

**On Common Ground 2: Continuity and Change  
DHDS March 1998**

**Text and photograph copyright © Helena Kazárová and DHDS 1998**

**ONE MUSIC – TWO DANCES: SARABANDE BY LULLY**

Helena Kazárová

Dance Department, Prague Academy of Music (HAMU)

**INTRODUCTION**

The subject of my paper and presentation is to investigate two solo sarabandes from Feuillet's *Recueil* of 1700<sup>1</sup> and 1704<sup>2</sup> set to the same music of Jean-Baptiste Lully.

The work on these two dances has proved to be extremely rewarding both to me and my students of dance science Hana Barochová and Katerina Réblová. The study has evolved itself at first quite intuitively and I have only tried to enhance the natural type of my dancers. From the technical point of view Peggy Dixon's instructions<sup>3</sup> have proved to be a great help in the reconstruction of the sarabandes. I had the idea to combine the choreography with the use of the requisites and this turned out to be a challenge to the dancers: they had to start thinking more about the inner contents of these sarabandes and to unite their whole personalities with a certain image. The gate into the theatrical quality of the sarabande has started to open...

**HISTORY AND TYPOLOGY OF THE DANCE**

The sarabande has Spanish roots even though the oldest known sources geographically point to Latin America<sup>4</sup>, as there it was known as a sung dance from the 16th century. Early in the 17th century it spread from Spain to Italy and France, where various instrumental types of it developed, some became known as 'sarabande francese.'<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, in most theatrical works of the 17th and 18th centuries it was used for the characterisation of the Spanish temperament. The French knew how to interpret it also in their own way: in a quicker and more playful manner.

This I hope renders us the legacy to the two options of performance we have arrived at: the sarabande of 1700 in the 'Spanish' way and the one from 1704 in the 'French' way. Of the Spanish manner of dancing we learn from Jacopo Martello in 1715<sup>6</sup> that it is "withdrawn within itself, and even in light movements of the waist maintains a sense of decorous dignity inseparable from the gravity of the nation...so that this dance appears rather like a walk beautified by witty oddities of the movement which show the natural turn and agility of the torso – high, slender and free..." From the same source we get to know that the Frenchman "dances in a way that gives you the impression that he is swimming...From time to time he skips as a swimmer who lets the crest of the wave push him high in order to be carried forward...This style of dancing greatly pleases the French, who are disposed towards amorous attitudes..."

Historically the sarabande was often affiliated with the art of seduction and ambition.<sup>7</sup> In the second half of the 17th century and in the 18th century it was considered as a theatrical dance form.<sup>8</sup>

**Feuillet's sarabande of 1700**

This was the first sarabande I became acquainted with, so I wanted to stress its Spanish descent. My choice for this dance was Hana, as she possesses very fluent and

elegant movements and dignity together with proud carriage of the body. From the first moment I had the idea of her dancing with a fan, the “wondrous engine” as Soame Jenyns<sup>9</sup> calls it. This was not very easy at first, we had to solve the problem of the opposition of arms and the result still seemed stiff. This problem was finally solved by inspiring ourselves by the use of the fan in the dance guajira (on a film by Carlos Saura). Interestingly, the guajira also developed as a sung dance of the Iberian folk in Latin America, as the sarabande is reported to. Hana grasped the character of the dance quickly and gave it a calm manner, yet seductive in a dignified, ‘phlegmatic’ way.

#### **Pécour’s sarabande of 1704**

When reconstructing this dance with my second student Kate we were confronted by a very different step-structure compared with the Feuillet’s sarabande. The sarabande by Pécour contains many contretemps and sisonnes, together with tombé-glissé steps and so it requires very lively movements. To my surprise, Kate had intuitively started to interpret the choreography with what I would call a ‘French flavour’. We have chosen to complete this dance by using a mirror in her hand as a symbol of coquetry and vanity. This all together results in a ‘sanguine’ character of the dance. And even though we were rehearsing the dance to the recording of a same tempo, this sarabande seemed always to be swifter and quicker than that by Feuillet.

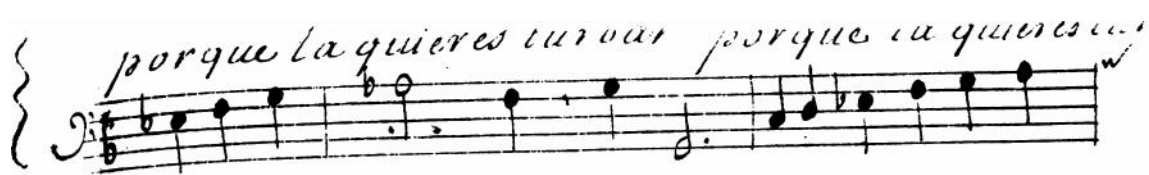
#### **MUSIC**

These two choreographic pieces were created both to the same music by Jean-Baptiste Lully, which was played for the first time at the premiere of his and Moliere’s comédie-ballet *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* at Chambord on 14th October 1670.<sup>9</sup> The identical tune was used for the choreographies of two further sarabandes in addition to the ones my article is dealing with.<sup>10</sup> Lully’s sarabande is to be found in the Third Act of the comédie-ballet constituting a third entrée of the *Ballet des Nations* and is titled in the Paris sources as ‘Premier Air Espagnol’. According to Schneider’s Catalogue<sup>11</sup> it bears the signature LWV 43/27 and was used by Lully one year later again in the *Ballet des Ballets* and also five years again in *Le Carnaval Masquerade*. Except for France, no other countries are mentioned by Schneider as possessing manuscript copies of Lully. But I was lucky in finding a manuscript copy of *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* in the musical archive of Count Lobkowitz from the castle Roudnice in Bohemia.<sup>12</sup> Here, the musical piece is titled ‘Sarabande’ and contains 5 instrumental lines including the bass, which is rare. The voices coincide with the printed part of H. Prunières<sup>13</sup> except for the repetition of the first four bars. I will return to this problem in the section devoted to choreography. The Roudnice manuscript places this sarabande after the aria sung by two Spaniards (Sieur Morel and Griller), where according to LWV the ‘Deuxième Air Espagnol’ (43/30) is placed and marked as 6/4 loure.

The reversed position of the dances in the compared sources is worth further research.

#### **Lully and the sarabande**

The sarabande was quite a favourite of the composer as he included it 34 times in his works for the theatre. He became acquainted with it probably early in his youth when



## *Sarabande*



The manuscript copy (undated) of the sarabande from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.  
Lobkowitz Musical Archive, Museum of Czech Music in Prague.

still in Italy, as it was a part of the repertory of the Spanish five-course guitar he had been learning to master in Florence.

The rhythmic type of the sarabande used in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* shows perhaps the Italian inspiration, as it is quite near to the type called 'sarabande italiene', beginning with an incomplete bar of two quarter notes (two-beat anacrusis).

For this type of sarabande a more lively tempo is usual, but in France it may not necessarily have implied a really fast one. For our live demonstration we used the Erato disc recording by Les Talens lyric from the year 1995, but had to slow it a little down in order to gain a satisfying dance performance. On the other hand the tempo on the tape No. 6 from the Nonesuch series gives the right tempo for a smooth performance of both choreographies. These notes may, of course, be just a question of individual practice approach and may differ with other performers.

### **STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP**

The sarabande of 1700 demonstrates a strong feeling of regularity and symmetric quality of step sequences. One can clearly distinguish 5 choreographic motives, which are performed beginning from the right foot and then from the left. Four of the five motives take four bars to accomplish, only the third motive takes eight bars. This mirror-like exchange of motives is suddenly distorted in the last 16 bars of the 64, that constitute the dance. Why?

Another interesting feature of the Feuillet's dance in relation to the music is that the 8-bar melody line is cut in two halves separated by a repetition. This corresponds well with the choreographic motive build on 4 bars of music and then repeated starting with the other foot. The Prunières' score has it and this was most probably printed from the French manuscript copies. But the Roudnice manuscript copy doesn't have it. Why? From what source was it copied and when? Was it directly from Lully's autograph or the earlier copies before the later choreographers, who came after Pierre Beauchamp, changed it to fit their ideas?

To this dance, Raoul-Auger Feuillet claims his authorship in 1700. But the original sarabande in *Le Bourgeois* was done and also performed by Beauchamps, possibly in a form of a duet with the dancer Chicanneau<sup>14</sup>. As it is known, only very few dances existing in the notation can be without doubt identified as his. Feuillet is famous for having 'borrowed' his dance notation system, quite without the author's permission. To my mind, with the choreography of the *Sarabande pour femme* it might well be a similar case. The choreography seems to have an older basis on which some changes were done: Feuillet could cut the melody after 4 bars and so also divide the original Beauchamp's 8-bar choreographic motive into two halves and in the last 16 bars he could have added his own invention, suitable for a conclusion of a solo. And a new dance was so easily born! This practice of remaking the older dances and helping thus to cover the lack of fantasy in the interest of quantity of dances produced was still very common at the times of Petipa in the 19th century and maybe Feuillet was its first pioneer...

The second sarabande, edited by Feuillet in 1704, is clearly by Louis-Guillom Pécour. In this case Feuillet had to be careful, as Pécour was still active at the Court. Pécour's sarabande is maybe more 'French' or 'modern', the symmetric regularity is cast away quickly after the opening 12 bars and never it is never retained till the end of the dance.

Pécour was 17 years old, when Beauchamp's choreography of *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* was premiered and the style of dancing was progressing since. The constant changes were very apparent to the people of that time, even though we are not able yet to develop a precise image of them.

## CONCLUSION

These two sarabandes have opened the gate into the baroque dance interpretation for my students and me as well, and the study and comparison of them has also opened new questions, which serve as a motivation for my further research. The careful analysis of the dances can surely help us to be more sensitive to the structure of the baroque music and through the different structure of the choreographic text we may find ourselves perceiving the same tune in another way. The art of combination and variation was the spirit of both the music and the dance in those times – an art from which we still have much to learn.



Hana Barochová and Kateřina Réblová performing the sarabande by J.B. Lully

## REFERENCES

1. Feuillet, R.-A. *Recueil de dances composées par M. Feuillet*, Paris, 1700, p.92
2. Feuillet, R.-A. *Recueil de dances...et des meilleurs entrées de ballet de Mr Pécour*, Paris, 1704, p.1
3. Dixon, P. Ballroom dances of the 17th and 18th centuries. *Nonesuch: Early Dance*, Vol.VI, London: P. Dixon, J. McKay, 1987, p. 82–89
4. Taubert, K.H. *Hofische Tänze. Ihre Geschichte und Choreographie*. Mainz: B. Schott's Sohne, 1968, p.110
5. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Ed. Stanley Sadie, London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980, p. 492
6. Winter, M. H. *The Pre-Romantic Ballet*. London, Beccles and Colchester: W. Clowes and Sons, 1974, p. 65
7. Horst, L. *Pre-Classic Dance Forms*. Princeton: Princeton Book Company, 1987, p. 48–50
8. “Theatralische Tänze bestehen in Entreen, Balletten, *Sarabanden* und andern künstlichen Tänzen...” ( The theatre dances comprise the entrées, ballets, *sarabandes* and other dances of art...) – cited from *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste...*Leipzig und Halle: Verlegst J.H. Zedler, 1744. Reprints Nr. 28, Michaelstein/Blankenburg, 1991, p. 1749
9. Jenyns, S. *The art of dancing*. London, 1729. Reprinted in fascimile with introduction by A. Cottis: London: Dance Books, 1978, p. 21
10. Little, M. E., Marsh, C. G. *La danse noble, an inventory of dances and sources*, Williamstown, New York, Nabburg: Broude Brothers Ltd., nos. 7720 and 7900
11. Schneider, H. *Chronologisch-Thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Werke von Jean-Baptiste Lully (LWV)*, Tutzing, 1981
12. The private Lobkowitz musical collection from the castle Roudnice nad Labem, temporarily kept at the Museum of Czech Music in Prague, Ms from II La 4, Theatre de musique, Tom I, No 4
13. Prunières, H. *J. B. Lully. Oeuvres completes*, Paris, 1930–39
14. Christout, M.F. *Le ballet de cour de Louis XIV*, Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1967, p. 119–120. The cast is also in *Oevres de Molière avec des remarques grammaticales; des avertissements et des Observations sur chaque pièce*. Par M. Bret. Tome septième. A Paris aux dépens des libraires associés. MDCCXXVIII, p. 139.