

## Chapter 8

### Conclusions

My professed goal, at the beginning of this research, was to investigate editorial methods, and how they would shape and adapt my performance. In the end, while I found the editorial research both enlightening and important, it was through the process of editing that I learned the most about the music, and the performance ramifications of editing are strongly linked to the degree of research necessary for the creation of a strong edition. Ultimately, when returning to my original question – “How can creating a critical-performance edition of the music of Johann Rudolph Ahle impact my performance of his music?” – I think there are a few observations that can be made.

First and foremost, from the practical standpoint of editing, I would suggest I have succeeded in creating an edition that would please both performers and scholars. It has been tested and continues to be tested by both performers and scholars (as well as combinations of the two) with satisfactory results. In addition to the isolated success with this edition, as an editor I’ve developed my skills to the point of editing being a marketable skill for me, and I’ve begun to see income from it. Lastly, in my performance of other edited music, I’ve learned to identify decisions that would have been made, both in scholarly editions that strive to make clear every critical act, as well as in what Alexander Silbiger terms “uncritical editions” – those of unknown origin that appear on the internet with alarming frequency.<sup>100</sup>

The process of focusing so intently on Ahle and his collection has shaped my performance of his music, of course. By examining the 1658 Lustgarten in

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<sup>100</sup> Alexander Silbiger, “The Promises and Pitfalls of Online Scholarly Music Publishing,” in *Early Music Editing* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 198.

such detail, I identified a possible approach in his collection of texts and composition styles to these texts. The performance implications are extensive. By realizing the patterns of personal devotion, it becomes clear that a sterile performance is completely unsuitable. This music must have the drama that comes as a result of a personal investment in the text – and that investment must be found in the instrumentation, the harmony, the rhetoric, and any other musical elements that Ahle had at his disposal. What's more, this trend of personal devotion, according to Frandsen, can be found in music throughout Germany in the seventeenth century – meaning this idea of heightened expression in sacred music should apply not only to Ahle, but to Schütz, Schein, Scheidt, and whomever else comes across my path.

Finally, by focusing so specifically, and by virtue of researching in the internet age, I was able to update the existing scholarship on Ahle – finding text sources which had been previously unknown. These sources have been crucial to realizing the extent of Ahle's fascination with personal spirituality – which I believe is in turn crucial to a convincing performance of his music. While I hesitate to announce to the world that Ahle is indeed the "German Monteverdi" – I certainly find his music of the highest quality, and I can only hope that through continued examination, more find his music equally stimulating.