Using the ‘turn’ ornament in PMX

The ‘turn’ (‘gruppeto’ in Italian) is quite a commonly used ornament; however, although available in MusiXTeX, it is (for technical/historical reasons) not defined in PMX.

Of course, you can always resort to inline TeX. But that may be a bit too much of a task for many non-TeXperts, in particular considering how simple the problem actually is.

Luckily, Don Simons has just suggested a rather easy-to-use trick to me that I want to hand on: simply redefine a particular PMX ornament symbol that you use only rarely!

So how about os? os [called \mtr by the PMX program itself] is sometimes used in renaissance music; it consists of 2 light slashes.

So if you want to follow that suggestion and redefine os, simply add

\let\mtr\turn

(on a line of its own) before the first use of os, and from then on os will produce a turn wherever it appears in your PMX source.

One of the main advantages of this approach is that you retain all the flexibility of PMX in fine-tuning the exact position of the ornament (writing, for example, os+2+3).

Of course, you don’t have to use os for the redefinition; (almost) any PMX ornament symbol will do. Just remember that the original ornament symbol that you replaced will now no longer be available.

(Contr. by C.C. Noack, Mon 2007 Jul 16)

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1One of the advantages of using os for this purpose is that it is actually undocumented. So many regular PMX users will not even have been aware of the fact that they have just replaced a PMX symbol!