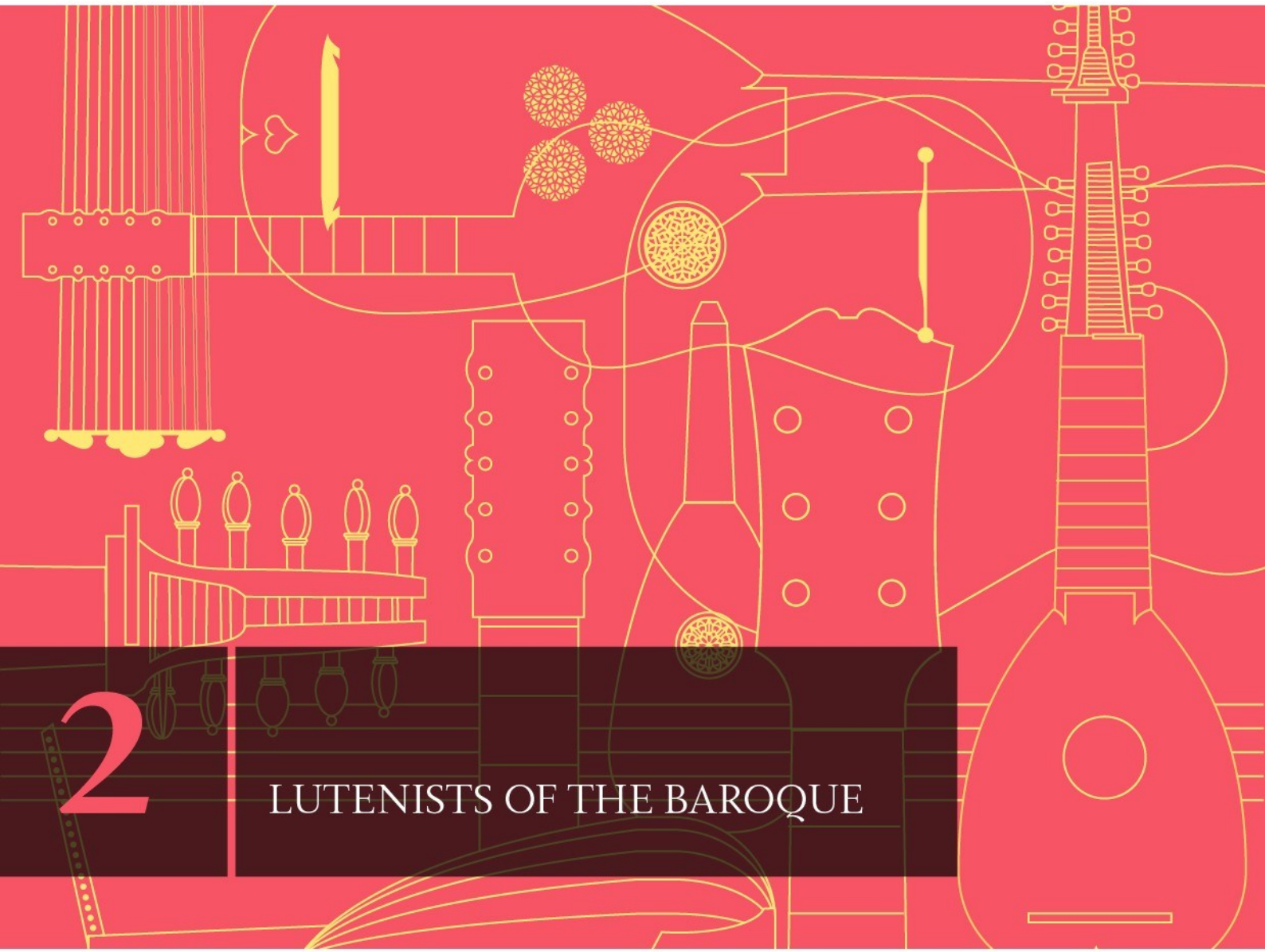
MUSIC FOR GUITAR, LUTE AND VIHUELA

THROUGH THE AGES

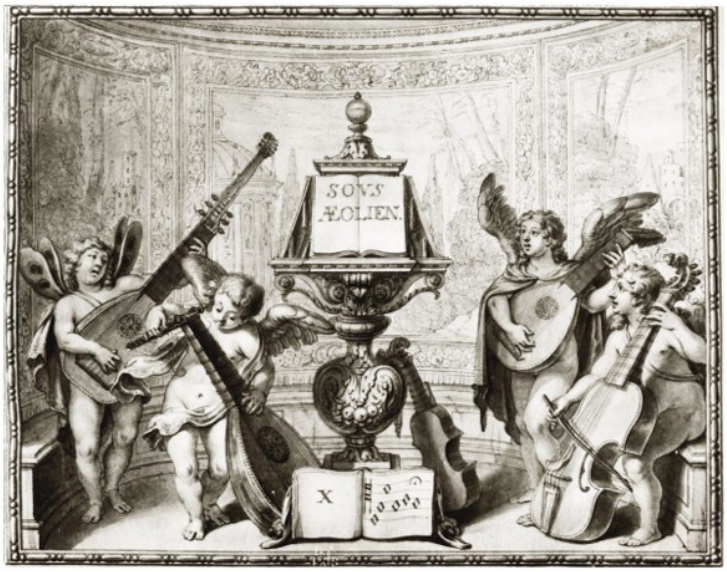
LANCE BOSMAN

CHAPTER PREVIEWS



2

LUTENISTS OF THE BAROQUE



MUSIC FOR GUITAR, LUTE AND VIHUELA

THROUGH THE AGES

VOL 2: LUTENISTS OF THE BAROQUE

2. Lutenists of the Baroque

Prologue

… ‘Taking leave of a repertoire abundant in diversity and invention, the curtain closes on the Renaissance to reopen on the next era of the lute from the Baroque period.

As the concluding lines from the last page on the lute of the 16th century in this series, echoes from the Renaissance music rang on. Those sprightly instrumental dances, galliards, almains, retained a hold awhile, notably in England. The indelible imagery they summon still is of cavorting figures in stone-clad halls. From another point of view the graceful unfolding of a pavan stirs in the mind’s eye a ceremonial tread. Recalling fantasias, those most introspective creations, these too extended their life, notably in Italy as ‘touch’ pieces at the keyboard.

Against the fading rays of the 16th century and at the dawn of the Baroque, new musical movements were astir. One revolutionary departure took place in the performance of Italian songs. The entwined lineworks of former vocal ensembles gave way to just one singer now with a single instrumentalist clasping an imposing long-necked lute. And there were other breakthroughs with the lute as their carrier. Dances sprang up in abundance, now Baroque varieties. Taking their turn in pages ahead, they bear French stamps with their peculiar turns of line. This is the fare of salons, of lute music touched by tonal plays of light and shadow.

The musical Baroque was one of expansion, and of lute compositions enlarged in breadth and range. National seams extended from Italy with lutenists participating in grandiose stage productions and opera. In France they propagated dance suites and court airs; from England, songs and instrumental eccentricities. Within the Central Lands stylistic cross-fusions were nurtured and expanded with indigenous perspectives.

After glimpsing the broader musical fronts of the Baroque, the repertoires of the lute take turn, apace with the experimental verve and stylistic tangents abroad in this age.

An intimate concert. By the Netherlander artist Hendrik Martenszoon Sorgh (1610–

CHAPTER PREVIEWS

Contents

An archlutenist. Engraved by Gabriel Huquier (1695–1772) after Antoine Watteau (1684–1721).

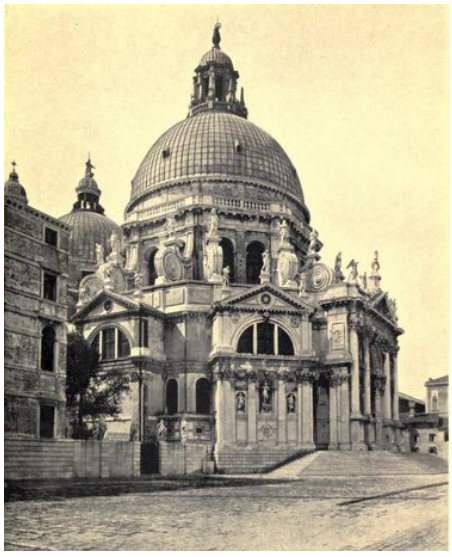
23. The Baroque Era.
A glimpse of the age

In an atmosphere of artistic freedom it is only to be expected that revolutionary trends should break out; that in the stimulating ambience of the Renaissance, certain painters, musicians and visionaries would breach the cultural norms of their time. Composure, moderation and serenity, the ideals of art and music later gave way in part to new movements of sharp contrasts, mobility and intensification. Such are the anguished madrigals of Gesualdo, the darting instrumental fanfares and vocal outbursts of Giovanni Gabrieli, the vivid coloration and accentuated depictions of El Greco. These releases, startling and audacious, surfaced during the latter decades of the 16th century. Isolated at first, they gained momentum and broader recognition, heralding a new cultural age.

Only in retrospect can such radical impulses be perceived as the tremors of another era. No clear-cut temporal boundary marks the wane of the Renaissance and the breakthrough of this ensuing epoch. Innovative ventures strove alongside tried and trusted practices; but so different from Renaissance values were the progressive arts at full stride in the 17th century that they have since been given a separate identity – as manifestations of the 'Baroque'. From the Italian *baroco*, the term had at first rather derogatory implications, of things misshapen or overly elaborate.[1]

The Baroque period, generally regarded as spanning the 17th to mid-18th centuries, is known at height for its decorative architecture, opulent interior designs, grand theatres and ceremonies. Against the vaulted stillness of Gothic design, the equilibrium and restful assurance of the Renaissance, extremes of Baroque art are curvaceous and mobile.

Baroque composers initiated opera and new forms of dramatic song. Instrumental idioms proliferated, for keyboard, ensemble, and not least for the lute and increasingly popular guitar. Across the broad musical fronts of the Baroque stand the figureheads of Monteverdi, Corelli, Vivaldi, Couperin, Rameau, Lully, Purcell, Schütz, Buxtehude, Sweelinck, Telemann – and the grand cosmopolitans, Bach and Handel. Monuments of the Baroque endure as London's St Paul's Cathedral and Versailles symbolizing Louis XIVs power. There are the Italian splendours of the century with their imposing domes and scrolled buttresses, as the Venetian church of Santa Maria della Salute. Florentine and Venetian architecture overwhelm the viewer with its rounded facades and spiralled columns. Impressive edifices are equalled in their outer aspects by lavish interiors.



Pl. 23.1. S. Maria della Salute, Venice, completed in 1687.

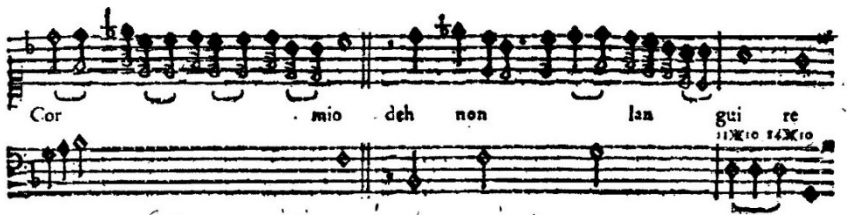
[1] The term 'Baroque' is also associated with the Portuguese *barroco*, a large rough pearl.

24. A Vista of the Musical Baroque

Italy, the Seicento

Though the transition from Renaissance musical styles to those ushering the new era was by and large gradual, certain trends heralding the Baroque period differed radically from former practices. One defining change which was to have lasting consequences occurred in solo vocal and instrumental writing. Renaissance polyphony in the main is evenly braided without any one voice predominating. An early Italian Baroque innovation, however, was to polarize the parts, thrusting an individual sung or played line over a bowed bass or chordal accompaniment. For the latter role the lute was favoured. As a 'monadic' setting it is thus distinct from a polyphonic one. Monody emerged in Florence nearing the close of the 16th century. Setting a melody alone and without deference to adjacent part movements allowed composers and performers to render that line individually with rhythmic flexibility and ornate inflections. Giving vent to the emotional implications of the text, solo vocalists intensified pathos and heightened expressions of anguish and joy with melodic flourishes, suspenseful pauses and even bodily gestures. Such sung-spoken impassioned recitation is known as *stile recitativo* – recitative.

Monody was to become the bedrock of much Baroque composition. Underpinning it is a *basso continuo*, a written bass line, also known as 'thorough bass' or simply 'continuo'. Lutes, keyboard, guitars, 'realized' an accompaniment with on-the-spot chords deduced from the continuo's bass notes. A leading proponent of monadic techniques and recitative was an Italian singer, lutenist and writer Giulio Caccini (1550–1618). Present at the Medici court, Caccini is credited as, or he claimed to be, the inventor of recitative. In the preface to his book of arias and madrigals *Le Nuove Musiche* (Florence, 1602) the author notes how tasteful vocal ornamentation can intensify the dramatic presentation of a monologue. To this end Caccini recommended the lute to accompany the voice. Moreover, an instrumentalist, unencumbered by detailed notation, likewise had leeway to apply individual touches. So the give-and-take of the vocalist would be reciprocated by the immediacy of the lutenist, be it as a duo performance or sung and played by one and the same. Caccini's book set a precedent for monadic performance of solo song in Italy. Soon into the century volumes of this kind reeled from Italian presses. In the informative introduction to his book Caccini gives a step-by step exposition on recitative with an accompanying bass line. The instrument he had in mind for this was an enlarged lute, the chitarrone. He then presented an example of vocal coloratura, a 'very expressive passage' for others to train themselves 'and acquire every greater perfection.'



Pl. 24.1. *Cor mio, deh non languire*, a cadential recitative by Giulio Caccini (Florence 1602).

25. The Baroque Lute.

Widening their prospects as the 17th century got under way, Italian lutenists appeared on the stages of wedding spectaculars and were heard plucking from the aisles. Florentines also caught sight of them on boats, carnival floats and celebrations. The dulcet tones of their serenades, the visual effect of a stroked chord alluding to Orpheus and his lyre, lent ancient-world imagery to these settings. Baroque lutes with their imposing presence now frequently become the very focus of paintings. Their corpulent bodies, extended necks and daunting ranks of strings possess a latent energy which even in stillness seems to convey a palpable vibrancy. Viewed on canvas these instruments vie with forefigures for attention. Their broad soundboards shining in the chiaroscurism of pitched light disposes the silhouettes of other objects into shadow. Again, in scenes of humble life, cavorters and singers bandy a lute. In dimly lit taverns lutenists abide amid country folk lounging, supping and smoking. Here too the play of light and dark throws the lute into relief. From inside to outdoor snapshots of rural recreations, a seated lutenist takes centre stage while rustics around make up numbers squatting and flirting. Upper ranks viewing these settings warmed to such idylls of bumpkins at leisure while they themselves remained comfortably distanced from the soil. The lute's presence in pastoral scenes, and indeed at the hands of their privileged observers testifies to this instrument's ranging circulation in the 17th century.

Ahead to the mid-Baroque and Flemish art, the lute also appears in a diversity of locations. Through the glow of a lantern or shaft of sunlight it reposes in modest yet comfortable domestic surroundings. Catching a glimpse of it through an open door or window it symbolizes recreation in everyday life, an emblem of homely contentment. Moving up the social scale the lute's status is now elevated against backdrops of draped walls, tapestries and resplendent furnishings. The lady of the house flaunts an imposing lute. It stands for prosperity, sophisticated tastes and erudition. Taking its place in fashionable imagery at the hold of gentlemen the instrument's bright soundboard offsets the severity of their dark garb.

Glimpsing French lutenists we catch sight of a periwigged world of cultured recreation. Dapper figures, theirs is the music of court and salon. In velvet attire they are seen, demurely crossed-kneed lapping the instrument. Displaying raised heels sideways on, those crinkled boots are not for these *joueurs de luth*. Stepping out from solo performances they as readily donned costumes for ballet acts. Striding the stage a grand entrée they made, chanting and strumming afoot (see Pl. 28.1). In another role still they excelled as accompanists to vocalists of elegant court ayres. Of these and other pursuits, the enterprises of French lutenists take turn in due course.

26. The Chitarrone-Theorbo

> *Even the viol and the harpsichord do not have the grace or the convenience of the Theorbo. .... it accommodates soft and delicate voices, which the other instruments would obscure*.
>
> Bertrand de Bacilly, *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter* (Paris 1668).[2]

It was not by chance that with the inception of monody there also came into being a lute of revolutionary design. To enhance the delivery of new Italian florid song, an enlarged lute was invented with a tonal compass that plumbed untapped depths. Lutes were still much preferred by singers for their tonal nuances and their imagery symbolizing the muse in song. But this one, like no other, had a remarkably extended pitch compass of deep-set strings. These rendered dense and dark accompaniments over which vocal and instrumental melodies were vaulted well to the foreground. The instrument invented to fulfil this role was the 'chitarrone', otherwise known as the *tiorba* or 'theorbo'.

To give this new-found lute a desired depth of tone, its bass strings ran from the bridge to a second pegbox attached to an extended neck. The lengthened strings not only augmented the bass range of the chitarrone, they increased its sustaining power, Pls. 26.1-2.

Pl. 26.1. Chitarrone by Magnus Tieffenbrucker (Venice 1608). Six double courses, 94 cms, eight single diapasons, 170.5 cms.

[2] Quoted in Mattax 1991, 10. Also Sayce 2001, Vol. 1, 53.

27. Italian Solo Lute Music

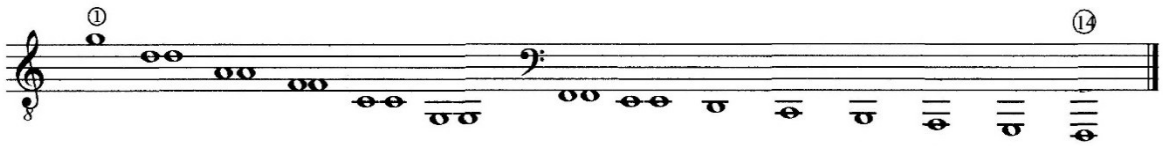
Amid the cacophony, fanfares and eruptions of new instrumental styles that heralded the Baroque, traditional values were nevertheless steadfastly preserved. A musical heritage of such wealth and diversity would hardly be brushed aside at a stroke. Why, even the torch-bearers of the Baroque age perpetuated the 'old practice' while proclaiming the new. No more so was this affection for the past upheld than in the Italian lute repertoire, even as it advanced with fresh imprints. That vintage forms ran side by side with innovative strides is borne out by music collections of the early 17th century. For lutes with standard tunings familiar dances and variations thrived, well after the chitarrone was up and running. Indifferent to the changing currents around, amateurs were quite at home with traditional fares; for they had, after all, a century of lute music handed down, and much of it preserved in accessible books.

Yet within their covers, certain items arising here and there now sound decidedly at odds with familiar ones. Changing tack and temperament, flecked with chromatics, they immediately strike the eye and ear as something new and different. If not there as standalones, these overtly adventurous compositions might lead or be lodged within a batch of unremarkable dance arrangements. Variation settings too of this day are likely to spring a few surprises. Alongside those cast in the old manner, within the orbit of their themes, are others now that by their sheer breadth have evidently broken from the fold. Launched from pliable ground basses they nigh take flight from the page.

The lute and theorboed lute

In keeping with the times, and to accommodate the stylistic plurality in the air, lutes with old tunings also accrued diapasons. Italian players called this extended instrument an arciliuto – archlute, or in Melli's case liuto attiorbato—a theorboed lute as he coined it in 1614, and a term since generally accepted. To confound the nomenclature of large lutes still, they are sometimes called simply as ever liuto. Like theorbos some extended lutes have really long necks. Others are stocky, with diapasons stopped a little above the first pegbox. Whatever their dimensions, these instruments differ from theorbos in not having re-entrant tuning, Ex. 27.1:

Ex. 27.1. Extended lute tuning - *Liuto attiorbato*



Play

Large lutes often have seven stopped courses and six or seven diapasons. Though extant instruments have seven courses to each pegbox, variants exist with eleven courses. Their necks allow for ten or eleven frets, as distinct from former lutes with eight or nine.[3]

[3] Spencer shows an illustration of an extended lute with seven doubled courses of 58.8 cms and seven doubled diapasons of 84.3 cms. Spencer 1976, 414.

28. Lutenists of the French Baroque

Unaffected by the sweep of Italian trends, French lutenists branched out with quite their own brands of composition. Acclaimed for their dance settings and character pieces, their music also stands apart for its capricious melodies and rhythms. Observing these idiosyncrasies later, we could also note in passing other traits of French lute music. For one, its liberal ornamentation, by no means cosmetic but suffusing its very fabric. Yet still, French lute music of the Baroque takes on subtle tones, and for certain genres is rather sombre. Often submerged in the lower registers, it frequently underlies the upper course, *sans chanterelle*. Moreover French lutenists imbued their music with certain tonal lustres elicited from the novel tunings. Another peculiarity still was to grace their solo compositions with exotic names. Who but they would dream up such allegorical titles as 'Ulysses', the 'Small harem', the 'Eight-o'clock piece' and 'La belle magnifique'. With these and other individual approaches, French virtuosos were to enrich the solo repertoire with unique imprints.

Esteemed by connoisseurs, the French lute was an object of culture, a cherished salon instrument. Befitting its elevated status were its debonair players, aptly attired in velvet and lace. Appointed as *maître joueurs de luth*, these masters comported themselves with aplomb, as the virtuosos they were (Pl. 28.4). And as regal is their solo music, by turns elegant, ponderous. Yet when the fancy took them, they would just as soon dispatch a romping dance. Moreover, in the convivial atmospheres of staged entertainments they weren't averse to joining the merriment. Ballets, theatricals and masquerades show them serenading and parading in fancy dress. They needed to be versatile lads. If donning a bizarre costume was the order of the day for an evening's revelry, then so be it. Pitching into staged spectacles, costumed processions of them are observed strumming in step an *entrée de luths*. What an opening they made in theatrical habits, as swathed gods or goddesses, plumaged Incas and soldiers. (Pls. 28.1–2; see also Pl. 24.5).[4] Away from these events, though, they propagated instrumental dances, courantes, allemandes and gigues. As well as homespun varieties they looked beyond their borders, frenchifying Hispanic sarabandes, chaconnes and canaries.

Pl. 28.1. A procession of lutenists from *Ballet des Fées des Forêsts de Saint-Germain.* (Paris, 1625). Act V, *Vingt-sixième entrée*: 'Grand Ballet Final'. In a rural setting the ballet is alive in symbolism, depicted by fairies, nymphs, shepherds and other beings in fitting get-ups.

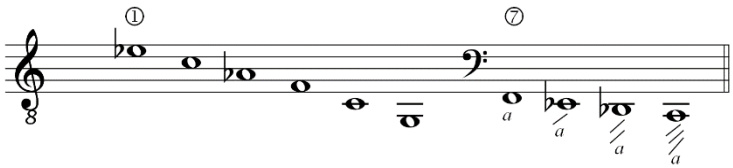
[4] See Chapt. 24, 'A Vista of the Musical Baroque', 'France'.

29. Seventeenth Century French Lute Tunings

The transition of French lute music from the Renaissance to that identified with the early Baroque is marked not only by stylistic changes, but also through the introduction of new tunings, *accords nouveaux.* Though these came into their own during the second and third decades of the 17th century, they were however mentioned in prints from the beginning of the 1600s. Antoine Francisque refers to modified tunings, *à cordes avallées,* in *Le Trésor d'Orphée* (1600).[5] Though Besard's *Thesaurus* (1603), in this case from Cologne, is Renaissance orientated in content and *vieil ton* the author refers to altered tunings for certain pieces. As an outright declaration of them is in the in the title page remaining from Pierre Ballard's since lost anthology of 1623, *Tablature de luth de differens autheurs*, *sur l'accord ordinaire*, to which the publisher adds *et extraordinaire*. From Pierre Ballard again are two volumes proclaiming new tunings, *Tablature de luth de differents autheurs sur les accords nouveau*x (1631, 1638). Pierre Gaultier also took up modified tunings for *Les Œuvres de Pierre Gaultier Orléanois*. Rome, 1638. Around this time Mersenne's *Harmonie universelle* (1636) illustrates standard tuning, *accord ordinaire*, and also cites *accord nouveau, ou extraordinaire.* The following *accord nouveau* open-string configurations for ten- and subsequently eleven-course lutes were adopted by progressive French lutenists. Those shown below are taken from listings in two modern editions of music from Pierre Ballard's books of 1631 and 1638. These tunings are named according to their designations in *Œuvres de Dufaut* (Paris 1965) and *Œuvres de René Mesangeau* (Paris 1971).

Pl. 29.1. A tuning check through the combined efforts of a mother and her daughter, in accord with the paw of their pet. Engraving by Etienne Picart. c.1630–33.

Ex. 29.1. F. Dufaut's *Accord 1* (Flat French) and R. Mesangeau's *Accord 2*:



Play

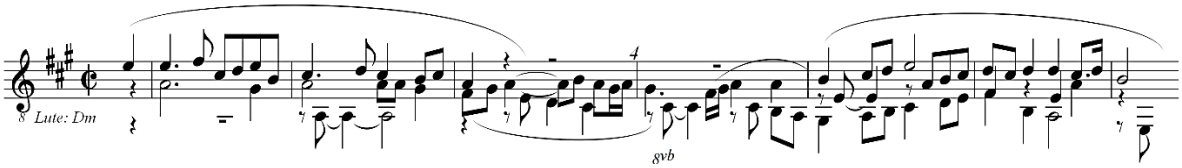
[5] In Renaissance tuning the third course is raised a semitone and the fifth lowered a tone.

30. The French Way of *style brisé*

If the novel sonorities that French lutenists elicited from experimental tunings were sufficient enough to distinguish their modes of composition, they also stand apart for their idiosyncratic linework. Quite removed is this manner of writing from the Italian style, of swooping melodies borne by purposeful chord progressions. The French, rather, concentrated on the miniature. Sticklers for detail, each swirl of melody is crafted individually; segments and gestures are savoured for themselves. French composers conceived their music not so much as successions of reciprocating passages, but as an accumulation of divisible entities.

At first hearing certain aspects of 17th century French Baroque lute genres might sound little short of bizarre. Melodies and counterpoints seem scattered, and more so given a bucking pulse, offbeat bass entries and irregular phrasing. So quirky and diffuse is the texturing of much French lute music, it has since been coined *style brisé*, the 'broken style'.[6] Crystallized in Denis Gaultier's *Rhétorique*, it is characterized by hopping counterpoint, jerky alternations of register, raked harmony and rasgueado-like brushes. Performance embellishments involve *séparé* otherwise spelt *séparée*, where intervals and chords are dislocated. Applied on the spur, *séparé* is also specified by angled lines upwardly bisecting the notes in question. Adding to these are *notes inégales*, splitting the temporal values of notes unequally. As Mary Burwell would have it, 'stealing half from one note and bestowing it on the next.'

Ex. 30.1. D. Gaultier: *Allemande* (c.1652)



Play

The drift of the top line from Ex. 30.1 might well imply its next turn, but susceptible to the vagaries of style brisé it veers elsewhere or is nipped by a cross-cutting counterpoint. Phrases frequently seem to teeter without conveying a sense of arrival or rest. They are inclined to pause at notes on which they hover uncertainly – or at least to our ears might sound like that. Melodies seem to vacillate, labouring a particular note rather than pressing onward. Hardly has the upper line of Ex. 30.1 spanned its first two bars when it falters. In the normal run of events, having once announced the tonic note, A, or chord at the start, this axis tone would be kept at bay awhile, allowing the phrase to reach out. Here however the progress of the upper line seems hampered from taking wing by the premature and insistent returns of its tonic.

[6] According to Buch the term *stile brisé* apparently took hold in the 20th century. Buch 1985a, 52–53.

31. French Instrumental Dances

While Italian theorbists were forging breakthroughs in monody and participating in staged vocal and instrumental ensemble performances, French lutenists chose more intimate venues to display their artistry. At home within circles of upper society they frequented Parisian salons and courtly circles. In such rarefied surroundings these elegantly attired *joueurs de luth* put on their best fronts to display this most esteemed instrument. A performance would not be countenanced without a facade of affected nonchalance. Turning on the charm, the poise of it all, every gesture was calculated to complement the musical occasion. To captivate the eye of the spectator was to enhance their hearing. A performance of a French master lutenist transcended that of just another musical soirée; it was a visually imposing event. Even so, silence was commanded from those in attendance. Only in hushed intimacy and stillness could this instrument's nuances be conveyed, its sonorities and tonal shades fully savoured. A rustle of cloth, an insensitive whisper, the creak of a chair would surely be met by a frown of disapproval. No involuntary belly rumble or burp dare intrude on the contrapuntal intricacies coaxed out or detract the performer from his resolve to give the music its expressive due.

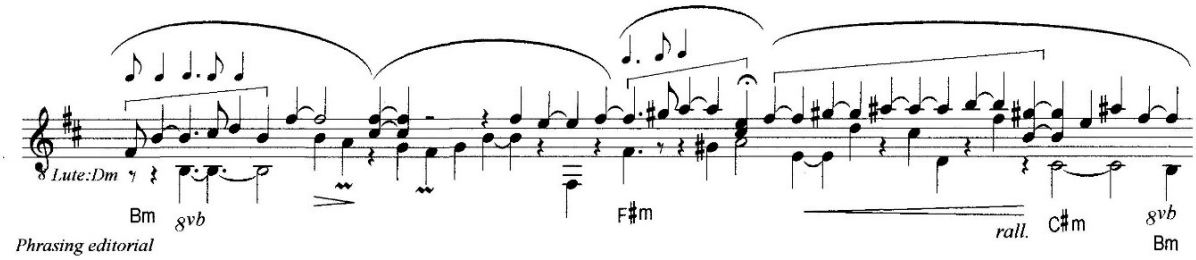
For these performances attentive audiences would be treated to a mélange of instrumental dances, now of a Baroque vintage. As the 17th century got into its stride, the Renaissance heritage of vocal intabulations, contrapuntal fantasias and song variations dwindled. Fresh varieties of stylized dances were propagated, courantes, allemandes, sarabandes, gigues. Alluding to the choreographic motions of dances themselves, instrumental renditions are by turns spirited, romping, lolling, stately. To these movements came others without dancelike associations. One is a unique kind of free-wheeling prelude perpetuated at French lutenists' hands. Another and quiet abstract in character is a solemn dedicatory piece, intended as a musical tribute. Alongside these homeland dances were those from neighbouring lands. Some fiery, certainly exotic, they spiced an instrumental suite. Erstwhile disreputable Spanish dances, sarabandes and chaconnes first strummed on guitar, gained elevated exposure though the lute. Rounding their rough edges, refined and polished, they became the musical savouries of courtiers and kings.

Preludes

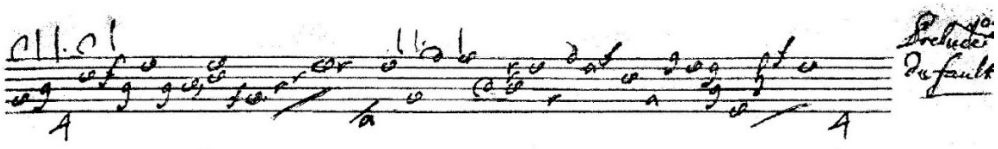
With few or no dancelike reflections, French preludes on the lute became introductory feelers for suites. Without barlines and with sparse or no stated note durations, they appear on the page as sprinklings of tones. It is up to the performer to align them chordally and rim them melodically. Speaking of preludes that informative old author Thomas Mace had something to say: "The *Praelude* is commonly a *Piece of Confused-wild-shapeless-kind* of Intricate-Play (as most use it) in which no perfect *Form, Shape* or *Uniformity* can be perceived, but a *Random-Business*, *Pottering* and *Grooping.*"[7] A somewhat extreme view, but it could be that Thomas came within sight or earshot of the preludes scored by French lutenists. Leaving much of their interpretation and finish to whim of the performer, these 'wild-shapeless' conceptions took shape, anew with each rendering.

[7] Mace 1676, 128.

Ex. 31.1. F. Dufaut: *Prelude de dufaut B fa si* (c. 1620–30)



Play

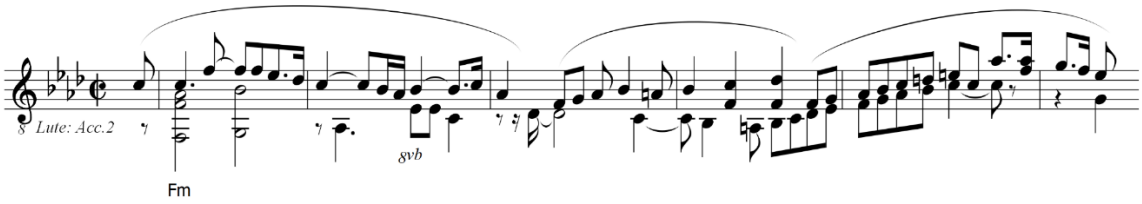


Pl. 31.1. *Prelude de dufault B fa si* by François Dufaut. From *Manuscrit. Vaudry de Saizenay* (1699).

Allemandes

Of all Baroque instrumental dances, allemandes are the most abstract in character, the least dancelike. Those for lute are slow to medium paced, with two broad beats to the bar. Alluding to no particular choreography, they are composed in quite individual ways. Contemplative, surging, languishing, such are the vagaries of allemandes. From patterned linework with interspersed scale runs, capricious exchanges of the counterpoint give rise to irregular arcs, elongating what might otherwise be equidistant phrasing. Melodies fringe or sidle within chordal mountings, staggered harmonies and counterpoints. Other than these generalizations, they elude definition. Those of Denis Gaultier are rather fitful, whereas Ex. 31.6 by Mesangeau is serene.

Ex. 31.6. R. Mesangeau: *Allemande* (1638)



Play

Beginning with this movement's characteristic melodic upbeat, it is routinely followed by a repeated note on the downbeat. Thereon upbeats or pickup threads usher a series of swooping short-breathed phrases. Each is directed to a destination point, be it a pitch peak, cadence or glancing modulation.

32. French Theorbo-lutes and Theorbos

Of the theorbo and lute:

> *These are instruments of repose, meant for calm and serious enjoyment, whose languishing harmony is the enemy of activity and requires only sedentary listeners.*
>
> Michel Le Pure, *Idée des spectacles* (1668).[8]

Nightfall has descended. On not just any evening but one seen through an imaginary flashback to a sunset on the Château of Versailles. The spotlight beams in on the Sun King seated at the head of the hall. Flanking his place of honour, family members, and dotted around a throng of courtiers and guests. A nod from the monarch, and the bustle ceases, murmurings curtailed. The band strikes up at Lully's command. With his stick beating time on the floor, a branle sets the ball in motion. Courantes follow then minuets, and as the entertainment gets into its swing, lighter dances still. There in the musician's gallery amid an assembly of strings and woodwinds is the jutting head of a theorbo. Standing out more so is this particular instrument for the elbow room accorded it – should that long neck inadvertently swivel sideways, woe betide a fellow player too close for comfort.

Another scene, and this one actually witnessed. On February the 8th, 1700, during what was perhaps the most colourful carnival season, a masked ball began. After opening dances a masquerade prepared by the Dauphin entered the room. Eyes beheld a great lord surrounded by animals of his menagerie. After a general parade around the room with the lord carried on the shoulders of four slaves, two monkeys played by professional acrobats put on a display of perilous leaps. They were followed by a vocal duet between two parrots [and here's the nub…] with a tiger playing the theorbo.[9]

Conjuring another fanciful though not far-fetched vision, within the royal palace is a further sighting of a theorbo. In an exclusive salon a soloist makes his bow to the chosen guests for this hearing. Well placed at court is this instrumentalist, for he is no less than that dab-hand, *Maître de la guitare*, Robert de Visée. Having settled into his seat his hands close in on that awesome rank of strings. From an upward thumb roll, the cumulative rumble from the diapasons sounds as if emanating from the very foundations of Versailles. An opening gambit contrived to impress, it's actually an indulgent tuning check. Then a melody coasts across, swerving and pointed with trills. Had Lully been present he would have smiled knowingly, recognizing this opening as a recasting of his *Ouverture de la Grotte de Versailles* (1668). He would be aware too that the chord terminating the third stave of Pl. 32.2 was so placed to stem the flow for a gigue-like episode to take flight. For its projection a swift left hand shift homes on the theorbo's mid fretboard where higher notes lie.

---

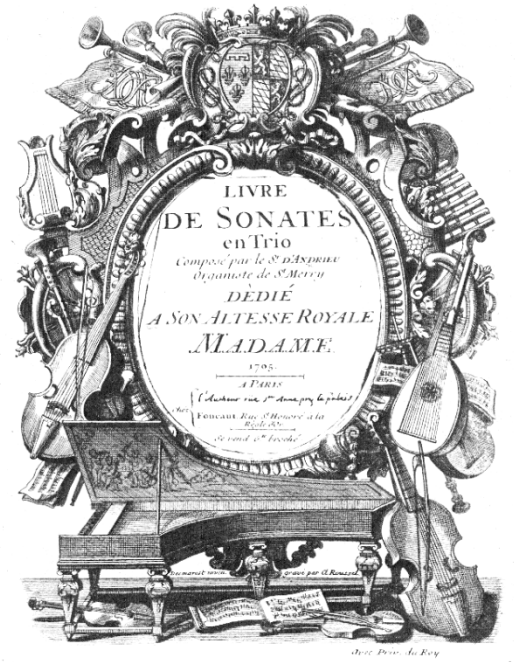
[8] Transl. by Sayce 2001, Vol. 1, 135.

[9] Harris-Warrick 1986, 46.

As continuo widened its footing on European stages, so ever more opportunities arose for theorbists to ply their craft. From the instrument's headstart in Italy, it gradually entered the fronts of French, English and German music. French soloists would be excused if this extraordinary long instrument initially passed their notice, preoccupied as they were investigating new tunings on standard lutes, and otherwise engaged in penning dance movements. As the century ticked on, the French theorbo came into its own, notably within Louis XIVs household. That the instrument found a niche in French regal circles over the latter decades of the 17th century is borne out by a succession of named theorbists holding posts at court.

Variously called *téorbe, théorbe*, *tuorbe*, French illustrations depict various kinds. Among them are large Italianate models and French-styled ones with their distinctive backward curving 'scroll' headstock (Pls. 32.1-2). They are also distinguished in having a single rose. In France as in Italy, ambiguities of nomenclature arise concerning lutes and theorbos, given that Italian imports with Gallic modifications appear concurrently with other large instruments, theorbo-like but not necessarily tuned as such.

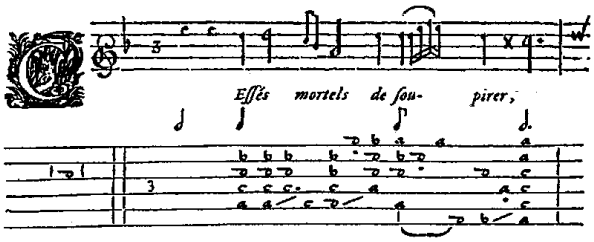
Pl. 32.1. Portrait of Nicolas Vleughels playing a theorbo (c.1717) by Antoine Watteau (1684–1721).



Pl. 32.2. Title page of *Livre de Sonates en Trio* by Jean-François Dandrieu (Paris 1705) featuring a French theorbo-lute with its typical backward curving head.

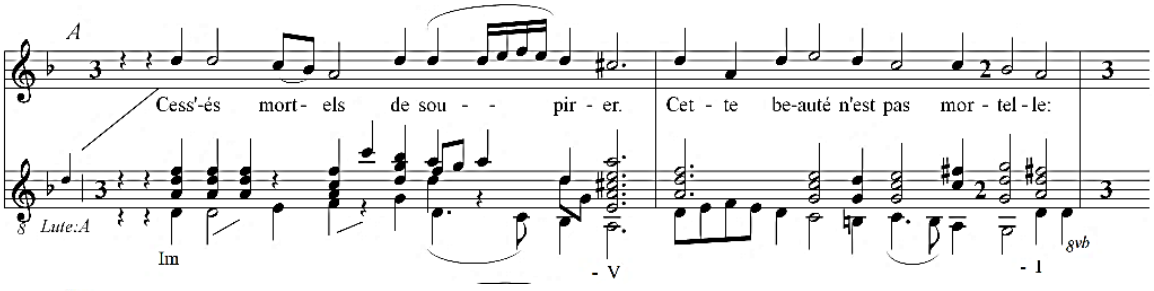
33. The *Air de cour*

Untouched by the changes that were taking place in French solo instrumental music, composers of lute songs kept to their own preserves. A standard lute with trusty tunings and a grounding of familiar keys sufficed for this elegant lyrical poetry. Airs to the lute alone came of age in the early 17th century and were to enjoy a heyday of nigh fifty years. Recitals of these courtly songs, *Airs de cour*, were held in Parisian salons, royal households and as vocal interludes for ballets. Tranquil pleasures for connoisseurs, nobility and the honourable pursuits of a courtier's amours, their words convey cultivated thoughts. Noble and poetic sentiments preoccupy the singer, often with a tinge of irony – of being torn between an urge to unburden their desires while luxuriating in captive enchantment. Lovers venerate paramours, and if failing to attract them, turn to the listener to lament their dejection. Through recourse to the heavens these sensitive beings bemoan their sorrows. They confide to babbling brooks about love unattainable and declare passions enflamed as the sun. From earthly plights to the outer world of the metaphysical, the poet seeks godly salvation from alluring, deceitful eyes. Like Dowland, these smitten souls revel in the fatalistic, finding solace only through the refuge of darkness or death. Hearing these refined presentations we imagine singers poised there, rendering their rueful vocal deliveries. Yet with dignity they seek a sympathetic ear, rather than attempting to elicit compassion. With fitting reserve too, the lutenist keeps a respectful aural distance with an unobtrusive accompaniment. All that is required of them is a background harmonization of stroked chords and complementary lines, pitched and timed to the turns of the melody.



Pl. 33.1. *Cessés mortels de soupirer* by Pierre Guédron, From *Airs de differents autheurs. Quatriesme Livre* (Paris 1613). The cypher at the beginning of the accompaniment indicates the pitch of the first sung note.

Ex. 33.1. P. Guédron (Arr. Gabriel Bataille): *Cessés mortels de soupirer* (1613)



Play

34. The British Baroque Lute

Picture the first stirrings of a typical London day during the early years of 17th century England. The city wakes with the dawn to a rattle of cartwheels beginning a morning's errands. Marketeers, early-risers yawn, whistle and cuss as they get under way. From an upstairs widow an inconsiderate householder discharges the previous evening's slops on some unfortunate passer-by. All is part of London's gradual awakening, of the populace getting into another day's stride. As the clock ticks on through morning, townsfolk gather pace. In the full throes of everyday activities, bustling inner streets resonate with a cacophony of raucous calls, of street vendors hawking their wares and the shouts of odd-job seekers trying to make a penny. Amid the holler of stall traders scratching a living are bartering crowds nosing for a bargain. Few returns would they get from those wily peddlers selling knick-knacks as they lounge at alley corners. Adding a voice to the din town criers with hand bells beckon passers-by to bend an ear to their quips of news, tall stories and yarns spouted from penny broadsheets, This was the London that Ben Jonson knew. Dramatist, boozer and with murder to his name, he was raised there and inhabited its seamy sides. Well qualified then was he to give graphic accounts of the metropolis. Urchins were abroad, slinking from alleys, up to their tricks. Snipping purses suspended from the breeches of incautious passers-by was rife in Jonson's young days. Grabbing one such scallywag by the scruff of the neck we could visualize him recalling from one of his comedies his ditty to 'Packington's Pound' "Oh you vile nation of cut purses all ... repent you for better or worse, and kiss not the gallows." With that in mind, but unrepentant, the urchin scuttles off.

Musical strains of a kind mingled with the inhabitants going about their business. The metallic twang of a cittern would be heard issuing from a barber shop, striking a chord in dubious harmony with the shrill tunes of 'hideous-noyse-making' pipers and fiddlers outside. Those roving minstrels with their songs, jigs and whatnot would 'make the teeth dance in the mouth.' Later into the evening over the reek of alcohol and tobacco, bawdy tavern choruses, scurrilous lyrics, spilled into the streets. All social classes rubbed shoulders for these convivial get-togethers. And among their clientele supping and letting off steam, illustrious names, yes, even Purcell and his ilk. The catch-songs and roundelays they vented between swills, and not forgetting either the tunes that balladeers churned out in the streets, were to prove a veritable breeding ground for medleys that would abide; preserved as anthologies. John Playford in later years saw to this.

Songs

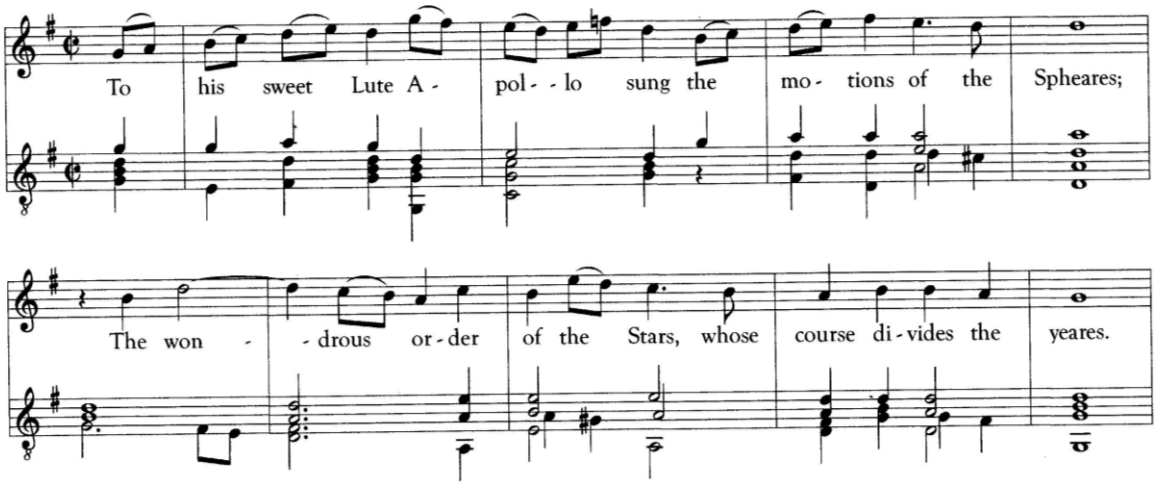
In a cool jasmine shade my lute I strung,
Where with divertive airs I play'd and sung;
The grateful sounds compos'd my cares to sleep,
Which o'er me now no watch apprear'd to keep.
Thrice blessed (said I) this long expected hour,
That frees me from my cruel gaolers pow'r.

The Confinement. A poem by Nathan Tate, (1677)
A prisoner finds solace through song and play.[10]

[10] Quoted by Goodwin 2010, 8.

England's prolific yield of songs from the 17th century is preserved in manuscripts and publications from the first decades, with further reams of continuo arrangements from the 1650s. There are also numbers of existing manuscripts with intabulated accompaniments. During the first years of the century three kinds of solo ayres ran side by side. One is contrapuntal in the Renaissance manner. Alongside are lucid and homophonically inclined songs, as Campion's above and that following:.

Ex. 34.4. T. Campion: *To his sweet Lute Apollo sung* (1601)



Play

And all the Mysteries above,
But none of this could Midas move,
Which purchast him his Asses eares

35. English Theorbo-lutes and Theorbos

From occasional calls on English lutenists to handle continuo early in the 17th century, demands on them gathered pace. Onwards to and beyond the mid-years, books of ayres and dialogues supported by a lute or viol proliferated. Pinpointing the theorbo's entry to these shores, Inigo Jones is reputed to be the first player to introduce it after his voyage to Italy in 1605. Regarded with some suspicion at the landing dock, the musically ill-informed port authorities looked on this long-necked specimen as some devilish contraption – a battering ram perhaps. Later and in a more receptive light the theorbo is cited in a London print by a lutenist in Prince Henry's retinue, the Italian Angelo Notari. Recalling an earlier reference to him from Chapter 26, the theorbo saw glint of day through *Prime musiche nuove,* printed in 1613 (Pl. 26.7). Before long theorbos so-called and theorbo-lutes were used in masques and subsequently as accompanying instruments for continuo bass lines to song collections.

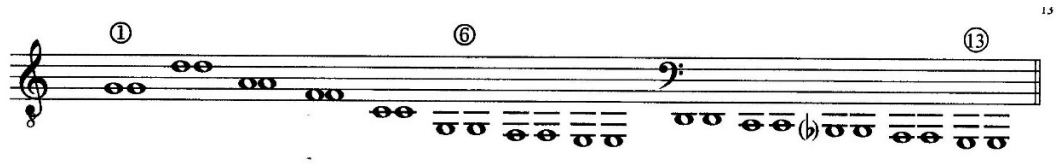
Theorbos are recorded for entertainments, among them Campion's *Maske of Flowers* from 1614. An Italian observer present at the Banqueting House at Whitehall for Jonson's *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* (1618) noted: 'Mercury next appeared before the King and made a speech. After him came a theorbo player [*un Musico con un Chitarrone*] in a gown who sang rather oddly in his throat, accompanying himself on his instrument.'[11] A group of lutenists enduring from the 16th century, 'Musicians of the Three Lutes' were known as such not for being a trio, but because they played three sizes of instrument. Among them Robert Johnson opted for a bass lute. Come the 1630s the group was subsequently called 'His Ma(jest)t(i)es fower Lutes', apparently because a fourth instrument, a theorbo, had been added.[12] Back in Whitehall no fewer than a dozen so-called theorbists were mustered for Shirley's masque *The Triumph of Peace* (1634). Interestingly, the musicians for this show featured Jacques Gaultier on lute and the brothers Lawes as singer-theorbists.[13]

References to theorbos in England from the 1630s specify them for dance music and vocals. They were summoned for Walter Porter's Monteverdian-like *Madrigales and Ayres. Of two, three, foure and five Voyces, with the continued Base ... to be performed with the Harpsechord, Lutes, Theorbos, Base Violl, two violins or two viols* (London, 1632); and William Child's *The First Set of Psalmes ... with a continuall Base either for the Organ or Theorbo ...* (London, 1639). The payments for the court masque *Calisto* (1675) mention two theorbos, two harpsichords and four guitars for dances performed by would-be gypsies and Africans.[14] Meanwhile, a tally of eminent composers called on a theorbist's services, the Lawes brothers, Locke, Humphrey, Blow and Purcell.

---

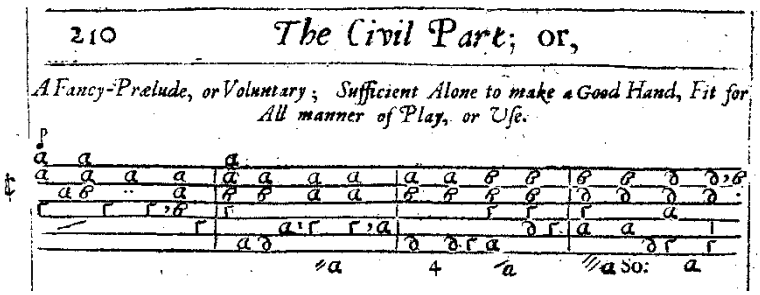
[11] Orazio Busoni's account of Jonson's *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* (1618). See Herford and Simpson 1950, 580–84.
[12] Holman 1993, 226–27.
[13] The names of the lutenists and theorbists for this masque are listed by Spring 2001, 325. For publications citing the theorbo and theorbo-lute from 1613 onward see Spring, Table II.4, 388–89.
[14] Holman 1999, 17.

Ex. 35.7. English large theorbo



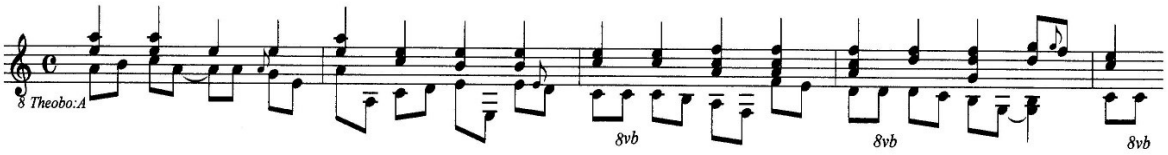
Play

According to Mace the theorbo has 12–13 doubled courses tuned to G with the first re-entrant, Ex. 35.7.[15] Large models however might have both upper strings lowered an octave. At least seven courses lie over the fingerboard. Smaller instruments could be tuned to A.



Pl. 35.6. *A Fancy-Prelude, or Voluntary* by Thomas Mace (London 1676).

Ex. 35.8. T. Mace: *A Fancy-prelude, or Voluntary* (1676)



Play

[15] Only Ann Blount's songbook of the 1650s appears to require a re-entrant first course, for a thirteen-course theorbo. Sayce 1995, 675.

36. The Lute in Germany and The Central Lands

Beneficiaries of French and Italian musical idioms, lutenists from the Central Lands merged these with homeland traditions into a cosmopolitan synthesis. Dance music from France was internationally well-known anyway, having circulated the courts of Europe under the batons of French choreographers. And with Italian music also in full swing, arias and sonata forms were likewise internationally absorbed. At the lute's late flowering now we detect within its repertoire such Italian traits as cantabile lyricism, violinistic-like figurations, purposeful harmonies, striding and pulsating bass lines. Side by side with these features are dances now with French stamps. Under the title of a suite or sonata might be an allemande with rippling Italianate figurations; then perhaps a French-accented courante. The same collection is also likely to harbour dance strains bearing no singular influence, but of mixed vintage.

Absorbing this stylistic influx, lutenists and composers from the Central Lands also extended their own traditions. Local dances and songs were absorbed. Indigenous choral polyphony and the compositional techniques of keyboardists were perpetuated. From such resources instrumental forms burgeoned, attaining awesome proportions by the closing years of the Baroque. For solo keyboard, violin and plucked strings, preludes, fugues and sonatas were taken at length. Not only were these composed for the lute, it profited from transcriptions of keyboard and violin works. Be the music written for or tailored to suit a lute, its repertoire at this stage presents a vivid testament to the stylistic diversity abroad in the late Baroque.

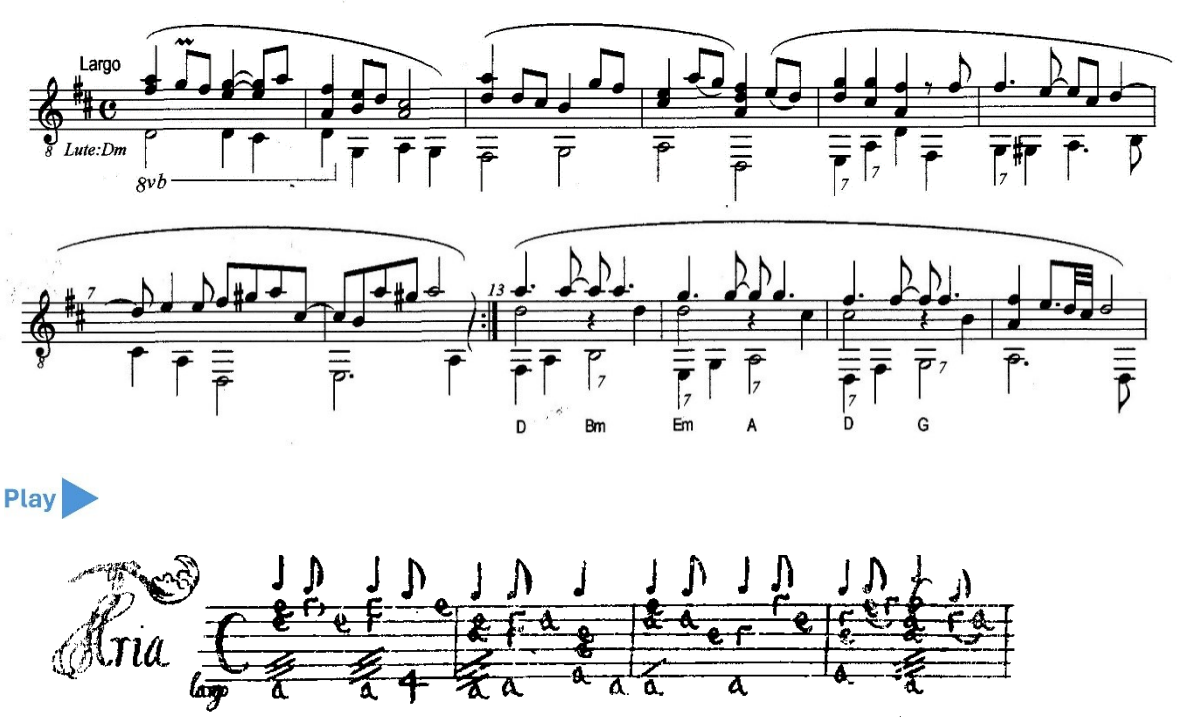
Backtracking through the Continental repertoires of the lute, the trail leads onwards from the anthologies of Renaissance retrospectives and topical items released in the early 17th century. At the threshold of the Baroque era is Jean-Baptiste Besard's cornucopia, *Thesaurus harmonicus* (Cologne, 1603). A huge anthology it brims with Renaissance dances, fantasias, intabulations of madrigals, chanson and air de cour settings. Across in the Netherlands, the anthologist and composer Joachim van den Hove (1567–1620) issued *Florida* (Utrecht, 1601) for a seven-course instrument. Then for eight courses is Hove's *Delitiæ musicæ* from 1612. Both volumes have preludes, vocal intabulations and dances. The former also contains fantasias. Following these are the preludes and dances Hove's *Praeludia testudini* (Leiden, 1616). Early on too a French lutenist, editor and dance teacher resident in Amsterdam, Nicolas Vallet (c.1583–after 1640) produced two volumes, *Le Secret des Muses,* 1615 and 1616. Attuned to topical styles in ten-course Renaissance strung, Baroque dances now figure, sarabandes, courantes and allemandes alongside earlier-styled variations and fantasias.

Pl. 36.1. Title page from Joachim van den Hove's *Delitiæ musicæ* (Utrecht 1612).

The 18th century

A prominent 18th century lutenist Johann Gottfried Conradi (d. 1747) perpetuated French dance movements for *Neue Lauten Stücke* ... (Frankfurt an der Oder, 1724). Alive with ornaments, appoggiaturas, raked chords, foundation dances and supplementary movements are scored for an eleven-course lute. Approaching the mid-century David Kellner (c.1670–1748) born near Leipzig left *XVI Auserlesene Lauten-Stücke* 'Sixteen Selected Lute Pieces' (Hamburg, 1747). Kellner specialized in *Phantasien*, dreamy in tone. Within this album too is a ranging chaconne, fantasias and some attractive arias, Ex. 36.8:

Ex. 36.8. D. Kellner: *Aria* (1747



Pl. 36.6. *Aria* by David Kellner (Hamburg 1747)

Lolling from one phrase to another, Kellner's arias and fantasias move as if under their own sway. Descending stepped movements play their part in this, sustaining a melody of yielding suspensions. Also ushering the lines is the chord progression led by bass strides of 4ths. This ordering and the countless melodic sequences stemming from it are given further exposures in lute music of the late Baroque.

37. J. S. Bach and his Dance Suites for Lute

Johann Sebastian Bach. 1685–1750

Pl. 37.1. A copy of a portrait of Bach in his sixties. The original from 1746 is by Elias Gottlob Haussman (1695–1744).

It is not just the breadth of Bach's musical vision that is cause for wonderment, but also his mastery of every idiom he turned to. From within and beyond Germany's borders he drew into a grand summation the musical styles of his time and those from the recent past. Like other immortal composers, his music will ever-outlive its creator. For centuries it has endured, weathering the turns of musical tides. If receding awhile in the wake of later developments it has quietly abided, to surface again to renewed acclaim. Onward to the present, Bach's music enters the reaches of our everyday hearing. By chance the snatch of a dance tune by him is caught in passing; or from across the room strains of his chamber music drift from the radio. Whether or not a title could be given to these odd encounters is incidental, for they still strike a recognisable tone. There is about their turn of phrase and pulse something unmistakably Bachian. Catering for the attentive concert-goer, few occasions go by without the composer's name appearing on programmes. For days of worship to annual calendar events, his seasonal perennials commemorate the spiritual significance of Christmas and Easter.

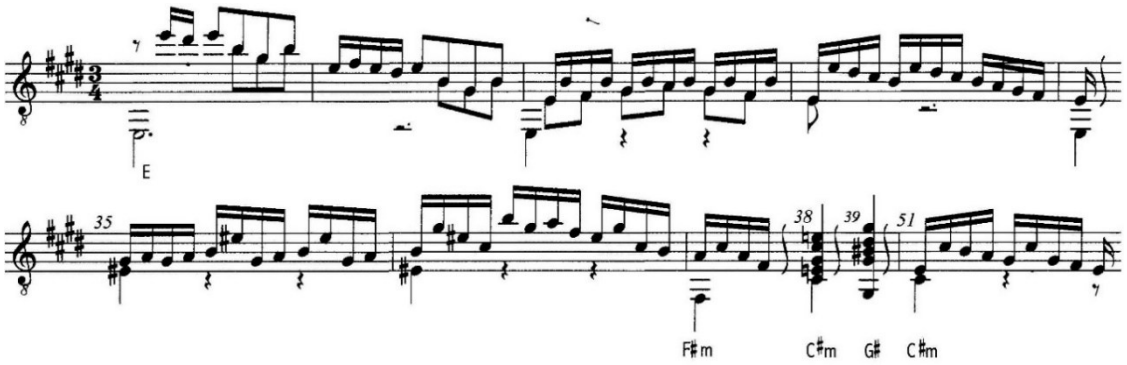
Preserved for the most part without change, Bach's music has over time also undergone some enterprising transformations. Arrangers and composers of late have since paid tribute to the old master, rejuvenating his music in novel guises. Through the medium of a modern orchestra the 20th century conductor Leopold Stokowski (1882–1977) recast Bach's popular classics in an expansive and latter-day orchestral light. At the hands of the Italian pianist Ferruccio Busoni Bach's remarkable chaconne for solo violin is transported through the keyboard into the soulful world of a 19th century concertoist. Beyond Europe distant admirers such as the Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos evoked Bachian strains now with an Amazonian tinge. Given a popular slant, the infectious lilt of Bach's preludes, fugues and lighter dances could hardly have escaped the ears of jazz players. Where propulsive bass runs and drum taps were hitherto heard in mind, they later materialized as the rhythmic backups to Jacques Loussier's piano improvisations. Also from the mid-years of the last century were those bopping chorals of the French 'Swingle Singers'. For their refined contrapuntal manner of scat singing, the old Cantor of Leipzig would surely have given an approving nod.

As a contrapuntist, Bach's mastery is not solely one of erudition; it is kindled with inventive flair and individuality. Polyphony in its maturity at the late Baroque animates his many chorales. It reaches full splendour in the Masses and Passions, the scriptural legends of St Matthew and St John. From heaven-bound chants to stretches of instrumental music, his counterpoints weave and pulsate in solo sonatas, suites, keyboard and chamber works. It is to these especially that we look as models for emulation. They endure as textbook exemplars on the art of counterpoint.

Preludes

From those hitherto musing and seemingly impromptu openers to suites, preludes of the late Baroque burgeoned as fully-fledged compositions in their own right. Fantasias effectively now, they allow for extended flights of imagination and ample opportunities to exercise instrumental dexterity. Open-ranging are those explorative in nature, as that from the second lute suite. A searching melody sets this under way, to be recalled from time to time between runs of sequences and spells of reflective passagework. Then there are spirited preludes impelled from start to finish by ceaseless figurations, as that from the fourth lute suite, Ex. 37.1:

Ex. 37.1. J. S. Bach: *Preludio*, BWV 1006a (c.1720)



Play

38. The Lute Music of Silvius Leopold. Weiss

Acclaimed in his time as a virtuoso lutenist, Silvius Leopold Weiss was the most prolific composer for the instrument, with a tally of solo works amounting to several hundreds. Journeying to various courts of Europe, his absorption of prevailing musical styles is reflected in his cosmopolitan embrace of French, Italian and Germanic traits. Born in 1686 near Breslau, now Wroclaw, Poland, Weiss held posts in the service of aristocrats and royalty. Accompanying the Polish Prince, Alexander Sobiesky to Rome around 1710, he returned to Germany and became attached to the palace of Dresden. During his appointment there Weiss travelled to other royal establishments, in Prague, 1717, Vienna 1718–19, London 1719 and Berlin in 1728. He remained in service in Dresden until 1750 when he took leave of the world.[16]

Pl. 38.1. Silvius Leopold Weiss (1686–1750). Detail from an engraving by Bartolomeo Folino after a painting by Balthasar Denner (1685–1749).

Lutenist and commentator, Ernst Gottlieb Baron sang Weiss's praises, as did the renowned theorist, Johann Mattheson. Rubbing shoulders with Bach too, a promising career was however nigh cut short by a carnivorous adversary. Story has it that in 1722 a visiting violinist named Petit, overcome by envy, attempted to bite off the last joint of the lutenist's right thumb.[17] This setback wasn't to deter Weiss, for he certainly kept other able fingers on the pulse of progressive trends. Fantasias, dance suites and singular movements by their reams, variations, duets and chamber music flowed from his pen.

Circulated in manuscripts, two European libraries house the principal contents of Weiss's legacy. One is in the British Library, Add. 30387 which covers works from 1717, the early to middle phases of the lutenist's corpus. Those from this manuscript are for an eleven-course lute. However, some from 1719 within this collection might well have been modified: appearing to be for thirteen courses, they could have been originally conceived for eleven.[18] The second collection is held in Dresden in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Mus. 2841.[19]

[16] 1708 is usually cited as the time of Weiss's trip to Rome. Smith questions this with new evidence pointing to 1710. Smith 1998, 5.

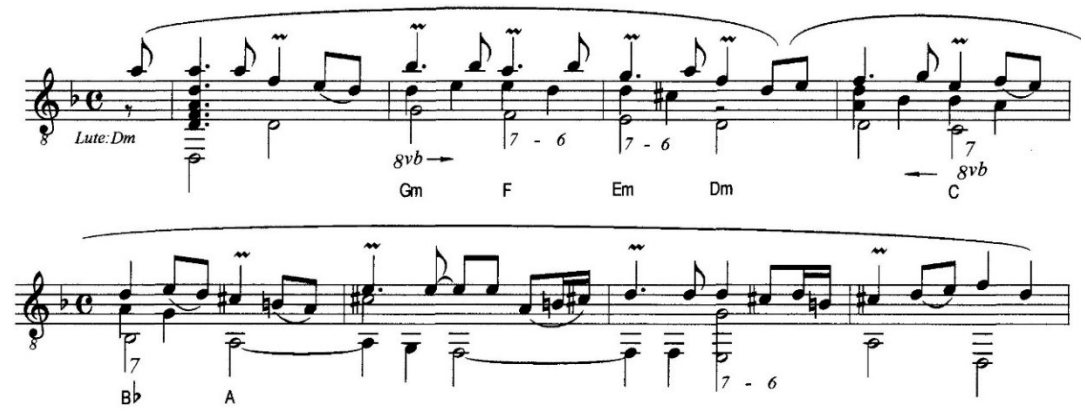
[17] Smith 1976, 71.

[18] Concerning the diapasons in Weiss's lute work and Weiss' pioneering the progression from eleven- to thirteen-courses there are two types of music by him. Firstly, such eleven-course music in which Weiss or others have marked down certain bass notes of original eleven-course music to incorporate a twelfth and thirteenth course; secondly, his later works which are fully-fledged thirteen-course music. Crawford 2002.

[19] According to Smith only relatively few pieces by Weiss can be dated with certainty. Hence it is necessary to rely mostly on the development of his compositional style based on the dated pieces to form a general chronology. Smith divides the Weiss opus into three periods: the early works composed before 1717, the middle period (1717–24) and the late period (1725–50). Smith 1980. See also Crawford 2006, 74. n. 21.

These compilations represent much of Weiss's later and finest works. While those in the British library are mostly from the early to middling years, and Dresden his subsequent productions, some sonatas among them are common to both sources.[20]

Ex. 38.6. S. L. Weiss: *Allemande*



Play

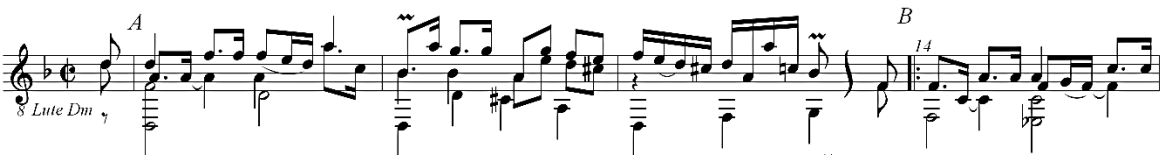
Laced with suspensions the descending triads within the opening phrases of Ex. 38.6, and a routine formula takes on a novel lustre. Moreover, these inserts invest upright chords with a linear dimension, particularly where their strands diverge in contrary motion. Such inflexions collectively contrive to lull the harmony downwards to its point of rest.[21]

Late works

Weiss's later works now reveal a lutenist composer at the height of his inventive powers. French and Italian traits are fashioned to his own ends with idiosyncratic touches. Movements bearing tempo and mood titles appear more often now. Overtures replace allemandes at times, and Prestos substitute gigues. To these are Adagios and Largos. Certain later movements also differ from earlier ones by their sheer lengths. Where former courantes, bourées, minuets would occupy a page or so, they might latterly extend to three. Present now are remarkably long flowing lines, indefinable dissonances and diapasons coming actively into their own as interceding bass passages.

With serene opening statements, reciprocating passages, lulls and dips both the following two allemandes and a sarabande convey an air of introspection, yet one dispensed with rhapsodic abandon.

Ex. 38.7. S. L. Weiss: *Alle[mande] adagio*.



Play

[20] The sonatas from the Dresden and British Library collections are catalogued and cross-compared by Crawford 2006. Each is itemized in terms of numbering, movements, keys and pagination.

[21] Descending progressions as these also harbour semi-formulated interceding secondary dominants, implied by component notes within the upper lines. Viz: bar 3: Em7 - (A) - Dm.

39. Later Chaconnes, Passacaglias and the Fugue

Not only did the musical tremors of the early 17th century unleash innovative ensemble works and vocal dramas, they also opened up wider prospects for instrumental soloists. In the experimental ambience of these days, performers alone made explorative strides. Taking centre stage, shaking compositional tricks from their sleeves to their fingertips, they sallied forth at the keyboard and skimmed the strings of a violin. Recasting familiar themes in new lights, they also allowed their imaginations free rein, playing by ear. For these players were also composers, and created on the spur as they performed.

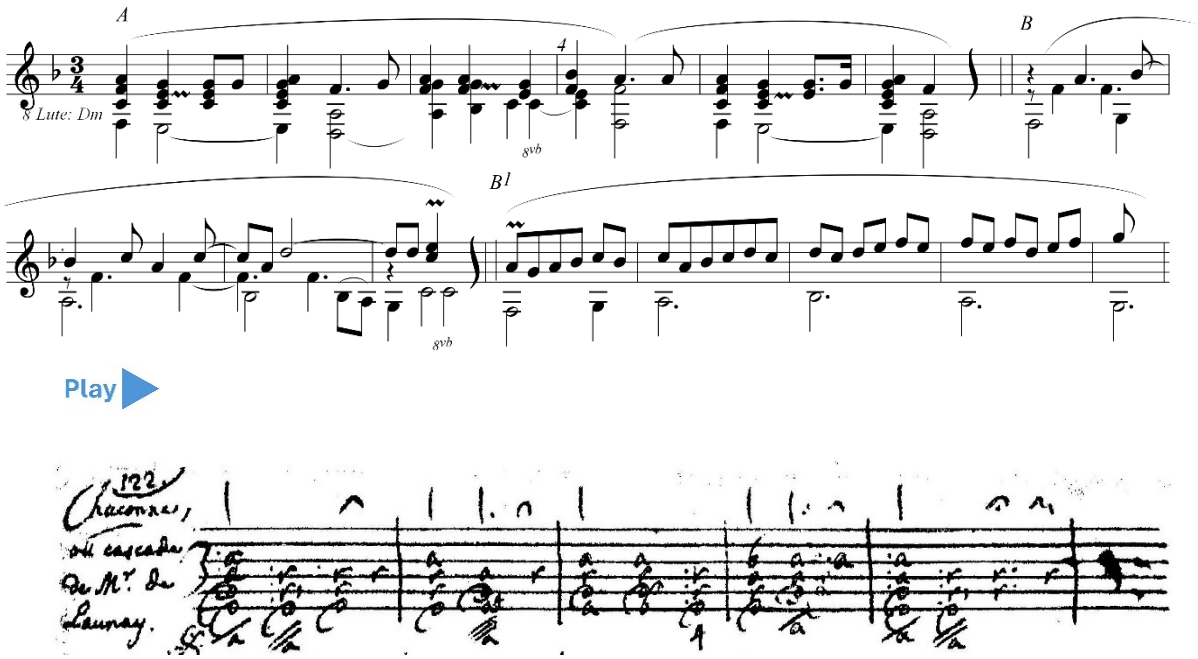
We know from eye-witness accounts that such feats of instantaneous music-making took place. Records tell of spectators converging in flocks to hear Monteverdi's spontaneous variations cascading from the organ of St Peter's in Rome. And Bach's ability to extemporize at length at the organ is legendary. To spellbound listeners, he would reel off a fugue on tap. In quieter, retiring circumstances, Sweelinck entertained his friends until midnight with improvisations at the keyboard on popular themes. A listener present at an impromptu harpsichord recital of Elizabeth Jacquet de La Guerre recalled 'the excitement she was able to bring to her extemporized performances. '… She had a marvellous talent for on-the-spot playing of preludes and fantasias. During an entire half hour, she would follow a prelude and fantasy with melodies and harmonies that were extremely varied and in excellent taste.' [22] In less auspicious circumstances, at weekly calls to prayer, church organists routinely whiled away time, spinning out a hymn or two as the congregation ambled along aisles to seats. Above all, the Baroque opened the way for soloists to step into the limelight at performances of orchestral music. While the assembled forces paused in proceedings, a virtuoso seized the moment to dash off a quite unwritten cadenza.

As the Baroque got into stride, solo undertakings attained awesome dimensions. Yet for all their magnitude, within many a single theme pulsated. Hatched from one idea, this catalyst animated the composition and onwardly energized it. Such were monothematic fantasias and ostinato variations, accruing embellishments as they went. Though others these days breached their boundaries after a few whirls for wider crossings. Diverging en route, freewheeling, meandering, there was time later to pick up the scent of the first-heard statement. The more effective are reflective spells between times be the theme lively in the first place. Otherwise surging forth from a thrusting announcement without respite, how long before the listeners' sensibilities numb, pummelled into a stupor by the onslaught of notes? Or just as draining to the ear would be a keyboardist idling there, sifting ideas until a fresh one dawns. Lost in rumination, minutes pass. Their patience stretched, drowsiness eventually overcomes the audience. Is this the response our performer desires, having just bared heart and soul? But then, from out of the blue an incisive chord is struck. The audience sit up, alerted to an abrupt change in the air. Erasing introspection at a stroke, a bolt of inspiration has seized the player. Possessed by renewed vigour, away the fingers drum.

[22] From Èvrard Titon du Tillet's *Le Parnasse françois,* 363–37, quoted by Anthony 1973, 252.

Akin to sarabandes, instrumental chaconnes are triple-timed and frequently have their middle notes of the bar trilled. Along with sarabandes too their melodies arch four to eight bars. Inclined to swoop and dip gracefully, they are nevertheless enlivened from time to time with guitar-like swishes of rasgueado.

Ex. 39.1. E. Gaultier: *Chaconne, ou Cascade Mr Launay*



Pl. 39.1. *Chaconne, ou Cascade de Mr Launay* by Ennemond Gaultier. From *Manuscrit. Vaudry de Saizenay* (1699).

Embedded in the lower register of the lute Ex. 39.1 begins rather sombrely, wending *sans chanterelle*. Adding further gravity yet paradoxically imparting an edge to this stretch are the grating counterpoints within. Another round and the variations then perk up, gathering pace. Accents at centre bar tend to segment the melody, but from time to time give rise to 'elisions' – where the ensuing phrase takes as its point of departure the end of the preceding one. An elision occurs at 4 here wherein the downbeat discord is resolved by F major prompting the second phrase. Seamless spans as these contribute to a chaconne's tireless momentum or four- and occasionally five-bar rotations.

40. The Baroque Lute: A Retrospective and its Swansong

Across the musical expanse of the Baroque, the lute's advances were monitored by its stylistic breakthroughs, national divergences and international blendings. To accommodate these repertoires newly-designed lutes came into being. So often are they the centre-pieces of paintings. What also catches the eye is the sheer variety specimens now on display. Among those previewed were corpulent models with ten courses, Pl. 25.4. Theorbos, emblems of the new age, were seen with up to fourteen courses, Pl. 26.1. Those with both an angled and upright pegbox for twelve courses were soon to appear. Be they stubby, lanky, whatever, they well catered for the wholesome harmonies and enwidened melodic reaches of vocal and instrumental music of this time.

What also marks out the lute of the Baroque is the stylistic spoke-wheeling of its repertoires. National traits were fashioned within borders and they nourished others beyond. Casting a farewell glance over these workings, extraordinary pieces are recalled. Alongside are those that warrant reviewing as archetypes of their genre. Nor was this age without its anomalies, breakaways prefiguring those to come.

As the first milestone in this retrospective, chitarronists took an opening bow alongside the prime-movers of monody and recitative. To enhance vocal deliveries the resonant sonority of a chitarrone otherwise theorbo was favoured. This provided Caccini with a sonorous backing for his recitatives from 1602, Ex. 26.2. Another proponent of the instrument, Jacopo Peri, featured it in the first operas around this time and moreover preferred it for accompaniments in his visionary treatise, *La varie musiche*, Pl. 26.4.

With songs to continuo well under way by 1616, Corradi for good measure supplemented his continuo bass line with an intabulated accompaniment, Pl. 26.6. Mustering the chitarrone's deep-set diapasons for solo settings, the instrument's re-entrant tuning was artfully deployed by Kapsberger for his *Arpeggiata*, Ex. 26.10. Released just into the 17th century, its crossed-string shimmers merit a place at the forefront of experimental Baroque music. Exploiting the chitaronne's re-entrant tuning in other solo capacities the instrument was put through its paces with the most individual means of musical creativity, the toccata. Kapsberger again was noted in this regard for his fingerboard skimming, Ex. 26.11. Castaldi likewise capitalized on the theorbo's properties with his *Arpesca* galliard, Ex. 26.13. Returning to the lute with standard tuning is Picinnini's breezy passacaglia, Ex. 27.4. Indicative of expanding variations now, this orbits no less than twenty-seven rounds. Turning to the mood swings of toccatas within the hold of the lute now is that from Kapsberger in 1611, Ex. 27.6. While Galilei fashioned dances on traditional lines, his chromatically infused toccatas bear bold strokes in tune with the 1620s, Ex. 27.7. Ahead to the mid-century Gianoncelli's courante marks a further and final stage of the Italian lute in keeping with the tendency now to polarize the discant and bass, Ex. 27.8. More so in this case is the melody thrust into sharper relief by its bass dipping to the 14th diapason.