

AUTHORITY, AUTONOMY, AND INTERPRETATION IN SEVENTEENTH- CENTURY ITALIAN LUTE MUSIC

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Italian players, whether accompanying or playing [solo] pieces, have no merit other than being able to produce a lot of sound from their instruments. Regardless of the player, they produce a sound with such an unpleasant harshness, that it offends the ears rather than flatters them. One would think that they might break the instrument at each stroke of the hand.

Jacques Bourdelot¹

in France, where there is no self-esteem, no one plays cleanly or delicately.

Alessandro Piccinini²

Bourdelot's criticism of noisy Italian lutenists and Piccinini's swipe at the disrespectful French underlie the distinct national (and nationalistic!) styles of performance that had emerged in lute music at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The French *luthistes* of this period are unified in their compositional style, consistent in their choice of instrument (eleven-course lute), and, as a result, more cohesive in their approach to performance than the Italians. Moreover, their music was stylistically and historically connected to its own time. It is rare that a French manuscript of this period would contain music from the middle of the sixteenth century, for example. Through their replacement of the old tuning with new ones, the French had reinvented their tradition and established a new history for the instrument.

Lute music in seventeenth-century Italy, on the other hand, reveals a plurality of styles, instruments, and performance traditions. Contemporary music written in a modern idiom by composers like Kapsberger and Piccinini co-existed with a 'classical' repertory of the sixteenth century that was still cultivated by amateurs and

¹ *Histoire de la musique* (The Hague, 1743), cited in Edmond Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas avant le XIX^e siècle*, 8 vols. (Brussels, 1867–88; rpt New York, 1969), ii, p. 376. The *Histoire* was first published in 1715, but largely written in the final decades of the seventeenth century; see Philippe Vendrix, *Aux origines d'une discipline historique: La musique et son histoire en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Liège, 1993), pp. 52–3.

² 'in Francia, dove non si stima alcuno, il quale non suoni netto, e delicato', *Intavolatura di liuto, et di chitarrone* (Bologna, 1623), Ch. II, p. 1.

students. Not one but at least four sizes of lute were used by Italian lutenists during this time: seven- and eight-course short-neck lutes for the earlier repertory, along with fourteen-course archlutes and theorboes for the most contemporary styles, not to mention 'giraffes' like the nineteen-course theorbo of *Kapsberger 1640*.³ It is safe to say that neither the newly invented techniques described in the prints of Kapsberger and Piccinini nor the music contained therein should be considered as the performance standard by which seventeenth-century Italian lute music should be judged. Rather, it would be more accurate to think of three very distinct performance traditions that were cultivated by seventeenth-century Italian lutenists. These are:

- (1) a *modern professional* tradition, largely for theorbo or archlute, written in a contemporary style incorporating effects and techniques such as slurs, arpeggios, tremolos, and a variety of trills; its main exponents were Kapsberger, Giuseppe Baglioni, Andrea Falconieri, and the *fratelli* Piccinini, which constituted the Roman school, as well as the anonymous composers of *Modena B* and *Paris 30*;
- (2) a *courtly professional* tradition, written in a more conservative idiom by court lutenists such as Santino Garsi da Parma and Lorenzo Allegri, and intended for courtly events, such as banquets, wedding festivities, or *balletti*; usually this music comes down to us for archlute (*Kraków 40153*, *Nuremberg 2*, and *Nuremberg 3*), and occasionally for lute ensemble;
- (3) a *domestic* tradition made up of amateur and student players who, for the most part, played smaller instruments. Their books often contain works by 'classical' composers like Francesco da Milano, conservative contemporaries such as Santino Garsi da Parma, settings of famous dances like the *Barriera*, the *Spagnoletta*, and the *Pavana d'España*, and arrangements of popular *arie* and *canzonettas*.

This musical and stylistic patchwork makes the *seicento* a particularly appropriate historical model for examining issues of lute performance practice that are relevant to our own time. Like us, Italian lutenists of this period understood the concept of 'early music' and the need to confront it on its own terms. At the same time, they also recognized the existence (and the trappings) of 'authenticity' – a concept that was already discussed by Vincenzo Galilei in his *Fronimo* of 1568/1584⁴ – forcing lutenists to adjust their techniques and instruments in order to meet the demands of new and old music, short of inventing different modes of playing altogether. Like us,

³ For a summary of lutes in seventeenth-century Italy and their distribution among the manuscripts, see Victor Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources of Seventeenth-Century Italian Lute Music* (New York, 1995), pp. 27–38. For an explanation of all sigla used in this chapter see pp. 140–1.

⁴ For an English translation, see Vincenzo Galilei, *Il Fronimo* (1584), trans. by Carol MacClintock (Stuttgart, 1985). The most detailed study of the *Fronimo* is in Philippe Canguilhem, 'Les deux éditions de *Fronimo* (1568 et 1584) et la place du luth dans la pensée musicale de Vincenzo Galilei', doctoral thesis, 2 vols., Université François Rabelais, Tours, 1994.

seventeenth-century Italian lutenists were caught in a historical 'swirl' of tradition and modernity, to which players adapted through their autonomous strategies of invention, revision, and, most of all, interpretation.

For a period in such stylistic and historical flux as the *seicento*, then, we must resist making aprioristic assumptions about the existence of a 'normative' performance practice, and recognize instead a diversity of approaches. To this end, documents such as treatises and prefaces to printed books are too few in number, too limited by their coverage of technique rather than performance, too poorly written, and too restricted in overall circulation to be of much use. A more promising approach to understanding the diversity of lute performance during the *seicento* is through a consideration of the concepts of *authority* and *autonomy*, which, in my opinion, define the fundamental parameters of historical practice and modern interpretation within which all performance is created. *Authority* refers primarily to the performer's use of an established text – an *Urtext* as far as is possible – and secondarily to the choice of an appropriate instrument (as revealed by the music or by contemporary visual sources), and deference to an established tradition in matters regarding style. The printed source, particularly if published during the composer's lifetime, is the usual index of *authority* in performance, and we have generally accepted its role in revealing what the composer ostensibly intended us to see (though it is not clear whether the composer performed it that way). Not surprisingly, the Italian repertory played by modern lutenists on recordings and in concert has come from prints and, with few exceptions, their performances have digressed little from these scores; by and large, they have approached printed sources as if they were prescriptive and authoritative.

Autonomy, on the other hand, deals with the options that are (and were) available in varying the authoritative score. It is what the player can do with the music within acceptable stylistic and historical boundaries.⁵ *Autonomy* is the province of manuscript sources, which, when they contain concordances to prints, show how different players imposed their personality, interpretive preferences, and technical abilities upon the music. They display the artistic licence of a performer, his autonomy in modifying and personalizing the authority of the text. The extent of variation between the authoritative text of a piece and an autonomous reading of it depends on many factors: region (Milan or Naples, for example), skill of performer, purpose (private academy or banquet), context of the manuscript (professional, pedagogical, or retrospective anthology),⁶ distance in time from the original, and experience or musical acculturation of the audience to the repertory (fashionable courtiers, erudite

⁵ Those familiar with the incisive work on performance by Richard Taruskin should equate his use of the term 'authority' (that is, interpretation) with my definition of 'autonomy'. See his chapter 'Tradition and Authority' in *Text & Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York and Oxford, 1995), pp. 173–97.

⁶ On these distinctions, see Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 19–26.

academicians, or foreign visitors, for example).⁷ Sometimes a lutenist will alter a text for technical reasons, in order to facilitate passages or even to render them more complex; or they can be based on an aesthetic preference. Other revisions can be to the musical vocabulary itself, such as chromatic alterations or the rewriting of cadences, which are often necessary when modernizing a piece that is several decades old. Occasionally manuscripts call for a larger or smaller instrument than that prescribed by the print, which almost invariably results in a thickening or a thinning of chordal textures and the addition or deletion of bass notes.

Manuscripts, then, are the product of players, their local traditions, and of their autonomy as musicians. They show what changes can occur to an 'authoritative' musical text when it is exported to the various sectors – near and far, professional and amateur – of actual performance, sub-regionalized through the dialects of written and oral transmission, varied according to personal taste, and eventually, if a composer is lucky, revived by a younger generation. In the case of the latter, manuscripts reveal how lutenists re-contextualized and modernized the past through elaboration and revision. Along these lines it is important to reflect upon how performance traditions of all musical cultures are inextricably linked to context. A print, for example, is context-neutral: it is created not for a single person or specific performance, but for a market. A lute *manuscript*, on the other hand, is the written evidence of music as it is disseminated into the hands of individual players, and is usually context-specific. Pieces in manuscripts thus qualify as the closest thing we have to 'recordings' by lutenists of past eras, since they 'capture' a specific performance in time.

Let us consider an example drawn from one of the most important Italian lute manuscripts of the sixteenth century, *Siena*, in order to understand the way in which authority and autonomy operate within performance.⁸ In addition to being the largest anthology of Italian lute fantasias of the Renaissance, *Siena* is also one of the central manuscript sources for the music of Francesco da Milano (1497–1543). The manuscript was copied between *ca.* 1580 and the late 1590s by a virtuoso, professional lutenist who must have had an immense knowledge of the repertory. The manuscript thus shows how Francesco's music was transmitted, interpreted, and revived a half-century after his death by a skilled player.⁹ Not surprisingly, *Siena*

⁷ As Kate Brown states in her article 'Representations', in *Performing Practice in Monteverdi's Music*, ed. Raffaello Monterosso (Cremona, 1995), p. 267: 'listening to various solutions as illustrated by recordings of Monteverdi from the last thirty years, it becomes obvious that there is no right solution: from Leppard to Rooley (regardless of personal preferences), it is clear that they are using the same source material to produce music that sounds radically different – and the major cause of the differences is not so much the state of academic knowledge but the estimated capability of the audience to understand it, not to mention changing tastes'.

⁸ The Hague, Gemeentemuseum Ms. 28 B 39. A facsimile has been published as *Tablature de luth Italienne dit Siena Manuscrit (ca. 1560–1570)*, ed. Arthur J. Ness (Geneva, 1988).

⁹ On Francesco's revival in the late sixteenth century and the making of his posthumous reputation, see Victor Coelho, 'The Reputation of Francesco da Milano (1497–1543) and the Ricercars in the Cavalcanti Lute Book', *Revue Belge de Musicologie* 50 (1996), pp. 49–72.

offers different readings of Francesco's music when compared to earlier printed versions of the same pieces. *Ricercar 5* (fol. 23r–v) is one such example.¹⁰ One of Francesco's most popular ricercars, given its appearance in several Italian, German, Lowlands, and English sources through the early seventeenth century,¹¹ the work was printed in each of the three surviving prints devoted to Francesco's music that appeared during the composer's lifetime, Sultzbach's *Intavolatura di viola o vero lauto* . . . *Libro Primo* and *Libro secondo* published in Naples in 1536,¹² and the *Intabolatura de liuto* . . . brought out by Marcolini of Venice in the same year. These three versions are identical with each other, and all subsequent concordances, with the important exception of *Siena*, are based on this 'authoritative' text. The *Siena* reading of fifty years later, on the other hand, adds numerous embellishments, motivic extensions and repetitions, and a rewriting of cadences. These changes fall into the categories I have described above as examples of manuscript 'autonomy', and they can be summarized as follows (see Examples 5.1a to 5.1j):

- 5.1a: *Siena* adds a 4–3 suspension (over an implied C) to the cadence in bar 14 and displaces the piece rhythmically by augmenting the rhythmic values. In bar 17, *Siena* provides more closure by ornamenting the cadence on F with a turn, like a *cadenza finale*, as compared to the more conventional internal formula used in *Sultzbach*.
- 5.1b: In bar 23, *Siena* changes the appoggiatura E♭ that appears in *Sultzbach* (bar 22, alto voice) to the chord-tone B♭, and 'de-ornaments' the cadence on C in bars 24–5.
- 5.1c: *Siena* eliminates the diminution in bar 30 (*Sultzbach*).
- 5.1d: *Siena* diminishes the rhythm in bar 39.
- 5.1e: In bars 47 and 52, *Siena* suspends the dissonance rather than restriking it, which is common in *Sultzbach*.¹³
- 5.1f: In bar 54, *Siena*'s raising of the E♭s in *Sultzbach* to E♮ pushes the phrase more tonally towards the final F through its 'modern' dominant C, whereas the E♭s in *Sultzbach* mirror bar 22 (see 5.1b, above) in its movement towards the more

¹⁰ I use the standard numbering as established in Arthur J. Ness, ed., *The Lute Music of Francesco Canova da Milano (1497–1543)*, vols. I and II, Harvard Publications in Music 3–4 (Cambridge, MA, 1970).

¹¹ See *ibid.*, p. 18 for a list of concordances.

¹² A facsimile of this print has been published as Francesco da Milano, *Intavolatura de viola o vero lauto I–II* (Geneva, 1988); the *Libro secondo* is in Neapolitan tablature.

¹³ *Sultzbach* is a Neapolitan print, so perhaps Piccinini's suggestion of 'restriking the dissonance as they do in Naples' (*Piccinini 1623*, Ch. III) is based on a tradition whose roots extend back to the early sixteenth century.

¹⁴ In other places, too, *Siena* raises the lowered second of a scale to *mi*, even in descending passages, e.g. bars 64 (*fa–mi*), 71, and 111. From bar 86, however, the opposite is the case, in which *Siena* consistently uses *fa* where *mi* is given in *Sultzbach*, e.g. bars 86, 95, and 99.

Ex. 5.1a–j Francesco da Milano, *Ricercar 5* (Ness edition): versions from *Siena*, fol. 23r–v (top system) and *Sultzbach*, fols. 8v–11r (lower system).

Siena

14

Musical score for the Siena version of *Ricercar 5*, measures 14–17. The score is written for two systems of staves (treble and bass clef). The top system (Siena) shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The bottom system (Sultzbach) shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The music is in a minor key and features complex rhythmic patterns.

5.1a

22

Musical score for the Siena version of *Ricercar 5*, measures 22–25. The score is written for two systems of staves (treble and bass clef). The top system (Siena) shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The bottom system (Sultzbach) shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The music is in a minor key and features complex rhythmic patterns.

5.1b

30

Musical score for the Siena version of *Ricercar 5*, measures 30–33. The score is written for two systems of staves (treble and bass clef). The top system (Siena) shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The bottom system (Sultzbach) shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The music is in a minor key and features complex rhythmic patterns.

5.1c

39

5.1d

47 52

5.1e

54

5.1f

59

57

73

68

5.1g

77

72

5.1h

Musical score for piano, measures 74-82. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 3/2 time. It consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 74 to 81, and the second system covers measures 82 to 82. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Measure numbers 82 and 74 are boxed in the top right of their respective systems.

Musical score for guitar, measures 104-112. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 3/2 time. It consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 104 to 111, and the second system covers measures 112 to 112. The right hand part is a guitar-specific notation showing fret numbers (0, 1, 3, 1, 0, 2, 0, 4) and a 3/2 time signature. The left hand part shows a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. Measure numbers M. 112 and M. 104 are labeled at the beginning of their respective systems.

5.1i

Musical score for piano, measures 106-114. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 3/2 time. It consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 106 to 113, and the second system covers measures 114 to 114. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Measure numbers 114 and 106 are boxed in the top right of their respective systems.

5.1j

‘archaic’ (seen from the eyes of *Siena*) plagal relationship with $B\flat$.¹⁴ Confirming this tonal orientation, *Siena* extends the phrase through a parenthesis consisting of two new repetitions (adding five bars to the work), bars 57–61, resulting in a postponement of the $B\flat$ cadence in bar 62.

- 5.1g: Consistent with previous passages in which *Siena* reduces the *Sultzbach* ornamentation, the ornamental turns cadencing on C and on F in bars 73–6 are eliminated, probably as a way to extend the continuity of this canonic passage without the cadential punctuation that is so typically evoked by this type of turn.
- 5.1h: bars 77–82. *Siena* animates the canonic section by fragmenting the voices in quick hoquet-like alternation. This is achieved by simply repeating bars 77–9 as 80–2. *Siena* syncopates bar 77 and eliminates the augmented sixth (!), which does not appear in the Marcolini print.
- 5.1i: bar 112. *Siena* simplifies the fingering of the suspension at the expense of the voice leading.
- 5.1j: bars 114–21. *Siena* alters the tenor voice in bar 115, then truncates the drive to the cadence by eliminating the repetition of bars 106–8/109–11, as read in *Sultzbach*. The motivation for this change is probably to weaken the sense of final closure since *Siena* also rewrites the final cadence to end on the dominant, as if the *ricercar* is simply a *prima pars* to another work, similar to the two-part madrigals common during the 1580s and beyond.

The *Siena* revisions are clearly the work of the skilled lutenist/scribe of the manuscript, and they represent not only his autonomous reading of the piece but a contemporization of it, according to the stylistic conventions of his own time. Certain portions of the work are revisions, but other sections introduce totally new passages to the existing score. Consequently, it is no longer simply ‘Francesco’s

work'. Nevertheless, it is this version, made some fifty years after the 1536 prints, that was included in Arthur Ness's complete edition of Francesco's music (a parallel might be if Mozart's version of *Messiah* had been used for the Handel complete edition), and it is also the version chosen by Paul O'Dette in his 1986 recording of Francesco.¹⁵ In other words, both the *Urtext* edition and a recording made by one of the foremost lutenists of our time promote a version of this piece that is not only many layers removed from the original text printed in Francesco's time, but one that is significantly the work of an anonymous lutenist from the hills of Tuscany¹⁶ for whom Francesco was already, in the 1580s, a 'classical' composer.

Now, if original sources, which ostensibly preserve the composer's intentions, are the precondition for any serious performance or scholarship, as we are all taught, why is the *Sienna* version of Francesco's *ricercar* not a problem from a performance practice standpoint (though it certainly is from a text-critical one¹⁷)? What validates this version as appropriate, and what can it tell us about the autonomous reading of a 'fixed' musical text? Finally, what implications does this comparative study impress upon the issue of performance practice in the seventeenth century? The many changes revealed by *Sienna* underlie the importance of the performer's autonomy in effecting changes to a musical text within general stylistic confines. They show how a piece is open to interpolation and interpretation through extension, repetition, suppression, elaboration, and alteration. These techniques have been generally regarded as elements of compositional style – that is, the *composer's* 'authority' – but they are actually inseparable from the *performer's* natural 'autonomy'.

Unfortunately, all but a few modern lutenists who play this repertory have virtually ignored the manuscript sources of this music and remained religiously close to the texts found in printed sources. There is still apprehension about the 'authenticity' of manuscripts vis-à-vis printed sources. Is the *Sienna* version 'authentic', and would Francesco have 'approved' of it? For the former, we can answer that it is 'authentic' in so far as it is transmitted by an original source and represents the flexibility in performance employed by Renaissance lutenists in adapting pre-existing works for their own use. As for whether Francesco would have 'approved' of it, what we do know is that the intabulations of vocal works by Francesco and his contemporaries clearly demonstrate the significant degree of latitude taken by performers in transforming the original text of a model and subjecting them to much the same treatment of personalization and modernization as we have seen above with *Ricercar 5*.

¹⁵ *Intabolutura da Leuto*, Astrée CD E7705. Chiesa's edition (transcribed a minor third lower for guitar) reproduces the 1536 Marcolini version. See Francesco da Milano, *Opere complete per liuto*, ed. Ruggero Chiesa (Milan, 1971), vol. I, pp. 9–12; for a detailed list of all the variants of this *ricercar* that exist between the sources, see pp. lv–lxiii.

¹⁶ For possible identifications of the *Sienna* copyist, see Dinko Fabris's review of the Minkoff facsimile of the manuscript (cf. n.8, above) in *JLSA* 20–21 (1987–8), pp. 165–70.

¹⁷ It should be pointed out that the Sultzbach prints were discovered only after Ness's edition was in production, though the nearly identical Marcolini version was certainly available.

Since the idea of 'seventeenth-century performance practice' is, of course, a concept of musical style and procedure rather than a mere chronological distinction, I have gone to some length in order to forge a link between trends in Italian lute practice of the late sixteenth century and the deepening of these tendencies in the years after 1600. To summarize the themes we have touched upon so far:

- (1) *Performance practice issues are most safely approached from a fixed musical text* and the relationship between that *point de départ* and the performer's art – not initially from theoretical descriptions or 'rules' contained in prefaces.
- (2) *Manuscript sources are more revealing about performance than prints* since they are performance- and context-specific, and hence 'freeze' aspects of performance in time, as a study of variant readings can show.
- (3) *Composition and performance are allied activities*, in that performance practice relies on an acceptable amount of compositional imposition, like troping, on a fixed text by a performer.
- (4) *Performance, like speech, is closely linked to generational or historical relevance*, in which performance practice can be seen as an evolving mode of communication that reflects the stylistic characteristics, regional conventions, and musical aesthetics of a certain period and its audience.

In the remainder of this chapter, I shall approach seventeenth-century performance practice within the context of these issues. My goal is not to provide a set of rules, but to illuminate what I believe were the conceptual procedures of performance as understood by lutenists of various strata and backgrounds during the seventeenth century, and integrate these ideas into a concept of modern interpretation. Using manuscripts as the main sources, I will attempt to 'thaw' those performances 'frozen' in lute and theorbo tablatures, and show how they can inform our knowledge of the area between textual authority and performance autonomy.

INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR PLAYERS

We can now return to some of the rudimentary issues of performance practice of the *seicento*, and examine them first in the light of our discussion above. Some seventy sources of Italian lute music are known to us from between 1600 and 1691. Fifty of these are manuscripts, of which twenty-three are for lute (seven to ten courses), fourteen are for archlute (eleven to fourteen courses), and thirteen are intended for theorbo (eleven to eighteen courses).¹⁸ All of the lute manuscripts employ 'Renaissance tuning' with occasional variants for the bass courses, and the odd experiment with the new French tunings; the theorbo manuscripts use the standard

¹⁸ See Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 34–5 for a complete breakdown of instruments represented in the manuscript sources. On the distinctions between lute, archlute and theorbo as well as a list of tunings, see *ibid.*, pp. 33–8, or the relevant articles in *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London, 1984).

Italian re-entrant tuning in which the highest two courses are tuned one octave lower. Treatises and surviving instruments confirm that a fourteen-course theorbo was standard, though the earliest theorbo sources all call for an instrument of eleven or twelve courses only (*Kapsberger 1604*, *Berkeley 757* [fascicle 2], *Kraków 40591*, *Frankfurt*), and by 1619, *Modena B* calls for an eighteenth course (see Plate 6), which is similar to the nineteen-course theorbo required for *Kapsberger 1640*.

Manuscript sources containing vocal pieces with lute accompaniments reveal that the normal pitch of the lute was g^1 (i.e. highest string tuned to g^1) and the theorbo was tuned a step higher, which is also confirmed by Praetorius and Kircher. A few sources call for a lute in a^1 , which suggests an instrument of dimensions such as the seven-course Vendelio Venere in the Accademia Filarmonica in Bologna, whose vibrating string length is 58.4 cm. Certain ensemble pieces in the manuscripts *Nuremberg 2* and *Nuremberg 3* call for bass lutes in D to play thick, intabulated accompaniments.¹⁹ The tiorbino, a small fourteen-course theorbo tuned an octave higher, is specified only in *Castaldi*, but it could have been used in some of the thirteen theorbo manuscripts as well as a 'character' instrument in certain types of performances.²⁰ There is no reason why it should not be used more today in the same contexts. Its high-pitched tuning (open third course to b^1) is ill suited for accompanying high voices, to be sure, but the instrument's bright sound compensates for its narrow playing range, which is one of the limitations of the theorbo as a solo instrument.²¹ The lute shown in *A Concert*, painted by the Roman Antiveduto Grammatica, is probably a tiorbino: it may have been much more popular than is generally assumed, particularly in Rome where the theorbo tradition was strong, given this associate of Caravaggio's well-known penchant for depicting people and objects from everyday surroundings.²²

Not a single Italian source calls for an instrument in *nouveaux accords*, which were becoming standard in France, though at least two progressively minded Italian lutenists flirted with their possibilities. A manuscript lute treatise by Pier Francesco Valentini explains the most common of the new French tunings (in D minor) and gives examples of realizing bass lines, ornamenting final cadences, and intabulation using this tuning;²³ and *Florence 45*, written by the Florentine Court lute teacher

¹⁹ See Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 110–15.

²⁰ Mason, after Wessely-Kropik, cites an archival source from 1661 that mentions the use of the tiorbino during an oratorio 'to play to the angel above the altar'. See Kevin Mason, *The Chitarone and its Repertoire in Seventeenth-Century Italy* (Aberystwyth, 1989), p. 9, n. 15.

²¹ Although the theorbo has an acceptably wide range, from an open fourteenth course at F to an open third course at a, its normal playing compass is somewhat constricted to within the high tenor range.

²² The work has been reproduced widely; see, for example, Keith Christiansen, *A Caravaggio Rediscovered: The Lute Player* (New York, 1990), p. 27.

²³ *Rome 4433*, fols. 28r–29v: 'Di una certa accordatura di Leuto alla Francese.' A facsimile of the manuscript is in *Pier Francesco Valentini: Il Leuto Anatomizzato / Ordine . . .* (Florence, 1989) with an extensive introduction by Orlando Cristoforetti. The treatise is summarized in Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 150–4.

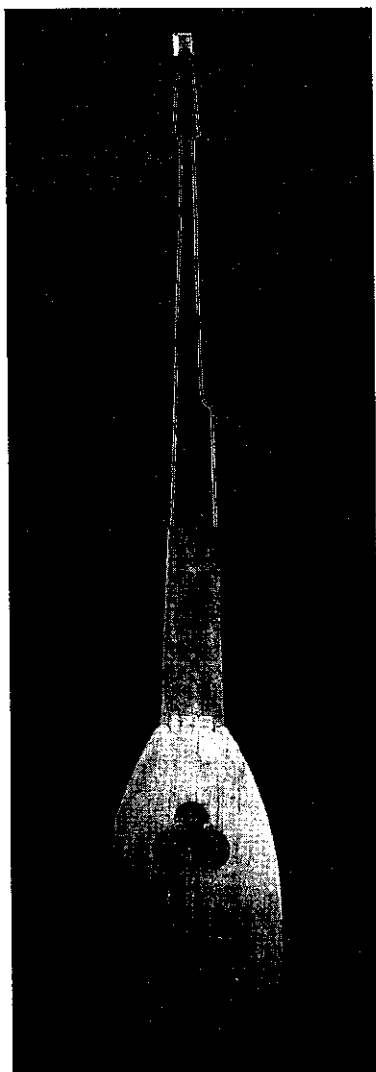


Plate 6 Eighteen-course theorbo by Matteo Sellas (Venice, *ca.* 1630). Paris, Musée de la Musique, Cité de la Musique. Inv. E 547 (photograph by Joël Dugot)

Giacinto Marmi, contains a chart showing this tuning (fols. 11v–12v), followed by a few fragments as examples.²⁴

The continued presence of seven- and eight-course lutes in almost half of the manuscripts may be surprising, given that the majority of surviving instruments from this period are lutes with extended necks. Furthermore, only one of the nineteen

²⁴ Pierre Gaultier's lutebook of works in various new tunings for ten-course lute was published in Rome in 1638, but it cannot be considered as an Italian source musically.

printed sources is not for either archlute or theorbo.²⁵ Nevertheless, short-necked lutes did indeed remain popular in Italy well after 1600, and they define a particular area of performance practice that is best understood by considering the relationships among instrument, repertory, context, and player. As in vocal music of the same period, there emerged in seventeenth-century lute music a historical and stylistic distinction between old and new, or *prima* and *seconda* practices. A clear stratification developed within lutenists by class (professional or amateur) and the instruments they played. In the previous century a professional musician like Francesco and an amateur novice learning the lute played the same instrument; the stylistic stability of sixteenth-century lute music and the well-defined needs of players required little more than a six-course lute, occasionally in different sizes.²⁶ All of Vincenzo Galilei's music, except at the very end of his enormous manuscript of 1584, calls for a six-course instrument, which was for him, an avowed purist, the 'classic' lute. Molinaro's lute book of 1599 is written for an eight-course instrument, but most of the pieces can be played on seven courses.²⁷

With the stylistic changes that took place after 1600, however, professional lutenists were required to learn new roles, such as playing continuo and participating in larger bands containing diverse rather than like instruments, and newer styles of music, all of which necessitated the use of different instruments. A single player like Kapsberger, for example, wrote for four instruments: lute (1611), eleven-course theorbo (1604), nineteen-course theorbo (1640), and guitar (lost). All evidence shows that by the 1620s, the theorbo had surpassed the lute as the instrument favoured by professionals, and with the meteoric rise in popularity of the guitar, guitarists also played theorbo and vice versa. (By removing the first course of the theorbo, courses 2–6 will be identical to guitar tuning, e, b, g, d, A; a guitarist can thus play continuo on either instrument without changing left-hand fingering.) Seven of the nine prints published from 1620 to 1669 are either exclusively or partially for theorbo, and the bulk of theorbo manuscripts are concentrated within this period as well. In 1628, Giustiniani reported that 'in the past the lute was also much in use, but this instrument is almost completely abandoned since the theorbo has been introduced'.²⁸ Bouchard wrote to Mersenne six years later from Rome that because of the theorbo 'the lute and the viol are almost out of use in Rome'.²⁹

²⁵ The *Balletti Moderni facili per sonar sopra il liuto* (Venice, 1611; rpt Geneva, 1980), calling for a seven-course lute.

²⁶ An excellent survey of lutes and lute construction at the end of the sixteenth century is in Robert Lundberg, 'In Tune with the Universe: The Physics and Metaphysics of Galileo's Lute', in *Music and Science in the Age of Galileo*, ed. Victor Coelho (Dordrecht and Boston, 1992), pp. 211–39.

²⁷ *Intavolatura di liuto di Simone Molinaro Genovese* (Venice, 1599; facsimile rpt Florence, 1978).

²⁸ Vincenzo Giustiniani, *Discorso sopra la musica* (1628), trans. Carol MacClintock (American Institute of Musicology, 1962), p. 79.

²⁹ For the entire passage, see Victor Coelho, 'G. G. Kapsberger in Rome, 1604–1645: New Biographical Data', *JLSA* 16 (1983), p. 129.

Nevertheless, manuscripts show that all players, even aspiring theorbists, began their studies on the lute. The thirteen existing theorbo manuscripts are either professional books, such as *Modena B*, or else student books that already assume an intermediate level of competence on the instrument, like *Rome 4145* and *Bologna*, which contain works by Kapsberger and Piccinini, respectively. Nowhere among the theorbo manuscripts is there a source intended for the true beginner, which is a source-type that is encountered frequently within the manuscript lute tablatures, e.g. *Berkeley 759* and *Brussels 16.662*.

Documentary evidence confirms this method of pedagogy. In 1612, a young Belgian lutenist named Philippe Vermeulen was sent to Rome to learn to play the theorbo, so that he might bring back to the north the latest Italian styles and make them better known at his own court.³⁰ But when he began studying the lute in Rome, the Archbishop of the Lowlands wrote sternly to his ambassador Philippe Maes, that ‘instead of working at bettering himself on the lute, [Vermeulen] should take pains to become a master of the theorbo, and that, moreover, he work towards that goal by studying with some capable man in that profession . . .’;³¹ a month later, the Belgian ambassador responded that

following your instructions, I have spoken on behalf of Philippe Vermeulen with some teachers of lute and theorbo about what you said, who tell me that ordinarily one instrument goes with the other, and that moreover if he plays the lute well, he will subsequently learn to play the theorbo without difficulty. As for salary, they ask two escuz a month for each instrument, which makes ten florins in all. Nevertheless, I will make inquiries of others. . .³²

Maes’s original information was correct, and at the beginning of August he confirmed that ‘practically everybody tells me it is better that [Vermeulen] continue to learn first to play the lute, and that afterwards, in one month, two, or three, he will easily learn to play the theorbo . . .’³³

Well, not quite so easily. Maes’s letter of a few months later confirms that even with the best teachers – Vermeulen was taught by no less than Kapsberger, after he failed in his attempts to contract Filippo Piccinini – mastery of the theorbo does not come without sacrifice:

In response to your letters of before 22 September [1612], I have looked for the S^r Piccenini, brother of the musician or lutenist now dead in the service of the nuncio;³⁴ but some five or

³⁰ Some items of this correspondence appear in Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas*, vol. II, pp. 376–88, which I have corrected and supplemented with other letters from this exchange following my 1990 examination of these documents in Brussels, Archives Générales du Royaume (AGR), Papiers d’Etat et de l’Audience’: *Negotiations de Rome de 1582–1636*. All of the shelf numbers cited by Vander Straeten have since been changed.

³¹ Vander Straeten, p. 378.

³² *ibid.*

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ Maes is therefore searching for Filippo Piccinini (1575–1648), who from all accounts equalled if not surpassed his brother Alessandro in fame during the early seventeenth century. The dead brother mentioned by Maes was

six months have passed since he left here from the employ of the illustrious Cardinal Aldobrandini to join the [service of the] Duke of Savoy, where he can still be found, having taken with him all of his furniture and clothing, so that if Your Highness wishes to have the music books left by his brother, you must therefore write to him . . .

I have since received your last letter of 29 [September], but am disturbed that you have not written me better news regarding Philippe Vermeulen, who in this state cannot continue much longer to live here; seeing that his parents are not sending him sufficient allowance so that he is practically naked, I am forced to extend him credit of some twenty or thirty escuz just so he can clothe himself. I leave to you his needs for food, which are at least 100 escuz annually. I suppose I could hire [him as] another member of my staff or a valet, but he could do nothing for me in this respect since he is from the morning to the evening locked in his room practising the theorbo, on which he hopes now to play well after some time, as his teacher confirmed to me a few days ago . . .³⁵

As solo virtuosos and the professional players in the continuo pits graduated from lutes to theorboes and archlutes, the larger group of amateurs, students, and nobles continued to own seven- and eight-course instruments on which they played a 'classical' repertory rather than a modern one. They valued this music as they did the venerable classics of Plutarch, Livy, Petrarch, and Tasso upon which their education was formed. Amateur anthologies like *Como*, *Montreal*, *Paris 29*, or the Berkeley lutebooks show that the lute music equivalents of these 'great books' were Francesco (particularly his monothematic fantasias nos. 33 and 34³⁶), stylish court dances drawn from Caroso's *Il Ballerino* (1580/1600) such as the *Barriera* (easily the most widely disseminated piece in the seventeenth-century Italian manuscript repertory), settings of popular tunes such as the *Spagnoletta* and *La Monica* (= *Une jeune fillette*), the patriotic *Aria di Fiorenza*, short formulas to accompany the recitation of poetry in *terza* and *ottava rima*, arrangements of popular canzonettas and, just to be contemporary, non-obtrusive, conservative modern music by Santino Garsi da Parma and the Cavaliero del liuto.³⁷ The most progressive lute music of the day by the likes of Kapsberger and Piccinini did not enter into the amateur musical diet; consequently, neither did the need for 'professional'-size instruments.

The large number of retrospective manuscript anthologies of lute music show that the cultivation of the lute by learned and noble society continued long after the lute itself declined as a solo instrument in Italy. Consequently, as long as Renaissance

Girolamo Piccinini (b. 1573), who obviously died sometime around the time of this letter. This document contradicts Cristoforetti's dating of Girolamo's death to 1615. See Cristoforetti's introduction to *Alessandro Piccinini: Intavolatura di liuto, et di chitarone...* (Florence, 1983), p. [ii].

³⁵ Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas*, vol. II, p. 381.

³⁶ For an examination of the Francesco repertory known to lutenists after his death, see Coelho, 'The Reputation of Francesco da Milano . . .'

³⁷ On the manner in which lutenists used these formulas, and for a study of a typical Italian lutebook compiled by a noble amateur, see Victor Coelho, 'Raffaello Cavalcanti's Lutebook (1590) and the Ideal of Singing and Playing', in *Le concert des voix et des instruments à la Renaissance*, ed. J.-M. Vaccaro (Paris, 1995), pp. 423-42.

lute music was still being played by a large amateur and student public – a parallel can be drawn here to the continued popularity of Arcadelt's madrigals in seventeenth-century Italy – lute makers of the early seventeenth century enjoyed a still-vigorous market for short-necked models.

The presence of so many short-necked lutes in the seventeenth-century manuscripts suggests some interesting possibilities for modern players, particularly those who tour and like to play eclectic programmes. We have already mentioned that pieces by Kapsberger and Piccinini rarely found their way into amateur sources. This is not because amateurs played instruments that were too small – even amateur manuscripts for archlute and theorbo (*Kraków 40591*, *San Francisco*) exclude music by Kapsberger and Piccinini. Quite simply, amateurs just did not care much for 'modern' music. On the other hand, more benign contemporary music by Santino Garsi da Parma, Caroso, and a small 'top ten' of popular dances³⁸ fill amateur anthologies and manuscript tutors, and these works show how lutenists freely adapted the music to fit the size of the instrument. Garsi's famous *Gagliarda della Marchesa di Sala*, for example, is one of the many pieces that comes down to us in versions for different-sized instruments. In the Florentine manuscript *Brussels 16.663* (ca. 1600–10), the piece is written for 6 courses. In *Kraków 40032* (1590–1611), a reliable source of Santino's music,³⁹ *Paris 941* (1609–16), *Paris 29* (ca. 1610–20), and *Pesaro b.14* (ca. 1610–25), a seventh course is present, and in *Rome 570* (ca. 1608–15) and *Kraków 40153* (1620–1), the last-named source copied in the hand of Santino Garsi's son, Donino, ten courses are required. Many other examples of adapting the music to the instrument can be found in these sources, and they reveal the autonomous decisions made by lutenists in the context of their own needs.

Unfortunately, doctrinaire notions about 'authenticity' have convinced most modern players that similar compromises or adaptations are inappropriate. To invoke such orthodoxy as playing Francesco *only* on a six-course lute or Piccinini *only* on a fourteen-course archlute contradicts the practices of lutenists in Italy during the seventeenth century. While the 'correct' instrument as designated in a print is always preferable and often unequivocal, the use of a different lute and the occasional transposition of a few bass notes are in no way violations of seventeenth-century performance practice; rather, these adaptations are well within the tradition of the time. Moreover, it is not always clear, even in professional prints, what

³⁸ Such as *La Adolorata*, *La Passionata*, *La Barriera*, the *Gagliarda dele cinque mentite*, and *La Tamburina*, to name just a few. For the dispersion of these, see Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*.

³⁹ *Kraków 40032* is the earliest source of Garsi's music and contains more pieces by him than any other manuscript. An edition of this important manuscript, edited by John Griffiths and Dinko Fabris, is forthcoming. In the meantime, see Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, p. 14 for a general description. A tablature incipit inventory of the manuscript is in *Berliner Lautentabulaturen in Krakau: Beschreibender Katalog der handschriftlichen Tabulaturen für Laute und verwandte Instrumente in der Biblioteka Jagiellońska Kraków aus dem Besitz der ehemaligen Preußischen Staatsbibliothek Berlin*, ed. Dieter Kirsch and Lenz Meierott (Mainz, 1992), pp. 1–53. For a list of concordant versions of the work, see Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, p. 584, no. 25.

instrument was intended by the composer. While there is little doubt about what is meant when specifying the *arciliuto* or *tiórba*, the word 'lauto' could mean many things at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In his *Libro primo di lauto* (Rome, 1611), Kapsberger calls for an eleventh course, which, given his professional status, might suggest an archlute strung in the disposition of 6 ('petit jeu') + 5 ('grand jeu'). But the eleventh course (B \flat) is used only once in the entire print, and both O'Dette and Smith use ten-course lutes in their recordings.⁴⁰ Moreover, with a few small adaptations, almost all of the pieces in the book can be accommodated easily and convincingly to an eight-course lute with the seventh and eighth courses tuned to F and C, respectively (rather than F and D), which is one of the eight-course configurations used by Pietro Raimondi in the amateur anthology *Como*. Twenty of the thirty-two pieces in *Kapsberger 1611* can be played on such an instrument, requiring no change at all to the music: toccatas 1 and 8; gagliarde 1–11; and correnti 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11. Toccatas 2, 3, 4, and 6, gagliarda 12, and correnti 7 and 9 require the transposition of only one or two bass notes which have no impact whatsoever on the voice-leading. In sum, all but five pieces from Kapsberger's *Libro primo* can be played on the same eight-course Renaissance instrument one uses for Molinaro, Dowland, or Laurencini.

Similarly, Piccinini's 1623 book for lute and theorbo specifies for the former an *arciliuto*, but Piccinini was already fifty-four years old at the time of this book's publication and many of the works were probably written for a smaller instrument during the composer's years in Ferrara during the 1590s. (Piccinini writes in his preface that he 'invented' the *arciliuto* around 1594.⁴¹) Whereas Kapsberger normally reserves his use of octave bass courses for cadential emphasis or harmonic support, Piccinini's dances contain many ill-advised passages on the bass courses that sound much better an octave higher (e.g. *Corrente prima*, bars 47–51; *Corrente XIII*, bars 27–31), a criticism that can also be made about many of the disappointing archlute works by Pietro Paolo Melii. Perhaps these are earlier works by Piccinini that he later revised for a larger instrument, similar to the Garsi example cited above. Some pieces, like *Corrente terza*, *Corrente quinta*, and *Corrente XII* are distinctly earlier works requiring a maximum of seven courses, and even the famous *Passacaglia* from his posthumous 1639 tablature calls for no larger than a seven-course lute.

One of the most interesting examples of adapting the music to fit the instrument is the occasional interchangeability seventeenth-century players allowed between lute and theorbo. Both of the central theorbo sources, *Modena B* and *Paris 30*, contain concordances with Kapsberger's 1611 lute book, which predates both manuscripts.

⁴⁰ Paul O'Dette, 'Il Tedesco della Tiorba': Kapsberger, *Pieces for Lute*, Harmonia Mundi HMU 907020; Hopkinson Smith, *Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger, Intavolatura di Lauto*, Astrée E 8553.

⁴¹ Piccinini 1623, p. 8, Ch. XXXIII: *Dell'Arciliuto, e dell'Inventore d'esso*. For a translation, see Mason, *The Chitarrone and its Repertoire*, p. 26.

Both concordances are dances: the *Gagliarda 3^a* (*Kapsberger 1611*, p. 17; *Modena B*, fol 15r), and the *Corrente 3^a* (*Kapsberger 1611*, pp. 25–6; *Paris 30*, fol 26v). Since Kapsberger's dances are rarely contrapuntal – the correnti are particularly transparent in texture – only a few changes to the tablature are required to adapt the dances for theorbo. Indeed, the same can be done to many of the other dances in Kapsberger's lute collection. It is entirely possible that either or both of the two unique dances by Kapsberger that appear in these manuscripts were adapted from his lost lute book of 1619, which was in circulation before either of the two manuscripts were completed. These adaptations are the work not of amateur or student lutenists, but of courtly professionals, and they show the flexible and autonomous practices that existed at the highest and most respected level.

Turning to the issue of right-hand position and technique, we can gain remarkably consistent information from seventeenth-century paintings and surviving instruments. They show that from *ca.* 1590, Italian lutenists used the right-hand technique known as 'thumb out', and they are unequivocal in their depiction of the lutenist's right hand closer to the bridge than during the sixteenth century. Piccinini mentions that the best sound on both lute and theorbo is produced by plucking the strings halfway between the rose and the bridge,⁴² though paintings often show the lutenist's hand much farther to the right (depending on the size of the instrument) of the rose. The right hand continued to be anchored by the small finger resting on the soundboard – this is confirmed once again by both Piccinini (Ch. V) and by paintings – just below or behind the bridge. Many surviving instruments even reveal a small indentation on the belly of the lute from where the finger was planted, confirming the accuracy of the paintings. But almost no lutenist today plays so close to the bridge as did our seventeenth-century counterparts, nor has any modern theorbist (to my knowledge) adopted the position described in *Kapsberger 1640*, in which the right hand was anchored by the *ring* finger at the bottom of the bridge, rather than by the fifth: Kapsberger's reasons for this position were to be contained in his book entitled *Il Kapsperger della Musica*, which never appeared. Generally, scale passages continued to be played by alternating downstrokes of the thumb with upward strokes of the index finger. The standard symbol of using dots in the tablature to show the notes played by the index finger was maintained in many manuscripts as well as in *Piccinini 1623*. However, archlute sources like *Kraków 40153*, *Perugia*, and *Venice* call for the index and *middle* fingers to play scale passages, similar to modern classical guitar technique. Piccinini permits this fingering when during scale passages the thumb must play another part, and he encourages its use for the evenness in sound that is produced. Clarity of prose not being one of Piccinini's strengths, he refers to this technique as 'arpeggiation' (Ch. XI); arpeggiation as we

⁴² *Piccinini 1623*, Ch. III, p. 1. See Fabris, in this volume, p. 38.

know it and as played on the theorbo, he calls 'pizzicate' (Ch. XXIX). As for the use of nails, seventeenth-century paintings of lutenists are inconclusive on this subject, but Piccinini mentions their use on the thumb, index, middle, and ring fingers and describes their optimal shape without apology or justification, suggesting that they were not at all uncommon. While the great Julian Bream was roundly criticized for his use of nails (and a footstool) by the first generation of modern flesh players, in recent years the tide has turned somewhat, and many professional lutenists have shown the advantages of nails for some repertoires after around 1550.

PEDAGOGY, PREFACES, AND VARIATION

The notions of autonomy, flexibility, adaptation, and the 'open score' were emphasized early on in the training of a seventeenth-century lutenist. Once again, the manuscripts are a rich source of information on this subject since almost half of them are pedagogical books. From these we can reconstruct fairly accurately the education of lutenists and trace some of the musical procedures they used to their source.

The root of this training lies with the lutenist's familiarity with genres, and the relationship between genre and performance. With the decline of contrapuntal and derivative forms like the fantasia and intabulation, combined with the need for lutenists to play more than one instrument, lute technique underwent a definite and perceivable change at the beginning of the seventeenth century, equal in scope to the transformations in vocal and keyboard technique at the same time. The parallel rise of more sectional and discursive genres, like the toccata, led to a subjectivity in overall approach. These newer genres demanded a flexible and explosive technique that could be used to dramatize individual moments of a piece – rather than overall symmetry, as in the Renaissance fantasia – through timbral and dynamic contrast, while at the same time exploiting the new dimensions in sound that were being opened up by larger instruments. The newest inventions in technique are found in theorbo sources, since the instrument, which was invented specifically for accompaniment, had to be adapted for a solo repertoire. These included slurs, strums, different varieties of arpeggios and trills, tremolos, highly syncopated rhythmic groupings, triplets, and cross-stringing for scales. Many of these 'new' techniques were used as effects within the new dramatic style of seventeenth-century toccatas. They are described in an unusually detailed passage from Giambattista Marino's epic poem *L'Adone*, which should be considered as an important source of seventeenth-century performance practice. In a recent article I have shown how Marino's intricate knowledge and specialist terminology about the lute seem derived from *Piccinini 1623*, whose author was one of Marino's close colleagues in Rome.⁴³ Archlute

⁴³ Victor Coelho, 'Marino's *Tocatta* between the Lutenist and the Nightingale', in *The Sense of Marino: Literature, Fine Arts and Music of the Italian Baroque*, ed. Francesco Guardiani (New York and Toronto, 1994), pp. 395–427.

manuscripts (*Florence 45*, *Perugia*, *Venice*) reveal that some specific theorbo techniques were eventually borrowed by lutenists. In the Roman pedagogical book *Perugia*,⁴⁴ both the sign // and the actual pattern of theorbo arpeggiation, first described in *Kapsberger 1604*, are employed for some pieces.⁴⁵ Their use is restricted to (1) toccatas, (2) chords that last a full bar, and (3) pieces at the end of the manuscript, beginning with the concordance of *Toccata 5^a* from *Kapsberger 1611* on pp. 90–2, which suggests some specificity in the use of this technique.

If there is one lesson that is emphasized more than any other in pedagogical books, it is that of variation technique. In the conventional sense, variation is the principal procedure used in multi-sectional pieces based on recurring harmonic or bass schemes, such as *passamezzos*, *passacagli*, *ciaccone*, and settings of the *Ruggiero*, *Romanesca*, *Folia*, *Bergamasca*, and *Aria di Fiorenza*. Variation principle is a fundamental strategy in theorbo composition: since the instrument cannot easily sustain contrapuntal textures because of its re-entrant tuning and its restricted range, the theorbo composer must rely on melodic and rhythmic variation as the main source of textural and sectional contrast. The majority as well as the most elaborate of the works in *Kapsberger 1604* are variation pieces: the *Ruggiero* (nine *partite* [= theme plus eight variations]), *Aria di Fiorenza* (nine *partite*), *Folia* (nineteen *partite*), *Romanesca* (five *partite*), and *Passamezzo* (three *partite*). Beyond this, the technique of variation underlies most other genres as well.

The archlute manuscript *Perugia* and the theorbo source *Rome 4145* provide particularly good insights into this type of pedagogical training, for these sources appear to have been supervised and at least partially copied by the professional lutenists Andrea Falconieri and Kapsberger, respectively. *Perugia* contains, in addition to a diverse repertory of dances and an important collection of toccatas, actual taught lessons that were copied into the book. Sprinkled throughout the manuscript in a subsidiary (and inexperienced) hand are short pieces with titles such as *Ceccona per A*, *Ceccona per B*, followed by the description ‘Mutanza’ and instructions ‘to copy this’ (‘Copiare questa’). A reconstruction of these lessons shows that they revolve primarily around asking the student to invent a *ciaccona* bass, transpose it to different scale degrees (e.g. pp. 12–15: *Ceccona per A*, *Ceccona per B*, etc.⁴⁶), and then vary it (‘Mutanza’) using diminutions, ornamented cadential formulas, and arpeggios. These ‘mutanze’ are based on standard scale and arpeggio patterns, which the lutenist learns in order to create various rudimentary harmonic formulas that can

⁴⁴ A facsimile of *Perugia* has been published as *Libro di Leuto di Giuseppe Antonio Doni, MS. Perugia, sec. XVII*, ed. Dinko Fabris (Florence, 1988).

⁴⁵ Kapsberger’s 1611 lute book mentions nothing about arpeggiation. On theorbo arpeggiation, see Victor Coelho, ‘Frescobaldi and the Lute and Chitarrone Toccatas of “Il Tedesco della Tiorba”’, in *Frescobaldi Studies*, ed. Alexander Silbiger (Durham, 1987), pp. 137–56.

⁴⁶ For an explanation of these titles, see Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 134–5.

be expanded and elaborated in different contexts. They can also serve to embellish other ciaccone in the manuscript. Plate 7 and Ex. 5.2 show how one of these lessons is illustrated in *Perugia*.

Variation technique is also the main lesson in *Rome 4145*. The manuscript opens with the *Ruggiero* and six of the nine *partite* from *Kapsberger 1604*, followed by *Tocatta 1* from the same print, all in Kapsberger's hand. A new hand copied the next seven works, which consist of two dances, both followed by their *doubles*, and three short *arie*, possibly accompaniments to vocal works. Almost half of the remaining pieces are passacaglia or ciaccona settings, which are usually followed by blank pages intended for the student to complete the settings, compose a variation, or transpose them.⁴⁷ As in *Perugia*, some of these passacagli are based on the same theme but transposed to different pitches. Completing these exercises allows the player to build up a repertory of possibilities in realizing a repeated bass line or chordal scheme in different transpositions. This principle of variation also underlies the ornamenting of final cadences, or *cadenze finali*. Continuo players were expected to have many ornamented cadence formulas committed to memory for realizing the long held notes that often appear at the end of monodies and *arie* of the early seventeenth century, among other types of final cadences. Some manuscript books contain intabulated exercises of this nature (*Kraków 40591*, fol. 62v; *Paris 31*, fol. 45r). In the manuscript treatise *Il Leuto Anatomizzato (Rome 4433)*, Pier Francesco Valentini devotes sections to ornamenting interior and final cadences (fols. 16r–18r) even providing examples using D minor tuning (fols. 28r–29v). The theorbo section of *Modena 239* contains ninety-eight examples of *cadenze finali*, offering ornamented solutions to bass lines descending or ascending by thirds, fourths, with 7–#6 and 4–3 suspensions, and other types of movement.⁴⁸

Variation technique is thus a licence for autonomy and improvisation – or improvised composition – and this is why many of the seventeenth-century manuscripts are compiled in the manner of a 'fakebook'. Most of the pieces in *Paris 29*, *Pesaro b.10*, and *Paris 941*, for example, provide the player with just one strain of a bass scheme or tune, from which lutenists were to create longer settings through elaboration and variation. Taken as a whole, these manuscripts show how variation technique is used in (1) pieces based on repeating patterns, (2) ornamented repeats for the binary or ternary sections of dances, (3) *Nachtänze* for dance pairs based on the same thematic material, (4) settings of *La Monica* (sometimes just called *Alemana*), which is one of the most popular variation pieces in the entire repertory and especially liked by theorbists, (5) popular tunes like the *Pavaniglia* (Spanish Pavan) and the *Spagnoletta*, and (6) programmatic works like the *Battaglia* and *Barriera*.

⁴⁷ A list of directions on fols. 13v–14r includes the direction to 'complete a passacaglia'.

⁴⁸ See Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 101–4; for a larger study including facsimiles, see Mirko Caffagni, 'The Modena Tiorba Continuo Manuscript', *JLSA* 12 (1979), pp. 25–42.

III *Ceccona per A*

Madama

Madama e Poligiano

Madama

Madama

Plate 7 Perugia, p. 114, *Ceccona per A* (courtesy of the Archivio di Stato, Perugia)

Variation is also an integral strategy used in the composition of toccatas. Most of the toccatas by Kapsberger and Piccinini, for example, are constructed around the presentation of two or three subjects and their subsequent elaboration, though the procedure of such elaboration is anything but conventional.⁴⁹ The quintessential

⁴⁹ For a discussion of the relationships between the common strategies used in toccatas and seventeenth-century poetry, with particular emphasis on Piccinini, see Coelho, 'Marino's *Toccatà*'.

Ceccona per A

[System 2]

Musical notation for the first system of the Ceccona per A. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines.

Mutanza

[System 3]

Musical notation for the second system of the Mutanza. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines.

Mutanza arpeggiare

[System 4] [System 5] [System 6]

Musical notation for the third system of the Mutanza arpeggiare. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines.

Altra Mutanza

[System 7] [System 8]

Musical notation for the fourth system of the Altra Mutanza. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines.

Altra

[System 9]

Musical notation for the fifth system of the Altra. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines.

Altra Mut.^{za}

[p. 115 - not shown in Plate 7]

Musical notation for the sixth system of the Altra Mut.za. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines.

unpredictability of these works is due to the possibilities that can be achieved through variation, since it is a technique that is adaptable to many different kinds of polyphonic or homophonic textures, unlike the stricter procedures of counterpoint, canon, fugue, or even canzona. It is not irrelevant here to cite a similar rise in variation-type pieces during the nineteenth century, when composers increasingly employed strict theme-and-variation, as well as variation derivatives such as cyclic form and developing variation, in order to free themselves from the formal restrictions and harmonic requirements of sonata principle and classical symphonic form. In the seventeenth century, variation technique can similarly be seen as a liberating device that can be found in a variety of genres. Example 5.3 shows how the seemingly unlimited invention of *Toccata 1^a* from *Kapsberger 1611* is, in fact, based on a simple variation principle of three motives and their mutations.

VARIANTS AND AUTONOMY

As we have noted above, printed books provide an 'authoritative' text that was, in most cases, approved by the composer,⁵⁰ but they do not succeed in telling us how this music is actually performed. Even when 'instructions' are provided in introductory prefaces, as in *Kapsberger 1604/1640* and *Piccinini 1623*, only the purely technical information – how to arpeggiate, how to interpret rhythms in triplets, how to play trills, tremolos, *accenti*, and slurs – is relatively unambiguous. *When* to trill, *when* to use the tremolo, and *when* to ornament, on the other hand, are never specified to the precision that modern players would like. If a lute teacher at a master class today was asked by a young player about where to ornament in a particular piece and he replied vaguely with, 'Here you should do one sort of ornament, there another, according to what is suitable', students would demand an immediate refund; it would be of little solace to the student that the teacher was simply quoting from *Piccinini 1623*. Rather, what is implicit behind the various techniques and effects that are described, but not *prescribed*, by Kapsberger and Piccinini, is the granting of autonomy in using ornaments 'in every place it is possible',⁵¹ 'in an unlimited number of places',⁵² 'in all places where there are long or short pauses',⁵³

⁵⁰ Of the main prints, *Piccinini 1623* was obviously approved by the composer and contains a list of errata; Castaldi was the engraver of his own print, and *Kapsberger 1604* and *Kapsberger 1611* were brought out by members of the composer's close patronage circle; only *Kapsberger 1640* seems to have a chequered history, and might not have represented the composer's original intentions. Leone Allacci (*Apes Urbanae* (Rome, 1633), pp. 159–60) listed *Kapsberger 1640* as being ready for publication by 1633, but seven years elapsed before it was finally published. Furthermore, only a single copy of this print survives (British Library), no concordances exist between this print and the manuscript sources, and one can notice the appearance of a second engraver's hand from p. 47.

⁵¹ *Piccinini 1623*, Ch. XI, p. 3, on arpeggiation.

⁵² *ibid.*, Ch. XVII, p. 3, on the second type of tremolo [trill].

⁵³ *ibid.*, Ch. XIX, p. 4, on where to ornament.

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The image displays four staves of musical notation in G minor (one flat) and common time. The first staff, labeled 58, shows a melodic line with a bracket labeled 'c' above it, spanning measures 58 to 61. The second staff, labeled 62, shows a similar melodic line with a bracket labeled 'c' above it, spanning measures 62 to 65. The third staff, labeled 73, shows a melodic line with a bracket labeled 'c' above it, spanning measures 73 to 76. The fourth staff, labeled 80, shows a melodic line with a bracket labeled 'c' above it, spanning measures 80 to 83, and two subsequent brackets labeled 'a' and 'b' above it, spanning measures 84 to 85 and 86 to 87 respectively.

Ex. 5.3 G. G. Kapsberger, *Toccata 1^a*, from *Kapsberger 1611*: motives a, b, and c, and their 'variations'

and on 'every chord as much as possible'.⁵⁴ Such 'codified flexibility' invites comparisons with Girolamo Frescobaldi's preface to his 1627 book of toccatas, which suggests variable tempos, allows the player to make 'cuts' in the overall form of the piece, and permits arpeggiation and some ornaments at the player's discretion.⁵⁵ What these authors seem to be saying is, 'here are the techniques and a few rudimentary guidelines since all of this may be new to you, but ultimately you are the player, and you make the decisions'. By encouraging this autonomy, the role of the composer has been placed in the hands of the performer. Consequently, significant interpretive differences can, did, and should exist in the performance of a single piece by different performers. Concordances contained in manuscripts reveal these variants, and they help define some of the autonomous strategies used by lutenists of the *seicento*.

The theorbo manuscripts *Modena B* (dated 1619) and *Paris 30* (dated 1626) are ideal for a comparison along these lines. Both are professional books copied less than a decade apart, and they are identical both in their selection of genres and in their arrangement. Unique works by Kapsberger and possibly Piccinini are found in both

⁵⁴ *Kapsberger 1640*, p. 2, regarding trills and *accenti*.

⁵⁵ A study of the parallels between Frescobaldi's and Kapsberger's toccatas is in Coelho, 'Frescobaldi and the Lute and Chitarrone Toccatas of "Il Tedesco della Tiorba"'. An expanded and more copiously illustrated version of this study is in Victor Coelho, 'G. G. Kapsberger "della tiorba" e l'influenza liutistica sulle *Toccate* di Frescobaldi', in *Girolamo Frescobaldi nel IV centenario della nascita*, ed. Sergio Durante (Florence, 1986), pp. 341–57. Another study that is highly relevant to this discussion is Étienne Darbellay, 'Liberté, variété, et "affetti cantabili" chez Girolamo Frescobaldi', *RdM* 61 (1975), pp. 197–243. Frescobaldi's rules have been reprinted many times; a readable, accessible version is in Lorenzo Bianconi, *Music in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 95–6.

manuscripts, as well as pieces culled from *Kapsberger 1604* and the lute source *Kapsberger 1611*, arranged for theorbo. Although the tablatures seem to have been copied in different cities, the stylistic origins of the repertory are unmistakably Roman. Despite their common ancestry, however, the three concordances between the two manuscripts offer some interesting variant readings. They show how two contemporary theorbists thought about the same pieces and how the styles of both are the result of their autonomous decisions on a fixed text.

Neither the Modena nor the Paris theorbists were apprehensive about imposing new formal divisions onto the models they chose to copy, or about extracting sections from larger pieces to suit their own needs. In the *Folia* copied from *Kapsberger 1604* that appears in *Paris 30* (fols. 17r–18v), only three of the eighteen variations were selected (nos. 1, 10, and 12), an editorial practice that sets a liberating precedent for the modern theorbist performing for modern audiences, given the length of most printed variation sets from this time. A different strategy was planned for the *Partita* (*Paris 30*, fol. 14v), which was extracted from the *Passamezzo*, also from *Kapsberger 1604*, but divorced from its theme and the other two variations. In addition to the possibility that it was played autonomously – it is the most impressive variation of the set – it was more probably combined with the untitled *passamezzo moderno* and its *partita* on fol. 29r–v. The *Gagliarda* on fol. 20r, also based on the *passamezzo moderno*, provides a natural *Nachtanz*.

A more intrusive example of revising the printed text can be seen in the *Gagliarda HK* (*Paris 30*, fol. 24r–v), concordant to [*Gagliarda*] 11^a from *Kapsberger 1604* (see Exs. 5.4a–b). The six-bar phrase (2 + 4) of Kapsberger's original – unusual when compared to most other galliards of the time but typical of the mannerisms that Kapsberger injects into his dances – has been extended in *Paris 30* by two extra bars to create a more conventional eight-bar unit of 2 + 2 + 4. As we will see in the next example, the variants encountered in the Paris manuscript are consistent by their clarification of unusual or imbalanced passages. The ornamented repeat composed by the *Paris 30* theorbist (Ex. 5.4c), is an actual example of how a player varied a binary repeat, and it is of particular value here since written-out repeats are rarely found in Kapsberger's work.

A more detailed approach to editing works is present in Ex. 5.5, in which *Paris 30* compresses the version in *Modena B* for the same reasons of attaining rhythmic clarity that guided the revision of Ex. 5.4. In the *Modena B* reading of this anonymous *Corrente* (Ex. 5.5a), the 'A' section contains twenty bars while the 'B' section is thirty-one bars long, compared to sixteen bars and twenty-eight bars, respectively, in *Paris 30* (5.5b). Instead of adding bars to achieve more orthodox phrase-lengths, as in Ex. 5.4, the Paris copyist suppresses the cadential deflection of bars 15–18 in favour of a clearer and more direct arrival at the tonic, G major. The rearrangement of material is more ingeniously accomplished in the 'B' section, in which the Paris

5.4a

5.4b

5.4c

Ex. 5.4 (a) *Gagliarda 11^a*, from *Kapsberger 1604*, p. 58
 (b) *Gagliarda* from *Paris 30*, fol. 24r–v
 (c) Ornamented repeat of 5.4b, bars 9–16

copyist avoids the rhythmic difficulties present in *Modena B*, bars 36–9, by telescoping bars 34–7 into two bars, as shown by the arrows.

Perhaps the most common variant that exists between concordant versions of a single piece involves the density of chord voicing. It is rare to find a concordance in the seventeenth century that does not contain at least a few chords that are more thickly or thinly voiced than the analogous chords in the model. When a concordance exists for a larger or smaller instrument than that intended by the model, it is, of course, natural to expect the addition, elimination, or transposition of bass notes. But when concordant versions are written for the same size of instrument, as in Ex. 5.5, chord voicing is a flexible decision that is guided by personal taste, sonority, technical ability, and context – i.e. using thicker chords in order to produce more

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5.5a

5.5b

11

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32

42

Ex. 5.5

- (a) *Modena B, Corrente AP* [Alessandro Piccinini?], fol. 9r
- (b) *Paris 30, Cor[rente]*, fol. 9v

sound when playing in a crowded or large room. In another study, for example, I have shown that the unusually thick chordal textures in *Nuremberg 2* and *Nuremberg 3* were written specifically for lutenists participating in a large ensemble that performed for various grandiose events related to the 1608 wedding celebrations for Cosimo II Medici and Maria Maddalena of Austria.⁵⁶

As lutenists of the early seventeenth century became experienced at playing continuo, they learned how to voice chords according to the musical context. Moreover, with the introduction of new arpeggiation patterns and the appropriation of certain techniques from the guitar, like strumming, the player could draw spontaneously on a variety of possibilities for playing chords. In Ex. 5.5b, the Paris theorbist uses thinner chords on most occasions (see bars 2, 6, and 24), sometimes suppresses bass notes (bars 4, 19), or adds them (bars 9, 25, and 43), occasionally changes the chord voicing (bars 8, 22), that alters the timbral quality of the chord when using a left-hand fingering in a lower position (bar 8), which has particularly interesting implications for all sorts of passages. Ex. 5.4 shows a contrary approach, in which the Paris theorbist significantly thickens Kapsberger's original textures at almost every chordal event in various ways including the addition of bass notes. Many of Kapsberger's dances, especially for lute, are in fact so thinly scored that a convincing 'realization' along the lines of Ex. 5.4b is not only possible, as Hopkinson Smith has recently demonstrated, but justified by historical practice.⁵⁷

The performance practices of seventeenth-century Italian lutenists are founded not on a common aesthetic goal, but on highly individual traditions that reveal the subjective, autonomous, and interpretive abilities of players. The elements and foundations of these practices are commensurate with the diversity of source-types, which are divided between pedagogical lute books for the student, lute and archlute anthologies containing a 'classical' repertory for the amateur, and professional books, usually for theorbo, that transmit the most progressive genres and styles of the early seventeenth century. In all of these books, the invention and autonomy of the player takes precedence over the musical text: performance practice is inextricably linked to interpretation and the choices made by the performer. Pedagogical sources show that this notion of the 'open score' was part of a lutenist's training from the beginning, in which the principle of variation was taught as a basis of musical composition.

Although the period continues to defy any strict codification of 'rules', the sources we have just studied show how performance varies according to context, and between the practices of élite professionals and those of amateurs or students. Just as our knowledge of art history is based not only on the Giotto's, Leonardos, and Titians, but also on the thousands of anonymous frescoes and oils that grace the chapels of small Italian towns, I believe that we must base our understanding of this

⁵⁶ See Coelho, *The Manuscript Sources*, pp. 110–15.

⁵⁷ See n. 40, above.

repertory not just on professional books, but also on the information-rich corpus of amateur and domestic manuscript sources. Embedded in these tablatures are the pedagogical principles that underlie both amateur and professional training. Since these manuscripts reveal procedures rather than just pieces, they provide an entrée into the practical solutions lutenists used to adapt to the changing techniques, styles, and musical aesthetics of the early Baroque, and they can provide a link between the historical practices of seventeenth-century lutenists and the goals of the modern interpreter of this music.

EXPLANATION OF SIGLA

- Berkeley 757* Berkeley, University of California Music Library, Ms. 757
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Bologna Bologna, Archivio di Stato, Fondo Malvezzi-Campeggi, Ms. IV-86/746
Brussels 16.662 Brussels, Bibliothèque du Conservatoire Royale de Musique, Ms. Littera S. No. 16.662 (rpt Brussels, 1980)
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Castaldi *Capricci a due strumenti cioè tiorba e tiorbino* (Modena, 1622; rpt Geneva, 1981)
Como Como, Biblioteca comunale, Ms. 1.1.20 (rpt Como, 1980)
Florence 45 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Ms. Fondo Magl. XIX 45
Frankfurt Frankfurt-am-Main, Private library of Matthias Schneider, Ms. without shelfmark
Kapsberger 1604 *Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitar[r]one* (Venice, 1604; rpt Florence, 1982)
Kapsberger 1611 *Libro primo d'intavolatura di lauto* (Rome, 1611; rpt Florence, 1982)
Kapsberger 1640 *Libro quarto d'intavolatura di chitarone* (Rome, 1604; rpt Florence, 1982)
Kraków 40032 Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellonska, Mus. Ms. 40032
Kraków 40153 Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellonska, Mus. Ms. 40153
Kraków 40591 Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellonska, Mus. Ms. 40591
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- Paris 30* Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Mus. Rés. Vmd. Ms. 30
- Paris 31* Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Mus. Rés. Vmd. Ms. 31
- Paris 941* Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Fonds Conservatoire National Rés. 941
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- Pesaro b.10* Pesaro, Biblioteca musicale statale del Conservatorio di Musica 'G. Rossini', Rari Ms. b.10
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- Rome 4145* Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Barb. Lat. 4145
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