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**Style and development in the theorbo works of Robert de Visée:
An introductory study**

Dunn, Alexander, Ph.D.

University of California, San Diego, 1989

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Style and Development in the Theorbo Works of Robert de Visée:

An Introductory Study

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Music

by

Alexander Dunn

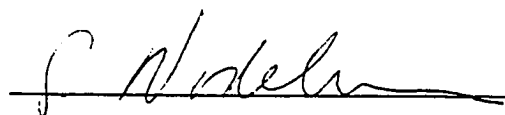
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Professor John Fonville
Professor Carol Plantamura
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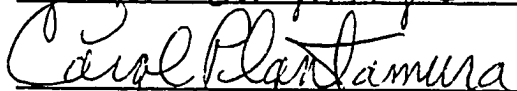
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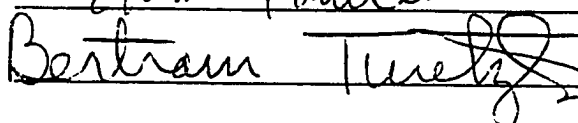
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University of California, San Diego

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Acknowledgements

In the undertaking of this study, I owe much thanks to my professors, colleagues, peers, and friends for their generosity and help. I am particularly indebted to Pepe Romero who lent his unflagging support and boundless understanding in the navigation of this sojourn. I also wish to thank Robert Strizich, who initially urged me to explore this area of study. Special gratitude is due to Claire Delerue; a seemingly endless fountain of patience. Her expertise and beautiful playing made the realization of this project more pleasant than it would have otherwise been. I would like to recognize my committee with whom it has been a pleasure to perform with; Professors John Fonville and Carol Plantamura have been most supportive. Especially, Professor Bertram Turetzky has given his time and guiding energy toward my work. My deepest gratitude goes also to Georges Bloch, Claude Chauvel, Catherine Lidell, Randy Pile, and Joe Poshek.

Those persons who provided information and assistance include Catherine Massip, Mme. Minkoff, Nigel North, James Tyler, Joel Dugot, Robert Spencer, Matanya Ophee, The Lute Society of America, and the Service Photographique of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Finally, I wish extend the most heartfelt thanks to my parents, without whose trust and encouragement this study would not have been completed.

VITA

November 19, 1955 Born San Diego, California

1979 B.M., San Francisco Conservatory of Music

1984 M.M., San Francisco Conservatory of Music

1982-1984 Instructor, San Francisco Conservatory of Music

1976-1985 Resident accompanist and Alumni, Aspen Music Festival

1985-1989 Research and Teaching assistant
University of California, San Diego

1986-1989 Alumni, Internationale Sommerakademie der
Hochschule Mozarteum

1989 Doctor of Philosophy
University of California, San Diego

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Music

Studies in Performance.

Pepe Romero

Studies in Musicology.

Professor Bertram Turtzky

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Style and Development in the Theorbo Works of Robert de Visée: An Introductory Study

by

Alexander Dunn

Doctor of Philosophy in Music

University of California, San Diego , 1989

Professor Bertram Turetzky, Chairperson

Robert de Visée (ca.1660-1732), was among the most outstanding exponents of the French Baroque guitar and theorbo. His corpus of works for the latter instrument have to date not received proper attention in either performance or written study.

Chapters 1 and 2 assemble the available biographical information, most of which has not been fully translated nor previously available in English. Special emphasis is placed on de Visée's activities at the court of Versailles and on his ensemble appearances as a theorbist. These sections attempt to synthesize historical data into a general picture of the composers role at the court; this is then placed into an historical-musical context with de Visée's contemporaries. Chapter 3 is a brief historical examination of the instrument, focussing on its appearance and use in France. Its invention in Italy and subsequent Gallic adaption is reviewed, as are physical descriptions and period lexicographic references, all of which contribute in part to its French identity.

The fourth chapter is a purposefully narrow comparison of the French theorbo with two of its most important influences. Firstly, plucked string instrument figurations instruments (as outgrowths of vocal continuo practices) is suggested as a compelling aspect of the theorbo's solo development. Of particular relevance to this comparison is an *air* of de Visée published in 1732, reproduced here for the first time in modern notation. An equally important impression was made by the new French viol, displaying many similar traits in repertoire and playing techniques. De Visée's reputation as a viol player is examined in the context of the French viol repertoire, and his participation in the infamous embroilment between de Machy and Rousseau is explained.

Chapter 5 cites and describes the available sources for the works of de Visée, all of which have been consulted. Following this description, the actual repertoire is analyzed in terms of differing systems of notation and alternate versions of given works. Musical style is then defined as a result of linear writing and how conjunct flow affects phrasal periods, internal voicings, bass line shapes, and harmonic language. Finally, genres and groupings are seen to both typify the period and to foreshadow *galant* style principles. Appendix 1 is a full English translation of the composers remarks from printed sources. Appendix 2 gives a transcription of a cluster of pieces from tablature, and Appendix 3 shows concordances between the sources examined.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Several types of hand-held, plucked string instruments were in use in Europe during the seventeenth through eighteenth century. Among those regularly employed in vocal accompaniment and as a continuo partner was the *théorbe*, or theorbo. Following its invention and development in Italy at the onset of the seventeenth century, this instrument became widely used in England, Germany, The Low Countries, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe. As an accompanying medium, it was most often coupled with voices, although due to its timbre and portability was a regular member in instrumental groupings as well. A solo repertory was developed in Italy, which made effective use of its idiomatic peculiarities (with regards to its unusual tuning) within the boundaries of early seventeenth century Italian instrumental style. The developments of its French solo repertoire are the areas chosen to highlight the theorbo works of Robert de Visée (ca.1660-ca.1730), a French musician who lived and worked in the most engaging period of the *grand siècle*: Versailles during the majority of Louis XIV. In reviewing the available biographical material, one is impressed by the multi-faceted talents of de Visée. In particular, his reputation as one of the finest exponents of the Baroque guitar is most evident. Less visible but equally important are his skills as a theorbist; indeed, de Visée brought to the French theorbo a contemporary – stylistic language that had no peer nor was surpassed by any other guitarist, lutenist, or theorbist of his generation. Hidden amongst the historical data are references to de Visée as a vocalist (although this is shown to be a sinecure allowing court employment) and as a player of the viola da gamba. In examining his body of works for the theorbo, the aforementioned skills may provide an historical background in tracing the stylistic lineage of his theorbo pieces.

In particular, this study has attempted to observe and relate how traditions in vocal accompaniment and French viol playing may have affected style as seen in de Visée's theorbo music. While some of the theorbo works concord in versions for guitar, lute, and especially two-staff versions for a melody instrument and continuo, the corpus of theorbo pieces are in this study viewed as works in their own right. The idiomatic and stylistic traits that characterize the theorbo

pieces supply ample evidence of this assertion; in probably all cases the staff versions were prepared following tablature originals. In a study of this nature, it is not possible to review all aspects surrounding this repertory. In organizing biographical information, this data has been considered in terms of the theorbo works only; this emphasis is then given an historical background with special importance placed on continuo practices as they may have been developed in France, the *air de cour*, French lute style, and lastly, the French viol. De Visée's compositional style is compared to other composers for viol and theorbo, and finally, his pieces are analyzed in terms of phrase length, melodic contour, texture, and harmony.

Previous Research

Little work has been conducted on de Visée to date and he has not yet been the subject of an in-depth study for his guitar, theorbo, lute, or staff notation pieces. Aside from period references cited by other authors, the existing biographical data, divorced from an actual examination of the repertoire, yields disappointingly little information on the circumstances surrounding de Visée's compositional output. A preliminary article, written by François-J. Fétis¹ laid an important groundwork for this topic, but unfortunately reports some doubtful information and devotes minimal energy to de Visée. A further compilation of material was assembled by Oscar Chilesotti, offering the essential facts of de Visée's life.² Another interesting but somewhat dated study is the article by Monique Rollin,³ which deals exclusively with the *tombeau* allemande form, of which six examples for lute or theorbo are extant. More recently, a thorough article was written by François Lesure,⁴ which relates in a compressed manner the biographical facts concerning de Visée's life. Lesure also briefly comments on de Visée's genre groupings, style, and systems of notation. The most important and extensive research was carried out by Robert Strizich, who contributed both an informative article on de Visée for the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*,⁵ and transcribed, edited, and published a highly polished edition of the

¹ François-J. Fétis, "Visée, Robert de," *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens* (2^d ed.), (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1860-89), pp. 365-66. 8 vols., 2 supplements.

² Oscar Chilesotti, *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 9 (1907-8), p. 62.

³ M. Rollin, "Les tombeaux de Robert de Visée." *Bulletin de la Société d'étude du XVII siècle*, xxxiv, 1957, p. 73.

⁴ François Lesure, "Visée, Robert de," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1949-). 10 vols. and revisions, article translated into German by D. Schmidt-Preuss, pp. 1831-33.

⁵ Robert Strizich, "Visée, Robert de," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, (London, 1980), p. 14. 20 vols.

guitar works,⁶ still the authoritative text for this repertoire. Following the information cited in these publications, I have endeavored to locate the original sources and to supplant them with material not previously known or cited. This study also attempts to systematically examine and draw further conclusions based on the available biographical information.

There has been to date no published analytical treatment of de Visée's theorbo pieces,⁷ and no collected or complete transcriptions of this repertoire has appeared in print.⁸ The standard texts on guitar or lute history have mainly duplicated the information found in the articles cited above, and the works for guitar have until quite recently overshadowed de Visée's accomplishments on the theorbo. Through the efforts of performing theorbists and the availability of several sources of de Visée's music in facsimile editions,⁹ an in-depth study of this repertoire has now become necessary.

Table 1 lists the sources consulted in the preparation of this study along with the siglum adopted as a convenience in their identification. They are generally referred to in a shortened *Réserve* or volume number used by the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale. In the cases where a source

⁶ See his *Robert de Visée- Oeuvres Complètes pour guitare*, Edited by Robert Strizich. (Paris: Huegel & C^{ie}, 1971).

⁷ Catherine Lidell authored an excellent unpublished study on de Visée. See her "The Guitar, Theorbo, and Lute Works of Robert de Visée: A Study of His Process of Arranging." (Graduate thesis: Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, 1976). Ms. Lidell graciously made this paper available to me.

⁸ A list of incipits for Vm⁷ 6265 (See Table 1 for a list of sources) was published by Jules Echorcheville. See his *Catalogue du Fonds de Musique Ancienne de la Bibliothèque Nationale* VI. VII (Paris: Terquem & Cie, 1914), pp. 196-202. Other works by de Visée but not attributed in this source are in *ibid.*, pp. 133-36. Echorcheville has transcribed theorbo pieces into a double bass clef format. This works in two or three measure incipits, but cannot be carried out successfully throughout entire pieces. A full transcription of a chaconne (VI. 4, p. 139) and two sarabandes (VI. 2, pp. 92-93) of de Visée was published by Richard Hudson; unfortunately in the wrong key, but otherwise excellent. See his *The Folia, the Sarabande, the Passacaglia, and the Chaconne. The historical evolution of four forms that originated in the five-course Spanish guitar* (Stuttgart: American Institute of Musicology, 1982).

⁹ Both printed guitar books have been published in facsimile editions. The reader is invited to refer to Robert de Visée, *Livre de Guitarre, Livre de Pièces de Guitarre* (Paris: Bonneüil, 1682 and 1686). Reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1973. The large manuscript of theorbo and lute tablature (referred in this study as "Saiz.I"), is also available in facsimile reprint. See *Manuscript Vaudry de Saizenay, Tablature de Luth et de Théorbe de divers Auteurs, 1699*. Reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1980. Introduction by Claude Chauvel. De Visée's publication of lute and theorbo pieces in a two-staff, continuo format is available as *Pieces de Theorbe et de Luth. Mises en Partition, Dessus et Basse* (Paris: Roussel, 1716). Reprint: Madrid: Arte Tripharia, 1983. The other sources containing theorbo pieces have herebeen consulted. They are available on microfilm from the Lute Society of America, or from the *Service Photographique* of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

was published, I have opted to refer to it simply by date. A standardized spelling for Robert de Visée's name has been employed; various spellings in original sources range from *Vizé*, *Visé*, to *Visée*. The reader may notice that no iconographical evidence was reproduced in the section on the physical description of the French theorbo. While there are numerous paintings, drawings, prints, and engravings depicting the instrument, this study's focus does not allow for a broader, multi-national examination. Also, the tablature is not reproduced in the examples and incipits imbedded in the text. Aside from problems of reproduction, space, and alignment, it was felt that a comparison with the tablature was not necessary in the shorter examples. Appendix 2 reproduces the full tablature original of the complete pieces transcribed in that appendix; the introduction to that section outlines my attitude and methods of transcription. Chapter 1 has organized the existing biographical data (that I have been able to locate) into a chronological ordering of period references and citations. Drawing on remarks from de Visée's printed books, I have attempted to construct a somewhat fuller biographical picture than has been previously available. The employment circumstances at the court are placed within the context of de Visée's performances. Where footnoted otherwise, all translations in this and in the following chapters are mine. The second chapter is a brief historical introduction to the theorbo as it was practiced in France. Issues relating to tuning, construction, and other matters are pointed toward the period of ca.1670-1732, showing how French musical preferences helped to shape the characteristics of this repertoire. Following this section, a chronological ordering of the extant relevant period definitions by various authors and lexicographers is given. Chapter 3 attempts to create the scenario that allowed for the development of a solo theorbo style of playing. Drawing on the French lute literature and the developing *air de cour*, de Visée's theorbo works are given an historical background that places a special emphasis on the emulation of vocal models or style. The differences between the arpeggiated lute style and continuo practices are here explicated to provide a foundation with which to view the mature theorbo style. In particular, vocal arrangements made by de Visée himself are examined in order to properly place these adaptations in the light of earlier *air de cour*. The published continuo treatises are related to de Visée with priority given to possible continuo practices. The fourth chapter traces the history of the French viol with consideration to its shared influences with lute-type instruments. This area has not been given ample attention in the literature on viol, and is of special application to this study; de Visée was reported to have been an excellent violist. The works of lute-influenced viol composers is compared to de Visée's style, and the parallel development of these two instruments is drawn through a comparison of their respective repertoires. Of central importance to this section is the infamous embroilment between Rousseau and de Machy in which de Visée is shown to have played an

active role. Finally, de Visée is situated against the two most celebrated proponents of the late viol style, Marais and Forqueray. Chapter 6 attempts to recognize the outstanding features of de Visée's compositional style. Phrasal, harmonic, and structural analysis is shown, and original sources are examined with regards to groupings and genre. Ornaments and atypical forms are also briefly discussed. Space does not allow for analysis or complete concordances of de Visée's theorbo arrangements from works of Corelli, François Couperin, Marais, Forqueray, Ballard, or Lully. Similarly, a detailed examination of the lute works is not possible within the limits of the present topic.

In sum, the scope of this study precludes a complete discussion of all aspects of this repertoire. This is hopefully minimized by focussing on those features that are most prominent in both the biographical and analytical data. As it is the first to synthesize these aspects, this study may provide a much-needed background for further work in this area. Its purpose, then, is to present de Visée's theorbo pieces against an historical-biographical background that will sharpen its stylistic features. As a corpus of works that deserves much greater attention, de Visée's theorbo music represents a musical microcosm of the transition between the high French lute style and the ensuing *style galant*.

TABLE 1
SOURCES OF THE MUSIC OF ROBERT DE VISÉE

MANUSCRIPTS

Siglum

Saiz. I Besançon: Bibliothèque municipale 279.152.

Rés. 1106 Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale Réserve 1106.

*Vm*⁷ 6265 Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale *Vm*⁷ 6265.

Rés. 1820 Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale Réserve 1820.

*Vm*⁷ 16 Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale *Vm*⁷ ms 16.

PRINTS

1682 De Visée: *Livre de Guitarre dédié au Roy*.
Paris: Bonneüil, 1682.

1686 De Visée: *Livre de Pièces pour la Guitarre dédié au Roy*.
Paris: Bonnüil, 1686.

1716 De Visée: *Pieces de Theorbe et de Luth...*
Paris: Roussel, 1716.

1732 de Visée: *Air Que la bouteille a*
d'attraits, Concerts Parodiques. VI. IV
Paris: Ballard, 1732.

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

De Visée and his circle

Practically no information regarding Robert de Visée's (ca.1660-c.1732) early career has survived. It is difficult to ascertain how de Visée received his musical instruction, and to what degree he was influenced by a particular national style or teacher. Until more biographical information surfaces, it is impossible to sketch broad phases of his early training. Unfortunately, even his birth and death dates are a matter of conjecture. The final recorded payment he received at the court of the Sun King in 1732 may indicate the year of or period prior to his death. Only his son François is listed as a *joueur d'instrumens* from the following year on. Although modern historians have placed his birthdate at ca.1660, I have been unable to locate any document that specifies this exact date. His birthdate was presumably arrived at through simple retroactive computation; from this we may conclude that de Visée lived to the age of about sixty-three. Had he been born prior to ca.1660, he of course would have been older, but it is difficult to accept Corrette's assertion that:

this report will enlighten all the world about the unusual merits of the guitar. Indeed, it is observed that all former masters of the guitar lived nearly one hundred years, such as Messrs. Derosiers, Prunier, de Visé, Cheron, and Doyen.¹

Several writers have suggested, even assumed, that de Visée was a pupil of Francisco Corbetta (1615-1681), the celebrated Italian guitar virtuoso. This assumption was presumably based on de Visée's *Tombeau de Mr. franc. que*, an homage to Corbetta, which appears in three

¹ Michel Corrette, *Les dons d'Apollon, méthode pour apprendre facilement à jouer de la guitare par musique et par tablature* (Paris: Bayard, n.d.). This passage is translated in C.R. Farrar, "Seven String Instrument Treatises of Michel Corrette: Translation with Commentary." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: North Texas State University, 1978), p. 211. Corrette himself alludes to his guitar treatise in his *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre la madoline*, 1772. His guitar book was issued prior to the mandoline method.

different versions.² The existence of a dedicatory *tombeau* does not confirm whether de Visée actually was a pupil of Corbetta, particularly since de Visée also dedicated *tombeau* allemandes to other figures, including Tonty, (vieux)Gallot, Mouton, and even his daughters, upon whose death de Visée composed an allemande entitled *La Plainte, ou Tombeau de Mesdemoiselles de Visée, Filles de L'Auteur*. Richard Pinnell states that Corbetta established relations with the French court from as early as ca.1648, the years surrounding his fourth book of guitar music.³ The reputation that Corbetta had developed in France, his involvement as the teacher of the Dauphin in the 1640's, and his guitar books printed in Paris must have lent considerable weight to his already international stature. De Visée must certainly have been familiar with Corbetta's published work; perhaps commencing with what Pinell refers to as Corbetta's "last period" of 1660-1667. Corbetta's book, dedicated to Charles II,⁴ includes a new tuning that features reentrant intervals, a tuning that de Visée was to employ exclusively. Moreover, Corbetta's book contains dances that bear a striking similarity to de Visée's 1682 book of guitar music, including convincing adaptations of Corbetta's rhythms, ornaments, and *batteries*. A deeper stylistic correspondence exists between Corbetta's final extant publication of 1674,⁵ and de Visée's first book. If he actually was a guitar student of Corbetta, the argument should lie on the strength of de Visée's continuation of Corbetta's achievements.

The somewhat scant information pertaining to his later activities must be gleaned from various memoirs, period letters, and court accounts. The earliest account of de Visée dates from 1680, when he was roughly twenty-four years old. Jean Leonor Le Gallois de Grimarest (1659-1713) refers to de Visée in his *Lettre ...à Mlle. Regnault de Solier* as a theorbist of renown.⁶ In his published essay, Le Gallois mentions various famous musicians such as the lutenists Gaultier, Blanchrocher, Du But, Mouton, Gallot, and others. Among the keyboard masters figure

² The version for guitar derives from de Visée's *Livre de Guitarre au Roy*, 1682, p. 38. There is a two-staff version at the end of this book (on p. 64) for a melody instrument and basso continuo. A second two-staff version appears on p. 57 of the *Pieces de Theorbe et de Luth, mise en partition...* of 1716, without attribution.

³ Richard Pinnell, *Francesco Corbetta and the Baroque Guitar*. VI.1 (Ann Arbor, UMI Research Press, 1980), pp. 117-21.

⁴ Francisco Corbetta, *La Guitarre Royale....* (Paris: Bonneuil, 1671).

⁵ Idem *La Guitarre royale dediée au roy*. (Paris: Bonneuil, 1674). French Baroque guitar tuning was based on a reentrant tuning; where a higher pitch falls on an inside string rather than an even disposition from the highest to the lowest string. This situation is a result of double strings (called courses), which are normally tuned in octaves. Baroque guitar music of England, Italy, and other countries used an octave or (low) unison on the fourth string. French tuning often observed a higher unison fourth string, pitched up an octave than the 'normal' note.

⁶ François Lesure, "Visée, Robert de," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, pp. 1831-33.

Chambonnières, the Couperins, and d'Anglebert. In speaking of the viol, theorbo, and guitar, Le Gallois writes:

Feu Hotteman a excellé dans la Viole, ou Messieurs de Ste Colombe, Desmarests, & du Buisson excellent maintenant. On voit Messieurs le Moine, Pinel, de Visé, Hurel, & quelques autres encore pour le teurbe, la Guitarre à francisque corbette, Mr de Valroy, & Mr Visé, & ainsi des autres instrumens où quelques-uns se sont signalez par dessus les autres, tant par leurs belles facons de jouer que par leurs doctes ouvrages.⁷

(The late Hotteman [Hotman] was an expert on the viol, where[upon] Messieurs de Sainte-Colombe and du Buisson now show expertise of their own. One sees Messieurs le Moine, Pinel, de Visée, Hurel, and still a few others [for] the theorbo, [for] the guitar, Francisco Corbetta, Mr. de Valroy and Mr. Visée, and the same goes for the other instruments, on which a few [players] surpassed the others, thanks to their excellent playing as well as their erudite works.)

Le Gallois' remarks are particularly intriguing since his letter predates de Visée's printed output. De Visée had apparently developed enough of a reputation as a theorbist and guitarist to warrant inclusion among the most well-known instrumentalists and composers of the day. In the dedication to his 1682 book, de Visée stated that "I believe I would not do injustice to the general public, should I postpone any longer the publication of a little book of guitar pieces..."⁸ This remark implies that he had considered, if not previously prepared these pieces for publication. It may have been on the strength of these suites that de Visée's early reputation was based. This hypothesis corresponds to the date of La Gallois' letter of 1680; we see that de Visée had postponed publication of his first book until 1682. Elsewhere, in the *Advis* to the above mentioned print, de Visée mentions that "I have thought it appropriate to detail these little rules... in this way those who Play my pieces will not experience the Inconvenience I sometimes faced when Playing the music of others." From this we may assume that de Visée was well acquainted with the existing literature for five-course Baroque guitar and French theorbo. Perhaps the observations in the *Lettre...à Mlle. Regnault de Solier* were also based on de Visée's performance of other compositions which predate or are concurrent with Le Gallois.

Among the repertoire of this period is Grénerin's guitar book of 1680.⁹ Grénerin's

⁷ J.L. Le Gallois, *Lettre de M^r Le Gallois à Mademoiselle Regnault de Solier, touchant la Musique* (Paris: E. Michallet and G. Quinet, 1680), pp. 62-3. Reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1984.

⁸ See Appendix 1 for a complete translation of this and other remarks from printed sources. Hereafter all quotations from de Visée's published works will be extracted from this Appendix.

⁹ Grénerin's guitar collection contains about fifteen groups of pieces in different keys. Following the guitar 'suites', the composer set three *simphonies* for two violins with a figured bass line for theorbo and a realized tablature part for guitar. Imbedded among the instrumental *simphonies* are three *Airs* for vocal trio and quartet in both French and Italian, with the same grouping and notation for continuo; a brief continuo tutor follows. Of special interest are the *Airs* for voices

collection may have provided a model for de Visée's books, as both composers include music in mensural notation. Grénerin's *symphonies* are original compositions however, whereas de Visée's pieces are merely arrangements from the guitar versions found earlier in his book; de Visée never assembled a continuo treatise. Perhaps de Visée was disparaging Grénerin in his complaints about the lack of detail other authors displayed concerning *batteries*, the intricate right hand strumming patterns. Other guitar books of this period include Carré (1671), Medard (1676), and Nivers (1666), and are extremely reticent on the issue of the *batterie*. Another likely influence is Corbetta's book of 1671, entitled *La Guitarre Royale, dédiée au Roy....* Corbetta includes continuo instructions, but like Grénerin, appended arrangements of guitar pieces for vocal duo, trio, and quartet, with a figured bass line (unspecified, but possibly for theorbo) and French tablature for guitar.¹⁰ Since Corbetta had taken great pains to explicate the strums (which he calls *repicco*), de Visée was not referring to the Italian master in his remarks.

De Visée at the court

The next mention of de Visée appears in the *Journal* of Philippe de Courcillon, Marquis de Dangeau, whose extensive notes supply us with a remarkably clear account of court life. The *Journal* informs us that on Saturday 11, 1686:

-Le soir S.M. (Sa Majesté) se promena longtemps à pied dans ses jardins; il se recouche toujours sur les huit heures et soule à dix dans son lit; il fait d'ordinaire venir Vizé pour jouer de la guitare sur les neuf heures.¹¹

and continuo, which exhibit an unusual alteration between duple and triple meters. This metric alternation is a feature of French *air de cour* from the mid seventeenth century. See Henry Grénerin, *Livre de Guitarre et autre pièces de musique, meslées de symphonies, avec une instruction pour jouer le basse continue* (Paris: H. Bonneuil, 1680). Reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1977. Grénerin also issued a *Livre de Theorbe*, dedicated to Lully, and published in Paris in ca.1670. Grénerin's title page mentions the inclusion of assorted pieces for theorbo, but only a continuo treatise appears. This source will be discussed in chapter four.

¹⁰ Given Corbetta's stature and the quality of his pieces, it seems unlikely that de Visée would level a complaint against him. Although the mixture of mensural notation with tablature is not peculiar to this period, Corbetta's achievements probably provided a model for Grénerin, as well as the current and following generations of guitar composers. Corbetta's use of both Italian and French tablatures, as well as his prefaces in those languages, made for wide dissemination of his works.

¹¹ Philippe de Courcillon, *Journal du Marquis de Dangeau, publié en entier pour la premiere fois...* (Paris: Didot Frères, 1854). VI. 1, p. 332.

(In the evening His Majesty takes a long walk in his gardens; he always goes to bed at eight o'clock and dines in his bed at ten; he usually has de Visée come at nine to play the guitar.)

As will be discussed later, we may conclude that de Visée took part in the court's musical activities from this period. A lengthier account of de Visée appears in 1688, where he is included in a letter of the violist Jean Rousseau. In his letter, Rousseau clearly refers to de Visée as a gambist in addition to his reputation as a theorbist. Rousseau describes at length and in detail various aspects of viol playing and its players. Additionally, he relates a lengthy scenario involving himself in an unfortunate exchange with de Visée. The acrimony in describing this scene indicates that Rousseau included de Visée among persons with whom he held certain disagreements; this sentiment does not, however, affect the tone of respect with which he refers to de Visée in alluding to his expertise on lute and viol.¹² Little mention of de Visée's powers as a gambist have found its way into modern sources of information. Titon de Tillet refers to his prowess on both theorbo and viol, and groups him with the *excellentes Basses de Violon*.¹³ The close proximity of gamba and theorbo (in range and timbre) make for fascinating conjecture concerning de Visée's musical education, and it remains for further scholarship to explore in depth de Visée's role as a violist.¹⁴

The next mention of de Visée appears in 1690, as an entry in Du Pradel's *Livre Commode*. In the section on *Musique*, de Visée and his son are designated as *Maîtres pour la Guitarre*. Since de Visée did not become the official guitarist to the court until 1719 and began instructing the King in 1695, well after the appearance of the *Livre Commode*, this listing must indicate repute rather than official *charge*, or post. At this time de Visée and his son apparently did not reside at the court, but are found as *Messieurs de Vizé à Luxembourg...*¹⁵ in this source,

¹² François Lesure, "Une Querelle sur le jeu de la viole en 1688: Rousseau contre Demachy," *Revue de Musicologie*, 46 (1960), pp. 181-199. For further remarks on the relationship between these two instruments, a complete quotation and translation of Rousseau's anecdote concerning de Visée, and an examination of Rousseau's debate with De Machy, see chapter four.

¹³ E. Titon du Tillet, *Le Parnasse François* (Paris: Coignard, 1732), p. 675. Titon's further remarks will be discussed below.

¹⁴ De Visée apparently played guitar, theorbo, and viol, but not lute. Although guitar and theorbo are radically different in timbre and range, the reentrant tuning created an uncanny sameness in the first six courses, whereas the standard tuning of the Baroque lute demanded completely different chordal shapes. Theorbo and viol are related timbrally, are both fretted, and utilize similar left hand techniques. Additionally, they were notated both mensurally and in tablature.

¹⁵ Du Pradel (pseudonym Nicolas de Blegny), *Le Livre Commode des Adresses de Paris pour 1692* (Paris: Denis-Nion, 1691). Modern edition of the 1692 edition: (Paris: Daffis, 1878), p. 211. This address probably refers to a street of that name in Paris; the title page to his 1682 book of guitar pieces informs the buyer that the collection *se vend a Paris Chez l'Auteur dans le*

de Visée is listed solely as a guitarist. As for the *Maîtres pour le Luth*, addresses for only Mouton and du Buc (sic du But) figure. He is not included among the *Maîtres pour la Violle*, in which De Machy, Saint-Colombe, Forqueray and Marais merit mention. Surprisingly, de Visée is not found among the listed theorbists who include *le Moyne*,... *Hurel*.¹⁶

The next reference to de Visée is a terse but respectful remark in the preface to a three-act *Comédie* of Jean Palaprat (1650-1721), entitled *Le Grondeur*. In his preface,¹⁷ Palaprat praises a certain famous player of the German flute,¹⁸ comparing his ability to de Visée by stating that he played:

des sons plux doux... Que ceux que De Vizé tire de sa guitare.¹⁹
(of sounds sweeter...Than de Visée draws from his guitar.)

Palaprat's comparison foreshadows a trend that de Visée was to follow in the years ahead. The flute underwent an alteration during the middle of the seventeenth century which transformed the one-piece cylindrical recorder into a three-piece conically-bored "German" flute, with an additional hole and key. Unlike the recorder, this new instrument had a full chromatic range and because of its popularity, began to be included in court chamber events and theater productions. Lully had utilized the German flute by 1681 in his ballet *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, at

Luxembourg...

¹⁶ *ibid.* p. 210.

¹⁷ *Le Grondeur* was actually co-written by Palaprat and Le Bruyère. Following its completion in 1691, the work was reviewed in the thirteenth volume of the exhaustive *Histoire du Theatre François* of that same year. The preface was titled separately as *Les Sifflets* and functioned as a sort of prologue to the play. In French comedies and drama of this period, printed critiques and prefaces were often circulated before the performance, and served an independent, critical function. *Le Grondeur* enjoyed several reprints and was translated (by Sir Charles Sedley) into English. This version was published in 1702 as *The Grumbler*, and a further one-act derivative appeared on stage in 1773; this version was printed as late as 1931.

¹⁸ Although I have been unable to examine this original document, Palaprat may have been referring to either René Pignon Descoteaux or Philibert Rébillé. Both were respected exponents of the transverse flute, received much contemporary praise and as we shall see, performed extensively with de Visée. La Bruyère, in his *Les Caractères*, supposedly modeled his "Fleuriste" after Descoteaux. See J.M. Bowers, *The French Flute School from 1700 to 1760*. (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1971), p. 19.

¹⁹ *Le Grondeur* was played in the Queen's apartment at Versailles in 1727. Musicians apparently took part in this performance as a *simphonie* and *porteur d'instruments* received payment. See Marcelle Benoit, *Musique de Cour: Chapelle, Chambre, Ecurie, 1661-1733* (Paris: Editions A. & J. Picard, 1971), p. 377. An earlier record of performance for this comedie in August 2 and 11, 1712, states that "Le soir, il (the King) fit jouer par ses musiciens la comédie du Le Grondeur..." This citation is noted in M. Benoit, *Versailles et le Musiciens du Roi* (Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1971), p. 70n.

this time two famous proponents of the instrument rose to prominence at the court. Both Philibert Rébille and René Pignon Descoteaux came to have an important impact on the destiny of the flute; de Visée collaborated with both artists on several occasions from this period on. By 1678, Philibert added the post of *joueur de flûte ordinaire du cabinet du Roy* to his post in the *Grand Ecurie* and in 1688, Descoteaux also began serving the royal household. Philibert's playing earned praise from Titon du Tillet and Du Pradel (who both mention de Visée as a master of guitar and theorbo), and the *Mercure de France* described how both Philibert and Descoteaux, at the king's command, performed for him in his apartments or in the woods of Versailles.²⁰ The two flutists must have enjoyed the king's favor in their appearances in the royal apartments or during outdoor walks through the gardens of which Louis was particularly fond. Their situation is reminiscent of de Visée, where he was called upon to amuse the regent at his bedtime. Due to the intimate nature of the Baroque guitar, outdoor performances would have been less successful than indoor settings, and both guitar and theorbo are better suited to smaller chamber groups; notwithstanding the fact that the theorbo was regularly prized for its volume. For this reason, de Visée is only mentioned in the context of ensembles and never in outdoor events, excepting the possibility of multiple theorbos in orchestral concerts or theatrical stagings. As with the viol, the dark timbre of the German flute made the theorbo an attractive accompanying partner. The soft and plaintive sound of the flute found favor at the court, and gave impetus to a school of flute playing that was to flower in France, concurrent with de Visée's career.²¹

Three years later in 1694, de Visée took part in a performance with both Philibert and Descoteaux. Dangeau's *Journal* relates the incident:

Après l'opéra, il alla souper avec elle au petit Luxembourg; où M. le Duc fit venir Descoteaux, Filbert et Vizé pour la musique, Mezzetin et Pascariel pour quelques scènes italiennes; il joua aussi avant souper, et ne repartit pour Versailles qu'à trois heures après minuit.²²

(After the opera, he [the king] went with her [Madame le Duchesse] to dine at the 'petit Luxembourg'; where the Duke had Descoteaux, Philibert and de Visée come to play music, Mezzetin and Pascariel to do some Italian scenes; before supper, he also played and did not head back to Versailles until three hours past midnight.)

If de Visée, Philibert, and Descoteaux were the only musicians present, de Visée probably performed on the theorbo without additional continuo support from either harpsichord or

²⁰ *Mercure de France*, June 1, 1725. This citation appears in Bowers, op. cit., p. 20.

²¹ Bowers, op.cit., pp. 15-21.

²² Phillipe de Courcillon, *Journal du Marquis de Dangeau...* op.cit., VI. 5, p. 112.

viol. The possibility exists that de Visée may have accompanied two flutes on guitar, but without bass support, it seems unlikely. Since they are the only names reported in this account, we must assume that no other musicians were present, although they may have been joined by singers. Another report of de Visée with these two flutists appears in 1696, in a letter from de Coulanges to Madame de Sévigné. Mme. Sévigné was herself an amateur musician as well as prolific writer, and she provided some interesting, although vague observations on the musical life at Versailles. The exchange of letters tells us that this particular ensemble was joined by no less a personage than Marin Marais. These four musicians provided pre-wedding music at the ceremony of Albret and Mlle. de la Trémouille at the Hôtel de Créquy; of that occasion de Coulanges writes:

Les jeunes gens, pour s'amuser, dansèrent aux chansons, ce qui est présentement fort en usage à la cour; joua qui voulut, et qui voulut aussi prêta l'oreille au joli concert de Vizé, Marais, Descôteaux et Philibert; avec cela l'on attrapa minuit, et le mariage fut célébré dans la chapelle de l'hôtel de Créquy.²³

(The young people enjoyed themselves dancing to the songs, which is currently quite fashionable at the court; played whoever wished to, [and whoever wished] could lend an ear to the nice concert of de Visée, Marais, Descoteaux and Philibert; with that, it was soon midnight and the marriage was celebrated in the Chapel of the hôtel de Créquy.)

This particular grouping probably consisted of trios for two *dessus* and continuo, and it has been proposed that this concert may have included Marais' *Pieces en trio pour les flutes, violin, & dessus de viole*, which had appeared in print four years previously.²⁴ These chamber music references are contemporary with a small concordance that seems to have been overlooked by modern historians. In his memoirs, the Marquis de Sourches (1645-1715) makes a brief mention of a payment made to de Visée on August 24, 1698. In the sixth volume, page 27 of his memoirs, the Marquis writes that:

Le Roi... donna 600 l (livres) à Vizé, célèbre joueur de téorbe.²⁵

(The king...generously gave 600 livres to de Visée, celebrated theorbist.)

²³ Letter from de Coulanges to Madame de Sévigné, *Lettres a Madame de Sévigné, de sa famille et de ses amis*, ed. M. Monmerqué, nouvelle édition, vol. 10 (Paris: Hachette, 1862), pp. 352-53. This entry was cited in J.M. Bowers, "The Flute in France from the late Middle Ages up through 1702," *Recherches de la Musique française classique XIX*, (Paris, A. & J. Picard, 1979), p. 40.

²⁴ Bowers, *ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁵ ed. Norbert Dufourcq, *La Musique a la Cour de Louis XIV et de Louis XV d'après les Memoires de Sourches et Luynes, 1681-1758* (Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1970), p. 21.

This payment is in concordance with the court secretary's account on this exact date and in that amount, for de Visée's initial payment at the court.²⁶ The official record refers to the amount as a *brevet*, or "commission." Since the court inventory does not specify de Visée as a guitarist or theorbist, we must assume that he was being recognized for his skills as both a guitarist and theorbist. It seems unlikely that the Marquis would bother to mention de Visée as a 'celebrated' theorbist (in the context of this payment) if he did not receive this royal gift for his theorbo playing. He of course was a highly visible guitarist due to his publications and association with Louis, but this brief account implies that he was an equally skilled and famous performer on theorbo. This inference is in accordance with the regular references to de Visée's appearances with other musicians at this time and it seems to strengthen the supposition that he played theorbo solos and continuo in these ensemble concerts.

Further performances including de Visée are cited in the *Mercure Galant*. In 1701, de Visée appeared in an impressive ensemble including Philibert and Descoteaux, François Couperin, Antoine Forqueray, Jean-Fery Rebel and others as entertainment during a promenade and supper at the chateau at Saint- Maur. Of that performance, the *Mercure Galant* reports:

Dans les intervalles de la promenade & du souper, on fut agreablement diverti par un tres beau concert, composé des Sieurs Couperain, Vizée, Forcroy, Rebel & Favre, Philibert & Descoteaux, & d'une petite Fille âgée de huit à neuf ans...²⁷

(During the intervals of the promenade and supper, among the agreeable diversions was a very beautiful concert composed of Mr. Couperin, Visée, Forqueray, Rebel and Favre, Philibert and Descoteaux, and a small girl around eight or nine years old...)

This large ensemble was comprised of two violins and two flutes, with a continuo section of harpsichord, theorbo (or guitar), and probably bass viol. Bowers makes the interesting suggestion that this grouping would have allowed for a performance of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Sonate pour 2 flûtes allemandes, 2 dessus de violon, une basse de viole, une basse*

²⁶ See Table 1 for a complete inventory of payments that de Visée received at the court.

²⁷ *Mercure Galant* (Paris: s.n., 1678-1701). Citation from July 1701, p. 247.

²⁸ Bowers, op.cit., p. 41.

²⁹ Charpentier's *Sonate* (ca.1686) predates all other extant French instrumental sonatas. The theorbo partbook lacks measures that had been incorporated into the almost identical harpsichord part. This indicates that probably no theorbo participated in the first performance of this work. See J.L. Sadie, "Charpentier and the early French ensemble sonata," *Early Music* 7, (1979), pp. 330-335. The pairing of harpsichord and theorbo as continuo partners was not unusual. Marais for example, suggested their use in the preface to his *Pièces a une et à deux violes* (Paris: Bonneuil, 1686). Further usage of this continuo practice is recommended by Michel de la Barre: "On peut jouer seul la plus grande partie de ces Pièces. Lorsqu'on voudra le faire en Partie, il

de violon à 5 cordes, un clavecin, et un théorbe,²⁸ had there been a *bass de violon* player present.²⁹

Ensembles of this size are unusual in the extant references to de Visée's chamber music activities as he generally performed in smaller groupings of two, three, or four players. For instance, de Visée performed with only Descoteaux on October 27, 1703, at Sceaux. Dangeau recorded the event in his *Journal* as:

Le soir, chez madame de Maintenon, le roi entendit Vizée et Descoteaux et les fit jouer longtemps. Après la musique Monseigneur et madame le duchesse de Bourgogne jouèrent au lansquenet.³⁰

(In the evening, at Madame de Maintenon's, the king heard de Visée and Descoteaux and had them play for a long time. After the music Monseigneur and madame the duchesse of Bourgogne played a game of lansquenet.)

We again find de Visée at Sceaux the following year with Descoteaux. This pair was joined by Forqueray and the harpsichordist Jean-Baptiste Buterne.³¹ Of this concert Dangeau writes:

Le roi arriva ici sur les quatre heures, se promena dans le jardins jusqu'à la nuit, fit abattre quantité d'arbres verts, et donna beaucoup de bons avis à M. du Maine pour l'embellissement de ses jardins. Au retour de sa promenade il y eut chez madame de Maintenon un concert de Descoteaux, Forcroy, Vizée et Buterne.³¹

(The king arrived at four o'clock, walked through the gardens until nighttime, had a number of trees chopped down and gave many a good advice to Mr. du Maine regarding the improvement of his gardens. After the promenade, there was a concert by Descoteaux, Forqueray, de Visée and Buterne at madame de Maintenon's.)

faudra prendre absolument une Basse de Viole, & un Théorbe ou un Clavecin, ou les deux ensemble." (Most of the pieces can be played alone. When you shall want to play with others you absolutely must have a bass viol, and a theorbo or a harpsichord or both together). *Pièces pour la flute traversiere, avec la basse continue* (Paris: Christophe Ballard, 1702), *Advertissement*.

³⁰ Dangeau, op. cit., VI. 9, p. 332. De la Barre actually preferred the sound of the theorbo to the harpsichord in realizing bass figures. The mellowness of gut strung theorbos blend with the characteristically dark sound of traverso more homogeneously than do the metal strings of the harpsichord. De la Barre voices his preference in his *Advertissement* to his work cited above as: "Mais je crois que le Théorbe est à préférer au Clavecin..." (But I think the theorbo must be preferred to the harpsichord...)

³¹ Unfortunately, none of Buterne's (ca.1650-1727) works have survived apart from a brief manuscript entitled *Petites règles pour l'accompagnement*. Buterne was active as a teacher and player at the court between 1678 and 1721; his post was then succeeded by Jean-François Dandrieu.

³¹ Dangeau, op. cit., VI. 10, p. 161.

A further reference is made in 1705 concerning de Visée's chamber music activities. He again appeared in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon with the two flutists. Dangeau again reports that:

Il y eut avant souper un petit concert chez madame de Maintenon, de Vizé, Descoteaux et Forcroy."³²

(Before the supper, there was a little concert given by de Visée, Descoteaux and Forqueray at madame de Maintenon's.)

The final mention of de Visée as a chamber musician appears in 1710 where he is specifically described as a theorbist. In his memoirs, the Marquis de Sourches recalls a concert that had taken place in the royal chapel. He writes that:

Le soir, le Roi revenant de Trianon passa chez elle (the duchess of Bourgogne), où il trouva une très belle symphonie, composée de des Costeaux, pour la flûte allemande, de Vizé pour le théorbe, de Buterne, pour le clavecin, et de Fourcroy, pour le basse de viole. Le roi s'y arrêta assez longtemps...³³

(In the evening, the king, back from Trianon, went by to visit the duchess of Bourgogne, where he found a very beautiful symphony in progress, comprised of Descoteaux on the German flute, de Visée on the theorbo, Buterne on the harpsichord, and Forqueray on the bass viol. The king spent a rather long time there..)

These concerts reveal a development that had emerged at the court at roughly the same time de Visée produced his first book of guitar music. Although both books had been dedicated to the glory of the king, France had suffered its first major military failures since the establishment of Louis' regime. These defeats had depleted the national treasury and with the death of Jean-Baptiste Lully in 1687, the *Musique du Roi* underwent a decline of morale; particularly in the areas of spectacle and opera. The moderation and distaste of excess that Madame de Maintenon (the king's mistress) upheld served to draw Louis away from the ostentatious spectacles, comedie-ballets, and *tragédie lyriques* that he had enthusiastically attended. In the wake of financial pressure and theatrical disinterest, Madame de Maintenon established musical recitals in her private chambers at Versailles. These entertainments often included select groups of nobles and high ranking officials; it was in these concerts that de Visée and his colleagues regularly performed.³⁴ Although no record survives, it is tempting to surmise whether de Visée took part in the

³² Dangeau, *ibid.*, VI. 10. p. 428.

³³ Marquis de Sourches, *Mémoires du Marquis de Sourches sur le règne de Louis XIV*, ed. G. J. Cosnac and E. Portal, XII (Paris: Hachette, 1892), p. 136.

³⁴ Robert Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 310.

concerts royaux organized by Madame de Maintenon during 1714-15 at Versailles. Since the names of other theorbists do not appear in the sources documenting chamber concerts that I have examined for this study, it seems plausible to suggest that de Visée may have played some part in the *concerts royaux*, as well as other chamber concerts cited here. Since de Visée (unlike Le Moine and Campion) was probably not attached the *Académie Royale de Musique*,³⁵ he probably made himself available for these chamber concerts in Versailles. Due to his close contact with Louis, de Visée may have been a likely, even preferred candidate for ensemble concerts.

Some of the more conspicuous musicians at the court were held in favor by the regent or certain nobility. Both Marin Marais and Antoine Forqueray (with whom de Visée played with in 1701) maintained ties with Phillipe de Bourbon, Duc d'Orléans, who was to assume the throne when Louis died in 1715. Forqueray instructed the duke in viol playing and Marais dedicated his second book of viol pieces to him in 1701. It was through the duke's request that Marais join Forqueray, François Couperin, de Visée, Rebel, Descoteaux, and others at Saint-Meur, as cited above. De Visée himself dedicated his 1716 publication of instrumental pieces to the duke. Musicians from the *chambre* (and no doubt other departments) were regularly employed to provide chamber and dance music for social gatherings that took place in the royal apartments three evenings a week during winter. An accurate account of one of these evenings is provided by Elizabeth Charlotte (wife of the king's brother) to her sister-in-law, Wilhemine Ernestine. On December 6, 1682 (the year of de Visée's first publication), "Liselotte" writes:

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday is *jour d'appartement*. All the gentlemen of the court assemble in the King's antechamber, and the women meet in the Queen's room at 6 o'clock. Then everyone goes into procession to the drawing room. Next to it there is a large room, where fiddles play for those who want to dance. Then comes the King's throne-room, with every kind of music, both played and sung. Next door in the bed-chamber there are three card tables, one for the King, one for the Queen and one for Monsieur. Next comes a large room-it could be called a hall-with more than twenty tables covered in green velvet with gold fringes, where all sorts of games can be played. Then there is the great antechamber where the King's billiard table stands, and then a room with four long tables with refreshments, all kinds of things-fruit tarts, sweetmeats, it looks just like the Christmas spread at home. Four more tables, just as long, are set out in the adjoining room, laden with decanters and glasses and every kind of wine and liqueur. People stand while they are eating and drinking in the two last rooms, and then go to the rooms with the tables and disperse to play... This goes on from six to ten and is what is called *jour d'appartement*. If I could describe the splendour with which all

³⁵ Evidence for this hypothesis is provided in the next section dealing with de Visée's professional affiliation with the court. There is no evidence to suggest that he was a member of the *Académie*.

these rooms are furnished, and the amount of silver there is everywhere, I should go on forever. It is really worth seeing.³⁶

The following illustration is an engraving by Antoine Trouvain which depicts one of these entertainments in a *jour d'appartements*. This particular concert is attended by the Duc de Bourgogne, Madame, the Duchess de Chartres, the Duc de Chartres, Mademoiselle (his sister), the Duchess du Maine, and the Princess de Conty. The musicians are placed in a separate gallery and the entire scene is illuminated by a crystal chandelier. In a novel of Madeleine de Scudéry entitled *Le Grand Cyrus*, a description of such a chamber concert states that the musicians are set in a gallery for the convenience of the audience- where one is not obliged to offer compliments to the performers.³⁷

From about the turn of the century onwards, several nobles attempted to emulate Maintenon's efforts to restore the former luster that the king's musical establishment had displayed. One of these nobilities was the duc and duchesse du Maine, who created a center of musical activity at their château in Sceaux. The duchesse sponsored comedies and ballets to the praise of her guests, and patronized musicians to take part in her efforts.³⁸ De Visée's participation at Sceaux in 1703-4 and in the royal chambers reflect only partially what extensive involvement he must have exercised. It is very likely that he took a much more frequent part in these smaller concerts than the few isolated examples reported here may attest.

Eulogies and later references

The above mentioned concerts shed light on de Visée's activities around the court and offer an idea as to what sort of ensembles he took part in. The recitals in the royal chambers and various apartments may have included solo pieces in addition to differing combinations of instruments; it is difficult to hypothesize as to what instrument he provided continuo accompaniment and solos upon, if any. The possibility certainly exists that he may have played solos on theorbo as well as guitar, but no document that I have examined has mentioned him in a dual role of accompanist and soloist, much less as a performer on different instruments in the same concert. It is unfortunate that Dangeau does not specify which instrument de Visée performed on in his

³⁶ This passage is translated in M. Kroll, *Letters from Lisiolette* (New York: Mc Call Publishing Company, 1971), p. 40. Lisiolette was the Duchesse d'Orleans, wife of the Duc.

³⁷ Quoted by A. P. Mirimonde in *L'Iconographie musicale sous les rois Bourbons* (Paris: Picard, 1975), VI, 1, p. 183.

³⁸ Isherwood, op. cit., pp. 312-13.

ILLUSTRATION 1

*Concert in the Fourth Room of the Royal
Apartments. Engraving by Trouvain.
Cabinet de Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale.*



QUATRIÈME CHAMBRE DES APARTEMENTS

evenings with Descoteaux, Philibert, Marais, and others, but fortunately the Marquis de Sourches does specify de Visée as a theorbist. We can be certain that theorbo was an accepted, sometimes preferred continuo accompaniment. In this light it seems reasonable to assume that de Visée played theorbo in both solo and ensemble situations and guitar in mainly solo performances. The possibility also exists that he may have provided continuo accompaniment on guitar, but this situation usually demands the support of a bowed (or wind) bass instrument. We are assured that he played guitar solos when he was called upon to amuse the king; François Le Cocq affirms this in eulogizing that:

Mons.^r Robert De Visée a été renommé par toute la France par l'honneur qu'il a en de Jouer si souvent devant Louis XIV ce Grand Roy, et de luy avoir dédié son livre de Guitarre en l'an 1682 ouvrage, a ce qu'il marque, de plusieurs années.³⁹

(Monsieur Robert de Visée has gained recognition throughout France, from the honor he enjoys of playing so often [in front of] Louis XIV, this great king, and of having dedicated to him his book of guitar [pieces] in 1682, a work of several years, as he himself writes.)

A further citation describing de Visée as a theorbist appears in Titon du Tillet's monumental *Le Parnasse François*. Although de Visée's does not warrant inclusion in the *Liste des Poètes et des Musiciens*, he is mentioned among other illustrious instrumentalists in the *Description du Parnasse François*:

Qu'on forme sur notre Parnasse un Orchestre de tant de fameux Jouers de toutes sortes d'instrumens, qui ont paru pendant le regne de Louis le Grand,...les Couperins...pour l'Orgue & le Clavecin,... les Philiberts, les Descoteaux, les la Barre, les Blavets, pour la Flute; les Marais, les Forquerays pour la Viole; les Gaultiers, les le Moine, les Visés, pour le Luth & le Théorbe....⁴⁰

(May, in our Parnassus, an orchestra be formed, made up of as many famed players of all kinds of instruments, as appeared during the time that Louis the Great reigned... the Couperins... for the organ and the harpsichord, the Philiberts, the Descoteaux, la Barre, the Blavets, for the flute; the Marais, the Forquerays for the viol, the Gaultiers, le Moine, the de Visées for the lute and theorbo...)

Although the three players of plucked instruments are mentioned in close proximity, Gaultier is the only lutenist, whereas Le Moine and de Visée are recognized here for their accomplishments on the theorbo. Titon again mentions de Visée in the inventory of players of the

³⁹ François Le Cocq, *Recueil des Pièces de Guitarre...* (Gand: Pharailde, 1729). Reprint: *Thesaurus Musicus*, Série A. (Brussels: Editions Culture et Civilisation, 1979). This quotation derives from the unnumbered introduction.

⁴⁰ Titon du Tillet, op. cit., p. 44.

Orchestre du Parnasse. This is an obvious allegorical representation of the large corpus of instrumentalists at the court; Titon consistently employs iconographical images to represent divinity. Louis himself is repeatedly referred to as *l'Apollon du Parnasse*.⁴¹ In this section, de Visée receives meritorious praise as a player of the viol:

Marchand & Visé excellentes Basses de Violon, & le Moine le plus habile des Joueurs de Tuorbe les accompagneront. Philibert, Des Coteaux, les deux Hottetteres, Lucas, y charmeront par le son de leur Flute.⁴²

(Marchand and de Visée, excellent 'Basses de violon' [bass viol], and le Moine, the most skilled of theorbo players, will accompany them. Philibert, Descoteaux, the two Hottetteres and Lucas will charm [the listeners] with the sound of their flutes.)

It is interesting to observe that Titon praises de Visée as a guitarist, theorbist, and violist. In a footnote to the above quotation, Titon remarks that de Visée received an official *charge* as court theorbist in 1725. Only Titon and the Marquis de Sourches mention de Visée as having received compensation for his duties as a theorbist. The records of payment administered by the *Secretariat de la Maison du Roi* make no mention of de Visée as a theorbist, so it seems that he had to first wait for his predecessor to die. If this is so, then it bears a strong resemblance to his situation with the title of *Maitre de Guitarre*. Perhaps there were other reasons that he did not receive royal recognition for his services as a theorbist until quite late. Titon informs us that:

Visé qui succéda à la mort de Le Moine à la Charge de Tuorbe de la Chambre du Roi, mort vers 1725.⁴³

(De Visée, who succeeded to the death of le Moine, deceased around 1725, to the post of theorbo player to the king.)

It must be noted that *Le Parnasse François* was issued in 1732. Although Titon speaks of the players in the *Orchestre du Parnasse* in the present tense, he had thoroughly chronicled salient musicians from the mid-sixteenth century until 1732. Many musicians that he speaks of were already dead by this time so this particular source, while providing valuable biographical

⁴¹ The academies of the court constantly associate Louis with the sun and hence, Apollo. Even before his birth, Louis XIV was identified with Apollo, and a medal fashioned in 1638 depicts him, yet unborn, as leading the sun on a chariot. The famous *Ballet du Roy des Festes de Bacchus* of 1651 featured him in a dancing role dressed in a brilliant costume of flames. The entire palace of Versailles is in fact, an opulent edifice on this theme. See R. Isherwood, op. cit., pp. 166-69.

⁴² E. Titon de Tillet, op. cit., p. 675.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 675n.

information, does not provide exact details of his death date. Titon does supply exact information for most of the poets and musicians whose names appear in the *Ordre Chronologique des Poetes et Musiciens*. Perhaps de Visée was living until immediately after the publication of Titon's massive tome; this is consistent with the supposition that he passed away following his last recorded payment in 1732.

A final biographical eulogy appears quite late, in 1780. In his imposing, four-volume *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne*, Jean Benjamin de Laborde (1734-1794) includes de Visée in his listing of *Musiciens Français*. Laborde's quotation tells us that:

Visée (Robert de), fameux Jouer de guitarre, fit graver en 1682 & 1686 plusieurs livres de sa composition, en tablature & en musique.⁴⁴

(Robert de Visée, famous guitar player, had several books of his composition engraved in 1682 and 1686, both in tablature and in music [staff notation].)

It is problematic to attempt to extract a consistent pattern from these isolated biographical references. Clearly, de Visée had established a firm reputation as a guitarist, but he clearly possessed gifts worthy of attention on theorbo and viol. It is possible that during the decade following his printed guitar music (1682-92), de Visée may have enjoyed a reputation primarily as a guitarist, secondly as a theorbist, and probably lastly as a violist. Even though he is praised as a theorbist in two sources, this seems to be eclipsed by the reputation and official post held by le Moine. Rousseau is the only extant source from this period that alludes to de Visée's capacity as a violist, and apparently none of his tablature for theorbo found its way into print.⁴⁵ It must be kept in mind however, that Le Gallois praised de Visée's theorbo playing as early as 1680. It may also be that de Visée's reputation was not founded on memoirs and court accounts, but on his actual printed output. His two editions of tablature for the five-course Baroque guitar may well have overshadowed the 1716 issue of pieces (derived from versions for guitar, lute, and theorbo) in a two-staff, continuo format.⁴⁶ Certainly the appearance of the books in 1682 and

⁴⁴ Jean Benjamin de Laborde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris: P.-D. Pierres, 1780), Tome III, Livre V, p. 539. Reprint: New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1978.

⁴⁵ In the *Avirtessement* to his 1716 book of treble-bass arrangements of lute and theorbo pieces, de Visée remarks that "Several authors might have wished me to add a third staff onto the music wherein to print the tablature... but there are so few people capable of understanding the tablature system that I have thought best not to increase the size of my book..." De Visée may have felt compelled to print theorbo tablature had that notational system still been in wide use. François Campion makes a similar remark in his treatise of accompaniment of 1716, which will be discussed in chapter four.

⁴⁶ Robert de Visée, *Pieces de Theorbe et de Luth, Mises en Partition, Dessus et Basse. Composées par M^r. De Visée, Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy* (Paris: Roussel,

1686 may have weighed de Visée's reputation toward his guitar music, despite his ensemble activities at the court.⁴⁷

Another factor that may have influenced his reputation is the fact that the king played guitar, however modestly. As an instrument of fashion, it may have overshadowed his accomplishments on other instruments, regardless of proficiency. Around 1692, reports of his chamber music activities begin to accrue, and they occur rather steadily until about 1705. Given the instrumental groups that he joined, I propose that de Visée accompanied primarily on theorbo. It is possible that he included theorbo solos in his chamber music performances, and played continuo on both theorbo and viol. Although the extant references are sparse, they afford an opportunity to view de Visée in the light of his contemporaries, especially masters such as Marais, Couperin, and Forqueray. His life at the court must have been musically rich, and his exemplary performance skills probably elicited a wide range of praise; much broader than the unfortunately narrow biographical picture that we must draw.

1716). As we shall see, some of the treble-bass staff arrangements that appear in this book are derived from guitar originals of which no versions for lute or theorbo are extant.

⁴⁷ Musicians employed in various capacities at the court were often forced to supplement their incomes by playing at the Opera or teaching in Paris. Outstanding instrumentalists sought jobs in the orchestras of Paris, and the modest income at the court often did not provide its employees with sufficient capital. Hence, many of the most noted musicians in the *Musique du Roi* made their real reputations in the town.

Conditions of Court Employment

On lit dans l'Histoire qu'Achille, Epaminondas, Alexandre, Tite, Severe-Alexandre & plûpart des Heroes de la Grece, & des Empereurs Romains se plaisient à chanter & à jouer de quelques Instrumens, en quoi plusieurs ont excellé, comme ceux que je viens de nommer. Sans avoir recours à l'antiquité, on citeroit plusieurs Princes des derniers siecles, qui chantoient facilement, & composoient même des Ouvrages de Musique. Parmi nos Rois, on nommeroit Charles IX. qui possedoit le Musique & chantoit d'un très grans goût; Louis XIII. qui a compos plusieurs Motets: & l'on peut dire que Louis XIV. qui se connoissoit très bien en Musique, ne trouva pas indigne de lui s'amuser a jouer de la Guitarre, q'il touchoit avec beaucoup de délicatesse.⁴⁸

(It is read through history that Achilles, Epaminondas, Alexander, Titus, Severus Alexander, and most heroes of Greece as well as Emperors of Rome enjoyed singing and playing of musical instruments, some being excellently skilled, as the ones I just mentioned. Without referring back to Antiquity, one could mention several Princes of the previous centuries, who could sing with ease and even compose musical works. Among our kings, one could name Charles IX, who was knowledgeable about music and could sing with great taste; Louis XIII, who composed several motets; and one can say that Louis XIV, who knew music quite well, did not find it unworthy of him to play the guitar, on which he was gifted with quite a delicate touch.)

De Visée's tenure to the court of Louis XIV coincided with a period of great artistic productivity. The original chateau of Versailles was enlarged in 1682 (the year of de Visée's initial publication) to become the seat of royal power throughout Louis' reign. Under Louis' appointment, the Florentine musician Jean Baptiste Lully (1633-1687) came to have an overwhelming influence on French musical taste, and his domination eclipsed the careers of many famous musicians at the court and in Paris. D'Anglebert, Couperin, Marais, Forqueray, Charpentier and other brilliant musicians served under Lully's supervision; often a suppressive environment that carefully channeled creativity into a means of royal glorification. Coupled with a fierce national pride was Louis' military impositions throughout the greater part of his reign. The rebellions of the Fronde (1648-1653) inspired Louis to reduce the powers of nobles and to wage almost continuous war from 1667 on.

Three years prior to Louis XIV's birth, Cardinal Mazarin⁴⁹ had declared war on Spain. From 1635 on, France was engaged in occupations in Portugal and Spain; during this time the Thirty Years War had split several European countries into allied forces. Paralleling Louis' birth in 1638, France suffered a serious military defeat against her enemy. With the aid of its allies of

⁴⁸ E. Titon du Tillet, op. cit., *Remarques sur la Musique*, pp. xxij-xxijj.

⁴⁹ Jules Mazarin (1602-1661) came to have a dominant influence in the royal councils in 1642, following the death of Cardinal Richelieu. As godfather to the Dauphin, Cardinal Mazarin conducted the businesses of state during the minority of Louis XIV.

Holland, Germany, and Italy, France temporarily abated the war against Spain and in 1660, Louis celebrated his marriage to the Spanish infanta Maria Theresa. During this period the Cardinal had attempted to embellish the court's musical establishment with the regular importation of foreign and especially Italian musicians. It was during this time of civil respite that Mazarin brought a second wave of Italian musicians to the court. Following the coronation of the fifteen year old Louis in 1654, Mazarin arranged the production of a large scale theatrical work of Carlo Caproli, entitled *Le Nozze di Peleo e di Teti*. The core of musicians from that production remained at Versailles to perform in Lully's music dramas, and it was in Lully's *Le Ballet de la galanterie du temps* of 1656 that Corbetta took part, directing an ensemble of guitarists.⁵⁰ Corbetta's works from this time on displayed an increasing amount of French influences.⁵¹

A decade before Louis' marriage to the Spanish infanta and two years prior to Lully's ballet, Cardinal Mazarin brought a guitarist from Spain to instruct the young king, although the first recorded payment for a court guitarist does not appear until 1681. In the atmosphere of national absolutism at Versailles, it is probable that the Spanish guitarist was viewed as another *musicien de l'étranger* of which the court regularly employed. Evidence of this sentiment is provided by the *Secrétariat de la Maison du Roi* who in 1681 reports:

Naturalité pour Bernard Jourdan dit la Salle, natif de St Luc en Espagne, faisant profession de la Religion catholique, apostolique et romaine.⁵²

(Naturalization for Bernard Jourdan called la Salle, born in St. Luc in Spain, who pledges his faith in the Catholic religion, apostolic and roman.)

The prevalent attitude toward foreigners was probably ambivalent. An edict issued much later announcing the union of the Chapel and Chamber (in 1761), reported that the reduction of non-French musicians would allow the *Musique du Roi* to function "without the need for calling upon foreign musicians."⁵³ Evidently, the *Musique du Roi* did not consider de la Salle a regular member of the musical household until this recorded naturalization. De la Salle then became firmly entrenched in the king's music with the title of *Maîtres de Musique et de Danse de la famille royale* around 1684. Under the guidance of de la Salle and possibly Corbetta, Louis was reputed to have become a proficient guitarist.

⁵⁰ R. Pinnel, op. cit., pp. 120-21.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 123.

⁵² M. Benoit, *Versailles et le musiciens du Roi*, op. cit., p. 79.

⁵³ John Edwin Morby, "Musicians at the Royal Chapel of Versailles, 1683-1792." (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation: University of California, Berkeley, 1971), p. 49.

Modern historians have portrayed the young Louis as a frivolous regent bent on pursuing carefree amusements. He was reported to have "escaped from the meetings of the royal council into the dressing room, where he played the guitar and discussed the ballet with a gentleman-in-waiting."⁵⁴ Under the influence of his father who was himself an accomplished amateur composer, Louis XIV developed interests in music and dancing. The young regent also studied harpsichord with Étienne Richard and lute with Germain Pinel, who also served as a court theorbist. Despite Louis' earnestness in harmless distraction, he later realized the importance of utilizing the fine arts and particularly music, to glorify and ennoble the crown. With the establishment and monopoly of the *Académies* in the 1660's, the fine arts became centralized and self-sufficient. French absolutism became a tool for the sole purpose of magnifying and projecting the royal image and in this environment of superiority, the *Musique du roi* became an institution to accelerate France's artistic reputation. One of the duties of the newly established *Académie* was to search the provinces for talent that could be developed at the court. This condition was conceivably similar throughout the courts of Europe, and it may have been through recommendation that Jean Baptiste Lully came to attention of the French court musician Michel Lambert. Lully's name first appears as a *garçon de chambre* from 1646, and it was with amazing rapidity that he rose to prominence within the court.⁵⁵

Lully himself was a guitarist and it was in that capacity that he became known to the Duke of Guise who brought the young musician to Paris.⁵⁶ Through a series of clever and daring political maneuvers, Lully ascended to supreme control of the entire musical household and under the blanket permission of a hastily patented letter issued around 1672, assumed full control over the *Académie* of music. With the production of his first spectacle in 1672, Lully's *Les fêtes de l'amour et de Bacchus* began a series of theatrical productions involving innovative stage machinery, ballet numbers, and often ridiculous, rambling plots. These spectacles were specifically designed to flatter and extol Louis' character and to justify his military exploits. The following illustration is an engraving executed by Le Pautre in 1678 which depicts Louis seated with his royal company during Lully's production of 1672; musicians are placed among the trees in the sets.⁵⁷ Although it is very difficult to discern theorbo heads (in this particular entrée) among the instrumentalists, this engraving may be a stylization of Lully's stage work.

⁵⁴ R. Isherwood, op. cit., p. 115.

⁵⁵ J. Newman, *Jean-Baptiste Lully and his Tragédies Lyriques* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979), pp. 39-42.

⁵⁶ R. Pinnell, op. cit., p. 121.

⁵⁷ François Lesure, *L'Opéra Classique Français, XVII et XVIII^e siècles*. Iconographie Musicale, VI. 1 (Geneva: Minkoff, 1972), p. 14.

Under the obstinant rivalry between their two national styles, France and Italy became involved in heated exchanges over the superiority of their operatic practices; this rivalry was split between two factions that supported or refuted the Lullian style of music drama. This controversy led to violent differences of opinion and often involved differing systems of philosophy such as Grimm and Rousseau. This issue continued well into the mid-eighteenth century, culminating in the Gluck-Piccini rivalry. Certainly these debates must have heightened the ardor of national absolutism at the French court.

It was under the dominant influence of Lully that de Visée first became attached to the court. In the preface to his 1682 *Livre de guitarrre*, de Visée tells us that:

I have attempted to conform to the taste of those who are especially skilled, and to the extent of my abilities I have lent to my compositions a hint of the style of the Inimitable Monsiuer de Lulli: I am convinced, that I remain far behind him...

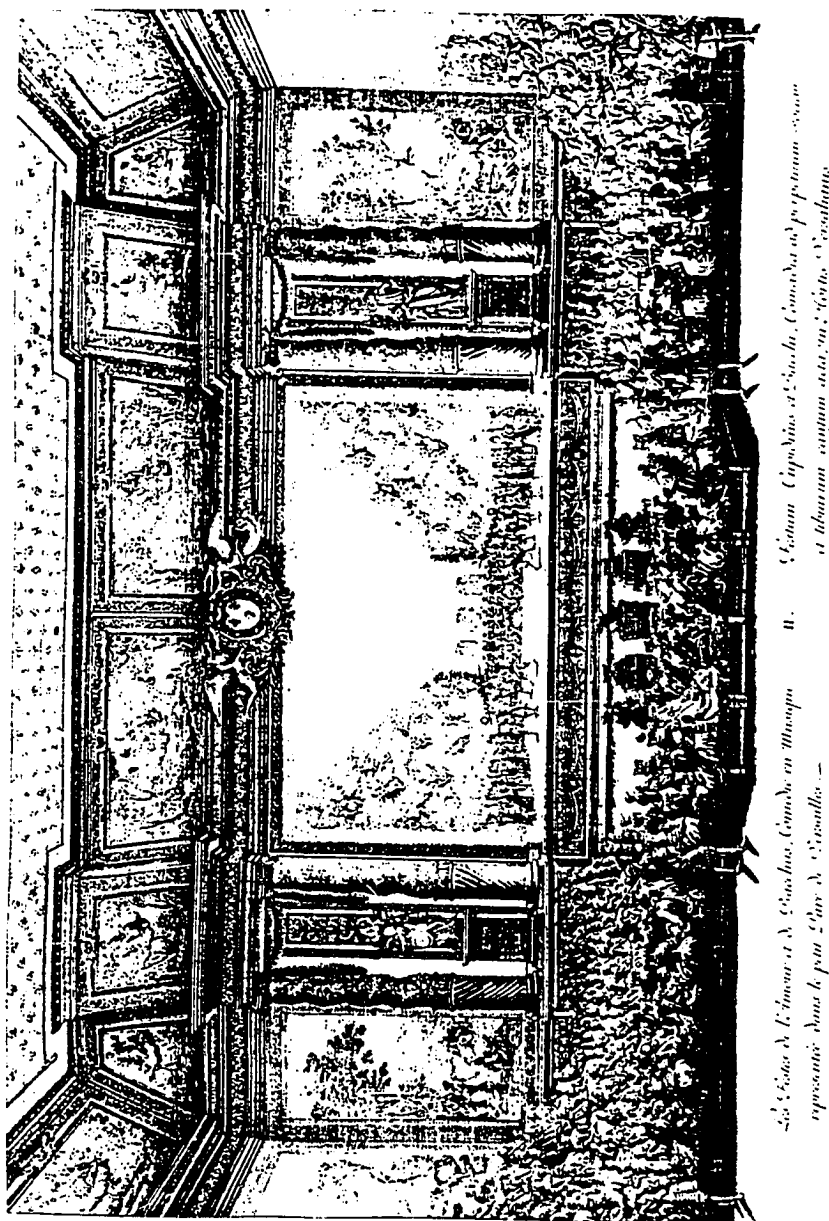
The *Musique du Roi* had regularly utilized theorbists⁵⁸ in larger ensembles⁵⁹ and in the theatre.

⁵⁸ In discussing the use of the transverse flute, Michel de la Barre had later stated that: "...But above all the celebrated Lully. One can say that he ought to be called the Apollo of France, but his elevation meant the downfall of all the old instruments except the oboe, thanks to the Philidors and Hotteterres, who spoiled so much wood and played so much music that they finally succeeded in making the instrument fit for concert use. From then on musettes were left to the sheperds, and violins, recorders, theorbos, and viols took their place, for the transverse flute did not arrive until later." This passage is quoted in French and translated by J. Bowers, "The French Flute School..." op. cit., p. 14.

⁵⁹ In the foreward to his *Florilegium Primum* of 1695, Georg Muffat informs the reader that his collection of suites for string orchestra and continuo "have given in the more gladly, observing that in Germany the French style is gradually coming into the fore and becoming the fashion. This same style, which formerly flourished in Paris under the most celebrated Jean Baptiste Lully, I have diligently sought to master..." This translation appears in Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in the Music History: The Baroque Era* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965), p. 83. In the foreward to his *Auserlene Instrumental Musik* of 1701, Muffat discusses his preference for part doubling, saying that "Your bass, however, will go better on the small French bass than on the double bass used hereabouts, and to this may be added, for the greater ornamentation of the harmony, a harpsichord or theorbo, played from the very same part... But insofar as you may have a still greater number of musicians at your disposal, you may assign additional players, not only to the first and second violin parts of the great choir (concerto grosso), but also to the two inner viola parts and to the bass, further ornamenting this last with the accompaniment of harpsichords, theorbos, harps, and similar instruments; as to the little choir or trio, for it is always to this that the word 'concertino' refers, let it be played singly, but at the same time superlatively well, by your best three string players with the accompaniment of an organist or theorbo player, never assigning more to a part, unless in some unusually vast place where the players of the great choir are exceptionaly numerous, then assigning two at the most." See Strunk, *ibid.*, pp. 90-1.

ILLUSTRATION 2

Final entrée from Lully's *Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus* in the small *Parc* at Versailles. Engraving by Le Pautre (1678), Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale.



The guitar was also regularly used as a continuo instrument in these spectacles,⁶⁰ and certainly multiple theorbos were regularly included in theatre productions as evidenced by contemporary prints depicting the heads of these instruments in the orchestra pit.⁶¹

I have not been able to locate documents which list de Visée as a theorbo player in either the court or the Paris productions of Lully's *tragédie lyriques*. Several names of theorbists appear as regular members of the King's music and they seem to have been employed as continuo musicians in the theatre; the records of the *Secretariat de la Maison du Roi* list Nicolas Hotman, Etienne Le Moyne,⁶² François Pinel and François Campion⁶³ as players of the theorbo and in

⁶⁰ One example of the specific use of the guitar in opera is Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (ca.1689). Purcell loosely emulated Lully in his overall structuring of an allegorical prologue functioning as a political commentary; an overture then follows a formal three-act classical drama liberally punctuated by choreographic interpolations. There is a *chacony* for guitar (Act II scene 1), probably intended to be joined by an archlute. Lully's *Ballet de la galanterie du temps* of 1656 utilized an ensemble of guitars, led by Francisco Corbetta. See Pinnell, op. cit., p. 121. Additionally, Lully's *Hercule Amoureux* of 1662 calls the entree *Pour Mercure Dieu des charlatans* a *Concert de guitares*. In the same work, this designation appears with the air *Concert de Venus et des Ibisirs*. Lully's *Ballet des Muses* of 1666 contains an air in Spanish: *ay que padesca de amour* which is marked *Premiere concert espagnol avec des harpes et guitares*. Lully's use of the guitar in his stage works may have been an outgrowth of Corbetta's popularity at the court.

⁶¹ Opera, oratorio, and church music at the turn of the eighteenth century sometimes call for the specific use of the theorbo, as in works of Fux, Vivaldi, and Handel. See C. Lawson, *The Chalumeau in the Eighteenth Century* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981), s.v. "Theorbo." The instrument was a regular orchestral member in French, Italian, English and German works. Sylvius Leopold Weiss apparently did not favor the use of the theorbo in the more intimate cantata or chamber settings. In a letter to Johann Mattheson in 1723, Weiss indicated that "...I am of the opinion that after the keyboard there is no more perfect instrument than this one [the lute], especially for *Galanterie*. The theorbo and *Archiliuto*, which are quite different even from each other, cannot be used at all in *Galanterie* pieces... I have adapted one of my instruments for accompaniment in the orchestra and in church. It has the size, length, power and resonance of the veritable theorbo and has the same effect, only that the tuning is different. This instrument I use on these occasions. But in chamber music, I assure you that a *cantata a voce sola*, next to the harpsichord, accompanied by the lute has a much better effect than with the *Archiliuto* or even the theorbo, since these two latter instruments are ordinarily played with the nails and produce in close proximity a coarse, harsh sound." As translated by Douglas Alton Smith, "The Late Sonatas of Silvius Leopold Weiss." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Stanford University, 1977), p. 34. There is no evidence to support Weiss' comment on the use of nails, although a single strung theorbo may be played in this way. French theorbists who also played guitar (including Campion, Grenerin, and de Visée) probably did not use nails, as they are more difficult to control on courses than the flesh of the finger.

⁶² Le Moyne is regularly praised as a master of the instrument. The large manuscript of *Vaudry de Saizenay* (which will be discussed later) contains several of his pieces, as do the theorbo manuscripts Vm⁶²⁶⁵ and Rés. 1106. A 1680 production (at Versailles) of Lully's *Ballet du Triomphe de l'Amour* lists Lemoyne as one of the *musitiens* (sic). Among the instrumentalists who participated in this production are Marais, Rebel, and Philibert. De Visée performed with these very musicians on different occasions in the royal apartments. For an inventory of the

some instances, other instruments. For example, members of the orchestra of the *Académie royale de musique* of 1713, 1719, 1725 and 1726 productions in Paris list Bernard Alberty and François Campion as theorbists.⁶⁴ On the title and first page of his *Nouvelles Découvertes sur la Guitarre* of 1705, Campion blantly informs the reader that he is a *Proffeseur-Maitre de Théorbe et de Guitarre de L'Academie Royale de Musique*.⁶⁵

No record has survived to inform us as to how de Visée first became attached to the court. Given Louis' early predilection for the guitar, it may be that de Visée's reputation preceded his appointment at the court and was in fact responsible for this appointment. Certainly Corbetta had made a favorable impact on the court, and since both Louis and Lully had some abilities as guitarists the prevailing favor toward that instrument made de Visée's entry fortuitous. In the *Advirtissement* to his book of guitar music of 1682, de Visée states that the collection is "the fruits of several years of work," that they were already known to Louis, and were "...fortunate enough not to offend you" (the king). From this period de Visée figures in the court accounts of the *Musique du Roi*. Concurrent with these accounts are the occasional references to his chamber music activities under nobility attached to the court which have been cited above.

rehearsals, dancers, and musicians from that production, refer to M. Benoit, *Musique de Cour, Chapelle, Chambre, Écurie, 1661-1773* (Paris, A. & J. Picard, 1971), p. 76. Henry Grenerin also took part as a theorbist in Lully's stage works. Following his court appointment in ca.1641, Grenerin participated in Lully's *Ballet de Psyché* of 1656 and the *Ballet royal de l'Impatience* of 1661. See the article by François Lesure, "Trois instrumentalistes françaises au XVII^e siècle," *Revue de musicologie* xxxvii, (1955), pp. 186-87.

⁶³ Campion is the author of a collection of pieces entitled *Nouvelles découvertes sur la guitarre* of 1705. He also issued a continuo treatise: *Traité d'accompagnement pour le theorbe* in 1716, and an *Addition au traité d'accompagnement* in 1730. Campion's treatises will be discussed in chapter four.

⁶⁴ It should be stated that Lully was granted royal privilege for the establishment of the *Académie de Musique* in March 1672. At that time the activities of the *Académie* and the *Musique de la Chambre* were officially unrelated. Louis had stipulated that Lully was not to draw on the court payroll in presenting his pieces to the Paris public. Since the *Académie* orchestra was comprised of musicians from that institution, the Paris productions of Lully's operas drew on solely *Académie* players. The initial staging was supposed to take place at the court; for these events the orchestra was comprised of both *Chambre* and *Académie* members. See L. Rosow, "Lully's Armide at the Paris Opera: a Performance History: 1686-1766." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Brandeis University, 1981), Pt.1, pp. 277-80. A examination of the lists of musicians that took part in the Paris productions would be necessary in determining whether de Visée actually participated in Lully's stage works. Had he been a member of the *Académie*, however, he probably would have utilized that title in his published output, in addition to the designation *Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy* of 1716.

⁶⁵ Campion first joined the *Académie* in 1705, where he replaced his teacher Maltot. Following his death in 1748, an inventory of his possessions included "...a number of fine guitars, theorbos lutes..." See the introduction by François Lesure in F. Campion, *Nouvelles Découvertes sur la Guitarre...* (Paris: Brunet, 1705). Reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1977.

De Visée must certainly have enjoyed the King's favor, possibly over Bernard Jourdan de la Salle. Despite the official position of de la Salle⁶⁶ as *Maitre de guitarre du Roy*, de Visée was absorbed into the roster of musicians in the *Musique de la Chambre* from 1698; it seems probable that de Visée may have shared a pro-French attitude toward his *charge*. Clearly de Visée preferred the moderation and clearly delineated lines of French "classicism;" perhaps he himself took part in the resistant attitude towards Italianate excess.⁶⁷ It is not difficult to imagine that he preferred Lully's and in turn his own style of composition over foreign influences, perhaps even over the Spanish guitarist already employed at the court. In the *Advis* to his 1682 guitar book, de Visée makes an indirect allusion to Spain and perhaps de la Salle, when he states that:

one will find no *folies d'Espagne* in this book. So many couplets of it are heard in all the concerts that it would be redundancy to repeat the follies of others.

The play of words on the Spanish harmonic progression *La Folia* seems to suggest de Visée's distaste for this genre. This did not, however, prevent him from composing passacaglias and chaconnes based on similar repetitive formulae.⁶⁸

The *Musique du Roi* was, until 1761, divided into three distinct groups. The *Musique de la Chapelle* produced music for religious ritual in honor of the King. The task of the *Musique de la Chambre* was to supply secular music associated with court entertainments, and the *Musique de la Grand Ecurie* was relegated to out-of-door parades and military ceremonies. Of these departments, de Visée held a post as a *chantre ordinaire de la chambre*, or chamber singer. It is probable that this position was given to him to insure his employment at the court. As none of the court documents mention de Visée as a vocalist, this appointment was likely a convenience to justify his position in the *Musique de la Chambre*. As mentioned above, de la Salle had held

⁶⁶ At Bernard Jourdan's death, the post of *Maitre de la guitarre* was inherited by his son, Louis Anne, who was given a *armorial*, or geneal coat-of-arms. See M. Benoit, op. cit., p. 401. De Visée and his son received no such *armorial*.

⁶⁷ De Visée's compositional style will be reviewed in depth in chapter five.

⁶⁸ An unattributed *Folies d'Espagne* appears in Vm⁷ 6265, Rés. 1820, and Rés. 1106. The latter source boasts an additional chordal couplet, although Rés. 1820 has an additional fourth couplet and its sixth couplet is uncopied, showing only a title. This work is probably not by de Visée; this hypothesis is based on the above statement and on the fact that it does not show outward stylistic traits of his theorbo music. In pieces of this nature, it is difficult to speak in terms of individual style. *Folies* of Corbetta, Grenerin, Gallot, and other composers are so similar (as they are based on a recurring harmonic progression) that it is perhaps more appropriate to speak of them as arrangements. This particular theorbo *Folies d'Espagne* does appear among other arrangements of de Visée, however. If it is indeed a work of his, it appears to be a begrudgingly made setting.

his official position since about 1650,⁶⁹ until his death in about 1695, when the post went directly to his son. This procedure was fairly typical in all branches of the King's music, and easily enabled family dynasties to flourish. Through a system referred to as *survivance*, the holder of a *charge* (called *titulaire*) could from any time designate a family successor or *survivancier*. Upon the death or relinquishment of a post, the *survivancier* assumed the duties associated with a particular post. This transmission was generally the prerogative of the holder of *charge*, whose privileges were purchased from the French government.⁷⁰ The assumption of de Visée's sinecure may be borne out by the fact that the King would have probably transferred the title of *Maitre* directly to de Visée had Bernard Jourdan de la Salle not enjoyed the privilege of *survivance*. In hiring de Visée as a *chanvre ordinaire*, de la Salle and his son retained their official designation while allowing de Visée to participate in the court's musical events and to instruct Louis in guitar.

De Visée was also granted the privilege of *survivance*, which he passed on to his son in 1713. A surprising amount of inconsistency in selection and salary is evident during the greater part of de Visée's employment at the court. De la Salle's salary matches that of the *Joueurs d'instruments* of the chamber, of whose names include d'Angelbert, Marais, de la Barre and eventually de Visée. It should be noted however, that many instrumentalists held positions in other departments simultaneously, and that they often had supplemental incomes from other *charges*. For example, François Pinel, a court theorbist, figures regularly as a *chanvre*, drawing a semester salary of 600 ^{lt}, exactly as de Visée. The list of payments as recorded by the court secretary for the three departments of music pose some contradictions and problems. De Visée was regularly referred to as an *ordinaire*; a newcomer who had not previously inherited a *charge*. He himself alludes to this distinction on the title page of his 1716 print of treble-bass arrangements of pieces from plucked string versions. The title page of that publication announces that the pieces enclosed are: *Composées par M^r. de Visée, Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy*. This boastful indication is ample evidence that the distinction of *ordinaire* persisted until at least 1716, if not throughout his employment.

Ordinaires served on a year-round basis and drew an annual salary of 600 ^{lt}. The *chantres* however, served by semester only and earned only 450 ^{lt} during their six-month tenure. The lower ranking *chantres* worked rotationally by semester and earned 600 ^{lt} for their service. These figures are complicated by the fact that de Visée's records of payment fall under the three

⁶⁹ M. Benoit, *Versailles et les Musiciens du Roi* (Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1971) p. 27.

⁷⁰ J. E. Morby, op. cit., pp. 84-89.

headings of *chantré*, *simphoniste*, and *jouer d' instruments*. Further difficulty arises when one considers that Chapel and Chamber vocalists fell under headings of their respective vocal range, and that instrumentalists were also listed as players of *dessus*, *haute-contre*, *taille*, *bass-contre*; this nomenclature also applied to players whose instruments corresponded to these ranges. De Visée's supposed range is never mentioned in the context of a *chantré* and the discrepancy in pay makes this title rather suspect. He must have been given a ranking among the lower *chantres*, as his pay indicates. As mentioned above, this appointment was probably a sinecure that allowed him to draw a salary from the court, even though Louis had already hired a foreign guitarist. Sinecures were not uncommon among musicians who enjoyed *survivance*, and his salaries from the three above mentioned categories render his position at court a rather privileged one.

His payments as a *chantré* from 1709 until 1732 remain at a fixed level; emphasized by the adjective *chacun* (exactly, or each) in the table below. It is unclear whether this adjective refers to the amount of compensation itself or to payments made to both Robert and his son; it may be that the secretary merely mentioned François with his father because of the *survivance*. This seems more probable than the former since *chacun* is used twice (in 1713 and 1715) in reference to only Robert. Following his appointment as *Maitre de Guitarre* in 1719, de Visée seems to draw a double salary as guitarist and *chantré*. Although his services as an instrumentalist appear under the heading of *simphonist*, he continued to earn a salary appropriate to a *maitre*. Perhaps the indication of *simphonist* refers to a combined role of chamber participant and orchestral member. It is unclear as to how de Visée received payment for his appearances in the apartments of certain nobility, but certainly he must have been paid from the *cassette* of the King or the payroll of the *Menus Plaisirs* for his regular services at the bedside of the King.

Both *chantres* and *ordinaires* received donations in the form of bread, wine, veal, mutton, capons, turkey-cocks, game, etc., during Easter, Pentecost, All Saint's Day, and Christmas. In addition to this privilege, chamber musicians were entitled to a daily *entretennement* of fifty *sous* per day, to defray costs of food, lodging, and dress. Other grants and sums were available to the musicians of the King's music; pensions and gratifications were available to outstanding instrumentalists. Additionally, musicians were entitled to *nourriture*, or nourishment, which enabled its recipients to meet the costs of food, of keeping of a horse, and other expenses. De Visée is reported to have received this type of recompense on at least three occasions: in 1713, 1715, and 1717.⁷¹ The supplemental source of income in the form of gratifications seem to be the

⁷¹ The information concerning salaries, various grants and other compensations is gleaned from Morby, op. cit., pp. 84-116. This section on court employment is largely based on Morby's research.

only source of explanation for the occasional discrepancies in de Visée's payment. In 1717, he received the annual salary of 600 ^{lt} as a guitarist; he also received an additional sum of 912 ^{lt} (as a *chantré*) for *nourriture*, and again another 87 ^{lt} for nourishment as a *simphonist*. The records of the court secretary do not mention special payment for opera productions of that year. These sums may reflect his increasing activity in the royal apartments at this time; they may also reflect on his 1716 publication of pieces although it remains unclear as to whether he had earned additional income at the court through that printed issuance.⁷² Titon's mention of a *charge* as a theorbist does not affect de Visée's payment of 1725, nor do the headings of *joueur d'instruments* and *maitre de guitarre* affect this annual salary of 1200 ^{lt}. We have already established that the Marquis du Sourches' note of 1698 is reflected in the court records. Although the royal *brevet* makes no mention of an instrument, the Marquis specifically calls de Visée a 'celebrated' theorbist. From this we may surmise that he was called upon to play both guitar and theorbo in situations appropriate to those instruments, even though the royal records mention only his official title of guitarist. It is not surprising that these inconsistencies would arise given the haphazard and loosely organized manner of the court records; even other theorbists such as Pinel, Le Moyne, and Campion receive compensation for capacities other than their main or secondary functions. Perhaps the inception of de Visée's tenure as reflected in the Marquis' note is a sort of recognition of de Visée's skills on both guitar and theorbo (and possibly viol). In this light, it appears reasonable to propose that de Visée's *charge* was indeed a mere formality and the vacancy and his subsequent title as a *chantré* had no bearing whatsoever on his instrumental skills. This situation is the mark of a valued and esteemed member of the musical establishment.

From the earliest recorded payment until 1719, de Visée's salary always falls under the heading of *chantré*, excepting the initial *brevet* in 1698 and a brief grant of 87 ^{lt} in 1717, under the category of *simphonist*. The title of *chantré* persisted until 1731, but the designation of *joueur d'instruments* also appears from 1720. From this we may deduce that de Visée continued to draw from the payroll of *chantres*, but did not fulfill vocal duties. Following Bernard de la Salle's death in about 1695, de Visée received the designation of *Maitre de Guitarre* in 1719. This act signalled de Visée's official appointment as Louis' teacher, although he may have instructed the king from the beginnings of his court tenure. Apparently de Visée did not receive compensation for this duty until three years later, in 1722, as ordered by the house treasurer in that year. The following table lists all of de Visée's payments at the court; for the terms used in

⁷² Additionally, Louis Jourdan de la Salle also received a full 1200 ^{lt} for his services as the *joueur de guitarre du Roy* in 1717.

the court secretary's accounts, the following definitions have been adopted: *charge* refers to an office, post, or employment. *Décharge* means a discharge or exoneration. *Ordonnance* refers to an ordinance, and a *brevet* signifies a patent or warrant. A *pension* is an allowance or annuity, and *gages* represents wages or salaries. These terms are used in the translation of the payments shown below. The royal household paid its domestics and musicians (among other classes of servants) in two ways: either through *à gages* or *à recompense*. The latter refers to a payment made after three or four years of service and was subject to the whim of the master, usually for a domestic service; some musicians preferred salary in this fashion. The former term refers to the regularly salaried positions in the *chambre*. For those who received payment *à gages*, the transactions (in *livres*) recorded by the court secretary do not refer to actual monies paid or received.

The basic monetary unit in France during this period was the silver *écu*, valued at twenty *sols*, and renamed the *Louis*. French currency was comprised of the *pistole*, or *Louis d'or*, valued at ca.490 grains of silver; the *Louis d'argent* was valued at half the gold coin. The *écu* was worth five *sols* and the *livre* about twenty. As stated, de Visée's payments do not refer to an actual monetary unit; rather, it designates a "money of account," of purely transactional purpose. The amount of six-hundred *livres* had been a standardized amount for many musicians, subject to a steady decline of value since the fifteenth century. Hence, the salary of six-hundred *livres* was worth about one third its value from 1600. Taking into account the relative decline of monetary value (about .039 per cent per year) between 1589 and 1671, the fixed amount of six-hundred *livres* does not represent an overly generous compensation. The stated wages are, however, not always a measure of income as an individual may have received gifts, grants, or other compensations.⁷³

The inventory of payments indicates de Visée's initial absorption into the roster of the

⁷³ The information on French currency and methods of payment is extracted from Charles C. Onion, "The Social Status of Musicians in Seventeenth Century France." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: University of Minnesota, 1959), pp. 103-8.

⁷⁴ De Visée performed with and authored at least one arrangement of music by Marin Marais. It is interesting to surmise whether ties between both families continued after Robert's death. The final citation listed here (in 1733) shows that François de Visée resigned from his position at the court, transferring his office to Jean Louis Marais, the youngest of Marin's male children. Since Marin's inheritance had gone to Vincent Marais in 1728, the year of Marin's death, François de Visée's resignation probably allowed the court secretary to bestow the office to Jean Louis Marais. It is unclear whether François de Visée had requested or was involved with this transference.

TABLE 1

INVENTORY OF
PAYMENTS⁷⁵

August 24 1698, Versailles:

Brevet de 600 lt de pension, en faveur du Sr Robert de Visée. ("Patent for a 600 lt allowance in behalf of Sr Robert de Visée").

October 30, 1709, Versailles:

*Brevet de chantre ordinaire de la musique de la chambre, pour Robert de Visée...*⁷⁶ *Le Roy... voulant traiter favorablement Robert de Visée, en consideration de sa capacité et de l'honneur qu'il a ee d'enseigner au Roy a jouer de la guitarre, sa Majesté luy a accordé et fait don de la charge de chantre ordinaire de la musique de la chambre, vacante par la mort de Laurent Dupré, pour en jouer par leá. de Visée aux gages de six cent livres employez dans l'estat general de sa maison... sans neantmoins qu'il puisse pretendre aucune chose a la nourrimenuues affaires de sa chambre, de laquelle nourriture sa Majesté a fait don a Jean Simon du Verger...* ("Patent of chantre ordinaire de la musique de la chambre for Robert de Visée ...The King ...deems to give his favor to Robert de Visée in consideration of his abilities and of the honor that is his, to teach the King how to play the guitar, Her Majesty has granted him and given him the office of *chantre ordinaire de la musique de la chambre*, left vacant by the death of Laurent Dupré, to be used by the aforementioned de Visée with wages of 600 lt... yet without his being authorized to claim any of the *nourriture*, which her Majesty has donated to Jean Simon du Verger...")

July semester, 1709 under the heading *chantres*:

A François Pinel, l'un des chantres ord^{re} de la musique du Roy, et a Laurent Dupré, nommé en survivance par brevet du (prem) ier septembre 1671 et receu le 14 juillet 1709, et encore a

⁷⁵ This inventory is extracted from Marcelle Benoit's thorough research on court payments to musicians during this period. The reader is invited to refer to his *Musique de Cour...*, op. cit., s.v. "Visée, Robert de." This source also contains payments made to de la Salle, François de Visée, Le Moyne, and other theorbists and musicians at Versailles.

⁷⁶ This act is also mentioned in a supplemental register of 1705.

Robert de Visée nommé et retenu en lad. charge au lieu du S^r Dupré deffunt,... ("To François Pinel, one of the *chantres ordinaire de la musique du Roy*, and to Laurent Dupré, named through *survivance* by a patent dated Sept. 1st, 1671, and received July 14th, 1709, and also to Robert de Visée named and maintained at the above-mentioned post in place of Sr Dupré, deceased...")

March 18, 1710, Versailles:

Ordonnance de descharge, pour payer a Robert de Visée, chancre ordinaire de la musique de la chambre, pourveu a la place de Laurent Dupré, les gages de lad. charge, depuis le decez dud. Dupré, nonobstant qu'il n'ait presté serment que le 17 mars de la presente année. ("Ordinance of discharge to pay to Robert de Visée, *chancre ordinaire de la musique de la chambre*, named in place of Laurent Dupré, the wages of the afore-mentioned office, since the demise of Sr Dupré, though he [de Visée] has only taken oath on March 17th of this year.")

April 23, 1710, Versailles:

...a Jean Simon Du Verger la nourriture de cinquante sols par jour attribuez a la charge da chancre ordinaire de la musique de nostre chambre, dont nous avons fait don aud. Du Verger, a commencer du 23^e octobre 1709, jour du decez dud. Dupré, nonobstant qu'il n'en ait obtenu le Brevet que le 30 du mesme mois... ("...to Jean Simon Du Verger, the *nourriture* of 50 sols per day, reserved to the office of *chancre ordinaire de la musique de nostre chambre*, which we have given to Sr de Verger, starting Oct. 23rd, 1709, day of the demise of of Sr Dupré, though he [du Verger] only obtained the warrant on the 30th of the same month.")

August 22, 1713, Marly:

Survivance de la charge de chancre ordinaire de la musique de la Chambre du Roi, en faveur du fils Robert de Visée, successeur de son père. Il touchera les 600 lt de gages attribués à cette charge, mais non les 50 s de >nourriture< par jour, dont le Roi a fait don à Jean Simon Du Verger, par son brevet du 23 octobre 1709. ("Survivance of the office of *chancre ordinaire de la musique de la Chambre du Roi*, in behalf of the son of Robert de Visée, successor of his father. He will earn the 600 lt attributed to that office, yet will not receive the 50 s of *nourriture* per day, the sum which has been attributed to Jean Simon Du Verger, through the warrant of Oct. 30th, 1709.")

Musique de la Chambre under the heading *chantres* 1713:

A Robert de Visée...(chacun)600 lt ("To Robert de Visée... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under chantres 1714:

Robert de Visée et son fils en survivance...(chacun)600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son, through *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under chantres 1715:

A Robert de Visée;...(chacun)600 lt ("To Robert de Visée... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre under the heading

Nourriture et entretènement des O,fficiers, 1715: A Simon du Verger, auquel le Roy a accordé, par brevet du 3^e octobre 1709, la nourriture attribuée a la charge de chancre ordinaire, dont Robert de Visée a esté pourveu, par brevet dud. jour... 912 lt ("To Simon du Verger, to whom the King has granted, through the warrant of Oct. 3rd, 1709, the *nourriture* reserved for the office of *chancre ordinaire*, office that has been attributed to Robert de Visée, according to the warrant issued the same day... 912 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under chantres 1716:

Robert de Visée et (blank) de Visée son fils en survivance... (chacun)600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son, through *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under chantres 1717:

A Robert de Visée, chancre... 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée, *chancre*... 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under Etat la depense que le

Roy veut et ordonne estre faite pour la nourriture et entretènement des officiers de la musique de sa Chambre 1717: A Jean Simon du Verger, auquel le Roy accordé par brevet du 3 octobre 1709 la nourriture attribuée la charge de chancre ord^{re} dont Robert de Visée a esté pourveu par brevet dud. jour... 912 lt 10s ("State of the expenses that the King desires and orders to be made on the *nourriture*... to the officers of the *musique de sa Chambre*: To Jean Simon du Verger, to whom the King has granted through the warrant of Oct. 30th, 1709, the *nourriture* reserved for the office of *chancre ordinaire* which was obtained by Robert de Visée according to the patent issued the same day... 912 lt 10s.")

Musique de la Chambre... under the heading simphonistes 1717:

A Robert de Visée... 87lt ("To Robert de Visée... 87 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under chantres 1718:

Robert de Visée et (blank) de Visée son fils en survivance... 600lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*... 600 lt.")

September 18, 1719:

Retenue de M^e de guitarre du Roy, pour Robert de Visée, par le deceds de Louis Jourdan de la Salle aux gages de 1.200 lt seulement. ("Title of *Maitre de guitarre* to the King, given to Robert de Visée at the death of Louis Jourdan de la Salle, the wage of exactly 1,200 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, under chantres 1719:

Robert Visée et (blank) de Visée son fils en survivance;...(chacun)600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, 1720, under Jouers

d'instruments: Robert de Visée, joueur de guitarre... 1.200 lt ("To Robert de Visée, guitarist... 1,200 lt.")

and under *Chantres*:

Robert de Visée et (blank) son fils en survivance... 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*... 600 lt.")

July 4, 1721, Paris:

Survivance de maitre de Guitarre du Roy, pour François de Visée, sur la demission de Robert de Visée, son pere, aux gages de 1.200 lt suelement. ("Survivance of guitar teacher to the King, for François de Visée, after the resignation of Robert de Visée his father, with wages of 1,200 only.")

Musique de la Chambre, 1721, under Jouers d'instrumens:

Robert de Visée, joueur de guitarre... (chacun) 600 lt ("Robert de Visée, guitarist... [each] 600 lt.")

and under *Chantres*:

Robert de Visé et (blank) Visé son fils en survivance;... (chacun) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

July 2, 1722, Versailles:

Ordonnance de decharge au Sr Dupuis, Tresorier de la Maison du Roy, pour payer à Robert de

Vizée, M^e de guitarre du Roy, pourvû a la place de Louis Jourdan de la Salle, les gages èchus depuis le 5 septembre 1719, nonobstant qu'il n'en ait esté pourvû que le 18 et presté serment le 23 dud. mois. ("Ordinance of discharge to Sr Dupuis, issued by the Treasurer of the House of the King, to pay Robert de Visée, guitar teacher to the King, named in place of Louis Jourdan de la Salle, the wages due since Sept. 5th, 1719, even though he only was named to the office on the 18th and sworn in on the 23rd of the same month.")

Musique de la Chambre, 1723, under Chantres:

A Robert de Vizée;... (chacun) 600 lt A Robert de Vizée, joueur de guitarre du Roy... 1.200 lt ("To Robert de Visée... [each] 600 lt.") ("To Robert de Visée, guitarist to the King... 1,200 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre,

1725,⁷⁷ *under Chantres: A Robert de Visée; (chacun) 600 lt Robert de Vizée, joueur de guitarre du Roy... 1.200 lt* ("To Robert de Visée; [each] 600 lt.") ("To Robert de Visée, guitarist to the King... 1,200 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, 1726, under Joueurs

d'instrumens: Robert de Visée, joueur de guitarre, et François de Visée son fils en survivance... (chacun) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée, guitarist, and François de Visée, his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

and under Chantres:

Robert de Visée et (blank) de Visée son fils en survivance;... (chacun) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*;... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, 1727, under Joueurs d'instrumens:

Robert de Visée, joueur de guitare, et François de Visée son fils en survivance... (chacun) 600 lt

⁷⁷ In this year another register of the King's music stated that *Pierre Henry Lagneau, petit luth de la Musique de la Chambre, demande, en consideration de 27 ans de service, l'agrement de la survivance de sa charge, qui est un semestre, en faveur de Jean Simon de Verger, déjà chanter de la musique de la Chambre en survivance de Robert de Visé, a fin de procurer une substance aud. de Verger, et luy une recompense qu'il en tirera (bon).* ("Pierre Henry Lagneau, *petit luth de la Musique de la Chambre*, requests on account of his 27 years of service, the favor of the *survivance* of his post which amounts to one semester, in behalf of Jean Simon de Verger, already *chanter de la musique de la Chambre* through the *survivance* of Robert de Visée, in order to provide earnings for the aforementioned de Verger, and counterpart for himself [Lagneau].") See Benoit, op. cit., p. 348.

("To Robert de Visée, guitarist, and François de Visée his son in *survivance*... [each] lt.")

and under *Chantres*:

Robert de Visée et (blank) de Visée son fils en survivance... (*chacun*) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique de la Chambre, 1729, under *Joueurs*

d'Instrumens: Robert de Visé, joueur de Guitarre; et François de Visé, son fils en survivance...(*chacun*) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée, guitarist; and François de Visée, his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

and under *Chantres*:

Robert de Visé et (blank) Devisé, son fils, en survivance... (*chacun*) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique (de la Chambre), 1731, under *Joueurs*

d'instrumens: Robert de Visée, joueur de Guitare, et François de Visé son fils en survivance... (*chacun*) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée and François de Visée, his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

Musique (de la Chambre), 1732, under *Joueurs*

d'instrumens: Robert de Visé, joueur de Guitarre, et François de Visé son fils en survivance... (*chacun*) 600 lt ("To Robert de Visée, guitarist, and François de Visée, his son in *survivance*... [each] 600 lt.")

October 25, 1733, Fontainbleau:

Survivance de la charge ordinaire de la musique, pour Sr Jean Louis Marais, (sur la) demission de François de Visée. ("Survivance of the office of *ordinaire de la musique*, for Sr Jean Louis Marais, on the resignation of François de Visée.")

royal music organization until his probable death in 1732.⁷⁴ This list indicates payments made to de Visée as a guitarist; none of the existing documents from the court secretary identify him as a theorbist or gambist. It was very common for instrumentalists to be proficient on more than one instrument, and this kind of versatility was even expected, in order to "eliminate the inconvenience that could result from the absence of some of (the members of the orchestra)."⁷⁸ As we have seen, the musicians that took part in the *Musique de Roi* included some of France's greatest performers, but certainly the requirement of proficiency on multiple instruments could render less than satisfactory results. Even vocalists in the Chapel occasionally held *charges* in two different vocal ranges. The *Musique de la Chambre* had already boasted inclusion of two of the most celebrated French theorbists when de Visée first became affiliated with the court. We have already surmised that he further developed his reputation as a theorbist with the court approximately ten years following his appointment as a guitar instructor, as evidenced by the references of Dangeau, Titon, and the *Mercure Galant*. This does not preclude the fact that he was already an accomplished theorbist at the time of his initial appointment, and the required proficiency on multiple instruments at the court does not reflect unfavorably on de Visée's skills as a performer on guitar or theorbo, although it may have increased his likelihood of employment.

It is from period references of de Visée's musical activities and his printed comments that supply us with the surviving information on his life. However scant the existing data, it serves to delineate the broader aspects and periods of de Visée's life. Admittedly, more biographical information may exist that would shed additional light on his life or music, but the present work is intended to merely lay a groundwork for further study in this area. De Visée lived and worked during a most engaging period of Louis' reign. Through his activity at Versailles and in Paris, he flourished as a master of guitar and theorbo, and received much contemporary praise for his exemplary playing and compositions. Through three printed books of music, de Visée distributed his pieces in an approved format, and several circulated manuscripts contained variants of his guitar and theorbo pieces in both tablature and mensural notation. The references to his chamber music activities mention him in the company of many famous masters of the time; it is through this limited but impressive information that Robert de Visée prominently emerges as the greatest exponent of the French theorbo.

⁷⁸ Morby, op. cit., p. 47.

CHAPTER III

THE FRENCH THEORBO

Origins and etymology

The *théorbe*, as it came to be known in France, had its origins in Italy. As one of the most important instruments of early Italian monody and opera, the chitarrone, or *ticrba* was called upon to accompany the voice by composers such as Peri, d'India, Caccini, Calavieri, Monteverdi, Gagliano, and others. From its beginnings around 1580, the Italian chitarrone was intimately tied with the voice, and this association persisted throughout its life. Although its invention was claimed by Alessandro Piccinini,¹ Mersenne,² Bonini and Doni identify the inventor of the chitarrone as Antonio Naldi, also referred as *il Bardella*. Caccini praised Naldi's playing, of which he said was the best *parti di mezzo*; Caccini was referring to Naldi's skill at continuo realization, and of fashioning inner moving voices.³ Further evidence of Naldi as the inventor of the chitarrone is furnished by Emilio de' Cavalieri in his letter to Luzzasco Luzzaschi. In this correspondence, Cavalieri describes Caccini's visit to Ferrara and writes that:

¹ Piccinini claims invention of the instrument in the prefacing chapters to his *Intavolatura di Liuto, et di chitarrone: Libro Primo* (Bologna, Moscatelli, 1623). Facsimile reprint: Bologna: Forni, 1962. In these prefaces he states that he had the Paduan luthier Chrisofano build a lute with an extremely long body to accommodate the extended bass strings. Since the instrument lacked resonance, he had another built with an additional pegbox to extend the basses beyond the fingerboard. With this success he claimed invention of what he calls the *arciliuto*. Piccinini's music, along with Kapsberger, Melii, Castaldi, and Pittoni form the basis of the solo repertoire for the chitarrone. For a complete quotation and translation of Piccinini's remarks, see D. A. Smith, "On the Origin of the Chitarrone," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* XXXII, 1979, #3, pp. 448-52.

² Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle*, 3 vols. (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1635). In Roger Chapman's translation of the third book of instruments, Mersenne writes that "...it was about thirty or forty years ago that Bardella invented it at Florence." *Harmonie Universelle*, translated by R. Chapman (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1957). For a complete translation of his remarks and the accompanying illustration, see below in the section on theorbo definitions.

³ Giulio Caccini, *Le nuove musiche* (Florence: Marescotti, 1602); reprinted 1606, 1607, 1615. For a translation of Caccini's preface, see the modern edition of this work by H. Wiley Hitchcock (Madison: ?, 1970).

Mi anche detto che a S:A: ha sadisfatto molto il suo Chitarone, et il modo de la Cordatura, del quale S:A: ne voluto il ritratto et veramente se V.S. sentisse Antonio Naldi detto il Bardello musico di questa A:, il quale lui lo hà inventanto, et lo suona in tutta ecc.^{za} crederei che sodisfacesse infinita.^{le} a V.S., et partico.^{le} per cantarvi sopra.⁴

He [Caccini] also told me that his highness [Alfonso II d'Este] was very satisfied with his chitarrone and the mode of tuning, of which his highness wanted the drawing. And truly if you could hear Antonio Naldi, called *il Bardella*, a musician of his highness's here, who invented it and plays it excellently, I believe you would be infinitely satisfied, particularly when it accompanies singing.

Other period sources praise and identify Naldi as the inventor of the chitarrone. Although he, as with Piccinini, may have brought the instrument to the attention of the public, Naldi may have been more responsible for the establishment of accompaniment to the monodic style; whereas Piccinini later published solo repertoire.⁵

It has been suggested that the Italian term *tiorba* was adopted to emulate the image of a Greek *citharoedist* who sang or intoned verse, and accompanied himself on the instrument.⁶ Although the Florentine preoccupation with ancient music and Greek ideals served as a basis for the introduction of the chitarrone, the nomenclature varied from its inception until about 1659. Both the terms *chitarrone* and *tiorba* were used interchangeably, and the former found favor among in the title pages to printed music- possibly to capitalize on its classical implications. The earliest known reference to the term *tiorba* as a plucked-string instrument appears in a letter from Pietro Strozzi to Giulio Caccini of 1595.⁷ The first printed mention of the term occurs in an Italian-English dictionary of 1598, entitled *The Worlde of Wordes*. Here Florio describes the *tiorba* as "a kind of musical instrument used among countrie people" and in the 1611 edition as "a musical instrument that blind men play upon called the Theorba".⁸ In a letter from the Ferrarese courtier Leonardo Conosciuti to Cardinal Liugi d'Este, dated the 26th of February, 1585, further evidence of the theorbo's association with blindness is made. In a description of a public festival, Conosciuti writes:

⁴ H. Prunierères, "Une lettre inédite d'Emilio del Cavaliere," *La revue musicale* IV (1923), pp. 128-33. This English translation appears in D.A. Smith, op. cit., p. 447.

⁵ Further citations of Naldi's invention are furnished by K.B. Mason, "The Chitarrone and its Repertoire in Early Seventeenth-Century Italy." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Washington University, 1983), pp. 24-26.

⁶ R. H. Herman, "Dialogo della musica antica et della moderna of Vincent Galilei: Translation and Commentary." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: North Texas State University, 1973), p. 728. This information is related in D. A. Smith, op. cit., pp. 444-45.

⁷ See Mason, op. cit., p. 2n.

⁸ Robert Spencer, "Chitarrone, Theorbo and Archlute," *Early Music* IV (1979), p. 411.

Ne vi fu cosa che potesse piacere al popola, se non quel carro d'Orbi che cantavano, ch'ando anco la matina, su'l quale era Figotta con una Tiorba dinanzi che non havea ne corde, ne cosa che buona fusse se non che vole(v)ano il molinello, et con quel moto, et con le sue zannate facea ridere la Brigata.⁹

There was nothing there that could please the people except the cart of singing blind men, which circulated during the morning as well, and on which was Figotto with a *tiorba* [hanging] in front of him that had neither strings nor anything else that was good, except that they demanded the little whirlingig [motion], and with that motion and with his jokes he made the brigade [of onlookers] laugh.

Another example of this term is reported in a document of May 8th 1596, from the Florentine organ builder Francesco Palmieri. In a request for payment for a keyboard instrument operated by wheels, he complains that:

Il ser.^{mo} gran Duca de(ve) dare lire otanta sono per fattura de un istrumento in tre pezzi a uso di tiorba da sonare per forza di rote dove vi e stato di molto perdimento di tempo in condurli e rimasti imperfeti fatovi atorno alchune spese e tuto per servitio di S. A. Ser.^{ma} con ordine del sig.^{re} Emilio de Calavieri quali strumenti uno a uso de spineta senza corde e senza tastatura e due case con cinque ruote per ciaschuno et tute di legname.¹⁰

(His highness the Grand Duke must pay eighty lire for the building of an instrument in three sections in the manner of a *tiorba*, played by means of wheels. There was much time wasted making them, and they remained imperfect and caused some [extra] expenses, all in the service of his highness upon the order of Signor Emilio de' Calavieri. The instruments, one in the manner of a *spineta* [still] without strings and without keyboard and two cases with five wheels for each, and all in wood).

These early references indicate that the use of the term *tiorba* or *theorba* here designated a hurdy-gurdy. The word may have mutated from *viola da orbo* (blind-man's viol) and subsequently adopted by musicians at the Florentine court; it has been proposed that this term was a nickname for the newly invented lute-type instrument.¹¹ By 1600, *tiorba* had become synonymous with the chitarrone, and the latter became the accepted term outside of Italy. The use of the term chitarrone seems to have been abandoned about 1630 in Italy, and the generic *tiorba* became the accepted term. Various adaptations of the Italian *tiorba* became standardized elsewhere. The English called it *theorbo*, the Spanish *tiorbia*, the German *theorba*, and the French *théorbe*, or *tuorbe*.

⁹ This quotation and translation appears in D. A. Smith, "On the Origin of the Chitarrone," op. cit., pp. 458-59.

¹⁰ D. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 459.

¹¹ Smith, op. cit., p. 461. Historians seem to have overlooked that *tiorba* is probably a combination of *theo* and *orbi*: an obvious allusion to Homer.

Tuning and construction

Of the instruments in use during the late sixteenth century, the lute seems to have had the strongest associations with the Greek *cithara*. Under the influence of Italian Renaissance humanism, experiments lengthening the lute's strings in order to improve its bass resonance may have sprung from a desire to refashion the image of an ancient instrument for modern usage. During the earliest period of the chitarrone's life, the ten-course Renaissance and large bass lute were still in existence; the primary difference between them and the chitarrone was tuning. One solution to the characteristically weak bass-string sound on lutes was to couple the thicker string with a thinner mate pitched at its octave, reinforcing the upper partials of the diapason. With larger lutes, the thickness of the lowest strings, even when tuned to just below breaking point as recommended by several writers, does not alleviate the problem of weak resonance. Even the octave doubling of courses did not substantially increase the resonance required for vocal accompaniment, especially in larger ensembles or in the theatre. The addition of a second pegbox on the bass side of the head allowed for a longer string length as well as for playing the bass courses (or single-strung basses) near the bridge, thereby producing a louder, brighter sound.¹² Clarity of bass lines, especially the deepest pitches, was a requirement in accompanying monody, vocal ensembles, and playing with other instruments, and this concern for volume and clarity must have prompted stringing experiments and the adaption of the *tiorba*. Other types of lutes with bass extensions did exist, and their morphology and terminology is a source of difficulty for the student of seventeenth and eighteenth century plucked string instruments. The nomenclature may vary from source to source, even with a given author, which tends to obscure or confuse its meaning. For this study the term *tiorba* or *théorbe* refers to a large lute with a single nut and an extended pegbox, as opposed to those instruments of differing configuration. Even those instruments which conform to the above description may be referred to (depending on their various tunings) as a theorbo-lute, *archiliotto*, and *liuto attiorbato*.¹³

¹² The lengthening of low pitched strings is a common technique of harpsichord building, but one that is relatively rare to fretted string instruments before ca.1590. An inventory dated 1566, however, lists "ain fischbaine Lautten mit zwei Kragen" ("a whalebone lute with two heads") in the possession of Raymund Fugger in Augsburg. The second pegbox probably housed additional or extra basses. Another type of instrument may be seen in an undated Florentine painting, recently re-attributed to Valerio Marucelli, from ca.1600. This information derives from Mason, op. cit., p. 22. Experiments with the additional pegboxes and longer basses may have occurred before Piccinini and Naldi, but its use in Italy at the onset of the seventeenth century had such widespread ramifications that it is (for purposes of the present study) more appropriate to use the *stile recitativo* as a starting point.

¹³ A description of various types of lute instruments appears in an informative article by Friedmann Hellwig, "The morphology of lutes with extended bass strings," *Early Music* 9 (1981), pp. 447-54.

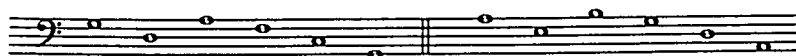
The earliest *tiorbas*, prior to the addition of a second pegbox, may have been adapted bass lutes, and the reentrant tuning of the *tiorba* proper may have grown out of the pre-existing tuning of the bass lute. The following example shows two different tunings, a whole step apart, of the bass lute:

Example 3-1: Tuning of the bass lute.



This next example illustrates an adapted bass lute, where the normally pitched bass lute is strung up a perfect fourth. Due to the tension on the first string, it must be lowered an octave. This situation (depending on the string length and thickness) usually demands that the second string also be lowered an octave:

Example 3-2: Adapted bass lute.



By adding diatonic basses we arrive at the tuning, in G and A, of the standard theorbo. The following illustration depicts two sizes of the instrument. The larger has an overall string length of ca.160 centimeters and was employed for ensemble use; the length of the fingerboard strings was ca.89 centimeters. Of the smaller instrument, its fingered string length was ca.76

centimeters, whereas the unstopped diapasons reached ca.120 centimeters. As noted in more detail below, this smaller theorbo was used for solo pieces.¹⁴

Although theorbo tuning may have arrived through an adaption of the bass lute, it is also closely related to the standard G-pitched Renaissance lute. The tuning of the Renaissance lute (referred to as *vieil ton*) remained in existence in France until ca.1630. This was gradually superseded by the standardized D minor tuning of the Baroque lute. The following example shows the tuning for a ten-course, G-pitched Renaissance lute:

Example 3-3: Renaissance lute tuning.



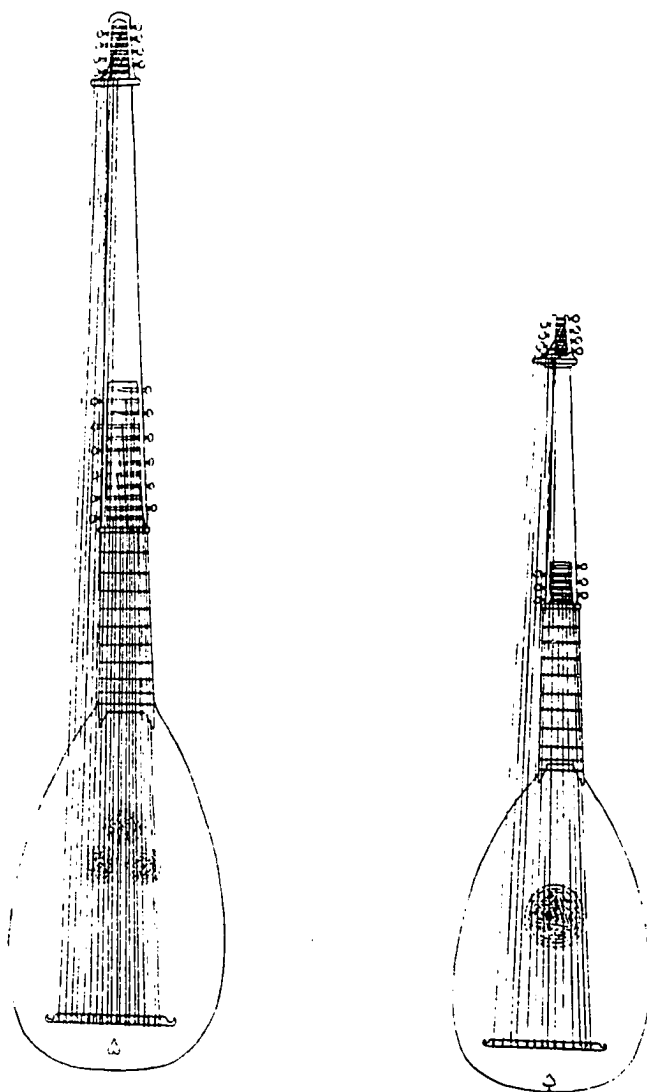
If we imagine an enlarged Renaissance lute with a longer than normal string length, it would still require that the first, if not first two courses be pitched down an octave. The addition of eight unstopped basses would then complete the stringing of the fourteen course theorbo. This greater overall string length of the theorbo does not allow for the first two courses to remain at their higher pitch since the gut material would not withstand that pressure without breaking. In order to retain the intervallic relationship, notwithstanding octave displacement, of the Renaissance lute, (or a transposed bass lute), the first two courses necessarily had to be lowered an octave: this created a reentrant situation where the third string is actually the highest pitch. In continuo playing, one could utilize chord shapes that had already been in use on the ten-course lute. The reentrant tuning however, created inversions and different spacings for chords; therefore one must either tolerate this problem or invent different left hand positions.¹⁵ While some

¹⁴ This illustration is extracted from an excellent study in continuo playing on various lute instruments. See Nigel North, *Continuo Playing on the Lute, Archlute and Theorbo* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). pp. 12-13.

¹⁵ A late French source, cited below, expresses favor toward this feature of the instrument. Benjamin Laborde writes that *Le charme de cet instrument est le reversement de l'harmonie, qui y est naturel par son accord ouvert*, "The charm of that instrument is the inversion of the

ILLUSTRATION 3

Large and smaller theorbo.



Definitions

Several writers and compilers of essays and dictionaries define the instrument according to its national or regional use. In order to narrow the scope of period definitions as they pertain to the present study, only descriptions that shed light on the history or development of the French theorbo will be examined. One of the earliest authors to provide a detailed woodcut illustration of the theorbo in France is Marin Mersenne. Although Mersenne provides painstaking detail throughout the third book on instruments, he makes the unfortunate error of identifying an archlute with a theorbo, which he corrects in a later list of errata.¹⁶ In his initial publication and in the section he calls "Proposition 1," Mersenne provides us with the following description of the theorbo:

The first figure on the right is nothing but a lute augmented with a new neck which serves to give a greater range to the last four strings, that is to say, to the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh, which have a sound as much lower in pitch as they are longer, and as much louder as they are thicker. This lute with two fingerboards is called the theorbo, which often has only a single string for each course, although this one has all its courses double, except that of the highest string, which is single."¹⁷

The following illustration shows Mersenne's depiction of the lute and Notice that Mersenne indicates A as the regularly employed tuning. With regards to the illustration, he continues to give misleading information on the theorbo: the instrument depicted in the woodcut is too small for a theorbo proper, and has only eleven courses. Although the pitches indicated are correct for the first six courses, he does not specify (in the graph above the instruments) any reentrant tunings. Furthermore, the problem is worsened by his explanation of its tunings for which he says:

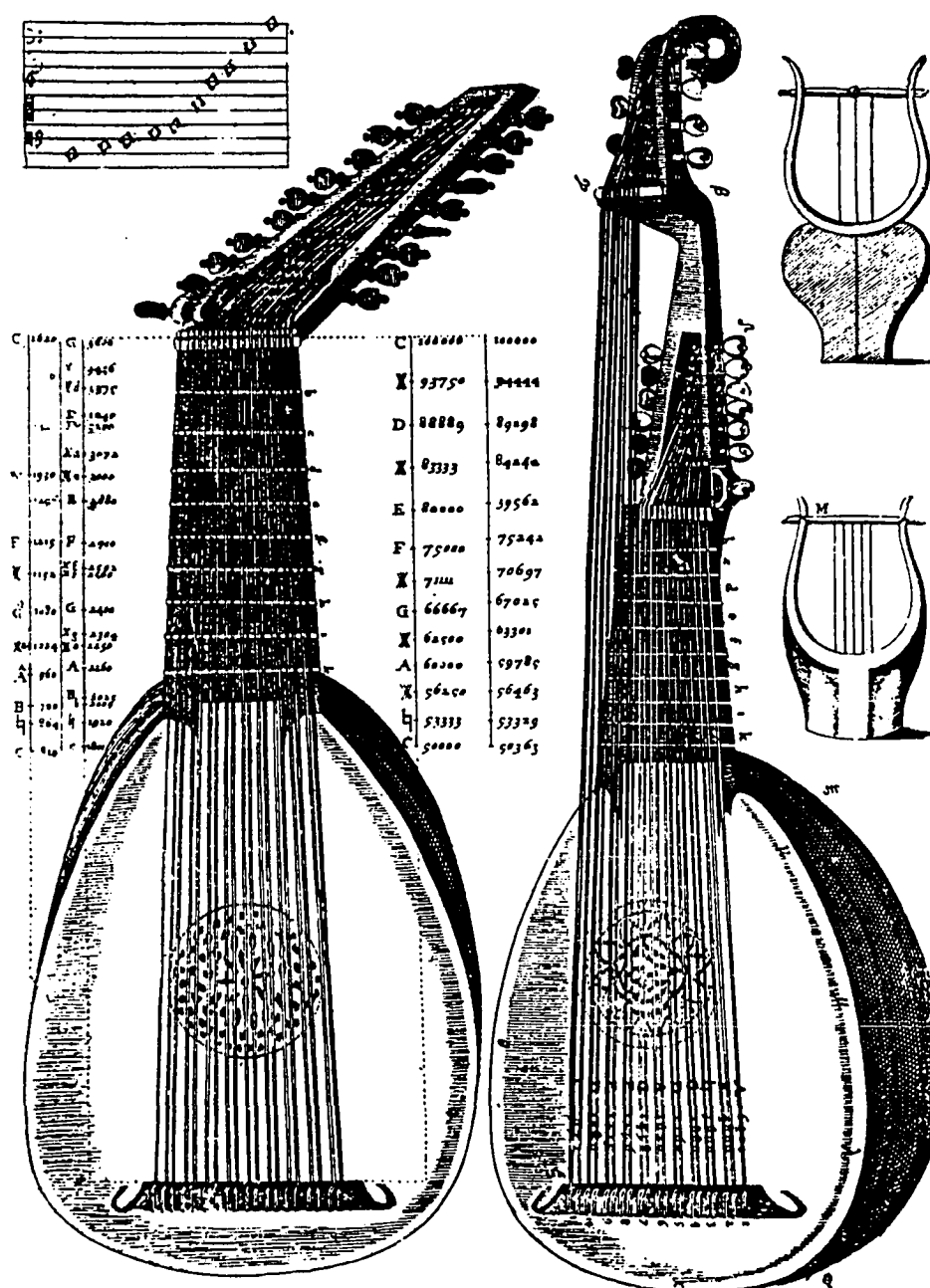
¹⁶ M. Mersenne, op. cit. Translation by Roger Chapman, *Harmonie Universelle* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1957). Mersenne mistakenly identifies a "double-necked lute" with a theorbo which he corrected in a list of errata issued later. In it he wrote: "Page 45 & 46 &c j'ay nomme la seconde figure à main droit Tuorbe, que les Italiens appellent Arciliuto, & qui doit plustost estre appelé Luth a double manche, parce qu'outre que le Tiorba est beacoup plus grand, il n'a qu'une chorde à chaque rang, & n'y a que trente ou quarante ans que le Bardella l'inuenta à Florence." ("I have called the second figure to the right [an illustration of an eleven-course archlute having a single first string and ten courses] a Theorbo [*Tuorbe*], which the Italians call 'Archiliuto', and which ought rather to be called a lute with a double neck, because aside from the fact that the theorbo is much larger, it has only string to each course, and it was about thirty or forty years ago that Bardella invented it at Florence.") M. Mersenne, *Seconde Partie de l'Harmonie Universelle: Lijre septiesme des instrumens* (Paris: ?, 1637), p. 77. See also Smith, op. cit., p. 446n.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 74.

ILLUSTRATION 4

Mersenne's lute and "double-necked lute."



Whence it is seen that the first six strings of the theorbo follow through conjunct degrees from the ut of C sol to the La of A mi la, which extends a major sixth. But is must be observed that this tuning is called the old pitch, which is used even now in concerts and which serves as a foundation for all the other tunings that have been practiced or invented since this ancient tuning, which was used in Italy and elsewhere, and which has been marked by the above-mentioned notes. Now although it begins here with the Ut of C sol, so as to represent the tuning of our theorbo, it is easy to leave this Ut in order to take the Re that follows, and which represents the tenth or the last string of the lute, to which there can be added as well an eleventh course, as in the theorbo."¹⁹

The "conjunct degrees" of the first six courses refer to a normal, non-reentrant tuning of a lute or archlute. Mersenne is unclear as to whether the diapasons could be tuned up a whole step from this "ancient tuning" with an additional course added below, or that the whole instrument could be strung up a step. It remains for the former to be more likely since various tunings were regularly used at this time (on lutes, not theorbos aside from the whole-step variant) and no other source, French or otherwise, recommend tuning above the normal A. Mersenne gives a lengthy account of tuning, tablature and playing techniques for the lute, as well as several tablature examples of music for that instrument. No musical examples are given for his "theorbo"; one must assume here that a non-reentrant situation must have been employed for his version of the instrument. Given the confusing and conflicting information in this important source, it seems plausible that the relatively slow development of the theorbo in France may have been exacerbated by Mersenne's regrettable errors and omissions.

Another problematic yet widely distributed source is Thomas Mace's large essay entitled *Musick's Monument*, first issued in 1676. Mace's work contains much valuable and interesting information in sections he calls *Parochiall Musick*, *Cathedrall Musick*, *The Lute made Easie*, *Musick in General*, and the *Contemplative Part*. The section on the lute and theorbo is by far the lengthiest chapter of the work, and the information on stringing, tuning, and playing from a figured bass is unusual in its detail. In referring to the *Dyphone*, or *Double-Lute*, Mace composed a *Recreational Fancy* of which the first couplet reads: "I am old, and of Great Brittain's Fame, Theorboe was My Name."²⁰ Mace makes no mention of Italian origin in his poem and in

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 75-6.

²⁰ Thomas Mace. *Musick's Monument; or a Remembrance of the Best Practical Musick, Both Divine and Civil that has ever been known to have been in the world*. (London: Ratcliffe and Thomson, 1676), p. 206. Mace's "Dyphone" is actually a theorbo and French lute joined at the soundboard, forming one large oval. He writes that for a person of no hearing (such as himself), the dyphone allows for the player to experience the resonance due to its increased volume. See the engraving, *ibid.*, p. 32. Mace's somewhat eccentric and conservative tastes are reflected in the musical examples and in an introductory dialogue that he composed to proceed the section on the lute. In this dialogue between the lute and the author, the lute complains of modern "Fumbling-fools... bunglers and their Tools." He goes on to extol Dowland, Johnson, and

associating the theorbo with England, clearly implies a widespread use of the instrument in that country, and at this time. He goes on to provide an historical description, claiming that:

The Theorbe, is no other, than That which we called the Old English Lute; and is an instrument of so much Excellency, and Worth, and of so Great Good Use, That in despite of all Fickleness, and Novelty, It is still made use of, in the Best Performances in Musick, (Namely, Vocal Musick.)

But because I said it was the Old English Lute; It may be ask'd, Why is It not then still so Call'd; but by the name of the Theorboe?

I Answer, That although It be the Old English Lute, yet as to the Use of It Generally, there is this Difference, viz. The Old Lute was Chief'ly us'd, as we now use our French Lutes, (so call'd;) that it is, only to Play Lone-Lessons upon, &c. But the Theorboe-Lute is Principally us'd in Playing to the Voice, or in Consort; It being a Lute of the Largerst Scize; and we make it much more Large in Sound, and Fulness of the Basses, or Diapasons, which are a great Ornament to the Voice, or Consort.²¹

Mace is here referring to the G-tuned ten-course Renaissance lute as the "Old English Lute" and provides further information as to how the theorbo is best used in accompaniment and in solos. He recommends that the player exercise caution in playing certain solos, as the largeness of the body and string length make it more appropriate for slower moving bass lines and pieces of gravity or seriousness. As to the tuning, he writes:

Let This suffice for one Reason, why it is not Call'd a Lute, or not put to That use of a Lesser, or Well Sciz'd Lute, for such Nimble, and Active Performance.

The 2d.[reason that it is called a theorbo] is This, that by Reason of the Largeness of It, we are constrained to make use of the Octave Treble-String, that is, of a Thick String, which stands Eight Notes Lower, than the String of a Smaller Lute, (for no Strings can be made so strong, that will stand to the Pitch of Consort, upon such Large Sciz'd Lutes) and for want of a Small Treble-String, the Life and Spruceness of such Ayrey Lessons, is quite lost, and the Ayre much altered. Nay I have known, (and it cannot be otherwise) that upon some Theorboes, they have been forc'd to put an Octave String in the 2.d String's Place; by reason reason of the very long Scize of the Theorboe, which would not bear a Small String to Its True Pitch; because of Its so great Length, and the Necessity of setting the Lute at such a High Pitch, which must Agree with the rest of the Instruments."²²

Gotiere (sic.) Gaultier as masters worthy of emulation. See *A Recreative Praeludium to This Work of the Lute Part*, *ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 207.

²² *ibid.*, p. 208.

In a chart, Mace gives G as the nominal pitch, and provides several examples of chord formations. He recommends tuning a smaller instrument up a whole step, to the standard A tuning,²³ and also prints a thirteen section *Fancy-Prelude, or Voluntary; Cufficient alone to make a Good Hand, Fit for All manner of Play, or Use.*²⁴ Throughout his treatise, Mace makes every effort to relate precise informations on details of playing, stringing, and reading from a figured bass. Unfortunately, the continuo examples and solo pieces in tablature only work (in terms of voice- leading and harmonic spacings) on an archlute tuning, without reentrant stringing. This feature of the theorbo section is puzzling, since Mace clearly defines the lower octave for the first and sometimes second string, but give actual examples which are composed for an instrument evenly strung from top to bottom, with no reentrant intervals.

Perhaps the misleading information in Mersenne and Mace may have accounted in part for the rather slow development of the instrument in France at this time, and it may be for these reasons that the printed definitions of the instrument in France did not first appear until the early eighteenth century. These and other descriptions provide enough information to demonstrate that although the instrument may have originated in Italy, it was probably introduced into France in the mid-seventeenth century by musicians that had resided in or travelled to England.²⁵

Grassineau affirms usage of the instrument in England from at least ca.1660, making a strong association of the instrument with France. This English source from 1740 affirms Hotman as an important proponent of the instrument and defines the theorbo as:

THEORBO, or Thiorba, a musical instrument made in the form of a lute, except that it has two necks or juga; the second and longest whereof sustains the four last rows of chords, and give the deepest and gravest sounds. See LUTE.

The Theorbo is an instrument which for this last seventy or eighty years has succeeded the lute in playing thorough basses. It is said to have been invented in France by the Sieur Hotteman, and thence introduced into Italy.

The only difference between the Theorbo and the Lute is, that the former has eight bass or thick strings, twice as long as those of the Lute, which excess of length, renders their sound exceedingly soft, and keeps it up so long at a time, that 'tis no wonder that many prefer it to the Harpsichord itself; at least it has this advantage over it, that 'tis easily removed from place to place.

All it's strings are usually single, tho' there are some who double the bass strings with a

²³ *ibid.*, pp. 216-17.

²⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 210-16.

²⁵ This fact will become evident through the French definitions given below.

little octave, and the small strings with a unison; in which case it bearing more resemblance to the Lute than the common Theorbo; the Italians call it Archileuto or Archlute.²⁶

Grassineau incorrectly states that the instrument was invented in France and introduced into Italy, although this may be a reflection of its widespread use in France prior to this publication. He correctly informs us that the instrument is usually single strung (as opposed to the Renaissance lute, Baroque lute, and Baroque guitar), but that some deviate from this practice, and that the theorbo is preferred by some to the harpsichord in realizing figured bass. This sentiment echos de la Barre and Marais in their preference toward the theorbo as an accompanying instrument. Grassineau makes no specific reference to vocal accompaniment, which implies that the instrument was utilized as much in purely instrumental settings as in vocal ones. A further, non-French source indicates the theorbo as an instrument primarily employed in continuo. The brief entry from John Hoyle's *Dictionarium Musica* of 1770 informs us that:

THEORBA, or Thiorba, a large Lute made use of by the Italians for playing a Thorough Bass. It has two necks, the longer whereof sustains the last four rows of Chords which are to give the deepest Sounds.²⁷

Hoyle implies that the instrument had wide use in Italy, and that its initial function was the realization of continuo. The English sources cited above make clear a widespread use of the theorbo in that country prior to its inception in France. Aside from offering period descriptions of the instrument, the existence of these sources suggest that the theorbo was imported into France from England, eventually transforming its original form as the *chitarrone* into the *théorbe*. Let us now examine French sources and definitions in order to more clearly place the role of the instrument within a national perspective. Again, most of the French definitions appear quite late;

²⁶ Grassineau, J. *A Musical Dictionary*. (London: J. Wilcox, 1740), p. 276. Reprint: New York: Broude Bros., 1966. In the same year, J.G. Walther gave a lengthy description of the instrument, identifying Hotman as its inventor. Walther writes that "Die Italianer nennen dis Instrument nicht selten Archileuto oder Archiliuto, und dir Franzosen Archiluth. Man will den, vor die Violdigamba, so berühmten Hottemann, für den Ersfinder dieses Instruments halten, welcher von Franckreich aus dessen Gebrauch in Italien...", (The Italians often call this instrument *Archileuto* or *Archiliuto*, and the French *Archiluth*. One finds that the famous Hotman, who first played viol, is thought to be the inventor of this instrument, and brought it to France as it was known in Italy...) Walther, J.G. *Musikalisches Lexikon, oder Musikalische Bibliothek*, c.v. "Theorba." (Leipzig: W. Deer, 1732), p. 604-5. Reprint: Documenta Musicologica, Kassel, Basel: Barenreiter Verlag, 1967.

²⁷ Hoyle, John. *Dictionarium Musica*. (London: S. Crowder, 1770), p. 102. Reprint: New York: Broude Bros., 1976.

suggesting that its adoption in that country occurred slowly. One of the first French definitions to have appeared in print derives from Brossard's well-known *Dictionnaire de Musique*.²⁸ Brossard seems to be confusing the terms *archiluth* and *théorbe*. The description itself conforms to the standard French theorbo; he probably did not intend to equate it with the archlute since his remark that the diapasons are "twice as long as the lute's" must exclude the archlute. Brossard's entry describes the instrument as:

THEORBA, ou Thiorba. en François THE'ORBE, ou Tuorbe, ou Tiorbe. C'est un Instrument qui depuis environ 50. ou 60, ans a succédé au Luth pour jouer les Basses-Continues; d'où les Italiens prennent souvent occasion d'intituler leurs Basses-Continues du mot Théorba. On prétend que c'est le Sieur Hotteman, si fameux d'ailleurs pour le jeu & les pieces de la Basse de Violle, qui en a été l'Inventeur en France d'où l'usage s'en est introduit en Italie & ailleurs. Il tient beaucoup du Luth, le corps & le manche étant à peu de chose près semblables dans l'un & dans l'autre, mais il en diffère en ce qu'il a 8. Basses, ou grosses Chordes plus longues deux fois que celles du Luth, & cette longueur en rend le Son si moelleux, & fait qu'il s'entretient si long-temps, qu'il ne faut pas s'étonner si plusieurs le preferent au Clavessin. Du moins il a cela de plus commode qu'il se peut transporter facilement où l'on veut, &c. Toutes ces Chordes sont ordinairement simples, mais il y en a qui doublent les Basses d'une petite Octave, & les Chordes du petit Jeu d'un unisson, à la reserve de la Chanterelle; & pour lors, comme il a beaucoup plus de rapport au Luth que le Théorbe à l'ordinaire; les Italiens nomment Archileuto ou Archiliuto, & les François Archiluth.²⁹

(THEORBA, or Thiorbe, in French THEORBE, or Tuorbe or Tiorbe. This is an instrument which, for the last 50 or 60 years, has succeeded the lute in the playing of thorough-bass; hence the Italians' frequent habit of giving the title *Théorba* to the bass line in their compositions. It has been said that Mr. Hotman, besides being famous as a player of the bass viol and a composer of pieces for that instrument, was the inventor of the theorbo in France, and that from there, the instrument was introduced into Italy and elsewhere. It [the theorbo] is similar to the lute in some ways, the body and fingerboard being roughly alike for both instruments, but [the theorbo] is different in that eight basses, or long strings twice as long as the lute's; that string-length is what makes the tone so mellow and gives it a longer sustaining power, so that one must not be surprised that some prefer it over the harpsichord. At least, it is more practical as it can be easily transported wherever one goes, etc. All the strings are generally single, but some [players] use octave doublings for the bass strings and unisons for the *petit jeu*, except for the *chanterelle* [which remains single]; in that case, it adds to the resemblance

²⁸ Brossard (1655-1730), composer and lexicographer, was an avid enthusiast of the French lute. He studied this instrument with Jacques Gallot, and copied out works of Gallot, du But, and others in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Ms. Vm⁷ 370, the "Brossard manuscript." Concordances, transcriptions, and other information of Gallot may be found in an excellent study by Clare Callahan. "Jacques Gallot's Pieces de Luth (c.1673), A Style Study and Critical Edition." (Unpublished graduate thesis, 1976).

²⁹ Brossard, Sebastien de. *Dictionnaire de Musique, contenant une Explication des Termes Grecs, Latins, Italiens, & François les plus usitez dans la Musique*, c.v. "Theorba." (Paris: Ballard, 1703). Reprint: Amsterdam: Antiqua, 1964.

between lute and theorbo, by contrast with the ordinary theorbo stringing. The Italians then name it *Archileuto* or *Archliuto*, and the French *Archiluth*).

Grassineau's entry in his dictionary of 1740 appears to be translated more or less directly from Brossard, and both authors credit Hotman with its invention in France. Although this attribution is incorrect, it implies that the theorbo was largely unknown in France in the period prior to Hotman's studies in England. Within the boundaries of a given national perspective, the introduction of a style or instrument may be tantamount (in the eyes of a given country) to its "invention." Another informative source from this period is from the French mathematician Joseph Sauveur (1653-1716). Sauveur began the study of music and acoustics relatively late in life, around 1695, but nevertheless was the first author to give a systematic presentation of multiple octave division in equal increments. Sauveur was also a member of the *Academie Royale des Sciences* at which he delivered lectures and through which he published various small volumes on mathematics and physics. Interestingly, Sauveur helped Philippe de Courcillon, marquis de Dangeau (in whose *Journal de Visée* is mentioned) in the calculation of chance card games. Sauveur also received help in musical matters from his mathematics pupil Philip II, duke of Orleans, to whom de Visée dedicated his book of instrumental pieces in 1716. Moreover, Sauveur quotes certain instrument makers as sources of information in his writings including the viol luthier Jean Hurel, at whose shop in the *rue St. Martin vis a vis la Fontaine Maubué* de Visée offered for sale his book of instrumental *Pieces de Theorbe et de Luth Mises en Partition, Dessus et Basse* from 1716 on. Sauveur may well have met or associated with the Dutch physicist Constantijn Huygens, during the former's tenure with the *Academie Royale des Sciences*. Huygens also had musical interests and in 1647 submitted for publication to Ballard a volume of twenty Latin psalms, twelve Italian *aire*, and seven French *airs* for solo voice and continuo.³⁰ In his *Memoires* of 1701, and on *Planche III*, Sauveur shows a chart comparing the ranges of voices, flute instruments, oboes, violins, viols, and the plucked instrument family of guitar, angelique, archlute, lute, and theorbo.³¹ The following illustration depicts Sauveur's chart showing relationships of range among various instruments. As may be seen in this chart, Sauveur's tuning for the regular

³⁰ Huygens, Constantijn. *Pathodia Sacra et Profana, unius Vocis cum Basso Continuo*. (Paris: Ballard, 1647). Modern edition: edited by Frits Noske, Amsterdam: Muziekuitgeverij Saul B. Groen, 1975. This collection had originally been conceived for voice with a composed accompaniment in tablature for theorbo. Ballard suggested that Huygens issue the volume with a bass line and continuo figures rather than tablature, probably to enable wider distribution and saleability.

³¹ Sauveur, Joseph. *Collected Writings on Musical Acoustics, (Paris 1700-1713)*. Edited by R. Rasch. (Utrecht: Diapason, 1984), Planche 3.

fourteen string theorbo follows the nominal A, but he also mentions a smaller *Theorbe a 10. Touches pour les Pieces* in addition to the larger nine-fretted continuo instrument. This smaller instrument retains the reentrant tuning of its larger relative, but is pitched up a perfect fourth and was presumably used in playing solo repertoire. The contents of several theorbo manuscripts confirms the fact that there was enough solo literature to warrant the use of this smaller theorbo, although the key indicated in these sources call for a larger A-pitched theorbo.³² There is no evidence to support the supposition that de Visée himself played a smaller theorbo, since the compiler of the principle source of his theorbo music in tablature (who was a student of de Visée's) gives keys that correspond to the A tuning in the *Saizenay* manuscript.³³

A further reference, ca.1700,³⁴ describes the smaller pitched theorbo in physical terms. Although it is an English source, James Talbot gives an extremely accurate description of the "lesser French Theorbo" in his manuscript cataloguing various wind, bowed, and plucked string instruments. Talbot shows two different classifications for the theorbo: English and French. He also gives dimensions and tunings for the French lute, angelique, archlute, and apollon. Talbot gives dimensions in feet (f), inches ('), and lignes (eight parts of an inch: "). Both Talbot's dimensions and information on tuning is reproduced here. With regards to the small instrument, he has recorded the following measurements:³⁵

³² An Italian source identifies and requires a smaller theorbo, although apparently pitched up a full octave. Bellerofonte Castaldi is shown composing on a single-strung theorbo in an engraved portrait from his publication for *tiorba* and *tiorbina*. This collection contains solos for theorbo, duets for theorbo and the small *tiorbina*, and songs in Italian for voice and theorbo. Another engraving shows two musicians playing together on these two instruments; a plaque above reads *Virtus Unita*. The small instrument is being played while standing, held by a strap. See Castaldi, Bellerofonte. *Capricci a due stromenti cioe Tiorba e Tiorbina e per sonar solo varie sorti di balli e fantasticarie*. (Modena, ?, 1622). Facsimile reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1981.

³³ This manuscript will be discussed below, in chapter five. Other manuscripts containing works of de Visée also correspond to the A tuning; the choice of keys for versions of theorbo pieces in other guises such as treble-continuo or guitar does not suggest that de Visée employed or even sanctioned his pieces on a small D-tuned instrument. The fact that certain theorbo arrangements of Lully (transcribed by de Visée) sound in their original key when played on a small theorbo does not support the premise that de Visée or his students played the smaller instrument, although some of the pieces and arrangements gain clarity and in fact sound quite well on a small theorbo.

³⁴ This manuscript is housed in the Christ Church Library, Music Collection, as Ms 1187.

³⁵ This information is extracted from the fourth of a series of articles chronicling Talbot's manuscript. Refer to Prynne, M. "James Talbot's Manuscript, IV. Plucked Strings-The Lute Family," *The Galpin Society Journal*, XIV, 1961, pp. 52-68.

TABLE 3

DIMENSIONS FOR THE SMALLER THEORBO

| Lesser French Theorbe by Sellier. | | | |
|---|------------|------------|---------------|
| | <i>ft.</i> | <i>in.</i> | <i>lignes</i> |
| From top of the long Head to 1st Nutt carrying 8 single Trebles | 0 | 5 | 1 |
| Thence to 2nd Nutt on Plate carrying 6 single trebles | 1 | 9 | 0 |
| Thence to Bridge | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| Thence to Breech | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Length of neck | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Of Plate to beginning of Points (whose length 1' 4 1/2 Distance 2' 6"+) | 1 | 0 | 6 |

Additional measurements for the "Lesser French Theorboe" are as follows:

Breadth of Plate above 3' 1". below 4' 1"
 Length of first Nutt 2'. of second Nutt on Plate 1' 7"
 from Bottom of Plate to Knott 7'+
 Diametre of Knott to Bridge 6'6"
 Breadth of Bridge above 2" below 4 3/4"
 Length of Bridge between Points 5' 7" (each Point 7")
 Breadth of Belly next Neck 4' 2". at middle of Knott 10' 5".
 above Bridge 1'ft. 1". Depth under Knott 4' 6".
 Fretts 9 (or 10). Ribbs 11.

Talbot indicates that the strings on the fingerboard were 29 7/8 inches, only slightly longer than that of the normal French lute, and that the bass courses span 50 7/8 inches. He also indicates that it carried nine or ten frets, as opposed to Saveur's example of only ten frets. Talbot does not give measurements for the large theorbo; it normally carried a stopped string length of ca. 32-35 inches. The spacing on the smaller instrument presumably allowed for greater fret spacing on the fingerboard; a limiting factor on the large instrument. Talbot's tuning follows Sauveur in pitching the normal A tuning up a fourth, as he describes as:

The lesser Theorbo (fitt for Lessons) carries the same number of ranks and Strings with F. Theorboe and is 4 Notes higher all the way. Crevecouer. Fr. single Theorboe carries single ranks whereof the lowest 8 Basses the last 6 Trebles. The 3^d String is the Treble, the 2^d a fifth lower, the 1st 4th above the 2^d. Crevecouer. This fitter for Thorough Bass than Arch Lute its Trebles being neither below the voice nor Instrs in Consort as Arch Lute. nor trebles too far distant from Basses. Crevecouer.³⁶

Although the smaller theorbo may have excelled in solo pieces, Talbot clearly shows that it was also used as a continuo instrument in vocal and instrumental ensembles, as its range fit well into ensemble contexts. In Talbot's opinion, it apparently worked (in a continuo context) to better effect than the archlute.

A final and late source of physical description for the French theorbo derives from Laborde's *Essai sur la Musique Ancienne et Moderne* of 1780. In volume one, chapter sixteen,

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 59. Mr. Crevecouer was apparently a theorbist and owner of the instrument measured here.

an alphabetical listing of the *Instrumens á Cordes, modernes* begins. Laborde depicts the instrument alongside the lute and guitar in the following illustration. As to the description, Laborde writes:

Theorbe.

Instrument fait en forme de Luth, mais avec la difference qu'il a deux manches, dont le second qui est plus long que le premier, soutient les huit dernieres cordes qui rendent les sons plus graves. Le corps du Théorbe est arrondi. Il a 14 cordes, les huit dont nous avons parlé, & six sur le manche le plus court; ce manche a dix touches, Cet instrument a plus d'entendue dans les basses que dans les dessus; ce qui fait que l'on distingue le Théorbe de pieces, & le Théorbe d'accompagnement. Celui des pieces est monté à la quarte, celui d'accompagnement au ton naturel. Le corps de ce dernier est d'ordinaire une fois plus gros que l'autre, ce qui le rend fort difficile à pincer.

Les basses exigent d'être montées en majeur ou mineur selon le ton où l'on joue: mais on peut souvent sauver cet inconvénient par le rapport des tons sur le petit jeu.

Le beau toucher exige beaucoup d'à-plomb & de force des deux mains. Les sons sont également beaux, les dessus sont brillans, & les basses nobles & majestueuses.

Le charme de cet instrument est le reversement de l'harmonie, qui y est naturel par son accord ouvert. Les pieces ne sont intelligibles, que par le moyen de la tablature.

Cet instrument est sans contredit le plus beau de tous les instrumens pincés, par la rondeur de ses sons dans les basses & dans les dessus.

On prétend que c'est le sieur Hotteman qui inventé le Théorbe, il y a environ cent cinquante ans. Du tems de Lully il n'y avait pas d'autres basses d'accompagnement.³⁷

Theorbe

(An instrument built in the shape of a lute, differing in that it has two fingerboards [heads], the second of which is longer than the first, and holds the last eight strings that give the lower bass notes. The body of the theorbo is rounded [*arrondi*]. It has 14 strings, the eight just mentioned and six more on the shorter fingerboard. That fingerboard has ten frets. This instrument has a wider range in the bass than in the treble; as a result there is a distinction to be made between *Théorbe de pièces* [for solo pieces] and *Théorbe d'accompagnement* [for accompanying]. The former is strung a fourth higher, the latter at the regular pitch. The body of the accompanying instrument is one time larger [twice as long] than the other, which makes it very difficult to play.

The basses demand to be tuned in major or minor, according to the key one plays in: but one may oftentimes resolve that impracticality through the relations between the pitches on the *petit jeu* [fingered strings].

Good playing demands much accuracy and strength from both hands. That way, the

³⁷ (Paris: Ph.-D. Pierres, 1780). Tome 1, pp. 304-5. Reprint: New York: AMS Press, 1978. The engraving shown in illustration is from the same volume, p. 299.

ILLUSTRATION 6

Engraving showing Laborde's *Guitare, Luth, Théorbe*.

Tome I. Page 299.



tone is evenly beautiful; the trebles are clear and bright, and the basses noble and full of majesty.

The charm of that instrument is the inversion of the harmony, which is given through the open tuning. Therefore, the pieces are only intelligible through the use of tablature.

This instrument is without discussion the most beautiful of all plucked instruments, thanks to the roundness of its tone in the basses and in the treble.

It is said that Mr. Hotman was the inventor of the theorbo, about one hundred and fifty years ago. At the time of Lully, there was no other bass [instrument] for accompanying).

Laborde claims that Hotman invented the instrument in ca.1630, and that "at the time of Lully" it was the only instrument used in accompaniment. He may have been referring only to plucked string instruments normally used in ensemble situations as no mention of the viol or harpsichord is made. Laborde also explains that in the situation where a pretuned diapason does not allow for chromatic alteration, the pitch may be transposed up into the fingered string range, "...but one can oftentimes resolve that impracticality through the relations between the pitches on the *petit jeu* (fingered strings)."

From these period references we see that the French theorbo was a fourteen string (or course) instrument with an additional, extended pegbox housing the riding, unstopped basses. The normal tuning was in A, with a single reentrant first string; a smaller theorbo existed in France that was tuned up a fourth, usually for solo pieces. We see that the Italian chitarrone was originally utilized as an accompanying lute although it developed a solo repertoire of its own. Upon its arrival in France ca.1650, the *théorbe* was also used as an accompanying instrument, but that it developed a separate, solo existence. Its use in French *air de cour* reflected several authors preference for the timbre of gut string with the human voice, and its inclusion in instrumental groupings evidence its special role as a supportive harmony instrument. The solo theorbo literature reflected trends in instrumental writing that drew on several disparate influences that helped to shape the solo literature into its national manifestation.

CHAPTER IV

ANTECENTS AND INFLUENCES

The theorbo in vocal music

Ce n'est plus le saison de Raymon ni d'Hilaire: Il faut vingt clavecins, cent violons, pour plaire, On ne va plus chercher au bord de quelque bois Des amoureux bergers la flûte et le hautbois. Le téorbe charmant, qu'on ne vouloit entendre Que dans une ruelle, avec une voix tendre, Pour suivre et soutenir, par des accords touchants De quelques airs choisis les mélodieux chants...

(The time of Raymond and Hilaire is past: nothing pleases now but twenty harpsichords, a hundred violins, no longer do we look for the flutes and oboes of amorous shepherds. The charming theorbo, which we wished to hear only in the most refined salons, accompanying a tender voice, following and supporting with expressive chords a few choice and melodious airs...)¹

Well before Lully's negotiation of control of the *Académie Royal de Musique*, this institution had flourished under the direction of the poet Jean-Antoine de Baif. His experiments with French measured verse sought to establish a relationship between music and poetry that, he felt, would revive a Greek and Roman concern for quantitative verse. De Baif's experiments, initiated around 1567, were formulated by relating differing types of classical feet to certain syllables. Among the composers of the *Académie de Poésie et de Musique* figured Jacques Maudit who in 1589 and following the death of de Baif, assumed control of the concerts of the *Académie*. The composers attached to the *Académie* continued de Baif's influence in their vocal music, which flowered into the *air de cour*.

¹ Jean de La Fontaine, *Epître à M. de Niert Ouevres*, ed. H. Regnier (Paris: Hachette, 1892), ix, pp. 154-63. La Fontaine's epitaph laments the passing of refinement and gentility associated with *air de cour*. The "twenty harpsichords, a hundred violins" disparages the new Lullian order of music drama, dissociated from the outmoded intimacy of salon *airs*. This extract and quotation appear in David Ledbetter, *Harpsichord and Lute Music in 17th century France* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), pp. 12-13.

Plucked string instruments and particularly the theorbo are described by contemporary writers as desirable and appropriate partners in vocal accompaniment. In tracing the lineage of development in French vocal accompaniments, one is met with two major obstacles. No examples (that I have been able to locate) survive of French theorbo realizations; a seemingly reticent attitude of authors and composers in describing an effective accompaniment complicates the problem. This attitude is reflected in Thomas Mace's comment when he wrote:

The French (who were generally accounted Great Masters) seldom or never would prick their lessons as they played them, much less reveal anything (further than that of necessity they must) to the thorough understanding of the Art...²

A strong relationship exists between Italian solo chitarrone music and existing examples of intabulated vocal accompaniments. Certainly a similar relationship must have existed between the *air de cour* and the later solo theorbo repertoire, although a lacunae bridges the mature theorbo literature and the flourishing of *airs* during the mid-century. It is not my intention here to construct a hypothetical example based on a figured bass line, although this is certainly possible, especially with *airs* of Lambert or Bacilly. The arpeggiated style of later French lute music (as it applied to the theorbo) certainly must have been an integration of innovations that first appeared in Maudit's concerts, and certain French lute tendencies may be viewed as an outgrowth of accompaniment practices. Obviously, an accompanist must be sensitive to the meaning of the text and a singer's inflections; articulatory synchronization must behave as a creative result of mere harmonic support. Moreover, in continuo playing, motives derived from larger vocal gestures must become a propulsive factor in creating convincing phrasal units. The occasional and discreet use of motivic imitation may have been a natural and effective means of establishing a communication between singer and player, and short periods of imitative counterpoint may have been a kind of reflective device of the accompanist to echo or comment on a vocal phrases, giving their textual meaning an instrumental context.³ Another supportive device

² Mace, op. cit., p. 40.

³ Both Agazzari and Praetorius makes direct reference to this type of imitation in vocal accompaniment. See David Buch, "La Rhétorique des Dieux." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Northwestern University, 1983), pp. 232-33. While selective imitation may explain in part the development of a figurative solo style, it was not advocated by later authors of continuo treatises. Both Delair (1690) and d'Anglebert (1689) provide examples which emphasize acciaccaturas, passing non-harmonic tones, and arpeggiation. Any reflective imitation that derives from either techniques will result in a use of rhythmic emulation, rather than the actual doubling or verbatim copying of vocal phrases. Needless to say, this does not apply in interludes, where the vocal-reflective dynamic was probably strongest. The relationship between the French language and resulting instrumental styles, especially with regards to French methods of rhythmic modification

was the arpeggiation or repetition of chords at the ends of cadences, which provide a lengthening of vocal cadential formulas. This is a characteristic feature of French solo lute from the 1640's, and the reiteration of chord members at cadences became a structural consideration in defining the size of internal and cadential closings. The syllabically uneven, declamatory nature of *airs* probably inspired theorbists to construct harmonic periods based on textual clarity, and to breathe with the vocalist in defining cadential lengths.⁴ Ornaments certainly must have been a shared domain, where the accompanist emulated these figures. Although the rather sparse textures and lack of figuration in printed lute accompaniments of Ballard do not suggest such elaboration, the improvisatory nature of continuo accompaniment does not translate well onto the printed page. The author of Mary Burwell's lute instruction book advises one to sing the examples given in the tutor and to use vocal music as a model since "singing will give him the graces of the lute."⁵ Indeed, the improvisatory qualities of accompaniment find their most direct instrumental alignment with the unmeasured prelude; a freely improvised genre of declamatory nature. Mace describes the prelude as having:

no perfect form, shape, or uniformity... but a random business, pottering and grouping... an unlimited and unbounded liberty.⁶

With the rise of the French *air de cour*, the theorbo came to be a common partner in this particular vocal form, and seems to have been favored as an accompanying vehicle in *airs* for a single voice. Michel le Pure was of the opinion that:

is a topic that is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

⁴ The poetic rhythm must follow the natural accents of speech for intelligibility. However, this is many times not the case. One feature of the *air de cour* is an alternation between duple and triple meters which may contradict speech inflections. Another irregularity results in the lengthening of final syllables as a caesura: the fourth syllable in eight and ten-syllable lines and the sixth syllable in alexandrines. This results in an impression of ritard that may or not be a result of the strictures of *musique mesurée*. Don Royster has pointed out that these irregularities are more attributable to rhythmic conventions in lute pieces than the application of syllabic distortions. See his "Pierre Guedron and the Air de Cour, 1600-1620." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Yale University, 1972), p. 4.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 233n.

⁶ Mace, *ibid.*, p. 128. Alan Curtis has suggested that the recitative (or in this context, French *récits*) served as a precedent to the unmeasured prelude, especially its mature form in the works of Louis Couperin, D'Anglebert and others. See his "Unmeasured Preludes in French Baroque Instrumental Music." (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1956).

Le tuaurbe n'est propre qu'à accompagner une voix, qu'aux Concerts, ou qu'à jouer enfin des Allemandes, des Sarabandes & des autres Pieces, où il y a plus de la majesté du Chant, que de la vigueur de la Dance. Il en est de mesme du Lut. L'un et l'autre sont trop graves, & la grande diversité des cordes que l'on touche, & des accords que l'on forme à la fois à force de charmer l'oreille, ne fait qu'embaraser les pieds. Ce sont des instruments de repos destinez aux plaisirs sérieux et tranquilles, & dont le languissante harmonie est ennemi de toute action, & ne demande que des Auditeurs sedentaires.

The theorbo is suitable only for accompanying voices, for consorts and for playing allemandes, sarabandes and other pieces which have more stateliness of melody than dance-like vigour. The same is true of the lute. Both instruments are too serious, and the multiplicity of strings and chords are played to charm the ear serve only to encumber the feet. These are instruments of repose, meant for calm and serious enjoyment, whose languishing harmony is the enemy of activity and requires only sedentary listeners.⁷

De Pure finds the theorbo too grave an instrument for pieces of a dancelike character, a sentiment shared by Mace. However, as an accompanying medium, de Pure finds the theorbo to be suitable as an accompanying instrument for the voice. This preference is also voiced by Bénigne de Bacilly who in 1668, published his well-known *Remarques Curieuses sur l'Art de Bien Chanter*. A theorbist himself, Bacilly gives extremely detailed information on what he considers proper singing; a special emphasis is made on ornamental melodic figures and on a treatment of structure, meaning, pronunciation and rhythm in French verse. Bacilly's comments clearly place the role of poetry and enunciation over embellishment and melody, and significantly elevate poetic meaning and clarity over extra-poetic, musical concerns. In chapter four and in the section called "The Necessity of Instrumental Accompaniment in Vocal Music," he writes:

I am not concerned here with the accompaniment or union of voices and instruments as it is practiced in choral concerts and choirs (which is absolutely necessary in order to perform the works properly), but only with the accompaniment of airs which are ordinarily sung by one voice alone. Among the instruments used at present to sustain the voice are the harpsichord, the viol, and the theorbo, the harp being no longer in use. The viol and the harpsichord haven't the grace and accomodation found in the theorbo, which is necessary for accompanying all kinds of voices. This may be because the sweetness of the theorbo adapts itself to weak and delicate voices, while the other instruments tend to obscure such a voice. The question then arises: 'Is it necessary to be accompanied by a theorbo in order to perform a song properly?'⁸

⁷ Michel de Pure, *Idée des spectacles anciens et nouveaux* (Paris: Brunet, 1668), pp. 273-4. This quotation and translation is found in Ledbetter, op. cit., p. 12.

⁸ Bénigne Bacilly, *Remarques Curieuses sur l'Art de Bien Chanter* (Paris: Ballard, 1668). This and other quotations from this source derive from the modern English translation by Austin B.

Bacilly goes on to describe a serviceable type of accompaniment, again affirming the theorbo as the most agreeable instrument for this purpose. Although he recognizes the suitability of the theorbo's sound in vocal support, he also warns that:

However, it is necessary to establish the fact that if the theorbo isn't played with moderation- if the player adds too much confusing figuration (as do most accompanists, more to demonstrate the dexterity of their fingers than to aid the person they are accompanying) it then becomes an accompaniment of the theorbo by the voice rather than the reverse. Be careful to recognize this, so that in this marriage the theorbo does not become an overpowering, chiding spouse, instead of one who flatters, cajoles, and covers up one's faults.⁹

Bacilly's concern for *agréments* (ornaments) in a syllabic context and their rhythmic flexibility belie his priority toward enunciation. The proximity of poetry and music in *airs* of this period demonstrate how small melodic shapes and restricted range results in textual clarity rather than extra-poetic applications. The domination of French prosody is persuasively discussed by Ralph Kirkpatrick who writes that:

Perhaps only Elizabethan keyboard music is dominated by language in a comparable way... I have come to believe that ornamentation in the French style is largely an extension of declamation, and most particularly in keyboard instruments a means of indicating those differences that prevail between one kind of consonance and another, and in the context of an entire phrase, varying degrees of tension and relaxation.¹⁰

Although the lute accompaniments in published *airs* until ca.1650 do not provide much insight into the figurative solo theorbo repertoire (aside from stylistic tendencies derived from early French lute textures cited above), Bacilly's remarks above suggest that theorbists were capable of and did indulge in excessive figurations in accompaniment. As the lute declined in popularity from ca.1650, the harpsichord, viol, and theorbo became fashionable continuo instruments in French *airs*, and the embellishment of *airs*, previously improvised, now became a language of stenographic symbols, subject to complicated rules. Certainly these smaller melodic figures were subject to emulation by the continuo player, along with motivic "filler" figures. During this period, a form of diminution (as noted above in an English context), mutated into *doubles*: ornamented counterparts to the plainer strophe. The use of *doubles* is most apparent in the

Caswell, *A Commentary upon The Art of Proper Singing* (New York: The Institute of Medieval Music, 1968), p. 11.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 11

¹⁰ Ralph Kirkpatrick, "Fifty Years of Harpsichord Playing," *Early Music* xi, (1983), p. 31.

lute repertoire of the Gaultiers and Mesangeau; they also appear regularly in the *airs* of Michel Lambert, a proponent of this new vocal style. A singer and composer who played theorbo, Lambert brought to France a style of singing that was markedly declamatory, affecting the *récits* of French opera. At this time, the term *air de cour* was abandoned, to be replaced by *air sérieux*. Bacilly provides an interesting remark on this new style of singing when he derides that:

Those who go back to the *airs* of M. Guédron are ordinarily certain old parties who, in order to do homage to their decrepitude, take great delight in citing *airs* of their youth and in broadcasting to the world (they even attempt to sing and wobble along with their lugubrious tone half chin and half jaw) such tunes as: '*Quand pour Philis*', '*Où luis-tu soleil de mon âme?*'... '*Aux plaisirs, aux delices Bergères*,' and above all the song entitled '*Le tombeau de Guedron*.' These are the favorites of these worthies and can rightfully be called 'the *Airs* of the Good Old Days.'¹¹

This new attitude toward declamation and poetic clarity must have played a decisive role in shaping the practices of continuo accompaniments. With regard to the theorbo, a singularly important aspect of this new attitude in vocal art may have been the application of ornaments. Here it may be helpful to make a distinction between diminutions as doubles or melismatically oriented elaborations, and ornaments. Obviously, plucked instruments cannot sustain sound as a bowed instrument of voice and they must rely on arpeggiations or ornaments of a much smaller range or rhythmic duration. Figures that revolve around a small melodic compass, maintain a recognizable melodic identity, and are notated by a stenographic symbol are most closely allied to what appear in plucked instrument tablatures. The application of these ornaments in vocal music became the domain of French vocal composers from around 1660.¹² Although it is difficult to assess to what degree players of plucked instruments may have been affected by these practices, it remains highly probable that theorbists would react to and adapt ornaments to their instrument; both as an emulation of the voice, and as a model for expressive instrumental "declamation." The standardized cadential figures which abound in vocal music of the period also appear in early French keyboard and lute music, attesting to an overlapping of style between vocalists and instrumentalists. Indeed, the single top string of lute-type instruments was presumably called the *chanterelle* as it normally played the highest lines or pitches,

¹¹ As translated by Susan Jane Cannedy, "An Anthology of French Solo Song, Sacred and Secular, 1600-1701." (Unpublished D.M.A. dissertation: University of Texas, Austin, 1986), p. 34.

¹² In 1666 Jean Millet published his *L'Art de bien chanter*, a treatise which reflects the vocal practices of the earlier generation, of which Bacilly criticized in the above quotation. See Cannedy, op. cit., p. 63-64.

creating an implied single line and accompaniment situation in some lute textures.¹³

A retracing of French lute style as derived from continuo practices may illuminate some features of the music of Hurel, Lemoyne, and other theorbists of the later seventeenth century. One direct example of a vocally influenced continuo solo may be found in Montéclair's 3^{ème} *Cantate à voix seule*. In the air and recitative from the cantata *La badine*, Montéclair suggests that l' *air* first be performed in an instrumental setting before the voice enters. Although harpsichord and viol were utilized more in this particular genre, the theorbo was also employed in some cantata settings.¹⁴

It must be noted that other instruments, especially harpsichord and viol, also exerted influence on the stylistic evolution of the theorbo. However, the appearance of the theorbo in France at Mauduit's concerts and the bias toward the human voice at this time imply that these other instruments, along with the theorbo, were also influenced by vocal art, at least in the context of vocal accompaniment. The publications of Lambert and Bacilly require a theorbo accompaniment that emphasizes shorter phrasal lengths and subtle poetic inflections of the text. These *airs* also display features that are more directly related to later theorbo pieces (such as Hurel and Le Moine) than is derivable from an examination of possible continuo practices. The relatively small range (usually spanning less than an octave), short phrasal lengths of varying poetic feet, and small, tight ornaments reflect well in French lute pieces of the mid-century and its subsequent effect on the theorbo.

While these aspects are intrinsic to lute instruments, some composers such as Denis Gaultier utilized these parameters to achieve a higher musical level than some of his more

¹³ The intabulation of polyphonic vocal music for lute first appeared in 1501 in the publications of Petrucci. This practice found use among sixteenth century vihuelists and lutenists; Dowland composed or arranged solo lute versions of his songs, Milan imbedded a superius into his tablatures, and da Milano intabulated vocal works of Jannequin and Josquin. One interesting French example of this transference of medium is found in Pierre Attaignant's 1529 publication entitled *Tres Breve et Familiere Introduction*. In this work, Attaignant transforms the madrigal *Fortune laisse* into a piece for lute and voice, giving the vocal superius an idiomatic lute accompaniment which follows quite closely the counterpoint of the original. See this author's paper, "The French Lute Style, its Influences and Developments," (Unpublished doctoral examination paper: University of California, San Diego, 1987), pp. 4-7.

¹⁴ M. P. de Montéclair, *Troisieme Cantate à voix seule*, *Premiere Livre* (Paris, ?, ca.1709). Nigel North has fashioned a solo theorbo version of the *air*, with an original realization of the figures. He also set a continuo part for theorbo on Le Camus' *Amour, cruel Amour*, from his *Airs à deux et trois parties* of 1678. These editorial realizations are mainly in two parts over moving bass lines, using thicker textures during slow-moving bass passages or at points of textual emphasis. See N. North, *Continuo Playing...*, op. cit., p. 223-29.

pedestrian contemporaries. Gaultier, in fact, does compose in a somewhat more restrained and linear style than his peers, but in discussing the use of motivic and sequential writing in his music, one must examine actual phrasal length and recognizable melodic repetition. In his use of "head-motives", Gaultier does rely on an array of melodic contours that may be described as linear,¹⁵ but his use of line is governed by the appearance and dissolving of motives rather than a regularly maintained texture.

It remains for Italianate influences to transform uneven phrasal periods into longer lines and small ornaments into "cumulative" figures. Another important trait of Italian music was the use of sequence, which received less overuse in French *airs*, even to the point of avoidance. The degree of influence and sharing of national traits must of course be addressed by each particular composer, but with regards to earlier theorbists such as Hotman, his pieces display a leaning toward French lute traits with marginal Italian tendencies. The same holds true of Hurel and Le Moine,¹⁶ although the dynamic between styles is in flux, shifting in emphasis between linear and harmonic treatment. It remains to examine how vocal art and Italian styles merge in de Visée's personality, and to what degree they influence his pieces most closely allied to vocal models.

The continuo treatises

The flowering of French *airs* and its subsequent effect on instrumental writing witnessed the publication of several treatises devoted to continuo accompaniment with plucked string instruments. Between 1660 and 1730, eight works appeared in print that make specific reference to theorbo realization, while several others including Derosier (1699), Saint-Lambert (1707), and Rameau (1722) make indirect allusion to the theorbo as an accompanying instrument. One of the earliest authors to publish continuo advice was Nicolas Fleury, who issued his forty-page *Methode pour apprendre facilement a toucher le theorbe*, in 1660.¹⁷ Fleury does not provide

¹⁵ The term "head-motive" was coined by Wolfgang Häfner in his study on Denis Gaultier. See his "Die Lautenstücke des Denis Gaultier." (Ph.D. dissertation: The University of Freiburg, 1939). While this technique may resemble to some degree the use of "signature phrases" employed by de Visée (to be discussed in chapter five), they are in Gaultier not bound by rhythms that either associate with or detract from melodic patterns that exist in the same tessitura. Even in those places where leaps or disjunct movement are used by de Visée, they are made congruous by the emphasis on line, not through an importance placed on small, quasi-imitative phrases as found in Gaultier.

¹⁶ Le Moine's life actually coincided with de Visée, although his pieces are of a much less progressive nature. Hurel is much closer to the ideals of the previous generation of lutenists, in contrast to de Visée's clearly defined linear style.

¹⁷ Nicolas Fleury, *Methode pour apprendre facilement a toucher le theorbe sur la basse-*

information on hand position, tuning, or other matters of technique, relying instead on a system of examples to illustrate the most convenient chords for continuo. All intervals are discussed, although the examples emphasize the figures for 3 and 6. Only occasionally are figures given for 8, 5, 7-6 or 4-3. Major intervals are regularly figured as "3:" or "6:" while a "3." or "6." designate minor intervals; only these inversions receive this treatment. Fleury seems to ignore the improper inversions that sometimes arise through reentrant tuning, and many chromatically affected bass notes (in the low register) are freely transposed up an octave on a stopped string. Similarly, examples abound of a written bass pitch (in his figured bass examples) that have been lowered an octave. This practice of freely transposed basses is a feature of Fleury's book, as well as a common device used throughout later theorbo treatises by authors with perhaps more theoretical discipline than Fleury. Inversions where the bass note is concealed within a chord formation is a typical aspect of Fleury, and demonstrates that these inversions must have been tolerated by players and other musicians. With application to vocal accompaniment, Fleury seems to favor a sonorous, idiomatic realization that provides a less disciplined approach than later writers.

Bartolomi's *Table pour apprendre facilement a toucher le theorbe...* duplicates Fleury's attitude in a simplified approach to realization. Bartolomi writes that his table, which is basically a list of realized cadences, will aid the reader in executing facile accompaniments *pour toucher toutes sortes d'Airs...*¹⁸ Bartolomi mirrors Fleury in his approach by cadential examples. Both authors prepare their views by a short discourse on intervals and chords in various positions; all then related to the actual examples in tablature. This work utilizes the full range of continuo figures from 2 to 7, with an "x" for major intervals and a flat sign for minor; accidentals are used for the other figures. Inversions, "hidden" bass notes, and freely transposed basses abound in Bartolomi, revealing a players approach to the discipline of continuo playing.

A further treatise appeared in ca.1670, authored by the guitarist and theorbist Henry Grenerin.¹⁹ Grenerin's *Livre de théorbe* follows examples set by Fleury and Bartolomi in

continue (Paris: Ballard, 1660). Facsimile reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1972. Fleury dedicated his method to the Duc d'Orleans, with whom de Visée retained ties. Fleury also identifies himself as an *Ordinaire de la Musique* on the title page, an identical title given to de Visée at his appointment at the court.

¹⁸ Angelo Michele Bartolomi, *Table pour apprendre facilement à toucher le theorbo sur la basse-continue* (Paris: Ballard, 1699), *Advertissement*. This "playing all sorts of airs" presumably refers to both vocal and instrumental accompanying.

¹⁹ Henry Grenerin, *Livre de theorbe contenant plusieurs pieces sur differens tons, avec une nouvelle methode tres facile pour apprendre à jouer sur la partie les basses continues et toutes sortes d'airs à livre ouvers* (Paris: Bonneuil, n.d.). This treatise is dedicated to Lully and was offered for sale at the same location as de Visée's two guitar books. Grenerin was a regular participant in Lully's stage works at the court, and his continuo treatise, while brief, may have

ascending figured bass lines and realized progressions. This treatise also uses Fleury's method of an "x" and flat sign to signify major and minor intervals. Grenerin may use as many as four chords in unrhthmicized sequence before the final cadential harmony. He also gives the full range of continuo figures, even compound intervals such as the ninth. Again, inversions appear wherever the bass moves above the third course, the highest unstopped string on the theorbo. Grenerin is an interesting case of a musician that played and published for both theorbo and guitar, attesting to the overlapping techniques of these two instruments. His *Livre de Theorbe* announces the inclusion of pieces before the *nouvelle methode tres facile*, but the print contains only figured bass examples. Grenerin dispenses with any discussion of intervals or the mensural notation of chromatic pitches on the theorbo, immediately commencing with a figured C major and minor scale and its tablature chords. As with the authors mentioned above, harmonies whose bass notes lie above the third string create inversions that fall below the written bass note. It must be noted that even in these instances, the thumb plays the lowest courses, even when it is not the lowest pitch of the chord, emphasizing the bass note. The problem of inversions is deemphasized by the natural weight of the thumb, projecting that string through inverted chords. In general, Grenerin seems to prefer inverted chord shapes that remain at the higher written bass note, instead of transposing the pitch to an unstopped string.²⁰ Inversions are an integral aspect of Baroque guitar playing (in French reentrant tuning with the fourth course at the upper octave), where the bass is often inside an inverted harmony. This is exactly the case in Grenerin's 1680 *Livre de Guitarre et autre piéces de musique, meslées de symphonies, avec une instruction pour jouer la basse continüe*. As with Corbetta and de Visée, Grenerin scores pieces in staff notation, although he provides a guitar tablature realization above the figures for theorbo. Although inversions are a technical necessity on Baroque guitar, they may have influenced Grenerin's attitude in his theorbo treatise insofar as he prefers them to transposed basses.

The last two treatises to appear in French²¹ devote much more detail to inversions and transpositions than do the earlier tutors. Both Denis Delair and François Campion saw fit to issue additions or revisions to their original tutors, testifying to the rise in popularity of the theorbo as

enjoyed widespread use in Paris.

²⁰ The problem of inversions may also be rectified by arpeggiating a chord first with the bass note, followed by an unusual right hand pattern that observes the proper ascending sequence of chord members. While only Delair (1690) makes specific reference to this technique, it had been in use in the solo Italian chitarrone music since 1604.

²¹ A continuo method in English was published in 1707, by Godfrey Keller. His *Compleat Method For Attaining to Play a Thorough Bass, upon Either Organ, Harpsichord, or Theorbo-Lute* (London: J. Cullen, 1707), is a brief tutor entirely in staff notation, paying no special attention to the theorbo.

an accompanying medium from ca.1690 until about 1730. Delair's *Traité d'accompagnement*²² is a full fledged continuo treatise comparable to Nivers, Saint-Lambert, and other French theoreticians and performers. Delair gives full explication to intervals, metric values, transpositions, and their application to the theorbo. The examples in this source are entirely in mensural notation,²³ with no reference to tablature. Delair seems to be the first theorist to have shown his figured bass signatures in a table; including twenty-three signatures organized in such a way so that the chords with the same lowest figure will be grouped together. In Godfrey Keller's treatise, a similar attempt was made to reduce the growing number of figures into a referential system such as Delair's. Delair is apparently the first writer to relate almost all of his chords to the perfect, the ninth, or the diminished fifth chord; resembling and surpassing Saint-Lambert's efforts in this system. Delair explains "ordinary" chords of diatonic dissonances and consonances, which do not differ significantly from other continuo treatises. He also illustrates "extraordinary" harmonies of augmented and diminished chords, greatly furthering the sophistication of the theorbo's capabilities in this medium. This sophistication is perhaps prompted by Delair's examples for harpsichord, for which he says:

On remarquera que la tablature que j'ay mis pour le Clavessin, sert aussi pour le Theorbe dautant que l'on est obligé dy sonner autant que l'on peut, toutes les notes que l'on trouvera en tablature de Clavessin, on se peut néanmoins dispenser d'ensuivre l'ordre, pourvu qu'on les sonne toutes, il nimporte laquelle se sonne la premiere, ou la derniere, apres la basse qui doit toujours précéder les accords, on se regle en cela sur la commodité de la main.²⁴

The tablature [staff notation] used for the harpsichord serves also for the theorbo, since one is obliged to play as much as possible all the notes found in the harpsichord tablature. Nevertheless, one can dispense with following a particular order in playing the notes. It does not matter what note is played first or last after the bass, which should always precede the other chord tones. This order is regulated by the convenience of the hand.²⁵

²² Denis Delair, *Traité d'accompagnement pour le théorbe, et le clavessin* (Paris: l'auteur, 1690). Facsimile reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1972.

²³ Aside from two brief tablature examples (in the second edition) showing the tuning of the theorbo which agrees with the standardized French nominal A, and a chart showing stacked octaves and their enharmonic equivalents with corresponding tablature. See *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

²⁴ Delair, *op. cit.*, *Advis*, C^v.

²⁵ As translated by Charlotte S. Mattax, "Denis Delair's Traite d'Accompagnement pour le Theorbe, et le Clavessin: A Translation with Commentary." (Unpublished D.M.A. thesis: Stanford University, 1985), p. xvii.

Delair freely transposes higher bass notes to the lower strings, largely avoiding the problem of inversion. He also recommends omitting notes in the harpsichord examples that are difficult or impossible to realize on theorbo. While Fleury maintains a mostly two or three part texture in his tablature examples, Bartolotti prefers a thicker texture of three and four part progressions. The doubling of certain chord tones on different strings of the theorbo may add to the illusion of density, and it should be kept in mind that these examples are designed as teaching tools. In an actual performed realizations, the texture probably varied according the the rhythmic or textual context, shifting in harmonic density and filled by passing or non-chord members. Delair seems to prefer a resonant realization that makes idiomatic use of the instrument, especially of its lower range. With regard to this point, he makes extensive use of what he calls *suppositions*, a connective device in bass lines that fills intervals of more than a third. As Delair describes:

The *supposition* is made when several notes of equal value follow one another, ascending and descending; only the second note of the beat carries the chord, not the first... *Suppositions* are used to connect the tone of a melody. They are ordinarily made when the bass ascends by a third or fourth, and then ascends by one or several degrees.²⁶

Delair's use of *suppositions* is of much greater melodic sophistication than the earlier treatises mentioned above. This concern for melodic shape in the bass seems to impart a greater linear significance to a written bass line, clarifying a polarity between the upper and lower lines. The passing tones in *suppositions* lie well on the unstopped basses of the theorbo, assuming that no accidentals conflict with their pre-established tuning.²⁷ Delair's progressive use of "extraordinary" chords and *suppositions* merit attention and define this work as a valuable study of continuo practice on either theorbo or harpsichord.

The final continuo treatise to have been printed in France was François Campion's *Traité d'accompagnement et de composition* of 1716.²⁸ As with Delair, Campion's work is

²⁶ Mattax, op. cit., p. 117.

²⁷ This emphasis placed on a linear shaping of the bass finds much agreement in de Visée's theorbo pieces where the bass fulfills a contrapuntal, not harmonic role.

²⁸ François Campion, *Traité d'accompagnement et de composition, selon la règle des octaves de musique* (Paris: Adam, 1716). Campion also issued an *Addition au Traité....* (Paris: ?, 1730). A salient feature of this source is Campion's *Règle des octaves* (Rule of the Keys), a system for identifying and fingering continuo figures in relation to open strings on the theorbo. This fingering system could then be shifted up the fingerboard chromatically, and provided a convenient method (albeit more theoretical and complex than the earlier continuo treatises) that allowed for immediate understanding of intervallic relationships. Although invented by his

primarily for harpsichordists, the examples given being entirely in staff notation. An experienced theorbist himself, Campion seems to disparage the simplistic approach taken by many earlier treatises and insists that the student commit the rules to memory. Campion also advocates an idiomatic approach that avoids frequent left hand shifts. As for doubling pitches within a harmony, he recommends that the student first familiarize himself with rudimentary chords, introducing complexities later. Campion represents a middle ground between Fleury, Bartolomi, Grenerin, to the later treatise of Delair. Although he never omits important dissonances or intervals of a figured chord, he does advocate constructing a smoothly flowing accompaniment. A guitarist as well as theorbist, Campion gives advice that may be practically realized on both instruments.²⁹ In the *Addition* he writes:

Qu'on ne se prévienne point sans raison contre la Guitare. J'avouërai avec tout le monde qu'elle n'est pas aussi forte d'harmonie que le Clavecin, ny le Théorbe. Cependant je la croy suffisante pour accompagner une voix: au moins est-ce la justice qu'on luy a rendu, quand on me l'a entendu toucher...³⁰

However, one is not prejudiced against the guitar without reason. I acknowledge, along with everyone, that it is not as strong of harmony as the harpsichord or the theorbo. However, I believe that it is sufficient for accompanying one voice. At least this is the justice given to it by those who have heard me play.³¹

Campion in fact gives a table showing the overlapping tunings of the Baroque guitar and theorbo.³² In this table, the *Petit jeu à le Maltot* are shown to be eight, not six stopped strings on the fingerboard. The five courses of the guitar are shown to correspond in pitch to the second

teacher Maltot, this "rule" made its first written appearance on the flyleaf of the large theorbo manuscript of Vaudry de Saizenay, discussed in chapter five.

²⁹ He also authored a *Nouvelle découvertes sur la guitare* (Paris: Brunet, 1705). Facsimile reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1977. This collection contains eight scordatura tunings, necessitating the use of tablature that he otherwise opposed; de Visée also composed a single guitar suite in 1682 in a scordatura tuning. Campion's work is augmented, in his own hand, with several manuscript pieces and contains *airs*, *fugues*, and pieces with fanciful titles. Campion witnesses a further relationship of vocal and plucked string music with his transcriptions of *airs* and *brunettes*, and in fact published some drinking songs between 1708 and 1715 through Ballard. A handwritten inventory in the guitar book lists an *Avantures Pastorales mesléés devers mis en musique*, also listed for sale in the back of his *Traité*. Additionally, he composed a *Second recueil d'airs*. Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate copies of these vocal collections, as they are probably lost. If they contain tablature accompaniments for theorbo, it would provide interesting evidence of Campion's solo style in comparison to continuo writing.

³⁰ F. Campion, *Traité*, op. cit., p. 19.

³¹ As translated in K. B. Mason, "François Campion's Secret of Accompaniment..," op. cit., p. 83.

³² F. Campion, op. cit., p. 38.

through sixth strings of the theorbo. The six unstopped basses are referred to as the *Grand jeu*. The relationship between these instruments is clearly shown here; for a guitarist to think in theorbo terms, he simply had to add the first string to the chord formations already known. Perhaps this is why many guitarists also played theorbo including Campion, Grenerin, and de Visée. One atypical aspect of this tutor is its author's use of *batteries*, the strumming technique most often associated with the guitar. Campion recommends the use of *batteries* in continuo accompaniment, saying that:

Le poulce, ayant touché la note essentielle, les autres doigts doivent faire une batterie en remontant & multipliant alternativement l'accord, à moins que les cordes ne soient séparées...C'est pour celà que je donne toujours une douzaine de leçons de Guitare, à ceux qui se destinent à l'accompagnement du Théorbe.³³

[After] the thumb has played the bass note, the other fingers [of the right hand] must do a *batterie*, alternately raising up and multiplying the chord, unless the strings are non-adjacent... It is for this [reason] that I always give a dozen lessons on the guitar to those who are destined for accompaniment on the theorbo.³⁴

In the *Addition*, Campion writes that the arpeggiation of chords (as with *batteries*) will fill passages where the bass moves slowly; this practice is also justified where the instrument cannot take all the written bass notes. In a situation where the bass line is too high to avoid inversions, Campion recommends transposing the bass down an octave wherever possible. Campion's treatise is perhaps the most practical continuo guide for the theorbo to have appeared in French. His advice is aimed at the serious student and avoids an overly simplistic attitude that earlier tutors may advocate.

The treatises cited above make clear the widespread use of the theorbo as an accompanying medium. Even though the authors may differ in attitude or approach, they all make some concession to the peculiarities of theorbo tuning. The development in sophistication from Fleury to Campion traces the growth in theoretical discipline towards the theorbo, and the later disfavor toward tablature makes clear its identity as a true continuo and solo instrument, unhampered by the tablature system. As these treatises relate to vocal accompaniment, they witness a

³³ *ibid.*, p. 25-26.

³⁴ K. B. Mason, *op. cit.*, p. 79. The strumming techniques of *tirer et rabattre* (sliding a single finger back across two or more strings) and the *batterie* are extremely rare in de Visée's theorbo pieces. However, this does not invalidate its use in continuo playing, even though Campion is the only author to recommend *batteries* on theorbo. Interestingly, *batteries* are found with much greater frequency in the theorbo manuscript Vm⁷ 6265, which contain versions of de Visée's pieces. Similarly, the tablature collection (Rés. 1820) of some of de Visée's pieces contains much more frequent use of *tirer et rabattre* than is notated in Saiz.I.

growing association with the harpsichord, foreshadowing the eventual eclipse of the theorbo. These treatises, while only briefly described here, firmly establish the theorbo as a preferred accompaniment instrument, echoed by Bacilly, de la Barre, and Marais.

Marais in a theorbo arrangement

The theorbo was especially equipped to accompany the German flute and viol, as evidenced by de Visée's role as an ensemble member with these instruments. The frequency with which the French continuo treatises appeared in print make obvious its natural relationship with the voice; this is reflected in de Visée's arrangements from vocal pieces of Ballard and Lully. An interesting example of a theorbist's attitude toward continuo is found in the theorbo manuscript Vm⁷ 6265, in which an arrangement of an allemande of Marais appears. The work is of particular interest since it is an adaption of a vocally-influenced viol piece and contains continuo figures. The work in its original form is for viol and continuo, with the second viol (and or chordal instrument) functioning as a bass line, intact with continuo figures. While the theorbo arrangement may not be definitely ascribed to de Visée, its inclusion among his original works in the manuscript is strongly suggestive of his adaption.³⁵ In this transcription, the "brisé" effect of wide leaps in the viol is approximated in the theorbo, although converted to a somewhat more linear guise by sustaining pitches through their written values. This is of course the purpose of *tenués* on the viol, but in the theorbo transcription certain rhythmic alterations of the line show that the arranger has written out ornament conventions as melodic figures. With relation to continuo practices, this arrangement poses an interesting example of how de Visée (if he is the arranger) imbedded a realization within an existing treble-bass outline. As with de Visée's other arrangements and original pieces, the top line takes precedence in this adaption. In preserving as much as possible the original shape of the melody, this arrangement makes a rather free use of octave displacement in both higher and lower ranges. The basically two-part nature of the arrangement contains only minimal filling within the upper and lower lines. Where the melody rests or the bass line is doubled by the first viol, continuo figures take over momentarily. In these passages, slower-moving chords are not used as harmonic filler. Rather, the bass line is matched by parallel movement of a compound third, or other such melodic treatment. The extremely free nature of the adaption and the inserting of only occasional filling harmonies or linear (continuo) movement

³⁵ Another theorbo transcription from Marais is found in Saiz.I, p. 232. This *air*, actually the *Marche pour les Matelots* from Marais' *Alcione* of 1706, is definitely arranged by de Visée as Vaudry (the compiler) has marked the adaption as *mise par M^r. de Visée*.

suggest that the author of this arrangement was concerned more with maintaining a constant stream of conjunct movement than short periods of slower chordal movement. This attitude is certainly consistent with de Visée's style, and the period from which the original viol piece dates (1686) suggests that de Visée may have actually accompanied Marais in this very work, subsequently preparing its adaption. In a theorbo arrangement from a relatively dense original, technical limitations would naturally affect the degree of attention paid to figured harmonies. Their treatment here so resembles de Visée's original writing as to suggest that textures in his music may have grown from continuo playing. The following two examples show the original work in a modern edition,³⁶ followed by the theorbo transcription. Although an isolated case, this arrangement suggests that theorbists may have exercised more textural variety in accompaniment than the treatises imply.

De Visée and the air de cour

Robert de Visée was familiar, at least in part, with the vocal repertoire that came to be known as simply *air*, after ca.1650. His theorbo arrangements of *airs* from printed books of Pierre, Jean-Baptiste-Christophe, and Christophe Ballard attest to his knowledge of this repertoire. Although these arrangements do not substantiate the proposition that his theorbo music was a (more or less) direct outgrowth of vocal accompanying practices, they witness a relationship between *airs* of that period and the mature French theorbo style. In these settings, de Visée observed principles that affect all of his arrangements from vocal originals; indeed these principles made themselves felt in the transference of theorbo pieces from one medium to another.³⁷

The simple monophonic chanson of the seventeenth century split into several guises, one of which was the *chanson à boire*, or drinking song. The nature of these songs necessitated a simple, recognizable melody in an unpretentious setting. The texts were often risqué or amusing, but the upper and middle classes required songs that could be sung in their homes without the risk of social embarrassment. The highly refined and stylized texts and music of the *air de cour* were not appropriate in the popular manifestations of this genre. As André de Rosier states:

The invention of the table is more for conversation than for eating. A few things suffice

³⁶ This excerpt is reproduced from Marin Marais, *The Instrumental Works Vl. 1, Pièces à une et à deux violes, 1686* edited by John Hsu (New York: Broude Bros., 1980), p. 40.

³⁷ These principles will be reviewed in chapter five.

Example 4-1: Marais: Allemande, Suite #2, m. 1-9.

The musical score for Example 4-1 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in G major (one sharp). The first nine measures are shown. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and fingerings. Below the bass staff, there are several lines of figured bass notation (lute tablature) corresponding to the notes in the bass line.

This next example shows the solo theorbo adaption:

Example 4-2: *allemande de marais*, m. 1-9.

The musical score for Example 4-2 consists of a single staff, bass clef, in G major (one sharp). The first nine measures are shown. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and fingerings. The score is a solo theorbo adaption, meaning it is designed for a single melodic line.

a man; a pleasant discussion, a *chanson à boire gaillarde*, and a glass of good wine can give twenty years of health.³⁸

The popularity of this genre encouraged the publication of collections aimed at these middle and upper classes. One example of this genre particularly relevant to the present study is the arrangement by de Visée of a *chanson gaillarde* from an undated manuscript collection.³⁹ This arrangement and its tablature original are given in the following examples.

A prominent feature of this arrangement is the priority given to the vocal line. This priority overrules the addition of inside harmonies and even extends itself to the adaption of the bass line. A solo instrumental setting of a vocal original would naturally give precedence to the top line, but in this example the so-called "brisé" aspects of theorbo compositions concurrent with this *air* are totally absent. What emerges here is a treble-bass texture of a truly linear character that does not suggest the ametrical nature of *air* texts. The clearly etched lines of the arrangement are occasionally interspersed with filler harmonies; these harmonies seem to accrue (in texture) at points of arrival and at standard cadential figures. This arrangement suggests many aspects of de Visée's compositional traits; although it is a rather insignificant piece in his total output, it belies a concern for clean, linear writing that is very much at odds with his theorbist contemporaries.

A further although somewhat more complex setting of an *air* is to be found in de Visée's adaption of *Le Rémouler*, an *air* in gigue rhythm that derives from J.B.C. Ballard's *Recueil d'Airs* of 1716.⁴⁰ The following examples in transcription and tablature illustrates this arrangement. This adaption contains features that provide perhaps more insight into de Visée's stylistic traits. The use of the low bass courses is much more developed, and has assumed contrapuntal aspects not found in the previous example. The clarity of the top line is still very much

³⁸ De Rosier was a dilettante and noble who composed *Chansons à boire*. This translation is quoted in S. J. Cannedy, op. cit., p. 5.

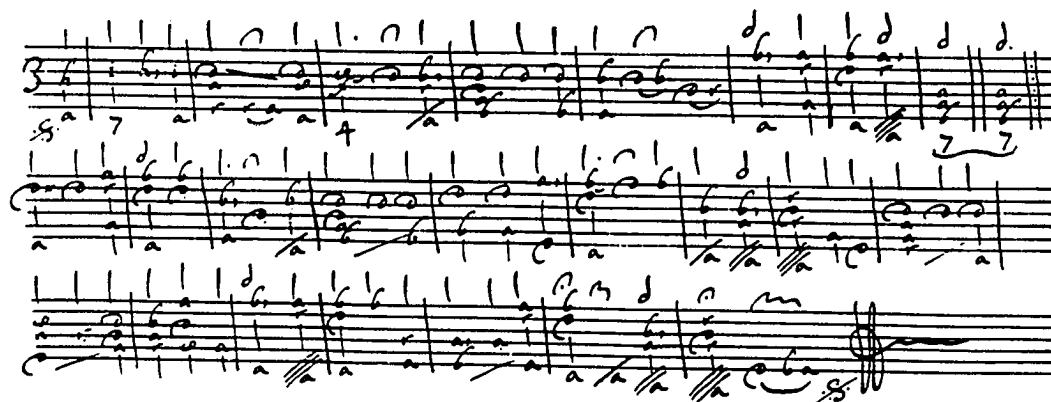
³⁹ *Je gage de boire autant qu'un Suisse* is a popular song that appears in the *Recueil de chansons gaillardes*, presently housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Vmd. ms 301(2). Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate the original *air* to facilitate a more in-depth comparison. Another theorbo version, corrupt and rife with irregularities is to be found in the anonymous theorbo manuscript Rs. 1106, f.7r. It is interesting to note that in both versions, the top line takes precedence over the shape of the bass line and the filling harmonies.

⁴⁰ This arrangement also appears in the same source in an adaption for baroque lute. It remains unclear whether de Visée was responsible for lute versions of his theorbo music, or whether the compiler of theorbo section of this the collection (who apparently played lute) made the adaptations. If the latter were true, it was probably under the supervision or received the approval of de Visée.

Example 4-3: *Je gage de boire autant qu'un Suisse*,
arranged by de Visée.



Example 4-3a: *Je gage de boire autant qu'un Suisse*,
theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 382.



Example 4-4: Ballard: *Le Rémouler*, arranged by de Visée.



Example 4-4a: Ballard: *Le Rémouler*,
theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 295



apparent, but the stepwise use of the bass line often results in sophisticated and unusual transpositions of harmonies. The conjunct motion of the bass here strongly resembles the *suppositions* mentioned in Delair's treatise of 1690. This use of the bass is given a contrapuntal significance that is not present in works of Hotman, Le Moine, and Hurel. Another frequent use of the low diapasons is the amplification of a harmony by reiteration at the low octave. This trait is also found in the printed continuo treatises mentioned above. The avoidance of such use of the lowest register is common to French lute composers.⁴¹

The inclusion of arrangements of popular and serious *airs* in the *Saizenay* manuscript is telling of de Visée's breadth of experience with these vocal forms. The arrangements often bear the marking *mise par M^r de Visée*; it is difficult to determine whether he transcribed them for teaching purposes, or as a means of instrumental preservation.⁴²

Various other popular genres appear in this source such as *brunettes*, *Noels*, and *contredanses*. The inclusion of this repertoire alongside lute works of Gallot, Jacquesson, Mouton, Du But, and others indicates the very cosmopolitan tastes of its compilers. The comparison of the two *airs* shown above is not meant to suggest a development or lineage in de Visée's methods of arranging, but merely to show how he best adapted a vocal model into an effective and idiomatic transcription. These forms are essentially of folk origin and their popularity may explain their inclusion in this source, but in describing the *air de boire*, Frederic Robert informs us that:

⁴¹ François Champion refers to the stopped strings as *petit jeu* and to the unstopped basses as *grand jeu*. See his *Traité...*, op. cit., p. 38. This terminology was also used by Denis Delair in his *Traité...*, op. cit., p. 5. Here Delair states that: *Il y a quatorze cordes sur le Theorbe, dont les six premières sont apellées le petit jeu...* ("There are fourteen strings on the theorbo, the first six are called the *petit jeu*...") This terminology seems to reflect organ ranks, and the little use of the lowest ranks in French organ music of this period may indicate a dislike for that resonance. While the theorbo and organ seem distantly related, one musician played both: Pierre Mélon, to whom Marin Marais dedicated his *Tombeau de M^r Meliton, Pièces à deux violes*, 1686. Meliton was reported to have performed with Le Moine in a dedicatory poem by Robinet, who wrote: *Un rare concert on ouït, De clavessin, Théorbe et Viole... C'est Mèlton, Garnier, le Moine...*, "A concert of rare quality was heard, (consisting of) harpsichord, theorbo, and viol... (with) Meliton, Garnier, Lemoine..." (Paris: *Gazette*, January 14, 1668). The use of low courses in chitarrone music is very much a feature of that repertoire, as it is in de Visée's theorbo music.

⁴² Other arrangements exist in this source, notably *La Petit Brunette* of Pierre Ballard, *VII^e Livre d'Airs de Cour* (Paris: 1628), and *L'autre jour m'allant promener* of Christophe Ballard, *Brunettes... Tome III* (Paris: 1711). These and other *airs* are duplicated in other manuscript sources as well. Arrangements of popular songs abound in the lute, theorbo and harpsichord repertoire.

Particularly brilliant examples of their kind were provided by Lully (*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, iv, 1.), who found in the genre a discreet occasion to give expression to his libertine ideas. The fascination of the public for these serious and drinking songs became so great that the innumerable collections published each year by one or several composers were insufficient to satisfy it.⁴³

Lully's influence made an impact on French *airs*, indeed upon all instrumental and vocal music in France. This effect is stated very clearly by de Visée in the preface to his 1682 book of guitar pieces. He writes that:

in order to succeed, I have attempted to make the melody as naturally singing as possible knowing myself only too well to pretend that I could be distinguished by the strength of my writing... and to the extent of my abilities I have lent to my compositions a hint of the style of the Inimitable Mounsieur de Lulli...⁴⁴

Even though Lully sought to embrace the syllabic inflection and rhythmic variation first encountered in the early *air de cour*, his application of those principles was tempered by an overwhelming concern for dramatic flow and character development. This concern resulted in a much more "Italianate" character than was previously found, and the example provided by Lully's *tragédie lyriques* find impact in de Visée's tendency toward smoothly flowing lines. The *air Sommes nous pas trop heureux* from Lully's *Ballet de l'Impatience* of 1661 provides another example of de Visée's skills at arrangement. Again, the top line is given predominance as it determines the role of the bass and inside harmonic activity. Transpositions freely occur in the bass range as is dictated by the playability of the top line. This arrangement is given in full with its tablature original, in the following examples. This adaption displays numerous features of de Visée's solo theorbo style. Firstly, the vocal line acts in mostly stepwise motion; where it spans a third it is always connected by an ornament from above or below, depending on its direction. De Visée's emphatic use of this type of *coulé* as a connective device speaks of his priority given to conjunct motion.⁴⁵ Secondly, the line occasionally jumps a fourth as a point of melodic emphasis,

⁴³ *Airs Sérieux et a Boire*, edited by Frederic Robert (Paris: Huegel & Cie, 1968), p. v.

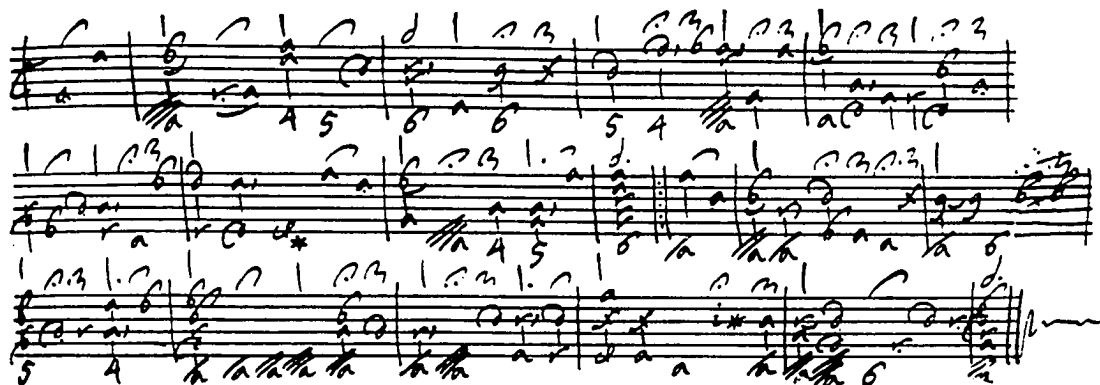
⁴⁴ See Appendix 1 for the complete passage from which this excerpt is extracted.

⁴⁵ This mostly conjunct linear style is not merely a trait of de Visée and Lully. It affected most composers at the court at this time, including (and especially) Marais and Forqueray; this "singing style" transfers very naturally to the viol. In his *Traité* of 1687 (the year of Lully's death) Rousseau recommends use of the ascending and descending *cheute* as a connective melodic device, saying that "The cheute is made when descending by the interval of a third...the cheute must never be made when the first note of the third is at the end of a melodic phrase... all descending thirds which are major... require a cheute." See Green, "Annotated Translation and Commentary," op. cit., p. 370.

Example 4-5: Lully: *Sommes nous pas trop heureux*,
arranged by de Visée.



Example 4-5a: *Sommes nous pas trop hereux,*
 theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 221.



a device used frequently by de Visée. In this arrangement, the filling of harmonies within the treble-bass outline plays no contrapuntal role- a feature that seems to be mostly reserved for these types of adaptations. It may be that de Visée chose to arrange this particular *air* of Lully because it bore striking similarities to his principles. By 1661, the date of Lully's ballet, these principles must have made sufficient impression on de Visée to affect his earliest printed issues of guitar music in 1682 and 1686. The influence of Lully can be seen most clearly in this and other theorbo arrangements, and the basic aspects of Lully's style make their presence felt throughout de Visée's works.⁴⁶

Another work of particular relevance to this study is the only extant *air* of de Visée, issued in a collection of Ballard. The rather late date of this publication attests to the public demand for these songs, but it may perhaps represent a tribute on the part of the publisher toward de Visée, who probably died in that year. The amusing nature of the song is seen in the text, of which is here given in its entirety:

Que la bouteille a d'attraits, Publiions en paix Ses heureux bienfaits; L'Amour, le tendre Amour Luy fait sa cour! Verse, Versemoy tout plein, Voisin, Ah!, que ces petits gloux gloux sont doux! Verse, Versemoy, cher Voisin, Tout plein, Ah! que ces petits gloux gloux sont doux! C'est Iris qui dans ces beaux lieux Préside à nos jeux. Objet divin, Qui pour mieux nous mettre entrain Dans ce festin Nous invite un verre à la main, A faire un aimable tin, tin, tin, tin.

(The bottle has such charm, Let us praise its goodness, Love even pays court to it! Pour, pour me a full glass, neighbor, Oh!, how sweet the little gurgles! Iris it is, who presides over our recreation in these charming surroundings, Can you see that divine object which to put warming spirit into our feast, invites us to cheer, hear its clink, clink, clink).

The following example reproduces for the first time de Visée's *Que la bouteille a d'attraits*, from Ballard's fourth book of solo airs with figured bass of 1732.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ See chapter five for an explanation of these principles as they affected de Visée's theorbo pieces. Nine other arrangements of Lully appear in Saiz.I, from both orchestral and vocal originals. In Lully's score, this *air* is called a *serenade*. Interestingly, this very *air* also appeared in Ballard's 1711 collection of *Brunettes*, and the text was given in Bacilly's *Recueil* of 1666. If this *air* is played on a smaller theorbo, it matches Lully's original tonality of G minor.

⁴⁷ Ballard. *Concerts Parodiques*. (Paris: Ballard, 1732), pp. 47-48. I am most grateful to George Bloch for examining the original at the Bibliothèque Nationale, and for providing me with a beautifully written hand copy.

Exemple 4-6: de Visée: Air:
Que la bouteille a d'attraits.

Concerts Parodiques, 1732

Air, de M. DeVise

LIVRE QUATRIÈME.

Que la bouteille a d'attraits, Publiions en paix Ses hereux bien -

Basse - continue

faits; L'A-mour, le tendre A-mour Luy fait sa cour! Verse -

Verse - moy tout plein, Voi sin Ah! que ces petits gloux gloux sont doux! Verse,

Verse - moy cher Voi-sin, Tout plein, Ah! que ces petit gloux gloux sont doux! C'est I -

ris qui dans ces beaux lieux Preside a nos jeux. Voi-tu cet Objet di -

vin, Qui pour mieux nous mettre entrain Dans ce festin Nous in -

vite un verrea a la main, A faire un aimable tin, tin, tin, tin.

Example 4-6a: de Visée: Air.
 Reproduction from Ballard's *Concerts Parodiques*.

LIVRE QUATRIEME. 47

AIR, DE M. DE VISÉE.

Que la bouteille a d'atraits, Publiions en paix Ses heureux bien-faits; L'A-

BASSE-CONTINUE.

mour, le rendre Amour Luy fait la cour: Verfe, Verfe-moy tout plein, Voi-

fin, Toit

48 CONCERTS PARODIQUES;

plein, Ah: que ces petits gloux gloux Sont doux! C'est L- ris qui dans ces beaux

lieux Prétend à nos jeux. Voi-tu cet Objet divin, Qui pour mieux nous mettre en train Dans

ce festin, Nous invite un verre à la main, A faire un aimable tin, tin, tin, tin.

FIN DU QUATRIEME CONCERT.

The relative simplicity of the line, especially in its reiteration of a single note, belie the popular origins of this form of song. The straightforward nature of the setting is mirrored in the theorbo arrangements cited above, with emphasis, albeit simplification of the melodic features in the Lully arrangement. One interesting aspect of this *air* is the unsuitability of the bass line for theorbo continuo. Its high range is more appropriate for viol and harpsichord, although it may be realized with viol and guitar or harpsichord alone. This *air* displays an harmonic sophistication that is shared in de Visée's solo theorbo works; a sophistication that is based less on syllabic inflection than on a subtle response to the overall meaning of a phrase. The phrasal structure itself is delineated by harmonic transgressions, enacted by "surprise" accidentals. Notice in the initial phrase how the tonic is blandly affirmed; subsequent phrases then become colored by modulation. The minor dominant of the second phrase is established without preparation at the words *L'Amour, le tendre Amour Lut fait sa cour!*. The next phrase, beginning with *Verse, Verse moy tout plein*,... raises the third of the dominant, which prepares (in a phrasal sense) the terse excursion through the major sub-mediante. This is harmonically prepared by the C#, a secondary dominant to the phrase of *cher Voisin, Tout plein*,... This itself prepares a brief suggestion of the minor supertonic at *Ah!, que ces petits gloux*..., immediately converted to the major supertonic. This phrase then prepares a restatement of the tonic, immediately altered by the flattened seventh degree at *Nous invite un verree à la main*. The minor dominant rapidly leads to a standard full cadence. The overall harmonic scheme seems to be based on four measure phrases and their subdivisions, introduced by a double anacrusis. The bass line is fashioned after this double anacrusis figure, in diminution and inversion. The most florid extension of this motive appears in the parallel compound thirds, at *Voi-tu cet Objet divin*,... The shading of phrases by harmonic inflection is of importance here: not only to create a cyclical-type overall scheme, but to mask the text and melody in a harmonic scheme more advanced than the simple nature of the poem. Perhaps de Visée is intentionally creating a situation of veiled harmonic complexity, as the entire collection is intended to parody the seriousness of *airs*. However, the use of shifting harmonic areas and unprepared dissonance is a trait of his compositional style in general. The inclusion of *airs* by Lully in this collection further witness his perennial presence and while a relatively simple work, this *air* contains germinal features of de Visée's theorbo style in microcosm.

The adaptations and original *air* cited above testify to de Visée's relationship with *air de cour* and Lully's dramatic vocal works. From the beginnings of its French identity, the theorbo was always an intimate partner with the voice, and the later solo style most probably grew out of an extension of the theorbo's accompanying capabilities. The figurative solo style found direct inspiration from the existing lute and guitar repertoire, but also responded to developments in

French vocal music, especially following the decline of the lute. The fertilization of harmonic and linear concerns found rich ground in de Visée's personality, and melded into a cosmopolitan language that belies a strong connection with vocal music.

The theorbo and viol in France

Marin Mersenne wrote in 1623 that there was no functioning *Académie* in Paris at that time and that this establishment had come under the direction of Jacques Maudit. One source from this period, unfortunately undated, mentions the use of the theorbo in an *Académie* concert. The poet Agrippa d'Aubigné, who professed to be a member of that institution, writes of a concert in Paris where:

un excellent consert de guitare, de douze violes, quatre espinettes, quatre luts, deux pandores & deux tuorbes.⁴⁸

(an excellent concert with guitar, twelve viols, four spinets, four lutes, two pandoras and two theorbos.)

This appears to have been a purely instrumental concert; the lack of detail in this description leaves the issue of part grouping a matter of conjecture. Perhaps the families of instruments were grouped as unison parts, or perhaps the distribution of parts was antiphonally realized. The use of theorbos here seems to have been in an accompanying context, although this is not substantiated by fact. The viol seems to have been a favored participant in Maudit's concerts; he was in fact credited for having brought the instrument into France from England.⁴⁹ The novelty and progressive use of instruments in the *Académie* concerts as directed by Maudit most likely made its impact on instrumental practices through the remainder of the century.⁵⁰ As fretted instruments, the similarities in left-hand techniques between the viol and theorbo were quite striking, and the low range and timbre of both instruments made for a successful blending in ensemble situations. Many of the early viol players were in fact lutenists or theorbists, and it was probably through this association that the theorbo was introduced into France. The theorbo must have been rare in that country before ca.1650, as little mention of its inclusion in concerts is made. Not only did Maudit establish the concept of concerts paid for by the public, he also helped

⁴⁸ Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné. *Oeuvres complètes*, edited by Réaume and de Caussade. VI. 1. (Paris: ?, 1873), p. 465.

⁴⁹ Mersenne, M. *Harmonie Universelle*, op. cit., *Preface general au lecteur*, p. 9.

⁵⁰ See the article by Albert Cohen. "A Study of Ensemble Practice in Seventeenth-Century France," *The Galpin Society Journal*, VI. XV, 1962. pp. 3-17.

to establish the fashionability of certain instruments including spinet, viol, and theorbo. From as early as 1636, Robert Ballard organized concerts as mentioned by Mersenne, and other persons including Chambonnières were known to have presented concerts of mixed instruments from 1641.⁵¹ One period description of the pairing of viol and theorbo as accompanying instruments appears in an anonymous manuscript detailing a musical entertainment given for the Landgrave of Hesse in 1647. The ensemble, described as musicians in service of the French king, took part in a spectacle that integrated stage machinery and dancing. The description states that after the stage opened,

Ensuite elle fut interrompüe par le damoiselle de la Barre qui dans une des galeries de la dite Salle, sa voix soutenue d'un clavessin avec deux luth, un thurbo et une viole, et le sieur Constantin qui l'avoient précède.

Then the music gave way to Mlle [Anne] de la Barre in one of the galleries, her voice supported by a harpsichord and two lutes, a theorbo and a viol, and Constantin playing the violin, the melody being in no way inferior to the consorts which had preceded it.⁵²

This citation demonstrates the accompanying role that both the viol and theorbo assumed with the voice. It is interesting that both instruments are mentioned together, and illustrates not only the mutual functions they shared, but that both instruments were utilized at the court from as early as 1647.

The viol had already enjoyed wide use and a highly developed method of playing in England; both French and English styles of viol playing parallel each other. It is difficult, however, to formulate to what degree English division style affected the French method of playing. The inception of the viol in France as a solo instrument is due to André Maugars (ca.1580-ca.1645) who, during his service to Charles I of England, learned the virtuoso solo style and brought his experience to the court of Louis XIII. Due to political difficulties with Cardinal Richelieu, Maugars made a lengthy sojourn to Italy, where wrote his celebrated observations on Italian musical life and its relation to French traditions.⁵³

The development of ensemble and solo instrumental practices in France at this time most likely grew out of the groupings that were formed at Maudit's concerts. Under the prevailing concern for poetic theories, the *Académie* meetings must have favored the human voice; a

⁵¹ See Ledbetter. *Harpsichord and Lute Music*, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

⁵² *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

⁵³ André Maugars. *Response faite à un curieux sur le sentiment de la musique d'Italie*. (Paris, 1672).

situation in which instruments played a supportive role, doubling choral parts. In fact, ensembles of viols seem to be the only family of instruments that were concerted together with voices. When lutes played in ensemble, it seems that they played in unison, with no distribution of ranges. With the patronage of Louis XII, Maudit became increasingly involved in the creation of public spectacles which gave a growing importance to purely instrumental music.⁵⁴

As we have seen, the chitarrone had already boasted several masters and had generated an important, if not substantial solo repertoire. We have also seen that the French *Académie* concerts gave a position of primary importance to the voice; it was in this milieu that the theorbo was first introduced into France, although the lexicographers and authors cited above conflict as to who was first responsible for its inception around ca.1650. Most period sources identify Nicholas Hotman with the importation of the theorbo from England; the instrument was already in wide use there and several musicians had travelled to or resided in England in order to study. Similarly, English musicians were known to have migrated to France in order to absorb that country's national style. In the progressive arena of Maudit's concerts, the theorbo was allowed to develop an identity that at first was most strongly tied with the voice. There is a strong possibility that its solo literature and style of playing was as strongly influenced by the decorative, linear style of playing that the viol developed at these concerts. The development of the viol was also strongly affected by a conscious emulation of the human voice, but its ability to traverse chordal and vocal styles served as a matrix for sharing these opposing attitudes with the theorbo. Although the theorbo was certainly and most directly influenced by existing techniques of solo lute and guitar playing, it remains very likely that the techniques of French theorbo playing were also a result of an extension of an ornamented continuo practice mentioned above, coupled with strong associations with the new French solo viol.

The beginnings of French lute style

For the present discussion the remarks and conclusions made concerning French viol and lute style will refer to its application to the theorbo. Many factors shaped the mature French lute style, notably degrees of Italianate style, French opera, and a mutual stylistic relationship with the harpsichord. The focus on the transition in style in viol and theorbo repertoires is purposefully narrow, as this area has received little attention with regard to French theorbo music. The introduction of the theorbo in France necessarily brought with the instrument a degree of its

⁵⁴ Cohen, op. cit., pp. 3-17.

previous history as it was developed in other countries. I hope to demonstrate here that the early practice of the instrument was in part a result of its natural association with the voice, which transcended national boundaries, and a result of early French viol practices. While the maturity of French viol music was largely dependent on a separation from the lute style, the theorbo (as it outlived the lute) was influenced by its relationship with viol styles and was in fact centered in the dispute over viol playing practices. Italian music continued to exert strong powers over French music, and remained an important force in shaping the stylistic vocabularies of certain composers. It seems improbable that Italian lute music of the early seventeenth century prevailed in influencing the French lute; this puzzling lacunae in the French lute's history may be partially explained by an examination of English lute and particularly viol music as it co-existed with the new French theorbo.

During the early seventeenth century, English music for keyboard and plucked instruments may have played an important role in shaping the beginnings of certain characteristics attributed to French music for the same instruments. In terms of defining what is today referred to as the "style brisé"⁵⁵ of the French lute school, certain elements are preshadowed in the playing techniques of sixteenth century English and Italian lute composers. Some French lute masters such as Jacques Gaultier, Mercure, and Dufaut resided in England at this time, and English sources such as Mace, Talbot, and the *Mary Burwell Lute Instruction Book*⁵⁶ attest to the popularity of the French lute in England. English lutenists had no doubt crossed the channel in order to study with celebrated French masters.

Some of the overt stylistic traits of English keyboard and lute music seem to have become absorbed into the compositional styles of early French lutenists. The French players transformed germinal elements present in English instrumental music into a particularly idiomatic style of composition which had a lasting evolutionary significance in France. One tendency of English instrumental writing was the division style of ornamentation, which featured

⁵⁵ In his study of Denis Gaultier's manuscript collection of lute pieces, David Buch demonstrates that the term commonly used today to define the French style of arpeggiated playing, the "style brisé," was not an historical term used by French musicians. See Buch, D.J. "La Rhetorique des Dieux: A Critical Study of Text, Illustration, and Musical Style." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Northwestern University, 1983), pp. 225-39.

⁵⁶ The Burwell lute tutor (ca.1660-1672) is a manuscript tutor of a Baroque lute method probably written by John Rogers, a student of Ennemond Gaultier. The tutor, in French tablature, is heavily biased toward French composers, particularly Mercure, Mesangeau, and the "English" (Ennemond) Gaultier. See *Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute*, facsimile of the manuscript, edited by L. Hewitt with an introduction by Robert Spencer, (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1974).

rhythmically even figuration in alternating strains of slower-moving counterpoint. This feature can be seen in the French equivalent of *doubles*, which provide an embroidery of chordal or quasi-contrapuntal material.⁵⁷ The tendency toward *doubles* even applied to French vocal music as a favored device to ornament sections of *airs*. The rhythmic divisions of a contrapuntally conceived framework may be applied both horizontally, as is the case with *doubles*, or vertically, as a scattering of pitches which outline to a particular harmony or shorter phrasal period. Obviously, linear variation is more suited to bowed, wind, or "vocally-conceived" lines as arpeggiation is an essential trait of lute or plucked keyboard instruments. The playing of parts successively rather than simultaneously is the essence of the French lute style, a style which was to later make itself felt in French harpsichord music. One of the first French lute sources to display the beginnings of the arpeggiated style was *Le Tresor d'Orphée* of Antoine Francisque.⁵⁸ Francisque employs the arpeggiated style in the dance genres rather than the older fantasias; a tendency that was to foreshadow the French predilection toward dances. Transitional in nature, his compositions use the broken style as textural element, echoing the French identity with this tendency as seen in the lute works of J.B. Besard.⁵⁹ The period of Francisque, Besard, and other French lutenists during the first thirty years of the seventeenth century displayed a more overtly international style than is normally associated with later French lute music. While the older contrapuntal forms retained their emphasis on motivic imitation and contrapuntal writing, the newer dance forms showed a greater use of melody, shorter phrasal periods, root position chords, and denser chordal thickness at important structural beats. The ubiquitous cadential trill is regularly seen, foreshadowing its structural use later in the century in defining internal cadences. A further development in stylistic overlappings between France and England occur in Robert Dowland's *A Musicall Banquet* of 1610, and Edward Filmer's *French Court-airs, with their Ditties Englished* of 1629. These sources contain translations or tablature accompaniments to French *airs*.⁶⁰ Francisque, Besard,

⁵⁷ De Visée authored only one extant *double*, an elaboration of a G major gigue found in Saiz.I, p. 304; the *double* appears on p. 310. It utilizes a more "brisé" texture and displays also a more Italianate use of steadily-running passage work than is normally seen in his style. This use of spun-out passage work is also common to the French lute *doubles*. The gigue that it accompanies is more indicative of de Visée's compositional style.

⁵⁸ Francisque, Antoine. *Le Tresor d'Orphée, livre de tablature de luth contenant une Susane un Jour plusieurs fantasias preludes passemises Galliades suites de Branles tant à cordes avalées qu'austres. Voltes & Courantes...* (Paris: Ballard, 1600). Facsimile reprint: Geneva: Minkoff, 1975.

⁵⁹ Besard, Jean-Baptiste. *Thesaurus harmonicus*. (Cologne, 1603). Besard's collection, published in Cologne, bespeaks of the fashionability of French lute music in England, Scandinavia, and Germanic countries.

⁶⁰ Realizations of Caccini's monodies by Dowland also exist in certain manuscript sources. Some period realizations of continuo basses of Italian monody do not necessarily reflect

and Dowland represent to a limited degree the influx of the arpeggiated style, a style whose elements that were to find greater fruition in Robert Ballard's *Livres de tablature*.⁶¹

The monopoly on printing which the Ballard dynasty exerted allowed Robert Ballard, himself an outstanding lutenist, to issue his works widely. Especially in his second issuance of 1614, Ballard represents the culmination of early French lute tendencies in this period, and affirmed certain characteristics of the newly emerged style. It was during the period of Ballard, Francisque, and Besard that lute music began to form truly national traits that distinguished English from French music. The later adaption and perfection of style (in idiomatic terms) by French lutenists from ca.1650 is notable in the preference toward asymmetrical phrasal lengths (especially in allemandes), a direct contrast to the regular strain patterns found in English lute and keyboard music. These French phrasal lengths tended to be juxtaposed melodic periods rather than the strain-couplet patterns in English music or the predilection toward polyphony. French lute collections also solidified groupings according to key and genre, favoring the pervasive courante. English groupings tended to favor three and four single genres, whereas French 'suites' may include multiple genres, especially courantes. Quasi-imitative counterpoint is a feature of this new instrumental style, in which small motives appear and dissolve into the overall texture, creating an impression of smoothness and rhythmic instability. Anacrusis figures abound in allemandes and quicker dances, an essential trait of later French lute music, and subtle rhythmic shifts (a hallmark of courantes) serve to complicate the predictability of phrasal lengths in English music. It is somewhat hazardous, however, to attempt a clear separation between national styles in Francisque, Besard, and others. Even within a single print or specific composer, styles may vary; in one case where a work may show shorter phrases, melodic elaboration, and a simple rhythmic structure, another may be closer to the ideals of "brisé" textures. The uniformity of national style after ca.1630 embraced the germane aspects of previous French and English lute music, but the transition is itself rife with irregularities and inconsistencies.

contemporary national practices, as evidenced in arrangements by Dowland, Luzzaschi, and Schütz. See Hill, J.W. "Realized continuo accompaniments from Florence c1600", *Early Music*, VI.II, #2, April 1983, pp. 196-98.

⁶¹ Ballard, Robert. *Premier Livre de luth*. (Paris: Ballard, 1611), and *Diverses Pièces mises sur le luth*. (Paris: Ballard, 1614).

The viol and earlier theorbo repertoire

The solidification of tendencies in French lute music parallel the career of Nicolas Hotman (d. 1663), who was to play a key role in the development of solo viol playing in France.⁶² Hotman was a theorbist as well, and fashioned his viol music in much the same way as lute music of the period. He was employed by the Duc d'Orleans on both viol and theorbo in 1655 following his travels to England; a salient feature of Hotman's style involves a shifting sound-mass of textures highly reminiscent of the "style brisé." The textures in his music range from a melodically shaped upper line with occasional chordal interjections, to the implied and passing polyphony of the arpeggiated lute style. It seems natural that Hotman would transfer this language to the new theorbo, firmly entrenching the instrument in the surviving traditions of lute playing, but also associating the theorbo's development to viol techniques, particularly of the left hand. Other devices peculiar to the viol at this time included various tunings which required tablature notation, and the technique of sustaining harmonies by *tenue*: the holding down of left hand fingers which belong to a given harmony. These devices were common techniques of lute playing, although it must be mentioned that their transference to the theorbo were more directly effected by lute techniques than an attempt to impose viol techniques onto theorbo. Both instruments, however, were affected by the human voice, and any discussion as to their differences and similarities must fall under the blanket influence of vocal music. Jean Rousseau remarks on the use of scordatura in viol pieces, as he writes:

mais si on ne considère la Viole que par cette foute d'accords, il fait avouer que les Estrangers l'emportent sur nous; parce que leaurs différentes manières d'accorder la Viole sont plus propes à composer & à executer les Pièces d'une grande Harmonie, & plus difficile pour leur execution: mais il est certain que la tendresse, du Jeu des François dans l'imitation de la Voix, l'emporte sur cette quantité d'accords, & sur ces diminutions surprenantes des Anglois...⁶³

⁶² Hotman was praised as a master of the viol, in contrast to Maugar's style of execution. Jean Loret mentions Hotman in a prose letter of March 1661, where he writes *...Outre de parfaits Théorbistes, Et d'excellens Clavessinistes, Outre le merveilleux Hotman, Qu'on estime, quoy qu'Aleman, en cas de Viole, Qui soit de à l'autre Pole;...*, "...Besides perfect Theorbists, And excellent Harpsichordists, Besides the marvelous Hotman, who, though German, is praised by everyone, All throughout the world, for his excellent talent on the Viol;...." See Jean Loret. *La Muze Historique ou Recueil des Lettres en vers...* (Paris: P. Daffis, 1878), Tome III, p. 335.

⁶³ Rousseau. *Traité*, p. 20. This passage is cited and translated in R. A. Green, "Annotated Translation and Commentary of the Works of Jean Rousseau. A Study of Late Seventeenth-Century Musical Thought and Performance Practice." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Indiana University, 1979), p. 148. The chordal style was not the solely defended by the French. This harmonic style of playing first found favor in England during the beginning of the seventeenth century. John Dowland's defense of the lute in 1612 (in the preface to his *A Pilgrim's Solace*) was in part inspired by Tobias Hume's statement in 1605 that "...from henceforth, the statefull

(But if the viol is considered only in terms of this multitude of chords, we must admit that the foreigners have won the day, because their different ways of tuning the viol are more appropriate for composing and performing pieces with great harmonic variety. Instead our tuning is more sterile for the composition of harmonic pieces and more difficult for their execution, but the tenderness of the French style of playing in imitating the human voice prevails over this quantity of chords and the surprising diminutions of the English.)

Rousseau here favors the standardized tuning of the viol, stating that it is more appropriate for a linear style than the chordal method. Left hand placement of chords is of course of great importance to lute and theorbo pieces, particularly at the chordal style, and the application of linear styles must necessarily be affected by this technical limitation. Theorbo pieces of differing composers share this aspect, but vary according to the amount of melodic degree, even of the same composer. Let us examine a cross-influenced piece by Nicholas Hotman, which incorporates both attitudes in varying degrees, as the following example illustrates.⁶⁴

Hotman's viol students included de Machy and Sainte-Colombe. De Machy represents the final period of lute-influenced viol style, a style that was to wane with the standardization of viol tuning and the decline of the lute in the second half of the seventeenth century. The difficulties in performing the chordal style of viol pieces entailed a careful balancing of line and supportive harmony, which are liberally punctuated with ornaments. In this style, the durations of arpeggios and bowing distribution becomes a factor in maintaining a steady rhythmic flow, particularly where lines emerge or are juxtaposed. De Machy offers many insights into the cross-fertilization of theorbo and viol, as his music shares to a large degree aspects of the French lute style, where he follows and affirms the tendencies of Hotman, Du Buisson and other early French viol composers. His publication of 1685 utilizes the standardized viol tuning, however, avoiding scordatura. The following example reproduces the first half a viol prelude of de Machy, where the problems of bowing and contrapuntal balance are apparent.

instrument Gamba violl, shall with ease yeelde full various devicefull Musicke as the Lute." See Hume's *The First Part of Ayres*. (London: 1605), "To the understanding reader."

⁶⁴ I have not been able to determine whether this piece was originally written for viol and subsequently adapted for theorbo, or is an original theorbo composition. Its appearance in the *Saizenay* manuscript of ca.1699 can only attest to its compilers tastes in music of the previous generation, as well as more progressive styles. The stenographic symbols appear here as in the tablature original. *Tenues* have been converted to normalized rhythmic values in lower voices, and the *tirer et rabattre* technique, essentially an ornament where a single right hand finger sweeps back across two or more strings, has been transcribed as a descending arpeggio sign. I have chosen to leave ornaments approached from above or below neighboring notes as the small crescents immediately following the note affected, as they appear in the original. For an explanation of ornament symbols and an explication of my transcription principles, see the preface to Appendix 2.

Example 4-7: Hotman: Chaconne.



Example 4-8: De Machy: Prelude



In the example of de Machy, the texture ranges from an accompanied top line to division-style passages or written out cadential ornaments. Even in passages notated as a single line, polyphony is implied in the use of *tenués*. In the Hotman Chaconne cited above, left hand placement seems to be the most important aspect of composition, even where "brisé" textures solidify into passing areas of two or three part polyphony. Both pieces share similar stylistic traits, however, despite the idiomatic concerns that may have shaped their respective styles.

Rousseau contra de Machy

As to the left hand, the chordal style required a certain placement of the left hand thumb which led to heated debates among viol practitioners. The apex of this debate was enacted by Jean Rousseau and the followers of de Machy, who exchanged violent differences of opinion on this issue. Rousseau prefers a specific left-hand position: that of the thumb opposing the middle finger. In his *Pieces de viole en musique...*, de Machy contended that:

il a deux ports de main pour le Violle, aussi bien que pour le Luth, le Tuorbe & la Guitarre. Le premier est mettre poulce au mileiu de manche, & le premier doigt à l'opposite du poulce, tojours en rond, à moins qu'on ne soit obligé de le coucher... Et pour le second qui est celuy où on la doit entendre, il fait placer le poulce plus au bord du manche, le second doigt à l'opposite du poulce...

(there are two hand positions for the viol as there are for the lute, the theorbo, and the guitar. In the first, the thumb is placed at the middle of the neck with the first finger opposite the thumb; [the first finger is kept] always rounded unless it has to be flattened to stop more than one string... And in the second, in which one extends the first finger, the thumb should be placed more toward the edge of the neck, with the second finger opposite the thumb...)⁶⁵

Throughout his writing, de Machy insists that viol technique is analogous to and had its origins in plucked string instruments. Rousseau levelled a diatribe on this issue when he retorts that:

It is without foundation to present to us what is practiced on the lute, theorbo, and guitar, because there is a great difference between the way of holding the lute, theorbo, and guitar and the way of holding the viol, and as a result, there must be some difference in the hand position. Certainly the way of playing the viol does not derive from its origin from plucked instruments, because the advantage of sustained notes which the bow

⁶⁵ As quoted and translated in Hsu, John. *A Handbook of French Baroque Viol Technique*. (New York: Broude Bros. Ltd., 1981), p. 23.

gives it distinguishes its character from theirs, which is much inferior, since the viol more nearly approaches the human voice than any other instrument. Further, if the hand position of plucked instruments is examined, it can be seen visibly that it is much different from that of the viol where the hand is almost always extended occupying most often five frets, which happens very rarely with plucked instruments where the hand is mostly bunched together. Those who play them almost always have the thumb opposite the middle finger.⁶⁶

A clear explanation of left hand position is provided by François Campion, in his *Addition au Traité d'Accompagnement et de Composition*. Campion unequivocally states that:

Le premier doigt régne à la première touche; le second doigt lui est auxiliaire. Le second doigt régne à la seconde touche; le premier, & le troisième lui sont auxiliaires. Le pouce doit être derrière le manche opposé à second doigt. Le troisième & petit doigt, régissent à la troisième & quatrième touche, selon leur plus grande proximité, & que le bon sens le demande. Quand la main se transporte plus bas, elle garde toujours le même menagement, ainsi qu'on le connoît par l'expérience & la raison.

(The first finger dominates the first fret. The second finger is auxiliary to it. The second finger dominates the second fret. The first and third are auxiliary to it. The thumb must be behind the neck opposite the second finger. The third and little fingers dominate the third and fourth frets, according to their greatest proximity, and that which good sense demands. When the hand is moved lower [ie. toward the body], it always retains the same regard just as one knows by experience and reason.)⁶⁷

As demonstrated, Hotman, de Machy, and other early violists sought a style which incorporated lute elements into their overall textures, whereas Rousseau and the progressives maintained that the instrument was more suited to a linear, vocal-type conception. Rousseau refers to these differing attitudes as *jeu d'harmonie* and *jeu d'melodie* in his *Traité* of 1687.⁶⁸ In

⁶⁶ This passage is translated by R. A. Green, op. cit., p. 312. Rousseau states that the viol did indeed have its origin in plucked instruments when he claims that "...the first instrument must have been a lyre with three strings made by the Egyptian Mercury on the model of a tortoise which he found on the banks of the Nile after a flood. Since this tortoise was fleshless and dried up, all that remained were some stretched nerves which Mercury plucked with the end of his finger and produces some sound." See Green, ibid. p. 293. Interestingly, one of Rousseau's works survives in a version for theorbo. In the anonymous theorbo manuscript Res. 1106, a *gigue de Rousseau rondeau* appears on f.12v.

⁶⁷ François Campion, *Addition au Traité d'Accompagnement et de Composition* (Paris, Adam, 1730), p. 7. This translation is by Kevin Mason, "François Campion's Secret of Accompaniment for the Theorbo, Guitar, and Lute," *Journal of the Lute Society of America* XIV, (1981), p. 78. Campion provides further evidence of this left hand position in examples of harmonic realizations on different strings. The compactness of fingered adjacent courses necessitates a smaller hand position than is recommended by certain viol players. The left hand positions on plucked instruments (well before Campion and de Machy) require the advice recommended above. Moreover, the use of barred chord positions which appear throughout the theorbo repertory (called *fillet ambulant* by Campion), demand such a left hand position.

⁶⁸ For a comprehensive examination of early French viol music and Rousseau, see Green, op. cit.

the *Avertissement* to de Machy's publication from which the above example derives, he writes at great length on the stylistic crisis facing French music at this time. The pressures of Italian music and the ostentation and spectacle of opera inspired a different approach to composition- an approach mirrored in the opposing differences between the chordal and linear styles. De Machy contended that the viol could be played in a number of ways: firstly as an harmonic instrument capable of playing and supporting (quasi) polyphony. It could also be used to accompany oneself while singing, and to be played in ensemble; its final capacity was to be plucked like a lute. He distinguishes between two types of instruments: *au Luth, au Tuorbe, à la Guitarre & à le Violle...*⁶⁹ De Machy's opinions reflect an attitude that aligns with the previous generation of lute-inspired viol writing; an attitude that finds direct counterpart in the French lute's predilection toward preciosity and inwardness. Rousseau's answer to de Machy is clearly outlined in part two of his *Traité*, where he favors a melodic style which emulates the human voice. Although de Visée favored a "singing style" that seems to align with Rousseau's ideals, he associated with a group of instrumentalists that supported de Machy.⁷⁰ That de Machy and his followers sympathized with a lute-influenced mode of viol playing is clear; de Visée's position appears to be one of personal opinion about Rousseau. Insofar as Rousseau represented the linear style, de Visée was a practicing exponent of that style. His personal relationship with De Machy and the lute style of viol playing is merely a natural association with other players of plucked string instruments.

Rousseau and de Visée

In his published letter of 1688, Rousseau reports an interesting anecdote about de Visée, which makes direct reference to de Visée as a violist. I quote passages here for reasons of biographical interest, and because it has not been quoted or translated with specific regard to de Visée. As to his personal interaction with de Visée, Rousseau informs us that:

Even Hubert le Blanc voiced an opinion on the relationship of the viol to plucked instruments when he wrote that "even the Lute and Theorbo, with their plucking, also have the inherent defect of not being expressive because they lack a bow. Their incomparable Harmony gives out everything in resonance and leaves nothing at all to the voice." Hubert Le Blanc, *Défense de la basse de viole contre les entreprises du violon et les prétensions du violoncel* (Amsterdam: Mortier, 1740). This translation, from the second part of le Blanc's bizarre treatise, is extracted from B. G. Jackson, "Hubert le Blanc's Defense de la viole," *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* XI, (1974), p. 34.

⁶⁹ De Machy, *Pieces de violle en musique et en tablature* (Paris: 1685). Facsimile reprint: Geneva, Minkoff, 1973, p. 10.

⁷⁰ This association will be made clearer in the ensuing discussion.

Il cite Monsieur de Visé & donne en mesme temps une histoire à deviner. Je suis fâché qu'il ait cité le nom de Monsieur de Visé, car la consideration que j'ay pour luy m'auroit fait taire ce que l'auteur du Libelle me force de dire, voicy l'histoire. L'auteur du Libelle ne sachant de quelle maniere se mettre à l'abry du cartel qu'on luy avoit présenté de ma part en présence des écoliers, crut que Monsieur de Visé pouvoit aider à mettre son honneur à couvert, ils concerterant ensemble & ayant aposté les maistres de luth qui sont de la cabale & tous leurs amis, ils les firent trouver au concert qui se faisoit en ce temps-la tous les mardis chez Monsieur de Montalan, où j'accompagne ordinairement, alors le concert qui avoit duré deux grand heures estant finy, je vis tous les gens de la cabale qui s'atroupèrent & laissant sortir tous ceux qui n'en estoient pas, ils parloient ensemble & prenoient leurs mesures, je ne concevois pas quel estoit leur dessein, mais Monsieur de Visé commença de m'en instruire en me demandant si je ne voulois pas bien entendre une sarabande qu'il avoit composé sur la viole, ce que j'acceptay honnestement; il joua deux pièces, lesquelles estant finies le monde se leva & sortoit, lorsque Monsieur de Visé en se levant me dit ces paroles: "voulez-vous jouer?" A quoy je répondis non, par les raisons suivantes. Parce que je voyais que c'estoit une chose préméditée. Parce qu'il n'y avoit pour auditeurs que la cabale & leurs amis. Parce que si Monsieur de Visé avoit dessein de m'engager à jouer, l'honnesteté l'obligeoit de me présenter la viole pour jouer le premier, & enfin parce que le compliment qu'il me fit en disant simplement, "voulez-vous jouer?" me parut mal digéré, & je fus surpris de voir qu'un homme de Cour comme luy me vouloit engager à jouer d'une maniere si mal honneste.⁷¹

(He [de Machy] quotes Mr. de Visée and tells an anecdote. I am displeased by the fact he has mentioned the name of Mr. de Visée, for the esteem that I have for him [de Visée] would have naturally prompted me to keep silence on what the author of the libel forces me to disclose; here is the story:

The author of the libel did not know how to protect his honor from the group of contradictors that had been presented to him in my name. He thought that Mr. de Visée might help him recover his dignity. They consulted together and invited the masters of the lute... and all their friends to the concert that was then given every Tuesday at Monsieur de Montalan's, and where I generally accompany. Once the concert was over, I saw all of the members of the intrigue gather together and ask those who were not part of it to leave. They spoke together some more, making their plan; I could not imagine what their intentions were, but began to understand when Mr. de Visée asked me whether I wanted to hear a sarabande which he had composed for the viol; I accepted obligingly. He played two pieces, after which the company proceeded to leave, when Mr. de Visée stood up and said: "would you care to play?". Upon which I replied that I would rather not, for the following reasons: because I could see that this had all been a scheme; because there, in the audience, were only the members of the intrigue and their friends, and because if Mr. de Visée had in mind to have me play, courtesy demanded that he present me with the viol so I would be the first to play... and I was surprised to see that a man of the court such as he would urge me to play in such a dishonest manner).

This exchange between Rousseau and de Visée was a direct result of the difference of opinion between Rousseau and de Machy. De Machy was of the opinion that Rousseau should

⁷¹ François Lesure, "Une Querelle.." op. cit., pp. 196-97.

not study with Sainte-Colombe, whose music de Machy could not tolerate. This may have been in part due to the fact that de Machy had earlier presented his viol-playing son to Sainte-Colombe, only to be told that he was not under proper musical supervision.⁷² Rousseau sought instruction from de Machy on one occasion, claiming that this was adequate. Immediately following the publication of his *Traité*, Rousseau presented de Machy with a *cartel de deffy*, a challenge to match him in the playing of harmonic pieces, accompaniment (of oneself singing), and transposition. It remains unclear whether de Machy actually responded to this challenge; since he cultivated little interest in transposition and accompaniment he likely did not agree. In his published letter, Rousseau describes a confrontation, probably constructed by de Machy, where he was approached by de Visée. Following a concert at the home of M. de Montalan where Rousseau regularly performed on Tuesday evenings, de Visée and other members of de Machy's *cabale* (a group of individuals of the same opinion), approached Rousseau. De Visée played two of his pieces on viol, then requested that Rousseau perform them. Since de Visée did not ask Rousseau to play his pieces first, as would have been proper, this was most likely meant to intimidate or embarrass Rousseau; he simply refused to play. This confrontation obviously places de Visée in sympathy with de Machy's musical ideals. De Machy had earlier referred to Rousseau in rather perjorative terms,⁷³ and Rousseau himself admits that he has attempted to emulate persons of more capability.⁷⁴

While de Visée clearly sided with de Machy, his musical ideals are nonetheless closer to Rousseau's claims. In his associations with de Machy, de Visée must have been intimately familiar with solo viol playing, especially as practiced by those players who advocated the harmonic style. While this unfortunate confrontation was reported by Rousseau to disparage de Machy's *cabale*, de Visée's music nevertheless resembles more closely the linear style as described by Rousseau. Clearly, the tendency toward style was a personal matter that did not involve the jealousies and ambition that seem to be the motivation behind this exchange. De Visée was a natural candidate for this exchange as he was a visible musician, both attached to the court and respected in town. While de Visée's music displays a tendency toward clearly distinguishable melodic lines, he apparently also sympathized with the older school of viol playing, a school that retained ties with its lute predecessors. The issue of style raised here strongly suggests that de Visée was also familiar with the French lute style and repertoire, making his personal style more a developmental phenomenon than a mere blind absorption of Lullian principles.

⁷² op. cit., p. 187.

⁷³ *ibid.*, p. 192.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p. 192.

The period of the viol debate of the 1680's carries much deeper implications than a simple difference of playing opinion. Following the decline of the lute, the theorbo had adopted a stylistic stance that was to reflect much greater issues. The pressure of Italian music and opera at this time compelled viol composers to discard the precious, inward attitude of the earlier pieces to enact a more popular, outward style. No highly visible figure emerged to direct the French lute into the new style, and it remained for the later viol players and keyboardists to provide in part an example for the theorbo to follow. This example is well represented in de Visée's arrangements of other composers music. Robert de Visée's career coincided with the final merging of French and Italian styles, particularly under the overwhelming influence of Lully, and de Visée was to conceive of a linear, Lullian style that adapted the idiosyncracies of the "style brisé" toward a more international synthesis of his art. Since de Visée was himself a violist, he was involved in the debate over playing styles and more importantly, of the various styles and influences that molded the makeup of his compositional models. These models included Marais, Forqueray, Couperin, and others as they themselves were influenced by Lullian style. The period of Rousseau and de Machy coincided with de Visée's printed books for guitar, and his style had by that time solidified into the progressive, linear language that he himself terms Lullian. It remained for de Visée to carry the implications of the viol debate (and its later ramifications) and the invasion of Italian practices to much deeper fruition in his compositions, and to meld the favoritism of a melodic style with the technical idiosyncrasies of his instrument.

De Visée and the viol during the Regency

The most brilliant synthesis of these two styles was reached in the works of Forqueray and Marais, two virtuoso violists who de Visée was reported to have performed with. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the viol had become a truly national instrument of the French, no longer in use in Italy. The almost century-long history of the French viol had culminated in the works of these two composers, although their respective approaches had then crystallized into clear struggle between the late Baroque French and Italian styles. As to the viol, there was no immediately direct method of transmitting the pure Italian style to that instrument. As interest in Italian music grew in France during the later seventeenth century, enthusiasm for the viol began to diminish, allowing the further encroachment of the violin; de Visée may have responded to Italian pressure or favored the use of this instrument. In his 1682 publication of guitar pieces, he appended arrangements for treble and continuo. Of those arrangements, he remarked that:

as my friends found pleasant my melodies, they insisted that I transcribe some of my pieces into Musical notation for the Satisfaction of those who may want to play them on the Harpsichord, the Violin, and other instruments.

A similar remark is to be found in the *Advirtessement* to his 1716 book of theorbo and lute pieces arranged in a treble-continuo format. Here he stated that:

The purpose of the present publication is the Harpsichord, Viol, and the Violin for which these pieces were intended and on which they have always played together.

The violin had of course, found much use at the court, and these publications attest to the overlapping of the violin and viol in France. They further serve to clarify the position of their composer as a proponent of both French traditions and the Italian violin. De Visée's mention of the violin as a presumably preferred melody instrument here may only be since the flute or oboe would be unable to perform the double stops that occasionally appear. The struggle between these two national styles is represented in the viol works of Marais and Forqueray; while Marais composed pieces ranging in difficulty from teaching pieces to virtuoso writing, he held a more rigid adherence to French viol traditions. His music utilizes a relatively narrow harmonic range, employing the full capabilities of the instrument in linear, chordal, and contrapuntal writing. Forqueray's output is regrettably small and he published no pieces during his lifetime. His extant works display a keen interest in Italian music; he was reputed to have played Italian sonatas as well as French pieces. Forqueray's motivic and melodic constructions are based more on repetition and sequence than Marais' and eschew graceful, melodically restricted writing to a more fiery, texturally varied approach.

As a violist and ensemble participant, de Visée was certainly aware of the personalities of Marais and Forqueray. While he himself attempted to incorporate some aspects of the Italian style, his theorbo works nevertheless adhere to French principles, even though those principles were in a state of flux, resembling to a greater degree the works of Marais. Several theorbo arrangements by de Visée of the viol pieces of these two masters exist. In the manuscript Vm⁷ 6265 page 54, a piece identified simply as *allemande de marais* is imbedded among original works of de Visée, implying an arrangement of his.⁷⁵ On page 82 of the above mentioned manuscript, another arrangement appears called *Les matelots de marais*. This piece, actually and *air* from Marais' opera *Alcione* of 1706, appears in a superior version in the Saiz.I, page 232.

⁷⁵ This piece is the Allemande in D major from the first suite of Marais' 1686 *Pièces à une et à deux violes*. Marais' first book was issued in the same year as de Visée's first guitar book.

Saiz.I also contains lute arrangements of Forqueray, including *La Vénétienne*, and *La Muzette*, both of which are clearly marked as transcriptions by de Visée.⁷⁶

These arrangements testify to de Visée's admiration for both Marais and Forqueray, and indicate the influence both composers had on his national preferences. The relationship between plucked instruments and viol still existed from the time of Rousseau and de Machy, as evidenced by the occasional depiction of lute textures in viol pieces of both Marais and Forqueray. In the 3^e *livre de pièces de viole* of Marais, a piece appears with the sub-heading *Gavotte du goût de Theorbe*. The same collection also contains a chordal piece entitled *Guitare*.⁷⁷ The *Pièces de viole, Second Livre* of 1701 contains a *Fantaisie luthée* in the second suite. This piece, marked *Gai*, relies heavily on dotted rhythms and sequentially ascending or descending thirds. Its key (D minor) is strongly suggestive of the D minor tuning of the Baroque lute.⁷⁸ The 1701 print also contains a piece highly reminiscent of Denis Gaultier (at least in its use of the pavane). The *Pavane selon le goût des anciens compositeurs de luth* is an attempt to transfer the use of smaller motivic shapes into Marais' more melodic language. The group entitled *Suite d'un goût Étranger* of Marais' fourth book of 1717 contains a *Pièce Luthée* in f# minor, the *ton de la chevre* tuning employed by the Gaultiers. This publication clearly depicts a theorbo on the engraved title page, and Marais specifically mentions the use of theorbo and harpsichord in the preface to the bass part-book of his *Première livre* of 1689. The continuo partbook to Marais' first publication, issued three years later, also depicts a theorbo (and a lute) on the title page. Additionally, both Marais and Forqueray composed character pieces they called *La Mandoline*, which features widely spaced chords and repeated top notes.

As demonstrated above, the debate over viol styles sprung from a disagreement over left hand position. As to the bow hand, the mature French viol style came full circle to its relationship with plucked string instruments when Hubert Le Blanc wrote that:

⁷⁶ *La Venitienne*, of obvious Italian character, does not appear in Forqueray's *Pièces de viole* of ca.1747, and *La Muzette* derives from a manuscript entitled *Recueil des Pièces de Violle...* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Vm 6296).

⁷⁷ M. Marais, *Pièces de violes* (Paris: de Baussen, 1711). The continuo book for this publication was engraved separately by de Plessy. The chordal nature of these two pieces allows for clever depiction of these instruments.

⁷⁸ The partbook instructs the player that *Les coups d'archet de cette pièce doivent être fort petits pour mieux imiter le goût du luth*. ("The [single-direction] bowing of this piece must be quite small in order to better imitate the manner of the lute.")

par les coups d'archet enlevés, et tout en l'air qui tiennent si fort du pincé du luth et de guitarre...

(with bow strokes that are lifted off the string [at the end of the stroke], which resemble so much the plucking of the lute and guitar...)⁷⁹

De Visée must have been influenced to a great degree by the stellar musicians at the royal court. Besides his connection with Marais and Forqueray, he also arranged several harpsichord pieces of François Couperin, another composer for the viol. The manuscript Rés. 1106 contains no less than seven theorbo adaptations of Couperin,⁸⁰ and Saiz.I, page 296, duplicates de Visée's most famous transcription, Couperin's *Le Silvains*, Book 1, ordre 1, number 16. These arrangements from keyboard originals indicate that de Visée was an admirer of Couperin, and illustrate a late example of the relationship between French lute and keyboard styles that had emerged and developed since d'Anglebert, Chambonnières, and Louis Couperin. The state of viol playing in France is well represented in de Visée's arrangements from this repertoire, and show how his knowledge and experience of its exponents made an important impression in his theorbo works.

⁷⁹ Le Blanc is here describing the bowing technique of Marais. See Hubert Le Blanc, *Défense de la basse de viole...*, op. cit., p. 23. This translation is from John Hsu, *A Handbook of French Baroque Viol Technique* (New York: Broude Brothers Limited, 1981), p. 4.

⁸⁰ See the list of concordances, Appendix 3.

CHAPTER V

THE THEORBO WORKS

The sources

Robert de Visée's entire oeuvre is comprised of works for Baroque guitar, Baroque lute, theorbo, and renditions of these pieces in a French treble and bass clef format with continuo figures.¹ The present discussion of the primary sources for the theorbo works will be divided into two main categories: those works or versions in tablature, and those in mensural notation. These systems were used interchangeably by de Visée, staff notation being a natural outgrowth of his style. Their variants and key choices, however, even within differing staff versions of the same piece, is a puzzling aspect of the works in this notation. The tablature sources are much more straightforward in terms of tonality as technical considerations limit the choice of key for a given instrument. The tablatures for theorbo versions usually concord in clusters of pieces arranged by key, facilitating identification. These sources, however, present many problems in their variants of rhythm, ornaments, and even left hand positioning. The versions in staff notation are often spread throughout a single printed or manuscript source, sometimes in distantly placed tonalities with regard to the theorbo keys. For purposes of the present discussion, tablature sources will be examined first, and staff versions secondly.²

¹ The single *air* that appeared in Ballard's 1732 collection has already been discussed and will not be included in this examination of works for plucked instruments or their corresponding two-staff versions.

² Table 1 lists the sources consulted together with siglum adopted for this study. These sources (to my knowledge) contain the complete extant theorbo music of de Visée in their primary forms. Other sources of the period that contain selections of Visée's guitar music are Santiago de Murcia's manuscript *Passacalles y obras de guitarra por todos los tonos naturales y accidentales* of 1732. This work contains unattributed works of Campion, Corbetta, and de Visée. A further source contains six works (all from 1682) of de Visée, and was presented to François le Cocq, *Recueil des pièces de guitare* (Brussels: Castillion, 1729). All six pieces in this collection are attributed to their composer, although only two are accounted for in the *Table des airs*.

Tablatures

The following review of the guitar pieces is purposefully terse, as it may shed only peripheral or conjectural light on the present topic. The guitar sources will here only be detailed where a comparative point or conjecture is pressed as it relates to the theorbo pieces. De Visée's first publication of guitar pieces, the *Livre de Guitarre* of 1682, contains sixty pieces arranged in eight key groups. Of the entire book, seventeen pieces concord in theorbo, lute or two-staff versions. Although only nine pieces have definite concordances in theorbo tablature versions, we must infer that in the cases where a guitar piece concords only with a two-staff version, it had a preexisting theorbo tablature. This is based on the assumption that tablatures preceded mensural versions. This source must be regarded as the definitive version of these guitar works, and the careful and thorough preparation of the entire collection belies de Visée's desire to create an impressive publishing debut.³

De Visée's second printed guitar book appeared four years later.⁴ His *Livre de Pièces pour la Guitare Dedié au Roy* of 1686 seems to have been an effort to gain further favor from the regent, and to provide the court with pieces of greater ease of playability. This print contains thirty-three works in four tonalities, all in minor keys.⁵ Of the ten works that find concurring

³ In discussing tablature versions first, we must temporarily ignore the treble-continuo versions that are included in the backs of both printed guitar books. The very existence of these mensural continuo versions is compelling evidence to show that de Visée first composed on an instrument and wrote out staff notation later. In the *Advis* to 1686, the composer reveals that he had been requested to adapt his guitar pieces into staff versions. This statement uncontestedly proves that his process of arranging (in the printed sources) always followed a plucked string original.

⁴ A 3^e *livre de pièces pour la guitare* of 1689 is mentioned by Fétis, but no trace of this volume is extant. See F. J. Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Bibliographie Générale de la Musique* (Paris: 1875). Reprint: Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1963, pp. 365-66. Another collection of pieces is mentioned by Wolfgang Boetticher, but this is a manuscript collection rather than a published source of whose whereabouts is unknown. See RISM VI. B7, *Lauten-und Gitarrentablaturen des 15. bis 18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Henle, 1978), p. 374. These citations may mistakenly refer to the same questionable source. Since no mention of a third volume is made by de Visée or any other persons, this reference remains rather suspect.

⁵ De Visée does not specify in either guitar books the separation of tonalities by title page or sub-heading. Both Grenerin and Corbetta resort to key indications, as do many tablature sources for lute and theorbo. While the pieces in both books are arranged in various key groups, an occasional piece in an unrelated tonality is sometimes inserted in a cluster. This is the case in 1682, where a single Chaconne in F major appears immediately after a group in C major. Its placement at the end of the genre sequence does not allow it to function as an opening work to the next group of pieces in G major, which is in an *accord nouveau* scordatura tuning. In 1686, a sarabande and gigue in A minor, and a sarabande and menuet in A major follow a cluster in G minor. These miscellany were probably appended to the nearest parallel major-minor key as a convenience. In 1686, a lone menuet in C major is appended to the final group in E minor, probably to conveniently insert this unrelated piece at the end of the collection. In plucked string music of this period (including harpsichord), the shifting to parallel major or minor pieces within

versions in lute, theorbo, and continuo sources, only six pieces appear in tablature versions for lute or theorbo. Again, we must assume that all ten concordances had lute or theorbo originals.

Three important guitar manuscripts are presently housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale: Réserve F 844, Réserve 1402, and Vm⁷ 6222. While the printed guitar pieces are often duplicated in these anonymous collections, they also provide sources for many pieces not found in 1682 or 1686. All but eight of the thirty-three pieces in these compilations (which are not duplicated in 1682 or 1686) concord with theorbo versions in tablature or staff notation. Unfortunately, these undated sources are difficult to compare chronologically with the printed books.⁶ The fact that most of these guitar pieces are concordant with theorbo or lute tablatures suggests that these sources were roughly concurrent with each other. Although these manuscript guitar versions may have existed prior to those for theorbo and lute, the uneven quality of some pieces (as compared to the printed books) and graphical separation of pieces (that generally do not follow key groups) implies that they are arrangements from preexisting theorbo originals. While this supposition does not conclusively show that the theorbo and lute versions were made first, it does imply that the pieces destined for 1682 and 1686 had been chosen to highlight the originality of these versions, an originality that held a mainly separate existence from theorbo versions. If we accept this hypothesis, then the guitar versions in the manuscript sources must be chronologically placed after 1686, at least in terms of date if not composition. This is consistent with the assumption that de Visée intended to create a progressive collection in 1682. In the *Advis* to that print he modestly reports that

So many people have applied themselves to the Guitar, and have presented their compositions to the general public that I do not know that by Publishing my own, I may contribute anything new to the taste of the curious amateur; Still this was the very incentive of my work...

If de Visée purposefully selected those pieces in 1682 and 1686 that did not (largely) concord with theorbo versions, it follows that he wished to emphasize these guitar compositions. The graphical, textural, and idiomatic characteristics of the manuscript guitar sources gives strong evidence (in some cases) in favor of a preexisting theorbo version. From this we may tentatively conclude that his music (prior or during the period of 1682) was indeed known to the

a 'suite' or group is highly unusual, excepting couplets in a chaconne or passacaglia, or contrasting sections of a rondeau.

⁶ Réserve F 844 contains arrangements of Rameau and François Couperin, placing its approximate date from the early to mid-eighteenth century.

Paris public or the court in both guitar and theorbo versions, affirming the unimportance of chronology. Le Gallois' reference to de Visée as a theorbist in 1680 show that he was known as a theorbist prior to the guitar books, and was even recognized by the court in this capacity, as Dangeau states. The court records reflect only duties as a guitarist, however. From these observations and the sometimes uncharacteristic writing in the manuscript guitar pieces, we may assume that de Visée was at this time an already accomplished theorbist. This fact makes highly probable the further assumption that music in the guitar manuscripts was equally well known in theorbo versions.

The next group of manuscript sources are entirely for theorbo and lute. The smallest of these is found in the Bibliothèque Nationale as Réserve 1820.⁷ This manuscript originally contained 102 numbered pages, many of them blank. In its present state, many pages have been removed. Its approximate size is oblong 220 x 290 mm., containing nineteen pieces. Only nine of these may be definitely ascribed to de Visée; the rest are either arrangements probably made by him, pieces of another composer, or are of doubtful attribution. On pages 5 and 6, only titles for a Courante and Sarabande are given. Since the Prelude and Allemande that precede these titles, and a Gavotte that follows all find concordance in three other tablature sources, it is highly probable that these titles refer to the same Courante and Gavotte that are imbedded in the other tablature sources. This becomes obvious when one considers that this cluster of pieces (in A minor) follows the near exact sequence in the other sources, notwithstanding the fact that the ordering of key groups has been displaced from these other sources. Arrangements of a Ballard *air* and a *brunette* make their ubiquitous appearance. This source also contains a five-couplet *folies d'Espange*.⁸ Although giving an impression of incompleteness, Rés. 1820 is very neatly

⁷ Réserve 1820 is in the collection of the Fonds Conservatoire Nationale. I am extremely indebted to Claude Chauvel for providing me with a short list, inventory, and incipits for the *unica* in this source.

⁸ This work concords in two other tablature sources: Vm⁷ 6265, p. 11, and Réserve 1106, f.31v. It is probably not by de Visée, although this is difficult to determine. The version in Rs. 1106 is extended with a final chordal *couplet*. Richard Hudson has transcribed this piece into staff notation in G-tuning, down a whole step from its true key. French theorbos did not extend down to F as their lowest string, as Hudson has notated. He apparently used the version in Vm⁷ 6265, pp. 11-13, which is missing the appended sixth *couplet*. He refers to it simply as "French c.1690." See his *The Folia, the Saraband, the Passacaglia, and the Chaconne. The historical evolution of four forms that originated in music for the five-course Spanish guitar* (Stuttgart: American Institute of Musicology, 1982), VI. 1, p. 117. Rés. 1820 also contains an additional fourth couplet not found in any other source. A title for the sixth couplet, presumably the chordal one that appears in Saiz.I, is written out, but no music has been copied. Hudson also does not identify de Visée as the arranger of Lully's *Chaconne des Harlequins*, which he refers to as "French, c. 1720." He must have consulted Vm⁷ 6265 (which lacks attribution for composer or arranger) as his source for transcription. In Saiz.I, p. 340, this chaconne bears the Vaudry's inscription *mise*

paginated and copied out. As with all tablature sources, it contains some discrepancies regarding rhythm and pitches.

The next largest tablature source is also housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale, as Vm⁷ 6265; it contains seventy original pieces and arrangements of de Visée. This collection, chronologically paginated, concords almost entirely with other theorbo sources. There is strong evidence to support the proposition that the arrangements of Marais and Lully as well as the assorted *airs* are transcriptions by de Visée. Of the entire collection, only two pieces are not by de Visée: an *allemande de Hautemant* and an *allemande de le moine*, both on page 46. While the transcriptions in this source never identify their arranger, the fact that some pieces concord in Saiz.1 with a definite attribution to de Visée (as arranger) makes this point clear. As compared to the other tablature sources, Vm⁷ 6265 contains inconsistencies, particularly some differences in the density of chords and occasionally conflicting pitches in the bass lines. In isolated cases some versions of pieces must be considered corrupt, as added measures appear to have been capriciously composed. While inconsistencies abound in all tablature compilations, this source is perhaps the more notorious for variants in ornaments, pitches and even left hand fingerings. The graphical layout is sometimes quite crowded, and the script occasionally borders on sloppiness. The errors in Vm⁷ 6265 may be accounted for in the explanation that it served as an early version or rough draft for another source.⁹

The large anonymous manuscript Réserve 1106 is also housed at the Bibliothèque Nationale. The ca. sixty works that carry the attribution ...*de M^r de Visée* find concordances in other printed and manuscript sources. In some instances, pieces that have no attribution here are definitely ascribed to de Visée in other sources. Réserve 1106 also contains many arrangements, particularly those of François Couperin, most of which do not appear elsewhere. As with Vm⁷ 6265, the bulk of original pieces are by de Visée, with only miniscule representation by DuBut, Le Moine, and Rousseau. The earliest general date that may be tentatively ascribed to Rés. 1106 is 1661, the year of Lully's *Ballet de l'Impatience*, for which a theorbo arrangement of the air *Sommes nous pas troupeux* is found on f.78r. This piece cannot provide an exact date since the compiler may have included pieces that were previously in the repertory or other sources. This *air* also appears in Saiz.I, for which its compiler has marked 1699 as a starting date. 1661 is in any case a rather early estimation since de Visée would have been about eleven years old. A

par M^r de Visée.

⁹ Nigel North has suggested that Vm⁷ 6265 was indeed a draft for Rés. 1106, a larger and more reliable source.

more plausible guess would be ca. 1713: the six arrangements from François Couperin's first and second harpsichord books cannot have been made before 1713, the year of Couperin's first book. Rés. 1106 does not show signs of having been compiled in layers over fifty-two years, especially since pieces of Le Moine, Rousseau, and earlier Lully are scattered among original pieces of de Visée. If Vm⁷ 6265 did serve as a draft for Rés. 1106, it was probably copied out in close proximity. The inclusion of *Les sourdines d'Armide* (on p. 42 of Rés. 6265) from Lully's *Armide* of 1686 suggest an earlier date, subject to the same conditions cited above. Two gavottes (p. 9 and 14) appear which derive from 1682, as does a gigue (p. 29.) Other works from 1686 and the guitar manuscripts are also found here. The inclusion of *Les matelots de marais* (on p. 82 of the same source) from Marais' *Alcione* of 1706 must date both Vm⁷ 6265 and Rés. 1106 after 1706. As with Vm⁷ 6265, the transcriptions are mostly scattered among de Visée's original works, giving strong evidence to the possibility of being his arrangements. The readability and care taken by its scribe, coupled with several *unica*, make Rés. 1106 a centrally important source for this study.

The final and most reliable tablature source was initiated in 1699 by Jean-Etienne Vaudry, Seigneur de Saizenay et de Poupet. Vaudry was nominated to the Parliament at Besançon in 1701 and was an avid follower of the lute and theorbo. Vaudry most probably studied with both Guillaume Jacquesson and Robert de Visée in Paris, lute with the former and theorbo with the latter. In his large manuscript collection, he constantly refers to both Jacquesson and de Visée as *mon maître*. Vaudry has compiled a source that displays extreme dedication to his art; not only is the script laid out with great care, many corrections, additions, and marginalia attest to his extreme exactness. Since Vaudry studied with de Visée, this source must overshadow both Vm⁷ 6265 and Rés. 1106 for reliability. In comparing this collection with both Vm⁷ 6265 and Rés. 1106, Vaudry's efforts must be regarded as definitive. In all probability, de Visée must have overseen or taken an intimate guiding role in Vaudry's work. Although this source does not contain all of de Visée's theorbo pieces or arrangements, we must nevertheless view it as the most credible version that has survived. While we cannot disclaim with any certainty the possibility that other tablature sources were approved by de Visée, no evidence exists in those sources to suggest that they were either overseen by their composer or are definitive versions.

The entire collection is comprised of two different manuscripts: the first¹⁰ volume of

¹⁰ Both sections of this source have been given different numerical designations in a catalogue of books in the Besançon library. The first section is catalogued as Ms 279 152, the second as Ms 279 153.

424 pages contains an initial section for lute. It appears that this volume was originally designed purely as a lute book, as the pieces for theorbo (on pages 217 to 406) seem to have been added later. The second and smaller volume is entirely for lute. The sigla Saiz.I refers to the first book, as it contains not only the sixty-six original pieces of de Visée and his twenty-four arrangements, but the forty-four lute pieces as well. The second volume does not contain works of de Visée. A *Table des Pièces de Théorbe* is found preceding the theorbo pieces. The actual physical layout of the pieces differs from the numbering of the *Table* which generally follows the usual genre sequence of the period. The numbered pages of tablature follow sequentially. As noted above, Saiz.I is the most reliable source in tablature for this repertoire, excluding of course the works that only appear in other sources.

Printed and staff sources

Mensural notation is a natural consequence of de Visée's style. As an exponent of linear writing, he would easily be able to create arrangements from plucked string instruments that could be realized in a treble-bass-continuo setting. That he may have even favored staff notation may be addressed by the inclination (at the prior period of 1716) toward this notational system over tablature. From 1716, De Visée actually offered to provide tablature versions of his theorbo pieces in printed staff notation, as he states in the *Advertissement* to that issuance. This offer probably applied to any non-tablature version of his music, not simply to those pieces from 1716.

The practice of notating lute or theorbo music in mensural notation is not without precedence. Both Perrine and Grenerin had earlier published music or tutors in staff notation. From as early as ca.1673, lutenists must have adapted their music to this medium,¹¹ and players of plucked instruments were probably expected to be fluent in standard notation.¹² Jean-Henry d'Anglebert was fond of arranging for harpsichord lute music of Denis and Ennemond Gaultier,

¹¹ Gallot le jeune wrote in the *Advertissement* to his *Pieces de Luth* of ca.1673 that "If the curious connoisseur wants to test what I have to say or to have my pieces played in concert, he will find, at the author's home, all the parts scored high and low for all musical instruments and he [the author] will explain his book to all those who will do him the honor of coming to see him." As translated by Clare Callahan, "Jacques Gallot's Pieces de Luth," op. cit., p. 106.

¹² Perrine, *Livre de Musique pour le Lut* (Paris: author?, 1679). This print is a method for showing the staff equivalents for lute tablature. A continuo method with tablature examples is included. Perrine's second book, *Pieces de Luth en Musique*, (Paris: author, 1680), contains thirty-one staff versions of Gaultier and Mesangeau. A final and very brief *Table pour apprendre à toucher le Luth sur les Notes...* appeared in 1698, dedicated to Lully.

Mesangeau, and Pinel. D'Anglebert's method of adaption maintains the essential melodic outline of the originals, but utilizes ornaments, changes of harmony, and filled-out chords. D'Anglebert also arranged twenty pieces of Lully in highly successful and idiomatic transcriptions. The connection between lute instruments and harpsichord is pointedly made by d'Anglebert and the "brisé" lute music of this period transfers quite well to the keyboard.¹³ The examples by d'Anglebert and Perrine establish an interesting connection between both the lute and harpsichord styles, and between the systems of notation normally associated with those instruments. While tablature may be vague regarding actual durations of inner voices or articulations, mensural notation (unless given extremely detailed symbology) cannot communicate the subtleties that characterize the French lute school.

By the time of François Campion's *Traité d'accompagnement et de composition...*, published in the same year of de Visée's 1716 book, theorbists may have largely preferred mensural notation over tablature. Campion goes so far as to call tablature *pernicieuse*, postulating that:

The use of tablature is harmful to those who wish to make any progress on the theorbo and the guitar, and it is this, in part, which has ruined the lute... For accompaniment, I use ordinary music in the manner of M. de Maltot. Wanting to learn by tablature, as was taught by the ancients, is like trying to drink up the sea. Nevertheless, I have conformed to the usage of tablature in a book of solo pieces for the guitar that I have published, where there are eight different ways of tuning. In this case tablature is useful, but those who wish to use it must already know their fingerboard by music.¹⁴

The above statements of Campion and de Visée leave no doubt as to the appropriateness of reading from staff notation, a condition that is especially necessary in continuo playing.

Four sources in staff notation have been consulted in this study. The first are the two printed guitar books which both contain a section at the end of each collection in staff notation. 1682 has twenty-four such arrangements and 1686 boasts sixteen. These mensural versions generally follow the established genre sequence, although 1686 includes the only Prelude (p. 60)

¹³ D'Anglebert's lute transcriptions may be mostly found in the large manuscript Vm⁷ 674-675 housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and known as the *Bauyn* manuscript. It has been published in facsimile as *Manuscript Bauyn. Pièces de Clavecin*. Introduction by François Lesure. (Geneva: Minkoff, 1977).

¹⁴ François Campion, *Traité d'accompagnement et de composition, selon la règle des octaves de musique* (Paris: Adam, 1716), p. 22. This translation is by Kevin Mason, "François Campion's Secret of Accompaniment for the Theorbo, Guitar, and Lute," *Journal of the Lute Society of America* XIV, (1981), p. 77.

from these books in that notation. The key changes of these staff versions is born of necessity. In the *Advis* to 1682, de Visée informs the reader that:

I had to transpose the pieces in notation because of the range of the Guitar which goes up to the highest D.la.re,....

De Visée usually set the top line on the two highest strings of the guitar in order to facilitate *batteries*. The tenor range of this instrument required a transposition up a fourth so that the melody (for violin or another instrument) would make use of the high range of that key version.

This principle governs the printed book of 1716 which are staff adoptions of theorbo and lute pieces. 1716 contains eighty-six original pieces of de Visée, the largest printed source in any notation. As with 1682 and 1686, it is set in French treble and bass clef with continuo figures. As a printed collection it resembles 1682 and 1686 in terms of careful preparation and reliability.¹⁵ Most of the pieces concord with lute and theorbo versions in all three tablature sources. In the case where a piece does not correspond to a theorbo or lute tablature, a guitar original exists. The minority of concordances with guitar pieces is in a manuscript staff source to be discussed below. Of the eighty-six pieces in 1716, the following pieces do not concord in the three theorbo tablatures reviewed above. The sarabande, p. 13, minuet p. 28, prelude and allemande, p. 31, prelude p. 52, allemande *Tombeau de Tonty* p. 55, allemande *Tombeau de Mr. Francisque* [Corbetta] p. 57, sarabande rondeau p. 63, sarabande p. 85, and gigue p. 95 all have corresponding guitar versions. They may be divided roughly between 1682 and 1686, excepting the *Tombeau de Tonty*, for which no original is extant. While we have already determined that the theorbo pieces that concord with guitar tablatures were largely avoided in 1682 and 1686, de Visée's statement in the *Advirtissement* of 1716 seems to encompass works of all medium. He says that:

The success these pieces enjoyed at the court, for several years, in the private concerts of the late king and among the august entourage of that grand Prince, finally convinced me to have them printed for the general public. The plaudits I have already received for them allows me to hope that a larger audience will welcome this book favorably...

¹⁵ Graphically, it also greatly resembles Anne Danican Philidor's 1.^{er} *Livre de Pièces pour la Flûte Traversière* (Paris: Roussel, 1712). Facsimile reprint: Firenze: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1980. De Visée's book was also issued by Roussel. Philidor employs the standard dance genres of the period, but also includes several fugues and a *Sonate*.

Although the composer is referring to these pieces as adaptations from theorbo originals, this statement calls forth some questions regarding the works that do not concord with theorbo versions. Is de Visée conclusively showing that (at least some) theorbo versions of 1682 and 1686 were indeed known to the court, or is he simply inserting some favored guitar pieces in a collection from mostly theorbo and lute originals, not bothering to mention guitar on the title page? Even if the latter were the case, the evidence reviewed above does suggest the former to be true, even if theorbo tablature versions of 1682 and 1686 do not exist in their entirety. It may also be that he wanted to belatedly issue his theorbo works to the public, aside from medium. If we accept the suggestion that 1682 and 1686 showcased his guitar pieces, it follows that 1716 would avoid guitar music. Given the care and quality of the printed books, it is easily understandable that de Visée would be concerned about versions of his music that circulated in manuscript. De Visée's remark concerning the corrupt "communications" of his pieces in the *Avirtissement* to 1716 may shed some light on the relationship between the printed guitar books and the theorbo tablatures. He states that:

A few of these pieces, to my surprise, have been communicated, without my knowledge, but so distorted and at the same time so full of mistakes that I feel obliged to disclaim them.

Twenty pieces from R^s. F 844, R^{és}. 1402, and Vm⁷ 6222 concord with 1716 and hence other tablature sources. De Visée may have been referring to these guitar manuscripts in the above quotation, but it remains unclear as to exactly which versions he considers "distorted." It is also highly probable that he is referring to the theorbo versions that circulated in tablature, especially Vm⁷ 6265; perhaps in his mind he made no distinction between one instrumental version or another. While his remark from 1716 may support this conjecture, we must dismiss as unlikely the notion that de Visée thought of his music in staff notation an ideal, abstract sense, divorced from technical concerns of a given plucked string version. The most probable explanation for this remark is that he simply did not feel compelled to offer specific information about the corrupt or incorrect versions of his music, regardless of instrument. These observations further strengthen the hypothesis that as a theorbist, de Visée was known quite early in his career and probably made theorbo versions of all his guitar music (or vice-versa) for the court and the Paris public.

The final staff source consulted for this study is the anonymous manuscript collection of lute and theorbo pieces at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Réserve Vmd ms. 16.¹⁶ Vmd 16 is a

¹⁶ Claude Chauvel has most kindly shared with me his inventory (and incipits for its *unica*) of this source.

large source of 155pp. oblong 190 x 247 mm. It was formerly in the private collection of G. Thiabault de Chambure, and has since been bequeathed to the Bibliothèque Nationale. As with 1716, it is in French violin clef and bass clef, containing seventy-eight pieces of which sixty-nine concord with 1716. Vmd 16 is an extremely interesting source, since it seems to share aspects of both printed and tablature sources. Vmd 16 was probably not copied from 1716; this is made apparent since the ordering from 1716 is disrupted. The fact that some bass line registers in Vmd 16 are displaced up an octave, more resembling a staff version copied from tablature, further discount the possibility that this source was directly copied from 1716. In all likelihood, Vmd 16 probably represents a staff version prepared from tablature, perhaps even overseen by its composer. In general, these staff versions conform more closely to their tablature originals than does 1716. The copyist of Vmd 16 seems to have chosen key areas, then written groups of pieces that roughly follow genre sequences. This practice does not correspond to the ordering in 1716, Saiz.I, Rés. 1106, or Vm⁷ 6265. The sequence of keys and clusters in Vmd 16 seems to be quite random and does not display any recognizable pattern as found in the other sources. One shred of evidence may substantiate the hypothesis that Vmd 16 was copied from Saiz.I. In this staff manuscript, a cluster of lute pieces from Saiz.I which do not appear in 1716 are found here. There is an inscription in the margin of Saiz.I regarding these pieces. Vaudry has written that *Cette Suite de pieces en D la re mineur n'est pas dans le livre gravé en partition des pieces de M^r de Visée* (p.199), ("This suite of pieces in D minor is not found in the engraved score book of de Visée's pieces"). Aside from Saiz.I, Vmd 16 is the only other source for this cluster. The omission of these group of lute pieces from 1716 is puzzling. This source gives the impression of being unfinished, as several titles are only given. Regarding supplemental signs, some continuo figures differ from 1716, and some ornament indications are at variance. The treble-bass versions of tablature works affirm de Visée's linear, non-arpeggiated thinking, and show how easily his pieces for plucked string instruments transfer to a continuo setting. With regard to the theorbo pieces, the most interesting feature the guitar staff versions is how they compare with staff versions of theorbo and lute music. The courante in 1682, page 20 is in D minor for guitar. Its corresponding staff version on page 76 is in A minor, but the printed staff version of 1716 (p.62) is in C minor, as is the manuscript staff version in Vmd. 16, pp. 139-40. The theorbo versions in Saiz.I, (p.187) and Rés. 1106 (f.8v) are both in G minor. This and other examples have led me to believe that the staff versions of 1682 and 1686 were prepared in very close proximity to the guitar tablatures; this is obvious given that fact that they appear in the same collection. The variance in keys for the theorbo staff versions strongly suggests that they were prepared from the theorbo tablature and that guitar or guitar staff versions were not necessarily consulted. The key

changes for the guitar staff pieces is a practical necessity, as mentioned above. Since the highest note of the melody is not subject to such strict limitations in a version for violin (and continuo) or another melody instrument, the composer was free to choose any key that made resonant use of that melody instrument. The fact that keys do not always correspond between versions and those for theorbo imply that they were adapted solely from the theorbo (or lute), and that the range restrictions that apply to those plucked instruments determined a key choice for their subsequent staff adaptations. From this evidence we may propose that even where a guitar version has been conclusively composed first, its theorbo or lute version does not have an inferior or secondary identity. In one case, a guitar gigue (1682, p. 36, C major) appears in a staff version in F major (1682, p. 77). This piece concords with theorbo versions in Saiz.I, p. 235, Rés. 1106 f.64v, Vm⁷ 6265 p. 29, all in C major. The printed staff version of 1716 is in F major, as 1682, but the manuscript staff version in Rés. 16, p. 39, is in D major. This puzzling example seems to offer no suggestion as to why the theorbo staff versions would be in different keys. Assuming that they were prepared from a theorbo original from which their keys always conform, it remains enigmatic. Perhaps the compiler of Vmd 16 simply made arrangements without closely consulting 1716, but this is improbable, and is a question that must for now remain open.

Alternate versions

As to the question of originals or alternate versions, it is my belief that this is irrelevant to both the theorbo literature as a whole and to its various instrumental guises. Even if de Visée had originally written a given work on guitar (for example), the existence of at least three theorbo tablature versions of this hypothetical work would suggest that the transferring from one medium to another was a natural extension of its composition. While a comparison between different versions may shed light on de Visée's arrangement practices, it must be emphasized that each version, whether it be guitar, lute, theorbo, or ensemble, must stand on its own as an idiomatic expression of his compositional language.

In determining the chronology of some theorbo works, one may isolate a piece and compare it with its concordant versions for guitar, lute, or treble and continuo. While it is a task that is largely superfluous to the obvious validity of the theorbo versions, it remains a fascinating question. It is perhaps more applicable and appropriate to examine only a select group of pieces in order to address this issue.¹⁷ The notion that de Visée conceived of his works as an abstract

¹⁷ This is precisely what Catherine Liddell did in her study on de Visée, selecting seven pieces of which appeared in all four versions. The present discussion of these pieces is based on her study,

ideal, wrote them into mensural notation, and transcribed them for plucked string instruments must be dismissed. De Visée was too highly regarded as a guitarist and theorbist to compose away from his instruments, and the idiomatic nature of his writing necessarily springs from a direct "hands on" experience with the instruments. There are however, differences and irregularities among the various versions of a single piece that may offer some suggestion as to which version was composed first. For the present purposes, let us assume that the treble-continuo versions were prepared after their guitar, theorbo, or lute originals. The indication *transposée du theorbe* that is appended to five of the lute versions in Saiz.I unquestionably shows that they were arranged from theorbo. One piece, the *Tombeau de Tonty* (Saiz.I, p. 65) is a lute adaption from a guitar original, although this piece bears no concordance to any extant guitar source. The supplemental *mise par M^r de Visée* obviously refers to his transcriptions from other composers. Since Saiz.I is the only surviving tablature source of de Visée's lute works, and was compiled (at least in part) by his student, we must assume the relative authenticity of these versions. De Visée himself would not have disapproved of or disowned these versions if he allowed the careful compilation in Saiz.I or their adaption in his 1716 book. Given their validity, it remains difficult to place the lute versions in a chronological context; especially since de Visée is never mentioned as a lutenist. It remains unclear whether he actually prepared these versions or allowed Vaudry to transcribe them under his supervision. The greater majority of the lute versions concord with two-staff renditions, from either 1716 or Vmd 16. Some of them find sister versions for theorbo, and only a few for guitar. From this evidence we may tentatively conclude that the lute versions in Saiz.I may have been later adaptations from theorbo or guitar versions. In the instances where lute versions do not concord with other plucked string versions, we must assume that they are *unica*, or that the possible guitar or theorbo versions are not extant.

Assuming that the lute versions are adaptations, we must address the question of whether de Visée composed first on guitar or theorbo. The greater part of the existing biographical data on de Visée suggests that he was mainly a guitarist, although we must approach this bias with caution. As cited above, two early references mention him as a celebrated theorbist; from this we must assume that he composed at both instruments. A highly valid approach to this question (discarding the tenuous issue of dating) is to observe how well a certain version lies on the instrument and if its sister version is as idiomatically successful. The *Courante*, page 20 of 1682 shows

which reflects her knowledge and expertise in this repertory, particularly from a performer's vantage. I am grateful to her for generously providing me with a copy of her paper, "The Guitar, Theorbo, and Lute Works of Robert de Visée: a Study of his Process of Arranging," (Unpublished thesis: Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, 1976).

extremely successful guitar writing, using the instrument to its full capacity. The lute version in Saiz.I, p. 187 (in G minor) is uncharacteristically low. The theorbo version in Rés. 1106 f.8v, also in G minor, requires many transpositions in the bass line. The following examples reproduce three versions of the piece.

Example 5-1: de Visée, Courante, m. 1-5, 1682, p. 76.



Example 5-2: de Visée, Courante, m. 1-5, Rés. 1106 f.8v.



Example 5-3: de Visée, Courante, m. 1-5, 1716 p. 62.



Due to the fact that the piece does not lie comfortably on either lute or theorbo, we may surmise that it was originally written for guitar. The variants in staff versions from guitar and lute (or theorbo) further witness a difference in attitude toward each version of the piece. The guitar staff version, in A minor is in a simple triple meter (although the tablature is in 2:3) with hardly any continuo figures excepting a later sequence of seventh chords not in this excerpt. The theorbo or lute staff version is up a minor third, in C minor, and is in a compound triple meter. More figures appear throughout this piece than the previous version, and the melody contains more ornamental detail. The bass line displays little variation between versions. Assuming that both printed versions represent de Visée's wishes at the time, we must regard 1716 as a later, more mature representation of his style. The differing keys must be viewed as a reaction to the process of arranging from guitar and theorbo, and the tablature versions strongly suggest a guitar original.

Another example of chronology may be seen in six versions of the Chaconne in A minor. This work has a guitar concordance in F 844, p. 237, in D minor. The three theorbo versions (in A minor) are found in Saiz.I p. 258, Vm⁷ 6265 p. 6, and Rés. 1106 f.28v. Its lute version (in A minor) is in Saiz.I p. 64 and the two-staff version in 1716 p.87, in D minor. The guitar version is an unconvincing adaption of the impression of depth projected by its sister theorbo version. This guitar work contains missing bass notes, little use of *batteries*, and a rather thin texture. Since the lute version is marked *transposée du theorbe*, we must assume that it was made after the theorbo version; the staff version must follow lute instruments. The theorbo version is extremely well written and makes resonant use of the instrument. Given this evidence, it seems plausible to view the theorbo version as first, the lute as second, guitar as third, and staff version as last.

Let us examine one final work that exists in no less than eight sources. The sole *Musette* is found in a highly successful guitar version in F 844, pp. 109 and 195. The single lute version is from Saiz.I, p. 152, with its theorbo version on page 292 of that collection. Two further theorbo concordances appear in Vm⁷ 6265 p. 68 and Rés. 1106 f.24r. Another theorbo tablature version resides in Rés. 1820 p. 57-8, and the two theorbo staff versions in Vmd 16 pp. 73-74 and 1716 p. 77. As mentioned, the guitar version (in G major) is extremely idiomatic, employing *batteries* and over-ringing of pitches to impart a rustic flavor. The lute version (in A major) is comparatively weak and does not utilize the resonance of the instrument. The theorbo versions make full use of the instruments range, deepening its effect and gaining a more profoundly drone-like character through the low diapasons. Based on this data, we must exclude the lute version as original. The two staff versions are of course secondary, requiring either guitar or

theorbo as original guises. Since this work does not appear in 1682 or 1686, we may surmise that both guitar and theorbo versions are roughly concurrent, and served as original models.

The chronology of certain works may be addressed through an examination of its concordances, but this is a task that requires a comparison of each piece to its relatives. While this may or may not have broader application to the general question of chronology, especially as it applies to the theorbo works, it is neither appropriate nor my intention to attempt a specific answer. As the previous discussion demonstrates, each piece had developed a personal history in relation to differing versions, and it must be remembered that this issue is rather superficial in determining the validity of the theorbo works as a whole. While historical and circumstantial evidence may point to different versions as primary or secondary, the theorbo versions as an entire corpus merit attention as works in their own right.

Rhythmic variants

The examples reviewed above pose questions other than chronology. Even a cursory glance at differing versions reveals rhythmic discrepancies that follow no fixed pattern. In every source and with great frequency, variations in rhythmic notation appear, often altering the character of the line. The most common occurrence of this alteration is the insertion of a dotted eighth and sixteenth figure where two even eighth notes occur elsewhere. This discrepancy is also found in a related notational trait called *separer*. This technical device is essentially a means of breaking two simultaneous parts by executing the lower pitch on the proper beat, followed by one or more notes. Intrinsic to plucked instruments as an arpeggiating symbol, its notation is a diagonal slash between the notes affected. Several lute composers (and later harpsichordists) utilized this short-hand method of arpeggiation.¹⁸ Jacques Gallot, the author of a printed book of lute pieces,¹⁹ gives specific directions for the *separer*. After giving the sign between the lower two notes of a three note chord he says that *...pour fraper deux cordes du pouce en semble ou separem.[†] il faut faire ainsy*, ("...In order to strike two strings with the thumb together or separately, it is necessary to make this [sign]"). Gallot then gives another example of a four note chord with *separer*

¹⁸ The notation for applications of arpeggiation was known variously as *Arpège en montant et descendant* by Rameau and F. Couperin, and *Séparez* by Le Roux. This later absorption of arpeggiation was probably inspired by French lutenists.

¹⁹ Jacques Gallot, *Pieces de Luth Composees sur differens Modes* (Paris: Bonneüil, ca.1673). The performance indications, called *Methode quil faut observer pour jouer propem. du Luth* is found on the third page of his *Pieces*. This translation is by Clare Callahan, "Jacques Gallot's Pieces de Luth, A Style Study and Critical Edition," op. cit., pp. 79-82.

between the highest two pitches. Of this he says *l'harpegem.¹ se faiten semble ou separem.¹ d'un grand accord je le faite de cette facon*, ("The arpeggio of a grand chord played together or separately I indicate in this fashion.")

Perrine gives more specific information on the rhythmic treatment of the *separer* in his *Pieces de Luth en Musique* of 1680.²⁰ In the *Advrtissement* to this book, he notates two stacked quarter notes with a *separer* between them as an introductory example of the ornament. He writes that two eighth notes with a *separer* should be played as an eighth immediately followed by a sixteenth, two dotted eighths as a dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth, and two quarters as a quarter followed by a sixteenth. In the three note examples he shows three dotted eighths as an arpeggio occupying the value of three sixteenths, three quarters as (from bottom to top) as quarter, eighth, sixteenth, and three dotted quarters as dotted quarter, dotted eighth, and sixteenth. The following example reproduces Perrine's instructions for this indication.

Example 5-4, Perrine: *separer* from
Pieces de Luth en Musique, 1680, pp. 6-8.

La ligne obliquement tirée entre les notes comme # signifie qu'il les faut toucher l'une apres l'autre, Sçavoir

1. *Un accord de deux notes de la valeur d'une croche comme # doit estre touché comme #*

2. *Un accord de deux notes de la valeur d'une croche pointée comme # doit estre touché comme #*

3. *Celui de deux notes de la valeur d'une noire comme # doit estre touché comme #*

4. *Celui de trois notes de la valeur d'une croche pointée comme # doit estre touché comme #*

5. *Celui de trois notes de la valeur d'une noire comme # doit estre touché comme #*

6. *Celui de trois notes de la valeur d'une noire pointée comme # doit estre touché comme #*

Although the topic of *separer* may be in the domain of ornaments (to be reviewed below), its effect on notation and variants has significance to the present discussion. Therefore, this symbol will be examined here as it applies to the issue of notation and its musical and

²⁰ Perrine, *Pieces de Luth...*, op. cit.

stylistic effect. In both 1682 and 1686, de Visée gives terse instructions for this convention. 1686 merely duplicates what was shown in 1682; de Visée indicates a straight line between two notes, saying that *Cette barre tirée droite veut dire qu'il faut pincer les cordes ensemble*, ("This straight line means that one must pluck the strings simultaneously"). This instruction is immediately followed by *Ces autres bares tirées de trauers vous les seront separer*, ("These other lines drawn diagonally [will] make you play them separately"). Apparently de Visée did not feel compelled to offer such detailed information as Perrine as this technique was well entrenched in guitar and lute techniques.

In de Visée's theorbo works, the *separer* functions as an rhythmic alteration, generally transforming two eighths into a dotted quarter and sixteenth figure. Between tablature and staff sources, the discrepancy between these two rhythmic figures can often transform a line of (apparently) even eighth notes into the characteristically dotted rhythms associated with French music of this period. While the application of unnotated dotted rhythms dates from as early as Ganassi, its use in French music of this period was advocated by several composers and theorists including Gigault (1682), Rousseau (1687), Raison (1688), L'Affilard (1694), Loulié (1696), Marais (1701), and Saint-Lambert (1722). It is my opinion that the use of *separer* in de Visée's theorbo music stems from the same technical principles that apply to other instruments and which have a similar result. For example, in Nivers's *Livre d'Orgue* of 1667,²¹ the use of a repeated fingering pattern of 3-4-3-4-3-4 in the right hand results in a subtle *inégaie* ("unequal") inflection. The same result is achieved on the flute; in Hotteterre's *Principes de la flute traversiere* of 1708, the tonguing pattern of "tu-ru-tu-ru" approximates this subtle lengthening and shortening of values.²²

In this theorbo repertoire, the use of *separer* gives the player a certain flexibility in rhythmic freedom. The technical principles of Nivers and Hotteterre, to name only two, find direct application not only in the *separer*, but in the slurring of passages where a longer line may be divided into slurred groups of two or more notes (*couler*). While the short-hand system of *separer* and the deliberately vague rhythmic freedom of slurred groups imparted to players an agreeable phrasal liberty, it also accounted for the discrepancies encountered in the various

²¹ G. G. Nivers, *Livre d'Orgue* (Paris: Ballard, 1667), p. iv. Nivers will often slur ascending and descending lines into sub-groups of three with a repeated pattern of three adjacent fingers, and groups of two with duple patterns. Entire groups of four notes are rarely repeated; they are generally followed by the breaking effect achieved by these smaller patterns.

²² J. Hotteterre, *Principes de la flute traversiere* (Amsterdam: Roger, 1708), pp. 21-22. This tonguing invites *inégaie*, especially if pairs of notes are slurred.

sources for the repertoire of this study. In one case where a rhythm is notated as two eighths, another version will show a dotted eighth and sixteenth, while yet another has a *separer*. The exact placement of these indications almost always occurs on a weak beat or an unstressed melodic unit. In French lute music of the preceding generation, *separer* is sprinkled throughout the entire phrase, often resulting in delayed melodic notes on stressed beats, even on structurally important bass notes. This radical use of *separer* is all but avoided by de Visée. He employs this device as a means of propulsion, carrying a rhythmically unstressed beat toward another metric arrival. In these cases and in the less frequent use of *separer* on a stressed beat, it greatly resembles François Couperin's use of what he calls *suspension*, the temporary delaying of a high melodic note in order to heighten expressivity.²³

The frequency with which rhythmic variants appear lead one to believe that the dotting of an eighth note pair was an accepted convention in de Visée's music. Where a conjunct line is slurred in pairs may imply a more subtle use of *inégaie*, and a *separer* sign does not automatically require dotting. This is an issue requiring a great sensitivity on the player in determining the degree and appropriateness of dotting; an issue that must be addressed through musical context and structural considerations. The next three examples from an allemande called *La Royale* illustrated this oft-encountered phenomenon.

Example 5-5, de Visée: Allemande m. 16-27,

Vm⁷ 6222, p. 17v.



²³ The *suspension* is shown by Couperin to be a dotted half note delayed by an eighth rest. As with de Visée, Couperin marks a vertical bar between notes to signify *ensemble*, which he calls *Unisson*. See F. Couperin, *Pièces de Clavecin, Première Livre* (Paris: Foucalt, 1713), *Explication des Agréments et des Signes*. Couperin emphatically insisted that his ornament and phrase markings be strictly observed. One wonders how he may have reacted to de Visée's arranging of his harpsichord pieces which are a rather relaxed interpretation of Couperin's exacting indications; de Visée even makes structural changes.

Example 5-6, de Visée: Allemande m. 16-27,
Saiz.I, p. 253.



Example 5-7, de Visée: Allemande m. 16-27,
1716 p. 81.



Notice that in the guitar version how *separer* is written in eighth notes, whereas in the theorbo it is indicated by the stenographic symbol. In 1716 the effect is not even approximated by the sequential thirds. One interesting aspect of *separer* on the theorbo is that (due to the tuning) notes may sometimes be reversed from their natural high-to-low disposition. The tablature version of this work in Rés. 1820 contains no *separer* in this passage, instead writing

out even eighth notes. Another aspect of *separer* is that it not only affords rhythmic alteration of long-short-long-short patterns, but allows the opposite pattern to be employed. This "Lombard" inflection is entirely in alignment with the style of *inégaie*.²⁴ One final feature of slurring here is the rhythmic offsetting of phrases, especially in sequences. The occasional use of a group of three slurred notes (as seen in the above guitar example) serves to break a formulaic sequence into smaller phrasal units; this trait allows for further use of *inégaie*. The next example illustrates how *separer* may be mensurally approximated as a dotted quarter and eighth figure.

Example 5-8, de Visée: Allemande, m. 1-13, Saiz.I, p. 228.



²⁴ The reversal of the long-short pattern is perhaps even natural for slurred pairs on lute instruments. This short-long pattern is referred to as *port de voix*, *coulé* by Boyvin (1689) and *pointé-coulé* by François Couperin.

Example 5-9, de Visée: Allemande, m. 1-13, 1716, p. 1.



In these versions a dotted quarter and eighth note figure are notated in the tablature as a quarter tied over to a dotted eighth and sixteenth note. Where the tablature indicates *separer*, de Visée has printed a delayed eighth note. Even though 1716 represents an uncontested opinion of this piece, it should be mentioned that accepted conventions such as rhythmic alteration and the proper metric placement of ornaments was an assumed practice. That this practice would be applied to printed music, whether it be for violin or theorbo, is obvious. Rhythmic alteration however, takes on a different meaning when applied to tablature, where only plucked pitches are notated. Linear plasticity is not immediately apparent in its appearance, and the molding of lines (especially counterpoint) is an art that does not respond to ornamental symbols with the exact effect as does staff notation. It may be for this reason that the theorbo tablatures display such discrepancies and that the printed sources, while undeniably credible, do not note with such detail the dotted inflections found with such regularity in tablatures.

Musical style

The corpus of works dealt with in this study seem to adhere to fixed stylistic principles; I have not been able to discern any distinguishing features that may allow for division into compositional "periods." In terms of stylistic maturity, de Visée appears to have formed his musical tastes early, under the oppressive weight of Lullian influence. Even following Lully's death, de Visée seems to have continued these tastes rather unchanged. He did not yield to Italian infiltration with the same enthusiasm as Forqueray or Marais, nor did he attempt to prolong the surface features of the rpeggiated French lute style with any applied purity. His personality is a cosmopolitan blend of Italian features as they were already transformed on French soil by native and foreign musicians, with particular resemblance to Francisco Corbetta. Corbetta had already enacted a convincing marriage of stylistic and idiomatic traits in his later guitar music, providing de Visée with a model that had already absorbed differing styles. From his earliest publications, de Visée represented a mixture of French and Italian elements, although his composite style was born and nurtured from a French attitude that only marginally accepted Italian pressures. The dispute over playing styles on the viol ocured at the onset of de Visée's career at the court; perhaps that disagreement further solidified de Visée's personal style as a balance of national traits. Certainly both linear and harmonic elements come to play in his music; it remains to be demonstrated to what degree he favored one element over another.

The similarities between de Visée's guitar music to other composers has already been documented.²⁵ Corbetta's earlier publications were outgrowths of the informal *alfabeto* style of the Italian guitarists, and his later books showed an increasing use of French tendencies as they were developed by lutenists. The integration of melodic flow in *batteries* and the rhythmic hallmarks of anacrusis are some of the pronounced features of his late style. De Visée absorbed and adapted these traits, carrying Corbetta's achievements to a higher, more refined expression of French style. By the time of de Visée's final print of 1716, the *style galant* had assumed an identity that was defined by gracefulness and refinement, the hallmarks of the theorbo compositions. His first book of guitar pieces uses much of Corbetta's language including similar melodic shapes, identical recntrant tuning, and an harmonic sophistication that makes interesting use of inversions.²⁶ One important difference between the melodic tendencies of these two composers is

²⁵ Richard Pinnell has convincingly shown that de Visée continued the trends set by Corbetta. See his *Francisco Corbetta and the Baroque Guitar*, op. cit., pp. 187-200.

²⁶ Richard Pinnell states that "Even in the theorbo music of De Visée, the *Tombeau de M. Mouton* resembles Corbetta's *allemande* of 1643, page 40. The closest the two composers ever come is in De Visée's *saraband* in D minor (1682, Page 21 f.), wherein Corbetta's melody is duplicated over different harmony (1648, Page 70)." Idem p. 198. De Visée's guitar music

de Visée's favor toward smoother contours and suave, balanced phrasing. That he translated Corbetta's mature style into purely French tendencies as early as 1682 places the bulk of the theorbo pieces after this period. If we accept as fact the suggestion that most of de Visée's theorbo compositions follow 1682, then in terms of style, all that can be said of them with any authority is that they represent his lyrical style in full flower.

One of the most salient features of de Visée's style in any medium is a concern for natural melodic flow. In his style, the suppleness and gentility of the earlier *air de cour* finds a greater motivic and sequential development. This principle applies equally to arpeggiated textures found in French lute music,²⁷ but function to a lesser degree in phrasal length.²⁸ Although Italian traits are invoked to establish propulsion in de Visée's music, they are nevertheless overshadowed by melodic lyricism.

Before embarking on a description of his melodic contours, let us briefly examine phrasal length. De Visée will often adhere to phrases that are easily divided into two or four measure periods. Where he chooses to deviate from this pattern, the use of melodic sequence may be summoned to outline short periods of what we will call "expectation," a situation achieved through rhythmic-melodic repetition. As a technique to create interest, he will often disrupt this process; this occurs mainly as an avoidance of obvious melodic logic as achieved through expectation. In other words, de Visée will set up a biparte or syllogistic melodic pattern

certainly was affected by Corbetta's powerful personality, especially 1682, but after examining Corbetta's and de Visée's works mentioned here, I must confess that I see hardly any model similarity between them, melodically or harmonically. The *Tombeau de M. Mouton* is incidentally, for lute, not theorbo. The saraband mentioned by Pinnell does in fact duplicate the same pitches for the first two measures, but this genre's repeated note character allows for much resemblance between composers and within a single composer's style.

²⁷ In some pieces it would seem appropriate to emulate the harmonic or melodic styles of certain French lutenists. De Visée's *Tombeau de Vieux Gallot* (Saiz.I, p.55), *Tombeau de M^r Mouton* (Saiz.I, p. 76), and *Tombeau de DuBut* (Saiz.I, p. 175) are lute allemandes dedicated to these lute composers. They do not differ significantly from his other works in terms of texture or quality of line. These homages show that de Visée had profound understanding of the French lute style and particularly the melodic and chromatic tendencies of Mouton and Gallot. All three pieces have a corresponding staff version in 1716 (pp. 33, 97, 53 respectively), titled merely *Allemande grave*.

²⁸ It may be argued that the theorbo music of Le Moine follows these melodic principles as well. To the extent that they do, Le Moine employs much longer and less defined melodic periods than does de Visée. Arpeggiated textures are integrated into linear writing with much greater frequency than in de Visée's music, and Le Moine seems to favor the melodic vagueness and harmonic wanderings some of the French lutenists. Structurally, his biparte sections are nearly twice as long as de Visée's, and although he does utilize motivic propulsion, he seems to be much less concerned about conciseness or classical proportion. These points are evident in his pieces in Saiz.I, especially the *Gigue grave*, p. 385, or the *Allemande*, p. 384.

based on a certain degree of expectation, only to suddenly shorten phrasal length by hemiola or unexpectedly push ahead to points of harmonic relaxation. This particular type of phrasal structuring may be defined as a type of musical equation wherein the metrically subtracted or added result creates an element of surprise, mostly at temporary, internal cadential closings.²⁹ While hemiola is directly related to the French lute style, his phrasal periods (as they are a combination of expectation and surprise) is a highly personal trait of de Visée's, actually an expression of *galant* language.

The next example illustrates this point; following the introductory anacrusis, a single measure descending motive is answered in the bass register. The third measure introduces a new thought: a small eighth note figure that revolves around the C#. This figure is, incidentally, a "brisé" type gesture that is founded on the upper notes of the figure which outline the melody; the lower C# is merely an harmonic note. The figure does, however, have rhythmic consequence. Following a temporary repose on the tonic in measure four, the melody continues to drop until the next measure where it reiterates the top G. Measure five, beat four continues its descent until another brief melodic respite, provoked by the low diapason scale, quickly answered in the tenor register. A cadence on the mediant is eventually reached in measure eight, only to be eventually extended melodically and harmonically:

Example 5-10, de Visée: Allemande, m. 1-8, Saiz.I, p. 321.



²⁹ This terminology implies that longer phrases are made up of subsets, subject to motivic manipulation. This is sometimes but not always the case when observing these phrases in the context of either two to four measure periods or entire bipartite sections. As should become clear in the examples to follow, de Visée uses smaller motivic propulsion, or introduces new melodic elements as a way of linking together or altering his "signature phrases." These two melodic approaches are not simply opposing ways of dealing with linear writing. They carry on a dynamic between themselves and have a function analogous to harmonic versus linear styles in this repertoire. It should be added that when analyzing melodic style, phrasal contours may be viewed as "shapes in themselves," or as functions of longer phrase sets. The approach taken here is to first observe how motives may activate trademark melodic contours. Any discussion of how melody plays a overall role belongs more to structural analysis. This point is touched upon in the section called "Groupings and Genres."

This example shows a rather complicated use of extended phrasal periods. The expectation achieved by motivic answering in the first two measures is immediately abandoned. The seemingly unrelated eighth note activity in measure three actually provides rhythmic impetus for the subsequent extensions and short scalar motives. Repeated notes in dotted rhythms function as a linking device between periods of longer (mostly) conjunct movement, and true cadential repose is often illusory; phrases of unequal length propelling toward the inevitable half-cadence at repeats. From the onset to the end of this example, small rhythmic and melodic shapes outline passing areas of expectation, only to be quickly altered. The units themselves seem to fall into patterns of statement/affirmation/extension, where the extension is either a logical outcome of two propositions, or is a seemingly unrelated event that creates an element of surprise or restlessness. The above example is a complicated case of phrasal construction; many of de Visée's melodic periods fall into an easily perceived two or four measure framework, especially in *galanteries* such as gavottes, minuets, and gigue. The greater part of phrasal construction may here be attributed to rhythm, but small melodic units also heighten the sense of alternations between tension and repose. The remarks and conclusions drawn above apply to cases where a melody is subject to motivic or rhythmic complications. Its insertion before the following discussion of melodic "trademarks" is intended to illustrate that certain linear habits employed by de Visée are usually prone to some degree of manipulation. The careful balance of classical proportions in line and their rhythmic pliability is an aspect that is not always easily definable in this repertoire. It is hoped that the previous analysis, itself based on an admittedly short but complex example, will compel the reader to remember that the following explication of melody is intentionally simplified so as to make clear the original impetus for melodic manipulation. A musical example would perhaps clarify this approach. Although the following allemande of Hurel seems to superficially resemble certain traits found in de Visée's allemande, a closer inspection will reveal more differences than similarities. Unlike de Visée, Hurel shapes melodic contours that spring from an harmonic source rather than a linear one; this is evident in the quality and development of line. Hurel's short melodic fragments, unlike Le Moine, do not dissolve into "brisé," but rapidly shift register. In pieces of an extended melodic nature such as this D minor allemande, small disjunct motives may outline harmonies. Where Hurel chooses to resort to simple scalar movement, phrases often extend over barlines, creating melodic vagueness. Intentional haziness is an aspect of Hurel's bass lines, brought about through rhythmically delayed entrances or avoidance of a recognizable or repeated patterns. This next example clarifies these points.

Example 5-11, Hurel: Allemande, m. 1-6,
Pieces de théorbe, f.3v.



As is evident here, neither phrases nor motives are the primary motivation for the shape of Hurel's contours. Harmonic rhythm seems to be the guiding force in delineating phrases; the actual obscuring or suppression of sequential patterns creates an impression that recalls quite strongly the French lute tradition. Hurel does not subject his motives to de Visée's hierarchy outlined above, and the deliberate softening of clearly etched phrases provide a marked contrast to de Visée's method of composition.

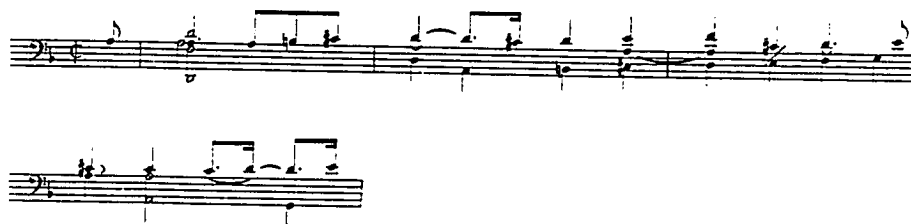
It has been tersely mentioned that the metric and phrasal irregularities used by de Visée must be applied to simpler, more pliable material. The process of creating musical interest from existing patterns is a technique that finds an almost constant use in his music. As a matter of convenience, it may be useful to reinvoke the comparison between vocal and lute music. As applied to the "signature phrases" to be reviewed, they fall under the generic category of vocal-type phrases; especially those that align more closely with the length of the human breath. The use of rhythmic irregularities mentioned above perhaps stem from a more instrumental source, especially the metric offsetting by arpeggiated textures or juxtaposition of smaller melodic units. The dynamic between these styles allows for the characteristic shape of de Visée's phrases; shapes that do not resemble the insistent propulsion of purely Italian writing, but rather show contours that are proportioned under the blanket rule of French lyricism. Keeping in mind that de Visée tended to Frenchify certain traits that may be identified as Italian, his melodic writing, while displaying typically French rhythms, is nonetheless fashioned with an eye toward proportion.

The remainder of this discussion should be prefaced by a mention of the importance of melody to this analysis. De Visée himself alludes to this importance when he describes his music as being modelled after Lully's "singing style", a style that he deems "natural" and that is favored

by people whose taste is "especially skilled."³⁰ That these remarks derive from 1682 makes melodic application the more central to his theorbo works. Even in the process of arranging works from one medium to another, the top line remains the governing factor in the physical layout on an instrument and the choice of key. Secondly important is harmonic movement,³¹ which usually determines the range of the bass line on the theorbo. The third aspect is the actual filling in of harmonies. These points are based upon a comparison of different versions of a single piece. The continuo figures encountered in 1716 sometimes differ with harmonies found in theorbo or lute versions. These harmonies, actually written or only implied in tablatures, are devised to either conform to proper linear writing, or are used as textural elements within the treble-bass polarity. These remarks should make clear the priority given to the melodic line; it remains to be seen in which ways de Visée utilizes vocal-type phrases in his music.

As a general description, de Visée's linearly molded phrases seem to follow two types of contour. The first ascends from a low pitch to a higher one (usually spanning a fourth) before residing in and developing its new melodic level. This signature phrase occurs mainly in movements of a serious nature, especially allemandes. The vocal nature of this melodic shape is clearly seen in the following examples.

Example 5-12, de Visée: Allemande, m. 1-4, Saiz.I, p. 228.



³⁰ *Advis*, 1682.

³¹ This statement is not meant to reduce the obvious significance of harmony as an important compositional element. Within the confines of a treble-bass framework, harmonies are of course present, but sometimes only implied rather than actually written in. The staff versions of plucked string pieces are an example of implied harmonic use, as figures are given an only skeletal notation. This and further uses of the word "harmony" are intended to apply to those very places where harmonies are actually notated in the tablature by the composer; this should be evident through analytic context.

Example 5-13, de Visée: Allemande, m. 1-3, Saiz.I, p. 357.



Another often encountered shape is an initial high note followed by a descent to a lower melodic region. In both types of contours, the first part of the phrase establishes the longer metric value, followed by its melodic and rhythmic activity. The descending type of phrase is seen in this example:

Example 5-14, de Visée: allemande *La Mutine*, m. 1-3,
Saiz. I, p. 271.



In both of the shapes shown above, the new melodic region is arrived at through conjunct motion. Stepwise motion is perhaps the single most important aspect of de Visée's melodic writing, and seems to overpower even pieces based on formulaic dance rhythms such as gavottes or minuets. In those pieces based more on harmonic rhythm, such as courantes or giges, stepwise motion is still a major factor, although slower harmonic rhythm usually determines a longer melodic period, whereas more rapid harmonic change necessitates shorter phrases. De Visée's melodies are usually generated through the two types of phrases outlined above. More often he

will mix both formulas together to create a longer arching phrase, as in this example:

Example 5-15, de Visée: Rondeau *La Montfermeil* m. 1-3,

Saiz.I, p. 308



Another outcome of their combination is the formation of an irregular pattern, as seen in this example:

Example 5-16, de Visée: Courante m. 1-3, Saiz.I, p. 377.



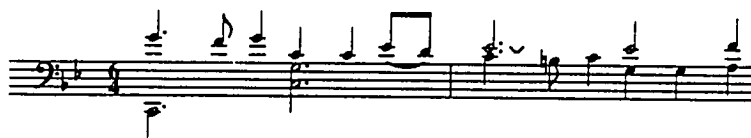
Another salient feature of de Visée's linear constructions is the sensitive use of intervallic leaps. In a melodic context, they are usually employed as an expressive device, and may occur within a phrase to heighten or extend phrasal length, which may be seen here:

Example 5-17, de Visée: Allemande m. 1-3, Saiz.I, 303.



These leaps sometimes function to delineate a new melodic region, as this example illustrates:

Example 5-18, de Visée: Gigue, m. 1-2, Saiz.I, p. 404.

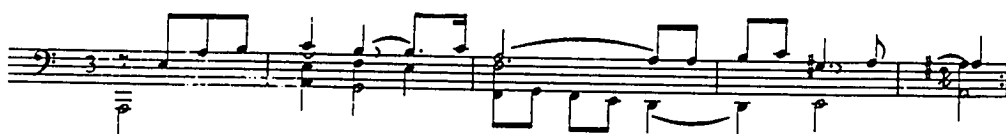


A final use of melodic leaps stems from an anacrusis figure in chaconnes and giges:

Example 5-19, de Visée: Gigue m. 1-4, Rés. 1106, f.90v.



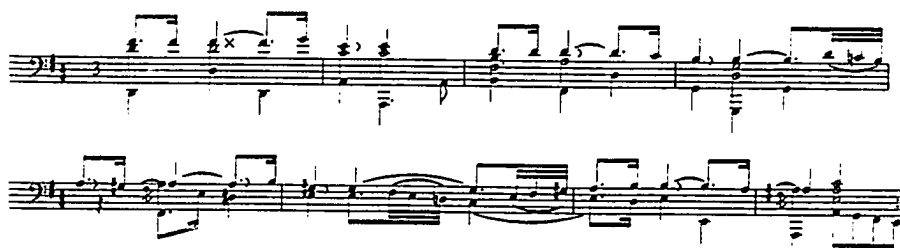
Example 5-20, de Visée: Chaconne m. 1-4, Saiz.I, p. 258.



It must be remembered that these leaps are integrated into a highly melodic context. They serve either an expressive or "surprise" function, or outline disjunct units as melodic-rhythmic motives. The opposite of disjunct movement is of course stasis, and the repetition of a melodic note is a frequently found device. This technique also allows de Visée to enact harmonic

changes underneath a static melody, recalling the sarabandes of the French lutenists. This next example shows this treatment of a repeated melodic pitch:

Example 5-21, de Visée: Sarabande m. 1-8, Rés. 1106, f.89r.



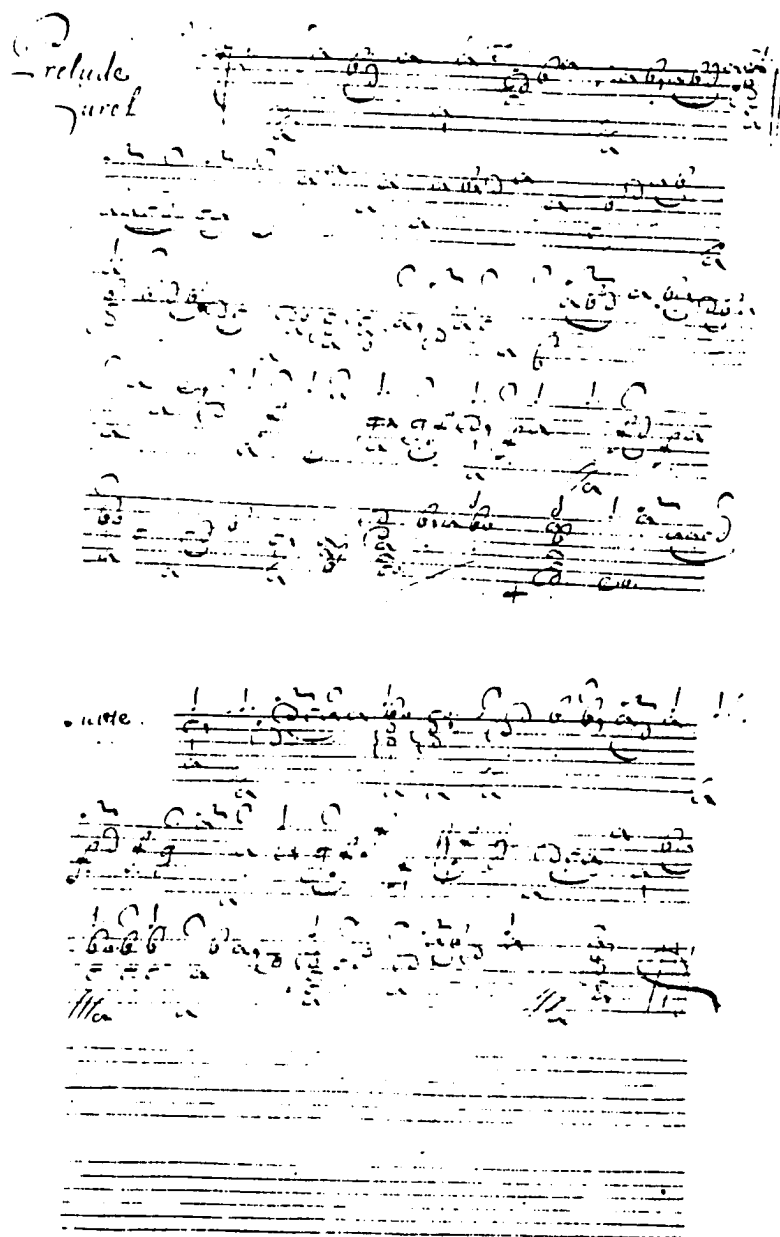
As is obvious from the above examples, clearly fashioned melodic contours built on mainly conjunct motion are the principle trademarks of de Visée's melodic style. That he thought in linear terms would naturally allow him to provide treble-bass versions of his music, even if they were composed at a plucked string instrument. In all cases, de Visée prefers a carefully etched, vocally wrought melody, with a bass line and harmonies in a secondary, supportive role. Even in his preludes, traditionally the province of the arpeggiated style, de Visée prefers the setting of a melodic line. Let us now examine two examples of this genre in an effort to determine to what degree arpeggiated textures obscure or support linear thinking. The following examples reproduce in transcription and tablature a prelude of Hurel. This is followed by a prelude (in the same key) of de Visée.

Subtle differences emerge in comparing these two examples. Again, Hurel's writing shows linear aspects, but it is rarely maintained throughout an entire phrase. More often, arpeggiated gestures or chordal movements are determining factors in the use of melody. Where purely conjunct lines appear, they seem to behave as linking devices to harmonic rhythm. While melody is occasionally employed, it is not consistently used as either a homogeneous texture or structural design. In his other preludes, the length of conjunct phrases are generally much shorter than de Visée, and extremely so compared to Le Moine. One interesting aspect of melody is Hurel's apparent nonchalance with regard to chord member disposition. When lines do appear they are often played with the right hand thumb taking the upper voice on the third string. This is immediately abandoned where other chord formations follow within a phrase. It also requires that melodic notes often become buried within harmonies, creating a "brisé" impression even while sustaining a line. Hurel's preludes in C major and D major also feature some extended scalar flourishes which recall de Visée's dramatic use of this gesture in his examples of this

Example 5-22: Hurel: Prelude in D minor.

The musical score for Example 5-22, Hurel's Prelude in D minor, is presented across seven staves. The notation is in D minor, indicated by two flats (B-flat and E-flat) in the key signature. The score features a variety of rhythmic values, including eighth, sixteenth, and thirty-second notes, as well as rests and ties. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The subsequent staves continue the melodic and harmonic development, with some staves showing complex rhythmic patterns and others featuring more sustained notes. The score concludes with a final cadence on the seventh staff.

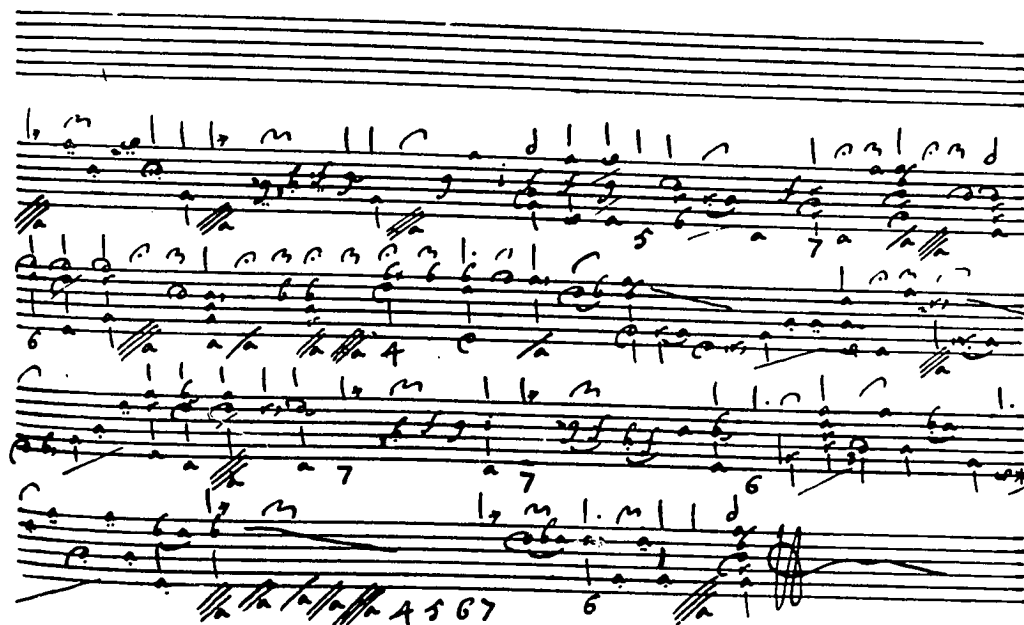
Example 5-22a: Hurel: Prelude,
theorbo tablature, *Pieces de théorbe*.



Example 5-23: de Visée: Prelude in D minor,



Example 5-23a: de Visée: Prelude,
theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 227.



form.³² In the prelude of de Visée, the occasional reliance of arpeggiated texture has assumed a contrapuntal significance that is not a consistent linear feature of either the French lutenists or Hurel. The impression of polyphony is apparent in the French lute repertoire, but it does not display such strictly contrapuntal traits as in this prelude of de Visée. Where he chooses to utilize "brisé" textures, they are woven into a polyphonic fabric of far greater phrasal length than either Hurel or the French lutenists.

As is shown in these examples, de Visée's suave, vocally fashioned lines take precedence over what had formerly been considered the prevailing and natural character of plucked string instruments. Many of the "signature" shapes may be glimpsed in this piece, especially the outlining of a region through repeated notes or the melodic significance given to inside voices. More than a simple presentation of melodic genera, this prelude is built on motivic-rhythmic sequence and repetition. Its unmeasured nature does not allow for overt use of melody and is therefore necessarily based more on harmonic rhythm than melodic period. In comparing this genre, one must remain aware that it is a form that has not traditionally employed melodic writing. A deliberate application of arpeggiation and ambiguity is natural to this genre as is seen in theorbo, lute, or harpsichord repertoires. While it is not surprising to conclude that melody plays a less functional role in Hurel's piece, it does provide a marked contrast to de Visée's work. Even in a form such as this, de Visée resorts to clearly discernable melodic contours, rhythmic sequence, and a more polyphonic application of "brisé" textures.³³

The final and most recognizable melodic shape is a familiar cadential formula. This ubiquitous trilled figure is usually prefaced by either an eighth or sixteenth-note figure that prepares the oscillation between the pitches of the *tremblement* (trill). This figure is usually followed by an anacrusis to the final chord of the cadence of either simple or compound nature on the tonic or dominant member of that chord. Structurally, this figure acts as a signpost to mark off points of melodic or harmonic repose. Its use at repeats and at the ends of pieces is of course the most

³² The Hurel example shown here and the other preludes mentioned derive from the Pierpoint Morgan Library ms. 17524, the *Pieces de théorbe*, ca. 1670. This manuscript has a printed frontespiece by Ballard. This source is not paginated with numbers, and I have simply referred to keys as they appear in their respective cluster.

³³ The short prelude in E minor (Saiz.I, p. 308), is an interesting exception to the above example. It appears to be a conscious emulation of "brisé" textures, using almost entirely arpeggiated figures. Even the arpeggiated A minor guitar prelude (1682, p. 8) makes more use of small ascending scalar motives than does this E minor theorbo prelude. Vaudry has appended this short work at the end of the E minor cluster. A larger, dramatic, and more characteristic example of the prelude may be found on p. 306; the smaller prelude may have been an afterthought or alternative opening to the cluster.

obvious structural function, but it is also inserted within sections to delineate phrases or to mark off boundary points between melodic periods. Its generic, mannered quality creates a sense of arrival and its more subtle use within phrases actually defines varying phrasal lengths.³⁴ As a closing figure at repeat marks or at the ends of pieces, it is always followed (in theorbo and lute tablatures) by a one or two measure arpeggiated chord. The most common occurrence of this formula is found in allemandes and courantes, but other dances may have a similar or shortened figure. The final chord usually contains members (usually the root and fifth) still ringing from the previous measure, and chord members are sometimes doubled on different strings for added resonance:

Example 5-24, de Visée: final cadence, Saiz.I, p. 303.



As the primary inspiration of his style, de Visée allows melody to influence other musical parameters such as bass and harmony. Due to the peculiarities of the instrument, the secondary function of these two aspects is perhaps more a technical necessity than an overt stylistic choice. That the Lullian style favored a clearly defined treble-bass texture may be seen throughout de Visée's theorbo music in mainly two-part writing. This must be considered the primary textural feature, as filling harmonies, (although they are contrapuntally well written) are inserted within the treble-bass outlines. De Visée's bass lines are a ramification of his predilection toward conjunct motion, although less overtly melodic than the top line. As the melody governs the choice of left hand position, the bass line must conform to this requirement.³⁵ The linear style

³⁴ Cadential gestures of this type may be found throughout all music of the *grand siècle* including Lully, Marais, Forqueray, Couperin, Rameau, Charpentier, and others.

³⁵ In the case where the pretuned diapasons do not allow for chromatic alteration in the bass, de Visée transposes the altered pitch up to a fingered string, occasionally disrupting the conjunct flow of that line. There are few isolated cases of this problem, and it does not seriously affect the overall impression of the bass. Another example of a transposed pitch occurs when the composer wishes to ornament a bass note. The unstopped strings of course cannot be ornamented, and in those cases where an ornament has been deemed desirable, the bass must be transposed up. These are unusual cases; the lowest line is usually fashioned in a way that allows for the greatest resonance and ease of playing.

is extremely succesful in the lowest bass register, where the left hand thumb may strike adjacent open strings, either ascending or descending, although the bass line does not reside solely on the unstopped strings. A common feature is the free use of both high and low bass range, traversing stopped strings (which allow for unlimited chromatic alteration), and the pretuned dipasons. As with melody, de Visée's bass lines seems to fall into two distinct categories. In the first, conjunct motion moves against the melody.³⁶ De Visée will occasionally employ contrary motion between voices. This technique allows for the greatest impression of depth between treble and bass, heightening intervallic distance. This is seen very clearly in the next example, where a near-verbatim rhythm pervades both lines.

Example 5-25, de Visée: Minuet m. 1-8, Saiz.I, p. 223.



As a subfunction of the above mentioned technique, a bass line that is fashioned on a similar rhythm of the melody may move in parallel motion.

Example 5-26, de Visée: Gigue, m. 16-20, Saiz.I, p. 359.



³⁶ These categorical descriptions are not meant to imply that de Visée merely extracted generic patterns from a spectrum of melodic clichés. The classifying divisions are here only a means of identifying salient features of style. Their artistic use is not a result of mere juxtaposition, but a creative synthesis of smaller melodic genera as necessitated by technical limitations of the instrument.

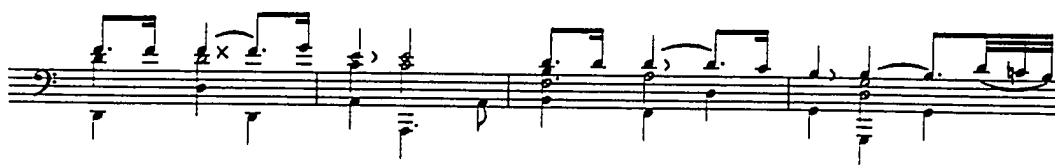
In the two examples above, bass line contours are a result of melodic strictures that emulate or simultaneously agree with the melody. Another use of melodic bass writing is the echoing or answering of small melodic shapes. This is seen in the following example where the lower voice answers the four-note motive throughout various bass registers.

Example 5-27, de Visée: Gigue, m. 10-17, Saiz.I, p. 359.



The second, non-linear function of the bass line is to move in a slower, disjunct way that reinforces harmonies by a low diapason doubling. This is evident in the following example.

Example 5-28, de Visée: Sarabande m. 1-4, Rés. 1106, f.89r.



As with the melodic functions outlined above, the bass often mixes these two roles, as seen here.

Example 5-29, de Visée: Sarabande m. 1-8, Saiz.I, p. 378.



These above examples demonstrate to what degree linear fluidity affected de Visée's thinking. The particular shape of his melodic constructs are outgrowths of the germinal aspects mentioned above, and their creative use attests to de Visée's facile inventiveness.

The final element in defining phrasal shape is the use of harmony. We have already determined that melody is of prime importance, affecting firstly the top line and secondly the bass. It is my belief that linear priority affects somewhat the use and more so the quality of de Visée's harmonic language. In developing this topic, it may be useful to define harmony as either a result of linear movement (or at least a conscious application of voice-leading), or as a textural element. One example of the former is de Visée's occasional use of chromatic lines. Even though chromaticism usually appears in an only two-part texture, it defines harmonic movement, particularly when it is buried within the treble and bass. The Allemande of Saiz.I, p. 321 finds a corresponding version in 1716, p. 99; the staff version is given in the following example with the inner chromatic lines from Saiz.I, inserted. This layering of different versions may show how the composer wished his continuo figures to be realized, presumably in a linear fashion.

Example 5-30, de Visée: Allemande m. 8-11, 1716, p. 99.



An harmonic analysis of this passage may shed some light on the role of linear harmonic thinking. The ascending chromatic line actually begins on the downbeat, tonic member of the mediant. This raised pitch then functions as the major third of the tonic, whose melodic raised sixth degree and upper neighboring seventh prepare and resolve to a major subdominant,

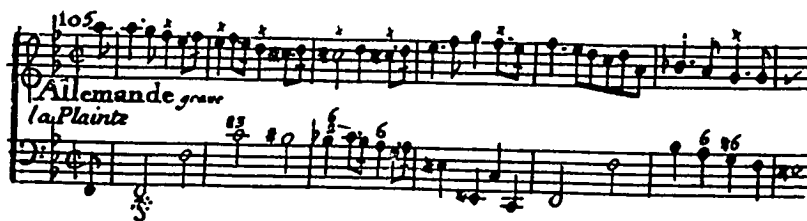
enclosing the chromatic line. On the second beat of m. 9, the bass drops through a $4/2$ subdominant until the third beat. Further chromatic alteration creates a major supertonic with the flatted ninth in the top voice, behaving as an appoggiatura to the octave and quickly dropping through the flatted seventh degree of that harmony. A final chromatic movement of the inside voice creates the dominant on m. 10, then passing through steady harmonic movement of dominant $4/2$, major subdominant $4/2$ and finally a full cadence of dominant $4/3$ (missing its root) to root position tonic.

Three different rhythmic levels (in the theorbo version) may be perceived here. In the first, the uppermost line with its tripartite structure of two identical rhythmic measures is followed by a slower melodic conclusion of ascending quarter notes. A syllogistic pattern is clearly seen here which in turn affects the bass line. The second melodic level is the bass line itself which conforms to the upper melodic periods, stretching the third statement over five quarter note pulses. The third and most hidden level is the chromatic line which moves in half notes. Steady rhythmic flow is not subject to consequences of melodic writing as used here; the conversion to a quarter note pulse in m. 10 occurs to provide parallel movement to the top line and to agree with the cadential pulse. The tonic of the mediant chord (on m. 9) functions as a half note despite the fact that the melody must dampen the ringing string for a sixteenth note value. A linearly shaped harmonic voice is not surprising given the importance of melody. As a textural element however, harmonic density works in two ways here. The relatively slow pulse of the chromatic line is only a skeletal strand in this passage of basically three part writing. Additional filling notes in the harmony are inserted as a textural element to deepen or darken a given chord. This effect may be seen on the mediant chord on m. 9, scored quite low (in the theorbo version) with a third above an already low bass. The major supertonic ninth chord on m. 9, third beat, is filled out with its fifth above the raised third. No open diapasons that conform with this harmony are available. In the final measure of the example, four part chords create a broadening effect to the full cadence. The parallel fourths in the third and fourth beats of m. 10 could have been easily avoided by maintaining an only three part texture. Apparently de Visée was more concerned with a textural effect at the cadence rather than observing strict contrapuntal rules. In fact, this concern for texture governs his entire approach to the density of inside voices.

Insofar as a shifting density of harmonic thickness resembles the French lute repertoire, it is nonetheless guided by balanced melodic periods, defined by internal cadences, and is subject to well-crafted voice leading. Another allemande provides a further example of chromaticism. The allemande from Saiz.I, p. 401 (in c minor), marked *La Plainte* contains a descending chromatic bass line commencing on measure two, before echoing the rhythmic figure of the

opening treble line. Chromaticism in this work seems to be relegated to this small three note figure, appearing in inversion at the second half of this piece. The next example reproduces the first six measures of *La Plainte* in its staff version (in f minor) from 1716:

Example 5-31, de Visée: Allemande m. 1-6, 1716, p. 105.



The versions from 1716 are scored in two voices; the basic texture for their theorbo versions. Presumably, a continuo player would increase or decrease chordal density to align with phrasal shape and character. In the theorbo versions, a constant texture of more than two voices cannot be maintained. In terms of density, de Visée seems to thicken basically two part writing³⁷ in several ways. As a means of accentuating a harmony, chords may often be thickened. In some cases a non-harmonic tone will attract the ear to a dense chord, as in this example:

Example 5-32, de Visée: Passacaille, m. 1-4, Rés. 1106, f.82v.



³⁷ Passages of only one voice also occur. This is usually an anacrusis situation where a scale or scalar motive anticipates a downbeat. It may also occur where motives are stated in one voice and answered in another.

In other cases, a rapid change of density within a phrase will create unexpected metric accents. This is a situation used to effect hemiolas, especially in courantes:

Example 5-33, de Visée: Courante m. 1-6, Saiz.I, p. 358.



In the first two measures of this example, a two part texture is discreetly filled by a free third voice. Following the cadence in m. 3, the sudden appearance of four note chords create strong metric accents on a hemiola period of 2-3-3-2-2 quarter beats respectively. Although the passage cited above may illuminate some aspects of de Visée's harmonic practice, chordal density and voice leading remain surface features of the actual harmonic progressions. The internal rhythms that the harmonic progressions display are naturally a result of differing genres. Any harmonic analysis must of course take these instrumental forms into account, but as a general trait one may observe that de Visée usually relies on diatonic progressions whose position is guided by a conjunct bass line.³⁸ Within phrases, this usually results in a first or second inversion. Root position chords are generally reserved for harmonic affirmation at the beginnings, internal cadences, and ends of phrases. The following example illustrates this block-type writing:

Example 5-34, de Visée: Allemande m. 19-22, Saiz.I, p. 321.



³⁸ As has been shown, the bass line is modelled after the melody. Stepwise movement of treble and bass not only allow, but require inverted harmonies.

The scoring in the above example is quite low. More often, de Visée will use a much wider separation between bass and treble; oftentimes the middle voice will lie directly underneath the treble. This example also furnishes a typical use of chromatic alteration to establish modulations. In order to activate modulation, de Visée will most often raise the third degree of a given harmony to function as the secondary dominant to the following chord. The excerpt above is from the second half of an allemande in B minor. The key of A major (the downbeat of the excerpt) had been achieved by a subdominant chord in root position with a raised third degree. A moving middle voice passed through root and flatted seventh of that harmony, resolving (at the excerpt) to the third degree of root position A major, now referred to as tonic. On beat three of m. 19, a $4/2$ tonic gives way to a $4/3$ supertonic with a raised third and missing its root. This secondary dominant function leads to a natural dominant (of whose flatted third is a melodic requirement) on m. 20, downbeat. This temporary cadence is affirmed by the root position of that harmony, an outcome of voice leading between treble and bass. The supertonic and $6/3$ submediant of m. 20 give way to a $6/3$ natural dominant, ornamented by a suspension. This harmony is maintained throughout m. 21, although beat four may be described as a $4/2$ tonic, quickly touched upon. The moving bass line of this beat is actually a motive derived from the previous resolution of the melody in that measure. The raised third of the submediant in m. 22 prepares the eventual reinstatement of B minor.

Another secondary dominant function is found in the occasional use of diminished seventh chords. While they appear less frequently, they furnish a dominant or secondary dominant function, always resolving the top voice up a half-step and the entire chord to a $6/3$ cadence. The next two examples show this use of the diminished seventh:

Example 5-35, de Visée: unmeasured prelude, Saiz.I, p. 381.



Example 5-36, de Visée: Sarabande, m. 11-12, Saiz.I, p. 322.



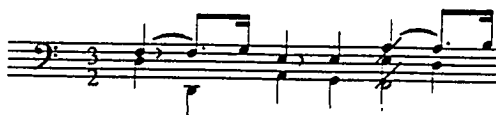
Another favored device is the use of the flatted seventh chord which does not serve a dominant function. It is sometimes a melodic result, prepared in the next example by the upper voice of the previous chord,

Example 5-37, de Visée: Allemande *La Mutine*, m. 8-9,
Saiz.I, p. 271.



or a result of voice leading in an inside strand:

Example 5-38, de Visée: Courante m. 2, Saiz.I, p. 254.



This next example shows a sequence of major and minor sevenths, dominant sevenths, and diminished chords. The entire cycle in C major is initiated by a tonic with a passing natural

seventh. The subdominant with a melodic suspended seventh moves to a half-diminished leading tone with a passing seventh. Doubly chromatic alteration in the lower and upper middle voices transform this into a major mediant (of secondary dominant function) resolving to a submediant with a passing natural seventh. The major supertonic resolves to another leading tone with a passing seventh (this chord may function as a temporary $4/3$ without its root), again resolving to the major $4/2$ mediant and resolving to a $6/3$ submediant with a passing sharpened sixth degree. A major $4/3$ mediant leads to its resolution of a root position submediant, actually the tonic of the piece. This passage is a telling example of how a simple descending melody of half notes and root position chords may be mixed with various chromatic changes, inversions, and secondary dominant functions.

Example 5-39, de Visée: Prelude, Saiz.I, p. 256.



Beside simple inversion and modulation, de Visée's harmonic language is given further piquancy by auxiliary tones, appoggiaturas, passing tones, anticipations and suspensions, and other ornamental techniques. The next example shows many of the harmonic and melodic devices reviewed. They here include chromatic movement and passing tones in the bass, melodic and motivic sequence, parallel thirds and sixths, and diminished and flatted seventh harmonies. The G major Chaconne in Saiz.I, p. 288, cannot be definitely ascribed to de Visée,³⁹ the additional couplets by de Visée show highly imaginative theorbo writing, as seen in the following examples

³⁹ Another version of this work is found in Rés. 1106, f.19v, also unidentified. Based on its length and high degree of repetition, it does not convincingly resemble either the Chaconne in A minor in Saiz.I, p. 258 or the D minor Passacaille on p. 229 of the same source, although there are certain superficial similarities in phrasing. Its composer is not identified in Saiz.I, but Vaudry does name de Visée as the author of the couplets in G minor. He says the original Chaconne has been *augmentée par M^r. de Visée*. This of course does not exclude the possibility that it is a work of de Visée, particularly since it appears in another source. Vaudry, however, is generally very careful in citing authors and in a large work as this Chaconne, it seems unusual that he would not mention the composer. The eight couplets by de Visée were intended to be inserted within the structure.

of transcription and tablature original.

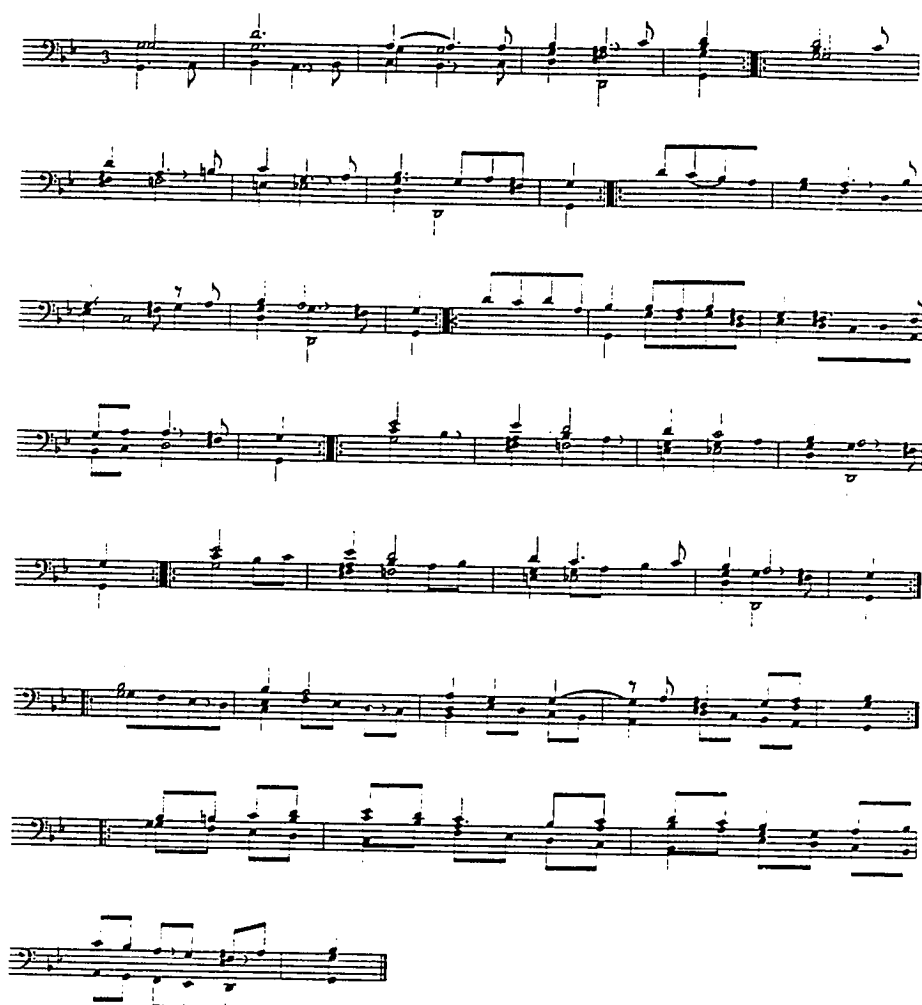
De Visée guides the harmonic and melodic techniques cited above within the confines of bipartite dance structures, excepting rondeau forms and freely notated preludes. Chromatic wanderings or secondary dominant functions are carefully wrought to align with shortened or extended phrasal periods. A less complex harmonic scheme is usually reserved for simpler two or four measure periods. These details exist on a lower strata beneath the long-term harmonic plan. One common harmonic scheme is a tonic-dominant/dominant-tonic pattern in a two part repeated form. This is most often seen in allemandes, courantes, and sarabandes. The chord at half cadences usually contains a bass line figure that descends from the root of the dominant until the (tonic) second degree to provide a smooth transition to the repeat. The second ending merely affirms the arrival of the dominant through arpeggiation. Other long term harmonic plans may also be seen. De Visée occasionally uses a (minor) tonic-median/midian/tonic plan, or in rondeau type pieces, variant statements on the tonic/dominant. The least employed plan is tonic-tonic/tonic-tonic, although this is sometimes encountered with some secondary dominant passages within these harmonic confines. In sum, harmonic periods naturally follow the contour of phrases and secondary functions are established to create temporary internal cadences, but these details are balanced within the larger tonic-dominant scheme. This plan seems to be a largely assumed directive in which the composer sets first his upper melodic periods, secondly a bass line, and thirdly chordal quality and density. Aside from harmonically ornamental pitches, surface ornaments appear to be the final layer in this compositional process.

The isolated examples shown above must represent only discrete aspects of a style that must be experienced aurally to be fully appreciated. To the extent that analytical commentary may aid understanding, it must be placed within an appropriate perspective with relation to the actual music as sound. While the general and more detailed observations made here are an effort to identify both the process and aspects of these compositions, it must be remembered that as the basic features of a style, they are integrated into a continuous musical stream. The processes of rhythmic-melodic manipulation, chordal density, and harmonic colorings are not superimpositions on a formulaic structure. Rather, they are ramifications of a distinctly melodic approach and creative harmonic language that must be appreciated through aural experience.

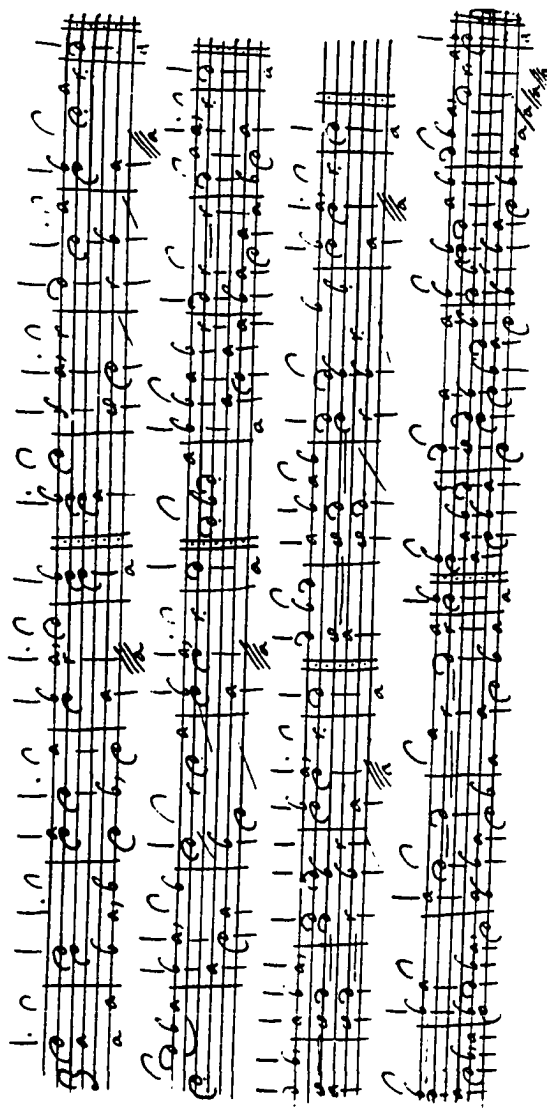
Ornaments

As the specific compositional aspects defined above form a whole, ornaments seem to be secondarily layered into the texture. Surprisingly few variants appear for the actual melodic

Example 5-40: de Visée: Eight Chaconne Couplets.

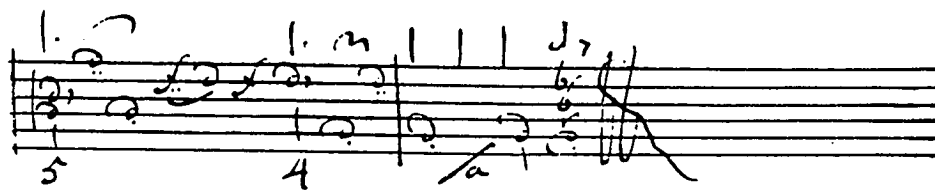


Example 5-40a: de Visée: Eight Chaconne Couplets,
theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 386.



pitches between guitar, lute, staff and theorbo versions. Between these versions, ornaments may vary considerably. In a case where a *separare* in a tablature creates a rhythmic delay in the top voice, another version may have a dotted eighth and sixteenth note figure, while another version shows a trill or other surface ornament. While ornaments as a whole seem to be a compositional afterthought, they emphasize the characteristics of a given instrumental version. Most similarities occur between the lute and theorbo versions, although differences in left hand positions affects the placement and quality of ornaments between these two versions. Ornaments often serve a structural role in drawing attention to a melodic point or a rhythmic accent, most often but not always appearing in the top voice. In the theorbo tablature sources, four basic types of ornaments are employed.⁴⁰ The trill or *tremblement*, is notated by de Visée as a small comma (,) immediately following the note affected.⁴¹ Its *cadence*, or resolution at internal and closing cadences is always notated in the tablature, but the actual number of repetitions or manner of execution for the *tremblement* has not been precisely indicated nor loosely suggested by the composer. The ornament table that appears in 1682 and reproduced in 1686 give no special directions for the *tremblement*. It does, however, appear with the greatest regularity in descending shapes or repeated notes, demanding the reiteration of the preceding pitch if approached from a second above. Any specific application of the *tremblement* must be drawn from the context of a given passage, as the duration of the harmony is the single most important factor in determining the number of repetitions. The *tremblement* is by far the ornament most used by de Visée. An example of the typical form of *tremblement* and *cadence* is found in numerous instances of cadential closings. This next example shows its notation on tablature,

Example 5-41, de Visée: Cadential formula in Courante m. 15-16,
Saiz.I, p. 272.

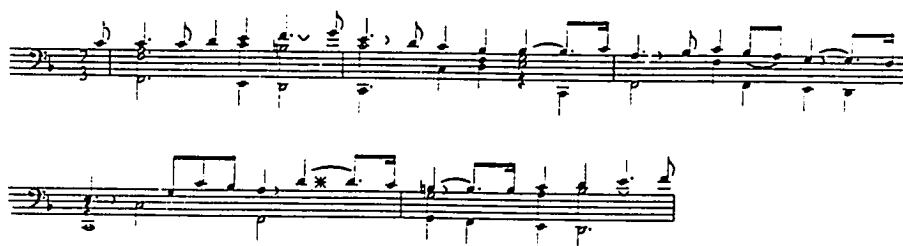


⁴⁰ A history or comparison of ornaments in guitar or lute instrument tablatures may be interesting, but peripheral to this discussion. In an effort to inspect their character or function, I intend to only describe ornaments that appear in the sources directly related to the present topic.

⁴¹ This and other ornaments are reproduced and transcribed in Appendix 1.

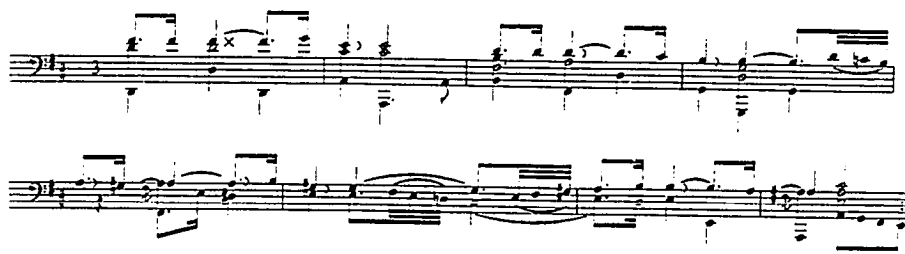
configurations demand terser treatment of the ornament. In the next example, one may imagine a tighter, more nervous application of the *tremblement*.

Example 5-43, de Visée: Courante m. 1-6, Saiz.I, p. 272.



In such cases where melodic-rhythmic articulation is of prime importance, the ornament may perhaps be given one or two rapid oscillations. In the instance that it is inserted in a piece of more dignified or stately character, it may require a slower and more melodic treatment. Slow harmonic rhythm allows for multiple oscillation; this is however, an issue that cannot be resolved by analytical conjecture and is entirely in the realm of individual interpretation. In this example, a more cadential-type treatment would perhaps be more appropriate to the character of the passage:

Example 5-44, de Visée: Sarabande m. 1-6, Rés. 1106, f.89r.

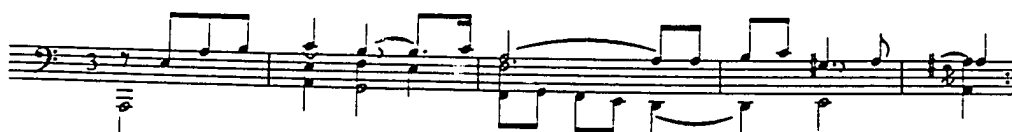


The second ornament most often encountered is the *appoggiatura* or *port de voix*. It is marked by a small crescent underneath its note (◡), and is generally found in ascending melodic shapes. Its insertion immediately following a lower pitch requires reiteration of that lower note at

the onset of the ornament. Again, no exact information is given by the composer in its execution, but since it does not rely on the natural gravitational weight of a left hand descending slur, it is prone to a milder effect. Its use in pieces of a rapid harmonic rhythm (such as courantes) would naturally require perhaps only one or at most two oscillations. It is never employed as a cadential figure as multiple repetitions would be most awkward and produce little resonance. Excepting where it is used on downbeats to affirm the harmony through ascending melodic motion, it may appear on weak or unstressed beats, further suggesting a more melodic than aggressively decorative application.

A variant of the *tremblement* and *port de voix* may be seen as a written out ornament, usually an inferior appoggiatura. This takes two guises: the first as an unmeasured phenomenon where two notes fall under the same rhythmic sign in the tablature, the second as a slurred pair of notes of a specific rhythm. The rhythmicized version is of course performed as notated, but the slurred pair is subject to interpretation. In ascending situations it was probably treated with a certain degree of *inégaie*, depending on melodic context. The resolution of a written out inferior appoggiatura is in many cases doubled on an adjacent string. This creates a passing dissonance of a minor second, immediately resolved to a unison. This particular cadential or ornamental resonance recalls a slurred single-string cadential resolution in the French lute repertoire. This example shows the cadential inferior appoggiatura in the final note of this example:

Example 5-45, de Visée: Chaconne, m. 1-4, Saiz.I, p. 258.



A further ornament used by de Visée is the mordent, usually referred to as the *pincé*. It is notated as a small "x" sign (x), immediately following a note. The *pincé* finds a much sparser use, usually preceded by an anacrusis of the same pitch. It also appears at melodic leaps, emphasizing the higher note. Its main-note character suggests somewhat rapid treatment, and it may be performed with one or two oscillations, depending on left hand configuration and melodic

context. The *pincé*, as with the *tremblement* and *port de voix*, is capable of emphasizing either a stressed or unstressed beat or note. The degree of repetition within an ornament and its melodic function are again entirely dependent on the character of the dance or genre.

The final ornament notated by a stenographic symbol is the vibrato, or *miolement*.⁴³ Vibrato is always placed on notes in the upper position, usually above the fifth fret. In pieces of a grave or sober nature, the *miolement* may be executed with a slow wavering motion to impart an appropriately pathetic manner to the note. This also allows for a subtle semi-tone bend in the pitch, a technique especially effective in those pieces of an extremely lugubrious nature. If given a rapid pressured treatment, it tends to resemble the viol technique known as *battement* or *flattement*, a two-finger vibrato that produces a quick, semi-tone trill. The *flattement* (as used in French viol music) is a highly expressive ornament that demands judicious use.

De Visée did not supply precise information on the execution of ornaments, instead relying on a common knowledge tradition that encompassed keyboard, bowed, and vocal ornaments as governed by what was considered proper taste. Lacking these details, the theorbo tablatures provide us with the most concise informations on the execution of these ornaments as applied to that instrument. Even in those places where a degree of uncertainty is present, one may draw a convincing conclusion based on the context of the passage. This requires a subtle and flexible approach to the ornaments, where they may assume different meanings in differing situations. The preponderance of dotted rhythms and the degree that they appear as alternate interpretations from an otherwise differently notated source leads one to believe that a gentle use of *inéale* was the most natural rhythmic alteration.⁴⁴ This assumption must be extended to the realm of ornaments, where the strong-weak beat hierarchy must dominate the degree of attention that ornaments may draw. As the level of rhythmic emphasis governs the quality of ornamental stress, so the character of line must control internal repetitions or durations of each ornament. In places other than final cadences, various treatments of the *tremblement*, *port de voix*, *pincé*, and *miolement* demand special consideration in their appropriately musical context.

⁴³ This term is used by de Visée in both 1682 and 1686. Vaudry has added this indication to the more recent lute part of Saiz.I, and to the theorbo section. This is the opinion, based on close inspection of the source, of Claude Chauvel. See the introduction to the facsimile reprint of Saiz.I.II, *Manuscript Vaudry de Saizenay* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1980). Introduction by Claude Chauvel.

⁴⁴ The term "first-mode alteration" has been used to describe a long-short rhythmic situation. Similarly, "second-mode alteration" applies to the so-called Lombardian practice of short-long alteration. For an impressively detailed study of these and other rhythmic practices, see N. W. Powell, "Rhythmic Freedom in the Performance of French Music from 1650 to 1735." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Stanford University, 1958).

Genres and groupings

Because of the physical layout in most of the theorbo manuscripts, genre sequences do not conform to the standard dance groupings of the period. Even in Saiz. I, Vaudry must resort to a different graphical layout than the order he prescribes in the *Table des pieces de Theorbo contenües en ce livre*. Nevertheless, de Visée favors a core group of dances in his orderings and either inserts certain dances within this core or appends other pieces after the sequence. All of the eleven 'suites' in Saiz.I are initiated by a prelude. The usual sequence follows a prelude, allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue ordering. Typical *galanteries* such as gavottes and minuets are usually inserted after the gigue, although this rule is not always observed. For instance, the A major group of pieces in Saiz.I follows this sequence,

Prelude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Gigue
Gavotte

whereas the F major cluster contains only these following pieces:

Prelude
Allemande *La Mutine*
Contrepartie de cette Allemande
Courante
Gavotte

The ordering in both Rés. 1106 and Vm⁷ 6265 adhere to this rule, although transcriptions and pieces of other composers often break the sequence. As with Saiz.I, graphical layout often affects placement. On folios, a two page work such as an allemande or courante presents no ordering problems. With a single page work such as a prelude or gavotte, they may oftentimes be

dispersed throughout a cluster. The ordering in Rés. 1820 follows the core grouping loosely although this source contains only two true clusters. Vmd 16 largely follows the established groupings. It gives the superficial appearance of having been copied from 1716, but the inclusion of a lute cluster in D minor and several *unica* lead to the conclusion that its copyist had access to other (probably tablature) sources. Its groupings mainly but not always conform to clusters found in 1716. In 1716, entire key groups may contain up to four examples of a given genre, all arranged in the core sequence. Additions to this grouping seem to favor first the gavotte, then minuet. Special forms (for de Visée) include chaconnes, passacailles, bourrees, and various rondeau forms such as muzettes and rondeau treatments of standard genres; only two preludes have been adapted in 1716.

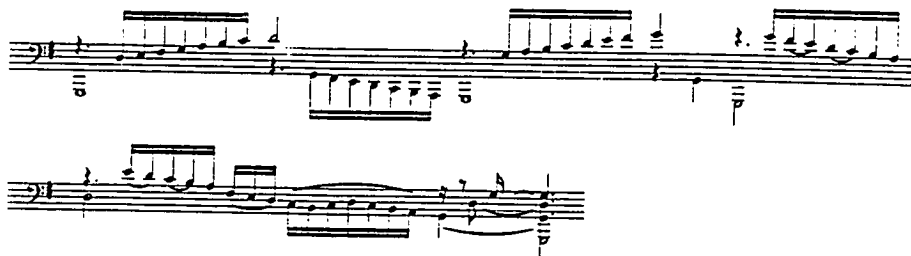
The use of signature phrases may allow for entire groups of pieces to be based on a single motive or for a given motto to permeate an entire cluster. While other composers of more piercing compositional insight may utilize this technique, de Visée seems to reserve the use of mottos for particular dances or genres rather than creating a suite complex built on smaller motives. The attitude of transposition and borrowing from one key to another is deeply engrained in de Visée's thinking, and this attitude may have been responsible for a motivic similarity between genres originally intended for a given cluster. If de Visée had constructed suites on motives, it would have reduced the possibility or desire for transposition or regrouping in other sources.

Individual movements

Preludes

The prelude functions as an introductory, rhetorical statement, ushering in the work with an often dramatic gesture. Among de Visée's theorbo preludes, two types of writing are evident. The first and most encountered form is a virtuosic, impetuous type of unmeasured prelude. In this style of writing, de Visée will employ long scalar passages, often mixed with "brisé" elements. A low open diapason always occurs at the onset, followed by its scalar flourishes. This next example illustrates this style: notice that scales often traverse the entire range of the instrument.

Example 5-46, de Visée: Prelude, Saiz.I, p. 291.



Following the scalar passages in this incipit, rhythmic stability is achieved through sequential arpeggiations and repeated motives, in contrast to the initial gestures. The standard closing cadential formula outlines a general bi-partite scheme of fast-slow for the entire work. In the next example, a similar structural scheme is adopted, but somewhat altered.

This prelude opens with a somewhat more conservative use of scalar movement. Chords and "brisé" textures are again a stabilizing counterpart to the slurred scales, but become imbedded within additional scalar passages. An extended modulatory passage is foreshadowed by two dotted eighth and sixteenth figures of a secondary dominant function, marked with brackets in the example. Following the repose of the chordal passage, dramatic scales return to drop through the entire range. This structure may be loosely defined as comprising three sections: the introductory scales, a section of mixed scales and sequence, an extended chordal passage, and finally a return of scalar movement. This ordering of events contrasts with the G major prelude cited above. Although they are both tightly-knit structures, they and other preludes nevertheless give an impression of spontaneity and improvisation. The balance between rapid, improvisatory scales and a more measured, chordal style provide contrasting material with which the composer may shape these introductory statements.

A second type of prelude writing shows much greater sobriety. It displays a more continuous rhythmic flow, somewhat resembling the allemande. Germane aspects of this writing are seen in the chordal and sequential passages in the preludes shown above, but structurally, this type of prelude writing is more based on constant rhythmic regularity. While scales and "brisé" textures may appear, they are integrated into a steadier pulse; implied by regular bass line movement. These preludes are often introduced by a three-note anacrusis figure as in examples 5-48 and 5-49.

Example 5-47: de Visée: Prelude.

The image displays a musical score for a prelude by de Visée, consisting of eight staves of music. The notation is written in a single system, with each staff containing a series of notes and rests. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is characterized by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups. There are several measures with rests, and the piece concludes with a final chord. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, note heads, stems, beams, and rests.

Example 5-47a: de Visée: Prelude,
theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 256.



Example 5-48, de Visée: Prelude, Saiz.I, p. 381.



Example 5-49, de Visée: Prelude, Saiz.I, p. 324.



De Visée's preludes are cast in the freely composed unmeasured form. Although rhythmic indications may appear in the tablature, the lack of bar lines and the impetuous nature of his scalar writing suggest a rather free treatment. Rhythmic indications usually appear where the texture congeals into three part writing or allemande-like regularity. The nature of this type of prelude may have posed the same interpretative problems as do similar examples of the genre by Louis Couperin, d'Anglebert, and other French harpsichordists. François Couperin addressed this problem in part by rhythmicizing small preludes into bar lines, a practice reflected in de Visée two guitar preludes found in two different printed sources. No theorbo preludes concord with staff versions; this is evident given the improvisatory nature of the form. One prelude in B minor from 1686 (p. 33) appears in a staff version at the end of that print (p. 60), in A minor. A third staff version in A minor is found in 1716, p. 31. This example reproduces the staff version from 1686.

Example 5-50, de Visée: Guitar prelude in staff notation,
1686, p. 60.

Prelude 60

The following example shows the later version from 1716.

Example 5-51, de Visée: Prelude in staff notation, 1716, p. 31.

Prelude

The version from 1686 is entirely dotted and has no continuo figures, although the melody notes are reproduced verbatim in 1716. The later version is set in flowing eighth notes and is liberally sprinkled with ornaments. While the staff versions in 1716 are supposedly from lute and theorbo originals, no version of this work is extant for either instrument. The discrepancy between rhythms in both treble and bass seems puzzling, since most other rhythmic variants (in other theorbo pieces) occur on only isolated beats. The C minor prelude from 1682 p. 37, also appears in 1716, p. 52, in the same key. The discrepancies between even and dotted rhythms is also seen here, but to lesser degree. No staff version of this work is found at the end of 1682. The prelude in 1686 appears to be a severe and uncontested example of unsubtle *inegalé*; a comparison of these two versions as applied to the theorbo preludes leads one to believe that rhythmic alteration (at least in accelerating scalar passages) was accepted. The statement in 1716 regarding corrupt versions is all the more baffling, but de Visée may have been referring to actual variants in melody or bass rather than rhythmic discrepancies.

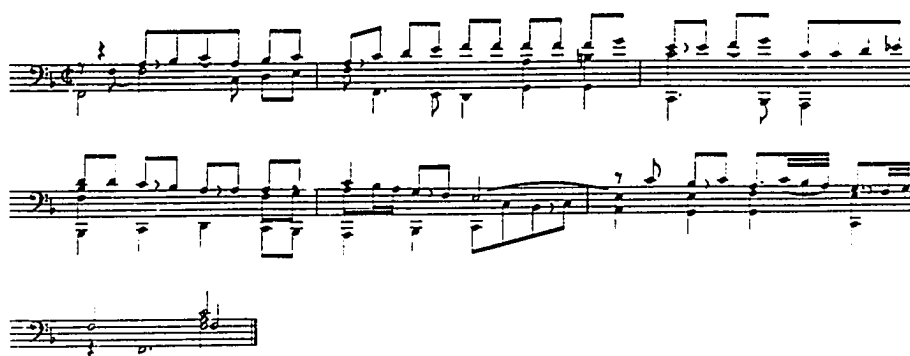
As is suggested by this comparison, the rhythmic execution of unmeasured preludes is problematic. One particular prelude in Saiz.I may have been used by de Visée as an illustration of this measured type of prelude. The short prelude in F major, p. 273, bears an inscription by Vaudry which reads *Il fait pointer les croches*, ("He has marked the [eighth] notes"). This rhythmicization of de Visée may have been a corrective or instructive act, since the version in Rés. 1106, f.66r must be considered corrupt. It contains an alien ancrusis figure, and several notes are either added or not concordant in Saiz.I. Moreover, rhythms in Rés. 1106 are almost consistently dotted; cadential figures also differ. The quality of writing in the F major prelude shows an allemande-like steadiness, measured into barlines, although no time signature appears. The following examples show a full transcription and tablature of this work.

As the examples seen above illustrate, de Visée's preludes tend to fall into two distinct types of categories: a free, improvisatory style and a more regular pulsed, chordal style. The chordal style encompasses longer phrases set over a bass line or accompanied by harmonies. Both approaches may be mixed within a single work, or one style may be favored over another. Only in rare instances is a single prelude composed entirely in one style.

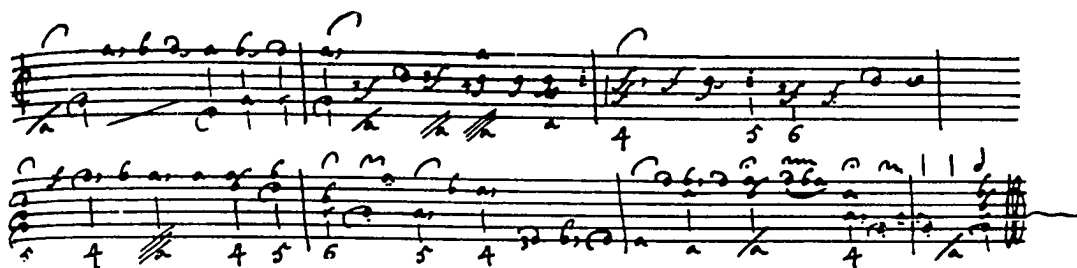
Allemandes

Allemandes seem to have been an attractive genre for de Visée. As he favored minor keys, the allemande, with its characteristic ponderousness, gave him an ideal genre with which to shape his melodic contours. Structurally, each half usually falls into twelve, sixteen, or eighteen

Example 5-52: de Visée: Prelude.



Example 5-52a: de Visée: Prelude.
theorbo tablature, Saiz.I, p. 273.



measure units, not counting the additional arpeggiated measure at cadences. Even if de Visée elects to use shortened or lengthened phrasal periods, the duple measure symmetry is almost always achieved in both halves. Of the minor key allemandes, the character is serious, underscoring the qualification *grave* that appears in printed sources and in some tablatures. Only one minor key allemande in 1716 (p. 3) bears the marking *gay*. Some surface features of allemandes include an eighth note or multiple note anacrusis, and a dotted eighth and sixteenth note pulse. They are all cast in cut-time meter.⁴⁵ Some bear a fanciful title from the composer, including *La Conversation* (Saiz.I, p. 376), *La Mutine* (Saiz.I, p. 271), and *La Royale* (Saiz.I, p. 253). The C minor cluster in Saiz.I contains a particularly poignant allemande which is inscribed as *La Plainte, ou Tombeau de Mesdemoiselles de Visée, Filles de l'Auteur*. To this, Vaudry has added *de M^r. leur Pere*.⁴⁶ The use of *miolement*, chromatic lines, and a high treble range make this allemande a superb example of de Visée in his most intensely dolorous mood. The following example shows the skillful use of motivic interplay in this piece.

⁴⁵ Most eighteenth century theorists held the opinion that cut-time indicated a more rapid tempo than the simple "C". All of de Visée's allemandes bear the cut-time meter, some qualified by these *grave* or *gay* markings. Judging by technical considerations and musical character, the *gay* indication was intended to be taken only slightly faster with more emphasis on articulation. The relationship between *grave* and no tempo qualification in allemandes is less distinct, but nevertheless suggestive of a difference in tempo. For some French writers including Corrette, cut-time merely meant a two-beat measure as opposed to a four-beat duration. See G. Houle, *Meter in Music, 1600-1800* (Bloomington and Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 57.

⁴⁶ The history of this homage is difficult to ascertain. If de Visée fathered two daughters, did they die at an early age? This allemande does not appear in any guitar source, although it is duplicated in staff notation in Vmd 16, pp. 109-110, marked *lancement*. A version is also found in Rés. 1106, f.54v marked *lentement*. Using the relative date of ca.1713 for Rés. 1106, this event may have occurred well after 1686 and before ca.1713, he was then about forty-five years old. Some interesting observations concerning this and other *tombeaux* appear in article by Phillipe Vendrix. Vendrix gives a two-measure incipit for de Visée's *Le Plainte*, comparing its harmonic audacity to Gallot. Unfortunately, Vendrix did not use the lowered second course theorbo tuning in his transcription. This results in disjunct breaks in the linear flow, perhaps resembling some French lutenists, but highly uncharacteristic of de Visée. See Phillipe Vendrix, "Le Tombeau en Musique en France à l'Époque Baroque," *Recherches sur la Musique Française Classique*, XXV (1987), pp. 105-138. De Visée does not use titles regularly as do many of the French lutenists. In the *Advis* to 1682 he notes that "...The other pieces [those not in scordatura tuning] have not been distinguished by any specific name as some authors have done. They are only marked as *suite*..."

Example 5-53, de Visée: Allemande *La Plaine* m. 1-16,
Saiz.I, p. 401.



The allemandes marked *gay* are much lighter in nature, sometimes employing running eighth note lines or disjunct phrasal mottoes. The F# minor lute allemande in Saiz.I, p. 203 concurs with a staff version in Vmd 16, p. 53, in G minor. This allemande achieves phrasal interest by the avoidance of regularly occurring two-measure periods.

Example 5-54, de Visée: Allemande gay, m. 1-16, Vmd 16, p. 53.

allemande
gay

Courantes

Courantes represent the most rhythmically vigorous dance in the suite. In tablatures they are almost always marked by a $3/2$ meter,⁴⁷ and display constant hemiola shifting between patterns of 3-3, 2-2-2, or a mixture of both. Courantes are all introduced by a single eighth note anacrusis, and the lack of tempo qualifications suggest a relatively stable tempo for this genre. Melodically, they avoid literal repetition, instead relying on fragmentary mottos offset by hemiola. The most common use of these mottos is the exchange between a dotted quarter/eighth note/quarter unit and a quarter/dotted quarter/eighth note. To this, groups of two or three eighth notes may be inserted. The overall organization of courantes is more derived from a deeper harmonic plan than from melodic contour; splintered phrases are pronounced by low bass note movement. The use of shifting chordal thickness is most evident in these dances and is given a dominant role over melody in delineating rapidly passing melodic periods. One particular courante appears in eight different versions,⁴⁸ but only the guitar versions identifies it as *La Villeroi*. This following example of this work illustrates the points mentioned above.

Example 5-55, de Visée: Courante, m. 1-8, 1716, p. 73.



⁴⁷ The metrical fraction is sometimes reversed to $2/3$; this phenomenon also occurs in some of Forqueray's viol works. Since all the courantes in 1716 are marked by $2/3$, we must assume that the fraction was for some writers interchangeable. Corrette claimed that the signature of $3/2$ was seldom used by the French, and other writers find that it represents a slower tempo than the simple "3". See Houle, op. cit., p. 58. Since the interchange between fractions appears in a printed source, we must reject Bonny McDowell's statement that "the only possible explanation for this strange notation might be Forqueray's lack of formal training in composition." See her "Marais and Forqueray: A Historical and Analytical Study of their Music for Solo Basse de Viole." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Columbia University, 1974), p. 132.

⁴⁸ Saiz.I, pp. 96, 285, Vm 6265 p. 66, Rés. 1106 f.16r, Vmd 16 pp. 11-12, 1716 p. 73, Rés. 1820 p. 55, and F 844 p. 214.

Sarabandes

Sarabandes are typified by a majestic chordal nature of slow harmonic rhythm, always notated by a simple 3.⁴⁹ Melodically, they fall into two and four measure phrases, making extended use of repeated pitches and dotted rhythms. Harmonically, they are built on a single chord for each measure and emphasize the second beat by denser texture, often doubling pitches on different strings. The French lute sarabande was usually set in a low tessitura, as are subsequent harpsichord examples, particularly Chambonnières. While de Visée may often explore the upper range of the theorbo in his sarabandes, the closely scored chords, wide treble-bass spacings, and sensitive use of both sweeping anacrusis figures and dissonance (as in the lute and harpsichord repertoire) are all evident in his manipulation of this genre. This example shows an effective use of unrhythmicized inferior appoggiaturas and shifting chordal density.

Example 5-56, de Visée: Sarabande m. 1-8, Saiz.I, p. 378.



Gigues

Gigues fall under two rhythmic categories: those in simple triple meter, notated as "3", and those in compound triple meter, either 6/4 or 6/8. The simple meter type is of a smoother nature, mostly adhering to a two or four measure phrasal period. They make less use of dotted rhythms and follow conjunct mainly movement. In the following example, these points may be seen, although in the twelfth measure a hemiola is suddenly enacted by an unmarked 6/4

⁴⁹ Corrette lumped folias, chaconnes, passacaglias, courantes, minuets, and sarabandes under this meter. This array of genres suggests a wide variance for the tempo indication. See G. Houle, op. cit., p. 58.

measure;⁵⁰

Example 5-57, de Visée: Gigue, m. 1-13, Saiz.I, p. 304.



and a corresponding tablature version.

Example 5-58, de Visée: Gigue, m. 1-13, 1716, p. 41.

⁵⁰ This is an unusual feature, as hemiolas are usually introduced without changes in bar length. The version in Saiz.I, p. 304 has normal barring, but the crossed out tablature letters, errors, and incorrect rhythms (with the normal barring) in this passage suggest that Vaudry did not bother to recopy his barring. The version in Rés. 1106 f.97v follows the same barring as 1716 p. 41.

Notice that in the theorbo tablature, intervals of a third are often filled by by a *coule* and how the bass line is freely transposed in the tablature, differing from this staff version.

The compound meter type is frequently dotted and shows a more jerky, disjunct quality. They are often marked *grave*, but sometimes *gaye*, as the *gigue angloise* in Saiz.I, p. 379. They may show a more complex phrasal construction, bordering on melodic extensions as seen in courantes. One particularly fine example of this genre that incorporates both aspects of writing is the D minor gigue in Rés. 1106 f.74v and Vm⁷ 6265, p. 36. It has a sister lute version in F# minor in Saiz.I, p. 205, and two staff versions in both Vmd 16 pp. 65-66 and 1716 p. 15. This example shows the beginning of this gigue:

Example 5-59, de Visée: Gigue *gaye*, m. 1-4, 1716. p. 15.

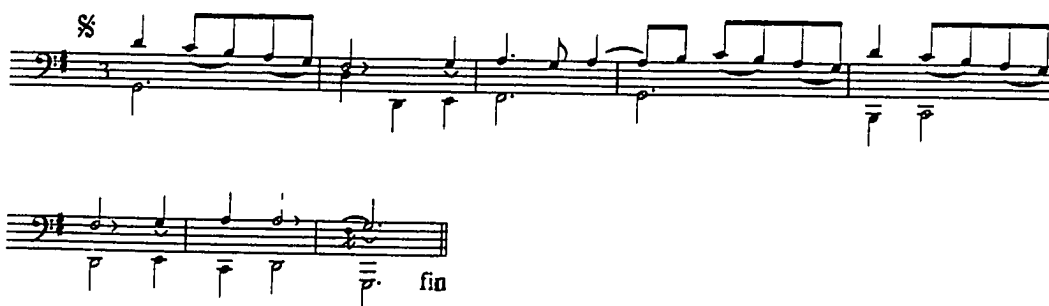


Galanteries and other forms

Minuets and gavottes conform closely with standard examples of their genre, falling into distinct two and four measure melodic patterns. As a rule, they are less complex harmonically and melodically than the core group of preludes or dances. De Visée's minuets are of a light character, showing a mostly two part writing. In the following example, a four measure phrase is framed by eighth note activity. The descending motion of measures one and four are balanced by a two-measure ascending period in measures two and three. A repeat of the first three measures of this formula, with the third measure slightly altered, cadences on the tonic. Different and asymmetrical phrases follow in this incipit. Due to the rondeau treatment of this dance, two more strains follow, both cadencing on the dominant. The other theorbo minuet in Saiz.I is biparte, not as with the triparte *Menüet en rondeau* as seen in this example.⁵¹

⁵¹ This particular work appears in both 1686 p. 44 and F 844 p. 58. Besides Saiz.I, it has three other versions: a theorbo tablature concordance in Rés. 1106 f.184 and staff versions in Vmd 16 p. 14 and 1716 p. 80. No lute version survives. Its probable chronology is first guitar, secondly

Example 5-60, de Visée: Minuet en rondeau m. 1-8, Saiz.I, p. 291.



Gavottes are more common, appearing in every key in Saiz.I excepting C major (which is really only two pieces), D major, and C minor. In some larger clusters such as G minor, as many as three may appear. They all conform to standard examples of the genre, with a two beat anacrusis figure and two measure measure phrasing. This excerpt is a fine example of this form.

Example 5-61, de Visée: Gavotte m. 1-6, Saiz.I, p. 323.



The descending quarter note, dotted figure, and following quarter note create a four-pitch group that is immediately repeated in the second measure, second beat. The dotted rhythm is given a rhythmic elongation, transforming the dotted figure into a dotted quarter and eighth note. The ensuing bass line on the downbeat of measure three then prepares a three-note anacrusis shape that introduces the second part of the entire phrasal period, using both quicker and longer dotted values. This subtle use of rhythm and symmetry characterizes even the most simple of formulaic dance forms, creating charming and attractive results, as exemplified in the above example.

theorbo, and finally staff notation.

Two measure phrases apply equally to the single bourree, called *La Villageoise*. This work was presumably an original guitar piece, as it appeared (in G major) in 1682 p.58, in an scordatura tuning. No theorbo version survives, although a D major lute version is found in Saiz.I, p. 132. Two staff versions were made of this work: Vmd 16, p. 32 and 1716 p. 96, both in D major.

Chaconnes and passacailles represent the larger, repetitive genres. The two theorbo examples of each form are constructed on a four measure period, followed by variations or couplets. They are characteristically dark, often accumulating great dramatic power. The use of a recurring initial couplet contributes to the tone of dramatic inevitability. The ensuing couplets provide textural contrast by changes in register, density, and contrapuntal writing. The passacaille in D minor is an impressive dramatic statement, resembling at times in its low tessitura, changes of register and cumulative propulsion certain examples of this form by Louis Couperin. This example illustrates these observations.

Example 5-62, de Visée: Passacaille, final three couplets,
Saiz.I, p. 229.

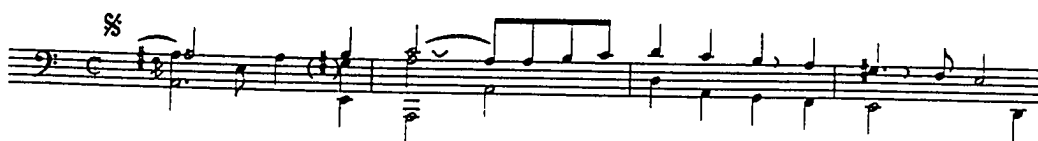


The Chaconne in G major appears in 1716 p. 29, and Vmd 16, p. 125, for which there is a corresponding lute version in Saiz.I, p. 100 in the same key; no theorbo version is extant. The other G major chaconne, Saiz.I, p. 288 has already been determined to be of doubtful attribution.

De Visée composed very few character pieces. Among these, there is a *Mascarade, rondeau* in Saiz.I, p. 257 in A minor. This work, in three sections, shows rhythms reminiscent of gavotte, but without the quarter note anacrusis. It is easily divided into four measure phrases, but the repeat of this period is partly reharmonized by inversion. The first section of this piece cadences on the tonic, as do all rondeau works. This next example shows an incipit for this work.

Example 5-63, de Visée: La Mascarade, rondeau, m. 1-8,

Saiz.I, p. 257.



Two more rondeaus, called *La Muzette* and *La Montfermeil* are found in Saiz.I, pp. 257 and 308 respectively. As seen, rondeau treatment of core dances results in a cyclical form of originally biparte structures.

Aside from occasional rondeau treatment, a final rethinking of standard genres is seen in the various *contrepartie*, second theorbo parts composed by de Visée. These parts may have been prepared especially for Vaudry, as they do not appear in other theorbo sources. They follow the established melodic and harmonic outlines of their originals, but their figurations lie below the top line of the original dance. These parts are imaginatively written and sound quite well as duets. The works that have composed *contreparties* in Saiz.I are the F major allemande titled *La Mutine* p. 271 (duet part p. 273), the G minor allemande p. 290 (duet part p. 293), the G minor gavotte en rondeau p. 287 (duet part p. 294), and the E minor allemande p. 303 (duet part p. 309). This example shows in score the original *La Mutine* with its *contrepartie*.

Example 5-64, de Visée: Allemande and contrepartie m. 1-4,
Saiz.I, pp. 271, 273.



The final work that does not fall into the genres discussed above is a single *double*, a work written as a figurative extension of a preexisting dance. The *Double de la Gigue* on page 310 of Saiz.I is an elaborate commentary on the gigue p. 304 of that source, utilizing steady streams of running eighth notes and two measure sequences. Doubles were a favorite device of composers of *air de cour* and of the French lute repertoire.

De Visée seems to have more concerned with grouping genres according to established sequence rather than attributing titles or extra-musical associations to his pieces. As noted, only a few pieces bear dedications, usually as a lament, secondarily as an indication of musical character. He did not indulge in descriptive or programmatic writing as did many French lutenists. Additionally, no pieces (that I have been able to locate) bear dedications to de Visée. This is not in keeping with traditions of dedicatory pieces as practiced by Forqueray, Marais, Domel, Hotetere, and several other composers of the period. De Visée's straightforward, unfrivolous attitude is well represented in his oeuvre for theorbo, attesting to a musician mainly concerned with his craft.

Summary

This study has attempted to isolate some aspects of musical and stylistic practices that shaped the artistic milieu surrounding the theorbo works of Robert de Visée. It has also endeavored to provide a biographical background for his life, emphasizing his role at the court of the Sun King and his activities with some of the more salient musical personalities employed at the court. The overall emphasis placed on vocal and viol music as probable influences is derived from both an examination of the music itself and a consideration of which aspects of the existing biographical data may have had the greatest musical impact. With regards to earlier French *air de cour*, some of the typical textures of French lute music are highly derivative of both vocal lines and possible continuo practices. Within this area, I have attempted to show in which ways de Visée's music resembles and differs from the lute literature. Taking the few period references to de Visée as a viol player, I have attempted to trace a lineage between the developing solo style of the French viol and its later exponents with whom de Visée was known to have performed. In contrast to the voice and viol, earlier and contemporary practices in music for plucked string instruments helped to form de Visée's progressive yet tasteful compositional traits.

In his capacity to mold forms that typify French instrumental music of this period, de Visée displays a keen melodic talent that balances a certain degree of Italian habits with French rhythms. As a consequence of melody, his harmonic language is both natural and sophisticated, showing a fascination for inversion and chromatic inflection that lends a deep maturity to his works. The prevailing mood of gravity and pathos is well suited to the instrument, and the idiomatically conceived writing allows for resonant and natural expression of his thoughts.

Like Lully, Marais, and François Couperin, de Visée synthesized prevailing styles into a distinctly personal yet highly national language. Within this language, his compositional skills and performing experience lent much profundity to his music; a depth that is not matched nor consistently maintained by his national peers on any plucked string instrument. As a culmination of their era, de Visée's theorbo works meld common practice theorbo, lute, and guitar repertoires into the largest and most significant corpus of theorbo works. As a foreshadowing of the *style galant*, they blend an elegance of expression, balance of form, and sensuousness, placing their composer among the finest proponents of guitar and lute repertoires including Dowland, da Milano, Gaultier, Corbetta, and Weiss. As de Visée's theorbo works have not been given due recognition, they deserve a highly respected place among all existing repertoires of late seventeenth and early eighteenth century French instrumental music.

APPENDIX 1

Translations from

Livre de Guitarre (1682),
Livre de Pièces pour la Guitarre (1686),
Pieces de Theorbe et de Luth... (1716).

of Robert de Visée

Introduction

The following appendix is a full translation of the text and instructions from the three printed sources (excluding Ballard 1732) of de Visée. His remarks are intriguing since they shed some biographical light on his role at the court; they are also useful in determining his musical preferences and practices. To my knowledge, these texts have not yet been fully translated. While most of the remarks pertain directly to the guitar works, they may be extended to the theorbo pieces as well. The general remarks on the inaccuracy of circulated versions of his pieces naturally apply to the theorbo works, especially since they were mainly communicated by manuscript tablatures.

The translations themselves attempt to capture the tone of seventeenth and eighteenth century French, often at the risk of modern grammatical error. It is exceedingly difficult to transfer the genteel, often ostentatious manner of these period texts. One particularly exasperating task is punctuation: sentences in the original often run on at great length, linking clauses by a mere comma. In other cases where a statement seems to cadence at the end of a thought, more and contrasting information is given without punctuation. This complicates syntax in a way that makes the issue at hand difficult to decipher in its musical context. Where this was the case, I have made an effort to discern the matter and to insert what I felt was appropriate punctuation. For clarity in a confusing passage, the reader is invited to refer to the reproductions of the original text immediately following the translations. The ornaments are reproduced in tablature, as an explanation for their application may be found in Chapter five. Only the ornament table from 1682 is given, as it is duplicated almost verbatim in 1686.

*LIVRE DE GUITARRE**DEDIÉ AU ROY*

Composé par Robert de Visée

Gravé par Hicrosme Bonneuil

Se vend a Paris Chez l'Auteur dans le Luxembourg

et

Chez le dit Bonneuil rue au lard devant la halle aux Cuiers vers
les SS. Innocents avec Privilege du Roy

Sire,

All things approved by *His Majesty* are guaranteed of the approbation of all other men, his taste decides in all such sovereignty of the merits of many sorts of works, that I believe I would do injustice to the general public, should I postpone any longer the publication of a little book of guitar pieces, which I have composed, the pieces having been fortunate enough not to offend you. They are the fruits of several years of work and I dare almost not doubt their success, when I think that they had the glory to divert *His Majesty* on several occasions during his rare precious times of leisure, as he rests from his august duties ruling the destiny of all of Europe. I dare even hope, *Sire*, that he will be kind enough to grant this book the honor of his protection, since I have sometimes seen him condescend to the practice of our art, (and play the guitar) with those very hands that give orders to fight battles, that have brought back so many trophies and impose laws to the entire world; I feel all the more confident of being able to obtain such a favor, that *His Majesty* has already gratified me, in choosing me to sometimes amuse *Monseigneur le Dauphin*: I would be happy, if through my diligent labor and long hours of wake, I could at last become less unworthy of such kindness, and of the privilege that was bestowed on me to approach the most magnificent Monarch of the universe and the most celebrated Conqueror; this is the only wish I have left to express, in the extreme ardour with which I long to show the entire world with how much respect, submission and gratitude I am

*Sire**His Majesty's*

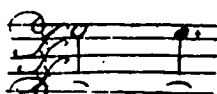
very humble, obedient and

faithful servant and subject

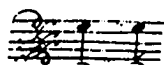
R. de Visée

ADVIS

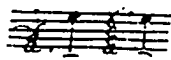
So many people have applied themselves to the Guitar, and have presented their compositions to the general public that I do not know that by Publishing my own, I may contribute anything new to the taste of the curious amateur; Still this was the very incentive of my work, and in order to succeed, I have attempted to make the melody as naturally singing as possible, knowing myself only too well to pretend that I could be distinguished by the strength of my writing I attempted to conform to the taste of those who are especially skilled, and to the extent of my abilities I have lent to my compositions a hint of the style of the Inimitable Monsieur de Lulli: I am convinced, that I remain far behind him, even though my pieces have had the good fortune to be favorably received by his *Majesty* and all of his court. Such acknowledgement enhances my pride, and allows me the hope that my Book will find some patrons. Besides, as my friends found pleasant my melodies, they insisted that I transcribe some of my pieces into Musical notation for the Satisfaction of those who may want to play them on the Harpsichord, the Violin, and other instruments. These pieces will be found at the end of the Book as I set them for the bass and treble. Incidentally, I beg those persons who know the rules of composition well, but are unfamiliar with the Guitar not to be shocked if they notice that I sometimes deviate from the principles, it is on account of the Instrument as it is most preferable to satisfy the Ear above anything else. I have found a new tuning on which I have composed a *suite* of pieces; I hope that their novelty will contribute to their success. The other pieces have not been distinguished by any specific name as some authors have done. They are only marked as *suite* and also one will find no *folies d'Espagne* in this book. So many couplets of it are heard in all the concerts that it would be redundancy to repeat the follies of others. When one shall encounter the following chord



one must *coulé* the fingers of the right hand down across the strings, finishing off softly with the thumb, touching each note after the other according to what the rythm requires. If one encounters a quarter note or an eighth on which one cannot stay long, and if the same sign



is indicated below the *batterie*, then one must play with the thumb only, if it is a strumming upward, and the rythm is a half note or dotted quarter, one must brush up with the first and second finger playing in the same way one did as when strumming downward, one string after the other, if it is a quarter note or eighth, use a swift brush of the first finger. When there are dots on some of the lines, as seen here



one must not touch the strings which they indicate so as to avoid dissonances and also render the melody clear, the thumb must fall naturally onto it and when going back up the first finger should do the same. I have thought appropriate to detail these little rules, in order to render the *batterie* sound more delicate, in this way those who Play my pieces will not experience the Inconvenience I sometimes faced when Playing the music of others. Here is about all I believed necessary to explain, if I have left out anything I invite Skilled players to supply themselves what is missed. I will always receive their Criticisms with much Deference.

I had to transpose the pieces in notation because of the range of the Guitar which goes up to the highest D. 1a. re, one must not forget the octave for the fourth string where it is very necessary.

TABLE OF ORNAMENTS (1682)

Cheute *tirades* *tremblement* *martellement* *mololement*

The image shows five staves of musical notation. The first staff, labeled 'Cheute', shows a single note with a decorative flourish. The second staff, 'tirades', shows a series of notes with slurs. The third staff, 'tremblement', shows a note with a vertical line of dots above it. The fourth staff, 'martellement', shows a note with a vertical line of dots above it. The fifth staff, 'mololement', shows a note with a vertical line of dots above it.

The image shows a single staff of musical notation with a note and a decorative flourish above it.

This dot under the letter shows that
it must be played with the first finger
of the right hand

The two dots mean (with)
the second finger

The sign underneath the letter (is to show
that one) must play them with the thumb

The image shows a single staff of musical notation with a note and a decorative flourish above it.

This line shows the holding
over of the treble part

and this one (indicates) holding
over with the bass

This straight line

means that one
must pluck the

strings together

These other lines drawn

diagonally (will) make you
play them Separer

Extract of the King's Privilege

Through the grace and Privilege of the King given at Versailles on the 16th day of July, 1682 signed by the Elders is permission given to Sieur Robert de Visée to Print or have Printed a Book of Guitar Pieces which he Composed, sell it, extract parts from it, to the public for a period of six consecutive years. It is forbidden to all Printers, Book Sellers, and others to Print the said Book, to sell counterfeits or even to extract any part of it at the risk of a fine of 1000^{lt} and of all expenses for Damages as is expressed in more detail in the Privilege(.) Printing Completed on 25 of July 1682, the Copies were provided.

LIVRE DE PIÈCES POUR LA GUITARRE

DEDIÉ AU ROY

Composé par *R. de Visée*

Gravé par *Bonneuil*

et se vend a Paris

Chez le dit Bonneuil proche la halle aux Cuirs vers SS. Innocens

et chez A. Letteguive rue Dauphine a la Pucelle vis a vis la rue

d'Anjou

Sire

The kindness with which *His Majesty* welcomed the first book of guitar pieces with which I had the honor to present him prompted me to work with great care in composing this new volume; I hope that *His Majesty* will give it his protection since my goal was no other than to please him: I would be too happy if the result of my hours of wake and labor could recreate *His Majesty* in the moments he can spend away from the important matters that keep him incessantly busy for the good of his subjects. Yet, *Sire*, the thorough knowledge of *His Majesty* in all things, have me justifiably concerned, that my work might not respond to his most delicate taste. If I am not fortunate enough to succeed in my endeavor, I will be happy to at least have made it known with how much zeal, and profound respect I am

Sire

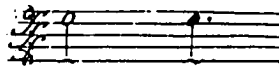
His Majesty's

very humble, obedient, and faithful

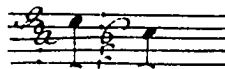
servant and subject R. de

Visée

I believe I did not leave out in my first book any bit of advice that could aid comprehension, I would thus not reiterate those informations if I knew for certain that this book would fall only into the hands of those persons who have read the previous volume. But in doubt, I think best to say that the pieces from the second book are much easier to play than the previous ones. I dare hope that the people who found the first publication too difficult will do me the honor of sampling these new pieces and will be able to find some that will suit their ability. I will repeat in fewer words what I wrote before: whenever you find this chord



you must strike down the strings with the fingers of the right hand and then add the thumb to finish off the batterie, with a soft touch, making it last as long as demanded, so as to maintain the harmony(.) when dots are placed on the line as follows



one must be careful not to touch the strings where the dots are indicated, you will also find towards the end of the book most of these pieces transcribed into notation for the treble and the bass so as to content those who may want to play them on other instruments.

Extract of the King's Privilege

Through the grace and Privilege of the King given in Paris on the date of February 21, 1686 signed by Bertin is permission given to Sieur Robert de Visée to Print or have Printed a book of Guitar pieces of his composition Dedicated to the King, sell it, extract parts from it to the public for a period of 6 consecutive years. It is forbidden to all Printers, Book Sellers, and others to print the said book to sell counterfeits or even to extract any part of it at the risk of a fine of 3000^{lt} and of all expenses for Damages as is expressed in more detail in the Privileges.

Printing completed the 8th of March 1686. copies are provided.

Pieces
DE THEORBE ET DE LUTH
 Mises en Partition, Dessus et de Basse.
 Composées
 Par M^r. de Visée,
 Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy.
 Dediées
 a S*A*R* MONSEIGNEUR LE DUC D'ORLEANS.
 Gravées par Cl Roussel
 se Vendent
 A PARIS
 Chez Bélanger, Marchand Papetier rue Dauphine.
 Messieurs Hurel, Maître faiseur d'Instruments rue S^t.
 Martin vis a vis la Fontaine Maubué.
 Prix en blanc..12 lt....
 Avec Privilege du Roy. 1716.

*To His*Royal*Highness* the Duc d' Orleans*

Monseigneur

May the Arts still dare pretend to the glory of amusing *H.R.H.* as they did during his leisure time. In their displeasure yet without chagrin they saw that he neglected them in order to transport his enlightened mind toward higher matters, and make the Kingdom find resource in his talents, yet they are flattered that after all which happened between he and them, the new radiance which surrounds him (*H.R.H.*) may bring him to recognize them and he will have the kindness to treat them like his faithful courtesans or if they dare say so like some of his favored followers.

Monseigneur,

Of *H.R.H.* With profound respect.....

The most humble,
 very obedient and
 submissive servant
 De Visée

Extract of the Letters of Privilege

By the grace and Privilege of the King given in Paris on the nineteenth of May of the year of our Lord 1716. Signed by the King through his counselor Fouquet(,) permission is granted to Sieur De Visée, *Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy*, to have engraved, Printed, sold and excerpt throughout the Kingdom a Book of instrumental Pieces of his composition for a period of fifteen consecutive years starting from the day on which this is dated. It is forbidden to all engravers, Printers, book sellers, and others to engrave, Print, sell, or excerpt from the said work or to counterfeit them without his express written permission at the risk of a 3000^{lt} fine, the confiscation of the prints, and of the counterfeit copies and all expenses for damages as expressed throughout the above mentioned letters of privilege. Signed by Fouquet.

Avertissement

The success that these pieces enjoyed at the court, for several years, in the private concerts of the late king and among the august entourage of that grand Prince, finally convinced me to have them printed for the general public. The plaudits I have already received for them allows me to hope that a larger audience will welcome this book favorably...

A few of these pieces, to my surprise, have been communicated, without my knowledge, but so distorted and at the same time so full of mistakes that I feel obliged to disclaim them.

Several authors might have wished me to add a third staff onto the music wherein to print the tablature: but there are so few people capable of understanding the tablature system, that I have thought it best not to increase the size of my book in an unnecessary way; besides I am always willing to make a tablature version available to those interested.

The purpose of the present publication is the Harpsichord, Viol, and the Violin for which these pieces were intended and on which they have always played together.

LIURE DE GVITTARRE
 DEDIE AVROY
 COMPOSÉ PAR ROBERT DE VISEE
 GRAVÉ PAR HIEROSME BONNEÜIL

{ Se vend a Pari: Chez l'auteur dans le Luxembourg
 Et
 { Chez le dit Bonneüil rue au lard devant la halle aux Cuir vers les
S.S. Innocents avec Privilège du Roy

Sire

Tout ce qui est approuvé par vostre Majesté, est si sûr de l'approbation du reste des Hommes, et son goût décide si souverainement du mérite de toutes sortes d'ouvrages, que ie croirois faire tort au public, si ie differois davantage à mettre au jour un petit recueil de piéces de Guitare, que j'ay composées, et qui ont eü le bonheur de ne vous pas déplaire. Elles sont l'ouvrage de plusieurs années, et ie n'ose presque douter de leur heureux succès, quand ie songe qu'elles ont eü plusieurs fois la gloire d'être vües par M. dans les heures de ce précieux loisir, ou elle se délasse de ses Augustes.

..

travaux et de ses grandes occupations qui reglent aujourdhuy le desin de toute l'Europe; J'ose
 mesme esperer, Sire, qu'elle voudra bien leur accorder l'honneur de sa protection, puisque ie l'ay
 veüe moi-mesme ne pas dedaigner quelque fois l'Exercice de nostre Art, et toucher la Guitare
 de cette mesme main, qui donne l'ordre pour les batailles, qui a tant cueilly de palmes, et qui m-
 pose des loix a toute la terre; je me flatte d'autant plus d'obtenir cette faueur, que V. M. m'a déjà
 comble de ses graces, par le choix qu'elle a fait de moy pour diuertir quelque fois Monseigneur
 le Dauphin: Que ie serois heureux, si par mes veilles et par mon assidue au travail, je pouuois a la
 fin me rendre en peu moins Indigne de tant de bontés, et de l'honneur que j'ay eu d'approcher du plus
 grand Monarque de l'univers et du plus fumeux des Conquerants; C'est le seul souhait qui me reste
 a faire, dans la passion extreme que j'ay de montrer, si ie puis, a tout le monde, avec combien de
 respect, de soumission et de reconnoissance ie suis
 Sire




De Vostre Majesté

*Le tres humble, tres Obéissant et tres fidel
 Seruiteur et Sijet R. de France*

ADVIS

Tant de gens se sont appliqués à la Guitare, et en ont donné des pièces au public que je ne sçai si je pourai en faisant Imprimer les miennes, offrir quelque nouveauté au goût des curieux : Cependant je n'ai travaillé que pour cela, et pour i réussir, je me suis attaché au chant le plus que j'ai pu pour les rendre au moins naturelles, me connoissant trop bien pour prétendre me distinguer par la force de ma composition. j'ai tâché de me conformer au goût des habiles gens, en donnant à mes pièces, autant que ma foiblesse me la pû permettre, le tour de celles de l'Inimitable Monsieur de Lully : je suis persuadé, que ce n'est qu'en le suivant de bien loing, que mes pièces ont eû le bonhœur d'être escoutées favorablement de sa Majesté et de toute sa cour. Cette approbation qui m'est si glorieuse, me fait espérer, que mon Livre trouvera quelques protecteurs. Aureste comme mes amis ont trouvé que le chant de mes pièces avoit quelque agrément, Ils m'ont obligé d'en mettre une partie en Musique pour la Satisfaction de ceux qui voudront les jouer sur le Luth, le Violon, et autres instruments. Ils les trouveront à la fin du Livre. Sçavoir la basse et le dessus, Et je prie ceux qui sçauront bien la composition, et qui ne connoistront pas la Guitare, de n'être point scandalisez, s'ils trouvent que je m'es- carte quelque fois des regles, c'est l'Instrument qui le veut, et j'ai sçu satisfaire l'Orville, préférablement à tout. J'ai trouvé en accord nouveau, sur le quel j'ai composé une suite de pièces ; J'espère que la nouveauté les fera réussir les autres ne seront point distingués par des noms particuliers

comme d'autres ont fait, Elles seront seulement marquées par suite on n'y trouvera point non plus de folies d'Espagne. Il en court tant de couplets dont tout les concerts retentissent, que ce ne pourrais que rebatre les folies des autres.

Quand on trouvera en accord marqué de cette manière  Il faut faire avec les doigts de la main droite en descendant, et finir par le poulx, en adouccissant, et les touchant l'une apres l'autre, selon que la mesure le permettra si c'est omé noire, ou omé croche, qui ne permet pas de demeurer beaucoup, et que cette même marque  soit au dessous de la batterie, Il faut battre du poulx seulement, si c'est en coup en haut, et que ce soit omé blanche ou omé noire pointée. Il faut relever du premier et du second doigt en touchant de même qu'en descendant les cordes l'une apres l'autre, et si c'est omé noire ou omé croche, relever du premier doigt brusquement quand il i aura des points sur quelques omes des lignes, ainsi que vous voyez  Il ne faut pas toucher les cordes qu'elles designent afin d'éviter les dissonances et aussi pour rendre le chant plus distinct, Il faut que le poulx tombe dessus, et en remontant que le premier doigt fasse le même effet que le poulx. J'ai cru apropos de faire observer ces petites règles, pour rendre la batterie plus delicate, afin que ceux qui Joueront mes pieces, ne tombent pas dans l'inconvenient ou je me suis trouve plusieurs fois en Jouant celle des autres, voila a peu pres tout ce que J'ai cru necessaire d'expliquer si J'ai nungue a quelque chose, Je prie les Habiles gens d'y supplier, Je

receuerai toujours leur l'insure, avec beaucoup de *D*ifference.
 Si, j'ay esté obligé de transposer les piéces de musique acciuse de l'entendue de la Guitare qui
 avoient esté en *D*. *la*. *re*. en haut, il ne faut pas oublier une octave à la quatrième cor.
 de, elle y est très nécessaire

7

Cheutes

tirades tremblement martellement miollement

le point dessous la lettre fait voir Les deux points signifient Cette marque dessous les lettres
qu'il la faut toucher du premier doigt du second doigt c'est pour les toucher du pouce
de la main droite

Celle barre pour marquer la tenue et celle-ci la tenue pour les basses Ces autres barres
des parties supérieures qu'il faut pincer tirent de travers
les cordes ensemble vous les feront
séparer

Extrait du Privilège du Roy

Par grace et Privilège du Roy donné à Versailles le 16. jour de Juillet 1682. Signé des Vieux il est permis au Sieur Robert de Visé d'Imprimer ou faire Imprimer en Livre de Pièces de Guitarrre qu'il a composé, de le vendre et debiter au public et ce durant le temps et espace de 6. années consécutives et deffence sont faites a tous Imprimeurs Libraires et autres d'Imprimer le dit Livre d'en vendre de contre faits n'y mesme d'en extraire aucune chose apene de milleures d'amande et de tous despens dommages et Interets comme il est plus amplement porté par le dit Privilège. Achevé d'Imprimer le 25. Juillet 682. les Exemplaires ont été fournis

LIURE DE PIÈCES POUR LA GUITTARRE

DEDIÉ AU ROY

COMPOSÉ PAR R. DE VISEE
GRAVÉ PAR BONNEVIL

ET SE VEND A PARIS

*Chez le dit Bonnevil, proche la halle aux Cuirs vers les SS. Innocens
et chez A. Letieguere rue Dauphine a la Pucelle vis a vis la rue d'Anjou*

Sire



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La bonté avec laquelle Votre Majesté à receu le premier liure de mes pièces de Guittarre que j'ay eu l'honneur de luy presenter m'a engagé de travailler avec soin à la composition de celuy cy ; J'espere que Votre Majesté le favorisera de sa protection, puis que ie n'ay point eu d'autre dessein que de luy plaire : trop heureux si ie pouvois pour tout fruit de mes veilles, diuertir Votre Majesté dans ces moments, ou elle se delasse des soins importants qui la tiennent incessamment occupée pour le bien, et le repos de ses sujets. Mais Sire, la parfaite connoissance que votre Majesté a de toutes choses me fait craindre avec raison, de ne pas respondre à la delicatesses de songoust si ie ne suis pas assez heureux pour réussir dans mon dessein, aumoins Gauray l'auantage d'auoir fait connoistre le Dele et le profond respect avec le quel ie suis

Sire

De votre Majesté

le tres humble, tres obeissant et tres fidele
seruiteur et sujet B. de Q'wez

3
Je croy n'avoir rien oublié dans mon premier livre de Guitarrre des avis qui peuvent en rendre l'Intelligence facile, ausy ne repeterois-je pas une seconde fois les avertissemens qu'il contient, si ie scauois que ce luy cy ne tombast que dans les mains de ceux qui ont desja l'autre, mais comme J'ignore qu'elle sera leur destinée, Je croy qu'il est bon d'avertir que les pieces du second sont d'une bien plus facile execution que les premieres dont les difficultés peuvent avoir rebute beaucoup de personnes, J'espere que celles qui me feront l'honneur de donner quelques moments a ce livre n'en trouveront pas tout a fait les pieces Indignes de leur application, Je repete en peu de mots ce que J'ay deja dit: que quand vous trouverez un accord de cette façon  Il faut couler les doigts de la main droite en descendant et adoucir du pource en finissant la batterie, et la faisant durer autant que la note leaige, pour entretenir l'harmonie quand il y aura quelques points sur les lignes comme vous voyez  Il ne faut pas toucher les cordes sur les quelles Ils sont places, vous trouverez ausy sur la fin du livre la plus part de ces pieces que J'ay tiré en musique avec le dessus et la basse: nous satisfaire ceux qui voudront en servir sur d'autres Instruments.

EXTRAIT DV PRIVILEGE DV ROY

65

*Par grace et Privilege du Roy donné a Paris en datte du 21. feburier 1686. Signe. Berin
il est permis au Sieur Robert de Visée de faire graver et Imprimer un livre de pieces
de Guitarre Dedie au Roy, qu'il a composé, de le vendre et debiter au public et ce du-
rant le temps et espace de 6. années consecutives, et deffences sont faictes a tous Impri-
meurs, Libraires, Graveurs et autres d'Imprimer ou graver le dit livre den vendre
de contre faits ny mesme d'en extraire aucune chose a peine de trois mil livres d'amen-
de et de tous despens dommages et Interests comme il est plus amplement porté au
dit Privilege.*

*Achevé d'Imprimer le 8^e Mars 1686.
Les exemplaires ont esté fournis.*

PIECES.
DE THEORBE ET DE LUTH.

Mises en Partition, Dessus et Basse.

Composées

PAR M^r. DE VISEE,

Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy.

DEDIEES

a S^r. MONSIEUR LE DUC D'ORLEANS.

Gravés par Cl. ROUSSEL

se Vendent
A PARIS

Chez
Messieurs

BÉLANGER Marchand Papetier rue Dauphine.
HUREL, Maître faiseur d'Instruments rue S^t. Martin vis à vis
la Fontaine Maubue

Avec Privilege du Roy. 1716.

Price en blanc. 12. 8.

A S·A·R· MONSEIGNEUR LE DUC D'ORLÉANS.....

Monseigneur

*Les beaux Arts osent ils encore pretendre à la gloire d'a-
muser V.A.R. cümme ils ont fait pendant son loisir. Dans leurs
déplaisirs ils ont vu sans chagrin que vous les negligiez pour trans-
porter vos lumieres a de plus grands objets, et pour faire de vos
talens la ressource de tout le Royaume; mais ils se flattent qu'après
tout ce qui s'est passé entre vous et eux, le nouvel éclat qui vous
environne ne vous les fera pas méconnoître, et que vous aurez la
bonté de les traiter comme les plus anciens de vos courtisans, ou
s'ils osent le dire comme d'anciens favoris. Je suis.*

MONSEIGNEUR,

De V.A.R. Avec un profond respect.....

*Le très humble et obéissant
et zélé serviteur DE VOS*

Extrait des Lettres du Privilège

Par grace et Privilège du Roy donné à Paris le dix-neuf May l'an de grace 1716. signé par le Roi en son Conseil Fouquet. Il est permis au SIEUR DE VISEE, Ordonnaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy, de faire graver, Imprimer vendre et débiter par tout le Royaume un Livre de pièces de Musique instrumentale, de sa composition pendant le temps de quinze années consécutifs à commencer du jour de la date des présentes. Avec défenses à tous graveurs, Imprimeurs, Libraires et tous autres de graver, Imprimer, vendre et débiter seditz ouvrages ny contrefaire sans sa permission expresse et par écrit a peine de 3000. ^{livres} d'amende confiscation des planches et des exemplaires contrefaits et de tous dépens dommages et intérêts comme il est porté plus au long par lesdites lettres de privilège. signé Fouquet.

Avertissement

Le succès que ces pièces ont eu à la Cour, pendant plusieurs années, dans les Concerts particuliers du feu Roy et sur tout les augustes suffrages de ce grand Prince, m'ont enfin déterminé à en donner une impression au public. Les applaudissemens dont il les a déjà honorées me font espérer qu'il les recevra favorablement.....

Quelques unes de ces pièces, qu'on m'a surprises, sont répandues dans le monde, mais si peu correctes et même si défigurées que je suis obligé de les desavouer....

Plusieurs auteurs auroient peut-être souhaité que j'eusse, dans une troisième partie sous la partition, ou la pièce eût été gravée en tablature : mais le nombre de ceux qui entendent la tablature est si petit que j'ay cru ne devoir pas grossir mon livre inutilement; d'ailleurs on me trouvera toujours disposé à les donner de cette manière à ceux qui les désireront.

Le but de cette impression est le Clavecin, la Viole et le Violon sur lesquels Instrumens elles ont toujours été concertées.

APPENDIX 2

Introduction

The following appendix is a full transcription of the initial cluster of pieces in Saiz.I, the 'suite' in D minor. This cluster was selected as a representative group of pieces because of its high level of quality and characteristic nature of writing. Several other clusters deserve attention here as well; particularly the C minor and G minor groups from the above mentioned source. A collected works transcription was not possible within the constraints of this study, and is a project that deserves separate treatment. The examples imbedded in the text of this study are meant merely to point to certain stylistic features of this repertory; the full transcription of the D minor cluster should provide a more overall, homogeneous view of these works.

Several problems must be faced in preparing a transcription from the notational medium of tablature into a mensural system. In presenting a single corpus of works, the editor must make decisions that apply generally rather than to only isolated examples. Specifically, problems of duration, line, and accrual of sound must be addressed. The theorbo is dependent on certain technical idiosyncrasies that do not transfer easily into staff notation. The reentrant nature of its tuning will oftentimes mean that in a melodic line, the interval of a second will be played on different strings in the same position. This over-ringing effect is one of the most typical features of the instrument. Furthermore, in the tablature, only rhythms for plucked pitches are shown. Those pitches that are meant to be held over are sometimes notated by a *tenué*; moreoften the exception than the rule. In the cases where a pitch belongs to a certain harmony, it is naturally sustained. In cases where it functions as a non-chord tone, certain choices must be made. Fortunately, de Visée provided us with many examples of staff notated theorbo pieces; these examples demonstrate that linear cleanliness and voice-leading are important traits of his style in any medium. While the technical peculiarities of the theorbo are most certainly utilized by the composer, the staff versions of these pieces strongly suggest that his theorbo works are intended to emulate what de Visée terms the "singing style." Moreover, a familiarity with this repertoire allows the editor to make decisions based on what seems to be de Visée's compositional preference, rather than relying on the most convenient method of transcription. In general, these transcriptions attempt to connect (wherever technically possible) lines that are obviously intended to form melodic motion. This is not always apparent when examining the tablature as a single conjunct line may move over several strings in its phrase. This over-ringing effect is entirely lost in mensural notation; however, the composer himself made no effort to notate this effect in the staff

versions. Although the staff versions are set for a single melody instrument and continuo and must therefore necessarily ignore "brisé" effects, their very existence coupled with what has been determined as de Visée's style provide strong evidence to support transcriptions that present mainly linear movement. Of course, *tenues* have been preserved where notated in the tablature. This problem of duration extends equally to inside voice leading activity. In a literal transcription of only struck pitches, voice leading is non-existent. However, certain aspects of the instrument must be taken into account when determining the actual value of certain notes. Here, values are extended for as long as they practically sound on the instrument excepting where left hand position shifts break the continuity of sound through articulatory silence. Bass notes that amplify or reinforce harmonies are left to ring over barlines where appropriate, and are notated as lines even where the right hand thumb may strike them one after the other in quick succession. In this case, a subtle over-ringing ensues that is almost impossible to notate cleanly on a staff transcription. Only the theorbo versions have been used as primary texts in this study, excepting where a comparison has been drawn between other versions. Although rhythms and pitches may vary somewhat between guitar, lute, staff and theorbo versions, this study has focussed on the theorbo pieces largely to the exclusion of the other versions. A complete comparison between these differing versions is not within the boundaries of this topic.

Lastly, notational signs for *separer* and various ornaments have been left intact in transcription. It was felt that the duplication of the original ornamental indications allows for a more natural stylistic application of these *agreements*. Although the modern notational equivalents of trills, mordents, and arpeggiations has been used in transcriptions of Baroque lute and guitar music, it was felt that these modern symbols may perhaps draw too much attention to themselves; forcing one to overly dwell on their execution without integrating them into the line, as is most musically appropriate. As for *separer*, a simple arpeggio sign between two or more voices completely destroys the effect of *inegalé* and obscures its contextual application. Furthermore, it may lead one to perform *separer* in always the same manner, ignoring the intended flexibility of this ornament. The vertical line between two or more notes in the tablature has not been reproduced in transcription; this *ensemble* sign merely signifies non-arpeggiation. The descending and ascending arpeggio with a single right hand finger has been transformed into a modern arpeggio sign with a small arrow indicating its direction. This was adopted as the small dots after letters in the tablature may be confused for rhythmically dotted values. Where a single pitch is doubled on different strings in the tablature, they have been notated together on the staff. The reader is invited to refer to the reproduction of the tablature following these transcriptions.

Transcriptions of *Pieces* in d minor:

Prelude

Allemande,

Courante

Sarabande

Gigue

Gavotte

Passacaille

Menuet.

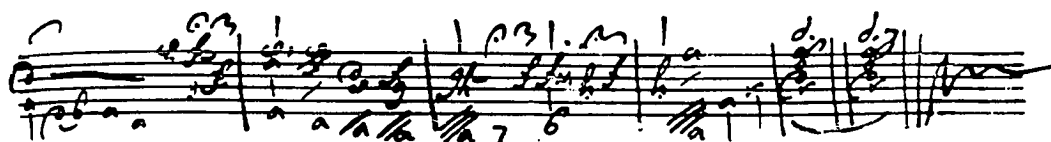
Saizenay 227. Prelude de Mr de Visce



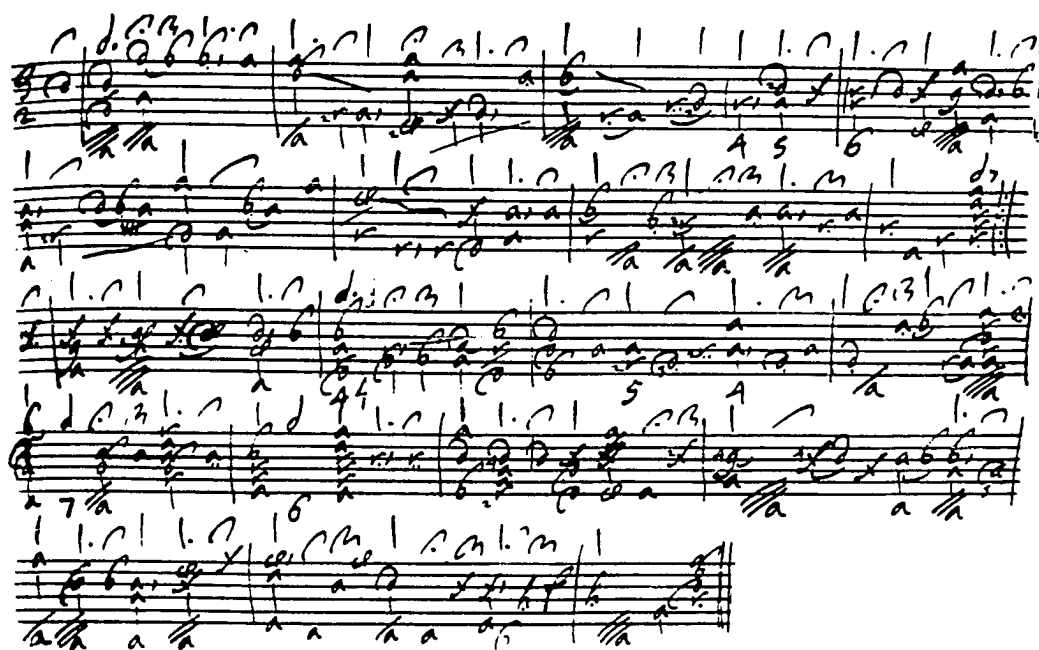
Prelude de
M. de Visce



The musical score is presented in a single system with 12 staves. Each staff contains a line of music written in bass clef with a common time signature (C). The notation includes various note values (quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes), rests, and bar lines. The music is a single melodic line with a steady rhythm, characteristic of an allemande. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).



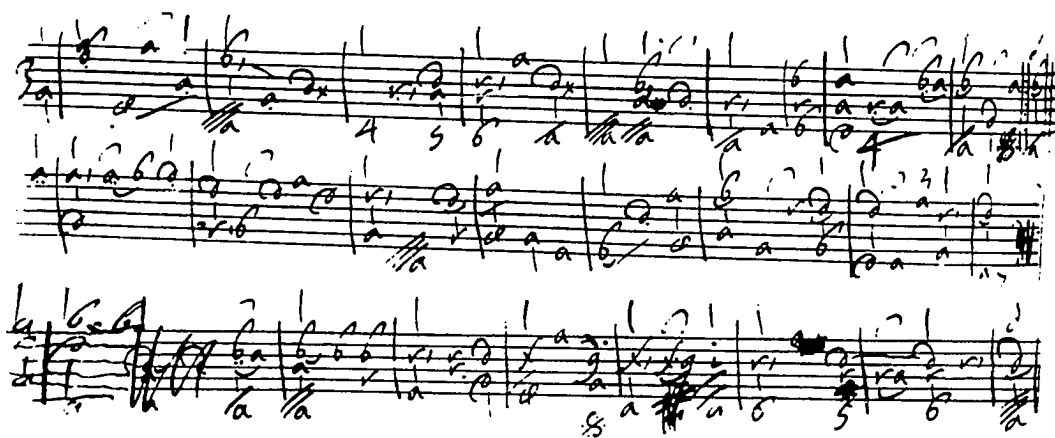
Saizenay 223. Courante de Mr de Visce



Saizenay 224. Sarabande de Mr de Visce



Saizenay 224. Gigue du mesme



Saizenay 221. Gavotte de Mr de Visce



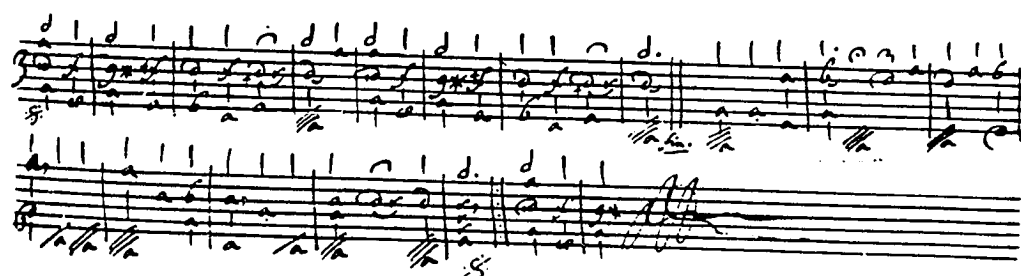
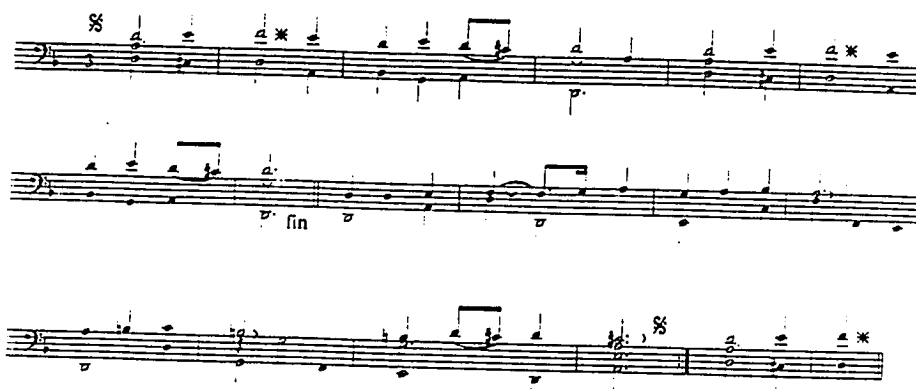
Saizenay 229. Passacaille du mesme

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in bass clef. It consists of nine staves. The notation includes various note values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes), rests, and repeat signs. There are several first and second endings marked with '2.0.0.' and repeat symbols. The piece is a Passacaille, which typically features a repeating bass line, though in this notation, the melody is written on a single staff.

Handwritten musical score for six staves. The notation is in a single system, with each staff containing a different melodic line. The music is written in a style characteristic of 19th-century manuscript notation, featuring various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The staves are connected by a single brace on the left. The notation includes many slurs, ties, and dynamic markings such as *sf*, *f*, *sfz*, *sfz in corde*, and *mezzo*. The music appears to be a complex, multi-voiced setting, possibly for a chamber ensemble or a large vocal group. The handwriting is in dark ink on aged paper.

sfz in corde
mezzo

Saizenay 223. Menuet du mesme



APPENDIX 3

Introduction

In order to facilitate ease in identifying concordancing versions, a table has been arranged showing page or folio numbers for a given work in each source. These concordances deal mainly with tablature versions, although staff versions from 1716 and Vmd 16 are also given. No effort has been made to correlate the theorbo versions with guitar for two reasons: firstly because only a relatively small number of theorbo pieces find guitar versions and secondly, because the reader may consult Robert Strizich's concordances of guitar pieces with most of the theorbo tablature sources.¹

As has been shown in chapter five, many versions appear in different keys. In this list of concordances, the keys for the theorbo tablatures is given before each cluster. Since the two staff sources usually place concordancing versions up a perfect fourth, this relationship is shown in the sub-heading of keys. Where a staff version is found to be in a different key than is usual, its tonality is indicated by an upper or lowercase letter in parentheses, designating major or minor. This has also been adopted for lute pieces, usually not in the same key as its theorbo version. Where not indicated by parentheses, a key will conform to the tonality of a cluster as shown by key heading. Where a lute version concords with a theorbo version in Saiz.I, parenthetical key indications are given before the lute versions and after the theorbo. In that source, pieces with numbers between 1 and 214 are lute versions; those from 217 to 406 are for theorbo.

¹ See Strizich's *Robert de Visée- Oeuvres Complètes pour Guitare*, (Paris: Huegel, 1971).

| Concordances | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Title | Saiz.I | Rés. 1106 | Vm ⁷ 6265 | Rés. 1820 | 1716 | Vmd ms. 16 |
| <i>Key: D minor</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>G minor</i> | <i>G minor</i> |
| Prelude | 227 | 71r | 33 | - | - | - |
| Allemande | 228 | 72v | 38 | - | 1 | 51 |
| Allemande | 199 | - | - | - | - | 33(d) |
| Courante | (g)190,223 | 73v | 34 | - | 7 | 55 |
| Courante | 200 | - | - | - | - | 35(d) |
| Courante | 70(f#) | 71v | - | - | 84 | 20 |
| Sarabande | 224 | 73r | 35 | - | 11 | 61 |
| Sarabande | 200 | - | - | - | - | 36(d) |
| Sarabande | - | - | - | - | 85(d) | |
| Gigue | 224 | 75v | 36 | - | 14 | 64 |
| Gigue grave | 201 | - | - | - | - | 37(d) |
| Gigue | 205(f#) | 74v | 36 | - | 15 | 65 |
| Gavotte | 221 | - | - | - | 17 | 69 |
| Passacaille | 229 | 82v | - | - | 19 | - |
| Minuet | 223 | - | - | - | 22 | 70 |
| Minuet | - | 81r | - | - | - | - |
| Menuet(?) | - | 85r | - | - | - | - |
| <i>C major</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>F major</i> | <i>F major</i> |
| Prelude | 235 | 61r | - | - | - | - |
| Gigue | 235 | 64v | 29 | - | 111 | 39(D) |
| Gigue grave | 102(G) | - | - | - | 76(C) | 7(C) |
| <i>A minor</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>D minor</i> | <i>D minor</i> |
| Prelude | 256 | 25r | 7 | - | - | - |
| Prelude | - | - | - | - | 31(a) | - |
| Allemande "La Royale" | 253 | 26v | 8 | - | 81 | 15 |
| "Tombeau de Tonty" | 65 | - | - | - | 55 | - |
| Allemande "Tombeau de Gallor" | 55 | - | - | - | 33(a) | 113(a) |
| Allemande | - | - | - | - | 31(a) | - |
| Courante | 254 | 27v | - | - | 83 | 17 |
| Sarabande | - | 27r | - | - | - | - |
| Gigue | 61 | - | - | - | 40(a) | 99-100(a) |
| Chaconne | 64,258 | 29v | 6 | - | 87 | - |
| Gavotte | 47,254 | 28r | 9 | 7 | 86 | 19 |
| "La Masquerade" rondeau | 257 | - | - | - | 88 | 40 |
| Menuet anglais(?) | - | 28v | - | - | - | - |
| Folies d'Espagne | - | 31v | 11 | - | - | - |
| Rondeau(?) | - | 33v,r | - | - | - | - |
| Menuet(?) | - | 35v | - | - | - | - |
| Menuet(?) | - | 35r | - | - | - | - |
| Minuet(?) | - | 41v | - | - | - | - |
| <i>F Major</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>Bb major</i> | <i>Bb major</i> |
| Prelude | 273 | 66r | - | - | - | - |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|------|-------|------|----------------|----------------|
| Allemande "La Mutine" | 114,271 | 67v | - | - | 45 | 101 |
| Contrepartie de allemande | 273 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Courante | 272 | 68v | - | - | 47 | 103 |
| Sarabande | 154(A) | 68r | - | - | 48 | 105 |
| Gigue grave | 154(A) | - | - | - | 49 | - |
| Gavotte | 272 | - | - | - | 51 | 107 |
| <i>G Major</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>C major</i> | <i>C major</i> |
| Prelude | 291 | 13r | 65 | 52 | - | - |
| Allemande | 290 | 15v | - | 53-4 | 71 | 9 |
| Contrepartie de allemande | 293 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Courante "La Villeroy" | 96,285 | 16r | 66 | 55 | 73 | 11 |
| Gigue | 102 | - | - | - | 76 | 7 |
| Gigue | - | 17r | - | - | - | - |
| Chaconne, augmentée(?) | 288 | 19v | - | - | - | - |
| Chaconne | 100(G) | - | - | - | 29(G) | 125(G) |
| Rondeau "La muzette" | (A)152,292 | 24r | 68 | 57-8 | 77(C) | 73(G) |
| Gavotte en rondeau | 287 | 18v | 67 | 56 | 79 | 13 |
| Contrepartie de gavotte | 294 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Minuet en rondeau | 291 | 18r | - | - | 80 | 14 |
| Minuet | - | - | - | - | 28 | 89 |
| Minuet | 285 | 24v | - | - | - | - |
| Minuet(?) | - | 15r | - | - | - | - |
| <i>E minor</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>A minor</i> | <i>A minor</i> |
| Prelude : | 306 | 94r | 18 | - | - | - |
| Prelude | 308 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Prelude | - | 94v | - | - | - | - |
| Allemande | 303 | 95v | 18 | - | 35 | 91 |
| Contrepartie de allemande | 309 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Allemande "Tombeau de Mouton" | 76 | " | " | " | 97(e) | |
| 123(e) | | | | | | |
| Courante | 305 | 96v | 20 | - | 37 | 93 |
| Sarabande | 305 | - | - | - | 39 | - |
| Sarabande | 307 | 96r | 21 | - | 38 | 95 |
| Gigue | 304 | 97v | 22 | - | 41 | 97 |
| Double de la gigue | 310 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Gavotte | 307 | 97r | 23,27 | - | 43 | 99 |
| Rondeau "La Montfermeil" | (a)64,308 | - | 27 | - | 44 | - |
| Menuet(?) | - | 93r | - | - | - | - |
| "La Villanelle" | - | 100v | - | - | - | - |
| <i>B minor</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>E minor</i> | <i>E minor</i> |
| Prelude | 324 | 45r | 58 | - | - | - |
| Allemande | 321 | 46v | 58 | - | 99 | 127 |
| Courante | 322 | 47v | 60 | - | 101 | 129 |
| Sarabande | 322 | 47r | 60 | - | 102 | 131 |
| Gigue | 323 | 48v | 62 | - | 103 | 133 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----|----|---|----------------|----------------|
| Gavotte | 323 | 48r | 61 | - | 104 | 135 |
| <i>D major</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>G major</i> | <i>G major</i> |
| Prelude | 339 | 87r | 49 | - | - | - |
| Allemande | 342 | 88v | 48 | - | 23 | 81 |
| Allemande | 130 | - | - | - | - | 41(D) |
| Courante | 131a | - | - | - | 74(C) | 43(D) |
| Courante | 131b | - | - | - | 92(D) | - |
| Courante | 339 | 89v | 48 | - | 25 | 83 |
| Sarabande | 343 | 89r | 50 | - | 26 | 85 |
| Sarabande | - | - | - | - | - | 45 |
| Gigue | 341 | 90v | 50 | - | 27 | 87 |
| Gigue gaye | 132 | - | - | - | 75(C) | 47(D) |
| Gigue gay | - | - | - | - | 95(D) | 21(D) |
| Minuet(?) | - | 92v | 53 | - | - | - |
| Bourree "La Villageoise" | 132 | - | - | - | 96(D) | 32(D) |
| <i>A Major</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>D major</i> | <i>D major</i> |
| Prelude | 360 | 37r | 13 | - | - | - |
| Allemande | 357 | 38v | 14 | - | 89 | 23 |
| Courante | 358 | 39v | 14 | - | 91 | 25 |
| Sarabande | 358 | 39r | 16 | - | 93 | 27 |
| Gigue | 359 | 40v | 16 | - | 94 | 29 |
| Gavotte | 359 | 40r | 17 | - | 96 | 31 |
| Minuet | - | 35r | - | - | - | - |
| Minuet or Air(?) | - | 41v | - | - | - | - |
| <i>G minor</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>C minor</i> | <i>C minor</i> |
| Prelude | 381 | - | 73 | - | - | - |
| Allemande "La Conversation" | (c)172,376 | - | 70 | - | 59 | 1 |
| Allemande gay | 203(f#) | - | - | - | 3(g) | 53(g) |
| Allemande | 202(f#) | - | - | - | 5(g) | 71(g) |
| Courante | 377 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Courante | - | - | - | - | 9(g) | 57(g) |
| Courante | 204(f#) | - | - | - | 8(g) | 59(g) |
| Courante | 187 | 8v | - | - | 62 | 139 |
| Sarabande | 378 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sarabande | 380 | - | - | - | 64 | - |
| Sarabande | 204(f#) | - | - | - | 12(g) | 62(g) |
| Sarabande | - | - | - | - | 13(g) | 63(g) |
| Gigue | 378 | - | 72 | - | 65 | 3 |
| Gigue angloise | 379 | - | 74 | - | 67 | 141 |
| Gigue | - | - | - | - | - | 67-8 |
| Gigue grave | - | - | - | - | - | 77-8 |
| Gavotte rondeau | 375 | 6v | - | - | 69 | 143 |
| Gavotte | 375 | 5r | 75 | - | 69 | 5 |
| Gavotte | 380 | 6r | - | - | 70 | 6 |
| Gavotte | 206(f#) | - | - | - | 18(g) | 69(g) |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-----|---|---|----------------|----------------|
| Chaconne couplets | 386 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Minuet(?) | - | 9v | - | - | - | - |
| Pastoralle | 206(f#) | - | - | - | 21(g) | 75(g) |
| <i>C minor</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>F minor</i> | <i>F minor</i> |
| Prelude | 402 | 53r | - | - | - | - |
| Prelude | - | - | - | - | 52(c) | - |
| Allemande "La Plainte" | 401 | 54v | - | - | 105 | 109 |
| Allemande "Tombeau de duBut" | 175 | - | - | - | 53(c) | 117(c) |
| Allemande "Tombeau de Tonty" | 65(a) | - | - | - | 55(c) | - |
| Allemande "Tombeau de Mr. franç.que" | - | - | - | - | 57(c) | - |
| Courante | 402 | 55v | - | - | 107 | - |
| Courante | 187(g) | - | - | - | 62(c) | 139(c) |
| Courante | 173 | - | - | - | 61(c) | 119(c) |
| Sarabande | 403 | 55r | - | - | 108 | - |
| Sarabande | 405 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sarabande (rondeau) | - | - | - | - | 63 | - |
| Gigue | 404 | 56v | - | - | 109 | - |
| Gigue | 173 | - | - | - | - | 121(c) |

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