

**The Baroque Guitar as an Accompaniment Instrument  
for Song, Dance and Theatre**

by

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## **Abstract**

The five-course 'baroque' guitar was regularly employed in the accompaniment of song and dance, and did so predominantly in the *rasgueado* style, a strummed practice unique to the instrument. Contemporary critics condemned *rasgueado* as crude and unrefined, and the guitar incited further scorn for its regular use in accompanying the ill-reputed dances of the lower classes. This thesis explores the performance practices associated with the *rasgueado* tradition, with particular focus on how guitarists accompanied popular dances and the vast repertory of *alfabeto* songs. The prominent use of the guitar as an instrument of accompaniment in theatrical works is also explored, and a wide cross-section of stage-works are compared to determine the personas, performance contexts and repertoires most commonly associated with the instrument.

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## Abbreviations

<i>AcM</i>	<i>Acta Musicologica</i>
<i>DR</i>	<i>Dance Research</i>
<i>ECS</i>	<i>Eighteenth Century Studies</i>
<i>EM</i>	<i>Early Music</i>
<i>EMH</i>	<i>Early Music History</i>
<i>GR</i>	<i>Guitar Review</i>
<i>GSJ</i>	<i>Galpin Society Journal</i>
<i>JAMS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
<i>JLSA</i>	<i>Journal of the Lute Society of America</i>
<i>JMT</i>	<i>Journal of Music Theory</i>
<i>JRMA</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Music Association</i>
<i>JSCM</i>	<i>Journal of Seventeenth Century Music</i>
<i>LSAQ</i>	<i>Lute Society of America Quarterly</i>
<i>LSJ</i>	<i>Lute Society Journal</i>
<i>MD</i>	<i>Musica Disciplina</i>
<i>ML</i>	<i>Music &amp; Letters</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>PRMA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Music Association</i>
<i>RdMc</i>	<i>Revista de Musicología</i>

## Terminology

### 4-Course Guitar

Italian: *chitarra da sette corde, chitarrino, chitarra alla napolitana, ghitarre italiana*

Spanish: *guitarra*

French: *guitarre, guiterne*

English: *guitarne, gitterne*

The English names are problematical as they could also indicate the gittern, which itself had many variant spellings.

### 5-Course Guitar

Italian: *chitarra spagnola*

Spanish: *guitarra española,*

French: *guitarre*

English: *guitar, gitar, gittar, gytar, kittar, ghittar, guittar, gitarr, gittair*

### The 'Plucked' style

Italian: *Pizzicato*; Spanish: *Punteado*; English: *Pinching*

### The 'Strummed' Style

Italian: *Battente*; Spanish: *Rasgueado*; English: *Brushing* or *Thrumming*

## Introduction

The word *rasgueado* describes a strummed performance practice unique to the guitar that has been used to accompany both song and dance since the sixteenth century. The essence of the practice, which nowadays is commonly associated with *flamenco* guitarists, is the highly rhythmic, chordal accompaniments, created with diverse strum patterns of varying levels of complexity involving any or all fingers of the right hand. In the late-sixteenth century, a system of notation was developed in Italy for the five-course guitar that made it possible to notate the unwritten traditions of *rasgueado*, and this was called *alfabeto* (see Appendix 1). This notation consisted of abstract chord symbols (mostly letters of the alphabet) designated to specific chord arrangements that performers memorised and reproduced when required. Composers used *alfabeto* to notate song accompaniments and popular dances until the mid-seventeenth century, from which point the notation was gradually supplanted by more sophisticated guitar tablatures. *Rasgueado* provided the guitar with a distinctive and characteristic voice, and the relative ease in which basic strummed accompaniments could be learnt made the instrument hugely popular in Early-Modern Europe.

The five-course guitar was in vogue as an instrument of accompaniment from the sixteenth to mid-eighteenth century. It was used in all levels of music making, from the recreational to the spectacular, and its popularity was such that it penetrated all spheres of society, cultivated by peasants and nobles alike. Nevertheless, *rasgueado* incited criticism from many who viewed the guitar and its associated repertoire with disdain. Most negative accounts of the instrument allude to an established hierarchy of plucked string instruments in which the lute ranked most

highly. *Rasgueado* was a tradition far removed from the plucked practices of the lute, and by comparison was dismissed by many as crude and simplistic. The association of strummed guitar playing with popular dances incited the displeasure of religious and moralist writers as the participants in such activity were reputed frequently to behave indecently.

*Rasgueado* bore associations with particular song and dance types cultivated among the lower classes, namely those that included lewd or audacious lyrics and immodest dance gestures. Such long-standing associations assisted in shaping the literary profile of the guitarist that commonly featured in novels and dramatic works. Characters portrayed with guitars on stage are most commonly of lower social standing and they frequently appear in scenes of comedy or romantic exchange. Perhaps the most vivid image of the literary guitarist is the lover playing beneath the window of his beloved after nightfall.

Chapter 1 explores the low opinion held for the guitar by exponents of the lute, who resented the popularity of *rasgueado* among the upper classes. These viewpoints are documented in numerous musical sources, such as lute methods and treatises on musical instruments written by theorists. Passing references to *rasgueado* cultivation can also be found, however, in the reflections of diarists and in the observations of authors chronicling the social trends of the time. The inadequacies of *rasgueado* practice as presented in their arguments will be explored in detail. The evidence for the prominence of the guitar among the upper classes is also presented, drawing largely from documented instances of guitars taking part in stately occasions, the numerous dedications to nobles that grace seventeenth-century guitar publications,

records of high-profile guitar students, the role of the guitar as a status symbol in contemporary portraiture and the encroachment of the instrument into publications that instruct young men in gentlemanly pursuits.

The focus of Chapter 2 is the use of the guitar in the accompaniment of the popular dances of the lower classes. The first section explores the negative reception history of the dances and the substantial criticism that they amassed. Considered sexually explicit and offensive to the highest degree, this repertoire was subject to critical bombardment and even censorship. There are many extant accounts of the dancing and also of the accompanying lyrics that were considered equally detestable, in the writings of court councillors, moralists and religious authorities. The second section explores the *rasgueado* performance practices associated with these dances, drawing largely from the teachings documented in guitar methods published between 1596 and 1674, and highlights its inherent improvisatory practices, which demanded abilities in transposition, harmonic variation, rhythmic embellishment and the *ad-lib* application of dissonance.

That the guitar was closely identified with *rasgueado*, the lower classes and their recreational dances was influential on the generation of stereotypes that came to identify the guitarist as dramatised on stage and in other literary arts. These had a bearing on the specific employment of the guitar in accompaniment on stage, and Chapter 3 explores the prominence of the instrument among particular stage personas and in certain performing context. To do this I have compared the stage directions and texts of a wide cross section of theatrical works from Spain, Italy, France and England to reveal the performance contexts, musical repertoires and characters with

which the guitar was most commonly associated. To emphasise the prominent role of the guitar in the theatre, I have produced a select list of works originating from each of the countries discussed that are known to have featured at least one guitarist.

The first section of the final chapter explores guitar accompaniments of the *alfabeto* songs, with particular focus on the performance practices underlying the guitar notations. The limited expressive capabilities of *alfabeto* are discussed, and an argument is made in favour of accompaniments that would have reflected the practices being cultivated in relation to the more progressive notations of the solo dance repertoire. The second section highlights the challenges faced by guitarists when accompanying from a continuo bass with an instrument of limited lower range. Guitar accompaniments have been criticised in past scholarship for their frequent concessions and unorthodox treatments of dissonance that were at odds with the conventions of counterpoint. This chapter takes issue with this viewpoint and argues that such occurrences were part of a uniquely guitaristic approach to accompaniment that satisfied the practical demands of the instrument.

## A Note on the Transcriptions

There were a variety of tunings in use throughout the period, which makes the transcription of any guitar music problematical. A major issue in this regard is that of bourdons, that is the thicker, lower octave sometimes added to the bass courses of the instrument.<sup>1</sup> The fourth and fifth courses of the guitar were commonly tuned in three different manners:

### **Example 1: Three common tunings**

1) Bourdons on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> courses



2) A bourdon on the 4<sup>th</sup> course (Semi-re-entrant)



3) No bourdons (re-entrant)



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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of the differing tunings employed see: Sylvia Murphy, 'The Tuning of the Five-Course Guitar', *G&S*, Vol. 23 (1970), pp. 49-63; Donald Gill, 'The Stringing of the Five Course Baroque Guitar', *Early Music*, Vol. 3 (1975), pp. 370-371; Richard d'A Jensen, 'The Development of Technique and Performance Practice as Reflected in Seventeenth-Century Italian Guitar Notation' (unpublished masters thesis, California State University, Northridge, 1980), 8-22, and in particular Monica Hall, 'The Stringing of the 5-Course Guitar', online essay <[www.monicaHall.co.uk/string.htm](http://www.monicaHall.co.uk/string.htm)>

The tunings employed seemed to have been largely determined by the style of music that was to be performed. If accompanying a singer, a performer may wish to add bourdons to broaden the lower range of the instrument. On the other hand, if they wanted to perform solo pieces that featured scalic passages played across the courses (an effect idiomatic to the instrument which the guitarist Gaspar Sanz called ‘campanellas’), then the re-entrant tuning would be most appropriate.

Producing transcriptions that satisfy the needs of scholars for representations of the notes at sounding pitch and the needs of performers for representations that communicate precisely where the notes are stopped is very difficult. Attempts to indicate both can result in transcriptions that are convoluted in appearance or deceptive, as fully-voiced chords can appear thinner in texture than they really are. The example below shows two possible transcriptions of chord ‘A’ (G major) that show the sounding pitches if they were played on a guitar with a re-entrant tuning. The first transcription shows how the notes on the lower courses form unisons with the notes sounding on the higher courses. The second transcription merely shows the audible result. Neither are particularly useful from the performer’s perspective as it is not immediately obvious which notes are stopped on the lower courses, or, in the case of the second transcription, if the lowest course is even meant to be played.

**Example 2: Possible transcriptions of chord ‘A’ at sounding pitch**

The image displays two musical transcriptions of a G major chord (chord 'A') on a re-entrant tuning guitar. The first transcription is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It shows two measures of music. The first measure contains a chord with notes G4, B4, and D5. The second measure contains a chord with notes G4, B4, and D5. The second transcription is a guitar tablature with six lines. The first measure shows fret numbers 2, 0, 0, 3, 3, 3. The second measure shows fret numbers 2, 0, 0, 3, 3, 3.



The method I have adopted in this thesis is to notate all notes on the fourth and fifth courses in the lower octave. It must be stressed that this has not been done to demonstrate the audible result of a performance with a guitar tuned with bourdons, but rather this method has been employed to provide a clear visual representation of the five separate courses of the instrument. Under this system the top note of the transcribed chord represents a note stopped on the first course, and the lowest note of the chord represents a note stopped on the fifth course. In doing this I have tried to produce transcriptions that are faithful to the guitar tablatures, and that show precisely which courses are to be stopped or struck. They do not, therefore, necessarily indicate the sounding pitches of the notes. Corbetta, for example, used a semi-re-entrant tuning in his *La guitarre royalle* (1671), so in my transcriptions of his music any notes on the fifth course will sound an octave higher than notated. The following should be borne in mind when viewing any transcriptions of five-course guitar music:

- 1) If the guitar is tuned with bourdons on both courses, the lowest note of a fully voiced chord will be on the fifth course.
- 2) If the guitar has a semi-re-entrant tuning, the lowest note of a fully voiced chord will be on the fourth course.
- 3) If the guitar has a re-entrant tuning, the lowest note of a fully voiced chord will be on the third course.

## Chapter 1

### ***Rasgueado*: Critical Responses to an Idiomatic Performance Practice and the Social Ascent of the Guitar**

*Rasgueado* was the dominant style of performance in the early decades of the seventeenth century. The early solo guitar publications from Girolamo Montesardo (1606) to Giovanni Foscarini (1629) were notated exclusively in *alfabeto*, a system of notation specially engineered for chordal strumming.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, with the emergence of mixed tablatures in the 1630s, *rasgueado* still remained the staple element of guitar technique, and strumming was still the most characteristic feature of the music in these publications. As the century progressed, however, the guitar repertoire displays a greater emphasis on *punteado* technique, and notations come to resemble contrapuntal lute tablatures more closely,<sup>2</sup> culminating in the finely crafted tablatures of Ludovico Roncalli (1692) and Francesco Guerau (1694).<sup>3</sup> Some late seventeenth-century guitarists used *rasgueado* in their publications to ornamental effect, including passages of strummed chords with often highly intricate patterns for the right hand to follow.<sup>4</sup> Corbetta was one virtuoso guitarist who seemed keen to rejuvenate *rasgueado*, particularly in his 1674 book, dedicated to Louis XIV, and eighteenth-century guitarist Santiago de Murcia also provided strummed introductions to his *punteado* dances in the *Codice Saldívar No. 4* (c.1730).

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<sup>1</sup> Girolamo Montesardo, *Nuova inventione d'intavolatura per sonore li balletti sopra la chitarra spagnola* (Florence, 1606), and Giovanni Foscarini, *Intavolatura di chitarra, libro secondo* (Macerata, 1629)

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3 for examples of mixed and lute-style tablature.

<sup>3</sup> Ludovico Roncalli, *Capricci armonici sopra la chitarra spagnola* (Bergamo, 1692), and Francisco Guerau, *Poem harmónico compuesto de varias cifras por el temple de la guitarra española* (Madrid, 1694)

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion of *rasgueado* technique see Silvia Murphy's article 'Seventeenth-Century Guitar Music: Notes on Rasgueado Performance', *GSJ*, Vol. 21 (1968), pp. 24-32, and also Joseph Weidlich's article 'Battuto Performance in Early Italian Guitar Music (1606-1637)', *JLSA*, Vol. 11 (1978), pp. 63-86

*Rasgueado* was also widely employed in accompaniment, and *alfabeto* was a regular feature of a vast printed song repertory. Whilst this was the practice most identifiable with the guitar, this is not to say that guitarists did not incorporate individually plucked notes into their accompaniments. Indeed, continuo guidelines published for guitar in methods and treatises during the mid-seventeenth century reveal that this was exactly what the leading virtuosos were teaching.<sup>5</sup> *Punteado* allowed the guitarists to refine their accompaniments (enabling them to play a running bass for example), and *rasgueado* gave the performances a distinctly guitaristic flavour. It provided the guitar with a unique voice, and distanced it from other plucked string instruments, not just in terms of audible effect, but also in terms of its physical execution. *Rasgueado* demanded an approach far removed from the practices of the lute or theorbo, and to some, this was part of its appeal. To others however (namely those that favoured the aforementioned instruments) *rasgueado* was considered too crude a practice to merit a serious musician's attention. So whilst the practice contributed to the guitar's popularity, it also fuelled the criticisms of its opponents.

Criticisms of the guitar originating from Spain, Italy, France and England share common themes, particularly frustration with the popularity of the instrument among the upper classes, and condemnation of a performance practice that in their eyes required very little skill. What will also become apparent in the following exploration of these sources is that the perceived negatives of *rasgueado* are commonly illustrated through comparison with techniques cultivated on the lute.

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<sup>5</sup> The earliest known continuo guidelines for guitar were included in Foscarini's fifth book for the instrument, published in 1640. This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Many critics saw the lute as representative of the noble, skilful and well educated, whilst conversely the guitar bore associations with the base and musically illiterate.

Altogether, the writings reveal a diverse range of attitudes encapsulated in the praises and criticisms that were directed at both instruments. Some writers discuss performing capabilities and limitations, and make arguments for the advantages of one instrument over the other. What the accounts do not do, however, is present a clear division between the exponents of the two instruments, in which supporters of the lute write disparagingly of the guitar and vice versa. Instead, they reveal a whole spectrum of conflicting opinion. We find positive remarks made of the guitar when played *punteado*, but we also find guitarists who are reluctant to play in this style, regarding it as more appropriate to the lute.

To take the most scornful criticisms of the guitar as a starting point in unearthing its complicated image, close examination reveals a recurring perception that the instrument was popular, only because it was easy to play. This assumption was fuelled by the perception that *rasgueado* placed low technical demands on its practitioners. These criticisms date from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and the dating is significant because it indicates the period when *rasgueado* was the dominant performing style. The anonymous author of the French treatise *La manière de bien & justement entoucher les lucs & guiternes* (Poitiers, 1556)<sup>6</sup> provides

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<sup>6</sup> The numerous variant spellings of ‘guitar’ in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can create great confusion, particularly as there was some overlap with the same word possibly meaning gittern, or cittern. Adrian Le Roy’s lost instruction book for the guitar calls the instrument ‘guiterne’, but later on the instrument is referred to less frequently with the letter ‘n’. In some cases there is no certainty to which instrument is being referred. For a discussion of the variant spellings see Matthew Spring, *The Lute in Britain: A History of the Instrument and its Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 48, and James Tyler, *The Early Guitar: A History and Handbook* (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), 25

an early and typical example of how lutes and guitars were compared in terms of technical difficulty:

In my earliest years we used to play the lute more than the guitar, but for twelve or fifteen years now everyone has been guitaring, and the lute is nearly forgotten in favour of Heaven knows what kind of music on the guitar, which is much easier than that for the lute.<sup>7</sup>

Given the date, it is likely that it is the four-course guitar to which the author is referring, which was played in both the plucked and the strummed style. The observation is interesting, as the four-course guitar was well cultivated in France and had a substantial solo repertoire in print, including song intabulations and dances. As the author emphasises a marked difference between the repertoire of the lute and guitar, it is likely that it is music in the strummed style to which he is referring.

This perception that the guitar was easy is understandable when one compares the notation of its published *rasgueado* dances with lute tablatures. The contrapuntal lute notations adorned with ornaments make the guitar's chord symbols and stroke signs look humble indeed and, as has already been mentioned, *alfabeto* was perfectly tailored for amateurs or complete beginners with little musical training.

References to the guitar being an easy instrument to play are also apparent in early Italian sources. For example, Scipione Cerreto published his *Dell'arbore musicale* in Naples in 1608, and in it he wrote:

There are also players of the Spanish guitar, who belong to the same status [as double harp/lute musicians] – not withstanding that [the guitar] has been used by people of low class and little worth, not to mention by clowns, who have used it at banquets – but that it was later

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<sup>7</sup> Translated in Frederic V. Grunfeld, *The Art and Times of the Guitar* (New York: Macmillan (N.Y.), 1971), 91

used by Cavaliers and by other important people came about because of the ease of playing this instrument, whose technique is learned rather for aria than for art.<sup>8</sup>

The author highlights the cultivation of the instrument amongst the Italian upper classes and its prominent role in song accompaniment, and the reasoning he gives for its popularity in this context is the simplicity of its performing style. Michael Praetorius discusses the guitar in Italy in the same context, and although he refers to strumming in terms of foolish songs, he also acknowledges that the instrument was capable of accompanying more artful repertoires. He writes in his *Syntagma musicum* in 1619:

In Italy, the charlatans and mountebanks [Ziarlatini and Salt'in banco], who are like our comedians and clowns, strum them, singing their villanellas and other foolish songs. Nethertheless, good singers can sing fine and lovely songs with it.<sup>9</sup>

References to the low technical demand of *rasgueado* are also apparent in Spanish sources. Sebastián Covarrubias published his *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* in Madrid in 1611, and in it he laments the dwindling popularity of the courtly vihuela in favour of the guitar:

Since the invention of the guitar there have been very few who have devoted themselves to the study of the vihuela. It has been a great loss, because all kinds of notated music was played on it, and now the guitar is nothing more than a cowbell, so easy to play, especially in *rasgueado* that there is not a stable-boy who is not a musician of the guitar.<sup>10</sup>

The popularity of the guitar in Spain proved a sore point for the acclaimed lutenist Jacques Gaultier when he visited Madrid in 1623. He recounted the experience in a letter to Constantijn Huygens, and revealed that following one performance it was

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<sup>8</sup> John Walter Hill, *Roman Monody, Cantata and Opera from the Circles around Cardinal Montalto*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 68

<sup>9</sup> Tyler, *The Early Guitar*, 33

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Cory Michael Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song in Print, 1610-ca.1665: Neapolitan Roots, Roman Codification and "Il Gusto Popolare"' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2006), 57

suggested that he might do well if he took up the guitar, to which he took great offence, writing that he felt like breaking the lute over their ears.<sup>11</sup>

These themes of complexity versus simplicity are ongoing in sources throughout the seventeenth century. Pierre Trichet's *Traité des instruments de musique* dates from around the 1630s and in the following passage he argues forcefully in favour of the superiority of the lute over the guitar:

For who is not aware that the lute is what is proper and suitable for the French, and the most delightful of all musical instruments? Still there are some of our nation who leave everything behind in order to take up and study the guitar. Isn't this because it is much easier to perfect oneself in this than in lute-playing, which requires long and arduous study before one can acquire the necessary skill and disposition? Or is it because it has a certain something which is feminine and pleasing to women, flattering their hearts and making them inclined to voluptuousness?<sup>12</sup>

English accounts of the guitar date mostly from the latter half of the seventeenth century, as the instrument came to prominence during the Restoration. Charles II was a keen performer, and Corbetta's presence at court during the 1660s did much to popularise the instrument. By this time, published guitar music was predominantly notated in lute-style tablature (*alfabeto* was not known in England), and the guitar's solo repertoire had reached a high degree of sophistication. *Rasgueado* was still an important aspect of guitar playing, however, particularly in accompaniment. English sources reveal that despite the refinement of its plucked repertoire, the instrument still suffered from the poor reputation that it had earned from its early critics of its more ancient performing style. In 1669, Sir Digby Kenelm published his *Of Bodies and Of Man's Soul*, in which he includes a chapter that compares the intelligence of man with that of animals. He cites one example that illustrates nicely how *rasgueado* was maligned, and once again this occurs in relation

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<sup>11</sup> Spring, *The Lute in Britain*, 309

<sup>12</sup> Translated in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 106

to the lute. The chapter is subtitled ‘Of the Baboon that played on a Guittar’, and the author writes:

The Baboon, we have mentioned, might be taught some lessons made on purpose with very few stops, and upon an instrument whereupon all the strings may be stricken with one blow ... of which much labour and time might beget a habit in him ... in the first learning of a lesson on the Lute, we imploy our reason and discourse about it; yet, when we have it very perfect, our fingers (guided by a flight of fantasie) fall by custome, without any reflection at all, to play it as well, as if we thought never so carefully upon it. And there is no comparison, between the difficulty of a Gittar and of a Lute.<sup>13</sup>

The author is using the two instruments to represent two opposite extremes.

The baboon would struggle with even a very simple instrument, such as a guitar, whereas man can master the far more challenging lute owing to his superior intellect. So the difference between the instruments highlighted by this passage is yet again the level of difficulty they present to the performer.

Another Englishman who did not think highly of the guitar (at least initially) was Samuel Pepys, who refers to the instrument as a ‘bauble’ in a diary entry, dated July 27<sup>th</sup> 1661. However, it is unlikely that it was the simplistic nature of its performing style that shaped his opinion, as he heard the instrument performed by Corbetta in 1667 and still regarded it unfavourably. He wrote in his diary, on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1667 that:

I there espied Seignor Francisco tuning his Gittar, and Monsieur De Puy with him, who did make him play to me: which he did most admirably, so well I was mightily troubled that all that pains should have been taken upon so bad an instrument.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Sir Digby Kenelm, *Of Bodies and of Man’s Soul to Discover the Immortality of Reasonable Souls* (London, 1669), 406, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 10/06/10] < [http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:48854:232](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:48854:232)>

Note that the spelling of the word ‘guitar’ in his subtitle differs from that in the main text.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in John M. Ward, ‘Sprightly and Cheerful Musick: Notes on the Cittern, Gittern & Guitar in 16<sup>th</sup> - and 17<sup>th</sup> - century England’, *LSJ*, Vol. 21 (1979-81), 40



Corbetta was not the only Italian virtuoso guitarist who came to London. There were others, such as Pietro Reggio, Nicola Matteis and Cesare Morelli. Even Pepys eventually succumbed to the lure of the instrument and took lessons with Morelli.

The Spaniard, Luis de Briceño, wrote a long and passionate defence of the guitar in 1626. His method, published in Paris, contains dances in the *rasgueado* style notated in Castilian *cifras* (see Appendix 1), and the preface reveals that the author was well aware that critics regarded the guitar unfavourably in comparison with the lute. His response is to stress the versatility of the guitar and to list some curiously outlandish advantages of the instrument over the lute:

There are many my lady, who made fun of the guitar and its sound, but if they would consider carefully they would find the guitar is the most suitable instrument for our time one could imagine, for nowadays one looks for savings of purse and trouble. The guitar is a veritable theatre of savings. And furthermore it is convenient and appropriate to singing, playing, ballet-dancing, jumping, running, folk-dancing and shoe-dancing. I can serenade with it, singing and expressing with its help a thousand amorous passions...It has none of the inconveniences to which the lute is subject; neither smoke nor heat nor cold nor dampness can incommode it. It is always fresh as a rose. If it gets out of tune easily, it is just as easy to tune it again...In my and many other people's opinions, the guitar has great advantage over the lute, which requires many attentions to be properly maintained: it has to be a good instrument, well played, well strung, and listened to carefully in silence. But the guitar, my lady, whether well played or badly played, well strung or badly strung, is pleasant to hear and listen too; being so easy to learn, it attracts the busiest of talented people and makes them put aside loftier occupations so that they may hold a guitar in their hands. They desert the lute, mandora, harp, violin, sinfonia, lyre, theorbo, cittern and clavichord, all for the guitar. Many things could be said in favour of these instruments, but here one consideration is paramount; two thousand people now entertain and express their thoughts and troubles through the guitar. And as further proof of the value of my guitar ask yourself whether Kings, Princes and gentlemen lay aside the guitar for the lute as they now leave the lute for the guitar?<sup>15</sup>

It would seem that defending the guitar was important to Briceño, as he concludes his book with a song against those who attack his instrument, entitled 'Romance hecho por el Señor Luis contra los que burlan de su Guitarra y de sus canciones'.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Translated in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 109

<sup>16</sup> Luis de Briceño, *Metodo mui facilissimo para aprender a tañer la guitarra a lo española* (Paris, 1626; facs. edn. Geneva: Minkoff, 1972), 24

There are numerous sources that record the opinions of the guitarists regarding *rasgueado*. Benedetto Sanseverino's *Il primo libro d'intavolatura per la chitarra alla spagnuola* was published in Milan in 1622, and in it the author reveals that he felt that *rasgueado* was not only the style most natural to the guitar but that, owing to the instrument's limitations of projection and range, it was a necessity. For this reason he discourages playing in the plucked manner, a practice that did not appear in notated form until the 1630s. He writes:

Finally it seems to me that one should play the Spanish guitar with full strokes, and not otherwise, because playing with diminutions, slurs, or dissonances is more suited to the playing of the lute than the Spanish guitar and in softening such an instrument, not only does one take away its own natural and ancient style, but also the harmony is entirely removed.<sup>17</sup>

Giovanni Foscarini was a major contributor to the development of guitar notations. He was a pioneer of mixed tablature, and widened the guitar's harmonic vocabulary with his addition of a dissonant *alfabeto* chord chart. His more sophisticated and harmonically adventurous compositions require considerable skill to perform, and so it is rather curious that he writes apologetically about these pieces. Moreover, his sentiments towards guitar music in the plucked style seem to echo those of Sanseverino. He writes:

I will not say much about the sonatas which are in lute style only; I have included them as an embellishment to the work rather than for any other reason, because I know that they are more appropriate for the lute than for the guitar. Really I make my living by playing the lute,<sup>18</sup> as has been noted by those who have encountered me in the service of various princes both in Italy and abroad and especially in Flanders, with his Serene Highness, Archduke Alberto.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Translated in Nina Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola and Italian Monody 1589 - c.1650' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Southern California, 2000), 71-2

<sup>18</sup> Other famous guitarist-lutenists include Morelli, Le Carré and Colista; Campion was an able theorbist as well as guitarist; and performers of all three instruments include Foscarini, Bartolotti, Viseé and Kapsberger.

<sup>19</sup> Monica Hall, 'Giovanni Paolo Foscarini – Plagiarist or Pioneer?' (Online essay), *Monica Hall: Baroque Guitar Research* <<http://www.monicaHall.co.uk/pdf/Foscarini.pdf>> [accessed 06/07/09]

Despite this statement, Foscarini includes in his fifth publication (page 107) an arrangement of a chaconne from Piccinini's posthumous lute book of 1639.<sup>20</sup>

French guitarist Antoine Le Carré displayed an awareness of the criticisms that were being made of his instrument in the preface to his *Livre de Guitarre*, a book containing some charming dances in lute-style tablature published in 1671. He writes the following defence of the instrument:

It is a mistake to believe that it is not possible to play all kinds of music on the guitar, for my own experience has taught me that there is nothing that cannot be played on it. I have concerned myself with the instrument especially to make it clear that if up to the present time the guitar has been regarded as worthless, this is not the fault or inadequacy of the art.<sup>21</sup>

Interestingly, in Corbetta's case, he makes a point of distancing himself from the lute in his 1671 publication *Le guitarre royalle*, dedicated to Charles II. Although this book contains music in the plucked style, Corbetta makes it clear that his talent is preserved solely for the guitar, and he did not cultivate this style on the lute beforehand. Moreover, he angrily denies ever playing the lute, and seems to resent what he calls 'envious people' comparing his music with the lute repertoire. He writes 'the world knows that I have never practiced such an instrument where I do not know even a chord'.<sup>22</sup>

An English source dating from 1683 makes reference to Corbetta and other guitarists in a passage that discusses the two playing styles of the guitar. The source

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<sup>20</sup> Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music from the Renaissance to the Classical Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 66

<sup>21</sup> Antoine Le Carré, *Livre de guitarre*, trans. by Monica Hall (Paris, 1671; facs. edn. Westminster CA: LGV Publishing, 2009), 6

<sup>22</sup> 'Il mondo sa che non ho mai praticato tal instrumento dove non ne so pur un accordo', Francesco Corbetta, *La guitarre royalle* (Paris, 1671; Facs. edn. Geneva: Minkoff, 1975), 4, translated in J. Henken, 'Guitar Continuo Practice in Seventeenth-Century Italy' (unpublished master's thesis, California State University Northridge, 1979), 35

is Edward Chamberlayne's *The Present State of England*, in which the author expresses a low opinion of *rasgueado*, but a higher regard for *punteado* (a style that he refers to as 'pinching'):

But the fine easie Ghittar, whose performance is soon gain'd, at least after the brushing way hath at this present over-topt the nobler Lute. Nor is it to be denied, but that after the pinching way, some good work may be made of the Ghittar by such as Sir Francesco Corbetta, Mr Janvier, Signor Pedro, Mr Wootton aforementioned, and the like.<sup>23</sup>

One guitarist who was well aware of the conflicting opinions on both sides was Gaspar Sanz. His *Instrucción de musica sobre la guitarra española*, was published in Saragossa in 1674, and in the preface he recorded his own assessment of the guitar that is perhaps the most balanced and convincing of the accounts discussed thus far. He writes:

Other people have defined the perfection of this instrument. While some of them have said that it is a perfect instrument, others deny that. I, however, say that it is neither perfect nor imperfect; it is as each player makes it, because the perfection, or lack thereof, resides in the player and not in the instrument itself. I have seen players do difficult things with just one string, and even without frets, that others would need the register of an organ to execute. Each player, then, makes the guitar good or bad...<sup>24</sup>

Up to this point, the accounts examined have revealed that the guitar's repertoire was perceived by critics as crude, and that they regarded its *rasgueado* performing style as simplistic. Conversely, what late seventeenth-century English sources reveal that the lute was regarded as overly complex. Thomas Mace and the author of the *Burwell Lute Tutor* each wrote passionately about their instrument, and went to great pains to explain why it was most worthy of a musician's time and effort. Both also comment on its waning popularity, and Mace in particular addresses the

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<sup>23</sup> Edward Chamberlayne, *The Present State of England*, Part III, (London, 1683), 89, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library, [accessed 10/06/10]  
<[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:59749:50](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:59749:50)>

<sup>24</sup> Translated in Jerry Willard, *The Complete Works of Gaspar Sanz*, Vol. 1 (New York: Amsco Publications, 2006), 15

cause of this phenomenon. Clearly he was aware that the lute bore an association with high technical difficulty, and on the title page of his *Musick's Monument* (1676) his section on the lute is introduced as follows:

The Second Part, Treats of the Noble Lute, (the Best of Instruments) now made Easie, and all its Occult-Lock'd-up-Secrets Plainly laid Open, never before Discovered; whereby It is now become so Familiarly Easie, as Any Instrument of Worth, known in the World, Giving the True Reasons of Its Former Difficulties: and Providing Its Present Facility by Undeniable Argument.

The aim of this section is to present the lute as an unchallenging instrument to learn. It opens with a prologue entitled 'The Lute Made Easie', which features a long dialogue between the author and his lute, 'the lute complaining sadly of its Great Wrongs and Injuries'. The section then begins as follows:

That the LUTE was a Hard or very Difficult instrument to Play well upon, is confess'd; And the Reasons why, shall here be given: But that it is Now Easie, and very Familiar, is as Certainly True; And the Reasons shall likewise be given.<sup>25</sup>

He provides two main reasons why the lute had previously been difficult to play. The first is that it used to have fewer strings, which made stopping chords more awkward, and the second is that the lute masters had an unfortunate habit of dying without writing down their lessons or methods. He goes on to write a forceful counter-argument to what he lists as six false charges against the instrument, shedding further light on contemporary perceptions of the lute. The charges are as follows:

That it is the Hardest Instrument in the World  
That it will take up the time of an Apprenticeship to play well upon it  
That it makes Young People grow awry  
That it is a very chargeable instrument to keep; so one had as good keep a horse  
That it is a woman's instrument  
It is out of fashion.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (London, 1676; facs. edn. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1977), 39

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*, 43

It is interesting that the perceived negatives of the lute could be seen to correspond with the perceived positives of the guitar, an instrument regarded as easy, fashionable and cheap.

The author of the *Burwell Lute Tutor* describes some of the ways in which the lute had been abused in recent times, and sheds light on some new and undesirable performance practices that lutenists had adopted. He writes:

It is a disgrace for the Lute to play country dances, songs or corantes of Violins as likewise to play tricks with one's Lute to play behind backs etc. The Lute is a noble instrument not made for Debaucheries, Ranting or playing in the streets to give serenades to Signora Izabella. Tis a grave and serious musicke for modest and sober persons and for the cabinet rather than for a publique place.<sup>27</sup>

The references to 'debaucheries' and street music are interesting as these are more akin to guitar performances in accounts of its cultivation among the lower classes (discussed in the next chapter). The author follows with a passage on behaviour appropriate to lute playing, revealing a stark contrast with that associated with the guitar. He writes that 'to make people dance with the Lute is improper – it is true that a young lady may dance the sarabande with her Lute and that is all ... this instrument requireth silence and a serious attention.'<sup>28</sup> The author stresses, then, that the lute thrives in an intimate setting and needs a silent audience to be fully appreciated. These writings make for an interesting comparison with those of Briceño cited earlier. Both authors mention serenades, dancing and the necessity for a silent and attentive audience in completely opposing ways.

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<sup>27</sup> Anonymous, *The Burwell Lute Tutor*, intro. by Robert Spencer (fac. edn. Leeds: Boethius Press, 1974), 69

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

The main focus of the accounts discussed in this section has been the perceived simplicity of *rasgueado* compared with the perceived complexity of lute technique. In reality, there is little sense in comparing two instruments that command such different styles of approach.<sup>29</sup> The guitarists highlight some interesting points regarding *rasgueado* performance. Although Briceño's account contains some highly exaggerated claims of the guitar, he provides us with an interesting discussion of its versatility, stressing that it was perfectly suited to accompany numerous song and dance types, both popular and courtly. Sanseverino gives us a practical reason for playing *rasgueado* rather than plucking, namely the rapid sound decay of the instrument and the limitations of its range. The fact that Sanseverino felt that he had to discourage plucking indicates its early cultivation, as perhaps does Covarrubias's assessment of the guitar as 'so easy to play, especially in *rasgueado*' in 1611. It seems that the underlying resentment of the criticisms of the instrument discussed so far lay in its increasing popularity amongst the upper classes. The writings in question do not centre on lower class cultivation of *rasgueado*, but rather highlight the practice among 'cavaliers', ladies, and persons who had previously played the lute or vihuela.

### The Guitar and the Upper Classes

As the above accounts indicate, the guitar was cultivated in higher social spheres from the late sixteenth century. Its use accompanying song contributed to its popularity among the upper classes, particularly in Italy. Other contributing factors were its regular appearances in theatrical productions and the evolutionary development of guitar notations from *alfabeto* to lute-style tablature, allowing its

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<sup>29</sup> For a modern day opinion on the matter, see the interview with Gerard Rebour in 'Guitar International' magazine (June, 1988) accessible online at <[http://g.rebours.free.fr/6E/6.Guitar\\_under\\_Lully.html](http://g.rebours.free.fr/6E/6.Guitar_under_Lully.html)> [accessed 05/10/10]

printed repertoire to become increasingly sophisticated. In the latter half of the seventeenth century, French culture was in vogue throughout Western Europe, and the French orchestral styles of Lully were particularly popular. What guitar tablatures from this period reveal, is a widespread dissemination of music in the French style, or of transcriptions of works by leading composers such as Lully and Campra.

The French influence is very apparent in Corbetta's *La guitarre royalle*, published in 1671. The book contains dance suites notated in French tablature. The dedicatee of the book, Charles II, had of course had spent his exile from England in France and had developed a taste for French musical styles. Corbetta's presence in France during the 1650s assisted with the instrument's popularity in court circles. The guitar initially gained currency through its appearance in court ballets under Louis XIII (1601-1643), a keen performer on the instrument. It was under Louis XIV (1638-1715) however, who shared his father's passion for the guitar, that the instrument really thrived. French guitar publications become far more prominent from the 1670s onwards, including those of Le Carré (1671 and 1675), Corbetta (1671 and 1674), Medard (1676), Grenerin (1680), Visée (1682 and 1686) and Campion (1705). Medard wrote in his publication that the greatest princes in Europe prefer the guitar to all other instruments.<sup>30</sup> Many French nobles played the instrument in theatrical settings, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

The demand for Lully's music is apparent in guitar tablatures from this period. Visée includes transcriptions of Lully's works in his guitar books, and names Lully as

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<sup>30</sup> 'Les plus grandes Princes de l'Europe qui ont voulu jouer de quelque Instrument Lont préférée a tous les autres...' Remy Medard, *Pièces de guitarre* (Paris: Guanière, 1676) quoted in Francois-Emmanuelle Denis, 'La guitare en France au XVII siecle: son importance, son repertoire', *Revue belge de musicologie*, Vol. 32/33 (1978-9), pp. 143-150, 145



the composer he was attempting to emulate in his own pieces. French contredanses were particularly sought after, and the choreography of such dances was ingeniously notated by Pierre Beauchamp and published in the catalogues of Raoul-Auger Feuillet in the early eighteenth century. Murcia's *Resumen*, published in Madrid in 1717, attests to the demand for such dances in Spain.<sup>31</sup> The dances in this book correspond exactly with those in Feuillet's catalogues, indicating the guitar's employment in accompanying this genre. Again some of the inclusions in Murcia's book are by Lully and Campra.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, as guitar tablatures were sufficiently developed, transcriptions of compositions high in demand by the most eminent composers of the time could become accessible to performers. At the same time, guitarist-composers could imitate these styles in their own compositions, as Corbetta does in his second *La guitarra royalle*, published in 1674 and dedicated to Louis XIV. He tells us in the preface that he includes music particularly suited to the tastes of the King, namely those in a chromatic and delicate style. Such practices served to make the guitar highly fashionable amongst the upper classes. We see instances of guitars in soirées at people's homes, and find the instrument playing an increasingly prominent role in the musical upbringings of young ladies and gentlemen.

The guitar publications themselves contain plentiful evidence of the instrument's presence in court circles. The books are full of dedications to nobles

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<sup>31</sup> For more information regarding influence of the French style in Spanish tablatures see Craig H. Russell, 'Santiago de Murcia: The French Connection in Baroque Spain', *JLSA*, Vol. 15 (1982), pp. 40-51

<sup>32</sup> Craig H. Russell, 'Radical Innovations, Social Revolution, and the Baroque Guitar' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Guitar*, ed. by Victor Anand Coelho (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 153-181, 164

from guitarists seeking patrons and court positions. They also provided the guitarists with a means of recording their associations with influential and distinguished people. They could document their past successes in previous employments, as Corbetta does when he tells us of his involvements in Lully's ballets, and when he boasts that his dances in his 1671 publication were particularly liked by King Charles and the dukes of York and Monmouth.<sup>33</sup> Stefano Pesori's *Galaria musicale* (1648) is of particular interest as it includes a register of the author's students, organised according to their class. The list reveals that he taught nobles, doctors, clergy and merchants among others.<sup>34</sup>

However, the guitar was being cultivated by the upper classes long before guitar music was in print. It took part in high-profile, stately occasions during the late sixteenth century, including the Florentine wedding celebrations of 1589 discussed below. An early Spanish employment of the guitar in such festivities was in 1599, when many extravagant dances were commissioned for the entry of Margaret of Austria into Madrid. Several of the dances involved guitarists in costume. The 'Dance of the Portuguese Musicians', for example, was choreographed by Pedro de Carranza and Julian de Herrera, and it required seven dancers carrying 'vihuelas, harp, cittern, bowed soprano vihuela [and] guitars'.<sup>35</sup> The 'Dance of the Music' required four gentlemen and four ladies, paired in different colours, and 'with different instruments in their hands including lutes, vihuelas, bowed vihuelas, cittern

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<sup>33</sup> Gary Boye has meticulously catalogued the contents of guitar publications up to 1800, and he also lists the names of any persons mentioned in the books. One should consult his website for an insight into the social groups associated with these tablatures. <<http://www.library.appstate.edu/music/guitar/>>

<sup>34</sup> See Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 104-5 for more information.

<sup>35</sup> David Sanchez Cano, 'Dances for the Royal Festivities in Madrid in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Dance Research*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Winter, 2005), pp. 123-152, 150

and guitars'.<sup>36</sup> Finally there was the 'Dance of the Acrobats', described as 'A fiesta of acrobats on a stage'. In this performance there were four women dressed as men and three men imitating the dress and gestures of the famous Italian performers of the *commedia dell'arte*. Two of the men were musicians; one carried the lute and the other a guitar.<sup>37</sup>

In early seventeenth-century Italy, we find records of upper class enthusiasm for the guitar as an accompanying instrument for song. This is unsurprising, as the guitar had been well received at the 1589 and 1608 Florentine wedding festivities, and published *alfabeto* songbooks were circulated from as early as 1610. One early source, dating from 1615, documents the musical upbringing of a privileged young Italian boy named Baldassarre. The source is part of an ongoing correspondence between Girolamo Fioretti and Marquis Enzo Bentivoglio,<sup>38</sup> in which the marquis, a nobleman with important diplomatic offices in several Italian courts, was kept up to date with the boy's progress. The source is of particular interest because it reveals that the marquis was especially keen for Baldassarre to learn to accompany songs with the guitar, and also that his teacher was a woman, the renowned singer Ippolita Recupito. Fioretti reports:

Now he will be at the disposition of Signora Ippolita, who will teach him how to play the guitar. And I shall not fail to remind her of Your Most Illustrious Lordship's wishes in this regard. In the meantime, you will be able to give those orders that seem appropriate to you so that Baldassarre will have a guitar with which to study, since Signora Ippolita does not have a guitar to lend him. I, too, will teach him what little I know, so that on some occasions he will be able to sing also the pieces of music that he will know in the Italian manner.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *ibid*, 151

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*

<sup>38</sup> Reproduced in Hill, *Roman Monody*, 130-134

<sup>39</sup> Translated in *ibid*, 133

As has already been mentioned, sources relating to the guitar in upper class English society date largely from the latter half of the seventeenth century, owing to Charles II's predilection for the instrument, its regular appearances in stage works and also the presence of Corbetta at court in the 1660s. The popularity of the instrument was such that it came to be encouraged in instructional guides for young gentlemen. In 1678, J. Gailhard published *The Compleat Gentleman*, which contains a passage listing all the accomplishments that a modern gentleman should aspire to. He writes:

And with your close following Riding the great Horse, Fencing, Dancing, Drawing Landscapes, and Designing, Learning the Gitar, the French and Italian Tongues, and following other Exercises, to acquire those Accomplishments, which do so much become a Gentleman of your Age.<sup>40</sup>

Such publications were common. Another that mentions the guitar is *The Compleat French-Master for Ladies and Gentlemen...* published in London in 1694 by Abel Boyer. The following passage is found in the seventh dialogue, titled 'Of a Gentleman's EXCERCISES':

Musick, either Vocal or Instrumental, is very agreeable, and contributes much to render a Gentleman accomplisht ... so that a Gentleman that has a good Voice will do very well to learn to Sing; or else he may be contented to play on the Lute, the Guitar, the Flute or the Flageolet.<sup>41</sup>

It is noteworthy that the guitar and lute are here mentioned on equal terms.

There is plentiful iconographic evidence of the guitar among the high ranks of society. It occurs in scenes of music-making in opulent settings such as in the interior

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<sup>40</sup> J. Gailhard, *The Compleat Gentleman; or, Directions for the Education of Youth as to their Breeding at Home and Travelling Abroad in Two Treatises*, Part II, Dedication, (1678), no page number, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10]

<[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:101863:63](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:101863:63)>

<sup>41</sup> Abel Boyer, *The Compleat French-Master for Ladies and Gentlemen* (London, 1694), 29, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 08/06/10]

<[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:54097:152](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:54097:152)>

scene with musicians and singers painted by Laurentius de Neter (1600-1650). However, the paintings that reveal most clearly how the guitar was embraced by the upper classes are those in which the instrument itself is symbolic of a high status. It was usual practice in portraits of powerful figures for the artist to include objects to symbolise the subject's wealth and education. The 'Agliardi Triptych' for example, painted during the 1660s by Evaristo Baschenis (1617-1677) depicts three brothers of the Agliardi family, Ottavio, Alessandro and Bonaficio, surrounded by instruments and symbols of learning. The impressive collection of instruments includes archlutes, lutes, bass viol, mandora, cittern, spinet and four guitars. The third panel of the triptych is of particular interest, however, because Alessandro is exhibited playing a very elaborately decorated guitar (an extra hint at the value of the instruments), whilst the table in front of him is covered in books to emphasise the family's intellectual pursuits.<sup>42</sup> The guitar is used to similar ends in Jacob van Schuppen's 'The Guitar Player' c.1700, a portrait of a courtier and his family in a very lavish setting. The family's musical interests are emphasised not just by the guitar, but also by the open songbook and the dancing girl.<sup>43</sup>

Inevitably, not everyone believed that playing the guitar was a suitable pursuit for a gentleman, and one such person was Obadiah Walker. In 1673, he published his *Of Education, Especially of Young Gentlemen: in Two Parts*. He presents his counter-argument thus:

Music I advise not; since to acquire any considerable perfection in it, takes up too much time; and to understand little of it, is neither graceful, satisfactory, nor durable. To thrum a Guitar

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<sup>42</sup> The triptych is discussed in greater detail by Victor Coelho in 'The Baroque Guitar: Players, Patrons, Paintings, and the Public', in *The World of Baroque Music*, ed. G. Stauffer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), pp. 175-178

<sup>43</sup> All of these pictures can be viewed in Dag Arve Lindsetmo's online image archive of plucked string instruments at <<http://www.klassiskgitar.net/imagesmain.html>> [accessed 27/07/10]

to 2 or 3 Italian Ballad tunes, may be agreeable for once, but often practiced is ridiculous, besides I do not remember to have seen any Gentleman, tho very diligent and curious abroad, to qualify himself with that skill.<sup>44</sup>

Curiously, Walker is not displaying any awareness of the guitar's plucked repertory that was being cultivated at the time, although this passage is interesting as it indicates an association of the guitar with the Italian repertory.

### The Guitar and Women

The guitar experienced an early interest among high-profile ladies, as documentary evidence places the instrument in the hands of leading female Italian musicians from the late sixteenth century onwards. By the latter half of the seventeenth century, the guitar had gained such currency amongst high- and middle-class women, that we find female dedicatees of published books of tablature; records of ladies taking lessons with the leading virtuosos of the time and on rare occasions, such as in the example above, of female teachers. There is substantial iconographic evidence of female performers and numerous literary references to such activities. Mentions of female guitarists are particularly prevalent in later English dramatic works, attesting to the popularity of the instrument during the Restoration.

In 1589, the four- and five-course guitar were used in the final *ballo* of the sixth *intermedio* for *La Pellegrina*, as part of the wedding festivities for Ferdinando de' Medici and Christina de Lorraine. The two guitarists who featured in this spectacle were both women: Vittoria Archilei and Lucia Caccini. Archilei was a

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<sup>44</sup> Obadiah Walker, *Of Education, Especially of Young Gentlemen: in Two Parts*. (Oxon, 1673), 196, Early English Music Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 08/06/10] <[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:101704:102](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:101704:102)>

singer in the service of the Medici, well thought of by Emilio Cavaleri and Sigismondo D'India,<sup>45</sup> and Lucia was the wife of the famous Giulio Caccini. The guitar-accompanied *ballo* would make another appearance in 1608 at the wedding of Cosimo de' Medici and Maria Maddalena of Austria, this time featuring Archilei and Francesca Caccini with guitars. Francesca was Lucia's daughter and was a talented musician and composer in her own right. She wrote canzonettas and music for the stage, and in 1625 she wrote a court opera, *La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina*. Many female performers made names for themselves singing monodies, and the guitar was one of the accompanying instruments they are documented using. Adriana Basile, who was held in high esteem by Monteverdi, sang Spanish and Italian songs to guitar accompaniment,<sup>46</sup> and as we have seen, Cardinal Montalto's singer, Ippolita Recupito, who was married to the composer Cesare Marotta, also played the instrument. Francesca Caccini's daughter, Margherita Signorini is also known to have studied guitar with Costanza de Ponte, the wife of the composer Luigi Rossi.<sup>47</sup>

In the mid-seventeenth century, the popularity of the guitar amongst Italian ladies was still strong. Stefano Pesori's *Lo scrigno armonico*, a book of *alfabeto* songs and music in mixed tablature, was published in 1648. To cater for female interest, he clearly highlights one page of dances as 'for women'.<sup>48</sup> Gavito points out that the *alfabeto* songs in Venetian prints utilise the soprano clef, indicating a

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<sup>45</sup> H. Wiley Hitchcock and Tim Carter, 'Archilei, Vittoria' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, 2nd edn., Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan Reference, 2001), pp. 856-857

<sup>46</sup> For more information about Adriana Basile, see John H. Baron, 'Secular Spanish Solo Song in Non-Spanish Sources 1599 – 1640', *JAMS*, Vol. 30, No.1 (Spring, 1977), pp. 20-42, 24-25

<sup>47</sup> Suzanne G. Cusick, "'Thinking from Women's Lives": Francesca Caccini after 1627', *MQ*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 484-507, 498

<sup>48</sup> 'Passaggi semplici per Dame, et novelli nello studio', Stefano Pesori, *Lo scrigno armonico* (Mantua, 1640; facs. edn. Florence: S. P. E. S., 1986), 17

predicted female interest in the music.<sup>49</sup> Fortune, however, advises caution when making such an assumption. He writes that ‘as a rule, though, the same songs were meant to be sung by men and women alike’, and he quotes a passage from Thomas Campion’s *First Book of Ayres* (c.1613) in which the author described ‘treble tunes’ as ‘tenors mounted eight notes higher’.<sup>50</sup> Some female members of the *commedia dell’arte* are depicted in iconographical sources performing with guitars (see Chapter 3). Two *commedia* actresses who were particularly famous for their mastery of the instrument were Virginia Andreini (1583-1630), whose stage character was *Florinda*, and, in the early eighteenth century, Giovanna Benozzi, who made a name for herself portraying the character *Silvia*. Watteau portrayed Benozzi playing the guitar in his *Harlequin, Pierrot and Scapin* (1716).<sup>51</sup> Angiol Michele Bartolotti’s second book of guitar tablature was dedicated to Queen Christina of Sweden, who arrived in Rome in 1655 after abdicating her throne. Christina had been a keen patron of music, and her court in Stockholm had featured an ensemble of Italian musicians, including guitarists Bartolotti and Reggio.

In 1626, Luis de Briceño attempted to popularise the *rasgueado* performing style in France by publishing a guitar method, which he dedicated to a French noblewoman, ‘Madama de Charles’. As we have seen, however, guitar publications do not gain currency in France until the 1670s, and these are notated in French tablature. Antoine Le Carré published two such books in 1671 and 1675.<sup>52</sup> The earlier book was dedicated to ‘Princess Palatine’ Sophia (1630-1714), daughter of Frederick V, and Elisabeth Stuart, and granddaughter of James I. The later book was

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<sup>49</sup> Cory Gavito, ‘Carlo Milanuzzi’s Quarto Scherzo and the Climate of Venetian Popular Music in the 1620s’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of North Texas, 2001), 54

<sup>50</sup> Nigel Fortune, ‘Italian 17th – Century Singing’, *M&L*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (July, 1954), pp. 206-219, 207

<sup>51</sup> This painting is reproduced in Daniel Hearz, ‘Watteau’s Italian Comedians’, *ECS*, Vol. 22, No.2 (Winter, 1988-89), pp. 156-181, 165

<sup>52</sup> *Livre de guitarre* (Paris, 1671) and *Livre de pièces de guitarre et de musique* (Paris, 1675)



dedicated to the future Queen Mary II of England (1662-1694); daughter of James II and wife of William, Prince of Orange, the future King William III of England. Le Carré addresses Princess Sophia thus:

... I present you only with these pieces for guitar, which being brought to life by the most beautiful hands in the world, will probably be more pleasing to the ears than all the praises which I could bestow. It is with this hope, Madame, that I have published them; but as it belongs only to the excellence of Your Spirit to recognise them, it also belongs only to Your rare Virtue to protect them.<sup>53</sup>

High profile ladies with an interest in the guitar could of course take lessons with high profile guitarists. Santiago de Murcia, one of the great Spanish virtuosos of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, taught Queen Maria Luisa Gabriela of Savoy, and Charles II's niece, Princess Anne, took lessons with Francesco Corbetta.

The guitar had great appeal amongst French ladies, as is attested to by contemporary iconography. French artists Jean-Baptiste Santerre (1651-1717), Alexis Grimou (1678-1733) and Jean-Marc Nattier (1685-1766) all painted the instrument being played by French women.<sup>54</sup> The last artist painted the guitar in the hands of Louise-Anne de Bourbon-Condé in 1731. Louise-Anne (1695-1758) was a noblewoman and daughter of Louis III de Bourbon. One of the most telling images, however, is the engraving published by A Trouvain in 1694, entitled *Dame de qualité jouant de la guitarre*, indicating the secure place of the instrument among estimable ladies.<sup>55</sup>

Further evidence of the cultivation of the guitar among upper-class French women can be found in musical sources. One manuscript dating around 1680 and

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<sup>53</sup> Antoine Le Carré, *Livre de guitarre*, trans. by Monica Hall, 4

<sup>54</sup> The works of these artists can be seen in Dag Arve Lindsetmo's online image archive, cited above.

<sup>55</sup> The engraving is reproduced in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 84

containing chansons with guitar accompaniment belonged to the ‘Duchesse de Neuville-Villeroi’, and another from roughly the same period belonged to ‘Madame la comtesse du Romain’.<sup>56</sup> In 1705, François Campion’s *Nouvelles decouvertes* was published in Paris, and it would seem that the author expected a female interest as he writes in the preface that women should not find the music too challenging: ‘Le beau sexe au contraire y trouvera des suites favorables aux belles mains’.<sup>57</sup>

English upper-class ladies took to the instrument with great enthusiasm and evidence of this is abundant in a diverse range of sources. References occur in memoirs, for example, that support this fact, such as those of the famous diarist John Evelyn (1620-1706). He makes two such references; the first in 1653, where he describes a performance by ‘Mademoiselle La Varenne’, ‘who sang so finely to the guitar’,<sup>58</sup> and the second much later in 1684, when he writes:

I visited Sir Rob: Reading, where after supper we had musique, but none comparable to that which Mrs Bridgeman made us upon the Gittar, which she mastered with such extraordinary skill, and dexterity, as I hardly ever heard any lute exceede for sweetnesse.<sup>59</sup>

It would seem, owing to the implied complexity of her performance and the comparison with the lute, that this entry records a solo guitar performance.

The guitar is also mentioned in the memoirs of Count Philibert Gramont, a Gascon of noble birth who spent time in England from the mid to late seventeenth century. His experiences of the Restoration court are recorded in his memoirs, published in 1713, and his comment that ‘you were as sure to see a guitar on a lady’s

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<sup>56</sup> F-Pn, MS Vm<sup>7</sup> 6236, RISM B/VII, 265, and F-Pn, MS Vm<sup>7</sup> 6235, RISM B/VII, 264

<sup>57</sup> François Camion, *Nouvelles decouvertes sur la guitare* (Paris: Michel Brunet, 1705; facs. edn. Geneva: Minkoff, 1977)

<sup>58</sup> John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. by E. S. de Beer (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 333

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*, 764

toilet as rouge or patches'<sup>60</sup> particularly highlights the popularity of the guitar among women. The vogue for the guitar during the Restoration however was not to everyone's liking, and one musician who lamented the phenomenon was John Playford. In 1666, he published *Musick's Delight on the Cithren*, and in the preface he makes a scornful reference to the current trend for young ladies to be 'taught by Monsieur la Novo Kickshawibus on the Gittair'.<sup>61</sup>

There are also numerous references to women guitarists in literary sources. 'Mr Crown's' heroic poem, *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love, between a Fair Noble Parisian Lady and a Beautiful Young Singing Man* (1692), tells the story of a lady of high station, writing that 'when she goes to Church, Court, Balls or Plays repair'd, She in new Garments, Modes, and Jewels glar'd'.<sup>62</sup> As befitted such a lady, we also learn that she was musically trained, and that she had 'Song-Books' and a 'rich Gittar',<sup>63</sup> presumably for self-accompaniment. The connection between the guitar and high breeding is a theme continued in English dramatic works. Some even make the connection explicit, such as *Britannia Triumphans* (1638), a masque by Inigo Jones and William Davenant. In the section of drama titled 'The Mock Romansa', there is a dialogue between a giant, a damsel and a knight. The knight protests against the damsel's treatment by the giant, claiming:

Knight: With Courtly Knights, not roaring country swashes  
Hath been her breeding still, and's more fit far  
To play on Virginals, and the Gittar.  
Than stir a seacole fire, or scumme a cauldron,

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<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 115

<sup>61</sup> Spring, *The Lute in Britain*, 413

<sup>62</sup> Mr Crown, *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love, between a Fair Noble Parisian Lady, and a Beautiful Young Singing Man* (London, 1692), 3, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10] <[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:48489:5](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:48489:5)>

<sup>63</sup> *ibid*, 5

When thou shalt breake thy fast on buls chaudron.<sup>64</sup>

Although the word ‘Gittar’ provides a suitable rhyme with the word ‘far’, it is not likely that the author selected it merely for this convenience. If guitar playing were not a suitable activity for such a lady, it would have been out of place in an argument that advocates her high station. It seems more likely that this passage is regarding the guitar as a suitable alternative to the virginals.

Another playwright who mentions the guitar in relation to good breeding is Thomas Shadwell, whose *Bury Fair* was published in 1689. In Act 2, Scene 1, Lady Fantast comforts her daughter, revealing that the guitar was considered a stable element of a young lady’s upbringing:

Come my sweet daughter, consider what I have said. Thou art in thy maturity of blooming Age; I have bred thee to the very Achme and Perfection of Bury Breeding, which is inferior to none in this our Island; Dancing, Singing, Ghittar, French Master...<sup>65</sup>

Margaret Cavendish, the Duchess of Newcastle, authored several plays that were published in 1662, including one called *Youths, Glory, and Deaths Banquet*.<sup>66</sup> This play imposes a virtuous symbolism upon the guitar, as it is the choice instrument of ‘Lady Innocence’, and it also offers an explanation for the appeal of the instrument

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<sup>64</sup> Inigo Jones, *Britannia Triumphans* (London: John Haviland, 1638), 17, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed, 09/06/10] [http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:8287:10](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:8287:10)

<sup>65</sup> Thomas Shadwell, *Bury-Fair* (London, 1689), II. 1. 13, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10] <[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:62061:11](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:62061:11)>

<sup>66</sup> Margaret Cavendish, *Playes Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious and Excellent Princess, the Lady Marchioness of Newcastle* (London: A. Warren, 1662), I. 4. 128, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library, [accessed 09/06/10] <[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:50022:76](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:50022:76)>

among young ladies, as it allows the performer to exhibit their playing, singing and dancing all at once. Act 1, Scene 4 contains the following dialogue:

WOMAN	...And the other day when you were gone abroad, I saw her [Lady Innocence] dance, sing and play on a Gitturn, all at one time.
LADY INCONTINENT	And how did it become her?
WOMAN	Truly she sang so sweetly, played so harmoniously, danced so gracefully, and looked so beautifully, that if I had been a man, I should have been in love with her.
LADY INCONTINENT	I charge you break her Gittar, <sup>67</sup> tell her she sings not well, and that her dancing doth ill-become her.
WOMAN	Perchance she will not believe me.
LADY INCONTINENT	Oh yes, for youth are incredulous, even against themselves.

The opening scene of Act 5 of William Wycherley's *The Gentleman dancing-master* (1693) contains a dialogue that seems to treat the guitar as a woman's pursuit. When the character Hippolita tries to prevent a fight, she is told by Monsieur not to meddle in the affairs of men and to busy herself with music: 'You Ladies may say anything, but cousin pray do not talk of swords and fighting, meddle with your Guitar, and talk of dancing with your Dancingmaster there ha, ha, ha.'<sup>68</sup>

Contemporary art attests to the popularity of the guitar amongst English women. One artist who did several portraits of ladies with guitars was Peter Lely (1618-1680). One of the portraits was of the actress, singer and mistress of Charles II, Moll Davies. However, one of his paintings that is of particular interest is his *Two Ladies of the Lake Family* (c1660). The guitar, which is being performed by one of the girls, serves to enhance their image as affluent and accomplished young ladies. The guitar is used to similar ends in the paintings of many European seventeenth-

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<sup>67</sup> Note again two different spellings of 'guitar' in close proximity.

<sup>68</sup> William Wycherley, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* (London, 1693), V. 1. 55, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 08/06/10]  
<[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:101710:30](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:101710:30)>

century artists, perhaps most famously in Dutch painter Jan Vermeer's *The Guitar Player* (c.1672) but also in the paintings of Flemish artist Gonzales Coques (1614-1684). Coques painted *A Gentleman with his Two Daughters* (c.1664), and *A Family Group by a Fountain* (c.1655), and in both paintings the young girls demonstrate their musical talents with guitars.<sup>69</sup>

This evidence above has demonstrated the widespread prominence of the guitar among the upper classes, and documents some of the evident resentment this generated among exponents of the more traditional plucked string instruments of court, particularly the lute. The sources reveal that *rasgueado* was cultivated amongst the higher as well as lower classes, and those dating from earlier in the century highlight this practice in the context of song accompaniment. Guitar publications from later in the century notated in lute-style tablature, indicate the use of the instrument in the accompaniment of courtly dances. Critics of *rasgueado* are found in Spain, Italy, France and England throughout the seventeenth century. In order to understand more fully their accounts of the practice, it is necessary to explore the repertoire in which *rasgueado* was employed. Although guitarists strummed accompaniments to songs, it was the accompaniment of popular dance where performers were most at liberty to exhibit their skills in the style. Writings on *rasgueado* in guitar publications relate to the dance repertoire. This therefore is the focus of the next chapter, again with an emphasis on reception, revealing that the guitar was subject to some much more damning criticisms, particularly from religious authorities. The second part of the chapter explores the performing practices

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<sup>69</sup> All paintings mentioned with the exception of *A Family Group by a Fountain* can be viewed in Dag Arve Lindsetmo's online image archive, cited above.

associated with *rasgueado* for a greater insight into the style that was so maligned by its critics.

## Chapter 2: The Guitar and Popular Dance

### Popular Dances: Their Nature and Reception History

The guitar was one of the instruments most closely associated with dance in the seventeenth century. Its early repertoire lies at the heart of the improvised popular entertainments of the lower classes in sixteenth-century Spain and Latin America, largely consisting of simple repeated chord patterns that could accompany both dance and song. Popular dances were known collectively as *bailes*, differentiating them from the refined *danzas* of the upper classes. Many dances fall into the popular category, including the *chacona*, *zarabanda*, *folia*, *escarramán*, and *jácaras* to name a few examples. *Bailes* were notorious for inciting rowdy and licentious behaviour, and as such, they encountered formidable opposition from the pious Spanish Inquisitors. There were three constituent elements to the dances: song, dance and music, with the music being typically supplied by guitar and percussion. All three elements sparked complaints from commentators, moralists and religious authorities, who objected to the suggestive dance moves, the content of the lyrics and the boisterous accompaniment. Such complaints, which span from the late-sixteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries, are valuable because they provide an insight into condemned practices with which the guitar was connected. Although the sources are teeming with disapproval, they reveal how the social groups associated with the instrument were perceived, and they offer a glimpse of the recreational use of the guitar in a social setting. They also reveal that the texts of the dances were used as satirical tools to mock important figures, which is one of the reasons why the dances became subject to censorship and suppression. The other reasons why were the



provocative dancing and the often profane song lyrics, which the guitar regularly accompanied.

Of all the *bailes*, the *zarabanda* and *chacona* were considered amongst the most offensive. The *zarabanda* was scandalous to the degree that in 1583 it was prohibited, and even to utter its lyrics was to risk punishment. The most lenient penalty was a fine, but offenders faced exile if they were women, or six years work on a galley if they were men. In 1615, the *zarabanda* was prohibited again alongside several other *bailes*, but this time it was banned from the theatre. The following extract comes from the ‘Reform of plays put into law by the council...for this Court [Madrid] as in all of the Kingdoms, 8 April 1615’:

That they do no bring to the stage things such as dances, songs, lascivious wiggles, or dishonest ones, nor those that provide a poor example, unless they conform to the [decorum] of the old danzas: and all bailes such as escarramanes, chaconas, zarabandas, carreterías and any others similar to these [are prohibited]...not permitting anything lascivious, dishonest, or offensive to pious ears or that endangers other [ears], nor of any theme that is not suitable for public presentation.<sup>1</sup>

That such reforms were unsuccessful in suppressing dances such as these is indicated by the need of the authorities to repeatedly prohibit them. The Council of Castille recommended further reforms in 1644, and once again the *bailes* are targets of censorship. The sixth recommendation was as follows:

That there may not be sung any *jácaras*, satirical verses, or *seguidillas*, or any other song or baile – old, modern, or newly devised – which has any indecency, brazenness, or gesture lacking in modesty. Instead, one should make use of dignified music, chaste *bailes*, and *danzas de cuenta*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Translated in Louise K. Stein, ‘Terpsichore and the Hearing of Music in Early Modern Spain’, *MQ*, Vol. 82, No. 3/4 (Autumn – Winter, 1998), pp. 654-677, 660

<sup>2</sup> Translated in Maurice Esses, *Dance and Instrumental ‘Diferencias’ in Spain During the 17<sup>th</sup> and Early 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, Vol. 1 (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), 535

Most negative accounts of the *bailes* focus their objections on either the erotic gestures of the dancers or the offensive content of the lyrics, but there is one theme that is common to many of the sources and that is the personal involvement of the devil in creating the repertoire. The devil, who as we will see was believed by some to be a guitarist, is held responsible for the negative attributes of the dances. The dances were therefore considered as ruinous to christian souls, and the role of the guitar in the process did little to boost the instrument's image. An example of this devilish association can be found in the following extract from Rodrigo Caro's *Días geniales o lúdicos*, published in 1626:

It appears that the devil brought these lewd bailes out of hell. And that which even in the pagan republic was not tolerated because of its moderate nature, is now looked upon with acclaim and delight by Christians. They do not realise the ruin caused by such habits, and the lasciviousness and indecencies which the young people swallow as easily as sweet-tasting poison, and which at the very least destroys their souls. And it is not only one baile, but rather so many that it now seems that names are lacking for the excessive number of indecent ones. Such bailes were the zarabanda, chacona, carretería, jacona, Juan Redondo, rastrojo, gorrón, pipirrona, guiriguirigai; and a great mass of others of this sort, which the agents of idleness - musicians, poets, and stage players – invent everyday without censure.<sup>3</sup>

As has already been mentioned, the sarabande was one of the most notorious *bailes* for causing offence, and an early account of the dance highlights some of the reasons why. The *Philosophía antigua poetica* by Alonso Pinciano was published in the same year as the earliest known five-course guitar treatise, 1596, and it contains the following description of a performance by two women:

Both of them got up from the table. The young girl with her vihuela danced and sang, and the old woman with her guitar sang and danced. They uttered a thousand obscenities from those foul mouths, reinforcing them with the instruments and unchaste movements of their bodies. The dissoluteness was such that the three men, who were alone, were abashed and affronted...<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Translated in Esses, *Dance and Instrumental 'Diferencias'*, 436

<sup>4</sup> Alonso López Pinciano, *Philosophía antigua poetica* (Madrid: Thomas Iunti, 1596), translated in Alexander Dean, 'The Five Course Guitar and Seventeenth-Century Harmony: Alfabeto and Italian Song' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Rochester, New York, 2009), 27

This account is interesting as it describes the simultaneous playing, singing and dancing by the performers. The main focus of the account is the coarse lyrics, accentuated by the indecent gestures of the dance. Another writer who clearly abhorred such entertainments was Juan Mariona (1536-1624), who clearly supported the suppression of such unrestrained dances, and wanted in particular to prevent their appearance on the public stage. He wrote a treatise against public amusements, *Tratado contra los juegos publicos*, published originally in Cologne in 1607 under the title *De Spectaculis*; and he describes the sarabande as ‘a dance and song so loose in its words and so ugly in its motions that it is enough to excite bad emotions in even very decent people’.<sup>5</sup> He elaborates further on the damaging impact of the immoral lyrics, writing:

...Because the obscene little songs – taken from the squares, saloons, and brothels – incorporate obscene words which are craftily composed and use musical settings which serve a similar purpose, they are committed to memory with the most serious damage to the habits of the people. So much worse is the fact that these songs pass from the theatres to the squares and private homes, fixed in one’s memory with lasciviousness as if stuck with paste.<sup>6</sup>

Song texts that were humorous, mocking, obscene or rife with double-entendre were common, and religious authorities did their best to prevent the circulation of such lyrics. One particularly offensive song was brought to the attention of the Spanish Inquisitors in 1716. It was the accompanying text to a *cumbées*, a *baile* popular in the New World, and the reaction of the authorities reveals that they took the dissemination of ‘damaging’ texts very seriously:

We the Inquisitors of Your Excellency; it has come to our attention through denunciations that certain couplets commonly called the chuchumbe [cumbées] have been disseminated and passed on in the city as well as in other cities and villages of this realm. They begin ‘A friar from the village is standing at the corner...’ to chaste ears, these lyrics are scandalous, obscene and offensive to the highest degree. They are sung and accompanied by lewd actions, lascivious displays and indecent and provocative shaking-all to the grave ruin and scandal of the souls of the Christian community.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Translated in Jane Bellingham, ‘Sarabande’ in *The Oxford Companion to Music*, ed. by Alison Latham (Oxford, 2002), 1101

<sup>6</sup> Translated in Esses, *Dance and Instrumental ‘Diferencias’*, 533

<sup>7</sup> Translated in William Carter, ‘The Baroque Guitar in Spain’ [CD sleeve], Santiago de Murcia, *La Guitarra Española* (Linn Records CKD 288, 2007), 6

The moralist, Nuno Marques Pereira, provides an interesting outlook on distasteful song texts. His *Compêndio Narrativo do Peregrino da América*, published in 1728, attributed the offensive content of the songs to the devil, who, he informs us, was also a guitarist. He writes that:

I am persuaded that it is the Devil who teaches them most of these songs [*modas* ], because he is a great poet, a musician skilled in counterpoint, and a guitar-player, who knows how to invent profane songs [*modas* ] to teach those who do not have a fear of God. Father Benito Remigio tells us in his book *Moral Practice of Healing and Confession* (page 9, and in another book entitled *God Momo*) that the Devil having entered into a rustic woman, a priest went to conduct the exorcism of the Church, and, curious, he asked the Devil what did he know. He answered that he was a musician. Soon he asked for a guitar, and he played it in such a manner, and with such dexterity, that it seemed as if a famous player was playing it.<sup>8</sup>

The penalties for writing song texts that mocked figures of importance were harsh, as occurred in 1589 after the wedding of the Duke of Alcala in Valladolid. The Duke suffered the embarrassment of fainting during the service, and shortly afterwards some humorous chaconne verses came to light that mocked the groom. These lyrics resulted in the arrests of eleven nobles.<sup>9</sup>

The chaconne was a *baile* as notorious as the sarabande, and its lyrics usually centred around the happy and carefree existence. Juan de Arañes included a chaconne text in his *Libro Segundo de tonos y villancicos* (1624)<sup>10</sup> titled *Un sarao de chacona*, and the refrain of the song captures the typical mood of the dance: ‘to the good life, the very good life, let’s all go to chacona’.<sup>11</sup> Luis de Briceño’s guitar method (1626) contains similar chaconne texts that also have the ‘good life’ refrain. One stanza from *La gran chacona* highlights the infectious popularity of the dance:

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<sup>8</sup> Translated in Rogério Budasz, ‘Black Guitar Players and Early African-Iberian Music in Portugal and Brazil’, *EM*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Feb. 2007), pp. 3-21, 6

<sup>9</sup> Translated in Stein, ‘Terpsichore’, 667

<sup>10</sup> Juan de Arañes. *Libro segundo de tonos y villancicos a una dos tres y quatro voces, con la zifra de la guitarra espannola a la usanza romana* (Rome: Giovanni Battista Robletti, 1624)

<sup>11</sup> The song is translated in full in Stein ‘Terpsichore’, 668-670.

‘there is no friar so sheltered, no nun so devout that hearing the sound of the chacona, can resist leaving his (her) sacred offices’.<sup>12</sup> Lines such as these can also hint at why the church objected to such lyrics. The importance of the guitar accompaniment to songs such as these is made very clear in a collection of verses published in Madrid in 1621. Pedro Arias Pérez’s *Primavera y flor de los mejores romances* contains a description of the ‘Island of Chacona’, and the verse begins:

Now that the guitar serves me with  
its sonorous voice  
and as a tongue that can  
sing to you my tale.  
Before I give you the whole story  
summed up in just a few words,  
about the land you now tread,  
its people and its customs,  
know that the people of this Isle  
cannot say anything at all  
without the guitar, singing to this  
sound [tune] and in this manner.<sup>13</sup>

Just as with the other *bailes*, we find highly critical accounts of the chaconne for its scandalous dance moves, and one that is of particular interest comes from a novel in dialogue written by Lope de Vega. *La Dorotea* was published in 1632, and in Act 1, scene 7, Geralda laments the popularity of the dance, and some of her comments echo those discussed in Chapter 1. She seems to blame the appeal of the guitar for the popularity of the dance, and complains that more ‘noble’ instruments are therefore being neglected:

May God forgive Vicente Espinel, who brought us this novelty and the fifth string on the guitar, so that now people are neglecting the nobler instruments and ancient dances for the wild gesticulations and lewd movements of the chaconnes, so offensive to the virtue of chastity and to a lady’s decorous reserve. Alas and alack, oh *allemande* and *pie de gibao*, who for so many years dignified our soirées. Ah, the mighty sway of novelty!<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Translated in Thomas Walker, ‘Ciaccona and Passacaglia: Remarks on their Origin and Early History’, *JAMS*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Autumn, 1968), pp. 300-320, 316

<sup>13</sup> Translated in full in Stein, ‘Terpsichore’, 664-666

<sup>14</sup> Lope de Vega, *La Dorotea*, (Madrid, 1632) trans. Alan S. Trueblood and Edwin Honig (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 45

Her reference to ‘novelty’ probably refers both to the movements of the dancers and also to the appeal of *rasgueado*.

We find yet another reference to the devil in an account of a chaconne by Cervantes in one of his *Novelas Ejemplares*, ‘La Ilustre Fregona’ (The Illustrious Kitchen-Maid) published in 1613. In the story the accompaniment is provided by a particularly gifted guitarist called Lope, who also sings the lyrics:

Since he had a quick, easy, sharp wit he began to sing a delightfully improvised song, as follows.

Come on now all you nymphs  
And sprites in company,  
For the dance of the chaconne  
Is wider than the sea.

Let castanets ring out,  
Bend down and rub your hands  
Either in the dung-heap  
Or maybe in the sands.

That’s well done by you all,  
You need no help from me  
So pray and give the devil  
Two figs from your fig-tree.

Spit at Beelzebub  
He’ll let us merry be,  
For he and the chaconne  
Will never disagree.<sup>15</sup>

Accounts that focus specifically on the immodest nature of the dancing voice two main objections: firstly that the dance gestures are sexually explicit, and secondly they complain of the physical contact between dancers of the opposite sex. Padre Antonio Garces, an eighteenth-century cleric, objected strongly to such contact, writing that ‘they give each other their naked hands, they press them, and

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<sup>15</sup> Stanzas 5-8, Miguel Cervantes, ‘La ilustre fregona’, in *Exemplary Novels III*, trans. Michael and John Thacker (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1992), 93

give one another signs with which they express love to each other – and not the pure kind'.<sup>16</sup>

Miguel Francisco de Steinera provides us with a very descriptive account of the dancing of a *cumbées* in 1776 that echoes the concerns of Garces. He writes:

The dance is done with gestures, shaking, wiggle-wagging, and swaying of the hips—all contrary to common decency and a bad example for those who attend in order to watch and be in the middle of it all. They fondle each other, weave together, embrace arm in arm, and dance belly to belly.<sup>17</sup>

One author, who did not necessarily regard the *bailes* so negatively as his religious contemporaries, was one Giacomo Cassanova (1725-1798), who wrote the following account of a *fandango* in 1767:

Each man and woman danced face to face, taking only three steps at a time, clicking castanets between their fingers and accompanying the music with poses as lascivious as anything one could ever see. The man's motions visibly represented the action of satisfied love, those of the woman, consent, ravishment, and the ecstasy of pleasure. I was under the impression that no woman could refuse anything to a man with whom she had danced the fandango.<sup>18</sup>

Having commented on the lyrics and the gestures of the dancers, the only element of the *bailes* that remains to be explored is the music. We know from descriptions of the performances that the most common instruments of accompaniment were the guitar, castanets, tambourine and *sonajas*. We have already encountered instances of the musicians being involved in the dancing, and a French treatise on musical instruments dating from the 1630s would seem to corroborate that

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<sup>16</sup> Translated in Carter, 'The Baroque Guitar in Spain', 6

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*, 6

<sup>18</sup> Translated in Dorothea Link, 'The Fandango Scene in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*', *JRMA*, Vol. 133, No. 1 (2008), pp. 69-92, 82

the instrumentalists could get very caught up in the atmosphere. Pierre Trichet's

*Traité des instruments...* includes the following passage about the guitar:

The guiterre or guiterne is a musical instrument widely used by the French and Italians, but still more among the Spanish, who were the first to make it fashionable, and who know how to play it more madly than any other nation, using it particularly for singing and for playing their sarabands, galliades, espagnolettes, passamezes, passecaglias, pavaues, allemandes, and romanesques with a thousand gestures and body movements which are so grotesque and ridiculous that their playing is bizarre and confused. Nevertheless even in France one finds courtesans and ladies who turn themselves into Spanish monkeys trying to imitate them, demonstrating that they prefer foreign importations to their own native products. In this they resemble those who, though they could dine well at their own table, would rather go out to eat bacon, onions and black bread.<sup>19</sup>

We can only speculate what Trichet meant by mad or bizarre playing. Perhaps he was referring to some particularly frenetic strumming, or to the guitarists'

involvement in the dancing. Certainly the atmosphere of madness is apparent in an

early account of a *folia*. Sebastián Covarrubias provides us with a very animated

description in his *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, published in 1611. He

writes:

The folia is a very noisy dance of Portuguese origin. Many dance figures come from it, accompanied by the noisy sonajas all of which make a loud noise and other instruments. Some dancers carry others on their shoulders, and some young men dress themselves as young maids, who, with pointed sleeves, go making turns and sometimes dancing. And the sonajas play with such great noise and so rapidly that everyone seems to be out of their minds; thus the dance is called folia, from the Tuscan word folle, meaning emptiness, madness, without brains.<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps the great noise and the rapid tempo apparent in this account are what Trichet meant by playing 'madly'.

The above accounts allow us to build in our minds a picture of a *baile* as it may have been performed. We can visualise the participants dancing seductively in very close contact with one another, and we can imagine the energetic and noisy

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<sup>19</sup> Translated in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 106

<sup>20</sup> Translation in Meredith Ellis Little, 'Folia' in *International Encyclopedia of Dance*, ed. by Selma Jeanne Cohen, 6 Vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), III, pp. 28-29



accompaniment, charged by the intoxicating atmosphere of fun and merrymaking. However, what the sources also do collectively is build a sort of character profile of the type of person who would indulge in such activities, albeit one coloured by their tones of disapproval and condemnation. They create an image of the guitarist as an ‘agent of idleness’, unrefined in his behaviour and unrestrained in his performances; someone who socialised with rogues in taverns or brothels, was foul-mouthed and worst of all, was an accomplice of the devil. Of course such negative outlooks on the participants of the dances was to be expected from the writings of moralists and churchmen who thought it their business to blacken the image of the *bailes* to stem their popularity. Nevertheless, it does seem that the seventeenth-century guitarist became associated with certain stereotypes, in particular the one portrayed on stage or in works of literature. Hence we find numerous guitarists in plays or novels that are rogues of questionable morals. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

### Rasgueado Dance Accompaniments: The Teachings in Guitar Methods

In 1596, the earliest known treatise for the five-course guitar was published and in it we find the earliest printed instructions for performing a popular dance. This was Joan Carles Amat’s *Guitarra española*,<sup>21</sup> and although the book contains no dance music, it discusses in detail how to play the necessary chords to perform the most popular dances of the time, which the author lists as the *paseo*, *vacas*, *galliard*, *pavaniglia*, and *seguidillas*. As Amat only describes the chord pattern of the *vacas*, he presumably assumed the student would be familiar with the other dances. In

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<sup>21</sup> Joan Carles Amat, *Guitarra Española de cinco ordenes* (Barcelona, 1596 [lost], Lérida, 1626). The 1626 edition is the earliest extant copy, but this book was hugely popular and went through numerous subsequent editions, the last known being published in 1819. Plagiarisms of Amat’s book exist in the guitar publications of Pablo Minguet Y Yrol (1752) and Andres de Sotos (1760)

1606, Girolamo Montesardo published the first book of music for solo five-course guitar,<sup>22</sup> featuring popular dances notated with *alfabeto* symbols, which sparked a phenomenon that would gain considerable momentum with Italian publishers in the 1620s. Giovanni Ambrosio Colonna and Pietro Millioni in particular produced numerous books for guitar between 1620 and 1637.

The earliest known book for guitar printed in France was Briceño's method, notated in Castilian *cifras*. Conditions in Spain were not so favourable for music publishing. The publication and dissemination of books was rigorously policed during the Inquisition, and all publications, whether from home or abroad, were scrutinised to ensure their suitability for public release. Censorship either saw books banned or necessitating correction and subsequently this curbed the enthusiasm to publish in Spain. Guitar books that were published on Spanish soil, such as those of Amat, Gaspar Sanz, Lucas Ruiz de Ribayaz and Francesco Guerau, were all subject to scrutiny from church authorities (and the last three men were all priests themselves). All of the above authors included a formulaic request in their prefaces that their books aid guitar students in praising God. This was probably partly to assist with securing approval for publication. Sanz for example wrote that he hoped that students of the guitar would do so 'for the main possible reason: praising with this skill the author of the Universe, that with more proper music created the Celestial Spheres'.<sup>23</sup> Guerau's book won the approval of 'Dr Juan Martinez, priest in charge of the parish of St James in this court [Madrid]', who writes:

...and having seen it and read it, I have found in the written part, nothing against our Holy Catholic Faith or against good morals; and as for the tablature, I judge it very useful for

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<sup>22</sup> Montesardo, *Nuova inventione* (Florence, 1606)

<sup>23</sup> Translated in Willard, *The Complete Works*, 16

combating sloth and for the use of those who may dedicate themselves to the Faculty of Music.<sup>24</sup>

The critics encountered in Chapter 1 believed that *rasgueado* was a skill that was easily attainable, and the publication of popular guitar dances for beginners, a phenomenon that gained momentum in the 1620s, could have contributed to this attitude. Many such publications claim that a teacher was not necessary to learn this repertoire, and, as has already been commented, *alfabeto* was a notation that was particularly suitable for beginners. Instead of having to interpret staff notation and find the required notes on the fingerboard, guitar students learnt dances through the mechanical process of placing their fingers where they were told, a sort of ‘painting by numbers’ approach to music. The dances themselves appear simplistic. Often not taking up more than one line of a page, they consisted of a short series of chord symbols with a basic rhythm for the right hand, and this was repeated any number of times.

This appearance is deceptive, however. These dances, intended for newcomers to the instrument, cannot convey to us how a talented guitarist would have executed them. Short chordal frameworks such as these would have served as a basis for both rhythmic and harmonic variation, and seemingly rudimentary notations concealed the underlying performance practices inherent in the repertoire. A repeated four chord sequence, such as the I – IV – V – I passacaglias that frequent dance publications would soon become tiresome without the performer injecting some vitality of his own design into the framework, and we know from the accounts of the *bailes* that the accompaniments were anything but monotonous. Nevertheless,

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<sup>24</sup> Francesco Guerau, *Poema harmónico* (Madrid, 1694) trans. by Brian Jeffery (facsimile edn. London: Tecla Editions, 1977), 83

these beginners' guides to the guitar do contain clues as to how the dances may have been performed by more skilled hands. After all, these books introduce the fundamental practices that would be expanded by the virtuosos decades later. Much can be deduced about the performance of a repertoire by examining how it was taught at an elementary level.

A survey of the contents of some the earliest guitar publications demonstrates which dance genres the beginners were learning. A compact representation of the different dance-types is presented clearly in Table 2.1. These books are formatted in such a way that the dances are grouped together by genre, and each dance framework is notated multiple times, each time beginning on a different keynote (see Example 3 for an excerpt of Colonna's passacaglias from his *Intavolatura di chitarra*). This means that the student developed a familiarity with the chord scheme, and how the chords within the scheme related to one another. They also became familiar with the fingerboard of the instrument, playing the dances in even quite remote and uncommon keys, and it gave them practical experience of transposing a dance from one key to another. Transposition is stressed as a vital skill for guitarists to learn, particularly for accompaniment. Firstly, it meant that the guitarist could adjust the music to suit a singer's particular vocal range. Amat demonstrates the practical application of transposition with an instructional chart.<sup>25</sup> The chart contains the chord scheme of a *vacas* notated in Catalan *cifras* (see Appendix 1) twelve times, and each time the dance begins on a different keynote (see Figure 1). This numerical system of notation, in which all of the chords are numbered 1 to 12, is particularly effective for demonstrating transposition. Presented clearly like this, the student can

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<sup>25</sup> Amat, *Guitarra Española*, 26

Table 2.1: Dances in early guitar publications

Amat (1596)	Montesardo (1606)	Colonna (1620)	Sanseverino (1620)	Milanuzzi (1622)	Briceño (1626)
Paseo	Passacaglia	Passacaglia	Passacaglia	Passacaglia	Passacalle
Vacas					
Galliard	Galliard	Galliard	Galliard	Galliard	Galliard
Pavaniglia	Pavaniglia	Pavaniglia	Pavaniglia	Pavaniglia	
				Pavan	
Seguidillas					
	Sarabande	Sarabande	Sarabande		Sarabande
	Sfessania				
	Bergamasca		Bergamasca	Bergamasca	
	Chaconne	Chaconne	Chaconne		Chaconne
	Folia	Folia	Folia	Folia	Folia
	Matachin				
	Romanesca	Romanesca	Romanesca	Romanesca	
	Ruggiero	Ruggiero	Ruggiero	Ruggiero	
	Villano	Villano	Villano	Villano	Villano
	Ballo Gran Duca	Ballo Gran Duca	Ballo Gran Duca	Balo Gran Duca	
	Brando				
	Calata				
	Canario				
	Corrente	Corrente	Corrente		
	Favorita			Favorita	
	Monica	Monica	Monica	Monica	
	Paganina	Paganina			
	Saltarello		Saltarello		
	Spagnoletta	Spagnoletta	Spagnoletta		Spagnoletta
		Passamezzo	Passamezzo	Passamezzo	
					Gascona
			Allemande		
				Fantinella	
Miscellaneous Dances	Ballo di Napoli	Tenor di Napoli	Tenor di Napoli	Tenor di Napoli	
	Ballo di Gazella		Ballo della Torcia		
	Ballo del Marchese di Vigliena		Ballo alla Romana		
	Ballo delli Stravestiti		Caccia amorosa		
	Balletto L'Amor mio				
	Ballo del Sventurato				
	Francesella				
	Ceraselle				
		Baletto	Balletto		
	Zefiro				
	Il Disperato				
	Amor secreto				
	La dolce Partita de Vida de mi Vida				
Miscellaneous Songs		Aria	Aria		
		Pargoletta Bella	Aria detta la Peregrina		
		La Beolca	Aria sopra Vezzasetta		
		Aria alla Piemontesa	Aria spagnola		
			Poi che vol amor		
			Sessa felice		

transpose the dance by simply adding or subtracting the same number to all of the chords in the scheme.

**Example 3: Transcription of some of Colonna's passacaglias<sup>26</sup>**

The first musical staff shows a 3-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The first measure contains two chords, the second measure contains two chords, and the third measure contains two chords. The chords are labeled A, B, C, and A. A treble clef and a sharp sign are present at the beginning of the staff.

The second musical staff shows a 3-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The first measure contains two chords, the second measure contains two chords, and the third measure contains two chords. The chords are labeled B, G, A, and B. A treble clef and a sharp sign are present at the beginning of the staff.

The third musical staff shows a 3-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The first measure contains two chords, the second measure contains two chords, and the third measure contains two chords. The chords are labeled C, A, I, and C. A treble clef and a sharp sign are present at the beginning of the staff.

<sup>26</sup> Transcribed from Colonna, *Intavolatura di Chitarra Spagnuola Del primo, secondo, terzo, & quarto Libro* (Milan: Dionisio Gariboldi 1637; facs. edn. Bologna: Forni Editore, 1971) 7

**Figure 1: Transcription of Amat's transposing chart**

Unas Vacas

Vacas.

1	12	10	9	1	12	10	9	10
2	1	11	10	2	1	11	10	11
3	2	12	11	3	2	12	11	12
4	3	1	12	4	3	1	12	1
5	4	2	1	5	4	2	1	2
6	5	3	2	6	5	3	2	3
7	6	4	3	7	6	4	3	4
8	7	5	4	8	7	5	4	5
9	8	6	5	9	8	6	5	6
10	9	7	6	10	9	7	6	7
11	10	8	7	11	10	8	7	8
12	11	9	8	12	11	9	8	9

The second important use of transposition arises when guitars of different sizes and tunings play together. Amat discusses this particular use of transposition in his treatise, writing:

when one instrument is very high and the other very low, you will be able to play in consort with your companion, for even if the chords are different, it will all sound the same. In this way twelve guitars could play together.<sup>27</sup>

Unlikely as it seemed that twelve different sized guitars would play together, Antonio Carbonchi authored a book of dances for precisely such an ensemble. In his *Le dodici chitarre spostate*, published in 1643, he writes the *alfabeto* out for each guitar twelve times, catering for twelve instruments each tuned a semitone apart.

Other types of instructional chart that appeared in several guitar publications such as those of Giovanni Foscarini (1640), Carbonchi (1643), and Gaspar Sanz (1674), are those that teach alternative voicings of individual chords. Early *alfabeto* charts normally

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<sup>27</sup> Amat, *Guitarra Española*, 27, translated by Hall, *Baroque Guitar Research*  
< <http://www.lutesoc.co.uk/lutesoc/uploads/baroque-guitar/amat/Amat.doc> > [accessed 25/6/10]

presented the guitarist with one voicing of any chord, and these were largely restricted to first position. The advent of shifted chord notation however meant that the guitarist was not restricted to the default voicings presented in the main *alfabeto* charts. Some guitarists therefore tried to instruct their students not to play the dances merely as written, but to vary them with alternative voicings in higher positions, thus making use of the higher tessitura of the instrument. These charts were not always entirely practical. Some included chords in eleventh position, hardly practical in the heat of performance, and others featured voicings that were downright awkward for the left hand to stop.

Figure 2 is a transcription of one such chart, which featured in Carbonchi's unusual book for twelve guitars. The virtue of the chart, he explains, is that it allowed the performers to perform each dance in the book in four different versions (see Figure 2). The first column contains the chord symbols A, G<sup>3</sup>, M<sup>5</sup>, and Y<sup>7</sup>, and all of these are different arrangements of the chord of G major. According to Carbonchi's instructions, once the guitarist selects a starting chord, all the subsequent chords of the dance come from the same row, hence there are four ways to play the same dance.<sup>28</sup> So a passacaglia in G would be notated A – B – C – A, and referral to Carbonchi's chart reveals that this could also be notated G3 – H3 – Y2 – G3, M5 – N5 – H5 – M5, or Y7 – G8 – N7 – Y7.

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<sup>28</sup> 'Quelle lettere corrispondenti, che sono sotto il mio Ritratto, significando, che si possono far tutte in quattro maniere, come sarebbe l'A, G<sup>3</sup>, tasti M<sup>5</sup>, tasti, e Y<sup>7</sup>, tasti, che è una cosa medesima, e così seguitando son tutte l'altre, che si potrebbero sonare tutte le sonate in quattro maniere'. Antonio Carbonchi, *Le Dodici Chitarre Sposate*, (Florence, 1643; facs. edn. Florence: S. P. E. S., 1981), no page number.



**Figure 2: Transcription of Carbonchi's table of alternative chord voicings**

LETTERE CORRISPONDENTI PER B. QUADRO.

A	B	C	F	G	H	I	M	N	Y	Q	R
G3	H3	Y2	M2	M3	N3	N2	Y3	G4	H4	M4	N4
M5	N5	H5	Y4	Y5	G6	G5	H6	M6	N6	Y6	G7
Y7	G8	N7	H7	H8	M8	M7	N8	Y9	G8	H9	M9

LETTER CORRISPONDENTI PER B. MOLLE.

O	L	E	+	P	K	D	S	T	Z	V	X
P3	K3	K5	S2	S3	T3	T2	K6	P4	K4	S4	T4
S5	T5	T7	K7	K8	P6	P5	T8	S6	T6	K9	P7
K10	P8	P10	T9	T10	S8	S7	P11	K11	P9	T11	S9

Sanz also produced such a chart in his guitar method published in 1674, which he proudly named his ‘labyrinth’ (see Figure 3). Sanz expands on Carbonchi’s principles and informs the student that the chords of the dance scheme need not all come from the same row of the chart, thus increasing the possible permutations of one dance scheme considerably. So under Sanz’s system, the A – B – C – A passacaglia could be notated A – H3 – H5 –&7 for example.

Figure 3. Transcription of Sanz's 'Labyrinth'<sup>29</sup>

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
+ F	D I	E C	O A	L B	P G	K H	M <sup>+</sup> M	N <sup>+</sup> N	& <sup>+</sup> &	P2 G2	K2 H2
M2 <sup>+</sup> M2	N2 <sup>+</sup> N2	&2 <sup>+</sup> &2	P3 G3	K3 H3	M3 <sup>+</sup> M3	N3 <sup>+</sup> N3	&3 <sup>+</sup> &3	P4 G4	K4 H4	M4 <sup>+</sup> M4	N4 <sup>+</sup> N4
&4 <sup>+</sup> &4	P5 G5	K5 H5	M5 <sup>+</sup> M5	N5 <sup>+</sup> N5	&5 <sup>+</sup> &5	P6 G6	K6 H6	M6 <sup>+</sup> M6	N6 <sup>+</sup> N6	&6 <sup>+</sup> &6	P7 G7
K7 H7	M7 <sup>+</sup> M7	N7 <sup>+</sup> N7	&7 <sup>+</sup> &7	P8 G8	K8 H8	M8 <sup>+</sup> M8	N8 <sup>+</sup> N8	&8 <sup>+</sup> &8	P9 G9	K9 H9	M9 <sup>+</sup> M9

<sup>29</sup> Transcription from Gaspar Sanz, *Instrucción de musica sobre la guitarra espanola*, 8th edn. (Saragossa, 1697; facs. edn. Geneva: Minkoff, 1976), 1

Colonna, whose passeggiata passacaglia in C is transcribed below, demonstrates the effectiveness of this technique of variation. The first three cycles of the chord scheme can be notated thus:

B – G – A – B

B – G – G3 – H3

H3 – M3 – M5 – N5

C major is represented by the symbols B, H3 and N5, F major by G and M3, and G major by A, G3 and M5. These are the same chordal variations that are presented in the charts of Sanz and Carbonchi.

**Example 4: Transcription of Colonna's third passeggiata passacaglia<sup>30</sup>**

The transcription consists of three staves of music in 3/4 time, each containing a sequence of chords. The first staff shows the first cycle: 3 B, G, A, B, G, G3, H3. The second staff shows the second cycle: M3, M5, N5, M5, M3, G3, H3, G3, G. The third staff shows the third cycle: A, B, A, D, A, B, A, D, G, A, B. Each chord is represented by a vertical line with a stem and a flag, indicating its duration in the 3/4 measure.

<sup>30</sup> Transcribed from Colonna, *Intavolatura di chitarra*, 12

Colonna's passacaglia includes another variation technique, the expansion of the framework through the addition of extra chords, some of which may be foreign to the original scheme. This was particularly effective at creating added interest to cadential progressions. Dances with frameworks that differ from the norm frequently appeared under the heading *passeggiata* or *variata*, and there are many examples in Colonna's guitar books.<sup>31</sup> In the above transcription we see instances of the scheme being altered to begin on the dominant, and also encounter the progressions V – vi – V – I, and V – vi – IV – V – I.

Although the dances in earlier publications were notated exclusively in chord symbols, some pioneering guitarists found ways to create melodic interest in the dances by altering the uppermost voice of the chord. One of the earliest composers to do this was Colonna in 1620, and his method was to place a number underneath the chord symbol, and the number would represent the fret to be stopped on the first course. Pietro Millioni explained the technique in his *Quarta impressione del primo, secondo, et terzo libro d'intavolatura*, published in 1627:

When you find a B with a 3 next to it, like this, B3, you must play the B chord and in addition you must extend the little finger [of the left hand] so that it stops the first course at the third fret.<sup>32</sup>

The standard B chord (C major) has an E in the top voice, but Millioni's alteration changes his note to a G. Stefano Pesori and Antonio Carbonchi developed this practice

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<sup>31</sup> This technique is covered in more depth by Richard Hudson in *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*, 4 Vols. (Neuhausen-Stuttgart: American Institute of Musicology, 1982), III, xvii, 'The Folia Dance and the Folia Formula in 17th-Century Guitar Music', *MD*, Vol. 25 (1971), 202, and 'The Concept of Mode in Italian Guitar Music During the First Half of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century', *AM*, Vol. 42, Fasc. 3/4 (Jul. – Dec. 1970), pp. 163-183

<sup>32</sup> Translated in Richard d'A Jensen, 'The Development of Technique', 46

further in the early 1640s to incorporate notes on the second course. These were notated above the staff.

Another early innovation in the development of *alfabeto* notation was the incorporation of dissonance into the chord charts, most of which came to be identified by asterisks, crosses, slashes or with small letter Ts. Many chords appear to have served a practical function, that is, they were an easier alternative to consonant chords that were awkward for the left hand. Much has been written about chord L (C minor) in this respect in recent research.<sup>33</sup> The dissonant version of chord L became the standardised fingering in the early decades of the seventeenth century, before transposing chord shapes alleviated the awkward consonant fingering.

**Example 5: The different fingerings of chord ‘L’**

1	2	3	4
3	3	3	3
1	1	1	5
0	0	0	5
1	4	3	4
3	3	3	3

Fingering number 1 is used in Montesardo’s 1606 publication, and also in early Spanish guitar publications by Sanz and Amat, but it is very awkward to stop and so fingering number 2 became a more popular consonant arrangement. Fingering number 3 is the dissonant variation, and number 4 is the arrangement facilitated by transposing chord K at the third fret.

<sup>33</sup> See Nina Treadwell, ‘The Chitarra Spagnola’, 66-67, and Dean, ‘The Five Course Guitar’, 132, 154-156, 168-175

Further instances of the practical application of dissonance can be found in the *tagliate* chord charts that first appear in the 1630s, such as those of Giovanni Battista Sfondrino (1637), Angelo Michele Bartolotti (1640), Millionsi (1661) and Giovanni Pietro Ricci (1677). The chords in these charts are usually identified by a small letter ‘t’ next to the chord symbol, and feature an incomplete fingering that leaves at least one course open. Leaving a course unstopped keeps one finger of the left hand free for passagework, hence the appearance of these chart in conjunction with mixed tablatures. The transcription below shows Bartolotti’s *tagliate* chords.

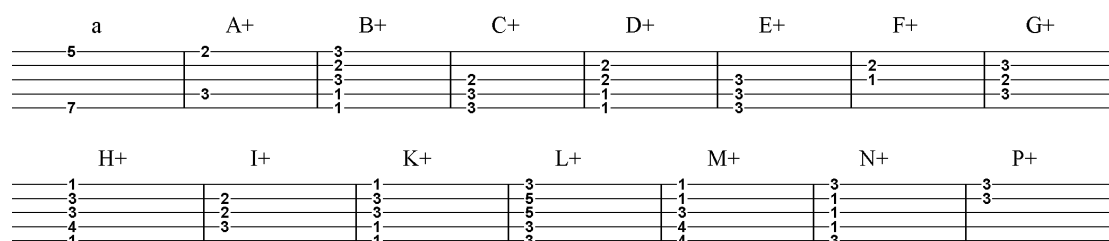
**Example 6: Bartolotti’s *tagliate* chords**

The earliest examples of dissonance in chord charts were inclusions to the main *alfabeto* body, such as the variant chord L and chord ‘\*’ that appeared in Colonna’s first book for guitar published in 1620. Chord ‘\*’ (later called B<sup>9</sup> by Foscarini and Granata) is transcribed below.

**Example 7: Colonna’s chord ‘\*’**

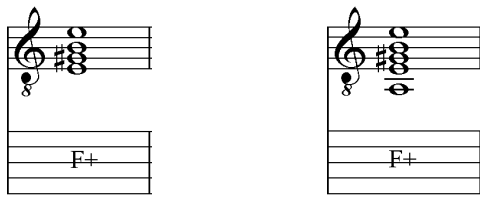
The two pioneers of dissonance in the *alfabeto* repertoire, however, were Francesco Corbetta and Giovanni Foscarini. Both devised separate *alfabeto* charts to exhibit dissonant chords. Corbetta's *alfabeto falso* was published in 1639, and Foscarini's *alfabeto dissonante* was published in 1640. Most of their dissonant chords feature suspended fourths or added sevenths, but Foscarini's chart poses certain issues of interpretation owing to its engraved presentation. Open courses are not included in the engraving, and so scholars have differed in opinion over whether all open courses should be included in the chords or not (see the transcription below). Transcriptions of the chart made by James Tyler and Gary Boye, for example, include all open courses, thus presenting all of the chords in five parts. Monica Hall on the other hand believes that some of the chords are alternative voicings of consonant chords, and that the clashing open courses should be omitted in these circumstances.

**Figure 4: Foscarini's *alfabeto dissonante* as engraved in his 1640 publication**



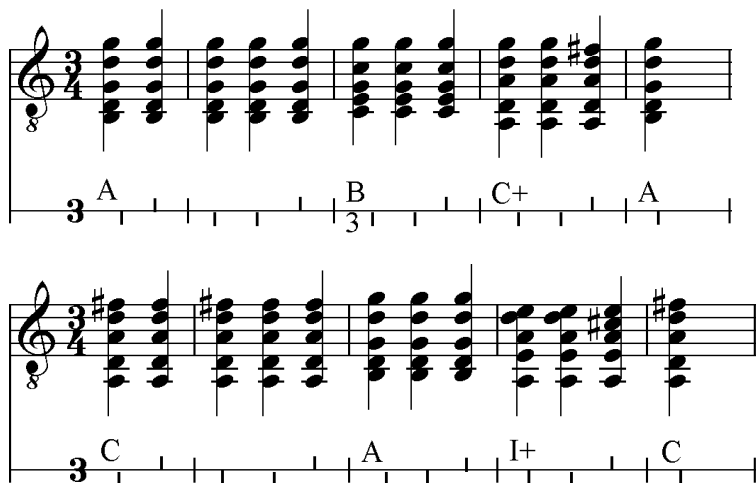
For example, chord F+ according to Hall is a consonant E major chord that omits the fifth course. If the open fifth course was struck the result would be an E major chord with an added fourth that would clash with the G sharp stopped on the third course (not an unusual occurrence in guitar music as simultaneous soundings of the third and fourth of a triad were common in the context of a suspension, and were notated in numerous continuo treatises for the instrument). The true intention of Foscarini is therefore open to debate.

**Example 8: Different interpretations of chord F+**



Frustratingly, the composers rarely use dissonant chord symbols in their own compositions, implying an improvisatory use of these chords on the part of the performer, and appropriate usage would require an understanding of the principles of preparation and resolution. As the composers provided little in the way of guidelines regarding the usage of dissonance, it was not likely something that would have been grasped without the aid of a teacher, making dissonance a tool for the more learned guitarist. There are some rare appearances of dissonant chords in guitar compositions. Hall highlights Foscarini's use of chord B<sup>9</sup> to introduce a passing note between two chords, and suggests that dissonance in the top voice could form part of a melody. Chords with added fourths and sevenths are particularly suited for use at cadences, and in printed sources this is the context in which they are most commonly encountered (although composers often do not bother to notate the resolutions of the dissonant note). The following examples demonstrate how Foscarini's dissonant chords can be used to create added interest at cadences:

**Example 9: Theoretical passacaglias featuring chords from Foscarini's *alfabeto dissonante***





One composer who provided a more comprehensive demonstration of the application of dissonance was Gaspar Sanz. Sanz devised yet another ‘labyrinth’ (transcribed below) that consists of chains of resolving seventh chords. It presents the chords in their functional context and Sanz writes:

In this table, you will find all the flourishes and ligatures that make up the phrases and music cadences, shown with their prevention and resolution, as a good composition requires. You will find the four voices, and the fullest way to play the guitar. Finally, you will find all the chromatic chords, with their consonances and dissonances, which are the hardest to master and are very useful for the person who wants to have a good foundation and accompany himself with voice. You may choose at your discretion, the time or air for the points, since it is nothing more than an aggregate of ligatures.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Jerry Willard, *The Complete Works*, 20

Example 10: Transcription of Sanz's dissonant 'Labyrinth'<sup>35</sup>

7

14

21

27

34

41

48

56

63

<sup>35</sup> Transcribed from Sanz, *Instrucción de musica*, 2

So from this chart we can see how the students could devise more interesting dance progressions. The following transcription demonstrates this process:

**Example 11: Theoretical passacaglias featuring chords from Sanz’s dissonant ‘labyrinth’**

Passacaglias in G

1)

2)

Passacaglias in C

1)

2)

## Passacaglias in D

1)

2)

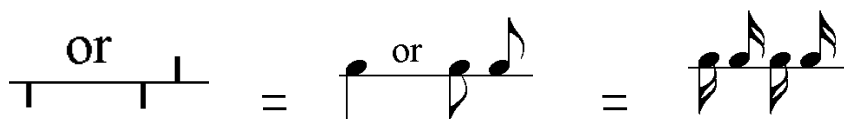
Up to this point, the focus has been on harmonic variation, but the other major constituent of popular dances was rhythm, and it was up to the guitarists to enliven the dances by injecting spontaneous rhythmic vitality into their performances. The indications of right hand strums are notated in dance publications as vertical lines (*botte*) that sit either above or below the stave. Those beneath the stave are down-strokes, and those above are up-strokes. The dances are regularly lacking in notated rhythms and barlines, but perhaps we can assume that this would not have been so problematical for seventeenth-century guitar students, who were more likely to be familiar with the metre and tempo of a *ciacona* for example.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Metre and tempo are discussed in greater detail by Jensen in ‘The Development of Technique’, 74-80, but one should also consult the writings of early eighteenth-century guitarists Santiago de Murcia and François Le Cocq. Murcia discusses time signatures and their implications, and Le Cocq provides descriptions of the different metres of individual dances in his index of musical terms. These have been translated by Monica Hall and can be found online at <<http://www.lutesoc.co.uk/pages/santiago-de-murcia>> and <<http://www.lutesoc.co.uk/pages/francois-le-cocq>>

The right hand strokes that are notated in publications for beginners depict a *rasgueado* accompaniment at its most basic. Sometimes composers included alternative versions of dances that featured a variation on the standard rhythm, usually differentiated from the other dances by the word ‘rotta’ in the title. Nevertheless, this was still variation at an elementary level, and if the performer was to avoid monotonous rhythms, a higher standard of rhythmic embellishment was necessary. It is quite clear from the writings of the guitarists on this topic that the notated stroke signs in their compositions were intended as points of departure for the more skilled performers. Many composers discuss two rhythmic ornaments that were widely employed to embellish the dances. These ornaments are rarely notated however, allowing the performers to use them at their own discretion.

The first ornament is the *trillo*. This most commonly consists of the division of one down-stroke, or two alternating down- and up-strokes into four, executed in rapid succession.

Figure 5: The *trillo*

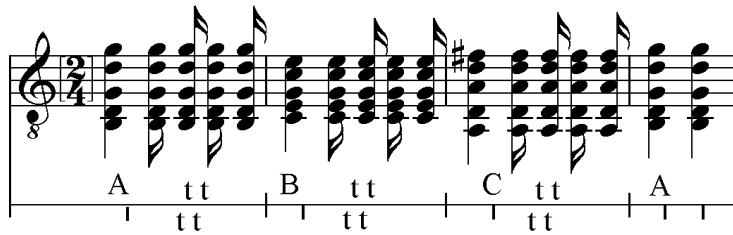


Abatessa gives a basic explanation in his *Corona di vaghi fiori* (Venice, 1627), where he tells us ‘the trillo is made with the finger called the index, touching all the strings downwards and upwards with rapidity’.<sup>37</sup> Guitarists differ in opinion whether this should be executed by the index finger alone (as advocated by Abatessa and Million), or

<sup>37</sup> Translated in Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music*, 175

with one finger and thumb (as advocated by Foscarini).<sup>38</sup> Millionsi is one of the few composers to notate *trilli* in exercises for his students. He does so in the *Secondo impressione del quarto libro d'intavolatura* (1627) and an excerpt of a *bergamasca* is transcribed below.<sup>39</sup>

**Example 12: Transcription of Millionsi's *trillo* notation**



The second ornament is the more complex and is called a *repicco*. Guitarists differed on the execution of this ornament, particularly regarding the number of right hand fingers required for its execution. Whatever the combination of fingers, the guitarist strummed varying patterns of down- and up-strokes, not necessarily striking all of the strings at once. Millionsi wrote for example in his *Prima impressione del quinto libro d'intavolatura* (1627):

In order to play the above-mentioned repicchi, you must play two downstrokes and two upstrokes...the downstrokes are played with the middle finger and the thumb respectively playing all the strings, while the upstrokes are played with the thumb and the index finger touching the first course only.<sup>40</sup>

Pico describes the *repicco* in his *Nuova scelta di sonate per la chitarra spagnuola* (Milan, 1698):<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Translations of their descriptions of both ornaments can be found in Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music*, 175-177, Joseph Weidlich, 'Battuto Performance', 63-86, and Sylvia Murphy, 'Seventeenth-Century Guitar Music', 24-32

<sup>39</sup> Transcribed from a facsimile reproduction in Jensen 'The Development of Technique', 70

<sup>40</sup> Translated in *ibid*, 73

<sup>41</sup> The dating of this work is uncertain, as the third digit of the year is not legible. Until recently it was largely accepted that the book dated to 1608, but recent research undertaken by Gary Boye argues the case

To play a Repicco one plays four strikes, that is two down and two up. The first down is played by the middle finger, the second down with the thumb, the third up is played with the thumb and the fourth up with the index finger, playing however only the top string, and a Repicco lasts for two beats [two strokes i.e. one beat].<sup>42</sup>

Corbetta is one of the few guitarists who actually notates the *repicco* in his music. In his 1671 publication, he includes a *ciaccona*, an excerpt of which is given in Example 13. He gives the following explanation of the notation:

You shall see the example of a repicco in a ciaccona, where the note with the extended stem is played with the thumb. Having begun first with the fingers, the thumb then plays the same and this is repeated as upbeats. Notice that the four tied beats indicate that one must play the first with the second finger, and the next with the first, and so again as upstrokes, all at a faster speed, and then continue with the fingers and thumb.<sup>43</sup>

Example 13: Transcription of Corbetta's *repicco*<sup>44</sup>

The writings of the guitarists regarding these ornaments reveal great consideration for musical effect and expression. The numerous different descriptions of how they should be executed reveal that the fingerings and number of strokes involved were

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for the later date. See his article, 'The Case of the Purloined Letter Tablature: The Seventeenth-Century Guitar Books of Foriano Pico and Pietro Millioni', *JSCM*, Vol. 11, No.1 (2005)

<<http://sscm-jscm.press.illinois.edu/v11/no1/boye.html>> [accessed 10/09/2010]

<sup>42</sup>Translated in Murphy, 'Seventeenth-Century Guitar Music', 28

<sup>43</sup> Francesco Corbetta, *La guitarre royalle*, 72, translated in *ibid*, 29

<sup>44</sup> Transcribed from Francesco Corbetta, *La guitarre royalle*, 72

personal to the guitarist, and each had his own way of embellishing his music. Where there is agreement amongst the guitarists is that these ornaments should be played musically, with subtle variations of volume, tone and texture. Colonna, for example, writes that one should play lightly, ‘touching now softly and then strongly, in the Spanish and Neapolitan way’.<sup>45</sup> Corbetta also discusses the effectiveness of dynamics in the execution of a *repicco* alongside instructions to enhance the effect with a variety of texture. He writes:

... where you see six quaver strokes play four of them from the third course downwards, and moving the hand, play the next two strokes on the other two courses, the first and second, without touching the other (third, fourth and fifth) ones’... at the next four [quaver strokes], hit the first quaver loudly, and the other three softly.<sup>46</sup>

To Montesardo, varying the tone was clearly an important aspect of a musical performance. He writes that ‘those who wish to do it more sweetly, should play on the hole, sometimes near the neck of the guitar and also, to sweeten the sound, sometimes on the neck itself’.<sup>47</sup> This is a technique frequently depicted by the artist Antoine Watteau in his painting of guitarists.<sup>48</sup>

When presented in notated form on the pages of guitar methods, *bailes* such as the sarabande and chaconne offer no hints to their early history of scandal and censorship. They do not conjure frenetic performances and seductive dancing, but rather appear short, repetitive, uninspiring and undemanding. They pose all of the difficulty of a modern day beginner’s first book of easy pieces, which, of course was precisely what many of these notated dances once were. In their basic notated form, the dances taught the rudiments of guitar technique – stopping chords and basic strums. The more advanced practices, such

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<sup>45</sup> Translated in Joseph Weidlich, ‘Battuto Performance’, 67

<sup>46</sup> Translated in Murphy, ‘Seventeenth-Century Guitar Music’, 29

<sup>47</sup> Translated in Weidlich, ‘Battuto performance’, 69

<sup>48</sup> It can be seen for example in his paintings *L’enchanteur*, and *Scène d’amour*, which are both reproduced in Frederick V. Grunfeld, ‘The Gentle Guitars of Jean Antoine Watteau’, *GR*, Vol. 35 (Summer, 1971), pp. 2-8



as the incorporation of dissonance and the rhythmic ornaments, are the ones that were rarely notated, and probably necessitated a teacher to be fully grasped.

The investigation into the performance practices inherent in the popular dance repertoire reveals that guitarists were expected to vary the dances both harmonically and rhythmically, and that the students were taught to do so with attention to dynamics, tone and texture. Whilst the strumming of short chord frameworks may appear undemanding, the challenge lies in the constant invention demanded of the guitarist to keep the frameworks sounding fresh, something the professionals sought to achieve by expanding the *alfabeto* charts, experimenting with harmony and developing right hand technique to a complex level. Sanz stressed the importance of developing the student's creative abilities to produce spontaneous variation in the preface to his guitar method. In an interesting discussion on why he felt that earlier methods by other composers fell short of the demands of the students, he wrote that 'they teach their pupils to play their pieces, but none of them gives out the rules to compose these pieces'.<sup>49</sup> Sanz clearly believed that a firm harmonic foundation and an ability to depart from the written music were of great importance.

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<sup>49</sup> Gaspar Sanz, *Instrucción de musica*, 12, translated in Willard, *The Complete Works*, 15

### Chapter 3: The Guitar and the Theatre

Much research has been conducted into the instrumental forces used in baroque theatrical works, particularly regarding the orchestras of Monteverdi, Purcell and Lully. Although much light has been shed on the practical and symbolic uses of individual instruments, the guitar has received less attention in this respect. This can be explained in part by the fact that notated source material specific to the guitar in this context is lacking, so whilst it may be known that the instrument was in regular use, the specifics of its employment are often uncertain. It is known, for example, that the guitar and harp were regular instruments of accompaniment in Spanish theatre troupes from the sixteenth century onwards, yet the instrumental music of many early *comedias* is lost. The Italian *Commedia dell'arte* actors regularly accompanied song and dance with the guitar, but of course improvisation was central to their productions, in which the actors elaborated even the script. The role of the guitar in the published stage works of mainstream composers can be equally obscure, as the performances given by guitarists were often improvised dances or song accompaniments and thus do not appear in notated sources. There are two such guitar dances in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, for example. Thus, to understand better the roles of the guitarist in the theatre, scholars have to rely on stage directions, contemporary accounts of given performances, iconography and any surviving scoring indications provided by composers.

A small but significant body of scholarship exists that sheds light on the diverse and important roles of the guitar in the theatre. Louise Stein has provided invaluable information on the role of the guitar in Spanish theatrical works through her documentation of the instrumentation and stage directions of many sixteenth- and

seventeenth-century Spanish productions.<sup>1</sup> Ann Macneil offers an insight into the musical repertoire of the *Commedia dell'arte*,<sup>2</sup> and Nina Treadwell highlights the erotic symbolism attached to the guitar during the spectacles performed in celebration of the marriage of Ferdinando de' Medici and Christine of Lorraine in 1589.<sup>3</sup> John Powell draws attention to the use of the guitar in French theatrical works,<sup>4</sup> and Curtis Price highlights the prominence of the guitar in English Restoration productions.<sup>5</sup>

A comparison of the uses of the guitar in Spain, Italy, France and England reveals that the instrument occurred most frequently in three performing contexts: serenading scenes, scenes either set in exotic surroundings or featuring exotic characters, and scenes of comedy. What the comparisons also reveal is that characters portrayed with guitars fall most typically into one of four categories: rogue, lover, buffoon or foreigner. The frequency of these recurring character associations with the guitar suggests a link to the stereotypical character profile of the guitarist encountered in Chapter 2. The association of the guitar with the popular entertainments of the lower classes, drunken antics, base morals, and wild, lascivious dancing was influential over its use on stage. The humorous and mocking lyrics of its popular dances were certainly absorbed into the satirical repertoire of the *commedia dell'arte*.

The following list has been compiled to demonstrate the widespread use of the guitar in theatrical performances. The list, which is not exhaustive, features staged

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<sup>1</sup> Louise K. Stein, *Songs of Mortals, Dialogues of the Gods: Music and Theatre in Seventeenth-Century Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)

<sup>2</sup> Anne Macneil, *Music and Women in the Commedia dell'Arte in the Late Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

<sup>3</sup> Nina Treadwell, *Music and Wonder at the Medici Court: The 1589 Interludes for La Pellegrina* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008)

<sup>4</sup> John S. Powell, *Music and Theatre in France 1600-1680* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000)

<sup>5</sup> Curtis Price, *Music in the Restoration Theatre: With a Catalogue of Instrumental Music in the Plays 1665-1713*, Studies in Musicology No. 4 (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979)

works in which at least one guitar is known to have been involved either on or off stage. It is organised chronologically by country, and wherever possible I have included the librettist and year of performance.<sup>6</sup>

Table 3.1: Theatrical productions in which at least one guitar took part

Spain

Luis Vélez <sup>7</sup>	<i>Celos amor y Venganza</i>
Miguel Cervantes	<i>Los Baños de Argel</i> (1581-5)
Miguel Cervantes	<i>La Casa de los Celos</i> (1581-5)
Lope de Vega	<i>San Segundo de Avila</i> (1594)
Lope de Vega	<i>La reina Juana de Nápoles</i> (1597-1603)
Lope de Vega	<i>El Cuerdo en su Casa</i> (1606-12)
Miguel Cervantes	<i>La gran sultana</i> (1608-10)
Miguel Cervantes	<i>El rufián dichoso</i> (1608-10)
Miguel Cervantes	<i>Pedro de Urdemalas</i> (1610-11)
Lope de Vega	<i>Peribañez y el Comendador de Ocaña</i> (1610-12)
Lope de Vega	<i>Las Almenas de Toro</i> (1610-13)
Lope de Vega	<i>El Premio de la Hermosura</i> (1614)
Mira de Amescua	<i>Mascara de la Expulsion de los Moriscos</i> (1617)
Juan de Tassis y Peralta	<i>La Gloria de Niquea</i> (1622)
Lope de Vega	<i>Amar, Servir y Esperar</i> (1624-35)
Pedro Calderon de la Barca	<i>El alcalde de zalamea</i> (c.1640)
Luis Quiñones de Benavente	<i>El licenciado y el bachiller</i> (1645)
Gabriel Bocángel y Unzueta	<i>El Nuevo Olimpio</i> (1648)
Francisco de Tárrega	<i>Los moriscos de Hornachos</i> (1649)
Pedro Calderon de la Barca	<i>Fortunas de Andrómeda y Perseo</i> (1653)
Ulloa y Pereyra	<i>Pico y Canente</i> (1656)
Pedro Calderon de la Barca	<i>Los sitios de recreación del roy</i> (1658)
Pedro Calderon de la Barca	<i>Céfalo y Pocris</i> (c.1660-1662)

<sup>6</sup> This list was compiled using the following books, articles, and online resources: Stein, *Songs of Mortals* (1993), Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music* (2002), Esses, *Dance and Instrumental 'Diferencias'* (1992), Macneil, *Music and Women* (2003), Denis, 'La guitare en France' (1978-9), J. S. Manifold, *The Music in English Drama from Shakespeare to Purcell*, (London: Rockliff, 1956), Powell, *Music and Theatre* (2000), *Le Magazine de l'Opéra Baroque*, <[http://operabaroque.fr/Cadre\\_baroque.htm](http://operabaroque.fr/Cadre_baroque.htm)>, Early English Books Online, <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxyd.bham.ac.uk/home>>, Nina Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola' (2000), Ted Bergman, *The Art of Humour in the Teatro Breve and Comedias of Calderón De La Barca*, (Woodbridge, 2003), Olivia Bloechl, 'War, Peace, and the Ballet in *Le Soir*', *EM*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (2010), pp. 91-100, Treadwell, *Music and Wonder* (2008), Tim Carter, 'A Florentine Wedding of 1608', *AM*, Vol. 55, fasc. 1 (January-June, 1983), pp. 89-107, Maurice Barthélemy, 'L'Opéra-comique des origines à la Querelle des Bouffons' in *L'Opéra-comique en France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. by Philippe Vendrix (Liège: Editions Mardaga, 1992)

<sup>7</sup> Luis Vélez de Guevara (1579-1644). This work was published posthumously in *Segunda parte de comedias escagidas de las mejores de España* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1652)

## Italy

Girolamo Bargagli	<i>La Pellegrina: Intermedi VI (La Discesa d'Apollo e Bacco col Ritmo e l'Armonia)</i> (1589)
Agostino Manni	<i>Rappresentatione di Anima, et di Corpo</i> (1600)
Michaelangelo Buonarroti	<i>Il guidizio di Paride: Intermedi VI (Il tempio della pace)</i> (1608)
Giovanni Andreini	<i>Lo Schiavetto</i> (Published 1612)
Giovanni Andreini	<i>Amor nello specchio</i> (Published 1622)
Giovanni Andreini	<i>La Ferinda</i> (Published 1622)
Giovanni Andreini	<i>Due Commedie in Commedia</i> (Published 1623)
Giulio Rospigliosi	<i>Il Sant'Alessio</i> (1632/34)
Giulio Rospigliosi	<i>I Santi Didimo e Teodora</i> (1635)

## France

Alexandre Hardy (attr.)	<i>Les Ramonneurs</i> (c.1624)
René Bordier	<i>Ballet des fées de la forêt de la Saint Germain</i> (1625)
René Bordier	<i>Ballet du Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut</i> (1626)
Jean d'Auvray	<i>Madonte</i> (1628)
	<i>Ballet des deux Magiciens</i> (1636)
Jean Rotrou	<i>Agésilan de Colchos</i> (1637)
Guérin de Bouscal	<i>Don Quichot de la Manche</i> (1639-40)
Charles Sorel (attr.)	<i>Comédie des chansons</i> (1640)
Jean Desmarest de Saint-Sorlin (attr.)	<i>Ballet de la Prospérité des armés de France</i> (1641)
Sallebray	<i>L'Amante ennemie</i> (1642)
Francesco Buti	<i>Orfeo</i> (1647)
Isaac de Benserade?	<i>Ballet des festes de Bacchus</i> (1651)
Francesco Buti	<i>Ballet de la galanterie du temps</i> (1656)
Isaac de Benserade	<i>Ballet d'Alcidiane</i> (1658)
	<i>Mascarade des cinq de la Nature conduite par la Fortune et les Plaisirs</i> (1658)
Isaac de Benserade	<i>Ballet de la Raillerie</i> (1659)
Isaac de Benserade	<i>Ballet royal de l'impatience</i> (1661)
Francesco Cavalli	<i>Ercole Amante</i> (1662)
Philippe Quinault	<i>Les Poëts: Sixth entrée of Le Ballet des Muses</i> (1666)
Moliere	<i>Pastorale Comique: Third entrée of Le Ballet des Muses</i> (1667)
Moliere	<i>Ballet des ballets</i> (1671)
Comédie-Italienne (Music by Cambert)	<i>Suite du festin de Pierre (Agiunta al Convitato di Pietra)</i> (1673)
Philippe Quinault	<i>Cadmus et Hermione</i> (1678)
Thomas Corneille	<i>Psyché</i> (1678)
A. M. de Fatouville	<i>Columbine Advocat Pour et Contre</i> (1685)
Monsieur Le Noble	<i>Les deux Arlequins</i> (1691)
Jean-François Regnard	<i>Le Carnival de Venise</i> (1699)
Jean François Regnard	<i>Les Follies Amoureuses</i> (1704)

Louis Fuzelier                      *Jupiter Curieux Impertinent* (1711)  
Alain-Renè Lesange                *Arlequin Orphée le cadet* (1718)

England

Ben Johnson                        *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (1621)  
Thomas Porter                      *The Carnival* (1663)  
John Lacy                            *The Old Troop* (1664)  
John Dryden                        *The Indian Emperor* (1665)  
John Lacy                            *Sauny the Scott* (1667)  
John Dryden                        *An Evening's Love* (1668)  
Thomas Shadwell                    *The Royal Shepherdess* (1669)  
Thomas Shadwell                    *The Humorists* (1670)  
John Dryden                        *The Assigination* (1672)  
John Crowne                        *Calisto*(1675)  
John Banister                        *A Parley of Instruments* (1676)  
John Dryden                        *Albion and Albanus* (1685)  
Thomas Durfey                      *The Banditti* (1686)  
Nahum Tate                        *Dido and Aeneas* (1689)  
Thomas Shadwell                    *The Amorous Bigotte* (1690)  
Thomas Durfey                      *Love for Money* (1691)  
Peter Motteux                        *The Novelty* (1697)  
Thomas Durrfey                      *The Intrigues at Versailles* (1697)

Owing to the guitar's early cultivation in Spain and Italy, it is not surprising that it is far more prominent in productions there in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Interestingly, we see greater activity in France beginning in the 1650s and in England in the 1660s, the periods when Francesco Corbetta was popularising the instrument in each country respectively, although it should be noted that the English public theatres had not been operating under the puritan government prior to the Restoration.

## Guitar Accompaniments of Theatrical Song and Dance

### Spain

That dance was a key element in Spanish theatrical works is evident from the reactionary accounts of the moralist writers encountered in Chapter 2. Many *bailes* were listed in these sources as commonplace on stage, and as has already been mentioned, attempts were made to suppress dances regarded as too risqué for public viewing.<sup>8</sup> The structure of a typical seventeenth-century Spanish *comedia* demonstrates the prominence of dance in the theatre.<sup>9</sup>

*Loa* (Preface)

Act I

*Entremés/Jácaras* (comic one-act play with dancing)

Act II

*Baile*/dance scene

Act III

*Mojiganga/fin de fiesta* (high spirited close/masked dancing)

The interludes between the acts featured music and dancing and were generally light-hearted to contrast with the more ‘serious’ main drama. During the *entremeses*, comedians would entertain the audience with their antics, dances, humorous dialogues and mockery of prominent figures of society. The *jácaras* was a *baile* that became popular in the Spanish theatres from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, but its name was also lent to a theatrical sub-genre that functioned as a comic interlude between the acts. In keeping with the thematic content of typical *jácaras* lyrics, the theatrical *jácaras* depicted characters and settings from the criminal underworld, and usually contained visual references to violence.<sup>10</sup> The *baile* that separated Acts 2 and

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<sup>8</sup> The range of popular dance types that appeared on stage extends well beyond those discussed in this thesis, and for more information one should consult Craig H. Russell, *Santiago de Murcia's Codice Saldívar no. 4*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), and Lynn Matluck Brooks, *The Art of Dancing in Seventeenth-Century Spain: Juan de Esquivel Navarro and His World* (London: Rosemont, 2003)

<sup>9</sup> Craig H Russell, ‘Radical innovations’, 162

<sup>10</sup> For descriptions of the theatrical *jácaras* see Ted Bergman, *The Art of Humour*, 188-200

3 could feature dialogue but could also be sung throughout (*bailes cantados*), and *comedias* typically ended on a high note with a jovial song and dance.

The importance of music in the Spanish theatre explains how guitar came to be an indispensable asset of the theatre troupes, along with the harp and vihuela. Guitarists known to have worked in theatre companies in the late seventeenth century include Gaspar Real, who performed with the company of Félix Pascual in 1673 and who also played the harp;<sup>11</sup> Pedro de Castro and Joseph de Salas, who both operated in the theatres of Madrid;<sup>12</sup> and Juan de Serqueira. Serqueira was a guitarist known to have been involved in numerous theatre troupes in Madrid in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. He appeared frequently alongside harpist Juan Bautista Chavarría between 1680 and 1700, in the troupes of Simón Aguado (1687), Rosendo López Estrada (1688), Damián Polope (1691, 1693, 1694, 1695), and Juan de Cárdenas (1696, 1697). He also worked with harpists Valerio Malaguilla and Alfonso de Flores.<sup>13</sup>

In 1653, a performance of *Fortunas de Andrómeda y Perseo* was given in the Buen Retiro Palace, which featured a dance accompanied by four guitarists. There is an account of the performance, provided by an Italian stage designer, Baccio del Bianco, and this reveals that at the time, the guitar's presence on stage was a well-established tradition, even if the Italian clearly disapproved:

...it was not possible, in an apotheosis of the gods, to avoid the four rogues dressed in the usual black with Spanish guitars, cape and sword, just as the twelve signs of the zodiac, which were twelve women, were at the point of falling from the sky, and got all out of order; and then the same four turned their backs to the public, the custom in this place, such that when I

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<sup>11</sup> Esses, *Dance and Instrumental 'Diferencias'*, 393

<sup>12</sup> Craig H. Russell, 'Radical Innovations', 163

<sup>13</sup> For more information on the theatre troupes in Madrid see María Asuncian Flórez Asensio, "'Salgan racionales ruiseñores': Músicos de las compañías teatrales de Madrid durante el siglo XVII", *RdMc*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2008), pp. 41-78



tried to eliminate this habit, they nearly crucified me, claiming it is impossible to dance without the four guitarists behind them; in short the refinement of the scene and the precision of movement on the stage are not observed here...<sup>14</sup>

This account is very revealing of musical practices in the Spanish theatre. It implies that the guitarist wore a traditional costume, and that their performances were governed to an extent by local custom and conventions. It also reveals the differences of aesthetic between the Spanish and the Italian stage designer. Clearly there is a clash between the Spanish traditional values and the Italian taste for elegance and precision. The guitar then, was so much a part of the fabric of Spanish theatre that it was considered an essential element in certain performance contexts.

One playwright who satirised the moralistic attacks on staged popular dances was Antonio de Salís (1610-1686). He does so by contrasting the rambunctious nature of the *bailes* with that of the more ‘noble’ *danzas* in a dramatised confrontation between the two in *Las fiestas bacanes* (1656). In the performance, the *danzas* are represented by noble women and the *bailes* are represented by drunks. The *sarao*, a *danza* portrayed by Francisca de Castro, wages war with the *bailes*, crying ‘To arms, to arms! Death to the *marionas*! Long live the *gallardas*! . . . You are learning that fast stepping clumsiness from the infamous inundation of wine’.<sup>15</sup> The scene concludes with the *bailes* victorious over the *danzas*, who give in to the lure of the intoxicating *marionas*.

Many of the dance types that featured on the Spanish stage appear in seventeenth-century guitar publications in their basic chord framework forms.

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<sup>14</sup> Stein, *Songs of Mortals*, 149. A picture of the final scene of this work is also reproduced on page 166 of the same publication. It shows a guitarist performing on the far left of the stage

<sup>15</sup> Translated in Craig H. Russell, *Santiago de Murcia’s Codice*, Vol. 1, 14

*Chaconas, zarabandas, villanos* and *pasacalles* were the staple repertoire of beginners learning to play *rasgueado*. Briceño actually refers to the practical use of the passacaglia in the theatrical context in his *Método* (1626). He calls passacaglias ‘theatre entrances’, perhaps implying the accompaniment of characters as they arrive on stage. Later-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century guitarists include examples of other popular stage dances such as the *marionas* and *jácaras* in their books. Sanz and Murcia include both dances and also include passages in *punteado* as well as *rasgueado*. By the time Murcia was compiling his publications, guitar music was generally notated exclusively in lute-style tablature, but he still provides strummed introductions to many of his dances, acknowledging their popular *rasgueado* roots.

The *jácaras* was a high-spirited dance, characterised by its dark, minor mode and frequent metrical shifts.<sup>16</sup> An example from Sanz’s guitar method is transcribed below.

**Example 14: Sanz’s *jácaras***<sup>17</sup>

The musical notation for Example 14 consists of a series of chords and single notes. The chords are: 3/4 E, I, E, I, E, G, B, H, I, E, I. The single notes are: I, E, I, E, I, E, I, E, I, E, I. The notation is transcribed from a guitar method book.

The *marionas* was a lively dance with a characteristic accent on the second beat of every other bar. Murcia’s strummed introduction to his *marionas*, is transcribed below.

<sup>16</sup> See Stein, *Songs of Mortals*, 232-233 for a more comprehensive discussion of the musical characteristics of the *jácaras*.

<sup>17</sup> Transcribed from Gaspar Sanz, *Instrucción de musica*, 1

Example 15: Excerpt of Murcia's *marionas*<sup>18</sup>

The scripts of many surviving *comedias* contain indications of instrumental music that has since been lost. Instrumental music could serve a structural purpose, set a mood, enhance a dramatic episode or conceal the mechanics of stage machinery. In another account written by Baccio del Bianco of a performance of Ulloa y Pereya's *Pico y Canente* (1656), he describes an instance of instrumental music serving the functional role of entertaining the audience during a change of scenery between the *Loa* and the first Act. He wrote:

Then the guitars, the violone, and the four violins with a keyboard instrument played, each one going his own way and playing according to his own taste. After this pig-headed symphony, the scene changed from the garden to the wood.<sup>19</sup>

Certain instruments bore familiar associations such as that of drums and war, or popular instruments such as the tambourine, which were associated with peasants.

<sup>18</sup> Transcribed from Santiago de Murcia, *Códice Saldivar No. 4* (c.1732; reproduced in *Santiago de Murcia's Códice*, Vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 7

<sup>19</sup> Stein, *Songs of Mortals*, 275

Guitars were often employed to evoke atmospheres of celebration, as occurs in *Celos amor y veng*a by Luis Velez. His vague reference to ‘happy music’ was supplied by numerous off-stage instruments, including guitars. Lope de Vega employs guitars to create a celebratory mood in his *Amor, servir y esperar* (1624-35) and also in *San Segunda de Avila* (1594). Cervantes uses off-stage guitars to create the spatial effect of distance, as in his *El rufián dichoso* (1608-10), in which guitar and tambourine play to suggest a performance heard from afar.<sup>20</sup>

Many of the songs accompanied by the guitar of course occurred in conjunction with dance, as many of the *bailes* were also sung. As discussed in Chapter 2, these lyrics were often satirical or peppered with profanities, and so amassed opposition from moralists and religious authorities. In the sixteenth century guitars accompanied popular *villancicos*, but in the seventeenth century they commonly accompanied romances and *letrillas* (short poems set to music). Briceño includes examples of both song types set to *pasacalle* accompaniment in his guitar method. Thematic content of the songs was diverse and could be amorous, narrative, humorous or lamenting. Act 3 of Lope de Vega’s *El premio de la hermosura* (1614) features a lament sung to guitar accompaniment labelled *elegía*.<sup>21</sup>

Songs could be used to enhance the dramatic action on stage, as occurs in Calderon’s *El Alcalde de Zalamea* (c.1640). In the second Act, guitarists Rebolledo and La Chispa play and sing a *jácaras* during a sword fight.<sup>22</sup> The *rasgueado* performance would have really accentuated the energy of the fighting. Songs could also add humour to scenes of comedy. In *El licenciado y el bachiller* (1645) by Luis

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, 334

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*, 79

<sup>22</sup> Bergman, *The Art of Humour*, 229-230

Quiñones de Benavente, the lead character sets a light-hearted tone as he sings to guitar accompaniment:

If you'll forgive me a moment,  
I'm just dying to sing,  
cause today for us top comics  
its a most important skill;  
...  
So, look out for the music! Here it comes!  
Every listener get out of the way,  
for if it catches him unawares  
my voice may damage him for life.<sup>23</sup>

### Italy

In *commedia dell'arte* performances the guitar was often used to accompany dance. The actors were particularly well known for their comic dancing, which could be highly athletic and acrobatic. Some of the guitar's popular *bailes* were adopted by *commedia* characters as their signature dances. *Scaramuccia* and *Arlecchino*, for example, were identified with the sarabande, which they would often dance with ridiculous and highly awkward steps.<sup>24</sup> Of all the dances associated with *commedia dell'arte* performances, the Neapolitan *sfessania* (or *ballo alla Maltese*) was one of the most frenetic.<sup>25</sup> There is an example of this dance in the final scene of Act 3 of Giovanni Battista Andreini's *Lo Schiavetto*, and the 1620 Venetian edition of the work mentions the guitar amongst the accompanying instruments.<sup>26</sup> Examples of the dance in guitar publications are rare, but it is included in Montesardo's 1606 publication and also in Pesori's *Lo scrigno armonico* (1640), although the rhythmic notation in Pesori's book is very unclear, making the dance difficult to interpret.

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<sup>23</sup> Esses, *Dance and Instrumental 'Diferencias'*, 388

<sup>24</sup> Allardyce Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 158

<sup>25</sup> The dance is portrayed in the engravings of Jacques Callot (1592-1635) entitled *Balli di Sfessania*. Some of these are reproduced in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 80, and interestingly the engraving of the character *Fritellino* shows him dancing as he plays the guitar.

<sup>26</sup> Anne Macneil, *Music and Women*, 169

We can get a glimpse of what the comic dances of the *commedia dell'arte* may have involved from iconographic sources such as Gregorio Lambranzi's *New and Curious School of Theatrical Dancing*, published in Nuremberg in 1716. There are references to *commedia* characters in this book, such as *Pulcinella*, and *Harlequin*, who is mentioned in relation to the chaconne. The accompanying illustrations show dancers in costumes, some making comic facial gestures, some with instruments and some being carried by other dancers.<sup>27</sup> Another useful source is an anonymous seventeenth-century engraving that depicts a choreographed performance with guitars and tambourines.<sup>28</sup> The image depicts four guitarists, each with one foot resting on the backside of the percussionist kneeling in front of them, and they stand in a square formation, surrounding a violinist who plays in the centre.

Comic dancing was undertaken by servant characters such as *Scapino*, but it should be remembered that the *commedia dell'arte* performers were not specialists in buffoonery; rather, they used such antics to inject visual comedy into a production where much of the humour lay in the wit of the dialogue.

A wide variety of song types were used in *commedia* performances, ranging from the humorous and at times incredibly low-brow songs of the servant characters, to the more refined arias performed by their masters. *Villanelle* with humorous or crude lyrics were sung by *Scapino*, the character portrayed by Francesco Gabrielli, but his signature tune was published in the *Infermita, testamento e morte di Francesco*

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<sup>27</sup> Gregorio Lambranzi, *New and Curious School of Theatrical Dancing*, intro by F. Derra de Moroda (Nuremberg, 1716; facs. edn. New York: Dance Horizons, 1972)

<sup>28</sup> This is reproduced as plate 4 in Thomas Heck, 'The Musical Iconography of the Commedia dell'Arte: An Overview', Christopher Cairns (ed.) *The Commedia dell'Arte from the Renaissance to Dorio Fo* (Lewiston NY: The Edwin Miller Press, 1989), 227-244,

*Gabrielli* in 1638. ‘I più rigidi cori’, otherwise known as the ‘aria di scapino’, was published with an *alfabeto* accompaniment, and the first stanza is reproduced in Macneil (2003).<sup>29</sup> This aria was hugely popular, and it featured widely in guitar publications. Carbonchi includes it in his *Le dodici chitarre spostate* (1643) and also in his *Sonate de chitarra* (1640), where it is presented in lute-style tablature. Colonna also includes the music in his first guitar publication (1620), where it is printed under the title ‘aria alla piemontesa’.

Isabella Andreini, *prima donna innamorata* of the Compagnia dei Gelosi, who performed at the 1589 Florentine wedding festivities, was also a talented writer of *canzonette*, largely influenced by the renowned poet Gabriello Chiabrera.<sup>30</sup> She wrote songs to perform to her audiences, and one in particular, ‘Io credèa che tra gli amanti’, experienced great popularity as it was published in 1618 in Remigio Romano’s *Bellissime Canzonette*, an anthology of popular songs. Remigio Romano’s complete 1625 edition contains numerous songs popularised by the Italian comedians listed in Macneil (2003),<sup>31</sup> but it also contains references to their stage-names, such as the ‘Barzellea di Scapino’ and ‘Deh Florinda gratiosa’ (Florinda was the stage-name of Virginia Andreini, Isabella’s daughter-in-law). Some *commedia* performances included monodies by mainstream composers. *Lo Schiavetto*, cited earlier, which was performed by the *Compagnia dei Fedeli* (established by Giovanni Battista Andreini and his wife Virginia), featured Giulio Caccini’s ‘Tu c’hai le penne amore’, sung by Virginia in Act IV.<sup>32</sup> As Macneil explains, this is why songs by composers such as Caccini feature in Romano’s anthology.

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<sup>29</sup> Macneil, *Music and Women*, 29

<sup>30</sup> See *ibid*, 62-72

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*, 71

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*, 169

The guitar of course also appeared in the theatrical productions of mainstream composers. Cavalieri used the guitar on several occasions, but most famously in the final *ballo* of the sixth *intermedi* of *La Pellegrina* in 1589. The guitar accompanied the song ‘O che nuovo miracolo’, and the music experienced such popularity that it became a mainstay of the guitar repertoire, still featuring in guitar publications in the early eighteenth century. It appeared under various titles, including *ballo del gran duca* and *aria di Fiorenza*. Example 16 was transcribed from Sanz’s guitar method.

**Example 16: Sanz’s Granduque de Florencia<sup>33</sup>**

The musical score for Example 16, Sanz's Granduque de Florencia, is presented in five systems. Each system consists of a guitar staff and a corresponding bass line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The bass line uses letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G to indicate fret positions. The guitar staff shows chord voicings and melodic lines. The piece is 32 measures long.

System 1 (Measures 1-8): Bass line: A, C, +, A, B, C, A, B. Chords: A, C, +, A, B, C, A, B.

System 2 (Measures 9-16): Bass line: A, D, +, G, A, B, A, B. Chords: A, D, +, G, A, B, A, B.

System 3 (Measures 17-24): Bass line: C, A, B, G, E, F, D, F, D. Chords: C, A, B, G, E, F, D, F, D.

System 4 (Measures 25-31): Bass line: C, A, B, C, A, B. Chords: C, A, B, C, A, B.

System 5 (Measures 32): Bass line: G, E, +, A, B, C, A. Chords: G, E, +, A, B, C, A.

<sup>33</sup> Transcribed from Gaspar Sanz, *Instrucción de musica*, 2



Cavalieri also uses the instrument in his *Rappresentatione di anima, et di corpo* (1600). In this performance, the guitar is one of the instruments representative of ‘pleasure’, along with the chitarrone and percussion. Cavalieri writes:

It will be good if [the characters] Pleasure, with his two companions, have instruments in their hands, playing while they sing, and also playing their Ritornelli. One can have a chitarrone, another a chitarrina alla spagnuola, and the third a small tambourine with bells in the Spanish style.<sup>34</sup>

‘Pleasure’ and his two companions sing to lively dance rhythms of alternating 3/4 and 6/4 metre, and each stanza is separated by a joyous ritornello. An excerpt of the music is transcribed in Example 17

### France

In seventeenth-century French theatre, we find much the same use of the guitar regarding dance accompaniment. Dances commonly accompanied with guitars were sarabandes, as in the *Ballet de deux magiciens* (1636), and chaconnes, as in Isaac Bensérade’s *Ballet d’Alcidiane* (1658). René Bordier refers to the guitarists as ‘chaconistes’ in the *Ballet des fées de la forêt de la Saint Germain* (1625). The instrument was often paired with castanets to evoke the Spanish dances as occurs in Molière’s *Pastorale comique* (1667) and in the *Mascarade des cinq de la conduite par la fortune et les plaisirs* (1658).<sup>35</sup>

Song in the *ballets de cour* occurs most frequently in the form of the *récit, air de cour* or chorus. The *récit* was sung in most instances by a solo voice to the accompaniment of a solo instrument, in most cases a lute. It served an

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<sup>34</sup> ‘Il Piacere con li due compagni, sarà bene, che habbiano stromenti in mano suonando mentre loro cantano, & si suonino i loro Ritornelli. Uno puotrà havere un Chitarone, l’altro una Chitarina Spagnuola, e l’altro un Cimbaletto con sonagline alla Spagnuola, che facci poco romore...’ Translated in Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music*, 36

<sup>35</sup> Powell, *Music and Theatre*, 91

Example 17: Cavalieri: 'Piacere con due compagni', *Rappresentazione di anima, et di corpo* (Act 2, Scene 4)<sup>36</sup>

Ritornello

Cantare

Chi gio - ia

Chi gio - ia

Chi gio - ia

Ritornello 6 6 4 # #

6

vuol, chi bra - ma Gus - tar spas - si, e pia ce - re,

vuol, chi bra - ma Gus - tar spas - si, e pia ce - re,

vuol, chi bra - ma Gus - tar spas - si, e pia ce - re,

vuol, chi bra - ma Gus - tar spas - si, e pia ce - re,

4 3 # #

13

Men - tr'il tem - po lo chia - ma, ven - ga, ven - ga à

Men - tr'il tem - po lo chia - ma, ven - ga, ven - ga à

Men - tr'il tem - po lo chia - ma, ven - ga, ven - ga à

Men - tr'il tem - po lo chia - ma, ven - ga, ven - ga à

# 7 7 #6 # # # 4 # # 6

<sup>36</sup> Transcribed from Emilio Cavalieri, *Rappresentazione di anima, et di corpo* (Rome: Nicolo Mutii, 1600; facs. edn. Farnborough: Gregg International, 1967), xii

gode - re; Get - ti gli a - fan - ni su - oi, etc.

gode - re; Get - ti gli a - fan - ni su - oi, Cor - etc.

gode - re; Get - ti gli a - fan - ni su - oi, etc.

gode - re; Get - ti gli a - fan - ni su - oi, etc.

#6 # #

introductory purpose and provided a commentary on the action that was to follow.

Again, the *air de cour* was traditionally accompanied by the lute, although Étienne Moulinié's book of airs has some inclusions with guitar accompaniment. The character Marinetta accompanies herself with a guitar as she sings both Italian and French airs in Monsieur le Noble's *Les deux Arlequins* (1691).<sup>37</sup> In Act 2, Scene 2, both *Harlequins* listen to her as she sings in French:

Cruel love, I break thy chains; I adore Harlequin, and the Ingrate flights me. Ah! how sweet it is to love! But alas there's no Flame so violent, but what cold Disdain may extinguish.<sup>38</sup>

As the guitar features by far the most prominently in the *entrées* of the ballet, normally in the form of a musical troupe, we find it more often accompanies a chorus, as it does in the *Ballet du grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut* (1626) by Bordier. In this work there is a ball, which is attended by guests of different nationalities. There is a ballet for each nationality, and one of these, the *Ballet des Grenedins*,<sup>39</sup> features a troupe of guitarists, who play and sing the following song:<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> A bilingual edition of this play was published in London in 1718, as French comedians were giving performances of the work at the theatre at Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

<sup>38</sup> Monsieur Le Noble, *Les deux Arlequins* (London, 1718), II. 2. 27

<sup>39</sup> Images of the *Ballet des Grenedins* were beautifully captured by the artist Daniel Rabel, and his depictions of the guitarists in their costumes can be accessed at *Le Magazine de l'Opéra Baroque* <[http://operabaroque.fr/Cadre\\_baroque.htm](http://operabaroque.fr/Cadre_baroque.htm)> [accessed 08/09/10]

Après avoir vidé nos verres  
Nous disons de bonnes chansons  
Pour charmer l'hoste et ses garçons  
Avec nos voix et nos guitares.

Having emptied our glasses  
We sing good songs  
To charm our host and his sons  
With our voices and our guitars.

Mais par musique ny paroles  
Ces gens-là ne se gaignent plus,  
Et n'ayment point le son des luths  
S'il n'est joint au son des pistoles.

But these people are won over  
By neither music, nor words,  
And they don't like the sound of lutes  
If it is not joined to the sound of pistols.<sup>41</sup>

There was a strong presence of Italian acting troupes in France mid-way through the seventeenth century, and such was their popularity that they came to operate in Paris on a permanent basis as the *Comédie italienne* until 1697. These actors performed the *Suite du festin de Pierre* in 1673, *Columbine avocat pour et contre* (1685) and *Les deux Arlequins* in 1691. Just as in England, there was a demand for Italian singers on the stage, and we find numerous productions featuring songs sung in both French and Italian. Guitars were employed in accompanying Italian airs, as occurs in Buti's *Ballet de la galanterie du temps* (1656). In this performance, the songs were performed by Anne de la Barre and Anna Bergerotti, and they were accompanied by six guitarists, including the King, and Francesco Corbetta. Anna Bergerotti also performed in the *Ballet de la Raillerie* (1659). Guitars also accompany Italian songs and dancing in Act 1 of *Le Carnaval de Venise* (1699) which is set in St Mark's Square.

### England

In seventeenth-century English theatre we again find regular occurrences of guitar-accompanied chaconnes and sarabandes. Crowne's *Calisto* (1675) included a sarabande danced by Princesses Mary and Anne with castanets to guitar accompaniment, and in Dryden's *Albion and Albanus* (1685) guitars perform a

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<sup>40</sup> Denis, 'La guitare en France', 144

<sup>41</sup> Translated with the assistance of my supervisor Dr Mary O'Neill.

chaconne. We also find the guitar in the context of comic dances, as in Durfey's *Love for Money* (1691), where in Act 3, Scene 2, the stage directions indicate that 'here the Romps perform a Ridiculous dance with Guittars out of Tune'.<sup>42</sup> As in other countries, English theatre works of the period frequently feature low-class rogues singing humorous and low-brow songs to guitar accompaniment. Durfey's character Frisco (played by Mr Jevon) in *The Banditti* (1686) is a fine example, and one of his songs of drinking and merry-making was published by Henry Playford and Robert Carr in the third book of their *Theatre of Music* series in 1686 (see Example 18).

The complete lyrics are as follows:

From drinking of sack by the pottle,  
From breaking a constables noddle,  
From bullies that would have been roaring,  
From bullies that would have been Whoring!  
I have brought here a noise of merry, merry, merry boys,  
Sweet Ladies to hinder your snoring,  
Hark! How the strings jar when I thrum my gitar!  
Ah! Prove not my foe! Languish below; to sleep I would go, he ho,  
To sleep I would go; he ho;

It is possible that the annotations on the music reading 'preng preng-ta' refer to the strumming of the guitar. *Alfabeto* was unknown in England, and in lute-style tablatures, guitar strumming was indicated with the stem directions of mensural notes. As the guitar accompaniment does not feature in the above source, 'preng preng-ta' may be a verbal description of the strummed rhythm, which seems to mirror that of the bass.

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<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Curtis Price, *Music in the Restoration*, 194

Example 18: Frisco's Song<sup>43</sup>

From drin-king of

Sack by the Pot- tle, from brea-king a Con- sta-ble's Nod- dle,

*Preng preng-ta, preng preng-ta, preng, preng.* *Preng,*

his Nod- dle, his Nod - dle; from Bull-ies that would have been Roar -ing, been

*Preng.* *Preng, Preng.*

Roar-ing, from Bull-ies that would have been Who-ring, I have brought here a

noise of mer -ry, mer -ry, mer -ry Boys, sweet La -dies, to hin - der your snoar -ing, sweet

La -dies to hin - der your snoar - ing Hark!

*Preng preng - ta, preng preng - ta, preng, preng.*

how the strings jarr, when I thrum my Git -tar! Hark!

*Preng preng - ta, preng preng - ta, preng, preng.*

<sup>43</sup> Transcribed from Henry Playford and Robert Carr, *The Theatre of music I-IV: Originally Published by Henry Playford and Robert Carr in Four Books (1685-1687)*, Music for London Entertainment, Series A, Vol. 1 (fac. edn. Tunbridge Wells: Macnutt, 1983), III, 4-5

52

8 how the strings jarr, when I thrum my Git - tar! Ah! prove not my

*Preng preng-ta, preng preng-ta, preng, preng.*

60

8 Foe! here I Lan - guish bel - ow; to my Sleep I would go, he ho \_\_\_\_\_; to my

67

8 Sleep I would go, he ho \_\_\_\_\_; to my Sleep I would go, hey ho \_\_\_\_\_.

Clearly, then, what is so far apparent from the investigation into the guitar's theatrical repertoire is that there was general consensus regarding the typical employment of the instrument that was common to the four countries discussed. It regularly accompanied popular dances and was often employed in comic scenes of light relief. Its suitability for the accompaniment of comic dances perhaps stems from the relative ease of strumming and being active on stage at the same time. There is also a common practice of allocating such dances or humorous songs to lower-class characters or rogues, suggesting an influence of the guitar's early association with the pastimes of the lower classes.

### Serenades and Erotic Symbolism

As the guitar's popular dance repertoire was criticised for inciting people to behave indecently, it is unsurprising that in art, literature and stage works the instrument itself bore an erotic association. There are early references to the guitar in

a seductive context in the works of French poet Pierre Ronsard (1524-1585). His *Quatre premiers livres des odes* (1550) included an ode to the guitar, that emphasises the suitability of the instrument for accompanying amorous poetry. He writes:

My guitar I sing of you, by whom alone I assuage, I assuage, I break apart, I enchant, the Love that I receive. . . Better then to sing the beauties of my mistress, that she might wish to bring to a happy end the sorrow that oppresses me.<sup>44</sup>

Such amorous association with the instrument was common, and another example can be found in the famed *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* written by late seventeenth-century English poet Nicholas Brady (1659-1726) and set to music by Henry Purcell in 1692. The poem praises the many different instruments of music, and guitars are mentioned alongside flutes in connection with lust:

In vain the Am'rous FLUTE and soft GUITARR  
Jointly labour to inspire  
Wanton Heat and Loose Desire. . .<sup>45</sup>

In literary and art works the instrument is frequently encountered in the hands of a would-be-suitor trying to seduce his beloved with amorous poetry. This is a common theme in the paintings of Antoine Watteau for example.<sup>46</sup> In literature and drama the guitar is regularly employed in serenades, most typically performed beneath a lady's window after nightfall. It should be remembered however that the guitar bore an association with the disreputable behaviour of lower-class rogues, and so whilst it was commonly used in love scenes, it was also a visual representation of lust. Victor Coelho discusses the symbolism of the guitar in art, and writes that 'its presence in a Baroque allegorical painting (and in opera) usually signified lust and

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<sup>44</sup> Translated in Carla Zecher, *Sounding Objects: Musical Instruments, Poetry, and Art in Renaissance France* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 182 f.n. 89 and 91

<sup>45</sup> Diane Kelsey McColley, *Poetry and Music in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 231

<sup>46</sup> See the reproductions in Grunfeld, 'The Gentle Guitars', 2-8



licentiousness',<sup>47</sup> whilst, conversely, the lute tended to represent love. Cervantes makes the guitar an accomplice to the less than honourable intentions of the protagonist of his novel *El celoso extremeño* (1613), in which Loaysa uses his skills on the instrument to charm his way into the Carrizales household in order to seduce the Master's wife Leonora.<sup>48</sup>

One early dramatic performance in which, as Nina Treadwell points out, the guitar assumes a blatant erotic association, is the finale of the sixth *Intermedi* for *La Pellegrina*, performed in 1589 as part of the Medici wedding festivities. This was in part due to the performance given by two women in the enticing *rasgueado* style, but the association becomes clearer when the underlying theme of this finale, that is the well-wishing of the royal newlyweds and more specifically the hope of an heir, is made explicit by the sung text:

Tre Donne:	For the royal bride Let nymphs and shepherds Weave a triumphal crown Of the loveliest flowers
Tutti:	Ferdinand is now happy and proud The noble virgin burns with holy ardor And prepares herself for amorous sport. <sup>49</sup>

Serenades were common both in literature and in dramatic works. Amorous *letrillas*, canzonettas and ballads were likely accompanied by a familiar chordal framework such as a passacaglia. Briceño stresses the versatility of the *pasacalle* in accompanying a range of theatrical songs in his *Método*. He includes a 'rule for knowing all the theatre entrances, which are called passacaglie, which are necessary

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<sup>47</sup> Victor Coelho, 'The Baroque Guitar', 176

<sup>48</sup> Miguel Cervantes, 'El celoso extremeño', in *Exemplary Novels III*, trans. by Michael and John Thacker (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1992)

<sup>49</sup> Nina Treadwell, *Music and Wonder*, 207. Treadwell provides a full translation of the text of Laura Guidiccioni's 'O che nuovo miracolo' given on pages 206-208

in order to sing every kind of *letrilla* and serious romance, whether Spanish or French'.<sup>50</sup> How exactly the serenades were performed was governed by their intended dramatic function. Serenades could assist in developing a romantic relationship between two characters, but they could also be vehicles of comedy. The latter type often featured unusual, mixed ensembles and outlandish costumes, often generating an atmosphere of cacophony rather than romance.

The instrumental forces employed in such scenes varied. A serenade could be accompanied by a single guitar, but there are several references to guitars playing alongside other instruments such as lutes, flutes and violins. For example, the guitar plays in an ensemble of singers and lutenists in Act 1, Scene 8, of the anonymous *Les Rammoneurs* (c.1624). In the also anonymous novel, *Vertue Rewarded* (1693), the guitarist wishes to perform a serenade at midnight, but to make sure the intended recipient is awake he plays a duet with a violinist first:

[The musicians] sallied out to go to the place where they meant to serenade... When they were come under the Window, they played a while in Consort, till they thought they had awaken'd those of the House, and then the Prince bad Celadon give over, and setting his Guittar to answer his Voice, with a passionate Air he sang this song...<sup>51</sup>

In many of Watteau's paintings of love scenes the guitarist has his right hand positioned either close to, or over the neck of the instrument, suggesting a sweetened tone in consideration of the more intimate nature of the performance.

Poetry could be sung by a single voice, or the principal performer could sing the stanzas and have his companions sing the chorus. The chorus is employed more

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<sup>50</sup> Translated in Thomas Walker, 'Ciaccona and Passacaglia', 308

<sup>51</sup> Anon., *Vertue Rewarded; or, The Irish Princess*, (London, 1693), 22-23, Early English Books Online, Univeristy of Birmingham Library, [accessed 09/06/10]  
<[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:44408:16](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:44408:16)>

commonly in comic serenades. The *Charivari*, a mock serenade traditionally used to mock couples in which there was a considerable age gap between the partners, usually featured a mix of noisy instruments and percussion. Lope de Vega included a serenade in his novel in dialogue *La Dorotea* (1632), in which the love-struck Fernando goes with his companion Julia to play beneath Dorotea's window. From Julio's assessment of the performance, it is clear that Fernando was a talented singer as well as guitarist:

JULIO           For goodness sake, master stop your ranting. Pick up your instrument and sing ... I think she knows you're here.

FERNANDO       Whether or not she knows I am here , I intend to make these strings tell Dorotea how unstrung I feel. And if she does not listen, it won't matter, because the soul delights in music naturally.

[. . .]

JULIO           Then go ahead and sing, since you're finished tuning, lest someone come along and interfere.

[. . .]

JULIO           Sir I believe they have opened the window slightly...?

[. . .]

FERNANDO       I believe I sang poorly because my voice was unsteady.

JULIO           On the contrary, never in my life have I heard you produce such excellent trills and chromatics. And when your voice shifted to falsetto an octave or two higher, it sounded superb.<sup>52</sup>

It would seem however that not all serenades were executed with such skill and grace. In fact, there are numerous references in dramatic works to the irritable and relentless performances of lesser musicians. For example, in Durfey's *The Intrigues at Versailles*, published in 1697, the Count de Fiesque asks:

What Gut-scraping Coxcomb has now been Insipidly Sacrifising? What Guittar-Thrasher, Thrum, thrum, thrum? What Madrigal Chanter with a love-trilling A\_\_h me, that makes me sweat to hear him? – or what Pittiful Pipero with a Toodle, Toodle, Toodle, - has been profaning the Eares of so Admirable a Beauty.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Lope de Vega, *La Dorotea*, 147-151

<sup>53</sup> Thomas Durfey, *The Intrigues at Versailles; or, A Jilt in All Humours* (London, 1697), 2, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10]  
< [http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:98013:6](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:98013:6)>

Likewise in *The Assignment* (1672) Dryden's character Aurelian complains of Benito's guitar-playing, saying 'there's not a street in all Rome which he does not nightly disquiet with his villanous serenade; with that guitar there, the younger brother of a cittern, he frights away the watch'. Dryden continues this theme in *The Spanish Fryer* (1681), where serenades are such a nuisance, according to one character, that there are 'Blunderbusses planted in every loophole, that go off constantly of their own accord, at the squeaking of a Fiddle, and the thrumming of a Ghittar'.<sup>54</sup> The words 'scraping', 'thrashing' and 'squeaking' emphasise the limited abilities of the musicians in question, although they could also be further examples of the negative perceptions of the *rasgueado* style of playing.

Serenades were commonly used in conjunction with comedy, whether through the intentionally raucous musical performances or through the ensuing drama that followed. Act 4, Scene 3 of the *Comedie des chansons* (1640) featured a mock serenade performed by 'musiciens grotesques', who played 'une guiterre, une vielle, des cymbals, des régales [and] des flageollets'.<sup>55</sup> In this scene, La Roze and his band of musicians go to serenade Silvie, and the stage instructions reveal that the accompaniment to La Roze's singing was a 'pasecalle'. The lyrics are as follows:<sup>56</sup>

LA ROZE	Permettez, ô Cloris! que se vous chante clairement La griefve peine de ce bel Amant, Et que j'acorde ma voix avec mon instrument.
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LE CHOEUR	Belle beauté, nous vous estimons tant, Qu'en vous voyant, nostre esprit est content.
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<sup>54</sup> John Dryden, *The Spanish Fryer; or, The Double Discovery* (London, 1681), I. 1. 14, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10]

< [http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:59689:13](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:59689:13)>

<sup>55</sup> Powell, *Music and Theatre*, 17, f.n. 12,

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*, 478-9

LA ROZE	Vous oyez ses souspirs, les avant-couriers du trespas, Vostre coeur de roche n'y resiste pas: Que craignez-vous? beau souspirs, Allez par compas.
LA CHOEUR	Rare beauté, vos attraits si puissans Ont fait mourir trop d'esprits innocens.
LA ROZE	Si vous n'alliez plus doux, à la fin vous en seriez las Le vent de Borée ne vous poursuit pas; Ne trottez plus beaux souspirs, n'allez que le pas.
LE CHOEUR	Rare beauté, sçachez que c'est pour vous Que l'Amour nous a fait devenir fous.

Sometimes the comedy lay in the dialogue of the angry recipients, opening their windows to express their displeasure at being disturbed. For example, in *Virtue Rewarded* the following ballad is sung to guitar accompaniment:

Why should my fair Enchantress sleep,  
And yet not dream at all of those,  
Whom Love of her in torment keep,  
And hinders from the least repose:  
She has kindled fires in my breast,  
Which keep me still awake,  
And robs her Lover of that rest,  
Which she her self does take.<sup>57</sup>

As the musician finishes singing, he hears a woman's voice call back to him:

Who are you that distrust your own Person and Wit so much, that you make your Court by Musick, to help the one; and chuse Mid-night for the time to pay your visits in, that Darkness may conceal the defects of the other?<sup>58</sup>

John Dryden uses a serenade to humorous effect in Act 2, Scene 1 of his *An Evening's Love* (1668), where two suitors arrive at the same time to play beneath a window, which inevitably results in a brawl. The scene is set in Madrid, and a body of English musicians prepare to give their performance:

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<sup>57</sup> Anon, *Virtue Rewarded*, 23

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*

WILD                    My project is to give our Mistress a Serenade; this being the last Evening of the Carnival, and to prevent discovery here are disguises for us too. . .

BELL                    'Tis very well; come Maskall help on with 'em, while they tune their instruments.

WILD                    Strike up Gentlemen; we'll entertain 'em with a song al' Angloise, pray be ready with your chorus. . .<sup>59</sup>

However, just as the musicians finish playing, they realise that they are not alone in their venture, for they hear:

*(Music and Guittars tuning on the other side of the stage)*

BELL                    Hark, Wildblood, do you hear; there's more melody; on my life some Spaniards have taken up this post for the same design.

*(The two Spaniards and the English fight; the Spaniards are beaten off the stage; the musicians on both sides and servants fall confusedly one over the other)*<sup>60</sup>

### The Guitar and Exoticism

If a dramatic work included a character from overseas, or if it was set somewhere abroad, two standard means of evoking a distant culture were through the use of elaborate costuming and with evocative music. Outlandish costumes were representative of exotic cultures, and instruments or dances characteristic of far-off lands served to enhance the foreign atmosphere. Castanets, for example, were (and still are) universally associated with Spain, and so their presence on stage, likely during a typically Spanish dance such as a sarabande or chaconne, gave the scene a distinctly Spanish flavour. This was yet another context in which the guitar's popular dance repertoire regularly featured on stage.

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<sup>59</sup> John Dryden, *An Evening's Love; or, The Mock Astrologer* (London, 1671), II. 1. 27-28, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10]

<[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:48803:25](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:48803:25)>  
<sup>60</sup> *ibid*, 28

Of all the exotic cultures portrayed with the guitar, that of the Gypsies was one of the most common. However, as the table below demonstrates, the range of characters represented with the instrument was diverse.

Table 3.2: Exotic cultures portrayed with guitars

<i>Pedro de Urdemalas</i>	Gypsies
<i>Calisto</i>	Gypsies (and Africans?)
<i>The Gypsies Metamorphosed</i>	Gypsies
<i>Mascarade des cinq de la nature</i>	Gypsies
<i>Pastorale comique</i>	Gypsies
<i>Cadmus et Hermione</i>	Africans
<i>Ballet d'Alcidiane</i>	Moors
<i>Los moriscos de hornachos</i>	Moors
<i>Ballet de la Raillerie</i>	Diverse Nations – (French, Italian, Turkish, Indian, Spanish)
<i>La Carnival de Venise</i>	Bohemians, Armenians
<i>Ballet des ballets</i>	Bohemians
<i>Ballet des fées de la forêt</i>	Spaniards
<i>The Indian Emperor</i>	Spaniards
<i>Ballet de la Prospérité des armés de France</i>	Americans

There is an iconographic source that depicts the guitar as a representative instrument of the American culture. In the engraving *Le Soir*, which shows Louis XIII attending a performance of the *Ballet de la Prospérité des armés de France* (1641), musicians are shown in the overhead balconies. The guitarist is prominent amongst the other performers, but, as Olivia Bloechl points out, all are wearing feather headdresses. She suggests that this is due to the presence of American characters in Act III, and explains that such headdresses were representative of native Americans, as that is how they were depicted in contemporary travel-writings.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Bloechl, 'War, Peace and the Ballet in Le Soir', 92. A detail of the engraving showing the balcony of musicians is reproduced in the same article on page 95.

The costume bill for John Crowne's *Calisto* (1675) is a revealing source of how guitars and costuming enhanced the exotic atmosphere on stage. This masque featured an entry of Africans and of Gypsies, and although it is not known exactly what or when the guitarists performed, we know they were present on stage and their elaborate costumes suggest they may have taken part in either or both of these entries. There were four guitarists, including the internationally renowned Francesco Corbetta, Mr Cutum, Mr Henry Deloney and Mr Delawney (guitar master to Princess Anne),<sup>62</sup> and thanks to the survival of the costume bill, we know what they wore. Charges were made '...ffor makeing a taffaty gowne Laced with gawes downe before round the sleeves and neck and bottome with all small ffurniture', for 'making a gilt leather cap with feathers', '18 ells white taffeta', 18 yds of 'broad gold gauze' and '14 falls [of feathers] of severall collours'.<sup>63</sup>

Corbetta is also known to have performed in the *Ballet de la galenterie du temps* (1656), the *Ballet royal de l'impatience* (1661) and *Psyché* (1678). Another famous musician who played the guitar on stage in costume is Lully, who portrayed a Gypsy in the *Pastorale comique* (1667) alongside guitarists Beauchamp, Chicanneau and Foignart. We find further references to Beauchamp and Chicanneau, who portrayed Bohemians in the fourth *Intermède* of the *Ballet des ballets* (1671) alongside de Lorge and la Valée. Chicanneau is also recorded performing in *Cadmus et Hermione* alongside three other guitarists: Etienne Bonard, 'Mayeux' (Antoine?)

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<sup>62</sup> Andrew R. Walkling, 'Masque and Politics at the Restoration Court: John Crowne's *Calisto*', *EM*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (February, 1996), pp. 27-62, 35

<sup>63</sup> Eleanore Boswell, *The Restoration Court Stage (1660-1702) with a Particular Account of the Production of Calisto* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1932/1960), 305



and ‘Pezan’.<sup>64</sup> The troupe of Spanish musicians in the *Ballet des fées de la forêt de la Saint Germain* (1625) were portrayed by Louis XIII and his entourage, which included the duc d’Aluyn and the duc de Nemours.<sup>65</sup> Other famous guitarist-theorbists known to have taken part in dramatic works are Henri Grenerin, who also performed in the *Ballet royal de l’impatience* and *Psyché*; and Michael Bartolotti, who performed in Francesco Cavalli’s opera *Ercole amante* (1662). It is possible that Foscari performed in Luigi Rossi’s tragicomédie *Orfeo*, as he was in Paris in 1647 during its performance and the continuo band specifies 2 chitarre, 2 liuti, 4 tiorbe and 4 cimbali.<sup>66</sup>

### The Guitar and Comedy

Early critics of the guitar saw the instrument as a novelty not to be taken seriously, and belittled its *rasgueado* performing style, which they regarded as simplistic and unsophisticated. These very characteristics that were seen to distance the guitar from more serious and noble instruments made it amply suited to accompany comedy. Its appropriateness also stems from its early cultivation amongst the lower classes. Some of the characters that appear most frequently in humorous contexts include servants, ruffians and rogues, and the guitar was thus a fitting instrument to represent them. It is amongst the lower-class characters that the guitar was most prominent. Lope de Vega for example allocates the instrument to servants in *El Cuerdo en su casa* (1606-12), peasants in *Peribañez y el comendador de ocaña* (1610-12), and soldiers in *Las almenas de toro* (1610-13). Cervantes has shepherd

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<sup>64</sup> Jerome de la Gorce, ‘Some Notes on Lully’s Orchestra’ in *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honour of James R. Anthony*, ed. by John Hajdu Heyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 99-112, 104-5

<sup>65</sup> Denis, ‘La guitare en France’, 144

<sup>66</sup> Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music*, 67

guitarists in his *La Casa de los celos*, and the instrument is performed by sailors in Andreini's *Amor nello specchio* (1622). This practice is continued throughout the century, so even in the Restoration theatre we find characters such as Frisco in Durfey's *Il Banditti* (cited above) and Antonio in Porter's *The Carnival* (1664), a guitarist preoccupied with music and womanising:

ANTONIO        Anyway fool, 'tis the onely ornament of a melancholly Lover, one that doats infinitely on all Women, and cares not a rush for any one in particular:  
 A Whore! why, hadst thou ever a Mistris thou didst Not wish to be so?...  
 FELICES        Oh, an excellent Rogue I have pick'd up.<sup>67</sup>

In *commedia dell'arte* performances, servants or grotesque characters frequently played the guitar. Iconographic sources attest to this, and amongst the male characters depicted with guitars are *Scapino*, *Brighella*, *Coviello*, *Fritellino*, *Buffetto*, *Mezzetino*, *Pierrot* and *Scaramuccia*. Female characters known to have played the instrument include *Lucinda*, *Silvia*, *Florinda* and *Columbina*.<sup>68</sup>

In 1632, the first performance of Stefano Landi's sacred opera *Il Sant'Alessio* took place in the Barberini palace at the Piazza delle Quattro Fontane. The Barberinis were important early patrons of opera, and this was the first of numerous productions performed in their palace.<sup>69</sup> Landi's work is based on the life of the Roman Saint Alexis, and there is an engraving by François Collignon of the fifth scene of Act 3, depicting angel musicians in clouds playing a variety of instruments, including guitars. Nina Treadwell draws attention to hand-written *alfabeto* on a surviving print

<sup>67</sup> T. Porter, *The Carnival A Comedy* (London, 1664), II. 1. 17, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10] <[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:96411:9](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:96411:9)>

<sup>68</sup> Iconographic sources depicting Fritellino, Columbina and Mezzetino with guitars are reproduced in Grunfeld, *The Art and Times*, 80, 128, and 137. Watteau's painting of Silvia playing the guitar is reproduced in Heartz, 'Watteau's Italian Comedians', 165. All other characters mentioned appear in images reproduced in Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin*, 75-77, 211, 93, 68, 104

<sup>69</sup> See Frederick Hammond, *Music & Spectacle in Baroque Rome: Barberini Patronage Under Urban VIII* (London, Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 201-214

of the opera,<sup>70</sup> which, along with the evidence of the engraving, suggests the guitar's involvement in the main body of the drama.

However, the instrument was also used in a scene that did not appear in the original 1632 performance. Virginia Lamothe speculates that this scene functioned as an *intermedio* between Acts 1 and 2, due to the irrelevance of its subplot to the rest of the drama and the large amount of dancing it requires.<sup>71</sup> In this scene, the guitar is played by a pageboy called Curtio. The pageboys provided the light relief, and as Lamothe points out, they even indulge in 'a slapstick scene full of puns with the Devil'.<sup>72</sup> It is perhaps fitting, then, that Curtio and an instrument with a devilish association accompany the dancing that takes place. One further observation made by Lamothe is that in 1634 two more performances of the opera were given: one with an audience that included prelates of the church, and another in the presence of the ladies of the court and their relatives. This leads her to surmise that the added scene was probably included for the more secular audience, and probably absent from the production witnessed by the clergy.<sup>73</sup>

The *commedia dell'arte* actors frequently incorporated the guitar into their antics, but as both the music and much of the libretto were improvised, it is hard to know exactly how the instrument was used. There are some published sources, however, containing dramatic works imitating those of the *commedia dell'arte*, that provide us with some clues as to the nature of the humour in these productions. In France, we find instances of comedy that seem to be modelled on Italian practices.

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<sup>70</sup> Nina Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola', 37

<sup>71</sup> Virginia Lamothe, 'The Theatre of Piety: Sacred Operas for the Barberini Family (Rome 1632-1643)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009), 112

<sup>72</sup> *ibid*

<sup>73</sup> *ibid*, 113

This is unsurprising, as the *commedia dell'arte* troupes gave performances abroad, and their popularity in France can be attested to by the presence of the *comédie-italienne* in the Hôtel de Bourgogne.

The fifth *entrée* of the *Ballet des festes de Bacchus* (1651) for example features 'musique grotesque' - a promenade of actors in outlandish costumes, playing various instruments, among them the guitar. One is described as having a comic posture and expression.<sup>74</sup> We find further evidence of costumes enriching the comedy in the correspondence of the Duchesse d'Orléans (the dedicatee of Carré's 1671 guitar book), who describes a *bal masqué* given in 1699. She indicates that among the guitarists featured in the *entrées* were le compte d'Ayen, le prince Camille and La Vallière in ridiculous attire, and also Monsieur d'Antin and Monsieur de Brionne and Monsieur le Dauphin, who played guitar in women's costumes.<sup>75</sup>

Evaristo Gherardi (1663-c.1701) was an exponent of the character Harlequin, and his six-volume *Théâtre italien*, published in Paris in 1700, contains the librettos of many productions given by the *Comédie italienne*.<sup>76</sup> One such inclusion is Fatouville's *Columbine advocat pour et contre*, performed for the first time in 1685, and in Act 2, Scene 7 of this work Scaramouche receives a fright from Pasqcariel as he plays his guitar:

Scaramouche enters, tidies up the room, takes his guitar, seats himself in a chair and starts to play while waiting for his master. Pasqcariel comes quietly behind him and beats out the measure above his shoulders-which terrifies him greatly.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> 'le troisième, dans une posture et avec une expression comique' quoted in *Le Magazine de l'opéra baroque*, <[http://operabaroque.fr/CHANCY\\_BACCHUS.htm](http://operabaroque.fr/CHANCY_BACCHUS.htm)> [accessed 07/09/2010]

<sup>75</sup> Denis, 'La guitare en France', 145

<sup>76</sup> Evaristo Gherardi, *Le Théâtre Italien de Gherardi ou le Recueil général de toutes les comédies et scènes françaises jouées par les Comédiens Italiens du Roy ...* 6 vols

<sup>77</sup> Quoted in Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin*, 105

Peter Motteux's *The Novelty* (1697) was written in imitation of the Italian *commedia* productions as is indicated by its full title, which describes the work as a 'pastoral, comedy, masque, tragedy, and farce, after the Italian manner'. Act V is titled 'Natural Magic, A short Farce', and this is a particularly interesting scenario because in it the guitar is central to the comedy. During this farce, Pantalone takes a candle to bed, but is startled when Pasquarel sneaks in and blows it out. After more incidents of trickery, Pantalone is so shaken by the presence of what he believes to be a ghost that he reaches for his guitar:

My Guitar's yonder; I'll try to play a Tune; perhaps that will drive away the Evil Spirit. Here's a chair, I'll sit; for I tremble so I can't stand'. (Pasquarel jumps into the chair, and places himself like a chair; and Pantalone takes the Guitar, sits on him; and then strikes the strings). 'Tis out of Tune and so am I too'. (Pasquarel untunes it as fast as he tunes it). 'What ails the Guitar? One string gives all the manner of sounds! Oh, now it is pretty well'. (Pasquarel puts his Arms under those of Pantalone, and plays). 'Oh! Oh! 'tis bewitched I think. (He rises, looks about, shakes the Guitar, looks under the chair, and shakes it; and in the mean time, Pasquarel gets out). 'I can see nothing'. (He sits again, plays a little; and Pasquarel walks on his Hands and frights him). Oh! I play and the Devil Dances; sure the Devil has ne're a Head, or 'tis where the Tail should be'. (Exit Pasq. Having first blow'd out the Candle.<sup>78</sup>

The guitar was prominent in English comedy, most typically of course in the hands of a lovable servant or rogue. This is precisely the arrangement in Act 1, Scene 1, of Dryden's *The Assignation*, in which Aurelian expresses his displeasure with his servant Benito's music-making. In the scene, Benito (played by Joe Haines) tries to continue playing as Aurelian tries to silence him:

BENITO ( <i>to Camillo</i> )	...but I look on you, Sir, as a man of judgment, and therefore you shall hear me play and sing. ( <i>He takes up the Guittar and begins</i> )
AURELIAN	Why, you invincible Sot you, will nothing mend you? Lay't down, or _____
	[. . .]
BENITO	I'll take up the Guittar, and suffer heroically ( <i>He plays, Aur. Kicks</i> )

<sup>78</sup> Peter Motteux, *The Novelty*, (London, 1697), 45, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 08/06/10] <[http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:104585:27](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:104585:27)>

AURELAIN	What? Do you Mutiny?
BENITO	Ay, do, kick till your toes ake; I'll be baffled in my Musick by ne'r a foot in Christendome.
AURELIAN	I'll put you out of your time, with a vengeance to you. ( <i>As Aurelian kicks harder, Benito sings faster, and sometimes cryes out</i> ). <sup>79</sup>

In summary, the guitar made regular appearances in a wide variety of theatrical works in settings ranging from the outdoor public stage to the royal dwelling place. Guitars appeared in comedies, masques, spectacle plays, operas, ballets, *tragédie lyrique* and *tragédie mise en musique*. Aside from their important roles in dance accompaniment they were chiefly employed in scenes of comedy. Sometimes this was in conjunction with dance, with comic actors performing an array of ridiculous and acrobatic steps. The association of the guitar with care-free living, drinking, dancing and singing made it an apt accompanying instrument for jovial scenes of buffoonery and wit. It was in such scenes that the light-hearted and mocking lyrics of the guitars *bailes* thrived. Guitarists frequently performed in outlandish costumes, performing as 'grotesque' characters or even cross-dressing. Sometimes guitarists would play intentionally out of tune for comic effect, or in the context of the mock serenade, they would give a purposely clamorous performance.

The guitar's association with the unrestrained dancing and frenetic strumming that took place during the *bailes* made the instrument apt to portray distant cultures. The dancing bore a stark contrast to the normal dance types of court and both the visual and audible impact of the strumming set the guitar apart from other traditional instruments of accompaniment. The use of the guitar to evoke exotic settings with

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<sup>79</sup> John Dryden, *The Assignation; or, Love in a Nunnery* (London, 1673), I. 1. 3, Early English Books Online, University of Birmingham Library [accessed 09/06/10]  
< [http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:59689:13](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:59689:13)>

dances such as the chaconne and sarabande was usually complemented by the use of elaborate costuming and percussion instruments, such as castanets or tambourines.

Another important role for the guitar was that of seduction, usually in the context of the serenade, although in this respect the instrument bore a dual association – that of romantic love, the kind demonstrated in the paintings of Watteau and in the songs of Fernando in *La Dorotea*, and that of lust, as preoccupies the guitarists Loaysa (1613), Frisco (1686) and Antonio (1664), all cited above. This association is again unsurprising considering the numerous moralistic objections to the lascivious behaviour that popular *bailes* supposedly encouraged in their participants.

## Chapter 4: The Guitar and Song

*Alfabeto* songs are one aspect of guitar accompaniment that has received considerable attention in past scholarship. Nigel Fortune, a leading authority on the evolution of Italian secular monody, wrote somewhat dismissively of the genre in his PhD thesis in 1954.<sup>1</sup> He associated the guitar with frivolous songs and advocated that *alfabeto* accompaniments of more ‘serious’ monodies were in fact added by enterprising publishers rather than composers. Scholars began exploring the performance practices associated with the guitar song repertoire in greater detail in the 1980s, and much of the published material from this time reveals that Fortune’s views were largely upheld. Richard d’A Jensen conducted valuable research into guitar accompaniments of seventeenth-century Italian songs, in which he provided an insight into the improvisatory performance practices associated with the *alfabeto* repertoire.<sup>2</sup> Silke Leopold is also noteworthy for her research into the significance of the *alfabeto* accompaniments notated on select canzonetta lyrics in Remigio Romano’s song anthologies.<sup>3</sup> Important information relating to the guitar as a continuo instrument was compiled by Robert Strizich, and this research was furthered in the 1990s by Monica Hall and Thomas Christensen.<sup>4</sup> It was also during this decade that guitar accompaniments of Venetian monody were addressed in the works of Roark Miller.<sup>5</sup> It is in the last decade however that the *alfabeto* song repertory has been explored

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<sup>1</sup> Nigel Fortune, ‘Italian Secular Song from 1600-1635: The Origins and Development of Accompanied Monody’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 1954)

<sup>2</sup> Richard d’A Jensen, ‘The Guitar and Italian song’, *EM*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (August, 1985), pp. 376-383

<sup>3</sup> Silke Leopold, ‘Remigio Romano’s Collection of Lyrics for Music’ trans. by Karen Williams in *PRMA*, Vol. 110, (1983-84), pp. 45-61

<sup>4</sup> Monica Hall, ‘The Five-Course Guitar as a Continuo Instrument’, *Lute News*, No. 52 (December, 1999), pp. 11-15, and Thomas Christensen, ‘The “Règle de l’octave” in Thorough-Bass Theory and Practice’, *AcM*, Vol. 64, Fasc. 2 (July-December, 1992), pp. 91-117

<sup>5</sup> Roarke Miller, ‘New Information on the Chronology of Venetian Monody: The “Raccolte” of Remigio Romano’, *ML*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (February, 1996), pp. 22-33, and ‘The Composers of San Marco and Santo Stefano and the Development of Venetian Monody (to 1630)’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Michigan, 1993)



with renewed energy on the parts of Nina Treadwell,<sup>6</sup> James Tyler,<sup>7</sup> Cory Gavito and Alexander Dean,<sup>8</sup> and these scholars have viewed guitar accompaniments somewhat more sympathetically in light of the limited expressive capabilities of *alfabeto* notations and the practical demands of the instrument.

This chapter seeks to clarify a number of the issues raised in the works of the above scholars, and to explore the more current positions held regarding seventeenth-century guitar accompaniments. It explores subjects of frequent dispute in modern scholarship, such as whether composers of monody approved of guitar accompaniments of their songs or even intended them in the first place; whether conflicts between *alfabeto* harmonies and those implied by the bass indicate carelessness, intentional clashes, or independent accompaniments in their own right; and whether the performance practices associated with the guitar's dance repertoire were applicable to its song accompaniments. Guitar accompaniments have often been criticised in past scholarship for their seeming lack of refinement and common disregard for the conventions of counterpoint. This viewpoint is also addressed, and an argument is made in favour of a consideration for the physical limitations of the instrument, that stresses the futility of imposing a judgement based on theoretical ideals onto a tradition that was governed by practicality.

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<sup>6</sup> Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola', and Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song' (2006)

<sup>7</sup> James Tyler, 'The Role of the Guitar in the Rise of Monody: The Earliest Manuscripts', *JSCM*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2003) <[www.sscm-jscm.org/v9/no1/tyler.html](http://www.sscm-jscm.org/v9/no1/tyler.html)> [accessed 10/09/2010]

<sup>8</sup> Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song' (2006) and Dean, 'The Five Course Guitar' (2009)

## Guitar Accompaniments in Printed Sources from the Mid-Sixteenth Century

The earlier four-course guitar was also played in the *rasgueado* style, as is confirmed by Amat in his short chapter on the instrument in his *rasgueado* method published for the five-course instrument;<sup>9</sup> but sources reveal that it also belonged to a separate tradition, more akin to the performance practices of the lute and vihuela. Tablatures from the mid-sixteenth century reveal a wide repertoire of dances, fantasias, intabulations of 3- and 4-part chansons and arrangements of these songs for solo voice and guitar. The earliest printed sources of music for the four-course guitar originate in France and Spain in the 1550s. Comments have already been made in Chapter 2 regarding the complications surrounding music printing in Spain during the Inquisition, and the stark contrast between Spanish and French print culture is apparent considering the substantial French repertory in comparison with the relatively few printed Spanish sources. There are no Spanish publications dedicated exclusively to the instrument, but rather there are a few select pieces for guitar included in large volumes of music for the vihuela. In France, on the other hand, the guitar received a steady stream of finely crafted solo works and song accompaniments from the likes of Adrian Le Roy, Guillaume Morlaye and Simon Gorlier. Table 4.1 shows the early chronology of four-course guitar music in print.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Amat, *Guitarra Española* (1596)

<sup>10</sup> Incidentally, the earliest source of printed music for four-course guitar in Italy is Melchior de Barberiis's *Opera intitolata Contina, Intavolatura di lauto...libro decimo* (Venice: Scotto, 1549)

Table 4.1: Early French and Spanish four-course guitar publications

<p><u>France</u></p> <p>Guillaume Morlaye, <i>Tablature de guiterne</i> (Paris: Fezandat, 1550) [lost]          Simon Gorlier, <i>Le troysieme livre</i> (Paris: Gran Jon and Fezandat, 1551)          Adrian Le Roy, <i>Premier livre de tablature de guiterre</i> (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1551)          _____, <i>Briefve et facil instruction pour apprendre la tablature de guiterre</i> (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1551)          _____, <i>Tiers livre de tablature de guiterre</i> (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1552)          Guillaume Morlaye, <i>Le Premier livre de chansons...</i> (Paris: Gran Jon and Fezandat, 1552)          _____, <i>Le second livre de chansons...</i> (Paris: Fezandat, 1553)          Adrian Le Roy, <i>Quart livre de tablature de guiterre</i> (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1553)          _____, <i>Cinquieme livre de tablature de guiterre</i> (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1554)          _____, <i>Seconde livre de tablature de guiterre</i> (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1556)</p>
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<p><u>Spain</u></p> <p>Alonso Mudarra, <i>Tres libros de musica en cifras de vihuela</i> (Seville, 1546)          Miguel de Fuenllana, <i>Libro de musica para vihuela intitulado Orphenica Lyra</i> (Seville, 1554)</p>
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Out of the above publications, Le Roy's second and fifth books of tablature and Fuenllana's *Orphenica Lyra* contain songs with notated guitar accompaniments.

Having been granted the privilege to print music from King Henry in 1551, Paris-based printers Adrian Le Roy and Robert Ballard had run a highly successful printing business, and part of their output included books of tablature for lute, cittern and guitar. Le Roy (c.1520-1598) produced five books of music exclusively for guitar or guitar and voice. Le Roy was himself highly musical, and a gifted performer, composer and theorist. His guitar method was known in England in translation (now lost), published there in 1568.

Le Roy and Ballard moved in high social spheres, including the court circles of the monarch. They were appointed ‘Royal Music Printers’ in 1553, and crossed paths with many leading poets and musicians, including Pierre Ronsard, Jacques Arcadelt, Claude Le Jeune and Orlande Lassus.<sup>11</sup> The songs in the guitar books are arrangements of 3- or 4- part chansons, and settings of humanist poetry. The majority of the poems in Book 2 (1556)<sup>12</sup> are by Mellin de Saint-Gelais, and in his title Le Roy calls them ‘chansons en forme de voix de ville’, which, as Jane Bernstein explains, indicated ‘courtly lyrical poetry set strophically to simple melodies’.<sup>13</sup> Nearly all of the songs in this book are arrangements of chansons by Pierre Certon from his *Premier livre de chansons à quatre parties* (1552). The majority of chansons in Le Roy’s fifth book for guitar are by Arcadelt, with two others by Certon, two by Le Roy, one by Laurent Bonard and one by De Bussy.<sup>14</sup>

In the same year that Le Roy’s fifth book was published, Miguel de Fuenllana, a blind, virtuoso vihuelist of great repute, published his *Orphenica Lyra*. Fuenllana’s dates of birth and death are uncertain, but he served under the Marquesa de Tarifa, Queen Isabelle de Valois, and Don Sebastian of Portugal. The book was dedicated to Prince Philip, Charles V’s son, and contains mostly solo vihuela pieces, but also song accompaniments presented in the typically Spanish format of red intabulations for the vocal melody and black for the accompaniment. This allowed the song to be

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<sup>11</sup> Samuel Pogue and Frank Dobbins, ‘Le Roy, Adrian’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, 2nd edn., Vol. 14 (London: Macmillan Reference, 2001), pp. 582-3, 582

<sup>12</sup> Adrian Le Roy, *Second livre de guitte* (Paris, 1556). This is a later edition of the original published in 1552, now lost.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Complete Chansons Published by Le Roy and Ballard’, *Sixteenth Century Chanson*, 30 Vols., ed. by Jane A. Bernstein (London: Garland Publishing, 1990), VI, xii

<sup>14</sup> Adrian Le Roy, *Cinqiesme livre de guitte* (Paris, 1554). This is the only known source of the inclusions by Certon: ‘Je sonne la retraite’ and ‘Jamais femme ne sera’. The 4-part version of De Bussy’s ‘Escoutez ma complainte’ is reproduced in transcription in ‘Chansons Published by Le Roy and Ballard’, *Sixteenth Century Chanson*, Vol. 10, edited by Jane A. Bernstein (London: Garland Publishing, 1990), 17-18

performed either with vihuela accompaniment or as an instrumental solo. The book concludes with a small selection of fantasias for guitar, and two songs with guitar accompaniment. One is the famous romance, 'Paseavase el Rey Moro' and the other, 'Covarde Cavallero', is a villancico by Juan Vasquez.

The layout of Le Roy's song accompaniments places the guitar tablature on a separate page to the right of the vocal part. The accompaniment incorporates an embellished version of the melody, again allowing the songs to be performed as instrumental solos if desired. The settings widely employ dance rhythms, which is why many of the songs are also given dance titles such as 'pavanne', 'gagliarde' or 'branle gay'. Example 19 demonstrates how Le Roy arranged Certon's 4-part chanson 'J'ay le rebours' for voice and guitar. The first transcription shows the original song and the second shows the isolated tenor line with accompaniment in the manner of a pavan. The main importance of Le Roy's and Fuenllana's books is that they reveal that popular romances, villancicos and chansons were being arranged for voice and guitar, and that there was sufficient demand for published volumes of these songs to merit repeat editions. Le Roy's arrangements also highlight the early

**Example 19 (a): Pierre Certon, 'J'ay le rebours', *Premier livre de chansons à quatre parties* (Paris, 1552)<sup>15</sup>**

Superius

J'ay le re-bours de ce que je sou-hait - te, J'ay con-ver - ty en joy-e con-tre-fait -

Contraténor

J'ay le re-bours de ce que je sou-hait - te, J'ay con-ver - ty en joy-e con-tre-fait -

Tenor

J'ay le re-bours de ce que je sou-hait - te, J'ay con-ver - ty en joy-e con-tre-fait -

Bassus

J'ay le re-bours de ce que je sou-hait - te, J'ay con-ver - ty en joy-e con-tre-fait -

8

te, Tout le plai - sir que per-dre crai-gnoye tant: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a -

te, Tout le plai - sir que per-dre crai-gnoye tant: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a -

te, Tout le plai - sir que per-dre crai-gnoye tant: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a -

te, Tout le plai - sir que per-dre crai-gnoye tant: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a -

15

mour def - fait - te: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a - mour def - fait - te.

mour def-fait - te: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a - mour def - fait - te.

mour def-fait - te: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a - mour def - fait - te.

mour def-fait - te: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me fend De voir l'a - mour def - fait - te.

<sup>15</sup> Transcribed from *Sixteenth Century Chanson*, edited by Bernstein, VI, 4

Example 19 (b): Pierre Certon's 'J'ay le rebours' - Le Roy's arrangement for voice and guitar<sup>16</sup>

J'ay le re - bours de ce que je sou - hai - te,  
J'ay con - ver - ty en joy - e con - tre - fai - te,

5

Tout le plais - ir que per - dre crai - gnoy tant: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me


10

send De voir l'a - mour de - fai - te: J'ay du mal tant tant, Que le coeur me

14

send De voir l'a - mour de - fai - te.

<sup>16</sup> Transcribed from Adrian Le Roy *Seconde livre de tabulature de guiterre* (Paris: Le Roy and Ballard, 1556; facs. edn Monte Carlo: Editions Chanterelle, 1979). This transcription assumes a four-course

guitar with the following tuning:  Jacques Cellier specified this tuning in a manuscript dating from c.1585 (F-Pn MS fr. 9152). See Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music*, 22-23

relationship between dance and the guitar-song repertory, which, as will become apparent, would greatly influence the strophic song repertoire of the five-course guitar.

The four- and five-course guitars co-existed for much of the seventeenth century. Sources indicate that the earlier instrument was still in active use up to at least c.1650. An *alfabeto* chart for the four-course guitar was published in Pietro Millioni's *Corona del primo, secondo, e terzo libro d'intavolatura di chitarra spagnola...* (Rome: Facciotti, 1631), and another anonymous source from 1645, the *Conserto vago di balletti...* contains music 'for playing on the lute, theorbo, and four-course Neapolitan-style guitar'. In his *Discorso sopra la musica* (1628), Vincenzo Giustiniani laments the dwindling popularity of the instrument, writing:

The playing of the chitarra napolitana has entirely ceased in Rome, and is nearly given up in Naples, where it was excellently played in previous times by Don Ettore Gesualdo and Fabritio Fillomarino in conserto with the previously cited Prince [Gesualdo] of Venosa.<sup>17</sup>

### The Five-Course Guitar and the *Alfabeto* Songbook

In sixteenth-century France, a group of poets, whose principal members were Pierre Ronsard (1524-1585), Joachim du Bellay (1522-1560) and Jean-Antoine de Baïf (1532-1589), reacted to the ostentatious writings of the *grands rhétoriciens* and chose instead to imitate ancient Greek and Latin models in the French vernacular. This group came to be known as the *Pléiade*, and Ronsard in particular wanted to develop forms that were particularly suited for musical settings. To this end, his writings stress the importance of strophic regularity, and, as Jeanice Brooks points

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<sup>17</sup> Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 162



out, the adoption of this principle among his contemporaries coincides with the increasing popularity of the strophic *air de cour* in the second half of the century.<sup>18</sup>

The changing aesthetics of French poetry were influential over similar trains of thought that were taking hold amongst Italian poets during the late sixteenth century. Gabriello Chiabrera (1552-1638) put much energy into developing the polymetric canzonetta, an undertaking that was fuelled by his desire to facilitate musical settings of his poetry. This motivation is made clear in his preface to *Le maniere de' versi toscani*, in which he describes his lyric verses as:

... being especially suited for singing, musicians, to the greater delight of others and with little trouble to themselves, compose music to these verses, which are of different varieties. Giulio Romano [i.e. Caccini] is proof of this.<sup>19</sup>

Experiments with strophic poetic forms coincided with the new musical ideals of the *seconda prattica* that were taking hold in Italy in the last decades of the sixteenth century. The exponents of this style sought to emulate the musical practices of ancient Greece, and to maximise the expression of the text without obscuring its meaning among weaving lines of polyphony. Counterpoint was considered the commanding element of the old style of composers such as Palestrina. Caccini writes in the preface to his *Le Nuove Musiche*:

In both madrigals and airs I have always sought to imitate the ideas behind the words, trying to find those rules of greater or lesser affect (depending on the feelings of the texts) and of particular grace. As much as possible I have hidden the art of counterpoint.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Jeanice Brooks, 'Ronsard, The Lyric Sonnet and The Late Sixteenth-Century Chanson', *EMH*, Vol. 13 (1994), pp. 65-84, 70

<sup>19</sup> Gabriello Chiabrera, *Le maniere de' versi toscani* (Genoa: Pavoni, 1599) trans. Robert R. Holzer, 'Music and Poetry in Seventeenth-Century Rome: Settings of the Canzonetta and Cantata Texts of Francesco Balducci, Domenico Benigni, Francesco Melosio and Antonio Abati', Part 1., (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1990), 64

<sup>20</sup> Giulio Caccini, *Le nuove musiche*, ed. by H. Wiley Hitchcock (Florence, 1602, facs. edn. Madison (Wisc.): A-R Editions, 1970), 4

Composers came to regard monody sung to a plucked string accompaniment (plucked strings most closely resembled the Greek kithara) as the most suitable and expressive vehicle to achieve this end. Such composers found great appeal in Chiabrera's strophic models, as they lent themselves well to melodies that were closely modelled on the natural rhythms of speech. This new style was nurtured in the literary and aesthetic 'academies' that were active in sixteenth-century Italy, most noticeably in the 'Florentine Camerata' of Giovanni de' Bardi (1534-1612). It is worth noting that some famed seventeenth-century guitarists were also members of academies, such as Giovanni Foscarini (fl.1620-49) who was a member of the *Accademia dei Caliginosi*, a literary association in Ancona, and who bore the nickname 'Il Furioso'. Francesco Corbetta (c.1615-1681) was a member of the *Accademia degli Erranti* in Brescia, in which he used the academic nickname 'Il Capriccioso', and Domenico Pellegrini (fl.1646-c.1682) was a member of the prestigious Bolognese *Accademia dei Filomusi*.

In light of these new ideals, the strophic, popular songs originating in southern Italy (which were commonly accompanied by the guitar) gathered more influence in the north as composers took an increasing interest in the Neapolitan villanella, or *canzone alla napoletana*. These songs were normally in three or four parts, incorporating Neapolitan dialects characteristic of their rustic origins. Nigel Fortune wrote somewhat dismissively of the sixteenth-century *canzone villanesche*, labelling them:

Hastily composed jingles about pretty shepherdesses with cheeks like roses, eyes like stars and lips like rubies, and about the lovelorn shepherds who suffer on their account. They are

worthless as literature, doggerel conceived on the spur of the moment by impoverished rhymsters, and then passed round from hand to hand, from composer to composer.<sup>21</sup>

Caccini's *Nuove Musiche* (1602) sparked numerous published collections of various types of monody under designations such as *canzonetta*; *villanella*; *aria*; *scherzo* and *cantata*. In the early seventeenth century, *cantatas* tended to be strophic variations (or strophic-bass *cantatas*).<sup>22</sup> They could indicate songs with contrasting sections of aria and recitative, but it is apparent now that many of the above designations were being used interchangeably.<sup>23</sup> The earliest extant printed songbook that features *alfabeto* accompaniments, however, is Kapsberger's first book of villanellas, published in Rome in 1610.<sup>24</sup> This *alfabeto* songbook phenomenon gained considerable momentum amongst Venetian publishers such as Alessandro Vincenti and Bartholomeo Magni during the 1620s.<sup>25</sup> Some of these volumes featured composers of such repute as Claudio Monteverdi, Sigismondo D'India and Alessandro Grandi.

The guitar, of course, had a long-standing association with light-hearted song texts such as those it regularly accompanied in the theatre, but the poetry featured in its printed song repertory included diverse thematic subjects. Indeed, some guitar songs embodied sacred or moral subject-matter. Kapsberger's second book of villanellas (1619) contains a mix of sacred and secular texts with *alfabeto*

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<sup>21</sup> Nigel Fortune, 'Italian Secular Song', 248

<sup>22</sup> Cory Michael Gavito, 'Carlo Milanuzzi's Quarto Scherzo', 32

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, 6. See also William. V. Porter jr., 'The Origins of the Baroque Solo Song: A Study of Italian Manuscripts and Prints from 1590-1610', Vol. 1 (unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, 1962), 59

<sup>24</sup> Girolamo Kapsberger, *Libro primo di villanelle à 1, 2 et 3 voci accomodate per qual si voglia strumento con l'intavolatura del chitarone et alfabeto per la chitarra spagnola* (Rome, 1610)

<sup>25</sup> The publishing of *alfabeto* songbooks is documented in detail in the third chapter of Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 64-109

accompaniment.<sup>26</sup> Domenico Manzolo's *alfabeto* songbook was published in Venice in 1623 and as the title indicates, it contained 'canzonette . . . a una e due voci con alcune spirituali da cantarsi'.<sup>27</sup> The anonymous *Canzonette spirituali e morali*, a 200-page volume of *alfabeto* songs, was published in Milan by Carlo Francesco Rolla in 1657,<sup>28</sup> and Foriano Pico's *Nuova scelta di sonate per la chitarra spagnola* (now believed to have been published in 1698) features an *alfabeto* accompaniment of the Litany of the Saints.<sup>29</sup>

Although the guitar most commonly accompanied villanellas and canzonettas, *alfabeto* accompaniments were added by some composers to a wider range of genres. *I lieti giorni di Napoli* (1612), a songbook by Girolamo Montesardo (the author of the earliest known solo *alfabeto* publication book for the five-course guitar), features *alfabeto* accompaniments of *madrigaletti*, *arie grave*, dialogues, an echo song and recitative. Montesardo's recitative is transcribed below in Example 20. John Walter Hill makes a case for the guitar's suitability for accompanying recitative, arguing that it provided harmonic support without reproducing the rhythms or pitch contours of the vocal line.<sup>30</sup> Nina Treadwell suggests that the guitarist might have rolled the chords in this context rather than struck them.<sup>31</sup> She also points out that Monteverdi's 'Piu lieto il guardo', which features in Vincenti's anthology *Arie de diversi* of 1634, contains a passage clearly labelled 'recitato' with *alfabeto* accompaniment.

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<sup>26</sup> Girolamo Kapsberger, *Libro secondo di villanelle a 1, 2 & 3 voci con l'alfabeto per chitarra spagnola* (Rome: Robletti, 1619)

<sup>27</sup> Domenico Manzolo, *Canzonette... a una e due voci con alcune spirituali da cantarsi nel chitarrone, arpicordo, & et [sic.] altri stromenti, con l'alfabetto per la chitarra alla spagnola* (Venice: Vincenti, 1623)

<sup>28</sup> Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 85

<sup>29</sup> Foriano Pico, *Nuova scelta di sonate per la chitarra spagnola . . . con alcune sonate e passeggiate non più poste alla stampa, tutte curiose tra le quali vi s'è aggiunto la Siciliana e le letanie de'santi, con l'intavolature messe spezzatamente, e la Romanella* (Naples, 1698). See footnote 41 on page 67

<sup>30</sup> John Walter Hill, *Roman Monody*, Vol. 1, 66

<sup>31</sup> Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola', 71

**Example 20: Montesardo's recitative<sup>32</sup>**

Mercurio

For - tú-na-ti gior-ni ov-e mor - ta - li Go-don s'à l'om-bra de\_\_\_ di-let-ti tan - ti, Di so  
A C A

4  
laz - zi di gio - ie, e dol - ci ca - nti, Ve - ni - te à can - tar me\_\_\_  
I C

6  
\_\_\_ co ò voi mor - ta - li ò voi mor - ta - li.  
A B I C A

Quel mi son'io, che su la dotta Lira  
Cantai le fiamme de celesti amanti,  
E i trasformati lor vaili sembianti,  
Si che del mio cantar ogn'un s'ammira.

Hoggi vengo à cantar i lieti giorni  
De la bella Partenope, che accoglie  
In sen noue delitie, e ardenti voglie,  
Però sien dolciàte gli miei litorni.

One genre in which the guitar is regularly excluded however is the *cantata*. In most Venetian *alfabeto* songbooks, guitar chords are not included on songs that carry this designation. The exception to this is in Milanuzzi's 1624 book,<sup>33</sup> which includes an example of a strophic-bass cantata by Monteverdi, 'Ohime ch'io cado', and this does have *alfabeto* accompaniment (transcribed in Example 21).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Transcribed from Girolamo Montesardo, *I lieti giorni di Napoli* (Naples, 1612), 3, reproduced in *Rome and Naples*, ed. by Gary Tomlinson, Italian Secular Song 1606-1636, 7 Vols. (London: Garland Publishing, 1986), III, pp. 229-268, 231

<sup>33</sup> Carlo Milanuzzi, *Quarto scherzo delle ariose vaghezze, commode da cantarsi a voce sola nel clavicembalo, chitarrone, arpa doppia, & altro simile stromento . . .* (Venice: Vincenti, 1624)

<sup>34</sup> One much later example of a composer who wrote a *cantata* with viola da gamba and guitar accompaniment was Handel, whose *Cantate spagnuola*, 'No se emendarà jamas' (HWV 140) was written between 1708-9. In this case the term indicates a work in three parts, two arias and a dividing recitative, all featuring the guitar.

It is a matter of dispute among scholars in recent times whether these composers really did embrace the guitar as an accompaniment instrument or whether the inclusion of guitar chords was the endeavour of enterprising publishers, trying to widen the market of their stock. Fortune accused Vincenti of this practice, for example, and was of the opinion that *alfabeto* accompaniments were an inferior species to those of instruments such as the *chitarrone*. He explained why the activities of these publishers were so objectionable in a passage describing the use of the guitar, which, he writes was:

. . . usually kept for light and frivolous canzonets; this is what some composers imply when, after listing the guitar, they add the rider 'in those songs in which it is most important'. But others do not bother to say this much; and so we find guitar-letters above some of their most serious songs, where they are wildly inappropriate.<sup>35</sup>

Fortune's argument is that the grafting of *alfabeto* accompaniments on to 'serious' songs would corrupt their original character, thus in this context the notations were inappropriate, and the likes of Caccini and D'India would not have approved of such tampering with their compositions.

It is certainly true that some contemporaries did not approve of the guitar, partly due to its low social origins discussed in Chapter 2, and partly for the same reasons given by Fortune, that it was associated mainly with light song. In his *Tesoro de la lengua Castellana* (1611), Covarrubias defines 'tonada' as 'the air of the vulgar

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<sup>35</sup> Nigel Fortune, 'Continuo Instruments in Italian Monodies', *GSI*, Vol. 6 (July, 1953), pp. 10-13, 12

Example 21: Monteverdi – Ohime ch'io Cado (excerpt)<sup>36</sup>

**System 1:** Measure 1-6. Chord: B. Lyrics: Ohi- me —

**System 2:** Measure 7-11. Chords: G A B G A D B A B B. Lyrics: ch'io ca - do ohi - me ch'in - ciam - po an cor-ra il piè pur come pri - a Ohi- me —

**System 3:** Measure 12-15. Chords: G A B G A D B A B G. Lyrics: ch'io ca - do ohi - me Ch'in ciá-po an-co-ra il piè pur come pri - a E la sfió-ri - ta

**System 4:** Measure 16-21. Chords: A + C G I C B G A B F C A I C F G C F. Lyrics: mi - a ca-du - ta spe - ne Pur di no - vo ri - gar con fre-sco la-gri-mar hor mi con - vi —

**System 5:** Measure 22-27. Chords: D B. Lyrics: ne Las -

**System 6:** Measure 28-32. Chords: G F G A B + G A D F G A B B. Lyrics: so del vec-chio ar - dor Co-no-sco l'or-me an - cor den - tro nel pet - to Las -

**System 7:** Measure 33-37. Chords: G F G A B + G A D F G A B C etc. Lyrics: so del vec - chio ar - dor Co-no-sco l'or-me an - cor den - tro nel pet - to Ch'à rot - to il va - go a -

<sup>36</sup> Transcribed from Carlo Milanuzzi, *Quarto scherzo*, reproduced in *Venice I*, ed. by Gary Tomlinson, Italian Secular Song 1606-1636, Vol. 6 (London: Garland Publishing, 1986), pp. 121-176, 157

song used nowadays by guitar musicians'.<sup>37</sup> Severo Bonini paints the guitar in a very poor light in his *Discorsi e regole* (c.1650), saying:

If they [listeners] are ignorant and inferior or of obtuse mind, such as lowly shopkeepers and peasants, they will not take as much delight as the others just mentioned. They would do better just listening to the blind sing to the lira, guitar or pipes, particularly harlots and other poor and simple creatures.<sup>38</sup>

The titles of some *alfabeto* songbooks reveal that certain composers thought the guitar was adequate to accompany some types and not others. Table 4.2 lists some examples of publications whose titles indicate a restrictive use of *alfabeto*.

Table 4.2: Publication titles indicating a restrictive use of *alfabeto*

Filippo Vitali, <i>Musiche...a una, due &amp; tre voci, per cantare nel cimballo o in altri stromenti simili con l'alfabeto per la chitarra in quelle più a proposito per tale stromento, libro terzo</i> (Rome: Soldi, 1620)
Gregorio Veneri, <i>Li varii scherzi...a una, due e tre voci per cantare nel cimballo, o in altri stromenti simili con l'alfabeto per la chitarra in quelle più a proposito per tale stromento, libro primo</i> (Rome: Soldi, 1621)
Sigismondo D'India, <i>Le musiche . . . a una et due voci da cantarsi nel chitarrone, clavicembalo, arpa doppia et altri stromenti da corpo, con alcune arie, con l'alfabetto per la chitarra alla spagnola . . . libro quarto</i> (Venice: Vincenti, 1621)
Sigismondo D'India <i>Le musiche . . . da cantarsi nel chitarrone, clavicembalo, arpa doppia &amp; altri stromenti da corpo, con alcune arie, con l'alfabetto per la chitarra alla spagnola . . . libro quinto</i> (Venice: Vincenti, 1623)
Raffaello Rontani, <i>Varie musiche a una e due voci...per cantare nel cimballo e nella tiorba, con l'alfabeto della chitarra in quelle più a proposito per tale stromento. Libro Quarto</i> (Rome: Robletti, 1625)
Domenico Crivellati, <i>Cantate diverse a una, due, e tre voci, con l'intavolatura per la chitarra spagnola in quelle più a proposito</i> (Rome: Robletti, 1628)

D'India's fourth and fifth songbooks (listed in the table above) contain a diverse variety of genres, including recitative, *lettera amorosa*, and through-

<sup>37</sup>Translated in Alvaro Torrente and Pablo L. Rodriguez, 'The "Guerra Manuscript" (c.1680) and the Rise of Solo Song in Spain', *JRMA*, Vol. 123, No. 2 (1998), pp. 147-189, 149

<sup>38</sup> Translated in Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 56



composed madrigals, but guitar accompaniments only feature in his strophic arias. Similarly Francesca Caccini and Stefano Landi restricted their guitar accompaniments to select songs. Caccini divides her *Primo libro delle musiche* (1618) into two sections: sacred and secular. The secular songs include ten *canzonette*, and she allocates the guitar to just two. Landi's large volume, *Arie a una voce* (1620), allocates the guitar to just six songs.

Bellerofonte Castaldi did not include *alfabeto* in his *Primo mazzetto di fiori* in 1623,<sup>39</sup> but he addresses this omission in his preface. He explains that it is not because he disapproves of the guitar, but rather because he disapproves of its notation, regarding it inadequate for rendering a musical accompaniment. His reasons boil down to his belief that those who are musically accomplished enough to accompany his songs do not need simple chord symbols to aid them:

Please do not turn away because the Author, most well knowing how to do it, did not place the A, B, Cs of the Spanish Guitar above each of the Airs, as one does according to current usage. This would have been done if one had not seen that such a Pedantry is of little use to those who don't know (if the letters are not discarded) of the innumerable errors that occur at the cadences because of the aforementioned hieroglyphs. He who knows how does not need to be taught.<sup>40</sup>

His opening sentence is very revealing of how high the demand for *alfabeto* was.

Castaldi was clearly concerned that its absence would impede the sales of his book.

These frustrations with the notation were clearly shared by Biagio Marini, who wrote in his *Scherzi, e canzonette* (1622):

Be advised that you shall find somewhere in this work that the *alfabeto* does not concord with the bass. Since the interest of the composer is to accompany the voice in as many [ways] as

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<sup>39</sup> Bellerofonte Castaldi, *Primo mazzetto di fiori musicalmente culti dal giardino bellerofonteo* (Venice: Vincenti, 1623)

<sup>40</sup> Translated in Gavito, 'The *Alfabeto* Song', 148

possible, do not concern yourself with this [discordance] or bind yourself to that [alfabeto], since the guitar lacks many good harmonies.<sup>41</sup>

Marini cannot write what he wishes in chord symbols, so he gives the guitarist license to deviate from the notated chord to create a more musical alternative.

Another composer who complained of the expressive limitations of *alfabeto* was Crescenzo Salzilli, who wrote in his *Amarille: Libro terzo delle canzonette* (1616):

As regards the letters for the guitar, whoever plays must be smart, since through the inadequacy of the instrument one cannot find the necessary consonance very well for the purpose of being able to express them with a single letter, including the crossed f's, because there are none of them in the press. . .<sup>42</sup>

Carlo Milanuzzi certainly intended the guitar accompaniment in his numerous song volumes. His writings echo those of Marini regarding the occasional clashes between the guitar part and the harmonies implied by the bass in his *Primo scherzo delle ariose vaghezze*.<sup>43</sup> He reveals:

. . . that in many places, I have altered the chords for the Spanish guitar with respect to the basso continuo, because when these ariette are accompanied, the Spanish guitar gives a different effect from that of the chitarrone or spinetta. In making these alterations I seek to give greater charm to the music.<sup>44</sup>

Milanuzzi is saying here that the accompaniments he offers are idiomatic to the instrument for which they are intended. So the accompaniment of these songs can either adhere to the continuo bass or be guitaristic, the implication being that the instruments listed on the title-page were not intended to play together. The alterations

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<sup>41</sup> Translated in Kevin Mason, *The Chitarrone and its Repertoire in Early-Seventeenth-Century Italy* (Aberystwyth: Boethius Press, 1989), 38-9

<sup>42</sup> Translated in Dean, 'The Five-Course Guitar', 81

<sup>43</sup> Carlo Milanuzzi, *Primo scherzo delle ariose vaghezze, commode da cantarsi a voce sola nel clavicembalo, chitarrone, arpa doppia, & altro simile stromenti, con le littere dell'alfabetto, con l'intavolatura, e con la scala di musica per la chitarra alla spagnola . . .* (Venice: Vincenti, 1622)

<sup>44</sup> Leopold, 'Remigio Romano's Collection', 53

that Milanuzzi speaks of occur frequently in the broader repertoire of *alfabeto* songs, and these include infrequent chordal omissions and additions, the treatment of certain bass notes as passing tones, and some mode changes.<sup>45</sup> For the most part, Milanuzzi's accompaniments conform to the continuo bass.

There seem to have been three criteria that governed the allocation of the guitar to some songs and not others, and the first of these, as we have already seen, was the poetic form of the text. Guitars more commonly accompanied strophic songs than more complex or through-composed models.

The second governing factor influencing how the guitar was allocated was whether the song had any relationship to dance forms. The guitar's widespread association with dance has already been discussed, and thus it was perfectly suited to accompany songs modelled on dance frameworks or those containing dance rhythms. These become particularly common from the mid-seventeenth century onwards. Fortune discusses the dance forms most commonly used by song composers, and highlights the frequent occurrence of the *courante* and *galliard*.<sup>46</sup> Miller points out that Milanuzzi uses 'gagliarda' and 'balleta' to subtitle many of the dances in his *Settimo libro delle ariose vaghezze*.<sup>47</sup> Some composers even include solo guitar dances amongst the vocal pieces, as in Milanuzzi's *Secondo* and *Terzo scherzo delle ariose vaghezze* (1622 and 1623). Similarly, Marco Aldigatti places his dances adjacent to the song texts in his *Gratie et Affetti amorosi canzonette* (1627), which Treadwell suggests allowed them to function as *ritornelli*.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Miller, 'The Composers of San Marco', 189

<sup>46</sup> Nigel Fortune, 'Italian Secular Song', 393

<sup>47</sup> Miller, 'The Composers of San Marco', 246

<sup>48</sup> Nina Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola', 39

The third criterion seems to have been the issue of practicality and relates to the limited bass range of the five-course guitar. This issue was raised by Treadwell, who points out that whilst *alfabeto* is present over a vocal melody, it is nearly always absent from notated instrumental *ritornelli* appearing in the same piece. Her explanation is that the *ritornello* demands a true bass to be rendered musically, which, of course, could not be provided by the guitar. She suggests therefore that the importance of the bass influenced the guitar's exclusion from certain pieces.<sup>49</sup>

Past research into *alfabeto* song repertoire on the parts of scholars such as Fortune, Jensen, Christensen and Leopold, and more recently by Miller, has largely focused on instances of editors carelessly adding *alfabeto* to songs with little consideration for the harmonies implied by the vocal parts, thus giving credence to the views that composers did not add the notations themselves. One popular series of song anthologies at the heart of this argument is the *Raccolte di bellissime canzonette*, assembled by Remigio Romano and published between c.1618 and 1626. The anthologies contain song lyrics extracted by Romano from other songbooks and manuscripts, and they are of interest because some of the texts are supplemented by *alfabeto* chords.<sup>50</sup>

*Alfabeto* publications were available in two different formats: one in which the chord symbols appear on a musical score, including the vocal melody, continuo bass and possibly chitarrone tablature; and another in which the vocal melody and bass are absent, leaving only the sung text with *alfabeto* chords notated above the individual lines of poetry. Remigio Romano's *alfabeto* songs conform to the latter format,

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<sup>49</sup> *ibid*, 75

<sup>50</sup> See Leopold, 'Remigio Romano's Collection', 45-61, and Miller, 'New Information', 22-33

suggesting either that the vocal melodies were well-enough known to merit their omission, or that they were improvised.<sup>51</sup>

Scholars have identified some of the musical sources of Romano's texts, and amongst these are editions by Giovanni Pietro Berti, Alessandro Grandi and Carlo Milanuzzi. Comparisons of Romano's accompaniments with those in his sources reveal that he had a tendency to harmonise all bass notes as root chords, that he also harmonised notes that were originally intended as passing notes, and that he often deleted text repetitions in his versions, meaning that on some occasions his songs finished in the wrong key.<sup>52</sup> Miller's research into Romano's sources have led him to the conclusion that many of the song texts with *alfabeto* in Romano's anthologies were not originally conceived with a guitar accompaniment, and that the *alfabeto* was added later. He suggests that Romano had access to manuscript sources of music by Berti, long before it was compiled and published by Vincenti in 1624 and 1627, and surmises therefore that Romano's *alfabeto* on Berti's songs is his own amateur realisation of the bass line. He speculates that the *alfabeto* chords in Vincenti's two published editions were probably added by the publisher.<sup>53</sup> Miller also points out that one of Romano's sources, the (now lost) first edition of Grandi's *Cantade et arie*, did not originally contain *alfabeto*, as it is absent from Alfred Einstein's meticulous transcription.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Approaches to the performance of *alfabeto* songs in this format are considered in some detail in Richard d'A Jensen, 'The Guitar and Italian Song', 376-383

<sup>52</sup> Roarke Miller, 'The Composers of San Marco', 160-173

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, 164

<sup>54</sup> Smith's College Music Archives, 'Madrigals of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', copied by Dr Alfred Einstein, *ibid*, 183

Kapsberger's seven books of villanellas, published between 1610 and 1640, have sparked much debate in recent scholarship, particularly regarding the authorship of the *alfabeto* accompaniments that graced each of the volumes. Fortune's stance on the guitar's use being reserved for frivolous music, and his claim that the appearance of *alfabeto* was largely due to publisher intervention has only been challenged comparatively recently. Henken's response to Fortune is as follows:

Doubtless it is true that *alfabeto* was added to some compositions *ex post facto*. But for men such as Kapsberger, this was probably not true. Giustiniani describes Kapsberger as the foremost theorbo player, as well as one of the best composers in Rome. As such he would likely know the *alfabeto* personally, and in his books the *alfabeto* simply indicates the chords of the theorbo part, minus the infrequent passing-tones and *passagi*. The *alfabeto* was often far from inappropriate also, as the songs to which it was added were frequently based on dance forms.<sup>55</sup>

Henken's point that guitars are well suited to accompany dance forms is valid, and Fortune in fact highlights Kapsberger's common use of the galliard as a model.<sup>56</sup> The guitar's early association with the *villanelle* is another argument for its suitability to accompany Kapsberger's songs. Jensen, in defence of Fortune, however, retorts that:

Henken seems to have missed the point here: more important than Vincenti's business practices is the fact that he included guitar chords for all the songs, irrespective of their individual character.<sup>57</sup>

Jensen's response is that 'individual character' or subject-matter should be taken into account, thus implying that the guitar should be reserved for 'frivolous' music, as Fortune calls it. This rather unfair segregation assumes that guitars were never used to accompany songs of a serious or moral nature. As has already been noted, the musical sources do not support this as the guitar was used to accompany

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<sup>55</sup> J. Henken, 'Guitar Continuo Practice', 8

<sup>56</sup> Nigel Fortune, 'Italian Secular Song', 393

<sup>57</sup> Jensen, 'The Guitar and Italian Song', 378

both melancholic and sacred texts.

Strizich argues that Kapsberger could not have notated the guitar chords himself, stating:

...at certain points...the music requires a chord of the first inversion (which can be verified by the chitarrone part as well as the ear), whereas the guitar chord indicated is merely a root position harmony built on the note of the bass line. Apparently, whoever added the alfabeto chords to Kapsberger's piece simply interpreted each note of the bass line as a root position chord, without taking the melody or tonality into account.<sup>58</sup>

Christensen highlights exactly the same points, saying:

...they could result in accompaniments that sounded downright clumsy, especially when paired with written out accompaniments for other continuo instruments...The guitar realization...is much thicker than that of the chitarrone. It also fails to follow the bass line or any of the dissonant suspensions found in the voices and chitarrone. In examples like these we can well understand why so many lutenists were scornful of the guitar.<sup>59</sup>

Some of these criticisms are rather curious. The 'thickness' of the guitar realization is a by-product of a notation that produces five-part chords, one note per course. The fact that it does not follow the suspensions present in the other parts was because, at this stage in its development, *alfabeto* was incapable of conveying any melodic movement, and so it was impossible to notate a resolving dissonance. That of course does not mean that a guitarist with a firm musical grounding could not produce such an effect. This was precisely why Castaldi thought it better to leave *alfabeto* out, as mentioned above.

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<sup>58</sup> Robert Strizich, 'L'acompagnamento di basso continuo sulla chitarra barocca, parte seconda', *Il Fronimo*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1981), pp.8-26, 8-9 translated in Jensen, 'The Guitar and Italian Song', 378

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Christensen, 'The Spanish Baroque Guitar and Seventeenth-Century Triadic Theory', *JMT*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Spring, 1992), pp. 1-42, 23

Regarding the improper realization of bass notes as root position chords, Russell confirms that careless approaches to guitar accompaniment are certainly evident in some sources:

The rage for accompanied vocal settings spurred lesser talents into the arena as well. Sometimes, an author's flimsy understanding of music theory results in alfabeto accompaniments that are rather laughable. One such fiasco occurs in Abatessa's song arrangements in the *Cespuglio di varii fiori* (1635) in which all the bass notes are harmonised as if they were root position chords. Of course, Abatessa's ineptitude is the exception rather than the rule.<sup>60</sup>

Leopold regards guitar intabulations rather more dismissively, claiming that:

the intabulated composition is not only always simpler, but also technically always the 'wrong' composition, the least harmonically convincing, the least well thought through...singing to the Spanish guitar at this time seems to have taken place on what was the most low-brow level of musical practice.<sup>61</sup>

Russell on the other hand is of the opinion that the songs (including those of Kapsberger) would suffer without the input of the guitar, as 'undoubtedly, the proper accompaniment for these delightful works should include the strummed guitar as part of the musical texture'.<sup>62</sup>

In a comparison of two settings of the same text by Kapsberger and Stefani, 'Deh Filli videntene', Leopold concludes that Stefani's guitar chords are 'not a reduction of a pre-existing version, but an independent version in its own right'.<sup>63</sup>

Gavito's explains that independent settings of popular song texts allowed composers to 'offer their own personalised musical renditions, perhaps even in response to or in

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<sup>60</sup> Craig H. Russell, 'Radical Innovations', 161

<sup>61</sup> Leopold, 'Remigio Romano's Collection', 57

<sup>62</sup> Russell, 'Radical Innovations', 161

<sup>63</sup> Leopold, 'Remigio Romano's Collection', 54, The sources are Giovanni Stefani, *Affetti Amorosi* (Venice, 1618) and Kapsberger, *Libro secondo di Villanelle* (Rome: Robletti, 1619)



competition with earlier settings in circulation'.<sup>64</sup> Miller conversely sees the dissimilar *alfabeto* as evidence that Kapsberger did not regard the guitar as an essential component to his songs. He points out that Stefani's version retains Kapsberger's melodic and harmonic structure, but as his guitar accompaniment differs, he speculates that Stefani's source was an early manuscript copy of the song that did not feature any *alfabeto*.<sup>65</sup> He does not dispute, however, that Kapsberger authored his own guitar accompaniment for the published edition.

Kapsberger's villanellas are problematic due to the conflicting evidence that both supports and disagrees with the notion that Kapsberger intended these songs to be accompanied by guitar. On the one hand the accompaniments display the same carelessness that was apparent in Romano's volumes. The bass notes are consistently treated as the roots of the above harmonies and passing notes are commonly assigned *alfabeto* chords, resulting in impractical chord changes at the level of the quaver. Example 22 is a transcription of a song from the fourth book of villanellas (1623) that clearly demonstrates a dysfunctional guitar accompaniment. The guitar harmonies indicated by the first two bars are G, F, e, d, C, d, e, C; thus the bass notes are clearly interpreted as root chords. This technique of designating *alfabeto* chords is implemented throughout the whole piece.

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<sup>64</sup> Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 110

<sup>65</sup> Miller, 'The Composers of San Marco', 187

**Example 22 : Kapsberger: ‘Cinta di rose’ *Libro quarto di villanelle* (1623)**

A G X E B E X B G A D E F C F D A G X E X G E

Cin - ta di ro - se l'o - do ra - ta Flo - ra Lie - ta le piag - gie col - o -

7 B E F D X C A X C F D A B D X C A B

ri te in fio - ra E gi - gli de sta su sur - ran - do

12 C D C B A D A B A B C A

suo - ra L'au - ra ca - no - ra

# # # 4 3#

Accompaniments such as these are at odds with the fact that Kapsberger was himself a guitarist, who had published books exclusively for guitar.<sup>66</sup> Gaspar Sanz names Kapsberger alongside Foscari, Granata, and Corbetta as some of the finest guitarists in Italy in his guitar tutor (1674). Kapsberger’s familiarity with the guitar is further confirmed by Coelho, who highlights the fact that Kapsberger supplied Mersenne with information regarding the stringing of the instrument for the *Harmonie Universelle*.<sup>67</sup> Gavito also draws attention to one peculiarity with Kapsberger’s second book (1619), which is that it featured an *alfabeto* chart. As the guitar song was so well established in Rome, most publishers did not bother to include such rudimentary guidelines, as they were considered an unnecessary supplement. He points out that Kapsberger’s publisher, Giovanni Battista Robletti, did not typeset an

<sup>66</sup> As did Falconieri, but unfortunately the guitar publications by both composers are lost. According to Dean in ‘The Five Course Guitar’, 238, two guitar books by Kapsberger appear in a seventeenth-century index of the Franzini library in Rome. See also Colin Timms, ‘Falconieri, Andrea’, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, 2nd edn., Vol. 8 (London: Macmillan Reference, 2001), pp. 526-527

<sup>67</sup> Victo Coelho, ‘G. G. Kapsberger in Rome, 1604 – 1645: New Biographical Data’, *JLSA*, Vol. 16 (1983), pp. 103-133, 129

*alfabeto* chart, which leads him to speculate that the chart was authored by Kapsberger.<sup>68</sup> That Kapsberger was a competent guitarist who understood *alfabeto* notation and used the instrument to accompany vocal music can now be claimed with some certainty. We can assume therefore that he was more than capable of notating a competent accompaniment, which makes the harmonic discrepancies all the more bewildering, and certainly suggests that the task was delegated to somebody less able.

Alexander Dean presents an explanation for the poor standard of the guitar accompaniments in early *alfabeto* songbooks by stressing the incompatibility of the early villanella with the *rasgueado* traditions of the guitar. He points out that the rapid juxtaposition of vertical harmonies in the vocal villanella placed unreasonable demands on the guitarist, and highlights the difficulty of assigning triadic chord symbols on to a genre that was still conceived in terms of horizontal voice leading.<sup>69</sup> He also draws attention to the change in approach in assigning *alfabeto* chords from the 1620s onwards that was more accommodating of the demands of the guitar, such as the simplification of bass lines, the incorporation of dance rhythms, and the use of common chord progressions from the *rasgueado* dance tradition.<sup>70</sup>

Clearly there is disagreement in current scholarship over the Kapsberger guitar songs, although one feels that the guitar perhaps suffers from comparison with other accompanying instruments. This is precisely what Christensen does, which in effect compares a notated accompaniment, i.e. for the chitarrone, with a notation that was essentially improvisatory and in 1610 was in the early stages of its development. This

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<sup>68</sup> Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 76

<sup>69</sup> Dean, 'The Five Course Guitar', 64-66

<sup>70</sup> Songbooks demonstrating the functional integration of *alfabeto* are the subject of the third chapter of *ibid.*, 127-217

approximation of what the guitarist actually did is all we have to go on. As will be discussed later, the *alfabeto* system would evolve in the 1630s through the efforts of guitarists who sought a more sophisticated notation that would significantly widen the scope of the guitar's harmonic vocabulary, allowing for notated accompaniments to become increasingly elaborate.

In many of the publications discussed, the guitar was one of many accompanying instruments mentioned on the title page. This flexible approach to accompaniment widened the appeal of song publications, but it also highlights an important aspect of these songs, that there was not one authentic version, but rather numerous versions depending on the accompanying forces. This is what Biagio Marini meant when he said 'the interest of the composer is to accompany the voice in as many [ways] as possible'. Some composers furthered this flexibility, however, by employing a multi-purpose format. Hill draws attention to a manuscript source (GB: Lbm, Add.36877, fo.36<sup>r</sup>), which features a madrigal by Giuseppino, *Occhi un tempo mia vita*, for two voices with *alfabeto* accompaniment. What is interesting is that the chords fit only one of the voices. This manuscript offers two versions of one song. It is either a vocal duet or a solo with guitar accompaniment. The main point, as emphasised by Hill, is that the two versions are very different, and that the guitar accompaniment, with its slower harmonic rhythm, changes the character of the song so that it more closely resembles recitative.<sup>71</sup>

Much has been made of the multi-purpose layout of such songs. Fortune suggests that the inclusion of *alfabeto* in a song allowed for two styles of

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<sup>71</sup> Hill, *Roman Monody*, 118

accompaniment, namely the ‘serious’ (without the guitar) or the ‘popular’.<sup>72</sup> Tyler discusses the layout of the guitar songs in the Kraków manuscript (PL-Kj Mus.Ms.40163), pointing out that the songs are all in three parts: the bass, the tenor who has the tune, and the discant. The *alfabeto* is notated above the bass and the tenor, but not the discant, and Tyler’s explanation is that the guitarist could read the *alfabeto* above the tenor line for self-accompaniment, or above the bass line so he could treat the part like a continuo bass.<sup>73</sup> Montesardo also arranges his three-part songs with *alfabeto* above the bass and top parts, but not over the inner voice. This presumably caters for the eventuality of either a polyphonic or a solo performance. He also places his chord symbols beneath the stave and directly over the sung text, which broke from the normal convention of notating the chords above the stave. However, as Treadwell points out, Montesardo’s approach facilitates the simultaneous reading of the text, melody and continuo line.<sup>74</sup>

Dean cites several sources in which the *alfabeto* accompaniments operate independently from the bass, stating that this occurs commonly in pieces with active bass lines, as its strict observance on the part of the guitarist would be impractical.<sup>75</sup> He names Guglielmo Minescalchi’s *Arie libro secondo* (1627) and Orazio Tarditi’s *Amorosa schiera* (1628) as songbooks in which the continuo is ignored in order to create a more satisfying guitar accompaniment.<sup>76</sup>

In the 1620s the popularity of the guitar meant that the guitar composers started experimenting with harmony and guitar notation to widen the instrument’s

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<sup>72</sup> Nigel Fortune, ‘Italian Secular Song’, 199

<sup>73</sup> Tyler, ‘The Role of the Guitar’, 2.7

<sup>74</sup> Treadwell, ‘The Chitarra Spagnola’, 61

<sup>75</sup> Dean, ‘The Five Course Guitar’, 205

<sup>76</sup> *ibid*, 208-210

vocabulary and address the limitations of *alfabeto* raised earlier by Castaldi, Marino and Salzilli. *Alfabeto* was expanded through the use of shifting chords to cover the full range of the fingerboard and composers increasingly experimented with dissonant harmonies and the incorporation of melodic lines. These experiments were pioneered by Foscarini in the 1630s, and resulted in the development of mixed tablature; *alfabeto* notation that sits on a stave and is combined with plucked melody.

Mixed tablature was a system of notation that was restricted to the solo repertoire of the guitar. Song accompaniments continued to be notated exclusively with *alfabeto* symbols. This was probably so as not to deter less able players and to avoid difficulties with printing. It should be remembered, however, that accompaniments notated in *alfabeto* assumed a skeletal role, and guitarists would not have been expected to adhere strictly to the chord symbols, particularly if they were able performers of the mixed tablature repertoire.

Experiments with the notation of individual notes in *alfabeto* dances began with alterations to the highest voice of the chord in books by composers such as Giovanni Ambrosio Colonna (1620) and Pietro Millionini (1627). Later publications by Stefano Pesori (1640) and Antonio Carbonchi (1643) extend this practice to include notes on the second course, and the gradual expansion of this practice eventually culminated in the mixed tablatures of Giovanni Foscarini in c.1630. Many composers adopted this style of notation, which became particularly prominent in books published during the 1640s. This indicates that by the mid-seventeenth century, guitarists were commonly combining plucked notes and strummed chords in their performances, and given the close relationship between the dance repertoire and the

*alfabeto* songs published in Venetian prints from the 1620s onwards,<sup>77</sup> it is possible that the performance practices that evolved in relation to the solo repertoire of the guitar – alternative chord voicings, the application of dissonance and plucked melodies - would have also been employed in song accompaniments.

Developments in guitar notation did not remain completely absent from *alfabeto* songbooks. A rare instance of a song composer notating shifted chords (two years earlier than their first appearance in the printed solo repertoire) occurs in Giovanni Stefani's *Affetti amorosi* (1618). He explains that he regularly uses chord 'K' at the third fret 'for better consonance, in place of letter L'.<sup>78</sup> The awkwardness of the consonant chord 'L' (c minor) has already been discussed, and of course this resulted in many composers treating its dissonant variant (which incorporated an added ninth) as the standard harmonisation.

Castaldi, in his discussion of the inadequacies of *alfabeto*, raised the issue of the improper treatment of cadences that frequently resulted from strict adherence to this notation. Marini sought to rectify this problem in his *Scherzi, e canzonette* (1622) and he devised new *alfabeto* symbols for chords that featured a suspended fourth, specifically for use at cadences. These chords are transcribed below in Example 23.

In 1640, Foscarini published the earliest known guidelines for realising a bass specifically for guitar.<sup>79</sup> He gives charts of corresponding harmonies for each bass note, provides demonstrations of resolving 7-6 and 4-3 suspensions and gives

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<sup>77</sup> Dean, 'The Five-Course Guitar', 134-137

<sup>78</sup> *ibid*, 187

<sup>79</sup> Foscarini, *Li cinque libri della chitarra alla spagnola* (1640)

**Example 23: Marini's altered *alfabeto* chords<sup>80</sup>**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for altered *alfabeto* chords. Each system consists of three parts: a guitar fretboard diagram, a treble clef staff with a chord symbol, and a bass clef staff with a single note. The first system shows chords A, B, B, G, C, A, F, and I. The second system shows chords G, H, H, M, I, C, R, and F. The fretboard diagrams use numbers 0-3 to indicate fingerings on the strings. The treble clef staves show the chord symbols and any accidentals. The bass clef staves show the bass note for each chord.

guidelines on how to accompany different note values. This marked the beginning of numerous continuo treatises for guitar that were published up until the mid-eighteenth century. These are listed in the Table below.

Table 4.3: Publications containing continuo guidelines for guitar

Italy

Giovanni Paolo Foscari, *Li cinque libri della chitarra alla spagnola* (Rome, 1640)

Francesco Corbetta, *Varii capriccii per la ghittara spagnuola* (Milan 1643)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Varii scherzi di sonate per la chitara spagnola* (Brussels, 1648)

\_\_\_\_\_, *La guitarre royalle* (Paris: H. Bonneuil, 1671)

Giovanni Battista Granata, *Soavi concerti di sonate musicali per la chitarra spagnuola* (Bologna: Giacomo Monti, 1659)

France

Antoine le Carré, *Livre de guitarre contenant plusieurs pieces . . . avec la manière de toucher sur la partie ou basse-continue* (Paris, 1671)

Henry Grenerin, *Livre de guitarre et autres pièces de musique meslées de symphonies avec une instruction pour jouer la basse continue* (Paris: H. Bonneuil, 1680)

Nicolas Derosier, *Nouveaux principes pour la guitare, avec une table universelle de tous les accords qui se trouvent dans la basse-continüe sur cet instrument, ce qui peut servir aussi aux personnes qui joüent du luth, du théorbe et de la basse de viole* (Paris: Christophe Ballard, 1699)

<sup>80</sup> Transcribed from a reproduction in Dean, 'The Five Course Guitar', 174



François Campion, *Addition au traité d'accompagnement et de composition par la règle d'octave; où est compris particulièrement le secret de l'accompagnement du théorbe, de la guitare et du luth avec la manière de transposer instrumentalement . . .* (Paris: Ribou, 1730)

### Spain

Gaspar Sanz, *Instruccion de musica sobre la guitarra española, y método de sus primeros rudimentos, hasta tañerla con destreza. Con dos laberintos ingeniosos, variedad de sonos, y dances de rasgueado, y punteado, al estilo español, italiano, françès, y inglés. Con un breve tratado para acompañar con perfeccion, sobre la parte muy essencial para la guitarra, arpa, y organo, resumido en doze reglas, y exemplos los mas principales de contrapunto, y composicion . . . Libro primo [-tercero]* (Saragossa, 1674)

Lucas Ruiz de Ribayaz, *Luz y norte musical para caminar por las cifras de la guitarra española, y arpa, tañer, y cantar á compás por canto de organo; y breve explicacion del arte, con preceptos faciles, indubitables, y explicados con claras reglas por teorica, y practica* (Madrid: Melchor Alvarez, 1677)

Santiago de Murcia, *Resumen de acompañar la parte con la guitarra...* (Antwerp, 1714 [issued Madrid, 1717])

Pablo Minguet y Yrol, *Las reglas de la guitarra, tiple, y vandola* (Madrid: J. Ibarra, 1752)

### England

Nicola Matteis, *Le False consonanse della musica per poter' apprendere a toccar da se medesimo la chitarra sopra la parte. Esempii curiosi con havertimenti chiarissimi e dichiarazioni dove ciasche d'uno potrà in breve accompagnar le arie in musica, e sonar qual si voglia basso . . . Il tutto è diviso in quattro parti* (London, c.1680 [published in English translation in 1682])

The significance of the publication of continuo guidelines for guitar is that they display an interest on the part of the guitar composers in encouraging accompaniments from a bass, a different approach to the obedient realisation of the *alfabeto* notation. They reveal the performance practices specifically relating to accompaniment that could not be conveyed by *alfabeto*, and present a codification of unwritten practices that were being cultivated prior to their appearance in print. Actually, guidelines for devising guitar accompaniments from a bass had existed in print long before Foscarini's fifth book, albeit in a very rudimentary form. Venetian

*alfabeto* songbooks included *scale di musica* from as early as 1622,<sup>81</sup> which assigned certain *alfabeto* chords to the bass notes of two scales: one *per B quadro* and another *per B molle*.<sup>82</sup> These indicate a much earlier interest in guitar accompaniments that were more observant of the bass, but, more comprehensive continuo instructions necessitated the development of more sophisticated guitar notations, so Foscarini's guidelines emerged following the adoption of mixed tablature.

### Accompaniments in Lute-Style Tablature

As the century progressed, *alfabeto* became increasingly obsolete, and in the late-seventeenth century it fell out of use. As harmonies became more complex, composers needed increasingly to write out each individual note of the chord. Francesco Corbetta's *La guitarre royalle*, written entirely in lute-style tablature, was published in 1671. The book consists mainly of court dances, but it concludes with alternative versions of four select dances, arranged as songs with guitar accompaniment. Corbetta's accompaniments are largely chordal, but the harmonic language is far in advance of early *alfabeto*. One of the songs is a sarabande entitled 'Tombeau de Madame' (transcribed in Example 24). 'Madame' was the King's sister Henrietta Anne, who died in 1670. The guitar accompaniment of this piece, however, is criticised by Thomas Christensen, who argues that:

Although Corbetta notates his accompaniments in precise tablature, the resulting realisation is still heavily chordal, showing the same disregard for the bass line we observed in Kapsberger's accompaniment and displaying many of the same "problems" of parallel perfect consonances and doubled or unresolved dissonances. The chordal texture and clumsy voicings of Corbetta's accompaniment are all the more striking when compared to the

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<sup>81</sup> Milanuzzi, Carlo. *Primo scherzo delle ariose vaghezze* (Venice: Vincenti, 1622)

<sup>82</sup> These are discussed in detail in Gavito, 'The Alfabeto Song', 93-95, and Dean, 'The Five Course Guitar', 283-300

Example 24: Corbetta – Tombeau de Madame<sup>83</sup>

Fall - oit il ó Dieux qui la fit es si bel - le la fai - re mor -  
 te - lle Prin - ce - sse Prin - ce - sse la Par - que vous ra - uit á nos  
 yeux — ó dure ad - ven - tu - re, il n'est plus ic - y bas de Gra - ces et d'a -

6 6 6 # # 6 7 b b 6  
 6 6 6 6 6 5 3 4 3  
 6 5 3 b 6 6 7

<sup>83</sup> Transcribed from Francesco Corbetta, *La guitarre royalle*, 93-95

Musical score for measures 16-20. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a guitar accompaniment. The lyrics are: "pas — ils ont sou - ffert la rig - uer du tre pas. Quoy donc si par -  
— d'a-pas ils ont ils ont sou - ffert la rig - ueur du tre pas. Quoy donc si par -". The guitar part includes a chord progression: # 6 #6 5 # 4 #3 b 7 7. The system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Musical score for measures 21-23. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a guitar accompaniment. The lyrics are: "fai - te elle est - oit sui - e - tte aux  
fai - te elle est - oit sui - e - tte aux". The system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Musical score for measures 24-26. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a guitar accompaniment. The lyrics are: "traites de la mor - te ó dep - lo - ra - ble sort  
traites de la mor - te ó dep - lo - ra - ble sort". The system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A "da capo al §" instruction is present above the staff.

sophisticated contrapuntal solo pieces intabulated in the rest of the collection from which the example is drawn.<sup>84</sup>

Suspicion should be raised when such ‘clumsy’ passages arise in works by guitarists of such renown as Corbetta. Contemporary accounts of his performing reveal a true virtuoso, and we know that he was frequently employed as accompanist in English court masques and in French ballets. Christensen raises one such anomaly himself. *La guitarra royale* is not a book of easy pieces. The dances require considerable skill to render musically, so it was not likely that his accompaniments had been written for anyone less skilful.

Christensen highlights instances of parallel perfect consonances and improper employment of dissonance as ‘problems’ with Corbetta’s accompaniment. However, owing to the limited bass range of the guitar and the necessity for each of the harmonies to fall within reach of the fingers of the left hand, such musical offences were a reality of strummed accompaniments. Those in the *punteado* style could adhere more closely to the rules of counterpoint, but accompaniments exclusively in this style were not common. The chordal accompaniment of Corbetta’s piece was not only guitaristic, but also served a practical solution to yet another of the instrument’s limitations, that of projection. Had the texture of the accompaniment been thinner, the rapid sound decay of the guitar would have made the instrument inaudible against the two voices.

The ‘problems’ listed by Christensen would have been valid if applied to the accompaniment of a harpsichord or chitarrone, but from the guitarist’s point of view they were ‘solutions’ to the challenges of realising a bass with an instrument that was

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<sup>84</sup> Thomas Christensen, ‘The Spanish Baroque Guitar’, 23

less well equipped for the task. When playing accompaniments on such an instrument, practicality had to be prioritised over theoretical ideals. Many of the unconventional treatments of dissonance came to be regarded as characteristically guitaristic idioms, such as the standardisation of the C minor chord with the added ninth in the *alfabeto* repertoire. Such uses of dissonance were abundant in the solo guitar publications of Corbetta and Angelo Michele Bartolotti, and they were also prescribed in continuo guidelines. A common occurrence at cadences for example was the anticipation of the final keynote in the preceding dominant chord. This happens in bar 10 of Corbetta's piece, for example, which features a cadential progression that ends in B flat major in bar 11. Here, the guitarist plays a 4-3 suspension in F that features the simultaneous sounding of the suspended note and the note of resolution.<sup>85</sup>

The famed early eighteenth-century guitarist Santiago de Murcia (c.1682-c.1740) went to great lengths in his continuo treatise to highlight the importance of practicality when devising an accompaniment. He makes it very clear that accompaniments are governed by the left hand, which was not to be inconvenienced by awkward chord shapes:

...the string nearest to where it occurs [the bass note to be harmonised] will be chosen according to the place where the hand happens to be, without displacing it; for one of the most important points to which he who accompanies or plays must pay attention, is the proper position of the left hand.<sup>86</sup>

The French lutenist and guitarist Robert de Visée (c.1655-c.1735) was clearly aware that guitar accompaniments would appear unorthodox or even in bad taste in the eyes

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<sup>85</sup> Monica Hall discusses guitaristic dissonance in 'Dissonance in the Guitar Music of Francesco Corbetta', *LSJ*, Vol. 47 (2007), pp. 55-80

<sup>86</sup> Murcia, *Resumen*, 8, trans. Monica Hall, (Online Translation), *Monica Hall: Baroque Guitar Research* [accessed 06/07/09] <<http://www.lutesoc.co.uk/lutesoc/uploads/baroque-guitar/murcia/murcia1.htm>>

of other instrumentalists, as he defended the compositions in his first guitar publication from any scorn they might incur from critics. He wrote:

I beg those who understand the art of composition well and are unfamiliar with the guitar not to be scandalized if they find that I sometimes break the rules. The instrument calls for it and it is necessary above all to satisfy the ear.<sup>87</sup>

The accompaniments for the five-course guitar have suffered from assessments of *alfabeto* notations at face value and from comparison with the accompaniments of other plucked string instruments. Furthermore, they have often been judged in accordance with the strict rules of counterpoint without regard for the practical demands of the instrument. When assessing the standard of guitar performance in the seventeenth century, many scholars have taken issue with the tendencies of the guitarists to break the rules of convention and to produce accompaniments that displayed a wide array of musical offences. Such an approach fails to acknowledge the ingenuity of composers who found practical solutions to the challenges posed by the limitations of the guitar, and also fails to recognise the offending practices as guitaristic idioms that were equally prominent in the instrument's solo repertoire. The priority of the seventeenth-century guitarist, first and foremost, was practicality, and this should be borne in mind in any assessment of the performance practices from this era.

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<sup>87</sup> Robert de Visée, *Livre de guitare, dédié au Roy* (Paris: Bonneuil and Nicolas Cheron, 1682), 4, translated in Monica Hall, 'Bartolotti's Lettere Tagliati' (Online Essay), *Monica Hall: Baroque Guitar Research* [accessed 06/07/09] <[www.monicaHall.co.uk/pdf/BartolottiPart4Rev.2.10.pdf](http://www.monicaHall.co.uk/pdf/BartolottiPart4Rev.2.10.pdf)>

## Conclusion

The underlying theme of this thesis has been the importance of *rasgueado* in defining the musical roles of the guitar in the seventeenth century, in developing uniquely guitaristic approaches to accompaniment and in shaping the opinions of both seventeenth- and twentieth-century critics.

In its heyday, the five-course guitar bore many negative associations in the minds of religious authorities, moralists and those who favoured more worthwhile musical pursuits such as the lute. *Rasgueado* was condemned by such persons for the low level of musical literacy required to perform in this style, and its associated dance repertoire was abhorred for the explicitly sexual gestures of the dancers and the lewd accompanying song lyrics. Some of these opinions were echoed centuries later, when scholars acknowledged that the guitar was commonly associated with light or frivolous genres, and they highlighted the crude nature of *alfabeto* accompaniments in comparison with the more refined tablatures of the chitarrone.

Such opinions were influential in shaping the stereotypes that came to typify the seventeenth-century guitarist. Criticisms aimed at *rasgueado* or its associated repertoire carried numerous themes that can be summarised as follows: rowdiness, immorality, lack of refinement, low levels of education and carefree, loose living. Frequently, we find these themes embodied by guitarists in literary or stage works. Such characters were commonly rogues, criminals, drunks, womanisers or buffoons. The instrument's association with frivolities and satirical lyrics made it particularly apt for the depiction of comic characters, as well as for the low life characters associated with *bailes* and the theatrical *jácaras*.



Seventeenth-century critics had first-hand experience of *rasgueado* accompaniments, but modern scholars must rely on *alfabeto*, and this is problematical, as too literal an interpretation may bear little relation to the end product in the hands of a gifted performer. Although *alfabeto* notations developed in relation to song accompaniment, from the first decade of the seventeenth century they were also employed in guitar dance publications in which the notation evolved to an elevated level of sophistication. Shifting chords and mixed tablatures were in use in the 1630s and dissonant *alfabeto* charts and continuo guidelines were in print by 1640. This progress, however, is not reflected in *alfabeto* songbooks, which consistently notated guitar accompaniments with standard *alfabeto* symbols. It is likely that this was to maintain the appeal of such publications among less able performers and also to avoid complicating the printing process. Notating songbooks in this way allowed for three performing possibilities on the part of the guitarist: realisation of the notated *alfabeto*, the utilisation of *alfabeto* symbols as a basis for an improvised accompaniment, or realisation of the continuo bass.

Considering that guitar methods for beginners encouraged detraction from the notated *alfabeto* through variation of chord voicing and the incorporation of dissonance, it is likely that guitarists who honed such skills would have implemented them in their song accompaniments, particularly as many *alfabeto* songs were conceived in the dance idiom and bore common chord progressions from the *rasgueado* tradition. Likewise, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a guitarist familiar with the performance practices associated with mixed tablature would have employed plucked notes in his song accompaniments. This would be particularly applicable to guitarists who were also able players of the lute or theorbo, such as Foscarini or Kapsberger.

The limited expressive capability of *alfabeto* was a source of frustration for song composers, but it is clear that at least some of these composers did not expect guitar accompaniments to reflect the inadequacies of *alfabeto*. Indeed, Castaldi thought that guitarists would do better to improvise accompaniments from a bass, and Marini made his desires for a specific treatment of cadences explicit through his *alfabeto* modifications.

Guitarists approached continuo realisation differently to other musicians, often taking liberties that would not be permissible with other continuo instruments. However, we can be more forgiving of these offences in light of the awkwardness of realising a bass with an instrument of limited lower range. This uniquely guitaristic approach to accompaniment often encompasses dissonances that are unprepared, doubled, or struck simultaneously with their notes of resolution, as well as parallel perfect consonances and chords of the second inversion. Second inversion chords were permissible on the guitar, and Tyler offers the following explanation:

Because of the guitar's tuning, stringing, and lack of basses . . . when an *alfabeto* chord is strummed on a baroque guitar, the effect is that of a neutral, nearly inversionless sound unit. And indeed, baroque composers treated *alfabeto* chords essentially like root position block harmonies, regardless of their actual harmonic inversion.<sup>1</sup>

These characteristic elements of guitar accompaniment were equally prominent in the solo dance repertoire, which supports the notion that they were staple features of a harmonic language that was idiomatic to the instrument.

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<sup>1</sup> James Tyler, *A Guide to Playing the Baroque Guitar* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 10

Much work remains to be undertaken to further our knowledge of the practices relating to guitar accompaniment. The *ad-lib* application of dissonance to song and dance accompaniments is one area in particular in which seventeenth-century guitarists are vague. Many charts of dissonant chords were produced for students to extract and employ as they wished, but guidelines governing this process are rare and for the most part unhelpful. Dissonant *alfabeto* symbols are rarely employed by composers, which leaves it to modern scholars to reveal how and in what circumstances they were employed.

Another area begging further research is how guitarists accompanied recitative, a topic that has only been considered briefly by scholars such as Treadwell and Hill.<sup>2</sup> Continuo guidelines, such as those of Foscarini and Matteis, advocate arpeggio patterns when faced with sustained, static bass lines, such as in the transcription below.

**Example 25: Matteis's arpeggiation demonstration<sup>3</sup>**

The image shows two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of three staves. The top staff is a bass clef with a sustained note (e.g., C2) and a slur over it. The middle staff is a treble clef with a melodic line of eighth notes. The bottom staff shows arpeggio patterns with letters 'a' and 'd' above notes, and 'c' or 'b' below notes, connected by diagonal lines. The first system starts with 'c' and the second with 'b'.

<sup>2</sup> Treadwell, 'The Chitarra Spagnola', 69, and Hill, *Roman Monody*, 67

<sup>3</sup> Transcribed from Nicola Matteis, *The False Consonances of Musick* (London, 1682, facs. edn. S. A. Monaco: Editions Chanterelle, 1980), 47

However, as a key characteristic of recitative is the sense of spontaneity arising from the speech rhythms of the vocal line, an accompaniment such as the one above would impose regular metrical units onto that line, and would be detrimental to its free nature. It seems therefore that such accompaniments could not have been conceived with recitative in mind. A greater understanding of guitar practices in relation to this genre is therefore necessary. Although there are numerous continuo treatises specific to the guitar, many are introductory in tone, suggesting that sufficient guidelines regarding the complexities of recitative accompaniment will not be found in these sources, and the scholar will have to look further for answers.

## Appendix 1 – Italian and Spanish Chord Charts

Example 26: Italian *Alfabeto*

The following table summarizes the chord diagrams and fingerings for the Italian *Alfabeto* chords shown in the image. Each chord is represented by a guitar fretboard diagram with finger numbers (1-5) and a corresponding chord diagram above it.

Chord	Fingering (5 strings)	Chord Diagram
+	2 2 0 0 0	Major 2nd
A	2 0 0 3 3	Major 2nd
B	3 2 0 1 0	Major 2nd
C	0 0 2 3 2	Major 2nd
D	0 2 2 1 0	Major 2nd
E	0 0 3 1 0	Major 2nd
F	2 2 1 0 0	Major 2nd
G	3 3 1 1 1	Major 2nd
H	1 3 3 3 1	Major 2nd
I	0 2 2 0 0	Major 2nd
K	1 3 3 2 1	Major 2nd
L	3 1 0 3 3	Major 2nd
M	1 3 3 4 3	Major 2nd
N	3 1 1 1 4	Major 2nd
O	1 0 0 3 3	Major 2nd
P	3 3 1 1 1	Major 2nd
Q	4 4 2 2 2	Major 2nd
R	2 4 4 4 2	Major 2nd
S	2 2 4 5 4	Major 2nd
T	4 2 2 2 5	Major 2nd
V	4 4 2 2 2	Major 2nd
X	2 4 4 3 2	Major 2nd
Y	5 5 4 3 3	Major 2nd
Z	3 5 5 5 3	Major 2nd
&	4 3 1 2 1	Major 2nd
Con	2 2 4 5 3	Major 2nd
Ron	3 3 5 5 5	Major 2nd

Example 27: Amat's Catalan System

1n 2n 3n 4n 5n 6n 7n

8n 9n 10n 11n 12n 1b 2b

3b 4b 5b 6b 7b

8b 9b 10b 11b 12b

Example 28: Briceño's Castilian System

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 9 P +

4 G 1 +

## Appendix 2 – Shifting Chord Notations

*Alfabeto* charts featured many chord shapes that were easily transposable as they produced consonant chords when formed in any position along the fingerboard. These ‘shifting’ chord symbols consisted of an *alfabeto* symbol and a number indicating the fret at which the chord-shape was to be stopped. Shifting chord ‘K’ (B flat minor) is demonstrated below.

**Example 29: Demonstration of shifting chord notations**

The image shows three examples of shifting chords: K, K2, and K3. Each example consists of a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat minor), a guitar chord diagram with a capo symbol on the first fret, and a fretboard diagram. The fretboard diagrams show the fingerings for each chord shape: 'K' (1-2-3-4-3-2-1), 'K2' (2-3-4-5-4-3-2), and 'K3' (3-4-5-4-3-2-1).

These movable chords were beneficial in broadening the harmonic vocabulary of the instrument and also lessened the burden of memorising all of the chord symbols, as some were rendered superfluous by this innovation. Chord ‘R’, for example, could now be notated ‘H2’, and Chord ‘Z’ could be notated ‘H3’.

**Example 30: How certain *alfabeto* chords became obsolete**

The image shows five examples of shifting chords: H, R, H2, Z, and H3. Each example consists of a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat minor), a guitar chord diagram with a capo symbol on the first fret, and a fretboard diagram. The fretboard diagrams show the fingerings for each chord shape: H (1-3-3-3-1), R (2-4-4-4-2), H2 (2-4-4-4-2), Z (3-5-5-5-3), and H3 (3-5-5-5-3).

Other shifting chord symbols include G, H, M, N, P and &.

### Appendix 3 – Mixed and Lute-Style Tablatures

The 1630s mark the period when *alfabeto* was combined with lute tablature to create ‘mixed’ tablature, a development that allowed guitarists to incorporate passages of melody and ornaments into their *rasgueado* compositions. In mixed tablatures, chord symbols and individual notes were notated on a staff, with rhythms notated overhead. Strum strokes for the right hand were notated on the bottom line of the staff. This is demonstrated in the following passage taken from a chaconne in mixed tablature by Corbetta.<sup>1</sup>

Example 31: Demonstration of mixed tablature

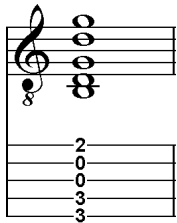
Towards the end of the century, the final stage of development in guitar tablatures came about, and this was the transition from the ‘mixed’ to the contrapuntal, lute-style tablature. As harmonies became more complex, and the demands of the composer exceeded the scope of the *alfabeto* chords, there was an increasing need to notate the chords fully. Italian and French composers adopted different methods of notating guitar music. In Italian compositions the staff imitates the horizontal stringing arrangement of the instrument as it is played. The bottom line therefore represents the first course. In French tablatures, however, the staff is arranged according to pitch, and so the top line represents the first, highest pitched course. French tablatures also differ from the Italian in

<sup>1</sup> Transcribed from Francesco Corbetta, *Varii scherzi di sonate per la chitarra spagnola* (Brussels, 1648; facs. edn. Florence: S. P. E. S, 1983), 28

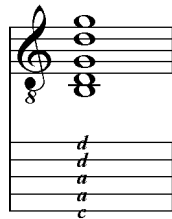


that the intabulations are letters instead of numbers. Spanish composers adopted the Italian style of notation.

**Example 32: Comparison of Italian and French tablatures**



Italian/Spanish tablature



French tablature

The following example is an excerpt of a gigue by Roncalli, notated in lute-style tablature.

**Example 33: Demonstration of lute-style tablature<sup>2</sup>**

The examples below demonstrate the three stages of guitar notation, as they would each notate a final cadence on G.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Transcribed from Ludovico Roncalli, *Capricci armonici sopra la chitarra spagnola* (Bergamo, 1692; facs. edn, Florence: S. P. E. S., 1982), 22

<sup>3</sup> For a full explanation of the three styles consult James Tyler's 'A Brief Guide to Reading and Interpreting Baroque Guitar Tablatures' in Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music*, 165-183

**Example 34: Comparison of the three stages of guitar notation**

Alfabeto notation showing two chords, C and A, represented by letters on a staff. The C chord is indicated by a vertical line on the first line (E) and a vertical line on the second space (A). The A chord is indicated by a vertical line on the second space (A) and a vertical line on the third space (C). A small '8' is written below the first line.

*Alfabeto*

'Mixed' tablature showing two chords, C and A, represented by letters on a staff. The C chord is indicated by a vertical line on the first line (E) and a vertical line on the second space (A). The A chord is indicated by a vertical line on the second space (A) and a vertical line on the third space (C). A small '8' is written below the first line. Below the staff, the letters C and A are written, with the numbers 3 and 2 written below them.

'Mixed' tablature

Lute-style tablature showing two chords, C and A, represented by letters on a staff. The C chord is indicated by a vertical line on the first line (E) and a vertical line on the second space (A). The A chord is indicated by a vertical line on the second space (A) and a vertical line on the third space (C). A small '8' is written below the first line. Below the staff, the letters C and A are written, with the numbers 0, 2, 3, 3 written below them.

Lute-style tablature

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