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JEAN ROUSSEAU AND ORNAMENTATION IN FRENCH VIOL MUSIC

Robert A. Green

Jean Rousseau: Life and Works

Jean Rousseau was born the son of a *boutonnier* (button maker) in Moulins, a small town about 175 miles south of Paris.¹ Although his date of birth and information concerning his early life does not exist, it seems reasonable from other biographical details to place the date around 1655. He came to Paris in 1676, and in 1678, he married a laundress, Françoise Torcy.² At the time of his marriage, he lived on the Rue de la Harpe at the home of a maker of lutes and viols Michel Colichon.³ This was also the place of business of M. Du Buisson, a viol player, teacher, and composer to whom we will return later.⁴ It was during this early period of his life in Paris that Rousseau studied with the great virtuoso and viol teacher Sainte-Colombe for one month.⁵

In 1678 he published his first work, *Méthode claire, certaine et facile, pour apprendre à chanter la Musique*. It was published in at least six editions before 1710, most of which were printed in Amsterdam.⁶ He dedicated his book to M. Lambert, Maître de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy, and from the text of his dedication, it is evident that although Michel Lambert influenced him greatly and showed him great favor, Rousseau was probably not a pupil of the great man. The book begins with a section discussing solmisation, which Rousseau calls the *Méthode de Si*. The importance of this section for the reader of Rousseau's works is that he uses the system throughout his work, especially when discussing melodic rules for the application of ornamentation. For this reason, the important aspects of his method are summarized in Appendix A. Rousseau's approach to the rudiments of singing represents one of the many attempts of this period to simplify the learning of solmisation and represents a transitory stage between the use of hexachords

¹François Lesure, "Une Querelle sur le Jeu de la Viole en 1688: J. Rousseau contre De Machy," *Revue de Musicologie* 46 (1960), 181.

²Paris, Archives Nationales, Ms. Y235, fol. 299.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Washington, Library of Congress, Ms. M2.1.T.2 17C (1666).

⁵François Lesure, *op. cit.*, 181.

⁶François Lesure, ed., *Écrits Imprimés Concernant la Musique*, International Inventory of Musical Sources, B VI2 (München-Duisberg: G. Henle Verlag, 1971).

and tonal thought. Rousseau's discussion of meter, which follows the explanation of solmisation and scales, is important for its relative modernity (in particular, the use of 3/4, 3/8, 6/4, and 6/8) and also for his attempt to tie certain meters to certain tempi.

This book was important outside France for a long time, especially in Germany. It is mentioned by Johann Gottfried Walther and discussed by Johann Mattheson.⁷ In *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister*, Mattheson quotes at length from additional material added to the *Méthode* about 1690.

In 1687 Rousseau published his *Traité de la viole*, which is important both for its information on performance practice and as one of the most complete sources of information on viol playing written in any century. The introduction is devoted to a history of the viol. Much of this section is fanciful, as it discusses supposed biblical references to the viol, as well as references in classical antiquity. His comments on more recent history are considerably more interesting for their information on the French view of other national styles, the French virtuosi of the early seventeenth century, and viol playing in other countries. The first section deals with the technical aspects of playing the instrument; the way to hold the instrument, bowing, and fingering. The second section discusses the different styles of music that were played on the viol in France in the seventeenth century and the technical prerequisites for each. These styles are divided into five different classifications. The melodic style is music with a single melodic line, perhaps accompanied by another instrument. The harmonic style is music for solo viol containing chordal passages. There are two accompanimental styles: the first where the singer accompanies himself playing a bass line and chords where possible, the second where the viol player is part of an ensemble. The fifth style is the improvisation of a series of variations on a subject, which was beyond the abilities of most players and, therefore, little used. The third section discusses ornamentation, and this section is translated in its entirety in the body of this paper. The fourth section discusses bowing in more detail and pursues the subject of transposition at length. It is apparent that the ability to transpose at sight was an extremely important technique for the seventeenth-century musician.

⁷Johann Gottfried Walther, *Musikalisches Lexicon oder Musikalische Bibliothek* (Leipzig, 1732), 535.

Johann Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (Hamburg, 1739), 173-174.

Johann Mattheson, *Grosse General-Basse-Schule* (Hamburg, 1731), 284.

Rousseau's *Traité* was published in the wake of three other publications important in the history of viol music: De Machy's *Pièces de Violle en Musique et en Tablature, differents les unes des autres, et sur plusieurs Tons* published in 1685, the *Pièces de Violles* of Marin Marais published in 1686, and Danoville's *L'Art de Toucher le Dessus et Basse de Violle contenant Tout ce qu'il y a de necessaire, d'utile & de curieux dans cette Science* published in 1687.

Danoville's work is the only French predecessor to the treatise of Rousseau and is considerably shorter than the latter. It is extremely dogmatic concerning its principles, and Rousseau takes issue with a number of them. It is apparent that Danoville was mainly interested in the *dessus de violle* (treble viol) and the melodic style. His comments on ornamentation reflect this bias.

De Machy's work, on the other hand, represents another series of biases based on an extreme viewpoint concerning the nature of the viol and its capabilities. These viewpoints resulted in a controversy which was to rage for some years following the publication of his work. In a section in the *Traité de la violle* labeled *Remarques*, Rousseau makes the following observations:

I advise the reader that I express my feelings with freedom in this work against an *Avertissement* which was given to the public a short time ago with which the greater part of its principles I take issue. My intention is not to insult anyone but only to defend the rules which I state in this *Traité* and to let it be known that the author of the *Avertissement* in question was not correct in charges against the *Jeu de la Violle* since I have shown that it has for some years existed at the highest level of perfection.

(J'avertis le Lecteur que, si je dis mes sentimens avec liberté dans cet Ouvrage, contre un *Avertissement* qui a esté donné au public depuis quelque temps, & dont je combats la plupart des principes; mon dessein n'est pas de faire insulte à personne, mais seulement défendre les Regles que je donne dans ce *Traité*, & faire connoître que l'Authéur dudit *Avertissement* n'a pas eu raison d'imputer des Abus au *Jeu de la Violle*, puis que je fais voir qu'elle est depuis plusieurs années dans sa plus grande perfection.)

We find the basis for these remarks in the introduction to the collection of suites published by De Machy in 1685.

Avertissement very necessary in order to know the principal rules which teach one how to play the viol well; and to eliminate the abuses which for some time have been attaching themselves to the instrument: with that which must be observed beyond ordinary rules in order to compose pieces.

(AVERTISSEMENT TRÈS-NECESSAIRE POUR connoître les principales Regles qui enseignent à bien jouer de la Violle, & à éviter les abus qui se sont glissés depuis quelque temps sur cet Instrument: Avec ce qu'il faut observer pour y composer des Pieces, outre les Regles ordinaires.)⁸

There follows many pages of useful information but also much thinly veiled polemic. He describes the two ways of holding the left hand (*port de main*). He firmly believes that the viol is a harmonic instrument like the lute or harpsichord and that those who play melody alone are like those keyboard players who play only with their right hand.

When a man knows his profession well, the chords must not stop him from composing beautiful melodies with all the *agrémens* necessary for playing tenderly: and there are those who use only one *port de main* and very often don't have any at all, which is the result of such an idea.

(Quand un homme scait bien sa profession, les accords ne doivent pas l'embarrasser en composant de beaux chants avec tous les agrémens nécessaires pour jouer tendrement: Et il n'y a que ceux qui ne se servent que d'un port de main, & qui bien souvent n'en ont point du tout, qui soient de ce sentiment.)⁹

Apparently there were some exchanges concerning this matter following the publication of Rousseau's treatise. On October 30, 1688, the "Answer of M. Rousseau to a letter from one of his friends who has notified him of a defamatory libel written against him. Given to the public by one of his friends" appeared in print.¹⁰ This letter does not attack De Machy by name, but the biographical details leave little

⁸De Machy, *Pièces de Violle en Musique et en Tablature, différentes les unes des autres, et sur plusieurs Tons* (Paris, 1685), p.1.

⁹*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰This document is reprinted in its entirety in: Francois Lesure, "Une Querelle sur le *Jeu de la Violle* en 1688: J. Rousseau contre DeMachy," *Revue de Musicologie* 46 (1960), 184-199.

doubt as to whom Rousseau is referring. In addition, Rousseau lists parallel octaves by page number and measure without mentioning the composer, but they coincide with parallel octaves in De Machy's work.¹¹

The subject of this letter is mainly the *port de main* and the *tenue*; the technique of stopping a string while playing other notes so as to keep the main notes of the chord vibrating. Although the points of technique involved are small in themselves, they are symptomatic of several larger issues. In the letter, Rousseau was defending his attempt in the treatise to introduce vocal conventions into an area whose departure had been taken from lute playing. De Machy wished to preserve techniques of solo viol playing and composition similar to those of the lute and harpsichord. Another area of contention was probably the fact that both De Machy and Rousseau's teacher, Sainte-Colombe had studied with Hotman, one of the first great French virtuosi, and De Machy considered him a rival. He did not attack Sainte-Colombe directly but attacked his methods through his students. It is evident from the contents of Rousseau's letter that De Machy had criticized the music of Marin Marais, another student of Sainte-Colombe. In the *Avertissement* of the first book of the *Pièces de Violes*, Marais said that he had fingered his pieces according to the technique which required only one *port de main* as opposed to the two hand positions advocated by De Machy. The technique of using only one *port de main* had become popular only recently, and he said that those who used the older systems and could not change could still play his pieces. There is no doubt that De Machy felt threatened by this popular innovation, which he had not mastered and did not believe in.

The figured basses of the *Pièces de Violes* were not published until 1689. In the *Avertissement* to this music, Marais makes the following comments:

At the end of the *Basse-continües* will be found an addition of several pieces that I have inserted to satisfy the eagerness of some foreigners who very much wished to see some of this style from me. I acknowledge that they are very difficult, but it is not, however, impossible to play them as are some I have seen in this fashion, which are beautiful only to the eye and on paper.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 192.

(On trouvera, a la fin de ces *Basse-continües* une augmentation de plusieurs Pieces particulieres que j'y ay inserees, pour satisfaire a l'empressement de quelques Etrangers, qui souhaitent beaucoup d'en voir de moy de cette maniere. Aussy j'avoüe qu'elles sont fort difficiles, mais qu'il n'est pourtant pas impossible de les executer, comme plusieurs que j'ay vu de cette facon; qui ne sont belles qu'a la veüe et sur le papier.)¹²

Very likely Marais was referring to the work of De Machy and that beautifully engraved edition which was the only other published collection of solo viol music in France.

One of the most important aspects of the letter for the purposes of this discussion is the amount of biographical detail it provides not only about Rousseau but about his contemporaries. We learn that Rousseau's *Méthode* had been attacked by the vocal teacher and author, Benigne de Bacilly, whom Rousseau says "doesn't know one note of music."¹³ We also learn that Rousseau composed a number of vocal and instrumental pieces (which do not seem to have survived).¹⁴ One of the more interesting stories contained in this letter is Rousseau's encounter with Robert de Visée, the guitarist, viol player, and composer. Every Tuesday night Rousseau participated in a concert at the house of M. de Montalan. One evening the concert was attended by the "cabal" of lutenists and viol players who had sided with De Machy. After the concert, Rousseau was approached by de Visée, who asked to play some of his own pieces for Rousseau. This he did and then presented the viol to Rousseau, requesting him to try them himself. Rousseau refused, which was a loss of face for him in the eyes of his enemies. Rousseau defended himself by saying that these were prepared pieces to which he could not do justice on the spot.¹⁵

The letter tells us much about Rousseau's personality. He appears as a man deeply wronged, who has been cornered and is now fighting for his professional existence. He is a man of little education, who nevertheless likes to quote Latin phrases which he knows most of his enemies will not understand. He has obviously worked very hard to gain his

¹²Marin Marais, *Basse-continues des pieces à une et à deux Violes* (Paris, 1689), *Avertissement*.

¹³Francois Lesure, *op. cit.*, 193.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 193. Some pieces initialled "J.R." which may be Rousseau's are found in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Cons. Res. 1111.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 196.

reputation and values his eminence as a teacher. As much as he would like to rise above this sort of sordid squabble, his ferocity belies his pose. His view of the world is rather cynical at times:

He says that I sprung up in one night like the mushrooms and that I put myself to the test two days ago to compose vocal and instrumental music.

To that I answer that I have been living in Paris for twelve years, and not finding in myself the spirit or the inclination to advance by quarrels, by intrigues with women, or by wine, which is the ordinary way of becoming acquainted with the world, I believed myself obliged to engage all my efforts in acquiring some merit through work....

(Il dit que je suis venu tout en une nuit comme les champignons, que je me suis mis en teste depuis deux jours de composer de la musique vocale & instrumentale.

A cela je répons qu'il y a douze ans que je suis demeurant à Paris, & que ne me trouvant pas un esprit ny une inclination propre a m'avancer par brigues, par l'intrigue des femmes, ny par la vin qui est le moyen ordinaire pour faire connoissance avec le monde, je crus estre obligé de faire tous mes efforts pour m'aquerir quelque mérite par la travail....)¹⁶

On the other hand, his abilities as a teacher shine through when he speaks of his students:

....as for students, one must not do as some doctors do and prescribe the same remedy for all diseases. I mean that they must be treated according to their natural disposition guiding them to perfection as well as one can without constricting them too much with formalities....

(....qu'au regard des écoliers il ne faut point faire comme certains médecins qui ordonnent le mesme remede a tous les maux, je veux dire qu'il les faut traiter suivant leur disposition naturelle, les conduisant autant qu'on le peut a la perfection sans les trop gêner dans les formalitez....)¹⁷

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 192.

We have no further information as to the rest of Rousseau's career or the date of his death. In spite of the troubles that this feud must have caused Rousseau, we can be thankful for the glimpse into the musical life of Paris that this document provides and a chance of becoming acquainted with Rousseau the man.

ROUSSEAU AND THE VIOL TRADITION IN FRANCE

Rousseau's work is an extremely important source of information on seventeenth-century ornamentation in France, and he is often quoted in this context. His opinions are reflective of many French writers of the period, and in this respect he is useful in that he provides many more details on certain subjects than they do. In addition, his ideas at least as expressed in the *Méthode*, must have had some influence outside France. It must be remembered that the *Traité de la viole* was addressed to an instrumental tradition considerably different in many ways from the tradition that had produced Rousseau. Rousseau was a product of that prestigious vocal school whose most important personification in France in the second half of the seventeenth century was Michel Lambert, who was Rousseau's possible teacher. Michel Lambert was under the influence of Pierre de Nyert, the gentleman-singer who had brought to France from a sojourn in Italy ideas on affective expression and ornamentation derived from Caccini and the early seventeenth-century monodists. This background had a considerable influence on Rousseau's philosophies concerning viol playing and particularly ornamentation, which brought him into direct conflict with contemporaries whose main influences came not from the voice but from that family of plucked instruments whose most important model was the lute.

This is not to say that the viol was not compared with the voice or to other members of the string family. Mersenne as well as others compares the viols to both, and even De Machy makes a point of saying that of all the instruments, the viol imitates the voice the best.¹⁸ But whereas the violin was considered an instrument for balls, serenades, and the out-of-doors due to its thick strings and strident qualities, the viol was an instrument for the intimacy of the chamber. Whereas the viol with its sustained tone and subtle bowing

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁸De Machy, *op. cit.*, 11.

could produce an aesthetic effect similar to that of the voice, it could not declaim in an era when "heightened speech" was an important aesthetic principle in vocal music.

The viol from a technical standpoint was classified with the lute, and this classification determined the principal aspects of compositional style in solo music. The classification appeared at least as early as Virdung's *Musica Getutscht* and was perpetuated in Praetorius's *Syntagma Musicum* and Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle*.¹⁹

The Interaction Between Lute And Viol Traditions

The lute as it evolved in seventeenth century France had a long tradition behind it as a solo instrument, in ensembles, or in accompanying vocal pieces. The *style brisé* and other stylistic features which reached their full flowering in the music of the Gaultiers and other lutenists of the early seventeenth century were already present in the collections of lute dances published by Attaignant in the early part of the sixteenth century.²⁰ The instrument reached the height of its popularity in the first quarter of the seventeenth century and began a slow decline until it all but disappeared at the beginning of the eighteenth century. After 1640 it was superseded in its accompanimental role by the théorbe,²¹ whose importance in the performance of the *air de cour* is attested to by Bacilly and others.²² The important difference between the théorbe and the lute was the open, diatonically tuned bass strings of the former which extended the bass range and strengthened it. This interest in the reinforcement of the bass range coincided with similar interests in other instruments, notably the harpsichord and, as we shall see, the viol. The interest in the use of the theorbe for accompaniment is marked by the disappearance of tablature and the appearance of methods which teach the reading of

¹⁹Daniel Heartz, "Les Styles instrumentaux dans la Musique de la Renaissance," *Musique Instrumentale de la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Jacquot (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1955), 63.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 70.

²¹James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeux to Rameau* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), 229.

²²Albert Cohen, "A Study of Instrumental Ensemble Practice in Seventeenth Century France," *The Galpin Society Journal* XV (March, 1962), 4.

musical notation and figured bass by Fleury (1660)²³ and Perrine (1679, 1680).²⁴

The viol, on the other hand, remained throughout the sixteenth century an ensemble instrument.²⁵ The viol developed as a virtuoso solo instrument in France much later than the lute, and its first use in this capacity coincided with the lute's peak of popularity. This development contrasts sharply with the development early in the sixteenth century of the viol as a solo virtuoso instrument in Italy to which the treatises of Silvestro Ganassi²⁶ and Diego Ortiz²⁷ amply attest. Part of the reason for the French failure to exploit the instrument was the continuing use of a five-stringed instrument until around 1580. Jacques Mauduit, director of the concerts of the *Academie*, is credited by Mersenne with introducing a six-stringed instrument.²⁸ There seems to be some basis for believing that Mauduit also introduced the six-stringed bass viol as a solo instrument,²⁹ but the first systematic exploitation of the viol as a solo instrument playing harmonic music seems to have been the astounding virtuosity of Andre Maugars.³⁰ About 1625 Maugars spent four years at the English court where he learned the technique of lyra viol playing from its greatest practitioners. The lyra viol began its rise about the time of the arrival of the Ferrabosco family in England.³¹ The technique of lyra viol playing is described by Playford in the middle of the seventeenth century as follows: "This way of playing on the *Viol*, is but a late Invention, in imitation of the old *English*

²³Nicholas Fleury, *Méthode pour appredre facilement à toucher le Théorbe avec la basse continue* (Paris, 1660), facsimile reprint (Geneva: Minkoff Reprint, 1972).

²⁴Anthony, *op. cit.*, 230, 234.

²⁵Cohen, *op. cit.*, 4.

²⁶Silvestro Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina* (Venice, 1542-43), German translation and transcription by Dr. Emilia Dahnk-Baroffio and Dr. Hildemarie Peter (Berlin: Robert Lienau, 1972). There are many errors in this edition.

²⁷Diego Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas sobre clausulas y otros generos de puntos en la musica de violones* (Rome, 1553), edition by Max Schneider (Kassel: Barenreiter, 1967).

²⁸Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle* (Paris, 1636-1637), Preface generale au Lecteur, ix.

²⁹*Ibid.*, III, Book VII, prop. XXXI, 63.

³⁰Andre Maugars, *Résponse Faite à un Cruieux sur le Sentiment de la Musique d'Italie* (Rome, 1639), trans. by Walter H. Bishop in *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America*, VII (1971), 6-8.

³¹John Playford, *Musick's Recreation on the Viol, Lyraway* (London, 1652, 1661, 1669, 1682), facsimile reprint of first half of 1682 edition with historical introduction by Nathalie Dolmetsch (London: Hinrichsen, 1695), Introduction, VIII.

Lute or Bandora,....." ³²

Beginning with the publication of *THE SECOND BOOKE OF SONGS AND AYRES, Set out to the Lute, the base Violl the playne way, or the Base by tableture after the leero fashion* by Robert Jones published in London in 1601, the viol became an acceptable and at times even preferred alternative to the lute as a chordal instrument for solo and accompanimental purposes. The extent to which this was the case can be seen in the aging John Dowland's defence of the lute and attack on the viol in *A Pilgrimes Solace* published in London in 1612 or Tobias Hume's comments in his publication of 1605: "...from henceforth, the statefull instrument *Gambo Violl*, shall with ease yeelde full various deviceful Musicke as the Lute." ³³

Music for the lyra viol was written in French lute tablature and made use of a variety of tunings. Similarities in the left-hand technique of the lute and viol were exploited by such composers and teachers as Thomas Robinson:

... and then what by your skill in playing upon the lute, and the knowledge you have in the pricksong, you may verie easilie attaine to play upon the *Viol De Gambo*, either by tabliture or by pricksong notes. For the carriage of your left hand upon the lute is likewise justly to be upon the base Viol, as shall bee more plainly declared in his due place after the lute lessons. ³⁴

Although similarities in left-hand technique between the two instruments resulted in similarities of composition, the viol possesses certain limitations due to the use of a bow. Notes which are part of a chord must be on adjacent strings limiting harmonic and contrapuntal possibilities. That these disadvantages may be turned into virtues can be seen in a prelude by Christopher Simpson.

³²*Ibid.*, 2.

³³As quoted by Frank Traficante, "Music for the Lyra Viols: The Printed Sources," *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* V (1968), 21.

³⁴Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke Wherein is Taught the Perfect Method of True Fingering of the Lute, Pandora, Orpharion, and Viol de Gamba*... (London, 1603), 12.

Example 1. Christopher Simpson, Prelude in B flat from *The Division-Viol* (London, 1659), measures 5-8.



It was this style of viol composition that French composers modified between 1625-1685 to conform to their own national taste influenced heavily by their lute-playing colleagues. In place of divisions and other virtuosic pieces, the French composed suites of dances with an emphasis on the melodic line and the suggested counterpoint of the *style brisé*.

Hotman (d. 1663), a younger contemporary of Maugars, was as much a *theorbiste* as a viol player, as were many of his contemporaries such as Sebastien Le Camus, the Ithier family, and the claveciniste Louis Couperin. ³⁵ Not only versed in the harmonic style that Maugars had brought back from England, Hotman was noted for his melodic style of playing. ³⁶ This style which emphasized melody at the expense of chordal or harmonic aspects was cultivated by Hotman and his contemporaries on the smallest instrument of the viol family, the *dessus de viole*. ³⁷ Since the primary court duties of these violist-theorbists consisted of accompanying performances of *air de cour*, their playing was probably heavily influenced by vocal styles. This melodic style together with its vocal conventions remained the property of the *dessus* throughout its age of popularity. Unfortunately these musicians were primarily improvisers, and the only music to have survived from this group is some by Louis Couperin ³⁸ and a fragment by Hotman. ³⁹

³⁵Marcelle Benoit, *Musiques de Cour. Chapelle, Chambre, Ecurie* (Paris: Editions A. and J. Picard, 1971).

³⁶Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la viole* (Paris, 1687), 23. (Probably taken from Mersenne.)

³⁷The *pardessus de viole*, a yet smaller instrument was popular in the early eighteenth century.

³⁸Two solo *fantaisies* in Louis Couperin, *Oeuvres Complètes de Louis Couperin*, ed. by Paul Brunold (Paris: Editions du L'Oiseau Lyre, 1936), Nos. 126, 127.

³⁹Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. allemand, 1674, cons. Ré. 1111, fo. 266. Cited in Francois Moreau, "Nicolas Hotman Bourgeois de Paris et Musicien," *Recherches sur la Musique française classique XIII* (1973), 6.

The next generation was dominated by the great composer, performer, and teacher, Sainte-Colombe (d.c. 1700). Sainte-Colombe was very much at home in the harmonic style as learned from his teacher Hotman,⁴⁰ but his only surviving works, a set of duets, show a well-developed melodic style.⁴¹ Sainte-Colombe is credited with adding the seventh string to the bass viol and introducing wound metal strings for the lowest four about 1670. This addition was made when the theorbe was at the height of its popularity, and lutes were being altered by the addition of another neck in order to extend the bass range.⁴²

A slightly older contemporary of Sainte-Colombe produced the first music which has survived in the harmonic style. This is M. Du Buisson, one of the first viol players Rousseau met upon his arrival in Paris. His music consists of a number of suites dates 1666 and 1674 both in musical notation and tablature and a number of individual pieces in a German manuscript which contains mostly lute pieces.⁴³ The suites, although simple teaching pieces for the most part, show the influence of French lute music on the virtuoso harmonic style which Maugars had brought from England. The pieces are binary forms dances with melodies which are supported by three-or four-part chords at cadences. Occasionally contrapuntal voices are suggested by imitative parts in different registers and the breaking of chords in such a way as to imply a polyphonic texture. Most suites begin with an unmeasured prelude, a type of piece which remained part of French viol music well into the eighteenth century. Example two illustrates some of the characteristic textures of this music.

Example 2. M. Du Buisson, Courante from the Fourth Suite in A major, Washington, Library of Congress, Ms. M2.1T.2 17C (1666), p. 19, measures 1-3.

⁴⁰Danoville, *L'Art de toucher le Dessus et Basse de violle contenant Tout ce qu'il y de necessaire, d'utile, & de curieux dans cette Science* (Paris, 1687), 4.

⁴¹Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Rés. Vma. ms. 866.

⁴²Anthony, *op. cit.*, 229.

⁴³Washington, Library of congress, Ms. M21.T.2 17C (1666). Durham, Cathedral Library, Ms.A 27, p. 130-139. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Cons. Res. 1111. The latter two manuscripts as cited in Barbara Schwendowius, *Die Solistische Gambermusik in Frankreich von 1650 bis 1740* (Regensburg: G. Bosse Verlag, 1970,) 240.



One of the most important technical aspects of the *style brisé* on the lute, harpsichord, or the viol was the maintaining of the principal chord tones and thus the realization of the basic harmonic progression, while playing figurations in different registers which suggested contrapuntal voices. This was the *tenue* or "hold" and was notated on all three instruments (if it was notated at all) with a straight line:

Example 3. De Machy, Courante from the First Suite in D Minor, *Pièces de Viole* (Paris, 1685), p. 19, measures 21-24.



It is described by Danoville in the following way:

It is called the *tenue* because the finger is held on the string which has just sounded until those which have been enclosed in its grouping have been sounded. It is by this means that the sound and harmony are obtained from all those instruments that are bowed as well as plucked, and that one hears the proper execution by which the trueness of the notes and chords are distinguished.

(On l'appelle Tenue, parce qu'on tient le doigt sur la Corde qu'on vient de conner, jusqu'à ce qu'on ayt sonné celles qui font enfermées dans son Cercle, c'est par ce moyen que le Son & l'Harmonie se tire sur tous les Instrumens tant a l'Archet qu'a Pincer & qu'on extend une execution propre par laquelle on distingue la justesse des Tons & des Accords...⁴⁴)

⁴⁴Danoville, *op. cit.*, 44.

It is only by understanding the closeness of the ties which existed between lute and viol technique as well as compositional style that the event of 1685-88 can be understood. In quick succession De Machy, Marais, Danoville, and Rousseau published their works. Of these, only De Machy was not a student of Sainte-Colombe. His extensive *Avertissement* states his philosophies in great detail. There are two groups of instruments: one plays only melody, such as the flute, violin, and *dessus de viole*. The others, the lute, clavecin, théorbe, and *basse de viole*, are properly harmonic instruments. The true method of playing the *basse de viole* is as a solo instrument in the harmonic style, and this it can do as well as the théorbe or harpsichord. Tablature is the best notation since it gives all the information in the simplest form, and it is ideal for any harmonic instrument. The viol can be used to accompany the voice or to play in an ensemble, but these are functions of lesser importance. Pieces can also be played plucked, and he composed some pieces for this purpose, but they have not been included in the collection. The left-hand technique (*port de main*) is the same on the viol as on the lute. The *tenües* must be as carefully observed on the viol as on the lute or harpsichord. Music in the melodic style is primarily ensemble music, and the viol player who devotes himself totally to this style knows as much about the instrument as the *claveciniste* who can play only with the right hand.⁴⁵

The pieces which follow are the first pieces to be published in France for solo viol. The collection contains the only pieces published in tablature for viol in France. The pieces are written for a seven-stringed instrument, and tablature for the seventh string is written below the lines, as it would be for the lowest strings of a lute. They are very carefully edited and fingered as though De Machy had to make sure that no one would say that they were impossible to play, and in fact, they require a very high degree of technical competence. These pieces are perfect examples of the transference of the lute technique and compositional style to the viol.

Rousseau takes a much broader view of the question of the proper function of the viol. He is ready to admit all points of view, but he does not hesitate to express his own. His emphasis on the ability to accompany with its attendant necessity for skill in transposition is clearly opposed to the

⁴⁵De Machy, *op. cit.*, 1-11.

stand taken by De Machy. The minimization of the importance of tablature on the grounds that much music, particularly vocal music, is written in musical notation is clearly reflected in the théorbe treatises on accompaniment of Fleury, Delair, and Perrine. These treatises devote much attention to the art of transposition as well.

Rousseau most directly confronts De Machy in the section of his book which deals with the harmonic style of playing and the *tenües*. Because of the difficulties and limitations of the chords, the element which must be of most importance is the melody. In his concluding remarks concerning the harmonic style, he states:

Yet I add to the latter that quite inappropriately, the author of the *Avertissement* wishes to give us the lute, the theorbe, and the guitar for models in order to tie us to practicing the *tenües*. Preferable to this are more important things that one can do, since the viol knows only the voice above it, and its aim must be to imitate its unique model in the beauty of melody and its *agrémens*, which are preferable to all *tenües* which might wish to stand in the way.

(J'ajoute encore à cecy, que mal à propos l'Autheur de l'Avertissement nous veut donner le luth, le Thuorbe, & la Guitarre pour modelle, afin de nous obliger à la pratique *des Tenües*, perferablement à tout ce que l'on peut faire de plus considerable, puis que la Viole ne connoist que la Voix au dessus d'elle, & son but doit estre d'imiter son unique modelle dans la beauté du chant, & de ses agrémens, qui font preferbles à toutes les *Tenües* qui voudroient s'y opposer.)⁴⁶

It is clear from the letter of 1688 that De Machy attacked Rousseau rather viciously since his views on the subject are expressed with more directness here, "...he mixes it with the lute, with the guitar, and all that pleases him, that he wants the masters of the lute, of the théorbe, of the guitar to be the true judges of the way to play the viol, which is absurd."⁴⁷

⁴⁶Rousseau, *Traite'*, 64.

⁴⁷Lesure, *op. cit.*, 189.

These disputes took place eighty years after similar arguments previously described had taken place in England. In England, composing for the solo viol had all but ceased, with the exception of a few French-inspired composers like Benjamin Hely. In contrast, Rousseau begins his treatise with the following comments:

Although the viol appears to us as an instrument which is among the newest because it has not been esteemed in France for very long, and although the lute and guitar, and many other instruments seem much more ancient; if everything that the ancient authors report to us is examined concerning the instruments of the first times; of their shapes and the way they were played, it will be found that the viol is one of the oldest.

(Quoyque la Viole nous paroisse un Instrument des plus nouveaux, parce qu'il y a peu de temps qu'elle est estimée en France, & que le Luth, la Guitarre, & plusieurs autres Instruments nous semblent beaucoup plus anciens; cependant si l'on examine tout ce que les anciens Auteurs nous raportent des Instruments des premiers temps, de leurs figures, & de la manière d'en jouer, on trouvera que la Viole est un des plus anciens.)⁴⁸

Rousseau's attempt to add age and distinction to the relatively new instrument is a symptom of the problems faced by Rousseau's colleagues in 1685: to develop a style of playing and a technique best suited to the instrument and relevant to the taste of the time. The absence of a long tradition forced composers and players to search for models among the instrumental and vocal music which surrounded them. The tradition based on the lute, which had provided the model for the earliest solo playing, was for some the road to perfection. For others, the viol's ability to sustain notes and its singing qualities indicated the imitation of vocal styles was the approach to be taken. The technical limitations of the instrument with the limited possibilities of tonalities and harmonic progressions made the lute an almost impossible instrument to follow. Rousseau's attack on De Machy's parallel octaves cited earlier is not simply a means of discrediting a rival. It is a graphic demonstration of these limitations. At the same time, the exclusive use of the

⁴⁸Rousseau, *op. cit.*, 1.

melodic style would not have made full use of the unique qualities of the instrument. It was the compromise between these two extremes represented in the works of Marais and other composers of the early eighteenth century who followed his example which proved to be the successful course.

Rousseau was not so extreme as to present the melodic style as the only legitimate approach to composition, but it was in his approach to the *agréments* that he represented the extreme of the vocal model. Most technical innovations in his treatise can be attributed to his teacher Sainte-Colombe, as we see evidence of them in the works of his other pupils like Marais, but the *agréments* show the influence of Rousseau's other mentor Saint Lambert and the institution he represented, the *air de cour*. At the same time, the process of borrowing from vocal conventions had begun at least with Sainte-Colombe if not with Hotman, so Rousseau was not isolated in his attempt to change what tradition had developed during the short history of viol playing in France. We can now turn to the *agréments* and consider their part in the viol tradition and Rousseau's philosophies concerning them.

THE AGREMENTS

Viol Ornamentation and the Lute Tradition

Few aspects of viol technique and composition were more tied to the lute tradition than ornamentation. This is a logical result of the fact that ornaments, for the most part, are a function of left hand-technique which, as has already been observed, is that aspect of playing the viol that has the greatest resemblance to playing the lute. Many authors like Mersenne, Mace, and Thomas Robinson considered ornamental signs, their names, and their execution interchangeable between lute and viol. The inconsistency with which these three elements of ornamentation were applied in lute or viol music through the first half of the seventeenth century makes it difficult, and in many cases impossible, to pin down the intentions of the composer.

The first attempt at codifying the welter of ornaments which had crept into lute music in the sixteenth century in France was made by Nicholas Vallet in 1615.⁴⁹ In addition to a number of signs indicating technical devices, he specified two ornaments:

1. ' an appoggiature from above.
2. x a trill beginning on the upper auxiliary; that is, an appoggiatura repeated several times.

As we shall see, these ornamental signs, albeit with different meanings, remained in use among viol composers well into the eighteenth century.

The next extensive attempt at codification occurred with Mersenne, who, in addition to the above signs which he modified to give more information, added a few signs of his own.⁵⁰ At the same time, he specified another set of conventions for vocal music. A contemporary of Mersenne's and perhaps the greatest exponent of French lute music, Denis Gaultier, provided a table of ornaments whose signs, terminology, and methods of execution bear resemblances to those of Mersenne and Vallet, but they differ considerably in

⁴⁹Nicholas Vallet, *Secret des Muses. Premier Livre* (Paris, 1615), modern edition and transcription by André Souris (Paris: Editions de CNRS, 1970).

⁵⁰Mersenne, *op. cit.*, III, Livre second des instrumens a cordes, 79-82.

many respects.⁵¹ In the 1620's and 30's, French conventions in lute ornamentation made their way into England, probably by way of French musicians who were employed by Charles I. From lute music, these conventions made their way into viol music.⁵²

The first viol music in France containing ornamental signs is the work of Du Buisson. There is no explanation given for their use, but their location in the music and their use in other lute or viol music would indicate their meaning as:

1. ' a short trill occurring usually on the long note of a dotted pattern.
2. + or x a mordent.⁵³

The Du Buisson pieces belong to a period when performers provided their own ornamentation, very little if any being indicated by the composer. From the publication of De Machy's *Pièces de Violle* in 1685 until the publication of the *Pièces de Viole* of Antoine Forqueray in 1745, every ornament in French viol music was carefully indicated, although less thoroughly explained. This was done for the most part because composers had come to regard the *agréments* as an integral part of the thematic material. This was to a large extent true, of course, in almost every type of French instrumental music. Composers continued to use signs derived from lute music; in particular the two signs discussed previously with regard to their use by Vallet and Du Buisson. Many composers invented their own.

ROUSSEAU'S AGREMENTS

Rousseau's writings on *agréments* are addressed primarily to those performers who must improvise their own. Since Rousseau was writing in a period when most music circulated in manuscript, and since, with the exception of the published works of Marais and De Machy, ornaments were not adequately indicated, he was probably addressing himself to the majority of situations to be encountered. Although the situation was already changing rapidly with regard to the

⁵¹Janet Dodge, "Ornamentation as Indicated by Signs in Lute Tablature," *Sammelbände der Musik-gesellschaft* IX (1907-1908), 326-327.

⁵²Thurston Dart, "Ornament Signs in Jacobean Music for Lute and Viol," *The Galpin Society Journal* XIV (March, 1961), 30-33.

⁵³Schwendowius, *op. cit.*, 192.

indication of ornamentation by the time Rousseau's treatise was published, vocal music and its accompaniment never did follow the trend toward thorough marking. It is to the role of accompanying that Rousseau is addressing many of his remarks. Rousseau was accused of undue rigidity even in his own time with regard to his pronouncements on the placement of ornaments. This rigidity was regarded as the unfortunate result of providing rules for something regulated by good taste.⁵⁴ His general attitude as expressed in his introductory remarks to the third part of the *Traité* as well as numerous statements make the criticism unwarranted: "...the sacred and profane books teach us that it is sometimes permissible, and even necessary, to by-pass ordinary rules,⁵⁵ because the rules are made for man not man for the rules."

Rousseau's presentation is aimed at the performer who is reading three or four notes ahead. His melodic analysis is based on three- or four-note patterns and sometimes their relationship to or placement in cadential patterns. His melodic analysis of the placement of ornaments is the most extensive undertaken in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁵⁶ Although he differs with his contemporaries on execution and terminology, the accuracy of his description as to the location of the *agrément*s in the music is largely born out by examination of contemporary scores. Each of the *agrément*s considered by Rousseau is discussed in sections which follow.

I. The Cadence

No *agrément* has received so much attention nor is there any ornament which is as essential to any French music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the *cadence* or *tremblement*. These ornaments consume considerable portion of the pages which Rousseau devotes to ornamentation, and few other writers have provided us with as much information. Since Rousseau's discussion is the most thorough of any writer and composer for the viol, his remarks are very important for the viol player, yet they must be read with caution. As has been previously mentioned, Rousseau's remarks assume a knowledge of his singing treatise (the *Méthode*), and his remarks there will be

⁵⁴For example Etienne Loulié in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. n. acq. fr. 6355, 210-222.

⁵⁵Rousseau, *Traité*, 64.

⁵⁶Putnam Aldrich, "The Principal *Agrements* of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Study in Musical Ornamentation" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1942), 244.

considered in conjunction with the supplementary discussion of the *Traité de la viole* itself.

The word *cadence*, as Aldrich points out, had a dual meaning in the seventeenth century. It referred to the harmonic and melodic formula marking the end of a phrase and also to the ornament commonly called a trill.⁵⁷ The formula was so inseparable from the ornament that the two meanings were in many ways synonymous. Rousseau was aware of the possible confusion of the two meanings, so in the *Méthode*, he used the *cadence parfaite* to differentiate the harmonic formula from the *agrément, cadence*. In the *Traité*, he used the term *cadence finale* in place of *cadence parfaite*. The choice of the use of the word *cadence* reveals Rousseau's vocal prejudices. No viol composer uses this term, which was common among vocal musicians in the late seventeenth century.⁵⁸ The one exception, Louis Heudelinne, writing for the *dessus de viole*, chose to continue the melodic tradition in his *agrément*s as well.⁵⁹ Rousseau implies that his rejection of the term *tremblement* is based on its too general use, and he regards them as basically the same.⁶⁰ The vagueness with which the term *tremblement* was used early in the seventeenth century has been discussed by Aldrich in terms of the comments of Mersenne.⁶¹ A few additional comments as the term relates to viol music might be in order. Pierre Trichet, a contemporary of Mersenne's, described the virtues of the viol family thus: "...it must be acknowledged that after excellent human voices, there is nothing so charming as the *mignards tremblements* that are made on the fingerboard, and nothing so ravishing as the dying strokes of the bow."⁶² There is no way of deciding from the context whether this remark refers to a vibrato or to some sort of trill or other ornament. As will be shown later, De Machy refers to the two-fingered vibrato as a *tremblement sans appuyer* showing the occasional use of the term in this way. Rousseau limits his use of the term to the physical action involved in performing the *cadence*.

The length, detail, and categorization of Rousseau's *cadences* are equaled only in the other vocal treatises of the time, notably Bacilly. Rousseau's categorizations and

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 186.

⁵⁸Schwendowius, *op. cit.*, 225-226.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 209.

⁶⁰Rousseau, *Méthode*, 54

⁶¹Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 186.

⁶²Pierre Trichet, *Traité des instruments de musique* (unpublished autograph, ca. 1640), Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Ms. 1070, reprinted in *Annales Musicologiques IV* (1956), 225.

terminology are with only minor exceptions identical with those of Bacilly indicating the debt they both owed to Michel Lambert. Rousseau categorizes his *cadences* in the following way: (1) *cadence avec appuy* (in the *Méthode, cadence avec un support*); (2) *cadence sans appuy* (in the *Méthode, cadence simple*); (3) *double cadence*.

(1) *Cadence avec appuy* (*Traité, 77-79; Methode, 54-56*)

This *agrément* is a trill starting on the upper auxiliary whose initial note is longer than the other notes of the trill; or as Rousseau puts it, the finger on the fret above the principal note "leans a little before trilling."⁶³ This *agrément* is used:

A. On a descending passage going from a shorter note to a longer note, or to a note of equal value (in which case it is optional) where the latter is the second note of a descending semitone (i.e., mediant or leading tone).

B. On repeated notes where the first is shorter than the second (on the second note of a descending semitone or the one just below it).

C. On descending thirds, by filling in the third with a note which becomes the *appuy* (*Appoggiatura*).

D. On the next-to-the last note of a cadence where the final note is approached from above.

E. On dotted notes in descending passages with the exception of the lowest note in the passage.

As Rousseau assumes that the reader has learned his musical basics from the *Méthode*, he does not explain the rhythmic aspects of making the *appuy*. On page 54-55 of the *Méthode*, the reader learns that the *appuy* or *support* is made by:

A. Taking part of the value of the preceding note and tying it to the note to be trilled. (*Par Anticipation de valeur et de Son*) (*Traité, Example, p. 78-79; A, B, C, D*).

B. Performing the *appuy* on the beat (*Par Anticipation du Son*) (*Traité, Exampe, p. 78-79; E, F, G*).

(2) *Cadence Sans Appuy*

This *agrément* is performed like the other but with the *appoggiatura* cut so that the upper auxiliary is as long as any of the other notes of the trill. It is performed:

A. In ascending or descending passages of short notes which fall on the strong part of the beat.

⁶³Rousseau, *Traité*, 76.

B. In descending passages on notes which are too short to receive a *cadence avec appuy*.

C. In passages of descending quarter notes on the strong beat of the measure.

D. On long notes, except in part singing, where the principal note must be taken and only the second half trilled.

E. In ascending passages when proceeding from a short note to a longer one.

(3) *Double Cadence*

This *agrément* is a *cadence* with a prefix; a "varied" *cadence*. It should be used if possible on a final cadence, and on long notes it should be used only on the first half of the note. Rousseau demonstrates a number of different types of prefixes.

Discussion

Rousseau's contemporaries differed considerably on a number of points concerning the execution of this *agrément*. The tendency among lute and harpsichord composers was to shorten the *appoggiatura* and perform the *agrément* on the beat, making the beats equal.⁶⁴ In the draft of his viol method, Loulie supports this viewpoint although he makes the frustrating observation that "the length of the *appuy* is regulated by the value of the note."⁶⁵ This observation is made also by De Machy. De Machy states that the beats of the *treblement* must be equal, but he does not specify whether the *appoggiatura* must be executed on or before the beat.⁶⁶ In fact most harmonic music does not permit the luxury of the *appoggiatura* which takes part of its value from the previous note. Bowing requires that the bass note be executed on the beat, and there is no way of holding the *appoggiatura* while playing the other notes of the chord. This is particularly true at the ends of phrases, which are usually harmonically reinforced. The example below illustrates a case where the *appuy* before the beat is technically impossible. Of course, the tempo, which depends entirely upon the taste of the performer, might be reason enough to exclude the long *appuy* in this case.

⁶⁴Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 211.

⁶⁵Cited in Schwendowius, *op. cit.*, 204.

⁶⁶De Machy, *op. cit.*, 8.

Example 4. De Machy, Unmeasured Prelude, from the Fourth Suite in G Major, *Pièces de Violle* (Paris, 1685), p.44.



The following example illustrates a case where the off-the-beat execution would be possible but where it loses its effect without a note to mark the beat.

Example 5. De Machy, Sarabande, from the Fourth Suite in G Major, *Pièces de Violle* (Paris, 1685), p.48, measures 18-19.



The only viol music containing the off-the-beat trill without question are the duets for two viols of Sainte-Colombe where they are specifically written out. Sainte-Colombe is known to have been partial to this type of small ensemble music as shown by the often-cited descriptions of his concerts of trios for bass viols played with his two daughters.⁶⁷ This music written in the melodic style is ideal for this ornament, and this particular type of *cadence* was probably a personal preference. Another of Sainte-Colombe's students, Danoville, is very explicit in saying that the *appogiatura* must take its value from the previous beat in order to emphasize the effect of suspension and dissonance. He also specifies that the beats of the trill must be accelerated, possibly another aspect of Sainte-Colombe's playing.

Loulié makes the observation that Marais in doubtful cases writes the value of the *appy* into his music. I have found no examples of unquestionable off-the-beat trills in the music of Marais.⁶⁸ Almost all *tremblements* in Marais must be clearly

⁶⁷Titon du Tillet, *Le Parnasse françois* (Paris, 1732), 624.

⁶⁸Danoville, *op. cit.*, 39.

⁶⁹Gordon Kinney, "Problems of Melodic Ornamentation in French Viol Music," *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* V (1968), 34-50. The author lists musical examples of off-the-beat trills. These examples are based on a personal interpretation and the author's ability to play them himself. The author advances no evidence to support his conclusions.

executed on the beat, and other composers I have examined follow his example. The *Avertissements* of their works indicate an almost universal approach.

The *double cadence* is not described by any other composer for the viol. It is frequently found in the literature and notated with *notes perdues* or *petites notes*. In other words, it was not regarded as an ornament but simply as a means of approaching a standard one. The *double cadence* was first described by Bacilly as a separate ornament in vocal music,⁷⁰ but it was described by the *clavecinistes* either as a combination of two ornaments, or as an individual ornament from Chambonnières on.⁷¹ Aldrich points out that several forms of Rousseau's *double cadence* are exceptional, in particular, the *renversée* (pages 99-100, Example E). I have been unable to find an example of the *renversée* in any viol music.

Rousseau's use of the + to mark the *cadence* is singular in viol music. It represents an attempt to introduce a convention which at this time was associated with vocal and ensemble music. The comma was used with few exceptions by composers throughout the history of solo viol music.⁷² Several anomalies and exceptions should be mentioned here. Loulié differentiates between a *tremblement* "dans les pieces" and a *tremblement* "dans la basse continue." "That which I am going to say about the comma for *les pieces* must be understood for the small cross in the *basse continue*."⁷³ Loulié's assessment of convention is manifested in a *chaconne* "pour une Flute traversiere, une Violle, et la Basse Continue" by Jacques Morel, which uses a small cross "x" to indicate trills in the flute part, but a comma is used in the solo viol part to indicate the identical ornament.⁷⁴ He lists this same sign (x) in his *Avertissement* as a *battement* (see section VI of this chapter), but its use in the flute part leaves no question as to its meaning in this case. The cross was used often in music for the *dessus de viole* in its traditional role as a melodic instrument. In addition, the *dessus* was often listed as an alternative to the flute or violin (as it is in the case of the Morel *chaconne*). Rousseau's

⁷⁰Bénigne de Bacilly, *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter* (Paris, 1668), translated and edited by Austin B. Caswell as *The Art of Proper Singing* (Brooklyn: The Institute of Mediaeval Music, Ltd., 1968), 187/95.

⁷¹Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 223.

⁷²Schwendowius, *op. cit.*, 225-226.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 204.

⁷⁴Jacques Morel, *Premier Livre de pièces de violle avec une Chaconne en trio* (Paris, 1709).

interest in the use of the viol in accompaniment would have led him to try to change the convention of signs, but unfortunately, it would have introduced a confusion factor in that the cross was often used in viol music to indicate the mordent (*martellement*).

Thus we see that Rousseau in terminology and choice of signs shows clearly his background in vocal convention. In addition, his description of the execution of the *cadence avec appuy* with the *appuy* that takes part of its value from the previous note was a vocal mannerism adopted by Rousseau's viol teacher Sainte-Colombe for music primarily in the melodic style. Its use in harmonic music is technically difficult, often ineffective, and does not seem to have been perpetuated in the solo music of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

II. Port De Viox

This *agrément* is best described as an appoggiatura from below. It is performed, to paraphrase Rousseau (*Traité*, p. 85), by cutting the value of the preceding note in half and placing the finger on the fret of the main note halfway through the second bow-stroke. The *port de voix* should be used when:

A. Ascending in stepwise fashion from a short note to a long note, particularly if separated by a half step.

B. Sometimes in the above case when note are of equal value, but if they are separated by a whole step, the melody must descend following the main note.

C. When the final cadence is approached from below, and the preceding note is less than a quarter.

In the *Méthode*, the reader learns there are two other types of *port de voix*.

A. *Port de voix par Anticipation du Son*. The lower appoggiatura takes its entire value from the main note. This type is used when proceeding from a short note to one that is four times as long, an eighth note to a half, for example. (See *Méthode*, p. 52.)

B. The appoggiature ascends or descends from a fourth or fifth above or below.

It must be accepted that Rousseau's additional descriptions in the *Méthode* were viable alternatives for the description given in the *Traité*. Both alternatives described there were too widespread in instrumental music and, as will be shown, the preponderance of evidence suggests that the preferred means of performing the *port de viox* on the viol was *par anticipation du son*.

In 1636 Mersenne described the *port de voix* (*accent plaintiff*) on the beat for the lute or viol mentioning the syncopated means of performing this *agrément* only in his treatise on the voice.⁷⁵ The accepted practice among lute composers was known to be the on-the-beat method. The generally accepted reason for this is that the lute cannot sustain the sound of a note effectively, and therefore, a syncopated *port de voix* sounds like nothing more than a syncopation and loses its expressive quality.⁷⁶ This is also true of the harpsichord, and from Chambonnières on (with the exception of Saint Lambert), the *port de voix* is described in ornament tables for this instrument as performed on the beat. It may also be argued that Chambonnières in transferring aspects of lute style to the harpsichord adopted procedures of ornamentation from that instrument.

Throughout the seventeenth century, the syncopated *port de voix* flourished in vocal music, notably the *air de cour*, and is described in detail by Bacilly.⁷⁷ The viol can sustain a note, unlike the lute or harpsichord, and can, under the right circumstances, make use of such vocal ornaments. The same technical problems described for the off-the-beat *cadence* exist for this ornament in music in the harmonic style. De Machy describes the *port de voix* in the following way: "The *port de voix*, which is called the *cheute* on the lute and other instruments, is made *par anticipation* from one note or one letter to another."⁷⁸ This description can be interpreted in several ways, and their notation in the score provides little help. In the large majority of cases, the shortness of the notes makes the on-the-beat approach the only possible interpretation.

The duets of Sainte-Colombe contain written-out *port de voix* which are performed exactly as notated by Rousseau on pages 86-87 of the *Traite*, and it is apparent that this is another mannerism of Sainte-Colombe, which he passed on to his pupils. The practice is also reflected in Danoville:

⁷⁵Mersenne, *op. cit.*, II, *Traité de la voix et des Chants*, 355.

⁷⁶Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 21-22.

⁷⁷Bacilly, *op. cit.*, 137-164/65-82.

⁷⁸De Machy, *op. cit.*, 9.

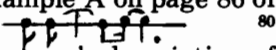
The *port de voix* makes a great slur in the melody, and without its help, it is impossible to sing or play cleanly.

It is made by cutting in half the note which precedes the one to which the voice is to be carried and tying the last half to the note which follows..... The famous authors use no other method.

(Le Port de Voix fait une grande liaison dans le Chant, & sans son secours il est impossible de chanter, ny jouer avec proprete.

Il se fait en coupant la moitié de la Note, qui precede celle sur laquelle on va porter la Voix & prenant la dernière moitié on la lie avec celle qui suit..... les fameux Auteurs ne se servent pas d'autre Méthode.)⁷⁹

An idiosyncrasy of Danoville is his example which shows a descending *appoggiatura*, a *port de voix* from above. This will be further discussed in conjunction with the *coule*.

It should be noted that the statement that Rousseau intended his *port de voix* to be performed exactly as he illustrated it is at variance with the interpretation of Aldrich. According to Aldrich, the rhythm of Example A on page 86 of the *Traité* should be approximately: .⁸⁰ Aldrich bases his interpretation on Rousseau's description of the bow-strokes, but both Danoville and Sainte-Colombe clearly contradict his analysis.

Rousseau differs from other instrumental composers in giving no sign for the *port de voix* as it should appear in scores. From 1686 on, most composers indicate it with a small note (*note perdue*) which appears tied to the main note. Marais describes this *petite note* as a note "which does not enter into the beat....."⁸¹ The most likely interpretation of this observation is that the small note takes its value from the main note, and a study of his work produces very questionable cases.

It should be mentioned that Rousseau's rules for the melodic placement of the *port de voix* coincide closely with the practice of Marais and most viol composers examined. Rousseau's description of the execution of the *port de voix* differs considerably from the practices of Marais and his contemporaries.

⁷⁹Danoville, *op. cit.*, 42.

⁸⁰Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 20.

⁸¹Marin Marais, *Pieces à une et à deux violes* (Paris, 1686), Avertissement.

⁸²Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 99.

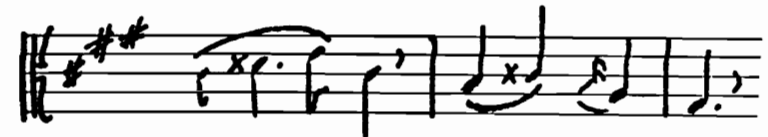
III. Cheute

This *agrément* is made by filling in the interval of a third in descending pattern. The passing note takes its value from the upper note. The following is a summary of the melodic rules which apply to its use.

- A. It should be used if the lower note of the third cannot be trilled, especially in the case of major thirds.
- B. It can be used if the note after the lowest note of the third descends by step, or even by another third.
- C. It is used sometimes between notes of the same pitch: preferably, the second note should be longer than the first.
- D. They must never be used if there is a break, such as a rest, or if the end of a phrase falls between the two notes of a third.
- E. If the second note of a descending fourth is altered by a sharp, a *cheute* from the semitone above the lower note is very moving.
- F. The *cheute* is very moving on accidentals in ascending passages in place of a *cadence*.
- G. In a descending pattern, a *cheute* may be substituted for a *cadence* on a note which requires its use.

Rousseau's extremely detailed description of this *agrément* is unique in French writings. It was heavily used, however, and its performance was rhythmically the same both in vocal and instrumental music.⁸² Rousseau indicates no markings for it, but when used by Marais and other viol composers, it is usually indicated by a *note perdue*. Below is a typical example of its use.

Example 6. Marin Marais, Sarabande, from the Second Suite in A Major from *Pièces de viole* (Book III) (Paris, 1711), p. 18. measures 2-3.



The above example represents a very common melodic formula in the music of Marais and other composers of this period, and the small note invariably takes its value from the previous note. The slur to the main note refers to bowing only. Sometimes Marais and others write passages which could have been a series of descending thirds, but which have been filled in with the *cheute*. The result is a descending scale passage with a dotted rhythmic pattern.

In most writings, this ornament is called a *coulé*, but most viol composers assigned it no name at all. *Coulé* is used in

viol music for another ornament which will be discussed later.

Another ornament that should be mentioned here is the *port de voix* from above of Danoville. This ornament occurs frequently in music of all kinds in the eighteenth century and, in some cases, can be confused with the *cheute*, because it is usually notated with a *petite note*. The important distinguishing aspect of the *cheute* is that it fills in a third. The example below illustrates a typical series of situations which might be encountered.

Example 7. Marin Marais, *Plainte*, from the Fourth Suite in D Major from *Pièces de viole* (Book III) (Paris, 1711), p. 50, measures 1-6.



(1) This *petite note* is clearly a *cheute*, taking its value from the previous note. The slur simply indicates the bowing as Rousseau describes it, or in other words, to what note the *petite note* is attached.

(2) This note is a *port de voix*, taking its value from the main note.

(3) This note fills in a third but must be treated as a *port de voix* from above, because it is part of a melodic sequence and also because it is part of a chord, which would make this note awkward if played as a *cheute*.

Marais often uses *petites notes* as notational variants of preceding measures. Measure two of the above example contains a notational variant of the dotted pattern in the first measure. There is a difference in bowing, however, in that the *petite note* is slurred to the next note whereas in the first measure, the sixteenth note is slurred to the previous note.

Rousseau's description of the *cheute* as a note which fills in a third, taking its value from the previous note (upper note) and slurred to the following note (lower note), is an accurate and extremely complete description of actual practice in the period under discussion.

IV. Aspiration

This *agrément* is executed by playing a very short note a half or whole step higher at the very end of a long note (half note or more). The short note must be very short and separated from the following note.

A. It is used in front of a note on which a *cadence avec appuy* should be performed.

B. It is used before a *cadence* in ascending passages.

C. It can occur between a *martellement* and a *cadence*.

D. Two successive *aspirations* must be separated by a *cadence* or a *cheute*.

E. The *aspiration* must always be in a position preceding a *cadence* or *cheute*.

F. The *aspiration* must fill in an ascending third following a *cadence* on a half step. It is also used to fill in thirds in other places.

G. If a descending half step is followed by a descending third which has a sharp, an *aspiration* should be used after the first note of the descending second.

H. An *aspiration* can be used in place of a *double cadence* in ascending patterns.

The treatment of this melodic figure as an *agrément* is found exclusively in vocal music, particularly the *air de cour*. The first to describe this vocal *agrément* was Mersenne, who called it an *accent plaintiff*.⁸³ He described an *accent plaintiff* to be played on the lute which, although similar to the vocal version, was in fact a *port de voix*, as previously discussed. Bacilly writes extensively concerning the performance of the *aspiration* or *accent*, and his version (as is Mersenne's vocal one) is the exact counterpart to Rousseau's description of its execution on the viol.⁸⁴ No composer or writer involved in viol music describes this *agrément*, but it is found in much music as a melodic pattern. Since it is considered part of the melody, it is notated correctly and poses no problems for the performer. The example below shows an *aspiration* preceding a *double cadence*, a typical use for this ornament.

Example 8. Roland Marais, *Prelude*, from the Fourth Suite in B Flat Major from *Deuxième Livre de Pièces de Viol* (Paris, 1738), p.24, measure 16.



De Machy uses this term for the type of one-finger vibrato normally executed with the little finger (Rousseau's *languueur*, section VI of this chapter)⁸⁵

⁸³Mersenne, *op. cit.*, II, *Traité de la voix et des Chants*, 355.

⁸⁴Bacilly, *op. cit.*, 189-196/95-99.

⁸⁵De Machy, *op. cit.*, 9.

In short, Rousseau's description of this melodic figure as an ornament is a reflection of vocal practice and is not found treated as such in instrumental music of the period.

V. Martellement

According to Rousseau, this *agrément* is performed from the main note to a lower auxiliary a major or minor second below. The finger on the fret of the main note may be lifted and put down again any number of times depending on the value of the main note. It is performed very quickly in contrast to the *cadence*, whose speed is varied for expressive purposes. It is inseparable from the *port de voix* and is a mechanical imitation of something the voice does naturally. The following conditions govern its use:

- A. It should be used on the second note of an ascending minor second (tonic or subdominant), especially when a short note is followed by a longer one.
- B. It should be used on the strong part of any division of the beat.
- C. It can be used in unison with an open string momentarily creating a dissonant interval.

The origins of this ornament lie in lute music. It is described by Mersenne in this context but is not mentioned by Bacilly or any other vocal writer in the seventeenth century.⁸⁶ Mersenne uses the name *battement* and combines it with his equivalent of the *port de voix*, the *accent plaintiff*. From this time on, the words *battement* and *martellement* were used almost interchangeably by a variety of composers. The most common name among viol composers of the eighteenth century was *battement*. Loulié and De Machy both use *martellement*. Danoville used the term most common among the *clavecinistes*, *pincé*. De Machy stands alone among viol composers in differentiating between a *martellement* and a *double martellement*, the latter taking more beats.

The sign most common among lute composers and almost unanimous among viol composers was + or x. As Aldrich points out, this was probably a corruption of Mersenne's sign *.⁸⁷ As pointed out earlier, Rousseau's attempt to introduce the + for the *cadence*, as was common in vocal music, would have produced a confusion factor.

Those who describe this ornament are unanimous in saying that it should be performed as fast as possible. Aldrich points to the necessity of doing this on the lute due to the short

string vibration time, and the transfer of this tradition into other media.⁸⁸ In practice, it was frequently linked to the *port de voix*, although by no means always as Rousseau implies. The two conditions where it usually appears alone are in fast passages, and where notes are approached by skip. It is frequently found on the first note of a composition and frequently found together with the *unisson* as described by Rousseau. Example 9 illustrates the use of the *martellement* alone in a fast passage. Example 10 illustrates a form of this *agrément* peculiar to the viol; that is, the execution of the ornament on one string while playing an open string in unison with the principal note. The effect created is a momentary dissonance of a second, giving emphasis to the ornamented note. In the suite from which Example 10 is taken, each movement begins with this distinctive ornament, suggesting thematic unity.

Example 9. Marin Marais, Allemande (Double), from the First Suite in D Minor from *Pièces de viole* (Book I) (Paris, 1686), measure 4.



Example 10. De Machy, Courante, from the First Suite in D Minor from *Pièces de Viol* (Paris, 1685), p. 19, first measure.



Rousseau's comments concerning the relation of this *agrément* to a vocal model leaves several questions unanswered. Bacilly describes a pulsation of the voice following the *port de voix* which does not, however, waver in pitch.⁸⁹ My interpretation of this ornament is: $\overset{p}{\underset{x}{\text{p}}}$. The general consensus of opinion is that this ornament was introduced into instrumental music in imitation of the vocal ornament, and that Rousseau's comments concerning this ornament indicate that an actual wavering in pitch was being

⁸⁶Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 484.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 488.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 481.

⁸⁹Bacilly, *op. cit.*, 139/65.

introduced into vocal music in imitation of the instrumental version.⁹⁰ This opinion might be questioned on the basis of the formidable history of lute ornamentation in the sixteenth century and the continuous documented use of this ornament since Mersenne.

Rousseau's rules concerning its use and placement, while not complete, represent contemporary practices, but the ornament conceived as being inseparable from the *port de voix* is not indicative of procedures followed by composers. In addition, terminology and choice of sign represent possible confusion in the performance of this music.

VI. Batement, Langueur, Plainte

The *batement* is a two-fingered vibrato produced by the rocking motion of two fingers pressed against each other. It produces the effect of a trill beginning with the main note, oscillating with an auxiliary about a quarter tone above it (depending on the width of one's fingers). The *langueur* is a vibrato produced by the rocking motion of one finger and is ordinarily used in those cases where the two-fingered vibrato is not possible, particularly when it must be used on a note held by the little finger.

The *plainte* is produced by the sliding of a finger downward from one fret to another, never over a distance of more than half a step.

The two types of vibrato (*batement* and *langueur*) are the two most commonly described *agrément*s among lute and viol composers. They were apparently so heavily used by lutenists in the sixteenth century that Mersenne considered them out of fashion but effective when used sparingly.⁹¹ There is a difference between the vibrato produced on the viol or by the voice in that the vibrato on the lute or viol goes from the main note to one above, whereas the vocal or string vibrato wavers either side of the main note.⁹² It also differs from other vibratos used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially on woodwind instruments, which oscillated from the main note to one about a quarter tone below it (*flatement*).

Rousseau's statement that it be used as much as possible has resulted in much controversy and can be interpreted to suggest its almost constant use. Most solo viol music of the period contains carefully placed indications for its use, and a

study of these can produce a more realistic interpretation of Rousseau's remarks. De Machy uses the two-fingered vibrato, which he calls the *tremblement sans appuyer*, and assigns it a small comma over the note. He uses it rarely, and there are no generalizations that can be made concerning its usual placement in the music. The "aspiration, which is also called the *plainte*, is made by varying the finger on the fingerboard. There are people who wish to call it *miaullement* by allusion."⁹³ This rather vague description has been generally interpreted to mean the single-finger vibrato,⁹⁴ but there are places in De Machy's music where it may refer to an ascending version of Rousseau's *plainte*. Danoville describes the ascending version of this ornament, which he calls the *coulé du doigt*. He says that it is never practiced in descending passages, a direct disagreement with Rousseau.⁹⁵ Example 11 shows (1) its use as vibrato, and (2) its use as an ascending glissando, or possibly both as vibrato and glissando.

Example 11. De Machy, Gavotte, from the Third Suite in G Minor from *Pièces de Viol* (Paris, 1685), p. 42, measures 5-9.



Danoville leaves the use of his two-fingered vibrato to the good taste of the performer except to say that it is frequently encountered on the first note of a piece which begins on a strong beat.⁹⁶ He names his single-fingered vibrato the *balancement de main*, a term not used by any other writer. He says that it is always practiced with the little finger and is used at the end of a *double cadence en coulade*.⁹⁷

Marais uses the term *pincé* or *flatement* (as do all eighteenth-century composers) for the two-fingered vibrato. The single-fingered variety is called *plainte*, adding a source of confusion to the reader of Rousseau. Marais is a frequent user of the two types of vibrato. He most often uses the one-finger variety on the fourth finger but by no means always. Other composers like Roland Marais use the

⁹⁰Austin B. Caswell, "The Development of 17th Century Vocal Ornamentation and its Influence Upon Late Baroque Practice" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1964), 81.

⁹¹Mersenne, *op. cit.*, III, Livre second des instrumens a cordes, 81.

⁹²Aldrich, *op. cit.*, 437.

⁹³*Miaullement*: language spoken by seventeenth-century French feline. De Machy, *op. cit.*, 9.

⁹⁴Schwendowius, *op. cit.*, 194.

⁹⁵Danoville, *op. cit.*, 43.

⁹⁶Danoville, *op. cit.*, 41.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 45.

single-finger vibrato more often, and on other fingers than the fourth. In contrast, one rarely encounters it in the works of Forqueray, whose greater interest in the harmonic style leaves less room for its use. It is most often encountered on long notes which need emphasis and is sometimes used as an alternative to the *cadence*.

Jean Rousseau's *plainte* is called the *doigt coulé* by Marais. Marais and possibly De Machy are the only composers who indicated this *agrément* in their music. This *agrément* can be regarded as a variant of the *aspiration* and was treated as such in vocal music. Bacilly discusses the relation between these two.⁹⁸

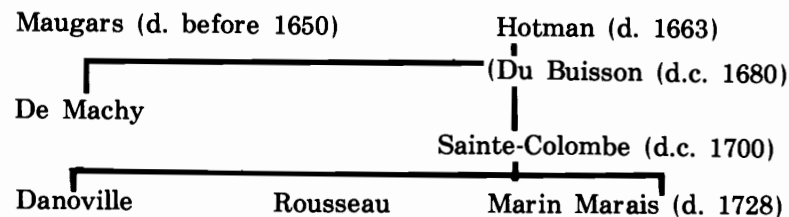
Thus it can be seen that Rousseau's injunction that the vibrato be used as often as possible is in fact qualified by the importance of, the desire for emphasis on, and the length of the note, and, to a lesser degree, the desire for variety. Rousseau's *plainte* is a convention associated with vocal music and is of far more importance in that area than in viol music, where it is used only by Marais in clearly marked locations.

We have seen in Jean Rousseau a mixture of influences: the influences of an extensive training in the art of singing, the influences of study with the great teacher Sainte-Colombe who had established his own set of conventions, and the influences associated with the mainstream of viol music and its conventions, which were not fully established and were largely based on lute playing traditions.

The influences of vocal conventions can be observed primarily in Rousseau's choice of terminology and notation, or lack of it, and the extent to which he relies on his singing treatise as a basis for ornamental practice in the viol treatise. The influence of Sainte-Colombe can be seen in his description of the execution of certain ornaments, particularly the *port de voix*. The influence of viol and lute traditions can be seen particularly in those ornaments and practices which are peculiar to the viol—the vibratos and glissando. Undoubtedly his association with Sainte-Colombe influenced his acceptance of these conventions.

It is difficult to separate those items which are strictly the result of Sainte-Colombe's practice from those which belong to the French viol tradition since so little viol music prior to Sainte-Colombe survives. We can arrive at some conclusions by comparing those ornaments described by Rousseau with those described by Sainte-Colombe's contemporary and rival

De Machy. This approach creates problems in that De Machy's writings present an extreme point of view. We might summarize the teacher-student lineage of musical influence between the key figures in seventeenth-century viol music in the following way.



The vocal conventions which influenced Rousseau create the greatest problems for the viol player who studies this work. Such terms as *cadence*, *langueur*, and *plainte* are at variance with the standard terms used by viol composers in the eighteenth century, when the greatest quantity of French viol music was produced. The lack of signs, except for the +, is again contrary to standard eighteenth-century viol practice. The reason that Rousseau's conventions were not accepted was the overwhelming success of Marin Marais, recognized as a genius in his own time, and who may yet enjoy a rebirth of interest with the growing number of musicians capable of performing his often extremely difficult pieces. Although Marais was a composition student of Lully, he did not allow Lully's approach to ornamental conventions to influence his music. Marais' published works served as models for other viol composers, who followed his conventions.

Rousseau's work is particularly useful as an analysis of the location of ornaments in all types of French music in the seventeenth century. No other writer attempted this. We learn from Rousseau that melodic considerations are the overriding factor in the placement of ornaments, and that vertical considerations are of little importance except in accompanimental parts. In short, it is *only* by studying Rousseau that a twentieth-century performer can learn where to place improvised ornaments in French music of the seventeenth century, although the study of scores where they are marked is certainly of value. Rousseau never resorts to that irritatingly indefinite phrase *le bon goût* to describe the location of ornaments in the music. It is perhaps here that Rousseau has made his greatest contribution to our knowledge of seventeenth-century ornamentation.

⁹⁸Bacilly, *op. cit.*, 199/100.

A "TEMPEST IN A GLASS OF WATER" OR A CONFLICT OF ESTHETIC ATTITUDES

Gordon J. Kinney

A duel was fought in Paris in the 1680's. No one was killed in it because the participants—fortunately, not only for their own well being but also for our eventual enlightenment—were not noblemen and therefore fought with the pen and not with the rapier, although their exchanges were no less sharp on that account. The "duelists" were Messieurs De Machy (his first name has not come down to us) and Jean Rousseau, both of them solo performers on the bass viol, or *viola da gamba*, and prominent teachers of the instrument.

Practically nothing is known about De Machy other than that he came to Paris from Abbeville, was a pupil of the famous Hotman (praised by Mersenne) and was last reported alive in 1691.¹

A little more is known about Jean Rousseau. Born around mid-century at Moulin, he moved to Paris in 1676, married there and (by his own account) he studied for one month with the Sieur de Sainte Colombe, founder of the "new" school of viol playing, of which his pupil Marin Marais became the greatest master.²

My own earliest intimation of the affair came from a remark in Nathalie Dolmetsch's book, *The Viola da Gamba* (London, 1962), in which she says—referring to Danoville's book on viol playing—that "Rousseau, in his work attacks Danoville on a number of small points without actually naming him."³ This is erroneous. As even a casually attentive reading of the relevant works would reveal, it was not Danoville (whose book appeared in 1687, the same year as Rousseau's) whom Rousseau attacked, but De Machy, whose book was published two years earlier, in 1685.

Hans Bol, in his recent monumental work on French viol playing, called the controversy between De Machy and Rousseau "a tempest in a glass of water."⁴ Nevertheless he has taken the trouble to provide us with a substantial quantity of cited documentation from the late 17th century, not hitherto available, which tends to prove—to me at least—that the matter was not as trivial as his characterization of it is meant to imply. The purpose of the present paper is to

present this documentation, to weigh the aptness of his comment against the background of the circumstances in which the affair took place and to show that the eventual effect on musical composition for the viol was far-reaching and protracted.

We learn from the *Épitome musical* by Philibert Jambe de Fer (1556) that in the 16th century the viol in France had five strings and was tuned throughout in fourths.⁵ Mersenne illustrates this instrument and gives for it the tuning c'gdAE.

Apparently the main service of this viol was to double the bass in mixed consorts with voices and/or other instruments; that is, it functioned not as a solo, but as a consort instrument. Mersenne's illustration shows that it already had the frets it had taken over from the lute family.⁶

Mersenne also depicts the six-string viol with fourths-and-a-third tuning: d' a e c G D, which by his time was standard all over Europe. This tuning, which comes directly from the lute, not only increased the playing range of the instrument but, owing to the tuning of a third between the middle strings, more accidentalized notes became available: a response to the demands of composers of the latter half of the 16th century.⁷

Not only the frets and tuning pattern of the viol were taken from the lute but in consequence of them many of the left-hand techniques of the lutenist were adopted by violists who, up to the last quarter of the 17th century, were generally performers on both instruments. In England, especially, the association between the two instruments is particularly clear in that country's development of "the Viol play'd Lyra-way," that is, with variable tunings to facilitate the playing of certain chords which brought with it, as a matter of course, notation in the French system of lute tablature. There exists a substantial body of English lyra viol music (on which our colleague Frank Traficante has made himself the leading authority). There is also, undoubtedly, a body of French viol music in tablature, so far inadequately explored, of which two examples may be cited:

1. A manuscript, containing suites for unaccompanied viol, both in notation and in tablature, by Du Buisson (also known as a lutenist), dated 1666, in the Library of Congress (M2.1/Book. T2 17C, fol. 1-555 and 67-v-90r). There are other

¹Hans Bol, *La Basse de viole du temps de Marin Marais et d'Antoine Forqueray* (Bilthoven: A.B.Creyghton, 1973), p. 315.

²*Ibid.*, p. 323.

³Nathalie Dolmetsch, *The Viola da Gamba* (London, Hinrichsen, 1962), p. 43 f; see also Bol, p. 149.

⁴Hans Bol, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁵Philibert Jambe de Fer, *Épitome Musicale, des tons, sons et accordez....violes* (Lyon, 1556) (in facs, ed. of Francois Lesure, pub. in *Annales musicologiques*, Tome VI, pp. 341 ff.).

⁶Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, (Paris, 1636-37) Livre IV iesme, p. 191.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 142.

mss. by him in Paris and Durham.

2. De Machy's *Pièces de Violle* (Paris, 1685) contains four suites in notation and four others in tablature, all for unaccompanied viol.

It would seem to be at least a likely possibility that French libraries hold more music of this kind which, because of its notation in tablature, has perhaps been classified erroneously as lute music.

From the foregoing it is evident that there existed in France by the mid-17th century two well-established practices in viol playing: part playing in a consort and unaccompanied solo playing. In the former double-stopping and chords were absent; in the latter, in contrast, many chords were employed. In the last quarter of the century another practice became increasingly popular, one which largely superseded both the others: a melodic style of playing with a thoroughbass accompaniment. The playing of one melodic part in a consort, however, did not die out completely in France but persisted well into the 18th century in the performance of the melody of the thoroughbass along with a harmony instrument.

(As I have also mentioned in a previous paper, consort playing also continued to some extent in the German and French versions of the Italian trio-sonata, in which the viol is employed as one of the two solo melody instruments.)

When De Machy published his *Pièces de Violle* in 1685, the controversy over which was more characteristic of the viol—accompanied or unaccompanied solo playing—was in its initial stage. This is apparent from what De Machy says in his Preface:⁸

Many persons of merit have asked me why up until now some Book of Viol Pieces has not been published, as has been done for the other Instruments, particularly for those which make harmony alone. The principal reason, in my opinion, is that some want Pieces in Music and others in Tablature, which would require a double expense, whereas for the other instruments, the first or the second would suffice. To satisfy the curiosity of some who are in doubt whether or not Tablature should be preferred to Music in learning to play this Instrument, I say that the Viol can be played in three styles—just like the Theorbo and the

⁸De Machy, *Pièces de Violle, en Musique et en Tablature, différentes les unes des autres, et sur plusieurs Tons. Elles contiennent deux Livres, et sont les premiers qui jusques a present ayent paru au jour*, (Paris, 1685).

Harpichord. One could likewise pluck it, which would pass for a fourth. But the first and most common is that of playing Harmony Pieces, which is the (way) proper for all Instruments that are to be played alone. And since the latter has always passed as the true way to play the Viol, I shall start out by stating my sentiment on this, and then we shall speak of the others.

Here, then, is De Machy's view of the main function of the viol: that it is *primarily* an instrument for the playing of unaccompanied solos in a chordal style. This being the case, it is only natural that he would imitate the *port de main*—the bearing of the hand—employed on the lute: the chordal fingerboard instrument from which he and his predecessors took their left-hand technique. Among the latter, in England, were Thomas Mace and Christopher Simpson. The cardinal element of this hand position was the relationship between the stopping fingers and the opposing thumb. Mersenne, writing about the lute, describes this position as follows:⁹

...the thumb must be placed above the first fret near the edge of the neck on the melody-string side in such a way that its tip is placed at the said fret and turned toward the head of the Lute.

Thus—and this is the crucial point—the thumb is located opposite the *first* finger. Mace, for the lute, gives the same directions as Mersenne, and for the viol merely refers the reader to these same directions.

John Playford says briefly:¹⁰

In the posture of your Left-Hand, observe this Rule: Place your Thumb on the back of the Neck, and opposite to the Fore-Finger.

Simpson's directions confirm the relationship between viol and lute technique:¹¹

When you are to set your fingers upon the Strings, you must not grasp the Neck of your Viol, like a Violin, but rather (as those that Play on the

⁹Marin Mersenne, *op. cit.*, Livre II iem, p. 78.

¹⁰John Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, (London: 1674, published by Ridgewood, 1966), p. 101 f.

¹¹Christopher Simpson, *The Devision-Viol* (London, 1654), p. 4.

Lute) keep your thumb on the back of the Neck, opposite to your fore-finger.

We now come to the statement in De Machy's Preface which set ablaze the fire of controversy. To understand it one must be aware that on the viol, as on the violoncello, two spacing patterns of the fingers are employed: one, the so-called "normal" spacing in which the fingers are a semitone (or one fret) apart; thus with a span of a minor third between fingers 1 and 4; the other spacing is the so-called "extension," in which the interval between fingers 1 and 2 is increased to a tone (or two frets apart), the spacing of the other adjacent fingers remaining at a semitone. During the extension it is a physical necessity for the thumb to be opposite the *second* finger, whereas during the normal stretch it can be aligned with either the first or the second finger. This being said, De Machy's statement may follow:¹²

It is to be observed, therefore that there are *two bearings of the hand* for the Viol, as well as for the Lute, the Theorbo, and the Guitar. The *first* is placing the thumb in the middle of the neck, and the *first finger*—always rounded except when one is obliged to bar with it—opposite the thumb....This bearing is practiced when one is not obliged to extend the hand. And for the *second* which is that in which one must extend it, the thumb must be placed nearer the edge of the neck (and) the *second finger* opposite the thumb, the first finger being more stretched out, except when some chord obliges it to be curved.

Danoville, whose book on viol playing appeared in 1687, two years after De Machy's, contradicts De Machy's thesis of "two bearings of the hand" by the use of the word "always," as follows:¹³

....It is necessary that the tip of the first finger be turned always toward the pegs, and that all the others be separated by an equal distance (i.e. interval). The thumb should *always* maintain a location under the *second finger* and follow it wherever it may have to go for the executing of the piece.

¹²De Machy, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹³Danonville, *L'Art de toucher le Dessus et Basse de Violle* (Geneva: Minkoff Reprint, 1972), p. 9.

It is now time to cite another statement from De Machy's preface: one which particularly incensed Rousseau because he interpreted it as a personal attack, not only on his own teaching but above all on that of his revered teacher, Sainte-Colombe.

Concluding his description of the bearing of the hand in extension, in which he says that the wrist should be straighter than the normal position, that the elbow should press against the player's side, and that all finger-holds should be observed as strictly as they are on the lute, De Machy then says:¹⁴

It is certain that in putting all these rules into practice exactly, one cannot fail to play properly. But it is one of my astonishments to have noticed that, except for a few persons who are skilled on the Viol, there are but few—even of those who make a profession of it—who are heard to speak of these rules, which are so essential for the Instrument. On the contrary, they disdain them, as the great majority do who are ignorant of them. What in all times has contributed to the mastery of this Instrument is for them a fault, even though the illustrious have always so recommended them that they never created Solos that were not in accordance with these rules.

He then returns to his thesis that the proper function of the viol is to play solos in harmony:¹⁵

Finally, in response to those who want to argue that Solos of a single melody are preferable to those that are harmonious: I say that they are more wrong than they think, since by this they reveal that they are ignorant in this matter. And when they cite pieces with a single melody by some skilled man in order to authorize themselves by his example, they do not notice that these are for several Viols—which is easy to recognize.

A person can have a hand for playing melodies that are beautiful, but single; but this must be compared to a man who might play perfectly on the Harpsichord or the Organ with one hand alone. This single playing might be very pleasant, but one

¹⁴De Machy, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 8.

would hardly call it *playing* the Harpsichord (or) the Organ.

It is the same with those who would confine playing on the Viol to simple (i.e. chordless) Solos, which has never been the custom for this Instrument played alone. . . They believe they are giving good reasons for it by saying that chords hamper one for making beautiful graces, and in consequence one cannot play so expressively. . . Of course they are mistaken. When a man knows his profession well, chords ought not to embarrass him in writing beautiful melodies with all the graces necessary for expressive playing. And it is only those who use but *one* bearing of the hand, and who often have none at all, who are of this way of thinking.

Rousseau's treatise on the viol, published in 1687, two years after De Machy's book, contains passages in which he bitterly attacks De Machy, but never names him. he refers to him either as "the author of the Preface" or as "the author of the Libel." A few extracts from Rousseau's Preface will illustrate the temper of his remarks. First—following a description of left-hand position—he says:¹⁶

In accordance with what we have just said, it can be stated that there is only *one* way of bearing the hand in playing the Viol, and that this way is natural. Nevertheless, some time ago a Preface was presented to the Public which attempted to create the belief that there are *two* bearings of the hand necessary for perfection in Viol Playing, and that all the Masters—through a general abuse—sin against this Rule, except the Author of the Preface. I say "all the Masters" because *they* all recognize and practice but *one* bearing of the hand; and because Monsieur de Sainte Colombe never taught or practiced any but the *one* I spoke of previously. thus it is *mal a propos* that the Author of the Preface should try to embarrass the Public with *two* pretended Bearings of the Hand; and it is illogical for him to represent to us that they are practiced on the Lute, the Theorbo and the Guitar; for, there being a great difference between the way of holding the Viol—which makes it manifest that there must

also be some difference in the manner of bearing the hand—it is certain that Viol playing does not take its origin from the plucked Instruments, because its character, which is much inferior to its own, since the latter resembles the voice more closely than any other Instrument. Furthermore, if one examines the Bearing of the hand for the plucked Instruments, it will be visibly manifest that it is a great deal different from that of the Viol, in which the hand is nearly always extended and in which it very often occupies five frets (i.e. a perfect fourth), which never or rarely happens on the plucked Instruments, on which the hand is more contracted, causing those who play them to have the thumb nearly always under the *first* finger, whereas on the Viol one places it below the *middle* finger. I do not say, however, that there are not times when one is obliged to place the thumb below the first finger for the easy execution of a few chords; but since this is not an ordinary case, as in keeping the thumb under the middle finger, and since this manner has never been considered as a *second* Bearing of the Hand in playing the Viol. He will say, perhaps, that there are some Masters who not only do not recognize these two pretended Bearings of the Hand but who also do not practice them: that is, who do not place the thumb under the first finger when it is necessary. But one can respond that this is not credible because it is a thing that one practices naturally; and even if what he says were true, this is no reason for saying that it has caused abuses to creep into the playing of the Viol: For there is not Art in the world in which one does not find some persons who are not wholly rule-abiding; one does not say on that account that they have caused abuses to creep into the Art.

The reference to "abuses" does not occur in De Machy's preface but in a pamphlet issued by him separately in the form of an open letter to his friends. Rousseau subsequently replied to this letter in a pamphlet of his own, recently discovered by Francois Lesure, which bears the title: "Response by Monsieur Rousseau to the Letter from one of his friends who warns him of a defamatory Libel that was written against him. Paris, 30 October 1688" (hence in the year following the publication of Rousseau's and Danoville's books on viol playing).

¹⁶Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la viole* (Paris: Christophe Ballard, 1687), pp. 30-32.

In his *response* Rousseau explains the points on which he and De Machy hold divergent opinions, above all the following:¹⁷

....the sole difference is that the author of the Libel, in his Preface, gives the name of *two* bearings of the hand to something that I—following the maxim of all the masters—name a *single* bearing of the hand, for Monsieur de Sainte Colombe never distinguished two bearings of the hand; Monsieur Marais, who learned from Monsieur de Sainte Colombe, recognized but one bearing of the hand; the late Monsieur Meliton, who also learned from Monsieur de Sainte Colombe and who was perfectly acquainted with the character of the Viol, never said or taught that there are two bearings of the hand; finally, I call here upon Monsieur Des Fontaines and upon all those who learned from Monsieur de Sainte Colombe if they ever heard him name two bearings of the hand. This is why I was right in saying that the author of the Preface treated all these masters generally as ignoramuses, who did not know that there are two bearings of the hand, when he said that one is indispensably obliged not to be ignorant of them, and that nevertheless all the masters other than himself have never spoken of them or heard them spoken of; was I not right also in putting myself among the number of these ignoramuses since I, as well as they, also name only *one* bearing of the hand?

From these citations it would seem that perhaps De Machy's real target was not Rousseau, but Sainte Colombe, upon whom, since he was a nobleman, a more direct attack might have been dangerous; and for the same reason, because it would have been beneath Saint Colombe's dignity to have replied in person, Rousseau is taking up the cudgels in defence of his teacher.

But De Machy may also have had a more personal reason for attacking Sainte Colombe. It seems that one day he took his son to Sainte Colombe and had him play for him. Sainte-Colombe told Rousseau afterwards (according to the latter) that the young De Machy was a nice boy and had some talent, and that it was a shame the lad was not put into his hands, for he might have made something good out of

¹⁷Francois Lesure, "Une querelle sur le jeu de la viole en 1688: Rousseau contre DeMachy," *Revue de Musicologie*, XLVI (1960).

him.¹⁸

Rousseau reports that he studied with Sainte Colombe for only one month and that he went to him for the sole purpose of learning the "new" hand position. During this time, he tells us, he had a room in the apartment of Colichon, a well-known instrument maker. Since De Machy also patronized Colichon, he and Rousseau occasionally encountered each other in Colichon's shop. De Machy knew of Rousseau's study with Saint Colombe and he cast slurs on the latter and invited Rousseau to visit *him* and find out what *real* viol playing was like. Rousseau did so, and was amused to see De Machy dramatize his use of the two hand positions by raising his elbow high in the "normal" position and then clapping it down against his side during extensions, so that he looked—as Rousseau puts it—"as though he, were playing the organized bagpipe" (*la musette organisée*). Once having observed De Machy's way of playing, Rousseau remarks: "I did not have taste sufficiently bad to leave Monsieur de Sainte Colombe."¹⁹

Sainte Colombe is usually credited with two major contributions to French viol playing. The first is twofold and concerns improvements on the instrument itself: the adoption of metal-wrapped lower strings and the addition of a seventh string on the bass side tuned to Contra A.²⁰ Pierre Trichet, however, writing just before 1640, describes the use of overspun strings on the pandora, so that the use of them on the viol may have antedated Sainte Colombe's alleged innovation in this respect. On the other hand Sainte Colombe may indeed have been the first to use the seventh string on the viol. More important, however, was his other contribution: the so-called "new" bearing of the hand, in which the thumb was aligned with the second finger as a *normal* location for it, not just in extensions.²² It is certain (from its use in his suites) that De Machy accepted the seventh string, and probably the overspun bass strings also, but he rejected the "new" hand position as a norm. Nevertheless, the musical configurations in their music, as well as the above-quoted statements of Rousseau, show that all the major French virtuosi of the viol adopted Sainte Colombe's innovations.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰Jean Rousseau, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

²¹Pierre Trichet, *Traité des Instruments de Musique*, ms. c. 1640 (ed. by F. Lesure, Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1957), p. 160.

²²Jean Rousseau, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

More important still was the influence of Sainte Colombe and of his talented pupils in changing attitudes generally about the major role of the viol in solo playing: unaccompanied solo playing with a profusely chordal texture practically disappeared—there are no examples of it in the works of Marin Marais (probably the most prolific composer for the instrument), none in those of his chief competitor, Antoine Forqueray the elder (as published by his son), none in those of Charles Dolle, Jacques Morel, Roland Marais; and I have found but a single unaccompanied movement in the five books of viol pieces by Louis Caix d'Hervelois. On the other hand, Marin Marais's German contemporary, Johann Schenck, wrote several sonatas for unaccompanied viol, as did also the relatively untalented Conrad Hoffer. Here one may perhaps find illustrated on the viol the 17th-century German tradition of polyphonic writing for an unaccompanied bowed instrument, so well exemplified in the violin works of Biber and Walther, which later reached its peak in the compositions for violin and for cello in this genre by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Sainte Colombe's technical gains and their practically universal adoption, despite the animadversions of a reactionary like De Machy, facilitated the perfection of the melodic style in viol playing and the creation of a very large and significant body of works for viol of unsurpassed elegance and refinement. A change in esthetic attitude capable of producing such a result amounts—I submit—to something more than a "tempest in a glass of water."

BOWS AND BOWING

Nathalie Dolmetsch

As we know from Renaissance paintings, the bow of the 14th-15th centuries was very much bowed. The nut was fixed and the hair stretched by being pulled through a hole at the end and knotted. By this simple means the required tension was obtained. There being no mechanics for tightening the hair further when it stretched, as it always does in time, the hair could be pulled through the hole and a further knot made, to bring it back to the required tension.

The next invention was a detachable nut which, fitting against a notch in the stick, was held in position by the pull of the bow-hair. This bow, though still arched was much less so than the earlier type, and could be slackened when not in use by extracting the nut.

In the 1600's a much improved and responsive bow evolved to which the final refinement was added, that of a nut with a screw thread in it, by means of which the hair could be tightened at will. As, for better control, the players demanded a longer, but still springy bow, the makers chose woods which gave this quality with less weight, thus retaining the balance.

One can continue to follow the development of the bow through the records of painters and engravers, and the Treatises of such masters as Simpson, Rousseau and De Machy. Bowmaking became an art, and has been so ever since. Making a good viol is one thing—making a good bow is quite another. One of our specialists in the Dolmetsch Workshops used to go into a kind of a trance (what other members of the firm called 'broody') and was best not spoken to until he had 'hatched' his bow. I have one of his which I prize very much.

To go back to the 17th century, we see portrayed slim, graceful bows, so well balanced that they can be held comfortably at the nut (which gives the best purchase for flexible wrist and fingers) without the least danger of its "dripping" at the point, as Thomas Mace calls it. The nut with a screw adjustment made it possible to regulate the stiffness of the bow-hair exactly. The careful tapering of the stick in its length procured a gentle, regular curve from nut to tip, when tightened. The fluting further reduced the weight without weakening the stick.

The preferred woods were, and still are Pernambuco (French, bois de Chine) and Snakewood, so called because of its speckled markings. Even with one of these springy woods the craftsman, then and now, had to suit the diameter of each stick to its strength, there being an appreciable variation in the stiffness of one piece of wood from another.

A good bow is a gift of the gods (and a sensitive

craftsman), and is as—if not more—important to the player as a good viol.

Toward the end of the century, makers and players literally over-reached themselves, on the principle that you can't have too much of a good thing, making bows of such length that they could not be balanced when held at the nut. The only corrective was to hold the bow further along the stick, thereby losing some of the extra length of stroke which was their aim.

This, as their bows were too long, was not a serious loss. The trend and its result is ingeniously demonstrated by Thomas Mace, in his 'Musick's Monument' (1686). He is quoting bowing instructions from Christopher Simpson, (first edition 1659).

Then take your Bow betwixt your Right Thumb, and two Fore-Fingers, near the Nut; the Thumb and 1st Finger Fastning upon the Stalk, and the 2d. Finger's-End Turned in Shorter against the Hairs; by which you may Poyze, and keep up the Point of your Bow; but if that Finger be not Strong enough joyn. the 3d. Finger in Assistance to it; but in Playing Swift Divisions, 2 Fingers, and the Thumb, is Best.

This is according to Mr. Simpson's Directions. Yet I must confess, that for my own Part, I could never Use it so well, as when I held It 2 or 3 Inches off the Nut (more or less) according to the Length or Weight of the Bow, for Good Poyzing of it: But 'tis possible, that by Use I might have it made It as Familiar to Myself, as It was to Him.

The revealing point lies in Mace's qualifying remark, "according to the Length or Weight of the Bow,—".

The exception comes when a child is learning to play with an adult bow. For him, with his shorter arm, to 'Poyze' and balance his bow it becomes necessary to hold it further along the stick. This is well illustrated by the boy in the painting by Abraham van den Temple (Amsterdam, 1671), (Plate IV).

To go back in history, we have in 1542, in Ganassi dal Fontego's *Regola Rubertina*, an illustration of three players (accompanying a singer in, presumably, a consort song) using bows of a convenient length to be held at the nut.

From then onwards, there are numerous pictorial representations of bowing from the nut of the bow, including the classical painting of St. Cecilia, by Zampieri (1581-1641). (Plate I) She demonstrates the ideal relaxed wrist for the

backward stroke—as indeed who better qualified to relax, having, so to speak, reached her goal for eternity, than St. Cecilia? She has also solved the problem of what to do if you have left your music-stand at home.

The period during which bows became over-long is comparatively a short one: we have seen its inception with Christopher Simpson and through Mace, Rousseau and the other French masters, to its peak, with Schenk, from which it later moderated a little.

Schenk was to Germany what Simpson and Marais were to England and France; it is only natural therefore that his bowhold, as shown in the famous engraving by his brother Pete Schenk (circa 1700) (Plate V), should be taken as a model by modern German and Swiss players and makers. This is satisfactory if the player has a bow as long as Schenk's, not so good if the bow is of medium length, and a real handicap if the bow is short.

There is a great satisfaction in getting the best service they can give out of one's tools—out of a hammer, the strongest stroke, by swinging it from the end of its handle, and the same from a tennis racket; always supposing your implement is of the right weight and length for your hand and arm.

The bow itself can help in obtaining the "*Handsom-Smooth-Sweet-Smart-Clear-Stroak*" that Mace demands (and don't we all?) if it is allowed to do so. We spend a lot of effort trying to make the bow do what we want, when we might be letting it do what is natural to it. The secret lies in letting the string carry the bow, and drawing it with the minimum of effort, hardly to be characterized as anything so definite as pushing or pulling, and the string will sing for you, and the bow go straight, apparently of its own free will.

Rapid passages become easy if taken in the centre of the bow, with the forward part of the wrist movement, (the whole movement is too long for quick notes), not trying to 'carry' the bow but using the 'pressure-release' of the finger-tip on the bow-hair to articulate the notes.

In general, if you have found a bow-hold with which you can relax, and are getting a good tone, let well alone and do not change. Like St. Cecilia, you have arrived.



Plate I Domenico Zampieri (1581-1641), *Sainte Cécilia*.



Plate II: Gonzales Coques (1614-1684), *The Family of Jacques Van Eyck*.



Plate III. Abraham Bosse, Detail from an engraving *auditus* (1636). (By kind permission of the Prints Division, New York Public Library; Astor, Tennox, and Tilden Foundations.)

SILVESTRO GIANAMBI's *Regole del Violino*
 REVELATIONS AND QUESTIONS

Richard D. Holtz

Every day I begin playing violin about three years ago.



Plate IV. Abraham van den Tempel, Detail from picture showing bow-hold to suit child's short arm. Amsterdam, 1671.

SILVESTRO GANASSI'S *Regola Rubertina*
REVELATIONS AND QUESTIONS

Richard D. Bodig

Shortly after I began playing viols almost three years ago, I began to become familiar with the great names associated with technique, ornamentation and musical exercises written for this family of instruments. Diego Ortiz, Christopher Simpson, Marin Marais and others seemed to be quoted frequently by experienced viol players, for what they had to say on the subject. Silvestro Ganassi's name also surfaced from time to time, but he seemed to be different from the rest—a man seemingly cloaked in mystery, but for good reason. Whereas the treatises of the others are supported by considerable musical material illustrating their teachings, Ganassi's *Regola Rubertina* overwhelms the reader with words—pedagogical, but also philosophical, metaphysical, evangelical and moralistic. There are musical examples in the *Rubertina*, to be sure, but relatively few in proportion to the text. Furthermore, it is difficult to perform from his examples, partially because of faulty reproductions in the facsimiles, but also because of his use of ten-line staff notation and his highly edited and sophisticated tablature, which takes much effort for today's players to read. Anyone casually perusing his musical examples and his cryptic fingering and tuning tables, understandably comes away more confused than informed.

Even so, I became intrigued with the mysteries of the *Rubertina*, written by a man we know little about, who at the advanced (by Renaissance standards) age of fifty-one, decided to put into print a lifetime of knowledge he had gained as a performer and teacher. There is as yet no published translation of this work into English, although there have been at least two translations into German which have been published in recent years.

I decided to undertake such a translation from a facsimile edition published in Leipzig in 1924 by Max Schneider, more in the spirit of adventure than in the expectation of discovery, although having read the German translations, I had a good idea of what to expect. Now that my translation is completed, it is clear to me that the *Regola Rubertina* contains a wealth of provocation material not only for viol and lute players, but also for other instrumentalists, singers, instrument makers and musicologists, who are interested in the music, performance practices and instruments of the period. Indeed, I find upon rereading this work, that there



Plate V. Peter Schenk, Engraving of his brother Johann Schenk C. 1700.

are new ideas to be discovered or new questions to be answered, and that I become less impatient with his seemingly unnecessary moralizations, apologies and redundancies.

Ganassi covers a great deal of musical ground in his two-part essay, and the comments which follow conform to the sequence he chose:

Position of the Viol and Use of the Bow

Ganassi's instructions are explicit about positioning the viol at an angle, yet high enough to avoid hitting the left knee with the bow, and in such a way that it can be moved easily forward and backward. He cautions us about maintaining a graceful and free movement of the arm and is disdainful of those who "hold the instrument in a cross position," which evidently was not an uncommon practice at the time (1542).

Although he says explicitly that the player should sit in an upright posture, he also says that the player must help convey the mood of the composition in his physical gestures and in the relative strength of the bow stroke. He talks of "trembling" on the fingerboard (presumably vibrato) but also with the bowing arm, possibly at fast sequence of articulations on the hair of the bow.² He suggests holding the bow at a distance, on average, of four fingers widths away from the bridge, but modifying the distance according to the requirements of the composition. He describes the difference between the use of more arm motion in bowing long sustained notes and more hand articulation with shorter note values.³

Ganassi emphasizes the importance of expressing music on the viol as though it were being sung such as, for example, sustaining the bow stroke in dotted rhythms, so that there is no interruption of sound.⁴

¹Silvestro Ganassi: *Regola Rubertina*, 1542-43. Facsimile ed. with preface by Max Schneider, 1924, Part I Chapter I, p. V.

²Chapter II, p. VI.

³Chapter III, p. VII

⁴Chapter VIII, p. VIII

Strings and Tunings

Ganassi's descriptions are generally oriented toward the bass viol, although he provides instruction for the other sizes as well. He refers to the six strings of the viol as "basso," "bordon," "tenor," "mezana," "sotana" and "canto," numbered 1 to 6, corresponding to the highest and lowest lines in Italian lute and viol tablature. The word descriptions, suggesting the singing parts in choral music, and the numerical sequence apply to all sizes of viols, allowing the reader to apply his teachings universally, without concern about the pitches to which the strings are tuned.

As viol and lute players know, Italian lute tablature represents diagrammatically the mirror image of a lute in the position in which it is played, the string with the lowest pitch lying on top (first line of tablature) and the highest pitch at the bottom (sixth line of tablature). With the viol, Ganassi also thinks in terms of the lowest string being closer to the body than the highest string. The concept is easier to visualize if one were to hold the viol in cross-position.

In speaking of tuning and of the notes of the scale, Ganassi's terms of reference are still those of the Guidonian hexachord (solmization). Notes of the scale are thus identified not only by their conventional letters, but also by the Guidonian syllables referring to the sequences or sequences in the hexachords in which the note is found. The *g* is called *G-sol-re-ut* since it is the "sol" of a hexachord beginning on the *c* below, the "re" of the hexachord beginning on the *f* below and the "ut" of the hexachord it initiates.⁵

In discussing the tuning of the outer strings of the viol, he refers to "kinds of fourths," depending upon the sequence of two whole tones and one semi-tone which comprise the fourth. In tuning the bass viol, for example, *D* to *F* is one "kind," consisting of a semi-tone, whole tone and whole tone. In the context of equal temperament, the distinctions seem irrelevant, but in Ganassi's tunings (see below) semi-tones and whole tones may be wide or narrow, depending upon where they fall on the viol.

Ganassi begins his tuning from the "basso" or lowest string on the viol. It is the fundamental, to which all other strings are tuned. He suggests a great deal of flexibility in deciding the pitch level of the bass viol in consort, so as to obtain a balanced sound. He draws an analogy with voices, saying that Gombert would transpose pieces in order to accommodate the voices in his choir which, because of the tessatura of the composition, might be strained in their upper

⁵Chapter VIII, p. X and chart p. XI.

or lower ranges. Evidently, one encountered similar problems with viols, so that it was not considered unusual to transpose pieces to produce a consort that sounded well.⁶

One is lead to assume that retuning was more often to a lower pitch than to a higher one, indicating the problems of balance lay primarily with the higher pitched instruments and voices. Ganassi suggests moving the bridge toward or away from the tailpiece to lengthen or shorten the string length. If the string length were increased, a string of thicker gauge was to be used and if it were decreased, a thinner gauge string was to be used. He suggests that instruments of two sizes, such as the bass and tenor, be adjusted simultaneously in opposite directions. This would indicate that there was lack of uniformity in the sound quality of the instruments of the period. This could have been because instrument makers had varying concepts of the sound quality they wished to achieve or because, as Ganassi indicates, the degree of craftsmanship among instrument makers was variable.

No mention is made of sound post adjustments in any of Ganassi's discussions. Possibly the sound post was positioned normally at a sufficiently great distance from the bridge to allow room for repositioning the bridge toward the tailpiece without producing an ugly sound. Alternatively the problem of balance might have been because some instruments had sound posts whereas others did not. In any event, Ganassi's treatise leaves us with many questions.

There is still another enigma about the quality of viols known to Ganassi. He speaks consistently about tuning the "alto or tenor" viol. Possibly the same viol was called by either of the two names, just as the viol was called "viola," "violone" or "lirone." Alternatively, there may have been a distinction between the alto and the tenor in timbre alone. This seems more plausible, considering the need to distinguish the inner voices in performing Renaissance polyphony.⁷

Ganassi then sets out to show how to finger the viol in four rules of tunings. In the first rule for the bass viol, the fingering is shown for the Dorian and Hypodorian scales. The fingering of each scale is called an "order." A third "order" shows fingering for a scale with two flats, which Ganassi calls "musica finta" ("musica ficta"), because the required *e*-flat is not in the Guidonian hexachord. In this "order" he retunes the lowest note of the bass viol down to a *C* not only to avoid the *e*-natural of the third string, but to retain the same

⁶Chapter X, pp. XII - XIII.

⁷Chapter VIII, p. VIII.

fingering that would be used in playing a Dorian scale starting on *D* (with no flats). He follows the same procedure in the third "order" for the tenor viol, tuning the lowest string from a *G* to an *F*. The "orders" for the treble viol follow those of the bass an octave higher.⁸

The second rule of tuning brings the tenor (or alto) a fifth higher than the bass rather than the customary fourth. This is simply a tuning to adjust the quality of the instrument in consort—perhaps an instrument which sounds too much like a bass in *G* tuning. In the third order of this tuning, the tenor is tuned a whole tone down—back to the normal *G* tuning. The tuning of the treble and bass viols remains the same for all three "orders" as in the first rule of tuning.⁹

The third rule of tuning keeps the bass and tenor viols in their usual relationships but brings the treble down to a fourth over the tenor and a seventh over the bass—presumably to make the instrument sound less bright. Since he maintains the same intervals between strings, the fourth open string of the treble becomes a *b*-flat, although the first order is a scale of naturals. This appears somewhat awkward, although the open string *b*-flat would be useful in flattening the *b* in the normal context of *musica ficta*. In the second order *b*-flat scale, however, the open string *b*-flat comes into regular use. In the third order, the open strings become *b*-flat on the top and bottom strings and *e*-flat on the fifth string. Since this can produce a "somewhat strange effect" (to quote Ganassi) he offers an alternative method of tuning in fourths, by keeping the treble in its normal *d* tuning but raising the bass and tenor each a whole tone to *E* and *A* tunings. The tenor becomes as in the first order of the second rule of tuning. Curiously, Ganassi is unconcerned that the fourth open string of the bass becomes an *F*-sharp, although one is led to understand that a *b*-flat open third string on the treble would have been less acceptable.¹⁰

The fourth rule of tuning is a transposition up a fourth from what is indicated in the notation—a practice which Ganassi says "most viol players" follow. For example, in playing a bass viol, a low *F* is played on the third fret of the fifth string, thus sounding a *b*-flat. A transposition chart is given for each of viols and for all three orders. He gives no indication why this practice is followed. Nevertheless, it must

⁸Chapter XII-XIII, pp. VIII-XXVI

⁹Chapter XV, pp. XXVII - XXX.

¹⁰Chapters XVI - XVII, pp. XXXI - XXXVI.

have been sufficiently prevalent for Ganassi to have constructed fingering tables. In effect, they eliminate the necessity of the player to transpose mentally first, hence conditioning him to know the fingering which produces the transposition. ¹¹

The first exercise in this book is a combination of scale passages with string crossings and leaps of thirds, fourths, fifths and octaves in both directions. Following this, he gives four *ricercari* to practice the technique of playing diminutions, the first two for the treble, the third for the bass and the last for the tenor. Each is represented in notation and in tablature. ¹²

The second book of the *Rubertina* begins with a discussion of a visual method for detecting good, bad and borderline strings. Without mechanized techniques for manufacturing strings, quality control in the sixteenth century was understandably difficult to achieve. Ganassi's instructions were therefore pertinent lest the viol player string his instrument with one or more defective strings, which would make it impossible to apply with success the tuning and fret positioning procedures he recommends. ¹³

Ganassi sets the second fifth and seventh frets by dividing the string length between the nut and the bridge, by use of a compass, into perfect seconds, fourths and fifths. Initially, the other frets are positioned in linearly equal segments between the nut and the three frets already positioned. The eighth fret, which is not usually placed on viols nowadays, is placed so that it is at the same linear distance from the seventh fret as from the fifth to the sixth frets. ¹⁴

Having set his frets according to the above procedure, Ganassi proceeds into finer tuning. He tunes from the bottom up, accepting the open bottom string as the fundamental. Except for the fourth string, all other open strings are tuned in unison with the fifth fret of the adjacent lower string. He does not, however, alter the compass-set positions of the second, fifth or seventh frets. ¹⁵

The open fourth string is tuned in unison with the fourth fret of the third string, which is tuned an octave higher than the second fret of the bottom string. Ultimately Ganassi adjusts the first, third, sixth and eighth frets to sound somewhat flatter than they did in their original mid-point

¹¹Chapters XXXVII - XXXX.

¹²Chapters XIX - XXI, pp. XXXXI - XXXXVIII.

¹³Part II, Chapters I - III, pp. (VI - VIII).

¹⁴Chapter III, pp. (VIII-XVI).

¹⁵Chapters V - VI, pp. (XVII - XXII).

settings; only the fourth fret (the major third against the open string) is made to sound sharper. The following table summarizes the final tuning sequence, (circled numbers) and the frequency ratios to the open sixth string:

String						
Fret	6	5	4	3	2	1
0	1.0000	1.3333 ⁽²⁾	1.7778 ⁽⁴⁾	2.2500 ⁽¹¹⁾	3.0000 ⁽¹⁶⁾	4.0000 ⁽²¹⁾
1				2.3704	3.1605	
2	1.1250 ⁽⁸⁾	1.5000 ⁽⁷⁾	2.0000 ⁽⁶⁾			
3	1.1852 ⁽¹⁴⁾					
4		1.6875 ⁽¹⁰⁾	2.2500 ⁽⁹⁾			
5	1.3333 ⁽¹⁾	1.7778 ⁽³⁾	2.3704 ⁽¹²⁾	3.0000 ⁽¹⁵⁾	4.0000 ⁽²⁰⁾	
6				3.1605 ⁽¹⁸⁾		
7		2.0000 ⁽⁵⁾				
8				3.5556 ⁽¹⁹⁾		

If we assume that each fret remains parallel to the nut over the width of the fingerboard, the following ratios represent the frequency of the interval of each fret to the open string:

Fret	Ganassi	Equal Temperament	Perfect Intervals
0	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
1	1.0535	1.0595	
2	1.1250	1.1225	1.1250
3	1.1852	1.1892	1.2000
4	1.2656	1.2599	1.2500
5	1.3333	1.3348	1.3333
6	1.4047	1.4142	
7	1.5000	1.4983	1.5000
8	1.5802	1.5874	

According to this table, on a bass instrument, the semi-tone between *e* and *f* and between *a* and *b*-flat are very narrow as are minor thirds. Major thirds, such as the one between the third and fourth strings, are quite wide. Ganassi is not unmindful of this. He says explicitly that although he recognizes the proportions of 6:5 and 5:4 for the minor and major thirds, he avoids these tunings "because of the nature of the instrument." What he probably was referring to was the problem of minor and major thirds being out of tune with the octave, e.g. *F* and *B* on the bass viol.

Ganassi's Tablature

Ganassi devised a highly sophisticated system of tablature to indicate the left hand fingering and, for the lute, the fingers of the right hand to be used in plucking individual notes and chords, and a sign for strumming chords. One of the plucking symbols is used also to indicate a pull bow for a composition to be bowed.¹⁶

He draws an interesting analogy between the thumb of the left hand and the little finger of the right hand, saying that the function of each is to provide stability to the rest of the hand. He does say, however, that the left hand thumb may be used at times in playing chords on the viol and on the lute.¹⁷

It would appear, upon first reading of the section on plucking, that Ganassi is referring only to the lute, but he mentions the viol specifically in recapitulating his instruction on plucking. One may conclude, therefore, that at times, the viol was plucked without holding the bow.¹⁸

Ganassi uses a fermata sign without a dot (∩) to indicate that one or more fingers on the left hand are to be kept down to sustain the sound.¹⁹ He also uses a sign (/) appearing to the right of the number in tablature, to indicate that the finger must be lifted so as to avoid a dissonance with a succeeding note, and to distinguish between successive notes in a diminution and other notes of a chord which may be sounding at the same time.²⁰

His system of tablature also indicates, to the player, where to shift hand position. Ganassi's left hand fingering indications are given by a placement of dots in one of four locations, to the left and right of the numbered fret as follows: 2 .2 2' 2. 21

¹⁶Chapter VII, pp. (XXII - XXIII).

¹⁷Chapter VIII, p. (XXIII).

¹⁸Chapter X, p. (XXXI).

¹⁹Chapter VII, p. (XXII).

²⁰Chapter XIII, p. (XXXII).

²¹Chapter VII, p. XXIII.

Thus on the second fret, the dot locations refer respectively to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers. Shifts in hand position are indicated on a given line of tablature whenever an ascending numerical sequence is broken. Ganassi shows positions beyond the frets, starting with number 9 and adding the symbols X X X X X and X for the succeeding 10th to 15th semitones, proceeding on the *d*'string of the bass viol up to a high *f*'.²²

Barring

Ganassi views barring as a method for shortening the string length. He specifically mentions this technique in connection with tuning the viol down by a semi-tone or a whole tone. Except for this application, his exercises show a more frequent use of "French" lute fingering technique, wherein the same fret position is played on adjacent strings, with different fingers playing consecutive notes. The example given suggests that barring may have been used mostly for scale passages, in which the first finger was to be used on two or more strings.²³

Playing on Three or Four Strings

Because of the frequency with which top strings used to break and because of the apparent scarcity of good strings, Ganassi instructs viol players to retune their instruments at such times and to transpose the music down a fifth. In Ganassi's example, the lowest string of the bass viol would be tuned up from a *D* to an *F*, the next string from a *G* to an *A*, the next from a *c* to a *d* and the last remaining string from an *e* to a *g*. The tenor (or alto) was to be tuned a fifth over the bass, and the treble, a fifth over the tenor.

Although Ganassi doesn't make any comment about the genre of music, it would seem that the compositions played on these four-string viols might have been scored for a consort of recorders.²⁴

The most drastic tuning change Ganassi introduces is for use when only the bottom three strings remain. The relative tuning of the three sizes of viols remains in fifths. The lowest string of the bass is again tuned up to an *F*, but the remaining two strings are tuned in fifths, viz. *c* and *g*, which

²²Chapter XVIII, pp. (XLVIII - XLVIII).

²³Chapter XX, p. (LV).

²⁴Chapters XXII - XXIII, pp. (LXIII - LXVIII).

he says is the same as the normal tuning of the unfretted viola da braccia. According to his chart, scales could be played with normal viol fingering, except that a Lydian scale beginning *F* on the bass viol requires a fourth finger extension in order to play the *B*-natural. For all scales he indicates a shift of the fourth finger on the top string in playing from the fifth to the seventh frets.

Evidently the instruments which were familiar to Ganassi were of sufficiently strong construction to withstand the unbalanced stress of playing only on the lower strings and the extra tension produced by tuning up. Viol makers may be able to shed some light as to what this practice and that of adjusting the bridge position meant in terms of the construction of instruments.

The *Regola Rubertina* probably will continue to remain an enigma to those who study its contents. Because of the breadth of coverage, this treatise provides us, at the very least, with an insight into the standards of performance and musicianship that were expected in 16th century Italy, but also a wealth of information on the technique of playing viols and lutes.

REVIEWS

Bol, Hans. *La Basse de Viole du temps de Marin Marais et d'Antoine Forquery*. Bithoven: A.B. Creyghton, 1973. xiv + 336p.; musical exs., facs. Vol. VII of the series *Utrechtse Bijdragen tot de Musiekwetenschap*, issued under the auspices of the Instituut voor Muziekwetenschap, under editorship of Edward Reeser.

Hans Bol's book *The Bass Viol in the Time of Marin Marais and Antoine Forquery* represents the most compendious and well-documented work on the subject to appear so far. A summary of its contents will give some notion of its scope. Book I deals with the *instrument*: history, types, tunings, fretting as discussed by ancient authors; French music for viol consort (which does not include the duets for viols by Sainte Colombe, published since Bol's work appeared); its forms and genres; French viol tablatures; different French playing styles and aspects of interpretation. Book II deals in great detail with the *techniques of playing the instrument* employed by the French masters, including all conceivable aspects of right-hand techniques. The second chapter of this book treats left-handed techniques in detail and in depth. Fingering, especially, is demonstrated in a systematic way that must inevitably provide basis for any future viol methods. The third chapter of this book presents a well-organized discussion of all the varieties of ornamentation found in French viol music. Each of these two books is thoroughly documented with reference notes. Not the least valuable portion of Bol's work is the inclusion, in the form of appendices, of a number of the late-17th and early 18th-century writings on the viol and its music not hitherto available in a modern publication—some of them, indeed, published here for the first time. Also provided are useful tabular surveys on the subject matter previously discussed. Thirteen plates provide us with photographic documentation of the appearance of viols from the 13th to the 18th century and some portraits of great French masters of the viol. Advanced players will find Bol's exposition of left-hand techniques on pp. 146-55, 161-66, 192-200. Bol's French is lucid and easy to follow. One can only hope that a work of such landmark importance will appear in an English translation, notwithstanding the considerable expense such a project will necessarily entail. According to the *curriculum vitae* provided by the author, Johan Hendrick Daniel Bol, he was born in 1923 in Dordrecht, was educated in Utrecht, has a diploma in violoncello, and began study of the viol with Boomkamp. Since 1971 he has been professor of viol at Utrecht Conservatory. He has performed with various ensembles in Belgium and Holland. The work under consideration here in his Ph.D. dissertation.

Gordon J. Kinney

Music of the French Baroque. James Caldwell, Lisa Goode Crawford, Marilyn McDonald, Catharina Meints, Robert Willoughby, Oberlin Baroque Ensemble. 3 discs, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, stereo. Vox SVBX 5142. \$11.95.

The recently issued Vox Box (SVBX 5142), captioned *Music of the French Baroque* and containing works by Barriere, Boismortier, Louis Couperin and Francois Couperin, M. Marais, Rameau and Sainte-Colombe, performed by the Oberlin Baroque Ensemble, presents the listener, on six record-sides, with a rich treasure of specimens of some of the finest music this period has left to us. All of the performances are not only technically impeccable but executed with a profound knowledge of the French Baroque style—its profuse ornamentation, which at times comes close to preciousness, but despite this is full of real emotional fervor, and its finely restrained classisistic spirit—and at the same time with a real sensitivity to—or perhaps one should say “sensibilite” of—the feelings and sentiments which underly it. Side 1 presents us with two “Concerts” for two bass viols by the, Sieur de Sainte-Colombe, teacher of M. Marais, E. Loulié and among others, of Jean Rousseau. The manuscripts of this music, long hidden away in a private collection, have only recently been made available in a modern reprint. Of all the works represented in this collection those of this composer are the most independent and original in style. Performed handsomely by Catherina Meints and her husband, James Caldwell, the listener is enchanted with an entirely new voice in viol literature, one which stresses not only the programmatic but also—like Robert Schumann a century and a half later—the personally whimsical. Practically nothing is known about Sainte-Colombe—not even his first name—beyond the fact that he “flourished” in the second half of the 17th century, was an aristocrat, and that he and two of his daughters entertained the French court with their viol playing. (I confess that I do not find in this music (as Mary Anne Ballard does in her first-rate program notes with the album) the influence of Matthew Locke (1630-1677), the teacher of Purcell and Sainte-Colombe’s English contemporary. Locke’s duos for bass viols are stricter in form and far less florid: indeed, in the ms. of his “Little Consort” for viol trio (1651) Locke, in a postscript, specifically asks the performers not to all ornamentation. In the music of these two composers the separation of national styles is far too complete to speak of one as influencing the other. Nor is the notion of duos for equal instruments innovative with either of

them. The tradition of such bicinia goes far back into the 16th century. In France itself duets for two viols by Nicholas Métru were published in Paris in 1642—thus very probably antedating those by Sainte-Colombe.) This marks the second recording of duos by Sainte-Colombe to be performed by the Oberlin players. The first (Cambridge label CRS 2201) includes music by M. Marais (Suite in E. minor from Book II, 1701) and other duets by Sainte-Colombe—equally colorful—and forms a good complement of the Vox recordings.

Side 2 presents an outstanding performance by Catherina Meints and her colleagues of the Suite in B minor by Marin Marais from his Second Book (1701), which includes ten of the twelve movements of the suite proper (the omitted movements are merely alternative choices for the performer) and is followed by the great “Tombeau pour Monsieur de Lully”—surely one of the really great elegies in the whole literature of music. Here Marais expresses, in moving fashion, his grief at the passing of his beloved composition teacher (to whom his First Book is dedicated).

Sides 3 and 4 present, complete, Marais’s longest instrumental work (almost 45 minutes), titled “La Gamme et autres Morceaux de Symphonie: pour le Violon, la Viole, et le Clavecin” (Paris, 1723), for which he gave performance direction, saying: “I composed this SCALE for the violin, the viol and the harpsichord; (but in the absence of the viol one can use, for the second treble, a second violin or a violoncello; and wherever chords for the viol are encountered, these can be omitted—always taking the top note...) The traverse flute will do marvelously well in all the tender and gracious places, and would also relieve the violin, which has to labor extremely (hard)—especially in The Scale...” These directions provide the Oberlin players with the composer’s own authority to alternate the violin with the flute and sometimes to combine them in unison. The original text, aside from some tastefully added ornamentation, is faithfully adhered to. The last seven measures, marked “gay” by the composer, however, are performed slowly. This change is probably wise, as it makes the close of a very long work more dignified. The execution by the individual performers is throughout impeccable in both technique and taste. Sides 5 and 6 contain two chamber works by Francois Couperin which were unpublished during the composer’s lifetime (1668-1733) but which are to be found in the 1933 memorial edition of his complete works. One, “Le Steinquerque,” subtitled “Sonade en Trio” (Couperin preferred “sonade” to the Italian “sonata” in analogy to “sérénade” vs. “serenata”), was composed as a battle piece to celebrate the victory in the battle of Steinquerque (in 1692) of the field marshal of

Luxembourg. The other, "La Sultane" (1695), a "sonade en quatuor," is a much more profound work to which the addition of an extra viol provides a great richness of sonority. In the former work is heard the full complement of the Oberlin Baroque Ensemble, which here includes, besides flute and oboe, two violins, two viols and harpsichord.

Side 1, in addition to the Sainte-Colombe duos with a fine reading of five "Symphonies" for viols and thoroughbass by Louis Couperin (1626-1661), (uncle of Francois Couperin, and) the earliest composer represented in this set. He was a treble viol player in the chamber music ensemble of the young Louis XIV. All of them show the influence of Lully's theatre music and, as Ms. Ballard writes, "lead to the speculation that they may have accompanied dancing." (It was such music as this that the young future Charles II of England heard while an exile at the French court, and which led him, after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, to cause the formation of a similar chamber group at the English court.)

The remaining composers represented in this set are all of a generation later than Fr. Couperin and M. Marais. The two on Side 5 are Jean Barrière (d. ca. 1751), whose Sonata in G major for the *pardessus de viole* (Livre V) is here performed on the *quinton* (5-string violin) by Marilyn McDonald, who executes faithfully and brilliantly the elaborate florid passage-work, fully written out, in accordance with French custom, by the composer, but which is rather Italianate in style. The lucious tone of the baroque flute, skillfully and expressively played by Robert Willoughby, is heard to good effect in the Flute Sonata in G major by Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1689-1755), which was composed for the most famous Parisian flutist of his time, Michel Blavet (whose playing was praised by Telemann, who played with him in Paris in 1737).

Finally, on Side 6, the ensemble—this time featuring harpsichordist Lisa Goode Crawford—presents the Second Concerto of the "Pièces de Clavecin en concert" by Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764), composed in 1741. One of the most difficult problems in performing these *pièces*—for flute (or violin, but flute here), viol and solo harpsichord—is to achieve a proper balance between the harpsichord and the other two instruments. This problem has been solved admirably in the present recording, not only by the use of suitable registration and dynamics but also with the discrete addition of a second viol on the bass line: something not specified in the original score—perhaps because Rameau feared to overbalance the light-toned harpsichord with which he was familiar—but which certainly sounds justified in the present performance.

All in all, this set of records provides the discerning listener with a rich banquet of works, superbly performed, representative of the best instrumental music of the French Baroque.

Gordon J. Kinney

CORRESPONDENCE

Mary Cyr, in her interesting discussion of viol iconography in the Baroque period ("The Viol in Baroque Paintings and Drawings," *JVdGSA XI* (1974) pp. 5-16) talks of a seven-string bass viol in a painting of St. Cecilia by Domenico ("Domenichino") Zampieri (Plate V). She says that this painting is the earliest artistic representation of a seven-string viol (p. 8), but she fails to mention when it was painted. Albert P. de Mirimonde gives Zampieri's dates as 1581-1641 (*Sainte Cécile, Métamorphoses d'un thème musical* (Geneva, 1974) p. 162), a fact that raises some very interesting questions.

Hans Bol discusses the question of when the seventh string might have been added to the bass viol, at least in France (*La basse de viole du temps de Marin Marais et d'Antoine Forqueray* (Bilthoven, 1973) pp. 16-17), and arrives at a date of about 1670. In speaking of a seven-string instrument made by Henry Jaye in England in 1624 (now in the Museum of the Paris Conservatoire), Bol questions whether the seventh string was part of the original instrument, possibly because of the assumed date of manufacture. There is a photograph in Anthony Baines' *European and American Musical Instruments* (N.Y., 1966) plate #108, of a seven-string bass made by Jakob Steiner, Absom, in 1655 (now in the Dolmetsch collection, Haslemere). Baines does not indicate whether this instrument has been altered. However, since Zampieri painted a seven-string viol before 1641, it is all the more possible that either of the above instruments is extant in its original form.

To the characteristics of the instrument described by Mary Cyr, "extremely thick neck, seven strings, a carved rose, and the unusual and decorative shape of its body and sound holes" (p. 8) we should add straight neck and low rather flat bridge. The usual French seven-string bass viol has a high bridge and thrown back neck, in contrast to Zampieri's instrument, which more nearly resembles earlier viols except in the number of strings.

A recent article in *Early Music*, "What Exactly is a Violone?" by Francis Baines (*EM V:2* (April, 1977) pp. 173-176) leads one to question whether the instrument in the painting under discussion is a bass viol at all. It is large compared to the size of the player, and it is played standing. Both of these features are characteristic of the violone. Francis Baines says that violones in early seventeenth-century paintings "have five, six or even seven strings" (p.174) and he quotes Agazzari who refers to the violone

"frequently doubling the bass line at the octave below" (p. 174). Could the player in the Zampieri painting be playing the bass line (transcribed by Mary Cyr, *op. cit.*, p. 8) at the octave below? This would emphasize the element of contrast so important in the arts in the seventeenth century, an idea which would be reinforced here by the small recorder in the painting whose role would be to double the voice at the octave above.

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