Moving early music: Improvisation and the work-concept in seventeenth-century French keyboard performance

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Moving Early Music: Improvisation and the Work-Concept in Seventeenth-Century French Keyboard Performance

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Chapter One: Introduction

Setting the Scene

Once, when I was a young graduate student in Montréal, I attended an unusual masterclass. It was given by a prominent and internationally renowned baroque violinist, whom I had heard perform brilliantly the previous evening. Being a harpsichordist and organist myself, I attended not only to support my violinist friends, but also to learn everything I could from a great artist whose performing style I much admired. As I sat in the subterranean rehearsal room of McGill University where the class took place, however, I began to feel ill at ease.

One of the student violinists—with whom I frequently played in chamber ensembles and the school's baroque orchestra—had just performed the first movement (Adagio) of Bach's Sonata in G minor for violin, BWV 1001. As usual, I found her playing deeply expressive and full of vitality, and I expected the master violinist to agree, albeit with suggestions for various technical and musical refinements. The pupil looked expectantly at the master, eager for her approval, but found something else: the master's annoyance. With a sigh, the master offered some perfunctory comments. Oh yes, the performance had been very musical, and certainly, she handled her instrument deftly. But to what purpose had she put her technique and musicianship? The pupil had clearly ignored many of the fine details of Bach's notation, arbitrarily introducing inappropriate bowing, phrasing, timing, dynamics, and a host of other musical details. She had clearly missed or ignored what Bach intended for his composition. Why had she done this? Did she think herself above Bach, the great composer? Did she not realize that her primary role, as a performer, was to seek to understand and transmit Bach's message, encoded however obliquely through the score's notation? Had she no respect for Bach's work?

This was what made me feel so unsettled. I knew enough about the history of Western art music (WAM) to recognize the vestiges of Romantic ideology in modern concert life, including its deification of the great composer and its moral imperative to *Werktreue*, or fidelity to the musical work.[1] I had thought that we enlightened musicians of the Early Music Movement—we historically-informed performers—had moved past such things. What I knew about seventeenth- and eighteenth-century musical culture included recognizing the imprecision of notation, the centrality of performers, and the importance of improvisation. Surely, if we were interested in understanding and performing historical music on its own terms, such notions would be incompatible with *Werktreue*. Yet here was incontrovertible evidence that I was wrong. Here, in an officially sanctioned setting, in a community of historically-informed performers, the master was chastising the pupil for having neglected her responsibility to the composer, to the score, and to the work. None of us batted an eye.

After leaving the masterclass and reflecting on the experience, I came away with a far greater sensitivity to the influence of *Werktreue* within my own musical life. The advice given by my teachers, for example, though grounded in the techniques and methods of the eighteenth century, was nevertheless expressed in terms of interpreting a composer's intentions ("I think what Bach intended here was…"). Historically-informed performance (or as it is often affectionately rendered, HIP) suddenly appeared as just another means of satisfying *Werktreue*. Studying history was a way of moving even closer to what the composer intended, of becoming a better interpreter of musical works.

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[1] Although *Werktreue* depends very much on Romantic ideology, it does nevertheless seem to be primarily an invention of the early twentieth century. It is certainly wrapped up in the trappings of Romanticism and the work-concept "because a particularly authoritative idea of the work *is already held firmly in place*" (Goehr 2007, xxxii). *Werktreue* only achieved its full flowering in the twentieth century, and was further sustained by the advent of recording technology (Ashby 2010). One might also trace the origins of *Werktreue* in the editorial aesthetics of the mid- to late nineteenth-century, particularly in the editions of the *Bach Gesellschaft* that sought to present "pure" texts without editorial additions.

It was really only after reading philosopher Lydia Goehr's *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (2007) that this problem crystallized for me. Goehr's book, in which she argues that the work-concept only emerged with regulative force around 1800, shifted my awareness to the various concepts—or more perniciously, ideologies—that silently guide our practices. Moreover, it revealed how an historically contingent concept like the work-concept could gradually recede from view, hidden behind the objects it engendered. The very idea that I should be faithful to a musical work is, after all, dependent on the notion that such a thing as a "work" exists at all; yet the existence of such works is something only rarely questioned by musicians. It follows, then, that without something like the work-concept to organize their practice, musicians before 1800 must have conceptualized music differently. Without the ontological framework of the work-concept, along with its associated ideals and practices like *Werktreue*, how might music-making have functioned differently in the past? How might musicians have conceptualized their creative process and its products? How might this music have actually sounded if produced under such radically different conditions? Moving to the present, why were we, as historically-informed performers, not trying to find answers to these questions? How different *could* our music and our music-making be if we only tried?

These questions form the problematic core of my research. In the years since that uncomfortable masterclass, my awareness of the work-concept and its tacit influence has only sharpened—particularly now that I find myself also in the role of teacher to a new generation of historically-informed performers. This dissertation constitutes an effort to move from *awareness* of the problem to an active *understanding* of it, and then ultimately to a variety of creative solutions. The ultimate aim of my research, then, is to answer the following question: without the work-concept, what kinds of practices become possible in HIP? In order to do this, I first select a musical repertoire in which the work-concept fits particularly poorly. Using the music of the seventeenth-century French harpsichordist and composer Jacques Champion de Chambonnières (1601/2–1672),

I replace the work-concept and work-based performance with an alternative conceptual-practical locus: improvisation. Using tools from historical music theory and historical improvisation studies, I then formulate a theoretical-practical description of Chambonnières's improvisational language. Using this framework, I learn to improvise in an historically-informed manner, relying upon a specific corpus of Chambonnières's harpsichord pieces as exemplars. Finally, I bring this acquired knowledge and experience to bear on the historically-informed performance of seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

Since this problem of the work-concept's tacit influence stems from my own artistic practice, it must therefore also be explored through practice. This research is what is often described as *artistic research* (or alternatively, practice-led research), a mode of inquiry in and through performance. Because of this, throughout this dissertation I will make reference to a variety of audio recordings of my own playing, including improvisation exercises, practice sessions, and public and private performances. These recordings are not only intended for illustrative purposes. In a very real sense, they directly constitute a vital part of the methods and outcome of the research project. Nevertheless, since my research—like all artistic research—is of an interdisciplinary nature, it will also be necessary to frame the various methodological choices I have made.[2]

What follows in this chapter, then, is a series of four conceptual and methodological plateaus, each one treating a particular facet of my research project. Although these various topics may not always be addressed directly in each subsequent chapter, they nevertheless form the ever-present thematic backdrop for all of my research. I will first interrogate historically-informed performance, understood here at once as a method for artistic renewal and as a sedimented musical tradition. Next, I will explore in greater detail Goehr's idea of the work-concept. In particular, I will pursue

[2] By "interdisciplinary," I refer not only to the various academic disciplines that inform my work (music theory, musicology, philosophy, etc.), but also to the larger disciplines of academic research and artistic practice.

the ramifications of the concept's regulative force. I will connect Goehr's work to Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of doxa and habitus, using them to understand how the work-concept can continue to exert its regulative influence on HIP. Third, and returning to HIP-as-method, I will consider the extent to which HIP can be used as a tool for research. I will first explore the notion of HIP as a kind of experimentation, comparing its workings to what historian of science Hans-Jörg Rheinberger calls an "experimental system." Finally, I will turn to HIP as a particular modality of artistic research. In dialogue with a number of artistic researchers, I will make clear what conditions must be placed on HIP if it is to function not only as an artistic method, but also as a method for research. After describing these four plateaus, I will move on to a brief evaluation of several examples of artistic research, each sharing at least some themes in common with my own work. Lastly, with all of these pieces in place, I will provide a brief summary of each of the dissertation's chapters, including its particular area of focus and its relevance to my wider research questions.

I can turn now to a consideration of the conditions under which my project began, and around which my whole professional life still hinges. What, exactly, is historically-informed performance?

The Two Faces of HIP

Historically informed performance (HIP) is at once two distinct practices, even if the two are often conflated in the minds of both audiences and performers. On the one hand, HIP is a method by which performers try to "join historical awareness to historical music" (Haynes 2007, 10). Such performers seek to engage, through the medium of performance, with historical evidence of various kinds (treatises, sound recordings, instruments, etc.). Since all historical evidence is by definition fragmentary and incomplete, performers must also necessarily work imaginatively to fill in any gaps in their understanding of the evidence. While many performers may choose this approach because

of its alignment with various kinds of *authenticity*,[3] the ultimate result of the movement is actually to form a musical style and substance wholly of the present. By virtue of its combination of historical evidence and the musician's contemporary response to that evidence, HIP thus "reconstructs the musical object in the here and now, enabling a new and hitherto silenced subject to speak" (Dreyfus 1983, 304). The musicologist Richard Taruskin (1995), most notably, has described the early HIP movement as a creation of twentieth-century Modernism, thereby forming a style of performance more in touch with the modern world than the so-called mainstream performance tradition. Thus, although HIP seeks to reconstruct performance practices of the past—because they are desired as more "authentic," more apt, or simply more interesting—the result of this effort is a newly formed contemporary style.[4]

This contemporary style is the foundation for the second face of HIP in the twenty-first century, namely an established oral practice—or, a tradition—parallel to that of "mainstream" performance. After HIP's early days of artistic experimentation, the style invented by pioneers like Gustav Leonhardt, Frans Brüggen, and Nikolaus Harnoncourt began to spread as part of the Early Music Movement. Aided by a recording industry eager to capitalize on novel sounds for old music, historically informed performers were able to share their newly conceived style with a wide array of listeners across a wide geographical distribution. At the same time, as HIP's pioneers cemented their professional reputations, they also began attracting students eager to learn this new style and attitude to performance. Many of these students were drawn to the ethos and methods of HIP. Perhaps more importantly, though, they were also drawn to the *sound* of HIP: its particular instruments

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[3] The notion of authenticity has an acrimonious history within HIP. Authenticity had long served not just as an ideal for HIP, but was also imagined an achievable goal. The most significant nail in the coffin of this notion was likely that delivered by Taruskin (1995), about which I will have more to say later. Peter Kivy's *Authenticities* (1998) is particularly useful in disentangling the kinds of claims performers make towards authenticity: or rather, what authenticit*ies* there might be at play in musical practices.

[4] Joost Vanmaele (2017, 23-37) provides a useful summary of the history of HIP from its beginnings into the twenty-first century, traced through a series of representative texts by practitioners of HIP.

(historical harpsichords and organs, gut strings, winds with fewer keys), its articulations (distinct and variably shaped, in comparison to the constant legato of mainstream performance), or its tone colors (often clear and transparent, with little vibrato). Over time, as these students began to enter the professional world, HIP was also introduced to conservatories and universities, further cementing its place in contemporary musical life. In this way, students have perpetuated both the *methods* and the *sounds* of HIP as inherited from their teachers, but with one key difference. Unlike their teachers, students of HIP do not necessarily need to "invent" a new style of performance. Instead, they absorb, learn, and internalize the style—just as they would for any mainstream performance style—in the traditional manner: by way of apprenticeship under master teachers.

What we have, then, is an autonomous performance tradition (HIP) existing parallel and adjacent to the disruptive method (HIP) by which it was first created. Indeed, historically-informed performer and musicologist John Butt has observed that already "by the late 1980s it was quite clear that HIP could engender its own traditions, albeit 'invented'" (2002, 12). It is now possible to become a successful HIP professional without ever once engaging with HIP's methods.[5] There is still, inevitably, a period of *defamiliarization* that occurs whenever someone first engages with HIP-as-tradition. In order to conform with the tradition, one is forced to grapple with a new instrument, new playing techniques, new approaches to phrasing, etc., and as a result, the music that one plays is made shockingly unfamiliar. The conventional, institutionalized way out of this unfamiliarity, however, is not imaginatively to invent one's own solutions based on one's reading of historical evidence. Instead, a compensatory *refamiliarization* is ready-made, provided to the player as an integral

[5] Ton Koopman would evidently agree: "But these days, I notice that many of the good performers are less and less interested in sources. Great musicians like Harnoncourt, Leonhardt, Brüggen, like myself and others have made many important discoveries; and younger players seem content with relying on those discoveries. They go off and make music, relying on what the earlier generations have taught them; they often do not bother to do their own research. I think that's dangerous because, if we are wrong, the next generation should find out our mistakes, and correct us" (2003, 7).

part of an already-established tradition. Choosing to align oneself with HIP, then, is not ordinarily a matter of escaping performance traditions; rather, it is a movement from one tradition (mainstream performance) to another.

Of course, many reputable institutions, teachers, and players do indeed teach and espouse the methods of HIP as well as its traditions. In favorable circumstances, students might learn to "re-create" the style of their teachers through careful study of historical materials, imaginatively reconstructing and re-discovering the performance traditions of HIP on their own. Eventually, they might even propose alternatives or emendations to their teachers' own styles. In some ways, then, the pioneering spirit of the Early Music Movement is still alive. As performers, many of us continue to innovate and re-shape our performance styles by way of HIP's methods. The performance tradition in which we work is therefore not fixed, but dynamic, as any comparison of performance styles from, say, 1980 and 2020 will demonstrate. However, in comparison to the movement's pioneers, our own capacity to innovate seems quite limited. Where it was once possible to effect radical stylistic change in the span of a single decade, we now measure small, appreciable change over several.[6] Why does it no longer seem possible to radically re-think the music we play?

There are, I think, several reasons for this. First, the very existence of a *tradition* constrains the practice of HIP-as-method. The two faces of HIP, method and tradition, are mutually influential. Our tradition bows in semi-deference to method, allowing itself to be updated if presented with strong enough evidence. Our method, meanwhile, is perpetually constrained by tradition. That is, whenever we engage in HIP-as-method, the artistic results of this process are evaluated against the

[6] Haynes (2007, 46-7), for example, discusses the enormous change observed in the performance style of recorder player Frans Brüggen between 1962 and 1973. In the span of little more than a decade, Brüggen had more or less invented a wholly new style of performance, which Haynes refers to as "Period Style." Stylistic innovation does still continue within HIP-as-tradition, even today, as evidenced by the work of performers and conductors like Skip Sempé, Teodor Currentzis, Christina Pluhar, and many others. As fresh, inspiring, or novel as we might find their performances, the scope of these innovations is, however, still constrained—in ways that Brüggen's performances were not—by their embeddedness within HIP-as-tradition.

backdrop of tradition, representing the general consensus of HIP's practitioners. Moreover, the various performance decisions we might make (the creative, imaginative component of HIP-as-method) are also pre-conditioned by our performance tradition. By way of example, let us suppose that I read a treatise that suggests a particular fingering for scalar patterns in particular situations, and I attempt to incorporate this fingering into my own performances. Under normal circumstances, the tradition of HIP—the one I learned from my teachers and in which I participate on a daily basis in my professional life—functions as the tacit framework for my artistic decisions, creating imperceptible limits on the ways in which I might engage with this particular historical evidence. The new fingering will likely have a determinate effect on my articulation and phrasing; but unless I have a very compelling reason for it, using this new fingering pattern will have no tangible effect on my pre-determined ideas about tempo, arpeggiation, and a host of other performance factors. To re-formulate an earlier point, HIP-as-method is not normally an invitation to invent a new style, but rather an opportunity to modify an existing one. In this way, HIP-as-method supports the slowly evolving continuity of HIP-as-tradition.

From a positivist perspective, this seems like an appropriate approach to HIP. As performers continually strive towards authenticity, even if only acknowledged as an ideal rather than as something truly achievable, they gradually alter their own style of performance. Tradition, representing the critical consensus of historically-informed performers, thereby constitutes a line of development that continually approaches—however provisionally, or asymptotically—perfection. Performers embedded within this tradition are usually not concerned with re-starting this line of development, with finding a new point of origin. Instead, they continually make small course adjustments, corresponding to new historical evidence or new ways of reading historical evidence, that collectively constitute the line's asymptotic curve. Of course, HIP-as-tradition does gradually

change over time, but it achieves this change at the same time as it disavows it, preferring instead to concentrate on its ultimate goal of authenticity, truth, or perfection.

In reality, though, the study of history is not a positivist enterprise. Historians must *interpret* the evidence with which they work, and thus, different historians may draw different conclusions from the same evidence. Moreover, historians do not normally make any claims to the completeness of their histories: each history is provisional, approaching only some portion of the past from a particular perspective. As oboist Bruce Haynes puts it,

> [o]ur "Period Bach" style, for instance, is carefully honed by music historians and performers, and constantly compared to historical evidence and new ideas. Period Bach style is not Bach's style, of course. It is ours, using Bach's as an ideal. We accept its criteria provisionally, since we know updates are on the way. We are in the same position as historians who are only able to take the evidence available and draw the most complete possible information from it; they neither can nor do claim to know what really happened.[7] (Haynes 2007, 149)

HIP, then, despite its reliance upon historical methods, is at least two steps removed from history. First, as discussed above, critics like Dreyfus, Taruskin, and Butt have collectively established that HIP was never the reconstruction of any musical style from the past, but rather a wholly *invented* contemporary style, *inspired* by history. Second, in contrast to the fragmentary and provisional character of the writing of history, HIP—when enacted in performance—is necessarily complete and fully determined. While rehearsal and practice might permit leaving multiple options open, performance demands that the musician make decisions, whether consciously or unconsciously, conditioned upon the performer's embodied habits and tastes. Unlike the historian's "performance" in writing, however, a musician's performance allows no doubt or equivocation.

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[7] This vision of HIP should certainly be contrasted with earlier understandings of "authenticity," such as that of Adorno in "Bach Defended against his Devotees" (1983), first published in 1955. Adorno sees the move towards authenticity as part of a larger misguided desire for objectivity, wiping away the subjective excesses of Romanticism. Haynes, however, acknowledges the subjectivity of the performer in engaging with music of the past and with historical evidence, and the "authenticity" that it achieves is always accepted as provisional.

Instead, as an event taking place in time, the performance moves inexorably from start to finish without the possibility for gaps, revisions, or second-guessing.[8]

These essential differences between history and HIP explain why it is so difficult for HIP to re-invent itself. Historically-informed performers need to be able to play in diverse professional settings, often with very little rehearsal time. They cannot possibly re-invent their musical style with each performance. Rather, they rely upon shared stylistic and technical conventions in order to make the most of their rehearsal.[9] The long result of this practice is to have gradually transformed what was originally an imaginative method of artistic renewal into a tradition of unspoken conventions, pre-suppositions, and unquestioned physical habits. An originary, subjectively-driven, historically-contingent period of artistic experimentation has ultimately sedimented as objective truth.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu describes processes like this using the related concepts of doxa, orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Bourdieu, recognizing that "every established order tends to produce […] the naturalization of its own arbitrariness" (2010, 164), conceives of doxa as the product of this naturalization. Doxa is described as the "quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organization" (164). It achieves this alignment between the natural and the arbitrary or contingent, however, without "awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs" (164). In the world of HIP, then, most of the performance habits, bodily or otherwise, of musicians belong to the sphere of doxa; they constitute the arbitrary (or, at least, contingent) elements of style that have gradually been naturalized as self-evident. Doxa is then only made apparent through the opposition of heterodoxy; as Bourdieu says, "the truth of doxa is

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[8] The differences between the historian's interpretation and the performer's, then, is also akin to the philosopher Jerrold Levinson's (1993) distinction between critical and performative interpretations. For Levinson, there is no direct translation or connection from one kind of interpretation to the other, and so the kind of "interpretation" a performer reaches will have an entirely different function and mode of production from the historian's.

[9] Solo performers, obviously, may not have the same constraints with respect to rehearsal time as ensemble musicians. Nevertheless, they are still likely to make efficient use of their time by relying on learned conventions.

only ever fully revealed when negatively constituted by the constitution of a field of opinion, the locus of the confrontation of competing discourses" (168).

In HIP, perhaps the clearest example of such heterodoxy is in the field of nineteenth-century performance practice. In recent decades, it has become increasingly common for historically-informed ensembles to give performances of nineteenth-century music, using something like the same "Period style," as Bruce Haynes calls it, they might use for Bach. Researchers in performance practice, however, have uncovered specific practices (like portamento, or pitch sliding) that do *not* figure within "Period style," but which are nevertheless confirmed by unambiguous historical evidence (namely, early-twentieth-century sound recordings).[10] A number of performer-scholars have experimented with these techniques in performance, and as we might expect, the results diverge considerably from what HIP ensembles generally sound like.[11] Their novel performances (heterodoxy) therefore unveil a certain kind of doxa within HIP, subsequently allowing for a new kind of consciously articulated orthodoxy to take doxa's place. The stakeholders in this orthodoxy include successful performers in HIP-as-tradition as well as their loyal audiences, who develop strategies to delegitimize heterodoxy and uphold orthodoxy. For example, sliding performance is castigated as evidence of both poor technique and poor taste, while non-sliding performance is praised as evidence of good technique and good taste. Performers who dare to challenge this orthodoxy therefore risk censure at the hands of those most interested in maintaining it.

For all of these reasons, it remains an immense challenge to recover the potency of HIP-as-method within the confines of HIP-as-tradition. There are, as I see it, at least three ways out of this

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[10] The field of nineteenth-century performance practice is growing rapidly. For an excellent summary of issues encountered in early (piano) recordings, see Neal Peres da Costa's *Off the Record* (2012). For a more general overview of issues in early recordings of all kinds, see Leech-Wilkinson (2009). And for recent perspectives from artistic researchers and performers, see Scott (2014) and Stam (2019).

[11] An excellent example of this is cellist and researcher Kate Bennett Wadsworth's recording of music by Brahms for cello and piano (2018), which features a variety of "uncouth" performance practices like portamento.

gridlock. Each one has the potential to inaugurate new practices that are jarringly opposed to HIP-as-tradition, so much so that they enable the recognition of doxa. The first way is to discover new historical evidence. The second way is to interrogate the (often tacit) conceptual frameworks by which we interpret existing historical evidence. The last way is to critically examine the methods by which we, as performers, imaginatively engage with historical material in performance. In sum, these three methods correspond essentially to three stages in the historically-informed performer's preparation: the gathering of evidence, the interpretation of that evidence, and the imaginative, often experimental engagement with that evidence through performance.

In the case of nineteenth-century music, as we have seen, the first method is truly a viable way forward. Since nineteenth-century performance practice is still a relatively new area of interest, performers and researchers are continually discovering new historical evidence to interpret creatively. But what of historically-informed performance of more well-trodden repertoires? As a harpsichordist myself—whose repertoire effectively reaches a caesura with the turn of the nineteenth century—exploring nineteenth-century performance practice is simply not an option.[12] Although researchers do regularly uncover new historical evidence, the frequency and scope of such findings pale in comparison to the discoveries of the twentieth century. Lacking new historical evidence, therefore, I turn to the second and third ways forward. I begin by interrogating a concept

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[12] I should, however, mention the work of my former harpsichord teacher, Robert Hill. He has investigated performance practices evident in early piano roll recordings for Welte-Mignon, recorded in 1904 by Carl Reinecke (1824-1910). Hill (2008) analyzes Reinecke's playing as "quantitative accentuation," in which different parts of the bar are accentuated agogically according to their metrical or expressive weight, not only qualitatively (louder or softer), but also quantitatively (longer or shorter). Given that personal performance styles tend to remain stable throughout adulthood, Hill has reasoned that Reinecke's performance may represent an accurate picture of early nineteenth-century performance practice. The fact that there is such an enormous distance between this performance practice and what we typically hear from historically-informed performances has led Hill to speculate that some of our initial premises in creating "Period Style" may have been quite wrong: that perhaps prior to the twentieth-century, the bar's metrical hierarchy was based on unequal temporal divisions rather than equal ones, for example. Based on this reasoning, Hill has developed his own highly expressive and idiosyncratic performance style that essentially reads the evidence from Reinecke's performances back into the eighteenth century, leading to highly temporally flexible performances of composers like Bach and Mozart. In this sense, at least, there may yet be things for harpsichordists to learn from nineteenth-century performance practice.

central to the performance of Western art music, and therefore, by proxy, central to HIP: namely, the concept of the musical work.

The Musical Work

What is a musical work? A wide variety of philosophers and musicologists have provided potential definitions, each depending on the author's philosophical orientation or their musicological/musical interest and focus.[13] Arguably the most influential and decisive of these efforts, however, was Lydia Goehr's thesis, put forward in 1992 in *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*.[14] In it, Goehr reframes the question of the musical work's ontology, moving from a concern with works themselves to an historically situated "work-concept." She makes this move in order to, temporarily, sidestep some of the difficulties she and others encounter in adjudicating ontological claims about the musical work. By focusing first on what kind of concept the work-concept is, she will then be better equipped to think about what kind of object a musical work might be. She then famously argues that the work-concept emerged around 1800. A number of musicologists have quibbled with Goehr about her precise dating of this emergence. Reinhard Strohm (2000), for example, argues that it makes better sense to look forward through history, rather than back, to reveal the emergence of the work-concept, and he identifies evidence of such transformation as early as the mid-fifteenth century. Nevertheless, as Goehr argues,

> [it] is less importantly the specific date of the concept's emergence to which my thesis is committed than to the historical fact that the concept emerged, and with this at least Strohm has no disagreement. If works existed in 1450 and were named as such, then I am wrong as a matter of fact. Still such an error would not

[13] For a recent appraisal of these approaches, see Davies (2018). Davies situates these diverse perspectives on the musical work within his concept of the "classical paradigm," which acknowledges musical performances as particular instances of "multiple artworks." Importantly for the notion of a musical work, "a performance in the performing arts is generally of something else—what we can call a performable work—and plays a necessary part in the appreciation of the latter" (2018, 46).

[14] As Goehr herself admits (2000, 234), much of her approach was also anticipated by Carl Dahlhaus, who described the late-eighteenth-century origins of the work-concept. Where Goehr takes issue is in Dahlhaus's uncritical use of the work-concept in also describing earlier practices.

> undermine my claim that the work-concept should not be assumed naturalistically or essentially to exist in all music practices of whatever sort. (Goehr 2007, xlviii)

What is most significant about Goehr's thesis, therefore, is its recognition of the work-concept's historical contingency. Despite the fact that most classical musicians treat the existence of musical works as simply given, Goehr allows us the possibility of imagining times and places when this was not yet the case.

As Goehr describes it, the work-concept is what she calls a *regulative concept,* one that can "determine, stabilize, and order the structure of practices" (2007, 102). In contrast to constitutive concepts and ideals, regulative concepts "guide the practice externally by indicating the point of following the constitutive rules" (102). Although a regulative concept operates in tandem with other associated concepts and ideals, it is still the operative, controlling factor in the shaping of practices. In the case of the musical work-concept, for example,

> [it] emerged in line with the development of numerous other concepts, some of which are subsidiary—performance-of-a-work, score, and composer—some of which are oppositional—improvisation and transcription. It also emerged alongside the rise of ideals of accurate notation and perfect compliance. In this process, the work-concept achieved the most central position. (Goehr 2007, 103)

The regulative concepts that guide our practices often evade our conscious awareness. Unless we draw attention to them explicitly, it is far more common for us to act by reference to constitutive rules or ideals than to their governing regulative concepts. They function, as it were, in the background of practice. Eventually, regulative concepts "are treated as if they were givens and not 'merely' concepts that have artificially emerged and crystallized within practice" (Goehr 2007, 104). Thus, the regulative work-concept that continues to structure our practice vanishes, and in its place emerges a series of self-evident givens, musical works. They are a consequence of what Goehr calls "the ontologizing of a concept" (xlviii). In effect, what Goehr describes is very close to Bourdieu's notion of doxa, wherein something that was once arbitrary and contingent becomes reified into something necessary and eternal. We learn these regulative concepts implicitly through long periods

of social interaction—like musical education, for example—and ultimately, these concepts form layers of invisible, yet highly effective doxa.

For most Western classical performing musicians, the musical work is something usually taken for granted and very rarely questioned. Indeed, for the vast majority, the work-concept functions implicitly as it guides their musical practice, both in terms of how they conceive of the "objects" of music and in how they respond to the ethical dimensions of musical performance.[15] In my own early musical education as a pianist, the work-concept was something I understood without needing any definitions. The content of my own lessons, practice sessions, and performances consisted not of an uninterrupted continuum of "music," but was rather partitioned into entities called "works." This encapsulation of a given quantity of music into a discrete work made perfectly intuitive sense: I learned music through notation, and each stretch of musical content was given its own visual cohesion on the page with clear boundaries between one work and the next, separated by title, double barline, page number, opus number, or volume. Thus, whatever music I produced at the piano necessarily had an object—the "something else" that my performance represents (Davies 2018, 46)—and even after I had memorized a span of music and could reproduce it without its notation, it remained a performance of a work. Despite their differences in style and notation, my teacher spoke of works by Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin in roughly the same terms, and I felt no fundamental distinction between the activity of performing Bach and the activity of performing Chopin; the objects of these performances were fundamentally of the same kind.

An engagement with the musical work was, therefore, a vital part of my *habitus* as a classical musician. Habitus, another of Bourdieu's concepts, could be defined as "a general, mainly tacitly and

[15] The most obvious connection between the work-concept and performance ethics is in the ideal of *Werktreue*, which is itself derived from the work-concept. Being faithful to a work, after all, is predicated on acknowledging the existence of musical works as classes of objects.

socially acquired whole of embodied patterns for action and behaviour—how to sleep, how to eat, how to play, how to be a man or a woman" (Coessens and Östersjö 2014, 333). It constitutes the individual's dispositions of practice that, collectively, can become sedimented as doxa within society. Because of the way they shape practices, regulative concepts function in constructing and shaping habitus. Reciprocally, the exercising of one's practice, conditioned by habitus, also effectively reinforces the givenness of regulative concepts. Describing the work-concept, Goehr highlights how regulative concepts can reinforce certain patterns of thought or action while precluding others.

> Regulative concepts are delimiting. They indirectly suggest to the participants of a practice that only certain beliefs and values are to be held and only certain kinds of actions are to be undertaken. In this sense, regulative concepts are structuring mechanisms that sanction particular thoughts, actions, and rules as being appropriate. Thus, for example, performing a work involves employing the appropriate regulative concept(s). One shows one's knowledge and understanding of these concepts when one, for example, complies with a score, plays these notes and not others, plays in such a way as to indicate respect for the genre musically and historically conceived. (Goehr 2007, 104)

In this way, regulative concepts and their associated practices are inextricably entangled. In the case of classical musicians, the performer's habitus is shaped towards the sociocultural practice of *work-based performance*. This entails a host of subsidiary practices, including interpretive strategies (how to read and perform the score, how to determine the scope of the performer's decisions) and modes of listening (hearing a performance's "of-ness," its representation of the work). The regulative work-concept, meanwhile, continually reaffirms the self-evident naturalness of these practices.

I proposed earlier that one way forward for HIP was to re-think the conceptual framework by which historical evidence is interpreted. Now, however, it should be clear that this is not enough. In the case of regulative concepts like the work-concept, it is extremely problematic to simply suspend them or replace them with others. Concepts of all kinds *regulate* our practices, not just creative,

artistic practices, but also practices of thought.[16] Within HIP, work-based-thinking and work-based-practicing, playing, and performing operate in tandem to produce an illusion of the work's ontological givenness, thereby limiting any possibility of developing different (artistic and conceptual) practices. Concretely, the work-concept reinforces a musician's focus on fixed objects (works) rather than on the flexible processes by which those objects might come to life. This focus creates tangible limits on a performer's potential for musical freedom and creativity, since it also constricts the ways in which musicians create meaning within performance. Moreover, it casts a shadow over alternative practices, like improvisation, that might re-orient a performer's balance between fixity and fluidity. Stepping outside the thrall of the work-concept therefore also requires a simultaneous step outside of habitual practice, outside of habitus. If one of the goals of HIP-as-method is to effect change in one's artistic practice, then removing, bracketing, or ignoring the work-concept is just a first step. Beyond this, we must cultivate new modes of thinking, living, and being—a newly-acquired habitus, fashioned from heterodox concepts and practices.

Goehr's most significant contribution for the future of HIP, then, is in *enabling* us to imagine these alternative constellations of practices, concepts, and ideals—constellations that are decentered from the work-concept's gravitational pull.[17] We can, of course, venture at naming these new centers of gravity. Goehr cites musicologist Elaine Sisman, who proposes that the work-concept ought to be distinguished from seemingly related concepts like the "opus-concept" and *Werktreue*, each of which has its distinct historicity and regulative force. Goehr (2007, xxxii), however, fears that "a desire for more historical nuance and specification…threatens to unfurl into infinite specification." "Why

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[16] Goehr (2007), for example, asks "how it is possible to think about the concepts that at the same time we employ in and for our thought" (xliv).

[17] Goehr is by no means the only scholar to have attacked the work-concept: a great number of musicologists have chipped away at it as well. In Chapter Two, I will explore some of this work in connection with seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

not," she wonders, "go further and add the composition-concept, the piece-concept, the oeuvre-concept, the tune-concept, the song-concept, the riff-concept, and even the improvisation-concept?" (xxxii). As a practicing musician, my own take on this is a pragmatic one: why not, indeed! If HIP-as-method is, in fact, a constant search for the new within the old, then "infinite specification" is exactly what is needed. By attending to the uniqueness of practice observed and intuited (via historical evidence) in each sociocultural setting—each individual historical period, geographical locale, composer, genre, etc.—we open ourselves to defamiliarizing encounters with historical materials. Each musical repertoire, considered as a component part of a socio-cultural whole, offers the opportunity of developing new concepts to more closely describe it, as well as new practices to more closely re-create it. Each repertoire—each piece, even—is a singularity, different from others surrounding it. HIP-as-method thus encourages us to search continually for provisional, increasingly adequate means of understanding a repertoire's peculiarities. The concepts and practices engendered through this process have the radical potential, when realized through the performer's reformed habitus, to shine new light on doxa. How might a musical practice centered on the "piece-concept" in seventeenth-century France, for example, differ from practices affiliated with the work-concept? What novel practices might a piece-concept enable? How might our understanding of the piece-concept alter through an engagement with these practices? Finally, how strange might our more familiar practices and concepts seem in juxtaposition with these newer ones?[18]

To summarize up to this point: recognizing the historical contingency of the work-concept enables us to imagine other concepts that might exist in its place, concepts that might serve as creative impetus for historically-informed performers. As a regulative concept, however, the work-concept acts in tandem with its associated practices, together forming a rigid layer of the classical

[18] Readers interested in potential answers to these questions should consult Chapters Two and Five, which together deal with developing an implicit notion of "piece" in seventeenth-century France.

musician's habitus. Stepping outside of the work-concept therefore also demands an equivalent movement outside of work-associated practices—a turn towards perceiving, living, and performing *differently*—in order to *defamiliarize* the familiar. This is an approach that emphasizes, above all, the *uniqueness* of each musical repertoire—or even each piece within that repertoire—staged through the creation of particular constellations of concept and practice.

HIP as Experimentation

I have now discussed two different means of highlighting the gulf between HIP-as-method and HIP-as-tradition: first, through the discovery of new historical evidence (as has been the case recently in nineteenth-century performance practice); and second, through the adoption of a new critical and conceptual framework for interpreting existing historical evidence and constructing new narratives. Moreover, as I argued above, if new concepts are to be put to effective work in HIP, they must be accompanied by analogous changes in practice as well. Without this important step, any newly-introduced concepts will, in all likelihood, simply be naturalized into the performer's existing habitus.

The third way of advancing HIP I proposed was to interrogate the process by which performers imaginatively engage with their interpretations of historical evidence. As I already noted, HIP-as-method works to create *new* styles of performance by creatively filling in the gaps. Any engagement with evidence is necessarily provisional and incomplete, and therefore, it falls to the performer to construct, reconstruct, or invent the missing pieces.

There is nothing neutral or objective about this process. The performer begins, on the one hand, with their habitual set of embodied performance habits, strategies, and ideals—their habitus—and on the other, with a set of performance practice ideas, conceptual and practical notions distilled from study and interpretation of historical evidence. Hopefully, if these performance practice ideas are interesting ones, they will conflict in some way with the performer's usual way of doing things.

In this way, they serve as a way of destabilizing the performer's habitus. They force the performer to ask: how can I do this differently? Historically-informed performers—or, more precisely, performers who are engaged in HIP-as-method as means of stepping outside of tradition—thus navigate a complex web of interactions as they work with historical materials through rehearsal. Over the course of hours of practice, and with recourse to taste, imagination, and experience, the performer will *experiment* with various ways of performing differently, using the tension between historical evidence and habitus to generate new styles of musical performance. This movement from habitus to experimentation is not unidirectional; rather, it emerges through a dialectical process, as a back-and-forth negotiation between the known and the unknown.

In many ways, HIP-as-method functions analogously to what historian of science Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (1997) describes as an *experimental system.* Rheinberger, developing this notion over the course of a detailed study of an American laboratory working on protein synthesis, characterizes such experimental systems as particularly emblematic of how research is conducted in the life sciences. He discovers that the usual scientific model for the formation of new knowledge—a theory-driven model, in which theoretically-formed hypotheses are proved or disproved within individual experiments—does not apply in such settings. Rather, the experimental system allows for the possibility of generating unexpected new knowledge, the system "designed to give unknown answers to questions that the experimenters themselves are not yet clearly to ask" (Rheinberger 1997, 28). Rheinberger describes experimental systems as "the smallest integral working units of research" (2004, 4). "System," as he explains, "means here simply a kind of loose coherence both synchronically with respect to the technical and organic elements that enter into an experimental system and diachronically with respect to its persistence over time" (ibid.). Of particular note is Rheinberger's distinction between "technical objects" and "epistemic things." Technical objects—the various tools, techniques, and concepts used within an experimental setting—represent

everything that is already (well-)known within the system. Epistemic things, meanwhile, are the forms of knowledge that crystallize within the system through the manipulation of technical objects. In naming it an epistemic "thing," rather than "object," Rheinberger emphasizes its openness, vagueness, and lack of clear determination, how it "embodies in an experimentally manipulable manner what one does not yet exactly know" (2004, 4). The difference between technical objects and epistemic things is therefore crucially a matter of how they are used within an experimental system: the distinction between the two is functional. Nevertheless, such distinctions need not remain stable over the life of a given experimental system. As Rheinberger explains,

> epistemic things can eventually be turned into technical things and become incorporated into the technical conditions of the system. And parts of the technical system can acquire epistemic status and thus turn into research objects. The dialectics between epistemicity and technicity is at the inner core of an experimental system; it is its driving force. (Rheinberger 2004, 4)

The component parts of an experimental system may therefore function in periods of relative stability or flux. As new forms of knowledge emerge from within a system, they may serve to open the possibility of forming still newer epistemic things, and, at once, to call into question the givenness, or technicity, of things we only imagined to be well understood.

Although few historically-informed performers would likely characterize their work as constituting an experimental system, complete with the institutional and social attributes described by Rheinberger, there is nevertheless a kind of experimentation that occurs as musicians prepare to perform. The process described above—in which heterodox concepts and practices are creatively reconciled with an existing habitus, demanding creative intervention from the performer, and resulting in new styles of performance—resembles the way unexpected knowledge crystalizes within an experimental system. Experimental musical practices, therefore, mirror certain aspects of experimental systems in the sciences. As philosopher and music theorist Henk Borgdorff notes, we "can therefore just as well speak of 'experimental practices' as of 'experimental systems', not least

because Rheinberger also applies his findings on experimental systems to academic practices outside the laboratory" (2012, 191-2).

The distinction between the epistemic and the technical is of particular importance in analyzing the dynamics of HIP-as-method. Within a given musical practice, the 'technical' may be broadly construed as what the performer *already* understands: the elements of that practice that are given, fixed, or unproblematic, and often embedded within the musician's habitus. The epistemic, meanwhile, is what the performer *seeks* to understand; it points to the elements of the practice considered unknown, contingent, or problematic. The knowledge that these epistemic things embody, given that they are embedded in a *practice*, is not just propositional or declarative (knowing-that); it is also procedural (knowing-how).[19] For example, many experimental practices in nineteenth-century piano playing—like pianist Anna Scott's practice as described in her dissertation "Romanticizing Brahms" (2014), for example—involve desynchronization or dislocation of the hands. This technique of desynchronization is often one of the primary *epistemic things* within such experimental practices, constituting a stylistic element that is foreign to the performer's habitus, and hence, relatively problematic and poorly understood. The performer *experiments* with desynchronization through recourse to various technical aspects of their practice. In this sense, 'technical' aspects refer to the host of elements of musical practice considered to be *un*problematic: for example, a pianist's understanding and use (knowledge and know-how) of dynamics, tempo modification (rubato), and phrasing might initially be 'technical objects' within such an experimental practice. Gradually, as the pianist experiments with desynchronization, its epistemic qualities will emerge in relation to the experimental practice's technical attributes. The pianist might discover, for

[19] This distinction between knowledge-how and knowledge-that originates in Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind* (1949). Ryle describes the two kinds of knowledge as distinct and independent, such that a person's ability to take some kind of action (knowledge-how) does not necessarily demand factual or propositional knowledge (knowledge-that) about the action.

example, that they prefer to desynchronize musical material to a greater or lesser degree depending on how it interacts with issues in tempo modification, whether it figures as part of an accelerando or a rallentando. Moreover, they may also find that this preference enables them to use desynchronization in their performances with greater creativity and conviction. The result of such an experiment is two-fold. First, the pianist will have learned enough about the epistemic thing (desynchronization) to incorporate it into the well-understood technical apparatus of their experimental practice; and second, this change in practice may also reveal newly-found problematic, epistemic qualities within formerly technical objects (tempo modification). This 'dialectics between epistemicity and technicity' is what drives the pianist's experimental practice forwards.

In many experimental practices, of course, it can be difficult to distinguish rigidly between the epistemic and the technical. In a recent informal survey, experimental practitioners pointed to how "the function of an element can fluctuate during a performance, which in turn requires a description of technical objects in not only stable but also unstable states" (Schwab 2014a, 116). Moreover, within a given experimental practice, it is very possible to work with multiple problematic areas at once. In Scott's study of Brahmsian performance practice, for example, she juggles multiple epistemic things over the course of her experiments, including dislocation, tempo modification (particularly rushing), arpeggiation, and phrasing. Which of these, at any given time, is exclusively epistemic or technical? Rather than defining these problematizing aspects of her practice in terms of fixed technical objects, then, she instead explores their interrelatedness. Knowledge materializes through the interaction of epistemic unknowns within her experimental practice at the piano.

Ultimately, any object or thing within an experimental practice has the potential to develop epistemic qualities. Recognition of those qualities, however, is conditioned and limited by the musician's habitus, as well as the tradition within which the musician works. The score, for example, might initially be understood to function as a technical object—perhaps even the primary technical

object—within Western classical performance traditions, including HIP. The presence of the score carries with it a host of well-understood score-based performance practices: playing these notes, notated on the page, and just these notes; playing just these rhythms. Musicians *know* how to play a score. An experimental practice, however, acknowledges that even well-secured technical objects like the score can function as epistemic things, so long as practitioners are willing to suspend, question, or problematize deeply-seated components of their artistic habitus. As visual artist and artistic researcher Michael Schwab explains it:

> These scores (or artistic traditions in general) are the material that re-emerges as again epistemically open in a meaningful artistic experimental system. It is set against a perceived epistemic closure that happens when such scores or traditions are simply re-performed as if new negotiations need not be entered into. At the site of the performance and under the conditions of tradition, an artist continually experiences and even produces epistemic loss, which the researcher in him or her attempts to suspend in ever new iterations. (Schwab 2014a, 121)

Using the score—or the musical work—as an epistemic thing, therefore, upsets its stability of meaning, both for its performers and its audiences. Audiences thereby gain the opportunity for new experiences of familiar works, while performers gain new means of creating and conveying meaning within established artistic traditions.

Although certain aspects of Rheinberger's concept of the experimental system seem perfectly at home within an artistic context, it is not a perfect fit.[20] What kind of knowledge is it, exactly, that is created within an artistic practice? For an (experimental) artistic practice, is the creation of knowledge even the primary aim? It seems clear that the kind of 'knowledge' created within artistic experimental practices is of a different order than that of scientific experimental systems. Rheinberger, for one, has drawn a distinction between the 'epistemic' and the 'artistic,' while at the

[20] One might also cite artistic experimentation's lack of reproducibility as another point of difference with scientific experimental systems. Rheinberger, however, already acknowledges that experimental systems must be capable of "differential reproductions," such that "generation of differences becomes the reproductive driving force of the whole machinery" (2004, 5). Both scientific and artistic reproducibility, then, are also always playing with difference in order to reach new knowledge.

same time acknowledging the potential links between the two (Borgdorff 2012, 196). In this sense, the epistemic is normally related to propositional knowledge, while the artistic or 'aesthetic' is related to "a complex interrelationship of sensation/perception (*aisthesis*) and artistic practice" (Schwab 2014a, 121). It is just these interrelationships that the still-nascent field of artistic research attempts to explore.

HIP as Artistic Research

Artistic research is a relatively new mode of inquiry that joins the aesthetic with the epistemic: it brings an artistic perspective to bear on the production of various kinds of knowledge. Often defined as "research in and through artistic practice" (de Ruiter 2017, 249), artistic research takes place from the point of view of the artists themselves, offering an insider's perspective on artistic practice.[21] The research therefore takes place from within the researcher's own artistic practice, thus collapsing any distance between the observer and the observed. Although this kind of research often does draw upon concepts, methodologies, and 'technical objects' from other disciplines, the primary tools of artistic research are necessarily also located within an artistic practice. Finally, the research culminates in an artistic outcome: that is, an artwork (or performance, composition, etc.) that embodies the knowledge thereby produced.

As I have just argued, it would be useful to distinguish between the aesthetic and the epistemic. While the epistemic is relatively easy to describe, the aesthetic is anything but. It is bound up with the various non-discursive, tacit, or subjective elements that make up an artistic practice, and as such, is fundamentally irreducible to propositional knowledge. In a very real way, then, the artworks

[21] The formulation "in and through artistic practice" points both to the research's topic (research in) and its methods (research through). It is meant to help distinguish artistic research from different but related forms of research, such as research *on* artistic practice (as in musicologists' studying the practice of performers, or research on extended techniques or technical devices used within performance) or research *for* artistic practice (as in a composer's research on an historical event, personage, or literary work in preparation for composing).

produced within artistic practices do stand on their own: they do not depend on explication or interpretation in order to be understood. Artistic research, however, serves to create links (as also suggested by Rheinberger) between the realms of the aesthetic and the epistemic. These links operate in two directions. First, artistic researchers must orient themselves towards the epistemic by, for example, formulating research questions, forming hypotheses, or constructing experimental systems; and they must then transform or incorporate these epistemic concerns into artistic practice. Second, they must also work to discursively supplement aesthetic products and processes—or create *expositions of practice as research,* as Schwab (2014b) puts it—that can communicate across disciplinary boundaries, such that the kinds of knowledge embodied by artworks might also enter academic discourse.[22] The ways in which this supplementation occurs vary according to the particulars of any given artistic practice, but they are all conditioned by what philosopher-musician Marcel Cobussen calls an "aesthetic sensibility" (2014, 67). Cobussen defines this sensibility as a "subtle, perpetual and complex play between understanding, imagination and informed intuition, a play between cognitive and affective knowledge, and a play between discursivity and corporeality" (74). Such an aesthetic sensibility therefore serves to ground and legitimate the various formations of knowledge that take place within artistic research.

Does—or better, can—HIP function as artistic research? For Cobussen, in any case, the answer seems to be yes, even if it is not recognized as such by the performers themselves. He cites the example of a lecture given by Ton Koopman, in which Koopman described his preparations for a

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[22] In this connection, I am inspired by the model proposed by Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?* (1994), in which art and philosophy constitute two different modes of thought. I will have much more to say about this when I deal more fully with Deleuze's ontology (via DeLanda) in Chapter Five. For now, suffice it to say that art is concerned with the intensive, with 'percepts and affects,' while philosophy is concerned with the virtual, with creating 'concepts.' In this way, traversing the gap between these two forms of thought is not a matter of explication or even translation. Rather, philosophy can operate parallel and adjacent to art, creating concepts that "correspond without resemblance" to works of art (DeLanda 2002, 54). Although I am certainly not doing philosophy in this dissertation, I am nevertheless engaged in traversing the path from one domain of thought (the artistic) to another (the epistemic).

recording of the complete works of Buxtehude, where "he visited the houses where Buxtehude had lived, investigated the churches where his music had been played, scrutinised scores, tracked down instructions that Buxtehude had left about how to perform his works, studied information written down by his students, and so on" (2014, 66). Koopman's research output, then, consists in its artistic results (concerts and CDs) as well as explanatory materials like lectures and liner notes. The only missing ingredient for recognizing this as artistic research (and having it legitimized as artistic research within a wider community of researchers) would be an interrogation of Koopman's own aesthetic sensibility, that is, the means by which epistemic concerns are transformed into aesthetic ones and vice versa. As Cobussen says, Koopman "places much emphasis on historical informedness but does not elaborate on how these data are translated into the final aesthetic results" (67).

Composer and artistic researcher William Brooks (2014) offers a much more detailed discussion on the limits of HIP as artistic research in a book chapter on the performance practice of William Butler Yeats. In somewhat self-contradictory fashion, Brooks seems to argue both against, and later for, understanding HIP in this way. Brooks discusses three different ways of engaging with and recreating Yeats's recitation practice: working with recordings of Yeats, working with notation from Yeats's circle, and finally, using and adapting Yeats's method to create new readings. On the one hand, Brooks seems to feel that these first two ways of working cannot constitute artistic research. Describing his efforts in composing 'psaltery' accompaniment for Yeats's recordings, he writes,

> this was an interesting activity, and I believe the results are convincing; but it did not feel like artistic research. The process was more akin to the restoration of a missing part in a Renaissance motet: there were decisions to be made and variants to be tested, but both the compositional technique and the standards to be applied were known in advance. I was not building on Yeats's research project; I was merely recreating a lost fragment from it. (Brooks 2014, 193)

Likewise, in describing his working from notation, Brooks finds HIP lacking:

> This too was interesting and—with more practice or a more talented performer—probably aesthetically convincing; but it too was research only in a limited sense. I was, after all, merely executing a score; and though I certainly learned quite a bit—for example, about how hard it is not to "sing"—I didn't advance Yeats's ideas significantly. As with any "historically informed" performance, the combination of scholarship, intuition, and judgment produced unexpected variations and curious difficulties; but no new terrain was traversed, though the ground was somewhat cleared. (Brooks 2014, 193)

Ultimately, it seems Brooks has written about these two "historically-informed" approaches to performance only to set up a contrast with "the third, most open option: to adopt the method but to deliberately disregard the traces, the scores, the specific artefacts of Yeats's original project" (ibid.). For Brooks, it is only now, when he is responding to the present rather than the past, that *interesting* artistic research can take place.

Unfortunately, HIP seems to be a straw man within Brooks's argument. For Brooks, HIP is fundamentally concerned with "re-creation," an approach that closes off the possibility of "traversing new terrain," or of generating new research questions. Brooks therefore characterizes his way of adopting Yeats's *method* to create new compositions as "in response to a living person, who had her own embodied understanding of the text," with the result that "suddenly the project seemed alive" (2014, 193). The implication is that HIP, in recreating the past, leads only to retracing *dead* research. We may also recall Brooks's characterization of his earlier forays into HIP as "merely executing a score," rather than creating something new. As I hope is now perfectly clear, this is a mischaracterization of HIP-as-method—indeed, of performance more generally—on several levels. In contrasting the *re-creation* that takes place in performance with the *creation* that characterizes composition and artistic research, Brooks seems to be denying the performer's creative agency to construct new meaning within a performance. Moreover, even if re-creation serves as a kind of regulative ideal for HIP, Brooks seems to undervalue the creative, imaginative, experimental practices that take place in performance, in which new kinds of knowledge (albeit tacit) are formed in response to those ideals. The result of this is a missed opportunity in exploring the ways in which

these three modes of using existing research might interact and affect each other. In what concrete ways, for example, might Brooks' own HIP-experiments have contributed to his Yeats-inspired composition, *Everlasting Voices*? In contrasting his own present-focused compositional practice with HIP's past-focused performance practice, Brooks seems to have missed how HIP-as-method creates, rather than re-creates, new styles of performance, wholly in the present.

On the other hand, in Brooks's conclusion, he seems to imply that HIP *could* function as artistic research, so long as it focuses on creation rather than re-creation. In the case of any kind of research in and through performance, Brooks quite rightly argues that "to study such research always entails, to some extent, the re-creation of an act—not as an academic exercise but as a part of the research method itself" (2014, 194). He concludes, however, that even if what we are striving for is re-creation, "it also follows that no performance is ever actually 're-created'; the traces are only an incentive to bring something new into being" (195). It is in this sense that Brooks defines his vision of historically-informed performance-as-research as "defiantly in the present, but acknowledging (as the present does) the past" (195).

In the case of artistic research output like Yeats's work, any given trace of such research "exists to justify the continuation of a practice without conclusion" (Brooks 2014, 195). The kinds of practices studied by HIP also leave traces. I would argue that these traces invite performers to use them to create something new: new performances, or more radically, new styles. It is only through these *new* things that we can perceive the continuity of the *old*. Within a research context, using historical traces as epistemic things within experimental practices also creates the possibility of generating new research from old materials. Brooks and I agree, then, on how seeking re-creation can ultimately lead to new creation. Where I differ from Brooks, however, is in my recognition of the potential for novelty within each performance. In my view, Brooks was already creating new art

(and new knowledge) in the earlier stages of his research, something he missed while "merely executing a score."

As I return to my question from earlier—can HIP function as artistic research?—I hope to answer it in these pages with a resounding 'yes.' I will use historical techniques in order to problematize my own artistic practice, transforming it from an inflexible tradition into an experimental practice. Through dialogue with music theory, philosophy, and other disciplines, I will also transform the tacit, procedural insights gained through practice into declarative knowledge, research to be shared and disseminated. In these efforts, I have been inspired and influenced by a number of other artistic researchers. In what follows, I will describe some of their projects, all of whose themes very much pertain to my own research.

Comparable Studies

Perhaps the clearest point of comparison with my own work is in Anna Scott's dissertation, "Romanticizing Brahms" (2014). In it, Scott investigates the persistent gap between modern pianists' performances of Brahms and what historical evidence actually reveals, the "gaps between what pianists believe, know and do" (349). She posits that an "ideology of control" tacitly guides modern pianists' ethical considerations and performance style in the music of Brahms. She then argues that this ideology enables a highly selective construction of Brahmsian identity, founded upon a nationalistically-inflected strain of biographical criticism. This image of Brahms aligns his supposedly ideally-German character with a healthy, controlled mind and body, which is then also associated with a style of performance evincing a similar level of control and objectivity. So constructed, this narrow identity rejects any elements of Brahms's performance style that do not align with the reigning ideology. By confronting this ideology with tangible historical evidence, namely the sound recordings of pianists from the Schumann-Brahms circle, Scott thus highlights and problematizes the construction of both identity and ideology. She analyzes these pianists' performance styles,

pinpointing a number of specific performance techniques (like desynchronization of the hands, rushing, etc.) and characteristic ways in which those techniques are deployed. Moreover, she recreates these performances at the keyboard, in order to make "their styles part of [her] own mental and physical apparatus as a pianist today" (327). After this period of analysis and style copying, she then experiments in applying these newly learned techniques to repertoire for which she had no recorded example. Through this transformation—from sound artifact to embodied experience and artistic practice—she discovers that these historical performance techniques undermine traditionally received ideals of structural clarity and control.

So much of what Scott accomplishes here is laudable, and I find many parallels with my own approach. She clearly identifies a concept that impacts performance (her "ideology of control"). She uses the tools of HIP to circumvent this ideology, stepping into a new and unfamiliar practice in which such ideology holds no sway. Scott is, of course, fortunate to be able to rely on sound recordings. She can therefore truly re-create these observed practices within her own body and mind, more or less without interpretation or equivocation. Interestingly for my own project's concern with the score, she comments from time to time on various ways in which her model pianists (Adelina de Lara and Ilona Eibenschütz) deviate from the written text, including adding, doubling, and removing notes from the score. Scott refrains, however, from commenting on how, or even whether, such deviations ultimately figured into her own experimental style. Had Scott written about her re-creation of this particular aspect of historical style, she might also have uncovered ways in which it relates to other nineteenth-century stylistic tendencies like desynchronization and tempo modification. How might Scott's own outlook on performing Brahms's have altered had she integrated such textual interventions into her own performing style? It is just this kind of improvisatory relationship to the text that will be explored in my own research.

Although it has very little to do with HIP, the dissertation of Stefan Östersjö, 'SHUT UP 'N' PLAY! Negotiating the Musical Work' (2008), is also a very strong influence. Östersjö thoroughly investigates the question of the musical work in relation to artistic practice within contemporary music. Through a series of case studies, in which he documents and analyzes his experience working with several different composers, he uncovers a huge diversity of practice that precludes the possibility of truly rigorous separation between "work" and "performance." Rather than viewing the performer's role as solely one of interpretation, he instead views it as "the final constructive phase of a musical work" (372). In order to better understand the various interactions between performers and composers, he formulates the concept of the *field of the musical work,* a musical-discursive practice wherein multiple agents operate, including score, composer, technology, editor, and instrument. Using this field, he is able to analyze the diverse workings of these agents in different contexts.

What I take away from Östersjö's work is a deep concern for the uniqueness of each project in which he takes part. Each project constitutes a unique field, a unique constellation of musical agents. As a result, Östersjö's experience of and interaction with the contours of the musical work—what he calls 'thinking-through-practice'— vary drastically depending on the disposition of the field. Perhaps one reason for this diversity of musical practice lies in Östersjö's emphasis on contemporary music, in which thinking-through-practice takes place within a field of *living* agents. In this respect, we may also recall Brooks's observation above that his own artistic research project only came alive when it was effectively transposed into the world of contemporary music. In my own work, although I am indeed working with old music written by dead composers, I still aim to recover the liveness and variety experienced by Östersjö. Indeed, as I will demonstrate in later chapters, a critical aspect of my approach is to transform static texts (scores) into changeable, moveable frameworks for improvisation.

Finally, I have also been greatly inspired by the research carried out by Paulo de Assis as part of the research project MusicExperiment21.[23] Like me, de Assis is fundamentally concerned with the ways in which ontologies of music exert their influence over practice. Turning away from the work-concept as inherited from the nineteenth century, Assis instead explores what kinds of music-making become possible when music is conceptualized according to other ontologies: more specifically, the ontology of Gilles Deleuze. Rather than working from what Deleuze wrote about music, Assis instead *applies* Deleuze's ontology to music. He is also very much influenced in this respect by post-Deleuzian treatments, such as Manuel DeLanda's reconstruction of Deleuze's philosophy.[24] Assis uses a wide variety of concepts and distinctions borrowed from Deleuze—including the virtual/actual, the intensive/extensive, difference, becoming, haecceity, and many others—in order to understand a musical practice supported by an ontology that moves beyond representation towards problematization. For de Assis (2018), a Deleuzian musical work is a multiplicity, of which a traditionally-received musical work constitutes only a small portion. These traditional "works" are only "specific zones, or partial elements of something that can be more aptly described and thought about in terms of musical multiplicities, which are fabricated by intensive processes that generate virtual structures and actual things" (61). The ontology proposed by de Assis therefore allows for a far more expansive view of the work, in which "there are as many virtual images of a musical work as persons thinking of it. Every single person has his or her own and unique diagram of any given musical work" (62).

In truth, I am not particularly interested in de Assis's work for its specific research outcomes. Rather, what I admire in this research is its trajectory and methods. His project originates in finding

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[23] De Assis provides the fullest exposition of his project in his monograph, *Logic of Experimentation* (2018).

[24] Manuel DeLanda has long been involved in reconstructing, appropriating, and developing the philosophy of Deleuze. The clearest example of this effort is in his *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy* (2002), which manages to make some quite obscure Deleuzian concepts approachable.

problems from within his own artistic practice, and this in turn motivates a move towards ontology, towards understanding the musical things or objects around which his practice turns. As he puts it, "I found myself in a situation where my own practice could not be aesthetically assessed on the basis of existing ontological accounts, and where our ways of working with the materials started suggesting new and alternative views of what a musical work is" (2018, 43). De Assis recognizes the close relationship between concepts (particularly ontological concepts, like the work-concept) and practices. His development of new musical ontologies therefore also allows him to develop and understand new musical practices that depend on these ontologies. For example, his categorization of various layers of *strata*, the concrete "actual things" that correspond to the virtual potentiality of the work, enables him to better control the problematic space of his performances.[25] He is therefore in a better position to think about questions related to his practice, like: how do the various actual things in a performance space—performer, instrument, acoustic, alternative editions of the score, related texts and recordings, etc.—contribute towards an audience's understanding of the musical work's complex potentiality? Thus, for de Assis, an artistic or aesthetic problem has motivated his turn towards philosophy, and this philosophical turn has in turn motivated further development and change in his artistic practice. It is exactly this dialogue between theory and practice that I find most useful in de Assis's work, and what I also aim to emulate in my own research.

An Overview of Research

The plan for the remainder of this dissertation mirrors that of the artistic research projects discussed above: it moves from a problem encountered in practice towards a theoretical re-orientation, and then uses this re-orientation to effect change within practice. In brief, the ordering of chapters here follows a logical sequence of steps following my initial research questions. The first

[25] This is not the place to get into the finer details of the Deleuzian ontology on which de Assis depends; I will however address aspects of it in greater detail in Chapter Five.

step, accomplished in the present chapter, is to establish and contextualize the central problem to be explored in my research: how can performers overcome the limitations that the work-concept places on HIP-as-method, and by extension, on its potential for creating new creative practices? Next, in Chapter Two, I choose a central case study in which to examine the problem in greater detail and specificity: namely, the keyboard music of Jacques-Champion de Chambonnières. The source history of Chambonnières's music and its associated performance practices are particularly problematic when understood through the lens of the work-concept. Instead, by way of a critical reading of documentary evidence and musicological argument, I will propose that the composition, performance, transmission, and reception of Chambonnières's music functioned as the exercise of oral culture. In particular, I rely on the concept of *mouvance* to explore the ways in which Chambonnières's pieces could change, transform, and move in performance. When viewed as products of orality, Chambonnières's harpsichord pieces transform from familiar musical works into something strange: the ossified remains of embodied music-making. In place of the work-concept and work-based-performance, I adopt a cluster of concepts and practices better suited to the particulars of the repertoire, including memory, embodiment, *mouvance*, and most importantly, improvisation.

In keeping with the aim of HIP in understanding historical practices on their own terms, the next step in my project is to study improvisation from an historical perspective. Chapter Three therefore presents a summary of the field of historical improvisation studies, with an emphasis on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In effect, this chapter forms the most important component of the new conceptual field I am adopting, intended to replace the work-concept and work-based-performance in my own practice. Historical improvisation constitutes a unique intersection of performance with the history of music theory, and as such, I engage with the claims and methods of both music theorists and performers. I begin by reviewing two major concepts by

which theorists have sought to understand compositional/improvisational fluency: the schema and the *Satzmodell*. Both models assume the presence of a repertoire of learned musical patterns that can be varied and embellished, and both models account for the relative speed and ease with which Baroque composers could compose and improvise. I then discuss the peculiar notational form known as partimento, a (figured) bass that served as a pedagogical locus throughout the eighteenth century. Using partimento, students across Europe (and especially in Neapolitan conservatories) learned a core set of schemata as embodied improvisational commonplaces, along with techniques for varying them and (mostly tacit) knowledge about how and when to use them in the course of composing or improvising. Moving towards the realm of practice, I review a number of recent pedagogical approaches to improvisation in historical styles. Finally, I explore the extent to which these techniques and methods for learning improvisation, developed with mostly German/Italian and high-Baroque/galant styles in mind, can be adapted—or better, translated—to the world of seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

Moving now from music theory to artistic research, in Chapter Four, I document and analyze my own efforts in learning to improvise in an historically-informed manner. In order to move beyond my own habitus as a performer and improviser, I must re-create Chambonnières's improvisational language in as much specificity as possible. After highlighting some distinctions between different kinds of knowledge—declarative vs. procedural and explicit vs. tacit—I pursue an inductive approach to Chambonnières's style. I play, analyze, and experiment with a corpus consisting of the twenty-seven courantes from Chambonnières's two published books of harpsichord pieces. Using some of the models and techniques discussed in the previous chapter, I explore a number of ways of treating this corpus not as a series of musical works to be performed, but rather as exemplars for improvisation. Over the course of my work with the corpus, I discuss the relationship between (music) theory and practice, and between analysis and performance. I

ultimately adopt a mode of analysis that attempts to track improvisational activity over the course of the piece. Most importantly, I am able to re-enact, test, and adjust this analysis in the course of improvising and performing. I use these analytic tools to refine my understanding of form (or *dispositio*) and modulation. I move inductively from observations about the corpus to a new conceptual framework and practical approach that I can then use within my own improvisational practice. In keeping with my desire to transform the corpus from a set of musical works into a research tool for improvisational learning, I introduce the computational musicology library music21 (Cuthbert and Ariza 2010) as a tool to effect this transformation. Using music21, I re-engineer the corpus into a source of nearly endless partimento exercises, collectively embodying Chambonnières's improvisational style. Finally, I construct a computational, probabilistic model (a Markov chain) for the patterns observed in the corpus, creating an even greater number of partimenti from which to learn. The ultimate purpose of this chapter is not to define a final, static, and complete set of improvisational findings. Rather, my goal is to outline historically-informed improvisation as a problematic-productive area oriented towards the epistemic, an area of incessant learning rather than certain knowledge. Historically-informed improvisation is, then, less a matter of making a perfect copy of a particular style (knowledge) than it is of creative engagement (learning).

In Chapter Five, I return to the problem stated at the outset of this dissertation: what happens to historically-informed performance when a new set of concepts and practices are introduced in place of the work-concept and work-based-performance? Having explored the concept and practice of improvisation in the preceding two chapters, I now bring these to bear on the historically-informed performance of seventeenth-century French keyboard repertoire. In light of embodied improvisational knowledge, is it still possible to perceive—and perform—Chambonnières's music as works? If so, how are these "works" different from those created under the work-concept? The Platonic, nominalist, and other ontological approaches to the musical work cited by Goehr have one

thing in common: an emphasis on identity, repeatability, and static *being*. By contrast, my own approach here is grounded in Deleuzian concepts of *difference, variability*, and *becoming*. In order to track the processes by which Chambonnières's "works" come into being—their ontogenesis—I compare a number of different experimental approaches to playing Chambonnières, each conditioned by an ability to read, analyze, and perform the score as embodied improvisational activity. I present these in the form of a musical suite—Prélude, Allemande, Courante I, Courante II, and Sarabande—each movement exploring a different facet of *mouvance* and musical identity. First, in the *Prélude*, I examine the ways in which French baroque preluding might be understood as pure musical activity, prior to the formation of any lasting or fixed identity. In the *Allemande*, I experiment with differing ways of "moving" the piece using improvisational technique, until I discover the limit at which it might also be "broken." The *Courante I* extends *mouvance* to encompass the practice of playing *doubles*, or variations on a piece. The *Courante II* then attempts to re-appraise a performance that "moved" too far, understanding it instead as an entirely new piece. Finally, in the *Sarabande*, I connect *mouvance* to HIP-as-tradition, exploring the ways in which present-day performance can continue to affect and shape a piece's changing, shifting identities.

In summary, I have tried to establish in this chapter a problematic area in the connection between HIP and the work-concept. I have also proposed a novel means of exploring the problem through artistic practice, using improvisation as a substitute for work-based performance. I have also defined the methodological background for the research project as a whole, consisting in an experimental musical practice (my own) that operates within the context of artistic research. With this framework in place, I turn in the next chapter to my central case study, the music of Jacques Champion de Chambonnières.

Chapter Two: Under the Fingers of Chambonnières

From my perspective as a professional harpsichordist, the music of Jacques Champion de Chambonnières presents a tantalizing mystery: why are these pieces not more popular? Playing his music now, especially from the printed edition of 1670, I sense a nearly perfect combination of freedom and restraint, of eloquence and audacity. Beautiful curves of melody fall effortlessly under the hand, embroidered with *agréments* in exactly the right proportions at the right moments. The texture is neither too sparse nor too rich, varying as the occasion demands. Even if the harmony seems, at times, to wander, this only enriches my appreciation of each musical moment.

Given how I feel about this music now, it seems a shame that it took me so long to discover it. While still a student, I had devoured the works of Louis Couperin, Jean-Henri D'Anglebert, Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre, and others; but for some reason, Chambonnières remained stubbornly on the sidelines. I had heard several pieces by Chambonnières played in recital, but they had made no lasting impression on me. It was only the experience of actually *playing* the music—and moreover, playing it from a beautifully presented facsimile of Chambonnières's authorized print—that seemed to change things. Over time, I came to experience this music as something like what Roland Barthes (1977) calls *musica practica*: music to be played and experienced through the body as an active participant, rather than consumed as a passive listener. Although I cannot be certain of this, I suspect my own experience is not an isolated one. Even now, I only seldom hear the music of Chambonnières featured in recitals. Meanwhile, an already impressive and ever-growing discography of seventeenth-century French harpsichord music has, for the most part, neglected Chambonnières,

the so-called "father of the *clavecinistes,"* in favor of his protégé Louis Couperin.[1] Why is this? Why does Chambonnières seem, at least initially, so unapproachable?

In this chapter, I will attempt to shed light on the various interrelated factors that complicate our contemporary reception of Chambonnières' music: first, its style and associated performance practice; second, its complex and seemingly contradictory source transmission; third, its indistinct boundaries between essential musical structure and contingent ornamental detail; and finally, its participation in a seventeenth-century "oral tradition" of keyboard music.

I will begin by reviewing the primary sources of evidence surrounding Chambonnières's style of musical composition and performance, focusing on Le Gallois's detailed letter of 1680. Le Gallois's vivid description of Chambonnières reveals an elegant, melodically-focused compositional style that varied continuously from performance to performance. I will then concentrate on some of the textual differences apparent in the extant sources for Chambonnières's music, a task made considerably simpler by the recent publication of an edition of his collected works (Gustafson and Herlin 2017). The variance exhibited by these sources needs somehow to be reconciled with an "authoritative" print of Chambonnières's works from 1670. Following arguments made by David Fuller, Ronald Broude, and Rebecca Cypess, I will pursue the notion that the *heterotextual* nature of the corpus is grounded in contradictory performance imperatives. In general, the variance between these readings is critically a question of *performance* style, rather than *compositional* style. As such, some sources—like Chambonnières's print for example—may attempt to fix the style in which a given piece might be performed, while others—particularly a manuscript in the hand of Chambonnières's younger contemporary D'Anglebert—are effectively translations from one style of performance to another. Next, I will examine what effect the *clavecinistes'* practice of variance might have had on the

[1] There are some noteworthy exceptions: listen, for example, to Kenneth Gilbert (1979), Skip Sempé (1993), Olivier Baumont (2003) and Karen Flint (2010).

persisting identity of a piece. In line with Nicholas Cook's (1999) analysis of the eighteenth-century practice of ornamenting Corelli's Opus 5 violin sonatas, I will argue that the *clavecinistes* could *see and hear through* notation to arrive at a given piece's structure, which could then be fleshed out in performance. In contrast to Corellian performance culture, however, with its constant reference to Corelli's published score as a single source of musical structure, French harpsichord music instead grapples with *heterotextuality*. Moreover, in a culture such as that of the *clavecinistes*—one that prized ornament and *agrément* to such a high degree—I will argue that it is quite difficult to distinguish rigidly between the ornamental and the structural. Ultimately, I will move that the musical practice of the *clavecinistes* makes more sense when viewed as the product of oral tradition. In particular, I will analyze their practice in terms of *mouvance*, the process of constant variation-through-performance within an oral tradition. I will detail this *mouvance* at work within French harpsichord repertoire, and will also explore the extent to which a piece may be "moved" before it is ultimately "broken." Finally, in approaching a piece by Chambonnières as an historically-informed performer, I will argue that the performer must necessarily engage with the music's contradictory performance imperatives. In order to understand how Chambonnières's oral tradition works, we must also engage with his (imagined) full range of embodied knowledge, including improvisational knowledge.

Le Gallois

The starting point for an historically-*informed* performance must be to gather all available information and evidence surrounding the *historical* performance in question. In the case of nineteenth-century performance practice, the examination of piano rolls and the earliest recordings of the twentieth century has proven invaluable: they reveal sonic evidence of practices like rubato and portamento that would otherwise be difficult to recreate solely from a textual description. Moreover, these recordings also point to a remarkable diversity of practice within a given performance tradition, as Anna Scott (2014), for example, discovered in piano performances of

Brahms's circle. In the case of pre-nineteenth-century performance practice, though, there are, sadly, no such sonic documents.[2] Without these, we must instead rely on other kinds of historical evidence: treatises, which usually describe how music *ought* to be played, as well as contemporaneous testimony (such as letters, diaries, memoirs, etc.) describing how music actually *was* played. Coupled with the distinction between ideal and actual performance conditions, we must also consider the place of the composer's (that is, the original performer's) performance style against the backdrop of the general performance style of a particular time and place. In this case, what we want is a document that describes how Chambonnières's own style of performance differed from that of his contemporaries.[3]

One of the most informative sources surrounding seventeenth-century French harpsichord culture is the *Lettre de Mr Le Gallois à Mademoiselle Regnault de Solier touchant la musique*, written in 1680.[4] The author, Pierre (or perhaps Jean) Le Gallois,[5] writes perceptively about a variety of harpsichord performance styles current during the seventeenth century. Although we know nothing for certain about the author's identity, nor about his musical credentials, he nevertheless seems to have been quite familiar with a wide array of harpsichordists: he cites Chambonnières, the Couperins (Louis and Charles), Jacques Hardel, Etienne Richard, and Pierre or Charles-Henri LaBarre as past "luminaries" of the instrument; and he counts Jean-Henri D'Anglebert, Pierre Gautier, an unknown

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[2] The closest we can get is automated musical instruments, musical clocks, and other mechanical cylinder recordings. In the realm of seventeenth-century keyboard music, the best example of this is the various "automatic virginals" or "barrel spinets," as in, for example, the instruments produced by the Biedermann family in Augsburg. David Fuller (1983) discusses musical instruments like these and the limitations of what they can tell us about performance practice. For a more detailed account of the musical decisions that inform the making of these instruments, the earliest source is Engramelle's treatise on barrel pinning, *La tonotechnie, ou, L'art de noter les cylindres* (1775). Engramelle's pinnings are particularly interesting because of his collaboration with the French composer Claude Balbastre. For more on the complexities of Engramelle's mechanical instruments' relation to notation and performance, see Cypess (2017).

[3] Of course, these textual descriptions benefit enormously from being read in tandem with other kinds of material evidence like original instruments, acoustical spaces, etc..

[4] David Fuller includes all of the relevant passages (in French) in his "French Harpsichord Playing in the 17th Century: After Le Gallois" (1976), along with a fine English translation and detailed notes.

[5] There is some doubt as to *which* Gallois it might have been: Jean or Pierre. Gustafson and Herlin (2017, xli) include a discussion of the author's identity, evaluating the evidence in favor of the various possibilities.

Buret, and Nicolas LeBègue among its current masters (Fuller 1976, 26). His letter is especially useful in contextualizing Chambonnières's unique performance style: Le Gallois famously distinguishes Chambonnières, who "touched the heart," from Louis Couperin, who "touched the ear" (24).

Beyond such distinctions—which, however poetic, remain elusive without any tangible aural context—Le Gallois describes quite concretely a "brilliant style" (*le jeu brillant*) and a "legato style" (*le jeu coulant*) (Fuller 1976, 24).[6] The brilliant style consists mainly of great rapidity of passagework and ornamentation. While Le Gallois praises it when practiced well, he also identifies a number of faults with the style: namely rushed and uneven ornamentation and tempo, unclear and messy playing "à cause qu'ils passent trop vite; ou qu'ils n'appuyent pas assez fort pour les faire entendre, ou qu'ils frappent les touches au lieu de les couler,"[7] and uninspired ornamentation and passagework: "Et ils y font continuellement des passages, particulierement d'une touche à son octave; ce que Chambonniere appelloit chaudronner" (25).[8]

Le Gallois also heaps scorn on the legato style, at least when overused:

> Car ils font de si grandes contortions de mains & de doigts; ils les élevent les uns sur les autres avec tant d'excez, en les serrant extraordinairement, que cela dégoute & fait pitié. Ainsi tout ce qu'on en peut dire est qu'en effet leur jeu est si fort coulé qu'il ressemble plûtost à un jeu de viele, où à force de couler le jeu n'a point de mouvement, qu'à un veritable jeu de Clavessin.[9] (Fuller 1976, 25)

To guard against excesses in either of these two styles, Le Gallois recommends a middle path. At least to me, this critique looks very familiar. In fact, in teaching my harpsichord students, I regularly

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[6] Note that the French word "jeu," as used by Le Gallois, encompasses both an aspect of style (*manière*) and the physical act of playing.

[7] "Because they go by too quickly, or because [the players] do not press hard enough to make them heard, or because they strike the keys instead of flowing smoothly from one to another" (Fuller 1976, 23).

[8] "And they continually add passages, particularly from one note to its octave, which Chambonnières used to call 'tinkering' " (Fuller 1976., 23).

[9] "For they so contort their hands and fingers, they pass them over each other with such excess, knotting them in an extraordinary manner, that it becomes ugly and pitiable. Thus all one can say about it is that their playing is indeed so very legato that it sounds more like the playing of a hurdy-gurdy, in which because of the slurring the playing has no rhythm than like true harpsichord playing" (Fuller 1976, 23).

work to find a middle path between an overly articulate, facile "brilliant style" and a singing, if sometimes clumsy "legato style." It seems almost difficult to believe this was written in 1680, and if I began with doubts about Le Gallois's credentials as a musical observer, they have since been dispelled.

Le Gallois identifies two masters of this middle path: namely Louis Couperin, who excelled in *doctes recherches*, and Chambonnières, who

> a excellé par dessus les autres, tant à cause des pieces qu'il a composées; que parce qu'il a esté la source de la belle maniere du toucher, où il faisoit paroître un jeu brillant & un jeu coulant si bien conduit & si bien ménagé l'un avec l'autre qu'il estoit impossible de mieux faire.[10] (Fuller 1976, 24)

Although he praises Couperin's work "à cause qu'elle est pleine d'accords & enrichie de belles dissonnances, de dessein, & d'imitation,"[11] it is entirely clear that Le Gallois prefers Chambonnières (Fuller 1976, 25). He identifies not only clear compositional traits, like his "chants naturels, tendres, & bien tournez" but also special qualities of his harpsichord touch and technique, described in detail that goes well beyond *le beau toucher*:

> On sçait qu'outre la science & la netteté, il avoit une delicatesse de main que les autres n'avoient pas; de sorte que s'il faisoit un accord, qu'un autre en même temps eût imité en faisant la même chose, on y trouvoit neanmoins une grande difference; & la raison en est, comme j'ay dit, qu'il avoit une adresse & une maniere d'appliquer les doigts sur les touches qui estoit inconnuë aux autres. (Fuller 1976, 24) [12]

According to Le Gallois, Chambonnières exhibited both excellence in composition, which is documented and preserved in musical notation, as well as great artistry in performance, the

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[10] Chambonnières "excelled others as much because of the pieces he composed as because of his having been the originator of that beautiful style of playing in which he revealed a brilliance and a legato so well contrived and adjusted one to the other that it would have been impossible to do better" (Fuller 1976, 22-3).

[11] "Because it was full of chords and enriched with fine dissonances, with structural niceties, and with imitation" (Fuller 1976, 23).

[12] "It is well known that besides skill and precision he had a delicacy of hand that others lacked; so that if he played a chord, and another imitated him by doing the same thing, one would perceive nonetheless a great difference; and the reason is, as I have said, that he had a dexterity and a way of applying his fingers to the keys which was unknown to others" (Fuller 1976., 23).

ephemeral details of which—Le Gallois's vivid description notwithstanding— are impossible to notate, and hence remain lost to the past.

Still, some details of performance can be notated. Perhaps most interesting of all these qualities discussed by Le Gallois are those that blur the distinction between the seemingly separate domains of performance and composition:

> On sçait aussi qu'il employait toûjours dans ses pieces des chants naturels, tendres, & bien tournez, qu'on ne remarquoit point dans celles des autres; & que *toutes les fois qu'il joüoit une piece il y méloit de nouvelles beautés* [emphasis added] par des ports de voix, des passages, & des agrémens differens, avec des doubles cadences. Enfin il les diversifioit tellement par toutes ces beautez differentes qu'il y faisoit toûjours trouver de nouvelles graces.[13] (Fuller 1976, 24)

In short, each time Chambonnières played one of his pieces, it was different from the last. We will need to wait until the next section to discuss the extent of these "new charms," but for now, note how a discussion of a clearly compositional aspect of Chambonnières's art (his melodies) naturally segues into the ways he varied them in performance. Note also how these *nouvelles graces* effectively blur the boundaries between the notated composition and the un-notated details of performance, since the *agréments* described by Le Gallois as a product of Chambonnières's performance could very well have been notated as a compositional detail, even if the particular qualities of his touch and sound could not.

Musicologist and historical keyboardist David Fuller has identified this easy conflation of performance and composition (as well as the language used to describe them) as a general feature of Le Gallois's letter (1993, 196). The letter is, first and foremost, a description of different manners of *playing* the harpsichord, but since a given manner of playing is usually joined with a characteristic manner of composing, it is impossible to cleanly separate the two. Beyond Le Gallois's own

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[13] "We know also that he always made use in his pieces of natural, tender, and well-turned melodies which were not found in those of others, and that *every time he played a piece he incorporated new beauties* [emphasis added] with *ports-de-voix*, passages, and different *agréments*, with *doubles cadences*. In a word, he so varied them with all these different beauties that he continually revealed new charms" (Fuller 1993, 196).

contemporary musical understanding, however, I think this points to blurred boundaries between the domains of performance and composition in seventeenth-century French musical culture more generally. Marin Mersenne (1636), for example, adopted a similar mixture of traits when describing the art of three generations of Champions, singling out Chambonnières for special praise:

> Mais apres avoir oüy le Clavecin touché par le sieur de Chanbonniere, […] je n'en peux exprimer mon sentiment, qu'en disant qu'il ne faut plus rien entendre apres, soit qu'on desire les beaux chants & les belles parties de l'harmonie meslées ensemble, ou la beauté des mouvemens, le beau toucher, & la legereté, & la vitesse de la main jointe à une oreille tres-delicate, de sorte qu'on peut dire que cet Instrument a rencontré son dernier Maistre.[14] (Mersenne 1636, "Première préface générale au lecteur," f. [A v]v.)

Mersenne reminds us here of a truism: that music is ultimately conveyed through performance. Before the regulative force of the work-concept, and its corresponding social and economic structures designed to support the nineteenth-century composer via patronage and publication, composer-performers relied on their performances to preserve and augment their reputations and livelihoods.[15] It is therefore no accident that Mersenne comes to learn of Chambonnières's particular mastery not through the circulation of manuscripts, but rather through his performance at the harpsichord. For Chambonnières, it seems, notation was something only incidental to his music's performance. Le Gallois touches on this point as he relates the curious circumstances by which Hardel, Chambonnières's favorite pupil, came to receive his master's music before passing it on to his own successor, Pierre Gautier:

> Je sçais aussi qu'outre ces pieces il luy [Gautier] a generalement laissé comme à son successeur toutes celles que Chambonniere a faites, & dont la plus part, sur tout les dernieres, ont esté copiées sous les doigts de Chambonniere, c'est a dire

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[14] "But after hearing the harpsichord played by the sieur of Chambonnières […], I can only express my opinion by saying that one needn't hear anything afterwards, whether one wants beautiful melodies and the beautiful harmonic parts mixed together, or the beauty of the rhythms, the good touch, and the lightness and speed of the hand joined by a very delicate ear, such that one could say that the instrument [the harpsichord] has met its ultimate master" (Gustafson and Herlin 2017, xxi).

[15] Of course, even with the work-concept in place, such activities were still essential for certain composers' livelihoods, particularly performing virtuosos like Franz Liszt, for example.

> lors qu'il les joüoit; de sorte que Hardelles en étoit le seul possesseur.[16] (Fuller 1976, 25)

As Fuller proposes, "taken literally, this can only mean that [the pieces] had previously existed nowhere but in the head of Chambonnières, and not even the composer himself had copies" (1993, 197). The possibility of a perfect "copy" in a situation like this is problematic—it would be more accurate to speak of a transcription than of a copy—and I will return to this issue below. For now, though, these dictated copies point to the ephemeral, changeable aspects of Chambonnières's performance style, and it should therefore come as no surprise that he would resist notating them himself.

What we have then, thanks to Le Gallois, is a tantalizingly detailed picture of Chambonnières the composer-performer. Against a cultural backdrop of other *clavecinistes*, Chambonnières displayed his mastery of composition in combination with delicacy of touch, and he varied his compositions with great spontaneity and variety in performance. Recalling my discussion from the previous chapter, one of HIP's goals here should be the *re-creation* of Chambonnières's musical practice, using this goal as the starting point for new creativity in performance. Given the rather improvisational quality to Chambonnières's playing, we might imagine that re-creating such a performance with appropriate *agréments* would prove impossible. Luckily, however, the sources for Chambonnières's music tell another story.

The Sources

There are at least 153 unique pieces by Chambonnières, preserved in nearly 400 texts.[17] Of the various sources for his music, two are considered to be "authoritative" based on their proximity to

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[16] "I also know that besides these pieces, he left to [Gautier] as his successor all those that Chambonnières had composed, of which the majority, especially the last ones, had been copied out under the fingers of Chambonnières, that is, as he played them, so that Hardel was the sole possessor" (Fuller 1976, 23).

[17] I am using the term "text" in this chapter in a fairly narrow sense to refer to "musical information which is written or printed" (Boorman 1999, 403).

the composer: first, the 1670 print, supervised by the composer, published in two books (Chamb I and Chamb II), and consisting of sixty pieces; and second, a manuscript in the possession of Guy Oldham since 1957, originally copied in Paris sometime in the 1650s. Oldham's manuscript contains music by Louis Couperin, D'Anglebert, and Chambonnières among others, written out in six different hands, including (as Gustafson thinks likely) the hands of Louis Couperin (the principal hand), Chambonnières, and D'Anglebert. Of the twenty-two pieces by Chambonnières, thirteen have been (presumably) entered by the composer himself, and some of the remaining nine have been entered by Louis Couperin and others by D'Anglebert (Gustafson and Herlin 2017, xxxix). Given the number of first-rate composers involved, the manuscript was evidently prepared for a musical colleague of some stature. These two authoritative sources differ considerably in the level of detail of texture and (especially) ornamentation preserved in notation, with the Oldham readings being predominantly simpler than those of the print. Of the various "non-authoritative" sources, there are a number that are of particular significance here, including: the Bauyn manuscript, created near the end of the seventeenth century[18], which is the source containing the greatest number of works by Chambonnières (at least 127); and the Réserve 89ter (henceforth referred to as Rés-89ter), which is in the hand of D'Anglebert. Faced with such a large number of sources, how should performers go about choosing their texts?

Of these sources, Chambonnières's printed edition of 1670 has understandably attracted the greatest attention from contemporary commentators, as it presents a detailed text personally supervised by the composer and produced at great personal expense. In the preface to the first

[18] The dating for the Bauyn manuscript has been revised numerous times, but recent evidence, particularly examination of the manuscript's paper, points to a date of 1676–c1700. For more detailed information on the manuscript's dating, see Gustafson (2014).

book, he describes his reasons for deciding to publish a collection of pieces which had formerly only circulated in manuscript copies:

> Cependant les avis que je reçois de differens lieux quil s'en fait un espece de commerce presque dans toutes les villes du monde, ou l'on a la connoissance du Claveßin, par les copies que l'on en distribue quoy qu'avec beaucoup de deffauts et ainsi fort a mon prejudice; m'ont fait croire, que je devois donner volontairement ce que l'on m'otoit avec violence & que je devois mettre au jour moy même ce que d'autres y avoient desja mis a demy pour moy; puis qu'aussi bien les donnant avec tous leurs agreemens comme je fais en ce recueil; elles seront sans doute, et plus utiles au public, & plus honorables pour moy, que toutes ces copies Infideles, qui paroissent sous mon nom. (Chambonnières 1670, Preface) [19]

If we take this statement at face value, Chambonnières would seem to fall into the mold of later composers, who notated their work in painstaking detail so as to control how those works would subsequently be performed. He complains of "faults" that damage his reputation, and Chambonnières is thus moved to exert his control and ownership over the music, producing a fixed text that supersedes the many "unfaithful copies" already in circulation. We would seem then to arrive at an early manifestation of *Werktreue*, in which the composer creates a text designed to encourage "faithful" performances.

The problem with this theory is that, thanks to Le Gallois's testimony, we know that Chambonnières varied his compositions each time he played them. Moreover, Le Gallois singles out this variance as something particularly praiseworthy and exemplary of Chambonnières's style. How, then, can Chambonnières produce a fixed text that notates the music as he would play it (and, by extension, as others ought to play it), when, at the same time, the way Chambonnières would play his own music precludes the notion of any fixed text?

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[19] "The information that I have received from various places, that there is a sort of trade in virtually all of the cities of the world in which the harpsichord is known, in the form of circulating copies that are full of faults and therefore prejudicial to me, has made me conclude that I should give of my own free will what has been taken by violence, and that I should publish myself what others have already half done for me; and since moreover it would be good to give them with all their *agréments* as I do in this collection, they will be without doubt more useful to the public and more honorable to me than all the unfaithful copies that have appeared under my name" (Broude 2017, 291).

David Fuller, Ronald Broude, and Rebecca Cypess discuss this contradiction in a closely related cluster of articles. Fuller opened the discussion with his 1993 article "Sous les doits [sic] de Chambonniere [sic]," in which he first identified the various strands of this multifaceted paradox. In attempting to find an approach to this music for editors and players, Fuller seeks to reconcile the diverse evidence gleaned from multiple sources, including: the "authoritative" published edition of 1670; Le Gallois's account of Chambonnières's playing; Chambonnières's complaint of "faulty" manuscript copies in circulation; the vast differences between "authoritative" readings of pieces preserved in the published edition and in Oldham's manuscript; the proliferation of manuscript copies, many of which postdate the print, and which nevertheless differ enormously from the print; Le Gallois's testimony that, between the deaths of Chambonnières and Hardel, most of Chambonnières's pieces were *not* in circulation, and that Hardel was the sole possessor of this music, having acquired it through dictation of his master's playing (*sous les doigts*); and finally, D'Anglebert's deliberate recomposition (or appropriation) of Chambonnières's music in Rés-89ter (to be discussed below). Ultimately, Fuller rejects the notion that the identity of the piece[20] resides in any one text, and instead proposes a *heterotextual* understanding, one that accepts a piece's definition by many texts, and in which "intention in this music seems to be buried somewhere underneath the notes we see" (1993, 200). The piece itself is something that can only be uncovered by reading between the lines of its various instantiations, and the composer's intentions for the piece, if they can be divined, remain similarly obscured.

Ronald Broude explores the relationship between composition, text, and performance in a series of articles broadly focused on French baroque keyboard music, and more particularly on Chambonnières's heterotextual pieces. Casting aside the usual distinction between descriptive and

[20] Tellingly, perhaps, Fuller carefully avoids referring to Chambonnières's "works."

prescriptive texts,[21] Broude instead proposes the concept of the "exemplary text" as a more useful way of understanding self-publications like Chambonnières's (2017, 292). That is, rather than prescribing how a performer ought to play (prescriptive notation), or describing how a particular performance sounded (descriptive notation), Chambonnières's 1670 print was instead "intended as a representation of the way the composer of a piece *might* perform it" (292, emphasis added). If Chambonnières's text has no prescriptive force, and only functions in this exemplary way, then it also stands to reason that Chambonnières *could have* produced any number of such exemplary texts for the same piece, any and all of which Chambonnières would have considered "honorable."[22] Broude thereby posits that Chambonnières's exemplary text inaugurates a convention whereby a single published text may represent a changeable heterotextual or "multiform" piece (294). Indeed, the performances cited by Le Gallois, each full of *nouvelles graces*, are analogous to such exemplary texts. Or rather—considered more properly from seventeenth-century French musical culture, in which performance is primary—an exemplary text represents through notation a given style of performance, however imperfectly. Broude thus makes the claim that in deciding to publish his works, Chambonnières is attempting to preserve his own style of performance in a more permanent way than had hitherto been possible. When Chambonnières complains of "faults" in circulating manuscript copies of his music, this is not at all the same thing as what we would call "errors," like missing accidentals or an incorrect number of beats in the bar. Rather, these faults are

[21] Charles Seeger (1958) originally proposed this distinction, using it to differentiate between the prescriptive function of traditional notation of Western art music, and the descriptive function of ethnographic transcriptions. More critically, musicologist Stanley Boorman points to the inadequacy of these two terms for elucidating the complex relationship between the composition or work, the performance, and the notation. He proposes instead focusing on the "allusive" qualities of notation that "describe the end result in some way which would make sense to the performer" (Boorman 1999, 411).

[22] Indeed, although Chambonnières could have done this, such a venture would likely have proved economically foolish. Even Fuller, in 1993, thought it unlikely that publishers would be inclined to publish large numbers of variant readings for a large number of pieces. Luckily, Broude, Gustafson, and Herlin proved him wrong in their edition of *The Collected Works* (2017)!

manifestations of styles different (and in Chambonnières's and Le Gallois's mind, inferior) from the composer's.

In an insightful and creative article ostensibly aimed at uncovering the reasons behind Chambonnières's leaving his post at court, Rebecca Cypess (2007) explores how the technique of engraving enabled Chambonnières to assert his independence, uniqueness, and artistic freedom. Since 1633, the Ballard family had held a monopoly on music printing from moveable type (*imprimée*), but engraved music (*gravée*) carried no such restrictions. Moveable type also brought with it a number of disadvantages for keyboard music, making it difficult to accurately notate such niceties as chords and beamed notes more than a third apart, not to mention the rich repertoire of *agréments* employed by harpsichordists (see Figure 2.1). Working closely with the engraver, composers were able to control (and after the first printing, correct) the precise manner in which their music was presented visually. By means of engraving, composer/performers like Chambonnières could achieve an "interplay of sound and printed text," wherein the freedom and individuality of the harpsichordist's performance were translated into a visual image:

> The physical appearance of each note is never repeated exactly the same way, as it is in the case of moveable type; analogously each note is played differently by different performers, and on different occasions even by the same performer. The individuality of performance styles is mirrored by the artistry of the engraving itself. The music's aural freedom, manifested in improvised agréments, the style brisé and other techniques of performance, are[sic] reflected by the visual turns and ornaments of the engraving. (Cypess 2007, 549)

The engraving is suggestive, evocative; in its graceful, variable shapes, it points beyond its notation to the ephemeral details of performance that remain fundamentally resistant to that same notation. Before engraving, if composer-performers wanted to convey something of their personal performance style to a wider public and to preserve their reputations, they were forced to rely on their own performances. And if they wanted to preserve their style beyond their own lifetimes (or

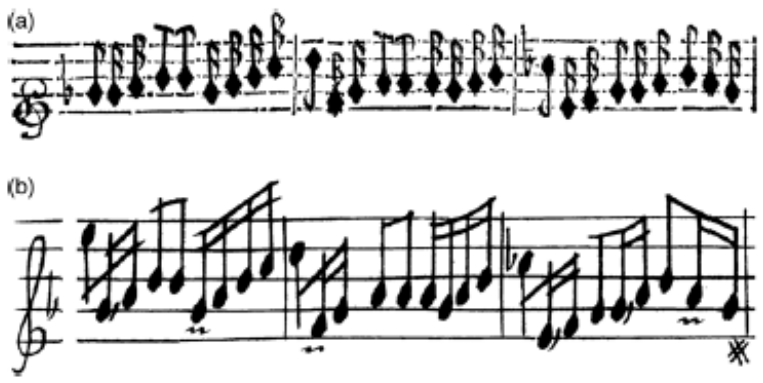

Figure 2.1 Lully, *Armide*, Passacaille. Comparison of print (a) vs. engraving (b). In Broude (2017, 283)
(a) Ballard edition, 1687, p.226, first system, bars 2–4, premier dessus.
(b) D'Anglebert, *Pièces de clavecin*, 1689, p.64, bottom system, bars 4–6, right hand

indeed beyond their failing careers),[23] the best they could do was train a devoted circle of students and encourage production of detailed manuscripts within that same circle. Chambonnières's engraving, for the first time in French harpsichord music, brought a new permanence and fixity to the substance of a performer's style. In its suggestion of the living, breathing, sounding music of performance, it is in some ways analogous to recording technology, which similarly reflects the actual experience of live music in an imperfect way.

But what of those unfaithful copies Chambonnières so despised? At this point, it seems appropriate to revisit a few of the other sources of Chambonnières's music, some faithful, others less so. Recall the earlier Oldham manuscript, which differs from Chambonnières's 1670 print in many respects, mostly in matters of performerly detail. Rather than reflecting real compositional revision, the variance between these sources is primarily due to their intended audiences: Oldham's manuscript was designed for a consummate professional, capable of realizing the bare text with

[23] Gustafson and Herlin (2017, xxx) hypothesize that part of the reason Chambonnières lost his standing at court was that his powers as a musician may have been declining. He cites a diary entry of Christiaan Huygens dated December 20, 1660 describing Chambonnières's performance as "mediocre."

appropriate *agréments,* fleshing out the texture, and adjusting and livening the rhythmic detail, while the print was designed for a wider public (and perhaps posterity).[24] But some of these differences go beyond mere simplification or amplification of detail. Particularly in matters of rhythmic precision and handling of the inner voices, the Oldham readings are not invariably simpler than those of the print; sometimes they're just different. Notice, for example, the handling of m. 4 in the two readings of the Courante in d GusC 12 (see Figure 2.2).[25] Where the Oldham reading smoothly leads the tenor stepwise into the middle of the bar against a static melody, the print emphasizes the rhythmic complementarity of melody and disjunct tenor. As Fuller notes, "although the readings are very similar, no bar except the first and last was left by the composer without some change of the notes themselves" (1993, 194). In discussing the kinds of variance exhibited by the sources, Gustafson and Herlin accept a nuanced interpretation of Fuller's heterotextual analysis:

> The differences are not due to the carelessness of the copyists—there are relatively few musical errors—nor are they due simply to the presence or absence of ornaments. Rather, the differences result from such things as the management of texture, the detail in which conventional gestures (e.g., cadences) are notated, and, at times, the shaping of melody and bass. These differences create what we may think of as "versions," each version being represented sometimes by a single text and sometimes by two or more very similar texts. It seems reasonable to infer that something akin to these constellations of texts must have existed for others of Chambonnières's compositions for which fewer texts survive. (Gustafson and Herlin 2017, xl)

Recognizing the discrete versions of Chambonnières's pieces proves invaluable in untangling a thick knot of source material. The Bauyn manuscript, for example, must have been prepared independently of sources close to Chambonnières, and its readings are marked by their simplicity and relative bareness of texture. Since Bauyn's readings diverge so heavily from the authorized sources, Gustafson and Herlin therefore consider each piece's reading to constitute a version of a given piece. The Parville manuscript, meanwhile, provides many readings that "appear to have been

[24] Posterity extends at least until 1690, when the third issue of Jollain's engraving was produced.
[25] GusC numbers refer to entries in Gustafson's (2007) online catalogue of Chambonnières's music.

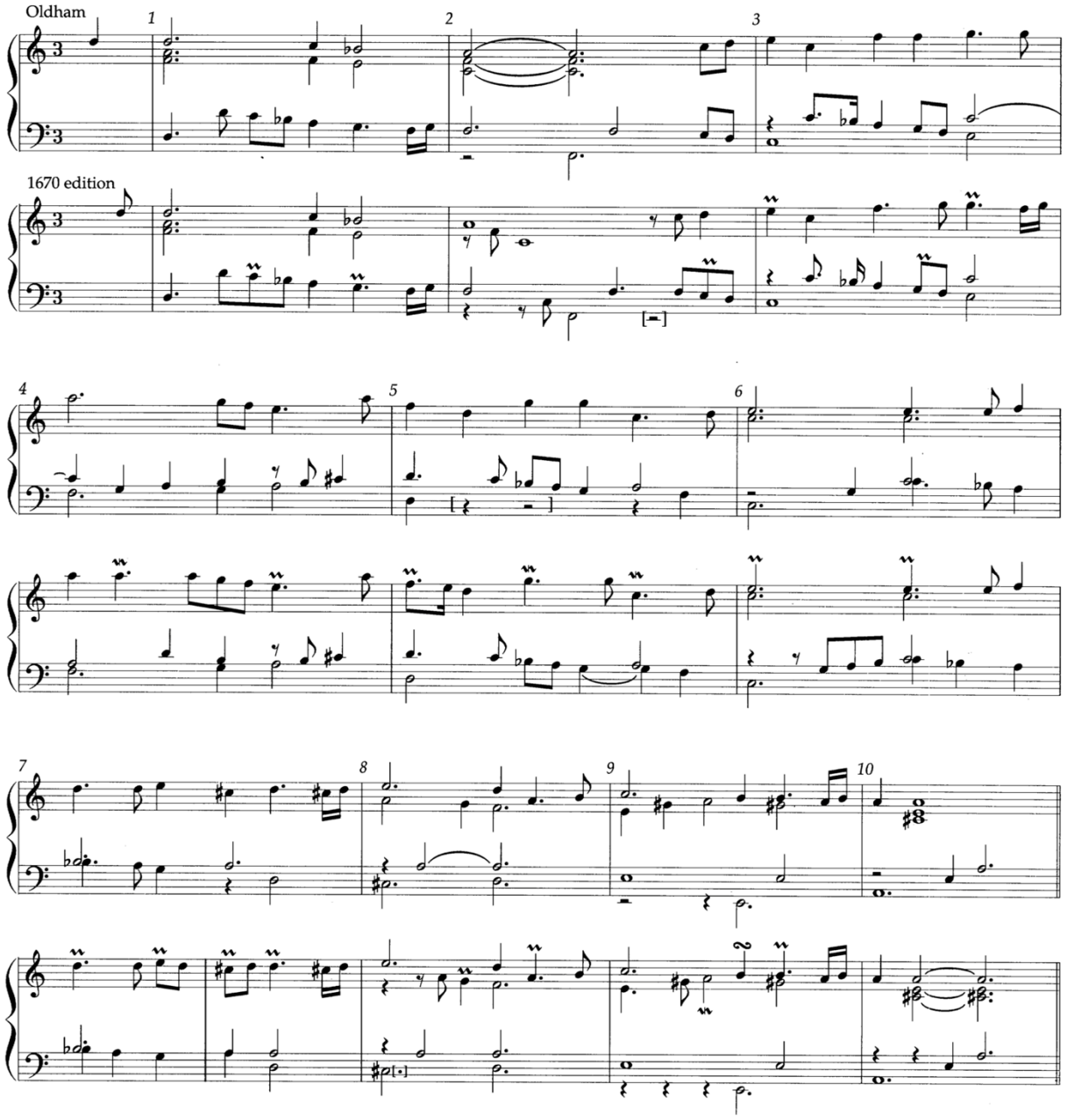

Figure 2.2. GusC 12: Comparison of Oldham and Chamb I (Fuller 1993, 193)

derived from the same sources as Bauyn's" (Gustafson and Herlin 2017, xxxix).[26] Because of this, even though Parville's readings often provide far more detail in their choice of *agréments* than

[26] Regarding the dating of Parville, the manuscript contains transcriptions of works by Lully, including from *Acis et Galathée* (1686). Because of this, the manuscript cannot have been prepared any earlier than 1686.

Bauyn's, both the Bauyn and Parville readings are often considered by Gustafson and Herlin to represent a single version of a given piece.

Perhaps the most interesting of all the "unfaithful" sources is D'Anglebert's manuscript Rés-89ter, which, in addition to several transcriptions of lute and viol music, and early versions of some of the suites D'Anglebert later published, also contains versions of a number of pieces by Chambonnières. Although it still seems doubtful that D'Anglebert actually studied with Chambonnières at any time, he was nevertheless closely connected to his circle.[27] The (probable) presence of his hand in the Oldham manuscript—together with the hands of Chambonnières and Louis Couperin—is evidence of this, as are the remarkable circumstances by which D'Anglebert assumed the duties of *ordinaire de la musique de la chambre du roi pour le clavecin* from Chambonnières without the position's accompanying income (Gustafson and Herlin 2017, xxx). To those who love and appreciate French Baroque music, D'Anglebert's *Tombeau de Chambonnières* also speaks, beyond words, to the tremendous affection he must have held for the elder composer. Given the relationship between the two composers, we might imagine that D'Anglebert's copies of these pieces would stay faithful to the composer's intentions. After all, the manuscript dates from sometime between 1677 and 1680, and if D'Anglebert had wanted to, he could have based his copy on Chambonnières's engraved edition of 1670. What D'Anglebert actually did, though, was to assimilate these works into his own performerly style.

Musicologist Douglas Maple (1988) has thoroughly described the manuscript and its contents, and has compared the manuscript's readings with Chambonnières's published versions. In each piece, D'Anglebert applied a fairly consistent set of stylistic preferences, including: a preponderance of quarter-note motion in the left hand, often created through broken texture (*style brisé*); more

[27] As Gustafson and Herlin (2017, xxvi) note, D'Anglebert was "already a mature performer when he arrived in Paris," and as such, it is unlikely that he studied there with Chambonnières.

consistent part-writing (often in three voices); a right-hand melody unencumbered by inner parts; and a greater density and variety of ornamentation in the right-hand melody (Maple 1988, 397). D'Anglebert also made a wide range of rhythmic modifications of various kinds, sometimes enhancing or suppressing a hemiola, shifting accents, dotting a rhythm, etc. (Fuller 1993, 196). The results of D'Anglebert's interventions are clearly still recognizable as Chambonnières's pieces, albeit clothed in another style. Given their divergence from the composer's own style, it is very possible that Chambonnières might have counted these among the "unfaithful" copies of his music, even if, according to our own contemporary tastes as connoisseurs of French music, we might consider D'Anglebert's efforts to constitute an improvement over the original. Kenneth Gilbert for example, in his edition of D'Anglebert's harpsichord music, professed a clear preference for the younger composer's style to Chambonnières's.[28] Certainly, as twenty-first century listeners, we are generally more familiar with the later seventeenth-century style of Lully and D'Anglebert than with the earlier style of Chambonnières, and in this sense, we might also understand D'Anglebert's revisions as a sort of update or modernization of a comparatively old-fashioned style.

D'Anglebert's appropriation of Chambonnières's music thus underscores some of the ethical issues that must have concerned *clavecinistes*. How could D'Anglebert, who clearly respected the elder musician, have brought himself to misrepresent Chambonnières's intentions for his compositions? Even if D'Anglebert felt it unnecessary to exactly reproduce the text of Chambonnières's print, would he not have at least wanted to accurately portray its composer's style of performance? Broude, for one, sees the move towards self-publication as part of a larger trend towards prescribing style for future performances:

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[28] "In my opinion the variants represent a conscious effort to improve the older master's sometimes gauche keyboard writing, especially in the left hand. As a comparison will show, they seem in every case to be more elegant and idiomatic than the original models ..." (Gilbert 1975, preface).

> Previously, performers had usually worked from texts to which they were expected to add embellishment; with the new dispensation, performers were given texts with details that they were expected to read through in order to arrive at the essential musical conception, which they were then expected to realize in the style represented by the detail. Both composers and performers accepted the convention that the texts that transmitted this repertory—whether barebones or detailed—were not to be realized literally, and it was this principle that enabled a repertory that valued spontaneity in performance to represent a multiform piece by a single text—or, indeed, by any text at all. (Broude 2017, 294)

What Broude is proposing here is something a bit different from *Werktreue*. It shifts our focus, as readers of the musical text, from the compositional substance to the performerly style in which that substance is presented. It is, therefore, more a kind of *Stiltreue*: that is, faithfulness to musical style.[29] Through the lens of *Stiltreue*, notation's primary aim is not to convey a musical work (or the instructions for performing said musical work), but rather to convey the stylistic essentials by which the music should be brought to life. *Werktreue* and *Stiltreue* are thus two different manners of reading and engaging with a given musical text, neither mutually exclusive nor mutually necessary. In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss the thorny problems of disentangling *style* from *work* in a given musical text. For now, however, I am content to recognize the utility of *Stiltreue* as a mode of interpretation. Using this concept, it becomes fairly simple to determine what sorts of manuscripts—and by extension, the sorts of performances they represent—Chambonnières would consider "faithful": namely, those that accurately portray Chambonnières's own style of performance. Being honorable to Chambonnières's music is thus less a matter of *Werktreue* than it is one of *Stiltreue*.

Broude's invocation of a "new dispensation," with all its religious overtones, is telling. It replaces one source of authority and authenticity, the composer's work, with another, the composer's performerly style. It assumes, moreover, that composers who self-published maintained an ethical

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[29] Although I am not aware of any sources that discuss *Stiltreue* as a foil for *Werktreue*, it is sometimes employed by German music critics as a complement of a performer's *Werktreue*, as in the desire to play Mozart like Mozart, Bach like Bach etc.

stance towards how their texts would eventually be used. While I think that *Stiltreue* will prove a useful concept in dealing with Chambonnières's texts, I also think that it is not entirely possible to disentangle the various aims and intentions composers had when they decided to self-publish their works. Composers did in some cases suggest something of an ethical imperative behind their texts: Denis Gaultier's 1670 publication, in which he describes how his pieces "should" be presented, is a good example (Broude 2017, 287-8). At other times, however, composers present their texts in the manner in which they themselves play them, as Marais does in the preface to his first book of viol pieces ("comme je les joue").[30] Marais's publication also presumes a pedagogical attitude on the part of the composer: he devises a series of symbols to represent the various *agréments*, provides fingerings, and includes an explanatory text describing "la delicatesse du toucher de la viole." Chambonnières's print, on the other hand, while it does make a brief nod towards being "more useful to the public," is primarily concerned with presenting an honorable, faithful presentation of his own performance style. To revisit an analogy I made above, the performer's objective in making a recording is often *not* (at least primarily) to influence and constrain subsequent performances. Rather, it is, at least in part, to produce an artistic object—a text—that accurately reflects the performer's own style and intention, expressed through adherence to a particular interpretive strategy (e.g. *Werktreue*).[31] Chambonnières's print can be seen to fulfill similar objectives, functioning as a sort of ideal *recording* of his performances.

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[30] The relevant section from Marais's *Pièces à une et à deux violes*, *Livre premier* (1686, viol partbook, 4) reads as follows: "Pour m'accommoder a la differente porteë des personnes qui joüent de la Viole, J'ay jusques icy donné mes pieces plus ou moins chargées d'accords. Mais ayant reconnu que cette diversité faisoit un mauvais effet, et que l'on ne les joüoit pas telles que je les ay composées; Je me suis enfin determiné a les donner de la maniere dont je les joüe, avec tous les agréments qui les doivent accompagner." (To accommodate myself to the different capacities of those who play the viol, I have until now given my pieces either more or less replete with chords. But having recognized that this diversity created a poor effect, and that they were not being played as I had composed them, I finally decided to give them in the manner in which I play them, with all the ornaments that must accompany them.)

[31] Ashby (2010) discusses these issues in reference to the interpretive strategies of Artur Schnabel and Glenn Gould, the first oriented towards "the intention of the author" and the second to "the intention of the work" (91). Ashby later demonstrates how their performances and recordings ultimately become *texts* in their own right, and that these texts have a life of their own quite apart from their authors. For more on this expanded notion of the musical text, see

If, however, we accept at least a small element of *Stiltreue* at work in seventeenth-century French keyboard culture, how do we explain D'Anglebert's interventions? There seems to be another set of ethical imperatives at work here, something akin to what Peter Kivy describes as "personal authenticity," namely being "authentically one's own, emanating from one's own person—authentic, in other words, as opposed to derivative or imitative" (1998, 108). It is in this sense, I think, that D'Anglebert's notation "performs" Chambonnières's works in a way that is, first and foremost, personally authentic. Personal authenticity, like *Stiltreue*, shifts attention away from the musical work—the raw material of performance—towards the creative, performative act. To be personally authentic as a performer means appropriating the materials of one's performance, making them one's own. Having his own taste and style distinct from that of Chambonnières, D'Anglebert therefore appropriates the musical material at hand in a way wholly consistent with his own preferences. Since D'Anglebert occupies more or less the same social and cultural milieu, since he speaks more or less the same musical language, we recognize this appropriation as a fairly subtle yet consistent transformation of Chambonnières's text.

As historian Jonathan Dewald (1993) has shown, seventeenth-century France was marked by a profound ambivalence between competing ideals of conformity and individualism. On the one hand, individualism was constrained by the conditions of what literary historian Stephen Greenblatt (1980) calls self-fashioning. The seventeenth-century world in which D'Anglebert constructed his identity was guided by a variety of cultural and social norms, including taste (*bon goût)* and decorum (*bienséance*), forming "a kind of communal judgment and taste shared among connoisseurs – a 'sensus communis' of experts" (Christensen 2010, 89). D'Anglebert therefore created his own artistic persona through a process of self-fashioning, through conformation to these shared norms.

Cobussen (2002).

On the other hand, the seventeenth-century French aristocracy—the part of society perhaps most oppressed by the demands of the state—explored ways of escaping tradition and dynasticism. As Dewald puts it,

> as family, state, and ethical ideals increasingly demanded renunciation of individual desires, men and women became increasingly absorbed in understanding themselves as individuals, and indeed in understanding personal desire itself. They explored their inner lives in autobiographies and novels, and they presented their lives in terms of personal achievement. They became increasingly preoccupied with emotion, which attached them to friends and lovers—in other words, to chosen objects of affection. Such deepening concern with the personal offered one response to the oppressiveness of seventeenth-century expectations. (Dewald 1993, 9)

It is tempting to imagine that harpsichordists—and especially Chambonnières, who held aristocratic pretensions—might also have shared these feelings of ambivalence toward individualism and *bienséance*. As discussed above, Cypess (2007) argues convincingly that a concern for individuality informed a host of Chambonnières's professional choices, including his decision to leave court and his method of engraving his harpsichord pieces. At the same time, Chambonnières achieved this individuality through socially- and culturally-available means of self-fashioning. In effect, Chambonnières and D'Anglebert could both only ever express their individualism or "personal authenticity" through negotiation with good taste, as particular inflections of *bienséance*. For listeners in seventeenth-century France like Le Gallois—fully attuned to this negotiation, to the subtleties of performance within their own cultural practice—they might well have found D'Anglebert's transformation of Chambonnières even more pronounced than we do; that is, they would have recognized even more of D'Anglebert the performer within Chambonnières's text. This personal authenticity—D'Anglebert's own originality within a culture of imitation—would necessarily have been of greater importance to him than any competing notion of *Stiltreue* that Broude proposes. As a professional musician, after all, it was only by cultivating a performerly personality of his own that D'Anglebert could develop and cement his stature and reputation.

In many ways, in fact, D'Anglebert stands as one of the clearest examples of personal authenticity within seventeenth-century French keyboard culture. D'Anglebert's various transcriptions, in particular, are emblematic of an obsessive yet nuanced approach to musical appropriation. In his transcriptions of orchestral music by Lully, for example, D'Anglebert "strips the pieces down to their basic skeletal form of a melody and its supporting harmonies" (Maple 1988, 558). He then uses this reduction as a basis for constructing his own, highly ornamented keyboard texture.[32] The various *parties de remplissage* (inner voices) of Lully's orchestral texture are omitted, and in their place, D'Anglebert employs a variety of broken chords, octave doublings, and other idiomatic keyboard features. In essence, he re-makes the piece in his own image, rendering it in his own style of (notated) performance.

As musicologist David Ledbetter has shown, the lute transcriptions from Rés-89ter show a careful conciliation between D'Anglebert's own keyboard style and that of lutenists. In contrast to the literal rendering of Perrine (1680), as well as various German sources that present a regularized three-part keyboard texture (Ledbetter 1987, 58), D'Anglebert instead creates a true synthesis. Through careful management of texture, he combines the loose part-writing of lute texture with the sustained melodic integrity of the outer voices as demanded by keyboard style; at the same time, he translates effects from the lute version (particularly the *tirer et rabattre*, or strumming) by way of more idiomatic effects for the keyboard, like syncopation and arpeggiation (Ledbetter 1987, 86). D'Anglebert seems, therefore, to have attempted to integrate the lutenists' style into his own musical language, extending even to his adoption of the lutenists' characteristic ornament symbols and peculiarities of tablature notation. As Ledbetter notes,

> in the case of D'Anglebert, whose keyboard style most thoroughly absorbed that of the lute, this naturalization of lute tablature extended to the notation of

[32] D'Anglebert was, of course, the harpsichordist of Lully's orchestra, and so it stands to reason that D'Anglebert's transcriptions of Lully may reflect something of his style of continuo playing as well.

> ornaments and even the characteristic séparé and ensemble signs. The notation was a natural consequence of a similarity of technical means and expressive aims. (Ledbetter 1987, 140)

Through his transcriptions, then, D'Anglebert is assimilating not only the lutenists' pieces, but their style as well. Whether conceived as musical apprenticeship, or perhaps homage, the lessons he learns from the lutenists become a vital part of D'Anglebert's self-fashioning, as he incorporates elements of lute style into his own style of composition and performance.

Only in the case of those who have fully absorbed the taste and style of their masters can we really speak of a perfect combination of stylistic and personal authenticity. I am reminded of the example of Hardel, cited by Le Gallois as the inheritor of Chambonnières's performerly style. Hardel, by virtue of his stature as a composer and performer in French musical culture, is already endowed with "personal authenticity." But we can also recognize the rhetorical strategy by which Le Gallois imbues Hardel with Chambonnières's authority too: he is credited with being "le plus parfait imitateur de ce grand homme, dont il possedoit tout à fait le genie" (Fuller 1976, 24).[33] By this invocation of the transmission of authority, Le Gallois thus participates in what Aleida and Jan Assmann call a *logic of authenticity,* in which Hardel's's activities "prolong the authority of a living tradition" (2003, 151). This logic of authenticity, according to the Assmanns, serves to distinguish between the *original* and the *fake*. Within modern cultures, the fake "displaces, represses, or substitutes for the original—it is a false usurper—and the original always unmasks and dissolves the fake" (Assmann 2003, 149). Using this logic, Hardel's performances should be understood as original and authentic, thereby revealing the inauthenticity of the various "fakes" also in circulation, "*avec beacoup de deffauts,*" as Chambonnières complained. Hardel's authority, his personal authenticity, is an extension of Chambonnières's own. D'Anglebert on the other hand, having been omitted from

[33] "The most perfect emulator of the great man, whose genius he entirely possessed" (Fuller 1976, 23).

Le Gallois's account, is resolutely excluded from that same living tradition; his own authenticity is set apart from Chambonnières's. In this way, Hardel could at once be faithful to Chambonnières (*Stiltreue*) and to himself, while D'Anglebert could not possibly do both.

In summary, the sources for Chambonnières's music demonstrate a tremendously flexible approach to the presentation of the composer's text, encompassing a wide range of differences in texture, rhythm, ornamentation, and style. Some of these sources, like Bauyn and Oldham, were intended for professional musicians, and as such, they provide minimally-specified readings that must be amplified by the performer. Other sources, like Chambonnières's published edition, produce something more akin to a model performance, intended to preserve and sustain a given performance style. Many more sources, like D'Anglebert's, include deliberate changes introduced by the copyist, neither amplifying nor reducing the copyist's source, but rather transforming it to accommodate the copyist's own taste (*goût*). This heterotextual variance is symptomatic of a performance-based culture that valorized freedom, variety, and spontaneity, granting the performer a considerable degree of latitude. Whether guided by some kind of *Stiltreue*, or instead by a sense of personal authenticity, or even something between the two, the sounding performance was ultimately more important than any particular series of signs inscribed on paper.

Finding the piece

Lurking behind all of this is a tacit assumption: namely, that each of these readings *is a reading of the same piece*. Faced with the textual, notational differences between sources purporting to represent the same piece, this point is by no means self-evident. How can we assess the kinds of variance introduced by performers within a seventeenth-century culture of appropriation? At what point is the piece's identity first established and subsequently transformed? When does it cease to be the same piece? In Gustafson and Herlin's edition of the complete works, for example, they sort all the readings for a given piece into a variety of discrete "versions." The readings of a given version are

thus more similar to themselves than they are to another version's readings, differing in ways that are considered "ornamental" while the differences between versions are "structural." Could there exist, then, some kind of minimally-specified score, perhaps consisting of a plain treble/bass pair, that encompasses all of the potential performances of, say, the *Courante Iris* (GusC 8)? Such a score would need to be generic enough to accommodate the full range of possible renditions of the piece, including all the versions collected by Gustafson and Herlin as well as any other possible versions one could imagine, while being specific enough to exclude renditions that are clearly of another piece.

Let us consider, for example, seven different versions of the *Courante Iris*, the first five measures of which are reproduced in Figure 2.3. In addition to several sources discussed earlier (Chambonnières's published print of 1670, Rés-89ter, and the Bauyn manuscript), the comparison chart in Figure 2.3 includes readings from the Borel manuscript (copied in France ca. 1660–1680), Brussels 27220 (copied in France after 1678), the Redon manuscript (compiled ca. 1661), and the Babel manuscript (copied in London ca. 1702 by French musician Charles Babel).[34] Intuitively, one recognizes *the same piece* within all of these variant readings. Nevertheless, the different styles in which the piece is clothed do have an effect on the listener's appreciation of a host of musical details. Consider, for example, the way in which these readings treat the left-hand accompaniment in measure 3. Chamb I, Bauyn, Rés-89ter, and Babell all choose to tie the bass C in the middle of the bar, creating a lovely 2-3 suspension with the tenor and soprano. The readings in Brussels and Borel, lacking this tie, instead create an impression of crispness and simplicity. The Redon reading, meanwhile, includes the tie but delays the resolution of the bass until the end of the bar, thereby mollifying any accent we might perceive on the third beat. Small "ornamental" details like these

[34] For complete bibliographic information and a detailed description of these various sources, as well as all other sources for Chambonnières's music, please consult Gustafson and Herlin (2017).

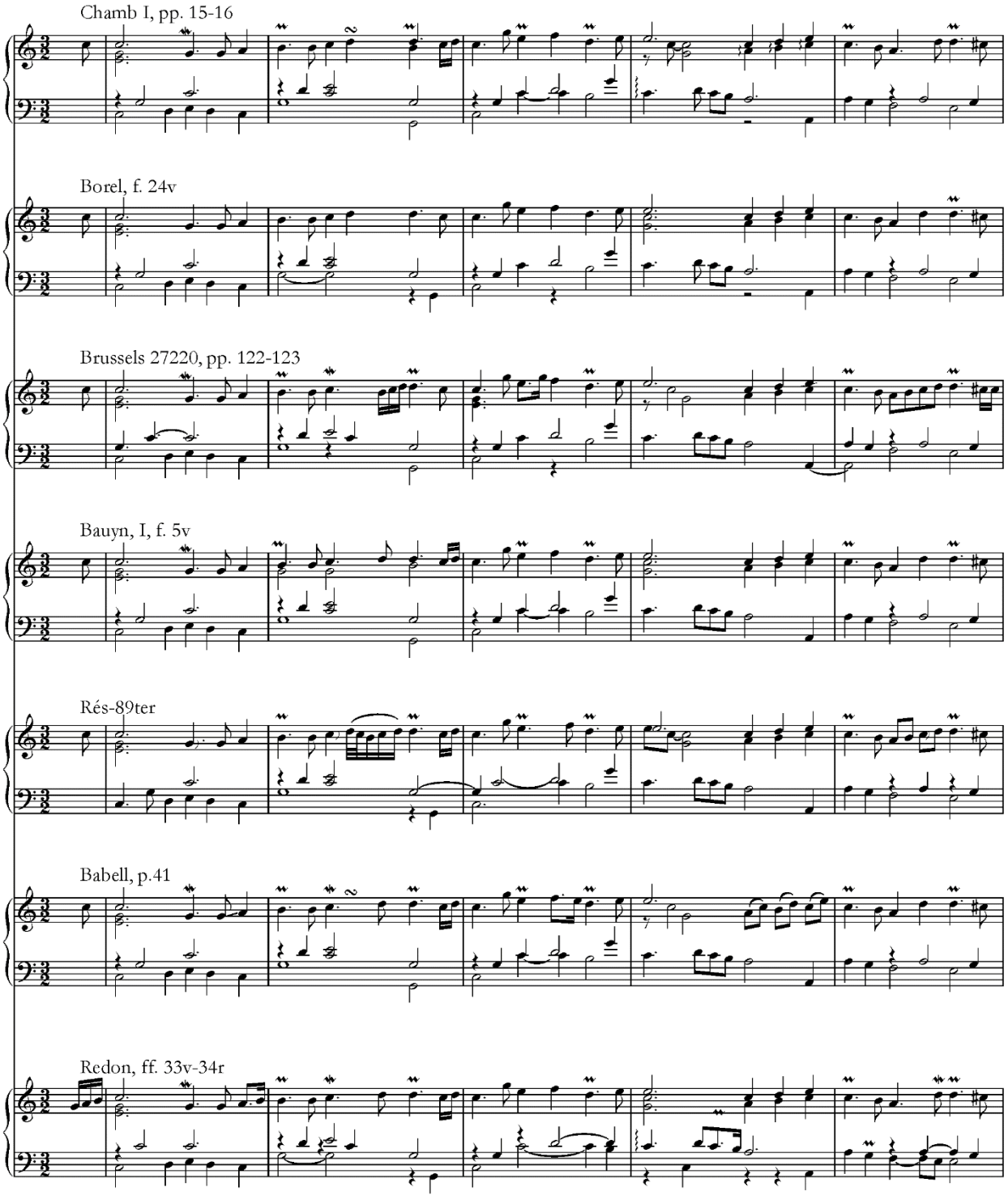

Figure 2.3. A Comparison of Seven Sources of *Courante Iris*, GusC 8.

accumulate over the course of each reading to such an extent that we must ask: *how much* of any given reading is structural or essential?

Nicholas Cook (1999) has addressed a very similar problem in connection with the explosion of performances, arrangements, transcriptions, and re-compositions of Corelli's Op. 5 that took place during the eighteenth century. The tradition of Italian adagio performance, in which a minimally specified score is filled by the performer with improvised "graces," seems to imply a stratified, hierarchical division of labor between composer and performer. The composer creates the structure—imagined by Cook to be something like a Schenkerian foreground—that gives the piece a lasting identity, while the performer creates the sounding "surface" that varies from performance to performance. In fact, even Corelli "performs" his structure to some extent, since the musical surface he provides (in the form of the un-ornamented solo part) is already an elaboration, albeit an unimaginative one, of what—Cook imagines—Corelli imagined (consciously or not) as the underlying, work-defining structure. Thus, in playing the adagio, the soloist is expected to *see and hear through* the notation to the underlying structure, and respond to it. If indeed each performance of Corelli's piece is an embellishment or realization of this pre-determined structure, then one might expect each of those performances to reduce in analysis to that original structure. This is, however, not the case. Instead, Cook discovers that a given set of graces will sometimes reduce to another structure altogether, thereby complicating the notion that a piece's identity rests in a single, stable structure. At this point, one can retreat to a higher analytical vantage point, but as Cook notes, "used this way, Schenkerian analysis becomes like bubble gum: the further you stretch it, the thinner it gets" (1999, 207-8). In this hierarchical conception of musical identity, a given structural reduction—meant to preserve the work's identity in the face of a variable performance practice—is either over- or under-specified, either overly restrictive of its performance possibilities or so generic as to be nearly meaningless. In this way, Cook argues, the entire "genre" of eighteenth-century

Corelli Op. 5 performances resists being boiled down analytically to a single underlying structure, and if it is to maintain its sense of integrity as a musical work, it must do so through other means. Cook therefore posits the idea that composerly and performerly personas interact within a piece of music in dialogic fashion: "performers have the options of working in line with the compositional structure as represented by structural analysis, such as Schenkerian analysis proper, or of working against it" (219).[35] Moreover, the compositional structure to which a given performer responds is relational rather than absolute; that is, as "different musicians make different decisions as to what is essential and what is contingent" (220), they will (probably unconsciously) *see through* Corelli's scores in different ways:

> They are graphic scores; scores, that is, designed not for literal execution, but for seeing, or better, for seeing through. You read the music, and then you don't play it; you play something quite different, but based on it. (Cook 1999, 222)

The unity and identity of Corelli's Op. 5, then, are ultimately assured by this continual reference to Corelli's original notation, "performed" on paper for the benefit of the musical eye.

We are on familiar ground here. Given the heterotextual presentation of the corpus, one wonders whether Chambonnières's textual variance might also resist being reduced to a single underlying compositional structure. One senses, as well, that each performerly text has responded in a fairly unique way to the question of *what* the piece is, what is essential, and what is contingent. D'Anglebert's interventions, for example, which often have profound consequences for our *rhythmic* appreciation of the piece, clearly demonstrate that he considered such details to be non-essential to the piece's identity. But while Cook's argument does indeed invite parallels with Chambonnières's corpus, there are also some significant points of difference. For one, the profusely ornamented solo

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[35] Although Cook imagines this "compositional structure" as something analogous to a Schenkerian foreground, this kind of analysis is actually not so far removed from a more historically appropriate analytical tool, namely thoroughbass. Indeed, it is no accident that an "imaginary continuo"—a term coined by theorist William Rothstein(1990) to describe a rhythmic reduction consisting of melody and figured bass—functions as an important element in some kinds of Schenkerian analysis.

lines of Corellian adagios go far beyond any degree of amplification found in French keyboard music, while at the same time the variance they exhibit is entirely restricted in other respects: the bass line, together with its rhythm and underlying harmony all remain unchanged, for example. The most important of these differences, however, is that this profusion of "graces" can all be traced back to one Corellian text, namely Corelli's authorized original of 1700. Indeed, Cook's dialogic analysis of performerly intervention depends upon a stable textual reference point; performers define their interventions in relation to something unchanging. At first glance, some of the underspecified readings, like Bauyn, might seem to function analogously to Corelli's unornamented original; when it comes time to play the piece, the performer must *see and hear through* the surface to the underlying structure before adding their own touch. The analogy is imperfect on several levels, though, since, firstly, Bauyn is in no way authoritative; secondly, any reading of Chambonnières, no matter how basic, is already more fully elaborated than an unornamented Corellian adagio; and thirdly, where Corelli produced something foundational and originary, Chambonnières's authoritative text could only attempt to influence and inflect a textual process already in motion, a heterotextuality.

Without this originary text, how are we to understand the art of performance in seventeenth-century French harpsichord culture? That is, how can we appreciate the notationally-preserved work of performers without the texts on which their performances are based? At the very least, perhaps we can attempt to gain some access to a sort of imaginary *Urtext*, defined in the space (that is, the variance) between readings, allowing us to construct a hypothetical text that defines the essential contours of the piece. Music theorist Stephen Grazzini suggests such a process:

> In the case of Chambonnières, it is harder to say what the piece ought to look like, if it could be separated from the written-out performance. Perhaps it would look like the barest of the manuscript scores, or perhaps it would be something even more abstract, like a skeletal melody and a figured bass. (Grazzini 2014, 108)

The idea is that by comparing a variety of readings, we gain some understanding of the subtext informing each performance/reading, even if the exact form and detail of that subtext remain unclear. Moreover, after having determined this subtext, we also gain some understanding of the processes and procedures by which performers vary (i.e., perform) their subtext. Fuller seems to have intuited this kind of seeing-through in his envisioning of a new edition of Chambonnières's works that includes "the richest, most ornamented reading—not on the principle that the most elaborate one represents the author's latest thoughts, but in order to supply the user with as many stylish performing ideas as possible" (1993, 201). For the contemporary performer, then, we seem to have arrived at a recipe for an historically-informed performance of a piece by Chambonnières, roughly outlined by Fuller with additional subtext from me: step one, "read through all 60 of the pieces from the composer's engraved edition in order to soak up the style" and "take the editor's chosen reading simply as a guide and inspiration"; step two, play through a variety of readings of the same piece (provided by Gustafson and Herlin) in order to *see through* to the *Urtext* underneath; and step three, accept "the player's responsibility not to play what he sees," embellishing the *Urtext* in a stylistically-appropriate fashion (Fuller 1993, 201).

There is a problem, though. The lack of an originary text to *see through* calls into question the kinds of distinctions we can make between essential and contingent elements of a piece. Without a point of origin, we lack access to the dialogic layer of performance in which any "seeing-through" takes place. The seeing-through I described above also assumes a hierarchical organization, in which structural elements in the music may be identified as essential, while surface details (or ornaments) are contingent. Gustafson and Herlin, in their approach to distinguishing between "versions" of pieces based on their degree of ornamental or structural difference, imply that this hierarchical division of the piece's identity also applies to Chambonnières. However, I think there is a certain ambiguity in any distinction one might make between purely ornamental differences (Parville vs.

Bauyn) and the more substantive differences discussed by Broude and Fuller. To be sure, *agréments* continued to be recognized as an incidental detail to be freely altered by performers well into the eighteenth century, while the other forms of performerly variance gradually became less acceptable. Saint-Lambert, writing in 1702, offers an opinion typical of his time:

> Après avoir appris à les [i.e. les agrémens] connoître icy, on pourra les pratiquer en toutes les occasions, où l'on trouvera qu'ils seront à propos: car, comme je l'ay dit tant des fois, on est extrémement libre sur le choix des Agrémens; & dans les Pièces qu'on étudie, on peut en faire aux endroits même où ils ne sont pas marquez; retrancher ceux qui y font, si l'on trouve qu'ils ne sients pas bien à la Pièce, & y en ajouter d'autres à son gré.[36] (Saint-Lambert 1702, 123)

He is, however, quite careful to spell out some of the limits of ornamentation, namely "que jamais les agréments ne doivent alterer le chant" (124),[37] a restriction which seems to preclude the kind of variance practiced in the seventeenth century. By the time of François Couperin's maturity in 1722, Couperin felt that the correct *agréments* were as essential a part of a good performance of his *Troisième Livre* as anything else:

> Je suis toujours surpris (apres les soins que je me suis donné pour marquer les agrémens qui conviennent à mes Pièces, dont j'ay donné, à part, un explication assés intelligible dans une Méthode particuliere, connüe sous le titre de L'art de toucher le Clavecin) d'entendre des personnes qui les ont aprises sans s'y assujétir. C'est une négligence qui n'est pas pardonnable, d'autant qu'il n'est point arbitraire d'y mettre tels agrémens qu'on veut. Je declare donc que mes pièces doivent être exécutées comme je les ay marquées, et qu'elle ne feront jamais une certaine impression sur les personnes qui ont le goût vray, tant qu'on n'observera pas à la lettre, tout ce que j'y ay marqué, sans augmentation ni diminution.[38] (Couperin 1722, Préface)

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[36] "After having learned these ornaments, one may apply them on all occasions when one finds them appropriate; because, as I have said many times, one is quite free in the choice of ornaments, and in the pieces one studies, one may apply them even in places where they are not marked, or remove the ones already there, if ones finds they do not fit well with the piece, and introduce others in their place" (my translation).

[37] "That the ornaments must never distort the melody" (my translation).

[38] "I am always surprised (after the care I have taken to mark suitable ornaments for my pieces, of which I have given, besides, a very intelligible explanation in my own method, known under the title The Art of Playing the Harpsichord) to hear people who have learned the pieces without respecting the ornaments. It is an unforgivable negligence, inasmuch as it is not an arbitrary matter to place such ornaments wherever one likes. I therefore declare that my pieces must be played as I have written them, and that they will never make an impression on people of good taste unless one observes everything that I have marked to the letter, without adding or removing anything" (my translation).

While many read this assertion as yet another step in the long march towards prescriptive, composerly authority, I prefer to look at it another way. For one, we need to consider Couperin's audience: he likely wrote this preface not for posterity, but rather for an amateur class of performers who might not necessarily be expected to exhibit *bon goût*. Even beyond any innate taste in music that a student may possess, that taste must also be informed by experience playing a musical instrument. Indeed, although Saint-Lambert seemed to be advocating for an ornamental free-for-all, he is quite insistent that such freedom is always conditioned by the performer's good taste and experience as a performer:

> Mais il faut cependant prendre garde à ne se pas donner trop de liberté sur ce sujet, sur-tout dans le commencement; de peur qu'en voulant rafiner trop tôt, on ne gâtât ce qu'on voudroit embellir: C'est pourquoy il est bon, & même necessaire, de s'assujettir d'abord aux Agrémens des autres, & de ne les faire qu'aux endroits où ils sont marquez dans les Piéces, jusqu'à-ce qu'on soit assez fort, pour juger sans se tromper, que d'autres n'y seront point de mal. On doit être persuadé, quelque bon goût qu'on ait pour le Clavecin, que si l'on n'a que six mois d'exercise, on ne peut pas si bien discerner ce qui donne de la grace au Jeu, que ceux qui ont pratiqué le Métier pendant vingt ou trente Ans, & qui ont acquis par cette longue experience, une connoissance plus sûre de ce qui peut embellir leur Art.[39] (Saint-Lambert 1702, 124)

Thus, both taste and experience were required for successful performerly intervention, and Couperin evidently wanted to make sure that performers of his music recognized this.

Beyond speaking to amateurs, what might Couperin say to the experienced professional musician wishing to play his music? Are the *specific* ornaments notated in Couperin's score necessarily as important as the style and taste those ornaments exemplify? When we see Couperin in his historical context—as another French composer-performer in a long line extending back to Chambonnières,

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[39] "One must meanwhile take care not to give oneself too much freedom in this matter, particularly at the beginning [of one's studies]; for fear that, in wanting to refine too early, one might spoil what one wishes to embellish. This is why it is best, and even necessary, to first subject oneself to the ornaments of others and to only apply them in the places where they are marked in pieces, until one is sufficiently experienced to judge without being mistaken that others wouldn't be bad. One must be persuaded, however good one's taste for the harpsichord, that if one has only had six months of practice, one cannot discern as well what gives grace to playing as can those who have practiced their *métier* for twenty or thirty years, and who have acquired by this long experience a much surer knowledge of what can embellish their art" (my translation).

D'Anglebert, Marais, and others—his *Troisième Livre* appears not as a series of musical works, but rather, as a series of exemplary performances, designed to illustrate Couperin's own inimitable performance style. Why else, after all, would Couperin appeal to the performer's desire to make an impression on "people of good taste," were not the quality of the performance at stake? What Couperin expresses, then, is not a push towards *Werktreue*. Rather, it is a feeling that appropriate ornamentation is as important for a stylish performance as anything else. In this same vein, Margot Martin has drawn comparisons between *agréments* and the affected rhetorical practices of the *précieuses* who presided over salon culture:

> Just as the précieuses took ordinary words and phrases and by their enrichment and embellishment turned conversation into a refined art, harpsichord composers used the simple melodies, chords and rhythms of common dances and enriched and embellished them. Agréments and the brisé style were their tools of refinement and means of sophistication. (Martin 1995, 6)

In a very real sense, the ornaments being used to embellish ordinary conversation were just as important as that conversation's subject, since the ornaments were the means by which salon participants demonstrated their art and contributed to their social standing. I am tempted to imagine that, in a culture that fetishized ornament to such a degree, French music's *agréments* were similarly regarded and prioritized by its cultural participants.[40] And if the right *agréments* (or at least the right kinds of *agréments* used at the right times) are indeed as important as any piece's structural elements, then one begins to question any separation of the two kinds of variance at all.

Of course, different kinds of musical practices may embrace clearer conceptions of the structural and the ornamental. In this connection, we might compare the practice of the *clavecinistes* with that of Lully. If Jean-Laurent Le Cerf de la Viéville (1705) is to be believed, then it would

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[40] Broude may agree on this point. In discussing the famous story of how Marin Marais was forced to hide in the garden at night in order to hear his teacher, Sainte-Colombe, play his pieces—related by Evrard Titon du Tillet (1732, 624)—Broude makes the rather compelling suggestion that "it may well be that Marais was less concerned with Sainte-Colombe's compositions than with the ornaments he devised and used" (2003, 47).

appear that Lully made very clear distinctions between essential and contingent features in his own music. Le Cerf describes how Lully and his secretaries worked in a sort of workshop tradition, in which, for many movements, Lully himself established only the most important elements—the melody and figured bass—and left his secretaries to complete the composition:

> Lulli faisoit lui-même toutes les parties de ses principaux choeurs, & de ses duo, trio, quatuor, importans . . . Hormis dans ses grands morceaux, dans ces Pieces importantes, Lulli ne faisoit que le dessus & la basse, & laissoit faire par ses Secretaires la haute-contre, la taille & la quinte.[41] (Le Cerf 1705, Seconde Partie, 126-7)

As Broude and Mary Cyr have argued, Lully focused his efforts on creating something like what would later be called a *partition réduite,* containing the "constitutive elements" of any given musical number (2018, 603). This *partition réduite* could then be filled out and completed with a variable number of *parties de remplissage* according to the demands of a given performance setting. In contrast to the *clavecinistes*—who combined the personae of composer and performer in one person, and often in one text—Lully's working methods stratify the production of music, with a clear demarcation between the roles of composer (Lully) and his "performers" (the secretaries).[42] This conventionalized practice naturally leads to conventionalized ways of interacting with scores as well, with clearly marked boundaries between the structural and the ornamental.[43]

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[41] "Lully himself created all the parts of his principal choruses and his important duos, trios, and quartets . . . [But] aside from such big numbers in important works, Lully wrote only the *dessus* and *basse*, and left to be done by his secretaries the *haute-contre*, the *taille*, and the *quinte*" (Broude and Cyr 2018, 601).

[42] Interestingly, however, Lully also seems to have composed through the medium of performance. According to Le Cerf (1706), rather than writing the *partition réduite* himself, he worked it out at the keyboard and then dictated it to his secretaries. "Lulli la lisoit jusqu'à la sçavoir presque par coeur: il s'établissoit à son Clavessin, chantoit & rechantoit les paroles; battoit son Clavessin, & faisoit une basse continuë. Quand il avoit achevé son chant, il se l'imprimoit tellement dans la tête, qu'il ne s'y seroit pas mepris d'une Note. Lalouette ou Colasse [Lully's secretaries] venoient, ausquels il le dictoit" (Le Cerf 1706, troisième partie, 215; Lully read [the scene] until he knew it nearly by heart. He set himself at the harpsichord, sang the words again and again, hammered away at his harpsichord, and fashioned a basso continuo. Once he had arrived at his melody, he impressed it so firmly upon his memory that he would not mistake a single note. Lalouette or Colasse came, and he dictated it to them).

[43] Broude (1992) explicitly links the division of labor between Lully and his secretaries with the artistic workshop tradition, whereby an artwork's most important features were fixed by the master artist, leaving his apprentices to fill in the details of lesser importance.

Let us consider the Courante Iris once again. I suggested above that by rigorously comparing sources, one could arrive at a sort of composite Urtext that defines the piece's identity. If we bracket temporarily our preconceived notions about surface versus structure, we find something striking: every source, save one (Borel), contains a pincé over the soprano G in the middle of the first bar. Is this single ornament part of the piece's identity? And if not, why does it re-appear so consistently in nearly every source? In a repertoire like that of the *clavecinistes,* in which the roles of performer and composer are so intertwined, such questions are by no means trivial. Unlike the *tragédies* of Lully, this repertoire resists a rigidly hierarchical division between surface and structure, and in this way, it betrays its origins not as a textual practice—that is, literate music—but rather as a product of something like an oral tradition.

Orality and Improvisation

In his discussion of eighteenth-century Corellian ornamentation, Cook eventually finds that such textual practices have much in common with oral traditions. He cites the work of Charles Seeger on the "Barbara Allen" folk tune, who concluded

> no such entity as 'the "Barbara Allen" tune' can be set up other than for temporary convenience. The fact that with a few intermediate steps we can easily change one version into the other must be regarded in the light of the fact that we can change either version into any other tune of like length with a little, less, or more ease. Melodies are, by their very nature, infinitely changeable or interchangeable. (Seeger 1977, 316)

It is, therefore, impossible to uncover the *Urtext* of a folk song like "Barbara Allen" because such a thing does not exist. Rather than pointing to a hypothetical original or prototype, we can only determine the identity of such a tune by way of its relationship to other tunes, as well as the concrete manifestations of these tunes in performance. Cook eventually concludes that "the result is what Wittgenstein called a 'family resemblances' structure: a kind of network structure where everything is linked, whether directly or indirectly, to everything else" (1999, 211). Grazzini rightly points out that while Cook's comparison of folksong with Corelli is not entirely apt—since Corelli's

Op. 5, despite its wide network of interrelationships, is nevertheless "dominated by Corelli's pristine, widely-distributed, and authoritative original" (2014, 107)—it does work very well with much seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

A number of concepts borrowed from the study of orality and oral poetry are particularly useful here. For example, the concept of the *multiform text* from Albert Lord's *The Singer of Tales* (1960/2000) recalls Fuller's idea of heterotextuality. First developed by Milman Parry and his student Lord, and later expanded in *The Singer of Tales*, the famous Parry-Lord hypothesis posits that the Homeric epics were created in and through performance. Oral poets relied upon a number of pre-established poetic/linguistic formulas, remembered, chosen, varied, and realized in the course of performing their songs. The multiform text is what results from this confluence of memory and variation, existing in a perpetual state of flux. By this logic, Lord would argue, a Homeric epic cannot have a single, authentic textual origin, since it exists only in performance, in the variance between (oral) texts:

> Our real difficulty arises from the fact that, unlike the oral poet, we are not accustomed to thinking in terms of fluidity. We find it difficult to grasp something that is multiform. It seems to us necessary to construct an ideal text or to seek an original, and we remain dissatisfied with an ever-changing phenomenon. I believe that once we know the facts of oral composition we must cease trying to find an original of any traditional song. From one point of view each performance is an original. (Lord 2000, 100)

Likewise, Fuller's heterotextual analysis of Chambonnières embraces the futility of searching for authentic origins. The various sources for Chambonnières's music point instead to the possibilities of multiformity and variation, created in performance.

The concept of *mouvance*, formulated by Paul Zumthor (1972, 73), describes the processes that drive this textual variation over time, not *un achèvement*, but *un texte en train de se faire*. Although originally suggested by Zumthor as a way of understanding medieval manuscript transmission—that is, of understanding how texts evolve within a literate culture—*mouvance* is also explicitly linked with

the workings of orality (Zumthor 1987, 160-61). *Mouvance* creates a certain instability in the oral or written text, then, whose creative potential can only be realized in performance. It is not such a stretch to describe seventeenth-century French keyboard performance in terms of *mouvance* either; the texts that performers *see through* seem to demand their own instability, serving only as temporary textual placeholders in a self-perpetuating performerly tradition, with each new performance contributing to the text's own multiformity.

Classics scholar Gregory Nagy has synthesized a number of studies of textual variation in his *Poetry as Performance* (1996), ultimately strengthening and extending the link between *mouvance* and performance within oral traditions. In particular, Nagy draws upon an edition by Rupert T. Pickens (1978) of the songs of twelfth-century troubadour Jaufré Rudel. In his edition, Pickens uses the concept of *mouvance* to explain the variance exhibited by the songs attributed to Rudel, manifesting in a number of discrete "versions" of the songs, created through performance. Interestingly, Pickens notices that the Provençal word *mover*, in the same sense as the French *mouvoir* or the English *move*, is used in Rudel's songs to express the workings of *mouvance*. In this connection, both Pickens and Nagy cite the ending of Rudel's Song VI, version 1a. In it, the poet speaks to an anonymous, intermediary transmitter of the song (presumably a *jongleur*) who is responsible for bringing it to its final intended audience: "and the one who will learn it from me / beware lest it *move* or change" (Pickens 1978, 232, my emphasis).[44] In this way, the poet demonstrates a conscious awareness of *mouvance* within his own sociocultural setting, albeit a negative one. More generally—and positively—Rudel's songs point to an understanding of all kinds of composition, re-composition, and performance in terms of "movement." By way of example, Nagy cites the beginning of Rudel's Song I, version 1, in which the poet "starts his song by picturing a nightingale as it sings, that is, as it

[44] "e cel qi de mi l'aprena/ gard si non *mueva* ni camgi" (my emphasis)

moves its song" (Nagy 1996, 15, original emphasis). *Mouvance*, then, should be understood as an essential quality of *any* creative act within an oral tradition such as Rudel's.

Within seventeenth-century French harpsichord culture, we can observe varying degrees of *mouvance* at work. At the more conservative end, perhaps, would be the many notated "performances" of Chambonnières's Courante Iris discussed above, each of which ultimately represents the same piece, namely Chambonnières's. The *clavecinistes'* practice of composing and performing *doubles* (or variations), however, takes *mouvance* to new heights. Although the composer of a piece might also write a corresponding *double,* more frequently they were furnished by another composer or, even more likely, improvised in performance (Reimann 1952, 322). The *double* stereotypically tends to lavish attention on the upper voice of a piece, featuring diminutions of the melody in fairly regular rhythmic values, often twice as fast as the main note value of the *simple* (the original piece). In a courante that tends to feature quarter-note motion, for instance, the *double* would likely move in eighth notes. Any additional interventions—like altering the bassline, or managing the texture differently—tend to be made in order to support a more active melodic line. In spite of these conventions, however, composer/performers could still be quite free and inventive in treating the *simple*. D'Anglebert, for example, in his *double* for Chambonnières's Courante in G (GusC 56), goes well beyond the ordinary (see Figure 2.4). Although he does show a preference for ornamenting the melodic line in eighth-notes, as is usual in *doubles* for courantes, he also partakes in decorating the lower lines, and as Maple (1988, 409) notes, even allows himself some imitation between voices. Given the extent of these interventions, it should come as no surprise that the *double* often receives an attribution distinct from that of its corresponding *simple*. In a real sense, then, the *double* represents a meeting point for composer and performer at the center of *mouvance*, with both parties sharing jointly in the piece's authorship.

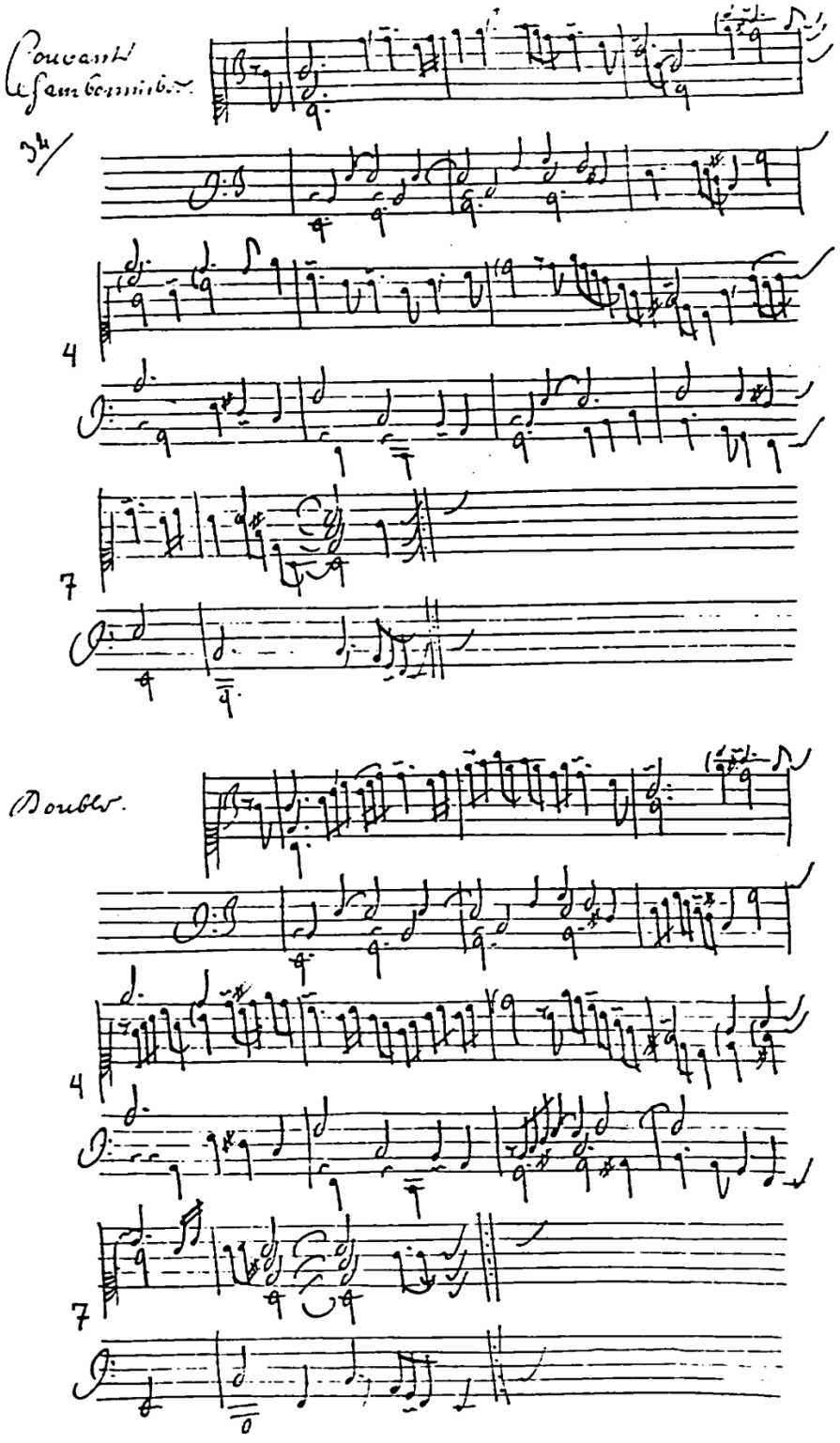

Figure 2.4. Chambonnières's Courante in G major (GusC 56) and D'Anglebert's *Double*

If we are correct in our assumption that the music of the seventeenth-century *clavecinistes* works like an oral tradition, and is therefore subject to *mouvance*, what happens when the music "moves" too far? In the case of Rudel, the poet clearly invokes the idea of "moving" a song, but beyond that, "the anonymous transmitter is enjoined to learn the song from the poet exactly as it was composed," lest the transmitter "break," "fracture," or "move or change" it (Nagy 1996, 22). Nagy hypothesizes that movement (*mouvance*) is valorized when it takes place within an authoritative performance setting, that is, when the performer has been authorized by the poet and the poet's performance is, in turn, validated by the audience. Such positive valuation of *mouvance* affirms the stability and lasting identity of a song within a given performance tradition, even as it undergoes variation and change over time. It is in this sense that Nagy can redefine *mouvance* as "the process of recomposition-in-performance as actually recognized by a living oral tradition, where the recognition implies the paradox of immediate change without ultimate change" (25). "Movement," however, is understood negatively as "breaking" when these conditions have not been met:

> If, however, a jongleur "moves" the song of a troubadour in an unauthorized situation, it is a matter of negative change because tradition breaks down. For a performer of a song to "move" it in a negative sense is to "change" it, even to "break" it. (Nagy 1996, 23)

We can understand the kinds of "movement" undergone by Chambonnières's pieces in a similar light. When the performance is "authorized"—either played by Chambonnières himself or by one of his best students—then the various changes introduced are considered faithful and honorable, and they participate in a *logic of authenticity* whereby the performance is perfectly aligned with the "original." The valuation of an "unauthorized" performance like D'Anglebert's, on the other hand, might be up for debate, depending on how one understood the tradition. Le Gallois, for example, would presumably not have cared for D'Anglebert's "breaking" of Chambonnières's performance tradition, but it is not difficult to imagine other listeners—like Kenneth Gilbert, for example, who, as we may recall, very much preferred D'Anglebert's style—who would have approved heartily.

D'Anglebert did indeed explore the outer limits of performerly *mouvance,* and in at least one case, he broke them. Douglas Maple (1988, 381), operating under the probably incorrect (yet impossible to prove otherwise) assumption that D'Anglebert studied with Chambonnières, considered the possibility that the readings in Rés-89ter constitute exercises in composition, perhaps even done with Chambonnières's encouragement. As I have argued extensively above, I prefer to view the contents of Rés-89ter as exercises in performance. Such distinctions become even more nuanced, though, in the confluence of performerly and composerly activities that led to D'Anglebert's Gaillarde in C. Gustafson (1979, 102) had already noted the remarkable similarities between this piece and another by Chambonnières, one that appears both as a Sarabande in C (GusC 34a) in the Bauyn manuscript (vol. I, f. 11r) and a Gaillarde in C (GusC 34) in the 1670 print.[45] The first strains of Chambonnières's and D'Anglebert's gaillardes are reproduced below in Figures 2.5 and 2.6.

As Maple notes, "there is not a direct measure-by-measure correspondence between the two pieces, but the similarities are so strong that there can be little doubt that D'Anglebert's piece was modeled on, or at least inspired by, Chambonnières's piece" (1987, 390). Maple proceeds to detail some of the compositional processes by which D'Anglebert arrives at his piece through the transformation of his model. Retaining Chambonnières's opening melodic idea, he re-harmonizes it to allow for a long descending sequence of 7-6 suspensions, thus slowing the harmonic rhythm. Throughout the piece, he again shows his preference for smooth, clear voice leading, coupled with a more active left-hand part achieved through broken texture. In effect, D'Anglebert applies many of the "performerly" conventions evident in his readings of Chambonnières, but at the same time, he

[45] Interestingly, Maple makes his comparison using only the sarabande from Bauyn, making no mention of its appearance as a gaillarde in the 1670 print. The sarabande and gaillarde by Chambonnières are very similar, with most of the apparent differences stemming from a change in meter from the gaillarde's 3/2 to the sarabande's 3/4. Since replacing Chambonnières's sarabande for the gaillarde would make no substantive difference to Maple's argument, I have therefore made this substitution here. A comparison of two gaillardes, with their similar rhythmic values and meters, is in any case easier to follow than Maple's original comparison.

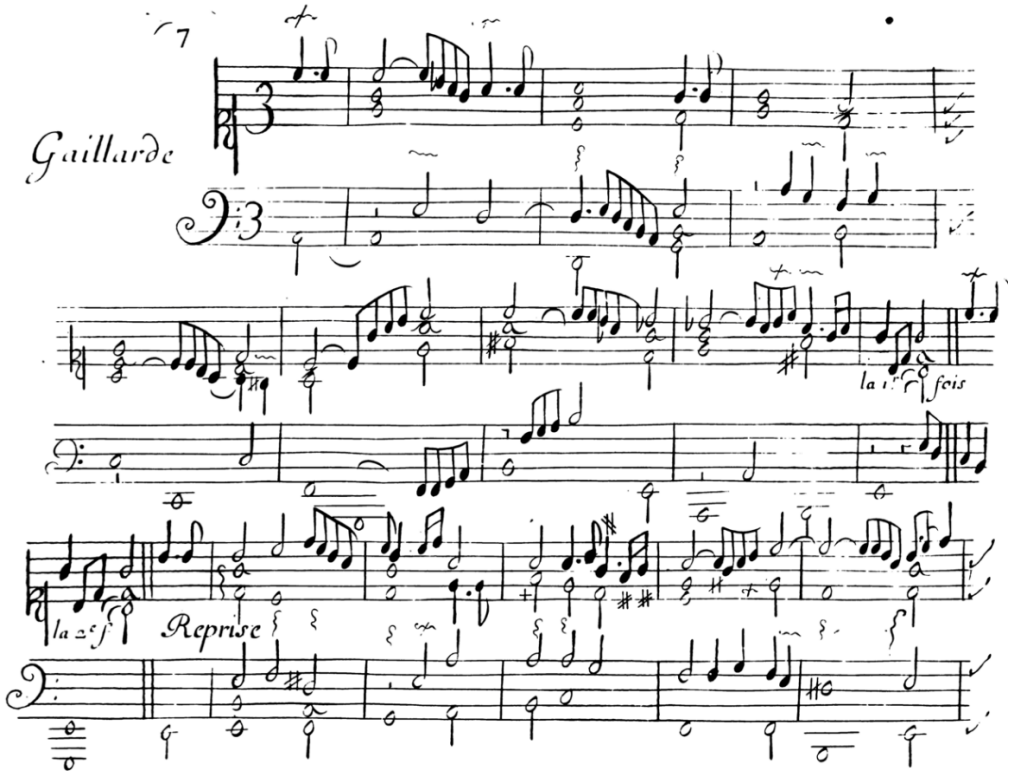

Figure 2.5. Chambonnières Gaillarde in C major (GusC 34).

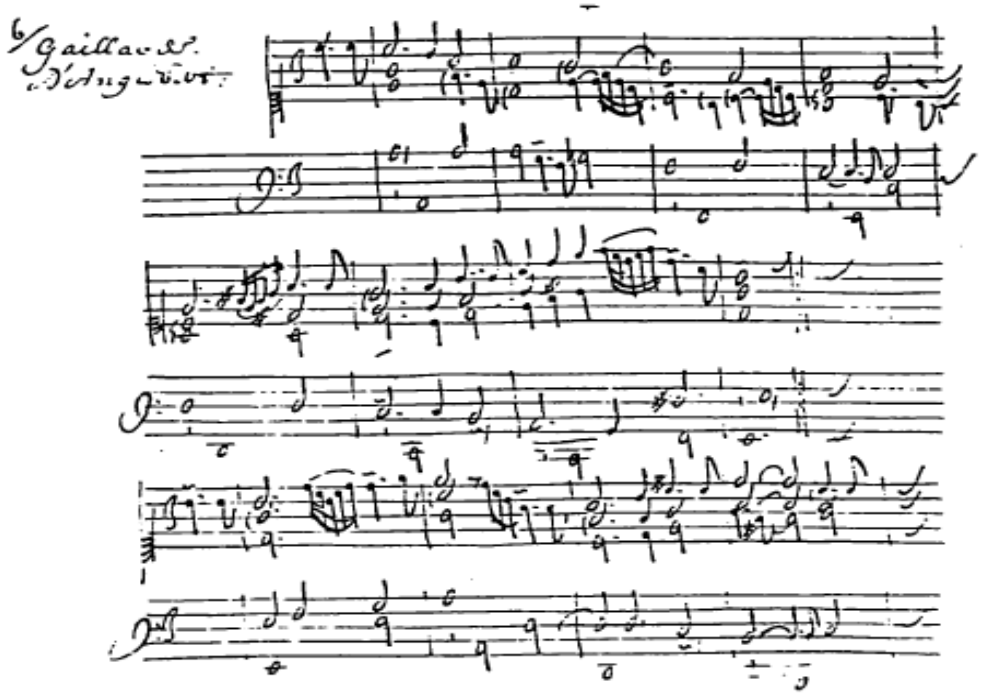

Figure 2.6. D'Anglebert's Gaillarde in C major.

seems to assert his "composerly" attitude as well. The result of these transformations is clearly recognizable as a new piece, as Maple agrees: "Because D'Anglebert reworked the first strain so extensively and essentially wrote an entirely new reprise, he was clearly justified in claiming this piece as his own. Its relation to the Chambonnières piece is nonetheless unmistakable" (395). In effect, D'Anglebert has "moved" Chambonnières's gaillarde to such an extent that he feels it necessary and appropriate to call it his own. Had D'Anglebert not appropriated his musical model so deliberately, completely, and successfully, we might well imagine contemporary listeners—particularly those familiar with Chambonnières's piece—to have found D'Anglebert's performance irreparably "broken."

D'Anglebert's re-molding of Chambonnières's music reminds us, again, of the difficulties inherent in distinguishing categorically between the ornamental and the structural, between the composerly and the performerly. At what point exactly in crafting his Gaillarde in C does D'Anglebert-the-composer take over D'Anglebert-the-performer's work? Oral traditions naturally resist these distinctions, as their *mouvance* gradually transforms text by means of performance. In retrospect, it should come as no surprise that the transmission of Chambonnières's music recalls the workings of an oral tradition. Le Gallois, citing Hardel's dictation *sous les doigts de Chambonnières* reminds us that the vast majority of Chambonnières's music had, in fact, never been notated! Existing solely in Chambonnières's head and hands, it operated according to a different set of rules than, for example, Corelli's Op. 5. In the case of this music, especially, we are forced to speak of orality, since the music only existed in any real way in performance, at least before Hardel's transcription. These pieces were *oral compositions,* arising through performance practices that did not depend upon notation.[46] Even though Le Gallois works assiduously to inscribe Hardel's "copies"

[46] *Oral* composition should be contrasted then with *literate* or written composition, which does rely upon notation. For more on these two kinds of composition and their workings in medieval music, see Busse Berger (2005).

within a *logic of authenticity*, the dictation—a translation from aural experience to textual presentation—is not transparent. Hardel's dictation therefore also participates in what the Assmanns (2003, 149) call a *logic of textuality*, in which original and *copy* (rather than the logic of authenticity's *fake*) define each other reciprocally. Even before considering the effects of textual processes of variance by which scribes influence their texts, it is difficult to speak of a textual "original" of which Hardel makes his "copy," and thus the copy points to "a cyclical movement of enrichment from the copy back to the original; the latter triggers the copy; the former, in return, valorizes the original" (150). One might even go so far as to say that the copy *precedes* the original, pointing towards its mythical pre-literate origins in orality. The lack of a real textual "original" again problematizes our efforts to *see through* a text, and it gestures towards other ways of understanding music: ways that move beyond text, and look instead towards embodied experience and the musical imagination.

Another way of conceptualizing music that only exists in performance is via improvisation. If we really take Le Gallois at his word, then most of Chambonnières's music must have been created not at the writing desk, but at the keyboard. Seated at the harpsichord, Chambonnières would, of course, still have had recourse to his musical imagination as he constructed his pieces; intimately connected with this imagination, though, he would have also relied on various kinds of (embodied) knowledge: how to harmonize a bass, how to ornament a melody, how play imitative counterpoint. These kinds of skills enable *composition-in-performance*, as improvisation is sometimes defined. The notation of Chambonnières extant pieces is best understood in line with musicologist Roger Moseley as an instance of *entextualization*, a process whereby discourse is transformed into "text," removed from its original context, and re-used. Mosely imagines two different modes of interaction with such entextualized utterances, one being literary, and the other archaeological. A literary mode of engagement with these pieces of Chambonnières's would tend to focus on each piece as a kind of 'frozen utterance,' having achieved a stable identity through notational rigidity (Moseley 2013, 4).

The archaeological mode, on the other hand, would view these preludes as *material*, created by physical hands at a physical keyboard, encapsulating the skill and activity that brought them about. As Moseley describes the archaeological mode, "it is procedural rather than descriptive" (2013, 11). The literary mode is concerned with the canonization of musical works, while the archaeological mode focuses on the "discursive flow" of improvisational practice.

If we can imagine Chambonnières's pieces not as a series of textual traces, but rather as a particular configuration of embodied skills and sounds, then the question of how to distinguish between the ornamental and the structural—and by extension, how to move the piece without breaking it—becomes considerably more complex. In the next chapter, therefore, I will examine the emerging field of historical improvisation studies, as well as its applicability to the performance of seventeenth-century French keyboard music. "Improvisation" is itself a fairly loaded term, having had a wide variety of meanings to different people, within different fields, and at different times. My task will consist in discerning a notion of improvisation correlated with specific musical practices, attuned to the techniques and methods by which Chambonnières's oral practice might conceivably have functioned. Such an approach attempts to bring particular historical practices into conversation with broader contemporary discourse surrounding improvisation, leading to a clearer understanding of those historical practices and, at once, an expanded conception of what improvisation can or might be. For the *clavecinistes*, improvisation and oral composition go hand in hand: oral composition depends upon improvisational technique as its central mechanism, while improvisational practice only achieves durability through the workings of orality. If we, as performers, are to take the principles of HIP-as-method seriously, then we must also seek to understand Chambonnières's works *for ourselves* as products of orality and the embodied knowledge of improvisation. We must ourselves enter creatively into Chambonnières's oral tradition. Only then will we be able to find "new charms" for old music.

Chapter Three: Historical Improvisation in Theory and Practice

Historical improvisation, it seems, is having a moment. Music theorist Thomas Christensen (2017) argues as much in his introductory essay to *Studies in Historical Improvisation*, in which he situates this area of study within the wider field of improvisation studies, whose efforts and outcomes have fortuitously coalesced around our own historical moment. We can now understand and appreciate how the reconstruction of earlier musical practices falls within the same sphere of activities as the music-theoretical and anthropological analysis of jazz, as well as the ethnomusicological study of world music. Christensen quite rightly argues that improvisation's current moment has also been sustained by the ongoing musicological and philosophical critique of the work-concept, both opening the door for the study of practices divorced from the musical score, as well as allowing for the (immensely problematic) admittance of these same practices into the work-concept's hallowed halls. In short, both historically and globally, the prevalence of unwritten, oral musical practices eclipses that of literate ones.[1] It is only now that the scales of scholarship seem to be tipping.

In detailing the "moment," Christensen illustrates how the study of historical improvisation naturally highlights commonalities between diverse improvisational practices (like a reliance on pre-learned gambits and memorized material, for example). But, perhaps more importantly for my own study, he also reminds us how divergent historical practices, even while ultimately all resulting in improvised music, can also be founded in divergent theoretical and pedagogical paradigms. I have

[1] Oral or unwritten music (as discussed in the previous chapter) is not necessarily the same thing as improvised music. After all, some improvisational practices—including partimento, discussed later in this chapter—may use or rely upon notation. Nevertheless, even if unwritten music is entirely "composed" in the mind, an absence of notation naturally encourages the use of improvisational techniques in the compositional process.

taken this caution to heart for my own project of reconstructing improvisational practices of seventeenth-century French harpsichord music, both general and specific (namely, the improvisational style of Chambonnières). Because of a relative paucity of historical sources related to keyboard improvisation in France, particularly in the first half of the seventeenth century, it remains an overwhelming temptation to adapt well-documented, successful approaches to conceptualizing historical practices of keyboard improvisation—like Robert Gjerdingen's galant schemata and Giorgio Sanguinetti's approach to partimento, for example—to the particular problems of my chosen repertoire. This risks, however, eroding some of the very differences I am interested in preserving! Given that I am pursuing the problems and methods of historically-informed performance to their logical conclusion in historical improvisation, I must at all times remain sensitive to the historically and culturally specific.[2] What makes seventeenth-century French improvisational practice different from eighteenth-century Neapolitan practice? And how is Chambonnières's practice different from that of his contemporaries and successors?

But first, what is improvisation? Philosopher Bruce Ellis Benson (2003), after first dismissing some of the "commonsense" definitions, and then after enumerating a long list of subtypes of improvisation, finally arrives at some common threads:

> … the difference between the various forms of improvisation is far more quantitative than qualitative. Each instance [subtype] involves a kind of reworking of something that already exists, so the differences concern the ways and the degrees to which this reworking takes place. Interestingly enough, none of these instances qualifies as 'improvisation' in the sense we cited earlier ('something created on the spur of the moment out of nothing'). (Benson 2003, 30)

For example, one of Benson's subtypes, improvisation$_7$, encompasses a number of activities we typically understand as improvisational in both Baroque music and jazz, involving "changing the

[2] Bruce Haynes writes compellingly about how the ideals of HIP should lead naturally to historically-informed performers learning to compose and improvise in historical styles (2007, 203-14).

melody line and/or altering the chords" (2003, 28). Benson's improvisation$_1$, on the other hand, which consists in the performer's introduction of musical detail like timing and dynamic, is usually seen not as a matter of improvisation, but of interpretation. Nevertheless, as Benson argues persuasively, this kind of activity also constitutes a kind of improvisation. After all, the player's performance is itself a "reworking" of an inherently incomplete score. Benson's notion of reworking thus allows us to recognize commonalities shared between seemingly dissimilar practices and operating at different scales of musical activity.

Emphasizing the uniqueness of each improvisational act, Marcel Cobussen notes that "it is not a good idea to write about improvisation in general, as it encompasses too many and too diverse practices" (2017, 14). Indeed, Cobussen instead adopts the approach of "radical empiricism" as a corrective against over-generalization. Radical empiricism thus entails focusing "on particular and individual cases . . . not examples subsumable under a more general category" (2017, 14). Both of these approaches—Benson's emphasis on the commonalities shared by different forms of improvisation, and Cobussen's emphasis on their differences—help in reconciling the individual improvisational act with its place in a larger web of improvised practices. Within historical improvisation, we see this balance play out in Gjerdingen (2007) and Sanguinetti's (2012) studies of eighteenth-century Neapolitan conservatories, in which they demonstrate how an extremely localized practice of composition and improvisation in Naples went on to influence musical style across Europe for more than a century. With respect to my own practice of historical improvisation, the question becomes one of confronting my contemporary musical personality with appropriate historical evidence. My improvisational practice will of course be distinct from the historical practices that inspired me; but as an historically-informed performer, it is through engagement with historical practices that I create the possibility of actively understanding and re-shaping my own. The actual "correctness" of the result is not of any great importance. If I intend to play like

Chambonnières, there are few who can really invalidate the effort, save perhaps for the "Early Music Police," as the more vociferous factions of HIP-as-tradition's orthodoxy are sometimes called (Shull 2006, 90). Instead, the benchmark for success is the degree to which I effect artistic growth and development. By stepping outside of myself (and, imaginatively, my own time and place), I can reconsider and recombine the various facets of my musical personality to create something new.

How might the *clavecinistes* of seventeenth-century France have learned to improvise? And, given that historical improvisation serves as my primary methodological tool for teasing out some of the latent contradictions and tensions in the work-concept, how should *I* learn to improvise? In what follows, I will begin by sketching out an approach to historically-informed improvisation grounded in two of the best-documented approaches to date, namely schemata and *partimenti*.[3] As formulated by Gjerdingen and others, schemata function both as voice-leading frameworks and as conceptual categories.[4] Relying on the work of Folker Froebe, Johannes Menke, Ludwig Holtmeier and others, I will first explore the extent to which the schema functions (or can function) in a stylistically agnostic way as a scaffolding for tonal music; or whether, in contrast to other concepts like the *Satzmodell*, and in sympathy with *topos*, it remains an historically and culturally specific construct. Regardless of whether they are viewed as models for musical communication or merely for composition, a robust collection of schemata or *Satzmodelle* will form an essential part of any historically-informed improviser's basic toolkit.

For Gjerdingen and Sanguinetti, the primary means by which galant apprentices internalized these schemata was the *partimento*, an instructional (un)figured bass that encapsulated a musical composition while training the student's mind, ears, and hands to produce an almost automatic

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[3] Within historical improvisation studies, these two concepts have received the greatest share of critical attention in the English-speaking world over the last decade. They have also been the focus of quasi-empirical studies on the effectiveness of historically-inspired pedagogical approaches in improvisation (Rabinovitch and Slominski 2015).

[4] The best exposition of schema theory is Gjerdingen's *Music in the Galant Style* (2007).

response to a musical stimulus.[5] Partimento practice enabled young musicians to learn a variety of compositional and improvisational skills at once, including diminution, counterpoint, harmony, and even schematic construction of a bassline. I will, therefore, examine the pedagogical principles underlying the practice of partimento, in hopes that I can eventually extend this culturally-specific practice to inform musical improvisation in seventeenth-century France.

In order to learn how to adapt these methods, I will review a comprehensive selection of recent studies of historical improvisation, as well as the pedagogical applications of this research. All of these approaches are premised on a thorough engagement with a reliable conceptual and practical toolkit: schemata and *Satzmodelle* for the creation of improvised musical structure, diminution practice for the creation of a musical surface, and thoroughbass as a pedagogical tool for learning improvisational technique. Each of these sources develops an idiosyncratic approach to historical improvisation and its pedagogy, guided by the example of specific primary sources and historical repertoires. Following the suggestion of the *Compendium Improvisation* (Schwenkreis 2018), then, I will seek to develop an approach tailored to my own chosen improvisational style, namely the style of the seventeenth-century *clavecinistes*, and more particularly, the style of Chambonnières.

To that end, I will next review some of the primary sources dealing with improvisation in seventeenth-century France. Compared to the situation in Italy and Germany, we are left with a relative dearth of detailed accounts of improvisational technique and pedagogy during the French Baroque. To that end, I will first discuss the extent to which French thoroughbass and accompaniment treatises can speak to improvisational technique, as well as how the practice of accompaniment might have been linked to counterpoint and composition. Finally, I will discuss the recent dissertation of Stephen Grazzini (2014) on the improvisation of *préludes non mesurés*. As one

[5] In addition to Gjerdingen's *Music in the Galant Style*, the standard reference for Neapolitan partimento practice is Giorgio Sanguinetti's *The Art of Partimento* (2012).

of the only large studies in recent years to deal with improvisational practice at the keyboard during the French Baroque, I will make a careful appraisal of some of its methods and claims, and assess the extent to which I can extend its approach for my own improvisational practice. In sum, I will synthesize a variety of contemporary approaches to the pedagogy of historical improvisation with the aim of adapting their suggestions to the particulars of my own radical empiricism, working towards a style at once familiar and recognizable, yet entirely unique.

Schema and Satzmodell

What is a schema? In Gjerdingen's galant orientation, a schema is part of "a particular repertory of stock musical phrases employed in conventional sequences" (2007, 6). In his *Music in the Galant Style*, Gjerdingen—a scholar of music theory and music cognition—proceeds to define the style in terms of these schemata, ultimately leading us not just to an understanding of how composers were able to work with such great speed and facility, but to how this music was heard and appreciated in its own time. His archeological project then is designed "to provide an option for the modern listener, a method for developing an historically-informed mode of listening to galant music" (Gjerdingen 2007, 19). Elsewhere, Gjerdingen and fellow music theorist Janet Bourne have drawn attention to similarities between the *constructions* (that is, the pairing of linguistic form with communicative function) of construction grammar and the *schemata* of various kinds of music, both learned through periods of apprenticeship:

> An orphan at one of the eighteenth-century conservatories in Naples, the prodigy Henri Fissot at the Paris Conservatory in the 1850s, and the young Rachmaninoff at the Moscow Conservatory in the 1890s all learned the art of composition through the age-old practice of child apprenticeship. Apprenticeship meant a long-term and focused internalization of the preferred productions of adult role-models or masters. In linguistics many scholars call those utterances 'constructions,' and in music many scholars have begun to call them 'schemas.' (Gjerdingen and Bourne 2015, "Introduction")

They continue with the comparison, linking the schema's form and function with the expression of meaning:

> A working definition of a construction in both language and music might thus be 'an entity with a conventionalized form, one that is generally paired with a particular meaning or function associated with a common situation in human communication.' In music this could mean a marked chord or progression, a conventional articulation like the half cadence, or the many schemata developed for phrases and sequences. Because music is rarely directly denotative, the notion of communicative function must be broad enough to include the evocation of mood, the suggestion of affect, and the whole range of nonverbal meanings treated in semiotics and embodied cognition. (Gjerdingen and Bourne 2015, "Introduction")

In a musical context, a schema is a conceptual category for a variety of musical utterances, marked by some "conventionalized form" and corresponding to a particular "communicative function." In linking form and function, schemata thus pair particular usages of voice leading, harmony, and counterpoint (syntax) with particular kinds of musical expression and meaning (semantics). By their invocation of communication, Gjerdingen and Bourne also call to mind the notion of *topics*, first identified and defined by musicologist Leonard Ratner as "subjects for musical discourse" divided into "types" and "styles" (Ratner 1980, 9). Although the concept of topic has expanded considerably in recent years to serve as an umbrella term for all kinds of semantic musical functions, they should still be distinguished here from schemata, which function more on the level of musical syntax than style or genre.[6]

Gjerdingen enumerates a wide variety of schemata used within the galant style, each fulfilling a particular kind of function: for example, the *Romanesca* as an opening gambit, the *Prinner* as the standard riposte, and the various types of *Clausula* as closing move options.[7] The "conventionalized

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[6]To that same end, music theorist Danuta Mirka defines topics as "musical styles and genres taken out of their proper context and used in another one" (2014, 2).

[7] In some important ways, these schemata might remind us of music theorist William Caplin's formal functions used for the analysis of Classical form. Both formal functions and schemata imply a notion of musical temporality, predicated on "our ability to perceive that something is beginning, that we are in the middle of something, and that something has ended" (Caplin 2010, 24). The segmentation of musical time into discrete schemata (opening gambit, riposte, and closing move) is roughly analogous to Caplin's segmentation of the Classical sentence theme type, consisting of presentation, continuation, and cadential formal functions.

While some of Gjerdingen's names for schemata are drawn from traditional usage (like the *Romanesca* and the various *Clausulae*, for example), others are entirely invented or named in honor of particular theorists. The *Prinner*, for example, is named after the seventeenth-century Austrian theorist Johann Jacob Prinner. This schema's bassline moves stepwise

form" of the schema consists of a treble-bass pair, notated using scale degrees and inflected by weak and strong beats. In the text, Gjerdingen's representation of the category takes the form of a small diagram, including all the salient details of the category but excluding any constraints of meter, key, or texture. The Romanesca, for example, is shown in Figure 3.1. In fact, this diagram represents only one possible variant of the Romanesca schema, namely the one most used by galant composers. Gjerdingen locates the compositional origin of the schema in the search for a solution to a problem: how does one add a third voice to two voices moving in parallel thirds? The seventeenth-century solution uses a leaping bass below the parallel thirds, forming a sequence of 5/3 chords: Johann Pachelbel, for example, uses this solution in his famous canon (Figure 3.2). The Classical solution, on the other hand, adds a treble voice, creating a stepwise bass line (Figure 3.3). In other words, the galant solution (Figure 3.4) combines the beginning of the Classical solution with a modified ending of the seventeenth-century solution. The result is what Gjerdingen identifies as the galant Romanesca: a pattern composed, played, and appreciated ubiquitously during the eighteenth century.

The process by which Gjerdingen developed his catalogue of schemata seems to have involved the happy confluence of corpus studies: in his research, Gjerdingen discovered remarkable similarities between the stock phrases of galant music and the bass lines of partimenti (more on these later). The partimenti by which Neapolitan apprentices learned their craft are filled with exactly the same sort of musical patterns that students subsequently used in their own compositions. Partimenti were sometimes accompanied by a short written text—or, more often, a *maestro*'s oral instruction—explaining the rules (*regole)* and standard movements (*movimenti*, essentially sequential bass patterns) that would be encountered in the students' exercises. Thus, the *movimenti* and *regole* of

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from scale degree 4 down to scale degree 1, with the treble trailing in parallel thirds. For more details, see Gjerdingen (2007, 45-60).

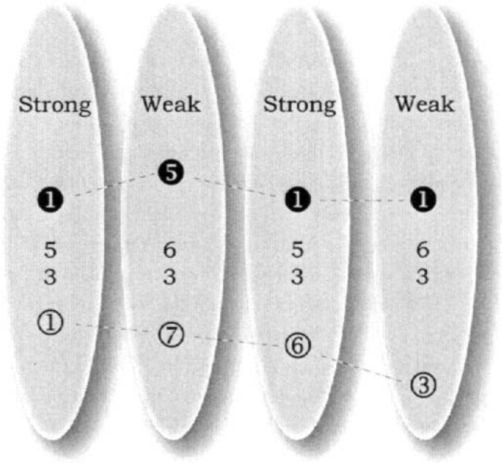

Figure 3.1. The Romanesca Schema from *Music in the Galant Style* (Gjerdingen 2007, 454)

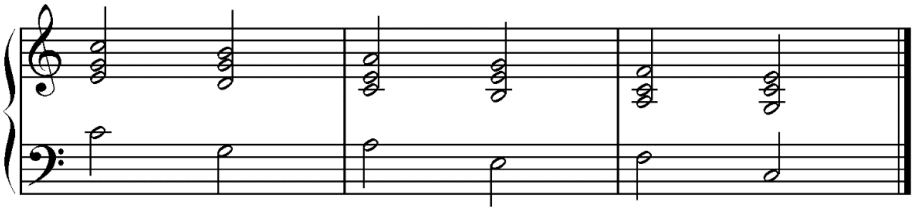

Figure 3.2. The "Leaping" Romanesca

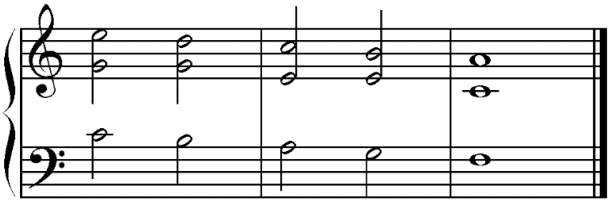

Figure 3.3. The "Stepwise" Romanesca

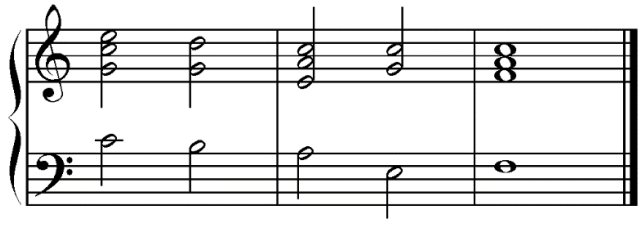

Figure 3.4. The "Galant" Romanesca

partimento theory often reappear (sometimes slightly altered) in Gjerdingen's galant schemata. Gjerdingen (2007, 30) cites Cimarosa's *zibaldone*, or student notebook, which contains a clear example of the seventeenth-century Romanesca. Indeed, the Romanesca as a schema (at least in its seventeenth-century version) is really no more than the rule "Falling by Fourths and Rising by Step" melded with the rule of the "Descending 5-6" (Sanguinetti 2012, 138). It seems, therefore, that the galant composer's education within the Neapolitan conservatories inculcated the perfect union of musical syntax (via *regole* and *movimenti*), style (via the strategic placement and disposition of schemata in partimenti and solfeggi), and fluency (through the playing of partimento at the keyboard). In short, galant composers had their compositional tools directly at their fingertips: they were, in fact, taught to be improvisers, whether with their pens or with their instruments.[8]

Gjerdingen is ultimately interested in schemata not just for their compositional expediency, but also for their capacity to convey meaning. The Romanesca ultimately determines its meaning within a vast syntactic-semantic web of possible musical utterances. Gjerdingen, helpfully, provides such a web (see Figure 3.5), in which the coloring of squares indicates how likely it is that one schema might follow another.[9] Part of how a given schema acquires and expresses meaning is in its capacity to arouse (and thwart!) our expectations. Thus, within the communicative web of galant music, the Romanesca acquires domain-specific meaning by virtue of its discursive relationship to, say, the Prinner. Part of what defines the Romanesca in a particular style, then, is our expectation that it might lead to a Prinner, and composers, working within the same communicative web, can move to satisfy or thwart that expectation. Quite apart from considerations of voice leading and musical

[8] Although most partimento scholarship has focused on partimento's fostering of improvisation at the keyboard, the partimento could also be used as the basis for a *dispozitione*, a written-out realization. Peter van Tour (2015), in particular, has demonstrated the importance of these compositional drafting exercises for the teaching of counterpoint in Neapolitan conservatories.

[9] Heavily-shaded squares indicate high occurrence, lightly-shaded ones show lower occurrence, and white squares indicate no occurrence whatsoever, as observed in the corpus of pieces presented in Gjerdingen (2007).

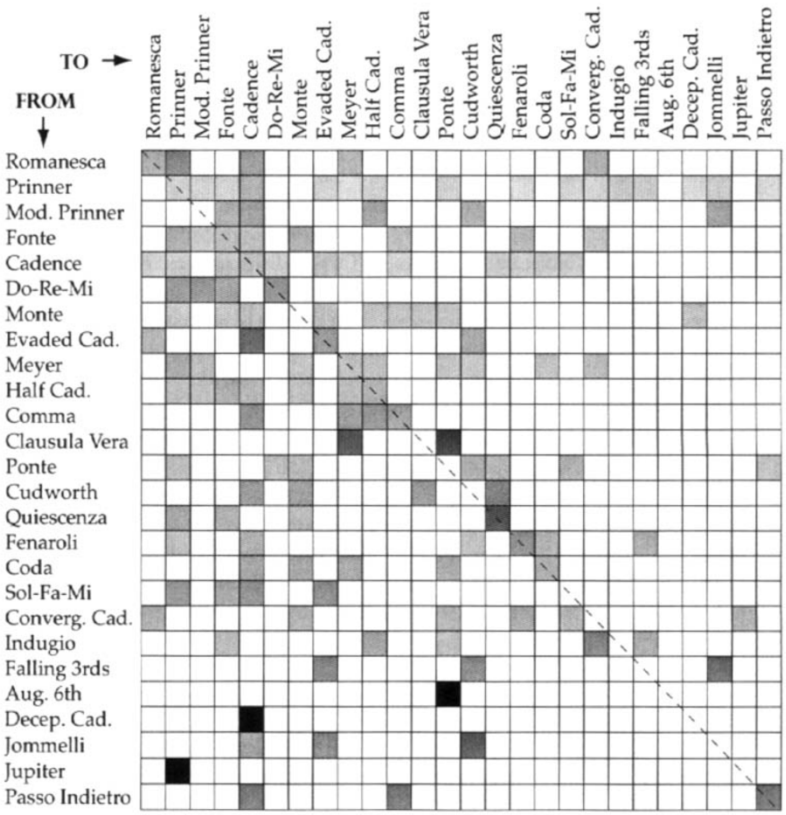

Figure 3.5. A Probability Graph from *Music in the Galant Style* (Gjerdingen 2007, 372).

syntax, schemata thus relate to each other in ways that might seem arbitrary, but in fact follow established conventions of usage passed on from master to pupil. Because there is a high probability of a Romanesca leading to a Prinner, the Romanesca thus helps define the Prinner. At the same time, because there is very little probability of a Prinner leading to a Romanesca, the Prinner also defines the Romanesca. The two schemata thus define each other recursively. Moreover, it stands to reason that each schema within the system partly defines all the others: the Fonte[10] and Romanesca, for example, partly define each other by their non-relatedness. Put another way, with all of these interrelationships in force, we might imagine that artificially changing the relationship between two schemata would have cascading consequences for the relationships between other schemata as well.

[10] Another schema, characterized by its sequencing of a given musical pattern down a step.

The reason I raise this point is that while we should admire the vast archeological project undertaken by Gjerdingen, and while we can certainly appreciate its applicability to large swathes of Italian-influenced repertoire, we have every reason to be cautious when applying Gjerdingen's results to other periods and styles. A Romanesca in the Italian galant style might mean something entirely different from a Romanesca in seventeenth-century France.

Contemporaneous with the largely Anglo-American inquiry into schema theory, German-speaking music theorists have worked with the related concept of the *Satzmodell* (Sprick 2014). *Satzmodelle* are understood here to be "compositional types and formulas" as formulated by Carl Dahlhaus (1990, 94), who attempted to explicate the intervallic organization of music prior to the eighteenth century and explore how these compositional approaches interacted with the new chordal approach advocated by Rameau and his successors. The *Satzmodell*, like the schema, is a model for understanding compositional technique. It is, most often, a polyphonic, contrapuntal voice-leading framework, shorn of any textural, stylistic, or idiomatic detail, and most often represented, as Gjerdingen attempted to avoid, "in the key of C major, with a 4/4 meter" (2007, 453). Figure 3.6, for example, shows a typical *Satzmodell* from Johannes Menke's (2009) collection. Whatever generality such *Satzmodelle* may lack in their representational form is more than compensated by their wide applicability to diverse forms of repertoire, "open to far-reaching transformation and combination" (Sprick 2014, 102).

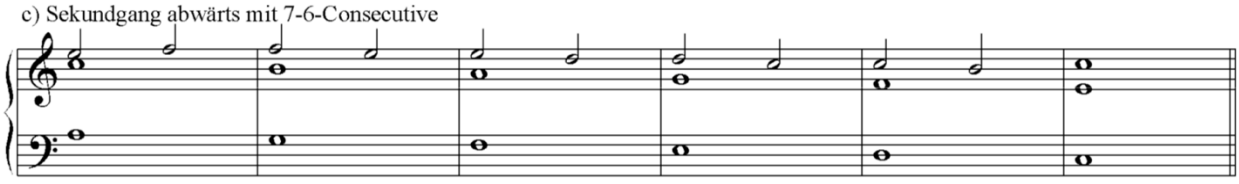

Figure 3.6. A 7-6 suspension *Satzmodell* (Menke 2009, 17)

The origin of most of these *Satzmodelle* can be pinpointed in the practice of Renaissance *contrapunto alla mente* (literally "counterpoint in the mind", or improvised vocal counterpoint). *Contrapunto alla mente*, sacrificing the variety demanded by written counterpoint, relied on the repetition of sequential, canonic models for its practicality and reliability, and singers made use of these Renaissance *Satzmodelle* with diverse formal and compositional constraints, both with and without a cantus firmus.[11] Perhaps inevitably, these same compositional models turn up in Renaissance instrumental improvisation practice: Sancta Maria's compendious *Art of Playing the Fantasia* (1565) relies on these sequential models not only for the improvisation of imitative textures at the keyboard but also for the homophonic technique of "playing in consonances" (Roig-Francolí 1995).

More remarkably, Folker Froebe (2007) has demonstrated convincingly how the pedagogical conceits of these practices formed the lasting basis for baroque *Satzmodelle*. Froebe shows how the apparent novelty of the *seconda prattica* represented by Monteverdi actually relies on its appropriation of the *prima prattica*'s improvisational practice. Moreover, Froebe highlights the continuing importance of these sequential models throughout the seventeenth century, with particular importance placed on the improvisation manual of Spiridione (the *Nova Instructio* of 1670), Georg Muffat's continuo treatise *Regulae Concentuum Partiturae* (1699), and Andreas Werckmeister's *Harmonologia Musica* (1702).[12] Building on this work, Menke (2009) has synthesized and systematized these various sources into one coherent set of *Satzmodelle* of broad applicability during the seventeenth century, in which he pinpoints a small subset of models that became significant for eighteenth-century practice. A similar sort of systematisation occurs in Menke, Ludwig Holtmeier,

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[11] Music theorist Peter Schubert has been especially instrumental in explicating these techniques and how they relate to contemporaneous compositional practices. See, for example his chapter "Counterpoint Pedagogy in the Renaissance," in Schubert (2002).

[12] The last of these received a particularly useful exegesis by Dodds (2006).

and Felix Diergarten's (2008) *Vademecum* that accompanies their edition of Paisiello's partimenti, summarizing many of the *regole* and *movimenti* covered by Sanguinetti in great detail. Thus, Renaissance *contrapunto alla mente* has led us back to where we started, namely in the world of Neapolitan partimento and its accompanying galant schemata.

The concepts of *Satzmodell* and schema are intimately linked, both simplifying the detail and richness of sounding music to reveal a more basic underlying framework of musical structure. Indeed, both models often lend themselves toward uncovering commonalities shared among diverse composers, genres, and time periods. But while the *Satzmodell* mostly remains agnostic towards the complexities of reception, the schema at least implies something of a code of musical conduct shared by composer and listener, enabling the communication of ideas through a common language. More recently, Gjerdingen has drawn a distinction between *movimenti*—sequential patterns that he describes in terms similar to *Satzmodelle* as "cues to the improvisation and composition of eighteenth-century music"—and schemata, which are "distillations of the *experience* of eighteenth-century musical phrases" (Gjerdingen 2020, 335). Indeed, this is part of the reason that Gjerdingen prefers representing his schemata via scale-degree diagrams rather than through musical notation: it makes for a better approximation of a given schema's mental representation. We can consider these two theoretical models, then, to occupy points on a broader continuum of musical practice, ranging from an emphasis on the know-how of compositional technique (*Satzmodell)* to an emphasis on the know-how (via syntax and semantics) of musical communication (schema). As points along this continuum, we could also add Michael Callahan's "*elaboratio* frameworks" and Stephen Grazzini's "thoroughbass formulas," discussed below, each with its own peculiar blend of representation and emphasis. For my own part, I am content to refer to the "stock patterns" of seventeenth-century French keyboard music as schemata, bracketing temporarily the issues of reception and representation that accompany the term. Later, in Chapter Five, when I have developed

improvisational skill of my own, I will return more fully to these complex issues of musical communication.

Partimento

As discussed above, the study of *partimenti* was the primary means by which galant composers internalized their repertoire of schemata and *Satzmodelle*.[13] To use a linguistic metaphor, if a lifetime of listening to galant music created a *passive* understanding of the music's vocabulary, then the playing of partimenti helped composers make this same vocabulary *active*. Partimenti achieved this feat through the deliberate pairing of stimulus and response. Rather than adopting the top-down, theory-driven pedagogical approach of Rameau and his followers, the conservatories of Naples instead led students to an experiential understanding of harmony, counterpoint, and composition, using an unfigured bass as the primary stimulus and demanding an appropriate compositional response from the student.[14] In order to successfully realize a partimento, the student would need to parse the unfigured bass into recognizable patterns (the "Rule of the Octave" (RO), cadences, *movimenti,* etc.) and harmonize it appropriately.[15] They would then need to recognize compositional devices inherent in the bass (like the opportunity for imitation), and provide an appropriate texture for their right hand, including appropriate diminutions and motivic material suggested in the bass line. Thus, the unfigured bass of the partimento encapsulated a fully-formed composition, albeit one whose details were left to the performer to discover or invent.

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[13] Although most research on partimento has focused on the Neapolitan conservatories, the partimento tradition has roots leading back throughout the seventeenth century, ranging from Banchieri's pseudo-partimenti in *L'Organo Suonarino* (1622) to the figured bass versets and fugues of Pasquini (2006).

[14] For more on the differences between the Italian tradition of partimento and Rameau's efforts at systematization, see Holtmeier 2007. This is, of course, something of a generalization since, as Holtmeier also acknowledges, "Rameau's complex operations still have a recognizable basis in experience and in the musical features themselves" (2007, 22).

[15] The Rule of the Octave was a method of harmonizing unfigured scalar bass lines, assigning particular harmonies to particular scale degrees in the bass. The best explanation of the rule is still Thomas Christensen's "The 'Règle de l'Octave' in Thorough-Bass Theory and Practice" (1992). There is also a wonderful explanation of the rule's pertinence both to partimento practice and to nascent conceptions of tonality in Holtmeier (2007). *Movimenti*, meanwhile, refer to the various sequential bass patterns that do not follow the rule of the octave.

How would a typical apprentice at a Neapolitan conservatory have gone about learning the language of galant music? The first step in learning a given schema was to internalize its corresponding *regole*, or the rules of partimento practice. The rules, ostensibly concerned with the harmonization of an unfigured bass, were actually a form of implicit theory that gradually introduced students to the principles of tonality (Menke 2010). Rather than present this tonal theory explicitly in prose, the rules instead exemplify the theory, pointing collectively towards an unspoken theory of tonality. By internalizing the rules through practice, the player comes to absorb and master these same tonal principles. Although these *regole* were, by and large, conveyed orally, there are also numerous extant collections of rules, both printed and in manuscript, that provide "stock patterns" and rules governing their usage, together with illustrative musical examples.

Fenaroli's *Regole* of 1775 was to become one of the most influential and complete of these collections: it was later incorporated into a six-part edition of his complete partimenti, and was reprinted numerous times. The Romanesca, for example, was covered by the rule for the *movimento* of "Falling by Fourths and Rising by Steps" (Figure 3.7). Fenaroli describes it in this manner:

> Firstly, all of the notes of this partimento can be accompanied with a 3rd and 5th. That is, one considers the first of these notes as a first of the key that passes to its fifth. And thus one considers the third note of the partimenti likewise as a first of the key that passes to its fifth. (Fenaroli 1775, 49-50)

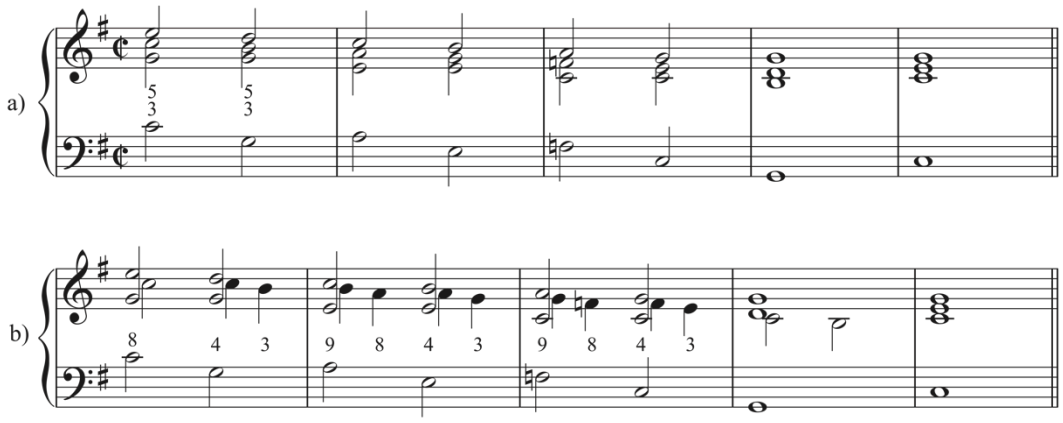

Figure 3.7. Fenaroli's Variants for "Falling by Fourths and Rising by Steps" (Sanguinetti 2012, 155)

In a nutshell, each note of the bass is to be accompanied by a triad. In most cases, there are several possible realizations of a given bass motion; in the case of the Romanesca, Fenaroli provides the aforementioned variant with triads as well as a variant with alternating 4-3 and 9-8 suspensions. By transposing these examples into a variety of different keys, the budding keyboardist begins to get a feeling for the *movimento* and its characteristic voice leading. The next step for our hypothetical apprentice is to study the schema in a practical musical context: for example, in Durante's "Perfidia"partimento (Gj 244)[16] from the *Partimenti Numerati* (figured partimenti). This partimento presents the Romanesca schema numerous times in a wide variety of musical contexts (different keys, modes, clefs, rhythms), and the figures provide enough information for the apprentice to choose an appropriate realization of the schema. After mastering this piece (and many others like it), our apprentice might be assigned an unfigured partimento, for example the seventh partimento from Durante's *Partimenti Diminuiti* (Gj 7). This partimento also presents the Romanesca schema several times in succession, but this time, without the benefit of figures. The player must recognize the schema wherever it occurs and realize it with the appropriate harmony and voice leading.

Of course, beyond issues of voice leading, our apprentice also wishes to learn something of idiomatic style and texture. Partimento rules generally only dealt with an abstract, polyphonic texture, and thus, most of our apprentice's instruction was doubtless provided orally. Durante's *Diminuiti*, however, provide an exceptional glimpse into this oral practice, as each of the partimenti contains one or more *modi*, or manners of diminution to be applied to certain bars of the partimento. Gj 7, for example, provides the following two *modi* for the first two bars of the partimento, shown in Figure 3.8. As it happens, the bars chosen by Durante correspond exactly to those of the Romanesca schema our apprentice is studying. The apprentice must now apply the

[16] "Gj" identification numbers were introduced in Gjerdingen's (2005) "Monuments of Partimenti" website.

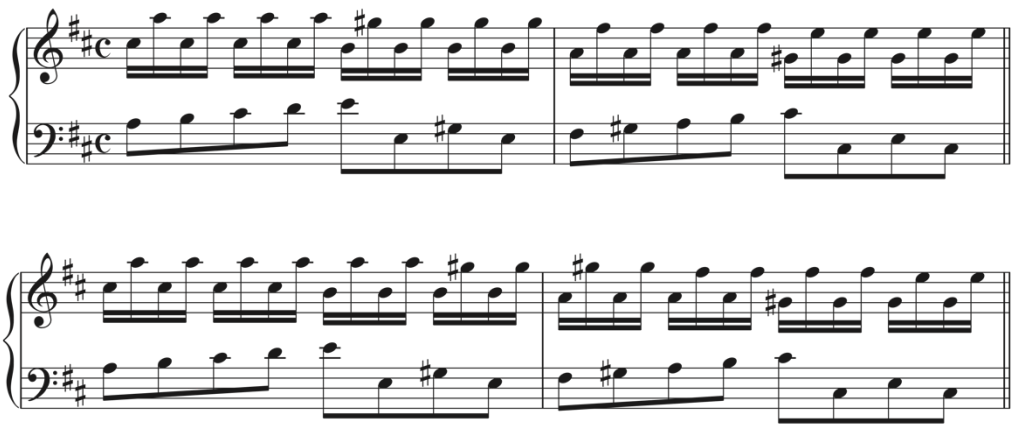

Figure 3.8. Durante's two Modi for Gj 7 (Sanguinetti 2012, 187)

appropriate figuration whenever the given schema occurs, creating a lasting pedagogical connection between the schema and its potential diminution.

Our Neapolitan apprentice has not yet finished with the Romanesca; the student will continue to encounter the schema in a wide variety of partimenti, further reinforcing the association of a particular bass line with a particular realization. The aim in all this is to create a nearly unconscious, instantaneous response to the unfigured bass, making its realization less a product of reflection than of reflex. By a process of continual repetition, variation, and transposition (both of motivic cells within the partimento, as well as of the partimento as a whole), the apprentice internalizes the schema tacitly, intuitively, and completely.[17]

Although the majority of recent scholarship on partimento has centered on the conservatories of Naples, the practice—both as a shorthand method for encapsulating compositions and as a

[17] I am not aware of any specific advice given by Neapolitan *maestri* regarding the transposition of partimento exercises. Given how frequently transposition of material is recommended in improvisation treatises in other traditions, it seems highly likely that the Neapolitans would do so also. The examples of simple exercises written out in various keys—the Rule of the Octave, for example—provides further evidence of this. Furthermore, the construction of partimento bass lines often involves the transposition of motivic cells, allowing the student the opportunity to practice their realization in a variety of keys. Sanguinetti details this in his explication of the "modular étude" in *The Art of Partimento* (2012, 248-54).

pedagogical conceit—had considerable circulation throughout Europe.[18] Indeed, partimento seems to have been widely cultivated in the German states during the eighteenth century, even if the various traditions never coalesced to form discrete schools, as the Neapolitans did. While there are few remaining sources, the ones that survive show remarkable variety of style and intent. The Preludes and Fugues of Gottfried Kirchhoff's *L'A.B.C. Musical* (1734), published in Amsterdam by the Halle-based composer, are relatively advanced works showing a high degree of motivic invention in the bass lines. In the North, Johann Mattheson's *Große General-Baß-Schule* (1731) is remarkable for its thoroughness. Each of its figured basses is accompanied by a (usually lengthy) discussion of a variety of performance issues including tempo, meter, genre, and style. Even more tantalizing is the copious advice Mattheson provides on how to go about realizing the bass line. Much like Durante, Mattheson suggests a variety of figurations, textures, and rhythms to use in the right hand. But where Durante provides only a few representative measures of the various *modi* and leaves it to the student to deal with the rest, Mattheson's discussion provides invaluable advice on how to fill in the blanks. It *almost* feels like a one-on-one lesson with a knowledgable maestro.

The Langloz Manuscript, despite its intimate connections to Bach's circle, has not generated the sort of interest scholars have invested in the Neapolitan partimenti.[19] Vasili Byros pinpoints this problem, in a brilliant article on potential pedagogical uses of the manuscript, when he notes that the preludes and fugues "do have a certain superficial emptiness and dryness about them" (Byros 2015). Indeed, Byros makes a virtue out of the undifferentiated, characterless bass lines. Rather than

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[18] Beyond the aforementioned work of Gjerdingen, Sanguinetti, and Van Tour, I must also mention the research of Nicoleta Paraschivescu (2019), which examines the partimenti of Giovanni Paisiello and their connections to Paisiello's own compositional style. Although its focus is considerably later than the seventeenth-century French repertoire under study here, her work is nevertheless useful to me as a creative and musicologically rigorous example of a contemporary performer engaging with partimento.

[19] William Renwick hypothesizes that "the origins of the work are Thuringian, in the period 1700–20, that the contents may stem directly or indirectly from J. F. [sic] Niedt, J. N. Bach, J. S. Bach, or another contemporary composer altogether, and that the transmission as well as the attribution to Bach most likely involved Kittel" (2001, 28).

treating them in the same manner as the advanced Neapolitan partimenti (like the "Perfidia") or like Mattheson's basses—in which the player's task is to follow the partimento composer's lead, responding and reacting appropriately to the motives and *Manieren* contained therein—Byros suggests another approach: treat the Langloz Manuscript as a "body of inventions," to be developed freely by the composer-performer.

Byros's efforts fill a noticeable gap in our understanding of the pedagogical uses of partimento. Thanks to Gjerdingen and Sanguinetti, it is already very well understood how composer-performers accumulated their vast body of tacit knowledge, but there is still the problem of "blank page syndrome," that is, the compositional paralysis that comes about when faced with a blank page, devoid of any pre-given material. Byros demonstrates a number of ways in which a partimento (especially a simple one like those contained in the Langloz manuscript) could be individualized, not just through the application of figures and *Manieren*, or through rhythmic variation, but also through the composing-out of the bass line itself. His treatment of the Langloz materials through "discovery and exploration of genre-specific structuring principles, and their elaboration, extension, expansion, and variation" provides a plausible, if hypothetical explanation for how apprentices assimilated the materials of partimenti, forming a useful pedagogical bridge between the partimento as continuity draft and the blank page (Byros 2015). Indeed, Byros's work serves as a bridge in our discussion as well, as it moves from an analysis of historical materials to their contemporary pedagogical application.

Contemporary Pedagogical Approaches

In recent years, there have appeared a number of book-length studies on the pedagogy of baroque keyboard improvisation . Among the most significant are the *Compendium Improvisation* (Schwenkreis 2018), Michael Callahan's "Techniques of Keyboard Improvisation in the German Baroque" (2010), and Lieven Strobbe's *Tonal Tools* (2014). The most useful and wide-ranging of

these is certainly the *Compendium Improvisation*, developed by members of the Forschungsgruppe Basel für Improvisation (FBI) at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. Intended as a sort of practical method-book for historical improvisation in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century styles, the book consists of a variety of individual articles written by different members of the FBI, each addressing a particular genre, style, or facet of improvisational technique. These chapters cover diverse topics and styles including figuration, ostinato, partimento, chorale harmonization, modulation, and—finally—rhetoric. The authors also draw upon a variety of (mostly German) historical sources to contextualize their pedagogical approach. Despite this stylistic diversity, the book is underpinned throughout by the material presented in its first chapter, consisting of a collection of the most important *Satzmodelle* for the Baroque, including cadences, sequences, the RO, pedal points, and a selection of opening gambits. Far from providing a mere theoretical description of these *Satzmodelle*, the book offers a concrete pedagogical approach to learning and internalizing them. For each *Satzmodell*, the authors provide a short exemplary partimento or ostinato exercise, designed to teach the *Satzmodell*'s normative realizations. These *Satzmodelle* thus form the core of the book's common language, applied by its authors to diverse improvisational settings.

The *Compendium* attempts to accomplish a great many goals within the same volume. It is, at once, a practical handbook for students, a pedagogical work for teachers of historical improvisation, and a work of impressive musicological and music-theoretical research. Beyond the specific compositional models and techniques it offers, however, the most useful aspect of the book is its espoused *attitude* towards music-making. The authors propose an historically-informed model for creativity in improvisation, wherein *Satzmodelle* and musical repertoire are considered two sides of the same improvisational coin, related by the twin processes of "instantiation" and "abstraction" (Schwenkreis 2018, 32). Within this model, *Satzmodelle* can be transformed into idiomatic, sounding music through a process of improvisational instantiation; at the same time, that same sounding

music may be abstracted into its underlying *Satzmodelle* through a process of analytic reduction. In this way, improvisers are brought into conversation with the repertoires they play. Newly found repertoire may be disassembled by the player into its component parts, only to be re-assembled through improvisation. Even the player's own improvisations are themselves amenable to being disassembled, abstracted, transformed, and reassembled into new improvisations through this same process. Any specific collection of compositional models is, therefore, of far less importance than the method by which these models may be acquired. The authors envision, then, that the motivated player will use these techniques to develop a personal improvisational language, informed by the specific repertoires and models chosen and encountered by the player. The *Compendium's* collection of *Satzmodelle*, along with its many stylistically-targeted articles, are provided merely as a kind of beginner's vocabulary for the long journey towards improvisational fluency.

Another of the most thorough applications of primary sources to issues of contemporary pedagogy is found in music theorist Michael Callahan's PhD dissertation (2010) on keyboard improvisation in the German Baroque. In it, he seeks to integrate a wide variety of historical sources to construct a comprehensive music-theoretical framework, one he uses to explain and synthesize discrete hierarchical levels of musical structure in improvisation. Modeled after Mattheson's divisions of classical rhetoric (*dispositio, elaboratio, decoratio* etc.), Callahan illustrates how a piece's form can be represented by a dispositio, articulated as a series of compositional goals (establish tonic, modulate to V, etc.).[20] A particular dispositio's goals—that is, its cadential waypoints—are realized by elaboratio, represented in the form of voice-leading skeletons rather like *Satzmodelle* (or "elaboratio frameworks" as he calls them). The elaboratio is ultimately transformed into sounding music in the decoratio, using the principles of diminution technique. Callahan discusses a number of historical

[20] For a brief yet informative survey of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German comparisons between musical composition and rhetoric, including Mattheson's five-fold sequential "divisions" of rhetoric, see Dreyfus (2004, 1-10).

sources for each of these hierarchical tiers—Koch and Mattheson for the dispositio, partimenti for the elaboratio, and the diminution pedagogy of Michael Wiedeburg for the decoratio, to name just a few examples—and, after an exploration of the application of these principles to imitative counterpoint, he synthesizes them into a contemporary approach to teaching keyboard improvisation.

In each of his chosen historical sources, Callahan is particularly attentive to extending the usefulness and practicality of the author's original intent. His discussion of Spiridione's *Nova Instructio* is a particularly good example.[21] Spiridione a Monte Carmelo (1615-1685), a German monk who traveled extensively throughout Europe, assembled a remarkable collection of short musical examples, each only several bars in length, into a series of *cadentiae*. The *cadentiae,* analogous to the *movimenti* and *regole* of Neapolitan partimenti, present a variety of seventeenth-century commonplaces, like cadences and sequential bass motions. Each *cadentia* exemplifying a given pattern is thus prefaced by a brief figured bass, and each of the following examples is a realization of that same bass. Spiridione expects the player to practice, transpose, and memorize these exemplars so that they can be recalled unconsciously, culminating in an improvised piece assembled from the tasteful concatenation of the *cadentiae*. Callahan's insight is that Spiridione may also be providing a method by which to learn the principles of diminution *implicitly*. By providing literally hundreds of possible realizations of the same bass line, Spiridione is also providing the player with the opportunity to sharpen their analytical skills as well. Thus, the thoughtful player will look beyond the surface realizations of the bass to the elaboratio framework underneath, and will begin to deduce principles by which these frameworks can be embellished:

> By distinguishing the generic voice-leading progressions from the diminution techniques employed to render them as musical surfaces, an improviser can learn

[21] Bellotti provides a good modern edition of Spiridione's work, along with some sage advice on how one might incorporate the *cadentiae* into a pedagogy of historical improvisation.

> both sets of patterns and techniques simultaneously, thereby laying the groundwork for not only a basic repository of memorized passages, but also a flexible and limitless interaction between the generative levels that beget them. (Callahan 2010, 84-5)

Callahan's dissertation culminates in the contemporary application of these historical approaches to keyboard improvisation, and he presents a sample curriculum that leads from decoratio (via ground bass improvisation) to the improvisation of freestanding pieces. Throughout this discussion, he addresses the interaction between improvisational technique and the analysis of repertoire. Moving from a set of improvisational procedures (like diminution technique) to the analysis of repertoire from an improviser's perspective demands a modicum of improvisational experience, but after this point, improvisational practice and analysis of repertoire become mutually beneficial activities.[22] Technique informs analysis, and the analysis, in turn, leads to further technical development. In Callahan's pedagogy, this interaction applies not just to decoratio, but also, via careful selection of repertoire, to the learning of elaboratio frameworks: in addition to frameworks encountered in partimenti and *cadentiae*, the student learns to extract elaboratio frameworks from an analysis of repertoire, and subsequently learns how to redeploy these frameworks to realize a particular dispositio (of a minuet, for example). Callahan ends with a series of exercises designed to explore the improvisational interactions between his three hierarchical tiers. Demonstrating this with a series of allemandes by Buxtehude, Callahan recommends holding two of the tiers constant, while varying the third, "toning just one set of improvisational muscles" (2010, 280). For example, maintaining the dispositio and decoratio of a given allemande, while varying the chosen elaboratio frameworks, leads to a deeper practical understanding of the decoratio strategies employed by the composer, and therefore, to a deeper technical understanding on the part of the improviser.

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[22] This is a point also noted by William Porter (2000), who recounts his work with students learning to improvise seventeenth-century North German praeludia.

I suspect that many of Callahan's techniques may prove deeply relevant to improvisation in the style of seventeenth-century *clavecinistes*. Of particular value are his insights into the relationship between the theoretical models of elaboratio and the variety of exemplars one encounters and attempts to assimilate. I also find his design of exercises, particularly the "isolation exercises," to be a brilliant way of practicing the integration of techniques proper to the various improvisational tiers. Perhaps the only area in which Callahan's presentation lacks is in its acknowledgment of the tacit dimensions of improvisational learning. Writing as a music theorist, Callahan is primarily concerned with describing his improvised music's formal and structural characteristics. Approaches to music learning that seek to cultivate bodily awareness, therefore, are given relatively short thrift. The sociologist and pianist David Sudnow, by way of contrast, describes in painstaking detail the process by which he learns to internalize jazz chords physically as "grabbed places," and this kinaesthetic dimension of learning is a large part of what enables his development as an improviser (Sudnow 2001, 12). In Callahan's case, although he is himself an able keyboardist and pedagogue, his observations here are mostly gained analytically rather than intuitively through practical experience at the keyboard. His activities and reflections as a pedagogue will, however, be discussed below.

Lieven Strobbe's *Tonal Tools* (2014) is an attempt to adapt and apply the methods used by Neapolitan conservatories to contemporary pedagogy of tonal improvisation. Strobbe divides tonal music into a number of named "components," each of which fulfills a particular tonal function. Although somewhat analogous to galant schemata, Strobbe's components are more loosely defined, functioning more like tonal pathways than as defined harmonic-contrapuntal models. The *Lancia*, for example, simply moves from tonic to dominant, while the *Quiescenza* creates a pedal point by shifting upper voices above a sustained bass. Each component can be realized by a number of "applications": the *Lancia*, for example, can be played either "leaping" (a direct movement from I to V) or "walking," with the movement between tonic and dominant filled in by additional bass notes.

The "walking" application can be further subdivided into the *Overture* component (I up to V) and the *Reverence* component (I down to V), each of which can receive further applications (like "gliding," in which intermediate bass notes are accompanied in fauxbourdon). The components are clearly inspired by Gjerdingen's schemata, and Strobbe prefaces the book with an invocation of "Eighteenth-century jazz" and the aim of partimenti to "transfer knowledge about how tonal music works" (Strobbe 2014, 14), but the components are meant to be as stylistically agnostic as possible. Apart from "idiomatic" applications like "ragtime," the player is meant to be able to adapt these components to function in whatever musical style they choose. Given that they do not necessarily demand adherence to a specific pairing of bass and treble, these "components" are considerably closer to Callahan's *elaboratio* frameworks, as they rely on registral flexibility and often invertibility. For each component, and often for each particular combination of component and application, Strobbe provides a number of examples from the repertoire (ranging from J.S. Bach to Paul McCartney) and discusses relevant issues of voice leading and usage.

The question of how to put Strobbe's components into use is slightly less clear. He does provide some basic advice on how to learn a component, and it mostly matches advice offered by Callahan: one should repeat, memorize, transpose, and transform (via changes in rhythm, texture, number of voices, diminution strategy, etc.) a component until it has been internalized. The next step is to find the component embedded in a (probably unfigured) partimento, in which the student's task, just as in Neapolitan partimenti, is to match the bass with an appropriate realization and diminution. Beyond this, he recommends creative engagement with the partimento, much along the lines suggested by Byros above, albeit more modestly. He therefore suggests methods for modifying the partimento bass itself. He discusses "stretching" and "compressing" the bass (playing it in a faster or slower harmonic rhythm) in contrast to "composing-out" (adding intermediate harmonies between events in the schema), "cutting" (deleting intermediate harmonies), and "merging" (dovetailing the

end of one schema with the beginning of another). Although he does discuss a number of diminution strategies, this is not a particularly well-developed aspect of the book.

Ultimately, what Strobbe demands is an experienced *maestro*, one capable of selecting (or likely composing) partimenti that will reinforce the components being studied. Apart from a small collection of ostinato basses, as well as a recommendation to extract partimento basses from repertoire, Strobbe offers little help in the matter of finding appropriate study materials. What I do find useful about his book, though, is the principle of adapting a fairly abstract "component" to diverse styles and genres. To adopt the language used at the beginning of the chapter, we can learn to adapt a *Satzmodell* to the context of a particular style and genre, transforming it into a culturally-charged, syntactically-meaningful schema. I also find Strobbe's method of adapting the partimento bass to be an invaluable part of any improvisation curriculum, since it forms a useful bridge to free improvisation.

Finally, there are a number of additional monographs that treat historical improvisation, but their approach tends to coincide with those already discussed. Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra's *Bach and the Art of Improvisation* (2011), for instance, uses many of the same principles recommended by Callahan, albeit limited to the improvisation of chorale-based forms. After some introductory material on historical keyboard fingering and technique, she presents basic information on voice leading and thoroughbass, leading to a wide variety of exercises in chorale harmonization (including an interesting presentation of techniques for modulation from Walther) and the improvisation of chorale partitas, chorale preludes, and dance suites (based on chorales). It is a pity, in fact, that the connections she makes between historical keyboard technique—that is, the physicality of keyboard playing—and improvisational practice are not further developed. To do so would speak to some of the tacit dimensions of improvisation that continue to remain unexamined by historically-informed

performers.[23] Pianist John Mortensen's *The Pianist's Guide to Historic* [sic] *Improvisation* (2020), meanwhile, is intended to share the techniques of historical improvisation with classical pianists. Again, its primary contribution consists in its presentation of a variety of pedagogical exercises for pianists, fashioned from established research in historical improvisation, albeit adapted for the interests of another public.

Other pedagogical approaches

There are several other musicians and scholars who discuss successful pedagogical results in historical keyboard improvisation that also merit attention, and which I will introduce here briefly. The keyboardist, conductor, and improviser Rudolf Lutz has described in some detail his pedagogy of Baroque improvisation in his article, "The Playing of Partimento" (2010), and of which I have firsthand knowledge gleaned during private lessons and masterclasses conducted in 2013–2015. Like Callahan, Lutz proposes learning a wide variety of *Satzmodelle* and developing them in the manner of a ground bass or ostinato. For each of these ostinato models, the student explores a variety of voicings and diminution techniques (including the use of invertible counterpoint).[24] Lutz also recommends the mutual interaction of repertoire and improvisational practice: for example, he suggests comparing a student's improvisation on a particular *Satzmodell* with an exemplary realization from the repertoire. In a manner similar to Callahan's "isolation" exercises, he also proposes creating a "de-individualized," simplified bass for the practice of partimento (Lutz 2010, 126). By extracting

[23] For a tantalizing example of the potential relationships between keyboard technique and compositional-improvisational technique that might be discovered, see Massimiliano Guido's "Counterpoint in the Fingers. A Practical Approach to Girolamo Diruta's Breve & Facile Regola Di Contrappunto" (2012).

[24] Lutz, more than any other pedagogue in the field, emphasizes practicing all the possible *physical* realizations of a given *Satzmodell*. With two hands, and a certain number of voices to play using those two hands, the question of the *distribution* of those voices between the hands comes into play. Assuming a four-voice *Satzmodell*, the following distributions are possible: R.H (3 voices) + L.H. (1 voice) (the thoroughbass distribution); R.H. (2 voices) + L.H. (2 voices) (Sancta Maria's polyphonic distribution); R.H. (1 voice) + L.H. (3 voices) (the monodic distribution). Lutz recommends practicing 3-voice realizations as well, and for organists, he also demands utilization of the pedals, leading to further variety of potential voicings.

this bass from chosen repertoire, and by transforming it after the method suggested by Friedrich Niedt in the *Handleitung zur Variation* (1706), the student has the opportunity of exploring alternative manners of diminution and comparing their results with the composer's.[25]

William Porter has described the methods and results behind his reconstruction of the improvisational practices of seventeenth-century North German organists. One of his most surprising insights in working with students was that knowledge of the repertoire in question was not necessarily helpful:

> Most of the students in the group had only minimal familiarity with the repertoire in question. Surprising though this lack of knowledge may be, it was in fact an advantage in that it allowed the genre to be taught as a series of improvisational procedures, unencumbered by students' memory of specific compositions. No examples from the repertoire were presented to illuminate a procedure or exercise until after it had been reasonably well mastered by the group. Since the goal of this endeavor is re-creation rather than imitation, this will continue to be the policy. (Porter 2000, 35)

The distinction between imitation and re-creation is significant here. Although imitation becomes inevitable after a certain initiation period, it is only then—after one has gained the ability to think, judge, and analyze improvisationally—that imitation can function creatively as re-creation. This is perfectly congruent with Benson's (2003) notion of improvisation as the "reworking" of something that already exists. The way in which we "work" (or even imagine that we can work) with material is conditioned by experience. Porter's point is that budding improvisers can only intend to re-create through imitation after they have first been conditioned to think improvisationally: not as executants, interpreters, or performers, but as *composers in performance*.

Music theorists Gilad Rabinovich and Johnandrew Slominski (2015) have discussed their results teaching galant keyboard improvisation to students at the Eastman School of Music. Teaching

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[25] Strictly speaking, in Callahan's terms this sort of *Niedtsian* exercise, as Lutz puts it, maintains the dispositio constant, maintains parts of the elaboratio constant (albeit expressed as thoroughbass rather than as a voice-leading framework), and varies the decoratio.

students on separate partimento and schemata tracks, the authors discovered a variety of benefits in adopting such an approach. One unfortunate aspect of the study is the apparent separation of the two improvisational activities (realizing partimento, and embellishing a series of schemata), but given the limited time allotted each participant (four half-hour sessions), this is an understandable restriction.

Finally, Michael Callahan has also published several articles discussing the pedagogical results of applying his research in the classroom. In an article on long-range planning in improvisation, he suggests slight cracks in his hierarchical model of improvisation, implying that decisions made on lower levels (*decoratio*) in the course of performance can have an impact on higher ones (*elaboratio, dispositio*) (Callahan 2012, 63-8).[26] And in a 2017 article on the use of technology in the classroom, Callahan provides valuable examples for how the pedagogical techniques of partimento practice can be adapted for students in contemporary settings.

Taken together, these pedagogical approaches to baroque keyboard improvisation demonstrate the plausibility of historical improvisation as a creative and scholarly enterprise. They propose methods of re-creating improvised practices from the past, relying upon the music-theoretical paradigms (schema, *Satzmodelle*) and pedagogical techniques (partimento) introduced earlier in this chapter. They introduce concrete and practical approaches for learning improvisational techniques—like Callahan's isolation exercises—as well as new ways of thinking about the relationship between one's musical repertoire and improvisational practice. Strikingly, however, these approaches restrict their focus nearly exclusively to German and Italian musical practices during the Baroque, leading one to ask: might improvisation have worked differently in France?

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[26] In the most telling example, Callahan demonstrates how a change of just a single note (a flattened leading tone) in the context of a cadence motivates entirely new sets of tonal objectives.

Keyboard Improvisation in Seventeenth-Century France

Given the extraordinary wealth of materials related to historical keyboard improvisation in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy and Germany, one might be surprised to discover another situation obtains in France. Although, as discussed in the previous chapter, improvisation of various kinds was an essential part of musical life in seventeenth-century France, there remain very few historical documents detailing its pedagogy, particularly for keyboard instruments. This might be explained, at least partly, by way of the peculiar history of thoroughbass in France.

As Thomas Christensen has pointed out, due to political and social forces, the practice of thoroughbass got off to a very late start in France, with the first work by a French composer calling for continuo only published in 1652, namely Henri Dumont's *Cantica Sacra.*[27] Plucked and strummed instruments (guitar, theorbo, etc.) adopted the practice first, probably due to the harmonic, vertical orientation of their music.[28] Keyboardists followed suit, with the earliest treatises being authored by D'Anglebert (1689), Nivers (1689) and Delair (1690). Perhaps because of this late start, these treatises and those that follow never approached the same advanced level as those of Niedt (1706), Heinichen (1728), and Mattheson (1731). Indeed, and with few exceptions, rather than addressing the niceties of professional accompaniment, or including sample realizations, these French treatises tend to brevity and restrict themselves to simple matters of voicing, figuring, and voice leading.[29]

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[27] Christensen cites "a confluence of social and political factors in which the church, court, and music guilds sought to maintain tight control over musical practice by keeping at bay many of the innovations stemming from the Italian seconda pratica" (1993, 45). Thoroughbass was likely considered one of those innovations. The first published work in France calling for basso continuo was actually by the Dutch poet and composer Constantijn Huygens, his *Pathodia sacra et profana* of 1647.

[28] The first treatise dates from 1660, namely Nicolas Fleury's *Méthode pour apprendre facilement à toucher le théorbe sur la basse continuë.*

[29] Boyvin's treatise of 1705 is a significant exception to this trend, since he includes some basic partimenti. For an excellent summary and assessment of French thoroughbass treatises from 1660 to 1775, see Zappulla (2000). For a fine selection of facsimiles of these treatises, see also the Saint-Arroman (2006) collection, published by Fuzeau in six volumes.

Also unlike the advanced German treatises as well as the Neapolitan partimenti, these French treatises never make the path from thoroughbass to composition entirely explicit.[30] There is, at least, some clear evidence that the French considered accompaniment and composition to be related and mutually beneficial activities. Take, for example, one of the earliest treatises on accompaniment (read thoroughbass) for keyboard instruments, Jacques Boyvin's *Traité abregé de l'accompagnement* (1705). Although he refrains from anything approaching Niedt's lofty, rhetorical flights of fancy, Boyvin does highlight the great benefit composers receive from also practicing thoroughbass, noting that "quand on a la main sur le Clavecin, on découvre des beautez qu'on ne trouveroit pas sans cela, quelque science, et quelque délicatesse de génie qu'on pût avoir" (1705, 8).[31] Several authors would also link accompaniment and composition in the titles of their treatises, as François Campion (1716) did in his *Traité d'accompagnement et de composition*. Perhaps the clearest example of this linkage is Rameau's opinion in the *Code de musique pratique*.

> Les principes de composition & d'accompagnement sont les mêmes, mais dans un ordre tout-à-fait opposé. Dans la composition, le seule connoissance de la racine donne celle de toutes les branches qu'elle produit: dans l'accompagnement au contraire, toutes les branches se confondent avec leur racine.[32] Rameau (1760, 24)

In contrast to Niedt—who views thoroughbass as the "most complete foundation of music" (1989, 28)—Rameau sees both accompaniment and composition as rooted in a more fundamental principle, namely his own *basse fondamentale*. All told, even if some authors considered thoroughbass as a foundational discipline for composition, because their accompaniment treatises stay primarily at a beginner's level, we cannot know with any great precision how thoroughbass might have led to

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[30] This trend of extolling the virtues of thoroughbass as the foundation of all composition can be observed in Niedt's *Musikalische Handleitung*, first published in 1700 and translated into English as the *Musical Guide* (1989), and culminates in Heinichen's detailed exposition in *Der Generalbass in der Composition* (1728).

[31] "When one has one's hands at the harpsichord, one discovers beauties that one would not find without it, whatever theoretical knowledge or refinements of genius one might imagine to possess" (my translation).

[32] "The principles of composition and accompaniment are the same, but in entirely the opposite order. In composition, mere knowledge of the root gives that of all the branches it produces; in accompaniment, on the contrary, all the branches are confounded with their root" (my translation).

composition in France.[33] Apart from thoroughbass sources, there are a number of instrumental treatises offering advice on preluding (improvising), but they generally lack the harmonic and contrapuntal awareness displayed by German and Italian sources. Rameau's discussion of improvisation in the *Code*, sadly, contains very little practical advice (1760, 178-85).

Beyond several short articles, the only extended contemporary discussion of historical keyboard improvisation in France is found in music theorist Stephen Grazzini's 2014 dissertation.[34] In it, Grazzini seeks to excavate the *prélude non mesuré* as an improvised genre. He looks both to understand French baroque reception of the prelude genre as a type of improvisation (together with French reception of improvisation as an activity and an idea), as well as to understand the techniques by which such preludes were improvised. Beginning with the idea that a prelude relies on "performance practice techniques" like continuo realization and melodic embellishment, Grazzini pursues a hierarchical approach to preluding, modeled after that of Callahan. The decoratio consists of a variety of ornate, figurate arpeggio models (drawn from French harpsichord and continuo treatises) coupled with ornamentation and diminution techniques from viol and singing treatises. The elaboratio consists of "thoroughbass formulas," which Grazzini represents quite simply as figured bass, in opposition both to Gjerdingen's schematic bubble diagrams and Callahan's (and the *Satzmodell* tradition's) voice leading skeletons. Figure 3.9, for example, shows one of the formulas most important to Grazzini, the "mi-fa" formula. For Grazzini, the dispositio, or the form of the prelude, is ultimately the most problematic aspect of the hierarchy. While he does suggest several formal models, including cadential frames and scale harmonizations (rather dubiously linked to C.P.E. Bach's presentation of the same method), Grazzini ultimately rejects the problem-solving of

[33] Boyvin, tellingly, stands as one of the minor exceptions here.

[34] The most significant of these short articles are in the German *Satzmodell* tradition: see Hamer (2012) on Louis Couperin's preludes, as well as Froebe (2012) on Bach's appropriation of French models.

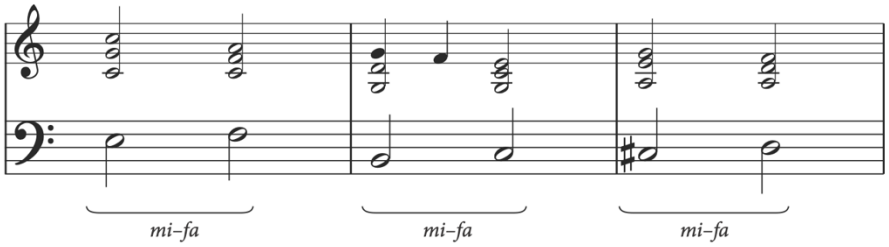

Figure 3.9. The "mi-fa" Formula (Grazzini 2014, 185)

dispositio in favor of a *problem-finding* approach. Rather than deciding in advance on the form of the prelude (what Callahan calls a "pre-improvisational" decision), the improviser treats the prelude as a problem-finding journey, searching out new harmonic possibilities and dealing with problems that arise along the way.

I do have reservations concerning several aspects of Grazzini's work. For one, it seems to me that trying to demarcate the work of *composition* from the work of *performance* is, although perhaps laudable in the service of demystifying improvisation, ultimately anachronistic. It may be convenient to reconceptualize the prelude as a product of performance practice rather than composition; this might explain how these pieces were created at the keyboard by performers. Nevertheless, although it is true that the path from thoroughbass (or partimento) to composition was not entirely explicit in France, recalling the example of Boyvin cited above, there is still ample evidence that performance and composition—and, therefore, the roles of performer and composer—were not separate spheres. Related to this is the problem that Grazzini seems to consider preluding as an activity more or less unrelated to other forms of improvisation. Even though the *prélude non mesuré* was the genre most often associated with "improvisation as concept" in France, Grazzini considers the "improvisation as practice" of preludes separately from the improvisation of other genres that were also associated with composed music.[35] Although this may have been expedient in restricting the

[35] Though, admittedly, Grazzini does recommend extending his study to the improvisation of other forms and

scope of his study, it also seems to me to be unfortunately near-sighted, given how frequently compositional techniques discovered in one genre tend to re-appear in others.[36]

For my own interest in reconstructing the improvisational practice of Chambonnières, there are several aspects of Grazzini's work that should prove useful, most important of which is his collection of thoroughbass formulas gathered from French continuo sources. Much like the Neapolitan *regole*, or Gjerdingen's schemata, these formulas could serve as the basis for a rich practice of improvised music-making. Although by no means complete, they do at least serve as a starting point in fashioning my own vocabulary of schemata, drawn from a corpus of exemplars (dance suites by Chambonnières) specific to my own targeted style. In addition, Grazzini's discussion of different modulation strategies and his "problem-finding" approach to musical form will serve as starting places for developing my own approach, adapted to genres and styles different from Grazzini's. Although he has done a great deal to explain *how* these preludes could have been improvised using historical techniques, he has not put this theoretical grounding into practice. In the next chapter, therefore, I will deal with each of these topics more fully and practically.

Summary

Based on this review of recent literature in historical improvisation, I can identify several areas of difficulty or concern in connection with reconstructing improvisational practices of seventeenth-century French keyboard music: first, the relation between theory and practice, understood here as the interaction of historically-inspired improvisational practice with historically-appropriate

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genres, including some in which an improvisation concept might not necessarily have been operative (Grazzini 2014, 326-33). For more on the difference between improvisation as concept and practice, see Bruno Nettl (1998, 9-10). An improvised practice is just an instance of composition in performance. An improvisation-concept, on the other hand, is a culture's collection of ideas and associations with improvisation, such as spontaneity, freedom, or genius. For Nettl, a cultural practice of improvisation does not necessarily have to coincide with that same culture's concept of improvisation.

[36] Porter (2003) has written about how canonic techniques associated with the improvised fantasia by Sancta-Maria have re-appeared in diverse contexts, not all of them imitative.

exemplars; second, a conceptual reliance on thoroughbass; and third, the appropriate design of (auto-)didactic material. I will address each of these points in turn.

1) Theory and Practice

If Chambonnières were teaching at a Neapolitan conservatory, what *regole* and *movimenti* might he have written into his student's *zibaldone*? While there is no direct analogue in seventeenth-century France for the Neapolitan *regole*, it is possible to reconstruct the rules, procedures, and models governing composition. Historical treatises in thoroughbass (accompaniment), counterpoint (composition), and diminution (various treatises on viol and voice performance) present a detailed, if incomplete, view of the most common bass progressions (*movimenti),* with their standard voice leading (*Satzmodelle)*, along with strategies for elaborating and embellishing these progressions. Although we have nothing comparable to the *Diminuiti* of Durante, we do at least have descriptions of diminution technique together with examples of their practical application,[37] as well as detailed theoretical descriptions of contrapuntal dissonance treatment, known as "supposition" in France (Cohen 1971). Given their pedagogical origins, these techniques and models should necessarily form the core of my own set of improvisational generating principles.

Beyond these rules, though, we can still detect the traces of schematic composition within the music itself. The extant repertoire's correspondence with the rules and progressions of thoroughbass tutors and with the diminution techniques of performance treatises, as Grazzini has shown, implies a link between improvisational technique and the primary evidence we have of the practice of that technique: namely, the repertoire. As William Porter noted, although we cannot directly observe the techniques used to create improvised music in the past, by observing the results of those techniques, we do indirectly gain some knowledge about the techniques themselves:

[37] The many extant *doubles*, or variations in smaller note values, of dance movements are excellent examples.

> The problem for us is that the most direct evidence we have of 17th-century improvisation is the repertoire, namely, the result. While it is true that to examine a result is not the same thing as to examine causal factors, it is possible that an analytical study of examples of the repertoire can reveal compositional procedures that may also have been improvisational procedures. (Porter 2000, 30)

In sum, we need the improvisation techniques *and* the repertoire that *could or might have been* generated by those same techniques in order to get a more complete picture of a particular improvisational practice.

As I will elaborate in the following chapter, the study of historical improvisation entails the transformation of explicit, analytically-derived knowledge into tacit, embodied knowledge and know-how. As Callahan has shown in the case of Spiridione's *cadentiae*, a detailed study of a variety of exemplars from an improviser's standpoint can yield important analytical and intuitive insight into improvisational models and techniques. With a given exemplar, the analysis begins from an historically-situated theoretical, artistic, and technical frame (thoroughbass, schema, *elaboratio* framework, etc.). By means of an effective practice method, the internalization of the exemplar generates new embodied improvisational knowledge and know-how. This inevitably leads to a change in one's own artistic practice, and thus the improviser reaches a new analytic frame by which to assimilate a chosen exemplar. Moreover, by means of their improvisational practice, the improviser continues to generate newly-created exemplars for their analysis, leading to yet another process of internalization of the exemplar and subsequent development of embodied knowledge. Thus, improvisational technique and artistic practice work in constant dialogue. From this vantage, and in line with Callahan, I am less interested in assembling *one* definitive collection of models and techniques than in learning to navigate the flexible, ever-changing web of connections between my own improvisational know-how and an established compositional practice. As my improvisational kinship with the seventeenth-century *clavecinistes* grows, I expect to see my understanding of its

generating principles change, just as I expect my understanding of its repertoire to change as well. Nothing will stay fixed.

2) Thoroughbass

Of course, my initial analytic frame remains slightly problematic. Earlier, I somewhat uncritically cited thoroughbass treatises from France as a potential source for improvisational techniques and models. Indeed, virtually all of the pedagogical materials cited above ground their discussion in the language and practice of thoroughbass. Thoroughbass, however, both as a practice and as a conceptual framework for composition, came to France much later than to other European nations. Given that the composers relevant to my study (Chambonnières, Louis Couperin, D'Anglebert, Hardel, etc.) may have only learned accompaniment from a figured bass as adult musicians, am I justified in conceptualizing their compositional technique in terms of thoroughbass as well? Would not an approach based on traditional rules of counterpoint be more historically appropriate, particularly since Chambonnières, rather famously, refused to play thoroughbass in Lully's band?

In short, while such an approach might be more historically correct, it would also be considerably less convenient. As Christensen notes (1993, 46), part of the reason that thoroughbass spread so rapidly in France after its introduction was that it proved congenial for representing the style of music that had been in fashion already for several decades: a bass-driven, harmonically and vertically oriented homophonic style. Even in composition pedagogy in France at that time (that is, counterpoint pedagogy), we can observe the same harmonic orientation (Christensen 1993, 62-4). Moreover, as organist and improviser Edoardo Bellotti (2017) has shown, thoroughbass was from its very beginnings in Italy conceived as an extension of counterpoint, and good continuo playing was assumed to follow contrapuntal principles. Indeed, part of the reason for thoroughbass's continued popularity as a pedagogical aid through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries must be due to its reconciliation of vertical and horizontal orientations in one easy-to-read notation. Moreover, as

Folker Froebe (2007) and others have shown, the adoption of thoroughbass did nothing to hamper composers' use of Renaissance *Satzmodelle*, albeit oriented towards a harmonic bass rather than a tenor.[38]

Finally, adopting an empirical stance, we can observe that Chambonnières's extant music (which dates, admittedly, from the latter part of his life) exhibits all the usual characteristics of bass-driven, tonally-oriented dance music. That is, since it looks and behaves like thoroughbass-influenced music, we can assume that it *is* thoroughbass-influenced music, even if Chambonnières might have understood it better himself as harmonically-oriented counterpoint. I will therefore begin my improvisation studies in the next chapter with the hypothesis that thoroughbass treatises *can* tell us something about how improvisation was taught in seventeenth-century France.

3) (Auto-)didactic Materials

Although we have a fairly good understanding of the rules of composition, accompaniment, and diminution as taught in seventeenth-century France, we know almost nothing about *how* these rules were taught. How, and by which methods, did students learn and assimilate the materials and techniques of their music? What we lack is something analogous to the Langloz Manuscript, Handel's lessons for Princess Anne,[39] Mattheson's *Große Generalbass-Schule* (1731), or especially, the partimenti of Fenaroli and Durante. Given the tremendous pedagogical advantages of these methods, it seems unlikely that savvy pedagogues in France would not have developed similar approaches to teaching composition and improvisation; and yet, we have very little evidence of this.

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[38] This absorption of renaissance techniques by baroque composers explains why I have not discussed here the various contemporary theoretical discussions of renaissance (vocal) counterpoint pedagogy. Moreover, there is evidence that vocal improvisation pedagogy informed keyboard improvisation technique as well. For a good discussion of this, see Peter Schubert's "From Voice to Keyboard. Improvised Techniques in the Renaissance" (2012).

[39] See Holtmeier, Menke, and Diergarten's *Solfeggi, Bassi e Fughe: Georg Friedrich Händels Übungen zur Satzlehre* (2013). Contrary to earlier reception of these lessons by Handel as simple thoroughbass instruction, Holtmeier et al. excavate it as a compositional-improvisational method.

While we wait for this evidence, I will continue on the assumption that the French *clavecinistes* did indeed develop such methods, and moreover, that these methods functioned analogously to the better-documented pedagogical traditions in Germany and Italy. In creating pedagogical materials for my own use, I will freely adapt ideas from the various sources discussed in this chapter, the ideas listed here for the reader's convenience:

- Practicing the frequent repetition, transposition, and variation of a variety of schemata
- Composing partimenti that practice or exemplify a given schema or schemata
- Practicing a variety of diminution strategies applied to a variety of schemata
- Thoroughbass and *Satzmodell* analysis of repertoire, designed to add to my schematic compendium and to discover new strategies for diminution
- The creation of *elaboratio* skeletal reductions of chosen pieces
- The creation of a partimento bass reduction of chosen pieces
- Practicing Callahan's isolation exercises in the context of chosen pieces
- Practicing variation of the partimento bass (composing-out, cutting, etc. in the manner of Byros and Strobbe)
- The free improvisation of dance movements, with or without a partimento bass

By adopting a wide variety of approaches and integrating them into my own experimental practice, I have the opportunity to find out what works best in my chosen style: that is, the style of Chambonnières as *re-created* within my own improvisational practice. In the next chapter, then, I will analyze my work putting these methods into practice, moving from a theoretical description of improvisational technique to an embodied, experiential understanding. These diverse approaches function analogously to Rheinberger's (1997) "technical objects," leading ultimately to an understanding of epistemic unknowns. How does one learn to improvise in this style? How well does improvisation in this style correspond to the models proposed by Callahan, Grazzini, and

others? How does the style I am recreating conflict, agree, or otherwise coexist with my own style as a performer? What, exactly, is *bon goût*? These are some of the questions that an experimental improvisational practice might seek to answer through the artist's own aesthetic sensibility. The ultimate aim, as ever, is not so much to arrive at historically verifiable results. This work is, after all, a product of HIP-as-method, and HIP only uses historical evidence as a starting place for new creativity. To that end, I turn now to my own improvisational practice, in dialogue with my imagined maestro, Jacques Champion de Chambonnières.

Chapter Four: Inductive Improvisation

Learning to improvise in a given style can feel like a mammoth task. After all, for most of Western musical history, performers and composers were primarily responsible for working in a single musical style; they learned this style from their earliest days as a result of their continual immersion in a particular geographical and historical setting, and as they reached maturity, their own style emerged as an inflection of a common musical language.[1] We, however, as twenty-first century musicians, cannot possibly recreate this same experience, constantly surrounded as we are by a multitude of different cultures and styles. We develop tremendous stylistic breadth at the expense of a deep mastery of any particular style: say, for example, the style of mid-seventeenth-century *clavecinistes* like Chambonnières.

In attempting to improvise in an historical style, I fully accept the impossibility of perfectly recreating the conditions under which a young harpsichordist may have learned to improvise in seventeenth-century France. After all, I cannot go back in time to "re-do" my formative musical training in a manner more conducive to my research aims. Moreover, historical improvisation has no more claim to "authenticity" than any other kind of musical performance. Nevertheless, following principles of HIP, I can attempt to recreate some of the experiences and stimuli that might have formed the young harpsichordist's education, and thus follow a course of study similar to their own. In this way, I can at least develop an historically *inspired* improvisational style, guided by historically *inspired* pedagogical techniques (Mooiman and de Jong 2016). Even though my sensitivity to these

[1] Indeed, Gjerdingen's project in *Music in the Galant Style* is predicated on the existence of a common musical language, shared between musicians and audiences. Of course, an individual musician could also work in several different styles, as in the case of musicians writing in the galant style for the court and in *stile antico* for the church. Nevertheless, this stylistic diversity pales in comparison to the postmodern plurality of styles in which contemporary musical life now takes place.

stimuli will no doubt be dull in comparison to that of a child, it is the effort and intention behind the activity that count most. Through this process—of intending to improvise using historical methods and techniques, and of seeing, hearing, and using historical repertoire as a repository of improvisational artifice—I defamiliarize my own usual practice as a performing musician, as well as the music that I play or improvise. As I argued in Chapter One, this is an essential part of how HIP-as-method ultimately leads to new styles of performance.

A central goal of my research is to understand music by Chambonnières as embodied improvisational knowledge, and to be able to engage with that knowledge through performance: in other words, to refamiliarize this repertoire within my own practice. An important sub-goal of my research, therefore, is to learn how to improvise in the style of Chambonnières. But, how exactly should I go about learning such a thing? And, once learned, how can I describe or articulate this type of knowledge in a form that can be written down and shared, such that it might be useful to other musicians and scholars? The previous chapter focused on developing a theoretical and analytical frame for understanding historical improvisation as activity, and it concluded with some general recommendations for applying that frame to the music of Chambonnières. In the present chapter, I document and analyze my own attempts at learning to improvise in Chambonnières's style, focusing on the improvisation of the most frequently occurring genre in his oeuvre, the courante. After some methodological reflections, I will describe the various steps I took in tailoring my pedagogical approach. An experimental phase of practice eventually leads to codifying a discrete set of schemata that I use to analyze my corpus of twenty-seven courantes. Using a python library for computational musicology (music21), I design software that programmatically creates a variety of pedagogical exercises, modeling in part the expert knowledge of a *maestro*, and I use these exercises to develop my skill in improvising.

Methodological Considerations

First, we need to make some distinctions about the kinds of knowledge I am generating through my research. While gaining some declarative knowledge (knowing-that) about a piece's improvisational elements and techniques will be helpful, my focus here will be on describing procedural knowledge (that is, knowing-how). As I put forward in Chapter Two, music like Chambonnières's may be productively read as the *entextualization* of an improvisational practice, frozen in notation and removed from its original discourse. What I propose in the present chapter, then, is to engage in what Moseley (2013) termed an *archaeological* mode of interaction with these entextualized utterances, in which I attempt to understand the text as *material*, created by living agents employing complex skills. Such material consists not of a specific set of notes and rhythms on the page, but rather of a collection of improvisational processes, procedures, and ideas that might potentially generate a piece once set in motion through performance. Procedural improvisational knowledge thus grants me access to the embodied activities and processes represented in the musical text, and allows me to engage creatively with them.

Another useful distinction here is that of tacit (or implicit) vs. explicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is the more straightforward of the two, easily codified and transferred through writing or verbal interaction. Tacit knowledge, on the other hand, defies easy codification or articulation: or as Michael Polanyi, the polymath who originated this concept, puts it, "we can know more than we can tell" (1966, 4). Tacit knowledge is created through the accumulation of personal or social experiences, and can usually only be transferred from one individual to another through long periods of shared interaction.[2] David Sudnow's *Ways of the Hand* (2001) is an unusually perceptive and

[2] Obviously, the degree of social interaction necessary for the development of such knowledge is relative to the complexity of the task. Learning to tie one's shoelaces, for example, takes relatively little time, while learning to improvise in a particular style takes far longer. All of these kinds of learning depend, however, on social situations employing "the pupil's intelligent co-operation for catching the meaning of the demonstration" (Polanyi 1966, 5).

successful example of how this type of knowledge can be verbalized. Through phenomenological analysis, he unpacks the content of his experience to articulate the tacit dimensions of how he learned to improvise. Usually, though, many aspects of tacit knowledge entirely resist verbalization, and the only effective way to convey this knowledge is through shared experience. Sudnow, for one, also needed to rely upon photographs of his hands on the keyboard in order to explain his experience, and moreover, these illustrations remain a poor substitute for re-creating the experience for oneself at the piano.

Many musicians have over time attempted to codify the tacit knowledge of the composer-performer-improviser, transforming practice and experience into general principles and recommendations for amateurs.[3] Conversely, the partimento tradition of instructional figured and unfigured basses, described in the previous chapter, sought to convey tacit knowledge through a long, curated chain of experiences. By confronting the student with a graded series of instructional bass lines to realize with the assistance of their maestro, the Neapolitan conservatories created the appropriate conditions for students to gain an improvisational skillset. Although this method of instruction took far longer to carry out than explicit, rationalized methods, it had the advantage of not reducing the complexity of musical practice to fit a simple explanation.[4] Contrary to the familiar adage that the way is "long by precepts, short by example," in the case of partimento instruction, the way by example is both long and deep.

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[3] Such treatises reached a highpoint in popularity in the mid-eighteenth century. J.F. Daube's *Generalbass in drey Accorden*, published in 1756, is an excellent example of this tendency: it reduces the enormous complexity of compositional practice, including dissonance treatment and voice leading, by deriving all harmony from only three basic chords (Wallace 1983).

[4] Someone following a rationalized method like Daube's would, of course, complete their course of study more rapidly than a student at a Neapolitan conservatory. They would, however, also miss out on the nuance. As Holtmeier puts it, the partimento tradition "does not seek to deduce harmony and melody, line and sonority (*Klang*), chord and counterpoint from a single coherent principle, as Rameau does, but permanently works through the tension between those poles in a dialectical way" (2007, 43).

What then should be the starting point in my search for tacit knowledge? How do I decide on what constitutes the style of Chambonnières? Should I look for seventeenth-century French treatises describing composition and follow their recommendations? Or should I begin with the pieces themselves to observe their style? As I argued earlier, historical improvisers develop their knowledge (and know-how) through the controlled interaction of an exemplar (or a body of exemplars) and an analytical, theoretical, musical frame. There is always a (productive) tension between these two forms of knowledge. On the one hand, the exemplar invites the improviser to discover its secrets intuitively and apply them to one's own work. The analytical frame, on the other hand, provides rules, principles, and guidance by which the improviser can create music. The distinction at play here is analogous to that of deductive (top-down) and inductive (bottom-up) reasoning. A deductive approach to learning improvisation would begin with some general principles of music-making, and based on those principles, elaborate a logically consistent set of recommendations and constraints, forming a theory of improvisation. An inductive approach, on the other hand, would begin with particular examples and generalize recommended practice based on observation. Jean-Philippe Rameau, for example, developed a largely deductive theory of musical composition in the *Traité* of 1722, in which he traces a number of general principles to a natural origin.[5] Johann David Heinichen, on the other hand, uses his compendious *Der Generalbass in der Composition* of 1728 to develop an inductive theory of musical composition, directly based on the example of established musical practice, founded upon "rules of art" (*Arth-Regeln*) (Holtmeier 2007, 43).

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[5] Of course, books three and four of the *Traité* on composition and accompaniment, respectively, are driven by largely practical concerns, and the pedagogy they propose is generated inductively from Rameau's musical practice. Christensen identifies within Rameau's theory a "rich dialectical interplay . . . between musical and cultural forces, between the 'internal' problems of musical practice and pedagogy that he addressed, and the 'external' ideas and language indigenous to the French Enlightenment by which he solved them" (1993, 4). As Holtmeier notes, however, this balance between internal and external shifts heavily towards the latter from 1726 onward, in which the "*basse fondamentale* becomes the paramount principle which usurps even musical practice" (2007, 12).

At which end should I start? I probably ought to start somewhere in the middle, of course, since these two modes of reasoning can also mix. More generally, inductive observations will always necessarily be influenced by the observer's existing analytic frame, and those observations will also eventually generate change within that same frame. I may begin by approaching a particular exemplar inductively, working with it intuitively to transform and re-use it in my own improvisations. This intuition is, of course, an *informed* intuition, shaped by my artistic experience as a performer and improviser, and more specifically, by my own pre-existing base of various kinds of (tacit) knowledge. Eventually, upon reflection, I may (though not necessarily) develop analytical insight into how this particular exemplar works, both in the form of knowing-about and knowing-how. I may also gain various forms of tacit and/or embodied knowledge through the experience of playing and improvising with the exemplar, thus effecting change within my own informed intuition. After accumulating enough of these insights with enough exemplars, I may eventually discern some more general guidelines concerning the exemplars' handling of counterpoint, harmony, rhythm, melody, or phrase structure. From these guidelines, I may then be able to deduce new ways of dealing with my musical material apart from those discovered in the exemplars. And finally, through this newly acquired analytical frame and its accompanying set of embodied experiences, I can both generate new improvisational exemplars, as well as re-analyze existing exemplars, thus starting the whole process anew.

The Corpus

Given the centrality of the exemplar to the entire enterprise of historical improvisation, the specific source of chosen exemplars is therefore of critical importance. While it is true that compositional-improvisational procedures may reappear across diverse genres—particularly, in the case of Chambonnières, across the many dance genres that constitute his nearly exclusive output—it is nevertheless the case that different genres of music demand slightly different skillsets from the

improviser. Of course, all dance genres rely on a generalized skillset, including skills like making good counterpoint, controlling modulation, etc., but each genre also tends to have a special quirk. The allemande, for example, relies upon imitative control, while the sarabande relies on effective variation of texture and melodic ornamentation.[6] Among the various dance types, however, the courante reigns supreme in Chambonnières's oeuvre: of the sixty pieces in Chambonnières's two published book of harpsichord music, twenty-seven of them are courantes, and the courante is also the most frequently occurring genre in Chambonnières's manuscript sources. The genre's prevalence here is a testament to its popularity in seventeenth-century France, first in the ballet, and later under Louis XIV as the most important component of the court ball (Little and Cusick 2001).

Beyond its importance to Chambonnières, the courante also presents unique challenges as an improvised genre. The most important element of the courante is undoubtedly its rhythmic and metrical complexity. Written in 3/2 meter, keyboard courantes, including those by Chambonnières, are effectively études in hemiola, as they constantly vacillate between a clear triple meter (3/2) and a duple one (6/4). A great deal of a particular courante's musical interest, therefore, is wrapped up in the manner in which this rhythmic complexity is expressed. Will meter changes be clear, or ambiguous? Will they happen simultaneously in all voices (particularly bass and treble)? By what musical devices (ornamentation, rhythmic detail, texture) will the meter be expressed? These are essential questions in determining how successfully a given courante represents and plays with its own genre.[7] It is worth recalling in this connection the example of D'Anglebert's recomposition of

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[6] I will return to the improvisation of allemandes and sarabandes in Chapter Five.

[7] If we think in terms of improvisational reworking, the question of what "material" or "content" a dance movement consists in becomes important. What material is any given courante reworking? For a courante to "play with" its genre, then, is for it to use the courante genre itself—including all of its usual generic expectations—as its primary material. Margot Martin (1996), for example, has discussed the question of the "content" of dance music. In the case of character pieces, the music's content is often related to the character or affect in question. Martin argues, however, that in the case of dance music without any additional appellation, the music's primary content is its own genre: that is, the piece expresses itself through its play with the rhythms and gestures proper to the dance type. Laurence Dreyfus (2004) makes a very similar point with respect to the music of J.S. Bach, who composes "against the grain" of particular genres. Bach

Chambonnières, discussed in Chapter One. In many of D'Anglebert's interventions, particularly in courantes, his chief aim seems to have been to clarify, finesse, or entirely alter metrical detail in Chambonnières's score, relying upon ornamentation and rhythmic or textural alteration to suppress or introduce a hemiola.

The courante relies upon rhythmic and metrical control for the improviser as well. Given that improvising is something that happens in real time, this makes mastering such control an even more difficult task.[8] It is for this reason that I find the courante, of all genres represented in Chambonnières's works, the most tantalizing. I freely admit that rhythmic control is the weakest element of my own improvisational practice. Working with courantes will thus afford me the opportunity to learn new rhythmic skills from scratch, all while becoming deeply familiar with the dance type most central to Chambonnières's work as a composer/performer/improviser. In this chapter, therefore, I take the twenty-seven courantes from Chambonnières's two published books of harpsichord pieces as my corpus. I have chosen these pieces because they come from a source close to the composer, and as such, they provide a wealth of performerly detail (as discussed in Chapter Two) from which I can also learn.

An Initial Analytical Frame

So, how should I begin to understand my corpus? How do I begin to see through the score to the improvisational techniques and gestures contained within? As I argued above, any attempt to understand an exemplar necessarily begins from an analytic frame. In this case, I have constituted an

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thus defines his music, in part, by his thwarting of the usual expectations surrounding dance genres.

[8] Strobbe and Regenmortel (2012) understand this as an issue of "feedforward:" that is, the pre-hearing, feeling, and playing of improvised material before it is actually played in time. This means that a large part of learning to improvise is in learning to control and accelerate the passage between something imagined or "pre-heard" to something played in real time. Obviously, the more rhythmically complex the material, the more difficult this passage becomes.

historically-informed analytic frame according to the recommendations formed in the previous chapter. First, however, a word about different types of analysis.

A musical analysis, if done well, sheds light on some facet of a composition. It might describe how a listener (real or ideal) hears the music, or explain the piece's formal functions, or even, in the case of Schenkerian analysis, seek to explicate the piece's gradual unfolding or enactment of tonality. The goal of my analysis, however, is to uncover techniques, structures, and principles of use to improvisers, and to internalize them through practice. To that end, I rely on a number of simple analytical tools (like figured bass) that describe individual sonorities or the connections between those sonorities (voice leading), but critically, these tools are usually not an end in themselves. Rather, the idea is to describe improvisational processes at the same level of detail as experienced by the players themselves in the course of improvising, whether consciously or not.

I fully accept that this goal is an elusive one. For one thing, as described by Callahan (2010, 31), the improviser may not be consciously focusing on the same kinds of detail at all times; their attention may on occasion shift from large-scale formal concerns (is it time to modulate to the dominant?) to lower-level concerns of texture or ornamentation. Moreover, to fully encompass *all* the musical decisions steered by the player, including the unconscious ones, would necessarily result in an unwieldy analysis. Nevertheless, I think we can identify in each improvisation a critical level of performative awareness coupled with a particular improvisational technique, what William Porter calls a "generating principle" (2002, 72). The early North German *praeambulum* that Porter describes achieves its effect through the alternation of different generating principles, stereotypically linked to different portions of the piece's form. For example, the piece's opening "exordium" is governed by "harmonic progression," while the following section is governed by "dialogue employing various figures" (Porter 2000, 32). From some of my formative lessons with Porter, I recall a similar approach to the improvisation of fugues. He taught the exposition, for example, as a succession of

generating principles: after the initial subject entry, we accompanied the answer using primarily thirds and sixths in two-voice counterpoint; subsequent subject entries were treated as either a harmonized bass (for entries in the lowest voice) or melody (for entries in the highest voice). Thus, from moment to moment, the improviser is occupied with a succession of generating principles, and out of this concatenation of principles evolves a larger form.

In the case of relatively short dance movements like Chambonnières's courantes, there is usually only one significant generating principle at play: namely, the harmonic bass accompanying a melody. There will undoubtedly be other principles at work from time to time; keyboard allemandes, for example, tend to feature more or less pervasive imitation between voices. These other principles are, however, nearly always subservient to the harmonic bass (or thoroughbass) that undergirds them. And, as I discussed earlier in Chapter Three, a thoroughbass is constructed (and, during the seventeenth century, was also taught) not just as a note-to-note succession, but also as the realization of a particular schema or *Satzmodell*.

The level of the schema (or for Callahan, elaboratio) is thus the meaningful bridge between the piece's form or dispositio—which, especially in the case of dance movements, is pre-determined by genre norms, and is thus partly a pre-improvisational decision—and its sounding surface or decoratio. Moreover, if Gjerdingen is correct in his theorization of historical modes of listening, the schema also describes the minimum unit of syntactically and semantically meaningful music, both for listener and for improviser-composer. Notwithstanding my caution earlier in applying Gjerdingen's results to other periods and styles, it is tempting to imagine that schemata also functioned this way for seventeenth-century French musicians. The succession of schemata therefore constitutes the piece's generating principle, and it is therefore at this schematic level that I

will focus my analysis. With this understanding of improvisational analysis now in place, in what follows, I will briefly sketch my own analytic frame and its terminology.[9]

The Schematic Toolbox

The cadence is perhaps the most important schema in all of tonal music. In my own practice, I follow the systematization of cadence types described by Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748) in which the cadence is formed by the interaction of four melodic formulas: the discant, alto, tenor, and bass clausulae (Figure 4.1) (Gjerdingen 2007, 139ff.).[10]

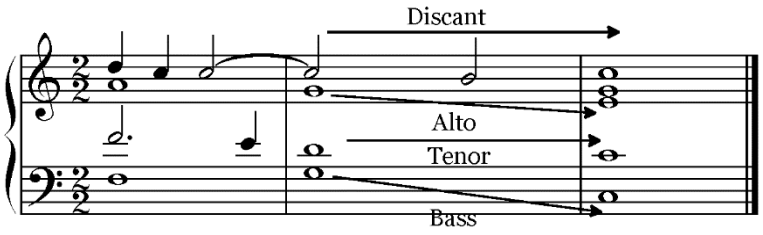

Figure 4.1. Walther's Clausulae

Recording 4.1. Walther's Clausulae

Walther's classification of cadences depends on which one of the clausuae appears in the lowest sounding voice, forming a complete melodic/harmonic complex. For example, when the bass clausula occurs in the lowest sounding voice, a bass cadence (*bassizans*)—or more simply, a cadence—results. If one of the other clausulae appears in the lowest sounding voice, a different sort of cadence results: a *cantizans* (discant cadence), *altizans* (alto cadence), or *tenorizans* (tenor cadence). Each of these cadence types denotes a different kind of closure; the bass cadence is strongest, followed by the tenor cadence, followed by the still weaker discant cadence, followed finally by the

[9] Since I have borrowed quite liberally from both Anglo-American and German traditions of music theory, I have also created my own idiosyncratic vocabulary, mostly borrowed from these sources, but occasionally invented by me.

[10] I will shortly examine several French descriptions of cadences. To my knowledge, there is no seventeenth- or eighteenth-century French source that discusses cadences in terms of clausulae. My decision to use this German terminology also comes from a desire to situate my own work within the wider practice of historical improvisers. The authors of the *Compendium Improvisation* (Schwenkreis 2018), for example, use exactly this classification scheme.

alto cadence. Indeed, the *altizans* is actually most often used as a way of evading a cadence, particularly when it steps down by way of scale degree 4 (see Figure 4.2).

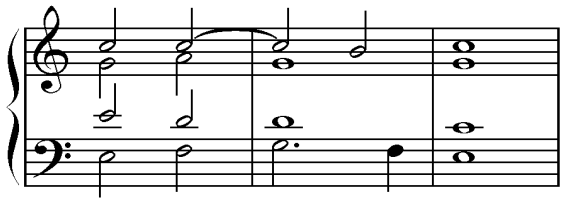

Figure 4.2. Altizans Cadence/ Evaded Cadence

Recording 4.2. Altizans Cadence/ Evaded Cadence

Already, this particular slippage between the schemata of the *altizans* and the evaded cadence points to a more general kind of connectedness between related schemata. In performing schematic analysis, choosing one specific schema over another is not necessarily the point of the exercise, since often a particular passage can convincingly be analyzed in multiple ways. Rather, as long as one remains aware of the connections between two related schemata, it is enough to choose the analysis that offers the most explanatory power; or, if preferred, provide both options.

Although seventeenth-century French sources do not discuss cadences in exactly these terms, they do nevertheless acknowledge that cadences differ in terms of their degree of finality. La Voye-Mignot (1656, 74-6), for example, describes three types of cadences: perfect (*parfaite)*, waiting (*attendante*), and broken (*rompue*). The perfect cadence, defined as a cadence that ends with a perfect consonance, encompass all the types of cadence discussed above, with the exception of the *altizans*. The broken cadence refers to any type of deceptive or evaded cadence, with the bass ending on scale degree 3 or 6. The waiting cadence roughly corresponds to our contemporary notion of the half cadence, but the way in which it invokes the idea of "waiting" or "expecting" a conclusion to an unfinished cadence is certainly more evocative. Charles Masson (1699, 49), meanwhile, distinguishes between the cadences *par degrez conjoints* and *par degrez disjoints*. The *cadence par degrez*

conjoints is further subdivided into an *en descendant* form, roughly corresponding to the *tenorizans,* and an *en montant* form, corresponding to the *cantizans*. Although Masson does present many of the same cadence types as Walther, I will continue to rely on Walther's terminology. Not only is this German terminology more succinct (compare *cantizans* with *cadence par degrez conjoints en montant*), but it is swiftly becoming a sort of lingua franca for historical improvisers as well (Schwenkreis 2018).

Later, and using his new concept of the fundamental bass, Rameau distinguished between a number of different cadence types. The fundamental bass of the *parfaite* moved down a fifth, roughly corresponding to the *bassizans* above; the fundamental bass of the *imparfaite*, however, moved *up* by a fifth. As Christensen notes, "Rameau was profoundly ambivalent about this cadence" (1993, 118). Since the cadence was primarily defined by motion of the fundamental bass, it could therefore encompass motions from tonic to dominant (like the *attendante* described above) as well as motions from subdominant to tonic, or what we would now define as a plagal cadence.[11]

Indeed, this bass motion had long reflected greater ambiguity than the corresponding motion down a fifth. In seventeenth-century discussions of the realization of unfigured basses, the authors' recommendations impart a quasi-tonal meaning to motion down a fifth (or up a fourth): they suggest playing a major third above the first bass note in such progressions, effectively creating a leading tone and turning the bass motion into a progression from dominant to tonic (de Goede-Klinkhamer 1997, 87-90). In the case of motions up a fifth (or down a fourth), they suggest instead playing the third that is natural to the mode. In most tonal situations, it is a simple matter to distinguish between plagal cadences and half cadences, despite their similar bass motions. But there are also analytical situations in which it is preferable to allow the progression's tonal interpretation to remain ambiguous, particularly when both chords in the progression are of the same quality (major

[11] The term "plagal cadence" only entered common circulation in the nineteenth century. For a fairly full history of the term, including some important French and Italian eighteenth-century usages, see Mutch (2015).

or minor). In my own work, I have nicknamed this tonally ambiguous schema the *Gasparini* (or "gasp" for short) in honor of Francesco Gasparini, author of an influential treatise on thoroughbass.[12]

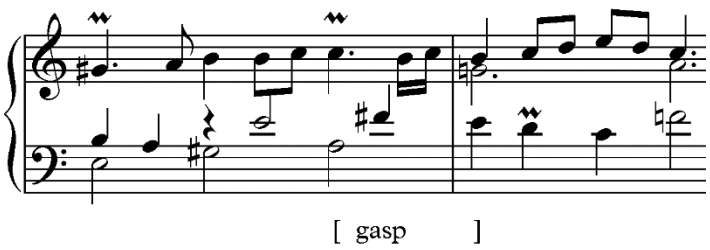

Figure 4.3. The *Gasparini* in GusC 4, mm. 3–4

Recording 4.3. The *Gasparini* in GusC 4, mm. 3–4

Figure 4.3 presents an example of this schema in one of Chambonnières's courantes in A minor, GusC 4. The excerpt begins in A minor, but the second bar's E minor chord already causes tonal uncertainty. Is this a minor dominant chord in A minor, or have we modulated to E minor? I feel that this passage ought to be analyzed in a way that properly reflects this momentary tonal ambiguity, even if, ultimately, it turns out to be part of a modulation to C major. What we are left with is a nexus of related schemata, all sharing the same type of bass motion, but yielding different tonal interpretations: the half cadence (or *attendante*), the plagal cadence, and the ambiguous *Gasparini.*

After cadences, the next significant element of my analytic frame is a collection of scale segments. Of course, any starting point for this discussion would include the Rule of the Octave

[12] The naming of these schemata can be somewhat arbitrary, and in cases like the "Gasp," even a little silly. However, my purpose in this study is not to develop a common language for scholars and musicians to share, as in Gjerdingen's work on galant music or in the *Compendium Improvisation,* but rather to illustrate how one might develop a *personal language* for improvisation. Indeed, the primary reason that I might name something is so that I (and only I) can better remember it and use it in the course of improvising, as well as recognize it in other exemplars I might wish to analyze. In this connection, I might also cite a memorable moment during one of my improvisation lessons with Rudolf Lutz, in which Lutz enjoined me to invent distinctive, personally-significant names for these schemata. He suggested that names like "popcorn" or "marshmallow" would be fine, so long as they were memorable for me.

(*règle de l'octave*, or RO for short). The RO provides a normative harmonization for an ascending and descending diatonic scale. It provides stable poles at the tonic and dominant with 5/3 chords, and leads between those poles by way of unstable 6/3 chords. By the eighteenth century, the various unstable scale degrees had been further individualized with characteristic dissonances (Figure 4.4).

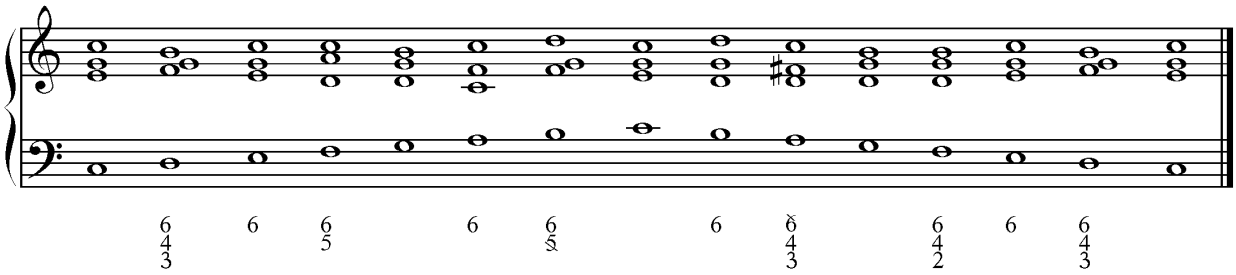

Figure 4.4. The Rule of the Octave in C major

Recording 4.4. The Rule of the Octave in C major

In a very practical way, the RO provides continuo players with an easy method of realizing unfigured basses: simply determine what key you are in, and then plug in the appropriate harmony above the given scale degree, so long as the bass is moving by step. For this reason, the RO achieved tremendous popularity as a pedagogical aid throughout seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. Beyond its utility to accompanists, the RO also offered composer-improvisers a means of navigating tonality, and as such, it was also common to use segments of the scale as tonal pathways.[13] The standard RO divides the octave into two parts: a pentachord from tonic up to dominant, and a tetrachord from dominant up to tonic. Likewise, the descending form of the RO is divided into two component parts: a tetrachord from tonic down to dominant, and a pentachord from dominant

[13] C.P.E. Bach's explanation of how to improvise a free fantasia is an excellent example of this method. Although Bach is not necessarily prescribing the RO's harmonization, preferring instead a more varied set of figures, he does recommend orienting the improvisation's form around scale segments: "[w]ith due caution he fashions his bass out of the ascending and descending scale of the prescribed key, with a variety of figured bass signatures; he may interpolate a few half steps, arrange the scale in or out of its natural sequence, and perform the resultant progressions in broken or sustained style at a suitable pace" (Bach 1949, 431). My own presentation of these scale segments, meanwhile, mirrors that of Job IJzerman (2019, 78-98).

down to tonic. Each of these tetrachords and pentachords thus offers a more flexible means of moving convincingly between tonic and dominant, without necessarily reproducing the scale *in toto*.

For all its simplicity, the RO is also limited. For this reason, treatise writers introduced various alternative harmonizations in addition to the most common version of the RO.

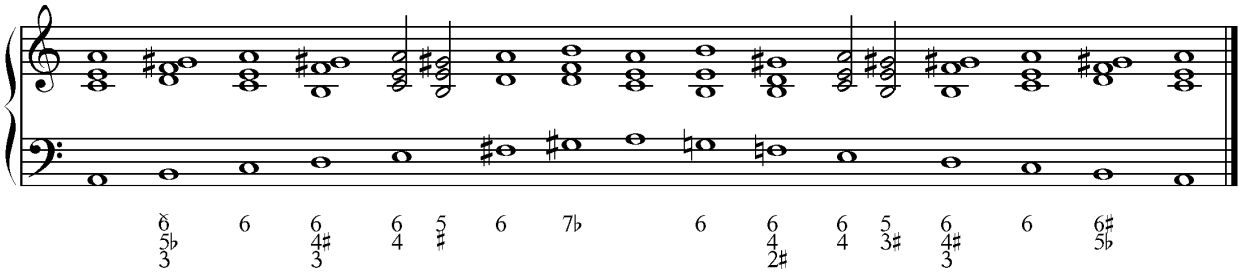

Figure 4.5. An Extended Rule of the Octave

Recording 4.5. An Extended Rule of the Octave

This "extended" rule of the octave was intended to provide greater flexibility for the accompanist and to better represent the range of options a composer might have used in the obligato parts. Yet even beyond the extended RO, the system is also limited by its point of division. What about other divisions of the octave, say, between tonic and subdominant?

As Grazzini (2014, 214ff.) has shown, French authors around the turn of the eighteenth century also prized a flexible approach to scale fragments. Saint-Lambert (1707), to cite one approach, describes a number of three-, four-, and five-note scale fragments, each with a unique harmonization dependent on the intervallic structure of the given fragment. He distinguishes, for example, between four different versions of the descending tetrachord, including one major, two minor, and one "phrygian" tetrachord.[14]

[14] This approach to scale segments in multiple harmonizations was certainly not unique to France. See, for example, Christensen's (2008) description of the South German *Fundamenta* tradition.

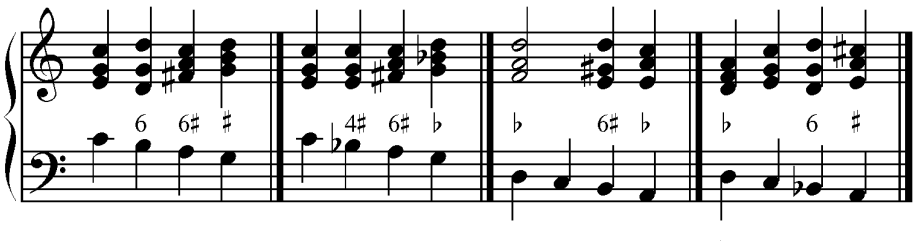

Figure 4.6. Four Tetrachords from Saint-Lambert

Recording 4.6. Four Tetrachords from Saint-Lambert

What makes these scale fragments so flexible is their lack of tonal grounding, each one presented in the absence of any definite tonal center. The major descending tetrachord, therefore, could represent the passage from tonic to dominant in the key of C major, or equally, from subdominant to tonic in the key of G major. Indeed, this tonal ambiguity is also baked into the RO: its descent to the dominant was problematic for some eighteenth-century critics, for whom it improperly mixed tones from other modes, but at the same time, the progression was also largely considered proper to its home key (Holtmeier 2007, 29). Robert Gjerdingen has also capitalized on this tonal ambiguity in defining his "Prinner" schema, which occurs in both modulating (from tonic to dominant) and non-modulating (from subdominant to tonic) varieties. But at least in seventeenth-century repertoires, I feel that trying to tie a particular scale fragment rigidly to a particular tonality causes it to lose its tonal potentiality. Like Grazzini, I prefer to conceive of scale fragments in a tonally agnostic way, particularly when it comes to tetrachords.

The final major component of my analytic approach is a collection of sequential bass patterns, referred to in the previous chapter as *movimenti*. In other genres, particularly in the fantasia, these bass patterns function as the repertoire's key generating principle (Butler 1974). Moreover—by way of their simple, memorable structures, and their ready capacity for variation, repetition, and diminution—they enable the improvisation of complex contrapuntal forms with relatively little effort. I cannot expect these sequential patterns to have nearly the same degree of ubiquity in my

own corpus, but nevertheless, they do form a key part of the style. I have adopted my own idiosyncratic terminology for these patterns, borrowed mostly from the German *Satzmodell* tradition, but also occasionally from Gjerdingen's schemata. For example, the Falling Thirds pattern (*Terzfall*) is identified by the largest interval within the bass pattern (a descending third).[15] The Romanesca pattern, meanwhile, encompasses all of the variants described by Gjerdingen, including leaping, step-wise, and galant variants (Figures 4.7–4.9).

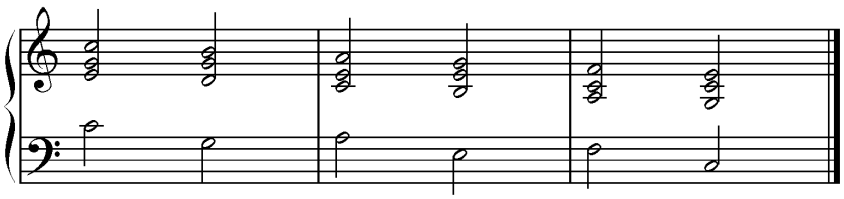

Figure 4.7. "Leaping" Romanesca variant

Recording 4.7. "Leaping" Romanesca variant

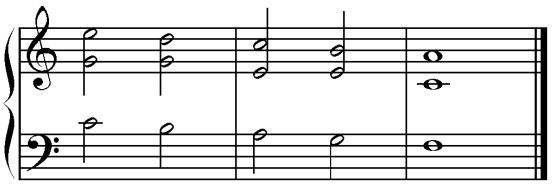

Figure 4.8. "Stepwise" Romanesca variant

Recording 4.8. "Stepwise" Romanesca variant

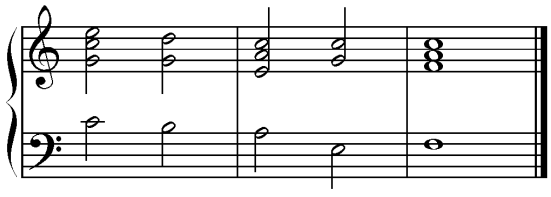

Figure 4.9. "Galant" Romanesca variant

Recording 4.9. "Galant" Romanesca variant

[15] For more on a systematic terminology of sequences, see Menke (2009).

These improvisational patterns thus form the starting point for my own analysis of the corpus. Admittedly, most of these schemata are derived from eighteenth-century sources, foreign to the seventeenth-century French style I am attempting to re-create. I should expect, therefore, that if these same schemata do figure within the language of Chambonnières, they may not necessarily be used in the same way that galant composers might use them. Indeed, a variety of seventeenth-century sources do include many of these same scale harmonizations, cadences, and sequential bass patterns. Both Alessandro Poglietti's *Compendium* (1676) and Muffat's *Regulae Concentuum Partiturae* (1699), for example, are fairly exhaustive in this respect, even if their terminology and usage differ from eighteenth-century galant norms as codified by Gjerdingen.[16] These generalized schemata therefore form the lens through which I can at least begin to understand Chambonnières's improvisational language in all its complexity and specificity. How, though, should I apply this frame to Chambonnières's scores? As was noted in the previous chapter, we lack any sort of "how-to" manual for improvisation in seventeenth-century France. More critically, we lack any contemporaneous discussion of the relationship between skills in counterpoint or thoroughbass and the composition or improvisation of keyboard music. If, however, I take the inductive approach, then I start directly with the musical corpus—in all its messiness—and ask the question: how could this have been improvised? Or even better: what skills would I need to learn in order to improvise this?

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[16] Closer to Chambonnières's style, one might also cite the variety of schemata offered by Nivers (1689) and Chaumont (1695). Both authors present a number of ways of harmonizing common bass patterns, including scales and sequences. In accordance with the slightly modal orientation of their musical style, they also both show a marked preference for diatonic 5/3 sonorities over the variety of sixth-chords favored by eighteenth-century musicians (Christensen 1992, 99). Interestingly, Chaumont presents his method as a "règle générale," both "pour toucher le contrepoint" and "pour le plein chant," thereby reflecting the continued importance of contrapuntal principles within church music in France. The distinction between modal and tonal orientations is complex and contentious, particularly since tonality during the seventeenth-century was only a developing construct. Compare, for example, the opinion of McClary (2012), for whom modal theory *does* hold explanatory power within seventeenth-century musical practice, with that of Wiering (2001), who holds that modal theory functioned mainly prescriptively rather than descriptively of actual practice. Far more useful to my own project, I think, are the various contrapuntal *Satzmodelle* discussed in the previous chapter, bridging the modal Renaissance and the (quasi-)tonal Baroque (Froebe 2007).

Into the Corpus

Until this point, my discussion of schemata has been couched in purely music-theoretical terms and techniques. The analytical work I perform later in this chapter, however, is only possible because of its grounding in my artistic practice. That is, I approach these musical texts not solely as a theorist, but also—and perhaps primarily—as a performer and improviser. The analysis that results is not solely the product of my analytical frame described above; it is also the result of a gradual excavation of my own tacit knowledge as a performer of some experience. The work of analysis is thus an ongoing synthesis. Through attempting to analyze the corpus, I reach a new analytical frame from which to perform further analyses. More importantly, the analyses are tested, problematized, revised, and supplemented through the medium of performance, and later, through improvisation. This kind of analysis occurring through performance is part of what Östersjö understands as *thinking-through-practice*, "a second species of musical interpretation, not based on language and analytical, verbal processes but on action and perception" (2008, 29). In this mode of thought, the performer has the opportunity of understanding music in its full temporality, as an aural event unfolding over experienced time rather than a visual event organized in a score. Moreover, the performer may also understand it as a physical, embodied process, created through the interface between player, instrument, acoustic space, and a host of other agents and factors. For improvisers, this embodied understanding of musical processes may allow them to discover kinesthetic links between exemplars, points of comparison that might otherwise have remained obscure in a traditional score-based analysis. As Östersjö observes, these two modes of thought are not mutually exclusive, since "typically, there is a mixture of analytic processes and thinking-through-practice in any artistic process" (2008, 78). The analysis that follows for the rest of the chapter, then, is constructed through the continual play between these two kinds of thinking. More specifically, it is

formed through interaction between two inseparable components of my musical persona: the theorist, and the performer-improviser.

The first step was to play through each of the twenty-seven courantes exactly as written, rather in the manner of David Fuller's suggestion to "soak up the style" (1993, 201). I used this as an opportunity to engage in thinking-through-practice, gaining knowledge about these pieces intuitively, and mostly tacitly. Moreover, this was an opportunity to develop certain qualities of attention: of learning to recognize the *feeling* of certain repeated chord voicings or patterns of ornamentation. This feeling consisted of a complex combination of sound and touch, analogous to the "grabbed places" discussed by Sudnow (2001, 12) in learning to play jazz. Of course, this kind of intuitive attention was also necessarily informed by analytical processes, derived from my experience with music theory and history. Learning to recognize a feeling, though, came about through the complex interactions of multiple agents that characterizes thinking-through-practice, including embodiment, engaged listening, and a whole host of performative factors like perception of timing, affect, and touch. Each new piece was thus an opportunity to discover new facets of Chambonnières's style to recognize and appreciate, both aurally and kinesthetically.

The next step was to transform the pieces into partimenti: (figured) bass lines over top of which I could improvise. My practice method corresponds roughly with what I learned from Rudolf Lutz during improvisation lessons conducted in 2014 and 2015. Lutz's lessons included a number of discrete "phases" of practice, consisting of phases A through D. The A-phase corresponds to what most people imagine improvisation to be: music created on the spot without any special preparation. Recalling Benson's (2003) notion of "reworking," the A-phase is not created out of nothing; rather, it responds to some form of raw material, be it a partimento, a theme, an affect, or even a set of genre-specific expectations. To rework something on the spot, then, means that this reworking takes

place in real time, without the benefit of reflection or revision in hindsight.[17] The B-phase consists in reconsidering the results of the A-phase: ironing out details that did not quite work, practicing important passages, and exploring alternatives. The C-phase involves fixing the improvised piece into a more or less ideal form, and it may involve notating the result as a composition. In the D-phase, finally, the player reworks the fixed piece of phase C, using its raw materials to fashion something new. In effect, the D-phase inaugurates a new A- or B-phase, in which the fixed "composition" of the C-phase is broken down into material for improvisation (a partimento, a theme, etc.). By these means, the improviser has access to a potentially inexhaustible supply of invention, each time reworking the raw materials into yet a new source for reworking. In this chapter, I will primarily be concerned with the A- and B-phases. A discussion of my work with C- and D-phases will be presented in Chapter Five.

My approach—discussed more thoroughly in the previous chapter—mirrors that of Friedrich Niedt in the *Musikalische Handleitung* as well as the recommendations of Rudolf Lutz in the *Compendium Improvisation*. In extracting a thoroughbass from a composed piece, I am furnished with a fixed, unchanging element to "rework" in the course of improvising; when the improvisation is finished, I can then compare my own result with the composer's. In working with these partimenti, I experimented with playing from both figured and unfigured basses. Although figuring Chambonnières's bass lines was initially a useful exercise in understanding his harmonic language, I very quickly learned to work from the bass alone, without figures. As an example of this stage in my improvisation practice, consider the following partimento, extracted from Courante no. 2 (Figure 4.10), as well as two improvisations on this partimento, the first corresponding to the A-phase, and the second to the B-phase (Recordings 4.10 and 4.11).

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[17] This does not preclude, however, reflection taking place within and during the improvisation. Later in this chapter, I will address this kind of reflection, called *reflection-in-action* (Schön 1983).

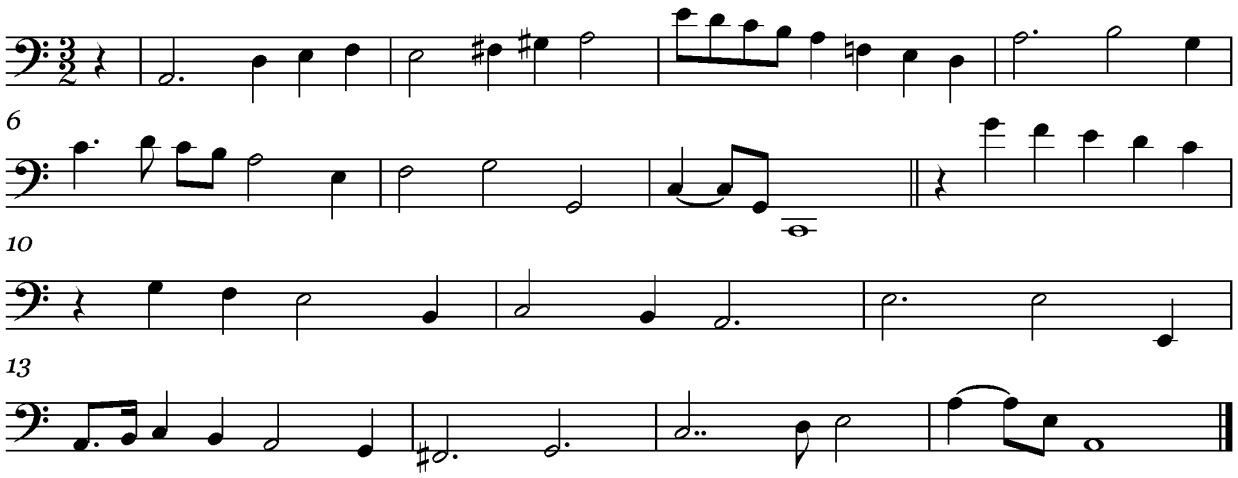

Figure 4.10. Courante in A minor, GusC 2 - Partimento

Recording 4.10. A-Phase Improvisation

Recording 4.11. B-Phase Improvisation

My A-phase improvisation (in G minor) is a fairly representative example of my initial work with these partimenti.[18] In fact, in some ways it is even more successful than my usual result, in that I managed to retain much of the improvised melodic shape during the repeats: there are sometimes small changes (in m.5, for example), but the overall impression is of more or less the same music in repeated sections. The affect of the piece is energetic and active, while remaining somewhat reserved and suave. Some aspects of the improvisation are not particularly compelling: the parallel thirds in m.13, for example, continue longer than would be usual for Chambonnières, and m.12 features an overly static soprano part. The courante's texture, meanwhile, betrays a certain "thoroughbass" orientation; that is, the melody I improvise is mostly accompanied by right-hand

[18] The scores presented here mimic some of the notational conventions of Chambonnières's 1670 print. The double barline before m.9, for example, indicates a repeat, as does the double barline at the end of the piece. Conventions within HIP with respect to repeats are somewhat loose, and my own practice here follows suit. Some of the recordings of dance movements included in this dissertation, therefore, do include repeats, while others do not.

chords, with only a few exceptions (like the trill in the tenor in m.15). Nevertheless, the result is at least fairly fluent and idiomatic.

My B-phase work consisted in experimenting with my realization of the partimento. I wanted to find ways of activating and varying the left-hand texture, using two voices in the left hand to accompany a solo melody in the right hand. In the first reprise, I think I accomplish this fairly successfully in mm. 3, 5, and 7, for example. This attention to the tenor voice in my left hand also encouraged me to vary the rhythm of the melody. I found that if the left hand were more active, I could allow the right hand to move more simply, as in mm. 1–2. I also found opportunities to enliven the right hand's rhythm at times. In m.12, for example, I imitated the rhythm I had previously used at the end of m.9. Inspired by this change, I replaced the tedious parallel thirds of the A-phase's m.13 with contrary motion, and introduced a consistent eighth-note motion through mm. 14 and 15.

As I mentioned above, the most challenging (yet rewarding) aspect of improvising a courante is in its rhythmic detail. The courante achieves its effect through the delicate interplay of bass and treble, sometimes in agreement, and other times not; creating this interplay is part of my job as an improviser. Responding to a suggestion from the *Compendium Improvisation*, I created a number of "rhythmic partimenti," in which I included the melody's rhythm (notated as a percussion part) as another staff in the partimento (Figure 4.11) (Unternährer-Gfeller 2018).

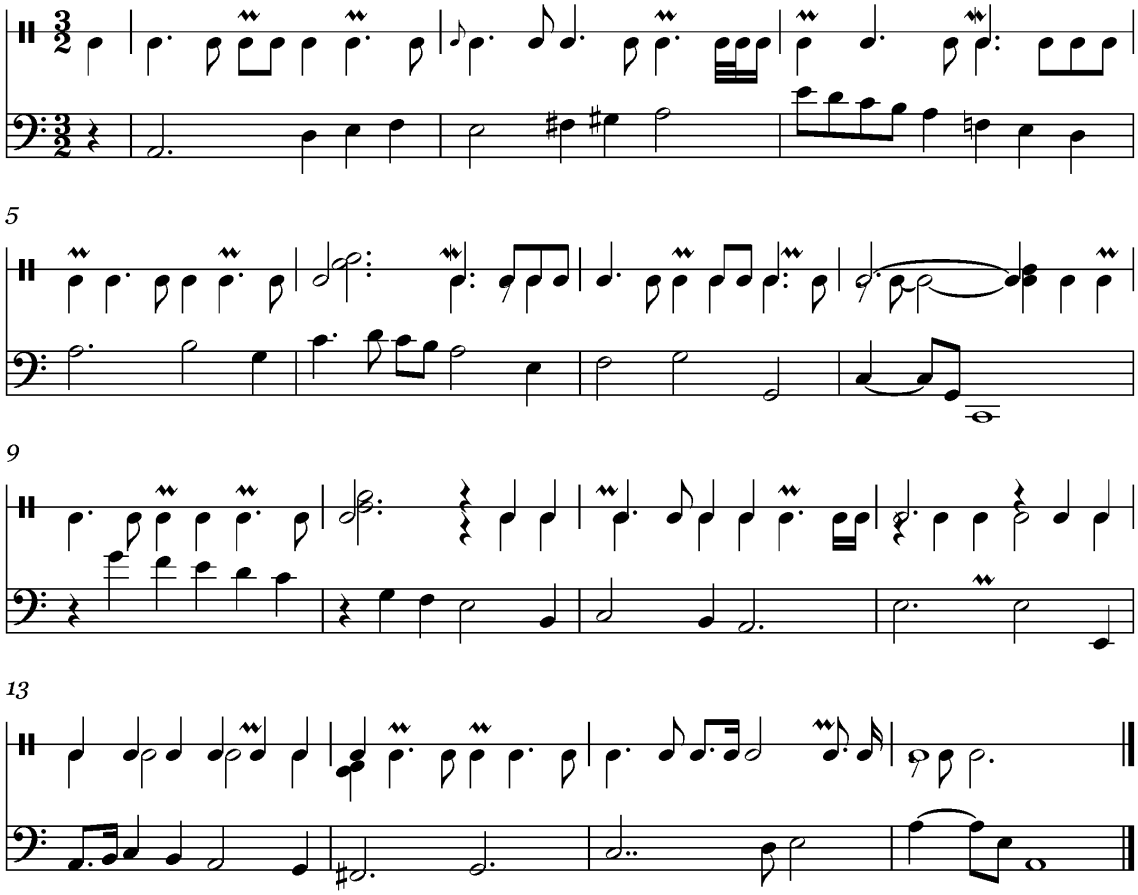

Figure 4.11. Courante in A minor, GusC 2 – Rhythmic Partimento

Recording 4.12. Improvisation on Courante GusC 2, in D minor

My A-phase improvisation on this rhythmic partimento (in D minor) demonstrates the profound effect that transposition can have on a piece's affect and tone color. In this case, the move to D minor has encouraged me to create a much more somber, reflective piece than the preceding ones in G minor. Part of this is achieved with a noticeably slower tempo, allowing more time to savor each sonority as I play it. Registration also plays a part: playing on a single 8' register, in contrast to the two-8' registration in the G minor pieces, creates a smoother, more supple effect in the melody.[19]

[19] This is hardly a subjective reaction to harpsichord registration. When playing on two 8' registers together, in order to avoid extreme heaviness of touch, the two registers are regulated such that they pluck their strings not simultaneously, but staggered. As a result, the player is naturally encouraged to depress the keys relatively quickly to bring these staggered plucks as close together as possible, effectively sounding as one; if, instead, the key is depressed slowly, then the two

In sympathy with a more refined and delicate touch, I also add a variety of ornaments to heighten the melody's sensuous quality, including, for example, the trills and *ports de voix* from the second half of m.6 to the cadence in m.8. The bass line's new tessitura has only necessitated small, occasional changes to the line, as in the cadential figuration in m.8.

This work allowed me to learn the characteristic rhythmic gestures of the courante while still being responsible for inventing its melodic shape. Although I learned a couple of standard courante rhythms through this process, and how to use them appropriately, I am still at a loss as to how to describe in words the variety and balance created through contrasting rhythms. Gradually, however, I came to anticipate many of the rhythmic details of the upper part, and eventually, to internalize them and make them my own.

Next, I began the process of learning and internalizing the schemata described above. Many of these patterns were already deeply familiar to me as a result of my previous work as an improviser and continuo player, particularly the segments of the Rule of the Octave. After reminding myself of a particular schema's essential voice leading, I began to look for the same pattern within the music I was playing. In looking for the *cantizans*, for example, I had no trouble finding numerous instances of this schema in the first piece I had practiced, the Courante in a GusC2 (m. 13). After isolating one, I transposed it to several different keys, and gradually, the excerpt began to surpass its particular configuration of pitches and assumed the abstract character of a pattern. I also transposed complete pieces to several different keys, at sight. Interestingly, after first experiencing the same piece in a variety of different tonalities, it became much easier afterwards to recognize the schemata in their musical context. Moreover, I began to notice how certain schemata would effortlessly lead into

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plucks are staggered very audibly. Playing on a single 8' register, however, players are free to depress the key as slowly or quickly as they wish, thus creating the possibility of a slow, controlled pluck.

others. Implicitly, then, I was slowly gaining knowledge about how the corpus's patterns interact within the context of a larger formal structure.

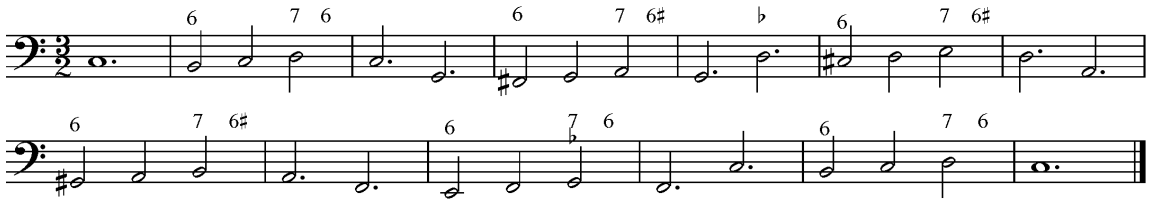

Figure 4.12. Dandrieu *Parcours* – With *Cantizan* and *Tenorizans*

Recording 4.13. Dandrieu Parcours, Improvisation 1

Recording 4.14. Dandrieu Parcours, Improvisation 2

As a way of continuing to internalize the schemata, I designed a number of partimenti to practice and transpose, each exemplifying a particular schema.[20] The partimento in Figure 4.12, for example, adapted from the *parcours* offered in Dandrieu's thoroughbass tutor, is intended for practicing the *cantizans* and *tenorizans* schemata.[21] I also practiced each partimento in a variety of different dispositions, using a method the authors of the *Compendium Improvisation* call "declination" (Schwenkreis 2018, 217). For example, my improvisations on Figure 4.12 present two different realizations of the *parcours*: the first with two voices in the right hand, and one in the left (Recording 4.13); and the second with one ornamented voice in the right hand and two in the left (Recording 4.14). Such declination exercises constitute another kind of thinking-through-practice. By

[20] The *Compendium Improvisation* provides numerous examples of these partimenti.

[21] Nearly all of the "tables" in Dandrieu's (1718) thoroughbass treatise follow the same pattern of keys: C major, G major, D minor, A minor, F major. The keys thus form a kind of *Monte Romanesca,* to use Gjerdingen's terminology.

experiencing the same schema in different dispositions, the improviser begins to develop an embodied understanding of the schema's aural and kinesthetic *feeling* as it presents itself in different situations. Moreover, the improviser learns to connect this embodied feeling with analytically-derived knowledge about the schema, learning to recognize it more quickly and reliably as well.

After this initial phase of exploration and experimentation, I attempted my first formal analysis of several pieces from the corpus. My analysis of the Courante in A minor, GusC 2 is presented in Figure 4.13. It consists of a very small repertoire of schemata, used repeatedly in varying contexts. In fact, nearly all of the analysis, save for a few passages of connective filler like the "descending third (or d3) schema in m.6, consists of various kinds of cadences: there are instances of the *doppia*, *composta*, *cantizans*, *altizans*, and *tenorizans*, not to mention several *attendantes,* plagal cadences, and evaded cadences. Since cadences were the centerpiece of baroque pedagogy, I take it as an encouraging sign that they are also central to Chambonnières's style, pointing to a congruity between my analytical frame and the corpus.

Testing the Analysis

Taking my analysis back to the keyboard is, however, the only way to test its success, and there are always improvements to be made. First, I reviewed my analysis in the course of playing; or put another way, I played the courante in the course of analysis. More specifically, I attempted to perceive, understand, and re-enact the analysis, in real time. The goal of this exercise was to join analysis and performance in one motion, allowing me to reflect on my analysis in the course of performing, and reflect on my performance in the course of analyzing the music. In this respect, this process concords well with what philosopher Donald Schön refers to as *reflection-in-action*. Schön's concept speaks to the common notion of "thinking on your feet," acknowledging that "we can think about doing something while doing it" (1983, 54). Within my own practice, this

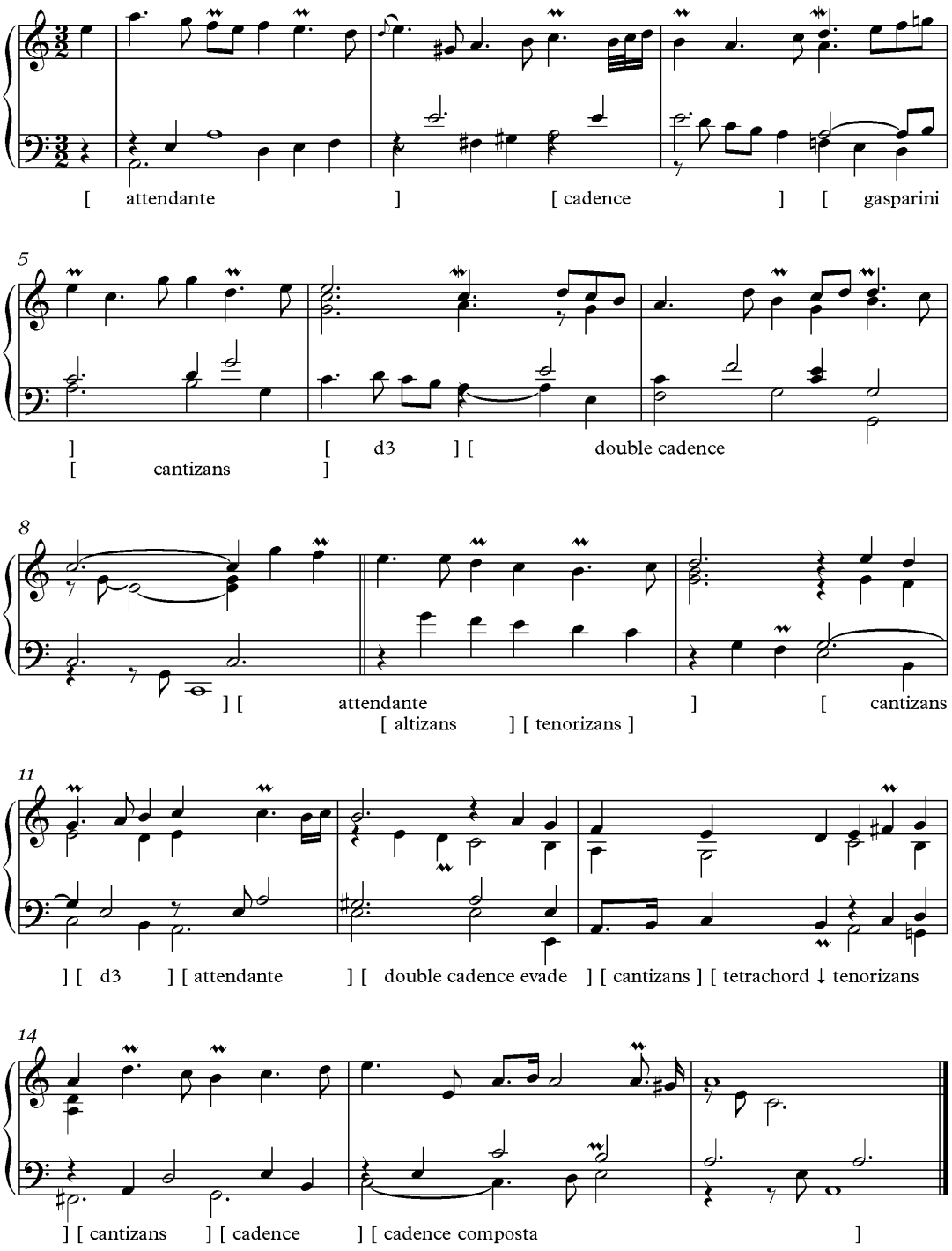

Figure 4.13. Courante in A minor, GusC 2

Recording 4.15. Courante in A minor, GusC 2

process has the potential to create immediate connections between my awareness as a player and my understanding as an improviser. It demands that I pay very close attention to how a given passage instantiates or realizes its abstract schema; or perhaps not, if the analysis is faulty. The following verbal re-enactment approximates what this is like:

As I prepare to play the first bar of GusC 2, I remind myself what the attendante is supposed to be: something expectant, arriving at the dominant, yet waiting for more to come. As I begin to play, I ask myself questions, and I answer with my fingers on the keys. Where am I starting? On the tonic. What is the next harmonic event? Moving to the subdominant. How does the subdominant arrive at the dominant? By snaking around the dominant, starting below and then heading above. And now I have arrived at the dominant, and the schema is complete.

Recording 4.16. Analysis 1 

I hesitate, and go back. I feel something else happening at the end of bar 1, heading into bar 2. There is something else to this snakiness. I play only the second half of the bar, and its resolution on the following downbeat, but slowly this time, savoring each sonority.

Recording 4.17. Analysis 2 

At this speed, it sounds like something else entirely. The third beat realizes another familiar schema, and as I put my analyst's hat back on, I pay closer attention to consonance and dissonance. This is what I hear:

Recording 4.18. Analysis 3 

I recognize this immediately: a phrygian cadence. I play it several times over, gradually accelerating to something like my original tempo. And now I return to the beginning of the piece once again, and I pay attention to both my

newfound discovery and my original analysis. I hear both at the same time, the phrygian cadence is still there, however briefly, embedded within my original trajectory. This makes sense.

Of course, the handy thing about reflecting upon these analyses at the keyboard is that I can mostly avoid verbalizing such discoveries. After playing through the piece several times in the deliberative manner described above, I was ready to refine my analysis and inaugurate a new round of reflection and testing at the keyboard. Over the course of many analyses, and many iterations of the same analysis, I gained greater insight into both the corpus and my analytic frame, the particulars of which I describe in the next section. As I explain below, I developed methods for describing schema variants, identified certain idioms specific to the corpus, and finally found an improvisational approach to modulation and large-scale form tailored to Chambonnières's fluid style.

From Schema to Tag

Very quickly, I felt a need to distinguish between different variants of the same schema. Consider, for example, the various kinds of cadence: simple, composta, and double. Beyond those labels, I also had to account for long cadences, evaded cadences, deceptive cadences, etc., as well as be prepared to deal with some combination of these variants: a long, evaded, double cadence, for example. Furthermore, I wanted to describe in my analyses not just a succession of schemata, but also some of the improvisational tools used to realize those schemata. In GusC 2, for example, I wanted to capture the imitation that happens in bar 9 as part of the larger attendante schema, as well as the snake-like voice exchange in bar 1 and the passing motion (5/3 - 6/4) of the soprano and tenor at the end of bar 4. I needed something analogous to the "applications" introduced by Strobbe in *Tonal Tools*: a repertoire of techniques to vary and enliven a small number of basic tonal pathways (2014, 22-3). To this end, I decided to use a system of *tags* in my analyses. The analysis still consists of a series of discrete schemata, corresponding to semantically meaningful stretches of music, but each schema is now accompanied by a series of tags to further describe how the schema

is realized. If smaller-scale schemata function as constituent parts of a larger schema (as does the phrygian cadence in bar 1 of GusC 2), then this schema is included as a tag attached to its parent schema (the *attendante*, in this case).[22]

Specific idioms

It did not take long for me to discover that certain patterns observed in the corpus fit only imperfectly into my analytical frame. Take, for example, the cadence that occurs in bars 6 and 7 of GusC 2, shown in Figure 4.14.

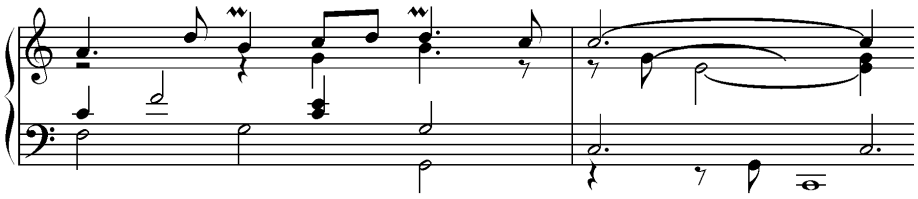

Figure 4.14. Courante in A Minor, GusC 2, mm. 6–7

This is *very nearly* a double cadence, but not quite. Like a standard double cadence, it begins on beat 2 with a 5/3 sonority (or in this case, a variant: 7/3), before proceeding on the next quarter note to the required 6/4 sonority (the so-called consonant fourth).[23] Normally, this 6/4 should prepare a 5/4 sonority on the next beat, which would then resolve to 5/3. Chambonnières's example, however, skips the 5/4 sonority to move directly back to 5/3. For a variety of reasons—perhaps because the 5/3 stage is twice as long as the preceding two stages, or perhaps because of the trill in the soprano—this still sounds like a double cadence, despite its lack of any suspended fourth. In fact, this particular cadence schema (5/3 - 6/4 - 5/3) occurs so much more often in the corpus than the traditional double cadence that it *should* properly be understood as a double cadence,

[22] See later in this chapter for several examples of complete analyses using this system of tags.

[23] The "consonant fourth" is discussed extensively by Knud Jeppesen (1992, 193-4), who describes it as a fourth introduced stepwise on a weak beat, preparing a stronger dissonance occurring on the next strong beat.

albeit a French *cadence double*.[24] At this stage, it is of no particular importance whether this is a matter of national (French) style, personal (Chambonnières's) style, or generic style; all that matters is that I recognize it, and make it a part of my own style.

After living with this music for long enough, I began as well to notice certain recurring patterns that had not yet figured in my analytical frame. Let us look, for example, at what happens in mm. 4–5 of GusC 2 (Figure 4.15).

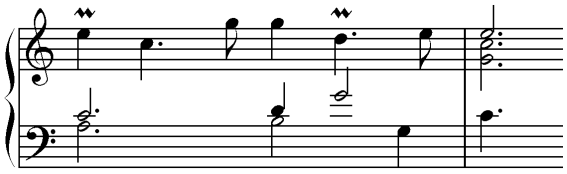

Figure 4.15. Courante in A minor, GusC 2, mm. 4–5

After the preceding bar's plagal cadence in a minor, the bass steps up to scale degree 2, harmonized with a ♮6 chord rather than the usual ♯6 demanded by the rule of the octave. This leads to scale degree 3 in the bass, harmonized with a 5/3 chord and effectively tonicizing C major by way of a cantizans. The tonic-to-mediant bass motion has thus been recontextualized as submediant to tonic, and this move to C major will be confirmed over the next three bars by a double cadence in C. Look however, at the same schema in mm. 1–2 of GusC 3, shown Figure 4.16.

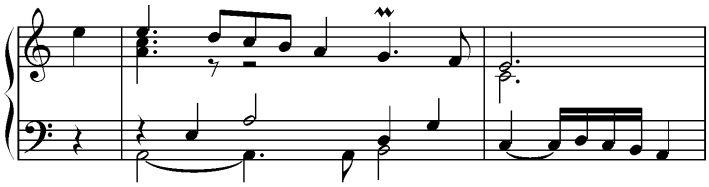

Figure 4.16. Courante in A minor, GusC 3, mm. 1–2

[24] This is a good example of adapting a more general kind of schema (the double cadence) to the particulars of a specific musical style. The French *cadence double*, then, should be understood as a kind of specialized double cadence, with its own set of norms and standard usages.

Here, we observe exactly the same pattern, but rather than continuing in C, the bass immediately returns to A as its tonal center of gravity. Viewed tonally, this passage provides only a fleeting hint of the relative major, and it seems preferable to analyze the passage as staying in its home key of A minor. Despite their differing tonal implications, both of these passages exemplify the same schema, one that harmonizes the stepwise ascent from scale degree 1 to 3 in this particular fashion. As I mentioned above, conceiving of scale fragments in a tonally flexible way allows me to accommodate both the modulating and non-modulating varieties of the schema under the same heading, or even to remain agnostic as to a passage's exact tonal interpretation. The schema occurs with great enough frequency in the corpus to justify its inclusion in my own *zibaldone,* however, and its effect is different enough from the standard RO harmonization to give it its own name: the *1-to-3*.

Dispositio and Modulation

Thinking about schemata in terms of their tonal implications leads naturally to thinking about modulation, and with it, the dispositio or form of the piece. In the case of French music, and Chambonnières's music more particularly, it seems difficult to speak of any rational tonal plan behind these pieces. Contemporary reception of Chambonnières's music has focused on its melodic elegance, but not necessarily its tonal coherence. Music theorist Drora Pershing, for example, offers a mostly negative assessment of his music, noting that "the harmonic motion in many of his pieces often seems almost random; without directed motion to clarify the structure, and with a top voice often lacking the coordination with the bass that helps define the form, we find few Chambonnières pieces with the cogency of the *Courante de Madame*" (2006, 126). To a large extent, such negative appraisal reflects the still largely Austro-German vantage point of music theorists. Nevertheless, even a sympathetic critic like James R. Anthony could find seventeenth-century French lute music "mannered, precious, even decadent; its melodies are surcharged with ornaments, its rhythms fussy, its harmony often aimless, and its texture without unity" (1978, 243). Responding to this, Susan

McClary (2012, 243) identifies a specific cause for listeners' discomfort with French music: namely its cultivation of stasis, timelessness, and lack of teleology. Through an extended analysis of D'Anglebert's *Tombeau de Mr. de Chambonnières*, McClary highlights the ways in which rhythmic, textural, and ornamental variety conspire to achieve this effect. Most important of all, though, is D'Anglebert's resolute refusal to fully modulate, to provide cadential confirmations for his tonal excursions. In McClary's view, the piece never properly leaves the key of D major, despite its wandering motion towards other tonal centers. This utter lack of tonal goal-directedness, rather than unmasking D'Anglebert as an incompetent composer, instead points towards his complete mastery of an alternative set of aesthetic ideals:

> Put briefly, D'Anglebert's task is to produce an experience of time in which the listener is absorbed by each present instant. He is obliged to satisfy the rules of orderly succession (the much vaunted *raison*) as he moves from moment to moment: the transgression of fundamental propriety would undermine the idyllic security of this prolonged stasis. He may even group together a couple of measures in a quasi-causal conspiracy, as in the case of the implied modulations, although none of these actually comes to fruition. […] Gradually we learn from this music not to bother at all with future-oriented thought, but to embrace the serene beauty of each new configuration as it arises. (McClary 2012, 248)

As I play through Chambonnières's courantes, trying to make sense of their tonal plan, I often think of this timeless, present-focused quality identified by McClary. Like D'Anglebert, Chambonnières follows the laws of compositional order (*raison*), but he delights in leading us to our ultimate destination by roundabout ways. The form of the courantes is, therefore, always generically correct: it begins in the "right" key, leading to a cadence on a generically accepted degree before the double bar, and then leading back to the home key by the end of the piece. The Courante in g, GusC 27 is an excellent example of this (Figure 4.17).

After establishing G minor with a phrygian half cadence in m.2, m.3 tonicizes C minor with a *cantizans* before attempting to reaffirm G minor with a cadence in m.4. This cadence is evaded by way of a flattened leading tone (F♮) on beat 3, causing tonal uncertainty that is only resolved by the

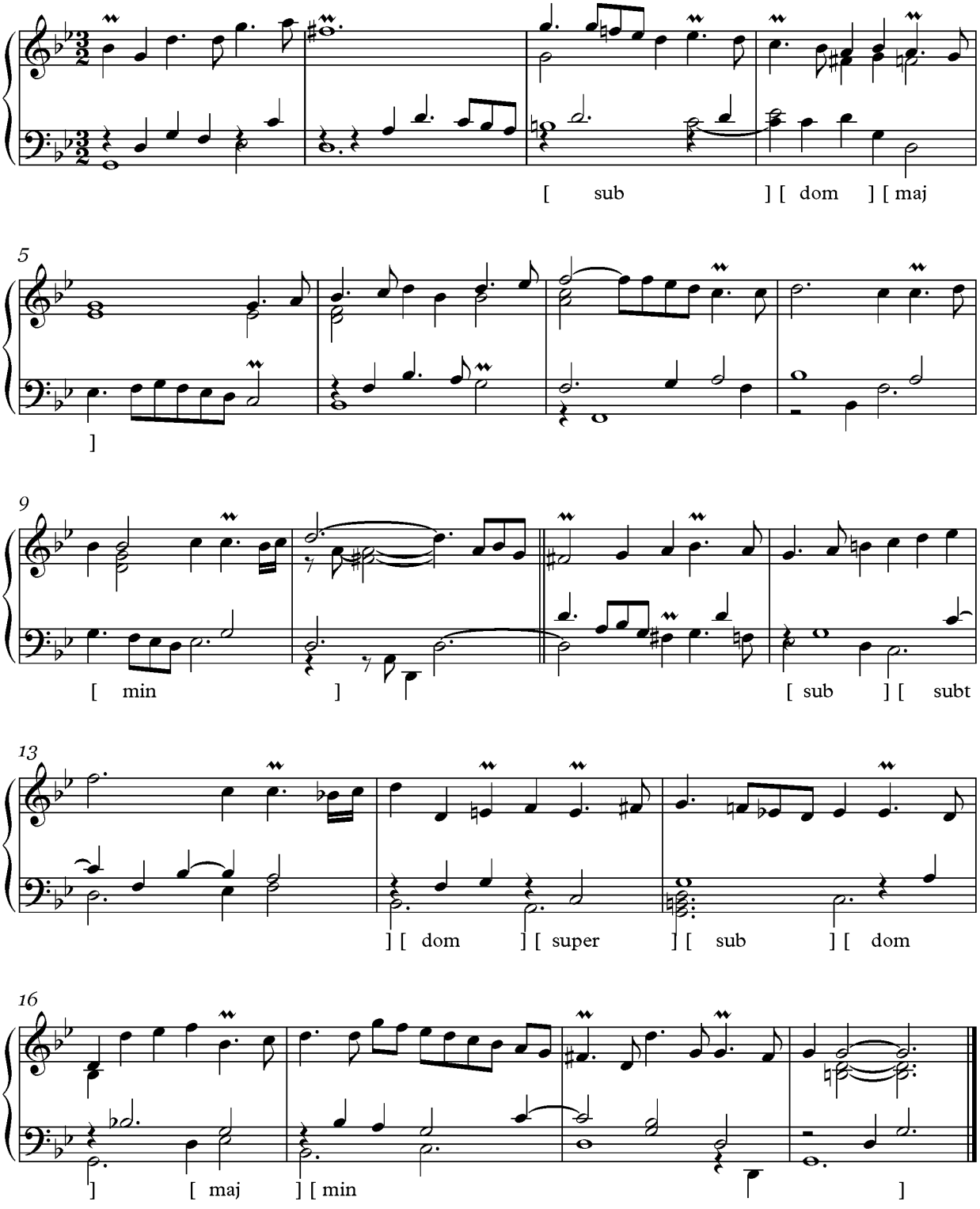

Figure 4.17. Dispositio of Courante in G Minor, GusC 27

tenorizans in mm. 5 and 6, tonicizing Bb. A modulation to Bb is confirmed by a cadence in mm. 7 and 8, but a deceptive cadence in mm. 8 and 9 pivots us back towards G minor, ending with another phrygian half cadence before the double bar. By m.12, we have once again tonicized C minor. The cadence in mm. 13 and 14, however, reveals that this is only part of a modulation to Bb. Measure 14 immediately modulates once again: the E♮ in the soprano on beat 2 points towards F major, but the *tenorizans* that follows into m.15 (with the soprano F#) reveals this to be part of a modulation to G minor. The downbeat of m.15, however, reveals that our arrival point is actually a G major chord, the dominant of C minor. C minor is, however, immediately turned back towards G minor in m.16 (by way of the tonally vacuous "Gasparini" schema). The presence of F♮ in m.16 points us seemingly towards the relative major, Bb, but mm. 17 and 18 reveal that this is instead only part of a long double cadence in G minor, thus ending the second half of the piece.

With apologies for potentially trying the reader's patience, this play-by-play description of Chambonnières's tonal "plan" demonstrates how nebulous the very notion of a plan is. One could imagine that a composer *might* pre-determine this zigzagging path as a pre-compositional decision, but would an improviser do that? Clearly not.

Grazzini (2014) distinguishes between what he calls "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches to modulation. He describes the top-down method (via Rameau's suggestions in book three of the *Traité*) as a matter of re-interpreting scale degrees, analogous to the traditional harmonic analysis of "pivot chords."; for example, one can reinterpret the original tonic as the subdominant of the new key, and effect this reinterpretation by way of an "irregular cadence" (257). Grazzini also cites modulating formulas like the Fonte (or "key-seeking" progressions as Callahan would call them) as examples of the top-down method. These approaches thus entail beginning with a modulatory goal in mind that the improviser subsequently carries out. Meanwhile, the bottom-up method, according to Grazzini's reading of Rameau, consists of "altering the quality of the tonic triad, changing it from

major to minor, for instance, or to a sixth chord of some sort" (260). In Grazzini's view, this represents a fundamentally different improvisational mindset from top-down methods: "you begin with the chord in front of you. You change its quality, and then you see where it leads" (261). In this way, improvisers find their modulatory path as each opportunity to modulate presents itself in the course of playing.

It seems to me that Grazzini's characterization of bottom-up modulation is somewhat naive. In his analysis of a prelude in D major by Louis Couperin, for instance, he speculates that a #4 chord is introduced "as if Couperin altered the quality of a local tonic, and then followed the new chord to see where it might lead" (Grazzini 2014, 261). Perhaps, at least initially, this type of exploration functions as Grazzini proposes: that is, the hypothetical player introduces the #4 chord and then wonders, "where can I go from here?" But after the improviser has gained even a modicum of experience, it no longer works so innocently. Rather, the player learns to associate chordal alterations, like the #4, automatically with particular modulatory pathways. In my own work as an improviser and continuo player, this is how I experience modulation. As a result of my long acquaintance with the RO, there is a nearly instant association between the 6/#4/2 chord and the subdominant degree, descending to the mediant. As a result, introducing a #4 chord automatically implies an appropriate reinterpretation of the bass. Moreover, if I decide to alter a chord in the way Grazzini describes, I do so already imagining at least some of its tonal potentiality. As I further gained experience, I also expanded my range of pathways. In the same way as expanded versions of the RO encompass a wider variety of sonorities, the #4 sonority eventually came to represent a multitude of paths (Figure 4.18).

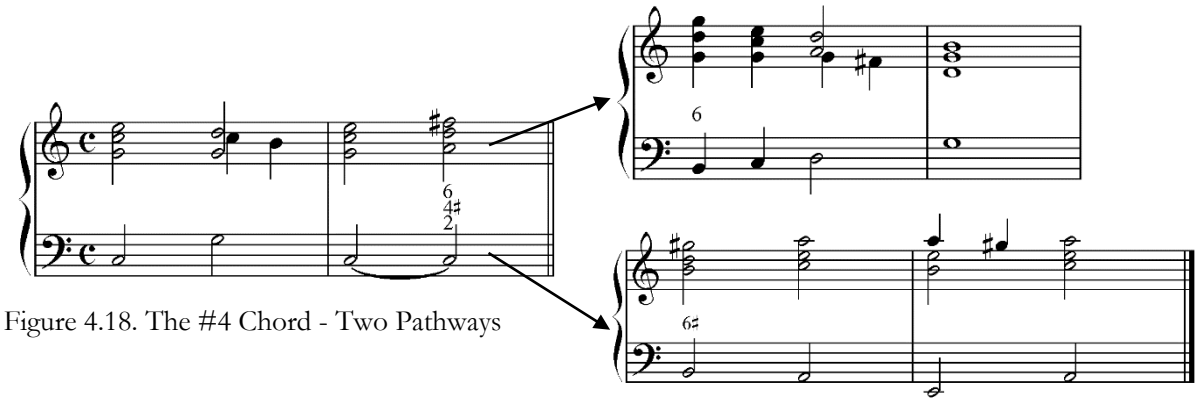

Figure 4.18. The #4 Chord - Two Pathways

Recording 4.19. The #4 Chord, Pathway A

Recording 4.20. The #4 Chord, Pathway B

Viewed in this way, the distinction between top-down and bottom-up approaches is negligible, since both involve reinterpreting scale degrees, and both eventually entail some degree of choral alteration. Nevertheless, the image that bottom-up modulation conjures—in which the improviser wanders from key to key, like exploring an attractive garden—is highly congruent with my own experience with Chambonnières's music, as well as that of critics like McClary with French music more generally. My point is only that the exploration already takes places with full knowledge of where the player might be going.[25]

Modulatory Strategy

Over the course of analyzing, playing, and improvising, I have tried to conceptualize modulation in a variety of ways. Lutz (2018) describes several of these in detail, including the reinterpretation of bass scale degrees discussed above. He also describes a process of scale mutation: in C major for

[25] In a way, the RO and the *Fundamenta* tradition are two different ways of coping with the complexity of actual musical practice, something that students can only fully grasp with experience. Where the RO provides one normative solution for harmonizing a bass, the *Fundamenta* tradition instead emphasizes a wide variety of solutions. In both cases, however, a teacher would need to intercede to fill in the gaps: in the case of the RO, the teacher would need to show the student when to deviate from the standard harmonization, and in the case of the *Fundamenta* tradition, the teacher would need to help the student in selecting from the various alternatives.

example, the introduction of scale degree #4 in any voice directly implies a move to the dominant; likewise, scale degree ♭7 implies a move to the subdominant. Although this is undoubtedly a useful way to think in the course of improvisation, for the purposes of my analysis, I found tracking these scale mutations to prove too unwieldy. Moreover, in line with my discussion above with Grazzini, I found it easier for myself to think of, and experience at the keyboard, these scale mutations as characteristic intervallic patterns above a bass. As part of my developing understanding of modulation, each kind of tonal motion came to have a distinct feeling, something that I could perceive and grasp often without thinking; or perhaps more accurately, that I could understand by thinking-through-my-fingers. This manner of embodied cognition allowed me to make complex decisions about how and where to modulate without analytical thought. Instead, my fingers led me where I needed to go, not unthinkingly, but rather relying upon the productive, intelligent interface between hand and keyboard. To better represent this emerging sense of key and modulation within my analyses, I settled on a more spatial metaphor for understanding how I could change key. I imagined a limited number of tonal directions of motion, each measured against the local reigning tonic: towards subdominant, dominant, relative major, relative minor, mediant, submediant, subtonic, and supertonic.[26] The piece's modulatory path, its dispositio, consists therefore in the concatenation of these tonal motions. If, in my analysis, a particular schema was used to accomplish a modulation in one of these directions, then I tagged the schema appropriately. I also observed that each of these tonal directions tends to entail characteristic chordal sonorities (like the #4 chord cited above in connection with a movement toward the dominant), and many often rely upon specific "tags" isolated in my analysis. For example, movement toward the subdominant is very often

[26] These designations are not intended to refer to tonal functions, but rather to scale degrees. A modulation to the "mediant," then, refers to a modulation to scale degree 3. This terminology is somewhat reminiscent of the *cordes essentielles,* consisting of *finale, médiante,* and *dominante*, which, as Pedneault-Deslauriers (2017) notes, had been common parlance since the early seventeenth century.

accomplished by the so-called *motivo di cadenza,* in which a cadence is evaded and redirected towards the subdominant by way of a flattened leading tone.[27]

In sum, I sought to represent in these analyses how I thought about and worked with a variety of improvisational procedures, techniques, and structures. Although I could undoubtedly refine my work further with enough time and experience, I ultimately arrived at analyses that felt right. Furthermore, I came to these analyses not solely through intellectualization, but also through a careful and reflective thinking-through-practice. With the analyses in hand, I could now put them to work.

Pedagogical Tools

One of the goals in performing these analyses was to sharpen my understanding of the theory behind Chambonnières's improvisational practice; to have a clearer idea of how pieces like his courantes *could* have been improvised. But beyond that, I wanted to engage with the corpus as a body of implicit, tacit knowledge, and moreover, to make this knowledge my own. I needed to transform my analyses into something like a collection of Neapolitan partimenti, offering, as I described above, a curated chain of experiences designed for maximum pedagogical impact. To that end, I turned to tools from computational musicology, namely the python library music21.

Music21 is, according to the developers, "an object-oriented toolkit for analyzing, searching, and transforming music in symbolic (scorebased) forms" (Cuthbert and Ariza 2010, 637). It consists of a variety of tools for working with XML files, and for representing and manipulating music programmatically, as well as a large collection of helper functions and objects for dealing with routine tasks in analysis and composition (like determining the key of a piece or passage, for example). While musicologists have increasingly relied on music21 for their corpus analysis projects,

[27] In my own analyses, I have affectionately termed this the "bLT," short for "flat leading tone."

in my own case, I am less interested in the software for its powers as an analytic tool than for its ability to programmatically organize and generate music.[28]

My first task was to turn my analyses into something intelligible to the software. I designed a standardized format for my analyses. Each piece's analysis was transcribed into a CSV file, with beats represented by columns and measure numbers represented by rows.[29] I conceived of an "excerpt" with a beginning (beat and measure number), end, and a series of descriptive tags. I entered each schema in the analysis into the appropriate "start" cell, with the primary schema indicated as the excerpt's first tag, and I indicated the end of the schema in the appropriate "end" cell.[30] As an example, Figure 4.19 shows the tag file for GusC 2.

I could now bring these tag files to bear on the corpus, represented as a collection of twenty-seven XML files. Using music21, I designed several data types and functions to represent the improvisational knowledge locked inside the corpus. In addition to a tag map, which programmatically represents a piece's analysis, I conceived of a tag dictionary. The tag dictionary catalogs every analyzed excerpt in the corpus and organizes them according to the excerpt's constituent tags. It is, effectively, a virtual *zibaldone*, full of every improvisational generating principle in Chambonnières's collection of courantes. With the tag dictionary, making inquiries about Chambonnières's style is effortless. With a few lines of code, I can look at every cadence in the corpus, side-by-side. Or, perhaps I might want to look at every double cadence modulating to the subdominant by way of a flattened leading tone. With a few more lines, I can see them all transposed to C major, or any other key of my choosing. The resulting pages of music are a little like

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[28] My project's up-to-date source code may be viewed and downloaded online on GitHub: https://github.com/medwards3/partimentifi.

[29] The courante's 3/2 meter was subdivided into 6 parts, giving us beats 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, and 3.5.

[30] In the tag files, schemata are indicated by strings of tags separated by spaces. The beginnings of subsequent schemata within the same bar are indicated by semicolons. The end of an excerpt is indicated by a backslash followed by the excerpt's schema (i.e. its first tag).

Measure	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5
0						att X phr
1						
2	/att; ttc a				/ttc; cad	
3			/cad	gasp plag X		
4	1to3 tail a cant mod maj	/gasp				
5	/1to3; d3			/d3; cad double long gal		
6						
7				/cad	att imit 2vc	
8	alt			/alt; ten comp d		/ten
9	/att			cant		
10	/cant; d3			/d3; att mod min		
11	/att; cad double ev blt mod maj					
12	/cad; tail a cant	/tail; ttc d ten mod →				
13	/ttc; cant			/cant; cad mod ←		
14	/cad; 3to5 cad comp long mod min					
15						/3to5

Figure 4.19. A Tag Map for Courante in A minor, GusC 2

the pages and pages of *cadentiae* in Spiridione's *Nova Instructio* of 1670. By playing through so many realizations of the same schematic design, I began to develop a better understanding of how I could transform an abstract schema into sounding music, guided by Chambonnières's example.

Beyond this, I also wanted to develop my skills in realizing a schema in the context of the piece as a whole. What I needed was analogous to the *partimenti diminuiti* of Durante or the *Große Generalbass-Schule* of Mattheson: a pedagogical method aimed at teaching the various hierarchical levels of improvisation (dispositio - elaboratio - decoratio) holistically. Viewed pedagogically,

partimenti are not just "potential musical works," as Sanguinetti (2012, 167) describes them. Rather, according to Moseley, they serve as complex interfaces for musical games:

> A partimento typically takes the form of a bass line to be realized *ex tempore* by a student at the keyboard. As such, it is a concise script to be decompressed and processed via the hardware of a harpsichord, the interface of its keyboard, and the "wetware" of its player's experience, skill, memory, and associations en route to becoming music. Rather than a text to be read, it is an algorithmic puzzle that prompts and admits multiple polyphonic solutions. (Moseley 2016, 91)

In their partimenti, Durante and Mattheson create what are effectively puzzles or games to be mastered by the player. Although one might view any partimento in such ludic terms, Durante and Mattheson are particularly clear in articulating the game's rules. In each partimento, the player needs to discover when and where to apply the various textures, figurations, and stylistic features suggested by the composer. Since each suggested diminution pattern is keyed to a particular schema, the player solves the puzzle by learning to recognize these schemata in the partimento, and by correctly adapting and applying the appropriate diminution. After encountering the same schema often enough, in diverse settings and with diverse patterns of diminution, the player intuitively and tacitly knows how to use and embellish the schema effectively in the course of improvising.

In order to put my virtual *zibaldone* to work, I designed several more functions to create *partimenti diminuiti* on demand. These functions take a given piece from the corpus, transform it into a partimento (or a rhythmic partimento, if preferred), select several schemata from the piece's tag map, select several excerpts from the tag dictionary corresponding to those schemata (either drawn from the same piece, or if desired, from the corpus as a whole), and present these excerpts—or *modi* as Durante would put it—to the player. Each of these steps in the process can be customized and/or randomized to present the player with a partimento exercise that looks unfamiliar. For example, I might generate the following exercise, shown in Figure 4.20.

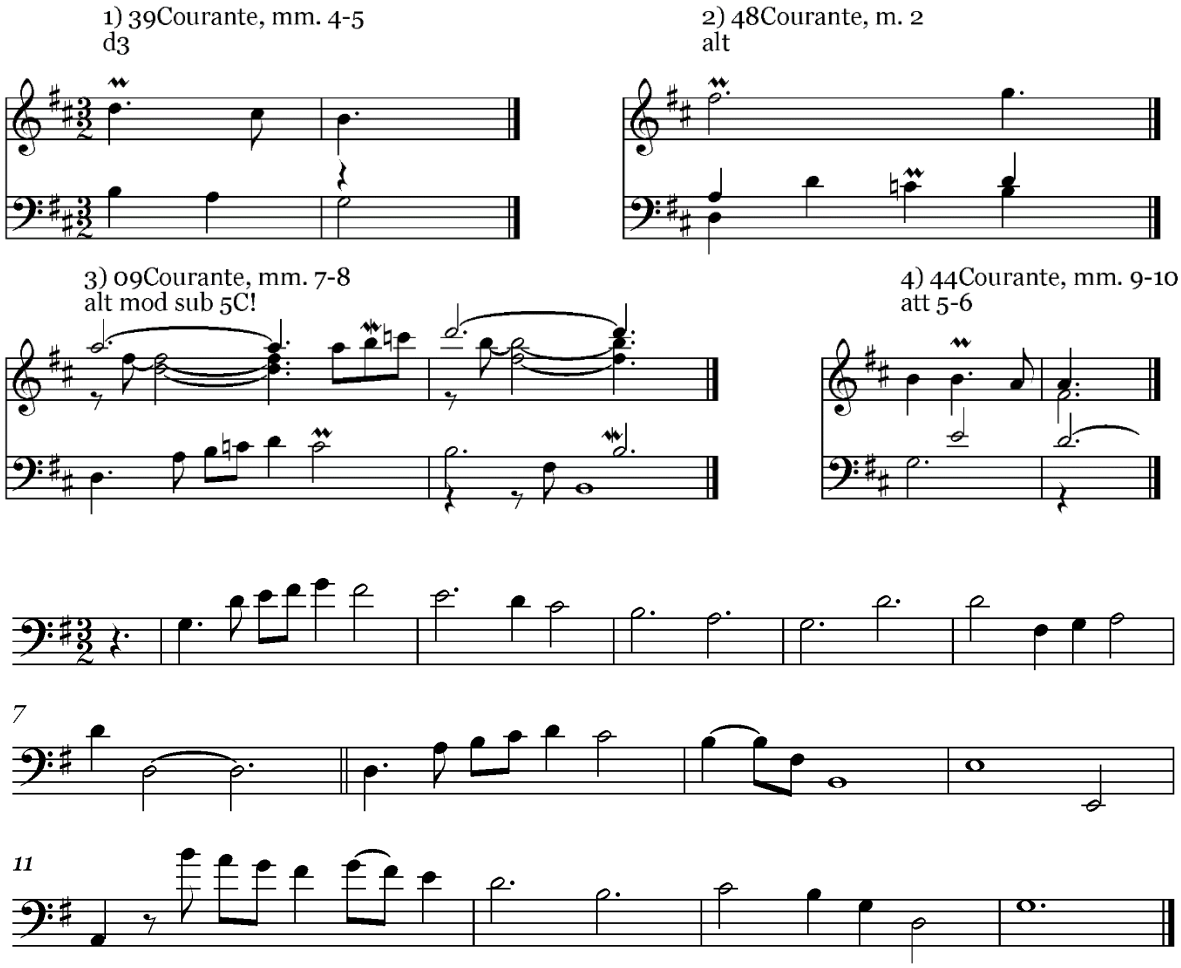

Figure 4.20. Excerpts and Partimento (Courante GusC 9)

Recording 4.21. Improvisation on GusC 9

In this case, my program has generated a partimento based on the Courante in C, GusC 9, transposed to G major. It has selected four sets of tags at random from the courante's tag map, printed in abbreviated form above the respective excerpts: d3 (descending third), alt (*altizans*), alt mod sub 5c! (*altizans* modulating to the subdominant with a surprising 5/3 chord), and att 5-6 (an attendante with 5-6 motion). The program then randomly selected exemplars of each of these tag sets from the tag dictionary, resulting in a d3 from Courante no. 39, an *altizans* from Courante no. 48,

another *altizans* from Courante no. 9, and an *attendante* from Courante no. 44.[31] With the partimento and the *modi* in hand, I was ready to start looking for improvisational solutions to the puzzle before me.

Rather than working from an improvised A-phase, I elected to begin immediately experimenting with adapting the excerpts to the partimento. I worked in stages. For each excerpt, I would first experiment with where to introduce it into the piece, and then improvise a courante including that excerpt in the chosen spot. For each subsequent excerpt, I would incorporate it into a new improvisation, all while retaining the previously worked excerpts. It was very easy to fit excerpt no. 3 to m.8, since it had originally been drawn from the same piece as the partimento bass. Excerpt no. 1 was the next simplest, in that I only needed to modify slightly the rhythm of the partimento's bass in m.1 to correspond with the excerpt. Excerpt no. 2, likewise, was quite simple to adapt to m.12: that is, I was able to recognize the excerpt's bass line as a diminution of the partimento's bass line in this bar. There were, however, several difficulties in adapting excerpt no. 4. I recognized the only possible opportunity for applying this schema in m.5, but I had encountered a problem of phrasing. Each time I improvised on the partimento, the melodic line came to rest of the downbeat of m.5; the excerpt, meanwhile, seemed to demand melodic continuity. Ultimately, I decided to maintain my own phrasing. I altered the excerpt nearly beyond recognition to achieve a degree of melodic repose on the downbeat, while allowing the tenor to project forward towards the next beat.

Simple Computational Modeling of Improvisation

While these exercises were certainly useful in developing improvisational skill, they were also limited by the size of the corpus. Without taking into account transposition of the bass, there are only twenty-seven partimenti available, corresponding to the twenty-seven courantes of the corpus.

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[31] The selected exemplars are all transposed by the program to the same key as the partimento, in order to facilitate the player's work.

One way to remedy this limitation might be to expand the size of the corpus to include all of Chambonnières's manuscript courantes, but this would be missing the point. The entextualized improvisational knowledge embodied by even a small corpus should be capable of generating a practically infinite number of pedagogical exercises. I therefore resolved to find a way to design entirely new partimenti from which to learn, generated from the raw materials of the corpus.

Based on my experiences until this point, I had confirmed for myself a (perhaps obvious) characteristic of courantes: namely, that the rhythmic motion of the bass line is often organized in bar-length units. That is, a given musical gesture starts at the downbeat, or immediately afterwards, and continues through until the next downbeat. By way of confirmation, in my schematic analyses I found that a large majority of excerpts do indeed begin and end on downbeats. Furthermore, I reminded myself that these bar-length rhythmic gestures, the elaboratio, were in the service of fulfilling the piece's dispositio: each bar, by virtue of its modulatory movement (or not), fulfills a particular function in the piece's larger formal design. I also reasoned that the bars fulfilling a given structural function (a "dispositio element") were all more or less interchangeable, so long as they all started and ended in the same place (i.e. on the same scale degree and in the same key). Based on this reasoning, I developed a new approach to constructing partimenti. By treating each bar in the corpus as a module, categorized according to a strict set of criteria, I could construct a new courante by concatenating a group of randomly-selected modules in sequence, each fulfilling a particular structural function.

There are two critical components in this model: first, a vocabulary of valid musical utterances, consisting of every bar-length module in the corpus together with its identifying features; and second, a decision-making process to select which bars to string together. I created the model's vocabulary by programmatically analyzing every bar in every courante, each in relation to the bar immediately following it. Unlike the system of tags I described in the previous section, this kind of

analysis could be performed automatically by the program I designed, and subsequently stored in memory. The function I created thus analyzed each bar according to the following criteria: first, the scale degree of the initial bass note; second, the chordal sonority over the bass ('5/3' vs. '6/3'); third, the current tonic (recorded as a scale degree in the piece's home key); and fourth, the structural function of the bar (e.g. Modulating, Cadential, Closing etc.). Each measure was categorized according to these criteria, taking into account as well the same set of criteria at the arrival of the downbeat of the next measure. These bar-length musical excerpts were stored in a data structure (a dictionary) allowing easy retrieval based on the aforementioned criteria.

With this vocabulary, I could now create any number of new courantes modeled after a given courante's formal design. After analyzing the selected courante to determine its sequence of dispositio elements, I use my catalog of bar-modules to introduce alternative modules to fulfill the same structural functions, selected by the computer at random. Figure 4.21 presents a comparison of the original bass line of GusC 2 with the output of music21. In fact, there are only two small differences between the two bass lines, in bars 3 and 10. Despite the fact that this particular output follows the original piece quite closely, it has nevertheless inspired me to improvise a piece with a markedly different tempo, affect, melodic line, ornamentation, and touch than the pieces in Recordings 4.10 and 4.11. The result is a piece that closely follows the same formal plan as the original, yet realized with contrasting materials: the same dispositio (or structure) with a slightly different elaboratio (or realization of that structure). By practicing a variety of different realizations of the same dispositio, generated by music21, I slowly acquired a very practical feeling for how each elaboratio functions within the formal structure of the piece.

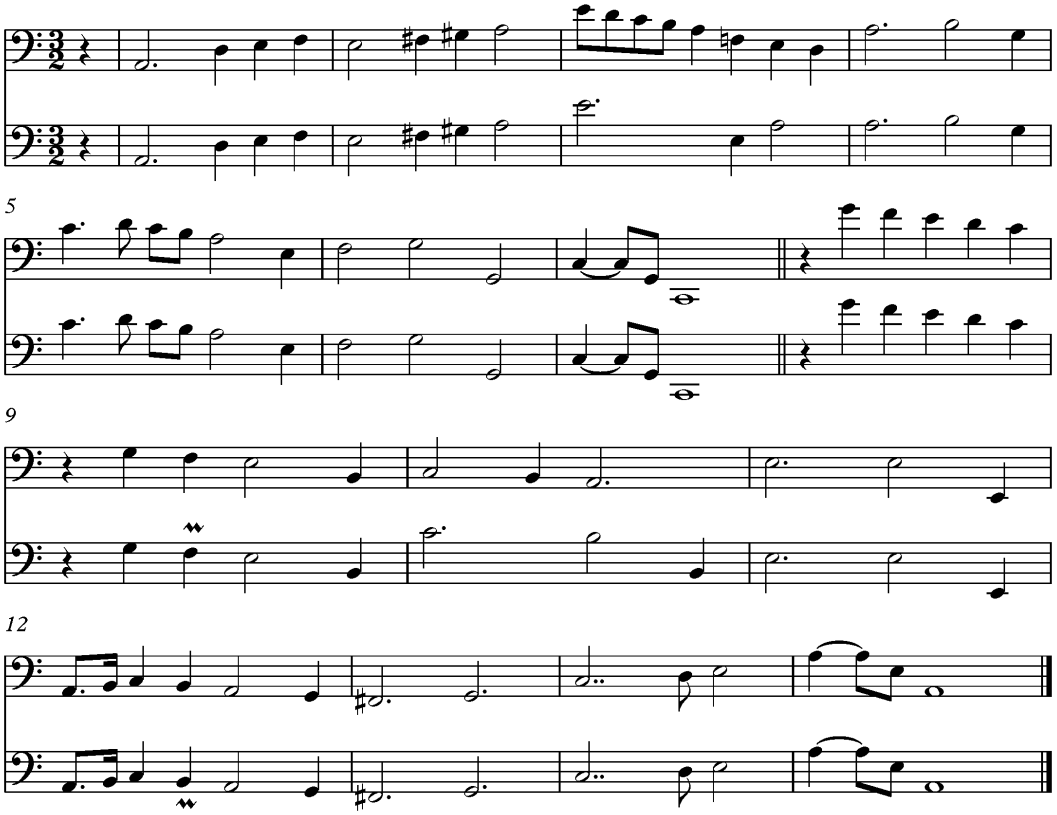

Figure 4.21. Comparison of GusC 2 (top staff) with music21 output (bottom staff)

Recording 4.22. Improvisation on GusC 2

But I also wanted to learn how to determine the piece's dispositio myself, and so I created a computational model for this kind of knowledge. More precisely, my goal was to create a tool for generating pedagogical exercises that might lead me to develop my own improvisational know-how. The model's decision-making process was intended to mirror, in highly simplified form, the decision-making process of an improviser. Here, I am contrasting an improviser's decisions, which are made in real time, to a composer's decisions, which are made outside the constraints of real time. In making compositional decisions, it is indeed possible to make choices that reflect the state of the composition as a whole, and these decisions can be revised at any point during the compositional process. Improvisational decisions, on the other hand, are made moment-to-moment, primarily

projecting forward into the future. With a limited working memory, it is highly unlikely that the improviser makes decisions taking into account all previously made decisions. Rather, it is probable that the improviser makes decisions based on a limited range of past decisions, or perhaps even, potentially, only the most recent decision.[32] This also accords well with the model of modulation introduced above, in which the piece's dispositio evolves as a result not of a clear design, but rather of moment-to-moment tonal motion. The improviser's skill consists in concatenating these tonal motions, creating an effect of modulatory wandering while still satisfying the genre's tonal demands. This description of improvisational decision-making, however limited, can nevertheless be modeled well by a Markov chain. A Markov chain models a random process in which any future state's probability depends only on the process's present state. All potential states of the process are included in the chain's "state space," and the probabilities of any given state moving to any other state are listed in the chain's "transition matrix" (Gerhard 2009, 67-9). In this respect, the reader may recall Gjerdingen's transition matrix of galant schemata from Chapter Three (Figure 3.5). For my own part, I chose to model the corpus as simply as possible, using a first-order Markov chain: that is, the set of transition probabilities is only dependent on the system's current state, not any of its past states.[33]

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[32] Of course, this notion of memory also encompasses the memory of the body, such that the fingers might "remember" the actions they just performed without any conscious awareness on the player's part. This embodied memory is also absent from the computer model, which is very much intended solely as a pedagogical aid, not as an accurate re-creation of improvisational skill.

[33] In reality, it would be impossible to model adequately the improvisation of a courante using only a first-order Markov chain. Even if the improviser is mainly thinking moment-to-moment (or bar to bar, in my model), they are nevertheless also aware of large-scale, long-term structure in predetermined forms like the courante. The improviser, knows, for example, that after a certain period of time, or a certain number of bars, they need to reach a cadence in a related key, corresponding to the written courante's double bar. In order to accommodate some of these larger structural concerns, I modified my implementation of the Markov chain. My implementation still constructs new courantes using the first-order transition probabilities observed in the corpus. However, after a certain number of bars, it also begins actively selecting for modules that will lead to a cadence in an acceptable key. If after five bars of looking the program has not yet reached a cadence, then the generated courante is rejected and the process starts anew.

As interesting as it is to know such things, it is of little help to the improviser. Such a matrix forms the declarative representation of what is normally procedural knowledge. That is, while expert improvisers may not be capable of articulating the probability of choosing one path (i.e. one state transition) over another, they will nevertheless intuitively—that is, using an intuition informed by their wealth of improvisational experience—make an appropriate choice in the course of improvising. In order to transform this explicit, declarative knowledge into tacit, procedural knowledge, I needed to engage myself creatively with a large number of newly generated pedagogical examples. Taken together, these exercises collectively exemplify the improviser's tacit knowledge of dispositio, or realization of underlying structure. My Markov chain implementation, then, will create any number of unique courantes, each one constructed according to the transition probabilities observed in the corpus. As an example, consider the courante in A minor shown in Figure 4.22, improvised on a partimento generated by music21.

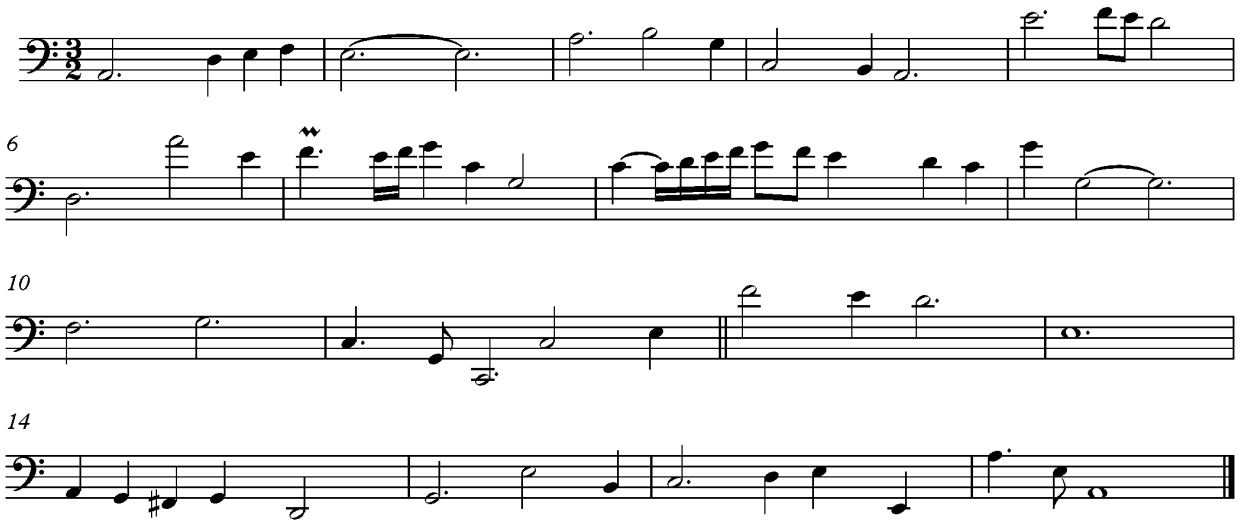

Figure 4.22. Courante in A minor, generated by music21

Recording 4.23. Improvisation on Figure 4.21

Conclusion

In summary, I have presented this process of improvisational reading as an excavation of sorts, sifting through the hierarchical layers of improvisational activity. I have tried to understand the various techniques and strategies by which Chambonnières could have improvised his keyboard pieces. By way of both traditional and more contemporary means, I have designed pedagogical materials to unlock the tacit improvisational knowledge embedded in these pieces. In using these materials myself, I have developed improvisational skill within the stylistic constraints of the corpus. In effect, having observed the traces of Chambonnières's improvisational language in his published works, I have learned to speak that language myself, albeit filtered through my own twenty-first-century sensibilities.

In the following chapter, I turn to the ways in which this newly acquired knowledge can be brought to bear on the issues raised in Chapters One and Two. I will explore what happens when twenty-first-century musicians read musical texts not as a series of performance instructions, but rather as a collection of improvisational ideas. In doing so, I will confront competing notions of work, style, and authenticity to carve out a new space for the historically-informed performer's freedom and creativity.

Chapter Five: Music as Movement

Music as Process

The previous chapter was fundamentally concerned with the acquisition of improvisational skill, defined, speaking in Benson's (2003) terms, as the ability to work idiomatically with the materials at hand. The present chapter, then, explores the effect improvising creates on the materials themselves. Returning again to terminology from Chapter Two, I am concerned here with *mouvance*, understood as the process by which a piece changes or varies in performance through improvisation.

Of course, improvisational activity does not necessarily have to have an *object*, something to represent or refer to. Even accepting Benson's assertion that all improvisation is the 'reworking' of something, that 'something' need not be foregrounded in musical practice. Instead, it is possible to look at music more as a *process* than as an object. This activity of music-making, what Christopher Small (1998) calls 'musicking,' is rooted in music's existence not as a fixed entity, but rather as an event, something that only gradually comes into being as it is created in performance. Musicking, then, entails a shift of emphasis from improvisation (the result) to improvising (the activity). Apart from improvisation, it is possible to view a whole host of established musical practices through this lens of musicking, including the performance of Western art music. As in the case of improvisation, doing so moves our attention away from the fixed reference points of classical music (musical works) towards the events (performances) created by musicians. Whereas, according to Kivy's (1993) Platonist view, a musical work is sometimes conceived as an ideal form that is discovered rather than created—existing independently of its original composition and its subsequent performance—musicking can *only* exist in its own (re-)creation, as a constant flow created by concrete historical individuals.

How do we effect this change in perspective from product to process? How can we understand, say, *mouvance* from the very interior of its unstable processes, rather than its stable, exterior manifestations? Philosopher Gilles Deleuze conceived of a metaphysics that privileges this unstable flow over the apparently stable entities we encounter in our daily lives, providing us with a useful set of concepts for thinking about process. In his ontological framework, Deleuze distinguishes between the actual and the virtual, both of which are fully real. If the actual refers to the physical world existing in space and time, then the virtual refers not to a possible world (since the possible may not necessarily be real), but more something like a *potential* world that could be made actual. Deleuze also conceives of *intensive processes* that effect the passage from the virtual to the actual, and back again. Deleuze understands the term *intensive* in a variety of ways, but here, it may be most useful to understand it in its original thermodynamic sense.[1] Indeed, philosopher Manuel DeLanda (2013) privileges this interpretation in his so-called "reconstruction" of Deleuze's ontology, wherein he defines Deleuze's extended understanding in terms of the simpler one. In thermodynamics, intensive properties are those—like temperature, pressure, or density—that cannot be divided, in contrast to extensive properties—like length, mass, or volume—that can. If a body of a water at a particular temperature is divided into several parts, for example, each part will retain the same temperature. Intensive differences, then, do not add together or subtract; rather, they average. Normally, when intensive differences within a system are small, they tend to cancel each other out, and the result is that these unstable, averaging processes become hidden beneath a seemingly stable product. When the difference between these properties is great enough, though, and when the system is moved far enough from equilibrium, the result is to "drive fluxes of matter or energy"

[1] See DeLanda (2013, 199) for a very concise summary of the three primary senses in which Deleuze understands intensity.

(DeLanda 2013, 199). It is these moments of far-from-equilibrium instability that reveal the processes that undergird apparent products in the actual world.

The privileging of becoming over being also has implications for any possible notion of 'identity.' In attending to intensive processes over stable products, Deleuze uproots philosophy's traditional conception of identity as primary and difference as secondary. Indeed, he shows that identity is always already permeated by difference, such that the two remain inseparably entangled. Identity must therefore be explained through difference. Identity is still a thinkable concept, but only as a differential identity, an identity which is also infinitely many *identities*. As DeLanda puts it,

> Deleuze, of course, would not deny that there are objects in the world which resemble one another, or that there are entities which manage to maintain their identity through time. It is just that resemblances and identities must be treated as mere results of deeper physical processes, and not as fundamental categories on which to base an ontology. (DeLanda 2013, 33)

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) introduce a variety of concepts that give clarity and precision to the workings of these intensive processes of becoming. *Strata* constitute the rigid, determined layers of actual reality. These are organized according to a concept of *territoriality,* referring to the extensive properties and qualities, physical or otherwise, that make up the world in which we live. *Territorialization*, then, refers to the various intensive processes that give rise to this actual world. *Deterritorialization*, meanwhile, points to the moments when the actual is pushed away from its equilibrium state, revealing the "intensive movements which animate strata from within" (DeLanda 2013, 205). What Deleuze and Guattari have created, then, is a powerful toolkit for thought, particularly for thinking about processes of becoming, passing from virtuality (or potentiality) through intensive processes towards actuality.

My aim in this chapter, however, is not philosophical. I do not intend to explicate, question, or problematize Deleuze's ontological framework, but rather to use it as a way of understanding my own practice. As I appropriate and adapt these ideas for my own ends, I may at times intentionally

"misuse" them, but the ideas will function productively so long as they are used to understand and "move" the artistic practice in which I work. My aim, then, is to explore how experimental practices such as mine can work through the creative tension that arises between event and object, process and being, *mouvance* and musical work. To rehearse an argument presented in the first chapter, as historically-informed performers operate within the more general confines of Western art music's performance tradition, their performances are also constrained by that tradition's regulative concepts, including—most powerfully—the work-concept. The work-concept naturally draws our attention away from music's gradual unfolding as an event, its *becoming*, and instead focuses us on music's persistence, its *being*. The work-concept and work-concept-centered practices have thus formed a layer of the classical musician's habitus, domesticating and essentializing what were originally contingent relations between scores and performers.

Even within mainstream classical performance traditions, however, there remains a residue of process within the finished product. More generally, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) identify a concern with "becoming" and "intensity" as the very purpose of the artist:

> By means of the material [e.g. paint, canvas, brush], the aim of art is to wrest the percept from perceptions of objects and the states of a perceiving subject, to wrest the affect from affections [e.g. feelings] as the transition from one state to another: to extract a bloc of sensations, a pure being of sensations. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 167)

In this conception of art, the artist works to uncover pre-individual perceptions and affections, what Deleuze and Guattari call "percepts" and "affects." These percepts and affects are considered to be intensive: that is to say, they are embedded in processes of becoming, constituting fluxes that drive matter and energy away from the equilibrium of static being. The artist's job, then, is to enter "a zone of indetermination, of indiscernibility, as if things, beasts, and persons . . . endlessly reach that point that immediately precedes their natural differentiation" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 173). The artist must then place these percepts and affects within a "plane of composition." As DeLanda

puts it, "in a very literal sense, art is concerned with making perceptible the usually hidden realm of the intensive" (2013, 213). In other words, artists preserve elements of the pre-individual, intensive world of becoming, even as they transform them into extensive, finished works of art.

It is in this sense that one might speak of the "residue" of process within music. In the case of compositional practice, for example, we have things like drafts and sketches that speak to the composer's process. Material traces like these point beyond finished scores and musical works to the concrete historical activities that shaped and formed them: playing and experimenting with musical materials, imagining possible outcomes, improvising at the keyboard, notating the score. Performers, meanwhile, also contribute to a musical work's coming-into-being. Performances—live performances, in particular—unfold in time as events, not objects.

As I alluded in earlier chapters, even within what philosopher David Davies (2018) calls the "classical paradigm" there are a variety of different models for understanding the performer's contribution to the musical work. These range from an extremely minimal role for a humble "executant," to models in which the work is co-constructed by the performer with the composer, and finally to models in which each performance represents, in itself, an independent musical work. All of these models allow for a recognition of the musical work as a locus of process, a meeting-place in which the activities of composers and performers intersect and interact. If the composer's creative processes coalesce and terminate in the score, then that same score serves as the point of origin for the creative processes of the performer. Moreover, just as composers, notating their scores, must imaginatively anticipate and engage with the actions of performers, so performers must imaginatively re-create those creative, intensive processes embodied by the score, resulting in new intensive processes that culminate in performance. The work-concept, however, strictly delimits the scope of these interactions, creating boundaries for the activities of composers and performers. Work-based-performance, as I called it in Chapter One, thus limits the performer's ability to

experience and engage with the intensive flows of creative practice, a space of indeterminacy in which pitch, rhythm, form, timing, dynamic, color, and energy are commingled.

It was for just these reasons that I proposed in earlier chapters a movement away from the work-concept and towards a more flexible conceptual framework. To that end, HIP-as-method presents us with the possibility of uncovering, problematizing, and destabilizing the stratified relations that define the space of Western art music: relations between composer and performer, score and performance, musical structure and musical surface. As I highlighted in Chapter Two, the repertoire of the seventeenth-century French *clavecinistes* is a particularly congenial place in which to explore these relations. I put forward a concrete alternative to the work-concept for understanding this repertoire: namely *mouvance*, the process by which a piece transforms and varies in performance while still maintaining a differential identity. In other words, *mouvance* is the process by which a piece by Chambonnières continually *becomes* "itself."

Moreover, I proposed that this music's performance practices pointed towards having been founded in improvisational skill, and that its divergent sources could more productively be read as an entextualization of embodied improvisational knowledge. Improvisation, viewed in this way, constitutes a pure intensive space of becoming in which a piece's *mouvance* may express itself. The various strata that make up a piece of music—boundaries between structure and ornament, pitch and rhythm, movement and affect, among untold others—are *deterritorialized* in the course of improvising, creating a chaotic, creative field of potentiality for the improviser to navigate through performance. Improvisation, then, allows us to understand the workings of *mouvance* beyond music theory's purview. Instead, an improvisational analysis examines *mouvance* from the interior of the process itself, within the piece's *becoming*.

As I described in Chapter One, I have embraced HIP as a tool for constructing *experimental practices*. At this point, finally, the details of my own experimental practice can now be described

fully. Just as in work-based-performance, my own practice begins with a musical text of some kind, most often a score. Where mainstream performance views the score as a closed technical object, however, my practice uses the score as an open-ended epistemic thing. Instead of thinking about the question "how can I perform this musical work in an historically-informed way," I move to questions like "what kinds of things can I do with this score?" The improvisational techniques and models described in the preceding two chapters—schemata, diminution patterns, modulation strategies, etc.—are now understood to function as technical objects within my practice. Working with these techniques in the course of improvising, I can now begin to discover ways in which the score may be deterritorialized and opened to processes of *mouvance*.

In order to demonstrate how an experimental practice such as mine can lead to the generation of new knowledge, I will present a series of case studies in the form of a musical "suite." Each case study—or movement—will take a musical text as an open, epistemic thing. In each case, I will examine how particular ways of working with the text lead to differing degrees of deterritorialization, and subsequently, how through improvisation these differing degrees of deterritorialization also lead to differing understandings of *mouvance*. In effect, each case study is an answer to the question, "what kinds of historical practices can I re-create using improvisation," or even, "what kinds of new practices does improvisation make possible?"

Within each movement, I will also present one or more recorded examples, created through my improvisational practice. Just like the provisional identities created through *mouvance,* each of these recordings should be considered a kind of snapshot of a particular moment of practicing: not as finished products, but remnants of process. Although these examples are unedited, they have all been preceded by a great deal of experimentation and reflection-in-action, and in this way they mostly correspond to what I described in Chapter Four as the B-phase of improvisational practice.

The first movement of my suite will be the **Prélude non mesuré,** which will explore improvisation as both a concept and a practice. The prelude was the genre in which musical process, rather than finished product, was mostly clearly recognized and appreciated as such by the *clavecinistes*. I will look to understand the products of this practice—the many preludes that *have* been preserved through notation—as *entextualizations*, instances of improvisational discourse removed from their original, living context. In line with Moseley (2013), I will argue for an archaeological engagement with the texts of these preludes, transforming them into material for improvisational reworking. Using a prelude in F major by Louis Couperin as the basis for my own preluding, I will experiment with different ways of reading and playing with its musical materials. Building first upon Callahan's (2010) and Grazzini's (2014) hierarchical conceptions of improvisational practice, and then extending Callahan's (2012) observations on the potential flexibility of this hierarchy, I will argue for a highly deterritorialized model of improvisation in which the musical surface enters into conversation with structure. Ultimately, as I continue to assimilate material for my preluding, including material from preludes by D'Anglebert and Jacquet de La Guerre, the original source of these materials will become less important than the continual process by which they are reworked.

Next, the **Allemande** will explore some of the ways in which *mouvance* functions in seventeenth-century French keyboard performance. In contrast to the prelude, in which the piece's enduring identity is subsumed by the transient *becoming* of its improvisational origins, the various dance movements of my suite rely upon a tension or balance between identity and difference, stability and motion. Each piece in the suite continually forms an identity that is always already inflected by difference. I will argue therefore that the best way to uncover and mold the contours of a piece's identity is through improvisational experimentation, conceived—as in the prelude—as a continual conversation between musical surface and structure. This process will lead to an experiential understanding of the allemande's potential range of identities, understood within a positive space of

mouvance and a negative space of brokenness. The **Courante I** will extend this experimentation to encompass the contemporaneous practice of playing *doubles*, or variations. The *double* is a fairly unique space within this cultural setting, in which the performer amplifies or adds to the identity of a piece already subject to *mouvance*. My own *double* for the courante should therefore be considered a kind of collaboration with the composer, a newly formed identity twinned with the piece from which it developed. As I move onward from the first courante, I will pause for a brief **Interlude.** In it, I will argue that the boundaries between one identity and another—or between positive movement and negative brokenness—can only be understood from within the same practice in which such valuations are made. Like the practice of thoroughbass, then, which acknowledges existent yet flexible rules and boundaries governing the roles of performer and composer, the performance practice of the *clavecinistes* should be understood within this same non-discursive environment. In the **Courante II**, then, we will see what happens when a piece is "moved" past its breaking point, thus becoming another piece entirely. Finally, in the **Sarabande**, I will connect this seventeenth-century practice of *mouvance* with the contemporary practice of historically-informed performers. Using a performance by Skip Sempé, I will examine the extent to which *mouvance* can function orally and aurally as part of a living tradition. I will look to extend the notion of musical surface to encompass *all* the performative details—timing, dynamic, articulation, etc.—that are the performer's stock and trade. As such, the active dimensions in which a piece's evolving identity can move should be expanded to include these performative concerns. Sempé's performance, then, in its full *aural* richness, will be seen not just as a "reading" of a piece, but as an active contribution to the shaping of that piece's identity.

Prélude non mesuré

The prelude is an excellent place to start in our discussion of *mouvance*, particularly since this is where the stakes of maintaining a piece's "identity" are lowest. In seventeenth-century France, the

prelude was the genre in which improvisational activity was most clearly recognized and appreciated as such by listeners. Recalling now the difference I highlighted in Chapter Three between an improvisation-concept and an improvisation-practice, it is in the prelude that concept and practice meet. In his discussion of the improvised prelude, Grazzini (2014, 280–300) attempts to define an improvisation-concept for the French Baroque. He synthesizes a number of sources of historical evidence, with particular emphasis placed on Sébastien de Brossard's dictionary definitions of various improvisatory genres, including the *prélude, fantasia, ricercata, tastatura*, and *toccata*. In effect, these genres form a network of related ideas surrounding improvisation during the French Baroque, and each individual term thus sheds light on a particular facet of the improvisation-concept. Brossard describes the toccata, for example, in these terms:

> C'est à peu près comme Ricercata, Fantasia, Tastatura, &c. Ce qui distingue cependant la Toccate de ces autres especes de Symphonie, c'est que 1º elle se joüe ordinairement sur des Instrumens à claviers. Et 2º qu'elle est principalement composée pour l'exercice des deux mains l'une après l'autre, parce que l'on y affecte d'ordinaire des Points d'Orgue ou de longues tenües, tantôt dans la Basse, tandis que le Dessus fait des vitesses, des diminutions, des passages, des Tirades, &c. tantôt dans le Dessus, tandis que la Basse ou la main gauche travaille à son tour, &c.[2] (Brossard n.d., 187)

In this way, Brossard links the toccata with a number of other improvisatory genres, and also adds more detailed connotations of physicality and instrumental prowess. The *ricercata*, meanwhile, is described as *un èspece de prélude ou de fantaisie*, in which "le compositeur recherche les traits d'harmonie qu'il veut employer dans les pièces réglées qu'il doit joüer dans la suite" (114).[3] Brossard also links the genre to an ideal of spontaneity, noting that the *ricercata* is ordinarily played *sur le champs et sans préparation*. In sum, we may infer from Brossard's various definitions an improvisation-concept that

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[2] "It is somewhat like the Ricercata, Fantasia, Tastatura, etc. However, what distinguishes the toccata from these other genres is that, first, it is ordinarily played on keyboard instruments. And second, that it is composed principally for the exercise of both hands, one after the other, since one ordinarily restricts this to pedal points or sustained chords, sometimes in the bass, as the treble makes runs, diminutions, passages, tirades, etc., and sometimes in the treble, while the bass works in its turn, etc." (my translation).

[3] "The composer explores the harmonic ideas he wishes to use in the stricter pieces that follow" (my translation).

includes harmonic exploration (*recherche*), freedom, spontaneity, and virtuosity, and as Grazzini demonstrates, many of these features may be shown to apply to preludes as well.

As I have argued at length, improvisation was an essential *practical* element of seventeenth-century French keyboard culture; more or less all of the *clavecinistes* conceived their music using learned techniques of improvisation, even if the results would later be refined on paper.[4] Moreover, even after the general shape of the piece was established, composer-performers like Chambonnières would continue to vary their pieces in performance each time they played (giving them *nouvelles graces*, as Le Gallois would say). Such examples of improvisation-practice are, however, not necessarily aligned with the ideals of an improvisation-concept. In the case of Chambonnières's pieces, for example, it seems more appropriate to speak of *mouvance* than of any contemporaneous concept of improvising, preluding, fantasizing, or extemporizing. Chambonnières's practice points to a balance between movement (*mouvance*) and stasis (identity), where an improvisation-concept points instead to the act of creation itself. Even with Benson's (2003) definition of improvisation as a "reworking" of something that already exists, in a practice governed by the improvisation-concept, the emphasis is typically placed on the *new* things the improviser creates, not the *old* things that have been reworked.

This is exactly what a prelude does during the French Baroque. Indeed, it might be more appropriate to speak here of the act of *preluding* than of individual preludes as lasting pieces of music. Évrard Titon du Tillet, for example, describes the prodigious improvisational abilities of Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre (1665–1729) in the following terms:

> elle avoit sur-tout un talent merveilleux pour préluder & jouer des fantaisies sur le champ, & quelquefois pendant une demie heure entière elle suivoit un prélude &

[4] One might also imagine the possibility of composers working out their pieces solely at the writing desk, without recourse to the keyboard. C.P.E. Bach, for example, distinguishes between the pieces that his father "composed without instrument, but later tried out on one" and "those for which he took the material from improvisations at the keyboard" (Jones 2007, 31). Nevertheless, I would argue that, even in the case of the former method, such composers' work at the writing desk was deeply conditioned by prior experience at the keyboard.

> une *fantaisie* avec des chants & des accords extrêmement variez & d'un excellent goût, qui charmoient les Auditeurs.[5] (Titon du Tillet 1732, 636)

Titon du Tillet thus creates a strong association between the prelude and its act of creation. Jacquet *pursues* the prelude in the course of performance, created *sur le champ* in a manner highly reminiscent of Brossard's definition of the *ricercata*. Jacquet's preluding is therefore a staging of her music's continual becoming, conceived as an event created for a particular audience at a particular time. Here, it is Jacquet's activity that is most highly prized by cultural participants like Titon, her ability to unveil melodies and harmonies that will charm her audience. The "identity" of the ephemeral music being produced by Jacquet is of only secondary importance.

Of course, much of the evidence we have of what these improvised preludes actually sounded like comes from "composed" preludes that have been written down and preserved. Jacquet, for example, included several preludes in her first published book of harpsichord pieces (1687). Even though these pieces do not quite reach the fantastic heights suggested by Titon—they are all considerably shorter than *une demie heure entière*, after all—it is still quite plausible to imagine that they *could* have been improvised. The notation of these preludes is best understood in line with Moseley (2013) as an instance of *entextualization*, a process whereby discourse is transformed into 'text', removed from its original context, and re-used. In this case, Jacquet's improvisational activity (preluding) has been entextualized through musical notation, detached from its original time, place, and social context.

Moseley's two modes of engagement with musical texts—the literary and the archaeological—will play out in different ways over the various movements of my own suite.[6] Since this is only a

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[5] "She had above all a marvelous talent for preluding and playing fantasies on the spot, and sometimes for an entire half hour she would pursue a prelude and a fantasy, with highly varied melodies and harmonies, and of an excellent taste that charmed her audience" (my translation).

[6] I first presented these two modes of engagement at the end of Chapter Two, and I relied upon Moseley's archaeological mode throughout Chapter Four.

beginning, though—a prelude—I will concentrate in this section on an archaeological engagement with the text, focusing on the improvisational activities, or generating principles, from whose purview the text has since been detached. Effectively, then, this chapter's prelude is a prelude to *mouvance* itself, focusing on the activity of performance rather than its product, and focusing on the reworking of musical material rather than on what is being reworked. Like each subsequent section of this chapter, I will begin this reworking with a musical text of some kind. The perfect place to start would have been an unmeasured prelude (*prélude non mesuré)* by Chambonnières. Unfortunately, there are no preludes whatsoever attributed to Chambonnières, and moreover, there is very little evidence that any of the thirty-odd anonymous preludes preserved in manuscript are Chambonnières's either.[7] On the surface, this might seem quite surprising, given that other composers from Chambonnières's circle, including Louis Couperin and D'Anglebert, wrote a number of highly accomplished preludes that likely speak to an equally accomplished improvisational practice. Given that Chambonnières was of an earlier generation, it is certainly *possible* that Chambonnières never even played or improvised unmeasured preludes, let alone notated them. If he did play preludes, perhaps they were of a slightly more conservative mold than the toccata- and lute-influenced preludes of Couperin and D'Anglebert, similar perhaps to organ preludes and Plein Jeu movements, as well as the preludes by Étienne Richard in the Bauyn Manuscript. On the other hand, it is also tempting to imagine, as David Fuller (2001) does, that Chambonnières would have wanted to "cash in" on the success of the lutenists during the first half of the seventeenth century, and would therefore have also played *préludes non mesurés* after the example of lutenists, such as his contemporary François Dufault. Regardless of what actually

[7] Of the various anonymous manuscript preludes, there have been several suggestions of attribution to Chambonnières, though none have been substantiated. For example, David Fuller (2001) suggests, without any clear evidence for it, that some of the preludes from the Brussels Conservatoire manuscript (B-Bc 27220) *could* be Chambonnières's.

happened in the past, history, of course, has nothing definitive to say about this matter. As an historically-informed performer interested in *re-creating* Chambonnières's preluding practice, I must instead work imaginatively, experimenting with appropriate historical materials to arrive at creative solutions. To this end, I have selected a prelude by Louis Couperin (Bauyn no. 13) as my raw material.

Keeping with the theme of this chapter, my question will be, as always, what kinds of things can I do with this musical text? In what follows, I will detail the process by which an historically-informed improviser may read this text, and then explore ways of improvising with this reading. Reading a piece improvisationally, as we may recall from the previous chapter, means entering into an archaeological mindset, attending to the various processes by which the musical material might originally have been realized. My own readings and improvisations, presented here as audio files, are thus products of an experimental practice, in which I attempt to *re-create* some of these processes for myself. As in all the movements of this suite, the goal of my experimental practice is to learn about the workings of *mouvance* in the present context: here, the act of preluding.

I begin with a straightforward performance of the prelude itself:

Recording 5.1. Louis Couperin, Prélude in F major

I chose this prelude because it is, in many ways, already a part of me. It has long been one of my favorites, and I have performed it frequently in concert. But what can I *do* with the prelude, beyond just performing it? How can I transform this score into an *improvisational text*? If the Prélude in F major constitutes the entextualization of Louis Couperin's improvisational practice, how can this text be re-embodied as improvisation? Callahan (2010), we may remember, divides improvisational technique into three layers of activity: the dispositio (form), the elaboratio (*Satzmodell*, schema, etc.),

and the decoratio (the musical surface). He also proposes a number of pedagogical exercises designed to isolate these various levels. A first step in understanding this particular prelude *as improvisation*, then, might be to enact these isolation exercises, sifting through the various levels of embodied skill contained within the prelude. Although, I would argue, every improvisational activity is an opportunity to learn, the central goal here is not necessarily to gain skill as an improviser, as it was in Chapter Four, nor to learn to improvise in the style of Couperin. Indeed, as I argued in previous chapters, the practice of the *clavecinistes* demonstrates a high degree of interconnectedness between musical surface and structure, thus calling into question attempts to learn them separately. Instead, the goal here is to understand the *materials* used by Couperin, as well as his improvisational reworking of those same materials, and to incorporate them into my own developing style of improvisation.

Re-embodying the text

I begin, then, by focusing on the prelude's decoratio. Grazzini (2014), in his work on the unmeasured prelude as an improvised genre, also uses this three-fold division of musical material, in which the decoratio consists of a variety of "performance practice techniques" related to continuo playing, such as arpeggiation and melodic embellishment, while the elaboratio consists of a series of "thoroughbass formulas," analogous to the schemata discussed in Chapter Four. For now, then, the prelude's *material* consists in these thoroughbass formulas, represented in Figure 5.1. The reworking of this material consists in the particular way I realize the thoroughbass. Recording 5.2, for example, presents a melodically-simple realization with a fairly full texture.

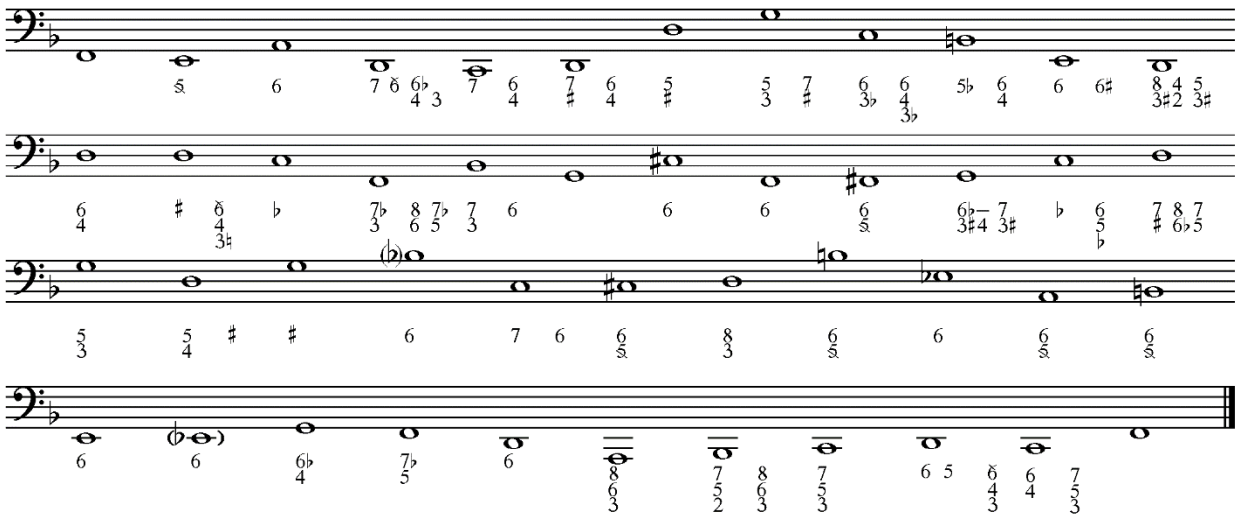

Figure 5.1. Thoroughbass Reduction of Louis Couperin Prélude in F major

Recording 5.2. Thoroughbass Realization of Louis Couperin Prélude in F major

So far so good. Actually, this process is not so dissimilar from the partimento exercises I constructed in the previous chapter. Without a set rhythm for the bass, though, the potential scope for variation in the decoratio is considerably expanded. Depending on how elaborate the arpeggiation or melodic ornamentation might be, different harmonies may be given different weights and timings than they might have received when played from Couperin's text. Recording 5.3, by way of example, attempts a vastly altered decoratio while still remaining in Couperin's gestural and figural language.

Recording 5.3. Alternative thoroughbass realization of Couperin Prélude in F major

Surface in Conversation with Structure

In focusing next on the elaboratio, we run into a problem. As appealing as Callahan's methodical approach to improvisation might be, it is also limited by the specific genres and styles he chooses to consider. Callahan, focusing on music of the German Baroque, expects a given "decoratio strategy"

to remain consistent throughout a piece, as in pattern preludes such as those in Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier*. Many of the other pieces that Callahan discusses—several different allemandes by Buxtehude, for example—tend also to display a high degree of motivic consistency, such that the "strategies" used to embellish a piece's elaboratio could be recognized, isolated, and reproduced. As I argued in the previous chapter, French keyboard music, on the whole, does not correspond well to this hierarchy. On the contrary, my work with the computational model I developed to simulate Chambonnières's pedagogy pointed to the interconnectedness of Callahan's improvisational tiers. In a courante in seventeenth-century French style, for instance, motivic consistency was found to be of less importance than graceful rhythmic and melodic balance between treble and bass. In such pieces, it seemed more useful to examine how a schema might be linked with particular realizations of that schema. What developed out of such work was not the mastery of a particular "decoratio strategy," but more an informed intuition about how to realize particular kinds of schemata in particular situations. The prelude, I would argue, demands even more than the courante this kind of abstract *feeling* for the rightness of a particular decoratio. Moreover, the genre expects nearly constant changes in musical surface: texture, arpeggiation, ornamentation, and rhythm are in a constant state of flux.

An exclusive focus on dispositio is an even more nebulous proposition. Callahan does not, unfortunately, provide an example of how one might maintain elaboratio and decoratio while varying the dispositio. Given that Callahan primarily considers the determination of dispositio to be a pre-improvisational decision, this is perhaps understandable. As a result, this is also where Grazzini parts ways with Callahan. In contrast to Callahan's understanding of dispositio as a pre-determined series of cadential waypoints that collectively establish the terms of the player's improvisational "problem-solving," Grazzini prefers to see the prelude's form as a matter of "problem-finding." Although Grazzini is not entirely explicit about this, I think that he recognizes that both approaches

may co-exist within a given improvisational practice. In this connection, Grazzini cites music theorist Philip Chang's (2011, 159-63) discussion of Louis Couperin's preludes, in which he compares the form of a prelude to the tripartite form of an oration. In this model, the first and last sections of the piece (the *Exordium* and *Finis*) are intended to clearly mark the piece's "tone." The middle section (*Medium*), however, has no pre-determined tonal function, leaving the composer-performer free to explore other (related) keys, as well as to employ a variety of cadential evasions and tonal deceptions. In such a model, then, we could expect an improviser to use a "problem-solving" approach to achieve clear tonic cadences at the beginning and end of the piece. In the middle of the piece, meanwhile, we might expect the improviser to use an exploratory "problem-finding" approach, consciously *avoiding* any strong cadence in the tonic. The distinction between these two approaches is somewhat analogous to Grazzini's distinction, discussed in Chapter Four, between "bottom-up" and "top-down" modulation. Just as I pointed there, however, to how the distinction between the two modulation strategies diminishes as an improviser gains skill, so too the gap between "problem-solving" and "problem-finding" shrinks with experience. The player discovers their improvisational path *in the course of making music*, and as such, the piece's dispositio evolves out of the player's simultaneous engagement with the music's structure (elaboratio) and surface (decoratio).

These considerations point again to the interconnectedness of Callahan's improvisational tiers. Without the artificial constraints of isolation exercises, could small changes in the decoratio have an appreciable effect on the elaboratio? Could enough changes in elaboratio also lead to changes in the piece's dispositio, particularly if these changes are viewed as newly found "problems?" We must remember that improvisation is something that takes place in real time. Even though Callahan presents his rhetorical model of improvisation as if its tiers were sequential, there is no inherent reason—assuming a highly skilled improviser—that the tiers could not be decided upon and realized

at the same time. Even if certain details are decided in advance as part of the performer's preparation, improvisation allows for these decisions to be modified or updated on the fly. In an article on the pedagogy of long-range planning in improvisation, Callahan (2012) convincingly argues that such improvisational decisions at the level of elaboratio can indeed have a profound effect on the improviser's decision-making with respect to form (dispositio). Unsurprisingly, Callahan's detailed example of how this might play out in practice takes place within the confines of the German *praeambulum*, a genre that, rather like the *prélude non mesuré*, works with tonal and phrasal flexibility (2012, 65-8).

One could rationalize these incursions of the local into the global in a variety of ways. If the improviser begins with a complete formal plan, then these adjustments to large-scale form might be considered *errors*. Alternatively, and more charitably towards the improviser, we might consider these local interventions to constitute *opportunities* for improvisation, problems to be found. Callahan, for one, calls this particular model of improvisational decision-making "idioms in conversation with form" (2012, 67). In the case of the unmeasured prelude, I would generalize somewhat further and speak of *surface in conversation with structure*, pointing to the kinds of connection between differing levels of surface and structure that can arise in improvisation. According to such a model, the player remains open at all times to musical possibilities, including both structurally-driven "problem-solving" and surface-driven "problem-finding" attitudes.

Working within this model, small, seemingly insignificant musical decisions can have a large impact on the overall trajectory of a piece. A surface in conversation with structure, then, precludes any sharp limit on the ways in which improvisers may interact with their musical material. In the following prelude (Recording 5.4), I experiment with this more flexible approach to creative reworking. In line with Chang's tripartite model of the prelude's form, I adopt a problem-solving approach for the opening (establishing the tonic) and closing (making a strong cadence), and a

Recording 5.4. Improvised Prélude on Couperin's Prélude in F major

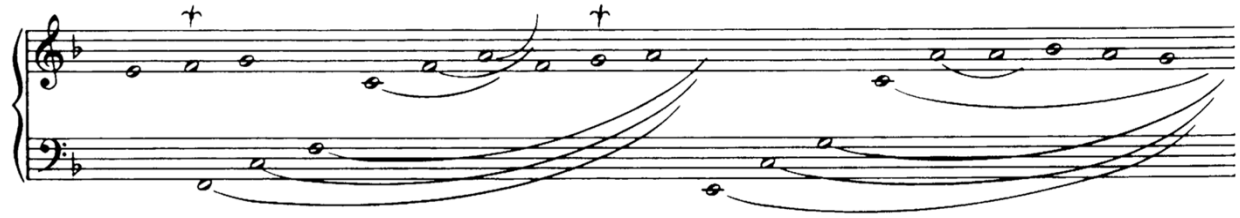

Figure 5.2. Opening Motive (Moroney 1985, 72)

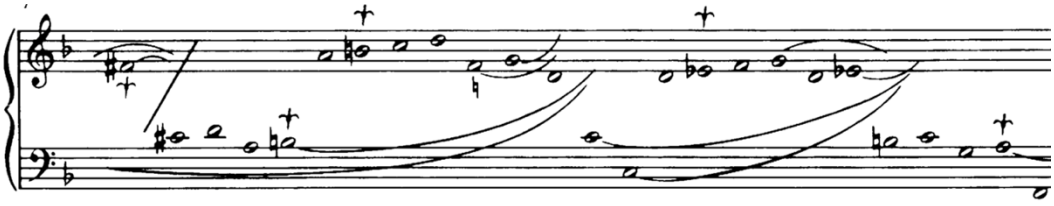

Figure 5.3. Lower-neighbor Pattern (Moroney 1985, 73)

Figure 5.4. Cadential Figuration (Moroney 1985, 74)

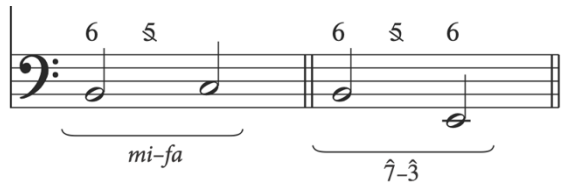

Figure 5.5. The "7-3 Evasion" Formula, compared to the "mi-fa" (Grazzini 2014, 208)

problem-finding approach for the longer middle section. I draw freely from the surface detail of Couperin's prelude, including its distinctive opening motive, its characteristic lower neighbor

pattern, and the wonderfully rich and colorful figuration of its final approach to the dominant (see Figures 5.2–5.4). I also draw from some of the prelude's most prominent schemata, particularly a frequently occurring schema that Grazzini names the "7-3 evasion," depicted in Figure 5.5 (2014, 208). And lastly, I revisit some of the same tonal paths as Couperin, though not necessarily in the same order or with the same degree of emphasis. So conceived, the prelude's raw material becomes an assemblage of musical ideas, techniques, and procedures to be drawn from freely—and reworked—in the course of preluding.

This sort of preluding depends upon the practice techniques I explored more fully in Chapter Four, corresponding to what I described there as the "B-phase." In particular, it depends upon careful reflection-in-action, wherein I examine and judge each musical moment as it passes. Although the methods are similar, the goal here is entirely different from the games, puzzles, and exercises I created and solved in Chapter Four. This is, instead, an experimental practice, stemming from an archaeological engagement with Couperin's raw materials, re-embodied through improvisational technique. In such a practice, I am free to work with the materials in any way I see fit, perhaps working with only one musical idea at a time. As I play, I am at once attempting to understand the material technically and musically, and explore its potential for development. The lower-neighbor pattern, for example, forces me to think about appropriate fingering and how the pattern might fit best into a chord. It also encourages me to think about the ways in which this figuration helps to lead from one harmony to the next. At the beginning of Figure 5.3, for example, the lower-neighbor pattern in the tenor, leading from A to B-natural, helps to create a sense of stepwise connection into the 6/5 harmony that emerges. As I experiment with this pattern, then, I begin to learn for myself something of its potentiality, the various things I can do with it in improvisation. As in Chapter Four, many if not most of these reflections are tacit and non-verbal, but their impact will still be felt in the ways I respond to the materials. As I continue to accumulate

new materials, I also explore the ways in which they interact: how the lower-neighbor pattern helps to prepare a "7-3 evasion," for example. Through this process of experimentation, reflection, and learning, I gradually arrive at preludes like the one presented in Recording 5.4.

At a certain point in the process of reworking, a prelude's materials begin to achieve a real independence from their original context. Consider, for example, some of figuration used by D'Anglebert in his published preludes, shown in Figure 5.6.

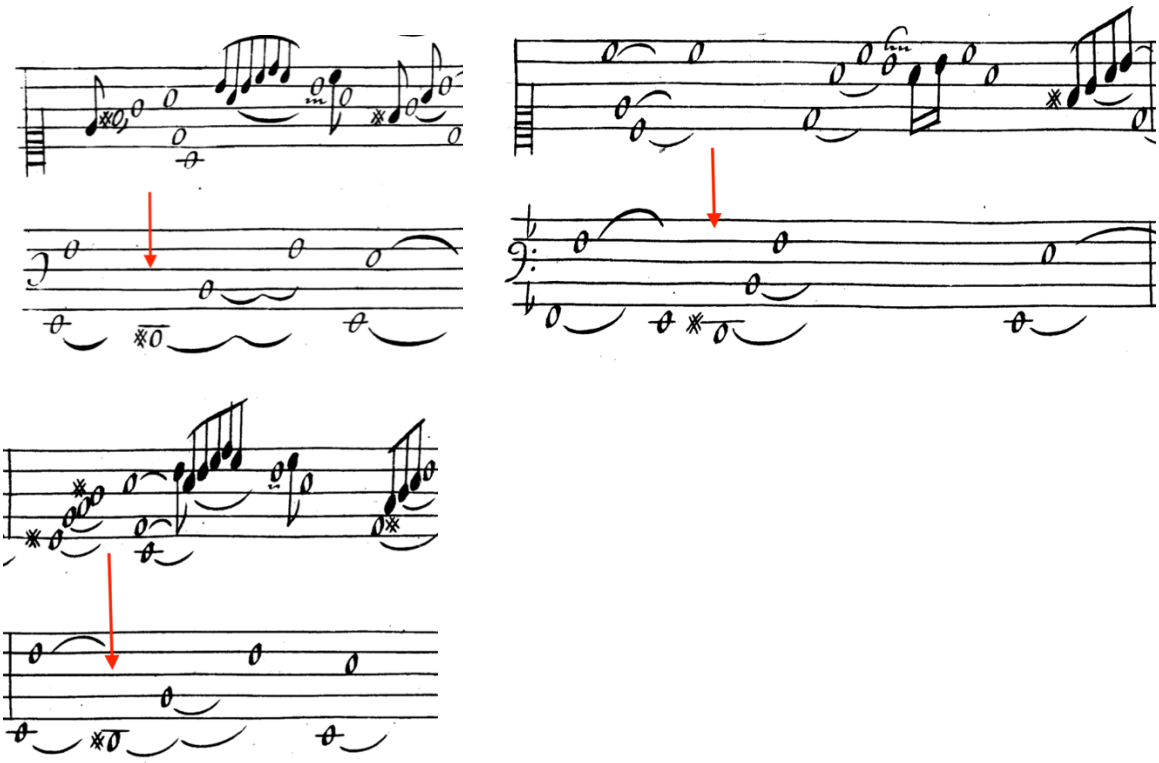

Figure 5.6. A D'Anglebert Prelude Module, as featured in all three of D'Anglebert's published preludes

This little module appears in a very similar form in all three of the preludes. It is not so much a part of any particular prelude's identity than it is a part of D'Anglebert's musical language. It is tempting to imagine that as different harpsichordists listened to each other—whether live, or through "notated" performance—they also may have borrowed and transformed each other's musical ideas. Perhaps I, as an historically-informed *claveciniste* myself, can then also permit myself to borrow, assimilate, transform, and recombine the musical materials I encounter, including this little module

of D'Anglebert's. This example is particularly telling because of its literal repetition through diverse musical contexts, but the same process of appropriation could be applied to any kind of musical material.

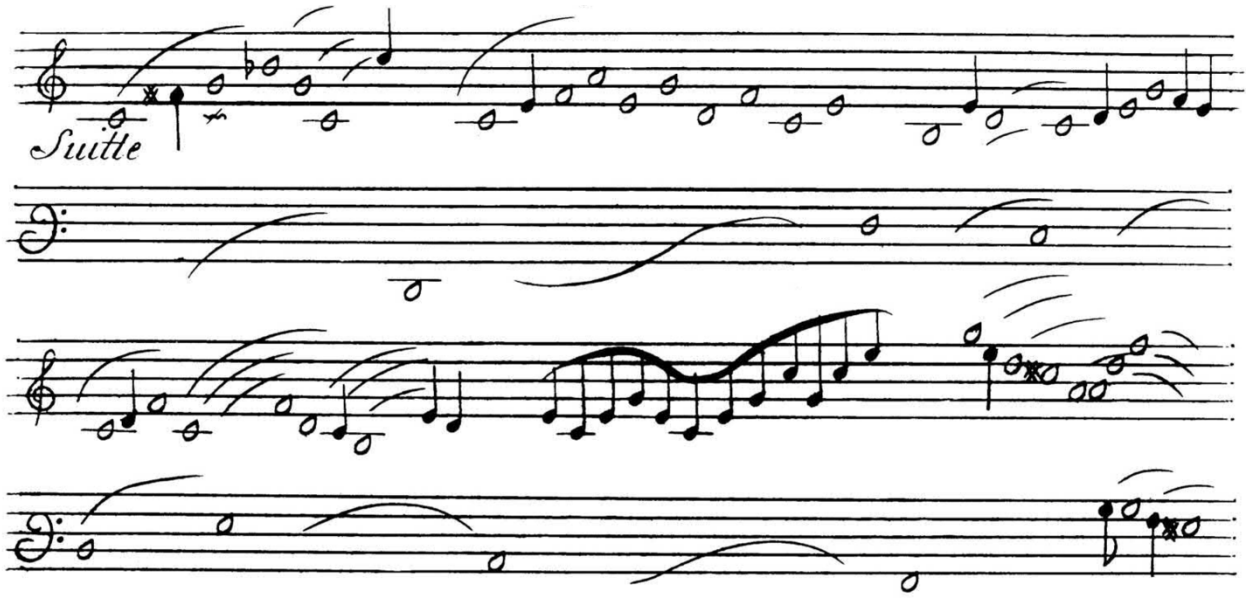

Figure 5.7. "Materials" from Jacquet's Prélude in A Minor (Jacquet 1687, 42)

Perhaps I might also wish to learn something from Jacquet de La Guerre, particularly since her improvisations were so highly esteemed in their day. I might take, for example, an extract from her prelude in A minor (see Figure 5.7). This short passage includes a number of techniques worthy of imitation, including its staggered parallel thirds in the right hand, its distinctive, fanfare-like arpeggio motif, and its striking movement from C-major harmony to A major. By a period of long acquaintance, patterns like this, together with tacit knowledge about how and when best to use them, become part of my own personally-authentic improvisational language. I might, for example, improvise a prelude of my own, without any intention whatsoever of reworking Couperin's, Jacquet's, or D'Anglebert's, that nevertheless recalls these pieces through its invocation of their singular musical materials:

Recording 5.5. Improvised Prélude in F major

Whose piece is this? For that matter, whose were any of the other preludes heard above? The way in which one answers this question will depend very much on the relationship between performer and receiver, as well as the ways in which these two parties interact within a performance tradition. In the performance tradition of the *clavecinistes*, the answer would be fairly straightforward, given that these are preludes, pieces whose identity only comes into being through performance activity. Considered purely within that same tradition, then, I would argue that each of these preludes is unique and created by me. With somewhat more nuance, however, I might also acknowledge the multitude of authors and sources—some named, and others anonymous—that converge at the moment of performance. The work I conducted in Chapter Four—learning Chambonnières's improvisational language—constituted only a beginning in the development of my own style. As a result of having spent considerable time immersed in this language, his re-created style forms a core element of my own. This style will, however, continue to grow, develop, and "move" as I encounter new decentering materials and techniques with which to work. Each encounter brings the opportunity of making the material my own, of allowing myself to be "moved" by it. At times, I may be aware of the specific sources of the various parts of my improvisational language; but more often, the origins of my musical material recede behind the newness of the improvisational act itself. *Mouvance* is not really at play here, given that the tradition in which I imagine my performance to be received is far more concerned with the *process* by which I rework material.

In this sense, improvising an unmeasured prelude is not so much a matter of working with specific musical materials. Rather, it is about improvising with an historical tradition. The nature of

the prelude genre is such that the activity of the performer—the performer's response to tradition—is of greater relevance than the specific pieces generated by that activity. To the performer, perhaps, the question of which materials are involved in the improvisation's 'reworking' may indeed be of practical importance. The creative process begins with some specific set of materials, to which I may respond through improvisation, be it a prelude I heard recently by an outstanding player (the Louis Couperin Prelude in F, or the preludes by D'Anglebert and Jacquet); or perhaps another piece in the suite I am about to play (the Chambonnières Allemande in F, coming up next); or even, perhaps, the mood or affect I wish to project on a given day. Any one of these—among many other sources or agents—might be a potential starting point for preluding. In each case, I would create a piece by improvising with one of these fixed points, responding to it creatively in performance, and experimenting with its contours. Such improvisation does not, however, take place within a musical vacuum. Rather, historical improvisation takes place within a tradition, or more correctly, several traditions: first, an historical tradition of seventeenth-century French preluding, as re-created in my own practice; second, an emerging tradition of historical improvisation in Western art music, created and shared by practitioners worldwide; and third, the omnipresent HIP-as-tradition, in which my own activities and those of other historical improvisers are judged and understood. This constitutes the web of tradition *in which* and *upon which* historical improvisers work.

Allemande

Our suite in F major continues with an allemande. One of my favorites is the Allemande in F major, GusC 46, from Chambonnières's second book of pieces. This allemande also appears in the Bauyn Manuscript (I, f. 33r), in a version that introduces a number of changes in texture, figuration, harmony, and rhythm. The first reprises of both versions are printed below in Figures 5.8 and 5.9,

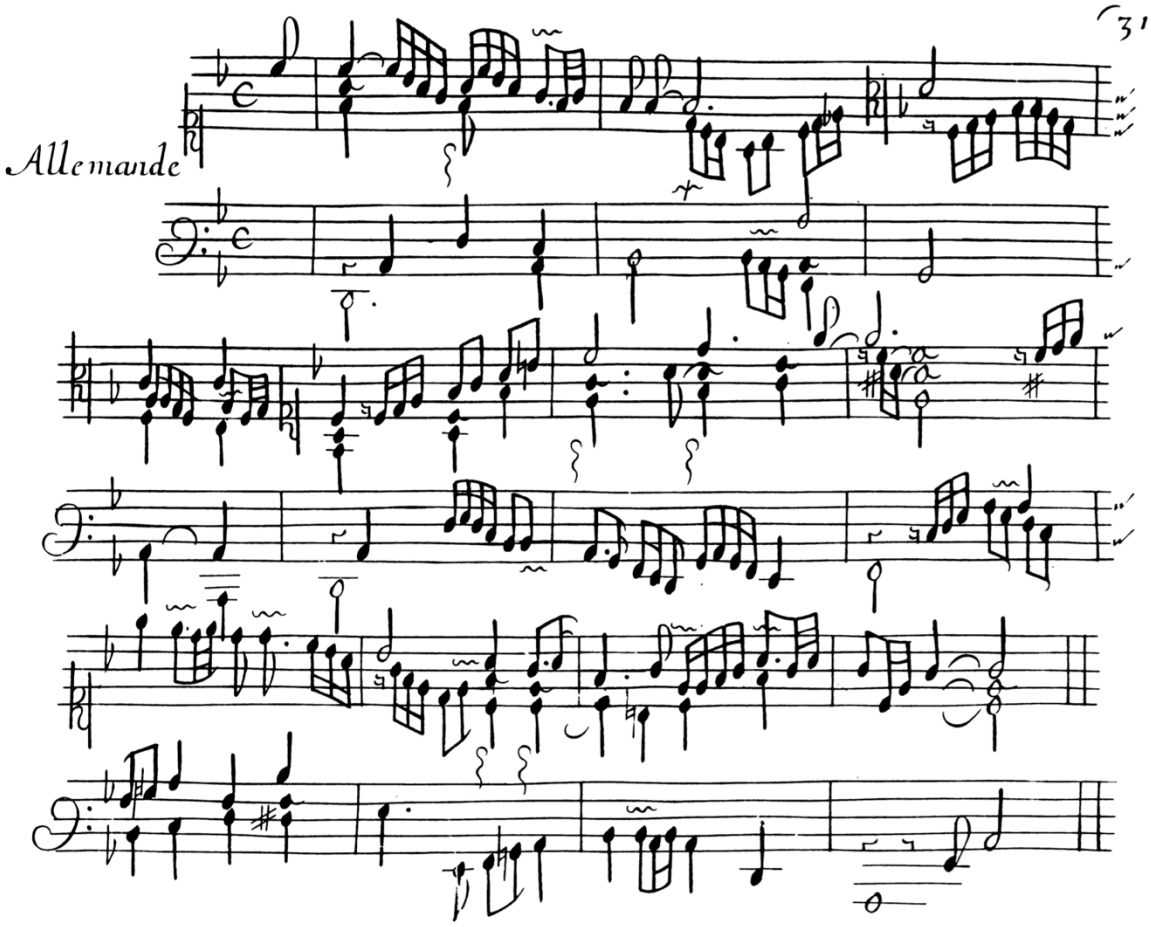

Figure 5.8. Chambonnières, Allemande in F major, Chamb II (1670, 31)

Recording 5.6. Chambonnières, Allemande in F major

together with recorded audio of Chambonnières's published version in Recording 5.6. As discussed extensively in Chapter Two, the *heterotextuality* of Chambonnières's *oeuvre*, as described by Fuller (1993), is some of the most tangible evidence we have of the workings of *mouvance* in seventeenth-century French keyboard culture. The co-existence of a piece's variants points to some concrete ways in which players understood the role of performance. The wide array of changes introduced by players (and preserved in notation through scribal transcription) represents nearly every conceivable musical parameter: meter, key, texture, melodic contour, figuration, ornamentation, and rhythm are

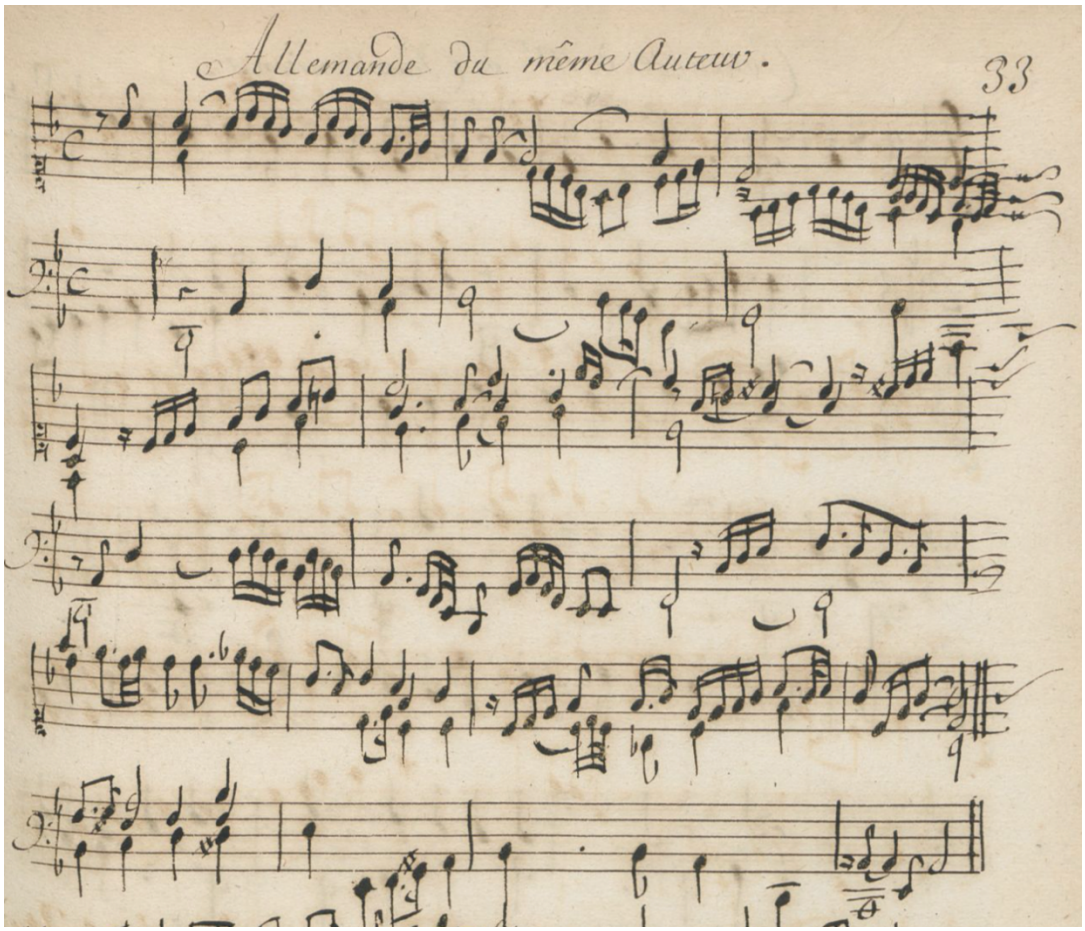

Figure 5.9. Chambonnières, Allemande in F major, the Bauyn Manuscript (I, f. 33r)

all potentially subject to variance. By comparing these variants, we as contemporary observers gain some access to knowledge about what kinds of "movement" were considered acceptable or common, and how far a piece could be moved before it was "broken." A typical historically-informed approach to playing this particular allemande might begin by comparing the two variants of the piece, and then constructing a minimally-specified score that only includes details common to both versions of the piece. The player could then create their own version of the piece in performance by ornamenting the minimal score with various kinds of detail.

The problem, though, is that no matter how exhaustive a collection of variants we might have, there is no objective way of marking the boundaries of the piece's identity. The minimally specified

score is a myth. We can always imagine—or even better, create—*one more* variant that seems to defy this provisional score, with a unique mixture of performerly interventions that, nevertheless, does not quite "break" the piece. Moreover, in a musical culture such as that of the *clavecinistes*, any attempt to form rigid distinctions between structural and surface interventions would prove a foolhardy venture. As the prelude showed earlier, surface and structure may often converse within improvisational practices.

As I have argued, I think a far more flexible and effective approach to *mouvance* in this music would go beyond issues of text. Rather than focusing on constructing the imaginary *Urtext* of Chambonnières's Allemande in F, we could instead attempt to *re-embody* the piece as improvisational activity. Just as with the Louis Couperin prelude, so too here we can learn to experience this piece *as improvisation* by diving into its various structural tiers of improvisational activity—its strata—and experimenting with ways of bringing those strata into conversation with one another. First, I might try maintaining the music's structure while improvising a new surface.

Recording 5.7. Chambonnières, Allemande in F major, New Surface

Next, I might try experimenting more freely with surface and structure in conversation. For example, some small changes in surface figuration in the middle of the allemande might motivate an entirely different way of passing to the dominant for the end of the first reprise.

Recording 5.8. Chambonnières, Allemande in F major, Surface in Conversation with Structure

The result of experimenting with these materials is a change in aesthetic sensibility. By attending to the improvisatory construction of the allemande—its patterns, tendencies, potentialities, and

contours—we gain a better appreciation for the way in which it provisionally *becomes what it is* in performance, for its differential identity through *mouvance*. A substantive change like the one we just heard, for example, has likely "broken" the piece, but recognizing this brokenness is, reciprocally, just another part of also recognizing the "wholeness" of other renditions. According to this model, the identity of the piece resides neither in any single essential text nor in a vast collection of variant texts. Rather, the piece exists as something experiential, created through hours of improvisational experimentation. It exists in the positive space of potential performances, and in the negative space of broken ones. After re-embodying the piece in this fashion, the act of performance transforms from something interpretive into something creative. As a result, the meaning of *mouvance* within performance has also shifted. The thing that moves is no longer textual but experiential, as is the space in which this movement takes place.

How can we represent this changeability in performance? The ideal, of course, might be to perform a piece multiple times in succession, giving it *nouvelles graces* each time. At the very least—and perhaps less tediously for the audience—we could take advantage of the repetition already built into the two-reprise form: two halves of an allemande, each half heard twice, each time with fresh charms. This is exactly what I have done in the following recording. The first time through presents the reading from Chambonnières's print, while the repeat gives my reworking.

Recording 5.9. Allemande in F major, with *nouvelles graces*

Courante I

One of the basic modes of *mouvance* practiced by the *clavecinistes* was the creation of *doubles*, or variations of a piece.[8] Beyond simply varying or "moving," though, the *double* also entails the notion of amplifying or adding to the piece. Just as playing styles could be represented textually in manuscripts, so too the improvisational practice of playing *doubles* could be represented through notation. As we saw in Chapter Two in a discussion on D'Anglebert's *doubles* of Chambonnières's pieces, the *double* involves a degree of performerly intervention comparable to that of other kinds of *mouvance*, and it also allows for variance in a similarly wide range of musical parameters. In the case of D'Anglebert, for example, we saw that, although mainly applied to the melody, ornamentation could also potentially be added to any voice or part. We also saw that these *additions* could be balanced by subtractions or simplifications applied to the other parts.

As we observed in the allemande, the kind of *mouvance* represented by Chambonnières's heterotextual corpus preserves the identity of its pieces. The *double*, however, represents a fairly unique meeting ground for two musicians, whether considered as composers, performers, improvisers, or some combination of the above. The *double* is a musical space in which the contributions of the piece's composer and the piece's amplifier are both recognized and attributed.[9] Consider, for example, the way that the Allemande "Le Moutier" *de Chambonnières* and its variation*, par Mr Couperin,* are presented in the Bauyn manuscript (Figure 5.10). The *double,* then, indicates a

[8] For more on the *double*, see the discussion in Chapter Two. In seventeenth-century France, *doubles* could be added to nearly any sort of genre, and more generally, a *double* is what vocal composers like Bacilly called their ornamented second verses of *airs de cour*. The *clavecinistes* do, however, seem to have been particularly fond of writing and playing *doubles* for courantes.

[9] Of course, it is also possible that the "composer" of the original piece and the "performer" of the *double* might be the same person, as is the case for D'Anglebert's notated *doubles* for his harpsichord pieces, as well as for Bach's various written-out *doubles* for movements from his English Suites. In this case, it may be convenient to imagine the composition and the *double* as having been written by two different personae. Even if these personae are not entirely distinct, they nevertheless reach a creative meeting point in the *double*.

particular kind of *mouvance* in which both the enduring identity of a piece as well as its continual transformation are simultaneously acknowledged by cultural participants.

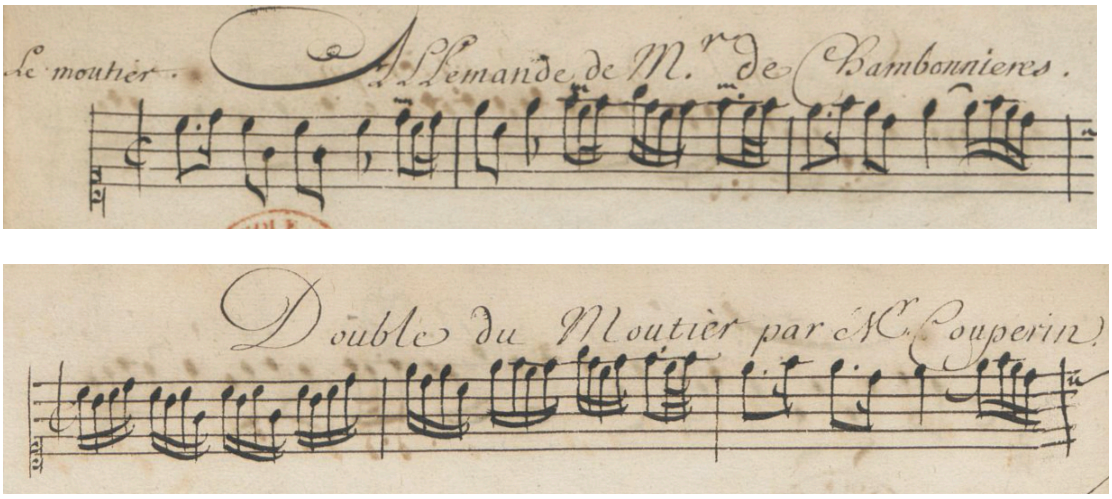

Figure 5.10. The Allemande "Le Moutier" and its *Double*, the Bauyn Manuscript

For the next movement in my suite, then, I will take the Courante in F major, GusC 47 (shown in Figure 5.11), and I will also add a *double* to it. Recording 5.10 presents a straightforward reading of the courante.

Recording 5.10. Chambonnières, Courante in F major

Given that playing a *double* is an improvisational practice, it stands to reason that it should be explored in the same way as the genres already discussed. Playing a *double* is, however, an even more complex activity than these earlier cases, given that its *mouvance* is applied to a piece *already subject to mouvance*. In other words, we are now involved in a kind of "doubled" *mouvance*! The first step, then, is to re-embody the courante as improvisational activity, and after enough experimentation, I might eventually arrive at a performance like the one presented in Recording 5.11.

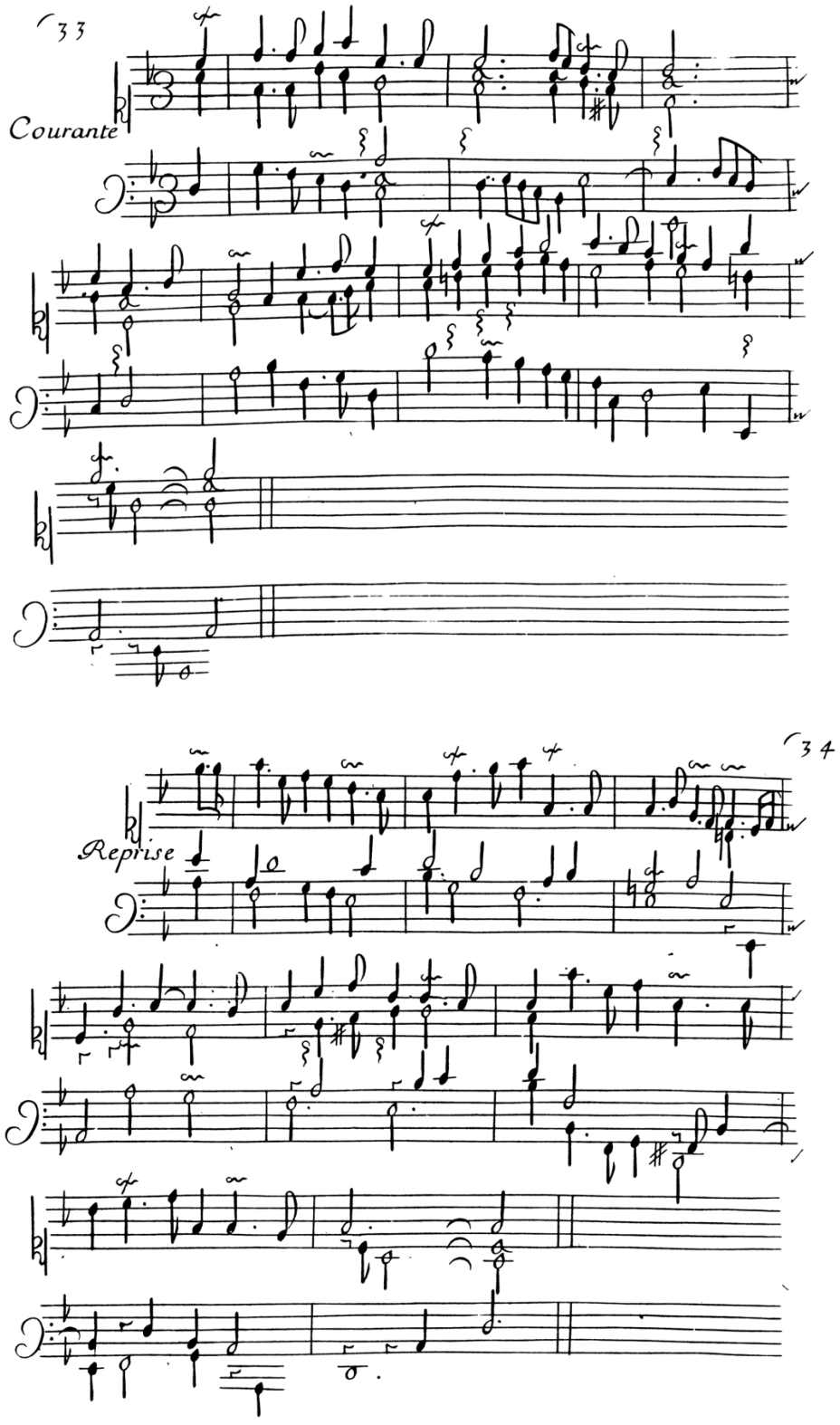

Figure 5.11. Courante in F major, GusC 47

Recording 5.11. Courante in F major, with *mouvance*

Creating this moveable, experiential form of the courante entails a corresponding change to our conception of the *double* as well. Rather than viewing our job as one of *adding* detail or ornamentation to something relatively simple, we should instead think of it as *moving* our flexible conception of the piece towards activity and plenitude. The *double* is just another mode of *mouvance*, then, in which the improviser is focused on creating an impression of relative amplification. Given that the *double* is intended to be a sort of joint effort between the piece's original composer and its subsequent performer, it also becomes possible to move the piece somewhat more radically than usual without breaking it. Following this ideal, then, we might end up with something like the following Recording 5.12.

Recording 5.12. *Double* of the Courante in F major

—Interlude—

What happens when we move too far? What happens when the piece is perceived by cultural participants as "broken?" In the case of the prelude, we saw that the genre's status within seventeenth-century French culture obviates such questions. The example of the prelude should give us pause as we excavate the ways in which *mouvance* and improvisation function in tandem within different spheres of activity. We should, therefore, expect that the manner in which the *clavecinistes* understood *mouvance* in dance pieces might differ from that of preludes.

In the case of the first courante, the piece's experiential contours were developed through improvisational experimentation. Up until this point, I have used this technique to re-create the

creative process by which—I imagine—Chambonnières might have originally improvised his pieces, thereby appropriating their materials for my own use. As I argued in Chapter Two, the basic mode of engagement of the *clavecinistes* was not one of execution or repetition, but rather one of re-creation, and appropriation. Each new performer to approach a given piece was therefore expected to create the piece anew, transformed through improvisational technique. This process of re-creation, which I have called *mouvance*, depended on culturally-agreed-upon limits on the extent to which a piece could be "moved" before it was "broken." That is, the boundaries of a piece's identity were formed and thus constrained by cultural practices and norms, thereby determining the extent to which improvisational activity could work upon a piece without a fundamental shift in its identity. It seems clear, based on the kinds of variance observed in the sources for Chambonnières's music, that *mouvance* was restricted to what we would mostly label as surface elements, rather than structural elements. The kinds of changes we observe are then mostly—though not exclusively—a matter of "performerly" concern like detail of texture, figuration, rhythm, and so on. As I have tried to demonstrate at length, though, it is very difficult to define in any precise way the full scope of any changes that might be allowed, and those that might not. The boundaries between a stable identity and a broken one are slippery, and hence, I have relied on my own experimental practice to discover these porous lines for myself. How, though, might the *clavecinistes* have understood these boundaries themselves?

In this connection, it may be useful to make a comparison with a more widely-understood practice. Thoroughbass, for example, can be considered in many situations a practice with very clearly defined boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Based on simple presentations of continuo practice (*accompagnement*) from early eighteenth-century France, the *basse continue* relates only to a specific part of a composition (the bass line), leaving the player free to ignore the other parts; it determines the harmony entirely by its figuring, leaving the player to

concentrate solely on issues of voice leading; and finally, it presents very clear rules for how the voice leading should be managed and realized—in four parts, for example—leaving the player to focus on *how* to satisfy those rules.[10] To use the language of Deleuze and Guattari, continuo playing at an amateur level is a relatively *territorialized* practice with respect to the musical culture of the French Baroque, having clearly established boundaries for the player's activity and interaction with the composition. As players gain experience, continuo playing gradually becomes relatively *deterritorialized*. We learn how to imitate and engage with other melodic parts of the composition, how to deviate from or expand the harmony, and how to vary the texture of our realizations, for example. Certain techniques we might formerly have imagined to belong to the territory of composition become *reterritorialized* as elements of a specific stratum of performance, the playing of thoroughbass. At the same time, we may begin to see techniques that belonged solely to performance now reterritorialized as a part of (oral) composition. In the preludes above, for example, I used the technique of thoroughbass to construct harmonies, textures, and voice leading above a bass line.

Critically, improvisation is the process by which these relative deterritorializations and reterritorializations are effected. Improvisation functions as a creative vehicle for learning about one's own musical practice, in which the space between practices like thoroughbass, ornamentation, performance, and composition is constantly reconfigured, but never collapsed. For this reason, experienced harpsichordists in seventeenth-century France had real yet flexible rules governing their performance culture. The identity of a piece of music, as it comes into being within a particular

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[10] This presentation of "beginner's" continuo playing may seem overly simplified. Nevertheless, there are several aspects of typical contemporary continuo pedagogy that are entirely absent from French sources, including the arrangement of the continuo accompaniment with respect to the solo parts. In Jesper Christensen's assessment, "it is nowhere stated that the position of the chords stands in any relation at all to the solo part. Nor is there any warning against occasionally doubling a note in the solo part. The position of the chords is always treated exclusively in relation to the bass" (Christensen 2002, 40).

culture through *mouvance*, was shaped in reference to the complete web of concepts and practices shared by that culture. In seventeenth-century France, authorship and identity most likely originated in (oral) composition, while the subsequent shaping of that identity arose in performance. The implication, then, is that performance practices like thoroughbass and ornamentation really were the primary source of energy for the piece's perpetual "movement" over time, but that the scope of these practices was also flexible and ever-changing. Improvisation, both then and now, is a powerful tool for understanding—and extending—the ways in which *mouvance* can potentially function, given that it blurs and realigns the boundaries between performance and composition. In such a flexible practice, it is only possible to speak in relative terms. A performance that invents an entirely new tune for a piece has 'moved' relatively further than one that retains the original one; given that inventing a new tune is usually deemed outside the realm of "performance practice," it might therefore also be considered "broken." Such valuations of good or bad, further or closer, moved or broken, are made in reference to shared cultural understandings of *what performance (of a piece) is*. Within such a culture, wherein the idea of performance itself has been set in motion through improvisation, these valuations are even more difficult to adjudicate, given that each participant may have a slightly different understanding of their role as a performer. It is for this reason that musical notation is an inadequate means for encapsulating the fullness of possibility within a piece. This possibility can only be grasped through recreating the rich, creative experience of music-making in which these pieces originally "moved."

Courante II

Earlier, in the allemande and courante, I used improvisation as a tool for uncovering the play between composerly and performerly personas within a given piece. The result of these experiments was a greater understanding of how a piece's identity could be 'moved' within performance, as well as what specific factors might contribute to a given piece's identity. Although the experimental

practice itself is relatively unconstrained, the performances that result from this practice are—quite self-consciously—constrained by my developing understanding of performance and *mouvance*. What happens, then, when I remove these constraints?

In this connection, we may recall Lutz's several "phases" of improvisation, discussed in Chapter Four. Up until this point, I have been working primarily with the A- and B-phases. In the A-phase, that entails relatively off-the-cuff—*sur le champs*—improvised reworkings of the material, and in the B-phase, experimentation and rehearsal with the results of the A-phase. In the course of experimenting with the first courante, I might arrive at a performance that "moves" rather far from the version included in Chambonnières's 1670 print.

Recording 5.13. Improvisation on the Courante in F major

Since I came to this result by reworking the Courante in F, I might perhaps choose to present it as a performance *of* the Courante in F. By this point, it should be fairly clear that, for the *clavecinistes*, such a performance would likely be considered to have moved too far. In comparison to my earlier performance of the courante, I have now made numerous alterations to the melody, the bassline, the texture, the rhythm, and the phrase structure. At the level of the piece's elaboratio, these changes have extended to additions or expansions of certain schemata, and substitutions, deletions or contractions of others. Although the piece does follow more or less the same formal plan as Chambonnières's, it *feels* like something new. My feeling for this shift in identity undergone by the courante, having been formed through hours of artistic experimentation, is a part of my informed intuition or aesthetic sensibility. This aesthetic sensibility toward issues of identity and *mouvance* is a vital part of what I am attempting to develop here through HIP-as-method, using an imaginative engagement with history to re-create a specific performance culture. From this perspective, I have

very little choice but to deem this performance of Chambonnières's courante "broken." In the absence of an opinion from a real, living and breathing harpsichordist from the *ancien régime*, my own opinion here will have to do.

Not wanting to be content with such a negative valuation, how might I re-consider the identity of this piece? What name can I give it that acknowledges both its newness and its original source? From a more contemporary perspective, I might choose to call it something like "Improvisation on a Courante by Chambonnières." Although this turn-of-phrase is something the *clavecinistes* would likely not have recognized, the formulation is reminiscent of others that were indeed used, such as the "*Double* on the Courante" discussed earlier.

Gradually, as I experiment with this piece during the B-phase, I may find that I tend to arrive at stable patterns from performance to performance, falling happily into familiar grooves. These "grooves" are analogous to what DeLanda (2013), following Deleuze, calls "singularities," or more evocatively, "attractors."[11] On this model, a piece's *mouvance* is analogous to an object's *state space*, which mathematically models an object's "degrees of freedom," the ways in which it can move or change. An object's change of state over time can then be modeled as a trajectory moving through this state space, just as a piece might also "move" over the course of performance. A singularity or attractor, then, acts to influence these trajectories, drawing them in through their "basin of attraction." Importantly, however, this singularity is never actually reached by any point of the trajectory; rather, trajectories only continually approach the singularity asymptotically. In this way, singularities define the long-term tendencies of a physical system, guiding processes as they reach stable yet fluctuating final states. Furthermore, a system may also be defined by multiple sets of

[11] Before transforming them into philosophical concepts, DeLanda introduces these terms at a metaphorical level, adapting their meaning and usage from mathematics and the theory of dynamical systems. For my purposes here, this metaphorical level will suffice.

attractors, each offering its own potential final state for the system. At equilibrium, the attractive power of a singularity remains obscured by the stability of the trajectories surrounding it. Moreover, the system's equilibrium—the inability of its trajectories to shift from one basin of attraction to another—also obscures the real existence of any other singularities within the system. When the system is pushed far past equilibrium, however, through an increase in the volatility and strength of its intensive differences, the reality of these multiple attractors quickly becomes apparent as trajectories shift from one attractor to another.

In the language of *mouvance,* these multiple attractors collectively represent the potentiality of the piece, each attractor representing a potential identity for the piece within performance. Critically, however, the trajectories of the state space of *mouvance* represent processes. My work thus far has emphasized the intensive processes of improvisation, creating what I called a *chaotic, creative field of potentiality*, analogous to a system far from equilibrium. When I allow myself to assume stable patterns of performance, however, I effectively allow the piece to settle into equilibrium, constraining the scope of its *mouvance* around a single attractor, potentiality, or identity. At equilibrium, a single "ideal" attractor guides and influences the trajectories constituted by improvisational processes. Performerly details gradually sediment into composerly ones. This process, in which I come to settle on a sort of "ideal" form for the courante, corresponds to Lutz's C-phase. I may arrive at something like the following:

Recording 5.14. Edwards, Courante in F major

Although Lutz suggests that this stage may often involve notation, there is no particular reason why notation is absolutely necessary for preserving this "ideal" form. So long as the memory of the composer-performer is up to the task, the newly created piece may persist as an *oral composition*. In

this connection, we should recall the discussion from Chapter Two about Chambonnières's practice of oral composition, leading to Le Gallois's curious anecdote about Hardel transcribing numerous pieces that, Fuller surmises, "previously existed nowhere but in the head of Chambonnières" (Fuller 1993, 197). The courante I have presented here is also now perfectly positioned for Lutz's D-phase, in which my reworked courante could itself be reworked through improvisation. Effectively, the D-phase is just another A-phase, but with two essential differences: first, that beginning with an oral composition obviates any seeing-through demanded by notation; and second, that we have *moved* the piece's point of origin far from where we first began.

Sarabande

As I mentioned in Chapter Two, my primary point of entry to Chambonnières's music was not as a listener, but as a player working from the 1670 print. One of the few exceptions to this was an encounter with a 1992 recording of Skip Sempé, which stands as one of the earliest devoted to the works of Chambonnières. In many respects, it is quite experimental: Sempé includes a number of improvised preludes, as well as a few tracks accompanied by theorbo.[12] What strikes me about this recording in particular is Sempé's inimitable performance style, and his reading of the Sarabande in G, GusC 126 is a perfect example of this.[13] The rhythm is flexible and elastic, while still maintaining a reasonably clear sense of the meter. His phrasing and melodic shaping tend towards longer, horizontal lines, sometimes creating long-breathed phrases of seven or eight measures. His use of overholding (or overlegato) emphasizes the harpsichord's capacity for building up resonance.

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[12] A number of French writers mention the combination of lute and harpsichord as a possibility for performance, including Le Gallois. See Fuller (1976, 23).

[13] Sempé's Chambonnières album is not easily available on most digital platforms, but his 2004 reading of the Sarabande in G from "Versailles: L'île enchantée" has been reissued several times, and he also has a recorded video performance on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjQWzlENCVg

Together, these ephemeral musical qualities, resistant to notation yet preserved through recording technology, constitute the core of Sempé's style as a performer.

Beyond such intangible qualities, there are also aspects of Sempé's performance style that *could* be notated, details that go beyond the specifics of whatever musical text he used for his performance. In order to understand the manner in which Sempé changes or varies Chambonnières's piece, we should first establish his textual reference point: that is, the specific text that Sempé is *seeing through*. This particular sarabande is not included in Chambonnières's print, but it does come down to us in two different versions: a reading in a manuscript in the Sainte-Geneviève library in Paris (F-Psg Ms. 2348/53, f. 15r–15v), and one from the Bauyn manuscript (I, f. 49r). At the time Sempé first recorded the piece, the only published edition of this piece would have been that of Brunold and Tessier (1925), which presents the reading from Bauyn (see Figure 5.12). Many of the changes Sempé introduces ought to remind us of the variance observed in the sources for Chambonnières's music. Consider, for example, the way in which Sempé realizes the last four bars of the first reprise. In measure 7, for instance, he considerably alters the melodic and rhythmic profile of the right hand, emphasizing a relatively-dissonant D in place of Bauyn's more consonant C. And later, in measure 10, he re-voices the chord on the downbeat to include a tenor E, played with a long *pincé* (or mordent). These alterations, along with many others Sempé introduces, are analogous to the interventions by D'Anglebert in Rés-89ter. In lieu of detailed, performerly notation—which as I argued in Chapter Two with Cypess (2007) could give some measure of permanence to the transitory qualities of performance—Sempé has used recording to achieve the same feat. It is a kind of notation in sound, just as Chambonnières's engravings were a kind of sound in notation.

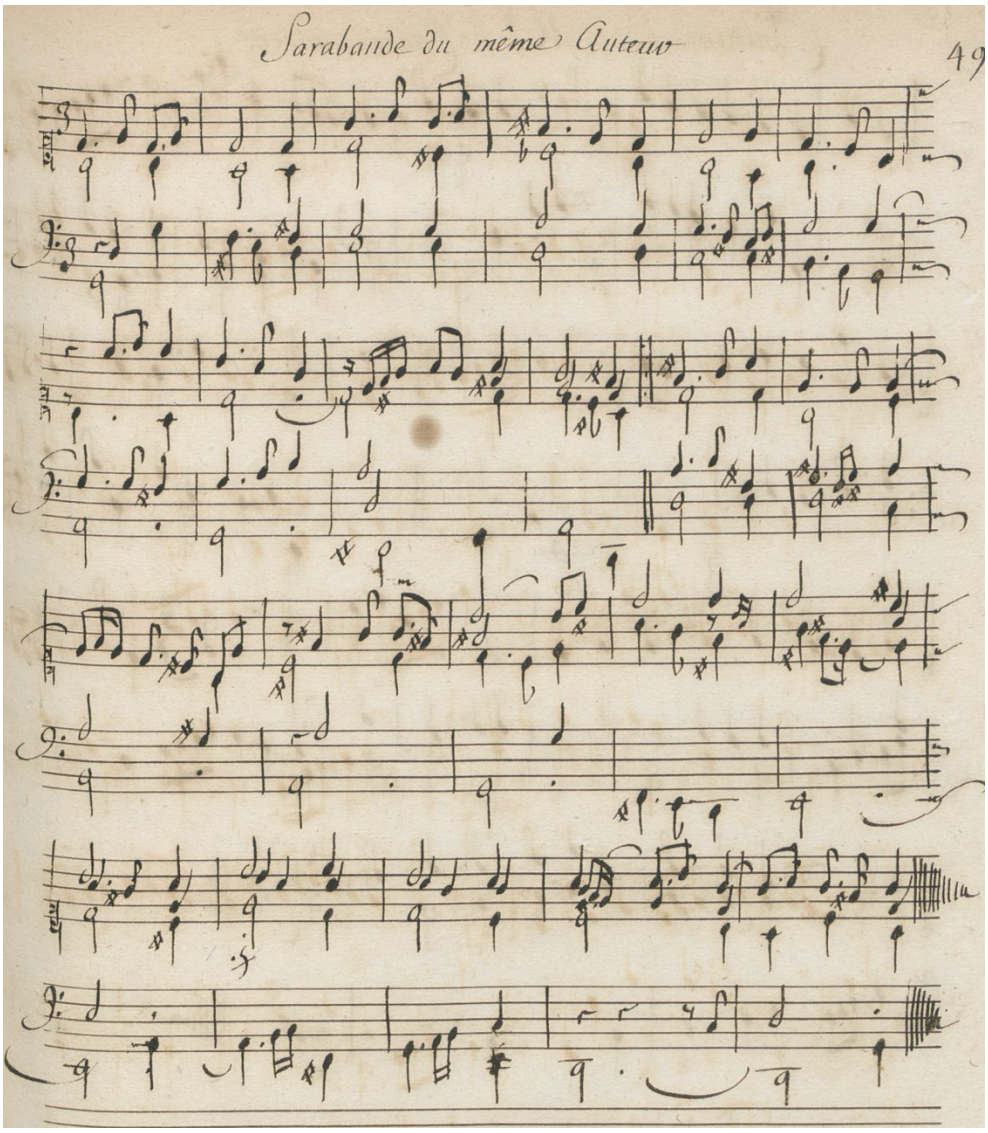

Figure 5.12. Chambonnières: Sarabande in G major, GusC 126a

Sempé's recording is a potent reminder of how musical *mouvance* is an essentially aural/oral phenomenon. Nowadays, we may infer a great deal about the workings of *mouvance* from the variant readings presented in historical sources, but these notated *traces* are just that: mere traces of a much larger oral tradition of performance. The identity of a piece of harpsichord music within seventeenth-century culture was in a perpetual state of becoming, and various musical *texts* of all kinds—including engravings and manuscripts, but also, crucially, performances—contributed to this process. Just as we observed in Chapter Two the difficulty in separating surface from structure, we

might now also find separating a piece from its style of performance similarly thorny. In the culture surrounding the *clavecinistes*, a piece's identity could only emerge through performance. After all, composers like Chambonnières created their pieces through improvisation and experimentation at the keyboard (i.e. performance), engraved editions attempted to capture a piece *together* with a style of performance, and even fairly simple, "bare-bones" manuscript readings like those in the Oldham manuscript inevitably include some details—of texture and rhythm, for example—that might otherwise be determined in performance. The piece continually *becomes itself*—in its own difference—through the medium of performance, notated or otherwise. Moreover, a given piece's identity cannot be located in any single text or performance, valid for all times, places, and people. Since the piece is constantly in motion, we can only attempt to capture the piece's differential *becoming-itself* as a kind of snapshot, one moment in time, one provisional identity amongst many. The complex, *moving* identity of a piece, therefore, only emerges through a negotiation of individuals: individual texts, performances, performers, listeners, and identities. Sempé's recording, then, provides one such provisional identity, created through a unique mixture of performerly style and compositional substance.

For a more complete description of this identity, one that acknowledges its mobility, we must look towards the role of performance within musical culture. I have already detailed the process by which I move from *reading* a text to *re-embodying* it as improvisation. We have seen how improvisational practice thus enables a space for creative experimentation, in which normal boundaries between surface and structure are dissolved, entering instead into conversation. This is the space in which the various dimensions of a piece's identity are relatively deterritorialized through experimentation, and subsequently reterritorialized in performance. We should now also recognize that deterritorialization makes this an *open* space, in which external ideas, techniques, and influences

can be brought within the territory of the text. In other words, it is a space that enables creative engagement with *intertexts*.

As I experiment with playing the sarabande, it is nearly impossible for me not to hear Sempé's performance in the background. It is a part of the musical space I inhabit when I play this piece, and it has a determinate influence on how I re-create the piece in performance. For example, Sempé's unique realization of measure 7 has come to "feel right" for me, and I very rarely deviate from it. His version of measure 10 with its characteristic long *pincé*, on the other hand, feels more like an option, one amongst many. Regardless of whether I choose to imitate, modify, ignore, or negate Sempé's intertext, the fact remains that these are performance decisions that are made in reference to another performance, another text. I may not be entirely conscious of these decisions at all times. Indeed, most of the time my memory of Sempé's performance disappears entirely within the piece, forming yet another of the piece's innumerable contours. Even so, Sempé's reading forms a vital part of the sarabande's still-emerging identity, forming one intertext within the larger text of my own performance.

Sempé's recording reminds us, then, that *mouvance* can be not just an historical process, but a contemporary one, operating within living traditions of musical performance. The tradition in which I work as an historically-informed performer is, of course, not solely of my own devising. Rather, HIP-as-tradition encompasses the entire field of agents and ideals by which my musical performances will be evaluated. Since Sempé is also part of HIP-as-tradition, the way in which he understands Chambonnières's sarabande will also have an effect on others involved in this same tradition, including both performers and listeners. Depending on the specific receivers of Sempé's performance, they might consider Sempé to have "moved" the piece in a highly positive way or, perhaps, to have "broken" it; in such a case, Sempé's performance would still remain involved in the piece's *mouvance*, but only as a kind of negative impression of *what the piece is not*. A piece's *mouvance* is

therefore not solely a personal matter, since it participates in a cultural setting—HIP-as-tradition—with shared values, standards, and practices. There is no single *Urtext,* no single identity. There is only *mouvance*, encompassing the full range of identitites assumed by a piece within a performance tradition.

Finally, in thinking about *mouvance* as a living process, we return to the ephemeral, impermanent qualities of performance that notation can only suggest. To what extent do these performative details—timing, tone color, phrasing, etc.—contribute to the identity of a piece? How much of that intangible quality of Sempé's performance style is wrapped up and preserved within the identity of Chambonnières's sarabande? As I think about the impression that Sempé's recording makes, it may in fact be the ephemeral, "incidental" qualities of his playing that grab me the most: the rich, sustained tone, the broad expansiveness of the downbeats. In other words, these are a large part of what *affects* me as a listener. These are details that resist any attempt at notation, yet remain audible through performance and have been given permanence through recording technology. These are the kinds of details that add up over the course of a performance to contribute to the piece's *affect*, its power to literally move me, to effect "the passage from one experiential state of the body to another" (Massumi in Deleuze and Guattari 1987, xvi). Surely this affect, created through the "incidental" details of performance, must be considered an integral part of the sarabande's emerging, moving identity.

In a deterritorialized space of improvisation, ephemeral details take on new importance. To what extent might composerly detail that *can* be notated have an effect on performerly detail that *cannot*? Or, more critically, to invert the question, how might performing—concerned with intangible, elusive, affective qualities—impact composing? In effect, this is merely a repetition of the same binary between surface/structure and substance/style, albeit transposed to an even more elusive plane. Just as was the case earlier, the solution to these questions is to be found in deterritorialized

musicking. Within an improvisational practice, there are no compositional decisions, no performance decisions; instead, there are *musical* decisions, operating within a deterritorialized musical practice. Within my own practice, for example, I might attempt to recreate something of the same *text* that Sempé uses—albeit transposed to F major for my own suite—and, in a creative moment, reach an affect different from Sempé's. Sempé's affect is flexible and rhapsodic, yet poised. At the same time, it often feels just a little easy, or even frivolous, as when he launches suddenly into flurries of quick diminutions. Recording 5.15, meanwhile, mostly attempts—with the possible exception of the beginning of the B-section—to create an affect of calm, languor, and sensuality.

Recording 5.15. Sarabande in F, Same Text, New Affect

On the other hand, I might attempt to re-create that elusive affect of Sempé's reading in ways that have a determinate influence on what some might consider the piece's structural identity.

Recording 5.16. Sarabande in F, New Text, Same Affect

In all of these cases, an improvisational mindset enables us to be more attentive to the play between structure and surface *at all levels of musical activity*, extending from the large formal design of the piece, right down to its most local level of performative detail. This, finally, is the space in which a piece moves and becomes.

Summary

This chapter began with the notion that, in order to understand *mouvance* as movement, we should also shift our attention from static identity to dynamic activity. I relied on a number of Deleuzian concepts, such as *intensity, becoming,* and *deterritorialization*, to understand the processes that

underlie the formation of a piece's identity, the ways in which a piece comes to be itself over time. Ultimately, I argued that since this identity arises through musical activity, we must therefore also seek to understand it from a perspective that is grounded within that very same activity, through a process of artistic research. To that end, I have detailed my own historically-informed, experimental, improvisational practice, resulting in a suite of pieces in F major.

Each movement of this suite has thus dealt with an aspect of shaping musical identity. In the Prélude, we observed a practice that privileged improvisational activity over final product, in which musical materials could take on a life of their own, independent of their original source. The Allemande, conversely, demonstrated the ways in which improvisational practice could uncover a piece's experiential contours. Through experimentation with different strata of musical surface and structure, the player develops an aesthetic sensibility toward the shape of the piece and the ways in which it can be moved without being broken. The player accomplishes this not through an imposition of one's own will, but rather through a creative negotiation with the piece's materials, such that the player might also be "moved." The material is not dead, closed, or finished; it invites the player to (re-)enter into a living musical process. In the Courante I, we saw how the practice of playing *doubles* created a unique collaborative space for composers and performers, each contributing in their own way towards the courante's developing identity. The Courante II, however, pushed this identity past its breaking point, creating a new piece with its own unique identity. By way of comparison with thoroughbass, I argued that the seventeenth-century French tradition of keyboard performance had flexible rules governing *mouvance*. These rules, however, were not discursive; rather, they were embedded within the practice itself, and hence, it is only through improvisational experimentation that one can now come to play by these rules again. Finally, in the Sarabande, I examined the extent to which *mouvance* could—and still can—function within oral/aural traditions of musical performance. I came to understand a performance by Skip Sempé as a living, integral part

of the sarabande's identity, not only in its substantive details (notes, rhythms, textures) but in its "incidental" details as well. Timing, tone color, articulation, energy, and affect are all part of the vast deterritorialized space of improvisation, and it is in this highly complex field of activity that *mouvance* becomes possible.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Recapitulation

This study has been organized into several discrete portions, corresponding to different stages of working with a problem. In Chapter One, I detailed some of the larger issues—and possibilities—that come out of taking HIP seriously not only as an established tradition of musical performance, but also as a method of inquiry. I divided the larger field of HIP into two independent practices: HIP-as-method and HIP-as-tradition. HIP-as-method was described as an approach for developing new styles of performance, inspired by the past. By working with various kinds of historical evidence—treatises, sound recordings, instruments, etc.—performers are confronted with techniques and practices radically different from their own, leading to a defamiliarization of the performer's own musical practice; once familiar repertoire now also appears radically unfamiliar. Through creative engagement with historical evidence, the performer has the possibility of developing a new, refamiliarized style of performance that takes this evidence into account. I described HIP-as-tradition, meanwhile, in line with Taruskin (1995) and Butt (2002) as an oral musical tradition that now exists independently of HIP-as-method. Using Bourdieu's (2010) concepts of doxa, orthodoxy, and heterodoxy, I explained the mechanisms by which HIP-as-tradition continually influences and constrains the practice of HIP-as-method. I also proposed a number of concrete means by which performers might look to confront the doxa of tradition with their own heterodox practices, including the discovery of new historical evidence, new conceptual frames used to evaluate and understand existing historical evidence, and newly critical approaches to the performer's creative engagement with that evidence. While the first of these options remains perfectly suited to the still burgeoning field of nineteenth-century performance practice, I argued

that my own concern with music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would be better served by the latter two.

I singled out the work-concept as one of the key limiting factors of HIP's critical frame. In line with Goehr (2007), I described the work-concept as regulative, exerting a powerful influence on the various practices that come under its purview, as well as on the performer's habitus. At the same time, I drew attention to the work-concept's historical contingency. Whether we accept Goehr's rough dating of 1800 or not, the fact remains that the work-concept did come into its regulative force at some point *in the past*. I argued that recognition of this fact would allow historically-informed performers to imagine alternative conceptualizations of music and music-making, including older practices, predating the work-concept, as well as newer practices, created in our own time. Furthermore, given the work-concept's powerful influence on musical practice, I stipulated that a simple bracketing of the concept would not be enough for performers to escape its continual pull. Rather, performers would also need to effect change in their habitus, in their unconscious ways of thinking, perceiving, and doing. I proposed that the best way to accomplish this would be through adopting new and unfamiliar practices to problematize and replace habitual ones.

I next considered some of the ways in which historically-informed performers work with historical evidence in order to cultivate new practices and styles of performance. By analogy with Hans-Jörg Rheinberger's (1997) theory of experimental systems, I described HIP-as-method as an experimental practice. According to this theory, the performer relies upon comparatively well-understood elements of the practice, called *technical objects*, in order to better understand the practice's unknown, vaguely-defined *epistemic things*. The distinction between the technical and the epistemic is thus a matter of function, and the same object, technique, or concept could therefore be understood in either capacity depending on the organization of the particular experimental system. I argued that in experimental practices like HIP, the boundaries between the technical and the epistemic can be

especially fluid, particularly since such practices involve the employment not only of declarative knowledge ("knowing-that"), but also of procedural knowledge ("knowing-how"). Understanding HIP as an experimental practice—or enacting it as a player—entails attending to the "dialectics between epistemicity and technicity" as it unfolds and develops in the player's habitus (Rheinberger 2004, 4).

If a part of the function of HIP-as-method is to gain insight into the unknown, epistemic elements of one's artistic practice, then HIP, I reasoned, must also be considered a form of artistic research. After weighing other scholars' appraisal of HIP as artistic research, I argued that HIP's acts of "re-creation" should also be understood as creative in their own right, and that engaging in HIP-as-method thus entails the generation of new knowledge, obtained through a process of artistic experimentation.

With these elements in place, I proposed the plan for my own study. This would first entail choosing a particular repertoire as a case study, and attempting to understand it—in its full historical specificity—apart from the work-concept. Without the work-concept, I argued, I would more easily be able to discern the concepts and practices that shaped and influenced the repertoire. After having identified these concepts and practices, I would then seek to understand them both intellectually and practically, subsequently internalizing them through practice and reshaping my own habitus as a performer. After having done this work, I would return to the repertoire with fresh eyes, ears, and hands, looking to understand and perform this music by engaging with it through my own experimental practice.

In Chapter Two, I documented as my chosen case study the music of seventeenth-century French harpsichordist and composer Jacques Champion de Chambonnières. I described some of the seemingly contradictory sources of evidence surrounding Chambonnières's music. These included: contemporaneous accounts of his performing style, particularly his penchant for varying his pieces

each time he played them; his "authoritative" print of 1670; and the wide discrepancies—encompassing changes in rhythm, melodic contour, texture, and many other musical features—observed between the extant sources of Chambonnières's music. I argued, in line with David Fuller (1993), that these conflicting sources of evidence could only be explained by a set of concepts, ideals, and practices removed from the work-concept. To that end, I examined several of the competing imperatives at play in the performance culture of the *clavecinistes*. Among these might have been something like *Stiltreue*, a fidelity to musical style. Such a notion, I argued, explains far better than *Werktreue* the function of an exemplary text like Chambonnières's 1670 print amidst the wider "heterotextual" corpus of sources for Chambonnières's music. Exemplary texts seek to capture a particular style of performance through notation, and they enjoin other performers to re-create their general style of performance, if not their specific readings. I argued, however, that if *Stiltreue* were indeed at work in seventeenth-century France, its importance within professional life would have been greatly eclipsed by other ideals, particularly *bienséance* and personal authenticity. These ideals better explain practices like those observed in D'Anglebert's autograph manuscript Rés-89ter, in which D'Anglebert appropriates a variety of musical sources, including many keyboard pieces by Chambonnières, into his own style of performance.

I then argued that the practice of the *clavecinistes* would have also held strong implications for their understanding of the identity of a piece of music. The temptation as contemporary observers might be to try to define a minimal set of compositional features of any given piece, defined as a kind of skeletal score, such that this minimally defined score could be varied in performance. The problem, however, is that the variance observed in the sources for Chambonnières's music encompasses nearly every conceivable musical parameter, such that it becomes impossible to distinguish rigidly between the composition's essential and non-essential elements. Just as the practice of the *clavecinistes* relied on loose, porous boundaries between composerly and performerly

personas, so too was the boundary between a piece's composition and its subsequent performances a flexible one. Pursuing a line of reasoning by Nicholas Cook (1999), I put forward that each performance entailed a unique *seeing and hearing through* the score, with each individual performer deciding on the piece's essential and contingent features. Moreover, this *seeing and hearing through* operated within a heterotextual field, wherein a given piece could be represented by many different texts at once. Without the work-concept, I argued, it becomes much more challenging to adjudicate the kinds of activity that secure a piece's identity through the vagaries of performance.

Ultimately, I proposed that a better model for this complexity of practice could be borrowed from the study of orality. In particular, I relied upon Paul Zumthor's (1972) concept of *mouvance* for understanding the ways in which a piece's identity could shift, change, and evolve in performance. Following a discussion of *mouvance* by Gregory Nagy (1996), I then explored the ways in which a piece's "moving" identity could be valued and appreciated by cultural participants—performers, composers, audience members, and other tastemakers. I also highlighted the flexible boundaries of *mouvance*. A piece's "movement" might be valued positively if it operated according to accepted standards of practice and took place within an authorized setting; it might potentially be "broken," however, if moved by an unauthorized performer, or otherwise moved in a negatively-valued way. Finally, I argued that all of the evidence encountered thus far pointed to the centrality within Chambonnières's artistic practice of improvisation, which I defined provisionally as *composition-in-performance*. His practice of "oral composition," without the aid of notation, could therefore be seen as the exercise of his improvisational skill, as could the subsequent *mouvance* of his music. In this light, the heterotextual corpus of Chambonnières's music could also be read productively as an *entextualization* of improvisational practice, removed from its original living context and frozen in notation. I proposed therefore an archaeological engagement with these texts, working to re-embody the improvisational techniques contained within them.

In Chapter Three, then, I turned towards developing a conceptual understanding of improvisation as practiced during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Western Europe, a field often termed *historical improvisation studies*. I began by developing a more complete (if still provisional) definition of improvisation. I focused particularly on Benson's (2003) understanding of improvisation, which he defines in a broad way as the reworking of something that already exists. The specific nature of any improvisational practice thus depends on what is being reworked, and how that reworking takes place. I continued by reviewing two of the most significant music-theoretical paradigms for explaining improvisational skill during the Baroque, the schema and the *Satzmodell*. I understood both of these paradigms to represent the "something" that might be reworked through improvisation, albeit each with its own particular emphasis. While the *Satzmodell* could best be described as a compositional model, the schema also implies a kind of communication between performer and audience, sharing a common musical language. Both of these paradigms effectively explain the plausibility of the improvisation of complex music, each providing the structural basis for the improvisation of a sounding musical surface. I then discussed some of the pedagogical materials used by eighteenth-century students to learn improvisation. In particular, I highlighted the extraordinary effectiveness of instruction via partimento, a bass line with or without figures used to represent and encapsulate a composition. I discussed the ways that partimento was used in Neapolitan conservatories to teach students a useful collection of schemata, as well as techniques—like diminution strategies—for working with these schemata to create music. This method of instruction also created powerful and lasting links for those students between composition, improvisation, and the practice of thoroughbass. Admittedly, the musical world of eighteenth-century Naples is far removed from that of seventeenth-century France. The detailed research into partimento undertaken by Gjerdingen, Sanguinetti, and others serves, nevertheless, as an essential starting point in approaching the hitherto less clearly understood practice of performer-

composer-improvisers like Chambonnières.

Pivoting to contemporary practice, I examined a number of recent studies of historical improvisation technique. I drew particular attention here to Callahan's (2010) hierarchical conception of improvisational practice, consisting of three discrete tiers: at the top, the *dispositio*, or form of the piece, conceived as a series of cadential waypoints; in the middle, the *elaboratio*, consisting of a collection of voice-leading frameworks rather like schemata or *Satzmodelle*; and at the bottom, the *decoratio*, or the musical surface, created through the skillful application of diminution technique to the elaboratio. I also drew attention to the model proposed by the *Compendium Improvisation* (Schwenkreis 2018), in which musical repertoire and improvisational technique work in constant dialogue; repertoire may be analyzed and schematized, and this schematization may itself be reworked into a new repertoire. In this way, budding improvisers are encouraged to develop their own musical language, a personal collection of improvisational techniques and models. Taken together, these accounts paint a detailed picture of the materials and methods that performers might use to re-create historical, improvised practices. I then explored how these more general pedagogical methods, primarily geared towards German and Italian styles, might be adapted for re-creating highly specific improvisational practices from the French Baroque. To that end, I relied significantly on Grazzini's (2014) work on the improvisation of *préludes non mesurés*. I argued that, even if there is only very little historical evidence from seventeenth-century France for the role of thoroughbass and partimento in the pedagogy of composition and improvisation, it would be reasonable to imagine that the *clavecinistes* might have employed similar—and similarly effective—methods.

In Chapter Four, I moved from a theoretical understanding of improvisation to a practical one. I documented and analyzed my own efforts in learning to improvise in an historically-informed style, modeled after the style of Chambonnières. I focused my efforts on the twenty-seven courantes from Chambonnières's two published books of harpsichord pieces, using them as a corpus of exemplars

to play, analyze, and rework. I described this approach as "inductive," moving from specific exemplars, via analysis and experimentation, to a set of techniques, principles, and methods that could guide my improvisational activity. Lacking any contemporaneous "how-to" manuals that might otherwise enable a "deductive" approach to improvisation, I argued that this inductive path would be one of the only ways of re-creating Chambonnières's improvisational style in its full historical specificity.

I introduced a method of working with the corpus that would not only transform its compositional materials into improvisational procedures, but also "move" my own aesthetic sensibility as a performer and improviser. I began by describing my initial analytic frame, including a wide variety of models, schemata, and techniques gathered in Chapter Three. I then showed how this frame could be brought into contact with the corpus through performance, analysis, reflection, and experimentation. I described a number of exercises I developed for fostering a practical engagement with the corpus. Apart from playing through the pieces as written to "soak up their style," I transposed and transformed them into a variety of partimento exercises, represented either by simple unfigured bass lines or as "rhythmic" partimenti. Throughout, I relied upon a working method borrowed from my own lessons with Rudolf Lutz, in which my improvisational work would be divided into a variety of discrete phases. Each of these phases was marked by differing degrees of premeditation or reflection, but they all depended upon some kind of pre-existing material to be reworked through improvisation. I also designed a number of exercises to isolate specific schemata I had identified within the corpus. Taken together, these exercises were intended to cultivate my intuition as an improviser, an "informed intuition" based upon my embodied, artistic experience, and upon which I could rely in performance. I then showed how this informed intuition could interact with a music-theoretical analysis through the medium of performance. I described the ways in which a schematic analysis could be re-enacted, tested, and critiqued, leading to change and

development in my own method of analysis. I showed how my understanding of certain schemata, like the double cadence, could evolve when confronted with appropriate exemplars from the corpus. As I demonstrated, my analytic frame and practical work at the keyboard thus participated in a constant dialogue, each influencing the other as I moved towards deeper engagement with the materials of the corpus. This feedback loop between analysis and practice also led to new insight surrounding issues of form and modulation in Chambonnières's pieces; for example, I developed a close attention to his use of characteristic intervallic patterns above the bass to signal particular modulatory paths.

Ultimately, I relied on tools from computational musicology (music21) in order to continue to transform the corpus from its frozen, entextualized form to a living, re-embodied improvisational practice. I first designed a method of encoding my schematic analyses of the corpus. Using this system, I constructed a virtual *zibaldone*, enabling comparisons of a wide variety of different realizations of the same schemata. I also wrote several short programs to create randomized, customizable partimento exercises. Similar to the partimenti of Durante, these exercises transformed my improvisational routine into something like solving a puzzle, or playing a game. Eventually, I designed a simple computational model of improvisational decision-making. The model represented decisions improvisers might make about form and modulation, as observed in the corpus. Using the model, I was able to generate a limitless supply of novel partimento exercises. My work with these exercises—which represent, implicitly, a kind of tacit, improvisational knowledge—was yet another way of developing my informed intuition about improvisational behavior in Chambonnières's style.

Chapter Five returned to the performance culture of the *clavecinistes*, as explored in Chapter Two. Here, I sought to understand music not as a fixed and finished product, but rather as an active process. Using concepts borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari, and from DeLanda, I attempted to sketch a picture of music as an activity, as becoming rather than being. If we understand the shaping

of a piece's identity as driven not by the work-concept, but rather by *mouvance*, then, I argued, we must also understand *mouvance* as movement, as a process or activity occurring over time. I argued moreover that improvisation was an ideal setting in which to explore this process. In improvisation, the stratified relations of musical practice could be deterritorialized, creating an exciting space of potentiality for the improviser to explore and experiment with. This is the space in which a piece's unfolding identities form, shift, and move. It is also the space in which my own experimental practice as an historically-informed performer can be brought to bear. I elected then to construct a short musical suite of dance movements in which I could experiment with *mouvance* from an improvisational standpoint, each movement exploring a different facet of the possibilities of *mouvance* within the culture of the *clavecinistes*.

Beginning with the *Prélude*, I examined the improvisational practice of French baroque preluding as pure activity, prior to the formation of lasting identity. Using a prelude in F by Louis Couperin as the raw material for my improvisational reworking, I examined the extent to which the prelude could be changed or moved at a variety of levels of structure. I argued that working with this prelude encouraged a relatively deterritorialized approach, in which the improviser brings the musical surface into conversation with its structure. Ultimately, I showed how the prelude privileges the improviser's activity of reworking over the specific materials being reworked. The prelude, then, was seen as a genre in which diverse musical influences might mix and co-mingle. In such a practice, the improviser is really improvising more with the tradition of preluding itself than with any specific set of musical materials.

In the *Allemande*, I showed how the deterritorialized space of improvisation could lead to new, experiential understanding of a piece's *mouvance*, or its potential range of identities. Through a process of experimentation, I probed the extent to which a piece could be 'moved' before becoming 'broken.' I argued that this experimental practice was not just a way of uncovering potential

identities of a piece, but also of developing an understanding of what performance might be. This should be understood as HIP-as-method put into practice, wherein I sought to re-create the *clavecinistes'* practice of "performing a piece" through movement of my own aesthetic sensibility.

In the *Courante I*, I re-created the seventeenth-century French practice of playing *doubles*. I understood this as yet another kind of *mouvance*, in which the piece's "original" identity, as conceived by the composer of the piece, could be juxtaposed with its "moved" identity, created by the performer. In the *Interlude*, I examined in greater detail some of the practical constraints that limit the scope of a piece's *mouvance*. In particular, I highlighted the practice of thoroughbass as an essential component of the web of practices defining the *clavecinistes'* idea of performance. Recognizing these constraints, in the *Courante II* I examined what became possible for the piece's *mouvance* when such limits are removed. I argued that a piece's broken performance could be more positively valued as the creation of a new piece, with a new set of potential identities.

Finally, in the *Sarabande*, I examined how *mouvance* did once—and still can—function as a living, aural, oral practice. I reflected on a performance by Skip Sempé and showed how it could move a piece, as well as how Sempé's performance might figure within my own performance practice. Moreover, I drew attention to the ways in which the ephemeral, un-notateable aspects of performance—tone color, timing, touch, dynamic, etc.—also contribute vitally to the shaping of a piece's range of identities.

Discussion and Conclusions

Returning to the scene I set at the very beginning of this study, I think that I can now better articulate what so unsettled me in that violin masterclass. The work-concept—along with its related practices and ideals like *Werktreue*—enacts powerful constraints on the actions not just of performers, but of virtually all cultural participants. Composers, performers, and audience members

understand their mutual relations in a highly stratified way, wherein the composer creates or discovers the work, the performer executes or interprets the work, and the audience finally receives it. This model imagines fixed objects or products of music-making—works—and orients all of musical practice around them. As a result, it denies practices that destabilize these stratified relations. HIP, in its participation in a variety of work-concept-centered practices, is thus also complicit in enforcing the boundaries between right interpretation and wrong, good taste and poor, composer and performer, master and intellectually passive student.

What right did this master violinist have to dismiss the original, creative interpretation of the student? From the perspective of HIP-as-tradition, she had every right. She could appeal to her own authority as a master practitioner of her art. Moreover, the tradition in which she practiced was also guided by that same ideal, *Werktreue*, that informed her criticism of the student. From the perspective of HIP-as-method, however, we see that the master had very little cause to invoke the work-concept, even implicitly. HIP-as-method instead demands a questioning of those very ideals upon which the master relied, along with a deep attention to historical interpretation and experimentation to justify the method's results.

My purpose in carrying out this research has always been to expand HIP's potential as a generator of new styles and performance options. As historically-informed performers, we have powerful tools at our disposal to uncover doxa within performance culture, and subsequently, to propose heterodox alternatives. HIP enables this through its construction of new experimental practices that respond to new historical evidence, to new ways of looking at old evidence, and to new ways of imaginatively engaging with that evidence. HIP enables us to imagine and re-create radically unfamiliar modes of interacting with familiar music. By this same logic, HIP should then also reject any uncritical attempts to re-instate the authority of the work-concept. Despite the allure of HIP-as-tradition, HIP-as-method should stand independently, looking toward alternative ways of

conceptualizing and making music.

Historically-informed approaches to performance are already remarkably diverse, and I am therefore hesitant to overly generalize. Nevertheless, these approaches—pedagogical approaches, in particular—do betray the influence of the work-concept by the things they take for granted. *Why would I change these perfectly fine notes, rhythms, and ornaments when I have this autograph manuscript, this print supervised by the composer, this marvelous scholarly edition?* They prioritize the objects and products of music—the musical works and the artifacts purporting to represent them—above the processes by which these works might have—and might still—come to life in performance. In this way, the work-concept enforces a uniformity of musical practice focused upon these finished products, foreclosing alternative possibilities that might stem from active, ongoing, and embodied processes of musical and intellectual creativity.

A central contribution of this study, then, is in its application of the techniques of historical improvisation (process) to the performance of musical repertoire (product). Historical improvisation has grown into a vital musical tradition of its own, sustained by several leading institutions—most notably the Schola Cantorum in Basel—and practiced throughout the world. It has also developed its own characteristic language and set of techniques, bridging the work of music theorists and performers as they collectively seek to explain and re-create improvisational practices from the past. Despite these advancements, however, historical improvisation remains a kind of niche activity within the wider practice of HIP. Few historically-informed performers learn to improvise, and for those that do, their improvisational skill has little impact on their performance of repertoire. Improvisation has been ghettoized within ordinary concert life, restricted to a handful of particular situations such as cadenzas, varied reprises, and imaginative continuo accompaniments. And yet, improvisation should change everything! Improvisational practice has the potential to create a profound impact on how one understands a score, piece, work, or performance.

It might be tempting to boil down the results of these preceding chapters to a cliché: *play it as if you were improvising it*. Doing so, however, risks eroding one of the central aims of HIP-as-method, of searching for not a single performance alternative, but many. My goal here was to increase my sensitivity as a performer to the uniqueness of the cultures into which I seek imaginative entry. The goal was not to understand improvisation and performance in a general way, but in a *highly specific* way, at a particular time and place, and practiced by specific people in specific instrumental idioms. In my chosen case study of Chambonnières's music, I discovered a model of performance that embraced a continual flux of musical identity, a *mouvance*. By re-creating some of the practices associated with the *clavecinistes*, particularly improvisational practices, my usual understanding of performance also "moved." The activity of performance had been defamiliarized through an encounter with historical materials, and subsequently refamiliarized through experimentation. My own aesthetic sensibility had been "moved" as well, forming an altered set of intuitions, ideals, and attitudes towards performance. Like the *mouvance* of a piece by Chambonnières, though, this movement within my own artistic practice cannot ever be a fixed and finished product. Instead, it is itself an ongoing process of change and development as I continue to engage in defamiliarizing encounters with musical material. I developed this new approach by diving deeply into a very specific historical period, geographical locale, and cultural milieu, such that the cultural practice of the *clavecinistes* could be appreciated in its full, radical otherness. As such, this research could also serve as a kind of heterodox provocation to the pervasive orthodoxy of HIP-as-tradition. There are alternatives to the work-concept, and recognizing these alternatives will lead to new ways of appreciating, understanding, and performing music from the past.

There is, however, one cliché I find quite apropros: *the process is more important than the result*. More specifically, the experimental practice of HIP-as-method is more important than the specific styles of performance that come out of it. In my own study, I created one provisional style of

performance. It came about by way of a specific combination of sources of evidence and working methods, but also—critically—by way of my own aesthetic sensibility. But it could have all turned out differently! Artistic research like this cannot be divorced easily from the aesthetic sensibility from which it receives validation. My own starting point as a performer and improviser, along with my specific trajectory through the experimental practice described in this study, are inseparably entangled with the resulting style of performance. This does not, however, invalidate the research. Rather, it provides a model for other historically-informed performers to re-create on their own. New performers may draw from other sources of evidence, or interpret the evidence differently, or light upon alternative practices with which to experiment. They will also approach whatever practices they do adopt with their own set of preferences, experiences, and perspectives. All of these deviations from my own course should then also lead to new styles of performance or improvisation, new understandings of *mouvance* and musical identity. These unique, heterodox results will also be grounded in their performers' unique aesthetic sensibilities. What they will all share, though, is their common experimental practice, rooted in HIP-as-method.

But why stop at Chambonnières? Without the work-concept, how might performers, composers, and improvisers have understood the formation of musical identity at different times, and in different places? It would be very useful to extend the results of this study to other repertoires, or to other instruments. The free works of the North German organ school—the praeludia of Buxtehude, for example— would be an excellent place to start. As a number of musicologists and performers have demonstrated, Buxtehude's praeludia are clearly linked to contemporaneous improvisational practices.[157] A number of organists have also quite successfully re-created these practices for

[157] Dodds (2006), for example, shows the clear linkage between Buxtehude's contrapuntal technique in his free works and the improvisation pedagogy of Andreas Werckmeister.

themselves.[158] It would be instructive to bring this improvisational practice to bear on re-creating a seventeenth-century North German culture of performance and musical identity.

Another avenue might be to explore alternative sets of practices and concepts. In the present study, for example, my work centered on the notion of a "piece" as understood by the *clavecinistes*, and I connected this concept to related concepts of performance and improvisation. As I hinted in Chapter Two in my discussion of D'Anglebert's reworking and appropriation of lute music, it might also be fruitful to explore the related concept and practice of transcription. What kinds of novel transcription techniques might be discovered or invented without the influence of the work-concept? And how might these techniques affect the shaping of a piece's developing identities? Given that transcription has been understood in so many diverse ways, it would be interesting as well to compare a variety of approaches to transcription as recreated by historically-informed performers.

The vision of HIP proposed in this study should also carry strong implications for pedagogical practice. As I described it in Chapter One, the training of young historically-informed performers is often a matter of preserving tradition. Students learn by imitating their teachers, striving to re-create the sounds and techniques of their teachers' musical practice, but not necessarily the methods by which those historically-informed sounds might have originated. If HIP is to be taught not only as a tradition but also as a method, then it is vital that students learn to go beyond simply re-creating their teachers' example. They must also genuinely learn to *innovate*, to offer their own heterodox alternatives to the present state of performance practice. Within my own pedagogical practice as a teacher of harpsichord and basso continuo, I have learned to notice the tension playing out within lessons between tradition's stabilizing influence and students' desire for innovation. As I offer them

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[158] Organist William Porter is a particularly good example, and he has also described the process of teaching improvisation in this style (Porter 2000).

guidance on their artistic and professional development, I teach them to play by tradition's rules, but also to become aware of the doxa lurking behind those rules. At the same time, I also attempt to instill in them a practical engagement with the methods of HIP, so that they may eventually propose their own innovations, updates, and alternatives. As Chapter Five particularly demonstrated, the approach developed in this study enables a dialogue between tradition and innovation, and it proposes concrete methods of effecting this dialogue. Rather than breaking wholly with tradition, such an approach encourages the deterritorialization of the boundaries of tradition, such that tradition itself might also be "moved." If HIP-as-method is to remain a vital, living part of the early music movement—and not just an historical relic that led to the musical tradition we enjoy today—then it must also be taught to new generations of historically-informed performers. In this respect, I believe this study offers a useful model for teachers wishing to foster the methods of HIP, and for students wishing to embrace them.

Finally, careful readers will have noted that I have largely skirted issues of audience reception in this study. I *have* examined in depth my own developing understanding of my role as a performer. I have not, however, gone on to ask questions that deal with how my performance relates to those who hear it. If I "move" a piece in the ways described in Chapter Five, will the audience accept and validate my efforts? Will the audience still recognize this as "the same" piece? Will the audience even understand what I am attempting to do? I have sidestepped such questions here because of the way in which I understand HIP-as-method. The experimental practice I constructed is primarily in service of performance *preparation*. Like a laboratory, the practice room provides a controlled environment for HIP-as-method, in which the performer might take risks that could never be dared in live performance. A live performance is more like a field experiment, in which the uncontrollable, unpredictable audience interacts with and influences both performer and performance. The lived experience of performance is, of course, an essential part of the informed intuition that guides

performers as they make decisions in the practice room. Nevertheless, live performance, by virtue of its unpredictable nature, will often go beyond the scope of anything the performer imagined or prepared for. Dealing with audience reception is therefore a natural next step for research such as mine. Live performance can be the space in which HIP-as-tradition comes into contact with new, heterodox practices developed through HIP-as-method. Indeed, each time I perform Chambonnières in public, this is precisely what happens. Each performance offers a unique opportunity for negotiation: between the work-concept and *mouvance*, between my own musical personality and Chambonnières's, between the audience's expectations and my desire to share something that challenges them. In this way, the study presented here will remain ongoing, so long as audiences remain willing to listen.

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Summary

Since its inception, historically-informed performance (HIP) has evolved from a radical yet flexible method of inquiry into an established aural tradition. It now encompasses at least two distinct practices. On the one hand, HIP-as-method seeks to develop new styles of performance inspired by historical evidence. It moves from historical inquiry to creative experimentation, ultimately re-creating musical styles from the past as wholly new styles within the present. HIP-as-tradition, on the other hand, now exists independently of its foundational method. Like other musical traditions, it depends upon the authority of expert practitioners, critics, and other taste-makers. It encourages creativity within the boundaries of generally agreed-upon norms and standards. It also remains beholden to the authority of *Urtext*, scholarly, and facsimile editions, and above all, to the aegis of the work-concept. Although the two faces of HIP ought to be independent, the doxa of HIP-as-tradition constrains the practice of HIP-as-method, thereby limiting the possibility of imagining and re-creating alternative, heterodox practices. The work-concept's prominence within HIP—despite its widely-acknowledged historical contingency—thus carries with it a number of limitations for the development of new performance practices, since it also diverts performers' attention from fluid musical processes to fixed musical products.

This study attempts to circumvent the influence of the work-concept by replacing it with an alternative constellation of concepts and practices. It asks the question: what kinds of new practices might have once been, and might still become possible without the influence of the work-concept? It uses the music of the seventeenth-century French harpsichordists, the *clavecinistes*, as a central case study. In particular, it examines the musical culture surrounding the so-called father of the *clavecinistes*, Jacques Champion de Chambonnières. It considers a variety of historical evidence and

musicological argument, including Chambonnières's documented practice of varying his works each time he played them, his imputed practice of oral composition without notation, and the high degree of variance observed in sources for his music, including sources penned by the composer. The performance-variance suggested by the evidence gestures towards a musical culture with flexible boundaries between composing and performing activities, in which a piece can only come into being through acts of performance. This study therefore proposes understanding a piece's fluid range of identities using the concept of *mouvance*, which is a kind of variance that arises within performances and is acknowledged by cultural participants (audiences and performers). Moreover, this study attempts to re-create this practice of *mouvance* by also re-creating the improvisational practice upon which *mouvance* relied. To that end, I synthesize a number of music-theoretical approaches to the study of historical improvisation, with the aim of developing a pedagogical approach to improvisation in seventeenth-century French style. Having acquired a conceptual and practical understanding of improvisation, I use these tools to construct an experimental practice in which to explore and re-create the *mouvance* of the *clavecinistes*.

Chapter One describes the problem of the work-concept in HIP. In order to step outside the limitations of the work-concept, it argues for replacing habitual musical practices of repertoire-performance with alternative ones. Consequently, it also examines HIP's capacity for constructing experimental practices that might enable this conceptual-practical shift. Chapter Two presents the central case study, the keyboard music of Chambonnières. Following musicological evidence regarding source transmission, this chapter posits that Chambonnières's published pieces behave less like a series of musical works and more like the transcription of an oral practice. Moreover, it argues that tacit, embodied, improvisational knowledge necessarily informs such a practice. In this light, a fixed musical score is more productively viewed as only one provisional reading of a fluid, "moving"

piece, formed and varied through improvisational technique. This chapter therefore proposes that a re-creation of this practice should also require the performer's adoption of an alternative set of concepts and practices, including *mouvance* and improvisation. Chapter Three then takes a wide survey of the field of historical improvisation studies with the aim of constituting a pedagogical approach to Chambonnières's improvisational language, fashioning an individually-tailored method by way of analogy with better-documented practices, such as galant schemata and Neapolitan partimenti. Chapter Four documents and analyzes the process of learning to improvise in this style, paying particular attention to the constant reflective feedback loop between musical exemplar, analysis, and performance. In particular, it focuses on the ways in which a performer's intuition, or aesthetic sensibility, may develop and be informed through this practice. It also discusses a variety of techniques for the transformation of musical texts into sources of embodied improvisational knowledge, culminating in the construction of a simple computational model of Chambonnières's improvisational style. Chapter Five then brings this improvisational experience to bear upon the performance of French keyboard repertoire. It effects a shift in orientation from fixed musical works (products) to flexible musical activities (processes), examining the workings of *mouvance* within a variety of musical genres. It presents these results in the form of a musical suite, each movement dealing with a different facet of *mouvance*. It argues that improvisation enables the deterritorialization of familiar practices, forming a creative space for experimentation that resists usual binaries of surface/structure and performer/composer. Through this process of experimentation, the performer feels out and discovers the boundaries defining a piece's range of potential identities. Finally, this chapter also reflects upon the ways in which this re-created practice relates to and participates in the larger tradition in which it is embedded, HIP-as-tradition. It asserts the continuing relevance of historically-informed performers in shaping a piece's identities, finding that *mouvance* is not solely a matter of notes and rhythms, but also of touch, sound, color, and affect.

The central contribution of this dissertation is two-fold. While recent research on historical improvisation has sought to counter the ossification of HIP-as-tradition, wider musical practice within HIP has not yet followed suit. First and foremost, this dissertation provides a unique perspective on how performers might apply knowledge and insight gained through historical improvisation to the performance of musical repertoires. It explores the concrete ways in which improvisation may be brought into conversation with musical repertoire, enabling new styles of performance that employ improvisational technique and promote performance creativity. Second, this dissertation also offers a concrete approach to the use of HIP-as-method for questioning the conceptual-practical frame by which HIP-as-tradition exerts its authority. It shows how performer-researchers can thus develop new and unique styles of performance in tandem with their internalizing of new concepts and practices. It therefore also intervenes in longstanding debates within HIP on the limits of authenticity, as well as in philosophical and musicological debates on the status of the (pre-nineteenth-century) musical work.

Samenvatting

Sinds haar ontstaan is de historisch-geïnformeerde uitvoeringspraktijk (HIP) geëvolueerd van een radicale, doch flexibele onderzoeksmethode naar een gevestigde auditieve traditie. Nu kent zij tenminste twee te onderscheiden praktijken. Enerzijds beoogt *HIP-als-methode* de totstandkoming van nieuwe uitvoeringsstijlen, geënt op historisch bewijs; zij reikt van praktijken van historisch onderzoek tot creatieve experimenten om uiteindelijk muzikale stijlen uit het verleden te presenteren als geheel nieuwe stijlen in het heden. Anderzijds bestaat *HIP-als-traditie* tegenwoordig onafhankelijk van de methode die eraan ten grondslag lag. Net als andere muzikale tradities is deze afhankelijk van de deskundigheid van professionele uitvoerders, critici en andere smaakmakers. Zij bevordert creativiteit binnen de grenzen van algemeen overeengekomen normen en standaarden. HIP-als traditie blijft ook schatplichtig aan de autoriteit van de zogenaamde *Urtext*, academische, en facsimile edities en, vooral aan het dogma van het werk-concept. Hoewel de twee gezichten van HIP onafhankelijk zouden moeten zijn, beperkt de doxa van HIP-als-traditie de praktijk van HIP-als-methode en daarmee ook de mogelijkheid om alternatieve, minder orthodoxe praktijken te bedenken en re-creëren. Ondanks de algemeen erkende historische contingentie ervan, draagt de prominentie van het werk-concept binnen HIP dus een aantal beperkingen in zich die de ontwikkeling van nieuwe opvoeringspraktijken in de weg staan, omdat dit concept de aandacht van uitvoerend musici ook leidt van flexibele muzikale processen naar stabiele muzikale producten.

Deze studie beoogt de invloed van het werk-concept te omzeilen door het te vervangen door een alternatieve constellatie van concepten en praktijken. Zij stelt de vraag wat voor nieuwe praktijken ooit mogelijk zouden zijn geweest (en nog steeds mogelijk zijn) zonder de invloed van het werk-concept. Ik gebruik de muziek van de zeventiende-eeuwse Franse klavecimbelspelers, de *clavecinistes*,

als centrale casus. In het bijzonder onderzoek ik de muzikale cultuur rondom de zogenoemde vader der *clavecinistes*, Jacques Champion de Chambonnières. Ik ga in op een verscheidenheid aan historisch materiaal en musicologisch onderzoek, evenals Chambonnières's gedocumenteerde praktijk zijn werken telkens als hij ze speelde te variëren, de aan hem toegerekende praktijk van mondeling componeren zonder notatie, en de hoge mate van variatie in zijn muziek, zoals vermeld in diverse bronnen, waaronder die opgetekend door de componist zelf. De variatie in uitvoeringen, gesuggereerd door dit materiaal, wijst op een muzikale cultuur met flexibele grenzen tussen componeer- en uitvoeringsactiviteiten waarin een stuk alleen kan ontstaan in de act van het uitvoeren zelf. Deze studie stelt daarom voor om door middel van het concept *mouvance* (beweging) een stuk te begrijpen als een reeks van flexibele identiteiten, als een soort van variaties die ontstaan in en door de uitvoeringspraktijk en die wordt erkend door culturele participanten (publiek en uitvoerders). Bovendien poogt deze studie die praktijk van *mouvance* te re-creëren door ook de improvisatiepraktijk waar *mouvance* op gestoeld was opnieuw tot leven te wekken. Daartoe verbind ik een aantal muziektheoretische benaderingen met de studie van historische improvisatie, met als doel een pedagogiek van improviseren in de zeventiende-eeuwse Franse stijl te ontwikkelen. Ik heb een conceptueel en praktisch begrip van improvisatie ontwikkeld die ik inzet om een experimentele praktijk te construeren waarin de *mouvance* van de *clavecinistes* geëxploreerd en gerecreëerd kan worden.

Hoofdstuk Een beschrijft het probleem van het werk-concept in HIP. Om buiten de beperkingen van het werk-concept te stappen, pleit het voor het vervangen van de gebruikelijke muzikale uitvoeringspraktijken door bepaalde alternatieven. Bijgevolg wordt in dit hoofdstuk ook het vermogen van HIP onderzocht voor het creëren van experimentele praktijken die deze conceptueel-praktische verschuiving mogelijk zouden kunnen maken. Hoofdstuk Twee presenteert de centrale

casus, de klavecimbelmuziek van Chambonnières. Op basis van musicologische argumenten met betrekking tot bronoverdracht verdedig ik hier de stelling dat Chambonnières's gepubliceerde stukken zich minder gedragen als een serie van muzikale werken en meer als de transcriptie van een mondelinge praktijk. Bovendien betoog ik dat impliciete, lichamelijke, op improvisatie gebaseerde kennis een dergelijke praktijk noodzakelijkerwijs informeert. In dit licht bezien is wellicht beter gefixeerde bladmuziek te beschouwen als een voorlopige lezing van een flexibel, "bewegend" stuk, gevormd en constant gevarieerd via improvisatietechnieken. Ik stel daarom dat een re-creatie van deze praktijk ook van een uitvoerder vraagt om een reeks alternatieve concepten en praktijken te ontwikkelen, waaronder *mouvance* en improvisatie. Hoofdstuk Drie biedt vervolgens een breed overzicht van het veld van historische improvisatiestudies met als uiteindelijk doel het ontwikkelen van een pedagogiek om toegang te krijgen tot Chambonnières's improvisatietaal; ik heb een op het individu toegespitste methode gecreëerd analoog aan beter gedocumenteerde praktijken, zoals *galant schemata* en Napolitaanse *partimenti*. In Hoofdstuk Vier documenteer en analyseer ik het proces om te leren te improviseren in deze stijl, met bijzondere aandacht voor de constante reflectieve feedback loop tussen muzikaal voorbeeld, analyse en uitvoering. Ik richt mij in het bijzonder op de manieren waarop de intuïtie of esthetische sensibiliteit van een uitvoerend musicus zich zou kunnen ontwikkelen op basis van deze praktijk. Tevens bespreek ik een verscheidenheid aan technieken voor de transformatie van muzikale teksten tot bronnen van belichaamde, op improvisatie gebaseerde kennis, culminerend in de constructie van een simpel improvisatiemodel van Chambonnières's stijl van improviseren. In Hoofdstuk Vijf pas ik deze op improvisatie stoelende ervaring toe op de uitvoering van Frans klavecimbel repertoire. Daarmee bewerkstellig ik een verschuiving in oriëntatie op vaststaande muziekwerken (producten) naar flexibele muzikale activiteiten (processen), en onderzoek de werking van *mouvance* binnen een reeks muzikale genres. Ik presenteer deze resultaten in de vorm van een muzikale suite, waarbij elk deel betrekking heeft op

een ander facet van *mouvance*. Ik stel dat improvisatie de deterritorialisatie van vertrouwde processen mogelijk maakt, daarmee een creatieve ruimte voor experimentatie vormend die gebruikelijke tegenstellingen zoals muzikale inhoud versus structuur en uitvoerder versus componist onderuit haalt. De uitvoerend musicus leert middels dit proces van experimentatie en ontdekt de grenzen van de mogelijke identiteiten van een stuk. Tot slot reflecteer ik in dit hoofdstuk op de manieren waarop deze gerecreëerde praktijk relateert aan en participeert in de grotere traditie waarin die is ingebed, HIP-als-traditie. Ik benadruk de aanhoudende relevantie van historisch-geïnformeerde uitvoerders bij het vormen van de identiteit van een stuk, en stel dat *mouvance* niet slechts een zaak is van noten en ritmes, maar ook van touche, klank, kleur en affect.

De wezenlijke bijdrage van deze dissertatie is tweeledig. Waar recent onderzoek naar historische improvisatie tegenwicht heeft willen bieden aan de ossificatie van HIP-als-traditie, heeft de algemene muzikale praktijk binnen HIP die nog niet gevolgd. Ten eerste biedt deze dissertatie een uniek perspectief op hoe musici kennis en inzicht verkregen via historische improvisatie zouden kunnen toepassen op de uitvoering van muzikaal repertoire. Ik heb concrete manieren geëxploreerd waarop improvisatie in muzikaal repertoire ingebracht kan worden om zo tot nieuwe uitvoeringspraktijken te komen die gebruik maken van improvisatietechnieken en creativiteit promoten. Ten tweede biedt deze dissertatie ook een concreet voorstel voor het gebruik van HIP-als-methode om het conceptueel-praktische kader te bevragen waaraan HIP-als-traditie haar autoriteit ontleent. Het laat zien hoe uitvoerder-onderzoekers nieuwe en unieke uitvoeringsstijlen kunnen ontwikkelen in combinatie met een internalisering van nieuwe concepten en praktijken. Dit proefschrift intervenieert daarom ook in langlopende debatten binnen HIP over de grenzen van authenticiteit, alsook in filosofische en musicologische debatten over de status van het (pre-negentiende-eeuws) muzikale werk.

Curriculum Vitæ

First prize winner in the 2012 Musica Antiqua Bruges International Harpsichord Competition, Canadian harpsichordist and organist Mark Edwards is recognized for his captivating performances, bringing the listener "to new and unpredictable regions, using all of the resources of his instrument, [...] of his virtuosity, and of his imagination" (*La Libre Belgique*). Since 2016, he has been Assistant Professor of Harpsichord at Oberlin Conservatory.

Edwards has given solo recitals at a number of prominent festival and concert series, including the Utrecht Early Music Festival, Bozar (Brussels), and the Montreal Baroque Festival. He has had concerto performances with a number of award-winning ensembles, including Il Gardellino (Belgium), Neobarock (Germany), Ensemble Caprice (Canada), and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. Also an active chamber musician, he is the artistic director of *Poiesis*, and collaborates regularly with Les Boréades de Montréal and Les Délices (Cleveland).

His début solo CD, *Orpheus Descending*, was released in 2017 on the *early-music.com* label and was reviewed warmly. *Passaggi* (ATMA 2013), his CD with the Canadian recorder player Vincent Lauzer, was nominated for an ADISQ award. His performances have been broadcast by American Public Media, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Klara (Belgium), and Radio 4 (Netherlands).

He is the recipient of academic grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the German Academic Exchange Service. He studied at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, where he earned his Bachelor of Music with highest distinction, and completed graduate degrees at McGill University and the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg. His former teachers include Robert Hill, William Porter, Hank Knox, and David Higgs.