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A Manual of French and German Lute Notation

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A Manual

of French and German Lute Notation

(TITLE)

BY

Elizabeth Carson

THESIS

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Preface

This thesis is concerned with the study of the elements of lute notation. The author has attempted to explore two diverse styles of tablature, the first being French notation and the second being German notation. Through this comparative analysis, it is hoped that a stronger and deeper understanding is developed for the lute, its notation, and its literature.

The first chapter is concerned with French notation. Both fret and metrical signs and the pitch system are discussed near the beginning of the chapter. Later, the various ornamentation signs are explained in the context of the tablature.

In the second chapter the German notation is investigated. Here, as many as fifty-four fret symbols are used, whereas the French have found it necessary to use only eight or nine. Thus, the plates and their transcription reveal a highly intricate notational system as compared to the French. The entire German system is shown to be far more strict and exacting. Already a basis is established for a systematic comparison and for future study.

After writing this paper, it is very probable that the author will have a better foundation for extending her interest and study on the topic of lute tablature.

The term, notation, denotes a method of writing down musical symbols with reference to the forms of the signs and the principles that dictate how and when those signs are to be used. In a broad sense, notation covers all types of European music from its earliest beginnings during the eighth and ninth centuries to the present. Each type of

notation requires special study in order to relate it in some manner to our present systems.

This study is concerned with the lute and its tablature, that of France and that of Germany. The two types lend themselves well to a comparative study, because the notational signs are opposite of each other. The Germans with their fifty or more fret symbols prove to be very formidable to the transcriber. While the French system should not be called simple, its abbreviated signs for ornamentation and its eight to nine fret markings reveal themselves to be slightly more approachable.

The first part of this paper deals only with the French tablature. Many of the sources used are those of other nations, especially England, which only bears out the widespread use of French tablature during the Renaissance. Along with the verbal explanations, musical examples are included in order to help clarify and organize the symbols.

In the second part, the German tablature is presented. Three variants of the system are discussed in turn: the notations of Hans Neusidler, Hans Judenkunig, and Hans Gerle. Here the use of tables is a virtual necessity for the understanding and later transcription of German tablature.

It is feasible that from the information given in this thesis the reader would be enabled to transcribe at least simple works from either the French or the German notation.

Part I

The Notation of French Lute Tablature

The earliest known French tablature is a manuscript of the Biblioteca Oliveriana in Pesaro, Italy, No. 114 (olim 1193), labeled on the fly-leaf Miscelania di Tempesto Blondi Poesie del 1500. Blondi is thought to be one of the possessors and transcribers of the manuscript, but not the initial possessor of the codex. No exact date of this tablature has been determined, but De tus biens on pages 65-68 is founded upon the discant and bass of Hayne van Ghizeghem's three-voice chanson De tous biens pleine which was written between 1470 and 1480.¹

Today, most of the surviving lute music is contained in the many books of lute tablature written during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This tablature is thought to have originated about 1507 and its use extends up to about 1770. The greater popularity of the French system of notation accounts for its adoption--rather than the more complicated German system, when the lute's popularity spread to England.

The earliest known documents of French lute tablature were two books published by Attaingant in 1529: Dixhuit basse dances garnies de Recoupes ei Tourdions . . ., and Tres breue ei familiers introduction pour entendre . . .² The second of these two books was probably designed to be a self instruction manual for the lute student. After the tablature reached England c. 1540, many instruction books appeared with descriptions of tuning, notation, and performance practices.

¹Walter Rubsamen "The Earliest French Lute Tablature" American Musicological Society Journal, vol XXI, Fall 1968, No. 3, p 289

²Vide, Will Apel, The Notation of Polyphonic Music p. 64

Therefore, before any attempt is made to discuss tablature, the following guidelines are presented as a help to those who are not familiar with the lute.

1. The fingerboard has eight frets (touches) which are marked by the letters b, c, d, e, f, g, h, and i. Occasionally, a ninth fret is marked k. The letter a is used for the open string.

2. The lute has eleven strings, arranged in six courses (orders), the lowest three of which are doubled in octaves. The fourth and fifth are in unison. The highest string, the chanterelle, is a single one.

3. As regards pitch, the indications of Attaingant are not definite. From the pieces for lute and voice, it appears that the lowest string was a G.³

4. The metrical signs are as follows:

Table No. 1

Semibreve	Minim	Semiminim	Crotchet	Fredon
	┌	└	≡	≡≡
				(indicated a trill or short <u>roulade</u>) ⁴

³Willi Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, c = middle c p. 679

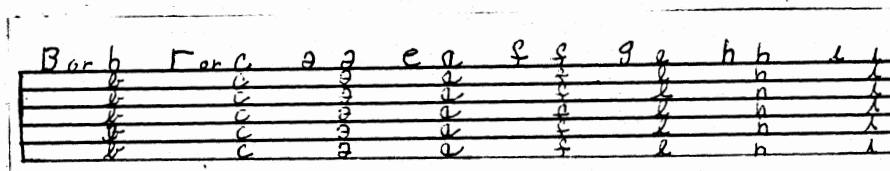
⁴Here, Robinson gives for the last four signs as indicating minim, crotchet, quaver, and semiquaver, there is no mention of a fredon. Each sign is half the duration of the one before i.e. semibreve = two minim = four crotchets = eight quavers = sixteen semiquavers. A dot after a sign increases its length by half as much. Thomas Tobinon, The Schoole Of Musicke (1603). p. 25

5. The staff (espace) consists of five lines (rigles). The tones to be produced on the sixth or lowest string, are represented underneath the staff on a ledger line, while the highest string is on top.

Later on, modifications occurred in both the staff and notation based on Denis Gaultier's method of tuning A-d-f-a'-d''-f'' (1650). The following signs were written underneath the staff and indicated the bass courses, tuned g, f, e, d, c. In the tablature, bass courses appeared as a, a', a'', a''', 4, (or 5). After this change appeared in the tablature the six line Italian staff was used.

Ex. No. 1, Italian Staff

In this example the i was sometimes written y.⁵



There is some confusion as to just when these changes occurred. Although Apel has given the year 1650, authorities differ as the following table demonstrates.

Table I

Author	Tuning System	Year
Willi Apel	<u>A-d-f-a'-d''-f''</u> and six line staff	1650
Francis W. Galpin	<u>A-d-f-a'-d''-f''</u> and six line staff	1625 ⁶

⁵Willi Apel, The Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 831

⁶Canon Francis W. Galpin, Old English Instruments of Music p. 32

Thomas Robinson

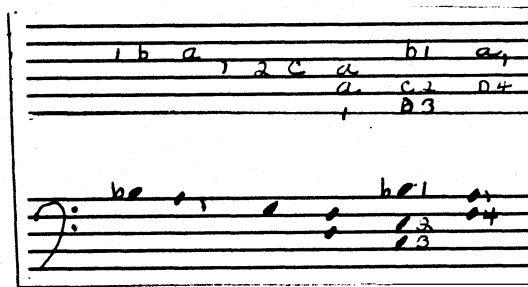
Old tuning,
G-d-a-f'-c''-g'', and
six line staff

Schoole of Musick
1603⁷

Any modifications that did occur apparently came during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Not only were there markings for rhythm and pitch, but on each line of the staff were designated the fingerings of the right and left hands. For the latter, Number 1 meant the first finger, 2, the second finger, 3, the third finger, and 4, the little finger. This notation is shown by the following example taken from Miss Elizabeth Burwell's Instruction Book.

Ex. #2, Notation in Elizabeth Burwell's Instruction Book⁸



⁷Robinson, p. 25

⁸Thurston Dart, "Elizabeth Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute", The Galpin Society Journal, XI, p. 5, 1965 Burwell copied the instructions from her teacher who was probably a student of the elder Gaultier.

Concerning the right hand are the following remarks: "For the forefinger of the right hand we mark one dot; for the second finger, two dots. The other fingers we do not use."⁹

Ex. #3, Right hand fingering



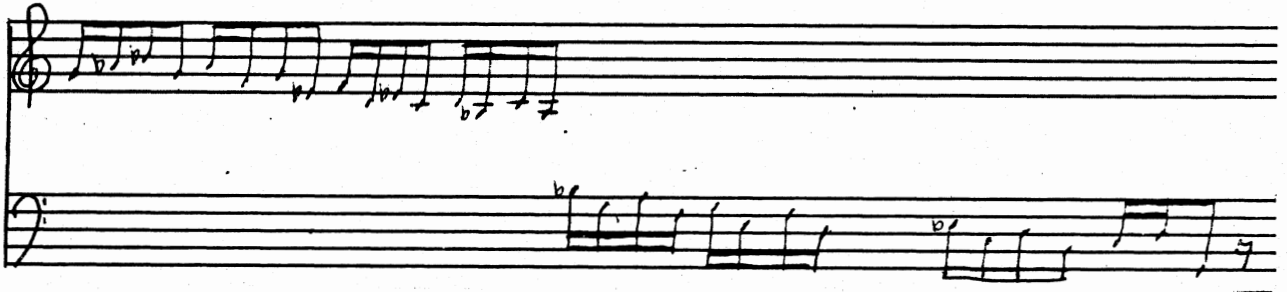
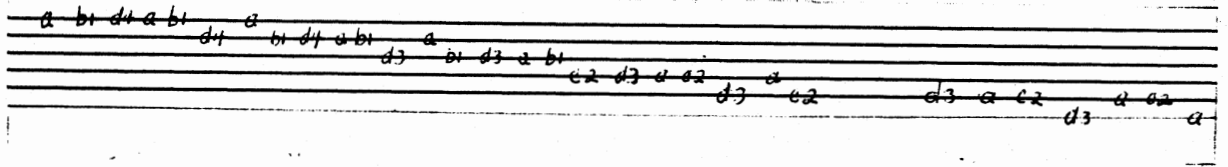
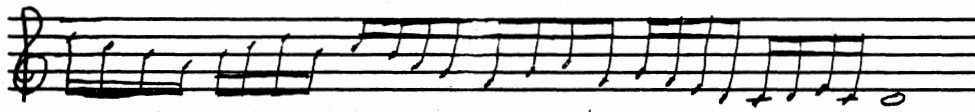
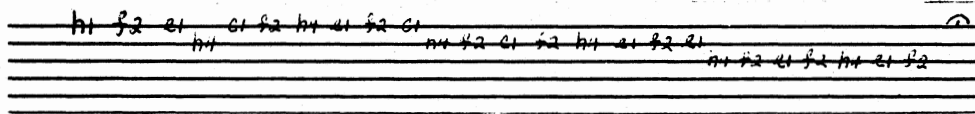
Burwell's book is simple and easy to follow, and not quite as technical as some. One of the more advanced teaching methods was written by Jean-Baptist Besard. This book, the Thesarus¹⁰ (1603) contained four hundred and three compositions divided into ten books according to genre. As an appendage to the book, he published a set of instructions on how to play the lute; the De Modo in Testudine Libellus.

Included in the Instructions are rules for good finger and hand position. Although Besard, like Burwell, does take the time to explain the fundamentals, his emphasis is on more advanced performance.

⁹Dart, The Galpin Society Journal, XI, p. 5

¹⁰Julia Sutton, "The Lute Instructions of Jean Baptiste Besard", The Musical Quarterly, Apr., 1965, LI, No. 2, p. 345.

Ex. #4, Besard's instructions for fingering

Running passages with low frets¹¹Ex. #5, Besard's fingering for running passages with frets¹²

¹¹Sutton, "The Lute Instructions of Jean Baptiste", *The Musical Quarterly*, Apr., 1965, LI, No. 2, pp. 350-351

¹²Ibid

Further on in the Book, Besard gives three rules for the left hand fingering of chords. Included is a new notational symbol, the "S". An "S" means that the first finger must be played across the strings.

1. In any chord containing the first fret and when a chord contains two "b's" on neighboring high courses, the tip of the first finger should be placed on both "b's" at the same time; if they occur on neighboring bass courses, the finger should be laid across the entire fret, or they should be played by the first and second fingers.
2. If the two "b's" have open strings between them, they must be played by two fingers rather than one.
3. Fingering of these chords should be planned in advance so that notes (other than open strings) that follow can be played with out removing the fingers from the chord.¹³

Ex. #6, Notation of chords according to Besard¹⁴

The image shows a handwritten musical score for guitar. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The notation includes various notes, accidentals (sharps and flats), and fingering numbers (b1, b2, d1, d2, d3, d4, a). There are also 'S' symbols placed below the notes, indicating a specific technique. Brackets [d] and [j] are placed above the first and last chords of the sequence. The notation is dense and appears to be a personal or working manuscript.

¹³Sutton, p. 352

¹⁴Ibid.

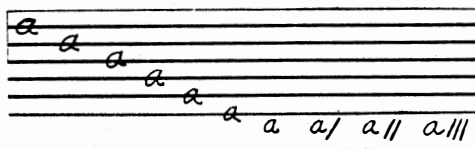
Later in 1617, there appeared a set of instructions on how to play the lute, Novus partus, a new edition of the set in the Thesaurus, revised and amended by its author in response to the overwhelming popularity of the earlier set. It also contained an additional fifty-nine very diverse compositions divided into three sections, representing a wide variety of forms and styles, typical of the early Baroque.

The music is written in standard early seventeenth century French lute tablature, and is for a ten-course lute (six fretted courses and four bass courses). The letters extend from a (open string). The bass courses are indicated beneath the staff by modifications of the letter a.

The tablature for all three lutes is the same even though they are not identical instruments. Besard's "Testudo minor" is the standard lute. His "Testudo maior" is larger and tuned a perfect fourth lower than the standard lute. The "Nova testudo" which he claims to have invented is smaller than the "Testudo maior" and is identical with the standard lute in tuning, except that courses III-X are to be tuned one octave above the norm. This causes the first and second courses to be lower than the third and fourth.

Ex. #7, Besard's lutes and their tunings

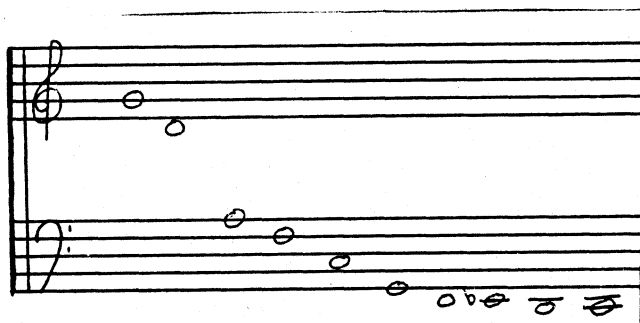
a. Standard lute tuning



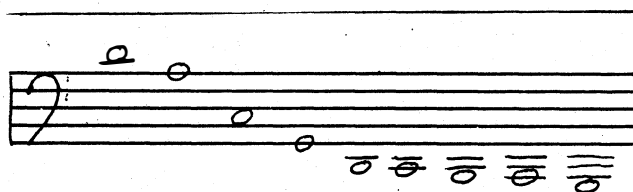
b. New Lute



c. Small Lute







d. Large Lute



¹⁵Julia Sutton, "The Music of J. B. Besard's *Novus Partus*, 1617", *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Summer, 1966, vol XIX, No. 2, p. 189.

The three lutes play together in Part I, the small (standard) lute and large lute are paired in Part II, and Part III is for the small lute alone, with the exception of four compositions for the new lute.

Most of the elements in tabulature notation have been covered. But, a characteristic of the lute is its many "Curiosities and nicities" as Mace puts it. Of course, he is referring to the long list of ornaments, fifteen of which he discusses in Musick's Monument.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. Shake (.a) | 9. Slur () |
| 2. Beate (la) | 10. Slide () |
| 3. Back-fall (ʎa) | 11. Springer (a') |
| 4. Half-fall (/a) | 12. Sting (←a) |
| 5. Whole-fall (+a) | 13. Futt (:a) |
| 6. Elevation (̂a) | 14. Pause () or () |
| 7. Single Relish (:a) | 15. Soft and loud play |
| 8. Double Relish (:;a) | (so: lo:) ¹⁶ |

The shake may be performed in two ways, either hard (a tearing shake) or soft. With the hard shake, on an open string, it must be struck with a right hand finger and then "be ready with the forefinger of the left hand to pick it up with the very tip (near the nail) of your finger".¹⁷ This often and quick picking up is referred to as scratching and is heard as a strong agitation.

The soft shake is very similar to the hard, except there is no "scratching". Instead, the string is beaten quickly in the same place.

Also, a shake can be made upon a stopped string. The only difference is that one of the under fingers such as the second finger is used to do the shaking, and an upper finger i.e., the forefinger, is used

¹⁶Thomas Mace, Musick's Monument, p. 103

¹⁷Ibid


to stop the note.

Falls are usually grouped together into three distinct types, the whole fall (double fall), half fall (single fall) and back fall.

The whole fall consisting of three notes is performed with two notes before the intended note. As an example of this, Mace says to first strike the open string, then let the forefinger fall on "b". The main note is the fret, played *c* with the little finger.

Unlike the whole fall, the half fall is done with two notes and is begun by striking a "half note" below.¹⁸ Again, the second note played is the predominant sound. In a back fall the opposite occurs, a semitone above is struck and immediately afterwards the principal note sounds.

In the case of the beat, there are only minor differences between it and the half fall. To beat a note such as on the fourth string, stop both *a* and *c* at the same time. As soon as it is struck, remove the finger so that *c* sounds. The sound falsified is always a half note below.

"Elevation" is just a term that describes the ascension or decent of a major or minor third occurring always upon the middle note. The following example shows an elevation expressed in both ascending and descending manners. Here, the  indicates the elevation.

¹⁸Mace, p. 102

Ex. #8, Ascending and descending elevation¹⁹

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is a single melodic line with notes and slurs. The first measure has notes 'a', 'r', and 'e'. The second measure has notes 'a', 'r', 'e', 'e', 'r', 'e'. The third measure has notes 'e', 'r', 'a'. The fourth measure has notes 'e', 'r', 'e', 'e', 'r', 'e'. Brackets and slurs are used to group notes and indicate techniques like 'elevation' and 'relish'. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with notes and accidentals (sharps and flats) corresponding to the melody.

┌ covers the five notes included. Since the elevation is on r only the first r is struck and the rest of the notes are performed by a sliding motion of the left hand.

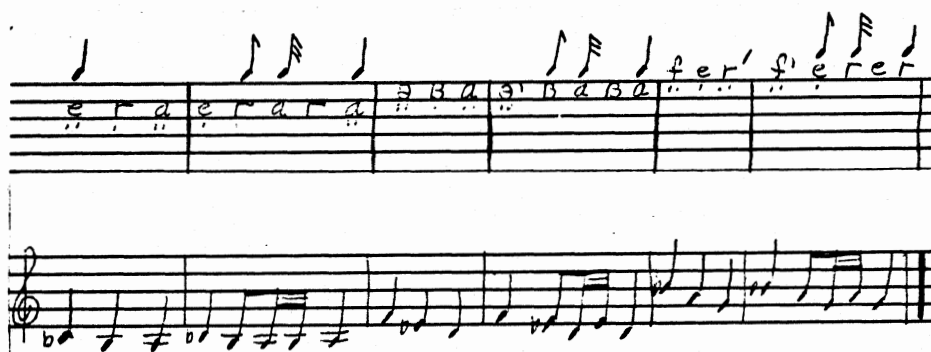
The single relish is included at this time because it is considered a part of the elevation. Three notes comprise a single relish with a back fall before the first of these notes.

Ex. #9, Single relish ascending²⁰

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is a single melodic line with notes and slurs. The first measure has notes 'a', 'r', 'e'. The second measure has notes 'a', 'r', 'a', 'r', 'e'. The third measure has notes 'a', 'r', 'e'. The fourth measure has notes 'a', 'r', 'e', 'r', 'e', 'r', 'e'. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with notes and accidentals (sharps and flats) corresponding to the melody.

¹⁹Mace, p. 107

²⁰Ibid

Ex. #10, Single relish descending²¹

In the double relish all that is involved is the expression of three plain notes in somewhat the fashion of an improvisation.

Ex. #11, Double relish²²

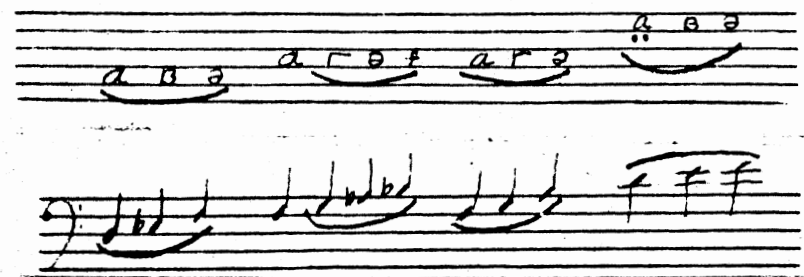
At the time Musick's Monument was published, the double relish was already dated and little use of it was being made in lute composition. Still, Mace recommends this grace as a good practice for hand control.

The hooped stroke also signifies the slur and the slide. Only from the context of the music can the player know exactly which ornament is being indicated.

²¹Mace, p. 107

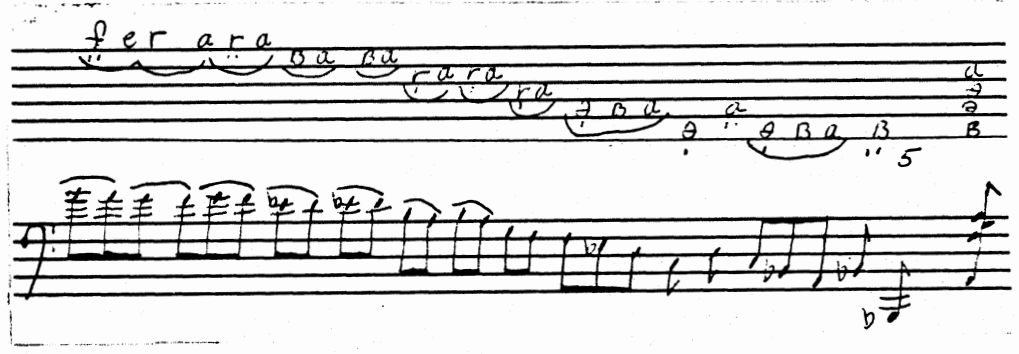
²²Mace, p. 108

Ex. #12, The slur²³



The slur is the falling of as many ascending notes as is possible on one string. Just the first is hit. Mace compares this technique to the whole fall.

Ex. #13, The slide²⁴

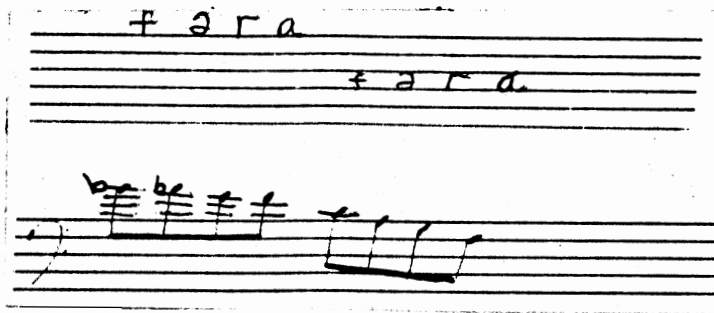


Usually, as in the above example, the player slides on just two or three notes. Occasionally though, a four-note slide will be encountered. The only difference between the slide and the slur is that in the slide, the notes are always descending.

²³Mace, p. 108

²⁴Ibid

Ex. #14, The four note slide




The springer is another grace involving a falsified sound. After a particular note is hit, another note one or two frets below in the same string is very lightly touched. In this way, the second note is not distinctly sounded yet the first note is still stopped with some vibrations of the second note occurring.

A full-bodied tone, such as a modern string instrument can produce, is difficult to attain with the lute. Another grace, the "sting", helps to remedy this defect somewhat. The sting is used primarily with long note values and is executed on a single string. After the desired note is struck, the finger is held on that fret. At the same time, the thumb is let loose and the hand is waved up and down from the nut to the bridge. Actually, the string is stretched upward and downward so that the sound seems to swell.

Usually, when the lute is said to "speake", it is the "tut" that is being used. With the right hand the note is struck, and immediately after that the same string is struck with another finger. In this way the sound that occurs is a "tut". "If you do it clearly, it will seem to speak the word "tut", so plainly, as if it were a living creature, speakable."²⁶

²⁵Mace, p. 108

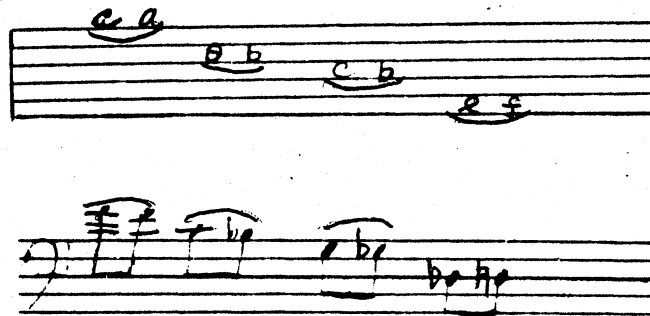
²⁶Mace, p. 109

The last two devices are not really graces even though Mace includes them with the other ornaments. 1. Loud and soft playing correspond to the modern use of the words "piano" and "forte". 2. A pause,  also a grace, is left up to the discretion of the lutenist. It may be only a temporary break in the phrase or a longer rest.

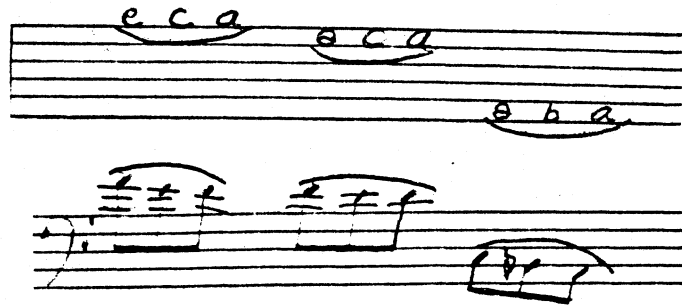
There are some ornaments that Mace does not discuss, perhaps because they are so similar to the others.

One of these is the roulade which is notated in the same manner as the slur and the slide. Roulades are very close to falls, except that the fall begins with a low note and ends upon a higher one; and the roulade begins at a high note and ends at a low note. This could be considered the same as the back-fall.

Ex. #15, Single roulade (two letters)²⁷



²⁷Dart, The Galpin Society Journal, p. 35

Ex. #16 Double roulade (three letters)²⁸

From Burwell's description of the sigh (or pull) it seems to be similar to the springer. In the open pull, the finger is removed from the string and then the same string is struck again. The stopped pull is executed when the finger stops the string, pulls it off and once more stops upon the same string and letter.

There are probably slight differences in the playing of any one of these ornaments from one lutenist to another. These differences especially come to light in the playing of louds, softs, and long note values.

The following two transcriptions of a prelude composed by Thomas Mace, in honor of his wife, illustrate the variables. From a nationalistic standpoint, this piece is interesting since it contains a variety of graces and also dips down into the bass courses. Following the tablature, the two transcriptions of the prelude provide easy comparison and contrast as to the transcribers' interpretations. First we present the piece in Mace's tablature.

²⁸Dart, p. 35

Ex. #17, A Prelude, Mistress (later known as Mrs. Mace)²⁹

In the following transcription of Mistress, the newer tuning system is used: $A_3-D-f-a' d''-f''$. All of the ornaments have been deleted since they are editorial and have no equivalents in modern notation.

It will be noted that in the tuning of the third course, that the open string a has been altered to b. This scordatura tuning is also used by Thurston Dart in his transcription of the piece. Definitely, within the major-minor system, this change of tuning and of key facilitates a more pleasing performance. Since scordatura tuning was not uncommon in sixteenth and seventeenth century lute music, it may well be that this particular tuning for Mistress is correct even though Mace does not indicate this on the tablature.

²⁹Mace, p. 121

In any event, false relations are avoided between the bass courses and higher courses with the change from open string a (third course) to b.

Ex. #18, Transcription Mistress

With the second transcription, Thurston Dart takes many liberties especially concerning ornamentation. He does include a table of some of the ornamentation used along with their transcriptions.

Original graces used by Mace

~~~~ = sting

⌋ = back-fall

| = beat

Transcription (Dart)<sup>30</sup>

~~~~ = vibrato

♪ = appoggiatura

⌋ = mordent

³⁰Canon Francis W. Galpin, Old English Instruments of Music, p. 39
The equivalents for ornaments are used by Dart for his transcription and most nearly approach the correct performance of Mistress.

Ex. #19, Transcription Mistress (Thurston Dart)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for 'Mistress' by Thurston Dart. It consists of four staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a B-flat key signature, and a 3/4 time signature. The music is written in a style characteristic of early modern lute tablature transcriptions, with many notes marked with 'p' and 's' (likely representing pitch and string numbers) and some notes marked with 'f' for forte. The second staff continues the melody with similar markings. The third staff features a double bar line and a repeat sign. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a final cadence. The handwriting is clear and legible, with some decorative flourishes above certain notes.

In this chapter then, we have reviewed the essential signs and markings of French notation. A large section was devoted exclusively to the ornamentation signs since they are an integral part of lute performance. In this respect they are unlike our ornaments in modern Western notation, which are perhaps ornaments in a truer sense because the lute's timbral properties require these ornaments for purposes of sustaining tones and creating musical variety and interest. In the broader aspect of this chapter, we have gathered together information on performance practices from a number of authorities in a single convenient source.

The following chapter deals with the more cumbersome German tablature. The ease and efficiency of the French system will be readily seen when comparing the two methods.

Part II

The Notation of German Lute Tablature

In contrast to the French tablature in which the fingers are directed by a clear representation of the fingerboard, the Germans used a notation in which each one of the fifty-four or more places was marked by a special sign. Because each marking is unique, German tablature is considered by some to be the best method to teach any fretted instrument to a blind student. Its invention is attributed by Virdung and Agricola to Conrad Paumann (1410-1473) who was himself blind. In his treatise, Musica instrumentalis deudsch, Wittenberg, 1529, Agricola expresses his opinion that "through its use, Paumann sought to make the sighted blind".³² Since Paumann was blind, it seems unlikely that he could have invented such a system of notation. It becomes easy to see how an air of mystery surrounds the origin of German tablature. Eventually, it was replaced in the second half of the sixteenth century by Italian string tablature.

Generally, the Germans have many archaic and awkward features, probably the most noticeable being that German notation was for a lute with only five strings, the type used in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Later on, the tablature was expanded to accommodate a six-stringed instrument.

Since there are different ways of notating the frets on the sixth string, the five upper strings will be explained first. Starting with the lowest string the names are Mittelbrummer, Kleinbrummer, Mittelsaite, Sangsaite, Quintsait (sometimes called Kleinsaite). They are numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The places in

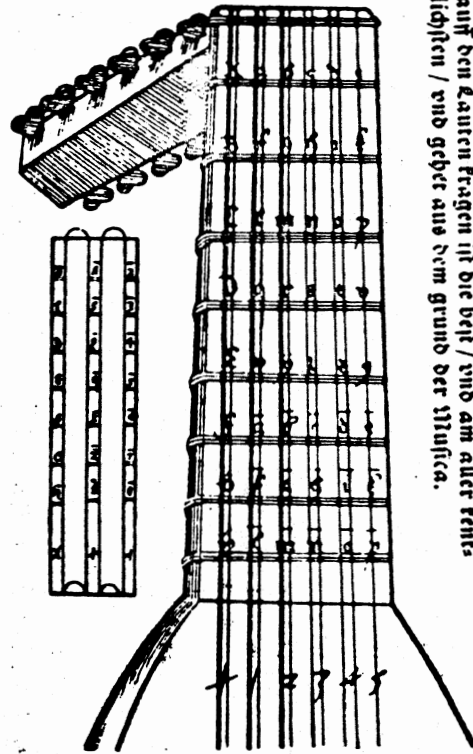
³²Martha Blackman, "A Translation of Hans Judenkunig's Ain Schone Kunstliche Underweisung . . . 1523", The Lute Society Journal, vol XIV, 1972 p. 29.

the first fret are marked by first five letters of the alphabet, a, b, c, d, e, running across the fingerboard. The second fret bears the letters, f, g, h, i, k, and the same procedure is continued with the remaining frets. Since the letters of the German alphabet were only twenty-three in number then, two new signs had to be added for the sixth, seventh and other frets, the alphabet was repeated either in doubled letters: aa, bb, etc., or in letters with a superior horizontal dash: a, b, etc. In the German system the upper letters indicate tones which are a fourth or a third part, while successive tones of the chromatic scale are denoted by every sixth letter of the alphabet, vide, Table II.

Although this system for the five upper strings is common to all German lute tablatures, there is some difference regarding the signs used for the sixth and lowest string, the Grossbrummer, which was added later, after the notation for the other strings had been established. The various notational methods for this string can be seen in a picture of the Lautenkragen (fingerboard) contained in Hans Newsidler's Ein Newgeordnet kunstlich Lautenbuch (Nurnberg, 1536).

The following is a reproduction of the Lautenkragen.³³

³³For a complete translation of the German text accompanying the diagram, refer to Willi Apel, The Notation of Polphonic Music, 900-1600, p. 76

Table #2 Lautenkragen (lute fingerboard)³⁴

• Sie ist angerichtet / daß der erst gross Brummer auf dem Lauten fragen / wol auf drey oder vierley art beschriben wirt / wie man dan gegenwertig unter dem Lauten fragen auf den dreyen linden die drey art / vnd auff dem Kragen die viert art / wol sithet. Sinn sein die drey linden darumb hinzu gesetzt / ob einer eine nit verribet / so verribet er doch die ander / dan die art sind all vier begriffen es Fan keiner fehlen / aber die art auff den Lauten fragen ist die best / vnd am aller Fents lichsten / vnd gehet aus dem grund der Musica.

The larger drawing shows Newsidler's preference for designating the Grossbrummer, namely the letter A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, for the frets and the sign + at the bottom for the open string. Other systems are indicated on the smaller drawing.

Following is a diagram of Newsidler's Lautenkragen using modern symbols placed in a horizontal position. One other method (III) has been added to the four given by Newsidler. This one is in Arnold Schlick's Tabulaturen (Mainz, 1512), the earliest source of German lute music.

³⁴Apel, p. 75

Ex. #20, Lautenkragen using modern symbols³⁵

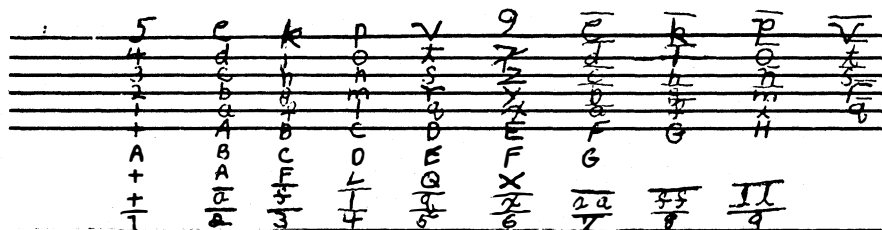


Table #3

Altogether there are five systems for the Grossbrummer.

| Composer | Title | Place and Year of Publication |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| I Hans Newsidler | <u>Ein Newgeordnet kunstlich Lautenbuch</u> | Nurenberg, 1536 |
| Sixt Kargel | <u>Lautenbuch . . .</u> | Strassburg, 1574 |
| Melchior Newsidler | <u>Teusch Lautenbuch</u> | Strassburg, 1574 |
| II Hans Judenkunig | <u>Ain schone kunstliche underweisung</u> | Vienna, 1512 |
| Hans Jaboc Wecher | <u>Lautenbuch . . .</u> | Bassel, 1550 |
| III Arnold Schlick | <u>Tabulaturen etlicher Tobgesang und lidlein</u> | Mayence, 1512 |
| IV Wolf Heckel | <u>Discant Lautenbuch</u> | Strassburg, 1552 |
| Bernhard Jobin | <u>Tenor Lautenbuch</u> | Strassburg, 1556 |
| | <u>Das Erst (Das Ander) Buch Newerlessner . . .</u> | |
| V Hans Gerle | <u>Ein Newes sehr Kunstlichs Lautenbuch</u> | Nurenberg, 1552 |
| Sebastian Ochsenkuhn | <u>Tablaturbuch auff die Lautten</u> | Heidelberg, 1558 |

³⁵Apel, p. 76

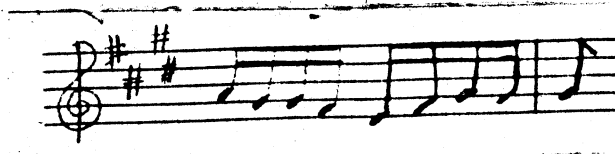
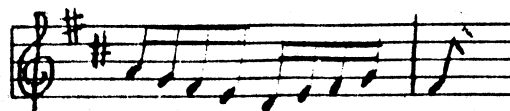
Three of the above systems of tablature will be included in this section, those of Hans Newsidler, Hans Judenkunig, and Hans Gerle. These will provide fairly broad study of the German style of lute playing. Each has his own method of instruction, yet each is very exacting in his instructions, as all German tutors seem to have been.



Hans Newsidler (1508-1563) was a prolific composer for the lute: his printed works, four books of solo lute music, Nurnberg, 1536 (two-part) 1540, 1544 (two different books, contain a variety of priambula, arrangements of popular vocal works and dances. One of these dances, "Judentantz" (Ein newgeordnet kunstlich Lautenbuch, Nurnberg, 1536) was transcribed by Wille Apel in the Historical Anthology of Music.

This particular piece represents the earliest example of the use of satire and bitonality in music. Whether the many dissonances are what were intended or whether they were a result of printer's errors is conjectural. Newsidler gives long and precise instructions for a special drone tuning; taking the note d (the second course unstopped in German tablature, designated by the figure 4). The lower courses (Grossbrummer is not used in the piece) are tuned [G] d d a. Then, he says that the top string, "Quintsaite", must be tuned to the letter t (e on the second course in French tablature) or f^{##}. A transcription using this tuning results in a tonic fifth and octave drone of D accompanying the melody. In the top string, the melody would remain c, but when the lower courses are crossed, it changes to D, which involves a repetition of f^{##}. The tuning of the piece would of course necessitate some retuning in the top string, e.g.

from f[#] to g.³⁶

Ex. #21, Retuning of Der Judentanz



The possible error in printing could have been the result of mistaking the plus sign (+ = ) for the letter t (+ = ).

The bitonal effect, according to Apel is intended in this piece.

His "Der Juden Tanz" (The Jew's Dance) is one of the most remarkable specimens of sixteenth century music. ShriII dissonance, otherwise unheard of before the adventurous experiments of twentieth century-music, result from the daring use of two conflicting tonal realms (bi-tonality), D-sharp in the melody against E-natural in the harmony. They produce an extremely realistic picture, not lacking a touch of satire. Each dance is followed by a Nach Tanz ("Hupfauf" literally, jump-up, i.e., jumping dance) which is a rhythmic variant of the main dance. Such dances were called Proportz, a name

³⁶Vide, Michael Morrow, "Ayre on the F string", The Lute Society Journal, 1960, vol II, pp. 9-10

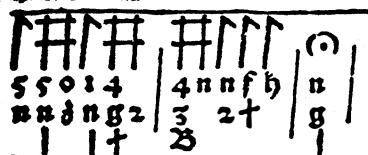
³⁷Ibid. p. 10

³⁸Archibald T. Davison and Wille Apel, Harvard Anthology of Music, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1947, vol. I, p. 108

which is derived from the³⁹ proportions of mensural notation (Proportio tripla).

Following is the facsimilie of "Der Juden Tanz". The transcription is done by Willi Apel.

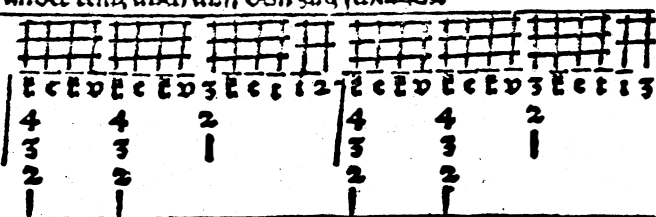
Ex. #22, Facsimilie and transcription of Der Judentanz (Willi Apel)

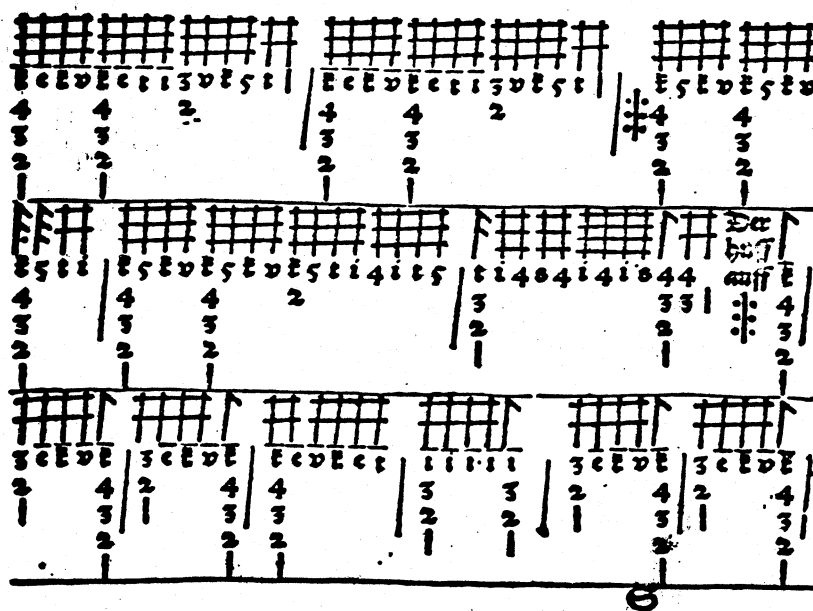


Finis die
 Schlacht
 Singnoei.

Sie volget der Juden Tanz/vnd wer in schlagen wil/der muss die Lautten
 anders ziehen. Man volget 8 zug/ziech Er silich den 11 litten Brumer vnd die
 Klein saitten/die 11 litten dun mit Brumer stet/der ziehet 11 litten/gleich als da 4.
 vnd den Klein Brumer. Muss gleich lauten/wie der mit Brumer wie vor ge
 wele der mit Brumer vñ die saitten dar 11 litten/vñ der Klein Brumer müß
 all drey ein gleiche stin haben/vnd der ziehet viere als da 4 gleich lauten/vñ
 die 11 litten saitten muß man dem e gleich ziehen/so is der zug recht.
 Man mag anch vil ander tenz anch anch dem zug schiaren.

Der Juden Tanz
 er muß gar ser be
 heid/ geschlagen
 werden/sunst laut
 er nit wol.





Der
 huff
 auff

Hans Newsidler, *Ein newgeordnet künstlich Lautenbuch*. Nürnberg, 1536

Der Juden Tanz (transcribed by Apel)

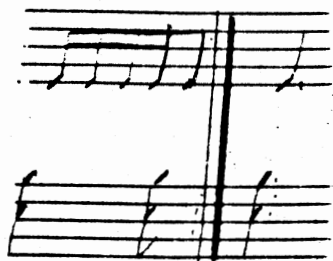
The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line with various note values and rests. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

The second system continues the piece with two staves. The upper staff features a more active melodic line with many eighth and sixteenth notes. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with a steady rhythm of chords and single notes.

The third system shows a change in the upper staff's texture, with a dense sequence of sixteenth notes. The lower staff accompaniment remains consistent with the previous systems.

The fourth system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The upper staff has a melodic line with some slurs, and the lower staff provides a steady accompaniment.

The fifth system concludes the piece. The upper staff features a melodic line that ends with a sharp sign, and the lower staff provides a final accompaniment.



As was previously mentioned, the Grossbrummer was not used in this piece. In Germany at this time, the six course lute was the most prevalent. It was not only used by Newsidler, but also by Hans Gerle, Sebastian Ochsenkuhn, Melchior Newsidler and Bernhard Joben.

Also, the many unknown writers of MS collections such as that transcribed for guitar by H. Bischoff from the Munich Staatsbibliothek, Museum, MS 1512, of c. 1540, make use of six courses.⁴¹

In view of the fact that there were six courses in use, it could be possible that the Grossbrummer tuned to F (second fret F) could be used in "Der Juden Tanz".

The second tablature system to be discussed is that of Hans Judenkunig. All of the instructions on correct fingering, hand position, and tuning are covered in Ain Schone Kunstliche Underweisung . . . 1523. In a translation of this book by Martha Blackman, are found the various diagrams for teaching lute tablature and fingering, Judenkunig is brief with his written directions, but very exacting and clear.

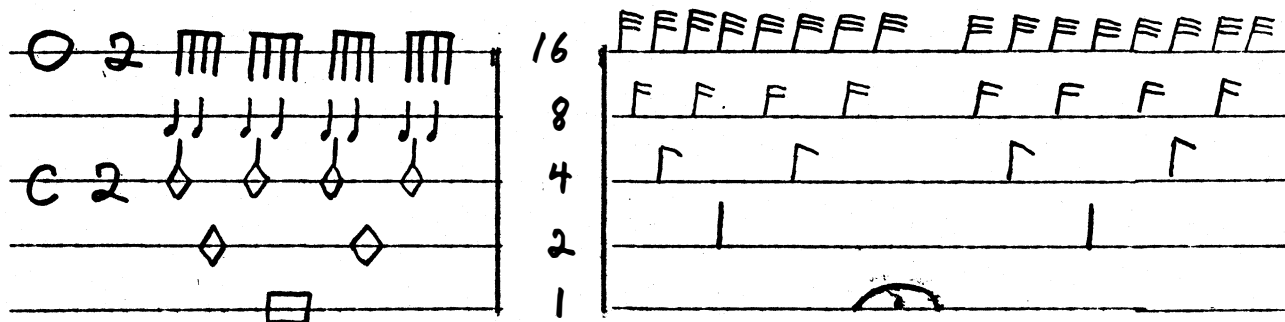
⁴⁰Davison and Apel, p. 108

⁴¹Diana Poulton "Lute Stringing in the Light of Surviving Tablature", The Lute Society Journal, vol VI, 1964, p. 16

The first thing to keep in mind when learning to understand tablature is to note with care how the letters are written on the fingerboard under the hand (refers to plate two p. 34). You must know that by heart or write a diagram of the lute a b c d e exactly as it stands on the fingerboard, with the capital letters and the small. These you must always press when they appear except the large A, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, (open strings). They should never be fingered, but always plucked on the strings on which they're written as shown on the fingerboard (plate two). Notice carefully that the rhythm of a semibreve which will be written above the letters is also 1, but the number one for a string will always be underneath and the rhythm above it, by which means you can distinguish them.⁴²

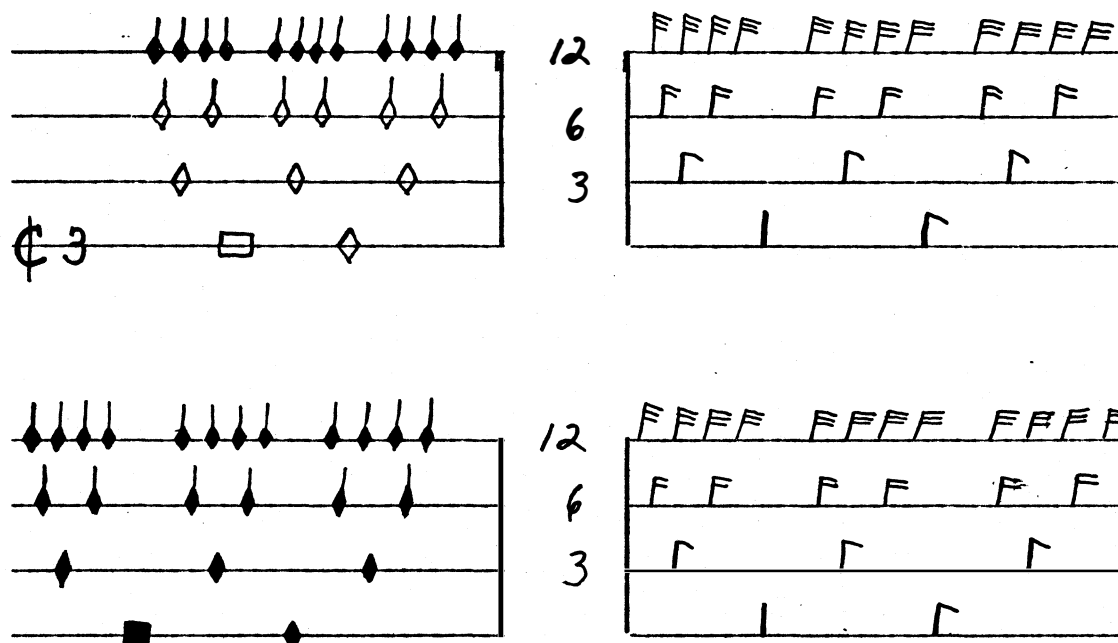
The rhythmic portion of the tablature is fairly simple to grasp. Here, he explains the note values by a diagram showing how many of the shorter values go into one long value from among the three mensuration signs: modus, tempus, and prolation.

Plate #1 Note values according to Hans Judenkunig⁴³



³³Blackman, p. 33

³⁴Ibid., See plate #2 p. 34



In the diagram sixteen semifusae, eight fusae, four minims, two semibreves or one breve equal one long tactus. The other two examples show triple prolation and the blackening of the notes. Twelve semifusae equal one tactus or six fusae or three minims.

Whether the following representations of hand positions are as valuable as the diagram of note values is very difficult to determine. Probably, they should not be used without the guidance of an instructor, for Judenkunig is not as thorough in explaining these positions.

Plate three - Hand One - modified (contracted) 1/2 position third fret on the top three strings with the fourth string. Judenkunig mentions in connection with hand one that a little line or hook over it must always be an upstroke with the fourth finger.

Plate four - Hand Two - (straight 1/2 position)

Plate five - Hand Three - (straight first position)

This hand takes in other frets up to the fifth.

Plate six - Hand Four - straight third fret position

Plate seven - Hand Five - straight fourth fret position

Plate eight - Hand Six - straight fifth fret position⁴⁴

Plate #2

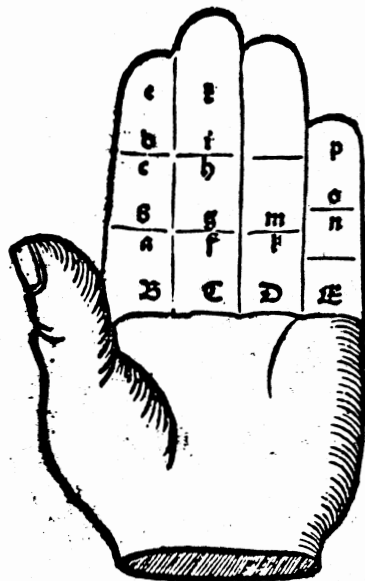


Plate 3
Hand One—contracted $\frac{1}{2}$ position

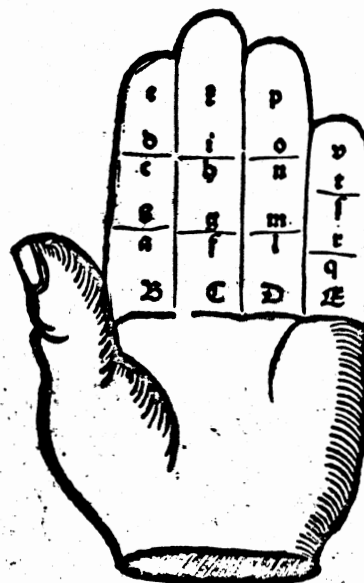


Plate 4
Hand Two—straight $\frac{1}{2}$ position

⁴⁴Blackman, pp. 39-41

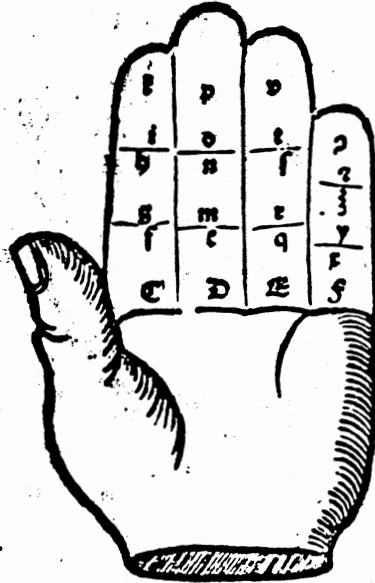


Plate 5
Hand Three—straight first position

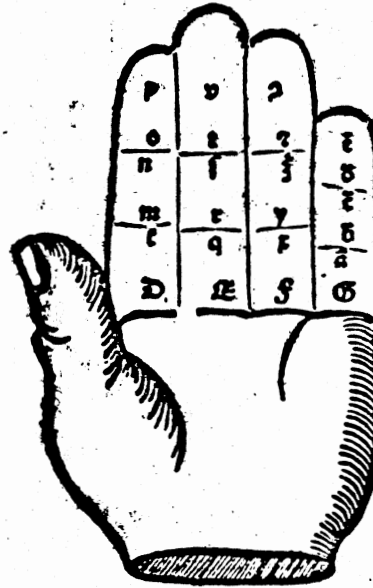


Plate 6
Hand Four—third fret position

Plate #4

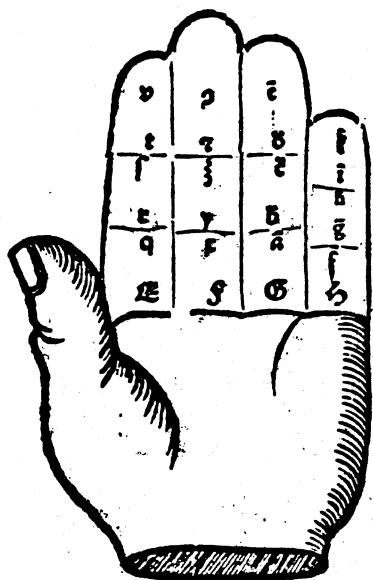


Plate 7
Hand Five—fourth fret position

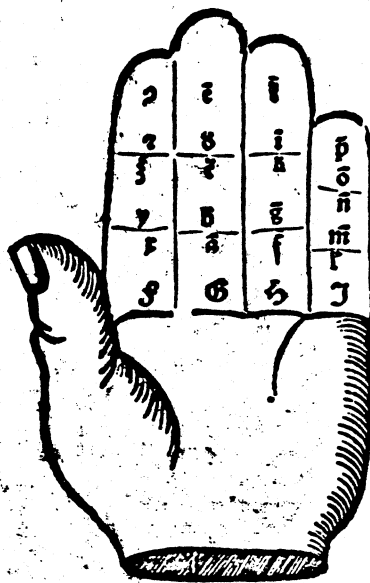
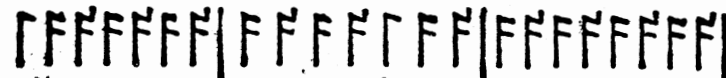

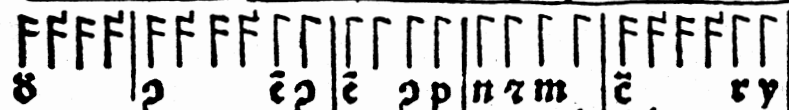


Plate 8
Hand Six—fifth fret position


Ex. #23, Facsimilie Ain schone kunstliche Underweisung
Hans Judenkunig



 ¶ x e r a x e G f G D f G c o t o c s z s e n
 Was duir Duamel.

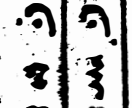

 D y n r s e p n e e D i e D z l z o l z o z


 z e s p z s p z y m y z d z m e r z l z n y r e


 f r d c z z o e e z l e D z z o c z v m e y a


 l e D z l o z s l o z o c z l z n y r z e z z o e z


 m z s p m s e p s e c z z s z m G e n y D f r d


 z m a

Finis.

Hans Judenkunig, *Ain schone kunstliche Underweisung*. Vienna, 1523

Ex. #24 Transcription of the preceding Priambel Hans Judenkunig

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together. There are several accidentals, including flats and naturals, throughout the system.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. There are several accidentals, including flats and naturals. A circled 'b' is visible in the upper staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. There are several accidentals, including flats and naturals.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lower staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. There are several accidentals, including flats and naturals.

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The treble staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a sharp sign (♯) and a flat sign (♭). The bass staff contains a bass line with quarter notes and eighth notes.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The treble staff contains a melodic line with eighth notes and various accidentals (flats and sharps). The bass staff contains a bass line with quarter notes and eighth notes.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The treble staff contains a melodic line with quarter notes and a sharp sign (♯). The bass staff contains a bass line with quarter notes and various accidentals (flats).

finis

Ex. #25, The tablature systems of Hans Newsidler and Hans Judenkunig⁴⁶

Newsidler

† 1 2 3 4 5

A B C D E F G H

Judenkunig

A 1 2 3 4 5 # 0 0 b 0 # 0 e # 0 0 b 0

Detailed description: This system shows two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a G-clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef with an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef.

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p

Detailed description: This system shows two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a G-clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef with an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef.

q r s t v x y z 7 9 ā b c d e

Detailed description: This system shows two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a G-clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef with an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef.

f g h i k l m n o p q r s t v

Detailed description: This system shows two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a G-clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef with an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef. The top staff has a treble clef and a G-clef. The bottom staff has a bass clef and an F-clef.

The last method of tablature is that presented by Hans Gerle. Primary sources are to be found on microfilms in the Deutsched Musikgeschichliches Archive. In a recent doctoral disertation by Jane Pierce, all of his works have been catalogued and transcribed.⁴⁷ These transcriptions and the accompanying analysis of his pedagogy represent one of the main sources on German lute music that is written in English. With the exception of some musical and prose excerpts, books of his instruction and music have not yet been translated or transcribed.

Three of his five volumes, publications of 1532, 1537, and 1546, are editions of the same work, Music teusch though the 1546 title page bears the words Musica und Tabulatura in place of Musica teusch. Within the five parts of Musica teusch are included most of Gerle's pedagogical writing, the fourth part dealing with playing the lute, and the fifth, transcribing for lute.

The following list includes all of Gerle's known publications.

Musica teusch

Nurnberg, Formschneider, 1532

Tabulatur auff die Lautten

Nurnberg, Formschneider, 1533

Musica teusch second edition

Nurnberg, Formschneider, 1537

Musica und Tabulatura

Nurnberg, Formschneider, 1646

⁴⁷Jane Pierce, Hans Gerle: Sixteenth-century Lutenist And Pedague, Part II, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Ph. D. disertation. 1973

Ein news sehr kunstlichs Lautenbuch

Nurnberg, Formschneider, 1552

Gerle opens his fourth section, 1546, on the lute with an explanation of the five courses of the lute.

The first string, Quintsait is made up of only one string, while all other courses are double strings. A drawing which follows shows all strings, second course Gesangsaitten; third course, Mittelsaitten; fourth, Kleinbomhart (Brummer), and a Mittelsait beside it. The location of each letter of tablature is also given, but the letters are difficult to read except for the open strings.

Below is an explanation of the frets found on the drawing. The frets on the Grossbrummer are notated by placing lines over the numbers 1-8 corresponding to the eight frets of the lute. The frets for the rest of the strings are given and also correspond to the drawing.

The first fret

a on the first fret under the middle Brummer

b under the small Brummer

c under the middle string

d under the song string

e under the fifth string

The second fret

f under the middle Brummer

g under the small Brummer

h under the middle string

i under the song string

k under the fifth string

The third fret

l under the middle Brummer

m under the small Brummer

n under the middle string

o under the song string

p under the fifth string

The fourth fret

q under the middle Brummer

r under the small Brummer

s under the middle string

t under the fifth string

The fifth fret

x under the small Brummer

y under the middle string

7 under the song string

9 under the fifth string

The sixth fret

a under the middle Brummer

b under the small Brummer

c under the middle string

d under the song string

e under the fifth string

The seventh fret

f under the middle Brummer

g under the small Brummer

i under the song string

k under the fifth string

The eighth fret

l under the middle Brummer

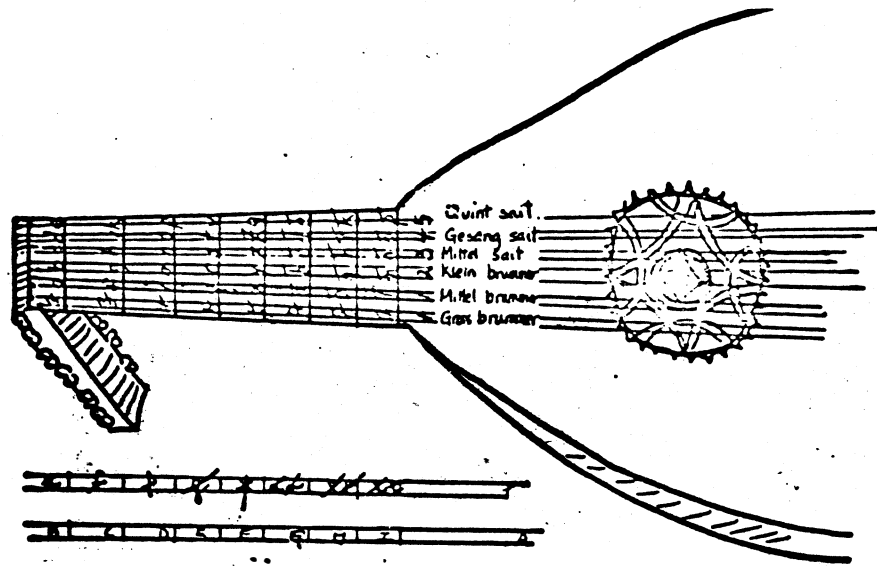
m under the small Brummer

n under the middle string

o under the song string

p under the fifth string

Plate #5 placement and explanation of the frets according
to Hans Gerle⁴⁸



⁴⁸pierce, Part I, p. 209

Starting with the lowest-pitched string, the courses are tuned a fourth, fourth, third, fourth, and fourth apart. Each of the three lowest-pitched courses has its second string an octave higher than its first.⁴⁹

The teaching of plucking technique occupies relatively little space in Gerle's book. In discussing both viols and lutes, he concentrates on left hand fingering, almost ignoring viol bowing technique and right hand technique.

About the right-hand lute technique, he mentions using the thumb, and index finger but not the little finger. There are only a few examples of right-hand fingering.

For left-hand lute technique, Gerle presents a system of dots indicating fingers on the left hand, and prescribes writing the dots beside tablature letters. For example, ($\frac{g}{h}$) indicates that the top letter should be played with the ring finger.⁵⁰ Gerle does not, however use this system over an entire composition.

Within his own intabulations he produces an inconsistency concerning left-hand technique. An example of this is found in the use of the star, notated as (*). About this sign he says:

Know this, too: that you will sometimes find a little star beside various letters. When one of these stars lies beside a letter, then you must hold the finger still there until the beat is over. It is only found when a run occurs on the same beat, then you must hold the finger that belongs

⁴⁹Pierce, p. 35

⁵⁰Ibid. p. 54 The bottom letters are played with the middle finger.

to that letter still until the run is over. It is only found when a run occurs on the same beat then you must hold the finger that belongs to that letter still until the run is over.⁵¹

Ex. #26, Star occurring on a run⁵²



Ex. #27, Star occurring other than on a run⁵³



About the signs for note value and rests, Gerle makes the following distinctions:

If you find in tablature two letters or numbers belonging together and if a stem lies above like the number 1. This indicates one beat, thus \underline{a} .⁵⁴ When two letters lie side by side and the stems are connected with a single flag, this also makes one beat, $\overline{a\ b}$. In the case of three letters all connected to make one beat, the last two letters will have double flags and the first letter a single flag, $\overline{a\ b\ c}$. When

⁵¹Pierce, Part I, p. 54

⁵²Ibid. Part II, p. 642

⁵³Ibid. p. 635

⁵⁴Ibid. Part I, p. 213

four letters make one beat, they are connected twice, so that there is a double flag ~~a d 4 n~~.

A dot appearing above two letters or numbers is worth two beats in tablature, n. But if the dot has a semicircular line over it, then it means that the voices come together and sustain, n̂.

A one beat rest in tablature is always written L and a half rest or suspir is written Γ. Along with the half rest there is always a half note to complete the beat, Γ n̂.

When a song is given in proportion or triple, the time values change and so do the signs. Usually, a song in triple is found in the Huphauf. The ratio becomes one and one-half to one beat. Whereas before two beats were separated, now only one and one-half beats are separated.

| | | | |
|-----|-------|---------|-------------|
| I Γ | Γ Γ | Γ Γ Γ | Γ Γ Γ Γ |
| d 4 | d o 5 | o o d 4 | n 4 d o 5 o |
| n c | n c d | c 9 | 2 |

In triple the full rest is T and the half rest (suspir) is L. One half-beat is always put after it like this L n̂.

The remainder of Gerle's book contains directions for stringing the lute, scordatura tuning and ways of transcribing, especially in the case of a different tuning. The writer has explained all notational signs used except those few mentioned in Gerle's publication, 1552.

The new signs have to do with correct fingering and probably

have more to do with his teaching methods than what will be found in one of his pieces. If the lutenist is at all accomplished, he will automatically know what finger belongs to what fret according to what the previous note is.

The fingers are marked by dots as in the following:

- Index finger . •
- Middle finger • •
- Ring finger • • •
- Little finger • • • •

Ex. #28, The dots as they would appear in tablature

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
 9: 9: 9: 9: d. 9. z: 9: 9. 9: 9. 9. 9. K: K: K: O:
 d n: o. n. n: z. n. 1. z. d: d: T: z O: b: o. o.
 n m: m. r. m: c: 1. 9. c: c: n: h: h: z. x. y: y:
 z. z. x: x: z. b. b: 1 1 m. 2 2 1 f: f: 4. 4.

⁵⁵Pierce, Part I, p. 249

The basic notational elements of the two tablature systems have been presented in order to explain their differences and similarities. It now becomes easy to understand why the French system is simpler to read while the German system is cumbersome and constrained. But, the Germans seem to be more exacting and in fact, once translated, their instructions are more complete, and therefore easier to follow than those of the French.

One interesting point in comparing the two is that the German system has a lack of ornamentation signs. In the tablature the only signs of any type to be found are the fret markings, dots, note value signs, and the star.

From studying the two tablatures, it seems likely that the Germans wrote out their ornamentations, runs, arpeggios, etc., while the French simply abbreviated their things by inserting a special sign.

With regard to the music, the French composed more art songs and ayres, while the Germans like the peasant type dances and some lieder.

At times, though, the Germans did borrow entire chansons and transcribe them into German tablature. An example is Gerle's intabulation Fors seulement.⁵⁶ In general there was much borrowing, both regard to the transcription of French-to-German, and German-to-French tablatures. Thus, German lute music became popular in France and vice versa. Following is a partial list of works of better known predecessors and contemporaries of Hans Gerle. Often, Gerle tran-

⁵⁶Pierce, Part II p. 380 Here is given the transcription.

scribed compositions for several of these composers.

| Italy | Spain | France | Germany |
|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 1507-18 Francesco
Spinacino,
<u>Intabulatura di
lauto</u> | | | Austria
Switzerland |
| 1511 | | | Sebastian Virdung,
<u>Musica getutscht</u> |
| 1512 | | | Arnold Schlick,
<u>Tabulaturen et
licher Lobgesang
und Liedlein</u> |
| 1519 | | | Hans Judenkunig,
<u>Utlis et com-
pendiaria intro-
ductio</u> |
| 1523 | | | Hans Judenkunig
<u>Ain shone Kunstliche
Underweisung</u> |
| 1529 | | Pierre
Attaignant
<u>et tres familiere
instruction: Dixhuit
basses dances</u> | |
| 1535-36 | Luis Milan
<u>El maestro</u> | | |

Conclusion

Both French and German notation have been discussed not only for the purpose of comparing their similarities and differences, but also for the purpose of unearthing a type of music that have been obscured because of its lack of ready availability in modern notational form. Although this paper was not originally intended as an instruction manual, it could be used as a text for learning the basic elements of lute transcription and ornamentation.

Far more important than its usefulness for self instruction is the fact of its availability in up-to-date English. Normally most of the information presented here would have to be found in French, German or old English text books. With the availability of explanation in a familiar language, interest in the lute and lute music will have a better chance to develop. Yet, for the present, there can be no doubt that more extensive research remains to be done.

Hopefully, the data accumulated in this paper will stimulate others to study in depth the special characteristics of lute notation and the process of its transcription.

Interest in the lute and its music should have a better chance of development with the availability of a manual, such as this, in a contemporary English idiom. This is not by any means to imply the lack of need for much further thorough research.

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