

See the original pdf on <https://monicahall2.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/corbetta-section-vi-part-31.pdf>

## Francesco Corbetta - The Best of All

### Section VI Part 3

#### 16. Gallot's Riddles Unraveled

In the CDROM files to his recording of some of Corbetta's music,<sup>1</sup> Eisenhardt has reproduced two small examples from the Gallot manuscript. His first example is taken from the Allemande on p.13, b. 13-14; the second from the Allemande on p.7. b.12-13. As can be seen in my transcription, Gallot has omitted the notes on the fifth course from the two chords in the first example although Corbetta has included them and has reduced the second 5-part strummed chord in the second example to two **plucked notes**. Eisenhardt suggests that

*These examples show exactly where the "non-harmonic tones" appear; the scribe of the Gallot manuscript... found it necessary to give a version different from La guitarre royale. This uncovers a practice of strumming where the right hand does not always play all the courses that are suggested by the left hand fingering. The question arises which letters in La guitarre royale (1671) are only there for reasons of fingering".<sup>2</sup>*

Eisenhardt has promoted the idea, first proposed by Richard Pinnell in 1976, that the "unusual dissonances" or "non harmonic tones" that feature in Corbetta's **La guitarre royale (1671)** are only there "for convenience" and are not intended to be played.<sup>3</sup> In his recently (2015) published book,<sup>4</sup> he has copied Pinnell's comments several times, presenting them as if they were a well established fact.

It is unlikely that Pinnell intended his remarks to be used as an excuse for bowdlerizing Corbetta's music. It would be helpful therefore to clarify what he – in a very brief passage about Corbetta's harmony - actually said -

*Anticipations are also frequent non-harmonic tones at cadence points, as shown by the circled note in Ex. 49. The Courante in Ex. 49 includes one frequent non-harmonic tone which I have been unable to justify. The note in question is the low F (sounding also an octave above) contained in the chord just before the circled F. The chord is merely V [the dominant] (except for this strident anticipation of I [the key note]).*

Eisenhardt has reproduced and commented on this example (Example 7.22b and Example 7.23a) on p. 167-8 of his book.

<sup>1</sup> Lex Eisenhardt – The secret of Corbetta's notation – CDROM files with "The royal guitar" – Verbena, CDR 2003-1.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. p.14.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Pinnell - The role of Francesco Corbetta in the history of music for the baroque guitar. (University of California, Los Angeles, 1976) p.225-7.

<sup>4</sup> Lex Eisenhardt – Italian guitar music of the seventeenth century. University of Rochester Press, 2015.

**Opmerking [I1]:** This is a part of Monica Hall's Baroque Guitar Research page, <https://monicahall.co.uk/>

In this section my name appears 72 times. It should be considered as a critical review of the chapters 6 – 8 from my book *Italian Guitar Music of the Seventeenth Century*.

Unfortunately, some of Hall's arguments are not as solid as they may appear at first sight. Therefore I added some notes in the margin of her original text.

**Opmerking [I2]:** This text was taken from the CDROM files that were added to my 2002 Corbetta recording, 15 years ago. It was my first attempt to finding ways to perform Corbetta's music in a more comprehensible and musical way. At that time the debate on Corbetta's unusual dissonances was yet to start and many new ideas have been formulated since. It would be hoped that now, in 2017, the focus can be on newer (and more representative) publications. For a short list see [www.lexeisenhardt.com/writings](http://www.lexeisenhardt.com/writings)

Pinnell's Ex. 49

Ex. 49 Courante Corbetta, 1671, p. 24

Pinnell continues

*Another example [Ex. 50] of this shows a C on the fifth course in a chord of G. The C circled... [in the example] is at the same pitch (because of the octave transposition of the fifth course) as the tone of the appoggiatura preceding the trill. To modern ears this seems to spoil the downward resolution of the non-harmonic tone.*

Pinnell's Ex. 50

Ex. 50 Gigue Corbetta, 1671, p. 52

Pinnell was aware that the method of stringing which Corbetta had in mind for the music in **La guitare royale (1671)** was the "French" tuning with octave stringing only on the fourth course. For practical reasons he transcribed his examples showing notes on the fifth course in the lower octave which can be confusing. Eisenhardt does not accept this as the most

**Opmerking [13]:** This method of transcribing is very usual, even though it is not perfect. The observant reader will probably be sufficiently informed to understand the consequences with regard to octave disposition. Other methods are also having certain disadvantages, as can be seen in Hall's transcription of the same example (Ex. 50). For example, the second note (f) is not transcribed in the lower octave (f), although it is played on the fourth course. The double g in the second chord must be a mistake.

likely option, arguing that Corbetta used octave stringing on both fourth and fifth courses; he is also reluctant to accept that even with octave stringing, these courses play a dual role. As a result, his transcriptions are misleading.

Pinnell's two examples actually illustrate two different problems.

In the first (Ex.49) the "unwanted dissonance" - F - is the suspended fourth sounding **simultaneously** with the note E onto which it should resolve. It is on the **fourth course**; the note on the fifth course is the root of the chord. Both the fourth and fifth courses would have to be omitted to eliminate it if the chord is to be strummed.

In his second (Ex.50) the C on the fifth course simply **duplicates** the suspended fourth on the third course **in unison as he has pointed out**. Both resolve onto the single note – B natural on the next quaver which is plucked.

Pinnell comments

*Usually, one justification may be applied in cases such as this. Since these "unwanted dissonances" are in rasgueado chords, and are preceded and followed by sonorities which require the left hand index to "bar" or fret all of the courses at the third fret [in his examples] it may have been notated for convenience. In other words the fifth course... may have been omitted by the player from the strum.*

Neither Pinnell nor Eisenhardt have mentioned that **Corbetta had a perfectly good way of indicating when a barré should be used – placing a wavy line under the tablature stave**. The unwanted dissonances may indeed be preceded and followed by sonorities requiring a *barré*, although this is certainly not always the case. However, the significant point that both Pinnell and Eisenhardt have overlooked is that the "dissonant" notes occur in conjunction with passing notes or ornaments. In order to play these, one course of the chord must be left unstopped. Pinnell has omitted the ornaments from his transcription. **The chord in Ex. 49 is Chord H3; the fourth course must be left unfretted and the chord re-fingered so that the descending appoggiatura on the first course can be played**. In Ex. 50 the chord is Chord G3; the **fifth** course must be left unfretted in order to play the C on the third course.

Neither Pinnell nor Eisenhardt have explained why it is "convenient" to have notes in the tablature which are not to be played. Pinnell suggests only that the fifth course might be omitted (and has overlooked the fact that it is the note on the fourth course which needs to be omitted in his Ex.49). Eisenhardt has argued that in some places, two or even three notes should be omitted from the chord.

In his book Eisenhardt starts by explaining that

*Corbetta was the seventeenth century's greatest promoter of the guitar.....At the same time it is questionable [emphasis mine] whether the tablatures from his*

**Opmerking [14]:** In my book (pp. 145–49) I have argued that Corbetta *may well have used* octave stringing. It's surprising to see that Hall is holding on to a narrow explanation of just one source, mainly basing her views on a few, rather cryptic, words from the preface to *La guitarra royale* (1671), ignoring other, circumstantial, evidence. There are good reasons to be cautious with drawing final conclusions. We should probably accept the possibility that Corbetta had two bourdons in mind, at least for accompaniment.

**Opmerking [15]:** It is very strange to suppose that the low f on the fourth course can resolve to the e', which is a major seventh higher.

**Opmerking [16]:** This is incorrect. In *La guitarra royale* (1671) wavy lines are often used in situations with open strings. It is a way to tell that you should hold the hand in the same position. It certainly was not Corbetta's perfectly good way of indicating when a barre should be used.

**Opmerking [17]:** It's a weird idea to accept problematic dissonances only to be able to play an ornament. See more comments on this at the Example 7.22c. below (p. 246).

**Opmerking [18]:** This is explained extensively, for example on p. 160 of my book.

*masterwork La guitarre royale were fully comprehensible to other players of his time. (p.99).*<sup>5</sup>

In a note he adds

*Corbetta's earlier books were in Italian tablature. It is likely [emphasis mine] that some French guitarists made transcriptions in French tablature for their own convenience.....*<sup>6</sup>

Certainly some of Corbetta's earlier music in Italian tablature is found in other sources (in particular in the Gallot manuscript) transcribed into French tablature. However **La guitarre royale** is in **French tablature** which players in France and in England would have had no difficulty in comprehending, especially as Corbetta himself was often on hand to explain to them anything that they might have misunderstood. What some of his contemporaries may have found difficult to comprehend and accept is his complex and original musical language. Remy Médard, who clearly knew Corbetta personally, suggests as much when he comments

*I have tried to emulate the style of the celebrated Francisque Corbet which he explained to me over several months with this difference – I found for my pieces a simplicity which he could not take the trouble to give to his.*<sup>7</sup>

Médard's own music consists mainly of straightforward 2- or 3-part writing with only the most basic 5-part strummed chords and may have been intended for a fully re-entrant tuning. In every way Corbetta's music is musically and technically more demanding. It is not just an eccentric notational device which would take several months to explain.

Eisenhardt goes on to observe

*There are several [emphasis mine] manuscripts in which pieces from La guitarre royale (1671) are copied, and some of Corbetta's most extreme harmonies have been changed. From how the tablatures are altered it appears that some of Corbetta's contemporaries perhaps played differently from what his tablatures say.*<sup>8</sup>

The only other manuscript besides the Gallot manuscript which he actually identifies is the manuscript copied by Jean-Baptiste Castillion in about 1706 – B.Lc Ms.245.<sup>9</sup> He has not mentioned the one other significant manuscript source which includes pieces from **La guitarre royale (1671)** – Santiago de Murcia's **Passacalles y obras, GB:Lbl Ms.Add.31640**, dated 1732, although he does refer to Carré's second printed book – **Livre de pieces de**

**Opmerking [19]:** It's odd to assume that Corbetta would have been often on hand to explain. Corbetta was living in England, at that time.

**Opmerking [10]:** Has there been found new evidence about Médard? Fully re-entrant tuning for this style?

<sup>5</sup> Op. cit. p.99.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit p. 218 Note 40..

<sup>7</sup> No page number. Je pretens avoir entierement suivi la maniere du fameux francisque Corbet, qu'il ma communiquée pendant quelques mois avec cette difference que J'ay trouvé pour mes pieces une facilité qu'il ne s'est pas donné la peine de chercher.

<sup>8</sup> Op. cit. p.100.

<sup>9</sup> Op. cit. p, 218 Note 45.

**guitarre et de musique** printed sometime between 1677-1688 which includes three pieces borrowed from **La guitarre royale**.

Eisenhardt makes the same point in Chapter 7 when discussing Corbetta's dissonance in more detail.

*There are several manuscripts from the seventeenth century into which music by Corbetta was copied, such as Henri [sic] Gallot's large manuscript (Gb-Ob Ms.Mus.Sch.C94). There are sometimes "corrections" of Corbetta's notation of exactly such dissonant chords.<sup>10</sup>*

In fact, Gallot is the only manuscript source in which there are significant differences. As my analysis shows, both Castillion and Murcia reproduce most of the dissonance unaltered.

Eisenhardt then reproduces Richard Pinnell's views on the subject

*Richard Pinnell suggests why considerably fewer works were copied from the La guitarre royale [into the Gallot manuscript – Eisenhardt has not made this clear] than from Corbetta's other books:*

*"Gallot demonstrates a knowledge of all Corbetta's printed books and a certain intimacy with three of them. Gallot's favourites are those of 1643, 1648 and 1674. Occasional excerpts from Corbetta's book of 1671...show that Gallot knew the book, but either could not play the music, or simply did not care for it".<sup>11</sup>*

Pinnell seems to have been unaware that the main section of the Gallot manuscript was copied during the 1660s and that the pieces in question were probably copied into it before **La guitarre royale** had appeared in print.

**Gallot's reason for not including other pieces from the 1671 book is more likely to be because he had not seen it. He obtained the few pieces that he has copied from another, earlier, source.**

The Gallot manuscript also includes 23 pieces from Corbetta's **La guitarre royale** (1674) which feature many of the same dissonant chords. These were copied later than the main manuscript and usually reproduce the music as it is in the printed book. Eisenhardt seems to have been unaware of this.

The pieces in **La guitarre royale** were obviously composed over a period of several years and some of them clearly circulated in manuscript. In a letter to his sister, Henriette-Anne, wife to the younger brother of Louis XIV, Philippe, Duc d'Orleans dated May 1667 Charles II wrote

**Opmerking [I11]:** In the 'Gallot' Ms there appear several dates, ranging from 1660 to the late 1680s. Even if the Ms. was probably started in the 1660s it is uncertain when exactly the pieces from Corbetta's 1671 book were added. They appear almost all after a note on f.52v (Gallot) which gives the year 1676. Even if the Sarabande la Stuarde is copied on an earlier page (f. 37v), dating them in the 1660s is misleading, and saying that he has copied them from another, earlier source is distorting the evidence.

<sup>10</sup> Op. cit. p.229 Note17

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit. p.100/Pinnell op. cit p. 267.

*I have heere sent you some lessons for the guittar, which I hope will please you. The Comte de Gramont did carry over with him others, which maybe you have; and as Francisco makes any more that pleases me, I will send them to you.<sup>12</sup>*

Rather than making this clear, Eisenhardt confuses the issue further by commenting

*It is just as likely that the scribe of the Gallot manuscript (or the scribe of a source it was copied from) did not know how to make sense of the harmonies of some of the tablatures from “La guitarre royale”. Most of the alternative versions of Corbetta’s compositions that we find in the Gallot manuscript are no easier to play, and the alterations are often rather awkward.<sup>13</sup>*

**Opmerking [I12]:** Again, the correct dating is probably crucial.

As an afterthought he has added a note

*For example, the Allemande du Roy from p.1 of La guitarre royale (1671). In Gallot’s version the music is changed considerably (mostly simplifications). It gives the impression that the tablature was not copied from “La guitarre royale” but rather written from memory. Because of the confusing tuning of the instrument this must have been a very difficult task. It remains possible that the tablatures were copied from an alternative source, possibly even by Corbetta. Considering the poor solutions, however this is not very likely.<sup>14</sup>*

He concludes this chapter with the following observation

*As will be argued in Chapter 7, Corbetta may have used tablature letters as a means to indicate left-hand fingering (in particular to show that a barré should be placed) [emphasis mine] not to actually represent the notes that should sound. Corbetta was not the only guitarist to write such unusual “harmonies”; this barré notation virus infected the tablatures of a few others too.<sup>15</sup>*

**Referring to something which cannot be proven in such emotive language seems out of place in what is supposed to be a scholarly monograph.**

**Opmerking [I13]:** Hypotheses are essential to formulating new theories. When is something considered to be proven?

Eisenhardt has not explained in what circumstances tablature letters are used to indicate left-hand fingering other than to indicate a *barré*. The only other guitarists that he identifies whose tablatures are “infected” by this “*barré* notation virus” are Carbonchi and François Martin.<sup>16</sup> In fact the “unusual dissonances” are encountered occasionally in the works of Bartolotti, Granata, Grenerin and in particular Carré, and in some anonymous manuscript sources as well as in Corbetta’s 1643 and 1648 books. The fact that the dissonant chords occur right across the repertoire in stylistically predictable contexts suggests that they are an integral feature of baroque guitar music, in both the Italian and French repertoire.

**Opmerking [I14]:** 'Stylistically predictable contexts' is very opaque; this opens the way to circular reasoning...

<sup>12</sup> Charles II p. 117.

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit. p. 100.

<sup>14</sup> Op. cit. p. 218 Note 47.

<sup>15</sup> Op. cit. p.100.

<sup>16</sup> Op. cit. p. 169.

Eisenhardt has added yet another note referring to the Gallot manuscript.

*It is remarkable that at other places in the Gallot manuscript there are the same "barre fingering harmonies" that were removed [emphasis mine] from Corbetta's works. Apparently this way of indicating a barré was used more often, even if it was confusing for performance.<sup>17</sup>*

He has not given any examples. What he presumably means is that they are not present in the printed version; they cannot have been "removed" if they were not there in the first place.

**Opmerking [I15]:** That is, if we would accept Hall's early dating (in the 1660s).

In bar 21 of the **Allemande du roy** for example, Gallot has included the B on the fifth course in error in the chord on the third beat. This is the equivalent of Chord &2; Corbetta has indicated that the fifth course should be omitted with a dot on the line in order to keep the fourth finger free for the variant Chord &2 with A on the first course on the next beat. On the fourth beat Gallot has an A major chord - the equivalent of Chord N - instead of the more difficult variant of Chord &2 but has included the B on the fifth course. This is a version of Chord N which does appear occasionally in **La guitare royale**. However, given the overall inaccuracy of Gallot's version it is more likely that he has included the notes on the fifth course in both chords in error rather than deliberately to indicate that a *barré* must be used; it is impossible to play either chord without one.

### What does Gallot really tell us?

Although in his book he hasn't said so in many words, Eisenhardt has created the impression that the variations in Gallot's versions, and in other sources, are significant and shed some light on Corbetta's dissonance or notation.

**Opmerking [I16]:** Created the impression... Variations are somehow important. They certainly shed some light on contemporary performance of Corbetta's music. Gallot and Carré may even have heard Corbetta play the works they copied.

### They don't.

First and foremost, none of the other sources which he mentions eliminate Corbetta's unusual dissonance.

Secondly Gallot may have disliked or misunderstood Corbetta's dissonance, but this does not prove that Corbetta intended his music to be played differently from the way that he has notated in the printed book which he himself prepared for the press. It certainly does not "uncover a practice of strumming where the right hand does not always play all the courses that are suggested by the left hand fingering". What it really uncovers is Gallot's incompetence as a player and copyist.

**Opmerking [I17]:** This probably refers to the aforementioned 'CDRom files'. Why is there no reference note here?

Finally the problems with Gallot's versions have nothing to do with the "confusing tuning of the instrument". There is little doubt that Corbetta used a low octave string or bourdon only on the fourth course with the fifth course re-entrant and Gallot would have done likewise. When writing out the music Gallot has had no problem recalling the melodic line

**Opmerking [I18]:** Gallot using French tuning, this is mere speculation.

<sup>17</sup> Op. cit. p.218 Note 49.

and the 2-part counterpoint and usually arranges it on the fingerboard in the same way as in the printed book taking into account displacements caused by the re-entrant tuning.

Where he has come seriously unstuck is when trying to work out the underlying harmony. He often seems to lack even the most basic grasp of musical theory. This is very obvious in the Allemande, the piece which varies most significantly. It is not just the “unusual dissonance” that he has “corrected”. He often eliminates straight forward chords of the 7<sup>th</sup> reducing the harmony to the basic triads and he often eliminates strummed chords altogether.

The most likely explanation is that he had learnt the pieces by ear and wrote them out from memory, guitar in hand, which may have been common practice in the seventeenth century. This would explain some of the more bizarre errors. However, it is not impossible that some of the variations originated with Corbetta. The most obvious example of this can be seen at the mid cadence in the Sarabande on p. 8. Both Gallot and Carré have a C minor chord on the first beat with an E flat played at the eleventh fret – m - on the first course. Corbetta has altered the melodic line to avoid using the eleventh fret, perhaps because he was aware that many players would have had only ten frets on their instrument. Murcia is the same as in the printed book.

January 2017

**Opmerking [119]:** One should try to do this on a baroque guitar, without the aid of YouTube or sound recordings. It seems more likely that he had learnt these, often very complex, pieces from tablature and not by hearing them repeatedly (played by whom?). Then he may have written them out, partly from memory, with many errors (or changes). Where do the 'bizarre errors' come from? If the scribe of the Gallot Ms. copied these pieces more or less verbatim from an alternative source, the errors may have been included there as well. It seems odd to assume that this example was an earlier (very inferior) version made by Corbetta himself.

**Opmerking [120]:** Is that so?

## Francesco Corbetta - The Best of All

### 17. Pandora's Lyre Unpicked Eisenhardt's Examples in Chapter 7

In the myth Pandora is given a jar containing all sorts of evils hitherto unknown in the world which she is told not to open. Needless to say, she opens it and all the evils fly out leaving only Hope under the lid as a consolation for mankind. Eisenhardt has released upon the unsuspecting world some extraordinary ideas about Corbetta's music. I hope that I can bring some consolation and enlightenment to those caught up in this web of misleading fantasy.

Opmerking [I21]: :-/

#### Open courses

The Allemande in B minor includes a harmonic progression which occurs frequently in **La guitare royale**. At bar 35 on the semiquaver there is a single note – C sharp – played on the second course at the second fret. Corbetta has clearly indicated that this is to be strummed. In order to do this effectively at least the third and fourth open courses must be included in the strum. Gallot has ignored implications of the bass line (if he was even aware of them) and implies that the D major chord should be sustained for two beats which is rather feeble. Castillion and Murcia have reproduced the notes as written including the strum note value without indicating the open courses.

Opmerking [I22]: Not effective?  
There seems to be no historical information showing unambiguously that in this repertoire strumming over fewer than three courses was considered ineffective. From my experience with playing music in battuto-pizzicato style I can assure that this should be no problem at all.

Eisenhardt has reproduced an almost identical example of this progression from the Sarabande on p.69 as Example 7.13 commenting on it as follows:

*It seems unlikely that the note on the open fourth course in the last chord of the first measure is part of the harmony. It is a harsh dissonance, unprepared and unresolved. If the fourth course is excluded the fifth should surely be omitted as well.<sup>1</sup>*

#### Example – Eisenhardt Ex.7.13 Corbetta – Sarabande p. 69 b.21-23 With Eisenhardt's transcription

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff is the original manuscript for the Sarabande, showing a single note on the open fourth course in the first measure. The bottom staff is Eisenhardt's transcription, which includes a chordal structure with a note on the open fourth course in the first measure, marked with a circled 'S'.

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p 159.

### Correct Transcription



Eisenhardt has failed to analyse the underlying harmonic progression correctly. The bass line is clearly F sharp - G - A - D. There is only one option for a chord on G taking into account the movement of the melodic line – the first inversion of an E minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord – E – G – [B] – D; this is a standard dissonance well within what was acceptable in the seventeenth century. The D is the minor 7th; it is prepared in the previous chord and resolves on C sharp on the third beat. Because of the limited compass of the instrument, in order to include it Corbetta has had to place it on the fourth course where it is **inadvertently duplicated in the lower octave**. The first course could be included although it obscures the melodic line; the open fifth course does not belong to the chord and should strictly speaking be omitted. Eisenhardt has reduced it to two parts which is unsatisfactory; the chord is clearly intended to be strummed. (The quaver on the second course immediately before the last note should be C sharp not D as shown in Eisenhardt’s transcription).

**Opmerking [I23]:** As in my second transcription.

**Opmerking [I24]:** Inadvertently duplicated? There is no (realistic) way to avoid playing the low d on the fourth course, as the chord should be strummed. We cannot prevent it to spoil the bass line f# - g - a - d. It is very misleading that the low d is not included in Hall's 'correct transcription'! I would suggest it is a I<sup>6</sup>-IV-V-I cadence, the second chord being an incomplete G major harmony (g - [b] - d) with a dissonant c# resolving to the d'. One could consider including the e' (the unprepared sixth of the chord), as it would anticipate the e' in next chord. Compare my comments to ex. 7.22c below, on p. 246. Moreover, the d' does not resolve to the c# on the third beat, as Hall seems to suppose.

Eisenhardt observes that

*An almost identical situation, [to Ex. 7.13] in another key can be found in a sarabande [on p.65] by Corbetta [Ex. 7.14].<sup>2</sup>*

He then compares this to the version of the same Sarabande in Carré’s book.<sup>3</sup> Exactly the same progression occurs in the “Allemande sur la mort du duc de Gloaster” at bar12; indeed it is one of Corbetta’s standard cadential progressions.

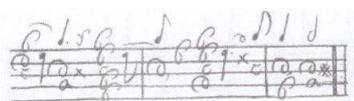
**Opmerking [I25]:** So, perhaps it's not a very good idea to include the e'.

In this example the bass line is **D - E flat - F - B flat**. The chord on E flat is a first inversion C minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord – C - E flat – [G] – B flat; the A is an ascending appoggiatura. Although the underlying harmony is identical – ii7b – V – I – the way in which the notes lie on the fingerboard differs. Here with the correct method of stringing the note on the fifth course will sound only in the upper octave. The “non-harmonic” tone is the F on the first course.

**Opmerking [I26]:** See my second transcription of ex. 7.14...

### Example – Eisenhardt Ex.7.14

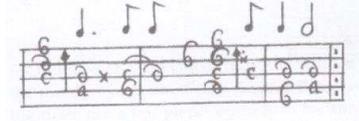
#### a. Corbetta – Sarabande p. 65 b.8-9



<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. p. 159

<sup>3</sup> Carré p. 17 – Sarabande Plainte.

b. Carré –Sarabande p.17 b.8-9



Eisenhardt's transcription



Correct Transcription



Eisenhardt remarks

*The last chord of the first measure is again very dissonant as in example 7.13 only here Corbetta has written out the whole chord in tablature. In the version of this same sarabande published by Carré.... this chord is simplified in the same way as the thinner of the two transcriptions in example 7.13. Carré has left out a number of the tablature letters from Corbetta's original. The simplified harmony can still be played battuto, so justice can be done to Corbett a's original strum notation. [emphasis mine].*

Carré clearly did not think that his simplified harmony could still be played *battuto*, and nor did Gallot who has reduced it in exactly the same way in the Allemande. Both have indicated that the two notes should be plucked. **There is no need to omit the note on the fifth or second courses – only the note F on the first course does not belong to the minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord on C.**

It is **absurd to suggest** that Corbetta has included **three letters** in the chord which are not to be played and has indicated that the two notes that remain should be played *battuto* when it makes more sense to play them separately. If the comparison proves anything at all **it suggests that more open courses should be included in Ex.7.13** not less stopped ones in Ex.7.14.

Eisenhardt continues

*Perhaps Corbetta has used the letters of the tablature – normally supposed to represent exactly which strings should sound – in an improper way to serve as fingering for the left hand! [emphasis mine].*

**Opmerking [I27]:** (Ex. 7.14).

Hall probably sees this as a  $I^6-II^{6/5}-V-I^6$  progression. The incomplete 7th chord in 6/5 position on ii (e b – [g – ] b b – c) includes as well a non-harmonic tone f and a dissonant tone a, which, like an ornament, resolves to the (accented) b b. This ornament can in some way be compared to the 'cheute' (or port de voix), which is described in Corbetta's preface to La guitare royale 1671. However, it could as well be regarded as a  $I^6-IV-V-I^6$  cadence. In that case, it seems better to leave out the c' on the second course (which is the unprepared sixth of the chord). This would be particularly beneficial for the voice leading.

In either case the most problematic dissonant would be the f' on the first course, which probably should be left out, like Hall has notated it in her 'correct' transcription. If leaving out one course would be acceptable, why not two?

Finally, the low B b from my first transcription (only there if we would use a bourdon at the fifth course) would be extremely disturbing.

**Opmerking [I28]:** ...and accept the low d which is 'inadvertently' duplicated in the low octave (in ex 7.13)?

Well – perhaps he hasn't....!

*If that were true, [why should it be?] the tablature letters would only indicate the best fingerings, [emphasis mine] and not which courses should be played.*<sup>4</sup>

Eisenhardt implies that there are alternative fingering options to using a *barré* but usually this is not the case. Even if the “dissonant” notes are omitted, a *barré* still has to be used and the resulting 2-part counterpoint cannot be placed in a different position on the fingerboard.

**Opmerking [I29]:** Actually, that's not what I imply. The tablature letters would only indicate that it is practical to place a barre.

Nevertheless, Eisenhardt adds a note referring to Pinnell yet again

*In his dissertation Pinnell comments on Corbetta's confusing notation. He suggests that Corbetta wrote these letters “for convenience” and he concludes that the non-harmonic tones should not be played.*<sup>5</sup>

Pinnell has not commented on Corbetta's “confusing notation”; he has commented on some of Corbetta's unusual harmony. He has not included this example and he has certainly not suggested that 5-part chords intended to be strummed should be reduced to two parts played *pizzicato*. He probably never intended his speculative comments to be misused in the way the Eisenhardt has done.

Eisenhardt then claims

*In that respect it could be seen as a manifestation of an attitude towards the notation of strummed textures similar to what underlies Foscarini's practice of omitting zeros:<sup>6</sup> on paper the battuto chords are treated as something primarily for the left hand. Neither Foscarini nor Corbetta provided more information for the right hand than an ambiguous sign for a strummed chord.*

This is nonsense. If Corbetta intended fewer courses to be included in the strum he could have left out the superfluous letters. Eisenhardt continues

*Those familiar with strummed chord accompaniment (and modern songs) will probably understand the rationale behind these shorthand notations.*<sup>7</sup>

**It is hard to imagine a more disingenious attempt to confuse the issue than this. There is no comparison between the two practices.**

Leaving the tablature lines blank, rather than putting in the “0”s or “a”s, is standard practice in most baroque guitar sources; it makes it easier and less time-consuming to hand

**Opmerking [I30]:** We may of course speculate on what Corbetta should have done. But what does it prove?

**Opmerking [I31]:** I would say that strummed chord accompaniment is particularly relevant here. Moreover, my remark should better be read in its context. The text continues (p. 160): “In battuto, the actual number of courses touched by the right hand (and also the intensity of the impact of the stroke on each individual string) can vary widely, depending on the context. Upstrokes, for example, have a tendency to include fewer strings than downstrokes, and a thumb stroke usually puts more emphasis on the lower strings than a stroke with the fingers, whereas an upstroke with the index finger accents the treble strings.”  
On paper, all the notes of the chord look as if they are all of the same loudness. However, in performance the notes tend to be played differently, even up to the point that some notes can hardly be perceived (or being virtually inaudible) while others dominate.

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit. p.159-60.

<sup>5</sup> Op. cit. p.229 Note 19.

<sup>6</sup> Eisenhardt discusses some of Foscarini's music on p.153-158. Because he has failed to grasp the underlying principles of baroque guitar notation in general and Foscarini's notation in particular most of what he says makes no sense.

<sup>7</sup> Op. cit p.160.

copy or print the music clearly and accurately. Eisenhardt has admitted as much, observing in his final chapter

*This was probably done because it saves labor and costs in writing and engraving.*<sup>8</sup>

As a general rule, open courses may be included if they belong to the basic triad. In other circumstances (such as Eisenhardt's Ex.7.13 discussed above) it is necessary to analyse the underlying harmonic progression accurately to decide what is appropriate.

### Including figures or letters in the tablature which are not to be played is not a shorthand notation.

Referring to it as a "shorthand" notation implies that it is a shortened or abbreviated form of something more complex. Clearly including hundreds of letters in the score which are not to be played is no such thing. On the contrary, it makes the music more difficult to copy or print clearly and accurately, it would confuse the player, and it serves no useful purpose. Eisenhardt contradicts himself in his summing up -

*...in the case of the barré notation of Corbetta...simplification of what is notated...may be called for.*<sup>9</sup>

#### Barré notation in cadences

Eisenhardt goes on to discuss what he refers to as "barré notation in cadences". Perhaps realizing that the variations in the Gallot manuscript and other sources do not support his theories, he has resorted instead to comparing passages from Corbetta's **Varii capricii per la ghittara spagnvola (1643)** which are in Italian tablature with similar passages from **La guitarre royale (1671)** in French tablature which he claims are intended to be played in the same way although they are notated differently. Referring to his Examples 7.21a and 7.22a from Corbetta's 1643 book he remarks

*...probably voice leading was the reason for using these thinner chordal textures. [in the Italian examples]. Gradually he began to write four- and five-part chords instead which resulted from the inclusion of extra tablature letters for the barré [emphasis mine]<sup>10</sup>.*

These examples are supposed to prove that in the passages in French tablature, Corbetta has included the notes on the fifth course, and in some instances the fourth course as well, only to indicate that the chord must be played with a *barré* and that they should be left out.

**This begs the question – why should he bother to do this in 1671, if he did not think it necessary in 1643?**

**Opmerking [I32]:** True. Foscarini's is shorthand. Corbetta's notation could be seen as a different case. Still, it would be a simple (or simplistic) way to indicate a barre. See below for more comments on this.

**Opmerking [I33]:** Good question indeed.

<sup>8</sup> Op.cit. p.177.

<sup>9</sup> Op. cit.p.169.

<sup>10</sup> Op. cit. p.167.

**Eisenhardt's Examples 7.21 and 7.24 compare perfect cadences with a simple 4-3 suspension.**

7.21a-b from the earlier book combine three-and four-part writing in Italian tablature with a final *alfabeto* chord; 7.21c from 1671 has five-part chords ending on a single note in French tablature. In 7.21a the first and fifth courses are omitted from the dominant chord with a 4-3 suspension; in 7.21b only the fifth course is omitted. In 7.21c the fifth course is included, doubling the suspended 4th. It is the equivalent of Chord G3; because of the left hand fingering, the fifth course must either be omitted or left unfretted so that the B with the descending appoggiatura can be played on the third course.

As can be seen in my analysis and transcription, even Gallot does not eliminate the fifth course from a chord if all that it does is to double the suspended 4th **in unison**. In the context of a strummed chord this is perfectly acceptable. All that Pinnell has said about this particular progression (his Ex.50) is

*To modern ears this [the note on the fifth course] seems to spoil the downward resolution of the non-harmonic tone [the appoggiatura on the third course].*

This may be so (although it is a sweeping assumption – how many modern ears did he consult?) but neither Pinnell nor Eisenhardt know whether Corbetta or seventeenth-century ears thought it spoils the downward resolution of the non-harmonic tone. It only becomes a problem if, like Eisenhardt, one insists in using a low octave string on the fifth course.

The Italian passacaglias are in triple time with a steady three crotchets to a bar; the harmony changes on each beat and Corbetta has imposed upon it the customary “down – down – up” strumming pattern although it could just as well be played pizzicato. The cadences illustrated occur at the end of regular four-bar sections.

The Allemande is rhythmically and harmonically much more complex. This “cadence” occurs at the mid-point of three bars of chords in quavers. The harmony changed on each quaver and the melodic interest is sometimes embedded in the chords. Even at a moderate pace, leaving out courses is not a very practical option, although Corbetta has indicated that the fifth course should be omitted in a couple of places. Passages like this are common in **La guitarre royale (1671)**.

My transcription shows first the three examples, with the Italian examples transposed into C major for ease of comparison. The French example is then shown in the context in which it occurs with the correct stringing. The **third** chord in Eisenhardt's Ex.7.21c is the same as the **second** in the Italian examples.

**Opmerking [134]:** This is not at all difficult to do.

Eisenhardt Example 7.21

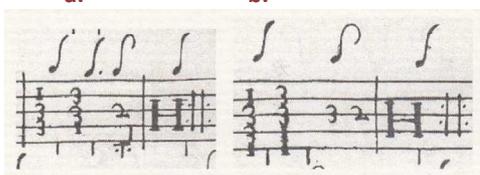
Ex.7.21a Passacaglia 1643 p.14, b.15-16; Ex.7.21b Passacaglia 1643 p.14, b.4-5;

Ex.7.21c Allemande 1671 p. 41 b.16-17

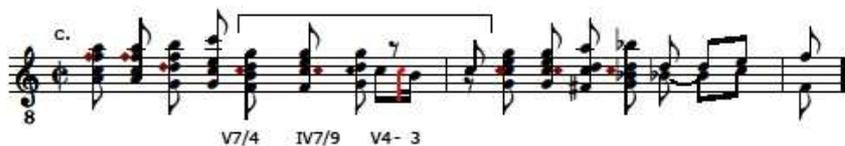
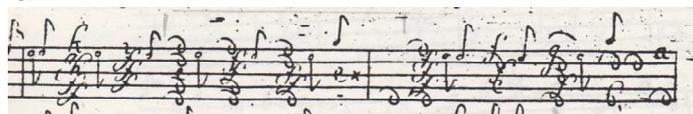


Original Italian tablature

a. b.

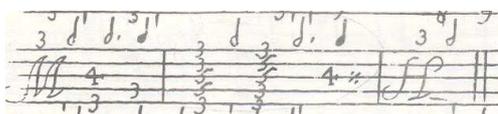


c.



A cadence almost identical to that illustrated in Eisenhardt's Ex.7.21a-b occurs in the Passacaglia on p. 18 of Corbetta's *Varij scherzi di sonate* (1648) and this instance Corbetta has indicated that all five courses should be included in both chords.

Passacaglia 1648 p.18, b.10-12





There are a number of other places in this book where Corbetta has doubled the suspended 4th in the same way.

Eisenhardt's Example 7.24 shows a similar cadence from the continuo exercises in 1643 and 1671. He claims that

*In Corbetta's instructions for accompaniment in La guitarre royalle, the continuo exercises from his 1643 book are transcribed into French tablature. In the latter the fifth course is added. This can be compared to examples 7.21b and 7.21c.<sup>11</sup>*

**In fact, his comparison of these two sources proves nothing at all.**

The exercises found in Corbetta's 1643 (and in his 1648) book are **not identical** with those of **La guitarre royale (1671)**. Understandably after a period of more than twenty years Corbetta has arranged some of the examples differently. The progressions illustrated in 1671 vary from those in the earlier books, and the chords are often filled out with additional courses. He seems to have had a different style of accompaniment in mind – one which features more strummed chords and is more appropriate for the guitar than the keyboard inspired exercises in the earlier books. In this example, with the correct method of stringing the suspended 4<sup>th</sup> will simply be doubled in unison. (See Section V for a detailed comparison of the three sources).

**It could be argued just as convincingly that in 1643 Corbetta used a bourdon on the fifth course and therefore avoided doubling the 4th; in 1671 he (and Gallot) used the French tuning and was able to include it.**

Observant readers will notice that the 1671 excerpt above (Ex.7.21c) includes two more of Corbetta's "unusual dissonances"; the second chord is Chord H with the fourth course left unfretted. In this context, it is the same as the first chord in the two Italian examples – IV7(9). The fifth course can be included with impunity as it doubles the note on the third course in unison. The first chord is the dominant 7th with an added 4th. Eisenhardt has not commented on either of these.

**Eisenhardt's Examples 7.22a-c and 7.23a-b compare perfect cadences in which Chord H3 – the dominant - is combined with a 4-3 suspension.**

Eisenhardt's Ex. 7.22a from the Corrente 1643 p. 55 b.12-14 in Italian tablature illustrates Chord H3 with a straightforward 4-3 suspension inserted on the second course without any ornamentation. It occurs in a perfect cadence at the midpoint of a piece in binary form. It is irrelevant because no passing notes are inserted into the chord preceding Chord H3 and

**Opmerking [I35]:** It's a pity that Hall has not included ex. 7.24. It can be compared to the final cadence of ex. 7.21c, although it is a semitone lower. As ex 7.24 is taken from an instruction for figured bass (La guitarre royalle 1671 p. 100) it would be illogical to suppose French tuning here, as the 'correct method of stringing'. With a bourdon on the fifth course there would be a non-harmonic bass note B (the equivalent of the C in my transcription of ex 7.21c) which is completely unacceptable here. It would make sense to leave the fifth course out. For a more comprehensive discussion of the guitar in basso continuo, in relation to stringing, see my book (2015), pp. 113-23.

**Opmerking [I36]:** That is likely indeed.

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit.p.168.

there is no ornament of any sort attached to Chord H3 itself; indeed it is impossible to play one. The left-hand fingering is therefore straightforward. (Eisenhardt has omitted the strum marks from all the chords).

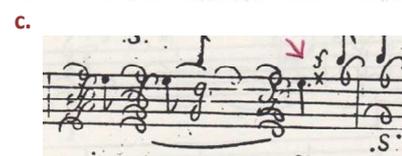
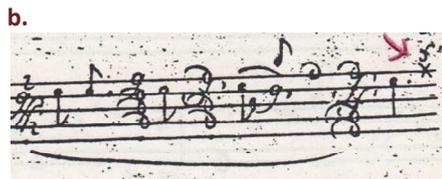
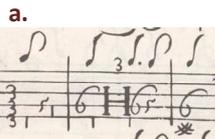
His Ex. 7.22b-c and 7.23a-b in French tablature are examples of Chord H3 with the fourth course left unstopped. Ex.7.22b and 7.23a are identical; both are the same as Pinnell's Ex. 49. It is not clear why Eisenhardt has included it twice. He has omitted the appoggiatura on the first course in 7.22b and 7.22c but has included it in 7.23a. He has however **ignored the effect this has on the left hand fingering.**

**Opmerking [I37]:** Yes, forgot the strum marks. Still waiting for the first book without mistakes :-)  
Doesn't change much though.

**Opmerking [I38]:** This is an important point (Exx. 7.22b and 7.23a). Hall tries to argue (see p. 231, above) that 'the fourth course must be left unstopped and the chord re-fingered so that the appoggiatura on the first course can be played.' However, the chord can also be strummed in just three-parts (c'- e'- g'). In that case we will have to leave out the disturbing f (and the c' on the fifth course as well).

**Eisenhardt Example 7.22**

**Ex.7.22a Corrente 1643 p. 55, b.12-14; Ex.7.22b Courante 1671 p.23, b. 26-27;  
Ex.7.22c Allemande 1671 p.22 b.25-26**





Eisenhardt observes that

*The first two chords of example 7. 22b can be understood as modifications of the alfabeto N chord, which would explain the dots on the fifth line.*

**The first chord in 7.22b (and in 7.23a) is indeed a variant of Chord N, but the second is not.**

It is not clear what Eisenhardt hopes to prove by this. He has omitted the chord which precedes Chord N. This is the equivalent of Chord &5 with a different note on the first course. The fifth course, which would have to be stopped with the fourth finger, has been omitted so that the note at the eighth fret on the first course can be played; there is a dot on the fifth course. The second chord is a B flat major chord. The next chord is a G minor 7th chord G - B flat - [D] - F with an accented passing note E. Corbetta has placed a dot on the fifth course, which does not belong to the chord, to indicate that it should be omitted. All three are 4-part chords. In the next chord, Chord H3 – the dominant - the fourth course must be left unstopped and the chord refingered so that the appoggiatura on the first course can be played. This results in a 4-3 suspension with the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> sounding simultaneously. This is not uncommon in the guitar repertoire.

Ex.7.22c illustrates the same cadence but the way in which it is approached is different. The chord at the end of the first bar is Chord N ; the fifth course is omitted to make way for the passing note. Corbetta has included the fifth course in the next chord – simple Chord H3. **The next chord** is again a G minor 7th chord G - B flat - [D] - F with an accented passing note E. Here he has included the “non-harmonic tone - C - on the fifth course. Possibly he wanted to maintain the 5-part texture but it is more likely to be inconsistency on his part. The cadence is the same as in the previous example – the fourth course is unstopped so that the appoggiatura can be played.

Eisenhardt’s Ex. 7.23b is not a perfect cadence; it occurs in the middle of a phrase.

**Eisenhardt Example 7.23b**  
**Courante 1671 p.23, b.3-5**



**Opmerking [139]:** Ex. 7.22c. Probably a V–IV–V–I cadence (C–B ♭–C–F) is intended. The incomplete B ♭ major chord b ♭ – [d] – f (the IV) includes a g' (the sixth) in the treble, which may be omitted. However, this dissonant g' is prepared in the treble of the preceding C major chord and it finally resolves to f', in the final chord. To further confuse the matter, there is as well the non-harmonic c' on the fifth course. There is only one possible B ♭ major chord with a barre in third position, and this is chord N3. This chord would preferably include the note d on the fifth course, played with the second finger. Quite often the fifth course remains unstopped (apart from the first finger), when melodies are played on the second or first courses, such as the e' – f' – g' in this example. The e' resolves to the chord note f' and the g' anticipates the same note in the next chord. The underlying harmony, however, remains B ♭ and it would make sense to consider it as a variant of chord N. This is a very complex harmony, created by the non-harmonic tones c' and g', and the suspended, or repeated, e' (together forming a C major triad), which are added to the incomplete B ♭ chord. The result is an incomprehensible C–E–G–B ♭ –[D–] F. However, if we would suppress the c' on ⑤ and the f on ④, by touching the fourth and fifth courses almost imperceptibly (or virtually inaudible), a bass line c'[or g] – b ♭ ' – c' – f emerges. Which at least would make sense.

**Opmerking [140]:** Would 'inconsistency' mean the same as 'mistake'? All in all, it's an uneasy way to explain the situation.



Eisenhardt comments on this example as follows

***The preparation of the bass note does not always occur in this cadence; in example 7.23b the final chord is in 6/3 position and the nonharmonic F on the fourth course is even more disturbing because the dissonance it creates is never resolved.***

It is not clear what he means in saying that the “preparation of the bass note does not always occur in this cadence”. The point about this particular chord – effectively Chord H with the fourth course left unfretted – is that its function may vary according to context. In Ex.21 it occurs as chord IV before the final cadence – the F is the root of the chord; there is no need for it to be prepared. In Ex. 7.22 and 7.23 it is used as chord V combined with a 4-3 suspension in which circumstances the 4<sup>th</sup> should be prepared in the previous chord. In the examples which Eisenhardt has included it is prepared correctly. As regards the non-harmonic tones - these do not resolve in several of his other examples either so that this example is no different.

All of these examples include the one “frequent nonharmonic tone” (the F added to the dominant 7th on C) which Pinnell rather surprisingly says that he is “unable to justify”.

***The chord is merely V [the dominant] (except for the strident anticipation of I [the key note].***

Whether or not it is a strident anticipation of the key note is entirely subjective. The 4-3 suspension is the commonest dissonance found in music from the late middle ages through to the present day. The problem arises because it is sounding simultaneously with its note of resolution. The 4-3 suspension cannot be played on the second course as in the Italian example if the appoggiatura on the first course is to be played as well, because both would need to be stopped with the fourth finger. The “non-harmonic tone” on the fourth course can only be eliminated if both the fifth course – which is consonant – and the fourth course are omitted reducing the chord to three parts and omitting the 4-3 suspension altogether. This does not result in a very satisfactory cadence. It is one of the commonest dissonances found in **La guitarrre royale (1671)** and perfectly acceptable to most modern ears.

**All that these examples really illustrate is different textures and different contexts. Like most normal human being Corbetta did not always do things in the same way.**

Eisenhardt claims that

**Opmerking [I41]:** It is impossible to discuss these matters with someone who misinterprets every word you say. It should not be too difficult to see that my remark (ex. 7.23b) is about the non-harmonic bass note (the f), which in this case (final cadence or not) cannot be justified as being an anticipation of the root of the harmony to which it resolves.

**Opmerking [I42]:** And that was my point indeed. Non-harmonic tones, resulting from strumming all courses at ‘open barres’, remain unsolved. This leads to inexplicable harmonies and unintelligible chord progressions (as demonstrated in my comment on example 7.22c, on p. 246, above).

**Opmerking [I43]:** There is not much common ground anyway, as to what is satisfactory or not.

**Opmerking [I44]:** It is indeed a frequent situation in *La guitarrre royale* (1671). But the question was how we should perform it. The fact that this situation is common doesn't prove that it should be performed with all courses included. Whether or not it is acceptable to modern ears is not the most relevant criterium.

*It can be doubted that Corbetta over the years aimed for an extreme increase of dissonance in exactly the same cadences [as those illustrated in Ex.7.21 and Ex.7.22].*

**It is even more doubtful that Corbetta would have suddenly decided it was necessary to include hundreds of letters in his 1671 tablature, just because the chord was played with a barré when he had not done so previously.**

Eisenhardt continues

*Is what we see here a progressive development of his harmonic language or has he made a wrong use of tablature, only showing at what point the barré has to be placed as Richard Pinnell suggests.<sup>12</sup>*

It is really no contest. It is obvious that it is a progressive development of his harmonic language. There is no conceivable reason why Corbetta should have “made a wrong use of tablature”. Eisenhardt has not put forward any convincing evidence to prove that he did.

Corbetta published five books over a period of thirty years; there is a gap of twenty-two years between the publication of his 1648 book and that of 1671 during which he published at least one, possibly two other books which are not extant. There is a very obvious development in his harmonic language, as well as in his musical style overall and in the kind of pieces he composed. The pieces in his 1639 book are almost entirely in *alfabeto*; the handful of pieces in “mixed style” are very simple. In his 1643 book two- and three-part counterpoint is combined with strummed standard *alfabeto* chords. In 1648 the emphasis shifts from writing *passacaglias* towards writing the standard movements of the suite with lute style preludes included for the first time. Some of the “unusual harmonies occur in both his 1643 and 1648 books in similar contexts. The music in **La guitarre royale (1671)** is more complex in every way.

In his concluding chapter Eisenhardt claims

*Today it is sometimes supposed [By whom? Eisenhardt doesn't say] that guitarists never played their chord strums the same way twice. [!] In this respect the capriciousness of Corbetta's barré notation can be misleading, since it does not necessarily imply that there was great variation in his performance.*

This is disingenious. It is reasonable to assume that when Corbetta has notated cadences differently he intended them to be played differently. This is what composers and players with any imagination do. There is nothing capricious about his notation. It is not always consistent or accurate but that is to be expected in the circumstances.

Eisenhardt continues

---

<sup>12</sup> Op. cit.p.167.

**Opmerking [I45]:** There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio...

**Opmerking [I46]:** It is a subject more people have speculated about, even though we have no means of knowing how things really were.

See for an example M. Hall, <https://monicahall2.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/corbettasectioniv.pdf> p. 29: '... how seriously did he intend the dissonance to be taken? The music in "La guitarre royale" was composed whilst he was based at the court of Charles II which was notorious for its decadence. It may have been his intention to amuse or shock his audience, or simply to attract their attention when he was playing as they probably did not sit listening in silence as we do today! If this was so he may sometimes have left out some of the dissonance.'

I don't think this is a relevant theory. It is based on a rather peculiar view on the circumstances Corbetta would have been in. Considering the deeply serious tone of most of the music from *La guitarre royale* an image arises of a very self-assured musician, and not of a musical clown. The point I tried to raise was that even someone of his stature can be inconsistent in his notation of *battuto* chords, in music in mixed *battuto-pizzicato* style. Not to fool anyone but as a result of his personal history with different types of tablature. And that this does not necessarily imply that he was capricious in his performance.

**Opmerking [I47]:** Not always consistent or accurate, or capricious? What would be the difference?

*In pizzicato sections from the same compositions there is not the slightest sign of indecision. It seems unlikely that his hesitancy would have been confined to battuto only, and to chords with barrés in particular, which leads to the conjecture that not all he put in tablature is music. [p.178]<sup>13</sup>*

This is also disingenious; it is gobbledegook as well.

The left hand fingering in the pizzicato sections is straight forward. Difficulties arise when this style of playing has to be combined with strummed chords which work best if all five courses are included. There may be different options depending on the context.

The most obvious example is Chord N. In its standard form it is played with a *barré*. The first course is stopped with the fourth finger and the fifth course with the second. The commonest auxiliary note to be combined with this chord is the minor/major 7<sup>th</sup>, either as a descending passing note or an ascending appoggiatura. This can only be stopped with the second finger. The obvious solution is to omit the fifth course. However in some instances as Eisenhardt himself has observed,<sup>14</sup> the open fifth course could be included because it belongs to the basic triad. There is also plenty of evidence to support the inclusion of the fifth course, even when this is dissonant. It is perfectly understandable that Corbetta should be inconsistent when writing out this and other chords which present similar problems and reasonable to assume that he sometimes did one thing and sometimes another.

Eisenhardt's assertion that there was no great variation in Corbetta's performance is also misleading. Corbetta would not have played his own music from the printed book and would not always have played it the same way; improvisation played a much more important part in the seventeenth century especially as regards ornamentation and strumming patterns. What we have in the printed book is the version which he committed to paper.

Corbetta's music may not be as popular today as that of Sanz or Santiago de Murcia and it is certainly not as easy to play but it is much more interesting and original. It requires careful study, with particular attention paid to the elaborate ornamentation which is characteristic of music of the period and the implications that this has for left-hand fingering. Only by playing it is it possible to understand where Corbetta is coming from. Studying it on paper in the light of inappropriate theoretical considerations is a futile exercise.

January 2017

**Opmerking [I48]:** There's no need to paraphrase my words. But include all five courses? In this style?

**Opmerking [I49]:** This is based on the proposition that all tablature letters in Corbetta's tablature were written with the intention to be sounded.

**Opmerking [I50]:** My remark clearly applies to the number of strings included in the strum, and to the degree of consonance. The question is whether there would have been variation in his performance in this respect, when playing the version which he committed to paper. I didn't speak of improvisation or ornamentation, and even not of different (rhythmical) strumming patterns. It's worrying to see that Hall is constantly misreading my words.

**Opmerking [I51]:** Very true!

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit. p 178

<sup>14</sup> Op. cit. p.165.