

2006

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Recommended Citation

Jackson, Roland (2006) "It Can “spoil all the beauty”: the Duplicating of Solo Dissonances in Seventeenth-Century Thorough-bass Accompaniment," *Performance Practice Review*. Vol. 11: No. 1, Article 2. DOI: 10.5642/perfpr.200611.01.02
Available at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/ppr/vol11/iss1/2>

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It Can “spoil all the beauty”: the Duplicating of Solo Dissonances in Seventeenth-Century Thorough-bass Accompaniment

Roland Jackson

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An essential question in the realizing of seventeenth-century thorough-bass concerns whether or not the dissonances present in a solo part are to be duplicated in an accompaniment. Until now, transcribers and editors have tended to replicate such dissonances, adjusting the accompanimental chords to reflect what is transpiring in an upper part. Some typical transcriptions, representing the early, middle, and late century, are cited in Example 1. These include excerpts from *L'Orfeo* by Monteverdi (1a),^[1] from *Historia di Jephthe* by Carissimi (1b),^[2] and from the cantata *Lascia, deh lascia* by Alessandro Scarlatti (1c).^[3] For each of these I have marked in numerically above the stave the main dissonances occurring in the soloists' parts (7 for 7th, 4 for 4th, d for diminished, and A for augmented). It will be observed that the editors have in each instance chosen to double these dissonances in their proposed accompaniments. Thus, in Monteverdi (Ex. 1a) the 7 on G# and the 9 and 11 (compounds of 2 and 4) on B and D are reproduced in the realization. And this is true as well of Carissimi's 7 on C, 4 on C, and 4 on G (in Ex.1b), and of Scarlatti's d5 on F, d7 on C, and A4 on G# (in Ex. 1c).

Example 1. a. Claudio Monteverdi, *L'Orfeo*, ed. Gian Francesco Malipiero; b. Giacomo Carissimi, *Historia di Jephthe*, 31, figured bass by Mathias Siedel; c. Alessandro Scarlatti, "Lascia, deh lascia," ed. George J. Buelow.

¹ Claudio Monteverdi, *L'Orfeo*, ed. Gian Francesco Malipiero in *Tutte le opera* (Asola, 1954-68), XI.

² Giacomo Carissimi, *Historia di Jephthe*, figured bass realized by Mathias Siedel (Wolfenbüttel, 1969), 31.

³ Alessandro Scarlatti, *Lascia, deh lascia*, transcribed by George J. Buelow, *Thorough Bass Accompaniment according to Johann David Heinichen* (Ann Arbor, 2/1986), 287.

a.

se' da me par-ti - ta per mai più mai più non tor-na - re

b.

in in - te - ri-tu vir - gi-nis la - chri - ma - - - te

c.

più non mi tor - men - tar - - - - - ch'io vuò

What do seventeenth-century theorists tell us concerning such a duplicating of dissonances? Little if any information can be gleaned from early century writers (e.g. Bianciardi, Agazzari, *et al.*)^[4]. Later on, a few theorists do allude to the desirability of having an accompanist play the soloist's notes, although whether dissonances were meant to be included remains unclear. In Bismantova and Penna^[5], for example, this advice appears to be directed

⁴ Francesco Bianciardi, *Breve regola per imparar' a sonare sopra il basso* (Siena, 1607); Agostino Agazzari, *Del sonare sopra il basso* (Siena, 1607).

⁵ Bartolomeo Bismantova, *Compendio musicale* (Florence, 1677), 82; Lorenzo Penna, *Li primi albori musicali* (Bologna, 1672, 2/1684), 184.

primarily toward aiding the singer in maintaining a correct pitch. Here for instance, is what Penna has to say:^[6]

First Rule: The organist should have his eyes open and be attentive not only to his own part but also to the part of the singer, placing this part above his own in order to accompany with keys that match the pitches of the voice, whether [this voice] be, for example, the soprano or the alto, making sure always to be prepared to touch the [proper] key, to give the pitch to the singer.^[7]

This statement is immediately qualified by the following:

Second Rule: If unable to accompany all the sung notes, take only the consonances, or at least the first and last of the downbeats or upbeats, leaving out the other [sung notes] as in the extracted example drawn from the above.^[8]

Here, the first sentence is ambiguous. Was a capable organist really not able to play all the notes of a singer's part? It would seem that Penna had in mind primarily that the organist should exclude dissonances in his accompaniment, this being borne out by the examples he provides. In Example 2 is shown his model for realizing a soprano part, a contracted version of which is suggested for the organist. In it, as he says, by rendering only certain notes ("the first and last of the beats") the part will be condensed in such a way as to enable an organist to play "only the consonances." Bismantova's remarks are similar, i.e. that the organist was to limit his part to the notes of a singer falling on the main beats, these presumably (as in Penna's example) being the consonant notes.^[9] In Example 2 we see Penna's original part for soprano, his suggested condensation of this part, his figured bass, and my own realization of this bass. The figured bass calls for a 4-3 suspension which, realized normally, would provide a dissonant quarter-note on A (4), resolving to a consonant quarter-note on G# (3). The voice part is consonant against the former, and has only a dissonant passing tone (4) against the latter, the result being that the accompanist and soloist at no point coincide in their use of dissonances.

⁶ From the 1684 edition, reprint by Forni Editore, Bologna, 184.

⁷ *Prima Regola.* Che l'Organista habbi l'occhio aperto, e pronto, non solo alla sua parte, mà ancora alla parte Cantante, collocatavi sopra, per accompagnarla con li tasti, corrispondenti alla voce, per Esempio se sarà il Soprano, tocchi li Soprani, se sarà il Contralto, suoni li tasti dell'Alto, procurando di esser presto à toccar il tasto per dar la voce al Cantore.

⁸ *Seconda Regola.* Che non potendo accompagnare tutte le Note cantanti, prenda solamente le Consonanze, ò almeno la prima & ultima del battere, e la prima & ultima del levar di mano, lasciando le altre come l'Esempio, cavato dalli Esempij dati di sopra.

⁹ Here I rely on Tharald Borgir's summary of Bismantova's statement in *The Performance of the Basso Continuo in Italian Baroque Music* (Ann Arbor, UMI Research Press, 1987), 158.

Example 2. Lorenzo Penna, suggested simplification of accompaniment, *Li primi albori musicali* (Bologna, 1672, 2/1684), 185.

The image displays a musical score with four staves. The first staff, labeled 'Penna's soprano part', is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff, labeled 'Penna's suggested simplification for the accompanist', is also in treble clef and shows a simplified version of the melody with fewer notes. The third staff, labeled 'realization of the figured bass', is in treble clef and shows a realization of the figured bass with notes and a figured bass symbol '#8'. The fourth staff, labeled 'Penna's figured bass', is in bass clef and shows the original figured bass with the figures '4 3'.

Another theorist of the late seventeenth century, Andreas Werckmeister, is more specific regarding the accompanying of dissonances. In a supplement to his thorough-bass treatise of 1698 he offers the following guidelines concerning this:^[10]

“It is also not advisable that one should always just blindly play together with the vocalists and instrumentalists the dissonances which are indicated in the Thorough-Bass, and double them: for when the singer expresses a pleasing emotion by means of the written dissonance, a thoughtless accompanist may, if he walk not warily, spoil all the beauty with the same dissonances.”^[11]

When Werckmeister refers to the “pleasing emotion” conveyed by a singer’s dissonance, he appears to be alluding to kinds of dissonances that are more prominent than mere passing

¹⁰ Andreas Werckmeister, *Die nothwendigsten Anmerckungen und Regeln wie der Bassus continuus oder General-Bass wol könne tractiret werden* (Aschersleben, 1698, 2/1715), 39. The above passage is cited and translated by Franck T. Arnold in *The Art of Accompaniment from a Thorough-Bass* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1931), I, 210. According to Arnold the passage in question appears in a manuscript version of the treatise, in its 1715 edition, and (“almost verbatim”) in Werckmeister’s *Harmonologia musica* of 1702.

¹¹ Es ist auch nicht rathsam, dass man allemahl die Dissonantien, so im General-Bass angedeutet werden, mit den Vocalisten und Instrumenten so crasse hinmache und verdoppele; denn wenn durch die gesetzte Dissonanz der Snger einen anmutigen affectum exprimiret: so kann ein unbesonnener General-Bassiste, wenn er nicht behutsam gehet, alle lieblichkeit verderben.

tones or anticipations (etc.), i.e. to suspensions or appoggiaturas, each of which achieve greater expressivity by falling on the strong beats. By replicating such dissonances an accompanist would, in his estimation, “spoil all the beauty.”

Of equal significance is Werckmeister’s continuing remarks, wherein he tells us that the figures provided by an accompanist were not always meant to be played. At times, indeed, they were simply cautionary, indicating to the thorough-bass player what is present in an upper part, so that a duplicating (“countering”) of them might be avoided:

“therefore the figures and dissonances are not always put in in order that one should just blindly join in with them; but one who understands composition can see by them what the composer’s intention is, and how to avoid countering them with anything whereby the harmony might be injured .”^[12]

Werckmeister’s main concern, as expressed in this passage, was that the accompanist “understand a composition,” i.e. that he be attentive to its dissonances, and through these grasp a composer’s expressive intent. Such advice remains relevant for the present-day historically-minded performer.

Written-out Accompaniments

Especially informative for the modern player in regard to the duplicating of dissonances are actual written-out accompaniments from the seventeenth-century. Although realized thorough basses of the time are quite rare, written-out orchestral accompaniments of solo arias, etc., that are occasionally provided by composers, are more plentifully available, providing invaluable guidance for the modern performer. It may come as a surprise to find that these sources reveal that the dissonances introduced by soloists were quite consistently, and seemingly consciously, avoided in accompaniments, which indicates that Werckmeister’s idea was more generally followed than has been supposed until now.

An early-century example is afforded by Robert Dowland’s suggested 1610 lute-tablature accompaniment to Giulio Caccini’s “Amarilli mia bella,” a portion of which is presented as Example 3 in John Walter Hill’s transcription.^[13] In it, it is noteworthy that each of the dissonances occurring in the solo part are lacking in the accompaniment. For the two suspensions

¹² [D]arum sind die Signaturen und Dissonantien nicht allemahl gesezet dass man sie so *crasse* mitmache, sondern ein Composition-Verständiger kan sehen, was des *Autoris* Meynung sey, und wie er nichts dagegen bringe, wodurch die *Harmonia* verlezet werde. Cited and translated by Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, I, 210.

¹³ Hill’s transcription, taken from Dowland’s *A Musical Banquet* (London, 1610), no. 19, appears in his “Realized Continuo Accompaniments from Florence c1600,” *Early Music* 11 (1983), 203.

in the voice, marked 4 and 7 above the staff, as well as for an accented passing tone, marked (7), the accompaniment displays a sudden dropping out of what would have been the potentially duplicating notes. This lessening of full lute texture in each instance allows the voice's dissonances to stand out more clearly. Especially noteworthy is the beginning of measure 6, where the notes D and B \flat , having just been sounded in the previous measure, are not carried over.^[14]

Example 3. Robert Dowland, lute tablature accompaniment of Giulio Caccini's "Amarillia bella," mm. 4-7.

Antonio Cesti's aria "Intorno all'idol mio," from his early opera *Orontea* of 1649,^[15] representing an instance of full orchestral accompaniment, is partially reproduced in Example 4. Here the dissonant d7 and d5 in the voice on C and A (m. 8) are each absent in the accompanying strings, as is true of the dissonant 4 on C (m. 11), 9 on A (m. 12), 9 on D (m. 14) and 4 on G (m. 16). The d7 in measure 8 is part of a 7-6 suspension, the d5 in this same measure of a 6/5 (or 6 over 5) suspension (wherein the 5 on A, acting as the dissonant note, resolves to a 3 on G), and the 4 in measure 16 belongs to a cadential 4-3 suspension, the latter accompanied by an open 5th (as in Dowland's two suspensions). The dissonant intervals, 4, 9, and 9 (mm. 11, 12, 14) represent suspensions in the bass. And although in these instances the solo part merely invokes the suspension rather than serving as the dissonant note itself, it is nonetheless not replicated in Cesti's accompaniment. These bass suspensions, conventionally described as 2-3 patterns, appear as compound intervals, 9-10, in measures 12 and 14. It is of note that the 9s in measures 12 and 14 produce suspensions that begin on off-beats, exemplifying a new metric freedom typical of baroque music. The suspension in measure 11, on the other hand, belongs to a

¹⁴ H. Wiley Hitchcock, in his transcription of this madrigal, *Le nuove musiche* (Madison, A-R Editions, 1970), 85f, does continue the notes D and B \flat into measure 6, thereby doubling the dissonant D, despite Hitchcock's own indication on p. 85 that his realization was based on Dowland's.

¹⁵ Edited by William Holmes (Wellesley Edition no. 11, Wellesley), 85.

more complex pattern, involving an added 4 above the 2, which will be referred to in the present article as a 2(4)-3, or 9(11)-10, suspension.

Example 4. Antonio Cesti, "Intorno all'idol mio," *Orontea* (1649), mm. 7-17.

7

d7 d5 4

In - tor - no all' i - dol mi - o, Spi - ra - te, pur Spi -

9 13 9 4

ra - te Au - re, au - re so - a - vi e gra - te

Example 5, taken from a portion of Alessandro Scarlatti's cantata "Da sventura a sventura" (ca. 1690), is cited by Tharald Borgir, who suggests that the realization possibly comes from the composer's own hand.^[16] In this instance we encounter a series of dissonant suspensions in the voice part, on 7, 5 (i.e. 6/5), 4, 4, 7, and 7 (as marked), none of which appear in the accompaniment, except for the 7 in measure 11, a duplication that might be explained as being due to Scarlatti's introduction of a suspension in the accompaniment as well, B to A#, at this point, which overlaps and takes priority over the voice part's own suspension of B to A-natural.

Example 5. Alessandro Scarlatti, "Da sventura a sventura," aria from the cantata (ca. 1690), mm. 7-12.

¹⁶ Borgir, *Basso Continuo*, 154.

The image displays a musical score for a vocal and instrumental ensemble. The top system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and two instrumental lines (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line has a circled '7' above the first measure, followed by the lyrics 're do- len'. The instrumental lines provide harmonic support. The bottom system continues the vocal line with a circled '(7)' above the final measure, followed by the lyrics 'ti...'. The instrumental lines continue to provide harmonic support. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals, along with figured bass notation (7, 5, 4, 4, 7, 7, (7)) indicating specific intervals or dissonances.

That the avoiding of dissonant doublings was a general feature in Scarlatti is further evidenced by an excerpt from one of his later arias, “Mi rivedi,” from the opera *Griselda* of 1721, cited as Example 6.^[17] None of the vocal dissonances, 5, 6, 7, 4, and 7 (as marked), are duplicated in the orchestral parts. The 5 in measure 5 is part of a 6/5 suspension, as is also the 6 in measure 6, which although serving as the consonant note in this suspension, is nevertheless not doubled. The 7 in measure 6 serves as a dissonant preparation to the suspension on 4 that follows—these dissonances lending emphasis to the high notes in the vocalist’s melodic line. The d7 in measure 7 initiates a 7-6 suspension dissonantly prepared by a d5, the 5 in measure 7 belongs to a 6/5 suspension, and the 4 in measure 8 to a 4-3 suspension.

Example 6. Alessandro Scarlatti, “Mi rivedi o selva ombrosa,” *Griselda* (1721), mm. 5-8.

¹⁷ Act 2, sc. 1, *The Operas of Alessandro Scarlatti*, vol. 3, ed. Donald J. Grout (Harvard Publications in Music, no. 8, 1975).

Mi ri- ve- di o sel- va om bro- sa ma non più Re- gi- na spo- sa mi ri-

ve- di sven- tu- ra- ta - dis- prez- za- ta pa- sto- rel- la,

(d5) d7 5 4

In Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, the First Sorcerer's aria ("The lonely traveller"), the beginning of which is cited in Example 7, contains non-doubled dissonant 7s in measures 1 and 3 (as indicated). The second of these initiates a 7-6 suspension begun on beat 3 and dissonantly prepared on beats 1 and 2, while the first represents a repeated-note appoggiatura on E, resolving from 7 to 8; this appoggiatura, itself a harsh-sounding major 7 approached by leap downwards from C, is part of a larger dissonant formation of 7 – 9 – 11, in which the 9 and 11 (on G and B^b) were added by Purcell in the accompanying string instruments.

Example 7. Henry Purcell, "The lonely traveler," *Dido and Aeneas* (1689), mm. 1-4.

First sorcerer

The lone-ly tra-ve-ler by night who like dis - mal ra - vens cry-ing

In Dido's aria "When I am laid in earth," partially quoted in Example 8, the numerous and varied dissonances in the vocal part: d4, A4, 9, d7, 7, 4, 7, 7, and 4 (as marked) contribute greatly to the markedly expressive character of this lament. Of these only the brief 7 in measure 13—perhaps considered by Purcell to have been incidental—is duplicated in the string accompaniment. Here follows a summary, allowing us to assess Purcell's remarkable inventiveness and imagination in the handling of dissonances:

Table 1.

m. 6	d4 initiates a 4-3 suspension set off against a full sixth chord in the accompaniment (this stands in contrast to the open 5 th underlying the 4-3 suspensions in Examples 3 and 4)
m. 6	the A4 is part of a 2(4)-3 suspension, used earlier by Cesti (Example 4)
m. 7	the 4 is part of a 4/3 (an inverted 6/5) suspension (in which the underlying configuration, C – Eb – G – A, resolves to D – F# – A)
m. 9	the 9 begins a 9-8 suspension decoratively prepared in measure 8
m. 12	the d7 is an escape tone resolving by leap downwards to another chord tone
m. 17	the 7 initiates a 7-6 suspension, in which the resolution on 6 appears in the accompaniment (leaving the voice part per se unresolved)
m. 19	the 7 is an escape tone that resolves by leap to a chord tone A
m. 20	the 4 is part of a 2(4/7)-3 suspension, a form going beyond Cesti, wherein both the 4 on C and the 7 on F# enhance the 2-3 suspension of G-A resolving to F#-A.

Example 8. Henry Purcell, "When I am laid in earth," *Dido and Aeneas*, mm. 6-22.

6 d4 A4 4 9

When I am laid, - am laid - in earth, may my wrongs - cre -

11 d7 7 4 7

ate no trou - ble, no trou-ble in thy - breast. Re - mem-ber me!

20 7 4

Re - mem-ber me! but ah! - for - get - my fate

Unrealized Accompaniments

The written-out accompaniments cited above (Exs. 3-8) yield a fair sampling of the kinds of dissonances encountered in seventeenth-century solo music. These can be supplemented, however, by further, unrealized accompaniments, i.e. those provided by simple bass lines or bass

lines with figures, which are, in regard to their essential harmonic content, as reliable (and valuable) as are the fully written-out examples. It will also be seen that these afford further evidence in support of the non-duplicating of solo dissonances.

The following examples are organized in the form of a summary or compendium of the various types of dissonance encountered, including five kinds of suspension (4-3, 7-6, 9-8, 6/5, and 2-3) derived from earlier, Renaissance practice, and two novel dissonances are also considered that first appeared in the seventeenth century, (7-8) *appoggiaturas* and *escape tones*, each reflective of the more chordal approach of the emerging baroque style.

4-3 suspensions

In Example 9 three examples of 4-3 suspensions are extracted from the written-out accompaniments cited above. These are each notable for the appearance of a simple open 5th in the accompaniment at the point where the suspension occurs. Thus, neither the dissonant 4 nor its resolution on 3 are duplicated, a possibility (to my knowledge) not mentioned by theorists of the time. The dissonances presented here are each different, representing three variegated approaches in regard to a single pattern. Dowland's suspension appears incidentally, falling on the fourth beat and lasting but an 8th note, while Scarlatti's is resolved decoratively and proceeds to a lowered leading tone on D rather than to the expected D#. Cesti's 4-3, on the other hand, occupies a full measure and is made part of a substantial cadence.

Example 9. a. Dowland, "Amarilli" (cf. Ex.3); b. Scarlatti, "Da sventura" (cf. Ex. 5); c. Cesti, "Intorno" (cf. Ex. 4).

a. 4

del mio cor



c.

Contrastingly, the 4-3 patterns represented in Example 10 are set against full chords, the 3 of the resolution being already present as the (non-doubled) 4 is introduced. This contributes to a more robust kind of sound, one that is frequently drawn upon by seventeenth century composers. In this usage it is seen that the written-out example by Purcell corresponds with two earlier unrealized examples by Schütz and by Viadana. In Purcell (Ex. 7a) the diminished 4 on B^b clashes against a sounding A in the accompaniment; in Schütz (Ex. 7b) a diminished 4 on C is set off against a B-natural; and in Viadana (Ex. 7c) a perfect 4 on A sounds against a G#. In the Purcell example the 6/3 chord is written out in the strings; in those of Schütz and Viadana, on the other hand, the presence of a 6/3 and 5/3 chord respectively is assured by the bass note, which in each case calls for a single simple chord to be sounded simultaneously above it (as is shown in the proposed realization).

Example 10. a. Purcell, "When I am laid: (cf. Ex. 8); b. Heinrich Schütz, "Und um die neunte Stunde," *Die sieben Worte*; c. Lodovico da Viadana, "Peccavi super numerum," *Cento concerti ecclesiastici* (1602).

a.

b.

c.

Sometimes a 4-3 suspension is introduced into the accompaniment itself, by means of figures attached to the bass notes. When this occurs, it is understood that a dissonance is not simultaneously present in the upper part, which tends to move from 2 to 1 in the key, producing usually a 12th to an octave above the bass. This may be seen in Example 11, in two contemporary unrealized examples, where the figured bass has reference only to the accompaniment, not to the vocal part. Caccini (11a), characteristically, leaps upwards to a 7 (figured as 14) prior to his final chord, and Cavalieri (11b) proceeds from a 6/4 (figured 13/11) to a 5/4 (figured 11) to a 5/3

(figured as a #) preparatory to his cadence,^[18] as shown in the provided realization. As these two examples illustrate, seventeenth-century thorough-bass figures were present primarily as a result of accompanimental rather than of solo dissonances.

Example 11. a. Giulio Caccini, *Le nuove musiche* (1602); b. Emilio de' Cavalieri, *Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo* (1600).

a.

realization

b.

realization

Example 12 points up that in non-soloistic music, such as in a work for chorus, dissonances in one or another of the upper parts *are*, in fact, duplicated in the accompaniment. In this instance a choral section of Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo* combines the alto voice's C# - D - C# (3 - 4 - 3) with the same dissonances in the continuo, which is figured # - 11 - #.^[19]

¹⁸ Other instances of this type by Cavalieri, i.e. with dissonances in the accompaniment but not in the voice, are cited by Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, I, 51, 54.

¹⁹ On p. xvi, no. 46, cited by Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, I, 52. Arnold cites a number of other examples of such mutually combined dissonances in non-solo music, I, 50-62.

Example 12. Cavalieri, *Rappresentazione*, p. xvi, no. 46.

In sum, the 4-3 suspension was more diverse in its realization than any other seventeenth-century dissonance, perhaps because of the variety of kinds of cadences in which it appeared. As we have seen, the accompaniments could take the form of an open 5th (Ex. 9), be comprised of full chords, sounding simultaneously with the dissonant 4 (Ex. 10), could appear in the accompaniment, when absent in the part of a soloist (Ex. 11), and could be present in non-soloistic works, such as for a choral ensemble, in both an upper part and in an accompaniment (Ex. 12).

7-6 suspensions

Example 13 shows 7-6 suspensions in the written-out accompaniments of Dowland, Cesti, and Purcell cited above, in which the 7 is not duplicated in the accompaniment. In these the suspensions, whether tied or untied, fall respectively on the first, second, and third beats of the measure. In 13a a tied-over major 7 on beat 1 resolves, after a passing-tone decoration, to 6 on beat 3; in 13b a non-tied diminished 7 on beat 2 resolves after a repeated note to 6 on beat 3; and in 13c a dissonantly-prepared minor 7 on beat 3^[20] resolves, following an anticipation, on beat 1 of the following measure, where the expected 6 becomes a 3 due to the movement of the bass.

Example 13. a. Dowland, "Amarilli" (cf. Ex. 3); **b.** Cesti, "Intorno" (cf. Ex. 4); **c.** Purcell, "The lonely traveler" (cf. Ex. 7).

²⁰ Precedents for the dissonantly prepared 7th extend back at least as far as Gesualdo. See, for instance, his "Resta di darmi noia" (Book VI, 23, m. 2).

a.

dol - - - ce de - si

b.

(in-)tor no all' i

c.

dis - mal ra - vens cry -

Example 14, from a segment of a villanella with written-out accompaniment by Johann Kapsberger,^[21] illustrates a non-doubled 7 that resolves into an already sounding 6. The

²¹ “Gia risi del mio mal mentre” (*Villanella*, 1619), cited by Thérèse de Goede, “From Dissonance to Note-cluster, the Application of Musical-Rhetorical Figures and Dissonances to Thoroughbass Accompaniment of Early 17th-Century Italian Vocal Solo Music” *Early Music* 33 (2005), 236.

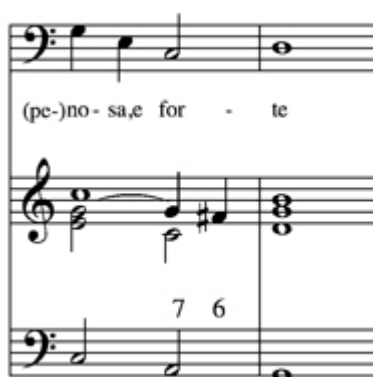
resolution is essentially to a C – G – A chord, which is itself decorated by a B in the bass. Such a movement into a note already present in the accompaniment is similar to the 4-3 suspensions cited in Example 10 above. The simultaneity of effect, on the one hand, of a 7/6 proceeding to a 6, and on the other, of a 4/3 moving to a 3, is characteristic of a new freedom in the handling of dissonance.

Example 14. Johann Hieronymo Kapsberger, "Gia risi del mio mal mentre," *Libro II de villanelle* (1619).



Example 15, from Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione*,^[22] illustrates a 7-6 suspension that occurs in the unrealized accompaniment but not in the vocal part. As with the 4-3 suspension in Example 11 the present example affords evidence that a conscious separation was made at the time between dissonances in one or the other of these two performing media (i.e. in the voice or in the accompaniment).

Example 15. Cavalieri, "Anime dänate," *Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo* (1600).



²² Cited by Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, I, 63.

9-8 suspensions

The 9-8 suspension also owes its origins to the Renaissance, and Johann Staden provides a straightforward and conventional example of it in his thorough-bass treatise of 1626, where the accompaniment is assumed and therefore not realized; this is reproduced in Example 16a.^[23] Purcell, in his written-out accompaniment, treats this suspension with greater freedom in Example 16b, preparing it decoratively and elongating the 9 by means of a dotted note.

Example 16. a. Johann Staden, *Kurzer und einfältiger Bericht* (Nuremberg, 1626); b. Henry Purcell, "When I am laid," *Dido and Aeneas*.

Example 16a shows a single bass line in a five-line staff with a bass clef. It contains three notes: a half note G2, a half note F2, and a half note E2. A slur is placed over the G2 and F2 notes. Example 16b shows a three-part setting in a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with the lyrics "may my wrongs" under the notes G4, A4, and B4. The middle and bottom staves are a lute or keyboard accompaniment in treble and bass clefs respectively. The accompaniment features a 9-8 suspension on the second measure, where the bass line has a dotted half note G2 and the treble line has a half note A2.

6/5 (4/3) suspensions


The 6/5 suspension—in which (as indicated above) the 5, made dissonant by the simultaneous presence of a 6, is thereafter resolved to 3 as the lowest note ascends to 1—may be observed in its most pristine form in Example 17a by Scarlatti. Here a diminished 5 (A^b), not doubled in the accompaniment, is turned into a suspension by the 6 (B^b) in another (in this instance a lower) voice; it is then resolved downwards by step as the bass moves upwards from D to E^b (as illustrated in the reduction). In the example by Cesti as well (17b) the 5 (A) is not duplicated and proceeds downwards against a rising bass, $D^\sharp - E$. In a further written-out example by Scarlatti (17c) a 5 (E^b) in the voice on beat two is resolved to a 3 (D) in the bass on beat 3, exemplifying a form of substitute resolution that arose as part of the freer, chordally-based practice of the baroque era (cf. Ex. 8). Examples 17d and 17e represent later, purely

²³ Johann Staden, *Kurzer und einfältiger Bericht* (Nuremberg, 1626). The 9-8 example is cited by Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, 107.

baroque, forms of the 6/5, in which the bass (or lowest note) does not move upwards by step, as had previously been the case. In 17d by Scarlatti the soloist's 5 (on beat 1) is resolved downwards by step to 4, against an unchanging bass on G, this 4 then becoming another suspension within a chain. In 17e by Frescobaldi a 6/5 sonority also resolves irregularly, with the bass note rising not by the usual 2nd, but rather by a 4th (as seen in the reduction).

Example 17. a. Scarlatti, "Mi rivedi," *Griselda* (cf. Ex. 6); **b.** Cesti, "Intorno," *Orontea* (cf. Ex. 5); Girolamo Frescobaldi, "Ciaccona prima," *Cento partite sopra passacaglia* (1637), m. 8.


a.



(sel)va om-bro-sa

reduction

b. reduction 6/5



no all' i-dol mi-o

reduction

c. 6/5

ta dis-prez-za

reduction

d. 6/5 4

(len-)

reduction

e. 6/5

(O3)

reduction

Example 18 shows a 6/5 that is immediately preceded by its inverted form of 4/3 in passages presumably by Jacopo Corsi (18a)^[24] and by Giulio Caccini (18b). In each instance the solo voice sings a dissonant, and non-doubled, 4 on A, forming a 4/3 sonority. This is then followed by a consonant 6 on the same note, forming a 6/5. The 6/5 in each composer's example resolves normally (as illustrated by the reduction). This succession of a 4/3 followed by a 6/5 is illustrated in the treatise of Bartolomeo Bismantova (Ex. 18c), where the two sonorities are described as being a "preparation to the cadence of 4 and 3,"^[25] i.e. as chords leading up to a 4-3 suspension.

Example 18. a. Jacopo Corsi?, "Almo Dio," *Dafne* (1594-97); b. Giulio Caccini, "Amarilli," Dowland tablature (1610); c. Bartolomeo Bismantova, *Compendio musicale* (1677), 82.

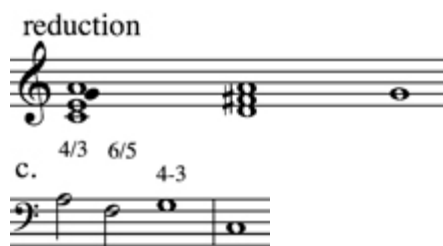
a. 4/3 6/5

reduction

b. 4/3 6/5

²⁴ Cited by Thérèse De Goede, "From Dissonance to Note-Cluster," 234.

²⁵ *Compendio musicale* (1677), cited by de Goede, *Ibid.*, 239.



In Example 19a Peri, in his *Euridice* of 1600, introduces a 4/3 as a purely inverted form of 6/5, in which the 4/3 moves directly to the resolution appropriate to a 6/5 (as shown in the reduction). In the following measure Peri proceeds to a further cadence, in which he adopts a more normal 6/5 cadence. Monteverdi in his *L'Orfeo* of 1607 (19b), perhaps influenced by Peri, also introduces the inverted form, associating it with the text “and too bitter” sung by Euridice in Act 4. In so doing, Monteverdi adopts Peri’s resolution (compare the two reductions). Purcell (19c) makes use of the 4/3 inversion in Dido’s Lament, taking it (like Peri’s and Monteverdi’s) directly to a cadence (see the reduction). Purcell’s version takes on a more decorative form, the note E being colored by its inflection on E^b, and the note G by its neighbor-tone F#.

Example 19. a. Peri, “Per quell vago bosschetto,” *Euridice* (1600); b. Monteverdi, “O dolcissimi lumi,” *L'Orfeo* (1607); Purcell, “When I am laid,” *Dido and Aeneas* (1689).

a. 4/3 6/5

-za im - mo - bil gie

11

reduction

b. $\frac{4}{3}$

e trop- po a - ma - ra

reduction

c. $\frac{4}{3}$

laid - - - in earth

reduction

The $\frac{6}{5}$ with a minor rather than major 6 appears in examples by Giovanni Gabrieli (20a), Monteverdi (20b) and Frescobaldi (20c). Gabrieli's colorful and abrupt $\frac{6}{5}$ (as marked) resolves immediately to a diminished triad on B, thereby adhering to the conventional pattern, before reverting back to an A major triad. Frescobaldi (20c), after introducing a regular $\frac{6}{5}$ on G, proceeds immediately to another $\frac{6}{5}$, this one with a minor 6, on the first beat of the following measure, adopting the very same notes as had Gabrieli, but resolving them more regularly to a major B \flat chord. Monteverdi's minor $\frac{6}{5}$ (20b) is quite unconventional, assuming momentarily the form of a sonority per se, that is of a chord without resolution, unless what follows (as marked in parentheses) can be construed as a mere interruption, with the expected (and normal) resolution following on the F chord that commences the next section.

Example 20. a. Giovanni Gabrieli, "In ecclesiis," *Sacrae symphoniae II* (1615); b. Monteverdi, "O dolcissimi lumi," *L'Orfeo* (1607); c. Girolamo Frescobaldi, "Seconda passacaglia," *Cento partite sopra passacaglia* (1637), mm. 30-31.

a. $6/5$



reduction

b. $6/5$ $6/5$



reduction

c. $6/5$ ()

(e-)clis- si ohi-mè v'o- scu- ra Rott'

(realization)

unfigured bass

reduction



2-3, 2(4)-3, and 2(4/7)-3 suspensions

In the 2-3 (or 9-10) suspension the dissonance appears in the lower note, which resolves downwards by step, the upper note only invoking the dissonance. In seventeenth-century examples the 2 in the upper part is at times enhanced by the adding of a 4, to form a 2(4)-3 suspension, and occasionally by not only a 4 but a 7 as well, creating a 2(4/7)-3 suspension. These various forms of 2-3 suspension are each represented in the thorough-bass treatise of Penna, mainly through intervallic numbers rather than actual notes. In Example 21 four of his citations are given, his original numbers being transcribed into notes in 21b, c, and d. Our own, more modern characterizations of these suspensions are placed after each of his examples.

Example 21. Lorenzo Penna, *Li primi albori musicali* (1672, 2/1684). Penna represents notes with numbers above the stave. The suspension type is indicated after each example.

p. 86



2-3, 9-10

p. 170



2(4)-3, 9(11)-10

p. 183



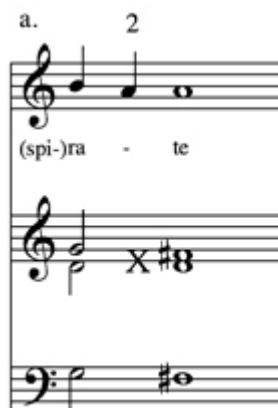
2(4)-3, 9(11)-10



2(4/7)-3, 9(11/14)-10

In Example 22 various types of 2-3 suspension are shown in written-out realizations by Cesti and Purcell. Cesti in 22a introduces a 2 (A) on an off-beat—a metrical placement that represents a distinct departure from earlier (Renaissance) practice—this note eliciting a 2-3 suspension in the bass from beats 1 1/2 to 2. In 22b Cesti adds a 4 on C to the 2 on A above the bass note G, creating a 2(4)-3 suspension that is resolved on the bass note F#. In these instances the 2 and 4 are not in themselves dissonant, but merely precipitate a dissonance in the bass. Even so, the 2 and 4 are not duplicated in the accompaniment, and thus were apparently regarded as dissonant notes by Cesti. Example 22c by Purcell shows a similar 2(4)-3 suspension, in which the 4, also not doubled, is augmented (an A4). And 22d by Purcell illustrates the 2(4/7)-3 suspension, brought about by his adding not only of a 4 (C) but of a 7 (F#) to the essential 2-3 progression.

Example 22. a. Cesti, "Intorno" (cf. Ex. 4); b. Cesti, "Intorno" (cf. Ex. 4); c. Purcell, "When I am laid" (cf. Ex. 8); d. Purcell, "When I am laid" (cf. Ex. 8).



b. 4

c. A4

d. 4.

Still more complex forms of the 2-3 and 2(4)-3 suspension, in unrealized accompaniments by Peri and Monteverdi, appear in Example 23. In Peri's "Quest'humil fera" (23a)²⁶ a 9-10 suspension (G-A to F#-A) commences on the second beat of measure two and is resolved on its fourth beat. Peri, however, places a lower D beneath the resolution. Also rather jarring in this example is the B^b in the accompaniment on beat two, which clashes with the A in the solo voice. Reduction 1 represents the essential notes of the suspension, reduction 2 those of its more elaborate form (the added D being represented by a square note or breve). The figures

²⁶ Cited by De Goede, "From Dissonance to Note-Cluster," 235.

beneath the bass notes—#, b, 4, #3, 2—call (respectively) for a major triad above D, a minor triad above G, and the intervals of 4, major 3, and 2. Such figures are characteristic of examples in which the dissonances appear in the accompaniment while the upper voice remains consonant.

Monteverdi's passage (23b) is similar to, but more audacious than Peri's. As in Peri a G in the bass initiates a 9(11)-10 suspension by the introduction of the notes A and C into the vocal line (mm. 2-3); also like Peri, Monteverdi places a D below the F# resolution in the bass. Monteverdi, however, turns the B^b in the accompaniment into a dissonance in its own right, resulting in a double suspension, G – B^b resolving to F# – A. Reduction 1 illustrates the essential pattern, reduction 2 Monteverdi's more elaborate transformation of it. Monteverdi's continuation in measure four represents a further intensification of the same pattern; following a dissonant, added 7 on C, an escape tone approached and left by leap, the note E^b turns the D in the bass into a suspended 9 that resolves to C, a 10 (see Reduction 1). As in measure three Monteverdi again reinforces the suspended D, this time by placing both an F and an A above it (i.e. a full triad), thereby bringing about a triple suspension (as shown in Reduction 2). It seems appropriate that these daring dissonances were drawn upon by Monteverdi to underscore one of the most poignant moments in his opera, as Orfeo in Act 4 witnesses Euridice descending back into the underworld.^[27]

Example 23. a. Peri, "Quest'humil fera," *Le varie musiche* (1609); b. Monteverdi, "o dolcissimi lumi," *L'Orfeo*.

Part a. shows a vocal line and a bass line. The vocal line has notes for "mi tie - - - ne" with a 9(11) suspension and a 10 resolution. The bass line has notes #, b, 4, #3, 2. Below are two reductions: reduction 1 and reduction 2, both in treble clef.

²⁷ Monteverdi made use of a very similar 9(11)-3 in Act 2, representing Orfeo's initial reaction upon hearing of the death of Euridice (see Ex. 1a).

b.

O dol-cis-si-mi lu-mi io pur vi veg-gio, io pur

reduction 1 reduction 2 reduction 3 reduction 4

7-8 appoggiaturas

The 7-8 appoggiatura (the 7 unprepared or leaped to) represents a new, highly expressive dissonance utilized presumably for the first time in the seventeenth century. It was often reserved for especially intense moments in operas or oratorios. The 7, appearing in a vocal part was not duplicated in the accompaniment, where a simple, and often sustained triad allowed the soloist's appoggiatura to stand out the more markedly.

Peri in *Euridice* (Ex. 24a), with unrealized accompaniment, brings out the text ("dark and horrid fields") by leaping from B^b down to a dissonant F[#] appoggiatura, set against a sustained G minor triad. Monteverdi (Ex. 24b), doubtless with Peri's passage in mind, draws upon the identical notes, B^b to F[#], to underscore Orfeo's reaction upon learning that Euridice has just died. Carissimi (Ex. 24c) adopts the same dissonance, as Jephthe's daughter laments her fate, again using the notes B^b and F[#] prominently against a held G-minor chord. Peri's, Monteverdi's, and Carissimi's accompaniments are unrealized. Later in the century Purcell (Ex. 24d), in a written-out accompaniment, introduces a similar 7-8 pattern to accentuate the dire pronouncements of the First Sorcerer in *Dido and Aeneas*. In this instance, the note E (not doubled in the accompanying strings) is boldly reiterated five times before finally resolving on F; and Purcell (as mentioned above) further enhances this dissonant note by adding to it a 9 and 11 in his string accompaniment.

Example 24. a. Peri, "Funeste piaggie," *Euridice* (1600); **b.** Monteverdi, "Tu se' morta," *L'Orfeo*; **c.** Giacomo Carissimi, "Ecce moriar virgo," *Historia di Jephthe*; **d.** Purcell, "The lonely traveler," *Dido and Aeneas*.

a. 7

Fu - ne - ste Piag - gie om - bro - si or - ri - di Cam - pi

suggested realization

unfigured bass

b. 7

Tu se' mor - ta

suggested realization

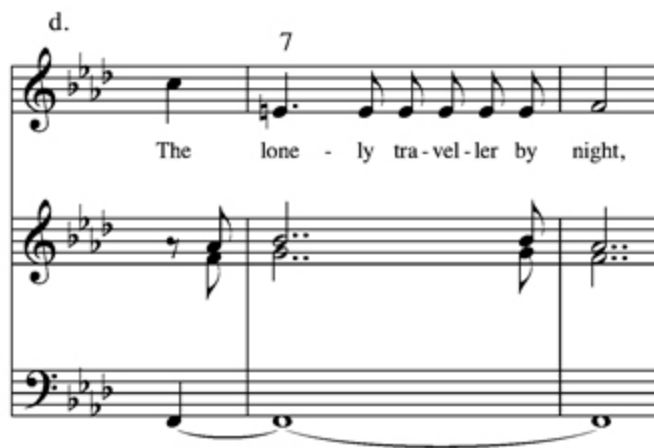
unfigured bass

c. 7

Ec - ce mo - ri - ar vir go

suggested realization

unfigured bass



7-3 and 9-5 escape tones

The escape-tone, another dissonance that first appeared in the baroque period, involves most often a dissonant 7 or 9, neither interval being duplicated in the accompaniment. The resolution is not by step, as expected in a suspension, but rather by leap to another note in the same chord. Common successions were from 7-3 or 9-5, these patterns being drawn upon by a considerable number of composers, as may be seen in Example 25.

Peri was among the first to utilize the device, introducing it to intensify one of the more expressive moments in his *Euridice* of 1600 (Ex.25a). In his unrealized bass the movement to a D-major triad (a chord assured by the # beneath the bass note D) in the second cited measure, brings about a dissonant 7 on C on beat 3. This C, treated as an escape tone, is leaped away from down to F# via a melodically disjunct diminished 5th, forming a 7-3 succession, a configuration that underscores Orfeo's plaintive "ohimè." Monteverdi's adoption of the pattern (Ex. 25b), most likely under Peri's influence, and also on unrealized bass, is more truncated, showing quick 8th notes outlining a diminished 5th from D to G#, and set against a sustained E chord in the accompaniment. As in Peri the pattern is again associated with Orfeo's exclamation of "ohimè." Caccini (Ex. 25c) shifts the formula to a 9-5 descent, also in conjunction with a diminished 5th and an association with the word "ohimè."

Schütz (Ex.25d) enlists the escape tone (again above an unrealized bass) to lend emphasis to the text words "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me" in one of his most graphic pictorial representations. Undoubtedly with earlier Italian models in mind, Schütz turns the note A (m. 2, beat 2) into an escape tone that descends by leap to E, using a 9-6 variant of the pattern. This note E becomes part of a 6/5 suspension on G – B^b – D – E that resolves normally to an A – C# – E chord. Adding further to the highly-charged nature of this passage, Schütz introduces parallel 2nds in the voice parts (basses 1 and 2) against the pre-cadential triad in the accompaniment; these 2nds result from the combining of a 4-3 suspension, D – C#, in bass 2 with a chord tone and

anticipation, E – D, in bass 1.^[28] In Example 25e Purcell, in his written-out example, perhaps familiar with earlier usages, associates the escape tone and descending diminished 5th, 7-3, with the text word “trouble” in Dido’s final aria, thereby further enhancing the mood of pathos conveyed by the piece as a whole.

As the above examples illustrate, the absence of dissonance duplication in written-out examples is a procedure followed as well in unrealized examples. It is also evident that a similar treatment of dissonances was transmitted from one seventeenth-century composer to another, forming a direct line from the earlier to the later century, that is, from Peri, to Monteverdi, to Cavalli, and finally to Purcell.

Example 25. Peri. *Euridice* (1600); b. Monteverdi, "O dolcissimi lumi," *L'Orfeo*; c. Caccini, "Ohimè, se tant amate"; d. Schütz, "Saul, Saul, was verfolgt mich," *Symphoniae sacrae III* (1650); e. Purcell, "When I am laid," *Dido and Aeneas*

a. 7 - 3

figured bass and suggested realization

b. 7 - 3

bass and realization

c. 9-5

²⁸ This cadence formula, utilizing parallel 2nds, was frequently drawn upon later in the century by Corelli, for which reason it has come to be called “the Corelli clash.”

d.

bass soloists 1.2.

9 - 6 (4 - 3)

Saul, Saul, Saul, Saul was ver- folgst du mich

e.

7 - 3

no trou - ble

The Treatment of Solo Dissonance in the Seventeenth-Century Lament

To conclude the present survey, a special consideration is given to the seventeenth-century lament, a genre in which solo dissonance played a particularly prominent role. Accompaniments to laments usually took the form of a recurrent or ostinato single line in the bass. These bass patterns, most often involving a descending 4th, were presented simply in melodic form in the original sources, leaving their chordal realization entirely in the hands of an accompanist. Modern transcriptions also most often fail to provide an interpretation of these basses, falling back simply on the presentation of a single melodic line. What sources of evidence might be drawn upon for the filling out of such basses? Three in particular might be proposed. The first is Purcell's written-out accompaniment for Dido's Lament ("When I am laid in earth"), which as we have seen is free (but for a minor exception) of the doubling of solo dissonances. Secondly there is "The Rule of the Octave," which, simply stated, advised that the first and fifth degrees of a scale were to be realized as 5/3 or root position triads, and the other

degrees (mainly the seventh and sixth) as 6/3 or first-inversion chords.^[29] A third form of evidence is provided by the kinds of harmonization typical of seventeenth-century thorough-bass as outlined in the present paper. These thorough-bass accompaniments were, as we have seen, predominantly consonant, allowing the dissonances, when present, to stand out all the more markedly against them.

Monteverdi's "Amor," part two of his "Lament of the Nymph" (for solo soprano, two solo tenors, and bass), appearing in his Eighth Book of Madrigals of 1638,^[30] became the essential point of departure for subsequent seventeenth-century laments by Cavalli, Cesti, Purcell and others. This work rests throughout on the underlying bass ostinato A – G – F – E. In accordance with "The Rule of the Octave" this would yield a chordal succession of i – v⁶ – iv⁶ – V in A minor.^[31]

Some evidence of Monteverdi's adoption of such a chordal scheme may be seen in an intriguing parallel between one segment of his "Amor" and Frescobaldi's *Cento partite sopra passacaglia*, which first appeared in print in 1637, a year prior to Monteverdi's vocal work.^[32] Both composers, as is shown in Example 26, make use of an identical strident 2nd, A – B, continuing this interval through several successive chord forms. Frescobaldi's chordal framework, although disguised by melodic decorations, can be reduced to a pattern that corresponds closely with the one produced by The Rule of the octave: A – C/ G – E/ F – D/ E – B, or i – v⁶ – iv⁶ – V, the very pattern suggested above for Monteverdi. The two "Rule-of-Octave" patterns, plus the unusual 2nd dissonance imposed upon them is illustrated in the reduction. A slight difference arises in Frescobaldi's insertion of the bass note D, which brings about a 4/3 to 6/5 succession (corresponding with those seen above in Ex.18). Monteverdi, on the other hand, confines his succession to the 4/3 alone (as he had also in Ex. 19 above). The

²⁹ The "Rule of the Octave" is described, for example, by Denis Delair in the second edition of his *Traité d'accompagnement* of 1690. See the translation by Charlotte Mattax, *Accompaniment on Theorbo and Harpsichord: Denis Delair's Treatise of 1690* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1991), 26.

³⁰ *Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi* (Venice, 1638). Modern edition in *Tutte le opere*, ed. Gian Francesco Malipiero (Asola, 1954-68), VIII, 286.

³¹ Ellen Rosand suggests that either this pattern or a "modal" i – VII – VI – V may have served as possible harmonizations of Monteverdi's Lament in "The Descending Tetrachord: an Emblem of Lament," *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979), 349.

³² *Girolamo Frescobaldi: Orgel und Klavierwerke*, ed. Pierre Pidoux (Kassel, 1949-54), III, 77. These variations were added to the third edition of the *Toccate*, (Rome, 1615, 3/1637), but they could have been circulated earlier, as could Monteverdi's "Amor" as well, leaving uncertain which composer may have influenced the other.

startling $3/2$ above G (G – A – B) appears to be a novel sonority, initially utilized by either Frescobaldi or Monteverdi, depending on which work may have been composed first.

Example 26. a. Frescobaldi, "Seconda Ciaccona," *Cento partite sopra passacaglia*, mm. 1-3; Monteverdi, "Amor" (Eighth Book of Madrigals, 1638), mm. 63-69.

The image displays three musical examples labeled a, b, and reduction. Example a shows a two-staff instrumental piece in 3/2 time, with a treble staff featuring a melodic line and a bass staff providing harmonic support. Example b shows a vocal and instrumental setting, with a vocal line in the treble staff and a bass line in the bass staff. The lyrics 'mi - se - rel - la ah' and 'più, no, no!' are written below the vocal line. Example reduction shows a simplified version of the harmonic structure, with a treble staff and a bass staff. The time signatures 3/2, 4/3, 6/5, and 5/4 are indicated above the staves.

In Monteverdi's Lament the repeating of the same chords throughout contributes a stable element to the musical design, one that serves as a foil to the greater freedom of thematic material as well as phrase lengths accorded to the solo parts. The chord scheme itself, being entirely consonant in its content, allows the dissonances, non-doubled, to stand out the more decisively and expressively.

Two portions of Monteverdi's "Amor" (mm. 5-24 and 53-63), with a realization based on the pattern of $i - v^6 - iv^6 - V$, are cited in Examples 27 and 28. The dissonances that occur against this pattern are summarized in the following table. The proposed accompaniment of these dissonances acquires plausibility in that many of the patterns directly correspond with those encountered in examples by other seventeenth-century composers, as described above. Of special significance are the resolutions of suspensions to notes already occupied in the accompaniment,

4 to occupied 3 (as in Ex. 10), 7 to occupied 6 (as in Ex. 14). The 6/5 with show. unconventional resolution (Ex. 17) and the 6/5 with minor 6th (Ex. 20), are both used elsewhere in Monteverdi, as are the 2(4)-3 (Ex. 23) and 9(11)-10 suspensions (Ex. 23), the appoggiaturas (Ex. 24) and the escape tones (Ex. 25).

Table 2.

measures		comparable examples
5 – 10	The pitches of the soloists match with those in the accompaniment	
11	The two Cs act as appoggiaturas to D	(Ex. 24)
12	C and A form a cadential 6-5 and 4-3 against the E triad in the accompaniment	(Ex. 10)
14	D forms a 6/5 with a non-conventioinal resolution	(Exs. 20b, 20c)
20	An unprepared and non-doubled 7 (following a rest) resolves to 6 in m. 21	(Ex. 13c)
22	F, a 7 above a full sixth chord, resolves to 6	(Ex. 14)
23	E is an escape tone, resolving to A in the two tenors	(Ex 25)
24	C and A form a cadential 6 and 4 against an E triad	(Ex. 10)

Example 27. Monteverdi, "Amor" mm. 5-24.

The musical score for Example 27, Monteverdi's "Amor" measures 5-24, is presented in three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, with lyrics "A- mor, Di- ce- a, A- mor,". The middle and bottom staves are accompaniment parts in bass clef. The time signature is 3/4. A circled "5" is placed above the first measure of the vocal line. The accompaniment features complex chordal textures, including triads and dyads, with some measures showing a 6/5 interval.

6/5 6/4 (13) 6/5 A- mor,

il ciel mi-ran do, il piè fer-mò

A- mor, do- ve, do- v'è la fè che'l tra-di- tor,

A- mor, do- ve, do- v'è la fè che'l tra-di- tor,

7 7—3 6/4

che'l tra-di- tor giu-rò? Mi-se-rel-la!

che'l tra-di- tor giu-rò? Mi-se-rel-la!

Table 3.

measures		comparable examples
53	G# acts as an appoggiatura, resolving to A	(Ex. 24b)
54	A and C invoke a 2(4)-3 suspension on G in the bass	(Ex. 23a)
59	E is an escape tone resolving to A	(Ex. 25a, b, e)
61	G initiates a dissonantly prepared 7-6 suspension	(13c)
	F#, the resolution becomes part of an irregularly resolved 6/5	(Exs. 17d, e, 20c)
64	A forms a cadential 4 against a full E triad	(Ex. 10c)

Example 28. Monteverdi, "Amor," mm. 53-65.

7-8 2(4)

(53) non lon- tan lon- tan da me. No, no,

ah, mi-se-rel-la!

7-3 7

che i suoi mar-ti-ri più non di-ram-mi

ah, mi-se-rel-la! (?)



Francesco Cavalli, Monteverdi's successor in Venice, transferred the idea of the lament on a recurrent bass into his operas. An early instance may be seen in the aria "Piangete occhi dolenti" from his *Egisto* of 1643,^[33] two portions of which (mm. 1-12 and 37-49) are cited in Examples 29 and 30. Cavalli, like Monteverdi, made use of the falling 4th, but changed it into its chromatic form, A – G# – G – F# – F – E, a pattern that had been utilized earlier in instrumental works by Frescobaldi and others. This pattern, harmonized in accordance with the above "Rule", is fairly close to the one that was most likely used in Monteverdi's Lament: i – V⁶ – v⁶ – IV⁶ – iv⁶ – V. As in Monteverdi, such a scheme again provides a consistently consonant background and lends an overall formal coherence to the aria. Here follows a description of Cavalli's treatment of dissonances and their suggested similarities with earlier seventeenth-century examples. Especially notable, as in Monteverdi, are the 4-3 and 7-6 suspensions to notes already occupied in the accompaniment (as in Ex. 10 and Ex. 14), the unconventionally resolved 6/5 suspensions (as in Ex. 17 and Ex. 20), and the escape tones (as in Ex. 25). A dissonant form not previously discussed is the retardation in m. 11, which does have a precedent in an example by Saracini (cited in Ex. 31).

Table 4.

measures		comparable examples
1	F forms an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Exs. 17d, e, 20b)
2	F, a suspended 7 above a sixth chord, resolves to 6 on E	(Ex. 14)
3	E is a suspended 7 above a sixth chord that is altered to an augmented 6 with D#	(Ex. 14)
6	C, a suspended d4 against a full sixth chord, resolves to 3 on B	(Ex. 10a, b)
7	B, a suspended A4 against a full (augmented) sixth chord,	(Ex. 10a, 10b)

³³ Ed. Raymond Leppard (London, 1977). Leppard realizes the bass differently from what is suggested here.

measures		comparable examples
	resolves to 3 on A	
10	D is an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Exs. 20b, c)
11	D is a retardation, a dissonance occurring earlier, for instance, in the composer Saracini	(see Ex. 31)

Example 29. Francesco Cavalli, "Plangete occhi dolente," *Egisto* (1643), mm. 1-12.

① 6/5 d7 7 d4

Pian- ge- te och- chi do- len- ti, e al fle- bil

⑦ 4 4/3 6/5 (ret)

pian- to mi- o pian- ga,

Table 5.

measures		comparable examples
39	E, an escape tone, resolves as a 7-3 pattern	(Ex. 25a, e)
43	B, an escape tone, resolves upwards to D	
45	F (intensifying m. 1) is an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Exs. 20b, c)
46	F, a suspended 7 over a sixth chord, resolves on E	(Ex. 14)
47	E, a suspended 7 over a sixth chord, resolves on D	(Ex. 14)
48	D, a suspended 7 over a sixth chord, resolves on C	(Ex. 14)
	C forms an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Ex. 20b, c)

Example 30. Cavalli, "Piangete," mm. 37-49.

Example 31. Claudio Saracini, "D te parto," *Le seconde musiche* (Venice, 1620).

Antonio Cesti, clearly affected by Cavalli, also frequently introduced the lament on a patterned bass into his operas. In the aria "Disseratemi abissi" from his *L'Argia* (1655),^[34] for instance, he adopted the same chromatically descending 4th pattern as had Cavalli in *Egisto*, positioning it, however, on E instead of on A. Like Cavalli, Cesti also occasionally substituted an augmented sixth chord for the iv⁶. In two portions of this aria (mm. 1-13 and 41-48), cited in

³⁴ Facsimile edition in *Italian Opera 1640-1770*, ed. Howard M. Brown (Garland Publishing, 1978), III, 138-9.

Example 32, Cesti's dissonances display a remarkable closeness to the ones employed earlier by Cavalli. And once again they may be found to have reference to comparable examples in other seventeenth-century composers, as discussed above. For example 4-3 to occupied 3 (Ex. 10), 7-6 to occupied 6 (Ex. 14), and the unconventionally resolved 6/5 (Ex. 20).

Table 6.

measures		comparable examples
4	A, a non-doubled 7 above a B triad, extends through the entire measure, before resolving to A in measure 5	(Ex. 13)
5	C creates an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Ex. 20b, c)
6	C is a suspended 7 over a sixth chord	(Ex. 14)
7	B, decorated ornamentally with C – D – C, is a suspended 7 over a sixth chord	(Ex. 14)
11	F# is a suspended 4 over a sixth chord	(Ex. 10a, b)
12	E, decorated ornamentally with F# - G – F#, is a suspended 4 over a triad	(Ex. 10c)
42	A is an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Ex. 20b, c)
43	G is an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Ex. 20b, c)
46	A is an unconventionally resolved 6/5	(Ex. 20b, c)

Example 32. Antonio Cesti, "Disseratemi abissi," *L'Argia* (1655), mm. 1-13 and 41-48.

The image displays three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 3/2 time. The notation includes a vocal line in the treble clef and a basso continuo line in the bass clef. The lyrics are in Italian, and the figured bass is written in numbers below the bass line.

Staff 1 (Measures 1-6): The measure number 1 is circled. The lyrics are "Dis-se-ra-te-mi a-bis-si io ven-go, io ven-go a". The figured bass for measures 1-6 is: 8:, 8:, 8:, 7, 6/5, d7.

Staff 2 (Measures 7-12): The measure number 7 is circled. The lyrics are "pian-ge-re - - lo ven-go a pian-ge-re". The figured bass for measures 7-12 is: 7, 4, 4, 4/3, 8:, 8:.

Staff 3 (Measures 13-18): The measure number 41 is circled. The lyrics are "cen-tro del-le pe-ne, del-le pe-ne". The figured bass for measures 13-18 is: 6/5, 6/5, 6/5, 6/5, 8:, 8:.

In measure 12 the final E, if correct—instead of D#—creates a 4 + 3 or 4/3 clash just prior to the final chord. This is a sonority sometimes encountered in seventeenth and early-eighteenth century cadences (see Ex. 33). In Denis Gaultier (33a)^[35] the notes E and F appear together prior to a cadence on F; in Alessandro Scarlatti (33b) A and B precede a cadence on A; and in Johann Friedrich Agricola's illustration of a recitative cadence (33c) C# and D lead into a D major chord. Such harsh cadential dissonances were later incorporated by Domenico Scarlatti as acciaccaturas into certain of his keyboard sonatas.^[36]

³⁵ Cited by Peter Williams, "The Harpsichord Acciaccatura: Theory and Practice in Harmony, 1650-1750," *Musical Quarterly*, 54 (1968), 515.

³⁶ These pre-cadential dissonances are discussed more fully in my article "Domenico Scarlatti's Acciaccaturas and Their Role in the Design of His Keyboard Sonatas," *Early Keyboard Journal* 23 (2005), 93-124 (in particular 98-105).

Example 33. a. Denis Gaultier, lute manuscript (1680s); b. A. Scarlatti, keyboard manuscript; c. Johann Friedrich Agricola, recitative cadence.

a. $4/3$

b. $4/3$

c. $4/3$

realization

figured bass

* * *

Although seventeenth-century thorough-bass realizations have until now often incorporated solo dissonances, evidence from the time, both in written-out and unrealized basses (i.e. single bass lines with or without figures) conclusively shows that composers consistently and systematically avoided such doublings. This indicates that Werckmeister's admonition that this duplicating can detract from (or "spoil") the beauty of a soloist's dissonances, was more commonly observed by contemporary composers than has been suspected. The practice of setting consonant chords against dissonances became a means of more sharply defining these dissonances, resulting in harmonic formations that were more intense than those commonly accepted by modern practitioners of thorough bass. The clashes of 4 against full $5/3$ chords or of

7 against full 6/3 chords in particular may seem shocking to our ingrained sensibilities, but they nonetheless more truly reflect the original nature of seventeenth-century sound than has hitherto been surmised. Such disparities between solo dissonance and the chords accompanying them appear to have had a prominent place, for example, in what were among the most overtly expressive of seventeenth-century musical compositions, the laments of composers such as Monteverdi, Cavalli, and Purcell.