



Approaches to accompaniment on the baroque guitar c.1590-c.1730

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Abstract

The five-course guitar was used as an instrument for accompaniment from the mid-sixteenth century to the late eighteenth century, yet its importance in the history of the instrument has largely been overlooked in scholarship. This thesis is the first comprehensive study of the performance practice of the extant guidelines with a view to understanding the development of accompaniment on the instrument and how it changed and developed during this period. This thesis examines the chronological development of the performance practice in such a way that parallels may be drawn between the extant sources and treatises for other instruments used for accompaniment. Guitar accompaniment was also strongly influenced by the performance practice associated with alfabeto chord symbols. This thesis provides an understanding of the more idiomatic characteristics of guitar accompaniment stemming from a detailed evaluation of the true sophisticated language of alfabeto is provided for the first time. This study provides a complete re-evaluation of the guitar as an instrument of accompaniment, challenging the past relegation of the instrument to a 'frivolous' musical repertoire; and examines various approaches that were adopted in different performance contexts.

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