

Mirella Vita

Dutch Harp Music

Translated from Italian by Rita Connelly



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DE HARPENER.

A une époque qu'il serait difficile de préciser, quelques-uns de ceux qui les jouèrent, reçurent des dénominations qui sont restées, dans la suite, des noms de famille. Aussi, aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles, rencontrons-nous des appellations de ce genre, précédées d'un nom de baptême, et positivement légales. A preuve celles-ci : *de Pipere*, le flûtiste; *Vander Luute*, du luth; *Cisterman*, l'homme au sistre; *de Vedelaere*, le violoniste; *de Harpeneer*, le harpiste; *de Trompere*, le trompette; *Sacqueboute*, saquebutte (2); *Akar*, naquaire, toutes appellations qui n'ont pas d'autre origine.

Above: De Harpener, from the private collection of E. Witsenburg.

Below: Old Dutch names from: E. VAN DER STRAETEN, La musique aux Pays-Bas, 1st volume, page 191.

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CHAPTER I

During my career spanning half a century, like all my fellow harpists I constantly had to grapple with the commonly held view that the harp has neither music nor history of its own.

Fortunately, over the years I have been able to give the lie to this myth and have tried to bring to light some of the vast repertoire, both early and modern, expressly composed for this instrument which has been treated somewhat as an outsider in the musical world.

The research work for my books on Italian and Swiss harp music was plain sailing because source materials were specific titles and title pages. Were I to write books on French, German, Austrian, British, Bohemian, Spanish, Portuguese or Scandinavian harp music, the work involved would be equally smooth and straightforward.

However, where Dutch music is concerned, the approach is rather different, because here it is the painters, treatise-writers and historians who provide the evidence and guidance necessary to discover the musical customs and traditions where the harp played a significant part.

Performers looking for pieces of music may use this book as follows: chapter II deals with treatises, chapter III with paintings, chapter IV with history and research accounts. Chapters V and VI are concerned with confusions in terminology. Chapter VII describes recent developments and chapters VIII and IX cover composers and pieces of music. Libraries and publishers are listed with their addresses in chapters X and XI, and finally chapter XII consists of the index based on the various groups of performers.

In this last chapter harpists will find the composers most suited to their programme, and can then turn to chapters VIII and IX for details. The actual pieces can be obtained by consulting chapters X and XI.

I wish you every success in your search, in your rehearsals and in your concerts !

In order to define what is Dutch or non-Dutch in early music, I have followed the current approach, i.e. all art and history prior to the separation of the "Seven Provinces" in the 16th century is the common heritage of the Low Countries, whereas everything pertaining to those courageous lands from then onwards is specifically Dutch.

CHAPTER II TREATISES

As has been mentioned, researchers trying to piece together material on the history of the harp must look for evidence which has escaped the notice of scholars concentrating on other aspects of the history of music.

An excellent field of research is the study of Treatises on music. A brief look at the most famous pillars of musical wisdom of the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th centuries clearly shows that the harp was very much part of musical culture.

The earliest treatises were written partly in Latin, so that they could be read and adopted in as many countries as possible: music itself knew no boundaries and Latin was the international language of culture.

Fifteen eminent authors wrote about the harp in their Treatises. They are listed here in alphabetical order, and then reviewed according to the chronological order of their books.

TREATISE WRITERS ON THE HARP (in alphabetical order)

AGAZZARI AGOSTINO (1578-1640) – Treatise 1607
ARNAULT DE ZWOLLE (c. 1400-1466) – Treatise 1440
BERMUDO JUAN (XVI century) – Treatise 1549-1555
BLANKENBURG QUINTUS VAN (1654 - c. 1739) – Treatise 1739
FERNANDEZ DE HUETE DIEGO (XVII-XVIII centuries) – Treatise 1702-1704
GALILEI VINCENZO (1533-1591) – Treatise 1581
GLAREANUS HENRICUS (1488-1563) – Treatise 1547
JUBENARDI BARTOLOMEO (? - after 1639) – Treatise 1634
MERSENNE MARIN (1588-1648) – Treatise 1636-37
MINGUET Y IROL PABLO (? - 1801) – Treatise 1774
PRAETORIUS MICHAEL (1571-1621) – Treatise 1615
RUIZ DE RIBAYAZ LUCAS (XVII century) – Treatise 1677
SANZ GASPAR (1640-1710) – Treatise 1674
TORRES MARTINEZ BRAVO JOSEPH (1665-1738) – Treatise 1702 and 1736
VENEGAS DE HENESTROSA LUYS (XVI century) – Treatise 1578

It can be seen that the earliest as well as one of the last treatise writers in this list are both Dutch. And between the time of Arnault de Zwolle and Quintus Van Blankenburg we find treatises from Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Spain and France, all bearing witness to the vitality of the harp.

ARNAULT DE ZWOLLE (c. 1400-1466)

Arnault graduated in Paris, and was an astronomer, doctor and engineer. His talents were greatly appreciated during the years he spent at the Court of Philip the Good in Dijon.

The harp was held in high regard at the Burgundy Court and the Dukes themselves played it. As well as astronomical instruments, Arnault also made musical instruments for musicians to play on all Court occasions.

His treatise, written in Latin around 1440, is kept at the National Library in Paris (manuscript latin 7295) and describes in detail the construction of musical instruments. Arnault has a preference for keyboard instruments, but he also gives attention to the lute and the harp. His text is descriptive rather than inventive.

The French translation was printed in Paris in 1932, edited by Le Cerf and Labarde. Harp construction is described on page 10.

Et par ce même procédé de la règle peuvent être marquées les divisions des touches sur la harpe (2). En effet, marquez d'abord sur la caisse de la harpe autant de parties égales que vous voudrez [faire] de notes, puis faites une règle sur laquelle [les divisions] soient également tracées, et placez à son extrémité une autre règle suivant un angle correspondant à [celui de] la forme de la harpe, et là où il vous aura plu de poser d'abord la première corde, etc. (3). Et notez que le *clavisimbalum* peut être

corda correspondens divisioni trunci. Et per istum eundem modum regule signari possunt divisiones clavium in cythara, quia primo signentur in ventre || 27 cithare tot divisiones (4) equales quot notarum placuerit; deinde fiat regula in qua protrahantur similiter, et in ejus extremitate affigatur alia regula ad angulum || 28 talem sicut est forma cithare, et ubi (5) primo placuerit ponere cordam primam, etc. Et nota quod clavisimbalum potest

HENRICUS GLAREANUS (1488-1563)

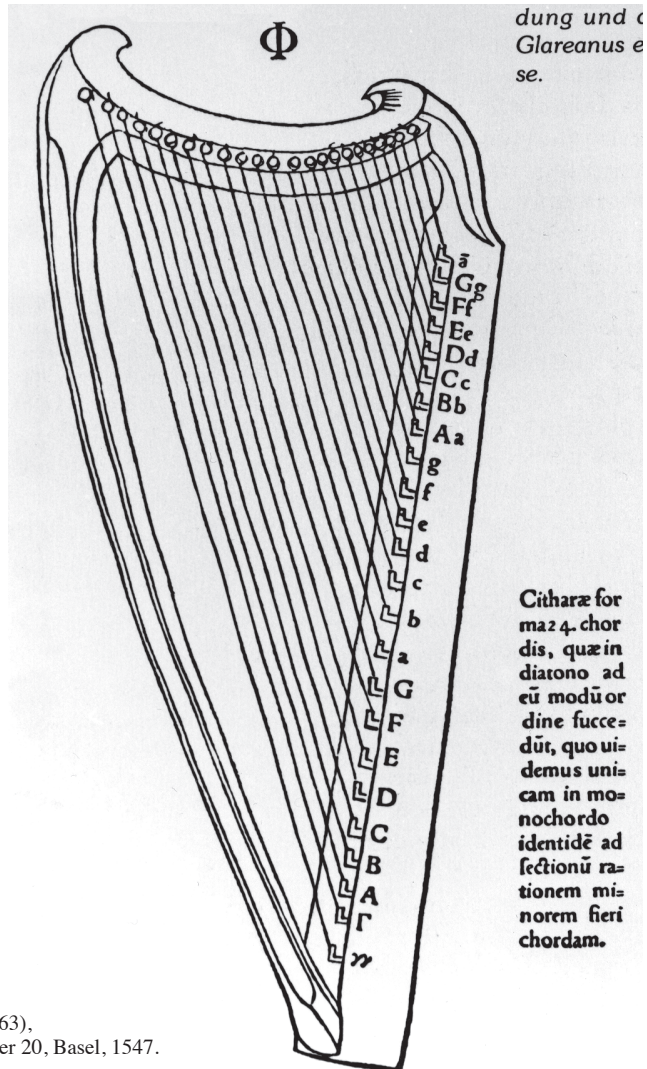
Heinrich Loriti, known as Glareanus because he was born in Mollis in the Swiss Canton of Glarus, was a poet, humanist, philosopher, harpist and composer.

He was Poet Laureate at the Court of Maximilian I, Professor at Basle University and a good friend of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Like Erasmus, Glareanus refused to take sides in disputes at the time of the Reformation.

His neutral stance cut short his brilliant University career, but his high reputation among scholars was not tarnished. After resigning from Basle University, he opened a school at Freiburg in Breisgau which was attended by the best students in Europe. He wrote two books on music: a slim volume written in 1516, later revised and enlarged by him into the famous treatise "Dodecachordon", printed in Basle in 1547.

In this wide-ranging work written in Latin, Glareanus refers to the harp as "cithara" and regards it as an instrument of prime importance. The harp he describes has yet only one row of strings, so that alterations and various tonalities were obtained by means of the ancient practice of "scordatura".

Modern reprint, edited by Clemens Miller, American Institute of Musicology, 1965.



HENRICUS GLAREANUS (1488-1563),
from: *Dodecachordon*, I, chapter 20, Basle, 1547.
One row harp (cithara) tuning.

JUAN BERMUDO (16th century)

Fray Bermudo's 1549 edition of *Declaración de instrumentos musicales* consisted of one volume, whereas the 1555 Osuna edition comprised five volumes. This enlargement was made to meet the demands of Fray Bermudo's fellow musicians. Five chapters of the fourth book (88, 89, 90, 91 and 92) are devoted to the harp. Chapter 88 is entitled "El arte de entender y tañer el harpa". Here, Bermudo sings the praises of Ludovico, the Court harpist of "los reyes católicos" who is reported to have been able to make alterations on the one-row harp by using a special finger technique. Bermudo goes on to describe in detail problems regarding the harp "de dos órdenes".

The facsimile of Fray Bermudo's treatise was edited by Marcario Santiago Kastner in Kassel and Basle in 1957, published by Bärenreiter.



Libro quarto:
 Arte de entender y tañer la harpa
 Dela inteligencia Dela perfectió par
 dela harpa. Cap. lxxxvij.
 particular dela harpa. Capitulo. lxxxviii.

Para entender la harpa en todas las cosas se requiere saber, que se ciertos capitulos para entender. En el primero se trata de la inteligencia de la harpa, que es algunas otras cosas a este de entender y aprender. No ay numero de cuerdas determinado para este instrumento. Algunas vezes le ponen veinte y quatro, que son toda la mano y mas quatro cuerdas abaxo de quantas para baxo las clavijas los modos naturales, es oltava. Como G solbert tena a gamas para primero y oltavo modo: dize a fijas para quinto y sexto, a Elami para tercero y quarto. A solbert para primero y segundo cuerdas que son oltava. Y porque G solbert tena en oltavo modo dize tambien cuerdas que son oltava. Otras harpas traen veinte y siete cuerdas. Para entender las tales cuerdas, no ay mas que saber: fino coger el primer blanco del acorde. Tirar las quatro cuerdas ya dize abaxo de gamas, y tres arriba de ella. Si mas cuerdas paxieren: y si multiplicando las tiras, se van notando como pueden proceder en sus notas. Quando este instrumento se hizo: se hizo en el genero diatonico, ni ay clavijas de sustentado, ni puntos en sus notas. Ahora que se tañer el genero cromatico, para tañer lo por la harpa: no puede ser en el temple que tiene porque le faltan las clavijas de sustentado. C. lxxxviii.

Todos los modos accidentales que en el monedado se tañen se pueden tañer en la harpa porque se faltan las clavijas de los tonos. Aun los modos naturales no todos se pueden tañer: pero se saltan los sustentados para baxar las clavijas. Todos los ranchos que en este capitulo de traseras particulares. Para tañer primero por D solbert, que es la buena cuerda, por no tener sustentado para baxar las clavijas de oltava y quinta: y para tañer los ranchos de otros modos: baxa de. Dize, que el número de los tonos: quando se baxa a las clavijas: poniendo el dedo debajo de la cuerda, la simonana y baxa a la clavija de sustentado. Para desferre y certidumbre en entender para este. Otro es el dicho primero por D solbert, con saber la cuerda quaxera, que es el solbert y su finitico mayor y si fueren entender si oltava: se puede sustentado para la clavija. Quando quaxera que el modo primero traen los, se que algunos se guarden usen a darlo: tañendo lo por la finitico, para de abaxar una cuerda, que es la primera y las oltavas un finitico mayor. Ella es el mi de baxo y bu de se fa. Con este, y con la quaxera para la clavija que se se faldia: se puede tañer. Si se tañer primero lo justito tañer por la sexta cuerda, que es A: no tena necesidad de abaxar cuerda: para el fin, que lo tiene natural.

Above: JUAN BERMUDO (16th century), title page from: *Declaración de instrumentos musicales*, Osuna, 1555. Below: *Idem*, front page of chapter 88.

LUYS VENEGAS DE HENESTROSA (16th century)

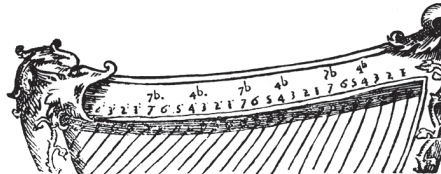
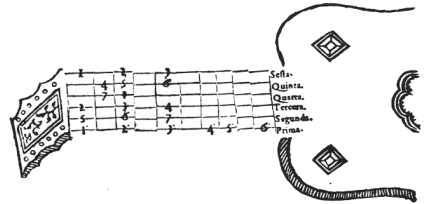
The book *Libro de cifra nueva para tecla, arpa y vihuela*, Alcalá de Henares 1557, was transcribed into modern notation by Higinio Anglés and is part of the volume *La música en la Corte de Carlos V*, Barcelona, Instituto Español de Musicología, 1944.

“Las cifras” (or tablature numbers) common to all three instruments are reproduced one below the other on page 160 of this volume. Venegas de Henestrosa thus teaches harpsichordists and harpists how to read the tablature of the Spanish lute (vihuela) i.e. the notation most commonly used in Spain at the time. After explaining about “cifra” and “diapasón” (tuning), he writes as follows: “... because the vihuela is more perfect than the harpsichord, but it is also more difficult. Since it is essential to know where to place the fingers on the vihuela in order to follow its tablature, I thought it would be helpful to show all three instruments, indicating which fret, key and harp string the numbers correspond to”.

These words make clear one of the reasons why the harp (one-row, or “arpa doppia”, or “arpa de dos órdenes”) was overlooked in later years by inattentive scholars, who “deleted” it from this period of history when it was enjoying its highest splendour. The fact that harpists could easily read both lute and vihuela tablature as well as harpsichord notation escaped the notice of Historians.

Anyone looking for a specific annotation referring to the harp will not normally find it on Spanish front pages, precisely because the harp was so widespread as to make particular reference to it unnecessary.

Little is known of Venegas de Henestrosa, apart from his being in Toledo in 1535 in the service of Cardinal Tavera.



Above: LUYS VENEGAS DE HENESTROSA (16th century), Plate from: *Libro de cifra nueva para tecla, arpa y vihuela*, Alcalá de Henares, 1557. Below: *Idem*, a guide to tablature.

AGOSTINO AGAZZARI (1578-1640)

Agazzari studied in Siena and lived there all his life, apart from four years spent in Rome (1602-1606) as *Praefectus Musicae* at the German-Hungarian Collegium.

His clear and concise treatise *Del sonare sopra il basso continuo con tutti li stromenti* (On playing over a thorough bass with all instruments), Siena, D. Falcini, 1607, is still used today by music students.

On page 3 he makes a distinction between “strumenti di fondamento” (instruments playing the thorough bass) and “strumenti da ornamento” (the higher voices) and considers the harp suited to both of these groups.

He advises the use of instrumental Basso Continuo in pieces for a small number of single voices (not choral pieces) i.e. pieces usually marked as S.A.T.B. 5,6 in all countries.

The Vatican Library in Rome has one of his works entitled *Stille soavi di celeste aurora, per 3, 4, 5 voci, col basso per sonare*, opus 19, Venezia, Stampe del Gardano, appresso Bartolomeo Magni, 1620.



AGOSTINO AGAZZARI (1578-1640), Title page of: *Del sonare sopra il basso con tutti li stromenti*, Siena, 1607.

MICHAEL PRAETORIUS (1571-1621)

Praetorius was born in Thuringia and was Kappelmeister at Lüneburg in 1604. Later he entered the service of the Duke of Brunswick as organist, then Kappelmeister, and lastly as secretary to the Duke; he also had a prebend as Prior of a monastery near Gotha. He himself informs us that he wrote thirty-one volumes of sacred music, nine of secular music and several others which remained in manuscript form. But his most important work, for which he is still famous today, is the treatise *Syntagma Musicum*, printed in Wittenberg between 1615 and 1620. The second volume (1618-20) entitled *De Organographia* is written in a mixture of Latin and German. Chapters XXX and XXXII clear up an old translation mistake that caused confusion from ancient times up to this day.

Each instrument is described in detail by Praetorius, and the name of each is translated into a number of languages. Often, however, chapter headings give only the Latin name for the instrument dealt with.

Now, as we shall see, Hellenists had incorrectly used the name "cithara" with reference to the harp. The name "cithara" appears twice in Volume 2 on two separate pages and referring to two separate instruments: one of the chapters, entitled

CITHARA.

(in Sciagraph, Col. XVI.)



Cithara, eine Cithar / Ist jetziger zeit bey uns viel ein-
mentum Musicum, als vorzeiten bey den Alten; die
men Citharz, vnter jetzige Harffe genennet wort
folgenden Numero 23. zu vernehmen.

Es seynd aber der Citharen fünffereley Art:
ne Cithar von 4. Choren / vnd wird unterschiedt
bifweilen (g g b f) vnd also den Italienische Cithar; bifweilen a g

DE ORGANOGRAPHIA.

ische Cithar genennet. Vnd diese Art mit 4. Choren ist fast ein illiberale, Sutoribus & Sartoribus usitatum Instrumentum.

2. Cithar von 5. Choren; vnd wird also gestimmt / d h g d e; oder F e c g a; von etlichen aber also / G a d a h.

3. Sechs Chörliche Cithar: Vnd die wird vff unterschiedliche Art gestimmt.

1. Die alte Italiener haben sie also gestimmt a c h g d e. 2. Einus Kargel von Saxenburg / h e d g f e. 3. Die dritte Art wird nach der fünf Chörlichen gestimmt / also / G d h g d e; Darauff man so viel nicht oberlegen darff / vnd viel bequemer vnd fliglicher zugreifen ist.

4. Großsechs Chörliche Cithar; do das Corpus noch eine so groß ist / vnd vnd eine quart tieffer; als die vortzen sechs Chörlichen Citharen; nemlich also / f d A d a h gestimmt wird.

Ist in alles fast zuo Eilen lang; Vnd Col. V. zu finden.

5. Noch wird eine grössere Art von Citharen gefunden mit 12. Choren; welche ein herrlichen starken Resonanz von sich gibt / gleich als wenn ein Clavicymbel oder Symphony gehört würde: Vnd zu Praga bey einem Keyserlichen vornehmen Instrumentisten, Dominicus genant / eine solche zu finden: Welche fast so lang als eine Daffgeige seyn sol. Deren Abriss Col. vii. zu finden.

Noch ist vor drey Jahren ohn gefehr ein Engelländer mit einem gar kleinen Euterlein; (deren Abriss Col. XVI.) in Deutschland kommen / an welchen der hundertste Boden von unten auff halb offen gelassen / vnd nicht angeleimet ist / Darauff er eine frembde doch gar sehr liebliche vnd schöne / armoy mit seinen reinen diminutionibus vnd zitternder Hand zuwegen bringen können / also / daß es nicht überhört Luft anzuheören; Vnd von etlichen vornehmen Lautenisten gleichgestalt nicht mehr practiciret werden kan.

Es wird aber; wie vor alten Zeiten die vier Chörliche Lauten also gestimmt:
Quinta } ins { a | g
Quart } | b | f
Tertia } | a | e
Secund } | f | c
Wiewol die Tertia bifweilen ein Semitonum majus höher ins b gezogen / vnd in corla valle genennet wird; Vnd in Frankreich vff der Lauten sehr gebräuchlich ist. Doch / daß alle Säcken vmb eine Oktav höher / als die Lauten also f b f g gezogen / vnd zu der Quint die Numeri 12. zur Quart, Num. 8. zur Tert Num. 6. vnd zur Secund Num. 10. von Messing vnd Eisen. Säcken gebraucht werden. Denn die Secund, oder Terz (Choren) nur noch eine Secund niedriger / als die Quint oder erste Clave

MICHAEL PRAETORIUS (1571-1621), from: *Syntagma musicum*, 2nd volume (*De organographia*) Wittenberg, 1619 – *Cithara* = citole.

BARTOLOMEO JUBENARDI (?-after 1639)

It is not known when this Italian musician arrived in Madrid (1632?), nor when he became harpist to the Court Chapel. We only know that he was there between 1636 and 1639, and that he was a friend and colleague of his fellow Court harpist Juan Hidalgo.

As well as being a harpist, Jubernardi was also an instrument-maker and in 1634 he wrote a treatise on the construction of one-row harps, “arpas de dos órdenes” and harpsichords which also includes a tablature for the harp.

However, the book was not published and the manuscript is at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid.

Since the treatise was not printed, it did not circulate widely and so Jubernardi’s harp tablature became little known.

Harp tablature can only be found in Spanish treatises, and these do not always agree on rules for tuning, writing and reading. As a rule, harpists played and wrote following lute and vihuela tablature.

