

## Chapter 3

### *The teaching of “harmonie” and “accompagnement” at the Conservatoire between 1795 and 1840*

*Harmonie* and *accompagnement* were the first stages of study in the composition *classe*.<sup>376</sup>

After learning basic music theory and *solfège*, the best students could start learning harmony (mainly based on the *Traité* of Catel, with *basses et chants donnés* as exercises) and *accompagnement*. The courses of accompaniment were intended to impart basic piano accompaniment skills to be used during lessons of *solfège* and *chant*, possibly owing to the central role of singers in the 19th century Parisian musical scene.<sup>377</sup> A testimony by Rameau, dating from thirty-five years prior to the period in question, offers a possible reason why teaching accompaniment was necessary for singers: apparently, many teachers could not accompany their pupils at the piano.

N'ayons donc plus de maître de musique, de maître à chanter, qu'il ne soit capable d'accompagner son élève sur le clavecin ou sur l'orgue: c'est l'unique moyen d'en faire un musicien; c'est le seul qu'on emploie en Italie, où l'on engage même l'élève à s'accompagner, dès qu'on le croit en état de pouvoir se livrer à cet exercice.<sup>378</sup>

In 1843 the composer and Conservatoire professor Antoine Elwart published a *traité* called “Le Chanteur-Accompagnateur”. The book is a “*Traité du clavier, de la basse chiffrée, de l'harmonie simple et composée*” addressed to the “personnes qui s'occupant de l'art du chant, sont privées d'un accompagnateur spécial.”<sup>379</sup> Its content is similar to the *traités d'accompagnement* by Perne and Dourlen that will be considered here.

The *méthode de chant* includes a chapter entitled “Des connaissances harmoniques et littéraires qu'un chanteur doit avoir.”<sup>380</sup> Here we find further information on the application of harmony and accompaniment on the training of singers.

L'instruction qui convient à un chanteur ne doit pas se borner à savoir lire seulement la musique à la première vue, ce qui suppose déjà une étude fort longue; il est essentiel qu'il ait une connaissance assez étendue des accords, des lois de l'harmonie et des modulations; de

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376 Pierre (1900a), 350. See Chapter 1.

377 See Chapter 1.

378 Rameau (1760), 5. Also quoted in Lescat (1991), 124.

379 Elwart (1843).

380 Richer et al. (1804), 83–84.

plus, qu’il sache pratiquer l’harmonie sur le forte piano, et il ne serait point inutile qu’il eût quelques principes de composition.

Ces connaissances sont nécessaires à un chanteur pour se conduire, en ornant le chant, de manière à n’employer jamais des traits qui ne seraient pas d’accord avec l’harmonie, ni propres à la nature et au caractère tant de la mélodie qu’ils doivent orner que des accompagnements qui marchent avec elle.<sup>381</sup>

The main reason singers were required to learn rules of harmony, modulation and accompaniment was to learn how to ornate the sung melody without clashing with either the melodic or the harmonic structure of the work.

In this chapter, printed and manuscript sources are used in an attempt to reconstruct *harmonie* and *accompagnement* courses. Although it is impossible to understand exactly how these two subjects were taught in Conservatoire classrooms, we can piece together the content of the lessons thanks to some highly comprehensive sources:

For *harmonie*, the manuscripts consulted are:

F-Pn Ms8303.

Le Borne, Aimé. 1813. *Cours d’harmonie de l’année 1813 suivi par A. Le Borne, dans la classe de M. Berton, professeur au Conservatoire de Musique. Commencé le 26 Octobre 1812. M.Dourlen Répétiteur.*

F-Pn Ms-7641 (1–4).

Perne, François-Louis. 1813. *Leçons du cours d’harmonie*. Four volumes.

For *accompagnement*, the printed sources used are:

Perne, François-Louis. [1822]. *Cours élémentaire d’harmonie et d’accompagnement*. Two volumes. Paris: Dorval.

Dourlen, Victor. [1840]. *Traité d’Accompagnement contenant les notions d’harmonie nécessaires pour accompagner les Basses chiffrées et par suite la Partition [...]*. Paris: Cendrier.

Another professor of *harmonie et accompagnement* was Joseph Daussoigne-Méhul, nephew of the composer Méhul.<sup>382</sup> He studied composition under Cherubini and his uncle, and harmony with Catel. He mainly taught classes for girls between 1816 and 1827 but, unfortunately, no written traces of his teaching methods survive. In an 1866 article published in the *Bulletins de l’académie royale*, he criticized Catel’s terminology, although he also maintained a respectful position towards his harmony teacher’s theory of chords and teaching method.<sup>383</sup>

381 Richer et al. (1804), 83–84 Also quoted in Lassabathie (1860), 43.

382 See Bartlet (2001).

383 *Bulletins de l’académie royale des sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts de Belgique*, Bruxelles: Hayez, 1866, 436–445.

### 3.1. Reconstruction of a course of *harmonie*

Thanks to Aimé Le Borne (1797–1866), it is possible to reconstruct Henri-Montan Berton's harmony course during the academic year 1812–1813.<sup>384</sup> Berton taught *harmonie*, and later *harmonie et accompagnement*, for 20 years from the foundation of the Conservatoire in 1795 until the suppression of the Conservatoire in 1815. He was one of the institution's longest tenured professors and contributed to the creation of the French school of harmony. Later, at the newly established *école royale*, he was appointed as a teacher of composition from 1819 to 1843.<sup>385</sup>

Le Borne collected all the exercises and concepts he learned during his lessons with Berton and his *répétiteur* Dourlen into a single manuscript. Dourlen himself became a professor for *harmonie et accompagnement* in 1816, teaching these subjects until 1842. Occasionally Le Borne took lessons from Gossec and Cherubini (probably substituting for Berton) and, at the end of the course, was also frequently taught by Catel. In fact, this course mostly follows the contents of Catel's and Berton's *traités*.<sup>386</sup>

The course started on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1812 and ended on the 8 August 1813 – the date of the *concours*<sup>387</sup> – with lessons taking place each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. According to Fétis, Le Borne “commença l'étude de l'harmonie dans la classe de Berton; mais il reçut toutes ses leçons de Dourlen, alors répétiteur de cette classe, et plus tard professeur.”<sup>388</sup> In fact, the name Dourlen appears next to each exercise. We might assume that Berton would give the theory classes (perhaps in a group lesson) while the *répétiteur* was in charge of the exercises. From the information contained in the *règlements*, it appears that courses of *harmonie* were group lessons and *répétiteurs* helped with exercises and, in some cases, assisting with teaching (for example, when the professor was absent). This could explain the presence of Dourlen's name next to the assignments.

The course follows the same topics covered in Catel's *Traité*, and is almost always consistent in their order of presentation. Most of the examples in Le Borne's manuscript are copied from those in Catel's book, with small changes and additions in terminology, suggesting that Berton did use the official *méthode* in his lessons. All exercises included one figured or unfigured bass to be harmonized in a three-and/or four-voice setting for a trio or string quartet. No corrections of the exercises survive, presumably indicating that Le Borne copied the corrected assignments into this manuscript, together with his lessons.

384 F-Pn Ms8303. An overview of this manuscript is in Geay (1999), 242–248.

385 See Chapter 2 for further information on Berton.

386 See Chapter 2.

387 Le Borne did not win the *concours*. Pierre (1900a), 538.

388 Fétis (1837), Bd. 5, 239.

After he had finished the course in 1813, Le Borne began to attend Cherubini's composition classes, which he continued with until 1820.<sup>389</sup> In 1847 Le Borne wrote his own *Cours d'harmonie*, that remained unpublished.<sup>390</sup> His course is very similar in structure and content to the one he himself had attended between 1812–13.

Let us now take a look at the course that Le Borne followed as a student of composition. As already indicated, the subjects correspond to those offered in Catel's *méthode*, with some differences in the order in which they are presented:

### 1. Classification of intervals and their inversions

Interval qualities are those found in Berton's *Traité d'harmonie: majeur, mineur, juste, augmenté, diminué*.<sup>391</sup> Each interval is notated together with its inversion and description (e.g., minor second together with major seventh), exactly copying the examples in Catel's *Traité*. Catel does not label the perfect fourth and fifth as “juste,” but indicates them simply by using the interval name “quarte” and “quinte”.<sup>392</sup>

### 2. Consonances and dissonances

In a short note, Le Borne writes that consonant intervals are the third, the fifth, the sixth and the octave; dissonant intervals are the second and the seventh, and it is not hard to notice that the fourth is missing. As we will later discuss, Berton and Catel both write about the ambiguous nature of the fourth as both consonant and dissonant in their *traités*.<sup>393</sup> It seems that the complicated nature of the fourth is left to further lessons and is not treated at first.

### 3. Motions

Three motions are taught: *direct* (parallel), *oblique* and *contraire*. Le Borne introduces the voice leading rule regarding forbidden parallel fifths and octaves, which applies even when these are hidden:

Il est défendu de faire des consonnances parfaites dans le mouvement direct même quand elles sont cachées.<sup>394</sup>

389 He will collate his composition lessons in seven manuscripts: F-Pn Ms 7664 (1–7). In the two manuscripts dedicated to the *marches d'harmonie* Le Borne was required to realize Cherubini's *marches* as counterpoint exercise for up to eight-voices, treating each bass movement as a *cantus firmus*.

390 The manuscripts containing this course are at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris: F-Pn Ms-7902.

391 See Chapter 4.

392 Catel (1801), 2.

393 See Chapter 4.

394 Le Borne (1813), 2.

This is also found in Catel's book, where a footnote specifies an exception to this rule:

A trois et à quatre parties, les quintes et les octaves cachées sont tolérées, dans les parties intermédiaires, entre les consonnances seulement.<sup>395</sup>

#### 4. The perfect triad

During the first three weeks of the class, Le Borne (assisted by Dourlen) realized one bass per lesson using the 5/3 chord on each note. The assignment was divided into two parts: first, realizing the same bass line in three voices, and then in a four-voice setting. From these exercises, it is clear that instruction was given to maintain linear voice leading and avoid skips. Nevertheless, it is possible to recognize, especially in the three-voice setting, some melodic patterns designated for the upper voice. In fact, these exercises contain some *moti del basso*, and we can deduce that some common choices of *beste Lage* were taught.<sup>396</sup> Furthermore, in some three-voices harmonizations, the third is often omitted from certain chords. In the second bar of figure 3.1, the third is missing in the *basso che sale di quinta e scende di quarta*. The second voice descends stepwise and seems to give priority to linear voice leading, rather than having the third in the chord.<sup>397</sup> The explanation for this is given in Catel's manual, where connecting perfect triads by preparing the fifth is suggested to avoid forbidden parallel motions.<sup>398</sup> Le Borne also applies this same principle to the eighth.

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<sup>395</sup> Catel (1801), 4.

<sup>396</sup> Holtmeier used the term “beste Lage” (originally derived from Förster) to describe the best position used in certain passages or sequences. The application of this principle in Paris using, among others, examples from Le Borne's manuscript will be discussed in Chapter 5. See Holtmeier (2017a), 113–115 and 138–140.

<sup>397</sup> See Chapter 5 for a further view of this example.

<sup>398</sup> Catel (1801), 9.

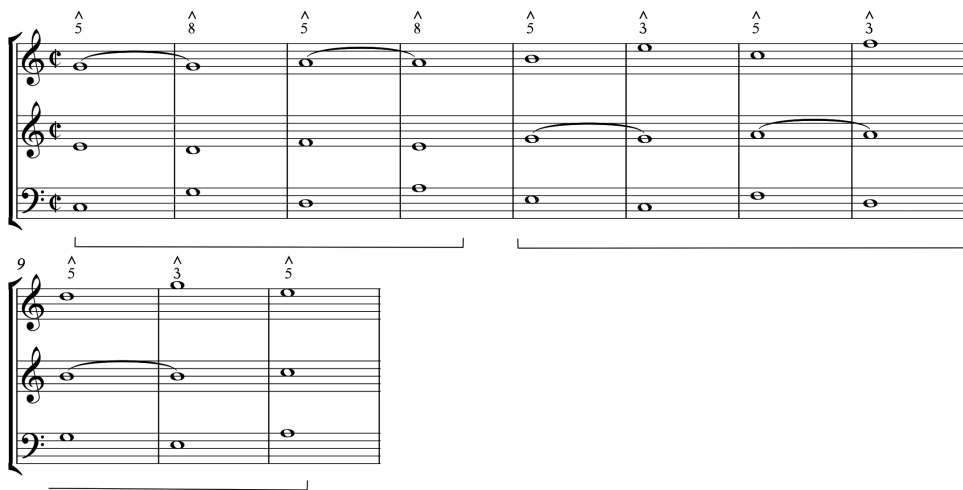


Figure 3.1. *Le Borne*, p. 2, n. 1, bb. 1-11.

### 5. The first and the second inversion of the perfect triad

The second and third weeks of the course covered the 6 and 6/4 chord; once again, there are two versions of the same exercise (both for three and four voices). There are no remarks on voice leading, but all fourths are prepared by a tied note. This does not happen in later exercises, in which the *quarta consonans* is often introduced stepwise in cadences, following instructions given by Catel:

[...] la quarte est employée comme consonnance dans le second renversement de l'accord parfait; aussi ce renversement est-il le moins agréable et le seul dont on ne puisse pas former une succession.<sup>399</sup>

These voicings are maintained in the four-voice setting, though some passages are realized in three voices. This is typically the 5–6 sequence of an ascending scale progression, whereby the addition of a fourth voice results in a leaping voice. This switch in the number of voices was also used by the Neapolitan school. The typical texture of this progression is often found in three-voice partimento sources.<sup>400</sup>

Imitation was also taught in the eighth lesson. In the assignment for this lesson (figure 3.2), the upper voice imitates the bass with descending thirds, while the middle voice makes an *imitation à l'inverse*, as Berton calls it.<sup>401</sup>

399 Catel (1801), 3. See also Chapter 4.

400 See among others Sanguinetti (2012a), 137, and Sala (2017), 4.

401 Berton (1815a), 232.

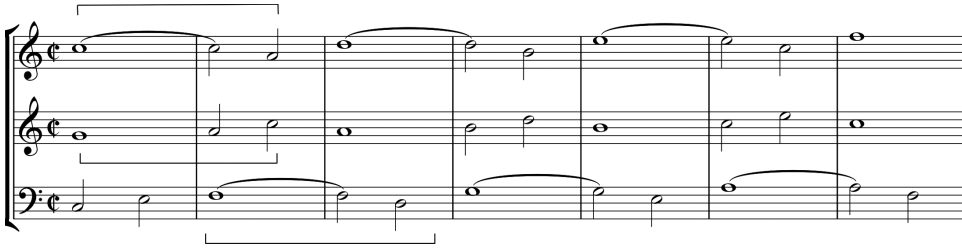


Figure 3.2. *Le Borne* p. 10 n. 8, bb. 1–7.

What is also remarkable is the presence of an easy version (with root position and sixth chords) of the rule of the octave at the start of the tenth exercise (fig. 3.3) that *Le Borne* realized under Dourlen.

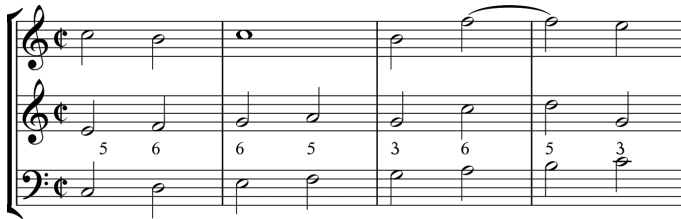


Figure 3.3. *Le Borne* p. 12 n. 10 bb. 1–4.

These basses were offered with figures, and there is no lesson on the rule of the octave in Berton's *traité*.<sup>402</sup> However, in Catel's manual there is a version of the *regola* with inversions of seventh chords included in the section dedicated to the "mouvements de la basse".<sup>403</sup> From studying the contents of the manuals written by professors, there is no doubt that the *règle de l'octave* was taught at the Conservatoire in both harmony and accompaniment classes.<sup>404</sup>

## 6. Passing tones

During the eleventh lesson, *Le Borne* learned about melodic embellishments. This appears later in Catel's book, after the dominant seventh and ninth chords, the half-diminished and the diminished seventh chord. After the description of passing tones, several examples are given in this lesson regarding how to embellish different intervals, examples of which are copied from Catel's *Traité*.<sup>405</sup> Usefully, the diminutions are always combined with imitations; this enables students to learn patterns that

<sup>402</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>403</sup> Catel (1801), 41.

<sup>404</sup> See Chapter 2 and 4.

<sup>405</sup> Catel (1801), 19–20.

embellish melodic intervals, as well practising imitations from the very beginning of their studies. In fact, from this point onwards, Le Borne starts using imitations and diminutions in his exercises.



Figure 3.4. *Le Borne*, p. 14 and *Catel* (1801) p. 20.

### 7. The dominant seventh chord

*Le Borne* offers just a few words about this chord. It is formed by a major third and two minor thirds;<sup>406</sup> the seventh must resolve downwards; the leading tone must go upwards; if the dominant seventh chord moves to the tonic it is called *cadence parfaite*; and, if it resolves on the sixth degree, it is called *rompue*.<sup>407</sup> The first lesson on the dominant seventh chord is centered on one bass to be realized in three and four voices. For the first time, modulations to the fifth, fourth, and sixth degree are introduced, probably for variety when using the dominant seventh chord.

Figure 3.5 shows a succession of secondary dominants in which two voices alternate the passing seventh and the chromatic ascent to the leading tone.



Figure 3.5. *Le Borne*, p. 17 n. 13, bb. 14–20

### 8. The first inversion of the dominant seventh chord

The fifth week covered exercises on the 6/5 chord. *Le Borne* allows the diminished fifth of this chord to leap. In French and Neapolitan sources, the diminished fifth was considered a half-consonance and therefore did not require preparation, though it was

<sup>406</sup> As already noted, Rameau, Berton, Catel and other teachers used the method by which the principle of chord formation achieved by stacking thirds on the fundamental note. See Chapter 2.

<sup>407</sup> See Chapter 2.



often used as a passing or a neighbor note.<sup>408</sup> Nevertheless, it was sometimes also reached by a skip, as shown in Muscogiuri's exercises.<sup>409</sup>

#### 9. The second and third inversion of the dominant seventh chord

The second and third inversion of the dominant seventh chord were studied during the sixth week of the course. The 4/3 chord is labeled as *accord de sixte sensible* and was used on the second degree of the scale, while the 4/2 chord is the *accord du triton*, used on the fourth degree of the descending scale. As noted, Berton changes the name of the 4/3 chord from the traditional *petite sixte* and does not agree with using the term *accord du triton*.<sup>410</sup> The chord names mentioned above were used in these lessons, probably because they were included in Catel's *Traité*, the official harmony method used at the Conservatoire. A total of five exercises and lessons are dedicated to this topic.

#### 10. The half-diminished seventh chord

Le Borne writes that the *septième sensible ou mixte*<sup>411</sup> is formed by two minor thirds and a major third. It is found in major keys on the seventh degree and in minor keys on the second degree. Three lessons are dedicated to this chord.

#### 11. Inversions of the half-diminished chord

All three inversions are treated here, for which only two exercises and lessons are given for practising these chords. The 6/5 chord is called *accord de quinte et sixte* (in Catel's *Traité*, it is called the *quinte et sixte sensible* to distinguish it from the first-inversion dominant-seventh chord).<sup>412</sup> The remaining two inversions are labeled according to Catel's terminology: the 4/3 chord is called *accord du triton et tierce majeure*, and the 4/2 is the *accord de seconde*. The name *accord du triton* is usually given when the tritone includes the bass tone. This explains why the third inversion of the dominant seventh chord is named similarly to the second inversion of this half-diminished chord.<sup>413</sup>

#### 12. The diminished seventh chord

The *septième diminuée* on the seventh degree in the minor is the topic for the next three lessons. Le Borne quickly defines this chord:

408 See Chapter 4.

409 Demeyere (2018), 216–224.

410 See Chapter 2.

411 This denomination is in Catel (1801), 15.

412 Catel (1801), 13.

413 See Chapter 2 for other denominations of these chords.

La Septième Diminuée se pose sur la note sensible dans le mode mineur, elle s'accompagne de tierce mineure, quinte diminuée, et septième diminuée, elle se chiffre par 7.<sup>414</sup>

### 13. Inversions of the diminished seventh chord

Three lessons and exercises cover inversions of the diminished seventh chord. The 6/5 chord is called *accord de la 6. sensible et 5. diminuée*, the 4/3 is the *triton et 3. mineure*; and the 4/2 is called *accord de 2. augmentée*.<sup>415</sup> At this point in Catel's book, a section is dedicated to the *neuvième majeure dominante*. This is missing in Le Borne's course.<sup>416</sup>

### 14. Suspensions: the seventh

Suspensions (called here *retards*) are treated as they are in partimento sources. There are several interval options for their preparation and examples given. Berton calls them *dissonances* in his *Traité*, just as the Neapolitan *maestri* did.<sup>417</sup> Once again, a whole week (three lessons, with exercises) is dedicated to this topic. The most common patterns used for chains of sevenths are the traditional descending scale and falling fifths/rising fourths. Catel explains all suspensions as prolonged notes (*notes prolongées*) that transform a *harmonie simple* in a *harmonie composée*.<sup>418</sup>

### 15. Suspensions: the first inversion of the seventh

Berton uses inversions to explain how certain *retards* are tied to specific bass movements.<sup>419</sup>

The example given refers to the 6/5 chord on the ascending fourth degree of the scale and, in the exercises, inversions of other seventh chords are used (e.g., in progressions), and dissonances are prepared and resolved in the same way. In this 6/5 chord, the fifth has to be prepared – unlike the 6/5 chord on the ascending seventh degree (first inversion of the dominant seventh chord).

### 16. Suspensions: the second inversion of the seventh

This kind of suspension is not typically present in Neapolitan sources. The 4/3 chord enriches the sixth chord which is often a resolution of a 7–6 chain on a descending scale:

414 Le Borne (1813), 28.

415 Terminology as in Catel (1801), 16.

416 Catel (1801), 17–18.

417 Berton (1815a), 14.

418 Catel (1801), 21. For the concept of “Sitz der Akkorde” See Chapter 2.

419 See Chapter 4.

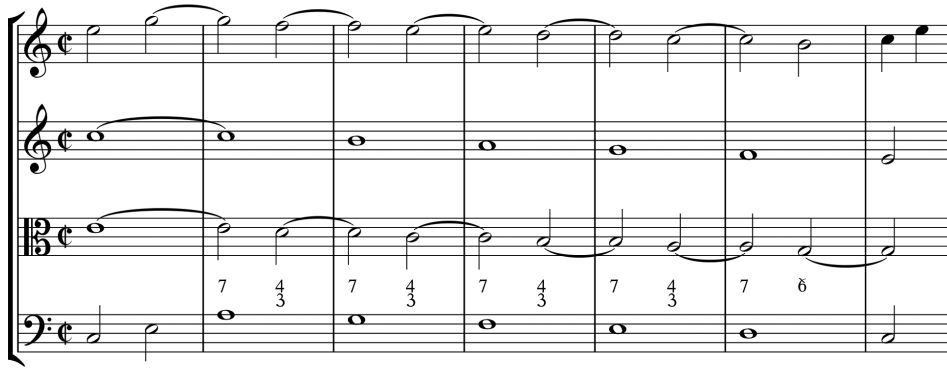


Figure 3.6. *Le Borne*, p. 40 n. 35b, bb. 3–9.

This progression is a variation of a falling fifth/rising fourth sequence accompanied by a succession of seventh suspensions, in which the falling fifth is substituted for its second inversion (shown in figure 3.7, with the *basse fondamentale* added to this sequence). The use of chord inversions derives from Rameau's theories;<sup>420</sup> however, this chord differs from the *accord de sixte sensible* – a second inversion of the dominant seventh chord placed on the second degree of the scale – as it does not contain the leading tone.

The musical score for Figure 3.7 is identical to Figure 3.6, but includes an additional staff at the bottom labeled 'Basse Fondamentale'. This staff contains the root notes of the chords for each measure: 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7. The figured bass notation from Figure 3.6 is also present in the original bass staff.

Figure 3.7. *Le Borne*, p. 40 n. 35b, bb. 3–9 with *basse fondamentale*.

420 See Chapter 2. See also Rameau (1722), 238.

## 17. Suspensions: the third inversion of the seventh

For this inversion, the dissonance can be found in the bass line. As above, it differs from the *accord du triton*, in which the dissonance does not need preparation.

## 18. Progressions

The next seven lessons are dedicated to the *marches*, which correspond to the *moti del basso* in partimento sources. In the first two lessons, Berton initially gives his student examples with consonances and then with dissonances in three and four voices. Many of these examples are found in both Catel's and Berton's *traités*, although with a different voice setting.<sup>421</sup> In the order of their appearance, the patterns given are:

- Fifth downward-fourth upward: harmonized with a) 5/3 chords; b) 7 chords.
- Third downward-second upward: harmonized with a) alternating 5/3 and 6/3 chords; b) alternating 5/3 and 6/5 chords.
- Descending syncopated scale: harmonized by alternating 4/2 and 6/3 chords.
- Descending and ascending scale: harmonized by a) 6/3 chords; b) alternating 7–6.
- Ascending syncopated scale: harmonized by a) alternating 6/3 and 5/3 chords; b) alternating 6/5 and 5/3 chords.

This last, syncopated ascending scale is actually the inversion of the *basso che sale di quarta e scende di terza*.<sup>422</sup>



Figure 3.8. *Le Borne*, p. 43, n. 21 with basse fondamentale.

## 19. Suspensions: the ninth

After concluding the section on the dissonance of the seventh in all its inversions and its practical application in the *marches*, Berton introduces the ninth. As with the seventh, several examples are given of intervals in which preparation can occur. Four lessons are dedicated to the practice of this dissonance.

<sup>421</sup> Berton (1815a), 109 et seq. Catel (1801), 41 et seq.

<sup>422</sup> In figure 3.8. the fundamental bass is added.

## 20. Suspensions: the fourth

This dissonance is usually the first to be taught in partimento sources. Here, it is presented as *la quinte et quarte* – also called *harmonie composée* – as opposed to the *harmonie simple*. The distinction between *simple* and *composée* comes from Catel's *Traité d'harmonie*.<sup>423</sup> All options for preparation and resolution are given. Three exercises are dedicated to this suspension.

## 21. Suspensions: the first and second inversion of the fourth

The first inversion of the 5/4 has the dissonance in the bass and it is figured as 5/2. The second carries the fifth in the bass (which is the second degree of the scale) and is notated 7/4 (see bar 4 in figure 3.9). Both dissonances require preparation and resolution.

## 22. Double dissonances

When transforming the *harmonie simple* into *composée*, some inversions of dissonances generate double dissonances. Berton shows the most common (figure 3.9), while in Catel's book several further options are given.<sup>424</sup>

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423 See Chapter 2.

424 Catel (1801), 31–33.



Dissonances resolve downwards, while the leading tone ascends to the tonic.

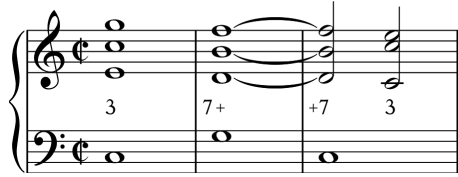


Figure 3.10. *Le Borne*, p. 73.

It is also possible for the leading tone to move chromatically downwards to a new seventh in a *basso che sale di quarta e scende di quinta* progression:

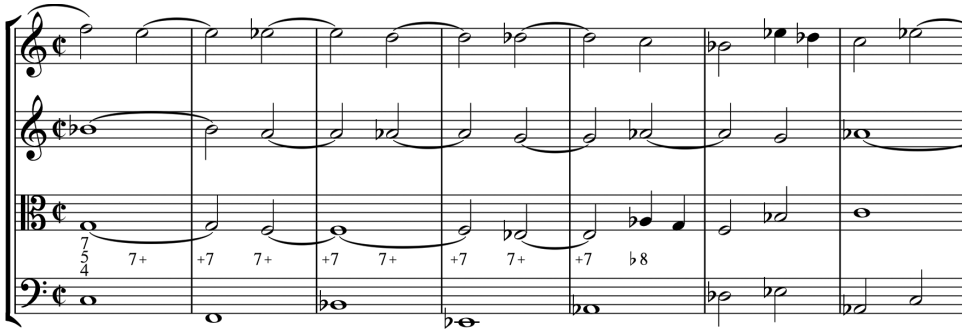


Figure 3.11. *Le Borne*, p. 74, n. 61, bb. 13–19.

## 24. Augmented sixth chords

Two lessons are dedicated to the three types of augmented sixth chords (that today are typically called Italian, German, and French). There are no written annotations next to the musical examples for these three chords and their resolutions. Nevertheless, there is a chapter dedicated to *altérations* in Catel's *méthode* that contains the description of these (and other) altered chords.<sup>426</sup>

## 25. Augmented fifth chords

As with the previous lesson, *Le Borne* writes down only the musical examples, probably leaving the explanations to Catel's book. In figure 3.12, the augmented fifth chord on the first degree in root position and two inversions on the dominant seventh chord appear.

426 Catel (1801), 58–61.

The musical score for Figure 3.12 is in C major, 2/4 time. It consists of two systems of exercises. The first system has four measures, alternating between 'harmonie simple' and 'Composée' exercises. The second system has two measures, alternating between 'Simple' and 'Composée' exercises. Each measure shows a four-voice setting with a bass line and three upper voices. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 and 6. Some measures include accidentals like sharps and naturals.

Figure 3.12. *Le Borne*, p. 78.

## 26. Pedal points

In Catel’s *Traité* this section precedes altered chords. There are three kinds of pedal points: *dominante*, *tonique*, and *intérieure*. The pedal on the dominant can support all kinds of consonances and dissonances, given that it starts with a dominant chord and ends with a *cadence parfaite*. The pedal on the tonic is frequently used alongside the dominant seventh chord and diminished seventh chords. The *intérieure* type of pedal point is a pedal note in another voice, rather than the bass. Berton gave his student several examples of the application of a pedal point, essentially showing how any *moto del basso* can apply to a pedal in the dominant, while pedals on the tonic and in other voices are less flexible. These same examples are found in Catel’s *Traité*.<sup>427</sup>

This was the last topic of the course, with the exception of a lesson on the *genre enharmonique* (enharmonic modulations through the diminished seventh chord) that took place two months later. The only subjects missing from Catel’s *Traité* are modulations and continuo figures, though these were possibly covered without any specific assignments being given. Meanwhile, Le Borne started intensive study under Catel himself: three lessons per week, with two substantially long and complicated unfigured basses to be realized in a four-voice setting for each lesson. Le Borne continued his lessons uninterrupted until August 1813, when the *concours* took place.

One year later, Perne was appointed *harmonie* professor at the Conservatoire. The manuscript F-Pn Ms-7641 (1–4) contains his *Leçons du cours d’harmonie*, and appears to be the notebook in which he collected the exercises that he gave to his students. The basses are not realized and next to each one of them are one or two dates for lessons. Only the *basses et chants données* contained in the fourth volume are

427 Catel (1801), 56–57.



realized for three and/or four voices. From these exercises, we can see that the topics are the same as those covered by Berton during his course, though Perne follows a different order. While Berton first teaches all chord types and their inversions – followed by suspensions and progressions – Perne starts his course with the perfect triad and its inversions, and then introduces the scale with parallel sixths. After introducing the diminished chords, there are exercises on other *moti del basso* (rising third/falling second, falling third/rising second, rising fourth/falling third, rising fifth/falling fourth, rising fourth/falling second). The suspension of the fourth is followed by other progressions (falling fifth/rising fourth and its inversion falling third/rising second). It is only at this point that the dominant seventh chord is introduced with its inversions, and this is followed by the *septième de sensible*. The exercises that follow contain all the content presented up to this point, and these have to be realized in 3 or 4 voices (and later, up to 10 voices). As in Berton's course, diminution and imitation are included in all exercises. Occasionally, Perne notates some fragments of imitations and/or diminutions that can be used in his exercises.

At the end of the course, there are exercises on cadences (*cadences évitées, interrompues, rompues, à la dominante, plagale*). Usually, we find cadences at the very beginning of a *cours d'harmonie*, while here they precede the last two topics: pedal point and *enharmonie*, though no explanation is given for this choice. An educated guess might be that Perne still needed to refine his syllabus in his first year of teaching; however, this would not explain why the cadence exercises presented do not become progressively more difficult. Nearly ten years later, Perne published his *Cours Élémentaire d'harmonie et d'Accompagnement*<sup>428</sup> and, in this, we find the same topics he taught in 1813, in a similar order. One of the changes involves the position of cadences which here are inserted at the beginning, between the inversions of the perfect triad and the diminished chords.<sup>429</sup>

There are no written exercises in Le Borne's notebook on cadences, but rather only a short note on cadences in the lesson dedicated to the dominant seventh chord. There is no evidence that cadences were covered during the course; though there are chapters dedicated to them in all three treatises written by Berton, Perne, and the official *méthode* by Catel, and both courses handle all the topics presented in Catel's *Traité*. The manuscript containing Berton's course follows Catel most closely in its contents and the order in which the topics are presented. Perne refers to Catel's *Traité*, *article IV* when discussing the *septième de sensible*, probably to suggest that students read that chapter in the *méthode*.<sup>430</sup> As pointed out earlier, Catel's *Traité* was certainly used as the main textbook for *harmonie* at the Conservatoire.

428 Perne [1822].

429 See Chapters 2 and 4 for further information on this source.

430 Perne (1813), II, 33.

### 3.2. Reconstruction of a syllabus of *accompagnement*

The subject of *accompagnement* consisted mainly of teaching piano accompaniment skills. Chordal realizations were often played from the figured basses found in the *solfèges*. It is rare to find unfigured basses – as opposed to figured – in French sources; yet Bienaimé, in his *50 Etudes d’harmonie pratique*, chooses to include some exercises without figures among his basses. He believed that the reason why students did not learn how to play an unfigured bass was due to certain teaching methods, which used written-out realizations of the bass. Therefore, students would play a piano score instead of reading and understanding continuo figures. Among the teachers who we know certainly used written realizations to teach *accompagnement* were Deldevez, Perne, and Dourlen.<sup>431</sup>

Il n’y a que deux moyens pour indiquer aux élèves comment ils doivent traduire les chiffres et disposer l’harmonie qu’ils représentent; le premier employé dans plusieurs traités, consiste à écrire, sur la clef de Sol et au dessus de la basse chiffrée, toutes les parties de l’harmonie; le second, à représenter la disposition de l’harmonie par la position des chiffres: mais le premier de ces moyens a cela de défectueux, qu’il place sous les yeux de l’élève l’harmonie écrite, et qu’alors l’élève lit un accompagnement de piano et ne s’habitue pas à lire les chiffres; l’autre, au contraire, le force à ne lire que des chiffres; et celui-là m’a paru devoir être préféré.<sup>432</sup>

Classes of *accompagnement* were taught separately from harmony until 1823:<sup>433</sup> This was usually done aurally and, presumably, Fenaroli’s *basses* were among the material used, since we have evidence that the Conservatoire bought numerous copies of the French edition of his *Regole*.<sup>434</sup>

Thanks to Perne’s *Cours élémentaire*, we can follow a thread through a syllabus of *accompagnement*. The appendix of his book contains a course specifically for *harmonistes* who wanted to learn how to be accompanists. In the preface, Perne writes that his *Cours* is specifically created for those students who live in the outskirts of Paris and cannot attend lessons regularly. For these students, it was necessary to have teaching material that would revise what was learned in the classroom and support them in their independent study. The lessons in his book are designed to contain basic theoretical information, practical instructions, and several exercises in order to practise what was learned in the lesson.

The ability to play the piano was not all that was needed in order to become an accompanist; other skills required include reading in all clefs, a good knowledge of

431 See Chapter 2.

432 Bienaimé (1845), 3.

433 They were separated again in 1878.

434 See Chapter 2.

all tonalities, and having sufficient understanding of harmony to analyze any kind of music.

Pour se livrer à l'accompagnement, il ne suffit pas de toucher passablement le piano forte, il faut encore être bon lecteur sur toutes les clefs, bien connaître les tons ou modes et les modulations dans lesquels sont composés ou passent les morceaux de musique, et surtout avoir des notions suffisantes d'Harmonie pour pouvoir analyser celle de quelque musique que ce soit.<sup>435</sup>

In Perne's *Cours*, the student is referred to the chapters where the following concepts of harmony are explained:

1. *Notions préliminaires* (intervals and their inversions, scales)
2. *Notions élémentaires d'harmonie* (voice motions, chords and their inversions)
3. *Notions essentielles sur la manière de coucher ou écrire les parties sur la basse* (voice leading rules).

There is no mention of the typical music theory topics to be found in other similar books, such as chord formation or nomenclature, topics which might not be considered sufficiently practical for accompaniment and which are normally limited to *harmonie* lessons. As will be seen, similar voice-leading instructions are given to those in written harmony lessons.

During *harmonie* classes, Perne strictly maintains the same number of voices throughout the piece/exercise;<sup>436</sup> however, in his *accompagnement* course, the number of voices may change according to the requirements of the movement of the bass or desired texture. Fenaroli's examples show the same interchangeable use of voices, which was a common practice among continuo players at the time.

## Lesson n. 1: Positions of the Right Hand

The first lesson gives guidelines for the right hand. The range remains in the *ambitus* of the G-Clef (C under the staff – G above the staff) and all voices move linearly and avoid skips. The first exercise is on root position chords. Perne gives some *règles générales d'accompagnement* for these chords:

1. Notes in common have to be tied (the fingers playing these notes do not move).
2. If there are no notes in common, hands move in contrary motion.

Positions of the right hand are also covered in this lesson and, like his Neapolitan colleagues, Perne uses the same classification:

<sup>435</sup> Perne [1822], 401.

<sup>436</sup> See Chapter 2.

Les meilleurs maîtres ont appelé *Première Position* celle où l'*Octave* est en dessus, parceque c'est la plus parfaite, et qu'on doit toujours terminer sur cette Position; *Seconde Position* celle qui a la *Tierce* en dessus; et *Troisième Position* celle qui a la *Quinte* en dessus.<sup>437</sup>

The best position is the first, followed by the second. The third is rarely used, and mostly confined to the middle portion of a composition. Each composition must end in the first position. If the right hand exceeds the limits of the given range, it is necessary to change position and bring it towards the center. This passage is called *reprise de position*, which can happen through similar, contrary, or oblique motion, provided that no forbidden parallels (parallel fifths and octaves, and octaves per contrary motion) are produced. The only exception is found in Catel's *Traité*:<sup>438</sup> parallel octaves between the bass and the lowest voice of the right hand are considered a doubling of the bass line. These parallel octaves, although tolerated, are best avoided.

Les Octaves avec la Basse ne sont tolérés que lorsque c'est la partie la plus grave de la main droite qui les forme, ce que l'on considère alors comme redoublement de la Basse; mais il vaut encore mieux les éviter.<sup>439</sup>

The first exercise is now presented by realizing each position, such that the student can correct himself during independent practice. Perne next adds annotations to each realization, to explain when modulations occur and how to change position.<sup>440</sup> At this stage in the training, changes of positions are suggested only to maintain a central range for the accompaniment. From the combination of the three positions, it is possible to obtain the *beste Lage*.<sup>441</sup> Some annotations give the students instructions on the *accompagnement pour le meilleur effet*.<sup>442</sup>

The first lesson closes with a reference to cadences. Only basic information is given on the *repos* ending on the tonic (*cadence parfaite*) and on the dominant (*cadence imparfaite ou à la Dominante*).<sup>443</sup>

The first lesson ends with seven other exercises (in major and minor keys), all containing modulations indicated by annotations. They are ordered in increasing difficulty and contain rhythmic patterns (with instruction to imitate them in the accompaniment) and diminutions.

437 Perne [1822], 404.

438 See the following pages of this chapter. See also Carlisi (2021).

439 Perne [1822], 407.

440 Similar annotations, with indications of modulations, positions and a few suggestions on harmonization, are found in a manuscript from 1789 containing basses (accompaniment lessons) by Gabriele Vignali. Vignali was trained in Bologna, presumably by Padre Martini. See Carlisi-Curtice (2021).

441 See Chapter 5.

442 See Chapter 5 for details.

443 Perne [1822], 408.

## Lesson n. 2: The perfect triad and its inversions

The second lesson of *accompagnement* is dedicated to root-position chords and their inversions; though here Perne writes much simpler explanations for chord formations than he did in the section covering *harmonie*. Chords are distinguished by being consonant or dissonant: consonant chords are the perfect triad and its inversions; dissonant chords are the seventh chords and their inversions, and all chords resulting from a *substitution*. Consonant and dissonant intervals are also listed through practical instruction on the preparation and resolution of dissonances. The only exceptions are the *dissonances appellatives*.<sup>444</sup> These dissonances must resolve in a particular way:

- the *quarte superflue ou triton* and the *seconde superflue* on the descending sixth degree in the minor resolve to the first degree of the scale.
- the diminished fifth and the seventh of the dominant resolve to the third note of the scale.
- the diminished seventh resolves to the fifth note of the scale.<sup>445</sup>

In order to help students, a table is included in this lesson with all inversions of triads in the most commonly used tonalities (all major keys and minor ones, except for D-flat minor, G-flat minor, and C-flat minor – which are covered by their enharmonic equivalent).

The lesson continues with instructions on how to use the first inversion of the perfect triad – the *accord de sixte* – which can be on all scale degrees, particularly the second, the third, and the seventh:

Cet accord s'emploie plus particulièrement sur la seconde, la troisième note et sur la note sensible du mode; mais il peut s'employer généralement sur toutes les notes de l'Échelle, surtout dans une suite ou marche de sixtes, ascendante ou descendante.<sup>446</sup>

In the case of consecutive sixths, the sixth has to be placed in the outer voice to avoid parallel fifths. Parallel octaves are tolerated if they occur in the lower voice of the right hand, to double the bass line: “Si l'on juge à propos d'ajouter l'octave, il faut la placer dans le bas de la main droite, comme redoublement de la basse.” However, in the first lesson, it was suggested that this practice is best avoided in order to maintain better voice leading.<sup>447</sup>

<sup>444</sup> See the following pages of this chapter.

<sup>445</sup> Perne [1822], 413.

<sup>446</sup> Perne [1822], 415.

<sup>447</sup> Perne [1822], 415. See also Carlisi (2021).



Figure 3.13. Perne (1822), 415.1

Perne provides two practical examples to show how the first voicing (fig. 3.13) is the best. He calls each of the following examples *disposition vicieuse* (fig. 3.14 and fig. 3.15).



Figure 3.14. Perne (1822), 415.2

In the first (3.14) he demonstrates how parallel fifths are produced. In the second (3.15), where the right-hand moves in contrary motion to the bass, he shows how the characteristic sound of the consecutive parallel sixths is lost.<sup>448</sup>

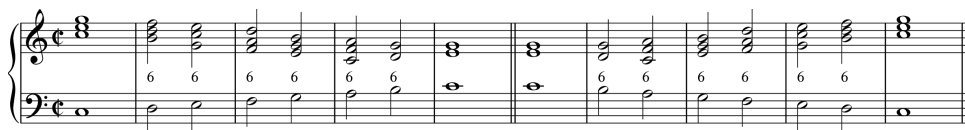


Figure 3.15. Perne (1822), 415.3

Eight figured basses in different major and minor tonalities follow these examples, allowing the student to practise applying the sixth chord. The first given assignment is realized by Perne in two different versions with different positions in order to show how the “best voicing” is more effective than other positions.

The next topic of this lesson is the 6/4 chord. The preferred positions of the chord are those in which the fourth or the sixth is in the upper voice. Four exercises on the application of this chord are provided. Once again, the first is realized by Perne in three versions (three positions) in order to show which *Lage* is preferable.

448 Perne [1822], 415. There are also parallel fifths between the last two chords on the descending degrees.

### Lesson n. 3: Dissonant chords

The third lesson covers all dissonant chords in general, with special attention paid to the dominant seventh chord and its inversions. The general rules are a) maintain tied the notes in common or proceed as per contrary motion; b) resolve the dissonance downwards and the leading tone upwards. Students were not required to transpose the examples, as their Neapolitan colleagues would have had to. Nevertheless, Perne provides a table for this chord and its resolution in all tonalities so that students could easily practise them.

Five exercises are given to practise seventh chords and their inversions. These consist of figured basses containing some *marches d'harmonie*, and passages in which these chords are applied. Once again, the first exercise is realized by Perne in three positions, and certain passages are commented on through annotations.

### Lesson n. 4: Règle ordinaire de l'octave

On appelle Règle d'Octave celle qui détermine l'Harmonie que doit porter chaque note de l'Échelle du mode, soit majeur, soit mineur, selon le degré ascendant ou descendant.<sup>449</sup>

In the section dedicated to the rule of the octave, Perne stresses the placement of each inversion of the dominant seventh chord on the scale degrees to which they belong. Once again, a table with these chords in the most used tonalities is provided. Following this, the rule of the octave (in the same version presented by Fenaroli) is given in three positions and in all major and minor tonalities. Each *regola* is followed by a *cadenza composta* preceded by the fourth degree harmonized with a 6/5 chord. Figure 3.16 shows Perne's examples in C major.



Figure 3.16. Perne (1822), 443.

449 Perne [1822], 437.

At the end of the appendix, Perne suggests how the student should continue their *accompagnement* practice:

Présentement que l'Étudiant en accompagnement, est en état d'avoir les mains bien placées pour la dispositions de l'harmonie, au moyen des leçons que nous venons de donner dans lesquelles les principes d'accompagnement sont développés, et surtout par l'exercice continuel de la Règle d'Octave dans tous les Modes, il devra reprendre ses études et son travail dès le commencement du Cours d'Harmonie, et suivre les leçons dans l'ordre indiqué en appliquant au clavier toutes les règles et notions qui sont données pour écrire à trois et quatre parties, et par conséquent se mettre dans le cas de pouvoir analyser l'harmonie des Partitions, et autres Ouvrages de Musique.<sup>450</sup>

Once the student has practised the rule of the octave in all positions and tonalities, Perne suggests he practises all the lessons of *harmonie* contained in his *Cours* on the keyboard. The goal of this instruction is not only to be able to accompany in an efficient way, but also to be able to analyze (and thus understand) all kinds of music. Indeed, this focus on analysis and comprehension is often present in French sources.<sup>451</sup> Although it might not have been an explicit intention in Neapolitan sources, the acquisition of analytical skills subsequently followed training in partimento and counterpoint. Perne's book ends with some suggestions for score reading and pieces to practise. He suggests three steps to learn this skill:

1. Choosing easy scores by Grétry, Dalayrac, Sacchini, and Piccini and starting with slow movements.
2. Moving on to Opera pieces from Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Mehul, Cherubini, Le Sueur, Berton, Catel, Boieldieu; again, starting with slow movements before progressing to faster pieces.
3. The last step is the practice of *fugato* pieces like *Oratori* and/or masses by Haydn, Händel, Mozart, and Cherubini.

Among theoretical works on *harmonie*, *accompagnement* and *composition*, Perne suggests books by Fenaroli, Albrechtsberger, Choron, Langlé, Catel, Reicha and Grétry.

Another example of a course for *accompagnement* is the *Traité d'accompagnement* by Victor Dourlen, Professor for *harmonie* and *harmonie et accompagnement* at the Conservatoire between 1816 and 1842.<sup>452</sup>

Dourlen's book (presumably as with his lessons) is similar to Perne's course. After a short overview of intervals, Dourlen introduces the position of the right hand. Unlike Perne, who uses the same positions found in Neapolitan sources, Dourlen follows Choron and names positions based on the interval between the bass and the lower

450 Perne [1822], 457.

451 See Chapter 2.

452 Dourlen, [1840].



voice of the right hand.<sup>453</sup> This results in a first position with a fifth between bass and higher voice, a second position with an eighth between these voices, and a third position with the third between the two external voices.<sup>454</sup>

After an exercise on the perfect triad and its inversions, Dourlen introduces some examples with scales accompanied by a *faux-bourdon* and consecutive 5–6 chords. The seventh chords and their inversions follow (dominant seventh chords, *septième mixte*, *septième diminuée*) and introduce the treatment of dissonances and their application on the *marches* (descending scale with 7–6, falling fifth/rising fourth, falling third/rising second, syncopated bass motion, etc.). The remaining dissonances and their application to the appropriate *moti del basso* are then provided. As with other treatises of the time, all *marches* are given with their inversions.<sup>455</sup> At the end of this short theoretical section, Dourlen provides a number of *partimenti* by Neapolitan authors like Sala and Durante, and *solfeggi* with which to practise.<sup>456</sup> Unfigured basses are also present among the exercises, though Dourlen provides the figures to these basses at the end of the book. This is because the use of figures was the norm among French accompanists, who were not taught to play unfigured bass lines and therefore found some Neapolitan unfigured *partimenti* challenging.

### 3.3. Conservatoire vs Conservatori: a comparison of teaching in Paris and Naples

Based on the information collected and presented up to this point, we can now summarize the different approaches to the teaching of *harmonie* and *accompagnement* at the schools in Paris and Naples.

Teaching harmony in the Neapolitan school was—as is known—tied to *partimento*. The theory arose from practice, as opposed to the reverse scenario. Ettore De-Champs describes the steps of the Neapolitan learning process: 1) first gaining knowledge on intervals; 2) learning and practising the rule of the octave; 3) and then finally, *partimento*. Origin of chords and harmonic tensions were taught through aural instructions of the *Maestro* and consultation with treatises:

Si dice e si sostiene come articolo di fede che la pratica non può, né deve avere altro uffizio che quello di corroborare più tardi quei sani principii che soltanto dalla teorica possono apprendersi, non riflettendo che la teorica non si deduce che dalla pratica [...]. Gli antichi però non la pensavano così: e tutti sappiamo che dalla Scuola Napoletana specialmente, dove si tenne e per molto tempo un sistema d'insegnamento tutto affatto opposto a quello ora in voga, si ebbero ciò nonostante teorici e pratici di gran valore. [...] Fino a qualche

453 See Chapter 4. Choron (1804), 4. Dourlen (1840), 4 and 7. See also Verwaerde (2015), 327–328.

454 See Chapter 4.

455 See Chapter 4.

456 Dourlen [1840].

anno fa, in quasi tutte le scuole d'Italia, l'armonia s'imparava presso a poco nel metodo seguente. Conosciuti appena gl'Intervalli, studiavasi la cosiddetta Regola dell'Ottava, impraticati sufficientemente di essa nelle tre differenti posizioni, si passava senz'altro allo studio del partimento, poco o nulla curandosi, almeno nei primi tempi, di conoscere teoricamente l'origine e la tendenza degli accordi. Queste origini e queste tendenze s'imparavano a conoscere grado a grado che ci s'inoltrava nello studio, guidati in ciò oltrech  dal proprio talento, dalla viva voce del maestro insegnante e dalla lettura dei trattati di armonia che venivaci indicati di consultare.<sup>457</sup>

Three Italian manuscripts, two by Biagio Muscogiuri<sup>458</sup> and one by Vincenzo Lavigna,<sup>459</sup> contain exercises done under the guidance of Fenaroli (as well as occasionally other teachers); these offer insight into Fenaroli's composition teaching.<sup>460</sup> The two manuscripts of Muscogiuri are part of his lesson notebooks. The Bologna manuscript contains books n.3 *Delle disposizioni a 2 parti*; and n.4 *Delle fughe a due parti*; while the Florentine manuscript contains books n.6 *Studio sopra tutti i moti del Basso a 3 parti*; n.7 *Delle disposizioni a 3 parti*; and n. 8 *Delle fughe a 3 parti*.<sup>461</sup>

Table 3.1. List of *moti del basso* in the manuscript of Muscogiuri.

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.  | <i>Basso che sale di grado</i>                                    |
| 2.  | <i>Basso che scende di grado</i>                                  |
| 3.  | <i>Basso che sale di terza e scende di grado</i>                  |
| 4.  | <i>Basso che scende di terza e sale di grado</i>                  |
| 5.  | <i>Basso che sale di quarta e scende di terza</i>                 |
| 6.  | <i>Basso che scende di quarta e sale di grado</i>                 |
| 7.  | <i>Basso che sale di quarta e scende di quinta</i>                |
| 8.  | <i>Basso che sale di quinta e scende di quarta</i>                |
| 9.  | <i>Basso che sale di sesta e scende di quinta</i>                 |
| 10. | <i>Basso che sale di sesta e scende di settima</i> <sup>462</sup> |
| 11. | <i>Basso che scende legato</i>                                    |
| 12. | <i>Basso semitonato.</i>  |

457 De-Champs, Ettore (1879), 46–47 in Sanguinetti (2005), 456–457. Also quoted in Sanguinetti (2012a), 96. For a deeper look into the discussion held at the Florentine Academy in 1878 see Sanguinetti (2012a), 95–98.

458 I-Fc B.505 e I-Baf MSGI-MUSC-MUS.1 (C.IR).

459 I-Mc Noseda Th.c.117.

460 These manuscripts have already been treated by Sanguinetti (2013), Van Tour (2015), Demeyere (2018) and Cafiero (2021). Their work is referred to here.

461 Unfortunately books 1, 2, and 5 are missing at the time of writing.

462 All bass movements, except n.10 are also in Lavigna's notebooks (I-Mc Noseda Th.c.117) and in the printed editions of the *Regole*. See the comparative edition by Demeyere: Fenaroli (2021a).

Lavigna's manuscript is divided into seven sections containing an entire counterpoint course, beginning with two-part cadences, *moti del basso, disposizioni* in two, three, and four voices, as well as four-part fugues.<sup>463</sup> Contents in these notebooks that could fall under harmony are:<sup>464</sup>

1. *Cadenze*
2. *Scale e moti del basso* (including *dissonanze*)
3. *Bassi e canti*
4. *Disposizioni*

The main difference between the French and the Neapolitan approach arose from the traditions of the two schools and the role that theoretical concepts played in both countries. The Parisian course proceeded by introducing chords and their inversions, and the *marches d'harmonie* were introduced as an application of certain chords or their inversions. A summary of an incomplete list of *moti* was presented late in the course, while other *marches* were used in previous exercises, such as those shown earlier in this chapter. On the other hand, in Fenaroli's teaching, there are apparently no lessons on chord inversions. The written instructions only cover on which scale degree a major or minor chord can be found.<sup>465</sup> The *uscite di tono* are described by musical examples. The twelve *moti del basso* are introduced as applications of *consonanze* and *dissonanze* and suspensions, rather than chord inversions, as with the description in the *Regole*.<sup>466</sup> The contrapuntal approach of the *scuola napoletana* is here evident through its application to lessons of "harmony."<sup>467</sup>

Despite differences in how theoretical content was taught, it seems that students took a similar approach to written exercises: assignments where both *bassi* and *canti* were realized with imitations and diminutions in two, three, and four parts. Berton and Dourlen asked their students to realize the same bass in three and four parts. Imitations and diminutions were gradually introduced during the course. Instead, Fenaroli asked his students to realize a two-voice basso or canto in three different ways prior to adding a third voice: 1) *semplice*: with diminutions, but only *colle consonanze*; 2) *con dissonanze*, diminished with suspensions; 3) *per imitatione*, diminished with imitations.<sup>468</sup> Comparing a two-voice *disposizione* realized by Muscogiuri, (fig. 3.18) with Le Borne's four-voice assignment for the *concours* (fig. 3.17), it appears that in

463 See Van Tour (2015), 160.

464 See also Van Tour (2015), 161.

465 We could assume that the instructions given during lessons were similar to those in Fenaroli (1775).

466 Fenaroli (1775). Further differences on the *regole* will be treated in Chapter 4 of this book.

467 As known, the Neapolitan *Maestri* did not refer to this kind of teaching as the modern subject of "harmony".

468 See Van Tour (2015), 165–166.

this case Fenaroli’s training resulted in a higher level than that achieved in Paris.<sup>469</sup> Figure 3.17 shows the first eighteen bars of this *leçon du concours*. Le Borne used mainly static chords with lengthy tied notes. It is rare that imitations are attempted, and there are few diminished parts in the assignment. Even in the bars containing the *marches d’harmonie*, which he had practised with imitations and diminutions, there are no diminutions (e.g., the two diminished *basso che sale di quarta e scende di quinta* in mm. 7–10 and the *basso che scende di terza e sale di grado* in mm. 13–15).



Figure 3.17. *Le Borne*, p. 169, bb. 1–18.

The assignments realized by Muscogiuri under Fenaroli look quite different. Figure 3.18 shows the first sixteen bars of the *disposizione* on the *basso VI*.<sup>470</sup> In this realization, we find both diminutions and imitations which create an overall rhythmic and melodic balance that is missing in Le Borne’s assignment. In any case, we must keep in mind that the individual learner’s abilities influence the level they achieve during their studies. Beyond the type of exercises performed and based on these manuscripts, it would seem that Muscogiuri was working at a higher level than Le Borne.

469 The two-voice example from Muscogiuri is used instead of a three-voice *disposizione*, because Fenaroli’s three voices assignments were preparatory exercises for a fugue based on a given *motivo* (we could call it the head of a subject or theme) and not on a given bass.

470 I-Baf MSGI-MUSC-MUSI (C.I R).



Figure 3.18. Muscogiuri, basso VI

In fact, Le Borne's realization alone is not enough to determine the level that was achieved at the Conservatoire. Berton's student did not win the *concours*, and therefore did not rank among the best students. Colet collected a number of his student's assignments for the *concours de harmonie* and, among these, were winners of first and second prizes. Figure 3.19 shows an excerpt of the exam of Charles Lebouc, for which he won the first prize in 1844.

Figure 3.19. Colet (1846), 332, bb.1–5.

The assignment above is at a similar level to the *concours* of 1818 (fig. 3.17). Unlike Le Borne, the student here uses imitations and inserts canons at the octave throughout the entire piece. The use of canons and imitations places this assignment closer to the *bassi fugati* of the Neapolitan school. As mentioned, Colet was an important representative for the French reception of partimento, and his book *Partimenti ou traité spécial de l'accompagnement pratique* was used during his classes.<sup>471</sup> It is therefore plausible that Colet might have taught harmony by combining it with partimento, although he

471 See Chapter 2.

often provided written realizations to facilitate students.<sup>472</sup> There is no doubt that the assignments given for the *concours* required a knowledge of counterpoint, especially of imitations and diminutions. As seen in all the teaching material examined, starting from Catel, all teachers taught these skills and required students to master them in order to advance to the next step of composition training: *contrepoint et fugue*.

By comparing the Neapolitan and Parisian harmony courses, it is evident that the two schools followed different approaches which derive from each school’s heritage and goals: the French theoretical tradition was deeply rooted in the Neo-Ramellian *basse fondamentale*; whereas the Neapolitan, practical teaching method aimed to train young composers in the most effective and simple way. While a French *harmoniste* learned about chords formation, their inversions, and how to name and distinguish them, a Neapolitan *partimentista* would start by practising the rule of the octave, learning the application of those same chords on each scale degree and practising *moti del basso* with applied *dissonanze* both at the piano and in writing. Berton suggested that “learning by doing” – as opposed to memorizing chord names<sup>473</sup> – was a more effective training method, as proven by the success of Neapolitan-trained musicians.<sup>474</sup>

In view of the above reconstruction of accompaniment courses, we can compare contents and results from courses of *accompagnement* and *partimento*.<sup>475</sup>

Summarizing the contents treated during classes of *accompagnement*, we can trace the following line:

1. Introduction, focusing on basic elements of music theory and harmony (a rudimentary knowledge of which was required to enter the course)
2. Positions of the right hand
3. Chords and inversions
4. Dissonant chords (including examples of their application of the *marches d’harmonie*)
5. The *règle de l’octave*
6. Figured exercises, often with given realizations

It is possible to compare this teaching with Fenaroli’s *partimento* course:<sup>476</sup>

1. The *regola dell’ottava*
2. *Cadenze*
3. *Dissonanze*
4. *Moti del basso*
5. Figured and unfigured *partimenti*

<sup>472</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>473</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>474</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>475</sup> Partimento teaching in Naples will not be covered here, as it is already extensively covered by, among others, Sanguinetti, Van Tour, and Cafiero.

<sup>476</sup> See Sanguinetti (2012a), Van Tour (2015), 162–165 and Demeyere (2018), 212–215.

The position of the rule of the octave in these two courses provides us with a clue that might explain why students did not learn how to play unfigured basses.<sup>477</sup>

After this training, if the student was talented, they would start a counterpoint course in parallel with *partimenti fugati*;<sup>478</sup> however, it appears that French students did not attain these improvisational skills.

The reason for this discrepancy in the final level is probably also due to a difference in the course's goals. While *partimento* was crucial for the education of a composer – and one of the main tools by which harmony and improvisation were taught – in Paris, the purpose of learning *accompagnement* was to equip students with the ability to accompany the classes of *solfège*, *chant*, and *accompagner une partition*.

Dès qu'un Élève de la classe d'accompagnement sera reconnu en état d'accompagner la basse chiffrée à l'examen trimestriel, le Directeur pourra le mettre à la disposition d'un Professeur de solfège ou de vocalisation et de chant ou de classe d'ensemble pour continuer ses études et mettre à profit les leçons qu'il reçoit ou qu'il a reçues.<sup>479</sup>

Bienaimé gives us a picture of what would happen during these lessons:

En effet, qu'un élève après avoir étudié les ouvrages que je viens de citer, veuille accompagner certaines leçons des solfèges du Conservatoire ou de Cherubini, il est presque toujours arrêté à chaque mesure; soit que les basses de ces solfèges lui présentent des difficultés de rythme ou de lecture, soit que la rapidité de certains passages portant des harmonies différentes sur chaque note ne lui laisse pas le tems de trouver les accords.<sup>480</sup>

According to Bienaimé (quoting his colleagues Dourlen, Fétis, and Lemoine), most of the exercises contained in *accompagnement* treatises do not contain many challenges for students, so these students are later unprepared to accompany the classes of *solfège*. He also points out that having realizations given is also counterproductive for achieving this goal.

From the lessons contained in the examined sources, it is evident that elements of imitation and diminutions were introduced in both courses of *harmonie* and *accompagnement*.

The *concours d'harmonie e d'accompagnement* consisted in realizing a figured bass at the piano. The following example (3.20) shows the assignment given at the *concours* of 1830. The long notes in the bass line usually indicate points of imitation, and the patterns in the bass line can easily be used in these moments.<sup>481</sup> Borrowing an analogy

<sup>477</sup> See Chapter 4 for a deeper look at the rule of the octave at the Conservatoire.

<sup>478</sup> Van Tour (2015), 165–168.

<sup>479</sup> Lassabathie (1860), 118. Also quoted in Vewaerde (2015), 323.

<sup>480</sup> Bienaimé (1845), 2.

<sup>481</sup> There are several *partimenti* with a similar structure. See e.g., Sala (2017).

from Robert Gjerdingen, this *basse* is composed of a combination of “interesting” and “boring” parts.<sup>482</sup>



Figure 3.20. *Pierre* (1900b), 206.

The *marches* in this bass are diminished as, for example, the *marche de septièmes*, or *basso che sale di quarta e scende di quinta* in bars 5–6 and the ascending 5–6 scale in bars 22–24. In m. 7, there is a two-step cadence that is a simple dominant seventh chord, instead of a *composta*. Similarly, the final cadence is a *composta*, whereas it would most likely be a *doppia* in Neapolitan partimenti, especially in a 4/4 tempo. However, it can be suggested that the slower harmonic rhythm could justify the use of a *composta* in this case.

Compared to Fenaroli’s partimento course, especially the partimenti in the fourth book (the last one before the *partimenti fugati*), it is evident that the level required to realize Neapolitan partimenti is substantially higher. These partimenti are unfigured and contain a greater number of *moti del basso* and more frequent chord changes (therefore a faster harmonic rhythm) per bar. In the French assignment shown (fig. 3.20), chords are often held for an entire bar and figures are given throughout the bass. Even compared to the figured partimenti of Fenaroli’s second book, the basses of the *concours* generally appear to be easier, since they contain fewer dissonances and *uscite di tono*.

As seen in both the courses of *harmonie* and the teaching of *accompagnement*, the differences between the teaching methods may have played a crucial role in the results attained by the two schools. Partimento training is based on systematic repetition and the transposition of patterns: the *regole*, that prepare the hand and the brain to respond automatically to a *stimulus* contained in the bass line. The French approach, although using similar exercises (and frequently adopting the same partimenti by Fenaroli), based its methodology on learning from a more theoretical starting point.

482 Gjerdingen (2010).



This would suggest that Bienaimé was correct when he stated that the solutions and realizations given for practising the *marches* and *basses* also had a negative effect on the learning process. The mental process triggered by reading and playing a score differs from that used in finding a solution and applying it at the piano.<sup>483</sup> Another reason for the different results of the French approach is the theoretical basis for teaching *accompagnement*. As noted in Chapter 1, the centrality of theory in French teaching methods had already been recognized by Choron to be among the causes of the weaker results for courses of *accompagnement*, as far back as 1820.

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483 “Project-based learning” has been studied in psychology since the end of the 19th century and is still proven as the best method for learning efficiently. Studies on this matter started with John Dewey in 1897 and were followed by the work as other renowned scholars such as Maria Montessori.

