A French manuscript from Dijon contains a setting by Galuppi of Confitibor tibi Domine (Psalm 111, known in English as “I will praise the Lord with all my heart”). Galuppi’s sacred music is every bit as graceful as his secular music, and full of elegant details. Two versions of the music that opens this motet are shown below. The first version is from the soprano’s initial entrance and features a melodic Sol-Fa-Mi linked to a Long cadence that supports elements of a Do-Re-Mi and a Prinner.

Ex. 18.1 Galuppi, Confitibor tibi Domine, mvt. 1 (ca. 1740s)
The second stems from the first instrumental interlude, in which the small orchestra plays a similar melody but substitutes a bass with elements of the Romanesca leading into a standard bass cadence. The upper voices are nearly the same as in example 18.1:

**Ex. 18.2** Galuppi, *Confitibor tibi Domine*, mvt. 1 (ca. 1740s)

![Score Image](image)

**Romanesca ?**

Though these are charming passages, it was a fact of galant practice that Sol-Fa-Mi, as a simple three-stage schema, was never as prevalent as, for example, Do-Re-Mi. Descending stepwise melodies, especially when in parallel thirds, were more likely to form constituents of a proper Romanesca or of various cadences. And both of the Galuppi basses shown here (exx. 18.1–2) suggest that four, rather than three, stages may have been intended. That is, the bass’s leap down from A₃ to D₃ (②–⑤) implies two separate chords under the melodic Fa (❹). At roughly the same time that the four-stage Do-Re-Mi became common (as Do-Re . . . Re-Mi, see chap. 6), the four-stage Sol-Fa-Mi emerged as a preferred schema for important themes.

A four-stage Sol-Fa-Mi has a concluding ④–③ dyad (*fa–mi* in major) in common with the Prinner, the Meyer, the Pastorella, and both halves of the typical Fonte and Monte. So one can expect to see the same High ② Drop that often signals the ensuing ①–② in all of those schemata. That is certainly the case with example 18.3 by Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770), the acknowledged *primo violino* in Padua for almost half a century. Tartini begins with a two-measure, four-stage Sol-Fa-Mi that features a High ② Drop in the second measure. He then continues with a modulating Prinner into which he nests a small Meyer. Both the Prinner and the Meyer converge and close on the same ①–② dyad, signaled by another High ② Drop.

A minor chord over ② at the second stage of the Sol-Fa-Mi was not required—a dominant chord would also have worked well. But galant composers seem to have preferred the minor chord there, especially in slower movements like Tartini’s Adagio. There could at times be special technical circumstances that would preclude a minor chord at
Chapter 18  THE SOL-FA-MI

ex. 18.3  Tartini, Opus 6, no. 4, mvt. 1, Adagio, m. 1 (Paris, ca. 1748)

SOL-FA-MI

PRINNER

the second stage. For example, when Anton Stamitz (1750–1789/1809), who grew up in the whirl of court music at Mannheim (his father directed its famous orchestra), wrote a Sol-Fa-Mi with rising chromatic appoggiaturas (see ex. 18.4), a ♭ in the bass at the second stage (m. 2) would have created a horrible clash (C₃ against both B₄ and D₅). So he used a ♮ (F₃) instead, ornamented from below by E♭.

ex. 18.4  A. Stamitz, Opus 11, no. 2, mvt. 1, Allegro, m. 1 (ca. 1775)
Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805), in a movement that nineteenth-century publishers touted as his “Celebrated Minuet,” also employs a ♩ for the bass of the second stage. The fame of this movement, which at various times in the twentieth century stood as one of the best-known galant works, even having a role in film,¹ may rest partly on its syncopated melody and partly on its delightful texture. The unique combination of violin 1 con sordino, violin 2 con sordino on alternating E₄ and E₅ sixteenth notes, and violas/cellos pizzicato cannot, unfortunately, be replicated on the two-staff reduction shown below:

ex. 18.5 Boccherini, Opus 11, no. 5, mvt. 3, Minuetto, m. 1 (1771)

In spite of variants like those favored by Stamitz and Boccherini, Tartini’s 1740s blueprint for a four-stage Sol-Fa-Mi proved to be remarkably stable, even when, in later decades, the schema doubled or quadrupled in length. In 1771, for instance, the French violinist Leduc wrote a four-measure Sol-Fa-Mi very much along Tartini’s lines, with a ♩ supporting a minor chord at the second stage, a High ♩ Drop, and a closing melodic Prinner (ex. 18.6). He then followed this with an eight-bar (!) Prinner, not shown.

ex. 18.6 Leduc, Opus 4, no. 2, mvt. 1, Moderato, m. 12 (Paris, 1771)

In the same decade, Salieri wrote an eight-measure Sol-Fa-Mi, allegro molto, which features the short melodic interjections characteristic of comic opera. Salieri’s passage
races on through an eight-measure Monte and three Fenarolis before catching its breath on a grand pause seventeen measures after the end of the Sol-Fa-Mi.

ex. 18.7  Salieri, Sinfonia from La fiera di Venezia, mvt. 1, Allegro molto, m. 96 (Vienna, 1772)

SOL-FA-MI

MONTE

FENAROLI

PONTE
The small triangle of scale-degree numbers in Salieri’s measure 108 is meant to highlight the overlapping contexts that impinge on the notated B₅. In the spirit of Tartini’s “usual Italian solfeggio,” that tone would be B la-mi-re—la in relation to the overall D-major key, mi in relation to the G-major focus just established by the first part of the Monte, and re or High ❷ in relation to the imminent A-major focus of the second part of the Monte. Because the bass line in measures 105–11 forms a rising chromatic line—F♯₃, G₃, G♯₃, A₃—the B₅ in measure 108 serves not only as High ❷ for the move to the ensuing A-major dominant chord, but also as High ❻ of a Converging cadence. Salieri’s practice is typical of an increasing reluctance during the 1770s and 1780s to write completely regular and predictable Montes. As mentioned, the more frequent use of the term Schusterfleck (Ger., “cobbler’s patch”)³ to describe such sequences is another indicator of the Monte’s decline in esteem.

The late nineteenth-century founders of the modern Olympic movement devised a motto—citius, altius, fortius (Lat., “fastest, highest, strongest”)—that neatly encapsulates a Romantic notion of excellence. Connoisseurs of galant music were not immune to the allure of ostentatiously fast and showy performances, and bourgeois audiences found them irresistible. Indeed, the speed and élan of Salieri’s passage does foreshadow many trends that came to dominate music in the decades following the French Revolution. But to an eighteenth-century court of the ancien régime, excellence in music meant something more. It often meant “sensibility,” a trait highly valued in galant society. Sensibility could be musically demonstrated through elegant details rather than through sheer speed, range, or loudness.

Chromatic decoration was one of the obvious musical marks of sensibility. As was discussed in chapter 8, Riepel’s imaginary student had mentioned that the following melody “seems like a workaday Fonte”:⁴

ex. 18.8  Riepel, the student’s “Fonte” or Sol-Fa-Mi

The imaginary teacher neither agreed nor disagreed but noted “some composers ornament it as follows”:⁵

ex. 18.9  Riepel, the ornamented “Fonte” or Sol-Fa-Mi
Riepel appears to be acknowledging, without describing it as such, the nexus between diatonic and chromatic versions of the Fonte and the Sol-Fa-Mi, which all share a global \( 5 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 3 \) core melody.

The type of ornamentation suggested by Riepel can be seen clearly in the following two Sol-Fa-Mi’s by Leduc. The first four measures show Leduc’s diatonic theme, a paired Sol-Fa-Mi. Then, after a four-measure interlude (not shown), the theme returns with added chromatic ornamentation and a slightly different character, having lost its playful eighth-note “escape tones” (cf. mm. 47, 49):

**Ex. 18.10** Leduc, Opus 4, no. 2, mvt. 1, Moderato, mm. 46–49, 54–57 (1771)

Just a few years later, in one of his movements titled Amoroso (one presumes that music with an “affectionate” or “loving” character ought to exhibit considerable sensitivity), Pugnani likewise employed the paired Sol-Fa-Mi with the ornamental chromatic descent. Moreover he seems to have recognized and exploited the implication for continuing the chromatic descent beyond \( 5 \rightarrow 4 \) and \( 5 \rightarrow 3 \) to \( b3 \rightarrow 2 \):
Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755–1824), the most famous student of Pugnani (who was in turn a pupil of Somis), often expressed sensibility through chromatic appoggiaturas that approach the chord tone from below. Those tones and similarly strong diatonic dissonances are starred in example 18.12, selected from one of Viotti’s solo sonatas for violin. He employs extensive chromatic decoration in his first cadence, which is a relatively short adaptation of the Grand cadence. He then inserts the Fonte and returns to a larger, more conclusive Mi-Re-Do cadence that largely eschews chromaticism in favor of rapid scalar runs. Viotti’s Fonte, which itself could be viewed as a chromatic variant of his Sol-Fa-Mi, has its melody a third above the normal, global Ⅳ–Ⅰ . . . Ⅰ–Ⅳ, thereby fostering the expressively more salient sonorities of dissonant seventh chords at the first and third stages of the schema (each half of his Fonte matches the Jommelli variant of the Comma; cf. ex. 11.34). This melodic excerpt, though it does not venture beyond first position on the violin’s E string, represents the height of sensitivity in late galant instrumental music.

Many presentations of the Sol-Fa-Mi were also given in the minor mode. In most cases few changes were made to the basic schema, even though a dissonant triad results at the second stage (e.g., in A minor: B, D, F). There was, in fact, a fashion for a type of minor-mode Sol-Fa-Mi that included an even stronger dissonance at the second stage—a 6/4 chord and the resulting 2–3 suspension. An example by Gaviniés originated in the minore section of a minuet (see ex. 18.13). The bass holds Ⅴ through both the schema’s
first and second stages, then resolves down to 7 at stage three. Note the affectively charged leap up to the High 9 in the second measure following the agitato syncopations of the first measure. Though the effect is quite different in the minor mode, Gaviniés’s syncopations are almost exactly the same as Boccherini’s (cf. ex. 18.5).

ex. 18.13  Gaviniés, Opus 3, no. 5, mvt. 3b, Tempo di minuetto, m. 1 (1764)

Gaviniés’s pupil Leduc produced a similarly sensitive Adagio on the same template. The added tenor voice in the original print suggests that either Leduc or his printer decided to make the 2–3 suspension explicit, since it is easily missed by the keyboard player in these unfigured basses. The marking of *rinforzando* (It., “strengthening”) at the start of the Prin- ner melody in measure 3 reinforces the inference of heightened “affection” (ex. 18.4).
If one were to combine the affective charge of the Sol-Fa-Mi’s written by these French violinists with the size and dynamism of the orchestral Sol-Fa-Mi by Salieri (ex. 18.7)—thus pairing French melodic sensitivity with Viennese orchestral élan—the result might resemble the famous opening of Mozart’s G-minor symphony (1788). This deservedly famous theme is, in my opinion, no less arresting for having been built on the stock schematic template of the paired Sol-Fa-Mi:

ex. 18.15  Mozart, Symphony in G Minor (KV550), mvt. 1, Allegro, m. 1 (1788)