The Italian Job: Ciconia, Du Fay, and the Musical Aesthetics of the Fifteenth-Century Italian Motet

Carolann Buff

I n his monograph on Guillaume Du Fay, David Fallows mentions in passing the influence of the works of Johannes Ciconia on the compositions of Du Fay's formative years.[1] In particular, Fallows notes the resemblance of the isorhythmic plan of Du Fay's motet *Vasilissa ergo gaude—Concupivit rex decorem tuum* to that of Ciconia's *Ut te per omnes celitum—Ingens alumnus Padue*.[2] If one disregards the introductory section of *Vasilissa*, Fallows argues, the two motets have nearly the same structure: both can be divided into two rhythmically identical parts. Based upon this structural similarity, Fallows concluded that Du Fay used his predecessor's motet as the model for his work.

The purpose of this study is to expand upon Fallows's assertion and establish Du Fay's *Vasilissa* as a motet in the tradition of works such as Ciconia's *Ut te per omnes*. I compare the two works paradigmatically in order to examine their features in high relief and search beyond traditional means of stylistic comparison, such as isorhythm. This will demonstrate that Du Fay as a young composer adopted and absorbed the features of a distinctly Italian motet tradition as exemplified by the works of Ciconia. This study demonstrates that Du Fay was not composing exclusively in a French *ars nova* idiom with only minimal references to Italian stylistic influences. Instead, his early works can be categorized as part of a much larger tradition that includes Ciconia as well as a number of other composers active in Italy in the first quarter of the fifteenth century.

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1. David Fallows, *Dufay*, rev. ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 21.

2. *Ut te per omnes* is in Bologna, Museo internazionale e Biblioteca della musica, MS Q.15 (hereafter Q15), fols. 289v–290r, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. Misc. 213 (hereafter Ox213), fols. 119v–120r; *Vasilissa* is in Q15, fols. 276v–277r, Ox213, fols. 132v–133r, and Trent, Museo Provinciale d'Arte, Castello del Buon Consiglio MS 1374 (*olim* 87¹) (hereafter Tr87¹), fols. 57v–58r. N.B. the folio numbering for Q15 in this essay is in the arabic system. Cross-referencing to the Roman foliation or the Mancini numbering system is readily available in the facsimile edition of the manuscript, Margaret Bent, *Bologna Q15: The Making and Remaking of a Musical Manuscript*, 2 vols., Introductory Study and Facsimile Edition (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2008).

Fallows emphasized the formal relationship between *Ut te per omnes* and *Vasilissa*, but they share more than just structural congruity. Each motet is in honor of specific political figures, and may have served some ceremonial function. The upper two voices of both motets are equal in range and texture; the tenors are written in relatively short values and are rhythmically varied; and the double-statement structure of each is accentuated by rhythmically complex cadential figures. This list of common characteristics, which is catalogued and defined in Margaret Bent's study of the fourteenth-century Italian motet, is part of a larger style of composition that has precedents nearly one hundred years before Du Fay arrived in Italy.[3] The evidence of a large proportion of Italian motets copied into Q15 demonstrates that this older style was popular in the Veneto at the turn of the century and through the next three decades.[4]

My examination of early fifteenth-century motets from the Veneto in comparison to those from France, particularly the region dominated by the musical culture of the papal court in Avignon, reveals two vastly different musical aesthetics. In general the texture of Italian motets consists of two equal upper voices with a tenor in a lower range that often moves in slightly slower note values, but which can also accelerate to join in an imitative texture alongside other voices. French motets are generally much more hierarchical, with the triplum moving in faster rhythmic values than the motetus, and both of these voices moving in significantly faster values than the tenor.

Motets from the south also differ in construction from their northern analogues. Although a few Italian motets are strictly isorhythmic, a great many others are not.[5] Instead, these works rely on other structural features to provide shape and form. The

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3. Margaret Bent, "The Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," in *L'Ars Nova italiana del Trecento* 6, Atti del Congresso Internazionale: L'Europa e la Musica del Trecento, Certaldo, 19–21 July 1984, ed. Giulio Cattin and Patrizia Dalla Vecchia (Certaldo, 1992), 85–125 at 122–25. Note in particular the typically Italianate characteristics of the anonymous motet *Marce Marcum* for Doge Marco Corner (*Italian Sacred and Ceremonial Music*, ed. Kurt von Fischer and F. Alberto Gallo, PMFC 13 [Monaco: L'Oiseau Lyre, 1987], 197–201). This motet shares a number of similar stylistic characteristics with Ciconia's works, including upper voices equal in texture and rhythmic activity, a freely composed and relatively fast-moving tenor, a single text, correspondence of musical phrases to poetic lines, voice crossing, tenor solos, melodic and rhythmic imitation, hocket, and extended melismas on the opening and penultimate syllables of the texts.

4. Margaret Bent, "Continuity and Transformation of Repertory and Transmission in Early 15th-Century Italy: The Two Cultures," in *Kontinuität und Transformation in der italienischen Vokalmusik zwischen Due- und Quattrocento*, ed. Sandra Dieckmann, Oliver Huck, Signe Rotter-Broman, and Alba Scotti (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2007), 225–46 at 225.

5. Recently, Bent has emphasized that double-statement motets without diminution such as those associated with the Veneto are actually more truly "isorhythmic" according to a strict definition of the term than those with mensural or proportional manipulation. See Margaret Bent, "What is Isorhythm?" in *Quomodo cantabimus canticum? Studies in Honor of Edward Roesner*, ed. David Butler Cannata, with Gabriela Ilnitchi, Rena Charnin Mueller, and John Nádas (Middleton, WI: American Institute of Musicology, 2008), 121–43 at 122. While not opposed to Bent's critique of the use of the term isorhythm, Emily Zazulia examines the isorhythmic techniques that are used well into the fifteenth century. See Zazulia, "Verbal Canons and Notational Complexity in Fifteenth-Century Music" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2012), 83–132. Zazulia proposes that isorhythm was not a dying and atrophic practice, as Thomas Brothers had implied in his article "Vestiges of Isorhythmic Tradition in Mass and Motet, ca. 1450–1475," *JAMS* 44 (1991): 1–56; instead she supports the argument that isorhythmic structuring is only one of many specific techniques of compositional method and that one should not rely upon the presence of isorhythm alone to define a motet and describe its structure.

composers associated with the noble courts of northern Italy were also likely to avoid borrowing pre-composed chants as the basis for their motets, instead creating newly composed tenors. Invented tenors are in general equal conceptually and composition-ally with the upper voices. The counterpoint of the tenor moves in direct relationship to the upper voices and leads to the possibility that the tenor was composed either simultaneously with or even after the upper voices. In an *ars nova* motet, the counter-point of the upper voices relies on the structure of the tenor. The tenor part must have been constructed first by organizing a pre-existing melody into various repetitions of rhythm. This organization gives an *ars nova* motet its basic structure and form.

Because all the voices of an Italian motet are freely composed, attention can be shifted from exclusive analysis of the tenor to the structural interaction of all voices, as well as other gestural features. These features can be identified and catalogued, allowing for a ready comparison not only between works such as *Ut te per omnes* and *Vasilissa*, but also many other motets. I have divided this catalog of features into three general cate-gories: texture, construction, and characteristic gestures. Editions of both motets can be found in the Appendices.

Texture

Most northern motets at the turn of the century were structured in a hierarchical fash-ion. In this differentiated structure the superius is in the highest register and the most active. The superius is thus set apart from the other voices of the motet in terms of number of notes, rhythmic complexity, and amount of text. Ciconia's motets all have equivalence of upper voices in terms of range, melodic shaping, rhythmic activity, and text setting.[6] The similarity of range allows for imitative passages and melodic sequences to emerge as part of characteristic textures. In *Ut te per omnes* the comparable rhythmic structure of the two cantus voices creates many possibilities for imitative melodic passages, particularly canons and sequences. Both parts also correspond in the nearly syllabic declamation of their texts. The texts are equal in length, sharing the same number of lines and nearly the same number of syllables per line. The syllabic text settings are bookended by extended melismas at the opening and conclusion of each half of each motet.

Following in the style of *Ut te per omnes*, Du Fay wrote the two upper voices of his *Vasilissa* in equivalent ranges. Although he sets *Vasilissa* for four voices, the basic gram-matical structure of the work is two equal upper voices over a fast-moving tenor.[7] As Fallows noted, *Vasilissa* shares a similar double-statement rhythmic structure with *Ut te per omnes*. Du Fay sets a single text nearly syllabically in the two upper voices, with some longer melismas adding punctuation at the ends of several of the poetic lines.

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6. This Italianate feature is characteristic of what Robert Nosow calls the "equal-discantus style." See Robert Nosow, "Florid and Equal-Discantus Motet Styles of Fifteenth-Century Italy" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1992), 38–50.

7. Nosow includes Du Fay's *Vasilissa* amongst his list of equal-discantus motets. Nosow, "Florid and Equal-Discantus," 43, 101–6. I will discuss the function of the contratenor as the fourth voice of *Vasilissa* later in this essay.

Ciconia does not use a pre-composed tenor for *Ut te per omnes*. Instead, he creates an entirely new melody, often moving in breves or semibreves. The rhythmic motion, despite being somewhat slower than that of the upper voices, moves much faster than the cantus-firmus tenors of *ars nova* motets. The newly created tenor moves rapidly and angularly to accommodate the counterpoint of its partners. In measures 42–44 of *Ut te per omnes* the voices all move in counterpoint with each other, each moving in its fastest rhythmic values—semibreves for the tenor, and minims or minim rests for the cantus parts (see Appendix 1).

Although Du Fay bases *Vasilissa* on a chant, suggesting *ars nova* influence, he sets the cantus firmus in a fashion that resembles less the slow-moving tenors of the northern tradition and more the rhythmically active Italian style.[8] It is likely that Du Fay chose or was given the tenor chant because the text is suitable for a nuptial theme; and yet the leaps of the melody that feature prominently in the first part of each half of the chant may have provided a compositional intrigue akin to that of the more angular motion of Ciconia's newly composed tenor for *Ut te per omnes*.[9]

Because of the spacing of the voices—two equally high cantus parts over a lower tenor—the primary cadential pattern in an Italian motet is $\frac{10}{6}$ cadencing to $\frac{12}{8}$, contrasting with the French practice of cadencing $\frac{6\text{-}8}{3\text{-}5}$.[10] A typical example is found in measures 11–12 of *Ut te per omnes*.[11] This creates a parallel-fifth motion between the two cantus parts, but retains acceptable contrapuntal motion between each cantus part and the tenor by resolving imperfect intervals 10 and 6 to perfect 12 and 8 respectively.[12]

Ciconia also utilizes what I describe as partial cadences by cadencing on a perfect sonority of $\frac{12}{8}$, but without every voice contributing to the pre-cadential sonority. This occurs in measure 23, where cantus II rests while the tenor, on *e*, and cantus I, on *c#'*, form a 6th interval. Cantus II then rejoins to resolve to the fully cadential *d–d'–a'*, a $\frac{12}{8}$

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8. Alejandro Planchart has identified the particular chant melody of *Concupivit rex* as one used specifically in the Veneto. Du Fay would have found this version only in the local chant books in Rimini. Alejandro Enrique Planchart, "The Early Career of Guillaume Du Fay," *JAMS* 46 (1993): 341–68 at 361–62.

9. The first pitches of each half of the *Concupivit rex* melody—the leap up a fifth from D to A—are followed by upward motion. In mm. 63–69, the tenor leap is followed by another step up to B. In mm. 24–31, the leap is followed by another leap up a minor third to C.

10. Bent, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," 103. For more on typically French cadences see Sarah Fuller, "On Sonority in Fourteenth-Century Polyphony: Some Preliminary Reflections," *Journal of Music Theory* 30 (1986): 35–70 at 51.

11. I have included in the edition suggestions for raised pre-cadential pitches as they would likely have been altered by a singer in the fifteenth century. The addition of musica ficta strengthens the directed resolution to the perfect sonority of the cadences. Prosdocimus, writing in early fifteenth-century Italy, discusses musica ficta at length in his treatise on counterpoint and especially notes the altering of pitches in imperfect consonance moving to perfect consonances to make the harmony "sweeter." Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Contrapunctus (Counterpoint)*, ed. and trans. Jan Herlinger (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 81–85.

12. Julie Cumming notes the parallel fifths of the medial and final cadences in Du Fay's *Vasilissa*, marking them as distinctively Italianate. See specifically mm. 62–63 and 102–3. Julie Cumming, *The Motet in the Age of Du Fay* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 84.

cadence.[13] In measures 69–70 Ciconia creates a partial cadence from the upward gesture of the tenor alone. As the two upper parts rest, the tenor moves up in a stepwise sequence from g to c′, thus sounding the g that is normally heard in the cantus I cadential figure, and then resolving to d′. Immediately following this sequence, the two upper voices rejoin on a closely voiced cadence with cantus II in unison with the tenor and cantus I in a fifth, with $\frac{5}{1}$ replacing $\frac{12}{8}$.

One of Ciconia's most striking cadential figures is found in measures 30–32. Here he sets up a dissonant $\frac{10}{5}$ sonority, which is held for the duration of a longa before rapidly cadencing on $\frac{12}{8}$. This resolution is only temporary. The $\frac{12}{8}$ sonority is heard for the duration of a minim and then moves immediately into an episode of high rhythmic activity.[14] In Ut te per omnes these cadences are particularly dramatic when the resolution immediately leaps into action after the held, pre-cadential sonority, moving directly into a frenetic energy of interlocking counterpoint in the upper voices.

Although the upper voices of Vasilissa are also equal in range, Du Fay does not typically cadence with an Italianate $\frac{10-12}{6-8}$. Instead, he strategically deploys this widely spaced figure at the medial and final cadences of the motet (mm. 62–63 and 102–3; see Appendix 2). Almost all of the internal cadences (for instance mm. 31–32 and 40–41) are $\frac{6-8}{3-5}$, a cadential spacing more commonly found in ars nova motets. A shared feature of the internal cadences in Vasilissa is that the contratenor crosses from a third below the tenor to come to unison at the cadence, creating parallel octaves with one or the other of the upper voices.[15]

Honorific and ceremonial texts are typical of the Italian-style motet, and equal voicing in the upper parts enables additional text-setting conventions that are unique to these works. In the case of Ciconia's Ut te per omnes (see Appendix 1 for texts and translation), a symbolic equivalence between its honoree, Francesco Zabarella, and St. Francis of Assisi is texturally reinforced by the call-and-response in the cantus parts in measures 20–25.[16] The rhythmic and melodic imitation of this passage in Ut te per omnes

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13. This same cadential pattern occurs again almost immediately in mm. 25–26 with the opposite configuration for the two cantus voices.

14. To a modern listener the arrival on the $\frac{10}{5}$ sonority in m. 30 can sound like the cadence, and thus disorientatingly and anachronistically harmonic. But this kind of tonal hearing can be mitigated if performed in Pythagorean tuning with a "large" major third. Thus the tension of the dissonant 10th resolves upwards to the perfect 12th and the cadential resolution on $\frac{12}{8}$ sounds correct despite the brevity of the cadential sonority. Ramon Pelinski calls the held sonorities before the excitement of the rhythmic passages, such as mm. 30–31 in Ut te per omnes, "moments of repose" [Ruheklänge], but I find this a misleading term. See Ramon Pelinski, "Zusammenklang und Aufbau in den Motetten Machauts," Die Musikforschung 28 (1975), 62–71, and Fuller's response in "On Sonority," 55. These sonorities should not be imparted with structural significance. If anything, they are moments of high tension relieved only by the explosion of activity that immediately follows.

15. Fuller and more recently Jennifer Bain have discussed cadential figures and "directed progressions," most notably in the music of Guillaume de Machaut. See Fuller, "On Sonority," 50–54, and Jennifer Bain, "Theorizing the Cadence in the Music of Machaut," Journal of Music Theory 47 (2003): 325–62 at 330–33.

16. Call-and-response is a technique that is most productively utilized when the vocal parts have an equal range and texture. It is therefore a compositional practice nearly unimaginable in works based upon hierarchies of range and rhythm as in motets of the Ars Nova.

is further emphasized by being coupled with the alliteration of the names beginning with "Fran-ci-" occurring in both texts (mm. 22 and 24).[17]

The text setting for the upper voices of Vasilissa can illuminate some of Du Fay's compositional decisions.[18] The poem that Du Fay set is in rhymed couplets, and each phrase of text coincides with a phrase of music (see Appendix 2 for the text and translation). Although individual phrases are carefully arranged, the large-scale musical division of the motet is significantly different from its texts' poetic form.[19] The poem is made up of three six-line strophes honoring the marriage of an Italian noblewoman, Cleofa Malatesta, and her groom, Theodore Palaiológos. Verse 1 is in honor of Cleofa, verse 2 of Theodore, and verse 3 is again for Cleofa. In the motet the first two lines of the first verse are set to the introductory canon. After this, there follows an equal division of the remainder of the poetry, cutting the verse for Theodore into unequal parts and leaving the last two lines of his verse for the beginning of the second half of the motet. In contrast to his seemingly random division of the honorific text in the upper voices, Du Fay carefully uses the parallel melodic and poetic division of the psalm form for his setting of the cantus firmus. The first half of the psalm verse corresponds with the first iteration of the tenor rhythm and the second half of the verse with the repetition of the talea.[20] Neglecting to highlight the poetic structure of the main text of Vasilissa, Du Fay instead chose to separate three verses into two rhythmically identical parts. By rejecting the poetic structure, he composed a double-statement motet, directly imitating Italian motets such as Ciconia's that were known in the sacred and secular courts of northern Italy in the early decades of the fifteenth century.

Du Fay pays special attention in the text setting of Vasilissa to bringing out words of particular significance to the listeners. Because this is a setting of a single text, certain words and phrases carry emphatic weight either through call-and-response, in which one of the two upper voices imitates both the melody and the text of the other, or in homophonic passages, gaining what Fallows describes as "increased directness of communication."[21] In a manner similar to the way in which Ciconia highlights the names Franciscus and Francisce in Ut te per omnes, Du Fay uses both melodic imitation

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17. See Jane Alden's study, "Text/Music Design in Ciconia's Ceremonial Motets," in Johannes Ciconia: Musicien de la Transition, ed. Philippe Vendrix (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 39–64 at 55–56, for a more detailed discussion on the significance of alternating texts in Ciconia's motets.

18. The poem that Du Fay sets for Vasilissa is not the finest example of literary or lyrical construction and is unusually prosaic for such a notable imperial topic. It is in no discernable meter, in rhyming couplets of irregular length. Leofranc Holford-Strevens does not attribute the poor quality of the poetry to youthful inexperience, but instead to the poet's "incurable inadequacies of innate inability." Leofranc Holford-Strevens, "Du Fay the Poet? Problems in the Texts of His Motets," EMH 16 (1997): 97–165 at 107. In light of Planchart's discovery of the recognition given to the young Du Fay for his literary skills while a scholar in Cambrai and the great divide between poetic text structure and musical structure of the motet, Holford-Strevens concludes in the same article that it is improbable that Du Fay was the author of this particular text. See also Planchart, "Early Career," 351–52.

19. Holford-Strevens, "Du Fay the Poet?" 105.

20. In the manuscript, the scribe emphasizes this structure by copying the entire text of the psalm under the tenor part. The second half of the psalm verse is placed directly under the repetition of the tenor rhythm.

21. Fallows, Dufay, 108. See also Nosow, "Florid and Equal-Discantus," 103.

and homophony to emphasize specific words. Particularly notable are the words "Vasilissa" and "Ytalica" in imitation, and "Cleofe," "Romeorum," and the phrase "a tuis de Malatestis," in homophony.[22] In most cases, Du Fay gives the tenor rests during the homophonic passages of the upper voices. By doing this he clears the texture, lending extra emphasis to the words of the cantus parts. The preponderance of proper names in these musically and textually significant episodes signals Du Fay's desire to highlight the honorees of the motet through both words and music.

Ut te per omnes is copied in two Veneto manuscripts, Q15 and Ox213. The Ox213 version of the motet differs from that of Q15 in that it includes an additional contratenor part.[23] This contratenor, added by either the scribe, the composer, or even a different composer, is problematic both from a contrapuntal and a compositional perspective.[24] In the case of Ciconia's motets, Bent concludes that none of the countertenors is authentic, since they were likely added during the creation of Q15 and Ox213, and thus postdate the composer's death.[25] Not only can many be ignored without changing the essential contrapuntal grammar of the motet, but some also alter the sonority of the work and are "best omitted."[26] It is possible that composers and scribes familiar with French motets in four voices introduced a novel four-part texture to works to replace the old-fashioned three-voice motet of fourteenth-century Italy.[27] By adding a fourth voice to motets such as Ut te per omnes, the scribe of Ox213 seems to have made an attempt to modernize an older work for performance in contemporary settings.

Although there is doubt that the contratenor was part of the original concept of Ut te per omnes, this particular example is reasonably well crafted. It enters in an imitative relationship with the tenor in measures 12–14 and adds to the rhythmic complexity of the texture of the motet by moving in displaced syncopation with the tenor in measures 42–45.[28] Yet the motet is contrapuntally complete with only three voices, for the

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22. Nosow, "Florid and Equal-Discantus," 104.

23. Heinrich Besseler declared the contratenor of Ut te per omnes "inauthenic" and in Margaret Bent and Anne Hallmark's edition it is labeled "optional." Heinrich Besseler, Bourdon und Fauxbourdon (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1974), 76; Johannes Ciconia, The Works of Johannes Ciconia, ed. Margaret Bent and Anne Hallmark, PMFC 24 (Monaco: Éditions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, 1985), 103.

24. Bent has concluded that through the fourteenth century, fourth-voice contratenors are problematic because of either copious doublings or excessive dissonance. It is prudent to consider many of these same issues with regard to added contratenors in early fifteenth-century sources. Bent, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," 101. See also Bent's discussion of "problematic" contratenor parts in the motets of Ciconia and others in the introduction to PMFC 24, in particular pp. xiii and xvii, and the critical commentary to specific works in the same volume.

25. Bent, "Continuity and Transformation," 225 n. 2.

26. Margaret Bent, "Naming of Parts: Notes on the Contratenor, c. 1350–1450," in Uno gentile et subtile ingenio: Studies in Renaissance Music in Honour of Bonnie J. Blackburn, ed. M. Jennifer Bloxam, Gioia Filocamo, and Leofranc Holford-Strevens (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 1–12 at 8.

27. Andrew Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behaviour: Case Studies of Equal-Cantus Italian Motets from the MS Bologna Q.15," PMM 18 (2009): 113–40 at 115–16.

28. I will address the concept of offset syncopation later in this essay.

contratenor does not contribute to the "essential grammar" of the work.[29] This is especially notable with the completeness of cadential gestures discussed above. Conspicuously, the contratenor at moments of cadence merely doubles the $\frac{10-12}{6-8}$ formula already found in the three-voice texture.

Despite intentional and integrated compositional features, the contratenor voice of Ut te per omnes obscures and distorts some of the most salient musical qualities of the motet. Particularly prominent is an echo passage between the two upper voices where cantus II introduces a melodic figure as the contratenor doubles the entire passage an octave lower (mm. 76–77). Another passage of upper-voice echo imitation is muddied by a series of parallel fifths between the contratenor and cantus II (mm. 20–21). The medial cadence is marred by extended stretches of parallel octaves (mm. 51–54). In addition to these inessential additions and contrapuntal incongruities, the basic sonority of the work becomes generically homogenized, either when the contratenor continues while the tenor rests, or when the contratenor crosses into a range below the tenor. Particularly problematic is the final section of the motet (mm. 101–6), where the text ends on a long melisma and rhythmic intensity is at its peak. Here the contratenor part simply alternates pitches with the tenor. Instead of propelling the passage towards the final cadence, this voice-exchange bogs down the motet on a static fifth drone that does not reflect the complex rhythmic and contrapuntal interplay present in the rest of the motet.[30]

Unlike the contratenor of Ut te per omnes, the contratenor of Vasilissa appears to be authentic and original.[31] The structural interplay between Du Fay's tenor and contratenor indicates that each part was composed with the other in mind.[32] Although the contratenor is acknowledged to be authentic, it does not mean that the voice is essential to the grammar of the motet. Despite the fact that it takes on a contrapuntal role with the tenor, and is integrated into the motet, it adds nothing crucial to the resolution of the counterpoint.[33] This countertenor is well crafted, contributing to the rhythmic layering of the semibreve–minim figures at the medial and final cadences (mm. 57–62 and 96–101). With the inclusion of the contratenor, these episodes are rhythmically maximally abundant, as there is a new pitch falling on every semibreve of each tempus. The constant rhythmic activity in these two groups of measures drives the texture through these episodes to their respective cadences.

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29. The phrase "essential grammar" is borrowed from Bent's essay on the analysis of counterpoint in the fifteenth century, "The Grammar of Early Music: Preconditions for Analysis," in Tonal Structures in Early Music, ed. Cristle Collins Judd (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998), 15–59 at 19. This rhetoric shifts the concept of counterpoint away from "rules" that can be broken towards a more subjective and sensitive treatment that one uses in the understanding of grammar in language.

30. Because counterpoint until the late fifteenth century was considered to be a dyadic process, one needs to consider first the relationship of the tenor to all other voices. See Bent, "The Grammar of Early Music." This does not mean that the contratenor is in any way essential to the grammar and sonority of Ut te per omnes, nor does it mean that the contratenor is any more authentic, but it does justify some of the excessive doublings and dissonances throughout the motet.

31. The same contratenor is present in all three sources for the motet.

32. Nosow describes this relationship as "mosaic-like" in "Florid and Equal-Discantus," 104.

33. Bent, Q15, 1:222. Nosow takes the opposite view, describing the contratenor as "harmonically essential." See Nosow, "Florid and Equal-Discantus," 106.

Construction

A key element in the construction of a Veneto motet is the foregrounding of small-scale musical features that combine into large-scale rhythmic repetitions. Rhythmic repetitions in all voices result in a double iteration of structure that divides the work into two parts. On the surface this double-statement structure might appear to be a fairly simple form, but the contrapuntal structure is instead quite sophisticated. Large-scale rhythmic repetition is notable because of small-scale features that are foregrounded and reemphasized in each half of the work.

In the Italian style, a newly composed tenor permits Ciconia a certain amount of compositional freedom. He is not restricted to the structure of isorhythm, with its slow-moving rhythmic values and prescribed melodic contours. By creating and controlling the interaction between the cantus parts without having to accommodate a pre-composed tenor structure, Ciconia can allow the newly invented voice to participate in the counterpoint, or hold back in sections where the upper voices form more complex relationships with each other. Several times he supports the intricacy of rhythmic motion in the cantus voices by setting the tenor on a single extended pitch (see mm. 32–35). By contrast, in measure 13 Ciconia gives the tenor its own solo melodic and rhythmic module, while the upper voices rest. Although the tenor generally moves in breves and semibreves, Ciconia here deploys semibreves and minims to fit the tenor line in with the rhythmic contour of the other voices. In this instance, the tenor is actually the instigator of the imitative figure echoed three measures later in the cantus parts.

Ut te per omnes remains in a single mensuration and tempus throughout. In motets composed in the north, the common practice was to use diminution or other kinds of mensural manipulation for the last section—typically for the last talea or two—to create a structural "acceleration" to the end of the motet. [34] In Italian motets, however, we see not a proportional diminution for the final section of the motet, but instead an increase of the speed of individual note values in the tenor, bringing them into an equal rhythmic texture with the upper voices. This can be observed in measures 93–103 of Ut te per omnes, where the tenor's basic motion accelerates from primarily breves to semibreves. Furthermore, this increase in speed is not produced exclusively in the final section of the motet, but also in internal cadences, such as the midpoint between the repeated rhythmic halves of Ut te per omnes (mm. 42–47). The increase in relative speed of the tenor results in the three voices weaving together in hocket and echo imitation. These cadential passages are distinctive of Ciconia's works, particularly of his double-statement motets, where rhythmic sequences lead to the medial and final cadences and thus highlight the formal structures of these works. This type of cadential sequence is also found in his through-composed motets, imbuing them with a formal structure regardless of the lack of isorhythmic constraints.

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34. Although Ut te per omnes has no mensuration sign in Q15, the notation implies that the motet is in tempus perfectum. This is confirmed by the mensural indication O in Ox213. Two motets by Ciconia have mensural changes, but neither represents the northern practice of diminution. Instead, these changes are utilized as "special experimental device[s]"; Bent, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," 98.

The division between the two rhythmic sections of Ut te per omnes is emphasized by an extended, untexted cadential passage leading into the medial cadence at measure 57. Ciconia articulates these cadential passages by expanding and contracting melodic and rhythmic modules that drive to the cadence. This passage is first marked by increased motion in the tenor, changing from movement mostly in breves to semibreves for the duration of three tempora (mm. 42–44). Simultaneously a rhythmic module in the two cantus parts (minim rest–minim–minim–minim) is passed in imitation from one voice to the other, repeating four times. This resembles a hocket not of single alternating notes, but of rhythmic cells. This cell is expanded twice in cantus I in measures 45–50, with repetitions immediately following in cantus II—this time preserving the exact melodic as well as rhythmic profile of cantus I. The modular material then contracts in measure 51, resulting in a single-note hocket passage. At the same time, beginning in measure 45, the tenor shifts into repeated leaps of fourths and fifths supporting the dynamic rhythmic interplay of the upper parts. At last the culmination of the melisma marks the end of the echo imitation and the first section of the motet resolves in measure 57 with a simultaneous sonority that acts as both cadence and opening of the second half of the work. This distinctive repeated rhythmic episode is also a key feature at the end of the motet (beginning in m. 98) on an extended "Amen" melisma. These passages highlight the double-statement form of the motet, making the beginning and ending of each section clearly audible to the listener.

Du Fay's Vasilissa is essentially in two parts with the second half a rhythmic replication of the first. Its sections are articulated by small-scale structures similar to those in Ciconia's motet that are repeated in both halves of the motet.[35] Both Ciconia and Du Fay set one line of poetry to one phrase of music, with shorter melismatic passages functioning as punctuation. In Vasilissa each rhythmic half of the motet opens with a homophonic statement set with each voice's longest note values. A short melisma separates the fourth and fifth line of text (mm. 32–35). Another melisma in cantus I punctuates the eighth and ninth lines before the homophonic statement of "Romeorum" (m. 55). This phrase introduces the increased rhythmic activity in all voices that leads into the medial cadence. Unlike Ciconia's melismatic cadential episode, the cadential sequences in both halves of Vasilissa are set with further text. Both Ciconia and Du Fay utilize imitative sequences and increased rhythmic activity to highlight the large-scale formal structures of their works, although there are slight differences in the method of setting up their individual small-scale structures.

One way in which Du Fay distances the setting of the cantus firmus in Vasilissa from its isorhythmic cousins is by not repeating the color. Instead, this is a single, through-composed setting of the chant. The talea similarly plays a muted structural role, being repeated only once. Another feature that distinguishes Du Fay's tenor from a typical ars nova tenor is that, as in other early fifteenth-century Italian motets, there is no diminution. Instead Du Fay's work is similar to motets such as Ut te per omnes in the rhythmic

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35. Two elements stand outside of this structure. The first is the canonic introductory section. The second is the final two pitches that complete the melody of the borrowed cantus-firmus tenor at the end of the work.

pacing of the tenor. Although the first several pitches are in relatively slower rhythmic values, the general motion is in breves and semibreves. After a canonic introduction, the tenor enters with a long held pitch at measure 24, which is followed by movement primarily in breves and semibreves with long rests. This slow texture ratchets up incrementally and gradually begins to resemble less the slow-moving tenors of *ars nova* motets and more the newly composed voices found in Ciconia's works.

Like Ciconia, Du Fay emphasizes the overall structure of the motet by increasing the complexity of the rhythms approaching the medial and final cadences. This is done by accelerating the general speed of both the contratenor and tenor parts in measures 57–63. Until this point the two lower parts generally have moved in breves and semibreves. At measure 57 cantus I introduces a rhythmic figure that is then imitated by all four voices in sequence. This increases the rhythmic motion of the contratenor and tenor, bringing them into textural equivalence with the cantus parts. This rhythmic module echoes through each voice and builds tension through to the cadence in measure 63.[36]

Characteristic Gestures

Texture and form are only two of many features that define style. Because they are large-scale features that are relatively easy to identify and describe, they are elements that are readily used to define the Italian style. But there are also a multitude of smaller-scale features and gestures that in combination give the late-medieval Italian-style motet its particular and distinctive profile. Thus the following section by necessity treats only a selection of characteristic traits that generally characterize the Italian style and are found in both Ciconia's *Ut te per omnes* and Du Fay's *Vasilissa*. These five distinctive features are temporal flexibility, minimally offset melodies, the interaction of rhythmic and melodic imitation, trumpet-like fanfares, and melodic flow.

Temporal Flexibility

Although *Ut te per omnes* is written in one overarching mensuration, there is temporal flexibility throughout. Instead of changing time signature, Ciconia espouses a rhythmic plasticity that shifts between triple and duple modus. This is a characteristic Italian trait and common to almost all of Ciconia's motets and mass movements.[37] It includes either shifts in the division of the breve from two to three semibreves and vice versa, or simultaneous duple and triple prolation in different voice parts. These rhythmic shifts could be transcribed in modern notation by a shift between $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{6}{8}$ but in Ciconia's works the effect is achieved not through a literal mensuration change, but simply through notational shifts. These rapidly shifting rhythmic passages emphasize the equivalence of smaller rhythmic values and a fluid concept of mensuration, typical of the Italian style, that is not bound to a strict duple or triple division of the breve.

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36. Du Fay also uses this same technique in his other motets of 1420s, such as *O gemma lux et speculum*—*Sacer pastor barensium*—*Beatus Nicolaus adhuc* (Q15, fols. 292v–293r; Ox213, fols. 130v–131r) and *Apostolo glorioso*—*Cum tua doctrina*—*Andreas Christi famulus* (Q15, fols. 270v–271r). I discuss the melodic shape of this episode in the section on fanfares below.

37. Bent, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," 103.

In Ciconia's works, the shift between triple and duple is fluid, passing easily from one measure to another and from one voice to another. An example of his use of duple within a triple tempus in *Ut te per omnes* is in measure 16. The cantus parts move in parallel fourths in a duple figure over the tenor's continuing triple motion. An additional illustration of a mensural shift can be heard in measures 20–24, where a set of three semibreves is followed with semibreve–minim–semibreve–minim patterns in both cantus voices. The shift between triple and duple occurs in echo imitation with the two voices trading a solo passage first heard in cantus II.[38]

Du Fay's shifts of prolation within the tempus in *Vasilissa* are not as adventurous as Ciconia's, yet he still employs this distinctly Italian procedure. Ciconia relishes rapid shifts, changing the prolation in the space of a single breve. Du Fay is more confident in establishing a long passage of duple prolation within the implied *tempus perfectum* of the motet. This kind of mensural shift realized within one voice against duple elsewhere in the texture is exemplified by the episode in measures 31–40. In measure 31 the contratenor first introduces a duple pulse while the three other voices continue in triple. Two measures later cantus I shifts from an alternating breve–semibreve motion to a semibreve–minim pattern, transforming the sequence from triple to duple meter just as the contratenor returns to a triple pattern. The pulse remains indefinite until measure 41, at which point all four voices return to motion exclusively in breves and semibreves and *tempus perfectum* is restored in all parts.[39]

Minimally Offset Melodies

Another form of rhythmic interplay distinctive to the Italian style is that of extended passages in which cantus I and cantus II move in equal semibreves, but one voice is offset by a minim.[40] This creates a series of local syncopations.[41] At measure 32 of *Ut te per omnes* cantus I replicates exactly the melodic contour of cantus II over a stretch of four measures, with a delay of a minim. Ciconia further accentuates the procedure by

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38. Shifts between duple and triple pulse within a single mensuration can be found in Guillaume de Machaut's works from the mid-fourteenth century, but this metric flexibility is restricted to musical genres such as ballades and rondeaux and not found in any of his motets.

39. Du Fay uses this procedure again in mm. 45–49, 70–75, and 84–88, suggesting a more conservative, yet nonetheless palpable, adaptation of the Italian technique.

40. There are only a few examples of displaced rhythmic patterns in fourteenth-century works, such as in Machaut's motet *Qui es promesses de Fortune—Ha, Fortune! trop suis mis loing—Et non est qui adjuvet* (*The Works of Guillaume de Machaut*, ed. Leo Schrade, PMFC 2 [Monaco: Éditions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956], 134–36). The text of this motet is concerned with treachery, deceit, and unanchoredness, and shifting mensural pulses may have been prompted by the poetry.

41. Willi Apel in *The Notation of Polyphonic Music*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1953), 414–17, uses the phrase "displacement syncopation" to describe these episodes. Jon Michael Allsen in "Style and Intertextuality in the Isorhythmic Motet, 1400–1440 (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1992) also uses it throughout his study. The problem with this phrase is that there is built into the term "syncopation" the implication that there is a rhythmic element akin to accented syncopation in Jazz or other popular music genres. What is actually happening in these motets is more of a slippage of the melody that Manfred Bukofzer describes as "durational syncopation," "since its effect depends on the duration of the notes more than on any pattern of accent." See Manfred F. Bukofzer, review of Willi Apel's *The Notation of Polyphonic Music*, MQ 30 (1944): 112–18 at 116.

placing it over a long-held tenor note that functions as a kind of drone, highlighting the complex texture above it.[42]

Like Ciconia, Du Fay uses offset melodies to create rhythmic diversity in the small-scale form of each section of *Vasilissa*. One such example is in measures 33–34. However, there are several notable differences between Ciconia's use of syncopation and Du Fay's. Unlike in *Ut te per omnes*, where the offset passage echoes both rhythm and melody, this passage from *Vasilissa* utilizes only rhythmic repetition. Again unlike the long example from *Ut te per omnes*, which lasts the duration of four *tempora*, the episode in *Vasilissa* lasts only half as long. Ciconia creates his passage of syncopation by taking a simple semibreve melody and shifting it by a minim. Du Fay instead allows for greater rhythmic diversification by shifting an entire rhythmic cell (consisting of semi-breve–minim groups) by a minim. This puts the rhythm of each melody in opposition to the other. The two melodies wind about each other in voice exchange, with cantus I descending to an octave below cantus II in measure 35.[43]

Interaction of Rhythmic and Melodic Imitation

Controlled rhythmic structure, specifically the repetition of rhythmic modules, rhythmic sequences and canon, and episodes of melodic imitation, is a hallmark of the Italian style. In the absence of isorhythmic tenor construction, imitation provides these motets much of their structural form. Ciconia's works are especially notable in this regard, for they exhibit extremes of the development of rhythmic structures and melodic imitation in cadential passages, particularly the diversity of rhythmic variation from stasis to extreme flurries of activity such as appears in *Ut te per omnes*, measures 31–32. One extreme example of rhythmic and melodic development is heard in the medial and final cadential episodes of the motet. I have discussed expanding and contracting patterns at some length above, but these episodes are significant because of the relative amount of time during which the listener is engaged with Ciconia's highest level of rhythmic interplay and melodic imitation. The episodes leading to both the medial and final cadences constitute over a quarter of the musical material of the motet.

Unlike Ciconia's use of highly varied rhythmic sequences, Du Fay forms the melodic shape of *Vasilissa* by utilizing relatively simple rhythmic structures. In general, the overall rhythmic motion of all voices of the motet is in semibreves with occasional breve–semibreve motion. When Du Fay writes extended minim passages, he always sets the melody in stepwise motion, creating a flowing character.

Like *Ut te per omnes*, *Vasilissa* features sequences of imitative rhythmic and melodic passages, but in general these are less explicit than Ciconia's. Melodic imitative modules occur in only a few distinct moments in each part of *Vasilissa*, but even the non-imita-

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42. Rhythmic syncopations are common to most of Ciconia's works. See for instance extended passages of syncopation in *O Petre Christi discipule* (Q15, fols. 228v–229r), *Albane missus celitus—Albane doctor maxime* (Q15, fols. 330v–301r), and *Petrum Marcello Venetum—O Petre antistes inclite* (Q15, fols. 277v–278r), amongst others.

43. Du Fay uses offset syncopation in a number of other motets, but in none of those instances is a melody echoed exactly, as it is in *Ut te per omnes*. The passages of syncopation in Du Fay's motet *O gemma lux* are particularly sophisticated.

tive passages are unified by rhythmic contour. *Vasilissa* is in three sections of differing types of imitation. The introductory portion, to measure 23, is in strict canon. The second section, beginning at measure 24, is marked by loose imitation between the parts or imitation at an interval; for instance see measures 36–37. In the third section (beginning at m. 63), Du Fay uses imitation at the unison reminiscent of the opening canon, particularly in measures 75–76 and in measure 85. This unifies the work by bringing elements of the introduction into the last section of the motet.

Leading up to the major cadences of *Vasilissa* (mm. 57–62 and 96–104) there is an exchange of a distinctive rhythmic module (minim rest–minim–semibreve–semibreve–semibreve) back and forth between the two cantus parts.[44] Unlike Ciconia's additive and subtractive cadential sequences, Du Fay maintains a single rhythmic pattern through to the cadence. Also unlike *Ut te per omnes*, the dramatic rhythmic imitation during the cadential sequences of *Vasilissa* is not melodically imitative. Indeed, it seems as if Du Fay deliberately evades melodic sequence in these two sections by avoiding repetition in the four-note module by either direction or interval. By doing this, Du Fay dissolves any notion of melodic superiority in any of the four voices, let alone either of the two upper voices, and instead creates a sonorous drive in which all the voices in combination move to the cadence. He decreases the general length of the tenor and contratenor notes, and, without deviating from the borrowed chant melody, sets them with the same rhythmic sequence as the upper voices, exclusively in semibreves and minims, with every voice participating in the rhythmic imitation.[45] The four voices enter separated by one semibreve each, so that the four-semibreve pattern and the four-semibreve cycle of entries push against the triple meter. This emphasizes a different mensural locus for the module within each tempus, setting the four voices off in a series of displaced syncopations not in triple meter, but also not entirely in a duple division of the breve, resulting in a remarkable series of interlocking rhythmic cells driving to each cadence.

Fanfares

One characteristic feature of most of Ciconia's works is a melodic passage that sounds like an echoing trumpet fanfare.[46] In *Ut te per omnes*, the pitches of the two cantus

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44. In the critical notes of her magisterial facsimile edition of Q15, Bent describes the rhythmic imitations at the end of each half of *Vasilissa* as "Ciconia-like," but does not specify what exactly this quality entails. See Bent, *Q15*, 1:222.

45. This distinctive rhythmic sequence that drives to the medial and final cadences is marked in its similarity to others in motets such as *Padu ... serenans—Pastor bonus* (PMFC 24, 108–9), attributed to Ciconia, and the anonymous fourteenth-century French motet *Rex Karole Johannis genite—Laetitie pacis concordie* (*Motets of French Provenance*, ed. Frank Ll. Harrison, PMFC 5 [Monaco: Editions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, 1985], 141–48). See Allsen, "Style and Intertextuality," 114. Allsen also notes that the same rhythmic sequence appears later in the anonymous motet *Elizabeth Zacharie* (Tr87[1], fols. 158v–160r); ibid., 358. I am currently preparing a larger study of the stylistic features of *Rex Karole* based upon a paper presented at the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference in Certaldo, July 2013.

46. Evocations of fanfares in fifteenth-century Italian works, particularly those of Ciconia, are legion. In particular, see Bent's discussion of references to explicit descriptions of trompetta parts in fifteenth-century motets and mass movements in "Trompetta and Concordans Parts in the Early Fifteenth Century," in *Music as Social Cultural Practice: Essays in Honor of Reinhard Strohm*, ed. Melania Bucciarelli and Berta Joncus (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2007), 38–73.

voices in measures 32–35 outline a melodic profile that resembles the second and third triadic registers of a natural brass instrument.[47] After almost exclusively conjunct motion in the upper voices, both parts shift into a series of triadic leaps that suggest the pitches obtainable through the harmonic series available on a heraldic trumpet. The syncopation of this melody at the minim, described above, further heightens the mimetic effect as the passage resembles trumpet calls echoing off the walls of a piazza during a procession or within the stone walls of a grand basilica. A fanfare of this complexity is more than merely a signal, but instead a heraldic announcement noting and proclaiming the presence of nobility. The passage evokes a notion of chivalrous, warrior-like figures, such as the motet's dedicatee Francesco Zabarella, who was recognized as a noble amongst prelates and a fundamental figure in the battle to repair the rift of the Papal Schism.[48]

Fanfare-like sequences can also be heard in a number of motets and mass movements in Du Fay's oeuvre.[49] In the case of *Vasilissa*, the trumpet-like qualities are not overt; even so a fanfare can be found. Du Fay subtly weaves a melodic pattern shared between all four voices during the episodes of increasing rhythmic intensity of the repeated rhythmic cells at the two primary cadences of the motet discussed above (mm. 57–62 and 96–104). The basic melodic outline of the emphasized pitches is reminiscent of the registral pitches of the natural trumpet, particularly in leaps upwards and downwards of fourth and fifth in the medial sequence. As in Ciconia's motet, the fanfare-like texture becomes an audible part of the episode at the end of the first half of the motet and highlights the form of the work as it moves into its second section.

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47. In Ciconia's arrangement, this harmonic sequence is transposed up a fifth from the common range of the natural trumpet. The second register of the trumpet concludes on G, a perfect fourth below middle C. The third register then extends from C up a major third to E, a minor third to G, and then up a perfect fourth to the octave C. The out-of-tune seventh harmonic on B♭ is not generally usable. See Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington, IN and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 44.

48. The notion that melodic episodes in Italian motets of the early fifteenth century might mimic horn calls is not outlandish. After all, a precedent is established in the Italian *caccia* repertory. Horn calls are particularly notable in Gherardello da Firenze's *Tosto che l'alba* (*Italian Secular Music*, ed. W. Thomas Marrocco, PMFC 7 [Monaco: Éditions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, 1971], 109–16) and Jacopo da Bologna's *Oselleto salvazo* (*Italian Secular Music*, ed. W. Thomas Marrocco, PMFC 6 [Monaco: Éditions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, 1967], 128–31). I find that the hunting calls referenced in the *caccie* are in general relatively simple, marking either a single pitch or outlining a leap of the fourth, and therefore distinct from the more elaborate fanfares in the fifteenth-century motets discussed in this study.

49. Bent, "Trompetta and Concordans," 62. A particularly notable trompetta reference is the solus tenor of the motet *Rite maiorem Jacobum canamus—Artibus summis miseri reclusi—Ora pro nobis dominum* (Q15, fols. 212v–213r). In most circumstances, elements from the original tenor and contratenor parts are combined to create a solus tenor. The product is a composite lower voice that moves in counterpoint to the two upper parts by using the grammatically essential elements of the tenor and contratenor. In the case of *Rite maiorem*, Du Fay adds a fanfare flourish at the beginning of each rhythmic section of the solus tenor that deviates from the basic borrowing of melodic elements from the contratenor and tenor. This flourish is trumpet-like both in rhythmic shape and in prevalence of leaps of fourths and fifths.

Melodic Flow

A further similarity between *Ut te per omnes* and *Vasilissa* is the rhythmic build-up that begins simply and then gradually increases in rhythmic activity at the end of each section. These long phrases, which correspond to the rhythmic division of the structure of each motet, are punctuated by occasional rhythmic flourishes. After the introductory material (*Ut te per omnes* to m. 8, and *Vasilissa* to m. 23), both motets move mainly in slower rhythms. The two cantus parts move in breves and semibreves (compare *Ut te per omnes*, mm. 9–12 with *Vasilissa*, mm. 24–27). As melodic modules are introduced and echoed, the texture accelerates to semibreves and minims, only occasionally punctuated by relaxations back to breve–semibreve motion (mm. 30–31 in *Ut te per omnes* and mm. 41–44 in *Vasilissa*).[50] The rhythmic halves of each motet conclude in a flurry of motion in all voices, then conclude in obvious cadences (compare *Ut te per omnes*, mm. 45–57, and *Vasilissa*, mm. 57–63). This wave-like hyper-texture is very far removed from the differentiated and layered texture of the French *ars nova* motet, where the triplum is the most active voice and the tenor always plays a foundational role, with minimal moments of interaction between the motetus and triplum.

At the very smallest scale of characteristic features, Ciconia utilizes distinctive rhythmic textures that highlight the juxtaposition of phrases and provide structural signposts. This fashions a configuration that shifts between motion and stasis throughout his works. Each phrase is distinct, picking up a new melodic or rhythmic element. A phrase in echo imitation is followed by a phrase that features syncopation, which in turn is followed by a phrase of rhythmic modulations between duple and triple meter. This is rounded out by the cadential episode with rhythmic and melodic cells shifting through expansion and contraction, which places rhythmic emphasis on a different place in each tempus unit of the phrase. This seemingly simple construction is articulated in Ciconia's works by the distinctive textures described above, which correlate to usher in each new phase of textural acceleration.

In contrast, Du Fay is successful in creating a flowing texture that distinguishes *Vasilissa* from *Ut te per omnes*. He uses contrapuntal cells to create stable passages of sound passing from one phrase to another. For example, in measures 32–35, Du Fay saturates the counterpoint at a minim level. This sequence is launched by rhythmic motion in the contratenor and spans the next three measures with a pitch occurring on every minim in cantus I, cantus II, and the contratenor while the tenor rests. In the most rhythmically complex passages at the cadences, Du Fay places the entries at a consistent rhythmic interval that creates motion on every minim of the sequence, with the passage flowing evenly into the cadential sonority at the medial and the final cadences (beginning at m. 63 and m. 102 respectively).

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50. Allsen compares several of the internal rhythmic modules of *Vasilissa* to what he describes as "ostinato" passages in Ciconia's *Doctorum principem*. The passages he highlights in *Doctorum principem* (mm. 3–4 and 15–16 as well as subsequent repetitions in the following mensural repetitions of these patterns) are unique to this single motet in Ciconia's oeuvre. The corresponding measures that Allsen notes in *Vasilissa* are mm. 33–35. I do not agree with his description of these phrases in Ciconia as ostinatos, nor do I find a compelling similarity of phrases between the two works. See Allsen, "Style and Intertextuality," 101.

A close study and analysis of Ciconia's *Ut te per omnes* and Du Fay's *Vasilissa* demon-strates that Du Fay was heavily influenced by some kind of Italian exemplar, if not specifically Ciconia's motet. The first indicator is the texture, which in both motets is basically two equal upper voices over a fast-moving tenor. If there is a contratenor, it is grammatically inessential and, in the case of *Ut te per omnes*, is better left out in performance. Delving into the structure of *Vasilissa*, one can find a compositional arrangement comparable with Italian customs rather than the typical *ars nova* isorhyth-mic principles that require a foundational tenor and strictly rhythmically differentiated triplum and motetus. Finally, the rhythmic texture and melodic phrasing and rephrasing in echo imitation are complementary to similar textures found in Italian works and especially the motets of Ciconia. A close reading of *Vasilissa* in comparison to Ciconia's *Ut te per omnes* clearly demonstrates that Du Fay was working in an Italian idiom.[51]

Ciconia's works are identifiable as part of one stylistic subgenre of the motet popular in the Veneto in the early fifteenth century. By contrast, the prevailing perception of a number of scholars is that Du Fay's *Vasilissa* represents a new compositional style—a fusion of French and Italian customs, or even a French isorhythmic motet that "delib-erately imitates the Italian style."[52] But instead of viewing *Vasilissa* in terms of a new compositional style, I argue that Du Fay is working strictly within the existing equal-cantus style of Ciconia. A parallel analysis of *Ut te per omnes* and *Vasilissa* reveals that the relationship between them is much stronger than merely the resemblance of their respective formal structures. I conclude that both Ciconia and Du Fay were composing in a style that was distinctive of works composed for the Veneto in the early fifteemth century and that is linked to the older fourteenth-century Italian tradition. The over-whelming preponderance of Italian characteristics in *Vasilissa* mitigates any apparently French features influencing the young Du Fay's musical style in the 1420s.

In 1984, Bent concluded that works from northern Italy in the Trecento and the early decades of the fifteenth century represent a tradition that can be clearly identified by its traits and constraints.[53] This has allowed later scholars to make further conclu-sions about the repertoire of the early fifteenth century in Italy. Identifying a distinctive Italian tradition reveals lines of connection between various composers and traditions, lines that might not be so obvious if Du Fay is merely considered a transplanted Frenchman or the great innovator of the "international style" of the mid-fifteenth century. There is no question that Du Fay's motets exhibit the features of both French and Italian traditions, combining them and evolving into a new and innovative style by the middle of the fifteenth century. But Du Fay had to start somewhere. In *Vasilissa* I do not see an equivalence of French and Italian features. Instead musical evidence in the

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51. This essay's argument that Du Fay was influenced by the Veneto motet style echoes Bent's conclusion that Du Fay's "motet *Vasilissa ergo gaude* of 1420 is in every way a pure Italian motet with respect to tonality, cadences, general rhythmic style and contrapuntal facture." Bent, "Continuity and Transformation," 225.

52. Cumming, *Motet in the Age of Du Fay*, 84. See also Nosow, "Florid and Equal-Discantus," 103; Allsen, "Style and Intertextuality," 125; and Bent, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," 113.

53. Bent, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet," 112–13.

motet points to an Italian exemplar. While there is no conclusive evidence that Ciconia's *Ut te per omnes* specifically was Du Fay's Italian-motet paradigm, Fallows has it right in spirit. Du Fay was imbuing his works with Italian characteristics, and his motets from the earliest decades of the fifteenth century are better considered Italian motets than belonging to some other hybrid style.

An examination of the works in Veneto manuscripts within the broader context of the motet style south of the Alps in the early fifteenth century reveals that composers in the Veneto shaped an earlier Italian compositional practice into a distinctive motet style. The recognition of these distinct characteristics changes our understanding of the motet in this era by shifting emphasis away from the assumption of the importance and influence of a so-called "French Central Tradition" of isorhythmic *ars nova* motets and towards the concept of parallel stylistic pluralism, one of varied regional stylistic differences.[54] It also corrects the assumption that the stylistic characteristics apparent in some of the earlier works of Du Fay originated only with his encounter with fifteenth-century English repertoire.[55]

The question that must now be considered is why Du Fay chose to use Italian works as his exemplars. The Italian motets found in Q15 are primarily settings of texts for important political personages and ceremonial events. What is significant is that motets of this style were intended for a specific audience, patrons, or influential figures who may have desired to hear works composed in a particular fashion. I propose that Du Fay's *Vasilissa* was simply a composition for a commission. In 1420 Du Fay was a young and eager composer who had been given his first prominent position with the Malatesta and instructed to write something appropriate for the occasion. He most likely turned to other works, such as the honorific motets of Q15, as exemplars for his own take on the ceremonial motet.[56] The result is a work that is modern and innovative, and yet incorporates elements of an Italian style that he hoped would impress his new patrons. These works were simultaneously retrospective and innovative, reflecting Du Fay's unique melding and manipulation of the Italian motet style with his own compositional language.

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54. The language of "central" and "peripheral" is borrowed from Reinhard Strohm, *The Rise of European Music, 1380–1500* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 35 n. 47, and 62. See also Strohm, "Centre and Periphery: Mainstream and Provincial Music," in *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1992), 55–59 at 58–59.

55. Planchart (personal correspondence) has noted that that Du Fay did not start incorporating English stylistic influences in his repertoire until the mid- to late 1430s at the earliest. This echoes Fallows's assertion that many of the stylistic characteristics that have been identified as "English"—vertical homophonic sonorities, triadic construction, and unprepared dissonances—can also be found in Italian music from the early fifteenth century. See Fallows, "The Contenance Angloise: English Influence on Continental Composers of the Fifteenth Century," *Renaissance Studies* 1 (1987): 189–208 at 194.

56. Bent, "A Contemporary Perception of Early Fifteenth-Century Style: Bologna Q15 as a Document of Scribal Editorial Initiative," *MD* 41 (1987): 183–201 at 196. If it could be speculated that there was some sort of relationship between Du Fay and the Q15 scribe, it might be better possible to argue that Du Fay was familiar with the versions of Ciconia's motets in Q15.

Appendix 1

Johannes Ciconia, *Ut te per omnes—Ingens alumnus Padue*[1]

Ed. Bent and Hallmark, 1985 (adapted by Buff, 2013)

Cantus I

Cantus II

(optional contratenor)

Tenor

Ut te per om - nes ce - li-

In-gens a-lum-nus Pa - - - du-

-tus   pla - gas se-qua-mur ma - xi - me cul-tu la-van-

- e,   quem Za - ba - rel - lam no - mi-nant,

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1. *Sources:* Q15, fols. 289v–290r; Ox213, fols. 119v–120r

Appendix 1 (continued).

18

-dos lu - mi - na,   Fran - ci - sce,

Fran - ci - scus al - mi sup - pli - cat

23

no - stros spi - ri - tus.   Tu   qui pe - ren -

Fran - ci - sci   a - do - rans nu - mi - na.

27

- nis_____ glo - ri - e   se - des tu - e - re om - ni - pa - tris, ___

Sis   tu - tor ex - cel - sis   fa - - - vens___

32

qui   cun - cta__ nu - tu con - cu - tit, per - ver - sa no - bis

ser - vo pre - can - ti   te   tu - o, quem   to - tus or - bis

Appendix 1 (*continued*).

Appendix 1 (*continued*).

Appendix 1 (*continued*).

Appendix 1 (*continued*).

Cantus I:

Ut te per omnes celitus	Enlighten our unclean spirits, [Saint] Francis, that
Plagas sequamur maxime	we may follow you with full reverence through all
Cultu lavandos lumina,	trials that come from on high.[1]
Francisce, nostros spiritus.	

Tu qui perennis glorie	You that watch over the seats of eternal glory of the
Sedes tuere omnipatris,	Father, who shakes all things with a single nod,
Qui cuncta nutu concutit,	protect us from evil.
Perverse nobis erue.	

Christi letus quod sumpserat	Through the wound of Christ, which he freely
Vulnus receptum per tuum	accepted and which you did also receive,
Nobis benigne porrige	
Ut de te canens gloriam	

Sic illa felix regula,	Kindly grant us that the fortunate order of Friars
Fratrum minorum nomine,	Minor, which you did found and that sings your
Cujus fuisti conditor	praises, may last forever.
Duret per evum longius.	

    Amen.   Amen.

Cantus II:

Ingens alumnus Padue,	Francesco, the famous offspring of Padua, Zabarella
Quem Zabarellam nominant,	by name, worshipping the power of kindly [Saint]
Franciscus almi supplicat	Francis beseeches him:
Francisci adorans numina.	

Sis tutor excelsis favens	Be a well-disposed protector for your servant that
Servo precanti te tuo,	prays to you, whom the whole world acclaims with
Quem totus orbis predicat	outstanding honors and with songs.
Insignibus, preconiis.	

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1. Translation by M. J. Connolly (slightly adapted) in PMFC 24, 224–25. For another translation and further discussion of this text see Leofranc Holford-Strevens's contribution to this volume, pp. 456–68.

Appendix 1 (*continued*).

Audi libens dignas preces
Doctoris immensi, sacer
Francisce, quo leges bonas
Antenoris stirps accipit.

Holy Francis, freely hear the worthy prayer of this great teacher, from whom Antenor's line receives good laws.

Silvas per altas alitus,
In mole clausus corporis,
Ducens viam celestiam,
Rector veni fidelium.

Come leader of the faithful, raised in the deep forests (?), enclosed in a mighty body, and guiding the way of the heavenly.

Amen.

Amen.

Appendix 2

Guillaume Du Fay, *Vasilissa ergo gaude—Concupivit rex decorum tuum*[1]

Ed. Besseler, 1966 (adapted by Buff, 2013)

Concipuit rex decorem tuun

Appendix 2 (*continued*).

Appendix 2 (continued).

Ro - me - o - rum   est de-spo-

est   no   -   bi - li - or: Ro - me - o   -   rum___

-tus quem co - lit   mun-dus__ to - - - tus,_____

est de - spo - tus   quem co - lit__   mun-dus__   to - tus,_____

in   por - phi - ro   est ge - ni - tus,   a   de -

in_____   por - phi - ro   est ge - ni - tus,___   a   de -

-o mis-sus ce - li - tus._____

-o   mis - sus ce - li - tus._____

Quoniam ipse est dominus tuus

Appendix 2 (continued).

Appendix 2 (continued).
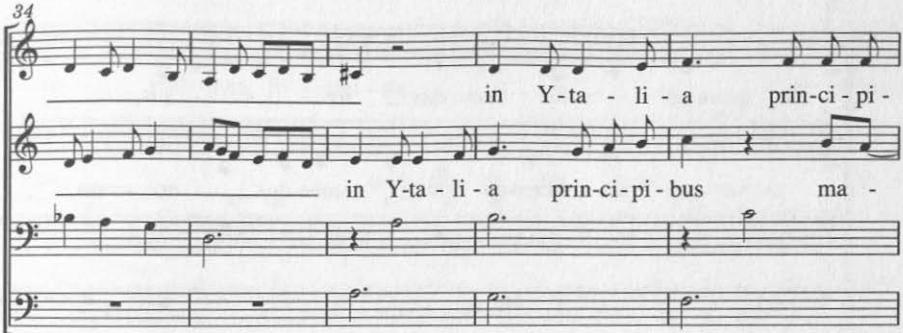
Vasilissa, ergo gaude,
Quia es digna omni laude,
Cleophe, clara gestis
A tuis de Malatestis,
In Italia principibus
Magnis et nobilibus,
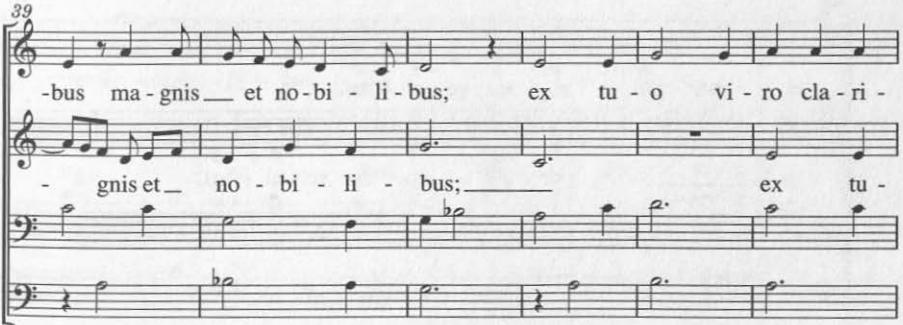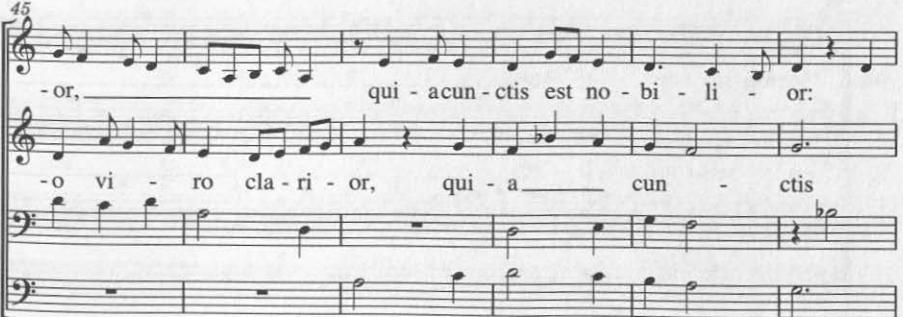
Ex tuo viro clarior,
Quia cunctis est nobilior:
Romeorum est despotus,
Quem colit mundus totus;
In porphyro est genitus,
A deo missus celitus.

Iuvenili etate polles
Et formositate
[Ingenio] multum fecunda
Et utraque lingua facunda
Ac clarior es virtutibus
Pre aliis hominibus.

Tenor:

Concupivit rex decorum tuum
Quoniam ipse est dominus tuus.

Empress, therefore rejoice, for you are worthy of
all praise, Cleofe, glorious from the deeds of your
Malatesta kin, leading men in Italy, great and
noble,[1]

More glorious from your husband, for he is nobler
than all; he is despot of the Rhōmaioi, he whom
all the world reveres; he was born in the purple,
sent by God from heaven.

In youthful bloom you abound in beauty, very
fertile [in your wits] and eloquent in both tongues,
and you are more glorious for your virtues above
other human beings.

The king will desire your beauty
Since he is your lord.

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1. Translation of cantus text by Holford-Strevens in "Du Fay the Poet?," 102–3. Translation of tenor text from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: Revised Standard Version*, ed. Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 690.