

IOSQ VIN DASCANTO.

L grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Che tiene lógo uerfo Dale beue grillo canta Dale dale beue beue grillo grillo
 cáta cáta El grillo el grillo e bon cátoe Ma nó fa como gliatri ocelli Come li há cátao un poco Q'n la magior
 Van de fatto i altro loco Sempre el grillo sta pur faldó
 A capite
 el caldo Alhor cáta fol per amore
 El grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Che tiene lógo uerfo Dale beue grillo cáta Dale dale beue
 beue grillo grillo cáta cáta El grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Ma nó fa como gliatri ocelli Come li há cátao un poco
 Van de fatto i altro loco Sempre el grillo sta pur faldó
 Q' uído la magior el caldo Alhor canta fol per amo

El grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Che tiene longo uerfo Dale beue grillo cáta Dale dale beue beue
 grillo grillo cáta cáta El grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Ma nó fa como gliatri ocelli Come li há cátao un poco Q'n la magior
 Van de fatto i altro loco Sempre el grillo sta pur faldó
 el caldo Alhor canta fol p amore
 El grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Ch tiene lógo uerfo Dale beue grillo cáta Dale dale beue beue grillo grillo cáta cáta
 El grillo el grillo e bó cátoe Ma nó fa como gliatri ocelli Come li há cátao un poco Q'n la magior el caldo
 Van de fatto i altro loco Sempre grillo sta pur faldó
 Alhor canta fol per amore

1 *El grillo*, from *Frottole libro tertio* (Venice: Petrucci, 1505), ff.61v-62 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Rar.878/3 (formerly Mus. pr. 120))

David Fallows

What happened to *El grillo*

IN terms of how often it has been recorded and published, *El grillo* is among the most popular works of the 'Josquin' canon. For large choirs and solo ensembles, amateur and professional, it is a sure-fire success, the kind of piece that always works as an encore. So readers may be surprised to know that there is only one early source for the piece, namely the third book of frottolas—*Frottole libro tertio* (illus.1)—published by Ottaviano Petrucci early in 1505, with an unchanged reprint two years later. By contrast, there are 30 16th-century sources of Josquin's *Plus nulz regretz*, which is hardly ever performed today.

We may be lucky to have even that single source of *El grillo*, for two reasons. First, most of the frottolas printed by Petrucci are unique to his prints. Of 653 pieces in his ten surviving frottola books, only just over a quarter are known from elsewhere. Second, *El grillo* is not at all typical of the frottola repertory in general. In fact nobody has ever found anything like it. The clipped opening homophonic phrases, the delightful run-out at the words 'longo verso', the tongue-twisting repeated notes at 'dale beve grillo canta'—these are features that choir-directors have all sought in vain elsewhere in the music of its time. More than that, there is very little else in the frottola repertory that works with a four-voice choir or ensemble: in general these are pieces that seem to demand a solo voice and three accompanying instruments. So it is no surprise that *El grillo* appears almost at the end of this third book of frottolas, no.60 out of 62. But for the need to fill up the last gathering of the book, Petrucci may never have bothered to print it at all.¹

More of a surprise is that it reached modern

edition so late. There has been no time since about 1510 when Josquin has not been unanimously accepted as the greatest composer of the early 16th century. But the earliest modern edition of this piece was in 1931, when it appeared in Arnold Schering's popular *Geschichte der Musik in Beispielen*. One reason for its late modern appearance, and its complete non-career in the 16th century, may be the ascription 'Josquin Dascanio'.

That wording appears only for this and for just one other piece, a further frottola printed by Petrucci, *In te Domine speravi*. As early as 1829 Kiesewetter published *In te Domine speravi* alongside Josquin's *La Bernardina* precisely to demonstrate that Josquin Dascanio could not possibly be Josquin des Prez.² For what it may be worth, *In te Domine speravi*—also something of a favourite among choirs—was not published as a work of Josquin until 1950, in the famous Davison and Apel *Historical anthology of music*;³ all the earlier editions were in volumes devoted to a complete source. For this, as for *El grillo*, the editors were very careful to give the composer as 'Josquin d'Ascanio'; nobody even suggested that this was identical with Josquin des Prez. That possibility seems to have been hinted at for the first time by André Pirro in 1940,⁴ and laid out fully by Helmuth Osthoff in the first volume (1962) of his great monograph on Josquin.⁵

At a very late stage, then, scholars began to conclude that Josquin d'Ascanio was indeed Josquin des Prez. Whether they were right remains an intractable question. It is true that two documents have recently (at last) been discovered with evidence that Josquin des Prez was employed by Cardinal Ascanio Sforza in 1484, leaving him in July 1485;⁶ but the musical

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2 A detail of *illus.1*, showing various errors in the the altus part. An early 20th-century handwritten correction can be seen on the second line. (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Rar.878/3)

style of *El grillo* (and of *In te Domine speravi*) makes such an early date of composition most unlikely. It is also true that the poet Serafino dall'Aquila (1466–1500) wrote a sonnet dedicated *Ad Jusquino suo compagno musico d'Ascanio*. This could mean 'To Josquin his friend, a musician of Ascanio', or it could mean 'To Josquin, his colleague as a musician of Ascanio'. Either way, it seems (to me) clear that the poem does indeed concern Josquin des Prez, who may therefore have had some further association with Ascanio Sforza at a later date. Three letters of late 1498 and early 1499 state that Ascanio Sforza then had a servant called Juschino; but the letters are entirely about hunting dogs and give absolutely no grounds for thinking that this Juschino was a musician.

There is another problem here. To read 'Josquin Dascanio' as meaning somebody who happened to be in the employment of Ascanio seems perverse: at least, none of the scholars I have queried on the matter has managed to produce another such case. The two most usual meanings of such a formulation are 'Josquin who comes from a place called Ascanio' (the German town of Aschersleben, in Brandenburg, was Latinized as Ascania; but it would be premature at this point to propose that these pieces are by a German Josquin; or perhaps it could be a misprint for the town of Asciano, 20 km east of Siena), or 'Josquin the son of Ascanio', slightly unlikely because Ascanio is an Italian name (classically that of

the son of Aeneas), whereas Josquin is a Franco-Flemish name, one particularly favoured in 15th-century Flanders. But, until any of these doubts and guesses can be put on firmer ground, the two songs must remain as possible works of Josquin des Prez. Even if clear evidence of a different composer should emerge, *El grillo* is one piece that is most unlikely to lose its place in the repertory. This is a piece loved for what it is, not for who wrote it.

So it is worth exploring some details that seem to have been overlooked, and which can be seen in the new edition given here as *ex.1*. They suggest that we may not have the piece in the best of shape. Petrucci's print has a fair number of mistakes that should have jumped to the eye of even the most casual proofreader. Some of them can be seen from a detail taken from the altus part (*illus.2*). Here the first four notes, to the words 'El grillo', return in the second printed line, just after the elaborate repeat sign, but as only three notes. It is perfectly obvious that the first is an error and should have been corrected.⁷ Immediately after that three-note statement there is a note missing just before the D with a fermata at the word 'cantore'. In the unique copy of the first edition (in Munich), the missing note has been added in blue-black ink. The annotator has even signed the correction: the letters 'g.c.' in a circle below the text are the initials of Gaetano Cesari, whose transcriptions, made in the years 1904–7, were

eventually published by Raffaello Monterosso and Benvenuto Disertori in 1954 as *Le frottole nell'edizione principe di Ottaviano Petrucci*.⁸ While it is interesting to speculate on how the authorities of the Bavarian State Library would react now to such annotation of a unique print, it is clear that Cesari's correction is absolutely right.

Another obvious mistake occurs at the beginning of that second line in the altus. As everybody who has ever sung the piece knows, after the final 'grillo grillo' comes the word 'canta', to two minims: the source has the word 'canta' twice in all four voices. Singers therefore have the option of singing the word 'canta' only once (which is what everybody does) or of subdividing the two minims so that 'canta' can be sung twice (which nobody would dream of doing). Actually that subdivision is theoretically possible, since there are innumerable places in the early Italian song repertoires, and particularly in the frottola repertory, where a longer note must be subdivided, especially at the end of a line; but in this particular case that seems an unlikely solution, since the printer had gone to the trouble of lining out the preceding 12 semiminims in all four voices. In the superius part that error comes at the beginning of a line, where nobody could possibly ignore it. All these easily seen errors were taken over into the two surviving copies of the second edition (November 1507) of Petrucci's *Frottole libro tertio*, now in Regensburg and Vienna.

As a further detail, in bar 37 of the altus the third note is *d'* in the source, creating a 6-4 chord. I have changed the note to *c'* in order to give something more plausible within the style of the time. That is

not an inevitable change: the moment passes by too fast for it to sound particularly ugly. On the other hand, it seems worth giving a piece like this the benefit of the doubt, to fix a detail if it can be done by moving a note by only one step. With that said, though, there is another detail that really cannot be fixed, and it is perhaps the clearest hint that whoever composed this piece was not fully in control of the notes. At bar 32 of the Altus there is a perfectly pointless rest in the middle of a word. Obviously it was inserted just to avoid parallel 5ths. It's not very impressive.

But the most bizarre error is the position of the elaborate double-repeat sign. Again it is perhaps easiest to read this from the altus voice-part (illus.2). That sign soon after the start of the second printed line means that you should repeat both the preceding and the following sections: that is, at the end of bar 17 you repeat back from the beginning and then repeat back to bar 17 from bar 29. This is wrong beyond any shadow of doubt. Common sense would suggest that after 1-22 there is a repeated section, 23-9, to accommodate lines 5-8 of the text; and that after the end of the piece the words 'a capite' (printed only after the superius) indicate a repeat of 1-22. That is in fact how the work is almost always performed. But Petrucci's print clearly directs a form of: 1-17, 1-17, 18-29, 18-29, 30-39, 1-17 (perhaps followed by a repeat of 1-17). This makes so little sense—musical or textual—that it can only be considered a further error in the source: the repeat of 18-29 would involve an absurd interruption of the sense that continues from line 6 to line 7 of the text; and the sudden ending at bar 17 would be without

Commentary to ex.1 (overleaf)

Apart from matters that should be clear from the edition itself, the following changes have been made:

- bars 7-11: Superius and bassus have simply one *longa*, with a fermata.
- bar 17: The last two notes in all voices carry the text 'canta canta', perhaps implying a subdivision to four semiminims.
- after bar 17: All voices have a double repeat, that is, forwards as well as backwards.

after bar 22: All voices have only a single barline, suggesting just a sectional division, with no implication that the piece ends here.

bars 24-5, tenor:
Rhythm Sb-Mi-Mi-Sb-Mi-Mi, adjusted to give homophony.

bars 33-5: All voices carry the text 'Alhor canta sol'.

bars 35-7: All voices carry the text 'per amore'.

bar 37, altus, third note:
Source has *d'*, corrected here to *c'*.

Ex.1 El grillo

Superius
 Altus
 Tenor
 Bassus

El gril - lo, el gril - lo è bon can - to - re Che

6

tie - ne lon - go ver - - - - so. Da - le be - ve

14

gril - lo can - ta, da - le, da - le be - ve, be - ve gril - lo, gril - lo can - ta.

18 [Fine]

El gril - lo, el gril-lo è bon can - to - re. Non fa co - mo, co-mo gli al-trio -
 Van de fat - to, fat-to in al - tro

El gril - lo, el gril-lo è bon can - to - re. Non fa co - mo, co-mo gli al-trio -
 Van de fat - to, fat-to in al - tro

El gril - lo, el gril-lo è bon can - to - re. Non fa co - mo, co-mo gli al-trio -
 Van de fat - to, fat-to in al - tro

El gril - lo, el gril-lo è bon can - to - re. Non fa co - mo, co-mo gli al-trio -
 Van de fat - to, fat-to in al - tro

26

- cel - li: Co - me gli han can - ta - to un po - co Quan - do l'à ma - gior el
 lo - co; Sem - pre el gril - lo sta pur sal - do.

- cel - li: Co - me gli han can - ta - to un po - co Quan - do l'à ma - gior el
 lo - co; Sem - pre el gril - lo sta pur sal - do.

- cel - li: Co - me gli han can - ta - to un po - co Quan - do l'à ma - gior el
 lo - co; Sem - pre el gril - lo sta pur sal - do.

- cel - li: Co - me gli han can - ta - to un po - co Quan - do l'à ma - gior el
 lo - co; Sem - pre el gril - lo sta pur sal - do.

33 # A capite

cal - do, ma - gior el cal - do Al - hor can - ta sol per a - mo - re.

cal - do, ma - gior el cal - do Al - hor can - ta sol per a - mo - re.

cal - do, ma - gior el cal - do Al - hor can - ta sol per a - mo - re.

cal - do, ma - gior el cal - do Al - hor can - ta sol per a - mo - re.

parallel in the music of the time. There seems no plausible alternative but to split that double-repeat sign, putting the second half of it after bar 22. Those details are just a further indication that all is not well with the only source of *El grillo*.

At this point it becomes important to look at the poem, which is also very odd within the known Italian poetry of the time. On the surface it is a fairly standard kind of *ballata* or *barzioletta*: lines 1–4 constitute the *ripresa*, which one would expect to be repeated at the end (as confirmed by the note ‘a capite’ at the end of the superius and by the fermata sign at bar 22 in all four voices); lines 5–8 are the *piedi*, characteristically repeated with the same two lines of music; lines 9–10 are the *volta*, the section that leads back from the rhyme-scheme of the *piedi* to that of the concluding *ripresa*.

		syllables
	[<i>Ripresa</i>]	
	El grillo è bon cantore	7
	Che tiene longo verso.	7
	Dale beve grillo canta.	8
	El grillo è bon cantore.	7
	[<i>Piedi</i>]	
5	(Ma) Non fa como gli altri ocelli:	9
	Come gli han cantato un poco	8
	Van de fatto in altro loco;	8
	Sempre el grillo sta pur saldo.	8
	[<i>Volta</i>]	
	Quando l'à maggior el caldo	8
10	Alhor canta sol per amore.	9

Metrically, though, this is very strange. The line-lengths marked above indicate that there are problems with the state of the text as we have it here. Such irregularity is extremely uncommon in Italian poetry.

First, the *ripresa* seems to be in seven-syllable lines, while the *piedi* and *volta* are basically in the eight-syllable lines characteristic of a *barzioletta*. I have not managed to locate any comparable example, but it seems to be intended.

Second, the *ripresa* includes one line of eight syllables (line 3). This line cannot possibly be emended, and surely takes its form because of musical imperatives—as though the music were in fact composed first. Its apparently ungrammatical structure could

support that view: there seems no sensible way of construing this line.

Third, line 5 poses enormous problems. Poetically, it can be reduced to the eight syllables of the rest of this section simply by the omission of the first syllable (which I have done). But that in its turn draws attention to the bizarre circumstance that the music for all four voices is unmistakably designed for a line of ten syllables.

What can we do about this? First we must make another musical emendation. In bars 24–5 the source gives the tenor voice the rhythm $\diamond \downarrow \diamond \downarrow \diamond \downarrow \diamond \downarrow$. Most of the rest of the song is homophonic, none more so than this particular section, bars 23–9. Surely it is only sensible to change the tenor rhythm here to match the other voices? There is so much else wrong with the source that this adjustment looks like a tiny detail. Second, though, we must acknowledge that homophonic writing of this kind is almost invariably syllabic. The only way for a line of eight syllables to go to music of ten syllables is for two of the syllables to be repeated. There is no trace of such a repetition in the source, but we have already seen enough problems here to move on to that extra emendation. Previous editions manage to turn line 5 into ten syllables by ignoring the elision at ‘gli altri’; and for line 7, to the same music, they create nine syllables by ignoring the elision at ‘fatto in’, and find various unsatisfactory solutions to the remaining non-existent syllable. This is by no means to suggest that breaking elisions is disallowed: it can be found everywhere in early Italian song (and needs to happen in lines 6 and 8); but it is definitely to say that in this particular case it is far better to look for other ways to make the music work. My solution is to eliminate the word ‘Ma’ and match the resulting eight-syllable lines to the music by repeating the words ‘come’ (line 5) and ‘fatto’ (line 7). It seems the only sane way forwards.

That may seem a touch bold. But the nature of these early printed frottola books is such that the text underlay is often extremely approximate. Broadly, the music was set in type first, with the texts set and printed later; and very little attempt was made to get the alignment right (though it is true that in the particular case of *El grillo* the results mostly look acceptable). In general, any attempt at understanding the text underlay of the Petrucci frottola

repertory must begin with the intabulations of Franciscus Bossinensis that Petrucci printed in 1509. Here, the requirements of the lute tablature mean that the voice part printed above the tablature is more generously spaced, and there is much more room for confidence that the texting and underlay represent a clear editorial decision.

That in its turn leads to the boldest of my proposals, concerning the last bars of the piece. The nine-syllable line 10 seems hard to emend and just as hard to explain except as an adjustment made by the composer of the music. Even with the printed text retained, however, three problems in the available editions immediately strike the eye (illus.3):³ the odd accentuation at 'canta sol'; the many repeated notes

at the beginning of the third printed stave of the altus part (bars 35–9 in ex.1), which have led to repetition of the words 'per amore' (twice in the altus and once in the bassus) in most modern editions; and most particularly the odd accentuation of the words 'per amore' in all voices.

After what has been said already, a solution to all three of those problems ought to be obvious. Simply repeat the words 'magior el caldo' at bars 33–5—that is, at the point where the source presents the words 'Alhor canta sol'. This throws the entire last line into the last musical phrase, which seems only logical. That in its turn is quite in line with what must be done to underlay text at all to most of the frottoles that Petrucci printed.

30

ta - to un po - co. sta pur sal - do. Quan - do la mag - gior el cal - do Al -

ta - to un po - co. sta pur sal, - do. Quan - do la mag - - gior el cal - do Al -

ta - to un po - co. sta pur sal - do. Quan - do la mag - gior el cal do Al -

ta - to un po sal - do. Quan - do la mag - gior el cal - do Al -

35 a capite

hor can - ta sol per a - - mo - re.

hor can - ta sol per a - mo - re, a - mo - re, a - mo - re.

hor can - ta sol per a - - mo - re.

hor can - ta sol per a - - mo - re, per a - mo - re.

3 The end of *El grillo* as it appears in *Josquin des Prés, Werken, Wereldlijke Werken*, ed. A. Smijers, M. Antonowycz and W. Elders, *Bundel V*, afl. 54 (Amsterdam, 1968), no.53, p.15. By permission of the Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis.

THE main point of this enquiry is to say that most sources need a closer look, and that when a piece is known from only one source—or, as in the case of *El grillo*, one source plus another that is an almost identical copy—the reader needs to think of a range of ways in which that one source could be wrong. More than that, it seems important to start by trying lots of different possibilities, perhaps later rejecting some of the more extreme guesses. Most readers, I hope, will be quite happy with my first suggested emendations; some will be more reluctant to accept the last two.

As a postscript, though, the results have an intriguing impact on some theories advanced by Jaap van Benthem in 1980.¹⁰ He noted that the *ripresa* comprises two sections (bars 1–11 and 12–17), each containing 88 notes, and that each section of the *piedi* comprises 77 notes (that is, bars 23–9). I would obviously add that this neatly inverts the seven-syllable structure of the *ripresa* and the eight-syllable lines of the *piedi*.

Beyond that—and returning now to my last proposed emendation, the text repetition at bars 33–5—it is intriguing to note that if we omit that repeated section the music of the *volta* comprises once again 77 notes.

Van Benthem had taken the discussion into another direction, pointing out that the number 88 spells out the name ‘Des Prez’ in gematria and using that as evidence that the piece is indeed by Josquin

des Prez. He also pointed out that twice through the *piedi* (77 × 2) plus the first 3½ bars of the *volta* (33 notes) added up to 187, which the name ‘Josquin des Prez’ spells in gematria. The final unconsidered section is of 64 notes, which he interprets as 8 × 8, thus again ‘Des Prez’. Willem Elders added a further gloss to that, counting the *ripresa* as 97 notes (that is, if you like, my 77 plus the 20 that I omitted) and proposing a musical emendation that added two further notes, bringing the total to 99, which spells ‘Josquin’ in gematria.¹¹ It would be easier to accept this proposal if there were any plausible explanation of the number 77 for the *piedi*.

A different postscript is just to say that my proposed emendations all have their direct impact on the sound of the piece, sharpening the edges, as it were. From the age of 18 I had the privilege of making music with two men who both had an enormous impact on everything I have done since, and who both continued to help and encourage me across the years. In so many ways Philip Brett and John Stevens were entirely different kinds of men; and it is quite wrong to group them together in this manner. But in several important ways they were the same: they continued making music throughout their lives, never losing sight of what happens on the stage; they had a fascination with number, particularly as it affects musical form; they constantly shared a keen perception of how text and music relate; and they were never shy of hypotheses.¹²

1 The book comprises eight gatherings of eight leaves each, thus a total of 64 leaves, the last of which contains Petrucci's colophon. *El grillo* is on ff.61v–62. On the matter of texting to all four voices, in the first eight frottola books of Petrucci, there are only three other pieces fully texted, all of them in the first book.

2 R. G. Kiesewetter, *Die Verdienste der Niederländer um die Tonkunst*, in Koninklijk-Nederlandsche Institut, *Verhandelingen over de vraag: Welke verdiensten hebben zich de Nederlanders ... in het vak der toonkunst verworven* (Amsterdam, 1829), *Musikalische Beilagen*, pp.71–2.

3 *Historical anthology of music*, ed. A. T. Davison and W. Apel, i

(Cambridge, MA, 1950), no.95b, p.98.

4 A. Pirro, *Histoire de la musique de la fin du XIVe siècle à la fin du XV^e* (Paris, 1940), pp.171–2.

5 H. Osthoff, *Josquin Desprez* (Tutzing, 1962–5), i, p.31. Osthoff had earlier outlined the position in his article on Josquin for *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vii (Kassel, 1958).

6 All documents mentioned in this paragraph are summarized, by date, in *The Josquin companion*, ed. R. Sherr (London, 2000), pp.11–20.

7 First pointed out in J. van Benthem, ‘Fortuna in Focus’, *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse muziekgeschiedenis*, xxx (1980), pp.1–50, at pp.45–6, n.90.

8 The set of Petrucci frottola books in Munich has several such corrections initialled by Cesari. Others are initialled ‘RS’, which presumably refers to the other man who edited and published a large quantity of Petrucci frottoles in those years, Rudolf Schwartz.

9 *Josquin des Prés, Werken, Wereldlijke Werken*, ed. A. Smijers, M. Antonowycz and W. Elders, *Bundel V*, afl. 54 (Amsterdam, 1968), no.53, pp.14–15. Exactly the same reading appears in *Josquin des Prés: 2 Italian songs for 4 voices or instruments*, ed. B. Thomas, Early Music Library, xcix (Brighton: London Pro Musica Edition, 1991), no.1. As concerns their treatment of the repeat signs, it is perhaps to be expected that the *Werken* presents what

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is in the source without worrying how it should be interpreted. Bernard Thomas indicates that the 'a capite' should reach to bar 29, presumably after it has been repeated. That seems an impossible place to end the composition.

10 See n.7 above.

11 W. Elders, 'New light on the dating of Josquin's *Hercules Mass*', *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse muziekgeschiedenis*, xlviii (1998), pp.112-49, at pp.115-16.

12 Much of the work and thinking for this article is part of my preparation for an edition of Josquin's four-voice secular music for the New Josquin Edition. Whether the editorial board will accept all my hypotheses remains to be seen.

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