A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians

A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians presents an edition of 110 letters exchanged by Italian musicians and composers in the sixteenth century. The principal authors are Giovanni Spataro of Bologna, Giovanni del Lago of Venice, and the well-known Florentine theorist Pietro Aaron. These letters form a unique and highly significant historical document. Written between 1517 and 1543, they are a vivid reflection of the intellectual world of important music theorists, composers, and performing musicians living in northern Italy. The letters deal with the vital musical questions of the day, intermingling profound observations with petty criticisms, conservative and conventional thought with progressive and unconventional conceptions that had far-reaching implications for future musical practice. Two complete compositions are preserved in the correspondence, and more than one hundred other pieces are mentioned, some of them no longer extant. Such letters, which reveal much more about contemporary practice than theoretical treatises, are very rare in the sixteenth century. The collection has long been known to scholars, but no more than a few letters have ever been published, since the scribal hands are difficult. This edition brings to light a wealth of observations on notational problems and compositional practice, including the earliest discussion of composing music with the aid of a score.

A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians

edited by BONNIE J. BLACKBURN EDWARD E. LOWINSKY CLEMENT A. MILLER

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to the memory of KNUD JEPPESEN

El ánimo del Músico que no conversa con otros Músicos, házese ò perezoso por no tener quien le incite y punce, con requirirle de lo que sabe y arguyrle; ò sobervio por la vana persuasión: porque no cotejando su habilidad cola de algún otro, endemasiado atribúyese à si mesmo. Por el contrario, quien conversando siente alabar sus estudios, mayormente está desseoso de perfeccionarse: y quien es algún tanto negligente, viene agujonado de la competencia, y como el hombre estudioso se toma à verguença el ceder à un ygual; assí tiene por honra grande el poder sobrepujar y ganar à un mayor.

> Pietro Cerone, *El melopeo y maestro* (Naples, 1613), Book I, ch. 34, fo. 93^r

PREFACE

THE origin of this edition lies more than forty years in the past. In 1948, while a Fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation, Edward Lowinsky first examined the Vatican manuscript of the Spataro Correspondence, then known mainly through Knud Jeppesen's 1941 article as a storehouse of information on music and musicians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Captivated by these letters, with their invaluable discussions of contemporary music, unguarded personal observations, and above all reactions to controversial new directions in music, he determined to prepare an edition that made them accessible to modern readers.

Lowinsky, never daunted by large enterprises, began the transcription of the letters during the two years he spent at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, 1952–4. But with the return to a heavy teaching schedule, the project was laid aside, with about half the transcriptions made. After some years, realizing that the task was beyond one man's capabilities, he attempted to interest other scholars in joining him in completing the edition. All declined, pleading lack of time to devote to a complex, long-term project. Then, in 1973, with retirement nearing, Lowinsky was happy to gain two collaborators. Clement Miller transcribed the remaining letters, annotating the notational problems, and proof-read the entire Correspondence, with special attention to the Latin texts. He also contributed numerous revisions and additions as the editing and translating progressed. Bonnie Blackburn was enlisted first as typist, proof-reader, and organizer of the material; eventually she served as editor of the Italian texts, translator, and annotator.

We record with regret that Edward Lowinsky did not live to see the completion of the work. By the time of his death, in October 1985, he had read and approved the edition of letters 1–59. A number of the Commentaries and some of the footnotes are his. He was unable, however, to write the Introduction. The original plan had been that Bonnie Blackburn should contribute two chapters, on the history and physical description of the manuscripts (Ch. 2) and on Giovanni del Lago's reading (Ch. 7); these were completed during 1985. It has fallen to her lot to write the remaining chapters, apart from Ch. 8 on notation, contributed by Clement Miller. She is also responsible for the Biographical Dictionary and the Notes on Problematical Terms.

We have called on several scholars' expertise in preparing this edition. Questions on the Italian texts were promptly answered by Professor Paolo Cherchi of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures of the University of Chicago and by Gabriele Dotto, Music Editor of the University of Chicago Press. Professor Susan F. Weiss of the Peabody Conservatory shared with us her materials on Bolognese musicians. Professor Thomas J. Mathiesen of Indiana University provided suggestions for the Greek sources of letter 96. Portions of the manuscript have been read by Professor Nino Pirrotta of the University of Rome, Professor Howard M. Brown of the University of Chicago, and Professor Claude V. Palisca of Yale University, who also sent us a photocopy of a rare edition relevant to letter 97. To all these scholars we extend our warmest thanks.

In the last stages of preparation we gained an invaluable collaborator in Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens, whose name will be found scattered among the footnotes-far from adequate acknowledgement of his contribution to the work, which began with his meticulous copy-editing of difficult material new to him, and soon extended to numerous contributions to our notes on classical sources, including the tracing of many proverbial sayings and quotations whose source we had not found. In particular, it was he who identified Ptolemy as the main source of letter 96, for which he also provided the translations from the Greek.

It is our pleasure to thank the librarians of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna, and the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in East Berlin, who graciously facilitated our work on the letters held by these institutions. We are also grateful to the Vatican Library, the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, and the Houghton Library, Harvard University, for permission to reproduce photographs of pages from manuscripts in their possession.

A book of this size and complexity, and largely in a foreign language, is not undertaken lightly by any press, even an academic one. Oxford University Press immediately recognized the importance of the work and has obligingly accommodated our wishes in the matter of design.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of three organizations in our labours. The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation supported the research of both Edward Lowinsky and Clement Miller; the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation assisted Bonnie Blackburn's research on the Venetian background of the Correspondence. Both these institutions also provided subsidies towards the cost of publication, as did the Renaissance Society of America, under its programme of subsidizing the publication of Renaissance texts and translations.

September 1989

BONNIE J. BLACKBURN CLEMENT A. MILLER

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 TABLE 1.
 Missing letters in Spataro's correspondence

Writer	Recipient	Recipient Date	
Cavazzoni	Spataro	July 1517	2
Del Lago	Spataro	22 June 1520	3
Del Lago	Spataro	10 July 1520	3
Aaron	Spataro	Feb. 1521	4
Aaron	Spataro	15 Jan. 1523	5
Aaron	Spataro	29 Jan. 1523	5
Aaron	Spataro	28 Feb. 1523	6
Cavazzoni	Spataro	correspondence of 1523	6
Spataro	Cavazzoni	correspondence of 1523	6
Aaron	Spataro	22 Mar. 1523	6
Spataro	Aaron	Aug. or Sept. 1523 (2 letters)	7
Aaron	Spataro	9 Sept. 1523	7
Del Lago	Spataro	Sept. 1523	7
Spataro	Del Lago	Sept. 1523	7
Aaron	Spataro	9 Oct. 1523	8
Aaron	Spataro	end of Oct. 1523	9
Spataro	Aaron	3 letters between Nov. 1523 and May 1524	II
Aaron	Spataro	21 Apr. 1524	II
Aaron	Spataro	19 Aug. 1524	13
Aaron	Spataro	Sept. 1524	14
Cavazzoni	Spataro	21 Oct. 1524	14
Aaron	Spataro	correspondence of 1527	16
Spataro	Aaron	correspondence of 1527	16
Del Lago	Spataro	24 Sept. 1527	15-16
Del Lago	Spataro	22 Aug. 1528	16
Del Lago	Spataro	4 Dec. 1528	19
Spataro	Del Lago	before Christmas 1528	19
Cavazzoni	Spataro	correspondence of 1529	17, 23, 29
Spataro	Cavazzoni	correspondence of 1529	17, 23, 29
Del Lago	Spataro	10 Feb. 1529	19-20
Del Lago	Spataro	25 Feb. 1529	20
Del Lago	Spataro	20 Mar. 1529	2 I
Del Lago	Spataro	14 May 1529	23-5
Del Lago	Spataro	28 May 1529	24-5
Del Lago	Spataro	9 Aug. 1529	27-9
Del Lago	Spataro	Dec. 1529	30
Spataro	Del Lago	Dec. 1529 or Jan. 1530	30
Aaron	Spataro	Nov. 1530	30
	•		

Writer	Recipient	Date	Mentioned in letter no.	
Spataro	Aaron	early Dec. 1530	30	
Aaron	Spataro	Jan. 1531	30	
Aaron	Spataro	Mar. 1531	32	
Spataro	Aaron	Apr. or May 1531	33	
Aaron	Spataro	June 1531	33	
Aaron	Spataro	Sept. or Oct. 1531	34	
Spataro	Aaron	Sept. or Oct. 1531	34	
Aaron	Spataro	7 Oct. 1531	35	
Aaron	Spataro	2 Nov. 1531	36	
Aaron	Spataro	before 15 Nov. 1531	36	
Spataro	Aaron	Nov. 1531	36	
Aaron	Spataro	10 Jan. 1532	37	
Aaron	Spataro	17 Feb. 1532	38	
Aaron	Spataro	6 July 1532	41-2	
Aaron	Spataro	23 Aug. 1532	45	
Spataro	G. B. Casali	autumn 1532	46	
Aaron	Spataro	22 Nov. 1532	48	
Aaron	Spataro	Dec. 1532	49	
Aaron	Spataro	late Dec. 1532	49	
Aaron	Spataro	19 Feb. 1533	50	
Aaron	Spataro	end of Feb. 1533	5 I	
Del Lago	Spataro	probably Feb. 1533	ς I	
Del Lago	Spataro	early Apr. 1533	52	
Aaron	Spataro	21 June 1533	5 5	
Del Lago	Spataro	26 June 1533	55-7	
Aaron	Spataro	7 Aug. 1533	58	
Aaron	Spataro	11 Aug. 1533	58-0	
Del Lago	Spataro	Sept. 1533	60	

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TABLE 2. Inventory of Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5318

Jeppesen's numbering	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee	Place and date	Later copies ⁴	Remarks
Section I. Le	tters by Giovann	i del Lago					
I	ĩ	I ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Girolamo Molino		Bol. 106, p. 3 Bol. 107. 1, p. 2	Autograph; dedicatory letter
2	93	2 ^r -10 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Fra Seraphin	Venice, 26 Aug. 1541	Bol. 106, pp. 4–23 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 3–19	Autograph copy
3	28	I I ^r -22 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni Spataro	Venice, 8 Oct. 1529	Bol. 106, pp. 25–50 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 20–39	Scribe A
4	44	22 ^r -33 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni Spataro	Venice, 23 Aug. 1532	Bol. 106, pp. 50–78 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 39–59	Scribe A
5	47	34 ^r -41 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni Spataro	Venice, 22 Nov. 1532	Bol. 106, pp. 79–94 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 60–71	Scribe A
6	43	41 ^r -46 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni Spataro	Venice, 4 Aug. 1532	Bol. 106, pp. 94–105 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 71–80	Scribe A
7	57	47 ^r -53 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni Spataro	Venice, 15 Aug. 1533	Bol. 106, pp. 106–19 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 80–90	Scribe A
8	68	53 ^v -58 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 6 Jan. 1520	Bol. 106, pp. 119–27 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 90–6	Scribe A
9	76	58°-60°	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 29 Dec. 1523	Bol. 106, pp. 127–31 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 97–100	Scribe A
IO	73	60 ^v -68 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 13 May 1523	Bol. 106, pp. 131–47 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 100–11	Scribe A
II	74	68 ^r -71 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 16 June 1523	Bol. 106, pp. 147–53 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 111–16	Scribe A
I 2	78A	71 ^r -72 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Paulo de Laurino	Venice, 15 Apr. 1525		Scribe A; struck through; = J23
13	80	72 [°] -76 [°]	Giovanni del Lago	Paulo de Laurino	Venice, 15 July 1525	Bol. 106, pp. 153–61 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 116–22	Scribe A
14	81	76°-79°	Giovanni del Lago	Fra Nazaro	Venice, 6 Jan. 1532	Bol. 106, pp. 161–7 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 122–6	Scribe A
15	82	79 ^r -80 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Fra Nazaro	Venice, 6 Aug. 1533	Bol. 106, pp. 167–71 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 126–9	Scribe A
16	83	8 1 ^r -8 2 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Fra Nazaro	Venice, 15 Sept. 1533	Bol. 106, pp. 171–5 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 129–32	Scribe A

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Jeppesen's numbering	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee	Place and date	Later copies ⁴	Remarks
17	84	83 ^r -85 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Lorenzo Gazio	Venice, 26 Aug. 1534	Bol. 106, pp. 175–9 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 132–5	Scribe A
18	86	85 ^r -101 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Lorenzo Gazio	Venice, 6 May 1535	Bol. 106, pp. 180–217 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 135–62	Scribe A
19	88	102 ^r -104 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Pietro de Justinis	Venice, 3 June 1538	Bol. 106, pp. 217–25 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 163–70	Autograph copy
20	69	105 ^{r-v}	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 24 Jan. 1520	Bol. 106, pp. 226–30 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 170–4	Scribe B; autograph signature;= J26
2 I	70	106 ^{r-v}	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 16 Feb. 1520	Bol. 106, pp. 231–3 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 174–6	Autograph copy
22	71	107 ^r -108 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, ult. [29] Feb. 1520	Bol. 106, pp. 233–6 Bol. 107. 1, pp. 176–9	Autograph copy
23	78B	109 ^{r-v}	Giovanni del Lago	Paulo de Laurino	Venice, 15 Apr. 1525	Bol. 106, pp. 236–8 Bol. 107. 2, pp. 1–2 Vienna, pp. 1–2	Autograph copy;= J12
24	96	110 ^r —115 ^v	Giovanni del Lago	Girolamo Molino		Bol. 107. 2, pp. 2–15 Vienna, pp. 2–13	Scribe A; not a letter but a set of musical definitions dedicated to Molino
25	60	116 ^r -129 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro [Aaron]	Bologna, 30 Oct. 1533	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 16–51 Vienna, pp. 14–46	Scribe C
26	69	130 ^r -132 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Giovanni da Legge	Venice, 24 Jan. 1520	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 52–6 Vienna, pp. 47–51	Autograph copy;= J20
Section II. L	etters to Giovani	ni del Lago					
27	3	133 ^r -134 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago	Bologna, 20 June [July] 1520	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 56–63 Vienna, pp. 51–7 Paris, fos. 50 ^r –51 ^v	Autograph; second half of J48
28	75	135 ^{r-v}	Giovanni da Legge	Giovanni del Lago	Rome, 20 Dec. 1523	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 63–4 Vienna, pp. 57–9	Autograph
29	72	136 ^{r-v}	Giovanni da Legge	Giovanni del Lago	Rome, 24 Dec. 1520	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 64–5 Vienna, pp. 59–60	Autograph
30	77	137 [°]	Paulo [de Laurino] de Neapoli	[Giovanni del Lago]	[Venice, 25 Mar. 1525]	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 65–6 Vienna, p. 60	Autograph
3 I	79	1 3 8 ^{r-v}	Paulo de Laurino	Giovanni del Lago	Rethymno, 5 June 1525	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 66–8 Vienna, pp. 61–2	Autograph
32	I 5	139 ^r –140 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	[Giovanni del Lago]	Bologna, 30 Oct. 1527	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 68–75 Vienna, pp. 62–8	Autograph

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Jeppesen's numbering	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee
33	16	141 ^r 142 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
34	17	143 ^r -146 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
35	19	147 ^r -148 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
36	29	149 ^r -152 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
37	26	153 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
38	25	154 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
39	23	I 5 5 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
40	24	1 5 6 ^{r - v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
41	2 I	1 5 7 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
42	22	1 5 8 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
43	95	159 ^{r-v}	Girolamo Malipiero	Giovanni del Lago
44	18	160 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
45	27	161 ^r -162 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
46	20	163 ^r –164 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
47	53	165'-166'	Giovanni del Lago	
48	3	167 ^{r-v}	[Giovanni Spataro]	[Giovanni del Lago]
49	52	168 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago
50	54	169 ^r -170 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago

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Place and date	Later copies ^a	Remarks
Bologna, 1 Sept. 1528	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 76–81 Vienna, pp. 69–73	Autograph
Bologna, 4 Jan. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 81–99 Vienna, pp. 74–88	Autograph
Bologna, 26 Feb. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 99–103 Vienna, pp. 88–92	Autograph
Bologna, 24 Nov. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 103–17 Vienna, pp. 92–105	Autograph
Bologna, 5 July 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 117–18 Vienna, pp. 105–6	Autograph
Bologna, ult. [30] June 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 119–20 Vienna, pp. 106–7	Autograph
Bologna, 28 May 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 120–2 Vienna, pp. 107–9	Autograph
Bologna, 3 June 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 122–3 Vienna, pp. 109–10	Autograph
Bologna, 31 Mar. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 123–5 Vienna, pp. 110–12	Autograph
Bologna, 5 Apr. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 126–8 Vienna, pp. 112–14	Autograph
Venice, 27 Nov. 1543	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 128–30 Vienna, pp. 114–16	Autograph
Bologna, 25 Jan. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 130–2 Vienna, pp. 116–18	Autograph
Bologna, 23 Aug. 1529	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 132–6 Vienna, pp. 118–21	Autograph
[Bologna, Mar. 1529]	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 136–40 Vienna, pp. 122–5	Autograph
25 May 1533	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 140–4 Vienna, pp. 125–7	Autograph memorandum
[Bologna, 20 July 1520]	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 144–8 Vienna, pp. 128–31	Autograph; first half of J27
Bologna, 16 Apr. 1533	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 149–51 Vienna, pp. 132–4	Autograph
Bologna, 4 June 1533	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 152–8 Vienna, pp. 134–40	Autograph
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Jeppesen's numbering	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee	Place and date	Later copies ^e	Remarks
5 I	61	171 ^{r-v}	Pietro Aaron	Giovanni del Lago	Padua, 12 May 1535	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 170–1 Vienna, pp. 151–2	Autograph
52	105	172 ^{r-v}	Pietro Aaron	Gregorio de Corbelli	Bergamo, 26 Dec. 1538	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 171–3 Vienna, pp. 152–4	Autograph
53	102	173 ^{r-v}	Lorenzo Gazio	[Pietro Aaron]	San Fortunato de Basciano, penult. [27] Feb. 1534	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 164–6 Vienna, pp. 145–7	Copy in Aaron's hand
54	90	174 ^{r-v}	Nicolò Olivetto	Giovanni del Lago	Treviso, 1 Oct. 1535	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 166–7 Vienna, pp. 147–8	Autograph
55	108	I 7 5 ^{r-v}	Lorenzo Gazio	Don Valeriano	S. Justina (Padua), Easter Sunday [28 Mar.] 1535	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 167–8 Vienna, pp. 148–50	Autograph
56	67	1 76 ^{r-v}	Pietro Aaron	Giovanni del Lago	S. Leonardo (Bergamo), 17 July 1540	Bol. 107. 2, p. 169 Vienna, p. 150	Autograph
57	87	I 77 ^{r-v}	Pietro de Justinis	Giovanni del Lago	Udine, 27 Nov. 1534	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 176–7 Vienna, pp. 156–7	Autograph
58	91	178 ^{r-v}	Francesco di Pizoni	Giovanni del Lago	Padua, 2 June 1537	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 178–80 Vienna, pp. 158–9	Autograph
59	92	179 ^{r-v}	Fra Seraphin	Giovanni del Lago	Treviso, 30 Apr. 1538	Bol. 107. 2, p. 180 Vienna, p. 160	Autograph
60	109	180 ^r	[Lorenzo Gazio]			Bol. 107. 2, pp. 181-2	Autograph memorandum
61	63	181 ^r -182 ^r	Giovanni del Lago	Pietro Aaron	Venice, 27 Aug. 1539	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 182-5	Autograph copy
62	62	183 ^{r-v}	Pietro Aaron	Giovanni del Lago	S. Leonardo (Bergamo), 13 Mar. 1536	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 173–6 Vienna, pp. 154–6	Autograph
63	65	184 ^{r-v}	Giovanni del Lago	Pietro Aaron	Venice, 12 May 1540	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 194-5	Autograph copy
64	85	185 ^{r-v}	Lorenzo Gazio	Giovanni del Lago	S. Justina (Padua), 9 Sept. 1534	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 195-6	Autograph
65	107	186 ^{r-v} (top)	Lorenzo Gazio	Don Valeriano	Corrigiola, 23 Nov. 1534	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 196-7	Autograph
66	94	186 ^{r-v} (bottom)	Francesco Lupino	Giovanni del Lago	Fano, 24 Apr. 1541	Bol. 107. 2, p. 198	Autograph
67	98	187°	Bernardino da Pavia	Giovanni del Lago	[Venice]	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 198-9	Autograph
68	89	188 ^{r-v}	[Bartolomeo] Tromboncino	Giovanni del Lago	Vicenza, 2 Apr. 1535	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 199–200	Autograph
69	99	189 ^r -191 ^v	?	[Pietro Aaron?]	[before 1523]	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 200-0	Copy in Aaron's hand
70-2 ^d	106	192 ^r —195 ^v	Giovanni Maria Lanfranco	Adrian Willaert	Brescia, 20 Oct. 1531	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 209–15	Autograph? ^e

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Tables Tables Place and date Later copies^a Remarks Addressee Writer Folios Number in present edition Section III. Letters to Pietro Aaron [Bologna, Feb. 1523] Bol. 107. 2, pp. 215-23 Autograph [Pietro Aaron] Giovanni Spataro 196^r-198^v 5 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 224-30 Bologna, 7 Mar. 1521 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 231–6 Autograph Pietro Aaron Giovanni Spataro 199^t-200^v 4 Bologna, 1 Nov. 1523 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 237-45 Autograph Pietro [Aaron] Giovanni Spataro 8 201^r-202^v Pietro Aaron Bologna, 8 Apr. 1523 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 245-59 Autograph 6 Giovanni Spataro 203^r-204^v Bologna, 19 Sept. 1523 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 259-69 Autograph Giovanni Spataro Pietro [Aaron] 205 r-206^v 7 Bologna, 6 Nov. 1523 Pietro [Aaron] Bol. 107. 3, pp. 270-8 Autograph 207^r-208^v Giovanni Spataro 9 Bologna, 6 May 1524 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 279-91 Autograph Giovanni Spataro Pietro Aaron 209^r-210^v 1 I Bologna, 23 May 1524 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 292-306 Autograph Pietro Aaron 2 I I^r-2 I 2^v Giovanni Spataro 12 Paris, fos. 43^{r-v}, 47^r Bol. 107. 3, pp. 307-15 Marc'Antonio Bologna, 10 Nov. 1524 Autograph Giovanni Spataro 213^r-214^v 14 [Cavazzoni] Bologna, 8 Nov. 1523 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 316-23 Autograph Pietro [Aaron] 2 I 5^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro 10 Paris, fos. 49r-50r Bologna, 8 Feb. 1531 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 324-8 2 I 6^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro Pietro [Aaron] Autograph 3 I Venice, 14 Feb. 1533 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 328-31 Copy in Del Lago's hand 217^{r-v} Pietro Aaron [Lorenzo Gazio] 101 [1534 modern style] Pietro Aaron Paulo [de Laurino] Venice, 29 Apr. 1525 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 331-4 Autograph $2\,1\,8^{r-v}$ 100 Paris, fo. 44^r Bologna, 30 Jan. 1531 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 334-50 Autograph Giovanni Spataro [Pietro Aaron] 219^r-221^v 30 Pietro [Aaron] Bologna, 5 Apr. 1532 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 351-5 Autograph 222^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro 39 Bologna, 19 June 1531 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 356-7 Giovanni Spataro Pietro [Aaron] Autograph 223^{r-v} 33 Pietro Aaron Bologna, 24 Oct. 1531 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 358-62 Autograph 224^r-225^v Giovanni Spataro 34 Bologna, 24 Oct. 1531 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 363-8 Giovanni Spataro Pietro [Aaron] Autograph 226^r-227^v 35 Pietro [Aaron] Bologna, 27 Nov. 1531 Bol. 107. 3, pp. 368-77 Autograph 228^r-229^v Giovanni Spataro 36 Bologna, 28 Mar. 1531 Pietro [Aaron] Bol. 107. 3, pp. 377-9 Autograph 230^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro 32 Bologna, 22 July 1532 Pietro [Aaron] Bol. 107. 3, pp. 379-82 Autograph Giovanni Spataro 231^{r-v} 42 Bologna, 30 Jan. 1532 Giovanni Spataro Pietro Aaron Bol. 107. 3, pp. 382-9 Autograph 232^r-233^v 37 Bologna, 20 Aug. 1533 Pietro Aaron Bol. 107. 3, pp. 389-93, Autograph Giovanni Spataro 234^t-235^v 58 398-9 Bologna, 13 Mar. 1532 Pietro [Aaron] Bol. 107. 3, pp. 399-401 Autograph 236^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro 38 Bologna, 12 Apr. 1532 Autograph [Pietro Aaron] Bol. 107. 3, pp. 401, 394 237^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro 40

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Jeppesen's numbering	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee	Place and date	Later copies ^a	Remarks
98–9	41	238 ^r -239 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro [Aaron]	Bologna, 19 July 1532	Bol. 107. 3, pp. 395-7, 402	Autograph, plus music example in Del Lago's hand
100	2	240 ^r -243 ^r	Giovanni Spataro	Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni	[Bologna], 1 Aug. 1517	Bol. 107. 3, pp. 404–12	Scribe D
101-2	46	244 ^r -245a ^r	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro Aaron	[Bologna, autumn 1522]	Bol 107 2 pp 412-16	Autograph
103	50	246 ^r 247 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro Aaron	Bologna, 4 Mar. 1533	Bol. 107. 3, pp. 413 10	Autograph
104	59	248 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro Aaron	Bologna, 29 Aug. 1533	Doi: 107. 3, pp. 423 8	Autograph
105	5 1	249 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro Aaron	Bologna, 8 Mar. 1533		Autograph
106	55	250 ^r -251 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro [Aaron]	Bologna, 30 June [July] 1533	Bol. 107. 3. pp. 428-22	Autograph
107	103	252 [°]	Pietro Aaron	Lorenzo [Gazio]	Venice, 29 Apr. 1534	Paris. fo. 45^{t}	Autograph conv
108	110	253 ^{r-v}	5	[Giovanni del Lago?]	[1533]	Paris, fo. 45 ^v	Copy in Aaron's hand
109	104	254 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Maria Lanfranco	Pietro Aaron	Brescia, 10 Aug. 1534		Autograph? ^e
Section IV.	Letters originally	forming part of	f Vat. lat. 5318 but now d	lispersed			
110	56		Giovanni Spataro	Giovanni del Lago	Bologna, 30 July 1533	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 158–63 Vienna, pp. 140–5	Autograph; original in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale
III	64		Pietro Aaron	Giovanni del Lago	S. Leonardo, Bergamo, 7 Oct. 1539	Bol. 107. 2, pp. 186–93	Autograph; original in Eas Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek
	49		Giovanni Spataro	Pietro [Aaron]	Bologna, 2 Jan. 1533	Bol. 107. 3, pp. 418–23	Autograph; original in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale
^a Bologna = Bo Nationalbiblio ^b This letter ac for himself. Sp he gives Del L	ologna, Civico Mus thek, MS S.m. 483 ctually belongs amo pataro's letter, thou Lago permission to	seo Bibliografico M o; Paris = Paris, Bi ong the letters of S gh addressed to A copy it 'in Aaron'	Iusicale; Vienna = Vienna, Ö: bliothèque nationale, MS it. : section III. It is a copy that E aron, is in answer to Del Lag s room'.	sterreichische 1110. Del Lago had made 30, and at the end	⁶ Nos. J65 and J66 have been pasted to ^d Jeppesen gave separate numbers to m ^e The two letters by Lanfranco (J70 an originals, but the handwriting of the tw serawl, J100 in a regular italic hand.	ogether. 1usical enclosures. d J109) both carry postal addresse wo is very different; J70 is written	s, as if they were in a hasty, ill-formed

TABLE 3. Inventory of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS it. 1110

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Item	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee	Place and date	Remarks
т		1 ^t -4 ^v	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo [Melone]	Modena, 22 Jan. 1572	Autograph
2	97	5 ^r -6 ^v	;	Giovanni [del Lago]		Copy in contemporary hand, with corrections by Del Lago
3		7 ^r -10 ^v	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	Modena, 9 Sept. 1571	Autograph. Fo. 10 ^r blank
4		11 ^r -12 ^b	5	[Ercole Bottrigari?]		Fos. 11–12b numbered in original as: 11, 12, 11, 12
5		1 2 b ^v	;	5		In form of a preface to a book, beginning 'Accioché humanissimi lettori'
6		13 ^r -14 ^v	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	Modena, 11 May1573	Autograph. Fo. 14 ^r blank
7		15 ^{r-v}	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	Modena, 24 Feb. 1574	Autograph
8		1 6 ^{r-v}	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo [Melone]	Modena, 23 May 1572	Autograph
9		$17^{r} - 18^{v}$	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	Modena, 16 Apr. 1573	Autograph. Fos. 17 ^v –18 ^r blank
10		19 ^r 20 ^v	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	[Modena], 4 May 1573	Autograph. Fos. 19 ^v –20 ^r blank
11		21 ^r -22 ^v	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	Modena, 23 May 1573	Autograph. Fos. 21 ^v –22 ^r blank
12		23 ^r -24 ^v	Gandolfo Sigonio	Annibalo Melone	Modena, 25 Apr. 1573	Autograph
13		25 ^r -28 ^v				Fos. 26 ^{r-v} , 28 ^v blank. Italian translation of Sectio tertia, cap. 2 of Lodovico Fogliano, <i>Musica theorica</i> (Venice, 1529). Late 16th-c. hand
14	66	29 ^r -36 ^v	Pietro Aaron	Giovanni [del Lago]	[Bergamo, early July 1540]	Autograph. Fos. 35°–36° blank
15		37 ^r -42 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Silvestro Alzato	Bologna, 14 May 1521	Fos. 37 ^{t-v} , 42 ^v blank. Contemporary copy made from the printed edition, <i>Dilucide et probatissime demonstratione</i> (Bologna, 1521), in answer to Gafurio's <i>Epistola</i> <i>prima</i> (1521)
16	12	43 ^{r-v} , 47 ^r	[Giovanni Spataro]	Pietro Aaron	Bologna, 23 May 1524	Late 16th-c. copy. One folio of the letter is missing after fo. 43 [°] . Original letter in Vat. lat. 5318, fos. 211 ^r -212 [°] .
17	100	44 ^r	Pietro Aaron	[Paulo de Laurino]	Venice, 29 Apr. 1525	Fo. 44 ^v blank. Late 16th-c. copy. Original letter in Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 218 ^{r-v}
18	103	45 ^r	Pietro Aaron	Lorenzo [Gazio]	Venice, 29 Apr. 1534	Late 16th-c. copy. Original letter in Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 252 ^v
19	110	45 [°]	Ş	[Giovanni del Lago?]	[1533]	Late 16th-c. copy. Another copy in Aaron's hand in Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 253 ^{r-v}
20	13	47 ^r -49 ^r	Giovanni Spataro	[Pietro Aaron]	[Bologna], 9 Sept. 1524	Late 16th-c. copy. The top of fo. 47^{r} contains the ending of item 16. Another version of the letter is printed in G. M. Artusi, <i>L'Artusi</i> (Venice, 1600), fos. $22^{r}-24^{r}$

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Item	Number in present edition	Folios	Writer	Addressee	Place and date	Remarks
21	IO	49 ^r -50 ^r	[Giovanni Spataro]	[Pietro Aaron]	Bologna, 8 Nov. 1523	Late 16th-c. copy. Original letter in Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 215 ^{r-v}
22	3	50 ^r -51 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	[Giovanni del Lago]	Bologna, 20 June [July] 1520	Late 16th-c. copy. Second half of letter only. Original letter in Vat. lat. 5318, fos. 133 ^r -134 ^v
23		51 ^v -54 ^v , 46 ^{r-v}	Giovanni Spataro	Silvestro Alzato	[Bologna], 14 May 1521	A second copy in late 16th-c. hand of Spataro's answer to Gafurio's <i>Epistola prima</i> ; see item 15 above. At least one folio is missing after fo. 54° . Fo. 46° blank except for some mathematical computations
24		55 ^r -59 ^v	[Franchino Gafurio]	[Giovanni Spataro]	[Turin, 20 Apr. 1520]	Fos. $57^{v}-59^{v}$ blank. First half, in Italian translation, of the <i>Apologia Franchini Gafurii musici adversus Joannem</i> <i>Spatarium</i> (Turin, 1520). Hand of earlier 16th c.
25	48	60 ^r -67 ^v	Giovanni Spataro	Pietro Aaron	[Bologna, Dec. 1532]	Fo. 67 ^v blank. Contemporary copy (Scribe E)
26	45	68 ^r -77 ^v	[Giovanni Spataro]	Pietro [Aaron] .	[Bologna, autumn 1532]	Fo. 77 ^v blank. Contemporary copy in same hand as item 25 (Scribe E)
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TABLE 4. Compositions mentioned in the Correspondence

Compositions marked with an asterisk either are lost or have not been identified.

Composer and title	Date	Letter
Aaron, Pietro		
*canti, canzonetta	Jan. 1531	30
*canti	Mar. 1531	32
*canti	June 1531	33
*concento con varie parole	July 1533	55
*Credo a 6	Mar. 1532	38
	Apr. 1532	39
*Gospel motet (In illo tempore loquente Jesu?)	Jan. 1531	30
*Letatus sum	Oct. 1531	35
	Nov. 1531	36
*madrigal	Apr. 1532	39
*madrigal	July 1532	41
*Mass a 5	Nov. 1531	36
*motet on cantus firmus Da pacem a 5	Jan. 1533	49
(Exaudiat Dominus?)	Mar. 1533	50
*motet on St John the Apostle	Nov. 1531	36
Alberti, Gasparo		
*madrigal a 6 in honour of Aaron	Mar. 1536	62
Vesper service for double choir	Mar. 1536	62
Anonymous		
*two French chansons	Apr. 1523	6
*motet by ancient author	Mar. 1533	5 I
Quid retribuam Domino	Aug. 1534	104
Bailly, Giovanni		
*four canzoni	June 1538	88
Barbingant	.	
L'omme bani	Feb 1010	70
	100.1,20	70
Binchois, Gilles	D	0
Credo	Dec. 1532	48
Brassart, Johannes		
*isorhythmic motet on Tenor Hoc iocundum	Aug. 1533	57
dulce melos	Oct. 1533	60
Brumel, Antoine		
Missa de Beata Virgine	Aug. 1534	104
Missa L'homme armé	Dec. 1532	48
Victime paschali	Aug. 1534	104

Tables

Composer and title	Date	Letter
Busnois, Antoine		
*Pourtant se mon	Jan. 1529	т 8
	May 1535	86
Cavalaro, Nicolò		
*psalm a 5	lan 1621	••
*canto or concento a 6	July 1522	30
	Aug. 1522)) \$8.50
Del Lago Cierrani	- 8 777	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
*Multi supt reseti revei		
Multi sunt vocati pauci vero electi	Nov. 1534	107
	Mar. 1535	108
	May 1535	61
_	May 1535	86
Domarto, Pietro de		
Gloria [recte Credo] in irregular fifth mode	Feb. 1520	7 0
Dufay, Guillaume		
Introit de Apostolis [in Missa Sancti Jacobi]	Dec. 1532	48
Introit de Confessoribus [Os justi]	Dec. 1532	40 48
Offertory de Spiritu Sancto [Confirma hoc Deus]	Dec. 1532	48
Le serviteur	Feb. 1520	71
Missa de Sancto Antonio da Padoa	Dec. 1532	48
Dunstable John		
Preco preheminencie	Orthe service	2
Veni Sancte Spiritus	Oct. 1529	28
· · · ·	Oct. 1529	28
Eloy d'Amerval		
Missa Dixerunt discipuli	Dec. 1523	75
	Aug. 1539	63
	Oct. 1539	64
Gafurio, Franchino		
*canto	Apr. 1533	52
	Aug. 1534	84
u.	Sept. 1534	85
"concento	Aug. 1532	44
"Missa L'homme armé	Sept. 1533	83
iovanni da Bologna		
*isorhythmic motet with Tenor Certa salutis	Oct. 1520	28
	Nov 1520	20

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Composer and title	Date	Letter
Hothby, John		
Ora pro nobis	autumn 1532	45
1	Jan. 1533	49
	Mar. 1533	51
*rota	Aug. 1539	63
	Oct. 1539	64
Isaac, Heinrich		
*two Masses	Dec. 1532	48
[Missa Chargé de dueil]	Dec. 1532	48
*Missa Je ne fays	Dec. 1532	48
Jacquet of Mantua		
Plorabant sacerdotes	Oct. 1529	28
Iosavin des Prez	· ·	
Missa Faisant regretz		104
Missa Gaudeanus	Dec 1522	104
Missa L'ami Baudichon	Dec. 1332	40 48
Missa L'homme armé sexti toni	May 1525	86
Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales	Aug 1,55	11
Missa La sol fa re mi	Oct 1520	-++ 28
Proeter return seriem	Mar 1529	20
	1441. 1)21	4
Justinis, Pietro de	I O	0.0
*Magnificat in fourth mode	June 1538	88
*Magnificat in first mode	June 1538	88
*Tulerunt dominum meum	June 1538	88
La Rue, Pierre de		
Porquoi non	Feb. 1520	71
Lanfranco, Giovanni Maria		
Threicium memorat quicumque	Aug. 1534	104
	Oct. 1531	106
Lapicida, Erasmus		
Tandernaken	Aug. 1532	44
Mouton, Johannes		
Missa sine nomine	Feb. 1520	71
	Oct. 1533	60
Peccata mea	Oct. 1533	60
Muradori Julio		
*ac modricals	June 1611	
2) maurigais	Oct 1331	> >
	Nov 1931	5)
	INOV. 1931	30
	Jan. 1532	37

Tables

Composer and title	Date	Letter
Obrecht, Jacob		
Missa Malheur me bat	Dec. 1532	48
Missa Si dedero	Oct. 1529	28
	Nov. 1529	20
Orto, Marbriano de		-)
Missa I'av pris amours	Mayrere	86
Venus tu m'a pris	Feb 1520	30
Diétan Lavat	105.1,20	/1
O hosts infentio		
O beata infantia	Feb. 1520	71
Primis, Philippo de		
*Missa Pourtant se mon	Jan. 1529	1 8
	Mar. 1529	2 I
	Dec. 1532	48
	May 1535	86
Pullois, Johannes		
Missa secundi toni	Dec. 1532	48
Ramis Bartolomeo		•
*Missa Requiem eternam	Nor	0
brissa Requiem eternam	Nov. 1523	8
*Tu lumen	Mar. 1929	21
	INOV. 1523	10
		41, 42
	Aug. 1932	43, 44
	Jan 1932	45
	Jan. 1533 Mox 1535	49
Denine de Franci	Way 1535	80
Kosino da Fermi		
Veni Sancte Spiritus a 5	Nov. 1523	8
	June 1529	24
Sancta Marina, Petro de		
*canto	Jan. 1531	30
Sarto, Johannes de		
Romanorum rex/Requiem aeternam	Oct. 1520	28
	Ang 1522	20
	Oct_{1522}	60
Spataro Giovanni	000 1999	00
Ave gratia plena		/
Ave grana piena	autumn 1532	46
	Jan. 1533	49
* Ave Maria a 6	Mar. 1533	50
AVE Maria a 0	Sept. 1528	16

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Composet and title	Date	Letter
Spataro, Giovanni (cont.)		
*canti	Oct. 1531	35
*Deprecor te	Mar. 1529	20, 21
1	Apr. 1529	22
*duo	July 1525	80
Gaude Maria	Jan. 1533	49
Hec virgo est preclarum vas a 4 and a 5	Oct. 1531	35
	Jan. 1532	37
	Apr. 1532	39
*Magnificats	Mar. 1521	4
*Magnificat	July 1533	55
0	Aug. 1533	58
*Missa Da pacem	Aug. 1517	2
•	July 1520	3
	Aug. 1532	44
	autumn 1532	45
*Missa de la pera	July 1525	80
•	Jan. 1529	17, 18
	Feb. 1529	19
	Mar. 1529	20, 21
*Missa de la tradictora	July 1520	3
*Missa O salutaris hostia	Mar. 1533	50, 51
	July 1533	55
*Missa Pera pera	Jan. 1529	18
-	Mar. 1529	20, 21
	Apr. 1529	22
	June 1529	24
*Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena	Apr. 1523	6
	Sept. 1523	7
	Oct. 1527	15
	Sept. 1528	16
*Missa Tue voluntatis	Nov. 1523	8
	July 1532	41,42
	Aug. 1532	43,44
	autumn 1532	45
*motet	April 1523	6
*motet (responsory)	Jan. 1531	30
motet for Leo X (Cardinei cetus)	Oct. 1527	15
	Sept. 1528	16
	Jan. 1529	17
	Feb. 1529	19

Tables

Composer and title	Date	Letter
*2 motets	Oct. 1531	35
*Nativitas gloriose	Jan. 1533	49
Nativitas tua Dei genitrix a 5 and a 6	Nov. 1531	36
	Jan. 1532	37
	Apr. 1532	39
*Pater noster a 5	Mar. 1529	20
*rotta (Ubi opus est facto?)	Oct. 1531	106
*Salve regina	Apr. 1533	52
*Ubi opus est facto	Aug. 1517	2
• •	Aug. 1532	44
	autumn 1532	45
	Nov. 1532	47
	Dec. 1532	48
Virgo prudentissima	Oct. 1531	35
	Nov. 1531	36
Tinctoris Johannes		-
Difficiles alios delectat	Dec 1520	72
	Nov 1522	/ 2 8
	Dec 1523	75
	Aug 1522	/)
	May 1525	86
	Aug 1520	62
	n.d.	100
*Missa Elas	May 1525	86
Tromboning Bartolomoo		00
*Sa la mia morta brami	A	0.
se la mia morte brann	Apr. 1535	89
Valeriano, Don		
*canto	Nov. 1534	107
Veludaro Vincenzo		
*canto	Nov 1621	-6
*canto		30
	Jan. 1992	. 57
Verbonnet, Johannes		
Missa Gracieuse gent	May 1523	73
	Aug. 1532	44
	autumn 1532	45
	May 1535	86
Willaert, Adrian		
Ave maris stella (hymn)	Oct., 1529	28
Ave maris stella (motet?)	Oct. 1521	106

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Composer and title	Date	Letter
Willaert, Adrian (cont.)		
*Magnificat in second mode	Oct. 1531	106
hymns	Aug. 1533	59
*composition on tenor of Del Lago's 'Multi	Nov. 1534	107
sunt vocati'	Mar. 1535	108
	May 1535	86
Quid non ebrietas	May 1535 May 1524	I 2
	Sept. 1524	13
	Nov. 1524	14
	Oct. 1529	28
	Nov. 1529	29
	Oct. 1533	60
Vesper service	Oct. 1531	106

PART I

Introduction

A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians

THE Spataro Correspondence, so called after its main author, the Bolognese music theorist Giovanni Spataro, is a precious and unique historical document. Altogether it comprises 110 letters, written between 1517 and 1543, of fifteen correspondents. These letters open a vivid perspective on the intellectual world of a group of sixteenth-century music theorists and performing musicians living in Italy. Forced by distance to communicate through writing, they have provided us with a tangible record of the concerns of the Renaissance musician. The discussions in the academies, the social gatherings in the homes of noble patrons, the criticism of new music during rehearsals, the private conversations between two theorists-these are largely lost to us. Treatises in dialogue form represent an attempt to capture some of the atmosphere of these occasions, but they inevitably are shaped by literary and didactic objectives. These letters, mostly written without publication in mind, throw into relief the burning musical questions of the day, mingling the profound with the trivial, the pure love of knowledge with petty criticism. In them we find subjects never touched upon in formal treatises, precious observations on musical practice, and reactions to new musical directions. The correspondence has its human side as well. The personalities of Giovanni del Lago, Pietro Aaron, and especially Giovanni Spataro are indelibly etched in their letters; the kaleidoscopic changes in their relationships, their pithy observations of each other's character, their triumphs, their failures stand forth in a way no treatise could reveal.

Whereas Giovanni Spataro and his fifty-four letters form the intellectual centre of the Spataro Correspondence, it was Giovanni del Lago, the Venetian music theorist, who collected these letters. He clearly intended to publish at least twenty-three of his own letters, for they survive in a fair copy provided with a title and a dedication to his patron, the Venetian patrician Girolamo Molino. This title epitomizes the Correspondence as a whole: 'Letters, composed in the vernacular, which contain the resolution of many recondite problems in music obscurely treated by the ancient music theorists and imperfectly understood by those of our day, for the common use of scholars of this liberal art'. The third main correspondent, the theorist Pietro Aaron, a Florentine living in Venice, was the recipient of many of Spataro's letters. Unfortunately, only nine of his own survive,

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although we can deduce many of his ideas from Spataro's replies. Of the three theorists, he was the most prolific, having published five books between 1516 and 1545, and he remains the best known today. His *Thoscanello de la musica* of 1523, one of the earliest music treatises to appear in Italian, was reprinted in 1529, 1539, 1557, and 1562. A fourth theorist, Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, is represented in the collection with two letters, one of them addressed to Adrian Willaert, who, though no letter of his appears here, hovers in the background as a guiding spirit. The remaining letters were written by a host of lesser musicians who belonged to the circle of Giovanni del Lago.

Most, if not all, of the letters in the Correspondence were in the possession of Giovanni del Lago in the sixteenth century. Some time after his death, the main corpus passed into the hands of Paolo Manuzio, son of the great Venetian printer. It eventually entered the Vatican Library, where the manuscript now bears the number Vat. lat. 5318. Other letters, which became separated over the course of the centuries, are now in Paris, Bologna, and East Berlin. The history of these manuscripts is traced in Ch. 2.

The Spataro Correspondence is a gold-mine of information about fifteenth- and sixteenth-century music and music theory. It is in the nature of mines to be difficult of access and to keep their treasures hidden, and the Correspondence is no exception. For more than one hundred years researchers have explored its contents, pulling forth a chunk here, a nugget there. Much has been missed. It was not until 1939 that the first inventory of the Vatican collection was published. We owe it to that indefatigable investigator of ecclesiastical archives, Mgr Raffaele Casimiri.¹ He began his inventory with these words:

It has long been my desire—unfulfilled up to now—to publish complete all the letters contained in MS Vat. 5318.

This is truly a precious collection—not entirely unknown to musicologists, however—of a lively and learned epistolary exchange between famous Italian musicians of the first half of the sixteenth century on questions concerning the theory and practice of music.

Casimiri arranged the letters in chronological order, giving the date, folionumber, salutation, and closing. Only in a few cases did he indicate the contents. At the end he included a partial list of the names and cities he had encountered. His work was offered as no more than a guide to the collection, which he still intended to edit. He died four years later, his long-nourished hope still unfulfilled.

¹ Raffaele Casimiri, 'Il codice Vatic. 5318. Carteggio musicale autografo tra teorici e musici del sec. XVI dall'anno 1517 al 1543', Note d'archivio per la storia musicale 16 (1939), 109-31.

If Casimiri's article afforded no more than a sketchy though tantalizing glimpse of the treasures of the Vatican manuscript, Knud Jeppesen's 1941 article, 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz des früheren Cinquecento', made the gold-mine accessible to scholars.² Not only did he present a much more detailed and accurate inventory of the manuscript, including concordances in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century copies and the fugitive letters in Paris, Berlin, and Bologna: he gave the first comprehensive view of the contents of the whole Correspondence. Jeppesen stressed its importance as 'source-material of the first rank—not only music-theoretical, but also bibliographical, personal, and cultural—of Italian music history in the first half of the sixteenth century'.³ His article remains the fundamental study to this day. It is much more than an inventory.

Jeppesen set the Correspondence in the context of early sixteenthcentury music theory, which was characterized by a strong polemical element, begun by Spataro's teacher, the hot-headed Spaniard Bartolomeo Ramis,⁴ and continued by his equally temperamental pupil. In Jeppesen's words, 'one discussed music theory as one does sport or theatre today'. And, as with sport and theatre, the debate was not limited to professional commentators. But what ambassador today would invite music theorists to lunch in order to discuss the intricacies of the Greek harmonic system? This was an invitation Giovanni del Lago received from the English ambassador to Venice (see no. 98). Spataro took part in a similar discussion at the ambassador's home in Bologna, and it inspired him to write a composition incorporating the remote chromatic note D (see no. 46). Only one letter from an amateur appears in the Correspondence (no. 97), but contact with the wider world of music-lovers is evident in a number of letters.⁵ Jeppesen illustrated the main topics discussed in the Correspondence and sketched the personalities of Del Lago, Spataro, and Aaron. He also emphasized the value of the Correspondence on bibliographical grounds: it contains references to, and even music examples from, a number of compositions that have not survived. But rich as his article was, he could not, as he himself admitted, cover every aspect of the Correspondence.

Casimiri's list had the virtue of giving a chronological sequence of the letters. Jeppesen's inventory of the Vatican manuscript, on the other

² 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz des früheren Cinquecento', *Acta musicologica* 13 (1941), 3-39.

³ Ibid., p. 36.

⁴ The spelling of his name varies. We have chosen the form used by Spataro.

⁵ The Biographical Dictionary has entries for all living persons mentioned in the Correspondence.

hand, revealed the origins of the Correspondence. As Jeppesen showed, it falls into three main groups. First come the letters of Giovanni del Lago, copied mainly by a scribe on to eleven consecutive fascicles. Then comes a series of autograph letters, for the most part written to Del Lago. The third main section consists almost entirely of autograph letters from Spataro to Aaron.⁶ Originally, then, the Correspondence was in the possession of two people, Del Lago and Aaron, and all the letters, except a few late ones to Aaron, were addressed to Venice. Not a single autograph letter to Spataro is present. He is the central figure in the Correspondence, and yet none of it comes from his estate. In several letters Spataro mentions that he keeps copies of all his epistole, which he is carefully preserving for posterity, in the hope that they might interest 'qualche gentile spirito' (see no. 48, para. 1). All these copies, as well as all autograph letters to him, have disappeared. It is one of those ironic twists of fate that his letters now see the light of day thanks to his occasional friend and frequent adversary, Giovanni del Lago.

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Even within the three main sections of the Vatican manuscript the letters were not placed in chronological order. We have therefore not felt bound to adhere to its order in the present edition. However, a strictly chronological arrangement, including the additional letters, would have had the disadvantage of separating letters from their answers and interrupting the continuity of exchanges between two writers. Moreover, some of the dates were discovered to be false.⁷ In the end, we decided on a third order. The central part of the Correspondence, the letters exchanged between Spataro, Del Lago, Aaron, and Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, has been arranged chronologically and numbered from 1 to 67. Spataro was rarely on good terms with Del Lago and Aaron at the same time, so most of his exchanges with each fall into different time periods. At one point, however, the correspondence was actually carried out à trois. In the second half of 1532, Spataro, to keep Aaron privy to all his 'virtuous arguments' with Del Lago, addressed his letters to Aaron instead, allowing Del Lago to make copies. Spataro's last letter is dated 1533, and the remaining letters in this group were exchanged between Del Lago and Aaron after the latter moved to a monastery near Bergamo. Many letters are missing from this series, as we can tell from specific references in the letters that survive. They are listed in Table 1 (see pp. xx-xxi), which makes it graphically clear that unique as the Correspondence is in its present state, it is only a remnant of what it must once have been. The second group of letters, between Del Lago and minor Italian musicians

⁶ A physical description of the Vatican manuscript is given in the following chapter. For the inventory, see Table 2 on pp. xxii–xxxiii.

and choirmasters, is self-contained. These letters, numbered 68 to 98, are published in approximately chronological order, arranged according to correspondent. The third group, letters 99 to 105, comprises letters that were sent to Pietro Aaron by other writers, and the remaining letters, 106 to 110, may have been in his possession as well. Our new numbering of necessity conflicts with Jeppesen's; a concordance can be found in the inventory of the Vatican manuscript in Table 2 on pp. xxii–xxxiii.⁸

In transcribing and making available the Spataro Correspondence, we are following in the footsteps of an illustrious predecessor, Padre Giovanni Battista Martini. On a visit to Rome in 1747, Padre Martini had briefly seen some of the manuscripts in the Vatican Library, including Vat. lat. 5813, which was of interest to him not only because the letters dealt with music theory but also because the main author was a native of Bologna, as was Padre Martini. With great difficulty, he arranged to have a copy made, but in the space of twenty-six years he was able to obtain no more than the first seventy-two letters.⁹ The transcription was finally completed in the mid nineteenth century on the initiative of Gaetano Gaspari, who was the first historian to make extensive use of the Correspondence, in several lengthy articles on music in Bologna in the sixteenth century.

Even though many letters of the Correspondence are lost, it is possible to follow the thread of the arguments through the responses. And arguments are largely what we are dealing with, for many of the letters are critiques, not only of treatises and theoretical opinions, but also of music. When Aaron sent Spataro his *Toscanello* for criticism, fresh off the press, Spataro responded with a series of nine review letters (see nos. 7–12; the fifth, sixth, and seventh letters have not been preserved). Spataro was in his element here; he liked nothing better than to be engaged in musical problems. Aaron seems to have responded agreeably, promising he would reply at the end of the series. Later on we learn that he did not, nor did he react to Spataro's 200-page critique of the manuscript of his treatise on the modes in polyphonic music. Unfortunately, this critique has disappeared, as have all but one of Spataro's unpublished treatises. Following this episode, Spataro and Aaron were not on writing terms; no letters between the two are extant between May 1524 and January 1531, although we

⁷ On this matter, see Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his Epistole'.

⁸ Jeppesen's inventory lists 112 letters, whereas the present edn. has only 110. The discrepancy has arisen for several reasons. Two letters listed by Jeppesen (J27 and J48) are actually two halves of one letter and have been reunited (no. 3). Jeppesen gave separate numbers to enclosures; we have used only one number. Finally, although Jeppesen included in his inventory the concordances in the Paris manuscript, he did not add the unique letters found only in that source (they are discussed on pp. 9–11 of his article).

⁹ On the history of Padre Martini's copies, now housed in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna, MSS 106 and 107. 2, see Ch. 2.

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know that letters were exchanged in 1527 and that correspondence was resumed at least by November 1530.

During the course of his critical review of Aaron's *Toscanello*, Spataro was inspired to take up work on his own treatises, abandoned some years earlier. When Del Lago offered to arrange to have them published in Venice, Spataro accepted with alacrity. But Del Lago, once he had all the treatises in hand, began to query Spataro's definitions and his examples, and Spataro, responding with growing impatience, finally erupted in a paroxysm of invective, accusing Del Lago of dragging out the affair with his puerile doubts and attempting to learn under the veil of 'disputation'. The treatises were withdrawn, with ill feeling on both sides (see no. 29). Subsequently, Pietro Aaron undertook to publish Spataro's treatises. The complicated history of these treatises is traced in Ch. 3.

Del Lago, too, late in life, had to undergo the same experience. In 1540 he sent Pietro Aaron a copy of his newly published *Breve introduttione di musica misurata.* Aaron tore apart the 'little rules', blasting Del Lago for publishing first, then asking for a critique, and his lengthy reply (no. 66) closes their extant correspondence. Anticipating this reaction, in the same letter Aaron related his unhappy experience when he reviewed Giovanni Maria Lanfranco's *Scintille di musica* in 1533, but, Aaron underlined, Lanfranco eventually swallowed his pride and gratefully acknowledged the critique. If these letters are any indication, the polemical writings of sixteenth-century music theorists that have been printed are only the plume of the volcano; criticizing fellow theorists seems to have been not only a professional obligation but a creative pastime.

While many of the subjects discussed in the Correspondence are covered in treatises of the time, we must not expect to find here any comprehensive view of music, or any systematic exposition of music theory. These letters, as Spataro remarked of his own *epistole*, proceed in the order in which the writer was provoked, and the subjects are not treated in a pedagogical sequence (no. 22, para. 2). The emphasis is on problematic aspects of theory, as Del Lago indicates on his title-page. Thus we do not find here the elements of musical practice often subsumed under the title *musica plana*, the essence of medieval theory: the hexachord system and the Guidonian hand, mutation, an explanation of intervals, and an exposition of the eight modes.¹⁰ What we do find is discussion of certain problems that arose when music started to outgrow the confines of medieval theory. Indeed, one of the most interesting aspects of the Correspondence is the sharp clash between old and new. It is not so much the gap between theory and practice as the conflict between old and new theoretical ideas. Theorists who rail against the 'moderni' are usually those of the older generation; their venerated teachers are the ones who are being mocked by the upstarts. A curious reversal is illustrated in the Correspondence: Spataro, then in his seventies, is far more attuned to modern times and novel ideas than are Pietro Aaron and especially Giovanni del Lago, who must be about twenty years younger. Spataro was critical of Aaron's faulty explanation of the *coniuncta*, using only flats. This theory, which is discussed in letters 15, 17, 30-1, 34, 57, and 71, was devised to rationalize remote flats and sharps by creating a place for them within the confines of the hexachord system. Once five sharps and five flats had been gathered into the fold, all six Guidonian syllables could be found on each note, and mutation became very complicated. With Spataro's considerable help, Aaron produced a treatise on this subject in 1531 (see no. 34).

With the introduction of such notes as Fb and Cb, E# and B#, the Pythagorean system was stretched beyond its practical limits. The question arose whether these notes could also be accommodated in the hexachord system by extending the theory of the coniuncta. Again, it is Spataro who leads the way; he can grasp the theoretical and practical feasibility of these notes; Del Lago at first is unable to place them correctly according to Pythagorean intonation, then, when edified by Spataro, protests that they are useless. The extended correspondence on this matter (nos. 53-60) was initiated by Del Lago and eventually drew in Pietro Aaron. Spataro had long since taken Del Lago's measure in this area. It required several letters and finally a music example until Del Lago was able to grasp the chromatic and enharmonic resolution of Spataro's motet for Leo X (nos. 15-17, 19). Del Lago is anchored in the past; Spataro has a vision of the future. In one letter he remarks: 'Music being a liberal art, it is unbounded; what musicians and composers know today is only the surface of what one can know' (no. 39, para. 2).

Of course, Spataro's teacher had inculcated in his pupil an inquiring, sceptical approach to theoretical verities. Spataro never forgot Bartolomeo Ramis, and he speaks reverently of 'mio preceptore' in many letters. He even transmits ideas of Ramis that are not in his one published treatise, the *Musica practica* of 1482.¹¹ Del Lago's musical upbringing must have been quite different. He mentions his teacher, the frottolist Giovanni Battista Zesso, in one letter, only to contradict him in a matter of notation (no. 83, para. 3). Del Lago considered himself an authority on the mensural system, and many of his letters concern problems of notation. By far the greater number of letters in the Correspondence has to do with

¹¹ These passages are assembled in the entry on Ramis in the Biographical Dictionary.

¹⁰ The modal system is treated 'sotto brevità' at the beginning of no. 93. This letter, in common with a number of Del Lago's other letters, has a more systematic orientation, in line with his intention to publish his letters.

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mensuration and notation, a subject that had largely become moot in the sixteenth century; all the examples discussed come from the previous century. One problem, however, is of fundamental importance: the question whether breves are equal under C and O. A guide to this aspect of the Correspondence is offered in Ch. 8. It is obvious that Del Lago felt more at home with the nuts and bolts of the rhythmic edifice than he did with the more speculative melodic substance. Del Lago was not an original thinker. He felt most comfortable when he could bolster his opinions with the statements of other theorists, and preferably the most venerable. His prime witness, in matters notational, was the fourteenthcentury writer Johannes de Muris. Spataro had no patience with this pedantry, and he complained bitterly to Pietro Aaron about Del Lago and his 'grosse antiquitati', his beloved antique theorists.

Del Lago's habit of quoting authorities, often by name, is illuminating because it shows how widely he read and what was available to him in Venice in the 1530s and 1540s. His interests ranged from Greek theory—a late development in his career—to Spataro's own writings, some of which are now lost. In between he quoted many theorists by name, but he also quoted without acknowledgement, a practice far commoner at this time. Most of the treatises he refers to he entitles simply 'Musica'. In every case it has been possible to identify these treatises and in some instances to show which manuscript he used. The catalogue of his reading is impressive. But even this list does not exhaust the authorities he had at his beck and call, for it has been possible to identify several theoretical manuscripts of the fifteenth century that belonged to him, by authors that he does not cite. Ch. 7, 'Giovanni del Lago's "Authorities"'', summarizes what the Correspondence reveals about one theorist's attitude towards tradition.

One topic that interested Del Lago in particular, but also Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, was the explanation of obscure canons. Spataro delighted in composing music that took sharp wits to decipher. In the very first letter in the Correspondence, he explains to Cavazzoni how to interpret the canonic directions in his motet 'Ubi opus est facto'. This was a complicated affair, in which the clefs were replaced by the names of planets, the tenor was sung in the three melodic genera, and the bass reversed note-values and melodic intervals. This piece, which unfortunately is lost, is discussed in four other letters in the Correspondence. It is not quite the *cause célèbre* that Willaert's chromatic duo was—for which the Spataro Correspondence is our main source of information—but it occasioned considerable interest as an early example of ancient music revived in modern practice, 'l'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica'. This and Spataro's other works are discussed in Ch. 3. The interpretation of difficult canonic directions tests the mettle of a musician. Giovanni Maria Lanfranco unwittingly got into trouble with Willaert over a canonic piece by Spataro. His profuse apology is the subject of no. 106. Del Lago once took revenge on Spataro and his irritating 'musici bolognesi' by sending two tenor parts of compositions nearly one hundred years old, both of which carry enigmatic inscriptions on how to perform the music, and asking for a resolution, saying, with tongue in cheek, 'it will be no trouble for them, much less for you, being the foremost in the art and science of music in our time' (no. 57, para. 6). Spataro was outraged at Del Lago's 'malice and cunning' for, he complained, 'it is unheard-of and unaccustomed among musicians to ask for the resolution of a tenor or another single part of a composition without sending all the parts'; no canon is so clear that the resolution is certain without examining the counterpoint (no. 60, para. 22).

The theorists in our Correspondence seem to have had very little interest in speculative music. Whenever they venture into this region, it is always with a practical aim.¹² The planets, the enharmonic and chromatic tetrachords, the proportional system are made to serve the cause of polyphonic music. No matter how theoretical the discussion, music is always in the forefront. Over one hundred compositions are mentioned in the letters. References to these works are gathered in Table 4 on pp. xxxviii-xliv. One of the notable contributions of the Correspondence is the wealth of information it provides about lost works. In one case it has allowed the recovery of a famous work by Tinctoris.¹³ In another, it has permitted us to identify an anonymous motet in the Aosta codex as a work by Johannes de Sarto (see the Commentary on no. 57). Dufay scholars have already used one of Spataro's letters to identify a mass and attribute several mass propers to Dufay (see no. 48). Both Del Lago and Spataro seem to have had access to fifteenth-century music manuscripts that are no longer extant, sources that included isorhythmic motets by Johannes Brassart and a certain 'Johannes Bononiensis' and a Credo by Binchois. Among the lost works mentioned are the 'Missa L'homme armé' by Gafurio, a 'rota' (perhaps a puzzle canon) by Hothby, a madrigal composed in honour of Aaron by Gasparo Alberti, a 'Missa Je ne fays' by Isaac, Tinctoris's 'Missa Elas', Tromboncino's 'Se la mia morte brami', and twenty-five madrigals by Julio Muradori, a singer at San Petronio in Bologna, that were sent to Willaert for criticism. Two complete composi-

 $^{^{-12}}$ Spataro did have a speculative streak, however, which found its outlet in his critique of Gafurio's *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*. He also considered his treatise on *sesquialtera* to be 'very learned and founded in mathematics' (see no. 30, para. 11). But little of this area comes under discussion in the Correspondence.

¹³ See Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings Recovered', *Early Music History* 1 (1981), 29–116.

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tions are preserved in the Correspondence, a motet by Spataro and a canonic motet with a humanistic text by Lanfranco.

All the theorists who participated in the Correspondence were composers, to a greater or lesser extent. We know that Spataro was a fairly prolific composer because he copied many of his own works into his choir-books at San Petronio-just how many is difficult to tell, since he did not add his name. Five have been identified through the references in his letters. Many more compositions of Spataro have not been preserved, especially the masses, which largely seem to have been works of his youth. Del Lago, as we know from Aaron's Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni, composed a motet 'Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi', a work with a programmatic title. The tenor is the subject of several letters in the Correspondence, and the whole part is preserved in no. 86. Not surprisingly, it is an exercise in alteration and imperfection, and it tripped up the over-confident Lorenzo Gazio. Most unexpected is the light the Correspondence sheds on Aaron as a composer. Hitherto he was known only as the composer of one frottola, published by Petrucci in 1505. In the years 1531 to 1533 Spataro and Aaron engaged in a highly interesting correspondence on compositional practice, illustrated in their own compositions, which they sent each other for criticism. At least eleven compositions by Aaron were sent to Spataro. These criticisms, which throw important light on contemporary ideas of counterpoint and harmony, are discussed in Ch. 5, 'The Art of Composition'.

In one of his letters to Aaron, Spataro excuses the errors in his works by saying that he copied them from his cartella without having them performed first. Here the Correspondence sheds light on a vexed question: how was it possible to compose complex polyphonic music before the invention of the score? A cartella is an erasable tablet, probably with music staves, used for composition. It is mentioned in ten letters. These references prove that composers of the earlier sixteenth century did indeed use scores for composing (although exactly how still remains to be determined). The new method of aligning voices-not necessarily with bar-lines-facilitated the new style of musical composition that was to become dominant in the sixteenth century. The *cartella* is considered at further length in Ch. 5.

Two subjects that have engaged musicologists in recent years are barely touched on in the Correspondence: modal theory in polyphonic music and word-note relations. Only five letters mention modes, and of these only two have remarks that are related to polyphonic music.¹⁴ Del Lago criticized Pietro de Justinis because he placed a flat in the signature of his Magnificat in the first mode, backing up this opinion with a quotation from Ugolino of Orvieto's Declaratio musicae disciplinae (no. 88, para. 7). The composition is lost, and Del Lago did not discuss any passages where the flat caused modal difficulties; he seems to have made the judgement solely on the basis of theory.¹⁵ The only acute observation on modes in polyphonic music in the Correspondence was made, not surprisingly, by Giovanni Spataro. In one of his review letters on the Toscanello, he criticized Aaron for allowing the composer, 'without observing the species of the mode in which the composition is set, free reign to do as he pleases and wishes, as long as he observes the rules of consonance' (no. 11, para. 8). This, Spataro, remarks, is not allowed in any theory of art. He goes on to say that there are many ways to compose, and one should always choose the best.

In one area of theoretical thought Del Lago is abreast of current developments, Spataro behind the times. The aspect of humanism that was to have such a profound effect on composers, the relationship between music and text, held no interest for Spataro. When Aaron criticized him for allowing incorrect word-accents in a motet, Spataro was astonished. He defended himself vigorously, saying that few musicians observe grammatical accents; moreover, the plainchant that he had used did not correlate long notes with long vowels (no. 36, para. 3).16 If grammar was of little interest to Spataro, it was of great importance to Giovanni del Lago, but only in one very late letter, a letter so different from his usual style that one would be hard put to say that it came from his pen, had he not signed it (no. 93). In fact, much of it is borrowed from other writers. This is not surprising, in view of Del Lago's general procedure, but here he seems to have discovered a new set of authorities: humanists and humanistically inspired musicians such as Gafurio. This letter, of which a large part also appears in Del Lago's treatise of 1540, has been considered in depth by Don Harrán, who calls it 'noteworthy for its emphasis on the relationship between music and language'.¹⁷ Del Lago lived in Venice, a centre of humanism, and the subjects treated in this

 $^{^{14}}$ The others are no. 73, in which Del Lago explains how to determine the mode of a chant with a range of only a fifth (para. 8), no. 93, in which he gives a brief résumé of modal theory for the benefit of Fra Seraphin, and no. 92, Fra Seraphin's letter of thanks. In no. 93 one also finds

the remark that the mode should be chosen according to the affects one wishes to portray. This was almost a theoretical commonplace at the time, yet there is little evidence that composers were guided by this principle before mid-century, and even after that point the extent of its application is problematic.

¹⁵ Spataro may be referring to a similar example when he remarks that Aaron's 'Letatus sum' would be 'more comfortable and more regular' without a flat in the signature (no. 35, para. 5). ¹⁶ The passage is discussed in Ch. 5.

¹⁷ 'The Theorist Giovanni del Lago: A New View of the Man and his Writings', Musica disciplina 27 (1973), 107-51 at 113. Del Lago's advice to composers is summarized in Ch. 5. On the relationship of the letter to the treatise and a conjecture on the dating, see Ch. 6.

Introduction

letter may very well stem from his participation in learned conversations of Venetian humanists, one of whom he claimed as patron.

The discussion of music, in all its aspects, is the bond that links all the writers of this Correspondence. Through over-zealous criticism that bond was sometimes broken, yet the power of music was such that it eventually overcame wounded sensibilities. When Pietro Aaron undertook to reconcile Giovanni Spataro with Giovanni del Lago in 1532, Spataro assured him that 'it is no trouble or bother at all when I involve myself in those things that gratify you, and especially in those important matters that pertain to our delectable harmonic science, and to me this appears justifiable for many reasons: first to learn, second to teach, and third to correct my faults, if I have erred in any way in my works' (no. 41, para. 2).

² History of the Manuscripts

It is one of the ironies of music history that the Spataro Correspondence has survived not through the industry of Spataro himself but that of his fellow correspondent and frequent adversary, the Venetian theorist Giovanni del Lago. For years Spataro nurtured the hope of publishing his *epistole*; he kept drafts of all his letters, asking for the return of those of his originals that were too long to copy. And yet not a single one of the letters in the Spataro Correspondence comes from Spataro's literary estate, of which no trace remains today except for his copy of his teacher Bartolomeo Ramis's treatise in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna. Instead, what survives is his thirty-three letters to Pietro Aaron, eighteen letters to Giovanni del Lago, and two letters to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, for the most part autographs.

No written record exists of how the Correspondence originally came together or how it was dispersed in later years. Our knowledge is entirely derived from an examination of the two main repositories of the letters, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5318, and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fonds it. 1110. Some gaps in the chronology can be filled only through conjecture, but the main line of transmission is clear.

BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATICANA, MS VAT. LAT. 5318

In its present state, Vat. lat. 5318 reflects, apart from minor changes in the order of some of the letters, the composition of the manuscript when it reached the Vatican Library in the early seventeenth century. Physically, three main divisions can be ascertained: a collection of letters by the Venetian music theorist Giovanni del Lago, mainly copied by a scribe $(J_{1-2}6)$,¹ a series of autograph letters largely written to Del Lago (J_{27-72}) , and another series of autograph letters, mostly from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron (J_{73-106}) . Of the miscellaneous letters that fall outside these three categories (J_{107-12}) , two originally belonged to Section II (J_{110-11}) , one to Section III (J_{112}) . The remaining letters, J_{107-9} , probably also formed part of Section III, since they are all

¹ When referring to the letters in the order in which they appear in the manuscript, we use the numbering Knud Jeppesen gave them in his inventory in 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', prefacing it with the letter J. Our own numbering reflects a chronological order within each group of correspondents. A collation between Jeppesen's numbering and our own may be found in Table 2. connected with Aaron. An inventory of the contents of Vat. lat. 5318 is given in Table 2 on pp. xxii–xxxiii.

The main body of Section I was copied for Del Lago by Scribe A $(J_{3}-18)$, as we shall call him. He transcribed Del Lago's *epistole* consecutively on to eleven gatherings and part of a twelfth of four bifolia each. The gatherings are numbered in the bottom right corner, beginning with fascicle 2 on fo. 11^r and ending with fascicle 13 on fo. 99^r. Fascicle 1, however, is in Del Lago's hand (see Pl. 1). It may have been added after Scribe A finished his work, since it carries the latest date of any of the letters in this section, 26 August 1541. J19, also copied by Del Lago, likewise carries a late date, 3 June 1538. It would thus seem that Scribe A completed his work before June 1538. These letters are prefaced by a dedication to the Venetian patrician Girolamo Molino, and it is clear that Del Lago intended them to be published; Section I of the Correspondence is the copy he intended to submit to the printer. This project is discussed in Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his *Epistole*'.

The remaining letters in the first section consist of Del Lago's working materials and supplementary letters to the portion of his correspondence copied by Scribe A. I20, copied by Scribe B, is a revised copy of I26, which is in Del Lago's hand (see no. 69). One other letter exists in a double copy, J12 in Scribe A's hand and J23 in Del Lago's hand. In this instance Del Lago substituted a more elegant and informative version (see no. 78B) for that copied by Scribe A (no. 78A); J12 is struck out. The lengthy set of definitions (J24), written for Girolamo Molino, dedicatee of the planned publication, was copied by Scribe A (see Pl. 2). There is no signature on the gathering, but it might originally have been copied as fascicle 1 of the manuscript; it would follow logically after the dedication of the whole collection of letters to Molino. Moreover, it bears the same watermark as fascicles 2-5. J25, from Spataro to Aaron, would seem to belong to Section III of the manuscript, but it is not autograph. It is, in fact, a copy that Del Lago had made for himself, for which he had Spataro's explicit permission (see no. 60, end). The handwriting of Scribe C (see Pl. 3) is identical with that of a manuscript that must have been in Del Lago's possession, discussed in Ch. 7.

The second main section of Vat. lat. 5318, comprising letters J27-72, consists mainly of letters written to Del Lago, some of which occasioned the replies that he intended to publish. This part of the Correspondence, like Section I, must stem directly from Del Lago (the two letters from Del Lago to Aaron, J61 and J63, are not the original letters but autograph copies). This section includes several autograph letters by Pietro Aaron (see Pl. 4). Puzzling is the presence of a letter, with music, from Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Adrian Willaert (J70-2; no. 106). Could Willaert, a

Al Ro For scraphin di Lordone de ser Salar phe poor to rivight to quale upon promotion mi In fatto quamialla mostiquesia del modi, como . Dies forthe boremin & i questi mel cale for out of primo, Seculo, Tone, annoso, amonto sillo, settimo et atoma . De quali quatro faro automico, et guarro plaga (uno ruo- 4.) mumi numerici funo quelli, codo primo, Terto devisite it service et sale por fo dismonstance Ante sice, pies fupor al for fime regelammeter popono afera dire atto more st alcumanuter disci noce, et de landere una. Ma i have plagale for pack and secudo, quarto, setto, it. utano. plaque fe dimanda no use defute dat for fine negolarmet poferme deficadore dantro, oner conductaves, et alcroburgo disigner, uner fer al pin.] predetti momi finiferna act compagente a dave, a dave court for at second fimilia Sec. no mo fol no Ter) o co parso, no chami. Juin inter present et sello, on E fame. Suttime ut attand, me gfol me set. it tale fime forme dette regulare. Ma il forme se Qualifumo fil fimi Jelli warm regulare del prime et del secolo prume forme in mereyalari! glit ment. dit ver a det guarte in & he mine and de quisses at del fetto en to fe to moi . del fertimore Some some del unano in cfol faint . It queto medenna il fa gow Set & remode, one make Joo advantation of the second et quepi on li morri formo detti morgotari. 10 warma in lever on alors low is not for proprio or deres m conten Hote MA ciofanno quemo mixe in quebet loco many whi punice property in above house pransa de forma

Pl. 1. Giovanni del Lago to Fra Seraphin, 26 Aug. 1541 (no. 93). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 2^r (autograph)

Soyins denne bounding fit in and the the formen from the and of the grant ally Somaine Denne virgles frichiste de sta septer de venezie Saturfunan de mais no circlaino no male vin atito prime bance prime fre honor to Br formallie . Guora à un calme de una nores or de una mertifican méctione . D'hiberge Somfoni i quelle a domendano : liquestimo bano defrer - fo To the ogudanier compe calons of annie to deler 200 dille originit i Defformation on dimendance quelle repeate queli mfume to ani offi meditioni propulfonniti of forma to acuter , ma quelli i quelo quanting no fines conform : ais pros officedone loin i on ali formular marking mangathe the philange if diftern fichimmon cofi momente some to commented : no dimono differi noi chimmon quilli promigto los ligh ----- "in formandum romachif . . Journale aquello sil quelo foro ter for de armen or genuin differeni of conname h i Joursually magness to increade i goalle to say talwo mornally denda of quality and Mentafine gover pour

Pl. 2. Giovanni del Lago, definitions of music written for Girolamo Molino (no. 96). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 110^r (Scribe A, with corrections in Del Lago's hand)

Venerabile, & Bado & Alli stufici Louis el mu bon Frate tion er? Sina alle di 25 fortent pressume paffare del tate Commune Lonio X4 Bor Zannetto Sebbi una sus in reponsion de uno questio à sur Eccollenne forte dalle noi Mufici bolognesi , Dalli quali , forondo el mio porere, e pino Amplamete vifasto, en à sur bans data la cura de sociare rale resperient La cual Cost dame i Ante molto rerespera, no canto por ifor mai di sposte a duante, porter, scando el scrineres de fa el predito prefa nore, el pares, & his ballin suffers, & Jasia foto quello, el male hi mons coste litigio. por el quales formado el mio povero luj domeria alo fourfris ou rengratiarme, of non delerge Porebein treministionions vor the perfisher. A chiam former forre aninger. Me ports to man. lero, & truta quosta fairda à mia pel soriueros et etien porobe a. Anofre . To la Frantin pertraitan à molto sottile, & dotta , & da to ser de fran The Firman , felo (ve Direi clour mal disposto al friener Colo gor fugir farirbe, & ambora, acois to be . Cout , mo The el mulo jung : fores trico the verier , suns girdiour le loro roop The of it accients in court le dimostre al plinte pro Rannon out quarite to barn kinned alfus pinner, babbiet una I remandar melle & Belopal : Come anobora altre volti ba facto v. trait i Deristo " to fond to be altred Confideration thugles the sud crott. & me accuse 10 Ge de mosto, anto posso, in projo. E mido, & wolonhing il formate. + pover du mayport forportatio fono da .v. Grett liberamite formito. Frate pietro mis bon el mo prodicio pre Rander por una fue the is the for sugnate me suifa bower voresuite una mia in reference by une suo Dulie à me Domandate. & Dire, & à take fue quifite fol the my gofter firm to it Johio mis , I make for parlage me & from milife, et Strano . Loves Jo mido bauer remariet. Sarisfacto al jus question : que la male anoborne et all'horne Is andaste sure a lour suferro. De Dubionerione, borne comprendo, et tal suo enestio nome da male Intersteener, Harfe Stranfort. Ma sognitande (ou) in 15 per por tes & in nome delli norri Mufri belogne/i jo bi dafino vinequefin

Pl. 3. Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 Oct. 1533 (no. 60). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 116^r (copy in hand of Scribe C)

183 200 2 112 + Stor generation querano franche consistino of Coloris che non perfor alfine / 10, paggio de una befico : Sappian de idio amo handan meglio che non mores posit. algorifine no second on maglione cheed er aniono che moi fabi ini io no un persone Innio magnationo, er dabene, quero fi pole uno in maginace er uno est nemerico fo grandiforma consta dime in Sono da nessa questa sono honorais que jono molti degri prismini inager faculta es massimamente in massia sa ha coloste ella cuesta del mis parione, modios modicine to idio maguarde il barbicer janoso mine comera beliferne, er renno mondo erneno er il mio puno Erniferne To verni duran lar da poreumi uchice de una mansionema ppena de una scuola del corpo di cheisto ana no fifogne drie le lasse la un fogne humo se elfatto fue in no ho notice at altre coliempo fi rida line io Dinna for for o gra maister no be feniro di fario er dubisando y lo advorage diqualito mas jorman me ho preseduro nos japor bons Allo che in Frineria alo jenie herrieno i fe me fussi ucomo ana malabia forea andato rumingo gli conquanta sucari di mulascio mon jupor so lacroce di legiaro sapare I no gli a faro mas mino porreli bances sob solere noi she io pla vin iliempo Je por Harro laccore Tyero de lifero por a anle alcano alpresente inporto imano de argente con unlater er ripofo verpenso della una mie, onde amen confelanone, elgiorno del beanfeimo Gregorio Sapor mon chresper come prague adis solfi trabém dala Ret gione de crefactures, da molio popolo honoraio or afficiente done nome volumente mente pa amose quale ame possino quelli fignori mufice, er canvori de Golfato ma afres decappelles que con mensione convort a honoraron, or que fu carshars un nelpes adue chon daloro a malmi pelan moleo spregramere , to un maynifiar adaes cho te v ruse le anniphone in conservato / cofa Co mais hassa cueduro stanio bene E forebbe ballons in principe , dapai una por cecaror 105 quanda fa ueftiro , con tania molundine, cho no piposena face inchiefa, n' ena ille alenze, da poi are no fu muitare nome, or finite lectimonie, fa do paparo sal 21do mon fignos me parrone in so to mit dicarrora , er parre des popolo done cue apparachiaro una belliferina colisione, abundante de mar apara er confetti da poi in cansato un mondrede a 6 soci del que no papeno manir mlande ma sib frest amprino is to cleve quelo parise, 'se anoi e apé atros us pares cofe no be form sa fino lissi, so micomeno ser certo effere quel piero Lazon cosi some alecimenti

228 Gr Rede ver deli Mulice excetter el mus hong frate petro saluige Ali di 13 del plente be rereputo una Then exception de . 2. monotorif sugrasa : plaquale be mitile una corretter banene veregois : la letters mus facto avera le returnete: et molto me ans relegiate & huere mitele de An refrato Publicito: or for the min to more this Bato a parlameto rool Be pro contro ; cirra of quelo at " the no po dian projecto de refer of it remain de la line much nature : 440 meter torne colidomi a quelle up prove barror facto ni quello uno letafus fu: lequale formo dame aromodare in li lorsi in moust nome frue un comptin he more comptet come I demofratice no the merute me tome suporto ala partitator de li braction receputi da la menora : laquale y bornere uno le aftatermo banco to demotioned quatro , cover we must not preserve and ; were exception to librah me adulta de emperior ing chaman mori munt en quello mo cato une prodestima chi mato : de laqual cravi, ustras demetrare to ratione walite : de rati da uni chramato mer corror no fem corner no infraria una equipela na tra quelle uno roderete tractare : pranto & une house us refor al Anne tarto i et queto i et difemere iel core i et lanuna une in pare : et corcut de l'apore more der putto , ciar una pfress : or una unificia (mo ulterto; lono unio) a tostondo luma dapo latin : do la que le refe porters bourse store monten se guandarets re quelle mue tractate de rontera queto a una fa asther make : et seir me fuffe de la tres 1 forme et rete ine me unate je dura et y garne : et I wonderson man fortamete us apparentia la mora ucorta : pronto de 4 polosti orgue corono la and us recedo cos quello cono mor nel tenore re el rom alvo fore la presta genitas : ut bie to to a Dea flast nel quale trane youcrets la provide minima in classes grane ser 2000 mot The transts fore it men correlle done promotife for Applie : the fur Roya de may me form Stante workende , the watch sore it horse the motivie al mution or faile fatures al arton going mo: la quali unerona che m quatron temponales babiano tempo longo: et bour : pomo entre tale fue Forsk guilton no to the costs or note proportion the no endens motivationite late quella to to mopione i la quelo to Dorn of multo menturadi el luo tempo mor la Aulo: et dialado o ura anestich the Af the brusses on aba Barry is of musico no the attrette Antone is gramatin article (p bai p el mo plano de inte ana plano la me sumpre & subure o utra renere : pose a la fillade fe laque la prosta el egrama tro ba la arroto longo: en a la Aquite Alaba, nor la indina dos nere revenado itrago Separate : et puer la plada li (produces granatiro) a la arren breve et eta bara la producta contade la quela del granatiro : e commenta breve : smallemete fra ettrasera tetras : el tempo multo a fograt a la seguite syllaten la qualeca la arrito brene ser d'into plano li afterna d'arrapo longo prise gli allegra due note lights retabile : or a bultime roos on bis quale , o breve , a aftigrate men store requale it of " la promis coop fi laqualo ut divi balo areiro longo ut he the the the the the certa iche hone in le musefmer de la abri mitala to tante very tit gramata in arche , iti bene to call the net applet to troughour to no pourts haust tomis to the in the la gamation no our neme I feller et momerres de lans perit apelloni, de ve fanne l'arrit gromater i inte me funte ift up door set musers a liters : ma fini protor abguare ni cata glano : no ungliari abora from petro mi host ulars de la ma faculta set no farets pero le l'apreses quardance da li mufiri esteri ide le quada forter many plus quite with onto a moutimante more more mates reproport please is qual pose forwards direty eye a me demotion himer erron & imparate set & mes horsone) al ani were demot re, I was benere ; non no I impount for to me water manut de fair trere ; ma l'i d'if the le creare

Pl. 4. *(left)* Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 13 Mar. 1536 (no. 62). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 183^r (autograph)

Pl. 5. *(above)* Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 27 Nov. 1531 (no. 36). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 228^r (autograph)

History of the Manuscripts

Introduction

7

resident of Venice as was Del Lago, have given it to the latter, knowing of his interest in erudite canons?

The third section of Vat. lat. 5318, with four exceptions, is composed of letters written to Pietro Aaron, most of them by Giovanni Spataro (see Pl. 5). This part of the Correspondence must have belonged originally to Aaron; this would explain the presence of J107–9—two letters (both copies) in Aaron's hand and a letter addressed to Aaron—which otherwise do not fit with the contents of this section, comprised, as it is, mainly of letters from Spataro to Aaron. The letters in Section IV, J110–12, once formed part of Vat. lat. 5318 but were separated from it, probably after 1850, and are now found in the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, East Berlin (J111) and the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, Bologna (J110 and J112). All three bear traces of the old numbering in Vat. lat. 5318 and were present when the Bologna copies of the Correspondence were made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see below).

In view of the nature of the contents, Vat. lat. 5318 is not a unified manuscript. The first part was copied in fascicles containing two similar watermarks. The rest of the manuscript consists of separate letters, mostly autograph. The letters are not in chronological order, and no attempt seems ever to have been made to place them in that order, probably because the folios were numbered before the correspondence attracted scholarly interest. Thus we may assume that the collection of letters reached the Vatican Library in the order indicated by the first numeration. We conjecture that at that time the first section of Vat. lat. 5318, copied mainly by Scribe A, comprised fourteen gatherings of four bifolia each, and that the residue consisted of loose letters, perhaps tied in packets. When the manuscript was restored and bound, each folio was separated and attached to a paste-down (unfortunately, they were glued on the verso side, where the margin is smallest, with occasional loss of words). Holes were repaired by pasting paper over them, and many pages that apparently were in fragile condition were covered with transparent paper, which has now turned brown, making those pages difficult to read.²

The manuscript is bound in vellum. Glued to the spine is a leather plaque with gold-tooled edges bearing the number 'Vat. 5318'. Beneath this is pasted a blue paper sticker with 'Vat. lat. 5318' stamped on it. The pages are of varying lengths. The size of paper in the first section of the manuscript, to fo. 132a, is 32×22 cm, and most of the rest of the paper is close to this size.

As might be expected in a collection of letters of diverse provenance spanning the years 1517 to 1543, there are many different watermarks. Of the twenty-five that we have identified, only one is used with any frequency, and that is the mark found in the fascicles of the first section of the manuscript, a cardinal's hat. In fascicles 2-5 (fos. 11-42) it is accompanied by the monogram FC, in fascicles 6-12 (fos. 43-98) by the monogram CB. Both these marks are listed in Briquet, no. 3480 (dated Reggio Emilia, 1545) and no. 3477 (Padua, 1547; also Graz, 1534; Vicenza, 1551; Padua, 1553; Udine, 1563-5).³ The year given by Briquet for the first mark, 1545, is a bit late for the date of the first section of Vat. lat. 5318, which was copied before Giovanni del Lago was promoted to titular priest of Santa Sofia in 1542, and probably before 1538. Briquet found only one sample of that mark, which adds to the growing evidence of how precarious it is to date paper according to Briquet-or any other bibliographical study; such dates can never be more than approximate. Since nearly all the letters in Vat. lat. 5318 carry dates, investigation of the watermarks is unlikely to yield essential information.⁴ Moreover, the wide range of dates of certain watermarks listed in Briquet precludes pinpointing any date with accuracy. Apart from the cardinal's hat watermark, no other mark matches any in Briquet precisely. The mark on fo. 104 is close to Briquet no. 646, the one on fos. 7 and 8 and 107 and 108 is similar to no. 684, the one on fo. 109 closest to no. 3440. Of marks such as the hunting horn (fos. 140, 141, 143-4, 148, 158), the three-peaked mountain (fos. 134, 155-6, 163, 167, 196, 200, 219), or the encircled anchor (fos. 1, 180, 188 bottom, 231, 234, 238, 245, 251) there are too many variants to enable us to identify any one mark with precision; even those in Vat. lat. 5318 exhibit several varieties of each mark.

We have noted that the letters of Vat. lat. 5318 are not arranged in chronological order and that the manuscript was cut apart and restored after it entered the Vatican Library. The evidence for the original order of the manuscript and the date of restoration may be found in the two numbering systems and in the copies of the manuscript that were made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

There are two sets of numbers in the upper right corner of the rectos of Vat. lat. 5318. The older is fainter and encircled. Blank folios were numbered, but the small slips attached to some letters were not. A second hand gave numbers to the small slips but letters to the blank folios, e.g. 132a. This accounts for part of the discrepancy in the two systems.

² These are: fos. $149'-151^{\circ}$, 161'-162', 178', outside margin of 196', $199'-200^{\circ}$, $205'-206^{\circ}$, $209'^{\circ}$, $211'^{\circ}$, $213'^{\circ}$, $246'-247^{\circ}$, $249'^{\circ}$, $254'^{\circ}$. These folios were already difficult to read in the mid 19th c., to judge from the errors and blank spaces in the transcription of this part of the manuscript in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS 107. 3.

³ C. M. Briquet, Les Filigranes (4 vols., Paris, 1907; repr. Amsterdam, 1968).

 $^{^4}$ However, J27 and J48, two parts of the same letter that we have reunited on the basis of internal evidence (see no. 3), have the same watermark, a three-peaked mountain surmounted by a cross.

Moreover, some numerals belonging to the first set are missing: 116, 125-6, 141.

The first set of numbering is regular up to 161 (= modern fo. 148). The next four folios contain roman numerals: xij, xiij, xiiij, and xv. The second hand has struck these through and substituted 162-5. Subsequently, when it renumbered the whole codex, it changed 162-5 to the modern 149-52. One other folio carries a roman numeral: viij on fo. 200 (= modern fo. 183). The meaning of the roman numerals is not clear. The old numeration resumes on fo. 166 (= modern fo. 153) and is regular up to 183 (= fo. 170). After 183, the sequence of the old numbering is disturbed. The next two folios bore the numbers 191 and 192, but these have been erased and 184 and 185 added by the second hand. The original numeration resumes with 186 and is regular until 190, then skips to 194. Numbers 200-3 are skipped and 205 (a blank folio) is placed after 207. Clearly, the original order of the manuscript has not been preserved after the present fo. 170.

When was the order changed? It must have occurred after Bernardino Sebastiani copied the second section of Vat. lat. 5318 for Padre Martini in 1774,⁵ for the letters of Bol. 107. 2 occur in a different order after the modern fo. 170. According to Sebastiani's copy, one of the detached letters now in Bologna, Museo Civico Bibliografico Musicale (J110), followed at this point in Vat. lat. 5318. Indeed, traces of the old numeration may be found on the two folios; they are almost certainly the original fos. 184 and 185. Bol. 107. 2 shows that the original order of Vat. lat. 5318 in this section was the following (citing Jeppesen's numbering): 50, 110, 53-6, 51-2, 62, 57-61, 111 (now in East Berlin), 63-73. This order is confirmed by the older numeration. The remainder of the manuscript is preserved in the original order, according to the first numeration, except that 267 and 268 are skipped. This is the point (following J101-2) where the copyist of Bol. 107. 3 included the second detached letter now in Bologna, J112. This letter too bears faint traces of an encircled numbering, which must have been the original 267 and 268.

Since J112 still formed part of Vat. lat. 5318 c.1850, when the third part of the manuscript was copied for Gaetano Gaspari (see below), and it does not carry the second numbering, the restoration of Vat. lat. 5318 and the second numbering must date from after 1850. The variation in the order of the letters in the second section of Vat. lat. 5318 seems to have occurred by chance rather than design and is understandable inasmuch as the letters had not yet been bound.

The physical evidence shows that the main part of Vat. lat. 5318 was in

the possession of Giovanni del Lago. The other part originally belonged to Pietro Aaron. How the two parts were united is unknown. Certain evidence, however, suggests that Section III was in Del Lago's hands before 1538 (see Ch. 6). Perhaps Aaron gave Del Lago his correspondence when he left Venice to become a monk in the monastery of San Leonardo near Bergamo in 1536 (see his enthusiastic report of his reception in his letter to Del Lago of 13 March 1536, no. 62). Del Lago replied to this letter three years later, 'better late than never', and the two exchanged several letters in 1539 and 1540.

The present state of the manuscript offers no clues to the fate of the Correspondence after Giovanni del Lago's death in 1544. However, an inquiry into the circumstances of its entrance into the Vatican Library has led to a plausible hypothesis.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF VAT. LAT. 5318

If the 'picciolo dono' that Giovanni del Lago intended to offer to Girolamo Molino, his collection of 'Epistole composte in lingua volgare', had been published as Del Lago intended, Vat. lat. 5318 would probably never have come down to us. Upon publication, the fascicles of the fair copy of Del Lago's letters, more likely than not, would have been tossed into the wastebasket. The loose letters from his correspondents would probably have been lost as well, since Del Lago's letters and the letters to him and Aaron survive, and how did they find their way to the Vatican Library?

From its accession number, 5318 in the series Vaticani Latini, we can deduce that Vat. lat. 5318 was catalogued in the early seventeenth century; MS Vat. lat. 5317, a collection of letters by Orazio Cardaneto, was copied in 1612 by the Vatican scribe Emilio Florio, according to its colophon. The sixth volume of the manuscript inventory of Latin manuscripts, prepared by Alessandro Ranaldi, second custodian of the Library between 1606 and 1645, covers numbers 4889 to 6025; it concentrates on the manuscripts that entered during the reigns of Paul V (1605–21) and Gregory XV (1621–3).⁶ Many of the manuscripts in this series were received earlier but catalogued with delay. Jeanne Bignami Odier has been able to identify the provenance of several groups of manuscripts catalogued in Volume VI of the inventory. Vat. lat. 4916–61, for example,

⁵ This copy is now in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, Bologna, MS 107. 2. On the copies of Vat. lat. 5318 made for Padre Martini, see below.

⁶ Much of the following account is drawn from the valuable study by Jeanne Bignami Odier with José Ruysschaert, *La Bibliothèque Vaticane de Sixte IV à Pie XI: Recherches sur l'histoire des collections de manuscrits* (Studi e Testi 272; Vatican City, 1973); on Ranaldi and his inventory, see PP. 101 and 106 (the sixth volume of the inventory is erroneously labelled 'tome 5' on p. 101).

History of the Manuscripts

came from the library of the Cardinal Librarian Guglielmo Sirleto (d. 1585); they were purchased from the Duke Giovanni d'Altemps c.1612. Vat. lat. 5009–42, works of the Spanish priest Cristóbal Cabrera (c.1515-98), entered the library in 1599. Vat. lat. 5358, a copy of the *Orationes* by the humanist Francesco Maturanzio (d. c.1512), was bequeathed to the library in 1614 by Baldassarre Ansidei, first custodian of the Biblioteca Vaticana. Manuscripts from the library of Aldo Manuzio the Younger (1547-97), received by the Vatican in 1616, were classed at different times; one bears the number 5232, some are found before the Cabrera group, and others after it, up to about the number 5400. Manuscripts carrying numbers above 5400 can be traced to the library of the jurist Francisco Peña (d. 1612), a large donation by Paul V c.1609-10, and a collection transported from Castel Sant'Angelo in 1614 (Vat. lat. 5592–702).⁷

Mme Bignami Odier's book provides no specific information on the provenance of Vat. lat. 5318. Nor does Ranaldi's inventory indicate the previous owners of the manuscripts (his preparatory notes, unfortunately, are lost).⁸ However, it does yield valuable information about the manuscripts following Vat. lat. 5318. MSS 5318–25 are all works on the theory of music (the sole exception being Vat. lat. 5319, the Old Roman Gradual). Do these codices emanate from one single source, or did Ranaldi simply gather up all manuscripts bearing on music and as yet uncatalogued, giving them consecutive numbers? The titles and incipits of the entries in vol. vi of his inventory (fo. 115^r) read as follows:

5318 IOANNIS de Lago, et aliorum Epistolae Italicae continentes dubia et declarationes artis musicae.

E' instinto naturale

Ι.

Ι.

5319 PRECES, Psalmi, et alia Secundum Anni circulum, cum musica sine princ. et fine.⁹

...mino notas fac mi-

5320 IOANNIS Ottobi Carmelitani Anglici artis musicae liber.¹⁰ In prefatione novae

⁷ Ibid., pp. 101-2 and 119-21.

⁸ Pierre Petitmengin, 'Recherches sur l'organisation de la Bibliothèque Vaticane à l'époque des Ranaldi (1547-1645)', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 75 (1963), 561-628 at 612.

⁹ This manuscript has been edited by Bruno Stäblein and Margareta Landwehr-Melnicki, *Die Gesänge des altrömischen Graduale Vat. lat. 1319* (Monumenta monodica medii aevi 2; Kassel, 1970). The incomplete incipit given by Ranaldi reflects the fragmentary state of the manuscript.

¹⁰ Described by Pieter Fischer in *The Theory of Music from the Carolingian Era up to 1400*, ii (Répertoire international des sources musicales, B III²; Munich and Duisburg, 1968), 98. The treatise is actually Johannes Ciconia's *Nova musica*; the erroneous inscription opposite fo. 1, 'Jo. Ottobi Carmelitani, Anglici', has been added by a hand later than that of the manuscript, which is dated 1476 on fos. 78' and 83'. It also contains Franco's *Compendium breve artis musice*.

5321	IOANNIS de Muris practica cantus mer	nsurabilis.	
	-	Quilibet in arte prac-	Ι.
	Aegidij de Murino tractatus cantus m	ensurabilis.	
		Quoniam sicut Deo	5.
	Prosdocimi de Beldemandis Patavini contrapunctus.		
		Scribit Aristoteles	8.
	Eiusdem ars calculatoria, et tabula.		
		Quoniam operanti	19.
	Philippi de Vitriaco ars contrapuncti.		
		Volentibus introduci	22.
	Johannes de Muris ars summaria contrapuncti. ¹¹		
		Quilibet affectans	24.
5322	322 MARCHETTI de Padua Lucidarium artis musicae planae.		
		Cum inquit Caymprę	1.
	Epistola eiusdem ad Rainoldum Domini Zachariae de Urbeveteri.		
		Mag. ^{co} Militi, et poten.	Ι.
	Eiusdem Pomerium artis musicae me	nsurabilis. ¹²	
		Quatuor sunt causae	50.
5323	23 HIERONYMI Maeij florentini de modis musicis antiquorum ad		
	Petrum Victorium Libri quatuor. ¹³	L.	
	1	Quod tibi pergratum	Ι.
5324	4 LIBER declarationis musicae disciplinae incerto Auctore ¹⁴		
))- -	unorphili	Homo dicitur esse liber	т
	MUSICAE artic libellus size pomine A.	atomio ¹⁵	
545	MUSICAE arus ilbenus sille nomine At	Mussice out warnaitor	
		musica est veraciter	Ι.

The youngest among them is the autograph copy of Girolamo Mei's *De* modis musicis antiquorum. As Claude Palisca observes, 'this is the original autograph bequeathed to the Vatican by Mons. Antonio Gualenghi, who acquired it after Mei's death [1594]'.¹⁶ We know this from the inscription

¹¹ Fischer, pp. 98–9. The manuscript also contains Johannes de Muris's *Musica speculativa* (fos. $12^{r}-20^{r}$).

¹² Fischer, p. 100. See also Jan W. Herlinger, *The Lucidarium of Marchetto of Padua: A Critical Edition, Translation, and Commentary* (Chicago and London, 1985), pp. 53–4. The manuscript also contains Marchetto's *Rubricae breves* (fos. 115^{v} - 116^{v}).

¹³ Autograph; see the description in Claude V. Palisca, *Girolamo Mei (1519-1594)*, Letters on Ancient and Modern Music to Vincenzo Galilei and Giovanni Bardi (Musicological Studies and Documents 3; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1960), pp. 37-9.

¹⁴ A partial version (lacking books I and V) of Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*; see the edn. by Albert Seay (3 vols., Corpus scriptorum de musica 7; Rome, American Institute of Musicology, 1959–62), i. 6–7.

¹⁵ A treatise on plainchant and measured music, variously ascribed to Philippe de Vitry, Johannes de Garlandia and others, and a fragment of Johannes de Garlandia. *De musica mensurabili*; described by Fischer, *The Theory of Music*, ii. 100-1, and *Johannes de Garlandia: De mensurabili musica*, ed. Erich Reimer (Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 10-11; 2 vols., Wiesbaden, 1972), i. 18-19.

¹⁶ Girolamo Mei, p. 37 n. 96.
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on the second flyleaf: 'Antonius Quaerengus hunc librum bibliothecę Vaticanę dono dedit'. It would be tempting to speculate that all these manuscripts originally belonged to Girolamo Mei. However, Mei's interests focused exclusively on Greek music; nowhere in his writings do we find an investigation of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century music theory. It seems more likely, then, that Alessandro Ranaldi gathered up and catalogued all music manuscripts on hand, regardless of their provenance.

The suspicion remained, however, that at least some of these manuscripts belonged to one person interested in music theory. Through research in the Vatican Library, that person was discovered to be Aldo Manuzio the Younger, grandson of the famous printer. A professor of rhetoric at Bologna, Pisa, and Rome, he was named corrector of the Vatican printing press on 18 May 1595.¹⁷ Manuzio's large library, inherited in part from his father and grandfather, was transported from Venice to Rome in 1588 or 1589. When he died on 24 October 1597, his library was claimed by the Republic of Venice, but the Apostolic Chamber seized the books in order to pay off Manuzio's outstanding debts, and Clement VIII caused them to be conveyed to the Vatican Library in November 1598, where 343 manuscripts and 1564 prints were selected and added to the Library's collection.¹⁸

The handwritten catalogue of Manuzio's books still exists in the Vatican Library, where it bears the call-number Vat. lat. 7121.¹⁹ The manuscript consists of two separate inventories. The original catalogue, now renumbered fos. $51^{r}-108^{v}$, was drawn up 'Die 18 martij 1560' (fo. 51^{r}). This date can only refer to the manuscript section, because it is patently too early for some of the printed books. Perhaps it was copied from an older inventory of the manuscripts. At the time the books were brought to the Vatican Library, this catalogue served as the basis for the selection made. The original date has been crossed out and replaced by '1600' and another hand has added: 'Indice de libri presi per ordine di Nostro Signore Clemente Papa Ottavo dalla libraria di Aldo Manutio'. The inventory, however, covers Manuzio's whole library; the titles of manuscripts and prints chosen appear on fos. $1^{r}-48^{v}$. In both the original and the fair copy each entry is accompanied by an estimate of the book's value (mostly expressed in baiocchi, 100 to a scudo) in the left margin.

¹⁷ Bignami Odier, La Bibliothèque Vaticane, p. 95 n. 100.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 81 and 95 n. 100.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 95 n. 100. Bignami Odier also refers to two other handwritten catalogues of Manuzio's library: one, fragmentary, in the hand of Marino Ranaldi, the Vatican custodian who made the choice of books and manuscripts, the other in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS J. 100 inf.

According to a note on fo. 63^{v} , the appraisal of the 343 manuscripts and 1564 prints amounted to 550 scudi—surely a gross undervaluation.²⁰

This inventory reveals that Aldo Manuzio the Younger was the owner of Giovanni del Lago's collection of letters and all other books on music between the numbers 5318 and 5325, with the exception of the Old Roman Gradual and the treatise by Girolamo Mei. The following entries, under the heading 'Manoscritti in Foglio', can be identified with these manuscripts:

fo. 1^t, 5th item from bottom and last item:

20 [baiocchi] Epist. varior. [= Vat. lat. 5318]

20 Marchetti de Padua Lucidarium in musica [= Vat. lat. 5322]

fo. 1^v, 3rd and 12th items:

50 Jo. Ottobi Carmelitani musica [= Vat. lat. 5320]

20 Jo. de Muris Musica [= Vat. lat. 5321]

fo. 3^r, 8th item from bottom:

10 Tractatus de musica [= Vat. lat. 5325]

fo. 4^v, 9th item from bottom:

De Musica [sic; entered from previous inventory by mistake]

fo. 5[°], 14th item:

50 Tractatus musicae [= Vat. lat. 5324]

Manuzio also owned three printed works on music theory, listed on fo. 30^r, items 18–20:

5 Jacobi Fabri Musica. Parr. 1551

20 Andreae Papii de consonantijs. Ant. 1581

10 Pietro Aron Lucidario in musica. Ven. 1545

The identity of 'Epist(olae) varior(um)' with the Spataro Correspondence might seem problematic; however, there is no other manuscript of letters listed. The erroneous ascription of Ciconia's *Nova musica* to Hothby in Vat. lat. 5320 goes back to at least 1560, since it is found in the original inventory of manuscripts. The identification of the two anonymous

²⁰ This would make the average price of an item 29 baiocchi, which is considerably less than it would cost to copy a manuscript at the time. For example, the scribe of the chant manuscript Cappella Giulia XV. 32 was paid 6 scudi for copying 28 folios in 1603; see José M. Llorens, *Le opere musicali della Cappella Giulia*, I. *Manoscritti e edizioni fino al '700* (Studi e Testi 265; Vatican City, 1971), p. 39. The same scribe received 15 scudi in 1600 for copying the 58-folio manuscript Cappella Giulia XV. 21 containing nine lamentations by Palestrina. In this case the expense covered paper and binding as well (ibid., p. 88). Printed books cost relatively less: in 1610 Francesco Soriano was paid 3 scudi for two music-books, one a collection of 22 masses from the press of Le Roy and Ballard, the other Victoria's *Officium Hebdomadae Sanctae* (Rome, 1585; ibid., p. xxi).

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treatises as Vat. lat. 5325 and 5324 was made on the basis of size: the first, valued at 10 baiocchi, must correspond to Vat. lat. 5325, which has 30 folios and measures only 91×137 mm. The second, valued at 50 baiocchi, fits Vat. lat. 5324, in quarto size with 72 folios, which is comparable to Vat. lat. 5320 of 85 folios, measuring 285×200 mm and likewise valued at 50 baiocchi. Puzzling in this context is the valuation of the Marchetto manuscript at only 20 baiocchi, for it has 116 folios and measures 283×202 mm. A glance at the spacing of the text provides the answer; the text area measures only 130×86 mm—smaller than the margins.²¹

The inventory of Aldo Manuzio's library raises several questions. Was Manuzio a music lover? Was he interested in music theory? Had he collected the books and manuscripts himself, or were they part of the library he inherited from his father? The answer to the first question would seem to be negative, for in the whole inventory there is not one work of practical music. Had he instead been interested in the theory of music, one would expect to find more than the three printed editions of sixteenth-century treatises, for example, the books of Glareanus and Zarlino. The original inventory of manuscripts, drawn up when Aldo was only thirteen years old, proves that the manuscripts of music theory entered the library during the lifetime of his father Paolo (1512–74), before he moved from Venice to Rome in 1561 to direct the Vatican printing press. Paolo must have had his library (which he did not bring with him to Rome) catalogued before his departure.²²

Paolo Manuzio, who was only three years old when his father died, reactivated the Aldine Press in 1533. Never in the best of health, he welcomed the stability of income that he thought would result from his appointment by Pius IV and looked forward to publishing correct editions of the Church Fathers. With the advent of Pius V, however, his work was redirected to printing decrees of the Council of Trent and liturgical books. Disillusioned with his position, yet uncertain of his prospects elsewhere, he remained in Rome, while continuing to prepare editions and commentaries of works of ancient authors, which were published in Venice by his son, Aldo the Younger.²³ He probably decided not to move his extensive library until he was well settled in the Holy City—which never happened.

²¹ See Herlinger, The Lucidarium of Marchetto of Padua, p. 53.

Paolo came to Rome without his family, expecting his wife to join him later. After many delays caused by ill health and a reluctance to leave Venice, Caterina arrived in October 1563. But finding Roman air not to her liking, she returned to Venice in 1567, and, despite repeated entreaties, never rejoined her husband.²⁴ In September and October 1571 Paolo wrote to her and his son, requesting that some of his books and winter clothing be sent to him.²⁵ Aldo did nothing. A year later Paolo renewed the request, with follow-up letters in October and November. Aldo delayed. Becoming suspicious, Paolo asked for an inventory of his goods in Venice. Finally, in January 1573, exasperated by Aldo's procrastination, Paolo threatened to have the Pope write to his legate in Venice 'to lodge a complaint in the College so that my works, my books, my clothing, and whatever else I am asking for be sent to me immediately. . . . We shall see if you or I will be the master, especially of things I acquired with so much effort.'26 To no avail: February, March, and June brought further letters. Nothing was sent. On September 19 Paolo addressed a bitter missive to his son: 'As to my books that have not yet been sent, I am not at all surprised, and I fear that in the end I shall be forced to come to Venice for two months to get my own things myself. ... I've written a thousand times about that inventory to know what is on any view of the matter my business; I've never been able to get it, and I know that if I don't come I'll never have it.'27 With unwonted promptness, the particular books requested arrived on 17 October, and Paolo asked for more, remarking: 'And it's a shame that I am regarded as the prince of the humanists and haven't got a Virgil, a Horace, a Sallust, a Livy. ... And so I remain like an ignoramus, and you, who never study, have your rooms full of my labours and vigils.²⁸ Obviously, the threat to return to Venice was effective; Paolo undoubtedly began to harbour suspicions on the state of his library. But why did he wait until 1571 to ask for his books—and then

²⁴ Pastorello, L'epistolario manuziano, pp. 302-3.

²⁵ See the Lettere di Paolo Manuzio copiate sugli autografi esistenti nella Biblioteca Ambrosiana, [ed. A.-A. Renouard] (Paris, 1834), p. 213.

²⁶ 'che ne faccia querela in Collegio, acciò che le mie opere, i miei libri, le vesti, et altro ch'io dimando, mi sia mandato subitamente. . . . Vederemo, se tu, o io sarà il padrone, massime di cose acquistate da me con tante fatiche'; ibid., p. 271.

²⁷ 'Quanto a miei libri non ancor mandati, non me ne meraviglio punto, e dubito che alla fine sarò sforzato venir a Venezia per due mesi, per pigliar io medesimo le cose mie.... Scrissi mille volte di quell'Inventario, per saper il fatto mio in ogni caso: non ho mai potuto haverlo; e so che, non venendo io, non l'haverò mai'; ibid., p. 296. Aldo was an avid book-collector himself, and Paolo wanted to be sure that his own books would be kept separate. In a letter of 15 Jan. 1569 Paolo had chided Aldo for spending so much on books after his return from Rome, without regard to the family's tenuous circumstances (ibid., p. 145).

²⁸ 'E anche una vergogna, ch'io sia tenuto principe de gli humanisti, e che non habbia un Virgilio, un'Horatio, un Salustio, un Livio.... Si che me ne sto come un'ignorante: e tu, che non studij mai, hai le camere piene con le fatiche, e vigilie mie'; ibid., p. 301.

²² The first indication of the invitation from Pius IV is found in Paolo's letter to Ottaviano Maggi of 17 Feb. 1559 (= 1560 modern style); see Lettere volgari di M. Paolo Manutio, divise in quattro libri (Venice, 1560), fos. 154'-155'.

²³ See Francesco Barberi, 'Manuzio, Famiglia', in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, vii (Vatican City, 1951), cols. 1995–6, and, for biographical information drawn from his correspondence, Ester Pastorello, *L'epistolario manuziano: Inventario cronologico-analitico 1483–1597* (Biblioteca di bibliografia italiana 30; Florence, 1957), pp. 294–301.

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only for some of them? He may not have had the space in Rome to keep them all. But more likely, he regarded the expense of moving them as prohibitive, for the financial security he expected from his new position was never realized.

When Paolo died in Rome in April 1574, he had been separated from the major part of his library for thirteen years. The inventory of his manuscripts reflects his inheritance from his father and the acquisitions he made before 1560. Thus he obtained the letters of the Vatican manuscript in Venice, either upon Del Lago's death in 1544 or from whoever inherited Del Lago's literary estate. Evidence that the other manuscripts of music theory entered Paolo Manuzio's library in the same manner and at the same time will be presented in Ch. 7.

Paolo Manuzio may have known Del Lago personally, although there is no hint of this in his extant correspondence, nor of relations with any other musicians or theorists. Manuzio, however, certainly knew Del Lago's patron, the patrician Girolamo Molino, for the two were members of the Accademia Veneziana, also known as the Accademia della Fama.²⁹ In his letter to Bernardo Tasso of 22 January 1558 announcing the founding of the Academy, Molino invites the poet to submit his epic poem *Amadigi* to the 'Signori Accademici, who are for the most part my friends', who will sponsor the printing of 'your honoured labours' by 'the excellent Paolo Manuzio, whom I mention in particular because you should know that he will oversee their printing'.³⁰ It is possible, therefore, that the link between Giovanni del Lago and Paolo Manuzio was Girolamo Molino.

For a century and a half, Giovanni del Lago's collection of letters reposed quietly on the Vatican Library's shelves, seemingly unnoticed, until the great Bolognese antiquarian Padre Giovanni Battista Martini saw them on a visit to Rome in 1747. Thus begins a new chapter in the saga of the Correspondence.

THE BOLOGNA AND VIENNA COPIES OF VAT. LAT. 5318

In September of 1748 Padre Martini's wide-ranging interests in the history of music led him to ask Girolamo Chiti, maestro di cappella of San Giovanni Laterano in Rome, to visit the Vatican Library and answer specific questions on some 'codici di musica' that Martini had seen briefly when he was in Rome. He listed MSS Vat. lat. 5129, 5318, 5320, and 5322-4, containing treatises by Marchetto of Padua, John Hothby, Girolamo Mei, Egidius de Murino, Philippe de Vitry, Petrus Talhanderus, and Giovanni del Lago.³¹ For Vat. lat. 5318 Martini asked for a list of all the letters with the name of the author, the date, and the place. Martini's extant correspondence with Chiti dates from April 1745 and continues up to 1759, during which time the two exchanged not only letters and information about music and musicians, but also books of music and music theory.³² Chiti replied to Martini's request on 3 October, alluding to some difficulties he had encountered in obtaining access to the manuscripts in the Vatican.³³ In a letter of 13 October Martini encouraged him to pursue the matter, and on 9 November Chiti assured Martini that he intended to fulfil his request soon.³⁴ This is the last we hear of Padre Martini's desire to obtain information about the letters of Giovanni del Lago, for they are not further mentioned by name in his correspondence. Yet Martini did persevere in his quest, for eventually he obtained copies of two-thirds of Vat. lat. 5318. They are found today in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale of Bologna, MSS 106 and 107. 2.

Bologna 106 contains copies of the first 23 letters of Vat. lat. 5318 (fos. 1^r-109^v). Bound in at the beginning is a receipt for the copying of the manuscript. It reads as follows:

Io sottoscritto hò ricevuto dall'Illustrissimo Signore Abbate Speranza scudi cinque e baiocchi 90 quali sono per le copie fatte per il Rev. Padre Martini, e mi dichiaro sodisfatto, etc. questo di 1. Giugno 1761. scudi 5:90

Elia Baldi³⁵

Giovanni Elia Baldi, called Elia, was a copyist of the Vatican Library. He

³¹ Letter of 26 Sept. 1748, of which an abstract may be found in Anne Schnoebelen, Padre Martini's Collection of Letters in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna: An Annotated Index (New York, 1979), p. 172, no. 1415. Anne Schnoebelen has done an invaluable service in making available to scholars substantial abstracts of Padre Martini's huge correspondence. The following account would have been much less complete without the guidance of her book. In June 1986 I was able to visit the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna and examine the letters in person. I wish to thank the librarian, Giorgio Piombini, and Sandra Righi for their helpfulness on this occasion.

³² See the abstracts, nos. 1212-657 in Schnoebelen, Padre Martini's Collection, pp. 137-209. Padre Martini's copy of Gafurio's Theoricum opus musice came from Chiti, who sent it to him in 1746; see Schnoebelen, p. 139, no. 1223.

³³ Ibid., p. 172, no. 1418.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 173, nos. 1419 and 1425.

³⁵ It is followed by another receipt of the same date, 'per alcune copie di musica antica fatte in Vaticano', signed 'Antonio ... nofei' (I have not been able to decipher the beginning of the name).

²⁹ See Pompeo G. Molmenti, La storia di Venezia nella vita privata dalle origini alla caduta della Repubblica (3 vols., Bergamo, 1927-9; repr. Trieste, 1973), ii. 235-6. Among the other members of the short-lived Academy (it dissolved in 1561) was Gioseffo Zarlino; see Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, Delle inscrizioni veneziane (6 vols., Venice, 1824-53), iii. 52 n. 1.

³⁰ Molino's letter is printed in Delle lettere di M. Bernardo Tasso (3 vols., Padua, 1733-51), ii, 358-61. Tasso, sensible of the honour, declined because the poem was not yet in its final form and because, 'as a prudent head of family', desirous to benefit his children, 'I have decided to print it at my own expense' (ibid., pp. 363-5)

began his career in 1744 as 'scopatore', but under the guidance of several Vatican scribes, he learnt to copy Greek and Hebrew, and in 1764 he was named coadjutor of Vincenzo del Re, 'scriptor hebraicus', and in 1772 coadjutor of Raffaele Vernazza, 'scriptor graecus', becoming chief Greek scribe in 1780. He died in 1799.³⁶

'Abbate Speranza', who paid for the copying of Vat. lat. 5318, is Giacinto Speranza, who held the title 'custode dell'Archivio delle scritture appartenenti all'abbadie e beneficii concistorii' from 1749 to 1765.³⁷ He was also secretary to Cardinal Domenico Passionei, Cardinal Librarian from 1755 to his death on 5 July 1761.³⁸ The names of Elia Baldi and Giacinto Speranza do not appear in the letters of Padre Martini, but Martini did count the Cardinal among his correspondents. On 13 December 1760 Cardinal Passionei wrote to Padre Martini thanking him for the copy of 'Sua eruditissima Opera', the first volume of Martini's Storia della musica, published in 1757. And in a letter of 31 December the Cardinal thanked Martini for a second copy of 'Sua Opera applauditissima intorno alla Musica'.³⁹ A third, and last, letter from the Cardinal, dated 18 February 1761, contains the words 'Qualunque volta Ella avrà la bontà di prevalersi di me nelle occasioni di suo servizio, mi troverà sempre pronto a darle le più chiare prove.⁴⁰ This must have been exactly what Martini had hoped to hear, for he seems to have lost no time in arranging for the copying of Giovanni del Lago's letters, completed on June 1 of that year, just one month before the Cardinal's death.

Elia Baldi stopped copying at fo. 109^v. He ended his manuscript with the note:

Qui sono li esempi desiderati, de quali quelli che hanno il numero spettano alla lettera in data 23 Agosto 1532. L'altri appartengono alla lettera che siegue.

Seguitano nel MS. doppo le lettere che si mandano, alcune difinizioni dello stesso Gio. Del Lago scritte al Mag.^{co} M. Girolamo Molino Veneto et in appresso alcune lettere di Gio. de Spatari, di Pietro Aron, Gio. Leggio, etc. quali cose se Vostra P. desidera potrà darne avviso.

The first part of the note has to do with the music examples, which were copied on separate sheets of paper. They were made by another scribe, whose receipt is preserved at the beginning of Bol. 106. The examples

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were subsequently cut into strips and pasted into Bol. 106 at the appropriate places. The second part of the note indicates why Baldi stopped copying at fo. 109^v. Martini must have asked for a transcription of 'the letters of Giovanni del Lago', perhaps unaware that the codex contained many other letters. Baldi copied the first twenty-three letters, all by Del Lago. Then follow, as he notes, the definitions written by Del Lago, a letter by Spataro, a letter by Del Lago (which duplicates, however, the twentieth letter), and then a series of letters *to* Del Lago.

Padre Martini was indeed interested in the rest of the letters, but it took some time until he could make arrangements to copy the second section of the codex; since Cardinal Passionei had died, another person in authority had to be found to approve the copying. This section, comprising letters 23-73 (first half) and transcribing fos. $109^{r}-196^{r}$, is now in the Civico Museo with the signature $107. 2.^{41}$ It is prefaced by the following letter from Bernardino Sebastiani, scribe of the Papal Chapel, to Padre Martini:

Molto Reverendo Padre Signore, Signore Padrone Colendissimo

Il Padre Maestro di Cappella de SS Apostoli ritrovandosi in questi giorni di Carnevale fuori di Roma, come già la Paternità Vostra sarà pienamente intesa, mi ha incaricato come quello, che trascrivo dal Codice Vaticano le Lettere da Lei bramate, affinchè in quest'Ordinario di Posta le spedissi quel tanto, che avevo copiato. In questa mia dunque le compiego un altro foglio, che unisce al primo già inviatale dal medesimo Padre Maestro prima della sua partenza da questa Dominante. Si assicuri, che le premure sono grandi per servirla: ma essendo infinite le vacanze della Biblioteca Vaticana, ed essendo pessimi li Caratteri degli Originali, taluni de quali appena si distinguono, ritardano a me quell'onore, che porrei farmi tanto colla Paternità Vostra, quanto col sudetto Padre Maestro, sollicitandone la desiderata Copia. Confido però, che passate le presenti vacanze del Carnevale, quali entrorno fin da ieri, con tutto l'impegno potrò applicarmi in ultimare il negozio a me commesso. Mi lusingo, che non dissaproverà la maniera, con cui vado copiando il medesimo manoscritto, procurando imitarlo al miglior modo che sia possibile, e con chiarezza, come ha Ella appunto caldamente raccommandato nella sua di commissione. Ma quando avesse qualche cosa in contrario, mi farebbe special favore di avvertirmene. Mentre colla più ossequiosa stima, e rispetto costantemente alla Paternità Vostra mi riprotesto

Della Paternità Vostra Molto Reverenda

Roma 5 Febraio 1774 Umilissimo, Devotissimo ed Obligatissimo Servitore Bernardino Sebastiani Scrittore della Cappella Pontificia

From this letter it appears that Bernardino Sebastiani has been charged with copying the remainder of Vat. lat. 5318, 'imitating the manuscript in

³⁶ See Bignami Odier, *La Bibliothèque Vaticane*, pp. 182–3 and 190 n. 3. Bignami Odier explains (p. 182) that the 'scopatori' were not simple sweepers but employees, partly self-taught, partly taught by their superiors, who were capable of taking on tasks such as preparing catalogues of manuscripts or medals.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 173 n. 40.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 165.

³⁹ See Schnoebelen, Padre Martini's Collection, p. 472, no. 3981, and p. 473, no. 3983.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 473, no. 3984.

⁴¹ MS 107. 1 is a fair copy of MS 106 that Gaetano Gaspari made for himself.

the best manner possible and with clarity', that Padre Martini has already been sent a portion, and now Sebastiani is enclosing another section, with regret for the delay, caused by the 'wretched condition of the characters, some of which can hardly be distinguished'. As soon as the carnival season is over, he will resume copying.

The arrangement for copying the remainder of Vat. lat. 5318 seems to have been made with 'il Padre Maestro di Cappella de SS Apostoli'. This is Luigi Antonio Sabbatini, who became, with some reluctance, maestro di cappella of Santi Apostoli in 1772, as he announced to Padre Martini in a letter of 11 April 1772.42 Sabbatini had studied with Padre Martini and in later years carried on an extensive correspondence with him.43 Few of Martini's answers are preserved; nor do we find the letter of commission mentioned by Sebastiani. In Sabbatini's letter to Martini of 1 December 1773, he remarked that he had hoped to send the first quintern, but 'the copyist I had chosen to do the copying came to me this morning in a fright to tell me that he can't do anything with it because it's all written in gothic and irregular and full of music and he hasn't the courage to do it, so I'll have to go to the copyists of the library itself and commission one of them'.44 Two weeks later, apparently having found a competent copyist, Sabbatini reported that 'the copying of the manuscript is proceeding'.45 On 29 January 1774 Sabbatini wrote again to Padre Martini explaining that the 'rascal of a copyist has hardly done anything, contrary to his promise. But one must have patience; at least this scribe, belonging to the Papal Chapel, can read the script and understands music.'46 This person surely is Sebastiani, who signs himself 'scrittore della Cappella Pontificia'. Sebastiani made rapid progress in copying, for already on the second of February Sabbatini was able to send the first fascicle to Padre Martini.⁴⁷ The second fascicle was sent together with Sebastiani's letter on the fifth of February. Sabbatini must have continued sending the fascicles as they were copied until 9 March, when he says that he is suspending sending

⁴² Schnoebelen, Padre Martini's Collection, p. 541, no. 4580.

⁴³ See Sven Hansell, 'Sabbatini, Luigi Antonio', in *The New Grove Dictionary*, xvi. 365–6. ⁴⁴ '... quella mattina l'è venuto da me il copista che avevo destinato per farlo copiare tutto spaventato à dirmi che lui non ne puol far niente mentre essendo tutto gotico scritto ed abbassiato e pieno di musica che non gli dà animo, dicché mi converrà andare dalli scrittori manuali dell'istessa biblioteca per dare la commissione a un di loro'. An abstract is given in Schnoebelen, *Padre Martini's Collection*, p. 543, no. 4600.

⁴⁵ Ibid., no. 4601.

⁴⁶ Ibid., no. 4604 (this section is not in the abstract).

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 544, no. 4605: 'Ecco il primo Foglio per ora, non avendo possuto staccare dal quinternetto, che non era ancora pieno, qualche altro pezzo.' Though the letter itself does not give any specific information on the material being sent, we can confirm that it is the copy of Vat. lat. 5318 through Sebastiani's letter, which states that Sabbatini, before leaving Rome, had sent the first 'foglio'.

them because he has not heard whether Martini has received any of them.⁴⁸ He resumes delivery on the 12th, again asking that Martini acknowledge their arrival in good order, inasmuch as they are all duly numbered.⁴⁹ On 26 March Sabbatini apologizes for not having sent the fascicle owing to his copyist's having failed him. Further letters of 6 April and 16 April indicate that Martini 'may guess whose fault it is for the delay'.⁵⁰ In his letter of 21 April Sabbatini announces: 'Ecco il solito fogletto'.⁵¹ Succeeding letters mention the fascicles until 25 June, when the copyists went on holiday. Sabbatini himself was away in July. Upon his return he could not find the copyist, and he predicted that 'I can see we're going to come on hard times with this rascal.⁵² Sabbatini was right; this is the end of the correspondence on the matter. Sebastiani did not, for unexplained reasons, complete the copy of Vat. lat. 5318; he stopped in the middle of a letter on fo. 198, leaving in the manuscript a sheet of paper with the transcription of part of the continuation of the letter. This sheet was bound into Vat. lat. 5318 when the manuscript was restored and now carries the number 197.53

In his 1941 article on Vat. lat. 5318, Jeppesen called attention to another collection of letters copied from Vat. lat. 5318 and now in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna with the signature S.m. 4830. Although he had not seen the manuscript, Jeppesen was able to report that it consisted of thirty-nine of the letters, all also found in Bologna 107. 2, and that the copyist was the same Bernardino Sebastiani. Citing personal correspondence with Dr Georg Kinsky, Jeppesen traced the manuscript from the collection of Carlo Lozzi in Rome in 1909 to the Heyer Collection in Cologne. When the latter was auctioned in 1927, the manuscript came into the possession of the Lengfeld'sche Buchhandlung, from which the Nationalbibliothek purchased it.⁵⁴

Unlike Bol. 107. 2, Vienna 4830 contains a title-page:

Lettere

Di diversi Autori Che trattano di Musica Copiate dalli loro Originali esistenti nella Biblioteca Vaticana In un Codice MS. che porta il Numero 5318.

⁴⁸ Ibid., no. 4606.
⁴⁹ Ibid., no. 4607.
⁵⁰ Ibid. and 4607.

⁵⁰ Ibid., nos. 4608, 4610–11. ⁵¹ Ibid., no. 4612.

⁵¹ Ibid., no. 4612

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⁵² Ibid., p. 545, no. 4619 (this section is not in the abstract).

⁵³ See no. 5 n. e.

⁵⁴ Jeppesen, 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 9.



Da Bernardino Sebastiani Scrittore della Cappella Pontificia nell' Anno 1774: E trasmesse al Celebre Maestro P. Martini Minore Conventuale In Bologna Col permesso della Santità di Nostro Signore Papa Clemente XIV. Felicemente Regnante

The title-page and the transcriptions themselves do not indicate that only part of the manuscript was copied-letters 23-59 and 62 in Jeppesen's numbering, to be precise. The beginning coincides with the beginning of Bol. 107. 2, also copied by Sebastiani, but Bol. 107. 2 contains ten and a half letters more than Vienna 4830. Comparison of the two copies reveals that Vienna 4830 must have been Sebastiani's original transcription and Bol. 107. 2 a fair copy. The Vienna copy contains words that were transcribed incorrectly, then struck out, with the correct version added. The Bologna copy gives the correct version. Most of the corrections seem to have been made at the time of the original transcription, but at least one was made after the 'fogletto' had been sent off to Padre Martini. In letter J25 (our no. 60), the Bologna copy (p. 16) has 'Ferrum Ferro anictur'. The last word has been underlined faintly and struck out lightly. In the Vienna copy the word has been cancelled heavily and replaced by 'acuitur' in Sebastiani's hand. In the Bologna copy there is a piece of paper pasted in the centre margin on which is written: 'Nella pagina 16. ove dice: In exercitationibus virtus perficitur, et etiam Ferrum Ferro anictur. Deve dire acuitur, e non mai anictur, che è trascorso sotto la penna.' This note is likewise in Sebastiani's hand; he must have sent it to Padre Martini with one of the later fascicles he had copied. The last ten and a half letters of the Bologna copy, not duplicated in Vienna 4850, seem to have been made directly from the manuscript, since they show the same type of corrections as in the Vienna manuscript.

The title-page in the Vienna copy, not found in the Bologna version, must have been added later. Sebastiani may have had the idea that he could profit doubly from his transaction with Padre Martini and that there might be a buyer for his original transcription. No other marks of ownership appear in the manuscript, however, and its whereabouts between 1774 and 1909, when it left the Lozzi collection in Rome, are not known.

If Padre Martini made any further attempts to complete the copying of Vat. lat. 5318, we have no record of them, and nearly a century passed until a transcription of the third and final portion of the manuscript was

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joined to the other two in Bologna. According to Jeppesen, who gives no source for the information, this last section was copied *c*.1850 by Giuseppe Marocco from Imola at the initiative of Gaetano Gaspari.⁵⁵ Of the three transcribers, whose work leaves much to be desired, Marocco is the least accurate; numerous misreadings and gaps appear in his transcriptions.

Gaspari, whose annotations are found sprinkled throughout Bol. 107. 1-3, prepared not only an index of the letters in chronological order (in Bol. 107. 1) but also an 'Indice delle cose più notevoli contenute nei tre volumi di queste lettere' in alphabetical order, covering sixteen pages (Bol. 107. 3). Bol. 107. 2 also includes Gaspari's extensive abstracts of the letters contained in that volume.

To Gaspari we owe not only gratitude for his careful annotations and indices of the Bologna copies of Vat. lat. 5318: we are also in his debt for their very existence. After Padre Martini's death, the municipal authorities of Bologna destined his library for the newly created Liceo musicale in 1804. Part of it indeed was received; the rest remained in the hands of Martini's former pupil Stanislao Mattei, who donated it to the Comune in 1816, but whose heir refused to transfer it. By the time the Comune took vigorous action to repossess the library, various volumes (including Martini's correspondence with Gluck and Mozart) had disappeared. Even after the two portions of the library were reunited, a series of incompetent custodians prevented any progress in ordering and cataloguing the library, which remained effectively closed to students of the Liceo.⁵⁶

The library was in a deplorable state when Gaetano Gaspari, appointed professor of *solfège* at the Liceo in 1840, took over as librarian in 1855. His letters to his friend, Angelo Catelani, offer poignant testimony of the ruins to which Padre Martini's splendid library had been reduced. But even before formally becoming librarian, Gaspari had concerned himself with the state of the library. In a letter of 3 February 1852 to Catelani, discussing the copies of old letters at the Vatican that Martini had made for himself, Gaspari says of MS Bol. 107. 2:

That copy, together with many other sheets and manuscripts and prints, was contained, confused and unbound, in a little chest next to the furnace in the room of the custodian of the Liceo; it was a heap of paper which old Barbieri used to light the fire in winter and for other lowly uses. One day, moved by bodily

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 8. Gaspari described his discovery of the Bologna copies and his arrangements to have the remainder of the correspondence copied in 'Ricerche, documenti e memorie risguardanti la storia dell'arte musicale in Bologna', *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Provincie della Romagna*, 1st ser., 5 (1867), 21-6 = id., *Musica e musicisti a Bologna* (Bologna, 1969), pp. 35-72.

⁵⁶ On the history of the library, see Francesco Vatielli, *La Biblioteca del Liceo musicale di Bologna* (Biblioteca de 'L'Archiginnasio', 2nd ser., no. 14; Bologna, 1917).

Introduction

necessity, I asked the custodian for a bit of paper. He opened up this little chest, which aroused in me great curiosity as to whether in that storehouse of sheets there might be something worthy of better use. In fact, I succeeded in rummaging through it at leisure and put in order all the fascicles of the manuscript, the letter of the copyist, and a number of loose leaflets of extracts, notes, and so forth.

I lost no time in obtaining as a gift these materials so precious to me, and as much as I considered myself lucky to have arrived in time to save them from the flames to which they were destined by the carelessness and ignorance of that old custodian, so much was I saddened, thinking that so many other documents of inestimable value must have perished prior to my discovery.⁵⁷

Gaspari's letter explains why MS Bol. 107. 2, manifestly belonging to Padre Martini's library, bears the stamp 'Gaetano Gaspari'. After he came into possession of this manuscript, Gaspari must have ordered the copying of the remainder of Vat. lat. 5318 and then made himself a copy of Elia Baldi's original transcription in Bol. 106, which evidently was not among the heap of papers in the little chest. That copy bears the number 107. I. Gaspari then gave his copies of the Correspondence to the Liceo.

Gaspari wondered about the treasures that might have disappeared from the custodian's scrap-heap before he discovered it. Might they have included the correspondence between Spataro and Gafurio, which we know was in the possession of Ercole Bottrigari, many of whose books and manuscripts formed part of Padre Martini's library?

Because of their legibility and the copious notes added by Gaspari, the Bologna copies of Vat. lat. 5318 have provided easier access to the treasures of the Spataro Correspondence for modern scholars than the original. But the disadvantage of depending on the Bologna copies has not always been noticed; they are not scholarly transcriptions and they are not accurate. None of the scribes indicated the original folios of the Vatican manuscript. All of them modernized the spelling, but not consistently. And all of them made mistakes in transcription, from simple misreadings to the omission of whole lines. Sometimes a combination of these two errors produces a quite different meaning. To cite one passage from Del Lago's letter to Fra Seraphin (no. 93) as example:

Bol. 106, p. 9

Alcuna volta fingere di far cadentia pigliare una consonantia ma propinqua ad essa cadentia per accomodarsi è cosa laudabile.

Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 3^v

Alcuna volta finger di far cadentia et poi nella conclusione di essa cadentia pigliare una consonantia non propinqua ad essa cadentia per accommodarsi è cosa laudabile.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 23. Gaspari seems to have lent the manuscript to Catelani, for the letter begins: 'Passando ora alla Storia del ms. d'antiche lettere ch'Ella ha presso di sè, e principalmente della copia fattane lo scorso secolo . . .'. Instead of counselling the composer to form a deceptive cadence by resting on a consonance near the cadence,⁵⁸ Del Lago considers it praiseworthy to pretend to cadence regularly but instead move to a consonance *not* near the cadence (that is, from the fifth to the fourth or the sixth degree instead of the tonic). Passages such as this show that Padre Martini's copyists failed to proof-read their transcriptions. That Sebastiani happened to notice his misreading of 'acuitur' as 'anictur' may be merely fortuitous.

Nevertheless, the Bologna copies are not without value. Some pages of the original letters have deteriorated since the copies were made. The holes and patches in letter no. 15 where folios 139 and 140 had stuck together were not there when Sebastiani copied this section in 1774, for he was able to read the passages without difficulty.⁵⁹ The hole at the top of fo. 145, mutilating two words in letter no. 17, seems to have been made after 1774, for Sebastiani could read 'ad maiorem declarationem'. But the torn margin of fo. 167 (letter no. 3) pre-dated this period, since Sebastiani's transcription includes a number of dots where he was unable to figure out the syllables missing from the technical terms Spataro used to describe the canon in his 'Missa de la tradictora'.

Perhaps the most useful aspect of the Bologna copies is the light they cast on the previous order of Vat. lat. 5318. As shown above, they prove that even as late as c.1850 the letters of the Correspondence were preserved in a different order, and that the three letters now separated from the main body of the manuscript (J110-12) all were originally part of it.⁶⁰ And, since the Bologna copies were made before the letters were separated and rebound, they show the original placement of one of the small slips of paper Del Lago added to his letter to Fra Seraphin (no. 93) that now carries no indication of where it should be inserted.⁶¹

⁵⁸ This is how Don Harrán, who used the Bologna copies, interpreted Del Lago's rule in 'The Theorist Giovanni del Lago', p. 111.

⁵⁹ See no. 15 nn. *a* and *d*.

⁶⁰ J111, Aaron's letter to Del Lago of 7 Oct. 1539 (no. 64), was in the possession of Wilhelm Heyer, who had purchased it in 1894 at the auction of the collection of F. Bamberg. See Georg Kinsky, Versteigerung von Musikbüchern Praktischer Musik und Musiker-Autographen des 16. bis 18. Jahrbunderts aus dem Nachlaß des Herrn Kommerzienrates Wilhelm Heyer in Köln ... Beschreibendes Verzeichnis (Berlin, 1927), iv. 70-1. J112 (no. 49), Spataro's letter to Aaron of 2 Jan. 1533, was also in the Heyer collection; its provenance is not listed (ibid., p. 104). It may have come from the Lozzi collection, together with Sebastiani's copy of the second section of Vat. lat. 5318. Leo Olschki reported in 1901 that among the autograph letters that Lozzi possessed was:

Spataro Giovanni Aron Pietro

From the form it is not clear how many letters are involved; perhaps it was just one, J112, Spataro's letter *to* Aaron. 'l.a.f.' stands for 'lettera autografa firmata'. See Leo S. Olschki, 'Una visita alla collezione del Comm. C. Lozzi di autografi e documenti riguardante la musica e il teatro', La bibliofilia 3 (1901-2), 231-59 at 237.

⁶¹ See no. 93 n. 8.

In the days before carbon-paper, microfilm, and Xerox photography, copying by hand was the only way to make personal copies of letters and manuscripts. Spataro kept copies of his letters, with an eye towards future publication. Padre Martini had copies made of early treatises out of scholarly interest; they were used by him in his *Storia della musica*.⁶² We may be grateful for his initiative in having the Spataro Correspondence copied; it has provided us with precious clues to the history of Vat. lat. 5318.

There is only one gap in the history of the Vatican manuscript, and that is the transfer of ownership from Giovanni del Lago to Paolo Manuzio, perhaps through an intermediary, Girolamo Molino. Otherwise we can trace the manuscript from its original owner to the present. The history of the other part of the Correspondence, in contrast, is documented only from 1862, when it entered the Bibliothèque nationale. Its early history is a matter of conjecture.

PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, MS FONDS IT. IIIO

The manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds it. 1110 is a collection of sixteenth-century letters concerning music, both originals and copies, in various hands. It consists of seventy-nine folios, numbered in ink by a modern hand.⁶³ Each letter is preserved as a separate fascicle, gathered with strings; all the strings are tied together and attached to the spine of the cover. The binding is limp, worn vellum. On the front cover is found the number '.LXVI.' and on the spine 'Lettere Diuerse'.

Paris 1110 was acquired on 27 May 1862 from the Parisian book-dealer

⁶² Since it is well known that Padre Martini's uncompleted *Storia della musica* (3 vols., Bologna, 1757-81) does not go beyond Greek music, it may not be superfluous to explain how he made use of 15th- and 16th-c. theorists in it. Volume 1 of the *Storia* is divided into three parts. The first part traces the evolution of music from the creation of Adam down to Egyptian music, in 80 pages. By far the greater part of the volume is devoted to three 'dissertations', the first 'Qual sia il canto agli uomini naturale' (pp. 83-164), the second 'Qual Canto in Consonanza usassero gli Antichi' (pp. 165-334), the third 'Del Canto, e degli Strumenti musicali degli Ebrei nel Tempio' (pp. 335-446). It is in the second dissertation that Martini cites authors as diverse as Bach and Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi. Three entries from the comprehensive 'Indice delle Materie' on pp. 469-502 will reveal succinctly what use he made of these musicians and theorists:

Bach (*Gio. Sebastiano*), suo esempio pratico della Quarta come sia Dissonante. 285 [There is an identical entry for Handel.]

de Beldemandis (*Prosdocimo*) seguace di Boezio non ammise, che il tuono maggiore. 272 [Aaron is cited for the same belief, as well as Marchetto of Padua, Tinctoris, Burzio, Guillermo de Podio, and several 16th-c. writers.] suo particolar sentimento sopra l'Intonazione dell'In exitta. 420.

Cottonio (*Giovanni*) descrive con vari vocaboli la diversità dei Punti caudati. 183. suo sentimento sopra le cadenze finali. 398.

⁶³ The two folios after fo. 12 were erroneously given the numbers 11 and 12; they have been renumbered 12a and 12b in Table 3, which otherwise follows the numbering of the manuscript.

Tross.⁶⁴ It is listed in the 'registre d'acquisitions C' as 'Lettres de Gandolfo Sigonio et lettres à lui adressées, sur la musique'.⁶⁵ The number found in the lower left corner of the first guard-sheet of Paris 1110, 'R.C. 5734', is the acquisition-number of the Bibliothèque nationale, and 'Suppl. fr. 5897' on fo. 1^c is a former call-number.

No physical clue to the earlier provenance of the manuscript can be detected. It is not even clear whether the different parts of this manuscript, which span more than fifty years, were owned by one person in the sixteenth century, or were put together at a later time.

The letters fall into two main groups: nine autograph letters of Gandolfo Sigonio to Annibale Melone, dating from 9 September 1571 to 24 February 1574 (nos. 1, 3, 6–12), and eleven letters belonging to the Spataro Correspondence, most of which are copies of the later sixteenth century (nos. 2, 14, 16–22, 25–6). The remaining letters and documents (nos. 4–5, 13, 15, 23–4) seem largely to have been copied, by various hands, from printed books of music theory (see Table 3 on pp. xxxiv–xxxvii).

The Sigonio-Melone correspondence has a bearing on the provenance of Paris 1110 but is not related to the Spataro Correspondence. Outside these letters, Gandolfo Sigonio is known only as the author of a Discorso on Nicola Vicentino's madrigals and his L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica that was printed at the end of Ercole Bottrigari's Il Melone secondo (Ferrara, 1602), which consists of a critique of Sigonio's treatise. Gandolfo was the brother of the far more famous Carlo Sigonio (1523-84), who studied philosophy and medicine at the University of Bologna, taught in Modena, Venice, and Padua, and finally in Bologna, where he and his brother were inscribed in the Bolognese nobility on 19 December 1564 in an act of the Senate of Bologna.⁶⁶ Gandolfo's career is obscure; he seems to have been a passionate musical dilettante rather than a professional musician or theorist. Bottrigari described him as 'not only a good musician in counterpoint', jokingly called Solfanino by his brother Carlo, 'but well versed in Zarlino's Istitutioni and Dimostrationi, and also somewhat in the books of other contemporary writers on music, both in Latin and Italian'.⁶⁷ His relationship with his brother appears to have been

 64 For information on the acquisition, we are indebted to the kindness of Mlle Catherine Massip of the Bibliothèque nationale.

⁶⁵ The other books purchased at the same time are unrelated: a cartulary of the Church of St Stephen in Mainz (n. acq. lat. 1008) and seven volumes of correspondence of French diplomatic agents and ministers regarding relations with Germany between 1703 and 1727 (fr. 10676–82).

⁶⁶ Girolamo Tiraboschi, Biblioteca modenese o notizie della vita e delle opere degli scrittori natii degli stati del serenissimo Signor Duca di Modena, v (Modena, 1784), 76–93.

⁶⁷ Lettera di Federico Verdicelli, quoted in Gaetano Gaspari, 'Dei musicisti bolognesi al XVI secolo e delle loro opere a stampa. Ragguagli biografici e bibliografici. Ercole Bottrigari', Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Provincie della Romagna, 2nd ser., 2 (1876), 3-84 = Musica e musicisti a Bologna, pp. 269-350 at 314 n. 2.

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difficult; Carlo, who had no children, took a paternal interest in the education of Gandolfo's sons, recommending them to his friend Cammillo Coccapani in Modena, where Gandolfo lived. In a letter to Coccapani of 19 October 1573 Carlo expressed anger that his brother had withdrawn little Carlo from the tutorship of Coccapani, even though he himself was paying the expenses, and he blamed Gandolfo's 'chronic fickleness'.⁶⁸

Annibale Melone, born in Bologna in the first half of the sixteenth century, was a pupil of Nicolò Mantovano, one of Spataro's younger colleagues in the choir of San Petronio.⁶⁹ He was a respected practical musician, becoming part of the 'concerto palatino' in 1553, and dean in 1582. He was a favourite of the foreign students at Bologna, more than one hundred of whom studied music with him between 1566 and 1594 and left their autographs in a book belonging to him.⁷⁰ He died in 1598.

It was always Melone's ambition to better himself; although an accomplished musician and teacher, he yearned to be known as a 'musico teorico'. He seized upon every opportunity to learn about theory, and when Ercole Bottrigari, after many years in Ferrara, returned to his native Bologna in 1587, Melone became one of his most devoted followers, spending at least three hours a day in Bottrigari's home discussing music and theory. All this we know from Bottrigari's preface to the second edition of his dialogue Il desiderio (1599), which Bottrigari says was written at the instigation of Melone.⁷¹ To please his friend, Bottrigari put Melone into the book under the anagram Alemanno Benelli. He also translated Greek and Latin authors for him, and Melone made copies of all these treatises. This happy arrangement had a curious outcome. Melone, eager for his hard-won scholarship to be known to the world through Bottrigari's treatises (the latter had also favoured him in a dialogue on the modes and in Il Melone and Il Melone secondo), begged Bottrigari to have his works printed. The Cavaliere was reluctant. Finally Melone prevailed upon him to bring out the Desiderio under the anagram Alemanno Benelli,

⁶⁸ Giovanni Franciosi, *Della vita e delle opere di Carlo Sigonio* (Modena, 1872), p. 76: 'Non può essersi aggravato della spesa, avendo io pagato, ma è stata tutta sua inconstantia, come in tutte le sue cose'. In his will of 1578 Carlo's main heirs were Gandolfo's children Barbara and Alexander, with a small bequest to their mother. Gandolfo, although apparently still living, is not an heir.

⁶⁹ See the Biographical Dictionary.

⁷⁰ See Oscar Mischiati, 'Studenti ultramontani di musica a Bologna nella seconda metà del secolo XVI', *Analecta musicologica* 3 (1966), 1–42.

⁷¹ See Ercole Bottrigari, *Il desiderio overo de' concerti di varii strumenti musicali*, ed. Kathi Meyer (Veröffentlichungen der Musik-Bibliothek Paul Hirsch 5; Berlin, 1924), Preface. The first edn. was published in 1594. For an English translation, see Ercole Bottrigari, *Il Desiderio or Concerning the Playing Together of Various Musical Instruments*, trans. Carol MacClintock (Musicological Studies and Documents 9; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1962), pp. 9–11. since it was not possible to publish works anonymously. The decision led to a raging controversy over the authorship of the work, which was not dispelled even by Bottrigari's explanation of the whole affair in his 1599 preface. We shall return to this later.

The correspondence between Sigonio and Melone goes back to an earlier time. The first letter is dated 9 September 1571 (no. 3) and continues a discussion apparently begun while Sigonio was in Bologna. The last letter is dated 24 February 1574 (no. 7). From these letters we can deduce that Gandolfo was particularly interested in the various temperaments in use at the time, the proportions of intervals, enharmonic music, counterpoint, and the resolution of canons. Business matters are discussed as well. Gandolfo was also interested in practical music: in one letter (no. 6) he asks for the loan of a young cornettist, not one in the class of Messer Ascanio,⁷² but perhaps a student of his, for a concert on the feast of Corpus Christi. In the end, he reports (no. 11), the concert was performed without the cornetto. The litany *a 10* was accompanied by two trombones, three lutes, two liras, one violin, and one transverse flute ('due tromboni, tri lauti, due lire, una violina et un traverso con bonissime voci').

Obviously, these autograph letters must have belonged to Annibale Melone. Were all the other letters of Paris 1110 in his possession as well? He may perhaps be connected with the two items that do not touch on the Spataro Correspondence. The first is an unsigned, undated letter (probably a copy) addressed 'Molto Ill.^{re} Signor Cavaglier s.' (no. 4). The handwriting is not that of Sigonio. Nor is it likely that the letter is by Melone, first because he was constantly together with Bottrigari and secondly because the letter is undoubtedly from a 'musico teorico'. The author responds to a request from the Cavaliere, who surely is Bottrigari, to give his opinion on those conclusions dealing with music in the work of an unnamed 'Reverendo P(adre) Carmelitano'. Conclusion 13 deals with the interval B-f, which the Carmelite calls a 'consonanza perfetta'.⁷³

⁷² Ascanio Trombetti, also known as Ascanio del Cornetto, played in the *concerto palatino* from 1563 on and was appointed as instrumentalist at San Petronio in 1573. He was also a composer of madrigals and motets and culminated his career as *maestro di cappella* of San Giovanni in Monte, 1583–9. See Anne Schnoebelen, 'Trombetti, Ascanio', *The New Grove Dictionary*, xix. 160.

⁷³ This puzzling claim may derive from an uncritical reading of Boethius, *De musica* 4. 14 (ed. Friedlein, p. 339, ll. 3-4), where the interval parhypate meson to hypate hypaton is listed as one of the four species of diapente. Zarlino (*Le Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), Book III, ch. 13) excuses it as an oversight on Boethius' part. The error had already been pointed out in the 11th c. by Hermannus Contractus (*Musica*, ed. W. Brambach (Leipzig, 1884), pp. 17-18, or GS ii. 143). See Henry Chadwick, *Boethius: The Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 97-8. I am grateful to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for suggesting the possible source of the Carmelite father's error.

nuta, quinta falsa, o quinta dissonante'. In Conclusion 14 this interval is said to consist of two 9:8 tones and two minor semitones 256:243. The author concedes that these are the correct Pythagorean ratios, but they do not create good harmony: the correct semitone to use was the major semitone 16:15 (i.e. that of Ptolemy's syntonic or intense diatonic tetrachord, $10:9 \times 9:8 \times 16:15$), which would leave the interval short of a perfect fifth by 'la misura d'un coma' (his 'coma' being the 'semituon più de minore' 135:128 discussed in Conclusion 18). Conclusion 15 concerns two errors in forming a 'giusta, sonora et perfetta diapente' because of the use of the semitones of the chromatic genus, which do not make one 9:8 tone. In Conclusion 16 the author criticizes the Carmelite father for supposing that Bb-f is a different interval from B-f#'. In Conclusion 18 the author faults the choice of the semitone 81:76 (Boethius' chromatic semitone), claiming that three other major semitones would have been better capable of yielding consonances: the Pythagorean 'apotome' 2187: 2048, the 'natural' Ptolemaic 16:15 — which makes a minor semitone of 25:24 with the 10:9 tone and a 'more than minor' semitone of 135:128 with the 9:8 tone—and thirdly 27:25 (not used by practical musicians), the complement of 25:24 to 9:8. Conclusion 20 concerns the 'hexachord' (i.e. the interval of a sixth), which the Carmelite father divided into two parts, major and minor. The author prefers to say that there are two sixths, one major, one minor, analogous to the division of the tone, and he criticizes the use of Pythagorean minor semitones, which make the major sixth exceed that in practical use, and the minor sixth fall short, by an 81:80 comma. The letter ends at this point, confirming its status as a copy. The treatise from which these conclusions come has not been identified.

The second item (no. 5) that may be connected with Melone is likewise anonymous and incomplete. It appears to be the sketch of a preface to a book, since it begins with the words 'Accioché humanissimi lettori possiati intendere quella cosa della qual si tratta . . .'. The author goes on to define music and suggests, in an imaginative vein, that it was born from the Muses, nine in number, which ancient philosophers claimed denoted the resounding of the eight celestial spheres, causing a 'maxima concordanza' called harmony, named after the wife of Cadmus, who knew how to play the bagpipe (*piva*) so well.⁷⁴ But this is to be reserved for 'another book'. Thus it seems that the preface, which trails off at this point, was intended for a book on practical music. Was it a treatise by Melone? Or perhaps the 'regola di musicha' that Gandolfo Sigonio mentions at the end of his letter of 24 February 1574 (no. 7)? He says he will send it to Melone because he cannot find a suitable press in Modena to publish it. The handwriting is not that of Sigonio, however, nor does it agree with any other letter in Paris 1110.

One other item in Paris 1110 might also have belonged to Melone. On fos. 25^{r-v} and $27^{r}-28^{r}$ is an Italian translation of Sectio tertia, cap. 2 of Lodovico Fogliano's *Musica theorica* (Venice, 1529), on the necessity of placing two D sol res and two Bbs. It is written in a later sixteenth-century hand. We know that among the Greek and Latin treatises Bottrigari translated for the benefit of Melone was Fogliano's *Musica theorica*.⁷⁵ Indecd, the *Desiderio* deals specifically with the need to temper D sol re and B fa (as well as E la mi, which Fogliano did not mention, to Bottrigari's surprise, 'for he had been a most careful scrutinizer of all the other imperfections of the consonances and a good authority for them')⁷⁶ because in Ptolemy's syntonic diatonic some intervals involving these notes are short or long by an 81:80 comma.

The remainder of Paris 1110 is connected with Spataro and his correspondents. Here the trail comes to a fork: are these materials copied from Spataro's own drafts, in which case we need not look beyond Bologna, or are they copied from his originals, in which case we must take the path to Venice? Six letters are later sixteenth-century copies of letters in Vat. lat. 5318. Only three of these are from Spataro, but five are connected with Pietro Aaron. Two other letters, directed to Giovanni del Lago, have no connection with Spataro; one is a copy (no. 2) and one an original (no. 14). They tip the weight of the evidence in favour of Venice. Two other letters from Spataro to Aaron (nos. 25 and 26) are contemporaneous copies; the originals are lost. Both these letters, although addressed to Aaron, were in answer to letters from Del Lago. We surmise that these are the copies Del Lago arranged to have made for his own use, as Spataro had suggested.⁷⁷ If, as we have hypothesized earlier in this chapter, Aaron gave all his letters to Del Lago before leaving Venice in 1536, the larger part of Paris 1110 can be traced to Venice and specifically to Giovanni del Lago. There remains the problem of when the copies of the letters in Vat. lat. 5318 were made. These materials were in the library of Paolo Manuzio by 1560; were they copied before then? The handwriting seems to date from later in the century. Did Paolo's son Aldo allow acquaintances to study in his library? Or are these copies of earlier copies? This point is moot.

Three other items remain to be accounted for. No. 15, a letter from Spataro to Silvestro Alzato, is a contemporary copy made from the

⁷⁴ Ingenious as this notion is, it is not original with the author of the preface; he seems to have taken it (except for the definition of music) from Pietro Aaron's *Toscanello in musica*, Book I, chs. 3 and τ —and in similar wording.

⁷⁵ Preface to the 1599 edn. of *Il desiderio*.

⁷⁶ Il Desiderio, trans. MacClintock, p. 47.

 $^{^{77}}$ Del Lago employed at least four scribes, whom we have named Scribes A, B, C, and E, according to the order in which they appear in the manuscripts. See Tables 2 and 3.

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printed edition of Spataro's *Dilucide et probatissime demonstratione* (Bologna, 1521). The handwriting is very similar to that of nos. 25 and 26.⁷⁸ No. 23 is a second copy, but in a late sixteenth-century hand. No. 24 is a partial Italian translation of a letter from Gafurio to Spataro printed in the former's *Apologia Franchini Gafurii musici adversus Joannem Spatarium* (Turin, 1520). These items could have been of interest to either Giovanni del Lago or Annibale Melone.

We have said that no trace remains of Spataro's literary estate. This is not strictly true, but the trail comes to a dead end at the close of the sixteenth century. From the 'Terza Giornata' of Bottrigari's unpublished *Trimerone*, written between 1593 and 1599, we know that he possessed letters by Spataro, 'if not the original, then at least a copy in his own hand'.⁷⁹ Melone (whom Bottrigari has cast as interlocutor in the dialogue) says he recovered 'the scraps of these letters and reflections of our Spataro from wrappings somewhat less miserable than those prognosticated in the eighth correction of the *Florum libellus* of Niccolò Burzio, those being used for crayfish and sardines, these for powder for the arquebus, where they unluckily ended up'.⁸⁰ Among these letters was a copy of a letter from Spataro to Aaron concerning Willaert's chromatic duo. Bottrigari refers to it in *Il desiderio*, at the same time offering an appreciation of Spataro, who showed himself 'not to be one of those run-of-the-mill musicians'.⁸¹

Bottrigari's library in large part came into the hands of Padre Martini and rests now in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale. Another substantial portion is in the Biblioteca Universitaria. Spataro's letters, however, are lost. Could they have been in that heap of scrap paper from which Gaetano Gaspari rescued the transcriptions of Vat. lat. 5318? He

⁸⁰ '... tai rottami di Epist. e di considerazioni del nostro Spataro da cartozzi assai men vili de' da lui nella già detta sua ottava correzione pronosticati al Flor. libello di Nicolò Burtio, per esser quei da Gambarusi e da Sardelle, questi da Polvo d'Archibugio, ove erano per sciagura loro capitati' (ibid.). In his *Honesta defensio* (Bologna, 1491), fo. B6', Spataro had lambasted Burzio for using irrelevant information from Isidore of Seville to fill up his useless treatise, which however might prove suitable for wrapping crayfish or sardines, and thus he could turn out to be not without some value ('che potrebbe anchora saltare in cartoci da gambarusio o de sardelle: e cussi potristi provare non essere al tutto inutile'). Bottrigari also mentions in passing that he had recently seen Spataro's autograph manuscript of the *Honesta defensio*.

⁸¹ 'Giovanni Spadari; il qual si come intendo, dimostrò veramente in quella sua lettera scritta à Don Pietro Aron sopra tal Duo di non esser un Musico da dozina'; *Il desiderio* (Bologna, 1599), p. 21. feared that 'many other documents of inestimable value must have perished' prior to his discovery (see above).

We have traced two distinct sections of Paris 1110, one coming from Venice, the other from Bologna. It is possible that they came together at a late date purely by accident. Yet there is another explanation that ties these two parts together and casts light on the very letter of Spataro mentioned by Bottrigari, which exists today only in two late copies. We know what happened to Spataro's literary estate, and we know where Bottrigari's manuscripts eventually came to rest. But what happened to Annibale Melone's literary estate? At this point the story takes a very strange turn with the appearance of another actor, who we believe is the shadowy presence behind MS Paris 1110.

Three days after Melone's death, which occurred suddenly in mid-April 1598, there appeared, on the doorstep of his widow Lucia, Giovanni Maria Artusi, then living in Bologna as a canon of San Salvatore, who succeeded in extracting from her all Melone's musical materials.⁸² Artusi, finding that the manuscripts frequently mentioned Annibale as interlocutor and that Bottrigari's name never appeared as author, thought that he had discovered a great secret between Bottrigari and Melone, and that Melone was the real author. In 1600 Artusi published L'Artusi, overo delle imperfettioni della moderna musica. When Bottrigari saw it he recognized in it his own words and things he had written in his dialogues. Thereupon he discovered that Artusi had got hold of Melone's literary estate, which included copies of all Bottrigari's unpublished treatises, and he demanded that Artusi return them. Receiving no reply, he put together a pamphlet, L'Antartusi, which, however, is lost. Artusi took revenge by reprinting Il desiderio in 1601, removing the first leaves and substituting another frontispiece, a dedication to the Senate of Bologna, and a discourse to the reader, in which he gave the 'true' author's name as Annibale Melone, pointing out that he had found in Melone's estate two preliminary drafts of the book in his own hand, proving him to be the author. The polemic continued for several years but need not detain us here. It suffices to show that Artusi must have been in possession of Gandolfo Sigonio's letters to Melone and the remaining materials that we believe belonged to Melone.

New documents have recently come to light on Artusi's life. He was born in Bologna in 1546 and died there on 18 August 1613. In 1562 he entered the Congregation of Canons Regular of San Salvatore in Bologna. It was the practice of this congregation to transfer its members from one house to another at frequent intervals. Thus Artusi actually spent many years away from Bologna; he is listed there only in 1562–3, 1566, 1568,

⁷⁸ Jeppesen ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 10 n. 17) believed the hands were identical. Letters 25 and 26 are written in a more fluid ductus, and the ascender of the *d* commonly curves to the left instead of bending to the right at the top as in no. 15. However, examples of the latter *d* are also found in nos. 25 and 26. Jeppesen tentatively identified the scribe of Vat. lat. 5318, no. 69 (J20) with this hand, but there are too many variants to make this identification secure.

⁷⁹ Bottrigari first speaks of Spataro's letters to Gafurio, 'delle quai con molte altre e però se non l'Originale, una copia almeno di propria mano di lui è appresso di me' (Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, cod. 326, Busta I, n. 13, fo. 53').

 $^{^{82}}$ The following account is drawn from Gaspari, 'Dei musicisti bolognesi . . . Ercole Bottrigari'.

1585-6, 1595-8, 1603-6, and 1610-13.83 At some point he studied in Venice with Zarlino, whose ardent defender he became in a polemic with Vincenzo Galilei.⁸⁴ This must have been in 1574, the only year he was assigned to Venice during Zarlino's lifetime, although he may have been allowed to visit during his residence in nearby Treviso, 1580-1. In 1588 he was given permission to go to Venice for eight to ten days to arrange for the publication of his 'lucubrationes ... de dissonantiis musicalibus'.⁸⁵ Artusi was born after Giovanni del Lago died, but he may have been acquainted with friends of his, and possibly he had an entrée to Paolo Manuzio's library. Items 2, 14, 25, and 26 of Paris 1110 must have been in Del Lago's possession. We do not know how they got separated from the other letters now in Vat. lat. 5318. Artusi was avidly interested in Willaert's chromatic duo, for he reprinted in L'Artusi Spataro's letter of 9 September 1524 to Pietro Aaron, in which the duo is discussed in detail (see no. 13). Artusi claims that he had possession of Spataro's autograph, which no longer exists. Letter 13 also is found in Paris 1110 (no. 20), in a later sixteenth-century hand. The differences between the two versions are sufficiently great to suggest that one derives from Spataro's draft, the other from the letter sent to Aaron. To which did Artusi have access?

The items in Paris 1110 that are later sixteenth-century copies of letters in Vat. lat. 5318 must have been transcribed in Venice. Unfortunately, we have no samples of Artusi's handwriting that would confirm the hand as his.⁸⁶ But time, place, and motive are on his side, and he is the most logical person to have brought together the Venetian and Bolognese sections of Paris 1110. Perhaps Artusi had both versions of Spataro's letter. The copies of the Vat. lat. letters are generally quite accurate, which leads us to believe that the version of Spataro's letter in Paris 1110 was copied from the autograph original and the version printed in Artusi's treatise comes from the draft. It is quite possible that Spataro made changes while recopying the letter. If this sequence of events is correct, we must then ascertain how Artusi obtained Spataro's drafts. In the Trimerone, Bottrigari places the discovery and possession of Spataro's letters into the mouth of Melone. But, in the treatises, Melone is merely a fictional alter ego of Bottrigari. Would Bottrigari have let these letters go out of his hands? Or were they really in Melone's hands and therefore among the materials Artusi obtained from Melone's widow? Here we must let the matter rest.

⁸³ On Artusi's life, see Oscar Mischiati, *La prassi musicale presso i Canonici regolari del Ss.* Salvatore nei secoli XVI e XVII (Rome, 1985), pp. 15 and 19–22.

⁸⁴ See Claude V. Palisca, 'Artusi, Giovanni Maria', The New Grove Dictionary, i. 646-8.

⁸⁵ Mischiati, La prassi, pp. 20-1. This treatise is the Seconda parte dell'arte del contraponto, nella quale si tratta dell'utile et uso delle dissonanze, published in the following year.

⁸⁶ Jeppesen ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 10) states that the copies were written by Sigonio. It is true that the hands are similar, but they are not identical. Nothing in Sigonio's letters suggests acquaintance with the present Correspondence.

3 Giovanni Spataro

ONE of Giovanni Spataro's characteristic sayings runs like a leitmotiv through his letters: 'Even if I have one foot in the grave, I still wish to learn.' During the years covered by the Correspondence, Spataro was in his 60s and 70s. Age could not diminish his enthusiasm for 'la nostra delectabile harmonica facultà', nor did it dim his wits: some twenty years older than Pietro Aaron and Giovanni del Lago, Spataro was still leading the way down new theoretical paths for his younger colleagues.

Spataro spent his entire life in his native city of Bologna. Of his early years little is known. He was the grandson of Maestro Conte di Giovanni Spataro, a merchant who dealt in swords, who died in 1471.¹ Spataro's father Guido had evidently died before then, because the estate was to be divided between Giovanni and his two brothers Jacopo and Guido. Since all three children were minors, they were placed under the guardianship of Antonio di Antonio Spataro. The family also included the mother, Perpetua di Giovanni Bertuccini, and two sisters, Francesca and Margherita. Spataro's grandfather was well-to-do, and at his death in 1541 Giovanni still lived in the family home in the Borgo delle Casse, situated in the parish of San Lorenzo di Porta Stieri. Spataro was born in either 1458 or 1459. In a letter of 4 January 1529 (no. 17) he mentions that he is now in his seventieth year, and in another letter of 30 January 1531 (no. 30) he says he is seventy-two years old. In his will of 26 October 1535 he calls himself 'pervenuto a la età decrepita de li anni 76'. Since the baptismal records of Bologna go back to 1 January 1459 and Spataro's name is not found in that year,² it is likely that his birthdate lies in the latter part of 1458, and perhaps 26 October; three of his wills are dated in October, two of them on the 26th.³

¹ The following account of Spataro's life is based on the article by Lodovico Frati, 'Per la storia della musica in Bologna dal secolo XV al XVI', *Rivista musicale italiana* 24 (1917), 449–78. Frati's research in the notarial archives yielded valuable information on Spataro's family and brought to light four of Spataro's five wills. These are of particular significance because they mention a number of Spataro's choir-books that he left to his church. Five of these are still extant and have been described and catalogued by Frank Tirro in *Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks*, the first volume of *Renaissance Musical Sources in the Archive of San Petronio in Bologna* (Renaissance Manuscript Studies 4; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1986). Spataro's treatises and letters were discussed in some depth by Gaetano Gaspari in articles that appeared in the 1860s; these are now conveniently gathered in reprint in *Musica e musicisti a Bologna*.

² See Frank Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks in the Archive of San Petronio in Bologna' (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1974), p. 171. It is possible, however, that the records are not complete for the early years.

³ This observation was first made by Tirro; see ibid., p. 176 n. a.

We do not know whether Spataro followed in his grandfather's footsteps in his youth, but a legacy in his will of 1535 suggests that he had some training as a swordmaker: his 'compare', the blacksmith Maestro Giampietro, is to receive his iron anvil weighing 4,000 lb. This was not merely a memento of his grandfather: Spataro says he had used it. Gaetano Gaspari, unaware of the documents discovered by Frati, had dismissed Gafurio's epigram against Spataro, which begins 'Qui gladios quondam corio vestibat et enses' ('Who once in leather swords and sabres clad'), as pure invective, based merely on the meaning of spadaro, 'swordmaker'.⁴ While Gafurio's verses turn out to have a factual basis, the epigram loses none of its sting, for Gafurio wanted to emphasize Spataro's common origins and lack of education.⁵ Spataro did not attend university, nor did he ever enter holy orders. From 1505 on, the date of his first recorded position, his whole life revolved around the church of San Petronio. But he was then forty-seven years old. His earlier years remain something of a mystery.

Certainly the decisive event in Spataro's life was his study with Bartolomeo Ramis, his revered 'preceptore'. This took place some time in the 1470s⁶ and may have continued to 1484, when Ramis gave Spataro a 'piculo tractato' (no. 29, para. 7), perhaps as he was leaving for Rome. Spataro inherited from his teacher not only a love of music in all its aspects but also a sharply polemical streak; if Spataro had literally forged swords in his youth, he figuratively put them to good use in his battles with Nicolò Burzio and Franchino Gafurio in defence of his beloved teacher. Even Gafurio had to concede that Spataro, although 'illiteratus' (not being able to write Latin), was 'in musicis acutissimus'.⁷ Spataro is not very informative about his early years, apart from his study with Ramis, but a chance remark confirms that he was a tradesman; Ramis came

⁴ 'Ricerche, documenti e memorie risguardanti la storia dell'arte musicale in Bologna', in *Musica e musicisti a Bologna*, pp. 39-40.

⁵ Spataro was very sensitive on the point, and his criticisms of Gafurio's writings include grammar as well (these corrections he credits to 'li nostri gramatici'). On Spataro's spelling and grammar, see the Principles of the Edition.

⁶ The outline of Ramis's life is fairly well known, but only one date can be securely attached to him, the year of publication of his *Musica practica* in Bologna, 1482. Spataro says this book had been ready for ten years before it was published (*Honesta defensio*, fo. B6'); how many of these ten years were spent in Bologna is not known. On Ramis, see the Biographical Dictionary.

⁷ De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum (Milan, 1518), fo. 77^r. Spataro protested that it was perfectly possible to know music, philosophy, and other mathematical sciences without having knowledge of Latin; see the remarks in his *Errori de Franchino Gafurio* quoted in Gaspari, 'Ricerche, documenti e memorie', in *Musica e musicisti*, pp. 50-1. It has sometimes been asserted that Spataro could not read Latin. This seems unlikely because he had to read Latin in order to criticize the treatises of Burzio and Gafurio. But he undoubtedly read it with difficulty, since he asked Gafurio to write to him in Italian instead.

to his shop to give him lessons.⁸ In the title of his 1491 treatise against Burzio he calls himself a 'humble professor of music'; evidently he too, like his teacher, had no formal position. The treatise was dedicated to Antongaleazzo Bentivoglio, scion of the rulers of Bologna and a Protonotary Apostolic, then aged nineteen, to whom Spataro declares himself indebted not only for his faculties but also his life.9 In several letters Spataro mentions a relationship with Hermes Bentivoglio, Antongaleazzo's younger brother, who was born in 1482.¹⁰ One of Spataro's lost treatises was written for Hermes, who was also the recipient of two masses: the 'Missa della pera' was so named because Hermes bore a pear in his coat of arms, and the 'Missa Pera, pera' incorporates a Bolognese street-cry. It seems likely that Spataro functioned, probably informally, as music tutor in the Bentivoglio household, and perhaps it is no coincidence that his first position at San Petronio comes at a time when the Bentivoglio family had become very unpopular in the city, one year before they were forced to flee Bologna.

Spataro received his first payment at San Petronio as a simple singer in March 1505 with a monthly salary of 3 lire.¹¹ Contrary to Gaspari's implication, he does not seem to have been a regular singer during the years preceding his appointment as 'maestro de canto', for he was paid only for that one month in 1505. He received 15 lire in 1506, 12 lire in 1507 and 1508, 15 lire in 1509, 24 lire in 1510, and 38 lire 4 soldi in 1511.¹² Obviously, he was not dependent on the position for living expenses. The inheritance from his grandfather must have been substantial: in 1471 the business, which was a partnership, had a capital of 4,127 lire. Spataro and his brothers owned at least two houses apart from the family home, and these brought in rental income.¹³ Once Spataro was promoted to 'maestro de canto', on 30 June 1512, he received a regular salary of 10 lire a month.¹⁴ He kept this position throughout his life, although from May 1533 he had the assistance of Michele Cimatore.¹⁵ He welcomed the help,

 9 'A la quale essendo non solo delle mie facultà, ma della propria vita debitore'; Honesta defensio, fo. A1°.

¹¹ Gaspari, 'La Musica in San Petronio', in Musica e musicisti, p. 135 n. 3.

¹² See Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', p. 174.

¹³ See Frati, 'Per la storia', pp. 456–7. In 1534 he was able to give 300 lire to San Petronio, to be invested at interest, which was to pay for two daily masses after his death, one for the repose of his soul, 'in cantu plano', the other a mass called 'La Comune de S. Petronio' (pp. 457 and 462).

462).
¹⁴ Gaspari, 'La Musica in San Petronio', in *Musica e musicisti*, p. 139.
¹⁵ Ibid., p. 142.

⁸ Castigating Burzio for his faulty explanation of proportions, Spataro says: 'Legi un poco queste mie proportione, le quale me insegnò lo mio Ramus Musicorum princeps stando a solazo cum mi nella mia apotecha' (*Honesta defensio*, fo. F3').

¹⁰ See the Biographical Dictionary.

as he remarked to Aaron, because it allowed him more time to revise his treatises for publication (no. 58, para. 5). Unfortunately, his extant letters stop shortly thereafter; the last is dated 30 October 1533 (no. 60). By 1535 he already had ordered his tombstone, which was engraved with the family arms, a shield bearing an arm holding a cudgel to which were attached three chains, each ending in a ball, and the inscription 'S. Sepulchrum Johannis Spatarij Musici Bononiensis et heredum suorum'.¹⁶ Civic and family pride remained with Spataro until the end; he always called himself 'musico bolognese', and he inscribed the manuscript copies of his treatises with his coat of arms.¹⁷ Spataro died on 17 January 1541 and was buried in the church of San Petronio, as he had wished.¹⁸

Spataro was a lifelong student, a singer, a composer, and a theorist, but above all he was a teacher. Del Lago could not offer him any greater compliment than to call him 'preceptore' (no. 15, para. 1). He loved to be sought out and always answered at length; such efforts, he said, 'are justified by many reasons: first to learn, second to teach, and third to be able to correct myself, if I have erred in any place in my works' (no. 41, para. 2). It is in this light that we must read his polemical treatises and his criticisms in the present letters. Spataro often says that he is not motivated by hatred or rancour, 'but only the zeal of the love of virtue and my neighbour, with a certain ardent desire for union that I should like to see between the learned men of this profession, so that all might be as one body and united in one wish, founded in the discipline of pure truth' (no. 31, para. 2). In his zeal to set everyone on the right path, he often vilified his enemies and wounded his friends. Since Aaron had called him 'father and teacher', Spataro 'behaved like a father and teacher towards him, because the duty of a father and teacher is to train the son and pupil so he will not fall into error' (no. 15, para. 5).¹⁹ Yet to this same 'son and pupil' he could write: 'I know that I am nobody among the learned and I'll never

¹⁷ In 1531, when it was a question of Aaron's publishing Spataro's treatise on the *sesquialtera* relation, Spataro remarked that the coat of arms in the front of the book should not be printed (no. 32, para. 2). The insignia on the copy of Spataro's 'Utile et breve regule' in British Library, Add. MS 4920, is not an attempt at rendering Spataro's coat of arms, but the emblem of the Servite Order: a three-branched lily whose trunk is bisected with a large capital S. The copy of Aaron's *Lucidario* in the Biblioteca Marucelliana in Florence is stamped with this emblem, indicating its provenance from the library of SS. Annunziata, the Servite church in Florence.

¹⁸ Frati, 'Per la storia', p. 463. His monument, of which Frati gives a transcription (differing from the tombstone mentioned in the will of 1535), was temporarily removed in 1664 and apparently never replaced; it has not been found.

¹⁹ Spataro uses strikingly similar language in 'training' Gafurio: 'tali errori soi non son da me demonstrati et in luce aducti per livore et per odio et rancore come lui dice. Ma solo per amaestrarlo, et per diffensione et zelo de la mera virtù et verità, la quale quanto più è da me amata, tanto più a lui è odiosa et strana'. See *Dilucide et probatissime demonstratione ... contra certe* frivole et vane excusatione da Franchino Gafurio ... aducte (Bologna, 1521), fo. a7[°]. amount to anything, but as one who seeks to learn, I always study and keep in musical practice' (no. 5, para. 1). And he is sincere. He is aware that his manner of writing hurts his friends and offends his colleagues, but he cannot control his pen when he is aroused.

Spataro's attachment to his own 'preceptore' is without parallel in his time, and his enthusiasm for 'la nostra delectabile harmonica facultà' may be one born of a late discovery. We must remember that Ramis taught music without a university stipend, and anyone who wanted to study with him would have had to pay for the lessons. Given his inheritance from his merchant grandfather, Spataro could have afforded this expense. It was surely his own decision to study music, and he probably undertook it without any professional intention. Normally, musicians received their first instruction as choirboys. Spataro, however, seems to have apprenticed himself to Ramis, learning music the way he must have learnt his swordsmith's trade, by being apprenticed to a master craftsman. He began as a student, but ended as a disciple. Many aspects of Spataro's character are directly traceable to his relationship with his teacher, and he probably tried to follow Ramis's methods in instructing the younger generation. He had his own coterie of disciples in the 'musici bolognesi'.²⁰

Spataro is among the best teachers because he is not content to lay down rules: he continually seeks to account for them. In the delicate interplay between authority and reason, Spataro accepts no statement emanating from 'la docta antiquità' that is not founded in sound logic. One of his inheritances from Ramis was a sceptical attitude towards received truth. Whereas Giovanni del Lago constantly cites ancient authorities whenever he wants to prove a statement, Spataro gives preference to reason. When a friend objected to a certain contrapuntal procedure in his 'Missa O salutaris hostia', Spataro replied that if it were legitimate to do only what has already been done, music would be a finite art and therefore not one of the liberal arts, the boundaries of which are unlimited. He convinced his friend that 'even if such a passage cannot be defended by authority, manifestly simple reason permits it' (no. 55, para. 1; see also no. 39, para. 2). When Del Lago found fault with Spataro for placing a long in the middle of a ligature, contrary to all theoretical precepts, Spataro countered that these statements 'are of little significance and no value and importance, because they are not adduced with any demonstrable reason'; if the form of the note can be shown unequivocally by a tail, there is no reason not to write a long in the middle of a ligature (no. 48, para. 13). When pressed, Spataro will sometimes defend himself with one of his favourite sayings: 'usus est altera lex', practice itself is as

²⁰ On this group of singers and musicians, see the Biographical Dictionary.

¹⁶ Frati, 'Per la storia', pp. 461-2.

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good as a rule. But practice is a two-edged sword, especially for a theorist, and Spataro himself often enough used the other blade. He wanted to publish his writings very much, but he feared that it would be a waste of time and money, 'because many have written on the subject, and few care about anything except the practice of singing; those who want to treat the matter according to practice find that reason is against them, and those who want to proceed according to reason find that practice contradicts them' (no. 30, para. 10).

We learn from his letters that Spataro made a distinction between theory for 'li rudi principianti' and theory for experienced composers. When Aaron criticized certain contrapuntal rules transmitted by fifteenthcentury authors, Spataro defended 'la docta antiquità': these rules were meant for beginners, to keep them from wandering according to their fancy. True composers, however, must be born, and they find ways to write that are sanctioned by no rules (see especially nos. 11 and 22). Spataro found a number of faults with Aaron's *Toscanello*, but he excused many of them because Aaron was writing for beginners, not for 'the learned and speculative musician, who proceeds according to reason and the light of intelligence' (no. 7, para. 7). Spataro was proud to place himself in this company, and even when explaining such elementary matters as rules of notation he offers interesting insights into his mode of reasoning.²¹

Spataro published four books on music. Only one of them could properly be considered a treatise, the Tractato di musica on the sesquialtera relation, which came out in Venice in 1531. The other three are polemical responses to Nicolò Burzio (Honesta defensio of 1491) and Franchino Gafurio (Errori de Franchino Gafurio of January 1521 and Dilucide et probatissime demonstratione of May 1521).²² By the 1520s, the controversy with Burzio had long been over; his name does not occur in the Correspondence. But Spataro had not finished with Gafurio, even after his death in 1522; his letters shed new light on that affair and clearly show that he still intended to set the record straight and purge the musical community of the erroneous ideas of 'quello pazzo et insensato Franchino'. If we include the present Correspondence, Spataro's unpublished writings far outweigh the printed ones. Unfortunately, nearly all of them are lost, but much can be learnt about them from Spataro's letters. The Correspondence also allows us to gain insight into the publication of a book on music theory in the Renaissance.

²¹ See, for example, his explanation of the reason for the rule 'like before like is always perfect' in no. 6, para. 3.

²² On the first two treatises, see Gaspari, 'Ricerche, documenti e memorie', in *Musica e musicisti*, pp. 42-53.

The origin of the Tractato di musica di Gioanni Spataro musico bolognese nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata exercitate [sic] (Venice, 1531) goes back to 1521, as Spataro explains at the very end of the treatise. In that year Aaron visited Bologna, and he and Spataro engaged in many discussions, among them whether it was legitimate to perfect the semibreve in sesquialtera under O and C and the breve in *sesquialtera* under ϕ and φ . At that point nothing was concluded, since Aaron had to return to Imola, but Spataro decided to investigate the matter further until he arrived at the truth. He eventually decided that the semibreve is indeed perfect under sesquialtera, and the major part of his treatise consists in demonstrating his assertion, which runs counter to the doctrine of Gafurio.²³ Thus this treatise too is not without its polemical aspects. We know from his letter of 8 April 1523 to Aaron that the treatise was completed by that date, for he was trying to find someone to translate it into Latin before he sent it to Aaron (no. 6, para. 9). At this time, Spataro was still smarting from Gafurio's charge that he was 'illiteratus', and he hoped to regain esteem by bringing out his work in Latin, even though he would have to find a translator, as Aaron had done with his first treatise. Since there is a gap in the correspondence at this point, we do not know whether the treatise actually reached Aaron. At any rate, Spataro put it aside because something else had piqued his interest.

In August or September 1523 Aaron sent Spataro a copy of his newly published treatise in the vernacular, the Thoscanello de la musica. Spataro plunged into reading it with keen enthusiasm. And here begins a series of letters of great interest. The first nine chapters, he reports to Aaron, proceed with 'great order and the light of intelligence', but then some statements puzzle him, and he begins to raise questions, 'not for the sake of disputation nor in a wish to oppose your clear opinions, but only for my satisfaction and enlightenment' (no. 7, para. 2). At least nine review letters were written, six of which survive (see nos. 7-12). They treat the values of notes under different mensurations and the effect of blackening notes, Aaron's erroneous use of terms, problematic passages in compositions by Ramis, Rosino da Fermi, and Tinctoris, the rule of beginning and ending with a perfect consonance, allowable dissonances in composition, the effect of the sharp-sign, and the necessity of notating accidentals. This last point evidently reminded Spataro of Adrian Willaert's chromatic duo, a subject that is taken up in the following letters—our only contemporary witness to what musicians thought about this extraordinary work.

Reading Aaron's treatise had an electrifying effect on Spataro: it set him to writing his own treatise on the same subject (see no. 8, para. 2). As we

 23 On the disagreement, which is fundamental to an understanding of Spataro's letters, see Ch. 8.

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learn from later letters, Spataro had already written a good deal about music that he had not published. Once he saw that Aaron was able to bring out a handsome treatise, with music examples—and in the vernacular at that—his competitive spirit was ignited. Aaron was a dear friend, but certain aspects of his treatise were ill conceived, and his slanting of the book towards beginners left out many subtle considerations of interest to real musicians.

Spataro's 'novo tractato in lingua materna' was written with incredible speed. By the first of November the work was finished (no. 8, para. 2), and he was eager to send it to Aaron to look over, 'so I can more securely place it before the public' (para. 7). Five days later, he began to have second thoughts, writing to Aaron that he has 'entered into a labyrinth' in this matter, and he prays that God will give him grace to come out of it with honour. 'However', he continues, 'the work is not yet published, so one can still hide and emend things, and if Your Excellency finds it good I believe you will have no less concern for my honour than I would myself, for I would do the same for you' (no. 9, para. 6). He compares himself to a sick man who has long put off seeing a doctor: when he finally goes to a good one and takes the bitter medicine and is cured, he regrets having waited so long. Thus Spataro knows his treatise is in good hands and that Aaron will tell him the truth about it, for truth is what brings a sick man back to health (no. 10, paras. 5-6). By the end of April 1524 Aaron had read the treatise and returned it to Spataro (see no. 11, para. 1). Unfortunately, there is a gap in the correspondence here, and we do not know Aaron's opinion of it or Spataro's reaction to it. He makes no further mention of this treatise in his letters to Aaron, and he continues with his criticisms of the Thoscanello, with much trepidation, for fear of losing his friend (see no. 11, para. 11). And this is indeed what happened in the end. As Spataro wrote to Del Lago in 1529, Aaron had promised to reply when the review was finished, but he never did (no. 27, para. 2). For Spataro, this response was more painful than any rejoinder Aaron could have made because it broke the human and scholarly communication between the two. Spataro's bitter disappointment is reflected in his remark: 'I have had no response whatever from our venerable Fra Pietro, and I really don't care because there's nothing to be gained from him; in this field he is not only a pauper but poverty itself.'

During the period when Spataro and Aaron were not on corresponding terms, Giovanni del Lago renewed his friendship with Spataro, addressing him as 'teacher' and asking questions about some of Spataro's compositions. Spataro was only too eager to make contact with a kindred spirit, and he was happy to oblige his friend because 'I know that Your Excellency doesn't attend to trifles but strives for the summit of the

science of music' (no. 15, para. 1). Their mutual regard deepened to the point where Del Lago expressed an interest in publishing Spataro's treatise on mensural music, of which he had a copy. The letter itself is lost, but Spataro's reply of 1 September 1528 (no. 16) gives us the history of this treatise, of which there were three versions. The first was very short; it was written quickly for Hermes Bentivoglio, but never completed.²⁴ The second version was somewhat expanded.²⁵ The third version was completely revised about two years earlier and completed to his satisfaction, and no one else has a copy of it. Spataro would prefer to have this version published, and he offers to send it to Del Lago 'for review and correction'. The offer was accepted, and by January 1529 the treatise was in Del Lago's hands. Although his letter is lost, we do know something about Del Lago's reaction to the treatise. To begin with, he thought it did not have a proper ending. Spataro replied that he did not have time to look the treatise over before giving it to the messenger, and that he remembered neither the beginning, middle, nor end. He suggested that Del Lago make up an appropriate ending. He also agreed with him that it would be a good idea to add treatises on proportions and counterpoint. Indeed, he had already written a small treatise on proportions and had a good part of a treatise on counterpoint completed, but it needed to be condensed, and there was no time for that because of the irksome task of teaching the choirboys. At this time, Spataro's age was beginning to weigh heavily upon him. He reminds Del Lago that he is now seventy years old, and he cares little whether his works are printed; besides, he says, it would be a waste of time and money, because many modern musicians do not observe the rules anyway. Moreover, the treatise on proportions would be difficult to publish, since the examples contain halfblackened notes and other typographical symbols that he had never seen in print; besides, it would require folio format and cost a lot to print. But he leaves the whole matter to Del Lago's pleasure (see no. 17, paras. 1-4). In his next letter he advises Del Lago not to bother with the book on mensural music if it does not seem worth printing 'because I know that nowadays the art of mensural music is held in small esteem' (no. 18, para. 5).

In mid-March, undoubtedly flattered by Del Lago's interest, Spataro promised to send the treatise on proportions and to start revising the

²⁴ This is probably the 'Utile et breve regule di canto composite per Maestro Zoanne di Spadari da Bologna' in British Library, Add. MS 4920, dated 1510. See the facsimile edn. by Giuseppe Vecchi (Johannis Spatarii Opera omnia, ii; Bologna, 1962), and the transcription in *Quadrivium* 5 (1962), 5–68.

²⁵ This is probably the treatise Spataro undertook while reading Aaron's *Thoscanello* in 1523, which would explain why he was able to finish it in such a short time. It is likely that Del Lago had a copy of this version. On Del Lago's quotations from Spataro's treatises, see Ch. 7.

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counterpoint treatise as soon as he felt better (no. 20). By the end of that month, he had already seen the proofs of the first part of the work, and he liked it, but he wondered, if the treatises on proportions and counterpoint were added, whether there should not be an addition to the title, which now reads: 'Utile et breve tractato de canto mensurato, composito per Maestro Zoanne Spatario, musico bolognese, ad instantia de lo illustre Signore et patrono suo observantissimo, Messer Hermes Bentivoglio', that is, 'con la additione de dui altri tractati, scilicet uno de contrapuncto et l'altro de proportione a le figure del canto mensurato applicate'. He would also prefer to see it come out in folio size ('foglio integro') because it is probably larger than Del Lago thinks; also, the examples would be easier to set. He asks Del Lago to keep an eye on the printer to see that things come out right and to be careful in correcting the proofs, because there are some errors. He will send the treatise on proportions soon and he promises to get to work on the counterpoint treatise, although he has not yet quite recovered from his illness (see no. 21).

Revising the counterpoint treatise turned out to be rather difficult. In explaining why, Spataro offers Del Lago (and us) a tantalizing glimpse into his desk drawer:

That treatise [on proportions] was the third part of a very large volume, divided into three parts. I called the first part *Appostille*, which only concerned my response to certain annotations that Franchino Gafurio wrote in his own hand in my teacher's treatise, *Practica*.²⁶ The second part was called *Epistole* and contained many musical questions that arose between us.²⁷ And the third part was this treatise on proportions, which proceeds with more order, that is by genera and species, than the *Appostille* and *Epistole*, which proceed in the order in which I was provoked by Franchino. Thus, even though these parts deal with mensural music, chant, counterpoint, and proportions, this type of treatment is not arranged in that manner and order that are used in treatises and introductions, that is, to begin with elementary principles and by way of rules proceed to the

²⁶ The copy of Ramis's treatise with Gafurio's annotations is preserved in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna with the call-number A. 80. Johannes Wolf, in his edn. of the *Musica practica*, included Gafurio's comments in footnotes. Spataro was so enraged by Gafurio's remarks that when Aaron asked about purchasing Ramis's treatise, he refused to lend him his copy (the only one in Bologna), saying that if he could buy another, he would throw this one into the fire (see no. 36, para. 11).

²⁷ Spataro mentions his correspondence with Gafurio several times. In his letter to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni of 1 Aug. 1517, he says that he and Gafurio have exchanged letters for twenty-four years, and that he has currently been reviewing the *Enchiridion musices* of Nicolaus Wollick at Gafurio's request (no. 2, para. 3). Since he writes that the treatise is drawn largely from Gafurio's works, Spataro must have had a great deal to say about it. In a later letter to Del Lago, of 23 Aug. 1529, Spataro speaks of the eighteen letters he sent to Gafurio on his errors in the treatise *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* of 1518, to which Gafurio never responded, but at the end published his *Apologia . . . adversus Joannem Spatarium et complices musicos bononienses* (Turin, 1520) and sent copies to various canons at San Petronio, 'hoping to strip me of my honour with one stroke' (no. 27, para. 3).

summit of the art. Therefore, in order to treat counterpoint, it will be necessary to write a treatise that proceeds in order, which (as I said) I will undertake. And I am of a mind to make it brief, because written rules can teach the first rudiments of counterpoint very well, but they won't make a good composer, because good composers are born just as poets are born (no. 22, paras. 2-3).

In the same letter he writes that he is enclosing the treatise on proportions, cautioning Del Lago that since he wrote it he has not read or revised it, so it should be examined carefully to see if it is worthy of publication. Moreover, if there are errors in it, in writing or in thought ('così nel scripto come facultà'), Del Lago should correct them. Over the next few months letters go back and forth, and in July the counterpoint treatise finally is sent to Del Lago, its dedicatee, even though Spataro feels he should wait a year and then look at it again. But he trusts in Del Lago's judgement, asking him to 'correct anything you don't like as if it were your own', even to change the beginning or ending if he wishes (no. 26). The summer passes, and on 23 August Spataro writes (no. 27) that he is delighted to hear that Del Lago is pleased with the treatise on proportions, and he brushes aside the latter's protestations that he is unworthy of the honour of the dedication of the counterpoint treatise. The beginning of the letter is full of happy anticipation at getting the treatises printed, but a dark note creeps in with the acknowledgement that Del Lago has certain questions that he would like to resolve. Spataro is eager to hear what they are, even though, he repeats, he has left all the corrections to Del Lago, in whose skill and knowledge he has full confidence. One is never too old to learn, he tells Del Lago, and besides, he wishes to avoid the 'error (as you write) into which our excellent and venerable Fra Pietro Aaron fell, who (having too much confidence in himself) published three musical treatises which brought him very little honour among experts' (para. 2).

Del Lago's reply of 8 October 1529 (no. 28) is the first letter from him to Spataro that has been preserved. He begins by quoting Spataro's letter of 5 July (no. 26) *in extenso*, and also a passage from his letter of 23 August (no. 27), to remind Spataro of the free rein given him in making corrections.²⁸ Then, cautiously and reluctantly, calling himself the least of Spataro's disciples, Del Lago raises his queries. Spataro's definition of *fuga* does not fit his example (and he quotes Prosdocimo, Tinctoris, Gafurio, Aaron, and Ramis to prove Spataro wrong), his definition of *talea* does not agree with the examples Del Lago has seen, and the definition of *color* is wrong. Del Lago ends by apologizing for having to make these criticisms; he is only fulfilling the office of a true friend who has his

 $^{28}\,$ The original letter probably did not include these quotations. On Del Lago's revisions of his letters, see Ch. 6.

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honour at heart. He assures Spataro that preparations for printing are under way, but it will take some time. Then Del Lago asks to see Spataro's *Appostille*, because it might clear up some of his other questions on points in all three of the treatises Spataro has sent him.

Spataro replied at length on 24 November (no. 29). He was peeved at the 'childish and ill-considered argumentation' Del Lago made with regard to the example of fuga, which was not wrong. Moreover, Del Lago misunderstood Tinctoris and Ramis. Spataro ridicules him for adducing Tinctoris's definition in the matter of *talea*, for Tinctoris 'was crazy and thought he knew a lot more than he did, as his works show', because his definition of *talea* is word for word the same as that for *color* (para. 7).²⁹ Moreover, Spataro says, his definitions are correct because they come from a small treatise that Ramis gave him in 1484, and Ramis was very learned and thoroughly acquainted with older usages. By the time he reaches the end of this lengthy letter, Spataro is plainly fed up with Del Lago's 'puerile questions'; he accuses him of delaying the production for months and using the veil of disputation to improve his knowledge. Finally, he demands that he return all his treatises, since, he comments sarcastically, it would do Del Lago's reputation little honour to publish his 'humile et basse opere'. Not a folio of the Appostille will he send him. It was not for nothing, he says, that he consulted with Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni before sending him his treatises, for he had heard some things about him that gave him pause. Del Lago is not to expect any more letters from him in answer to his childish arguments. But once he has returned the treatises, they will be 'amici come prima'.

Naturally, this led to a prolonged break between the two. Spataro narrated the whole story to Aaron in his letter of 30 January 1531 (no. 30), thanking him for his intervention in getting Del Lago to return the treatises. Long forgotten is his bitter assessment of Aaron. Overflowing with gratifude towards his 'dearest friend', he says: 'Just think how happy and pleased I was and what a wonderful example I have learnt from you in being humble towards you—you who write to me, unworthy of even naming you, with such cordial humility that I am struck dumb with amazement' (para. 1). Now Spataro suggests that Aaron might like to publish the treatises. He would be happy to give everything to Aaron, but, he says, 'it would seem better to me to honour you with more learned works and treatises than these' and he mentions his treatise on the perfection produced by *sesquialtera*, 'very learned and founded in mathematics'. He also has 'certain letters written to the late Franchino Gafurio on his *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, all founded in speculative music' (para. 11). By March it had been decided that the treatise on *sesquialtera* would be published, with a dedication to Aaron. Spataro gives him permission to change the dedication if he wishes, and he also suggests that if he finds the criticism of Gafurio too harsh, he may temper the wording, without changing the meaning (no. 32, para. 2). The rest of the treatises he intends to give to Aaron as a gift, there being no worthier heir. The next letters show that Spataro continued to revise his treatises on counterpoint and proportions with a view to publishing them together with the *sesquialtera* treatise.

In the end, only the treatise on *sesquialtera* was printed, in October 1531. By November Spataro had received a copy, in which he noticed that there were some errors. He asked Aaron to get his original manuscript back from the printer and keep it in order to make corrections in case anyone else should wonder about it (no. 36, para. 12). This Aaron was able to do, as we learn from Spataro's letter to him of 30 January 1532 (no. 37, para. 2), in which he speaks of 'multi errori'. A few months later, Aaron asked Spataro for a copy of his treatise with the corrections marked, and Spataro sent him one together with a letter dated 12 April 1532 (no. 40). He explains some of the errors and mentions a passage in the third chapter which he says he did not write. He is sending the corrections not because he wishes to criticize Aaron for not having taken more care with the printing but only because Aaron has asked for them, and he would certainly be grateful if Aaron would correct any copies of the treatise that happen to fall into his hands.

Although the sesquialtera treatise was the only one to see print, Spataro and Aaron continued to discuss the publication of Spataro's other treatises. In particular, Aaron was intrigued by the letters, and Spataro responded on 30 January 1532 that 'with regard to my letters on music, I think I will do something, because the administrators of San Petronio have offered (at their expense) to give me an assistant who will help me in teaching the clerics, so I shall have time to spend on the revision of the letters' (no. 37, para. 2). More than a year later, the possibility of printing the treatise on mensural music was still under discussion. Spataro asked Aaron to return it because he had found an engraver in Bologna who would do it free because his son was a choirboy under Spataro's direction at San Petronio (no. 55, para. 7). Aaron misinterpreted Spataro's intentions in asking for the return of the treatise, thinking he no longer had any faith in him, but Spataro reassured him that he merely wanted to look it over again. Indeed, some changes were necessary, and, he says, he took the opportunity to include more esoteric matters, especially those that he and Del Lago had disagreed on, including passages in his own works (no. 58, para. 5).

²⁹ Spataro was mistaken about this; see the Commentary on no. 29.

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At this point the correspondence between Spataro and Aaron draws to a close. We have no idea why. Since there was no break in their relations, it seems more likely that the remaining letters are missing. Aaron retained the warmest regard for his friend, and in his *Lucidario* of 1545, published after Spataro's death, he frequently refers to 'l'eccellente et consumato musico Messer Gioan Spadaro'.

Besides the treatises on mensural music, counterpoint, proportions, and sesquialtera, and the Appostille and Epistole, Spataro mentions other writings that have not come down to us. These were in the nature of reviews, a mode of writing that he found particularly congenial. After Aaron had recovered from Spataro's nine review letters on the Thoscanello, he sent him the manuscript of his Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato. Their correspondence during this period is lost, and we should not know about this were it not for a remark that Spataro makes in a letter to Del Lago of 23 August 1529. He had sought to persuade Aaron 'to withdraw publication of that treatise on the modes that he has recently published, which came out just as I had said in my letter to him, that is, without order and truth, against which I have written some two hundred pages, which I have with me' (no. 27, para. 3).³⁰ It would have been highly interesting to read what Spataro had to say about this treatise, since he rarely touches on modal theory. This megacritique had predictable results, but Aaron eventually learned to cope with Spataro's habit of castigating his writings, and when he received Spataro's fifty-page critique of various debatable points in his treatises (see no. 31, para. 2), he seems to have let it pass without a murmur. (To spare his feelings, Spataro says, he wrote as if he were speaking of someone else's writings.) In particular, Spataro was concerned about Aaron's faulty demonstration of the thirty mutations possible in the Guidonian hand because he had only used flats, and he urged him, for his honour's sake, to retract what he had written. Out of that 'zeal of the love of virtue' that always motivated him, Spataro even offered to write up the correct explanation and let Aaron publish it under his own name, and this is indeed what we believe happened (see the Commentary on no. 34).

Spataro collected his letters in the hope that 'they might interest a refined soul in the future' (no. 48, para. 1). Fifty-four of them are preserved in the present Correspondence; many more are lost. These letters are far more varied and interesting than his published works, and they underscore the misfortune of his personality: his inability to loosen his emotional and intellectual bonds to his teacher Bartolomeo Ramis, with the result that what publications we have of him are all either *in toto*

³⁰ The detailed criticism possibly dates from after the publication of the treatise in 1525, because Spataro reports that Aaron was still offended by the matter in 1529.

or *in parte* in defence of Ramis. Perhaps the discovery of some of the lost treatises would change this picture.

Spataro's course of study with Ramis also included counterpoint and composition. Compositions by Spataro are mentioned in no fewer than thirty-six letters. Except for two very special pieces, these were all sacred works, Magnificats, motets, and masses, many written for Spataro's own choir at San Petronio (see Table 4, pp. xli–xliii). Since Spataro did not enter his name above these pieces in his choir-books, we are almost entirely dependent on his letters to identify them. Only two works are preserved outside Bologna, a lauda, 'Tenebre facte sunt', published in Petrucci's *Laude libro secondo* of 1507,³¹ and a motet that Spataro must have sent to Gafurio, since it appears in one of his choir-books.³²

In his earlier letters Spataro mentions a number of masses that he had composed when he was young. Since they are full of obscure canons and mind-boggling proportions, they probably date from the 1470s and 1480s, when such works were in vogue. They are all lost, and it is not likely that they were performed by Spataro's choir because they were by 1512 quite old-fashioned.³³ They still remained of interest, however, to theorists, and especially those who were nostalgic for the past, such as Giovanni del Lago. In 1520 he asked Spataro about the canonic inscriptions in the 'Missa de la tradictora'. Spataro was glad to oblige, although he warned his friend that they were 'made when I was barely out of adolescence, and they are now more difficult and laborious for me to decipher than they were then' (no. 3, para. 2). Nine years later Del Lago asked for the 'Missa de la pera'. Spataro was reluctant to send it 'because of its prolixity and length, and also because it didn't seem to me that it was worthy of being examined by any expert because of its almost inordinate length and because it was composed in my youth, when a man's brain is sometimes far from his head, and I composed it more out of caprice than to follow and hold on to any order, and also to please my patron Hermes Bentivoglio and his friends and companions' (no. 18, para. 2).

Six of the seven masses Spataro mentions were old works, and they all had tenors that the composer filled with a variety of bizarre riddles.³⁴ Two masses are discussed in some detail, with music examples. Spataro's great

³¹ Modern edn. in *Die mehrstimmige italienische Laude um 1500*, ed. Knud Jeppesen (Leipzig and Copenhagen, 1935), pp. 4-5.

³² 'In illo tempore missus est angelus Gabriel', in MS 2266 of the Archivio della Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo in Milan, fos. 100^v-103^t. A modern edn. may be found in Luigi Torchi, *L'arte musicale in Italia*, i (Milan n.d.), 35-48.

³³ Among the music mentioned in Spataro's will of 1527 that has not survived were 'certi altri libri: in li quali sono scripte et notate certe Misse: et altri concenti: overo canti antiqui et a' tempi nostri poco usitati' (Frati, 'Per la storia della musica in Bologna', p. 460).

³⁴ On the 'Missa O salutaris hostia', composed in 1533, see nos. 50-1 and 55.

delight was to wed theory with practice. Two aspects interested him in particular, proportions and the Greek harmonic system. In the 'Missa Da pacem' proportions are applied both temporally and acoustically. Temporally, the tenor of the first part of the Gloria is sung under the sign ϕ and the proportions $\frac{96}{23}\frac{1}{18}\frac{2163}{217}$ (see no. 3, paras. 8–11). Blackened notes

add to the complication. Acoustically, according to the canon, 'the first ascending species of the superparticular genus should be the seventh descending species and the descending [species] ascending' (para. 7). The first superparticular ratio, 3:2, yields the fifth, and 'ascending' means the upward leap of a fifth. The 'seventh descending species' is 9:8, or the interval of a descending whole tone. Every time that the singer sees the upward leap of a fifth he is to convert it to a descending whole tone, and vice versa: all downward leaps of fifths become ascending whole tones. In the 'Qui sedes' section of the Gloria the proportions in the tenor are to be reversed, following the directions 'alpha in omega dedatur', and the melody is to be inverted. As is often the case, the resolved version is very simple, not to say boring (compare the original and resolution in para. 14 of no. 2). From the discussion of the 'Missa de la pera', the 'Missa Pera, pera', and the 'Missa Tue voluntatis' we can see that all these works had tenors with complicated proportions, as well as complex notational problems. The 'Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena' must have been in the same vein, for Gafurio had criticized the tenor for its 'multi inexcusabili errori' (see no. 16, para. 1), which Spataro characteristically dismissed because Gafurio gave no reasons. (Spataro remarks that he was not surprised, because such food was not to Gafurio's taste.)

The ne plus ultra of Spataro's masses was the 'Missa de la tradictora', discussed at length in no. 3. The melody, probably from a folksong, is subjected to rhythmic and melodic manipulation in such a way that the original becomes completely unrecognizable (the title is most apt). In the 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' the tenor is sung backwards in the 'third species of the minor multiplex genus', subquadrupla, meaning that the note-values are multiplied by four (para. 3). In the 'Et in Spiritum' Spataro exchanges intervals, as he does in the 'Missa Da pacem'; here ascending semitones become descending major thirds and vice versa (paras. 4-5). In the 'Benedictus' the traitress appears in an entirely new guise, clothed in the raiment of the enharmonic and chromatic genera. Lest we think that Spataro sanctions chromatic and enharmonic music in a mass, he quickly explains that all non-diatonic intervals are to be converted to rests because 'such intervals are not used in the diatonic genus' (no. 3, para. 6). He stopped short of any further explanation, merely giving the resolution, because he hoped that Del Lago was familiar with these genera, since he had no time for the 'multo longo scrivere' it would otherwise require.³⁵

In casting a tenor into an enigmatic form and using the chromatic and enharmonic genera, Spataro was following in the footsteps of his teacher, whose 'Tu lumen, tu splendor patris' is mentioned in eight letters in the Correspondence. Ramis composed this work while he was in Bologna, and he gave a brief explanation of it in his *Musica practica* in the chapter 'in quo canones et subscriptiones subtiliter declarantur'.³⁶ The work itself is lost, but Gafurio, who criticized it in his *Apologia*, gives the following example of the tenor:



The canonic inscription reads: 'In perfectione minimorum per tria genera canitur melorum.' Ramis explains that each note equals six 'measures', as if the mensuration-sign were C. The rest of a breve at the beginning indicates that each syllable equals a breve. The tenor is sung three times. The first time the second note is a trihemitone or minor third above the first (i.e. the diatonic reading), the second time it is a whole tone above the first (the chromatic reading), and the third time it is a semitone above the first (the enharmonic version). Gafurio raised a number of objections,³⁷ the principal of which is that in the chromatic version the interval between tu and lu cannot be a whole tone because the two lower semitones in the chromatic tetrachord do not fill a 9:8 whole tone; he cited Boethius and three different chromatic tetrachords given by Aristoxenus. He found the enharmonic version similarly faulty. Spataro replied at length in his Errori de Franchino Gafurio. The nine errors he found in Gafurio's comments on 'Tu lumen' take up one-quarter of this treatise. Spataro concedes that Gafurio is correct concerning the two semitones in the chromatic tetrachord, but he claims that the difference, although evident in theory, is not sensible to the ear, and he reminds Gafurio that he has written to him many times that the diatonic tetrachord used 'in la activa Musica' is divided into a 16:15 semitone at the bottom followed by two whole tones, one 9:8 and the other 10:9. The difference between the latter is 81:80, which the ear cannot distinguish.³⁸ Moreover, Ramis's tenor 'was

- ³⁵ The transmutation of the melody is discussed in the Commentary on no. 3.
- ³⁶ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, pp. 90-2.
- ³⁷ The passage from the *Apologia* is reprinted in Wolf's edn. of Ramis's treatise, pp. 110-12.

³⁸ Errori de Franchino Gafurio da Lodi (Bologna, 1521), Error 38, fos. $44^{v}-45'$. He seems to contradict what he said earlier in his *Errori*, that the ear can distinguish between a theoretically correct 81:64 ditone and the 5:4 major third in practical usage, which also differ by 81:80 (Error 22, fos. 21^v-22'). If we could have asked him about this, he probably would have said that it is easier for the ear to distinguish the intonation of a consonance, the major third, than of a dissonance, the whole tone. Moreover, in 'Tu lumen' the whole tone occurs melodically in an inner voice.

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intended for performance and not just for speculation, and therefore the whole tone resulting from these two chromatic spaces necessarily is understood to be one of those two tones appearing on the practical monochord, 9:8 or 10:9^{.39} He concludes that Gafurio's argument is beside the point because Ramis's 'genera are guided by the practical order in use, and you argue theoretically'.⁴⁰

Underlying the argument between Gafurio and Spataro is their different understanding of the tuning system used in the performance of contemporary music. When Spataro speaks 'theoretice', as he does in most letters in the Correspondence, his language is that of Pythagorean intonation. However, whenever he uses the expressions 'la musica activa' or 'l'ordine practico et usitato' he adheres to Ramis's simplified division of the monochord using superparticular ratios for semitones, thirds, and sixths. Ramis seems to have arrived at this division purely empirically, but his tuning is very similar to Ptolemy's syntonic diatonic, as Spataro is aware, since he mentions it in the Errori.⁴¹ Spataro's criticism of Willaert's chromatic duo is couched solely in Pythagorean terms, but he recognized that Willaert was applying a different temperament, Aristoxenean, in practice (no. 13, para. 2). The only letters by Spataro in the Correspondence that allude to Ramis's temperament are those in which his canonic directions label intervals of semitones and thirds by superparticular ratios: 16:15 is 'el semitonio in la activa musica usitato', 5:4 'el spatio del ditono in practica exercitato' (see no. 3, para. 4).

In all the discussion of Ramis's chromatic experiment, no mention is made of another of Spataro's essays in this genre, the motet that he wrote for Leo X. It too had a tenor sung in the three melodic genera, and Gafurio was acquainted with it because he found many intolerable errors in it as well (no. 15, para. 1). Pietro Aaron adduced it in his treatise *De institutione harmonica* to prove that while contemporary music was written mainly in the diatonic genus, it was possible to make use of the chromatic and enharmonic genera:

Since composition and performance can be found in the two remaining genera, I fully believe they should not be banished and rejected, which those who are skilled in art do not do, of whom there are not a few in our time, one being Giovanni Spataro of Bologna, whom I venerate as a father for the merit of the

³⁹ '... tali distantia... è stata dal mio preceptore aducta a l'acto et exercitatione, et non solo a la speculatione, per la quale cosa serà de bisogno che el tono nascente da li predicti dui chromatici spatii sia inteso essere uno de quelli dui toni nel monochordo activo exercitato, scilicet el sesquioctavo o el sesquinono'; *Errori*, Error 39, fo. 45^r.

 40 '... el tuo arguire è extra propositum perché (ut dixi) tali soi generi son guidati da l'ordine practico et usitato, et tu arguisse theoretice'; ibid., fo. $_{45}$ ^v.

⁴¹ Ibid., fo. 22^t. On the argument between Gafurio and Spataro, see Claude V. Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought (New Haven and London, 1985), pp. 232-5. exceptional virtue with which he is blessed and because of his age. He recently composed a motet in honour of Pope Leo X, which I have both seen and sung with pleasure, in the tenor of which he made use of the chromatic and enharmonic genera, although many Italian musicians of no little renown derided it because they could not find the principle for an unusual and recondite composition, which we, however, his friends, found and have sung. I mention this to show that those genera of which both principle and composition are established are certainly not to be banished, nor should anyone who wants to use them now and then be condemned.⁴²

Spataro's motet, like his teacher's, is lost, but the tenor can be reconstructed. In 1527 Giovanni del Lago sent Spataro a resolution of the tenor and asked him about the chromatic section. Spataro replied that the tenor covers two tetrachords, diezeugmenon and hyperboleon, and the first and fifth syllables of the tenor, 'Le' and 'fex', are on paranete diezeugmenon, or D la sol re. In the chromatic tetrachord, this note is two semitones distant from paramese (b) and therefore it cannot be located on c' (as Del Lago had it) but must be signed with a sharp. Similarly, the syllables 'o' and 'pon', written on paranete hyperboleon (g'), must sound as f#' (no. 15, paras. 1-2). The next letter adds a bit more information. Part of the canon read 'tritas pausato', and this meant that the note trite in the two enharmonic tetrachords was to be replaced by a rest in order to avoid the unacceptable intervals that would fall between the syllables 'ma' and 'xi' (a quarter-tone) and 'xi' and 'mus' (two whole tones plus a quarter-tone). The rest is that of a breve under \odot (no. 16, para. 2). Although the remainder of the canonic inscription is missing, it is possible to determine that the tenor was built on the solmization syllables of 'Leo pontifex maximus' and that it began on d':



⁴² 'Verum quia in duobus reliquis compositio ac pronunciatio inveniri potest, non repellendos ac explodendos prorsus arbitror, quod non faciunt qui sunt in arte peritissimi, quales sunt hoc nostro seculo non pauci, quorum de numero est Ioannes Spartarius Bononiensis, quem ego ob meritum eximiae virtutis qua pollet, etsi [etiam?] rationetatis, uti patrem veneror. Is enim modulationem proxime in laudem Leonis decimi pontificis Maximi edidit, quam ego et vidi et libenter cecini. In cuius tenore chromaticum genus complexus est et enarmonicum, licet a nonnullis non parvi nominis italis musicis explosa fuerit quia inconsuetae atque recondit modulationis rationem minime inveniebant, quam nos tamen amici eius inveniemus [invenimus?] atque cecinimus. Quod quidem ideo dixisse volui, ut ostenderem non esse prorsus repellenda ea genera quorum et ratio constet et compositio. Neque damnandum esse qui illis quandoque uti voluerit'; *Libri tres de institutione harmonica* (Bologna, 1516), fo. 22^v. Spelling and punctuation follow the original. The grammatical errors have been corrected in the translation. For the history of this treatise and its translation into Latin see Ch. 4.

In the chromatic version, the tetrachords become b c' c#' e' and e' f' f#' a', and so the tenor must read:⁴³



In the enharmonic version the tenor appears as:



The rests replace notes that would sound a quarter-tone above e' and a quarter-tone above b, trite hyperboleon and trite diezeugmenon. The whole tenor is given in a resolved version at the end of no. 15. From it we can see that there was a rest between each word and the next, and that the sign \odot for the enharmonic and diatonic versions meant that the notes and rests were to be tripled. Spataro never mentions the text of the other voices, but from the resolution it appears that the motet began 'Cardinei cetus' in the *prima pars* and 'Partibus intulerat' in the *secunda pars*.

Spataro says nothing about the circumstances surrounding the composition of this motet. In 1516 Aaron spoke of it as a recent work. We may therefore guess that it was composed at the time of Leo X's meeting in Bologna with Francis I. Leo entered Bologna on 8 December 1515, to a rather cool reception on the part of the Bolognese, who adhered to the Bentivoglio faction, and he stayed only long enough to formalize the alliance with Francis, leaving on the 18th. During these ten days he celebrated a solemn pontifical mass in San Petronio.44 Spataro's motet may have been performed at one of the banquets. He was the foremost composer in Bologna, and since there was no princely family ruling then, the main vocal forces available for the festivities must have come from the Cathedral. The Bolognese musicians probably had little to do, however, since both Francis I and Leo X were accompanied by their own musical chapels. For Spataro, who never seems to have travelled outside Bologna, the brilliance of these two chapels, both the singers and the music, must have been overwhelming.45

⁴³ In nos. 15 and 16 Spataro mistakenly wrote the last f and c with sharps. He corrected his error in no. 17.

⁴⁴ See Ludwig von Pastor, *Storia dei Papi dalla fine del Medio Evo*, trans. and rev. Angelo Mercati (15 vols., Rome, 1942-3), iv/1. 85-93.

⁴⁵ Tirro suggests that some of the repertory in Spataro's choir-books may have been gathered at this occasion, in particular the music of Mouton, four of whose motets appear in Spataro's choir-books (exceeding the number of motets by any other composer save Spataro). See Renaissance Musical Sources, p. 3.

Giovanni Spataro

Spataro's 'Missa de la tradictora' and his motet for Leo X were not the only examples of what might be termed his 'secret diatonic art'. The very first letter in the Correspondence, written by Spataro in August 1517 to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni (no. 2), explains in detail the motet 'Ubi opus est facto'. This must be an earlier work than the motet for Leo X because Spataro writes that his task would be easier if he had a copy of the explanation he had written for a friend of Benedetto Bellabusta; since Spataro kept copies of his letters during the period of the present Correspondence, his explanation must date from an earlier period. 'Ubi opus est facto', another lost work, must have been the acme of Spataro's esoteric art. It is clear that in it he strove not only to emulate but also to surpass his master; the enigmas are not confined to the tenor but pervade the whole motet. Cavazzoni had apparently asked about the meaning of the canonic inscriptions: 'Saturn' at the beginning of the soprano, 'the equality of the father of Jove' over the alto, and 'Saturn asks for justice' over the bass. Since Spataro had decided not to follow Ramis in choosing a liturgical text, he was free to invoke pagan deities.⁴⁶ All these mottos are used in place of a clef; Saturn being the seventh planet, the clef falls on g, the seventh note above proslambanomenos (no. 2, para. 5). Since the father of Jupiter is Saturn, the alto starts on the same note (para. 9). With regard to the motto over the bass, 'Saturn asks for justice', justice, considered musically, is the octave, the most perfect interval. Therefore the bass begins an octave lower than the soprano and alto (para. 10). These three voices also moved in complicated notational and proportional ways, as we can see from the examples given in no. 47, paras. 2, 3, and 7. Moreover, in the bass Spataro applied one of his favourite theories. He was the main and most vocal proponent of the 'equal breve' theory, that is that breves are of equal duration in perfect and imperfect tempus, which derived from his conviction that the breve is the central element in the mensural system; longs and maximas are accumulations of breves, semibreves and minims are divisions of the breve.⁴⁷ The canon instructs that division should be replaced with aggregation and vice versa. This means that all the note-values except the breve are reversed, the maxima becoming a minim, the long a semibreve, and vice versa (no. 2, paras. 10-11). Not content with this, Spataro also adds a further complication, one that he had already used in two of his masses: 'The ascending leaps of the first superparticular genus should be of the second in the same genus,

⁴⁶ The text of his motet is not preserved beyond the incipit, usually given as 'Ubi opus est facto'; Del Lago refers to it as 'Ubi opus est facto, verba non sufficient', which means 'where there is need of action, words are not sufficient'.

⁴⁷ His great opponent in this matter was Gafurio, who held that the minims are equal and therefore a breve in perfect time is one-half longer than one in imperfect time. On this problem see Ch. 8.

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and vice versa.' In other words, ascending fifths and fourths are to change places (paras. 10 and 12).

The most difficult aspect of 'Ubi opus est facto', however, was its tenor. In its enigmatic version it had no notes, only a circle and a breve rest and the motto 'Each order of the tetrachords is sung in the three melodic genera, making only one interval out of the two first intervals in the second and third genera, and omitting the synemmenon tetrachord' (no. 2, para. 6). Spataro goes into a thorough explanation of the five tetrachords of the Greater Perfect System and their disposition in the three genera, with examples. The canon commands, however, that in the chromatic and enharmonic genera the first two intervals be combined into one, which results in each tetrachord having only three notes, of which the middle one sounds at a different pitch in each (see the resolution in no. 2, para. 8). The result is exactly the same as in Ramis's tenor, although he did not need to specify that the two lower intervals were to be combined because his melody used only the first, third, and fourth notes of the tetrachord. And it is very similar to Spataro's motet for Leo X, where the problematic notes are replaced by rests. Spataro does not explain why some notes should be skipped, but the reason is the same one he gave Giovanni del Lago when he explained the resolution of the tenor of his motet for Leo X: 'it would not be permissible or praiseworthy to proceed by distances and intervals that are not used'-not used, that is, in modern practice (no. 16, para. 2). Thus in all three 'chromatic and enharmonic' works the antique tetrachords existed on paper only and were not sung. But the seeds were being sown, and Spataro lived long enough to gather a few flowers himself.

While Spataro took a conjuror's delight in musical esoterica, he also composed music for his choir at San Petronio. Five of the motets he mentions in his letters were copied into the choir-books that he willed to the church, five of which have survived to this day.⁴⁸ Many more works are probably hiding under the guise of *anonyma*, for Spataro had no need to enter his name over his own works, and he rarely gave composers' names in general.⁴⁹ These five motets were new works dating from the early 1530s, when Spataro and Aaron exchanged musical compositions; their letters offer a highly interesting view of compositional practice since they discuss the music in some detail.⁵⁰ Other motets have not survived; perhaps Spataro did not think them worthy of being entered into the repertory of San Petronio (none of Aaron's compositions seems to have made the grade), or else some choir-books have not been preserved. Much

⁴⁹ Tirro was able to attribute only 64 of the 162 compositions in the complex; ibid., p. 7.

of Spataro's early music was lost around 1529, when his schoolroom and study at San Petronio were flooded. Disturbed at finding many of his books and copies of music soaking wet and damaged, he threw them into the fire, much to his later regret (see no. 52, para. 1).⁵¹ Among the lost motets mentioned in the Correspondence are an 'Ave Maria' for six voices, sent to Del Lago in 1528 (no. 16), a 'Deprecor te', whose alto Del Lago requested in 1529 (nos. 20–2), a 'Nativitas gloriose' (no. 49), a 'Pater noster' *a 5* composed in March 1529 (no. 20), and a 'Salve Regina' written around 1493 (no. 52). He also mentions various 'canti' and motets that we have not been able to identify (see nos. 6, 30, 35).

Spataro also composed Magnificats. Judging from his choir-books, the Magnificat was frequently sung in polyphony in San Petronio; MS A. xxxxvi includes twenty-four settings, and four more are found in other choir-books. In his earliest letter to Aaron, of 7 March 1521 (no. 4), Spataro tells his friend that he has sent him all the Magnificat settings he has, which are mostly his own, composed to fit the high pitch of the organ. Spataro had a lifelong devotion to the Virgin; most of his motets are Marian motets, and it was his wish to be buried in the chapel of the Madonna. The latest work of his mentioned in the Correspondence is a Magnificat—written in 1533 'to escape certain vain thoughts not befitting my decrepit advanced age' (no. 55, para. 6). And the earliest work of which we have notice is a Magnificat composed while Spataro was still studying with Ramis, which his teacher included in a fascicle of compositions to be sent to Ercole I, Duke of Ferrara, in January 1482.⁵²

Spataro lived past the age of eighty. At a time when many of his generation were no longer living, he was still singing, composing, teaching, and writing. He complained frequently about illness and about his poor eyesight, but he kept going; the legendary longevity of musicians is nothing new. He himself was aware of the secret of his long life, and it is strikingly similar to the comment by Pietro Cerone that stands as epigraph to this edition. We give the last word on his life to Spataro himself. It comes from a letter he wrote to Giovanni del Lago in 1533 (no. 52):

I pay you tribute and thanks as my master and superior, because your writings have often roused me from slumber and unfruitful indolence, by which man (for not having competition and opposition) often remains oppressed and spends precious time in vain, and this ill-spent time can never be recovered.

⁵¹ This conflagration may also have consumed Spataro's copy of Ramis's 'Tu lumen'; when he discovered in 1532 that Giovanni del Lago had a copy, he was overjoyed: 'I have looked for this motet for many years and I was never able to find it; now that I understand that he has it, if he will send it to me, it would be dearer to me than if he were to give me 25 gold scudi' (no. 41, para. 6). Nor did Spataro possess a correct copy of his motet for Leo X (see no. 19, para. 4). ⁵² See the letter of Floriano Malvezzi published in Oscar Mischiati, 'Un'inedita testimonianza su Bartolomeo Ramis de Pareia', *Fontes artis musicae* 13 (1966), 84–6 at 86.

⁴⁸ See Tirro, Renaissance Musical Sources.

⁵⁰ See Ch. 5, 'The Art of Composition'.

Pietro Aaron

Pietro Aaron

OF all the letter-writers in the Correspondence, Pietro Aaron is the bestknown and the most enigmatic.¹ Author of five published treatises spanning the years 1516 to after 1545, recipient of Giovanni Spataro's most interesting epistles, he is represented by only nine letters, none of them written to Spataro. We know that the two carried on an extensive correspondence, and not even all Spataro's side of it has survived.² Since Aaron and Giovanni del Lago both lived in Venice, there was no need to correspond; letters between the two are found only when Aaron was absent from Venice. And even then their correspondence was sporadic. The Vatican manuscript also preserves by chance a few letters between Aaron and other writers (nos. 99–105).

Aaron was a native of Florence, as he never neglected to emphasize in his title-pages.³ Yet he can have spent no more than his childhood and adolescent years in Florence. We know next to nothing about this period of his life; his family, his friends, his early musical experiences, his teachers, his occupation are all shrouded in mystery except for one passing remark that has intrigued scholars because it offers a clue to the biographies of four outstanding composers as well as to Aaron's birthdate. In his first published treatise, the *Libri tres de institutione harmonica* of 1516, Aaron discusses the modern method of composition, citing as his personal models Josquin, Obrecht, Isaac, and Agricola, 'with whom I had the greatest friendship and familiarity in Florence'.⁴ We know that Agricola and Isaac were both in Florence, Agricola in 1474 and from October 1491 till April 1492,⁵ and Isaac from July 1485 to *c*.1495 and again in the second decade of the sixteenth century.⁶ But confirmation that

¹ The most up-to-date and complete consideration of Aaron's biography is found in Peter Bergquist, 'The Theoretical Writings of Pietro Aaron' (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1964), which includes a transcription of all Aaron's letters and large excerpts from letters written to him. The biography in the present chapter draws on documents unknown to Bergquist, but does not alter the main outlines of Aaron's life.

² See Table 1 on pp. xx-xxi.

³ He named his treatise *Toscanello in musica* 'in grateful homage to my homeland and place of birth' ('il nostro Toscanello, che così ho voluto fargli il titolo in gratia de la terra patria et nativa'); see Book I, ch. 6.

⁴ ^{(...} quod nos quoque crebro facimus: summos in arte viros imitati praecipuae [*sit*] vero Iosquinum. Obret. Isaac. et Agricolam: quibus cum mihi Florentiae familiaritas: et consuetudo summa fuit'; *Libri tres de institutione barmonica*, fo. 39[°].

⁵ Edward R. Lerner, 'Agricola, Alexander', The New Grove Dictionary, i. 162.

⁶ Martin Staehelin, 'Isaac, Heinrich', The New Grove Dictionary, ix. 330.

Josquin and Obrecht were also there is entirely missing. Josquin was in Italy until about 1500, and a visit to Florence any time between 1459, the first appearance of his name in Italian sources, and this date is possible. Obrecht too could have come to Florence during either of his two stays in Italy at the Este court in Ferrara, 1487–8 and 1504–5. But in the case of Josquin and Obrecht, these can have been no more than visits, so it seems likely that in their case Aaron was stretching the definition of friendship and familiarity. At our present state of knowledge, it is impossible to fix a period when Aaron could have known these four composers in Florence. It is not, however, necessary to believe that he met them all at the same time. The most likely period is the years between 1487 and 1495. This conclusion has a bearing on Aaron's date of birth. Clearly c.1490, as many earlier dictionaries suggest, is too late, especially if Aaron, as seems certain, is the author of the frottola ascribed to 'Aron' published by Petrucci; the name Aaron or Aron is very rare. A birthdate of c.1480 is more logical.7

In view of his later career, Aaron may have been a choirboy in one of the Florentine churches. Thus far his name has not turned up among the singers of polyphonic music in the main Florentine establishments. Curiously, in all his treatises he never mentions who his teacher was. If we can judge from the way he discusses counterpoint, he did not learn music from a composer who had been trained in the north.⁸ Rather, he seems to have gained his knowledge mainly from practical experience. Apart from the frottola mentioned earlier, no compositions by him have survived; it is only from Spataro's letters that we learn that Aaron continued to compose, sacred as well as secular music.⁹

The first certain date in Aaron's life is provided by the publication of his first treatise, *Libri tres de institutione harmonica*. The dedication, to the Cavaliere Girolamo San Pietro, is dated Imola, 25 January 1516. The title-page itself indicates that this treatise is unusual; in addition to Aaron's name, it includes the name of Giovanni Antonio Flaminio as

⁷ Peter Bergquist gave thoughtful consideration to this problem in 'The Theoretical Writings of Pietro Aaron', pp. 22–8. While some of the biographical data cited above have become available only since 1964, his conclusion as to Aaron's birthdate remains unaffected. The date of 1489 or 1490 stems from Fétis, who claimed that a letter placed at the head of the 1539 edn. of Aaron's *Toscanello*, dated 7 Oct. 1539, tells us that Aaron was twenty-six years old when his treatise of 1516 was published (*Biographie universelle des musiciens*, 2nd edn. (8 vols., Paris, 1860–5), i. 1). No such letter has ever been found, unless Fétis is referring to Aaron's letter to Del Lago of that date, no. 64 in the present Correspondence. In this letter Aaron regrets not having become a monk twenty-five years earlier, but does not say anything about his age.

⁸ On this point, see Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 40 (1987), 210–84 at 218.

⁹ A motet is also mentioned by Aaron's student, Illuminato Aiguino; see no. 30 n. 7. Aaron's compositions are listed in Table 4 on p. xxxviii.

translator.¹⁰ Indeed, it was really a joint publication, for Flaminio provided prefaces to all three books. The first of these, addressed to Aaron rather than the reader, informs us of the genesis of the treatise. From it we learn that Aaron had been in Imola for some time; Flaminio speaks of the 'long-standing and constant benevolence and familiar acquaintance' that unites the two and mentions their frequent conversations on literature and men of letters. He speaks of Aaron simply as a friend; there is no hint that Aaron has any official position—indeed, if he had had one, Aaron would surely have included it on the title-page, as he did in his later treatises.

In the first preface, Flaminio describes an event that took place one day in his home in Imola. An elegant Latinist, he had a vivid sense of style, for he reports the conversation in dialogue. Aaron happened to notice a copy of a recent publication by Flaminio, a book of poetry printed in Bologna,¹¹ and he offered his congratulations. Then a melancholy look came over his face. Pressed by Flaminio, he admitted his envy of the poet, whose name was now immortalized in print. But, replied Flaminio, could not Aaron too bring out that work, already completed, that would ensure his fame? Aaron acknowledged that many who admired the work regretted the long delay in its publication. He had, he said, kept it back for two reasons, one the Horatian injunction not to rush into print, the other the fear that the treatise would be slighted because it was not written in Latin; nor did Aaron, although he knew Latin, feel competent enough to translate it to his and Flaminio's satisfaction. Thereupon Flaminio offered to do it himself. Aaron replied, astonished, 'Flaminio, you must be joking.' Flaminio protested that he was in earnest, and nothing would give him greater pleasure. Aaron was overwhelmed. The assembled company, including Flaminio's son, beamed with pleasure since they were all fond of Aaron 'because of his priesthood and virtue'. Although Flaminio remarked that he was so occupied he hardly had time to breathe, he resolved to undertake the translation immediately. At this point, at the request of his friends, he launched into a brief praise of music, drawn from classical sources. At the end, Aaron, inflamed with the thought of public acclaim, made up his mind to compose a new work, one that would treat the material at greater length and reveal 'many secret chambers of the art'. It was decided that they should meet each day, with Aaron dictating and Flaminio translating. Indeed, the treatise reflects this method of composition, because it includes many remarks by Flaminio. Since he knew Greek,

¹⁰ Flaminio (1466-1536), a native of Imola, was a humanist and the father of the more famous poet Marc'Antonio Flaminio.

¹¹ Identified by Bergquist as *Sylvarum libri II* of 1515 ('The Theoretical Writings', p. 29 n. 33). Bergquist includes a partial transcription of the preface to *De institutione barmonica* on pp. 487–94 and comments on it briefly on pp. 29–30. he often gives an explanation of the Greek terms used by Aaron. Citations from Cleonides and Martianus Capella indicate the humanist background of his knowledge of music.

Unfortunately for posterity, Flaminio was not a musical scholar, and all the elègance of his Latin did not save Aaron from a stinging critique of the book by Franchino Gafurio. Although the letter is lost, we know what at least one of Gafurio's objections was-to the use of I to designate sesquitertia-because Spataro mentions it in his Errori de Franchino Gafurio of 1521. An exchange of letters between Gafurio and Flaminio reveals the background of the affair.¹² Spataro had sent the book to Gafurio upon publication. Gafurio in turn wrote to Flaminio, praising his style but disparaging Aaron's ideas in acid language; the musical part, he wrote, is so tangled with errors that the author seems to know nothing about the elements of music, and he urged that the work be withdrawn. He sent Flaminio a list of the worst errors,¹³ remarking how dangerous it is for those professing liberal arts to publish without consultation. Flaminio responded in an eloquent epistle, expressing his gratitude for Gafurio's complimentary words and the opportunity to make his acquaintance. He assured Gafurio that Aaron held him among the first musicians of the age. But it was not true that the book was printed without being reviewed by knowledgeable men; indeed, it was seen by Giovanni Spataro, who holds a highly regarded position among contemporary musicians. Spataro had carefully read the book and suggested emendations. But the printer did such a careless job that many errors in thought and diction occurred. Flaminio closed with the hope that Gafurio will excuse Aaron's angry response and that the two will temper their ire and renew their good will towards each other.

Flaminio's letter put Spataro on the spot, and his cautiously worded remarks in his letter to Cavazzoni of 1517 about 'a certain Pietro Aaron', whose recently published treatise he neither praises nor criticizes, show that he carefully tried to conceal his ill-fated role as adviser to Aaron (see no. 2, para. 2). But with the passage of a few years, Spataro felt more sanguine about revealing his further involvement in the controversy. In his *Errori de Franchino Gafurio*, written when the two were at sword-point, he remarks:

I recall that in 1516, owing to your jealousy and spitefulness, a musical dispute originated between you and Pietro Aaron, the learned Florentine, and because

¹² Both letters were printed in the 1744 edn. of Flaminio's *Epistolae familiares*; they are transcribed in Bergquist, pp. 504-10, and discussed on pp. 30-2.

¹³ The list does not appear with the letter in the printed edn., nor is it found in Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 1998, a 16th-c. copy of Flaminio's letters, including the exchange with Gafurio on fos. 225'-227'.

Pietro Aaron

Introduction

Aaron (in defence) showed you many of your own errors, you wrote to me that you understood very well that it was I and not Pietro who was answering, and so you stopped writing to Pietro and engaged me in your quarrel, and this is the reason (as you know) for all our disputes.¹⁴

Years later, when both Gafurio and Spataro were dead, Aaron undertook to respond to a few of the former's criticisms, acknowledging that some of the answers came from himself and Spataro jointly.¹⁵

Unlike the controversy between Spataro and Gafurio, which turned into a pamphlet war, the dispute between Aaron and Gafurio seems not to have been made public. As far as we know, Aaron continued living in Imola. He may soon thereafter, on the strength of his publication, have obtained his position as singer and teacher in the cathedral at Imola. The first contract extant dates from February 1521, but towards the end of it we learn that Aaron is being re-engaged for another year. On 15 February, at a convocation to which all the dignitaries resident in the churches of Imola had been called for the purpose of deciding 'on the engaging of Piero Aaron as singer in the church and on the provision to be given him', the five beneficed chaplains (*mansionarii*) voted 4 to 1 to engage him with a provision of sixteen measures of wheat, in return for which Aaron

promised to be present in choir during divine services and to be responsible for the chant on solemn and festal days throughout the year beginning on the first of March, on the condition that he, without appealing during the course of the month before the end of the year on account of the other part of his salary that ought not to be continued, be understood to persevere in that manner and form in which (he did) in the past year, and thus to endure through the month passed over for another year with the same salary. ...¹⁶

The mysterious condition preventing Aaron from appealing for the remainder of his salary is perhaps clarified by a second document, hitherto unpublished, which shows that Aaron was engaged and paid by the city of Imola itself, both for serving in the cathedral and teaching music. It comes

¹⁵ See Lucidario in musica (Venice, 1545), Book II, fos. 10^r and 11^v-12^r; Book III, fo. 16^r.

¹⁶ For the text of the documents concerning Aaron's position in Imola, see the Annexe to this chapter. The present document, found among Gaetano Gaspari's papers, was published by his friend Angelo Catelani in 'Pietro Aron', *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* 9 (1851), 77–8, without indication of source. Bergquist, who transcribed it from Catelani in 'The Theoretical Writings', pp. 575–8, interpreted the document as a settlement reached after a formal protest by Aaron that he had not received his salary for the previous year (pp. 33–4). 'Conducta', however, refers to a normal contract for services, and the dispute seems to have involved only one month.

from the *Campione*, or *Libro degli annali imolesi*, deliberations of the General Council of the city of Imola, under the date 3 April 1521:

Item, after business was completed in the same Council, a written petition of the following tenor was presented, to wit that in order to enrich divine worship and give distinction to the city of Imola, it is proposed to and petitioned of the Magnificent Community of Imola that those sixty Bolognese pounds that were wont to be spent in pious causes by the Magnificent Lords the Gonfalonier and Conservators for the time being shall be applied to recompense a worthy singer to be retained in the Cathedral of San Cassiano of Imola, and that at present they shall be designated and assigned to Pietro Aaron for life, with the obligation of serving and honouring the said church of San Cassiano, and also teaching the art of music free of charge to poor clerics of the city or territory of Imola, as well as all other associates and persons serving in this musical chapel, and that if the said singer shall renounce his office honourably and properly in time at the relation of the Chapter and priests of the said church, the Community shall not be bound or obliged to pay the said provision or salary to him, and that the election of another suitable singer shall always pertain and belong to the said Magnificent Community, with the knowledge however of the said Chapter of San Cassiano.

On which, rising, the distinguished doctor of laws Niccolò de Codruncho of the Councillors, in deliberating, declared that the said Pietro Aaron is a virtuous man and an honour to the city of Imola and that he should be retained in such allegiance by giving him the said sixty pounds a year in consideration of his virtues. Which said, likewise rising, the distinguished doctor of arts and medicine, Master Andrea de Ferris, a Councillor of the said Council, in deliberating, declared that the said Pietro Aaron had received an offer from elsewhere with a high salary, and that he would not leave Imola if he received the said salary, and that our Community by all means should try to keep and retain such a man for the sake of conserving and enriching the said music in that city, for it is of ornament and honour to the said city and Community of Imola; which said, several other Councillors declared that it be put to a motion, to wit:

That those who deem it good and are pleased that Pietro Aaron, singer in the church of San Cassiano, should be given and granted those sixty Bolognese pounds every year that are at the disposition of the Magnificent Lords the Gonfalonier and Conservators of the city of Imola, in each magistracy conferring and granting such sum as it shall please these lords in order that the singingschool may be preserved in this city of Imola and there may be the means to sing mass on solemn feast-days in the said church, and this for the honour of the city and enrichment of divine worship, and in the event that the said Pietro Aaron shall fail in this laudable enterprise, that the community of Imola may and shall have the power to elect another singer in the said church of San Cassiano, and that the said singer shall be held and obliged to teach the poor clerics free of charge, as well as all other associates and persons serving in this chapel, and that the election of the said singer shall always pertain to the same community of Imola with the knowledge of the Chapter of the said church of San Cassiano, they shall give the white beans [i.e. shall vote 'aye']. The vote was fifty white beans in favour. Two

¹⁴ Errori de Franchino Gafurio (Bologna, 1521), Error 32, fo. 39^{-v}: 'm'è venuto a memoria che de l'anno 1516 (per la tua invidia et petulantia) tra te et Petro Aron Florentino Musico doctissimo naque litigio Musico: et perché Petro Aron (per sua diffessa) te demonstrò multi toi errori: Tu scrivesti a me che da te era compreheso che io era quello che te respondeva, et non Petro: pertanto tu lassasti de scrivere al prelibato Petro, et con meco volesti la lite; per la quale cosa (come tu sciai) tra nui acadete multe desputatione'.

black beans notwithstanding, the above proposal was carried and passed as above.¹⁷

This was a high honour indeed for Pietro Aaron, and it confirms the warm feelings exhibited by Flaminio and his circle.¹⁸ Since the council met in April, but Aaron's contract with the chapter of San Cassiano began on 1 March, the 'month passed over' during which Aaron could not appeal for the remainder of his salary must have been March. The chapter, in lieu of raising Aaron's salary, apparently negotiated behind the scenes with certain influential council members to have the city offer Aaron a separate position. The combined salaries must have exceeded the other offer Aaron had received. During the month of March, however, he had to take it on faith that the deal would go through.

On 11 October of the same year Aaron received another sign of recognition from the cathedral, the granting of a benefice. He was appointed a chaplain, with the obligation to say three masses a week, in consideration of which he would receive two gold coins at Christmas.¹⁹ This benefice confirms that Aaron was a priest, for only priests could say mass. Flaminio's remark that Aaron was loved 'because of his priesthood' can now be taken literally.

The reference to the other offer Aaron was considering is intriguing. Could it have been at Spataro's church, San Petronio in Bologna? Some time during this same year Aaron visited Spataro in Bologna, where they engaged personally in the musical discussions that they were to continue by correspondence for at least the next twelve years. Spataro mentions the visit in a note at the end of his *Tractato di musica*, which was published in Venice in 1531 under Aaron's sponsorship:

You were the cause of my decision to treat this material [the *sesquialtera* relation], ,and this was because when you were in Bologna in 1521 you visited me in the musicians' residence of San Petronio, and at that time we discussed many exalted and subtle considerations of the art of music. But we came to no conclusion, since you had to return immediately to Imola, where you were then resident.²⁰

Spataro's first letter to Aaron in the Correspondence is dated 7 March 1521 (no. 4), and it is evident from it that the two had been in continuous

¹⁷ See the Annexe, doc. 2.

¹⁹ See the Annexe, doc. 3.

contact; many earlier letters must be lost. The letter was sent to Aaron 'at Imola, in the house of the Reverend Provost de la Volpe', who is the first person on the list of Aaron's supporters at the time of his reappointment and the contributor of one-quarter of the measures of wheat, as specified in the contract. Imola is only 34 km away from Bologna, and it is quite possible that there were other visits as well.

In spite of the promising beginning of his career, Aaron did not stay in Imola long thereafter. On 19 June 1522 he appointed a procurator to resign his benefice, which probably meant that he was leaving Imola.²¹ By February 1523, the date of Spataro's next extant letter to him,²² he was in Venice, living with the Grand Prior of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, Sebastiano Michiel. Nothing indicates that the move was recent, so he may very well have come to Venice in June 1522.

Why did Aaron leave Imola? The unsettled political situation may have been the reason: in 1522 a conflict broke out in the city between two families, the Vaini and the Sassatelli, which led to civil unrest.²³ But a more likely answer is that Aaron did not find religious life and clerical duties congenial. He felt comfortable in the circle of humanists around Giovanni Antonio Flaminio, but there were few, if any, musical scholars with whom he could talk and share his ideas. Moreover, Flaminio himself had moved to Bologna in 1520.²⁴ Venice, on the other hand, was teeming with musicians. There a theorist could really feel at home. Spataro's letter of February 1523, in response to Aaron's of 15 January, does indeed hint that Aaron was in his element in Venice, for he had regaled Spataro with his 'adventures and honourable disputes' (no. 5, para. 1).

We read in some dictionaries that Aaron was in Rome in 1516, where he enjoyed the favour of Leo X and founded a music school.²⁵ None of these statements is supported by evidence. The belief that Aaron was in Rome stems from a mistaken interpretation of a few sentences in the preface of his *Thoscanello de la musica* of 1523, dedicated to his patron Sebastiano Michiel. There Aaron recalls Leo X's great love of music,

whence it came about that many exerted themselves under his pontificate, each according to his own strength, to strive to profit from the great rewards that they

:

²² The letter is undated, but can only be from Feb. 1523; see no. 5 n. 1.

²³ G. Alberghetti, *Compendio della storia civile ecclesiastica e letteraria della Città d'Imola* (2 vols., Imola, 1810), i. 296-7.

¹⁸ In the church, however, Aaron did not have unanimous support: one of the beneficed chaplains voted against him when his appointment came up for renewal, and another walked out in dissent before the vote (see the Annexe, doc. 1).

²⁰ '... quella fu causa che io mi disponessi a pertractare di tale materia, et questo fu perché del anno de la nostra salute MDXXI trovandosi tua Eccellentia in Bologna, fui (per tua benignità) da te visitato nel musico habitaculo del nostro divo Petronio, et alhora tra noi di molte alte et sottile consideratione de l'arte musica fu facto discorso.... Ma alhora nulla fra noi era concluso, perché tua Eccellentia presto convenne tornare a Imola, dove (in quel tempo) era la tua residentia'; *Tractato di musica*... nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta, fo. I5^v.

²¹ See the Annexe, doc. 4.

²⁴ See the account of his life by Francesco Maria Mancurti in Marci Antonii, Joannis Antonii et Gabrielis Flaminiorum Forocorneliensium Carmina (Prato, 1831), p. 430.

 $^{^{25}}$ See A. Bonaccorsi, 'Aaron, Pietro', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, i (Rome, 1960), 1–2. It is a shame that this great new enterprise, now at the letter D, should have been initiated with an article as uncritical and dated as the one on Aaron. Many other entries incorporate original research; see for example the excellent contributions by Oscar Mischiati on Marc'Antonio and Girolamo Cavazzoni.

saw being promised for their efforts. I was one of these, who, having been born in tenuous circumstances and seeking some honest way to support my musical studies, put forth no little effort, if not as happily as I should have wished, at least as much as my talent and industry allowed, and I should have utterly abandoned any hope of reward for my labours because of the untimely death of Leo, lamentable to all refined spirits, if your lordship had not offered yourself to me as my only support in my afflicted fortune, who, although unequal to Leo in power, are yet in no way inferior in virtue nor in the zeal of favouring anyone not devoid of virtue.²⁶

Aaron, a native Florentine, had perhaps been working on his treatise with the idea of dedicating it to the music-loving son of Florence. He seems to have hoped for a benefice or at any rate a position that would allow him the freedom to pursue his scholarly interests. We know of Leo's munificence towards singers and instrumentalists, but there is no record of his having supported a theorist. Perhaps Aaron was inspired by the example of his compatriot Piermaria Bonini, who dedicated to Leo X his Acutissime observationes nobilissime disciplinarum omnium musices, published in Florence by Bartolomeo de Zanetti on 15 November 1520, just a year before Leo's death. The author, who calls himself 'arithmeticorum minimus', concentrates on the speculative, mathematical side of music, in particular the three genera; although he does not neglect musica practica, he has nothing original to say about it.²⁷ In the dedication he refers to his decision to write about music: 'not being able, for the contrary impediments and valid prohibitions, to print music (cose musicale)', he says, he has concentrated on writing about music. By 'valid prohibitions' he must be referring to the ten-year privilege granted by the Signoria of Florence to Giovanni Bernardo di Salvestro and Giovanni Battista dell'Ottonaio, Florentine printers, to print music, in response to their petition of 8 February 1515.²⁸ As far as is known, no music was published by them.

²⁶ 'Donde è proceduto che sotto il suo pontificato molti si sono affaticati, ciascuno secondo le lor forze, di far profitto in essa per gli ampi premii, che a le loro fatiche vedevano essere proposti. Tra gli quali io sono stato uno, il quale in tenue fortuna nato ricercando per alcuna honesta via di sostentare la mia tenuità negli studii di musica, mi sono non poco affaticato, se non così felicemente come harei voluto, almeno quanto l'ingegno et la industria mia ha potuto: et harei al tutto disperato il premio a le fatiche mie per la importuna et a ciascuno gentile spirito lagrimevole morte di Leone, se vostra signoria non mi si fussi offerta unico presidio a la afflitta mia fortuna: la quale quantunque di potere a Leone non sia pari, non però è in alcuna virtù a quello inferiore, né in studio di favoreggiare qualunque di virtù non sia spogliato.'

²⁷ Leo X may have been known to have a particular interest in chromatic and enharmonic music. It was for him that Spataro wrote a motet in which the tenor is sung (only ostensibly) in the chromatic and enharmonic genera, and Aaron knew this work because he cites it in the *De intitutione harmonica*. fo. 22^e. (On Spataro's motet, see Ch. 3.)

²⁸ See Martin Picker, 'A Florentine Document of 1515 concerning Music Printing', *Quadrivium* 12 (1971), 283-90. For the dedication, see Gaetano Gaspari, *Catalogo della Biblioteca del Liceo Musicale di Bologna* (5 vols., Bologna, 1890-1943), i. 197. Bonini himself obtained a privilege (the colophon carries the words 'cum gratia et privilegio'), but the text of it is not printed in his book. Perhaps Aaron felt that Bonini's publication, even apart from the privilege, had effectively pre-empted his own efforts to obtain Leo X's favour.

Under the circumstances, Aaron had every reason to be grateful to his new patron, Sebastiano Michiel, who may also have been instrumental in securing him a benefice as 'canon of Rimini'. What the preface of the Toscanello does not make clear is that Aaron lived in the house of Michiel, who was the Grand Prior of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, the 'ordine hierosolymitano'. This building, which today houses the offices and archive of the Order of the Knights of Malta in Venice, stands next to the Order's church, San Giovanni del Tempio, and it is to this church, then often called San Giovanni dei Furlani after the settlers from Friuli who lived in the area (the Calle dei Furlani runs alongside the church), that Spataro addresses his letters to Aaron. In the title to his next treatise, the Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato, published in 1525, Aaron calls himself 'maestro di casa' of Sebastiano Michiel. This was an elegant fiction, for Aaron's real responsibilities were as tutor to Michiel's sons. Officially, as an ecclesiastic, Michiel had no sons, and they are not mentioned in the legal proceedings concerning the disposition of his property after his death.²⁹ All letters from Aaron to Spataro being lost, we are dependent on Spataro's replies for knowledge of Aaron's life. From 1523 until March 1531 Spataro closes his letters to Aaron with greetings to 'monsignore reverendo'. In June 1531, for the first time, he recommends himself to Michiel 'and to his sons, much loved by me for their fine qualities' (no. 33, para. 3). In the following letter the sons are called 'most noble and of shining virtue' (no. 34), and from here on they are always greeted. Aaron must have given Spataro regular reports on their progress.³⁰

The comfortable situation in which Aaron found himself came to an abrupt end in November 1534 when Michiel died. He lost not only a patron but his living as well. Owing to a dispute between Michiel's heirs and the Order, Aaron did not even receive the fifty ducats and the cross that Michiel had willed to him (no. 62, para. 1). Then about fifty-five years of age, Aaron knew it was too late to find a position as a singer, apart from the fact that it would have entailed an unacceptable loss of reputation. Nor could he hope to become a *maestro di cappella*, having been away from the profession so long. In May 1535 we find him in Padua, where the friars of Santa Justina have done him great honour and the 'magnificent Captain' is

²⁹ See the Biographical Dictionary under Michiel.

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³⁰ On the possibility that 'Messer Camillo', mentioned in two of Spataro's letters of 1533, might be one of the sons, see the Biographical Dictionary under Camillo.

reluctant to let him leave (see no. 61, para. 2). In the absence of other letters, it is impossible to tell how long he stayed there. But his experience with Sebastiano Michiel must have taught him to be wary of patrons. He had only to fall sick, as he told Giovanni del Lago some time later, and he would have been on the doorstep. Weighing his alternatives, in 1536 he took the drastic step of becoming a monk in the Order of the Crutched Friars and transferring to a monastery near Bergamo.

This move must have shocked Aaron's friends; it certainly astonished Giovanni del Lago, who could not understand why a priest should even consider becoming a mere monk. Del Lago was also chagrined because he had lost his old musical sparring partner. Aaron's letter describing his new living conditions is a revealing document. Even as a monk, Aaron had a patron (perhaps the abbot; he is never named). By any standards, the conditions were luxurious: a beautiful clean room, meals, a doctor, medicine, a barber, a boy to serve him, twenty ducats a year for clothing and a benefice (see no. 62 and Pl. 4 on p. 20). But what seems to have impressed Aaron most was the esteem in which he was held. His patron, he says, is the most generous person one can imagine, and one who truly appreciates him. No one is inquisitive about his affairs. Music is composed in his honour. Best of all, his future is secured, even if he becomes ill. Three years later, Aaron recalls his life with Sebastiano Michiel in bitter terms:

You know how much time I've wasted among lords, and I regret most the sixteen years with Monsignor of San Giovanni that came to naught; would God I had never seen him! I'm not at all discontent in having taken this habit; I regret I didn't do it twenty-five years earlier. I'm better off now than ever before (no. 64, para. 1).³¹

Indeed, he counsels Del Lago to follow his example and escape the marshy and miserable place where he lives without reputation. There is no stigma in being a friar, he says: kings, dukes, great lords, and cardinals have all become friars. Nevertheless, one detects a defensive note in these remarks.

For Del Lago, Aaron's decision to leave the Queen of the Adriatic, the centre of the musical world, and bury himself in a monastery near Bergamo was incomprehensible. But Aaron was not as isolated as Del Lago must have thought. 'Here there are many worthy men in every field, and especially in music', Aaron wrote (no. 62, para. 1); one of them was Gasparo Alberti, *maestro di cappella* at Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo, who composed a madrigal in Aaron's honour. Nor was Aaron cloistered: in 1539 he spent a month of music-making in the company of the foremost

³¹ The twenty-five years Aaron speaks of may place his decision to become a priest or his move to Imola in 1514.

families of Brescia, and he was invited to return for Carnival (no. 64, para. 2). During these years, Aaron also prepared his last substantial treatise, the *Lucidario in musica*, which was published in Venice in 1545 and dedicated to his Brescian friend, Count Fortunato Martinengo. Since he received a privilege from the Venetian Senate, he must have been alive at that time. He still belonged to the Crutched Friars, but there is no indication of where he is living.³²

Aaron's last treatise, the curiously elementary *Compendiolo di molti dubbi*, segreti et sentenze intorno al canto fermo, et figurato, was published in Milan by Giovanni Antonio da Castiglione, without date. It is dedicated 'Al molto Reverendo et Magnifico Signore Monsignor Traiano da San Celso, Patrone Honorando'. Although the author speaks of 'la perpetua et fedele servitù qual tengo con vostra Signoria', the tone of the dedication is so impersonal that one wonders if Aaron really was acquainted with Monsignor Traiano. Peter Bergquist has identified him as Traiano de Alicorni, whose connection with the abbey of San Celso in Milan dates from May 1549, when Paul III granted possession to him and Bartolomeo Capranica as a house of the order of the Canons Regular of San Salvatore.³³ If this date is correct, the *Compendiolo* was printed in 1549 or later. Certainly it post-dates the *Lucidario*, since Aaron refers the reader to it for further information.

We do not know when Aaron died. He was no longer living in 1562, when the *Toscanello* was reissued, because that edition was printed posthumously.³⁴ The title-page of the *Compendiolo* bears the following motto: 'In memoria eterna erit Aron, Et nomen eius nunquam destruetur.' Bergquist suggested that 'this could mean that Aaron was recently dead', but on the other hand 'it might equally well be an encomium of the sort that now appears on dust-jackets'.³⁵ The sentiment exactly fulfils Aaron's dearest wish in 1516, when Flaminio offered to translate his first treatise into Latin, but it is surely not a motto that Aaron himself would have put on his title-page. It seems likely that it was added by the printer. It is even possible that the dedication itself stems from the printer, who was Milanese. In the dedications of all his other treatises, Aaron's name is

 32 Fétis, without giving any source, says that he moved from the convent at Bergamo to the one in Padua and then to the one in Venice (*Biographie universelle*, i. 2-3).

³³ 'The Theoretical Writings', p. 53. Bergquist notes a conflicting account, according to which Alicorni held possession in the 1530s but renounced it to Capranica on 1 Jan. 1539, who ceded it to the Canons Regular in Mar. 1548 (ibid., pp. 53–4).

³⁴ In the title we read 'Con l'aggiunta fatta dall'autore stesso, innanzi che morisse'. The Addendum, however, is the same as the one in the 1529 edn.

³⁵ 'The Theoretical Writings', p. 54. The very last sentence of the treatise is also noteworthy: 'And if nothing further of mine is seen in the future, without disrespect to you I shall make an end.'

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included in the heading. The dedication of the *Compendiolo* lacks Aaron's name. Perhaps the manuscript of the *Compendiolo* was found among Aaron's effects after his death and one of his colleagues decided to publish it. Bergamo, although then under Venetian domination, is close to Milan.

Aaron's *Toscanello* is graced with a woodcut that shows the author seated on a throne-like chair, book in hand. On either side of him is a group of listeners, and in the foreground appears a table on which are two books, a recorder, a lute, and a lira da braccio. The illustration certainly implies that Aaron held a public lectureship in music, but if this is the case, it is not supported by any other evidence—at least not in Venetian sources. However, Aaron might have had the woodcut made while he was in the employ of the city of Imola, when one of his obligations was to teach music to poor clerics as well as others attached to the church. If, as we suppose, the *Toscanello* was undertaken while Aaron was in Imola in the expectation of dedicating it to Leo X, such a woodcut would have been entirely appropriate.

Only one man acknowledges himself as Aaron's pupil: Illuminato Aiguino of Brescia. In his two treatises, La illuminata de tutti i tuoni di canto fermo, con alcuni bellissimi secreti, non d'altrui più scritti (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1562) and Il tesoro illuminato di tutti i tuoni di canto figurato, con alcuni bellissimi secreti, non da altri più scritti (Venice: Giovanni Varisco, 1581), Aiguino refers repeatedly to 'il mio honorato et irrefregabile maestro Don Pietro Aron'. Where and when can Aiguino have studied with his 'honoured and irrefutable' teacher?

Nothing is known of Aiguino's life except what is given on the titlepages of his treatises; he was an Observant Franciscan friar ('dell'ordine Seraphico d'Osservanza') and a native of Brescia. Since he belonged to a different order from Aaron, he would not have been a student at Aaron's monastery near Bergamo. If he was born c.1520, as has been suggested,³⁶ it is unlikely that he studied with Aaron in Venice.³⁷ We know, however,

³⁶ A. Valentini, *I musicisti bresciani ed il teatro grande* (Brescia, 1894), p. 2, suggested the birthdate based on the 1560 tax-declarations of an Aiguino family living in Orzinuovi, near Brescia. An Illuminato is not mentioned in these records, perhaps because he was not living in Orzinuovi but in a Franciscan house. Aiguino's 1562 treatise was printed 'con Privilegio dell'Illustrissima Signoria di Venetia, per anni xv'. This privilege was granted to 'Bernardino Ayguino da Bressa' on 23 Dec. 1561; see Richard J. Agee, 'The Venetian Privilege and Music-Printing in the Sixteenth Century', *Early Music History* 3 (1983), 1–42, Appendix, no. 45. One of the tax-declarations cited by Valentini was made by a Bernardino Aiguino, son of the late Girolamo; he may possibly be the brother of Illuminato. As an Observant Franciscan, Illuminato may not have been in a position to seek the privilege himself, which must have entailed the payment of a fee (on the calculation of the cost of readers, see ibid., p. 9 n. 25).

³⁷ The prefaces to both his publications are dated in Venice, but they were written long after he knew Aaron. In the 1562 treatise and in some copies of the 1581 treatise there appears a woodcut of the author. In the 1581 copy the inscription in the circular frame reads CAPITANO. that Aaron spent at least a month in Brescia in 1539, and from his account, it seems likely that he returned there from time to time (see no. 64). Moreover, his *Lucidario* of 1545 was dedicated to the Brescian Count Fortunato Martinengo, and Brescians figure prominently in his lists of 'cantori a libro' and 'cantori al liuto'.³⁸ Aiguino's references to Aaron bespeak a relationship of some depth and duration. It is clear that Aaron transmitted the teachings of Spataro and Bartolomeo Ramis as well, for Aiguino speaks of them too in reverent terms. The other theorist he mentions frequently is Marchetto of Padua, who was dismissed out of hand by Ramis, principally for his notion that the tone could be divided into five parts. But Aiguino's books are on the modes, and Marchetto whether acknowledged or not—is the fountainhead of Italian modal theory through the sixteenth century and beyond.³⁹

Aiguino does not say where or when he knew Aaron, but it must have been during the latter's last years. The relationship was close enough for Aaron to share his musical materials with Aiguino. We deduce this from several passages in Aiguino's treatises. Refuting certain unnamed modern writers in the treatise of 1581, Aiguino says:

if they had known that our ancient writers could have honourably begun the modes with gamma *ut* or C fa ut, the above-mentioned irrefutable masters [Aaron, Spataro, and Ramis] would have demonstrated it in their works, not so much in those that have been published, as in *those that are hidden, which have been in my hands.*⁴⁰

The reference is tantalizing. What could he have seen? And did he only see them, or did he possess them? The earlier treatise sheds more light. Speaking of the range of authentic modes, Marchetto, in ch. 2 of Treatise 11 of his *Lucidarium*, stated that the perfect mode fills a ninth.⁴¹ Aiguino disagrees, believing that 'perfect' denotes a range of an octave,

This led Fétis to believe that Aiguino had been a soldier before he entered the Franciscan order (*Biographie universelle*, i. 41-2). In the 1562 treatise, however, the woodcut appears with a different inscription: F. ILLUMINATO AYGUINO. C.A.P.I.T.A.N.I.O. D.M.D.R. Capitanio is a family name, and perhaps Aiguino had some connection with this family in 1562 (the treatise, however, is dedicated to Paola, Countess of Guastala, a lady renowned for her pious deeds whom Aiguino does not seem to know personally). The initials D.M.D.R remain mysterious.

³⁸ The first name on the latter list (*Lucidario*, Book III, fo. 31[°]) is 'Il Signor Conte Lodovico Martinengo'. Three of the 'cantori a libro' are from Chiari, a town 26 km west of Brescia, including Girolamo Lorino, 'maestro di Capella in Brescia'.

³⁹ See Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, 'Zur Tonus-Lehre der italienischen Musiktheorie des ausgehenden Mittelalters', *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* 40 (1956), 23-32.

 $4^{\bar{0}}$... quando havessero conosciuto che gli nostri antichi havessero possuto dare principio alli Tuoni in Gamma *ut*, overo in C *fa ut* con l'honor suo, gli sopradetti irrefregabili Maestri l'havrebbono dimostrato nell'opere loro, non tanto in quelle che sono in luce, come ancora in quelle che sono sepolte, quali sono state nelle mani mie'; *Il tesoro illuminato*, fo. 30° .

⁴¹ See Marchetto, Lucidarium, ed. Herlinger, p. 379.

and my honoured teacher Pietro Aaron confirms this in his book called *De institutione harmonica*, chs. 26 and 27, and the same is affirmed by Giovanni Spataro in his unpublished treatise.⁴²

Authentic modes, he continues in the next chapter, are permitted to descend one note beneath the final, and this is according to ecclesiastical, not musical, authority,

as my honoured teacher Pietro Aaron affirms in autograph letters written to the laureate musician Giovanni Spataro of Bologna, and this author too affirms the statement of my irrefutable teacher.⁴³

The theory of modes is not one of the subjects discussed by Spataro and Aaron in the Vatican correspondence; in fact, it seems to have been of little interest in general to our letter-writers. To what letters and treatise does Aiguino refer? As we have seen, in 1529 Spataro wrote to Del Lago that Aaron was very annoyed at him because he had tried to persuade him to retract his treatise on the modes. If Spataro sent a copy of his 200-page critique to Aaron, it may well be the treatise to which Aiguino refers, and the letters by Aaron copies of those he wrote to Spataro in defence of his views, all of which have been lost. There is one more possible allusion to Spataro's treatise on the modes. The Paduan musician Francesco di Pizoni, in a letter to Del Lago of 2 June 1537, mentions 'uno libro de lo excellente Messer Zuan Spatari da Bologna fatto sopra il canto fermo', which Del Lago is said to have seen together with Pietro Aaron (no. 91). It cannot be solely by coincidence that the three references to Spataro's treatise on modes or plainchant are all linked to Pietro Aaron. It is a pity that nothing is known about Aiguino's career, for it might be helpful in tracing that part of Aaron's scholarly materials that did not pass into the hands of Giovanni del Lago.

Compared with most sixteenth-century theorists, Aaron had an unusual career. The standard sequence of events was choirboy, singer, holy orders or university study, and eventually *maestro di cappella*. The only certain knowledge we have in these respects is that Aaron was a priest by 1516 and that he was a singer in the Cathedral of Imola from at least early 1520 to June 1522. Unlike other theorists, he never speaks about his teacher, and indeed his musical education seems to have been

⁴² '... questo mi conferma il mio honorato maestro Pietro Aron nel libro chiamato de Institutione harmonica al cap. 26 et anchora al 27 et il simile afferma Giovanni Spadaro nel suo trattato non posto in luce'; *La illuminata*, fo. 19'. deficient.⁴⁴ In the preface to his *Toscanello* he mentions that he was born in tenuous circumstances. His prose style shows that he received little, if any, formal instruction in grammar and rhetoric. What can explain the different path he followed?

Aaron is an unusual name. Of the thousands of authors listed in Luigi Ferrari's 700-page Onomasticon: Repertorio biobibliografico degli scrittori italiani dal 1501 al 1850 (Milan, 1947), there is not one Aaron. Pietro Aaron appears under 'Aron', the unique occurrence of this spelling. In the great Dizionario biografico degli italiani, which devotes nearly four volumes to the letter A, Aaron is the very first entry and the only one under Aaron. Aaron spelt his name both ways; in the De institutione harmonica and Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni it is Aaron. In the Toscanello, Lucidario, and Compendiolo it is Aron. In his letters he signs himself both Aaron⁴⁵ and Aron.⁴⁶ Now Aaron is a Hebrew name, and one that would be immediately recognizable to Christians, since Moses' brother Aaron, the high priest, is a prominent figure in the Pentateuch. The spelling with double a is closer to the Hebrew form, Aharon. Could Aaron have come from a Jewish family?⁴⁷

In recent years we have become more aware of the role of Jewish musicians in Renaissance life. Between the poles of the fifteenth-century Jewish dancing master, Guglielmo da Pesaro, and the late sixteenth-century Mantuan composer, Salamone Rossi, scores of Jewish musicians have been identified.⁴⁸ Perhaps most surprisingly, a large contingent of Italian musicians at the court of Henry VIII was recently discovered to be of Jewish origin.⁴⁹ Our knowledge of Jewish musicians and musical practice varies inversely with the degree to which Jews were able to enter society without restriction, as Israël Adler has pointed out.⁵⁰ In the absence of the epithet 'ebreo' it has often been difficult to distinguish musicians of Jewish origin. Frequently it is the name that gives the clue. The very English-sounding name of the sackbut player John Anthony

⁴⁷ This is a question that intrigued Lowinsky. What follows is largely based on his notes.

⁴⁸ The literature for the 15th and 16th cc. is rather scattered. An overview is given in Israël Adler, *La Pratique musicale savante dans quelques communautés juives en Europe aux XVII*^e et XVIII^e siècles (2 vols., Paris and The Hague, 1966), i. 43 n. 171.

⁴³ '... come afferma il mio honorato maestro Pietro Aron per lettere di propria sua mano, mandate al l'aureato [*sic*] musico M. Giovan Spadaro Bolognese, et anchora esso autore afferma il detto del mio irrefregabile ma[e]stro'; ibid. The disagreement with Marchetto was not over the range of authentic modes but whether a mode could be called perfect if it filled only eight notes.

⁴⁴ This was certainly Spataro's opinion in the letters of the early 1520s. Bergquist, in discussing Aaron's presentation of notation, says of the *De institutione harmonica*: 'There are a number of mistakes in the book which clearly indicate Aaron's sketchy training in his youth, but they are not repeated in *Toscanello* and the later books' ('The Theoretical Writings of Pietro Aaron', p. 125).

⁴⁵ No. 61 (1535); no. 62 (1536); no. 100 (1525); nos. 101 and 103 (1534); no. 105 (1538).

⁴⁶ No. 64 (1539); no. 66 (1540); no. 67 (1540).

⁴⁹ See Roger Prior, 'Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court', *The Musical Quarterly* 69 (1983), 253-65.

⁵⁰ Adler, La Pratique musicale, p. 46.

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was not his true name; his will gives it as Anthonius Moyses, and his executor was Ambrose of Milan, another Jewish royal musician.⁵¹ Giovanni Maria de' Medici, Count of Verruchio, a lutenist much appreciated by Leo X, was a converted Jew whose original name has never been recovered.⁵²

It has long been known that Italian Jews carried double names, Christian and Hebrew, one for dealing with the outside world, the other for domestic and religious use. The Christian name was not chosen at random but was often directly related to the Hebrew name, either in meaning or through assonance. Thus Mazel-tov became Buonaventura, Reuben became Rubino.⁵³ Surnames were rare throughout the Renaissance; many Jews were known by their place of origin (da Bassano, da Pesaro) or country of origin (Grego, Tedesco). The name given at circumcision was almost always biblical. When a Jew converted to Christianity, he often chose a new name, one intimately linked to his Hebrew name or else the name of his sponsor in baptism.⁵⁴

We know that Aaron was a priest and that he spent his last years as a monk. But he could have been a convert to Christianity. Aharon may be the name he was given at circumcision.⁵⁵ Since it had no Italian equivalent, the corresponding name Pietro may have been chosen by analogy: just as Aaron was the first high priest of the Jews, so was St Peter, traditionally considered the first Pope, the high priest of the new religion. The hypothesis of Aaron's Jewish origin helps to explain a number of otherwise puzzling elements in his life: the nature of his 'tenuous circumstances' and obscure early life, his lack of a thorough grounding in grammar and music theory, his failure to mention any teacher, his wandering life and marginal career. For a Jew, even a converted Jew, a comfortable life was never taken for granted. Rulers and governments were alternately tolerant of and hostile towards Jews, largely depending on economic circumstances. Since canon law forbade Christians to lend money at interest, Jewish money-lenders performed an indispensable economic function. Periodically governments would grow uncomfortable with their dependence on Jewish bankers. Often such situations reached crisis proportion when preachers inflamed the populace against the Jews. The experiences of Florence in Aaron's youth were not at all unusual and, if our hypothesis is correct, may be directly related to his move to Imola.

⁵⁵ Or possibly Aaron was his father's name.

Lorenzo de' Medici had always had benevolent sentiments towards Florentine Jews, and his role as patron of arts and sciences assured a warm welcome for scholars and artists.⁵⁶ Periodically he had to contend with preaching friars, especially the Observant Franciscans, who worked closely with the poor and encouraged their feelings of victimization by Jewish pawnbrokers and gave them 'legitimate' outlet by stigmatizing the Jews as killers of Christ, as well as spreading outright anti-Jewish libels involving ritual murder. As long as the Franciscans pursued negative policies, the Florentine government was able to cope with unrest. But when the idea came up to set up a public institution to lend money-the Monte di Pietà—an excuse was found to dispense with Jewish moneylenders. The Franciscans made it their main campaign. They found a gifted orator in Bernardino da Feltre, who spread the gospel from one end of Italy to the other. It was he who was behind the spectacular case of Simon of Trent, the baby who disappeared and whose blood was said to have been used by the Jews at Passover. This was in 1475. Fra Bernardino, flushed with success, spread the warnings through other Italian cities, creating considerable problems for municipal authorities. In 1488 Bernardino delivered the Lenten sermons in Florence, urging expulsion of the Jews and the setting up of a Monte di Pietà. Lorenzo had to call out the soldiers and set him outside the city gates, so great had been his success in raising a rabidly anti-Semitic mob.

After the death of Lorenzo, the situation changed. The 'ebrei forestieri', those without legal abode in Florence, were expelled. Under Savonarola, the native Jews were at first tolerated because of their economic contribution, but in 1496 a decree was promulgated that Jews were no longer to be allowed to lend money, and a term of one year was set for them to leave Florence. The effect of the decree, however, was postponed until all the money owed the Jewish bankers had been paid up, which did not occur until 1508. This was a very difficult time for Florentine Jews, with the threat of expulsion constantly hanging over them. Many must have left for other cities that were more tolerant.

Aaron himself never speaks of a Jewish background. Perhaps there is an indirect allusion in the *Toscanello*, where he says 'we have the Old Testament as foundation for our true Christian faith' (Book I, ch. 2).⁵⁷ And perhaps the somewhat surprising remark by Giovanni Antonio

⁵¹ Prior, 'Jewish Musicians', p. 255.

⁵² See H. Colin Slim, 'Gian and Gian Maria, Some Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Namesakes', *The Musical Quarterly* 57 (1971), 562-74, esp. 563-8.

⁵³ See Umberto Cassuto, Gli ebrei a Firenze nell'età del Rinascimento (Florence, 1918), pp. 233-5.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 244.

⁵⁶ The following account is based on Cassuto, *Gli ebrei a Firenze*, pp. 55-81, and Cecil Roth, *The History of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia, 1946), pp. 166-90.

⁵⁷ What at first seemed to be a more positive indication, the statement that the Psalter (Ps. 80: 4 Vulg.) bids us sing at the beginning of the new month with the trumpet 'because the Jews were commanded to sound the trumpet at the beginning of the new moon [Num. 10: 10], which they do to this day' (1529 edn., fo. B2'), turned out to be no witness at all, since the whole of ch. 5, except for a few small passages, is translated from Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 3, 19–22.

Flaminio that Aaron was loved 'because of his priesthood' (see above) is a veiled reference to a sincere conversion. The connection between Aaron the composer and Aaron the high priest of the Jews is made in an elegant manner in the motto over the woodcut of Aaron that appears in his *Lucidario*, 'Virga Aron refloruit', and repeated in the first line of the distichs by Nicolò d'Arco under the portrait: 'Vivat Aron, saeclo sua virga refloreat omni'. The reference is to Num. 17, where it is related that God commanded Moses to collect rods (*virgae*) from the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel, on each of which was written the name, and the rod that blossomed belonged to Aaron. It is this image that Isaiah calls on when he prophesies that 'there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root' (Isa. 11: 1).⁵⁸

Nicolò d'Arco's encomiastic distichs show that Aaron preserved his contacts in humanistic circles after he left Imola. D'Arco, born in 1492 or 1493, studied at the University of Padua between 1511 and 1521.⁵⁹ He was a friend of Marc'Antonio Flaminio, the son of Aaron's translator Giovanni Antonio. In D'Arco's *Numeri*, a book of poems published in Mantua in 1546, his praise of Aaron appears in Book II, no. LXVI, under the heading 'De Arone musico':

Vivat Aron, saeclo sua virga refloreat omni,

Per quem, obscura olim, Musica nunc rutilat.

Ergo digna feret tantorum dona laborum: Praemia quis tanto digna neget capiti?

Vos vivum, vates, statua et decorate corona:

Post obitum sidus, dii, facite esse novum.60

Long live Aaron; may his rod reblossom in every generation; Through whom Music, once obscure, now shines.
Thus shall he receive gifts worthy of such great labours: For who would deny fitting rewards to so great a man?
In life, you poets, honour him with statue and laurel wreath; After death, o gods, fashion of him a new constellation.

As with most such laudatory poems, one learns more about the poet's creative gifts than the subject's personality. The distichs must have been composed specifically for the *Lucidario*. D'Arco may have become acquainted with Aaron in Brescia, for he was the father-in-law of Count Fortunato Martinengo, the dedicatee of the *Lucidario*. He must also have

⁵⁸ The more immediate source for the motto is probably the Alleluia verse 'Virga Jesse floruit' (*Liber usualis* 1267).

⁵⁹ Dizionario biografico degli italiani, iii (1961), 793. D'Arco died in late 1546 or 1547.

⁶⁰ In line 3, the version printed in Aaron's Lucidario reads 'Ergo pulchra ferat'. The above version is taken from Hieronymi Fracastorii Veronensis, Adami Fumani canonici Veronensis, et Nicolai Archi Comitis Carminum Editio II (2 vols., Padua, 1739), ii. 240.

been a gifted amateur musician: Aaron places 'Il Signor Conte Nicolò d'Arco' at the head of his list of 'Cantori a libro' in the first chapter of Book IV of the *Lucidario*.

In a similar class is the poem dedicated to Aaron by the Bolognese humanist Achille Bocchi, a great friend of both Giovanni Antonio Flaminio and Aaron, who was present in Imola at the time the discussion concerning the translation of the *De institutione harmonica* took place.⁶¹ He was then twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old, and, according to Flaminio, a highly skilled organist and keyboard player.⁶² A precocious youth, at the age of twenty he had already published a defence of his teacher Giovanni Battista Pio. In that same year he was called to the Studio in Bologna as lecturer in Greek, and he later taught rhetoric and poetry. The position, however, seems largely to have been honorary, for at the same time he pursued a career in other fields. During the pontificate of Leo X he was in Rome as imperial orator, and he dedicated a collection of poems to Leo under the title *Lusuum libellus*.⁶³ The poem to Aaron is found in this work, and thus it must date from Aaron's years in Imola:

Ad Petrum Aaron Florentinum. Ode Iambus.

Errabat olim Musice per florida Novem sororum prata, qua Biverticis Late comant amoena Parnasi iuga, Ibatque longe celsior quam assueverat, Longe et nitidior, comptior, venustior. Tum Momus, ille ille obloquutor maximus, Sardonicum risit, caninoque intuens Hanc vultu, ait. Vah, vah, Quid hoc; unde hic furor? Unde hęc Licentia; unde fastus hic novus? Quid cęteris, quid pręstat hęc sororibus? Hęc atque alia cum forte verba Delius Audisset, ira accensus infit. Quid tibi Cum musica, miselle, inepte, livide,

⁶¹ 'Aderat tum forte Phileros meus Achilles Bocchius iuvenis candidissimus et gręce latineque doctissimus utriusque nostrum familiaris qui Faventiam postridie profecturus ad Flaminium suum veterem hospitem diverterat' (*Libri tres de institutione harmonica*, fo. 5°).

⁶² 'Achillem meum Philerotem Bochium, qui quidem (ut nosti) organi ac instrumentorum eiusmodi peritissimus est'; ibid., fo. 42'.

⁶³ See A. Rotondò in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, xi (1969), 67–8. Rotondò cites two manuscripts, one in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS plut. 33. 42, the other an 18th-c. copy in Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2675 (ibid., p. 69). Unknown to him are further copies in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5793 (dedicated to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, then Vice-Chancellor), and Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 1471 (dedicated to Claudio Guicci, Bishop of Mirepoix). All three 16th-c. versions are presentation manuscripts. Although the contents are slightly different, the poem to Aaron is present in all three. The book was not published in Bocchi's lifetime, but a selection from it was printed in *Carmina illustrium poetarum italorum*, ii (Florence, 1719), which includes the poem to Aaron on p. 348. Nasute Mome, quique cunctis invides, Nemo tamen tibi. Tace, tace omnibus Invise. Sic enim impero, sic sancio, Sit ceteras inter sorores Musice lam nominis primi, caputque et gloria, Hanc nobilis postquam Fluentie⁶⁴ decus Ille ille Petrus Aaron cognomine, Squallore, et atro vindicavit a situ, ac Totam nitori reddidit nuper suo. Pulcher loquendi hic finem Apollo fecerat, Tum vero protinus miser Momus male Livore edaci percitus disrumpitur. Risere Muse, deinde magnis arduum Implere Parnasi cacumen plausibus, Summisque tuum ad usque astra, Petre, laudibus Efferre nomen. Ergo vives, omnium Ouot sunt, fuerunt, atque erunt in posterum Clarissimus, dum Cynthius flammantia Circum capacis ibit orbis moenia. Atque interim exultent boni tecum, Aaron, Rumpatur et livore quisquis rumpitur.65

To Pietro Aaron of Florence. Iambic Ode

Music was once wandering through the nine sisters' flowering fields, where the pleasant heights of twin-peaked Parnassus spread their leaves on every side, and she went far more proudly than she usually did, far more splendidly, elegantly, and gracefully. Then infamous Momus, that greatest of naysayers, laughed sardonically, and regarding her with a snarling face, said: 'Oh! oh! what have we here? Whence this folly, this licence, this new haughtiness? In what, in what is she superior to the other sisters?'

When Delian Apollo by chance heard these and other words, he began to speak in anger: 'What have you to do with music, you wretched, inept, spiteful, scornful Momus, you who are envious of everyone, but none of you? Be quiet, detested by all; thus do I command, thus decree. Let Music now have the first name and be the leader and glory among the other sisters, now that the renowned Pietro with the name of Aaron, the noble glory of Florence, has lately rescued her from squalor and dismal neglect and has restored her completely to her own splendour.'

Fair Apollo had here made an end of speech; then straightway the wretched Momus, fatally stirred by gnawing envy, bursts asunder. The Muses laughed, then filled the lofty peaks of Parnassus with great applause and proclaimed to the stars your name, Pietro, with the highest praise. Thus you shall live, most

⁶⁴ From a corrupt reading *Fluentini* at Pliny, *Natural History* 3. 52, early humanists derived a supposed original name *Fluentia* for Florence.

⁶⁵ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS plut. 33. 42, fo. 6^v. Lowinsky discovered this poem in 1948.

renowned of all who are, were, or will be in the future, as long as the Cynthian god (Apollo) shall travel around the fiery walls of the spacious world. And meanwhile let the good exult with you, Aaron, and let whoever bursts with envy be destroyed.

To be the recipient of such a work undoubtedly gratified Aaron, yet he evidently considered it unsuitable as a prefatory poem for any of his treatises. D'Arco's distichs, with their apotheosis of the writer, being short and to the point, seemed to him more appropriate.

Although only nine letters by Aaron have survived in the Correspondence, his personality is vividly reflected in them. When he is not writing about music theory, he has a chatty, colloquial style. He reports personal events: his visit to Padua in 1535 and the conversation over dinner (no. 61), his reception into the Order of the Crutched Friars and his living conditions in Bergamo (no. 62), his visit to Brescia in 1539 (no. 64). He is also interested in the personal lives of others: the sad story of Giovanni Maria Lanfranco's forced flight from Verona to an Augustinian monastery near Bergamo, after having 'spoiled' a boy, is known only from Aaron's report to his young fellow friar, Gregorio Corbelli, to whom Aaron pointedly makes the remark, 'attend to your own honour so you don't become another Fra Leonardo of Bergamo' (no. 105). Aaron relishes gossip: he passes on what he heard about Lorenzo Gazio's trip to Venice, where he visited Willaert and insulted a composition by Del Lago (no. 61). In unguarded moments Aaron can be quite earthy. Such letters rarely survive the centuries, unlike the more learned epistles such as those written by Spataro, who did indeed intend to preserve his letters for posterity.

Aaron was younger than Spataro by perhaps twenty years, and he was close to a beginner in music when the two began to correspond, some time before the publication of Aaron's *Libri tres de institutione harmonica* in 1516. In this book Aaron places Spataro among the foremost experts in the chromatic and enharmonic genera and expresses his veneration of the older author.⁶⁶ Spataro was Aaron's mentor, and this relationship is manifest throughout their correspondence. In only one aspect—as far as we can tell from the extant letters—does Aaron feel himself on a level of equality with Spataro, and that is as a composer. Neither vaunted himself as gifted in this respect, but each considered himself a competent writer and freely criticized the contrapuntal faults in the other's works (see Ch. 5). Aaron's debt to Spataro in the *Toscanello*, though unexpressed, is evident to all who have read Spataro's letters,⁶⁷ and his little treatise on

⁶⁶ For the passage in question, see Ch. 3.

⁶⁷ See especially no. 4 nn. 5–8, and no. 12 nn. 8, 10, and 16.

mutations may have been written in large part by Spataro (see the Commentary on no. 34), but only in the Lucidario, published after Spataro's death, does Aaron publicly acknowledge Spataro's influence on him, calling him 'eccellentissimo et dottissimo' (Book I, fo. C3^r) and 'giudicioso et dotto' (Book III, fo. 16^r).⁶⁸ Sometimes he refers to Spataro's published treatises, but once he acknowledges their private correspondence. Contesting an opinion of Gafurio, Aaron quotes Spataro's affirmation that any interval of a determined proportion can be found geometrically and arithmetically in a sounding string length. 'These words of the excellent Giovanni Spataro', Aaron says, 'are not published, but were written to me and considered and confirmed by me' (Book III, fo. 17^v). This letter has not survived; it must belong to correspondence between Spataro and Aaron in the wake of the publication of Aaron's De institutione harmonica, when both were drawn into defending the book against Gafurio's criticisms. Several of the chapters in the Lucidario reflect this controversy. Others amplify and correct some statements made in Aaron's earlier treatises. Towards the end of the Lucidario, after discussing alteration, Aaron says: 'And what we have written above and clarified with cogent reasons, we have discussed many times with the excellent Giovanni Spataro and confirmed everything between us, some of whose opinions, to strengthen our confirmations in these matters, we have adduced in the present work so that one can better see how right and good the opinion of others can be who believe and hold the opposite' (Book IV, fo. 33^{r v}).

The willingness to learn from others and the acknowledgement of the value of contrasting opinions are characteristic of Aaron's personality and explain why his friendship with Giovanni Spataro was able to survive the sometimes acid tongue of the latter. They shared a keen love of 'our beloved harmonic faculty', as Spataro put it, and it is in the letters between these two that the weight of the Correspondence lies.

ANNEXE

Documents Relating to Aaron's Employment at Imola

During the summer of 1986 I had occasion to examine Gaetano Gaspari's papers, housed in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna. Among them I found four documents concerning Pietro Aaron's position in Imola. These

⁶⁸ Aaron's scholarly relations with Giovanni del Lago followed the opposite course; in the *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni* of 1525 Aaron cites Del Lago ('el venerabile messer Pre Zanetto musico Veneto') several times as confirming his opinion. Del Lago is not mentioned in any later treatise, and a perusal of Aaron's critique of Del Lago's 1540 treatise (no. 66) will quickly show why. Aaron was content to be Del Lago's friend, but he felt he had little to learn from him.

documents were copied in the 1850s by Gaspari's friend Antonio Gabriele Zardi from notarial acts in Imola. I present them here in Gaspari's transcription. The three dots replace a sign for abbreviation of the customary formal clauses.

1. In Christi nomine Amen. Anno Domini 1521. die xv. Februarij. Cum fuerint vocati omnes tam in dignitate constituti (preterquam Dominus archipresbyter, et dominus Petrus Maria Thesaurarius) quam omnes canonici existentes in civitate Imole, ac Mansionarij Ecclesie Imolensis, die precedenti, que fuit 14. presentis mensis februarij, pro presenti die et hora, cellebrata missa majori ad deliberandum, et mature consulendum super conductione D. Petri Aron Cantoris in Ecclesia ipsa, et super provisione eidem prestanda, sicut Dominicus de Birris nuntius dicte Ecclesie retulit vigore cedule ex parte domini Prepositi sibi date, quam vidi et legi, sic omnes vocasse, et de constitutis in dignitatibus, et canonicis nullus interesse curaverit, exceptis infrascriptis videlicet quorum nomina sunt hec.

D. Prepositus Vulpensis

D. Baptista Angelinus

D. Bartholomeus Angelinus

D. Vincentius Cavina

D. Jacobus de Pictoribus

Et de Mansionariis nemo ultra infrascriptos se presentaverint, videlicet

D. Petrus Ravennas Angellinus Syndicus

D. Antonius Faba

D. Petronius a Sellis

D. Franciscus Tuschinij

D. Antonius Carota

D. Bernardinus de Loreto audito partito posito disentiens discessit.

Qui omnes, accusata contumatia et negligentia ceterorum pro honore et conservatione divini cultus in Ecclesia predicta, volentes per presentes facultates exponere, se obligaverunt dicto domino Petro Aron presenti eidem dare, et solvere, et consignare corbium frumenti quantitates infrascriptas, modo et forma infrascriptis, videlicet

D. Prepositus corbes quatuor4	
D. Vincentius Cavina c. tres3	frumenti ad
D. Baptista et D. Bartholomeus de Angellinis c.	
quatuor4	mensuram
D. Jacobus de Pictoribus c. unaI	
et D. Vincentius Cavina nomine domini Archidiaconi	Imole
de Brocardis alias corbes duas frumenti 2	ť

Et predicti Syndicus Mansionariorum, et Mansionarij predicti, obtento partito per fabas quatuor albas ex quinque de dando dicto D. Petro Aron Corbes XVI. frumenti de predicta mensura, se obligaverunt dare et consignare in recollectu proxime futuro dicto Domino Petro Aron dictas Corbes XVI frumenti, pro eo quod promisit in Choro divinis interesse et cantu se occupare diebus solemnibus et festivis per annum incipiendum in Kalendis Martii proxime futuris, et ut

Pietro Aaron

Introduction

sequitur, hac tamen conditione, quod non facta interpellatione per mensem ante finitum annum per alteram partem de conducta non perseveranda: intelligatur perseverare eo modo et forma quo anno tunc preterito, et sic per transitum mensem perdurare per alium annum cum eodem salario... Que omnia et singula ... obligaverunt ... Renunciavit ... juraverunt ... et fiat plenum ...

Actum Imole in Cappella S. Donati in Sacristia Sancti Cassiani presentibus ibidem Domino Francisco de Dutia, et D. Francisco de Burchellis Testibus.

Ego Vincentius Gybettus Notarius rogatus scribere scripsi.

Pages 37–8 of the first volume of Gaetano Gaspari's *Miscellanea musicale*, MS UU. 12. 1 in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale of Bologna. According to Gaspari's note, the document was copied for him by his friend Antonio Gabriele Zardi on 30 Oct. 1850 from the notary acts of Vincenzo Gibetti, 1521, Protocol VII, fo. 121[°], in the archives of the city of Imola.

2. Item post peracta in ipso Consilio fuit porrecta scriptura petitionis ac narrationis subsequentis videlicet quod pro augumento divini cultus et patrie hujus Imolensis ornamento proponitur ac petitur a Magnifica Comunitate Imole, quod ille sexaginta libre bononorum, que dispensari consuetum fuit in pios usus a Magnificis Dominis Vexillifero et Conservatoribus pro tempore, applicentur pro mercede unius Cantoris Musices valentis retinendi in domo Sancti Cassiani Imolensi, et in presentiarum designentur ac deputentur Domino Petro Aaron pro toto tempore vite sue, cum obligatione inserviendi, et decorandi dictam Ecclesiam Sancti Cassiani, et etiam docendi in hujusmodi arte musica gratis pauperes clericos Civitatis vel territorii Imolensis, nec non et omnes alios sotios et inservientes in ipsa Capella musice qui pro tempore fuerint, et si dictus Cantor ab Officio suo honorate et debite desierit in tempore ad relationem Capituli et Sacerdotum dicte Ecclesie, quod Comunitas non teneatur, nec debeat illi tradere dictam provisionem seu salarium, et electio alterius ydonei Cantoris spectet semper et pertineat dicte Magnifice Comunitati cum scientia tamen dicti Capituli S. Cassiani, super quibus surgens

Eximius legum Doctor D. Nicolaus de Codruncho ex Consiliariis consulendo dixit, quod dictus Dominus Petrus Aaron est homo virtuosus et honorificus Civitati Imolę et quod retineatur ad obsequium hujusmodi dandis sibi dictis libris LX^{ta} in anno intuitu virtutum suarum, quibus dictis similiter surgens

Eximius artium et medicine Doctor Magister Andreas de Ferris consiliarius dicti Consilii consulendo dixit, quod dictus D. Petrus Aron fuit requisitus alio se conferre cum magno salario, et quia non fit ab Imola discessurus quando subveniatur sibi de dicto salario, et quia Comunitas nostra omnino conetur habere, et retinere talem virum pro virtute dicti Cantus musices conservandi, et augendi in ipsa Civitate, quoniam est decoris et honoris dicte Civitati et Comunitati Imole; quibus dictis nonnulli alii ex Consiliariis dixerunt poni super propositum sequens partitum videlicet

Quibus videtur et placet quod D.º Petro Aron Cantori Musico in Ecclesia Sancti Cassiani dari debeant et concedi ille libre sexaginta bononorum singulo anno que stant in dispositione Magnificorum Dominorum Vexilliferi et Conservatorum Civitatis Imole in quolibet Magistratu largiendi, et concedendi ad ipsorum Dominorum libitum ut schola cantus conservetur in ipsa Civitate Imole et quod missa cantari valeat singulis diebus solemnibus in dicta Ecclesia, et hoc pro honore Civitatis, et augumento divini cultus, et in eventum quod dictus D. Petrus Aron deficeret a dicto laudabili eius exercitio, quod Comunitas Imolę possit, et valeat eligere alium Cantorem in dicta Ecclesia Sancti Cassiani, et quod dictus Cantor teneatur et obligatus sit docere gratis clericos pauperes, nec non omnes alios sotios et servientes ipsi Capellę et quod electio dicti Cantoris semper pertineat ad ipsam Comunitatem Imolę cum scientia Capituli dictę Ecclesię Sancti Cassiani, dent fabas albas ... Datis fabis ... Fabę albę de sic repertę fuerunt quinquaginta, nigris duabus non obstantibus, victum, et obtentum fuit supradictum partitum, ut supra.

Transcribed in Gaspari's *Miscellanea musicale*, MS UU. 12. 2, pp. 518–20, from a letter sent him by Antonio Zardi on 10 Jan. 1852.

3. Die XI. mensis Octobris 1521.

Venerandus Vir D. Vincentius Cavina Canonicus Imolensis Rector Capelle S. Marie Assumptionis in Ecclesia Sancti Cassiani constituit D. Petrum Aron presentem, capellanum et cantoristam ad annum cum onere trium missarum pro qualibet hebdomada, et pro mercede promisit dare in festis Nativitatis Domini Nostri duos aureos rassioti debitis temporibus. Et hoc quia dictus D. Petrus promisit onera missarum substinuere [*sic*] et adimplere ... que omnia et singula ... sub pena quo [*sic*] pena ... Item refficere ... pro quibus obligavit ... Renunciavit ... juravit ... et fiat plenum ...

Actum Imolę in Capella Sancti Laurentii sub voltis Palatii pręsentibus ibidem D. Joanne Francisco de Florianis et Orlando Parmesano Testibus notis.

Ego Vincentius Gybettus Notarius rogatus s.s.

From Protocol VII of Vincentius Gybettus, fo. 666^r; transcribed in Gaspari's *Miscellanea*, MS UU. 12. 1, pp. 38–9. Gaspari queries two words in the document, *cantoristam* and *rassioti*. In the same Protocol on fo. 681^v the notary entered the following note: 'Die 17. Octobris 1521. Nominationem in Mansionarium de D. Petro Aron habetur in filtia mei notarij.' Zardi was not able to find this folder.

4. Die 19 Junij 1522.

Ven. Vir D. Petrus Aaron Florentinus Mansionarius Ecclesię Imolensis sponte ... fecit constituit creavit et solemniter ordinavit Ven. virum Dominum Jacobum de Caputiis de Imola presentem procuratorem ad ipsius constituentis nomine, et pro eo Mansionariam seu locum quem obtinet inter Mansionarios Ecclesię Sancti Cassiani Imolensis in manibus S. D. N. papę, sive Vice Cancellarij, aut Ordinarij Imolę, aut ejus Vicarij Generalis, vel alterius cujusvis ad hoc potestatem habentibus ... et ad favorem honorabilis viri D. Thomę quondam Magistri Egidii Clerici Imolensis, et non aliter alias nec alio modo pure libere et simpliciter resignare et renuntiare, et ressignationem desuper recipi petendum et litterarum expeditioni consentiendo. Jurando quoque in animam Constituentis quod in hujusmodi rassegnatione [*sic*] non intervenerit quodcunque interesse... Item ad omnia alia et singula ... dans ... promittens ... sub obligatione omnium et singulorum suorum bonorum ... super quibus voluit a me notario fieri annotationem irrevocabilitatis, promittens nunquam revocare, et si quandocum-que revocari voluerit, revocationem non valere.
Actum Imolę in Capella S. Egidij in domo Octaviani quondam Eximij Legum doctoris Domini Joannis Lilij, pręsentibus ibidem Ser Jacobo Andrea de Gentilinis, et Magistro Gaspare Totto testibus vocatis...

Ego Vincentius Gybettus.

Die dicta

Postquam incontinenti dictus Petrus Aaron presens sponte constituit Ven. virum D. Thomam quondam Magistri Egidij de Imola presentem ad ipsius constituentis nomine exigendum ... petendum ... recipiendum ... Item ad quietandum et absolvendum ... Item ad recipiendum ... obligationes. Item ad omnia alia et singula ... sub pena qua pena ... Item ad substituendum ... dans ... obligans ... et fiat plenum ad negotia ...

Actum Imole in Capella S. Egidij ubi supra, presentibus dictis Testibus ut supra nominatis.

Ego Vincentius Gybettus Notarius ss.

From Protocol IX of the same notary, fo. 356°, transcribed in Gaspari's Miscellanea musicale, MS UU. 12. 1, pp. 39-40.

The Art of Composition

RESPONDING to Pietro Aaron's criticism of consecutive fifths, one perfect, the other imperfect, in the motet 'Nativitas gloriose', Spataro remarked: 'I used them because I don't believe they go against the art of harmonic practice' (no. 49, para. 4). The theory and practice of 'l'arte de la harmonica facultà' is one of the main concerns of the writers in the Correspondence, and especially of Giovanni Spataro. The discussion of specific compositions, often with musical examples, forms one of the most interesting and valuable aspects of these letters. This was the age when simultaneous conception of the polyphonic complex was becoming the norm, when the art of composition was being separated from the craft of counterpoint, and when composers began to use scores as a compositional aid. The present Correspondence bears witness to the reactions of individual writers and composers to these momentous changes.

More than one hundred compositions—over half of them no longer extant—are discussed in the Correspondence (see Table 4 on pp. xxxviii–xliv). They are used to illustrate mensural complexities, notational problems, and harmonic practice. Obscure canonic directions are queried and clarified. The Correspondence reveals a practice that is far commoner than scholars have realized: it was customary among composers and musicians to send each other single compositions. Such exchanges are mentioned in twenty-seven letters in the Correspondence, which also preserves two complete compositions, Spataro's 'Ave gratia plena' (see no. 46) and Lanfranco's 'Threicium memorat quicumque' (see no. 106). Were it not for these letters, we should never know that Aaron was a composer of motets, madrigals, and masses; the only work by him hitherto known was a frottola published by Petrucci in 1505. Spataro, too, emerges as a much more prolific composer than the extant choir-books of his church indicate.

More than twenty years ago Edward Lowinsky drew on a passage from one of Spataro's letters to Del Lago to illustrate the newly emerging concept of musical genius in the sixteenth century.¹ 'The written rules can teach the first rudiments of counterpoint well,' wrote Spataro in 1529, 'but they will not make a good composer, inasmuch as the good composers are born just as are the poets' (no. 22, para. 3). This subject was also a topic of discussion between Spataro and Aaron. The two were under no illusion

¹ 'Musical Genius—Evolution and Origins of a Concept', The Musical Quarterly 50 (1964), 321-40 and 476-95 at 481-2 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 51.

that they were gifted composers-their awe of Adrian Willaert and great regard for his compositions make this clear-but they strove to achieve a high level of craftsmanship. In another letter to Del Lago of the same year, Spataro emphasized that the knowledge of counterpoint was the indispensable basis for composition, and he deplored the present state of the art, where 'even without studying the precepts of counterpoint everyone is a master of composing harmony' (no. 17, para. 4).² Indeed, Spataro's and Aaron's criticisms of each other's compositions mostly involve contrapuntal faults. The temptation is great to dismiss the two as a pair of Beckmessers. But that would be a mistake. Spataro himself said that 'good composers (through natural instinct and a certain grace and manner that can hardly be taught) sometimes introduce expressions in counterpoint and composition that are not demonstrated in any rule or precept of counterpoint' (no. 22, para. 3). Time and again when Spataro criticizes a passage in Aaron's works or defends one of his own, he appeals not to the rules of ancient authors but to the authority of the ear. And here he makes a profound statement on how the musician of his time heard music. Spataro grew up in an era when it was not yet common to appeal to the judgement of the ear in forming opinions about the sound of musical intervals.³ But he-unlike many writers on music-evolved with his time, and even into his seventies he was keenly following and participating in new developments in music.

Spataro, however, was not dogmatic about the judgement of the ear. When it suited him, he would take the opposite tack: after telling Aaron that one of the latter's motets was sung at San Petronio and highly praised by the listeners, he continued: 'But, as Ptolemy says, this art of music must be judged not only by the sense of hearing: reason must enter as well', and he proceeded to correct some contrapuntal faults (no. 36, para. 4). And when Aaron criticized a seventh resolving into an octave, Spataro at first defended it, then, to satisfy his friend, emended it, remarking that 'all questions will be removed, and also it will be more pleasing to the sense of hearing, which, because of its instability and imperfection, cannot judge all the important aspects considered by reason or theory, which consists in intellectual understanding and the recognition of truth' (no. 37, para. 4). At times Spataro was hard pressed to defend his compositional choices. When a knowledgeable friend queried a passage in one of his masses, Spataro conceded that there was no authority for it, but he finally

² On what Spataro meant by 'harmony', and the difference between counterpoint and composition, see Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century'.

³ On the novelty of this notion in 15th-c. thought, see Lowinsky, 'Music of the Renaissance as Viewed by Renaissance Musicians', in Bernard O'Kelly (ed.), *The Renaissance Image of Man and the World* ([Columbus, Ohio], 1966), pp. 129–77; see esp. pp. 132–48 = Music in the Culture of the *Renaissance*, pp. 88–95. convinced his sceptical friend by showing that the passage could be defended by reason (no. 55, para. 1).⁴

While Spataro believed that composition could not be taught by written rules, he was convinced that two-part counterpoint could indeed be learnt from a book. His own treatise on counterpoint, the subject of an acrimonious exchange with Del Lago (see nos. 28–9), is lost. All we know about it is that ch. 7 of the second part concerned *fuga*, *reditta*, *talea*, and *color*, about which Spataro had some novel ideas. Spataro's criticisms of Aaron's compositions, which will be discussed below, undoubtedly incorporate some of his precepts of counterpoint, as well as his thoughts on compositional procedure. In two of his 'review' letters of Aaron's *Toscanello*, however, we catch a glimpse of the direction Spataro would have taken as a teacher of counterpoint.

Three of these letters are missing, with the result that we do not know Spataro's reactions to Aaron's definition of counterpoint (taken from Gafurio) and especially to Aaron's description of the methods of composition of older and younger composers. Spataro's letter of 6 May 1524 (no. 11) concerns ch. 17 of Book II of the Toscanello, on whether a composition must begin with a perfect consonance. Some musicians, says Aaron, taught this, but he considers it optional. A composition must end, however, on a perfect consonance. Spataro counters that the rule to begin on a perfect consonance was intended for beginners, not for mature composers. The proper pedagogical method is to begin with what is easy, clear, and certain (para. 2). Moreover, this rule was devised for noteagainst-note writing in two parts, not for the mature composer, who understands the nature of perfect and imperfect intervals and how they should be used at the beginnings and endings of compositions. Aaron's erroneous opinion, Spataro says, was derived from the writings of 'that fool Franchino', who stated that a composition should end on a perfect consonance in accordance with Aristotle's dictum, 'perfection in all things is to be found not in the beginning but in the end'. This philosophical idea does not apply here, says Spataro, and he proceeds to give a comparative example of two architects who construct their buildings with common and precious stones, but in a different order. Both buildings, Spataro maintains, will be equally finished and perfect, no matter whether the precious stones are at the beginning or the end. Likewise, the completion of musical compositions does not depend on the placement of the perfect consonances (para. 4). Moreover, Aaron's prescription does not accord with modern practice: many compositions of four or more voices end with an imperfect consonance (para. 5).

When Aaron rejects the advice of older musicians to move from a ⁴ On Spataro's belief in the guiding principle of reason, see Ch. 3.

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unison in regular order to a third, fifth, sixth, octave, and so on in favour of greater freedom of choice, thus allowing 'compositions of greater beauty and interest', Spataro responds that Aaron unfairly finds fault with the older generation; writers such as Ugolino and Spataro's own teacher Ramis

did not go beyond the first principles because this learned antiquity knew that the art and grace of composing harmony cannot be taught, for composers must be born, just as poets are born. Thus they first taught how to compose with two voices, note against note, and then they showed how to diminish the note-values. Whoever wanted to proceed beyond that needed (with the help of a teacher) to be aided by a certain heavenly inclination and divine grace (para. 7).

In both cases Aaron transmits time-honoured rules of two-part counterpoint, not realizing that they were not intended for composition in three or more voices. He himself surely learnt counterpoint this way in his youth, and for two-part writing the old treatises were just as valid in the sixteenth century. Aaron seems not to have had a teacher, who, as Spataro counsels, would have helped his pupil proceed beyond the stage of twopart counterpoint. Aaron's modifications of the old method are based on the realization that the kind of music that was being composed in his day was different, but he lacked the theoretical acumen to develop a new theory of counterpoint. Judging from Spataro's remarks, his own treatise would have developed a rigorous pedagogical method that was based on modern practice, distinguishing between two-part counterpoint, or the successive method, and composition in three or more parts—at least those aspects that could be imparted through rules.

Continuing in his criticism, Spataro marvels that Aaron, 'without observing the species of the mode in which the composition is set', gives 'the composer complete liberty to do as he pleases and wishes, as long as he observes the rules of consonance'.⁵ 'Such freedom is not conceded in any theory of art', Spataro counters. Rather,

one must always seek to choose the best manner, and in this consists the virtue of the composer; hence it comes about that many compose, and the composition of one will be more pleasing than the composition of another. This is what the ancient authors attempted to codify in rules and precepts, for if in any faculty there is the possibility of doing well and better, it is not a matter of free choice but of the best rule and precept and grace (para. 8).⁶

⁵ This criticism was premature: in the next chapter Aaron does indeed say that the mode should be respected in writing cadences. When he comes to this chapter, Spataro has nothing critical to say about it.

⁶ Spataro wrote this before he read what Aaron had to say in ch. 21. In the next letter he praises Aaron for rightly saying that the first precept of counterpoint is that 'the voice-parts should always be arranged so that they are convenient for the singers, and that one consonance should move to another as closely as possible' (no. 12, para. 7). But he notes that the advice conflicts with ch. 17, where complete freedom of choice is given to the beginner.

Next Spataro takes up a remark that Aaron makes on dissonance treatment. He uses it to develop a theory that he refers to in a number of letters in the Correspondence, and one that is comparable in its idiosyncrasy to his theory on the perfection of notes under *sesquialtera*. Aaron had stated:

Note that in florid counterpoint, the first and last notes of a passage in diminution should be concordant, while those in the middle may be dissonant, as in natural speech. Because of the fast tempo in such diminutions, whatever dissonances appear are not disturbing to the ear of the singer.

After adducing some examples that go counter to Aaron's statement and noting that they are to be found frequently, even in Aaron's own compositions (para. 9), Spataro remarks that if Aaron wants to excuse these dissonances by the fast tempo, one could just as well excuse them on the first note, in which case the art of florid counterpoint would disintegrate. The true reason why the ear does not hear the dissonances on the middle and last notes, he explains, is that 'only the beginning and first motion that the voice makes on the note (owing to the intensity caused by singing) is heard and understood by the ear, and then the suspension and holding-out of the voice up to the next percussion (percussione) of time assumed in the course of singing is accepted by the ear in place of stillness (taciturnità)'. As proof of this theory, Spataro refers to compositions where dissonant notes such as sevenths, fourths, and seconds are suspended. During the suspension 'the ear does not hear what it would not suffer on the first percussion' (para. 10). Spataro has in mind a sequence of syncopations such as, say:



which is taken by the ear as if it were:



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Spataro does not say that the two are identical. He aims at elucidating the difference between a note sounded (*percussione*) and a note held over (*suspensione*). It is this difference that accounts for the dissonances implicit in chains of suspensions.⁷

This theory, as Spataro himself acknowledges in a later letter (no. 49, para. 2), derives from Gafurio's De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum. But Gafurio did not present it in the context of suspension. Using the same words *percussione* and *taciturnità*, he described the phenomenon of sound: 'Every sound [resides] in percussion, but not every percussion in time, but in the extension of time. For in the middle of the percussions created by the sounds some stillnesses occur, setting off one sound from the other.²⁸ Contrary to much of what Gafurio said, this statement struck Spataro as 'beautiful and true' (no. 49, para. 2), and he made it a touchstone of his dissonance theory. But he applied it in a way completely sui generis. As long as he uses the theory to explain the phenomenon of suspension dissonance, in those cases where the suspension is properly prepared and resolved, it makes a certain amount of sense. But he goes on to apply it to all types of dissonances, including augmented and diminished intervals, and in different contexts, which calls into question his musical judgement. Specific examples will be discussed below.

For our composers, the art of composition resides in harmonic practice. Spataro was completely untouched by humanist concerns about the declamation of the text. He was offended when Aaron suggested that grammatical accents (i.e. quantities) should be observed in setting the text:

I am even more astonished at you, seeing that you want to take away a musician's free will and make him subject to grammatical accents; even though they have a quantitative value of long and short, nevertheless no fixed and certain proportion occurs between these temporal quantities because they do not fit into the time and measure of the mensural system that the musician considers by measuring according to up-beat and down-beat, or arsis and thesis, that is, raising and lowering. That the musician is not constrained to follow grammatical accents is proved by the plainchant I used as a subject or tenor ['Virgo prudentissima'], because on the syllable 'fi', which has a long accent according to the grammarian, and on the following syllable 'li' fall two equal notes, separated in time, and yet the syllable 'li' (according to the grammarian) has a short accent, as does the following vowel, which the grammarian counts as short. Similarly, there would

⁷ Glareanus also believed that in a syncopation a dissonance such as a whole tone 'is not heard'; see *Dodecachordon*, trans. Clement A. Miller (Musicological Studies and Documents 6; 2 vols., [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1965), i. 64.

⁸ 'Omnis sonus in percussione: non autem omnis percussio in tempore: sed in temporis termino. In medio enim percussionum quae per sonos fiunt: quaedam eveniunt taciturnitates: quibus soni invicem discernuntur' (*De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, fo. III^r, l. 8 from bottom).

be a contradiction between the musical time assigned to the following syllable, which has a short accent,⁹ and the chant [which] assigns it a long, that is two notes in ligature, and the last, 'on', which is short, is assigned a note equal in value to the first, 'fi', which, as I said, has a long accent:

I don't know what moved you all of a sudden to demand such grammatical niceties in other people's compositions, but I think that whoever looked carefully through your own works would find that you haven't been so particular, because grammar is not your or my profession. And also I think that there are few musicians who observe grammatical accents in mensural music. Thus, as I said, the musician is free, but more care should be taken in plainchant. So, my honoured Fra Pietro, don't try to go outside your field. You'd achieve no small gain if you could manage to guard yourself from musical errors (in which, as usual, your last composition sent to me appears to be abundant). (No. 36, para. 3; see Pl. 5.)¹⁰

If we look at Spataro's motet, 'Virgo prudentissima', we find that he committed what grammatically oriented musicians would call a barbarism in setting the words 'filia Sion':¹¹



Not only did he disregard the 'grammatical accent': he did violence to the word-accent (which is probably what Aaron objected to). Indeed, Spataro frequently sets words stressed on the first syllable to an iambic rhythm. This is the first and last time that the matter of text-setting is broached between Spataro and Aaron. Aaron must have seen that any further discussion would be pointless. Frank Tirro has studied Spataro's habits in underlaying text in the choir-books he copied for San Petronio. He notes that Spataro frequently separated syllables as an aid to the singer, but distributed them under the notes without concern for the accent of Latin words; he regards Spataro's approach as a pragmatic one which in many aspects coincides with the rules laid down by Lanfranco, Zarlino, and Stoquerus.¹²

⁹ On the scansion of 'Sion', see no. 36 n. 3.

¹⁰ In the heat of the argument, Spataro let slip words that he later had to apologize for; see his contrite response to Aaron's letter in no. 37.

¹² See 'La stesura del testo nei manoscritti di Giovanni Spataro', R*ivista italiana di musicologia* 15 (1980), 31–70. Tirro overlooked the discussion of the question in Spataro's letter.

¹¹ See *Italia sacra musica*, ed. Knud Jeppesen (3 vols., Copenhagen, 1962), i. 114, mm. 25-7. The same motif is repeated in the alto and tenor.

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Spataro wonders what moved Aaron to bring up this subject. It may have been an acquaintance with Biagio Rossetti's *Libellus de rudimentis musices*, published two years earlier, in 1529. This is not the kind of treatise that Spataro would have been likely to read, since it is a manual for singers of plainchant. Rossetti had studied both grammar and theology, and he approaches the matter of choral singing as a Christian humanist, one steeped in the pronouncements of patristic writers. Of foremost importance to him is the scansion of the words; he even goes so far as to suggest ways to alter the rhythm of chant so that long and short syllables coincide with long and short notes.¹³ It is regrettable that none of Aaron's sacred compositions has survived so that we might discover whether he followed Rossetti's precepts. Certainly there must have been discussion in Venice on the proper methods of setting texts to music, for Adrian Willaert became the fountainhead of the 'musica nova', a central feature of which was the close relationship between word and note.

It was Spataro and Aaron who regularly exchanged compositions. Hardly a letter went between the two from 1531 to 1533 that was not accompanied by one work or another. Spataro occasionally makes us privy to the origins of these works. The 'Missa O salutaris hostia' was written 'to afford me some relief to my tribulations'. It is, he says, 'not something learned' but 'the most humble and modest composition ever written by me or others' (no. 50, para. 6). On another occasion a Magnificat was composed 'to suppress some vain thoughts not befitting the decrepit advanced age in which I find myself. And yet I find neither medicine nor exercise that can help me' (no. 55, para. 6). In each case, the text Spataro chooses is related to his condition. In selecting the Magnificat, he is saying that the only woman a man of his age should be thinking of is the Blessed Virgin Mary. In choosing 'O salutaris hostia', verse 5 of the hymn 'Verbum supernum prodiens', Spataro implores the power of the Eucharist to aid the oppressed. He must have known of the miraculous healing power of this hymn verse, which Louis XII had ordered to be sung throughout his realm and to which he ascribed his own cure.¹⁴ Neither of these works found its way into the repertory of San Petronio, to judge from the surviving choir-books. They were written simply for the pleasure of making music, and for Spataro this meant writing music, since he did not play an instrument.

Most of the criticisms each levelled at the other have to do with contrapuntal faults. Parallel unisons, fifths, octaves, and their compounds

¹⁴ See *The Medici Codex of 1518*, ed. Edward E. Lowinsky (Monuments of Renaissance Music 3-5; 3 vols., Chicago, 1968), iii. 43 and n. 10.

are pointed out and usually accepted and emended. But some cases are arguable. Aaron must have thought that a semibreve rest would serve to separate a set of consecutive octaves, but Spataro claims that under the metric signature \diamondsuit that rest is too short since it corresponds to only half a tactus, and it cannot keep the ear from hearing the octaves (no. 36, para. 4). Likewise, staggered octaves bridged with a pair of fusae or semiminims, such as the following, are impermissible:



Because of the swiftness of the short notes, Spataro says, the two octaves stand out. In the first example, he says he believes that he has never found a similar progression in the works of any skilled composer (no. 35, para. 5). He makes the same remark on the second passage, reminding Aaron that he has already warned him about this (no. 50, para. 6).

A cardinal rule of counterpoint is that two consecutive perfect intervals of the same species are forbidden. This is the rule Aaron had in mind when he pointed out five errors in Spataro's 'Virgo prudentissima'. Spataro acknowledges only one error. As to the others, 'if I wanted to demonstrate with valid reasons that what you call my errors are not errors, it would take not a letter but little short of a substantial treatise' (no. 36, para. 2). Spataro says it is no vice to have consecutive fifths, if one is perfect, the other imperfect, and he refers Aaron to his treatise on counterpoint, which unfortunately is lost. Since the motet survives, it is possible to locate the consecutive fifths sanctioned by Spataro:¹⁵



The other passages to which Aaron objected must have been tritones moving to perfect fourths, an inversion of the above progression, which

¹⁵ Italia sacra musica, ed. Jeppesen, i. 113, m. 8.

¹³ See the extended analysis in Don Harrán, Word-Tone Relations in Musical Thought from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century (Musicological Studies and Documents 40; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 108-29.

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occur in several cadences in this motet. Aaron apparently forgot Spataro's opinion, for several years later he again criticizes 'two fifths, one perfect and the other imperfect', in Spataro's 'Nativitas gloriose', a motet that is no longer extant. To this Spataro simply remarks 'I used them because I don't believe they go against the art of harmonic practice' (no. 49, para. 4).

Had Spataro not been able to refer Aaron to his counterpoint treatise in support of this practice, he could have cited the *Musica practica* of Bartolomeo Ramis, from whom he learnt the exception. But perhaps he simply quoted Ramis, for Aaron, in his *Lucidario* of 1545 (Book II, fo. 7^v), cites the passage from Ramis and adds a music example:

Tristano de Silva used to say that one can place one fifth after another fifth, one perfect, the other imperfect, as can be seen in that old song called 'Soys emprantis', and in one by Verdelot, 'Infirmitatem nostram' etc., but that imperfect fifth is not allowed in whole notes but in small divisions of the breve, such as here, i.e. in minim and semiminim:



The example is not from Frye's ballade, 'So ys emprentid'. The passage to which Tristano de Silva refers must be the following:¹⁶



¹⁶ This is the reading of the Mellon Chansonnier, fos. 61^v-62^v. In the modern edn. of this

manuscript, the editor has changed the rhythm of the middle voice to $\int \int o$, following all other sources. See The Mellon Chansonnier, ed. Leeman L. Perkins and Howard Garey (2 vols., New Haven and London, 1979), i. 157-9 (music), and ii. 371-2 (commentary). This reading creates another forbidden (if brief) interval, an augmented fifth. Apparently, the scribes of the other manuscripts balked at the consecutive fifths, not being aware of the exception to the rule. (No one, however, seems to have been bothered by the consecutive fifths in m. 3.) A second example occurs between the superius and contratenor at mm. 47-8. Here the diminished fifth occurs uncharacteristically on the strong beat and has been corrected by the editor with a flat that seems uncalled-for harmonically. Karol Berger has considered the problem of vertical relations in Musica ficta: Theories of Accidental Inflections in Vocal Polyphony from Marchetto da Padova to Gioseffo Zarlino (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 93-121. The passage from Verdelot's 'Infirmitatem nostram' is also different:¹⁷



Because of the flat in the signature, the two fifths are perfect; Aaron must have considered that the b should be raised to b to make a major sixth moving to an octave, which is what his example shows. Aaron devotes a whole 'oppenione' to the rule and its exception. But he does not feel sanguine about recommending it, for he remarks: 'if this appeals to you, you are free to follow it; and especially when constrained by necessity, we do not condemn it'. He had in fact been aware of the exception when he wrote his earlier treatises, but he did not approve of it then: 'Those who place two fifths one after another, even though one is perfect, the other imperfect, in our opinion fall into error, for in the diatonic species such diminished intervals are not suffered.'¹⁸

The exception to the rule forbidding consecutive fifths is also an exception to another rule: *mi contra fa* must be avoided in perfect intervals. The *mi contra fa* rule was designed to catch augmented and diminished intervals. It will work literally only when *musica ficta* is not involved, but the principle applies to passages such as the one in 'So ys emprentid', even though here it is *mi contra sol*. Aaron objected to the diminished fifth at the end of Spataro's 'Ave gratia plena' (the motet was enclosed with no. 46):



¹⁷ Modern edn. in Treize Livres de motets parus chez Pierre Attaingnant en 1534 et 1535, ed. A. Smijers, iv (Monaco, 1960), 99–102.

¹⁸ Toscanello, Book II, ch. 14. He goes on to speak of tempered fifths in organs. As Peter Bergquist has pointed out, Aaron took this passage from Gafurio (*Practica*, Book III, ch. 3) but misinterpreted it: Gafurio did not say the diminished fifth could not be found in the diatonic species but that it should not be used in composition ('The Theoretical Writings of Pietro Aaron', p. 338).

Spataro replies that it is not audible, but he remarks that it would be if the semibreve in the tenor were divided into two minims. Moreover, he says—and this must have given him great satisfaction—'if this is *not* correct, I learnt the error from the precepts you give in your *Toscanello*', and he quotes the passage where Aaron says that in a series of four notes, the first and last must be concordant but the middle notes can be dissonant; they pass so quickly that they do not disturb the ear (no. 49, para. 3). Aaron does not specify the rhythmic values of the notes. He probably has in mind a particular type of cadential dissonance found frequently in the music of his contemporaries:¹⁹



But this dissonance normally involves sevenths, fourths, and seconds, not diminished fifths. And it is an exceptional usage; dissonance is normally relegated to passing notes between beats.²⁰

Unfortunately, we do not know how Aaron reacted to Spataro's defence. But he must have been stunned by Spataro's next letter, in which Spataro criticizes the following progression in Aaron's five-voice motet on the cantus firmus 'Da pacem':



'And because I was castigated by you for such a procedure in my "Ave gratia plena"', Spataro says, 'you can judge that if I have erred in this place, so you too in this passage will not be without guilt' (no. 50, para. 5).²¹ But, he continues, invoking again a favourite concept, 'it certainly doesn't matter, because in your and my compositions that imperfect fifth

¹⁹ The example comes from the anonymous 'Ma seule dame' in the *Odhecaton*, mm. 16–17; see the edn. by Helen Hewitt and Isabel Pope (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), p. 385. The author is so fond of the progression that he repeats it every chance he can get, even within phrases.

²⁰ Jeppesen discusses this type of cadential dissonance at length in *The Style of Palestrina and the Dissonance*, and rev. and enlarged edn. (Copenhagen and London, 1946), pp. 119-33.

²¹ Curiously, in neither passage does Spataro suggest that the diminished fifth should be corrected by *musica ficta*; on this point, see no. 50 n. 10.

falls on the silence that the voice makes between the percussions from one beat to the other. It is true that yours would be a greater error, even though your work is signed &(, for the modern custom (in singing) is to beat the semibreve, and therefore your second minim in the bass on *e* will fall on the down-beat in singing. But you could say that you want your composition to be sung according to the diminished sign placed at the beginning, and you could save yourself that way.'

The difference between $\[mathbb{C}\]$ and $\[mathbb{C}\]$ as a time signature was taken seriously by Spataro. He never specifically says that there is a fixed temporal relationship between the two (except, however, when they occur simultaneously in a proportional relationship).²² The difference occurs in the tactus or, as Spataro and the Italians called it, *battuta*. Under $\[mathbb{C}\]$ the measure has one down-beat and up-beat, under C two. Accordingly, the treatment of dissonance should be different under the two signs. In other letters he faults Aaron for syncopations that are misplaced under C 2 or $\[mathbb{C}\]$ (see no. 30, para. 6, and no. 36, para. 4). But Spataro realizes that the theoretical verities of his youth are no longer fashionable; modern practice is to beat the semibreve, no matter what the signature. He makes the same remark in another letter (no. 30, para. 2).²³

Spataro views dissonance treatment from two perspectives: metre and harmony. A dissonance disallowed on the down-beat may be acceptable on the up-beat. But not all dissonances are permitted on the up-beat. They must pass a harmonic test first. What concerns Spataro most about these dissonances is whether they are sounded simultaneously or one voice is held over. This is made clear by his defence of his passage with a diminished fifth and two even more surprising ones, queried by Aaron:



To the first example Spataro remarks: 'that augmented octave will not be understood by the sense of hearing because it will not fall on the first and stressed beat given by the voice with that semibreve marked with a sharp in the alto, but on the suspension or duration of the time or voice, which

²³ This practice is confirmed by Glareanus; see no. 30 n. 2.

²² In one letter, Spataro does suggest that the tempo is faster under \diamondsuit . Where Aaron separates consecutive octaves with a semibreve rest, Spataro says the rest is too brief under the signature \diamondsuit , and the octaves will be heard (no. 36, para. 4).

the ear accepts in place of stillness (taciturnità)' (no. 37, para. 3). To the second example he replies: 'I considered that passage very well before I sent it to you, and I hold and believe that it can reasonably stand, not so much because of the speed as for the reason of the stillness that falls between the percussion of one beat and the other percussion' (no. 49, para. 2). And here is where he calls on 'the beautiful and true' words of his arch-enemy, Franchino Gafurio: 'For in the middle of the percussions created by the sounds some stillnesses occur, setting off one sound from the other.²⁴ In view of the stillness, Spataro insists, there is no need to be concerned with whatever intervals fall there, for the ear will not hear them. But if there were no 'stillness' and the notes were attacked simultaneously, then Spataro would not allow the dissonance. Indeed, he criticizes Aaron for the following passages (no. 50, para. 6):



Such dissonances, however, are found frequently in the music of Spataro's contemporaries and are not foreign even to Palestrina. If Aaron had looked hard enough, he could have found a few examples in Spataro's own works.²⁵ It would seem that Spataro was so taken by his own theory that he let it cloud his musical judgement, for he allows diminished and augmented intervals contrary to common practice and disallows relatively accented passing dissonance when attacked simultaneously with another note, a quite ordinary phenomenon in music of his time.²⁶ In other aspects, however, Spataro had an acuter ear. Some chords (or, as Spataro calls them, 'distantie concorde'; see no. 46) strike his ear as poor, quite apart from the metric context. For example, of Aaron's



he says that the c #'' sounds well against the tenor (the lowest note) but that

²⁴ See n. 8 above and the Commentary on no. 49.

²⁵ See e.g. 'Ave gratia plena' (with no. 46), m. 37, 'Virgo prudentissima', 2.p., mm. 73-4 (Italia sacra musica, ed. Jeppesen, i. 116), and 'Hec virgo est preclarum vas', 2.p., m. 68 (ibid., p. 121)

²⁶ See also his remarks on the way one hears the melodic tritone in no. 58, para. 3.

the sixth that mediates the extremes, a fifth plus a major semitone, does not make 'a good resonance played together with the outer notes' (no. 30, para. 7).

Other contrapuntal faults that Spataro criticizes in Aaron's works have to do with voice-leading. Here Spataro cannot cite particular rules so he gives various reasons, depending on the degree of ineptitude. In Aaron's 'Letatus sum'



does not please me because it could be arranged in a better way (no. 35, para. 5). In Aaron's mass for five equal voices



is not a counterpoint by a learned man, because experts do not ascend from a sixth to a unison (no. $_{36}$, para. $_{4}$);²⁷



the last semibreve produces very bad counterpoint with the other voices and especially the bass, because it descends from a sixth into an octave, which is never found done this way by an educated man (ibid.);



this seems to me the progression of a rank beginner. It would certainly have been better for the tenor to ascend to a third with the soprano, and then, continuing, that passage would have had more grace and been more artistic because the bass would not have ascended with the tenor with a fifth with so little grace and learning (ibid., para. 7; the bass voice is not given).

Aaron's five-voice motet with the cantus firmus 'Da pacem' comes in for a great deal of criticism, including the following passages:



²⁷ Strictly speaking, this is not an ascent from a sixth to a unison. Spataro probably objects to the chord-spacing.

I shan't cite a reason for this, because I believe that a similar descent, from an octave to a fifth, is not found in the works of any learned composer (no. 50, para. 6);



in my opinion, this is not the procedure of an expert (ibid.);



this is rather awkward in my judgement and not common (ibid.);

the semibreve descends from a tenth to an octave with the bass in a manner both unpleasing and uncommon (ibid.);



I don't care for the ascent from a sixth to an octave (ibid.).

Except for the first two examples and the last, all these passages involve the descent into a fifth or octave by similar motion. Those having a leap in both voices are not sanctioned by Tinctoris or Zarlino. The sixth descending into an octave by stepwise movement in the upper voice is allowed by the two theorists, but Zarlino specifies that it must be a halfstep.²⁸ Tinctoris makes no distinction between major and minor intervals, but his example also shows a half-step.²⁹ Thus Spataro's sensitivity here

²⁹ Liber de arte contrapuncti, in Opera theoretica, ed. Albert Seay (Corpus scriptorum de musica 22; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1975-8), ii. 36.

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coincides with that of his fellow theorists. The ascent from a sixth to an octave is not shown by Tinctoris (who lists only permissible progressions). Zarlino finds it 'tolerable', but likewise only if one voice moves by half-step.³⁰ Again, the theorists support Spataro. In neither case does Spataro suggest that the progression would be acceptable if a half-step were used. As to the tenth descending into an octave by step in the lower voice, cited twice by Spataro, Tinctoris does not list it among the allowable progressions, and Zarlino expressly forbids it.³¹ Both theorists discuss all these progressions in the context of two-part counterpoint. Yet Aaron's works are for four and five voices. Is Spataro over-zealous in his critique? This point will be considered below; it is relevant to the way in which Spataro found the errors.

In one of his letters, Spataro begs Aaron not to take offence at his writing, since he does not take Aaron's criticism ill, 'and I would always rather be made aware of my errors by my friends than my enemies, and when I find I have erred, I try to keep from erring again, always giving due thanks for their labours in behalf of my benefit and honour' (no. 36, para. 8). Aaron took Spataro at his word. But he soon found his friend to be very stubborn about acknowledging errors, especially where Spataro insisted that the 'stillness' between notes will obviate diminished and augmented intervals, as we have seen above. Aaron could have no way of knowing that Spataro altered several of these passages when he entered the motets in his choir-books.

In one interesting case Spataro recognizes that Aaron's criticism has some validity and is willing to say so:

You speak about a certain harshness of some sixths towards the beginning of one of my two compositions, and I understood the honest, right, and true justification that you made for me to those expert singers, that is that I intended to carry out the imitation at the fifth in conformity with the subject or tenor of the plainchant that I took, without regard to another better sonority that (removing the imitation) could have been used, and that I (with the illumination of intelligence and recognition of truth) was quite well aware that those sixths in that place were not very pleasing, and that I was even more certain of it when I had it sung, but still it pleased me to leave them there, because they can remain without being against art, and I think that any learned person (for the reason you gave those singers) would consider me excused. The reason why the sixths in that place are not pleasing to the ear arises from their lowness and slowness. (No. 35, para. 3.)

Since there is a gap in the correspondence between this letter and the previous one, we do not know which two motets Spataro had sent Aaron.

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²⁸ See The Art of Counterpoint: Part Three of Le Istitutioni harmoniche, 1558, trans. Guy A. Marco and Claude V. Palisca (Music Theory Translation Series 2; New Haven and London, 1968), p. 76.

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But a passage matching the description of the sixths is found in mm. 6–7 of his 'Hec virgo est preclarum vas':³²



Spataro might also have mentioned that the sixths, in addition to lying low and being slow, are exposed. Tinctoris did not care for consecutive major sixths in two-part counterpoint.³³

Aaron had more luck in persuading Spataro of the inadvisability of letting a seventh resolve into an octave. He proffered the criticism as gingerly as possible, merely suggesting that Spataro look at that passage where 'the second semibreve sounds against the bass half in a seventh and half in an eighth' (no. 37, para. 4):



Spataro responds:

certainly I wrote that passage very carefully and not without reason, for every passage that can appear between two simple intervals (except for a fifth) can also stand [with one voice] at the octave, above or below, and to prove this true conclusion, I adduce this example:



The second semibreve of the tenor sounds a second against the second half of the first semibreve of the cantus, and then joins with the following minim in a unison; this passage can stand and composers have used it.³⁴ Therefore I say, if the same tenor is notated an octave higher and the cantus in the same position, thus:

³² Modern edn. in *Italia sacra musica*, ed. Jeppesen, i. 118-23. He took the chant from Nicolaus Wollick's *Enchiridion*; see no. 37 n. 11.

³³ Liber de arte contrapuncti, in Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, ii. 33-4.

³⁴ Zarlino sanctions it in occasional cases; see The Art of Counterpoint, p. 97.



such a passage or counterpoint can stand without error.

Spataro is on very shaky ground here. His assertion that he wrote the passage *studiosamente* is as forced as his explanation, and his 'rule' that a two-part passage can be proved correct by inverting the parts is unheardof. That Spataro was not serious about his declaration we can deduce from his willingness to change the passage, 'to remove all doubt and so that my honoured Fra Pietro shall not have laboured in vain'—and, he concedes, 'it will be more pleasing to the sense of hearing, which, because of its instability and imperfection, cannot judge all the important aspects considered by reason or theory, which consists in intellectual understanding and the recognition of truth'.

It is noteworthy how little our composers are concerned whether the mode is handled properly. Nowhere in the discussion of these compositions is mode mentioned, let alone held up as the context for cadences, imitations, and melody. Only once does Spataro make an indirect comment. Having sung through Aaron's 'Letatus sum' with a pupil, he remarks: 'It seems to me that the work would be more comfortable and more regular if it were sung without the Bb placed at the beginning of the composition, but only to insert the sign wherever it is needed in the course of the work' (no. 35, para. 5).

How did Spataro find the errors in Aaron's compositions, and how did he tell him where they were located? It is unlikely that he could have heard many of these faults when the works were sung by his singers. Our natural supposition would be that he scored the works and referred to measurenumbers. This was not the case. The procedure is revealed in Spataro's letter of 24 October 1531. He says that he and a disciple of his went over the piece, singing two parts together (no. 35, para. 5).³⁵ He located the faults in three ways. He often wrote a passage in one voice and then specified the interval that one of the notes makes against another voice. Sometimes he placed the passage by referring to the word or words of the text. At other times, in more melismatic pieces, he counted the time in semibreves, saying, for example, 'from the seventeenth to eighteenth semibreve between soprano and alto'. Spataro's method of checking for errors explains why he was able to hear and criticize a number of passages that would be undetectable-and furthermore legitimate-in counterpoint of more than two parts. Thus his specific objections, apart from

³⁵ See also no. 32, para. 3, where he mentions the same process.

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parallel perfect intervals, must be weighed carefully against contemporary practice. They cannot be codified as 'Spataro's rules for composition'.

If Spataro was able to catch the errors in Aaron's motets by singing two parts at a time, why are his own works not free of the same errors? Some of them he excuses as a slip of the pen or errors in copying (his eyesight, as he says a number of times, was weak). But after one particularly lengthy critique by Aaron, Spataro says simply: 'Thank you very much for being so diligent in examining my disordered compositions; the disorder is due to trusting myself too much, because without otherwise having them sung I copied them off the *cartella* and sent them to you' (no. 49, para. 5).³⁶

Here the Correspondence sheds light on a problem that has long vexed musical scholars: how did composers of the time write their music, since the score had not yet been invented? More than forty years ago Edward Lowinsky showed that writers speak of scores as early as 1537 and attribute their use to the generation of Isaac and Josquin, around 1480-1520.37 In a subsequent article he discussed a number of manuscript scores that have survived, but none before mid-century.³⁸ Most of these are large anthologies of vocal music. Only one late source has the nature of a composer's sketch-book. Here it is important to distinguish between score as a format for aligning voices or, as Lampadius puts it, an 'ordo distribuendi voces sive cantilenarum partes', and score as a tool used by composers for composition. The Italian word for the former is 'partitura' or 'partidura', for the latter 'cartella'. Cartella is a term known hitherto only from seventeenth-century sources and later. In a recent article Jessie Ann Owens has drawn together a number of references to the cartella, the earliest being Luzzasco Luzzaschi's description in 1606 of the cartella Cipriano de Rore used for composing, which Luzzaschi was presenting as a gift to Cardinal Federigo Borromeo.39 It is clear from Luzzaschi's description that the cartella is now missing, although the set of part-books containing Rore's 'Miserere' that Luzzaschi describes as accompanying the cartella is found in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

One seventeenth-century dictionary defines *cartella* as 'a kind of sleeked pasteboord to write upon and may be blotted out againe'.⁴⁰ Some

³⁶ In a later letter he postpones sending a mass until he has had it performed at least once (no. 51, para. 3).

³⁷ Edward E. Lowinsky, 'On the Use of Scores by Sixteenth-Century Musicians', Journal of the American Musicological Society 1 (1948), 17-23 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 797-800.

³⁸ Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Early Scores in Manuscript', Journal of the American Musicological Society 13 (1960), 126-73 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 803-40.

³⁹ See Jessie Ann Owens, 'The Milan Partbooks: Evidence of Cipriano de Rore's Compositional Process', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 37 (1984), 270–98.

⁴⁰ John Florio's Italian-English dictionary, Queen Anna's New World of Words (1611), cited ibid., p. 280.

composers, as we know from their wills, used stones or slates for composing,⁴¹ and Owens has brought to our attention the representation of one such tablet in an engraving by Coonhert of Maarten van Heemskerck's 'Allegory of Good and Bad Music', made in 1554.⁴² It is in upright format with ten ruled staves, on which *Industria* has written a soprano clef and the metre \mathcal{C} . Her writing-tool is attached by a cord. Since the *cartella* appears to be about an inch thick, it may very well be made of stone or slate.

Spataro's letters antedate all previous descriptions of a *cartella* and provide precise information about its size and use. The earliest mention is in his letter to Del Lago of 25 January 1529 (no. 18, para. 4):

Item prego V.E. me mandi una cartella, o vero una tabula de abaco, la quale sia quadra et longa per ciascuno lato, o verso quanto è longo questo foglio o vero littera, la quale tabula o vero cartella voglio per componere alcuna volta qualche concento, et del pretio daritime adviso, che satisfarò del tuto.

Also, would you please send me a *cartella* or abacus-tablet which is square and is about as long on each side as this sheet or letter; I want the tablet or *cartella* for composing occasionally. And let me know the price, and I'll pay it in full.

From this letter we learn that a *cartella* could not be had in Bologna but could be purchased in Venice, and it could be ordered in a specific size; that stated here, by the page-length of Spataro's letter, is $32 \text{ cm}(c. 12\frac{1}{2} \text{ in.})$ square. Spataro says he wants it for composition; perhaps it was also possible to buy a *cartella* without lines for another purpose. Indeed, the term 'tabula de abaco' seems to refer to an erasable tablet on which arithmetical problems could be solved. 'Abbaco' in modern Italian is an arithmetic primer; in Spataro's day it meant arithmetic using arabic numerals.

That the *cartella* ordered by Spataro had staff-lines is clear from a letter to Del Lago written two months later, on 31 March (no. 21, para. 1):

A li dì 27 del presente ho receputo una vostra de dì 20 signata a me gratissima, per la quale ho inteso quanto diceti circa un'altra vostra a me missa con el foglio rigato.

On the 27th of this month I received yours of the 20th which gave me great pleasure, through which I understand what you say about one of your other letters sent to me with the lined sheet.

By calling it 'foglio rigato' Spataro seems to indicate that it is made of heavy paper, perhaps pasteboard, and not stone. Later on in the letter he remarks: 'I received the *cartella*, which is just right for my purposes, but I

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 281. In n. 22 Owens lists various fragments of slates, some with staves, others with notes, that have been discovered by Suzanne Clercx, A. J. Bliss, and Jacques Chailley. ⁴² Ibid., p. 282, fig. 2.

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am surprised that you did not tell me the price, because I should have sent you the amount, it being my nature that a friend should not suffer harm. But do what you like, and I thank you very much' (para. 4). A follow-up letter mentions that he had responded to Del Lago's letter sent with the *cartella* (no. 22, para. 1).

To what use Spataro put his *cartella* we find out in his letter to Pietro Aaron of 30 January 1531 (no. 30, para. 2):

Ma dove diceti che non gli è el suo numero, de questo hora me sono acorto, guardando sopra la tabula o vero cartella dove prima fu da me composto, perché (per certa mia chiareza) segnai el numero octonario dove voleva essere signato el novenario.

But where you say that the number is not correct, I realized this just now, looking at the tablet or *cartella* where I first composed it, because (for my clarification) I wrote the figure eight where I meant it to be a nine.

If the motet was still on the cartella, and Spataro could go back to it and check a passage, it means either that he had not composed any new music in the mean time or that he had more than one cartella on which to compose. At any rate, he had not erased the music, even after he copied it out and sent it to Aaron. But could he have fitted a whole motet on a cartella measuring 32 × 32 cm? If the 'foglio' was lined on both sides, the answer is yes. But if it was lined on only one side, Spataro would have had to write very small to crowd all the notes in. But from what he says about writing an 8 instead of a 9, it seems likely that only part of the composition was present on the cartella. This mysterious remark is connected with the requirement that a composition have the correct measurement in every mensuration that is marked by the signature.43 Aaron remarked that Spataro's motet came out with an uneven number of semibreves ('per non observare el binario numero in le semibreve'). Spataro must have composed a passage and marked the end with the figure 8 to remind himself that it was eight semibreves long and that he would have to start the next passage at the beginning of a measure. But he had miscounted; there were really nine semibreves, and so his motet ended in the middle of a measure. If the whole motet had been composed in a score with barlines, this could not have happened without the composer's being immediately aware of it. Thus it seems likely that only part of the motet was on the cartella at one point; when one section was found to be satisfactory, it was transferred to paper and the next section begun.⁴⁴ Another letter shows

⁴³ On this point, which is discussed in several letters, see especially no. 44, paras. 10–11 and no. 93, para. 6. Zarlino also adheres to the practice; see *The Art of Counterpoint*, trans. Palisca and Marco, pp. 248–9.

⁴⁴ This is exactly the same process that Jessie Ann Owens deduced from mistakes in Rore's 'Miserere mei', especially an error in counting the tactus; see 'The Milan Partbooks', pp. 292-3.

that Spataro commonly left music on the *cartella*: when he went back to his *cartella* to check a passage, he discovered that it was right (no. 36, para. 2).

In June 1533 Spataro wrote to Del Lago requesting another *cartella*, this time in a different size (no. 54, para. 6):

Ma prego V.E. me voglia mandare una cartella come già facesti, la quale sia grande quanto è la medietà de tuto questo foglio, ma sia uno digito, o poco più, più largha. Et datime adviso del costo, che subito ve remeterò el pretio.

But I ask you to send me a *cartella* as you did before, one that is as tall as half the length of this sheet, but a finger's breadth or so wider. And let me know the cost, and I will immediately reimburse you.

This letter measures 30.5×20 cm, so the *cartella* would have been about 6×9 in., the size of a Renaissance part-book. Again we see that the size must have been made to order. Because there seems to have been no problem in sending it from Venice to Bologna, it was probably not very heavy. Nor can it have been very expensive. The request came at a time when Spataro and Del Lago were engaged in an escalating controversy. We learn from Spataro's next letter, to Aaron, that he 'received the *cartella* and nothing more, and I don't care to have anything more from him; I didn't ask you for such a service, for which you shouldn't be indignant, because between the two of us there is greater friendship, and so I call on you for things of greater moment' (no. 55, para. 3). Under the same date he wrote to Del Lago:

Concerning the *cartella* you sent me, I give you infinite thanks; it is just right for me. But I should have been very pleased if you had told me the price, because true friendship is maintained and endures when no inconvenience or harm comes between friends. And if nevertheless you want me to accept it as a gift, I am happy, on condition that you too call on me and all my powers for your necessities and pleasures, for which I shall always be ready (no. 56, para. 4).

The advantage of having a *cartella* that is wider than it is tall is that more music can fit on one line. A *cartella* this size would probably have six staves, allowing for the composition of a six-voice work. It is not necessary to believe that the music had to be barred; if Spataro made a mistake in counting semibreves, it shows that the work was not barred; the voices were probably simply aligned under each other.

We come back to the question of how Spataro checked his own compositions for errors. It is clear from the example that acutely embarrassed him that he did not (or did not always) use the *cartella* for a final check before the transfer to paper. He does speak of having the works performed first, but this was not a secure method. Instead, he mentions another, somewhat surprising, procedure. After thanking Aaron for diligently examining his five-voice 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix',

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Spataro mentions that he had added a sixth voice and sent it to him in recent days: 'I added that sixth voice to that composition more to investigate if any error occurred in the five-voice version than for another reason. So if you don't think that sixth voice goes well, keep to the original five-part version' (no. 37, para. 3). To add a sixth voice so as to test the correctness of a five-part composition is not a common working method. We must imagine that Spataro used it because in this way he had to give the closest attention to the five parts; if something were wrong, it would certainly emerge in that process. He was well aware that the addition of another voice would not necessarily lead to a better composition. And indeed, when he entered 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix' in his choir-book, he omitted the sixth voice.

Spataro must have followed this method regularly; at the end of the same letter he says he is sending another motet for four voices, to which he later 'added a fifth part, the better to test if there were errors between the four voices; this fifth voice has not been as well sung and examined as I should have liked', and he asks for the usual critique (para. 6). The method is simply a more elaborate way of carrying out the process Spataro used to check Aaron's compositions, singing each possible pair of voices singly. In fact, this is the same 'method of reviewing compositions and correcting them of all kinds of errors' that Orazio Tigrini proposes in *Il Compendio della musica* of 1588.⁴⁵ It consists of taking the soprano and comparing it note for note with each other part, then taking the alto and comparing it with the lower voices in turn, and finally checking the tenor against the bass. Tigrini does not speak of placing the parts in score, but his method, though laborious, works.⁴⁶

At the time Spataro and Aaron were exchanging compositions, new developments in 'l'arte de la harmonica facultà' were taking place in Venice. Under the aegis of Adrian Willaert a new music was being composed which found its public expression in the master's aptly titled *Musica nova* of 1559. The music itself, however, largely dates from the 1540s, when one contemporary writer was already calling Willaert 'nuovo Prometheo della celeste Armonia'.⁴⁷ At the centre of the new style lay the intimate relationship of music and text. Gaspar Stoquerus, the author of the most extended discussion of word–note relations in the sixteenth century, whose rules are based on the practice of Willaert, wrote:

⁴⁷ Sylvestro Ganassi in the second part of his Regola Rubertina (Venice, 1543), dedication.

Recently, Adrian Willaert seems to have begun, and happily so, a new music, in which he does away altogether with the liberties taken by the older composers. He so strictly observes well-defined rules [of text-setting] that his compositions offer the singer greatest pleasure and no difficulties at all as far as the words are concerned. All modern composers follow him now. As Josquin appears to be the leader of the older school of music, so Adrianus stands out as the summit, the father, leader, and creator of the new style which is now being generally imitated.⁴⁸

Venice in the early 1540s is the context for Giovanni del Lago's contribution to the art of composition in the form of a letter to a certain Fra Seraphin dated 26 August 1541 (no. 93).⁴⁹ This is the first extended discussion of how to go about composing a vocal work, with particular attention to text-setting. Large parts of it do not originate with Del Lago, although he refers to few authors, and in fact none of it may be original with him, for this is a subject in which he shows little interest in his other letters. Pending discovery of the true authors, however, we shall refer to the ideas as Del Lago's.⁵⁰

In true humanist style, Del Lago begins his discussion of composition with the words: 'As to the procedure of composing a composition, the first thing to note is that every time you wish to compose a madrigal or sonnet or barzeletta or other canzone, first you must diligently search out a melody suitable to the words so that the music fits the words, that is that it is appropriate to the subject-matter' (para. 5). The mode is to be chosen according to the affects of the text. The soprano should not rise more than sixteen notes above the lowest note of the tenor. The counterpoint should be varied with graceful passages in smaller notes and syncopations. The soprano should frequently imitate the other voices. A praiseworthy practice is to lead the voices to a cadence but deflect them to a more distant consonance; the tenor, however, should cadence properly in order to reflect the sentence-structure of the text (para. 5). Cadences are necessary, not arbitrary, for they distinguish the parts of speech and must be used accordingly (para. 6). At this point Del Lago branches out into a lengthy quotation from Donatus' Ars grammatica on the structure of

⁴⁸ Edward E. Lowinsky, 'A Treatise on Text Underlay by a German Disciple of Francisco de Salinas', in *Festschrift Heinrich Besseler* (Leipzig, 1961), 231-51 at 245 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 880.

⁵⁰ Don Harrán, noting Del Lago's references to Aristoxenus, Bede, Donatus, Isidore, Nicomachus, and Quintilian, calls him 'a typical humanist, quite unlike his contemporary Lanfranco whose whole attention was turned to *musica practica*' (*Word-Tone Relations*, p. 160). Four of these references, however, appear in Del Lago's letter courtesy of an unacknowledged quotation from Gafurio's *Practica musicae* (see no. 93 nn. 38-9). Del Lago's humanist clothing is mostly second-hand.

⁴⁵ See Book II, pp. 51–2.

⁴⁶ Vicentino suggests the same method for checking four- and five-voice compositions, but he goes on to say that for six or more voices, it would not be a bad idea to score the composition and then compare the voices ('partire la compositione à brevi, à lunghe, et terrà il modo sopradetto, da rincontrare detta compositione: che sarà sicuro modo di corrigere i falli'); see *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (Rome, 1555), Book IV, ch. 41.

⁴⁹ Much of the section on composition in this lengthy letter is already found in Del Lago's *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* (Venice, 1540). On the dating of the letter, see Ch. 6.

sentences, from which he leads directly into another lengthy quotation (unacknowledged) from a second ancient grammarian, Victorinus. Del Lago's habit of quoting authorities takes him very far afield in the present letter. The patchwork quilt of sources, put together in a haphazard manner, gives this letter a strangely disconnected aspect. Only a few of them are more than marginally related to music.

The central advice to a composer is the following: 'Take care not to produce barbarisms in setting the words to music, that is, do not place a long accent on short syllables, or a short accent on long syllables, for it is against the rule of the art of grammar, without which no one can be a good musician, which teaches correct pronunciation and writing' (para. 7). Del Lago acknowledges that few composers observe grammatical accents in setting texts.⁵¹ In the next decade, however, the practice became common among Italian and northern composers who moved in humanist circles. And it is in this company, and especially in the academies and social groups, where musicians and music-making were an indispensable component, that discussions of the relations between music and grammar and rhetoric must have been debated at length. Del Lago's patron, the Venetian patrician Girolamo Molino, himself a poet and great lover of music, may have brought Del Lago into these circles. And it is perhaps through Molino that the Correspondence came into the possession of one of the foremost Venetian humanists, Paolo Manuzio.

⁵¹ This is certainly the case if Del Lago is speaking about quantitative accent, as Don Harrán supposes (*Word-Tone Relations*, p. 158), but less so if he means qualitative accent. Given the nature of Del Lago's indiscriminate compilation of sources and the fact that he nowhere discusses the difference between quantitative and qualitative accent, it would seem that he did not distinguish between the two.

6 Giovanni del Lago and his Epistole

FORTUNE did not smile kindly on Giovanni del Lago. To a man so selfesteeming, the stagnation of his career must have been a bitter disappointment. Thwarted for long years in his hope for promotion, and unlucky in his choice of a patron, Del Lago died with his dearest wish unfulfilled, the publication of his collected letters. That desire has now been realized, after nearly 450 years, but in a form that would not have wholly pleased the author. For this he has only himself to blame. To our benefit, but to his detriment, he preserved the letters that were written to him, letters that he had no intention of publishing, and they reveal sides of his character that cast him in a less favourable light.

Up to the present, all our knowledge of Del Lago's life has derived from letters in the Correspondence. The earliest is from Spataro, dated 20 July 1520 (no. 3), in which he replies to two letters of 22 June and 10 July, now lost. How long the two had been in correspondence is not clear; the tone of Spataro's letter is cordial but not personal. He responds at some length to Del Lago's inquiry about the meaning of certain canonic inscriptions in some of his early masses. Many of the succeeding letters between the two are of the same nature, Del Lago inquiring, Spataro explaining. Del Lago is evidently younger than Spataro. Since he was already a priest in 1520, he was probably born in the decade between 1480 and 1490. Of his early life, and even his place of origin, nothing is known. There is no trace of Venetian word-forms in his writing. In one letter he mentions that his teacher was 'Giovanne Baptista Zesso padoano' (no. 83), and perhaps he too was a native of Padua. Zesso is the author of several frottole and laude published by Petrucci; nothing is known about his life.¹

In 1520 Del Lago, as we know from the address on Spataro's letter, was a member of the clergy in Santa Sofia in Venice, a small church in the *sestiere* of Cannaregio. He remained there throughout his life. We can trace his living quarters in Venice through the fragments of addresses on the letters sent to him. At first he received mail at Santi Apostoli, a larger church a few blocks away from Santa Sofia (see no. 72). In 1523 he lived near the dump by Santa Sofia ('a canto le scovazze'; no. 75). In 1528 and

¹ See The New Grove Dictionary, xx. 670.

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1529 he lodged at the barber's shop at the sign of the Sun in the Campo Santa Sofia (nos. 16-29).² By 1535 he had moved to a street near the church (no. 89). In 1536 Aaron addressed a letter to him at 'Santa Fumia' (no. 62), the church of Santa Eufemia on the Giudecca. But in 1537 he is back in Cannaregio, living in the 'Cale da le velle'—a street that exists to this day, with the same name, close to the church of Santa Sofia (no. 91). The very last letter in the Correspondence is addressed to him at 'San Martino delle Contrade' (no. 95), a church in the *sestiere* of Castello.

Santa Sofia is now, and was in Del Lago's day, a small parish church. It faces a *campo* that borders on the Grand Canal, close to the Ca' d'Oro. It is remarkable among Venetian churches because it has no façade; the front is covered with shops, and only the tympanum, flanked by a stubby bell-tower, peeps out behind them. It was no different in Del Lago's time; in Jacopo de' Barbari's famous woodcut of Venice, dated 1500, a portico is clearly visible across the front of the building. In 1810 the parish was among the many that were suppressed in the wake of Napoleonic reforms. The church was closed and all functions were transferred to the neighbouring parish of San Felice. Santa Sofia was restored to worship in 1836.³ Today it is open only on Sunday mornings.

Knud Jeppesen reported in 1941 that he had examined the parish archives, still kept at San Felice, but could find no trace of Del Lago.⁴ A renewed search, however, undertaken in 1986, uncovered documents that revealed the main stages in Del Lago's career and the date of his death.⁵ In a register of miscellaneous documents with the old number 18, the curate, or *piovan* as he was called in Venice, Tomaso Bianco, entered the following note:

By the elevation to the curacy of myself, the above-named Tomaso, in 1527, the position of deacon in the said church, which I had held, having become vacant, the chapter of our church elected the priest Giovanni del Lago, then subdeacon, to the position of deacon.⁶

The hierarchy of Santa Sofia consisted of the curate, three titular priests, a deacon, and a subdeacon (there are payments to an organist, but no singers). Thus in 1527 Del Lago moved up from the bottom rung of the ladder. But he was not happy. He was already a priest, bearing the honorific 'Pre' throughout his life, and perhaps he thought that he should have received a higher promotion. In October of that same year Spataro, responding to a letter by Del Lago now lost, expressed sympathy for his friend's 'affanni et impedimenti' suffered in the recent past, events that 'disturb and harm a gentle and fine mind such as I take you to be' (no. 15, para. 1). If Del Lago felt jealousy over Bianco's sudden rise, skipping over the office of titular priest, it was to be compounded in succeeding years, for Bianco, who was Del Lago's age, if not younger-and obviously capable and energetic, to judge from his notes in his registers⁷—remained in office until 1570, when he died at the age of eighty-four.⁸ Meanwhile Del Lago continued his slow ascent. On 3 August 1542 one of the titular priests died and Del Lago was promoted to his position. Had the piovan been older, Del Lago could very well have aspired to the curacy. But Bianco, as it turned out, outlived Del Lago by twenty-six years. A laconic note in the register informs us that Del Lago died on 8 March 1544.9

Giovanni del Lago was the quintessential 'teorico'. He chose to make his career not as a singer or *maestro di cappella* but in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. His interest in music shies away from the sounding phenomenon; what intrigued him most were the mensural system, problems of notation, obscure canons, the Greek genera, and Pythagorean intonation. The one composition that has come down to us, albeit in an incomplete form, his 'Multi sunt vocati', has a tenor that is an exercise in the correct interpretation of imperfection and alteration (see no. 86). It must be an early work, since it is mentioned by Pietro Aaron in his *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni* of 1525.¹⁰ Del Lago was most at home in the world of theory. He must have spent hours reading old treatises, and we know that he himself owned a number of them (see Ch. 7). He took delight in catching Spataro in errors, especially in notation. To prove his

⁸ Gian Jacopo Fontana, Illustrazione storico-critica della Chiesa di S. Sofia (Venice, 1836), p. 42.

² His landlord was 'Maistro Symon barbier', who rented the property, a two-storey house and dispensary built at his own expense, from Francesco Longino for 6 ducats a year. This information comes from a legal document in the Archivio di Stato, Venice, San Salvatore, Busta 29, no. 53.

 ³ Antonio Niero, La Chiesa di Santa Sofia in Venezia: Storia ed arte (Venice, 1972), pp. 40, 52.
⁴ 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 4.

⁵ I wish to thank the parish priest, Don Paolo Trevisan, for his kindness in allowing me free access to the documents in the Archivio parrocchiale San Felice, fondo Santa Sofia.

⁶ 'Per assumptionem mei suprascripti presbiteri Thome ad plebanatum de anno 1527; vacante titulo Diaconali in dicta ecclesia, cuius ego possessor extiteram; ad eundem titulum Diaconalem, per capitulum ecclesie nostre presbiter Joannes de Lacu qui tunc subdiaconus erat, electus fuit' (fo. 27'). In another register, labelled D, Bianco specifies the date of his elevation to the curacy as 4 June 1527. 'Subdeacon', 'deacon', and 'titular priest' were official positions in the chapter, not grades in holy orders.

⁷ Between 1527 and 1530 he had the church completely restored, in 1531–2 the new organ was built ('ex sumptibus meis et parogianorum'), in 1533 he added another storey to his house, in 1534 he erected a chapel to SS Vincent, Sebastian, and Roch ('sumptibus meis pro maiori parte'), and in 1535 another chapel, to the Virgin, again mostly at his own expense. These annotations were made on fos. 16'-17' of a small vellum register that begins with excerpts from wills.

⁹ '1544 a di 8 marzo morite pre Zaneto prete intitolado'; Register D (the folios are unnumbered, but the entries occur in chronological order).

 $^{^{10}}$ Aaron cites it as an example of the seventh mode; see fo. C2^v. He also mentions several times that his statements are confirmed by 'el venerabile messer pre Zanetto musico Veneto'. Del Lago was known as 'Pre Zanetto' throughout his life.

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superiority in theoretical matters, Del Lago often trotted out a quotation from one of his beloved old theorists—a practice that irked Spataro and led more than once to a break in their relations. His habit of 'testing' his correspondents, which he ingenuously admits in the postscripts to some of his letters, also annoved Pietro Aaron. Del Lago must have been an exasperating person. Some letters fairly drip with obsequiousness, even by the standards of the time. More than once he alludes to 'the feeble force of my meagre and humble ability' (no. 80, para. 7), but his modesty rings false. The fatal flaw in his character was hubris, and it brought him low. In 1540 he sent Aaron a copy of his newly printed treatise on mensural music with the request to read it and advise him of any errors, 'so I shall not remain so long in fetid ignorance; reason demands that a man should correct himself when his errors are discovered by himself or are pointed out by others' (no. 65). He received in return a thirteen-page critical review that could not have been to his liking (no. 66). Aaron quite rightly complained of his presumption and arrogance in publishing first, then asking for a critique. His letter seems to have brought the friendship and correspondence to an end with one stroke.

If Del Lago rarely won the day over Spataro and Aaron, he could console himself with the admiring attention that smaller musicians lavished on him. One such is the Austin friar Paulo de Laurino of Naples, who visited Del Lago in Venice in 1525. No one, wrote Laurino, excels Giovanni del Lago in explaining the theory and practice of music, and if he had only a short time to live, he would gladly spend a year under Del Lago's tutelage (no. 79). A host of minor musicians looked to Del Lago as their mentor. They were eager to correspond with him and have their doubts resolved by the master. In these gratifying relationships probably lie the roots of Del Lago's idea to collect his letters and publish them. As shown in Ch. 2, the whole first layer of the Vatican manuscript is a fair copy of Del Lago's letters, provided with a title-page and dedication to his patron, the Venetian patrician and man of letters Girolamo Molino.

When did Del Lago decide to prepare his letters for publication? A clue is offered by the scribal hands in the Vatican manuscript. Scribe A copied sixteen letters consecutively on to fos. $11^{t}-101^{v}$, the original layer of Del Lago's *Epistole*. The latest letter in this layer, no. 86, is dated May 1535, which provides the *terminus post quem* for the preparation of the fair copy. The first letter following this series, no. 88, is a copy in Del Lago's hand. Its date, June 1538, gives the *terminus ante quem*.¹¹ The title, dedication, and first letter, dated 1541, which occupy fos. $1^{t}-10^{v}$ and are all in Del Lago's hand, must have been added later (see Pl. 1 on p. 17). We can deduce from the change in his status on the title-page from 'diacono' to 'prete' that Del

¹¹ See Table 2, J18 and J19.

Lago was revising his manuscript as late as 3 August 1542, the date of his promotion.

If Giovanni del Lago had succeeded in publishing his letters, his book would have been not only the first musical correspondence to have been printed, but the only such one in the sixteenth century. As the century progresses, more and more letters of musicians are extant, but few were published, and none in a collected edition. Del Lago's *Epistole* are unique even in their manuscript form.¹² The question is not only why the letters were never published, but also what gave Del Lago the notion that such an enterprise would be commercially feasible.

Between 1535 and 1538 occurred an event that captivated the reading public: Pietro Aretino brought out a volume of his letters in Venice in 1537. It was the first vernacular correspondence to be published by a modern writer,¹³ and it met with immediate success. Aretino's colourful personality, his wide-ranging interests, his fresh and vivid literary style, his eminent friends, and his scandalous reputation ensured that the letters found a ready audience. Five other volumes followed, and scores of other literary figures lost no time in taking a leaf out of Aretino's book. The history of the publication of the first volume merits consideration, for it has more than one parallel with Del Lago's Epistole. By 1537 Aretino had been engaged in a wide correspondence that included princes of the Church and heads of state. His letters were already famous. The idea of publishing them came not from Aretino but from one of his secretaries, Nicolò Franco, and the printer Francesco Marcolini, a close friend. They gathered together one hundred letters, but felt that these were not sufficient. Aretino, however, was quite willing to fill the gap, and in the space of six weeks he produced ninety more letters. The book, supplemented with a few odds and ends, was printed in a great hurry, and the first edition was full of errors. It sold so well that ten more printings followed in the next year alone. A second book appeared in 1542, a third in 1546, two more in 1550, and the last, posthumously, in 1557.¹⁴

Del Lago could not have failed to be impressed with Aretino's success. Of course, he had not the literary style nor the connections of Aretino, but his audience would be musicians, theorists, and enlightened amateurs of

¹² The only scholarly correspondence comparable is the six lengthy letters of Girolamo Mei to Vincenzo Galilei and Giovanni Bardi, edited by Palisca in *Girolamo Mei*. The correspondence began in 1572 and continued until 1581. It is preserved in a collection of extracts from Mei's studies on Greek music in the Vatican Library. Only Mei's letters, in a contemporary copy, have survived. On a lesser scale, a group of letters of Gandolfo Sigonio to Annibale Melone are found in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fonds it. 1110; on these letters see Ch. 2.

¹³ See Anne Jacobson Schutte, 'The Lettere Volgari and the Crisis of Evangelism in Italy', Renaissance Quarterly 28 (1975), 639-88 at 650-1.

¹⁴ The above account is drawn from *Aretino: Selected Letters*, trans. with an Introduction by George Bull (Harmondsworth, 1976), pp. 38–9.

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music, of whom Venice had more than a few. Thus Del Lago intended his publication, as he put it in the title, for 'the common use of the scholars of this liberal art', those for whom 'the resolution of many recondite problems in music obscurely treated by the ancient music theorists' would hold fascination. Did he miscalculate? The answer is complex and based entirely on circumstantial evidence.

The financial aspect must have been the primary factor. Del Lago could not have been well off. In 1538 he was a minor cleric in a very small parish church. He was not under the protection of a wealthy ecclesiastic who could have obtained a benefice for him. Thus it is unlikely that Del Lago could have subsidized the publication. It is almost certain that a printer would not have undertaken the enterprise without a subvention, since he had no precedent for this type of venture from which to judge possible sales. Surely Del Lago hoped that his intended dedicatee, the patrician Girolamo Molino, would underwrite the printing costs. But Molino himself was in straitened circumstances, owing to an unhappy family situation (see the Biographical Dictionary). Perhaps he had promised to make a contribution when his affairs improved-he instituted a lawsuit against his father in 1543-but Del Lago died in 1544, long before the suit was settled. There is no indication that he ever sought another patron for the Epistole. His Breve introduttione di musica misurata, published in 1540, was dedicated to another patrician, Lorenzo Moresino. Since this work was conceived after the Epistole, Del Lago could easily have asked Moresino to sponsor the letters instead, a publication of much greater interest than the elementary treatise, but he seems to have remained loyal to the intended dedicatee Molino.

There is a second reason that may have contributed to the failure of the Epistole to see print, one that became apparent only after a close study of the whole Correspondence. Del Lago may not have undertaken the preparation of the fair copy with immediate publication in mind. Many of the letters were written to Giovanni Spataro, and several, especially Del Lago's critique of Spataro's treatise on counterpoint (no. 28), are rather harshly worded. Having been stung more than once by Spataro's sharp tongue, Del Lago may have intended to delay publication until the septuagenarian, who for years had claimed that he had one foot in the grave, was safely under ground. Spataro did not oblige until 1541, eight years after the definitive break in their relations. But then there remained the problem of Pietro Aaron, with whom Del Lago seems to have been on good terms up to the point when Aaron offered a stinging critique of his treatise, the Breve introduttione, in 1540 (no. 66). No letters in the part of the Epistole copied by Scribe A are addressed to Aaron because none were written during the period when both men were living in Venice, before 1536. But Del Lago could not dare to publish his *Epistole* while Aaron and Spataro were still alive for an entirely different reason: he had fashioned parts of his own letters from bits and pieces of letters by Spataro and Aaron; the true authors would have recognized the thefts.

It is always a question, when an author publishes his own letters, whether they preserve the original form or have been edited. In some cases—Aretino is a good example—the letters may have been written specifically for publication, and perhaps had never been sent to their addressees. Judging from the responses of his correspondents, some of Del Lago's letters were extensively edited before Scribe A copied them. And the fair copy of the *Epistole* shows signs that Del Lago continued to revise his letters after 1535 (see Pl. 2 on p. 18). He not only altered spellings but also made his pronouncements weightier by adducing additional testimony of venerable theorists. These passages appear as marginal additions in his own hand (see Pl. 6).¹⁵ Other letters were discovered to be entirely or in part fictitious; those to Giovanni da Legge were all written after the recipient's death, though carefully pre-dated.

Del Lago's *Epistole* were to consist of his own letters only; he had no intention of being shown up by Spataro's sharp replies. We may consider ourselves extremely fortunate that he kept the replies, however, for they are our only means of proving what Del Lago changed and what he stole. The Vatican manuscript reflects the order in which he must have kept his materials: first the *Epistole*, then the letters written to him, and finally the letters of Spataro and others addressed to Aaron. How this latter group came into his possession has been suggested in Ch. 2.

The *Epistole* were to have taken the following form:

1. Title and Dedication to Girolamo Molino (1).

2. Letter to Fra Seraphin (93).

3. Five letters to Giovanni Spataro (28, 44, 47, 43, 57).

4. Four letters to Giovanni da Legge (68, 76, 73-4).

5. Two letters to Fra Paulo de Laurino (78, 80).

6. Three letters to Fra Nazaro (81-3).

7. Two letters to Lorenzo Gazio (84, 86).

8. One letter to Pietro de Justinis (88).

9. Three more letters to Giovanni da Legge (69-71).

10. Definitions of musical terms written for Girolamo Molino (96).

Items 3–7 and 10 are in the hand of Scribe A. Item 10 (see Pl. 2 on p. 18) was probably intended originally for the opening of the *Epistole* but later moved to make room for the letter to Fra Seraphin, which is a miniature treatise, partially incorporated in Del Lago's printed treatise. Items 1, 2, 8,

¹⁵ The additions are set off by upper half-brackets in the edn.

L . . . in thing in silling comich you and shen 'm form men infiller some ist prisinterin care agher to grade for for it popian have Similarmented dul quet are Anfind the sun me door crace alama a curper last anginit aquite quermon on finite of agentito see to mage to come plager, com fin Doniphage " 1. Reifenfary very , or down & for cargos when dal cope mis panfare lient de misi horre phires note sister of suggeste valin plababa wine to pagine win the put substances on instrom sphabe pour na purpose, in philippin a quint houghouse l'interport he push worin monodenes & fir third saffers it be information of comments from the meles to waling about different in brough sumar the new of ene dite 1. or de mine medi to questi for ba sugran and chumpi an - > liften polis a lington Parg rimp V conthe ist he go degrift & sun burn min No sufore abligno - On Alter pur offic inte . A verominale with In Virmanin as q . Acollo M. D. XXXY.

Pl. 6. Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 4 Aug. 1532 (no. 43). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 46^v (Scribe A, with corrections and additions in Del Lago's hand)

and 9 are in Del Lago's hand; a second copy of letter 69 to Da Legge exists in a revision copied by Scribe B. One of the letters to Laurino (no. 78) is also extant in two copies; the one by Scribe A has been struck through and is replaced by another version in the hand of Del Lago. The letters are not in chronological order, not even within each group.

Of these twenty-two letters, eleven have borrowed or even fictitious elements (nos. 68-71, 73-4, 76, 78, 80-1, 86) and five others—all the ones written to Spataro—show signs of having been revised (nos. 28, 43-4, 47, 57). The letter to Fra Seraphin is a separate case; it may be partly revised and partly fictitious. If the *Epistole* had been published and all the letters to Del Lago had been lost, we should never have discovered Del Lago's working methods. He would truly have appeared as 'el docto de Venetia'—pedantic, yes, even reactionary, but still a person of considerable authority. This was the figure he presented to the minor musicians who were eager to seek his advice. That we can see him as Spataro and Aaron saw him (and Spataro made Aaron privy to all his dealings with Del Lago) is an accident of fate. Ever mutable, the Goddess Fortuna tripped Del Lago up four centuries after his death.

The first suspicion that something was amiss in Del Lago's Epistole was raised by the correspondence with Giovanni da Legge, whom Del Lago addresses as 'dignissimo sonator d'organo'. Nine letters are extant, two by Da Legge and seven by Del Lago (nos. 68-76). The two letters by Da Legge were both written from Rome, where he had travelled on family business, but his home was Venice. Neither refers to any letter from Del Lago. Del Lago, in turn, begins every epistle with thanks for Da Legge's letter. In the one case where he mentions a date, 20 December 1523 (no. 76), there is a letter by Da Legge of that date extant (no. 75), but Del Lago responds to entirely different matters. In another letter Da Legge told Del Lago that he had found in Florence a treatise by Gafurio, the Theorica printed in Naples, which, he says, Del Lago may not know (no. 72). But in a letter dated eleven months earlier (no. 70), Del Lago asked Da Legge to look for Gafurio's Theorica, printed in Naples, when he was next in Florence. It is not a question of Del Lago's following the dating style of the Venetian chancery, where the new year began on I March: in nearly all the letters in the present Correspondence the year changes on 1 January. More puzzling in this exchange of letters, from the point of view of date, is Del Lago's comment, in the very first letter of 6 January 1520 (no. 68), that he had answered Da Legge's questions about Aaron's Toscanello two years previously. The Toscanello was not printed until 1523. Are we to think that Aaron's Toscanello was completed in 1518, long before he arrived in Venice, and that it circulated among musicians for five years before being published?

As long as the identity of Giovanni da Legge remained unknown,¹⁶ it was not possible to solve the discrepancies in Del Lago's letters to him. But once it had been discovered that he died in 1525,¹⁷ a decade before Del Lago decided to publish his *Epistole*, everything fell into place. Not only could Da Legge not dispute Del Lago's letters; he could be a convenient coat-rack, so to speak, on which Del Lago could hang any theoretical points he wished to cover in his 'resolution of recondite problems'. Considering the musical skills requisite in a good organist, some of these points were very elementary indeed, but Da Legge was no longer in a position to protest.

Once Del Lago hit upon this method of fleshing out his *Epistole*, he proceeded with a free hand. Letters 69–71 to Da Legge, not part of the original layer of the *Epistole*, were probably written after 1535. It is in one of these letters that Del Lago asked Da Legge to look for Gafurio's *Theorica* in Florence. Some of the letters to his other correspondents are probably fictitious as well; for example, Del Lago's letter of 15 July 1525 (no. 80) does not respond to Laurino's of 5 June 1525 (no. 79). In the absence of death-dates for Laurino, Fra Nazaro, and Lorenzo Gazio, however, we cannot be sure how much was invented.

Invention is only one side of Del Lago's creative efforts in his *Epistole*; the other is borrowing. Just as Del Lago never felt secure in his opinions without the support of other, preferably medieval, theorists, so he seems to have sensed his failings as a stylist. He thoroughly revised his spellings, perhaps in response to Pietro Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua*, published in 1525,¹⁸ and he took to borrowing opening and closing passages that appealed to him in the letters of his correspondents, principally Spataro, Aaron, and Tromboncino.

The opening paragraph of Del Lago's letter of 16 June 1523 to Da Legge (no. 74) was modelled on Spataro's letter to Cavazzoni of 10 November 1524 (no. 14)—proof positive that Del Lago's letter was deliberately misdated:

Spataro to Cavazzoni

Da V.E. et Nobiltà ho receputo una de dì 21 otobris signata, la quale m'è stata gratissima perché scio che me amati. Ho inteso quanto diceti circa Messer Petro

Aron. Sia stata la cosa come se voglia, a me pareria che per questa poca cosa non dovesse essere nato tra voi alcuno odio né malevolentia. Imperò che tra vui et sua Excellentia non c'è acaduto cosa la quale sia digna de producere sdegno né iusta indignatione, ma più presto de augumentare la virtù et studio de questa tra nui celebrata facultà harmonica.

Del Lago to Da Legge

Da Messer Giovan Maria de Lio ho ricevuto una vostra data a dì 6 di febraro, la quale mi è stata gratissima, et ho inteso quanto dite di Frate Alessandro. Ma sia stata la cosa come si voglia, mi parebbe che per tal causa non dovesse esser nato tra voi alcuno odio né veruna malivolentia perché non gli è accaduto donde causar si potesse rissa et sdegno alcuno, ma più presto eccitamento et studio a questa nostra eccellente arte et scientia musicale.

In his letter of 13 May 1523 to Da Legge (no. 73), the first paragraph was appropriated from an anonymous letter that exists in a copy made by Aaron (no. 99). The tenth paragraph was drawn from a letter Del Lago wrote to Spataro in 1532 (no. 44, paras. 5 and 13). The first paragraph and part of the next of no. 80 to Laurino (15 July 1525) were borrowed from Spataro's letter to Cavazzoni of 1 August 1517 (no. 2). The ending of no. 81 derives from the same letter, para. 4. The last sentence of no. 88 to de Justinis was taken from Spataro's letter to Del Lago of 4 January 1529 (no. 17, para. 15).

Nor was Del Lago content with furbishing his letters with borrowed finery: the substance of his correspondents' thought was also fair game. In the first paragraph of his letter of 24 January 1520 to Da Legge (no. 69), he incorporated a sizeable passage from Spataro's letter to Aaron of 8 April 1523 (no. 6, para. 5) explaining the rule 'like before like'. Part of para. 14 of Del Lago's letter to Gazio of 6 May 1535 (no. 86) was lifted from a letter from Spataro to Aaron of February 1523; see no. 5, para. 4. Del Lago's letter of 15 April 1525 to Laurino (no. 78) is heavily indebted to Aaron's own letter to Laurino of 29 April 1525, a copy of which was in Del Lago's possession (no. 100).¹⁹

One case of borrowing is particularly complex. In his letter to Da Legge dated 'ultimo febraro 1520' (no. 71), Del Lago promises to explain the theory and practice of the *coniuncta*, notes altered by *musica ficta*, but before doing so he digresses to give a definition of the two accidental signs, # and \flat , and a description of their function. This passage reappears, largely word for word, in Del Lago's letter to Spataro of 15 August 1533 (no. 57, para. 2). The natural assumption would be that Del Lago took over the explanation from his earlier letter, but in view of our finding

¹⁶ Jeppesen tentatively identified him with the Venetian patrician and Procurator of San Marco to whom Annibale Padovano dedicated his first book of ricercari in 1556 ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 5 n. 3).

¹⁷ Giovanni da Legge was a Venetian organist who, hoping to follow in the footsteps of Dionisio Memo, took his *clavicimbalum* to England to play for Henry VIII. His sad end is related in the Biographical Dictionary.

¹⁸ For examples, see the Principles of the Edition. A second edn. of Bembo's book appeared in 1538.

 $^{^{19}}$ If this letter is an original rather than a copy, Del Lago may have substituted his own letter for Aaron's; see no. 100 n. 2.

evidence that some, if not most, of Del Lago's letters to Da Legge are fictitious, it is also possible that we are dealing here with another fictitious letter, one that was made up after August 1533. Letter 71 is an autograph copy, but the copy must have been made after 1533 because it incorporates all the spelling changes Del Lago made in Scribe A's copy of the letter to Spataro of 1533: doi to duoi, removere to remuovere, se to si, etc.²⁰ Moreover, the passage in the present letter seems to have been copied directly from no. 57. After transcribing it, Del Lago made a few further changes: the spellings luoco and luochi replace luogo and luoghi, and the words 'dove sta segnato' were added above the line. These words are also a later addition in no. 57. It is possible, of course, that Del Lago did write to Da Legge in 1520, that he reused the passage in question in no. 57, and that he later recopied the present letter, incorporating the passage from the revised version of no. 57 in his Epistole. From a point of view of the context, however, this theory seems less plausible, for the elementary explanation of the function of the flat- and sharp-signs seems rather condescending in answer to Da Legge's question about the location of the coniunctae; after all, he did not ask for a definition of the coniunctae. From the sentence ending 'dove hanno i suoi principii' the letter would logically continue with para. 3, 'Le congiunte familiare ...'. The explanation of the flat and sharp, however, are completely germane to no. 57. In fact, our hypothesis is corroborated in an unexpected manner by the discovery that part of the passage in question was originally taken from a letter of Spataro to Aaron, dated 9 September 1524 (see no. 13, para. 4), written more than four years after the putative date of the present letter. No wonder Del Lago refrained from publishing his Epistole during Spataro's lifetime! Further evidence that no. 71 was written after 1533 and pre-dated to fall within Da Legge's lifetime is the citation of Loyset Piéton's 'O beata infantia', which did not appear in print until 1534. But the most telling evidence of late origin is the appropriation of the opening paragraph from Tromboncino's letter to Del Lago of 2 April 1535 (no. 89).

Reading Spataro's letters to Del Lago, with their detailed explanations of errors committed by Del Lago and their contemptuous advice ('learn to speak musically'; no. 56, para. 1), one wonders how Del Lago gathered the courage to publish his letters to Spataro, even without the tart replies. The answer is that what remains is an edited copy, in which the most glaring errors have been corrected. Since we do not have the originals, we can only deduce this from Spataro's replies. One of the most acrid debates between the two concerned the pitch of Fb, Cb, $B\sharp$, and $E\sharp$ in Pythagorean temperament. In no. 57 Del Lago claimed that *ut* of Fb and

 20 The watermark, of the Annunciation (cf. Briquet no. 684), matches that of the supplementary leaves, fos. 7–8, added to a letter dated 1541 (no. 93).

Cb lie a major semitone beneath C and G (para. 3). This is correct. But it is not what the original letter had, because Spataro told Aaron that Del Lago said they lie a *comma* beneath C and G (no. 60, para. 6). In para. 13 he quotes Del Lago as saying that these notes would cause the tones and semitones to change places and there would no longer be a diatonic order; this passage does not appear in the edited version of Del Lago's letter.

The long quotations from Spataro's letters that appear in Del Lago's letters as the context for his remarks (nos. 28, 43, 57) were surely not in the original letters. And some of Del Lago's letters may be conflations. In no. 48 Spataro speaks of two letters by Del Lago, one dated 22 November 1532 in which 'it appears that he is quite content' and a later one ('and now he comes back again with his queries'). Del Lago's letter no. 47, dated 22 November 1532, must be a conflation of these two letters, the first paragraph being the original letter, the remainder the second letter, to which Spataro is responding in no. 48.

The most puzzling aspect of Del Lago's Epistole is their relationship to his treatise Breve introduttione di musica misurata, published in Venice in May 1540.21 In an article on Del Lago and his writings, Don Harrán investigated the parallels. He discovered that Del Lago incorporated twelve passages, some quite substantial, from eight different letters,²² and he concluded that 'Del Lago viewed his letters as a fund of materials to be turned to use, when needed, for composing one section or another of a theoretical work'.²³ Had Del Lago given up the idea of publishing his Epistole and used them as a basis for his treatise instead? The problem with this view-and it is one that Harrán acknowledged and tried to solve-is that one of the borrowed letters, indeed the letter from which the most substantial borrowing occurs, is dated 26 August 1541, more than a year after the treatise was published. If Del Lago had relinquished the plan to publish his correspondence, why does one of the letters post-date the treatise? And why should he bother to copy out a long letter if he could refer his correspondent to the published treatise?

After carefully comparing the letter to Fra Seraphin (no. 93) and the treatise, Harrán came to the conclusion that the letter was a revised version of the passages in the treatise, adapted to the personality of the recipient.²⁴ Then he considered the possibility that the letter was misdated, finding supporting evidence in the letter of 30 April 1538 from Fra Seraphin to Del Lago (no. 92), in which he thanks him for the 'order of the ascent of the modes', the very subject treated at the beginning of no.

²¹ Reprinted in 1969 by Forni Editore, Bologna, with the addition of page-numbers.

²² 'The Theorist Giovanni del Lago', pp. 138-9.

²³ Ibid., p. 139.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 126.

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93. In this case, the treatise would represent a revision of the letter. Harrán favoured this hypothesis, especially in view of his discovery of Del Lago's wholesale borrowing from his letters in the printed treatise, and suggested that 'perhaps other evidence, drawn from a collation of the contents of the treatise with Del Lago's letters at large, may be utilized to strengthen this contention'.²⁵ We are now in a position to bring this evidence to bear on the problem.

The lengthy letter to Fra Seraphin treats three main topics: a description of the modes, precepts on composition, and the relation between music, grammar, and rhetoric. The first part, on the modes, does indeed seem to be the letter to which Fra Seraphin replies on 30 April 1538 (no. 92), and we may suppose that it was originally a separate letter, written in April 1538. The other two parts, which are related, may have been written in response to queries by other musicians, but no such letters survive in the Correspondence. Had they originally taken this form, there is no reason why Del Lago should have changed his normal procedure in the Epistole; in fact, it is more likely that he would have preferred three separate letters to three different people as evidence of his widespread fame. Let us suppose, therefore, that the two remaining parts were composed specifically for the treatise, then revised and expanded for the letter. The question then remains why Del Lago should publish the Epistole after the treatise had been printed, since there was considerable duplication between the two. Moreover, why should he date the letter to Fra Seraphin fifteen months after the issuance of the treatise?

Let us try to put ourselves in Del Lago's position in, say, 1539. He has the manuscript of a collection of letters on recondite musical problems ready for a printer, but he cannot obtain the subvention needed to publish them, nor has his old antagonist, Giovanni Spataro, yet given up the ghost. Aaron had buried himself in a monastery near Bergamo three years earlier. True, he had written in 1536, but Del Lago has not bothered to respond. After at least nineteen years in the same little church, he has not been promoted above the rank of deacon. He sees with chagrin that Aaron's *Toscanello* is reprinted for a second time, after an interval of ten years. Then the idea occurs to him that he could put together his own treatise. There is obviously a market for a brief compendium of mensural music; many have written on the subject but their books, 'excessively long, have only induced tedium in the reader'.²⁶ Moreover, by using what he has already written to his correspondents, he can cobble the book together in a short time. The standard material on hexachords, mutation, signs, imperfection and alteration, and proportions can be interpolated easily. Del Lago then reviews his first draft but finds something missing. As useful as all this information is to Moresino and his friends, it is not what really interests the informed amateur. In the patrician Venetian salons, where music-making is an indispensable part of social life, the connoisseur wants to know how the composer goes about composing, how he sets about achieving his goal of matching words and music.²⁷ The lengthy comparison of music and grammar that now follows in the treatise may have been derived from discussions between humanists and musicians in which Del Lago may have participated. This section of the treatise is its only truly original part; previous authors had made comparisons between music and grammar, but none to the extent that we find here.²⁸

After the treatise was published, Del Lago still hoped to bring out his Epistole, in spite of the fact that not everything would be new.²⁹ He probably was persuaded that the audience would be different; the Breve introduttione was intended for 'the common usefulness of all those who love that science' (dedication), the *Epistole* for 'the common use of scholars of this liberal art'. And for the scholars, the long disquisition on music and grammar would be most welcome. Thus he must have decided to take this section of the treatise and rework it into the form of a letter, going back to the grammarians for further details on syllables and letters of the alphabet (paras. 10–12) and putting in definitions here and there.³⁰ He then added all this material to a letter he had already written to Fra Seraphin, but dated the final version 26 August 1541, which was probably the day he completed the revision. It is possible that he would have changed the date later, but perhaps he opted for the late date in the belief that the publication should include recent work and not simply his old letters. Or perhaps the discrepancy simply slipped his mind, as seems to have happened when he mentioned Aaron's Toscanello in a letter supposedly written in 1520. He obviously regarded the letter to Fra Seraphin as

²⁷ See the passage from Mattheo Nardo's letter, borrowed by Del Lago in no. 93, para. 5.

²⁸ See Harrán, *Word-Tone Relations*; Del Lago's treatise is discussed on pp. 156-60. See also the Commentary on no. 93.

²⁹ As mentioned earlier, the correction on the title-page proves that he was still making revisions after 1540. It was Jeppesen who first suggested that Del Lago had intended to publish his letters ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', pp. 4–5). Harrán is somewhat sceptical, believing that Del Lago 'presented the collection to his patron (Molino) in manuscript' ('The Theorist Giovanni del Lago', p. 135). In its present state, however, it would not have made an impressive gift. Proof that the fair copy of the *Epistole* was indeed prepared for publication is found on fo. 71' in the form of a note to the typesetter. After crossing out 'vale' on the first eight letters, Del Lago wrote a marginal note in the ninth: 'levare via tutti i vale'—'remove all the *vales*'.

³⁰ On other revisions, see Harrán, 'The Theorist Giovanni del Lago', pp. 122-6.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 129.

²⁶ See the dedication to Lorenzo Moresino, in which Del Lago says he had often been exhorted by Moresino to bring out something on practical music.

the centrepiece of his treatise because he put it first, displacing the definitions written for Girolamo Molino.

After more than four hundred years, Del Lago's dream of publishing his *Epistole* has come true. His letters are printed in the version that he carefully prepared, but not in the context that he desired. For now he must share space with his correspondents—sworn enemies as well as ardent admirers—whose letters have reached us only because he happened to preserve them. Our debt to him is great.

7 Giovanni del Lago's 'Authorities'

GIOVANNI DEL LAGO, in his role as mentor to the host of minor musicians with whom he corresponded, frequently reinforced his criticism with quotations from works of other theorists. His habit of naming sources—unusual for the time¹—allows us to establish a list of the books and manuscripts to which he had access, either in his own library or elsewhere in Venice. Given his almost worshipful attitude to the great scholars of the past, his readings are heavily oriented towards medieval theory, which he can have known only in manuscript, except for Boethius. His letters therefore not only reveal what a sixteenth-century theorist found interesting and relevant to contemporary practice; they also afford us a valuable insight into the transmission of musical thought.²

Scholars have been able to reconstruct many medieval and Renaissance libraries through contemporaneous catalogues and book-lists, through bequests listed in testaments, inventories of estates, and through ex-libris marks or marginal annotations.³ Music historians have not been so fortunate. Apart from Antonfrancesco Doni's ideal but somewhat sketchy library,⁴ publishers' catalogues (mostly from the latter part of the sixteenth century), and bibliographies such as Conrad Gesner's *Pandectae* of 1548,⁵ we have only one outstanding example of the library of a

¹ Edward Lowinsky has shown how Zarlino in his *Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558) 'took over Glareanus' system of twelve modes, including Aeolian and Ionian, the forerunners of major and minor, without as much as a nod in the direction of the Swiss humanist': *Tonality and Atonality in Sixteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961), p. 34. Clement Miller, too, has noted Renaissance theorists' frequent practice of neglecting 'to cite the sources of their information, especially if the source in question was a contemporary writer or one recently deceased'; he cites specifically Gafurio, Cochlaeus, and Zarlino. See 'Early Gaffuriana: New Answers to Old Questions', *The Musical Quarterly* 56 (1970), 367–88 at 369 and n. 18.

² The present chapter takes its point of departure from F. Alberto Gallo's earlier preliminary study, 'Citazioni di teorici medievali nelle lettere di Giovanni del Lago', *Quadrivium* 14 (1973), 171–80. Gallo's article is, as he states, a 'rapid investigation' of the medieval theorists cited by Del Lago as authorities. Although he supposes that Del Lago possessed 'una buona raccolta di manoscritti' (p. 177), he does not attempt to identify these manuscripts with surviving exemplars.

³ Pearl Kibre's article, 'The Intellectual Interests Reflected in Libraries of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 7 (1946), 257–97, is a fine and thoughtful assessment of the contents of early libraries as they reflect the interests of their owners. A useful survey of the subject is James Westfall Thompson, *The Medieval Library* (Chicago, 1939), especially the chapter by Dorothy M. Robathan, 'Libraries of the Italian Renaissance', pp. 509–88.

⁴ See James Haar, 'The *Libraria* of Antonfrancesco Doni', *Musica disciplina* 24 (1970), 101–25. ⁵ See Lawrence F. Bernstein's study, 'The Bibliography of Music in Conrad Gester's Pandectae (1548)', *Acta musicologica* 45 (1973), 119–63.

sixteenth-century music-lover before mid-century, that of Ferdinand Columbus, whose treasures are the basis of the Biblioteca Colombina in Seville.⁶ Personal collections formed later in the century, such as those of the Fugger⁷ and Herwart⁸ families, have been reconstituted through inventories. No library catalogue of a music theorist has yet been discovered, although we know of a number of manuscripts and prints that were owned by Franchino Gafurio, many of which he willed to Santa Maria Incoronata at Lodi in 1518.⁹ That library was dispersed in 1694. Today, Gafurio's books and manuscripts are preserved in Milan, Lodi, Rome, Parma, Verona, Tremezzo, London, Los Angeles, and Cambridge, Mass. They are easy to identify because he systematically entered into them his name and the date of purchase. Moreover, he was in the habit of annotating his books.

In the case of Giovanni del Lago's library, the identification of specific books and manuscripts that belonged to him is more difficult. He seems not to have inscribed his books nor to have annotated them. He did, however, sometimes correct a faulty passage, and these corrections are valuable indications of his ownership. But the main clues to Del Lago's wide readings lie in his correspondence: his citations of specific works and his frequent quotations from older theorists allow us to draw up a list of the books he studied. Whether he owned them personally or consulted them at the homes of friends or in the libraries of Venetian monasteries can be determined in only a few cases, but we do know that he actively sought to acquire books for his library.

In his choice of printed books, Del Lago shows a distinct bias towards works published in Italy, and especially those written by his friends and acquaintances. In the course of his correspondence he cites treatises by Ramis, Gafurio, Aaron, Spataro, Lanfranco, and Vanneo. But he had recourse to a much larger manuscript collection of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century theory. We should not be surprised to find that he quotes Boethius, Guido, Marchetto of Padua, Johannes de Muris, Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, Hothby, Tinctoris, and Gafurio, but he also knew such obscure writers as Amerus and 'D. B. de Francia', and he had a smattering of Greek theory as well. Del Lago also had in his possession manuscript

⁶ See Catherine Weeks Chapman, 'Printed Collections of Polyphonic Music Owned by Ferdinand Columbus', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21 (1968), 34-84.

⁹ See Alessandro Caretta, Luigi Cremascoli, and Luigi Salamini, *Franchino Gaffurio* (Lodi, 1951), pp. 83-4 and 115-19.

versions of three of Spataro's treatises—a subject of heated discussion in their correspondence, which led to a break in their relations. Altogether he cites thirty-two treatises by twenty-three writers. Impressive as this list of authorities is, it does not reveal the full extent of his reading, for our theorist also appropriated passages from other writers without acknowledging their source. Some of these will be uncovered in the course of the present chapter; the borrowings from his contemporaries and even his correspondents are identified in Ch. 6.

Our investigation of this Renaissance theorist in his study will be undertaken on a chronological basis.

Greek Theory

Del Lago's rare forays into Greek theory occur only in the 1541 letter to Fra Seraphin (no. 93) and the set of musical definitions he drew up for his patron, Girolamo Molino (no. 96), which likewise must be one of the last entries in the Correspondence. It appears that he developed an interest in Greek music late in his career. An undated letter in the Correspondence may shed some light on this. In it, Bernardino da Pavia invites Del Lago, together with Adrian Willaert, to lunch at the home of the English ambassador to Venice to discuss certain musical matters ('dove se haverà da parlare alcune cose de musicha'; no. 98). Bernardino asks Del Lago to bring his division of the three genera, which the ambassador wishes to have defined. As an incentive, Bernardino adds that 'you will find there [books by] some authors who have written about music, I mean old ones which I don't believe Your Reverence has ever seen'. Letter no. 96 does indeed contain a division of the three genera, together with definitionsand more. In it Del Lago cites Ptolemy, Gaudentius, Aristoxenus, Euclid, Aristides Quintilianus, and Porphyry. Could these have been the ancient authors to whom Bernardino refers? As far as we know, Del Lago did not read Greek, and in the 1540s none of the musical works of these authors was available in print in a Latin translation.¹⁰ However, they were all accessible in Venice during Del Lago's lifetime in Greek manuscripts. Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS graec. 322, for example, a fifteenthcentury manuscript that belonged to Cardinal Bessarion, includes treatises by all the above authors.¹¹ Possibly, these were the works discussed over lunch. The English ambassador was a Bolognese protonotary, Giambat-

⁷ See Richard Schaal, 'Die Musikbibliothek von Raimund Fugger d.J.: Ein Beitrag zur Musiküberlieferung des 16. Jahrhunderts', *Acta musicologica* 29 (1957), 126–37.

⁸ See Marie Louise Martinez-Göllner, 'Die Augsburger Bibliothek Herwart und ihre Lautentabulaturen', *Fontes artis musicae* 16 (1969), 29–48, and H. Colin Slim, 'The Music Library of the Augsburg Patrician, Hans Heinrich Herwart (1520–1583)', *Annales musicologiques* 7 (1964–77), 67–109.

¹⁰ Some might have been available in manuscript: Gafurio, for example, had commissioned the translation of the works of Aristides Quintilianus, Ptolemy, Bacchius the Elder, and Bryennius; see Alberto Gallo, 'Le traduzioni dal greco per Franchino Gaffurio', *Acta musicologica* 35 (1963), 172–4.

¹¹ See the descriptions in *Musici scriptores Graeci*, ed. Carl Jan (Leipzig, 1895), pp. lxxxiilxxxviii, and Thomas J. Mathiesen, *Ancient Greek Music Theory: A Catalogue Raisonné of Manuscripts* (RISM B11; Munich, 1988), pp. 693-9.

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tista Casali, later bishop of Belluno. Spataro knew him in Bologna, where the ambassador had a home and hosted gatherings in which music was discussed (see no. 46). The date of Bernardino's letter of invitation to Del Lago can be narrowed down to the period between December 1527 (Willaert's appointment as *maestro di cappella* at San Marco) and March 1535 (Casali's departure from Venice). Casali himself must have known Greek, for on 24 September 1527 his messenger returned four Greek manuscripts that the ambassador had borrowed from the library of San Marco.¹² It is not inconceivable that it was the ambassador himself who translated the Greek theorists for Del Lago. Another person from whom Del Lago could have learnt about Greek music was Lodovico Fogliano, who was in Venice at this time and was possibly in the service of Giambattista Casali.¹³

The Greek authors mentioned by Del Lago in his letter of 26 August 1541 (no. 93) to Fra Seraphin—Aristoxenus and Nicomachus—came to his knowledge in another manner, as did Quintilian. This letter, really a miniature treatise (large parts of which were incorporated in Del Lago's *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* of 1540), in addition to quotations from such well-known authors as Donatus, Bede, and Isidore of Seville, includes a lengthy passage translated, without acknowledgement, from Gafurio's *Practica musicae* in which Gafurio discusses rhythm, adducing the definitions of Quintilian, Bede, 'the Greeks', Aristoxenus, and Nicomachus.¹⁴ In this case at least, Del Lago's acquaintance with Greek theory derives from a secondary source.

One gains the impression that Del Lago's involvement with Greek theory stems from a desire to be *au courant* rather from any deep interest in the subject. The speculative side of music, to judge from his other letters, did not excite him; he was most at home in the realm of *musica practica*.

Early Medieval Theorists

That Del Lago knew Boethius' *De arithmetica* and *De musica* should come as no surprise: these were fundamental sources for music theory in the Renaissance as well as the Middle Ages. No theoretician of music worth his salt was ignorant of Boethius. But since Del Lago was inclined more towards practical matters, he refers to Boethius rarely. He quotes the *De musica* only for a remark on 'comma' (no. 57), but his definition of consonance (no. 76) agrees with that of Boethius, as do a number of

¹⁴ See no. 93 nn. 37–9 (cf. Ch. 5 n. 50).

definitions in no. 96. The *De arithmetica* is cited for Boethius' demonstration that 'all inequality is caused by and proceeds from equality' (no. 74) and for his definitions of proportions (no. 68). Del Lago also ascribes to Boethius a statement that does not come from his *De musica*: 'Et Boetius dice ita est de illis qui sine arte canunt, sicut de litteratis qui nunquam [litteras] didicerunt' (no. 74). Later sources, such as a treatise attributed to Johannes de Garlandia, credit the phrase to Guido.¹⁵

Guido of Arezzo is mentioned many times throughout the Correspondence in connection with the six solmization syllables. Del Lago also quotes the famous jingle on the difference between musicians and singers (nos. 74, 86). He then attributes to Guido (in his 'Musica') the remark that singers who cannot distinguish between tones and semitones lose as much time in singing as it would take them to obtain a perfect knowledge of sacred and secular writings (no. 74):

Dice anchora così: Cantores vulgares qui vim toni et semitoni[i] discernere nesciunt in vanum laboraverunt, tantum tempus in cantando perdentes quantum in secularibus divinisque scripturis profecisse potuissent.

The 'Musica' is not Guido's *Micrologus* but the Prologue to his Antiphonary.¹⁶ Del Lago's wording is different from the version printed by Gerbert; it is closer to the quotation of this passage included in the treatise *Introductio musice* attributed to Johannes de Garlandia, as F. Alberto Gallo has pointed out.¹⁷ This treatise had widespread dissemination in Italy.¹⁸ Parts of it, including this passage, are also found in the *Ars contrapuncti* attributed to Philippe de Vitry.¹⁹ Del Lago's quotation, however, comes from neither of these sources but from a fifteenth-century treatise that he had in his own library, discussed below.

Two other quotations that come from early theorists probably derive from more recent sources. Del Lago was fond of *dicta* and incorporated them here and there in his letters. In no. 86 he writes 'regola è in qualunque arte un comune mandato' (para. 16). The sentence comes from Odo's *Dialogus de musica*, but since Del Lago quoted it in Italian, he probably took it from another, later treatise. The passage on the 'accidentality' of *musica ficta* in no. 73 eventually derives from a Cistercian

¹⁹ 'Tra Giovanni di Garlandia', p. 18. See CS iii. 23.

¹² The manuscripts, one of Procopius and three of Origen, came from the library of Cardinal Bessarion; see Giulio Coggiola, 'Il prestito di manoscritti della Marciana dal 1474 al 1527', *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 25 (1908), 47–70 at 55. For further information on Casali, see the Biographical Dictionary.

¹³ See the entry for Fogliano in the Biographical Dictionary.

¹⁵ Introductio musice, ed. E. de Coussemaker in Scriptores de musica medii aevi (4 vols., Paris, 1864-76), i. 163a.

¹⁶ Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica sacra, ed. Martin Gerbert (3 vols., Saint-Blaise, 1784), ii. 34-7 (hereafter abbreviated GS); English translation in Source Readings in Music History, ed. Oliver Strunk (New York, 1950), pp. 117-20.

¹⁷ 'Citazioni di teorici medievali', p. 173. For the passage Del Lago quotes, see CS i. 163a. ¹⁸ See F. Alberto Gallo, 'Tra Giovanni di Garlandia e Filippo da Vitry: Note sulla tradizione di alcuni testi teorici', *Musica disciplina* 23 (1969), 13–20, esp. 15–18, and id., 'Alcune fonti poco note di musica teorica e pratica', *L'ars nova italiana del Trecento* 2 (Certaldo, 1968), 49–76.

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treatise of the early thirteenth century. The treatise mainly survives in late copies and this particular passage was given wide currency in the series of anonymous compendia of music published throughout the sixteenth century in Venice, either attached to manuals for clerics or as a separate publication.²⁰

Del Lago's quotation in no. 43 (see Pl. 6 on p. 134) from the relatively obscure thirteenth-century English theorist Amerus (some manuscripts give his name as Aumerus, Aimerus, or Aluredus) comes as a surprise, the more so since there are no surviving Italian sources of his treatise.²¹ As Cesarino Ruini notes, Del Lago's reading diverges slightly from the main sources and hints at a possible Italian tradition. Amerus calls himself a member of the household of Cardinal Ottobuono Fieschi, and thus he must have spent some time in Italy. Did Del Lago see a now-lost copy of Amerus' treatise, or did he take the reference from a secondary source? The former seems more likely, inasmuch as Amerus' work, as far as we know, found no echoes in the writings of Del Lago's predecessors and contemporaries.

Marchetto of Padua

Del Lago refers to Marchetto of Padua four times, twice quoting him (nos. 28, 82), once translating his definition of permutation (no. 73), and once claiming him as the inventor of the sign # for the diesis (no. 88). All these references are to the *Lucidarium*. Thanks to the new critical edition of this treatise by Jan Herlinger, it has been possible to compare Del Lago's quotations with the readings of all extant manuscripts—fifteen complete sources and twelve fragmentary ones.²² The collation led to the conclusion that Del Lago's source was Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5322, which contains both Marchetto's *Lucidarium* and his *Pomerium*. The passage quoted in no. 82 agrees precisely with the reading of Vat. lat. 5322 (and two other related sources).²³ The lengthier passage in no. 28, para. 5 shows only minor differences, some of which could have occurred during copying: the transposition of two words, the addition of two words to bring two parallel passages into agreement ('si incipiat per deservientem notam a fa, ibi ponitur b rotundum. Si vero *a* mi, *ibi* ponitur ightharpoint quadrum'), and the correction of a grammatical error ('Hec enim note' changed to 'He enim note'). One reading in Del Lago's quotation is found only in Vat. lat. 5322: 'predicte due voces, fa et mi' instead of 'predicte due, scilicet fa et mi' in some sources and 'predicte due note, scilicet fa et mi' in others.²⁴ The only major difference is the chapter-number, which Del Lago says is 'capitolo 42°'. In Vat. lat. 5322 this chapter is 62. All other sources, however, number the chapters differently, beginning anew for each 'tractatus', and most call this 'capitulum tertium'.²⁵ Del Lago's variant may originate in a simple slip of the eye, for the chapter-numbers in Vat. lat. 5322 are given in Roman numerals, and 'lxij' might easily be misread as 'xlij'.

Vat. lat. 5322 is a paper manuscript of Italian origin dating from the fifteenth century.²⁶ It is written throughout in one hand, but two later scribes have entered additions and corrections in the *Lucidarium* section. One hand, which seems to be of the mid sixteenth century, has added a few words that are missing in the first chapter of the eighth treatise and an extended passage left out of ch. 4 of the eleventh treatise.²⁷ These omissions are not a peculiarity of Vat. lat. 5322: both also occur in Pisa, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 606, which, as Herlinger has shown, is a source closely related to Vat. lat. 5322.²⁸ The later scribe, then, was collating Vat. lat. 5322 with some other manuscript. Since the variants in this last passage do not agree with any one of the extant sources, this manuscript must be lost.

The second hand that made additions to Vat. lat. 5322 is familiar; it is that of Del Lago himself (cf. Pl. 7 with Pl. 1 on p. 17). His corrections, on fos. 22^{v} , 30^{v} , 43^{v} , 44^{r} , and 44^{v} , are all minor and could have been made on the basis of the sense of the passage rather than derive from collation with another manuscript, as must be the case with the other scribe's additions. Discovery of Del Lago's hand in Vat. lat. 5322 confirms our hypothesis that it was the source of his *Lucidarium* quotations and proves that Vat. lat. 5322 entered Paolo Manuzio's library in the same manner as Vat. lat. 5318. It also shows that someone knowledgeable in music theory had access to the manuscript in Venice in the later sixteenth century, before it was transferred to the Vatican (see Ch. 2).

The most influential aspect of Marchetto's theories was his treatment of

²⁰ See no. 73 n. 13.

²¹ See Amerus, *Practica artis musice* [1271], ed. Cesarino Ruini (Corpus scriptorum de musica 25; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1977), pp. 13–14. Only two complete sources have come down to us: Bamberg, Staatliche Bibliothek, MS Lit. 115 (written in Bamberg, early 14th c.) and Trier, Seminarbibliothek, MS 44 (written second half of 15th c., Burgundian area).

²² The Lucidarium of Marchetto of Padua, ed. Herlinger. Only three of the fragmentary versions are included here; for the others, see Herlinger's dissertation of the same title (University of Chicago, 1978), pp. 57–9.

²³ Since inverted word-order was omitted from the variant readings noted in the published edn. of the *Lucidarium*, I refer to the dissertation, p. 467.

²⁴ Lucidarium, p. 304.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 298.

²⁶ See the description ibid., pp. 53-4.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 272, source 'R' \sim fo. 25' of Vat. lat. 5322; p. 426, § 71 \sim fo. 39' of Vat. lat. 5322. ²⁸ Ibid., pp. 50 and 54. It probably originated in Venice: the Venetian monk Teofilo Macchetti brought it to Pisa in the late 17th c.; see Beatrice Pescerelli, 'Teofilo Macchetti (1632-1714): Un dimenticato precursore della ricerca musicologica', *Acta musicologica* 48 (1976), 104-11, esp. 106-7.

Dennika florie Dysecfarm mitter of Ponniense at Duby terms Pinelaus per afterfil in est de lighten de grane, e vis offic leve Ma take commerce prove de grane, e vis offic leve Ma take commerce prove de grane, e vis offic leve Ma take commerce prove de grane, e vis offic leve Ma take commerce prove de grane, e vis offic leve Ma take commerce prove de grane, e vis offic leve Ma take commerce prove de for ponter of provider of ponter de for the poster de for the poster de formations of provider of ponter de for the poster de formation of provider of ponter provider adaptive serve of the formation offic int. of Data for fuelar of ponter format format provider name of for fuelar to form bon for a vis provider name of for fuelar to form bon for a vis provider name of formation of format of the server provide to format of the formation of the server provide to format of the format of the server of the form a bor fine notes as provider of the server of the fine to be forma man as the poster of the server of the fine to the format of the server of the format of the server provide form the format of the server of the format of the format ad order proper server of the server of the format of the production of the server of the format of the production of the server of the format of the server provide the production of the server of the fine to serve gravery, et with the poster of a grave of graver of format of the production of the server of the format of the server format of the production of the server of the se

Pl. 7. Giovanni del Lago's annotations to Marchetto, Lucidarium, in MS Vat. lat. 5322, fo. 30^{v}

the modes. When Del Lago, in the midst of a discussion of modes in no. 93, suddenly breaks into Latin (para. 2), the suspicion is raised that he is quoting some theorist. It turns out to be Marchetto: the reading matches Vat. lat. 5322 except for the order of the last three words.

Del Lago also knew Marchetto's *Brevis compilatio*, from which he quoted the phrase 'omnes vero mediae breves dicuntur' (no. 47). Marchetto is only one of five theorists Del Lago produced from his arsenal to impress upon Spataro his error in writing a long in the middle of a ligature, for all middle notes should be breves. Later he must have decided that four expert witnesses would do, and he deleted the passage from Marchetto.²⁹

Marchetto's impact on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century music theory is increasingly becoming evident. His division of the tone into five dieses, roundly denounced in the fifteenth century, came to be viewed with new interest in the next, as theorists began to experiment with different tunings.³⁰

Johannes de Muris

Del Lago's habit of quoting authorities sometimes irked Giovanni Spataro, who, in a letter to Aaron, refers contemptuously to the coarse food that nourishes Del Lago, who 'can attain to nothing further with his intellect than what he finds written in his ancient author, Johannes de Muris' (no. 48, para. 11). Johannes de Muris, indeed, is one of Del Lago's favourite authorities. Since notational matters consume a good part of his critical attention, Del Lago often has recourse to the Libellus cantus mensurabilis, the most authoritative and influential of the notational treatises of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.³¹ In two letters (nos. 44, 86) Del Lago gives it the title 'Musica', as he usually does with treatises of older authors. In two others (nos. 28, 47) he specifies the title as 'Trattato de cantu mensurato'. Whether the quotations actually come from a separate copy of the Libellus cantus mensurabilis or from the version incorporated with commentary in Ugolino of Orvieto's Declaratio musicae disciplinae, to which Del Lago also refers (mistakenly believing it to be by Prosdocimo; see below), is difficult to determine. In each case, however, the readings are closer to Ugolino's version than to the conflated edition published by Coussemaker, and in six letters (nos. 28, 44, 47, 69, 73, 86) Del Lago draws on Ugolino's commentary as well. One of the other music theory manuscripts coming from Paolo Manuzio's library, Vat. lat. 5321,

²⁹ See no. 47 n. 8.

³⁰ See Jan Herlinger, 'Fractional Divisions of the Whole Tone', *Music Theory Spectrum* 3 (1981), 74–83, and Karol Berger, *Musica ficta*, pp. 22–9.

³¹ Forty-seven manuscript versions of the *Libellus* exist, six of which were known to Coussemaker when he prepared his edn. in CS iii. 46–58. A critical edn. is lacking.

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contains a copy of de Muris's *Libellus* (fos. $2^{r}-6^{r}$), but this is not the source of Del Lago's quotations. It was, however, in Del Lago's possession, because he has corrected a garbled passage in it (fo. 2^{r})—probably after his copy of the Ugolino treatise.

Of less interest to Del Lago was the treatise by Johannes de Muris that he calls 'Trattato de contraponto'; he cites it only once, for the definition of counterpoint (no. 74).³² Coussemaker published an Ars contrapuncti secundum Johannem de Muris in CS iii. 59-68. Klaus-Jürgen Sachs, on the basis of the contents and the sources, believes that the second part of this treatise ('Cum notum sit') is a later anonymous addition.³³ It is found together with the first part ('Quilibet affectans') in at least ten sources, and in the fifteenth century it was commonly thought to be the work of de Muris. Del Lago's definition of counterpoint does not correspond precisely with any of the surviving sources. It agrees with four sources in omitting 'supra' or 'super' ('sicut quis non potest [supra/super] edificare') and with three other sources in including 'addiscat et' ('nisi prius addiscat et sciat contrapunctum').³⁴ It is closest to Washington, Library of Congress, MS ML171. J6, a manuscript copied in Venice between 1465 and 1477.35 Thus we may adduce a lost manuscript, perhaps of Venetian origin, for Del Lago's quotation.

Philippe de Vitry

Another of Del Lago's 'grossi antichi' was Philippe de Vitry, whom he calls 'a very ancient musician and man of no little authority' (no. 47, para. 6). Del Lago draws on this authority to castigate Spataro for writing a long in the middle of a ligature. The treatise quoted is not Vitry's *Ars nova* but a compendium based on his teachings published by Coussemaker under the title 'Ars perfecta in musica Magistri Philippoti de Vitriaco':³⁶

Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 39^r

Vitry (CS iii. 35)

Item omnis tractus ascendens in prima nota positus cuiuscumque ligaturę facit duas primas esse semibreves. Et omnes medię sunt breves. Item omnis tractus ascendens in prima positione ligature descendentis vel ascendentis facit primas esse semibreves; et omnes medie sunt breves cujuscumque sint ligature.

³² The same definition, without source, appears in no. 76.

³³ Der Contrapunctus im 14. und 15. Jahrbundert: Untersuchungen zum Terminus, zur Lebre und zu den Quellen (Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 13; Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 182-3.

³⁴ See the collation, ibid., p. 84. Vat. lat. 5321, which belonged to Del Lago, is one of the few sources that does not follow 'Quilibet affectans' with 'Cum notum sit'. Hence Del Lago could not have used this manuscript for his definition.

³⁵ See the description in Guido d'Arezzo, *Micrologus*, ed. Jos. Smits van Waesberghe (Corpus scriptorum de musica 4; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1955), pp. 68-71. By 1471 the manuscript had already travelled to Pavia with its copyist, Gianfrancesco Preottoni di Pavia.

³⁶ CS iii. 28-35. Coussemaker expresses his doubts about the authorship on p. xvi.

Coussemaker's source, a manuscript in private possession in Vienna, is now in Chicago, Newberry Library, MS 54. 1.³⁷ Two other sources of this treatise, beginning with the words 'Omni desideranti notitiam artis mensurabilis musice' (CS iii. 29a), are known: Seville, Biblioteca Colombina, MS 5-2-25, no. 14,³⁸ and (greatly condensed) Siena, Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati, MS L. v. 30, fo. 129^{t-v} .³⁹ The latter omits the section on ligatures, while the former gives it in a wording different from Del Lago's quotation, which is close to the version of the Newberry manuscript. Again, we must posit that Del Lago used a copy of a treatise that is now lost.

Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi

Del Lago cites three treatises by Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, a 'Trattato di contrapunto' (nos. 28, 57), a 'Musica' (no. 88), and a commentary on Johannes de Muris's Libellus cantus mensurabilis (nos. 44, 47, 69). As F. Alberto Gallo discovered, his quotations from the latter do not come from Prosdocimo's own commentary but from that of Ugolino of Orvieto, in Book III of the Declaratio musicae disciplinae.⁴⁰ The 'Musica', likewise, is identifiable with Book I of Ugolino's treatise. Del Lago must have used a copy that either gave Prosdocimo as author or, more likely, was anonymous. Since Prosdocimo did write a commentary on the Libellus cantus mensurabilis,⁴¹ Del Lago may have assumed that he possessed this version. The manuscript Vat. lat. 5324, which probably came from Del Lago's library, contains an anonymous redaction of Ugolino's Declaratio musicae disciplinae. However, it is not the source of Del Lago's quotations: it lacks Book I entirely, and Book III breaks off before the commentary on de Muris's treatise begins. Del Lago must have had another copy which has not come down to us-perhaps a fragmentary manuscript of the sections missing in Vat. lat. 5324.⁴² In four other letters (nos. 28, 73, 76,

³⁷ For a description of this source, see Kurt von Fischer, 'Eine wiederaufgefundene Theoretikerhandschrift des späten 14. Jahrhunderts (Chicago, Newberry Library, Ms. 54.1 olim Codex cujusdam ignoti bibliophili Vindobonensis)', *Schweizer Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft* 1 (1972), 23–33.

³⁸ Modern edn. by Higini Anglès, 'Dos tractats medievals de música figurada', in Walter Lott, Helmuth Osthoff, and Werner Wolffheim (eds.), *Festschrift für Johannes Wolf zu seinem* sechzigsten Geburtstage (Berlin, 1929), pp. 6–12, esp. 6–10.

³⁹ Published by Gilbert Reaney in 'A Postscript to Philippe de Vitry's Ars nova', Musica disciplina 14 (1960), 29-31.

⁴⁰ 'Citazioni di teorici medievali', pp. 175-6.

⁴¹ See Expositiones tractatus pratice cantus mensurabilis magistri Johannis de Muris, ed. F. Alberto Gallo (Prosdocimi de Beldemandis Opera 1; Bologna, 1966).

⁴² All the other complete copies known of the treatise contain the author's name except Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Rossiano 455; see Ugolino of Orvieto, *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, ed. Seay, i. 3–8. The few small variants between Del Lago's version and the others (which are surprisingly uniform, to judge from Seay's critical notes) do not allow us to assert or deny that Rossiano 455 might be his source. 86) he appropriated quotations from this source without acknowledging their author.

Del Lago's citations from the counterpoint treatise differ considerably from the version printed in Coussemaker (iii. 193-9), based on Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS A. 56; they are very close to the second version of the treatise, dated 1425, found in Lucca, Biblioteca Governativa, MS 359.43 During the sixteenth century, this manuscript was in Padua (Prosdocimo's place of origin), in the monastery of San Giovanni in Verdara.44 The other three manuscript sources of the counterpoint treatise, including that in Vat. lat. 5321, owned by Del Lago, follow the readings of the Bologna manuscript.45 Del Lago must have consulted a copy made either from Prosdocimo's 1425 original or from the Lucca manuscript. This is the more interesting because it allows us to conclude that Del Lago knew two versions of the counterpoint treatisethe earlier, dated 1412, in Vat. lat. 5321, which he owned, and the later of 1425 from which he quotes. There is no sign in Vat. lat. 5321 that he attempted to correct its readings (as he did in other treatises in this manuscript); he apparently recognized that they were sufficiently dissimilar to preclude collation with the later version.

Del Lago also must have had access to Prosdocimo's *Tractatus practice* cantus mensurabilis, for the definition of talea he quotes in no. 28 without source agrees with the third definition (the 'opinio quorumdam modernorum') given by Prosdocimo in the chapter 'De colore et talea' in this treatise. Later in the same letter, Del Lago quotes two different definitions of color. Both come from Prosdocimo; the first is the opinion of the moderns, the second the opinion of contemporaries of Johannes de Muris.⁴⁶ Moreover, the notion that color in music is similar to color in rhetoric seems to be derived from the same treatise.⁴⁷

Del Lago also used Prosdocimo (without naming him) to refute Marchetto's labelling a fifth of a tone a diesis. The source of the quotation in no. 88 is Prosdocimo's treatise against Marchetto, the *Tractatus musice speculative*,⁴⁸ whereas the objection to Marchetto's institution of the sign \bigotimes comes from the revised version of the counterpoint treatise.

⁴³ For a comparison of the readings, see Gallo, 'Citazioni', pp. 176-7. The treatise is now available in a critical edn. by Jan Herlinger, *Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, Contrapunctus* (Greek and Latin Music Theory 1; Lincoln, Nebr., and London, 1984).

⁴⁴ Gallo, 'La tradizione dei trattati musicali di Prosdocimo de Beldemandis', *Quadrivium* 6 (1964), 57–84, esp. 79–80.

⁴⁶ CS iii. 227a and 226b. In this instance, Del Lago's wording agrees with that of Coussemaker's source, Bologna A. 56, and not with the redaction of the Lucca manuscript. ⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 226a.

'D. B. de Francia'

The most obscure of Del Lago's authorities is 'el reverendo D. B. de Francia', of whose 'Musica' Del Lago quotes a sentence from the eighth chapter on *coniunctae* (no. 57, para. 4):

Notandum est quod signum b mollis nunquam est ponendum nisi super situm huius vocis mi quam semper conmutat in fa, neque signum b quadri est ponendum nisi super situm huius vocis fa quam semper mutat in mi.

Del Lago calls on D. B. in an effort to answer Spataro's two-part question: (1) where do ut and fa fall in hexachords including a flat before F and C and in hexachords including a sharp before E and B, and (2) what is the reason why these signs are not used in those natural places, as Ramis, Tinctoris, and Hothby state?

Who is the Revd D. B. de Francia, and where did Del Lago find his treatise? The former question wholly defeats us; the latter is easily answered. The treatise is in Venice, in the Biblioteca Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 64 (3415).⁴⁹ It is a paper manuscript of 66 folios in a modern numeration, still in its original vellum binding. The watermark, an anchor in a circle, is a mark common in northern Italy in the sixteenth century. The manuscript is written throughout in one hand in a rather rough cursive script (see Pl. 8) of a type that is found in sixteenth-century sources. The scribe is fond of capital letters and writes the letter q with a tail sharply bent to the right. The title on fo. 2^r reads: 'Incipit brevis Collectio Artis Musicę per Reverendum D. B. de Francia'. The explicit on fo. 64^v gives more information:

Explicit brevis Collectio Artis Musice tam ex Terminationibus Antiquorum, quam modernorum Magistrorum in hac Arte peritorum pro utilitate Incipientium in hoc parvo libello aggregata ut simpliciores ad divinas laudes decantandas citius instruerentur. Deo gratias, per me scripta Emericum de Siler ad placitum presbyteri Jacobi de Gravia.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ See Giuseppe Valentinelli, *Bibliotheca Manuscripta ad S. Marci Venetiarum. Codices Manuscripti Latini* (6 vols.; Venice, 1868–73), v. 207. Lowinsky first studied the manuscript during a visit to Venice in 1948. It had not been mentioned in the musical literature until the recent chapter by F. Alberto Gallo on 'La trattatistica musicale' in *Storia della Cultura veneta dal primo Quattrocento al Concilio di Trento*, iii/3 (Venice, 1981), 297–314 at 297. Gallo refers to Del Lago's letter to Spataro of 15 Aug. 1533 as evidence that the manuscript was in Del Lago's possession.

⁵⁰ Valentinelli reads 'Seler' and 'Guidi'. 'Gravia' may possibly be 'Gravina': the head serif of the final *a* extends over the *i* and could therefore indicate an abbreviation for *n*, although the scribe writes many of his *a*s in this manner. If the name were Gravina, Jacobus might be identical with Jacobus de Cincinnatis de Gravina, a canon in Pesaro, who in 1477 ordered the copying of Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, as the colophon of London, British Library, Add. MS 33519 states; see *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, ed. Seay, i. 4. The manuscript later came into the possession of Franchino Gafurio.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 81.

⁴⁸ Modern edn. by D. Raffaello Baralli and Luigi Torri, 'Il *Trattato* di Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi contro il *Lucidario* di Marchetto da Padova', *Rivista musicale italiana* 20 (1913), 707-62 at 731-62.

Chube-Buring

Pl. 8. D. B. de Francia, *Brevis collectio artis musice*, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 64 (3415), fos. 15^V-16^T (copied by Scribe C)

Giovanni del Lago's 'Authorities'

The priest Jacobus de Gravia probably had responsibility for Gregorian chant in his church; he needed a manual to teach the singing of divine services. D. B.'s treatise is not suitable for choirboys, who would also have had instruction in mensural music, but is intended, as the explicit states, for 'simpliciores', that is for ecclesiastics who had had no training in music. Certainly the treatise is oriented towards church music. It begins, in fact, with the words 'Cantate Domino, & benedicite nomini eius. ps. 95. Dicit Augustinus quod musica ad divinas laudes decantandas in ecclesia Dei est valde necessaria.⁵¹ The chapter headings will give an idea of D. B.'s interests:

De sex vocibus et earum locali situatione capitulum primum (fo. 2bis^v)

De tribus proprietatibus, et septem principiorum assignatione capitulum secundum (fo. 7^r)

De vocum multiplicatione, et earum dispositione capitulum tertium (fo. 9^v)

De mutationibus et earum investigatione [capitulum quartum] (fo. 10^v)

De totius cantus distinctu, et de specierum cognitione capitulum quintum (fo. 15^{r})

De huius artis practica, et human vocis reparatione capitulum sextum (fo. 23^r)

De mutationum electione, et disiunctarum descriptione capitulum septimum (fo. 32^{v})

De coniunctarum utilitate, et earum positione capitulum octavum (fo. 45^{v}) De notitia tonorum, et eorum modulatione capitulum nonum (fo. 56^{v})

D. B.'s major concerns are two: how to produce a chorus of welltrained voices (see ch. 6), and how to know when and where to make mutations (chs. 4, 7, and 8). To this last he has given much thought and, in ch. 8, composed a miniature treatise on the *coniuncta*, or *musica ficta*.⁵² His authorities are Boethius, Isidore of Seville, Papias, Guido, and Philippe de Vitry. But when one examines the quotations from these authorities, one is left with the impression that D. B. was not well versed in music theory. Granted that Boethius is the ultimate authority for medieval music, what is one to think of the claim that 'Mutatio secundum Boetium est variatio

⁵¹ For Augustine's views on church music see *Epistulae* 55. 18. 34; less positive is *Confessions* 10. 33. 49-50.

⁵² He names nine *coniunctae* used in plainchant, with examples, plus two found only in 'cantus figuratus', $c_{\#}^{\#}$ and, by implication, e_{D}^{b} , and one 'que transcendit omnes regulas cantus figurati', f_{D}^{b} above the staff (fo. 56°). The theory of the *coniuncta* goes back to the 14th c. The central, and so far earliest, description is found in MS 744 of the Music Library of the University of California, Berkeley, in an anonymous treatise dated 1375. See Oliver B. Ellsworth, 'The Origin of the Coniuncta: A Reappraisal', *Journal of Music Theory* 17 (1973), 86–109. In another source the author is given as Goscalcus; see *The Berkeley Manuscript: University of California Music Library, MS. 744* (olim *Phillipps 4450*), ed. Ellsworth (Greek and Latin Music Theory 2; Lincoln, Nebr., and London, 1984), pp. 13–15.

On other theorists who use the term 'coniuncta', see Albert Seay, 'The 15th-Century Coniuncta: A Preliminary Study', in Jan LaRue et al. (eds.), Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music: A Birthday Offering to Gustave Reese (New York, 1966), pp. 723-37.

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numeri, seu notę in eodem spatio, vel in eadem linea' (fo. 11^r)?⁵³ Philippe de Vitry, 'in hac arte doctissimum', is cited for the statement that there are nine *coniunctae* used in plainchant and twelve in discant (fos. $47^{v}-48^{r}$). Although Philippe de Vitry has an important section on *musica falsa* in his *Ars nova*,⁵⁴ he does not list the *coniunctae*—at least not in any of his surviving writings.

Since the subject-matter covered by D. B. is so limited, it is difficult to assign more than an approximate date for the writing of the treatise. It probably originated in the fifteenth century, when the discussion of *coniunctae* (using that term) was at its height. Confirmation of a date not later than about 1500 is provided by the presence of ch. 8 of the treatise, without author's name and lacking the music examples, in Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS VIII. 82 (3047), fos. $22^{v}-26^{t}$, a compendium of late fifteenth-century theory including many works by John Hothby.⁵⁵ But it is possible to push the *terminus ante quem* back to 1489 through comparison with the manuscript treatise of Bonaventura da Brescia called *Venturina*, dated 15 September 1489, which draws four extended passages from D. B.'s treatise, with no indication that he is quoting anyone.⁵⁶ F.

 53 'Numeri' is not the term commonly used in the definition of mutation; it should be 'nominis vocis'. The citation may not stem from D. B.'s pen, however, because it is added at the top of the folio. Other marginal additions, such as an exposition of (Marchetto's) division of the whole tone into five parts (fo. $19^{(-v)}$), conflict with D. B.'s teachings ('nam tonus constat sive componitur ex novem punctis seu indivisibilibus, quod idem est'; fo. 17'). The scribe of the Venice manuscript seems to have copied from a version of D. B.'s treatise annotated by another person.

'D. B. de Francia', if he is responsible for this definition, is not the only theorist to make such extravagant claims for Boethius' far-sightedness: an anonymous writer in Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Capponi 206, fo. 41', for example, also credits Boethius with a statement about mutation: 'Dicit enim Boethius quod mutatio fuit inventa causa necessitatis'; see William G. Waite, 'Two Musical Poems of the Middle Ages', in *Musik und Geschichte: Leo Schrade zum sechzigsten Geburtstag* (Cologne, 1963), pp. 13-34 at 19. Nicholas of Capua, too, in his *Compendium musicale a multis doctoribus et philosophis editum* of 1415 (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS Lat. VIII. 82 [3047]), says: 'Mutatio secundum Boetium est dimissio unius vocis propter alteram sub uno signo et una littera et in eadem voce' (fo. 5'). Another version of this treatise, however, lacks the ascription to Boethius; see Adrien de La Fage, *Essais de diphthérographie musicale* (Paris, 1864; repr. Amsterdam, 1964), p. 315. There seems to be a persistent thread of belief running through medieval theory that Boethius is to be credited with the system of solmization.

⁵⁴ Philippe de Vitry, *Ars nova*, ed. Gilbert Reaney, André Gilles, and Jean Maillard (Corpus scriptorum de musica 8; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1964), pp. 22–3.

⁵⁵ See the description in John Hothby, *Opera omnia de musica mensurabili*, ed. Gilbert Reaney (Corpus scriptorum de musica 31; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, American Institute of Musicology, 1983), pp. 35-8.

⁵⁶ Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS A. 57. A modern edn. has recently been published by Albert Seay, *Bonaventura da Brescia, Brevis collectio artis musicae (Venturina)* (Colorado College Music Press Critical Texts 11; Colorado Springs, 1980). On p. 9, sentences 3 (to *sol, la*) and 6 are found on fo. 2bis^v of the Venice manuscript; on p. 13, sentences 2–4 appear on fo. 15^v; on p. 17, sentences 36 (beginning 'sicut in grammatica') to 38 are on fos. 46^v-47'; and Alberto Gallo noted the similarity of Bonaventura's opening ('Incipit brevis collectio artis musicae') to the title of D. B.'s treatise and the common explanation of *musica ficta* as equivalent to *verba ficta*,⁵⁷ but Bonaventura's indebtedness goes further. His first sentence, continuing 'tam ex determinationibus antiquorum quam modernorum magistrorum in hac arte peritorum, pro utilitate cantorum in hoc parvo libello aggregata ad divinas laudes decantandas', is taken almost literally from the colophon to D. B.'s treatise (see above). But unlike D. B., whose treatise largely seems to be original with him, Bonaventura leans heavily on other authors. His major source, as Albert Seay notes, is Marchetto of Padua's *Lucidarium*, whole chapters of which he quotes literally (without acknowledgement, as is commonly the case). His second substantial source is the *Florum libellus* (Bologna, 1487) of Nicolò Burzio, whom he acknowledges in part (Burzio being among the living).

D. B.'s treatise also turns out to be the source of Del Lago's mysterious quotation from Boethius and the phrase from Guido cited above:

quia sicut dicit Magister Guido inter antiquos in arte musica doctissimus, Cantores vulgares, qui vim toni & semitonii discernere nesciunt, in vanum laborant, tantum tempus in cantando perdentes, quantum in secularibus divinisque scripturis profecisse potuissent. Item Boëtius in Musica sua dicit, Ita est de illis, qui sine arte canunt, sicut de litteratis qui nunquam [litteras]⁵⁸ didicerunt. (Fo. 15[°]; see Pl. 8.)

Del Lago's change of 'laborant' to the perfect, 'laboraverunt', makes little sense and may derive from an unconscious conflation with Ps. 126. I Vulg.: 'Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam.' Otherwise the two passages agree exactly, except for Del Lago's erroneous 'semitoni'. The etymology of *regula* in no. 86, para. 16, may likewise come from D. B. (fo. 57^{r}).

The *terminus post quem* of D. B.'s treatise might be narrowed down to 1485 through the quotations from 'Papias'. Papias is a eleventh-century grammarian whose great dictionary went through four fifteenth-century printings, one in Milan (1476) and three in Venice (1485, 1491, 1496).⁵⁹ He included a number of musical terms, of which D. B. quotes *cantor*, *clavis*,

on p. 82 sentences 3 (beginning 'propter temerariam') to 8 may be found on fos. 50^v-51^v and 53^v . Bonaventura does not accept D. B.'s teachings on the *coniuncta*, preferring instead to develop Ramis's proposal for three different gamuts, beginning on F, G, and A.

⁵⁷ 'La trattatistica musicale', pp. 297–8.

⁵⁸ The word 'litteras', missing in Del Lago and D. B., is found in Bonaventura and other sources (e.g. CS iii. 23a).

⁵⁹ Ludwig Hain, *Repertorium bibliographicum* (2 vols., Stuttgart and Paris, 1838), ii, Part 2, p. 26, nos. 12378–81. Some scholars believe that 'Papias' is the title of the dictionary, not the author's name.

diapason, diastema, and fictio compositio. All the readings agree with the 1476 edition except the definition of diapason:

Diapason musice artis symphonia constat ex quinque tonis et duobus semitonis id est de diapente et diatessaron. Dicitur vero diapason de octo quia octo voces habet. Diapason interpretatur de omnibus quia omnes habet voces, vel quia cithara antiqua octo habebat cordas. (Fos. 21^v-22^r.)⁶⁰

The 1476 edition lacks the word 'omnes' in the last sentence. 'Omnes', however, is found in the Venetian editions of 1485 and 1496.⁶¹ If D. B. used a printed copy of Papias' *Vocabularium*, we could assign a date of between 1485 and 1489 to the treatise.⁶² But it is also possible, and perhaps more likely, that he quoted Papias from a manuscript, as Jerome of Moravia had in the thirteenth century.⁶³ The inclusion of substantial passages from D. B. in Bonaventura's treatise, without acknowledgement, suggests that the treatise originated earlier in the century.

It is from the chapter on *coniunctae* in D. B.'s treatise (fo. 47^{v}) that Del Lago draws his quotation. It follows the wording of the Venetian manuscript exactly. Could this manuscript too have formed part of Del Lago's library? Although the treatise probably dates from the first half of the fifteenth century, the handwriting, as noted above, seems to be of the sixteenth. Moreover, it is a hand that occurs in the Spataro Correspondence (compare Plates 7 and 3 on pp. 150, 19). Letter 60, which we ascribe to Scribe C, is a copy of a letter of 30 October 1533 from Spataro to Aaron, although it is really in answer to a letter of Del Lago. At the end, Spataro says that if Del Lago wants to see the letter, 'it is all right with me if you show it to him and let him read it and even make a copy of it in your room at your pleasure and convenience, and not permit him to take it out or to take possession of it'. Since the letter is very long (28 pages), Del Lago must have decided to hire a professional scribe to copy it. It is likely, then, that Del Lago asked the same scribe to copy D. B.'s treatise.

⁶⁰ For the last sentence, cf. Guido, *Micrologus*, ch. 6 (ed. Smits van Waesberghe, p. 115).

⁶¹ I wish to thank Carey S. Bliss, Curator of Rare Books of the Huntington Library, for kindly comparing the readings of the later edns. of the *Vocabularium*, both in the possession of the Huntington Library.

⁶² Another contemporary theorist who drew on Papias is Fiorenzo de' Fasoli, whose Liber musices (MS 2146 of the Biblioteca Trivulziana in Milan), dedicated to Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, was written between 1484 and 1492. See Albert Seay, 'The "Liber Musices" of Florentius de Faxolis', in *Musik und Geschichte: Leo Schrade zum sechzigsten Geburtstag* (Cologne, 1963), pp. 71-95; for a different view of the treatise and a correction of the date, see Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Ascanio Sforza's Life: A Key to Josquin's Biography and an Aid to the Chronology of his Works', in id. (ed., with Bonnie J. Blackburn), Josquin des Prez: Proceedings of the International Josquin Festival-Conference (London, 1976), pp. 31-75 at 47-50 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 550-1. D. B. shares with Fiorenzo a particular interest in the coniuncta. ⁶³ CS i. 75a. Whether he is the same as the scribe named at the end of Venice VIII. 64, Emericus de Siler, remains to be determined.

The Venetian manuscript of D. B.'s treatise did not enter Paolo Manuzio's library together with other manuscripts owned by Del Lago. It remained in Venice and at some uncertain time entered the library of the order of the Regular Somaschi Clerics, located near Santa Maria della Salute. At the time of the suppression of the monasteries under Napoleon, which wrought havoc with monastery archives and libraries in the Veneto, the librarian of the Biblioteca Marciana selected 135 manuscripts to be transferred to his library; the present manuscript must have been one of them.⁶⁴

John Hothby

In the same letter in which Del Lago quoted 'D. B. de Francia', he also called on the writings of John Hothby to prove that the comma is not a musical interval but only serves to complete a tone (no. 57, para. 2):

Et questo si approba per l'autorità di Giovan Ottobi nella sua Musica, dove lui tratta della comma, le parole del quale sono queste, scilicet: Comma est particula qua semitonium maius superat minus, de cuius speciebus sive proportionibus non est curandum, et sic de aliis eius accidentibus, cum non ponatur in aliquo genere melorum, etc.

Del Lago goes on to state that since the monochord and other instruments are not divided by commas, 'it could be called useless and not necessary in this case', that is, in the matter of Fb and Cb and B# and E#. Spataro was not one to let this pass by. He points out that the comma does indeed occur on the 'modern monochord' between the two black keys bridging G and A, that is, between Ab and G#, and that every other space of a tone on the monochord should be divided this way (no. 60, para. 12), and he concludes that 'without the consideration and appearance of the space of a comma, no instrument could be perfectly divided, as Fra Zuanni Ottobi has demonstrated in his *Calliopea*' (para. 13). It must have given Spataro great pleasure to be able to quote one of Del Lago's authorities against him.

But the *Calliopea* does not contain a division of the monochord, nor does Hothby discuss the position of the comma in this treatise. Del Lago quoted the definition of the comma from Hothby's 'Musica'. Spataro, probably by inadvertence, referred to the *Calliopea*, Hothby's best-known treatise, written in Italian, but Del Lago's quotation is in Latin. In fact, it comes from Hothby's other major treatise, which survives in a number of

⁶⁴ It bears a label listing the provenance as 'Somaschi della Salute'. On the transfer of the manuscripts to the Marciana, see Francesco Luisi (ed.), *Laudario Giustinianeo* (2 vols., Venice, 1983), i. 4–6.

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sources under different titles.⁶⁵ It is not yet available in a modern edition. In the version of Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS VIII. 82 (3047), the

definition of the comma is found on fo. 45^r:

De Coma

Coma est particula qua semitonium maius superat minus, de quibus speciebus sive proportionibus non est curandum. Et sic de eius aliis accidentibus, cum non ponatur in aliquo genere melorum, ut patet per eorum sufficientiam. Et fit inter quamvis vocem secundi ordinis et sibi similem tertii atque immediate sibi sequentem.

The passage is revealing. Del Lago stopped short of the last sentence, which flatly contradicts his statement that 'such an order [i.e. of commas] is entirely disapproved and rejected from use' (no. 57). Did he perhaps not understand Hothby's idiosyncratic system of indicating flats and sharps? The 'second order' stands for the flats: Gb, Ab, Bb, Db, Eb, the third for the sharps: F#, G#, A#, C#, D#. Hothby, however, called all flat notes by the next lower note; thus 'A secundi ordinis' is Bb, not Ab. 'A tertii ordinis' is A#. The last sentence is to be translated: 'And it [the comma] occurs between any voice of the second order and the same one of the third order immediately following it', e.g. the comma is found between A of the second order (Bb) and A of the third (A#).⁶⁶ This was understood by Spataro, who also was acquainted with Hothby's system from his division of the monochord in the three orders, found in the same set of treatises as the definition of the comma.

It would be difficult to pinpoint the manuscript of Hothby's *Musica* used by Del Lago: while the reading of Venice VIII. 82 does not agree exactly with his quotation, that of Florence Pal. 472 (fo. 10°) does; but the latter manuscript seems to have originated in Florence (or Pisa) and to have stayed there.⁶⁷ If Del Lago had incorporated an error in this quotation, it would be easier to determine his source.

⁶⁵ See Albert Seay, 'Hothby, John', *The New Grove Dictionary*, viii. 730, who lists the treatises as if they were different works: 'Ars plane musice' (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl. XIX. 36), 'De musica intervallosa' (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS plut. 29. 48, and Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 82 [3047]), and 'Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musice' (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Pal. 472, and London, British Library, Add. MS 36986). Not mentioned by Seay is the 'Regule venerabilis Magistri Johannis Octobi' in Rome, Biblioteca Corsiniana, MS 36. D. 31. There are considerable differences between these versions, especially in the order of the sections, and some are incomplete. One has the impression, as Gilbert Reaney remarked of Hothby's counterpoint treatises, 'that different pupils have been taking down his treatises, or even his lecture notes'; see John Hothby, *De arte contrapuncti*, ed. Gilbert Reaney (Corpus scriptorum de musica 26; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, American Institute of Musicology, 1977), p. 10.

⁶⁶ The second and third orders figure prominently in the *Calliopea*, but in this treatise Hothby does not say that a comma separates the two orders.

⁶⁷ Description in John Hothby, *Tres tractatuli contra Bartholomeum Ramum*, ed. Albert Seay (Corpus scriptorum de musica 10; Rome, 1964), pp. 3–6.

Stung by Spataro's devastating criticism in his letter of 30 October 1533 (no. 60), Del Lago seems never to have corresponded with him again; no further letters between the two are found in Vat. lat. 5318. Yet Del Lago remembered the lessons of letter no. 60 and applied them five years later in his correspondence with Pietro de Justinis, a minor musician from Udine. The latter had sent Del Lago a four-voice motet, 'Tulerunt Dominum meum', for criticism. Del Lago immediately espied an E# and took de Justinis to task for writing a 'tritono incomposito', the leap of a tritone, from B_{\flat} to E and then making things worse by adding a sharp to the E. which raises it by a major semitone, producing the interval of a fifth plus a comma; such an interval 'is not singable, that is it can't be sung, nor is it a species belonging to the diatonic genus, que speties omnino fugiende sunt, nisi auditus intelligentis aliter sentiret' (no. 88, para. 3). Moreover, he goes on, this E[#] conflicts with an E[‡] in the bass, producing the dissonance of six whole tones plus a minor semitone. Pietro de Justinis must have been amazed when he received this letter, for we may be sure he had no intention of writing E#; he used the sharp-sign as a 'cautionary' accidental⁶⁸ to ensure that the singer did not sing an Eb to avoid the melodic tritone. Later in the letter, in commenting on another such example, Del Lago admits as much: 'But I believe Your Reverence has used it only to ensure that mi be sung in that place, in order not to make that fifth diminished' (para. 6).

The E \sharp must have reminded Del Lago of Spataro's letter and his reference to Hothby's placement of commas in the division of the monochord, for the anonymous Latin passage Del Lago quotes in his letter to de Justinis comes from the same treatise by Hothby. It is found in the section on the 'semitonium molle', Hothby's term for the interval A-B \mathfrak{p} :

Semitonium inter A primi et A secundi ordinis vocatur molle acutarum vel superacutarum, quod non cantatur nisi A secundi ordinis depingatur, vel quando F accurreret B per quatuor voces trium tonorum causa tritonis [sic], vel per quinque voces duorum tonorum et duorum semitoniorum, que coniunctiones omnino fugiende sunt, nisi auditus intelligentis aliter sentiret.⁶⁹

Hothby applied the remark to the tritone and the diminished fifth; Del Lago makes it seem as if he were condemning the fifth plus comma, an interval not considered by the English theorist. Most interesting about Hothby's statement is not the prohibition against tritones and diminished

⁶⁸ On such accidentals, see Don Harrán, 'New Evidence for Musica Ficta: The Cautionary Sign', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 29 (1976), 77–98.

⁶⁹ Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 82 (3047), fo. 41^r. In Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Pal. 472, the same passage (without the words 'causa tritonis') is found on fo. 9^r.

fifths but the exceptional tolerance of them 'if the hearing of an intelligent person perceives otherwise'. Such a statement coming from the pen of Johannes Tinctoris, who regularly alludes to the judgement of the ear,⁷⁰ would cause no surprise; in the case of Hothby, a confirmed Boethian, it is a matter of some wonder. But there are many sides to this interesting figure, who has not received the attention he deserves.

Johannes Tinctoris

A scholar in the habit of giving definitions, Del Lago found Tinctoris's *Terminorum musicae diffinitorium* highly useful and authoritative. Commenting on doubtful statements in Spataro's manuscript treatise on counterpoint, Del Lago refers to 'Giovan Tintoris nel suo diffinitorio' for definitions of *b rotundum*, *fuga*, *talea*, and *color* (no. 28). Spataro was incensed: to him Tinctoris's definition of *fuga* is 'deficient, irregular, and superfluous' (no. 29, para. 6). But it was for Tinctoris's definitions of *talea* and *color* that he reserved his wrath, for the latter, 'literally, and word for word, reads like the one he used to define *talea*' (para. 7).⁷¹ For Spataro, 'Tinctoris was crazy and thought he knew a lot more than he really did, as his works show.' Spataro rightly faults Del Lago for giving no examples for his definitions and concludes that 'you have only attended to prating, and you wrote a lot of definitions that you don't understand, which square with the defined "as an ass to the lyre"' (para. 7).

Del Lago's quotations from the *Diffinitorium* agree word for word with the printed version, except for the definition of 'b molle', which is lacking not only in the printed text but also in Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS II. 4147, used by Coussemaker (CS iv. 177–91). It is, however, found in the fifteenth-century manuscript at Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS B. 2, fo. 4^r: 'B molle est proprietas per quam in omni loco cuius clavis est .f. ut canitur et ex illo cetere voces deducuntur.' In copying from a manuscript source that included the definition of 'b rotundum', Del Lago or his copyist made an easily understood error, reading the letter 'f' as a long 's', a common abbreviation for 'scilicet' (full stops enclosing figures and single letters are characteristic of writing of this period).

Spataro's scathing denunciation of Tinctoris and all his works⁷² made only a temporary impression on Del Lago, for four years later the Venetian theorist dared to cite Tinctoris again in a letter to Spataro: 'the coniuncta, according to Johannes Tinctoris, is nothing but making a semitone of a tone and a tone of a semitone' (no. 57, para. 5). This time the definition was so uncontroversial that Spataro found no fault with it (perhaps also because it agrees with that of Ramis); however, he points out, quite reasonably, that Tinctoris's definition could equally well be applied to Fb and Cb and B# and E# (no. 60, para. 18).

With the Benedictine monk Lorenzo Gazio, Del Lago was on safer ground: in a letter to him he quotes the definitions of 'reductio' and 'sincopa', the former without source, the latter according to 'Tinctoris nel suo Definitorio' (no. 86, paras. 7-8). The readings of both quotations agree with the printed version.

Del Lago even used Tinctoris to make a grammatical point. In his letter of 26 August 1541 to Fra Seraphin (no. 93), which includes an extended discussion of grammatical terms, Del Lago defined *clausula* as a part of speech that ends in a pause or a perfection. The definition is translated word for word from Tinctoris's *Diffinitorium*, but Del Lago substituted 'parte dell'oratione' for Tinctoris's 'partis cantus'.⁷³ Subsequently Del Lago thought better of this definition, which does not completely fit grammar, and he exchanged it for another one; see the end of para. 13.

Although Del Lago cites by name only the Diffinitorium, it is clear from his letters that he also knew other treatises by Tinctoris. His definitions of 'redicta' (no. 28, para. 10) and 'contrapunctus' (no. 76, para. 2), quoted without source, both come from the Liber de arte contrapuncti. So does a passage concerning the tritone quoted in Latin without indication of author in no. 82. A general reference to a treatise by Tinctoris sanctioning the use of rests to indicate mode (no. 44, para. 6) leads us to the Proportionale, where Tinctoris discusses this matter. Likewise, the Proportionale is the source of Tinctoris's opinion that notes under sesquialtera are not perfect (no. 80, para. 6). In no. 70, Del Lago mentions in one breath a 'Gloria del quinto tuono irregolare' by Domarto and Barbingant's 'L'omme bani'; he probably took the references from Tinctoris's Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium, Book I, end of ch. 3. Tinctoris quotes the first seven measures of Domarto's composition (it is actually a Credo, not a Gloria) and the first five measures of Barbingant's chanson. Del Lago also refers to Domarto in another context, citing his use of O2 and \$\phi_2\$ to indicate modus minor perfectus, tempus imperfectum (no. 73, para. 10); this reference must stem from the Proportionale, where Tinctoris takes Domarto to task for this very practice. In a letter to Gazio, Del Lago quotes a sentence from the Proportionale in translation without acknowledging his source (no. 86, para. 13).

Thus Del Lago had access to at least four of Tinctoris's treatises,

⁷³ See no. 93 n. 33.

⁷⁰ On the novelty of this position, see Lowinsky, 'Music of the Renaissance as Viewed by Renaissance Musicians', pp. 135-8 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 90-1.

⁷¹ Tinctoris's definitions are not the same, but he has reversed the usual understanding of *color* and *talea*; his *talea* comprises both melodic and rhythmic identity of the passages, *color* only rhythmic identity. See the Commentary on no. 29.

⁷² Spataro did not always hold a low opinion of Tinctoris; in no. 48 he quotes the 'subtile J. Tintoris' approvingly, since in this case Tinctoris contradicts Del Lago (para. 11).

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although he cites only one by name. And if we can make a deduction from a reply by Spataro to a letter that is lost, Del Lago asked him for the treatise on alteration (see no. 51, para. 3). In a letter to Aaron he alludes to Tinctoris's treatise on the mensural system (no. 63, para. 2). Nor should we forget that he was acquainted with Tinctoris's pedagogical motet, 'Difficiles alios', which he used to verify certain pronouncements on notation (nos. 44, 63, 86).

There are far fewer exemplars of Tinctoris's treatises extant than one would expect, given the scope of his influence. Of the three sets of what may be termed the 'collected edition', two are presentation copies. What Del Lago and Spataro owned must have been single treatises. Since these are fairly small, they must have been unbound, which may be one reason why few have survived, and those only as part of an anthology.⁷⁴

Franchino Gafurio

Up to this point it has been possible to identify all the treatises that Del Lago refers to vaguely as 'Musica', from Guido to Hothby. We come now to one that was not known to have survived: Gafurio's 'Musica intitulato a Messer Guido Antonio Arcimboldo', from which Del Lago quotes the following passage (no. 47, para. 6):

Omnes itaque notule in medio ligaturarum sunt ligabiles preter longam qu nunquam mediam coniuntionem tenet, et preter semibrevem, qu in medio nunquam pariter constituitur nisi in ligatura cum opposita proprietate. Ignari tamen nonnulli longam in media collocatione constituunt cum cauda descendente lateri eius dextro applicata, nullam penitus inter ligatam longam et simplicem differentem figurationem sentientes ut hic H. Quod est intolerabile, nam alia est figuratio long simplicis, alia ligate, ut ex predictis regulis facile deprehendi potest. At cum omnes huius discipline clarissimi medias figuras semper breves concludant, hic minime concedendum est longam ipsam inter extrema posse coniungi. Omnis igitur figura ligabilis non ligata est toleranda nec est viciosa, ligata vero non ligabilis est viciosa et intolerabilis. Omnia denique figuris ligatis applicantur accidentia qu et simplicibus ipsis accidere solent.

The quotation from Gafurio was meant to be the finishing stroke in Del Lago's critique of Spataro's placement of a long in the middle of a ligature—he had already marshalled the testimony of Philippe de Vitry, Marchetto of Padua, Johannes de Muris, and Prosdocimo. In his response, Spataro carefully ignored the quotation from Gafurio (assuming it was included in the letter Spataro received and not a later addition), upholding numerous examples of longs in the middle of ligatures in 'many

⁷⁴ For the sources, see Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 10–13. Spataro quotes from the *Tractatus alterationum* in no. 48, para. 11; his wording differs from all known sources of this treatise; see no. 48 nn. 6 and 8.

compositions written by very learned men' against Del Lago's 'rule observed by rude antiquity' (no. 48, para. 15). Nor would Spataro be likely to accept Gafurio's opinion: the two had engaged in a lengthy and vitriolic controversy at the end of Gafurio's life.

Perhaps Spataro was puzzled by the source of this quotation. It could not be the *Practica musicae*, for that was dedicated to Ludovico il Moro. Nor could it be any of Gafurio's other printed treatises in Latin, because they are not concerned with notation. Del Lago refers to Book II, ch. 5. This is the very book and chapter in which ligatures are discussed in the *Practica musicae*, but in quite different language:

Mediis autem ligaturarum notulis nulla inest essentialis differentia cum omnes in quantitate conveniant: hinc unicum nomen sortiantur necesse est. Sunt enim ut Franchoni et Anselmo cunctisque musicis placet omnes mediae breves. Quare falso arbitrantur qui longam notulam mediam conclaudunt puta hoc modo \square . Longa quidem solum principio atque fini ligaturarum applaudit. Semibrevis principio ac medio quum scilicet plures quam duae fuerint in oppositae proprietatis ligatura coniunctae. Principio et fini si tantum duae. Brevis vero ut predictis consyderationibus deductum est in ligaturarum principio, medio, atque fine congruum obtinuit locum. Minimam autem figuram musici nusquam ligare consueverunt. Verum quae simplices figurae patiuntur accidentia, puta alterationem, imperfectionem et huiusmodi, haec et ipsis ligatis solent intimari.⁷⁵

It seemed possible that we were dealing with a lost treatise of Gafurio's⁷⁶ or, more likely, a manuscript version of an early redaction of the *Practica musicae*. It was known that Gafurio composed the four books of the *Practica* at different times and that they underwent considerable revision before the treatise was published in 1496.⁷⁷ Clement Miller had drawn attention to the existence of 'a prototype for Book II ... many years before the 1496 imprint': the *Tractato vulgare del canto figurato* published in Milan in 1492 by Gafurio's pupil Francesco Caza 'is actually a vernacular condensation of Book II of *Practica*'.⁷⁸ Gafurio's introduction to this

⁷⁵ Practica musice (Milan, 1496), fo. aa5^{r-v}.

⁷⁶ In his article 'Early Gaffuriana', Clement Miller discusses five extant manuscripts of early writings by Gafurio; in none of them is Guido Antonio Arcimboldo the dedicatee. Of two lost manuscripts, the *Flos musicae* was dedicated to Ludovico Gonzaga, Marquess of Mantua; the dedicatee of the *Musicae institutionis collocutiones*, written in Verona about 1476, is unknown; see Caretta *et al.*, *Franchino Gaffurio*, p. 134. The references to the two treatises come from the contemporary biography of Gafurio by Pantaleone Melegolo appended to the *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus*.

⁷⁷ On the *Tractatus practicabilium proportionum* of c.1482 (Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS A. 69), which later became Book IV, see Miller, 'Early Gaffuriana', pp. 373–83. An early version of Book I exists in a manuscript copy made by the Carmelite friar Alessandro Assolari in 1487 (Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica, MS Σ . 4. 37, fos. 2'–20'); see Miller, 'Gaffurius's *Practica musicae*: Origin and Contents', *Musica disciplina* 22 (1968), 105–28.

⁷⁸ 'Gaffurius's Practica musicae', p. 108.

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treatise explains that it is derived from a Latin compendium of mensural music written years earlier. But the passage concerning ligatures is condensed so much that it is impossible to tell if that Latin compendium is Del Lago's source:

Tute le altre note et figure che se ritrovano in mezo le ligature zoè tra la prima nota et la ultima de ciascuna ligatura sono breve, et queste regule generale non patiscano exceptione alcuna et se pur se ritrovasse in una ligatura una longa ovvero più longe intra la prima et la ultima nota como son queste, essa ligatura è falsa et se debe dissolvere.⁷⁹

Moreover, the treatise is written in a much simpler form and seems to be aimed at a different audience.

Yet another vernacular version of part of Book II, and specifically the chapter on ligatures, exists in a manuscript containing Gafurio's *Micrologus vulgaris cantus plani* (Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS A. 90, fos. $21^{v}-24^{r}$), which Clement Miller dates *c*.1482.⁸⁰ It is clear, despite the awkward Italian translation, that this chapter is based on the same version of the treatise that Del Lago quoted:

Tute le note pon [possono] fare ligate in megio [mezzo] della ligatura salvo longa qual non ten la sua coniuntione mai nel megio et anchora la semibreve è mai posta in megio excepto cum opposita proprietade. Sono alcuni ingnoranti che nello megio constituiscano la longa cum la virgula descendente dal canto dextro sentendo che non sia alcuna differentia [*sic*] figuratione tra la simplice longa et ligata, come appare in questo exemplo \square , lo qual acto non è per modo alcuno da fare comportato perché una è la figuratione della longa simplice et una altra de la ligata, come se poi comprendere facilmente per le predicte regule. Et pertanto così come ciascuno clarissimo in questa arte judicamo tute le medie note nella ligatura breve, per niente è da conced[e]re a quelli che constituiscano longa poter star nello megio nella ligatura. Adunque ogni figura che se possi ligare e non sia ligata se tollera et non è vitiosa, ma quella che è ligata e non possi ligare è vitiosa et intollerabile, e finalmente ale figure ligate se aplicano tute gli accidenti che soleno accad[e]re ad epso [*sic*] simplice figure. (Fo. 23^v.)

The strongest clue to the date of Del Lago's version of Gafurio's treatise lay in his statement that the quotation comes from Book II, ch. 5. The chapter of c.1482 is not placed within the context of a book. The chapter on ligatures in Francesco Caza's translation of 1492 bears no number, but in the preface Caza states that he is 'imitando la doctrina et ordine del preceptore mio Franchino Gaffuro nela seconda parte dela

opera sua praticabile' (fo. a1^r). Thus, by 1492 the overall plan of the *Practica* had taken shape—and probably already by 1487, when Alessandro Assolari copied the 'Liber primus musices practicabilis'.⁸¹

Another clue to the date of Del Lago's version was the dedication to Guido Antonio Arcimboldi. A member of a prominent Milanese family and brother of Cardinal Giovanni Arcimboldi, to whom Gafurio dedicated the 1480 edition of his Theoricum opus, Guido Antonio became Archbishop of Milan in 1488, succeeding his brother. A faithful adherent of the Sforza family, he was sent on numerous diplomatic missions by Ludovico il Moro. He died in 1497.⁸² Since Del Lago's version of the 'Musica' is dedicated to 'Messer' Guido Antonio Arcimboldi, it must have been written before he became archbishop-indeed, before he entered clerical orders, for otherwise he would have been addressed as 'Reverendissimo', with his title. Like his brother, Guido Antonio had been a ducal courtier and married before he became an ecclesiastic. On 6 January 1477 'Eques d. Guido Antonius de Arcimboldus' was appointed to the Consiglio Segreto of the Duchy, 'ab hodie ad beneplacitum'; in 1478 he became Milanese commissary in Piacenza, and on 15 September 1480 he was promoted to head the commissariat in Cremona.⁸³ It is likely that he became acquainted with Gafurio at that time; between late 1480 and May 1483 Gafurio resided at Monticelli, near Cremona, according to Melegolo's biography.⁸⁴ In fact, Melegolo states that it was during these years that Gafurio began to write the Practica. While it has been accepted uncritically that the *Practica* was completed by 1483,⁸⁵ there is good reason to believe that the early version of Book IV, the Tractatus practicabilium proportionum, was finished at this time: it is dedicated to Corradolo Stanga of Cremona, whose fief lay next to Monticelli. The early version of Book I probably dates before Gafurio became maestro di cappella at the Duomo in Milan in 1484: it has none of the references to Ambrosian Chant that were incorporated in the printed edition.⁸⁶ Miller also supposed that 'the material on mensural notation which became Book II of the Practica was probably begun about the same time as Book I, although lack of a

⁸¹ Miller, 'Gaffurius's Practica musicae', p. 106.

⁷⁹ See the facsimile edn. and translation by Johannes Wolf, Francesco Caza: Tractato vulgare de canto figurato (Berlin, 1922), fo. a3^c.

⁸⁰ See Miller, 'Early Gaffuriana', pp. 383-4. The chapter, headed 'Capitolo delle ligature', is in a different hand from that of the *Micrologus* and does not carry Gafurio's name.

⁸² A sketch of his life is given in Lydia Cerioni, *La diplomazia sforzesca nella seconda metà del Quattrocento e i suoi cifrari segreti* (Fonti e studi del Corpus membranarum italicarum; 2 vols., Rome, 1970), i. 131-2.

⁸³ See Caterina Santoro, Gli Uffici del Dominio Sforzesco (1450-1500) (Milan, 1948), pp. 14, 487, 407. On 6 Oct. 1481 he was temporarily replaced by his nephew, Aluisio Arcimboldi, while he made a trip to Rome. His successor was formally nominated on 10 Apr. 1483 (ibid., p. 408). ⁸⁴ See Caretta et al., Franchino Gaffurio, p. 22. Melegolo does not specify the date Gafurio left

Naples, but it is likely that it was after his *Theoricum* was published on 8 Oct. 1480.

 ⁸⁵ Miller has argued against this assumption in 'Gaffurius's *Practica musicae*', pp. 105–9.
⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 106–7.

manuscript copy such as exists for Book I makes this supposition rather conjectural.⁸⁷

With the rediscovery of Gafurio's lost manuscript at the Houghton Library of Harvard University, that supposition becomes fact.⁸⁸ The manuscript, an autograph but not a presentation copy, is indeed dedicated to Guido Antonio Arcimboldi. It carries the following heading: 'Franchinus Gaforus laudensis musices professor Guidoni Antonio Arcimboldo Equiti aurato prestantissimo viro ac ducis Insubrium Senatori dignissimo' (see Pl. 9). In the preface, Gafurio says that since he recently dedicated his 'Theoricum musice discipline' to Guido Antonio's brother, the cardinal, it seemed right to dedicate the present 'musices praticabilis libellum' to him. The mention of the *Theoricum opus* as already completed places the present manuscript after 8 October 1480, the date the Theoricum was printed. A note in a different hand at the end of the manuscript (fo. 23°) reads: 'Liber presbyteri Pauli de Graecis laudensis emptus ... 1480' (the dots stand for two symbols that defy decipherment; they probably indicate a date). Paolo Greco, also from Lodi, was the dedicatee of two of Gafurio's treatises, the Tractatus brevis cantus plani of c. 1474 (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS 1158) and the Micrologus vulgaris cantus plani of c.1482.89 From the note in the Harvard manuscript, it would seem that he purchased Gafurio's manuscript towards the end of 1480.

The differences between the *Musices praticabilis libellus* and the version printed as Book II of the *Practica musicae* are of the same kind that Clement Miller found in his comparison of the *Tractatus praticabilium proportionum* with Book IV of the *Practica*: many references to composers and compositions in the manuscript have been omitted in the printed edition. Gafurio criticizes by name several musicians whose names do not appear in Book II of the *Practica*: Hothby,⁹⁰ Dufay,⁹¹ Domarto,⁹² Busnois and

⁸⁸ MS Mus 142. According to the accession-list, the manuscript, purchased from Martin Breslauer of London in 1969, was formerly in the possession of the trustees of the third Marquess of Linlithgow, Hopetown House, West Lothian, where it was bound with printed books from the library of Paolo Greco. It consists of three unbound fascicles, measuring 181×135 mm. The pages are water-stained, and heavy trimming has caused the loss of some words in the outer margins. Mr Rodney Dennis, Curator of Rare Books, kindly facilitated my study of the manuscript during a visit in 1987.

⁸⁹ Miller, 'Early Gaffuriana', pp. 370-2, 383. The *Micrologus* in Bologna A. 90 lacks a dedicatee, but Miller discovered that the Bergamo manuscript of Book I of the *Practica* mentions Greco as dedicatee (ibid., p. 383).

⁹⁰ '. . . hinc error prefati Othbi patet qui in tenore sui moteti "Ora pro nobis" modum maiorem perfectum, minorem imperfectum et tempus imperfectum hiis signis concludit O22' (Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Mus 142, fo. 9').

⁹¹ 'Guielmus item Dufay in suo Qui cum patre de "Missa Sancti Antonii" modum minorem perfectum et tempus perfectum erranter sic signavit O3' (ibid.).

⁹² 'Dommarto quoque in "Missa Spiritus almus" modum minorem perfectum et tempus imperfectum pluries distinxit hoc signo O2' (ibid.).

Franchinus Gaforus landenfis muhas phillor Sun Soni Amorio arcimbolo Equite aurato prestantifimo -unro de ducio infubria Gendtori dignufimo. G. pt.d. de tua prestintissimo durato E sues fuima sua nutate fingulari q. bissicontia et chizitate ci in oco tum marie erga cos de speciali quada mora honeftan Doctrina ac alique mittiches plendore perminet no optime exploratio habere cam fane faibendi puicas mibi i finazo baudanad ufuzpaffem. Dezu cuz me mimone istat pfrantifima buanitati tuas tanta be nuclentia tontia eximicante a abbumtia ac poting Ardore pictaitie Affecta ut can the fund ann prestimad as bonetant limat pollicize of pfecto of futut A makes its it & denitore more fulitions optime met Achannat bine laibends officio delle neduna votinte im openes anoddaz + prozeci mufice defceptors foster tuo Germano Cardinaly paucies inter & bus morners paz ville profecto wife off his mulices praticabilis h bella ut vor cl' there operio relignite . W to per fimi i planta definate suppe an ed muficos succeptina longe would lima of Ourod effects munus libenting fusarpille uiter ut med nimiti opera ple 14 120/6 the nother out al hur opie betidiz adducts pelaza ad have mulia's principilis facilitati no ad ocius couple nel ad alias no hupming impelle molum housing underet Sufarme in Educes profonds me opulating al archi nu fal public legenable effection the adhering a autoritate The protize minime distriction. Date

Pl. 9. Franchino Gafurio, *Musices practicabilis libellus*, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Mus 142, fo. 1^r. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 107–8.
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Ockeghem,⁹³ and again Domarto, together with Barbingant.⁹⁴ At the end of ch. 11, on imperfection, Gafurio refers to a statement concerning blackened notes of 'Godendach carmelite musici doctissimi preceptoris mei' (fo. 15[°]). This is one of two places where Gafurio gives the original form of his teacher's name; in the *Practica* he merely writes 'ut posuit Bonadies preceptor meus'.⁹⁵ Tinctoris is cited frequently, mostly with approval, and a number of his writings are mentioned.

Both the present treatise and the one on proportions were strongly influenced by Tinctoris, with whom Gafurio had just spent two years in Naples. In the treatise on proportions, Gafurio cites a number of the same examples and composers as are mentioned in Tinctoris's Proportionale. He also took over some of Tinctoris's critical expressions, reprimanding Egidio Cervelli and Petrus de Domarto for their 'inexcusabiles errores' in the use of mensuration-signs.⁹⁶ In the present treatise, the criticisms of Dufay, Domarto, Busnois, and Ockeghem echo those made by Tinctoris in his Proportionale,97 and the tandem condemnation of Domarto and Barbingant for allowing a note followed by a dot of augmentation to be imperfected (a practice imitated by Busnois) is taken directly from Tinctoris's Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium.98 Tinctoris's language in his Proportionale is sometimes surprisingly intemperate. Stung by his sharp tongue, his contemporaries did not hesitate to make their feelings known.⁹⁹ In his later works, he considerably toned down his criticism, and so did Gafurio: in the printed version of Book II, the passage criticizing Domarto and Barbingant has been altered to the parenthetical 'quod nonnullorum pace dixerim'. In the printed version of Book IV, all the references to 'intolerable errors' have been removed and only one author, Busnois, is criticized by name-but indirectly, putting the onus on Tinctoris ('Tinctoris has sharply criticized him ...').¹⁰⁰ In the Practica,

⁹³ 'Quamplurimi insuper puta Busnoys et Okegem iisdem erroribus processerunt, quorum alios (ut opinor) inadvertenter errantes, alios ignoranter falsis procedentes sententiis et erroribus sani musici apertissime damnant' (ibid.).

⁹⁴ 'Insuper est notandum quod notula cui punctus perfectionis fuerit appositus nunquam potest imperfici per applicationem seu reductionem alterius partis propinqu sive remote . . . licet Domarto in tenore "Patrem quinti toni irregularis" et Barbingant in tenore cantilenae "Lommebani" contrarium fecerint . . . quos Busnoys aliique complures imitati sunt" (ibid., fo.

17^v). ⁹⁵ Fo. bb8^r. Miller found the other in the *Tractatus practicabilium proportionum* ('Early Gaffuriana', p. 379).

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 376.

97 Tinctoris, Opera theoretica, iia. 57, 55, 49.

98 Ibid. i. 154. Del Lago cited this passage in no. 70.

⁹⁹ This we can deduce from the prologue to his *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum*: 'censuerunt aliqui et praecipue unus non modo hic sed etiam in omni alia honesta ac liberali institutione, velut cunctarum bonarum artium expers, nominari indignus, merito vituperii nota me afficiendum'; ibid. i. 65.

¹⁰⁰ Gafurio, Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 178.

Gafurio becomes a master of indirection ('There are some who ...'; 'I also do not approve of the improper practises of many composers who ...'; 'Many also write ...'; 'Some want ...').¹⁰¹ Similarly, the 'nonnulli ignari' of Del Lago's quotation who write a long in the middle of a ligature, 'quod est intolerabile', become, in the 1496 print, simply those who falsely believe ('falso arbitrantur qui ...'), and the statement that 'omnis figura ligabilis non ligata est viciosa et intolerabilis' is omitted.

Did Del Lago own Paolo Greco's copy of Gafurio's *Musices praticabilis libellus*? There are a few minor differences in readings in the passage he quotes, including four errors. In the fourth sentence, Del Lago gives 'hic minime' in place of Gafurio's 'iis minime' and omits the word 'figura' after 'ligata vero'. Errors such as these could have slipped into the letter when it was recopied (we may recall that this letter is a copy by Scribe A of Del Lago's original letter, no longer extant). But there is nothing to indicate that Paolo Greco's manuscript was ever in Venice. There must have been at least one other copy of the treatise, the one that was presented to Guido Antonio Arcimboldi. No trace of it remains. And if Greco bought Gafurio's manuscript, surely Gafurio had another copy that he kept.

Del Lago also had recourse to Gafurio's treatise in an earlier letter to Spataro. In a discussion of the necessity to measure compositions by observing the proper 'number' for major and minor mode, *tempus*, and prolation, Del Lago suddenly shifts to Latin (no. 44, para. 10). This is usually a sign that he is quoting from another theorist. In the original letter he left the passage unidentifed, but in his revision for publication he added the words 'e questo dice Franchino Gaffurio'. The first eleven words of the passage do not occur in the Houghton Library manuscript, but the remainder agrees word for word. Either Del Lago has written the beginning himself (it is a condensation of the preceding material), or he is using a copy of the treatise in which Gafurio had made revisions; nearly the whole passage was omitted in the published version of the *Practica musicae*.¹⁰²

Del Lago probably owned all Gafurio's printed treatises. He does not quote from the *Theoricum opus musice* (Naples, 1480), but when a friend of his told him he had located a copy in Florence (see above, Ch. 6), Del Lago surely asked him to acquire it. The *Practica musicae* is cited in no fewer than five letters, mostly on matters of notation, and passages from it were 'borrowed' in two other letters. The *Angelicum ac divinum opus musice* is quoted against Spataro in no. 28 for the proper definition of *fuga*. The *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* largely lay outside Del Lago's sphere of interest, yet he borrowed from it a quotation he felt particularly apt: 'For the theorist contemplates and puts things in order, the practitioner

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 179, 180, 183, 185. ¹⁰² See no. 44 n. 23.

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merely performs' (no. 74, para. 1). The thought may not be original with Gafurio; it occurs as a marginal remark in his book.

Giovanni Spataro

Giovanni Spataro is known to posterity more as a polemicist than a theorist; author of three contentious critiques, he published only one theoretical treatise (itself not without polemical overtones), the *Tractato di musica di Gioanni Spataro musico bolognese nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata exercitate* (Venice, 1531). Another treatise has come down to us in manuscript form: the 'Utile et breve regule di canto composite per Maestro Zoanne di Spadari da Bologna', dated 1510.¹⁰³ Were it not for the letters exchanged between Del Lago and Spataro in the Correspondence, we should be unaware of the other theoretical manuscripts Spataro had written and intended to publish.

In August 1528, Giovanni del Lago wrote to Spataro about his interest in publishing Spataro's treatise on mensural music, a copy of which he had.¹⁰⁴ Spataro recalled that he had composed three different versions of the treatise. The first was short and written very quickly for Hermes Bentivoglio. The second version was somewhat expanded. A third version, completely revised, was 'not yet in the hands of any living being except myself (no. 16, para. 4). This is the version that he wanted to have published, and he sent it to Del Lago. In the course of an increasingly acrimonious correspondence, which came to a bitter end, Spataro completed and sent to Del Lago two further treatises, on proportions and on counterpoint.¹⁰⁵ Thus, at one point, Del Lago had in his possession four treatises by Spataro. Before he published them, however, a number of doubtful points had to be clarified, and Del Lago spelt them out in great detail in a series of letters. When Spataro finally had enough of Del Lago's 'childish and ill-considered argumentation', he demanded all his treatises back (no. 29, para. 9). Del Lago stalled, and it took the intervention of Pietro Aaron to restore the manuscripts to their owner (no. 30, para. 10).

It is possible that the delay in Del Lago's returning the treatises was caused by his decision to make copies of them. Four years later, when Spataro and Del Lago were again on somewhat friendlier terms, Del Lago brought up anew the matter of the correct definition of *talea* (no. 57). After giving two tenor parts that he wanted Spataro and the 'musici

Giovanni del Lago's 'Authorities'

bolognesi' to resolve, Del Lago wrote that the type of *talea* mentioned in the canonic instructions was not discussed 'in your work on counterpoint, as is apparent from the second part, seventh chapter, where you define *talea*' (para. 7). Del Lago even had the nerve to refer to his earlier letter (no. 28) that had so enraged Spataro. That he did this maliciously is evident from a postscript he added at the end of the version of the letter he intended to publish: 'In this response I sent Giovanni Spataro the request to resolve the two above tenors in order to test him.' The reaction was predictable and may be read in no. 60. Del Lago's precise reference to the 'seco.ida parte al capitolo 7° shows that he must have made a copy of Spataro's counterpoint treatise before he returned it in 1529.

From Del Lago's correspondence, it would also appear that he owned an earlier version of Spataro's treatise on proportions. In his letter of 15 July 1525 to Paulo de Laurino he mentions that 'Giovanni Spataro, in his duo given as example in ch. 22 of his treatise on proportions, is of the opposite opinion' (no. 80, para. 5). This letter is dated four years before Spataro sent Del Lago his 'tractato de proportione' (no. 24). But the problem of the date is resolved by the discovery that Del Lago's letter of 1525—or at least its date—is fictitious (see Ch. 6), and so the version he is quoting from is most likely the one Spataro sent him in 1529. Likewise, the quotation from Spataro's 'treatise on proportions in ch. 14, which treats the perfection of sesquialtera' in Del Lago's letter of 6 January 1532 to Fra Nazaro (no. 81, para. 3) must be drawn from the same treatise; it is not to be found in ch. 14 of the printed treatise on sesquialtera. By August of 1532 Del Lago had obtained a copy of the printed treatise; he wrote to Spataro, citing 'your work entitled "On the perfection produced by sesquialtera", in ch. 27' (no. 44, para. 4) and another passage 'in ch. 29 of the same treatise' (para. 6), and these quotations do indeed come from the published treatise, although Del Lago has edited Spataro's grammar and spelling.

It remains to be determined which version of Spataro's 'trattato de canto mensurato' Del Lago possessed. The manuscript would seem to have been in his hands as early as 1523, for in a letter to Giovanni da Legge of that year he cites a passage from ch. 7 of Spataro's 'Musica intitulata al Signor Hermes Bentivoglio' (no. 74, para. 2). However, this is another fictitious letter, and so no conclusion can be drawn from the date. Spataro himself did not know which of the two early versions it was, but if Del Lago intended to publish one of them, it should be the third and last version (no. 16). By January 1529 Del Lago had received the final version. Spataro wanted the title to read: 'Utile et breve tractato de canto mensurato, composito per Maestro Zoanne Spatario, musico bolognese, ad instantia de lo illustre Signore et patrono suo observantissimo, Messer

¹⁰³ British Library, Add. MS 4920; see Vecchi's facsimile edn. or his critical edn. in *Quadrivium* 5.

¹⁰⁴ The letter is not extant, but the contents may be deduced from Spataro's reply of 1 Sept. (no. 16).

¹⁰⁵ On the history of the treatises, see Ch. 3.

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Hermes Bentivoglio, con la additione de dui altri tractati, scilicet uno de contrapuncto et l'altro de proportione a le figure del canto mensurato applicate' (no. 21, para. 3). The title is similar to that of the London manuscript of 1510; Spataro evidently still held on to the idea that the treatise should be 'utile et breve', if somewhat expanded over the earlier versions. The break in relations between Spataro and Del Lago caused the project to founder, and even under the guidance of Pietro Aaron the treatise did not find its way into print.

Del Lago, however, must have kept a copy of the third version of Spataro's treatise, and he was well aware of the negotiations with Aaron for publishing it, for in his letter to Spataro of 23 August 1532 he refers to the 'Trattato suo di canto misurato al quinto capitolo intitulato prima al Signore Hermes Bentivoglio, di poi a Frate Piero Aaron, charissimo amico nostro' (no. 44, para. 3). The title indicates that he has in mind the third and final version of the treatise, and indeed the passages quoted from it are not found in the manuscript of 1510. Later on in the same letter, however, Del Lago cites 'suo trattato antidetto de cantu mensurato primamente da lei composto et intitulato al Signore Hermes Bentivoglio' (para. 4), and this appears to be the early version. He quotes from the fourth and sixth chapters, and in no. 47 he gives a long passage from the fourteenth chapter on alteration (para. 2). These quotations are similar to passages in the London manuscript, but they do not agree precisely. Most differences are simple changes in spelling (zifra for ziphara, benche for bene che, dinanzi for inanti, etc.) which may be due to Del Lago's editorial pen, but in no. 47 twenty words are included that do not appear in the London manuscript. Moreover, Del Lago consistently refers to chapter-numbers, but the chapters of the London manuscript are not numbered, nor do they always coincide with the divisions implied by Del Lago's numbers. Furthermore, the manuscript bears no dedication. The London manuscript therefore cannot be the manuscript Del Lago owned. It seems likely that it preserves the first version of Spataro's treatise¹⁰⁶ and that Del Lago had a copy of the second, expanded version; apart from the additional words we have noted, the passage he cites as coming from ch. 4 occurs in the third chapter of the London version, showing that Spataro had added a new chapter, or made a new chapter-division, in the second version.

These tantalizing glimpses of lost sources show that theoretical manuscripts must have circulated in much the same way that compositions did, in loose fascicles. Because they were not professionally copied and were probably unbound, they were more easily discarded when they were no longer of use. The relatively large number of sources of Marchetto's *Lucidarium* and Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* must be due to their usefulness to later generations; several of these sources were copied two hundred years after the treatises were written.

Giovanni del Lago must have taken great pride in his library; he sought to fill in gaps wherever possible. Not a rich man, he could not afford to commission lavishly decorated codices. Those manuscripts that can be traced to his possession are utilitarian in appearance; his was a working library. He was, however, able to hire copyists to assist him. Scribes A and B of Vat. lat. 5318 (see Table 2) prepared the fair copy of the 'Epistole composte in lingua volgare', the title Del Lago gave to his collected correspondence in Vat. lat. 5318. Scribe C copied a long letter from Spataro to Aaron (no. 25) and the treatise by 'D. B. de Francia'. Scribe E copied two letters from Spataro to Aaron for Del Lago's use (nos. 45, 48).

Del Lago also employed his friends in obtaining music treatises. The Venetian organist Giovanni da Legge, passing through Florence on a business-trip to Rome in December 1520, reported that he had found 'one of Franchino's musical works, the Theorica printed in Naples; I don't know if you know about it' (no. 72), and he asked whether he should look for 'cosa simile' in Naples. Del Lago evidently took advantage of his friend's offer. Three years later, on another trip to Rome, Da Legge wrote that he had immediately gone to see 'that friend of mine who has those books on music', and sent Del Lago a list of the books (unfortunately, the list is missing). 'True', he says, 'they are not large books; however, it would be rather inconvenient to copy them for various reasons. Nevertheless I shall do my best to serve you and also to have some nice things for myself' (no. 75). It is not certain that Da Legge's friend is a bookseller; he might be just a musician interested in theory who is willing to let a friend of his copy some of his manuscripts. Da Legge does not seem to be keen on being employed as scribe, and he asks Del Lago for a favour in return: an annotated copy of Éloy's 'Missa Dixerunt discipuli' to give to his friend, like the commentary on Tinctoris's 'Difficiles alios' that Del Lago had given him before.¹⁰⁷ Emphasizing the quid-pro-quo nature of the undertaking, Da Legge adds: 'so that you undertake this trouble so I shall have greater reason to satisfy your request'. The books copied by Da Legge could have been prints as well as manuscripts; we know of several instances of manuscript copies made from printed editions.

¹⁰⁷ On these two compositions, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings Recovered'.

¹⁰⁶ That it lacks the dedication is no obstacle to this hypothesis: it is not in Spataro's hand but in that of a scribe, who may have omitted it. Vecchi, 'Le *Utile e breve regule di canto*', p. 9, suggests that the dedication was left out because the Bentivoglio were no longer in power in 1510, having been thrown out of Bologna in 1506. He believes that the London manuscript represents the second version, since he sees no signs of its being 'breve et cum celerità facta', as Spataro characterized the first version (ibid.).

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In 1534 Del Lago was still looking for another treatise by Tinctoris to add to his library. In a letter to Del Lago Lorenzo Gazio apologizes for not sending it: 'concerning that little work by Tinctoris, everything I had of his together with a Guido was stolen from me in Milan' (no. 85, para. 3). 'That little work' might be the *De inventione et usu musicae*, a work that is not mentioned at all in the Correspondence and seems to have been little known in the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁸

The latest author quoted by Del Lago (without attribution) is Sebald Heyden, whose remarks on modal ethos struck Del Lago as an appropriate introduction to his instructions on composition in his letter to Fra Seraphin of 1541 (no. 93, para. 5).¹⁰⁹

Del Lago must have been of two minds concerning the advisability of quoting authorities in his correspondence with fellow theorists and musicians. In his Breve introductione of 1540, based in large part on his letters (see Ch. 6), he quotes no more than one passage from a music theorist, Gafurio,¹¹⁰ whom he calls 'mio don Franchino Gaffurio'-a curious appellation, since we have no indication that there was any personal relationship between the two. Perhaps he thought that appeals to higher authorities were not necessary in these 'regolette' collected 'sotto brevità' (see the dedication); or perhaps Spataro's sarcasm had cured him of his veneration for 'all those celebrated antiquities of his, which are none of his own work or effort' (no. 60, para. 24). Some of the quotations apparently did not appear in the original letters, for they have been added in the margins of the fair copy made by Scribe A and continued by Del Lago. This is the case with one of the quotations from Tinctoris ('b rotundum') and a few from Prosdocimo in no. 28 ('musica colorata', color as understood by Johannes de Muris's contemporaries, and the equation of color with ornament), the quotation from Amerus in no. 43, the reference to Ramis's Musica practica in no. 44, Prosdocimo's comments on musica ficta in no. 57, the quotations from Guido and Boethius taken from D. B.'s treatise in no. 74, the 'altra opinione' of Spataro in no. 81, one of the quotations from Marchetto in no. 82, the quotation without source from Hothby and the lengthy quotation from Ugolino in no. 88. But many of his authorities appear in the body of his letters. The conclusion is inescapable that Giovanni del Lago felt most confident when he could call on another theorist to back up his opinions.

We know that Del Lago owned a number of manuscripts of music

theory, but it is impossible to tell whether he owned all the ones he quoted from, or even to be sure that the final list of seventeen printed books and forty-nine manuscript treatises given below includes all the works in his possession. Then, as now, a scholar was not limited to the books in his own library; he could borrow from friends and he could visit monastic libraries, which often were rich depositories of medieval manuscripts. And Del Lago could have used the Biblioteca Marciana, which from the beginning was conceived as a public library.

The idea of a public library in Venice seems to have been sown in the fourteenth century. In 1362, Petrarch 'offered to leave his codices to the republic of Venice, on the condition that the senate would provide a house for him and his books during his lifetime'.¹¹¹ Unfortunately, his plan came to naught, and a century passed by until another famous scholar with a lifelong passion for collecting books determined to carry out the idea Petrarch had planted. John Bessarion (c.1395-1472), archbishop of Nicaea in 1437, made cardinal by Eugene IV in gratitude for his support at the Council of Ferrara and Florence, and titular patriarch of Constantinople in 1463, had first willed his books to the monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. The Venetian ambassador to the Curia, Paolo Morosini, persuaded him to leave them to the Church of San Marco instead, to be administered by the Procuratori di San Marco. The gift of 900 volumes in Greek and Latin was formally accepted in March 1468. The books were to be housed in the ducal palace and called 'Bibliotheca Sancti Marci'. In 1485, because of lack of a proper space and fear of theft, the books were placed in boxes and the room in which they were located was partitioned off. In 1515 the decision was made to house the books in a new building to be constructed opposite the ducal palace. It was not until 1554 that the first part of Sansovino's libreria was completed; the books were finally moved in 1559.

During the nearly hundred years that Bessarion's books were kept in the ducal palace, and even though they remained boxed up, they were still accessible to scholars. Bessarion's will stipulated that the books were not to leave Venice and that they could be lent out only against a sufficient deposit.¹¹² In both cases, the records show, exceptions were made occasionally, and at various times the Procurators had to make vigorous efforts to recover overdue books. Few documents remain of loans before 1545,¹¹³ and most of these seem to have been to patricians or diplomats,

¹⁰⁸ Five new chapters copied into a northern French manuscript have recently been published by Ronald Woodley; see 'The Printing and Scope of Tinctoris's Fragmentary Treatise *De inventione et usu musice*', *Early Music History* 5 (1985), 239–68.

¹⁰⁹ Del Lago may also have found the music examples of de Orto's 'Missa J'ay pris amours' and Ghiselin's 'Missa Gratieuse gent' in Heyden; see no. 86 nn. 15–16.

¹¹⁰ Breve introduttione di musica misurata, p. [36]. The citations of Bede and Donatus on p. [42] were taken over with large sections of letter no. 93.

¹¹¹ See Lotte Labowsky, Bessarion's Library and the Biblioteca Marciana: Six Early Inventories (Sussidi eruditi 31; Rome, 1979), p. 25. The following account is drawn from pp. 24–92.

¹¹² See Maria Luxoro, La Biblioteca di San Marco nella sua storia (Collana di monografie delle biblioteche d'Italia 1; Florence, 1954), p. 53.

¹¹³ See Coggiola, 'Il prestito di manoscritti della Marciana', and Carlo Volpati, 'Per la storia e il prestito di codici della Marciana nel sec. XVI', *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 27 (1910), 35–61.

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including Bishop Giambattista Casali, ambassador of the King of England, who borrowed several Greek books (see above). But since the Biblioteca was a public library, it should have been open to scholars. Indeed, in 1531 the Great Council of the Republic, noting the honour that the library brought the city, ordered that it be moved to another room above the church (which is attached to the ducal palace) and a stairway built with direct access to the outside.¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, the records of loans from 24 September 1527 to 1545 are lost.¹¹⁵

Giovanni del Lago's twenty-six letters in the Correspondence allow us a valuable insight into the research and reading of a Renaissance theorist, and a glimpse of his working library. With the identification of unattributed quotations and the inclusion of manuscripts that we know belonged to him, it is possible to draw up a comprehensive list of theorists known to him. In the catalogue that follows, the numbers in parentheses refer to the letter in which the treatise is alluded to or quoted, whether the source is indicated or not. The treatises for which no letter is listed were determined to have been part of his library on the basis of annotations in his hand found in the manuscript.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GIOVANNI DEL LAGO'S READING AND HIS LIBRARY

Aaron, Pietro, Libri tres de institutione harmonica (Bologna, 1516) (no. 28). ----- Toscanello (Venice, 1523 or 1529) (nos. 63, 65, 68).

----- Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525) (no. 57).

[Treatise on mutations] (Venice, 1531) (no. 57).

Amerus Anglicus, Practica artis musice (no. 43).

Anon., Tractatus musices (Venice, 1499) (no. 73).

Aristides Quintilianus, De musica (no. 96).

Aristotle (Pseudo-), Liber de causis (nos. 43, 44).

Aristoxenus, Elementa harmonica (nos. 93, 96).

Bede, De arte metrica liber (no. 93).

Beldomandi, Prosdocimo de', Ars calculatoria (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

¹¹⁴ 'Et da anni 60 in qua stiano in alcune casse, con non vulgar notta del honor del stato nostro, pero havendosi trovato loco sopra ditta chiesia dove se potranno abelmente reponere, et darli etiam additto de fora via senza andar per la ditta chiesia, sia preso che li procuratori de supra siano obligati immediate de i primi danari che scoderano adattar ditto loco, et farli l'addito conveniente de fora via'; Venice, Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Cod. Gradenigo 127, fo. 53°; last paragraph of 'Diversi ordeni da esser osservati nella procuratia de supra' of 2 June 1531, enacted in the Maggior Consilio.

¹¹⁵ Volpati, 'Per la storia', p. 50. On loans made from 1545 on, see Henri Omont, 'Deux registres de prêts de manuscrits de la Bibliothèque de Saint-Marc à Venise (1545–1559)', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 48 (1887), 651–86. ----- Tractatus de contrapuncto (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

----- Tractatus de contrapuncto (revised version) (nos. 28, 57, 88).

----- Tractatus musice speculative (no. 88).

----- Tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis (no. 28).

Boethius, De arithmetica (nos. 68, 74, 81).

----- De musica (nos. 57, 76, 96).

Ciconia, Johannes, Nova musica (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5320).

D. B. de Francia, Brevis collectio artis musice (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 64 [3415]) (nos. 57, 74, 86).

Del Lago, Giovanni, Breve introduttione di musica misurata (Venice, 1540) (no. 65).

----- Epistole composte in lingua volgare (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5318).

Disticha Catonis (nos. 74, 86).

Donatus, Ars grammatica (no. 93).

Egidius de Murino, *Tractatus cantus mensurabilis* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

Euclid, *Elements* (nos. 68, 70, 96).

Franco of Cologne, Ars cantus mensurabilis (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5320).

Gafurio, Franchino, Angelicum ac divinum opus musice (Milan, 1508) (no. 28).

----- De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus (Milan, 1518) (no. 74).

— Musica intitulata a Messer Guido Antonio Arcimboldo (Musices practicabilis libellus) (nos. 44, 47).

----- Practica musicae (Milan, 1496) (nos. 28, 44, 68, 73, 80, 84, 86, 93).

----- Theoricum opus musice discipline (Naples, 1480) (nos. 70, 72).

Gaudentius, Harmonica introductio (no. 96).

Guido, Regulae rhythmicae (nos. 74, 86).

Heyden, Sebald, De arte canendi (Nuremberg, 1540) (nos. 86, 93).

Hothby, John, Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musicae (De musica intervallosa) (nos. 57, 88).

Isidore of Seville, Etymologiae (no. 93).

Lanfranco, Giovanni Maria, Scintille di musica (Brescia, 1533) (no. 63).

Marchetto of Padua, Brevis compilatio (no. 47).

----- Lucidarium (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5322) (nos. 28, 73, 82, 88, 93).

----- Pomerium (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5322). Muris, Johannes de, *Ars contrapuncti* (nos. 74, 76).

---- Ars contrapuncti (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

----- Libellus cantus mensurabilis (as part of Ugolino of Orvieto's Declaratio musicae disciplinae) (nos. 28, 44, 47, 83, 86).

— Musica speculativa (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

Odo, Dialogus de musica (no. 86).

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Philippe de Vitry, Ars contrapuncti (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

----- Ars perfecta (no. 47).

Philippo de Caserta, *Tractatus de diversis figuris* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).

Porphyry, In harmonica Ptolemaei commentarius (no. 96).

Ptolemy, Harmonica (no. 96).

Ramis, Bartolomeo, Musica practica (Bologna, 1482) (nos. 44, 54, 70, 74).

Spataro, Giovanni, Errori de Franchino Gafurio da Lodi (Bologna, 1521) (no. 44).

----- Tractato de canto mensurato (early and late versions) (nos. 16, 28, 44, 47, 74).

----- Tractato de contrapuncto (nos. 28, 57).

----- Tractato delle proportioni (nos. 28, 80, 81).

----- Tractato di musica . . . nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta (Venice, 1531) (nos. 44, 80).

Tinctoris, Johannes, Diffinitorium (manuscript copy) (nos. 28, 57, 86, 93).

——Liber de arte contrapuncti (nos. 28, 76, 82).

——— Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium (no. 70).

----- Proportionale musices (nos. 44, 73, 80, 86).

----- Tractatus alterationum (no. 51).

----- Tractatus de regulari valore notarum (no. 63).

Ubaldi, Baldo degli, commentary on the Infortiatum (no. 74).

Ugolino of Orvieto, Declaratio musicae disciplinae (nos. 28, 44, 47, 69, 73, 76, 86, 88).

Vanneo, Stefano, Recanetum de musica aurea (Rome, 1533) (nos. 63, 93). Wollick, Nicolaus, Enchiridion musices (Paris, 1512) (no. 93).

⁸ Mensural Notation

In taking a comprehensive view of the contents of the 110 letters in the Correspondence, it is immediately apparent that notational practice is a constantly recurring theme. In letters devoted to diverse musical subjects, one is struck by the frequency of sections on notational procedures. Without question all aspects of notation were a truly important, and very often a highly controversial topic, among Italian musicians of this period.

A complete analysis of the complex and divergent views on notational practice is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead, we offer a guide to the topics discussed in individual letters, italicizing those letters in which the subject is treated extensively. Some problems are considered at greater length in commentaries. On the concept of 'number', see the Notes on Problematical Terms.

Alteration

Spataro to Aaron: 4, 8, 43 (and Commentary), 48 (and Commentary) Del Lago to Spataro: 47 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 74 Del Lago to Gazio: 86

Binary and ternary number

Spataro to Aaron: 4, 7 (and Commentary), 30, 45; see also the Commentary on no. 48 Del Lago to Spataro: 43–4 Del Lago to Fra Seraphin: 93 Lanfranco to Aaron: 104

Blackened notes

Spataro to Aaron: 5-7, 8-10, 41-2, 48 Del Lago to Spataro: 43 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 68-9 Del Lago to Gazio: 86 Del Lago to de Justinis: 88

Dots

Spataro to Aaron: 4, 5, 9, 45, 48 (and Commentary) Del Lago to Spataro: 43–4, 47 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 70

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Del Lago to Fra Nazaro: 81 Del Lago to Gazio: 86

Hemiolia Del Lago to Da Legge: 68

Ligatures

Spataro to Aaron: 9, 45, 48 (and Commentary) Del Lago to Spataro: 43, 44, 47 Del Lago to Gazio: 86

Mensural modes

Spataro to Aaron: 5, 7, 41, 45 (and Commentary), 48 (and Commentary) Del Lago to Spataro: 43, 44 Del Lago to Aaron: 63, 65 Aaron to Del Lago: 64 (and Commentary), 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 73-4 Del Lago to Laurino: 78 Aaron to Laurino: 100

Mensuration-signs in general

Spataro to Del Lago: 3 Spataro to Aaron: 5, 7, 30, 41-2, 45 (and Commentary), 48 Del Lago to Spataro: 44, 47 Aaron to Del Lago: 64, 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 68, 73-4 Del Lago to Laurino: 80 Del Lago to Fra Nazaro: 81, 83 Lanfranco to Aaron: 104

Unusual mensuration-signs

 $\begin{aligned} & \varphi: 3, 44^{-5}, 47^{-8} \\ & \varphi, \varphi: 45 \\ & \emptyset: 44^{-5} \\ & \boxtimes: 44 \\ & O_{2:} 5, 8, 41, 44^{-5} \text{ (and Commentary on no. 45), 64, 66, 73} \\ & \varphi_{2:} 4I, 42, 44^{-5} \text{ (and Commentary on no. 45), 47^{-8}, 73, 88} \\ & \varphi_{2}^{2:} 4I, 45 \\ & \varphi_{2}^{2:} 44^{-5} \\ & O_{3:} 44, 64, 66 \\ & \varphi_{3:} 44 \\ & \varphi: 44^{-5} \\ & \odot_{2:} 44^{-5}, 64 \\ & \varphi_{2:} 44^{-5} \\ & \odot_{3:} 64 \\ & O_{1}^{3}, O_{2}^{3:} 80 \end{aligned}$

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00,0C: 44 C: 5, 6, 30, 45, 66, 80-1, 104 C 2: 30, 44-5, 64, 66 ¢ 2: 44-5 ¢²:45 C 3: 44-5 (and Commentary on no. 45), 47-8, 64, 66, 81 ¢ 3: 44, 47-8 D: 88 ¢: 44, 47 C 2: 64 C 3: 64 ¢3: 80 CO,CC: 44 O33 and similar signs with two figures: 44, 45, 64, 66 Perfection and imperfection Spataro to Aaron: 4, 5-6, 7-8, 41-2, 45, 48, 60 Del Lago to Spataro: 43-4, 47 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 68-70 Del Lago to Fra Nazaro: 83 Del Lago to Gazio: 86 Del Lago to de Justinis: 88 **Proportional numbers** Spataro to Cavazzoni: 2 Spataro to Del Lago: 3 (and Commentary)

Spataro to Del Lago: 3 (and Commenta Spataro to Aaron: 6, 9, 45, 60 Del Lago to Spataro: 44, 57 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 68 Del Lago to Laurino: 80 Del Lago to Fra Nazaro: 81 Del Lago to Gazio: 84 Gazio to Del Lago: 85

Rests

Spataro to Aaron: 5, 7, 45 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 73

Rests as mensuration-signs¹

Spataro to Aaron: 7, 45 (and Commentary), 51; see also Commentary on no. 48

¹ On this topic, see also the Notes on Problematical Terms s.v. 'indiciale'.

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Del Lago to Spataro: 44 Aaron to Del Lago: 64, 66 Del Lago to Aaron: 65 Del Lago to Da Legge: 73 Del Lago to Fra Nazaro: 83

Rule of like before like

Spataro to Aaron: 5-6, 42 Del Lago to Da Legge: 69, 74 Del Lago to Gazio: 86 Del Lago to de Justinis: 88

Sesquialtera

Spataro to Aaron: 6–10, 60 Aaron to Del Lago: 66 Del Lago to Da Legge: 68 (and Commentary) Del Lago to Laurino: 80 Del Lago to Fra Nazaro: 81 Del Lago to Gazio: 84 Gazio to Del Lago: 85 Del Lago to de Justinis: 88

It will be immediately apparent that the central figures in this discussion are Giovanni Spataro and Giovanni del Lago, especially if we consider that nos. 41-2, 45, and 48, although ostensibly from Spataro to Aaron, are actually in answer to letters by Del Lago (this was how Spataro kept Aaron informed of his discussions). Del Lago was filled with 'dubii' and criticisms of Spataro on many intricate and complex notational matters. A good example is no. 44, which contains Del Lago's criticism of Spataro's use of mensuration-signs, his treatment of mode, and his incorrect notation. Letter 45 is Spataro's spirited defence of his notational principles.

In addition to the specific problems listed above, there is one very significant notational principle that is behind the thought-processes of Spataro, Aaron, and Del Lago. An understanding of this principle is essential in order to clarify many of the viewpoints expressed in the letters and to explain some of the specific notational problems discussed. It concerns what is frequently referred to as 'the five essential notes', namely, the maxima, long, breve, semibreve, and minim. Some theorists held that the breve had an unchanging value and that the values of the other notes were derived from it. For example, if a breve under O equals a breve under C in temporal duration, then three semibreves under O move at the same speed as two semibreves under C, and thus are in a *sesquialtera*

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proportion to the two semibreves. In this arrangement, mensuration-signs also function as proportional signs. Other theorists opposed the idea of a breve as the central unchanging temporal unit, and also the use of mensuration-signs as proportional signs. Instead they stated that notes of different mensurations are not comparable, and that all minims should be considered equal in value. The problem of the equal breve is not merely theoretical; it is highly significant for the performance practice of music of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

In a recent article, Anna Maria Busse Berger has explored in depth the question of equal breves versus equal minims in Italian Renaissance theory.² Among the many theorists she discusses are the principal authors of the Correspondence. By direct evidence these theorists are divided into two groups: in favour of an equal breve are Ramis, Spataro, Lanfranco, and Aaron (1545 and after); in favour of an equal minim are Tinctoris, Gafurio, Aaron (before 1545), and Del Lago.³ Although there are no letters in the Correspondence by Tinctoris or Gafurio, they are mentioned so frequently that it is not difficult to discover their opinions on notational matters. They are alternately castigated or praised, depending upon which theorist is discussing them.

The case of Pietro Aaron is special, since he vacillates between the two theories. In his earlier writings he favours the equal minim and in his later treatises, probably influenced by Spataro, he espouses an equal breve. This is clearly stated in his *Lucidario in musica* of 1545, where he advocates the equal breve and acknowledges that in his *Thoscanello de la musica* of 1523 he favoured the equal minim.⁴ And in his letter to Del Lago of 7 October 1539, he says:

the origin or formation of all the essential notes arises from the *tempus*... and the *tempus*, which is unique, firm, and stable, ... will be called an unchanging movement from which all the other species arise. Given that this breve or *tempus* is divided into three parts of a third and two parts of a half, one will not say that there are two kinds of *tempus*, greater and lesser, but one will say perfect and imperfect, with respect to the ternary and binary number, because this ternary as to its number appears to be greater, but as to its force and effect it is equivalent to the binary number. (No. 64, para. 4.)

Spataro, the most prominent correspondent in the letters, was a strong advocate of the equal-breve principle, which he inherited from his teacher

² Anna Maria Busse Berger, 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time in Italian Theory of the Renaissance', *Early Music History* 5 (1985), 1-28.

³ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴ In the *Lucidario*, Book II, fo. 13', the relevant passage is: 'gli antichi et dotti Musici sesquialteravano le note di questo segno O comparate al seguente C perché per un tempo di questo C pronontiavano due semibrevi, et sotto questo O ne passavano tre, ... non ostante che dannoi sia stato in contrario osservato al cap. 38 del primo libro del nostro Toscanello'.

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Ramis.⁵ In his letter to Cavazzoni of 1 August 1517, which is the earliest letter in the Correspondence, Spataro clearly states his belief in the equal breve. In discussing the five essential notes, he says that 'the breve is the chief and the beginning, like unity in arithmetic. Thus the minor mode, namely the long, arises from this breve multiplied two or three times, but minor prolation arises from the same breve divided into two or three parts' (no. 2, para. 11). A letter to Aaron of autumn 1532 contains a similar comment: 'just as unity in arithmetic can stand by itself, namely, without number, ... I also say that the breve (from which mode arises) can stand by itself ... but in prolation (which divides the *tempus* into parts) the opposite occurs' (no. 45, para. 17).⁶

Throughout his long life Spataro adhered to the equal-breve principle. In an early manuscript treatise, *Utile et breve regule di canto* (1510), he states that the breve in mensural music is an unchangeable measure by which all notes are reckoned (fo. 2^r). The *Tractato di musica*, printed in 1531, is an entire book on *sesquialtera*, which results from the equal-breve theory. In it he echoes his other statements about the breve: 'the breve . . . will be the true measure and beginning of mensural music, because from this *tempus* or breve all the other species and notes, singable and not singable (i.e. the rests), have had their origin'.⁷ Spataro had another follower in the theorist Lanfranco, whose *Scintille* advocates the equal-breve principle.⁸

Giovanni del Lago has been cited by Berger as a theorist who was an advocate of the equal-minim principle on the basis of his letter to Giovanni da Legge of 24 January 1520 (no. 69).⁹ This was an incorrect conclusion: the letter does not show that Del Lago was an equal-minim adherent, since the passage in question (para. 1) really came from a letter of Spataro to Aaron (no. 6, para. 5), in which Spataro explains that the rule 'like before like' does not apply to a breve before another breve in a different mensuration.¹⁰ In no. 78 (Version B), from Del Lago to Fra Paulo de Laurino on 15 April 1525, it appears that Del Lago is actually in the equal-breve camp. In discussing the five essential notes he says: 'just as

⁵ For Ramis on the equal breve, see Berger, 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time', pp. 7-8.

⁶ As explained in n. 19 on this letter, in Spataro's time 1 was not considered a number but the principle from which all numbers were generated. See also the Commentary on no. 7.

7 \dots la breve \dots sarà la recta mensura et principio de la musica mensurata, imperoché da esso tempo o vero breve tutte le altre specie et figure cantabile et non cantabile (s. le pause) hanno havuto el suo origine' (end of ch. 4). In this treatise Spataro attempts to demolish the equal-minim principle maintained by Gafurio.

⁸ Scintille di musica (Brescia, 1533), pp. 35, 40.

⁹ Berger, 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time', p. 22.

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unity in arithmetic is considered the beginning of number, so the breve or tempus is regarded in music as the chief and beginning of mensural music, even though it is in the middle of the five essential notes' (para. 2). Although no. 100, Aaron's letter to Laurino of 29 April 1525, is the model for no. 78 (ostensibly written by Del Lago),¹¹ the explanation (and much of the wording) is already found in Spataro's letter to Cavazzoni of I August 1517 (no. 2), quoted above. In another letter to Laurino Del Lago states unequivocally: 'if in the beginning of each part of each composition C were signed, and then in the course of the work this O, which is no different as to measure from this C, except as regards the perfection of the breve . . .' (no. 80, para. 5). On the other hand, Del Lago disagrees with Spataro's theory of perfection under sesquialtera (no. 80, para. 6, and no. 81, para. 3). And in no. 81, he makes a statement that is the touchstone of the equal-minim theory: 'the minim in \odot or in \mathbb{C} is no different from the minim in O or in C, but the difference arises through the perfection of the semibreve' (para. 1). It is hard to refrain from concluding that Del Lago plainly did not understand the difference between the equal-breve and equal-minim theories. Nothing shows more clearly the pitfalls of his habit of running from theorist to theorist: all his 'authorities' avail him little in the absence of a solid intellectual foundation.

The two most prominent theorists in the equal-minim camp are Tinctoris and Gafurio. A good source for Tinctoris's equal-minim belief is his *Proportionale musices*, written c.1473. In opposing the comparison of note-values of different mensurations in a proportion, he says: 'when three semibreves are compared with two, if any of the former is worth two minims, any of the latter should also be worth two. ... [I]f, for example, wishing 3 to 2 to be related as *sesquialtera*, we arranged three breves of imperfect *tempus* against two of perfect, we should not make *sesquialtera*, nor indeed any proportion of inequality, but of equality, namely, 6 to 6.'¹² From these comments it is evident that Tinctoris espouses equal minims and disapproves of the comparison of perfect and imperfect breves on the basis of breve equality.

In the Correspondence there are six letters in which a composition by Tinctoris is discussed in detail by various theorists, his 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus'.¹³ The work, which is a pedagogical three-voice motet, was probably written about the same time as the *Proportionale*. It illustrates the principles laid out in Tinctoris's treatise, and concerns

¹¹ Concerning Del Lago's habit of using letters by other writers, see Ch. 6.

¹⁰ By omitting three words in this passage Berger arrived at a translation that inverts Del Lago's (and Spataro's) meaning. They do not say that one breve 'will not be measured smaller ..., as will the other', but that one breve will not be measured in its smaller parts (*da le sue minor*) as the other will, that is, the semibreves are of unequal duration in the two mensurations.

¹² Tinctoris, *Proportionale musices*, in *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, iia. 57; also CS iv. 176. See further Berger, 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time', pp. 18-20.

¹³ See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings'. For the letters discussing the 'Difficiles alios' in the Correspondence, see ibid., pp. 88–101.

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various proportions and mensuration-signs, as well as complex examples of imperfection, alteration, and coloration. The beginning of the motet has O in the cantus and contra, while the tenor has \odot . All voices are in *integer valor*, and the equal-minim principle is followed.¹⁴

The only other major theorist of the time who advocated the equalminim concept was Gafurio. Although Tinctoris was approximately fifteen years his senior, both men were associated in Naples between 1478 and 1480 and were on friendly terms.¹⁵ Their dedication to the equalminim principle was the main reason for its eventual acceptance, even though they were not always in agreement on minor points. The best source for Gafurio's equal-minim practice is his Practica musicae. Book IV of this treatise is modelled on Tinctoris's Proportionale, and each notational and mensural topic is followed by a musical example. In opposing those advocating an equal breve Gafurio says: 'Those who call a semibreve of tempus imperfectum greater in value [maior] because it equals half a breve, and lesser [minor] when it equals a third of a perfect breve, are in error, since one semibreve is always equal to another in the same prolation. Neither does it matter that one semibreve equals half of a breve and the other a third of a breve, since these breves are in dissimilar mensurations.'16 Gafurio also opposes the use of different mensurations as proportional signs. In a musical example he has O in one voice and C in the other, so that in the equal-breve system a sesquialtera proportion between the two voices would result. Gafurio's example applies the equalminim principle.¹⁷ In another statement on sesquialtera Gafurio says: 'There are some who show sesquialtera proportion with the sign of prolatio perfecta, that is, with a dot within the sign of tempus, as in \mathfrak{C} , \mathfrak{O} , and who think there is no difference between prolatio and proportio. This is refuted above all by an examination of the ratio, for proportio sesquialtera equates three minims with two, while prolatio perfecta equates three normal minims with one semibreve and does not measure three minims with two.'18

In her study of twenty-two Italian Renaissance theorists, Berger found that the far greater number of theorists up to 1510 adhered to the equalbreve concept.¹⁹ This shows that during the fifteenth century Spataro, instead of being the lone proponent, was in the mainstream of Italian theoretical thought concerning equal breves. It also indicates that the errors Tinctoris and Gafurio criticized in the works of some composers were not errors at all if the equal-breve principle is applied. But during the early part of the sixteenth century the equal-minim principle became dominant, as was seen in Aaron's *Thoscanello* of 1523. The chief reasons for this change were the writings of Tinctoris and Gafurio. Although the equal-breve and equal-minim concepts existed together in the early sixteenth century, owing chiefly to the efforts of Spataro and his followers, by the third decade of the century, at the latest, equal breves had been completely supplanted by equal minims.

The equal-breve concept had certain inherent complexities, such as differing lengths of semibreves and minims that depended on the mensuration-sign used;²⁰ the equal minim of Tinctoris and Gafurio had the virtue of simplicity. In a letter to Del Lago in 1529 Spataro acknowledges the problem when he says: 'among musicians and singers the rules and regular precepts set down by our learned predecessors are no longer observed. Your Excellency knows well that in our time the signs established by the ancients are held in little esteem and value, and they only use this sign φ , and of the proportions they only use *sesquialtera*' (no. 17, para. 4). Although Spataro continued to defend the equal-breve system in his *Tractato di musica* of 1531, his comments indicate that he probably knew it was not the wave of the future. It is ironic that the progressive Spataro, who was far-sighted and intuitive in so many musical fields, should succumb in the end to the principles of Tinctoris and the conservative Gafurio in the area of notational practice.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 7, 23-4.

¹⁴ See the transcription, ibid., pp. 105-16, and p. 42.

¹⁵ The 16th-c. poet and musician Tomaso Cimello said that Gafurio was closely associated with Tinctoris, 'suo carissimo amico'. See Miller, 'Early Gaffuriana', pp. 377-8.

¹⁶ Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 88.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 155, ex. 45, m. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁹ Berger, 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time', pp. 6, 23.



PRINCIPLES OF THE EDITION

THE Spataro Correspondence has remained a largely buried treasure not only because of its extent but also because of the difficulty of reading the handwriting, principally that of the main author, Giovanni Spataro. Time has also taken its toll on these letters: in some the ink has bled through the paper, in others the edges have become frayed, with loss of letters and words. The methods used to repair the damage have made some pages nearly illegible. But even if none of these conditions were present, it would still take some effort to read these letters, simply because the manner of putting words on paper has changed considerably in the past four hundred years. A perusal of the facsimiles will show that paragraphing is rare, sentences often run on at great length, punctuation is irregular, words are joined together haphazardly, abbreviations are common, and spelling is quite different from current usage.

Our objective has been to present these letters in the most readable manner possible, while preserving the original spellings. Readability was considered with respect both to the ordering of the letters and to their transcription. The letters have been arranged primarily by groups of correspondents; where answers exist, they always follow the letter to which they respond.¹ In the transcriptions we have introduced paragraphs, modernized the punctuation, normalized capitalization and the use of *i* and *j*, *u* and *v*, and added apostrophes and accents.² Words have been separated or joined according to modern usage, except that two words have been left whenever joining them would necessitate doubling a consonant in modern Italian, as: sì come (= siccome), o vero (= ovvero), acciò che (= acciocché), etc. Abbreviations have been resolved silently. On the other hand, the polite forms of address, Vostra Excellentia, Vostra Signoria, and Vostra Paternità, have been abbreviated as V.E., V.S., and V.P.

No quotation-marks or italics appear in the original. We have used quotation-marks to set off quotations from other letters, proverbs, biblical passages, canonic inscriptions, titles of compositions and treatises, and single words. We have italicized all quotations from other theorists, even when the borrowing is unacknowledged. Hexachord syllables and specific pitches are also italicized. Square brackets are used for obliterated words, words or letters that have been added editorially, and clarification of unusual spellings. Folio-numbers are indicated in the margin; a vertical

¹ See above, p. 6, for an explanation of the order.

² Our model, except in the matter of spelling, has been Bernard Weinberg's edn. of *Trattati di poetica e retorica del Cinquecento* (4 vols., Bari, 1970-4); see the 'Nota filologica' ibid. i. 583-5.

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stroke (|) has been placed in the text where a new page begins. Marginal additions, which appear in many of Giovanni del Lago's letters, are indicated by upper half-brackets ($\lceil \rceil$); these additions were made some years later and show how he revised his letters. Lower half-brackets ($\lfloor \rfloor$) indicate passages from Spataro's letters that Aaron borrowed for his *Toscanello* (see nos. 4 and 12), passages that Del Lago appropriated from the letters of his correspondents, and sections of his own letters that he reused in his treatise of 1540 (see Ch. 6).

We have attempted to trace all quotations from theorists and to identify treatises and musical compositions mentioned, with reference to modern editions where available. All biblical translations are taken from the Rheims-Douay-Challoner translation of the Vulgate.

In order to make the Correspondence accessible to those who do not read Italian, we have provided condensed English versions of each letter, generally one-third to one-half the length of the original. Complete translations would have swelled the edition to unmanageable size. Moreover, our authors did not consider brevity a virtue: they wrote in a conversational style, which is one of the reasons why the Correspondence is so valuable. In a letter to Del Lago, Spataro remarked that Gafurio used to say that 'my letters were more than a letter and less than a treatise. I don't know how to say a lot in a short space' (no. 17, para. 15). In the English condensations, we have endeavoured to include every point of substance, without neglecting the personal tone and interplay of personalities. But it should be kept in mind that these are not real translations, and they should not be quoted in place of the original letter. In the case of quotations from theorists, however, we have provided literal translations. These are italicized in the English version as well as in the original letter.

Because some of the letters are quite lengthy, we decided to number the paragraphs to make comparison between the English and Italian versions easier. There are two series of footnotes. The numbered footnotes apply to both versions; numbers are the same in both. Lettered footnotes refer only to the Italian text; they have been used to correct errors and to transcribe passages in Del Lago's letters that were cancelled when he revised his *epistole*. Cancellations made in the course of writing have been ignored.

The music examples have been either given in facsimile or transcribed exactly as the original offers them. In the English condensations we have scored the polyphonic examples, retaining the original note-values. The sign for square b is sometimes written b, sometimes a. In no. 57, however, a indicates a sharp, and we have changed it to a to avoid confusion.

In the Correspondence, notes are sometimes called by their Greek and

sometimes by their Guidonian names. In the translations we have followed a modified Helmholtz system to indicate specific pitches, where middle C is c'. All three systems are combined for easy reference in Fig. 1 on p. 198.³

The Spataro Correspondence is so extensive that it was not feasible for us to comment on every point of interest. Nevertheless, we offer a guide to some of the major topics of discussion in three chapters of the Introduction: Spataro's and Aaron's criticisms of each other's compositions in Ch. 5, 'The Art of Composition'; one theorist's attitude towards tradition in Ch. 7, 'Giovanni del Lago's "Authorities"'; and the central topic of the Correspondence, the mensural system and problems of notation, in Ch. 8, 'Mensural Notation'. Other important topics, treated in one or two letters, are discussed in commentaries to individual letters. In the Notes on Problematical Terms we draw together references to a limited number of terms and concepts (such as *taciturnità*) that are of particular interest.

A number of persons make their appearance in these letters, musicians as well as non-musicians. To avoid multiple cross-references, we have listed their names in a Biographical Dictionary, which includes all living persons mentioned in the Correspondence, as well as two important theorists who were known personally to the authors, Bartolomeo Ramis and Franchino Gafurio. The spelling of names is irregular. In the English condensations we have used a standard version of the name when the person is known from other sources (e.g. Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni); otherwise we retain the original spelling.

Some readers may question our decision not to modernize the spelling. Italian orthography was not fixed before the eighteenth century, and it was only in the sixteenth century that literary figures such as Pietro Bembo began to pay attention to it. Retaining the original spellings gives us insight not only into the geographical backgrounds but also the level of education of our correspondents. And in Giovanni del Lago we have the particularly interesting example of a scholar who undertook a revision of his orthography in the late 1530s or early 1540s, undoubtedly in response to current literary notions.

When Giovanni Maria Artusi presented a letter by Spataro in his L'Artusi of 1600 (see no. 13), he had the interlocutor, Signor Vario, say: 'Here is the letter in his own hand. Read it, and if, in reading, you should find some word not quite Tuscan, ascribe it to the period and the time.' Spataro writes in the 'lingua cortigiana', the language spoken at the northern Italian courts, whose literary form Vincenzo Calmeta, the poet

³ Tinctoris (*Expositio manus*) follows the mainstream in placing g among the graves; Spataro, Aaron, and Del Lago, however, begin the *acutae* with this note: see no. 53 n. 2.



Principles of the Edition

and friend of Serafino Aquilano, held superior to Tuscan. Among the outspoken anti-Tuscans in the vexed 'questione della lingua' was the Bolognese Giovanni Philoteo Achillino, who mentions Spataro and other Bolognese musicians in his *Viridario* of 1513.⁴ Spataro, of course, had no literary pretensions. The reader of modern Italian should have little difficulty in following his language once he becomes accustomed to the more Latinate orthography, such as *scripture*, *predicto*, *receptaculo*. Less obvious are words such as *caxa*, *uxo*, *spexo*; Spataro sometimes writes x where modern Italian has s. One idiosyncrasy should be pointed out: in feminine nouns ending in e he writes the plural and singular in the same form, e.g. *qualche petitione facte* and *le voce*. Only the context determines which he means.

Giovanni del Lago, on the other hand, was more self-conscious about language, and there is evidence that the 'questione della lingua' affected him directly. After Scribe A had prepared the fair copy of his *Epistole*, Del Lago, some time in 1538 or later, went back over the letters and made extensive changes in orthography. This is one aspect of the letters that it was not feasible to retain in our transcription. In the edition of Del Lago's letters we have used his revised spellings. But we think it will be of interest to give a sample of the changes he made (not always consistently) in an effort to convert his 'lingua cortigiana' to Tuscan:

original de, el legata, resposta cerca ditto, preditto insiemi signare, dinota como boni, soni ponto, adonque, longa officio luio tuole negre raggione, caggione opinione pocho, luogho dinanti, inanti reducere dicete

correction di, il ligata, risposta circa detto, predetto insieme segnare, denota come buoni, suoni punto, adunque, lunga ufficio luglio toglie nere ragione, cagione oppinione poco, luogo dinanzi, inanzi redurre dite

⁴ See the Biographical Dictionary, s.v. 'Musici bolognesi'. On the 'lingua cortigiana', see Bruno Migliorini, *Storia della lingua italiana*, rev. edn. (Florence, 1966), pp. 321-41.

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auctoritati, commoditate in la, in el ne li, in li soi da poi, do poi debbiano deve fasse fosseno pareno pono potria puole serveno vedo

auctorità, commodità nella, nel ne (= ne'), ne loro dopo debbino debbe facesse fossero paiono pongo, possono potrebbe puo servono veggo

Some of these forms are specifically mentioned in Pietro Bembo's *Prose* della volgar lingua (Venice, 1525; the second edition appeared in 1538); the others Del Lago could have absorbed from reading this treatise or other similar ones. Certainly Del Lago, whose patron was a poet, was aware of the debates that were taking place in Venetian literary circles over the proper use of language. His manuscript is perhaps one of the few remaining examples that graphically show the direct effect of literary theory on practice. A. The Correspondence between Giovanni Spataro, Marc' Antonio Cavazzoni, Giovanni del Lago, and Pietro Aaron

I (JI). Fo. 1^v

Title and Dedication of Giovanni del Lago's *Epistole* (autograph)

^{1^r} Epistole composte in lingua volgare nelle quali si contiene la resolutione de molti reconditi dubbii della Musica osscuramente trattati da antichi musici, et non rettamente intesi da moderni, a comune utilità di tutti li studiosi di tale liberale arte, novamente in luce mandate dal molto di ciò studioso Messer Gioanne del Lago, prete nella Chiesa di Santa Sophia di Vinegia, et scritte al Magnifico Messer Girolamo Molino, patricio venetiano.¹

¹^v Al Magnifico Messer Girolamo Molino, patricio venetiano, patrone honorandissimo.

È instinto naturale, Magnifico Signor, desiderare quello che a sé proprio si conosce simile. [Es]sendo adunque V.S. di virtù piena et tra gli altri perciò celebrata, merita non solamente la dedicatione delle presenti epistole, nelle quali si contengono diversi dubbii di musica, ma esser essaltata ad ogni altro honore. Et certo si vede che pochi al dì d'hoggi si trovano (come voi) dottata non solamente di tale scienza, ma anchora di gentilezza et costumi ornato. Onde per non trovare a chi meglio si possino tali dubbii rimettere ad esser giudicati, et per esser voi quello, il quale nell'arte di musica tiene il primo grado fra le altre virtute, et anchora per mostrare alcuno segno del amore et benivolentia ch'io vi porto per infinite obligationi, ve ne fo uno presente, il quale anchora che sia picciol dono a V.S. (alla quale maggior più degni si converiano), nondimeno per vostra benigna cortesia vi piacerà accetare questo picciolo dono, et sarà vi grato venendo da uno suo fedelissimo servitore.

Pre Gioanne del Lago

The Letters

Letters, composed in the vernacular, which contain the resolution of many recondite problems in music obscurely treated by the ancient music theorists and imperfectly understood by those of our day, for the common use of the scholars of this liberal art, newly published by the most learned musical scholar Messer Giovanni del Lago, priest in the Church of Santa Sofia in Venice, and addressed to the Magnificent Messer Girolamo Molino, patrician of Venice.¹

In view of your celebrated *virt* \hat{u} you merit the dedication of these letters on musical questions; no one is more qualified, both by talent and personality, to appreciate these problems. I present this small gift as a sign of my affection and infinite obligations towards you.

¹ This is the title Giovanni del Lago intended for the publication of twenty-two of his letters, which are copied consecutively in the first part of Vat. lat. 5318. Even though his letters form less than one-quarter of the Correspondence and have not been published in the order he intended, we have retained his title because it epitomizes the Correspondence as a whole. Del Lago made two corrections on the title-page, changing 'Giovanne' to 'Gioanne' and 'Diacono' to 'prete'. The latter change must have been made after 3 Aug. 1542, the date of his promotion to titular priest (see Ch. 6).

2 (J100). Fos. 240^r-243^r

Giovanni Spataro to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, 1 August 1517 (Scribe D)

240^r Messer Marco Antonio mio honorando, salutem.

1. A li giorni passati ho riceputo una vostra a me giocunda et gratisima, circa la quale ho inteso molte cose et particule, de le quali non farò spetiale mentione per non proceder in lungo, ma de ogni cosa che voi mi proffereti vi ringratio et al bisogno vi operarò.

2. Circa el *Diffinitorio*¹ che voi diceti haver de Tintoris, non curo, perché assai mi basta quello che io tengo. Circa etiam a quello che diceti de la retratatione de esso *Diffinitorio* non ho inteso. Uno Petro Aron fiorentino ha fatto stampare qui in Bologna una opera² la quale non laudo né vitupero. Se potrò, con questa vi la mandarò, perché fa imprimere certi errori che essa opera [contiene].³ Se saranno impressi a tempo vi la mandarò al presente. Se non, non starò molto da poi.

3. Son stato a questi giorni non poco occupato, et questo è proceduto [per]ché Fran[chi]no^{*a*} Gafurio che sta a Millano, el quale assai ha scritto in musica, mi ha mandato uno certo tratato musico de uno francese chiamato Nicolao Baroducense,⁴ el qual tratato tutto è stato quasi tolto da le opere ^{*a*} The right margin is ragged and some letters have been lost on this folio.

¹ Johannes Tinctoris, Terminorum musicae diffinitorium. See the Commentary.

² Libri tres de institutione harmonica (Bologna, 1516). Spataro's manner of introducing Aaron's name seems to indicate that he was not previously acquainted with Aaron. This is not the case: he had in fact read a copy of Aaron's treatise before it was published and made some suggestions for improvements. We know this from an exchange of letters between Gafurio and Giovanni Antonio Flaminio, who translated Aaron's treatise into Latin; see Ch. 4. Spataro distanced himself from Aaron's discussion of counterpoint, see Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', pp. 219–20. Another subject of controversy, the use of D to designate sesquitertia, is discussed in Ch. 4.

³ The word 'contiene' or a similar one must have been omitted in the copying of the letter. Spataro seems to be referring to a second printing of Aaron's treatise that includes a list of corrections. If it was printed in time, he would send it to Cavazzoni with his letter; if not, he would send it later. Indeed, several copies of Aaron's treatise contain a four-page list of errata, headed by a note to the reader explaining that some statements had not been clearly expressed and some errors had crept in through the carelessness of the proof-reader (*corrector*). The list appears in the facsimile edn. of Aaron's treatise by Broude Brothers Limited (New York, 1976), following fo. 62. Flaminio, in his letter to Gafurio of 1 May 1517, writes about the many misprints.

⁴ Nicolaus Wollick's *Opus aureum* first appeared in Cologne in 1501. But the treatise Gafurio sent to Spataro must have been the enlarged Parisian edition of 1509 or 1512, which carries the title: *Enchiridion musices Nicolai Wollici barroducensis*. The Duchy of Bar-le-Duc, formerly in the possession of René of Anjou, King of Naples, Sicily, and Jerusalem, came under the full control of his grandson, René II of Lorraine, in 1485. Wollick, however, considered himself as 'Nicolaus Gallus' in his letter of dedication. See Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, *Nicolaus Wollick* (1480-1541) und sein Musiktraktat (Beiträge zur rheinischen Musikgeschichte 13; Cologne, 1956), pp. 32, 291. del preditto Franchino. Et perché Franchino sumamente laudava tale tratato, et perché etiam a me domandava el parer mio, ho speso et consumato molti giorni in veder tale opera et in scriver el mio parer ad esso Franchino. Ma non so come al fine restaremo amici, benché bene se cognoscemo, perché già sono 24 anni che circa questa facultà se habbiamo scritto. Se adunque vore[ti] el preditto trattato, bisognarà mandar a Millano et far capo a Franchino che darà el modo de trovar tale volumine, et se vende [per] tre marcelli,⁵ et forse manco.

4. Ho veduto quanto scriveti cir[ca] quello vostro postscritto; vi voglio scrivere, ma se fusse altri che voi, reccusarei tale impresa, non per[ché] io faccia caso che siano intesi, ma perché ci achade assai scrittura, a la quale per el tempo caldo et per [l']età mia annosa male posso dare opera. Io mi aricordo che ad instantia de Frate Benedetto Bellabusta nostro bolognese, frate de l'ordine (qui in Venetia) de Santa Elena, io ne feci una altra declaratione, scilicet del mottetto 'Ubi opus', etc., ad uno suo frate prior in Ferara. Se havesse al presente havuto tale copia, non mi saria poco commodo. Sia con Dio, a lo amico non si pò negar cosa alchuna licita.

5. Pertanto dove nel suprano de esso mottetto dice così, scilicet 'Saturnus', tale nome è stato ivi posto per clave, scilicet che dimostra el loco dove la prima nota è collocata. Imperò secondo che (la scola musica consente) da proslambanomenos ad meson, o vero da A re ad A la mi re primo, è ordinato et posito l'ord[ine] de li planeti in questo modo:6 che la luna per esser inferiore è considerata essere in proslambanomenos, o vero in A re posita. El secondo planeto è chiamato Mercurio, el quale è assignato ad hypate hypaton, o vero ad \$ mi. El terzo planeto è chiamato Venus et è in parhypate hypaton collocato, o vero in C fa [ut]. El quarto planeto, che è el sole, è collocato in licanos hypaton, o vero in D sol re, et el quinto, chiama[to] Marte, restarà^b in hypate meson posito, o vero in E la mi, ma Jupiter, el quale è il sexto planeto, serà locato in parhypate meson, o vero in F fa ut de la mano de Guido. Saturno, el quale è il septimo, harà il suo loco in licanos meson, o vero in G sol re ut primo, et in esso G sol re ut el suprano di tale canto harà il suo principio. Altro circa questa particula del suprano non dico, perché oltra che quello che significa quello nome,

^b MS: restata.

scilicet 'Saturnus', non chiedeti, el quale (ut dixi) denota che tale particula $_{240^{v}}$ ha | principio in G *sol re ut* acuto.

6. In lo tenore del preditto canto se trova uno canon, o vero una regula o vero precepto, senza apparentia de figure o note cantabile, ma ivi è posito uno circulo et una pausa de breve, el qual canon dice così, scilicet 'Omnis tetrachordorum ordo per tria genera melorum canitur effingens in duobus secundis dumtaxat unum anfractum suorum tamen duorum primorum intervalorum et synemmenon utique devitans'. Dove esso canon dice 'omnis ordo tetrachordorum', dico che li ordini de li tetracordi sono cinque. El primo ha principio in hypate hypaton, o vero in \$ mi grave, et termina in hypate meson, o vero in E la mi pur grave, et questo tetracordo da li Greci è chiamato hypaton. El secondo tetracordo ha principio in hypate meson, o vero in E la mi grave, et termina in mese, o vero in A la mi re acuto, et è chiamato meson. Et el terzo tetracordo ha principio in mese et termina in nete synemenon, scilicet da A la mi re in D la sol re, et è chiamato synemmenon. El quarto tetracordo ha principio in paramese et termina in nete diezeugmenon, come dal and mi de and fa = mi ad E la mi acuto, et è chiamato diezeugmenon, ma el quinto et l'ultimo de li tetracordi, el quale è chiamato hyperboleon, ha principio in nete diezeugmenon et ha fine in nete hyperboleon, scilicet da E la mi acuto ad A la mi re superacuto. Et questo basta per la cognitione de tutti li ordini de li tetracordi.

7. Da poi tale canon seguita così, scilicet 'per tria genera melorum canitur', circa la intelligentia de li quali dico che apresso Boetio li generi de li canti sono tre, cioè diatonico, chromatico et enarmonico. El primo, scilicet el diatonico, divide et ordina ciaschaduno de li cinque tetracordi prediti per semitonio, tono, et tono, ut hic:



El secondo genere, chiamato cromatico, divide ciaschuno de li cinque tetracordi prediti in questo modo, che da la prima corda a la seconda sarà quella medesma distantia de semitonio, la qual è stata in la diatonica partitione, et da la corda seconda a la terza etiam sarà distantia de semitonio, li quali insieme gionti (come a molti piace) reintegrano el spatio del tono.⁷ Ma da la terza corda a la quarta cade uno intervallo de

⁵ On the prices of other music-books, see no. 9, para. 1.

⁶ Here Spataro applies the teaching of Ramis in his *Musica practica* (ed. Wolf, pp. 58-61). Ramis asserted that he derived the theory from Cicero (*De re publica* 6. 17-18), although his actual source is Boethius, *De musica* 1. 27, where the heavenly bodies are connected with Greek note-names. The title-page of Gafurio's *Practica musicae* (1496) shows the same correspondence, but adds the nine Muses and the eight modes.

 $^{^7}$ Spataro adds the parenthetical comment 'come a molti piace' because his description of the chromatic tetrachord did not please others, and especially Franchino Gafurio. As Spataro acknowledges elsewhere, theoretically speaking, the two semitones do not equal a 9:8 whole tone. See the discussion of this point in Ch. 3, pp. 67–8.

triemitonio, o vero de semiditono, el quale triemitonio sarà in uno intervallo, scilicet incomposito pronuntiato, perché basta che ogni tetracordo habbia tre intervalli. El terzo genere, chiamato enarmonico, divide ciaschuno de li cinque prediti tetracordi in questo modo, scilicet da la prima corda a la seconda fa distantia de una dieses, et da la seconda a la terza similmente fa distantia de una altra dieses, le quale insieme gionte reintegrano el spatio del semitonio. Ma da la terza corda a la quarta produce uno spatio de dui toni in uno intervallo pronuntiati. Compreso adunque come da li tre generi prediti ciaschaduno de li cinque tetracordi di sopra assignati resta per se diviso, facilmente sarà compreso quello che in esso canon seguita, scilicet 'effingens in duobus secundis dumtaxat unum anfractum suorum tamen duorum primorum intervallorum', la sententia de le quali parole si è questa, che in li dui ultimi generi, scilicet 241' nel cromatico et in lo enarmonico, el se dè fare | in ciaschaduno tetracordo

ad D *sol re*⁸ similmente sarà semitonio. Ma volendo procedere secondo che el canon ce comanda, se debba saltare da \natural *mi* ad D *sol re* chromatico et non tocare C *fa ut*, et per tale modo de quello tono composito cadente tra \natural et D (cromatice loquendo) se ne fa uno tono incomposito, scilicet in uno intervallo pronuntiato, et da poi da D ad E se procederà con intervallo de semiditono incomposito, cioè in uno intervallo pronuntiato, et aciò che più claro questo sia compreso, adduco questi essempi sequenti:



Ciaschuno tetracordo sempre ha quattro corde, ma perché nel predito genere cromatico de li primi dui intervalli solo faciamo uno intervallo,

⁸ Here (and in the description of the enharmonic tetrachord) we run into a problem of terminology. Spataro is able to describe the intervals of the semitone and diesis (quarter-tone), but he has no name for their pitch. When he says that 'from C fa ut to D sol re will likewise be a semitone', D has to be understood as C \sharp or D \flat (later he calls it 'D sol re chromatico'). In the enharmonic tetrachord, he states that from B to C is a diesis and from C to D is a diesis, and therefore the interval B to D will be a semitone. In speaking about the chromatic and enharmonic genera, Spataro, following ancient practice, does not treat the note-names as fixed pitches but as the names of strings whose tuning changes according to the genus.

scilicet saltando da la prima a la terza, resta che in lo essempio addutto di sopra ad longum in ciaschuno tetracordo non appareno più de tre corde, de le quali tre corde di sopra assignate la seconda dista da la prima per tono, et la terza dista da la seconda per semiditono, et per tale [modo] insieme gionte perficeno esso tetracordo o vero diatessaron de dui toni et uno semitonio completo. Compres[o] la cognitione del preditto secondo genere, facilmente a la cognitione del terzo, chiamato enarmonico, se potrà pervenire. Et perché el canon comanda che de li primi dui intervalli se ne faccia uno, come di sopra nel cro[ma]tico è stato fatto, pertanto de li soi dui primi intervalli che sono duo dieses insieme gionti faremo uno semitonio in questo modo, che essendo da 🛱 ad C distantia de dieses et da C ad D similmente, non se procederà da 🛱 ad C et da C ad D, ma lassaremo C intatto et solamente sarà canta[to] \ et D, et da poi procederemo da D ad E per intervallo de ditono incomposito. Et per tale modo se procederà in ciaschuno de li altri tetracordi. Et appare che tali tetracordi solo sarano cantati con dui intervalli, perché li primi dui sarano inclusi in uno, come è stato ditto et come per il sequente essempio se dimostra:



8. Finalmente esso canon seguitando dice così, scilicet 'et synemmenon utique devitans', per le quali parole se intende che bene che 'l canon in principio dica, 'omnis tetracordorum ordo', etc., che el terzo tetracordo, el quale è el synemmenon, è ecceptuato et levato de tale tenore, et che in esso 241^v tenore sarano solo cantati | quattro tetracordi, ciaschuno per li tre generi prediti pronuntiato, li quali quattro sarano questi, scilicet hypaton, meson, diezeugmenon, hyperboleon, et ciaschuno de essi quattro tetracordi sarà cantato tre volte, scilicet per diatonico, per cromatico, et per enarmonico. Ma perché alchuni potriano dubitare per quali note cantabile essi tetracordi debbiano esser exercitati, et etiam potriano circa el valore de tale note stare in dubbio, per la clara cognitione de tale note et signo è stato posito nel principio, scilicet inanzi ad esso canon, el signo circulare et una pausa de breve, per la quale pausa breve se dà notitia che le figure per li tetracordi in tale tenore exercitate sono breve del tempo perfetto. Et così prima se ponerà la pausa del tempo, et da poi per tempi perfetti o vero per breve procederemo, come in lo sequente essempio appare:



9. Havendo declarato et ad longum posito el tenore del canto predito, hora a la declaratione del contr'alto de tale canto attenderemo, nel principio del qual contr'alto è così scritto, scilicet 'Jovis parentis equalitas', le quali parole ivi sono state posite per clave, scilicet per manifestare dove la prima nota de tale contra alto habbia el suo principio, el quale principio (ut supra) è ditto esser la equalità del parente o vero padre de Giove, el qual padre de Giove (come da li poeti è stato ditto) è Saturno. Adunque perché (ut diximus) Saturno è in G sol re ut locato, restarà che anchora el principio de esso contra alto sarà in tale loco situato, scilicet che con lo soprano principierà in unisono. Circa li segni et proportione in tale contr'alto occurenti non mi estenderò perché più oltra non domandati.

10. Nel contrabasso de tale canto in loco de clave è così scritto, scilicet 'Saturnus iustitiam petit'. Di sopra è stato concluso che Saturno è collocato in G sol re at primo; ma perché el canon (in questo loco) dice che Saturno domanda giustitia, pertanto gli è da declarare come (in musica) sia intesa questa giustitia, la qual cosa circa le consonantie è considerata, perché gli è da sapere che de le consonantie alchune sono perfette, et alchune sono imperfette. De le perfette alchuna supera l'altra. Essendo adunque le perfette consonantie solo due, scilicet la ottava et la quinta, dico (come ogni musico consente) la ottava esser più perfetta de la quinta, imperò che la ottava non patisse in diminutione nec etiam in augumentatione, ma la quinta (come per li instrumenti artefatti se proba) patisse in diminutione, et tale quinta etiam augumentata per semitonio et per tono facilmente se converte in proprietà de sexta, ma la ottava per poca 242^r diminutione non è aceptata da lo audito, nec etiam per augumen | tatione de semitonio, né de tono mai non concorda. Et perché facilmente non

2. Spataro to Cavazzoni, 1 Aug. 1517

tende a la diminutione né etiam tende a lo augumento come fa la quinta preditta, è ditta essere non solamente giusta ma è chiamata propr[ia] giustitia, perché la giustitia, senza offender ad altri, serba et vole per se quello che è suo, scilicet cinque toni et dui s[e]mitoni, et non più né manco, per la qual cosa essendo tale diapason dotata de tale dignità, acquista nome no[n] solo de esser giusta, ma (ut dixi) esser la propria giustitia. Per la qual cosa adunque intenderemo che Saturno cerca questa diapason, scilicet che essendo (ut dixi) Saturno in G sol re ut, che esso Saturno se parte da G preditto et descende ad Γ *ut*, et non ascende ad G superacuto, perché esso contrabasso saria molto incomodo et sinistro. Et per tale rasone esso contrabasso harà principio in Γ ut. Ma nel canon del preditto contrabasso, el quale dice così, scilicet 'illud quod est divisio agregatio sit et e converso, et anfractus superparticularis primi intensi sint eiusdem generis secundi et e contra', questa è la conclusione, scilicet che le maxime appar[ente] sono cantate in loco de minime et le minime sono cantate per maxime, le longe sono cantate per semibreve et le semibreve apparente sono cantate per longe, et le breve sono inmutabile, scilicet che so[no] cantate per breve. Anchora li intervalli ascendenti per quinta se faranno de quarta et quelli de la q[uar]ta ascendenti se faranno de quinta.⁹

11. Se voi di queste cose preditte cercate la rasone, attenderete a [ciò] che seguita. Gli è da considerare che essendo el preditto canon constituito in canto mensurato, el [biso]gna advertire circa le figure in esso canto mensurato usitate, per la qual cosa bisogna recor[rere] a quelle figure che intra loro sono similitudinarie, le quale sono chiamate essentiale, le quale sono queste cinque, scilicet 🗖 🗆 🗸 🍐, de le quali la breve è capo et principio, sì come è la unità in arythmetica.' De la preditta breve adunque due o tre volte sumpta o agregata nasce el modo minore, scilicet la longa, ma de la preditta breve in due o in tre parte divisa nasce la prolatione^d minore,¹⁰ et così la longa et la semibreve^e saranno simile (non dico in virtù) ma in numero, perché (ut dixi) la longa solo potrà haver in sé due o tre volte la breve, et così la semibreve divide essa breve in due et in tre par parte et non più; et così sono simile in quanto al binario et al ternari[o], ma in virtù (ut dixi) assai distano, perché la longa contiene in sé due o tre volte el principio, o vero tempo integro, et la semibreve divide esso integro tempo in due o in tre equal parte. Se adunque vogliamo procedere ' MS: arytmhetica. ^d MS: ploratione. " MS: breve, altered to 'semibreve' in Del Lago's hand.

⁹ On Spataro's abstruse canons, see Ch. 3 and the Commentary on no. 3.

¹⁰ Minor prolation is normally the division of the semibreve into two minims; Spataro's use of the term to denote the division (whether twofold or threefold) of the breve seems to derive from his notion that the breve is the central element; *prolatio minor* is treated as analogous to *modus minor*.

(ut diximus), la longa sarà cantata per semibreve, et la semibreve sarà cantata in loco de longa. Similmente nui havemo che la maxima potrà solo esser agregata de quattro o sei^f o nove breve, et così etiam la breve solo (da la minima) sarà divisa in quattro o sei o nove parte. Per la qual cosa dico che in numero caderà intra loro non poc[a] similitudine, ma in virtù altro sarà quattro, sei o nove volte lo integro sumpto, et altro sarà esso integro in quattro, sei o nove parte equale diviso. Per tale similitudine adunque la ^{242^v} maxima | qui apparente sarà cantata per el valore de una minima et la minima sarà cantata per la maxima, et per tale modo le longe et le maxime, le quale sono agregatione de tempi, sarano cantate per semibreve et minime, le quale nascono da la divisione del tempo. Et così per contrario le semibreve et le minime (in tale canto apparente) sarano cantate come longe et maxime, come etiam di sopra è stato ditto.

12. Da poi esso canon seguita così, scilicet 'et anfractus superparticularis primi intensi sint eiusdem generis secundi'. Per questo se debba intendere che li anfratti o salti ascendenti del primo anfratto superparticulare, li quali sono la diapente che nasce da la sexqualtera, se fanno del secondo anfratto superparticulare che è la diatessaron che nasce da la sexquitertia, 'et e contra', scilicet che li salti ascendenti de diatessaron se fanno de diapente. Et questo basti in quanto a la declaratione del canto chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto', etc.

13. Questa è una copia de la lettera la qual mandò Messer Zuan di Spadari da Bologna a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono sopra i canoni del suo motteto chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto', etc., 1517, die primo augusti.

14. Voi etiam diceti voler la declaratione de quello canon in la particula 'Qui sedes' de la mia missa de 'Da pacem Domine' assignato, el qual dice così, scilicet 'proportionum alpha in o dedatur et per contrarium motum quinquies sine pausis prioribus repetendo concines'. Prima dove esso canon dice 'proportionum alpha in o dedatur', bisogna advertire che solo le proportione in tale tenore apparente mutano loco, scilicet che la prima proportione, la quale è sextupla così signata ⁶/₁, è posita in loco de l'ultima così apparente, scilicet ⁶/₂, et l'ultima, cioè la preditta tripla così posita ⁶/₂, sarà locata nel loco de la prima, scilicet de la sextupla, et la seconda comparatione, scilicet la subsextupla così figurata ¹/₆, sarà posita in loco de la penultima, cioè de la quadrupla, ut hic ¹²/₃ signata, et essa quadrupla sarà posita nel loco de la subsextupla, et per tale modo se rivolta el principio in fine et el fine in principio, come declara questa positione, ut hic:



Da poi esso canon seguita dicendo che esse figure se replicano cinque volte per moto contrario. Qua se intende che esso tenore è cantato sei volte, scilicet la prima, et poi sarà reiterato cinque altre volte che sono sei, la qual repetitione se fa senza connumerare le prime pause, scilicet quelle pause le quale sono inanti a le figure cantabile, ma solo se numerano quelle che sono posite dapo o vero in fine de esse figure cantabile, le quale cantabile figure se cantano per moto contrario, scilicet che quelle che descendono ascendono, et quelle che ascendono descendono. Circa el valore de le figure pausabile et cantabile, più oltra non mi extendo, perché havuto la declaratione preditta, so che da per voi bene le intendereti, ma per più chiarezza vi mando tale tenore, el quale resoluto sta ut hic:



1. Thank you for your recent informative letter and your kind offer.

2. With regard to the *Diffinitorium* of Tinctoris,¹ I already have a copy; I have heard nothing about his retraction of it. A certain Pietro Aaron has published a book here² which I neither praise nor criticize. I'll send you a copy because it prints certain errors contained in the work.³

3. I have been busy reading the treatise by Nicholas of Bar-le-Duc [Wollick]⁴ that Franchino Gafurio of Milan, who has written a lot on music, sent me for review; it is largely taken from Gafurio's writings, and he recommends it highly. I don't know how we shall remain friends after my letter to him, though we have corresponded for twenty-four years. If you want the treatise, write to Gafurio; it costs about three marcelli.⁵

4. As a friend, I cannot refuse to answer the request in your postscript, though the summer heat and my age make it difficult. It would be easier if I had before me the explanation of my motet, 'Ubi opus est facto', which I once made for a colleague in Ferrara of Fra Benedetto Bellabusta.

5. In the soprano, 'Saturn' indicates the clef, that is, the place of the first note. Following the assignment of the names of the planets from proslambanomenos to mese, A to a, the moon is A, Mercury B, Venus c, the Sun d, Mars e, Jupiter f, and Saturn g.⁶ The soprano therefore begins

2. Spataro to Cavazzoni, 1 Aug. 1517

on g. I shall not say any more about the soprano since you only asked about the name Saturn.

6. In the tenor there are no notes but a circle and a breve rest. The canon states: 'Each order of the tetrachords is sung in the three melodic genera, making only one interval out of the two first intervals in the second and third [genera], and omitting the synemmenon tetrachord.' With respect to 'each order of the tetrachords', there are five orders of tetrachords, beginning on B (hypaton), e (meson), a (synemmenon), b (diezeugmenon), and e' (hyperboleon).

7. The canon continues 'it is sung in the three melodic genera'. According to Boethius, the diatonic tetrachord proceeds by semitone, tone, and tone:



The chromatic proceeds by the same diatonic semitone, another semitone (which together, as many agree, make a whole tone),⁷ and semiditone, the enharmonic by diesis, diesis (which together make a semitone), and ditone. The canon, 'making one leap of the first two intervals in the latter two [genera]', means that in the last two genera the first two intervals are combined into one distance. In the second order of tetrachords the first two intervals are one semitone from *B* to *c* and another semitone from *c* to *d*.⁸ The canon instructs them to be combined, skipping over *c*, so the second order will be sung as tone and semiditone:



Each tetrachord always has four notes, but since we combine the first two intervals in the chromatic genus, the example shows only three, making a tone followed by a semiditone, which together make a fourth. The third genus is treated similarly. The first two intervals, each a diesis, make a semitone when combined. c is skipped, and d to f is a ditone. These tetrachords are sung with only three notes:



8. Finally, the canon 'and avoiding the synemmenon without fail' means that the synemmenon tetrachord is to be omitted, so only four tetrachords are sung, hypaton, meson, diezeugmenon, and hyperboleon. Each is sung three times, in the diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic genera. The circle and the breve rest before the canon indicate that the mensuration is in perfect *tempus* and that the note-values are breves. It starts with a breve rest and then proceeds in breves, as the following resolution shows:



9. In the alto, 'the equality of the father of Jupiter' indicates the clef, to show where the first note begins. Since Saturn is the father of Jupiter, and Saturn is g, the alto begins on the same note as the soprano. I shan't explain the other signs and proportions since you did not ask me to.

10. In the bass, 'Saturn asks for justice' also indicates the clef. 'Justice' is considered musically with regard to the consonances. The perfect ones are octave and fifth. The fifth (as instruments show) can be diminished or augmented, but not the octave, which is not only just, but justice itself, which demands exactly its due, five tones and two semitones. Therefore

Saturn seeks an octave, so the bass begins an octave lower, on G—not higher, because this would be difficult for the bass. The canon, 'that which is division should be aggregation and vice versa, and the ascending leaps of the first superparticular genus should be of the second in the same genus, and vice versa', means that maximas are sung as minims and longs as semibreves, and vice versa, breves remaining the same, and that all intervals of the ascending fifth are sung as ascending fourths and all ascending fourths as ascending fifths.⁹

11. Here is the rationale: since the canon concerns mensural music, one

must turn to the five essential figures, $\Box \Box \Box \circ \diamond$, of which the breve is

chief. The breve is considered like unity in arithmetic; multiplied by two or three, it produces the minor mode; divided into two or three parts, minor prolation arises.¹⁰ Thus the long and semibreve are similar in number, binary or ternary, but not in value. The long is sung in place of a semibreve and vice versa. Similarly, the maxima can be composed of four, six, or nine breves, and the breve can be divided into four, six, or nine minims. Again, they are similar in number but not in value. Thus maximas are sung in place of minims and vice versa. Maximas and longs, which are aggregations of breves, are sung as semibreves and minims, resulting from division of the breve.

12. In the rest of the canon, the 'ascending interval of the first superparticular' is the fifth, 3:2, which is turned into the second superparticular, the fourth, 4:3. 'And vice versa' means that the ascending fourths are turned into fifths. This should suffice for an explanation of 'Ubi opus est facto'.

13. This is a copy of the letter Spataro sent to Cavazzoni on the canons in his motet 'Ubi opus est facto', 1 August 1517.

14. You also ask for the explanation of the canon in the 'Qui sedes' section of my mass 'Da pacem Domine'. 'Alpha of the proportions should be surrendered to omega, and you shall sing five times in contrary motion without repeating the first rests' means that the proportions in the tenor change place: ${}_{1}^{6}$ at the beginning exchanges with ${}_{2}^{6}$ at the end, and ${}_{6}^{1}$ and ${}_{3}^{12}$ in the middle are likewise reversed, shown as follows:



After the first statement, the notes are sung five times in inversion, repeating only the rests found after the first statement. You can work out the values of the notes from the previous explanation, but I give you the resolution:



COMMENTARY

This is the earliest letter in the chronology of MS Vat. lat. 5318. It is written by Spataro, but not in his hand (cf. para. 13), in reply to a letter from Cavazzoni, no longer extant.

Cavazzoni must have spoken about the 'retraction' of Tinctoris's Diffinitorium, the first printed dictionary of musical terms. One can deduce from this that he had certain information to the effect that Tinctoris-probably in his later yearswanted to retract the Diffinitorium, or parts of it. There are a number of significant differences between the printed version of the Diffinitorium and the Brussels manuscript (Bibliothèque Royale, MS 11. 4147). Unfortunately, the dictionary was excluded from Albert Seav's critical edition.¹¹ One important difference is in the definition of 'tonus' and its parts. In the printed version 'tonus' is defined as 'coniunctio ex distantia quinque dies[i]um constituta' ('an interval constituted of five dieses').¹² This definition follows the doctrine of Marchetto of Padua, as expounded in the Lucidarium musicae.¹³ Coussemaker's edition, after the Brussels manuscript, gives the following definition: 'tonus est conjunctio ex distantia unius semitonii majoris et unius minoris constituta' ('A tone is the interval constituted of a major and a minor semitone').¹⁴ By the time he wrote the Liber de arte contrapuncti in 1477, Tinctoris had retracted his first definition (Marchetto's theory, in particular his division of the tone, was widely criticized in the late fifteenth century). In that book he defines the tone as 'discordantia ex mixtura duarum vocum uno semitonio maiore ac uno minore ab invicem distantium effecta' ('a discord consisting of the mixture of two sounds distant from each other by a major and a minor semitone'),¹⁵ and he says that 'according to some' the chromatic semitone consists of the fifth part of a tone. The retraction of the division of the tone into five parts also causes changes in Tinctoris's definitions of diastema, diesis, and semitonium; compare the readings in Coussemaker's edition with those in Parrish's edition of the Dictionary. The former also has entries under scisma and diacisma, not present in the printed version.

The date of printing of Tinctoris's Diffinitorium had previously been assumed

¹¹ Tinctoris, Opera theoretica.

¹² See the *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish.

¹³ See Marchetto, *Lucidarium*, ed. Herlinger, pp. 130–57, and Jan Herlinger, 'Marchetto's Division of the Whole Tone', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34 (1981), 193–216. ¹⁴ CS iv. 189.

¹⁵ Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, ii. 92.

to be c.1475 because the book was dedicated to Princess Beatrice of Aragon before her marriage in 1476. James Coover has shown convincingly that 1495 is a more likely date, but he wonders why the printer, Gerardus de Lisa, whom he believes to have been acquainted with Tinctoris, did not revise the dedication.¹⁶ The fact that Tinctoris had already changed his mind about the division of the tone by 1477 suggests that he was not responsible for the printing of his dictionary and that Gerardus simply set the manuscript as it came into his hands. The publication of this work, with its superseded definitions and out-of-date dedication, may have embarrassed Tinctoris, which may be the reason why Cavazzoni speaks about 'la retratatione de esso *Diffinitorio*'.

The equation of the octave with the idea of 'justice' recalls Macrobius' equating of the number eight with justice, a notion he ascribes to the 'Pythagorici'.¹⁷ The Renaissance musician developed a new appreciation for the unique character of the octave. Ramis, preceded in his praise of the octave by Johannes Gallicus of Mantua, 'replaces the time-honored division into hexachords, units of six tones, by the division into octaves, which is the order that modern music theory has accepted'.¹⁸ His praise of the number eight is found in the eighth chapter of the first treatise of his *Musica practica*. Spataro, his disciple, adds new reasons for considering the octave as *perfectissima consonantia* (Johannes Gallicus' term) or, as he has it, 'justice personified' ('non solamente giusta ma . . . propria giustitia').

B.J.B.

¹⁶ See his essay, 'The Printing of Tinctoris' Dictionary', in Dictionary, trans. Parrish, p. 108. ¹⁷ Macrobius, Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis 1. 5. 17–18. In fact this is a departure from normal Pythagorean doctrine, which equated justice with five or four: see Mario Regali, Macrobio: Commento al Somnium Scipionis, libro I (Biblioteca di studi antichi 38; Pisa, 1983), pp. 248–9. ¹⁸ Edward E. Lowinsky, 'The Concept of Physical and Musical Space in the Renaissance', in

¹⁸ Edward E. Lowinsky, 'The Concept of Physical and Musical Space in the Renaissance', in Gustave Reese (ed.), *Papers of the American Musicological Society, Annual Meeting, 1941* (n.p., 1946), pp. 57-84 at 75 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 14-15. **3** (J48 and J27).¹ Fos. 167^{r-v} and 133^r-134^v Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 20 July 1520 (autograph)

^{134^v} [Reverend]o Domino Joan[ni del Lago] Sancte So[phie subdiaco]no dignissimo [maiori honora]ndo. [Venet]ijs.

167^r Venerabilis vir et amice honorande, salutem.

1. A dì 2 julii ebi una vostra de dì 22 junii signat[a], et da poi ho receputo un'altra a dì 15 del predicto de dì 10 julii signata, le quale son de un[0] medesimo tenore. A la prima vostra predicta son stato tardo circa la resposta, et questo è sta[t0] perché da dì 23 junii sino a questa hora son stato gravemente amalato de una infirm[ità] multo grave, de la quale (per essere già carico de multi anni) non credo potermi liberare.

2. H[0] compreheso quanto sia el vostro desiderio, scilicet la declaratione de quelle mie subscriptione d[a] me sino al tempo de la mia quasi adoles[c]entia facte, le quale a me al presente son più inc[0]gnite et laboriose circa la sua inteligentia che non erano in quello tempo. Pure al meg[lio] che io potrò et saperò (aciò che el vostro optato desiderio habia effecto), tale subscriptione et ca[no]ni serano da me declarati.

3. Et prima V.S. me recerca circa quello canon posito s[u]pra la particula de la Gloria de la 'Missa de la tradictora' chiamata 'cum San[cto] Spiritu', el quale canon dice ut hic: 'Hoc in hypate meson precipue cantabis; in tertia [mi]noris multiplicis canendo reverteris; per maius in mesen per sinemenon reitera[bis].' Appare claro che tale canon comanda che esso tenore se debia cantare tre volte, scilicet la pr[ima] comenzando in hypate meson, cioè in E *la mi* grave, et sequitando usque in finem. Per la second[a] volta esso canon comanda che esso tenore debia tornare dal fine al principio cantando, scilicet che nel ritornare quella pausa de breve posita in fine de esso tenore non se tace. Vole et[iam] esso canon che quando esso tenore in la seconda volta torna dal fine al principio, che le note cantabile et non cantabile siano gubernate da la tertia spetie de

¹ Jeppesen, 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 8, already observed that the two letters are related in subject-matter. J48 is incomplete and carries no date. In fact, J27 is the continuation of J48, and the two letters, although physically separated in the Vatican codex, are one and the same. This is further confirmed by physical evidence: fos. 134 and 167 have the same watermark (fo. 133 has none). The three folios have three rows of four cut-marks each in the same place. (These cut-marks result from the folding and sealing of the letter.) How, then, is one to explain the discrepancy between the date of J27, 20 June 1520, and the beginning of J48, in which Spataro says he received Del Lago's two letters during July? Since he excuses himself for his late reply to the first letter from Del Lago, but not the second of 10 July, we may assume that his letter was written soon after he received Del Lago's second letter, on 15 July. July 20 would be a logical date. 'June' therefore must be a slip of the pen, understandable if we recall that he says at the beginning of the letter and at the end that he has been gravely ill and is still 'not in good health'.

The Letters

minore [mol]tiplice, scilicet da la subquadrupla, et per tale modo ciascuna figura cantabile et non cantabile starà^{*a*} in quadruplo, scilicet che ciascuna figura serà quadruplicata. Ma in tertia vice el can[on] predicto comanda che esso tenore debia principiare nel principio in mesen, scilicet in A *la mi re* [acu]ta, per synemenon, scilicet per b molle. Ma vole che tale reiteratione proceda 'per maius', scilicet c[on] quelle figure le quale (in seconda vice) son state cantate in tertia minoris multipli[cis], scilicet in la subquadrupla come $\frac{1}{4}$, vole che in la tertia volta siano cantate in essa tertia spetie del genere multiplice de magiore, scilicet in la quadrupla come $\frac{1}{4}$. Et p[er] tale modo quello maius fu da me inteso, el quale maius ad altro non atende che a f[are] che le figure conducte (in la seconda volta) dal subquadruplo, in la tertia volta siano condu[c]te dal quadruplo, come in questa resolutione V.S. potrà vedere:



4. In quanto a quello che V.S. domanda circa el canon supra la particula 167^v 'et in Spiritum' signato, el quale dice ut hic: 'in primo signo anfractus intensi superparticularis quartidecimi fiunt ex tertia eiusdem generis remissi. In secundo et e converso et quarta superpartientis secundum ordinem numerorum in illam redeundo. Tertio et quarto ut iacent in libro', el tenore de la predicta particula è guidata da quattro signi, de li quali el primo è questo: C, nel quale signo prima el canon comanda che li anfracti intensi, o vero le distantie le quale ascendeno, le quale son de la specie quartadecima del ge[nere] superparticulare, la quale serà la sesquiquintadecima, in la quale consiste el semitonio in la activa musica usitato, vole che siano cantate et prese per la tertia spetie del medesimo genere superparticulare, scilicet per la sesquiquarta, ma che debia essere remissa, scilicet descendente. De la quale prima particula de esso canon la conclusione è questa, che in ciascuno loco de esso tenore soto questo signo C el si trovarà el semitonio ascendente, che tale spatio de semitonio se debia pronuntiare ditono descendente, et questo advene perché in essa

tertia spetie superparticulare, la quale è la sesquiquarta, cade el spatio del ditono in practica exercitato.

5. Da poi, esso canon pervene al secondo signo ut hic O signato, et dice che el se debia procedere per el contrario de quello che habiamo facto nel primo signo, scilicet che così come nel primo habiamo facto del spatio del semitonio intenso ditono remisso, che nui faciamo (in questo secondo signo) del semitonio remisso ditono^b intenso. Dice ancora esso canon che la quarta specie del genere superpartiente, la quale nasce secondo l'ordine de li numeri, scilicet la supertripartiensquintas, la quale contene in sé la sexta minore in la activa musica exercitata, sia riducta in la predicta 14^a specie del genere superparticulare predicta, in la quale se contene el spatio del semitonio cantabile. Per la quale cosa se conclude che del spatio de la sexta minore se farà spatio de semitonio, come demonstra questa resolutione sequente:



^{133'} 6. Circa el canon posito supra el tenore de la particula 'Benedictus', esso tenore è gubernato da li tri generi de li canti et è cantato tre volte, scilicet la prima per genus enharmonicum, la seconda per genus chromaticum, et la tertia per diatonicum. El canon comanda che lo enharmonico et el chromatico debiano tacere o vero convertire quelle figure cantabile in pause le quale discrepano dal diatonico. Questo discrepare se intende che quando esso tenore serà cantato per ciascuno de li dui superpositi generi et che li occuresse alcuno intervallo non pertinente a genere usitato diatonico, che quele prime note che producono tale distantia non usitata siano riducte' in pausa. Se V.S. ha familiari li predicti generi, a quella serà cosa facilissima tale cognitione. Ma se quella non ha bene la cognitione de tali generi, me acaderia supra queste poche parole fare multo longo scrivere, al quale scrivere ho molto male el comodo per più rasone et impedimenti, ma la sua resolutione sta ut hic:

^b MS: ditotono. ^c MS: sia riducta.

^a MS: stera. 218



Basta che in lo enharmonico genere non haveti cantare el primo suo intervallo, el quale serà de una diesis, et in lo chromatico non haveti cantare el secondo suo intervallo, el quale se crede essere de magiore semitonio, li quali intervalli non sono exercitati in genere diatonico.²

7. Circa el canon posito nel tenore de la prima parte de la Gloria de la missa de 'Da pacem', el quale dice in questo modo, scilicet 'sexties sine pausis prioribus repetito, et prima superparticularis intensa sit septima remissa et remissa intensa', demonstra esso canon che el predicto tenore serà cantato septe volte, scilicet che la prima serà cantata conumerando le prime pause, et da poi serà sei volte replicato, o vero cantato senza le prime pause predicte. Dice etiam esso canon che la prima spetie del genere superparticulare intensa sia la septima spetie de esso genere superparticulare remissa. Altro non vole dire questo se non che li intervalli ascendenti contenuti da la sesqualtera, scilicet la diapente, siano facti intervalli sesquioctavi remissi, scilicet de tono in des[c]endendo. Et dove dice 'e remissa intensa', dice che li intervalli de diapente, li quali serano descendenti, se faciano de tono ascendente.

8. Circa le proportione in tale tenore occurente, non ci cade poca consideratione, perché son subtilemente conducte. Pure al meglio che ^{133^v} potrò con brevità circa esse alcuna cosa explicarò. | Prima habiamo da considerare che el predicto tenore, per essere nel principio con questo signo ϕ signato, che due semibreve serano pronuntiate per una de le altre sue parte. Adonca, quelle tre pause de longa perfecta, le quale dapo questo signo ϕ sequitano, harano el valore de 27 semibreve. Et quelle tre pause de longa perfecta, le quale tre pause de longa perfecta, le quale tre pause de longa perfecta, le quale comparati, scilicet $\frac{9}{2}$, harano tanto de valore quanto hano sei semibreve del signo primo, le quale con le predicte 27 coniuncte serano 33. Da poi sequitano altre tre pause de longa signate con questi termini, scilicet $\frac{6}{3}$, le quale

² For an explanation, see the Commentary.

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(perché cadeno in dupla consideratione respecto la precedente^d comparatione così signata, scilicet $\frac{9}{2}$) hanno el valore de tre semibreve, le quale con le predicte 33 inseme coniuncte farano 36. Et per tale modo le predicte nove pause de longa perfecta nel principio locate solo hanno virtù de 36 pause de semibreve de questo signo diminuto ϕ nel principio posito.

9. Circa le tre maxime sequente plene, l'è asai claro che ciascuna harà el valore de due semibreve de questo signo ϕ diminuto predicto. Dapo le quale maxime sequitano tre semibreve con questi termini signate, scilicet ¹/₁₈, de le quale tre semibreve ciascuna aquista el valore de una maxima plena de le precedente, perché se una semibreve aquista el valore de 18 et che 18 semibreve habiano havuto el valore de due, ergo ciascuna de esse tre semibreve harà tanta virtù quanto (ut dixi) ha ha[v]uto ciascuna de le precedente maxime plene, scilicet de due semibreve de questo signo non integro, scilicet ϕ . Da poi se pervene a la quarta comparatione, scilicet $\frac{21}{2}$, la quale comparatione demonstra che 21 de le sequente son posite per due de la proportione precedente così signata ¹/₁₈. Ma per più facilemente trovare el valore de quella pausa de longa perfecta posita dapo la predicta proportione, scilicet 21, ce refferiremo a le minime, dicendo se 21 minima de le sequente hano el valore de due minime de le precedente ut hic signate, scilicet $\frac{1}{18}$, quante minime de essa proportione $\frac{1}{18}$ valerano le 18 minime incluse in la pausa de la longa perfecta posita dapo la comparatione $\frac{21}{2}$. Et per trovare la mera verità de questo, poneremo questi termini, scilicet 21, 2, 18, et da poi multiplicaremo 18 per 2, o vero 2 per 18, et farà 36. Da poi partiremo tale advenimento, scilicet 36, per 21, et quello che ne virà serà 1 et $\frac{5}{7}$. Et per tale modo se cognoscerà che la pausa de longa perfecta posita dapo la proportione 21/2 resta in valore de una integra minima et $\frac{5}{7}$ parte de un'altra de la precedente proportione ut hic signata: 1/18.

10. Dapo questo se pervenirà a la quinta proportione ut hic signata: ${}^{6}_{1}$, la quale demonstra che sei minime dapo sé posite hano tanto de valore quanto ha una minima de la precedente proportione così signata, scilicet ${}^{21}_{2}$. Et perché dapo essa quinta comparatione sequita una pausa de longa et de tempo perfecto, la quale harà in sé el valore de 18 minime, de le quale se sei serano una de la precedente proportione così signata, 134^c scilicet ${}^{21}_{2}$, restarà che la pausa predicta valerà solo tre mi|nime de la predicta precedente proportione, scilicet ${}^{21}_{2}$. Da poi bisognarà vedere se (ut demonstravi) 18 minime de questa proportione, scilicet ${}^{21}_{2}$, hebeno tanta virtù quanto hebe una minima et ${}^{5}_{7}$ de la proportione ${}^{1}_{18}$. Quando adonca valerano tre minime de questa proportione, scilicet ${}^{21}_{2}$, et trovarasse che le predicte tre minime harano el valore de due septime parte de una minima de la predicta tertia proportione ut hic signata, scilicet ${}^{1}_{18}$, le quale due d MS: precedende.

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predicte septime parte de la predicta pausa minima giuncte con la integra minima et $\frac{5}{7}$ predicte, se reintegra el valore de due pause de minima de la tertia comparatione così signata: $\frac{1}{18}$.

11. Circa la sexta et ultima comparatione in esso tenore locata ut hic signata: $\frac{3}{7}$, tale proportione se pò declarare per multi modi, de li quali el più breve a me pare che sia considerare che tanta virtù harano le tre longe perfecte contenute da le maxime vacue dapo la proportione $\frac{3}{7}$ posite quanto harano septe longe perfecte da la precedente proportione così signata: $\frac{6}{1}$ guidate. Di sopra è stato dicto che la pausa de longa perfecta da questa comparatione $\frac{6}{1}$ gubernata solo ha el valore de due septime parte de una minima de le figure o note de questa comparatione, scilicet $\frac{1}{18}$. Adonca se tre aquistarano el valore de septe de questa proportione, scilicet $\frac{6}{1}$, restarà che le maxime vacue dapo questa proportione $\frac{3}{7}$ posite (perché hano el valore de tre longe perfecte) ciascuna valerà 14 septime parte de una minima de la predicta comparatione, scilicet $\frac{1}{18}$. Pertanto tanto valerà una de le predicte maxime vacue quanto vale una de le semibreve gubernate da questa proportione, scilicet $\frac{1}{18}$.

12. Et questo basti in quanto a queste vostre petitione, circa le quale più brevemente che ho potuto ho cercato satisfarvi. Ma essendo la cosa ardua, male se possono exprimere tanto clare che siano intese. Pertanto seria de bisogno che V.S. et io ce trovassemo inseme, perché per multi modi facili et clari inseme parlando, tale difficultà se possono demonstrare. Pertanto se integramente V.S. non restarà da me satisfacto, quella me harà per excusato per multe rasone, et prima perché (ut dixi) son non in bona valitudine e sanità. Pure quella acceptarà la optima mi[a] voluntà et non l'opera, la quale per essere incult[a] et con grossi vocaboli pronuntiata serà da V.[S.] excusata, et (ut dixi) guardando al core mio serà con lieta fronte acceptata.

Vale. Bononie, die 20 junii [julii]³ 1520.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. I have not been able to respond earlier to your letters of 22 June and 10 July because I have been stricken by an illness so grave that, considering my age, I see no hope of recovery.

2. You would like an explanation of the canons of the 'Missa de la tradictora'; they were written so long ago, when I was almost a youth, that I can hardly understand them myself, but I shall do my best.

3. At the words 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' in the Gloria the canon, 'This you shall at first sing in hypate meson [e]; you shall return by singing in the third species of the minor multiplex genus; you shall repeat on a, using bb, with the larger [time values]', means that the tenor is to be sung three times, the first time beginning on e. The second statement is sung backwards, including the breve rest at the end, with all the note-values augmented by four, since the third species of the minor multiplex genus is *subquadrupla*. The third statement begins on a' and is sung with bb. 'Per maius' indicates that the notes are sung in the third species of the major multiplex genus, *quadrupla*, which means that the note-values return to their original form, as you can see in the resolution:



4. The canon to the section 'Et in Spiritum' says: 'Under the first sign the ascending intervals of the fourteenth species of the superparticular genus are transformed into descending intervals of the third species of the same genus. Under the second [sign] the reverse, and the fourth species of the superpartient genus, according to the order of the numbers, going back into the former. Under the third and fourth [signs] as given in the book.' This can be explained as follows: The tenor is guided by four signs. Under the first, C, all ascending intervals of the fourteenth species of the superparticular genus, or 16:15, which is the semitone in practical music, are to be sung as descending intervals in the third species of the same genus, or 5:4, which is the major third in practical music.

5. Under the second sign, O, the reverse obtains; all descending semitones become ascending major thirds. Moreover, the fourth species of the superpartient genus, or 8:5, the minor sixth in practical music, becomes the fourteenth species of the superparticular genus, a semitone. Thus a minor sixth becomes a semitone, as this resolution shows:



6. Regarding the canon to the 'Benedictus', the tenor is sung three times, in the enharmonic, chromatic, and diatonic genera. In the first two genera, however, all intervals not present in the diatonic genus are to be replaced with a rest. It would take a long time to explain this if you are not familiar with the three genera, so I will simply give you the resolution:



In the enharmonic genus the diesis is not sung, and in the chromatic genus the major semitone is omitted.²

7. The canon to the tenor in the first part of the Gloria of my 'Missa Da pacem', 'Repeated six times without the first rests, and the first ascending species of the superparticular genus should be the seventh descending species and the descending [species] ascending', indicates that the tenor is sung seven times. The rests at the beginning are sung only the first time. The first ascending species of the superparticular (ascending fifths) are to be sung as the seventh descending species of the same genus (descending whole tones). 'Descending ascending' means that all descending fifths are to be sung as ascending whole tones. 8. The proportions in this tenor are very tricky. I shall explain them briefly as best I can. Under the first sign, ϕ , two semibreves equal one in the other voices. The three long rests after this sign are worth twenty-seven semibreves and the three long rests after the sign $\frac{9}{2}$ equal six semibreves of the first sign. The three long rests after $\frac{6}{3}$ equal three semibreves. Therefore these nine long rests equal 36 semibreve rests under ϕ .

9. Of the three following black maximas, each one has the value of two semibreves under ϕ . After the proportion $\frac{1}{18}$ each of the three semibreves has the value of the previous black maxima. If one semibreve becomes worth eighteen, and eighteen had the value of two, then each semibreve will have the same value as the previous black maxima. Under $\frac{21}{2}$ you figure out the value of the perfect long rest by counting minims. If twenty-one minims under $\frac{21}{2}$ have the value of two minims under $\frac{1}{18}$, how many minims under $\frac{1}{18}$ are equivalent to the eighteen minims of the perfect long rest under $\frac{21}{2}$? You multiply 18 by 2 and divide by 21. Therefore the rest is worth $1\frac{5}{7}$ minims of the preceding proportion.

10. Under the fifth proportion, ${}^{6}_{1}$, six minims are equivalent to one under ${}^{21}_{2}$. The perfect long rest of eighteen minims is equivalent to three minims under the previous proportion. These three minims have the value of ${}^{2}_{7}$ of a minim under the third proportion, which, added to the rest of $1\frac{5}{7}$ minims, result in the value of two minim rests under $\frac{1}{18}$.

11. Under the last proportion, $\frac{3}{7}$, there are various ways to calculate the value. The easiest is to consider that the three perfect longs comprised in the black maximas after $\frac{3}{7}$ are equal to seven perfect longs under $\frac{6}{1}$. Since the latter were worth $\frac{2}{7}$ of a minim, each black maxima under $\frac{3}{7}$ will be worth $\frac{14}{7}$ of a minim under $\frac{1}{18}$, that is, two minims or a semibreve.

12. This should suffice to answer your question, but since the matter is very difficult, it would be better if we could discuss it in person. If I have not satisfied you, please excuse it as due to my poor health. Accept my good will and not the uncultured work, with its clumsy vocabulary.

COMMENTARY

The 'Missa de la tradictora' (which no longer survives) is based on a melody, probably a popular tune,⁴ the original version of which, to judge from the

⁴ 'La traditora' was a popular theme in Italian poetry and music. It deals with woman, treacherous in love, or, as Verdi's *Rigoletto*, following Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'amuse*, more lightly says: 'La Donna è mobile'. In vol. iii of his study, *La Frottola* (Århus and Copenhagen, 1970), p. 42, Jeppesen quotes a tune to the words 'La traditora la vol ch'io mora' ('the traitress wants me to die') from Lodovico Fogliano's quodlibet, 'Fortuna d'un gran tempo', and compares another to the words 'O traditora perché non mi votu ben' ('O traitress, why don't

canonic directions, accords with the last statements of the cantus firmus in the 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' and 'Et in Spiritum' sections. In the latter section, Spataro alters the melody as follows: in the first statement, all ascending semitones are to be sung as descending major thirds. In the second statement the reverse obtains: all descending semitones become ascending major thirds, and the one minor sixth becomes a semitone.

Why did Spataro choose to alter the semitones and the minor sixths? He may have had in mind an idea that later in the century crystallized in the concept of 'inganno', that is, the technique of varying a motif by holding on to its solmization while changing the hexachord in which some of its notes occur. This is the way in which the term *inganno* was defined by Giovanni Maria Artusi, who seems to have been the first to describe it, in the *Seconda parte dell' Artusi overo delle imperfettioni della moderna musica* (Venice, 1603), p. 45.⁵ Spataro's *inganno* is not based on solmization syllables: he achieves it by virtue of a canonic prescription demanding that intervals notated in one fashion be sung in another. To put it differently: *la tradictora* (the cantus firmus) looks one way, but acts in another. When interrogated, she can answer that, beneath the surface, she is always the same.

To understand how Spataro, who was after all no Netherlander, could have arrived at such subtle and contrived canons, we need only to recall that he was a student of Ramis. And his Spanish master wrote a chapter 'in which canons and written instructions are subtly explained'.⁶ Ramis sets out by defining canon as 'regula voluntatem componentis sub quadam ambiguitate obscure et in enigmate

you love me'). He gives two further melodies, one a keyboard version with the text of Fogliano's quodlibet, another a villotta that includes the words 'O traditora facta fra nui'. An anonymous dance setting in Basle, Öffentliche Bibliothek der Universität, MS F. x. 17-20, no. 10, derives from the tune of the keyboard version cited by Jeppesen, and an anonymous frottola in Sambonettus' *Canzone Sometti Strambotti et Frottole, libro primo* (RISM 1515²), fo. 37', sets the text 'Traditora me ai tradito' ('Traitress, you have betrayed me'). Even though the Quattrocento frottola is light-hearted, the desperation and anger of the deceived lover come out in lines such as these: 'Traditora, il tuo gran pianto / non restaura el mio ardore' ('Treach'rous woman, all thy tears / Win thee not my love again'). 'La traditora' also appealed to lutenists; see Howard Mayer Brown, *Instrumental Masic Printed before 1600: A Bibliography* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 1536₉, 1545₉, 1545₉, 1545₉, 1549₈, [1552₁₀₀, 1563₁₁, 1571₉, 1573₉, 1583₉, 1592₁₂. None of the melodies matches the cantus firmus of Spataro's mass.

⁵ Roland Jackson quoted and discussed this passage in 'The *Inganni* and the Keyboard Music of Trabaci', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21 (1968), 204–8. Josquin had already made use of the technique in his 'Missa La sol fa re mi'; see James Haar, 'Some Remarks on the "Missa La sol fa re mi'', in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin des Prez: Proceedings*, pp. 564–88.

For a different use of the term, in the sense of *inganno dell'occhio*, in enharmonic modulations beginning with Willaert's chromatic duo, see Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Echoes of Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Compositions', in Harold Powers (ed.), *Studies in Music History: Essays for Oliver Strunk* (Princeton, 1968), pp. 183–238 at 200 and 230 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 723 and 727.

⁶ 'Tertia pars, capitulum quartum. In quo canones et subscriptiones subtiliter declarantur' (*Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 90). insinuans'.⁷ As an example he quotes Busnois's canon: 'Ubi α ibi ω et ubi ω finis esto' ('Where alpha is, there shall omega be, and where omega is, there shall the end be'). Ramis explains that 'the canon teaches singing by opposites: they begin at the end and end at the beginning, as in Busnois'.⁸ Ramis quotes three canons from Busnois without identifying the compositions in which they occur: two are from the composer's 'Missa L'homme armé'. One in particular interests us: 'Ubi thesis assint [s]ceptra, ibi arsis et e contra'. *Thesis* stands for descending, *arsis* for ascending melody; *assint* is a variant for *adsint*, and *sceptrum* means staff. The meaning is that where the notes go downwards, the melody should go upwards and vice versa. This agrees with Ramis's continuation: 'ubi in tantum vox elevatur, in quantum deprimenda videbatur' ('in which the voice is raised by as much as it appeared it had to be lowered').⁹

Here, obviously, is the origin of the canonic directions in Spataro's youthful 'Missa de la tradictora', which may very well have been his 'graduation assignment', as it were, in a long course of study in theory and composition he took with Ramis. One may wonder why Spataro does not mention the term *inganno* nor explain its technique. Elsewhere in the letter, speaking about another canon, he apologizes for failing to take the time to explain everything in proper detail. In both cases he contents himself with giving the resolution without explanation.

Technique and symbolism are never far removed from each other in the music of the Renaissance. The use of *inganno* in a mass based on 'La traditora' makes sense.¹⁰ A treacherous woman indulges in deceit. The logic of expressing the idea of 'deceit' in a musical technique of 'deceit' suggests that Spataro might have to be credited with the invention of the *inganno*, unless it could be shown that the combination of a textually grounded 'deceit' with the musical *inganno* occurs earlier. In the absence of the term *inganno* in the fragments of Spataro's correspondence, what case can we make for his having invented the word together with the technique? There is one internal and one external piece of evidence. In view of his love of allegory, the presence of the technique of 'deceit' in a mass based on a melody singing of deceit makes it likely that Spataro, who was also one of the keenest theoretical minds of the age, should have thought of

⁷ 'A rule suggesting the composer's intention under the veil of some ambiguity, obscurely, and in the form of a riddle'. Tinctoris uses almost identical language, but more concisely, in his definition: 'Canon est regula voluntatem compositoris sub obscuritate quadam ostendens.' See Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Music in Titian's *Bacchanal of the Andrians*: Origin and History of the *Canon per tonos*', in David Rosand (ed.), *Titian: His World and His Legacy* (Bampton Lectures in America 21; New York, 1982), pp. 191–282, esp. the section on 'The Term ''Canon'' in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Music Theory', pp. 209–14 = *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance*, pp. 301–5.

 $^{8}\,$ '. . . canon docet cantare per contrarium, incipientes a fine in principio finiunt, ut fecit Busnois'.

⁹ Ramis erroneously interchanged *ubi* and *ibi* (*Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 91). In Busnois's mass the motto appears in the correct order, as above; see *Monumenta polyphoniae liturgicae Sanctae Ecclesiae Romanae*, ser. 1, vol. i, fasc. 2, ed. Laurence Feininger (Rome, 1948), p. 19, Agnus Dei. While the meaning of the canon is clear enough, Busnois's syntax defies explanation.

¹⁰ The origin of a new 16th-c. canon technique in symbolism is the subject of Lowinsky's 'Music in Titian's *Bacchanal of the Andrians*: Origin and History of the *Canon per tonos*'.

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term and technique together. The concept of 'mutation' already suggests a process of transformation; *inganno* merely lends that transformation a new twist.

The concept of *inganno* also played a prominent role in the literature of Bologna in the 1480s and 1490s. Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti (c.1450-1510), Bologna's foremost prose writer, delighted in stories of deceit, such as the quack doctor made to drink the bitter brew that he concocted for his patient, who simulated having been bitten by a snake.¹¹ More hilarious still is the story of Don Ateon, a chaplain of Antongaleazzo Bentivoglio. Covetous of the rich benefices of Antongaleazzo's father's chaplain, who had fallen ill, he allowed himself to be ensnared by the tricks of Bentivoglio and his conspiring friends into the firm belief that the chaplain was on his death-bed. Indeed, he saw and touched the 'corpse'. Invited by the Bentivoglio ladies, who were part of the conspiracy, to celebrate his good fortune by feasting and dancing, he was not prepared, when sent back to his room to fetch his lute, to find the chaplain there, the picture of radiant health, and the cruel destruction of his dreams of wealth and status.¹²

Both Sabadino and Spataro were on a footing of some intimacy with the Bentivoglio family, the rulers of Bologna. Spataro had not only composed a 'Missa de la pera' for the youngest Bentivoglio, Hermes, who bore a pear in his coat of arms, he had also dedicated his first printed work, the *Honesta defensio* of 1491, to his elder brother, Antongaleazzo Bentivoglio, then a nineteen-year-old Protonotary Apostolic. Sabadino was in the service of Count Andrea Bentivoglio for twenty years. His story of Don Ateon had been written in 1493; the former story had been published in Bologna in 1483. It is quite possible that the poet and the musician knew each other, that they laughed together at the stories that made the rounds of Bologna. Nor is it beyond the realm of possibility that Spataro wrote his 'Missa de la tradictora' under the inspiration of Sabadino's stories.

Sabadino's *novella* XXV, more than all others, deals with words and ideas that resemble Spataro's canons in masses and motets. The story concerns Nestor, a Bolognese youth of good family, twenty-four years of age, who had been in love with a seventeen-year-old young woman of modest circumstances for three years without succeeding in approaching her, save by passing her house in the hope of catching a glimpse of her. Having recently been given in marriage to a young man of similar age and condition, she seemed even more remote, which, instead of cooling, increased his ardour. One day the girl's mother, aware of his passion for her daughter, thought to use it for her own purposes. Having been bewitched some time back, and not entirely recovered, and knowing that Nestor had a friend Piero, who had a great reputation as a necromancer, she accosted him one day, as he passed her house, and implored him to bring Piero to liberate her from the evil spell. Nestor finally saw a ray of hope and gained his friend's willing collabora-

¹¹ Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, *Le Porretane*, ed. Giovanni Gambarin (Bari, 1914), *novella* XLIII, pp. 257–63. (The original edn. was published in Bologna on 1 Apr. 1483; a reprint appeared next year in Venice, and six in the 16th c.; see ibid., p. 441.)

¹² Ibid., pp. 415–38. This *novella* did not appear in the original edn. The editor published it from an autograph manuscript in the Vatican Library (Cod. Vat. Urbin. 1205). It was written for and dedicated to Francesco Gonzaga, the renowned Marquess of Mantua, with the title *Ateonia* and dated 23 July 1493.

tion. The two, after pretending to be incapable of complying with her request. eventually came one evening, having asked for various tools and utensils, three candles, a new carafe, a freshly baked stone, having furthermore prevailed upon the two women under various pretexts to get their husbands out of the house. Piero began his incantations and ceremonies: he made those present kneel down while he was reading to them from the Teorica de li pianeti, which had various figures of the heavens and the planets; he uncovered a sphere of bronze that he had brought with him, and had them all turn East to recite various prayers. Then he asked them to rise and gave the sphere to Nestor to hold, while he read aloud the chapter De la figura de Mercurio. Eventually, he admonished the mother to keep her eyes steady on the carafe of water even though she might see one hundred thousand devils reduce the house to a shambles. When Nestor, with simulated agitation, asked whether he and the daughter would be allowed to see the actual cure, Piero frowned and sent them peremptorily into the adjoining bedroom, warning them not to come out before he called them, once the three candles had burnt down.

The word *inganno* itself appears several times in this elaborate story mixing religion, superstition, ceremony, the magic of incantation, the pretence of science, and the high comedy of two young lovers carving out two hours of happiness through deceiving those who had conspired to deprive a young woman of the freedom to determine her own life. Everything went according to plan, except that the two husbands returned too early. Nestor hid behind Piero in a small dark room at the back of the house. Piero, discovered by the girl's husband, put up a great show, accusing the *donna traditrice* of having cheated him of the reward for his cure; baring his knife, he forced the terrified man to flee, thus achieving a safe escape for his friend and himself. Mother and daughter eventually succeeded in persuading the husband to run after Piero and obtain his forgiveness so that he could continue to cure the mother—and prolong the lovers' happiness.

Needless to add, the idea of *inganno* was deeply ingrained in Italian literature. Disguise and deceit of diverse kinds in all classes of society celebrate their first triumph in Boccaccio's *Decameron*; they reappear in the *novelle* of Matteo Bandello (1480-c.1561), imitator of Boccaccio; and they find a double climax in Machia-velli's play *Mandragola* and in his political tract *The Prince*. In *Mandragola*, by many critics considered Italy's greatest comedy, the most impossible *inganno* is perpetrated by the lover in the presence of the unsuspecting husband.¹³ In *The Prince* (1513) *inganno* is finally elevated to a virtue, when the ruler is advised that 'those that have been best able to imitate the fox have succeeded best. But it is necessary to be able to disguise this character well, and to be a great feigner and dissembler' (ch. 18).

Considering the closeness of time, place, and subjects—*inganno*, treacherous women, astrology—we may see in Spataro a musical kinsman of Sabadino, the Bolognese writer of *novelle*. Artusi, who, as far as we know, is the first theorist to write about *inganno*, was a Bolognese; he had access to some of Spataro's

¹³ Machiavelli might well have been inspired by Boccaccio's ninth story of the seventh day, where a similar tale is told about Lydia, her husband Nicostratus, and his servant Pyrrhus.

The Letter

correspondence, for he published a letter from Spataro to Aaron. Spataro's letters must have been generally familiar in musical circles of Bologna. Ercole Bottrigari, too, referred to Willaert's duo and to Spataro's letter to Aaron about it.¹⁴

In the first two sections of his mass, Spataro is being intentionally obscure in his canonic directions, in fact doubly obscure, because he chose to label the proportions not by their actual names but by their hierarchy in the proportional system. Instead of specifying 'proportio subquadrupla' in the second statement of the 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' section, he writes: 'in tertia minoris multiplicis', i.e. 'in the third species of the genus *submultiplex'*. Here he is applying proportions to note-values. In the 'Et in Spiritum' section he applies proportions to intervals. Instead of saying 'semitonium' or 'proportio sesquiquintadecima' (16:15) he specifies 'fourteenth species of the superparticular genus'; instead of 'tertia maior' or 'proportio sesquiquarta' (5:4), he writes 'third species of the superparticular genus'. In the second statement he manages to work in the superparticular the fourth species of which is the proportion 8:5, or a minor sixth.

All these proportions should have been familiar to the theorist of the time (except that Spataro is following Ptolemy's syntonic diatonic tuning rather than Pythagorean intonation).¹⁵ However, when it comes to the Benedictus section, Spataro employs terminology that not every theorist might have been expected to understand—at least in its application to contemporaneous music. Following the lead of his master, Bartolomeo Ramis, in his 'Tu lumen',¹⁶ Spataro directs the tenor to be sung in the three genera, enharmonic, chromatic, and diatonic. 'If you are familiar with the aforementioned genera', Spataro says, 'you will find it easy to understand [the canon]. But if you haven't considerable knowledge of these genera, I should have to embark on a long description of these few words.²¹⁷ Since Spataro has no time for that, he simply gives the resolution, with a few comments. Unfortunately, he has neglected to include the original canons, but from his explanations we know that all intervals in the first two genera that are 'unsingable' in the diatonic genus (i.e. quarter-tones and major semitones, such as the interval Bb–B μ ¹⁸) are replaced by rests.

In converting the diatonic melody into the other two Greek genera, Spataro works not with single notes but with intervals. The cantus firmus melody covers two conjunct tetrachords, meson and synemmenon:

¹⁴ See Ch. 2.

¹⁵ More precisely, he is following Ramis's division of the monochord, which he recognizes is a practical, not a theoretical tuning. On this matter, see Ch. 3.

¹⁶ See Ch. 3 for an explanation of this motet, which is discussed in a number of letters in the Correspondence.

¹⁷ From later correspondence, it is clear that Del Lago found the application of the enharmonic and chromatic genera to modern music—the 'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica', as Vicentino will entitle his treatise in 1555—very confusing, and a considerable number of letters went back and forth between Spataro and Del Lago on the resolution of the tenor in Spataro's motet for Leo X, which likewise is sung in the three genera.

¹⁸ Singing the interval $B \not\models -B \not\models$ produces a major semitone between *mi* and *fa*, a process, exceptional in medieval theory, that is called permutation; it is discussed in no. 73.



The equivalent intervals in the enharmonic and chromatic genera are as follows (+ above a note indicates a quarter-tone):



As Spataro says, the first interval of the enharmonic tetrachord cannot be sung because it would be a diesis, and the second interval of the chromatic tetrachord, a major semitone, is also 'unsingable', that is, not part of the diatonic system. Therefore they are converted into rests. It should be noted that in the chromatic tetrachord only the intervals F-F# and $B\nexists-B\flat$ are 'unsingable'; each note may be sung separately. The first interval of the diatonic melody, $A-B\flat$, coincides with the first interval of the chromatic tetrachord, but the note C of the diatonic melody converts to $B\Downarrow$. It may be sung when it follows E, but the next interval, $C-B\flat$ in the diatonic melody, produces $B\nexists-B\flat$ in the chromatic tetrachord, and therefore the B♭ is replaced with a rest.

Spataro goes on to explain the canons in his 'Missa Da pacem'. Like those of the first two sections of the 'Missa de la tradictora', they involve proportions applied to note-values and to intervals. Here Spataro ranges further afield, introducing such complex relationships as 1:18, 21:2, and 3:7 between proportional sections. This mass, like the first, has not survived. Spataro's letter affords proof that the very complicated proportions discussed in Book IV of Gafurio's *Practica musicae* actually were used in 'practical music', albeit the music of a composer-theorist, a type of musician frequently encountered in the Renaissance.

E.E.L.; B.J.B.

4 (J74). Fos. 199^r–200^v Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 7 March 1521 (autograph)

200[°] Venerabili ac musico peritissimo domino Petro Aron florentino maiori honorando. Imole in caxa del Reverendo prevosto de la Volpe.

199^r Venerabilis vir et maior honorande, salutem.

1. Ho receputo una de V.E. et ho inteso el tuto. Primo circa li magnificat quali quella domanda, dico che io non tengo magnificat alcuno che a V.E. per li tempi passati non sia a quella da me stato mandato, né etiam non ho de altri che de li mei, perché pochi ne trovo che siano comodi al nostro choro per causa de l'organo, el quale è intonato tropo alto.¹ Da l'altra parte io son tanto occupato per varii respecti che male potria havere tempo da notare. Sì che ve conforto fare come poteti, perché questi son giurni de ricordarsi del tempo passato, al manco a me che son più morto che vivo per li multi anni mei.

2. Circa quello che V.E. dice de Jusquino, ho examinato el suprano de quello suo mutetto, scilicet 'Preter rerum',² da V.E. allegato. A me pare che dal principio usque in finem multo bene proceda con lo integro ternario de le breve. Se le altre sue parte, scilicet tenore, contra alto, et basso, non observano tale numero, per questo io non lo imputarei errore a Juschino, perché lui [h]a agiuncto (in fine cantus) qualche figure cantabile che non observano tale numero ternario integro per dare più gratia al fine de esso canto.³ Ma basta che el fundamento, el quale me pare esso suprano, sta bene.⁴

¹ See Commentary.

² See Josquin des Prez, *Werken*, ed. Smijers *et al.*, Motetten, Bundel 7, pp. 21-8. Spataro's commentary is confined to the *prima pars* of the motet, written under O₂, the perfect minor mode. The *secunda pars*, for the larger half, is written in *tempus imperfectum diminutum*.

³ In the prima pars, only the soprano and second tenor end at the beginning of a mensural unit; the other voices do not 'observe that ternary number' but end within m. 29, leaving their final mensural unit incomplete. (On the concept of 'number' in this context, see the Notes on Problematical Terms.) Spataro's defence, although it fits the facts, is remarkable in two respects. First, the usually so meticulous Spataro forgives where the otherwise more liberal Aaron censures; this accords with the former's admiration for musical genius in general ('li compositori boni nascono così come nascono li poeti'; see no. 22, para 3. and Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius-Evolution and Origins of a Concept', pp. 481-2 n. 72 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 51) and for Josquin in particular ('ho trovato Josquim [sie] despret optimo de li compositori del tempo nostro'; see Tractato di musica, fo. e4'). Secondly, he ignores the violation of the metric order in m. 25 of that very soprano he deems to be 'el fondamento'. It should be:



3. Circa l'altro vostro quesito, asai se potria dire, ma al più che potrò me sforzarò essere breve, perché, ut dixi, ho poco otio da spendere in queste cose che quasi nulla montano. Vui sapeti che el musico è libero, scilicet che in distribuire el tempo perfecto lui è in sua potestate, scilicet che pò locare uno tempo integro ut hic $O \square$, o vero diviso in parte tertie ut hic $\circ \circ \circ$, o vero giungere due sue tertie parte inseme unite et l'altra separata, ut hic $\square \circ$, o vero prima producere la tertia parte et da poi le due unite, ut hic $\circ \square$. Et etiam sapeti che per questo acade che sempre le breve (in lo circulo) non son perfecte ma solo son perfecte quando dapo o inanti a sé non cade el numero de le minore propinque, el quale superabondi de la parte tertia de la figura apta a la perfectione, come seria se el vostro exemplo primo fusse ut hic notato, scilicet:

Alhora la seconda breve seria imperfecta, perché numerando le semibreve a tre, tale seconda breve con la sequente semibreve seriano colte per uno integro tempo, scilicet per tre semibreve. Ma se el musico vole che tale seconda breve habia in sé el valore perfecto, a lui serà più licito ponere el puncto dapo tale breve che una semibreve in forma cantabile, perché se lui li ponerà la semibreve, el sequitarà che tale seconda breve predicta serà perfecta, et che la seconda sequente semibreve [serà] alterata ut hic: potria però ponere ut hic: provincia dui Ma qua seguitariano dui inconvenienti, li quali non sunt de mente compositoris, scilicet divisione de tempo et superfluità. Dico divisione de tempo perché se el musico volesse uno tempo solo non diviso ut hic ____ el non lo haveria ma haria uno tempo, del quale le due parte tertie seriano in una breve incluse et l'altra parte tertia seria separata. El secondo inconveniente seria che el conveneria fare per più quello che se pò fare per manco, scilicet che but goes instead:



Josquin has superimposed a metric pattern appropriate to *tempus perfectum* on a mensuration in *tempus imperfectum*. (Thanks are due to Thomas Brothers for his observations on this passage.)

⁴ The cantus firmus is divided between the first tenor and the soprano, phrase by phrase, but not note for note. Spataro therefore might just as well have called the tenor the 'fundamental part'. Had he done so, he would have followed tradition. Instead, he followed Josquin, who, in the free treatment of the cantus firmus, likewise deviated from tradition.

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essendo così notato: $b \square \cdot \square \square$ solo sequitano quatro positione, scilicet la prima breve, el puncto, la semibreve sequente, et l'altra breve, et in questo modo seriano cinque consideratione, scilicet la breve prima, la semibreve sequente, el puncto de divisione, la semibreve sequente, et la seconda breve, ut hic: $b \square \circ . \circ \square$. Per queste demonstratione appare

199^v che el puncto posito dapo la breve | nel vostro exemplo non harà quella consideratione che saria se fusse in forma de semibreve. Imperò che Ltale puncto non è posito dapo tale breve in loco de semibreve, ma sta in tale loco come signo, el quale demonstra che la breve (a la quale esso puncto è postposito) resta in lo suo integro valore et perfectione, la quale perfectione (per el precepto regulare) li seria tolta, o vero levata, [da] la semibreve sequente₁,⁵ per la quale cosa advene che numerando le semibreve a tre, se fa differentia da numerare queste figure _____ a queste O . Perché numerando queste O . a la breve se dice due, et a la sequente semibreve se dice una, che inseme giuncte fano tre. Ma numerando questo passo O = a la breve non se dirà due et al puncto una, ma se coglie essa breve et puncto inseme dicendo tre, come se fusse una breve, la quale (senza alcuno accidentale signo o puncto) per se fusse integra et perfecta, ut hic O a a. Pertanto, esso puncto è dicto de perfectione, perché demonstra che tale figura, scilicet la breve, dil musico o compositore è perservata integra et perfecta, et che tale puncto è ivi locato perché senza tale puncto la predicta breve seria facta imperfecta da la sequente semibreve, come el regulare precepto de lo imperficere comanda₁,⁶ come etiam da V.E. è stato inteso.

4. In lo secondo exemplo ut hic posito:

⁵ When Aaron wrote his *Thoscanello de la musica* (Venice, 1523), he incorporated several passages from Spataro's letter in ch. 32 of Book I, 'Della cognitione, et natura del punto'. The passage marked with lower half-brackets appears as: 'tal punto mai non è cantato, né anchora è valore di semibreve ma (come ho detto) sta come segno dimostrante la perfettione alla breve: la quale forse saria diminuta, et imperfetta di una semibreve sequente, o suo valore' (fo. D2').

⁶ Cf. ibid., fo. D2^r: 'perché numerando queste _____ alla breve si dice due: et alla

sequente semibreve una: che fanno insieme giunte tre. Ma numerando questo \bigcirc \square alla breve non si dirà due, et al punto una: ma si nomina essa breve con il punto dicendo tre: come se fusse una breve, la quale senza alcuno segno accidentale per se fusse integra, et perfetta,

come qui _____. Per tanto esso punto è detto di perfettione: perché dimostra che

tal figura dal compositore è perservata integra, et perfetta: perché senza il punto forse sarebbe da una sequente semibreve fatta imperfetta, come comanda il precetto de la imperfettione.' Aaron even took over Spataro's 'perservata'.

$BO_{\Box} \cdot \circ \circ \Box$

poteti comprehendere che se quello puncto fusse inteso essere una semibreve, la breve restaria perfecta et la seconda semibreve non seria alterata perché staria ut hic:

 $30 \circ \circ \circ \circ$

Ma dico che quello puncto è superfluo perché lui l'ha posito per puncto de perfectione, et non è puncto de perfectione. Imperò che el puncto de perfectione serà quello el quale senza tale puncto la nota a la quale esso puncto è postposito restarà imperfecta, come nel primo exemplo appare. Pertanto se in esso secondo exemplo serà livato quello puncto, la breve restarà così perfecta senza tale puncto come fa con el puncto₁,⁷ perché essendo la seconda semibreve alterata, dapo tale breve non sequita minore per la quale possa imperficere, ma sequitano due semibreve tra due breve locate, de le quale (come vole la regula) essendo l'ultima alterata, se perfice uno complecto ternario de semibreve.

5. Item V.E. domanda se sequitando tra due breve, due semibreve, scilicet una in pausa et l'altra in forma cantabile, l'ultima semibreve è alterata, ut hic:

et non dapo essa breve sequitando el puncto et dapo la semibreve, ut hic:

Se V.E. advertirà a quello che è stato dicto di sopra, trovareti che intra el puncto (in questo loco assignato) et le figure, le quale representano la voce, come la semibreve, etc., et etiam quelle che representano taciturnità, come la pausa de la semibreve, non cade poca distantia, perché le figure predicte son posite per quantità et parte del tempo. LMa el puncto de perfectione non è quantità né parte del tempo ma è locato per signo aciò

quel punto: la breve resterà così perfetta senza punto, come si faccia col punto.'

che el cantore comprehenda che la nota o breve, a la quale esso puncto è postposito, è perservata da la imperfectione, et per tale causa la seconda semibreve in questo exemplo serà alterata: ^{200^r} questo: ^{200^r} questo: ^a | Per queste demonstratione V.E. potrà intendere che el puncto non è el valore de una semibreve, ma che (ut dixi) sta in tale loco come signo demonstrativo de la perfectione de la breve precedente, la quale (regularemente) senza tale puncto posito seria

imperfecta de la sequente semibreve. 6. Più circa questo haria dicto, ma perché (ut dixi) son occupato circa li facti de l'anima, V.E. me harà per excusato. Facte queste feste de Pasqua, serò più libero et meglio potrò essere a vostri servitii. Ho havuto l'opera de Petro Maria da Florentia,⁹ la quale ancora non ho veduta perché la voglio serbare dapo Pasqua, ma subito la trascursi un poco. Da poi lo darò ad uno amico mio che la tenga sino che harò tempo de vederla. Ma veramente che a me pare che lui haria havuto più honore a lasare stare. Pure io voglio lassare lo affanno a lui. A me non seria honore litigiare contra lui perché è tropo giovene in lo studio musico. Non altro. Al signore prevosto¹⁰ me arecomandareti, et io tuto son vostro.

Valete, Bononie, die 7 martii 1521.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. Concerning the Magnificat settings you request, I have sent you all I had; I have only Magnificat settings of my own, because I can find but few that are suitable for our choir inasmuch as our organ is tuned too high.¹ Moreover, I am so busy, I have no time for copying. Please make do as you can; these are days to remember the past, at least for one as aged as I.

2. With regard to Josquin's 'Praeter rerum',² I have examined the soprano part and it seems to me that it proceeds in good order from beginning to end in three-breve units. If the tenor, alto, and bass do not

⁸ Cf. ibid.: Dico adunque che il punto della perfettione non è quantità né parte del tempo: ma solamente è segno acciò che il cantore comprenda che la nota che ha il punto dopo sé è conservata dalla imperfettione, et per tal causa la seconda semibreve sarà in questo essempio

alterata () 🗆 📀 🗖 et non in questo () 🗖 • 📀 🗖

⁹ Acutissime observationes nobilissime disciplinarum omnium musices Piermarie Bonini florentini (Florence, 1520). Bonini, who calls himself 'Arithmeticorum minimus', dedicated the treatise to Leo X. In fact, the work can be seen as a theoretical analogue to Spataro's motet for Leo X, in as much as Bonini emphasizes the three genera, listing all the intervals and ratios (chs. 14–20 of the 'Tractato primo'), and, like Spataro, ministers to Leo X's interest in ancient Greek music. The preface is printed in Gaspari, *Catalogo della Biblioteca del Liceo Musicale*, i. 197.

¹⁰ See the Biographical Dictionary s.n. Volpe.

observe the same metre, I wouldn't fault Josquin for this, because he added a few notes that are not in that metre to impart more grace to the ending;³ it is sufficient that the fundamental part, the soprano, fits it.⁴

3. As to your other question, I shall try to answer it briefly because it's not of great importance. You know that musicians can write a perfect *tempus* as $O \square$ or $\circ \circ \circ \circ$ or $\square \circ$ or $\circ \square$ and that breves are perfect when they are not preceded or followed by an isolated semibreve, such as if your first example were notated thus:

Then the second breve would be imperfected by the following semibreve. But if you want that breve to be perfect, you should use a dot rather than a semibreve on the same pitch (which would cause the semibreve following it to be altered). You could write $\frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{1}{2} \cdot$

4. In your second example:

 $_{L}$ if the dot were a semibreve, the breve would remain perfect and the second semibreve would not be altered because it would appear thus:

 $BO_{\Box \diamond \diamond \diamond \Box}$

The dot is superfluous; it is not a dot of perfection. Such a dot is one that leaves the breve imperfect if it is removed. But in the second example the breve remains perfect without it.⁷ Since the second semibreve is altered, following the common rule regarding two semibreves placed between two breves, there is no smaller note with which to imperfect the breve.

5. Similarly, if you replace the first semibreve in the figure $\Box \diamond \diamond \Box$ with a rest, it has a different effect from replacing it with a dot, for a rest

The Letters

has temporal value, \lfloor whereas a dot is not a part of time but is only a sign indicating that the note it follows is kept from imperfection, and therefore the second semibreve is altered, but not when the rest is replaced by a dot \lfloor .⁸ Thus you can understand that a dot does not equal the value of a semibreve but is only a sign of perfection of the preceding breve.

6. More could be said, but at this time I am occupied with matters of the soul; after Easter I shall be freer and be able to serve you better. I received the book by Piermaria of Florence.⁹ I have only browsed in it, sufficiently though to conclude that the author would have been wiser to refrain from publication. I see no honour in engaging in debate with a mere beginner. Please commend me to the provost.¹⁰

COMMENTARY

This is the only source informing us of the high tuning of the organ at San Petronio in Bologna and the use of the organ in the performance of the Magnificat. Frank Tirro had already surmised as much: 'Whether organ or chant was used for the alternate verses in these settings cannot be determined with certainty, but considering the salary of the organist, the money expended for the purchase and maintenance of the instrument at this period, and the instructions for the organist's assistants, it is highly probable that *alternatim* settings with organ were used for psalms, hymns, and canticles [i.e. *Magnificat* and *Te Deum*].'¹¹

Spataro's choir-books contain twenty-eight Magnificat settings, only one of which is not in *alternatim* style. In fifteen the even-numbered verses are set, in twelve the odd-numbered.¹² All except four (by de Silva, Févin, Jachet, and Eustachio) are anonymous; concordances yield two by Morales and one each by Gasparo Alberti, Mouton, and Renaldo. All the rest except one are *unica*, and it is logical to suppose that many of these are by Spataro.

But it is more likely that the Magnificats in MS A. XXXVI, datable 1527 or earlier since the manuscript is described in Spataro's will of 1527,¹³ are by Spataro, than those in MS A. XXXV, which must have been copied after 1533.¹⁴ This is because the pitch of the organ was changed between the copying of these

¹¹ 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks in the Archive of San Petronio in Bologna', p. 158. For a description of the organ at San Petronio at Spataro's time, see ibid., pp. 160–6, and id., 'Lorenzo di Giacomo da Prato's Organ at San Petronio and its Use during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', in Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus (eds.), *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore* (2 vols., Florence, 1977–8), ii. 489–97.

For confirmation of the practice of performing the successive verses of the Magnificat alternately by choir and by organ, both presumably using the Gregorian tone for the Magnificat, we depend to a great degree on literary sources; see Winfried Kirsch, Die Quellen der mehrstimmigen Magnificat- und Te Deum-Vertonungen bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrbunderts (Tutzing, 1966), pp. 43 fl.

¹² See Tirro, Renaissance Musical Sources, p. 159.

manuscripts. Acting on Spataro's complaint, in 1528 the overseers of the Fabbrica engaged the Brescian organ-builder Giovanni Battista Facchetti to lower the pitch by a whole tone and to add split keys between G and A, to permit the use of both G# and Ab. The alterations were carried out in 1531.¹⁵

B. J.B.

¹⁵ See Oscar Mischiati, 'Profilo storico e lineamenti del restauro', in *Il restauro degli organi di S. Petronio* (Bologna, [1982]), pp. 13–28 at 15.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 31–2.

5 (J73). Fos. 196^r–198^v Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [February 1523] (autograph)

196^r Venerabilis vir et decus musicorum, salutem.

1. A li dì 31 januarii proximo passato, ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 15 del predicto signata, per la quale certamente a me è parso che a me sia scripto da uno extraneo et non da uno amico. Et questo nasce da tanti respecti et laude le quale uxa V.E. in tale vostra a me missa. A me (certamente) più presto tali termini pareno da essere usitati tra li extranei che tra li amici et confederati in quello vinculo de amicitia in lo quale V.E. et io siamo (per mera virtù, et antiquo amore) ligati. V.E. me perdonarà, ma io non voria tante laude, perché (come V.E. dice) io son homo, et non Dio, et se (per dono divino) a V.E. pare che qualche più de gratia (in qualche particula de questa harmonica facultà) dal celo benigno me sia stata concessa, io (per questo) non me movo né levo ad alto, imperò che sempre inanti a li ochii de lo intellecto mio tengo el vero speculo de la mia ignorantia et poco sapere, el quale speculo fa che (per le laude de V.E. et da altri a me date) io non me levo in superbia, et che io non me existimo essere quello che non son, et quello che di me multi predicano. Imperò che io scio bene che nullo son intra li docti et che nulla sempre serò, ma come quello el quale cerca" imparare, sempre studio et di continuo sto in lo musico exercitio. Et (solo per imparare) multo me piace vedere le altrui oppinione, per la quale cosa a me è summamente e piaciuto intendere et havere notitia de queste vostre occurentie et litigii virtuosi, circa li quali (essendo io da V.E. recercato) dirò el mio parere et quello che a me pare, che ne senta la mera verità, non però perché io voglia che V.E. stia contento a la oppinione et mia sententia, ma da poi pigliareti quello che ve parerà esse el meglio, perché scio che V.E. el saperà fare come quello che non manca de mera doctrina et inteligentia.

2. A me pare (concludendo) V.E. domanda, se essendo una longa vacua posita inanti ad una pausa de dui tempi o vero occupante dui spatii in lo signo del modo minore perfecto,² ut hic: $\bigcirc 2$ \square se tale

longa potrà rationabilemente imperficere ut hic: O2 - così come pò imperficere la breve nel tempo perfecto inanti a due pause de semibreve equalemente posite ut hic: Ora . A la quale cosa (respondendo) aduco el regulare et usitato precepto de la perfectione, el quale dice ut hic, scilicet: Brevis ante brevem, vel^b ante pausam brevis, in tempore perfecto; semibrevis ante semibrevem, vel ante pausam semibrevis in prolatione perfecta; similiter longa ante longam, vel ante pausam longe in modo minore perfecto non debent imperfici;³ per la quale regulare consideratione appare che la breve in tempore perfecto non debe esse imperfecta inanti a la sua pausa, ut hic: \bigcirc . Et similemente la semibreve inanti a la sua pausa in la prolatione perfecta non debe imperficere, ut hic: 🔶 👞 . Et etiam per tale sententia appare che la breve del tempo perfecto potrà imperficere inanti a due pause de semibreve equalemente posite ut hic: Et etiam la semibreve de la prolatione perfecta potrà imperficere inanti a due pause de minima (similemente) equalemente giuncte ut hic: $\frac{\bigcirc}{\bigcirc}$ et questo advenirà perché dato che queste due pause --- parimente giuncte habiano el valore de una breve imperfecta, non son però la propria pausa de essa breve imperfecta, ma son due pause de semibreve. Similemente acaderà de queste due pause de minima, scilicet , scilicet che ancora che habiano el valore de una semibreve imperfecta, non son però (in quanto a la forma) una sola pausa de semibreve imperfecta.

3. Ma l'uno et l'altro de li exempli predicti serà come se dapo la breve del tempo perfecto sequitasseno tre semibreve, de le quale le prime due fusseno ligate, o vero non ligate, ma esse prime due in una sola linea o spatio posite, ut hic:

Imperò che così come ciascuna de le predicte tre breve pò imperficere a parte ante, così dico che (similemente) la breve del tempo perfecto posita

^b MS: nec. ^c MS: both signs dotted.

^a MS: cerco.

¹ Although this letter is undated, the references to January in the letter as 'proximo passato' indicate that it was written in February. It must pre-date the printing of Aaron's *Thoscanello* (5 July 1523) because Aaron incorporated in it Spataro's opinion on the perfection of a long followed by a two-breve rest (see n. 6). In Feb. 1522 Aaron was still in Imola (see Ch. 4). Feb. 1523 is therefore the only possible date; moreover, on 28 Feb. Aaron wrote to Spataro requesting an explanation of the rule 'similis ante similem semper est perfecta' (see no. 6), a rule Spataro had used in the present letter (see para. 4).

² All notes are white or unfilled unless they are specifically called blackened notes; hence we

translate *longa vacua* (literally: empty or unfilled long) simply as 'long'. In Spataro's notation O2 is 'modo minore perfecto', C2 is 'modo minore imperfecto'. He disapproved of showing mode by means of rests (see no. 44, para. 13, and no. 45, para. 15).

³ Cf. Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, first rule: 'longa ante longam in modo perfecto semper est perfecta. Et brevis ante brevem in tempore perfecto semper est perfecta. Et semibrevis ante semibrevem in majori prolatione semper etiam est perfecta' (CS iii. 47-8).

inanti a queste pause - potrà imperficere a parte ante, et similemente acaderà de la semibreve inanti a queste pause posita --- in la prolatione perfecta. Et questo acaderà perché dapo sé non sequita sola pausa a sé simile in virtù o valore, né etiam in nome. Per la quale cosa V.E. potrà claramente comprehendere che intra queste pause --- et la breve plena ut hic: _____ non è poca distantia. Imperò che questa breve plena 🔳 (in questa consideratione per proprio nome) è chiamata breve imperfecta, et queste due pause - non se chiamano pausa de breve imperfecta, pertanto non se potrà dire che la breve vacua posita a le predicte due pause ut hic: ______ sia inanti a la sua simile, perché intra la breve predicta et le predicte pause non cade univocatione né etiam equivocatione,⁴ et per consequente tale breve (per tale modo posita) 😐 📃 potrà imperfi-196° cere a parte ante, laquale cosa non acaderà de la longa vacua del modo minore perfecto posita inanti a la pausa longa occupante dui spatii da V.E. ut hic assignata: $\bigcirc 2 \ \hline \$. Imperò che così come in tale segno et altri simili (in nota o figura cantabile) se dà longa perfecta et longa imperfecta, ut hic: 02 🖣 💷 così et etiam se dà pausa sola de longa perfecta et pausa sola de longa imperfecta, ut hic: $\bigcirc 2$ || \square .

4. Similemente dico che così come in tale signo una longa vacua posita inanti ad una longa imperfecta non debe imperficere, ut hic: O2 Così etiam la longa vacua posita inanti a la pausa de la predicta longa imperfecta non lice essere facta imperfecta. Et questo è observato da ciascuno perito, così antiquo come moderno. Imperò che dove la regula dice che la nota simile non debe imperficere inanti a la sua simile, questo se intende in quanto a la qualità et non in quanto a la quantità, scilicet in quanto al nome et non in quanto a la virtù quantitativa, cioè che siano simile in equivocatione et non sempre in univocatione, o vogliam dire che basta che siano simile in nome et non in substantia, come maxima ante maximam, longa ante longam, brevis ante brevem, semibrevis ante semibrevem, et così inanti a le sue pause. Et perché (ut dixi) la longa ha duplice pausa, scilicet pausa de longa perfecta, ut hic: = et pausa de longa imperfecta, ut hic: = le quale pause (senza contrarietà) son usitate nel signo del modo minore perfecto, pertanto (ratione predicta) dico che se la longa vacua serà posita inanti a quale se voglia de le predicte due pause, che essa longa non debe imperficere, la quale cosa etiam acaderia de la breve del signo del tempo perfecto se essa breve havesse dupplice pause, scilicet pausa sola de tempo perfecto, et

⁴ On these terms, see the Notes on Problematical Terms.

pausa sola de tempo imperfecto, le quale (inter se) havesseno forma diversa. Imperò che alhora el non seria licito che la breve vacua del signo del tempo perfecto fusse facta imperfecta inanti a la pausa de la breve imperfecta, perché così come la breve vacua del tempo perfecto non debe imperficere inanti a la breve imperfecta, ut hic: 🙁 🗖 🗖 🗖 similemente acaderia che essa breve vacua non seria imperfecta inanti a la pausa de essa breve imperfecta. Et alhora tra la longa vacua del modo minore perfecto posita inanti a la pausa de la longa imperfecta et la breve predicta caderia pare et recta similitudine, et conformità integra, perché così come la longa ut hic posita: O2 non debe essere imperfecta per essere inanti a la simile sua, scilicet a la longa in pausa, così essendo la breve vacua (gubernata da questi signi O O) posita inanti a la pausa imperfecta a sé simile in nome, seria così perfecta come se la fusse posita inanti a la pausa a sé non dissimile in nome et quantità. Similemente, se el non se trovasse nel modo minore se non una sola invariabile pausa de longa, la quale (exempli gratia) solo occupasse dui spatii, ut hic: 🛨 et che essa pausa fusse intesa perfecta et imperfecta per li debiti signi del modo minore, come acade de la pausa de la breve et de la semibreve, alhora intra el modo minore perfecto et el tempo perfecto, et etiam intra la prolatione perfecta, caderia pare similitudine et convenientia, perché così come nel tempo perfecto le pause de le semibreve ut hic posite: --- son posite per el valore de uno tempo imperfecto, et così come queste --- son posite per el valore de la semibreve imperfecta, a le quale manca la propria pausa, così nel modo minore perfecto se poneriano due pause de breve ut hic posite: ____ per el valore de una longa imperfecta. Et questo adveniria perché la longa imperfecta alhora etiam mancaria de pausa propria, così come la breve imperfecta nel tempo perfecto et la semibreve imperfecta in la prolatione perfecta mancano de la unica et propria pausa particulare. Et così come la breve vacua del tempo perfecto pò imperficere inanti a queste pause — et la semibreve in la perfecta prolatione pò etiam imperficere inanti a queste ----, così etiam la longa vacua (nel modo minore perfecto) potria imperficere inanti a due pause de breve parimente posite, ut hic: $\bigcirc 2 - \square - \square$. Adonca^d non bisogna volere asimilare la positione de queste pause -m-usitate nel signo del tempo perfecto a la pausa de la longa imperfecta usitata in lo signo del modo minore perfecto, perché (come è stato demonstrato) intra loro non cade alcuna similitudine, perché per queste due pause ---- la breve imperfecta posita nel signo del tempo perfecto è demonstrata per le sue parte, ma per

^d MS: Andoca.
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questa sola pausa de longa, scilicet \pm , la longa imperfecta (nel modo minore perfecto) è demonstrata per el suo tuto, in uno solo signo compreheso.

5. Ma dove V.E. pone questo exemplo dico che a me pare che quello puncto posito intra le predicte pause non sia conveniente, perché è frustratorio et indarno posito et da alcuno docto non usitato. 198^t Pertanto, acadendo che tale pause siano divise più recta mente,^e serano

posite ut hic: Et questo nasce da la contrarietà, la quale cade in tale exemplo, scilicet unire et dividere, perché la pare positione de tale pause ut hic posita denota che inanti a sé o vero dapo sé hano sempre l'altra sua tertia parte in figura cantabile con la quale ambe due (in numerando le semibreve a tre) se acompagnano, ut hic:

<u>sets</u>. Et dato che (in quanto a lo effecto de la perfectione) non siano de la natura de la simplice pausa de la breve perfecta, tamen (in numerando el concento) son prese inseme giuncte, et computate per uno tempo imperfecto, et non divise.

6. Adonca (per quello che è stato dicto di sopra) V.E. potrà intendere essere contra de vui quello che V.E. dice havere voluto mantenere, scilicet che figura o nota alcuna non resta perfecta inanti a la pausa minore de sé,

perché diceti che bisogna sia simile a sé, ut hic: 2970Imperò che la vostra consideratione harà solo loco valido in questo exemplo _____ perché la breve (in tale loco) non ha altra pausa propria che solo la pausa de la sua perfectione, et non la propria pausa de la sua imperfectione. Ma in questo exemplo 2 1 la longa (ut dixi) ha duplice pausa, scilicet la propria pausa de la sua perfectione, la quale occupa tri spatii, et la pausa propria de la sua imperfectione, la quale occupa dui spatii, inanti a le quale (ut diximus) la longa vacua non lice imperficere, ut hic: 299. Et questo nasce perché (ut diximus) longa ante longam vel ante pausam longe (in modo minori perfecto) non debet imperfici; similemente brevis ante brevem vel ante pausam brevis in tempore perfecto non debet imperfici. Et perché (ut dixi) in tempore perfecto non se dà pausa de breve imperfecta come se dà pausa de longa imperfecta nel modo minore perfecto, sequitarà che la breve vacua del tempo perfecto solo serà perfecta inanti a la pausa del tempo perfecto, et non a la pausa del tempo imperfecto, la quale pausa de tempo imperfecto non se trova né è stata inventa per se, scilicet con forma differente da la perfecta, excepto se nui non volessemo considerare che la pausa occupante due tertie parte del spatio (tra linea et linea cadente) fusse essa pausa de tempo imperfecto, come recita Bartolomeo Ramis,⁵ mio preceptore, essere già stato usitato da li antiqui, la quale cosa non seria de aducere in luce per essere in tuto remota da l'uxo et da la exercitatione.

7. V.E. etiam dice che questi vostri amici concludeno che così come la breve vacua inanti a la breve plena (la quale è diminuta del suo tertio) resta sempre perfecta in tempore perfecto, f ut hic: $\bigcirc \square \blacksquare$ che similemente dicono advenire de la longa vacua del modo minore perfecto posita inanti a la pausa de la longa diminuta del suo tertio, ut hic: 02 9 . Circa questo (come di sopra è stato concluso) dico che dicono la verità, perché ut dixi, così come questa breve vacua O 🗆 serà brevis ante brevem, così tale longa serà longa ante longam. Et dove V.E. dice che pure teneti la pugna che la pausa de dui tempi non è simile a la figura longa plena, etc., Messer Petro mio honorando (con suportatione), dico che a me pare che errati non poco, perché certamente ogni demonstratione è contra V.E.⁶ Imperò che se ne li canti de modo minore imperfecto la pausa occupante dui spatii è chiamata pausa de longa imperfecta, tale pausa (in li canti del modo minore perfecto) serà etiam dicta pausa de longa imperfecta. Et perché in lo predicto modo minore perfecto la longa imperfecta è comprehesa in dui modi, scilicet vacua con la abstractione de la sua parte

tertia, ut hic: O2 🛛 🗆 et etiam per essere plena, ut hic: O2 🖷 🖵, pertanto dico

che tale predicta pausa, occupante dui spatii, non serà dissimile a la predicta longa plena, ma serà la sua pausa propria. Et così come essa longa plena è dicta longa imperfecta, così tale pausa occupante dui spatii serà dicta la propria pausa de tale longa imperfecta. Ma perché el non se dà

^f MS: imperfecto. Two dots have been placed under 'im', indicating cancellation.

⁴ At this point in the original manuscript an extra page, numbered 197, was inserted. It was written in 1774 by Bernardino Sebastiani, scribe of the Papal Chapel, who copied MS Bologna 107. ¹/₂ for Padre Martini. It was bound into Vat. lat. 5318 by mistake (see Ch. 2).

⁵ 'Perfectio etiam temporis pausis brevium denotatur aliter secundum nos, aliter vero secundum antiquos, quoniam, ut ait magister Franciscus, si pausa temporis occupat totum spatium, totum tempus denotat perfectum. Sin vero duas spatii partes occupaverit, duas temporis partes demonstrat; si autem tantum unam, unicam partem morulae, quia unam minorum ostendit' (*Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 86). Ramis attributes the opinion to 'magister Franciscus', that is, Franco of Cologne. See his *Ars cantus mensurabilis*, ed. Gilbert Reaney and André Gilles (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 18; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1974), p. 55: 'semibrevis maior duas partes obmittit rectae brevis'. The distinction between the two rests is made because Franco recognizes a major and a minor semibreve.

⁶ Apparently, Spataro succeeded in convincing Aaron, for in the *Toscanello* (Book I, ch. 29) Aaron writes: 'la lunga del modo minor perfetto appresso la pausa delli tre tempi, o dui, sempre sarà perfetta, benché alcuni a questo siano contrarii: cioè che essa lunga nanzi la pausa delli dui tempi nel modo minor perfetto antedetto, non sempre sia perfetta, per molte cause, quali (per non essere prolisso) lascieremo' (fo. C4[°]).

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pausa sola che non sia equale in virtù et simile in nome a qualche sola cantabile figura o nota, pertanto domando a V.E. se tale pausa occupante dui spatii (nel modo minore perfecto posita) non serà equipera a la longa imperfecta o vero plena, a quale sola nota cantabile tale pausa serà simile?

8. Da poi sequitando diceti che ogni volta che la pausa longa appare diminuta de uno tempo, ut hic: $\bigcirc 2$ che alhora tale pausa demonstra che la longa vacua a sé anteposita resta ancora lei diminuta del suo tertio, come farà questa breve _____ quale resta perfecta, ma in questo serà imperfecta. Messer Petro mio honorando, V.E. (in tale loco) fa una comparatione et similitudine non similitudinaria, perché vui fati comparatione intra quello el quale è mutabile o vero variabile, et quello el quale è invariabile. Qua bisogna stare in cervello, perché (come ho dicto di sopra) tra la pausa del tempo de questo signo de tempo perfecto, scilicet O et la pausa del tempo de questo signo de tempo imperfecto, scilicet C (in quanto a la forma apparente) non cade alcuna differentia, ma el suo perfecto et imperfecto se comprehende per questi signi differenti, scilicet O C. Ma nel modo minore perfecto (ut dixi) non acaderà per tale modo, 198^v perché^g se dano due pause de | longa, scilicet la perfecta et la imperfecta, inter se dissimile de forma apparente, per la quale dissimilitudine et varietà de forma (senza altro signo apparente) tale pause son comprehese. Imperò che la pausa de la longa imperfecta, la quale solo occupa dui spatii, serà comune, scilicet che pò stare nel signo del modo minore perfecto, et etiam nel signo del modo minore imperfecto, senza chiareza de altro signo, perché la sua forma (la quale è de dui tempi) asai claro demonstra la sua imperfectione. Ma la pausa de la breve (per la sua stabilità et immutabile forma) senza altro signo, scilicet de perfecto et de imperfecto, non potrà essere comprehesa, scilicet se serà perfecta o imperfecta. Ma perché, secondo che per el vostro scrivere posso existimare, el pare che V.E. (in questo loco) voglia concludere che la pausa ut hic posita \pm in li canti del modo minore perfecto (perché non occupa più de dui spatii) sta per signo de imperfectione, a questo respondo et dico che tale pausa per se sola posita (et sia in quale signo si voglia, scilicet de modo minore perfecto o de modo minore imperfecto) non potrà essere intesa per signo de imperfectione. Et questo acaderà perché tale pausa è famulata^b o vero comune al signo del modo minore perfecto et etiam al signo de modo minore imperfecto, et quello che a multi convene se atribuisse essere de quello al quale lui se acosta. Se tale pausa adonca serà locata nel canto del modo minore perfecto, tale pausa non potrà removere la perfectione assignata dal signo de la perfectione ad esso canto, perché starà in tale loco

come sta lo accidente nel subiecto, el quale accidente pò essere posito et remosso da esso subiecto senza corruptione del subiecto.⁷ Pertanto, se tale pausa serà data o ablata dal subiecto de la perfectione, mai tale pausa non potrà removere tale perfectione dal subjecto perfecto. Similemente, se tale pausa serà posita ne li canti del modo minore imperfecto, dico che tale pausa non serà signo de tale imperfectione. Et questo nasce perché (ut dixi) tale pausa è comune nel perfecto et etiam in lo imperfecto modo minore.

9. Pertanto, se in uno canto non se trovasse signo alcuno de modo minore perfecto, et ancora che li fusse la pausa de la longa occupanti dui spatii, el non se diria che tale concento fusse de modo minore imperfecto perché in tale canto fusse la apparentia [de] la pausa de la longa imperfecta. Ma el se diria che tale canto fusse de modo minore imperfecto perché in tale canto manca o vero non se trova signo de perfectione, et per tale modo la pausa de dui spatii (circa el signo de imperfectione) non opera. Ma la natura del canto è quella la quale opera, perché, come dice el mio preceptore: Dove non cade signo alcuno accidentale, scilicet de perfectione, el canto alhora se canta secondo la sua natura, scilicet per imperfecto; et dove opera la natura ivi l'arte è frustratoria, perché la natura non ha bisogno de l'arte, ma l'arte è bene imitatrice de la natura.⁸ Ma che 'l sia la mera verità che questa pausa \pm non pò essere signo de modo minore imperfecto, sia posito o vero dato uno concento nel quale (senza apparentia de alcuno de questi signi, scilicet -02) habia nel principio et etiam nel medio la predicta pausa occupante dui spatii, ut hic:

In tale canto (per le longe

plene et le breve divise) serà indicato essere el modo minore perfecto et non imperfecto per la apparentia de la pausa de la longa due volte posita, et questo acaderà perché tale pausa non guberna, ma è gubernata, et perché è posita intra li effecti del modo minore perfecto, sta in tale loco come famula et serva de la perfectione et non come signo de imperfectione.

10. Dice etiam V.E. che contradiceti etiam a quello che essi amici dicono de la breve ut hic posita: 🔲 😶 li quali dicono che così come tale breve (alcuna volta) è perfecta et alcuna volta non, che etiam la longa

8 MS: per que.

^b MS: famulate.

⁷ See the Notes on Problematical Terms s.v. 'accidentale'.

⁸ 'Cum igitur aliud signum non reperiretur in contrarium, natura sua canendus est cantus, scilicet per binarium numerum. . . . Ipse enim inscius doctrinae artem praeponebat naturae, cuius contrarium manifestum est, quia ars imitatur naturam in quantum potest' (Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 88). On Ramis's notion that imperfect is more natural than perfect, see the Commentary on no. 7.

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vacua del modo minore perfecto, ut hic posita: $\bigcirc 2 \ \square$ harà tale condictione, ma che V.E. (circa questo) dice non essere bona resolutione, perché la breve predicta respecto a queste pause $\neg \square$ non observa tale proprietà et natura quale cade intra la longa predicta et questa sola pausa $\bigcirc 2 \ \square$ perché tale pausa de longa è una sola, et queste $\neg \square$ son due pause. Imperò che questa $\bigcirc 2 \ \square$ è chiamata pausa o vero signo de longa, et queste $\neg \square$ non così, ma son due pause de semibreve, etc. Circa questo dico che V.E. dice benissime et circa questo più ultra non dirò perché di sopra al proposito è stato dicto asai.

11. Ho receputo un'altro breve scripto de V.E. de dì 29 januarii signato per el quale V.E. me recorda le olive et salsizoni. De olive non bisogna parlare, come (per un'altra mia a V.E. missa con tre para de salsizoni) potreti intendere, ma io piglio male voluntiera tale cure, perché io ho più affano in trovare el portatore che non ho a trovare la roba. Pertanto, quando qualche cosa ve acade, voria che V.E. mandasse el portatore, perché io non ho gratia né ventura in scrivere qua a V.E. Le littere vostre vano presto a Bologna, ma le mie non sano trovare la via de venire qua in Vinetia.

12. Non altro per hora. Se di sopra fusse cosa male dicta, sia per non dicta, aciò che non acada tra nui come advene tra Franchino et io, el quale haveva de l'asino et de lo ingrato, et pigliava el mio scriverli in mala parte, el quale mio scrive[re] non era se non per darli lume, come la carità ce amaestra. Al vostro reverendo patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] me recomandati, el quale (perché è receptaculo de virtù) voglio che etiam sia mio patrone, se pure sua Signoria se vole dignare conumerarmi nel numero de li soi servitori. Vale Petre mi, et ut soles me ama e Christum pro me ora.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. On 31 January I received your letter of 15 January. Because it was so full of praise I thought that a stranger was writing and not a friend, especially in view of our long-standing bond of affection and friendship. If you think I have a special ability in music it is a gift from heaven, for I know well the limits of my knowledge and the fact that I am a nobody among the learned and never shall be anything, although I study and remain continually in practice. I am always glad to receive the opinions of others on music, including yours, and I will offer my own views, since you have requested it, and you will take from them what you like.

3. If three semibreves follow a breve in \bigcirc or \bigcirc , and the first two semibreves are in a ligature or in the same place, then the breve can become imperfect through a preceding note (*a parte ante*). Likewise, a perfect breve preceding two semibreve rests can become imperfect *a parte ante*, for even though the semibreve rests equal a breve rest in value, they have not the equivalent name or shape. There is no small difference between these rests $\neg \neg$ and a blackened breve; the latter is an imperfect breve but the former is not the rest of an imperfect breve; there is neither 'univocation' nor 'equivocation'.⁴ The same holds for a void breve. Therefore a breve thus $\neg \neg \neg$ can be imperfected *a parte ante*, but not a long thus $\bigcirc \bigcirc 2$ because the rest is that of a long.

4. I also say that just as a perfect long preceding an imperfect may not become imperfect, a perfect long preceding an imperfect long rest cannot become imperfect. All skilled musicians observe this procedure. The rule that a perfect note before another similar note should not become imperfect refers to the similarity of name and not of value, as a maxima before a maxima and a long before a long. Therefore a perfect long before a long rest of two spaces or of three spaces should not become imperfect. Since a perfect breve in O or O should not become imperfect before an imperfect breve, such a breve should not be imperfect preceding an imperfect breve rest, assuming that the breve had a double rest, perfect and imperfect. Then there would be complete conformity between that breve and a long in O_2 placed before an imperfect long rest. If there were only one long rest in the perfect minor mode, with imperfection dependent on the signs, then a placement such as <u>max</u> would be equivalent to <u>may</u> for an imperfect breve and <u>u</u> for an imperfect semibreve.

Likewise, a long could become imperfect before such a rest. Thus there is no similarity between - and =.

5. But it seems to me that to place a dot between two semibreve rests, as you do, is not proper, nor is it used by skilled musicians. Instead, the two rests should be placed on different lines, to show division between them. When they are placed side by side, it indicates that there is another third part before or after them with which they should be joined. Two semibreve rests of this kind are always counted together as an imperfect *tempus*.

6. When you maintain that a note does not remain perfect if it precedes a rest of smaller value, this is valid only with a breve rest in O, for the breve in this case has only one kind of rest, a perfect one. But a long has two kinds of rests: imperfect, of two spaces, and perfect, of three. Since there is no comparable imperfect breve rest, a breve in perfect time will be perfect before a breve rest in O. A breve rest in imperfect time has the same form as a perfect rest, although a rest occupying two-thirds of a space between two lines might be considered an imperfect breve rest in perfect time. It is mentioned by Ramis, my teacher, but is no longer in use.⁵

7. You say that your friends state that a breve in O remains perfect before a blackened breve, and that a long in O₂ before a rest of two spaces is also perfect. I agree with this. But when you say a rest of two spaces is not similar to a blackened long, I think you err greatly, because every proof is against you.⁶ A blackened long in either minor mode is called imperfect, and a rest of two spaces is the proper rest of an imperfect long. Every rest has an equivalent note-value; if you claim that the rest of two spaces is not equivalent to an imperfect long, to what note would it be?

8. Then you say that just as a long rest of only two spaces in O_2 shows that a preceding long also loses a third of its value, so a breve in O preceding a breve rest will remain perfect, but in C it will be imperfect. Here you compare what is variable with what is invariable. A breve rest in O and a breve rest in C look the same; their perfection or imperfection is shown by the signs O and C. But in the perfect minor mode a long rest can be perfect or imperfect; its form shows which it is. The same is not true of the breve rest. It seems that you conclude that a long rest of two spaces in O_2 stands for a sign of imperfection, but I say that it does not, since this rest occurs in both imperfect minor mode and perfect minor mode. If you find a composition in the perfection; it is equivalent to an accidental which can be added or removed from a subject without corrupting the subject.⁷ Similarly, such a rest is not a sign of the imperfect minor mode.

5. Spataro to Aaron, [Feb. 1523]

9. If a composition has no signature of the perfect minor mode, even though you find a rest of two spaces you could not say that the work is in the imperfect minor mode. It is the lack of time signature that tells you it is in the imperfect minor mode. The nature of the composition is the active element, as my teacher says: Where an accidental sign does not occur, namely of perfection, then the composition is sung according to its nature, namely as imperfect; and where nature acts art is superfluous, for nature has no need of art, but art indeed is an imitator of nature.⁸ To prove this, take the following example without metric signature:



The blackened longs

and the breves separated by a dot show that it is in the perfect minor mode and not in the imperfect mode because of the imperfect long rests.

10. You say that you oppose your friends who state that as a breve preceding two semibreve rests may be perfect or imperfect, so too may a long in O2 that precedes a long rest of two spaces; you argue that in the one case there are two rests, in the other only one. You are quite right and I shall add nothing, for enough has been said above.

11. I have received another letter in which you remind me of the olives and the sausages. The olives are no problem, but finding a suitable messenger is difficult. When you need something, I'd like you to send a messenger. Your letters reach me in Bologna without trouble; mine to you in Venice go astray.

12. I hope none of the preceding will be a cause for ill will, so that nothing happens between us like what occurred between Franchino and myself. He was a fool and an ingrate, and took exception to my writings, which were only intended to enlighten, as charity teaches us. Please greet your patron [Sebastiano Michiel], who I wish would also be my patron.

6. Spataro to Aaron, 8 Apr. 1523

6 (J76). Fos. $203^{r}-204^{v}$

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 April 1523 (autograph)

^{204^v} [Reverendo et venerabili et musico con]sumatissimo Domino Petro Aron [florentino. In Venetia, Sancto Zoanne de] li furlani.

203^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. A li giurni passati io scripse a V.E. havere receputo una vostra de di ultimo februarii signata, et che per essere da multe cause impedito non poteva respondere a li quesiti vostri, per la quale cosa al presente trovandomi alquanto più libero de la mente circa tali quesiti (al meglio che saperò) a quella darò resposta.

2. V.E. dice volere la resolutione di questo, scilicet quale sia la causa che tuti li auctori musici dicono che la simile inanti a la sua simile debe essere perfecta senza alcuna exceptione, et diceti che de questo non assignano altra rasone.¹ Da poi, etiam V.E. domanda come se intenda questa similitudine, et etiam domandati per quale causa da li predicti è stato ordinato tale regula mai non dovere patire [exceptione]. Circa al primo dico che credo che V.E. sapia che ogni nota demonstrata perfecta dal signo se pò imperficere, la quale imperfectione non è altro che abstractione de la sua parte tertia. Questa imperfectione adonca (infalibilemente) sequitarà quando inanti, o vero dapo, la nota apta a la perfectione el numero ternario de le sue propinque minore restarà superfluo, ut hic: $O^{\circ \circ \circ \circ \Box} \square \square \circ \circ \circ \circ$, et altre simile occurentie, la quale regula et modo de imperficere mai non patisse exceptione, perché questo procede da la natura de le note perfecte in cantando exercitate, le quale (in cantando) son considerate variate in dui modi, scilicet integre et composite, o vero in parte divise. Quando son in la sua integrità, alhora son conumerate integre et perfecte. Ma quando son composite o vero divise, tale divisione pò acadere in tri modi. El primo serà quando serano private de la tertia sua parte a parte ante, ut hic: O o 🗖 , el secondo quando serano diminute de essa sua parte tertia a parte post, ut hic: O 🗆 🔷, el tertio quando serano tute resolute in parte minute, ut hic: Oo o, et etiam per note più minute, come per minime,⁴ etc. Adonca perché questa breve O □ ◊ et altre simile figure (in quanto breve) resta privata de la semibreve sequente, la quale è parte tertia de la sua integrità, tale breve aquista nome de imperfectione, perché alhora (per se) non vale tre semibreve. Et questo

^a MS: mineme.

acade perché resta impedita et diminuta de la semibreve sequente. Et perché tale imperfectione è existimata vera et reale, pertanto mai non patisse exceptione. Et perché lo opposito de la imperfectione non è altro che la perfectione, pertanto sequitarà che così come la imperfectione predicta ha una cognitione infalibile, reale, et certa, che etiam la perfectione convirà havere tale non exceptuata et infalibile cognitione, la quale è stata constituta da li antiqui in la simile posita inanti a la sua simile.

3. Et la rasone de tale locatione è stata da alcuni consultata, li quali hano dicto che li antiqui constituirno tale precepto senza essere sforzati da rasone alcuna, ma solo mossi da proprio senso. Et altri (confabulando) dicono che li antiqui (circa questo) non furno mossi da alcuna rasone la quale fusse propria intra tale figure simile, ma son solo stati mossi da alcuna rasone de comparatione. Imperò che nui habiamo che intra le sonore distantie in la similitudine cadere tuta la integrità de la perfectione, come appare intra le voce unisone et le equisone, le quale son existimate da li compositori essere de integerima perfectione decorate.² Ma certamente che da me è considerato altramente circa questo. Imperò che io considero se (ut diximus) l'è de neccessità che el si trova la figura perfecta realiter et senza exceptione, dico che el serà de bisogno che tale demonstratione de infalibilità de perfectione appara in modo che dapo la nota constituta perfecta s[e]quiti un'altra nota la quale non possa essere comprehesa da essa nota perfecta. Pertanto serà de bisogno che dapo essa nota sequiti una sua simile, o vero una magiore. Imperò che la simile non pò comprehendere né imperficere la sua simile, et etiam la magiore non potrà essere comprehesa da la minore. Pertanto qua bisogna disputare et vedere inanti a quale de le predicte figure tale nota serà più rectamente considerata infa[li]bilemente essere perfecta, scilicet inanti a la sua simile, o vero inanti a la magiore. Se adonca (come è stato dicto di sopra) l'è neccessario che la nota infalibilemente demonstrata perfecta sia locata inanti ad una nota, la quale non sia minore, o vero che non possa essere parte tertia de essa nota perfecta, dico che el bastarà che tale figura perfecta habia tale cognitione, scilicet che sia posita inanti a la sua simile, et questo advenirà perché 'frustra fit per plura quod fieri potest per pauciora',³ et da tale rasone credo che (circa questo) la docta antiquità fusse constrecta, perché se la semibreve perfecta et le altre simile possono havere la clara notitia de la

¹ Johannes de Muris, in his *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, states: 'nulla nota potest imperfici ante sibi similem' (CS iii. 49b). The rule does not occur in Franco of Cologne's *Ars cantus mensurabilis*.

² Spataro refers to unisons and octaves; cf. Bartolomeo Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 63: 'Octava . . . perfectissima vocatur et aequisona, quia aeque videtur sonare cum prima sicut unisonus.'

³ This is one of Spataro's favourite expressions, and we encounter it many times in the Correspondence. The ultimate source is Aristotle, *Physics* 1. 4 (188°17–18): 'And it is better to assume a smaller and finite number of principles, as Empedocles does' (*The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Barnes, i. 321). Spataro's wording, which had great currency in the Middle Ages, probably derives from some medieval commentary.

infalibile perfectione per essere locate inanti a la sua simile, el seria vano et frustratorio assignarli tale immutabile perfectione inanti a le sue sequente magiore, come la semibreve inanti a la breve, a la longa, et a la maxima. Similemente, se la breve potrà essere comprehesa perfecta inanti a la breve, el serà frustratorio comprehendere et assignare tale sua perfectione

203[°] inanti a la longa et inanti a la maxima. Et etiam el simile acaderà de la longa dal signo demonstrata perfecta, che potendo essere comprehesa infalibilemente perfecta per essere posita inanti ad un'altra longa, el seria frustratorio comprehendere tale sua perfectione quando fusse inanti a la maxima locata, perché quello che se pò rationabilemente considerare per la positione de una simile inanti a la sua simile serà vano considerarlo inanti a la sua magiore. Imperò che (senza neccessità) el non se debe lassare quello che claramente se pò comprehendere per la simile per fare transito in la propinqua o in la remota et etiam in la remotior. Perché se la infalibile perfectione de la figura perfecta fusse stata ordinata in la figura posita inanti a la magiore, el sequitaria che le figure essentiale (le quale tendeno ad augumentare o vero consisteno de la aggregatione delli tempi) non hariano fine, come de la maxima, la quale (per demonstrarsi perfecta) conviria essere locata inanti ad una sua magiore, et per tale modo el seria de neccessità che ultra la maxima se desse un'altra nota magiore, et così si procederia in infinitum."

4. Veramente, Messer Petro mio honorando, che (circa questo) da la docta antiquità fu inteso el tuto. Pertanto intra li predicti dui reali extremi, scilicet perfecto et imperfecto, da loro furno assignati certi medii, li quali (perché possono havere natura de perfecto et de imperfecto) possono essere chiamati neutrali, o vero participanti. Imperò che da la reale et infalibile imperfectione (la quale, ut diximus, consta de la nota apta a la perfectione impedita da la sua propinqua minore) depende che essa nota pò essere perfecta et imperfecta intra le sue minore locata, ut hic: O I O I O O O O I, et altri simile occurentie. Et da la reale et infalibile perfectione causata da la simile inanti a la simile locata nasce che mediante el pleno, tale reale perfecto se converte in imperfecto, ut hic: O • = D, et altre simile occurentie. Per queste demonstratione potriano dire alcuni che quello che di sopra circa la perfectione et imperfectione è stato dicto non è reale né naturale, perché pò patire, a la quale cosa se responde che quello che di sopra è stato dicto se intende non permutando li termini, scilicet vacuo inanti a vacuo, et non pleno inanti a vacuo, et breve o altra simile non punctata posita intra el numero non expedito ternario de le sue minore, ut hic: $\bigcirc \square \diamond \diamond \diamond \diamond \diamond$.

5. Ma dove V.E. dice volere intendere come se intenda questa similitudine, circa questo (mosso da la sententia del phylosopho in li *Predicamenti*), respondo et dico che tale similitudine de figure debe essere secundum qualitatem et non secundum quantitatem. Imperò che dove la regula dice 'similis ante similem', etc., essa regula demonstra che tale similitudine debe essere secundum nomen tantum. Imperò che ogni volta che el se parla de nomine ad nomen, o vero de una superficie ad un'altra superficie, el se dice simile et dissimile. Ma quando el se tracta de quantitate ad quantitatem, el se dice equale et inequale.⁴ Pertanto, dicendo la regula 'similis ante similem', el se intende che (de neccessità) tale figure sempre debeno convenire secundum nomen, et non sempre in virtù quantitativa, come semibreve inanti a semibreve, così perfecta come imperfecta, ut hic:

litudine de denominatione de note debe essere intesa cadere intra le figure de uno medesimo signo, ut hic: O \square \square , et non ut hic: O \square C \square . Imperò che dato che secondo el nome, l'una de le breve predicte non sia dissimile da l'altra, tamen l'una non serà mensurata da le sue minore come serà l'altra. Pertanto la breve inanti a la breve per tale modo posita potrà imperficere a parte ante, ut hic: O o D C D. Ma se dapo la breve ut hic posita O D sequitarà un'altra breve ut hic signata: $O \square \frac{3}{2} \square \diamond$, et altri modi simili, dico che tale breve dapo el signo circulare posita restarà perfecta, et questo advenirà perché in tale loco la breve ut hic posita $\frac{3}{2}$ \square on muta signo ma essa breve solo muta compositione, et non perfectione. Imperò che per uno tempo perfecto del signo circulare se pigliano nove minime de quelle, le quale son posite dapo li termini comparati, o vero tre semibreve perfecte, come nel tractato nostro de la sesqualtera habiamo demonstrato.⁵ Pertanto se V.E. considerarà bene a quello che è stato dicto di sopra, trovareti che da li antiqui è stato ordinato che tale regula non debia patire [exceptione], scilicet che sempre la simile resti perfecta inanti a la sua simile, per assignare uno ordine de certa et infalibile perfectione non dissimile ma correspondente a l'ordine de la certa et immutabile imperfectione, la quale (ut diximus') naturalemente occurre quando la nota demonstrata perfecta del signo iace intra le figure sue minore sequenti, le

^b This sentence was written on a slip of paper at the end of fo. 240^v headed: 'Appostilla lasata per errore, la quale sequita dove trovareti questo signo :::: .'

[&]quot; MS: dimus.

⁴ Spataro refers to Aristotle, *Categories* 6 (6³30-4).

⁵ Tractato di musica . . . nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata exercitate. Spataro's opinion that breves under sesquialtera proportion are perfect was not shared by many of his contemporaries. He undertook his treatise on the sesquialtera as a defence of his views; see Ch. 8. For the history of this treatise, which was not published until 1531, see Ch. 3.

quale per superfluità o per diminutione non observano la ternaria conumeratione, et così de altre figure più minute riducte a le propinque.

6. Haveti etiam inteso essere più licito constituire tale infalibile perfectione in la simile inanti a la sua simile locata che non serà se serà posita inanti a la magiore, perché se tale cognitione de clara et nota perfectione se pò havere intra le simile (intra le quale cade maxima propinquità), el seria frustratorio cognoscere tale perfectione in la nota posita inanti a la magiore, el quale ordine è etiam stato observato da li antiqui in la divisione del monochordo: imperò che cognoscendo loro che 'l era neccessario che inanti o intra o vero dapo dui toni occuresse el semitonio,

^{204^r} tale | monochordo fu da loro diviso per tetrachordi, o vero per quattro chorde, chiamate diatessaron, et non per pentachordi o vero per cinque chorde, chiamate diapente, el quale spatio de diapente non se dà senza semitonio. Tale ordine fu da loro observato perché se el basta che tale monochordo sia diviso per manco, scilicet per diatessaron, el seria vano dividerlo per diapente. Similemente, se tale firma et immutabile perfectione pò (con quella rasone medesima) apparere inanti a la sua simile che acaderia essendo posita inanti a la magiore, dico che el seria vano se tale perfectione fusse stata constituita inanti a la magiore, perché el seria frustratorio se (senza necessità) el se lassasse la simile (tra le quale non cade excesso né differentia alcuna) et avincere la dissimile, tra le quale cade maxima distantia et inconformità.

7. Ho etiam scrip[t]o a V.E. come ho scripto a Baldasera, et da lui non ho havuto alcuna resposta. Ma Zoanne Batista da Pozo me ha scripto che Baldasera dice che lui ha scripto a V.E. et che etiam responderà a me, tamen ancora non ho ha[v]uto resposta alcuna.

8. Al mio honorando Pre Zanetto dareti questa missa et mutetto,⁶ li quali son con questa ligati, et asai a sua Signoria me recomandati. Non so come se chiamarà bene servito da me, perché l'è stato de bisogno che io vada in prestanza per la copia de tale missa et mutetto. Et perché tale copia era de uno non troppo amico mio, m'è bisognato haverla per terza persona et notare presto et ocultamente. Pertanto dapo che hebi notato, m'è bisogno rendere la copia senza potere vedere se erano correcte, sì che se lui vi trovarà errore, V.E. farà mia excusatione. Tamen a sua Signoria et al nostro Messer Paulo Scotto V.E. asai me recomandarà et a li altri amici nostri, ma prima el vostro et mio patrone Monsignore reverendo [Sebastiano Michiel], el quale (perché è amico de le virtù) più che tuti li homini viventi è da me amato, et altro non bramo che fare cosa li sia de piacere.

9. Finita che serà questa quadragesima,⁷ io serò con uno frate de Sancto

Augustino multo docto per fare riducere l'opera de la sesqualtera in latino. Se io me acordarò con lui, l'opera passarà. Se ancora non me acordarò, subito la mandarò qua a V.E. Bisogna aspectare facta la quadragesima, perché tale frate predica ogni giorno in la eclesia del nostro Sancto Stephano, sì che hora è impedito.

10. Perché da Messer Marco Antonio Cavazon non ho mai havuto quelle mie epistole, et etiam perché non ho via alcuna de scriverli, prego V.E. voglia cercare quale è quello gentilehomo venetiano, el quale è andato in offitio a Bressa, et trovando el nome de quello, ve prego dati a la sua caxa questa mia derita a Messer Marco Antonio predicto, che forsa harano migliore via de mandarla a Bressa che non ho me, et de questo asai ve prego. Et perché io li scrivo se lui havesse più facile modo de mandare le predicte epistole mie qua in Vinetia che non ha de mandarle a Bologna, che lui le mandi qua a V.E.⁸ Pertanto se lui le manda, ve prego ne habiati bona custodia et che procurati mandarmele a Bologna per misso fidato.

11. Da poi che hebi scripto quanto di sopra se contene, et mentre che io aspectava la certeza se V.E. era andato a Roma o non, a li dì 7 del presente hebi una de V.E. de 22 martii signata, per la quale de la littera de Messer Guasparro da le Arme hebi clara no[ti]tia, et de ciò non mi marveglio, perché mai le littere mie (per lui mandate) non hebeno ventura. Horsù sia con Dio. Me rencresse habiati havuto fatica et sturbo, Messer Petro mio honorando; se ho falato per dare la littera mia (derictiva a Baldasera) a Joanne Batista da Pozzo, dico mia culpa. Ma io deti a lui tale littera mia perché nel suo parlare lui me demonstrò essere amico vostro, et etiam disse sapere che V.E. voleva che Baldasera venisse qua, e diceva che Baldasera li haveva dicto el tuto. Pertanto non solo alhora el pregai (ma etiam dapo io li scrisse) che el pregasse Baldasera che lui volesse respondere a V.E. o veramente a me, et credo che tanta sia stata la solicitudine del predicto Zoanne Batista che Baldasera me ha scripto, et aciò che V.E. sia claro del tuto, ve mando la sua propria littera a me missa. Non fa bisogno che V.E. habia alcuno respecto, perché a me piace essere recercato, perché sempre se impara, et più hora me piace imparare che mai facesse, benché per el numero de li multi anni male io possa dare opera al studio. Pertanto se li mei scripti ve piaceno, me piace. Se ancora non ve satisfano, inculpati el mio poco sapere et (adoperando el vostro subtile ingenio) cercati da per vui satisfarvi, perché uno solo homo non scia ogni cosa. Circa la andata de Roma ho inteso ad plenum. Se io fusse più giovene che non son, io poneria da parte ogni altra cura et veniria qua, perché sempre ho havuto desiderio vedere questa tanto digna cità, et tanto più voluntiera veneria per visitare el nostro comune patrone Monsignore

⁶ The mass is probably the 'Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena'; see no. 7, para. 9.

⁷ In 1523 Easter fell on 5 Apr.; as becomes clear in para. 11, Spataro wrote by instalments.

 $^{^{8}\,}$ Spataro apparently had asked Cavazzoni to return all the letters Spataro had written to him. On this, see Ch. 3.

reverendo et vedere et abrazare V.E. Ma io son tanto impedito da li sinixtri, li quali produce la trista et annosa mia età, che certamente non credo che io potesse arivare vivo a la medietà del desiderato camino.

^{204^v} Pertanto | ad altro atenderemo. Bastame asai che a sua Signoria a tempi me recomandati, et se a Bologna per sua Signoria et per V.E. vi posso fare a piacere, dati adviso senza respecto alcuno. Sempre ve rengratio de lo officio faceti con sua Signoria et ne le vostre oratione.

12. El tractato de la sesqualtera mandarò come serò resoluto con el frate predicto, circa el quale tractato altro non dico poiché non voleti che dica. Quando V.E. me mandò quelle due canzone francese, io le portai in palazo, et non trovai Antonio pifaro. Ma io le lassai ad uno cancelero del capitaneo Ramazotto, chiamato Petro Zoanne, amico de V.E., de Antonio, et mio, et lui me promisse darle al predicto Antonio pifaro, et così fece. Da poi io intesi dal predicto cancelero che Antonio ne fece poca existimatione perché non erano notate in clave da sonare, et così le rendete al predicto Petro Zoanne, el quale me le portò, et più volte le cantassemo. Et vedendo che piacevano al predicto Petro Zoanne, io ne feci uno presente a la sua zentileza, sì che Antonio ha havuto el modo torne copia, se ha voluto. Se altro circa ciò voleti che io facia, dati adviso.

13. Messer Petro mio honorando, a me non rencresce salutare V.E. con le littere mie, perché certamente (per la longa nostra amicitia, la quale è fondata in virtù) tra nui è nato tanto amore et affinità che existimo che V.E. et io siamo de uno solo corpo al mondo nati. Pertanto de summo gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni humilità et gentileza, et perché a me pare uxare ingratitudine a negarvi cosa alcuna, pertanto, aciò che credati essere vero quello che dico, scilicet che sete da me supra tuti li mei amici amato, mandatime uno fido misso con una vostra, et io per esso fido misso vi mandarò quello tractato de la sesqualtera, perché ho pensato che serà bono che V.E. el discorra prima che sia de vulgare in latino traducto. Ho pensato^d essere bono non ve tenire più in tempo et in speranza, et se el piacesse a Dio chiamarmi (per multe cause), io son più contento che resti apresso a V.E. che ad altro homo vivente, perché a me pare che non altramente merita lo amore, el quale (con effecto de honore et de la mia exaltatione) V.E. me porta. Non altro per hora. Tuto son vostro.

Bononie, die 8 aprilis 1523.

Vester Johannes Spatarius Bononiensis

1. Pressure of work prevented me from answering the questions posed in your letter of 28 February. Being of somewhat freer mind now, I will respond.

2. You wish to know the reason for the rule 'Like before like is always perfect' [similis ante similem semper est perfecta],¹ how 'similarity' is to be understood, and why the rule cannot suffer any exception. Any note shown by the time signature to be perfect can be rendered imperfect by taking away one-third of its value. This imperfection follows without fail whenever the perfect note has before or after it a group of the next smaller note-value that exceeds a ternary number, as in the series $O \diamond \diamond \diamond \diamond$

 $\Box \Box \Box \circ \circ \circ \circ$. Perfect notes can be considered as either whole or divided.

Division takes place if the perfect note loses one-third through a note preceding it: $0 \circ \Box$, or following it: $0 \Box \circ$, or if three semibreves form one composite: $0 \circ \circ \circ$, or if minims are grouped together. Breves are called imperfect when they lose one-third of their value. Such imperfection is judged to be true and real and therefore does not suffer an exception. Perfection has the same truth and reality.

3. Some say the ancients devised this rule without any special reason, others that they were merely moved by analogy because, considering musical ratios, the unison and octave are similar and are considered to be perfect.² I, however, believe there is a different reason: if a note is to be perfect, it must be succeeded by another note that cannot be included in the first note; therefore the succeeding note must be equal to or larger than the first one. We must next enquire whether the first note will be more infallibly perfect before a similar note or a larger one. I believe that the first case is sufficient to prove perfection; therefore—according to the ancient philosophical principle, 'it is pointless to do by more what can be done by fewer'³—the second case is unnecessary. Besides, if one had to depend on the next higher value in order to show perfection, the note-values would have to proceed to infinity.

4. Between the two extremes of perfection and imperfection lies a mean, called 'neutral or sharing'. For example, a note may be perfect or imperfect depending on the surrounding notes of lesser value, or a breve before another breve can be imperfected by blackening: $O \bullet \blacksquare \square$. Some might consider that an exception to the rule, but this would involve changing terms.

5. Regarding the meaning of 'similarity', I say, following Aristotle, that it is similarity according to quality, not quantity. The rule 'similis ante similem' refers to the name only. When one speaks of quantities, one says 'equal and unequal'⁴ and refers to the numerical value of an object. Similarity, then, applies to names, such as a semibreve before a semibreve,

^d MS: pensata.

either perfect or imperfect, as thus: $\bigcirc_{\underline{C}} \circ \circ | \circ \circ \circ |$ [the third semibreve is perfect even though it is followed by an imperfect semibreve]. Similarity in name, however, is valid only under one time signature: $\bigcirc \square \square$ and not $\bigcirc \square \square \square$. In the latter case, the first breve could be imperfected by a preceding semibreve. In the case of $\bigcirc \square_2^3 \square$ the first breve is always perfect, because $\frac{3}{2}$ is not a change in time signature but in the composition of the breve, which remains perfect, nine minims being equivalent to the breve under \bigcirc , as shown in my treatise on the *sesquialtera* relation.⁵ The ancients declared that the rule should not suffer an exception in order to give an infallible counterpart to the rule of imperfection.

6. If we can prove that like before like is always perfect, it is superfluous to prove that a note before a larger note will be perfect. The ancients recognized this principle in their division of the monochord by tetrachords; knowing that after two tones a semitone must occur, the smallest unit is a series of four notes. It would therefore be superfluous to divide the monochord by pentachords. Thus if perfection occurs before a similar note, it is superfluous to constitute it before a larger note.

7. I wrote to Baldasera but had no response from him, but Giovanni Battista da Pozzo writes to me that he has written to you and will answer me.

8. Please give the enclosed mass and motet to Pre Zanetto.⁶ I had a hard time obtaining copies of them; I had to use a third party to get the music from a person with whom I am not on good terms and then copy them quickly, without being able to proof-read the copies. Please give my greetings to him, to Paulo Scotto, and to your and my patron [Sebastiano Michiel].

9. Once this Lent is over⁷ I hope to interest an Austin friar in translating my treatise on the *sesquialtera* into Latin. If it doesn't work out, I will send the treatise to you.

10. I never received my letters from Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni; would you find out who that Venetian gentleman is who went to Brescia and send him the enclosed letter to give Cavazzoni? If it is easier for Cavazzoni to return my letters to Venice rather than Bologna, he should send them to you.⁸ If he does, will you see that they are sent to me in Bologna by trusted messenger?

11. After writing the foregoing, I received your letter of 22 March. I apologize for having given the letter for Baldasera to Giovanni Battista da Pozzo, whom I thought I could trust, knowing him to be your friend. But I did get an answer from Baldasera, which I enclose. You should feel no qualms about writing to me; I like to be sought after, because now that I have become older I like to learn even more. If my answers don't satisfy you, you should seek elsewhere, because one man cannot know everything. Thank you for your invitation to come to Venice; I should enjoy nothing better, but fear that, at my age, I should not complete the journey.

12. I shall send my treatise when I have made arrangements with the friar. I took the two French chansons you sent me to the palace. Not finding Antonio Pifaro, I left them with our mutual friend, the chancellor Petro Zoanne. I heard later that Antonio had little opinion of them because they were not notated in the proper clefs for instruments; thus he gave them back to Petro Zoanne, who brought them to me and we sang them several times. Since they pleased him, I gave them to him as a gift, so that Antonio could copy them, if he wanted to.

13. I enjoy corresponding with you; because of our long friendship, I feel as if we were born from one mother. To prove that I love you above all my friends, I ask you to send me a trusted messenger and I shall give him my treatise on the *sesquialtera* for you to look over before it is translated into Latin, for if anything should happen to me, I should feel happier if the treatise were in your hands rather than in anyone else's.

7 (J77). Fos. 205^r-206^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 19 September 1523 (autograph)

206^v [Reverendo et venerabili et musi]co eruditissimo Domino Petro [Aron de Florent]ia maiori honorando. Venetijs, [Sancto Zoanne] de li furlani.

205^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. Per due altre mie a V.E. misse quella ha potuto intendere del tractato vostro musico¹ receputo, et etiam che se quella ne mandarà a Bologna, credo se ne spazarà alcuno, ponendoli condecente pretio.

2. Hora perché da me è stato dato principio de legere tale vostro tractato, fa bisogno (come tra li amici acade) de qualche sue circumstantie et parte pertractare, et questo non per disputare né etiam per volermi opponere a le clare et mere vostre sententie, ma solo per mia satisfatio[ne] e chiareza. Ma certamente a me pare che V.E. sia stato nutrito tra le muse. Imperò che dove (nel capitulo primo del primo libro) pertractati de laudibus musices, credo che meglio non se potria dire, et similmente nel capitulo secondo dove de li inventori de essa musica faceti discurso. Et etiam multo a me piace quello che dicto haveti nel terzo, quarto, et quinto capitulo, et etiam a me pare che con grande ordine et lume de inteligentia da V.E. sia stato sequitato sino al capitulo nono del predicto libro primo.

3. Ma da poi, nel capitulo 10, a me pare che V.E. sia stato diminuto, perché dove (circa el fine de tale capitulo) diceti ut hic, scilicet: *nel modo magiore imperfecto la maxima valerà due longe, sei breve, 12 semibreve, et minime* 24, ut hic: \pm^2 perché (secondo questa vostra conclusione) el pare che in altro modo non se trovi el modo magiore imperfecto, se non quando la maxima vale due longe perfecte, et questo facilemente potria essere creduto da multi, perché in li capitoli precedenti dove tractati del modo magiore, V.E. aduce due varietà de positione de pause de longa demon-

strante el modo magiore perfecto, ut hic: _____ et da poi solo assignati

questa positione de pause: $\underline{\pm}$ per la cognitione del modo magiore imperfecto, el quale serve a lo opposito de queste: $\underline{\pm}$. Et da poi non aduceti alcuna positione binaria de pause longe occupante dui spatii, la quale sia a lo opposito de questa positione ternaria: $\underline{\pm}$, come seriano

queste: $\overline{\pm}$. De questo non poco son stato admirato, perché se questa ternaria positione d[e] pause: $\underline{\pm}$ occupante dui spatii demonstra che la maxima resta perfecta o vero complecta de tre longe imperfecte, sequitarà che la binaria positione de tale pause, ut hic posite: $\underline{\pm}$ demonstrarà che la maxima serà imperfecta et harà valore de due longe imperfecte. Ma de questo io ho per excusato V.E., perché pò essere proceduto da inadvertentia et non da ignorantia, perché tale cosa è nota ad ogni rudo, ma 'quandoque bonus dormitabat Homerus'.³

4. Similemente sequitando tale musico tractato, son pervenuto al capitulo 34° del predicto primo libro,⁴ el quale capitulo è stato^a da me multo bene considerato et più volte let[t]o, et maxime dove V.E. dice ut hic, scilicet: Ma nota che tale diminutione ne la tertia parte de le note negre non solo si trova quando la maxima vale tre longe et la longa tre breve, ma ancora ne li signi che demonstrano tale figure essere imperfecte come qui: ⊙, nel quale signo la ma×ima et la longa possono essere divise in tre parte equale, cioè la maxima in 12 semibreve de tempo imperfecto et la longa in sei. Così in questo ancora 🤆 , nel quale se pò trovare divisa la maxima in tre parte equale, cioè in minime 24 et longa in 12 minime. Togliendo adonque nel primo signo el tertio a la maxima, resta in semibreve 8 et la longa in 4, et nel secondo diminuta resta la maxima in minime 16 et la longa in minime 8, come qui appare: .⁵ Primamente circa questo io dubito dove diceti che in questo signo la maxima pò essere divisa in 12 semibreve de tempo imperfecto, perché a me pare che le semibreve de questo signo O siano subiecte al tempo perfecto, et non a lo imperfecto. Ma potria essere errore de lo impressore, perché credo che in tale loco voglia dire che essa maxima vale 12 semibreve de prolatione perfecta.⁶ Et pure se sta bene secondo che sta scripto, prego V.E. me facia claro de tale dubitatione.

³ 'Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus': Horace, *Ars poetica* 359. Spataro quotes Horace from memory, which accounts for the wrong tense.

⁴ Toscanello, fo. D4': 'Cognitione della maxima, et lunga di colore pieno' (1529 edn., fo. E2'). Spataro makes no mention of ch. 32, in which Aaron had incorporated large parts of Spataro's letter to him of 7 Mar. 1521 (no. 4); he surely noted with satisfaction that Aaron had been convinced by his arguments. Later on he was eager to see whether Aaron had incorporated his criticisms of the *Toscanello* in the second edn. (see no. 27, para. 3). On the question of plagiarism, see the Commentary on no. 12.

⁵ Toscanello, fo. D4^r (1529 edn., fo. E2^v).

⁶ The terms *prolatio maior* and *prolatio perfecta* are used synonymously by Aaron in the *Toscanello*, Book I, ch. 8, although he prefers *prolatio perfecta*. In this he follows Gafurio, who, in his *Practica musicae*, Book II, ch. 9, rejects the analogy with *modus maior* and *modus minor*, for the latter are founded on two different note-values, maxima and long, whereas *prolatio* refers to only one value, the semibreve (see *Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, p. 90). See also Wolf Frobenius, art. 'Prolatio', in *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie*.

⁷ Aaron's explanation of the blackened maxima and long is elliptic, erroneous, and

¹ Thoscanello de la musica, published in Venice on 5 July 1523. The second edn. (1529) gives the title Toscanello nella musica. We shall use this spelling hereafter.

² Toscanello, fo. B_5 : 'Quanto sia il valore delle note nel modo maggiore perfetto, et imperfetto, modo minor perfetto, et imperfetto' (1529 edn., fo. C1'). Spataro retains his own spelling when quoting from Aaron's treatise.

^a MS: stata.

7. Spataro to Aaron, 19 Sept. 1523

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5. Dubito etiam dove V.E. dice che la maxima et la longa in questo ²⁰⁵ signo O possono essere divise in tre equale parte, et per tale modo el pare che vogliati concludere che quattro semibreve siano la tertia parte de la maxima predicta et che due semibreve siano la parte tertia de la predicta longa. Questo a me non pare consono, perché el sequitaria che se quattro semibreve in tale loco son la parte tertia de la predicta maxima, che etiam quella nota cantabile, la quale precise coglie le predicte quattro semibreve (come la longa de dui tempi imperfecti in questo signo O) serà etiam parte tertia de tale maxima, et per consequente tale maxima serà perfecta, et per tale modo acaderà de la longa, la quale cosa serà contra de vui, perché diceti che in questo signo O la maxima et la longa son imperfecte. Ma veramente, Messer Petro mio honorando, non se debeno dire essere parte tertia de la maxima, perché ciascuna nota resta reintegrata de quelle note o vero parte de le quale tale nota resta resoluta et in parte divisa. Pertanto essendo la maxima predicta resoluta primamente in due longe imperfecte de dui tempi perfecti, et secundariamente in quattro tempi perfecti, tertio in 12 semibreve perfecte, et quarto in 36 minime, per tale modo dico che etiam tale maxima debe essere reintegrata, scilicet de due longe imperfecte, de le quale ciascuna sia complecta de due breve perfecte, o vero de quattro tempi o vero breve perfecte, et etiam de 12 semibreve perfecte, o vero de 36 minime, et non mai de quattro semibreve perfecte tre volte scripte, come (tacite) da vui è stato concluso. Imperò che se per el pleno dato in tale maxima sequitasse che la maxima perdesse 4 semibreve come parte sua tertia, el sequitaria che (in tale loco) a la maxima seria assignato quello che non li convene, scilicet lo imperficere, et al tempo (el quale è perfecto) seria tolto quello che li convene, scilicet esso imperficere, perché removendo da la maxima 4 semibreve perfecte, quelle quattro breve perfecte da la maxima contenute (dapo tale remotione o vero imperfectione de maxima) più non haverano de che se possano fare imperfecte. Ergo, etc. Pertanto, Messer Petro mio honorando, dico che el pleno dato et assignato in la maxima et in la longa da questo simplice signo O gubernate non opera circa la diminutione de essa maxima et longa. Ma solo tale pleno

opera circa la imperfectione de quelli quattro tempi,^b o vero breve, le quale da la maxima vacua son contenute primamente perfecte.

6. Per la quale cosa a me pare che male da V.E. sia stato usitato quello vocabulo, scilicet dicendo che la maxima per el pleno resta diminuta, perché se V.E. advertirà, quella trovarà che non poca differentia cade intra minuire et imperficere in le figure cantabile, et questo nasce perché la maxima, la longa, la breve, et la semibreve son gubernate da dui numeri, scilicet dal binario et dal ternario, de li quali el binario è dicto naturale perché è prima invento et considerato, et perché el ternario è fondato supra el binario, o vogliam dire che el ternario (in questo loco) ha origine dal binario,⁸ per la quale cosa esso binario (per essere naturale) pò essere compreheso senza signo, scilicet che quando in li canti non appare signo alcuno, tali canti son cantati per binario, o vogliam dire per imperfecto. Ma quando (ultra tale binario, o vero numero naturale) el canto serà modulato, scilicet per ternario, alhora bisogna che tale modulatione ternaria sia apparente per signo, per la quale cosa (in questa facultà harmonica) ogni ternaria consideratione è dicta accidentale, perché tale ternario respecto al binario sta come lo accidente nel subiecto, el quale accidente se dà et tol[l]e senza coruptione del subiecto,⁹ come appare de le note perfecte, le quale tanto possono imperficere fin che siano pervenute al naturale binario, et non più ultra. Quando adonca de una nota perfecta se leva o vero tol[l]e la sua parte tertia, el non se dice che tale nota sia 206^r diminuta, ma el se dice che tale nota resta imperfecta, el quale imperficere (in questo loco) non vole dire altro se non che quello accidente o ver perfectione, la quale fu agiuncta al naturale binario, resta levata o vero tolta da esso binario, et che el proprio binario resta integro et solo, scilicet senza accidente et alcuna superfluità. Ma quando da poi dal naturale binario serà tolta alcuna parte, come tale volta acade intra le figure sesqualterate ut hic: ¢ •, alhora tale note se possono chiamare diminute perché perdeno el proprio suo origine chiamato naturale.¹⁰ Per questa rasone appare che la maxima et la longa plene aducte di sopra non serano dicte diminute, perché non perderano el proprio binario, scilicet lo imperfecto, ma serà inteso che (ut dixi) le magiore figure perfecte, scilicet le breve, le quale son contenute da essa maxima, solo siano imperfecte.

theoretically unsound: elliptic, because the sign \odot refers to the perfection of the breve and semibreve, not to the imperfection of the maxima and long, which, in Aaron's system, should have been shown by a single two-bar rest; erroneous, because the '12 semibreve de tempo imperfecto' must be in perfect *tempus* (as Spataro points out); and theoretically unsound, because these twelve semibreves are divided into four groups of three, not three groups of four, and therefore are not divisible by three. Moreover, since the maxima is already imperfect, it cannot undergo further imperfection. Spataro discusses his doubts about these points in the following paragraph. In the next letter Spataro declares himself satisfied with Aaron's explanation of this passage. It is hard to see why he was, because Aaron did not emend the passage in the second edition. Aaron apparently meant that blackening the maxima in this mensuration would imperfect the parts in it that were perfect, removing one semibreve from each of the four perfect breves. However, such a result is properly accomplished through imperfection, not coloration.

^b MS: tempo.

⁸ This is an idea Spataro received from his teacher, Bartolomeo Ramis; see no. 5, para. 9. It is, of course, the precise opposite of the traditional view (see the Commentary).

⁹ On this argument, see no. 5, para. 9.

¹⁰ Aaron must have wondered why Spataro did not object to his statement at the end of ch. 31, where he argues that an imperfect long in perfect *tempus* cannot properly be said to be imperfected, but must be called diminished, inasmuch as it did not have a ternary value to begin with.

7. Ma se da poi de essa maxima plena sequitarano, o vero precederano, octo minime, le quale faciano imperfecte quelle octo semibreve, le quale restano perfecte in la maxima da poi el pleno de essa maxima ut hic: \odot

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plena se potrà rectamente dire essere diminuta, perché non havendo più in sé nota alcuna la quale possa imperficere, tale maxima plena perderà la parte tertia del naturale suo valore, scilicet del binario a lei prima constituto, perché serà sesqualterata, et per consequente bisognarà che la sua parte tertia, in forma de longa plena, o vero in valore inanti o vero dapo tale maxima plena, sia apparente ut hic:

et altri modi simili. Et bene che questo parà alquanto duro da considerare al simplice practico, pure dal speculativo et docto musico (el quale procede cum rasone et cum lume de inteligentia) tale positione è affirmata.¹¹

8. V.E. acceptarà questo mio scrivere in bona parte, et non perché io vi voglia reprehendere, perché io non ho tale intentione perché io scio bene che io non son digno de portarvi el libro dreto, non solo a V.E. ma etiam al minimo, el quale exerciti questa facultà harmonica, ma solo scrivo per imparare et intendere se V.E. ha meliore oppinione, perché se io credesse fare dispiacere, io non vi scriveria de simile occurentie. El dubio è subtile et non da practici. Pertanto, havendo facto el tractato vostro per li practici, V.E. se pò excusare dicendo havere uxa[to] termini da practici perché li practici credono che ogni figura plena debia demittere la sua parte tertia.

9. Mentre che io scriveva questa, uno frate de li Crosati me dete una de V.E. del dì 9 del presente signata, a la quale non farò altra resposta, perché

' MS: binaria.

¹¹ See the Commentary.

7. Spataro to Aaron, 19 Sept. 1523

per due altre mie a V.E. mandate quella serà claro del tuto. Ma circa quello che per parte de Messer Paulo Scotto [scriveti], io non me arecordo bene quale mia missa fusse quella, la quale io mandai a Messer Pre Zanetto, benché creda che tale missa fusse quella che già io composi supra certe antiphone de Sancta Maria Magdalena. Aciò che 'l nostro amico Messer Paulo sia servito, a me pare scrivere al predicto Messer Pre Zanetto che sua Reverentia me farà grande apiacere se lui acomodarà V.E. o Messer Paulo Scotto de tale missa, aciò che ne pigliati copia. Se lui ve la darà, la dareti a Messer Paulo. Se etiam lui non ve la darà, dareti adviso et del nome de la missa, che farò^d che V.E. et Messer Paulo haverà el suo intento.

10. Iterum prego V.E. | non piglii el scrivere mio in sdegno et in mala parte, perché io non voglio più litigio con alcuno, et maxime con el mio honorando Messer Petro, el qual amo de puro core, perché scio che V.E. ama me. Pertanto, more solito, pregareti per me aciò che se io son in errore, che el spirito sancto benedecto me illumini circa la verità. Et a Monsignore vostro et mio patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a Messer Paulo Scotto me recomandareti, et a Pre Zanetto, al quale dareti questa ligata, ne la quale el prego che se V.E. o vero Messer Paulo li domandarà tale missa, che per amore mio lui ve la dia. Io sequitarò vendendo l'opera, et se circa questa harò da V.E. grata et non turbata resposta, occurendomi dubietà alcuna ve darò adviso. Ma se non harò resposta grata, starò tacito, et più non dirò cosa alcuna, perché io non vorei perdere lo amico et el tempo ad uno tracto.

Petre mi vale, et ut soles me ama. Bononie, die 19 septembris 1523.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. In two previous letters I notified you of the receipt of your treatise.¹ Were you to send some copies to Bologna, a few might be sold, if the price were right.

2. Now that I have begun to read your treatise, it is necessary (as is the custom among friends) to raise questions, not for the sake of argument but to clarify some points. Certainly, you must have grown up with the Muses. One could ask for no better treatment of the praise of music and music's inventors than that given in the first two chapters of Book I. Everything is presented in good order and with great intelligence up to ch. 9 of the first book.

^d MS: fare.

7. Spataro to Aaron, 19 Sept. 1523

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3. But towards the end of ch. 10,² where you state that in the imperfect major mode the maxima is worth two longs, six breves, twelve semibreves, and twenty-four minims, showing these rests: \pm , one could easily believe that this was the only possible arrangement of note-values in the imperfect major mode. In earlier chapters you gave two sets of rests indicating perfect major mode; why is the imperfect major mode not indicated also with the rests \pm , showing that the maxima and the long are imperfect? Surely this is only inadvertence rather than ignorance, for every beginner knows this. But 'occasionally even Homer nodded'.³

4. The next point involves ch. 34 of your treatise,⁴ which I have carefully considered, especially where you say that the diminution of blackened notes by a third occurs not only when the maxima is worth three longs and the longs three breves, but also under signs that demonstrate the imperfection of these notes, such as \bigcirc , under which the maxima and long can be divided into three equal parts, the maxima into twelve semibreves in imperfect tempus and the long into six, and under \bigcirc the maxima divided into three equal parts or twenty-four minims and the long into twelve minims. Under the first sign, removing a third from the maxima, eight semibreves are left, and four in the long, and under the second the maxima will have sixteen minims and the long eight, thus: \bigcirc 4 \bigcirc 4 \bigcirc 5 I question this because under \bigcirc it seems to me that the semibreves are subject to perfect tempus, not imperfect—or is this perhaps a printer's error for 'twelve semibreves of perfect prolation'?⁶ If this is not what you intended, please explain it.⁷

5. I am further puzzled by your statement that the maxima and long under \odot can be divided into three equal parts, and that the third part of a maxima would be four semibreves, and the third part of a long two semibreves. If this were the case, the maxima and long would have to be perfect, whereas you called them imperfect. Moreover, the breves are treated as if they were imperfect. There are indeed twelve semibreves, but they should not be divided into three equal parts, nor should four semibreves be taken for the third part of a maxima. The maxima and long being imperfect, the four semibreves cannot relate directly to the maxima but only to the perfect breves contained in it. Were the blackened maxima to lose four semibreves as its third part, as you claim, then it would assume a function that it does not have, i.e. imperfection, because it is already imperfect, and the perfect breve would forfeit its proper function, that is, the ability to be rendered imperfect. Removing four perfect semibreves from the maxima leaves the four perfect breves without the possibility of imperfection. Blackening the maxima and long under O does not diminish the maxima and the long but imperfects the four breves contained in the maxima.

6. I believe you err in calling the maxima 'diminished', for there is a considerable difference between imperfection and diminution. All note-values are governed by two numbers, binary and ternary. The binary number is the original and natural number; the ternary is founded on it and is thought of as an added part.⁸ Therefore, if there is no sign, the mensuration is binary. Ternary mensuration is considered 'accidental': it modifies the subject and can be added or removed without altering the essence of the subject.⁹ Imperfection of its smaller perfect parts therefore is the proper expression, not diminution of the whole, because the part removed is 'accidental' to the binary value. But if a part is removed from a natural binary number, as under *sesquialtera*, then one speaks of diminution.¹⁰

7. If the blackened maxima were succeeded or preceded by eight minims, which would imperfect the eight perfect semibreves, then the maxima would have its true binary value, since all the perfect notes contained in the white maxima would have been rendered imperfect. But there is a case where the blackened maxima could properly be called diminished: if four semibreves and eight minims were to be placed next to it. There being no notes left to be imperfected, the maxima will lose a third of its value through *sesquialtera*. However, *sesquialtera* must be shown by changing the maxima pure and simple to a maxima followed or preceded by a blackened long. This will seem hard for a simple practitioner to understand, but the speculative and learned musician, by virtue of reason and intelligence, will affirm its correctness.¹¹

8. I assure you that nothing is further from my mind than the wish to reprove you; I realize that I am not worthy to carry a book for you or even the lowliest among musicians. I write only in order to learn and to find out whether you have a better idea. The matter is complicated, and you are writing for the practical musician, for whom the theoretical problems are too subtle.

9. As I was writing, I received your letter of 9 September. Regarding your request on behalf of Paulo Scotto for a copy of the mass that I had sent to Pre Zanetto, I think it must be the mass I wrote on some antiphons of St Mary Magdalene. I shall write to Pre Zanetto and ask him to oblige you or Scotto. If he won't, let me know the name of the mass, and I will see that you get a copy.

io. Again I beg you not to take my letter ill, because I want no more quarrels with anyone, least of all with my honoured Messer Pietro, whom I love with a pure heart, knowing that you love me. You will as usual pray that if I am in error the Holy Spirit may enlighten me. I shall go on reading your book, and if your reply is gracious and unruffled, I shall continue advising you of any doubts occurring to me; if not, I shall stop writing, for fear of losing friend and time at a stroke.

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7. Spataro to Aaron, 19 Sept. 1523

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COMMENTARY

The traditional view of the hierarchical order of ternary versus binary metre was that the number three, signifying the Trinity, was perfect and had to be granted pre-eminence. When duple metre was introduced, in the thirteenth century, it faced considerable opposition, both on musical and theological grounds.¹² That Ramis should have been a proponent of binary mensuration as the more natural goes hand in hand with his scientific, anti-theological attitude, and his belief in reason as the supreme arbiter in matters of art and thought.¹³ He evidently arrived at this notion through an analogy with medieval number theory. Macrobius, in his commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis*, stated that 'one, which is called *monas* or unity... is not a number but the source and origin of numbers.... Two, since it is the first after *monas*, is the first number.¹⁴ Ramis transmits this number theory in ch. 8 of the first part of *Musica practica*.¹⁵

Marchetto of Padua, the first theorist to describe imperfect metre, still pays tribute to tradition when he calls triple metre the natural and perfect number. However, he establishes the composer's right to choose imperfect in preference to perfect time, if he so wishes, but he must give a special sign to show imperfection:

And since every composition naturally and by itself observes perfect more than imperfect time, seeing that the latter indicates imperfection, the former perfection, therefore a composition by its very nature is not bound to imperfect but to perfect time. However, at the pleasure of the composer, it happens that, when he writes polyphonic music, it may be set in imperfect time. Then it is necessary that he place a sign indicating his intent that the composition be in imperfect time throughout; this is not necessary in a composition in perfect time.¹⁶

By the mid sixteenth century, however, the idea of binary mensuration as the natural and original system had become so entrenched that Pietro Aaron, in his *Compendiolo* of c.1545, could say that those who believe the opposite 'possono essere istimati nel arte di Musica falsatori, et di una minima intelligenza' (*Del canto figurato*, ch. 15).

¹² See Willi Apel, The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900-1600, 5th edn. (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), pp. 292-4.

¹³ See Lowinsky, 'Music of the Renaissance', pp. 157-60 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 99-101.

¹⁴ Macrobius, *Commentum in Somnium Scipionis* 1. 6, 7, and 18. On Spataro's analogy between the breve and 1, see Ch. 8 and no. 45, para. 17.

¹⁵ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 24.

¹⁶ 'Et quia omnis cantus de se et naturaliter plus respicit tempus perfectum quam imperfectum, cum illud dicat imperfectionem et istud perfectionem, ideo cantus ex natura sua non determinatur ad tempus imperfectum, sed ad perfectum; ex voluntate autem instituentis propter modum armonizandi fit quod cantus respiciat tempus imperfectum, dimisso perfecto. Et ideo est necesse quod ipse instituens ponat signum innuens mentem eius in cantu de tempore imperfecto toto, et non in cantu de tempore perfecto'; *Pomerium*, ed. Giuseppe Vecchi (Corpus scriptorum de musica 6; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1961), Book II, Tractatus 2, pp. 164–5; 'fit', found in three manuscripts, has been substituted for the 'sic' in Vecchi's edn. in order to supply the missing verb. When Spataro proposes, in para. 7, to show *sesquialtera* of a blackened maxima both by a blackened long and by four white semibreves, he remarks that this notion is 'alquanto duro da considerare al simplice practico' but will be understood by the 'speculativo et docto musico'. Gafurio transmits succinctly the meaning of coloration in perfect metre: 'Whenever a note is blackened in a ternary mensuration it is imperfected by a third part of its own value. The third part must also be blackened to establish its relationship to the other note.¹¹⁷ In the present case, if the blackened maxima is to be sesquialterated by the four semibreves, it is these semibreves that should be blackened. Otherwise, according to the rules of imperfection, notes that cannot imperfect the neighbouring note of greater value must be transferred to the next imperfectible note. To expect the four white semibreves to merge with the blackened long is to infuse speculation with mysticism.

B. J.B.

¹⁷ Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 102.

8 (175). Fos. $201^{r}-202^{v}$

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 1 November 1523 (autograph)

202^v [Reverendo et venerabili et musico perit]issimo Domino Petro [Aron florentino m]aiori honorando. [In Ven]etia, [Sancto Zoanne de li] furlani.

201^r Venerabilis vir et musices amatorum caput, salutem.

1. A li dì 27 otobris ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 9 del predicto signata, per la quale (per havere compreheso tuto el contrario di quello che io, con grande paura, aspectava) molto me son alegrato. Imperò che (certamente) de due cose da V.E. io ne aspectava al manco una, scilicet o che circa quella mia de dì 19 a V.E. missa [no. 7] io restaria senza resposta, o vero che respondendo, io seria da V.E. acramente rebuffato et represo. Pertanto (vedendo essere reusito tuto lo opposito) ogni mio timore et suspecto è ritornato in gaudio, et a me pare (poi che le mie dubitatione son state benignamente da V.E. acceptate e vedute) havere guadagnato lo amico mio. Imperò che V.E. (per li scripti a me missi) demonstra che le mie epistole et scripti pleni de amore ve son stati grati, li quali mei scripti non son reprehensione né etiam correctione (perché 'non sum dignus calciamenti tui solvere corigiam')¹ ma son dubitatione et parlare fraterno, come acade intra liberi amici et fratelli amatori de virtù, li quali l'uno con l'altro (confabulando) de qualche sue virtuose dubietà se fano clari, come al presente è acaduto, perché circa le dubitatione mie in quello tractato de V.E.² misse, ad plenum da quella son rimasto claro et satisfacto. Horsù non più circa questo, benché asai ce seria che dire circa un'altra particula, et questo è che certamente a me pare che V.E. tropo sia humile et che tropo dica, et perché sempre inanti a li ochii mei tengo el lucido speculo de la mera verità, scilicet del mio poco sapere et ignorantia. Pertanto, tanta humilità non pende da mei meriti ma da la vostra innata bontà, virtù, et gentileza, la quale sempre ho trovato regnare in V.E.

2. Ma da poi io non ho più scrip[to] a V.E. circa quello vostro musico tractato, et questo è proceduto perché io deti principio a scrivere quello mio novo tractato in lingua materna,³ et etiam perché io aspectava

¹ Cf. the prophecy of John the Baptist, Mark 1: 7: 'Venit fortior me post me, cuius non sum dignus procumbens solvere corrigiam calceamentorum eius' ('There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and loose'). ² Toscanello.

³ It is not entirely clear which treatise Spataro refers to. Judging from a previous letter to Aaron (no. 6), the treatise on the *sesquialtera* was finished and ready to be translated into Latin. The 'new treatise in the vernacular' is probably a revised version of Spataro's treatise on mensural music, which he may have undertaken to remedy the deficiencies he perceived in Aaron's *Toscanello*. In the last paragraph of the present letter he tells Aaron that perhaps it will be ready sooner than he thinks and that he wishes Aaron to read it before publication. On the history of Spataro's treatises, see Ch. 3. intendere se a V.E. erano grate le mie dubietà et scripti. Ma da poi che l'opera è scripta et finita et che etiam (per la predicta vostra receputa) ho compreheso che a V.E. li mei scripti son grati et non molesti, iterum (per questa mia) ritorno a quella per farmi claro de alcune altre mie dubietà trovate nel capitulo 35 del primo libro.

3. Et prima dove V.E. dice ut hic, scilicet: et prima nel modo minore perfecto atrovarai le breve negre acompagnate con le longe negre de dicto modo, le quale breve non perdeno parte alcuna per essere in tale loco de natura imperfecte, ma sono così descripte per reintegrare la quantità del modo minore perfecto, quale mancaria ne la demonstratione de le longe negre, le quale figure negre non son concedute trovarsi senza compimento, sì nel modo come nel tempo.⁴ Circa le quale vostre sententie non poco dubito, perché io me arecordo havere veduto già una missa facta dal mio preceptore supra 'Requiem eternam',⁵ multo plena de arte et subtilitie, che da lui nel modo minore perfecto, così de tempo perfecto come de tempo imperfecto (in mensurando el concento), era congiuncta la breve plena con la longa vacua ut hic:



Dal mio predicto preceptore

era inteso che ciascuna de le due predicte breve plene fusse facta plena per evitare alteratione, la quale alteratione acaderia in ciascuna de le predicte breve se non fusseno plene.⁶ Et da poi acompagnava ciascuna de le predicte breve plene con la sequente longa vacua. Et per tale modo acaderia che la vostra regula data in tale 35 capitulo faleria, benché V.E. potria dire che tale ordine seria più facile quando le^a longe sequente a tale breve plene fusseno plene, la quale cosa non affirmava el mio preceptore. Et diceva che tale longe non doveva[no] essere plene, perché in questo loco la nota magiore non debe servire a la minore, sì che la longa non se debe fare plena per obedire a la breve, ma sì bene et e contra, scilicet che le breve se fano plene per unirsi con la longa. Et questo da V.E. è affirmato dove nel proprio loco diceti ut hic, scilicet: *Adonque è di bisogno che tale breve siano conumerate a le longe o vero per se sole in quantità senaria*. Et etiam el

^a MS: lo.

⁴ Toscanello, fo. $D4^v$ (1529 edn., fos. $E2^v-E3^r$).

⁵ The Requiem mass by Bartolomeo Ramis has not survived.

⁶ Blackening a note to prevent alteration seems to be an idiosyncrasy of Ramis which he transmitted orally to Spataro; it is not in his *Musica practica* (which has no section on imperfection and alteration), nor is it discussed by Gafurio or Tinctoris. In the course of the 16th c., when alteration fell out of use, one often finds $\bullet \square \square$ in place of $\diamond \diamond \square$, where the second semibreve should be altered (see Apel, *Notation of Polyphonic Music*, p. 136). This form of notation spells out the alteration instead of leaving it to the singer's knowledge of notational practice.

8. Spataro to Aaron, 1 Nov. 1523

The Letters

predicto mio preceptore diceva che se tale longa vacua fusse facta plena, che tale pleno seria frustratorio et senza neccessità producto, perché se la breve plena anteposita sta come una breve simplice vacua, scilicet non alterata, el sequitarà che la longa sequente vacua, la quale è receptaculo de tale breve plena intesa vacua, debe essere etiam vacua. Imperò che el vacuo se debe congiungere con el vacuo secondo la virtù et esentia, et non secondo la apparentia, perché ancora che le predicte breve in apparentia siano plene et che (secondo la sua essentiale virtù et valore) esse breve siano intese come vacue, alhora essa breve, circa el modo, debe etiam trovare el complemento vacuo.7 Pertanto appare etiam che congiungendo ciascuna de le predicte breve plene con la longa plena, el non seria giungere plenum ad plenum, ma seria giungere vacuo ad plenum. Ma nel secondo exemplo di sopra signato con el circulo complecto acaderano etiam le predicte consideratione, et etiam la longa potrà essere plena al servitio de la breve plena. Et tanto più li serà da considerare perché in tale loco son due perfectione, scilicet el modo minore et el tempo. Pertanto, se la longa postposita a la breve plena fusse plena (ultra li inconvenienti di sopra demonstrati), etiam sequitaria che (non volendo forsa el compositore) quelle due breve perfecte, de le quale essa longa vacua è receptaculo, mediante el pleno seriano imperfecte, perché essendo tale longa facta imperfecta de la sua parte tertia da la breve plena a sé anteposita, el sequitaria che el pleno dato ad essa longa tenderia ad imperficere le due breve predicte da la longa predicta contenute, et per tale modo sequitaria che el vacuo et perfecto tempo se con[g]iungeria con dui pleni et imperfecti tempi per perficere el numero ternario de tri tempi a complemento de la longa del modo minore et del tempo perfecto, la quale cosa (certamente) è erronea et non mai da docto alcuno producta in luce.

4. De simili exempli ut supra positi n'ho facto ancora io in certo tenore de una mia missa dicta 'Tue voluntatis', et etiam ho trovato certi auctori da li quali el predicto conducere de figure plene con le vacue è stato usitato, et maxime da Rosino da Fermi in uno tenore de uno suo 'Veni Sancte Spiritus' a cinque voce facto.⁸ Pertanto, Messer Pe[t]ro mio honorando, a me pare che circa tale figure plene V.E. doveva parlare con qualche exceptione. Ma V.E. se pò excusare circa questo, dicendo che quando V.E. havesse voluto demonstrare che tale ultima breve et altre simile non dovesse alterare, che asai bastava ponere uno puncto tra la ^{202^r} quarta et la quinta breve, et che alhora asai | per el practico era claro che la quinta breve era conumerata con la sequente longa ut hic: $O_2 \square \square \square \square \square$. $\square \square \square$ et che V.E. ha parlato

con li rudi,^{*b*} et non con li docti, li quali docti tendeno al lume de lo intellecto et a la speculatione de la verità. Pertanto aducono demonstratione speculative et tanto alte che da li simplici practici son poco et quasi nulla existimate.

5. Similemente, Messer Petro mio honorando, nel predicto capitulo 35 de^c quello vostro tractato me occurre un'altra dubietà dove V.E. (sequitando) dice ut hic: *El secondo modo, che ogni breve negra soto el tempo perfecto è diminuta de una tertia parte quale è una semibreve, et questo per essere essa breve formata de numero ternario, e così tute le semibreve negre apresso esse breve sono ne la quantità come se fusseno vacue, ma solo stano in augumento del numero perfecto.*⁹ Ma certamente circa tale vostra sententia asai dubito, et questo è solo perché ho trovato apresso a certi docti antiqui et moderni, come da Tintoris in uno suo mutetto multo arduo, del quale non me arecordo el nome,¹⁰ el quale Tintoris pone queste note ut hic:

o vero così:

nel quale predicto mutetto da esso Tintoris non è inteso che la breve plena et la sequente semibreve plena inseme coniuncte possano perficere et reintegrare uno tempo complecto de tre semibreve vacue, ma solo da lui son intese solamente havere el valore de due semibreve vacue, le quale con la precedente, o vero con la sequente, semibreve vacua inseme coniuncte perficerano el valore de uno tempo perfecto, perché (in tale positione) quella breve plena non è facta plena perché sia convertita de perfecta in imperfecta, perché ancora che la fusse vacua, la non seria perfecta ma seria

^b MS: rude. ^c MS: del

⁷ Spataro refers to a personal discussion with Ramis ('Ramis used to say'); the *Musica practica* treats coloration only as a sign indicating that the mensuration is perfect or that the notes are in *sesquialtera* (see *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 89).

⁸ The motet, which seems not to have survived, is also mentioned in Spataro's letter of 3 June 1529 to Del Lago (no. 24), in which he says that he could no longer find the work, which was rather old-fashioned and had a tenor full of artifice, 'not too gratifying to our modern practical musicians'.

⁹ Toscanello, fo. D4[°] (1529 edn., fo. E3^r).

¹⁰ The motet is 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus', discovered recently by Blackburn, and edited and commented upon in 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings Recovered'. Tinctoris's motet contains several passages in coloration, some of which indicate imperfection, others *sesquialtera*; these passages are discussed on pp. 95–100. Spataro must have quoted the passage from memory; his quotation does not agree exactly with any of the passages in Tinctoris's motet, but he understood correctly 'Tinctoris's use of blackening to indicate *sesquialtera*.

imperfecta de la sequente semibreve vacua. Pertanto tale pleno in tale breve dato più non potrà tendere ad imperficere, ma atenderà al sesqualterare, per la quale cosa advenirà che tale breve plena inseme con la sequente semibreve coniuncta non producerà uno tempo perfecto, come da V.E. è concluso. A me pare che V.E. in questo passo doveva parlare con qualche exceptione. Imperò che quello che ha dicto V.E. potrà stare ut hic, scilicet:

et altra declaratione non aduco perché scio bene che circa tale positione sapereti elegere el vero dal falso, benché circa questa particula V.E. se potria excusare dicendo che da vui è inteso tractare de le note gubernate da li signi perfecti simplici, et non quando tra le figure de tali signi^d occureno figure sesqualterate demonstrate per el pleno.

6. Diceti etiam che le semibreve plene posite dapo le breve plene non perdeno valore, ma che stano in augumento del numero perfecto. A me questo dicto (scilicet augumento) non pare bene dicto, perché ogni augumento excede la integrità de la cosa augumentata. Però a me pare che meglio seria stato dire complemento, o vero suplemento. Ma questo poco importa al practico, el quale poco atende a la significatione de li vocabuli. Potria essere stato culpa de lo impressore, perché ho compreheso in altre particule del vostro tractato predicto che al perficere da V.E. è pure usitato el proprio et condecente vocabulo suo.

7. Messer Petro mio honorando, se a V.E. queste mie dubitatione son moleste, pigliatele per non dicte, et se ancora per non ce havere ocio (o per essere per altre cause impedito) non me poteti dare resposta, non ve affaticati in scrivere, perché io vi voglio vivo, contento, et sano, et non morto. Ancora io pigliarò qualche riposo. Altro non voglio da V.E. se non che quella con deligentia (ut dixi) quella si digni vedere quello tractato mio predicto et del suo parere darmi adviso aciò che più sicuramente el possa ponere in publico, el quale tractato credo che V.E. l'haverà forsa più presto che non crede. Tuto son vostro. Al^e patrone de V.E. et mio Monsignore reverendo [Sebastiano Michiel] me recomandareti, et a Messer Paulo et a Messer Prie Zanetto.

Vale. Bononie, die prima novembris 1523.

Vester J. Spatarius

^d MS: signa. " MS: El.

1. I am greatly relieved that you responded so graciously to my letter [no. 7]; I had feared to be met with silence or with wrath. But you are pleased with my writing, which was not meant to correct you, for 'I am not worthy to loose the latchet of your shoe.'¹ You have completely clarified my doubts regarding your treatise.² Indeed, if I were to say anything more, it would be that you are too humble.

2. I myself have not written since, because I have begun work on my new treatise in the vernacular,³ also, I was waiting to see how you would receive my remarks. Now I can take up my queries where I left off, at ch. 35 of the *Toscanello*, which deals with the blackened breve.

3. I wonder about your statement: in the perfect minor mode you will find blackened breves accompanying blackened longs; these breves do not lose part of their value because they are already imperfect; they only serve to fill out the quantity of the perfect minor mode, since blackened figures must always have a complement, both in mode and in tempus.⁴ I remember having seen two examples in the 'Missa Requiem eternam' of my teacher⁵ where a blackened breve is joined with a white long. Ramis blackened the breve to prevent its alteration.⁶ You might counter that the following long should also be blackened, but Ramis used to say that the larger note does not serve the smaller-just the opposite. You yourself acknowledge this later when you say these breves should be counted with the longs or by themselves in groups of six. Moreover, Ramis said that blackening the long would be superfluous; for if the breve is not altered, the white long is imperfected by it and should also be white. The notes have to be joined according to their value and essence, not according to their appearance: Ramis's blackened breve has the value of a white breve and thus must be joined to a white long.⁷ The same applies to the second example I give but with the additional consideration that tempus perfectum is involved. If the long were blackened here, the two perfect breves contained in it would be imperfected, perhaps against the composer's intention, and would result in the value of a perfect breve joined with two black, imperfect breves to fill out a long in the perfect minor mode and perfect tempus, which would be wrong and is not found in any learned composer.

4. I myself wrote similar examples in the tenor of my 'Missa Tue voluntatis' and have found them in Rosino da Fermi's 'Veni Sancte Spiritus' $a f.^8$ Perhaps you ought to speak about an exception in this case. True, you might say that for practical musicians it would suffice to place a dot after the fourth breve to cause the fifth breve to imperfect the following long: $O_2 \square \square$, and that your treatise is not not written for speculative theorists.

5. In the same chapter you state the second manner is that every black breve in perfect tempus loses a third part, a semibreve, because the breve is ternary, and so

all the black semibreves accompanying these breves serve only to fill out the tempus and have the same value as if they were white.⁹ In this connection I recall a very difficult motet by Tinctoris¹⁰ that shows a black breve followed by a black semibreve, thus:

1900000 Together they do not fill out a

perfect *tempus* but have the value of two white semibreves. The breve was not blackened to cause imperfection because it would have been imperfected by the following semibreve; therefore the blackening indicates *sesquialtera* proportion, three semibreves in place of two. Here too you should speak about an exception.

6. Likewise, you state that black semibreves placed after black breves do not lose any part of their value but serve to augment the perfect number. I do not believe that 'augmentation' is the right word, since any augmentation exceeds the wholeness of the thing augmented; the proper word would be 'complement' or 'supplement'. But such finesse matters little to the practical musician, who pays but slight attention to semantics. Of course, it could also be a printer's error, since you use the correct word elsewhere.

7. My honoured Messer Pietro, if these queries bother you, ignore them if you like or if you have no time to respond. I do not wish to tire you with correspondence; I want you alive, well, and happy, not dead. I wish only that you would read my new treatise and advise me on it so that I could place it with greater confidence before the public; it will be ready soon. **9** (J78). Fos. 207^{r} - 208^{v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 6 November 1523 (autograph)

²⁰⁸^v [Reverendo et venerabili et musico peritiss]imo Domino Petro [Aron florentin]o maiori honorando. [Vene]tijs, [Sancto Zoan]ne de li furlani.

207^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. A dì primo del presente da Maestro Justiniano libraro ho receputo una de V.E. inseme con sei volumini del tractato da V.E. noviter impresso,¹ et ho inteso quanto quella dice del pretio. Et perché io scripsi a V.E. che mandasse credo sino a sei, questo fu perché uno homo da bene, amatore di musica, chiamato Messer Veturio, me haveva dicto che ne voleva uno. Questo credo che non lo vorà più, perché l'è venuto qua in Venetia con el Reverendo Generale de li Crosati. Similemente Julio et Bastiano Boca de Ferro me disseno che ne volevano etiam uno per ciascuno, et un'altro ne voleva uno certo frate de Sancto Augustino, amico mio. Ma hora che l'opera è a Bologna, dicono^a che l'è massa cara, et dicono che (in Bologna) se dà la Practica² de Franchino (la quale è tuta exemplata et ha el duplo carte o vero foglii) per dui marcelli. Et etiam dicono che hano per manco de dui carlini el tractato vulgare del predicto Franchino,³ el quale è de tanti foglii come è quello de V.E., sì che non scio che fare. Aciò che loro non credano che io voglia farne guadagno, io gli ho monstrata la littera de V.E. A me pareva meglio che stesseno in la botega del predicto Maestro Justiniano, perché lui è multo più apto a finirli che non son io, et se loro ne vorano, vadano da lui.

2. Maestro Benedecto libraro, el quale fu lo impressore de quello altro vostro tractato musico latino,⁴ è morto. Io haveva scripto a Ferrara ad uno amico mio chiamato Don Antonio Rigom come V.E. faceva stampare tale tractato, et lui me respose che ne voleva uno, sì che li scriverò che l'opera è a Bologna et che mandi el precio se lo vole. Del resto V.E. darà adviso quello che vole se faza. Io ho posto tanto male usanza tra nostri bolognesi et altri amici, che se credeno che ogni homo sia Zoanne Spataro, el quale dona el suo, el quale rito è proprio rito da pazo, perché io da poi ne patisco sinixtro et danno. Quello poco de bene che li poteti fare, facitelo, perché son gente che poco (al mio parere) se ne curano, et questo advene perché

^a MS: dicone.

¹ Toscanello (Venice, 1523).

² Practica musicae (Milan, 1496).

³ Angelicum ac divinum opus musice (Milan, 1508). In spite of its Latin title, the treatise is in Italian.

⁴ The colophon of Aaron's *Libri tres de institutione harmonica* (Bologna, 1516) names as printer 'Benedictus Hectoris, Bibliopola Bononiensis' (i.e. Benedetto di Ettore Faelli).

poco existimano havere inteligentia de la virtù,⁵ ma più se exercitano in cantare.

3. Ma da poi che son in scrivere, per complacere a V.E. et non (ut dixi) per reprehendere quella, me occureno certe dubietà, le quale nascono dal predicto 35 capitulo del primo libro de[l] tractato predicto noviter impresso,⁶ dove V.E. dice in questo modo, scilicet: *Il terzo modo è quando nel tempo imperfecto et prolatione imperfecta tu trovi una sola breve negra; tale breve negra perde una sua quarta parte, quale è una minima, e tanto resta come se fusse una semibreve con uno puncto, o voi dire, una semibreve et una minima.*⁷ Certamente, Messer Petro mio, io non scio tanto^b pensare che io me arecorda havere mai trovato tale breve plena posita per la valuta de una semibreve con el puncto, etc., et quanto più cerco per farmi conforme al vostro dicto (el quale credo non sia senza fundamento), tanto manco de rasone ce trovo, le quale siano valide et firme circa la predicta nota plena aducta, perché el sequitaria che tale breve, ut hic plena C \blacksquare , haria natura de sesquitertia, la quale sesquitertia credo che mai non sia stata trovata (per tale modo signata) da auctore alcuno autentico, né antiquo né moderno. Imperò che

se la sesquitertia serà ut hic data: Coo $\frac{4}{3}$ \square C $\frac{1}{3}$ \circ \circ \neg , quella breve

posita dapo li termini producenti la sesquitertia perde la quarta parte del suo valore, scilicet una minima, perché quattro minime se fano equivalente a tre minime del signo precedente, posito ut hic: C. Se tale exemplo adonca serà riducto tuto soto al signo, scilicet senza apparentia 207^{v} de li termini comparati, tale | exemplo serà ut hic signato, scilicet: $C \circ \circ \circ \circ \circ \circ \circ \Box$. Se adonca (secondo la V.E.) tale breve dapo li termini comparati posita serà (senza tali termini relati) ut hic posita, scilicet: $C \circ \circ \bullet \circ \circ \Box$, el sequitarà che el pleno in essa breve dato serà signo producente la sesquitertia, et per tale modo serà forza considerare che tale ^b MS: tento.

⁶ Toscanello, fo. D4^v, 'De la figura breve plena' (1529 edn., fo. E2^v).

⁷ Ibid. (1529 edn., fo. E3'). Aaron has in mind the notation $\blacksquare \blacklozenge$, used by some scribes in

place of \bullet . Spataro acknowledges this practice in para. 4, but it probably did not occur to

pleno dato produca la sesquitertia comparatione, et questo advenirà perché (circa le figure exercitate) el non se dà che figura alcuna possa essere diminuta de la sola parte quarta, se non per virtù del sesquitertio effecto. Similemente dico che ogni figura (diminuta per el pleno dato) se pò reintegrare mediante el puncto dapo tale figura plena posito, come appare

de la sesqualtera ut hic signata: ¢ 🗆 🖷 🔹 🖶 🖓 🗖 . Et questo nasce perché

el puncto dato dapo tale nota reintegra la figura (la quale prima era imperfecta, scilicet in valore de due parte tertie) de la recta medietà de la sua imperfectione.⁸ Se adonca dapo a quella figura da V.E. ut hic C \blacksquare considerata serà dato uno puncto ut hic C \blacksquare , se domanda che puncto serà quello? Dico che tale puncto non potrà (rationabilemente) essere inteso reintegrare tale nota plena de quella minima o vero sua parte quarta, la quale tale nota perde mediante el pleno, et questo advenirà perchè el non se dà puncto alcuno, el quale (posposito a quale breve se sia) che denoti o vero demonstri la quarta parte de tale nota in quattro parte divisa. Ma se V.E. volesse dire che tale nota plena se potrà reintegrare per la addictione

de' la quarta parte ablata, scilicet de la minima apparente, ut hic C = \$,

circa questo altro non voglio dire, ma lassarò iudicare a V.E., scilicet se a quella pare cosa condecente et regulare che el diminuto pleno coglia una parte vacua a sé remota per farsi integro et complecto.⁹ Ma se V.E. volesse dire che volendo riducere tale nota plena de diminuta a la recta integrità, che bastaria producere tale nota de pleno in vacuo, a questo respondo et dico che el sequitaria che tale nota plena haria etiam natura de sesqualtera, le figure de la quale sesqualtera (per el pleno signata), riducte de pleno in vacuo, fano transito de la diminuta parte tertia in la recta sua integrità.

4. Ma certamente io non nego, ma credo che V.E. habia atrovato tale breve plena con la sequente minima vacua stare per una semibreve con el puncto, perché ancora da me son state atrovate de strane positione de note da considerare, le quale son state exemplate o vero notate da quilli che alcuna volta (con celerità) toleno la copia de qualche concento, li quali quando cognoscono havere errato ne lo exemplare, (per più facilità) in corregendo lo errato concento, fano certi soi signi o figure, che dato che

⁵ 'Virtù' seems to be used here in the sense of 'theory' or 'learning'. For other meanings, see the Notes on Problematical Terms.

him at first because Aaron refers only to a blackened breve and not to a blackened breve followed by a blackened semibreve. Moreover, this notational pattern is more commonly found at prolation level, an example of which is discussed in the following letter. For Spataro, such notation has no theoretical basis. Apel (*Notation of Polyphonic Music*, p. 128) calls it 'minor color' but cites no theoretical source for this term or usage. Aaron, who intended his book for practical musicians, made no change in this chapter in his second edn.

[°] MS: la.

⁸ The dot is one of perfection, because Spataro considers that notes under *sesquialtera* are perfect; see Ch. 8. Those theorists who hold that the values are imperfect under *sesquialtera* would have written the second black breve as a white breve.

⁹ In terms of modern notation, a half-note can be followed by a dot standing for a quarternote, but not by an eighth-note. This would require double dotting, which did not come into use until some three centuries later. It is certainly interesting that the problem emerges as early as 1523.

ancora che siano contra l'uxo et contra l'arte, son però da loro intesi come vogliono stare rectamente figurate et notate. Imperò che (al proposito) io ho atrovato in multe copie con celerità scripte et notate (aliquando) una sola figura ut hic posita 📙 per una semibreve, et pure el se scia che una semibreve sola per tale modo figurata non è data in la mensurata musica, ma perché el notatore aliquando (per errore) havendo scripto o vero posita una breve, ut hic per una semibreve, ut hic posita , et dapo che se è acorto de lo errore, senza removere essa figura de breve tira uno tracto ascendente a lato sinixtro de essa breve, ut hic 🔓, non però perché tale figura sola posita sia figura data in musica, ma basta che al notatore è cognito che tale nota vole essere una semibreve. Et per tale modo potria essere acaduto a V.E., scilicet che quella haria trovato qualche copia con $_{208^{r}}$ celerità scripta, et che el^d notatore (notando), dove doveva ponere^e una semibreve punctata et dapo una minima, ut hic . , li venne posito una breve, ut hic: , et da poi (compreheso lo errore) per havere qualche signo de tale errore (et per fare presto, come se uxa) fu da lui facta plena tale breve, ut hic = \$\delta\$, et questo potria esseressi la mera verità, perché multi cantano queste figure plene m • a similitudine de queste • • •. Io me arecordo che al tempo che io imparava musica da Messer Bartolomeo Ramis, mio preceptore, che sua Excellentia me fece tore copia de uno certo canto, nel tenore del quale canto erano due note, le quale stavano ut hic notate, scilicet P. Et perché io dubitava, el mio preceptore predicto disse che colui, el quale scripse tale tenore, doveva notare tale figure ut hic P, ma perché tale notatore haveva poca cognitione de ligature, scilicet che da lui non era facta alcuna differentia intra queste note ligate: 🏱 et queste: H,¹⁰ pertanto da lui era stato notato ut hic: H, per la quale cosa, essendo poi examinato tale canto da qualche inteligente, per havere a memoria tale errore, fu da lui a mano sinixtra dato uno tracto descendente a la nota seconda per signo che denotasse che tale nota non era longa, ut hic: 1.¹¹ Per conclusione de tale nota ut hic plena: , dico che credo che mai da auctore alcuno fusse dicto che tale nota fusse intesa perdere la quarta parte, imperò che el pleno, dato tra le figure gubernate de li signi

^d 'El' is repeated at the top of the next folio.

imperfecti, non assigna altra diminutione che solo el sesqualterare, come da ogni perito se concede.

5. Ma dove sequitando V.E. dice ut hic, scilicet: el quarto modo è quando tu trovi nel tempo imperfecto et prolatione perfecta una breve negra,¹² etc., circa questo altro non dico, perché (se bene me arecordo) in quella prima mia [no. 7] dove a tale proposito io ve scripsi circa el modo, credo havere dicto al proposito et da V.E. fui chiarito del tuto, et etiam V.E. asai denota la verità nel fine de tale quarto, notando dove quella dice ut hic: et per consequente tale figura et forma de colore pieno demonstra che le due sue semibreve in tale corpo formate restano diminute de la sua tertia parte per la sua negreza apparente.13

6. Horsù non più per questa, la quale procede come le altre m[i]e, scilicet che queste non son disputatione^g né ancora contradictione, ma son dubitatione, a le quale se V.E. responderà, me serà grato. Se etiam non, harò el tacere per allegante resposta. Imperò che potria essere che non ce haver ocio né tempo da spendere in queste mie dubitatione da rudo et insensato vechio. Pertanto serbareti queste fatiche et resposte al tempo che a V.E. harò manda[to] quello mio tractato,¹⁴ che scio che ce serà che fare. Io son intrato in uno laberinto, che Dio voglia et mi conceda gratia che io ne sia reusito con honore. Tamen, l'opera non è ancora in publico, sì che ancora se pò ocultare et emendare, et se bene serà apresso a V.E., credo che non manco hareti cura de lo honore mio quanto haria me proprio, perché el simile ancora io faria per V.E., a la quale humilemente me arecomando, et al reverendo nostro patrone Monsignore [Sebastiano Michiel], et a tuti li altri amici nostri, scilicet a Pre Zanetto et a Messer Paulo Scotto, a li quali V.E. farà le condecente salutatione.

Vale. Bononie, die 6 novembris 1523.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. I received your letter and six copies of your treatise¹ from the bookseller Maestro Justiniano. I had suggested that you send six copies, but one of the persons who wanted one, Veturio, has left for Venice and

^f MS: essera. ^e MS: ponenere.

¹⁰ The oblique shape changes the meaning of the last note; the first ligature is breve-breve, the second breve-long.

¹¹ A descending tail changes the value of the note from long to breve or breve to long, depending on the shape of the ligature.

^g MS: dispatatione.

¹² Toscanello, fo. D4^v (1529 edn., fo. E3^r).

¹³ Spataro objects to Aaron's statement that the black breve in imperfect *tempus* and perfect prolation 'loses its third part', since it is already imperfect. Aaron correctly goes on to explain that each of the perfect semibreves contained in the breve loses a third part; Spataro quotes this passage at the end of the penultimate paragraph of his letter. ¹⁴ See no. 8 n. 3.

the other three, Julio [Muradori], Bastiano Boca de Ferro, and my friend the Austin friar, complain that it is too dear: one can buy Gafurio's *Practica*,² which is twice the size and has many music examples, for two marcelli, and his Italian treatise,³ with the same number of pages as yours, costs less than two carlini. I am at a loss what to do; I showed them your letter to prove that I was not making a profit. I suggest that the copies be left with Maestro Justiniano, who can do a better job of selling them.

2. Maestro Benedecto, who printed your first treatise,⁴ has died. I wrote to my friend Antonio Rigom in Ferrara that the new treatise is out. For the rest, please advise me what to do. I am afraid I am responsible for the bad manners of our Bolognese and other friends, for they expect everyone else to be like Giovanni Spataro, who gives away his own things. This is really foolish, and I have suffered because of it. They do not pretend to understand intellectual matters,⁵ being more interested in singing.

3. Now that I am writing, I will take the opportunity to raise a few more questions about ch. 35 of your treatise.⁶ You write: the third manner is when you find a single black breve in imperfect tempus and imperfect prolation; that breve loses one-quarter of its value, a minim, and becomes the equivalent of a dotted semibreve.⁷ In practice I have never seen a blackened breve used to indicate a dotted semibreve; such a breve would have the nature of sesquitertia. If it were written thus: $C \circ \circ \frac{4}{3} \Box C \circ \circ \circ \Box$, the breve after $\frac{4}{3}$ would lose a fourth part, that is a minim, because four minims equal three under C. $C \circ \circ \blacksquare \circ \circ \circ \Box$, the black breve would be in *sesquitertia*, and this is the only way to reduce a note by a quarter. All blackened figures can be reintegrated [restored to their full value] by a dot, as shown by this example in sesquialtera: $\Box = \bullet = \bullet = \neg \Box \neg$. The dot restores the imperfect note by half its imperfection.⁸ But if one places a dot after your black breve, what kind of a dot would it be? No dot can reintegrate the fourth part of a breve. Should you reply that the breve can be reintegrated by a white minim, I shall leave you to consider whether it is proper and regular for a diminished blackened note to be reintegrated by a white one in a remote value.⁹ If, on the other hand, you were to claim that the black breve could be reintegrated by following it with a white breve, I say that it would still be in sesquialtera.

4. I do not deny that you may have found a single black breve indicating a dotted semibreve, but I believe it is due to an error of the copyist, who, having written in haste a breve instead of a dotted semibreve, blackened the breve to show a reduction in value; I recall similar examples of notation that go against the rules. For example, a scribe wrote \Box when he intended \diamond , and he then added a tail thus: \Box , to indicate a semibreve. So perhaps the copyist wrote $\Box \diamond$ instead of $\diamond \cdot \diamond$, then blackened the breve. This explanation fits your example the better since many sing $\bullet \bullet as \diamond \cdot \diamond$. I also remember a piece I copied for Ramis that had the following ligature: \square . Ramis told me that the copyist should have written \square , but since he was not very familiar with ligatures, he wrote \square instead,¹⁰ which someone else, recognizing the error, tried to correct by adding a tail to the left of the second note.¹¹ I conclude that blackening in duple metre can only indicate *sequialtera*.

5. Where you say, the fourth manner is when you find a blackened breve under imperfect tempus and perfect prolation,¹² I have already commented on this in my first letter [no. 7]; I have been fully enlightened by you on this point; moreover, you give the correct interpretation at the end of your explanation, where you say and consequently such blackening demonstrates that the two semibreves of which it is comprised are diminished by a third of their value.¹³

10 (J82). Fo. 215^{r-v1}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 November 1523 (autograph)

²¹⁵[°] [Illust]rissimo Domino Petro [Aron de Florentia] maiori honorando. [In Ven]etia, [Sancto Zoanne de] li furlani.

^{215^r} Venerabilis vir, et amatorum musices doctissime, salutem.

1. Havendo già (per altre tre mie) facto noto a V.E. de alcune mie dubitatione trovate in quello vostro tractato in materna lingua noviter impresso,² come quello el quale certamente è divoto de le allegantissime opere di quella (solo ut dixi per imparare), son pervenuto al capitulo 36 del primo libro de tale tractato,³ nel quale multe digne et subtile consideratione ho trovate. Et per tale modo legendo, son pervenuto dove V.E. dice ut hic, scilicet *Il quarto modo se trova ne la prolatione perfecta, et tempo imperfecto*, etc. Et così (ultra procedendo) V.E. pone questo exemplo:

Da poi V.E. dice che ritrovandosi tale note in tale modo, che la semibreve negra resta di valore et quantità de una minima con puncto. Contra questo non voglio arguire, perché in li precedenti capitoli ho compreheso che V.E. non ignora che tale semibreve plena con la sequente minima plena son sesqualterate, et che essendo sesqualterate (ancora che colte inseme in virtù et valore faciano tanto quanto fa una minima punctata et una semiminima inseme colte), tamen per la apparente forma et positione de tale note el non se pò negare che (in quanto al nome) quella semibreve plena non sia chiama[ta] semibreve, et che la sequente figura plena, ut hic

posita 4, non sia chiamata minima, le quale figure plene (ut dixi inseme

colte) hano virtù et valore de una semibreve imperfecta o vero de due minime de questo € a sé precedente. Et questa consideratione è nota et clara apresso el docto musico comertio.

2. Ma ultra de le predicte, li dubitanti domandano che figure o vero note serano quelle altre due figure sequente plene, ut hic posite

dapo la predicta minima plena posite, scilicet se serano due minime plene o vero due semiminime. A me pare che siano due minime plene, perché (in quanto a la apparente forma) in alcuna cosa non son dissimile da la^a a MS: le.

¹ A late 16th-c. copy of this letter may be found in Paris it. 1110, fos. 49^r-50^r.

² Toscanello.

³ Ch. 36 is entitled 'Della figura semibreve piena' (fo. D4^v; 1529 edn., fo. E3^r).

predicta minima plena, scilicet posita immediate dapo la semibreve plena. Se adonca son due minime, el suo essere plene serà superfluo et frustratorio, perché asai bastava che fusseno vacue, ut hic:

et per tale modo (in mensurando el predicto exemplo) la semibreve plena con la sequente minima plena et la prima vacua (inseme colte) seriano state el valore de tre minime vacue, o vero de una semibreve perfecta de questo signo \in assignato in tale exemplo; et la seconda minima vacua con la tertia minima alterata o vero duplicata seriano state colte per el valore de un'altra semibreve.⁴

3. Ma se la predicta seconda et la tertia nota ut hic signate, scilicet

plene, 1, son state posite da V.E. per semiminime (come io credo),

veramente non scio quale excusatione io possa fare aciò che quella non resti tinta et inculpata, atento che le semiminime in tale signo punctato,^b et in tale caxo et occurentia, non se fano plene per quello modo che occureno in li signi non punctati. Et questo acade perché non seriano comprehese né cognos[ci]ute da le minime plene, le quale multe volte acadeno in li signi punctati, per multi caxi, li quali lì possono occurrere, come da li opti[mi] musici è stato observato—le quale semiminime da loro son usitate vacue,

ut hic: δ δ . Pertanto dico che (secondo el mio debile iuditio) el predicto

exemplo producto da V.E. seria stato più rectamente ut [hic] notato:

4. Et circa questo più ultra non dico, perché scio che V.E. asai bene $_{215^{v}}$ comprehende quello che | ho dicto, el quale mio dicto non voglio (ut

^b Paris 1110 has 'inusitato' for 'punctato'.

⁴ If the two notes are semiminims, as Aaron intended, the example would be transcribed as follows:

If they are minims, as Spataro would have it, the example comes out



In the 1529 edn., the third minim appears as a white minim. So rendered, the example neither clarifies Aaron's intention nor meets Spataro's objections. Moreover, it fits the metre only if the two black minims were meant to be *fusae*, but they lack the requisite flags.

supra) sia preso da V.E. per reprehensione né^c per argumento contrario, né etiam perché io voglia dare il lume o vero luce al sole, ma tantummodo che da V.E. sia inteso per una mia certa dubitatione, la quale al presente a me s'è riducta a memoria per havere già (ne la mia juvenile età) veduto ne^d le opere de li optimi antiqui, come de Dufai, de Okgem, et del preceptore mio optimo, occurentie come appare in uno suo mutetto chiamato 'Tu lumen', etc., et altre sue compositione, et etiam de multi altri. Nientedimeno ancora tengo con V.E., la quale (per essere inteligente) scio che non opera senza consideratione. Horsù non più circa questo.

5. El mio tractato⁵ è ligato et finito. Ad altro non atendo che solo de trovare uno qualche amico fido che el porti qua a V.E.,⁶ bene che a me adviene come fa a lo infirmo, el quale per longo spatio de tempo ha portato supra el corpo suo la longa et molesta infirmità, et non potendo più resistere piglia lo optimo consiglio, scilicet de andare a trovare lo optimo medico, al quale lui va con non poca paura, pensando a più particule che advenire li potriano. Ma poi che dapo ha ritrovato el fido et optimo medico et receputa la amara medicina et facto sano, o quanto lieto se ritrova, et fra sé medesimo si rode et pente de essere stato tanto pigro et timoroso!

6. Pertanto, Messer Petro mio, così ad me advene. Io sto in timore che scio che se l'opera mia ver[r]à qua in le mane de V.E. (perché quella me ama), io scio che quella me dirà la mera verità, de la quale son vero amatore, la quale cosa a me serà grata^f perché la mera verità è quella la quale reduce l'homo de la egritudine a la mera sanità. Et prima voglio aroscire et cognoscere li errori mei da li amici mei che da li invidi emuli et detractori. O quanto io ser[ò] lieto e alegro quando io sentirò che dal mio caro et excellente Messer Pe[t]ro che l'opera mia serà examinata et castigata!

7. Pertanto prego V.E. se el venesse a Bologna qualche amico fido de V.E., che quella el mandi a me con uno scripto de V.E., et io lo darò voluntiera; nientedemeno farò el possibile per mandarlo più presto se potrà, perché altro non desidero. Non altro per questa. A V.E. me arecomando, et prego con Monsignore [Sebastiano Michiel] faciati le debite salutatione, et etiam con li altri amici.

Vale. Bononie, die 8 novembris 1523.

Vester J. Spatarius

"MS: de. " MS: de. " Paris 1110, fo. 50", stops at this point. " MS: grato.

⁵ See no. 8 n. 3.

1. You have already received three of my letters concerning some problems in your recently printed treatise in the vernacular.² As a devotee of your elegant works, for my edification, I come now to Book I, ch. $_{36}$,³ where you say *the fourth manner is found in perfect prolation and imperfect tempus*, and you give this example:



and say finding such notes in such a manner, the blackened semibreve has the value of a dotted minim. I know that from previous chapters you are aware that the first two notes are in *sesquialtera* (although equivalent in time to a dotted minim and semiminim), but owing to their visible form and position, they cannot be called other than semibreve and minim, although they have the value of an imperfect semibreve or two minims, as skilled musicians know.

2. But there is a question whether the succeeding two notes are two blackened minims or two semiminims. I believe they are minims, in which case it is unnecessary to blacken them:



Then the first two blackened notes and the first white note would equal a perfect semibreve in \in , while the second white note would combine with the altered or doubled third white note to make another semibreve.⁴

3. But if you mean those two notes to be semiminims, as I really believe, I don't know how to avoid faulting you, for they should not be

4. I hope that you will not take these comments as a rebuke or my desire to give light to the sun, but only a query, since I remember in my youth having seem this practice in the best composers, such as Dufay, Ockeghem, and my teacher Ramis, in his 'Tu lumen' and other works.

5. My treatise⁵ is finished and bound, and I am seeking a trusted friend to bring it to you. I come to you as someone with a long illness who finally goes in search of the best doctor. Having found him, and, after taking the bitter medicine, having fully recovered, he regrets his procrastination and his fears.

6. These are my feelings as I send you my work in expectation of your verdict. But truth leads a man from sickness to health. I would rather be

embarrassed and learn my errors from my friends than from jealous detractors.

7. So, should a trusted friend of yours come to Bologna with a note from you, I shall give him my treatise. At any rate, I hope to get it to you as soon as possible. II (J79). Fos. 209^t-210^v Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 6 May 1524 (autograph)

^{210^v} [Reverendo et venerabili et musico doctissimo] Domino Petro Aron de [Florentia maiori h]onorando. [Vene]tiis, [Sancto Zoanne] de li furlani.

209^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum caput, salutem.

1. A di primo maii ho receputo una de V.E. de di 21 aprilis signata, a la quale non darò altra resposta perché credo V.E. già havere havuto una mia per la quale quella ha potuto intendere la receputa del mio tractato musico,¹ et etiam credo quella havere havuto un'altra mia, ne la quale se tractano alcune mie dubitatione circa quello vostro musico tractato materno.²

2. Per questa mia adviso V.E. che per fido misso ho mandato la littera a Baldasera. Similemente, per essere stato admonito da V.E. che io debia sequitare circa tale mie dubitatione per farvi apiacere, et non perché io mi voglia oppone[re] a le sententie de V.E., havendo a quella già circa ciò mandato septe epistole,³ hora vi mando^a la octava, la quale prima nasce da una dubitatione, la quale me occurre circa el capitulo 17º del secondo libro,⁴ dove V.E. nel principio de tale capitulo dice ut hic, scilicet: Considerano alcuni che el principio de ciascuno canto debia essere principiato per consonanza perfecta; nondimeno tale regula è al tuo beneplacito et non necessaria, perciò la quinta, octava, duodecima, quintadecima, et altre simile, dato che in sé habiano suavità grandissima, sono a compiacenza del compositore circa el suo principio.5 A me, Messer Petro mio honorando, pare che V.E. non distingua bene tale regula, perché la regula del contrapuncto data solo (in li primi rudimenti) constrenze lo ediscente a principiare et finire el concento in specie perfecta, ma non constrenge el docto compositore, et questo è stato stabilito et ordinato da li docti et inteligenti preceptori, da li

^{*a} MS*: manda.</sup>

¹ In his previous letter of 8 Nov. 1523 (no. 10), Spataro promised to send his treatise to Aaron; in this letter he confirms safe return of the manuscript. Unfortunately, he gives no hint of what Aaron thought of the treatise.

² Thoscanello de la musica (Venice, 1523).

³ Only four of these are extant (see nos. 7-10).

⁴ *Toscanello*, fo. I1^v: 'Se la consonanza, o concordanza è necessaria al principio del canto' (1529 edn., fo. I3^v).

⁵ Ibid. This sentence does not make sense, for Aaron seems to end with allowing what he opposes in the beginning. The fault is Spataro's, who cuts off Aaron's thought in mid-sentence. It goes on: 'but not at the end, because according to the Philosopher perfection in every thing is attributed to the end, not the beginning'. Spataro cut the quote not out of malice—after all, he was writing to the author, who knew what he had written—he quoted as much as he felt was needed to remind Aaron of what he, Spataro, was about to discuss. Spataro's remarks are commented upon in Ch. 5.

quali è stato inteso che ogni principio debe essere facile et debile, scilicet che in lo instruire, lo ediscente se debe principiare a le particule più facile, clare et cognite. Pertanto quello precepto regulare, scilicet principiare et finire in specie perfecta, è stato aducto per li principianti, et non per li docti compositori, perché li primi rudimenti debono essere intra loro de tale immutabilità et firmeza che el rudo ediscente non vada dubitando con la sua fantasia.⁶ Pertanto cadendo tale immutabilità in le specie perfecte, tale specie son state assignate al rudo principiante per principio et fine del concento, et etiam perché son più facile da considerare che non sono le imperfecte.

3. Et questa verità la habiamo da Boetio nel capitulo 32º del secondo libro de la sua Musica,7 dove dice che el non è più facile da considerare a l'ochio o vero a lo aspecto che dapo uno simplice numero o vero una linea considerare el suo duplo, come la diapason, dapo el duplo la parte media, come el sesqualtro, el quale produce la distantia de diapente. Da poi dice (in facilità) seguitare el triplo, del quale nasce diapason diapente, et da poi el triplo sequita la consideratione de la parte tertia, la quale (in sonis) produce la diatessaron distantia. Et per tale modo appare che in le distantie multiplice et in le superparticulare, scilicet in la diapason, in la diapason diapente, bisdiapason, et in la diapente, et in la diatessaron, consiste più facilità che non consiste in la tertia semiditonale et ditonale, et in la sexta minore et magiore, perché cadeno in lo genere superpart[i]ente, el quale genere non consiste de multiplicità, né etiam de superparticularità, scilicet del tuto et de una sola parte aliquota, ma consiste del tuto et de più parte aliquote, le quale (inseme giuncte) non reintegrano una parte aliquota del termine minore.

4. Per le predicte demonstratione appare che le regule et precepti aducti in luce da li antiqui non son stati assignati senza rasone, et è da considerare che li antiqui hano constretti li ediscenti a tale regule in li primi rudimenti, scilicet componendo a nota contra nota, scilicet a due voce, et tale regule

non son state da loro aducte per i docti compositori, da li quali la integra immutabilità de le distantie perfecte et la mutabilità de le distantie imperfecte è comprehesa et è inteso come se debiano usitare in lo principio et fine del concento. Ma questa erronea oppinione non nasce da V.E. ma nasce da quello pazo et insensato Franchino,⁸ el quale per meglio probare che le consonantie perfecte se debeno ponere in fine cantus adduce quella 209^v phylosophica sen tentia, etiam da V.E. (sequitando) allegata, dove diceti ut hic, scilicet: Ma nel fine non già, perché in ogni cosa (secondo el philosopho) la perfectione è atribuita al fine, non al principio.9 Tale auctorità phylosophica non è pertinente circa questo, perché Aristotele parla de quelle opperatione a le quale se apartene principio, medio, et fine, come seria uno edifitio et altre simile, perché se li mancasse una minima pietra o altra cosa pertinente al complemento de tale edifitio, esso edifitio non serà finito, et per consequente non se dirà essere perfecto, perché perfecto (in tale loco) è inteso come finito et reintegrato in quanto a l'opera. Et per meglio declararvi questo, aduco questo exemplo. Al proposito poniamo che siano dui artefici, li quali (eiusdem materie et forme) faciano dui edifitii, scilicet uno per ciascuno, et che l'uno et l'altro habia due varietà de pietre, scilicet pietre de gran pretio et pietre de vile pretio. L'uno de li predicti artefici pone le pietre de optimo precio nel principio de l'opera sua, et l'altro colloca le sue pietre de gran pretio in fine de l'opera sua. Hora se domanda (finito ciascuno de li edifitii predicti) quale serà più perfectamente finito et complecto, scilicet quello el quale harà le pietre de optimo pretio nel suo initio, o quello che harà tale pietre de optimo valore in fine? Circa questo certamente (in quanto al fine) ciascuna de le opere predicte serà complecta

⁸ Oddly enough, Spataro overlooked that his own teacher, long before Gafurio, said the same thing. In the first chapter of the second part on counterpoint (p. 65 of Wolf's edn.), Ramis writes as follows: 'Cum incipimus organizare, ponamus vocem in quinta vel in octava aut in aliqua alia ab istis composita secundum vocis commoditatem et etiam in unisono; et cum finimus, hoc idem faciendum. Hoc autem est propter hoc, quia aliae consonantiae non sunt tantae perfectionis, quantae sunt istae' ('At the beginning of a [two-part] counterpoint let us use a fifth or an octave or one of their composites and also a unison, according to the natural range of the voice, and let us do the same at the end. The reason for this is that other consonances do not possess the perfection that these do'). If Aaron had confronted Spataro with this quotation, the latter would undoubtedly have countered with the observation that Aaron was talking about four-part harmony, whereas Ramis had discussed two-part counterpoint. The whole section begins with these words: 'Nunc autem, quoniam super datum cantum organizare curamus . . .' ('Now, however, since we are concerned to make a counterpoint over a given melody'); ibid. And with his usual perspicacity Spataro would probably have added: 'If we place a third in a four-part chord, we still retain the fifth and the octave and the perfection that goes with them. This is not the case in two-part writing.'

⁹ The reference is to the eighth rule of counterpoint in his *Practica musicae*, 'that every song should end on a perfect consonance, either on a unison, as has been customary in Venice, or on the octave or fifteenth, as every school of musicians commonly observes for the sake of a perfect harmonic union. For according to the philosopher [Aristotle] the perfection of anything is the end' (trans. Miller, p. 129). The reference is to *Metaphysics* 5. 16, 1021^b24-5.

⁶ The term 'fantasia' appears in Ramis's *Musica practica* (ed. Wolf, p. 71), where he speaks about two-part counterpoint and criticizes 'our singers': 'In this manner harmony generates in the listeners some natural sweetness that cannot be explained in words. But our singers give little thought to that beyond what pleases their imagination or fancy (*quod imaginationi seu fantasiae suae placet*).' In both Ramis's and Spataro's usage, the word 'fantasia' has a negative connotation.

⁷ The reference is actually 1. 32 (ed. Friedlein, p. 222): 'Eodem namque modo auris afficitur sonis vel oculus aspectu, quo animi iudicium numeris vel continua quantitate. Proposito enim numero vel linea nihil est facilius quam eius duplum oculo vel animo contueri. Item post dupli iudicium sequitur dimidii, post dimidii tripli, post tripli partis tertiae. Ideoque quoniam facilior est dupli descriptio, optimam Nicomachus putat diapason consonantiam, post hanc diapente, quae medium tenet, hinc diapente ac diapason, quae triplum, ceteraque secundum eundem modum formamque diiudicat.' Spataro conflates Boethius and Nicomachus: the former did not say that the half part is equivalent to *sesquialtera*.

11. Spataro to Aaron, 6 May 1523

The Letter

et perfecta et finita. Et per tale modo acaderà de uno concento musico composito et finito de varia materia, scilicet de distantie perfecte et de distantie imperfecte, perché siano le perfecte dove se vogliano, scilicet in principio o in fine, sempre el concento (in quanto al fine) serà complecto et perfecto, perché la perfectione et fine de l'opera non consiste in la varia positione de la materia de la quale l'opera è complecta, ma consiste in lo complemento de l'opera, perché ancora che l'opera havesse initio de la più pretiosa et degna materia che trovare se potesse, et non sia complecta et finita, tale opera non potrà essere dicta perfecta, et de questo ha inteso el phylosopho.

5. A me pare che questa vostra oppinione sia asai contra la moderna exercitatione, perché rare volte acade che nel fine de li concenti, come de 4 o più voce facti, non cada qualche distantia imperfecta, per la quale cosa acaderia che in uno solo fine de uno solo concento caderia contrarietà, scilicet perfecto et imperfecto, et de questo ve potria aducere multi exempli de docti compositori, li quali lassarò perché scio che bene cognoscereti questa essere una clara verità.

6. Item V.E. (sequitando) dice ut hic, scilicet: Ancora li antichi musici, dando lo unisono al tenore col canto, seguitano la terza, dapo la terza la quinta, dapo la quinta la sexta, dapo la sexta la octava, dapo l'octava la decima, et così in longo andamento procedevano. Et per il contrario il simile modo observavano, cioè de la decima in octava, etc. Et perché manifestamente tale modo non se observa da li moderni, da nui serà conceduto libero arbitrio potersi fare dapo lo unisono la quinta, et dapo la terza la sexta o vero octava, et dapo la octava la quinta e (come a te piacerà) farai mutatione, perché si vede che multi più begli et grati canti in questo modo son composti che non se facevano in quello antico ordine, nel quale l'huomo più stretto se trovava.¹⁰

7. Messer Petro mio honorando, a me pare che V.E. (in questo loco) reprehenda li antiqui de inconveniente reprehensione, perché se V.E. havesse veduto et bene examinati li exempli assignati da li antiqui in li soi compendii et tractati, forsa quella haria trovato che ancora da essi antiqui è ^{210^r} stato concesso (aliquando dapo lo unisono) dare la quinta, | la sexta, et la octava, et questo acade secondo che la nota la quale sequita dapo lo unisono, scilicet ascendendo o descendendo, dista da la predicta nota la quale ha unisono con el tenore, come V.E. trovarà se legereti quello discurso del contrapuncto facto da Ugolino¹¹ et dal mio preceptore,¹² et da altri musici, et similemente de le altre distantie concorde, perché la docta

¹¹ Ugolino of Orvieto, *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book II, ch. 26, 'De generali seu universali ordine contrapuncti' (ed. Seay, ii. 32-4).

¹² Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, pp. 62–76: 'Secunda pars idest contrapunctus'. Ugolino's rules are included in Ramis's treatise (Wolf, pp. 69–70).

antiquità da vui (così senza consideratione) reprehesa non ha ignorato cosa alcuna pertinente al contrapuncto facto a due voce, scilicet a nota contra nota, perché da loro non è stato temptato più ultra che li rudi principii, perché essa docta antiquità sapeva che l'arte et la gratia del componere la harmonia non se pò insignare, perché el bisogna che li compositori nascano così come nascono li poeti. Pertanto primamente da loro era dato el modo de componere a due voce, scilicet a nota contra nota, et da poi demonstravano de minuire el tempo. Chi da poi più ultra voleva procedere bisognava che (mediante lo aiuto del preceptore) el fusse prima aiutato da qualche sua optima inclinatione celeste et gratia divina.¹³

8. Da poi V.E. (senza havere respecto a le specie del tono del quale el concento è composito) dati al compositore libero arbitrio che facia come li piace et vole, pure che concordantemente proceda, el quale arbitrio non è conceduto in doctrina alcuna.¹⁴ Perché dato che uno concento se possa fare in multi modi, tamen el se debe sempre cercare de elegere el megliore modo, et in questo consiste la virtù del compositore, et da questo nasce che multi componeno, et che la compositione de uno serà più grata de la compositione de un'altro. Et circa questo se son affaticati de demonstrare li docti antiqui per via de regule et precepti, perché dove acade che in una facultà se pos[s]a fare bene e meglio, ivi non cade arbitrio, ma li cade optima regula et precepto et gratia.

9. Da poi sequitando V.E. dice ut hic, cioè: Et avertisci a li canti diminuti che sempre la prima nota et l'ultima in uno discorso diminuto vole essere concordante et li mezi diversi alquanto con dissonantie, come el discurso naturale comporta.¹⁵ Contra la quale vostra sententia aduco questi sequenti exempli:



¹³ See Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius—Evolution and Origins of Concept', pp. 481-3 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 51-2, and no. 22 below.

¹⁴ Spataro's remark is not entirely clear. By 'observing the species of the mode' he may mean that the composer should avoid accidentals that would lead to what Tinctoris calls a 'dislocation of the mode' (*distonatio*), that is, creating cadences on inappropriate degrees (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, ii. 150). Or he may mean that the composer should shape his melodic lines according to the species of fourth and fifth proper to the mode. If we can judge from his criticism of Aaron's compositions, Spataro means the former. He is exclusively concerned with harmonic progressions; there is not a word about melodic style.

¹⁵ Toscanello, fo. 12^t (1529 edn., fo. 14^t). On this rule of Aaron's, see Jeppesen, The Style of Palestrina and the Dissonance, p. 127, and also Carl Dahlhaus, 'On the Treatment of Dissonance in the Motets of Josquin des Prez', in Lowinsky (ed.), Josquin des Prez': Proceedings, pp. 334-44, esp. p. 340. Jeppesen was of course unhappy with Aaron's rule, which agrees neither with the best theorists nor the best composers of the time—certainly not with Palestrina's style. Nevertheless, he traced its survival in post-Aaron theoretical writings. Spataro's dissent from Aaron has remained unnoticed so far.

¹⁰ Toscanello, fo. I2' (1529 edn., fo. I4').

Quelle quattro semiminime del primo tenore divideno in quattro parte la seconda semibreve del primo suprano, et l'ultima semiminima non concorda perché è seconda con el suprano. Similemente la seconda minima del secondo tenore et la semiminima del tertio tenore sono ultime particule de la seconda semibreve del secondo suprano, et non concordano, et pure possono stare et son usitate. Altri multi exempli vi potria aducere circa questo, li quali son da me positi da parte, perché scio che ancora V.E. n'ha facto de simili in le sue compositione.

10. Item sequitando (circa el fine del predicto capitulo 17°), V.E. dice che per la velocità che in sé hano le voce in tale diminutione, essendo in essa alcune dissona[n]tie, non sono incomode a lo audito del cantore.¹⁶ Questa rasone dico non essere bona, perché se per la velocità le dissonantie non fusseno incomode al senso de lo audito, el sequitaria che così in principio de la nota diminuta se potriano così fare le dissonantie come nel medio de essa figura diminuta, et per tale m[odo el]^b diminuire le quantità cantabile seria arbitrario, et non regulare. Et questo è stato observato da al[cuni, ma è] tanto raro che se pò dire non mai. Ma certamente la causa che lo audito non sente le medie et ext[reme not]e de la diminutione nasce che solo el principio et primo moto che fa la voce in la nota (per la in[tensità] sumpta in cantando) è solamente sentito et compreheso da lo audito, et da poi quello stare suspeso et durare che fa la voce sino a l'altra percussione del tempo sumpto in cantando sequente è aceptato da lo audito in loco de taciturnità. Pertanto, abstracta dal tempo la prima sonora percussione (a la quale lo audito sta attento), da poi de tuto el resto del tempo esso audito non cura, perché (ut dixi) quella suspensione, la quale cade tra l'una et l'altra percussione del tempo sumpto, è acceptata da lo audito in loco de 210[°] taciturnità, come se vede claramente in li canti ligati o vero | incathenati, li

quali demonstrano che in uno tempo pronuntiato la ultima sua medietà serà septima, quarta, et seconda, et altre simile dissonantie da li optimi compositori con tale arte de doctrina usitate in le parte durante el^e suspexo del tempo sumpto in cantando che lo audito non sente quello che lui non patiria in la prima percussione del tempo predicto.¹⁷

11. V.E. pigliarà queste mie dubitatione in loco de dubitatione et non de reprehensione o vero de correctione, come altre volte ve ho scripto, benché circa questo io me afatico male voluntiera perché ho paura che ad uno tracto perderò la fatica et lo amico, che serà multo pegio. Ma perché da V.E. son stato pregato al sequitare, così sequirò per obedire a li precepti di quella, credendo farvi apiacere, perché di questo io non ho

^b Hole in original; our supplement, and so throughout the paragraph.

' MS: et.

apiacere alcuno, ma n'ho summo despiacere et timore et incomodo e fatica et danno, le quale mie incomodità pateria voluntiera quando io credesse che producesseno buono fructo, et che tra nui fusse augumento de amicitia, et che non parturisseno odio, come la verità tale volta sole parturire apresso a li cori ingrati et inimici de le virtù.

Al nostro comune patrone Monsignore reverendo [Sebastiano Michiel] me recomandareti, et a li altri amici, et son tuto de V.E.

Bononię, die 6 maii 1524.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. On the first of May I received yours of 21 April. I trust you have by now my letter in hand confirming receipt of my treatise,¹ and another discussing some problems in your treatise in the vernacular.²

2. I have sent the letter to Baldasera through a trusted messenger. Encouraged by you, I continue the series of seven letters³ with this, the eighth, concerning ch. 17 of the second book,⁴ where you write as follows: Some musicians hold that the beginning of each composition should be made with a perfect consonance; but this rule is optional, not obligatory: the fifth, octave, twelfth, and fifteenth and others like them have great sweetness and can be chosen for the beginning at the composer's pleasure.⁵ The rule of beginning and ending a composition with a perfect consonance, it seems to me, was made for the beginner, not the mature composer; the rule was set up by wise teachers who knew that every beginning should be easy and that the right method consisted in letting the student begin with what is easy, clear, and well known. The firmness of the rules will prevent the beginner from going astray by following his own fancy.⁶

3. This principle goes back to Boethius, who, in ch. 32 of the second book of his *De musica*,⁷ holds that [the ear is affected by sounds and the eye by sights in the same way as the mind is by mathematical relationships]. There is nothing easier for the eye or mind to perceive after a simple number or a line than its double, corresponding to the octave, and after the double the half, or *sesquialtera*, which produces the fifth. Next comes the triple, generating the octave plus fifth, and then the third part, producing the fourth. And thus it appears that there is greater simplicity in the multiple ratios [1:2, 1:3, 1:4], i.e. in the octave, twelfth, and double octave, and the superparticular proportions [2:3, 3:4], the fifth and fourth, than in the minor and major thirds and sixths, for these belong to the superpartient genus, which is made neither of multiples, nor of superparticulars (i.e. of one number and another containing that number

¹⁶ Toscanello, fo. I2^r (1529 edn., fo. I4^r).

¹⁷ For an explanation of this theory, see Ch. 5, 'The Art of Composition'.

plus one part of it), but of one number and another containing that number plus more than one of its parts [3:5, 5:8].

4. It is not you but that fool Franchino (Gafurio)⁸ who is responsible for this erroneous doctrine. He tried to prove it by referring to the philosophical maxim, quoted also by you, *but not at the end, because perfection in all things is to be found not in the beginning but in the end.*⁹ But this philosophical idea does not apply here, for Aristotle speaks only about things that have a beginning, a middle, and an end, such as a building which, if it lacks even one single stone, cannot be considered finished. 'Perfect' in this sense means finished and complete. But if two architects make two buildings, and both have two different kinds of stones, one of great value, the other common, but one builder uses the precious stones at the beginning of his work and the other at the end, surely both buildings will have to be viewed as being equally finished and perfect. The same goes for musical compositions, whose completion does not depend on where the perfect intervals are placed.

5. Your opinion, it seems to me, does not accord with modern practice; only rarely do you find compositions for four or more parts that do not have some imperfect consonance at the end. I could cite many examples, which I omit knowing that you are perfectly aware of this.

6. You continue: Again, older musicians, beginning with a unison between tenor and soprano, proceed in regular order to a third, a fifth, a sixth, an octave, a tenth, and so on. And they do the same in reverse, from the tenth to the octave, etc. Since modern composers manifestly do not follow this procedure, we shall allow free choice to go from unison to fifth, from third to sixth or octave, and from octave to fifth, and other changes as you please. In this way many compositions of greater beauty and interest emerge than those done in the old style, in which the composer was confined to narrower limits.¹⁰

7. Here, it appears to me, you find fault unfairly with the older generation of composers: for if you examine carefully the examples given by Ugolino¹¹ or my teacher,¹² you will discover that they have counterpoints of similar technique. Indeed, they knew everything pertaining to two-part counterpoint there is to know. They gave instruction only in the rudiments, knowing full well that the art and beauty of writing for more voices cannot be taught, for composers must be born just as poets are born. Therefore they taught two-part counterpoint, first note-againstnote, then florid. Whoever wanted to proceed further needed the help of a teacher and above all the aid of divine grace and talent, bestowed only by heaven.¹³

8. Without paying any attention to the species of the mode in which a piece is set, you allow the composer free choice as long as he observes the rules of consonance.¹⁴ Such freedom is not conceded in any theory of art.

Granted that a composition can be made in many different ways, yet one should seek the best. And here is the reason why one piece has more appeal than another and why the well-grounded musicians of the past tried so hard to find rule and precept. For wherever one can do well and better, it is not a matter of free choice but of the best rules and good taste.

9. Continuing, you say: Note that in florid counterpoint, the first and last notes of a passage in diminution should be concordant, while those in the middle may be dissonant, as in natural speech.¹⁵ I counter with the following examples:



The first shows the last semiminim of the tenor dissonant with the soprano. The second example shows the second minim dissonant, and the third example has a dissonant semiminim. Yet they are acceptable and are encountered quite frequently, even in your own compositions.

10. You further defend these dissonances by saying because of the fast tempo in such diminutions, whatever dissonances appear are not disturbing to the ear of the singer.¹⁶ By the same token one could defend placing a dissonance on the first note of a four-note figure, in which case florid counterpoint would degenerate from a well-ordered to an arbitrary art. Some composers have done this, but rarely. The true reason why the ear does not perceive the dissonances of the middle and end of the figurations is that it reacts only to the stress given in singing to the first note. What follows, the suspension and holding-out of the voice to the next beat, is taken by the ear as if it were a pause, as can be seen in compositions containing syncopations or interlockings, where the second half of the note will fall on a seventh, fourth, second, and similar dissonances used with such art and ingenuity by the finest composers in the suspended parts that the ear hears only what it already accepted on the first sounding of that syncopation.¹⁷

11. As I wrote before, please consider these to be queries and not criticisms. Since you wish it, I shall continue, hoping to please you and not for my own pleasure, for I have none, particularly when I fear risking to lose at one stroke my trouble and—which is worse—my friend; I would gladly suffer these troubles if I thought that my work would bear fruit and further our friendship.



12 (J80). Fos. 211^r-212^{v1}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 23 May 1524 (autograph)

^{212^v} [Illustrissimo] Domino Petro Aron de Flo[rentia maiori honorando. Ven]etiis, [Sancto Zoanne de li] furlani.

²¹¹^r Musicorum peritissime et maior honorande, salutem.

1. Existimo che V.E. habia receputo due mie, scilicet una responsiva ad una de V.E. da me receputa da Don Antonio da le Anelle, nostro bolognese, et l'altra la quale pertracta de certe mie dubitatione in quel vostro musico tractato² invente et trovate [no. 11]. Et perché da quella son stato advertito che io debia senza alcuno dubio dovere sequitare, havendovi già mandata la epistola octava, questa (circa tale mie dubietà) serà la nona,³ per la quale cosa essendo pervenuto al capitulo 19 del libro secondo, nel quale V.E. demonstra l'ordine el quale debe tenere (nel suprano) quelo el quale vole componere psalmi et Magnificat in canto mensurato, et per tale modo legendo el m'è venuto a memoria certa particula la quale (circa tale 19 capitulo) me scripse quello amico mio da Ferrara,⁴ al quale mandai uno volumine de esso vostro tractato. Tale amico mio diceva che V.E. haveva errato, perché da quella non era stato considerato che così come li toni hano diversi seculorum et terminatione, che così possono finire in diversi lochi, et non in uno solo loco, come da V.E. è stato demonstrato.⁵ Diceva etiam che V.E. haveva errato dove in tale capitulo haveti dicto che el secondo tono ha el principio de la sua

³ Of the nine instalments Spataro wrote in criticizing the *Toscanello*, three are missing (nos. (-7))

⁴ This must be Antonio Rigom, whom Spataro mentions in his letter of 6 Nov. 1523 as wishing to have a copy of the *Toscanello* (see no. 9, para. 2).

⁵ Rigom correctly criticizes Aaron for stating that the beginning, middle, and end of psalmtones, just as in Gregorian Chant, should be 'stabile, fermo et ordinario' because they must respond to the organ or to another chorus. Aaron specifies the three pitches in each of the modes, and this is obviously his recommendation to the composer. Evidently in response to this criticism, Aaron, in the revised edition of the *Toscanello* of 1529, deleted the end of the passage in the 1523 edition ('... in G sol re ut. La quale intonatione, et modo è osservato nel canto fermo, come sono introiti, graduali, alleluia, offertorii, sanctus, agnus dei, post communioni, responsorii, antiphone, et hynni, nelli quali non si remuove l'ordine dinanzi detto, ma in ogni altra compositione la fine sottogiace alla necessità, et li principii alcuna volta al arbitrio') and substituted the following: '... in G sol re ut, et in molti altri modi secondo le differenze di seculorum' (Book II, ch. 19). He let stand, however, the endings he had previously specified.

In Willaert's (and Jacquet's) psalm settings of 1550 (RISM 1550¹) each verse ends for the most part on the same chord. Occasionally, a psalm may alternate between two chords (particularly in the Hypophrygian mode). Rarely does one encounter an occasional different chord in one verse or the other. intonatione in C *sol fa ut*. Et diceva che V.E. da poi se contradice circa questo, perché (in li exempli che V.E. pone in fine del predicto capitulo) ponete el principio de esso secondo tono in F *fa ut*.⁶ Et perché circa questa particula non voglio essere auctore ma recitatore, circa questo altro non dirò.

2. Ma da poi sequitando son pervenuto al 20 sequente capitulo et ho multo considerato dove (circa in principio de tale capitulo) V.E. dice ut hic: però è stato neccessario stabilire una figura o signo per el quale si habia al cantore a demonstrare quale sia la nota augumentata, o diminuta, etc., el quale segno per generale uso è chiamato diesis, et è figurato in questo modo X⁷ A me pare che V.E. in tale loco haria dicto meglio dicendo, scilicet, per el quale segno se habia a demonstrare quale sia el spacio o vero intervallo augumentato o diminuto,⁸ perché questo signo 💥 non acresce né minuisce la nota ultra el suo valore, ma bene acresce et minuisce el spacio et intervallo tra nota et nota apparente in quanto a la^a immaginatione et opperatione, ma non in quanto a la sua apparente locatione. Et questo advene perché el spacio reale et naturale considerato (mediante la apparentia del signo predicto) resta permutato, come de tono in semitono, et e contra, et così de altri simili. Ma la nota (in la sua temporale quantità cantata) non mai mediante tale signo cresce, né etiam decresce 1, el quale vostra sententia serà contra a quello che V.E. ha dicto nel capitulo 32 del primo libro del tractato predicto, dove demonstrati che la nota cantabile non è augumentata per el puncto posito dapo tale nota dal signo perfecto gubernata. Et etiam sapeti che li signi diminuti son signi de la nota diminuta, come questo \diamondsuit , et altri simili, et etiam per termini comparati producenti proportione de magiore inequalità, ut hic: $\frac{2}{12}$, et altri simili, come in multe particule de tale tractato da V.E. è stato concluso. Ma tale diminutione non mai è comprehesa per questo signo \bigotimes . Ma sequitando^b bene appare che V.E. ha inteso che (mediante tale signo) la nota non se muta, ma sì el spatio et intervallo naturale cadente intra el sono grave et lo acuto. Ma pure el vostro parlare inducerà confusione intra quelli che a l'arte dano principio, li quali non san[n]o così bene distinguere el vero dal falso.

3. LQuesto signo 💥 predicto è stato chiamato dal mio preceptore signo de b quadro tantum, et da Frate Zoanne Othobi è stato chiamato

^a MS: lo. ^b MS: sequitanto.

¹ A late 16th-c. copy is in Paris 1110, fos. 43^{--v}, 47^r.

² Thoscanello de la musica (Venice, 1523).

⁶ Here Rigom is wrong (unless there was an error in his copy): Aaron places the first note of the second psalm-tone on c in his text and in the example.

⁷ Toscanello, fo. 13^v (1529 edn., fo. K1^v).

⁸ In the Aggiunta to the 1529 edn. of the *Toscanello*, Aaron quotes the following passage verbatim, without referring to Spataro (fo. N4'); see Commentary.

signo de b quadro jacente.⁹ Et questo \(\exists da lui \exists stato chiamato signo de b) quadro recto, li quali nomi son pi\u00fc rectamente considerati che non \(\exists chiamando questo signo \(\colorembl{k}\) diesis, perch\(\exists el nome \exists consequente al suo effecto. Perch\(\exists cos\) come procedendo da mese ad trite sinemenon cade intervallo de semitonio, et che da poi ascendendo da la predicta chorda mese ad paramesen (al quale practico se atribuisce el b quadrato), el se procede per intervallo de tono, el quale paramese (more pythagorico) dista da trite sinemenon per semitonium maius intensum, cos\) acader\(\exists de questo signo \(\colorembl{k}\), scilicet, che acadendo che el canto ascenda de spatio in linea et e contra, ut hic:

•): □ *□ □ ×□

et altri simili, sempre convertirà el spacio naturale del semitonio in tono. Pertanto, opperando questo signo effectivamente, come fa el b quadrato ^{211^v} recto | predicto, dico che tale signo serà più rectamente chiamato b quadro che diesis, perché dicendo diesis, lo effecto et el nome non hano inseme corespondentia, ma sì bene, essendo chiamato b quadro₁, come credo che da V.E. sequitando sia stato inteso.¹⁰

4. Da poi sequitando in lo predicto 20 capitulo V.E. dice che quella tertia minore cadente intra *mi* et *sol*, come tra E *la mi* et G *sol re ut*, senza la positione del signo de diesis in G posito, dando octava in grave con E, nascerà dispiacevole harmonia con la nota posita in G^{11} A me questo non pare bene dicto, perché el sequitaria che ogni tertia minore così in

⁹ See Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 29, and Hothby, *Calliopea legale*, ed. E. de Coussemaker in *Histoire de l'harmonie au moyen âge* (Paris, 1852; repr. Hildesheim, 1966), pp. 295-349 at 298.

¹⁰ In the Aggiunta to the 1529 edn. of the *Toscanello*, Aaron quotes this paragraph almost literally, including Spataro's musical example (fo. N4^{t-v}); see Commentary.

¹¹ Aaron's own words are helpful in understanding Spataro's comments. They are: 'questo segno [the sharp]... nello ascenso accresce, et nel discenso diminuisce, come sarà nel seguente discorso da E *la mi* acuto a G *sol re ut* secondo con queste syllabe *mi sol*, con il qual *sol* sarà il tenore in terza di sotto, et il contrabasso per una decima minore, per la qual congiuntione nascerà dispiacevole harmonia, come per la esperienza udirai' (fo. I3°; 1529 edn., fo. K1°). To avoid this 'displeasing harmony' Aaron makes the third major and presents this example:



In later editions Aaron replaced 'dispiacevole' with 'non grata', no doubt in an attempt to escape Spataro's criticism that an 'harmonia dispiacevole' constitutes a contradiction in logic.

semplice come in composito produceria trista harmonia. Pertanto ogni intervallo de diapente mediato produceria spiacevole et trista harmonia et mala sonorità, perché el se vede che ciascuno spacio de diapente non pò essere concordabilemente mediato senza la occurrentia de la tertia minore, imperò che se la tertia magiore (in la diapente mediata) serà data in grave, la tertia minore restarà in acuto, la quale non lice essere augumentata, perché li extremi soni passariano in proprietà de sexta, et se la tertia magiore serà locata in acuto, la minore restarà in grave, la quale tertia minore (ratione predicta) non potrà essere augumentata in gravità. Ma certamente a me pare che la decima minore et la tertia etiam minore con la octava in grave non producano spiacevole harmonia, ma bona et suave. Ma convertita la minorità de tale decima et tertia in maiorità, scilicet, de semiditono in ditono, la harmonia serà più grata al senso de lo audito. Pertanto tale conversione non serà de spiacevole harmonia in grata et bona, ma serà conversione de bona in meliore, perché el non se dà né trova harmonia spiacevole, perché quello che non piace a lo audito non è harmonia, ma bene (ut dixi) se dà bona et meliore harmonia.

5. Da poi sequitando V.E. dice per havere la bona harmonia l'è neccessario signare soto a quella syllaba sol del suprano el signo de diesis, aciò che quella decima minore del contrabasso, quale era alquanto dissonante per essere diminuta de uno semitonio magiore, essendo solevata al loco suo si senta più suave.¹² A me pare che tale signo non sia soto la nota, scilicet, sol, come V.E. dice, ma è tuto el contrario, perché la sillaba sol predicta è subiecta et obedisce al signo de diesis per due rasone: la prima perché tale signo in positione et apparentia se prepone a la syllaba o vero nota, scilicet sol; la seconda perché el signo de diesis (ut diximus) remove la sylla[ba] sol (et altre simile) dal naturale suo proprio loco et non e contra. Ma dove V.E. dice che quella decima minore del contrabasso con el suprano, quale era alquanto dissonante per essere diminuta de uno semitonio magiore, essendo sulevata al loco suo si sente più suave,¹³ circa questo vostro parlare a me pare che ce cadano multe contrarietà et intricatione, perché dicendo che tale decima minore è alquanto dissonante, et da poi dicendo che mediante quello augumento, scilicet essendo sulevata al loco suo, se sente più soave, tale dire che tale decima se sente più suave declara che prima, scilicet inanti a tale augumento, tale decima era suave et non alquanto dissonante, perché quella distantia la quale per se è alquanto dissonante (per se pulsa) non concorda in musica, come appare del spacio sesquitertio o vero diatessaron, el quale per essere participante, scilicet che in tuto non è concorde per se, tamen mixto con la quinta et con la tertia in grave è tollerato dal senso de lo audito. Ma la tertia minore non ha tale natura, perché per se è

> ¹² Toscanello, fo. $I_{3^{v}}$ (1529 edn., fo. $K_{1^{v}}$). ¹³ Ibid.

bona, ma transmutata in tertia magiore serà meliore, perché piglia altra natura et proprietà quantitativa.

6. Da poi sequitando V.E. dice che tale signo apresso li docti et practici cantori non è de bisogno, etc. Et io dico che tale signo è così de bisogno a li docti come a li indocti, perché in ogni loco dove acade tale decima minore el canto non debe sempre essere levato per semitonio, se non quando stante el canto in tale loco firmo, non cade con altra sua particula in specie perfecta, come in quinta^c et octava et altre simile, perché acaderia nel suprano dapo la prima o più note se conviria descendere per semitonio non bono, come li sequenti exempli declarano:



^{212^t} Se la prima nota del primo suprano posita in G superacuto, et altre simile, farà meliore resonantia essendo cantata soto questo signo X, tamen la seconda nota,¹⁴ la quale convene in octava et in duodecima con el contrabasso, non farà bona harmonia, perché mediante tale signo levato, la octava dissona, perché aquistarà natura de nona multo discorde, et la duodecima serà permutata in tertiadecima, non grata a lo audito come la duodecima.¹⁵ Tali inconvenienti etiam acaderano nel secondo exemplo

' MS: quinte.

superposito, per la quale cosa dico che tale signo de sublevatione debe essere apparente, così per li docti come per li indocti, perché in cantando, el docto potrà così ignorare quello che dapo tale elevatione de voce sia la intentione del compositore come lo indocto, Let questo se intende in li concenti non previsti, scilicet non prima cantati o vero considerati $_{\perp}$.¹⁶ Et par me che con questa sententia V.E. sia asai concorde, perché sequitando diceti che alcuna volta el compositore varia le consonantie, scilicet, che in tali lochi sempre non darà la decima, ma aliquando 5^a , 8^a , 12^a , et 15^a . Pertanto concludo Lche (ut dixi) tale signo è così conveniente a li docti come a li indocti. Et dico che el cantore non è tenuto (nel primo moto) levare le note ne li lochi dove tale signo pò acadere se tale signo non appare, perché potria errare, imperò che^d pò stare, et non pò stare. Pertanto debe apparere al tempo opportuno, et quando non bisogna, non se debe aducere in luce.

7. Da poi le predicte son pervenuto al capitulo 21 del predicto libro secondo, et ho considerato dove V.E. rectamente dice ut hic, scilicet: *Et* nota che sempre tu debi acomodare le parte senza discursi incomodi al cantore et unire le consonantie prossime l'una a l'altra più che sia possibile, et questo è dato per primo precepto.¹⁷ Questo precepto è optimo et è assignato da li docti in li primi documenti del contrapuncto. Ma a me pare che sia contra quello che da V.E. è stato dicto nel capitulo 17° precedente, dove dati al principiante plena auctorità et arbitrio che facia come li piace.

8. Son già passati tri anni, et credo ancora che siano più de quattro, che da uno Messer Laurentio Burgomozo da Mutina, el quale era cantore de la musica secreta de Papa Leone, me fu dicto che da Messer Adriano, musico celeberimo, el quale sta con lo illustrissimo Duca de Ferrara, haveva mandato uno duo a la Beatitudine de Papa Leone, el quale duo finiva in septima. Et diceva che li cantori de sua Beatitudine non lo poterno mai cantare, ma che fu sonato con li violoni,^e ma non tropo bene. Pertanto io (el quale sempre desidero de imparare) per mezanità de uno mio amico bolognese, el quale habita in Ferrara, ho obtenuto gratia da Messer Adriano in modo che sua Excellentia s'è dignato (di sua propria mano) mandarmi tale duo, el quale è stato cantato, sonato, et deligentemente examinato da li nostri musici bolognesi, et laudato per opera subtilissima et docta. Et perché al[c]uni son fra nui, li quali multo alto speculano et dubitano, pertanto a V.E. mando tale duo, aciò che quella con quello suo ingenio acutissimo, et de li altri musici veneti, examina tale concento et

^d MS: che che. ^e MS: violuni.

¹⁴ That is, the second semibreve on g'.

¹⁵ Spataro calculates the intervals as if the second g#' were ab'; that is, he treats the intervals as if g#' and ab' were exchangeable, at least in practice, if not in Pythagorean theory. In this, too, he follows the lead of Ramis, who divides the octave into 'another quantity that hardly differs in sound: tritone and diminished fifth', asserting that the difference between them is so slight that it does not matter in practice (*Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 50).

¹⁶ The two passages in lower half-brackets in this paragraph appear nearly verbatim in the Aggiunta to the 1529 *Toscanello*, fo. N4'; see Commentary.

⁷ Toscanello, fo. 14' (1529 edn., fo. K2').

12. Spataro to Aaron, 23 May 1524

The Letters

ordine non forsa mai più a li nostri tempi veduto, et aciò che quella da poi me dia adviso del suo parere, remota ogni passione.¹⁸

9. Io sequitarò l'opera vostra, perché la voglio finire presto, perché voglio dare opera ad altre importantie. Son sempre a li piaceri de V.E. Al nostro comune patrone Monsignore reverendo [Sebastiano Michiel] me recomandareti, et a li altri amici nostri, et per me sempre in le vostre divote oratione orareti.

Vale. Bononię, die 23 maii 1524.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. I believe you have received two letters from me, the one a response to a letter from you, and the other [no. 11] on questions concerning your treatise.² In the present letter, the ninth on this subject,³ I have come to Book II, ch. 19, regarding the composition of psalms and the Magnificat in mensural music. I sent a copy of your treatise to a friend in Ferrara,⁴ who said you had not taken into consideration that just as the psalm-tones have different endings, so they may finish on various notes and not only on a single one, as you claim.⁵ He also said you wrote that the psalm intonation in the second mode begins on c', but that your musical example begins on f.⁶ On this point I am only transmitting his comment.

2. Continuing with ch. 20, you say that *thus it has been necessary to institute* a sign that tells singers when a note is augmented or diminished; this sign is generally called a diesis and is written as &.⁷ It is better to say that this sign augments or diminishes the interval between notes,⁸ since it does not change their value or location. Moreover, you contradict what you say in Book I, ch. 32, where you show that a dot does not augment a note under perfect signs. You know too that diminished signs and proportions of greater inequality diminish notes. Further on, it is clear that you know that the sign changes not the note but the size of the natural interval, but your words will confuse beginners in this art.

3. The X sign has been called simply 'square b' by Ramis and 'slanted square b' by Hothby, who called \$\phi\$ the sign of 'straight square b'—names

more proper than *diesis*.⁹ Since this sign always changes a semitone into a whole tone, I say that it is more correctly called 'square b' than *diesis*. 10

4. In ch. 20 you also state that a minor third between e' and g' supported by an octave produces an unpleasant harmony.¹¹ To me this seems not well put, because it would follow that every minor third, whether a simple interval or a composite harmony, would yield an unpleasant sound. But a fifth cannot be mediated without a minor third, which cannot be raised to a major without changing the fifth to a sixth. Indeed I believe that a minor tenth and a minor third with a lower octave are not unpleasant but good and sweet. I grant, though, that, changed to a major third, the harmony will go from good to better. There is no such thing as an unpleasant harmony. For anything that displeases the ear cannot be called harmony. But we can speak of good and of better harmony.

5. You say further that in order to have a good harmony *it is necessary to* place a sharp-sign under the syllable sol in the soprano, so that the minor tenth with the bass, which is somewhat dissonant because it lacks the major semitone, may seem more pleasant when it is raised to its proper pitch.¹² The sharp should be placed before, not under, the note, which is not raised to but from its proper place. You contradict yourself by saying that the minor tenth becomes 'more pleasant' when raised¹³ because that means that originally it was pleasant and not 'somewhat dissonant'. An unpleasant interval is not concordant by itself, such as a fourth, which becomes tolerable when used above a fifth or a third. But a minor third is good by itself.

6. You go on to say that the \bigotimes sign is not needed for experienced singers, but I say that it is necessary both for skilled and unskilled singers, because the soprano should not be raised whenever there is a minor tenth, unless the harmonies under it do not change to a fifth or octave, as these examples show:



¹⁸ This paragraph, relating to Willaert's celebrated chromatic duo, 'Quid non ebrietas', is reprinted with an English translation in Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* (3 vols., Princeton, 1949), i. 319–20. Joseph S. Levitan, 'Adrian Willaert's Famous Duo *Quidnam ebrietas'*, *Tijdschrift der Vereeniging voor Nederlandsche Muziekgeschiedenis* 15 (1939), 166–233, gives a facsimile of the last page of Spataro's letter, opp. p. 176. For the solution to the 'duo', which is in fact a quartet, see Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined', *Tijdschrift voor Muziekwetenschap* 18 (1956–9), 1–36 = *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance*, pp. 681–98.



In the first example the first semibreve in the soprano on g' would sound better if raised, but the second note,¹⁴ forming an octave and a twelfth with the bass, if raised with that sign, would be changed to the unpleasant sound of a ninth and thirteenth.¹⁵ The second example is similar, and so I say the \bigotimes sign should be indicated for all singers. This is especially important when singing at sight. You yourself acknowledge that the composer can vary the consonances. Thus I conclude¹⁶ that both skilled and unskilled singers need this sign, for they are not obliged to raise the note without the sign and could make errors if there is a choice. It should appear when necessary, otherwise not₁.

7. In Book II, ch. 21, you rightly say note that the voice-parts should always be arranged so that they are convenient for the singers, and that one consonance should move to another as closely as possible; this is the first precept.¹⁷ This contrapuntal precept is excellent, but I believe it conflicts with what you said in ch. 17, where you give complete freedom of choice to the beginner.

8. Three or more years have passed since Lorenzo Bergomozzi of Modena, who was a singer of Pope Leo's *musica secreta*, told me that Messer Adriano [Willaert] sent the Pope a duo that ended on a seventh. The Pope's singers were never capable of performing it; it was then played on viols, but not very well. Through the good offices of a friend of mine in Ferrara, Messer Adriano sent me a copy of the duo and it was sung, played, and highly praised here in Bologna. Some of us who like to speculate have questions about it, and I am sending the duo to you so that you, with your acute intellect, and the other Venetian musicians may examine the work and send me your unprejudiced opinion on a composition, the like of which may never have been seen in our times.¹⁸

9. I shall continue reading your work, which I want to finish soon in order to get on to other important work.

12. Spataro to Aaron, 23 May 1524

COMMENTARY

This letter is of fundamental importance for putting an end to the controversy on the authorship of the 'chromatic duo'—actually the chromatic quartet—a work of unique importance for the development of equal temperament, making accessible all major and minor chords in the circle of fifths and the complete chromaticization of the scale. That this composition is indeed by Adrian Willaert was still doubted in the article by Walter Gerstenberg in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. The present letter, dated 23 May 1524, could not be more explicit. 'Quid non ebrietas' was sent to Spataro by Willaert himself.

Another important point concerns Spataro's emphatic declaration that one cannot expect singers to apply *musica ficta* in compositions sung by sight ('concenti non previsti, scilicet non prima cantati o vero considerati').

In 1529 Aaron brought out a new edition of his *Toscanello*. Three extended passages from the present letter (delimited above with lower half-brackets) were incorporated in the 'Aggiunta del Toscanello a complacenza de gli amici fatta', all without mentioning Spataro's name. Aaron's borrowing was first noted by Lewis Lockwood in an article on 'A Sample Problem of *Musica ficta*: Willaert's *Pater noster*',¹⁹ where he calls it 'an almost verbatim plagiarism'. Lockwood states that 'this unacknowledged borrowing scarcely bolsters our confidence in Aron' (p. 166). This is a serious charge. To evaluate its justice one has to ask first whether the sixteenth century was at all familiar with the concept of plagiarism and secondly how the presumed plagiarism fits into the relationship between Aaron and Spataro.

Regarding the first point, we must distinguish between a legal and a moral aspect of plagiarism. Legally speaking, there can be no question of plagiarism since copyright legislation had not yet been introduced. Hansjörg Pohlmann emphasizes that it was not before the eighteenth century that the beginnings of an author's legal right to his product can be traced. But, more essentially, he judges that the psychological and sociological foundations for such concepts were, with few exceptions, missing.²⁰ Morally speaking, the line between plagiarism and imitation in the Renaissance is very thin.²¹ To speak only about music, in theoretical writings it was quite common in the Middle Ages and Renaissance to take over parts of treatises without acknowledgement. Lockwood himself has shown that Cerone freely borrowed from Pontio.²² Zarlino took over Glareanus' twelve-mode system 'without as much as a nod in the direction of the Swiss humanist'.²³ Johann Turmair's condemnation of the practice is as rare as it is vehement:

¹⁹ In Powers (ed.), *Studies in Music History*, pp. 161-82, esp. 165-7. Lockwood cites two passages; we were able to find only the second one in Spataro's letter (cited in n. 16 above).

²⁰ Die Frühgeschichte des musikalischen Urheberrechts (Kassel, 1962), pp. 6-9.

²¹ See e.g. Harold Ogden White, *Plagiarism and Imitation during the English Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935).

²² See 'On "Parody" as Term and Concept in 16th-Century Music', in LaRue *et al.* (eds.), Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music, pp. 560-75, esp. 571-2.

²³ Lowinsky, Tonality and Atonality, p. 34.

Of all the modern authors that I have read, only Franchinus Gafurius has a clear understanding of music and explains it in a scholarly fashion. But some people read him and—without really understanding what he has written—quote him verbatim, failing to mention his name. Certainly such people are an obnoxious and pitiful lot, since they would rather be detected as thieves than give due credit to their masters.²⁴

That Lockwood's censure of Aaron is too strong can be illustrated through the relationship between Spataro and Aaron. Aaron is the only theorist with whom Spataro is able to maintain an amicable relationship undisturbed by the choleric outbursts that characterize his exchanges with Gafurio and with Giovanni del Lago. In his letter to Aaron of 8 April 1523 (no. 6) Spataro writes: 'there grew between us such love and affinity that I think Your Excellency and I are [like twins] born from one single body. . . . I should hold myself an ingrate were I to deny you anything whatever' (para. 13). True, their relationship did not always run smoothly. There was a hiatus in their correspondence after Aaron failed to respond to Spataro's series of review letters on the Toscanello, and when the new edition of the Toscanello came on the market in 1529, Spataro wrote to Del Lago to send him a copy, because he wanted to see if Aaron had made use of his criticisms (see no. 27, para. 3). For Spataro, the most important consideration was the advancement of knowledge; although he may have been disappointed not to have been mentioned in the Aggiunta (we do not know his reaction to it), he surely would have had nothing but praise for Aaron's ability to acknowledge an error and correct it. So little did he care about being credited that two years later he offered to write up an explanation of the sharp and flat conjunctae and send it to Aaron, who could publish it under his own name (see no. 31), and this is indeed what seems to have happened (see the Commentary on no. 34).

E.E.L.

²⁴ From the preface to his *Musica rudimenta*, which he published under the name Johannes Aventinus (Augsburg, 1516), trans. and ed. T. Herman Keahey (Musical Theorists in Translation 10; Brooklyn, 1971), p. 2. 'Obnoxii' actually has the meaning 'servile' or 'abject'. **13** Paris 1110, fos. 47^r-49^{r1} Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 9 September 1524²

47^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum decus, salutem.

1. A li dì 3 settembris ho ricceuta una di V.E. de dì 19 agosto segnata, la quale a me è stata molto grata et ioconda, non tanto per esser restato claro di certe mie dubietà et suspetti, ma etiam per haver inteso che quella non è impedito da alcuno sinistro et male, et che come solevi, me amate.

2. Circa el canto di Messer Adriano, V.E. dice che è uno quarto et non uno duo. Circa questo ho inteso da alcuni che da sua Eccellentia tale canto prima fu fatto a due voci, et da poi a quatro voci, ma perché a me assai bastava vedere [come] el fine del tenore con el canto concordando in diapason finiva in settima, pertanto solo cercai havere tale concento a due voci, perché io, voltando la fantasia in molte parti, non poteva trovare che tale fine in settima potesse producere recta et integra diapason. Pure quando io vidi tale canto con quello segno di b mole o vero rotondo in diversi luochi posito, compresi la sua intentione et ingenio grande, el qual suo ingegno grande saria stato più grande se l'opera adamus[sim]^a li fosse riuscita. Io pretermetto quello che V.E. dice che tal tenore è assai deforme alla natura del canto,³ perché in tal tenore circa questo Messer Adriano merita escusatione perché da sua Eccellentia solo è stato atteso a dimostrare che con arte et industria el spatio aparente della settima 47^v virtualiter sia | spatio de ottava, o vero de diapason, el qual canto dalli nostri cantori et musici è stato molte volte cantato et sopra instrumenti artificiali sonato, et sono rimasti molto sattisfatti^b et contenti perché non hanno ateso né considerato più oltra di quello che da li arteficiali instrumenti è dimostrato. Ma io, conoscendo che li organi, arpicordi, violoni, et altri instrumenti de la mano de li artefici produtti^e non sono superiori al teorico, né etiam dano regola al musico speculativo, ma che el musico è quello che dà regola et limita tutti li instrumenti produtti da l'arte, non son stato contento a quello li pratici pulsatori preditti (mediante li soi instrumenti) hanno detto et predicato, ma considerando

^a Latin, meaning 'exactly, accurately'. ^b MS: sattisfatto. ^c MS: produtto.

¹ The present letter is not the original (which is lost) but a late 16th-c. copy. A slightly different version appears in Artusi, L'Artusi; see Commentary.

³ Aaron must have complained about mm. 15–20, where the soprano stays in one mode while the tenor modulates, causing awkward cross-relations between the two voices.

² Two large excerpts from this letter were transcribed, translated, and commented on by Lowinsky in 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined'; see pp. 22-8 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 690-3. The text offered in the present edition differs somewhat, mostly as regards spelling—a result of subsequent experience in reading Italian hands of the Quattrocento and Cinquecento.

con la rasone et con el lume de l'intelleto speculando, credo havere trovato la mera verità, la qual verità certamente non pò essere aparente per li instrumenti a tempi nostri produtti da la mano de l'artefice, perché tali instrumenti mancano de molti intervalli et partimenti, li quali son neccesarii, volendo sonar tale tenore sopra tali usitati instrumenti. Per la qual cosa, Messer Pietro mio honorando, dove V.E. dice che havete trovato che il detto tenor per il procedere (con la esperientia dello instromento) termina in lo loco di D grave, dico che questo è impossibile, et etiam dico che tal tenore non manca di uno coma della integrità de diapason con el canto, come dicete che molti dicono,⁴ perché quanto con el compasso et monocordo musico considero, io trovo che (rationabilmente) tale tenor exubera et transcende oltra la diapason per un coma, in modo che fa che intra esso tenore et el canto cade uno spatio de diapason completo de sei toni, come era la opinione di Aristoseno, scilicet composto di cinque toni et dui semitoni, de li quali semitoni uno sarrà magiore et l'altro minore,⁵ come per esperientia V.E. comprenderà se (ponendo da parte li pratici instrumenti per mano de artefici facti) guardarete in tal tenore a quel segno de b rotondo in Ge sol re ut acuto posito ut hic per el qual segno de b rotondo la nota seguente resta locata tra G acuto et F grave, in modo che quello tono cadente intra G predicto et F resta diviso per semitonio minore [in] grave et magiore in acuto, scilicet che da F grave al predetto segno di b rotondo cade spatio di minore semitonio, et da esso segno de b rotondo al G^{d} acuto caderà spatio de magiore semitonio. [Notate che io parlo theorice, et non practice.]^e Et perché tale spatio de tono, scilicet tra F et G cadente, nel vostro arpicordo né etiam in altri instrumenti simili non resta per tal ordine diviso, [scilicet con semitonio minore in grave, et maggiore in acuto, ma per molte cause resta diviso, theorice loquendo, per maggior semitonio in grave, et

^d MS: b; Artusi gives G. ^e See Commentary for this and other passages in square brackets.

minore in acuto, però primamente] dico che tal tenore non potrà esser stato bene né rettamente modulato da V.E. in tale arpicordo, ma havereti[/] proceduto extra naturam ipsius tenoris.

r	3.	Da	poi	la	nota	ut	hic	in	G	segnata	15 25	tale	tenore	procede
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18

gradatim ad C acuta ut hic **B** . Circa tale processo hab-

biamo molto bene da advertire a quella quarta minima cantabile posta in C acuta predicta con el b rotondo segnata, la quale minima, da certi nostri pratici pulsatori de instromenti fatti per arte, è stata considerata et pulsata in paramese o vero nel mi de be fa be mi, la quale cosa da me li fu dimostrata esser erronea, perché se dal segno di b rotondo predetto in G

acuto ut hic signato 10 procederemo per diatessaron intenso, tale diates[s]aron non potrà cadere supra paramese o vero sopra el mi de be *fa* be *mi* perché così come tra F grave et el b rotondo de be *fa* be *mi* cade recta diatessaron, così seguitarà che intra la corda data per semitonio minore più acuta de F grave e la corda data per semitonio minore più acuta [del b rotondo] de be fa be mi caderà etiam diatessaron, la quale corda sopra il b rotondo de be fa be mi per semitonio minore considerata non potrà attingere a paramese o vero al mi de be fa be mi, perché se intra trite sinemenon et paramese cade spatio de magiore semitonio, restarà che subtracto il minore semitonio dal magiore semitonio, le restarà quello spatio el quale li musici chiamano coma, et per tale modo la predetta nota locata in C acuta signata con questo segno b caderà intra trite sinemenon et paramese, dividendo el spatio del magiore semitonio [intra el b rotondo et el b quadro assignato] per semitonio minore in grave et per coma in acuto. Et perché li vostri instrumenti et arpicordi mancano di tale divisione, dico che tale tenore non pò da V.E. né da altro esser stato rettamente pulsato, dal quale predetto segno de b rotondo aparente in C acuta esso tenore (dopoi) descende^g per incomposta distancia de diapente, et dato che in aparentia tale descenso^b di diapente sia locata in F grave ut

hic pure perché in essentia si parte per uno coma più depresso de paramese, restarà che tale figura segnata in F grave non potrà cadere sopra E graveⁱ come da molti è stato creduto, ma caderà sotto E grave per spatio di uno coma, perché così come intraⁱ paramese et hipate meson cade diapente remisso, così se nui ci rimeteremo per diapente da uno loco o corda per coma remissa da paramese, tale diapente etiam caderà per coma remisso respecto hipate meson, et perché tale corda per coma

^f MS: haverei. ^g MS: destende. ^b MS: destenso. ⁱ MS: C; Artusi gives E. ^j MS: entra.

⁴ The tenor would fall short by one comma if the 'molti' believed that the flat lowered the pitch by a minor rather than a major semitone. This is a position that might have been held by organists, for in mean-tone temperament the sizes of the two intervals are reversed. (On this point, see also no. 30 n. 5 and no. 110, end of para. 1.) The difference between ebb and d would not, however, be the comma of Pythagorean tuning because in mean-tone many of the intervals are tempered.

⁵ Aristoxenus does not recognize major and minor semitones; he is the ancient proponent of the concept of equal temperament. At any rate, this is how the 16th c. saw him (see Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined', pp. 2–3, 12 n. 27, 20–2, 27–8 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 682–6, 690, 692); contrast Malcolm Litchfield, 'Aristoxenus and Empiricism: A Reevaluation Based on his Theories', Journal of Music Theory 32 (1988), 51–73. Spataro knew this, as becomes clear in the continuation of the letter, but he does not wish to say so at this point of the argument—for pedagogical reasons, one presumes.

	remissa sotto hipate meson non si trova in li vostri instrumenti, scilicet arpicordi et altri simili, dico che ut supra tale canto non potrà rettamente esser conducto né pulsato in tale vostri instrumenti. Ma da poi seguitando, tale tenore procede in lo intenso per diatessaro[n] imcomposita ut hic
	19 bo con en la qual cosa quella minima puntata et etiam la
8 ^v	etiam la sua sequente, le quali in aparentia son segnate in be fa be mi , caderano tra G et A acute, $ $ in modo che con A <i>la mi re</i> conjugano ^k per spatio di coma. Et perché li predetti vostri instrumenti non sono per tal modo divisi, restarà che (ut dixi) tale tenore non potrà in tali instrumenti esser modulato, de le quali figure o note predicte per coma sotto A acuta virtualmente considerate, el predicto tenore si rimette per diapente
	incomposta ut hic B s e dato che el predetto spatio di
	diapente incomposto in quanto alla aparentia cada situato in E grave, tamen virtualiter sarà inteso cadere tra C et D grave in modo che con D restarà depresso per spatio di coma, la qual cosa è assai chiara, perché se da uno suono o vero corda, la quale sia subposita ad A acuta per spatio di coma, ce remeteremo per diapente, tale diapente etiam caderà più grave per coma rispetto al D grave. Et per tale modo accaderà che procedendo in tale tenore usque in finem, ciascuna nota la qual in apparentia serà locata in E grave, sempre in virtù et essentia caderà sotto D grave per spatio di uno coma. Per la qual cosa concludo che tal tenore, terminato et finito in lo loco settimo respetto al suo canto o vero soprano, non potrà per tale arte esser inteso (realiter) cadere in recta diapason, perché (ut dixi) intra tale tenore et el canto predicto (in tali lochi) cadeno sei toni. Et etiam appare che da V.E. tale tenore non potrà esser rectamente modulato in lo vostro arpicordo perché manca delli spatii delli comi di sopra dimostrati. Ma tale tenore potria meglio essere modulato con l'organo naturale et instrumento della natura, perché l'organo naturale non manca de perfec- tione, per la qual cosa l'arte con tutto el suo potere sempre cerca imitar la natura. Ma perché lo audito per la sua imperfettione male pò giudicare de questi spatii minimi et inusitati, pertanto la rasone dà suplimento dove el senso resta deficiente. Pertanto io existimo che Messer Marco Antonio nostro si sia portato da sapiente, perché forse conoscendo sua Eccellentia
	che tale tenore è pieno di molte subtili considerationi et dubietà, ha più presto voluto tacere che male parlare et incurere' in errore.

4

4. Credo che V.E. sapia che da li musici è stato solo ordinato dui segni per li quali li suoni naturalmente considerati si possono removere dal loco proprio, li quali segni son questi: # b. El primo, scilicet #, remove el sono naturale per semitonio magiore in [acuto; el secondo, scilicet b, opera per contrario, scilicet che remove el sono dal loco naturale per semitonio maggiore in] grave. Adonque a Messer Adriano è stato impossibile fare che E grave sia D grave, perché se questo segno b producerà due volte el suo effetto, tale suo effetto duplicato producerà uno coma più di un tono sesquiottavo, perché dui semitoni magiori insieme colti superano el tono di uno spatio^m di coma, perché a tal tono basta un semitonio magiore et

^{49^r} uno minore. | Pertanto volendo che E grave havesse el loco in D grave, scilicet che E fosse rimesso per uno integro tono sesquiottavo, bisognaria che li musici havesseno constituito dui varii segni per li quali li naturali soni fussero remossi in grave, delli quali segni l'uno fosse inteso removere essi suoni naturali per magior semitonio in grave, et l'altro per minore, et per tal modo (exercitando mo l'uno mo" l'altro) ogni spatio^e di tono naturale per arte si potria rectamente reducere del suono suo acuto nel suono suo propinquo grave. Ma tali segni non son stati inventi, perché si può far senza et non son neccesarii, et etiam perché tale modo di rimovere li intervalli muta la spetie. Pertanto sono da fugire, perché sono termini da sophista, li quali apparent et non sunt. Et se V.E. bene advertirà al contrapunto in li lochi predicti con el canto, trovarete che li cadono altre distantie non usitate, le quali nascono da quello spatio^o di coma superfluo predicto.

5. V.E. dice che Monsignore [Sebastiano Michiel] dice che se io non li mando dui para de salzizotti, che quelle cose che sono in ordine di stampare contro di me che le farrà abrusare. Questo vostro parlare sona che se io mandarò li salzizotti a sua Reverentia che tale opere, etc.⁶

9 settembre 1524.

Jo. Spatarius

1. On 3 September I received your letter of 19 August, which cleared up my doubts and assured me of your health and your continued friendship.

2. Concerning the composition by Messer Adriano [Willaert], you write that it is not a duo, but a quartet. I have been told that Adriano set it

^k MS: congiurano. [/] Artusi skips from 'sua Eccellentia' to 'incurere'.

 ^m MS: una specie; corrected after Artusi.
ⁿ MS: specie; corrected after Artusi.
^p MS: quelle spetie; corrected after Artusi.

⁶ The scribe left out the ending, which Lowinsky supplied conjecturally ('Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo"', p. 26 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 692).
first for two, later for four parts. For my purposes it was sufficient to see how the tenor could have ended in an octave with the cantus when the notation showed an ending on a seventh. This is why I asked for these two parts only. Examining the various positions of the flat in the tenor, I discovered with what great ingenuity Willaert had proceeded, but it would have been greater if he had succeeded exactly. I can overlook what you say about the clash between soprano and tenor,³ which can be excused because of his intention to show how the seventh can be an octave. Our musicians sang and played the duo many times and were very pleased with it. But performing this work is not the same as analysing it; today's instruments lack the intervals and divisions that are necessary to perform the work correctly. The truth is that the tenor cannot end on d, as you claim (having played it on an instrument), nor is it short by one comma, as you aver is being said by many.⁴ It exceeds the octave by one comma, the distance between soprano and tenor being six whole tones, according to the opinion of Aristoxenus, that is, five whole tones and two semitones, one major, one minor.⁵ If you observe the g [in m. 20 of the tenor], you will find that it is distant by a minor semitone from the f. But since your harpsichord lacks this division, you cannot play the tenor on it properly.

of our practical musicians, but I showed them that this was wrong. c'p' is a fourth higher than b_{β} , so it falls one comma beneath b_{β} , a division unobtainable on your harpsichord or any other instrument. Likewise, the f following will fall one comma under e. This note could not have been played correctly on the harpsichord, for it lacks the interval of a comma beneath e. From there the tenor goes up a fourth to a note that appears to be b but is really a comma lower than a. It then proceeds to e, which is really a comma lower than d, and it continues in this manner to the end. Therefore the ending does not form a true octave with the soprano but six whole tones. The duo can better be performed by voice, which is nature's instrument and does not lack in perfection, as do our mechanical instruments. But since the ear, imperfect as it is, can ill judge these tiny and unaccustomed intervals, therefore reason must come to the rescue where the senses fail. This is why I think Marc'Antonio [Cavazzoni] has acted wisely when he, recognizing the subtleties and ambiguities of this tenor part, preferred silence to error.

4. I think you know that musicians invented two signs to remove sounds from their natural places, # and \flat . The first raises the sound by a major semitone. The second lowers the sound by a major semitone. Thus Willaert could not make *e* equivalent to *d* because a double flat lowers a note two major semitones, which would be one comma more than a whole tone. To make *e* equivalent to *d*, musicians would have had to invent two signs, one lowering a note by a major semitone, the other by a minor semitone. Such signs have not been invented because they are not needed. They would in fact change the nature of the species [of fifths and fourths]. Thus they should be avoided. The counterpoint with the soprano also reveals other unusual intervals caused by the comma.

5. You write that Monsignore [Sebastiano Michiel] says that unless I send him two pairs of sausages he will see to it that those things that are now in press against me will be burnt. This way of putting it means that if I should send the sausages to his Reverence that those things, etc. [will be published. Thus it is doubly in my interest to keep the sausages here].⁶

COMMENTARY

Letter 13 exists in two versions, neither of which is the original. One, the version presented above, is found in Paris 1110, fos. 47^r-49^v, among a group of letters from the Spataro Correspondence copied by a late sixteenth-century hand (see Ch. 2). The second version appears in Giovanni Maria Artusi, L'Artusi overo delle imperfettioni della moderna musica. Ragionamenti dui (Venice, 1600), fos. 22^c-24^v. Artusi claims (through the interlocutor, Signor Vario, who shows the letter to his companion, Luca) that the letter is in Spataro's own hand: 'Eccovi la lettera di sua man propria, legetela, et se nel legerla, legesti qualche parola non così Toscana, scusate l'età, e'l tempo, che così comportava all'hora' (fo. 22^r). Surprisingly, the two versions of the letter are different in a number of places—not just in spelling but in word-order and in expression, changes that a scribe is not likely to make. For example, in para. 2, where Paris 1110 has 'ma perché a me assai bastava vedere [che] el fine del tenore con el canto concordando in diapason finiva in settima, pertanto solo cercai havere tale concento a due voci', Artusi gives 'Ma perché à me assai bastava vedere come el fine del Tenore con el Canto finiva in Settima concordante in diapason, per tanto io non dimandai à sua Eccellenza se non el Canto con il suo Tenore'. Which is closer to Spataro's original? From a comparison of the duplicate letters in Paris 1110, for which the originals have survived, we see that the copyist has largely confined his variants to modernizing the spelling (predetta instead of predicta, governata instead of gubernata, compresa instead of *comprehesa*, etc.). Therefore it seems likely that the present letter as well must be closer to Spataro's original, apart from the spellings, and this is the version we have chosen to edit. Artusi's letter, however, may have been taken from Spataro's draft (on this, see Ch. 2, p. 50), and it has been useful in correcting certain erroneous readings (noted in the footnotes) and in supplementing words and parts of words left out, perhaps inadvertently, in Paris 1110. Artusi omits the jocular ending.

14 (J81). Fos. 213^r-214^v

Giovanni Spataro to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, 10 November 1524 (autograph)¹

- ²¹⁴^v [Al mi]o carissimo Messer Marco Antonio [Cavazzoni, musico exc]ellentissimo, [Ven]etia.
- ^{213^r} Messer Marco Antonio, quanto mio magiore honorando, salutem.

1. Da V.E. et Nobilità² ho receputo una de dì 21 otobris signata, la quale me è stata gratissima perché scio che me amati. Ho inteso quanto diceti circa Messer Petro Aron. Sia stata la cosa come se voglia, a me pareria che per questa poca cosa non dovesse essere nato tra voi alcuno odio né malevolentia. Imperò che tra vui et sua Excellentia non c'è acaduto cosa la quale sia digna de producere sdegno né iusta indignatione, ma più presto de augumentare la virtù et studio de questa tra nui celebrata facultà harmonica.

2. V.E. me scrive che Adriano (per havere facto tale canto)³ merita grandissime laude, et che a vui pare multo ingenioso, a la quale cosa respondo et dico che a me pare che Adriano sia stato tropo animoso et audace, et etiam dico che a me non pare che uno artefice merita laude quando el pò conducere una opera a la sua perfectione et integrità per vie facile et cognite, et che va cercando vie et modi obscuri per li quali l'opera non pò pervenire al perfecto fine de la sua integrità, sì che bisogna che resti superflua o diminuta. Quando una cosa è possibile et che è inventa, a me pare che sia vano cercare le sue impossibilità. Ma quando una cosa è existimata essere impossibile et che non se trova inventa, alhora è bono et [merita] laude cercare de pervenire a qualche sua propinquità, la quale (per impossibilità) sia presa in loco de integrità, come acadete ad Archimenide, el quale, cognoscendo che la quadratura circulare era existimata essere impossibile per essere incognita al comertio phylosophico (non potendo trovare la debita integrità), lui se sforzò de apropinquarsi ad essa integrità per una certa propinquità non molto distante de la mera integrità, et questo a lui fu laude, perché inanti a lui, né etiam dapo lui non s'è trovato alcuno che più a la integrità de tale quadratura sia asceso, la quale cosa non è stata observata da Messer Adriano, perché lui (per certe sue vie da

sophista et signi male considerati et pegio intesi) ha pervertito la mera integrità, clara, cognita et apparente, cadente in la dupla sonorità constituta tra lychanos hypaton et nete^a synemenon, scilicet tra D grave et D acuto, et questo è stato perché sua Excellentia non ha havuto respecto che se el signo de b rotondo una volta locato deprime o vero abassa la chorda o vero sono dal loco proprio per uno semitonio magiore, che se tale b rotondo serà due volte exercitato, la chorda sonora alhora serà depressa per dui semitonii magiuri, li quali (inseme colti) producono uno spacio el quale suppera el tono per uno spacio [de] uno coma, per la quale cosa dico che el fine del tenore de tale canto, el quale in apparentia termina in E grave, non caderà in D grave ma caderà tra C grave et D grave, in modo che con D serà spacio de coma, et con C serà spacio de tono incomplecto, scilicet de dui minori semitonii, la quale chorda predicta, scilicet distante da D grave per coma, serà diapason o vero dupla superflua con D acuta, et per tale modo tale diapason non serà aggregata de cinque toni et dui minori semitonii, come la diapason (in musica exercitata) bisogna havere, ma serà complecta de sei toni, la quale distantia serà dissona, et tale dissonantia serà sensibile, nota, et clara al senso de lo audito, perché la dupla sonorità non patisse excesso né diminutione de alcuno minimo spacio o quantità se sia. Et se de questa diapason superflua voleti havere più clara inteligentia, trovati Messer Petro Aron, al quale più giurni fano io li scripsi el tuto supra tale canto de Adriano [no. 13], dal quale Messer Petro ho havuto resposta che sua Excellentia ha conferito le mie sententie con uno maestro Marco da l'Aquila, sonatore digno de leuto, el quale habita qua in Vinetia, el quale è homo de multa inteligentia, et dice che ha trovato che io dico la verità, benché de tale suo affirmare li mei scripti poco me risulti in gaudio, perché el me pare strano che el musico cerchi havere el lume de^b la intelligentia da uno pulsatore de instrumento. Horsù non più circa ques[to].

3. Ma torno a dire che (secondo el mio debile iuditio) Messer Adriano non merita tante laude quanto dice V.E. perché quello che per se è lucido et claro è stato da lui con confusione irregularemente producto in luce et con difformità de' specie, in modo che tuto el canto (per la sua instabilità) va vacillando. V.E. etiam dice che tale canto è duretto, et diceti la causa essere perché la diapason et le sue parte⁴ mutano sua natura, et io dico che non solo per tale causa tale canto è duro, ma etiam perché in multi lochi le sexte excedeno la sua quantità per quello predicto spacio de coma, el quale spacio de coma fa che el canto predicto non observa le distantie proprie al diatonico genere.

¹ The present letter was transcribed, translated, and commented on in Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined', pp. 14-21 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 687–90. See no. 13 n. 2.

² H. Colin Slim, in his article on the composer, mentions that 'he belonged to a prosperous Bolognese family with its own coat of arms' (*The New Grove Dictionary*, iv. 36).

³ The chromatic duo, 'Quid non ebrietas'.

^a MS: neten. ^b MS: da.

⁴ The 'parts' of the octave are the fifth and the fourth. To these Spataro adds the sixths. He might also have mentioned the one third and the tenths, which are also off by a comma.

4. Similemente non poco son stato admirato dove V.E. dice che el leuto ha tuti li soi tasti semitonii minori.⁵ Benché io non dia opera al sonare el leuto né altro instrumento, pure (da certa musicale rasone mosso) a me pare che tuti li tasti del leuto non possono essere tuti semitonii minori, perché el tono exercitato non se li potria sonare, el quale tono consta de dui inequali semitonii, scilicet magiore et minore. Et etiam a me pare che el spatio de diatessaron (el quale cade intra tuta la longitudine del canto respecto a tuta la sonora longitudine de le mezanelle,⁶ et altre simile) solo seria constituto de cinque minori semitonii, et così restaria che tra lo audito et lo instrumento o vero leuto predicto caderia non poca differentia. Ma a me pare che la compositione o vero condensatione, la quale cade intra le chorde predicte, sia contra de vui, perché se nui pigliamo uno leuto (more solito) bene temperato o vero acordato, sempre el quinto tasto de le mezanelle caderà in unisonantia con tuta la quantità extensa de la chorda del canto del predicto leuto. Non essendo adonca altro diatessaron che coadunatione de dui toni et uno semitonio minore, sequitarà che se essa diatessaron serà resoluta in semitonii, tale diatessaron contenirà in sé dui magiuri semitonii et trei minori o vero 5 mino[ri] se[m]itonii et dui come. Per le predicte rasone appare che quelli cinque tasti predicti de le predicte chorde chiamate mezanelle non potrano essere tuti semitonii minori, ma bisogna che de tali cinque semitonii predicti, alcuni siano magiori et alcuni minori. Altramente credo che li harmonici concenti compositi da li musici non se potriano sonare supra el leuto. Pertanto bisogna che tale leuto sia subiecto et serva a lo instrumento regulare o vero monochordo musico, a similitudine del quale tuti li concenti musici son compositi et ordinati.^c

5. V.E. se degnarà pigliare queste mie consideratione in bona parte, et non perché io voglia denigrare la clara fama de Messer Adriano, al quale (per le sue optime virtù) sempre son tenuto, né etiam perché io voglia essere contra le vostre sententie et consideratione, perché scio bene che a me non lice 'ponere os in celum'.⁷ Ma quello che da me a V.E. è stato scripto nasce da integerimo et cordiale amore, et etiam aciò che se li mei scripti son da essere acceptati et da essere observati, che siano da quella acceptati con quello puro amore che da me son stati scripti. Se etiam meritano reprehensione, prego quella se dignerà darmi adviso aciò che io più non stia in tale errore, perché ancora che io sia col pede in la tetra fossa, sempre desidero imparare, et maxime da li amici mei come è V.E., a la quale humilemente me arecomando.

Vale. Bononie, die 10 novembris 1524.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. I have received the letter of 21 October from Your Nobility² concerning your dispute with Pietro Aaron. Nothing really occurred between the two of you worthy of producing rancour rather than increased devotion to our celebrated art of music.

2. You write that Adriano [Willaert] deserves great praise for having composed such a work³ and that you deem it to be most ingenious, to which I respond that to me it seems rather that he has been over-bold. I don't think it praiseworthy to seek obscure ways to achieve something that doesn't even come out perfect, when an easy way exists that leads to perfection. But when something is thought to be impossible and a way is found to come very close to a solution, as Archimedes did in trying to square the circle, this is praiseworthy. But whereas Archimedes at least came close to his goal, Adriano, through ill-considered accidentals, utterly failed to achieve a perfect octave between d and d', overstepping that octave by one comma and producing a dissonant interval, clearly noticeable as such, for the interval of the octave suffers no excess or diminution of the least particle. If you want to know more about this augmented octave, ask Aaron, to whom I wrote an explanation [no. 13]; he responded by saying that the lutenist Marco dall'Aquila agrees with me. I find it strange, though, that a theorist [Aaron] should seek illumination from a practical musician.

3. You say that this composition sounds somewhat harsh because the octave and its parts⁴ change their nature. To this I would add that also the sixths exceed their true measure by one comma, which interval keeps the composition from observing the intervals proper to the diatonic genus.

4. You aver that the frets of the lute are all arranged in minor semitones.⁵ Although I play neither lute nor any other instrument, theoretical reasoning shows me that all frets of the lute cannot be so arranged. For how would one then produce the whole tone, made up of

^{&#}x27; MS: ordinate.

⁵ Cavazzoni must have meant to say that all semitones of the fretted lute were equal. Recently, Mark Lindley has pointed out that Cavazzoni was probably describing a lute tuned in equal 18:17 semitones—a ratio to which, together with the greater proportion 17:16, Boethius (*De musica* 1. 16) allowed the name of semitone—and that such a division comes close to equal temperament because the additional tension required to press the string to the fret raises the pitch slightly. See *Lutes, Viols, and Temperaments* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 20-1. This is also the ratio proposed for lutes by Vincenzo Galilei, Marin Mersenne, and Girolamo Cardano (ibid.). ⁶ Spataro confuses the *mezzanelle* with the *sotanelle*, which form the second-highest course of the lute.

⁷ Cf. Ps. 72: 9 Vulg.: 'posuerunt in caelum os suum, et lingua eorum transivit in terra' ('They have set their mouth against heaven: and their tongue hath passed through the earth').

one major and one minor semitone? The distance of a fourth, which falls between the two highest strings,⁶ would only consist of five minor semitones, and thus the lute would conflict with the sense of hearing. The composition of the interval that falls between these two strings contradicts you, because if we take a well-tuned lute, the second string stopped at the fifth fret makes a unison with the open top string, and this fourth consists of two major and three minor semitones. Otherwise, polyphonic compositions could not be played on the lute. It follows that the lute must be subject to the monochord, in whose image all musical compositions are set and ordered.

5. Please take my observations in good part, for I do not wish to denigrate Willaert's fame or oppose your opinions, for I know it is not proper to 'set my mouth against the heavens'.⁷ If I err, please correct me; even with one foot in the grave, I still wish to learn.

15 (J32). Fos. 139^r–140^v Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 October 1527 (autograph)

140^v [Al] Musico excellentissimo Messer Prie [Zoanne veneto, quanto m]agiore honorando.

^{139^r} Venerabilis vir et maior honorande, salutem.

1. A li dì 24 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 24 setembris signata, per la quale ho inteso li vostri affanni et impedimenti occursi nel tempo passato, li quali bisogna portarli in pace perché sono de li fructi che dà el mondo. Ma certamente che n'ho havuto grande despiacere per amore vostro, perché tale occurentie molto dano sturbo et noceno ad uno gentile et subtile ingenio, come me pare comprehendere che sia V.E. Da poi molto me sono alegrato per essere stato visitato da V.E. con sue littere plene de amore, et etiam perché me chiamati preceptore, et etiam perché ho compreheso che V.E. non dà opera a cose basse, ma che tende a la alteza de la harmonica facultà, et etiam perché V.E. s'è dignato de vedere, discutere, et examinare le debile opere mie, le quale perché sono state affirmate da V.E., et maxime de li tenori de la missa etc.,¹ la quale missa già mandai a Franchino Gafurio, ma da lui non hebi resposta troppo a me grata, perché lui diceva che in tali tenori erano multi intollerabili errori, et bene che per le parole sue io steti alquanto dubioso, pure perché non demonstrava rasone alcuna de quello che lui diceva, reputai che in lui fusse livore o ignorantia, perché le opere sue asai claro demonstravano che lui era poco perito in canto mensurato. Ancora mandai al predicto Franchino quello mio mutetto facto per papa Leone, et lui diss[e el simil]e,^a ma de tale suo parlare feci poca existimatione per le rasone dicte di sopra.

2. Horsù [ad rem. V.]E. me ha mandato la resolutione del tenore del predicto mutetto et diceti che dubitati in la resolutione chromatica.² Ma per meglio fare claro V.E. de tale dubitatione, io me extenderò alquanto circa tale chromatico genere demonstrato in tale tenore. Pertanto habiamo da advertire che tale tenore participa de dui tetrachordi, cioè de diezeugmenon (el quale ha el suo principio in paramese, o vero nel *mi* de $bfa \mid mi$, et termina in nete diezeugmenon, o vero in E *la mi* acuto) et etiam

^{*a*} These and the following words in square brackets occur where there is a hole in the original that has been patched. However, the original words have survived, stuck to fo. 140^{*t*}.

¹ 'Maria Magdalena'. We know the name of the mass from Spataro's letter to Del Lago of 1 Sept. 1528, written because Del Lago claimed he never received the present letter. See no. 16.

 $^{^2}$ On Spataro's motet for Leo X, discussed in nos. 15–17 and 19, see Ch. 3. The tenor is a *soggetto cavato dalle vocali* of 'Leo pontifex maximus', and Spataro refers to the notes by their syllables.

participa del tetrachordo hyperboleon, el quale ha el suo principio in nete diezeugmenon, o vero in E la mi predicta. Ma perché la prima et la quinta sillaba de tale tenore, zoè 'Le' et 'fex', sono posite in paranete diezeugmenon, o vero in D la sol re, volendo procedere chromatice, bisogna advertire che le due chorde predicte serano distante da paramese per spatio de dui semitoni, li quali in extremità pronuntiati producerano uno tono incomposito, la quale distantia de tono non se potrà exemplare né figurare per le linee et spatii usitati in l'ordine naturale senza apparentia de qualche signo accidentale. Pertanto sequitarà che tale note non potrano stare simplicemente locate in trite diezeugmenon, o vero in C sol fa ut, come da vui è stato demonstrato in la resolutione a me missa. Ma serà de bisogno che tale prima et quinta nota predicte siano locate in C sol fa ut et signate con questo signo #, per el quale signo le predicte note serano intese essere remosse dal loco naturale per spatio de magiore semitonio. Et alhora tale chorde serano intese^b essere la terza chorda chromatica del tetrachordo diezeugmenon, perché (ut dixi) serano distante da paramese per dui semitonii, o vero per uno spatio de tono, come appare nel monochordo et organi dal mi de b fa b mi al tasto negro posito intra C sol fa ut et D la sol re, et el simile acaderà de la seconda et terza chorda, zoè 'o' et 'pon', posite in tale tenore, le quale sono signate in paranete hyperboleon, le quale, respecto a nete diezeugmenon, distarano similemente per dui semitonii, o vero per tono, chromatice loquendo, et per tale modo, riducte a le linee et spatii usitate, caderano in trite hyperboleon, o vero in F fa ut acuto signate 139^v con | questo signo #, come vedereti signato in la propria vostra resolutione a me missa, la quale in questa inclusa a V.E. mando.³

3. Et in questo loco io non sono discorde da la mera verità, né etiam dal nostro Messer Petro Aron nel capitulo 40 del 2° libro del suo Toscanello,⁴ dove lui tracta del tasto nero posito nel monochordo intra C fa ut et D sol re et intra F fa ut et G sol re ut. Ma a me pare che da poi, in quello suo Tractato de tonis,⁵ non poco sua Excellentia se sia alontanato da la mera verità, perché da uno solo signo de b molle signato in D sol re lui fa nascere dui exachordi inter se diversi et differenti, et de questo hareti clara notitia, se principiando al predicto signo de b molle signato in D sol re. El quale perché (virtualiter) è più basso de D sol re per semitonio magiore, sequitarà che (descendendo gradatim) trovareti che el suo mi caderà pare in sono con C fa ut naturale, et el suo re caderà più basso de B mi per spatio de magiore semitonio, et etiam el suo ut caderà più basso de A re per magiore semitonio. Ma el suo sol caderà^c intra D sol re et E la mi, in modo che con D sol re serà semitonio minore et con E la mi serà magiore, et el suo la caderà in parisonantia con F fa ut naturale. El quale ordine predicto è in tuto reprobato et remoto da l'uxo. Et per non essere [apparente n]el^d monochordo et altri instrumenti usitati, se potrà chiamare frustratorio [et vano].

4. [Anco]ra dice che da esso fa, o vero b rotondo o molle, signato in D sol re nasce la syllaba ut in A re naturale. Per questo dico che el sequitarà che da esso b molle, o vero fa, signato in D sol re nascerà un'altro exachordo diverso dal predicto,⁶ perché se esso exachordo harà el suo utequale in sono con A re naturale, bisognarà che el suo re sia equale in sono con B mi naturale, et harà el suo mi cadente intra C fa ut et D sol re, in modo che con C fa ut serà semitonio magiore et con D sol re serà semitonio minore, et el suo fa caderà in unisono con D sol re, et el sol caderà unisono con E la mi naturale. Ma el suo la caderà intra F fa ut et G sol re ut, in modo che con F fa ut serà magiore semitonio et con G sol re ut serà minore. Et questo predicto ordine è observato in li monochordi et altri instrumenti rectamenti divisi. Et perché Messer Petro nostro predicto dice che la syllaba la cadente in F fa ut grave nasce da quello fa posito in mese, pertanto acaderà che el fa da lui considerato in D sol re restarà senza el suo

' MS: cadere. ^d See n. a.

⁶ Spataro believed that Aaron derived two different sets of hexachords from Db, one on Ab, the other on A\$, only because he misunderstood Aaron's system. Aaron's purpose was to show how each note could receive all six solmization syllables. Since he uses only flats as accidentals, the letter A is to be understood as Ab when the solmization syllables ut, fa, and sol are used and as At when sung as re, mi, and la. Aaron states (Trattato, ch. 27) that A as ut is derived from Db, and therefore he refers to Ab, not Ab. Moreover, he does not call the note 'A re naturale' but 'non naturale': 'La prima voce *ut* non naturale viene da un *fa* finto posto in Lychanos hypaton cioè D sol re.' His convoluted exposition is complicated by his inconsistency in deriving the more remote solmization syllables: while g as fa is said to arise from a flat signed on g, d as fa is derived from a flat on a by mutating to a hexachord a fifth lower, and in the upper octave d' as facomes from a flat placed on g, mutating to a hexachord a fifth higher. Spataro is right in maintaining that Aaron should have shown both sets of coniunctae, those with sharps as well as those with flats. In a small pamphlet without title, printed in Venice in 1531 and bound with some of the surviving copies of the Trattato and the Toscanello, Aaron conceded the point and rationalized his procedure with reference to the philosophical saying: 'It is pointless to do by more what can be done by fewer.' He undertook the treatise, which shows how to make thirty mutations on each note, 'non perché nel capitolo predetto [Trattato, ch. 26] da noi sia stato comesso errore: ma solo per dimostrare che da noi non è ignorato, che tali sei nomi offitiali anchora si possino trovare essercitando le predette due coniunte a luoghi et a tempi debiti' (fo. aa1'). For the background to this treatise, see the Commentary on no. 34.

^b MS: intesse.

³ The example, which the reader will find at the end of this letter, is now glued to the bottom of fo. 140. It must have been loose originally, since the cut lines (made when folding and sealing the letter) do not coincide with those on the bottom of fo. 140. In his letter to Del Lago of 4 Jan. 1529 (no. 17), Spataro says that he made a mistake in placing sharps in front of the final f' and c'of the chromatic resolution. He repeated the error in no. 16. Spataro does not discuss the chromatic resolution of 'maximus' in nos. 15 or 16; it is only when he specifies the placement of those syllables in no. 17 that he becomes aware of his error in adding the sharps. 'Cardinei cetus' must be the beginning of the text in the other voices, which have not survived.

⁴ Toscanello, fo. MI': 'Divisione del monachordo per tuoni, et semituoni naturali, et accidentali' (1529 edn., fo. MI').

⁵ Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525).

la ordinario, et el fa assignato da lui in mese (secondo lui) harà due volte la, scilicet uno in F fa ut grave et l'altro in C sol fa ut. Ma meglio circa questo è stato inteso da lui circa la sillaba *la* assignata in F *fa ut* acuto.⁷ Ma lui non ha potuto rectamente pertractare de tale importantie, perché el crede che el non sia altra coniuncta che solo quella de b molle. Ma le coniuncte certamente sono due, cioè una de b rotondo, la quale se signa con questo signo b in ciascuno loco dove naturalemente se trova mi, et l'altra se chiama coniuncta de b quadrato, la quale se signa con questo signo # in ciascuno loco dove naturalemente cade fa. Et (tenendo tale ordine) la sillaba ut considerata in A re nascerà da la prima coniuncta de b quadrato signata in C fa ut, et similemente el re considerato in B mi et etiam 140^r el mi locato in C fa ut et el fa de D sol re et el sol de E la mi, et similemente el la considerato in F fa ut, come dal mio preceptore è stato scripto⁸ et è affirmato da ciascuno docto. Perché solamente exercitando la coniuncta de b molle el non se potrà producere uno monochordo rectamente diviso, et questo nascerà perché quello tono, el quale inmediate serà supra el semitonio naturale, cioè che caderà intra C et D et intra F e G, non potria restare diviso per semitonio magiore in grave et minore in acuto, come appare in ciascuno monochordo rectamente diviso. Et circa questo multe altre importantie se potriano dire, le quale sono lassate da me perché 'inteligenti pauca'.⁹

5. Ma al mio Messer Petro Aron me recomandareti, al quale più giurni sono passati che non li ho scripto, perché già lui se dolea de me, dicendo che sempre in le mie littere io li dava qualche bastonata. Ma se sua Excellentia havesse ateso a quello che gli era scripto da me, forsa che al fine lui haria compreheso che più gli hariano valute le mie bastonate che non li sono valute le laude a lui date da quilli che poco sciano, li quali (senza ale) l'hano facto volare sino al celo. Ma lui me chiamava patre et preceptore, et così io da patre et da maestro me portava verso sua Excellentia, perché lo officio del patre et del preceptore è de amaestrare el figliolo et el discipulo, in modo che non cada in errore. Ma lui credeva che io fusse mosso da livore et invidia. Ma io era mosso da compassione, la quale portava a la sua cecità et a li sucessori, li quali aliquando, perché prestano tropo fede a qu[ello che t]rovano^e scripto, cadeno nel latio [= laccio] de la fetida ignorantia.

^e These and the following words in square brackets are visible underneath the patch from fo. 139 that is stuck over them; see n. *a*.

⁸ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 31.

Non altro per hora. Sempre son[o per farvi] apiacere; pertanto V.E. me operi per soi bisogni et per soi amici.

Vale. Bononię, die 30 otobris 1527.

Se V.E. più me scrive, drizati vostre littere in Bologna in la sacristia de Messer Sancto Petronio.



1. I received your letter of 24 September on 24 October and am thus informed of all the troubles that you have suffered in the past—events that harm a gentle and fine mind such as I understand yours to be. But I was pleased with the warmth of your letter and because you call me 'teacher', also because you took interest in my feeble compositions, and in particular my mass.¹ Franchino Gafurio, to whom I sent that mass, found in it 'many

⁷ In ch. 32 Aaron derives *la* on *f* indirectly by first positing a flat on *a*, which descends a fifth to another *fa* on $d\mathfrak{h}$. It is puzzling why he chose this roundabout route, since he was willing to derive *ut* on $A(\mathfrak{h})$ from $d\mathfrak{h}$ without mutation. In ch. 39 he indeed had a 'better understanding', for there *la* on *f'* is derived directly from $d\mathfrak{h}'$.

⁹ See Plautus, Persa 729 and Terence, Phormio 541.

intolerable errors'; of his censure I took little notice because he gave no reasons for his opinion and because his own works show but small expertise in composition. The same happened when I sent him the motet I composed for Leo X.

2. In explanation of the chromatic resolution of the tenor of this motet,² it is important to keep in mind that it is based on two tetrachords, the tetrachord diezeugmenon from b to e' and the tetrachord hyperboleon from e' [to a']. But since the first and the last syllables of the tenor, i.e. 'Le' and 'fex', fall on paranete diezeugmenon, i.e. on d', I must point out that for a chromatic construction these two notes, the first and the fifth, have to have the distance of two semitones, i.e. one whole tone from paramese, b. To achieve this, we cannot simply use trite diezeugmenon, i.e. c', as you have done in the resolution you sent me, but we must add a sharp to obtain c^{\sharp} , a major semitone higher than c'. Thus these notes will be interpreted as the third chromatic note of the tetrachord diezeugmenon, or, on monochord or organ, the black key between c' and d'. Similarly, the second and third notes of the tenor, on the syllables 'o' and 'pon', are notated on paranete hyperboleon, g', which must be two semitones, or one whole tone, removed from nete diezeugmenon (e') and fall on f #', as you will see in your resolution, which I am enclosing.³

3. And here I am in agreement with what our Pietro Aaron writes in ch. 40 of the second book of his *Toscanello*,⁴ where he treats the black keys between c and d, and f and g. But later on, in his treatise on the modes,⁵ when he tries to derive two different sets of hexachords from one single $d\mathfrak{p}$, he strays from the simple truth. And this you will clearly comprehend when you begin with $d\mathfrak{p}$ (= fa) and continue downwards with c (= mi), $B\mathfrak{p}$ (= re), $A\mathfrak{p}$ (= ut). In each case the flat notes are one major semitone lower than their natural counterparts. Likewise, sol will fall on $e\mathfrak{p}$, a minor semitone higher than d, and la on f. And this hexachord is entirely disapproved and not in use, and since it is not to be found on either the monochord or other instruments, one might call it a figment of the imagination.

4. With the same db Aaron construes a hexachord with ut on A natural. But I say this would result in a different hexachord,⁶ with $c \ddagger$ and $f \ddagger$. This hexachord can be found on the monochord and other instruments correctly divided. Since he says that la on f derives from fa on a, the fa on db will not have its ordinary la, and the fa on a will have la twice, once on f and the other on c'. He had a better understanding of la on f'.⁷ Aaron could not treat the matter properly because he thought that there was only one *coniuncta*, operating with flats; but certainly there are two, one with flats, the other with sharps. Therefore, the hexachord beginning on A derives from the first sharp *coniuncta*, $c \ddagger$, as my teacher wrote.⁸

Working with flats alone, the monochord cannot be correctly divided because the intervals between C and D and F and G will not have the proper succession of a major and a minor semitone. More could be said, but 'a word is enough to the wise'.⁹

5. Remember me to Pietro Aaron, to whom I have not written for some time, since he complained that there was no letter in which I did not give him a caning. But my canings do him more good than does the praise of those of small knowledge, who have made him (though he lacks wings) soar up to high heaven. Since he called me 'father' and 'teacher', I did my duty accordingly, moved by compassion for his blindness. **16** (J33). Fos. 141^{r} -142^v

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 1 September 1528 (autograph)

^{142^v} [Al venerabile Messer Pre] Zoanne veneto, diacono [dignissimo de Sancta S]ophia, musico peritissimo. In Venetia, [in la Barberia del] Sole sopra el campo de [Sancta Sophia].

141^r Venerabilis vir et amice honorande, salutem.

1. A li giurni 27 del presente¹ ho receputo una de V.R. de dì 22 del presente signata, per la quale ho inteso come quella sta dubitando quale sia la causa che non haveti havuto resposta de una vostra a me missa sino a li giurni 24 setembris de l'anno 1527 passato circa certi dubii, li quali haveti in quello mio tenore cantato per li tri generi de li canti.² Et pare quasi che V.R. dubita che io sia sdegnato con quella, la quale cosa veramente non procede da sdegno, né etiam da mia pigritia, perché da quella non ho receputo iniuria per la quale io me debia movere a sdegno. Ma sumamente credo essere tenuto a V.R., perché ve seti degnato examinare et approbare le opere mie, le quale da multi (per excusare la sua ignorantia) sono state tinte et denigrate, come da Franchino, al quale già mandai quella mia 'Missa de sancta Maria Magdalena', et lui me scripse che in li tenori erano multi inexcusabili errori. Similemente li mandai quello mio concento facto per papa Leone, et lui disse el simile, de le quale sue parole feci poca et quasi nulla existimatione, perché lui non assignava rasone alcuna, et etiam perché 'cecus non iudicat de colore',³ et perché io bene sapeva che tale subtilità non erano cibi per soi denti. Pertanto V.R. sia certo che subito io deti resposta⁴ a la vostra prima a me missa, et tale mia resposta mandai qua per la via de uno nostro canonico de Sancto Petronio chiamato Messer

¹ 'Del presente' indicates that Spataro began writing this letter during August, but finished and dated it on 1 Sept.

² The motet for Leo X. On this work, see Ch. 3.

³ Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 2. 1 (193^{*}4-9). Paraphrased as 'Caecus natus non potest disputare de coloribus quantum ad rem, sed quantum ad nomen', this observation became a commonplace; see Jacqueline Hamesse, *Les Auctoritates Aristotelis, un florilège médiéval: Étude historique et édition critique* (Philosophes médiévaux 17; Louvain and Paris, 1974), p. 144.

⁴ The letter survives (see no. 15). Since it is part of the section of the Spataro Correspondence that belonged to Del Lago, it is puzzling why Del Lago should not have received it by the time he wrote to Spataro a year later. The letter might have gone astray and been discovered after he wrote, especially since, contrary to Spataro's usual habit, it does not carry Del Lago's full address. No. 15 must be the original letter and not a copy in Spataro's hand because it has been folded and sealed. All that remains of the address on the back is: '... Musico excellentissimo Messer Pre... agiore honorando'. Every other letter from Spataro to Del Lago carries at least some part of Del Lago's address in addition to his name. On the other hand, it is not beyond the pale of the possible that Del Lago intended to test Spataro's firmness of conviction, or his memory, in view of the distrust prevailing between the correspondents.

16. Spataro to Del Lago, 1 Sept. 1528

Francesco da l'Organo, che già fu [fa]miliare del reverendo episcopo de Pola,⁵ quando sua Signoria era gubernatore in Bologna. Et el predicto Messer Francesco (con altre sue littere) drizò tale mia resposta qua in Vinetia in casa del predicto episcopo de Pola, et multo pregava uno amico suo (el quale era servitore de esso episcopo) che facesse che tale resposta mia havesse recapito in mane de V.R. Ma da poi io, vedendo che da V.R. non haveva alcuno resposta, pensai bene che era stato male servito, et el simile penso essere advenuto de un'altra mia resposta mandata qua al mio honorando Frate Petro Aron, la quale per simile via mandai a sua Excellentia, che da lui altro non ho sentito, al quale Frate Petro fareti la mia excusatione, aciò che forsa lui non cada in qualche pensero strano, asai dissimile a la mia innocentia et puro amore, el quale porto a sua Excellentia per li soi beni meriti et virtù.

2. V.R. dice dubitare in lo canon del predicto tenore in quella dictione, la quale dice 'tritas pausato', et etiam nel genere chromatico. Pertanto dico perché exercitando tali generi, el non seria cosa licita né laudabile procedere per distantie et intervalli non usitati, pertanto perché la sexta sillaba in tale tenore posita, zoè 'ma' (la quale è posita et locata in trite hyperboleon, o vero in F *fa ut* acuto)⁶ con la sequente syllaba, zoè 'xi', secondo el genere enharmonico dista per una diesis, el quale intervallo non è usitato in practica, o vero in la musica activa, pertanto tale syllaba, cioè 'ma', non è cantata in tale tenore, ma el suo valore se converte in taciturnità, et similemente acaderà de l'ultima syllaba, zoè 'mus', la quale in tale tenore cade in trite diezeugmenon, o vero in C *sol fa ut*, perché

^{141°} procedendo da la septima predicta sillaba, cioè 'xi', posita in | nete diezeugmenon, o vero in E *la mi* acuto (la quale è chorda stabile), ad essa syllaba ultima, zoè 'mus', enharmonice, tale distantia o vero destenso non seria intervallo usitato, perché intra nete diezeugmenon et trite diezeugmenon, enharmonice procedendo, cade intervallo o vero distantia de dui toni et una diesis. Adonca (per tale causa), zoè per observare li usitati intervali, el valore de le chorde o vero syllabe, le quale in tale genere sortisseno el nome 'trite' in tale tenore, sono state da me riducte in taciturnità, o vero in tacita quantità, de uno tempo de questo signo Θ in principio de tale tenore posito.

3. Ma circa el sequente genere dicto chromatico, nel quale diceti dubitare, per declaratione de le vostre dubietà dico perché la prima syllaba de tale tenore, zoè 'Le', la quale è posita in paranete diezeugmenon, o vero in D *la sol re*, la quale è la seconda⁷ chorda del tetrachordo diezeugmenon

⁵ Altobello Averoldi. See the Biographical Dictionary.

⁶ Le-o pon-ti-fex ma-xi-mus. For the tenor, see below.

⁷ Uncharacteristically (and perhaps accidentally), Spataro is reckoning the tetrachord in the Greek manner, from acute to grave. Elsewhere, and even in the following parenthesis, he always follows the medieval convention of counting the tetrachord from the bottom up.

(el quale ha el suo initio in paramese, o vero nel *mi* de $bfa \perp mi$ acuto), secundo genus chromaticum dista da esso parame[se] per dui semitonii, li quali inseme colti fano uno spatio de tono. Dico che el serà neccessario che tale syllaba prima, zoè 'Le', sia locata in C *sol fa ut* con questo signo # de b quadro iacente, per el quale signo el spacio del semitonio cadente intra paramese et trite diezeugmenon serà riducto in spacio de tono, et similemente acaderà de la syllaba seconda, zoè 'o', et 'pon', posite in paranete hyperboleon, o vero in G *sol re ut* superacuto, le quale resolute, o vero riducto al modo usitato, zoè, de le linee et spatii, caderano in F *fa ut* acuto con questo signo # predicto signate, come declara la sequente resolutione de tuto el predicto tenore, riduto nel signo posito in le altre sue particule:



4. Circa quella opera mia⁸ che V.R. dice havere, io me arecordo che tale tractato è stato facto da me in tre volte. La prima fu breve et cum celerità facta per el Signore Messer Hermes, ma non fu bene complecta. La seconda volta tale opera fu alquanto augumentata. Ma da poi, circa dui anni fà, tale tractato (iterum) fu da me revisto et complecto secondo la mia intentione, et tale tractato per tale modo complecto non è ancora apresso de homo vivente excepto che a me. Volendo adonca V.R. fare imprimere uno tractato mio de canto mensurato, seria meglio questo ultimo da me finito et complecto, el quale non è tanto breve, et per essere assai magiore volume de quello che tene V.R. (quando fusse impresso), reusciria uno libreto de condecente numerosità de foglii. Pertanto V.R. pensarà circa questo, et se la voleti vedere, ve la mandarò voluntiera, aciò che bene sia da V.R. consultata et castigata. Ma voria essere cauto in modo che ad uno tracto io non perdesse lo amico et etiam l'opera. Pertanto a me pare che V.R. sia con Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono et fati che lui mandi da me per tale tractato, et da poi lui el darà a V.R., perché io cognosco lui et scio che non me faria alcuno incomodo et danne, et bene che io sia certo essere amato da V.R. et che creda che siati homo da bene, tamen non cognosco quella,⁹ a la quale mando con questa una mia 'Ave Maria' a sei voce, la quale, senza guardare al mio rozo et basso stile, per amore mio con lieta fronte acceptareti, et al mio reverendo Frate Petro Aron me recomandareti, e al predicto Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono.

Vale. Bononie, die prima setembris 1528.

Tuus J. Spatarius

1. On the 27th of this month¹ I received your letter of the 22nd in which you wonder why I have not answered yours of 24 September 1527, concerning your queries on my tenor in the three genera.² Indeed, you fear that I might be angry with you. This could not be the case, since I never received any injury from you. On the contrary, I am greatly beholden to you for having deigned to examine and approve my works, which have been stained and blackened by many, such as Franchino (Gafurio), to whom I once sent my 'Missa de sancta Maria Magdalena'. He wrote to me that its tenor contained many inexcusable errors. Likewise, I sent him my motet in honour of Pope Leo X, and he said something of the same nature. But I took little notice of his words because he gave no reasons. Moreover, I knew well that such subtleties were not food to his taste, for 'the blind cannot judge colour'.³ You may rest assured that I did answer your first letter;⁴ I sent it through a canon of San Petronio of Bologna, Francesco dall'Organo, who directed it in care of the Bishop of Pola⁵ in Venice. When I did not hear from you I suspected I might have been served badly. Indeed, I now think the same must have happened with a response I sent to Pietro Aaron, from whom I did not hear either. Please make my excuses to him, lest he begin to entertain some strange

⁸ Tractato de musica mensurata. On the history of this treatise, see Ch. 3.

⁹ Spataro had been in correspondence with Del Lago in the 1520s, as we know from no. 3, but he probably had never met him and did not feel that he knew his character. His uneasiness on this score turned out to be warranted.

thoughts about me far removed from my sincere feelings of pure friendship on account of his merits and talents.

2. You say you have difficulties with the passage 'tritas pausato' ('make the tritae into rests') in my canon to the tenor of the motet for Leo X and also with the chromatic genus. I say that in using the enharmonic and chromatic genera, it would be neither legitimate nor commendable to proceed with intervals not in use nowadays. Since the sixth syllable in the tenor, 'ma',⁶ placed on trite hyperboleon (f'), is one diesis removed from the seventh syllable 'xi' in the enharmonic genus—an interval not available in contemporary practice—this syllable is not sung; its value is converted to silence. The same will be the case with the last syllable 'mus', placed on trite diezeugmenon (e'); the distance from the syllable 'xi', placed on nete diezeugmenon (e'), is an interval not in use, to wit, two whole tones plus one diesis. Thus the notes called trite are changed to rests of one breve under the sign O.

3. Concerning your question about the use of the chromatic genus in the same work, I say that the first syllable of the tenor, i.e. 'Le', placed on paranete diezeugmenon (d'), which is the second⁷ note of the tetrachord diezeugmenon (beginning with paramese, or $b \not \mid$), is two semitones removed from paramese. It will be necessary therefore to place the syllable 'Le' on $c \not \mid$ '. Likewise, the 'o' and 'pon' on paranete hyperboleon (g'), will have to be placed on $f \not \mid$ ', as shown in the example.

4. You say you own one of my treatises.8 I recall having written three versions of this tract. One, brief and done in haste for Signor Hermes [Bentivoglio], was not properly completed. The second version was somewhat expanded. But then, some two years ago, I revised it again and wrote an ending in tune with my intentions, and this version is not yet in anybody's hands save my own. If you would like to publish a tract of mine on mensural music, this last version would serve best. It is much larger than the one in your possession; when printed, it would turn out to be a little volume of decent size. Consider the matter, and if you wish to see it, I shall be glad to send it to you so that you may examine and revise it. But I wish to proceed with caution lest I lose friend and trouble at a stroke. I suggest that you go to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni and ask him to send for the treatise, and he will then give it to you. For I know him and I am sure he will cause me no harm or damage. And although I am certain that you are well disposed towards me and that you are a man of honour, nevertheless I do not know you.9 I am sending you enclosed a six-part 'Ave Maria' of my composition. Although its style is crude and simple, I beg you to accept it kindly for my sake.

17 (J34). Fos. 143^r-146^v Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 4 January 1529 (autograph)

146^v [Al venerabile Messer Pre Zoanne] veneto, diacono [dignissimo de Sancta Sophia et m]usico peritissimo. [In Venetia, in la Barb]eria del Sole, sopra [el campo de Sancta S]ophia.

143^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. Ho receputo una de V.E. per la quale ho inteso quella havere havuto una mia [no. 16], etc., et la resolutione del tenore de quello mio canto facto per papa Leone. Diceti ancora che haveti havuto quello mio tractato de musica mensurata, circa el quale tractato diceti che ancora non l'haveti veduto, ma che per qualche ochiate che li haveti dato che a vui pare che in l'ultimo capitulo non li sia signo alcuno che l'opera sia finita. Pertanto me domandati come debe stare tal fine. A la quale cosa respondo che io non me recordo come stia el principio né el medio, né etiam el fine de tale tractato, perché sono già passati molti anni che da me fu facto, et mai dapo non l'ho veduto, né etiam da alcuno altro. Et se el non fusse stato la comodità de quello frate, el quale portò qua tale tractato, io non l'haria mandato se prima io non l'havesse veduto dal principio al fine. Ma V.E. (per mio contento) li farà uno fine secondo el suo parere, el quale sia consonante al principio.

2. Ancora diceti che in tale tractato non haveti veduto capitulo alcuno de contrapuncto né de proportione, li quali tractati non stariano male in fine de tale opera. Messer Pre Zoanne mio honorando, V.E. già me scripse che el ve era pervenuto a le mane uno mio piculo et breve tractato de musica figurativa, etc., et che la vostra voluntà era de farlo stampare, ma perché tal opera reus[c]irebe picola et de poco volume, vui dicevi essere bono agiungere a tale opera qualche breve tractato de contrapuncto et etiam de proportione. Alhora io ve scripsi che tale tractato non era bene complecto, ma che era da me stato tanto ampliato et cresuto che essendo impresso, reusciria asai condecente volume, et che se V.E. el voleva vedere, che io el mandaria qua, et così l'ho mandato. Io non ve parlai de altro contrapuncto né de proportione. L'è la verità che se con tale opera fusseno li tractati predicti, non staria male, perché el pare che el canto mensurato habia tri membri: nel primo se demonstra la mensura del tempo musico con le sue circumstantie, cioè el modo et la prolatione con le sue figure, o vero note cantabile et non cantabile, et li signi per li quali el valore virtuale de tale note è compreheso; l'altro membro considera come le figure predicte siano subiecte ad altre quantità et virtù non demonstrate dal signo circulare et semicirculare, el^a quale li musici chiamano propor-^a MS: al.

17. Spataro to Del Lago, 4 Jan. 1529

The Letters

tione. Ma el terzo membro serà el contrapuncto, el quale insigna componere la harmonia, la quale è significata et demonstrata per le figure o note predicte, perché la^b harmonia consiste in la mensura del tempo, o per se o aggregato, o in parte minute diviso.

3. De le proportione io ne feci già uno breve tractato, el quale ancora non è stato veduto fora, ma seria difficile da imprimere, perché ce sono figure medie vacue et medie plene et altri caracteri li quali ancora non ho veduto in stampa, et ce sono altre figure molto difficile, a le quale non caderia poca spexa, et bisognaria essere impresso in foglio integro.

4. De contrapuncto io^c ancora ho scripto molto in longo. Pertanto, volendo riducere tale opera a brevità, ci bisognaria non poco tempo et fatica, la quale a me è molto molesta, sì per havere la cura de la molesta scola de li clerici, sì etiam per essere già intrato in l'ano 70. Et ancora poco et quasi nula curo che siano impresse, perché certamente io comprehendo che la fatica et la spesa seria getata via, perché più intra musici et cantori non se observano li canoni et regolari precepti da la docta antiquità ordinati. V.E. vede bene che a tempi nostri li signi ordinati da li antiqui 143^v sono tenuti in poco pretio et existimatione, et che solo | usano questo

signo ¢, et de le proportione solo uxano la sesqualtera. Et etiam senza studiare li precepti de contrapuncto, ciascuno è maestro de componere la harmonia. Havendo adonca più volte pensato a le predicte occurentie, ho compreheso che el seria uno getare via el tempo et la facultà a intrare in questo laberinto, el quale seria senza alcuno fructo, per la quale cosa ve conforto, non intrati in questo impazo, che per me ne fazo poca extima. Pure fati el vostro parere, et io per farvi cosa grata farò tanto quanto voreti.

5. A me pare che V.E. non debia havere a sdegno, se con qualche respecto ho mandato qua el mio tractato, perché el mio ignorare la vostra bona conditione et optima fama me ha facto cadere in tale errore—s'è licito però dire errore. Ma veramente a me pare che per tale mia dubitatione et respecto vui ve doveti alegrare, perché da Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono ho havuto tale informatione de V.E. che io non tengo cosa tanto cara che liberamente io non affidasse in le vostre mane. Pertanto fati existimatione che 'omnia mea tua sunt',¹ et se ho falato, ve chiedo perdono.

6. Io ve mandarò la missa mia 'de la pera', la quale voglio notare de mia mano con mia comodità, perché è molto prolixa.

7. Horsù lasiamo queste parole et veniamo ad altre particule, le quale sono de più importantia et utilità, et se scrivendo a V.E. paresse che io

^b MS: lha. ^c MS: ho.

excedesse li termini de la amicitia, me perdonareti, perché a lo amico non se debe celare la verità, ancora che 'veritas odium parit'.²

8. Da poi, V.E. scrivendo dice le sequente parole, cioè: 'Circa la dubitatione, la quale mi occorre in nel prenominato tenore vostro, cioè in nel genere chromatico,³ non scrissi a V.E. circa esso genere che da me fusse ignorato li soi intervalli et processo suo, come V.E. ha possuto comprehendere in la resolutione di mia mano inclusa in una mia littera dirrecta a V.E., perché vogliendo rimovere li intervalli del diatonico et convertirli in el genere chromatico, bisogna che l'appara cum qualche signo manifesto, come è questo #.' Messer Pre Zoanne mio honorando, io sono usitato che quando ad alcuno amico io scrivo de qualche importantia de musica, sempre ne tengo copia, et questo è facto da me per multi optimi respecti. Pertanto io tenì copia de quella mia prima littera a V.E. missa, la quale non vi fu data, in la quale littera era inclusa quella vostra resolutione, la quale diceti havermi mandata de vostra mano, la quale vostra resolutione fu da me signata con lo signo ut hic posito #, el quale signo in alcuno loco de la vostra resolutione non era signato, ma stava ut hic:



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Come volete vui che per la prescripta vostra resolutione io habia possuto comprehendere che da vui non siano stati ignorati li intervalli et processi chromatici, li quali (come diceti) conveneno essere apparenti con questo ^{144^r} signo #, se in tale vostra resolutione non haveti posito tale segno | in loco alcuno al chromatico genere pertinente? Ma veramente che ho tenuto per firmo che V.E. sia asai lontano da tale cognitione, perché se da vui questo fusse stato bene inteso, vui non haresti lassato incorere Frate Petro Aron in tanti manifesti errori in quanti lui è caduto in quilli capitoli de quello suo vulgare tractato, dove lui ha voluto demonstrare come in ciascuno loco o positione de la mano sono li sei nomi officiale, cioè *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*.⁴ Et de tali errori non solamente Petro predicto resta incolpato, ma

² Terence, Andria 68.

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³ In Spataro's motet for Leo X.

⁴ Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525), fo. f2': 'Dichiaratione come in tutte le positioni over luoghi della mano sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o veramente voci'.

¹ Luke 15: 31 and John 17: 10.

etiam V.E., perché esso Petro in molte parte de tale tractato ve allega. Pertanto se crede che con Petro siati convenuto parimente in sententia et iuditio, et tali errori nascono perché lui et etiam V.E. credeti che el sia solamente una coniuncta in la musica ficta, come esso Frate Petro apertamente demonstra nel 26 capitulo de tale tractato, dove lui dice queste parole, cioè: Benché ad alcuni qualche volta paia cosa strana che in tuti li sopradicti luoghi se ritrovino sei note, o vero voci, chiamate ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la, questo non è che sia fora di proposito, ma solo advene che la coniuncta non intendeno.⁵ Et da poi, procedendo per li sequenti capitoli, non demonstra che tale sillabe dependano da altro signo che solamente dal b rotondo, la quale cosa è impossibile, perché come rectamente è stato demonstrato da Frate Zuanne Othobi6 et da Bartolomeo Ramis,7 mio preceptore, saltem le coniuncte sono due, cioè una de b molle ut hic signata b, et l'altra de b duro, la quale è signata con questo signo #, le quale coniuncte (rationabilemente exercitate) producono lo musico instrumento rectamente diviso. Adonca dico che a me pare impossibile che (ignorando la coniuncta de b duro), sapiati rationabilemente collocare le chorde chromatice intra le linee et spatii usitati, et questo a me pare asai claro. Imperò che in quello tenore resoluto, el quale a V.E. ho mandato,⁸ trovareti uno errore in fine de la resolutione chromatica da me facto per non bene havere advertito al loco dove nel tenore non resoluto sono locate queste due syllabe, cioè 'ma' et 'mus', el quale errore da vui non è stato cognosuto. Imperò che tale syllabe predicte, cioè 'ma' et 'mus', sono da me state signate con questo signo #, el quale signo non li convene, perché essendo la sillaba 'ma' (nel tenore non resoluto) posita in trite hyperboleon, o vero in F fa ut acuto, tale chorda (chromatice procedendo) non se debe removere da trite hyperboleon, o vero da F fa ut acuto predicto, perché tale loco, o vero chorda, è la seconda chorda del tetrachordo hyperboleon, la quale secundum genus diatonicum chromaticumque dista da la prima chorda de tale tetrachordo (chiamata nete diezeugmenon, o vero E la mi acuto) per semitonio, et essendo con questo signo # signata, non seria la seconda chorda chromatica, ma seria la terza, chiamata paranete hyperboleon chromatica.

9. Ma se vui voleti excusarvi, dicendo che seti incorso in questa inconsideratione perché haveti creduto a la mia resolutione male signata, respondo et dico che questa serà una debile excusatione, perché così come da vui son stato repreheso de le octave et quinte superflue che li occoreno

⁶ John Hothby, *Calliopea legale*, ed. Coussemaker, p. 298. Hothby distinguishes between \$\$ ('straight square b') and \$\$ ('slanted square b').

(de le quale haveti cognitione et inteligentia), similmente, havendo vui havuto bona inteligentia et cognitione de la positione de tale genere intra linee et spatii, V.E. me haria demonstrato tale errore, et etiam quella haria compreheso che tolto via la causa, cioè questo signo # (con el quale sono signate le doe predicte syllabe, cioè 'ma' et 'mus', nel tenore non resoluto), non li seriano cadute tante octave et quinte superflue come V.E. ha $_{144}$ scripto. El non se pò negare che nel contrabasso primo de la prima parte de tale canto non cada una octava superflua, la quale cade supra la seconda parte terza de quello secondo tempo, o vero breve, el quale cade nel tenore non resoluto sopra questa littera, 'o', chromatice considerata, perché riducta a le linee et spatii usitati, caderà in F acuto con questo signo # picta, et tale octava superflua non è stata facta da me perché io non intenda che non sta bene, ma è stato perché forsa alhora non hebi bene advertentia circa el loco remosso da F acuto con questo signo #. Ma quando tali errori non pendeno da ignorantia et poco sapere, alhora lo autore è più digno de excusatione che da essere incolpato. Et in questi, et altri simili erori, sono caduti multi optimi musici et compositori, così antiqui come moderni. 'Quis est tam linceus qui interdum non cecutiat?'⁹ Pertanto per amore mio coregereti el predicto contrabasso ut hic:



et serà livata via quella octava superflua la quale cadeva intra F grave et paranete hyperboleon o vero G *sol re ut* chromatica, la quale chorda, riducta a le linee et spatii, cade in F acuto signata con questo signo #.

10. Da poi, ultra procedendo in tale vostra littera, vui diceti ut hic: 'et perché da C *sol fa ut* a F *fa ut* acuto¹⁰ è lo intervallo de uno diatessaron, el quale intervallo è incomodo et inusitato et non se trova in alcuna compositione, né moderna, né antiqua', etc. Messer Pre Zoanne mio honorando, circa questo che diceti, io non voglio altro iudice se non i vostri sonatori practici de organo, a li quali domandareti come, in li soi instrumenti, sonarano questo processo:



⁹ This proverbial saying (?) seems to derive from Cicero's 'quis est tam Lynceus, qui in tantis tenebris nihil offendat, nusquam incurrat' ('who is so much of a Lynceus he would not trip over or bump into things in such pitch-darkness?'). See Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares* 9. 2. 2. Lynceus, son of Aphareus, was the sharpest-sighted of all mortals, and could see through the earth to the underworld; he was the look-out man on the *Argo*.

¹⁰ From the context it is clear that this interval is c #' - f #'.

⁵ These are the opening words of the chapter.

⁷ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 28.

⁸ See the example at the end of no. 15.

17. Spataro to Del Lago, 4 Jan. 1529

The Letters

Se tali sonatori serano periti ne lo instrumento, dirano che, bone sonoritatis causa, non sonarano la seconda nota del predicto canto posita in C acuto in esso C, ma che sonarano essa nota supra quello tasto negro el quale cade intra C et D acuto, el quale tasto negro intra linee et spatii usitato non è compreheso se non per questo signo # signato nel loco de C acuto. Dirano anchora che non sonarano la terza chorda del predicto canto in F naturale acuto, ma (bone sonoritatis causa) sonarano tale nota supra quello tasto negro el quale cade intra F acuto et G superacuto, el quale tasto negro da li optimi exercitanti è signato in practica con questo signo # in F acuto. Et per tale modo acaderà descendendo da F predicto a C acuto con decime ut hic:



Dico adonca che li boni pulsatori de li instrumenti facti per arte (per certa sua practica) sonano li canti non come simplicemente sono compositi et scripti da li indocti compositori, ma li sonano come debeno essere signati, et simileme[nte] fano li periti cantori. Molte volte cantano li concenti meglio che non sono stati compositi et signati da li compositori.

11. Ma V.E. crede che tale diatessaron non sia usitato perché non è

 $_{145}$ ^r in grande errore, et questo advene perché (ut dixi) vui non credeti¹¹ che el sia altra coniuncta che solamente quella de b molle. Ma ad [mai]orem [declar]ationem ve aduco questo processo: R _ _ _ _ _ nel quale

processo naturale se crede essere la seconda spetie de diatessaron, come claramente apparerà procedendo per le note intermedie de le predicte extremità. Ma se da poi serano posite le note sequente:

dico che intra tali extremi caderà così la seconda specie

¹¹ At the top of fo. 145^r is pasted a piece of paper containing a slightly different version of the two examples given by Spataro, but written in Del Lago's hand:



de diatessaron come in li extremi superiori non signati per signo alcuno, et questo advene perché così come la coniuncta de b molle remove el semitonio naturale de acuto in grave, ut hic: **Romanda de la semitonio**, similemente la coniuncta de b duro remove esso naturale semitonio de grave in acuto, come seria reducendo questo predicto naturale processo # questo accidentale 15 de la queste remotione de semitonio sono in lo arbitrio del compositore.

12. Volendo adonca V.E. cantare el mio tenore resoluto con facilità, el serà bisogno che la pena l'ultima sillaba cantabile, cioè 'xi', la quale (enarmonice) cade in nete diezeugmenon, o vero in E la mi acuto, sia mutata de mi in sol, et dapo descendendo per semiditono, se dirà mi in quella sequente nota chromatica, la quale nel tenore resoluto è posita in C acuto con questo signo #. Et da poi (ultra procedendo) diremo la a la sequente nota posita in F acuto signata con questo predicto signo #. Et per tale ordine comprehendereti che la syllaba sol, considerata equale in sono con E la mi acuto, nasce da la coniuncta de b quadrato, o vero duro, signata in C acuto, et non dal b rotondo, o vero molle, signato in D la sol re, come è stato scripto dal nostro Frate Petro Aron nel capitulo 38 de quello suo vulgare tractato, etc.¹² Perché se la predicta sillaba, cioè sol, nascesse dal b rotondo signato in D la sol re, el sequitaria che (in ordine) tra sol et fa caderia uno intervallo de uno tono et uno semitonio mazore. perché se simpliciter da E la mi a D la sol re cade distantia de tono remisso ut hic: , sequitarà che da esso E la mi a D la sol re ut hic

serà tanto più del spatio de uno tono quanto serà signato: el spatio el quale cade intra D la sol re et esso b rotondo, el quale b rotondo (secondo theorica) ha el suo loco, o vero sono, per semitonio magiore più



These two examples show that Del Lago had a pretty good understanding of Spataro's ideas. Strange is that he does not continue with the sharp construction, omitting in particular the subsemitone to d', c^{\sharp} , in the second example at the end (unless he thought it to be self-evident). ¹² Trattato . . . di tutti gli tuoni, fo. g2^t.

grave de D la sol re, et tale mutatione dicta di sopra, cioè mutare el mi de E la mi in sol, non serà mutatione de proprietà in proprietà, come acade in l'ordine simplice de la mano de Guido, perché el mi de E la mi nasce dal ut posito in C acuto, el quale (secondo practica) è cantato per la proprietà de natura, et el sol, considerato equale in sono con E la mi acuto, nasce da questo signo # chiamato b quadro iacente signato in C acuto.^d Adonca, el sol predicto in E la mi considerato non tenerà l'ordine de le tre proprietà de l'ordine simplice, perché non harà el suo ut né in G né in C né etiam in F, ma harà el suo ut equale in sono con A la mi re acuto. Adonca, come a multi piace, tale mutatione serà de natura in la coniuncta de b quadrato 145^v signata in C sol fa ut, come ce demonstra Bartolomeo Ramis, mio preceptore, nel capitulo quinto de la prima parte de la sua Practica.¹³ Ma potria etiam tale mutatione (in questo loco) essere dicta secundum genus, perché se fa varietà de enharmonico in chromatico. Ma perché quella chorda, cioè E la mi, è comune a ciascuno genere in sono et quantità, se potria etiam dire che essa mutatione è solamente secundum speciem, perché remove questo spatio de diatessaron: posito ut hic): Reference de diatessaron, la quale tene el semitonio nel terzo intervallo, in la seconda specie, ut hic: , la quale tene el semitonio nel primo intervallo.

13. Da poi vui procedeti in quella vostra littera dicendo ut hic: 'Ma perché io trovo nel primo et nel secondo contrabasso lo diapason et lo diapente superfluo più volte, però non segnai la resolutione mia con questo segno #', etc. Per le predicte vostre parole vui claramente demonstrati che mediante la examinatione del contrapuncto haveti compreheso quello che lo ingegno vostro ha potuto cognoscere, et non perché la cognitione de locare tali generi tra linee et spatii sia vostra scientia, perché se (realemente) da vui fusse stata comprehesa la mera verità, vui (senza alcuna dubitatione) me haresti mandata la vostra prima resolutione signata con li debiti signi et pertinenti a tale tenore resoluto, et da poi a vui era licito inculparmi de quella sola octava superflua, la quale (ut dixi) cade sopra la seconda sillaba chromatica de la prima parte de esso tenore non resoluto. A vui è vano fare queste excusatione con meco, perché io cognosco queste fictione da lontano. Se vui non haveti cognosuto lo errore da me comisso in la mia resolutione a V.E. missa, questo è signo che de tali importantie haveti poca intelligentia et che andati titubando. Ma se così non fusse, vui non me hareti mandato la vostra prima resolutione così simplicemente et senza li debiti signi signata, la quale per

^d The last four words have been erased but are still legible.

¹³ Actually Treatise II, ch. 5 (Wolf, pp. 34-40).

tale modo vui me mandasti, dicendo che dubitavi nel genere chromatico. Ma vui non sapeti forsa che la dubitatione nasce da ignorantia, perché, ut dixi, se in vui fusse stata la reale et non ficta inteligentia, vui me haresti mandata la vostra resolutione debitamente notata et signata, et senza dubitatione, et da poi se vui li havessi trovato errore alcuno, cioè tante quinte et octave superflue, alhora era vostro debito et honore darmene adviso. Ma perché, ut dixi, questa non vostra scientia et perché haveti tropo creduto senza examinare la facultà con le sue debite circumstantie, seti incorso in quello errore nel quale multi cadeno, cioè che vedeno la festuca in l'ochio alieno et non vedeno el trabe che hano nel suo.¹⁴

46^r 14. Ad maiorem declarationem | iterum a V.E. mando quella resolutione chromatica come rectamente debe stare, ut hic:

et similemente debe stare in la resolutione chromatica del tenore de la seconda parte de tale concento, per la quale resolutione vedereti che (ut dixi) la syllaba 'ma' et etiam 'mus' non bisognano essere signate con questo signo #. Ma se V.E. volesse argoire, dicendo che da la syllaba 'fex' resoluta et posita in C acuto con questo signo # a la syllaba 'ma' posita in F acuto non signata con tale segno cade uno spatio de diatessaron diminuto, el quale è incomodo da pronuntiare et etiam in alcuno genere non è [tol]erabile, a questo respondo che tale diminuta diatessaron in tale loco non è incomoda, perché prima che dapo la syllaba 'fex' sia cantata la sequente syllaba 'ma', intra loro cade la pausa de uno perfecto tempo. Pertanto tale spatio non se dirà essere pronuntiato né cantato, perché prima che dapo la syllaba 'fex' sia pronuntiata la syllaba 'ma', el se li interpone la taciturnità de tre semibreve, o vero de uno tempo perfecto, per la quale taciturnità prima che la voce canti la syllaba 'ma', lo audito ha già posto in oblivione el sono sopra la syllaba 'fex' pronuntiato. Pertanto non potrà p[r]oducere irregularità, perché la irregularità de li intervalli consiste in pronuntiare immediate uno sono dapo un' altro sono, et non quando dapo uno sono sequita taciturnità (non tropo breve però) et da poi un'altro sono. Dico ancora che dato che tale distantia non fusse mediata da la taciturnità, che el non seria contra l'uxo et la exercitatione ut hic:







Nel concento precedente, claramente appare che da l'ultima semibreve posita in G superacuto signato con questo signo # (immediate et senza interpositione de taciturnità) se ascende ad C superacuto, non signato con tale signo, tra li quali cade el spatio de diatessaron diminuto. Tale processo ancora è exercitato da C acuto ad F senza discrepantia, ut hic:



Pertanto dico che tale spatio non serà dicto incomodo né irregulare, perché non è incomodo a lo audito, et etiam perché è exercitato,^f et 'usus est altera lex'.¹⁵

15. Se ho scripto cosa che a V.E. non piaza, perdonatime, perché quello che ho scripto l'ho scripto con puro core et perché io ve amo, la quale cosa poteti comprehendere per questo mio longo scrivere, per el quale forsa direti, come alcuna volta diceva la bona memoria de Franchino Gafurio, cioè che le mie littere erano più de una littera et manco de uno tractato. Ma io non scio dire multe cose in poca scriptura. Dareti adviso de la receputa, et se altre dubietà ve occurreno, scriveti, perché hora che son vechio, me piace imparare. Al mio Frate Petro Aron dareti saluti in infinitum, et a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono dareti questa sua. Sempre sono a li vostri piaceri.

Vale. Bononie, die 4 januari 1529.

Vester J. Spatarius

f MS: exercitatio.

17. Spataro to Del Lago, 4 Jan. 1529

1. I have your letter informing me that you received my letter [no. 16] with the resolution of the tenor of my motet for Pope Leo X and also my treatise on mensural music. You say that the treatise does not seem to have a proper ending. I do not remember its beginning, middle, or ending since I have not looked at it for many years; I should not have sent it to you without first going over it but for the convenience of having the friar carry it. You are welcome to compose an ending in consonance with the beginning.

2. You also say there are no chapters on counterpoint or proportions. I told you that the treatise concerned only mensural music; it would not be a bad idea to include the two other subjects since mensural music has three parts, one in which the measurement of time is shown with all its proper signs, note-values, and rests, the second in which these values are subjected to other quantities, which musicians call proportion, and the third, counterpoint, in which these note-values are put together in harmony.

3. I have already composed a treatise on proportions, but it would be difficult to print because of the special characters needed; it would cost a lot and require folio format.

4. I have also written a good deal about counterpoint, but to revise and condense it would take a long time, which would be difficult to find because, for one thing, I still have to direct the bothersome choir-school; for another, I have already entered my seventieth year. I also fear it would be a waste of time since today's musicians and singers no longer follow the rules of our learned forebears. Nowadays they use only &, and of proportions only *sesquialtera*. Everyone is a master of harmony without having studied counterpoint. I suggest therefore that you don't get involved in this. Nevertheless, do as you like; to please you, I shall do whatever you want.

5. You should not have taken it ill that I sent you my treatise with some precautions. On the contrary, you should be pleased because Cavazzoni gave me such information about you that I would now not hesitate to send you anything. Feel sure that 'all I have is thine',¹ and if I have erred, I apologize.

6. I shall send you my 'Missa de la pera' after I have copied it at leisure, for it is very long.

7. Now let us turn to more important matters. If it seems I have exceeded the terms of friendship, please forgive me, for one should not conceal the truth from friends even though 'truth engenders hatred'.²

8. You wonder about the use of the chromatic genus in the tenor.³ You say you understand its intervals, as I could have seen from your resolution, for changing diatonic intervals to chromatic will require the

¹⁵ 'L'uso fa legge' is listed as an Italian proverb in Giuseppe Giusti and Gino Capponi, *Dizionario dei proverbi italiani* (Milan, 1956), p. 2. For 'consuetudo est altera natura' no fewer than four sources are listed in the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*; see Hamesse, pp. 144, 200, 241, and 272.

use of a sharp. I am accustomed to keep copies of my correspondence, and I have a copy of my letter to you in which I marked the sharps, for your resolution did not have a single sharp in it, as follows:



How can you expect me to know that you understand the chromatic intervals if you have left out all the sharps? And if you had understood these matters, you would have kept our friend Pietro Aaron from falling into many errors in his treatise,⁴ where he says *although it appears strange to* some that the six syllables should be found on every position of the hand, this is not out of the question; they simply do not understand the conjuncta.⁵ Since he mentions you so frequently, you too must believe that there is only one coniuncta in musica ficta. But it is impossible to find all six syllables on one note by using only flats because, as Hothby⁶ and Ramis⁷ have demonstrated, there are two *conjunctae*, b and \sharp , which produce a correctly divided instrument. Therefore, since you do not know about the sharp coniuncta, how could you resolve the chromatic version properly? In fact, I made a mistake in my resolution⁸ that you did not catch: the syllables 'ma' and 'mus' were signed with a sharp, which was not correct. 'Ma', in the diatonic version, is on f', which is the second note of the tetrachord. Since it lies a semitone above the first note, f' is also the proper location of the second note in the chromatic tetrachord. f^{\sharp} would be the third note.

9. If you want to exonerate yourself by saying that you followed my resolution, this would be a weak excuse, for these sharps are the cause of the augmented octaves and fifths that you criticize. True, there is an augmented octave in the first bass against the second third of the breve f^{\sharp} on the syllable 'o' in the unresolved tenor; this I had merely overlooked. Since the mistake did not proceed from ignorance, the author should be excused rather than blamed. The best musicians fall into similar errors. 'Who is so Lynceus-like he does not have occasional moments of blindness?'⁹ If you correct the bass in the following manner, the augmented octave will be removed:



10. Further on in your letter you say that the fourth from c' to f'^{10} is awkward and not used in any old or modern composition. You should ask some organists how they would play the following passage:



If they are skilful, they will play the second note of the highest voice as c#' for the sake of good sonority, and also the f' as f#'. In the following example they would play f#' and c#' in tenths:



Good players, just like skilled singers, perform compositions not as they are written by unskilled composers but with the necessary accidentals. Often they improve on the composer's work.

11. If you think that the interval c #' - f #' is not used, you are mistaken, because you believe there is only one *conjuncta*, the flat.¹¹ Take the second species of fourth, b to e'. The fourth c #' to f #' has exactly the same intervals as the progression $a b \flat c' d'$. Just as the flat places the natural semitone in the lower position, so do the sharps place this natural semitone in the higher position, and a composer is free to use these transpositions of a half-tone.

12. Now, if you wish to sing my tenor with ease, on the penultimate syllable that is sung in the enharmonic resolution, 'xi', which falls on e', you should mutate from *mi* to *sol*. Descending a minor third, you reach the first note of the chromatic resolution, c#', which is *mi*. The next note, f#, is *la*. Thus *sol*, on e', derives from the sharp *conjuncta* on c' and not from dp', as Aaron writes.¹² If *sol* were to originate from dp', there would be an interval of a tone and a major semitone between *sol* and fa, e#'-dp'.



Changing from *mi* to *sol* on *e'* is not mutation from hexachord to hexachord, as in the Guidonian hand, but from the natural hexachord to the sharp *coniuncta* on *c'*, as my teacher Ramis demonstrates in the fifth chapter of the first part of his *Practica*.¹³ Such a mutation could be called a mutation of genus, changing enharmonic to chromatic. Or, since *e'* is common to both genera, it could be called a mutation of species since it changes the third species of fourth, *c' d' e' f'*, to the second species, c #' d' e' f #'.

13. You remark that in the first and second basses you found a number of augmented octaves and fifths and therefore you omitted the sharps in the resolution. This shows that you deduced the error from the counterpoint rather than from your knowledge of the genera. If you had understood the simple truth, you would have sent me the resolution with the sharps and then rightly faulted me for that one augmented octave. You can't fool me with your excuses of 'doubts' about my tenor; if there were real intelligence in you, you would have known where to place the sharps in the resolution. Like many, you see the mote in the eye of others but not the beam in your own.¹⁴

14. Here is the proper chromatic resolution:



As you see, the syllables 'ma' and 'mus' should not have sharps. If you object to the diminished fourth between 'fex' on c#' and 'ma' on f' as awkward to sing and not belonging to any genus, I respond that it is not awkward because a rest of a perfect breve intervenes; by the time you sing f', the ear has forgotten the c#'. The interval would be irregular only if one sound immediately followed the other, but not when there is a rest (not too short, however) in between. But even without the rest, this interval is not contrary to practice, as you can see in this example:



The g#' ascends to c'', a diminished fourth. You can also find it from c' to f', as here:





15. If I have written anything that displeases you, I ask you to forgive me. I mean well, as you can see from the length of this letter. Gafurio used to say that my letters were more than a letter and less than a treatise. I don't know how to say a lot of things in a little space. If you have any more doubts, write; even though I am old, I like to learn. **18** (144). Fo. 160^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 25 January 1529 (autograph)

^{160°} [Al venerabile Messer Pr]e Zoanne, diacono de Sancta [Sophia dign]issimo et magiore mio [honorando. In] Vinetia, [in la Barberia del So]le posita sopra el campo [de Sancta Sophia].

160^r Venerabilis vir et musices peritissime, salutem.

1. A V.E. a li giurni pasati (per la via de Frate Sebastiano da Ferrara de l'ordine de Sancto Salvatore) ho mandato a V.E. una mia [no. 17] in responsione de una vostra prima a me per esso Frate Sebastiano mandata. Non scio se l'haveti receputa, ma se non l'haveti havuta credo che presto l'havereti.

2. Et perché da Frate Petro Aron, et etiam da V.E. più volte sono stato pregato mandarvi la mia 'Missa de la pera', la quale sino al presente non ve ho mandata per causa de la sua prolixità et longitudine, et etiam perché in tale missa non me pare essere cosa digna da pervenire a lo examino de alcuno homo docto, per la sua quasi inordinata progressione, et perché da me fu composita nel tempo de la mia età giovenile, ne la quale età el cervello de l'homo tale volta è lontano dal capo, et più presto fu composita per una bizaria che per sequitare et tenire ordine, et etiam a complacentia del mio patrone Messer Hermes Bentivoglio et de altri soi amici et compagni, ma pure vedendome solicitato per le vostre littere, le quale sono plene de amore et mera dilectione (ancora che a me tornasse in qualche diminutione de honore), deliberai notarla de mia mano et a V.E. mandarla, così come per una mia ve ho promisso, la quale missa vedereti con questa mia inseme ligata. Et se alcuna cosa li serà mendosa, la corregereti, o vero a me (per vostra bontà) dareti aviso.

3. Io ne feci un'altra, la quale è intitulata 'Pera, pera'. Se la voreti, ve la mandarò. Ma io ho una missa de uno chiamato Phylippo de Primis da Fano, el quale era tenorista de papa Julio, facta supra uno certo concento chiamato 'Portant semon',¹ la quale missa è molta plena de bone arte et

subtilità, la quale ve mandarò se voreti, aciò che circa tale missa alquanto ve affaticati et a me scriveti el vostro parere.

4. Item prego V.E. me mandi una cartella, o vero una tabula de abaco, la quale sia quadra et longa per ciascuno lato, o verso quanto è longo questo foglio² o vero littera, l[a] quale tabula o vero cartella voglio per componere alcuna volta qualche concento, et del pretio daritime adviso, che satisfarò del tuto.³

5. Non altro per hora. Tuto son de V.E. Del tractato mio de canto mensurato altro non dico, ma bene ve prego, se l'opera non ve pare da essere impressa, non intrati in laberinto, perché io cognosco che l'arte del mensurato canto oggidì è tenuta in poca existimatione et pretio. A li amici me recomandareti.

Vale. Bononię, die 25 januarii 1529.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. I don't know if you have received my last letter [no. 17] yet, sent via Fra Sebastiano da Ferrara, but you should have it soon.

2. Because you and Pietro Aaron have asked me many times for my 'Missa de la pera', which I have not sent so far because of its great length and also because it didn't seem to me worthy of being shown to learned men (having been composed in my youth, when the brain is sometimes far from the head, and rather as a caprice than to conform to any order, written also to please my patron, Hermes Bentivoglio, and his friends), nevertheless, moved by your kind entreaties, I have decided to copy it in my own hand and send it, even if it should reflect poorly on me. You will find it enclosed. If there is anything false in it, please correct it or advise me.

3. I also wrote another, the 'Missa Pera pera'. If you'd like it, I shall send it. But I have a mass 'Pourtant se mon' by Philippo de Primis,¹ who was a tenor in the chapel of Julius II, that is full of art and subtlety. I could send it so you could sharpen your wits on it and let me know what you think of it.

4. Would you please send me a cartella or an abacus-tablet, square, with

¹ The mass, which seems to be lost, is also discussed in a letter from Giovanni del Lago to Lorenzo Gazio (no. 86), where he states that the tenor comes from a chanson by Busnois. Pietro Aaron, in his *Trattato*... *di tutti gli tuoni*, fo. b2', lists a 'Pour tant semon' by 'Antonio Busnois' as an example of the first mode ending on D *la sol re*. Catherine Brooks, who found no chanson by Busnois with this title, believes it to be by Caron ('Antonione Busnois, Chanson Composer', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 6 [1953], 111–35 at 113). A modern edn. of Caron's 'Pourtant se mon voloir s'est mis' may be found in *Les Œuvres complètes de Philippe (?) Caron*, ed. James Thomson (Collected Works 6; 2 vols., Brooklyn, 1971–6), ii. 190–1. The tenor does end on d', and it mainly moves in the diapente d'-a', which Aaron considers a characteristic of the first mode. For further references to the mass, see nos. 21, 48 (para. 18), and 86 (para. 5). It is also mentioned as an example of proportions in Spataro's *Tractato di musica*, fo. e3'. The

^{&#}x27;Officium philippon' in Hradec Králové, Museum, MS 11. A. 7 ('Speciálník'), p. 89, is not based on Caron's 'Pourtant se mon', nor has it any notational subtleties. It appears in other sources as the 'Missa de Franza', ascribed to Philippe Basiron, also known as Philippon de Bourges.

 $^{^2}$ The length of this letter is 32 cm.

 $^{^3}$ This is the first of a number of references to and requests for a *cartella*, which obviously refers to some kind of score. See Ch. 5, 'The Art of Composition'.

sides about the length of this letter?² I need it for composing. Please let me know the price and I shall reimburse you.³

5. With regard to my treatise on mensural music, if you don't think it worthy of being printed, stay out of that maze, for today the art of mensural music is held in small esteem.

19 (J35). Fos. 147^r-148^v Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 26 February 1529 (autograph)

¹⁴⁸ [Al venerabile Messer Pre Z]oanne Veneto diaco[no dignissimo de Sancta So]phia, musico doctis[simo, quanto magiore] mio honor[ando. In Ven]etia, [in la Barberia del Sole] supra el campo de Sancta [Sophia].

147^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. A li dì 24 del presente ho receputo una de V.E., la quale è a dì x del presente signata, et ho molto bene inteso quanto diceti circa el non havere havuto da me alcuna responsione de una vostra a [me] missa per quello frate el quale portò a Messer Marco Antonio el mio tractato de canto mensurato, la quale vostra diceti che era signata a li 4 de decembre proximo passato, de la quale cosa son restato pleno de stupore et maraveglia, perché copiosamente, et de particula in particula, fu da me dato resposta a V.E., la quale resposta [no. 17] io assignai al predicto frate de l'ordine de Sancto Salvatore chiamato Frate Sebastiano da Ferrara sino inanti a la fructuosa natività del nostro Signore Messer Jhesu Christo proxima passata,¹ et de tale cosa ho havuto grande despiacere perché io scripse tale resposta con mio grande incomodo, per essere el fredo molto intenso, per essere etiam male disposto, et perché scrivendo^a a tempo de nocte (come bisognava fare), li ochii mei molto male me servivano. Ma come hebi la vostra predicta de dì x del presente signata, subito io fui a trovare el predicto frate, el quale molto se maravegliò et disse che haveva data tale mia resposta al priore de Ferara, el quale alhora era in Bologna, et disse che li promisse mandarla qua sicuramente, ma dice che V.E. vada a Sancto Salvatore qua in Vinetia, et che domandi al sacristano se ha tale mia resposta.

2. Dapo la quale mia resposta (circa el principio del presente mexe), ve mandai un'altra mia [no. 18] con la mia messa 'de la pera' inseme ligata, per la quale etiam a V.E. io dava notitia del mio parere circa quello mio tractato de canto mensurato. Ma Frate Sebastiano dice che questa predicta non poteva ancora essere^b giunta qua in Vinetia quando V.E. scripse quella de dì x februarii, et che potria essere che hareti l'una et l'altra a uno tempo medesimo. Potria essere vero, tamen V.E. darà adviso. Et el predicto Frate Sebastiano dice che scriverà al predicto priore de Ferrara circa questo. Per certo io sono pure disgratiato in queste mie littere scripte qua a V.E. Non scio da che proceda. V.E. da uno canto se maravegliava di

^a MS: scrivento. ^b MS: essera.

¹ The letter was actually sent in January, as Spataro recalls correctly in the second paragraph.

me, et io da l'altro mi maravegliava di quella, et perché pure el me pareva 147^v stare tropo in longo la vostra resposta, commenza[va] a dubitare | che così serebe come è stato. Horsù sia con Dio.

3. Ma io me arecordo che io ve scripse che se V.E. bene advertiva a quello mio concento facto per papa Leone, che el non li cadevano tante octave et quinte superflue come da vui era scripto, et che questo era stato creduto da vui perché V.E. solamente haveva facto fondamento et dato fede a la resolutione del tenore a V.E. mandata, perché le syllabe, scilicet 'ma' et 'mus', non debeno essere signate con questo signo # in genere' chromatico, ma la prima, scilicet 'ma', debe stare in F acuto senza altro signo accidentale, et la seconda, zoè 'mus', debe stare in C acuto senza altro signo. Et in tale mia resposta ve demonstrava la mera rasone.

4. Io scripse ancora a V.E. che 'l era la verità che nel contrabasso primo de la prima particula de tale concento cadeva una octava superflua, la quale cade supra la seconda parte terza de quello secondo tempo o vero breve, la quale nel tenore non resoluto cade supra questa littera, zoè 'o', chromatice considerata, et così ve mandai tale contrabasso emendato in tale loco. Ma da poi pensando se in alcuno altro loco (in Bologna) io poteva trovare tale concento, solamente a fine de emendare tale errore me arecordai che una venerabile matrona chiamata Madonna Lucretia Cantora haveva uno libro tuto de mia mano notato, el quale già donai a uno nobilissimo gentile homo chiamato el conte Camillo di Pepoli, ciptadino nostro bolognese, et tanto feci che ebi tale libro. Ma quando io voleva corregere el predicto contrabasso, trovai che quella nota non era simplicemente in F grave posita, ma era con questo signo signata #, de la quale cosa asai me ne alegrai, et con certi amici mei molto intelligenti tale caxo consultai. Ma per livare via ogni errore et dubitatione, et a complacentia de multi, io remossi tale loco et lo ridusse come a V.E. l'[h]o mandato. Pertanto se V.E. bene advertirà, trovarà che in tale concento non serà alcuno errore de quilli che diceti, et cognoscereti che haveti demonstrato non havere quella mera cognitione et inteligentia de li generi de li canti la quale diceti havere, perché vui haveti iudicato senza vedere prima se la resolutione mia a vui 148' missa quadra et convene con el tenore resoluto, perché se bene | tale

Inissa quadra et convene con el tenore resoluto, perene se bene i une ordine fusse stato tenuto da V.E., quella haria claramente compreheso che io meritava restare incolpato^d solamente de la resolutione non bene a V.E. missa, et non del concento composito respecto al suo tenore non resoluto, per la quale cosa appare essere la verità quello trito proverbio, el quale se

' MS: grenere. d MS: incolpata.

sole dire, che 'sono molti li quali vedeno la festuca in l'ochio altrui et non vedeno el trave el quale hano nel suo proprio'.²

5. Circa le altre particule da V.E. tacte in tale sua littera tanto copiosa, altro non dico perché se hareti la resposta mia alhora facta, del tuto sereti claro. Non altro per hora. A V.E. me recomando, et a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazon per parte mia dareti saluti senza fine.

Vale. Bononie, die 26 februarii 1529.

[Vester J. Spatarius]

1. I have received your letter of the 10th of this month telling me you had had no reply to your letter of 4 December sent by the friar who took my treatise on mensural music to Messer Marc'Antonio [Cavazzoni]. I am shocked that this should be so because I answered you point by point [no. 17] and I had sent my letter by the same friar, Sebastiano da Ferrara, before Christmas.¹ I am the more unhappy since I wrote the letter with great difficulty because of the intense cold. My eyes also troubled me, since I have to write at night. I immediately went to the friar, who assured me he had given the letter to the prior of Ferrara, then in Bologna, who promised to send it safely. He suggests that you go to San Salvatore in Venice and check with the sacristan.

2. After sending that answer towards the beginning of the month, I sent another [no. 18], with the 'Missa de la pera'. Fra Sebastiano will write to the prior on this matter. I certainly have had bad luck in sending letters to you; we both have been wondering at the tardiness of the other.

3. I remember that I wrote to you about the resolution of the tenor of my motet for Leo X. There were not as many augmented fifths and octaves as you thought because you accepted the resolution I sent you. But as I explained, the syllables 'ma' and 'mus' should have no sharp in the chromatic genus.

4. I also wrote that there was indeed an augmented octave in the first bass against the syllable 'o' in the unresolved tenor and I sent you an emendation. Later it occurred to me that there was another copy of this piece in Bologna, in a manuscript I had written for Count Camillo de' Pepoli, now in the hands of a venerable matron, Madonna Lucretia Cantora. When I went to correct the f in the bass, I found it was signed with a sharp, which delighted me, and I discussed the matter with some

 $^{^2}$ The 'commonplace proverb' comes from the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 7: 3: 'And why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye?' See also no. 17 n. 14.

intelligent friends. But, to remove all doubts and satisfy many, I changed the passage to conform to the emendation I had sent you. Now you will see that there are no errors and you will realize that it was your faulty understanding of the genera that led to your criticism. The mistake was only in my resolution of the tenor, not in the piece as a whole with respect to the unresolved tenor, which proves the truth of that old proverb, that there are many who see the mote in others' eyes but not the beam in their own.²

5. I shall not respond to the other matters touched on in your lengthy letter because you will have received my answer in the mean time.

20 (J46). Fos. $163^{r}-164^{v}$

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. (after 13 March and before 28 March 1529)¹ (autograph)

^{164°} [Al venerabile Messer Pre Zoanne] veneto, diacono [de Sancta Sophia et m]usico acutissimo, et [quanto maggiore suo honorando. In] Vinetia, [in la Barberia del So]le posita sopra el campo [de Sancta Sophia].

163^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum doctissime, salve.

1. A li dì 13 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 25 februarii signața, per la quale ho inteso de una vostra a me missa de 10 februarii signața, circa la quale altro non dico, perché a V.E. ho dato plena resposta [no. 19].

2. Da poi diceti havere receputo una mia de dì 4 januarii signata [no. 17], la quale cosa asai a me è piazuta. Ma ho bene havuto in grande despiacere che tale mia sia prima stata aperta et da altri veduta. Che V.E. sapia^a che questo non è de mia voluntà. Io deti tale mia a Frate Sebastiano da Ferrara de l'ordine de Sancto Salvatore, el quale è vostro et mio amico, el quale frate fu quello che a V.E. portò el mio tractato de canto mensurato, et sua Paternità dice che lui dete tale mia al priore de Ferrara, el quale priore sole drizare le littere al sacristano de Sancto Salvatore qua in Vinetia, el quale sacristano (secondo che dice Frate Sebastiano predicto) è grande amico de V.E. Pertanto in quanto al mio iuditio et parere, questo inconveniente nasce da li frati, et se l'homo non se pò fidare de li frati, io non scio horamai de chi potermi più fidare. Io cercarò per lo advenire de mandarvi le mie per altra via.

3. Ho etiam inteso quanto diceti circa el tractato de contrapuncto et de proportione. Io ho uno tractato mio de proportione, el quale ve potria mandare, perché è destincto brevemente per li soi generi con alcune sue spetie per capitoli. Ancora ho scripto molto diffusamente in contrapuncto, ma non sono in termine de potere mandare qua, et bisognarebe che fusse scripto de novo, a la quale cosa io non potria dare opera al presente, perché dal fine de feberaro sino a questo giorno son stato et sono gravemente amalato de male de costa o vero punctura, et questa volta ho creduto dormire de mortale somno. Ma come io serò sanato et che harò satisfacto a questi giorni sancti, io sono de fantasia fare cosa che a V.E. serà apiacere. In questo mezo io cercarò mandarvi per messo fido el

" MS: Che da V.E. sapiati.

¹ The letter is not dated. It was written some time after 13 Mar., mentioned in the first paragraph, and before Easter, which in 1529 fell on 28 Mar.

tractato de proportione predicto, et se a V.E. parerà aspectare sino che io mandarò el contrapuncto, a me parerà bono, perché (secondo l'ordine) meglio serà che dapo el canto mensurato sequiti el contrapuncto, et dapo el tractato de proportione, che prima le proportione et da poi el contrapuncto, perché volendo procedere per exempli clari, el se pò bene ^{163^v} tractare | de contrapuncto senza proportione, ma non e contra. Adonca, carissimo mio, io me resolvo et concludo che inanti pasqua io non potria mandarvi cosa alcuna, non tanto per essere ancora male in sanità et valitudine, quanto per essere etiam occupato circa el mio officio de la eclesia. Ma dapo pasqua prima ve mandarò el tractato de le proportione et (interim) vui le consultareti, et potria essere che non ve piacerano. Et dapo ve mandarò qualche^b capitoli de contrapuncto, et questo se intende piacendo a Dio che io torni a la prestina sanità.

4. Io ve mando el contra alto, el quale V.E. me ha domandato, cioè 'Deprecor te', etc. Ancora vi mando una oratione dominicale a cinque voce, la quale feci a giurni passati. A giurni passati ve ho mandato la mia 'Missa de la pera'. Credo che l'habiati havuta. Se non l'haveti havuta, cercati da li frati de Sancto Salvatore, che el predicto Frate Sebastiano la mandò qua per uno frate che era con el visitatore, el quale frate dice essere molto amico de V.E. Ma V.E. cerca de sapere quare dicitur 'pera, pera'. Pertanto V.E. intenda che io ho facto due misse circa questa pera le quale sono molto inter se differente. La prima che io feci fu questa che ve ho mandata, la quale feci a complacentia de Messer Hermes Bentivoglio, el quale in quello tempo dava molto opera a la musica. Et perché sua Signoria portava una pera per insegna et arma, io nominai tale missa la 'Missa de la pera' per farmi grato a sua Signoria. Ma l'altra missa la quale io feci, chiamata 'pera, pera', io la composi supra uno certo modo che se cridava in Bologna, ut hic:

De			
-TD Y	Y Y	Ť	
-4	1 1	· 1	
	pera	pera	ı

Sì che V.E. ha la causa perché una de tale misse è dicta 'de la pera' et l'altra 'pera, pera'.

5. Non altro per hora. Pregati Dio per me, che mi conceda tanto de vita sino che io habia satisfacto a li vostri et mei desiderii, li quali certamente sono iusti et senza vanità et desiderio de vana fama. A V.E. me recomando. Se V.E. me scrive et manda le sue littere per la via del banco de li Saraceni, fatili sopra una cuperta, la quale dica: 'Al mio carissimo Messer Nicolao Mantoano, musico peritissimo. In Bologna soto le scole publice.'

^b MS: qualchi.

La causa un'altra volta a V.E. la scriverò. Iterum vale. Scripta con grande fatica et despiacere.

Tuus J. Spatarius

1. On the 13th I received your letter of 25 February mentioning your letter of 10 February, which I have answered fully [no. 19].

2. I am happy to hear that you had my letter of 4 January [no. 17], but displeased that someone had opened and read it. Please understand that this was not my intention. Fra Sebastiano, to whom I gave that letter, is a friend of both of ours, and the sacristan at San Salvatore is a great friend of yours; I can only blame the friars for this trouble, and if one can't trust friars, I don't know whom to trust. I shall try to find another way in the future.

3. I understand what you write about the treatise on counterpoint and proportions. I could send you a treatise on proportions in which some of the species are treated briefly in separate chapters. I have written at length on counterpoint, but it would have to be rewritten, which I can't do now because I have been so ill from the end of February till now with a sore rib or puncture that I thought I should fall into a mortal sleep. But when I am well and Holy Week is over, I have in mind to do something to please you. I shall send you the treatise on proportions by a trusted messenger. If you can wait for the treatise on counterpoint, it would be preferable to place it second, because you can treat counterpoint without proportions but not vice versa. So after Easter I shall send you the treatise on proportions and you can study it. And, God willing that my health be restored, I shall then send you a few chapters on counterpoint.

4. I am enclosing the alto of my motet 'Deprecor te' that you asked for, and also a 'Pater noster' for five voices which I composed recently. You should have received my 'Missa de la pera' by now; if not, check with the friars at San Salvatore. You want to know why it has the title 'pera, pera'. I wrote two masses on this pear that are quite different. The first was the one I sent you. I wrote it for Hermes Bentivoglio, who was very keen on music at that time. Since he bore a pear in his coat of arms, I called it 'Missa de la pera' to please him. The other mass is based on a Bolognese street-cry:



Here, then, is the reason why one mass is called 'de la pera', the other 'pera, pera'.

5. Enough for today. Pray God to grant me life to satisfy your and my desires, which are certainly just and without vanity. If you send your letters via the bank of the Saraceni, enclose them in an envelope that says: 'To my dear Messer Nicolao Mantuano, accomplished musician. In Bologna at the public schools.' I'll explain why some other time. Written with great effort and discomfort.

21 (J41). Fo. 157^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 31 March 1529 (autograph)

^{157^r} [Al venerabile Messer Pre Z]oanne veneto, de Sancta [Sophia diacono d]ignissimo et musico peritissi[mo, quanto maggiore suo h]onorando. [In V]enetia, [in la Barberia del So]le sopra el campo de [Sancta Sophia].

157^v Venerabilis vir et mi maior honorande, salutem.

1. A li dì 27 del presente ho receputo una vostra de dì 20 signata a me gratissima, per la quale ho inteso quanto diceti circa un'altra vostra a me missa con el foglio rigato, circa la quale altro non dico per havere (prima che hora) datovi resposta et mandato el contra alto,¹ el quale V.E. chiedeva.

2. Ho etiam inteso quanto diceti de la 'Missa de la pera' receputa. Ma di curto ve mandarò quella de 'pera pera'. Ho etiam inteso come haveti la missa de Philippo,² etc. Ma circa la 'Missa de requiem' del preceptore mio, non potreti essere servito, perché io non scio dove ritrovarla. Credo che in Bologna non se ne trova copia, sì che hareti patientia, la quale cosa asai me spiace che non vi possa servire.

3. Io ho veduto el principio de l'opera stampato, el quale me piace. Ma volendo ponere dapo tale tractato de canto mensurato uno tractato de contrapuncto et un'altro de proportione, a me pareria che dopoi che lo impressore nel principio harà impresso ut hic: 'Utile et breve tractato de canto mensurato, composito per Maestro Zoanne Spatario, musico bolognese, ad instantia de lo illustre Signore et patrono suo observantissimo, Messer Hermes Bentivoglio', che ancora debia sequitare ut hic: 'con la additione de dui altri tractati, scilicet uno de contrapuncto et l'altro de proportione a le figure del canto mensurato applicate', perché stando esso titulo come sta quello che V.E. me ha mandato, pareria che tuto el libro solo tractasse de canto mensurato, et non de contrapuncto et de proportione. A me più piaceria che fusse impresso in foglio integro, perché el volumine reuscirà più grande che forsa non credeti, et etiam perché meglio li potrano capere li exempli et figure neccessarie.

4. Ho havuto la cartella, la quale è molto al proposito mio, ma me sono maravegliato che non dati aviso del pretio, perché ve haria mandato la valuta, perché la mia natura è che lo amico non habia danno. Sì che fati vui, et asai ve rengratio. Se lo impressore stampa, guardatili bene che sia correcto, perché nel principio a me misso sono qualche errori. Pertanto

¹ On Spataro's 'Deprecor te' see no. 20, para. 4.

² 'Pourtant se mon'; see no. 18, para. 3.

habiati bona advertentia a corregere la stampa, et ancora quello che de mia mano haveti scripto dove fa bisogno.

5. Presto ve mandarò el tractato de le proportione, et circa ciò ho già parlato con Frate Sebastiano da Ferrara, el quale dice che a V.E. se recomanda et se maraveglia che ancora non li haveti scripto, come li prometesti. Io darò opera de ponere inseme uno breve tractato de contrapuncto, ma non posso ancora dare bene opera al scrivere, perché ancora non sono bene libero del male havuto, ma ogni sforzo farò aciò che l'habiati a tempo, sì che non dubitati.

Non altro per hora. A V.E. me recomando.

Vale. Bononie, die ultima martii 1529.

Vester J. Spatarius subscripsi

1. I have received your letter of the 20th and understand what you say about your other letter and the ruled sheet. I have already sent the alto part¹ you asked for.

2. You now have my 'Missa de la pera'. Soon I shall send the 'Missa Pera, pera'. I understand you already had Philippo's mass.² I am very sorry that I cannot send you the Requiem mass of Ramis; I do not know where to find it. I don't think there is a copy of it in Bologna.

3. I have seen the beginning of my treatise on mensural music in print and I like it. If the treatises on counterpoint and proportions are added, the title should read as follows: 'Useful and brief treatise on mensural music, composed by Maestro Giovanni Spataro, Bolognese musician, at the request of the illustrious Hermes Bentivoglio, his most observant patron, with the addition of two other treatises, one on counterpoint and the other on proportions as applied to the note-values of mensural music'. I should prefer to have it printed in folio format since the volume will be large; the examples will fit in more easily.

4. I received the *cartella*, which is just right, but you did not tell me the price. Please check the proofs of my book carefully; there are errors in what I received.

5. I shall send you the treatise on proportions soon, and when I am fully recovered I shall get to work on the treatise on counterpoint.

22 (J42). Fo. 158^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 5 April 1529 (autograph)

158° [Al venerabile Messer Pre Zoa]nne veneto, de Sancta [Sophia diacono digni]ssimo, musico doctissimo, [quanto maggiore suo honorando. In Vene]tia, [in la Barberia del So]le posita sopra el campo [de Sancta Sophia].

158^r Venerabilis vir e[t] musices doctissime, salutem.

1. Per due mie a V.E. misse, cioè una con quello contra alto, el quale chiedeva V.E. ['Deprecor te'; see no. 20], et l'altra in responsione de quella con la quale era ligata la cartella [no. 21], haveti potuto intendere che la mia volontà et desiderio era de mandarvi qua el mio tractato de proportione, et questo è solo per vostro contento, perché diceti che asai seria conveniente che fusse impresso inseme con el tractato mio de canto mensurato, el quale tractato de proportione [con] questa mia al presente ve mando, pregandovi che mentre che io scriverò el tractato del contrapuncto, V.E. voglia bene examinarlo, perché dapo che io feci tale tractato, non l'ho mai let[t]o né veduto, et se a V.E. pare digno de producere in luce, ne fareti el vostro parere. Se etiam non ve parerà, serà posto da parte come cosa inutile, frust[r]atoria, et vana.

2. El predicto tractato era la terza parte de uno mio volumine molto longo, in tre parte diviso, del quale tractato la prima sua parte era da me chiamata 'Appostille', la quale solamente tendeva a la responsione de certe appostille, le quale scripse Franchino Gafurio de sua propria mano supra el musico tractato de la *Practica* de mio preceptore.¹ L'altra particula era dicta 'Epistole', in la quale particula se contenevano multe musice questione intra lui et me occurente. Et la terza particula era questo tractato de proportione, le quale proportione procedeno con più ordine, scilicet de generi et specie, che non fano le epistole et appostille predicte, perché in tale appostille et epistole se procede secondo che io era da Franchino incitato. Pertanto, ancora che in tale particule se tracti de canto mensurato, de canto plano, de contrapuncto, et de proportione, tale modo de tractare non è però ordinato con quello modo et ordine che se uxa in li tractati et introductorii, cioè de principiare a li rudi principii, et per via de regola procedere sino a la alteza de la disciplina.

3. Pertanto, volendo tractare del contrapuncto, el serà de bisogno che io scriva uno tractato el quale in sé tenga ordine, al quale (come ve ho

¹ Spataro's copy of Ramis's *Musica practica*, with Gafurio's notes, survives in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale of Bologna (A. 80). In his edition of the treatise, Wolf gives Gafurio's comments in footnotes.

22. Spataro to Del Lago, 5 Apr. 1529

The Letters

scripto) darò opera. Et ho disposto farlo che sia breve, perché le regole scripte possono bene insignare li primi rudimenti del contrapuncto, ma non farano el bono compositore, imperò che li compositori boni nascono così come nascono li poeti. Pertanto quasi più ci bisogna lo aiuto del celo che la regula scripta, et questo ogni giorno è apparente, perché li docti compositori (per instinto naturale et per certa gratia et modo, el quale quasi non se pò insignare) aliquando in li soi contrapuncti et concenti aducono termini, li quali da alcuna regula et precepto de contrapuncto non sono demonstrati.²

4. La missa de 'pera pera' ve mandarò come sono uno pochetto retornato in sanità. Habiati bona advertentia circa questo tractato de proportione, et se gli serà errore, così nel scripto come facultà, corregitelo.

Vale. Bononie, die 5 aprilis 1529. Dareti adviso de la receputa.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. From my last two letters, one with the alto ['Deprecor te'; see no. 20], the other in response to yours sent with the *cartella* [no. 21], you know that I wanted to send you my treatise on proportions. It is enclosed. While I am writing the treatise on counterpoint, please examine the one on proportions, which I have not looked at since I finished it. If you find it worthy of being printed, do what you think; if not, it will be put aside as useless.

2. This treatise was the third part of a long book in three parts. The first, called 'Appostille', consisted of answers to Gafurio's annotations on Ramis's *Musica practica.*¹ The second, called 'Epistole', comprised letters on many musical matters discussed by Gafurio and myself. The third was the present treatise on proportions, which proceeds with more order than the other two parts, which also treat mensural music, plainchant, counterpoint, and proportions, but not in a systematic order from easy to difficult, as should be done in textbooks.

3. Therefore I shall write a new treatise on counterpoint, making it brief. Rules are good for the beginner but will not make a good composer, for good composers are born, just as are poets. The gift of heaven is almost more important than the rules, for good composers, through natural instinct and a certain graceful manner, which can hardly be taught, sometimes find expressions that no rule allows.²

4. The 'Missa Pera, pera' will be sent when I am better. If there are errors in the treatise on proportions, in language or thought, correct them.

² The preceding passage is quoted as the earliest musical document known so far to make 'the distinction between inborn talent and craftsmanship acquired through training', an idea that distinguishes the Renaissance from the Middle Ages, in Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius— Evolution and Origins of a Concept', pp. 481-2 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 51. An even earlier source is Spataro's letter to Aaron of 6 May 1524 (see no. 11, para. 7).

23. Spataro to Del Lago, 28 May 1529

23 (J39). Fo. 155^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 28 May 1529 (autograph)

^{155^t} [Al venerabile Messer Pre Zoan]ne veneto, diacono [de Sancta Sophia] et musico peritissimo, [quanto maggiore] honorando. [In Ve]netia, [in la Barberia del S]ole supra el campo de Sancta [Sophia].

¹⁵⁵ Venerabilis vir etc., salutem.

1. A li dì 27 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 14 del presente signata, et ho inteso quanto diceti circa quello mio tractato de proportione, el quale ve promisse mandarvi da poi pasqua. Ma siati certo che haveva ligato tale tractato et posto in ordine per mandarlo qua a V.E., ma per essere el volumine alquanto grande, a me non pareva cosa da mandare per via de banco o vero mercatante. Pertanto aspectava che el tornasse a Bologna quello fante el quale me portò la cartella, al quale io voleva dare tale tractato et pagarlo, ma mai non venne, et da me era dubitato che qua non potesseno venire littere, perché el se diceva che qua non se dava recepto a quilli che venivano da Bologna, per suspecto de peste. Procedendo per tale modo la cosa in longo, io comenzai havere suspecto che a V.E. non fusse acaduto qualche incomodo et spiacere, et questo era perché da quella io non haveva adviso alcuno. Et per essere claro de questo, io scripse a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono aciò che lui me facesse certo del stato vostro, et da lui ancora non ho havuto adviso alcuno. Per questo che io comprehendo che eramo dui che stavamo in admiratione, perché V.E. se maravegliava che io non li mandava el tractato promisso, et io me maravegliava che da quella non haveva resposta circa quella mia de ultimo de marzo a V.E. missa [no. 21]. Ma hora perché sono certo del vostro stato, ve mando el predicto tractato de le proportione, el quale non scio se serà al proposito, ma me dareti adviso del vostro parere.

2. Ancora ho composito uno tractateto de contrapuncto, el quale ho finito, et voglio che sia intitulato a V.E., ma bisogna che sia scripto de novo, al quale voglio dare opera che sia scripto, e poi a V.E. el mandarò più presto che potrò. Ma temo che el caldo me darà non poca noglia. Pure farò quanto per me fare se potrà, aciò che l'habiati presto.

Non altro per hora. Tuto son vostro.

Bononię, die 28 maii 1529.

El vostro più che suo J. Spataro

1. I have received your letter of the 14th, in which you ask what happened to my treatise on proportions, which I said I was enclosing in my last letter. It was all bound and ready, but since it was so large, I hesitated to send it by a bank or merchants and was waiting for the boy who brought me the *cartella*, but he never came. I also heard a rumour that people coming from Bologna were not admitted for fear of the plague. For a long time I did not hear from you and I finally wrote to Cavazzoni to inquire about your health. Now I am sending the treatise on proportions; let me know if it will do.

2. I have finished a little treatise on counterpoint and I should like to dedicate it to you, but it needs rewriting. In spite of the heat, I will do what I can to see that you have it soon.

24 (J40). Fo. 156^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 3 June 1529 (autograph)

¹⁵⁶ Al venerabile prete Zoanne Veneto, diaco[no de Sancta Sop]hia dignissimo et musico [peritissimo, quanto maggio]re suo honorando. In Vinetia, [in la Bar]beria del Sole supra el campo de Sancta Sophia.

156^r Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. Ho receputo una de V.E. de 28 maii signata, per la quale ho inteso da la vostra bona valitudine et vivere, la quale cosa molto me piace, et de questo sia laudato Dio. Ho etiam inteso V.E. havere receputa la mi[a] missa¹ a li giurni passati con una mia [no. 23] respondente a quella vostra de dì 14 maii.

2. Ve ho mandato el tractato mio de proportione per la via de li Saraceni, mercatanti bolognesi, sì che procurati de haverlo, et havuto che l'havereti, ve degnareti darme adviso aciò che io più non ce pensi. In altro non mi exercito se non in scrivere el tractato del contrapuncto noviter per amore de V.E. composito. Et scripto che serà, subito a V.E. el mandarò.

3. Circa el motetto de Rosino da Fermo,² el quale chiedeti, io me arecordo già haverlo in uno mio libro, el quale donai ad uno servitore del Magnifico Juliano di Medici,³ sì che io non ho copia alcuna, et asai ho cercato tra musici et cantori bolognesi, ma non trovo alcuno che l'habia, né etiam che se arecordi haverlo mai veduto, perché è opera che è stata facta molto tempo fà, et perché ancora haveva uno tenore molto artefitioso, non tropo grato a questi nostri practici moderni. Ma io non restarò de cercare. Se trovare el potrò, a V.E. el mandarò.

Non altro per hora. A V.E. me recomando.

Vale. Bononie, die 3^a junii 1529.

Tuus J. Spatarius

¹ Spataro's 'Missa Pera, pera'; see no. 22, para. 4.

² 'Veni Sancte Spiritus'; see no. 8, para. 4.

³ Giuliano de' Medici was born in 1479 as the third son of Lorenzo il Magnifico. After the overthrow of the Medici in 1494, he spent the years until 1512 in exile from Florence. The earlier part of his exile was passed at the Court of Urbino, and he is portrayed in Castiglione's *Il* cortegiano. In 1512 he returned to Florence as governor, and in 1513 his brother, Leo X, made him Gonfalonier of the papal forces. Francis I created him duc de Nemours in 1515. He was present in Bologna in 1515 at the meeting between Francis I and Leo X. He died in 1516. See G. F. Young, *The Medici* (New York, 1933), pp. 284–8. Spataro's connection with Giuliano probably dates from the years of his exile, when he was frequently a guest at Bologna in the home of Nicolò Rangoni and his wife Bianca, daughter of Giovanni II Bentivoglio; see Cecilia M. Ady, *I Bentivoglio*, trans. Luciano Chiappini (Varese, 1967), p. 195. 1. I have received your letter of 28 May and am glad to hear you are well and have received my mass¹ and my letter [no. 23] in answer to yours of 14 May.

2. I have sent you my treatise on proportions by the Saraceni, Bolognese merchants. Please let me know when you have it. I am spending all my time on the new counterpoint treatise for you.

3. Regarding the motet by Rosino da Fermi that you would like,² I used to have it in one of my books, which I gave to a servant of Giuliano de' Medici.³ I have searched high and low in Bologna but no one has it or even remembers seeing it. It was composed a long time ago and had a tenor full of artifice, not too pleasing to modern musicians. If I find it I shall send it to you.

25 (J38). Fo. 154^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 June 1529 (autograph)

^{154^v} Al venerabile Messer Pre Zoanne veneto, de Sancta Sophia diacono dignissimo et musico doctissimo, magiore mio honorando. In Vinetia, in la Barberia del Sole sopra el campo de Sancta Sophia.

154^r Messer Pre Zoanne mio honorando, salutem.

1. Con una mia [no. 23] (in responsione de una vostra de dì 14 maii signata) ve ho mandato el mio tractato de proportione, et ancora in una altra mia [no. 24] (in responsione de una vostra de dì 28 del predicto) ve ho dato notitia de tale tractato a V.E. mandato. Et perché uno nostro bolognese chiama[to] Phylippo Maria de Rubeis più giurni fano per parte de V.E. me disse che vui ancora non havevi havuto tale tractato, alhora intesi da quello nostro mercatante dal Saraceno che lui haveva mandata qua tale opera, et che seria alquanto tarda. Pure non sentendo cosa alcuna et parendome che horamai deberebe essere qua arivata, sto in grande pensiero. Pertanto prego V.E. me dia adviso del tuto aciò che io.sapia quello che ho a fare.

2. El tractato del contrapuncto è finito, et cerco messo fidato, sì che più presto che potrò ve lo mandarò. Una gratia voglio da V.E., che dati o fati dare questa qua ligata a uno giovene bolognese chiamato Allexandro, el quale sta con el reverendo episcopo da Caxale,¹ ambasatore del Re de Inghilterre, el quale giovene trovareti in la habitatione de Messer Adriano, maestro de la capella de Sancto Marco, al quale Messer Adriano asai me recomandareti.

Vale. Bononie, die ultima junii 1529.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. With my letter [no. 23] in response to yours of 14 May I sent you my treatise on proportions and in another letter [no. 24] I advised you of this, in response to yours of 28 May. But a few days ago Philippo Maria de Rubeis told me that you had not received the treatise. I learnt from the merchant who took it that it would be somewhat late and I am now anxious to hear whether you have it.

2. The treatise on counterpoint is done and I am looking for a trusted

¹ Giambattista Casali; see the Biographical Dictionary.

26 (137). Fo. 153^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 5 July 1529 (autograph)

^{153^t} [Al venerabile m]usico Messer Pre Zoane [veneto, de Sancta] Sophia diacono dignissimo. [In] Venetia, [in la Barberia del] Sole posita sopra el [campo de Sancta So]phia.

¹⁵³ Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

Havendo aspectato multi giurni per havere notitia da V.E. se quella ha receputo el mio tractato de proportionibus, già più giorni fano mandatovi qua, et altro non sentendo, sto pleno de admiratione et maraveglia. Ma pensando che ho dato tale tractato in mano de optimi homini et boni mercatanti, pure alquanto me conforto che capitarà al fine del mio intento, et perché (come per un'altra mia ve ho dato adviso) ho finito el tractato de contrapuncto, a me pareva male tenirlo a Bologna. Pertanto a V.E. el mando con questa mia ligato, benché non tropo voluntera l'ho mandato, perché tale tractato voleva almanco stare uno anno et poi iterum essere veduto et examinato. Ma de una sola cosa piglio conforto, che scio che serà (per amore mio) con deligentia veduto et let[t]o, et de ogni suo errore purgato et neto, de la quale cosa molto ve prego, cioè, che bene lo vogliati legere, et se li trovati superfluità o diminutione, o altro errore, o vero cosa che non ve sia apiacere, emendatilo come cosa vostra, che sono molto contento. Et ancora se el fine o el principio non stano a vostro modo, del tuto fatine el vostro volere, perché così come a V.E. l'ho dericto et intitulato, così voglio che sia tuto vostro.

Non altro per hora. Fati che intenda del receputo tractato per mio contento. Tuto son vostro.

Bononie, die 5 julii 1529.

Vester J. Spatarius

I wonder why I have not heard whether you have received my treatise on proportions; I am sure it will arrive since I gave it to reliable persons. Enclosed I am sending the treatise on counterpoint, but with some reluctance: it really ought to be kept back a year and then re-examined. But I know you will read it diligently and purge it of all errors. If you find anything superfluous or lacking, or other errors, emend it as if it were your own and I shall be happy. And if you do not like the beginning or end, change it as you please; since I have dedicated it to you, I want it to be all yours. **27** (J45). Fos. 161^r-162^v Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 23 August 1529 (autograph)

^{162^v} [Al venerabile Messer Pre] Zoanne veneto, musico, [de Sancta So]phia diacono dignissimo et [musico peritissimo. In Ve]netia, [in la Barberia de]l Sole posta sopra el campo [de Sancta Sophia].

161^r Venerabilis vir, salutem.

1. A li giurni 26 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 9 signata, la quale a me è stata gratissima per havere inteso che el tractato mio de contrapuncto è giunto al fine desiderato, et etiam che a V.E. è stato apiacere che a quella sia dedicato. Et benché quella (per sua humanità) se chiami indegno, pure a me pare (et con verità tengo) che alcuna opera mia non possa essere digna de pervenire a quella senza erubescentia et culpa de essere reputato temerario et prosumptuoso. Pertanto non per augumentare et acrescere la vostra clara fama a V.E. ho intitulato tale tractato mio, ma solo per mio honore et exaltatione, perché se mai serà impresso (come che credo che per vostra industria serà), essendo approbato da V.E., li invidi et mordenti detractori non ardirano de demonstrare fora la rabida soa malignità. Pertanto serà forza che (revolti in sé stessi) tutti^a se rodano et strazano le proprie viscere. Horsù nel nome di Dio. Se ho facto qualcosa che a V.E. sia grata, molto me piace et resto contento, et poco existimo et curo de la fatica et tempo spexo in fare tale opera.

2. Ma perché diceti che ve occurreno certi dubii in tale tractato, et similemente nel tractato de proportione, harò apiacere intendere el tuto quando a V.E. serà comodo, benché (ut scripsi) ogni cosa ho remesso a la vostra corectione. Io scio et tengo per firmo che tale opere mie non possono stare senza qualche cosa male considerata, perché bisognava che fusseno più volte con soma cura et deligentia examinate. Ma me sono confidato in V.E., la quale (per essere perito et docto in tale facultà) satisfarà al tuto. Pure harò apiacere intendere dove dubitati, perché ancora che io sia con ambedui li pedi in la fossa, ancora desidero imparare, et "61" etiam per non incorrere in lo errore nel quale (come scriveti) | è caduto el nostro excellente et venerabile Frate Petro Aron, el quale (fidandosi tropo in sé stesso) ha producto in luce tri musici tractati de li quali lui n'ha havuto asai poco honore apresso a li intelligenti. Io già li scripsi demonstrandoli multi errori da lui comissi in quello suo *Toscanello*, et mai (in sua deffensione) non me dete alcuna resposta.¹ Ma pure a l'ultimo lui

[&]quot; MS: tute.

¹ Six of the nine letters by Spataro are extant; see nos. 7-12. Spataro's annoyance seems to have coloured his recollection, for in his letter of 1 Nov. 1523 he had declared himself

me scripse che lui haveva compreheso el tuto de quello che io li scriveva, et che circa tale mie demonstratione che lui per una sua epistola me daria plena resposta del tuto, per el quale suo scrivere non poco dubitai che lui non volesse fare come fece Franchino Gafurio, el quale per 18 mie epistole fu da me advertito de multi soi errori comissi in quello suo tractato *De harmonia instrumentorum*,² dal quale Franchino mai non hebi alcuna resposta sino al fine de l'opera. Da poi lui me fece una appologia contra,³ et molte ne mandò a Bologna a diversi canonici de la nostra eclesia, credendosi tormi a un tracto lo^b honore et la utilità. Ma la cosa reusì altramente che lui non havea pensato, perché (Dei gratia) io sono cognosuto essere asai alieno da quello che lui (mosso da l'ira) falsamente diceva di me, ma pure hebi fatica et affanno asai. Ma da el nostro venerabile Frate Petro predicto non ho havu[to] resposta alcuna, et anco poco me ne curo, perché con lui cosa alcuna non posso guadagnare, perché circa questa facultà lui non è solamente mendico ma è la propria miseria.

3. Potria essere che se lui ha facto retractare quel suo *Toscanello* predicto con qualche emendatione, che tale emendatione seriano tolte da li mei scripti a lui missi. Pertanto ho grande desiderio vedere tale tractato 162^t noviter impresso,⁴ per la quale co sa prego V.E. facia forza de mandarme uno de tali soi tractati noviter impressi, et datime adviso del pretio, che del tuto ve satisfarò. Al venerabile Petro non voglio scrive[re] de tale cosa, perché lui è al tuto sdegnato con me, et que[sto] nasce perché io asai cercai retrarlo da la impresa de quello suo tractato de tonis⁵ ultimamente da lui impresso, el quale è reuscito proprio come io li scripsi, cioè senza ordine et verità, contra el quale ho scripto apresso a cento foglii, li quali scripti sono apresso di me.⁶ Et questo non è stato facto da me per livore, né etiam per odio et invidia che io porti al mio venerabile Frate Petro, ma solo aciò che li rudi (li quali facilemente credeno), legendo li soi inculti scripti et erronee sententie, non caminano per la via de le tenebre et de li errori, in li quali

^b MS: lho.

'completely satisfied' with Aaron's answer (see no. 8, para. 1). Since very few changes were made in the second edn. of the *Toscanello*, apart from the addition of the 'Aggiunta', it is likely that Aaron's main defence was that he was writing for practical musicians, not speculative theorists. Some of the revisions take Spataro's objections into account: see no. 12 nn. 5 and 11. For other changes, see the notes to Peter Bergquist's translation of the *Toscanello* (Colorado College Music Press Translations 4; Colorado Springs, 1970).

² De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus (Milan, 1518).

³ Apologia Franchini Gafurii musici adversus Joannem Spatarium et complices musicos bononienses (Turin, 1520).

⁴ The second, revised edn. of the *Toscanello*, published in Venice on 5 July 1529.

⁵ Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525).

⁶ This manuscript has disappeared. If Spataro had sent a copy of it to Aaron, it may be the unpublished treatise that Aaron's student Illuminato Aiguino claimed he had seen; see Ch. 4, p. 88.

(veramente) per la sua poca advertentia et tropo existimarse resta immerso. Ma io ve conforto che non stati a litigare con lui, perché tali homini sono da fugire et andare con loro a Placentia,⁷ aciò che restano in la sua ignorantia et pertinatia, come credo saperà fare V.E., alla quale humilemente me recomando et offero.

Vale. Bononie, die 23 augusti 1529.

Vester J. Spatarius

1. On the 26th I received yours of the 9th with great pleasure, since I learnt that you now have my treatise on counterpoint and are pleased to have it dedicated to you. Even though you call yourself unworthy, I know that no work of mine sent to you can be anything but bold and presumptuous. It is not for your sake but for mine that I dedicate it to you; invidious and mordant disparagers will not dare show their rabid malice but be forced to gnaw their own guts. If I have pleased you, I am happy and do not regret the time spent in writing the work.

2. You say you have some queries about the treatise and also the one on proportions. I am convinced that my works must contain some illconsidered passages, because they needed to have been read and reread with the greatest care. But I have placed my trust in you; your experience and learning will take care of everything. However, I should like to know what your doubts are. Although I stand with both feet in the grave, I still wish to learn, and I want to avoid Aaron's mistake of being too selfconfident; his three treatises have brought him little honour among the intelligent. I pointed out many errors in his Toscanello,¹ with no response. Finally he wrote that he understood everything and would give me a detailed answer. I feared he might do what Gafurio did when I wrote him eighteen letters on the errors in his De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum.² He never answered me but instead published an Apologia³ and sent copies to several canons of my church, hoping to dishonour me. It turned out differently, but still it cost me some trouble. I don't mind if Aaron doesn't respond; there is nothing to be gained with him; in this field he is not just a pauper but poverty itself.

3. If he has revised the *Toscanello*, he may have taken my criticisms into account. Thus I am eager to read the new edition;⁴ can you send me a copy and let me know the price? I don't want to write to Aaron; he is sore at me

⁷ In 1604 Tomaso Buoni listed 'Tu passi da Piacenza' as an idiom meaning 'il compiacere ad altri, et il descender facilmente alle voglie d'altrui; che altro non è, che piacenza'; see *Nuovo thesoro de' proverbi italiani* (Venice, 1604), pp. 355-6.

because I tried to dissuade him from publishing his treatise on the modes.⁵ I wrote him 200 pages about it; just as I predicted, it came out without order and truth.⁶ I was not moved by hate or envy but wanted to prevent the gullible from being misled. I counsel you not to get involved with him; such men should be humoured⁷ and left alone in their ignorance and obstinacy.

28 (J3). Fos. 11^{r} -22^r

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 8 October 1529 (Scribe A)

11^r Al Eccellente Messer Gioanne di Spatari Bolognese Musico Dignissimo."

Eccellente Messer Gioanne.

1. A dì nove d'agosto scrissi una mia a V.E. in risposta d'una vostra fatta a dì 5 di luglio [no. 26], la quale era insieme legata col trattato vostro del contrapunto a me intittolato, nella quale mia lettera ringratiava per infinite volte V.E., come ella ha potuto leggere et vedere in quella. Et essendovi degnato, per vostra innata gentilezza et bontade, non solamente intittolarmelo, ma etiam rimetterlo a mia correttione, humiliandosi ad uno suo minimo discepolo, come appare in detta lettera dove V.E. così scrive: 'Et perché, come per un'altra mia vi ho dato aviso, ho finito el trattato del contrapunto, a me parea male tenerlo a Bologna. Pertanto a V.E. il mando con questa mia legato, benché non troppo volontieri lo mando, perché tal trattato volea al manco stare un anno et di poi iterum esser veduto et esaminato. Ma di una sola cosa piglio conforto, che so che sarà per amor mio con diligentia veduto et letto, et di ogni suo errore ben purgato, della qual cosa molto vi prego, che ben lo vogliate leggere, et se li trovate superfluità o diminutione o altro errore, o vero cosa che non vi sia apiacere, emendatelo come cosa vostra, che sono molto contento. Et $_{II}$ anchora s'el fine o ver el principio non sta a vostro modo, del tutto fatene il vostro volere, perché così come a V.E. l'ho dicato et intittolato, così voglio che 'l sia tutto vostro', etc.¹

2. Et perché io scrissi in la predetta mia a V.E. di esponerli el parer mio di certi dubbii che mi occorrevano sopra alcuni capitoli del trattato vostro di contrapunto, et etiam in quello delle proportioni, V.E., per un'altra sua data a dì 23 di agosto [no. 27] in risposta della predetta mia, mi scrisse che la desiderava intendere il tutto quando a me fusse commodo, come appare in detta lettera, dove così dice V.E.: 'Ma perché dite che vi occorrono certi dubbii in tal trattato, et similmente in quello delle proportioni, ha[rò] piacere intendere il tutto quando a V.E. sarà commodo, benché (ut scripsi) ogni cosa ho messa alla vostra correttione. Io so et tengo per fermo che tali opere mie non possono stare senza qualche cosa male considerata, perché bisognava che fossero più volte con somma cura et diligentia

^a The succeeding words, 'Pre Giovanni de Lago salutem', have been cancelled.

¹ The passage in quotation-marks is quoted from Spataro's letter of 5 July 1529 (no. 26). Note Del Lago's changes in spelling, and even in wording. Some of these already appear in the fair copy of Del Lago's letter; others were added subsequently.

esaminate. Ma mi sono confidato in V.E., la quale, per essere perita et dotta in tal facultà, satisfarà al tuto. Pur harò piacere intendere dove dubitate, perché anchora che io sia con ambedue li piedi in la fossa, anchora desidero imparare', etc.²

3. Adonque conoscendo io esser così il voler di quello, cioè che io gli ^{12^r} scriva il mio parere, volontieri io tal | cosa farò, perché desidero compiacerli, et sempre farli cosa grata, et non perché io voglia opponere et contradire al giuditio et parere suo, perché io potrei anchora esser delli minimi sui discepoli discepolo. Et per tal cagione mal volontieri io piglio tale carico. Pur tuttavia per usar ufficio di vero et buono amico, et per non occultare quello che forse li potria tornare in danno et dishonore, non restarò dire il mio parere circa i dubbii occorrenti.

4. Dico adonque così, et primo quanto alla seconda parte nel capitolo vii, il quale tratta della fuga, della reditta, de talea, et del colore, dove difinite che cosa sia fuga in questo modo, dicendo: che alla fuga al manco bisogna siano due, delli quali l'uno in cantando seguiti l'altro per quelle medesime distantie et vestigii che ha tenuto l'altro, le quali medesime distantie et vestigii^b caderano procedendo per unisono, per diatessaron, per diapente, per diapason et per le sue composite. Et la preditta fuga consiste nella similitudine de li intervalli musici fatti per arsin et thesim, et non nella similitudine delli nomi ad placitum positi alli soni,³ il che dimostra V.E. in questo suo essempio ut hic:



^b MS: vestigie.

² Quoted from Spataro's letter of 23 Aug. 1529 (no. 27).

³ We place in italics those passages Del Lago seems to be quoting from Spataro's treatise, which, unfortunately, is lost.

Dico adunque che se questo qui sopra notato esempio ben noterà et bene esaminerà, V.E. troverà essere dissimile alla sua difinitione o vero descrittione, come da questo luoco del soprano sino alla fine vedere et cognoscere si può ut hic:

perché il tenore, il quale fuga et sequita in questo luogo il soprano per diatessaron con questi nomi de sillabe ut hic:

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dice re in D la sol re et fa in F fa ut et mi in E la mi et re in D la sol re et mi in E la mi. Ma il soprano non può fugare con quelle medesime sillabe' come fa il tenore, perché nel soprano diremo sol in G sol re ut sopra acuto, et fa in 13^r bfalmi (accidentaliter) per virtù del b rotondo segnato | nel predetto luogo, et la in A la mi re et sol in G sol re ut et re in A la mi re per causa di ascendere, et questo perché il b rotondo o ver molle da voi posto et segnato in bfabmi sopra acuto è mobile,^d la forza et possanza del quale non si estende se non alla nota o ver note le quali sono propinque ad esso b rotondo, il quale b rotondo in quella linea o ver spatio dove è posto et segnato solamente a quella nota la quale gli è contigua sempre se li dice fa, quia ubi b ibi fa semper. Et questo si intende però in ciascun luogo dove naturalmente et accidentalmente non è fa. Ma quando poi immediate si ascende o vero discende, allhora si lascia il b molle et si entra nella proprietà di natura o vero nella proprietà di b duro, secondo li luoghi occorrenti, perché non si seguita più oltre cantando per esso b rotondo, ma solamente serve a quella sola nota alla quale è segnato et posto tal segno, come seguitando si dirà.

5. E questo si conferma da Marcheto Padoano nel capitolo 42°, dove così dice: Sed notandum est quod dictum est supra, quod ubicunque ponitur b rotundum dicimus vocem fa, ubicunque vero ponitur \$\u03c4 quadrum dicimus vocem mi. He enim note quibus predicta duo signa scilicet \$\u03c4 \$\u03c4 deserviunt semper habent secum na | turam semitonii, que natura si incipiat per deservientem notam a fa, ibi ponitur \$\u03c4 rotundum. Si vero a mi, ibi ponitur \$\u03c4 quadrum, et he sunt proprietates proprie b rotundi et \$\u03c4 quadri, et hec est ratio quare ibidem in cantu scribuntur, et ea sequuntur

 $^{^{\}prime}$ MS: 'de Guido monacho' has been cancelled. $^{\prime}$ 'Mobile' was substituted for 'solamente inditiale'.

solum predictę duę voces fa et mi et non alię.⁴ Essendo adunque stato posto questo essempio da V.E. in questo modo per dichiaratione della fuga, io credo che quella habbia oppinione che quello b rotondo posto in quel luogo sia stabile,^e sì come fusse segnato in principio di ciascuna particola di ciascun concento. Et questo similmente da Messer Hadriano Vuillaert familiarissimo nostro è stato usato, come appare in un suo canto a due voci fatto sopra alcuni versi tolti da Horatio, li quali così cominciano: 'Quid non ebri[e]tas', etc.,⁵ el quale ha segnato et posto il segno di b rotondo in processu cantus in molti luoghi del tenore per stabile, come fusse segnato in principio del concento.^f

6. Ma io in questo tengo altra oppinione,⁶ et dico quel tale b rotondo posto in quel luogo da V.E. è mobile.⁸ Perché (come credo sappia V.E.)^{b7} | quando il b rotundo è segnato in principio di una particola o vero di più particole di ciascun concento, tutta quella particola o ver processo di sillabe o ver de voci si canta per la proprietà di b molle, perché alhora il b rotondo est signum demo[n]strativum sì come fanno l'altre chiavi, delle quali una dimostra la proprietà di natura et l'altra dinota la proprietà di b duro, et il b rotondo (ut dixi) la proprietà di b molle, ^re questo conferma Giovan Tintoris nel suo *Diffinitorio* al capitolo 2°, il quale così dice: *b rotundum est clavis utriusque* bfa h mi, *designans ibi per b molle* fa *canendum esse*,⁸ et seguitando in esso capitolo dice: *b molle est proprietas per quam in omni loco*

^e Del Lago wrote 'essentiale', cancelled it by placing dots underneath it, and wrote over it: 'stabile'. ^f Del Lago has substituted 'stabile, come fusse segnato in principio del concento' for 'essentiale'. ^g 'Mobile' has been substituted for 'solamente indiciale'. ^b The following was deleted at this point: 'Quando b rotundum positum est in principio cantus, scilicet inter clavem et signum, tunc dicitur esse essentiale [*immobilis*, added above, has also been cancelled]. Essentiale io intendo qui in questo luogo cioè secondo la sua naturale [14'] potentia et il suo essere, la quale o vero il quale è in dimostrare che ...'.

cuius clavis est F ut canitur, et ex illo cetere voces deducuntur.⁷⁹ Adongue il b molle è una delle tre proprietati, un modo di proprietà dall'altre distintto et separato, et in esso canto tiene il terzo luogo fra esse proprietati, perché il segno di b molle rimove il canto da b quadro o ver duro, et anchora naturale, in b molle accidentale. Et quando est positum in processu cantus est tantummodo signum indicativum di fa.ⁱ Et allhora quella nota solamente alla quale si pone et aggionge tal segno sarà soggetta alla legge di quello segno, come di sopra habbiamo detto, ^ret sempre si deve segnare immediate dinanzi alla nota, et questo istesso afferma Maestro Prosdocimo Padoano nel trattato suo di contrapunto al capitolo 2°, regola quinta, dove tratta di musica colorata, il quale così dice: Quinta regula est hec, quod quando aliquod horum duorum signorum ponitur propter aliquam consonantiam colorandam, semper debet poni immediate ante notam que propter talem consonantiam colorandam in voce varianda est, sive talis nota sit in tenore, sive in contratenore, sive in aliquo discantuum, et sive sit ipsa in linea, sive in spatio, cum quodlibet tale signum non deserviat nisi notę ipsum immediate sequenti, nisi b rotundum in principio alicuius cantus pro clavi poneretur, quoniam tunc ipsum b rotundum totum cantum denominat cantari debere per b rotundum sive molle, etc.¹⁰ Et perché esso predetto b rotundo in questo vostro essempio è segnato in processu cantus, però serve solamente a quella nota o ver note che seguita immediate,^j il qual b rotundo poner si suole tantummodo | ratione consonantiarum vel ad evitandam duritiem tritoni aut ut convertatur tonus in semitonium et e converso. Sì che a me non pare, cum bona vostra venia, che quello essempio di V.E. ben quadri et convenga alla difinitione o vero discrittione et proprietà della fuga.

7. Et non solamente in quello luogo è dissimile, ma in molti altri luoghi di essa particola. Et maxime in fine V.E. è discrepante dalla mera et verace difinitione della fuga, perché *fuga* (secundum Johannem Tinctoris) *est idemtitas partium cantus quo ad valorem, nomen, formam, et interdum quo ad locum*

14^v

^{*i*} 'Est tantummodo signum indicativum di fa' has been substituted for 'si dice essere solamente indiciale, cioè non opera totalmente la sua naturale potentia secundo il suo essere, sed tantummodo est signum indicativum di fa'. ^{*j*} 'Serve solamente a quella nota o ver note che seguita immediate' has been substituted for 'si dimostra esser solamente inditiale'.

⁴ Marchetto of Padua, *Lucidarium in musica*, ed. Herlinger, pp. 302 and 304, from which the translation is taken. As shown in Ch. 7, Del Lago's source of Marchetto's treatise appears to be Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5322.

⁵ See above, nos. 12-14, for a discussion of Willaert's chromatic duo. Each new accidental introduced in the tenor has the force of a key signature.

⁶ Del Lago distinguishes between two functions of the flat sign, one 'accidentaliter' referring to the one note before which it is placed, therefore variable or 'mobile', the other 'stabile', that is, governing a whole phrase or piece, as if it were placed at the beginning of a composition, or, as we should say, as key signature (on this point, see the Commentary on no. 29). He points to Willaert's chromatic duo as an example of the second use of flats, where every new flat serves as a pillar in the construction of the great modulation undertaken by the tenor from D to Ebb (see Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo").

⁷ Six lines have been cancelled following the parenthetical remark; see n. b. The cancellation stems from Del Lago's decision not to use the words 'essentiale' and 'indiciale'. On these terms, see the Notes on Problematical Terms under 'indiciale'. The changes were made in the fair copy of the letter in the light of Spataro's reply; see the Commentary on no. 29.

⁸ CS iv. 179; *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 10.

⁹ The definition is missing in both the printed edn. and the Brussels manuscript, Bibliothèque royale, MS 11. 4147. However, in MS B. 2 of Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, the above definition *does* occur. Del Lago misread F as $.\int.$, the abbreviation for 'scilicet'. Both quotations from Tinctoris are added in the margin of Del Lago's letter.

¹⁰ The quotation from Prosdocimo is also a marginal addition. In CS iii. 198, the text is slightly different and it appears in Tractatus III, ch. 1, of the *Tractatus de contrapuncto*. Del Lago's version agrees with the redaction of Lucca, Biblioteca Governativa, MS 359, where the passage occurs on fo. 32'. For a comparison of Del Lago's quotation and the two versions of Prosdocimo's treatise, see Gallo, 'Citazioni di teorici medievali nelle lettere di Giovanni Del Lago', pp. 176–7. Prosdocimo's treatise is now available in a critical edn. and translation by Herlinger, *Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, Contrapunctus*, whose translation we have used; see p. 78 for the extract quoted by Del Lago.

notarum et pausarum suarum,¹¹ col quale il nostro Don Franchino Gafurio anchora conviene et concorda, come appare nel primo precetto o vero prima regola nel quinto capitolo del trattato quarto della sua musica composta in lingua materna così intitolato, Angelicum ac divinum opus musice, il quale dice così: Ma per esser arbitrario questo precetto, patisce eccettione, perché molti musici danno principio alle loro compositioni in concordantia et concinnità imperfetta, cioè in terzo o vero in sesta aut in decima et in terzadecima, et diviene molto dillettevole et arteficioso, massime quando una parte del concento

^{15^t} sequita l'altra | con simile processo di note, la quale si possono dire consequentia o vero fuga, etc.¹² Ma notate ove lui dice 'con simile processo di note', esso intende però imitandosi^k l'un l'altro con simile figure o ver sillabe di medesimo nome, di medesima forma, et di medesimo valore. Et similmente in fine della sesta regola nel terzo capitolo del 3° libro della sua Prattica latina, dove egli tratta del contrapunto, le parole del quale così dicono: Nam sepe et multum tenoris notule notulas cantus ascendentes aut descendentes cum similibus motibus subsequ[u]ntur. Similiterque in contratenore proceditur, quod potissimum evenit cum partes cantilene sese invicem iisdem motibus fugant atque figuris, etc.¹³

8. Et similmente il nostro carissimo amico Don Pietro Aaron nella sua musica latina, De institutione harmonica, nel capitolo 52, el quale difinisce così: Est autem ideo dicta imitatio sive fugatio, quia subsequens vel antecedens precedentis voces partis, vel subsequentis easdem nomine, sed locis diversas repetit, et vel quasi imitando pronuntia[t] vel quasi subsequendo fugare videtur.¹⁴ Et poi seguitando dà il essempio così dicendo: Si cantus in D la sol re inchoabitur et

^{15^v} dicetur re mi fa sol la, tenor sub eo quintam faciet pausam unam de minimis expectando, que quinta in G sol re ut acuto erit et easdem cantus notas retinet. Illud tamen sciendum oportere tunc ipsum tenorem per b molle cantari, neque enim aliter notas cantus imitaretur quas diximus, etc.¹⁵ Et questo medesimo ha osservato

* MS: inmitandosi.

¹⁴ Libri tres de institutione harmonica (Bologna, 1516), Book III, ch. 52, fo. 56^r.

¹⁵ Ibid., fo. 56°. In Aaron's division of the gamut (based on Ramis; see no. 53 n. 2), 'G sol re ut acuto' means g. It would have been clearer if he had added a music example:



But his printer, Benedetto di Ettore Faelli, did not have music type; the book has not a single music example. Benedetto is the printer of Aaron's translator, Giovanni Antonio Flaminio. A year earlier, in 1515, he had published Flaminio's *Silvarum libri II, ejusdem Epigrammatum libri III*,

lo eccellente musico Messer Adriano Willaert in uno suo hymno 'Ave maris stella',¹⁶ el quale ha segnato il segno del b molle in paramese in principio del tenore, e questo per fare imitare le notule o vero figure del tenore per diapente inferiore dopo quelle del soprano con quatro tempi di brevi, il quale principia in D *la sol re* per medesimi nomi et consequenter¹ medesime spetie et medesimi intervalli, come vuole la reale et vera fuga. [¬]Questo istesso ha fatto Messer Jacquet in uno suo motteto 'Plorabant sacerdotes et levite' a cinque voci fatto,^{¬17} anchora che Frate Giordano¹⁸ del ordine di San Domenico, maestro di cappella del Domo di Padoa, tiene altra oppinione. Ma quando disputassimo insiemi di tal materia, io li feci intendere et conoscere che esso non intendeva la natura et proprietà della fuga, e come anchora era in grandissimo errore.

9. Per le predette ragioni et autorità V.E. troverà questo sì fatto suo 16^r esempio esser dissimile et contrario a queste | difinitioni, et anchora alla sua dichiarati[0]ne posta nel predetto capitolo, et etiam nel capitolo x^o della prima parte, regola quinta, dove V.E. recita la difinitione della fuga difinita da Bartholomeo Ramis suo preceptore, la quale dice così: *Et acciò che le voci o ver note le quali sequitano nel tenore non siano discrepanti da quelle del contrapunto, perché come la fuga comincia a discordare in similitudine, immediate nasce la dissimilitudine della fuga*, etc.¹⁹ Per la predetta difinitione del vostro

¹ The 'r' has been erased but is necessary.

¹⁶ Del Lago's description fits the third verse, 'Virgo singularis', of Willaert's hymn 'Ave maris stella', first published in the *Hymnorum musica* of 1542. For a modern edition see Adrian Willaert, *Opera omnia*, ed. Hermann Zenck, Walter Gerstenberg, *et al.* (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 3; Rome, 1950-), vii. 107-13. What Del Lago calls the tenor is labelled C[II] in the edition. The two voice-parts are written on one line with two different clefs; the canonic voice is the only one that has Bb in the signature. Del Lago's letter of 1529 confirms Gerstenberg's 'theory that Willaert's collection of hymns may have been gradually written over a long period' (Foreword, p. i), posited on the basis of Spataro's 'letter to Pietro Aron dated 1533 [see no. 59] in which he remarks that he already possesses many outstanding polyphonic hymns by Willaert'.

¹⁷ The reference to Jacquet of Mantua's motet is written in the margin (and therefore was probably added after 1538). 'Plorabant sacerdotes' was first printed in Scotto's *Iacheti musici celeberrimi*... *motecta quinque vocum*... *liber primus* (1539); for a modern edn., see Jacquet of Mantua, *Opera omnia*, ed. Philip T. Jackson and George Nugent (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 54; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1971–), v. 108–17. The quintus follows the soprano at the lower fifth. The part does not carry a flat in the signature; a few are marked in the course of the piece, but many more need to be added.

¹⁸ Giordano Passetto; see the Biographical Dictionary.

¹⁹ The quotation comes from the second part of *Musica practica*, Tractatus primus, capitulum primum (Wolf, p. 68): 'Sed in his exemplis ponimus illas ultimas voces in organo tenore non habente aliquid pro eis, ut similitudo ostenderetur, quia supponimus quod voces quae sequentur in tenore non discordent cum illis, quia cum fuga incipit discordare in similitudine, fiat

¹¹ Diffinitorium, in CS iv. 184, and Dictionary, trans. Parrish, p. 32.

¹² Angelicum ac divinum opus musice (Milan, 1508), Book IV, ch. 5, fo. H1^c.

¹³ Practica musicae, fo. dd2^v (trans. Miller, p. 127).

and he continued to publish a number of his books in later years. Aaron's later treatises, except the *Compendiala*, were published in Venice by printers who had music type.

For a transcription of other examples of Aaron's 'fuga syncopata', see Lowinsky, 'Early Scores in Manuscript', p. 162 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 833.

preceptore da voi allegata si comprende che quando la parte fugante, cioè quella che imita et seguita la parte fugata, cioè quella che precede, essendo differente di nome da questa parte fugata, convien che la sia similmente differente negli intervalli, et consequenter in spetie, et questo per variare, che fa el semituono, dal quale nasce la differentia di nomi di ciascuna spetie nella musica esercitate, cioè prima, 2^a, 3^a, 4^a, etc.^m Per tale dissimilitudine et differentia di spetie il canto anchora diventa duro, seguitandosi così l'un l'altro. Et etiam per tal cagione si fa mutare al tuono la sua natura et compositione, sì che V.E. intende che non gli essendo simile imitatione di

16^v nome, non gli può essere fuga reale et vera, perché seguitariano tutti li predetti errori, perché è necessario che la fuga habbia tre conditioni, cioè che la sia simile quanto al nome delle notule o ver sillabe, quanto alla forma, et etiam quanto al valore di esse notule, come appare per la ragione detta di sopra. Pertanto mancandoli ciascuna di queste tre conditioni o ver parti, non si può congruamente nominare vera fuga.

10. Ma di la reditta, la quale dichiara V.E. nel antedetto capitolo, mi piace la sua oppinione, perché *Redicta nihil aliud est quam unius aut plurium coniunctionum continua repetitio.*²⁰

11. Di poi seguitando in esso capitolo, son pervenuto alla difinitione di talea, da V.E. così difinita: Tala è un modo di cantare il quale occorre quando in una sola particola del concento si procede con un medesimo passo o ver processo, variando per diversi luoghi, come si dimostra nel soprano del sequente concento, ut hic;



" At this point del Lago added, then struck out, the following: 'eccetto il ditono, il quale è ...' (the following two words are illegible).

immediate dissimilitudo.' Del Lago is actually not quoting Ramis's definition of *fuga* but his cautionary remark that the final notes of the imitating part ought to concord with whatever notes follow in the tenor. Ramis describes *fuga* as follows: 'quando organum imitatur tenorem in ascensu aut descensu, non in eodem tempore, sed post unam notulam vel plures incipit in eadem voce eundem cantum facere aut similem in diatessaron vel diapente aut etiam diapason vel in suis compositis ac decompositis sub aut supra. Quem modum practici fugam appellant, propterea quod una vox aliam sequitur simili arsi aut thesi' (ibid.).

²⁰ Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Book III, ch. 6 (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Scay, ii. 154; 'redictas' is a misprint).

Il qual modo di talea che possi stare o non possi, io per hora altro non scrivo, quantonque io trovi altri modi diversi di talea, cioè di notare et ¹⁷ dimostrare il suo modo, in | compositioni antiche, le quali poria anchora accadere che V.E. non ha forsi vedute, secondo appare nel tenore d'un concento di Domino presbitero Johanne Bononiensi composto del M.cccc.xl sopra alcuni versi i quali principiano così, 'Certa salutis', etc.,²¹ il qual tenore è così notato ut hic:



Canon. Dicitur ad primam et tertiam taleam de modo et tempore perfecto, ad secundam et quartam taleam de modo imperfecto et tempore perfecto.²²

In questo tal modo di talea qui di sopra notato nel prescritto tenore V.E.

²¹ A 'Johannes Baçus Correçarius de Bononia' is the author of a ballata in the Reina codex of c.1400, a date that would seem too early for our composer, unless he is identical with the 'Giovanni d'Andrea di Bazo' who was a singer and 'maestro dell'organetto' at San Petronio in Bologna from 1443 to 1452; see Osvaldo Gambassi, *La Cappella musicale di S. Petronio: Maestri, organisti, cantori e strumentisti dal 1436 al 1920* (Historiae musicae cultores 44; Florence, 1987), p. 51.

 22 As the canon suggests, the motet has two different *taleae*. The note-values of the first and the third *taleae* are the same, and so are those of the second and the fourth *taleae*. None of the definitions of *talea* cited by Del Lago specifically mentions the use of two *taleae*; the author of the motet seems to have applied the technique in a personal way. Certainly, it would be difficult to determine the beginning and end of the second, third, and fourth *taleae* were they not marked by slurs. A note is missing in the eleventh measure of the fourth *taleae*, which we have supplied conjecturally. vede come la terza talea corresponde et è simile in quanto alle figure, ma ben diversa di luoghi, et consequenter anchora di voci, dalla prima, et la quarta similmente dalla secunda, che è diverso modo da quello di V.E. Sono etiam molti altri modi de talea usitati da molti compositori antichi nelli suoi | concenti, i quali così essa talea definiscono: *Talea est unus* processus solum similium figurarum repetitus pluries in aliquo cantu secundum eundem ordinem, et absque medio,ⁿ²³ et etiam da Johannes Tinctoris, el quale definisce talea nel suo Difinitorio in questo modo: si dice, *Talea est* idemptitas particularum in una et eadem parte cantus existentium, quo ad nomen, locum et valorem notarum, et pausarum suarum.²⁴ Ma Giovan de Muris nel suo Trattato de cantu mensurato al capitolo nono definisce talea (tacitamente

però) come fa il colore, la definitione del quale parlaremo quando d'esso si trattarà, perché lui non pone differentia alcuna tra la talea et il colore. [¬]Et per tal cagione lui non pone alcuna definitione di talea ma solum del colore, perché lui teneva che non li fusse differentia veruna tra talea et colore, [¬] come appare nel progresso del detto capitolo, dove si dice così: *Pro quo nota quod aliqui cantores ponunt differentiam inter colorem et taleam. Nam* vocant colorem quando repetuntur^o voces similes, taleam vero quando repetuntur similes figure, et sic fiunt figure diversarum vocum, etc.^{p25}

12. Trova[n]si anchora parecchi altri modi di talea, li quali per brevità io lascio al presente, per esser questo assai sufficiente in dimostratione de essa talea, benché V.E. nella predetta sua opera non la dimandi 'talea', ma
^{18^t} 'tala'. Io non | trovo in alcun libro di musica, né anticho, né moderno, né appresso di alcun autore approbato tal modo di procedere esser nominato per questo vocabulo 'tala',²⁶ el qual nulla significa, ma ben si trova 'talea', 'tale

ⁿ A marginal addition, beginning 'et da alcuni altri la definiscono così ...', was subsequently crossed out because it coincides exactly with the definition in the text, except for the reversal of 'pluries repetitus'. ^e MS: repertuntur. ^P After this passage, the following sentence has been struck out: 'Et per tal cagione lui non pone altra definitione de talea perché lui teneva che non li fusse differentia veruna tra talea et colore.' Del Lago rewrote this passage in the margin and inserted it earlier in the letter. He then wrote another marginal addition, but cancelled it: 'perché al suo tempo erano alcuni cantori i quali volevano che fusse differentia tra il colore et talea, imperò che nel colore fusse fatto repetitione de simili vociet de simili figure, ma nella talea solamente repetitione de simili figure. Et dicevano il colore esser [added above: *fieri*] fatto cum medio interposito tra l'una et l'altra repetitione senza alcun mezo [corrected to: *taleam fieri sine aliquo medio*] in modo che tra loro erano non poco discrepantia, come appare nelli tenori de suoi motteti.'

el qual vocabulo in musica altro non significa che repetitione di medesime figure o ver notule, come appresso di Giovan de Muris si legge, et di molti altri musici antichi peritissimi. Però dove V.E. ha scritto 'tala' in la sua opera predetta, io, se a·llei piacerà, ponerò 'talea'. Oltra di questo siete stato deficiente dove dite nella predetta vostra definitione, cioè 'in una sola particola del concento', perché non solamente in una sola particola del concento (come dite voi) si fa la talea, ma anchora si trova in ciascuna particola di ciascuno concento, come appare nelle particole del sopranotato tenore, et in uno motetto de Joannes Dunstable, 'Veni Sancte Spiritus',²⁷ et similmente in uno altro suo mottetto composto sopra una antiphona 'Inter natos mulierum'²⁸ di Sancto Giovan Baptista, et etiam in uno mottetto di presbyter Joannes di Sarto composto sopra lo introito della messa delli morti 'Requiem eternam',²⁹ et in molti altri concenti | de dottissimi compositori.

13. Et similmente siete stato deficiente in definire el colore (come intenderete al suo luogo quando d'esso tratterò) perché non solum si fa el colore in una sola particola del concento (come ho detto di sopra della talea) ma anchora si fa in ciascuna particola di ciascuno concento, et tale processo si deve ritrovare in mezo del canto, el quale niente altro è che una certa melodia nel canto più volte repetita, *et questa sì fatta repetitione è voluntaria, non lasciato et posto da canto l'ordine delle misure del modo, del tempo, et della prolatione, per il quale anchora si serva il modo delle pause. Si replicano adonque le figure, cioè le notule et le pause, due, tre, et quatro volte, secundo la voluntà di quello che compone, la quale repetitione si dimanda colore nella musica, perché la musica si colora, id est si orna et abellisce per tal colore, per el quale alli occhi de' resguardanti et alle orecchie degli audienti si representa et dimostra decora et bella.*³⁰ ⁷Certamente il colore appresso li musici è ornamento del canto sì come è

²⁸ Dunstable, *Complete Works*, ed. Bukofzer, pp. 78-81 (tenor of the four-part motet 'Preco preheminencie').

²³ Word for word as at Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Tractatus practice de musica mensurabili* (CS iii. 227a).

²⁴ CS iv. 189; *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 64.

²⁵ CS iii. 58. Del Lago's wording agrees with the version of Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* included in Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, ed. Seay, ii. 265.

²⁶ Del Lago did not search far enough; Anon. V calls it 'talla' (CS iii. 397b), as do some redactions of Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* (CS iii. 58b).

²⁷ Modern edn. in Dunstable, *Complete Works*, ed. Manfred Bukofzer; 2nd rev. edn. by Margaret Bent, Ian Bent, and Brian Trowell (Musica Britannica 7; London, 1970), pp. 88–91 (*a* 4) or 92-4 (*a* 3); both motets are isorhythmic, but the four-part version has more isorhythm in the upper voices. Gafurio includes the tenor of the four-part motet in his *Practica musicae* (trans. Miller, p. 85) as an example of rests indicating mode.

²⁹ This is the motet 'Romanorum rex', anonymous in the unique source, the Aosta Codex, fos. 267'-268'. See the Commentary on no. 57 for a discussion of the authorship.

³⁰ Del Lago is translating here without acknowledgement from Ugolino of Orvieto's commentary on Johannes de Muris's definition of *color*: 'Huiusmodi autem repetitio voluntaria est, mensurarum modi, temporis et prolationis ordine non dimisso, quo etiam pausarum modus servatur, repetuntur ergo figurae, id est, notae et pausae, bis, ter vel quater ad componentis voluntatem quae repetitio color in musica nuncupatur. Coloratur enim musica, id est, decoratur, tali colore quo intuentium oculis et audientium auribus praesentatur decora' (*Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, ed. Seay, ii. 265).
appresso li rhetorici ornamento della oracione.³¹ Et è differente questo processo da quello il quale si dimanda 'introito', perché questo processo si fa quando 19^t alcuna parte di alcun canto riceve il fine de l'altra parte del medesimo | canto. Nel fine adunque delle parti del canto questo processo si deve trovare, il quale improprie si dimanda colore quantunque communamente così si possa chiamare.³²

14. Ma queste vostre definitioni di talea et del colore da voi definite servono solamente alle compositioni degli antichi, perché gli antichi usavano solamente la talea et il colore in una sola parte del canto, cioè nel tenore, come appare nel preallegato capitolo del preditto Gioane de Muris, dove lui recita la differentia che al suo tempo facevano alcuni compositori tra el colore et la talea, nel quale così se legge: que differentia quamvis servetur in quampluribus tenoribus mottettorum, non tamen servatur in ipsis mottettis. Exempla patent in mottettis, etc.³³ Per la predicta auctorità adonque potete comprendere come gli antichi facevano la differentia tra el colore et la talea solum in tenoribus mottettorum, ma li moderni, più perspicacemente intendendo, usano con osservato ordine delle misure queste differentie del colore et della talea ne' tenori, superiori, cioè nelle parte più acute, et ne' contratenori,³⁴ sì che intendete come siete stato diminuto in più parti nel definire la talea et il colore.]

^{19^v} 15. Ét similmente è cascato in errore el preditto Tintoris nel definire il colore et la talea, ma in questa sola parte lui ha errato dove dice 'in una et eadem parte cantus'.³⁵ Ma certamente non so in che modo l'uno et l'altro di voi meglio escusarsi possa quam per hoc dictum Oratii, 'qua[n]doque bonus dormitat Homerus'.³⁶

16. Ulterius, quando V.E. dichiara il modo di procedere qual si dimanda colore, dice in questo modo: Anchora dalli preditti antichi è stato

³¹ This marginal addition probably derives from Prosdocimo's *Tractatus practice* (CS iii. 226a): 'quod color in musica sit sumptus sub quadam similitudine ad quemdam colorem rethoricum qui repetitio nominatur'.

³² Again Del Lago quotes from Ugolino: 'et differt iste processus ab eo qui introitus nuncupatur. Hic enim processus fit cum aliqua pars alicuius cantus finem alterius partis eiusdem cantus assumit. In fine ergo partium cantus hic habet reperiri processus qui improprie dicitur color licet communiter valeat appellari' (*Declaratio*, ed. Seay, ii. 266). Gallo has suggested that *introitus* is a technique 'which consists of a rapid succession of 'entrances' of the same motif in the different voices of the composition', and he gives as example a passage from Ciconia's 'Venecie mundi splendor'. See *Music of the Middle Ages*, ii, trans. Karen Eales (Cambridge, 1985), p. 85. The introductory duos of some isorhythmic motets, for example Dufay's 'Apostolo glorioso', are labelled 'Introitus', but this is a different phenomenon.

³³ CS iii. 58; Ugolino, Declaratio, ed. Seay, ii. 266 (Del Lago follows Ugolino's wording).

³⁴ Another unacknowledged translation from Ugolino (ed. Seay, ii. 266): 'Sed quamvis ii cantores antiqui solum in motetorum tenoribus colore et talea uterentur, moderni tamen perspicacius intelligentes his coloris et taleae differentiis in tenoribus, superioribus atque contratenoribus mensurarum ordine servato utuntur.' This explains the puzzling reference to 'the moderns'. They are not Del Lago's but Ugolino's contemporaries.

³⁵ See above, n. 24.

³⁶ Horace, Ars poetica 359; see also no. 7 n. 3.

usitato uno altro modo di procedere nelle particole de' concenti, il quale da loro è stato chiamato colore, il quale colore si fa quando in una sola particola del concento, senza mutare luogo o vero intensione et remissione, sarà pronuntiato uno medesimo passo et processo per figure o ver note cantabili, le quali siano diverse di virtù, forma, et valore, come appare nel soprano del sequente concento:



^{20⁵} | Excellente Messer Gioanne, io trovo V.E. esser anchora dissimile dalla retta definitione di questo modo di procedere, chiamato da musici 'colore', come appare appresso Gioanne de Muris nel predetto suo *Trattato de cantu mensurato* in capitolo nono, dove lui tratta de hoc colore, il quale così lo definisce: *Color in musica est vel vocatur similium figurarum unus processus pluries repetitus in eodem cantu*, etc.,³⁷ et etiam secondo alcuni altri dotti musici antichi, i quali el definiscono in questo modo: *Color est unus processus similium figurarum atque similium vocum repetitus pluries in medio alicuius cantus secundum eundem ordinem et cum aliquo medio.*³⁸ ⁷ Io trovo anchora da alcuni altri antichi, i quali sono discrepanti da questi in definire questo colore, i quali così lo definiscono: *Color est unus processus similium vocum solum repetitus pluries in aliquo cantu secundum eundem ordinem absque aliquo medio.*¹³⁹ Et da Tinctoris nel suo *Definitorio* se definisce così: *Color est idemptitas*

³⁷ CS iii. 58; Ugolino, *Declaratio*, ed. Seay, ii. 264; again, Del Lago's wording agrees with Ugolino's version.

³⁹ Prosdocimo, reporting on the opinion of some of Johannes de Muris's contemporaries (ibid. iii. 226b).

³⁸ Prosdocimo, reporting the 'opinio quorumdam modernorum', in *Tractatus practice* (CS iii. 227a).

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particularum in una et eadem parte cantus existentium, quo ad formam et valorem notarum, et pausarum suarum.⁴⁰ Per le quali definitioni V.E. può comprendere facilmente esser stata lei (perdonime) deficiente in essa definitione di esso colore, come in quella di talea, per trovarsi etiam tutti questi altri modi diversi, de' quali habbiamo poco dinanti parlato, li esempi de essi brevitatis causa omitto.

17. Preterea dove V.E. allega Jacomo Obrecht in confermatione della 20^v sua definitione del colore sopradetta ne' tenori della messa sua chiamata 'Si dedero',⁴¹ dico che Jacomo Obrecht non ha havuta tal consideratione, come dite voi, di componere i detti tenori procedendo per modo di colore come è parso a V.E. Ma se V.E. bene esaminarà et atentamente considererà tali tenori della detta messa, troverà non esser così come quella dice, ma tutto el contrario a quello che lei afferma nel suo esempio, secundo appare nel tenore della prima parte della Gloria, et similmente in Qui tollis, Patrem, Crucifixus, Sanctus, et in Osanna, li quali tutti lochi sono diversi et molto dissimili allo esempio de V.E. Ma io tengo fermo et certo questa esser stata la sua intentione di Jacomo Obrecht primo et principalmente, per dimostrare haver cognitione de' segni di tempo con prolatione, come saria delle sue quantità ternarie et binarie, ^ret de il valore delle sue note, cioè quali sono perfette et imperfette, et quali alterano, et che proportioni nascono da quegli, comparando li detti segni del tenore a segni posti in principio delle parti del concento, ⁷⁹ et della misura anchora di ciascuno di essi segni, et etiam per dimostrare di essere abondantissimo nel contrapunto, come saria in un medesimo atto o ver processo di note 2 I ^r replicato più volte per più et manco valore diversificare il suo contrapunto. Et questa credo sia stata la mera intentione et il proprio volere di esso Jacomo Obrecht, perché al suo tempo tengo certo tal modo di procedere per colore pochi, anzi nessuno, havesse piena cognitione di sì fatto modo di procedere, come manifestano le loro compositioni, non si essendo mai usato né da lui, né da alcuno de sui contemporanei tal modo de procedere.

18. Questo simile dico esser stato osservato da Giosquino in la sua

⁹ This marginal addition replaces the following: 'perfette et imperfette, alteratione et proportione, comparando li detti segni del tenore a segni posti in principio delle altre parti del concento, da quali segni nascono diverse proportioni'.

messa composta sopra queste note o ver sillabe, *la sol fa re mi*,⁴² più volte replicate, cioè alcuna volta cantate di massime, alcuna di lunghe, et alcuna volta di brevi, et alcuna di semibrevi, et alcuna volta di minime, et qualche volta queste figure o ver notule sesqualterate, scilicet in proportione sesqualtera, per dimostrare essere abondantissimo et locupletissimo di peritia et doctrina pertinente al contrapunto sopra un medesimo atto o vero progresso, el quale d'alcuni moderni è chiamato 'pugna' o vero 'reditta' et non colore, perché alli sui tempi non se usava questo modo di colore.

^{21^v} 19. Parmi che io sia stato, honorando mio, | molto arrogante et temerario nello scriver circa queste dubitationi. Ma volendo dimostrare quello che è di mio giuditio et parere, non ho possuto dire altrimente. Et se gli paresse che io contrariasse et repugnasse a qualche sua opinione, come di sopra habbiamo detto, non è proceduto da veruna malignità, né per volermi preponere a·llei de dottrina, ma per usare ufficio di vero et sincero amico havendo cura del suo honore, attento che V.E. mi ha mandate per sua humanità et gentilezza le opere sue, et sopra di esse richiesto il parer mio. Non è vero amico quello il quale al suo amico occulta et asconde la verità con il velo della blandiloquentia et fallace adulatione.

20. Di giorno in giorno io vo preparando le cose necessarie allo stampare l'opere de V.E., quantonque li bisogni lungo tempo, et massimamente per l'intaglio delli esempi. Pur non sono per mancharli in cosa alcuna. Ma da usarli ogni diligentia et fede, vorria ben che V.E. mi facesse vedere il suo trattato chiamato *Apostilla*, il quale allega spesso in le opere sue, acciò che io possa vedere alcuni altri dubbii quali io ho in alcuni lochi di questo suo trattato de contra punto et in quello de le proportioni, et etiam in quello intitulato a Messer Hermes Bentivoglio di canto misurato, delle quali dubitationi altro per adesso scrivere non posso a V.E., se prima io non veggo el detto trattato. Sì che la prego quanto so et posso si degni mandarmelo.' Et quanto più presto V.E. se degnarà darmi risposta, tanto più charo me sarà.

In Venetia a dì vIII ottobre м.р.ххіх.

[Giovanni del Lago]

⁴⁰ CS iv. 180; *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 14.

⁴¹ Modern edn. in Obrecht, *Werken*, ed. Wolf, Afl. 12, Missen 9. For a facsimile of the tenor, see Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music*, p. 183. Throughout the tenor Obrecht uses mensuration-signs to change the value of the notes on the repetition of each passage. The sections cited by Del Lago carry three or four mensuration-signs. Spataro's definition is so general that it could be applied to Obrecht's tenor; the only difference between the tenor and Spataro's example is that in the latter the values are merely halved and then quartered; in Obrecht's tenor some of the note-values change between perfect and imperfect values.

 $^{^{}r}$ MS: mandarmello. The following passage has been cancelled: 'presto. In tutto quello che io so et posso sono sempre a comandamenti di V.E., offerendomi sempre a quelli p. [illegible word] come suo buon figliolo et desideroso haver spesso lettere da lei.'

⁴² Modern edn. by Smijers in Werken van Josquin des Prés, Missen 2, and id., Josquin des Prez, Opera omnia, i/2 (Amsterdam, 1957).

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The Letters

I. On 9 August I answered your letter of 5 July [no. 26] and thanked you infinitely for sending your treatise on counterpoint. Through your innate kindness, you not only dedicated it to me, but allowed me to correct it, since you wrote: 'Enclosed I am sending the treatise on counterpoint, but with some reluctance: it really ought to be kept back a year and then re-examined. But I know you will read it diligently and purge it of all errors. If you find anything superfluous or lacking, or other errors, emend it as if it were your own and I shall be happy. And if you do not like the beginning or end, change it as you please; since I have dedicated it to you, I want it to be all yours.'¹

2. In answer to my letter of 9 August you wrote on 23 August [no. 27] as follows: 'You say you have some queries about the treatise and also the one on proportions. I am convinced that my works must contain some ill-considered passages, because they needed to have been read and reread with the greatest care. But I have placed my trust in you; your experience and learning will take care of everything. However, I should like to know what your doubts are. Although I stand with both feet in the grave, I still wish to learn.'²

3. Knowing that this is your wish, I shall gladly comply, not to oppose you, for I could be the disciple of the least of your disciples, but to fulfil the duty of a true friend and not conceal what might turn out to your detriment and dishonour.

4. In ch. 7 of the second part, which deals with *fuga*, *reditta*, *talea*, and color, you define *fuga* as follows: the fuga calls for at least two parts, one of which follows the footprints of the other at the unison, fourth, fifth, and octave and their compounds. Fuga consists in the similarity of the intervals, rising and falling, and not in the similarity of solmization syllables, placed as one wishes with the sounds.³ But your definition is contradicted by your example:





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is answered a fourth below by the tenor:



The syllables in the soprano would be *sol*, fa (as an accidental), la, *sol*, re, (since it continues upwards), because the flat that you add to b' is variable and applies only to that note. One says fa whenever there is a flat. But

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when the melody continues upwards or downwards, you cancel the flat and return to the hard or the natural hexachord.

5. This is confirmed by Marchetto of Padua, who says in ch. 42: As mentioned above, wherever square \Box is set down we sing mi, wherever round b is set down we sing fa. The notes these two signs, \Box and \Box , serve always are related by the semitone. If the semitone is introduced by a note sung as fa, a round b is placed there; if it is introduced by a note sung as mi, a square \Box is placed there. These are the true properties of the round b and the square \Box , and this explains why they are written in the same place in melody. The only syllables that follow them are fa and mi—no others.⁴ You seem to believe that the B \flat is fixed, as if it were a key signature, just as my intimate friend Adrian Willaert used it in the tenor of his 'Quid non ebrietas'.⁵

6. But I hold a different opinion,⁶ and I say your Bb is variable, because (as I think you know)⁷ when Bb is placed in front of a passage, the whole passage is sung in the soft hexachord, for the flat acts as a clef. Tinctoris confirms this in his Dictionary: Bb is the clef of Bb/Ba, showing that fa should be sung.⁸ And: Bp indicates the hexachord where F is sung as ut and the other syllables derive from it.9 Therefore Bb indicates its own hexachord, separate from the others, and when it occurs in the middle of a piece, it indicates fa and applies only to that note. This is confirmed by Prosdocimo of Padua in his counterpoint treatise: The fifth rule is this: that when either of these two signs is applied in order to colour some consonance, it ought always to be applied just before the note whose syllable is to be changed in order to colour the consonance, whether the note be in the tenor or in the contratenor or in one of the discants, and whether it be on a line or in a space, for any such sign serves only the note immediately following it (unless the round b is applied at the beginning of some melody as a signature, because in that case the b signifies that the whole melody ought to be sung with round or soft b).¹⁰ Since your Bb occurs in the middle of a piece, it applies only to that note or the notes that follow. Therefore it seems to me that your example does not agree with your definition.

7. The same goes for other passages, and especially the ending. Tinctoris says: Fuga is the identity of voice-parts in a composition with respect to time-values, solmization, form, and sometimes the location of notes and rests,¹¹ with which Gafurio agrees: Since this precept is arbitrary, it suffers exception, because many musicians begin their compositions with an imperfect interval, that is a third, sixth, tenth, or thirteenth, which is very pleasing and artful, especially when one part imitates the other in a similar progression of notes, which can be called consequence or fuga.¹² By 'similar progression of notes' he means the same solmization syllables and note-values. Similarly, in his Practica he says: For the notes of the tenor frequently move in ascending or descending parallel motion with the notes of the cantus, and the same is true of the contratenor. This occurs especially when voiceparts of a song move in imitative style.¹³

1.

8. Don Pietro Aaron, our dear friend, in his De institutione harmonica defines it similarly: It is called 'imitation' or 'chasing' because the following or the preceding [part] repeats the voices of the preceding or the following part [respectively], [making them] the same in name but different in location; and either as it were utters them by imitating or appears as it were to chase them by following.¹⁴ He gives an example with the following remarks: If the cantus begins on d' and sings re mi fa sol la, the tenor makes a fifth beneath it, waiting for a minim rest; the fifth will be on g and will retain the same note-values; know however that it is necessary that this tenor is then sung with Bb, for otherwise it would not imitate the above-mentioned notes of the cantus.¹⁵ The excellent musician Adrian Willaert placed a Bb in the key signature of the canonic follower in his hymn 'Ave maris stella'¹⁶ to preserve the same intervals and syllables, as a true fuga requires. Jacquet, in his 'Plorabant sacerdotes et levite' for five parts,¹⁷ did the same, though Fra Giordano¹⁸ of the Dominican order, maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Padua, has a different opinion. When we debated the issue, I informed him that he misunderstood the true nature of the term *fuga* and apprised him of his great error.

9. Your example is not only contrary to your definition but also to the discussion in the same chapter and in ch. 10 of the first part, rule 5, where you quote the definition of *fuga* given by your teacher Ramis: So that the syllables or notes that follow in the tenor should not disagree with those in the counterpoint, because when the fuga begins to disagree, the dissimilarity of the fuga becomes evident.¹⁹ This definition of your teacher shows that if the follower differs in its syllables, it necessarily differs in intervals and species, because the semitone, which determines the species [of fourth or fifth], is in a different place each time. Because of the different species, the composition becomes harsh and the nature and composition of the mode changes. Therefore, unless the solmization syllables are the same, there cannot be a true *fuga*. For the *fuga* has three conditions: similarity in syllables, form, and note-values. Lacking one of these, it is not a real *fuga*.

10. I like your definition of *redicta* because redicta *is nothing but the* continuous repetition of one or more melodic intervals.²⁰

11. You define talea as a manner of singing which occurs when one voice-part repeats the same passage on various degrees, as shown in the soprano of the following example:



Whether this definition is valid or not, I wish for the moment to say only that I have found different uses of *talea* in old compositions, such as the tenor of a motet by Giovanni da Bologna, 'Certa salutis',²¹ composed in 1440:





Canon. The first and the third *taleae* are in perfect mode and *tempus*, the second and fourth *taleae* in imperfect mode and *tempus*.²²

The note-values of the third *talea* agree with those of the first, but their location is quite different, and consequently their syllables. The same is true of the fourth and second *taleae*. Older composers define *talea* as a progression of similar note-values only, repeated several times in some voice-part in the same order and without intervening material.²³ Tinctoris says: Talea is the identity of small passages in one and the same voice-part regarding solmization, pitch, note-values, and rests.²⁴ Johannes de Muris does not distinguish between *talea* and color: Concerning this, note that some singers make a difference between color and talea. They call it color when similar pitches are repeated, but talea when similar note-values are repeated, and thus emerge note-values with different pitches.²⁵

12. There are other kinds of *talea* that I won't go into now. You call it 'tala'. I have not found this in any old or modern book.²⁶ According to Johannes de Muris and other experienced old authors, *talea* is the repetition of the same note-values or notes. So, with your leave, I shall change it to 'talea'. Moreover, you err in stating 'in one voice-part of the composition' because *talea* can be found in every voice-part; see the tenor above and also Dunstable's 'Veni Sancte Spiritus'²⁷ and his motet on the antiphon 'Inter natos mulierum',²⁸ and a motet by the priest Johannes de

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Sarto with a tenor on the introit 'Requiem aeternam' of the mass of the Dead,²⁹ and many other compositions by the most learned composers.

13. You err also in defining color, because it is found not just in one voice-part but in each part of every composition, in the middle of a work. Color is a certain melody repeated several times in a composition. And this repetition is voluntary, preserving the metrical ordering of the mode, tempus, and prolation, including the measurement of the rests. The notes and rests are repeated two, three, or four times. This repetition is called color because the music is coloured, i.e. ornamented and embellished by that color, delighting the eye and ear,³⁰ just as the rhetoricians call colour an ornament of speech.³¹ And this procedure differs from introitus, so called when one part of a composition receives the end of the other part of the same composition; it should be found at the end of the voice-parts and is improperly called color, although it can commonly be so called.³²

14. Your definitions of *talea* and *color* are valid only for old compositions because older composers used them only in the tenor, as stated by Johannes de Muris: Which difference, although it may be observed in many tenors of motets, is not seen in the upper voices. Examples are shown in the motets.³³ According to this authority, the ancients distinguished between color and talea only in the tenors of the motets, but modern composers, who are more perspicacious, use color and talea in tenor, superius, and contratenor.³⁴ Thus you will understand the deficiency of your definitions.

15. Tinctoris made the same error in his definitions, but only when he specified 'in one and the same part of the composition'.³⁵ I can excuse the two of you only by saying that 'occasionally even good Homer nods'.³⁶

16. You define color as follows: Again, the aforesaid ancients used another procedure in the parts of the compositions which they called color, which occurs when a passage is repeated in one voice-part on the same pitch but with note-values that differ in force, shape, and value, as appears in the soprano:





Here too your definition does not agree with that of Johannes de Muris, who says: Color *in music is, or is called, a progression of the same note-values repeated several times in the same voice-part.*³⁷ Some older theorists say: Color *is a progression of similar note-values and similar pitches repeated several times in the middle of some voice-part in the same order and with some intervening material.*³⁸ Others say: Color *is a progression of similar pitches only, repeated several times in some voice-part in the same order without intervening material.*³⁹ According to Tinctoris, color *is the identity of small passages in one and the same voice-part regarding the form and the value of the notes and rests.*⁴⁰ Therefore you can easily see that your definition of *color* (if you will forgive me) is incomplete, in the light of all these others.

17. Moreover, you say Obrecht used *color* as you define it in the tenor of his 'Missa Si dedero'.⁴¹ I do not think this was Obrecht's intention. If you examine the tenor in the Gloria, Credo, and Sanctus with care, you will see it does not agree with your example, but just the opposite. He wanted to show his mastery of the proportional system and his abundant talent in counterpoint. In his time no one knew any more how to use *color*; none of the compositions shows it.

18. Josquin did a similar thing in his 'Missa La sol fa re mi',⁴² using these syllables now in large values, now in small, even in *sesquialtera*, to show his rich and overflowing skill and knowledge of counterpoint. Some modern musicians call this *pugna* (fight) or *redicta*, but not *color*.

19. I fear, my honoured friend, I have been very bold and arrogant in formulating these doubts. They proceed not from ill will or a wish to show myself superior; they answer the office of a true friend who has your honour at heart. You have asked my opinion; a real friend does not hide the truth under a veil of flattery and false adulation.

20. I am making preparations for printing your treatise, but it will take a while, especially the examples. But to do the best I can, I should very much like to see your treatise *Appostille* that you cite so often, in order to consider some other queries I have on your treatises on counterpoint and proportions. The sooner I hear from you, the better. **29** (J36). Fos. 149^{r} -152^v

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 24 November 1529 (autograph)

¹⁵² [Al venerabi]le prete Zoanne veneto, de Sanc[ta Sophia diacon]o dignissimo et musico [doctissimo. In Ve]netia, [in la Barberia del] Sole posita sopra el cam[po] de Sancta Sophya.

149^r Venerabilis vir, salutem.

1. A li dì 5 del presente ho receputo una vostra de dì 8 otobris signata [no. 28], la quale (per due cause) a me è stata non poco molesta et de sumo spiacere, et prima per havere compreheso che non haveti havuto una mia [no. 27], la quale ve mandai per uno frate de Sancto Salvatore, in resposta de quella vostra de dì 9 augusti signata a me missa.¹ Et etiam ve ho mandato due altre mie per la via de Messer Gaspar da le Arme, directive a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono. Per ciascuna de le predicte io ve pregava che a vui piacesse mandarme quella agiuncta che ha facta el nostro Frate Petro Aron al suo *Toscanello.*²

2. L'altra causa per la quale questa vostra ultima a me è stata molesta nasce da le vostre puerile et impensate argumentatione, le quale vui faceti nel 7° capitulo de la seconda parte del mio tractato de contrapuncto a vui misso, dove diceti che io sono contra me medesimo in questo passo de fuga:

Et questo diceti advenire perché el tenore, el quale fuga dapo el soprano ut

hic: $\frac{12}{15}$ c s r, non potrà fugare con quelle medesime voce o

vero syllabe de Guido, perché el tenore farà el suo processo con queste denominatione de syllabe:

re fa mi re mi

¹ Spataro's complaint is puzzling, for Del Lago does not say he had no answer; moreover, he quotes from the letter Spataro sent; see no. 28, para. 2. We suspect that the version we have of Del Lago's letter is an edited one. He must have added the lengthy quotations from Spataro's two letters as background for his criticism of Spataro's treatise. Did the originals not exist, we should be disinclined to believe that Spataro gave Del Lago such a free hand in editing his works.

² Spataro refers to the second edn. of Aaron's *Toscanello* (Venice, 1529), which contains an 'Aggiunta del Toscanello a complacenza de gli amici fatta' (fo. N1'). In his previous letter (no. 27, para. 3), Spataro expressed his interest in finding out whether Aaron had made any changes in response to his critiques.

et el soprano procederà ut hic:



Io non scio dove vui haveti trovato che li nomi de li soni o vero voce, li quali sono stati inventi et ad placitum assignati a li soni musici aciò che li musici intervalli stiano in la memoria del cantore, siano de essentia musices et cantus. Pertanto dico che la similitudine (in fugando) solo consiste in la similitudine de li intervalli o vero specie exercitate nel concento fugato, et per tale modo è stato inteso da Tintoris, se sanamente advertereti a quella sua diffinitione da vui aducta in luce,³ come etiam è stato inteso da Bartolomeo Ramis, mio preceptore, nel capitolo primo de la seconda parte da la soa Practica, dove lui dice ut hic: Est tamen modus organizandi optimus, quando organum imitatur tenorem in ascensu aut in descensu, non in eodem tempore, sed post unam notulam vel plures incipit in eadem voce eundem cantum facere, aut similem in diatessaron vel in diapente, aut etiam in diapason vel in suis compositis ac decompositis sub aut supra, quem modum practici fugam apelant, propterea quod una vox aliam sequitur simili arsi aut thesi.⁴ Questo doctissimo musico conclude che la fuga solo consiste in la similitudine de lo ascenso et del descenso, et non in la similitudine de li nomi assignati a li soni del canto. Et questa verità claramente da vui serà comprehesa considerando che se da dui cantori tale mio exemplo serà cantato senza denominare alcuna de le syllabe de Guido, tale exemplo o vero canto mio in tale loco serà dicto essere fugato, perché procederà per intervalli et specie simile. Ma se da poi tale mio concento serà da li predicti dui cantori iterum cantato con dissimile denominatione per le syllabe de Guido, perché li nomi de li soni o vero syllabe serano dissimili, tale concento (secondo vui) non serà più canto fugato, et per tale modo, secondo vui, $_{149^{v}}$ sequitarà che el nome (el quale è posito ad placitum) torà el proprio a la specie, et ancora sequitarà che se Plato fugarà Socrate con medesimi passi, che l'homo non fugarà l'homo, ma sì, se Socrate serà fugato da Socrate.

3. Dico ancora che tale processo potrà essere in dui altri modi pronuntiato et cantato per le syllabe de Guido da vui non considerati, ut hic:



³ See no. 28 n. 11.

⁴ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 68 (see no. 28 n. 19). Slipping inadvertently into Italian, Spataro writes 'simile' for 'similem' and 'voce' for 'vox'.

29. Spataro to Del Lago, 24 Nov. 1529

et tale varietà de denominatione nasce perché el modo de procedere per tale syllabe in tale loco et altri simili è arbitrario et non tanto subiecto a la regola de observare l'ordine de tale syllabe, come è el canto plano, perché in canto plano sempre li lochi de le mutatione se possono formare in acto, ma nel mensurato canto le mutatione non sono actualemente cantate, ma sono subintelecte, et ciascuno cantore (in questa musica mensurata) denomina li soni et le sonore distantie secondo el suo comodo, et poco curano de la diversa denominatione de li soni, ma solo atendeno che li spatii de li toni et de li semitonii cadano pronuntiati in li lochi soi debiti et regolati. Concludo adonca che a la fuga solamente convene la observantia de la similitudine de li intervalli et specie, et non del nome de li soni.

4. Da poi oltra procedendo in tale vostra, vui scoprite un'altra vostra ignorantia dove diceti che credeti che quello signo del b molle, el quale ho posito per declaratione de la fuga, sia inteso da me essere signo inditiale et essentiale.⁵ A la quale vostra male pensitata consideratione respondo et dico che el signo del b molle et del b duro sempre serano inditiali et non mai serano essentiali, et questo advene" perché sono signi primi, et non accidenti proprii de altri signi, et perché non possono essere comprehesi né etiam essere intesi stare in li concenti per alcuno suo accidente occurente in le note exercitate in li concenti, se non per la sua apparente et usitata forma propria. Imperò che el non acade del signo del b molle et del b duro come acade del signo circulare et altri simili usitati in canto mensurato per la clara notitia del valore de le note, li quali perché sono signi primamente considerati sono tantumodo dicti signi inditiali. Ma da poi l'ordine de le note, o vero figure, el quale dapo procede in li concenti secondo l'ordine de tali signi, è chiamato signo essentiale, et sono per tale modo nominati perché sono de essentia cantus, zoè cantati o vero mensuratamente pausati in li concenti, o vero canti, come acade del signo circulare signato in fronte cantus, el quale (ut dixi) sempre serà signo inditiale. Ma se da poi (in processu cantus) se trovarà qualche suo effecto, o vero proprio accidente, come seriano queste pause ---- o vero

^a MS: adevene.

⁵ Spataro's use of the words 'inditiale' and 'essentiale' shows that Del Lago changed the terminology to 'mobile' and 'stabile' after he sent the letter to Spataro; see no. 28 nn. d-j and 6-7. In fact, he is following Spataro's suggestion, made later in the present letter. Spataro recalls Del Lago's criticism incorrectly. The latter did not claim that Spataro understood the flat as both indicative and essential but only as essential, that is, remaining in effect for the rest of the composition in order to ensure the correct intervals with the corresponding *fuga*. It is Del Lago who claimed that the flat was indicative rather than essential, that is, it affected only the note immediately following. Spataro correctly faults Del Lago for his terminology, which he appropriated from the use of rests to indicate mode; indeed, Del Lago has reversed the meaning of the terms, for rests placed before the metric signature are called indicative, those within the course of the piece essential.

semibreve alterate, o vero divise, o vero breve plene per evitare perfectione, etc., alhora tali effecti o vero accidenti proprii (del circulo producti et considerati) serano signi secondi, et serano dicto essentiali, perché oltra che loro demonstrano quello che prima dal circulo è stato demonstrato, sono ancora mensuratamente exercitati in li concenti, la quale cosa non potrà acadere in li signi del b molle et del b duro, perché el non se dà signo in notulis per el quale tali signi possano essere comprehesi, ma sempre sono extra. Et la nota per tali signi signata non muta valore per virtù de esso signo, ma tantumodo muta sono et loco. Dico ancora che al signo del b molle non se convene tali vocabuli, scilicet inditiale et essentiale. Pertanto meglio da vui seria stato dicto, dicendo che tale signo potrà essere continuato et non continuato, o vero stabile et mobile. Per le predicte demonstratione potreti intendere che tale signo non è stato posito da me in tale loco per signo essentiale, come vui credeti. Et per meglio demonstrare el vostro poco sapere, diceti che da Messer Adriano è stato posito tale signo per signo inditiale et essentiale, come appare in quello suo canto a due voce facto ['Quid non ebrietas'], etc., circa el quale canto io ve conforto che per honore vostro non vogliati parlarne, perché 'stolido non sapit ista seges':⁶ tale cibo non è per vostri denti.

5. Diceti ancora che in multi altri lochi, et maxime nel fine de tale mio exemplo, io sono discrepante da la natura de la fuga. Circa questo respondo et dico che tale discrepantia è stato facta da me con summo studio nel medio et nel fine de tale exemplo, aciò che nel medio l'uno modo de fugare sia destincto et cognosuto da l'altro, et aciò che nel fine el concento resti integro et finito, così nel suprano, come nel tenore. Imperò che la particula fugata sempre in fine cantus serà dissimile da la fugante, per la quale cosa Bartolomeo Ramis (per non essere dissimile in le particule de la fuga) lassa in li soi exempli la particula fugata diminuta nel fine respecto la particula fugante,⁷ la quale cosa non è stata observata da me, aciò che le particule del concento siano equale in quantità et aciò che siano inseme cantate usque in finem cantus, et non aciò che una canti et l'altra manchi de figure cantabile.

6. Da poi ultra sequitando vui diceti che io sono molto discrepante da la mera et reale diffinitione de la fuga, et per meglio substentare quello che diceti, aduceti in luce la diffinitione de J. Tintoris, la quale dice ut hic: Fuga est identitas partium quo ad valorem, nomen, formam, et interdum quo ad locum notarum et pausarum suarum,⁸ la quale diffinitione dico essere dimi-

nuta, irregulare, et superflua, perché in multi lochi non quadra et non competisse con la natura et proprietà de essa fuga diffinita. Imperò che dove dice 'fuga est identitas partium cantus', qua caderà diminutione, perché tale identità non occorre in eodem tempore come di sopra ha dicto Bartolomeo Ramis,⁹ et la diffinitione da vui chiamata reale manca de tale proprietà conveniente a la fuga. Dico ancora che dove dice 'quo ad nomen', scilicet 'notarum et pausarum suarum', serà superfluo et irregulare, perché come di sopra ho demonstrato, el nome ad placitum assignato a le note cantabile non pò essere de esentia cantus, et etiam asai bastava dire 'quo ad valorem' et non 'quo ad formam', perché la forma de le figure 150^v de le diverse particu|le, le quale fano la fuga, potrà essere diversa, ma non de virtù et valore, come acaderia se una de tale particule del canto fusse signata con questo signo integro C, et l'altra per questo diminuto C. Similemente dove sequitando diceti 'et interdum quo ad locum notarum et pausarum suarum', seti stato superfluo, perché asai bastava dicendo 'quo ad locum notarum suarum', perché le pause sono così note come sono le note cantabile, et etiam perché circa la fuga le note cantabile et le pause maxime inter se differunt. Imperò che le note cantabile servano ordine locale in la fuga, ma le pause non sono subjecte^b a tale ordine, perché siano posite in quale loco se vogliano, altro non producono che solo el suo tacito valore, et la fuga non consiste in le distantie locale de le pause, ma sì in le distantie locale de le note cantabile. Hora poteti comprehendere che andati claudicando, perché vui aduceti in vostra diffensione quello che apertamente è contra de vui, et questo advene perché fati come fano quilli che poco sciano, li quali perché vano con poco respecto, se recano ogni

7. Da poi ultra procedendo, diceti che seti pervenuto dove io tracto de talla, o vero talea, et diceti che non confesati né negati che tale modo da me assignato possa stare o non possa stare, ma che in le antique compositione haveti trovato altri modi de talea asai diversi dal mio assignato in tale mio tractato, et aduceti in luce uno certo tenore de uno Zoanne Bolognese asai difforme da la mera verità.¹⁰ Et perché non sapeti più oltra, non diceti altro, cioè come sia cognosuto che la talea sia in esso tenore circa le cantabile o non cantabile note posite in esso tenore. Et oltra procedendo, per demonstrare che cosa sia talea, vui diceti questa sequente vostra diffinitione, cioè *Talea est unus processus solum similium figurarum repetitus pluries in aliquo cantu secundum eundem ordinem et absque medio.* Et da

^b MS: subjecta.

sterco in seno.

⁶ Cf. Hans Walther, *Proverbia sententiaeque Latinitatis medii aevi*, v (Carmina medii aevi posterioris Latina ii/5; Göttingen, 1967), p. 369, no. 31648: 'Tu gallo stolidum, tu iaspide dona sophie, / Pulchra noces stolido, nil sapit ista seges', quoted from a 14th-c. manuscript.

⁷ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 68 (see no. 28 n. 19).

⁸ See no. 28 n. 11.

⁹ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 68; Ramis's definition includes the words 'non in eodem tempore'. Tinctoris did not specify that one voice follows another.

¹⁰ 'Certa salutis spes'; see no. 28, para. 11.

poi per meglio fortificare la vostra male pensitata predicta diffinitione, aduceti in luce la diffinitione de Tintoris, con el quale haveti cercato concordarvi, perché ogni simile petisse el suo simile.¹¹ Tintoris era uno pazo, et molto più se credeva sapere che non sapeva, come demonstrano le opere soe, et come potreti comprehendere, dove sequitando diceti che da esso Tintoris è stato diffinito che cosa sia colore in musica ut hic: Color est identitas particularum in una et eadem partem cantus existentium quo ad formam et valorem notarum et pausarum suarum.¹² La predicta soa diffinitione, ad litteram et de verbo ad verbum, sona come fa quella, la quale lui ha posito per diffinire che cosa sia talea. Non scio se due nature diverse stano soto una medesima diffinitione, ma le predicte sue et vostre diffinitione non demonstrano la natura del colore, né etiam de talea, ma demonstrano la natura de la redicta, perché el colore sequita la cosa colorata con qualche 151^r similitudine | de essa cosa colorata, et non con identità de forma et valore de note, perché de la identità de le particule facta in una medesima particula del concento, senza mutare la forma et valore de le note, nasce la redicta, o vero la particula replicata et iterum dicta, et de questo vostro errore non ve seti acorto.¹³ Et questo nasce perché haveti aducto in luce molte diffinitione et de alcuna non haveti assignato exemplo, imperò che 'exempla magis docent quam verba'.¹⁴ Haveti solamente ateso a chiachiarare, et multe diffinitione haveti scripti che da vui non sono intese, et quadrano con el diffinito 'ut asinus ad lyram'.¹⁵ Ma io tengo che quello che circa la fuga, redicta, colore, et talla, o vero talea, da me è stato scripto sia bene dicto et scripto, perché tale doctrina non è mia, ma io l'ho havuto da uno piculo tractato, el quale me fu donato dal mio preceptore de l'ano 1484,¹⁶ el quale tractato tengo scripto de sua propria mano, et credo che

¹¹ This proverb goes back to antiquity. As 'simile gaudet simili' it is found in Erasmus, *Adagiorum chiliades quatuor* (Basle, 1523), fo. 64° (no. 1. 2. 21). It also appears in Ecclus. 13: 19 as 'omne animal diligit simile sibi, sic et omnis homo proximum sibi'.

¹² Dictionary, trans. Parrish, p. 14; see no. 28 n. 40.

¹³ Spataro makes a distinction between *redicta* and *color* that is not found in Tinctoris. For Tinctoris, *redicta* is 'the continuous repetition of one or more melodic intervals' (see no. 28, para. 10). Spataro's example of *color* could illustrate this definition. But Spataro believes that *color* is an ostinato that undergoes diminution upon repetition, whereas *redicta* does not presuppose any rhythmic pattern.

¹⁴ See Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Hiezechihelem prophetam*, ed. Marcus Adriaen (Corpus Christianorum, series Latina 142; Turnhout, 1971), p. 317 (2. 7. 2): 'Plus enim plerumque exempla quam ratiocinationis verba compungunt.'

¹⁵ This famous proverbial Greek saying was transmitted in Erasmus, *Adagia*, fo. 131' (no. 1. 4. 35)

¹⁶ This treatise has not survived. It may be the same as the one mentioned by Pietro Aaron in his *Lucidario* (Venice, 1545), Book III, fo. 18°: 'Bartholomeo Rami in un certo suo compendio composto in lingua materna ...' (which Aaron cites for the definition of counterpoint according to 'gli antichi'). Ramis himself, in his *Musica practica* (ed. Wolf, p. 42), mentions a treatise in 'lingua materna' that he wrote while he was in Salamanca. quello che lui ha scripto in tale tractato sia la mera verità, perché lui era docto et haveva grande cognitione de li termini usitati da li antiqui, et etiam lui andava con altro respecto che non ha facto Johannes de Muris et Tintoris, li quali, dato che l'uno fusse existimato bono theologo,¹⁷ et l'altro bono astro-logo,¹⁸ non sono però stati boni musici,¹⁹ come l'opere sue demonstrano.

8. Io non dico che la intentione de Jacobo Obreth sia stata che li tenori de la sua missa de 'Si dedero' fusseno intesi da altri essere stati facti da lui in modo de processo colorato, ma dico che de tale tenori (resoluti in uno solo signo) claramente nascerà una musica et processo colorato. Se lui non ha havuto tale intentione, non resta però che lui non habia facto quello che da lui non è stato compreheso, perché spesso acade che multi, parlando et tractando de diverse scientie, fano de li sylogisimi et altri termini pertinenti a li optimi logici, et loro ignorano logica. Se da Jacobo Obreth è stato ignorato quello processo colorato el quale cade in li soi tenori predicti, da poi da altri musici (più docti de lui) tale colorato processo è stato compreheso, la quale cosa è stata da vui tacite affirmata, dove seguitando diceti che al tempo del predicto Jacobo non era alcuno el quale havesse intelligentia de tale processo collorato, per le quale vostre parole se verifica quello che da me è stato dicto di sopra, scilicet che multi (aliquando) fano quello che non intendeno et che non cognoscono, che da poi è compreso et denominato da coloro che in tale facultà sono docti. Quanti sono li quali scriveno in latino et in ling[u]a materna che fano de li interogativi et de le parenthesis, et altri puncti et termini che non li intendeno, che da poi sono intesi da li periti et boni gramatici. Pertanto se tale modo è stato tenuto da Josquino per demonstrarsi copioso de arte de contrapuncto, et non per procedere per musica colorata, questo non contradice però che lui non habia aducto in luce el canto colorato da lui non inteso né considerato, el quale canto colorato diceti essere stato (51^v chiamato | da loro 'pugna' et 'redicta', et non 'colore'. A me certamente

¹⁷ Tinctoris, as we know from many of the headings of his treatises, was licensed in canon law, but he is not otherwise known as a theologian. Perhaps Spataro confused the musician with the theologian Johannes Tinctoris, canon of the cathedral of Tournai and author of numerous theological treatises, who died in 1469; see Ronald Woodley, 'Iohannes Tinctoris: A Review of the Documentary Biographical Evidence', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34 (1981), 217–41, esp. 218 and 223.

¹⁸ Johannes de Muris's numerous treatises on astronomy/astrology far outweigh the five treatises on music. On his life, see Lawrence Gushee, 'New Sources for the Biography of Johannes de Muris', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 22 (1969), 3-26. On his works, including those on astronomy, see Ulrich Michels, *Die Musiktraktate des Johannes de Muris* (Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 8; Wiesbaden, 1970).

¹⁹ Spataro's concept of *musicus* is the same one held by Boethius (*De musica* 1. 34; ed. Friedlein, p. 225), who defines him as one 'who possesses the faculty of judging, according to speculation or reason, appropriate and suitable to music, of modes and rhythms and of the classes of melodies... and of the songs of the poets'; *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Strunk, p. 86.

molto piace che tale nome, scilicet colore, usitato da li antiqui sia stato chiamato 'pugna' da li moderni, perché la pugna nasce quando sono multi non concordi in unione, la quale cosa acade nel colore. Imperò che intra el colore et el colorato non cade poca discrepantia, perché nel colorato consiste la integra et mera verità, ma nel colore (respective) consiste errore et mendatia.²⁰ Che tale colore sia stato chiamato redicta da li moderni predicti, non lo credo, ma se pure è stato da loro per tale nome denominato, tale denominatione non le convene, perché (ut dixi) redicta et colore multum inter se differunt, perché la redicta consiste de la particula iterum replicata et dicta con figure o vero note equale in quantità et valore, et el colore consta de la particola primamente dicta con figure differente de quantità et valore reiterata.

9. Da poi sequitando diceti che (de giorno in giorno) andati preparando quello che fa bisogno al stampare l'opera mia, et che li bisogna gran tempo, etc. A me (Pre Zanetto mio) pare che io sia caduto nel lazo, el quale sempre dubitai, cioè che in vui io trovaria più zance che facti, perché vui stati dui, trei, et quattro mixi [=mesi], et da poi me scrivete con qualche vostre puerile dubitatione et fati argumenti de tale sorte che non solo monstrati el vostro poco sapere, ma cercati de imparare soto umbre de disputatione, et questo è usitato da vui per meglio conducere l'opera in longo. Pertanto ve prego, se me voleti fare apiacere, che me mandati li mei tractati, perché non curo che siano impressi per vostra mezanità, perché vui ve existimati tropo docto, et le opere mie sono humile et basse. Pertanto a vui seria poco honore intravenire in la impressione de tale opere mie. Imperò che vui seti el docto de Vinetia, et per essere tenuto di magiore reputatione et doctrina, andati dicendo che io ve ho mandato le opere mie aciò che siano da vui correcte et castigate. Et sequitando diceti che vui voresti che io ve mandasse el mio tractato chiamato Appostille, perché voleti chiarirve de alcuni dubii, a la quale cosa respondo che io non ve mandaria el minimo foglio che sia in tale mio tractato, perché el me dole (sino a la morte) de quello che ve ho mandato. Ma io me ne dolerò con Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono, del quale (prima che io ve mandasse le opere mie) io volsi el suo consenso et parere, et questo non fu da me facto senza causa, perché prima io haveva inteso qualche vostro andamento. Pertanto non aspectati più littere da me circa la declaratione

de le vostre puerile^c dubietà et argumenti, perché con vui (che seti la propria ignorantia) cosa alcuna non posso guadagnare. Et iterum ve prego me vogliati mandare li mei tractati, et da poi seremo amici come eravamo prima.

Vale. Bononie, die 24 novembris 1529.

J. Spatarius

1. On 5 November I received your letter of 8 October [no. 28] which displeased me for two reasons, first that you did not receive my response [no. 27] to yours of 9 August,¹ sent with a friar of San Salvatore. Apparently you have also not received the two letters I sent you by Gaspar dalle Arme care of Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, in which I asked you to send me a copy of Aaron's *Aggiunta* to his *Toscanello*.²

2. Secondly, I was annoyed by your childish and ill-considered arguments in claiming that my example contradicts my explanation of *fuga* because the solmization syllables do not agree, the tenor having

and the soprano

I don't know from where you get the idea that solmization syllables, invented solely for the convenience of singers in remembering intervals, are of the essence of music. Similarity in imitation consists in using the same intervals and species; both Tinctoris³ and Ramis agree. The latter writes in his *Practica*, Part 11, ch. 1: *There is, however, an excellent way of producing counterpoint: when the contrapuntal voice imitates the tenor in ascending or descending, not at the same time but after one or several notes, it begins to make the same melody on the same pitch or at the fourth, fifth, or even octave or their compounds or simple intervals above or below. Musicians call this fuga, because one voice follows another in a similar ascent or descent.⁴ This learned theorist concludes that imitation consists in the similarity of rising and falling intervals alone and not in the similarity of solmization syllables. If two*

²⁰ We have long puzzled over this sentence. We believe that Spataro may intend to differentiate between a coloured object, the colour being part and parcel of the object (this is the real thing, *la integra et mera verità*), and the colour as something that is brought to a thing from the outside and therefore changes and distorts the object from what it really is (Spataro would have much to criticize in today's processed foods, we fear). With this analogy he is trying to buttress his approval of Obrecht's music on the one hand, and his disapproval of the artificial way in which some theorists of his day wish to label it.

29. Spataro to Del Lago, 24 Nov. 1529

The Letters

singers sing my example without syllables, you will have imitation because the intervals and species are the same. But if they then sing it with dissimilar syllables, according to you it will not be imitation. This is like saying that the name, given arbitrarily to the note, acquires the property of the species, and that if Plato pursues Socrates step for step, a man will not pursue a man, but only if Socrates pursues Socrates.

3. The passage could also be solmized two other ways:

and these syllables are arbitrary, unlike in chant, for in mutation in mensural music the syllables are understood but not sung; what matters is that the tones and semitones fall in the right places. I therefore conclude that imitation consists in the similarity of intervals and not of solmization syllables.

4. Further on in your letter you uncover afresh your ignorance when you say I believe the B \flat in my example to be indicative and essential.⁵ \flat and are always indicative and never essential, for they are primary signs and not attributes of other signs; they have only one form. The signs \flat and are not like metric signatures at the beginning of a piece that indicate the value of the notes. If the attributes of, say, a circular signature divided semibreves, blackened breves to avoid perfection, etc., they are secondary signs and are considered essential; not only do they indicate what the sign had demonstrated but they affect the rhythmic movement. This is not the case with \flat and \flat , for there is no signal in the notes that reflects these signs; they are always extraneous. The note to which the sign is applied does not change value but only sound and place. 'Indicative' and 'essential' are not the proper words; you should have said 'continuous' and 'discontinuous' or 'fixed' and 'variable'. From the preceding you can understand that I did not intend the b as an essential sign. Your lack of intelligence shows in your statement that Adriano used the b as an indicative and essential sign in his duo ['Quid non ebrietas']; I beg you not to talk about this piece, if your honour is dear to you. Such food is not for your teeth: 'that harvest is not to the taste of slow wits'.⁶

5. You say that in many other parts of my example of *fuga* I deviate from my definition. I did this on purpose and with careful thought, to distinguish one type from another and to let the two parts come to an end, for the imitation will always break off at the end. This is why Ramis, in his

examples, stops the leading part and lets the follower continue.⁷ I did not follow his example because I wanted the two parts to cadence together.

6. To show how wrong I was you quote Tinctoris's definition of fuga: Fuga is the identity of voice-parts in a composition with respect to time-values, solmization, form, and sometimes the location of notes and rests.⁸ This definition is incomplete, irregular, and superfluous. It is incomplete because he does not specify that the similarity does not occur at the same time, as Ramis does.⁹ Your 'true' definition also misses the point. Where Tinctoris says 'as to the name of the notes and their rests' the definition is superfluous and irregular, since the solmization is irrelevant. 'As to the value' alone would have been sufficient, because the form of the notes could be different in appearance but not in value, if one part is sung under C, another under ¢. It is also superfluous to say 'and sometimes the location of the notes and their rests'; 'the location of the notes' would have been sufficient, since rests are also notes; moreover, rests can be placed anywhere you like. The imitation is between the notes that are sung, not the rests that are silent. You see how you stumble, quoting definitions that go against you, just like ignorant persons who by walking without due care cover themselves in filth.

7. On the matter of *talla* or *talea*, you do not approve or disapprove of my definition, but you cite a certain tenor by Giovanni da Bologna that is far off the mark.¹⁰ How do you know there is a *talea* in this tenor? You define talea as a progression of similar note-values only, repeated several times in some voice-part in the same order and without intervening material. To fortify this ill-conceived definition you adduce that of Tinctoris, with whom you have tried to assimilate your views, for like ever seeks out like.¹¹ Tinctoris was a fool and thought he knew a lot more than he did, as his works show. You should have understood this because his definition of *color* agrees word for word with his definition of talea: Color is the identity of small passages in one and the same voice-part regarding the form and the value of the notes and rests.¹² I don't know if one definition can cover two different terms, but you both are describing not talea or color but redicta. Color derives from the coloured object, not the identity of the form and value of notes. If you keep the form and value, then you have redicta.¹³ You didn't realize this because you have the habit of quoting all sorts of definitions without giving examples. But 'examples teach more than words'.¹⁴ You rattle on in your ignorance, not realizing that your definitions fit as well as 'an ass to the lyre'.¹⁵ I am convinced that my definitions of *fuga*, *redicta*, *color*, and talla or talea are correct because I have them from a small autograph treatise given me in 1484 by my teacher Ramis.¹⁶ He was learned and knew the terminology used by older writers and proceeded more prudently than Johannes de Muris and Tinctoris; granted that the latter was a good

theologian¹⁷ and the former a good astronomer,¹⁸ yet they were not good musicians,¹⁹ as their works show.

8. I do not claim that Obrecht intended to incorporate color in the tenor of his 'Missa Si dedero', but that is the musical result, if you resolve it under one signature. He may have done it unintentionally; many who are not trained in logic can nevertheless use syllogisms and other terms of logic. The fact that scholars later recognize it as color proves my point; think of all the people who write with interrogatives and parentheses and other grammatical features that they don't understand, but good grammarians do. And if Josquin used this process to prove his skill in counterpoint, it does not necessarily mean that it is not color because he didn't understand it as such. I certainly like the modern term 'pugna' for color, for fights break out when people who disagree come together. This is what happens in color. There is a difference between color and that which is coloured; in the latter there is complete truth, in the former error and falsehood.²⁰ I doubt that the musicians of today call color 'redicta'; if they do, the term is improperly used because redicta consists of repetition of passages with the same note-values and color the repetition with different note-values.

9. You say you are making preparations for printing my treatise. It seems to me I have fallen into a trap, as I always feared, for I find in you more prattle than action: you wait two, three, and four months, then you write to me with your infantile doubts and you argue in a way that reveals not only your small knowledge, but your intention to learn under the veil of 'disputation', just to drag things out. So do me a favour and return my treatises; my works are too humble for your exalted mediation and would bring you little honour. For you are the great scholar of Venice and to inflate your reputation you go around saying I have sent you my treatises for correction. I won't send you even one page of my Appostille; it pains me to death that I sent you anything at all. I shall complain to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, whom I consulted about you first, and this I did not without reason; I already had an inkling of your conduct. Don't expect any more letters from me on your puerile arguments; there is no profit in corresponding with you, who are ignorance personified. Again I ask you to return my treatises; then we shall be friends as before.

COMMENTARY

If we were to arbitrate between Del Lago and Spataro, the latter would not fare too well. Indeed, he had asked the 'great scholar of Venice' to correct the errors that must remain in his writings because he had not had the time to proof-read his work. He had said even more than that: do with my writings as you please; they are yours. Now that Del Lago has done just as he was told, Spataro cannot take it. It is as if he were saying two things, one out loud, the other *sotto voce*: out loud, 'correct my errors', *sotto voce*, 'but remember, Spataro makes no errors, and don't you ever forget it'.

Yet things are not quite as easy as all that. Are we willing to believe that Del Lago was sincere in his critique and that he really wanted to publish Spataro's writings? Or is it perhaps possible that he had heard very well what Spataro had said sotto voce and that his aim was to irritate his Bolognese colleague to the point where he would free him from a duty that he found not at all to his liking (to publish another man's writings), and further to lure him into sending him everything he had ever written, the Appostille above all, to which he kept referring constantly? While he did not feel that he was standing with both feet in the grave, as Spataro was fond of saying, yet, like Spataro, he too was eager to learn-and he realized full well how much there was to learn from the cantankerous old choirmaster of San Petronio. It is, at any rate, thoughtprovoking that Spataro challenges Del Lago's use of the terms essentiale and indiciale for the two uses of the flat as key signature and as accidental, and proposes instead the terms 'stabile' and 'mobile', and that these are the terms that Del Lago substitutes for essentiale and indiciale in the copy of his letter (which is all that remains today). Since this is a copy Del Lago had prepared for publication, he evidently intended to include some of Spataro's corrections.

If we read Del Lago's letter with care, we can easily spot the passages designed to irritate the master. But it is more difficult to adjudicate the points at issue. Del Lago distinguishes correctly between the flat as a key signature and the flat as a mere accidental; but by inflating the issue of that little passage and its solmization, he plays the pedant. No musician at the time took solmizing a few notes that seriously. On the other hand, Spataro plays down the issue by treating solmization as simply a matter of adding syllables to music, when the point is that identical solmization necessarily means identical intervals, in which major thirds and sixths do not change to their minor denominations and vice versa. But Del Lago and Spataro talk past each other. The latter does not wish to see that equal solmization must needs produce equal intervals; the former ignores the possibility that the music might be the same, even if the solmization syllables are different: there just is not one way only in which to solmize a passage of music.²¹

Del Lago makes a most intriguing point, attributing to the accidental flats in Willaert's 'Quid non ebrietas' the strength of a key signature. To say that this complicated piece is not food for the Venetian's teeth is a typical sarcasm of Spataro's, but it is not an argument.

We know by now that, when provoked, Spataro cannot control his bad temper. This is certainly the case when he blasts Tinctoris as a fool, who may be a

²¹ For Spataro, the argument is about solmization, not the question whether a consequent in a *fuga* needs to preserve the exact intervals. Thus he does not disagree with Del Lago in this respect, contrary to Karol Berger's claim in *Musica ficta*, p. 158. However, Del Lago's point, which was not clearly expressed, was that Spataro's example did not fit his definition because the Bb did not have prolonged validity; thus the following Bbs do indeed change the intervals with respect to the *fuga*.

good theologian, but is not a good musician. Fortunately, Spataro does not always hold to this low opinion of Tinctoris.²² Concerning the substance of the matter, Spataro is half right. Ridiculing Tinctoris for giving the same explanation for two different terms, color and talea, he claims that the two definitions agree 'verbum ad verbum'. In his dictionary, however, Tinctoris defines color as 'identitas particularum in una et eadem parte cantus existentium quoad formam et valorem notarum et pausarum suarum'23 and talea as 'identitas particularum in una et eadem parte cantus existentium quoad nomen, locum, et valorem notarum et pausarum suarum'.²⁴ In each definition we place in italics the word and words, respectively, that do not occur in the other. We must interpret 'formam', the word in the definition of *color* not appearing in that of *talea*, as 'melodic shape'; 'valor notarum et pausarum' refers to the rhythmic shape. 'Nomen', a word in the definition of talea not to be found in the definition of color, must concern the solmization syllables, 'locus' the pitch, since a theme having the same syllables may appear in one or several transpositions, that is, in a different 'locus'. Now then, what is, according to Tinctoris, the difference between color and talea? Talea's melodic shape includes identity of intervals; color's does not. Why did Spataro claim that the two definitions are the same? If we examine his own understanding of talea (an ostinato on different pitches with no diminution; see no. 28, para. 11) and color (an ostinato on the same pitch that undergoes diminution upon repetition; see no. 28, para. 16), the main difference between the two concerns valor, the rhythmic shape. Because Tinctoris says that the valor is the same in both talea and color, this must be Spataro's fundamental point of criticism. In addition, since Spataro believed that the solmization syllables (nomina) are arbitrary and are not a necessary part of the definition of fuga, he seems to have overlooked Tinctoris's subtle distinction between forma and nomen. In fact, forma, to Spataro, means rhythmic, not melodic shape, for in his definition of color he says the passages are different in 'virtù, forma, et valore' (no. 28, para. 16), and these three words refer to the proportional diminution, because the melody is exactly the same each time.

In his explanation of what he meant when he said that Obrecht used *color* in his 'Missa Si dedero', Spataro makes a profound observation. I am, he says, not claiming to know Obrecht's intentions, I am speaking only of the musical result. It is possible that a composer uses a specific technique without being aware of it. Here Spataro touches upon a truth that extends far beyond the period in question. It is one of his many brilliant insights that would be difficult to find in other writers of this time as well as later. Nevertheless, Del Lago is probably right when he asserts that in Obrecht's time no one knew any more how to use *color*, for the simple reason that by that time it had ceased to be a technique of interest to composers.

E.E.L.

²² See no. 48, para. 11.
²³ CS iv. 180; *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 14.
²⁴ CS iv. 189; *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 64.

30 (J86). Fos. 219^r-221^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 January 1531 (autograph)

221^v [Reverendo et venerabile et] celeberimo musico Fra [Petro Aron flore]ntino de l'ordine hyro[solimitano, quanto magio]re honorando. [In] Vinetia, [Sancto Zoanne] de li furlani.

219^r Reverende pater et musicorum decus, salutem.

1. Sino a dì 2 decembris hebi dal corero una de V.E., a la quale subito feci resposta. Ma perché el corero non ritornò per tale resposta, come lui me promisse, tale resposta ho tenuta sino hora, poco curando de mandarla, perché quasi haveva per certo che V.E. haveva havuto le mie littere. Ma perché el me pareva che circa la resposta de V.E. el tempo andase in longo, comenzava a dubitare de qualche vostro incomodo, et quasi haveva deliberato scrivere a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono per intendere el tuto. Et stando in tale pensero, equo [=ecco] che dal celo vene la desiderata gratia, perché a li giurni 20 de genaro, che fu el giorno del lucido martire Messer Sancto Sebastiano (finito el vespero), da Frate Tomaso de Sancto Salvatore hebi uno certo fasiculo nel quale erano littere et canti de tanta gratia et dolceza pleni che farebeno movere a lacrime li insensati sassi. Pensati, carissimo mio, quanto io restai contento et quanto me sono alegrato et quanto optimo exemplo ho preso da V.E. de essere humile verso quella, la quale a me, che non sono pure digno nominarvi, scriveti con tanta cordiale humilitade che resto de stupore pleno. Pertanto circa le virtù et benegnità le quale in V.E. regnano, non ardisco extendermi, et non potendo con el mio senso exprimere pure una sola minima parte de quelle, el mio dire più presto seria uno denigrare et tingere quelle, che farle più lucide et clare.

2. Ho compreheso quello che diceti circa la 5^a semibreve del contrabasso de la 2^a parte de quello mio mutetto, el quale fu errore del calamo. Ve rengratio de la correctione facta. Ho etiam inteso quanto diceti de quelle doe octave facte nel tenore, etc. Nel tenore predicto coregereti^{*a*} ut hic:



se a V.E. pare che stia bene. Se pure non ve pare, emendatilo al modo che ve pare meglio. Ma dove diceti che non gli è el suo numero, de questo hora me sono acorto, guardando sopra la tabula o vero cartella dove prima fu da me composto, perché (per certa mia chiareza) segnai el numero

" MS: coregerteti.

octonario dove voleva essere signato el novenario.¹ Ma de questo poco curo, perché esso responso è signato con questo segno C, nel quale cantando se bate la o. Se fusse segnato con questo ¢, seria errore evidentissimo, perché non gli seria la mensura integra del tempo dato in la breve, come vale tale segno diminuto. Ma se pure per non observare el binario numero in le semibreve in tale mio responso ho comisso uno errore, dico che V.E. in quella sua canzonetta a me mandata n'haverà comisso dui, et el primo serà simile a quello che V.E. dice essere stato mio errore, perché tale canzonetta è signata con questo segno C 2, nel quale se debe batere la mensura in la breve et cogliere doe breve per una longa, mensurando el concento, et tale binario numero de breve non li cade integro. Et etiam in processo de tale canto, volendo batere la breve come denota el segno (in fronte cantus posito), li cade desordine asai de multe sincope evitate da li docti, le quale non sono bene note et comprehese, perché in cantando, V.E. et altri moderni (per più facilità) bateno la semibreve senza havere respecto al segno posito in principio cantus.² Se el mio responso fuse signato con questo segno C2 et che le semibreve fusseno riducte in breve et le breve in longe et le minime in semibreve, etc., V.E. seria stato tacito senza pensare più ultra. Circa quelle doi octave, el non se pò vedere ogni cosa. Pertanto V.E. nel tenore emendarà ut hic

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se a quella pare che stia bene. Se ancora nò, fati come de cosa vostra.

3. Circa el tratatello,³ ciascuna sera al meglio che posso sto in exercitio. Come serà finito et reveduto, a V.E. el mandarò, perché non voglio mancare de fede a V.E. Pregati pure Dio che io stia sano. Già sono apresso ^{219^v} al fine da tale tractato.

4. Io sono contento, Frate Petro mio honorando, per amore vostro credere che hora pensati che l'è più de una coniuncta, et non solamente quella de b molle, benché nel tractato vostro vui diceti che altri se maravegliano che in tute le positione de la mano possano essere *ut*, *re*, *mi*,

fa, sol, la, et questo advene perché loro non intendeno la coniuncta.⁴ Qua pare che intendeti solo de una et non de più, perché haresti dicto le coniuncte,^b et non la coniuncta. Et dove diceti che havete lassato de fare mentione de questo segno # per havere uno modo facile, questo serà impossibile, perché l'è più difficile volere demonstrare la verità de una cosa per la via indirecta che non serà per la recta, perché in apparentia el non se potrà cognosce[re] essere fa in positione alcuna dove naturalemente non sia fa, se non per el segno del b quadro signato ne la positione naturale subsequente a quella naturale positione ne la quale tale fa accidentale serà equalemente in sono inteso et posito, come exempli gratia acaderà volendo demonstrare che la intentione del musico è de mutare la prima specie de diatessaron cadente intra A re et D sol re in la terza spetie, la quale ha el semitonio nel 3^o intervallo. Tale variare non serà intesa da ciascuno, stando el canto ut hic notato:

Ma se dapo, questo segno # serà posito in C fa ut ut hic:

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perché l'è observato intra musici che dove è tale segno locato se debia dire *mi*, pertanto sequitarà che el *fa* constituito in D *sol re* con le soe syllabe precedente et sequente, excepto el *mi*, non harano origine da sé né da esso *fa* ma harano origine da questo segno \sharp predicto in C locato. Et questa serà clara et facile intelligentia et non confusa. Similemente dico che ogni *mi* accidentalemente in una naturale positione considerato non potrà havere origine da sé medesimo, ma harà origine da questo segno \flat o vero *fa* segnato in la superiore positione propinqua respecto a la naturale positione, a la quale tale *mi* serà equalemente considerato. Et questo ordine producerà clara et rationale notitia et non confusa, perché serà maniffesto et claro el^e nascere de ciascuna syllaba per segno regolato, firmo, claro et apparente, et non per intricata et obscura et insolubile fictione.

5. Et iterum (per demonstrarvi che beneché io già me trovi ne la età de anni 72 che ancora sto in cervello) torno a dire (ut iam dixi), cioè: Messer Petro mio honorando, el b molle segnato in D *sol re* divide quello tono el

^b MS: conioncte. ^c 'el' is given twice, at the end and the beginning of the line.

¹ For an explanation of this passage, see Ch. 5, p. 122.

² Glareanus offers an interesting confirmation of this practice in his *Dodekachordon*, Book III, ch. 7. Formerly it was common in Germany, he says, to beat according to the breve, but this has fallen out of fashion; in France, however, it has long been customary to beat the semibreve, 'and it is certainly easier for students'. See Glareanus, *Dodecachordon*, trans. Miller, ii. 232, including n. 1, which quotes Johann Wonnegger's condensation of the *Dodekachordon*, *Musicae epitome* (Basle, 1557), specifying that in Germany 'sixty years ago' it was customary to measure according to the breve. See also Eunice Schroeder, 'The Stroke Comes Full Circle: O and O in Writings on Music, ca. 1450–1540', *Musica disciplina* 36 (1982), 119–66, esp. pp. 139–40, on conflicting views of contemporary theorists.

³ This is Spataro's critique of some of Aaron's writings, especially the chapters on mutation in his Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525); see no. 31.

⁴ Trattato della natura et cognitione, ch. 26, 'Dichiaratione come in tutte le positioni o ver luoghi della mano sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o veramente voci'.

quale cade intra D *sol re* et C *fa ut* per semitonio minore in grave et mazore in acuto, in modo che dal predicto segno de b molle a D *sol re* serà spatio de semitonio mazore, et da esso b molle a C *fa ut* serà minore. Et circa questo non respondeti al proposito, perché vui diceti che a vui pare sia tuto el contrario, cioè che dal tasto negro, o vero semitonio, a C *fa ut* sia semitonio mazore, et non minore, et che dal predicto tasto negro a D *sol re* sia minore.⁵ Tale vostra resposta non sona al proposito, perché io parlo de quello semitonio el quale è producto da questo segno b signato in D *sol re*, et vui respondeti secondo quello semitonio el quale è segnato in C *fa ut*



Quello tasto negro el quale nasce dal b molle signato in D *sol re* non se trova nel vostro monochordo,⁶ ma bene se li trova quello el quale nasce da questo segno # segnato in C *fa ut*, et perché senza la consideratione de tale b molle in D et altri lochi simili signato non se potrà pervenire a la integra cognitione de le sei sillabe in ciascuna positione de la mano equalemente considerate, dico che a me pare impossibile che da V.E. ne sia stato rectamente pertractato, come per clarissimi effecti ne li vostri scripti appare. Per le predicte, V.E. potrà comprehendere che dato, ut dixi, che io sia a la extrema decrepità, che io non sono però fora del recto sentimento, come forsa alcuni se credeno, li quali più ultra non pensano se non quanto trovano in li soi arteficiali instrumenti.

^{220^r} 6. Ho receputo | li canti de V.E. et quilli sono stati cantati domenica, che fu a dì 22 del presente, ne la sacristia del nostro divo Petronio, non solo una volta ma più volte da optimi et intelligenti musici et cantori, et molto li piaceno et somamente da loro sono stati laudati. Et etiam a me molto piaceno et de tali canti molto ve rengratio. Et perché da V.E. sono stato advertito de certi falli retrovati in quello mio responso, la quale cosa ho acceptata in bona parte per meglio advertire un'altra volta, pertanto per cambio de tale servitio, ho facto discorso circa el canto primo de quello vostro evangelio a me misso,⁷ et ho trovato che in numerando le breve a doe come vole el segno, li cadeno certe sincope le quale sono state non concedute da V.E. nel capitolo 37 del suo *Toscanello*,⁸ et perché nel segno ut hic C 2 posito in principio cantus, la recta mensura in cantando cade sopra la breve, restarà che la quarta semibreve dapo la quale sequita la pausa de la breve serà sincopata ultra tale pausa de breve. Et similemente altri inconvenienti li caderano simili, li quali ancora che non siano contra el canto, tamen sono contra l'ordine del mensurare assignato da V.E. in tale capitulo.

7. Ho etiam asai considerato a quella prima semibreve posita in C superacuto signata con questo segno \ddagger nel predicto canto primo, la quale cade sopra quello puncto posito dapo la 2^a breve nel contra alto, perché a me pare che intra loro non cada distantia diatonica usitata, perché intra loro caderà più de una sexta minore, cioè diapente con uno semitonio mazore, la quale serà manco per uno coma⁹ de una sexta mazore, el quale loco bene serà concorde con el tenore in decima mazore, ma el termine medio in F *fa ut* acuto dato nel contra alto non farà bona resonantia inseme con li extremi pulso. Questo è el mio parere. Tamen se a V.E. pare altramente, sia per non dicto.

8. Ho inteso circa la maledeta obstinatione del nostro Pre Zanetto, el quale se sforza negare la manifesta verità, la quale verità è lucida, clara et apparente, perché se lui non havesse scripto tale littera, el non haria retenuta la resposta da me a tale sua littera data, ma el me haria scripto che tale littera non era stata da lui a me mandata.¹⁰ A V.E. chiedo de gratia che

⁷ This is perhaps the Gospel motet 'In illo tempore loquente Jesu ad turbas' mentioned by Aaron's student, Illuminato Aiguino (*Il tesoro illuminato*, 1581, fo. 37°).

⁸ In this chapter, entitled 'Che cosa sia syncopa', Aaron says that 'la nota syncopata non debbe ritrovare la pausa maggiore di sé'. As correct procedure he illustrates two semibreves separated by two semibreve rests on different lines:

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A breve rest between the semibreves would be incorrect notation, for it would contradict the measure.

⁹ Spataro mistakenly wrote 'coma' for 'semitonio minore'. The error is surprising, in view of his correct exposition in para. 5.

¹⁰ Spataro does not make clear which letter this is. It is probably not no. 28 but a letter, now missing, mentioned in para. 10, in which Del Lago complained about the unfriendly tone of Spataro's reply to no. 28.

⁵ Aaron may have based his opinion on an organ in mean-tone temperament with split keys, in which the position of the flat and sharp is reversed; see no. 110, end of para. 1. In mean-tone temperament the diatonic semitone (here C-Db) is larger than the chromatic semitone ($C-C\sharp$). Spataro gives the correct division of the tone in Pythagorean tuning.

⁶ Spataro applies the term 'monochord' not only to the one-stringed instrument used to determine pitches and ratios but also to a keyboard instrument, probably a clavichord. This is made clear by his reference to black keys.

li perdonati et lasatilo stare, et ancora io li perdono, dica pure al pegio che lui potrà de me, che poco ne curo. Io non ho mandato a V.E. tale sua littera per farli danno alcuno, ma solo per mia iustificatione, perché el pareva che V.E. dubitasse. Horsù non più.

9. Ho inteso quanto circa le opere mie diceti. A questo certamente comprehendo che siamo amici, perché a tale cosa ho (a giurni passati) più volte pensato et havuto fantasia de drizare qualche opera mia a V.E., parendomi che a me seria più honore et licito intitulare uno tractato musico a uno el quale sia docto et famoso in tale facultà, che a uno principe o altro grande homo el quale ignorase la facultà tractata. Pre Zanetto già me scripse che a lui era pervenuto a le mano uno mio piculo tractato de canto mensurato¹¹ già da me composto per lo Signore Messer Hermes Bentivoglio, et perché a lui diceva parere asai utile che, piacendo a me, lo faria stampare, et io li resposi che tale tractato non era in quello tempo stato complecto da me, ma che dapo fu complecto, et se lui voleva pure farlo stampare, che meglio era che quello che era complecto fusse impresso, et se lui faceva che Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono me scrivesse, che io li mandaria tale tractato, perché non me fidava tropo de lui. Unde che Messer Marco Antonio me scripse che Pre Zanetto era homo da potersi fidare di lui de ogni grande cosa. Alhora, a Messer Marco Antonio mandai tale mio tractato, et lui el dete a Pre Zanetto. Quando Pre

220^v Zanetto hebe el mio tractato el me scripse che | tale tract[at]o per se solo impresso seria picolo volume, et che a lui pareria che con tale fuse giuncto uno tractato de proportione. Alhora comenzai acorgerme che lui haveva voglia de proceder in longo. Pure perché io haveva già facto tale tractato de proportione, io li scripse che n'haveva uno composito, ma che seria difficile da stampare perché gli erano molte figure et note difficile da imprimere. Lui respose che lui pigliaria modo et via al bisogno. In soma, io li mandai tale tractato. Dapo lui me scripse del tractato receputo, dicendo che tale dui tractati non stariano bene senza uno tractato de contrapuncto. Alhora comenzai a dubitare ancora più che prima, ma pure asai male volontiera feci tanto che con mio grande incomodo et sinixtro feci uno tractato de contrapuncto, el quale fu da me a lui intitulato, non sapendo a chi altro mazore furfante poterlo dedicare. Come lui hebe tale tractato et che lui non hebe più scuxa de conducere l'opera in longo, el comenzò a dire che lui haveva certe dubitatione, et che se ne voleva chiarire, et dapo forsa 4 misi el me scripsse sopra, sopra la fuga, talla, et colore, con certe sue diffinitione, le quale lui le chiamava reale, et contra de me per tale modo argueva che, a chi non l'havesse cognosuto, haria creduto che l'havesse inglotito tu[tt]a la philosophia. Et etiam lui me

domandava un'altro mio tractato chiamato *Appostille*, perché diceva volersi chiarire de certi soi dubii.

10. Pensate, Frate Petro mio carissimo, che alhora non potete stare el segno, né havere patientia, el fu forza che io li scrivesse el mio parere, et che io respondesse a le sue reale diffinitione da lui non intese. Et alhora io li scripsi che lui me mandasse li tractati mei, perché non voleva più che fusseno impressi per suo mezo, et che a lui non seria honore che l'opere mie mendose fusseno per sua industria producte in luce. Alhora lui me scripse che io li haveva scripto una littera non conveniente a uno amico, et io iterum li scripsi che me mandasse li mei tractati. Et così li hebi, gratia de Dio, et etiam per mezo de V.E., la quale per quello che ho dicto de sopra pò intendere che altro che el tractato de contrapuncto non era derictivo a Pre Zanetto, è 'l canto mensurato al Signore Messer Hermes. Le proportione erano senza essere ad alcuno directe, perché io le haveva tolte de un'altro mio volume molto grande in tre parte diviso, cioè Appostille, *Epistole*, et *Proportione*.¹² Ma a me pare che la fatica et spexa seria getata via, volendo fare stampare tale opere, perché de tale facultà è stato da molti scripto, et perché pochi se curano de intendere altro che practica de cantare, et chi vole tractarne secondo l'uxo dicono contra la rasone, et chi vole observare la rasone, l'uxo gli è contrario, et poco existimano la rasone, sì che di ciò poco curo, et pareme meglio lasare stare.

11. Se pure a V.E. piace, io sono per fare tanto quanto vole V.E. Ma a me pareria essere meglio illustrare quella de più docte et altre opere et tractati che de queste importantie, le quale tuto el giorno sono lacerate et straciate et non intese dal vulgo et poco apreciate. Io già feci uno tractato dove se proba de la perfectione producta da la sesqualtera in le figure cantabile, molto docta et in mathematica fondata.¹³ Ancora ho certe epistole derictive a la bona memoria de Franchino Gafurio sopra quello suo tractato De harmonia instrumentorum fondate tute in musica speculativa, ogni cosa in lingua materna scripta.^d Se potria ancora aducere in stampa el tractato de proportione con alquanto riducere le figure con più facilità. Quando questo paresse a V.E., tute (de gratia) haria intitularle a V.E. come al più digno speculatore^e che oggidì sopra la terra viva, et ancora 221^r l'opera del mensurato canto, la quale voglio alquanto reformare et mutare, et etiam del contrapuncto. De ogni cosa voglio farvi uno dono, beneché sia piculo a tanta alteza, et pagaria la medietà de ciò che al mondo posedo per^f potere stare al manco el spatio de uno anno con V.E. in * MS: spectaculo. Spataro seems to have unconsciously conflated ^d MS: scripte. 1 MS: et. 'speculatore' with 'receptaculo'.

¹¹ A version of Spataro's Utile et breve regule di canto: see no. 16 and Ch. 3.

 $^{^{12}}$ The *Appostille* consisted of Spataro's answer to Gafurio's remarks on the treatise by Ramis; the *Epistole* contained letters of Spataro to Gafurio; the last part was the treatise on proportions.

¹³ Published in Oct. 1531 as Tractato di musica di Gioanni Spataro musico bolognese nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata exercitate.

imperiale cità. Et ogni cosa serà al comando de V.E., perché non curo fare guadagno, tanto (gratia de Dio) ho che me basta. Ma come io già scripse al nostro pre Zanetto, altro non chiedo se non che le mie copie et originali me siano dapo la impressione restituiti. Ma perché in fine V.E. dice che voluntera seresti medio a fare che tale mie opere fusseno impresse, solo per vedere quilli tanti errori che dice el nostro Pre Zanetto volere fare stampare, circa questo dico che senza che V.E. se ubliga a farle stampare io mandarò qua a quella tute quelle opere le quale a lui haveva mandate, perché a me serà cosa grata che da homini intelligenti siano ponderate et emendate, se errore se li trova. Cognosco bene che l'opera del contrapuncto seria laboriosa per li exempli, li quali sono molto prolixi per havere concluso molte diverse particule in uno solo exemplo. Pertanto date adviso quello che V.E. vole che io facia et quello che haveti pensato et deliberato, perché tanto serà quanto V.E. vorà.

12. La littera la quale me dete Frate Tomaso, che andava a Imola, la deti a Don Leonardo. Da poi ho inteso che l'ha mandata, et perché a V.E. non ho al presente cosa nova alcuna che sia mia da mandare a V.E., havendo facto uno nostro cantore et mio discipulo uno psalmo, mando a V.E. tale psalmo a 5 voce. Tale discipulo è chiamato Nicolao Cavalaro; altri lo chiamano mantuano. E homo da bene; è giovene et molto perito in practica et in theorica. Circa el canto, del quale dice V.E., facto da Petro de Sancta Marina, mai non l'ho veduto, sì che altro circa ciò non dico.

13. Ho fornito de scrivere el tractato quale a V.E. ho promesso. Voglio alquanto vederlo. Se in questo mezo, V.E. havesse qualche amico suo afidato, el quale volesse andare a Bologna, dati adviso, et io gli darò tale tractato. Non scio come mandarlo; sono 25 foglii integri.

14. Non altro per hora. Se in questa mia [non] fusse cosa scripta con quella modestia et reverentia la quale s'apartene a V.E. et intra li boni e veri amici, non incolpati el mio bono animo et intentione, ma sì la mia ignorantia, et non me reputati maligno né superbo, ma sì pleno de ardente amore et carità, la quale sempre ho verso el proximo, perché io voria che ciascuno cognoscesse la via recta, et per tale causa tanto tempo me sono afaticato, et etiam me afatico et afaticarò, sino che viverò. Vale. Al vostro reverendo patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] me recomandareti. Tuto sono de V.E.

Vale. Bononie, die 30 januarii 1531.

De V.E. servitore J. Spatario

1. I had your letter of 2 December from the courier and answered immediately, but since he did not return as promised, I kept the answer here, thinking you must have received the letters I sent you before. Nevertheless, I was concerned that I did not hear further from you, and even thought of having Cavazzoni investigate why. Then from heaven came the desired favour; on 20 January, the day of the glorious martyr St Sebastian, I received a packet of your letters and compositions, so full of grace and sweetness they would bring tears from insensate rocks. I am overwhelmed by your warmth and humility, which shall be a good example to me. I could not begin to express adequately the least part of your virtues and kindnesses.

2. The error you point out in the bass of the second part of my motet was a slip of the pen. To avoid the octaves, please correct the tenor as follows:



or whichever way you want. You are right in observing that the number of semibreves does not come out correctly: I checked the score (*tabula o vero cartella*) and found that I had written 8 instead of 9.¹ But it hardly matters since the motet is in C and the tactus falls on the semibreve. Had it been in ¢ with the tactus on the breve, it would certainly have been incorrect. You yourself make the same error in your canzonetta, which is in C 2; here the tactus falls on the breve and you come out with an uneven number. Moreover, you have syncopations that are irregular under C 2. You and many others do not realize this because you always beat in semibreves, no matter what the signature.² Had I written my piece in C 2 in doubled note-values, you would never have noticed the error. On those octaves, it's not possible to catch everything, so emend the tenor as follows:



or whichever way you like.

3. Concerning the little treatise that I promised you,³ I am working on it every evening. As soon as it is finished and revised, I'll send it on.

4. I am glad that you now realize there is more than one *coniuncta*, not just the flat, and even though in your treatise you say there are those who wonder how it is possible that the six solmization syllables can be placed

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30. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1531

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on every note of Guido's hand, and this is because they do not understand the *coniuncta*.⁴ It is impossible to leave out the # *coniuncta* and hope to demonstrate it indirectly, because you cannot recognize fa in any place where it is not found naturally unless it is preceded by a #. For example, if you want to change from the first to the third species of the fourth between A and D, you have to add # to C, sung as *mi*, in order to sing D as *fa*. This is perfectly clear. Similarly, every *mi* placed irregularly in a natural position [C D F G] derives from the following *fa*, marked \flat [D \flat E \flat G \flat A \flat]. This order is clear and rational, and not an intricate and obscure fiction.

5. Again, to show you that although seventy-two years old I am still sharp-witted, I repeat that Db divides the tone into a minor semitone from C and a major semitone from D. It differs from C# by a comma. You claim the opposite⁵ because you haven't got a Db on your monochord,⁶ but without flats on D and other places it's impossible to find the six syllables on the hand. Therefore, you weren't able to treat this matter adequately. You see, I'm still more quick-witted than some give me credit for.

6. Your compositions were sung in the sacristy of our San Petronio last Sunday and everyone, myself included, praised them highly. Many thanks! Because you were so kind as to correct my errors, I shall return the service and point out that in your Gospel motet,⁷ counting the breves according to the signature C 2, you have some syncopations that you do not allow in ch. 37 of your *Toscanello*: a semibreve is syncopated beyond a breve rest.⁸

7. I also have been considering the semibreve c #'' that coincides with the dot after the second breve in the alto; it seems to me it produces more than a minor sixth, namely a fifth with a major semitone, less than a major sixth by a comma.⁹ It produces a major tenth with the tenor but doesn't sound good against f' in the alto. This is just my opinion, which you can ignore.

8. I understand what you write about the cursed obstinacy of our Pre Zanetto. Had he not written me that letter, he would not have kept my reply, but written to say that he had sent me no such letter.¹⁰ Please forgive him and let him be; I too have forgiven him. I sent you his letter not to hurt him but to justify myself, because you wondered.

9. From what you write about my works, we are certainly friends, and it has occurred to me to dedicate something to you; it is more honourable to dedicate something to a man learned and famous in the discipline than to a prince or other great man who knows nothing about it. Pre Zanetto wrote that he had a copy of my treatise dedicated to Hermes Bentivoglio and that he would like to publish it.¹¹ I sent him a more complete version, after receiving Cavazzoni's assurances about Pre Zanetto's integrity. When he said the volume would be too small, I sent him a treatise on proportions and later, at his request, a treatise on counterpoint, written with great discomfort, which I dedicated to him, not being able to think of a greater rascal to whom I could dedicate it. After four months, he had no more excuse to drag things out, but then he began to query me about *fuga*, *talea*, and *color*, giving his own 'real' definitions against mine; if you didn't know him, you would have thought he had swallowed philosophy whole. Then he also asked for my *Appostille*.

10. Finally I lost patience and replied to his so-called 'real' definitions, asking him to return my imperfect treatises, which would bring him no honour to publish. He wrote that my letter wasn't appropriate to a friend, and I asked again for my treatises. And I finally got them, thanks to God and to your intervention. Only the one on counterpoint was dedicated to him, and the one on mensural music to Hermes Bentivoglio. But the one on proportions had no dedication since it was drawn from my large three-part work, *Appostille*, *Epistole*, and *Proportione*.¹² I really think it would be a waste of time and money to print these works; almost all the emphasis these days is on practical music. Those who write about it care nothing about theory, and those who are concerned with theory find that practice is against them.

11. I shall do what you like, but I think something more learned would honour you more than these things that are so denigrated and not understood by the common herd. I wrote a treatise on the perfection of notes under sesquialtera, very scholarly and mathematical.¹³ I also have my letters to the late Gafurio on his De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum, all on speculative music and written in the vernacular. The treatise on proportions could also be published, cutting down on the examples. I should be pleased to dedicate them all to you as the most worthy speculative theorist in the world today, and also the treatise on mensural music, which still needs revision, and the one on counterpoint. I should like to give you all of them as a present, even though it would be little, considering your greatness. I would even spend half of what I possess to stay a year with you in that imperial city of Venice. As I wrote to Pre Zanetto, all I ask is to have my copies and originals back. I shall send you everything I sent him and shall be pleased to have intelligent men examine my works and emend them if necessary.

12. I handed the letter Frate Tomaso gave me to Don Leonardo. I have no work of my own to send you at the moment so I am enclosing a psalm for five voices by my talented disciple, the singer Nicolò Cavalaro, also called Mantuano; he is young and very good in practice and in theory. I have never seen the piece by Pietro de Sancta Marina.

13. I have finished the treatise I promised you. If you have a trusted

friend who will come to Bologna, I shall give the twenty-five sheets to him.

14. If I have written anything wanting in that modesty and reverence that you deserve, do not ascribe it to lack of good will but to my ignorance; don't think me malicious or conceited, but [see me as] I am, full of love and neighbourly charity. I want everyone to walk the right path. This is what I have been, and am still, striving for, nor shall I ever cease in this endeavour as long as I live.

31 (J83). Fo. 216^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 February 1531 (autograph)

^{216^v} [Venerabile et periti]ssimo musico Frate Pe[tro Aron florent]ino de l'ordine hyroso[lomitano, quanto] mazore honorando. In Vinetia, [Sancto Zoanne de li furlani].

216^r Reverendo et excellentissimo, el mio honorando Frate Petro, salutem.

1. Se V.E. non ha receputo una mia [no. 30] in responsione de una de V.E. a me mandata per Frate Tomaso, prego quella cerchi qua al banco de li Saraceni, che la trovareti.

2. Al presente con questa mia qua ligata mando la promessa a V.E. facta, cioè certe mie dubitatione scripte, le quale circa le opere et tractati de V.E. me occureno.¹ Et aciò che a V.E. siano manco moleste, legendo tali mei scripti, ho fincto che tale mie dubietà non siano circa l'opere vostre ma de un'altro terzo et amico vostro, et ancora ho tenuto tale ordine aciò che se (per caxo) fusseno vedute da altri, che non intendano tali scripti mei essere circa le opere vostre. Prego V.E. non pigli tale cosa in mala parte ma in bona, e faza [faccia] in modo che la fatica et el mio tempo spexo (per fare apiacere a V.E.) non parturisca odio né ranchore, atento che in me non è rancore né superbia, né livore, ma solo uno gelo de amore de la virtù et del proximo con uno certo ardente desiderio de unione, la quale io voria vedere intra li docti de questa facultà, aciò che tuti fusseno uno corpo et sequitasseno parimente in uno volere, fondato in la disciplina de la mera verità. Pertanto, el mio honorando Frate Petro, V.E. legerà li scripti mei. Se alcuna cosa li serà che a V.E. sia grata, quella tenereti, et l'altre ponereti da parte, come inutile. Et considerareti che ancora io posso errare, perchè sono homo et non Dio. Ma de una sola cosa me contento, perché tali mei scripti vengono al tempo de la quadragesima, che se a V.E. per altro non serano accepti, al manco ve piacerano perché li potreti exercitare in cartocci da sardelle.

3. Potria essere che da me in qualche loco de li vostri tractati non è stato bene inteso la vostra ordinatione et fantasia, al manco in quilli capitoli dove V.E. ha tractato de le sei sillabe considerate equale in sono in ciascuna positione de la mano, et de questo me sono acorto per quella vostra ultima a me missa.² Pertanto, havendo io già scripto come vedereti, per fugire fatica non sono tornato a scrivere altramente. Ma tale vostre consideratione non possono stare senza errore, perché in molti lochi opportuni non haveti uxato questo segno #, senza el quale circa tale

¹ Spataro's fifty-page critique (see no. 30, para. 3 and 13) of Aaron's writings has not survived.

² Probably the letter of Nov. 1530, now lost; see no. 30.

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materia non se potrà rectamente pertractare,³ et perché in ciascuno loco de la mano dove serano le sei syllabe predicte equale in sono, se possono trovare rationabilemente trenta mutatione. Pertanto sequitarà che senza tale segno ut hic # signato, tale mutatione non se potrano trovare. Io tengo le figure de ciascuna positione, le quale claramente demonstrano la mera verità, le quale sono 20,⁴ le quale al presente non mando a V.E. perché non è opera da fare a tempo de nocte. Come el giorno serà più longo, che io possa scrivere, voglio mandarle a V.E. aciò che quella resti claro del tuto. Ma credeti a me, che siano tale vostre consideratione come voleti, che non possono stare senza errore, come apare in li mei scripti a 216^v V.E. missi. Ma se possibile fusse, con qualche licita excusatione, che tale

16° V.E. missi. | Ma se possibile fusse, con qualche field electations, the missi consideratione de le predicte sei syllabe fusseno retractate, per lo honore de V.E. io ve ne conforto, et io per lo amore che io ve porto me offerisco a darvi ogni aiuto, et piacendo a V.E. farò l'opera et a quella la mandarò, et in vostro nome la fareti stampare. A questo pensareti perché se tale opera serà examinata da homo el quale de tale consideratione habia intelligentia, molto sereti incolpato. Fareti come a V.E. piace et pare meglio.

Non altro per hora. Tuto sono de V.E.

Vale. Bononię, die 8 februarii 1531.

El vostro servitore J. Spataro

1. If you have not received my answer [no. 30] to your letter, please look for it at the bank of the Saraceni.

2. Enclosed I am sending you the promised critique of your writings;¹ to spare your feelings, it is written as if it were about a third person's work. Please do not take it ill; I spent time and effort not out of pride or spite, but merely out of love of truth and a desire for unity among scholars. Keep whatever you like and discard the rest; even I may err, because I am man, not God. At any rate, should they be good for nothing else, my writings, coming as they do during Lent, can be used to wrap sardines.

3. It is possible that I have not always understood your procedure and your ideas, especially in the chapters where you treat the six syllables on each position of the hand. I realized this upon reading your last letter;²

³ In Aaron's Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525), chs. 25-45, only flats are used in hexachord transpositions.

⁴ Spataro had spoken before of thirty (*trenta*) mutations, which is correct. The '20' here must be a slip of the pen—rare in Spataro's letters, but understandable under the circumstances: it is late at night and the lighting is poor ('non è opera da fare a tempo de nocte'). He promises to send him his chart of mutations 'as soon as the days grow longer'. however, to save trouble, I have not changed what I wrote. But there must still be some error, since you have not used the sharp at a number of opportune places, without which you cannot find thirty mutations on each degree.³ I have a chart that shows twenty mutations.⁴ When the days are longer I shall copy it and send it to you. If it were possible, with some legitimate excuse, to retract your discussion of the six syllables, for your honour's sake I urge you to do so. I should be happy to help you; if you like, I will write it out for you and you can print it under your name. Consider it well, for you could be severely criticized by knowledgeable men.

32 (J92). Fo. 230^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 28 March 1531 (autograph)

- ^{230^t} [Venerabile et reverend]o et excellentissimo musico Frate [Petro Aron floren]tino de l'ordine hyrosolomi[tano, quanto maggiore] honorando. In Venetia, [Sancto Zoanne] de li furlani.
- ^{230^v} Excellentissimo et clarissimo de li musici, el mio honorando Frate Petro, salutem.

1. A li dì 26 del presente, essendo in choro al vespero, hebi una de V.E. da me molto desiderata, perché parendomi che già pasaseno li termini de havere adviso et littere da quella, comenzava a dubitare et con la fantasia considerava molte cause le quale in questa misera vita possono occurere. Horsù sia laudato Dio.

2. A V.E. mando el tractato de la sesqualtera vulgare¹ aciò che quella^e ne faza [faccia] come cosa soa propria, et se a V.E. pare che tale tractato sia degno de essere impresso, datilo a lo impressore; se ancora non ve pare cosa de haverne honore, non durati fatica, perché seria male spendere el tempo in cosa che al fine retornasse in vergogna. Et de questo asai ve prego, perché io non curo aquistare fama de auctore de false sententie, né etiam de non probate oppinione. Prego ancora V.E., se quella epistola posita nel principio de l'opera a quella intitulata non sta a vostro modo, che ve dignati darli quella forma quale voleti. Et similemente nel processo de l'opera, et maxime dove ho tractato de Franchino, se ho dicto tropo ultra, temperati el mio dire senza mutare sententia, perché quando io feci tale opera, Franchino era vivo et eramo inseme in litigio. Pertanto, io haveria potuto incorere in qualche parlare degno de reprehensione, perché 'ira impedit animum', etc.² Quella arma la quale è nel principio del libro, o vero insegna, non la faceti stampare. Ma haria bene acaro che quella figura posita nel fine del 13° capitulo fusse bene et mensuratamente tagliata, perché quelle linee applicate al tempo et al modo mazore et minore, et a la prolatione, non sono de poca importantia. Ma ho speranza che la cosa passarà bene, perché seti sapiente.3 In questo mezo io darò opera de riducere (con facilità) quilli exempli positi in quilli tractati li quali già mandai al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto, et riducti et a V.E. intitolati, a quella ne farò uno presente, perché ho deliberato che quella (come el più degno che oggidì intra musici se trova) sia herede de le opere mie, beneché non siano digne de tale herede. Et questo voglio che sia perché sempre me haveti amato.

3. Io non ho dato el vostro canto a Messer Nicolao, perché la domenica de passione lui non fu in choro. Credo che habia uno poco de febre, ma voglio andare a trovarlo sino a la sua caxa et farò el debito. Ho facto lo offitio con Juliano et altri cantori. Tuti se recomandano a V.E. Ma perché veneredì passato, che fu a dì 24 del presente, Juliano me restituite la vostra epistola, et poi io solo, con uno clerico, cantai le sue particole con el soprano, et lì trovai certe particole dove io dubito, le quale al presente non ve scriverò, perché non ce haria tempo, ma per un'altra mia dirò el tuto.

4. Ho inteso de le havute mie dubitatione,⁴ la quale cosa a me è stata de piacere, perché io dubitava che non fusseno andate per mala via. Ma ve prego che non ve vogliati turbare, perché lo animo mio è de getarle nel foco, atento che la cosa et opera vostra (per essere impressa) et in publico aducta, non potrà più tornare a retro.

5. A li giurni passati, la mia serva o vero masara, la quale era el guberno de la mia caxa, per essere vechia è caduta in infirmità,⁵ in modo che l'è stato bisogno che io trovi un'altra serva, la quale goberni lia et me, unde che el me pervene a le mane una donna da bene che ha nome Benvenuta, la quale dice essere stata qua in Vinetia molto tempo, et el suo marito haveva nome Antonio Bandera, la quale dice che cognosce V.E. et molto ve lauda et ve prega quella vogliati salutare el negro per sua parte.

A V.E. me recomando.

Vale. Bononie, die 28 martii 1531.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

1. On the 26th during Vespers, I received your letter; I had begun to worry about the long delay.

2. I am sending you my treatise on *sesquialtera*¹ to do with as you like; if you think it should be published, give it to the printer. If not, don't waste any time on it; I'm not interested in being known as a purveyor of false ideas or unproven opinions. If the dedicatory letter doesn't suit you, please revise it. The same goes for the rest of the work; I may have written

^{*a*} MS: quelle.

¹ The Tractato di musica, published 8 Oct. 1531.

² Disticha Catonis 2. 4. 2: 'Impedit ira animum, ne possit cernere verum' ('Anger blocks the mind so that it cannot perceive the truth').

³ In the event, the diagram (see Pl. 10 on p. 475) was printed incorrectly; see no. 40, para. 1.

⁴ See no. 31, para. 2.

⁵ This servant was Bartolomea, called Berta; Spataro remembered her in his wills of 1527 and 1535. In the former she was to receive her usual wages of 7 lire a year and, if she were still in his service at the time of his death, a bed, a bolster, two pairs of sheets, the best blanket to be had, and other household items. See Frati, 'Per la storia della musica in Bologna', pp. 458 and 461.

intemperately about Gafurio, who was then alive and with whom I was in conflict, for 'anger blocks the mind . . .² You may temper the wording, without changing the meaning. The coat of arms at the front should not be printed. But the diagram at the end of ch. 13 I'd like to have done carefully because the lines indicating *tempus*, major and minor mode, and prolation are important.³ I shall reduce the number of examples in the other treatises that I had sent to Pre Zanetto and then give them to you; since you have always loved me, I wish you to be the heir of my works.

3. I could not give your composition to Nicolò [Cavalaro] since he was not in the choir on Passion Sunday [26 March] because of illness, but I shall do so when I visit him at home. I gave your greetings to Juliano [Veludaro] and the other singers and they send their regards. A cleric and I went through your piece, singing each part with the soprano, and I found certain doubtful places, about which I shall write to you later.

4. I am glad to hear that you received my critical remarks,⁴ for I thought they had gone astray. Please do not be distressed by them; I really feel like throwing them into the fire, since your treatises are already in the public domain and can no longer be withdrawn.

⁵. My old servant has fallen ill,⁵ and I had to find another to take care of her and me. My new servant, Benvenuta, says she and her husband, Antonio Bandera, knew you in Venice. She is full of your praises and wants you to greet the Moor for her.

33 (J88). Fo. 223^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 19 June 1531 (autograph)

^{223^v} [Venerabile et reverendo e]t excellentissimo musico Frate Petro [Aron florentin]o de l'ordine hyrosolomita[no, quanto maggior]e mio honorando. In Vinetia, [Sanct]o Zoane de li furlani.

223^r Excellentissimo, mirabile, et grande, el mio Frate Petro, salutem.

1. A li giurni 17 del presente^{*a*} ho receputo una de V.E., la quale a me in parte è stata nogliosa et in parte asai grata et cara. È stata a me molesta perché nulla diceti circa li canti, li quali mandai qua a Messer Adriano,¹ cioè se V.E. li ha havuti da quello frate del diavolo et dati a Messer Adriano, et circa ciò per una mia molto ve pregava, et etiam per un'altra mia a V.E. missa per la via de li Saraceni nostri bolognesi, con la quale era el mio tractato de canto mensurato, circa el quale altro non dico, perché in quella con esso tractato ligata asai credo havere dicto. Ma tale vostra a me è stata de grande letitia per li vostri dulci canti, mirabilemente et con grande arte facti, a me missi, li quali^{*b*} ho dati a Juliano et a Messer Nicolao, vostro et mio optimo amico et homo da bene et de molte virtù ornato, et sono da loro sumamente stati laudati, et molto li piaceno et rengratiano V.E., et a quella se recomandano asai.

2. A questi giurni passati io ho revisto quello mio tractato de contrapuncto, el quale già dedicai al reverendo Pre Zanetto, et ho molto abreviati certi exempli et l'ho intitulato a V.E. Et perché se V.E. farà imprimere quello primo mio tractato in foglio integro,² potria essere che esso tractato, con quello de canto mensurato, non fariano uno sufficiente volume inseme positi. Pertanto parendo a V.E., mandarò quello altro de contrapuncto, et se a V.E. non parerà che stia bene posito con li predicti, lo tenereti sino a tanto che harò riducto a facilità li exempli positi nel mio tractato de proportione, et da poi, parendo a V.E., li fareti ponere inseme a lo^c impressore. Prego V.E. atenda a s[t]are sano et schifati la fatica più che poteti, et pregati Dio per me.

3. Non altro al presente. A V.E. et al reverendo patrone vostro et mio [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi molto da me amati figlioli per le soe virtù, ve dignareti recomandarmi, et tuto sono de V.E.

Vale. Bononie, die 19 junii 1531.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

^a MS: prensente.

^b MS: quale. ^c MS: le.

¹ Twenty-five madrigals by Julio Muradori; see nos. 35-7. ² The treatise on *sesquialtera*; see no. 32.

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I. On the 17th I received your letter, which both disturbed and pleased me. You say nothing about the compositions I sent you by that infernal friar to give to Messer Adriano [Willaert]¹ and my letter on this, nor do you reply to my letter sent with my treatise on mensural music. But your delightful and artistic compositions gave me great joy, as they did Juliano [Veludaro] and our common friend Nicolò [Cavalaro], who send their greetings.

2. I have now revised my treatise on counterpoint, formerly dedicated to Pre Zanetto. I have considerably reduced certain examples and inscribed it to you. If my first treatise is printed in folio,² even with the treatise on mensural music the book may be too small. I shall send you my treatise on counterpoint; if this doesn't fit in, hold it until I have cut the examples in my treatise on proportions, and the two can be printed together.

3. Please commend me to your and my patron [Sebastiano Michiel] and his sons, whom I love for their fine qualities.

34 (J89). Fos. 224^r-225^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 24 October 1531 (autograph)¹

225^v [Reverendo et venerabile] et excellentissimo musico Frate Petro Aron [florentino de] l'ordine hyrosolomitano, quanto [maggiore honorando. In Ve]netia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

^{224^r} Reverendo et excellentissimo de li musici, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Petro, salutem.

1. Sono già passati molti giorni che hebi una de V.E. con la quale era uno doctissimo, subtile, et degno tractatetto novamente impresso,² el quale (allegantemente et con optime et vere demonstratione) demonstrava come in ciascuna de le positione de la mano de Guido ciascuno de li sei nomi officiali se possono trovare. Et perché la materia è molto ardua et difficile, alhora (senza dire altro) da me a V.E. solamente fu dato adviso de l'opera receputa senza dire altro. Ma perché simile subtile opere (al parere mio) non sono da essere iudicate così presto et senza el iuditio de homini docti, pertanto tale opera fu da me publicata tra li nostri musici, aciò che da loro, a suo piacere et comodo, fusse bene discorsa et ponderata con posato examino. Ma da poi a me fu restuita non senza diverso parere, imperò che alcuno de loro (più presto mosso da crassa ignorantia che da livore) diceva che V.E. era contra el mio preceptore, el quale mentre che tracta de le coniuncte dice che dove sono li sei nomi officiali equalemente giuncti in sono, che in tale loco sono solamente 18 mutatione, et vui diceti che sono 30. Ma circa questo suo primo errore li fu da me demonstrato, che V.E. in parte alcuna non era contra el mio preceptore, et che ancora lui non era contra de vui, et questo appare claro considerando che el mio preceptore non volse uscire de l'ordine de le mutatione observate in la simplice mano de Guido monaco, perché ancora che (secondo l'ordine de le coniuncte da lui tenuto) in D sol re cadano equalemente li sei nomi officiali, lui non volse fare mutatione de ut in mi, né etiam de ut in la et e contra, perché in la simplice mano de Guido non se trova alcuna positione dove ut et mi et ut et la siano equalemente soto una sola littera positi. Ancora lui non fece mutatione de re in fa et de fa in re perché tali dui nomi, cioè re et fa, in loco alcuno non conveneno equalemente in la predicta

¹ Jeppesen ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 25 n. 24) believed that this letter, which bears the same date as the next, was inadvertently misdated 1531 instead of 1530 and that it precedes no. 31. He was unacquainted with Aaron's pamphlet of 1531 discussed in this letter and the next, whose date of publication proves that this letter is correctly dated 1531.

² A five-folio untitled pamphlet, printed in Venice in 1531 by Bernardino de Vitali, that is bound with some copies of Aaron's *Toscanello* and *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni*. It is a revision of ch. 26 of the latter treatise. Aaron later incorporated this treatise in Book IV, ch. 11 of his *Lucidario in musica* (Venice, 1545).

mano de Guido. Et ancora (per tale rasone) lui non fece mutatione de mi in fa et de fa in mi, et etiam de mi in sol et de sol in mi, et similemente non mutò fa in la et la in fa per le rasone predicte, le quale varietà de mutatione potevano essere aducte in luce da lui perché procedevano con equale sonorità secondo el loco et soto uno solo segno o vero littera, come da lui è affirmato mentre che diffinisce che cosa sia mutatione, dicendo ut hic: *Mutatio est duarum vocum equalium inter se per diversas proprietates in uno signo et una voce variatio*,³ benché alcuni de li nostri musici dicono che questa diffinitione demonstra che solamente le mutatione cadeno intra le tre proprietà del canto, cioè intra b duro, natura, et b molle, la quale cosa li demonstrai essere falsa, perché se così fusse stato inteso da lui, el non haria dicto che in D *sol re* (dapo le date coniuncte) sono 18 mutatione. Pertanto circa questa prima sua dubietà restorno satisfacti.

2. Ma pure alcuni de essi nostri musici dicevano che tacite V.E. era asai contra el predicto mio preceptore, perché lui dice che le coniuncte sono doe, cioè una de b duro et l'altra de b molle. Da poi dice che quella de b molle se segna in quilli lochi dove naturalemente cade mi, come in aabta et in E, et che quella de \natural duro se pone dove naturalemente cade fa, come in C et in F, et vui signati la coniuncta de b molle et de b duro in D et in G, a la quale sua male pensitata fantasia li fu da me resposto che intra Bartolomeo Ramis mio preceptore et vui non cade pare consideratione né respecto, perché Bartolomeo solo atese et hebe respecto a producere tante positione de la mano de Guido signate quanto era de biso[g]no circa la divisione de li toni in dui semitonii del monochordo et organo al suo tempo usitati, et disse che V.E. ha considerato più alto et subtilemente, perché haveti havuto respecto che ciascuno spacio de tono de li predicti instrumenti resti diviso in modo che in grave et in acuto appara el mazore et el minore semitonio con la differentia del coma, la quale cade intr[a] loro, et etiam che V.E. haveva havuto respecto che in ciascuna positione de la mano de Guido mediante tali signi se potevano trovare tuti li sei nomi officiali pari in sono, li quali respecti non hebe Bartolomeo Ramis predicto, per la quale cosa sequita che el suo monochordo non potrà così bene immitare lo instrumento naturale et organo humano come farà questo vostro nova-224^v mente impresso. Se concluse adonca che intra | vui non era contrarietà, ma differentia come acade in doe specie eiusdem generis, che l'una in qualità sia meliore de l'altra. Et etiam io disse che de nulla V.E. haveva perterito l'ordine de la mera verità demonstrata da Frate Zoanne Othobi, ma che asai meglio et più plenamente haveti scripto de lui, perché haveti

³ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 32.

demonstrate quelle 30 mutatione intra tali nomi officiali occurente, le quale lui non assigna in li soi tractati musici.⁴

3. Ultimamente ciascuno de loro stete tacito et contento per le rasone allegate. Ma alcuni de loro (ridendo) dicevano che veramente credevano che in me era tornato el senso puerile, perché mai non trovorno che io dicesse che el mio preceptore fusse inferiore ad alcuno altro musico, excepto che al presente. Ma da me li fu facta condecente resposta, et per tale modo fu finita la nostra disputatione con grandissime laude a V.E. atribuite, come meritamente se convene, et al tracto predicto impresso, circa el quale altro non dirò perché el seria uno denigrare et tingere tale opera, essendo per se ultramodo lucida, clara, et doctamente producta da homo experimentato et de ogni virtù ornato.

Vale. Al reverendo vostro patrone et mio [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi lucidi de virtù et nobilissimi figlioli me recomandareti, et io a V.E. me recomando.

Bononie, die 24 otobris 1531.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

1. Many days ago I received your most learned, subtle, and praiseworthy new little treatise, showing how to find the six syllables on each position of the hand.² Since the subject-matter is very difficult, I first sent you only an acknowledgement of receipt. Such works require time and the judgement of learned men; therefore I circulated it among our musicians. One of them (moved more by ignorance than spite) said you contradict my teacher, who gives eighteen mutations instead of thirty. I showed him his error, explaining that Ramis kept strictly to Guido's hand; even though the six syllables can be found on D *sol re*, Guido did not mutate between *ut* and *mi*, *ut* and *la*, and *re* and *fa*. For the same reason he did not mutate between *fa* and *mi*, *mi* and *sol*, and *re* and *la*. However, these mutations could have been made according to Ramis's definition of mutation: *Mutation is the interchange of two syllables on the same pitch by means of different hexachords under one sign and one note.³ Some objected, saying that*

⁴ Although his terminology in the *Calliopea legale* is confusing, Hothby does show the six Guidonian syllables on each note of the scale, and he demonstrates that 'in ciascuna regula promiscua per tutti li ordini sono trenta mutazione'; see pp. 317-19. On the enigmatic form in which Hothby couched his theory of mutation, see Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Secret Chromatic Art Re-examined', in Barry S. Brook, Edward O. D. Downes, and Sherman Van Solkema (eds.), *Perspectives in Musicology* (New York, 1972), pp. 91-135 at 125-6=Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 774; see also Lowinsky, 'The Goddess Fortuna in Music', *The Musical Quarterly* 29 (1943), 45-77 at 67-8=Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 235.

34. Spataro to Aaron, 24 Oct. 1531

The Letters

Ramis referred only to mutations in the hard, natural, and soft hexachords, but I showed them that this was not true; otherwise he would not have demonstrated eighteen mutations on D *sol re*. On this, their first objection, I was able to satisfy them.

2. Still some persisted in saying you tacitly contradict Ramis, for he has only two coniunctae, b where there is normally a mi, as in Bb and Eb, and # where there is normally a fa, as in C and F, but you have a b and a # on D and G. I replied that Ramis considered only the divisions of the tone on the monochord and organ in use at his time, but that your thought went higher and subtler by dividing each whole tone [in the Pythagorean tuning system] so that the major semitone lies beneath the minor semitone [showing the # coniuncta] and the minor semitone lies beneath the major semitone [showing the b coniuncta], with the difference of a comma between them, allowing the six syllables on every position of Guido's hand-a division not contemplated by Ramis, whose monochord could not approximate the human voice as well as does your new treatise. It was concluded that there was no contradiction between you and Ramis but that you exceeded him. Nor, I explained, did you disregard the true order established by Hothby; you wrote better and more fully than he, because you gave a demonstration of the thirty mutations with the traditional names of the syllables, which he left out.4

3. In the end, they were all satisfied. But some, laughing, said they thought I had entered my second childhood; never before had I admitted my teacher to be inferior to anyone. I gave them a suitable reply, and we ended our discussion with high praise for you and your lucid, clear, and scholarly treatise.

Greetings to our patron [Sebastiano Michiel] and his sons.

COMMENTARY

This letter is a minor miracle. Old Vinegar Spataro speaks with a honeyed tongue. He is full of praise for another theorist, Pietro Aaron—not one of the *docta antiquità* but a living contemporary. Not only that, he elevates him above his teacher, Ramis de Pareja. In a letter on mutations he represents the most unexpected mutation himself. How are we to understand this?

In his letter of 8 February 1531 (no. 31), Spataro urged Aaron to publish a revision of his 'explanation how in all positions of the hand, naturally or through accidentals, there are six solmization syllables', published as ch. 26 of his *Trattato* della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525). Here Aaron explained the theory of mutations only with the aid of the flat sign Spataro criticized him for omitting mutation by sharps; by utilizing these, thirty mutations are possible on each position. He promised to send him a copy of his

chart demonstrating this, as soon as the days grew longer. Spataro stressed in his letter of February that he was moved only by Aaron's honour, and that 'for the love I bear you, I offer to give you any aid, and if it pleases you I shall do the work and send it on to you *and you can have it published in your name*' (my emphasis).

Between February and the present letter of 24 October, Spataro must have sent Aaron a missive, now lost, containing his examples of the thirty mutations. Aaron published them in a pamphlet without title, possibly in September or the beginning of October of the same year. Hence, in the present letter, Spataro is praising his own work, not Aaron's. Why should he do that? An Italian proverb says: 'One gives an egg hoping to receive a chicken in return.' With a letter of 28 March 1531 (no. 32) Spataro sent his treatise on sesquialtera to Aaron with the plea to have it printed in Venice if he were to find it worthy of publication. On 8 October Spataro's treatise came off the press of the same Venetian printer who had published Aaron's pamphlet on mutations and before that his treatise on the modes (and his Toscanello), Maestro Bernardino de Vitali. Spataro could not have been happier. We must remember that Spataro and Aaron had resumed their correspondence after a hiatus of seven years. Spataro had fallen out with both Del Lago and Aaron, his only hopes for getting a work of his published. He had had enough time to think-and he had mellowed. Late in life he had learnt that 'No man is an Island, entire by itself.' But there may also be another reason for the unusual cast of this letter: in his other letter to Aaron of the same date, Spataro says he is sending the present letter expressly so Aaron can show it to Del Lago, since the latter had asked about Spataro's reaction to the treatise (see no. 35, para. 6). The letter was designed to gratify Aaron and preserve the fiction of his authorship-and to confound Del Lago.⁵

E.E.L.

⁵ Peter Bergquist ('The Theoretical Writings of Pietro Aaron', pp. 449–50) considered the question of Spataro's share in the treatise; he acknowledges that Spataro's 'letters undoubtedly helped Aaron to frame his presentation' and that they 'present some crucial ideas that appear in the Supplement', but he believes that Aaron was capable of writing the treatise himself. Moreover, in Spataro's lack of self-congratulation he sees evidence of Aaron's authorship; 'one would hardly expect Spataro to forego some such expression if he had written the work'. Bergquist overlooked the telling remark in Spataro's accompanying letter.

35. Spataro to Aaron, 24 Oct. 1531

35 (190). Fos. 226^r-227^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 24 October 1531 (autograph)

- ^{227^v} [Reverendo et venerabile] et doctissimo musico Frate [Petro Aron florentin]o de l'ordine hyrosolomitano, [quanto maggiore honorand]o. [I]n Venetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.
- ^{226^r} Reverendo et excellentissimo de li musici, el mio honorando et molto da me amato Frate Petro, salutem.

1. A li giurni 18 del presente hebi una de V.E. de dì 7 signata, la quale a me è stata più che gratissima, perché parendomi (più che el dovere) tardare la resposta de le mie a V.E. misse, io dubitava de qualche vostro incomodo et dispiacere. Hor sia laudato Dio, imperò che tarde non furno mai gratie divine.

2. Ho inteso quanto haveti facto con Messer Adriano [Willaert], et circa ciò altro non se dica se V.E. se remete et sta contento.¹ Ancora io starò tacito, et a Messer Adriano offerete tuto el mio potere, perché credo che lui me ama. Et pregatilo che voglia mandare quilli 25 madrigali, li quali li mandò qua Messer Petro nostro organista, perché sono de Messer Julio [Muradori] nostro amico et cantore, et iterum a sua Excellentia me recomandati.

3. Diceti ancora de certa dureza de alcune sexte posite nel principio de uno de quilli mei due canti,² et ho inteso la honesta, recta, et vera excusatione la quale ha facta per me V.E. a quilli doctissimi cantori, cioè che da me fu considerato fare la fuga de diapente a similitudine del subiecto o vero tenore del canto plano sumpto senza havere respecto ad altra meliore sonorità, la quale (removendo tale fuga et similitudine) gli seria potuta cadere, et da me (con el lume de la inteligentia et cognitione de la verità) primamente fu asai bene compreheso che tale sexte in tale loco non erano molto grate, et da poi ancora meglio n'hebi certeza quando el feci cantare, ma pure me piaque che così stesse, perché pò stare senza essere contra artem, et credo che da qualeunque docto serà veduto che (per la rasone da V.E. dicta a quilli cantori) me harà per excusato. Ma la causa perché tale sexte in tale loco posite non sono molto grate al senso de lo audito nasce da la sua gravità et da la soa tardità.

4. Credo bene che V.E. habia havuto fatica et incomodo non poco con li impressori, perché per quello poco che ho havuto a fare con loro, sono

¹ For the explanation of this matter, see the Biographical Dictionary under Willaert.

per tale modo restato satio et de fastidio pleno che prima patiria ogni grande supplitio che mai più caderli in le mano. Ma tengo et scio che ogni incomodo haveti portato con patientia per amore mio et per farmi apiacere, et el simile son disposto fare per V.E., ancora che el mio potere sia poco. Et molto me piace che l'opera sia finita,³ la quale credo che starà bene, perché è stata deligentemente con amore de le^a lectione et suma solicitudine curata non solamente da homo docto et perito ma etiam mio amico. Pertanto con vostra comodità ne mandareti al manco una per me, et se possibile serà, ancora la mia copia, e stia come se voglia, cioè signata da li impressori, che poco ne curo.

5. Frate Petro mio carissimo, io voglio che sapiati che el non vive oggidì al mondo homo che tanto da me sia amato quanto è V.E., et se io scrivo qualche mio parere in le opere vostre, prego non lo vogliati pigliare in mala parte, perché con lo amico se debe andare con la verità et non ocultare quello che li potria tornare in scandolo et vergogna, et similemente se debe con lieta fronte acceptare el parere del suo amico, maxime quando l'homo cognosce che procede con la mera verità, et non credere che da quello gli siano tenute le insidie al calcagno per torli la soa bona fama. Questo dico perché V.E. a li giurni passati me mandò uno suo 'Letatus sum', etc., el quale subito fu cantato et molto laudato, come da me ve fu scripto. M[a] da poi (perché io tengo bono conto de l'opere vostre), io, con certo mio discipulo, discorsi tale canto, cantando le soe particole a do voce inseme, et ci trovai certi passi che non me piaceno, de li quali el primo è che a me pare che tale canto seria più comodo et più regolare se fusse cantato senza quello segno del b molle posito nel principio del predicto concento, ma solamente ponere in processo tale segno dove fa bisogno.⁴ V.E. ancora advertisca dove el contra alto sta ut hic:



^{226^v} che quella semibreve | nel suo principio se move et bate in seconda con el suprano et in nona con el contrabasso. A me non pare che stia bene. Ancora advertireti dove el predicto contra alto fa questo processo

the quello puncto posito dapo quella minima cade in

² A passage that matches this description is found in Spataro's 'Hec virgo est preclarum vas'; see the edition by Jeppesen in *Italia sacra musica*, i. 118-23, mm. 6-7. Spataro sent this motet to Aaron in a five-voice version on 30 Jan. 1532 (see no. 37, para. 6); he must have sent the fourvoice version earlier. On the various passages criticized in this letter, see Ch. 5.

^a MS: li.

³ The Tractato di musica on sesquialtera, printed 8 Oct. 1531 in Venice.

⁴ This is one of the few passages in the Correspondence dealing with mode, specifically the harmonic implications of a flat in the signature. The motet does not survive, but it probably was set in the Dorian mode, in which Bb is frequently needed.

octava con el contrabasso, et ancora quella semibreve sequente^b cade in octava, in modo che per la velocità et poca portione de tempo le quale hano queste doe intermedie note 🌔 🌢 ascendente (a lo audito), pareno

doe octave, et de questo sereti claro se tale passo serà da vui cantato. Et credo che in alcuna compositione de homo perito trovareti simile processo. Similemente dove el tenore procede ut hic

Bbordoo

trovareti che quella ultima semibreve descende de terza in unisono con el contra basso, la quale cosa a me no[n] piace, perché se potria conducere per megliore modo. Et questo che ho dicto è stato dicto da me con grande reverentia et timore, et forsa ancora che io erro, ma errando, o non errando, pigliatelo in bona parte perché io desidero el vostro honore et exaltatione, et non per monstrarmi docto.

6. Circa quello che V.E. me domanda per conto de Pre Zanetto, ve mando questa altra mia inclusa [no. 34] aciò che gli demonstrati el mio parere circa le coniuncte impresse, et ancora ve mando un'altra, la quale è venuta più giurni fano da Imola. Credo che vada a Messer Baldasera vostro et mio honorando, al quale asai me recomandareti.⁵

7. Ancora a V.E. mando uno mio canto dove ho imitato el canto plano de una antiphona de la nostra Madonna vergine Maria.⁶ Scio che è cosa da nulla, ma scio che per amore mio lo acceptareti con lieta fronte, et se cosa mendosa li trovareti, per amore la emendareti.

8. Non altro per hora. Al reverendo vostro et mio patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi floridi et lucidi de virtù nobilissimi' [figliuoli] me recomandareti. Tuti li nostri musici et cantori a V.E. mandano saluti senza termine, et io a quella humilemente me recomando.

Vale. In Bologna, a li dì 24 de otobre 1531.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

^b MS: sequenta. MS: nobilissime.

⁶ 'Virgo prudentissima'; see no. 36, para. 2.

I. I was happy to receive on the 18th your letter of the 7th; I had begun to wonder if the delay might have been due to an indisposition or displeasure on your part. But God be praised, for divine grace never came too late.

2. I understand how you have handled the matter with Messer Adriano [Willaert]; if you are over your annoyance, and content, let no more be said.¹ I too shall not mention it. Please assure Willaert of all my good will, for I believe he loves me; beg him to return the twenty-five madrigals of our friend and singer Julio [Muradori], sent by our organist Petro.

3. You speak about the harshness of some sixths at the beginning of one of my two motets;² you excused it, saying I was constrained by the imitation at the fifth of the Gregorian cantus firmus. This is true; I realized that they were not very pleasant to the ear because they lie low and are slow, but I left them because they are not contra artem.

4. I can well believe that you are having a hard time with the printers; I would rather undergo torture than fall into their hands again. But I know you bear it patiently to please me, and I would do the same for you. I'm delighted that the work is finished,³ and I'm sure it will turn out well because it is supervised not only by a most learned and experienced man, but also a friend of mine. Please send me a copy and, if possible, my original, even if it has been marked up.

5. My dear Pietro, I love no man alive as much as you, and if I criticize your works, do not take it ill, for a friend must not conceal what might turn out to be scandalous or shameful. Please accept what I say since it proceeds from truth, and do not believe I am laying a trap for you. I have gone through your 'Letatus sum' (which we had already sung and praised) with a student of mine, singing two voices at a time, and I found certain passages that did not please me. First, the composition would come out more smoothly and in better order if you removed the flat from the key signature and used it only where necessary.⁴ In the alto in this passage:



the semibreve creates a second with the soprano

and a ninth with the bass. In another place the figure



barely conceals parallel octaves. Where the tenor has



⁵ Imola lies 34 km south-east of Bologna. Baldasera's correspondent must have known that Spataro regularly sent letters to Venice and therefore would be able to forward this letter. Baldasera is probably Baldasera da Imola, the organist at San Marco.

the last semibreve moves from a third to a unison with the bass; this could be improved. I say all this in reverence and fear; perhaps I am mistaken, but please believe I desire only your honour.

6. With regard to your request on behalf of Pre Zanetto, show him the enclosed [no. 34], which demonstrates my opinion on the *coniunctae* printed in your treatise. I also send you a letter that came a few days ago from Imola for Baldasera, your friend and mine.⁵

7. I am sending you another motet of mine on a Marian antiphon.⁶ It's nothing at all, but if you find anything wrong, please correct it.

8. Greetings to our patron [Sebastiano Michiel] and his flourishing and noble sons. All our musicians and singers send their regards.

36 (J91). Fos. 228^r-229^v Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 27 November 1531 (autograph)

- 229^v [Reverendo et venerabile et do]ctissimo de li musici Frate Petro [Aron florentino] de l'ordine hyrosolomitano. In Venetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.
- 228^r Reverendo et de li musici excellentissimo, el mio honorando Frate Petro, salutem.

1. A li dì 13 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de 2 novembris signata, per la quale ho inteso V.E. havere receputo la littera mia facta circa le coniuncte [no. 34], et molto me sono ralegrato per havere inteso che seti restato sati[s]facto. Et ho etiam inteso come seti stato a parlamento con el reverendo Pre Zanetto, circa el quale altro non se dirà, pregando Dio che el se remova da la sua mala natura.

2. Ho molto bene considerato a quelle vostre emendatione facte in quello vostro 'Letatus sum', le quale serano da me acomodate in li lochi soi comodi, come scrive V.E. Ho ancora compreheso come per demonstrare che non seti ingrato ma sempre disposto a la satisfa[c]tione de li beneficii receputi da li amici, li quali per honore vostro se affaticano, havendo io demonstrato quattro errori vostri comissi nel predicto canto, V.E. (per vincermi de liberalità) me advisa de cinque (che vui chiamati errori) trovati in quello mio canto, 'Virgo prudentissima' chiamato, de li quali errori, volendo demonstrare con rasone valide che tali da vui chiamati mei errori non sono errori, non bastaria una epistola ma seria quasi uno condecente tractato. Pertanto per vostro honore ve conforto al stare tacito et quieto et disponere el core et l'animo vostro in pace, et cercati de sapere come doe quinte, cioè una perfecta et una imperfecta, sono usitate (senza vicio) ascendendo l'una dapo l'altra, de la quale cosa potreti havere clara notitia se guardareti in quello mio tractato de contrapuncto a V.E. misso.¹ Et se el non fusse che io tengo per firmo et certo che me amati, io diria che per garire et per vendicarvi maniffestamente ve opponeti a la mera verità. Pertanto de li predecti cinque errori solo uno ve concedo, cioè quello che cade nel tenore con el contra alto soto la parola 'genitrix', ut hic:



¹ On this progression, and on Spataro's criticisms of Aaron's motet, see Ch. 5, pp. 109–11 and 115.

36. Spataro to Aaron, 27 Nov. 1531

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nel quale tenore ponereti la seconda minima in E *la mi* grave,² et per tale modo l'ho trovato stare in la mia cartella dove primamente fu composito.

3. Et più ancora de vui me sono maravegliato, vedendo che voleti tore el libero suo arbitrio al musico et farlo subiecto a li accenti gramatici, li quali ancora che (in quantità temporale) habiano tempo longo et breve, tamen intra tale sua temporale quantità non se dà certa et nota proportione, perché non cadeno mensuratamente soto quello tempo et mensura la quale considera el musico mensurando el suo tempo inter systole et diastole, o vero arsis et thesis, cioè levare et abassare. Che el musico non sia constretto seguitare li gramatici accenti, el se proba per el canto plano de tale antiphona da me sumpto per subie[c]to o vero tenore, perché a la syllaba 'fi', la quale secondo el gramatico [h]a lo accento longo, et a la sequente syllaba, cioè 'li', cadeno doe note equale in tempo separate, et pure la sillaba 'li' (secondo el gramatico) [h]a lo accento breve, et etiam harà la sequente vocale, la quale dal gramatico è conumerata breve. Similemente serà contrarietà intra el tempo musico assignato a la sequente svllaba, la quale [h]a lo accento breve, et el canto plano li assigna el tempo longo, perché gli assigna doe note ligate cantabile³ et a l'ultima, cioè 'on', la quale è breve, è assignata una nota equale in tempo a la prima, cioè 'fi', la quale, ut dixi, ha lo accento longo ut hic:

fi li a si on

Io non scio dove proceda che hora in le compositione de li altri andati con tanti respecti gramatici, ma credo chi bene cercasse per le vostre compositione se trovaria che non haveti havuto tanti respecti, perché la gramatica non è vostra né mia professione. Et ancora credo che siano pochi compositori che observano li accenti gramatici in canto mensurato. Pertan[to], ut dixi, el musico è libero, ma più se debe observare in canto plano. Non vogliati adonca, Frate Petro mio honorando, uscire de la vostra facultà, et non fareti poco se sapereti guardarve da li musici errori

(de li quali certo, more solito, questo vostro canto a me ultimamente misso me ne pare molto copioso et pleno), de li quali perché scrivendo diceti che a me demonstrati li mei errori per imparare, et per mio honore, alcuni ve ne demonstrarò per vostro honore, ma non per imparare, perché io non voglio imparare de fare errore, ma sì de essere contra lo errore. 228^v 4. La prima domenica del mexe presente, che fu a dì 5, io feci cantare nel nostro choro de Sancto Petronio la vostra messa a cinque voce pare, la quale fu summamente laudata da li audictori, così laici come clerici. Ancora a li dì 19 dapo vespere io feci cantare in la nostra sacristia quello vostro canto predicto a me ultimamente misso, el quale fu laudato molto da li cantori et da li circonstanti et ancora da me. Ma perché, come piace a Ptolomeo, questa arte de musica non solamente sta nel iuditio del senso de l'audito, ma etiam bisogna che ci concorra la rasone,⁴ pertanto l'ho discorso alquanto con la mensura de la rasone et de lo intellecto, et ce ho trovato certi andamenti, li quali non dirò come dice V.E., cioè, che non me piaceno, ma dico che non sono termini da essere usitati da homo tanto docto et famoso quanto forsa se existima, crede, et tene V.E. Et prima guardati ne la prima parte dove el soprano fa questo processo:

B, · · · · · · ·

Vui trovareti che el tenore descende con octava con la seconda minima, cadendo in unisono con el basso et in sexta con l'alto. Pertanto dico che tale contrapuncto è cosa da fanciulli, perché meglio et più regolato staria se tale minima nel tenore fusse sexta con el soprano e 'l contra alto fusse quinta con el basso. Ancora pure in la predicta prima parte nel contra alto con el basso, dove cadeno queste parole, scilicet 'in cena recubuit',⁵ dove stano queste note:

⁴ 'The criteria for harmony are hearing and reason': Ptolemy, *Harmonics* 1. 1 (*Die Harmonie-lehre des Klaudios Ptolemaios*, ed. Ingemar Düring (Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift 36/1; Göteborg, 1930), p. 3, ll. 3–4). Ptolemy's opinion is reported by Boethius, *De musica* 5. 3 (Friedlein, p. 355). Spataro could also have found it in Gafurio's *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* (trans. Miller, p. 152).

⁵ These words occur in several chants for the Feast of St John, Apostle and Evangelist (27 Dec.): 'Iste est Joannes' (antiphon, *Liber usualis* 420; responsory, *Antiphonaire monastique de Worcester* (Paléographie musicale 12; Tournai, 1922), 41), 'Valde honorandus est' (antiphon, *Liber usualis* 421; responsory, Worc. Ant. 39), and 'Hic est beatissimus evangelista' (responsory, Worc. Ant. 40), and also in the Gospel, beginning 'In illo tempore dixit Jesus Petro' (*Liber usualis* 423; 'et recubuit in coena'). Aaron's motet is not identical with the anonymous responsory motet 'Iste est Joannes' *a j* in Scotto, *Musica quinque vocum* (RISM 1543²; also Gardane, RISM 1549⁶) or the anonymous 'Valde honorandus est' in the same print. Nor is it the 'Iste est Joannes' *a j* in Bologna, Archivio di San Petronio, MS A. xxx1x, fo. 98'.

² Spataro's motet survives in MS A. XXXXV of the Archivio di San Petronio, on fos. $1^{v}-3^{r}$. The second minim in the tenor is also *e*. For a modern edn., see Jeppesen, *Italia sacra musica*, i. 113–17. The passage quoted is found at mm. 59–61. The parallel fifths to which Aaron objects occur between the cantus and tenor in m. 8.

³ For the melody of 'Virgo prudentissima', see *Liber usualis* 1600²; this version lacks the second note of the ligature. A source showing this ligature is Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Barberini 543, fo. 169', from an Antiphoner of c.1100, possibly of Sienese provenance; see *Monumenti Vaticani di paleografia musicale latina*, ed. H. M. Bannister (Leipzig, 1913), *Testo*, p. 93, no. 266, and *Tavole*, no. 53a, top. The *i* of *Sion* is long in Hebrew and in Christian poetry of c.400; but both vowels are short in Bernard of Cluny's line 'Urbs Syon aurea, patria lactea, cive decora' (*De contemptu mundi* 1. 269) and in those that follow. (Our thanks to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for this observation.)

ce cadeno doe quinte intra quelle semiminime et le sequente. Dapo nel soprano et contra alto de la seconda parte dove faceti questo processo:

cade uno contrapuncto non da homo docto, perché el non se dà tra docti ascendere de sexta in unisono, come da vui è stato facto intra la prima et la seconda minima de tale particole, et ancora quelle sequente semiminime del contra alto se moveno senza concordare con el soprano. Ancora dove el soprano predicto fa questo processo:

trovo che seti contra l'arte et musici precepti, perché numerando le semibreve a doe, l'ultima minima punctata con la sequente semiminima convirano sincopare ultra la sequente breve, et sincopando trovano la pausa de la semibreve, la quale sincopa è evitabile, perché caderà in nota et in mensura, perché el canto nel principio è signato con questo segno diminuto \Diamond , nel quale se baterà la breve et non la semibreve, et se pure volete batere la semibreve, sequitarà uno altro vostro errore, perché el sequitarà che la causa producerà uno effecto a sé contrario. Ancora guardareti circa al fine del contra alto de la prima parte dove cadeno queste note:

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Quella ultima semibreve cade con molto malo contrapuncto con le altre particole, et maxime con el contra basso, perché descende de sexta in octava, da alcuno docto non mai trovata per tale modo facto. Et oltra procedendo, volendo vui pervenire al fine de la prima parte nel contra alto, vui poneti queste note:



et el contrabasso sta ut hic:"



^a MS: erroneous dot after breve.

La prima semibreve del contrabasso con la seconda parte de la prima breve del contra alto cadeno in octava, et da poi in esso basso et alto sequita una pausa de semibreve, dapo la quale iterum haveti posito un'altra octava ascendente. Dico che tale doe octave non stano bene, perché quella pausa generale de semibreve, la quale sequita dapo la precedente octava data (per essere solamente la medietà de la nota batuda assignata dal signo ut hic φ posito in principio cantus) non potrà bene ocultare al senso de lo audito quella sonorità de octava già da lo audito sentita inanti a la pausa predicta. Pertanto dico⁶ che in mediare le octave, meglio asai serà la sonorità che non serà la taciturnità, et questo nasce perché al senso de lo audito tanto piace lo audire che dapo la cosa grata da lui audita, meglio atenderà a un'altra audictione, ponendo in oblivione la prima, che non farà se dapo sequitarà el tacere. Che questo sia evitabile el se proba per lo audito et per la auctorità de Franchino Gafurio nel capitulo 12 del terzo libro de la soa *Practica.*⁶

5. Ancora dico che questo segno # da vui posito nel fine del contra alto de la prima parte de tale vostro canto non è bene posito, perché el non se dà segno accidentale sopra segno accidentale. Pertanto così come mediante el segno del b molle haveti remosso el canto da \ddagger quadro o vero ^{229^r} duro et naturale in b molle accidentale, così per contrario, | volendo retornare el canto de b molle accidentale in \ddagger duro naturale, alhora el serà licito segna[re] in $b fa \ddagger mi$ el b quadrato drito, ut hic \ddagger , et non el [b] quadro iacente, el quale b quadro iacente solo se segna sopra le positione naturale, come è stato dicto da Frate Zoanne Othobi.⁷

6. Ma perché io sono repreheso da vui de una 14^a data nel contrabasso con uno puncto posito dapo una minima nel soprano,⁸ pertanto guardareti bene in lo tenore de la seconda parte de tale vostro canto in quella sesqualtera dove el tenore fa questo processo:

et vedereti che el contrabasso batte in 7^a con quello puncto posito dapo la

^b MS: dicto.

⁸ Spataro seems to have removed the offending fourteenth; it is not to be found in his 'Virgo prudentissima' in Bologna A. XXXV (Jeppesen, *Italia sacra musica*, i. 113–17).

⁶ Gafurio says: 'If a tenor and cantus are an octave apart, and the cantus rests on a minim rest (the tenor not resting or also having a minim rest), it is not proper for another octave in ascending or descending parallel motion to follow immediately'; see his *Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, p. 143.

⁷ See his *Calliopea legale*, ed. Coussemaker, pp. 298–9. Karol Berger singles out the passage in the present letter to show that 'it is Spataro rather than Aaron who must be seen as the key figure in the transition to the modern understanding of accidentals' (*Musica ficta*, p. 21). In his *Lucidario* of 1545, Aaron transmits Spataro's ideas in much the same words (Book II, fos. $3^{v}-4'$).

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prima semibreve. Non dico già che questo non se possa fare, perché a qualunque^{ϵ} puncto el quale non importa tuta la integrità de la nota batuda, se pò dare 7^a et 14^a quando la nota cantabile a lui sequente descende al loco propinquo, et tale puncto alhora se accepta in loco de sexta o de 13^a, et la rasone se tace per non procedere in longo.

7. Ma non poco me sono maravegliato dove in questo processo del soprano:

haveti proceduto nel tenore con tanto inordinato contrapuncto, perché a la prima semibreve haveti dato sexta et a la sequente, la quale descende per ditono (ancora descendendo), dati octava. Questo a me pare uno processo da uno principiante et rudo fanciullo. Ma certo era asai meglio ascendere con tale tenore in terza con el soprano, et dapo, oltra sequitando, tale processo haria havuto più gratia et più seria con arte facto, perché el contrabasso non seria asceso con quinta con el tenore con si poca gratia et poca doctrina.

8. V.E. non habia per male el scrivere mio, perché io non piglio el vostro in mala parte, et sempre voria essere facto evidente de li errori mei più presto da li amici mei che da li inimici, et quando io cognosco havere errato, io me guardo de più non errare, refferendo sempre le debite gratie de le fatiche da loro durate per mia utilità et honore. Ma quando io cognosco che la reprehensione facta non è firma né valida, alhora da me se existima che el proceda da ignora[n]tia o da livore o da superbia, et queste trovo che fano che l'homo repreheso se move in tri modi, cioè a ira, a riso o a pianto. Per me, per tale occurentie mai me movo a ira, né etiam a riso, ma sì a pianto, perché ho grande compassione vedendo la stultitia de li homini che con certi modi cercano scusarsi con demonstrare li errori del compagno, li quali alcuna volta credeno lavarsi et più restano imbratati che prima.

9. Circa li errori da li impressori in l'opera mia⁹ comissi, altro non dico, perché come io serò in megliore valitudine, io la voglio discorere tuta, et de tuti quilli errori che li trovarò ve darò aviso aciò che al manco emendati quella che apresso de vui tenereti.

10. Circa la seconda vostra da me receputa a dì 15 del presente inseme con el libro, a V.E. ho data resposta et rengratio iterum V.E., et a quella ho mandato sei salcizzoni de li megliori che ho potuto trovare in Bologna. Ma se fareti a mio senno, li tenereti per vui.

' MS: qualonqua.

11. Circa la *Musica* de Bartolomeo Ramis,¹⁰ non poteti essere servito, perché in Bologna non se ne trova se non quella la quale io tengo apresso de mi, et io già la mandai a Milano a Franchino, et lui dapo me la mandò tuta squinternata et de sua mano appostillata contra lo auctore, in modo che non me curo che sia veduta, perché altri, che non intendeno li termini de lo auctore, facilemente potriano credere a quello che fu scripto da Franchino, et se io ne trovasse un'altra, io la compraria, et perché tale appostille non fusseno vedute, io getaria questa che tengo nel foco.¹¹

12. Me spiace che Pre Zanetto habia comprato l'opera mia, perché senza fallo lui ce trovarà qua[l]che errore causato da lo impressore. Pertanto seria bono temptare se V.E. potesse havere el mio originale da lo impressore e tenirlo qua apresso de vui per corregere l'opera impressa, acadendo che altri dubitasse. Circa le altre opere mie, fatine el vostro parere, che sono contento. Haveva dato principio de livare via certe figure per comodità de la stampa da le *Epistole*,¹² ma el m'è sopragiuncto questa mia descesa, et essendo breve el giorno et non havendo ochiali che me servano a scrivere la not[t]e a la lume, credo che non potrò sequitare più oltra al presente.

^{229^v} 13. A V.E. mando | uno canto per parte de Juliano nostro, el quale ha facto uno suo figliolo molto giovenetto, et a V.E. molto se recomanda inseme con Messer Nicolao et tuti li altri nostri cantori et musici. Ancora mando a quella uno mio canto a cinque voce,¹³ circa el quale ve prego che se li trovati errore, me dati adviso senza respecto alcuno, perché io non sono de la natura de coloro che hano in odio la verità, la quale nel core suo sempre parturisse odio.¹⁴ Già un'altra volta io scripsi a V.E. che acadendo parlare con Messer Adriano, che el pregati per parte de Petro nostro horganista che el voglia mandarli quilli 25 madrigali che lui li mandò qua in Vinetia, perché sono de Messer Julio nostro cantore.¹⁵

Al vostro et mio patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi nobilissimi figlioli me recomandareti, et a V.E. me recomando.

Vale. Bononię, die 27 novembris 1531.

Tuto de V.E. J. Spatarius

¹⁰ Musica practica (Bologna, 1482).

¹¹ Spataro's copy survives in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale of Bologna (A. 80). Gafurio's marginal remarks have been transcribed by Wolf in his edn. of the *Musica practica*.

¹² Spataro first wrote to Aaron about his 'epistole' on 30 Jan. 1531 (no. 30, para. 11). Evidently, Aaron had suggested in one of his lost letters that Spataro prepare the 'epistole' for publication.

¹³ 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix' (see no. 37, para. 3).

¹⁴ See no. 17 n. 2.

¹⁵ See no. 35, para. 2.

⁹ Tractato di musica.

1. I was happy to hear from your letter of 2 November that you received my letter on the *coniunctae* [no. 34] and that you are satisfied. On Pre Zanetto, nothing more is to be said; pray God that he change his malicious disposition.

2. I shall incorporate your emendations in your 'Letatus sum'. To show your gratitude and exceed me in liberality (since I found four errors in your motet), you point out five (so called) in my 'Virgo prudentissima'. It would take a whole treatise to explain why these are not errors, so I beg you to keep your peace. If you look at my treatise on counterpoint, you will see why two fifths moving upward can be used in succession, if one is imperfect.¹ Were I not certain that you love me, I would say you deliberately sidestep the truth to take revenge. Only one error do I concede, in the tenor at the word 'genitrix':



Please change the second minim to e,² which is the way it appears on my score (*cartella*), where I have originally composed it.

3. I wonder even more about you that you want to impose on musicians the observation of grammatical accents. Given that there are long and short quantities, they are not subject to a fixed proportion, as music is between systole and diastole or arsis and thesis, that is raising and lowering. The chant melody I followed proves that musicians are not constrained by grammatical accents. 'Filia' has a long and two short accents, but the chant gives three breves. 'Sion' is short-short, but the chant gives a long (two breves in ligature)³ and a breve:



I don't know what moved you to pay so much attention to grammatical considerations; if one were to look into your own works, one would find that you have not been so particular yourself. Grammar is not our profession, and few composers observe grammatical accent in mensural music. So I say the composer is free, but more care should be taken in plainchant. You would do better to concentrate on avoiding *musical* errors, for certainly your last motet is full of them; I shall demonstrate them not to learn from them (as you say) but for the sake of your honour.

4. On Sunday, 5 November, we sang your mass for five equal voices in church to general admiration, and on the 19th the motet you recently sent

me was performed in the sacristy and highly praised by all, laymen and clerics. But, as Ptolemy says, music must be judged by reason as well as by the ear.⁴ In this light, there are several procedures that ought not to be used by someone so learned and famous as perhaps you believe yourself to be. In one place you write:



This is childish; it would have been much better to put the tenor on f and the alto on a. At the words 'in cena recubuit'⁵ you have parallel fifths:



In the *secunda pars* you move from a sixth to a unison, which is not done by the learned, and the semiminims in the alto clash with the soprano:



In another place you go against the rules: the syncopation of the dotted minim and semiminim under &is misplaced:



Towards the end of the prima pars, the alto



creates poor counterpoint because the last semibreve forms a sixth with the bass descending to an octave. Between the alto and bass at the end of the *prima pars* you have an octave, then a semibreve rest and another octave. Under \diamondsuit the rest is too brief and you hear parallel octaves:

36. Spataro to Aaron, 27 Nov. 1531



A rest is not a good choice for bridging two octaves; the ear needs another sound in order to forget the first. Listen to it, and consult Gafurio's *Practica musicae*, Book III, ch. $12.^{6}$

5. You err in using # before B at the end of the alto of the *prima pars*: an accidental cannot be placed on another accidental. To cancel the flat in the signature, you have to use \natural , the 'straight square b', and not #, the 'slanted square b', which, as Hothby says, occurs only in natural positions.⁷

6. Since you criticize a fourteenth against a dot after a minim in my motet,⁸ look at the tenor of yours in the *secunda pars*:



The bass sounds a seventh against the dot. But this is allowed, if the next note descends, in which case the dot is accepted in place of a sixth or thirteenth.

7. I was astonished to find the progression



between soprano and tenor. This is worthy of a beginner. The tenor should move to *a*; this would be a more graceful progression, also in consideration of the bass.

8. Do not take offence at my writing, because I do not take yours ill; I would rather learn from my friends than my enemies, and I am always grateful for correction. But when the criticism is not valid, it must proceed from ignorance, spite, or pride. The natural response is to become angry, to laugh, or to cry; as for myself, I neither laugh nor get angry, but I have pity on those foolish people who seek to excuse themselves by criticizing others and who only end up blackening themselves.

9. When I am in better health, I shall look for the printing errors in my book⁹ and inform you so you can correct your copy.

10. I have already responded to your letter and the book and sent you six of the best Bolognese sausages (if I were you, I'd keep them for myself).

11. On Ramis's *Musica*¹⁰ I cannot help you; mine is the only copy in Bologna and it was taken apart and annotated by Gafurio. I don't want it to be seen because others might believe Gafurio was right. If I could find another one I would buy it and throw this one into the fire so that no one should ever see the comments he scribbled on my copy.¹¹

12. I'm sorry to hear that Pre Zanetto bought a copy of my book; he is sure to find some errors, caused by the printers. See if you can get my original from the printer and keep it with you to correct the printed copy, in case others raise questions. On my other works, do as you see fit. I started to eliminate some of the examples in my $Epistole^{12}$ to make things easier for the printer, but I cannot work at night, lacking eyeglasses for use with candlelight.

13. I am enclosing a composition by the young son of Juliano [Veludaro], with greetings from him and Nicolò [Cavalaro] and all the other singers and musicians, and my own five-part motet.¹³ Do not hesitate to criticize it, for truth does not breed hatred in me.¹⁴ Again, when you see Messer Adriano [Willaert], please ask him to return Julio [Muradori]'s twenty-five madrigals.¹⁵

37 (194). Fos. 232^r-233^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 January 1532 (autograph)

- ^{233^v} [Reverendo et venerabile e]t musico excellentissimo Frate Petro Aron [florentino] de l'ordine hyerosolomitano, [quanto maggiore] mio honorando. In Vinetia, [Sanc]to Zoanne de li furlani.
- 232^r Excellentissimo et de li musici doctissimo, el mio honorando et magiore Frate Petro, etc.

1. A li dì 24 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de 10 del presente signata, la quale, nel suo principio, a me è stata non poco molesta et nogliosa, perché quella dice io havere scripto con molto sdegno [no. 36]. Et legendo li vostri humili scripti et de puro amore pleni, non ho potuto contenere le meste lacrime. Certamente io non me arecordo quello che ho scripto a V.E., ma bene scio che più che altro homo vivente ve amo de optimo et puro core, et se alhora forsa io scripsi qualche coseta non forsa con tanto humile et dolce parlare quale intra dui cordiali et fidi amici se convene, perdonatime, perché io ve confesso el mio peccato, che quando io fui repreheso da V.E. circa li accenti gramatici (perché quella non è vostra né mia facultà), a me parve che da vui fusse cercato uno litigio insulso per darmi baglia et per demostrarmi che nel mio concento erano più errori che non erano nel vostro. Ma per tale mio scripto (come se voglia) non pensati mai che per sdegno alcuno el core mio se parta dal vinculo et legame de la nostra longa amicitia et puro amore, el quale, perché è fondato in mera virtù, serà senza termine et fine, et etiam perché mai non fui ingrato, et quando io recevo benifitio da qualonque se sia, sempre me sta ne la memoria, et per uno cerco renderli cento. A me certamente seria grande vituperio et biasemo apresso a li viventi, havendo receputo da V.E. tanti innumerabili benefitii et havendo patito tanti sinistri e fatice per darmi fama et optimo nome, et ancora essere più caldo et disposto circa le laude mie nel futuro tempo, et da poi io (come insano et stulto, per una poca cosa che nulla importa) lassare da parte et abandonare uno tanto et fido amico. Pertanto, Frate Petro mio honorando, alhora" non ce pensava et non credeva che tale mio scrivere (in cosa alcuna) ve desse noglia. Et se haveti scripto errori o dubitatione, poco ne curava, perché la verità m'è amica, et sempre me sono extimato essere homo et non Dio, et essere subiecto al potere falare, et non me spiace quando (con rasone) et con amore li mei errori me sono demonstrati. Horsù non più circa questo. Basta che sapendo che el scrivere mio ve ha dato affanno, io son caduto in tanta tristeza che non lo potresti credere, et

^a MS: alhoro.

di ciò iterum vi chiedo venia et perdono. Un'altra volta non serò così pazo.

2. Ma pure alquanto sono confortato per havere inteso che V.E. tene apresso di sé el mio originale,¹ aciò che se possano corregere multi errori li quali sono in l'opera impressa che asai importano, et etiam me piace che el nostro Pre Zanetto laudi tale tractato. Et se lui havesse alcuno dubio et che me scriva, io li scriverò come amico senza guardare a quello che è passato. Ancora scio che Messer Adriano ha mandato li soi canti a Petro organista.² Circa le mie epistole musice,³ credo che farò qualche cosa, perché ho bona intentione da li operarii de Sancto Petronio che (a sue spexe) me darano uno compagno che me aiutarà nel insignare a li clerici, sì che harò tempo da potere spendere circa la reformatione de tale epistole.

3. Ma ancora più me sono alegrato vedendo | che V.E. s'è dignato de examinare con deligenza quello mio canto a 5 voce⁴ et che (per vostra innata gentileza) seti dignato darmi adviso del vostro parere et errori in tale canto trovati, al quale canto è stato agiunta da me la sexta voce et a V.E. iterum mandato a giurni pasati. Tale sexta voce è stata agiuncta da me a tale canto più per examinare se errore alcuno se trovasse nel canto predicto a cinque voce facto che per altra causa. Pertanto se tale sexta voce non ve pare che li stia bene, tenetelo solo a cinque voce come prima.⁵ Ma non ho però tanto potuto aprire li ochii et guardarmi da li errori che non gli è né sia rimasto qualche uno, et maxime quelle doe quinte, de le quale hora me advisati, che cadeno intra el contrabasso et el contra alto nel

¹ The manuscript of Spataro's Tractato di musica, printed 8 Oct. 1531 in Venice.

² As it stands, 'li soi canti' could refer either to Willaert or to Petro the organist. From the preceding letters (see nos. 33 and 35–6) we know that Petro had sent Willaert twenty-five madrigals by Julio Muradori, a singer at San Petronio, and that Spataro has repeatedly asked Aaron to request their return. Since the first urgent request was made in a letter of 19 June 1531, and since Spataro complains that preceding requests have gone unanswered, it is reasonable to assume that the corpus of twenty-five madrigals written by Muradori goes back at least to the years 1529–30, that is to the very beginnings of the publication of books of madrigals. This serves as a useful reminder that the publication of music, particularly in this early period of music printing, constitutes only a part of the actual music composed. Muradori's name is not known in the annals of music history. If he sent his madrigals to Willaert in the hope of receiving a recommendation to a music-printer, he was apparently disappointed—unless the madrigal by 'Petrus organista' in the fourth book of Arcadelt's madrigals is really his (see the Biographical Dictionary under Petro).

³ Spataro speaks of his letters to Gafurio, extracts of which he had already published in the *Errori de Franchino Gafurio*. Gafurio refers to another and replies to it in Book III, ch. 8 of his *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, where he calls Spataro 'very acute in music (although illiterate)' (trans. Miller, p. 167; see also pp. 20–1, where the relationship between the two theorists is discussed). Nothing came of Spataro's plan.

⁴ 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix' (Archivio di San Petronio, MS A. xxxxv, fos. 5'-7'). For a modern edn., see Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 513-21.

⁵ On this method of checking for errors, see Ch. 5, pp. 123-4. Eventually, Spataro himself entered the work in his autograph MS A. xxxxv with five voices.

37. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1532

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principio de la prima parte de tale canto. Pertanto V.E. emendarà tale contra alto in questo modo:⁶

Da poi V.E., sequitando, dice che haveti trovato che sopra el contra alto ut hic signato: 32×10^{-10} nel contrabasso cade questo processo:

Et bene che altro non diceti, a me pare intendere che voleti dire che tra la prima semibreve del contrabasso et quella semibreve per tale modo signata nel contra alto predicto cade diapason superflua, a la quale cosa respondo et dico che tale superflua diapason non serà comprehesa dal senso de lo audito, et questo advenirà perché non caderà sopra el primo et vivo moto che fa la voce data in tale semibreve ut hic # nel predicto contra alto signata, ma caderà in la suspensione o vero nel durare del tempo o voce, el quale durare lo audito lo accepta in loco de taciturnità, per la quale cosa advene che in le fractione o vero diminutione de le note che cogliono la mensura in cantando, et in altre più minute figure, se atende che el primo moto sia concorde; le altre particule sono a placito, cioè, che possono essere concorde e non concorde, tenendo però sempre firmo l'ordine del procedere per arsim et thesim.7 Et circa questo più oltra non me extenderò, perché nel medesimo canto a sei voce, a V.E. mandato, ho mutato loco a tale nota del contra alto, non perché non potesse stare, ma solo per acomodare la voce sexta.⁸

4. Et sequitando diceti che io guardi nel fine de^b la seconda parte del contra alto sopra la parola 'donavit' ut hic:

dove quella seconda semibreve del contra alto batte con el contrabasso mezza in septima et mezza in octava, et dato che altro non diceti, pure a me pare che vogliati dire che in tale loco sia errore. Ma certamente che da me tale passo è stato studiosamente et non senza rasone messo, imperò che ogni processo el quale pò stare intra dui soni in simplice (non li occurente distantia de quinta) potrà etiam stare nel loco suo octavo, così intenso come remisso, et per probare questa vera conclusione, ve aduco in luce questo exemplo:



La seconda semibreve del tenore batte sopra la ultima medietà de la prima ^{233^r} semibreve del canto in seconda, et | da poi coglie la sequente minima in unisono, el quale passo pò stare et trovasi essere stato usitato da li compositori. Dico adonca, se el tenore predicto serà notato per diapason intensa ut hic:

Barro

che alhora (stante el canto nel suo loco) ut hic:

9: 10000

tale processo o vero contrapuncto potrà stare senza vitio.⁹ Et questa consideratione è fondata in verità, come li superpositi exempli demonstrano. Ma per livare da li dubitanti ogni dubitatione, et aciò che el mio honorando Frate Petro non habia indarno laborato,¹⁰ sono contento che per magiore chiareza et prego V.E. che vogliati emendare tale passo nel contrabasso ut hic:

9:10 \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

et per tale modo ogni dubitatione serà remossa, et serà ancora più grato al senzo de lo audito, el quale, per la sua inconstantia et imperfectione, male pò dare iuditio de tute le importantie considerate da la rasone o vero theorica, la quale consiste nel lume de lo intellecto et cognitione de la verità. Circa li altri dui errori li quali diceti, credo che li trovareti correcti et emendati nel medemo concento, el quale ho mandato più giurni fano a V.E.

5. Da poi, Frate mio honorando, V.E. me fa restare pleno de mestitia et

⁹ On this passage, see Ch. 5, p. 118-19.

¹⁰ Aaron did not 'labour in vain' because Spataro changed the passage, as is seen in MS A. xxxxv. See Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', p. 519, mm. 67–8.

^b MS: da.

⁶ The corrected version (mm. 5-8) is found in MS A. xxxxv.

⁷ Spataro's ideas about arsis and thesis, about 'il primo et vivo moto' (the strong beat), the weak beat, suspension, and syncopation confirm what Lowinsky wrote on this subject in 'Early Scores in Manuscript', pp. 158-71 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 830-8. See also Ch.

⁸ Spataro was not convinced by his own explanation of the augmented octave, for in MS A. xxxxv he changed the alto to *e* and removed the augmented octave. See Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', p. 518, m. 54.
37. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1532

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stupore et tuto pleno de admiratione, perché diceti che io non mi voglia turbare né sdignare con quella, etc. Al quale vostro parlare pleno de tute le virtù, altro non responderò, perché a me pare che quello che di sopra ho dicto asai basti, et iterum dico che ho de somma gratia non solamente che V.E. me conumeri nel numero' de li amici de quella, ma nel numero de li soi servitori. Veramente io seria bene da essere reputato uno solemno pazo se io me sdegnasse con V.E., ne la quale consiste ogni honore et laude mia, et quando hebi quilli quattro libri impressi con la vostra, et che io vidi che V.E. non respondeva a quella mia la quale chiamati irrata, io fui molto lieto et contento, credendomi che tale littera fusse smarita et perduta et non a le vostre mane pervenuta, ma quando da poi vidi la resposta, et che V.E. ha preso tanto affanno, sono restato in tanto certamine et combatimento, che ho creduto divenire pazo et insano. Horsù non più circa questo. Iterum prego me perdonati, et se più caderò in tale errore, pigliatene gioco et piacere, perché in ciascuno vechio el senso puerile non sol mancare.

6. A V.E. mando uno mio canto nel quale ho imitato uno canto plano con le parole posto da Nicolao Wolucio in uno suo tractato musico,¹¹ el quale canto prima feci a quattro voce, ma da poi (per meglio examinare se intra tale quattro voce era errore) li agiunse la voce quinta, la quale quinta voce non è stata tropo bene cantata né examinata, come io haria voluto, ma V.E. pigliarà cura de examinarla per amore mio et del tuto darmi adviso, et de questo asai ve prego, perché più a me piace che li amici mei me demonstrano li mei errori che li extranei. Emendarò el canto de V.E.¹² come da quella m'è stato scripto.

7. Non altro per hora. A li piedi de V.E. umilemente me inclino et iterum de li falli commissi in li mei scripti chiedo perdono, et humilemente a quella me recomando. Juliano a V.E. manda uno canto el quale ha facto el suo figlio, et a quella con tuti li altri nostri musici et cantori se recomanda. Al reverendo vostro et mio patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi figlioli me recomandareti.

Vale. Bononię, die 30 januarii 1532.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

^c MS: numeri.

¹¹ Nicolas Wollick, *Enchiridion musices* (Paris, 1512), fo. C4': 'Hec est preclarum vas'. A modern edn. of Spataro's 'Hec Virgo est preclarum vas' $a \neq$ (after Bologna A. xxxxv, fos. $3^{v}-4^{t}$) may be found in Jeppesen, *Italia sacra musica*, i. 118-23.

¹² The motet on St John, Apostle and Evangelist; see no. 36.

1. Your letter of the 10th, which reached me on the 24th, disturbed me because you say I wrote disdainfully [no. 36]. Reading your humble and loving response, I could not contain my tears. Please forgive me if I wrote anything out of keeping between two good friends; when you criticized me about grammatical accents (which is not our field), I thought you wanted to pick a tasteless quarrel to make fun of me and to show me there were more errors in my motet than in yours. Please do not believe that I would ever seek to break our friendship, for I was never ungrateful. I should be most blameworthy if, after all the trouble you have gone to for me, I gave up so good and loyal a friend as you. I never dreamt my writing would disturb you. I know I am only a man, and I can err, and when others point out my mistakes (with reason) it does not displease me. I beg you again to forgive me; another time I shall not be so foolish.

2. I am glad to hear that you have my original¹ so that you can correct a number of significant errors in the printed copies. I am also pleased that Pre Zanetto praises the treatise. If he has any questions, let him write to me and I shall answer them as a friend without regard to what has passed between us. I know too that Messer Adriano [Willaert] has sent his compositions² to Petro the organist. Concerning my letters on music,³ I hope to get something done, since I have been given to understand that the administrators of San Petronio will assign me, at their expense, an assistant to teach the clerics, which will give me time to undertake the revision.

3. I was delighted to receive your criticism of my motet,⁴ to which I added a sixth voice, more in order to check for errors in the five-voice version than for any other reason. If the sixth voice doesn't meet with your approval, omit it.⁵ I wasn't able to catch all the errors. The parallel fifths that you mention should be corrected by changing the alto as follows:⁶



You draw my attention to an augmented octave between alto and bass:



I don't think it is heard as such because it does not enter on the first and strong beat against the note in the alto, but on the suspension or holding of the note, something that the ear accepts as if it were silence. The first

beat of the measure should be consonant; the other beats can be consonant or dissonant as long as you hold on firmly to the order of arsis and thesis.⁷ In the six-voice version I removed the augmented octave, but only to accommodate the sixth voice.⁸

4. You point out that at the word 'donavit' in the alto a seventh resolves to an octave. Apparently you think this is an error, but I wrote that passage with great care. In any two-part passage one of the voices can be transposed an octave (unless there is a fifth). The following example shows a second resolving to a unison:



If you transpose the tenor up an octave it becomes a seventh resolving to an octave, which is allowed:⁹



But to remove all doubt, and so that my honoured Fra Pietro shall not have laboured in vain,¹⁰ please emend it as follows:

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	1.	20			
1			0	<u> </u>	
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	,				

This version will be more pleasing to the ear, which cannot always judge what is theoretically correct. The other two errors have already been corrected in the six-part version.

5. You fill me with sadness and wonder when you say you don't want me to become angry with you. I think I have said enough above, but let me say again I am grateful to be included not only among your friends but your servants. I should be an utter fool to become angry with you, on whom my whole honour and fame depend. When I received the four copies of my book with your letter and found that you didn't reply to my 'angry letter', I was relieved, thinking it lost, but later when I saw your answer and found how much it had upset you, I was in a quandary. Again, please forgive me; in old age childishness is never missing.

6. I am enclosing a motet of mine based on a chant in Nicolaus Wollick's treatise¹¹ which I set for four voices and to which I added a fifth to check for errors. Please examine it and advise me of any. I shall emend your motet¹² as you instruct me.

7. I kneel humbly at your feet and ask your forgiveness. Juliano [Veludaro] is sending a piece by his son and we all give you our regards.

38 (J96). Fos. 236^{r-v}, 225^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 13 March 1532 (autograph)

²³⁶ [Reverendo et venerabile et] doctissimo musico Frate Petro [Aron florent]ino de l'ordine hyrosolomitano, [quanto maggiore] honorando. In Vinetia, [Sancto Mi]chaele de li furlani.

236^v Venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, etc., salutem.

1. A li dì ii del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 17 febrarii signata, con la quale era uno 'Patrem' a sei voce molto soave et con grande arte composito, el quale fu più volte cantato la domenica sequente da li nostri cantori dapo el vespere in la sacristia del nostro divo Petronio, et fu molto laudato et a me è sumamente piaciuto. Et di ciò molto ve rengratio.

2. In quanto a l'opera del mio preceptore,¹ la quale desiderati de have[re] tuta et complecta, ve dico certamente che lui mai non dete complemento a tale opera, et quella che se trova non è complecta, perché lui fece stampare a Bologna tale particole perché el se credeva de legerla con stipendio in publico. Ma in quello tempo acade che per certe cause lui non hebe la lectura publica, et lui quasi sdegnato andò a Roma et portò con lui tute quelle particole impresse, con intentione de fornirla a Roma. Ma non la fornite mai, ma lui atendeva a certo suo modo de vivere lascivo, el quale fu causa de la sua morte. Son stati multi li quali hano creduto che io habia tale suo t[r]actato complecto et che io el tenga oculto aciò che li mei furti non restino scuperti, ma certamente sono in grande errore. Ma perché V.E. dice haverne trovato qua uno incomplecto, credo sia la verità, perché da lui non fu mai complecto né finito. Et per essere claro de questo, guardati in questa, che gli è una certa carteta dove sono scripti tuti li capitoli de tale opera,² et inscontratili con li capitoli del tractato da vui qua trovato. Se tanti capitoli et tali ce sono, certamente haveti tuta l'opera la quale dal mio preceptore fu impressa. Se alcuno li manca, dati adviso, che ve li mandarò scripti, se li voreti.

3. Ho inteso quanto V.E. ha examinato et visto con lo impressore, et de li foglii, et intaglii, et carta. Circa tale cosa altro non dico. L'opere sono de V.E., et così come de cosa vostra ne fareti, che sempre starò contento. Cercati de stare sano aciò che ancora qualchi giurni se possamo godere inseme. Non ho potuto dare più presto resposta perché sono stato quasi 20 giurni nel letto de male de fredura et altri, de li quali tuta la nostra cità n'è plena, et ancora non sto bene.

¹ Bartolomeo Ramis, Musica practica (Bologna, 1482).

 2 See the end of this letter. Spataro's list of the chapter-headings, originally enclosed with the present letter, is now attached to the back of his first letter of 24 Oct. 1531 (no. 34), on fo. 225° of MS Vat. lat. 5318.

38. Spataro to Aaron, 13 Mar. 1532

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4. A giurni passati per altre doe mie ve avisava de certo mio bisogno et maxime de uno paro de ochiali.³ Asai ve prego, se l'è possibile che sia servito, che faciati ogni opera. Messer Nicolao, Don Leonardo, Messer Juliano, et tuti li altri nostri musici et cantori a V.E. se recomandano, et io tuto sono di quella, la quale prego fa con el suo et mio reverendo patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] le solite recomandatione, et etiam con li soi figlioli lucidi et perclari [de] infinite virtù.

Data in Bologna a dì 13 de marzo 1532.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro

[List of chapter-headings in Ramis, Musica practica]⁴

[Prima pars, tractatus tertius]

- 2. Capitulum secundum de origine tono[rum]
- 3. Capitulum tertium in quo musice mundane, etc.

Capitoli de la seconda parte, scilicet contrapuncto

- 1. Capitulum primum in quo notitia, etc.
- 2. Capitulum secundum in quo er[r]or quorundam, etc.

Capitoli de la tertia parte

- 1. Tertia pars in qua^a de numeris harmonicis, etc.
- 2. Capitulum secundum in quo figura per que numerorum, etc.
- 3. Capitulum tertium in quo signa aliarum specierum, etc.
- 4. Capitulum quartum in quo canones, etc.

Capitoli del tertio tractato

- 1. Capitulum primum in quo de triplici proportionalitatum, etc.
- 2. Capitulum secundum in quo medietas harmonica, etc.
- 3. Capitulum tertium in quo primarie monochordi, etc.
- 4. Capitulum quartum in quo semitonia canenda aut evitanda Epilogus. Finis.

^a MS: quo.

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⁴ The top has been cut off, leaving the list incomplete.

1. I received your letter of 17 February on 2 March. You sent with it a delightful and artistic Credo for six voices, which was sung several times after Vespers on the following Sunday and praised by all.

2. With regard to my teacher's treatise,¹ he published a part of it in Bologna, hoping to receive a public lectureship, but, for certain reasons, he did not succeed. In indignation, he went to Rome, intending to complete it there. He never finished it; his lascivious lifestyle led to his death. Many think I have a complete copy but conceal it in order to hide my thefts from it; they could not be more wrong. I am sending you a list of the chapter-headings,² which you may compare with your copy to see if they are all there. If not, I shall be glad to send you a written copy of the missing chapters.

3. I have heard about your negotiations with the printer on the format, woodcuts, and paper. Do as you like, for the works are yours. I have been in bed for almost twenty days because of a cold and other ills, of which the city is full, and have not yet recovered.

4. A while ago I wrote you two letters on my need for eyeglasses.³ Would you be able to get me a pair? Nicolò [Cavalaro], Don Leonardo, Juliano [Veludaro], and all the others send their greetings.

Enclosure: a list of chapter-headings in Ramis, Musica practica⁴

³ On the invention of concave lenses for compensation of myopia, see Vincent Ilardi, 'Eyeglasses and Concave Lenses in Fifteenth-Century Florence and Milan: New Documents', Renaissance Quarterly 29 (1976), 341-60. For a revised and enlarged edition, see Occhiali alla corte di Francesco e Galeazzo Maria Sforza con documenti inediti del 1462-1466, trans. Guido Lopez (Milan, 1978). If it strikes us as strange that eyeglasses should be ordered from Venice to be sent to Bologna without measurements of any kind, we shall not be surprised to hear that the enterprise foundered (see no. 39, para. 5).

39. Spataro to Aaron, 5 Apr. 1532

39 (J87). Fo. 222^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 5 April 1532 (autograph)

- ^{222^v} [Reverendo et venerabile et c]eleberimo musico Frate Petro [Aron florentino] de l'ordine Hyrosolomitano, [quanto maggior]e honorando.
 [In] Vinetia, [Sancto Zo]ane de li furlani.
- 222^r Excellentissimo et de li musici doctissimo, el mio reverendo et honorando Frate Petro, etc.

I. A li xi del pasato ho receputo una de V.E., circa la quale non me extenderò, perché il vostro humile et tanto dolce parlare fa che li ochii mei debili non possono le lacrime retenere. Pertanto io passarò oltra, rengratiando quella che s'è dignato de examinare con deligentia quello mio canto facto a quattro voce¹ et ancora la quinta sua voce agiuncta, et dove haveti trovato loco degno de emendatione me ne haveti claramente advertito, et perché in tali lochi mendosi ho facto deligente correctione, a me pare licito che a quella ne dia adviso aciò che emendati tale concento in li soi lochi debiti. Pertanto primamente dove diceti che el tenore con el canto sopra la parola 'gloriosa' stano ut hic:



V.E. emendarà tale tenore^{*a*} ut hic:² $\mathbf{B}_{\mathbf{S}}$

2. Diceti ancora che haveti trovato che el canto con el tenore in la seconda parte sopra la parola 'et pia' fa questo processo:³



Da poi diceti che la seconda semibreve del dicto tenore, la mità sua viene octava et el resto in septima, et da poi ne segue con la sequente minima un'altra octava, et diceti che a vui non piace che quelle doe octave siano solamente mediate da una septima. Se tale processo fussa da me stato notato ut hic:

^{*a*} MS: tenero.

alhora V.E. potria bene dire che tale doe octave seriano mediate da una septima. Ma stando come sta nel mio canto, quella septima non sta in tale loco per mediare tale doe octave, perché tale septima non è comprehesa da lo audito, perché batte o vero percuote la seconda semibreve del tenore in la sua seconda parte media, o vero nel durare che fa la voce, et non nel suo principio, cioè, che non se moveno inseme. Ma quando l'una voce ha principiato cantare, l'altra seguita, percotendo non in tale principio ma nel medio, o vero durare, che fa la voce, el quale durare da lo audito è inteso quasi come taciturnità, et da poi seguita che sopra la seconda parte de la seconda semibreve del soprano cade una minima in octava, la quale (ratione predicta) da lo^b audito non è claramente intesa come octava, perché mentre che la voce del soprano dura o vero sta suspensa, tale octava è cantata nel tenore. Dico adonca che tale doe octave predicte sono mediate da quello legamme de octava et septima el quale occorre intra la seconda semibreve del tenore et la prima minima del soprano, et con la prima medietà de la seconda semibreve del predicto soprano, et non da la septima, come V.E. crede. Et circa tale passo ancora un'altra volta a V.E. scripse in quello mio canto a sei voce a dui soprani composito,⁴ et tale passo nel canto presente ho facto con summo studio et non inconsideratamente, et molto' ce ho pensato, et a me pare che possa rationabilemente stare, mosso da molte theorice rasone le quale approbano tale verità, le quale ancora non spiaceno al senso de lo audito, come declara el sequente concento:5



^b MS: li. ^c MS: molte.

¹ 'Hec Virgo est preclarum vas'; see no. 37 n. 11.

² Spataro's corrected version is found in MS A. xxxxv, fo. 3^{v} ; see Jeppesen, *Italia sacra musica*, i. 119, mm. 18–19. When he copied the motet into his choir-book he omitted the added bass, which caused several of the contrapuntal problems discussed below.

³ Ibid., p. 122, mm. 86–8 (this is a corrected version that Spataro proposes later in the letter; see n. 7).

⁴ 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix'; see no. 37, para. 3.

⁵ This is not part of a composition, but an independent example in which only one of the two tenor parts should be sung. In the second measure the soprano and tenor form delayed unisons, and the soprano and alternative tenor form delayed octaves. According to Spataro's explanation preceding this example, such a contrapuntal movement is legitimate.

Se V.E. volesse dire che apresso ad alcuno compositore non haveti trovato tale processo, respondo et aducovi quella sententia de Boetio, la quale dice ut hic: 'Quippe miserrimi est ingenii semper inventis, et non inveniendis uti',⁶ perché, essendo la musica arte liberale, l'è da credere che li soi termini sono senza fine et che quello che oggidì sciano li musici et ^{222^v} compositori è la superficie de quello che se pò sapere. Ma se pure [a] V.E. | (per complacere a coloro che non hano tali respecti) gli pare mutare tale

passo dove nel tenore sta ut hic:⁷ \mathbf{p} fareti che stia ut

hic: Biologi

3. Et dove diceti che in la prima parte del contrabasso aggiunto con el canto intra le 16 semibreve et le 17 sono doe octave, in tale loco, piacendo

a V.E., el contra agiunto, el quale sta ut hic: $\underline{9:}$ fareti che stia ut hic: $\underline{9:}$

Et ancora dove diceti che el contra alto con el basso agiunto sopra la parola 'serpentis' essere due quinte come qui:

emendareti tale contra alto ut hic:⁸ **19** • • • • • • • • • • Et dove etiam diceti

che intra dicto contra alto et el basso agiuncto sono dui unisoni sopra la parola 'clemens' ut hic:

fareti che el contra alto stia ut hic:⁹ **B**. Circa li altri errori,

⁶ Pseudo-Boethius, *De disciplina scolarium* 5. 4: 'Quippe miserrimi est ingenii semper inventis uti et numquam inveniendis'. See *Pseudo-Boèce, De disciplina scolarium: Édition critique, introduction et notes*, ed. Olga Weijers (Leiden and Cologne, 1976), p. 121. This is a notion that appealed to Zarlino, who quoted this passage at the beginning of the Ragionamento Terzo of his *Dimostrationi harmoniche* (Venice, 1571), p. 145: 'Cosa propria è di uno Ingegno miserrimo et povero, usar sempre le cose, che sono state da altri ritrovate: et non mai quelle, che ritrovar si possono. De Disciplina Scolastica. ca. 5.' See also no. 55, para. 1.

⁷ This musical example refers to the earlier example on 'et pia'. Spataro's revision, which follows immediately, removes the delayed parallel octaves and is found in MS A. xxxxv, fo. 4^v (Jeppesen, *Italia sarra musica*, i. 122, mm. 86–8).

⁸ This version is also found in MS A. xxxxv, fo. 4' (ibid., p. 119, mm. 33-5).

⁹ This version also appears in MS A. xxxxv, fo. 5' (ibid., p. 122, m. 85), even though the added bass part has been omitted.

proceduti dal calamo, da V.E. emendati, stano bene, et de tuti ve rengratio, et a questa volta non poca fatica haveti havuta per me et per advertirme de tanti errori, de li quali ve chiedo venia et perdono come quello che, per essere vechio, son tornato in la età puerile.

4. A Messer Juliano ho dato el vostro madrigale, el quale da lui è stato benignamente et con lieta fronte receputo, et a V.E. molto se recomanda. A giurni passati ho mandato a V.E. el canto fermo del vostro 'Patrem' a sei voce, sì che altramente non lo mando perché credo l'habiati havuto. Al presente non mando l'opera mia correcta¹⁰ perché sono ancora amalato et male ce posso dare opera, et etiam perché apresso de me non è rimasta alcuna de quelle quattro le quale me mandò V.E. Ma come potrò comodamente acendere, ne trovarò una et a quella la mandarò correcta.

5. Io sono stato octo giurni a scrivere questa littera, tanto sono molestato da diversi mali. Circa li ochiali rengratio V.E., li quali non aperti et non serrati non sono boni per me, de li quali era uno vetro rotto, come V.E. potrà vedere, perché così facti come sono, a quella li remando, et molto mi doglio che habiati havuto fatica et danno. Circa li quali ochiali altro non fareti perché cognosco che seria bisogno che io fusse qua, con li ochii mei male disposti.

6. Messer Nicolao, Don Leonardo, et li altri amici se recomandano a V.E., et io, a li piedi di quella come bono servitore, mi recomando et offero, et al reverendo vostro et mio patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi figlioli me recomandareti.

Vale. In Bologna a dì 5 de aprile 1532.

De V.E. servitore Zoanne Spataro subscripsi

1. On 11 March I received a letter from you so humble and sweet, it brought tears to my eyes. Thank you for examining my motet¹ so diligently. Where the soprano and tenor on the word 'gloriosa' have



please emend the tenor to:²



¹⁰ Spataro's Tractato di musica.

2. You mention the staggered octaves at 'et pia', mediated by a seventh:³



If the passage were written as:



you would be right. But since the dissonance occurs when one voice is suspended, the ear accepts it as silence and doesn't perceive the seventh. I have already discussed a similar passage in my motet $a \ 6.^4$ The present passage was made with considerable thought, and it seems to me theoretically defensible and not displeasing to the ear; see the following example:⁵



If you have never encountered this progression before, I refer you to Boethius' statement: 'It is certainly a sign of a poor talent to keep walking on old tracks rather than striking out in new directions.'⁶ Music being a liberal art, it is unbounded; today's knowledge is only the surface of what one can know. But, to please those who believe otherwise, pray emend the tenor to:⁷



3. Where there are parallel octaves between the 16th and 17th semibreves in the added bass, please change it from



Regarding the fifths at 'serpentis':



change the alto to:8



Where there are unisons at 'clemens' between the alto and the added bass:



change the alto to:9



The rest of the errors were slips of the pen and your emendations are correct. Many thanks; this time you had quite a bit of work, and I beg your indulgence for an old man in his second childhood.

4. I gave your madrigal to Juliano [Veludaro], who accepted it gratefully. Recently I sent you the cantus firmus of your Credo a 6. I have not yet been able to send you a corrected copy of my treatise¹⁰ owing to my indisposition.

5. It took me eight days to write this letter because of various illnesses. Thank you for the eyeglasses but, open or shut, they don't suit me, and one lens is broken. Thus I return them, with regret for your troubles and expense. Do not undertake anything more in this matter; with my eyesight so deficient, I should have to be there in person.

6. Nicolò [Cavalaro], Don Leonardo, and the rest send greetings, and I am at your feet like a good servant.

40 (J97). Fo. 237^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 12 April 1532 (autograph)

^{237^v} [Reverendo et venerabile e]t doctissimo musico Frate [Petro Aron floren]tino de l'ordine hyroso[lomitano, quanto maggiore] honorando. In Vinetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

237^r Reverendo et de li musici excellentissimo, salutem.

1. Perché (per più vostre littere a me a giurni passati misse) V.E. me ha facto intendere che quella haria molto acaro vedere uno de quelli mei tractati impressi qua in Vinetia emendato et correcto de mia mano, pertanto al presente a V.E. mando questo,¹ el quale molto bene examinareti de foglio in foglio, et in ciascuno loco dove (nel margine) trovareti questo signo, .:, et dove tale segno trovareti doe volte posito, in tale loco sono dui errori. De li errori gli è ne asai, ma quilli che più importano, l'uno sie nel capitulo 3º dove in margine ho scripto ut hic: 'Queste" non sono parole de lo auctore', perché in tale loco (non scio da chi) è stato agiuncto uno certo parlare che non è mio et etiam non è al proposito de l'opera. Similemente la figura nel fine del 14º capitulo² (la quale sopra tute le altre importa[n]tie fu da me a V.E. recomandata)³ non sta bene et non concorda con la declaratione facta nel capitulo 14º sequente, perché quella linea la quale è assignata al tempo simplice et la linea assignata a esso tempo in la creatione de la prolatione debeno essere equale, et in tale figura la linea assignata al tempo semplice o vero non diviso ut hic signata:

$$\square \square \square \square$$

è minore de la linea assignata a la prolatione o vero tempo diviso in parte, come per semibreve et per minime. Item guardareti nel capitulo 21° dove è

una figura che secondo la stampa sta ut hic: $\overset{4}{C} \overset{2}{C} \overset{3}{\overset{0}{O}}$. Facti che quello

semicirculo, el quale sta sot[t]o questo ¢, stia ut hic O.4

^a MS: Questo. ^b In the letter, dots are placed after the figures and the breves. Spataro commonly surrounds figures with dots as marks of separation. The dots following the breves are used in the same way; they have no mensural significance, and we have omitted them to avoid confusion. No dots appear in the treatise, but there the signs are not printed in the form of a list.

¹ The Tractato di musica (1531) on sesquialtera.

³ See no. 32, para. 2.

⁴ This figure shows that Spataro considers semibreves under the signs \diamondsuit and \supset to stand in 4:3 relationship to semibreves under O. The passage in the *sesquialtera* treatise was a final reply to Gafurio, who thought that Spataro was referring to ratios of intervals in the proportion

² Actually the diagram at the end of ch. 13. See Pl. 10.

2. De li altri errori, se cercareti in li lochi signati, trovareti, li quali nel parlare non poco importano, li quali da me sono stati correcti et emendati. Questo che ho dicto non è stato dicto da me per incolpare V.E., perché credo firmamente che tali errori non pendeno da vui, et che el sia vero V.E. scia bene, che circa tale particularità nulla a quella non ho scripto, et etiam non haria scripto al presente, se el non fusse stato per complacere a quella, la quale per molte sue littere m'ha rich[i]esto circa questo. Ma poi che la cosa è reuscita per tale modo, se vole dare laude a Dio, el quale ogni cosa dispone, et se alcuno de tali tractati pervirà a le vostre mane, ve prego che cercati de emendarlo al meglio che poteti per amore mio.

Vale. Bononie, die 12 aprilis 1532. Le debite recomandatione fareti a li usitati amici. Iterum vale.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro

1. Since you have written in several letters sent to me recently that you would like to have the emendations in my treatise,¹ I am sending you a corrected copy. The errors are marked in the margin with this sign: •: . There are quite a few, and where you find two signs, there are two errors. In particular, there is a passage in ch. 3 that I did not write and that is not relevant. The diagram at the end of ch. 14^2 (the importance of which I had stressed³) does not agree with the text; the lines under *tempus* alone and the *tempus* with prolation should be equal; in the chart the lines assigned to the four breves are smaller than those assigned to their division into parts, or

prolation. In ch. 21, the semicircle in $\begin{array}{c}4\\C\\C\end{array}$ and $\begin{array}{c}2\\C\end{array}$ under $\begin{array}{c}\\C\end{array}$ should be printed as $O.^4$

2. You will find other significant errors as marked. I send the corrections not to blame you (I am sure the errors are not due to you) but because you kept asking for them in your letters. But now that the matter has turned out this way, let us praise the Lord, who disposes everything; and should any copies come into your hands, please correct them as best you can.



Pl. 10. Giovanni Spataro, *Tractato di musica* (Venice, 1531), diagram at end of ch. 13. According to Spataro, the middle column should have been as wide as the others

^{4:2:3.} The dispute had its origin in Gafurio's critique of Aaron's *De institutione harmonica*, where Aaron had called \supset a sign indicating *sesquitertia*. It continued in correspondence between Gafurio and Spataro, and it found its way into print in Gafurio's *Apologia* and Spataro's *Errori*, where the problem is discussed at length in Error 32 of the fifth part, fos. 39'-41°. Anna Maria Busse Berger kindly drew our attention to the context of this figure. She discusses it in 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time', pp. 11-12.



Pl. 11. Passages from Spataro's 'Missa Tue voluntatis' and Ramis's 'Tu lumen' copied by Del Lago. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 239^r

41 (J98–9). Fos. 238^r–239^v Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 19 July 1532 (autograph)

^{239°} [Reverendo et venerabile et m]usico excellentissimo Frate Petro [Aron florentino] de l'ordine hyro[solomitano, quanto maggiore] honorando.
[In] Vinetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

238^r Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, et molto da me amato, el mio honorando Frate Petro, salutem.

I. A li dì 17 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 6 del predicto signața, et etiam uno optimo et bene composito madriale, el quale da optimi cantori fu più volte subito cantato et molto laudato, et io inseme con loro molto ce ne allegrassemo, perché tuti siamo amici de V.E. Et de tale concento molto ve rengratio, el quale ho dato ad uno amico che ne vole tore copia.

2. Ho inteso quanto V.E. chiede ad instantia del reverendo Pre Zanetto, amico nostro, de la quale cosa ho alquanto havuto dispiacere, perché per el vostro tanto humano scrivere et con tanto respecto, me pare comprehendere che haveti poca fede in me. Ma certamente che a me non pare fatica, né havere incomodo alcuno quando me exercito in quelle cose che a V.E. sono grate, et maxime in quelle importantie le quale a la nostra delectabile harmonica facultà se aperteneno; et questo a me pare licito per molte rasone: et prima per imparare, secundo per insignare, tertio per potermi emendare, se in loco alcuno de l'opere mie io fusse stato mendoso.

3. Pertanto, ponendo da parte tanti respecti et excusatione da V.E. scripte, dico che a me pare che Pre Zanetto voglia dubitare circa questo signo ϕ_2 , primamente in quella soa polliza da lui signato con la croce,¹ cioè se tale segno serà inteso essere questo O, demonstrante el tempo perfecto, doe volte diminuto, o vero serà questo O₂, demonstrante el modo minore perfecto et el tempo imperfecto, una volta diminuto. Circa la quale dubitatione respondo et dico che quando a li signi simplici o vero integri et prima considerati diversi se agiungerà qualche accidentale positione, et che mediante tale accidentale positione intra loro caderà forma non diversa in apparentia, che alhora la soa natura et diversa proprietà debe essere comprehesa per li soi apparenti et proprii accidenti. Pertanto dico se Prie Zanetto, o altri chi si sia, considerarà bene a le figure o vero note posite dapo questo segno ϕ_2 , perché la prima longa media vacua et media plena con la pausa de la semibreve ante se posita non potrà

¹ Del Lago's notation of three passages from Spataro's 'Missa Tue voluntatis' and one from Ramis's 'Tu lumen', omitted by accident from Spataro's letter but enclosed with no. 42, is found on fo. 239' of Vat. lat. 5318. See Pl. 11 opposite.

havere^{*a*} loco né stare in questo segno O₂ de modo minore perfecto et de tempo [im]perfecto. Similemente la longa sequente plena non harà convenientia con tale segno, né etiam le doe pause de semibreve divise, le quale sequitano dapo la prima breve. Et etiam similemente acaderà de le doe sequente longe, cioè una media vacua et media plena, et l'altra tuta plena, le quale plenitudine de note et pause separate perché (in tale loco) sono proprii accidenti del tempo perfecto et non del modo minore perfecto, dico che (senza alcuna dubitatione) tale segno serà inteso essere questo O doe volte diminuto, et non questo O₂ una sola volta diminuto,

^{238^v} perché in tale note sequente non appare accidente alcuno proprio da tale segno. Circa questo asai se potria dire, ma questo bastarà per non procedere in longo. L'è la verità che quando li proprii accidenti mancasseno, che tale non varia positione de segni seria dubiosa. Pertanto (per livare via ogni dubietà) el mio preceptore diceva che questo O doe volte diminuto era dal suo preceptore² signato ut hic ϕ^2 et per tale modo tale segno era compreheso da questo O 2 una sola volta diminuto, ut hic posito $\phi^2.^3$ Ma io non ho voluto uxare tale varietà de signi, perché non sono usitati, et perché asai claro (ut dixi) me parea^b procedere demonstrando el segno per li proprii accidenti. Imperò che 'accidentia multum conferunt ad cognoscendum quod quid est'.⁴

4. V.E. etiam dirà a Pre Zanetto che quella semibreve vacua nel 'Criste' signata con la croce vole essere plena, et similmente quella breve vacua nel 'Patrem' con tale croce signata vole stare plena, et per tale modo stano nel mio originale, come lui vederà nel proprio suo exemplo a me misso, el quale li mando in questa vostra incluso.⁵

5. Ma circa quella breve prima da lui signata con la croce nel co[nt]ra basso del mutetto chiamato 'Tu lumen' del mio preceptore, dicetili che lui intenda come li piace, pure che da lui sia inteso che quella longa posita nel principio sia imperfecta, o vole de la sequente, o de la seconda breve, inseme con essa longa ligate, o vole de le sequente doe semibreve, o vero de la terza breve, perché faza come li piace, che l'è neccessario che in tale

^a MS: havero. ^b Spataro repeats 'asai claro' here.

⁵ The notes in question are blackened in Del Lago's example (see Pl. 11); Spataro must have filled them in.

loco sia el valore de doe longe perfecte et non più, et non manco. Et circa questo altro non dico perché bisogna che io intenda la soa dubitatione per via de scriptura, et non solo per segno de croce, el quale dato che spaventi et ponga terrore a li maligni spiriti, tamen a me non apre la intentione et dubitatione sua.

6. Adonca, carissimo mio, V.E. dirà a Messer Pre Zanetto che per amore vostro et ancora suo, havendo dubio alcuno da conferire meco, che el mi scriva liberamente, che sempre (o presto, o tardi) al meglio che potrò li darò grata resposta, et che sempre el voglio havere in loco de mio mazore honorando, come meritano le soe optime virtù. Ma V.E. el pregarà che se lui desidera farmi cosa grata, che el prego che lui me mandi una copia da quello mutetto del mio preceptore chiamato 'Tu lumen', el quale mutetto ho cercato molti anni et mai trovare in parte alcuna non l'ho potut[0]. Ma hora intendendo che lui l'ha,⁶ se lui m'el mandarà, a me serà più caro che non me seria se lui me donasse 25 scuti d'oro, et questo è solo perché uno certo monaco chiamato Don Laurentio Gazo molte volte me l'[h]a mandato a domandare, et io el voria servir[e] perché el fu de li discipoli de Franchino, et per intrare con lui in qualche musico litigio, aciò che così come io ho rotto el capo, che li membri restino anullati,⁷ et de questo sumamente ve prego, et a soa Excellentia me recomandareti, et a li altri soliti, et a V.E. recordo che tuto son di quella. Li ami[ci] tuti a quella se recomandano.

Vale, Petre mi honorande. Bononię, die 19 julii 1532.

Servitor de V.E. J. Spataro

1. On the 17th of this month I received your letter of the 6th together with an excellent, well-composed madrigal, which was immediately sung several times by the finest singers and greatly praised. A friend is making a copy of it.

⁶ Since one of Del Lago's examples comes from Ramis's 'Tu lumen', Spataro assumes that Del Lago has a copy of the complete motet.

 ² Johannes de Monte, to whom Ramis refers in his *Musica practica* (ed. Wolf, pp. 84 and 88).
 ³ Ramis does not discuss this sign in his *Musica practica*.

⁴ Aristotle, *De anima* 1. 1 (402^b20-1): 'for the knowledge of the essential nature of a substance is largely promoted by an acquaintance with its properties'; *Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Barnes, i. 642. In the *Propositiones universales Aristotelis* (Bologna, 1488), fo. CI^v, the passage occurs in this wording: 'Accidentia magnam partem conferunt ad cognoscendum quicquid est idest subjectum.' Spataro's wording follows that used by Marchetto of Padua in the opening sentence of Book I of his *Pomerium* (see the edn. by Vecchi, p. 39); Marchetto may well have been his source.

⁷ An allusion to Ramis's refutation of Guido and his followers, specifically Hothby: 'Ego enim caput conterere volo, ut corpus istud in erroribus constitutum cadaver iam fiat nec amplius vivere possit' (*Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 42). Spataro, having demolished Gafurio, now wants to stamp out his musical offspring. Gafurio cites Gazio in' his *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, Book II, ch. 1, as 'a very acute musician [who] has diligently taught our concept of the measurement of this system [division of the tetrachord] in three genera' (trans. Miller, p. 78; see also p. 19). Gazio and Spataro had already discussed the meaning of the canon in Ramis's motet, according to Gafurio; see his *Apologia*, fo. A8° (the passage is reprinted in Wolf's edn. of Ramis, *Musica practica*, pp. 110–12).

2. I understand what you ask on behalf of our friend, Pre Zanetto. It displeased me somewhat, since your over-polite and respectful tone seems to suggest a lack of faith in me. But it's no trouble at all for me to involve myself in things that gratify you, especially those that pertain to our delectable harmonic science—first to learn, second to teach, and third to purge my works of error.

3. In his enclosure, in the passage marked by a cross,¹ it seems to me that Pre Zanetto wonders whether ϕ_2 is equivalent to O, that is, *tempus* perfectum, twice diminished, or to O2, that is, minor perfect mode with imperfect tempus, once diminished. If you add an accidental attribute to simple signs so that no difference appears between them, their nature and different properties have to be judged by their evident and particular attributes. If you look at the notes placed after ϕ_2 , you find a halfblackened long with a semibreve rest before it, a blackened long, and two separated semibreve rests, none of which is characteristic of the minor perfect mode with imperfect tempus. These notes and rests are characteristic attributes of perfect tempus and not of the minor perfect mode. Therefore ϕ_2 indicates O twice diminished and not O₂ once diminished, since none of the attributes proper to the latter sign appears in the notes. More could be said, but this should suffice. True, if the characteristic attributes are lacking, the sign will be ambiguous. My teacher's teacher² wrote ϕ^2 for the sign of O twice diminished to avoid confusion with O₂, meaning ϕ_2 once diminished.³ But I didn't use it because it is not common and because the attributes clearly demonstrate the sign, for 'attributes are of great use in knowing what something is'.4

4. Please tell Pre Zanetto that the void semibreve in the 'Christe' and the void breve in the Credo marked with a cross should indeed be blackened, as they are in my original and in his own example, which I enclose.⁵

5. With regard to the breve in the bass of 'Tu lumen' marked with a cross, tell him he may interpret it as he likes, as long as he understands that the long at the beginning is imperfected, either by the first or second breve in ligature with it, or by the following two semibreves, or by the third breve; whichever way he chooses, the passage must comprise the value of two perfect longs. I say no more than this because I need to understand his queries through writing and not through crosses; these may terrify evil spirits, but they do not communicate his meaning to me.

6. So, dear friend, tell Pre Zanetto to write to me freely and I shall respond as best I can, for I always hope to honour him as my better, as his eminent merits deserve. Tell him he could do me a great favour by sending me a copy of Ramis's 'Tu lumen'; I have searched for it in vain for many years, but now that I understand that he has it,⁶ if he were to send it

to me, I should enjoy it more than if he gave me 25 gold scudi. And this only for one reason: a certain monk, Don Lorenzo Gazio, has asked me for it many times; I want to use it to engage in a musical polemic with this disciple of Gafurio so that just as I have crushed the head, the members too shall be destroyed.⁷

42 (J93). Fo. 231^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 22 July 1532 (autograph)

^{231^v} [Reverendo et venerabile et d]octissimo musico [Petro Aro]n florentino [de l'ordine hyeroso]lomitano, Ma[ggiore mio honorando. In Ve]netia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

^{231^r} Venerabile et excellentissimo de li musici, et più che ogni altro vivente da me amato, el mio da me molto honorato Frate Petro, salutem.

1. Non sono però passati multi giurni che (respondendo a una de V.E. de dì 6 julii signata) da me fu a quella scripto circa certe dubietà havute dal nostro comune amico Pre Zanetto a me misse et notate, et con el signo de la croce demonstrate, a le quale soe dubitatione (al più presto che a me fu possibile, et al meglio che a me parse havere inteso la sua dubitatione) io deti resposta [no. 41]. Ma perché io scripse che io mandava inclusa (in la mia a la vostra responsiva) quella copia o vero poliza dove tale doe dubietà erano scripte et notate, et da poi che hebi spazata tale mia littera, trovai tale copia tra certe altre scripture, onde che asai me ne dolsi, et per emendatione de tale errore son tornato iterum a scrivere questa, con la quale tale copia serà acompagnata, et per parte mia ve degnareti salutare el venerando Pre Zanetto, pregandolo che me mandi quello mutetto del mio preceptore,¹ che lui non me potria fare magiore gratia et dono.

2. Et etiam li direti che quello segno con quella croce signato ut hic Φ_2 posito² sta bene, et che etiam le soe sequente note stano benissimo, perché se da lui tale segno (ut scripsi) serà considerato essere questo O doe volte diminuto, lui trovarà che quattro semibreve o vero una longa complecta de doe breve imperfecte passarà per una semibreve de questo predicto segno integro O, come credo che lui intenda, et la breve imperfecta passarà per una minima de tal segno circulare integro, et in questo modo tale longa passarà per una breve de questo ¢ et la breve predicta harà el valore de una semibreve del segno predicto ut hic ¢ posito. Ma se pure lui dubitasse circa le note le quale dapo tale segno sequitano, dicetili che quella prima longa (la quale dal lato dext[r]o appare media plena et dal lato sinixtro media vacua) serà receptaculo de doe breve imperfecte, de le quale l'una è demonstra[ta] per el pleno de la soa predicta medietà, et l'altra è apparente per l'altra parte soa vacua, la quale inseme con la precedente pausa de semibreve colta (restando prima in valore de una breve imperfecta) farà uno complecto tempo perfecto. Havuta questa⁴ parva

^a MS: questo.

declaratione de la longa prima predicta, credo che lui asai claro comprehenderà le sequente note et pause.

3. Ma temo che lui non voglia sequitare la oppinione de alcuni, li quali dicono che tale nota media vacua et media plena non debe imperficere a parte ante, perché el seguitaria che la simile se faria imperfecta inanti a la soa simile,³ la quale cosa non harà loco in questa consideratione perché altro^b respecto se ha quando dapo una nota dal segno demonstrata perfecta seguita la soa simile in denominatione et forma, et altra cosa serà considerare el virtuale valore de doe note perfecte dal segno demonstrate, compreheso in uno solo corpo o quantità, perché se ivi serà el valore et la 131^v virtù, ivi mancarà la clara et distincta soa forma | separata, la quale è quella che per la similitudine de li corpi o figure dà la clara notitia de la perfectione, perché alhora in tali lochi serà primo et secondo o vero simile inanti a la simile, ut hic: On n. Ma in uno corpo o figura media vacua et media plena, non se potrà uxare tali vocaboli, perché la soa virtù è unita et non seperata o vero divisa per note. Pertanto se dirà dextro et sinixtro secondo la apparentia soa. Et alcuna volta acaderà che in quelle note vacue, le quale in sé contenirano più note perfecte, non caderà dextro né

sinixtro apparente ut hic: \odot_{i} , et altre simile. Alhora claro se vede che

quella breve harà el valore de tre semibreve perfecte, de le quale solo doe sono imperfecte, de le quale doe imperfecte non se pò certamente dare notitia quale siano de le tre predicte, le quale siano imperfecte,^c si se serà la prima et la seconda, o la prima et la terza, o vero la seconda et la terza. De varii et simili exempli per varie note et signi se potriano aducere in luce, li quale non comemoro perché 'intelligenti pauca'.⁴

4. Ma aciò che un'altra volta io non duri tanta fatica ad investigare quale sia el quesito et dubio de altri, direti al reverendo Pre Zanetto che occurendoli dubietà alcuna da conferire con me, che lui me scriva ad longum,^d et a sua Reverentia me recomandareti, et a tuti li soliti amici, et sopra tute l'altre cose el nostro redemptore Messer Jhesu Cristo pregareti per li mei peccati. Tuto son de V.E. Uno frate de observantia de Sancto Francesco, chiamato Fra Francesco da Cr[e]mona, molto amatore de musica, el quale vole andare al Sepulcro, è stato qua da me, et a lui ho dato

^b MS: altra. ^c MS: imperfecta. ^d MS: longõ.

⁴ See no. 15 n. 9.

¹ Bartolomeo Ramis, 'Tu lumen'.

² See the passage from the Kyrie of 'Missa Tue voluntatis', Pl. 11.

 $^{^3}$ This rule is often quoted in the Correspondence; see especially no. 6, where Spataro answers Aaron's question about the reason for it, and no. 86, where Del Lago severely criticizes Lorenzo Gazio for ignoring it.

molto de le opere vostre. Dice volere venire qua et volervi visitare. Lui è gentile et costumata persona, se cosa alcuna haveti da darli, etc.

Iterum vale. Bononie, die 22 julii 1532.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro subscripsi

1. A few days ago I wrote in response to yours of 6 July, answering the queries marked with a cross by our common friend, Pre Zanetto. After sending the letter [no. 41], I discovered I had neglected to enclose the slip with his queries, and I hasten to send it on. Please greet Pre Zanetto for me and ask him to send me my teacher's motet;¹ he could not do me a greater favour.

2. Tell him also that the sign ϕ_2 marked with a cross² is correct and also the following notes, for if he considers it to mean O twice diminished, he will find that four semibreves or a long of two imperfect breves are the equivalent of a semibreve under O, and the imperfect breve equals a minim. Thus the long will equal a breve under φ and the breve a semibreve. But if he wonders about the notes following that sign, tell him that the first long, blackened on the right side, comprises two imperfect breves: one imperfected by coloration, the other by the preceding semibreve rest. Given this explanation, he should be able to understand the following notes and rests.

3. But I fear he may want to follow the opinion of those who say that a half-blackened note cannot be imperfected *a parte ante* because like would be imperfected before like.³ That consideration holds in the case of two perfect notes similar in name and form, but not when the value of the two perfect notes occurs in one single quantity. In a half-blackened note the values are joined; one therefore speaks of right and left according to the appearance. Sometimes, in void notes that contain the value of several perfect notes, no

right or left will be evident, such as here: $\odot \downarrow \Box \downarrow$. That breve will have

the value of three perfect semibreves, two of which will be imperfected, but it is not possible to tell which two of the three are imperfected. More examples could be adduced, but 'a word is enough to the wise'.⁴

4. Next time, to save me so much effort in divining his thoughts, let Pre Zanetto write to me at length. Greet all the usual friends and above all pray our Redeemer Jesus Christ to forgive my sins. A Franciscan friar, Francesco da Cremona, a great lover of music, has been here on his way to the Holy Sepulchre. I gave him many of your works, and he says he wants to visit you. He is a pleasant and well-mannered person; if you have anything to give him, etc. **43** (J6). Fos. 41^r-46^v

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 4 August 1532 (Scribe A)

41' A Messer Gioanne di Spatari."

1. Già molti giorni per il nostro comune amico Messer Pietro Aaron feci intendere a V.E. che la si degnasse de scriverme sopra alcuni dubbii i quali mi occorrevano in la missa 'Tuę voluntatis' di V.E., et anchora sopra una lunga posta nel principio del contrabasso del motetto del suo preceptore, "Tu lumen, tu splendor patris", i quali tutti dubbii erano segnati con una croce. V.E. in resolutione di ditti mei dubbii non ha mi rescritto ma al preditto Messer Pietro Aaron, come appare per una sua a dì xix di luglio [no. 41].

2. Et quanto appartiene alla longa¹ del preditto motetto, scrivete così: 'Ma cerca quella breve prima da lui segnata con la croce nel contrabasso del motetto chiamato "Tu lumen" del mio preceptore, diteli che lui in-41^v tenda come li pia[c]e, purché da lui sia inteso | che quella lunga posta nel principio sia imperfetta, o vuole della sequente, o della secunda breve, insieme con essa lunga ligate, o vuole delle sequenti semibrevi o ver della terza breve, perché faccia come li piace, che gli è necessario che in tal luoco sia il valore di due lunge perfette, et non più, et non manco. Et circa questo altro non dico perché bisogna che io intenda la sua dubitatione per via di scrittura, et non solum per segno di croce', etc. Alle quali parole respondendo dico che quella lunga deve esser perfetta per virtù delle brevi ligate, perché quelle due brevi ligate insieme con la longa precedente quasi habent vim unius longe perfecte, quia 'virtus unita fortior est se ipsa dispersa'.² Et questa virtù unita se intende però in quanto al valore et non in quanto alla forma. Pertanto (cum vostra bona venia) a me non pare stia bene, ma che debbano esser disciolte et separate, perché queste due brevi così ligate insieme, le quali sequitano immediate dopo la lunga, hanno il valore di due terze parti unite insieme della lunga perfetta. Et hanno tanta virtù (dico a comparatione et similitudine in quanto al tempo) quanto hanno queste due semibrevi insieme ligate poste sotto il tempo perfetto come appare in questo esemplo ut hic:

^{*a*} The original heading, 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto Messer Giovanni di Spatari di Spatari [*sic*] salute', has been crossed out.

¹ Since Del Lago marked the breve rather than the long (see Pl. 11 on p. 476), Spataro began his answer with the breve.

² Pseudo-Aristotle, *Liber de causis* 16: 'Omnis virtus unita plus est infinita quam virtus multiplicata'; see Otto Bardenhewer, *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift Ueber das reine Gute bekannt unter dem Namen Liber de causis* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1882), p. 179. This philosophical notion, as Spataro shows, does not apply to notation; see no. 45, para. 20.



42^r Et questa virtù et essentia unita si intende quanto | a fare remanere la nota anteposta ad essa ligatura perfetta. Per la qual cosa in questo esemplo qui sopraposto, quella prima breve è perfetta, cioè vale tre semibrevi, perché le due semibrevi ligate si pigliano per due terze parti d'un tempo perfetto e si connumerano con la semibreve sequente, le quali insieme colte o ver computate fanno un tempo perfetto, et la seconda breve è imperfetta, cioè vale due semibrevi. Et questa perfettione et imperfettione di queste due brevi si causa per virtù di essa ligatura, la quale fa che la prima breve rimane perfetta, et la seconda imperfetta si fa dalla quarta semibreve precedente. Ma se queste due semibrevi ligate fussino disciolte et separate, la prima breve se faria imperfetta dalla prima delle due semibrevi, le quali erano prima ligate, la quale semibreve sequita immediate, et la seconda breve rimaneria perfetta. Adunque per simile ragione la detta lunga bisogna resti perfetta, et non può per alcun modo, essendo in quel modo posta, diventare imperfetta a parte posteriori. Et questo è stato osservato da voi in l'ultimo Agnus Dei della vostra predetta messa 'Tue voluntatis', come appare per quelle due semibrevi ligate innanti alle quali li sono due 42^v brevi ligate, le quali si cantano sotto la subtripla proportione, per le quali semibrevi ligate la secunda breve si fa perfetta.³ Et anchora le preditte due semibrevi ligate fanno redurre quella semibreve puntata et la minima sequente a quella pausa di semibreve, la quale è tra la breve et la pausa della breve. Et questo similmente si causa per virtù de essa ligatura, la quale fa che la secunda breve ligata resta perfetta, et reduce anchora quella semibreve puntata et la minima sequente (ut dictum est) a quella pausa della semibreve la quale è tra la breve et la pausa de la breve. Ma se le fussino divise et disligate, alhora la seconda breve ligata si faria imperfetta dalla prima delle due semibrevi le quali erano prima ligate, la quale sequita

semibreve sola senza compagna alcuna. 3. Adunque torno a dire che la detta lunga non può per alcun modo diventare imperfetta a parte posteriori, ma sì ben a parte anteriori, et questo quando è dinanzi a lei la sua terza parte, cioè minore propinqua, o vero il suo | valore, et alhora si debbe dimostrare questa tale imperfettione con il punto così immediate come mediate, o vero per il colore. Ma quando si fa a parte posteriori, si fa solamente mediate. Et questo similmente si dimostra per il punto o vero per il colore. Adonque non essendo dinanzi alla predetta lunga la sua terza parte, cioè la nota breve, o

43^r

immediate. Et poi computato il numero ternario, convien che resti una

43. Del Lago to Spataro, 4 Aug. 1532

ver il suo valore, dalla quale nota, o ver dal quale valore si possa fare imperfetta, remane perfetta, o ver con il colore, cioè per la impletione⁴ de essa nota. Pertanto non gli essendo né il punto, né il colore, la resta essa lunga necessariamente perfetta propter predictam rationem. Onde quante volte troviamo la maxima nel modo maggiore perfetto inanzi a due lunge ligate, la detta maxima resta perfetta. Et quando noi troviamo la lunga nel modo minore perfetto innanzi a due brevi ligate, essa lunga similmente rimane perfetta. Et sic quoque dicendum est quando troviamo la breve 43^{v} nel tempo perfetto innanzi a due semibrevi ligate, la detta breve resta perfetta. Per il che essendo stata fatta da lui questa lunga a parte posteriori imperfetta, come dite voi in la vostra lettera, da una di quelle brevi non immediate sequenti, cioè distanti, dico che nessuno dotto compositore ha usato questa così fatta imperfettione, cioè mediata, senza apparentia di qualche segno, cioè o col punto, o col colore, perché da nessuno cantore cantando non si cognosceria utrum la predetta lunga sia perfetta o ver imperfetta, perché l'occhio non può immediate vedere et discernere questa tale imperfettione mediata senza l'apparentia dell'uno o dell'altro segno predetto. Adonque se lui havesse fato la lunga antidetta negra, cioè impiuta, con la prima breve sequente ligata similmente negra, o vero anchora una di quelle brevi non immediate sequenti, cioè lontane et distanti, di simil colore piena, o il suo valore,^b alhora si torriano tutte le dubitationi le quali porriano accadere al cantore cantando, perché la nota 44^r perfetta perde la terza parte del suo valore per la qualità del colore, et questo per perficere il modo minore perfetto, cioè per accompagnare con la lunga la sua terza parte, perché allhora pel colore in questo loco si significa et dinota reduttione. Concludo adonque breviter che non si essendo da lui osservate tutte le predette cose, non può in tal positione

4. Di poi seguitando, trovo una breve ligata tra due semibrevi insieme ligate, et una longa meza vacua et meza piena, dopo la quale seguita immediate una semibreve negra per supplemento del numero ternario, come qui in questo suo esemplo si dimostra:

non esser dubitatione di errore.



^b The passage from 'o vero anchora' to 'il suo valore' has been transposed from the end of the folio; it was apparently a later addition which the scribe did not insert correctly.

³ For the musical example, which Del Lago gives in his next letter, see no. 44, para. 14.

⁴ 'Impletione' is derived from the Latin 'implere', to fill up, make full. Tinctoris uses the term, both as noun and verb, to indicate blackening of notes, as 'quotienscumque nota tota impletur signum est quod tertia parte totius sui valoris imperficitur' and 'quoniam notarum impletio non solum imperfectionem, sed reductionem, sesquialteram et duplam significat . . .'; see his Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 166).

Dico anchora esserli errore, perché quelle due semibrevi insieme ligate, le quali sono ligate con la breve et con la lunga, hanno il valore di una breve, et la breve ligata tra le due semibrevi ligate et la lunga conviense alterare, et questo acciò che quella breve ligata con le due semibrevi precedenti ligate non restino sole et senza il ternario numero,⁵ perché | quando 44[°] trov[i]amo due lunghe insieme ligate con la massima nel modo maggiore perfetto, sempre la secunda lunga si altera. Dico però secundo li compositori moderni, perché li antichi non vogli[o]no che la longa possa stare in mezo della ligatura, cioè fra le note estreme, per alcun modo, come appare per le sue regole date.⁶ Ma questi ignari compositori moderni, perché non intendeno bene le regole delli dotti antichi, non si aveggano del suo errore a porre due longhe ligate insieme con la maxima. Li antichi, quando volevano che la secunda lunga fusse alterata innanzi la maxima, dimostravano con il punto, ma non con la ligatura. Non autem sic in le due brevi legate con la lunga nel modo minore perfetto et nelle due semibrevi ligate con la breve nel tempo perfetto. Pertanto quando troviamo due brevi insieme ligate con la lunga nel modo minore perfetto, sempre la secunda breve si altera. Et quando troviamo due semibrevi insieme ligate con la breve nel tempo perfetto, | sempre la secunda semibreve si altera, et questo 45^r per perficere il numero ternario, non gli essendo però alcun segno il quale mostrasse che la secunda nota in ligatura non si debba alterare, come saria col punto o vero pel colore, cioè per la impitione de essa seconda nota o ver figura. Allhora se evitaria per questi segni questa tale alteratione. Non si essendo adonque questo osservato in dimostrar tal differentia da lui con alcuno de' predetti segni, seguita che essa breve se debba alterare. Pertanto la detta breve ligata con le due semibrevi predette ligate et con la lunga non sta bene, perché la è posta et locata per breve retta, et non alterata, cioè ella è posta per il simplice valore della sua forma, ma non per duplice valore di essa nota o ver figura, cioè di essa breve, perché la ligatura il più delle volte esclude il numero precedente, cioè se pone in principio perfectionis mensure,^d come | far si suole nel tempo, cioè nella nota breve. 45 Et questo è osservato dalla maggior parte de' dotti compositori, i quali poneno la ligatura fatta di qualunque sorte et qualità di note o ver figure ligabili, cioè atte a potersi ligare, in principio del numero, così binario

^c At this point Del Lago has deleted the words: 'Et quasi sempre include il numero sequente.'

d 'Perfectionis mensure' has been substituted for 'del numero'.

come ternario. Ma più se osserva nel numero ternario, nel quale consiste la perfettione.

5. Adonque se da lui fusse stato segnato il punto dinanzi alla semibreve puntata et la minima ut hic:

allhora si fuggeria l'alteratione per virtù del punto, il qual dimostra che dinanzi a queste note ligate è il valore di una breve, o ver se da lui anchora fussino state fatte negre le predette note ligate con la semibreve precedente puntata et la minima sequente ut hic:



^{46^t} Che se pur V.E. volesse dire che queste tali note fatte negre pel colore denotassino et significassino la sesqualtera habitudine, dico hoc non esse aliquo pacto admittendum. Ratio est perché il colore in questo luogo opera solamente quanto alla breve, la quale è ligata tra la lunga et le due semibrevi insieme ligate, cioè impedisce et fa che la predetta breve ligata, come seconda in ligatura, non si altera, et per integrare el numero ternario o ver senario si sogliono acompagnare [con] altre note di simile colore colorate et piene a compimento et perfectione del numero, così ternario come senario, così immediate come mediate. Similmente se lui havesse disciolte et separate queste si fatte note preditte ligate vacue però, perché poco importa in questo luogo che le siano ligate o ver disligate et disgionte, perché qui non glie può intravenire alcuno errore, come saria nel cantare et pronuntiare le parole, anchora che nella prima nota $_{46^{v}}$ solamente se pronuntia et dicesi una sillaba cantando et in le altre nessuna sillaba mai si pronuntia, cioè in quelle le quali sono insieme ligate. ^[Et] questo conferma el venerabile presbyter Annuerus Anglicus nella sua Musica,⁷ el quale così dice: cognoscant qui canere volunt, quod nunquam inter

⁷ F. Alberto Gallo identifies him as 'Amerus o Aumerus, Annerus o Amierus, o Aluredus che compose nell'agosto dell 1271, probabilmente a Viterbo, una *Practica artis musice*'; see 'Citazioni di teorici medievali nelle lettere di Giovanni del Lago', p. 172. See also id., *La teoria della notazione in Italia dalla fine del XIII all'inizio del XV secolo* (Bologna, 1966), pp. 13–17. Gallo remarks that this particular citation may not be original with the English theorist, for it is also found as 'Regula generalis' at the end of the *Liber musicalium* attributed in the only manuscript to Philippe de Vitry (CS iii. 45–6). Amerus' treatise was edited by J. Kromolicki, in *Die Practica artis musicae des Amerus und ihre Stellung in der Musiktheorie des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1909), and is now available in a critical edn. by Cesarino Ruini, *Ameri Practica artis musice* [1271] (Corpus scriptorum de musica 25; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, American Institute of Musicology, 1977); the passage quoted by Del Lago is found on p. 33. Ruini notes (pp. 13–14) that Del Lago's version, which differs slightly from the two complete versions known, may indicate 'the possible existence of an Italian tradition'. The quote from Amerus was a later addition to Del Lago's letter (see Pl. 6 on p. 134).

⁵ 'Number' can be understood in the sense of 'measure' when it occurs in the context of *tempus*: three semibreves will fill the space of a measure, or, in Del Lago's terminology, 'observe the number three'. But in the context of minor mode, 'number' will refer to the measurement of a long, that is to the number of breves in a long. On the different meanings of 'numero' in the Correspondence, see the Notes on Problematical Terms.

⁶ On the possibility of placing a long in the middle of a ligature, see nos. 47-8.

syllabas eiusdem dictionis pausare licet de iure racionis cantus, nisi forte plures notę super eandem syllabam fuerint. Tunc inter notas eiusdem syllabe poterunt pausare, ita quod residuas notas resumant cum eadem syllaba ipsa incepta, et notę coniuncte naturaliter non debent disiungi, etc.⁷⁸ Similmente non glie può accadere errore alcuno per queste altre ragioni, non essendo cosa composta sopra le note di canto plano, come sono Antiphone, Responsorii, Introiti, et altri sì fatti canti tolti^e dal compositore per soggetto di un suo concento.⁹ Pertanto acciò se toglia via questa tal dubitatione et prolissità, cioè lunghezza di tempo, la quale potria retardare et far stare sospeso il cantore cantando, saria stato meglio che lui havesse segnate dette note con uno de' modi i quali io ho segnato negli esempli qui di sopra posti et dimostrati. Prego adunque V.E. che la si degni per sua humanità rescrivereme sopra questi tali dubbii. Ne restarò obligato. Et a·llei pur assai mi raccomando.

In Venetia, a dì 4 agosto M.D.xxxii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. Some time ago, through our common friend Pietro Aaron, I asked you to clarify some passages in your 'Missa Tue voluntatis' and one in the bass of your teacher's motet, 'Tu lumen, tu splendor patris', beginning with a long. You did not respond to me but to Aaron, in a letter dated 19 July [no. 41].

2. As to the long in the motet,¹ you write: 'With regard to the breve in the bass of "Tu lumen" marked with a cross, tell him he may interpret it as he likes, as long as he understands that the long at the beginning is imperfected, either by the first or second breve in ligature with it, or by the following two semibreves, or by the third breve; whichever way he

^e MS: tolto.

⁸ There seems to be no difficulty in understanding Amerus' instruction on how to sing a long passage over one single syllable. It boils down to the precept: interrupt such a passage only if you need to take a breath. But what, then, does the last phrase mean: 'et note conjuncte naturaliter non debent disiungi' ('and notes naturally joined must not be disjoined')? Amerus gives the following example:



Excellent as his principle is, his illustration is disappointing, because he does not go far enough in the definition of what are 'notes naturally joined', if we take the strokes as dividing lines.

⁹ Del Lago implies that when a chant melody is used in a polyphonic composition, the ligatures of the chant should be preserved. Spataro discusses this point in no. 48, para. 15.

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chooses, the passage must comprise the value of two perfect longs. I say no more than this because I need to understand his queries through writing and not through crosses', etc. I reply that the long should be perfect because of the two breves in ligature, which virtually have the value of an imperfect long, since 'virtue united is stronger than virtue dispersed'.² This 'virtue united' concerns the value, not the form. It seems to me that these two breves should be separated. A comparable example, under perfect *tempus*, is the following:



The two semibreves in ligature cause the preceding breve to remain perfect. The third semibreve forms a perfect *tempus* with the two in ligature and the fourth semibreve imperfects the following breve. But if the ligature were dissolved, the first semibreve would imperfect the breve and the final breve would remain perfect. Therefore the long must remain perfect. You yourself observe this practice in the last Agnus Dei of your 'Missa Tue voluntatis', where two semibreves in ligature follow two breves in ligature under *subtripla* proportion, and the second breve is perfect.³ These two semibreves in ligature cause the dotted semibreve and following minim to be drawn together with the semibreve rest between the breve and the breve rest. But if they were divided, then the second of the breves in ligature would be imperfected by the first semibreve, but this process would leave a semibreve alone without any companion.

3. Therefore I repeat that the long [in 'Tu lumen'] cannot be imperfected by the following note (a parte post), though it could be by a preceding note (a parte ante), if it were preceded by a note of a third of its value, and this would require adding a dot before it or later or using coloration, that is, filling the note.⁴ But since there is no preceding note, the long must be perfect. Every time we find a maxima in the perfect major mode before two longs in ligature, the maxima remains perfect. The same goes for a long in the perfect minor mode before two breves in ligature and a breve in perfect time before two semibreves in ligature. But since he [Ramis] imperfected this long by one of the further breves, as you write, I say that no learned composer has used this type of imperfection without some sign such as a dot or coloration, for no singer could know whether the long was perfect or imperfect. If he had blackened the long and the following breve or one of the subsequent breves, all doubts would vanish, for the blackened note loses one-third of its value and the accompanying blackened breve completes the perfection. Coloration of the breve in this case indicates that it is drawn together with the long. I

conclude that since he did not observe any of these things, we are without a doubt confronted with an error.

4. Further on I find a ligature consisting of two semibreves, a breve, and a half-blackened long followed by a black semibreve:

9:02 = 1 0 0. 0 1 + 0 ° W

Again there is an error, because those semibreves in ligature have the value of a breve, which causes the next breve to be altered before the long. Otherwise the breve with the semibreves will lack the ternary measure.⁵ When we find two longs in ligature with a maxima in the major perfect mode, the second long is always altered. This is according to modern usage; older composers do not allow a long in the middle of a ligature, as their rules show.⁶ But these ignorant modern composers, not understanding the old rules, do not realize their error in placing two longs in ligature together with a maxima. When older composers wanted to indicate alteration, they did so with a dot, not a ligature. This does not obtain for two breves in ligature with a long in the perfect minor mode and two semibreves in ligature with a breve in perfect time; here the second note is always altered, unless there is some sign to the contrary. Since Ramis used no such sign, that breve must be altered. Thus that breve is not correct since it is put for a regular breve, not an altered one. A ligature usually excludes the perfect number, that is, it is placed at the beginning of a perfection, as one usually finds in perfect time. Most learned composers place a ligature at the beginning of a measure, binary or ternary, but more frequently in ternary metre.

5. Therefore if he [Ramis] had placed a dot before the dotted semibreve, thus:

9 02 110 . 0. 0 411 . 00

the dot would prevent alteration by demonstrating that the notes before the ligature have the value of a breve. Or he could have written the first three notes of the ligature and the preceding dotted semibreve and minim in coloration:



Should you wish to say that such coloration would indicate *sesquialtera* instead, this is certainly not so, because coloration in this context applies only to the breve, to prevent its alteration. To fill out the ternary or senary

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measure, one usually blackens the accompanying notes. Similarly, he could have dissolved the ligature, for in this place a ligature is not needed to indicate text placement. In singing, the first note of a ligature takes a syllable, but the remaining notes none. This is confirmed by the venerable English priest Annuerus in his *Musica*,⁷ who says: *let those know who wish to sing that one should never rest between the syllables of a word unless there are several notes on one syllable. Then they can rest, but they should resume singing on the same syllable, and notes naturally joined must not be disjoined.⁸ Similarly, there can be no error since it [the motet] is not composed on plainchant, such as antiphons, responsories, introits, and other melodies the composer may choose as subject.⁹ So, to avoid confusing the singers, it would have been better to write the notes in one of the ways I have demonstrated. I should be grateful if you would have the kindness to reply.*

COMMENTARY

Spataro does not seem to have responded to the present letter; it may be one of Del Lago's fictitious letters, especially since he quotes a substantial excerpt from Spataro's letter of 19 July (no. 41) in para. 2. The question concerning the long in Ramis's 'Tu lumen' is posed again in Del Lago's next letter (no. 44, para. 14) and answered by Spataro in no. 45, para. 20.

The query about the alteration of the breve in a passage from Ramis's motet (paras. 4-5) is not taken up in any later letter. Del Lago contends that the two semibreves in ligature have the value of a breve and therefore the following breve, which is joined to a long, should be altered. He goes by the authority of the rule stating that when two breves are joined in ligature to a long in the perfect minor mode, the second breve is altered in order to complete the ternary measure. According to Tinctoris, the alterable note must be whole, but its companion may be divided.¹⁰ This rule is applicable only when the ternary mensuration is incomplete; to count the measures we must know which note to start with. Assuming that the first note in Del Lago's excerpt is the beginning of a measure in the perfect minor mode, he is correct: the value of a breve is missing before the long and therefore the preceding breve will need to be altered. He contends, however, that the ligature is incorrectly written, for, as he says, 'the ligature usually excludes the preceding number, that is, it is placed at the beginning of a mensural unit'. Here he is stating an observation, which generally holds true, rather than a rule. He then offers two ways in which Ramis could have shown that alteration was not intended, both of which cause the second semibreve in the example to be altered, beginning a new mensural unit with the third semibreve. Since the motet is not extant, it is not possible to determine what Ramis's intention was.

B.J.B.

¹⁰ 'Quinta generalis regula est quod omnis nota veniens alteranda quoad formam necessario est integra. Eius vero socia per partes potest esse divisa' (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 176).

44 (J4). Fos. $22^{r}-33^{v}$

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 23 August 1532 (Scribe A)

22^r A Messer Gioanne di Spatari.^a

 A giorni passati per Frate Piero Aaron mandai a richiedere certi dubbii da V.E., li quali mi occorrevano in la messa vostra chiamata 'Tuę voluntatis' nel primo Kyrie del tenore, et in molti lochi de detta messa, et etiam nel mottetto 'Tu lumen | tu splendor patris' del vostro precettore, nel principio del contrabasso,¹ circa li quali V.E. per sua bontà se è

degnata compiacerme.² 2. Nientedimanco sono rimasto quasi confuso, massimamente circa questo segno ut hic ϕ_2 posto nel tenore del primo Kyrie di detta messa, il quale da V.E. è posto et considerato per segno de modo minore imperfecto et tempo perfecto, due volte inciso o ver tagliato, e questo dite advenire perché sono posti gli accidenti fra le notule cantabili, i quali denotino tempo perfetto. Ma dico che non poco havete errato, perché da tutti i dotti musici antichi, et etiam da alcuni moderni, tale segno è posto et inteso per segno di modo minore perfecto et tempo imperfecto, et quantonque siano stati da voi posti e segnati questi tali accidenti fra le notule cantabili i quali dinotino tempo perfetto sotto tal segno, dico che repugnano et sono contrarii al segno, perché gli accidenti fra le notule di tale segno dinotano perfettione di tempo, ma perché el circolo è segnato immediate dinanti alla cifra binaria, è inteso esser posto conditionaliter, cioè non per se solo, et alhora denota modo minore perfetto. Et la cifra binaria che è contigua al segno dimostra tempo imperfetto, non essendo posta sotto d'essa l'unità | ut hic O₁², et gli accidenti dimostra[no] tempo

^{23'} posta sotto d'essa l'unità | ut hic O_1^* , et gli accidenti dimostra[no] tempo perfetto, per il che sono contrarii l'uno a l'altro, et 'duo contraria non possunt simul stare in eodem subiecto'.³ Ma a mi pare che se V.E. havesse segnato (dico secundo i moderni compositori) in questo modo ut hic $\emptyset \boxtimes$ o ver^b a questo modo $\varphi_{1,}^{2,4}$ che allhora rationabiliter si intenderebbino le figure cantabili et le suoe pause doversi cantare pel segno di tempo perfetto inciso sotto la dupla proportione, perché altrimenti da tutti periti

^a The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto Messer Giovanne di Spatari salute.'

^b Del Lago has substituted 'o ver' for the following: 'aut parumper separata et lontanata la cifra dal segno cum la unità sottoposta'.

¹ For the passages queried, see no. 41.

² See Spataro's letter to Aaron of 19 July 1532 (no. 41).

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musici et cantori senza dubbio alcuno cantariano et fariano le longe perfette et le brevi imperfette, come per l'authorità delli antichi si concede, perché questo segno ϕ_2 dinota modo minore perfetto per virtù del circolo, et tempo imperfetto per la cifra solamente binaria, cioè la longa perfetta et la breve imperfetta, come di sopra è stato detto.

3. Et questo è affirmato da V.E. nel *Trattato* suo *di canto misurato*⁵ al quinto capitolo intitulato prima al Signore Hermes Bentivoglio, di poi a Frate Piero Aaron, charissimo amico nostro, dove così da V.E. è scritto:

- 23^v Havendo optimamente io compreso la natura et | proprietà de' duoi segni preditti, faci!n ente haremo la chiara notitia degli altri duoi sequenti, de' quali uno sarà questo sequente, scilicet O2, per il quale sarà compreso che 'l modo minore sarà perfetto et la longa varrà tre brevi, come pel circolo si comprende. Ma il tempo, o ver la breve, sarà imperfetta. Et questo è chiaro et manifesto per la cifra binaria posta di poi el *preditto circolo*, etc.⁶ Pertanto dico che questo segno ϕ_2 non è differente da questo O 2 quanto alla perfettion della longa et la imperfection della breve, eccetto che in questo O2 passa una breve per battuta, o vero due semibrevi, o vero il suo valore, ma in questo ϕ_2 , per virtù della virgula, una longa imperfetta, o vero quatro semibrevi. Adonque per la incisione del detto segno, et similmente per li accidenti posti tra le dette notule di esso segno, non si muta la sua naturale potentia, perché ponendosi questo segno Φ_2 (secondo voi) per segno de modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto due volte diminuto, seguiteria anchora che non gli fusse alcuna differentia tra questo O2 et questo \$\phi\$ inciso et senza cifra, quanto alla perfection del tempo, et quanto alla battuta, la qual cosa è falsissima, perché la cifra binaria che è apresso il segno non opera come virgola,
- ^{24^r} quanto | comprendere posso in questo locho esser il vostro giuditio et parere, ma solamente tal cifra significa et dimostra tempo imperfetto come segno secondario, et per se, ut modo demonstratum est, 「perché sono duoi segni ciascuno per se solo; la cifra ternaria appresso al circolo o ver al semicircolo puole et è simile al circolo, et la binaria è simile al semicircolo. Adunque sono duoi segni, cioè ciascuno per si posti, uno apresso l'altro, ut hic OO CO OC CC, come da li più antichi se usavano, ma li loro successori in loco di quelli hanno usato questi: O3 O2 C3 C2. E questo è affirmato da Maestro Bartolomeo Ramis, vostro precettore, in la sua *Musica* in la 3ª parte, trattato primo, capitolo terzo.⁷⁷

4. Et questo se conferma^e dalla E.V. nel suo *Trattato* antidetto *de cantu mensurato* primamente da lei composto et intitulato al Signore Hermes

⁷ See Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, pp. 87-8.

³ Aristotle, *Topics* 2. 7 (113²22-3): 'Impossibile enim est contraria simul eidem inesse' (in the translation by Boethius; see *Aristoteles latinus*, v/1-3 (Brussels and Paris, 1969), p. 42); cf. also *De interpretatione* 14 (24^b9).

⁴ On these signs, and Spataro's reply, see no. 45, para. 4 and n. 6.

[&]quot; MS: comferma.

⁵ This treatise is an expanded version of Spataro's Utile et breve regule di canto (1510); see Ch. 3.

⁶ This quotation is not found in the *Utile et breve regule*, but was probably added by Spataro when he enlarged the treatise for Del Lago.

Bentivoglio, al quarto capitolo, nel quale così ella dice: El primo si chiama modo con tempo, el secondo tempo con prolatione. Modo con tempo si fa così, cioè O 3 C 3 O 2 C 2. El circolo et el semicirculo dimostrano il modo, ma la zifra 3 2 dimostra il tempo, etc.⁸ Et che sia el vero che la virgola dinota solamente la diminutione delle figure o vero notule, et non la cifra ternaria et binaria, V.E. lo afferma anchora nel predetto trattato al capitolo 6, dove la tratta de' segni del numero diminuto, nel quale così dice, scilicet: la quale diminutione, in quanto per li segni si cognosce, quando sono secati o ver tagliati, et però se el segno del modo col tempo sarà tagliato a questo modo: $\phi_3 \phi_3 \phi_2 \phi_2 si$ chiamerà modo cum tempo diminuto. Similmente se el tempo con prolatione sarà tagliato per tale modo: $\Phi \notin \Phi \notin$, si chiamerà tempo con prolatione diminuta. Et anchora è da notare che benché tali segni siano diminuti, le note sempre restano nel 24^v suo numero, cioè perfetto et imperfetto, etc.9 Et similmente questo è affirmato da voi nella opera vostra intitulata Della perfettione produtta dalla sesqualtera, sesqualtera, al capitolo 27°, dove dite queste parole, scilicet: Ma se la sesqualtera sarà data tra le figure de questi segni simplici: O2 C2, o vero tra le note di questi diminuti ut hic: ϕ ¢, etc.¹⁰ Dico adonque per le preditte vostre parole che V.E. afferma che questi duoi segni ut hic O2 C 2 non sono segni diminuti respectu habito alla cifra binaria posta appresso li preditti segni, scilicet O2 C2, ma che la virgola è quella che dimostra la diminutione delle figure o ver notule et non la cifra, perché la cifra ternaria, dico secondo gli antichi, quando è posta sola appresso al circolo o vero al

tempo imperfetto. 5. Ma io trovo da Verbonet, compositore moderno, come appare nel tenore della prima parte del Patrem de una sua messa composta sopra il tenore di una canzone chiamata 'Gratiusa gent',¹¹ esser stato da lui posto

semicircolo, dimostra solamente il tempo perfetto, et la cifra binaria il

⁸ The quotation is found on fo. 6° of *Utile et breve regule*. When Del Lago wrote his *Breve introduttione di musica misurata*, published in Venice in 1540, he drew on a number of his letters. He also took material from Spataro's treatise on mensural music. Not only the present quotation but nearly the entire chapter 'De li segni del modo con tempo secondo li antichi' (pp. 22-3 of the facsimile edn.) is taken from Spataro's treatise; compare fo. 6° of the *Utile et breve regule*.

⁹ Spataro, Utile et breve regule, fo. 9^r.

¹⁰ Spataro, Tractato di musica (Venice, 1531), fo. g3^v.

¹¹ See Johannes Ghiselin-Verbonnet, *Opera omnia*, ed. Clytus Gottwald (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 23; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1961–8), iii. 13. In his book Johannes Ghiselin-Johannes Verbonnet (Wiesbaden, 1962), pp. 45–50, Clytus Gottwald discusses and analyses this mass, citing portions of this letter, and of no. 86 (in which the same passage is mentioned); they are among the indications that Verbonnet was the same man as Johannes Ghiselin, under whose name Petrucci published this and four other masses of the composer in the year 1503 (see Claudio Sartori, *Bibliografia delle opere musicali stampate da Ottaviano Petrucci* (Florence, 1948), pp. 63–4). Gottwald observes that Ambros already cited Sebald Heyden's characterization of the tenor of Ghiselin's mass based on Busnois's 'Gratieuse gent' as an attempt to present the mensural signatures in an exhaustive manner. He himself calls it 'a didactic experiment for candidates of notational theory' and he gives a helpful analysis of its scheme (p. 45).

questo segno O2, et similmente in la particola 'Et resurrexit' del predetto Patrem questo ϕ_2 per segno de modo minore imperfetto et di tempo perfetto et prolatione | perfetta sotto la dupla proportione, e questo 25^r secondo la opinione di alcuni moderni, benché l'habbia segnata diminuta, perché la dovea segnare in questo modo ut hic $\odot_1^2 \phi_1^2$, perché non essendo ivi la unità sottoposta alla cifra binaria, non può indure altro al cantore se non dubitatione (come havete fatto voi nel predetto Kyrie) utrum se gli è posto per segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto con prolatione perfetta, secondo che gli è usato dagli antichi, o vero secondo alcuni moderni per segno de modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto con prolatione perfetta, come per il circolo et per il punto si dimostra. E questo è la verità, quia circulus in cantu mensurato perficit breven, pu[n]ctus vero signo temporis infixus semibrevem, perché alhora si intenderia tal segno stare per se et essere sottoposto et suggetto alla dupla proportione come radice et fundamento delle proportioni, come dimostra essa cifra, la qualle dinota la dupla proportione in li canti mesurati, et per questa ragione io credo che 'l predetto Verbonet si sia mosso a questo perché el circolo el quale è stato assegnato da' musici al tempo perfecto o vero alla breve perfetta, et il semicircolo al tempo imperfecto o vero alla 25^V breve imperfecta, li quali sono segni certamente immutabili, et che siano immutabili, non bisogna altrimente provarlo, perché è notorio a ciascun buon musico. Et la cifra ternaria et binaria sono accessorie et famule, perché la possanza dello accessorio saria maggiore della potentia del suo principale.

6. Per questo si può comprendere che dal predetto Verbonet si ha per cosa certa che non sia altro segno ne' concenti el quale dimostri el modo maggiore o ver minore perfetto, se non per la virtù delle pause. Et tale opinione tengono molti altri dotti compositori, come è Tinctoris et Don Franchino Gafurio, secondo appare ne' suoi concenti, et similmente ne' loro trattati musici, ne' quali parechi compositori antichi sono stati da loro represi et reprobati per haver segnato il modo minore perfetto et imperfetto cum la cifra ternaria et binaria segnata appresso al circolo o vero al semicircolo, et similmente el tempo perfetto et imperfetto.¹² Pertanto torno a dire che in quanto voi dite queste parole al capitolo 29 del preditto trattato, videlicet: *pertanto, sarà necessario che quanto alla divisione del fermo tempo si caggia differentia tra le semibrevi di questi duoi segni simplici:* O2 C 2, *li quali dimostraranno che il tempo o ver la breve resta in tre equali parti partita*, etc.¹³ Dico anchora che per le preditte vostre parole allegate di

¹² For Tinctoris's opinion of these mensuration-signs, see his *Proportionale* (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, iia. 55-6; CS iv. 175-6); for Gafurio's comments, see his *Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, pp. 88-9.

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¹³ Spataro, *Tractato di musica*, fo. h2^{\cdot}. Del Lago left out the following words after 'tempo': 'o ver la breve resta in due equale parte divisa, et le semibreve di questi altri dui segni semplici: O₃

7. Et questa è la verità perché la cifra ternaria o vero binaria è differente dalla virgola per natura et essentia, ^ret sì vi adduco l'autorità et opinione de Giosquino (el quale è stato divino¹⁵ nel componere) nella sua messa '[L'homme armé] super voces musicales' nel principio del ultimo Chirie del soprano, el qual pone questo segno ϕ contra a questo ε posto nel tenore per segni equali,¹⁶ perché lui ha opinione che non sia differentia quanto alla batuta da questo segno O prima integro comparato a questo ε , ma poi per la virgola vuole che sotto questo ϕ passa una semibreve o ver il suo valor, et sotto questo ε una minima, per la quale virgola resulta la dupla proportione.¹⁷ Il medesimo ha fatto Pre Erasmo Lapicida in uno

¹⁴ Cf. Spataro, *Utile et breve regule*, fo. 8^{*}. Presumably Del Lago is quoting from Spataro's revised version, no longer extant.

¹⁵ The epithet 'divine' as applied to artists was thought to have been used first by Pietro Aretino in a letter of 16 Sept. 1537 to 'the divine Michelangelo' (Lettere sull'arte di Pietro Aretino, ed. Ettore Camesasca [3 vols., Milan, 1957–60], i. 64). 'In 1542 the Venetian Sylvestro Ganassi del Fontego speaks of the Flemish composer Nicolas Gombert, the Emperor's chapelmaster, as huomo divino in tal professione. And in the second part of the same work, published one year later, he calls Adrian Willaert nuovo Prometheo della celeste Armonia. The same Aretino who had called Michelangelo 'divine' speaks in his Marescaleo (Act V, Sc. 3) of Willaert as sforzo di natura, miracle of nature. All of these expressions point to a concept of creativity based on the new ideas of originality and inventiveness. Insofar as Man is creative in this new sense he partakes of God's nature and may therefore properly be addressed as "divine".' See Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius-Evolution and Origins of a Concept', p. 484 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 52-3. Del Lago would seem to precede our witnesses by ten years; however, the epithet appears in a marginal addition, probably added after 1538 (see Ch. 6). Undoubtedly, since he, Aretino, and Ganassi were Venetians, the term 'divine' as applied to artists was then current in Venice. In a recent book on Michelangelo and the Language of Art (Princeton, 1981), p. 528 n. 40, David Summers points out that 'Michelangelo was first called "divine" by Ariosto (Orlando furioso, xxx111,2; 1532)'. The epithet may seem surprising in a Christian context, but it was freely applied in antiquity to outstanding statesmen, orators, and poets.

¹⁶ See Josquin des Prez, Werken, ed. Smijers, Missen, 1, p. 3. The original mensuration-sign in the tenor of Kyrie II is O, not C; see the facsimile of the cantus firmus ibid., p. v, after Petrucci.

¹⁷ In reality, it is not the voices under ϕ that are diminished, but the tenor under \odot that is augmented. Arthur Mendel, in the Workshop on the Performance and Interpretation of Josquin's Masses (Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin des Prez: Proceedings*, pp. 707-8), has pointed out that

suo canto 'Tandernaken'¹⁸ a tre voci facto, el qual ha posto questo segno φ nel soprano, et similmente questo \in nel contratenore, el quale vuole che questo segno φ sia cantato contra a questo C in dupla proportione per virtù de la virgola,[¬] perché il proprio della cifra ternaria (secundo li antichi) è in dimostrare el modo minore perfecto, et aliquando el tempo perfetto, et similmente la cifra binaria dimostra il contrario, cioè il modo minore imperfetto et tempo imperfetto, perché allhora sono poste esse cifre come segni per se, et la virgola dimostra solamente la diminutione delle figure.

8. Et questo se conferma anchora da V.E. nella prima parte nel Errore 26^v 20 della vostra apologia contra Don Franchino dove voi così dite: Ma quando da poi esso circolo o ver semicircolo seguitano due cifre, scilicet ambedue ternarie o ambedue binarie, o vero una ternaria et l'altra binaria, allhora tale circolo et semicircolo stano per segno di modo maggiore, et la prima cifra sta per segno de modo minore, et la seconda sta per segno di tempo, etc.¹⁹ Dico adonque che secondo voi la cifra ternaria è segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo perfetto, et similmente la cifra binaria è segno di modo minore imperfecto et di tempo imperfetto, per il che se le dette cifre sono segni secondarii et simplici, non possono dimostrare et segnificare diminutione, come fa la virgola, perché tali cifre dimostrano solamente la perfettione et imperfettione delle figure o ver notule come segni per se, et questo quando sono poste appresso al circolo o vero al semicircolo, et hanno la medesima possanza, così appresso il segno integro come appresso el diminuto, perché li antichi, sotto questi quatro segni integri ut hic O3 O2 C3 C2,

C3, li quali dinotano che el tempo . . . '. As noted elsewhere, Del Lago felt free to change Spataro's spellings.

Josquin equates the minim under \mathfrak{C} with the semibreve under \mathfrak{O} and under ϕ , showing that he did not regard the stroke as a sign of diminution. Mendel suggested that the original meaning of the stroke as a sign of diminution 'had been nearly forgotten by this time' and concluded that 'the stroke through the C, when it does not occur simultaneously with other voices, means "somewhat faster than without the stroke". And the same with the circle' (ibid., p. 709). But he found it 'a strange solution in a piece which is so obviously playing with mensurations'. In fact, there is theoretical testimony to support the belief that ϕ indicates 'somewhat faster' than O. In his Proportionale musices, Tinctoris criticizes Ockeghem for using the sign O3 in all voices of 'L'autre d'antan' because it is a sign of proportion, not a time signature. He believed Ockeghem wished to indicate a tempo faster than sesquialtera, but, in Tinctoris's words, 'it was sufficient to do this by drawing a stroke through the centre of the circle in each part. For its function is to signify acceleration of the measure, whether in perfect or imperfect time, the form in each being ϕ ¢, as also appears in an infinity of his own compositions' ('Ad quod efficiendum virgula per medium circuli cuiusque partis traducta sufficiebat. Nam proprium est ei mensurae accelerationem significare sive tempus perfectum sive imperfectum sit, ut in infinitis etiam suis compositionibus apparet, cuius in utroque [tempore] forma talis est: \$\phi\$ \$\phi\$'); Tinctoris, Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, iia. 15.

¹⁸ Del Lago probably knew the work from *Canti C* (Venice, 1504), fos. $152^{v-1}53^{t}$. Modern edn. in R. Lenaerts, *Het Nederlands polifonies lied in de zestiende eeuw* (Mechelen and Amsterdam, 1933), pp. (14)-(18).

¹⁹ Spataro's Errori de Franchino Gafurio (Bologna, 1521), fo. 8°.

ponevano et davano la misura sopra il tempo come principio, et secondo alcuni altri sopra la breve | come media tra le cinque figure essentiali.²⁰ Ma 27^r quando erano diminuti o vero tagliati tali segni, davano la misura sopra la lunga imperfetta o vero il suo valore, et similmente in questi quatro segni, scilicet O C O C. In li primi duoi davano la mesura sopra la semibreve perfetta, et nelli altri suoi sopra la imperfetta. Et questo era da loro osservato quando le parti del concento erano eguali et simile in segno. Ma da alcuni moderni in questi duoi O C si pone la misura sopra la semibreve imperfetta o vero il suo valore, et aliquando sopra la minima, et questo quando questo segno O o ver questo C è posto in principio di alcuna particola di ciascun^d concento, puta nel tenore, comparato a questo O o vero a questo C segnato in le altre particole di esso qualonque concento. Et questo anchora si afferma da V.E. nel prenominato trattato al capitolo 8 dove la deffinisce la misura di ciascun segno,²¹ le quali parole lascio di porre qui per minor mia fatica.

9. Et etiam ho trovato in molte altre sue compositioni, come si dimostra in quel suo concento chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto, verba non sufficiunt', perché in esso V.E. ha posto questo medesimo segno ut hic ϕ_2 per segno de modo [minore] perfetto et di tempo imperfetto. Et similmente ho trovato nella particola del 'Benedictus qui venit' della predetta | sua messa ['Tue voluntatis'] esser stato posto da lei questo segno ut hic ¢ 2 in principio del tenore per segno di modo minore imperfetto et tempo imperfetto diminuto, sotto il quale ha V.E. segnate le pause de tre tempi tra il preditto segno et questo ϕ , le quali pause dimostrano il modo maggiore et minore perfetto, la qual cosa rationabilmente non può stare, perché tal segno, secondo li antichi, dimostra il modo minore imperfetto, et le pause le quali occupano tre spatii dimostrano il modo minore perfetto, per il che V.E. non può negare per modo alcuno non havere errrato, sed 'quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus',²² perché tra el segno et il segnato cade repugnantia," demostrandose per il segno il modo minore imperfetto et per le pause, le quali sono il segnato, si dimostra el contrario, cioè il modo minore perfetto, etc. Per la qual cosa dico par che V.E. se contradica quando questo segno ϕ_2 da lei si pone in significatione di duoi diverse cose, cioè per modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto, come si dimostra nel primo Kyrie della preditta messa, et nel motteto preallegato, scilicet 'Ubi opus est facto', etc. per segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto. Ma anchora che quella potria dire che non sono accidenti | alcuni tra le figure le quali denotino el tempo perfetto in questo 28^r

²¹ The version of the Utile et breve regule owned by Del Lago; see above, n. 5.

²² See no. 7 n. 3.

27^v

segno più che in quello, respondendo dico che dove è il modo perfetto o vero imperfetto, anchora ivi può essere tempo perfetto o ver imperfetto, dato che non vi siano accidenti alcuni apparenti. Perché può ben stare che tra le figure cantabili sotto questo segno ut hic ϕ_2 , non vi essendo accidenti alcuni (cioè brevi, lunge piene, et etiam semibrevi piene), et questo si fa per integrare il numero perfetto, cioè il numero ternario, o vero punto di divisione, posto tra due semibrevi o vero pause di semibrevi, unite insieme a questo modo ut hic _____ (et altre simile occurrentie), essere di modo perfetto et tempo perfetto, come saria se in una parte d'un concento non gli fusse altro che massime, lunge, et brevi, perché allhora si potria intendere così el tempo perfetto come imperfetto. Concludo adonque, ponendose questo segno ϕ_2 in doi modi diversi, si produce dubitatione et dilatione di tempo al cantore. Et questo basti quanto al primo dubbio.

10. Item nell'ultimo Kyrie del tenore della detta messa me occorre 28^v un'altro dubbio quanto al modo che da V.E. è stato usato, et mai ho veduto da altro musico di autorità alcuna esser stato questo così usato, eccetto che da V.E. Ma perché da huomo di tanta autorità come siete voi, al quale a questi nostri tempi non se trova simile, né manco penso per l'avenire in questa nostra scientia musicale, pertanto la prego si degni resolverme tal dubbio, perché da questo segno posto in principio de esso tenore ut hic ϕ infino a questo ϕ , cioè tra l'uno et l'altro, da V.E. non è considerato esser di modo minore perfetto, se non da questo ϕ per in sino al fine di esso tenore, perché se vede che tra l'uno et l'altro segno non è il suo numero, o vero la sua quantità pertinente al modo minore perfetto, videlicet di tre brevi perfette o vero il suo valore, et etiam manca della quantità della massima imperfetta, cioè del modo maggiore imperfetto, perché ne' concenti misurati non si dà modo minore senza la quantità del maggiore, et e contra non si pone il maggiore senza la quantità del minore. Pertanto voi, et ciascun altro compositore, acciò non cascino in sì fatti errori, debbono dedurre al fine i suoi canti con ordine de tutte le mesure, $_{29^{t}}$ et secundo | la perfettione et imperfettione di queste compire, perché *le* misure, le quali usiamo in cantu mensurato, sunt quatuor, scilicet mensura modi maioris, modi minoris, temporis, et prolationis, cunque modus maior sine minore, et minor modus sine tempore, et tempus sine prolatione minime possint constitui, nam maiori^f quantitativo accidenti minus semper immediate subsequens necesse est inesse.²³ E questo dice Franchino Gaffurio,^g perché ogni maggiore include

J MS: maior.

^e MS: repugnentia. ^d MS: ciascum.

²⁰ Here Del Lago distinguishes between adherents of the equal-breve theory and those who subscribe to the equal-minim theory.

⁸ The words 'e questo dice Franchino Gaffurio' were added later, not by Scribe A, but by Del Lago.

²³ Del Lago is quoting (from the words 'cunque modus maior' on) from the early version of Book II of Gafurio's Practica musicae. In Harvard University, Houghton Library MS Mus 142, this passage is found on fo. 10' in the chapter 'De prolatione'. In the Practica musicae Gafurio

in sé il minore, et quello contiene. Adunque il modo maggiore contiene in sé il minore. Similmente il modo minore include in sé il tempo, et quello contiene. Questa è cosa manifesta, perché la lunga ha il valore de le brevi, et quelle contiene et include in sé. Certamente il modo è maggiore del tempo, et la longa maggior della breve. Dato adunque il modo, si dà anchora il tempo, et dove è il modo, ivi anchora è il tempo. Ove adunque è la longa, ivi anchora sono le brevi implicite, tamen non si può porre il modo, o ver non può stare il modo senza tempo. Similmente perché il minore si include nel | maggiore, et da quello si contiene (come è stato già detto), la prolatione s'include nel tempo, et si contiene da quello. Adunque la prolatione nel tempo si include, et da quello si contiene. Questo esser vero si prova, perché la semibreve, che è parte della breve, si contiene da quella breve, et in essa si include. Questo è manifesto, perché ogni breve ha il valore delle semibrevi; posto adunque et dato il tempo, si pone et dà similmente la prolatione, et dove è il tempo, ivi è la prolatione. Adunque non si può dare il tempo senza la prolatione.

11. E questo si confferma dal dottissimo musico Maestro Prosdocimo de Beldomando padoano, comentatore sopra Gioanne de Muris, come appare nella *Espositione* de la 8ª particola del primo capitolo del preditto Gioanne de Muris, la quale particola così principia: *Item duplex est prolatio*, *scilicet perfecta que vocatur maior*, *[et] imperfecta que vocatur minor*, etc.,²⁴ el quale la espone in questo modo: *Est igitur mensura prolationis aliarum omnium fundamentum et vocatur prolatio, quia ad eius prolationem maiorem vel minorem omnes alię reducuntur, et si bene concipimus proferuntur. Eas enim*

30^r

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mensuras omnes quilibet | bene compositus debet habere cantus, scilicet modum, tempus, et prolationem, modum scilicet maiorem vel minorem, tempus perfectum vel imperfectum, prolationem perfectam sive maiorem vel imperfectam sive minorem. Quidam^b vero modorum maioris vel minoris perfectionibus non curantes in suis cantibus, solum tempora et prolationes perficiunt, qui absque defectu non transeunt, quia perfectus cantus horum perfectionibus conficitur. Ideo cantus omnis non partem prolationis sed completam, non partem vel partes temporis sed completum, non partem vel partes modi sed completum debet habere modum, et tunc cantus perfectus est cum his omnibus completur perfectionibus. Cum autem aliquod istorum deficit, cantus perfectus non est.²⁵

12. Ma credo che V.E. pensa che quando in una particola di ciascun concento se transferisce, cioè si varia di tempo perfetto in tempo imperfetto, et e contra, non essendo segnato il modo tra l'uno et l'altro segno, cioè con una o ver con più pause di tre tempi secondo l'uso moderno (il quale si segna così), che da quel segno dopo il quale seguitano le pause, o vero altri accidenti ad esso modo pertinenti, si intende el modo ^{30^v} esser perfetto. Ma so ben che 'l modo è inmobile et stabile, et mai | si varia ne' concenti. Et questo in duoi modi accade. L'uno è quando le pause sono poste in principio del canto, così inanti al segno temporale come inmediate di poi. L'altro è quando è segnato in processu cantus, cioè con le pause predette, come da voi è stato segnato nello antidetto tenore, et

similmente nella particula del contrabasso del primo Agnus Dei della vostra messa 'Da pacem Domine'. Tunc enim intelligitur a principio usque ad finem cantus esse modum perfectum, dato che li fussino diversi segni, cioè segni di tempo perfetto o imperfetto con prolatione perfetta o vero imperfetta, così innanti come di poi di tali pause, perché allhora solamente si varia il tempo, cioè di perfetto in imperfetto, et e contra, et similmente di prolatione perfetta in prolatione imperfetta. Ma il modo resta fisso et stabile, perché non si può mai removere né variare per alcun segno diverso di tempo per essere segnato con le pause, le quali sono immobili.

13. Et questo anchora è stato servato dal prenominato Verbonet in la particola del Sanctus del tenore della sua preditta messa, et similmente da Tinctoris in uno suo canto a tre voci | fatto sopra alcuni versi, li quali principiano così: 'Difficilesⁱ alios delectat pangere cantus',²⁶ nel tenore della prima parte, et similmente nella seconda parte del tenore, et nella parte suprema, et nel contratenore. Et etiam dico che siete incorso in simile errore nella particola del Benedictus del tenore dell'antedetta vostra messa, et etiam in l'ultimo Agnus Dei. Ma V.E. deve notare che le pause dimostranti tanto il modo maggiore quanto il minore perfetto da' moderni invente qualche volta le poneno indiciali et non si connumerano, ma sono solamente segno demostrativo del modo, et questo quando le ponevano

^b MS: quędam.

reduced the passage (in which he had also cited Tinctoris's *Tractatus de regulari valore notarum*) to the words: '. . . inde et prolationem sine tempore. Atque modum maiorem sine minore et minorem item sine tempore in cantilenis constitui non posse notissime comprehendi potest' (fo. bb1'; p. 91 in the translation by Miller). On the manuscript of Gafurio's Book II, see Ch. 7, pp. 170-2. The earlier part of Del Lago's quotation is derived from Ugolino's commentary on Johannes de Muris (see n. 25 below): 'Quatuor ergo sunt mensurae quibus utimur in mensurabili cantu, scilicet, mensura modi maioris, modi minoris, temporis et prolationis' (Ugolino of Orvieto, *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, ed. Seay, ii. 83).

²⁴ Johannes de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 47.

^{*i*} MS: Defficiles.

²⁵ As F. Alberto Gallo discovered, this quotation comes not from Prosdocimo's commentary on Johannes de Muris but from Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. 11-9 (ed. Scay, ii. 83-4), which is likewise a commentary on Muris. See Gallo, 'Citazioni di teorici medievali', pp. 175-6. By 'perfections', Ugolino does not mean ternary quantities, but that every piece should be measured by complete units, binary or ternary, in each of its divisions: major and minor mode, *tempus*, and prolation.

²⁶ For a transcription and discussion of this piece, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings Recovered'. On the passages mentioned by Del Lago, see p. 89.

tra la chiave et el segno, qualche volta le segnano inditiali et essentiali, et allhora le locano immediate o vero mediate da poi al circolo o ver semicircolo, et si connumerano con le altre notule o vero figure cantabili. Et allhora tali pause sono stabili in li canti misurati, perché con nessuno altro segno diverso, così di modo come di tempo, si può removere la perfettione dimostrata da tali pause, quia immobiles quidem sunt, ma se 31^v intende dal principio de quella | particola sino alla fine esser il modo maggiore o vero minore perfetto, come di sopra è stato detto, secondo dimostravano esse pause. Et che tali pause denotanti così il modo maggiore come il minore perfetto non si possino removere quando le sono poste in principio o vero in processu di una o ver più particole di qualvoi concento, V.E. lo afferma tacitamente nella sua apologia, cioè defensione fatta contra Don Franchino Gafurio, nella seconda parte nello errore 17°, dove dite queste parole formali: Molte volte etiam da me sei stato advertito che tu non vai per la retta via, dove cerchi provare che meglio resta segnato il modo maggiore et minore perfetto con le pause longe occupa[n]ti tre spatii, che non era appresso alli antichi per il circolo et lo semicircolo con la zifra ternaria et binaria di poi sé poste, etc.²⁷ Et sequitando in lo errore 18°, questo istesso anchora è affermato da V.E. dove la dice così: perché è provato per li dotti musici che è bisogno che essi modi habbino segno de perfetto et imperfetto valore, acciò che li canti 32^t in mezo o vero in processo si possino transmutare di perfetto in | imperfetto, et e contra, come etiam si usa cantando che in una sola particola di un concento si varia di tempo perfetto in tempo imperfetto, et e contra. Altramente il compositore saria sforzato ne' canti del modo maggiore et minore perfetto, senza mutare segno, procedere usque in finem cantus incepti, per la quale cosa sequitaria che 'l musico saria soggetto al segno, et non e contra. Per questa licita causa sono stati segnati dalli antichi li segni perfetti et imperfetti alli modi, cioè che in processu cantus el precedente fusse destrutto et casso per le apparenti oppositioni che 'l seguente, come etiam accade nelle proportioni nel misurato canto segnate, scilicet che la sequente proportione segnata destruge la precedente, etc.²⁸ Sì che V.E. per le predette vostre sententie può comprendere come il modo dimostrato da voi et d'altri musici moderni per le pause così inditiali come essentiali ne' $_{32}^{v}$ concenti del canto misurato è fisso et stabile, et non si può removere | et variare.

14. Oltra di questo, trovo nell'anteditto Agnus Dei una certa reduttione da voi fatta di una semibreve pontata con la minima accompagnata, le quali si cantano sotto la subtripla proportione, la qual semibreve pontata con la ditta minima si reduce da V.E. a quella pausa della semibreve la quale è tra la breve et la pausa de la breve, et per la tale

 2^{7} Errori de Franchino Gafurio, fo. 7^t. Error 17 is, however, in the first, not the second, part of the treatise.

reduttione la ditta breve resta perfetta. Et qui ho apposto et notato el vostro proprio esempio ut hic:



Dico che secondo la imbecillità del mio debile et basso ingegno, mi pareria stesse meglio a questi tre modi, li quali sono diversi dal vostro, ut hic:



La ragione è questa, che quella terza breve precedente la pausa della semibreve nel vostro sopranotato esemplo da quella rationabilmente si fa imperfetta immediate, come sua minore propinqua et terza parte, perché quella pausa non resta sola, ma si connumera cum la breve innanzi a sé posta. Pertanto la semibreve puntata con la minima sequente restano sole et senza numero et compagna. Et questo afferma Johannes de Muris in lo capitolo de imperfectione notularum della Musica sua in la septima regola dove così dice: Quando inveniuntur due note simul sole, ille non debent partiri sed simul computari.²⁹ Et questa tale reduttione se intende et se fa in diversi modi quando si trovano due brevi, o ver due semibrevi, et similmente due minime, o ver il valor di esse, poste avanti ad una nota maggiore non propinqua, et che tale nota maggiore sia perfetta quanto a si et quanto alle parti sue, et che tale nota o ver sia puntata con il punto de perfectione, o ver sia posta dinanzi ad una sua simile, o ver alla sua pausa. Allhora le ditte notule se intendeno essere sole, et così le si transferiscono di lontano, perché tale nota non si può far imperfetta da quelle notule minori o ver dal valore di esse. Similmente quando la nota imperfetta che contenga in si parti propinque, remote, o ver più remote perfette, et che tali parti non se possano fare imperfette da quelle notule minori immediate precedenti, alhora si reduceno di lontano per trovare la sua terza parte. Si fa anchora questa tale reduttione per integrar il numero perfetto et altri modi simili. 15. Ulterius quanto a quella lunga nel principio del contrabasso del moteto 'Tu lumen tu splendor patris' del vostro preceptore, lo quale sta ut hic:

2:02	*	. • ¤	₩

²⁹ Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, CS iii. 49.

²⁸ Ibid., fo. 7^v.

dico che tale lunga deve essere perfetta per virtù delle brevi ligate, perché quelle due brevi insieme ligate con essa lunga quasi habent vim unius longe imperfecte, quia 'virtus unita fortior est se ipsa dispersa'.³⁰ Pertanto, cum bona vostra venia, a me non pare stia bene, ma che debbino esser disciolte et separate, perché essendo ligate tali brevi, essa lunga resta perfetta, perché non ha alcuna breve o vero il suo valore a parte anteriori della quale o vero dal quale si possa fare imperfetta, etc.³¹

16. Quanto alla richiesta de V.E. del moteto 'Tu lumen tu splendor patris', volentieri io li ho satisfatto pro viribus, il quale io mando incluso in questa mia. Et se altro io posso per lei, la mi comandi liberamente, perché tanto per lei non farò quanto non potrò. Et quella mi perdoni se io non havesse scritto in questa mia epistola [con] quella debita reverentia quale non sola da me servar si debbe, ma anchora da molto maggiori de me, alla cui bona gratia per infinite volte mi ricomando.

In Venetia, a dì xxiii agosto, M.D.xxxii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. Recently, through Pietro Aaron, I transmitted to you some queries concerning your 'Missa Tue voluntatis' and also the motet of your teacher, 'Tu lumen, tu splendor patris',¹ and you were kind enough to satisfy me.²

2. Nevertheless, I am still rather confused, primarily about the sign ϕ_2 in the tenor of the Kyrie. You say it indicates the imperfect minor mode and perfect tempus, twice diminished, because the attributes in the notes indicate perfect tempus. But I say you fall into no small error, for all learned musicians of the past and some of today use this sign for the perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus, and the attributes that you use to indicate perfect tempus are contrary to the sign. Since the circle is placed right next to the figure 2, it is understood as conditional, that is not independent, and thus it denotes the perfect minor mode. And the figure 2 indicates imperfect *tempus*, since it has no figure 1 under it, as here: O_1^2 . But the attributes indicate perfect tempus, and 'two contraries cannot exist in the same subject'.³ But if you had written ϕ or \bigotimes or ϕ_{1}^{24} as modern composers do, it would be clear that it is perfect tempus diminished, under duple proportion. Otherwise experienced musicians would sing perfect longs and imperfect breves, because in Φ_2 the circle denotes perfect minor mode and the binary figure imperfect tempus.

³⁰ See no. 43 n. 2.

³¹ This philosophical notion does not apply to notation; see Spataro's reply in no. 45, para. 20.

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3. You yourself affirm this in your own treatise on mensural music dedicated first to Hermes Bentivoglio,⁵ then to our dear friend Pietro Aaron, in ch. 5: Having perfectly understood the nature and characteristics of the two foregoing signs, the following two will be easily comprehended. O2 indicates perfect minor mode, with three breves to a long, as the circle shows. But the figure 2 *clearly shows imperfect* tempus.⁶ Therefore I say that ϕ_2 is no different than O2 with regard to perfection of the long and imperfection of the breve, but in the latter you have one breve or its value to a beat, in the former, because of the stroke, an imperfect long or four semibreves per beat. The stroke and the attributes of the notes cannot alter the natural force of the sign. If you claim Φ_2 is imperfect minor mode and perfect *tempus* twice diminished, it would follow that there is no difference between O_2 and Φ with regard to the perfection of *tempus* and to the beat, which is totally false because the figure 2 has not the same effect as the stroke, which seems to be your opinion, but demonstrates imperfect *tempus* as a secondary sign. The figure and circle or semicircle are two different, independent signs. Older musicians wrote them OO CO OC CC; their successors write O3 O2 C3 C2. This is affirmed by your teacher, Bartolomeo Ramis, in his Musica, part 3, first treatise, third chapter.⁷

4. You yourself affirm this in the aforementioned treatise in ch. 4: The first is called mode with tempus, the second tempus with prolation. Mode with tempus is written $O_3 C_3 O_2 C_2$. The circle and semicircle show the mode, the figures the tempus.⁸ And in ch. 6 you affirm that only the stroke indicates diminution: Diminution in signs is recognized by a stroke. Mode with diminished tempus is written $\varphi_3 \varphi_3 \varphi_2 \varphi_2$. Tempus with diminished prolation is written $\varphi \ \varphi \ \varphi$. Even though the signs show diminution, the notes preserve their perfection and imperfection.⁹ You affirm the same in your treatise on the sequialtera in ch. 27: If sesquialtera occurs after the simple signs $O_2 C_2$ are not diminished signs because of the figure 2 but that diminution is shown by a stroke. I repeat what the older musicians say: 3 next to a circle or semicircle denotes perfect tempus, 2 means imperfect tempus.

5. But I find that Verbonnet, a present-day musician, in the tenor of the Credo of his 'Missa Gratieuse gent',¹¹ uses O_2 and in the 'Et resurrexit' ϕ_2 as signs of imperfect minor mode with perfect *tempus* and perfect prolation under duple proportion, following the practice of some contemporary musicians, though he should have written O_1^2 and ϕ_1^2 : without the figure 1 beneath the 2, the singer will wonder (as in your Kyrie) whether it is perfect minor mode with imperfect *tempus* and perfect prolation according to older practice, or imperfect minor mode and perfect *tempus* and prolation according to some present-day musicians. The latter is right, 'for the circle renders the breve perfect and the dot within it perfects

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The Letters

the semibreve'; now one can understand that the sign stands by itself and is subject to duple proportion, as demonstrated by the figures. I believe Verbonnet was moved by the following consideration: O and C are immutable signs and are understood by all good musicians as such. The figures 3 and 2 are accessories and subordinates, or the strength of the accessory would be greater than the power of the principal.

6. From this we can deduce that Verbonnet believes for a certainty that perfect major and minor mode can only be demonstrated by rests. Many other learned composers believe this, such as Tinctoris and Don Franchino Gafurio, as their works and also their treatises show. They criticize a number of older composers for using the circle and semicircle with the figures 3 and 2 to indicate the perfect and imperfect minor mode and similarly tempus perfectum and imperfectum.¹² I return to ch. 29 of your treatise [on the sesquialtera], where you state: regarding the division of tempus, there is a difference between semibreves in the two simple signs O2 and C2, which demonstrate that the tempus or breve is divided into [two equal parts, and the semibreves in $\bigcirc 3$ and $\bigcirc 3$, which show that the breve is divided into] three equal *parts*, etc.¹³ It appears that you call $\odot \odot \odot \odot \subset$ simple signs and likewise $\bigcirc 3$ C 3 O 2 C 2, but you consider diminished signs only those with a stroke: ϕ $\oint \phi \phi$ or $\phi_3 \phi_3 \phi_2 \phi_2 \phi_2$. And this is affirmed in your treatise dedicated to Aaron in ch. 7: but if the circular sign is diminished or cut thus ϕ , then the stroke is a sign of diminution.¹⁴

7. This is true, because the figures 2 and 3 differ in nature and essence from the stroke. I adduce the authority and opinion of Josquin (who was godlike¹⁵ as a composer) in his 'Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales'. At the beginning of the second Kyrie he places ϕ in the soprano against C in the tenor as equivalent signs¹⁶ because he believes the beat is the same under O and C. The stroke produces duple proportion, making a semibreve under ϕ equivalent to a minim under C.¹⁷ Erasmo Lapicida did the same in his 'Tandernaken' *a* 3, placing ϕ in the soprano and C in the contratenor; the stroke effects duple proportion.¹⁸ According to older musicians, the characteristic of the figure 3 is to demonstrate the perfect minor mode and sometimes perfect *tempus*, and the figure 2 the opposite. These are independent signs and the stroke merely demonstrates diminution of the notes.

8. You yourself affirm this in the first part of Error 20 in your apologia against Franchino [Gafurio]: When a circle or semicircle is followed by two 2s, two 3s, or one of each, then the circle indicates major mode, the first figure minor mode, and the second figure tempus.¹⁹ According to you, the figure 3 indicates perfect minor mode and perfect tempus, the figure 2 imperfect minor mode and imperfect tempus. For if these figures are secondary and simple signs, they cannot signify diminution as the stroke does; they demonstrate only

perfection and imperfection and have the same effect whether they appear with a circle or a semicircle, whole or diminished. Older composers, under $O_3 O_2 C_3 C_2$, placed the measure on the breve as the principal of the five essential notes; others called the breve the middle note.²⁰ But when the signs are diminished, the measure falls on the imperfect long or its value (two breves), likewise in $\odot \in \odot C$; the measure is placed on the perfect semibreve in the first two, on the imperfect semibreve in the second two. This practice was observed when the signs in all voice-parts were the same. But some modern composers, in $\odot \in$, place the measure on the imperfect semibreve or its value, and sometimes on the minim, when one voice has \odot or \in against \bigcirc or \mathbb{C} in the other voices. You confirm this in your treatise in ch. 8.²¹

9. And in many of your other compositions, for example 'Ubi opus est facto', you use ϕ_2 for perfect [minor] mode and imperfect *tempus*. In the tenor of the Benedictus of your 'Missa Tue voluntatis', ¢2 stands for imperfect minor mode and imperfect diminished tempus, under which you use rests of three breves that demonstrate perfect major and minor mode. This is not rational, for (according to older musicians) the sign indicates imperfect minor mode and the rests perfect minor mode. You cannot deny that you have made a mistake, but 'occasionally even good Homer nods'.²² Therefore you contradict yourself by making ϕ_2 stand for two different things, imperfect minor mode and perfect tempus in the first Kyrie of your mass, and perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus in your motet. You might say that there are no attributes in the notes to indicate perfect tempus. But perfect and imperfect mode may contain either perfect or imperfect tempus, even if none of the attributes appears. It could well happen that under ϕ_2 there are none of the attributes [of perfect minor mode with perfect tempus] (such as blackened breves, longs, or even semibreves to indicate integration of ternary units, or dots of division placed between two semibreves, or two semibreve rests on the same line) but all the same it is in perfect mode and tempus. Take as example if one voice-part of a composition has only maximas, longs, and breves, in which case perfect or imperfect tempus could be understood. I conclude that using ϕ_2 in two different ways will induce doubt and hesitation in the singer.

10. My second query concerns the tenor of the last Kyrie of your mass ['Tue voluntatis']. You do something I have never seen done by any musician of authority. But since it is done by a man of your eminence, unmatched in our times and probably those to come in this our science of music, I beg you to enlighten me. Between the first sign, ϕ , and the ϕ , you do not consider there is perfect minor mode, but only from ϕ to the end of the tenor, since the proper measure of three perfect breves or their

value is lacking. Also, the correct number of imperfect maximas is not observed, for in mensural music there is no minor mode without major mode and vice versa. Thus you, and all other composers, have to regulate the measures to avoid errors. There are four types of measure, according to Gafurio: of major mode, of minor mode, of tempus, and of prolation; no major mode whatever can be constituted without the minor, no minor mode without tempus, and no tempus without prolation, for the larger unit by necessity includes the next smaller.²³ Therefore the major mode contains the minor mode, the minor mode the tempus. This is evident, because the long has the value of the breves and contains them. The mode is greater than tempus and the long greater than a breve. Given the mode, one also gives the tempus. Given a long, the breves are implicit. So mode cannot exist without tempus. The same is true of prolation, which is part of tempus; where you have tempus, you have prolation.

11. This is confirmed by the learned musician Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi in his commentary on Johannes de Muris, in the eighth paragraph of ch. 1, prolation is twofold, perfect, also called major, and imperfect, also called minor.²⁴ He explains: The measure of prolation is the foundation of all the others and is called prolation because all other time signatures are reduced to its major or minor form and are so performed (proferuntur), if we well understand. Every well-conceived composition must have the measures of mode, tempus, and prolation, that is, major or minor mode, perfect or imperfect tempus, and perfect or major prolation or imperfect or minor prolation. Some composers, ignoring perfections of the major and minor mode in their works, only use perfections in tempus and prolation, not without error, since a perfect composition is achieved through these perfections. Thus every composition must have the complete and not partial measure of prolation, tempus, and mode, and then the composition is perfect when it consists of all these perfections. If any of these is lacking, the composition is not perfect.²⁵

12. I think you believe that when one changes from perfect to imperfect *tempus* or vice versa, without signalling the mode by means of three-breve rests according to modern usage, that from the sign after which the rests or other attributes of mode appear, the mode is considered perfect. But I know well that the mode is fixed and never changes within a composition. It is shown in two ways, by rests at the beginning both before and after the time signature, or by rests in the course of the composition, as in the above-mentioned Kyrie and the bass of the first Agnus of your 'Missa Da pacem'. The whole work is in the perfect mode, even though *tempus* and prolation change. But the mode is fixed since the rests are unchangeable.

13. Verbonnet observed this in the tenor of the Sanctus of his mass ['Gratieuse gent'] and also Tinctoris in his three-part work, 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus'.²⁶ You fall into the same error in the tenor of

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the Benedictus of the same mass ['Da pacem'] and also in the last Agnus Dei. Note that the rests that signify perfect major and minor mode. invented by the moderns, are at times only 'indicative' and therefore are not counted, when they appear before the time signature, at times both 'indicative' and 'essential', in which case they are placed after the time signature and are counted together with the other notes. Such rests are fixed and indicate that the mode remains the same throughout the section. You tacitly affirm this in your apologia against Gafurio, in the second part, Error 17: I have warned you many times that you go astray in trying to prove that it is better to use rests to indicate perfect mode than the circle and semicircle with the figures 2 and 3 used by older composers.²⁷ And in Error 18: The older musicians proved that it is necessary to have a sign indicating perfect and imperfect values so that a change can be made in the middle of a work from one to the other, just as one can vary the tempus from perfect to imperfect and vice versa in a single passage of a work. Otherwise the composer would be forced, in compositions in perfect major and minor mode, to proceed to the end without changing signatures in the mode in which the work began, which would mean that the musician was controlled by the sign and not vice versa. For this legitimate reason older composers used signs for perfect and imperfect mode; in the course of a work, a new signature cancels the old one, just as happens with proportions in mensural music; a new proportion cancels the old one.²⁸ Therefore you can understand from your own statements that the mode as indicated by rests is fixed and cannot be changed.

14. Moreover, in the Agnus Dei [of your 'Missa Da pacem'] I find, under *subtripla* proportion, a dotted semibreve and minim counted with a semibreve rest between the breve and breve rest, causing the breve to remain perfect:



According to my weak intellect, you would have done better to notate it in one of the following three ways:



The reason is that the breve should be imperfected by the following semibreve rest, which leaves the dotted semibreve and minim without a

companion. This is affirmed by Johannes de Muris in the seventh rule of imperfection in his *Musica*: *When two notes are found together alone, they should not be separated but counted together*.²⁹ This is understood in different ways when two breves or two semibreves or two minims or their value are placed before a greater remote note that is perfect as to itself and to its parts, and is either marked by a dot of perfection, or placed before a similar note or its rest. Then the two notes are considered to be alone and are transferred beyond the perfect note. Similarly, if the note they precede is imperfect but contains perfect parts (near, remote, or more remote) that cannot be rendered imperfect by the two notes alone, they are also transferred to join with a third part. Such drawing together (*reduttione*) serves to complete a perfect number.

15. As to the long at the beginning of the bass of 'Tu lumen':

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I say it should be perfect because of the two breves in ligature, which virtually have the value of an imperfect long, since 'virtue united is stronger than virtue dispersed'.³⁰ It seems to me that these two breves should be separated, for if they are in ligature, the long remains perfect because it is not preceded by a note that could imperfect it.³¹

16. I am satisfying your request for the motet 'Tu lumen' willingly and enclose it herewith. If I can do anything else for you, ask me freely. Please forgive me if I have not observed proper reverence in this letter. **45** Paris 1110, fos. $68^{r}-77^{r}$ Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [autumn 1532] (Scribe E)¹

68^r Reverendo et excellentissimo de li musici, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Pietro, etc.

1. A li dì 4 septembris ho receputa una de V.E. de dì 23 augusti signata, la quale a me è stata molto grata, non tanto perché assai me ralegro quando da V.E. ho qualche adviso, quanto che con essa vostra era quello mutetto del mio preceptore² da me tanto desiderato, et etiam per havere anchora receputo una del nostro comune amico Messer Pre Zanetto [no. 44], la quale è plena de multi subtili argomenti musici, a li quali per non mancare de la promessa fatta a V.E. et etiam perché lui non resti dubbioso, et in li soi errori, per questa mia gli farò condecente resposta, la quale resposta a V.E. serà directiva aciò che quella, la quale (per soa gratia) humilemente se chiama mio discipulo et figliolo, sia participante de quella heredità la quale debitamente al bono figliolo se aspetta et convene.

2. El nostro venerabile Pre Zanetto per una soa de dì 23 augusti signata [no. 44] assai me ringratia della resposta da me a lui fatta a giorni passati circa certi dubbii da lui mossi in alcuni de li tenori de la mia missa chiamata 'Tue voluntatis' [no. 41]. Ma dice però che non resta tropo bene satisfatto et claro, ma quasi più confuso che prima, et massimamente circa questo segno ϕ_2 posto da me nel tenore del primo Kyrie de la predetta mia missa,³ el quale segno sta in tale loco per segno de modo minore imperfetto et de tempo perfetto doe volte diminuto et inciso o vero tagliato, per la quale cosa lui dice che ho errato, perché da tutti li musici, così antichi como moderni, tale segno è stato inteso per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto, per la quale cosa dice che a lui pare che se da me tale segno fusse stato signato in questo modo \oplus , o vero ut hic ϕ 2, cioè che la ziphra binaria fusse molto distante et separata dal segno circulare, che allhora claramente se intenderia che le figure musice dovesseno essere gubernate dal segno del tempo perfetto inciso in dupla proportione.

3. Quanto al primo suo argumento, dico che lui erra dicendo che questo segno ϕ_2 sia stato posito et inteso da tutti li musici antichi et moderni per segno de modo perfetto et tempo imperfetto,⁴ perché io

¹ The present letter is a copy made for Del Lago; the original is lost. The scribe has some idiosyncratic spellings, such as 'auttore', 'puntto', 'essistimandose', etc.

² Bartolomeo Ramis, 'Tu lumen'.

³ For the music, on fo. 239', see p. 476.

⁴ In the version of the 23 Aug. letter that appears in his collected letters, Del Lago does not say that O2 has the same meaning among *all* early and modern musicians, but that it has the same meaning among all early and *some* modern musicians. As we discovered in an earlier letter (no. 28), he has altered his original letter to reflect Spataro's response.

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trovo che tale segno è stato demonstrato et signato da Verbonetto, auttore moderno, nel tenore de la prima parte del Patrem de la sua missa de 'Gratiose gent',⁵ dove nel principio de tale tenore pone questi doi segni l'uno a l'altro subposito ut hic $\bigcirc_{C_2}^2$, le quali signi sono remossi da

l'ordene de li antichi constituto, perché el primo da essi antichi era inteso per signo de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto et de prolatione perfetta, et el secondo da essi antichi era inteso essere segno de modo minore imperfetto et de tempo imperfetto et de prolatione perfetta, et tali segni (in tale tenore positi) sono stati intesi dal preditto Verbonetto come questi $\odot \in$ subietti a la dupla comparatione. Similmente el preditto Verbonetto (nel tenore de la particula 'Et resurrexit' de la preditta missa) da lui è stato posito questo processo

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^{68^v} Tale segno è stato inteso da lui stare | per questo signo O doe volte diminuto. Et assai de simili essempli se potriano allegare, ma assai le demonstratione de li preditti bastarano contra quello che lui dice, cioè che appresso tutti li musici antichi et moderni questo signo ϕ_2 sempre è stato posito per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto, la quale cosa appare non essere vera, perché da molti dotti scrittori moderni, come da Tintoris, da Franchino Gafurio, et da Nicolao Francese, tali segni (da li antichi assignati) sono stati reprobati, et etiam da molti ottimi compositori moderni non usitati in li soi concenti.

4. Quanto al secondo, a me pare che lui non meritaria resposta, perché questi tali signi \bigoplus , \bigoplus 2 da lui assignati non sono regolati né de commune mandato, né mai intra musici usitati, ma perché sono stati solo inventi da lui, a lui li lassaremo come soi.⁶ Ma dico che se noi ce vogliamo acostare a

⁵ See no. 44 n. 11. In the final version of the letter, Del Lago says that Verbonnet's practice is an exception to the norm; this statement must have been added after he received Spataro's reply.

⁶ Spataro seems to have completely forgotten what he wrote in his treatise on *sesquialtera*, for there (in ch. 24, fo. f5') he shows a whole series of signs with two crossed strokes, of which he remarks: 'Et se [el segno] haveva due virgule, era da loro [sc. gli antichi] inteso come quadruplo rispetto al medemo segno semplice.' The only theorist found by Johannes Wolf who suggested two strokes as a sign of double diminution is Artusi, in his *Arte del contrapunto* of 1586; see Johannes Wolf, *Handbuch der Notationskunde* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1913–19), i. 423. Since Artusi evidently had access to at least part of the Correspondence (see Ch. 2), he may well have formed his idea under the influence of the present exchange, if not from Spataro's treatise. Aaron transmits Spataro's ideas on the double stroke in his *Compendiola* (Milan, c.1545), fo. B4' of the second part, and he is followed by his pupil Illuminato Aiguino, who even goes so far as to show signs with four strokes in *II tesoro illuminato di tutti i tuoni di canto figurato* (Venice, 1581), fo. 51'. Lodovico Zacconi, *Prattica di musica* (Venice, 1592), has a sign & demonstrating 'doppia diminutione della Semibreve', but he concedes that 'questa maniera è stata sempre poco in uso'

la antiquità, che questo segno \oint da lui posito per questo O doe volte diminuto serà male inteso da lui, perché el mio preceptore diceva che li musici antichi ponevano questo segno $\emptyset \phi$, non per el recto medio secato, per segno de procedere (in cantando) con più celerità, respetto a questo, O.7 Dico adonque che quello segno circulare da lui adutto doe volte non per el suo medio recto inciso, non serà inteso stare per el diminuto del segno una volta diminuto, ut hic posito Φ , perché questo prima ut hic posito ϕ era inteso che el canto dovesse cantarsi cito. Da poi data l'altra virgula ut hic ϕ , serà inteso che el canto debe essere cantato citius, et non per la medietà di questo $\phi \, \mathscr{O}$ primamente per medium cantato. Ma per complacere a li rudi et ignoranti, se potria usare questo segno ϕ^2 in loco de questo ϕ un'altra volta diminuto, come diceva el mio precettore essere stato usato dal maestro suo, el quale ordine è stato osservato da me nel tenore del 'Benedictus qui venit', etc. de la predetta mia missa, dove nel principio ho posito questo segno c^2 et non ut hic c_2 . aciò che el semidotto non creda che tale segno ut hic posito $(c)^2$ sia questo C 2 diminuto, el quale segno da li antichi era inteso per segno de modo minore imperfetto et de tempo et prolatione imperfetta, da po el quale segno non potriano rationabelmente stare le sequente pause de lunga occupante tri spatii, perché el seguitaria che intra el segno et el signato, o vero intra la causa et el causato, caderia contrarietà et non pare convenientia, perché in tale loco el signo demonstraria el modo minore essere imperfetto et el signato demonstraria essere de modo minore perfetto. Ma dato che anchora per la apparente positione de le pause et per el

^{69^r} Ma dato che anchora per la apparente positione de le pause et per el numero de le note cantabile sequente (anchora che tale segno fusse da me mostrato ut hic posito $\langle 2 \rangle$), tale canto da li dotti potesse essere inteso cadere sotto questo signo C doe volte diminuto. Tamen ad maiorem declarationem tale signo fu da me ut hic posito $\langle 2 \rangle$ et non ut hic $\langle 2 \rangle$. Ma chi più claramente volesse procedere per li rudi, meglio seria signare tale segno nel tenore del primo Kyrie preditto ut hic $\langle 2 \rangle_1^2$, ma alhora tale segno (come a molti piace) non seria gubernato da la diminutione, ma sì da la dupla proportione, la quale dupla non seria apparente ma seria subintellecta, perché intra questo segno φ inanti ad essa dupla posito et la dupla ut hic signata $\frac{2}{1}$ non cadeno note alcune gubernate da questo segno φ , le quale a le sequente (dapo la data dupla) siano comparate. Ma perché in quello mio tenore preditto io non ho atteso a complacere a li rudi ma sì alli

⁽fo. 26'). There is one composition in Trent, Castello del Buonconsiglio, MS 89, that has in the tenor against O in the other voices. This combination appears in the Kyrie (and later sections) of the anonymous 'Missa Te Deum laudamus', fos. $7r^{1}-80'$. The sign, however, does not indicate double diminution but reduction in the ratio 3:r; three breves of the tenor equal one breve of the other voices.

⁷ Not in his *Musica practica*. For Tinctoris's opinion on ϕ , see no. 44 n. 17.

dotti, pertanto da me è stato proceduto con termini da dotto, cioè che per li accidenti proprii et al segno convenienti in le note apparenti, el dotto comprenda che le note de tale tenore sono subiette et gubernate dal tempo perfetto, el quale serà compreso per el segno circulare, et per la prima data diminutione per la virgula apparente, la quale incide o vero taglia esso circulo, et da poi per la seconda diminutione, significata per la ziphra binaria, sia inteso che le sequente note serano pronuntiate in quadruplo più veloce respetto a questo segno O integro et non diminuto.

5. Et dove lui sequitando dice che questo segno ϕ_2 non è differente da questo O_2 et per consequente che così come questo O_2 assigna modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto, che etiam questo ϕ_2 (anchora che 'l sia inciso) harà tale significatione et natura, a questo respondo et dico che considerando che l'uno et l'altro vario effetto da ciascuno de essi signi produtto primamente depende da uno medesimo signo, cioè dal circulo, che el non sarà da maravegliare se essercitando tale circulo prima considerato circa la diminutione, tale circulo pigliarà qualche forma in apparentia non dissimile, per la^a quale se potrà comprendere diverse quantità et valore essere assignate a diverse note. Perché nui habiamo per regola ferma che la diminutione non è altro che ponere una nota per el valore de la soa propinqua minore, la quale diminutione (da li moderni) simpliciter se segna in doi modi, cioè primamente per la sectione del segno ut hic ϕ ¢, l'altra per la ziphra binaria dapo el segno secto et tagliato, ut

 $_{69}^{v}$ hic $\phi_2 \phi_2$, per la quale cosa dico che intra questo segno ϕ_2 et questo O_2 caderà non poca differentia, imperò che (ut diximus) questo signo Φ_2 se trova posito per questo O doe volte diminuto, perché in tale circulo appareno li preditti doi ordeni de la considerata diminutione, cioè primamente per la virgula la quale incide el circulo, et poi per la ziphra binaria dapo el circulo locata. Ma in questo signo O2, dove primamente dapo esso solamente la binaria ziphra appare, non se trova mai essere stato dato alcuno ordine de diminutione, cioè la prima per virgula, né la seconda per binaria ziphra dapo sé posita, per la quale cosa se dirà che intra tali signi caderà grande differentia in consideratione, perché (rationibus predictis) questo ϕ_2 serà inteso come questo O doe volte inciso o vero diminuto, et questo O2 (ut dixi) starà come signo integro et significarà che diverse proprietà caderano intra le note de tale signo a le note de questo ϕ_2 preditto, le quale differentie più claramente appareno quando da poi tali signi nascono qualchi soi accidenti proprii, come nel preditto mio tenore è stato da me usitato.

6. Ancora sequitando, questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che adonque per la incisione del ditto signo ut hic posito ϕ_2 , non osservarà la sua natura, perché ponendose questo segno ϕ_2 per segno de tempo perfetto et

prolatione imperfetta doe volte tagliato, sequitarà che anchora intra questo O₂ et questo ϕ senza ziphra non caderà alcuna differentia in quanto a la perfectione del tempo. Circa questo respondo al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto et dico che lui ha assai male in prattica la cognitione de li signi, perché lui non considera che quando primamente questo signo O se fa diminuto, tale sua prima diminutione (ut dixi) non se segna con la ziphra binaria posita dapo tale circulo, ut hic O2, ma se segna virgulato et inciso ut hic ϕ . Ma se dapo gli accaderà un'altra diminutione, tale diminutione potrà essere signata con la ziphra binaria posita dapo el circulo preditto primamente inciso ut hic ϕ_2 , et maxime ut dixi apparendo in le note li accidenti proprii del tempo perfetto. Et questo dico essere claro et potersi essercitare, perché rarissime, et forsa non mai, lui non ha trovato auttore alcuno antico né moderno che habia adutto in luce questo segno ϕ_2 per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto diminuto, per la qual cosa accaderà che tale signo non sarà approbato né da la musica università usitato. Pertanto dico 'Que enim rarissime fiunt, nullius artis solet regula approbari." Ma perché tale segno (ut dixi) con rasone da Verbonetto et etiam da me, con la clara apparentia de li proprii soi accidenti, è stato addutto in luce, dico che senza alcuna dubitatione potere essere inteso per segno de tempo perfetto doe volte diminuto. Et se questo simile signo ϕ_2 è stato posito da me in quello mio concento chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto', etc. et etiam in quello Trattato de canto 70^r mensurato intitolato al Signore | Messer Hermes Bentivoglio per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto una volta diminuto,⁹ tale signo è stato addutto da me per tale modo in luce non già perché sia usitato tra musici, come lui ha ditto di sopra, ma solo per demonstrare che se potria iuridicamente usare, et mediante li proprii soi apparenti accidenti essere inteso differente da questo non dissimile ϕ_2 significante el modo minore imperfetto et el tempo perfetto, perché potria acadere che una taberna et merzaria teneriano uno indifferente signo, et pure perché in la taberna non se vende merze, et etiam in la merzaria non se vende vino, tale signo in doi lochi diversi indifferente de forma posito per li diversi accidenti da lui demonstrati serà inteso essere differente a sé medesimo, non in quanto a la forma ma in quanto a la cosa diversa da lui demonstrata. Quanti vocaboli et nomi ha el grammatico, li quali sono indifferentemente pronuntiati et scritti, che da poi sono diversi in constructione! Se tutte le scientie et facultà fusseno redutte plane et a facilità per complacere alli rudi, el non se cognosceria el dotto dal indotto.

7. Et oltra sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che io potria dire che in tale mio concento, scilicet 'Ubi opus est facto', etc., non se trovano

⁸ Odo, Enchiridion musices (Dialogus de musica, § 14; GS i. 261b).
⁹ See no. 44, para. 3.

^a MS: le.

accidenti proprii tra le figure o vero note li quali demonstrano che el tempo sia perfetto, et che per consequente tale signo solamente convenire al modo minore perfetto et al tempo imperfetto. Alla quale cosa lui dice respondere in questo modo, cioè che dove è el modo perfetto, o vero imperfetto, che ancora ivi potrà essere tempo perfetto et imperfetto, dato che non gli siano accidenti alcuni apparenti, perché dice che el potrà ben stare che tra le figure cantabile sotto questo segno Φ_2 , non li essendo alcuni accidenti, cioè breve et longhe plene et etiam semibreve plene, et questo per reintegrare el numero perfetto, cioè el numero ternario, o vero puncto de divisione posito tra doe semibreve, o vero pause de semibreve unite ut hic -----, et altre simile occurentie, essere de modo et de tempo perfetto, come seria se in uno canto non li fusseno altre note che massime, longhe, et breve, etc., et concludendo dice che ponendo questo segno Φ_2 in dui modi diversi, gli nasceria confusione et dubitatione al cantore. Alle quale soe parole respondo et dico che occurendo tale caso, cioè che in tali indifferenti signi de forma apparenti non se potesse l'uno da l'altro per li soi proprii accidenti comprendere et discernere, che alhora la seconda diminutione seria signata con la proportione dupla ut hic ϕ_1^2 .

8. Da poi sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto procede con molte mie laude a le quale non attendo, perché sempre tengo inanti agli occhi^b el speculo de la mia cognitione. Ma pure dapo, lui cerca de darmi de una dura petra nel calcagno, et parendo che lui se mova con uno certo modo de molta reverentia, dice che gli occore un'altro dubbio circa el modo che da me è stato usato, el quale dice che da lui non mai [è] stato veduto che da

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altro musico sia stato fatto, perché dice che nel principio del tenore de l'ultimo Kyrie de la mia missa preditta ['Tue voluntatis'] ho posito questo signo con queste note ut hic:

et da poi domanda per quale causa da questo signo ϕ posito in principio de tale tenore sino a questo ϕ sequente, cioè tra l'uno et l'altro, io non ho conducte le note secondo el modo minore perfetto, come ho fatto nel sequente secondo segno persino al fine de esso tenore, perché dice che el se vede che intra le note cadente tra l'uno et l'altro signo, non se trova el ternario numero de le breve perfette, o vero el suo valore cadente nel modo minore perfetto. Frate Petro mio honorando, non poco me maraveglio de questo nostro amico Pre Zanetto, el quale dice che mai non ha trovato tale ordine preditto da altro musico essere stato tenuto. Potria essere la verità, perché da lui forsa non è stato circa ciò cercato. Ma voglio concedere che da lui non sia stato trovato da musico alcuno, essistiman-

dose lui essere quello che credo che el sia, cioè el primo de li musici intra li altri musici veneti, el doveria pure alquanto levare lo ingegno ad alto et lassarsi gubernare al theorico lume de la intelligentia et guardarsi de non incorere in queste cose inaudite et fora de ogni rasone, et considerare che nel principio del preditto mio tenore sono quattro signi, de li quali signi dui sono intesi per la apparentia, et dui sono compresi per la privatione.¹⁰ Quilli li quali sono apparenti sono el circulo et el puncto in esso circulo posito ut hic ϕ , li quali demostrano che el tempo et la prolatione sono perfetti, et la privatione demonstra che in tale tenore el modo mazore et etiam el minore sono imperfetti. Et da poi seguita questo altro signo Φ , el quale inseme con la pausa de la longha sequente, la quale pausa occupa tri spatii, demonstra che le figure dapo sé posite sono gubernate dal modo minore perfetto et dal tempo perfetto per la apparentia del circulo, et el signo de la privatione denota che tale note sono numerate sotto el modo mazore imperfetto et etiam da la prolatione imperfetta. Et etiam appare che el secondo segno destruze el primo, perché sempre el sequente anulla el precedente.

9. Per le preditte demonstratione dico che la pausa occupante tri spatii posita dapo el secondo segno non debbe opperare se non circa le note del signo propinquo a sé precedente et non circa el primo, et questo advenirà perché (per el signo de la privatione) el modo minore nel primo segno ut hic posito ϕ se demonstra essere imperfetto. Pertanto dico che secondo lui el seguitaria che in uno solo subietto seriano dui contrarii, scilicet perfetto et imperfetto, et questo se vede manifestamente essere usitato ogni giorno da tutti li musici, che se in processu cantus se darano diversi signi, sempre el sequente destruze el precedente, et questo nasce perché 71[°] quando in una sola particula de uno concento se dano diversi signi, da tante varietà de canti restarà completta et terminata tale particula, quante varietà de segni in tale particula se trovarano. Ma tale soa dubitatione haria bene loco et seria vera se tra tale pausa de longha et el primo segno non se trovasse altro segno diverso dal primo, perché alhora tale tenore seria gubernato per uno solo canto et signo, el quale signo (per la privatione) demonstraria el modo mazore essere imperfetto et el modo minore per el suo proprio accidente demonstrato per la pausa occupante tri spatii seria inteso essere perfetto, et per la apparentia del circulo punctato, seria demonstrato che el tempo et la prolatione seriano perfetti. Ma perché lui dice che non ha mai trovato musico alcuno che tenga tale ordine, dato che anchora (ut dixi) che da musico alcuno da lui non sia mai

 $^{^{10}}$ Spataro explains the concept of privation more fully in the course of the letter. He says that in C, the absence of a dot indicates minor prolation; the absence of any sign for major or minor *modus* indicates that the modes are imperfect (para. 12). On the concept of 'privation', see the Notes on Problematical Terms.

^b MS: ochio. 518

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stato trovato tale processo, lui doveria però pensare che così come in uno principio de uno concento (essempli gratia) serà dato questo segno C et che se da poi in processu cantus serà dato questo altro segno O, o vero altri simili signi che el se usa, che le note posite dapo questo segno O, posito dapo questo C posito nel primo loco, non sono più mensurate né gubernate secondo el primo signo ut hic C posito, ma sono gubernate dal secondo, scilicet dal circulo, et per tale modo sempre se intende che la positione del sequente destruze el precedente.

10. Ma perché el nostro Pre Zanetto potria dire che tale mio essemplo non ha vera similitudine con quello che da lui è stato arguito, perché lui ha arguito nel signo del modo minore perfetto, et io respondo con lo essemplo del signo del tempo perfetto, alla quale cosa respondo che quello che ho ditto di sopra accaderà in ciascuno de li altri segni, et questo se potrà claramente comprendere recorrendo a li primi et antichi origini da li quali li moderni signi sono stati derivati et tolti, come (essempli gratia) de questo signo moderno ϕ da me posito nel principio del preditto ultimo Kyrie de la mia missa preditta. Trovaremo che da la dotta antiquità tale segno era ut hic figurato $\langle 23$, el quale signo apresso a li preditti antichi denotava modo mazzore imperfetto, modo minore imperfetto, tempo perfetto, et prolatione perfetta, et el sequente signo da me ut hic posito

era da la preditta antiquità signato ut hic ¢33, el quale segno era

inteso da loro essere de modo mazzore imperfetto, de modo minore perfetto, de tempo perfetto, et de prolatione imperfetta. Quando adonca accadeva che da loro uno concento (nel suo principio) fusse signato con questo signo \$23, tale concento (non essendo in processo impedito da altro signo a sé differente) era usque in finem per tale signo cantato. Ma se

^{71^v} in processu cantus fusse stato trovato el secondo signo ut hic po sito ¢ 33, alhora el primo signo restava esscluso et el preditto secondo era essercitato, et per tale modo una sola particula cantus era cantata per dui signi diversi o vogliam dire per dui canti diversi, cioè prima per modo mazore et minore imperfetti et per tempo et prolatione perfetti, et da poi per modo mazore imperfetto et modo minore et tempo perfetti et prolatione imperfetta, et etiam per tale ordine erano numerati et mensurati differentemente. Et per tale modo accadeva de ciascuno altro signo dapo un'altro dato et posito, perché ciascuno per se era considerato. Pertanto ciascuno osservava la sua propria natura et proprietà, el quale ordine è stato osservato dal dottissimo Frate Zoanne Hotbi anglico et carmelitano in uno suo mutteto chiamato 'Ora pro nobis',¹¹ etc. dove nel principio del

soprano prima pone questo signo O de tempo perfetto et de modo maggiore et minore et de prolatione imperfetti. Et da poi in processu cantus signa questo altro signo \$22, el quale demonstra che el modo maggiore, el minore, e'l tempo, per li soi apparenti signi, sono imperfetti, et che la prolatione per la privatione del punto resta imperfetta, et tanto quanto dura el canto in tale signo, tale canto è mensurato et cantato. Et per tale modo el primo signo in tale canto ut hic O posito resta anullato et excluso. Et sequitando dapo le figure del secondo preditto signo ut hic posito \bigcirc 22 procedendo,^c pone questo altro \bigcirc 22, el quale denota modo maggiore perfetto, modo minore, tempo, et prolatione imperfetti, et fin che non pervene a l'altro signo sequente, sotto la numerosità de tale signo conduce le sequente soe figure et note. Et etiam tale ordine è stato tenuto da lui nel tenore del preditto mutetto, dal quale recto ordine et modo de procedere non se parte quello mio tenore preditto, el quale (nel suo initio) appare signato con questo signo ϕ , el quale essendo come questo c_{23} da li antichi usitato, et stando come signo per se, cioè che secondo el moderno uso altro (in apparentia) non demonstra che tempo et prolatione perfetta, et per la privatione demonstra nel modo minore né etiam nel mazore essere perfectione,^d pertanto se dapo in processo serà dato questo altro signo O de tempo perfetto et de prolatione imperfetta, al quale come a uno novo subietto (mediante la apparentia de la sequente pausa de longha occupante tri spatii) lo accidente proprio et conveniente al modo minore perfetto se acosta, el segno, etiam per non essere differente in virtù 72^{r} da questo (c) 3 da li antichi usitato, dico che el primo in fronte cantus ut

hic posito ϕ rationabilemente et antiquorum auctoritate debe stare per se, et la perfettione del modo minore apparente nel sequente signo non li essere conveniente, de la quale perfettione, ut dixi, per el signo de la privatione esso signo resta privato.

11. Ma perché a me pare comprendere che questo nostro Pre Zanetto, fingendo de non intendere questa verità, lui camina per certa via non reale ma da sophista, pertanto io li voglio demonstrare che in quelle note posite dapo questo signo preditto ut hic



se trova quello medesimo completto modo minore perfetto el quale se trova in questo segno sequente



^c MS: procedando. ^d MS: imperfectione.

Institute of Musicology, 1964), pp. 4-7. For a facsimile of the work, see Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart vi (1957), cols. 776-7.

¹¹ Faenza, Biblioteca Comunale, MS 117, fos. 26^v-27^t (pp. 44-5). Modern edn. in *The Musical Works of John Hothby*, ed. Albert Seay (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 33; [Rome], American

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Imperò che el modo minore perfetto considerato in questo segno ϕ coglie tre breve perfette o vero nove semibreve imperfette, el quale numero novenario indifferenter etiam se trovarà in le note dapo questo segno ϕ posite, et questo advenirà perché in tale loco sono doe breve o vero tempi perfetti, de li quali ciascuno harà el valore de tre semibreve perfette, li quali dui tempi insemi colti harano virtù et valore de sei semibreve perfette, le quale a la imperfettione reddutte farano uno novenario numero de semibreve,¹² le quale semibreve così in numero como in virtù et valore non serano differente da le preditte nove semibreve imperfette considerate nel modo minore perfetto dato in questo signo ϕ di sopra apparente. Et per tale modo, volendo lui che el modo perfetto apparente sia sempre fisso, stabile, et immobile, così in numero come in virtù, el sequitarà che in quanto al modo minore perfetto preditto in tale preditti signi non caderà discrepantia, ma sì bene maxima similitudine et conformità et proportione de equalità.

12. Ma perché queste sono cavilatione et termini usitati da huomini littigiosi et poco dottrinati et non da reali, pertanto l'è uno perdere tempo circa ciò affaticarsi, come etiam appare dove sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che ultra che nel preditto mio tenore ut hic signato ϕ manca el valore de una longha perfetta, cioè tre breve perfette, che etiam la quantità de la integra massima imperfetta, cioè del modo mazore imperfetto, li mancarà, la quale cosa lui dice essere necessaria trovarsi, perché el non se dà el modo minore senza el mazore, perché el mazore contene esso minore più volte. Circa questo respondo che in questo da me è stato sequitato el rito et uso moderno et etiam antico, imperò che li musici moderni et etiam antichi rare volte se esstendeno in mensurare li concenti se non tanto quanto demonstrano li signi modali apparenti in essi concenti, et non circa queli signi li quali da la privatione sono intesi, come se essempli gratia questo signo C demonstrante el tempo imperfetto serà

dato nel principio del concento. La apparentia del signo demonstra che el tempo è imperfetto et che la breve vale doe semibreve, et la privatione $_{72}^{v}$ del puncto non posito nel semicirculo denota che la prolatione serà imperfetta, et similmente el modo minore et el mazzore, per la privatione de li signi de perfectione a loro pertinenti, restarano imperfetti, per la quale cosa el musico o vero compositore attenderà a conducere el suo concento per equali et integri tempi o vero per breve, et per la integrità de essa breve coglierà doe semibreve et quattro minime, etc. Et non attenderà che le breve predicte habiano el completto numero binario per complemento de la longha, né etiam che le longhe cadano a doe parimente posite nel concento per complemento de la massima, perché non solamente tale ordine circa la harmonia seria frustratorio et vano, ma toria lo arbitrio al compositore, perché contra el suo volere et intentione (volendo osservare tali numeri) aliquando converia conducere el suo concento più breve o più longo che non voria, per la quale cosa li musici moderni hano produtto a l'uso nel signo preditto ut hic C posito, dove la mensura caderà sopra la semibreve, che se in cantando la mensura resta completta, non cercano più oltra, et similemente cantando o vero battendo la breve nel preditto segno diminutto, ut hic posito ¢, per la quale cosa li nostri contemporanei hano lassato da parte li segni da li antichi usitadi per essere più liberi et non subietti a tante varietà de mensure, le quale circa la bona harmonia nulla importano. Ma quando questo signo preditto C, more antiquo, fusse signato ut hic C22, alhora perché ciascuno signo de modo et de tempo sono apparenti et al habito redutti, aciò che el signato havesse convenientia con el signo apparente, seria licito che in tale concento signato le breve et le longhe osservasseno el binario complemento et ordine. Pertanto in quello mio tenore preditto nel suo initio con questo signo ϕ signato (per complacere a l'uso) ho solo atteso a conducere mensuratamente in luce quelle spetie le quale sono apparente per el suo constituto signo, come la breve et etiam la semibreve, le quale spetie per el circulo et per el puntto in esso circulo posito sono apparente et perfette demonstrate. Ma de la longha et de la massima, le quale solamente per la privatione et non per la apparentia del suo signo et accidente proprio non sono demonstrate et comprese, rationibus predictis sono state da me lassate intacte et senza respetto alcuno del suo binario numero. Ma se ciascuna de le specie de tale signo fusse stata da me signata more antiquo ut hic ¢23, alhora per sequitare lo antico ordine et aciò che el signato non fusse discrepante dal signo apparente et e contra, seria stato licito che in tale mio tenore ut hic signato ϕ claramente fusse apparente el numero de le minime a tre numerate, et similemente el numero de le semibreve perfette fusse a tre mensurato, et le breve per reintegrare el valore de la longha fusseno condutte per binario numero, et le longhe similemente fusseno a doe

inseme colte per reintegrare el valore de la massima, et alhora tale ordine seria stato condecente et necessario, perché mediante lo apparente signo, el valore de ciascuna specie seria stato claramente noto et compr[e]heso, et

 $_{73}$ ^r non per la privatione del signo proprio. Ma non dico però che anchora che non apparesse signo alcuno che el canto non fusse meglio inteso et modulato quando li soi numeri et quantità fusseno osservate. Ma questo a tempi nostri (rationibus predictis) sta in lo arbitrio de li compositori, perché se lui tene tale ordine bene est; se ancora non sequitarà tal ordinatione (perché sequita l'uso), non debe essere incolpato, perché 'usus est altera lex',¹³ el quale uso è stato sequitato da Dufay, da Okgem, da Busnois, da Eloy, et da altri compositori più moderni in molti soi musici concenti, come da Verbonet, da Josquino, da Jacobo Obreth, et da altri, de li quali el numero è quasi senza termine.

13. Da poi sequitando questo nostro amico dice che lui crede che io pensi che quando uno concento se transferisse et fa variatione de tempo perfetto in tempo imperfetto, et e contra, non essendo signato el modo tra l'uno et l'altro signo, cioè con una pausa de tri tempi, o vero più pause, che solamente da quello segno dapo el quale sequitano le pause o vero altri accidenti se intende el modo essere perfetto, et e contra. Et anchora sequitando dice che el modo è immutabile et stabile, et che mai non varia, et massime quando l'è signato in processu cantus. Tunc enim intelligitur a principio usque in finem cantus esse modum perfectum, dato che li fusseno diversi signi, cioè signi de tempo perfetto et imperfetto con prolatione perfetta et imperfetta. Et dice che nel medesimo errore sono incurso nel tenore del Benedictus de la mia preditta missa et etiam in l'ultimo Agnus Dei.¹⁴ Da me, Frate Petro mio honorando, sempre è stato tenuto che ciascuno de li signi inventi (circa la cognitione del tempo et de la soa aggregatione chiammata modo, et circa la divisione de esso tempo chiammata prolatione) pos[s]a stare per se, et che se uno de tali signi serà posito dapo un'altro, che la natura et proprietà del segno precedente se debbia lassare, et pigliare quella del sequente, come exempli gratia, se questo signo C serà posito in principio cantus et che in processo (ut dixi) sequiti questo O, alhora sequitarà che el concento, el quale prima era mensurato o vero numerato sotto el tempo imperfetto et prolatione imperfetta, et etiam de ciascuno modo imperfetto, serà transferito in tempo perfetto et prolatione imperfetta et etiam de ciascuno modo imperfetto, et così per lo contrario, et per tale modo accaderà de li altri simili signi, perché ciascuno pò stare per se, et è libero et non famulare, et per tale modo etiam accaderà se nel principio del concento serà dato questo signo C2, el quale appresso a li antichi demonstrava el modo

minore essere imperfetto et simelemente el tempo serà imperfetto, et che da poi in processo se trovi questo O2, dico che alhora nel concento se farà variatione de modo minore imperfetto et tempo etiam imperfetto in modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto, come è stato assignato da la dotta antiquità, et non advenirà come dice el preditto Pre Zanetto, cioè che dato questo signo C 2 o vero questo ¢ in principio cantus, et dapo sequitando in processo questo



 $_{73}^{v}$ che el debbia essere così | in li primi dui signi el modo minore perfetto come nel sequente in processo locato et posito, perché intra loro sequitaria repugnantia et contrarietà nel suo modale ordine apparente et da essi signi demonstrato, et per tale modo la varietà de li signi inventi seria frustratoria, perché el seguitaria che uno signo haria natura de un'altro a sé contraria.

14. Questa clara et mera verità è stata adducta in luce dal mio precettore nel contrabasso del suo mutetto chiamato 'Tu lumen', etc. nel principio del quale contrabasso lui assigna et pone questo signo O2, el quale (ut dixi) denota che el modo minore è perfetto et el tempo serà imperfetto, et da poi in processu cantus pone questo C 3, el quale (per la auttorità antica) demonstra che el modo minore è imperfetto et che el tempo serà perfetto, et pure in tali varii signi se osserva la sua temporale et modale natura. Imperò che in questo signo O2, in mensurando el concento se cogliono tre breve imperfette per una longa perfetta, et in questo C 3 se mandano doe breve perfette per una longha imperfetta, per li quali dui vari[i] modi de mensurare el tempo et el modo minore nascerà in esstremità uno indifferente senario numero de semibreve per diversi medii mensurato, dal quale numero et indifferente senario el preditto mio precettore considera che intra tali differenti signi pos[s]a nascere proportione de equalità, come in tale suo mutetto preditto appare.

15. Ma certamente io resto molto admirato de questo nostro amico Pre Zanetto, el quale tenga tale erronea oppinione, la quale da altro non nasce se non che li musici del nostro tempo non usano li signi proprii de ciascuno modo, cioè perfetto et imperfetto et mazore et minore, perché nulla differentia fano intra el signo et el signato, et vogliono (tantummodo) cognoscere l'uno et l'altro modo per l'ordine posito et apparente de le pause de longha, le quale non sono propri[i] signi, ma sono accidenti et ordini considerati et compr[e]hesi da li primi signi, per la qual cosa se in processu cantus volesseno transferirse de modo perfetto in modo imperfetto, et e contra, seria bisogno che, contra el loro volere, in processu cantus ponesseno note le quale representasseno taciturnità, cioè pause de longhe, et essendo compreso da loro che tale ordine senza confusione non

¹³ See no. 17 n. 15.

¹⁴ Del Lago says that the Agnus Dei is from Spataro's 'Missa Da pacem' (see no. 44, para. 12).

potria consequire, pertanto quando trovano che in medio cantus li accidenti del modo perfetto per le pause de le longhe apparenti, come cechi credeno che tutto el concento sia per tale ordine modale gubernato, perché (ut dixi) non hano signo el quale per se et extra signatum positum (per la sua apparentia) denoti tale perfettione. Ma quello el quale cognosce queste prevaricatione et cognosce che li accidenti non possono né hano facultà de potere removere la natura de alcuno signo o vero subietto, non seguita tale loro fantasie, ma seguitando la mera verità, crede che dove se darà varietà de signi, che in tale loco anchora se trovarà mensure nel signato musico figurativo, per la quale cosa è stato demonstrato da Tintoris che le positione de li signi esercitati occorreno in sedici modi inter se differenti,¹⁵ et che ciascuno, regolaremente dapo l'altro posito, potrà privare el precedente, li quali signi preditti, ancora che differentemente siano pictti et figurati da li signi da li antichi addutti, tamen in significatione minime inter se differunt, et li preditti signi antichi sono veri signi, perché la soa apparentia sta extra signatum, et li signi cadenti nel signato, come le pause de le longhe occupante dui o tri spatii posite pa rimente a doe o vero a tre (et altri ordine osservati in le note cantabile), sono accidenti de tali veri signi.¹⁶ Et questo appare claro, perché non se

possono variatamente dare in processu cantus senza sustantivo o vero subietto, cioè signo circulare o semicirculare.

74^r

16. Et più me maraveglio de questo amico nostro che dica che el modo ne li concenti è sempre stabile, fisso, et immobile, cioè che mai non varia, perché se, exempli gratia, nel principio de uno concento serà posito questo signo C 2, el quale (come ditto habiamo) demonstra ciascuno modo essere imperfetto, et che da poi, in processu cantus, sia posito questo O2, el quale tantum demonstra el modo minore essere perfetto, se dimanda al nostro Pre Zanetto, in quali de li preditti dui signi demonstranti el modo minore essere differente, se osservarà tale modale stabilità, firmezza, et immutabilità, la quale lui dice doversi osservare usque in finem cantus? Se serà quella la quale è demonstrata per questo segno C₂ posito in principio cantus, alhora sequitarà che la propria natura assignata al secondo signo ut hic posito O2 serà frustratoria et vana, perché serà come quella causa la quale non potrà producere el suo effetto, et così per contrario, cioè che se el concento serà tutto gubernato per el secondo signo, ut hic posito, O 2, el primo, ut hic signato C2, serà vano et indarno posito per le rasone preditte. Credo che questa soa oppinione venga dal suo proprio senso,

¹⁵ See Tinctoris, *Tractatus de regulari valore notarum (Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 125–38).

¹⁶ It is surprising to find Spataro referring to Tinctoris, because Tinctoris uses *longa* rests to designate the modes in all sixteen mensurations; therefore a change in mode would necessitate adding rests, a practice Spataro has criticized in the same paragraph. However, Tinctoris used the rests only in conjunction with signs, so their meaning is clear.

perché lui a comprobatione de quello che lui dice non adduce rasone né auttorità, né etiam essemplo alcuno. Pertanto dico se da me nel principio de quello tenore del Benedictus de la mia preditta missa ['Tue voluntatis'] ho posito la perfettione del modo mazzore et etiam del minore signate per le pause de le longhe occupante tri spatii parimente a tre inseme giuntte et posite, et che dapo in processu cantus tale perfettione modale serano state private, destrutte, et tolte del concento per la apparentia de questo ϕ et altri sequenti signi, dico che questo non serà contra l'arte né etiam contra la rasone, perché così come l'è usitato che per la apparentia et positione de questo signo O de tempo perfetto demonstrata dapo questo C la imperfettione del tempo demonstrata per tale signo resta destrutta, così etiam sequitarà che le preditte modale perfettione in tale tenore nel principio date per la sequente positione de questo signo ϕ et altri sequenti (non sequitando dapo esso signo accidenti proprii demonstranti tali modi essere perfetti) restarano annullate^e et del concento abstratte et tolte, perché se come lui affirma in ciascuno signo se trova modo mazore, modo minore, tempo, et prolatione, sequitarà che in ciascuno de li signi positi dapo le prime 4 pause de longha perfetta in principio de tale tenore posite serà ancora modo mazore, modo minore, tempo, et prolatione. Ma el modo minore in tali signi et el mazore serano imperfetti, le quale imperfettione per signo proprio non sono apparente, ma sì per la privatione de tali proprii signi, per le quale privatione asai claro se cognosce che tale spetie sono in tali signi senza perfettione, perché procedeno secondo la natura et non per accidens. Ma che la privatione in questa facultà sia signo de imperfettione nui l'habbiamo da Tintoris, dove mentre che tratta de valore notularum, dicendo ut hic: Signum prolationis minoris est non habentia puncti in medio circuli perfecti vel imperfecti, ut hic $\circ C$.¹⁷ Pertanto dico che tale mio tenore preditto farà varietà de modo mazore et minore perfetti in modo mazore et minore imperfetti, et etiam la natura et proprietà de questo signo C^2 , in fronte cantus prima dato, serà annullato da questo ϕ sequente, redducendo | el concento del tempo imperfetto in tempo perfetto, et tale ordine serà tenuto usque in finem cantus.

17. Ma dove lui dice che el non se dà modo minore senza mazore, dico che lui non dice bene, perché el doveria dire che el non se doveria dare modo minore senza mazore per osservare regola et ordine de la discretta^f et continua quantità, le quale dal musico sono considerate finitamente cadere in le cinque note essentiale in canto mensurato essercitate.¹⁸ Ma perché, ut dixi, a tempi nostri se vede che se li concenti sono signati con el

^e MS: annullati.

 74^{v}

[∫] MS: distretta.

 ¹⁷ Tinctoris, Tractatus de regulari valore notarum, in Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 131.
 ¹⁸ See no. 44 n. 20.

signo del modo mazore et minore et tempo et etiam de prolatione denotante perfettione, alhora se attende alla ternaria connumeratione de quelle note le quale sono propinque in ordine alle note per el signo demonstrate perfette, et etiam se in uno concento serano alcune note demonstrate perfette dal suo signo, et che de alcuna altra non appara signo de perfettione, alhora non essendo sforzati per qualche licita causa, solo se attende alla ternaria connumeratione de le note minore propinque de la nota perfetta per reintegrare la sua perfettione. Dico anchora che lui erra dicendo che el non se dà modo minore senza mazore, imperò che l'uno et l'altro in quanto al suo origine (el quale è el tempo) serà subietto alla quantità discretta. Pertanto ciascuno de essi modi serà numero, et la sua unità serà el tempo musico, per la quale cosa dico che così come la unità in la arythmetica pò stare per se, cioè senza el numero,¹⁹ et el numero binario pò stare senza el ternario, etc., dico etiam che el tempo musico (del quale nasce el modo) potrà stare per se, scilicet senza el modo, et così come el numero binario pò stare senza el ternario, et el ternario senza el quatternario, similemente dico che el modo minore imperfetto et perfetto, li quali sono aggregati de dui et de tri tempi, potrano stare ciascuno per se senza el modo mazore imperfetto et etiam perfetto, in li quali se potrano trovare el numero de 4 o sei et nove tempi, perché essendo el modo ut dixi subietto alla discretta^g quantità, sequitarà che el numero minore serà priore et el mazore serà posteriore. Ma in continuis, come seria considerando la prolatione (la quale divide el tempo in parte), nascerà el contrario, perché alhora la mazore parte del tempo considerata seria priore et la minore serà posteriore. Che le quantità minore possano stare senza le mazore, l'è stato apertamente declarato da Joannes Tintoris mentre che lui ha trattato de valore notularum, dicendo ut hic: Quattuor autem quantitates ab artis musice preceptoribus^h institutas accepimus, videlicet modum maiorem et modum minorem, tempus, et prolationem, ex quibus quidem quattuor quantitatibus omnis cantus componitur, non quod necessarium sit in quolibet cantu omnes concurrere, namque si prolatio sola sit, cantus est ut hic $\odot \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow$. Idem si tempus sine aliquo modo, ut hic

 O_{1} \circ \circ \circ Sed ubi modus maior ibi minor. Ubi modus minor ibi tempus. Ubi

tempus est ibi prolatio, quoniam maioriⁱ semper quantitati minoremⁱ inesse necesse

^b MS: preceptores.

^g MS: distretta.

¹ MS: maiores. ¹ MS: minori.

¹⁹ In Spataro's time (and up to Descartes's) 'one', or 'unity', was not considered 'a number but the principle from which all (further) numbers were generated'; see Christoph J. Scriba, 'Number', *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. Philip P. Wiener (5 vols.; New York, 1973), iii. 403. This concept goes back to the ancient Pythagoreans. Tinctoris, in his *Proportionale*, writes: 'Number is a multitude composed of unities, as 2, 3, 4... Nor is "one" properly speaking a number, but the material of number and an element of arithmetic' ('numerus est multitudo ex unitatibus constituta, ut 2, 3, 4... Neque unum proprie numerus est, sed materia numeri et elementum arithmeticae'; *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, iia. 58). See also the Commentary on no. 7. *est.*²⁰ Adonca, per le rasone preditte appare che el minore modo potrà stare senza el mazore, ma non e contra, et questo se intende in ciascuno modo, perché (ut dixi) sono de numero o vero de multitudine de tempi aggregati. Ma la prolatione, la quale è parte del tempo, non potrà essere considerata senza el tempo, perché la parte nasce [et] è denominata dal suo tutto.

^{75^r} 18. Dapo oltra | sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che oltra le soe preditte dubitatione, che etiam lui ha trovato nel preditto tenore de lo Agnus Dei preditto [from the 'Missa Da pacem'] una certa reduttione de una semibreve punttata con la minima acompagnata, la quale semibreve punttata con la preditta minima dice essere stata da me ridutta a quella pausa de semibreve la quale è tra la breve et la pausa de la breve, et la ditta breve resta perfetta, et per maggiore evidentia dice mandarmi el preditto mio tenore el quale sta ut hic:



et da poi sequitando dice che secondo^é la sua imbecilità et basso ingegno che a lui pareria che tale tenore stesse ancora bene in questi tri modi diversi dal mio:



Di sopra pare che el nostro Pre Zanetto voglia affirmare che in tale mio tenore per tale modo notato non sia cosa alguna mendosa, perché lui non dice che tale mio tenore non stia bene.²¹ Ma dice che ancora potria stare bene stando per ciascuno de quelli tri modi da lui addutti et di sopra assignati. Ma da poi sequitando et fingendo de volere assignare la rasone de ciascuna de tale tre varie sue positione, pure me incolpa de errore, dicendo ut hic la rasone de le tre preditte varie sue positione essere questa, cioè che quella breve la quale precede la pausa de la semibreve rationabilemente se fa imperfetta de quella tale pausa immediate come soa minore et parte terza, et perché quella pausa de semibreve non resti sola, serà numerata con la breve inanti a sé posita. Pertanto dice che la semibreve punttata con la sequente minima restarano sole et senza ternaria compagna. Primamente circa quello tenore, el quale da lui è stato addutto primamente ut hic:

^{*} MS: seconda.

²⁰ Tinctoris, Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 125-6.

²¹ In no. 44, para. 14, Del Lago says that it seems to him the passage would be notated *better* in the other three ways. Here is another example showing that he made some changes in response to Spataro's answer.
45. Spataro to Aaron, [autumn 1532]

The Letters



dico che tale tenore non sta notato come sta quello el quale tengo appresso di me, el quale sta ut hic:



Et etiam dico che dato che ancora tale tenore fusse da me stato posito et notato come da Pre Zanetto è stato notato, che staria bene, et dico che quella breve posita inanti alla pausa de la semibreve non seria intesa essere fatta imperfetta de la preditta pausa de semibreve, né etiam da alcuna altra nota a sé minore propinqua in tale tenore apparente, perché le note le quale possono imperficere alhora sono imperfette de la soa parte terza quando ultra el ternario numero de la soa propinqua minore superavanza una [nota], o vero el suo valore. Se adonca serano numerate le semibreve a tre nel preditto tenore, el quale tene Pre Zanetto, tale processo se farà ut hic, cioè che la prima et etiam la seconda breve serano perfette et le sequente doe semibreve legate con la sequente semibreve farano un'altro completto ternario numero de semibreve, o vero una breve perfetta, et da

^{75°} poi, cogliendo la sequente semibreve punttata con la sequente | minima, et etiam quella pausa de semibreve posita dapo la sequente breve, se farà un'altro completto ternario de semibreve claro et esspeditto, et per consequente quella breve posita inanti a quella pausa de semibreve restarà perfetta et non imperfetta, come dice el nostro Pre Zanetto, la quale cosa acaderà perché niente superavanza ultra la integrità apparente del completto ternario numero de le semibreve inseme colte, el quale ternario è tanto claro che dubitatione alcuna non li potrà occurrere. Per le quale demonstratione appare che quelli tri differenti modi circa esso tenore da lui addutti serano fatti indarno et frustratorie¹ positi.

19. Imperò che el primo modo da lui assignato confonderà quello che appare claro nel primo, perché senza necessità et indarno lui conduce quella semibreve punttata et la sequente minima per una longha et prolissa sincopa inusitata et da alguno dotto né indotto non mai considerata, cioè che ultra una breve perfetta et la pausa de essa breve perfetta lui conduce le preditte figure per trovare la sua terza semibreve, la quale è posita da lui dapo la preditta breve perfetta et la soa pausa sequente. Dico ancora che quello puntto posito dapo la terza breve nel secondo essemplo da lui addutto serà superfluo, perché se (rationibus predictis) tale breve serà

¹ MS: frustratorii.

perfetta senza quello puntto, restarà che tale puntto serà in vano locato et posito. Ma bene voluntera intenderia dal nostro Messer Pre Zanetto, con quale rasone da lui è stato posito quello puntto tra quella pausa de semibreve et la pausa de la breve nel terzo essemplo da lui demonstrato? Lui potria essere esscusato circa quello puntto posito dapo la terza breve, dicendo che tale puntto è stato posito da lui per puntto de perfettione per più chiarezza per li rudi, ma circa l'altro puntto preditto posito intra la pausa de la semibreve et la pausa de la breve sequente, non saperei esscusarlo per modo alcuno, perché se quelle doe note sole, scilicet la semibreve punttata et la sequente minima (come lui dice che piace a Zoanne de Muris), debbeno essere ridutte et computate inseme et non divise per trovare la soa terza parte, sequitarà che sequitando immediate la breve per el puntto de perfettione demonstrata perfetta, che senza el puntto posito intra la preditta pausa de semibreve et la sequente pausa de breve, tale semibreve punttata con la minima sequente non potriano essere ridutte né computate con altra nota che solo con la pausa de la semibreve preditta. A me certamente pare che lui non habbia osservata quella regola de Zoanne de Muris da lui allegato, la quale dice quod quando inveniuntur due note simul sole, ille non debent partiri, sed simul copulari.22 Se le preditte doe note debeno essere copulate o vero computate, sequitarà che tenderano ad locum per accompagnarsi con un'altra o con altre semibreve sequente per farse del numero completto ternario, la quale cosa è denegata da quello

puntto preditto posito intra la pausa de la semibreve et la breve preditta, per el quale puntto se demonstra che le doe note preditte sono fisse et immobile, cioè che non tendeno ad locum, ma che la pausa de la semibreve preditta serà quella la quale farà transito de loco ad locum per associarse con le doe preditte note, come demonstra quello puntto dapo sé posito, el quale non potrà producere altro effetto che retrog[r]adatione, perché non potrà significare permanentia né esspettatione, perché remotto tale puntto, tale pausa non potrà essere intesa andare né a desstra né a sinistra, per la quale cosa concludo essere vano chiudere et ligare quello el quale non se potrà movere et mutare loco.²³ Ma per demonstrare al preditto Pre Zanetto amico nostro che lui non è asceso a quella completta et mera integrità che lui se esstima havere, per più clara demonstratione, demonstrata per le tre varietà da lui di sopra assignate nel preditto mio tenore, pertanto oltra le soe tre preditte demonstratione li adduco questa consideratione, la quale al rudo cantore serà assai più facile da comprendere, più rationale, et più frequentata intra musici ut hic:

²³ On the notion of dots tying down a note, see no. 66, para. 15.

²² Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, CS iii. 49. De Muris and Del Lago give 'computari'.



Et per tale retta apparentia et per le rasone di sopra assignate, lui potrà comprendere che la semibreve punttata con la minima sequente non restarano sole et senza ternaria integrità, et ancora non serano divise in parte, ma unitamente serano computate et reddutte, come piace a quello suo auttore chiamato Joannes de Muris, al quale da lui è stato dato uno senso a suo modo.

20. Et oltra procedendo questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice ut hic, che cerca quella longha posita nel principio del contrabasso del mutetto 'Tu lumen', etc. del mio precettore ut hic:

9:02 9 P & C m

lui dice che quella longha debb'essere perfetta per virtù de le doe sequente breve con essa longha ligate, perché dice che quelle doe breve con la longha inseme ligate quasi habent vim unius longhe imperfecte, et dice che 'virtus unita fortior est ipsa dispersa', per la quale cosa dice che a lui non pare che stia bene, ma che staria meglio se le breve, le quale sono con tale longha ligate, fusseno disciolte et separate, perché stando in tale modo ligate, essa longha restarà perfetta, perché non ha alcuna breve a parte anteriori da la quale se possa fare imperfetta, etc. Circa quello che lui dice, cioè che la preditta longha debbe essere perfetta per virtù de le doe breve le quale sono inseme con essa longha ligate, etc., io respondo et dico che la regola generale la quale ce amaestra circa la cognitione de le note perfette non dice che la nota dal signo demonstrata perfetta debbia sempre essere perfetta inanti al tutto né etiam alla mazore parte del suo valore, ma dice che serà sempre perfetta, sequitando immediate la soa simele in forma, et non in valore o vero in parte divisa, et essa regola dice che la nota preditta, scilicet dal signo demonstrata perfetta, restarà etiam perfetta quando inanti a sé et dapo sé se trovarà el completto numero ternario de le soe minore propinque. Per la quale cosa dico che la longha preditta potrà imperficere, perché dato che quelle doe sequente breve con essa longha ligate habeant vim imperfette longe, tamen a forma longe deficiunt, et perché 'forma est que dat esse rei et | non materia dispersa',²⁴ dico che per

76^v perché 'forma est que dat esse rei et | non materia dispersa',²⁴ dico che per tale rasone tale longha potrà imperficere. Et questo è stato demonstrato da quello suo auttore preditto, cioè Joannes de Muris, in la soa Musica mentre che dà la prima regola, dicendo ut hic: Prima regula est quod longa ante longam

in modo perfetto est perfecta,²⁵ et non dice 'ante breves ligatas'. Simelemente el preditto suo auttore, dove sequitando assigna la seconda regola, dice ut hic: Seconda regula est [quod] quandocumque aliqua nota debet imperfici oportet quod eam^m immediate seguatur nota maior vel minor in forma vel in pausa maioris vel minoris forme, quia similis ante similem non potest imperfici,²⁶ per la quale seconda regola appare claro che la longha preditta potrà (rationabelmente) imperficere, perché dapo lei immediate sequita la minore, et insuper el numero ternario da essa minore incompletto, et non la simele in forma. Pertanto dico che tale longha, senza essere impedita da le doe sequente breve con essa longha ligate, potrà imperficere, et etiam dico che restarà imperfetta, perché numerando le breve a tre dal principio de tale contrabasso ut hic signato O_2 sino al sequente signo ut hic posito $C_{3,2}^{27}$ el numero ternario de le breve superabunderà de una breve, la quale breve (non essendo computata con la longha preditta in principio locata) restaria sola et senza el ternario numero computata, la quale cosa è assai clara per el contrapuntto occurrente intra tale contrabasso et le altre particole del concento preditto. Concludo adonca che dato che tale doe breve ligate con la longha habeant vim unius imperfecte longe, perché defficiunt a forma longe (rationibus predictis) sequitarà che tale prima longha potrà imperficere, et etiam dico che in tale doe breve ligate non caderà la virtù unita, perché la virtù de la perfettione, in questa consideratione, cade in la ternaria apparente connumeratione completta a principio usque in finem cantus, et non nel binario, et perché la longha potrà imperficere inanti al preditto ternario immediate posita, sequitarà che tanto più potrà imperficere inanti al binario unito, come di sopra è stato ditto. Ma la fantasia de questo nostro Pre Zanetto è che tale longha non debbia essere fatta imperfetta a parte posteriori sed anteriori, ma perché la regola de la imperfettione non fa circa ciò alcuna distintione, pertanto el modo de imperficere tale longha et altre simile note è stato lassato in lo arbitrio del musico et compositore, cioè che le figure et note imperficiente possano imperficere et essere riddutte (inmediate et mediate) alle note fatte imperfette, così a parte ante come a parte post, come se trova in molte compositione et concenti compositi da dottissimi antichi, et come dal mio ottimo precettore nel mutetto preallegato ['Tu lumen'] et in molte altre soe compositione è stato osservato. Ma el nostro Pre Zanetto non attende a queste consideratione da li dotti considerate, perché (secondo che pos[s]o comprendere) a lui piaceno più le cose plane et alli rudi pertinente.

²⁴ Hamesse (*Les Auctoritates Aristotelis*, p. 133) refers to St Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, vii, lect. 17 n. 1668. A closer reference is viii, lect. 4 n. 1743, but neither has the exact words used by Spataro.

[&]quot; MS: etiam.

²⁵ Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, CS iii. 47.

²⁶ Ibid. 48.

 $^{^{27}\,}$ The example given by Del Lago (see facsimile, p. 476) does not go as far as the sign C 3.

77^r Pertanto dove cade qualche dubitatione | da li rudi non intesa, cerca, forsa per parere dotto, opponersi et dire in contrario.

21. Per le rasone preditte, Frate Petro mio honorando, el nostro Pre Zanetto potrà comprendere che questo signo Φ_2 et altri simili, quando diversi accidenti se li appoggiano, non essendo diverso de forma, darà diversa intelligentia et cognitione, et etiam lui potrà comprendere che questo signo \bigcirc da lui in dui modi ut hic \oint , $\oint 2$ signato, per non essere usitato né invento, serà frustratorio et solo inteso da lui et non da altri, et etiam potrà cognoscere che etiam questo signo ϕ_2 serà differente da questo O_2 , et che questo signo Φ_2 per essere inciso harà diversa intelligentia et natura da questo non inciso O2, et etiam potrà comprendere che intra questo signo O2 et questo ϕ caderà massima differentia. Potrà etiam intendere el nostro Pre Zanetto che circa la harmonia nulla importa se de quelle specie de le quale non se dà signo apparente non se trovarà in li concenti el numero completto de le soe minore propinque, et etiam cognoscerà che sempre el signo sequente destrugge el precedente, et li concenti per alcuno signo accidentale non possono variare se tali accidenti non serano appoggiati a qualche susstantivo, o vero subietto, cioè al signo circulato o vero al semicirculare, et potrà comprendere che el modo minore potrà stare senza el mazore et non e contra, et etiam potrà comprendere che el modo in li concenti serà così mutabile come sono li altri signi et mensure, et potrà sapere che solamente el modo perfetto serà considerato procedere a principio usque in finem cantus quando in processo de esso canto non se dà signo differente dal primo in fronte cantus posito, et intenderà come lui è stato in tutto frustratorio circa quelli tri varii essempli assignati in quello mio tenore de l'ultimo Agnus Dei de la mia preditta missa ['Da pacem'], et che circa el terzo de li essempli preditti, lui non ha osservato quella regola da Joannes de Muris data et da lui allegata, et vederà come la nota potrà essere perfetta, havendo el numero ternario de le soe minore propinque tutto integro, così a parte ante, come a parte post, o vero parte a parte ante et parte a parte post. Finalmente ancora potrà cognoscere che lui con termini da rudi et indotti dice contra quella longha posita nel principio del mutetto 'Tu lumen', etc. del mio precettore. Finis.

[Giovanni Spataro]

1. I received your letter of 23 August with great pleasure, not only because I am happy to hear from you, but also because you enclosed the motet of my teacher² and a letter from our common friend Pre Zanetto [no. 44] that is full of subtle musical arguments. As I promised you, I am

answering it, lest he remain in his doubts and errors, but addressing it to you, who graciously call yourself disciple and son, so you can share in your inheritance.

2. Pre Zanetto, in his letter of 23 August [no. 44], thanks me for the answer to his queries about the tenor of my 'Missa Tue voluntatis' [no. 41], but still admits to confusion regarding the sign φ_2 in the tenor of the first Kyrie³ as indicating imperfect minor mode with perfect *tempus* twice diminished. He claims I erred because he says all old and modern musicians use that sign to signify perfect minor mode and imperfect *tempus* and that I should have written φ or φ_2 (with the figure clearly separated from the sign) to indicate unmistakably perfect *tempus* twice diminished.

3. He errs in stating that *all* old and modern musicians use ϕ_2 to indicate perfect minor mode with imperfect *tempus*⁴ because Verbonnet,

in the tenor of the Credo of his 'Missa Gratieuse gent', $5 \text{ uses } \bigcirc_{C2}^{2}$ not in

old sense of perfect minor mode with imperfect *tempus* and perfect prolation and imperfect minor mode with imperfect *tempus* and perfect prolation, respectively, but as $\Theta \in$ under duple proportion. Similarly, in the 'Et resurrexit' he writes φ_2 as a sign of O twice diminished. I could adduce other examples, but this is enough to prove him wrong. Moreover, the old practice is criticized by learned modern writers, such as Tinctoris, Gafurio, and Wollick, and many of the best modern composers do not follow it.

4. I hardly think his second query deserves an answer, because the signs ϕ and ϕ_2 are totally his own invention.⁶ But if he wants to revive ancient practice, he misunderstood it, for my teacher said that older musicians used to write ϕ or ϕ (with the stroke at the side) to indicate a faster tempo than O.⁷ Therefore, ϕ should indicate an even faster tempo, and not ϕ again diminished. But for the untutored, one could write ϕ^2 , as my teacher said was done by his teacher. I did this in the Benedictus of my mass, writing φ^2 instead of φ_2 lest the half-learned should think it was C₂ diminished and therefore, according to older practice, imperfect minor mode with imperfect tempus and prolation, after which the threebreve rests would have no place, the rests being contrary to the sign. Even if I had written \$\Omega_2\$, learned musicians, because of the rests and the number of the notes, would understand it to mean C twice diminished. Nevertheless, I wrote (c_2^2) , not (c_2^2) . To make things perfectly clear for beginners, it would have been better to write O_1^2 , but that would not indicate diminution but duple proportion. Such duple proportion would not be apparent but understood, since between O and $\frac{2}{1}$ there are no notes to compare with those after the sign. But since I wasn't writing for

45. Spataro to Aaron, [autumn 1532]

The Letters

beginners but for the educated, I used terms they would easily understand: attributes in the notes characteristic of perfect *tempus*, marked O, and the stroke and 2 to indicate quadruple proportion.

5. When he says ϕ_2 is no different from O_2 with regard to mode and *tempus*, I respond that since the effects produced by these signs depend primarily on the same sign, i.e. O, it is not surprising that if that same circle is used with diminution, its form is not dissimilar, by which one may understand that different values are assigned to the notes. For diminution means to replace a note by its next smaller value, and modern musicians show it in two ways: $\phi \ c$ and $\phi_2 \ c_2$. There is quite a difference between ϕ_2 and O_2 , for the first indicates O twice diminished (having both the stroke and the figure 2), whereas in O_2 there is no diminution; it is an integral sign and means that different effects follow in the notes; they are made evident by their particular attributes, as in my tenor.

6. Pre Zanetto says further that the stroke in Φ_2 does not respect its nature, for if the sign indicates perfect tempus and imperfect prolation twice diminished, there would be no difference between O2 and ϕ as regards perfection of tempus. I respond that Pre Zanetto is not well informed about signs, for he doesn't know that the first way to indicate diminution of O is by a stroke, not a figure. A second diminution is indicated by the addition of the figure 2, especially when the attributes of perfect tempus appear in the notes. Rarely, and perhaps never, has he found an older or more recent author who uses ϕ_2 for perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus diminished. Therefore I say that 'No art approves by rules that which occurs only exceptionally." Since Verbonnet and also I used that sign with the clear appearance of its proper attributes, there is no doubt that it stands for perfect *tempus* twice diminished. And if I used ϕ_2 in my motet 'Ubi opus est facto' and my treatise on mensural music as a sign of perfect minor mode with diminished imperfect tempus,9 it was not because that meaning is common among musicians but because it is legitimate to use that sign, provided that the proper attributes follow it. Suppose a tavern and a haberdashery hang out one and the same sign; even though the tavern doesn't sell goods and the haberdashery doesn't sell wine, the different meaning of the sign will emanate from the wares exhibited. The grammarian has many words and names, written and pronounced alike, but different in structure. If all knowledge were reduced to the plain terms accessible to the untutored mind, you couldn't tell the educated from the uneducated.

7. Further on, Pre Zanetto says I might reply, there being no attributes in the notes of my motet that indicate perfect *tempus*, that the sign refers only to perfect minor mode with imperfect *tempus*. To this he responds: where there is perfect or imperfect mode, there can also be perfect or imperfect *tempus*, even if none of the attributes appears; under φ_2 there might be none of the attributes—blackened notes to indicate integration of ternary units, dots of division between two semibreves, or two semibreve rests on the same line—yet it is imperfect mode and *tempus*, if, for example, one part has only maximas, longs, and breves, etc. He concludes that using φ_2 in two different ways will induce doubt and hesitation in the singer. I reply: if the attributes do not indicate the meaning of the sign, then the second diminution should be shown by duple proportion: φ_1^2 .

8. Pre Zanetto proceeds to praise me highly, to which I pay no attention, since I have but a sober estimate of my knowledge. In so doing he aims at my Achilles' heel. Simulating great reverence, he queries a procedure in the last Kyrie of my 'Missa Tue voluntatis' that he has not seen followed by any other musician:

He wonders why I didn't observe the perfect minor mode between the two signs as I did from the second sign to the end, since he doesn't find the proper number of three-breve units. My dear Pietro, I do wonder about our friend; if he has never seen this, he couldn't have searched very far. Considering himself, as he does, the greatest among musical minds in Venice, he ought to have raised his sights a bit higher and allowed himself to be guided by the light of intelligence to keep from falling into such outlandish notions. There are four signs at the beginning of my tenor; two are understood by their presence and two are understood by their absence (per la privatione).¹⁰ The two explicit ones are the circle and the dot, which demonstrate perfect tempus and prolation. The absence of two other signs indicates that the major and minor modes are imperfect. Then follows Φ and a rest occupying three spaces, which indicate perfect minor mode and perfect tempus; the absence of other signs (el signo de la privatione) shows that the major mode and the prolation are imperfect. Furthermore, the second sign cancels the first, for the succeeding sign always nullifies that preceding.

9. With the foregoing, I prove that the rest taking three spaces applies to the second sign only. Since there was no indication of mode next to the first sign, the mode is imperfect. He claims that there are two contraries in the same subject, perfection and imperfection, but composers do this all the time, for each succeeding sign cancels the previous one. Every section of a composition is governed by its own signs. His criticism would have been correct had there been no new sign between the first note and the rest, for then the first sign (because of privation) would indicate imperfect

minor mode, the rest perfect minor mode. If he thinks he has never seen such a procedure, let him consider the following: take a composition in C that at one point changes to O or a similar sign. The notes following O are no longer governed by C; so O cancels C.

10. Should Pre Zanetto argue that my example is not relevant because it shows change of *tempus* rather than of mode, I say the same procedure occurs under all signs. If we go back to the origins of these signs, we find that ϕ used to be written as $\langle 23 \rangle$, which indicated imperfect major mode, imperfect minor mode, perfect *tempus*, and perfect prolation. My second

sign,

was formerly written \$\cong 33\$, understood as imperfect major mode, perfect minor mode, perfect tempus, and imperfect prolation. When the older musicians began a composition in \$23, the whole work was sung in that mensuration unless another sign intervened. But if ¢ 33 appeared in the middle, the first sign was cancelled and the second sign governed this section. Therefore the two sections were sung in different mensurations and were counted differently. Each sign regulates its own section according to its nature. This was observed by the learned Englishman John Hothby in his motet 'Ora pro nobis'.¹¹ He places O in the soprano to indicate perfect tempus; both modes and prolation are imperfect. Further on he writes \$\mathbf{22}\$, showing that both modes and tempus are imperfect, and prolation, by the absence of the dot, is also imperfect. The new sign cancels the preceding O. The third section of the soprano is signed ϕ_{22} , which stands for perfect major mode, imperfect minor mode, imperfect tempus and prolation; this measurement governs the notes until the next sign. The tenor follows the same procedure. My tenor does not deviate from this order. ϕ is equivalent to the older c_{23} . According to modern practice, it indicates, through its appearance, perfect tempus and perfect prolation, but, through privation, imperfect minor and major mode. But if O appears later, showing perfect tempus and imperfect prolation, and has beside it the characteristic of the perfect minor mode (a three-breve rest), being thus equivalent to the older (33, I) say that the first sign ϕ stands by itself and the perfection of the minor mode indicated by the second sign does not apply to it.

11. Our Pre Zanetto, pretending ignorance of this truth, would fain proceed along the path of sophistry. Therefore I will show him how one can find the complete measure of the perfect minor mode in the notes after

¢: <u>13 ⊕ ■∎ ₀ ₅ ●</u>

just as one can in the succeeding passage: \bigcirc

three perfect breves or nine imperfect semibreves. The number nine will also be found after $\dot{\Phi}$, for the two perfect breves have the value of six perfect semibreves, which, changed over to imperfect [and together with the following notes], are the equivalent of nine imperfect semibreves,¹² equal to those under $\dot{\Phi}$ in the perfect minor mode. Therefore, as he wishes, there is no discrepancy in the perfect minor mode between the two signs but full agreement and equal proportion.

12. But these are frivolous objections and terms used by guarrelsome, ill-informed men and it's a waste of time to answer them. Similarly, Pre Zanetto says that not only does the passage under ϕ fall short of the value of a perfect long, it also lacks the quantity of an imperfect maxima, for one cannot have minor mode without major mode. I respond that I have followed old as well as modern practice, for modern and also older musicians rarely bother to measure their compositions in any way other than that shown in their modal signs. Just as C, by the absence of a dot, indicates minor prolation, so does the absence of signs for mode mean that the modes are imperfect, in which case the composer measures his compositions by breves, not worrying about whether they pair off to fill out longs or whether the longs pair off into binary units to make maximas. Such regulations would restrict the composer's freedom, forcing him to make a composition longer or shorter against his will. This is why modern composers use C, where the measure falls on the semibreve; if the measure is complete, they don't concern themselves further, and similarly with the measurement of the breve under ¢. They discard the rest of the older signs to avoid being tied down by such a variety of measurements, which have nothing to do with good harmony. But if C were written in the older manner, C22, then one would have to observe the correct measurement of two-breve and two-long units. Therefore in my tenor I observed only the measurements indicated by Φ , breve and semibreve, both perfect. Since the long and the maxima are not fixed by time signatures, I did not bother about pairing them. If I had used the old sign \$23, then I should have had to number the minims by threes, the semibreves by threes, the breves by twos, and the longs by twos. But I don't say that even though no sign is indicated, it would not be better for the understanding and performing of the work if the proper numerical quantities were observed. In our time, this is left to the composer's judgement; if he follows the rule, well and good; if not (because he conforms to practice), he shouldn't be criticized, for 'practice is as good as a law',¹³ and this practice has been adhered to by Dufay, Ockeghem, Busnois, Éloy, and other more modern composers such as Verbonnet, Josquin, Obrecht, and countless others.

13. Continuing, our friend believes that I think when one changes

= ϕ calls for

from perfect to imperfect time or vice versa, without signalling the mode by means of three-breve rests, that only from the sign after which the rests or other attributes of modes appear can the mode be considered perfect, and the opposite. He further says that mode is fixed and does not change within a composition, especially when it is signed in the middle of a composition; it is understood to be in perfect mode from beginning to end, even though there are other signs, of perfect and imperfect tempus and perfect and imperfect prolation. And he claims I fell into the same error in the Benedictus and last Agnus Dei of my mass.¹⁴ I have always held that all time signatures can stand by themselves and that a new signature cancels the old one; in a composition in C, a passage in O indicates a change from imperfect to perfect tempus, prolation and mode remaining imperfect, and the same holds for other signs. A composition that begins in C 2, which older composers consider as imperfect minor mode and imperfect tempus, and then at some point changes to O2, turns into perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus. Pre Zanetto claims, given C_2 or C_2 at the beginning and then = 2

that perfect minor mode also applies to the first two signs. But this is not so, for there would be contradiction between the signatures, and the variety of signatures would be futile, for one signature would have the characteristics of another contrary to it.

14. The truth of the matter is shown by my teacher in the bass of his 'Tu lumen', which begins in O_2 (meaning perfect minor mode and imperfect *tempus*) and then changes to C_3 , imperfect minor mode and perfect *tempus*. These signs preserve their temporal and modal nature. Under O_2 three imperfect breves complete a perfect long; under C_3 two perfect breves fill in an imperfect long. Within these two mensurations the six semibreves are the same, so my teacher posited a proportion of equality between the two signatures.

15. I certainly marvel at Pre Zanetto, whose erroneous opinion stems from our modern musicians who do not use the proper signs for mode but, confusing the sign and the signified, use *longa* rests, which are not signs *per se* but attributes of signs. Thus, should they wish to change the mode within a composition, they would have to add rests against their will. Knowing that this method must lead to confusion, when they find *longa* rests in a work, like blind men they think the whole work is governed by that modal order. But those who know that attributes cannot change the nature of the sign follow the true path, as demonstrated by Tinctoris, who shows the proper signs for the sixteen mensurations,¹⁵ in which each cancels the one before it. Even if depicted differently from the older signatures, they hardly differ in meaning, and the older signs are true signatures, because they stand outside the notation; the signs occurring within the notation such as the rests of two or three spaces are simply attributes of these true signs,¹⁶ which cannot occur without their subject, the circular and semicircular signatures.

16. Even more do I wonder at our friend when he says that in compositions the mode is fixed and never changes. Suppose a composition begins in C₂, showing both modes to be imperfect, with imperfect *tempus*, and changes to O2, in which the minor mode becomes perfect. In which sign is the mode fixed and unchangeable until the end of the piece? If it is in C_2 , then the properties assigned to O_2 will be in vain, like a cause that cannot produce its effect, and the same holds for O2 followed by C2. I think he made this up, because he cites no authority or example for it. Thus, if I used three three-breve rests to show perfection of both modes in the Benedictus of my mass ['Tue voluntatis'], and then in the course of the work used ϕ and other signs to cancel the perfection of the modes, it was not contrary to art or reason, for just as O cancels C, so ϕ can cancel the modal perfection because there is no attribute after ϕ indicating perfection of the modes. If as he claims every signature indicates major mode, minor mode, tempus, and prolation, it follows that every one of the signs after the four perfect-long rests at the beginning will also have major mode, minor mode, tempus, and prolation. But in those signs the major and minor modes are imperfect because of the privation, or absence, of signs. Tinctoris confirms that privation is a sign of imperfection: The sign of minor prolation is the absence of a dot in the middle of a perfect or imperfect *circle*, O C.¹⁷ Therefore I say that my tenor does change from major to minor mode, and φ^2 at the beginning is cancelled by φ , after which the tempus is perfect until the end.

17. When he says that no minor mode occurs without the major mode, he does not put it well; he should have said: when observing the discrete and continuous quantities of the five essential note-values,¹⁸ minor mode should not be given without major mode. Nowadays, as I've said, composers observe perfection only when the signature demands it. He errs when he claims there is no minor mode without major mode. The modes are subject to discrete quantity, based on the unit, equivalent to the breve. Just as unity may stand by itself in arithmetic without number, and the number two may stand by itself without the number three,¹⁹ so *tempus* may stand by itself without mode. Similarly, minor mode, which is an aggregate of two or three breves, can stand by itself without major mode, which is measured by four, six, or nine breves. The mode being governed by a discrete quantity, the lesser number comes first, the greater one afterwards. But in a continuous quantity, like prolation, which divides the breve, the greater part comes first, the lesser part afterwards. Tinctoris

confirms that the lesser quantity can stand without the greater: We have accepted four quantities established by the teachers of the art of music, that is major mode, minor mode, tempus, and prolation, of which four quantities every piece is composed, not that all have to occur in each composition, for if prolation stands alone,

the music is thus: \odot \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow . Similarly, if tempus without either mode, thus: \bigcirc

 $b \circ \circ$. But where there is major mode, there is minor mode; where there is minor mode, there is tempus; where there is tempus, there is prolation, for the greater necessarily includes the lesser quantity.²⁰ Therefore, the minor mode can stand without the major mode, but not the opposite, and this is true of both modes, since they are aggregates of breves. But prolation, because it is a part of the breve, cannot stand alone.

18. Then our friend Pre Zanetto queries a passage in the Agnus Dei of my 'Missa [Da pacem]' where a dotted semibreve and minim are counted with a semibreve rest between the breve and breve rest, causing the breve to remain perfect, and he gives this example:



Then he says that, according to his weak intellect, the passage could also be written in three other ways:



He doesn't claim that I made an error,²¹ but that the three other ways are also acceptable. But then, in pretending to justify his three new ways, he does accuse me of error, for he says the breve should be imperfected by the following semibreve rest, which leaves the dotted semibreve and minim without companion. First of all, that is not the way I notated this passage; it should be:



But even if I had written it as he says, it would still be correct: that breve is not imperfected by the following semibreve rest or any other note because imperfection occurs only when the note would otherwise be too large by a third. You count the semibreves in threes as follows: the first and the second breves are perfect, the two semibreves in ligature plus the third make another ternary unit, then the dotted semibreve and minim are counted together with the semibreve rest after the breve to make another ternary unit; thus the breve remains perfect because nothing is left that would exceed the ternary units, which are now clear beyond doubt. So his three examples will be offered in vain.

19. Moreover, the first example calls for an unusual syncopation drawn out over a breve and a breve rest, never contemplated by any person learned or unlearned. In his second example, the dot after the third breve is superfluous because, as I have shown, that breve is already perfect. But I should certainly like to know why he places a dot between the semibreve rest and the breve rest in his third example. He might claim the dot after the breve is a dot of perfection to enlighten novices, but I couldn't justify his dot between the two rests, for if the dotted semibreve and minim are to be counted together (as he claims Johannes de Muris says), and if the breve is followed by a dot, they can only join with the semibreve rest. It seems to me that he did not follow de Muris's rule, that when two notes are found alone together, they should not be separated but counted together.²² If those two notes should be joined, they ought to be counted with another semibreve or other semibreves, but this is prevented by the dot between the two rests, for the dot shows that the two notes are immobile; rather it is the rest that is mobile and joins with the two notes. The dot signifies retrogradation, for it cannot mean permanence or expectation; without the dot the rest cannot be understood as moving to right or to left.²³ Therefore it is useless to tie down what cannot be moved. But to show Pre Zanetto that he hasn't reached the perfection he thinks he has attained in his three examples, here is another, easier, and more common way that will help the beginner:



The dotted semibreve and minim are not without their ternary complement and are not divided but counted together, according to his authority Johannes de Muris, whom he has interpreted in his own way.

20. Then Pre Zanetto queries a long at the beginning of the bass of my teacher's motet 'Tu lumen':



He says it should be perfect because of the two breves in ligature, which virtually have the value of an imperfect long, since 'virtue united is stronger than virtue dispersed', and that the two breves should be separated, for if they are in ligature, the long remains perfect because it is not preceded by a note that could imperfect it. I reply that the rule of perfection does not state that a note, shown to be perfect by the signature,

remains perfect before its full value or the greater part of it, but only before its like in form. It is also perfect when it is preceded or followed by a complete ternary unit of its near parts. So that long can be imperfected, for even if the two breves have the value of an imperfect long, they have not got its form, for 'it is form that gives essence to a thing, not dispersed matter'.²⁴ This is demonstrated by Johannes de Muris: The first rule is that a long before a long in a perfect mode is perfect.²⁵ He doesn't say 'before two breves in ligature'. And he continues: The second rule is that whenever a note should be imperfected, it must immediately be followed by a note of a larger or smaller form or a rest of a larger or smaller form, for like before like cannot be *imperfected.*²⁶ From this rule it follows that the long can be imperfected, for it is followed by a smaller note which is part of an incomplete ternary unit and not by its like in form. If you count the three-breve units between O2 and C3,²⁷ there is one breve left over; this appears also from the counterpoint with the other voices. Therefore, even if those two breves have the value of a long, they have not got its form. The concept of 'virtue united' is not valid, for the capacity for perfection applies to ternary, not binary units. If the long can be imperfected before three breves, it can certainly be imperfected before two of them in ligature. Pre Zanetto's fantasy that this long can only be imperfected a parte anteriori is not confirmed by the rule; the composer is free to imperfect a parte ante or a parte post, as shown in many compositions by eminent older composers and in my excellent teacher's motet and his other works. But our Pre Zanetto prefers simple and plain things; when a problem out of the reach of beginners arises, he tries, perhaps to play the learned man, to take the opposing side.

21. For the reasons aforementioned, my dear Frate Pietro, our Pre Zanetto may yet understand (1) that ϕ_2 and similar signs are to be understood in different ways according to the attributes found with them, (2) that ϕ and ϕ 2 are figments of his own imagination, understood by no one else, (3) that ϕ_2 is different from O_2 and there is the greatest difference between O_2 and ϕ , (4) that harmony is not affected if those mensurations not indicated by a sign are not complete, (5) that a new time signature always cancels the old one, (6) that an accidental attribute unattached to circle or semicircle causes no change of metre, (7) that minor mode may stand without major but not vice versa, (8) that mode in a composition is as variable as are other signatures and mensurations, (9) that perfect mode is observed throughout a piece only if no signature contrary to the first appears, (10) that he wasted his time giving his three different solutions for the tenor of my mass and that in the third he did not observe the rule of perfection that he cites from Johannes de Muris, (11) that a note can remain perfect if it has a ternary unit of its near parts before

and after, or partly before and partly after, itself, and finally, (12) that in criticizing the long at the beginning of my teacher's motet, he acted like a mere beginner. *Finis*.

COMMENTARY

Two interrelated topics are debated at length in letters 41-5: whether ϕ_2 means O (perfect *tempus*), twice diminished, or O₂ (perfect minor mode and imperfect *tempus*), diminished; and the merits of the two different ways of indicating mode, by signs or rests. As is frequently the case, Del Lago initiates the discussion by asking Spataro about passages in his compositions, specifically the ones written some forty to fifty years earlier, when the composer delighted in obscure notational procedures. The problems treated have no relevance to sixteenth-century notation, but they make us aware of old controversies of more than theoretical interest. Tinctoris's stinging rebuke of Busnois, Faugues, and other composers in his *Proportionale musices* (the reaction to which surprised no one more than the author) must reflect the heated musical arguments of the day.

The question about the sign ϕ_2 arises from the two different systems of indicating mensural modes in the last third of the fifteenth century. The older tradition, of which Hothby was the most prominent representative at the time, made use of various combinations of signs, figures, and dots. The mensuration in which all values are perfect was indicated by \odot_{33} : the sign stands for major mode. the first figure for minor mode, the second figure for *tempus*, and the dot for major prolation. The mensuration in which all values are imperfect was shown by C 22.²⁸ If major mode was not indicated, the components were shifted down one level: O3 indicates perfect minor mode, perfect tempus, and perfect prolation. This system has the virtue of clarity and simplicity, but it has one great drawback: O and C are used in conflict with their traditional meaning of tempus. Moreover, when major mode is not indicated, the signs become ambiguous, for then they can be confused with proportional signs. Hence Del Lago's question: in ϕ_2 , does the circle indicate mode or tempus? If the former, the figure 2 indicates tempus; if the latter, it means duple proportion, or diminution. (There is no confusion about the stroke, which also indicates diminution.)

The newer system, championed by Tinctoris and Gafurio, used various combinations of signs with *longa* rests to indicate mode. The mensuration in which all values are perfect was shown by \bigcirc The circle and dot stand for

tempus and prolation, removing the ambiguity of the old system. The number of rests shows the mensuration of the maxima, and the length of the rest shows the mensuration of the long. The mensuration in which all values are imperfect was

shown by C _____.²⁹ This system also has a drawback: rests may have their normal

²⁸ See Aaron's (faulty) exposition in no. 64 and the commentary on that letter.

²⁹ The clearest exposition of this system is Tinctoris's Tractatus de regulari valore notarum (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 125-38).

meaning, or they may function only as an indication of mode and not be counted.³⁰

Both systems fell out of use by the end of the fifteenth century, when composers no longer paid attention to major and minor mode. The observance of mode hung on longest in the late fifteenth-century tenor motet, of which Josquin's *Praeter rerum seriem*, with the signature O₂ (perfect minor mode, *tempus imperfectum*), is a good example.³¹

As usual, what is so clearly described in theoretical treatises is rarely reflected in practice, and both our theorists adhere to elements from each system. Del Lago accepts O2 as indicating minor mode and tempus (no. 44, para. 2), yet insists that major mode is shown by rests (ibid., paras. 12-13). Spataro agrees that O2 shows minor mode and *tempus*, calling it an integral sign, but he says that ϕ_2 is O, twice diminished: the first diminution of tempus is indicated by a stroke, the second diminution by the figure 2 (no. 45, paras. 5-6). However, he has to concede that ϕ_2 is ambiguous; to discern the correct meaning, one has to scrutinize the notes that follow it to determine whether the 'accidents' apply to perfect or imperfect tempus (no. 41, para. 3; no. 45, paras. 4-7). When Del Lago points out that Spataro used ϕ_2 in his motet 'Ubi opus est' and ϕ_2 in his 'Missa Tue voluntatis' to show mode and tempus rather than tempus, twice diminished (no. 44, para. 9), Spataro, for once, is forced to admit that Del Lago is right, but he insists that he followed this usage not because it is common but merely to demonstrate that it is legitimate, provided that the proper attributes are observed in the notes that follow the sign (no. 45, para, 6). It is here that he uses the metaphor of the tavern and haberdashery with identical signs, whose meaning can only be determined by the window display.

Counteracting Del Lago's unfounded claim that mode is fixed at the beginning of a piece and cannot be changed during its course (no. 44, paras. 12–13), Spataro says that all time signatures, on whatever level, stand by themselves and can be changed whenever the composer wishes (no. 45, paras. 13–16). This is why he objects to using rests to indicate mode, since the composer is forced to observe their value when he wants to change mode during the course of a composition. Rests, he insists, are attributes, not true signs (no. 45, para. 15). Indeed, Spataro notes that modern composers have dropped observance of the modes in favour of greater freedom, for the mensural prescriptions restrict the composer unduly; moreover—and this is always a strong point with Spataro—they have nothing to do with good harmony (no. 45, para. 12).

Whereas the theorists agree that O_2 means perfect minor mode with imperfect *tempus*, some fifteenth-century composers—Busnois being a prominent example—use it as a sign of *tempus perfectum diminutum*.³² Tinctoris objects to the sign because the figure 2 is ambiguous: it could mean *dupla* or *subsequialtera*, or other proportions with the figure 2. He contends that it should be written as a proportion, O_1^2 , 'prout ars requirit'.³³ He also criticizes Domarto for writing

³⁰ See the Notes on Problematical Terms, s.v. 'Indiciale/Essentiale'.

³¹ Spataro discusses its mensuration in no. 4, para. 2.

³³ Proportionale musices (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, iia. 45 and 50).

sesquialtera under C 3 as if the sign were \in .³⁴ Richard Taruskin has suggested that Busnois used C 3 in the 'Tu solus' of his 'Missa L'homme armé' with the same meaning, it being the only logical way to indicate *integer valor* in major prolation, which at this time normally had the meaning of augmentation, as it does in the other sections of Busnois's mass.³⁵ Clearly, there was no agreement in the fifteenth century on the understanding of these signs.

B.J.B.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 56.

³⁵ See 'Antoine Busnoys and the L'Homme armé Tradition', Journal of the American Musicological Society 39 (1986), 254-93, esp. 287-8. Taruskin calls C 3 an 'ad hoc' mensuration-sign which 'no theorist ever explained' (p. 285), and he derives its meaning solely from the musical evidence. But even if Tinctoris had not discussed Domarto's use of the sign, its meaning could have been determined by comparison with Busnois's use of Oz in four sections of the mass. Under both signs, notated mode and tempus are sung as tempus and prolation. The relationship of C_3 to O_2 is problematic, since this is the one section of the mass where the tenor is not written under \odot or \in but in the C3 of the other voices. Taruskin reads $\bigcirc 2$ as *tempus diminutum*, C3 as integer valor. This creates an elegant symmetry in the ratios of closing sections of the mass (see his Table 2, p. 270), but it causes an awkward slowing-down of tempo just where one would not expect it. Judging from Busnois's 'Conditor alme siderum', in which each of the four voices begins in a different mensuration, under the signs of mode and tempus the longs are in equal proportion; see the modern edn. in Albert Seav, 'The Conditor alme siderum by Busnois', Quadrivium 12/i (1971), 225-34. In the mass, the long in both mensurations has twelve minims, so there would be minim equivalence between the sections, although the tenor itself under C3 will be sung four times as fast.

³² Ramis approves this practice; see *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 84.

46 (J101–2). Fos. 244^r–245a^r Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [autumn 1532]¹ (autograph)

 ²⁴⁵ [Reverendo] et venerabile et musico excellentissimo [Frate Petro] Aron de l'ordine hyeroso[lomitano, quanto maggi]ore honorando. In Vinetia, [S]ancto Zoanne de li furlani.

244^r Reverendo et de li musici excellentissimo, etc.

1. Dapo che ebi scripto questa prima qua ligata [no. 45], in la quale se tracta de le responsione da me facte al nostro Pre Zanetto circa le soe argumentatione et dubietà, et mentre che io aspectava che Frate Allexandro, presente lactore, se partisse da Bologna et a V.E. (come messo fido) portasse tale mie resposte, me pervenne a le mane uno certo mio canto a quattro voce composto,² el quale canto a li giurni passati fu da me facto, perché trovandomi in Bologna in caxa del reverendo Monsignore da Caxale nostro bolognese, el quale al presente sta qua in Vinetia per ambassatore o vero refferendario del sacro re de Inghilterra, et soa Signoria diceva che el se trova scripto apresso a multi dignissimi auctori de le grande maraveglie le quale facevano li musici con la modulatione de li soi concenti nel tempo anticho, pertanto sua Signoria domandava se el se poteva componere canti per altri generi che per el genere diatonico usitato. Fu circa ciò dicto varie oppinione, perché in tale loco erano homini in tale facultà et in altre scientie molto docti, et fu concluso che l'era impossibile, volendo havere la bona harmonia, solo havere la exercitatione de uno solo genere, perché dato che in una sola particula de uno concento se observasseno li intervalli et forme de uno solo genere,

² 'Ave gratia plena'. Spataro copied the motet at the end of his letter; the soprano and tenor are found on fo. 245', the alto and bass on fo. 245a' (see Pl. 12 and transcription on pp. 555-61). The motet has been published in Luigi Torchi, *L'arte musicale in Italia*, i. 31-4, and transcribed in Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 237-40.

tale forme et intervalli non se potriano observare concordabilemente in le altre particole del concento, et questo fu a soa Signoria demonstrato per maniffeste demonstratione et exempli, et per meglio verificare questa clara verità, fu demonstrato che el diatonico genere non era per se exercitato in la formatione de la harmonia usitata, et che li altri dui generi da Boetio assignati asai davano aiuto al diatonico predicto, così in modulatione come in le distantie concorde, perché el se vede che el se canta el semiditono intenso et remisso in uno intervallo, el quale spatio è specie chromatica, et etiam el ditono, el quale è intervallo enharmonico. Et circa le distantie concorde fu dato uno exemplo in quella diapason, la quale cade intra hypate hypaton et paramese, et altre simile distantie, le^a quale non potrano essere harmonice divisa, cioè con el diapente in grave et diatessaron in acuto, senza lo aiuto de la terza chorda chromatica, chiamata lycanos meson chromatica, la quale caderà nel monochordo sopra quello tasto negro intra parhypate meson et lycanos meson diatonica posito, o vero intra F fa ut et G sol re ut, la quale chorda o vero tasto serà recta diapente con $\exists mi$ grave et optima diatessaron con $\exists mi$ acuto.

244^v 2. Et perché alhora uno certo amico nostro, el quale | è più temerario che docto, disse che lui non haveva mai trovato tale diapason per tale modo divisa, quasi volendo dire che tale divisione non poteva stare, pertanto alhora deliberai fare uno picolo⁶ concento, nel quale se trovasse la predicta diapason per tale modo mediata, aciò che el se vedesse che dato che da lui non sia mai stato trovato, che se possono fare rationabilemente, et che potrà essere exercitata da lo instrumento facto per arte bene diviso, et etiam da lo instrumento naturale, el quale mio concento non è stato più veduto da alcuno, perché non ce siamo da poi trovati in loco alcuno inseme congregati, el quale canto voluntiera mando a V.E. perché secondo che ho trovato in li vostri compendii, a me pare che de tale importantie habiati optima intelligentia et cognitione,³ et maxime nel vostro Toscanello, el quale ho quasi finito de legere a uno giovene nipote de uno nostro canonico, amico mio,⁴ el quale tene el vostro Toscanello predicto, ma li manca quello vostro ultimo tractato, el quale demonstra come in ciascuna de le positione de la mano de Guido se possono trovare li sei nomi offitiali, scilicet ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la.⁵ Pertanto ve prego se poteti mandarne uno (senza incomodo vostro), lo mandati aciò che el giovene habia integramente le opere vostre et possa imparare.

¹ Jeppesen believed the letter was written in July 1532 ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 8) because he thought it followed no. 41, Spataro's letter to Aaron of 19 July 1532. It is evident that Spataro enclosed the present letter with one of the replies he made to Del Lago that were addressed to Aaron, of which there are four: no. 41 (19 July 1532), no. 42 (22 July 1532), no. 45 (no date; in answer to Del Lago's letter of 23 Aug. 1532, no. 44), and no. 48 (no date; in answer to Del Lago's letter of 22 Nov. 1532, no. 47). We believe it was enclosed with no. 45 for the following reasons: in his letter to Aaron of 2 Jan. 1533 (no. 49), Spataro acknowledges receipt on Christmas Day of 'la copia mia de la resposta facta al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto'. This is the original of his letter no. 45; at the end of his letter of 22 Nov. 1532 (no. 47) Del Lago says he had not yet made a copy of Spataro's letter, but would do so soon (see para. 8). Further reasons for dating the present letter after no. 45 are the reference to Frate Allexandro and the enclosure of the motet 'Ave gratia plena'; in the same letter to Aaron of z Jan. 1533 (no. 49), Spataro complains about 'li mali portamenti de Frate Allexandro' (who perhaps was dilatory in delivering Spataro's letter) and he discusses Aaron's criticisms of the motet 'Ave gratia plena'.

[&]quot; MS: la. " MS: piculo.

³ For Aaron's criticism of the motet and Spataro's defence of the augmented octave in measure 14 and the diminished fifth in measure 50, see no. 49, paras. 2 and 3.

⁴ *Toscanello in musica* (probably the Venice, 1529 edn.). The nephew is probably the Victorio mentioned in no. 49, para. 6.

⁵ On this treatise, see no. 34.



Pl. 12. Giovanni Spataro, 'Ave gratia plena'. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fos. 245^{r} and (*right*) $245a^{r}$ (autograph)



3. V.E. trovarà nel mio canto predicto che in D è signato questo segno \ddagger , el quale segno denota che con \dashv *mi* cade in terza mazore, la quale chorda se trova in pochissimi monochordi.⁶ Pertanto alcuni potriano dire che in tale loco non lice signare tale segno, perché non havendo loco nel monochordo, che tale segno serà indarno in tale loco posito. A questo se responde che l'arte sempre debe imitare la natura et non e contra. Pertanto dico se el non se potrà sonare, la causa non procederà da l'arte musica, ma procederà da lo instrumento, el quale è diminuto et non con le debite divisione condensato et producto. Ma credo che meglio se sonaria nel leuto, et ancora meglio se potrà cantare, perché tute le divisione exercitate ne li instrumenti sono più familiare a lo instrumento naturale o vero voce humana bene disposta et dal perito musico et cantore pronuntiata.

4. Non altro per questa. Circa le recomandatione, asai basta quello che in questa altra mia con questa ligata è stato dicto. Ma bene prego V.E. voglia fare che questa qua ligata' directiva al reverendo Monsignore Casale sia data a soa Signoria, et quando V.E. se facesse cognoscere a soa Signoria, credo che volontiera ve vederia, perché a Bologna (parlando de

^{245^t} li musici qua in Vinetia residenti) asai da me V.E. li fu | laudato, et perché a soa Signoria io prestai la *Theorica* de Franchino, la quale non ho havuta in la soa partita facta da Bologna, et etiam perché soa Signoria me promisse mandarmi uno de li tractati musici de Messer Lodovico Fogliano,⁷ pertanto per questa a soa Signoria chiedo la *Theorica* predicta, et etiam el musico tractato predicto.

Vale Petre mi, et ut soles me ama. Iterum vale.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spatario

I. After I had written the enclosed letter answering Pre Zanetto's queries [no. 45], and while I was waiting for Frate Allexandro, bearer of this, to depart from Bologna and, as trusted messenger, deliver it to you, I came across a motet I composed a few days ago.² I happened to be at the home of Monsignore da Casale, a Bolognese, who is at present ambassador to Venice of the King of England; he asked whether—in view of the

marvellous effects ascribed to ancient Greek music—compositions could be written in other than the common diatonic genus. A number of opinions were advanced by the erudite gathering, and it was concluded that good harmony could not be achieved by one genus alone; it might be done in one passage, but the rest would not concord. A number of examples were adduced, and to prove the argument, it was shown that the diatonic genus is not used exclusively in our ordinary harmony, but that the other two genera assigned by Boethius lend support to it, in melodic progressions as well as in concordant intervals. An ascending or descending minor third belongs to the chromatic species, and the major third is an enharmonic interval. Regarding concordant intervals, the octave B-b can be divided harmonically (with a fifth on the bottom and a fourth on the top) only by using the third chromatic note, *lichanos meson chromatica*, or f^{\ddagger} , which falls on the black key between f and g on the monochord.

2. Since a friend of ours, more brash than learned, said he had never seen an octave so divided—implying that it was impossible—I decided to compose a short work showing such a division to prove that it was within reason and that it could be performed on a properly divided instrument and also by Nature's instrument (the voice). No one has yet seen this composition, and I am sending it to you because from your treatises you seem to be well acquainted with these matters,³ especially in your *Toscanello*, which I have almost finished reading to the young nephew of one of our canons.⁴ He has a copy, but lacks your latest treatise on how to find the six solmization syllables on each position of Guido's hand.⁵ If you could send him a copy, he will have all your works and can learn.

3. You will find a D# in my composition, indicating a major third with B, which is found in very few monochords.⁶ Some might say it should not be used if it is not found on the monochord. My answer is that art should imitate nature and not vice versa. If it can't be played, it is the fault of the imperfect instrument, not of art. A lute could play it, but the voice would be better; such divisions of intervals are more familiar to skilled singers.

4. My greetings are conveyed in my other letter, enclosed. Would you please see that the letter addressed to Monsignore da Casale reaches him? If you introduced yourself, I think he would see you gladly, for, in speaking of Venetian musicians, I praised you highly. I am writing to him because he did not return the copy of Gafurio's *Theorica* I lent him before he left Bologna, and he did not send me one of Lodovico Fogliano's treatises,⁷ which he had promised to do.

[•] MS: ligatata.

⁶ In his *Compendiolo*, fo. Ε₅' of the second part, Aaron mentions the possibility of obtaining D# on the organ 'mettendo un Tasto bianco sopra del nero, di quantità, o spatio d'un Coma, come si vede in alcuni Istromenti nella Italia'.

⁷ Musica theorica (Venice, 1529). Spataro is apparently unaware that Fogliano published only one musical treatise. Fogliano may have been in the service of Giambattista Casali; see the Biographical Dictionary.

COMMENTARY

The present letter is an interesting parallel to the letter from Bernardino da Pavia to Giovanni del Lago (no. 98), in which he, together with Adrian Willaert, invited Del Lago to the home of the English ambassador to Venice. He was asked to bring his division of the three genera; Greek music theory was to be the topic of discussion. Bernardino promised to show Del Lago books by 'ancient authors on music'.

Unfortunately, Spataro, though speaking of 'the erudite gathering' at the ambassador's home in Bologna, does not mention anyone by name, whereas from Bernardino's letter we learn that the ambassador had invited the greatest luminary in Venetian musical life, Adrian Willaert, and Giovanni del Lago, the Venetian oracle on matters musical and historical, and of course Bernardino, of whom we know nothing, but who was probably a musician and a friend of Willaert's.

Nevertheless, we learn a number of interesting things. If Del Lago was the musical oracle of Venice, Spataro certainly was that of Bologna. Our simple choirmaster can be said to have had a relationship, if indirectly, with the King of England, even as he had previously had one with Leo X. In each case he had to do with an extraordinary music-lover and connoisseur. Indeed, both the pope and the king are known to have composed themselves. Each time it was the excitement about the ancient genera of Greek music that prompted Spataro to try his hand at compositions designed to show how that knowledge could be translated into modern music: 'l'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica' was in Spataro's mind long before Vicentino conceived of it; but Vicentino would never have admitted that Spataro had more than the spark of a hope of realizing what it took his archicembalo to achieve. And he was right. Nevertheless, if one studies the wording of the question debated by Nicola Vicentino and Vicente Lusitano (see Vicentino's L'antica musica, Book IV, ch. 43), one cannot avoid the impression that the present letter may well have furnished the basis for the formulation of Vicentino's challenge.8

The reader may charge us with using sleight of hand when we claim that Henry VIII was behind Casali's inquiries in Venice and in Bologna; neither of the two letters says so. There is sufficient evidence to attest to Henry's insatiable appetite for music of all kinds. We cite a few documents to substantiate the King's reaching out to foreign courts in search of the finest musicians and the most elegant instruments.

In 'the Chamber's Accounts' of Henry VIII of 1528-9, we find the extraordinary sum of £33. 6s. 8d. paid out to 'Albert de Ripa, luter, minstrel and servant to the cardinal of Mantua' on 12 February 1529. On 8 November 1531 the sum of 20 is paid to 'Barba John and Peter Maria, Shakbuttes, departing into their country' (perhaps Italy, to judge from their names); on 26 August 1532 'the French queen's sackbuts' receive 28s., probably for one performance; and on 26 October 1532 'the singers of the French King's privy chamber, in reward', get £4. 13s. 4d.⁹

⁸ See Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined', pp. 27-8 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 692-3.

⁹ Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, ed. J. S. Brewer, v



Cantus

Altus

BC

<u>_____</u>



А



555









To these accounts may be added a highly interesting letter from Alfonso d'Este of Ferrara to Henry VIII of 13 October 1517, written in impeccable humanistic Latin,¹⁰ from which we learn that the two music-loving princes were in contact with each other and that the king had sent a messenger, himself an Italian lutenist, to Ferrara with a letter to Alfonso, to which the duke responded with a letter of his own and the gift of a beautiful Italian lute that John Peter, the messenger, thought would please the king greatly. For the king, years later, to have sought information about the three Greek genera of music with the help of his Italianborn ambassador to Venice fits very well into the picture which these documents paint for us.

Spataro uses a colourful harmonic palette in his attempt to show the result of mixing chromatic with diatonic chords. D major chords appear frequently, also B minor, and above all the unusual B major chord in a cadence on E minor. This is the chord with which Spataro intended to demonstrate to his friend ('more brash than learned') that it was indeed possible to create a harmonic division of the octave B-b by means of the third chromatic note f#. Another unusual passage emerges if we apply the *musica ficta* required by Spataro's clear notation. In

(London, 1880), pp. 309, 756, 759, and 760-1. The cardinal of Mantua was Ercole Gonzaga (1505-63), on whose life and musical activities see Iain Fenlon, *Music and Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Mantua*, i (Cambridge, 1980). Three months later de Ripa was at the court of Francis I, where he remained until his death.

¹⁰ Translated in Ivy L. Mumford, "The Identity of "Zuan Piero"", Renaissance News 11 (1958), 179-83 at 181-2.

measures 37-9 bass and tenor prescribe a flat for B, which should be self-evident because the bass descends a fifth from f and the tenor ascends a fourth from the same pitch. But Spataro adds flats to each voice. Now the discant has an E on the fourth beat of measure 37, no more than a quarter-note. If we leave Eb, out cries mi contra fa; if we transform the Eb into Eb, our readers will say, but what about the notorious clash between C# in the alto and C4 in the bass of measure 14, which Spataro defended against Aaron's sharp eye with the excuse that a dissonance so brief and unaccented was hardly perceptible-would the same excuse not do here? No. Reason? In the C#-C4 clash it is easy to assume oversight; in the present case the exaggerated care taken by Spataro to establish the Bb beyond cavil is a warning against falling into the trap of easy parallels. Besides, should the word on which the passage rests not deserve attention? Illuminans. What might Spataro wish to illuminate? He composed the motet with the goal to prove harmonic division of B-b with the chord of B major, involving the D#. He might have wished to include an Eb to prove that it could co-exist in the same piece with D#. Or he might have had a bolder idea: Eb is the enharmonic alter ego of D#-but only in Aristoxenean temperament. Is that what Spataro meant? Hard to assert, in view of his determined stand in favour of Pythagorean tuning. But is it possible that he meant it? Hard to deny, in view of his known shifts, albeit temporary, to gain a point in debate.

Frank Tirro has shown that Spataro revised the motet later, adding a *secunda* pars to it, and eliminating the D# as well as the C#. He did away even with the B minor chords in measures 11 and 21, which indeed are rare in the music of the time. With these changes, entered into the version of San Petronio MS A. xxxxv, fos. $23^{v}-25^{r}$,¹¹ Spataro makes a revealing confession. The daring harmonies that he introduces into a discussion of how the ancient chromatic genus can be used in modern polyphony have no place in a choir-book for Church services. In so doing, he follows Willaert's example, who writes two extraordinarily bold chromatic compositions in his youth, in the service and probably at the command of Alfonso d'Este of Ferrara,¹² but never once makes use of similarly audacious harmonic progressions in the immense *auvre* of his sacred or even secular works.

E.E.L.

¹¹ See Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 564-70.

¹² See Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined' and id., 'Music in Titian's Bacebanal of the Andrians'.

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 22 November 1532 (Scribe A)

34^r A Messer Gioanne di Spatari."

1. Da l'ecellente musico Misser Pietro Aaron amico nostro ho recevuta una vostra direttiva a·llui [no. 45] in risposta di una mia fatta alli 23 de agosto^b [no. 44], in la qual alcuni dubbii se contenivano, la resolutione de' quali io desiderava havere da V.E., alla qualle io per adesso non voglio altramente respondere perché voglio essere vostro amico, et non inimico, facendo io assai maggior conto de voi che voi de mi, il che apertamente se dimostra per usar io molto maggiore riverentia a voi che voi a me. Ma io essendo homo de natura pacifica, pigliarò in bona parte et in loco de paterne ammonitioni le parole vostre. Et de hoc satis.

2. Prego V.E. che per sua innata gentilezza se degne de responderme a questi pochi dubbii, i quali mi restano circa le sue compositioni, scilicet in quel suo concento 'Ubi opus est facto, verba non sufficiunt', nel soprano et nel contra alto, et etiam nel contrabasso. Et questo io non fo per tentare V.E., volendomi equiperare a·llei, ma solum per vedere se ne concordamo in opinione, quantonque (io ingenuamente el confesso) sono di altro parere de che è V.E.,^c | et primo nel soprano del detto concento circa quel punto posto tra quelle due semibrevi, le quali sono tra la quinta breve¹ et la prima lunga, dopo la quale sequitano immediate quatro semibrevi, le quali sotto questo segno φ. Et qui ho posto el proprio vostro esemplo:



Dico questo punto preditto (con bona vostra venia) a noi^d pare sia superfluo. La ragione è questa: perché quella breve dinanzi alle due semibrevi tra le quali è posto il detto punto rationabilmente si fa imperfetta dalla prima semibreve che seguita immediate, anchora che non gli fusse tal ponto, come parte terza di essa breve, o vero come dalla sua minore propinqua, et la prima breve, la quale è inclusa nella lunga, si fa imperfetta dalla seconda semibreve a parte anteriori. Et la prima semibreve delle quatro che sequitano immediate da poi la lunga fa imperfetta la secunda breve, la quale è inclusa in essa lunga a parte posteriori. Ma penso

^a The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al detto Messer Giovanne di Spatari, salute.' ^b 'M.D.xxxii' has been deleted in the original. ^c 'circa questi dubbii' has been deleted in the original. ^d Changed from 'mi'.

¹ Del Lago is numbering the breves in the second phrase, after the rests.

che V.E. habbia posto quel punto o vero per punto di divisione, o vero di imperfettione. Ma se lei lo ha posto | per punto di divisione, cioè per 35 evitare alla secunda semibreve la alteratione, dico non poter esser di divisione, perché l'alteratione si causa tra due parti maggiori propinque perfette, cioè quando due semibrevi in tempo perfetto sono poste tra due brevi. Non essendo punto di divisione tra l'una et l'altra semibreve, all'hora la secunda semibreve si altera, ma non tra la breve et la lunga, perché la breve è perfetta per virtù del circolo et la preditta lunga è imperfetta da sé, et etiam la semibreve è parte remota della lunga, perché l'alteratione sempre si causa in le parti propinque delle figure perfette, et nella secunda o vero in l'ultima sempre, et per questa ragione non può causare tra la ditta breve et la lunga alteratione. Et questo è affermato da Giovan de Muris in la terza regola de alteratione, il quale così dice: Quandocunque inter duas longas de modo perfecto vel pausas longarum vel inter punctum et longam inveniuntur due breves sine puncto in medio, secunda alteratur, id

- est valet duas breves. Similiter | quando inveniuntur duę semibreves inter duas breves 35 de tempore perfecto, vel pausas brevium, vel inter punctum et brevem sine puncto in medio, secunda alteratur, id est valet duas semibreves, etc.² Ma lui non dice tra una breve et una longa, et questo perché l'alteratione convien essere fatta tra due note maggiore propinque, come sono due semibrevi tra due brevi nel tempo perfetto. Non essendo punto di divisione tra l'una et l'altra semibreve, all'hora rationabilmente la secunda semibreve si altera, et non tra la breve et la lunga, per esser la semibreve parte remota dalla lunga, perché bisogna che la sia dinanzi alla sua maggiore propinqua sequente, cioè alla breve, la quale contiene in sé perfettione, quia ubi est perfectio, ibi alteratio, scilicet, ubi est mensura perfecta, sive mensure perfectio, ibi potest alteratio fieri.³ Dico anchora non potere causarsi alteratione tra la breve et la lunga et e contra perché la lunga nel tempo perfetto di sé et sui natura est imperfecta. La ragione è perché da lei non si toglie la terza parte, et similmente la semibreve non è terza parte di essa lunga. Pertanto | non può 36^r
- la semibreve dinanzi alla lunga alterarsi, et questo medesimo è affermato da voi in l'opera vostra intitulata al Signor Hermes Bentivoglio al capitolo 14 dell'alteratione, dove dite queste parole, cioè: Similmente mentre che del punto de divisione habbiamo pertrattato habbiamo detto che quando tra due note che contengano in sé perfettione si trovano due sue minori propinque così $\Box \diamond \diamond \Box$, o vero

così 🗖 🔓 🖕 et in molti altri modi occorrenti, la seconda altera o vero duplica il

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valore suo, etc.⁴ Et queste sono vostre parole formali. Et queste altre anchora nel ditto capitolo, dove così seguitate dicendo: Et primo è da sapere che la nota alterata o vero atta all'alteratione mai non si altera, se non inanzi alla sua maggiore sequente o ver propinqua, o vero alla pausa de ditta maggiore sequente, come la minima dinanzi alla semibreve et alla sua pausa. Et non alla breve et alla longa, né alle pause sue, né anchora alla massima. Et la semibreve inanzi alla breve s⁶ et alla sua pausa, et non alla lunga, né alla sua pausa, né similmente alla massima. Et la breve inanzi alla lunga, et alla sua pausa, et non inanzi alla massima, et la lunga innanzi la massima, et non ad altra nota. Similmente la nota mai altera dinanzi la sua simile, como è la minima dinanzi la minima o vero alla sua pausa, etc.⁵

3. Et similmente dico di quel punto messo tra le due minime, le quali sono poste tra la breve et tra la semibreve, come in questo esemplo:



Dico anchora per la predetta ragione questo punto anche esso esser superfluo et non necessario, perché la preallegata regola sequita così: *Idem est de duabus minimis inter duas semibreves de maiori prolatione, nam quandocunque remanent duę sine puncto in medio, secunda est alterata, id est valet duas minimas.*⁶ V.E. ha inteso come la regula è contra di lei, perché la regola non dice [che la minima deba alterare]^e tra la breve et la semibreve. Ma se ella ha posto questo punto per punto de imperfettione, dico senza esso regolarmente (ut dixi) ciascaduna di esse^f note farsi imperfetta dalla sua minore immediate sequente, come | è quella breve nel primo esemplo dalla prima semibreve, et la prima breve, la quale è inclusa in la lunga che sequita, dalla seconda semibreve sequente, et similmente nel secundo esemplo la secunda semibreve, la quale è inclusa nella breve, da la prima minima si fa imperfetta, et la semibreve sequente de la seconda minima.

4. Quanto a questo segno ¢ posto nel secondo esemplo del soprano sopranotato, prego V.E. si degni notificarmi se lo ha posto per se, id est sine aliqua relatione, o vero relato a questo ϕ , el quale è segnato nel principio del soprano, o vero alle sue note, o a qualunque altro modo. Et questo basti quanto alli dubbii del soprano.

^f The words in square brackets, omitted by the copyist, have been supplied from Spataro's quotation of this passage in no. 48, para. 6. ^{f}MS : essere.

37^r

² Jo. de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 52.

³ The source of Del Lago's quotation from Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* is the version of this treatise contained in Book III of Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, which consists of a lengthy commentary on the *Libellus*. The passage quoted by Del Lago is drawn from Ugolino's Commentary on the chapter on alteration (ed. Seay, ii. 167).

⁴ Cf. Spataro, *Utile et breve regule di canto*, fo. 32^v. Del Lago must be quoting from a revised version of Spataro's treatise no longer extant (see Ch. 7).

⁵ Ibid., fo. 34'. The passage 'Et la breve inanzi alla lunga, et alla sua pausa, et non inanzi alla massima' and the preceding 'alla sua pausa, né similmente' are lacking in the London manuscript.

⁶ Jo. de Muris, Libellus, CS iii. 52.

5. Item nel contr'alto⁷ quel punto segnato da V.E. dopo quelle due semibrevi poste tra la lunga et la breve, le quali si cantano sotto la dupla proportione segnata^g sotto questo segno C $_3$ et anchora sotto questo C_3 . Credo per questa ragione sia stato così segnato da quella acciò che la secunda semibreve dopo la quale seguita immediate la breve non si alterasse. Et che sia el vero, dimostrate sequitando poco poi per quelle due semibrevi messe tra la lunga et la massima quasi al fine del detto contralto 37^{v} sotto questo segno ¢3, perché lei non ha posto el punto tra la seconda semibreve et la massima, perché la intentione sua è che le due brevi, le quali sono incluse in la lunga, poste dinanzi alle due semibrevi, si faccino imperfette dalle due semibrevi sequenti senza altrimenti dimostrare con punto. Ma non così delle due semibrevi tra la lunga et la breve, perché ella è di opinione che senza il punto la secunda semibreve si debba alterare. Similmente ella ha segnato el predetto punto dopo quelle due brevi poste tra la massima et la lunga, le quali se cantano sotto la dupla proportione segnata sotto questo segno ϕ_2 . Ma si potria escusare V.E. dicendo haver segnato quel sì fatto punto acciò li simplici et non molto esercitati cantori cantando non facessino alterare la seconda breve, et così anchora la seconda semibreve tra la lunga et la breve sotto questi antidetti segni, C 3 ¢3. Ma saria stato meglio che V.E. havesse voluto satisfare più tosto a' 38^r periti che alli imperiti, perché appresso li dotti si reputa quel punto superfluo et non necessario, perché di tutti i periti musici se farriano quelle due brevi imperfette le quali sono in la lunga (essendo parte propinque de esse brevi) da quelle due semibrevi sequenti, le quali si cantano sotto li duoi presegnati segni ut hic C $_3$ \bigcirc $_3$, et similmente le due lunghe incluse in la massima sotto questo segno ϕ_2 . Ma quel punto posto tra le due semibrevi in questo segno segnato (c_3) tra quelle due lunghe meze vacue et meze piene, credo certo V.E. habbia segnato tal punto per due ragioni. Prima è acciò che la secunda semibreve non si alterasse, l'altra ragione acciò non remanessino sole et senza numero o ver senza società ternaria. Ma io so che anchora che non li fusse tal punto tra le due semibrevi predette, mai si altereria la seconda semibreve^h tra due lunghe, ma ben tra 38^v due brevi o vero tra 'l valore di una breve et poi la breve,ⁱ perché saria contra la regola della alteratione. Né manco le restariano sole, perché la secunda breve vacua inclusa in la prima lunga si fa imperfecta dalla prima semibreve immediate sequente a parte posteriori. Et la prima vacua della seconda lunga sequente si fa imperfetta dalla seconda semibreve a parte

6. Oltra di questo mi occorre anchora un dubbio de la lunga in mezo

^g MS: segnate. non se causa'.

anteriori.

^{*b*} The following words have been deleted here: 'perché l'alteratione ^{*i*} MS: brevi.

della ligatura molte volte da V.E. posta nel contralto del ditto concento, videlicet 'Ubi opus est', etc., et etiam in molti lochi del contrabasso, il che non so per qual caggione ella l'ha fatto così. Credo più presto sia da esser represa la poca cura dello esemplatore, perché spesso suole tal cosa accadere per negligentia dello scrittore, et anchora ignorantia, non havendo notitia, o vero poca, di quel che scrivano, et maxime in questa nostra facultà musicale, perché importa assai, come ben sa V.E., [sapere] ligare le note insieme le quali sono disciolte et dissolvere et separare quelle le quali sono ligate, perché in tal cosa possono occorrere molti errori et ^{39^r} non pochi inconvenienti, come saria | cantando le parole o vero viciare el tenore fatto sopra el canto plano o ver fermo, et etiam de un tenore d'un canto composto tolto per soggietto, sopra il quale fussino fatte due o ver tre parti, perché removendo qualche cosa in esso tenore, non saria più quello, et altri inconvenienti vi nasceriano. Ma se da V.E. è stata ligata la lunga tra le altre note o ver figure, non potria stare per la auttorità di Maestro Philippo de Vitriaco, musico antiquissimo, et huomo di non mediocre auttorità, el quale parlando delle note ligate così dice: Item omnis tractus ascendens in prima nota positus cuiuscumque ligature facit duas primas esse semibreves. Et omnes medie sunt breves.8 Similmente questo è affirmato da Gioanne de Muris nel suo trattato de cantu mensurato in capitolo de ligaturis in octava regula, el quale così dice: In omni ligatura omnes medie sunt ³⁹ breves, nisi prima | esset cum opposita proprietate, etc.⁹ Et questa verità è stata dilucidata da Prosdocimo de Beldomando padoano, dottissimo in tutte le arti, come appare per le opere sue, comentatore et espositore sopra Giovan de Muris, quando lui espone detta regula 8^a. Così dice: Sed quidam moderni viam scientie ignorantes medie note in ligatura tractum descendentem apponunt, qui ratione perfectionis eam efficit notam longam; qui et contra auctoris regulam et contra Franconem faciunt, dicentem in libro suo mensurate musice in capitulo de ligaturis quod longa in medio ligature nullo modo est ponenda, etc.¹⁰ Adonque per l'auttorità de questi dotti musici antichi, dalli quali havemo havuto il lume et la intelligentia della nostra musicale scientia, dico non se

⁸ The quotation is similar to a passage in the 'Ars perfecta in musica Magistri Philippoti de Vitriaco', CS iii. 35. See Ch. 7, p. 152, for a comparison of the two readings. Del Lago's letter originally included at this point a quotation from Marchetto of Padua that was subsequently struck out: 'E questo istesso afferma Marcheto padoano nel suo *Breve compendio* di musica mensurata nel ultimo capitolo, nel quale tratta delle note composite o ver ligate, el quale così dice: *Omnes vero medie breves dicuntur.*' On the *Brevis compilatio* of Marchetto, see Giuseppe Vecchi, 'Su la composizione del *Pomerium* di Marchetto da Padova e la *Brevis compilatio*', *Quadrivium* 1 (1956), 153–205, which includes a transcription of the *Brevis compilatio*. The passage cited by Del Lago occurs on p. 204.

⁹ Jo. de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 56.

¹⁰ As pointed out above (see no. 44 n. 25), Del Lago is actually quoting from Ugolino of Orvieto's commentary on Johannes de Muris in his *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. VII-9 (ed. Seay, ii. 236). For Franco, see his *Ars cantus mensurabilis*, ed. Reaney and Gilles, pp. 45 and 50.

⁷ Del Lago gives the example at the end of para. 7.

dovere né possere contradire, et maxime in quelle cose le quali sono approbate et anchora da l'uso frequente, non solo dalli antichi di summa auttorità et celebratissimo nome, ma anchora dalli moderni, come è don 40^t Franchino Gafurio, ecellente musico, nel quinto | capitolo del secondo libro de la sua *Musica* intitulato a Messer Guido Antonio Arcimboldo, il quale questo affirmando, così dice: *Omnes itaque notule in medio ligaturarum sunt ligabiles preter longam que nunquam mediam coniuntionem tenet, et preter*

semibrevem, que in medio nunquam pariter constituitur nisi in ligatura cum opposita proprietate. Ignari tamen nonnulli longam in media^j collocatione constituunt cum cauda descendente lateri eius dextro applicata, nullam penitus inter ligatam longam

et simplicem differentem figurationem sentientes, k ut hic \square . Quod est intolerabile,

nam alia est figuratio longe simplicis, alia¹ ligate, ut ex predictis regulis facile depr[e]hendi potest. At cum omnes huius discipline clarissimi medias figuras semper breves^m concludant, hic minime concedendum est longam ipsam inter extrema posse coniungi. Omnis igitur figura ligabilis non ligata est toleranda nec est viciosa, ligata vero non ligabilis est viciosa et intolerabilis. Omnia denique figuris ligatis applicantur accidentia que et simplicibus ipsis accidere solent.¹¹ Et anchora, quantonque d'alcuni (imperiti però) et antichi et moderni si sia fatto il 40^v contrario, | dico quelli havere errato et fatto contra le predette regole et contra la antiquità, perché questi sì fatti ignoranti non meritano che li sia prestata fede, per essere loro di assai minore autorità. Et circa hoc verbum non amplius addam.

7. Similmente dico che in tutti questi lochi dove havete posto et segnato questo punto, si debba annullare et tor via acciò non fusse causa di far errare quelli che dopo noi verranno, perché ciascuno dotto de mediocre giuditio questo può facilmente giudicare. Et qui sotto noto il vostro proprio esemplo del contralto, nel quale si contiene tutto quello che di sopra è qui scritto quanto al punto et la lunga ligata, etc. Et per brevità ho lasciato ponere lo esemplo del contrabasso.



¹¹ Del Lago is quoting from an early version of Book II of Gafurio's *Practica musicae*, a copy of which has recently come to light in the Houghton Library of Harvard University. It differs significantly from the printed version; see Ch. 7, pp. 166–73.

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8. Prego V.E. non habbia per male questo mio scrivere perché ciò che io fo, Iddio el sa, fo solamente per l'honor suo, sapendo bene io che ella è persona da non havere a sdegno il mio scrivere, et alla sua gratia di ^{41^r} continuo mi ra comando. La vostra lettera in resposta della mia drizzata a Misser Pietro Aaron subito che l'harò copiata (poiché così è il suo volere) la restituerò al preditto Misser Pietro nostro.

In Venetia, a dì xxii di novembre M.D.xxxii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. I received from our common friend, Pietro Aaron, your letter to him [no. 45] in answer to mine of 23 August [no. 44] in which I raised some questions I hoped you'd be willing to answer. I will say no more in reply for now because I wish to be your friend, not your enemy, holding you in higher esteem than you do me. But being a peaceful man, I shall take it in good part and accept your words as paternal admonitions.

2. I ask you to be so kind as to respond to the few remaining queries regarding your compositions, not in order to challenge you as if I thought myself to be your equal but only to see if we agree, although, I confess, I do have a different opinion. The first concerns the soprano of your 'Ubi opus est facto' where you place a dot after two semibreves between the fifth¹ breve and the first long, followed by four semibreves, in duple proportion under Φ :



This dot, if you will pardon me, seems superfluous, because the breve preceding the dot would be imperfected by the following semibreve even without the dot, and the first breve that forms part of the long would be imperfected by the preceding semibreve. And the second breve in the long would be imperfected by the first of the following four semibreves. If you intended that dot to be one of division, in order to avoid alteration of the second semibreve, I say it cannot be a dot of division either, because

alteration only occurs between two notes of the next greater value. When two semibreves in perfect tempus occur between two breves, the second semibreve is altered, but not when they are placed between a breve and a long, first because the long is imperfect per se and secondly because it is a value remote from the semibreve, not the next greater value. Johannes de Muris, in his third rule of alteration, says: Whenever two breves without a dot interposed are found between two longs in the perfect mode or two longa rests or between a dot and a long, the second is altered, that is, it is worth two breves. Similarly, when two semibreves without a dot interposed are found between two breves in perfect time, or breve rests, or between a dot and a breve, the second is altered, that is, it is worth two semibreves.² He does not say 'between a breve and a long' because alteration takes place between a pair of notes of the next greater value such as when two semibreves occur between two breves in perfect tempus. Without the dot, the second one is altered, but not when it is between a breve and a long because the semibreve is removed by two degrees from the long; it has to stand before a perfect note of the next greater value, that is, a breve containing perfection. For where there is perfection, there is alteration, that is, where there is perfect measure or perfection of the measure, there alteration can occur.³ Moreover, alteration cannot apply between the breve and the long and vice versa because the long in perfect time is imperfect by nature and therefore its third part cannot be removed; nor is the semibreve the third part of a long, and therefore it cannot be altered before a long. You yourself affirm this in your treatise dedicated to Hermes Bentivoglio in ch. 14 on alteration: Similarly, in treating the dot of division, we have said that when two notes of the next smaller value are found between two perfect notes, the second is

altered, that is, it doubles its value, as here: $\Box \diamond \diamond \Box$ or $\Box \diamond \diamond \diamond \Box$.⁴ And

you continue: The altered or alterable note is never altered except before its next greater value or the rest of the next greater value, as a minim before a semibreve and its rest, but not before a breve and long or their rests, nor certainly before a maxima; and a semibreve can be altered before a breve and its rest, but not before a long, a long rest, or a maxima; and a breve can be altered before a long and its rest, but not before a maxima; the fore a maxima, and a long only before a maxima. Similarly, a note is never altered before its like, such as a minim before a minim or its rest.⁵

3. I say the same about the dot dividing the two minims between the breve and semibreve in this example:



For the foregoing reason the dot is superfluous, because the rule

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continues: The same obtains for two minims between two semibreves in major prolation, for whenever two remain without a dot in between, the second is altered, that is, it counts for two minims.⁶ You see that the rule contradicts you because it doesn't say 'between a breve and a semibreve'. But if you intended the dot to be a dot of imperfection, I say that without the dot each of the notes would be imperfected by its next smaller value, just as the breve in the first example by the first semibreve and the first breve that is included in the following long [is imperfected] by the second semibreve; similarly in the second example, the second semibreve that is included in the breve is imperfected by the following minim and the next semibreve by the second minim.

4. Regarding the sign $\[mathbb{C}$ in the second example above, did you intend it to stand by itself, or is it related to $\[mathbb{Q}$ at the beginning of the soprano, or to the notes, or some other way? This is all concerning the soprano.

5. In the alto,⁷ the dot after the two semibreves between the long and the breve in duple proportion under C₃ and also C_3 seems intended to prevent alteration of the second semibreve. That this is true you demonstrate near the end of the alto under \$\$3, where two semibreves occur between a long and a maxima, for you did not place a dot between the second semibreve and the maxima, intending that both breves contained in the preceding long should be imperfected by the two semibreves, but in the former case you thought that without the dot the second semibreve would be altered. Similarly, you placed a dot after two breves between a maxima and a long in duple proportion under ϕ_2 . You could excuse yourself by justifying the dot as preventing inexperienced singers from altering the second breve, and also the second semibreve between the long and the breve under C $_3$ and \bigcirc $_3$. But it would have been better to satisfy experienced singers, who consider that dot superfluous: they would all imperfect the two breves in the long by the following two semibreves under C 3 and \notin 3 and the two longs in the maxima under \oint 2. But I think you placed a dot dividing the two semibreves under C3 between the two half-blackened longs for two reasons, to avoid alteration of the second semibreve and to see that they did not lack a ternary number. But even without the dot, the second semibreve would never be altered between two longs (though it could be altered between two breves or between the value of a breve and a breve) because it is against the rule of alteration. Nor are they an incomplete unit, for the second, void breve in the first long would be imperfected by the first semibreve a parte post and the first, void breve in the second long would be imperfected by the second semibreve a parte ante.

6. I also wonder about the long in the middle of a ligature. You write this frequently in the alto and the bass of your 'Ubi opus est', and I don't

know why. It must be carelessness on the part of the copyist; such things happen through the negligence or ignorance of scribes, especially in music, for it is important, as you well know, to [know how to] connect separated notes and to dissolve ligatures because many errors can arise, as happens when singing the words of a plainchant or cantus firmus and also a tenor taken from a polyphonic work to which two or three parts are added, for in removing something in this tenor, it will not be the same any more, and other problems would arise. But if you did place a long in the middle of a ligature, it cannot stand, according to the authority of the eminent ancient musician, Philippe de Vitry: Every ascending stem placed on the first note of any ligature makes the first two notes semibreves. And all middle notes are breves.⁸ Johannes de Muris, in the eighth rule of his chapter on ligatures in his treatise on mensural music, says the same: In every ligature all middle notes are breves, unless the first note is with opposite propriety.⁹ Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi of Padua, eminent in all the arts, commentator on Johannes de Muris, observes on this rule: But certain modern musicians, wanting traditional knowledge, append a stem to the middle note of a ligature, which, because of the rule of perfection, makes it a long; they go against de Muris's rule and that of Franco, who, in his book on mensural music in the chapter on ligatures, says that a long should never be placed in the middle of a ligature.¹⁰ Therefore, I say we cannot contest the authority of these learned musicians, from whom we derive our musical knowledge, especially in those matters also approved and used commonly by modern musicians, such as the excellent Franchino Gafurio. In ch. 5 of the second book of his Musica dedicated to Guido Antonio Arcimboldo, he says: All notes may be placed in the middle of ligatures except a long, which never holds a middle position, and a semibreve, which likewise never occurs in the middle except in a ligature with opposite propriety. However, some ignorant musicians put a long in the middle with a descending tail to its right, supposing that there is no difference between a simple

long and a long in ligature, thus: \mathbf{H} . This is intolerable, for the shape of a simple

long is different from one in ligature, as can be easily understood from the foregoing rules. Since the most respected men in this discipline conclude that middle notes are always breves, it should not be allowed to place a long in the middle. Therefore every note capable of being joined that is not in ligature is acceptable, but a note in ligature incapable of being joined is unacceptable. Finally, every attribute that applies to simple notes also applies to those in ligature.¹¹ Even though some (inexperienced) old and modern composers have done the opposite, they err and break the rules and deserve no credence.

7. Similarly, I say that wherever you used that dot, it should be removed, in order to avoid confusing our successors, for every moderately intelligent person can easily understand. Below I give the relevant passages in the alto.



2. Please do not take my writing ill, because, God knows, I do it only for your honour. I know you will not look down upon it. As soon as I have copied your letter to Pietro Aaron in response to mine (since this is his wish), I shall return it to him.

48 Paris 1110, fos. 60^r-67^r

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [December 1532] (Scribe E)¹

^{60^t} Excellentissimo et de li musici doctissimo, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Petro Aron, etc.

1. Essendo alli giurni passati da V.E. stato pregato che qualeunqua volta io serò recercato dal nostro amico carissimo Pre Zanetto veneto de qualche sue dubietà in musica, che per amore de V.E. io sia contento darli quelle condecente resposte le quale a li soi quesiti se aparteneno, per la quale cosa, per essere obediente a li preghi de V.E., li quali, come mio magiore, tengo in loco de iustissimi precepti, a li giurni passati per una mia a V.E. directiva [no. 45], a multi soi argumenti et dubietà deti risposta, circa la quale mia resposta, secondo che per una soa de dì 22 novembris signata me advisa, pare che assai restasse satisfatto. Et al presente iterum torna dubitando, o vero fingendo de dubitare, a chiedermi la dechiaratione de altre soi dubitatione, a le quale per amore de V.E. darò plena resposta, la quale resposta serà directiva a V.E., non perché per sdegno né per altra causa io resti de scriver a lui, ma solo aciò che V.E. comprehenda et sia participe de queste nostre fatiche, le quale sono virtuose et pertinente a la facultà a la quale di continuo V.E. dà opera. Pertanto prego quela sia contento monstrare tale mie resposte al predicto nostro Pre Zanetto, et quando le harà al suo piacere tenute, V.E. (more solito) se le farà restituire et a me le mandarà a Bologna, perché le voglio ponere con le altre opere mie, perché (nel futuro tempo) potriano forsa essere grate a qualche gentile spirito.

2. El predicto nostro Pre Zanetto primamente dice che nel soprano de quello mio concento chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto', etc. è stato da me posito uno puncto tra quelle doe semibreve le quale sono tra la quinta breve et la prima longa, da poi la quale immediate sequitano quattro semibreve, le quale sono cantate sotto questo segno ϕ , come demonstra el sequente mio proprio exemplo:



Da poi sequitando dice che tale puncto (con mia bona venia) a lui pare che sia superfluo, et dice la rasone essere questa, perché quella breve dinanti a le doe semibreve tra le quale è posto el predicto puncto rationabilemente se fa imperfecta de la prima sequente semibreve, come de la soa minore propinqua, et la prima breve la quale è inclusa in la longha se fa imperfecta de la seconda semibreve a parte anteriori, et la prima semibreve de le quattro, le quale immediate sequitano da poi la longa, fa imperfecta la seconda breve, la quale è inclusa in essa longa, a parte posteriori. Da poi sequitando dice che lui pensa che da me sia stato posito quello puncto de divisione, o vero de imperfectione, per evitare alteratione, et molte altre parole indarno dice per demonstrare che anchora che tale puncto | non fus[s]e ivi posito, che tale semibreve non seria alterata, et circa tale alteratione lui aduce una soa rasone male considerata, come sequitando se dirà.

60[°]

3. Circa le predicte soe argumentatione, et altre le quale in processo demonstraremo, primamente dico che lui non ha considerato bene a quello che el docto musico potria considerare con rasone, perché se tale puncto (intra le predicte doe semibreve posito) serà abstracto, tale processo alhora (rationabilemente) potrà essere inteso in dui modi diversi, de li quali el primo serà come da lui è stato dicto, el quale da li rudi è considerato come termine et fine, perché (essendo senza lume) più oltra non tentano né considerano. El secondo serà inteso ut hic, cioè, che non essendo el puncto posito intra le doe semibreve predicte, perché serano sole, cioè senza società ternaria, sarano computate o vero conumerate inseme con quelle quattro semibreve, le quale sequitano dapo la sequente longa, et per tale modo (inseme colte) farano uno senario numero, et la longa restarà in valore de doe breve perfecte. Et questa serà optima consideratione, perché l'è più conveniente che le doe semibreve predicte siano computate con le quattro dapo la longa posite, le quale sono inter se simile, che non serà se non serano divise et computate in la longa sequente, la quale non è soa simile né propinqua, ma sì remota, et etiam perché in la similitudine cade la vera amicitia et conformità, et tale ordine harà in sé più rasone et iustitia che non harà l'ordine da lui assignato di sopra, perché ciascuna nota restarà nel suo proprio constituto numero et valore, cioè senza augumento et senza diminutione, cioè la longa (ut diximus) in valore de doe breve perfecte et le semibreve inseme giuncte perficerano doe volte el ternario numero, o vero dui tempi perfecti, per le quale rasone concludo che el puncto predicto posito intra le predicte doe semibreve da lui chiamato superfluo non serà superfluo, ma serà necessario, così per li docti come per li semidocti, perché la declaratione de le cose dubie è amica, così al docto come a lo indocto. Et per questo sequitaria che secondo lui li puncti positi da li grammatici per distinguere le dictione de la oratione, per complacere a li docti, non se doveriano ponere, et similimente li comenti facti sopra le altre facultà etiam seriano

¹ The present letter is a copy made for Del Lago; the original is lost. Spataro replies to no. 47, although he seems to imply in para. 1 that he is responding to a letter written after that of 22 Nov. ('al presente iterum torna dubitando'). This indicates that Del Lago conflated his two letters in the version to appear in his *Epistole*.

frustratorii. Ma dove lui dice che la prima breve posita in la sequente longa se fa imperfecta de la seconda semibreve a parte anteriori, et che la prima semibreve da le quattro sequente immediate dapo la longa fa imperfecta la seconda breve, la quale è inclusa in essa longa a parte posteriori, circa questo dico che lui ha malissimamente parlato, perché alle doe breve in la longa predicta incluse non se dà né prima né seconda, perché prima et seconda cadeno in quantità discreta o vero divisa, et alhora ciascuna sta per se disgregata da l'altra in apparentia, et non in una sola figura o corpo virtualmente considerata, ma bene li caderà ante et

4. Circa quello che lui dice, volendomi dimonstrare le condictione le quale a la nota alterata se conveneno, altro non dico, perché più oltra alcuna cosa se ne tractarà. Ma seguitando lui dice che la alteratione [se] causa tra le parte propinque et perfecte, et sequitando adduce una auctorità de Zoanne de Muris, dapo la quale iterum dice che la alteratione conviene essere facta tra doe parte propinque et perfecte, et non tra una perfecta et l'altra imperfecta, et e contra, come lui dice essere stato facto da me in lo anteposito exemplo. Et dice questo mio errore nascere perché la longa ex se è imperfecta, pertanto non li potrà cadere alteratione, perché ubi est perfectio ibi alteratio, et e converso. El nostro Pre Zanetto molto s'è affaticato indarno per volermi insegnare et dare ad intendere che quello puncto posito intra le predicte doe semibreve sia stato posito da me per puncto de divisione, cioè per evitare che la seconda de tale semibreve senza tale puncto non sia alterata, et crede che io sia tanto grosso che io ignori le conditione conveniente a la nota alterata, et lui non se accorge de uno suo errore doe volte dicto di sopra, cioè che la alteratione [se] causa tra doe parte propinque et perfecte, perché la nota da me intesa alterata non alteraria intra quelle note le quale sono sue parte propinque, ma sì intra quelle note de le quale essa nota alterata una serà parte propinqua, et l'altra remota, etc., come etiam seguitando se dirà.

5. Anchora el nostro Pre Zanetto contradice a sé medesimo dove dice che la semibreve predicta non potrà alterare inanzi a la longa sequente, perché tale longa non è perfecta. Qua lui tacite conclude che la semibreve predicta potria alterare inanti a la magiore nota a sé remota, cioè a la longa perfecta, la quale cosa da lui di sopra è stato negata. Ma per demonstrarli che anchora la alteratione de le note potrà acadere non solamente sequitando la nota magiore propinqua né remota, né remotior, né remotissima, ma che etiam potrà acadere dove non sequitarà nota alcuna a sé

magiore, adduco questi exempli sequenti: O 🗆 💊 🗞 🔳 🛛 🗞 🗞. Nel primo

exemplo de necessità quella seconda semibreve posita intra la prima breve et la longa plena serà alterata per complemento del ternario numero de la semibreve. Da me se concede quello che la simplice regola dice, cioè che la nota debe alterare inanti a la soa magiore propinqua demonstrata perfecta

61^v dal suo signo. Questa tale predicta regola se intende observarsi | quando dapo la nota alterata sequitasse una nota mazore la quale potesse essere receptabile de le doe note ut hic posite OI & Q. Ma quando (ut supra o

vero ut hic $\bullet \diamond \diamond \blacksquare$, et altri simili modi) quelle doe semibreve non

possono essere conumerate con alcuna nota mazore a sé sequente, alhora (rationibus predictis) tale nota apta a la alteratione debe alterare de necessità. Potria etiam la nota disposta a la alteratione essere alterata senza havere a parte ante né etiam a parte post alcuna nota magiore, ut hic 000, et altri simili modi, o vero ut hic 00000. Potria anchora rationabilemente alterare essa nota inanti a la nota simile de un'altro signo imperfecto, ut hic $\bigcirc \diamond \bigcirc \diamond \bigcirc \diamond$, \bigcirc vero ut hic $\bigcirc \diamond \bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc$, et in altri modi simili, come è stato demonstrato da Jacobo Obreth nel soprano del Patrem de la soa 'Missa de Malur me bat',² perché la alteratione non è stata inventa se non per complemento del ternario numero, et è più libera et arbitraria che alcuni rudi non credeno, ma bisogna essere usitata con industria et arte. Ma dove lui dice ubi est perfectio, ibi alteratio, et e converso, dico che lui non dice bene, perché dove serà perfectione sempre non sarà alteratione, perché uno concento potrà essere numerato dal principio al suo fine per ternario numero de note, senza trovarsi alteratione, ma la data alteratione non potrà stare senza perfectione.

6. Et oltra procedendo questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che lui el simile conclude che quello puncto posito intra le doe minime le quale sono posite tra la breve et la semibreve, come appare in questo exemplo:



dapo el quale exemplo lui sequitando dice che per la predicta rasone, che anchora dice che tale puncto è superfluo et non necessario, perché la soa

² Modern edn. in Obrecht, *Werken*, ed. Wolf, Missen, 4, and Obrecht, *Opera omnia*, ed. A. Smijers, i/4 (Amsterdam, 1955). Spataro must have been mistaken in the name of the mass, however, for the Credo is in duple metre throughout, precluding alteration. We have checked the other masses by Obrecht published by Wolf but could find no passage that fits Spataro's description, nor could he be referring to Josquin's 'Missa Malheur me bat'.

allegata regola sequita ut hic: Idem est de duabus minimis inter duas semibreves de maiori prolatione, nam quandocunque remanent due sine puncto in medio, secunda est alterata,³ et sequitando anchora dice che bene me ha demonstrato che la regola è contra di mi, perché^a la regola non dice che la minima deba alterare intra la breve et la semibreve, ma sì tra doe semibreve. Benché, Frate Petro mio honorando, per responsione de quello che ha dicto el nostro Pre Zanetto assai bastaria quello che da me è stato detto di sopra nel primo exemplo dove habiamo demonstrato che la regola anticha simplicemente per li rudi assignata in multi modi pò essere exceptuata et potrà patire, perché così potrà alterare la seconda de le doe minime in questi signi Θ C posite, non havendo ante se la semibreve ut hic

 2° , come se harà tale semibreve inanti ut hic $\circ \circ \circ \circ$, et anchora

dico che la minima predicta potrà così essere alterata inanti a la nota a sé $_{62}$ ^r mazore remota come inanti a la mazore propinqua ut hic $| c \downarrow \downarrow \Box \downarrow \downarrow$, o

vero ut hic $\epsilon \diamond \diamond \bullet$, et altri simili modi, perché la alteratione (ut dixi) non è stata inventa se non per el complemento ternario. Dove adoncha doe note (a tre numerate) restarano sole et sia l'ultima in la propria forma inanti a quale altra nota a sé mazore se voglia, o sia tale mazore propinqua, o remota, o remotior, o vero remotissima, o perfecta, o imperfecta, de le quale mazore alcuna non possa essere receptabile de le predicte doe note apte a la alteratione (come dicto habiamo), sempre l'ultima de le predicte minime serà alterata. Et circa questo altro exemplo non se assignarà, perché basta quello che di sopra è stato dicto et demonstrato.

7. Ma dove lui dice che se da me tale puncto è stato posito per puncto de imperfectione, che regolaremente ciascuna de tale note senza tale puncto serà intesa farsi imperfetta de la soa minore sequente, come quella breve nel primo exemplo de la prima semibreve et la prima breve la quale è inclusa in la longa che dapo sequita sarà facta imperfecta de la seconda semibreve, et similmente accaderà nel secondo exemplo, la seconda semibreve la quale è inclusa in la predicta breve serà facta imperfecta de la prima minima, et la sequente semibreve serà facta imperfecta de la seconda minima, a le quale soe parole respondo et dico che remosso quello puncto, el quale è posito intra le doe minime predicte, tale concento potrà dal theorico et speculativo essere considerato rationabilemente stare in cinque varii modi differenti, de li quali el primo serà come lui dice, che finitamente considerano le rude antiche regole, cioè che senza tale puncto

" We have deleted a superfluous 'è' following 'perché'.

la prima minima potrà essere intesa imperficere una de le doe semibreve virtualmente, et non formalmente, considerate in la precedente breve; et in questo loco (come di sopra è stato dicto) lui ha errato, dicendo che in tale breve stano prima et seconda semibreve. Per el secondo modo dico che remoto tale puncto, quella seconda pausa de minima posita inanti a la predicta breve vacua potrà rationabilemente essere riducta con quelle doe minime immediate posite dapo la sequente breve per accompagnarse con le doe simile a complemento del ternario numero, et per tale modo la breve anteposita a le doe predicte minime restarà complecta del suo integro valore, cioè de doe semibreve perfecte, et etiam l'ultima semibreve restarà perfecta, et questo serà recto processo perché (come a multi piace) l'è meglio a reintegrare che deficere et mancare. El terzo modo serà questo, cioè che quelle doe pause de minima non equalemente posite potrano essere intese imperficere quelle doe semibreve contenute in la sequente breve vacua, e da poi cogliere la prima minima sequente con la seconda alterata per complemento de una semibreve perfecta, et per tale modo la sequente semibreve vacua restaria perfecta. El quarto modo, non

^{62^v} appa rendo tale puncto intra le predicte doe minime posito, el musico speculativo potria considerare che una de le predicte doe minime fusse transportata ad imperficere una de quelle doe semibreve considerate in quella breve vacua, la quale è posita dapo la sequente semibreve, et questo se intende non essendo tale semibreve in essa breve considerate facte imperfecte da altre minore sequente, et l'altra minima potere essere riducta ad imperficere quella semibreve vacua la quale sequita immediate dapo le predicte doe minime. El quinto et ultimo modo, dico che el buono theorico, senza tale puncto, potria considerare che una de le predicte doe minime facesse imperfecta la sequente semibreve vacua et che l'altra fusse connumerata con l'ultima breve posita in tale exemplo per imperficere una de le semibreve in tale breve incluse, non essendo tale breve receptabile de più de un'altra minima a sé precedente o vero sequente.⁴

8. Per le predicte rasone dico che remoto tale puncto intra le predicte doe minime posito, perché el theorico et docto musico potria restare in molte dubietà, tale puncto non dovere essere dicto frustratorio né indarno posito. Imperò che quilli processi li quali in ciascuna facultà sono dubiosi, et che in varii modi posseno essere intesi, la sua declaratione non serà vana né superflua, perché ad ogni exercitante serà grata. Ma che tale processo, non apparendo el predicto puncto intra le predicte doe minime, possa essere inteso da li docti potere stare per li cinque modi predicti, dico che ciascuno dubioso processo, el quale per positione de uno o più puncti potrà essere reducto a la clara et nota intelligentia, che remoti tali puncti,

⁴ On the five ways of resolving this passage, see the Commentary.

³ See no. 47 n. 6.

etiam tale intelligentia potrà etiam per tale modo essere intesa dal speculativo et buono theorico, per la quale cosa el mio preceptore diceva che tutti li puncti exercitati in la mensurata musica erano frustratorii respecto al docto theorico, excepto che el puncto de augumentatione et de perfectione. Non dica adoncha el nostro Pre Zanetto che io doveva più presto cercare de complacere a li docti che a li rudi, ma prima lui doveva bene pensare, essendo lui, come forsa el se crede, del numero de li docti, non essendo el predicto puncto intra le predicte doe minime, se da lui seriano stati considerati in tanti varii [modi] potersi mensurare le note^b predicte. Ma aciò che lui non possa dire che quelle cinque mie demonstratione theorice assignate di sopra non pos[s]ino essere per tale modo considerate dal theorico, perché claramente non se posseno resolvere né riducere a la clara demonstratione per positione de puncti, pertanto ponendo da parte la prima, la quale è assai clara et apparente, adduco in luce la seconda ut hic:

63^r

-1 -1	el terzo ut hic	el quarto ut hic	el quinto ut hic
	r	1	r
~~~~			
	••••••		

Et le ultime doe predicte consideratione, cioè la quarta et la quinta, serano assai conforme a la soa oppinione, perché lui dice che la seconda minima non debbe alterare, perché inanti a la prima non sta la nota soa maggiore propinqua, cioè la semibreve.

9. Et oltra sequitando lui domanda se questo segno & posito in lo exemplo precedente è stato da me posito come segno per se o vero relato o comparato a questo  $\Leftrightarrow$  posito nel principio del soprano de tale mio concento. Respondo et dico che se tale segno stesse come per se, la mensura in cantando caderia in la semibreve et doe minime passariano per una mensura, perché volendo sequitare et tenire el stillo da li più oggidì usitato,⁵ in tale signo non diminuto per se considerato caderà la recta mensura in la minima, ma essendo diminuto, doe minime serano colte per una mensura o vero una semibreve imperfecta. Pertanto senza durare fatica in discorrere el contrapuncto, dico che a me pare che tale segno cada in subdupla con la dupla precedente et in proportione de equalità con questo segno  $\Leftrightarrow$  in principio cantus posito.

10. Et ultra procedendo, el preditto nostro Pre Zanetto dice che vole

che le predicte bastino circa a li dubii del soprano del predicto mio concento, et sequitando dice che nel contra alto del mio concento predicto che quello puncto el quale ho signato dappo quelle doe semibreve posite tra la longa et la breve, le quale se cantano sotto la dupla proportione segnata sotto questo segno C 3, ut hic

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2			
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et dice che per simile rasone, che lui crede che tale puncto sia stato per tale modo da me signato aciò che la seconda semibreve, dappo la quale immediate sequita la breve, non sia alterata. Et per demonstrare che lui dica la verità, dice che io el demostro poco dapo per quelle doe semibreve posite intra la longa et la maxima, quasi al fine del predicto contra alto

posite sotto questo segno ut hic +3

et questo dice essere vero perché non ho posito puncto alcuno intra la seconda semibreve et la maxima, et dice questo advenire perché la intentione mia è stata che quelle doe breve, le quale sono incluse in la longa posita dinanti a le predicte doe semibreve, se faciano imperfecte da le sequente predicte doe semibreve senza altra demonstratione de puncto, ma non così de le doe semibreve posite tra la longa et la breve, perché dice che la mia oppinione è che [senza il punto] la seconda semibreve debia alterare. Et etiam dice che similemente ho signato el predicto puncto dapo quelle doe breve posite intra la maxima et la longa, le quale se cantano sotto la dupla proportione signata sotto questo segno  $\phi_2$  ut hic

63^v | Et procedendo dice che io me potria excusare, dicendo havere segnato tale puncto aciò che li simplici et non molto docti cantori, cantando, non faciano alterare la seconda breve, et così anchora la seconda semibreve tra la longa et la breve sotto questi predicti signi posite C 3 ¢ 3. Ma dice che seria stato assai meglio havere satisfacto a li periti che a li imperiti, perché apresso a li docti se reputa quello puncto essere superfluo et non necessario.

11. Messer Petro mio honorando, questo nostro comune amico Pre Zanetto non pò levare lo ingegno ad alto, perché si nutrisce et pasce de cibi grossi, come sogliono fare li simplici, et più oltra non transcende et pensa con lo intellecto se non quanto lui trova scritto in quello suo auctore antico dicto Joannes de Muris, el quale anchora che habia simplicemente scritto, se potriano (con qualche exceptione) molte notabile particule

^b MS: nocte.

⁵ The 'current convention' of which Spataro speaks is the habit of treating  $\in$  as a sign of augmentation, so that the *tactus* falls on the minim rather than the semibreve. According to Spataro, the added stroke indicates diminution; therefore two minims or an imperfect semibreve pass for a *tactus*.

#### The Letters

demonstrarci a le quale el nostro predicto Messer Pre Zanetto non pò ascendere, perché, ut dixi, l'è tropo grave. Et più oltra non ascende se non quanto seria el grosso et simplice senso et parlare de quello che lui trova scritto, per la quale cosa, benché a le soe predicte argumentatione assai bastasseno le rasone da me di sopra assignate con varii exempli, pure a magiore soa chiarezza, li adduco in contrario la sequente auctorità del subtile J. Tintoris, el quale circa questo molto bene ha inteso, come appare nel suo tractato musico dove mentre che lui tracta de la alteratione de le cantabile note, dice ut hic: Tertia regula est quod omnis nota que alteratur, necesse est quod ante suam maiorem propinguam alteretur, ut longa ante maximam, brevis ante longam, et sic de singulis. Cuius ratio duplex est, quia loco note alterate maior propinqua poni non potest, eo quia similis ante similem non imperficitur. Unde que alteratione valet tantum duas, necesse valere tres, ad quod evitandum secunda prime^c similis est alterabilis. Secunda est quando due note minores^d eiusdem speciei ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam, ut due breves ante maximam, due semibreves ante longam, et sic de singulis, possunt eam imperficere, et sine alteratione numerus esset perfectus.^{e6} Di sopra appare che dal predicto Tintoris (tacite) è stato demonstrato et concluso che la alterabile nota potrà alterare inanti a la soa mazore remota, remotior, et remotissima.⁷ Et de questo serà claro el nostro Pre Zanetto se bene lui advertirà a quello che nel secondo modo è stato dicto dal predicto Tintoris, cioè che quando doe note minore de una medesima specie sono posite inanti a un'altra nota a sé magiore remota, etc., che se tale doe note potrano imperficere tale nota mazore remota, che alhora la seconda de tale note minore non serà alterata, et perché negatio unius (in hoc loco) est affirmatio alterius,

64^r

^c MS: proxime. ^d MS: minoris. ^e MS: imperfectus.

⁶ Spataro's quotations from Tinctoris do not agree with any known version of the *Tractatus alterationum*, and they contain several errors. Cf. Tinctoris, *Tractatus alterationum*, CS iv. 67, and *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 175: 'Tertia generalis regula est quod omnis nota quae alteratur, necessario ante suam maiorem propinqu'am alteratur, ut longa ante maximam, brevis ante longam, semibrevis ante brevem et minima ante semibrevem. Cuius ratio duplex est, prima, quoniam loco notae alterandae maior propinqua poni non potest, eo quod similis ante similem non imperficitur. Unde quae per alterationem valet tantummodo duas, necesse valeret tres. Ad quod evitandum secunda primae similis est alterabilis. Secunda ratio est, quoniam duae notae minores elusdem speciei ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam positae, ut duae breves ante maximam, duae semibreves ante longam, aut duae minimae ante brevem aut duae semibreves ante maximam, duae minimae ante longam, aut duae minimae ante maximam possunt eam imperficere, et sic absque alteratione numerus est in perfectione.' Spataro's substitution of 'quando' for Tinctoris's 'quoniam' in the last sentence obscures the meaning.

sequita che se tale doe note minore non potrano imperficere la nota

⁷ Spataro's belief that Tinctoris's use of the word 'possunt'—the two notes 'may' imperfect a remote value—allows the possibility that they might also be altered before it, is not confirmed by the examples in Tinctoris's treatise or in his pedagogical motet, 'Difficiles alios' (see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 67, 70, 82, 83). In Tinctoris's fourth rule (discussed below) alteration is allowed after, but not before, a remote value.

perché da la sequente breve plena non possono essere comprehese, et perché per altro modo non se potriano accomodare al ternario numero. Et per tale rasone sono state posite da me le doe semibreve predicte intra la

longa et la maxima senza puncto alcuno ut hic \$3 7 ° ° 7, perché

potendo essa longa et etiam la maxima essere receptabile de tale doe semibreve, non lice che la seconda sia alterata. Pertanto potrano essere riducte ad imperficere la precedente longa respecto le^f breve da essa longa contenute, o vero la maxima sequente respecto a doe parte remote, la quale declaratione è stata da me lassata in la consideratione del bono theorico o vero musico, perché quello sta nel mio arbitrio e voluntà. Che anchora la nota alterabile possa alterare, non essendo posita intra doe soe mazore propinque, cioè che la prima sia mazore remota et l'altra mazore propinqua, el predicto Tintoris el declara, dicendo ut hic: Quarta regula est quod licet due note minores ante maiorem propinquam solo invente, alia maiore remota, remotior vel remotissima ab illis duabus imperfectibili precedente, eo quod imperfectio tamquam odiosa magis quam^g alteratio sit evitanda, non hec^h ab illis imperficietur, immo ultima illarum alterabitur, nisi puncto intermisso ab ipsa propinqua dividatur,⁸ et da poi pone questo exemplo sequente:⁹



⁸ Tinctoris, *Tractatus alterationum*, CS iv. 68, and *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 175–6: 'Quarta generalis regula est quod licet duas notas minores ante maiorem propinquam solas inventas, alia maior remota vel remotior vel remotissima ab illis duabus imperfectibilis praecedat, tamen, eo quod imperfectio tamquam odiosa magis quam alteratio sit evitanda, non haec ab illis imperficietur. Immo ultima illarum alterabitur, nisi puncto ab invicem vel ambae ab ipsa maiore propinqua dividantur.'

⁹ Hard to believe as it is, Spataro, usually so careful—and doubly so when writing for Del Lago—makes two, albeit tiny, rhythmic errors in the example: a dot is missing after the second pair of minims, and the penultimate note should have a stem (there are also two errors in pitch). These errors possibly stem from the copyist of the letter. On the resolution of this passage, see the Commentary.

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Molte altre soe sententie et exempli potria assignare del predicto Tintoris, li quali apertamente sono contra le frivole rasone del nostro Pre Zanetto, el quale più oltra non tenta sapere se non quanto sonano le grosse parole de quello che è stato scritto da quelli soi rudi auctori antichi, ma sarano da me tacite passate per non procedere in longo, et etiam perché assai credo havere dicto in demonstratione de la mera verità, cioè che li puncti predicti da me in quello mio canto positi non sono superflui, ma sono necessarii, così per el docto come per el semidocto, | el quale con lo intellecto non ascende a tanta altezza, perché (ut dixi) la declaratione de quelle importantie, le quale possono per diversi modi essere intese, non serà mai dicta frustratoria, perché serà grata ad ogni pecto erudito et sano, dal quale ogni altro livore et passione serà remota.

12. Anchora sequitando, questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che circa quello puncto da me signato intra quelle doe semibreve posite intra quelle

che tale puncto sia stato da me per tale modo posito per doe rasone, et prima aciò che la seconda semibreve non sia alterata, et l'altra aciò che tale doe semibreve non remanesseno sole et senza el debito numero, et dice che anchora che non li fusse tale puncto, che mai la secunda semibreve non seria alterata, perché la alteratione se causa intra doe breve et non intra doe longe. Dice anchora che le predicte semibreve senza tale puncto non restariano sole, perché la seconda breve vacua inclusa in la prima longa se farà imperfecta de la prima semibreve immediate sequente a parte posteriori, et la prima breve vacua de la seconda semibreve a parte anteriori. Vedeti, el mio Frate Petro honorando, come parla questo nostro amico Pre Zanetto, perché lui dice che la prima longa ha la seconda breve vacua, et che etiam la seconda longa ha la prima breve vacua; lui tacite concede che le predicte doe semibreve non sono intra doe longe, ma sì intra doe breve vacue, cioè intra la seconda breve de la prima longa et intra la prima breve de la seconda longa, et per consequente serà da lui (tacite) affirmato che se nel medio de le predicte doe semibreve non fusse el puncto, che la seconda seria alterata, come vole la regola da lui allegata. Ma non però per tale rasone è stato da me posito tale puncto intra le predicte doe semibreve, ma solamente da altra mera consideratione, et da la terza regola da Tintoris di sopra assignata mosso, dove lui dice: Secunda est quando due note minores eiusdem speciei ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam, ut due breves ante maximam, due semibreves ante longam, et sic de singulis, possunt eam imperficere, ut sic sine alteratione numerus esset perfectus.ⁱ¹⁰ Pertanto dico¹ che se tale puncto non fusse posito intra le doe predicte semibreve, che la seconda de esse semibreve potria essere alterata, perché remoto tale puncto, tale doe semibreve (inseme colte) non posseno essere comprehese in la sequente longa ad imperficere quelle doe breve in essa longa considerate, et perché l'è meglio perficere et reintegrare che non serà imperficere et minuire, se tale puncto intra le predicte semibreve non fusse posito, per tale rasone la seconda de le doe semibreve predicte⁴ da ogni docto seria più presto intesa essere alterata, che imperficere la breve de la prima longa | et etiam de la seconda, perché come piace a Tintoris predicto, la imperfectione è molto più odiosa che non è la alteratione,¹¹ et come a Guido monaco piace, l'è meglio a crescere che minuire.¹² Ma lui

che non se parte da la aparente et grossa regola de quello suo Joannes de

Muris antico non potrà attingere a queste suttile consideratione. 13. Finalemente questo nostro amico Pre Zanetto dice che ho molto errato in certe ligature apparente nel contrabasso del canto mio predicto, et circa ciò fa uno longo discorso et molto dice, et adduce in contrario certe auctorità de certi antichi musici, le quale sono de poco momento et de nulla existimatione et importantia, perché non sono producte con rasone alcuna demonstrativa, ma solo per proprio senso considerate. Io trovo che li antichi hano solo dato regola de cognoscere le note ligate nel suo principio et nel fine, et circa el principio hanno addúcti tri modi differenti per cognitione de le figure o vero figura nel principio constituta. El primo è stato da loro chiamato con proprietà, et questo era quando la prima nota era breve. El secondo da loro è stato dicto senza proprietà, et questo era quando essa prima nota era longa. El terzo da loro è stato chiamato con opposità proprietà, et questo era quando la prima et seconda nota erano semibreve. Et circa el fine de le predicte note ligate è stato da loro considerato dui modi, de li quali uno è stato da loro chiamato con perfectione, et questo accadeva quando l'ultima nota era longa. Et el secondo modo era da loro chiamato senza perfectione, et questo acadeva quando l'ultima era breve, de le quale denominatione non se trova alcuno auctore, né antico né moderno, che ne assigni rasone alcuna, cioè che una medesima nota come la breve, per la quale rasone nel principio de la ligatura posita, sia chiamata con proprietà, et nel fine locata sia dicta senza perfectione, et la longa posita nel principio de la ligatura sia dicta senza proprietà, et posita nel fine sia chiamata con perfectione, oltra che (ut dixi) non è mai trovato auctore che di ciò adduca rasone alcuna. Ma alcuna

65^r

64 ^v

^{*} MS: predicta.

¹¹ See the 'fourth rule' above, para. 11.

¹² Spataro refers to the *Micrologus*, ch. 2, in which Guido describes the naming of the uppermost tetrachord with doubled letters, remarking that 'many call this superfluous; we however prefer to be superabundant rather than deficient' ('Hae a multis superfluae dicuntur; nos autem maluimus abundare quam deficere'); see *Micrologus*, ed. Smits van Waesberghe, p. 94.

^{&#}x27; MS: imperfectus. See n. 6.

¹⁰ See n. 6.

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volta molto ce ho pensato et studiato, et mai non ho saputo trovarne rasone alcuna. Pertanto ho pensato che tale denominatione siano state trovate più presto per uno certo ordine de brevità per essere inteso nel parlare, che per rasone.

14. Se adonca da Joannes de Muris et da Maestro Philippo de Vitriaco è stato ditto che tutte le note intra le extreme de le ligature posite sono breve, da loro non è però stato dicto che nel medio de tale extreme non se possa dare una o più longe, imperò che loro solo hanno pertractato de quele note ligate posite nel principio et nel fine, le quale, permutata la soa prima constituta forma, o vero per essere la prima più alta o più bassa de la seconda, con virgula, o senza virgula (et etiam de l'ultima) potrano mutare

nome et virtuale valore. Ma circa le intermedie, altro non dicono, perché 65 ciascuno scia, che se le regole date solo tractano de le note posite nel principio et nel fine, et che solamente nel principio de la ligatura potrà conditionalemente stare la longa, la breve, et doe semibreve, et nel fine solamente stare¹ la longa et la breve, che alhora le note intermedie serano breve, se simplicemente, cioè senza altro tracto, serano notate et posite. Ma se tale nota media," mediante la additione del tracto o vero cauda descendente (senza confusione posita) potrà essere intesa essere simplice longa, se domanda al nostro Pre Zanetto quale rasone lui potrà assignare contra tale clara positione, la quale chiamo clara perché 'forma est que dat esse rei'.¹³ Ma certamente che troppo audacemente circa questo è stato parlato da Prosdocimo padoano, expositore de Joannes de Muris, dal nostro Pre Zanetto allegato,14 dicendo che alcuni ignoranti moderni, li quali ionorano la via de la scientia, poneno la longa con el tracto descendente in lo medio de le note ligate, perché da Joannes de Muris non è stato dicto tanto oltra. Et dal nostro Pre Zanetto iterum voria sapere, dove Prosdocimo dice, Sed quidam moderni viam scientię ignorantes, etc., con quale scientia et rasone lui potrà demonstrare che la longa con el tracto descendente figurata a mano dextra non possa essere intesa et stare come longa nel medio de le note ligate? Lui non trovarà homo che di questo possa assignare alcuna vera rasone, ma ogni rasone serà bene contra lui, perché ogni spetie la quale ha propria et cognita forma, essendo mixta con altre specie formale, s'è fata nota et clara per la propria soa forma.

15. L'è adoncha da credere che Prosdocimo è stato superfluo et transgressore, perché (parlando senza respecto) è uscito fora de li termini rationali et de la intentione de lo auctore da lui exposto et commentato, et

questo se proba per quattro mere et optime rasone, de le quale la prima sarà perché se nel medio de le note ligate non se potesse dare la longa recta, o vero con la soa prima figura considerata picta, el sequitaria che el musico non seria in suo arbitrio, perché se uno compositore volesse sumere uno canto plano neumato, o vero ligato, per suo subiecto, et che lui volesse convertire ciascuna de le predicte note ligate in longa, lui non potria fare, secondo la erronea oppinione de Prosdocimo et del nostro Pre Zanetto, senza seperare le figure de tal canto plano neumato, et per tale modo solvendo, o vero non ligando tale longe, el subiecto sumpto non sequitaria el canto plano secondo le debite vocale demonstrate nel canto plano dal compositore tolto" per subiecto.¹⁵ Per la seconda rasone dico che da Prosdocimo et altri soi sequaci non è stato advertito al ordine tenuto in canto mensurato. Imperò che così come nel tempo perfecto doe semibreve vacue ligate con la breve, sempre la seconda altera, etiam nel modo minore perfecto, doe breve ligate con la longa, la seconda sarà

. Per la terza rasone dico che così come el modo minore perfecto

alterata, così appresso a li docti è observato che quando sono doe longe

ligate con la maxima, che la seconda longa debbia alterare, ut hic

(senza altro proprio segno o vero accidente proprio de perfectione) pò essere inteso essere perfecto in li concenti per la positione de tre breve inseme ligate ut hic et altri simili modi, che etiam el modo

magiore per tre longe ut hic ligate potrà essere inteso perfecto,

66^r

come da molti boni musici è stato exercitato, li quali accidenti proprii non potriano consequire se la longa non se potesse dare con la propria forma intra la extremità de le note ligate. La quarta rasone dico essere perché 'usus est altera lex',¹⁶ perché dato et concesso che da quella prima ruda antiquità anchora fusse observata tale regola da Prosdocimo audacemente adducta, dapo da la posterità a tempi nostri tale regola^o senza rasone considerata non è observata, perché se trovano multi concenti da doctissimi homini compositi, così antichi come moderni, che circa le note ligate

" MS: tolte. ^o MS: regole.

¹ MS: stata. " MS: note medie.

¹³ See no. 45 n. 24.

¹⁴ Del Lago is actually quoting from Ugolino's commentary on Johannes de Muris; see no. 47 n. 10.

¹⁵ Spataro's statement provides evidence that a cantus firmus taken from plainchant should preserve the same ligatures and text setting as the chant melody. It might also be extended to mean that a subject taken from plainchant, even if embellished, should follow the text setting of the chant. On this point, see the discussion at the Workshop on Josquin's Motets during the International Josquin Festival-Conference in Lowinsky (ed.), Josquin des Prez, pp. 649-51. At least one 16th-c. composer followed the text setting of the chant when paraphrasing, even when it conflicted with his normal practice in underlaying text; see Johannes Lupi, Opera omnia, i, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 84; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1980), pp. xiii-xiv.

¹⁶ See no. 17 n. 15.

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hano havuto poco respecto a le predicte regole antiche senza rasone adducte, de li quali, per satisfac[t]ione del nostro Pre Zanetto, alcuno sequitando ne adducerò in luce.

16. Et prima ho trovato che Gulielmo Dufay in lo contrabasso de uno

suo introito 'de Appostolis' pone le sequente note ligate .¹⁷ Se

domanda a Pre Zanetto, deffensore de la ruda antiquità, che nota serà quella la quale è posita nel fine de tale ligatura, cioè se tale nota (per essere più bassa de la penultima et etiam quadrata) serà (more antiquo) dicta con perfectione, et per consequente se serà longa, come le regole soe antiche vogliono? Ma a me pare che sia maxima, la quale è conosciuta perché tene la forma propria de la soa simplicità.¹⁸ Similmente el predicto G. Dufay in una particula de uno suo introito 'de Confessoribus' pone ut hic

¹⁹ Iterum se domanda al predicto deffensore de le antiche regole se l'ultima de tale note ligate, per essere più alta de la penultima, serà dicta senza perfectione, come la predicta antiquità dice. Item el predicto Dufay, in la prima parte della Gloria del tenore de la soa 'Missa

de Sancto Antonio da Padoa', pone questa ligatura 20 in la quale

ligatura la longa con el tracto a mano dextra, contra Prosdocimo et Pre Zanetto, sta nel medio de le note ligate. Anchora el predicto Dufay in la seconda parte de la predicta Gloria ha poste queste note per tale modo ligate , de le quale la prima serà extra regulam antiquam, perché non potrà essere dicta con proprietà, né senza proprietà, né etiam con opposita proprietà, come vogliono le an tiche regole. E stato etiam posito

¹⁷ Alejandro Enrique Planchart has identified this passage in Dufay's 'Missa Sancti Jacobi', mm. 27–8 of the contratenor of the Introit; see 'Guillaume Dufay's Masses: Notes and Revisions', *The Musical Quarterly* 58 (1972), 1–23 at 14. Modern edn. in Guillaume Dufay, *Opera omnia*, ed. Heinrich Besseler (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 1; Rome, 1950–66), ii. 18.

¹⁸ In the earliest codifications of rules for ligatures, the maxima was not included because it was not in use; all the rules apply to longs, breves, and semibreves *cum opposita proprietate*; see Franco of Cologne, *Ars cantus mensurabilis*, ed. Reaney and Gilles, pp. 43-51 and 59-64. Franco does recognize a 'duplex longa', but he treats it more as a convenience in notating two longs on the same pitch than as a separate note (see p. 30). By the time of Johannes de Muris, the maxima was well established, yet he does not mention it in his chapter on ligatures in the *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, nor does Ugolino in his commentary on the same work, written a century later. In 15th-c. music, however, maximas do appear in ligature, and this usage is sanctioned by Tinctoris in his *Tractatus de notis et pausis*, Book I, ch. 14 (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 116-17).

¹⁹ Identified by Planchart ('Guillaume Dufay's Masses', pp. 16-17) as the 'introit Os justi, for the Common of Confessors, which appears in Trent 88 as part of a cycle for Saint Francis (fols. 191^v-192')'. This is one of the mass propers attributed to Dufay by Laurence Feininger and published in his Auctorum anonymorum missarum propria XVI quorum XI Gulielmo Dufay auctori adscribenda sunt (Monumenta polyphoniae liturgicae Sanctae Ecclesiae Romanae, Series II: Proprium Missae, Tomus I; Rome, 1947), p. 151, mm. 30-4.

²⁰ On the examples from this mass, see the Commentary.

66^v

dal predicto Dufay nel predicto tenore queste sequente note ligate , le quale nel principio et nel fine non se posseno denominare secondo le regole antiche. Dal predetto Dufay nel predicto tenore sono state posite le sequente figure cantabile ligate et in tale ligature appare che la longa con el tracto a mano^p dextra sta nel medio de le note ligate. Et circa el fine del predicto tenore pone ut hic , et nel principio de la particula Qui sedes ha notato ut hic

17. Similemente ho trovato che Joannes Puloys, auctore antico, nel tenore de la prima parte de la Gloria de la soa 'Missa secundi toni', ha posto questa sequente ligatura  $2^{1}$  et nel contrabasso ha posito ut hic  $2^{2}$  et nel tenore Qui tollis ha notato ut hic  $2^{3}$  et etiam ut hic  $2^{2}$  et nel tenore Qui tollis ha notato ut hic  $2^{3}$  et  $2^{3}$  et mane.

²¹ Modern edn. in Johannes Pullois, *Opera omnia*, ed. Peter Gülke (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 41; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1967), pp. 1–18. David Fallows has traced the Pullois passages; see *Dufay* (London, 1982), p. 298 n. 7. The three longs in ligature are found at mm. 16–21 (p. 4). All three manuscript versions (Trent 87, 90 and 93) give the same ligature:

9 ∉

In the present case it can be demonstrated that Spataro compressed the intervals to fit the ligature on two lines (on this question, see the Commentary).

 22  Here we run into a snag because Pullois's three-voice mass has no 'contrabasso', nor is there any passage in the Contra that matches the ligature. Fallows believes the 'contrabasso' was a fourth voice, now lost. If there was a fourth voice, it must have been a *si placet* part, probably added by another musician, since the three-part version stands perfectly well on its own.

²³ This passage appears at mm. 85–9 (Gülke, p. 6), with the same ligature as in Trent 93 (fo. 215°):



(This version, lying a fifth higher, was overlooked by Gülke.) The last note of the ligature is a tone lower than given by Spataro; the error may stem from the copyist of Spataro's letter.

²⁴ There is no figure exactly like this ligature in the present section, but a passage occurs at mm. 102-5 with a dotted long-maxima ligature in Trent 90 (fo.  $106^{\circ}$ ). In Trent 87 (fo.  $169^{\circ}$ ) and 93 (fo.  $215^{\circ}$ ) the passage is written as three separate longs. Again, since we are not dealing with Spataro's original letter, we do not know whether it is the scribe who mistranscribed the first note as a maxima.

suo Patrem ha notato ut hic  $rac{1}{2^{5}}$  et etiam ut hic  $rac{1}{2^{5}}$  et Dufay predicto in uno tenore de lo offertorio 'de Spiritu Sancto' ha notato ut hic  $rac{1}{2^{6}}$  Et questi basti in quanto a la antichità.

18. Ma circa quelli li quali sono stato a li tempi nostri, ho trovato che Anthonio Brumello, nel tenore del secondo Agnus Dei de la soa 'Missa de l'home armé', ha notato ut hic _____,²⁷ la quale ligatura non se commemora in le regole antiche, et el nostro bono Josquino nel contrabasso Osanna de

la messa 'L'ami badechion' ha notato ut hic 57 .28 Anchora nel tenore

²⁵ The two figures come from a Credo that is an *unicum* of the Aosta Codex (Aosta, Biblioteca del Seminario Maggiore, A' D19), fos.  $35^{v}$ - $36^{t}$ . For a modern edn., see Arthur Parris, 'The Sacred Works of Gilles Binchois' (Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1965), ii. 181. Since the top left corner of fo.  $36^{t}$  is damaged, Parris was unable to read six and a half measures after the first two notes of the tenor:

Spataro's first example shows that the third note of the tenor is a maxima, and, indeed, a maxima on c' fits the harmonic context. Once again, Spataro's ligature indicates the spatial relation of the notes, but not their exact pitches.

The second example occurs in the tenor towards the end of the first staff:

²⁶ Planchart ('Guillaume Dufay's Masses', pp. 15–16) has identified this ligature as mm. 39–42 of the tenor of the Offertory 'Confirma hoc Deus' of the 'Missa de Spiritu Sancto' (Trent 88, fo. 118'), 'which forms part of the Proper cycle that includes the one alleluia ascribed to Dufay in Trent 90'. A modern edn. may be found in Feininger, *Auctorum anonymorum missarum propria* XVI, pp. 10–12. The ligature is different in Trent 88:



Planchart points out that the first long occurs at the end of a staff, and he believes the scribe 'could not fit the admittedly odd-looking ligature in, so he copied the D as part of the previous ligature with an oblique trait, and separated the two longs'.

²⁷ See Antoine Brumel, *Opera omnia*, ed. Barton Hudson (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 5; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1969–72), i. 87, mm. 41–4. Hudson's main source, Petrucci, has not a ligature, but Verona DCCLXI has.

²⁸ See Josquin des Prez, *Werken*, ed. Smijers, Missen 9, p. 87, mm. 79–85. Cappella Sistina 23 has no ligature; Verona DCCLXI has only the breve and maxima in ligature:

del Christe de la soa 'Missa Gaudeamus' ha notato ut hic 🗀 , ²⁹ et ne tenore de la seconda parte de la Gloria ha etiam notato ut hic 🗀 . ³⁰ Et ho
etiam trovato che Enrigo Yzach ha notato ut hic ਜ . ³¹ Anchora esso
Enrigo Yzach nel contrabasso del Christe de un'altra sua messa (de la
quale non scio el nome) ha notato ut hic Anchora esso
Enrigho nel tenore de un'altra soa missa pur sine nomine ha notato ut hic
et etiam nel tenore del Patrem de la sua 'Missa de Je ne fays' ha
posite ⁴ le sequente note ligate ut hic , le quale

note ligate et altre simile, perché la regola anticha (ut dixi) non le assigna nome alcuno, pertanto tale nome gli è assignato per la soa forma propria primamente constituta, a la quale regola anticha è stato anchora Philippo de Primis, in lo soprano de Osanna de la soa missa plena de arte dicta

'Portant semon',³² dove ha notato ut hic 🗂 . Imperò che la ruda et

anticha regola dice che quando accaderà che de le note la prima serà longa et etiam l'ultima, che se intra loro caderà alcuna intermedia, che serà breve, et di sopra tale intermedia serà maxima. Ha etiam in tale soprano Philippo preditto posite queste note sequente:  $\blacksquare$ , de le quale la prima non è declarata ne la antica regola. Ha posito anchora Philippo predicto

nel contra alto nel predicto Osanna queste note ut hic ligate i ,

67^r le quale ligature da la regola antica sono state tacite exceptuate, perché la soa cognitione è remissa a la propria soa prima apparente forma, et per tale

@ The MS has 'apposite' for 'ha posite'. This word occurs in a part of the sentence that was left out by the scribe and subsequently added by him at the bottom of the page. Cf. no. 60 n. g.

²⁹ See *Werken*, Missen 3, p. 57, mm. 17–24 (beginning of the Christe). The main source, Jena 32, has the ligature.

³¹ The Isaac citations are problematic, since Spataro does not name three of the masses and the fourth, 'Missa Je ne fays', is unknown. Martin Staehelin, in *Die Messen Heinrich Isaacs* (Publikationen der Schweizerischen Musikforschenden Gesellschaft, 2nd ser., 28; 3 vols., Bern and Stuttgart, 1977), i. 45, discusses Spataro's letter. He searched for the examples quoted and reported that he found similar passages, but no precise likenesses. The first of these examples, however, can be found in Isaac's 'Missa Chargé de dueil', in the tenor of the Sanctus, mm. 30–5; see Heinrich Isaac, *Messe*, ed. Fabio Fano (Archivium Musices Metropolitanum Mediolanense 10; Milan, 1962), p. 102. This is a mass Spataro had in one of his choir-books, San Petronio MS A. XXIX, fo. 30'; see Tirro, *Renaissance Musical Sources*, p. 40. Unfortunately, it is now missing from this source.

³² This mass, which Spataro greatly admired, seems not to have survived. It is also discussed in nos. 18, 21, and 86. On de Primis, see the Biographical Dictionary.

Gareth R. K. Curtis has recently proposed that, despite the abundance of sources ascribing this mass to Pullois, it is the work of an anonymous Englishman. See 'Jean Pullois and the Cyclic Mass—or a Case of Mistaken Identity?', *Music and Letters* 62 (1981), 41-59. Further studies will have to determine the validity of his conclusion.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 61, mm. 71-8. Jena 32 again has the ligature.

# The Letters

modo accade de la longa con el tracto posito a mano dextra notata intra le extremità de le note ligate, la quale serà cognita per la propria sua forma apparente, et rasone alcuna a questo non potrà essere contraria.

19. Per quello che di sopra è stato dicto, el nostro Pre Zanetto potrà comprehendere se da lui è stato dicto la verità dove lui dice che el non se doveria contradicere a li precepti antichi, et maxime in quelle cose le quale anchora sono approbate da l'uso, non solo da li moderni, sed etiam da li antichi de summa auctorità, perché per li exempli di sopra assignati adducti da li antichi et da li moderni, appare che li antichi precepti non sono stati da lui intesi, et che le note ligate da me posite non sono contra le vere regole antiche, et che etiam non se parteno dal moderno uso, et etiam che in ciascuno loco dove è stato da me signato el puncto, che tale puncto è necessario et non superfluo, et che non è digno de essere anullato et tolto via, come lui dice, perché non potrà inducere errore alcuno se non a quelli, li quali sono simili a lui, cioè che hanno una certa intelligentia terminata et finita, in modo che più oltra non possono ascendere, et questo forsa pende da qualche sua mala dispositione o peccato, imperò che 'in malivolam animam non intrabit sapientia'.³³

Vale, mi Petre.

#### De V.E. servitor, J. Spatario

I. Since you asked me as a favour that whenever our friend Pre Zanetto sent me queries about music I should respond in a manner appropriate to his questions, in order to comply with your wishes, which I regard as my superior's most just commands, I recently answered many of his queries and arguments [no. 45], and it seems he was satisfied. But now he comes back, claiming, or rather feigning, new doubts, which I shall answer for your sake. The letter is directed to you so you can participate in matters that interest you. Please show the letter to Pre Zanetto, then (as usual) return it to me because I want to put it with my other works which may interest a refined soul in the future.

2. First he says that in my motet 'Ubi opus est facto' I place a dot between two semibreves between a breve and a long, in this example:



³³ Wisdom 1: 4: 'Quoniam in malevolam animam non introibit sapientia.'

Then he says, begging my pardon, that the dot is superfluous, because the breve preceding those two semibreves would be imperfected by the following semibreve, and the first breve that forms part of the long would be imperfected by the preceding semibreve, and the second breve in the long would be imperfected by the first of the following four semibreves. Then he says he believes I intended the dot as one of division, in order to avoid alteration, and he spills much ink demonstrating that even without the dot alteration would not occur, giving an ill-considered reason.

3. First I say that he did not give sufficient consideration to the matter, for without the dot an intelligent musician could understand the passage in two ways. The first is his way, which is all a beginner could conceive. The second is as follows: the two semibreves would be considered alone and therefore would be counted with the following four semibreves to make a senary unit and the long would remain perfect. This is a better solution because the semibreves are more similar to each other than to the long, and since true friendship and agreement occur in similarity, this order is more rational than his, for every note preserves its full value, without augmentation or diminution. Therefore the dot is not superfluous but necessary, for experienced and inexperienced alike. On his view it would follow that sentences don't need punctuation and commentaries are unnecessary. But where he says that the first breve in the following long is imperfected by the second semibreve a parte ante and that the first semibreve of the four after the long imperfects the second breve in the long a parte post, he blunders, for one doesn't say 'first' and 'second' for the two breves in the long because these terms apply to discrete quantities, where each note is separate. In this case one says 'ante' and 'post' or 'left' and 'right'. If one were to consider a long as consisting of a first and second breve, there would be no difference between it and  $\Box \Box$ , and therefore the second semibreve would have to be altered since two semibreves would occur between two breves:  $\Box \circ \circ \Box \Box$ .

4. I shall take up the conditions for alteration later. He says that alteration occurs between perfect notes of the next greater value, citing Johannes de Muris, and not, as I had it, between a perfect and an imperfect note and vice versa. He says my error occurs because the long is imperfect *per se*, and only where there is perfection is there alteration. Our Pre Zanetto wasted a lot of effort in trying to teach me that my dot is one of division, to avoid alteration, and he thinks I am so thick as not to know the conditions of alteration. He doesn't realize his own error in claiming that alteration can only occur between two perfect notes of the next greater value, for my note is altered between one near and one remote value, as I shall show.

5. Pre Zanetto, furthermore, contradicts himself when he says the

semibreve cannot be altered before the long because the long is not perfect. This amounts to saying that the semibreve could be altered before a remote value that was perfect, which he denied above. But to demonstrate that alteration can occur not only before the next greater value or before remote and very remote values, but even when no larger note

follows, I adduce the following examples:  $\bigcirc \square \diamond \diamond \blacksquare \blacksquare \bigcirc \diamond \diamond$ . In the first,

the second semibreve has to be altered to produce a ternary unit of semibreves. I do concede the simple rule that alteration occurs before a next greater value shown to be perfect by its sign. This rule is valid when the altered semibreve is followed by a greater note that could be counted together with the two semibreves:  $O\square \diamond \diamond \square$ . But when (as above, or

thus:  $\bullet \diamond \bullet$ , or other similar examples), those two semibreves cannot be

6. Further on, Pre Zanetto says he concludes the same regarding the dot between the two minims in the following example:



He cites the rule: The same obtains for two minims between two semibreves in major prolation, for whenever two remain without a dot interposed, the second is altered.³ He claims the rule is against me, since it doesn't say 'between a breve and a semibreve'. I think I have sufficiently demonstrated in the previous example that the simple rule, made for beginners, can suffer many exceptions, for the second of two minims under  $\odot$  and  $\mathbb{C}$  can be altered with or without a semibreve in front and before a near or remote value or a blackened note. Since alteration was invented to complete a ternary number, wherever two notes in perfect mensuration stand alone

before any other note with which they cannot be counted, the second note will be altered.

7. When he claims that if I used the dot as one of imperfection, the passages could be so understood without it (the first breve in the first example would be imperfected by the first semibreve and the second semibreve would imperfect the first breve included in the following long, and the same with the minims in the second example), I reply that, without the dot, a theorist could understand the latter passage [the last five notes of the example in para. 6] in five different ways. The first would be his [Del Lago's] way, following the basic rule: the first minim imperfects one of the two semibreves contained in the preceding breve-and he again errs in saying 'first' and 'second' semibreve. The second way would be to count the minim rest preceding the breve with the two minims, leaving the breve in its full value as well as the semibreve. This is the right procedure because it is better, as they say, to restore than to be wanting. The third would be to consider that the two minim rests on different lines imperfect the two semibreves contained in the breve, then to alter the second minim, leaving the following semibreve perfect. The fourth would be to use one of the minims to imperfect one of the two semibreves within the breve following the semibreve, provided that these semibreves are not imperfected by succeeding smaller notes, and use the other minim to imperfect the semibreve following the minims. The fifth and last way would be to use one of the minims to imperfect the semibreve and the other to imperfect one of the semibreves in the following breve, provided that the breve is not imperfected by more than one other minim, preceding or following it.⁴

8. From the foregoing, I say that without the dot, a theorist or an experienced musician would remain in doubt; hence the dot is not superfluous. Clarification of an ambiguous passage is always welcome. Without the dot, the passage could be interpreted in five ways. The dots clarify the interpretation, but without them a good theorist can understand it. My teacher used to say that for a good theorist all dots are superfluous except those of augmentation and perfection. Pre Zanetto shouldn't be telling me to satisfy the learned rather than beginners. First he ought to consider whether he, believing himself among the learned, would have thought of those five different ways without the dot. Lest he claim that these ways cannot be clearly shown by adding dots, I demonstrate the second to fifth as follows:



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The fourth and fifth conform to his opinion that the second minim should not be altered because the first is not preceded by its near value, a semibreve.

9. Then he wants to know if  $\mathfrak{E}$  stands by itself or in relation to  $\Phi$  at the beginning. If it stood by itself, the beat would fall on the semibreve, with two minims per beat, for, following today's preferred usage,⁵ if the sign were not diminished, the beat would fall on the minim; it being diminished, two minims or an imperfect semibreve fall in one beat. Without taking the trouble to examine the counterpoint, I think it is in subduple proportion with the preceding dupla [see example in para. 2] and in equal proportion with  $\phi$  at the beginning.

10. Next Pre Zanetto turns to the alto and criticizes the dot following two semibreves placed between a long and a breve:

He claims I used it to prevent alteration, and as proof of this he points to a later passage where I place two semibreves without a dot between a long

and a maxima: <del>C3 •••</del>

my intention being (he says) that the two semibreves should imperfect the two breves included in the preceding long. But in the first case, he says, my opinion is that without the dot alteration would occur. In another passage he shows that I place a dot after two breves between a maxima and

a long under  $\phi_2$ :

He thinks I could excuse myself by claiming that the dots aid the inexperienced singer, but I should have satisfied the learned, who know this dot to be superfluous.

11. My dear Pietro, our friend Pre Zanetto is incapable of raising his sights since he is accustomed to the crude diet of simple folk; he cannot see further than what he finds written by this ancient author of his, Johannes de Muris, who, although he wrote plainly, can frequently be interpreted in ways beyond Pre Zanetto's ken. He perceives no more than the simple sense of what is written. Therefore, even though the preceding examples should suffice, I adduce the authority of the subtle Johannes Tinctoris, who understood this very well. In his treatise on alteration, he says: The third rule is that every note that is altered must be altered before its next greater value, as a long before a maxima, a breve before a long, and so forth. The

reason is twofold, for the next greater value cannot be substituted for the altered note because like before like cannot be imperfected, whence [a note] which by means of alteration is worth only two is necessarily worth three. To avoid this, the second note similar to the first is alterable. The second reason is that when two smaller notes of the same value are found before a greater value that is remote, more remote, or very remote, as two breves before a maxima, two semibreves before a long, and so forth. they can imperfect it, and without alteration the number would be perfect.⁶ Tinctoris (tacitly) shows that an alterable note can be altered before its remote, more remote, or very remote value.⁷ Pre Zanetto will realize this if he pays attention to the second reason; when the two notes can imperfect the larger remote note, the second note will not be altered, and since the negation of one (in a particular place) is the affirmation of the other, it follows that if imperfection cannot take place, alteration will. In

this example: Correction Tinctoris would say that the second

minim between the semibreve and breve is not altered because the two minims can imperfect the two semibreves in the breve. But if notated as

follows: _____, the second minim has to be altered in order

to make a ternary unit. This is why I placed two semibreves between a long and a maxima without a dot; they can imperfect the long or the maxima; the decision is up to the good theorist or musician. But alteration could also occur, as Tinctoris states: The fourth rule states that it is permissible for two smaller notes found alone before the next greater value to be preceded by another note that is remote, more remote, or very remote from these two notes that can be imperfected by them; since imperfection should be avoided as more odious than alteration, this note will not be imperfected by them; rather the last of them will be altered, unless it should be divided from its neighbour by a dot.⁸ Then he gives the following example:⁹



I could adduce many other examples from Tinctoris that are clearly against the flimsy arguments of Pre Zanetto, who seeks no further than the bare words of his primitive ancient authors, but I think I have said enough to demonstrate that the dots placed in my composition are not superfluous but necessary for learned and half-learned alike, since, as I said, the clarification of ambiguity is always gratifying to one of learned and sound mind not affected by envy or malice.

12. Then Pre Zanetto takes up the dot I used between two semibreves

# placed between two half-blackened longs: $\$ 3¶ $\diamond \cdot \diamond$ ¶. He believes I used

it for two reasons, to avoid alteration of the second semibreve, and to see that a ternary number was not lacking; but he says that, even without the dot, the semibreves would not be alone because they would imperfect the void breves contained in the longs. You see, Frate Pietro, how our friend talks: by speaking of breves within the longs, he tacitly concedes that the two semibreves are not found between two longs but between two breves, and therefore he tacitly concedes that without the dot the second semibreve would be altered, according to the rule cited by him. But I used that dot for another reason, moved by Tinctoris's third rule: The second reason is that when two smaller notes of the same value are found before a greater value that is remote, more remote, or very remote, as two breves before a maxima, two semibreves before a long, and so forth, they can imperfect it, so that thus without alteration the number would be perfect.¹⁰ Thus I say that without the dot, the second semibreve could be altered, for without the dot the two semibreves could not imperfect the two breves in the following long. It is better to perfect and join together than to imperfect and diminish. If the dot were omitted every learned person would understand the passage as alteration of the second semibreve rather than imperfection of the void breves in the two longs; for as Tinctoris says, imperfection is more odious than alteration,¹¹ and Guido says it is better to increase than to diminish.¹² But Pre Zanetto, who does not depart from the plain rule of his Johannes de Muris, cannot arrive at these subtle considerations.

13. Finally, our friend says I have made many mistakes in ligatures in the bass, going on at length and adducing the authority of certain older musicians, of no importance whatsoever because no reason is stated. I find that the older musicians give rules only concerning the beginning and end of ligatures. The first note is called 'with propriety' when the note is a breve, 'without propriety' when the note is a long, and 'with opposite propriety' when the first two notes are semibreves. The last note is called 'with perfection' when the note is a long, 'without perfection' when it is a breve. No author, old or modern, ever gives a reason why the same note, such as a breve, should be called 'with propriety' at the beginning of a ligature but 'without perfection' at the end and a long called 'without propriety' at the beginning and 'with perfection' at the end. I have sometimes given a lot of thought to this, but I never could come up with a reason for it. I think it was invented more for quick comprehension in speaking than for a sound reason.

14. If Johannes de Muris and Philippe de Vitry said that all the middle notes of ligatures are breves, they did not say that it was impossible to write one or more longs in the middle; they only dealt with the first and

last notes, which change their name and value through their relative position or through a stem. But they say no more about the middle notes; since the rules involve only the initial and final notes, the middle notes are understood as breves if they are notated as such. But if such notes, through the addition of a stem (without causing confusion) could be understood as longs, I ask Pre Zanetto by what reason he could object to this clear procedure, clear because 'it is form that gives essence to a thing'.¹³ Certainly Prosdocimo, the commentator on Johannes de Muris,¹⁴ is too bold in saying that some ignorant modern musicians, wanting traditional knowledge, place a long with a stem in the middle of a ligature, because Johannes de Muris did not go so far. And I'd like Pre Zanetto to explain, where Prosdocimo says 'but certain modern musicians, wanting traditional knowledge', etc., with what knowledge and reason he can demonstrate that a long with a stem descending on the right side cannot be understood and used in the middle of a ligature? He won't find anyone who can give a reason for this, and reason is against him, for each species has its characteristic form, which distinguishes it when it is mixed with other species.

15. Prosdocimo exceeded rational limits and went beyond the intention of the author he commented upon; I cite four good reasons. (1) If a composer cannot place a long in the middle of a ligature, he will lose his liberty; for if he wishes to take a plainchant with ligatures as a subject and treat each note as a long, he could not do it, according to the mistaken opinion of Prosdocimo and Pre Zanetto, without breaking the ligatures, and therefore the subject would not follow the syllabification of the plainchant.¹⁵ (2) Prosdocimo and his followers did not consider the system followed in mensural music. Just as two semibreves in ligature with a breve in perfect time will call for alteration of the second semibreve, so two breves in ligature with a long in the minor perfect mode call for alteration of the second breve, and the learned alter the second of two longs in ligature with a maxima. (3) Just as the minor perfect mode, without any specific sign, is indicated by three breves in ligature, so do three longs in ligature indicate the major perfect mode, and this is observed by many good musicians. This would be impossible if the long could not appear in the middle. (4) 'Practice is as good as a law';¹⁶ even if the earliest musicians observed Prosdocimo's rule, later musicians, up to our time, have not; one finds many compositions by the most eminent composers, older and more recent, that ignore that unsupported rule. To satisfy our Pre Zanetto, I shall give examples.

16. Dufay, in the bass of his Introit 'de Apostolis', has a ligature of two semibreves, a breve, and a maxima.¹⁷ I ask the great defender of antiquity, Pre Zanetto, what note is at the end: is it 'with perfection' because it is

lower than the penultimate note, and therefore a long, as his rule requires? I think it is a maxima, because it has the shape of a maxima.¹⁸ In his introit 'de Confessoribus' Dufay writes semibreve-semibreve-maxima.¹⁹ Again I ask, should that last note be a breve since it is higher than the penultimate note and therefore 'without perfection'? In the tenor of the Gloria of his 'Missa de Sancto Antonio da Padoa',²⁰ Dufay has a ligature in which the penultimate note is a long with a stem, against Prosdocimo and Pre Zanetto. In the same Gloria Dufay gives a maxima-long ligature. The first note is outside the old rule, for it is not with propriety or without propriety or with opposite propriety. Another ligature in the tenor is maxima-maxima; neither note fits the old rule. In two more ligatures you find a long in the middle with a stem. Towards the end there is a long-maxima ligature and at the beginning of the 'Qui sedes' a ligature beginning with a maxima.

17. Similarly, in the Gloria of the 'Missa secundi toni' by the old composer Johannes Pullois I find three ligatures with a long in the middle in the tenor,²¹ bass,²² and tenor of the Qui tollis,²³ and a maxima-maxima ligature.²⁴ Binchois, in the tenor of a Credo, has a maxima-long-maxima ligature and another that ends in a maxima.²⁵ Dufay, in the tenor of the Offertory 'de Spiritu Sancto', has a breve-long-long ligature.²⁶ This should suffice for the older composers.

18. In our times, Brumel, in the tenor of the second Agnus Dei of his 'Missa L'homme armé', writes a maxima-maxima ligature,²⁷ not found in the old rules, and our good Josquin in the bass of the Hosanna of his 'Missa L'ami Baudichon' writes long-breve-maxima,²⁸ and in the tenor of the Christe of his 'Missa Gaudeamus' maxima-maxima,²⁹ and likewise in the tenor of the Gloria.³⁰ Isaac wrote three longs in ligature³¹ and in the Christe of another mass maxima-breve-breve-long-breve. In yet another mass he wrote maxima-long-long, and in the tenor of the Credo of his 'Missa Je ne fays' he wrote maxima-maxima followed by five maximas in ligature. Since the old rule ignores these notes, they are determined by their actual shape. Philippo de Primis, in the Hosanna of his ingenious mass 'Pourtant se mon', ³² gives a maxima in the middle of a ligature; the old rule says it should be a breve. He also wrote a maxima-long and two maximas in ligature. These notes, tacitly excluded from the old rules, are recognized by their shape, and the same is true of the long with a stem in the middle of a ligature, and no reason can contradict this.

19. From the foregoing, Pre Zanetto can understand that if he stated the truth when he says the ancient precepts should not be disregarded, especially those approved by use, it appears—from the examples above that he didn't understand the old rules and that my ligatures are not against the true old rules nor contrary to modern usage. And wherever I used the dot, it is necessary and should not be removed, as he claims, for it can confuse only those who are similar to him, that is, those who have limited intelligence, and this perhaps proceeds from his evil disposition, for 'wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul'.³³

#### COMMENTARY ON NOS. 47 AND 48

The present exchange is typical of the relationship between Del Lago and Spataro. Priding himself on his knowledge of notation, Del Lago is certain that he has caught Spataro making two errors in his motet 'Ubi opus est facto'. One concerns the conditions under which alteration occurs, the other the propriety of writing a long in the middle of a ligature. Proclaiming his humble nature and his great reverence, Del Lago begs Spataro, 'per sua innata gentilezza', to resolve his doubts, although (he cannot resist confessing), he holds a different opinion.

Under imperfect minor mode and perfect *tempus* Spataro has written the following:  $\Box \diamond \cdot \diamond \Box$ . Del Lago contends that the dot is superfluous: Spataro

used it to prevent alteration, but alteration does not obtain because the two semibreves are not placed between two notes of the next greater value in perfect mensuration. He makes the same objection to a similar passage in imperfect

*tempus* with major prolation:  $\Box \stackrel{\downarrow}{\diamond} \cdot \stackrel{\downarrow}{\diamond} \diamond \Box$ . To support his opinion, Del Lago quotes his prime authority on notation, Johannes de Muris, and then—his trump card—Spataro himself, in the treatise written for Hermes Bentivoglio. He ends the letter in full confidence that he has been able to set Spataro right, 'for his honour'.

As usual, Del Lago has miscalculated. Spataro concedes de Muris's rule, but he contends that it was devised for beginners. Noting that there are many exceptions, he warms to the task of explaining them in detail, basing himself not on the rules but on the principle that alteration was invented to complete a ternary unit. Reason supplies where authority is deficient.

After vindicating his usage of the dot, Spataro proceeds, in a characteristic vein, to 'speculate further', showing Del Lago how the second passage, without the dot, could be resolved in five different ways. According to his description in para. 7, the five resolutions are as follows:








Third way



Fourth way



Fifth way

The fourth and fifth examples result in the same rhythm. Could the copyist have made an error in transcribing Spataro's letter? At the end of para. 8 Spataro notates the second to fifth ways, adding dots for clarification:





Third way



Fourth way





There is some discrepancy between the description in para. 7 and the notation in para. 8. In the third way, according to the description, the two minim rests imperfect the breve. Therefore the dot should have been placed before the first rest, as it is in the fourth way as notated. However, whether the breve is imperfected by one or both rests, the remainder of the example is the same,

#### 48. Spataro to Aaron, [Dec. 1532]

showing alteration after a remote value, which, although not sanctioned by Johannes de Muris, is permitted by Tinctoris's fourth rule. The fourth example is problematical. If we assume that the scribe inadvertently transposed the third and fourth examples, the single dot between the two minim rests does not clarify Spataro's statement that one minim imperfects the last breve and the other imperfects the semibreve; rather, alteration would be indicated. But Spataro specifically says that the second minim is not altered in the fourth and fifth examples. The solution must be that the first dot is correctly placed in the fourth example, but a dot is missing between the two minims. Thus the first dot would ensure that the breve is imperfected as to both its parts, and the second dot would prevent alteration, forcing the minims to imperfect the following notes since neither of them can imperfect the preceding note. The fifth example is almost exactly the same, but since the breve is imperfected by only one minim rest, it was necessary to place a dot before the first minim to prevent imperfection of the preceding breve a parte post. (In discussing the imperfecting minims in the fourth and fifth ways rather than the imperfecting minim rests, Spataro is describing a purely notional distinction at the expense of a real one.)

Not content with his examples, Spataro decides to beat Del Lago at his own game and return theorist for theorist. Whereas Del Lago's Johannes de Muris wrote plainly for beginners, the 'subtle Johannes Tinctoris' understood alteration very well (para. 11). Forgetting that he had once denounced Tinctoris as 'un pazo' (no. 29, para. 7), Spataro tries to enlist him in his battle with Del Lago over the question of alteration before a remote value. Tinctoris would have been amazed, for his rule does not support Spataro's contention, and the two reasons that he appends to the rule do not, as Spataro claims, allow one to believe that 'Tinctoris (tacitly) has demonstrated and concluded that an alterable note can be altered before its remote, more remote, or very remote value'. To his credit, he does use the word 'tacitly'.

Spataro is on firmer ground, however, when he claims that Tinctoris allows alteration when two smaller notes fall between a remote value and the next greater value, such as two semibreves preceded by a long and followed by a breve. Spataro quotes the example given by Tinctoris in illustration of his fourth rule, but with two small rhythmic errors. Tinctoris gives the example as follows:³⁴



In the following transcription, the notes marked with an asterisk are altered; those marked with a cross are imperfected. All note-values are perfect (1 maxima  $= 3 \log s = 9$  breves = 27 semibreves = 81 minims). In view of the difficulty of reading the long note-values, we have divided the measures into units of breves (separated by one bar-line), longs (indicated by a double bar-line), and maximas (triple bar-line).

³⁴ Tinctoris, Tractatus alterationum, in Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 176, Ex. 6.



Unlike Gafurio's examples, those Tinctoris gives in all his notational treatises (except the one on proportions) are monophonic. This makes it difficult to be certain that one has arrived at the resolution intended, especially when alternatives are possible. For example, the second note calling for alteration under the fourth general rule is the seventh note. But according to Tinctoris's fifth general rule of alteration, which follows this example, the fourth note should also be altered, since the ligature has the value of two longs and is placed between two maximas; the fifth rule states that the note to be altered must have the proper form, but its companion may be divided into smaller parts. It is hard to believe that Tinctoris, who takes great pains to illustrate his points in order, would present an example that demonstrates a rule not yet formulated. But unless a second long is missing after the first (the other altered notes are followed by paired notes of the next greater value), the long must be altered; otherwise we should have an improbable syncopated maxima.

The real difficulty, however, occurs at the end of the example. A clue that either we have not transcribed it correctly or the original is defective lies in the incomplete number of longs: the last maxima-unit lacks a long (the final note of a composition is considered to be unmeasured; the mensural unit must be completed with the penultimate note). The necessity of completing all mensural units demanded by the time signature is discussed in Del Lago's letter to Spataro of 23 August 1532 (see no. 44, paras. 10–11). Since this example shows the mensuration of the maxima, all maximas should have three longs. The four extant sources of Tinctoris's *Tractatus alterationum* have no differences in note-values in this example. Was Spataro correct in writing a breve instead of a long as the penultimate note? In fact, his version shortens, instead of lengthening, the final maxima-unit by one long, for the first breve of the ligature would imperfect the preceding long (and if this note were to imperfect, it should not be in ligature). If there is an error in the example, it might indeed be the penultimate note; if it stood alone instead of in ligature with the preceding three notes, the last maxima-unit would be perfect: breve-altered breve-long plus long.

The polyphonic examples of major mode in Tinctoris's treatises tend to support the theorists' demand that the mensural units be complete on all levels indicated by the metric signature. There are three examples in the Proportionale, in all of which the correct number of longs is given,³⁵ and one in the counterpoint treatise.³⁶ In this last example, all three voices have passages in proportions, and the number of longs in each part differs: 20 in the superius, 18 in the contratenor, and 13 in the tenor. According to the signature, the piece is in the imperfect major mode; therefore the number of longs in the tenor is irregular. None of the compositions collected in Tinctoris's Opera omnia specifies the major mode. In his pedagogical motet, 'Difficiles alios', the perfect major mode of the prima pars is correctly observed, but the imperfect major mode of the secunda pars is not followed, since there are 27 longs in the tenor, equivalent to  $13\frac{1}{2}$  maximas.³⁷ In this section, as in the example in the counterpoint treatise, the use of proportions seems to interfere with the observance of major mode. Three anonymous compositions in Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, MS M. 1013, the source of Tinctoris's 'Difficiles alios', indicate major mode (fos. 114^v-115^r, 116^v, 117^v); in each, the proper number of longs is observed. On the foregoing evidence, Tinctoris would not, in a composition not making use of proportions, have neglected the major mode; and hence our present example, as given in the Tractatus alterationum, is indeed incorrect, or incorrectly resolved.

The second major topic of discussion in nos. 47 and 48 is the propriety of writing a long in the middle of a ligature. Del Lago, following fourteenth- and fifteenth-century authorities, insists that such notation is improper. Spataro, appealing to reason and common use ('practice is as good as a law'), defends the usage. He also shows that many composers use maximas in ligatures, a configuration not sanctioned by the theorists.

During the course of his discussion Spataro offers many examples, from known as well as unknown compositions. Of particular interest are his quotations from Dufay's 'Missa de Sancto Antonio da Padoa'. This mass, mentioned in Dufay's will, has hitherto been considered lost. David Fallows, in a letter of 1 April 1981, suggested that the mass survives, but that it was incorrectly identified as Dufay's other mass for St Anthony (St Anthony Abbot), the 'Missa Sancti Antonii Viennensis', also mentioned in his will.³⁸ Fallows has subsequently worked out his hypothesis in convincing detail in the chapter on 'The St Anthony Masses and Other Doubtful Mass Music' in his recent book on Dufay.³⁹ The mass bears no title in the unique source in which it appears complete, Trent 90, but Heinrich

³⁹ Dufay, pp. 182-8.

³⁵ Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, iia. 24, 53-4.

³⁶ Ibid. ii. 128–30.

³⁷ See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 105-16.

³⁸ A modern edn. appears in the Opera omnia, ii. 47-68.

Besseler identified it as one of the masses of St Anthony on the basis of excerpts of the Gloria and Credo quoted by Tinctoris in his *Proportionale musices*, who cites the mass simply as 'de sancto Antonio'. Because Besseler did not find the seven ligatures quoted by Spataro as coming from the mass for St Anthony of Padua in the mass in the Trent manuscript, he concluded that the latter was the mass for St Anthony Abbot.

The difficulty in identifying the passages quoted by Spataro is twofold. Spataro writes the ligatures on as few lines as possible; in all but two of the ligatures with staff lines, all the notes move stepwise. As Fallows has demonstrated in clearly identifiable passages from the mass by Pullois, Spataro has sometimes compressed intervals in the interest of saving space, since his concern was only the form of the ligature. Therefore the spatial relations of the notes in his examples may actually be different. Secondly, we do not know what source Spataro was quoting from; what appears as a ligature in one source may be divided in another, or the ligature may extend over fewer or more notes. In the case of the 'Missa Sancti Antonii' of Trent 90, we have only one source to compare with Spataro's examples. With these considerations in mind, David Fallows (p. 184) identifies the first ligature

quoted by Spataro (  $\rightarrow$  ), said to come from the tenor in the first part of the Gloria, with mm. 6–11 of the tenor of the Gloria of the mass published by Besseler (p. 49). The passage appears in Trent 90 (fo. 396') in the following form:



In support of Fallows's identification, it might be pointed out that the first three notes are anomalous in the tenor part, which has few repeated notes, but this notation seems to be the only way to transform the blackened long and breve into white notation. A similar example is found in mm. 48–9. Since the ligature is divided differently in Trent 90, a long does not fall in the middle, as it does in Spataro's example.

Spataro's second example (  $___$ ) comes from 'the second part of the Gloria'. At the opening of the second part of the Gloria, the 'Domine Deus' section (Besseler, p. 51), the tenor has the following ligature in Trent 90 (fo.  $396^{\circ}$ ):

A second source, Perugia MS M. 1013, has recently been discovered for part of this section of the mass, but it has the same ligature as Trent 90.⁴⁰

Spataro's third example, two maximas in ligature, is found at mm. 84–7 (Besseler, p. 51). For the fourth example (

passage at mm. 70-3, written thus in Trent 90 (fo. 396^v):

⁴⁰ Fos. 96^v-97'; see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', p. 37, no. 30.

The first note of the first ligature, D, forms the last note of Spataro's second example, a maxima-long ligature. For Spataro's fifth example ( ), Fallows suggests mm. 77-9, written thus in Trent 90:



In this place the Perugia source differs slightly from Trent but does not match Spataro's version:



Spataro's sixth example ( ), appearing 'near the end of the tenor', can easily be identified with the final notes of the tenor (Besseler, p. 51, mm. 100-5), which ends with two long-maxima progressions, although neither is in ligature:

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Spataro's last example (_____) comes from the beginning of the 'Qui sedes' section. This is a separate section in Dufay's mass, and the tenor (mm. 165-70; Besseler, p. 53) appears as follows in Trent 90 (fo. 398'):



This is the only instance of the seven where the configuration of rhythmic values does not match Spataro's examples exactly. Fallows believes that Spataro's second note is a copying error; indeed, there is no way to fit an extra breve into the music.

While the 'Missa Sancti Antonii', as transmitted by Trent 90, does not show any longs in the middle of ligatures, they can be found in other compositions (e.g. fo. 100^r, second staff; fo. 110^r, top staff; fo. 111^v, seventh staff; fo. 119^v, seventh staff; fo. 157^r, second staff, etc.) as well as in the other Trent codices. Spataro was perfectly right that the rule cited by Del Lago was not always observed. Anonymus XII allows longs in the middle of a ligature: 'Omnis nota quadrata habens filum seu proprietatem in dextra parte sive sursum sive deorsum longa est, sive initialis, media vel finalis'.⁴¹ Tinctoris, while stating that all middle notes are

⁴¹ CS iii. 486

breves, with the exception of a second semibreve *cum opposita proprietate*, does include longs in the middle of a ligature in some of his music examples.⁴² He also recognizes that maximas can be used in ligatures.⁴³

B.J.B.

⁴² For the rule, see *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 115. For the music examples (in different treatises), see ibid. i. 155-6, 178, 193.
⁴³ Ibid. i. 116.

**49** (J112). Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale. Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 2 January 1533 (autograph)¹

[Reverendo et venerabile] et excellentissimo musico Frate [Petro Aron f]lorentino de l'ordine [hyerosolomitan]o, quanto magiore honorando. In Vinetia, [Sanct]o Zoanne de li furlani.

^{1^r} Excellentissimo et de li musici dotissimo, el mio honorando Frate Petro, Idio vi mantenga in sanità et in la gratia soa.

1. A li giurni passati io feci resposta ad una de V.E. a me missa con quello vostro mutetto facto sopra el tenore 'Da pacem domine', el quale fu cantato el giorno de Sancto Tomaso Appostolo² da li cantori nostri et sumamente laudato, et a me molto piace, del quale ve rendo gratie senza fine. Da poi el giorno de la natività del nostro Signore Messer Jhesu Christo ebi un'altra de V.E. con la copia mia de la resposta facta al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto [no. 45], et etiam la emendatione del contra alto del mutetto del mio preceptore [Ramis, 'Tu lumen']. Del tuto rengratio V.E. Et etiam ho inteso le parole le quale sono state tra V.E. et el predicto Pre Zanetto, et etiam li mali portamenti de Frate Allexandro. Mai più non fidarò de simili poltroni frati.

2. Et etiam con tute le mie forze et virtù rengratio V.E. che s'è dignato discorere con deligentia li mei canti et ancora darme adviso de li errori retrovati, prima che siano notati et scripti nel libro del nostro choro. Pertanto dove diceti che nel mutetto 'Gaude Maria' sopra la parola del canto dicta 'credidisti' sono doe duodecime col contrabasso come qui:



emendareti el basso, che stia ut hic:³  $\xrightarrow{p}$ 

Ma dove V.E. dice che nel mutetto 'Ave gratia plena', sopra la parola 'plena', tra el contra alto et el basso sono molte discordantie ut hic:

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cioè, che dapo la decima magiore sequita una octava superflua, et che in tale loco sono tre semiminime molto discordante continuate, cioè la prima

The Letters

¹ A facsimile of the first page of this letter is given in Tirro, Renaissance Musical Sources, p. 58. ² 21 Dec.

³ The corrected version is found in MS San Petronio A. xxxxv, fo. 10^t. For a modern edn., see Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 536–43. The corrected passage occurs at mm. 35–7.

in nona magiore, la seconda più de octava de uno apotome, et la terza più de septima minore, a le quale vostre argumentatione respondo et dico che tale processo è stato asai bene considerato da me prima che a V.E. fusse mandato,⁴ et tengo et credo che possa rationabilemente stare, non tanto per la velocità quanto per la rasone de la taciturnità^a la quale cade intra la percussione de uno tempo musico a l'altra percussione, la quale taciturnità è stata comemorata da Franchino Gafurio nel capitolo 2º del primo tractato De harmonia instrumentorum, dove dice queste belle et vere parole: In medio enim percus[s]ionum, que per sono[s] fiunt, quedam eveniunt taciturnitates quibus soni invicem discernuntur, etc.⁵ Se adonca (come è la verità) nel medio o vero intra le percussione sonore cade taciturnità, restarà (come ogni doctrinato consente) che el serà quasi frust[r]atorio affaticarsi circa el consono de tale tacito intervallo, perché la taciturnità non è nota al senso de lo audito. Tale processo et el sequente, come se dirà, fu da me facto con sumo studio et non ignorantemente, per le predicte naturale rasone, et perché certamente io me existimava quello che è advenuto, cioè che da V.E. (in tale passo) seria dubitato, ma certamente che non ce cade alcuna dubitatione, perché procedendo per tale modo uno discorso continuo, pure che nel primo moto la voce sia concorde, asai basta, come più volte da me seti stato advertito, per le quale demonstratione dico che quelle tre semiminime predicte, ancora che siano in distantia non concorde con la semibreve predicta ut hic # signata, non serano note al senso de lo audito come V.E. dice, perché percoteno el tempo musico nel durare et non nel suo primo moto et percussione. Ma veramente che V.E. haria potuto parlare più musicalemente dove diceti che la prima semiminima cade in nona mazore, perché, essendo V.E. musico perito, meglio seria stato dicendo che tale semiminima cade in diapason con tono. Ma in tuto haveti errato dove diceti che la terza semiminima cade in uno spatio più de septima minore, perché se bene mensurareti tale distantia, trovareti che tra tale terza semiminima locata in D grave et quella semibreve posita con questo signo # in C acuto cade diapente con ditono, o vero uno spatio de septima mazore. Ma per darvi notitia come da tale semiminima posita in D grave ne lo intenso se potesse dare più de la septima minore et manco de la mazore, guardareti a questo exemplo:"

## 13 20 9 0

*^a MS*: tarciturnità. Spataro intended to write a Db

ıv

^b MS: first note Eb; from the context it is obvious that Db.

Alhora intra tale note cade distantia de quattro toni et tri minori semitonii, che sono uno semitonio minore più de la septima minore. Et circa questo altro non dico perché tale verità è clarissima.

3. Ancora circa questo processo



el quale diceti stare nel fine del canto predicto, dico come di sopra, cioè che sta bene, et che quella quinta imperfecta non è sensibile.⁶ Ma bene seria nota al senso de lo audito se quella semibreve posita nel tenore fusse divisa in doe minime, perché, etc. Et se pure non sta bene, tale errore è stato da me imparato da li precepti de V.E. dati nel vostro *Toscanello* nel 17° capitulo del secondo libro, dove mentre che tractati de la diminutione, diceti ut hic: *Et avertisci a li canti diminuti, che sempre la prima nota et ultima in uno discorso diminuto vuole essere concordante, et li medii diversi alquanto con dissonantie, come el discorso naturale comporta, nel quale, per la velocità che in sé hano le voce in tale diminutione, essendo in essa alcune dissonantie, non sono incomode allo audito del cantore*, etc.⁷ Et circa questo altro non dico, perché 'intelligenti pauca',⁸ et perché 'turpe est doctori',⁹ etc.

4. Et da poi sequitando V.E. dice che nel mio mutetto 'Nativitas gloriose'¹⁰ ne la prima parte, sopra la parola 'semine' del canto con el contra alto, se procede per tri unisoni come qui:

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el quale errore serà da V.E.^c emendato nel contra alto ut hic:



" We have deleted a superfluous 'serà' here.

⁶ In the revised version of this motet, Spataro let the diminished fifth stand at the end of the *prima pars*; see Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', p. 567, m. 53.

- ⁷ Aaron, *Toscanello* (Venice, 1529), fo. I4^r.
- ⁸ See no. 15 n. 9.
- ⁹ Disticha Catonis 1. 30:
- Quae culpare soles, ea tu ne feceris ipse.

Turpe est doctori quum culpa redarguat ipsum.

(What you habitually condemn do not do yourself.

It's a disgrace for a teacher when his censure convicts himself.)

Spataro found this quotation particularly apt in his treatise against Nicolò Burzio, the *Honesta defensio* (Bologna, 1491), fo. C5^c.

¹⁰ This motet has not survived. The 'Nativitatis gloriosa' that Jeppesen mentions ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 31) is actually Spataro's 'Nativitas tua', which he sent to Aaron on 27 Nov. 1531 (see no. 36, para. 13), without giving its title. The excerpts quoted in nos. 37 and 39 allow its identification with Spataro's 'Nativitas tua' entered into MS A. xxxxv.

⁴ Spataro had sent the motet with no. 46. See the facsimile and transcription at the end of the letter. On his later revision of this passage, see the Commentary.

⁵ Gafurio, *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus* (Milan, 1518), fo. 3'. Spataro had made a similar point in an earlier letter to Aaron; see no. 11, para. 10 and Ch. 5, 'The Art of Composition'.

Et etiam dove V.E. dice havere trovato nel tenore de^d la prima parte del predicto mutetto sopra la parola 'de tribu' dui unisoni con el contrabasso^e



^{2^r} Et sequitando diceti che in dui o tri altri lochi haveti trovato doe quinte, una perfecta et l'altra imperfecta, etc., le quale da me sono usitate perché credo che non siano contra l'arte de la harmonica facultà. Circa le note le quale mancavano in lo tenore et nel canto, haveti facto bene a ponerle, come diceti, a li soi lochi debiti.

5. Et molto rengratio V.E., che s'è dignato fare deligente discorso circa tali mei male ordinati concenti, el quale male ordine è nato per tropo fidarmi de mi medesimo, perché senza altramente farli cantare li notai de la cartella e a V.E. li mandai. Ma da poi de alquanti de tali errori me acorsi, et alcuni ne furno da me emendati. Pertanto io teneva per firmo che da V.E. seria admonito, le quale admonitione sono da me aceptate come paterne. Pertanto ve rendo gratie senza fine.

6. Al nostro venerabile Pre Zanetto darò resposta, et mandarò el canto 'Ora pro nobis' de Othobi¹¹ come potrò, perché sono alquanto occupato per la causa già a V.E. scripta, circa questa tediosa gente del papa et de lo imperatore.¹² Messer Nicolao et Don Leonardo a V.E. mandano saluti senza fine, el quale Messer Nicolao dice che Victorio dice che non vole venire qua, ma vole ogni modo andare a Roma a la partita del papa, et a questo l'ha exortato Francesco milanese, optimo sonatore de leuto. Et io ho parlato con el barba de esso Victorio, el quale è canonico nel nostro Sancto Petronio, el quale dice che el reverendissimo Cardinale da Campegio ha tolto Victorio in protectione, et vole che vada a Roma.¹³ Pertanto bisognarà sperare in altro. Se altro se trovarà, darò aviso. Asai me ne duole, perché credo che seria piaciuto al reverendo vostro patrone

^d MS: da. ^e We have omitted a superfluous 'dui unisoni'.

[Sebastiano Michiel], al quale et a li soi figlioli me recomandareti, et etiam a V.E. me recomando, pregando quella me voglia conumerare nel numero de li vostri amici et servitori.

Vale. Bononie, die 2ª januarii 1533.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

1. Recently I answered your letter sent with your motet on the cantus firmus 'Da pacem Domine', which was sung by our choir on St Thomas's Day² and highly praised. I too like it very much and thank you warmly. The day after Christmas I received another letter with the copy of my response to Pre Zanetto [no. 45] and also the corrections in the alto of my teacher's motet [Ramis, 'Tu lumen']. Many thanks. I understand the words that passed between you and Pre Zanetto and also the bad behaviour of Frate Alessandro. Never again shall I trust such lazy friars.

2. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for so diligently examining my works and advising me of errors before they are entered into our choir-books. In my 'Gaude Maria' where you find parallel twelfths:

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please change the bass as follows:³ 2; • • •

In my 'Ave gratia plena' you object that after the major tenth there is an augmented octave, and that there are three highly discordant semiminims in succession, giving respectively a major ninth, an octave plus a major semitone, and an interval greater than a minor seventh:



I considered that passage very well before I sent you the motet,⁴ and I think it can stand, not so much for the quickness of motion as for the

¹¹ See no. 45 n. 11.

¹² Spataro refers to the second meeting in Bologna between Clement VII and Charles V, Dec. 1532–Feb. 1533 (the first having taken place Nov. 1529–Mar. 1530); see Ludwig Pastor, *Storia dei Papi*, iv, pt. 2, 438–44.

¹³ Victorio is probably the young man who was studying Aaron's *Toscanello* with Spataro (see no. 46, para. 2).

stillness between one sounding beat and another. Gafurio, in his De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum, puts it in these beautiful and true words: For in the middle of the percussions created by the sounds some stillnesses occur, setting off one sound from the other.⁵ Therefore if there is stillness between musical sounds, every intelligent person will agree that one need not be concerned about the sound of such a still interval, not perceived by the ear. I wrote that passage and the next with great care, having in mind these reasons, but I was sure you would query it. Yet no question should arise since the first beat is consonant, as I have told you on other occasions. Even though these three semiminims are not concordant with the  $c^{\mu}$ , they are not heard as such because they occur after instead of on the beat. You could have spoken more musically by calling the interval of the first semiminim an octave with a tone rather than a major ninth. But it is totally false to say that the third semiminim, d, creates an interval greater than a minor seventh with the c#'; it is a fifth with a major third, or a major seventh. To make that interval greater than a minor seventh but lesser than a major, you would have to write this:

which makes a distance of four tones and three minor semitones, a minor semitone more than a minor seventh.

3. Then you object to the following passage at the end:



I say, as above, that the diminished fifth is not audible,⁶ but it would be if the semibreve were to be divided into two minims. If this is not correct, I learnt the error from your *Toscanello*, where you say: *And be aware that in small note-values, the first and last in a series should be concordant; those in the middle can be varied with dissonance, as in natural speech; the small notes pass so quickly that the dissonances do not disturb the listener*, etc.⁷ I say no more, for 'a word to the wise',⁸ and 'it's a disgrace for a teacher', etc.⁹

4. In my 'Nativitas gloriose'¹⁰ you point out a progression of three unisons in soprano and alto:



49. Spataro to Aaron, 2 Jan. 1533



At 'de tribu' you found two unisons between tenor and bass:



Please change the passage to:



You say that in two or three other places you found two fifths, one perfect, the other imperfect; I used them because I don't believe they go against the art of harmonic practice. You did well to fill in the missing notes in tenor and soprano.

5. Thank you very much for being so diligent in examining my disordered compositions; the disorder is due to trusting myself too much, for I copied them fresh from my score (*cartella*) and sent them off without having them sung first. Afterwards I discovered several errors and emended them. I was sure you would criticize me, and I accept your criticisms gratefully as paternal admonitions.

6. I shall answer Pre Zanetto and send him Hothby's 'Ora pro nobis'¹¹ once I am free of these tedious people of the Pope's and the Emperor's.¹² Nicolò [Cavalaro] and Leonardo send their greetings. Nicolò says that Victorio doesn't want to go there [to Venice] but to Rome when the Pope leaves, and Francesco da Milano, a first-rate lutenist, is encouraging him. Victorio's uncle, a canon at San Petronio, says Cardinal Campeggio has taken Victorio under his wing and wants him to go to Rome.¹³ So we'll have to look elsewhere; if I find someone else, I'll let you know. I regret this because I am sure he would have pleased your patron [Sebastiano Michiel], to whom and to whose sons I commend myself.

#### COMMENTARY

If there is anything that Spataro finds hard to do, it is admitting error. In theory he will cheerfully concede that he is not infallible—see no. 27, para. 2—in practice it is another matter. In this letter we see him go as far as he will ever go. He confesses that he sent the two motets to Aaron fresh from the *cartella*, 'without having them sung first'. This, then, is not his usual practice. And we must not think too badly about his need for aural corroboration, for the famous story of Johannes Manlius' tells us the same about Josquin: 'Whenever he had written a new composition, he gave it to the choir to sing, while he was wandering about listening intently whether everything sounded right. When something displeased him, he would step towards the choir and say: "Enough—I shall change it."'¹⁴

There were a number of errors in his compositions that Spataro could not excuse or defend. The one he did defend against Aaron—and we today should side with Aaron—is the sounding of a minim  $c \natural$  in the bass against a held-over semibreve  $c \sharp'$  in the alto (see the third example in para. 2). Spataro bases himself on the theory of the 'silences between the notes', which he already used in an earlier letter to Aaron (no. 11, 6 May 1524) in explanation of the dissonances emerging from syncopation. There he says (para. 10) that only the notes freshly sounded on the down-beat are perceived by the ear, whereas the suspension, lasting to the next sounding of the syncopating voice, is accepted by the sense of hearing in place of a rest.

In both letters Spataro uses the concept of 'taciturnità', but not precisely in the same sense. In 1524 we are still dealing with an audible phenomenon: the held-over note on the up-beat has lost the down-beat's intensity of sound; it is accepted by the ear 'in place of a rest', but it is not a rest. In 1533 Spataro goes further; he says: 'la taciturnità non è nota al senso de lo audito', and the phenomenon that he now wishes to explain is not the down-beat of the dissonant syncopation, but the dissonance between a long held note and a freshly sounded short note. This is the first time in a technical analysis that Spataro introduces—since it is not a physical phenomenon—a metaphysical concept. Does he really believe in it? Probably not, for when he entered the motet into his choir-book (San Petronio MS A. xxxxv, fos.  $23^{v}-25^{v}$ ), he changed the alto so as to avoid the contested dissonance:¹⁵



The only person I can think of who has come to terms with the concept of 'stillness between the notes', albeit translated into the visual, is Christian Morgenstern (1871–1914), in his poem 'Der Lattenzaun':

## 49. Spataro to Aaron, 2 Jan. 1533

Es war einmal ein Lattenzaun, mit Zwischenraum, hindurchzuschaun. Ein Architekt, der dieses sah,

stand eines Abends plötzlich da und nahm den Zwischenraum heraus und baute draus ein großes Haus.

Der Zaun indessen stand ganz dumm, Mit Latten ohne was herum.

Ein Anblick gräßlich und gemein. Drum zog ihn der Senat auch ein. Der Architekt jedoch entfloh nach Afri- od- Ameriko.

Or, in the magnificent translation by Max Knight:

There used to be a picket fence with space to gaze from hence to thence. An architect who saw this sight approached it suddenly one night, removed the spaces from the fence and built of them a residence. The picket fence stood there dumbfounded with pickets wholly unsurrounded, a view so naked and obscene, the Senate had to intervene. The architect absconded, though,

to Afri- or Americo.¹⁶

If one can take a 'Zwischenraum' and build therefrom 'ein großes Haus', then one can take the 'stillnesses between the notes' and compose out of them a sonata. Only a poet's fancy can transform a 'metaphysical' concept into a sensually perceptible figure. Not endowed with a poet's mind, Spataro, most prosaically, corrected the offensive notes.

There remains one question: if he did not believe in the concept of 'stillness between sounds', why did Spataro use it in his debate with Aaron? Answer: Anything to win an argument!

E.E.L.

¹⁶ See Christian Morgenstern, *Galgenlieder, A Selection*, trans. Max Knight (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963), pp. 16–17. Knight has kindly given us permission to quote the revised translation in *One and One Make Three* (Berkeley, 1988), p. 198.

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¹⁴ Helmuth Osthoff, Josquin Desprez (2 vols., Tutzing, 1962-5), i. 82.

¹⁵ For a modern edn. of this revised version, see Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 564–70.

#### 50. Spataro to Aaron, 4 Mar. 1533

**50** (1103). Fos. 246^r-247^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 4 March 1533 (autograph)

^{247^v} [Reverendo et] venerabile et doctissimo musico [Petro Ar]on florentino de l'ordine [hyerosolomitano], quanto magiore honorando. [In] Vinetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

^{246^r} Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici excellentissimo, el mio honorando et molto da me amato Frate Petro Aron, etc.

1. El primo giorno de la macra et nogliosa quadragesima, qual fu a li dì 26 de feberaro proximo passato, hebi una de V.E. de dì 19 del predicto signata, la quale a me fu molto grata, non tanto per havere inteso che V.E. ha receputo la resposta da me facta a Pre Zanetto [no. 48], de la quale stava in dubitatione, quanto per havere ancora inteso che la Signoria de Messer Camillo non resta con mi sdegnato, ma che da soa Signoria è stata aceptata la mia excusatione, et etiam perché a me pare che ogni giorno più lo amore de V.E. cresca verso di me indigno. Io non responderò a molte particole contenute in la predicta vostra per non essere longo nel scrivere. Ma certamente che el dolce sono de li scripti de V.E. per tale modo me move per grande letitia a lacrimare che non in una sola volta ma in più volte bisogna che tali scripti de V.E. siano da me letti. Ho inteso la offerta la quale V.E. me ha facta per parte del reverendo Monsignore vostro [Sebastiano Michiel], la quale aceptarei se io credesse ringiovenire, ma temo adveniria tuto el contrario, perché tali pasti sono più per li gioveni che per li vechii. Ma credo che venendo io qua, a me seria più utile et con comodo piacere el stare nel fondico de li todeschi che altra cosa.¹ Nientedimanco, rengratio soa Signoria reverenda da la soa bona intentione, et tuto de soa Signoria reverenda sono, et de ciascuno de li soi figlioli, et a tuti humilemente me recomando.

2. Ho etiam inteso quanto V.E. dice de Pre Zanetto, al^a quale già per complacere a V.E. con mio incomodo doe volte ho dato resposta circa le

^a MS: el.

soe argumentatione da rudo scripte. Ma se più tornarà a scrivere (poiché da V.E. m'è dato libero arbitrio) farò quello che a me parerà. Con lui et altri simili non se pò fare guadagno, perché sono simile ad uno campo sterile, nel quale è vano affaticarsi, perché non pò producere alcuno bono fructo,² et soto umbra de disputatione cercano imparare, et con soi^b frivoli argumenti et de poco momento cercano farsi tenire docti. Et qui me maraveglio che in questa cità, la quale è la prima del mondo, non sia homo che li responda. Ma da poi penso che qua sono homini sapienti, li quali asai bene sano che la più condecente resposta la quale se possa dare ad uno pazo et arrogante è el tacere et lasare tali pari in la soa ignorantia e mateza.

3. Circa el mio tractato de canto mensurato, fareti el parere vostro, ma pure haria acaro, prima che fusse impresso, darli una ochiata. Tamen V.E. facia el suo parere.³

4. Circa quello che el reverendo vostro patrone desidera sapere de Victorio, a li dì 27 del predicto feci legere al barba suo la vostra littera circa la sua particula. In suma lui me disse che Victorio era acunzato cum ^{246^v} el reverendissimo cardinale Redupho,⁴ et che li dava dieci ducati | el mexe et la camera fornita, et la spexa per lui et per uno servitore, et una cavalcatura, et etiam li haveva promisso de vestirlo de novo una volta l'anno et provederlo de benefitii nel futuro tempo, sì che 'intelligenti pauca'.⁵

5. A li giurni passati V.E. me mandò uno suo mutetto a cinque voce composito sopra el canto plano 'Da pacem domine',⁶ el quale fu alhora cantato da optimi cantori, et molto a loro et a me piaque. Ma da poi (per mio piacere, et per imparare) tale concento è stato da me examinato, nel quale ho trovate alcune positione de voce che (iuditio meo) potriano stare

⁶ Spataro does not give the text of the other voices, but from the words he mentions in connection with various errors he detected, it is likely that the motet begins with the responsory text 'Exaudiat Dominus orationes vestras, et *reconcilietur* vobis, nec vos deserat *in tempore* malo. Dominus *Deus vester*. Det vobis *cor omnibus*, ut colatis eum, *et faciatis* eius voluntatem. Dominus . . .' (*Antiphonaire monastique* . . . *de Lucques* (Paléographie musicale 9; Tournai, 1906), p. 299). The second part of the text comes from the beginning of the responsory 'Impetum inimicorum *ne timueritis*: memores *estote*, quomodo salvi facti sunt patres nostri: *Et nunc* clamemus in coelum, et miserebitur nostri Deus noster' (*Antiphonaire monastique* . . . *de Worcester*, p. 181). The responsories are based on 2 Macc. 1: 5, 3 and 1 Macc. 4: 8–10. The remainder of the text probably comes from the responsory 'Aperi coelos [*recte* oculos] tuos Domine et vide afflictionem nostram. Circumdederunt nos gentes ad puniendum nos. Sed tu Domine *extende brachium tuum* et *libera animas* nostras' (ibid., p. 182).

¹ When Spataro says that if he were to come to Venice, he would prefer to stay at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, he is undoubtedly joking, for this warehouse, meeting- and lodging-place for German merchants in Venice, existing since the 14th c., was the most sumptuous hotel in Venice in the Renaissance. This is where the richest merchants, such as the Fuggers, and kings, such as Henri III, stayed when they came to Venice. It was famous for its magnificence, its frescoes painted by Giorgione in 1509, its location—right on the Grand Canal next to Venice's most beautiful bridge, the Rialto—and its importance as a centre of commerce and exchange. See Molmenti, La storia di Venezia nella vita privata, ii. 183; for a picture of the Fondaco, see ii. 81. See further Peter Lauritzen, Venice: A Thousand Years of Culture and Civilization (New York, 1981), p. 123. For a brief analysis of its economic importance, see Richard Ehrenberg, Das Zeitalter der Fugger, 3rd edn. (2 vols., Jena, 1922), i. 72–3.

^b MS: soe.

² Ironically, in writing four years earlier to Del Lago, Spataro uses similar words about Aaron (during a lengthy gap in their correspondence); see no. 27, para. 2.

³ On the projects for printing this treatise, see Ch. 3.

⁴ Niccolò Ridolfi; see the Biographical Dictionary.

⁵ See no. 15 n. 9.

meglio, como sequitando a V.E. demonstrarò, et prima nel soprano quasi nel principio sopra la parola 'reconcilietur' ut hic notato:⁷

L'ultima minima et la sequente semibreve con el contrabasso cadeno in quintadecima ut hic:

Et dove, oltra procedendo, el contrabasso predicto fa questo processo:⁸

quella seconda minima posita in E grave cade in quinta imperfecta sopra la quarta longa del tenore primo posita in  $b fa \perp mi$  acuto signata con questo segno b. Et perché de tale processo da V.E. già fui repreheso nel contrabasso de quello mio canto chiamato 'Ave gratia plena',⁹ V.E. potrà iudicare che se in tale loco ho errato, che etiam quella in questo predicto loco non restarà senza colpa.¹⁰ Ma certamente che nulla importa, perché nel vostro et nel mio concento tale quinta imperfecta cade nel tacere che fa la voce intra la data percusione de uno tempo a l'altro.¹¹ L'è vero che el vostro seria mazore errore, ancora che el vostro concento sia signato con questo segno c. Pure l'uxo moderno (in cantando) bate le semibreve, et per tale modo la vostra predicta seconda minima nel predicto contrabasso in E grave posita caderia in la prima percussione del tempo in cantando.¹² Ma V.E. potria dire che voleti che el vostro concento sia cantato secondo

⁷ In many of the following examples, emendations have been made in the original letter. Spataro's procedure is to single out a contrapuntal fault in Aaron's motet, give the example as Aaron has it, then emend the example. We present the original version but indicate the emendations in footnotes. In the present case, he changed g' to bb'.

⁸ Spataro added a flat before e.

⁹ For Spataro's defence of his use of a diminished fifth in this motet, see no. 49, para. 3.

¹⁰ Spataro faults Aaron for not writing a flat before the *e* to correct an imperfect fifth against the tenor. He does not consider that the flat might have been added by *musica ficta*, and rightly so, because he knew that Aaron advocated writing out accidentals that would not be immediately obvious to the singer. Aaron likens these accidentals to signposts that show the singer the correct path to take; see his *Tascanello*, Book II, ch. 20, and especially the *Aggiunta* to the 1529 edn., where he discusses the problem at length and cites many examples. Spataro himself entered a number of accidentals in his choir-books, but by no means all that are called for; in particular, following the convention of the time, he generally left the *subsemitonium modi* up to the singers. See the analysis by Frank Tirro in the chapter on '*Musica ficta*', in 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 248-321.

¹¹ On the concept of 'silences' between sounding notes, see no. 11, para. 10, no. 49, para. 2 and Commentary, and Ch. 5.

¹² On this point, see no. 30 n. 2.

el segno diminuto posito in fronte cantus, et per tale modo quella se potria salvare.

6. Similemente ho trovato nel predicto contrabasso sopra la parola 'in tempore', ut hic notato:

che el tenore secondo fa questo processo:¹³  $3b \cdot 1$ 

Quella prima semiminima se move in nona con la prima minima posita dapo la semibreve punctata posita nel predicto contrabasso. Ancora nel predicto contrabasso sopra la parola 'deus vester' ut hic notato:

## 2: ...

quella minima cade nel contra alto in undecima sopra la prima semiminima ut hic posita:¹⁴

Ho trovato etiam nel predicto contrabasso sopra la parola 'cor omnibus' ut hic:

che sopra tale processo el tenore secondo se move ut hic:¹⁵

^{247^r} Et circa questo non aduco altra rasone in luce, perché credo apresso ad alcuno docto compositore non se trovaria uno simile descenso, cioè de octava in quinta. Et etiam oltra procedendo, ho trovato che el soprano, sopra la parola 'et faciatis' ut hic notato:

quella terza minima cade in sextadecima con el contrabasso, ut hic notato:¹⁶



et etiam la quarta minima del predicto soprano descende de 17ª in

¹³ Spataro corrected the tenor by changing the two semiminims to one minim g.

¹⁴ Spataro corrected the example by substituting a minim d' for the two semiminims.

¹⁵ The second tenor voice is conjectural because the example is partially covered by a smear in the manuscript. The pitch but not the rhythm of the first two notes is clear; the last note is not legible.

¹⁶ Spataro changed the semiminims A and G to a minim G.

quintadecima con el predicto contrabasso, la quale cosa (iuditio meo) non è processo da docto. Ancora nel contra alto sopra la parola 'ne timueritis' ut hic notato:

ho trovato che quella seconda nota descende con el tenore primo ut hic notato de sexta in quinta, cosa asai incomoda al mio parere et non usitata:

Similemente nel secondo tenore sopra la parola 'estote' ut hic notato:

quella terza semibreve con modo non grato né usitato descende de decima in octava con el contrabasso ut hic figurato:

Item nel contrabasso sopra la parola 'et nunc' così notato:

ho trovato che la terza minima cade in undecima con el contra alto ut hic notato:

Et nel tenore secondo sopra la parola 'extende' ut hic notato:

la seconda et terza minima descendeno con doe octave con el contrabasso ut hic notato:

Ancora dove el secondo tenore sopra la parola 'libera animas' ut hic notato:¹⁷

' MS: extote.

¹⁷ Spataro corrected the g to d'.

con el contrabasso, el quale sta ut hic:

2: boboon

a me non piace quello ascenso el quale cade de sexta in octava intra la prima minima del tenore predicto et le sequente doe con el contrabasso predicto. Et etiam a me non piace dove nel soprano sopra la parola 'brachium tuum' ut hic notato:¹⁸

et el contrabasso ut hic posito:

cade la quintadecima intra la semibreve del soprano et dapo, sequitando doe semiminime, sequita un'altra volta essa 15^a, la quale cosa non è laudabile apresso a multi docti, perché la perfectissima distantia et sonorità de le doe quintadecime predicte è male ocultata al senso de lo audito per la poca portione del tempo la quale hano in sé le predicte doe semiminime intra le doe predicte quintadecime pronuntiate, de le quale importantie ho advertito V.E. per bene, et così per bene prego quella le voglia acceptare, perché le corretione a me da quella facte circa li mei concenti me sono molto grate, et così prego quella voglia acceptare le mie se sono digne da essere acceptate.^d Et etiam prego quella facia el simile in questa mia missa¹⁹ la quale ho composita per dare alcuna volta refrigerio a le mie adversità, et del tuto darme adviso, aciò che io possa securamente ponerla in luce, la quale a V.E. mando non come cosa docta, ma per la più humile et bassa compositione che mai fusse da me et etiam da altri facta, et a V.E. genuflexo humilemente me recomando.

Vale. Bononie, die iiii martii 1533.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro

1. On the first day of lean and tiresome Lent, 26 February, I received your letter of 19 February, which pleased me—not so much to hear that you got my response to Pre Zanetto [no. 48] but to learn that Messer Camillo, rather than being angry with me, accepted my excuses, and that

^d MS: acceptata.

¹⁸ Spataro replaced the two semiminims with one minim g'.
¹⁹ 'Missa O salutaris hostia'; see no. 55, para. 1.

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every day your affection for my unworthy self seems to grow. The sweetness of your letter moved me to tears of joy; I reread it many times. If I thought my youth would return, I should gladly accept the offer you make on behalf of your Monsignore [Sebastiano Michiel]. But if I were to come [to Venice], it would give me greater pleasure to stay at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi than anywhere else.¹ Nevertheless, I thank his Reverence for his good intention and I humbly recommend myself to him and his sons.

2. I understand what you say about Pre Zanetto, whose rudimentary queries I have twice answered, not without inconvenience, to gratify you. If he writes again, I shall, since you have given me freedom of action, do as I see fit. No gain comes of dealing with such people, who are like a sterile field incapable of growing good fruit.² Under the guise of debate they seek to learn, using frivolous arguments to appear educated. I am really amazed that in Venice, the first city in the world, no one replies to him; but then I realize that they are wise, because the best answer one can give an arrogant fool is silence, leaving him to his ignorance and imbecility.

3. Do what you please with my treatise on mensural music, but I'd like to look it over before it is printed.³

4. Regarding your reverend patron's wish to know about Victorio, his uncle told me Victorio had settled down with Cardinal Ridolfi,⁴ who was giving him ten ducats a month, a furnished room, expenses for himself and a servant, and a horse, and had promised him new clothes once a year and benefices in the future. 'A word to the wise.'⁵

5. You recently sent your five-voice motet on the cantus firmus 'Da pacem Domine', which was sung by the best singers and greatly pleased them and me.⁶ Later, for my edification and instruction, I went over it and found some places that, in my judgement, could be improved. In the soprano at 'reconcilietur' parallel fifteenths occur with the bass:⁷



Later on, the bass sounds a diminished fifth with the tenor  $(e \natural$  against  $b \flat$ ),⁸ an interval you criticized in my 'Ave gratia plena'.⁹ If I have erred, you too are not without blame.¹⁰ But it doesn't matter because in both our motets the diminished fifth occurs in the silent interval between beats.¹¹ True, yours would be the greater error even though your signature is  $\varphi$ .

Nevertheless, modern practice is to beat the semibreve, and your diminished fifth falls on a down-beat.¹² But you could save yourself by saying the motet should be sung under  $\diamondsuit$ .

6. At 'in tempore' you have a ninth:¹³



At 'deus vester' there is an eleventh:¹⁴



And at 'cor omnibus' an octave leaps down to a fifth:¹⁵



At 'et faciatis' you write a sixteenth and the soprano descends from a seventeenth to a fifteenth with the bass, a progression not used by a skilful composer:¹⁶



At 'ne timueritis' a sixth of the alto with the tenor leaps down into a fifth—awkward, it seems to me, and not in use:



At 'estote' a tenth of the tenor with the bass descends to an octave, an unpleasant progression not commonly used:

		Q	Q	
<u>.</u>				••••
• .	+			
	Þ	~	-0-	0

At 'et nunc' I find an eleventh of the bass with the alto:



At 'extende' you write parallel octaves between the second tenor and the bass:



At 'libera animas' in the same voice pair I don't like this particular form of ascent from a sixth to an octave:¹⁷



nor the parallel fifteenths barely concealed at 'brachium tuum':18

50. Spataro to Aaron, 4 Mar. 1533



Many learned men criticize this, for the perfect distance and sonority of the two fifteenths is not hidden by the brief passage of the two semiminims. I hope you will accept these criticisms in good part, for your corrections of my works are very welcome to me. Please do the same for the enclosed mass¹⁹ (which I composed to afford me some relief to my tribulations) so that I can bring it out with assurance. I send it not as something learned but as the most modest composition ever written by me or others and I humbly bow my knee before you.

#### 51. Spataro to Aaron, 8 Mar. 1533

## **51** (J105). Fo. 249^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 March 1533 (autograph)

- ^{249^v} [Reverendo et venerabile et] doctissimo musico [Petro A]ron florentino [de l'ordine hye]rosolomitano, [quanto maggiore h]onorando. In Vinetia, [Sancto Zo]anne de li furlani.
- ^{249^t} Reverendo et de li musici doctissimo, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Petro Aron.

1. A li dì 4 del presente ho receputo una de V.E., a la quale subito brevemente feci resposta solo perché pareva che quella desiderasse sapere presto del Vilano tenorista, etc., el quale, come ho scripto a V.E., è intrato in capella del papa in loco de uno el quale è morto, che era chiamato Messer Andrea,¹ sì che el predicto Villano ha scripto qua el falso per pervenire a qualche suo disegno, perché come multi dicono, è homo molto dopio.

2. Hebi etiam una del nostro amico comune, Pre Zanetto, el quale molte de le mie resposte me rengratia, circa le quale resposte dice che al presente altro non responderà, sì che penso che in processu temporis vorà dire qualche cosa in contrario. Et perché lui dice havere trovati alcuni errori in esso canto,² li quali da lui me sono stati mandati signati con questo signo[†], dico questo potere essere proceduto da me nel copiare, perché la copia la quale teneva è molto anticha et caduca, et perché io el notai a tempo de nocte. Per deffecto del poco mio vedere, male poteva

² Spataro refers to Hothby's motet 'Ora pro nobis', which he discussed in his letter to Del Lago, no. 45, para. 10. In no. 49, para. 6 he tells Aaron he will send the motet to Del Lago. Spataro describes the mensuration-sign at the beginning of the tenor as 'doe volte inciso'. From this wording we might infer that the sign was  $\phi$ ; however, Spataro says that no such sign has ever been used (no. 45, para. 4). He therefore might mean  $\phi_2$ , which he considers to be *tempus* imperfectum, twice diminished (ibid., para. 5). In the unique source of Hothby's motet (see no. 45 n. 11), the sign is O22, which regularly means perfect major mode, imperfect minor mode, and imperfect tempus; but the notes must be reduced in the proportion 4:1 with respect to the superius and contratenor. It appears that Hothby used these signs to indicate both mensuration and proportional diminution. Since the late 14th c. single mensuration-signs had been used to indicate proportions. Because of their inherent ambiguity, they were often accompanied by a canon or coloration. The system was reformed by the end of the 15th c., when signs had largely been replaced by fractions, a method championed by Tinctoris and, following him, Gafurio. On the chronology of this development, see Anna Maria Busse Berger, 'The Origin and Early History of Proportion Signs', Journal of the American Musicological Society 41 (1988), 403-33. Those theorists who discuss double and triple mensuration-signs say that they indicate mode and tempus (see Ramis, Musica practica, pp. 82-3, and the Commentary on no. 45). But musicians used them to indicate diminution, especially when contrasted with different mensurations in the other voices. (This practice is analogous to treating  $\odot$  and  $\odot$  as signs of augmentation.) It is certainly interesting that Hothby the theorist and Hothby the composer are not entirely consistent.

discernere le note posite in linea da quelle le quale erano in spatio. Ma aciò che lui (per se medemo) resti satisfacto, con questa mia mando tale mia copia, la quale V.E. li darà che tenga a suo piacere, et da poi la renda a quella, aciò che retorni a caxa, perché tali concenti et opere tengo con molta deligentia, perché alcuna volta acadeno contra quilli che troppo prosumeno. V.E. gli dica che el signo doe volte inciso posito nel principio del tenore sta bene, perché riducto al moderno uxo, serà come questo:

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in quadruplo cantato, in modo che una longa o vero quattro semibreve passarano per una semibreve de questo signo O posito nel principio del soprano et etiam del contra.

3. Et del mutetto de quello docto antico a me mandato, per parte mia lo rengratiareti et li direti che al presente non li mando quello tractato de Zoanne Tintoris,³ et questo è solo perché io mando a V.E. una mia missa,⁴ la quale ho notata più dì fano et scripta et sigilata la epistola, ma ho aspectato de cantarla una sola volta. Pertanto mandando etiam tale tractato, temo che el portatore se agrevaria de tanto viluppo, ma de curto lo mandarò et a soa Reverentia scriverò, bene che non credo darli adviso alcuno circa quello mutetto a me mandato, perché molto sono occupato. Et se pure ce havesse otio, più presto el voria spendere in vedere el musico tractato de Messer Lodovico Fogliano,⁵ nel quale qualche cosa se pò imparare, secondo che per qualche ochiata data ho potuto comprehendere.

^{249^v} Tamen | farò quanto potrò per vedere l'uno et l'altro, perché dato che già sia giunto al etade, pure ancora me piace imparare. Altro per questa mia non dico perché molte altre particole in questa altra mia prima scripta se conteneno.

4. Pertanto a V.E. me recomando, et al vostro reverendo patrone [Sebastiano Michiel], et a li figlioli soi, et etiam a la Signoria del nobillissimo Messer Camillo, et etiam al nostro Pre Zanetto.

Vale. Da Bologna, a dì 8 martii 1533.

De V.E. servitore Zoanne Spataro

⁴ 'Missa O salutaris hostia'; see no. 55, para. 1.

⁵ Fogliano, *Musica theorica* (Venice, 1529).

¹ On Villano and Messer Andrea, see the Biographical Dictionary.

³ Probably Tinctoris's treatise on alteration, which Spataro had quoted in no. 48.

1. On the fourth I received your letter and replied immediately to let you know about Villano, the tenor; he entered the Papal Chapel in place of the late Messer Andrea,¹ so what he wrote is false; he must have had some design of his own in mind. Many think him two-faced.

2. I also heard from Pre Zanetto; he thanks me for many letters, to which he says he will not respond right now; I suppose in good time he intends to say something in opposition. The errors he claims to have found in the composition I sent him² must have occurred because I transcribed it at night from an old and brittle copy, and with my poor vision I could hardly distinguish the notes on the lines from those in the spaces. I enclose my own copy for him to keep at his pleasure and then return, for I like to hold on to these pieces; they are sometimes useful in defence against those who presume too much. Tell him that the sign with double diminution at the beginning of the tenor is correct and stands for

## **B**¹¹¹C

diminished 4:1; thus a long or four semibreves are equivalent to one semibreve of the superius and contratenor under O.

3. Thank him for the motet by that ancient author and tell him that I shan't send the treatise by 'Tinctoris³ just now because I am enclosing a mass of mine⁴ for you, which I have written mostly by candlelight; I waited [before sending it off] until I had it sung at least once. I fear the bearer would be overburdened were I to add the Tinctoris. I'll send it soon, but I doubt I'll have time to discuss the motet; if I had leisure, I'd rather read Lodovico Fogliano's treatise,⁵ from which something can be learnt, as a glance at it indicates. But I'll do what I can concerning both Fogliano and the motet, since, old as I am, I'm still eager to learn.

4. Greetings to you, your patron [Sebastiano Michiel], his sons, the noble Messer Camillo, and also our Pre Zanetto.

**52** (J49). Fo. 168^{r-v} Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 16 April 1533 (autograph)

^{(68^v} [Al venerabi]le Pre Zanetto de Lago vene[to, musico do]ctissimo, quanto ma[ggiore suo honorando]. In Vinetia.

^{168^r} Venerabile et molto da me amato, el mio (de li musici doctissimo) Pre Zanetto, salutem.¹

1. A li dì 10 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. la quale in humanità me pare che exceda li termini, la quale cosa nasce da la vostra innata gentileza et amore, el quale sempre ho compreheso Vostra Reverentia havere verso di me, la quale cosa non credo essere per alcuna mia gratia né virtù, ma nascere da la vostra dulce natura, la quale veramente sempre ho compreso essere senza alcuna amaritudine et dolo. Se adonca nel tempo pasato (forsa con qualche mio incomodo) ho cercato satisfare a qualche petitione a me da V.E. facte, non bisogna renderemi gratia, ma sì solo a Dio, el quale è solo donatore de tute le gratie et virtù. Et perché l'homo non è nato solo per suo comodo in questo mondo, ma etiam (a li bisogni) subvenire al proximo et amico de quello che a lui è possibile, et non potendo, al manco con optimo parlare confortare lo amico a patientia, come al presente acade, perché quella me domanda una mia 'Salve Regina', la quale a giurni passati ancora m'è stata domandata da Frate Petro Aron, al quale io scripse che io non sapeva dove trovarla. Credo che siano più de 40 anni che feci tale canto, et scio che io ne haveva copia, ma sono più de 4 anni che una vernata, a tempo de nocte, a Bologna venne una grande neve, dapo la quale subito venne una così grande pioza che fece trapiovere tuti li cuperti de le caxe, in modo che quando la pioza fu cessata io trovai la mia scola del canto et el studio pleni de aqua et multi libri bagnati et guasti, et similemente molte copie de canti et altre scripture, le quale (molto turbato) getai nel foco, perché erano tute lacerate et guaste, tra le quale scripture et copie de canti credo veramente che ancora era tale 'Salve Regina' et altri canti asai, li quali trovo che me

¹ This letter is so unusual that we give it here in almost complete translation. What could have happened between early March, when Spataro likened Del Lago to a sterile field that will never grow good fruit (see no. 50, para. 2), and the present letter? During the winter Del Lago must have been smarting from the thorough put-down he had been subjected to in no. 48, in which Spataro impugned not only his intelligence but his morals. Indeed, Spataro was of a mind to cease all correspondence with the 'arrogant fool' (no. 50, para. 2). This was evidently more than Del Lago could bear; he must have written a humble letter to Spataro, full of self-reproach and apology. Since it was not a scholarly letter, he did not preserve it with his *Epistole*. He concluded it with a master-stroke: a request for one of Spataro's compositions. As we have seen, Spataro is extremely susceptible to flattery. But the almost indecent eagerness of his desire to re-establish contact finds a convincing explanation in the last paragraph: it is through competition and disagreement that knowledge is advanced.

2. Ancora quello canto de Franchino io non lo vidi mai, né ancora non se trova fra nui.² Me dole non ve potere servire per tale petitione. Io non direi che V.E. fusse impudente né temerario et presumptuoso, ma quella me faria despiacere a non adoperarmi come non solamente amico ma servitore a soi bisogni, perché el simile ancora io farei verso quella. Perché nel pecto mio, altro non credo se non che quella me sia amico, et perché questo tengo per firmo, a quella offerisco ogni mia facultà et potere, et non per discipulo et a me inferiore non acepto V.E., ma sempre come mio maestro et superiore ve refferisco honore et gratie, perché li vostri scripti me hano molte volte svegliato dal somno et da la infructuosa accidia, da la ^{168^v} quale l'homo | (per non havere emulatione et contrasto) molte volte resta oppresso et spende el caro tempo in vano, el quale male usato tempo mai non se pò recuperare, come credo^a che sia noto a V.E., a la quale humilemente me recomando. Et etiam prego quella me recomandi al mio quanto magiore honorando Frate Petro Aron.

Vale. Datum in Bologna a dì 16 aprile 1533.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro da Bologna

Venerable and much beloved Pre Zanetto, most learned of musicians.¹

I. On the tenth I received your letter, overflowing with humanity engendered by the innate kindness and affection I always knew you had towards me, not because of my merits but due to your sweet nature, which is truly without bitterness and guile. If I have, in the past, perhaps with some difficulty, sought to answer your queries, there is no need to thank me, but only God, the fount of goodness and virtue. Since man should help his neighbour whenever possible, and if not, comfort him, I must request your forbearance in the present case. You ask for my 'Salve Regina'; so does Aaron, but I cannot find it. I wrote it more than forty years ago and I know I had a copy, but more than four years ago there was a great snowstorm in Bologna, followed by torrential rain that caused all the roofs to leak. I found my schoolroom and study full of water, and many of my books and music soaked. I was so upset I threw them all into the fire, and I think the 'Salve Regina' must have been among them. Many times have I regretted it.

^a MS: crede.

² On this composition, see nos. 84 and 85.

## 52. Spataro to Del Lago, 16 Apr. 1533

2. I have never seen that composition by Gafurio and no one here has it.² No, I would not call you impudent or presumptuous for asking me that favour; it would please me if you treated me not only as a friend but as a servant for all your needs; I would ask the same of you. I firmly believe you are my friend, and I offer you all my talents and capabilities and I accept you not as my disciple and inferior, but honour you as my master and superior; your writings have often shaken me out of slumber and sloth, for without competition and opposition man often wastes his time, which can never be recovered. I recommend myself humbly to you and I ask you to commend me to Fra Petro Aaron, to be honoured as my elder.

**53** (J47). Fos. 165^r–166^r Memorandum by Giovanni del Lago (autograph)

^{165^r} Questi sono gli infrascritti dubbii i quali mi fu[rono] mandati a richieder da Maestro Gioanne di Spatari bolog[n]ese, musico excellente, del anno M.D.xxxiii, a dì xxv di maggio.¹

#### Dubbii di musica

primo Il primo è ponendo il segno di b molle in F, et in C, dove sarà la sua sillaba ditta *ut* et la sua sillaba ditta *la*?

- 2° Secondo, ponendo tal segno in G, et in D, dove sarà la sua sillaba ditta *ut* et la sua sillaba ditta *la*?
- 3° Terzo, ponendo il segno di b quadro giacente in  $\frac{1}{2}$ , et in E, dove sarà la sua sillaba ditta *ut* et la sua sillaba ditta *la*?
- 4° Quarto, ponendo tal segno in G sol re ut acuto,² dove sarà la sua sillaba ditta ut et la sua sillaba ditta la?
- 5° Quinto, dicendo fa in mi di  $bfa \perp mi$  in eodem sono, dove sarà il suo mi?

Resolutione degli soprascritti dubbii,³ et

- primo Primo, lo *ut* del b molle segnato in F grave cade per spatio di maggior semituono sotto C *fa ut*, et il suo *la* cade per maggior semituono più depresso di A *la mi re* acuta. Et lo *ut* del b molle segnato in C acuto cade per spatio di maggior semituono più depresso di G *sol re ut* acuto, et il suo *la* caderà per maggior semituono più depresso di E *la mi* acuta.
- ^{165^v} 2° Secondo, lo *ut* del b molle segnato in G sol re ut acuto cade intra D sol re et C fa ut, in modo che tale *ut* sarà distante da D sol re per spatio di maggior semituono, et con C fa ut sarà semituono minore, et il suo la caderà in unisono con il fa di bfa  $\Box$  mi. Et lo ut di tal segno segnato in D la sol re cade intra A la mi re et G sol re ut

³ As might be deduced from the heading to this memorandum, and as is confirmed by no. 54, the 'solutions' are Spataro's.

acuti, in modo che tale ut caderà per semituono maggiore remesso con A *la mi re* acuta, et sarà semituono minore intenso con G *sol re* ut detto, et il suo *la* caderà equalmente in suono con F *fa ut* acuto.

- $3^{\circ}$  Terzo, lo *ut* del b quadro giacente segnato in b cade per semituono maggiore più intenso di G *sol re ut* acuto, et per semituono minore più remesso di A *la mi re* acuta, et il suo *la* caderà per spatio di maggior semituono più intenso di E *la mi* acuta, o ver per spatio di comma più intenso di F *fa ut* acuta. Et lo *ut* di tal segno posto in E *la mi* grave cade per maggior semituono più intenso di C *fa ut* et per minore semituono più remesso di D *sol re*, et il suo *la* caderà per spatio di maggior semituono più intenso di A *la mi re* acuta.
- 4° Quarto, lo *ut* del b quadro giacente segnato in G sol re ut acuto cade equale in suono con E *la mi* grave et il suo *la* cade per semituono maggiore più alto di C sol fa ut et più depresso per semituono minore di D *la sol re.*]
- 166^r 5^o Quinto, lo suo *mi* è più depresso del *mi* naturale d'uno semituono minore, collocato però in A *la mi re* acuta con tal segno #. Allhora s'intenderà esso *mi* più alto del loco dove sarà scritto per un semituono maggiore.

The following are the questions sent me on 25 May 1533 to ask the excellent musician Maestro Giovanni Spataro of Bologna.¹

#### Musical problems

- (1) If we place a flat before F and C, where are their syllables *ut* and *la*?
- (2) If we place that sign before G and D, where are their syllables *ut* and *la*?
- (3) If we place a sharp before B and E, where are their syllables ut and la?
- (4) If we place that sign before  $g^2$ , where are its syllables *ut* and *la*?
- (5) If you say fa on Bb, where is its mi?

#### Solutions to the above problems³

- (1) The *ut* of fp lies a major semitone below *c* and its *la* a major semitone below *a*. The *ut* of cp' lies a major semitone below *g* and its *la* a major semitone below *e'*.
- (2) The *ut* of gb falls between d and c, a major semitone distant from d and a minor semitone from c. And its *la* is the same as fa on bb. The *ut* of db' falls between a and g, a major semitone below a and a minor semitone above g, and its *la* is on f'.

¹ A second set of the five questions, also in Del Lago's hand, is pasted on to fo. 166'. It would seem unlikely that these questions were formulated independently of the debate on Willaert's chromatic duo that animates the pages of Spataro's correspondence (see especially nos. 12–14). Where else should a contemporary musician have found a flat before C continued through a downward leap of a fifth to an Fb (unstipulated)? The other questions, save for no. 4, were developed in relationship to these new notes and new signs (see Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-Examined').

² Del Lago, Spataro, and Aaron all place g among the *acutae*, contrary to common practice, in which the *graves* range from G to g, the *acutae* from a to g', and the *superacutae* from a' to e''. The source of their division of the gamut is Ramis, who believed that it was illogical to place two Gs, G and g, in the lowest range (*Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 9). Spataro calls g' both 'G sol re ut acuto' and 'G sol re ut primo'.

- (3) The *ut* of b# lies a major semitone above g and a minor semitone below a, and its *la* lies a major semitone above e', or a comma above f'. The *ut* of e# lies a major semitone above c and a minor semitone below d, and its *la* a major semitone above a.
- (4) The *ut* of  $g^{\#}$  has the same pitch as *e* and its *la* lies a major semitone above *c'* and a minor semitone below *d'*.
- (5) Its mi [of fa on bb] is a minor semitone below bb, placed, however, on a with a sharp, indicating that it is a major semitone above a.

**54** (J50). Fos. 169^r-170^v

Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 4 June 1533 (autograph)

170[°] [Al venerabile e]t doctissimo musico M. Pre [Zoanne] veneto et in Sancta [Sophia diacono di]gnissimo, quanto ma[ggiore suo honorando]. In Vinetia.

^{169^r} Salve vir doctissime, etc.

1. Nel dì primo del presente ho recevuto una de V.E. et nobilità,¹ et a molte particule de essa non darò resposta, non tanto per non procedere in longo, quanto perché sono de poco momento et importantia. A me pare che asai basti dicendo che tuto sono de V.E., et del passato alcuna cosa più non pertractare, imperò che 'in multiloquio non deest peccatum'.^{a2} Pertanto tractaremo de quello che più importa et che a me pare più laudabile et utile.

2. V.E. dice che quello cantore³ etc. dice che *ut* del b rotondo signato in G sol re ut acuto serà equale in sono con D sol re, et che el suo la serà equale con el mi de  $bfa \ bmi$  et che ancora lui diceva che *ut* del b rotondo signato in D la sol re era equale con A la mi re, et che el suo la era equale con F acuto. Da poi diceti che da V.E. li fu resposto che quella nota o vero voce fa in G et in D signata con el b rotondo nasceva da la congionta del b quadrato o vero duro, la quale se segna in F grave et in C acuto con el segno del b quadro iacente ut hic #. A la quale cosa dico che secondo el mio debile parere quello b rotondo signato in G acuto non harà el suo *ut* equale con D sol re, ma tale suo *ut* caderà intra D sol re et C fa ut, in modo che tale *ut* serà distante da D sol re per spatio de mazore semitonio, et con C fa ut serà semitonio minore. Et perché questa verità appare in quantità et sta in primo gradu certitudinis, se potrà claramente probare in questo modo.

3. V.E. dice che dal signo del b rotondo signato in G acuto a F fa ut cade intervallo de semitonio minore. Questo se concede. Pertanto sequitarà che tale b rotondo o vero fa signato in G acuto harà el suo mi equale in sono con F fa ut grave et el suo re caderà per tono più basso de F predicto. Et per tale modo tale re caderà intra E la mi et D sol re, el quale re serà distante da E la mi per magiore semitonio et serà distante d[a] D sol re per minore semitonio. Se dapo voremo descendere dal predicto re per tono, scilicet al suo ut, tale ut caderà intra D sol re et C fa ut, el quale ut serà

^a MS: pecctatum.

¹ This letter is missing, but it must have been based on the five questions of no. 53.

² Prov. 10: 19: 'In multiloquio non deerit peccatum.'

³ Don Raphaello; see para. 4. On his identity, see the Biographical Dictionary.

distante [da] D sol re per spatio de mazore semitonio et da C fa ut serà distante per minore semitonio. Dico ancora che el la de tale b rotondo signato in G predicto non potrà cadere equale in sono con paramese, o vero con el *mi* de  $bfa \perp mi$ , ma tale *la* caderà equale in sono con trite synemenon, o vero con el fa de b fa  $\exists mi$ . Et questo se proba in questo modo. L'è cosa clara che questo signo b signato in G sol re ut, al quale se dà la syllaba fa, è distante da G predicto per spatio de mazore semitonio in grave. Se adonca da esso fa voremo ascendere per spatio de tono, scilicet al sol, tale sol caderà intra G sol re ut et A la mi re in modo che con G sol re ut serà spatio de minore semitonio intenso, et con A la mi re serà spatio de mazore semitonio remisso. Et da poi procedendo da esso sol al sequente la, se ascenderà per spatio de tono, el quale caderà (ut dixi) equale in sono con el fa de b fa b mi acuto. Et a me pare questa sia la mera verità, et non con el mi perché el sequitaria che intra fa et la caderia uno spatio de ditono con ^{169^v} uno mazore semitonio. Et dove V.E. dice che [lui dice che] questo segno b o vero fa signato in D la sol re haveva el suo ut equale in sono con A la mi re, a me pare che questo sia stata male inteso da lui perché, rationibus predictis, el suo ut caderà intra A la mi re et G sol re ut, in modo che tale ut caderà per semitonio magiore remisso con A la mi re, et serà semitonio minore intenso con G sol re ut, de la quale mera verità sereti certo se considerati che tale fa signato in D acuto non cade equale in sono con esso D acuto, et da poi descendereti per l'ordine de le sillabe cantabile, perché trovareti che el suo mi caderà equale in sono con C acuto, et el suo re caderà equale in sono con el fa de b fa b mi acuto, et da poi et descendendo per spatio de tono haremo el suo ut intra A et G acuto locato, el quale con A serà mazore semitonio remisso, et con G serà minore semitonio intenso.

4. Dico etiam che el predicto cantore (el quale secondo che fra nui multi dicono ha nome Don Raphaello) non ha dicto male dicendo che el *la* de tale *fa* signato in D *la sol re* cade equalemente in sono con F *fa ut* acuto, perché tale *fa* harà el suo *sol* intra D et E acuti, cioè che tale *sol* serà distante da D acuto per minore semitonio intenso, et con E acuto serà distante per mazore semitonio remisso. Et da poi se ascenderà ad F acuto per tono. Et a me pare che questa sia la mera verità, come etiam V.E. potrà comprehendere se con deligentia bene advertireti.

5. Diceti etiam che da V.E. li fu resposto che quella voce fa in G et in D signata con el b rotondo nasceva da la coniuncta del b quadrato o vero duro, la quale se segna in F grave et in C acuto con el segno del b quadro iacente, ut hic #, la quale verità dico non essere stata bene pensitata da V.E. Una causa non potrà mai producere uno effecto a sé contrario.⁴ Nui habiamo che in qualunque loco dove questo signo # serà dato che la voce

se intende esser levata dal loco proprio per el magiore semitonio, el quale secundum genus usitatum non se exercita per se. Adonca si tale segno serà dato in F et in C,^b el non potrà producere da esso F et C^c quello spatio de minore et usitato semitonio, el quale ne lo intenso cade intra F et G et intra C et D mediante el segno del b rotondo signato in G et in D. Ma questo segno # posito in F et in C harà el suo sono più intenso de questo b signato in G et in D per uno spatio de coma. L'è bene vero che questo segno # segnato in F et in C serà causa che el caderà la syllaba fa equale in sono con G et D, ma tale fa non serà quello fa el quale nasce da questo segno bsignato in G et in D, perché intra loro serà distantia de semitonio mazore. Per questo V.E. potrà comprehendere che la auctorità de Bartolomeo Ramis et de Hottobi è stata tanquam nihil ad rem, perché, ut dixi, la vostra questione è del signo del b rotondo signato in G et in D, et vui li argueti del signo ut hic posito # in F et in C, li quali non bene conveniu[n]t, 170^v perché l'uno senza signo alcuno de b molle produce la syllaba fa parimente in sono con G et con D, come apare in la figura de Bartolomeo da vui allegata,⁵ et come è stata rectamente inteso dal nostro excellentissimo Frate Petro Aron in quello tractato che lui fece per insignare come in ciascuna positione de la mano se possono trovare li sei nomi officiali, scilicet ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la,⁶ nel qual tractato, se V.E. bene advertirà, trovareti che la sillaba fa equalemente con G et con D considerata nasce da questo signo # in F et in C signato, et che el mi equalmente considerato con F et con C naturali nasce dal segno del b molle signato in G et in D, per la quale cosa appare che non poca differentia caderà intra el fa equalemente con G et con D considerato et el fa con questo signo b in G et in D posito et signato.

6. Altro circa questo al presente non se dirà perché el portatore de la presente me acelera et vole partirse. Ma prego V.E. me voglia mandare una cartella come già facesti, la quale sia grande quanto è la medietà de tuto questo foglio, ma sia uno digito, o poco più, più largha.⁷ Et datime

^b MS: D. ^c MS: D.

⁴ Practically speaking, one cannot explain the origin of a flattened note through a hexachord with sharps.

⁵ See Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 35, fig. 4: D and G in the *ordo naturalis* (hexachord on G) are sung as *fa* in the *ordo accidentalis* (hexachord on A).

⁶ Aaron's untitled pamphlet of 1531; see no. 34. This is of course the part written by Spataro and sent by him to Aaron with permission to print it under his own name. It constituted Spataro's payment for Aaron's having his tract on *sesquialtera* published in Venice (see the Commentary on no. 34). It gives him evident pleasure to quote it as if Aaron had written it.

⁷ The page measures  $30.5 \times 20$  cm; it is the normal page-size of Spataro's letters.

adviso del costo, che subito ve remeterò el pretio. Tuto sono de V.E., a la quale humilemente me recomando. Al nostro Frate P. Aron dareti saluti senza fine.

Vale. Da Bologna, a dì 4 junii 1533.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

I. I received your letter¹ on the first of the month and shall confine myself to its essential points. It seems to me enough to say that I am entirely devoted to you, and to say no more about the past, for 'in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin'.²

2. You report that singer³ as claiming the *ut* of gb to have the same pitch as *d* and its *la* the same as *mi* of  $bfa \ bmi$ , and the *ut* of db' to be the same as *a* and its *la* the same as *f'*. You replied that Gb and Db originate from the *coniuncta* of the sharp signed in F and C. In my humble opinion, the *ut* of gb is not *d* but falls between *d* and *c*, a major semitone below *d* and a minor semitone above *c*. This is verifiable by measurement and stands in the first degree of certainty; it can be proved as follows.

3. You say that from gb to f is the interval of a minor semitone. Granted. Thus if gb is fa, mi will be f and re will be a tone lower than f. It will be a major semitone below e and a minor semitone above d. Ut will be a tone lower, a major semitone below d and a minor semitone above c. And the la of gb cannot be on mi of  $bfa \ mi$ , but falls on its fa. This is how you prove it: gb as fa is a major semitone below g. If we go up a tone to sol, it will lie a minor semitone above g and a major semitone below a. From sol to la we ascend by a whole tone, which brings us to fa of  $bfa \ mi$ ; it cannot be mi because that would cause a major third plus a major semitone between fa and la. Where you say that [he says] the ut of db' is a, I think he misunderstood this, for the ut will be a major semitone below a and a minor semitone above g. You can ascertain this if you consider that db' is not the same pitch as d'. Descending through the hexachord, mi falls on c', re on the fa of  $bfa \ mi$ , and then descending a tone we reach ut, a major semitone below a and a minor semitone above g.

4. The singer (whom many of us believe to be Don Raphaello) was not wrong in saying that the la of dp' is equivalent to f' because its *sol* lies between d' and e', a minor semitone above d' and a major semitone below e', a whole tone distant from f'.

5. You also told him that Gb and Db derive from the *coniuncta* of the # in F and C. This is not well thought out. A cause can never produce an effect contrary to itself.⁴ We hold that wherever the sign # is placed, the

## 54. Spataro to Del Lago, 4 June 1533

pitch is to be raised by a major semitone, which major semitone is not used by itself in the ordinary [diatonic] genus. If it is placed before F and C it cannot produce the usual minor semitone F-Gb and C-Db but will be a comma higher than Gb and Db. True, F# and C# cause the following G and D to be solmized fa, but that fa is not the same as the fa of Gb and Db; there is a difference of a major semitone between them. Therefore, the testimonies of Ramis and Hothby are irrelevant, for the question concerns Gb and Db, and you talk about F# and C#. Without the flat, G and D are sung as fa, as appears in the chart by Ramis⁵ that you refer to and as our Fra Pietro Aaron correctly understood in his treatise on how to find the six syllables on each position of the hand;⁶ he shows that fa on G and D arises from F# and C#, and mi on F and C arises from Gb and Db. There is no small difference between the fa of G and D and the fa of Gb and Db.

6. I shall stop here because the bearer of this letter is anxious to leave. Please send me a *cartella* as you did before, about as tall as half this page but a finger's breadth or so wider.⁷ Let me know the price; I shall immediately reimburse you. I humbly commend myself and send greetings to our Pietro Aaron.

## 55. Spataro to Aaron, 30 July 1533

**55** (J106). Fos. 250^r-251^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 July¹ 1533 (autograph)

²⁵¹^v [Reverendo et] venerabile et musico doctissimo [Petro Aron] florentino de l'ordine Hye[rosolomitano, qua]nto mazore honorando. [In Ve]netia, [Sancto Zo]anne de li furlani.

250^t Reverendo, venerabile, et excellentissimo de li musici, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Petro, etc.

1. Nel dì primo julii ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 21 junii signata, a la quale sono stato tardo a la resposta, perché quella scripse che quella (con certi gentilihomini veneti) voleva per 15 giurni andare a stare a Vicenza. Ma io ponerò da parte molte laude da V.E. a me date, le quale cognosco che nascono dal grande amore che quella me porta, per le quale io non me exalto né me tengo più ma asai manco che non sono existimato, come quello che cognosco che l'arte è longa et la nostra vita è asai breve,² et che se l'homo durasse sino che el mondo pò durare, sempre harà da imparare. Et questa tale consideratione è acaduta a li giurni passati intra uno docto amico mio et me, el quale arguendo contra a uno certo passo da me facto in quello duo del Patrem de quella mia missa de 'O salutaris hostia', la quale già mandai a V.E., lui diceva non havere mai trovato tale passo apresso alcuno compositore, et io gli resposi che se in musica non era licito fare se non quello che se trovava facto, che el seguitaria che l'arte musica seria finita et consumata, et per consequente non seria arte liberale, come sono le altre arte quadriviale, de le quale non se dà fine.³ Ma pure al fine lui restò contento, perché io li demonstrai che ancora che tale passo non se potesse deffendere per auctorità, che apertamente la mera rasone el concede. Pertanto, Frate Petro mio honorando, per le laude da V.E. et da altri a me date, io non sono tanto pazo che io sempre inanti a li ochii del mio intellecto non tenga el vero speculo de la mia ignorantia et poco sapere, come quello che sono vero comprehensore del mio poco sapere.

2. Ma veramente, Frate Petro mio honorando, per questa ultima de V.E. sono stato et ancora resto de mala voglia, perché a me pare claro comprehendere che quella se piglia grande affanno et sta in continuo dolo et suspecto, che tante siano le blanditie et proferte et humile scrivere de Pre Zanetto ch'io ponga da parte el sacro et da me tanto amato nome de V.E., el quale per benemeriti de V.E. tanto tempo ho portato et porto nel

core sculpito, et che io voglia sublimare lui, el quale cognosco claramente che se lui fusse a me superiore come lui a me è inferiore, che sempre el cercaria de insidiarmi et darmi de una durissima pietra nel calcagno. Et questo da me è stato claramente compreheso per li soi superbi et mali considerati scripti, a li quali (per fare apiacere a V.E.) non in oculto ma sciente quella (per mazore soa confusione) ho dato condecente resposta, la quale cosa non è acaduta in quelle importantie le quale tra V.E. et me sono state occurrente, perché sono solamente intra V.E. et me, et non ad altri ^{250^v} sono state manifeste et note. Pertanto | prego quella levi da sé ogni suspectione et dubietà, perché io tengo che V.E. et io siamo dui uniti

3. Dal predicto Pre Zanetto a li giurni passati hebi una soa de dì 26 junii signata, la quale è in responsione de quella mia a lui missa de dì 4 del predicto data [no. 54], per la quale el poverello non solamente cerca excusarsi, ma cerca inculparmi, dicendo che da me non è stato inteso che quando lui tracta de la nota in G acuto et^a etiam in D signata con el b molle, ut hic:

parimenti in uno volere et puro amore.

Bpo Bpo

che lui intende pertractare del fa equale in sono con G et con D naturali predicti, a le quale soe excusatione io haveva facto una molto acra resposta, et del tuto li dava la repulsa, che mai più non me scrivesse né desse adviso de cosa alcuna, et questo era perché a me pare strano che uno (el quale se existima docto, come lui se crede essere) non sapia scrivere claramente quello che lui ha nel suo concepto, ma vole contrariare et vole che altri intendano el male dicto et scripto per recto et irreprehensibile, la quale mia acra resposta a lui facta fu veduta da certi amici mei, a li quali non piaque tale stile da me tenuto, et dicevano che Pre Zanetto era homo da pigliarsi piacere de li soi mali scripti. Et io li resposi che la natura mia sempre hebe in dispiacere li homini de simile sorte. Alhora da loro fui pregato che più temperatamente, per complacere a loro, io volesse più amichevelemente al nostro Pre Zanetto scrivere, et che se li soi scripti a me non redondavano in piacere, che io la fasse tale piacere a loro, per la quale cosa per obedire a tali iusti precepti, mutai stile et resposi al predicto Pre Zanetto come in questa qua ligata a lui directiva appare [no. 56], la quale forsa a V.E. non monstrarà, perché non ho potuto tenermi de qualche cosa a lui forsa non troppo grata. Da lui ho havuto la cartella et non altro, et etiam de altro non curo havere da lui, et da V.E. non ho cercato tale servitio, et quella non pigli admiratione, perché così come intra quella et me è mazore amicitia, così serbo adoperare V.E. in cose de mazore importantia.

" We have deleted a superfluous 'in' at this point.

 $^{^1}$  MS: June. June must be an error, because in the first line Spataro speaks of receiving a letter from Aaron on 1 July.

 $^{^2}$  The original source of 'Ars longa, vita brevis' is Hippoctates, *Aphorisms* 1. 1; Seneca cites it in Latin at *De brevitate vitae* 1. 1.

³ Spataro expressed the same thought in no. 39, para. 2.

4. El predicto Pre Zaneto me domanda dove serà la syllaba *ut* et la syllaba *la* de la nota in G sol re ut, ut hic signata:

et io li respondo che la sillaba *ut* de tale nota in tale loco signata caderà equale in sono con E *la mi* grave, et che el suo *la* caderà intra C et D acuto, cioè per magiore semitonio distante da C et per minore da D.

5. Ho receputo le resposte già facte a Pre Zanetto,⁴ et el concento facto per quilli signori veneti con le varie parole,⁵ li quali sono molto stati grati a li nostri musici, et molto da loro et da m[e] molto comendati. Pertanto rengratio V.E.

6. Circa Don Leonardo altro non dico, perché per una soa qua ligata intendereti el tuto. Messer Nicolao nostro a V.E. manda uno suo concento a sei voce facto et a quella se recomanda. Et io a quella mando uno mio ^{251^t} Magnificat, | el quale ho facto per fugire certi mei vani penseri non pertinenti a la decrepita mia etade annosa ne la quale me ritrovo. Et pure non trovo medicina né exercitio che mi vaglia. Pertanto da V.E., more solito, prego sia examinato et castigato con quello amore el quale tengo per fermo che me portate, et del tuto da poi me dati adviso.

7. Ancora, Messer Petro mio honorando, prego V.E. che sia contento mandarmi quello mio tractato de canto mensurato, perché ho preso grande amicitia con uno intagliatore optimo, el quale in ligno molto bene se adopra, al quale ho demonstrato quello tractato mio de contrapuncto, et lui se è già offerto farmi ogni cosa gratis, la quale cosa non voglio, ma voglio a piacere, et credo che lui farà come io vorò, perché lui già me ha dato uno suo figliolo per clerico in Sancto Petronio, con speranza (mediante el mio aiuto) trarne qualche sua utilità et comodo. Et se V.E. non ha per chi mandarlo, datilo a Messer Allexandro de li Oratii, mercatante qua in Vinetia, con una de V.E. a me dirrectiva, che penso che serò servito per la longa amicitia la quale è stata tra li antichi soi et mei, et perché ancora tra Messer Oratio et Messer Antonio, et altri de la soa casa habitanti in Bologna, se cognoscemo come prosimi parenti. Et se pure recusasseno et non volesseno mandarlo (benché non el credo), datilo al fondaco o vero banco de li Saraceni, mercatanti qua in Vinetia et nostri bolognesi, et fati una cuperta a la vostra a me missa che sia directiva in Bologna a lo excellentissimo doctore in ciascuna lege, Messer Zoanne Baptista Garganello, el quale ha uno suo caro nipote che sta qua in Vinetia con li predicti Saraceni mercatanti. Altro circa questo non dico perché quando harò l'opera, de giorno in giorno a V.E. darò adviso de quello che occurerà.

8. Perché el nostro Pre Zanetto scriven[do] dice che lui non è tanto grosso che fusse caduto in erro[re] puerile, etc., per probare alquanto come el sia ingenioso, nel fine de questa soa qua ligata^b [no. 56] (per parte de li nostri musici bolognesi) li chiedo la declaratione de uno dubio musico. Ma prima voglio vedere come responderà. Pertanto se lui, circa tale dubii, recerca el parere de V.E., cercati de fare che lui dia tale resolutione, perché da poi a V.E. darò adviso del tuto.

9. Io non potria dire con mille lingue quanto io sia et quanto a quella et al reverendo vostro patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi figlio[li] optimi et de ogni virtù colmi me recomando.

Vale. In Bologna, a dì 30 julii' 1533.

Tuto de V.E. J. Spataro

1. On I July I received yours of 21 June. I am late in replying because you said you intended to go to Vicenza with some Venetian gentlemen for fifteen days. I shall disregard your compliments, occasioned by your great affection for me. Art is long and life is short;² were man to live as long as the world, there would still be something to be learnt. I was reminded of this the other day when a friend criticized a passage in that duo of the Credo in my 'Missa O salutaris hostia' that I sent you, saying he had never seen such a procedure. I replied that if in music one could only repeat what had already been done, the art of music would be finite and therefore not a liberal art, as the other quadrivial arts, which are boundless.³ In the end I convinced him that it was allowed, if not by rule, then by reason. So, my dear Pietro, neither your compliments nor those of others make me foolish enough not to hold before me the mirror of my ignorance.

2. But I really was disturbed by your letter because it appears that you are upset and suspicious, fearing I should accede to Pre Zanetto's blandishments and offers and humble writing, and exalt him above you,

^b MS: ligato. ^c MS: junii (see n. 1).

⁴ This strange wording refers to the procedure adopted by Spataro in part of his correspondence with Del Lago. He addressed nos. 45 and 48 to Pietro Aaron, although they are in answer to letters from Del Lago; Aaron is charged with returning these letters just as soon as Del Lago has read them (see no. 45, para. 1 and no. 48, para. 1).

⁵ This could of course mean a Latin composition with different texts, but 'el concento facto per quilli signori veneti con le varie parole' seems to suggest rather a composition on texts in various languages. Multilingual texts in secular compositions are not rare (see, e.g. the two-part quodlibet 'Hé Robinet, tu m'as la mort donnée—O rosa bella, o dolce anima mia' mentioned in a letter of Galeazzo Maria Sforza of 16 Nov. 1472, cited in Lowinsky, 'Ascanio Sforza's Life', p. 64 = *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance*, p. 558). That Spataro ends his letter with assurances 'in a thousand tongues' ('con mille lingue') might constitute a free association with 'le varie parole'.

whose sacred name I carry engraved in my heart. Were he as superior to me as he is inferior, he would still be laying traps for me and taking aim at my heels. This is perfectly clear from his arrogant and ill-considered letters; to please you I gave him polite replies, not in private but (to confound him the more) with your knowledge, something that did not occur in the debates of important questions between you and me, from which third parties were always excluded. So please relieve yourself of all suspicion, because you and I are united in one will and pure friendship.

3. I received a letter from Pre Zanetto in response to mine [no. 54] in which the poor man not only tries to exonerate himself but to blame me, claiming that I didn't understand that when he referred to Gb and Db, he meant fa in the natural positions of G and D. I gave him a very caustic response and completely rebuffed him, saying I didn't want to hear from him any more because, although he thinks he is so learned, he cannot express himself clearly; indeed, he takes others to task for not understanding what he means. Some of my friends said they didn't like the tone of my response, and that Pre Zanetto was one to take pleasure in his bad writing. I replied that I never could abide such men, but they begged me to moderate my answer. Moved by their just entreaties, I rewrote it, as appears in the enclosed letter [no. 56] (which perhaps he will not show you, since I could not restrain myself entirely). I received the *cartella* from him but nothing further, which suits me fine. I didn't ask you for it because of our greater friendship; I call on you for things of more importance.

4. Pre Zanetto asks where the syllables *ut* and *la* are of g and I answer that *ut* falls on *e* and *la* between *c'* and *d'*, a major semitone above *c'* and a minor semitone below *d'*.

5. I have received my answers to Pre Zanetto⁴ and the composition on various texts for those Venetian gentlemen,⁵ which pleased our musicians very much.

6. On the matter of Don Leonardo, I am enclosing a letter from him. Nicolò [Cavalaro] sends a piece for six voices and I a Magnificat, which I wrote to escape some vain thoughts not befitting my advanced age; and yet I find neither medicine nor exercise to help me. Please correct it as usual.

7. Would you be good enough to return my treatise on mensural music? I've made friends with an excellent engraver to whom I showed my counterpoint treatise. He will do it for free (which I don't want, but I do want it just right) because his son is in my charge at San Petronio, from which he hopes, with my help, to derive some use and profit. You can give the manuscript to Alessandro degli Orazii, merchants in Venice, long-time friends of mine in Bologna. Or give it to the Saraceni, Bolognese merchants in Venice, with a cover addressed to Giovanni Battista Garganello, UJD, whose nephew works for the Saraceni. I'll let you know what happens.

8. Since Pre Zanetto says he isn't so stupid as to commit childish errors, I, to test his ingenuity, pose a musical question (on behalf of our Bolognese musicians) at the end of the enclosed letter. If he wants your opinion, try to find out his. I'll tell you how it turns out.

9. A thousand tongues would not be enough to recommend myself to you, your patron [Sebastiano Michiel], and his excellent sons.

**56** (J110). Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 July 1533 (autograph)

^{2^v} Al venerabile] musico doctissimo M. [Pre Zoanne de] Lago veneto et de Sanc[ta Sophia diaco]no dignissimo, quanto [maggiore suo honorando]. In Vinetia.

^{1^r} Salve venerabilis vir, etc.

1. A li dì 13 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de 26 junii signata per la quale quella dice che io debia bene advertire, perché dove diceti che quella nota o vero voce fa in G et in D signata con el b rotondo nascerà da la coniuncta del b quadrato o vero duro, el quale se segna in F grave o vero in C acuto con el segno del b quadrato iacente, perché diceti che da quella è stato inteso parlare de quella syllaba *ut*, la quale è equalemente considerata in sono con D *la sol re* et A *la mi re*, la quale nasce da F grave et da C acuto con el segno del b quadro iacente, ut hic #. A la quale cosa respondo et dico che da me è stato resposto secondo el sono de le vostre parole scripte et secondo li clari exempli et non confusi da quella aducti in luce ut hic:

# 

Imperò che se da vui era inteso parlare de la syllaba fa equalemente considerata in G et in D^a naturali, el non bisognava dire che tale fa era signato con el b rotondo in G et in D^b naturali predicti, perché (in tale consideratione) intra el signato et non signato cade inequale distantia et denominatione asai dissimile, come da poi V.E. (mosso da più recta consideratione) ha compreheso. Ma vui, per non sapere scrivere el concepto del vostro core, voleti che da altri sia inteso che se vui chiedeti de la dura petra, che io intenda che voleti del pane. Adonca imparate de parlare musicalemente, perché quando una syllaba accidentalemente¹ è intesa^c stare equalemente in sono con una positione naturale, alhora el non se debe dire che tale syllaba immaginata sia (in tale loco naturale) signata con alcuno de questi signi b  $\ddagger$ , perché la nota o vero sono in tali lochi per tale signi signato serà per spatio de mazore semitonio intenso o vero remisso remosso dal naturale loco signato.

^c MS: intensa. At the end of the sentence Spataro uses 'intenso' to mean 'raised'; here 'intensa' is a slip of the pen for the past participle of 'intendere', 'inteso'.

## 56. Spataro to Del Lago, 30 July 1533

2. Et examinando questi vostri scripti, ho compreheso un'altro vostro errore, non forsa cognosuto da quello cantore² da V.E. allegato, perché vui el recercati de la syllaba ut et de la syllaba la considerate in ordine respecto la syllaba fa equalemente considerata in G et in D predicte, et da poi che lui ha resposto al vostro quesito, vui diceti haverli resposto che quella nota o vero voce fa in G et in D signata con el b molle nasce da la coniuncta de b quadro signata in F grave o vero in C acuto. Qui appare che el vostro respondere fu da sophista et non reale, perché vui el recercati de la syllaba *ut* dependente o consequente a la predicta syllaba *fa*, la quale ut non è principio de li altri nomi offitiali in queste immaginate consideratione, et da poi (extra propositum) diceti che 'l^d principio de tale *fa* nasce da questo signo # in F et in C signato. Et etiam tale cantore, et forsa ancora V.E., non hebe advertentia, che se questo signo # in F et in C serà productore ordinario de la syllaba ut considerata in D et in A predicti, che etiam tale segno serà productore ordinario del suo sequente fa in G et in D predicti, equalemente considerato et non signato. Et questo se potrà probare per la auctorità del mio pre ceptore et da li altri auctori da V.E. allegati, le quale auctorità da quella allegate non ab re sono da me state dicte et chiamate extra propositum et tanquam nihil ad rem, perché non hano convenientia con el b rotondo in G et in D acute signato, ma sì con el fa equalemente in tale positione considerato et non signato. Ma dove V.E. procedendo dice che per livare ogni dubietà da li dubitanti et etiam aciò che io non habia indar[n]o spexo el tempo et le fatiche, et etiam per complacermi, seti contento emendarvi nel loco dove haveti scripto, etc., a la quale cosa respondo che bene haveti considerato, la quale vostra emendatione non voglio acceptare essere facta per a me complacere, ma solo per seguitare la mera verità et per honore de V.E., la quale non scio per quale causa era usito del recto sentiero e mera verità.

3. Quella ancora me recerca dove et in quale loco de la mano de Guido cada la syllaba *ut* et la syllaba *la* de la nota o vero voce in G acuto signata ut hic:

₿**

Potria essere che a tale vostro quesito, quando da me a V.E. [fu] dato resposta a quella vostra de dì 25 maii, non fu dato altra resposta perché alhora dal portatore io era multo solicitato, perché presto diceva volersi partire da Bologna. Ma meglio è tardi che non mai. Ma a me pare che qua in Vinetia habiati el bono et vero maestro et cognoscitore de quello che tanto lontano andati cercando, cioè el nostro doctissimo Frate Petro Aron,

^d MS: chel el.

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² Don Raphaello; see no. 54, para. 4.

^a MS: C. ^b MS: C.

¹ 'Accidentalemente' means here 'irregularly placed'. In Guido's hand G can be *ut* or *re* or *sol*, but not *fa*. If it is solmized as *fa*, then it belongs to the hexachord on D and its *mi* is F#. In this case G, although called *fa*, cannot be signed with a flat, which would lower the sound by one major semitone.

el quale in quello suo ultimo et breve tractato che lui fece de la inventione de li sei nomi offitiali in ciascuna de le naturale positione de la mano de Guido,³ lui et vere dice che la syllaba *fa* equalemente considerata in A *la mi re* acuto nascerà dal b quadro iacente signato in G acuto. Pertanto sequitarà che el suo *sol* caderà pare in sono con el *mi* de  $b fa \perp mi$  sequente, et el suo *la* caderà per semitonio mazore più alto de C acuto et più depresso per semitonio minore de D acuto. Et per tale modo gradatim descendendo, trovaremo che el suo *ut* caderà pare in sono con E *la mi* grave.

4. Circa la cartella da V.E. a me mandata, a V.E. rendo gratie senza fine, la quale è molto al mio proposito. Ma molto a me seria stato a piacere che quella me havesse dato adviso del pretio, perché la vera amicitia alhora se mantene et è durabile quando intra li amici non concorre incomodo et danno. Et se pure a V.E. piace che da me sia acceptata in dono, sono contento, con pacto che quella etiam me adopri inseme con ogni mio potere e facultà a soi bilsogni et piaceri, a li quali sempre serò parato.

5. Li nostri musici bolognesi a li giurni passati hano messo in campo certi dubii musici, per li quali sono nate intra loro varie consideratione, in modo che el pare che no[n] se possano firmare né restare resoluti, et perché sciano che questa tanto nobile et magna cità habonda de ogni bene et virtù, me ha[no] pregato che io voglia per la loro parte et etiam mia, come quello che è tuto speculativo et de subtile ingegno seti^e che V.E. scriva dove serà la syllaba *ut* et la syllaba *la* del b rotondo signato in F o vero in C et similemente del b quadro iacente signato in  $\natural$  et in E. Et perché el mio preceptore⁴ et Tintoris, et etiam Frate Zoanne Othobi dicono che tali signi non se signano in li predicti lochi naturali,⁵ domandano a quella quale sia la rasone perché tali signi^f non se debeno signare in li predicti lochi naturali. Et de questo da V.E. aspectemo plena

2^r

⁴ Ramis criticizes Tinctoris's definition of *coniuncta* as the placing of b or # in an irregular place because if b were to be placed on C or another place where *fa* is sung, it would be irregular, but not a *coniuncta*, and the same is true if # is placed where *mi* is sung (*Practica musica*, ed. Wolf, p. 30).

⁵ Although Tinctoris defines *coniuncta* in his *Diffinitorium*, in his treatises he prefers the term 'musica ficta'. Tinctoris does not specifically prohibit placing b on C or F and  $\sharp$  on B or E, but his definition states that the *coniunctae* are substituted for 'regular' tones, that is, whole tones; thus Cb, for example, would not change a 'regular' tone because the interval B $\downarrow$ -C is a semitone. In Hothby's three orders (*Calliopea legale*, ed. Coussemaker, p. 298), the flat order omits C and F, the sharp order B and E.

resposta, et a quella inseme ancora me se recomandano a quella, la quale Dio sempre conserve^g in sanità.

In Bologna, a dì 30 julii 1533.

Tuto de V.E. J. Spataro

1. On the 13th I received yours of the 26th of June in which you say I should pay more attention, for when you said that fa on Gb and Db arises from f # and c #', you intended to speak of ut on d' and a, which arises from f # and c #'. I reply that I answered according to the letter of your writing and the clear examples you gave of Gb and Db. If you meant fa on G and D, you shouldn't have specified a flat in those natural positions; there is a considerable difference in interval and in name between the sign and the absence of the sign there, as you understood later on. But since you can't express yourself clearly, you speak of stones and expect me to understand bread. Learn to speak like a musician, for if you want to have a syllable irregularly placed¹ in a natural position, that imagined syllable should not be signed with an accidental, which removes it by a major semitone from the natural position.

2. I also found another error you made, which that singer may have missed,² for you ask him about the syllables *ut* and *la* with respect to *fa* on G and D, and after he answered, you said that *fa* on G and D signed with a flat arises from f # and c #'. That was a sophistic, not a real answer, for you asked about *ut* with respect to *fa*, but in this case *ut* is not the beginning of a hexachord; and then you say, beside the point, that the origin of the *fa* is F# and C#. That singer, and perhaps you too, did not realize that if F# and C# were generators of *ut* on D and A, they would generate *fa* on the natural positions of G and D. This can be proved by the authority of my teacher and the other authors you cite. I called them irrelevant here because they speak not of Gb and Db but of *fa* on G and D. But where you say that to remove all doubt and so I won't have spent my time in vain, and also to please me, you agree to make an emendation, I can't accept it for those reasons, but only for the sake of truth and your own honour. I don't know how you got off the right track.

3. You ask me again where the syllables ut and la of g# fall. I must have overlooked this question because the bearer of the letter was anxious to leave. Better late than never. But it seems to me that in Venice you could find the true master of these matters, our learned Fra Pietro Aaron, who in

& MS: conserva.

[&]quot; This word, added above the line, seems to be superfluous.

f MS: che.

³ Aaron's untitled pamphlet of 1531; see no. 34.

his latest treatise, on how to find the six syllables on every position of the hand,³ shows that fa on a arises from g. Therefore *sol* falls on b and la a major semitone above c' and a minor semitone below d'. Descending step by step, *ut* falls on e.

4. Many thanks for the *cartella*, which is just right. I wish you had told me the price, because true friendship is preserved when neither party suffers. But if it is a gift, I accept it, on condition that you call on me in any need.

5. Our Bolognese musicians have been unable to reach a conclusion in discussing certain musical questions, and they have asked me to put them before you, with your speculative and subtle mind. Where do you think are the syllables *ut* and *la* of Fb and Cb and B# and E#? And, since my teacher,⁴ Tinctoris, and Hothby all say that such signs should not be used in those natural places,⁵ what is the reason? We await your full answer and send our greetings.

### **57** (J7). Fos. $47^{r}$ - 53^v

 $47^{v}$ 

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 15 August 1533 (Scribe A)

47^r A Messer Gioanne di Spatari.^a

1. A cinque di agosto hebbi una de V.E. data a di xxx di luglio [no. 56] da nostro Don Pietro Aaron in risposta di una mia de xxvi giugno, nella quale si contiene una mia dimanda a V.E., cioè dove debbe essere la sillaba detta *ut* et la sillaba detta *la* ascendendo gradatim de questa nota posta in G acuto segnata con il segno de b quadro giacente ut hic:¹

15 1 0

della quale dimanda havete risposto secondo el solito vostro, et all'incontro V.E. mi fa un certo quesito da parte et in nome delli sui musici bolognesi. Quantunque el sia inutile et non pertinente al genere et modo diatonico, mi sforzarò el meglio che potrò et saprò dichiararlo a voi et cotesti vostri musici, se così è che essi dimandino. Ma sit quomodocumque, non restarò di dire el mio parere.

2. Et primamente dove dite così nella vostra lettera: 'I nostri musici bolognesi alli giorni passati hanno messo in campo certi dubbii musici, per li quali sono nate tra loro varie considerationi, in modo che pare che non si possino fermare né restare | resoluti. Et perché sanno che questa tanto nobile et magna città abonda di ogni bene et virtù, mi hanno pregato che io voglia scrivervi et pregarvi per parte loro et etiam mia che V.E. scriva dove sarà la sillaba *ut* et la sillaba *la* del b rotondo segnato in F et in C, et similmente del b quadro giacente segnato in b et in E', etc. A questo tal quesito così io brevemente respondo et dico: LSono stati ordinati dalli musici duoi segni per li quali i suoni naturalmente considerati si possono remuovere dal luogo proprio, li quali sono questi: b #. El primo, cioè b, remuove il suono naturale dal luogo proprio dove sta segnato per semituono maggiore in grave. Il secondo, scilicet #, opera il contrario, cioè remuove il suono naturale per semituono maggiore in acuto.  $J^2$  Et

" The original heading read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al detto Messer Giovanni di Spatari salute.'

¹ Throughout the letter, this sign was originally written as  $\bigotimes$ , then changed to  $\natural$ . In his letter of 3 June 1538 to Pietro de Justinis (see no. 88), Del Lago criticized the latter for writing E $\natural$  with the sign  $\bigotimes$ , stating that this sign 'realiter in musica nulla significa' and attributing its invention to Marchetto of Padua. This is very curious, since the sharp-sign occurs more frequently in musical manuscripts and prints than the natural sign. We have transcribed Del Lago's  $\natural$  as  $\ddagger$ , since he meant it as a sharp.

 $[\]frac{2}{1524}$  The passage in lower half-brackets seems to have been taken from Spataro's letter of 9 Sept. 1524 to Pietro Aaron; see no. 13, para. 4. It would therefore have been added when Del Lago

però quando questo segno b sarà segnato in uno delli luoghi naturali de la mano di Guido monacho, allhora quel tuono naturale resta diviso per semituono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto. Et quando questo segno, cioè #, è segnato in uno de' luoghi predetti naturali, allhora quel tuono naturale resta diviso per semituono maglgiore in grave et minore in acuto. 48^r Et questo anchora accade tra ciascun spatio di tuono accidentalmente considerato. Ma se questo segno b si segnase in F et in C naturali, el suo suono saria più depresso^b de E et de  $\frac{1}{2}$  per spatio de un comma. Et se questo segno # fusse dato in E et in 占 naturali, el suo suono saria più intenso di F et di C per spatio di comma, el quale spatio predetto di comma fa che non si osservano le distantie atte et proprie al genere diatonico. Né etiam nel chromatico et nello enharmonico se procede immediate da un suono al altro per tal spatio di comma, el quale è solamente necessario' alla formatione et redintegratione del tuono et altre spetie nella musica esercitate.^d Et questo si approba per l'autorità di Giovan Ottobi nella sua Musica, dove lui tratta del' comma, le parole del quale sono queste, scilicet: Comma est particula qua semitonium maius superat minus, de cuius speciebus sive proportionibus non est curandum, et sic de aliis eius

^{48°} accidentibus, cum non ponatur in aliquo | genere melorum, etc.³ Et questa è l'autorità perché il spatio del comma in nessun[/] genere d'alcun perito in l'arte musica non è stato posito per intervallo acciò si proferisca, ma solamente alla formatione et perfettion del tuono et delle consonantie (come ho detto di sopra) perché con gran difficultà si può percipere dalle orechie per il suo minimo spatio o ver intervallo, dato che sia ultimo spatio sensibile, come al nostro Boetio piace in libro 111°, cap. V111°, el quale così dice: Est enim comma quod ultimum comprendere possit auditus.⁴

3. Dico adunque (per satisfatione de V.E.) che la sillaba ditta *ut* del b rotundo dato in F et in C naturali, tale sillaba *ut* sarà più depressa di C et di G per spatio d'un semituono maggiore, et similmente la syllaba detta *la* 

^b MS: di presso.
^c Del Lago deleted the words 'et anche commodo' at this point.
^d The following was added in the margin but subsequently deleted: 'et perché tale modo de removere li intervalli mutano [sie] le specie, pertanto non se debbono tali segni segnare in li preditti luoghi'. Cf. Spataro's letter to Aaron of 9 Sept. 1524: 'et etiam perché tale modo di rimovere li intervalli muta la spetie. Pertanto sono da fugire . . .' (no. 13, para. 4).
^e MS: della.
^f MS: nessum.

revised his letters in view of publication. On this, see Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his *Epistole*'.

³ Hothby, Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musicae editus a reverendo patre Magistro Johanne Octobi Anglico (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Palat. 472, fo. 10°). On this treatise, see Ch. 7, pp. 161-3.

⁴ Boethius, *De musica*, ed. Friedlein, p. 285. The quotation actually comes from 3. 10. At this point Del Lago added in the margin, then deleted, the following: 'perché anchora che el sia compreso da l'audito, l'instromento naturale non potrà esso pronuntiare' (see para. 3). It reappears as a marginal addition on fo. 49'.

sarà più depressa di A et di E per spatio di semituono maggiore. Ma la sillaba *ut* del b quadro giacente, ut hic # segnato in E et in  $\square$  naturali, tale sillaba ut sarà più intensa de C et de G per spatio d'un semituono maggiore, et al medesimo | modo la sillaba *la* più intensa sarà di A et di E 49^r per spatio d'un semituono maggiore, o ver sopra B [rotundo] et F (quod idem est) per spatio d'un comma.⁵ Il quale spatio non è per se in actu cantabile per esser transito difficile, et molto incomodo saria al cantore cantando, [perché anchora che sia compreso da l'audito, l'instromento naturale non potria esso pronuntiare,[¬] per la qual cosa tale ordine è in tutto reprobato et remosso dall'uso. Etiam per non essere anchora il monochordo et altri instrumenti per tale divisione divisi,⁶ cioè per commi, si potria dire frust[r]atorio et non necessario in questo caso₁.⁷ Pertanto è vana cosa et non necessario dimandare tal ordine di hexachordi per non potersi procedere secondo il genere diatonico, cioè naturale, in pratica usitato, perché nel genere diatonico si procede per semituono, tuono, et tuono, et per il contrario per tuono, et tuono, et semituono, et al medesimo modo è per le sillabe di Guido, cioè per ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la. Ma se volessimo procedere con questo altro ordine predetto, non saria diatonico | naturale, ma saria un'altro genere misto et non diatonico 49^v simplice. Né anchora di sì fatti hexachordi fa mentione il nostro amico Don Pietro Aaron in quello ultimo suo trattatello,⁸ nel quale lui tratta delle congionte, fatto in retrattatione et correttione di alcune cose dette da lui sopra tal materia non troppo ben considerate, come appare nel capitolo xxvII et xxVIII del suo t[r]attato de tonis,⁹ ne' quali dichiara 'come in tutte le positioni o vero luoghi della mano di Guido sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o ver voci',¹⁰ et questo perché credea che non fusse altra congionta che solo quella di b molle, come se può facilmente comprendere nel capitolo xxv1 del predetto suo trattato.¹¹ Ma certamente le congionte in cantu mensurato sono due, cioè una di b molle, la quale si

⁵ This is not what Del Lago originally wrote, as we can deduce from Spataro's reply; see no. 60, para. 6.

⁶ Del Lago does not say 'per non essere il monochordo et altri instrumenti per tale divisione divisi'; he says 'per non essere *anchora*... divisi'. From this 'non anchora' we may deduce not so much that Del Lago himself was in favour of such division but that there must have been discussions of this matter among Venetian musicians, some of whom may have talked about keyboard instruments with smaller tone divisions. In fact, in his reply to this letter (see no. 60, para. 12), Spataro points out that 'the modern divided monochord' has a split key between G and A, allowing for both  $G\sharp$  and Ab, between which there is an interval of a comma.

⁷ The passage in lower half-brackets was drawn from Spataro's letter of 30 Oct. 1527 (no. 15, end of para. 3).

⁸ This is the treatise without title, printed in Venice in 1531, that appears attached to some copies of the *Toscanello* and of his treatise on the modes. See no. 34.

⁹ Aaron, Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525).

¹⁰ Ibid., ch. 26.

¹¹ Ibid., fo. f**2**^{⊷v}.

segna con questo segno  $\flat$  in ciascun luogo della mano di Guido dove ^{50^t} naturalmente et accidentalmente si trova *mi*, et l'altra congionta si chiama di b duro, la quale si segna con questo segno  $\ddagger$  in ciascuno luogo della mano di Guido dove naturalmente et accidentalmente cade  $fa_{\perp}$ .¹² Et di questo chiaramente si dimostra esser due coniunte per questi versi fatti dalli antichi, i quali così dicono:

> Dic coniunctarum quadrum genus atque rotundum. A servabit et E coniuncta figura rotunde; in F et in C discernit⁸ progressio quadre.¹³

Et tali congionte segnate con i predetti segni nelle antidette lettere sono chiamate naturali, perché procedono diatonicamente. Ma se tale segno  $\flat$ sarà segnato in C o ver in F naturali, et questo # in  $\vdash$  o ver in E naturali, allhora tali congionte non saranno al genere diatonico né ad alcun altro genere pertinenti.^b

 $_{50}$  [ 4. Da poi procedete in la vostra lettera dicendo così: 'Et perché el mio precettore et Tintoris et Fra Giovanni Ottobi dicono che tali segni non si segnano ne' luoghi preditti naturali,¹⁴ domandano a quella qual sia la ragione che tali segni non si debbono segnare ne' luoghi predetti naturali', etc. Respondendo dico che se dal vostro precettore et da Tintoris et da Fra Giovanni Ottobi è stato detto che i predetti segni, cioè di b rotondo et di b quadro giacente, non si segnano ne' luoghi predetti naturali, da loro è stato detto per due ragioni, delle quali la prima è che se 'l segno di b rotondo o ver molle si ponesse in tale lettere o vero in altri luoghi ove naturalmente fusse *fa*, non saria real et vera coniunta, et similmente se il segno di b quadro o vero duro si segnasse dove naturalmente fusse *mi.*ⁱ 'La ragione è perché da b ad C et da E ad F naturali cade immediate lo spatio del semituono minore, et non del tuono, il quale si possa dividere per semituono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto, o ver per maggiore

^{*b*} Del Lago deleted the following passage, found on the last six lines of fo.  $50^{\circ}$  and the first three lines of fo.  $50^{\circ}$ : 'Et queste sono ditte irrationale perché non si potessino in nessun genere . conducere né misurare, imperò che ogni irrationale è imposibile [*sic*], perché non si puole conducere, misu[ra]re, né denominare, e questo è perché da h ad C et da E ad F cade immediate el spatio del semituono minore et non del tuono, el quale [fo.  $50^{\circ}$ ] si possa dividere per semituono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto, o ver per maggiore in grave et minore in acuto, etc.' (Part of this passage was transferred to the bottom of fo.  $50^{\circ}$ .)

^{*i*} Del Lago deleted the following at this point: 'Et questo è affermato dal vostro precettore in la prima parte, trattato 2°, capitolo 2° della sua *Musica*' (Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 30).

¹³ This saying probably derives from some medieval didactic poem on music; we have not succeeded in tracing the source.

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 $_{51}$ r in grave et minore in acuto.⁷ Dico adunque, essendo ne' predetti luoghi fa et mi naturali, non oportet signari et demonstrari huiusmodi fa et mi per signa accidentalia, perché sariano indarno messi, et anchora si destrueria et guasteria l'ordine naturale. Rationibus predictis è ben vero che gli è stato ordinato et poi anchora osservato da' musici, che dove sarà tal segno b segnato, si debba dire sempre fa, et dove sarà dato questo segno # si debba dire sempre mi, ma questo si intende però in ciascun luogo nella mano di Guido dove non sono né fa né mi naturali, come afferma el reverendo D. B. de Francia al capitolo 8º della sua Musica dove lui tratta delle congionte, el quale così dice: Notandum est quod signum b mollis nunquam est ponendum nisi super situm huius vocis mi quam semper conmutat in fa, neque signum b quadri est ponendum nisi super situm huius vocis fa quam semper mutat in mi, etc.¹⁵ Questo medesimo afferma il dottissimo musico maestro Prosdocimo di Beldomando padoano nel trattato suo di contrapunto al capitolo secondo nella terza regola, nel quale tratta di musica colorata, il quale così dice: Tertia regula est hec, quod signa huius ficte musice sunt duo, scilicet b [rotundum] sive molle et [quadrum] sive durum, que duo signa nobis quandoque demonstrant vocum fictionem sive positionem in loco ubi ipse voces esse non possunt, etc.⁷¹⁶

5. L'altra ragione è che se li predetti segni accidentali | se ponessino et ٢ĭ^v segnassino nelle antidette lettere naturali, cioè in 占 et in E o ver in C et in F, non saria similmente congionta, perché la congionta, secondo piace a Giovanni Tintoris, altro non è se non far di tuono semituono et di semituono tuono.¹⁷ Essendo adunque sopra 🔓 et E et sotto C et F spatio propinquo di semituono minore, il quale spatio secondo l'ordine naturale è fisso et immobile, et non di tuono, pertanto non poriano tali segni operare el suo effetto secondo la sua natura et proprietà, perché seguirebbe che la definitione et il definito sarianno contrarii tra loro, et anchora per questo seguirebbe che non si potriano commodamente tali congionte pronuntiare dal cantore ascendendo et descendendo con la voce, se non con grandissima dificultà et fatica, per esser spatio o ver intervallo inusitato, e questo è per defecto della pratica, la quale per infino a hora  $_{52}$ ^r non ha dato, né manco è per dare per lo advenire, segno alcuno che sotto C et F di uno semituono maggiore o ver sotto 🗄 et E d'un comma (quod idem est) si possano dire fa per compire el semituono minore che doveria esser fra b et esso sopradetto luogo, si come si fa in tutte le altre lettere, le

¹⁵ Brevis collectio artis musice per Reverendum D. B. de Francia (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS VIII, 64 [3415]), fo. 47°. On this treatise, see Ch. 7, pp. 155-61.

¹⁶ Prosdocimo, *Contrapunctus* 5. 3 (ed. Herlinger, p. 74). Del Lago's version is closer to the recension in the Lucca MS; cf. Ch. 7, pp. 153-4.

⁸ MS: discenrit.

¹² The passage in lower half-brackets has been borrowed from Spataro's letter of 30 Oct. 1527 to Del Lago (no. 15, para. 4). But it was part of Del Lago's original letter, since Spataro quotes this passage in his reply (no. 60, para. 16).

¹⁴ See no. 56 nn. 4-5.

¹⁷ Tinctoris, *Dictionary*, trans. Parish, p. 14: 'Coniuncta est dum fit de tono regulari semitonium irregulare aut de semitonio regulari tonus irregularis.' By omitting *regularis* and *irregularis*, Del Lago misses an essential point of Tinctoris's definition.

### 57. Del Lago to Spataro, 15 Aug. 1533

#### The Letters

quale tutte se possono sbassare de uno semituono maggiore, la qual cosa non possono far C et F nisi imaginative, ergo male, etc. Adunque per le predette ragioni potete comprendere perché li detti segni non si segnano ne' luogi antidetti naturali, perché non producono intervallo comodo all'harmonia, et questo è el mio giuditio et parere, et se in questo io non ho satisfatto ad plenum a V.E., quella si satisfaccia da lei medesima.

6. Prego V.E. per lo amore qual lei mi porta voglia esser contenta pregare cotesti vostri musici per parte mia et anchor vostra che si degnino mandarmi la resolutione in scriptis di questi duoi tenori qui sotto notati, li

^{32^v} quali non posso cantare con le altre parti per non l'intendere bene, perché so che cotesti vostri musici non solamente in pratica sono dottissimi et esercitatissimi, ma etiamdio in theorica. Però questo sarà facile a loro et tanto più a voi, essendo voi a questa età el primo in questa nostra arte et scientia musicale. Advertatis[/] che nel segno del primo tenore per una misura passa una semibreve imperfetta, o vero el valore d'essa, contra una semibreve, o vero il suo valore, di questo O, el quale è segnato in le altre parti del concento. Ma nel segno del secondo tenore si pone una semibreve perfetta, o vero tre minime, per una battuta contra una semibreve perfetta, o vero tre minime, de questo C posto in principio delle altre parti, per esser equali in virtù et valore. Li predetti tenori sono qui sotto notati:



⁵³^r Canon: Dicitur ter. Primo modo: prima talea in subdupla | superbipartiente proportione.¹⁸ Secunda talea in subdupla proportione. Tertia talea in subsesquitertia. Quarta vero in subsesqualtera. Secundo modo: prima talea dicitur in tripla proportione. Secunda in hemiolia. Tertia sicut jacet. Quarta in subdiatessaron.¹⁹ Tertio modo: dicitur in diapente.²⁰ Et est notandum quod secunda et tertia vice capitur in diapente.

Seguita l'altro tenore:

 j  Here del Lago interposes a Latin word, the second person plural of the present subjunctive active of *advertere*.



Canon: Qui dicitur bis, due prime talee de maiori modo perfecto, minori existente imperfecto. Alie vero due talee e contrario, secundo per semi de primo.²¹

7. Ma di questi tali ordini di talea, i quali sono ne' duoi sopranotati tenori, non fa mentione alcuna V.E. nel opera sua di contrapunto, come appare nella seconda parte al capitolo 7°, dove lei definisce talea.²² Trovandosi anchora | questo altro modo essersi usitato ne' canti oltra quello che V.E. ha posto et per esemplo dimostrato nella predetta opera sua, et quanto a questi modi et ordini di comporre et segnare detta talea, io li dimostrai per una mia data a dì 8 di ottobre M.D.xxix [no. 28] come si trova altro modo diverso dal vostro usitato da' dottissimi compositori antichi ne' loro harmonici concenti. Et però credo che tali sopranotati tenori saranno facilmente intesi da voi per essere voi stato così advertito da me nella detta mia lettera sopra tal materia di talea.²³ Et quanto a questo, altro non scriverò per hora.

In Venetia a dì xv agosto M.D.xxxiii.

#### [Giovanni del Lago]

Io mandai a richieder^k in questa mia risposta la resolutione dei duoi soprascritti tenori a maestro Gioanne di Spatari per tentarlo.²⁴

^k MS: richierder.

²¹ No composition by Brassart with this tenor survives. The canonic inscription is similar to that of Brassart's 'Magne decus potencie/Genus regale esperie': 'Iste dicitur bis, primo de modo et tempore perfectis, secundo per tercium sed prime pause non dicuntur' ('This is sung twice, first in perfect mode and *tempus*, second at one-third the value, ignoring the first rests'); see Johannes Brassart, *Opera omnia*, ed. Keith E. Mixter (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 35; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1965–71), ii, p. xvii. In the absence of the other voices, the tenor cannot be transcribed with certainty; see Spataro's remarks on this point in his reply to the present letter (no. 60, para. 23). According to his reply, there should be dots after the second *longa* rest and last breve rest.

²³ See last paragraph of the Commentary.

 24  This postscript, in Del Lago's hand, is a later addition, probably made when he went over the letters and corrected the spellings in view of his intended publication.

¹⁸ Proportio subdupla superbipartiens = x:(2x + 2). As Spataro remarks in no. 60, para. 22, the canon does not specify which subdupla superbipartiens is meant; the resolution shows that it is 3:8, subdupla superbipartiens tertias. See the Commentary.

¹⁹ The resolution of the canon shows that 'subdiatessaron' is identical with 'subsesquitertia'. See the Commentary.

²⁰ Similarly, 'in diapente' is identical with 'sesquialtera'.

²² Del Lago refers to a treatise by Spataro that is no longer extant. He had already criticized Spataro's definition of *talea* in a previous letter; see no. 28.

1. On 5 August I received from our Don Pietro Aaron your letter of 30 July [no. 56] that was in answer to mine of 26 June, in which I asked where the syllables *ut* and *la* are of  $G^{\sharp}$ .¹ You replied in your usual way and in exchange posed a question on behalf of your Bolognese musicians. Even though it is pointless and not pertinent to the diatonic genus, I shall try my best to answer, if it is really they who pose the question. However that may be, I shall not hesitate to give my opinion.

2. First you say: 'Our Bolognese musicians have been unable to reach a conclusion in discussing certain musical questions, and they have asked me to put them before you. Where do you think are the syllables ut and la of Fb and Cb and of B# and E#?' Briefly, I say that musicians established two signs to remove notes from their natural places. The first, b, lowers the note from its natural place by a major semitone. The second, #, does the opposite; it raises the note from its natural place by a major semitone.² When a flat is signed in one of the natural positions of the Guidonian hand, it divides that tone into a minor semitone below and a major semitone above. When a sharp is signed in one of those natural places, the tone is divided into a major semitone below and a minor semitone above. This happens in every whole tone divided by an accidental. A flat on F and C lowers the sound to a comma beneath E and B, and a sharp on E and B raises the sound to a comma above F and C. This comma creates distances not proper to the diatonic genus. Nor is the interval of a comma used in the chromatic and enharmonic genera; it only serves to complete a whole tone and other musical intervals. Hothby confirms this in his Musica: The comma is the portion by which the major semitone exceeds the minor, whose species or proportions are of no concern, and therefore their properties too, since it is not used in any melodic genus.³ This is the reason why the comma is not used by any skilled musician as a singable interval, but only to complete a whole tone or consonance; it is very hard for the ear to discern because of its small interval; Boethius says: The comma is the smallest [interval] that hearing can perceive.⁴

3. Therefore *ut* of Fb and Cb will fall a major semitone beneath C and G and *la* a major semitone beneath A and E. But *ut* of E\$ and B\$ will lie a major semitone higher than C and G, and *la* a major semitone above A and E, or a comma above Bb and F.⁵ The interval of a comma is not singable, for even if you can hear it, the voice cannot produce it. Therefore it is excluded from practice. Moreover, since monochords and other instruments are not yet divided by commas,⁶ it can be called useless. The interval diatonic order, which is semitone, tone, tone and, in reverse, tone, tone, semitone, and the same holds for the Guidonian syllables. This other order would not be the natural diatonic genus but a mixed one. Nor does

our friend Aaron mention such hexachords in his latest treatise on mutations,⁸ a revision of some ill-considered statements in chs. 27 and 28 of his treatise on the modes,⁹ where he shows 'how there are six syllables, naturally and accidentally, on each position of the hand of Guido',¹⁰ because he thought that there was only one *coniuncta*, operating with flats, as his ch. 26 makes clear.¹¹ But certainly there are two *coniunctae* in mensural music, soft b, shown by  $\flat$  in every position of the hand where there is regularly or irregularly a *mi*, and hard b, shown by  $\ddagger$  in every position where there is regularly or irregularly a *fa*.¹² This is clearly demonstrated in the old verses:

Specify the round and square kinds of conjunctae. The sign of the round conjuncta [b] will keep to A and E; the progression of the square one [#] distinguishes F and C.¹³

The *coniunctae* so signed in these letters are called regular because they proceed diatonically. But if C or F is signed with b and B and E with #, these *coniunctae* do not belong to the diatonic or any other genus.

4. Then you write: 'Since my teacher, Tinctoris, and Hothby all say that such signs should not be used in those regular places,¹⁴ what is the reason?' I answer that the reason is twofold. First, if a b were placed in those letters or in other places where there is regularly a fa, it would not be a true *coniuncta*, and the same holds whenever # is placed where *mi* occurs regularly. The reason is that the interval from B to C and from E to F is a minor semitone and not a whole tone that could be divided with the minor semitone below and the major semitone above or vice versa. Therefore accidental signs placed for fa and mi in the regular positions of fa and mi would be useless and would destroy the natural order. True, musicians say that where you find b you should sing fa and where # mi, but that applies only to those positions on Guido's hand where fa and mi do not occur, as is affirmed by the Revd D. B. de Francia in ch. 8 of his *Musica*, concerning the *conjunctae*: The b sign should never be used except where mi is located, which it always changes to fa, nor be used except where fa is located, which it always changes to mi.¹⁵ The learned Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi confirms this in his counterpoint treatise under rule 3 of ch. 2, concerning 'coloured music': The third rule is that the signs of musica ficta are two, round or soft b and square or hard  $\natural$ . These two signs indicate at times alteration of the notes or their placement where they cannot ordinarily be.¹⁶

5. The second reason is that if those accidental signs are placed in the natural positions B and E or C and F, they would still not be *coniunctae*, which Tinctoris defines as making a semitone of a tone and a tone of a semitone.¹⁷ Since the space above B and E and below F and C is fixed as a semitone and not a tone, the signs could not have their proper effect and

therefore the definition and the defined would contradict each other. Also, these *coniunctae* would be very difficult to sing in ascent as well as descent because of the unaccustomed interval. Up to now, practice has not shown—nor will it do so in the future—any sign through which one can sing a major semitone lower than C and F or a comma lower than B and E (which is the same thing) to complement the minor semitone between the flat and the above-named places [i.e. Bb-Cb, Eb-Fb] as you can do in the other degrees, all of which can be lowered by a major semitone, but not C and F except in one's imagination. These are the reasons why those signs are not used in those natural positions, because they do not produce a harmonious interval. If I have not succeeded in satisfying you with my opinion, satisfy yourself.

6. I pray you, for the love you bear me, to ask your Bolognese musicians on my behalf to resolve these two tenors for me, which I cannot sing with the other parts, because I do not understand them well. Your musicians are so learned and accomplished, in theory as well as practice, it will be no trouble for them, nor for you, the foremost musician of our time. In the first tenor, an imperfect semibreve or its value is the equivalent of a semibreve under O in the other voices. In the second tenor a perfect semibreve or three minims pass per beat against a perfect semibreve under C in the other parts. The tenors are as follows:



Canon: It is sung three times: (i) The first *talea* in *subdupla superbipartiens* proportion [3:8],¹⁸ the second *talea* in *subdupla* proportion [3:6], the third *talea* in *subsesquitertia* [3:4], the fourth in *subsesquialtera* [2:3]. (ii) The first *talea* in *proportio tripla* [3:1], the second in *bemiolia* [3:2], the third as written [3:3], the fourth at the lower fourth [3:4].¹⁹ (iii) It is sung at the fifth [3:2].²⁰ Note that the second and third times it is sung at the fifth.

Here follows the second tenor:



Canon: It is sung twice, the two first *taleae* in perfect major mode and imperfect minor mode. The other two *taleae* the reverse; the second time diminished by half.²¹

7. In your counterpoint treatise, you do not mention this kind of *talea* when you give a definition in Part II, ch.  $7^{22}$  In my letter of 8 October 1529 [no. 28] I pointed out to you that there were other kinds of *taleae* used by the most learned musicians of old. On the basis of my guidance in that letter, you should easily be able to resolve these tenors.²³

PS. I asked Spataro for the resolution of the two tenors to test him.²⁴

#### COMMENTARY

Del Lago's letter allows us to recover a composition by Johannes de Sarto that in its unique source, the Aosta Codex, fos.  $267^v$ – $268^r$ , appears anonymously (the name has been cut off). The four-part isorhythmic motet mourns the death of Albrecht II, King of the Romans, who died in 1439, and calls on the musicians of the imperial chapel to pray to Christ and Mary for his soul. Heading the list of these musicians is Johannes Brassart. Because of the prominent position of Brassart in this list and because 'Romanorum rex' follows another state motet that is ascribed to Brassart in the Aosta Codex, 'O rex Fridrice/In tuo adventu', Guillaume de Van proposed Brassart as the author of 'Romanorum rex',²⁵ an ascription that has been cautiously accepted by the editor of Brassart's works, Keith E. Mixter, who published it as an *opus dubium*.²⁶ In Del Lago's tenor the eleventh note should be D, in ligature with the preceding C. But he gives the ninth note correctly as D; Aosta has C. Apart from minor variants, the canonic instructions are identical.

These instructions indicate augmentation in the first *color* (de Sarto calls it 'modus'), diminution in the second and third.  $\odot$  in the tenor against O in the upper voices does not indicate augmentation, as it does later in the century; the minims are equal.²⁷ Therefore a breve of the tenor takes one and a half measures of the upper voices (or, as Del Lago says, an imperfect semibreve of the tenor is the equivalent of a semibreve under O). In the first *talea*, three semibreves expand to eight, in the second *talea* to six. The proportions always refer back to the *integer valor* and are not cumulative. The use of 'subdiatessaron' and 'diapente' to describe the proportions *subsequitertia* and *sesquialtera* has, as Mixter points out,²⁸

²⁵ Guillaume de Van, 'A Recently Discovered Source of Early Fifteenth-Century Polyphonic Music', *Musica disciplina* 2 (1948), 5–74 at 14.

²⁶ Brassart, *Opera omnia*, ii. 44–7. The motet has also been published by Mixter in Johannes Brassart, *Sechs Motetten* (Musik alter Meister 13; Graz, 1960), pp. 28–37, which includes a facsimile of the source (p. xiv).

 27  On the evolution of the meaning of  $\odot$  and  $\varepsilon$  in Tinctoris's thought, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', p. 42.

²⁸ Sechs Motetten, p. ix. Mixter has analysed the isorhythmic structure of the motet in 'Isorhythmic Design in the Motets of Johannes Brassart', in James W. Pruett (ed.), Studies in

theoretical justification. Tinctoris, in his *Diffinitorium*, gives as the third meaning of 'diatessaron' its definition as the proportion 4:3. Similarly, the third meaning of 'diapente' is the proportion 3:2.

The ascription to Johannes de Sarto is plausible on biographical grounds; like Brassart, he was a member of Albrecht's chapel and is included among the musicians named in the motet. Brassart's name occurs first because he was 'rector capellae'. De Sarto's surviving auvre is small: three introits and three antiphon motets, all for three voices.²⁹ Mixter proposes to remove two of the introits and give them to Brassart because their Gloria Patri sections are to be used in other introits by Brassart ('Gloria Patri ut supra').30 The scribe of the table of contents of Aosta shows some confusion with regard to these two introits; he first wrote 'Brassart', then crossed it out and wrote 'Sarto'. It would be difficult to confirm the ascription of 'Romanorum rex' to de Sarto on a stylistic basis since nothing in his auvre resembles it. Nevertheless, de Sarto's 'Verbum Patris hodie' in Oxford, MS Canonici Misc. 213, fos. 12^v-13^r, also has an unusual set of directions for resolving the tenor. In most fifteenth-century isorhythmic motets the tenor is prefaced by a number of different mensuration-signs but carries no further directions for performance. Occasionally a verbal canon is given instead, specifying the changing mensurations, such as in Brassart's 'Magne decus potencie/Genus regale esperie'.31 'Romanorum rex' is unusual in giving the mensurations in the form of proportions. De Sarto's 'Verbum Patris hodie' is not isorhythmic, but the tenor bears the following instructions: 'Canitur per  $\frac{9}{3}$ . figure allegorismi [recte algorismi] ponuntur pro modis necnon circuli pro temporibus.³² We take it to mean: 'It is sung in  $\frac{9}{3}$ . The arabic figures denote the modes and the circles the *tempus*.' The first part,  $\frac{9}{3}$ , is in perfect major mode, perfect O

minor mode, and perfect *tempus*. The second part,  $\odot$ , is in imperfect minor mode, perfect *tempus*, and major prolation.

Paragraph 7 shows that Del Lago, like Spataro, carefully filed his letters. If his letter of 8 October 1529 (see no. 28) contains the directions based on which Spataro 'should easily be able to resolve these tenors', then how is it that Del Lago himself confesses at the beginning of para. 6 that he does 'not understand them well'? The answer lies in his admission—to be added to the published version of his letter—that he poses the question merely in order to test Spataro.

B.J.B.

Musicology: Essays in the History, Style, and Bibliography of Music in Memory of Glen Haydon (Chapel Hill, 1969), pp. 179–89 at 186–8.

³² Charles van den Borren, who edited the piece in *Polyphonia sacra* (Burnham and London, 1932), pp. 280-3, had understandable difficulty in deciphering the inscription; he queried two words and remarked (p. liv): 'the signification of these words is not very clear. However, the solution of the canon offers no difficulty, considering that the notation is complete by itself.'

# **58** (J95). Fos. $234^{r}-235^{v}$

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 20 August 1533 (autograph)

^{235^v} [Reverendo e]t venerabile et musico excellentissimo [Petro Ar]on florentino de l'ordine [hyerosolomitano], quanto magiore honorando. [I]n Vinetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

234^r Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, el mio molto da me amato Frate Petro Aron, etc.

1. A li dì 13 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 7 signata, a me più che gratissima, per la quale ho claramente compreheso quello che da me sempre è stato per certo tenuto, cioè che con optimo core et puro amore me amati. Ma pure el vostro in tante mie laude et humilemente scrivere più presto reputo essermi incarico che laude et honore. Ma da poi che el vero Idio a V.E. come homo ha dato libero arbitrio, io non intendo già essere quello che de tale arbitrio vi voglia privare. Pertanto quella a me scriverà come gli piacerà, et io sempre cercarò de stare basso et cognoscere me medemo,¹ per non essere conumerato nel numero de li aroganti et insensati pacci [pazzi], li quali fano castelli in aere² et più che non sono vogliono essere existimati, nel numero de li quali se potria decentemente conumerare el venerabile amico nostro Messer Pre Zanetto, el quale potria essere turbato meco, perché a li giurni passati io fui da lui recercato de certe dubietà tra soa Excellentia et uno altro musico o cantore occurrente, cioè che lui cercava sapere da me in quale loco in la mano de Guido cadeva la syllaba ut et etiam la syllaba o vero chorda la dependente (in ordine) dal segno del b molle o vero fa signato in D la sol re et in G sol re ut acuto, ut hic:



et perché alhora da me li fu dato recta resposta secondo el sono del suo quesito et etiam secondo li signi di sopra da lui aducti in luce. Ma lui, per excusarsi de li soi manifesti errori, a me scripse che io non haveva inteso la sua intentione, perché lui diceva intendere pertractare de la syllaba faequalemente considerata in sono con D *la sol re* et con G *sol re at* predicti. Et alhora da me gli fu scripto che lui andasse a imparare de parlare più rectamente musicalemente, perché se da lui era inteso pertractare de la syllaba fa equalemente giuncta in sono con G et D predicte, asai più recto

²⁹ See Keith E. Mixter, 'Johannes de Sarto', The New Grove Dictionary, ix. 668.

³⁰ See Brassart, Opera omnia, i, p. xi.

³¹ See n. 21 above.

¹ The origin of 'Know thyself' was not known even in antiquity. According to Juvenal (11. 27), the saying descended from heaven; it was inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi.

² The image of building in the air goes back as early as Augustine: see Sermones de Vetere Testamento 2. 7, 'ne subtracto fundamento rei gestae, quasi in aere quaeratis aedificare' (cf. also 8. 2). The Roman de la Rose, l. 2442, has 'Lors feras chastiaus en Espaigne'. These two sources were apparently crossed to produce the saying 'to build castles in the air', found in many languages.

seria stato a lui dicendo che tale fa era immaginato, et non dire signato, perché intra el signato et lo equalemente immaginato non cade poca distantia, perché una syllaba diversa in una positione naturale immaginata serà equale in sono con tale naturale positione. Ma se una naturale positione serà con tali signi signata, alhora intra el signo et el naturale loco signato caderà differente sonorità et intervallo. Et perché lui diceva che io doveva bene pensare che lui non seria caduto in tale puerile errore, et che el pareva che lui volesse dire essere stato mio errore perché io non haveva inteso el suo inordinato et male parlare, et etiam che con certo suo parlare arrogante, come è suo costume (a me, che scio quanto lui vale), voleva monstrarsi docto, io gli scripsi una mia de molto strano sono, la quale fu veduta da certi amici mei non mediocriter docti, da li quali fui pregato che per el loro amore io volesse più temperatamente al nostro Pre Zanetto scrivere, atento che tale homo era uno pazo da pigliarsene piacere, et gli resposi che la natura mia non fu mai de pigliarme piacere de simili pacci. Et alhora me pregorno che se a me non era piacere, che alhora^a lassase tale 234^v contento, | et per tale modo (per servire a li amici) gli fu da me più moderatamente scripto.

2. Ma vedendo li predicti amici che lui, el quale se tene tanto docto, chiedeva dubietà non solo da homo grosso ma da simplici fanciulli, cioè de la syllaba ut et de la sillaba la dependente da questo segno # signato in G acuto, deliberorno de temptare alquanto tanto soa doctrina et magno sapere, et li mandorno a chiedere dove in la mano de Guido caderà la syllaba ut et la syllaba la del segno del b rotondo signato in C et in F naturali, et similemente dove tale sillaba *ut* et *la* de questo segno # in  $\square$  et in E naturali signato in la mano de Guido caderano. Et ancora gli hano domandato per quale rasone da Tintoris, da Frate Zoanne Othobi, et dal mio preceptore, da lui allegati, è stato dicto che in C et in F predicti naturali non se debe signare questo segno b, et etiam perché da li predicti è stato concluso che in 🔓 et in E naturali non se dà questo segno #. V.E. ha inteso quali sono li dubii et ques[i]ti da li nostri musici a Sua^b Excellentia domandati, li quali come V.E. dice che lui scossando el capo disse che alhora gli resolveria, la quale cosa è credibile, perché sono termini da homo docto come fra nui lui è existimato. Ma pure perché lui ha demonstrato ignorare la syllaba ut et la syllaba la dependente da questo segno # signato in G acuto, la quale consideratione è asai più facile de la predicta, tra li nostri musici se pensa et crede che molto harà da studiare. Ma responda come li piace, cioè o vale bene o male, lui non potrà perdere nulla del suo, perché se rectamente responderà, lui in sumo honore et exaltatione crescerà, et ancora se non dirà bene, da li nostri musici gli serà demonstrato la mera via. La resolutione de tale quesito al presente non mando a V.E., perché se advenisse che lui respondesse rectamente, io non voglio potere pensare che tale verità gli sia stata aperta et demonstrata da quella, benché credo che se V.E. ci pensarà bene, che el vostro ingegno è tale che la mera verità trovareti. Ma se lui darà resposta, o sia recta, o non recta, a V.E. scriverò el tuto. Et errando lui, non voglio che da altri che solo da V.E. la mera verità gli sia aperta, per mazore sua confusione. Pertanto, con el più cuperto modo che poteti, el confortareti che (per suo honore) se degni dare resposta.

3. Ma dove che lui dice che questo processo

 $[non e vero tritono]^c$  ma che solo se intende così:

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et che circa questa sua oppinione lui me allega in suo favore, io non scio con quale mia auctorità et sententia circa questo lui me possa allegare in suo favore, perché io trovo che ogni verità è contra de lui. Imperò che se el composito tritono non fusse tritono, el sequitaria che la diffinitione et el diffinito seriano contrarii intra loro, la qual diffinitione apresso a ciascuno

235^r docto dice che el tritono non è al tro che coniu[n]ctione de tri ascendenti o descendenti toni, et etiam sequitaria che la composita diatessaron non seria diatessaron, et similemente la composita diapente non seria diapente, et similemente la composita diapason non serà essa diapason, ma solamente la extremità de tale distantie demonstraria la perfectione del tuto. Ma potria essere che solamente lui chiama tritono^d tale immediata distantia del tritono perché, essendo incomposito pronuntiato, la sua asperità et dureza è molto nota, et molto spiace al senso de lo audito, ma quando la sua distantia è mediata, alhora è più tollerata dal senso de lo audito. Et questo nasce (come li nostri musici affirmano) perché lo audito più atende a dui soni, l'uno dapo l'altro immediate pronuntiati, che non atende a dui extremi mediati, perché li medii intra dui extremi dati pronuntiati asai occultano a lo audito la extrema dureza in uno intervallo pronuntiata. Et questo nasce perché così come el tempo è instabile, così la memoria del sono preaudito etiam presto da esso audito è dimisso et posto in oblivione et atende solo al sono sequente. Pertanto se con la voce questo transito tritonico

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" MS: alhoro. " MS: suo.

 $^{^{}c}$  The context seems to call for these or similar words, which Spataro may have overlooked in recopying his letter.  d  We have deleted a superfluous 'n' at this point.

da V.E. aducto in luce serà ut iacet cantato, lo audito prima atenderà a quella distantia la quale prima cade intra la prima chorda o vero voce a la seconda, et da poi (senza ricordarsi del sono primo) atenderà al sono secondo et al terzo, et da poi, senza recordarsi del sono secondo, atenderà al terzo, et al quarto sono, et per tale modo acaderà che el spatio del duro tritono serà pronuntiato mediato, o vero composito, senza offendere el senso de lo audito. Per le quale rasone di sopra assignate, appare lo errore de alcuni moderni scripturi, li quali dicono che quello spatio de tono el quale cade intra mese et paramese è duro, perché l'è el complemento del tritono intenso.³ Ma loro non pensano che la dureza del spatio del tritono, così remisso come intenso, non se perfice del suo ultimo intervallo, ma se fa complecto de le sue voce extreme così composite come incomposite, o vero materiale et formale.⁴

4. Ho inteso quanto V.E. dice del canto de Messer Nicolao et mio,⁵ et a Don Leonardo ho facto intendere la particula a lui pertinente, el quale inseme con Messer Nicolao asai a V.E. se recomandano.

5. Ma mentre che io scriveva questa, me supragiunse lo^e excellentissimo Messer Zoanne Baptista Garganello, el quale me dete una de V.E. de dì 11 del presente signata inseme con el mio tractato de canto mensurato, la quale vostra più presto a me è resultata in tristeza che in gaudio, perché a me pare che quella sia restata molto con tristitia, quasi dubitando che con arte et fictione io habia cercato livarvi tale mio tractato da le mani,⁷ et che poi el nostro anticho amore sia finito, come ha falsamente immaginato quello maligno seminatore de discordie, Pre Zanetto. Ma carissimo et honorando, el mio Frate Petro, non dubitati che in me non è amore fincto, ma sì puro et vero, et la voluntà che haveva de discorere alquanto esso tractato, perché altra copia non se ne trova che sia così complecta, et etiam per havere la comodità degli intaglii, me ha facto chiedere tale opera. Et aciò che la mala intentione de Pre Zanetto non habia loco, io da bono cristiano et optimo amico vi prometto che, impresso o non impresso, ve 235^v restituirò non solo tale tractato, ma etiam quello del contrapuncto, el quale da quello giovene non fu mai scripto, per le cause a V.E. già dicte, et etiam perché più non me aiuta circa la cura de li clerici, perché da li signori fabricerii m'è stato provisto de un'altro molto megliore per me.⁶ Questo

" MS: le. f MS: mano.

³ Nicolaus Wollick, *Enchiridion musices* (Paris, 1512), fo. B₃^r, lists three names for the  $\natural$  sign, the first of which is called ' $\natural$  durum [= b durum] propter durum ascensum ab a ad b', but he derives the name from the *hexachordum durum*, not from the progression of a tritone.

⁴ On this paragraph, see the Commentary.

⁵ Spataro's Magnificat and a work for six voices by Nicolò Cavalaro; see no. 55, para. 6.

⁶ D. Michele Cimatore. He was elected as 'novo mastro de canto' in 1533 and succeeded Spataro in 1541; see Lodovico Frati, 'Per la storia della musica in Bologna', p. 467, and Frank Tirro, 'Cimatore, Michele', *The New Grove Dictionary*, iv. 403. Pre Zanetto non è homo ma è uno diavolo incarnato, el quale se reputa esse[re] uno Dio, et questo appare claro per le sue superbe parole, dove dice che lui cognosce bene el mio core, perché la cognitione del core humano solo se aspecta a Dio. Io non fui mai inganatore, né mai fu mia^g usanza de inganare alcuno, et quello che ho havuto nel pecto io l'ho portato scupertamente in fronte. Ma che bisogna più dire, V.E. scia bene che mai non cercai darvi botta, ma bene ho cercato mantenermi in la vostra benivolentia, per la quale ogni giorno mi trovo c[r]escere in honore et fama, perché V.E. è non solamente homo da bene ma famoso et claro in virtù.

6. Circa la resposta da lui a li quesiti de li nostri musici facta, ancora nulla habiamo havuto. Credo che lui ne parla così fredamente con V.E. per sentire se alcuna cosa ne haveti sentito. Ma potria essere che se lui la tene petitione da puto, che lui ancora responderà da puto, come è sua solita usanza. Horsù non più per hora, perché el foglio è già pleno, et per essere alquanto ancora venuto in colera, al presente altro non dico.^b

7. Messer Nicolao et Don Leonardo se recomandano a V.E. et etiam io inseme con tuto el musico nostro comertio, et al vostro reverendo patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi figlioli per parte mia dareti saluti senza fine. Vale. Bononie, die 20 augusti 1533.ⁱ

. Bonome, die 20 augusti 1533.

Servitor de V.E. J. Spataro

1. On the 13th I received yours of the 7th, which gratified me very much, for I know what I always believed, that you love me sincerely. Yet your great praise and your humble writing are, I feel, almost a burden more than an honour. But God has given you free will, and I shall not deprive you of it. So write to me as you please, and I shall strive to be modest and to know myself,¹ for I do not wish to be counted among those arrogant fools who build castles in the air² and want to be regarded as greater than they are, among whom one could well place our venerable friend Pre Zanetto. He is probably annoyed with me because he asked my opinion in a musical dispute between him and another musician about where the syllables *ut* and *la* are of Db and Gb, and I answered according to the letter of his question and his examples. But he, trying to wriggle out

g MS: mio. b MS: dice.

^{&#}x27; The last figure was not completed, and it looks rather like a 7; it was so read by the person who added the year of writing on the back of many letters. The letter, however, must date from 1533 since Spataro mentions that 'a li giurni passati' Del Lago asked him about the position of *ut* and *la* with respect to D $\mathfrak{h}$  and G $\mathfrak{h}$ ; this was in his letter of 26 June 1533, no longer extant; see no. 57, para. 1.

of his obvious errors, wrote that I misunderstood him, because he meant the syllable fa on D and G. So I wrote back that he ought to learn to speak more like a musician, because if he meant fa on the same sound as G and D, he should have specified that it was imagined, not signed, because a faimagined in a natural position will have the same pitch, but if an accidental is used, the pitch will differ. Because he said I ought to know he wouldn't make such childish errors, apparently to make the blame fall on me for not understanding his confused speech, and because of his arrogance in showing off his learning (towards me, who know his true value), I wrote him a rather irate reply, but my friends said he was a fool, and they prevailed on me to temper it, so I changed it to a more moderate tone.

2. But my friends, seeing that Pre Zanetto, who holds himself so learned, asks not only simple but childish questions, such as ut and la of G[#], decided to test his vast learning, and they asked him where the syllables ut and la of C and F fall, and also the syllables ut and la of B and E#. And they asked why Ramis, Hothby, and Tinctoris say you cannot place a flat on C and F or a sharp on B and E. These are the questions to which (as you report) he, tossing his head, said he would give an answer straight away. He probably will, but since he didn't know where *ut* and *la* of G[#] were, which is much easier, our musicians think he will have to study hard. Right or wrong, he won't lose anything by it; if he is right, his honour will increase; if he is wrong, our musicians will set him straight. I shan't send you the answer just now because if he responds correctly, I don't want to suspect he learnt it from you, though I'm sure you'll be able to work it out. I'll let you know what happens. And if he is wrong, I want you to be the one to enlighten him, to his greater embarrassment. So, as covertly as you can, encourage him, for his own honour, to respond.

3. Where he says the progression F-G-A-B-A or F-G-B-A is not a true tritone but only F-B-A is and cites me in his favour, I have no idea where he could have found an utterance of mine in his support; the truth is against him. If a filled-in melodic tritone were not a tritone, the definition and the defined would contradict each other, for a tritone is a progression of three ascending or descending whole tones. Similarly, a filled-in fourth would not be a fourth, nor a filled-in fifth a fifth, and a filled-in octave would not be an octave, but only the outer limits would demonstrate the interval. Perhaps he wants to call only the leap F-B a tritone because its harshness is more audible; when it is filled in, it is more tolerable. This is because, as our musicians affirm, the ear hears only one sound after another; the middle notes hide the harsh notes of the interval between the extreme notes. Just as time is changeable, so the memory of a sound is lost when a new sound occurs. Thus, if your progression

F-G-A-B-A is sung, the ear attends to the first interval, then, forgetting the first note, hears the second and third notes, then forgetting the second, hears the third and fourth, and thus the interval of a tritone, because of the intermediate notes, does not offend the ear. These reasons make clear the error of some modern writers, who say that the whole tone A-B is harsh because it completes the ascending tritone.³ But the tritone, ascending or descending, is not completed by its last interval but by the outer voices, whether it is filled in or not.⁴

4. I understand what you say about Nicolò [Cavalaro]'s composition and mine,⁵ and have informed Don Leonardo of the part concerning him.

5. While I was writing this, Giovanni Baptista Garganello handed me your letter of the 11th with my treatise on mensural music. Your letter gave me more sadness than joy, for it appears that you believe I used fictitious reasons to get my treatise back and that our old affection is ended, as that malicious disseminator of discord, Pre Zanetto, falsely imagined. My dearest Pietro, do not doubt my true friendship; I really do need to see this treatise because it is the only complete copy and because of the convenience for the engraving. As a good Christian and great friend, I promise you to return it, printed or not, and also the treatise on counterpoint, which was not copied by that young man, for the reasons I have already given you, and also because he no longer helps me with the clerics; the overseers have provided me with another, who suits me much better.⁶ This Pre Zanetto is a devil incarnate; he thinks he is a god, as you can see from his haughty words, saying he can see into my heart, for only God can understand the human heart. I have never deceived anyone, and I always speak my mind. You know well I have never sought to attack you but always to be in your good graces, through which my honour and reputation increase, because you are not only a good man but renowned and famous for your talents.

6. We still have not heard his response to our musicians; he probably speaks so coldly to you because he wants to find out if you know anything. He may think it is childish, so he will answer like a child, as usual. But enough for now, since there is no more space on this sheet and I have already begun to lose my temper.

7. Nicolò [Cavalaro] and Don Leonardo send their best wishes, in which I and our whole musical circle join. Please greet your patron [Sebastiano Michiel] and his sons for me.

#### COMMENTARY

Spataro enters, I believe (and it bears investigation), new territory when he tries to explain (para. 3) that not only can we speak of a tritone when there is a melodic

leap to the tritone (as Del Lago thinks), but also when there is a melodic configuration framed by the tritone, but mediated by the intervening steps of the diatonic genus. Spataro understands that Del Lago's narrowing of the definition of 'tritone' to the interval itself is based on the undisputed phenomenon of the melodic tritone's rejection by the ear—the ear of the musician operating in the confines of the modal and contrapuntal framework of his age. But, he asks, why does the ear tolerate the tritonic progressions



The reason is, he continues, that the ear attends more to the succession of two notes than to the extreme notes (f-b) filled in by its intervening steps. It is these intervening notes that conceal from the ear the harshness of the tritone. In listening to the above tritonic progressions, the ear fastens first on the interval between the first and the second notes, and then (without remembering the first interval) to the interval between the second and third notes, and then without remembering the second interval it fixes on the third note and the fourth. And so it happens that the interval of the harsh tritone appears mediated through the intervening notes without offending the ear. This, Spataro continues, explains the error of some modern writers who say that the whole-tone interval between A and B (in the configuration of a tritonic progression) is harsh. They do not take into account that the harshness of the tritone, whether going down or up, does not spring from its last interval, but from its bounding intervals, whether in filled-in or direct form.

What seems new here is the introduction of a psychological analysis of hearing. We are aware of the greater significance that the Renaissance musician attributes to the sense of hearing, in contradistinction to the medieval musician, who preferred *ratio* and *numerus* to the judgement of the ear.⁷ But it would be difficult to find *before* Spataro an attempt to deal in psychological terms with the way we hear a melodic progression. Yet, there are strange things to be observed in this explanation. Hardly any musicians today—and perhaps even then—would agree that we hear note by note, regularly forgetting the preceding steps. To hear musically, to hear a melodic progression, we must hear as we read: not forgetting but remembering the previous notes (or words) in what one might call an act of relational hearing.⁸ Is it possible that Spataro thought otherwise? To determine

⁷ See Lowinsky, 'Music of the Renaissance as Viewed by Renaissance Musicians', pp. 136-8 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 90-1.

the answer to this question, we must read Spataro very carefully. If we do, we make some interesting observations. In introducing the note-by-note hearing process, Spataro speaks not for himself, but for 'our musicians'. He says we tolerate the tritone more easily when the offending interval is bridged by the intervening steps. 'Et questo nasce (*come li nostri musici affirmano*) perché lo audito più atende a dui soni, l'uno dapo l'altro immediate pronuntiati, che non atende a dui extremi mediati. . . 'It is his colleagues who say this. That Spataro is by no means always in agreement with them, or they with him, can be seen in letters 34 and 55.

Secondly, we discover that at the end Spataro takes issue with the theoretical statement that in the progression F–G–A–B–A the step from A to B is the offending element. No, says he, the harshness of the tritone springs not from the last interval, but from the bounding intervals (F–B $\beta$ ). This he can say only if he believes in relational hearing, that is, in the ear's capacity to relate the two bounding notes across the intervening mediating notes. He is leading his readers (Aaron, Del Lago, and future readers, whom he has constantly in mind) in a Socratic dialectic from one position to its opposite, building a bridge from the position of his colleagues to his own.

If the present-day musicologically trained reader were to object that even the filled-in tritonic progressions were not acceptable then, as they should not be today in our editions of sixteenth-century music, then we must again seek the answer in a more precise reading of Spataro. He never says that the tritonic progression is accepted by the ear; he says 'it is more [easily] tolerated'. And this is certainly true; but *musica ficta* teaches us that toleration can be transformed into acceptance by lowering the tritone to a fourth through the addition of a flat to B. This Spataro knew as well as anyone else, but it was not the topic of his discourse, which we would rather entitle: 'Does the concept of an interval still hold when it is filled in by intervening steps?' And his resounding answer is: 'Yes, because across the intervening steps the ear remembers the first note when arriving at the fourth or fifth note'.

⁸ The beginnings of a psychology of hearing go back to the last half of the 19th c.; see Natasha Spender's outstanding article on 'Psychology of Music' in *The New Grove Dictionary*, xv. 388-421, to which an 'Assessment' by Rosamund Shuter-Dyson (421-3) and a bibliography (423-7) are added. Spender quotes C. von Ehrenfels on perception of melody as saying: 'in order to apprehend a melody it is not enough to have the impression of a momentarily sounding tone in consciousness, but—where the tone is not the first one—it is necessary to have at least a few of the preceding tones simultaneously presented in memory' (p. 391; the original source is 'Uber Gestaltqualitäten', *Vierteljahrsschrift wissenschaftlicher Philosophie* 14 (1890), 249-92). Von

Ehrenfels is one of the first representatives of the *Gestalttheorie* who applied its idea of the whole preceding the parts to music. A 20th-c. psychologist of music summed up the idea in this motto: 'It is not the note that makes the music, but music that makes the note'; see Albert Wellek, 'Musikpsychologie', *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ix (1961), col. 1158, and id., 'Gehörpsychologie', ibid. iv (1955), col. 1595.
#### 59. Spataro to Aaron, 29 Aug. 1533

# 59 (J104). Fo. 248^{r-v}

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 29 August 1533 (autograph)

^{248^r} Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, el mio da me molto amato Frate Petro Aron, etc.^{*a*}

1. A li giurni passati per una mia [no. 58] io feci noto a V.E. de molte occurentie, et infra le altre come io haveva receputo el mio tractato de canto mensurato, et perché alhora, essendo già stracco del scrivere, et etiam perché el foglio era pleno, circa quella de V.E. a me missa, signata de dì 11 augusto, non fu da me facta tropo plena resposta, per la quale vostra asai me sono atristato, vedendo che quella quasi ha ha[v]uto in dispiacere de mandarmi tale tractato, forsa credendo che io sia sdegnato et che imputi a V.E. essere stato negli[gen]te circa la impressione de quello, a la quale cosa, carissimo mio, prego che non ce vogliati pensare, perché tale fantasia non fu mai in me. Come più volte a V.E. ho scripto, non tanto perché l'opera è vulgare quanto per essere più anni che io feci tale tractato, io haveva voglia de vederlo una sola volta almanco prima che fusse in publico aducto et impresso, et così ho dato principio de vederlo, et asai resto satisfacto. Ma pure in alcuno loco l'ho emendato, et asai m'è stato a caro, perché de alcune altre particule a li lochi soi decenti tractarò, de le quale sono stato in disputatione con el nostro Pre Zanetto, come da V.E. per li mei scripti a giurni passati è stato compreheso, da le quale disputatione et dubietà, se non fusseno altramenti declarate, potriano apresso a qualchi pochi intelligenti et ignari producere dubio de contrarietà et mio errore. Perché in tale tractato io non ho speculato più alto se non quanto li simplici precepti da li antichi et rudi moderni comandano senza speculare più alto, come s'è sforzato de aducere contra li canti mei compositi el predicto nostro Pre Zanetto, el quale cerca fare intendere a V.E. che con inganno io cerco livarvilo da le mani,^b et che se io laudo V.E. in le mie littere, che io vi do botta, et per aquistare benivolentia, et che lui cognosce bene el core mio. Ma certamente che lui ha asai poca cognitione de la natura mia, perché io porto in fronte quello che ho nel core.

2. Ancora non è giunta a Bologna la resposta de quelli dubii musici a lui chiesti da li nostri musici, a li quali, scossando el capo, lui voleva immediate dare vera resolutione.¹ Potria essere che ha resposto, ma che sono stati mandati da lui a staffetta sopra una lumagha. Io gli respusi liberamente et senza pensare che lui credesse che io non sapesse dove sta la sillaba *ut* et etiam el *la* de questo signo # signato in G acuto, perché io

" The covering page with the address is missing. " MS: mane.

andava a bon camino et non da maligno, come lui sole andare, et da me tale soa domanda non fu tolta a sdegno, perché io credeva che lui dubitasse perché io l'ho trovato dubitare in particule de minore importantie. Ma le vostre littere me hano aperto lo intellecto, le quale vostre ho ¹⁴⁸^v portate in seno sino al di de oggi, et è stato tale giorno | che (pleno de sdegno et ira) l'ho let[t]a quattro volte, et maxime dove lui dice che credeva che ne lo intrinseco io non ve amasse, le quale parole me sono state asai nogliose, perché el non vive homo che più né tanto quanto V.E. sia amato da me, perché li boni meriti de quella così vogliono. Et circa questo altro non dirò perché a me pareria butare in ochii a lo amico quello che ho facto per mio debito et per amore et gelo de lo honore del mio honorando Frate Petro,² al quale più credo essere tenuto che a me stesso, perché asai più che altro vivente et più che me stesso è stato solicito et s'è affaticato circa el mio utile et honore.³ Pertanto non creda V.E. che io sia venuto con truffe et inganni, perché o impresso o non impresso, io ve mandarò el tractato mio asai meglio formato che non era prima, al dispecto de Pre Zanetto, el quale voglio che se menta per la gola et che crepi de invidia, et che sempre resti uno ignorantazo che non existima vergogna, come appare dove lui dice che bene o male che lui responda, non spenderebe uno bagatino.⁴ Prego V.E. non voglia parlare con lui de tali dubietà, aciò che per qualche vostra parola non venesse a qualche vera intelligentia. Basta che a V.E. darò adviso del tuto, ma prima voria vedere tale soa resposta fata sopra tale quesito, el quale lui dice essere domanda da puto.

3. Una gratia ancora chiedo a V.E., se el non ve torna a incomodo et sinixtro, che quella pregasse Messer Adriano che per amore de V.E., et ancora per amore mio, a soa Excellentia li piacesse componere tri versi sopra questo hymno come a soa Excellentia piace, el quale è lo hymno del nostro divo Petronio,⁵ del quale al fine del mese sequente serà la soa festa et solemnità, et de questo prego V.E. che el preghi quanto sia possibile,

³ And here he surely alludes to Aaron's merit in having his treatise on *sesquialtera* published in Venice.

⁴ A bagattino is a Venetian coin worth one-quarter of a quattrino.

⁵ San Petronio, Archivio Musicale, MS A. XXXXV, partly in Spataro's hand, includes forty hymns; see the table in Tirro, *Renaissance Musical Sources*, pp. 34–9. Tirro remarks that 'five of the six hymns entered by Spataro are by Willaert, and an anonymous hymn for S. Petronio, in Spataro's hand and in the style of Willaert, standing next to a hymn by Willaert in the following section copied by Scribe B, may well be the hymn Spataro requested' (ibid., p. 32). The hymn is 'Laetetur mens fidelium', of which verses 2, 4, and 6 are set polyphonically (fos. 76°–78°). Tirro believes it is in Willaert's style. For a modern edn., see Tirro, 'Giovanni Spataro's Choirbooks', pp. 708–17. Later in the manuscript a second setting is found, of verse 2 only (ibid., pp. 777–80). Might this be the one stanza requested of Aaron?

¹ This description of Del Lago's reaction to Spataro's question comes from Aaron's letter of 7 Aug. (see no. 58, para. 2).

 $^{^2}$  Here Spataro is probably thinking of having written the explanation of how to find the six syllables on each position of the hand that he allowed Aaron to publish under his own name (see the Commentary on no. 34).

perché molti altri himni de soa Excellentia habiamo, li quali (perché sono doctamente et con grande arte facti) molto sono grati et piaceno a li audienti. Et se V.E. gli piacesse farne uno verso, quella me faria cosa grata.

4. Al presente altro non dico, se non che tuto sono de quella, a la quale humilemente me recomando, et genuflexo prego quella gli piaza conumerarmi nel numero de li soi servitori, et che al reverendo vostro patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li figlioli me recomandati. Don Leonardo se recomanda a V.E. inseme con Messer Nicolao, el quale aspecta el parere de quella circa quello suo canto a sei voce a V.E. mandato. Et etiam tuti gli altri amici musici et cantori a quella mandano saluti senza fine, et a quella se recomandano.

Vale. Bononie, die 29 augusti 1533.

#### De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

I. I wrote to you a few days ago about recent events but did not reply fully to your letter of the 11th because the page was full and I was worn out. It saddened me to see that you were so discontent to return my treatise on mensural music, thinking I was displeased because you were negligent in getting it printed. Please give no more thought to this; I never harboured such a fancy. As I wrote to you several times, it is not so much because the work is a popularization as that I wrote it many years ago, and I wanted to see it at least once more before it was printed. I have started to read it and am very satisfied, but I have made a few changes and I am especially glad to be able to add some points I have been disputing with Pre Zanetto, as you know from my recent letters. If they are not clarified, some ignorant people might think I contradicted myself. In this treatise I did not intend to pursue higher speculations; I only dealt with the simple rules prescribed by theorists of the past and those of the present writing for beginners. Pre Zanetto, in criticizing my compositions, tries to use criteria of higher speculation; he also insinuates that I used deceit in getting the treatise back, and that, if I praise you in my letters, I actually attack you, and that he knows my heart very well. But he certainly knows my nature very little, because my heart is open for all to see.

2. We still have not received Pre Zanetto's answer to our queries which he, tossing his head, said he would resolve forthwith.¹ He may have responded but used a snail as a courier. I answered him freely, not thinking he would believe I didn't know where ut and la of G# are since I followed a straight path and not a crooked one, as he likes to do, and I

didn't disdain his question, because he has asked more trivial ones before. But your letter opened my eyes; I read it four times that day, with anger and indignation, especially where he says that in my heart of hearts I don't love you. No one lives whom I love more, for your virtues invite it. And about this I shall say no more, for it would seem to throw in the face of a friend what I have done for him out of love and obligation and zeal for the honour of my honourable Fra Pietro,² to whom I am more attached than to myself, for he has done more for me than anyone else.³ Please do not believe I acted with fraud and deceit, for - printed or not-I shall send you back my treatise in better shape in spite of Pre Zanetto, who should lie in his teeth and burst with envy and always remain an ignoramus without shame, as he shows by saying that whether he responds correctly or not, he wouldn't give a brass farthing.⁴ Please don't talk to him about those queries, lest from a word of yours he might discover the true answer. I'll inform you after I see what he responds to this question, which he calls childish.

3. May I ask you a favour, if it will not turn out to [your] disadvantage and misfortune? It is to ask Messer Adriano [Willaert] if he would set, for your sake and mine, three stanzas of the enclosed hymn to St Petronius,⁵ whose feast-day comes at the end of next month. I have many other hymns by Willaert which please the listeners because of their fine technique and great art. And if you would set a stanza, you would do me a favour.

4. I humbly recommend myself and kneel before you, asking to be included among your servants, and send greetings to your patron [Sebastiano Michiel] and his sons. Don Leonardo and Nicolò [Cavalaro] and all our musicians and singers ask to be remembered; Nicolò awaits your opinion on his six-voice composition.

# **60** (J25). Fos. 116^r-129^v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 October 1533 (Scribe C)

¹¹⁶^r Venerabile et reverendo et delli musici dottissimo, el mio honorando Frate Piero, etc.

1. Sino alli dì 28 settembre prossimo passato, dal nostro commune amico Messer Pre Zannetto hebbi una sua [no. 57] in responsion de uno quesito a sua Eccellentia fatto dalli nostri musici bolognesi, dalli quali, secondo el mio parere, è stato amplamente resposto, et a me hanno data la cura de scrivere tale responsione, la qual cosa da me è stata molto recusata, non tanto per esser mal disposto quanto perché secondo el scrivere che fa el preditto Pre Zannetto, el pare che lui habbia suspetto che io sia solo quello el quale li mova tale litigio, per el quale (secondo el mio parere) lui doveria alegrarse et rengratiarme, et non dolerse, perché 'in exercitationibus virtus perficitur', et etiam 'ferrum ferro acuitur'.¹ Ma perché io considero che tutta questa faticha è mia pel scrivere, et etiam perché cognosco che la facultà pertrattata è molto sottile et dotta, et da esser de gran pretio stimata, et io (ut dixi) esser mal disposto al scrivere, solo per fuggir faticha, et anchora acciò che da V.E., come quello el quale sempre è stato amico della verità, siano giudicate le loro resposte, et etiam acciò che V.E. le dimostri al preditto Pre Zannetto, et che quando le harà tenute al suo piacere, habbiate cura de remandarmele^a a Bologna, come anchora altre volte ha fatto V.E., acciò che io le pona con le altre considerationi musice tra sua Eccellentia et me accadute. Et de questo, quanto posso vi prego; et credo che volontieri el farrete, perché de maggiori importantie sono da V.E. liberamente servito.²

2. Frate Pietro mio honorando, el nostro preditto Pre Zannetto, per una sua de dì 18 agosto segnata [no. 57],³ me avisa haver recevuta una mia [no. 56] in responsione de uno suo dubio a me domandato. Et dice che a tale suo quesito ho data resposta secondo el solito mio, el quale suo parlare me è stato molesto et strano, perché io credo havere rettamente satisfacto al suo quesito, per el quale anchora che allhora io andasse senza alcun suspetto et dubitatione, hora comprendo che tal suo quesito venea da mala intentione. Horsù transeat. Ma seguitando, lui dice che per parte et in 116[°] nome delli nostri musici bolognesi, io li ho fatto uno quesito, | et che quantonque el sia inutile al genere et modo diatonico, che lui al meglio che

^a MS: mandarmelle.

potrà se sforzarà dechiararlo, etc., el qual dubio lui dice esser questo, scilicet: Dove sta la syllaba *ut* et la syllaba *la* de questo segno b segnato in C et in F, et similmente de questo segno  $\sharp$  segnato in  $\natural$  et in E. Et seguitando, lui dice che questo segno b et etiam questo segno  $\sharp$  sono stati ordinati dalli musici per removere li suoni naturali [per semitonio minore in grave et maggiore in acuto et]^b per semitonio maggiore in grave et minore in acuto, acciò che 'l spatio de ciaschuno tuono resti partito in doi semituoni. Et seguitando dice che se questo segno b sarrà dato in F et in C, che 'l suo suono sarrà più depresso de E et de  $\natural$  per uno spatio de coma. Et se questo  $\sharp$  sarrà segnato in  $\natural$  et in E naturali, dice che 'l suo suono sarrà più intenso de C et F per uno spatio de coma, etc.

3. Messer Piero mio honorando, questo nostro amico, scilicet Pre Zannetto, assai tempo ha speso in vano cerca le sue demostrationi de sopra allegate, perché dalli nostri musici bolognesi, senza discrepare dalla natura cerca tali segni intesa dalli musici, sentono altramente che sua Eccellentia non dice.⁴ Imperò che lui non se parte dalla prima et bassa costitutione de Guido, per tale ordine de segni segnata. Ma loro, speculando più alto, dicono che 'dans signum dat consequentiam signi',' per la qual cosa dicono che dato uno delli segni preditti, scilicet questo  $\frac{1}{2}$  o ver questo  $\frac{1}{4}$ , anchora seguitarà quello che a ciaschuno de tali segni sarrà consequente. Se adonque medianti tali segni li tuoni trovati in la simplice mano de Guido restano divisi in doi semitonii, etc., dicono che anchora questo segno b dato in C et in F et etiam questo [#] dato in b et in E non ^{117^t} mancaranno de tale effetto. Et dicono che tale verità sarrà compresa da lui, se sua Eccellentia se arrecarà a mente dove V.E. in quello ultimo vostro trattato impresso,⁵ nel quale insegnate trovare li sei nomi officiali in ciaschuna delle positioni della mano de Guido, in quello loco dove V.E. demostra dove habbia origine et dependentia la syllaba mi equalmente in suono considerata con C et con F, perché in tale luocho, et vere dicete, che la syllaba mi equalmente in suono considerata in C harà il suo nascimento da questo segno b segnato in D sequente, et che la syllaba mi egualmente considerata con F nascerà da questo segno b posito in G, et similmente, dove date regola de trovare el nascimento della syllaba fa egualmente posita in \$\mpsi et in E, la quale nasce da questo segno \$\mpsi segnato in A et in D, lui chiaramente comprenderà che, come è stato inteso da Frate Giovanni

¹ Cf. Prov. 27: 17: 'Ferrum ferro exacuitur . . . '.

² Aaron must have done so, for the present letter is not Spataro's original but a copy made for Del Lago.

³ The date is actually 15 Aug.

^b Spataro, in condensing Del Lago's answer, omitted these words, which are necessary for the explanation (see no. 57, para. 2). ^c MS: signo.

⁴ Spataro, in para. 7, admits that Del Lago determined the position of Cb, Fb, B#, and E# correctly (in the Pythagorean tuning system). The 'different opinion' of the Bolognese musicians concerns whether hexachords containing these notes could be considered to belong to the diatonic genus.

⁵ Aaron's untitled treatise of 1531; see no. 34.

The Letters

Ottobi et dal mio preceptore nel capitolo quinto del tractato secondo della sua Pratica,⁶ che sono tre ordini diatonici dalli musici considerati, non de natura et sostantia diversi, ma sì diversi secondo la sua apparente positione locale, cioè che in apparentia l'uno è più intenso de l'altro per debiti et convenienti spatii musici cerca el principio della sua integrità et ordine nel monochordo apparente, o vero imaginato, delli quali tre ordini diatonici, per tenere ordine, dal predicto Frate Giovanni Ottobi uno è stato chiamato primo o vero naturale, l'altro da lui è stato ditto secondo, et l'altro terzo.⁷ El primo in li concenti sta per se, scilicet senza segno alcuno, perché essendo chiamato naturale, non li accade essere segnato con segno alcuno accidentale. El secondo ordine appare in li concenti segnato con 117[°] questo segno b in ciaschuno loco dove respetto al primo ordine non caderà la syllaba fa. Et lo terzo ordine è segnato con questo segno  $\sharp$  in ciaschun luogho del primo ordine dove non cade la syllaba mi. Adonque li nostri musici, considerando a tali ordini preditti, dicono se ciaschuno delli preditti tre ordini non è altro che un solo ordine per se apparente nel monochordo o vero mano de Guido, seguitarà che nel secondo ordine, et etiam nel terzo, se potrà segnare questo segno b in ciaschuno luogho ove non caderà la sua syllaba fa, et questo  $\ddagger$  dove non caderà la sua syllaba mi. Pertanto considerando che per la regola data dal nostro Frate Piero Aaron, che in C et in F naturali cade equalmente in sono la syllaba mi la quale nasce dal secondo ordine segnato con questo segno b in D et in G, pertanto in tali lochi, scilicet in C et in F, dicono rationabilmente potere stare questo segno b non respetto alla syllaba fa del primo ordine in tal locho cadente, ma respetto la syllaba *mi* del secondo ordine, la quale in tali luoghi cade equalmente in sono con la syllaba fa de l'ordine primo.⁸

4. Se adonque el nostro Messer Pre Zannetto bene advertirà, lui comprenderà che con efficacissime raggioni questo segno # sarrà segnato in  $\natural$  et in E del primo ordine. Imperò che in tali lettere predicte cade equalmente in suono la syllaba *fa* del terzo ordine, la quale nascerà da questo segno # segnato in A et in D del primo ordine, per le quali demostrationi sua Eccellentia potrà intendere che questo segno # in  $\natural$  et in E naturali posito non starrà in tali lochi respetto la syllaba *mi* de l'ordine primo, ma sì respetto la syllaba *fa*, la quale pende da questo segno # de l'ordine terzo segnato in A et in D, la quale cade in parisonantia con  $\natural$  et E ¹¹⁸ del primo ordine, da molti chiamato naturale.⁹ Per le quali demostrationi

⁶ Ramis, *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, pp. 34–40; see especially the chart on p. 35, which shows the Guidonian gamut transposed a tone lower and a tone higher.

lo eccellente Messer Pre Zannetto nostro potrà comprendere che 'l quesito a sua Eccellentia dalli nostri musici fatto non sarrà incommodo et impertinente al genere diatonico, come da sua Eccellentia è stato ditto, perché tal modo de segnare sempre sarrà inteso respetto ad uno solo genere diatonico et solo ordine, et non a più ordini inequalmente nel monochordo considerati o vero apparenti. Et benché mediante tali segni dati nel monochordo apparano diverse commistioni de intervalli non per se convenienti al genere diatonico usitato, tamen ciaschuno mediocre dotto senza alcuno impedimento et dubitatione potrà trarne et eligere la forma debita et conveniente a ciaschuna spetie et intervallo diatonico et ordine, observando giustitia, scilicet dando a ciaschuno li soi convenienti et debiti ordini et spatii.

5. Dicono anchora li preditti nostri musici che lui dice contra sé medemo, perché lui dice che tali preditti segni in tali lochi segnati sono incommodi et non al genere diatonico pertinenti, perché producono el spatio del coma, el quale non solamente non è cantabile, ma anchora non è spatio diatonico, et da lui a me è stato dimandato dove cada la syllaba *ut* et la syllaba *la* de questo segno # in G naturale segnato, el qual segno remove el suono dal loco ove sta segnato per spatio de maggiore semitonio intenso, el quale non è spatio diatonico, ma sì chromatico. Ma lui certamente tiene aperti li occhi a queste particole, le quali sunt nullius importantie, et a quelle che molto importano non vede lume, perché non vole cognoscere che anchora che tali spatii siano apparenti, che non sono 1118[°] per se esercitati, ma sono inclusi in maggiori spatii cantabili, in modo che restano compresi et non pronuntiati.

6. Lui dice anchora che per satisfare a tale quesito, che la syllaba *ut* dependente da questo segno and segnato in C et in F del primo ordine chiamato naturale sarrà più bassa de G et C per uno spatio de comma,¹⁰ cerca la qual cosa i nostri musici dicono che alloro pare che lui habbia non pocho errato, perché dicono che seguitaria che tra*fa*et*ut*et e contra non caderia diatessaron, ma solamente li caderia spatio de ditono, come lui chiaramente potrà cognoscere componendo li estremi, li quali cadeno tra il comma posito sotto <math>
and, il quale nasce da questo segno b segnato in C, et il comma posito sotto G, perché dal comma posito sotto and al spatio del comma posito sotto sotto G caderà uno spatio de tono et de uno comma. Et per tal modo tra tali extremi se includeranno solamente doi toni, et non diatessaron. Et il

⁷ On Hothby's three orders, see his treatise *Calliopea legale*, ed. Coussemaker, pp. 298–301. Hothby goes beyond Ramis in showing Gb and Db, G#, D#, and A#.

⁸ That is, a transposition to C of the Guidonian  $bfa \perp mi$ , in which fa is Cb, mi is Cb.

⁹ That is, a transposition of the Guidonian  $bfa \perp mi$  by a half-step downwards, in which fa is Bb, mi is B**‡**.

¹⁰ In the present version of no. 57, Del Lago has 'semituono maggiore', not comma; see no. 57, para. 3. This shows that no. 57, copied by Scribe A, does not reflect Del Lago's original letter but is a revision made after he received Spataro's critique. Throughout paras. 6–10, wherever Spataro criticizes Del Lago for writing 'comma', no. 57 has been adjusted to say 'semitonio maggiore'. On the revision of Del Lago's letters, see Ch. 6.

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simile accaderà dal comma posito sotto E produtto da questo segno  $\mathfrak{b}$  segnato in F al spatio del comma posito sotto C.

7. Anchora li preditti nostri musici dicono che 'l nostro eccellente Pre Zannetto ha non pocho errato, dicendo che la syllaba la, la quale nasce da questo segno b segnato in C et in F, sarrà più bassa de E et de A per spatio de un comma, perché seguitaria che da fa al suo la in ordine caderia spatio de diatessaron et non de ditono, la qual cosa dicono esser assai chiara, perché se questo segno b sarrà dato in C et in F, el suo suono, como etiam da lui di sopra è stato affirmato, caderà per un spatio de comma più basso de \u00e4 et de E, dal qual comma locato sotto \u00e4 et sotto E al comma locato sotto E et sotto A caderà integra diatessaron. Et questo sarrà assai chiaramente demostrato per diatonico processo. Imperò che da questo segno b segnato in C a questo b segnato in D sequente caderà spatio de tuono, el qual tuono restarà diviso da C naturale per maggiore semitonio ^{119^t} in grave et minore in acuto. Et dal preditto b segnato in | D a questo segno b dato in E caderà anchora spatio de tuono, il qual tuono da D naturale, ut supra, restarà diviso per maggiore semitonio in grave et minore in acuto. Et da poi procedendo da questo segno b segnato in E a questo b segnato in F se farrà spatio de minor semitonio, li quali doi toni preditti col predicto semitonio minore insieme tolti^d perficeranno un completo spatio de diatessaron et non de ditono, como rettamente tra fa et la et la fa debbe cadere, et similmente accaderà da questto segno b dato in F al spatio del comma posito sotto A, como, mediante quello che e sopra è stato ditto, chiaramente da lui potrà esser compreso. Pertanto dicono che se lui bene advertirà, che 'l trovarà che la syllaba ut, la quale sarrà produtta da questo segno 🖢 segnato in C et in F, caderà per spacio de maggior semitonio sotto G et sotto C. Se lui bene advertirà, dove da lui è stato ditto che questo segno b dato in C remette el suo suono per maggior semitonio sotto C, et che 'l preditto segno dato in F remette etiam el suo suono per maggiore semitonio, et etiam lui advertirà, che se questo segno b sarrà dato in C, che la sua syllaba ditta la caderà più depressa de E per maggiore semitonio. Et essendo tal segno segnato in F, el suo la caderà per maggior semitonio più depresso de A, come da lui sarrà compreso se lui attenderà alla intelligentia della certezza, la quale è produtta dalla infallibile quantità.

8. Anchora li musici nostri dicono che sua Eccellentia ha non pocho errato dicendo che la syllaba *ut* de questo segno # segnato in  $\nexists$  et in E sarrà per un spatio de comma più intenso de G et de C, perché seguitaria che tra *mi* et il suo *ut* caderia spatio de diatessaron et non de ditono, come apertamente se comprende procedendo diatonice ut hic, scilicet, che da questo segno # segnato in  $\nexists$  a questo # segnato in A caderà spatio de tono remesso, il quale tono per  $\nexists$  naturale restarà diviso per minore semitonio

^d The scribe has probably mistranscribed Spataro's 'colti' and also 'colto' a few lines below.

^{119^v} in grave et maggiore in acuto, et dapo da questo segno # preditto posito in A al simile (ut supra) ut hic figurato # posito in G caderà etiam spatio de tono, il qual tono da A naturale (ut supra) restarà diviso per minore semitonio in grave et maggiore in acuto, et finalmente procedendo a questo segno # locato in G al spatio de un comma posito sopra esso G, se ha il spatio de un minore semitonio, il quale colli predicti doi toni insieme tolto^e perficerà un spatio completo de diatessaron, il quale spatio, diatonice loquendo, sarrà la seconda spetie de diatessaron, perché tiene il semitonio nello intenso nel primo intervallo. Et similmente dicono accadere da questo segno # segnato in E respetto al spatio de un comma più intenso de C posito, cerca il quale, tenendo l'ordine di sopra assegnato, da lui sarrà compreso havere mal ditto.

9. Ma concludendo, i nostri musici dicono che la syllaba *ut* de questo segno # dato in # dell'ordine primo, rationibus predictis, caderà per semitonio maggiore più intenso de G et per semitonio minore più remesso de A. Et se questo segno # preditto sarrà dato in E, dicono che 'l suo *ut* caderà per maggiore semitonio più intenso de C et per minore semitonio più remesso de D.

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10. Anchora li preditti musici nostri dicono che la syllaba ditta *la*, la quale nasce da questo segno # segnato in E, caderà per spatio de maggiore semitonio più intenso de A et non per spatio de uno comma, come da lui è stato ditto. Et anchora dicono che la syllaba ditta *la* de questo segno # preditto segnato in \$\u03c4\$ caderà per spatio de maggiore semitonio più intenso de E o vero per spatio de comma più intenso de F naturale, la qual cosa dicono esser assai chiara, perché se tra \$\u03c4\$ et E naturali cade spatio de diatessaron, come da *mi* al suo sequente *la*, se da poi el suono del preditto \$\u03c4\$ naturale, mediante questo segno # dato, sarrà per spatio de maggior semitonio più intenso del preditto \$\u03c4\$, anchora seguitarà che la syllaba *la* 120^r dependente da tale elevatione | sarrà etiam per maggior semitonio più intensa de E naturale, il qual spatio de maggiore semitonio sopra E dato, ut dixi, transcenderà F naturale per spatio de un comma, et non per spatio de comma sopra E tantum, come da lui è stato concluso.

11. Et oltra procedendo, el nostro eccellente Pre Zannetto dice che il spatio de comma non è cantabile per esser molto difficile, et etiam dice che l'è reprobato, et perché non è apparente nel monochordo et altri inst[ru]menti usitati, se potrà chiamare frustratorio et non necessario. Al quale suo parlare non bene considerato respondeno li nostri preditti musici et dicono che dato che 'l spatio del comma per se non sia cantabile, el non sarrà però inutile et in vano considerato, essendo posito in li lochi sui necessarii et convenienti. S'el fusse la verità che 'l spatio del comma fusse frustra considerato, al nostro Boetio sarria stato vano in la sua *Musica* 

" See n. d.

demostrare come il minore semitonio resta superato dal maggiore per un spatio de comma, et como el minore semitonio è maggiore de tre commi et minore de quattro, et come il maggiore semitonio è maggiore de quattro commi et minore de cinque, et come il spatio del tono è maggiore de otto commi et minore de nove, et come la diapason consonantia, o vero el duplo intervallo, è superato dalli estremi de sei toni per uno spatio de comma. Et etiam a llui sarr[i]a stato vano demostrare in quali termini comparati cade il spatio del comma,¹¹ et similmente da tutti gli altri musici, dalli quali è stato scritto in theorica et musica speculativa, sarria stato in vano scritto. Imperò che da ciaschuno è stato del spatio del comma pertrattato come spatio necessario per la redintegratione de molti spatii sonori nel monochordo diviso apparenti, li quali senza lo aiuto del spatio del comma alla debita integrità et proportione non possono attingere, come dalla Eccellentia de Messer Ludovico Fogliano mutinese nel 120° capitolo 13° della seconda sectione del | suo musico compendio è stato provato.¹² Et perché dal nostro Boetio è stato ditto che 'l spatio sonoro del comma è l'ultimo che possa esser compreso dallo audito, pertanto i nostri musici non credono che tal spatio sia cantabile, né anchora per se usitato in lo inst[ru]mento della natura, né etiam per arte fatto. Ma dicono che lo è sensibile et ch'è aggionto o ver computato con altri maggiori spatii in luochi opportuni convenienti et debiti. Imperò che mediante la addictione del coma molti spatii de toni compositi de doi minori semitonii nel monochordo apparenti non solamente se reducono alla debita integrità, ma etiam reduce lo intervallo sonoro non ottimamente grato al senso de lo audito, in modo che lo audito molto ben resta satisfatto et contento. La qual cosa, Frate Pietro mio honorando, pare che sia ignorata da questo nostro Pre Zannetto, perché lui non haria ditto che tale spatio de coma non è apparente nel monochordo, del quale, essendo nel numero delli dotti connumerato, demostra havere assai pocha intelligentia.

12. Ma li nostri musici dicono che se lui bene advertirà in lo monochordo moderno diviso, lui trovarà che tra G et A cadeno doi tasti negri, delli quali el primo, scilicet quello che è propinquo ad G, nasce da questo segno b segnato in A, per il qual segno el tono cadente tra G et A predicti restarà diviso per minore semitonio in grave et maggiore in acuto. Ma perché da E al predicto tasto negro cade un certo spatio chiamato terza, la quale supera el semiditono o vero terza minore per spatio de uno semitonio minore et è manco del spatio del ditono o vero terza maggiore per spatio de un comma, pertanto pulsando tale tasto negro con E a sé inferiore naturale, tale sonorità non sarrà ben grata al senso de lo audito. semitonio cadente tra el preditto tasto et A, acciò che con E preditto se potesse havere la terza maggiore intensa, la quale minima particella dal preditto maggiore semitonio tolta non potrà essere altro che 'l spatio del comma, il quale sarrà apparente nel monochordo nel locho preditto tra il primo et lo secondo tasto negro positi tra G et A naturali preditti. Appare adonque che nel monochordo se trova el spatio del comma nel locho preditto dove quello tono posito tra G et A naturali restarà diviso per maggiore semitonio in grave et minore in acuto, et e contra, come doveria essere ciaschuno delli altri spatii delli toni nel monochordo apparenti. Et allhora l'arte molto sarria imitatrice della natura. Et questo aveneria mediante il spatio del comma apparente in li lochi opportuni.

13. Pertanto i nostri musici concludono che senza la consideratione et apparentia del spatio del comma, alcuno inst[ru]mento non potrà essere perfettamente diviso, come da Frate Zuanni Ottobi è stato dimostrato in la sua Calliopea,¹³ la quale verità, Frate Pietro mio honorando, da V.E. è stata tacite approbata in quello vostro trattato dove insegnate de trovare li sei nomi officiali in ciaschuna positione della mano de Guido monacho, li quali se fusseno misuratamente per termini numerali comparati cerca la sonora chorda produtti et apparenti, se comprenderia che ciaschuno tono de l'ordine primo o vero naturale restaria (ut supra) diviso, scilicet con minore semitonio in grave et maggiore in acuto, et e contra. Et tale 121^v differente divisione de tono sarria sola mente compresa mediante il spatio del coma, el quale, stando nel medio de doi minori semitonii, darria aiuto in grave et in acuto alli musici intervalli secondo la opportunità et bisogno, como appare tra questo segno # segnato in G et questo b segnato in A naturali, tra li quali cade differentia de uno spatio de coma. Et questo aviene perché questo segno # segnato in G se disgionge dal preditto G per semitonio maggiore in acuto et se accosta con A per spatio de minore semitonio, et questo b segnato in A se disgionge dal preditto A per maggiore semitonio in gravità et se appropinqua ad G per spatio de minore semitonio, et nel medio de tali segni (ut diximus) se interpone il spatio del coma, el quale è molto honorato dalli dotti in questa facultà, et non esistimato superfluo, come dal nostro Pre Zannetto è stato detto, el quale, oltra procedendo, dice che l'è vana cosa et non al tutto laudabile domandare tale ordine de hexachordi per non potersi procedere in pratica secondo il genere diatonico naturale et usitato. Imperò che nel genere diatonico se procederà per semitonio, tono, et tono, etc., et al medesimo modo per le syllabe de Guido, scilicet per ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la. Et dice che se

 13  Del Lago had quoted, in Latin, from Hothby's 'Musica', which turns out to be the *Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musicae* (see no. 57 n. 3, and Ch. 7, pp. 161-3). Spataro inadvertently cites Hothby's more famous treatise, the *Calliopea*, which, however, is written in Italian and does not contain a division of the monochord.

¹¹ All these matters are treated in book 3 of Boethius' De musica (ed. Friedlein, pp. 267-300).

¹² Lodovico Fogliano, Musica theorica (Venice, 1529), fo. 29': 'De commatis utilitate'.

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volessimo procedere per questo altro ordine preditto, li toni et etiam li semitonii naturali mutariano loco, scilicet che non starriano in li lochi soi naturali et usitati in pratica tra linea et spatio. Et per questo dice che nasceria un'altro genere misto et non diatonico simplice, et anchora dice che non se trova alcuno inst[ru]mento per tale modo diviso.

14. Cerca questo assai chiaro di sopra dalli nostri musici è stato 122^r concluso, scilicet che da to el segno o ver la syllaba usitata, che anchora se dà quello che al tale segno et alla syllaba sarrà consequente, et questo adverrà perché la linea o vero chorda sonora, per essere continua et senza fine divisibile, sempre sarrà materia apta ad ogni harmonica forma et distantia. Ma dove lui dice che volendo procedere per tale ordine predicto, che li toni et etiam li semitonii mutariano loco, etc., a questo i nostri musici respondeno dicendo che per tale suo parlare lui incorre in molti errori. Et prima dicono che lui pone differentia inter idem, perché dicendo che se li toni et semitonii non sarranno positi tra linee et spatii secondo l'ordine naturale in pratica usitato, che sarranno de uno altro genere misto. Ma li nostri musici respondendo dicono che siano li toni et li semitonii diatonici in qualonque loco se vogliano, scilicet da linea in spatio et e contra, o vero senza linea et spatio considerati, sempre sarranno de un solo genere et non con altro genere misti. Et questo dicono advenire perché in quocunque loco species residet, et ibidem virtus. Pertanto dicono che così come li soni et distantie harmonice non hanno loco proprio per lo instr[u]mento naturale, così etiam non haranno loco proprio in lo instr[u]mento per arte fatto. Imperò che l'arte serve alla natura, et non e contra. Et se l'instr[u]mento fatto per arte manca de tale ordine et divisione, tale effetto non pende dall'arte et scientia musica, ma pende dallo artifice, il quale ignora tale divisione, et etiam dalla manuale sua opera, la quale dato che alquanto se possa accostare alla esercitatione 122^v naturale, tamen mai alla integrità non potrà attingere. Et dicono che secondo questo nostro philosophante, el seguitaria che se uno homo nato in Bologna venisse qua in Venetia, che per mutar loco et apparere con questi veneti, el non sarria realmente de genere animalium, ma acquistaria altra generità et commistione. Dicono anchora che seguitaria che molti concenti da homini dottissimi composti, li quali concenti mediante la positione de questo segno  $\flat$  et etiam de questo  $\ddagger$ , così nel principio delli concenti como nel suo processo o vero medio positi, li quali concenti non osservano la positione delli toni et delli semitonii per linee et spatii secondo l'ordine simplice, non sarriano secondo el solo genere diatonico produtti, ma hariano diversa natura generica, la quale cosa credere

procederia da poco discorso et manco sapere. Imperò che le linee et spatii non arguiscono differentia generica in musica, ma le proprie spetie et forme usitate sono quelle che danno la varia cognitione generica, como è stato dimostrato da Giovanne Moton in una sua messa 'sine nomine',¹⁴ et anchora in un suo muttetto ditto 'Peccata mea',¹⁵ in li quali concenti da lui in ciaschuna delle particole è stato segnato questo segno  $\flat$  dove cade  $\natural$  et E naturali, per el qual segno el semitonio, el quale nel primo ordine cadeva tra  $\natural$  et C et tra E et F, o vero tra linea et spatio, et tra spatio et linea, resta cantato tra A et  $\natural$  et tra spatio et linea, et il semitonio cadente tra E et F naturalmente costituto de spatio in linea mediante el segno predicto posito in E, caderà tra D et E preditto, | procedendo de linea in spatio. Ma perché in la messa predicta et muttetto se osservano le spetie del genere usitato diatonico, anchora che li toni et semitonii in quanto alle linee et spatii siano remossi da l'ordine usitato, dicono che la preditta messa et muttetto sarranno solamente secundum genus diatonicum, et non ad altro o vero con altro genere misto, et el tetrachordo diatonico procederà per semitonio, tono, et tono, et che etiam tali concenti se potranno cantare per le syllabe de Guido, scilicet *ut*, *re, mi, fa, sol, la.* 

15. Et oltra seguitando, el nostro eccellente Pre Zannetto dice ut hic: et anchora de sì fatti hexachordi non fa mentione el nostro dottissimo musico Messer Frate Pietro Aaron in quello suo ultimo trattatelo, in lo quale lui tratta delle congionte, etc. dove dechiara che in tutte le positioni della mano de Guido sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o vero voci, etc. Alla qual cosa respondeno i nostri musici et dicono che questo non sarrà contra al quesito da loro a sua Eccellentia fatto, attento che se Messer Pietro Aaron poteva pervenire alla chiara demostratione del suo intento senza pertrattare de tali hexachordi et segni in tali lochi segnati, el sarria stato vano et incarco^f a sua Eccellentia sumere più materia che non gli era de bisogno, attento che 'frustra fit per plura', 16 etc. Et dicono che se dal nostro Pre Zannetto fusse considerato allo effetto produtto da questo segno b segnato in C et in F et da questo # dato in \$ et in E, el non haria forsi ditto tante particole extra propositum. Ma dicono che l'hanno per excusato perché 'cecus non iudicat de colore', et 'stolido non sapit ista seges'.17

^{123^v} 16. Et anchora seguitando, questo nostro eccellente Pre Zannetto dice che certamente le congionte sono doi, cioè una de b rotondo, la quale se

^f The scribe may have mistranscribed the word 'indarno'.

¹⁴ The mass, published without name by Petrucci in 1515, is actually based on Compère's chanson 'Dictes moy toutes voz pensées'. A modern edn. may be found in Johannes Mouton, *Opera omnia*, ed. Andrew C. Minor (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 43; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1967–), ii. 1–50. It is in C Dorian, with a signature of two flats throughout.

¹⁵ Modern edition in Lowinsky (ed.), *The Medici Codex of 1518*, iv. 241-5. The motet is in C Dorian.

¹⁶ See no. 6 n. 3.

¹⁷ See no. 16 n. 3, and no. 29 n. 6.

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segna con questo segno b in ciaschuno loco dove naturalmente se trova mi, et dice che l'altra congionta se chiama de  $\natural$  quadrato, la quale se segna con questo segno  $\sharp$  in ciaschun loco dove naturalmente caderà la syllaba fa. Et dice che questo chiaramente se dimostra per questi versi fatti dalli antichi, li quali così dicono:

> Dic coniunctarum quadrum genus atque rotundum. A servabit et E coniuncta figura rotunde. In F et in C discurrit progressio quadrae.

Circa le quali authorità et ditti dal nostro Pre Zannetto di sopra assignati, li nostri musici respondeno et dicono che lui tacite contradice a sé medemo, dicendo che la congionta de b molle se segna in ciaschuno loco dove naturalmente cade la syllaba mi. Et dapo, in quelli versi assignati dalli antichi da lui addutti, dice che la congionta de b molle [è] segnata in A, nel quale A dicono che naturalmente non cade mi perché la syllaba mi equalmente considerata in A nascerà dalla congionta de b molle con questo segno b segnato in \$\pres naturale,¹⁸ come da Frate Giovanne Ottobi et dal nostro preallegato Messer Pietro Aaron nel preallegato suo trattatelo è stato ditto. Pertanto dicono che 'l nostro Pre Zannetto (ut dixi) ha concluso contra de lui, perché se 'l se concederà che per raggione della syllaba mi data equalmente con A che 'l segno del b rotondo sia dato in A, 124^r anchora per tal | raggione el non se negarà che tal segno del b rotondo non se possa dare in C et in F. Imperò che così come la syllaba mi egualmente considerata in A pende et nasce da questo segno b segnato in \$ naturale, similmente la syllaba mi egualmente considerata in C et in F harà origine da questo medemo segno b segnato in D et in G. Et anchora per tal raggione concludeno de questo segno # segnato in \$\$ et in E, il quale starrà in tali lochi segnato per raggione della syllaba *fa* produtta da questo segno # in A et in D segnato, como etiam de sopra è stato dicto.¹⁹

17. Et seguitando, el nostro Pre Zannetto dice che dove li nostri musici li domandano quale sia la raggione che da Frate Giovanne Ottobi et da Messer Bartholomeo Ramis è stato ditto che in C et in F naturali non se deve segnare questo segno  $\flat$ , et anchora perché in  $\natural$  et in E naturali non se segna questo  $\ddagger$ , alla quale petitione lui respondendo dice che dalli preditti authori tali segni non sono stati segnati in tali lochi naturali per doi raggioni. Et per la prima dice che se 'l segno del b molle se ponesse in F o

¹⁸ It is surprising that Spataro should claim that *mi* does not naturally fall on A, since it does so in the *bexachordum molle*. Furthermore, to call Bb a *coniuncta* is not correct, for  $bfa \perp mi$  is an integral part of the Guidonian hand. The only true *coniuncta* on B is the second note above gamma, which is B *mi* in the Guidonian system. However, Spataro and many of his contemporaries considered Bb to be an accidental (see the Notes on Problematical Terms under 'accidentale').

¹⁹ See para. 4. The reasoning is: where you find mi you can also have fa, and vice versa.

vero in altro loco dove naturalmente fusse fa, che non sarria congionta, et el simile dice che accaderia ponendo el segno del \$ quadro o vero duro dove naturalmente fusse la syllaba mi, et che essendo adonque in tali lochi fa et mi naturali, non oporte[t] signari et demonstrari huiusmodi fa et mi per signa accidentalia, perché sarriano indarno positi, et anchora se distrugeria et guastaria l'ordine naturale. Et da poi dice che l'è ben vero 124^v che l'è stato ordi nato et etiam osservato dalli musici, che dove sarrà questo segno b che sempre se debba dire fa, et che dove sarrà questo  $\sharp$ sempre se dica mi. Ma dice che questo se intende però in ciaschuno loco della mano di Guido dove non sarrà né *fa* né *mi* naturali, cerca la quale sua prima raggione li nostri musici dicono che restano assai mal satisfatti, perché dicono che 'cui competit definitio competit et definitum'. Et dicono che la congionta da Giovanne Tintoris è stata definita non esser altro che positione del b rotondo et del 🖞 quadrato in loco irregolare.²⁰ Et etiam dicono che da Bartholomeo Ramis è stato ditto che la congionta non è altro che far del tono semitonio et e contra, et del ditono semiditono et e contra,²¹ et similmente delle altre specie, per la qual cosa dicono che questo segno b dato in C et in F et questo segno # dato in b et in E naturali sarranno rettamente chiamate congionte, perché produrranno tali effetti quali delle preditte definitioni sono alla congionta assignati.

18. Et questo provano primamente per la definitione addutta di sopra dal preditto Tinctoris, imperò che dicono che tali segni sarranno positi in loco irregolare. Et questo dicono avenire perché se questo segno b sarrà segnato in C o vero in F, accaderà che tra il segno et il luogho segnato caderà differentia, imperò che C et F per se considerate sono segni et lochi regolari et naturali. Ma questo segno b in C et in F segnato sarrà nel luocho suo irregolare posito, et non nel luocho suo regolare. Et questo averrà perché il luogho regolare et a tal segno pertinente sarrà per semitonio maggiore più depresso del luogho segnato, scilicet de C et de F naturali, come ciaschuno musico consente. Seguitarà adonque che per la definitione de Tinctoris de sopra assignata che questo segno b in C et in F 125^r segnato sarrà rettamen te chiamato congionta, la qual cosa similmente averrà de questo segno # dato in \$ et in E naturali. Se prova anchora che tali segni preditti per la definitione da Bartholomeo adducta di sopra sarranno rettamente chiamate congionte, perché farranno del tono semitonio et e contra, et del ditono semiditono et e contra, como dice la definitione di sopra assegnata, et così delle altre specie in musica

²⁰ 'Coniuncta est appositio b rotundi aut b quadri in loco irregulari' (Tinctoris, *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 14).

considerate. Perché se questo segno b sarrà dato in C, allhora quello tono

²¹ 'Coniuncta est facere de semitonio tonum et de tono semitonium, sic et de semiditono ditonum et de ditono semiditonum et de aliis speciebus similiter' (Ramis, *Practica musica*, ed. Wolf, pp. 29–30). Ramis quotes this as a common definition.

el quale nello intenso caderà intra questo segno b segnato in b et C naturale sarrà redutto in minore semitonio, et el simile accaderà se tal segno sarrà segnato in F, perché quello tono el quale nello intenso cade tra questo segno b posito in E et F naturali sarrà redutto in spatio de semitonio. Dicono anchora che 'l simile accaderà de questo segno # dato in \$\u03e4 et in E naturali, perché se questo segno \$\u03e4 sarrà segnato in \$\u03e4, allhora quello spatio de tono el quale nel remesso cade tra questo segno # segnato in C et a naturali restarà redutto in spatio de semitonio, et el simile accaderà del predicto segno segnato in E naturale, per lo qual segno quello tono remesso cadente tra questo segno # segnato in F naturale et E naturale restarà redutto in spatio de semitonio. Pertanto, come è stato provato, li nostri musici dicono che li segni preditti in tali luoghi naturali segnati sarranno rationabilmente chiamati congionte, perché la definitione gli è competente. Et se tale sottile considerationi sono remosse dalli rudi practici, sono però in massima consideratione appresso el musico et theorico speculativo, como dallo eccellentissimo musico Messer Hadriano in Santo Marco qua in Venetia, della musica maestro dignissimo, è stato demostrato in un suo concento con grande arte et industria fatto, le parole ¹²³^{*} del quale | concento sono queste, scilicet: 'Quid non ebrietas designat', etc., come nel tenore de tal concento appare dove in C acuto ha posito^g questo segno b con gran raggione et magisterio et anchora theorica consideratione dal musico et theorico speculativo approbata.

19. Anchora el preditto eccellente nostro Pre Zannetto seguitando dice che essendo naturalmente fa in C et in F naturali, che in tali luochi non lice segnare questo segno b, et similmente dice che questo segno  $\sharp$  non lice esser posto in quelli luoghi dove naturalmente cade *mi*, come in  $\natural$  et in E, perché dice che sarriano indarno positi et anchora destrugeriano et guastariano l'ordine naturale. Al quale suo parlare li nostri musici respondeno et dicono che li segni preditti in tali luoghi naturali segnati non sarranno indarno positi. Imperò che quelli segni in queste considerationi sarranno indarno positi li quali per intentione et remissione non removeranno el sono per spatio musico dal luogho dove sarranno segnati, come accaderia se in processu cantus questa lettera A naturale et altre simili fusse segnata dove naturalmente cade tale lettera, scilicet A. Allhora perché tale lettera, scilicet A, sarria data dove tale A cade naturalmente, allhora tale A sarria indarno posita, perché non produrria alcuna musicale intensione né remissione respetto al luogho segnato, et similmente accaderà delle altre lettere naturalmente considerate. Pertanto dicono perché questo segno b segnato in C et in F remove el suono dal luogho segnato per spatio de maggior semitonio remisso, molto commodo per la

^g The MS has 'apposito' for 'ha posito'; this type of error indicates that the letter was dictated to the copyist. Cf. no. 48 n. q.

reintegratione del tono, et etiam perché questo segno # dato in b et in E naturali remove etiam el sono dal loco segnato per maggiore semitonio intenso, similmente molto commodo per la redintegratione del tono et 126^t altre musice distantie, sequita rà che non sarranno in vano in tali lochi segnati, come da lui impensatamente è stato ditto. Dicono anchora che per l'apparentia delli preditti segni in tali lochi segnati, l'ordine naturale non restarà destrutto, come da lui è stato concluso. Imperò che tali segni respetto all'ordine naturale segnato stanno come sta lo accidente nel subietto, el quale accidente se dà et toglie dal subietto senza corruptione del subietto.²² Et questo dicono essere assai chiaramente compreso. imperò che tolto o vero remosso el segno o vero lo accidente, l'ordine naturale o vero subietto restarà integro et non destrutto, et non e contra. perché tolto via l'ordine naturale o ver el subietto, lo accidente o vero el segno restarà destrutto et in vano et senza effetto et alcuna significatione posito, come per molte raggioni, authoritati, et esempi philosophici dicono potersi chiaramente dimostrare.

20. Et oltra procedendo, questo nostro amico, scilicet Pre Zannetto, dice che l'è ben vero che l'è stato osservato dalli musici che dove questo segno and sarrà segnato, sempre se debba dire*fa*, et che dove sarrà questosegno <math>
and sarrà segnato, sempre se debba dire*mi*. Ma lui dapo glie aggionge una glossa,dicendo che questo se intende in ciaschuno loco della mano de Guidodove naturalmente non sarrà né*fa*né*mi*, alla quale sua glossa respondenoli optimi nostri musici che dato che li intervalli musici in la sua intensioneet remissione alle varie denominationi ad placitum invente dalli esercitantide questa facultà^{*i*} non siano soggetti, che etiam chiaramente se potrà dire*fa*in C et in F segnati con questo segno <math>
b. Et dicono che tale *fa*, el quale sarrà inteso nascere da questo predicto segno b in C et in F segnato, sarrà differente in suono dal *fa* in C et in F naturalmente considerati, la quale 126^v cosa dicono poter stare in doi modi. El primo dico no esser chiaro per questo esempio:

# Booberg

La prima nota in cantando sarrà ditta mi, et da poi la seconda sarrà ditta fa, et etiam alla terza sarrà dicto fa, come in canto misurato è usitato descendere da fa a fa sequente per tono subintelletto. El secondo modo accaderà dicendo mi (ut supra) alla prima nota et seguitando dicendo faalla seconda, et di poi, mutando tal fa in *sol*, se descenderà regolarmente per tono remesso, dicendo fa alla terza nota, come è usitato da quelli li

^b MS: falculta.

²² See the Notes on Problematical Terms s.v. 'accidentale'.

quali cantano canto plano, el qual processo da loro è chiamato mutatione per descendere da \u00e4 duro in b molle. Dicono adonque i nostri musici che in questo esempio et processo:

# -9:000 - -

se potrà (ut supra) procedere in doi modi, pel primo dicendo mi sopra la prima nota et fa sopra la seconda posita in G segnata con questo segno b, et dapo etiam dire fa sopra la terza nota, come è usitato in canto misurato. Et pel secondo modo etiam rettamente se potrà dire fa descendendo, como è usitato in canto plano, scilicet dicendo etiam mi sopra la prima nota et seguitare con fa sopra la seconda posita in G con questo segno b segnata, et di poi mutando el preditto fa in sol se descenderà per spatio de tono, dicendo fa in F fa ut segnato con questo segno b, la quale mutatione, scilicet mutando fa in sol in tal luocho, sarrà mutatione per descendere dalla congionta de b molle segnata in G in la congionta de b molle segnata in F sequente, per le quali demostrationi appare che in quelli luochi dove naturalmente in la mano de Guido sarrà fa, mediante el segno del b molle in tali lochi segnato se potrà etiam dire fa senza superfluità et senza esser frustratorio, perché tali denominationi sarranno tra loro distanti per spatio de maggiore semitonio, così come anchora accade tra le altre positioni naturali dove non cade né fa né mi segnati con questi segni b, #. Dicono 127^r anchora i nostri musici che se potrà eser|citare la syllaba *mi* in ciaschuno locho della mano de Guido dove naturalmente cada mi segnata con questo segno #, el qual mi dicono che non sarrà frustratorio et superfluo, perché tra el mi naturale et el mi segnato con questo segno # in tal locho naturale non caderà pare convenientia né sonorità. Et tra loro caderà distantia de maggiore semitonio, come dechiara' el sequente esempio:

#### 9: #***

Nel precedente se potrà procedere in doi modi, dicendo *mi* sopra la terza nota posita in  $\natural$  segnata con questo segno  $\ddagger$ . El primo sarrà procedendo per le denominationi subintellette. Per il secondo modo, el quale più se accosta all'uso, et etiam è più facile, sopra la prima nota se potrà dire *fa* et da poi sopra la seconda se dirrà *mi*, el quale *mi* sopra la seconda nota preditta dato, mutato in *re*, se potrà con più facilità ascendere alla sequente terza nota dicendo *mi* per tono intenso. Et tenendo tale ordine, i nostri musici dicono che rettamente se potrà dire *mi* [segnato con questo segno  $\ddagger$ ] in ciaschuno locho della mano de Guido dove sarrà naturalmente tal syllaba *mi*, perché tra el *mi* naturale in una naturale positione locato et el *mi* 

i MS: dechiare.

causato da questo segno # in tal luogho segnato cade differentia de maggiore semitonio, como etiam di sopra dal preditto nostro Pre Zannetto è stato ditto.

21. In summa, li nostri musici dicono che 'l nostro Pre Zannetto ha ditto molto bene dicendo che 'l suono de questo segno b segnato in C et in F naturali caderà più remesso de \u00e4 et E naturali per spatio de uno coma. Et anchora dicono che lo ha ditto bene dicendo che questo segno # segnato in \u00e4 et E naturali harà el suo suono più intenso de C et F naturali per uno spatio de coma, la qual cosa dicono esser tanquam nihil ad rem perché loro non l'hanno recercato cerca questo, ma sì cerca la syllaba *ut* et la syllaba *la* da tali segni producte in la chorda sonora, cerca la quale sua petitione dicono che da lui sono stati assai male satisfatti, perché se è molto allontanato dalla mera verità, come de sopra è stato provato. Dicono anchora che cerca el secondo quesito sono etiam da lui restati assai male resoluti, et questo è advenuto che per mostrarse dotto, lui ha voluto transcendere fibulam²³ et pertrattare assai più che al quesito da loro fatto era pertinente et intricare quelle importantie le quali se competano al musico et theorico speculativo con le syllabe della mano de Guido, alle quali apertamente lui demostra che l'arte musica sia soggetta. Similmente dicono che 'l nostro Pre Zannetto ha troppo creduto a quelli versi, li quali dice che sono stati assignati dalli antichi, li quali demostrano che in A et in a et in E naturali tantum se debba segnare questo segno b, et che questo # solamente debba segnarse in C et in F naturali. Et dicono che da Fra Giovanne Ottobi habbiamo che etiam questo preditto segno b potrà stare segnato in D et in G, et questo # è stato segnato da lui etiam in G et in A naturali²⁴ non senza grande arte et commodità dello inst[ru]mento della natura, et etiam fatto per mano dello artifice, et etiam come dal nostro Frate Pietro Aaron in quello suo preallegato trattatello è stato demostrato.

22. Finalmente, Messer Pietro mio honorando, questo nostro amico et eccellente Pre Zannetto, forsi vedendo che la virtù non l'aiuta, el cerca aiutarse con certa sua malitia et vana astutia, et perché forsi el dubita che per haver resposto alli quesiti dalli nostri musici a llui fatti de haver dato nel pazzo, pertanto perché 'solatium est miseriis', etc. per meglio potersi scusare delli errori suoi, che etiam gli altri | cadano in errore, et questo appare assai chiaro, perché lui ha mandati doi tenori alli nostri musici, scilicet uno de Giovanni de Sarto, et l'altro de Giovanni Brasart, authori assai antichi, et alli nostri musici domanda la resolutione de tali tenori, et

²⁴ See Hothby, *Calliopea legale*, ed. Coussemaker, pp. 298-9.

²³ Literally 'wished to pass beyond the buckle'; apparently a variation on the story related by Pliny (*Natural History* 35. 85) of the cobbler who found fault with Apelles' depiction of a shoe. When the artist corrected it, the cobbler ventured to criticize the leg, whereupon Apelles made a remark that has become proverbial: *Ne sutor supra crepidam* ('Cobbler, stick to your last'). (Our thanks go to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for recognizing this allusion.)

dice che lui non gli puole bene cantare con le altre sue parti, perché da lui non sono bene intesi. Li predicti nostri musici sono stati per lassarlo senza alcuna resposta cerca tali tenori, perché non fu mai più audito né usitato che tra musici se recercasse la resolutione de un tenore o altra sola particola de un concento senza mandare tutte le parti del concento, perché non se dà tanto chiara descriptione o vero canone che primamente mediante lo esamine del contrapunto el musico o ver cantore non se ne voglia chiarire, perché rare volte tale soscrittione et canone se danno senza qualche enigma et oscura sententia. Ma pur li nostri musici sopra tali suoi tenori vogliono dire qualche cosetta, anchora che non possano dire con integra resolutione, perché cerca questo vocabolo o ver nome, scilicet talea, non hanno altra certezza se non, come lui dice, esser stato ditto da me nel trattato mio de contrapunto et da Tinctoris nel suo Definitorio, dove non fa alcuna differentia tra talea et colore.²⁵ Ma lui adduce certe altre positioni cerca tale talea, le quali alli nostri musici sono incognite et inaudite. Pertanto a lloro pare che non siano soggetti a tal legge, le quali varietà de talea forsi da loro sarriano state comprese se dal nostro Pre Zannetto fussino stati usitati li termini da homo da bene et tra musici usitati, scilicet con tali tenori mandare le altre sue parti, le quali essendo col suo tenore esaminate, hariano forsi chiaramente compreso dove nel primo tenore primamente dice ut hic: 'Prima talea', et etiam hariano havuto intelligentia quale delle proportioni chiamata subdupla superbipartiens sia quella della quale se tratta in tale canone, perché tali proportioni sono senza fine, come comparando tre ad otto et 5 a 12 et 7 a 16, et sic in infinitum. Et perché 'proportiones maioris inequalitatis minuunt comparatum, minoris ipsum comparatum augent',26 dalli nostri 128^v musici sarria apertamente stato compreso lo augumento della prima talea, et così per consequente havendo la notitia come dallo authore la talea sia stata intesa, da loro sarria stato compreso che le note della seconda talea, le quali sono soggette alla subdupla comparatione, virtualmente crescono in duplo. Et anchora da loro sarria stato inteso che le note della terza talea dalla subsesquitertia proportione governate restariano augumentate dalla sua parte terza, perché ogni apparente ternario acquista virtù quaternaria.

Et anchora in la quarta talea, alla quale dal canone è assegnata la subsesqualtera, sarria chiaramente compreso che ogni dualità haria virtù ternaria. Et per tal ordine el primo modo²⁷ de cantare tal tenore sarria stato chiaramente dal dotto compreso. Et procedendo in tale tenore per lo

#### 60. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Oct. 1533

secondo modo, le figure della prima talea restaranno diminute, perché sono soggette alla tripla proportione, et tre note haranno valore et virtù de una sua simile, et le figure della seconda talea, perché sono guidate della hemiolia o vero sesqualtera comparatione, tre note acquistaranno virtù de doi sue simili. Et la terza talea starrà ut iacet. Et le note della quarta talea sarranno cantate per diatessaron remessa,²⁸ respetto al loco suo apparente, le quali comparationi sarranno intese ut supra se sarranno a tali note referite secondo el suo valore dal segno nel principio de tal tenore, ut hic posito: O. Ma se ciaschuna de tali proportioni sarrà referita alla propinqua passata, allhora le note preditte acquistaranno altra virtù et altro valore, la qual cosa non se potrà comprendere senza lo esamine delle altre parti del concento. Similmente, dove tale canone dice ut hic, scilicet: 'Tertio modo in diapente. Et est notandum quod secunda et tertia vice capitur in diapente', dicono che senza lo esamine delle altre parti el non se potrà chiaramente cognoscere se·lle note sarranno remosse dal loco apparente per diapente remessa o per diapente intensa.

23. Cerca el secondo tenore, li nostri musici dicono che se le doi prime

talee terminaranno dove appare questo segno O, che lo authore in tal

tenore sarrà stato superfluo et frustratorio. Et questo sarrà apparente et ^{129^r} chiaro, perché dove nel canone lui dice ut hic: 'due pri|me talee de maggiore modo perfetto, minore existente imperfecto', etc., el preditto tenore, come sta notato, demostra per se quello che in tale canone se contiene. Imperò che quello punto posito dapo la prima et etiam dapo la seconda pausa della longa occupante doi spatii assai chiaro demostra che la massima è fatta imperfetta della preditta pausa longa, et etiam la seconda et quarta longa sarranno alterate. Pertanto è stato vano nel canone preditto della perfettione del modo maggiore pertrattare, et etiam della imperfectione del minore in tal tenore, perché [per] la pausa della longa occupante doi spatii assai bene appare che in tal tenore el modo minore non sarrà perfecto. Et dove seguitando dice ut hic: 'Alie vero due talee e contrario', etc., dicono che se le altre preditte due talee haranno principio con le note

immediate posite dapo questo segno predicto  $O_{3}$ , che similmente el suo

canone sarrà superfluo. Imperò che non solamente el segno per se apparente demostra che, more antiquo, el modo minore è perfetto, ma etiam dechiara la imperfectione del modo maggiore, et che 'l tempo sarrà perfetto, per la qual cosa accaderà che la quarta breve, et etiam ultima, sarranno alterate. Anchora el punto dato dapo la prima pausa de breve,

²⁵ Spataro made this claim in his letter to Del Lago of 24 Nov. 1529; see no. 29, para. 7. Tinctoris's definitions are in fact not the same; see the Commentary on no. 29.

²⁶ Gafurio makes a similar statement, but in different words, in ch. 2 of Book IV of his *Practica musicae* (trans. Miller, p. 157).

 $^{^{27}}$  Spataro understands 'modo' to mean 'manner'; de Sarto had used it as a synonym for *color*; see the Commentary on no. 57.

²⁸ Without the other voices, Spataro had no way of knowing that 'in subdiatessaron' does not mean 'at the lower fourth' but *subsesquitertia*. On the correct resolution of the tenor, see the Commentary on no. 57.

etiam quello el quale è posito dapo la seconda, demostrano la perfettione del modo minore cadere in tal tenore. Li nostri musici dicono che vogliono che queste preditte demostrationi bastino per la resolutione delli tenori preditti domandati dal nostro Pre Zannetto, el quale forsi se crede parlare con li morti et che le sue insidie non siano intese. Ma se lui havesse mandate le altre parti, forsi che cerca tali tenori dalli nostri musici sarria stato ditto più oltra cerca queste sue grosse antiquitati, le quali li sono tanto grate, perché 'ogni simile appetisce el suo simile'.²⁹

24. Frate Pietro mio honorando et charissimo, per parte delli nostri musici bolognesi, dalli quali per le vostre innumerabili virtù et optima fama sete molto amato, a V.E. mando queste resposte da loro fatte a certe resposte le quali ha fatte el nostro Pre Zannetto | a certi quesiti dalli nostri musici a sua Eccellentia fatti. Ma perché a loro pare che lui se sia portato da rustico et da homo maligno, invido, et insidioso per havere usati termini non liciti et non usitati cerca quelli tenori de sopra nominati, pregano V.E. sia contenta farli intendere che da loro havete havute tali resposte. Et se lui le vole vedere, sono contenti che glielle mostrate et lassate leggerle, et etiam pigliarne copia in camera vostra con vostro piacere et commodo, et non consentirli che le porti fora, né chelle habbia in suo dominio, perché a loro pare che 'l sia più licito a non compiacere Pre Zannetto delle sue fatiche et vigilie, che non è a lui esser stato avaro et non cortese de quelle sue tanto celebrate antiquit[at]i, le quali non sono sue opere né fatiche. Et de questo quanto possono pregano V.E., alla quale humilmente, et io insieme con loro, se recommandano.

Da Bologna alli 30 ottobre 1533.

Servitor de V.E. J. Spataro

I. On 28 September I received Pre Zanetto's answer [no. 57] to the question posed by our Bolognese musicians, who have given me the task of responding. I was very reluctant to do so, not so much because I am not well but because Pre Zanetto suspects that I am the only one who promotes this controversy, in which case he should be glad and thank me rather than complain, for 'virtue is perfected through practice', and also 'iron is sharpened by iron'.¹ But since I understand that I shall have to do the writing and because the matter is subtle and very erudite, to save trouble and so that you, the faithful friend of the truth, can judge their reply, I am writing to you. Please let Pre Zanetto have the letter at his

²⁹ See no. 29 n. 11.

leisure, then return it to me, as before, so I can put it with our other musical exchanges.²

2. My dear Pietro, Pre Zanetto, in his letter of 18 August [no. 57],³ acknowledges receipt of my answer to his query [no. 56]. He says I responded in my usual way, which annoyed me because I think I answered correctly. Only now do I see his bad faith in that question. He claims I and our Bolognese musicians posed a question that is irrelevant to the diatonic genus: where are the syllables *ut* and *la* of *b* on C and F and # on B and E? He says that *b* and # were invented to change the natural sounds by dividing the tone into two parts, with the minor semitone below and the major semitone above and vice versa. Then he says that Fb and Cb will lie a comma lower than E and B, and B# and E# a comma higher than C and F, etc.

3. My dear Pietro, our friend has wasted a good deal of time on these demonstrations, for our musicians, though not disagreeing on the function of these signs as commonly understood by musicians, nevertheless arrived at a different opinion.⁴ He holds fast to the doctrine of Guido on these signs. But they, speculating in a higher vein, say 'he who gives a sign gives its consequence'. In this case, given  $\flat$  or  $\ddagger$ , there follows the consequence of these signs. If the whole tones in the simple hand of Guido can be divided into two semitones by these signs, b will have the same effect in C and F and # in B and E. They say he will recall this if he studies your latest treatise on how to find the six syllables on each position of the hand,⁵ where you show the origin of *mi* on the pitches of C and F to be Db and Gb, and the origin of fa on B and E to be A# and D#. As Hothby and my teacher show,⁶ there are three diatonic orders used by musicians, no different in nature and substance, but in different locations, that is, one is higher than the other with regard to the regular musical spaces of the monochord in relation to its beginning note. Hothby called the three orders natural, second, and third.⁷ The first occurs in compositions without key signature; since it is called natural, it needs no accidental signs. The second occurs in compositions that have a flat where no fa occurs in the first. The third has # where no *mi* occurs in the first. Therefore our musicians say, in view of the fact that all three orders are equivalent to the one order of Guido, it follows that in the second and third orders b can be used wherever there is no fa and  $\sharp$  wherever there is no mi. Therefore, following the rule given by our Pietro Aaron-that mi occurs on C and F by virtue of Db and Gb in the second order—they say logically that a flat can be used on C and F, not in relation to fa of the first order but to *mi* of the second order, the same pitch as *fa* in the first order.⁸

4. If Pre Zanetto pays close attention, he will see there are excellent reasons for signing # in B and E of the first order. B and E are *fa* in the

third order, originating in a # on A and D of the first order. Therefore B# and E# do not stand in relation to *mi* of the first order but to *fa* of the third order arising from A# and D#, which is the same pitch as B and E of the first or natural order.⁹ Therefore the question our musicians posed is not irrelevant to the diatonic genus, for these signs apply only to one diatonic genus and order, and not to several unequal orders on the monochord. Even though these signs create intervals not used as such in the diatonic genus, any moderately intelligent person, without hesitation, could find the correct form for each diatonic interval and order by allotting the regular orders and spaces.

5. Our musicians say he contradicts himself in saying that these signs in those places are awkward and not pertinent to the diatonic genus because they create the interval of a comma, which is not only not singable but also not a diatonic interval, after asking me where ut and la of a  $\ddagger$  on G fall, which raises the pitch by a major semitone, not a diatonic but a chromatic interval. He certainly has a sharp eye for these trivial details but can't see the light in more important matters. He doesn't wish to acknowledge that those intervals only appear to be there and are not used *per se* because they are included in larger singable intervals.

6. When he claims that ut of Cb and Fb lies a comma¹⁰ lower than G and C, our musicians think he makes no little error, for it would follow that there would not be a fourth but the space of a major third between fa and ut, as he can clearly see by filling in the notes between Cb (a comma below B) and a comma below G. From a comma below B to A there are two minor semitones, and from A to a comma below G there is a whole tone and a comma, which add up to two whole tones, not a fourth. The same goes for the interval Fb to a comma below C.

7. He makes the same error in claiming that la of Cb and Fb lies a comma lower than E and A, for fa to la would be a fourth and not a major third. Cb and Fb lie a comma lower than B and E, as he says, and from there to a comma below E and A is a fourth, according to this diatonic progression: Cb to Db is a whole tone, Db to Eb is a whole tone, Eb to Fb is a minor semitone, which together comprise a perfect fourth and not the major third that should occur between fa and la. The same goes for Fb to a comma below A, as he can see from the above. They say if he looks closely he will find ut of Cb and Fb a major semitone beneath G and C. If he is attentive, where he said that a flat on C lowers it by a major semitone and the same on F, he will also notice if a flat is signed on C, its la will be a major semitone beneath E, and the la of Fb will fall a major semitone lower than A, as he will understand if he accepts the certainty of infallible quantity.

8. They further say he erred in claiming that ut of B# and E# lies a

comma higher than G and C, for from *mi* to *ut* would be a fourth and not a major third, as is evident by proceeding diatonically: B# to A# is a whole tone, A# to G# another whole tone, G# to a comma above G is a minor semitone, which add up to a perfect fourth of the second species because the semitone is the first interval. The same goes for E# to a comma higher than C; following the above ordering, he will see that he blundered.

9. In conclusion, our musicians say that, for the foregoing reasons, the ut of B# is a major semitone higher than G and a minor semitone lower than A. Ut of E# is a major semitone higher than C and a minor semitone lower than D.

10. They say that la of  $E^{\ddagger}$  is a major semitone higher than A and not a comma, as he states. And la of  $B^{\ddagger}$  is a major semitone higher than E or a comma higher than F, which is perfectly clear, for if there is a fourth between B and E, *mi* to la, and the sharp raises B by a major semitone, *la* will be a major semitone higher than E, exceeding F by a comma, and not just a comma above E, as he concluded.

11. Further on, our excellent Pre Zanetto says that the interval of a comma is unsingable, very difficult, and also rejected; because it does not appear on the monochord, it is useless and unnecessary. To his illconceived notion our musicians reply: given that the interval of a comma is not singable per se, it is not therefore useless but occurs in its necessary and convenient places. If it were useless, our Boethius would have had no reason to show how a major semitone exceeds a minor by the interval of a comma, and how a minor semitone is greater than three but less than four commas and a major semitone greater than four but less than five, and a tone greater than eight commas but less than nine, and how six whole tones exceed an octave by a comma. And it would have been useless for him and all other theorists to demonstrate the ratio of the comma.¹¹ Every one of them says the comma is necessary to complete many musical intervals on the divided monochord that otherwise would not have the correct proportion, as Lodovico Fogliano of Modena proved in his treatise.¹² And because Boethius says the interval of a comma is the smallest interval perceptible, our musicians do not claim it is singable or used per se on the monochord or by the voice, but they say it is audible and is added to other larger intervals in the necessary places. For a comma not only causes many notes composed of two minor semitones on the monochord to reach their fullness but it corrects intervals that do not quite please the ear. Pre Zanetto seems unaware of this, or he would not have said the comma does not appear on the monochord; for a scholar, he seems to be very ignorant.

12. Our musicians say that if he examines a modern divided monochord, he will find two black keys between G and A; the first is Ab, dividing G-A into a minor semitone below and a major semitone above. But from E to that black key is a third that is a minor semitone higher than a minor third but a comma lower than a major third; thus the interval does not sound good. Therefore the learned took away a tiny part of the interval of a major semitone between that key and A in order to make a major third with E, and that tiny part is nothing but a comma, which appears on the monochord between the first and second black keys spanning G and A. Therefore the interval of a comma does appear on the monochord where the whole tone A-G is divided with the major semitone below and minor semitone above and vice versa, as every other interval of a tone on the monochord should be divided. Thus art imitates nature, by means of a comma in the correct places.

13. Therefore our musicians conclude that without the comma, no instrument can be perfectly divided, as Hothby demonstrated in his Calliopea.¹³ You yourself tacitly approve this in your treatise on how to find the six syllables on every position of the hand; if they had been shown by ratios of string-lengths, one could see that every whole tone in the first order would be divided with the minor semitone below and the major semitone above and vice versa. Such a division is only accomplished by means of the comma between the two minor semitones, which assists the upper or lower interval as necessary by means of a # on G and a b on A, the difference between them being a comma. A # on G raises the note a major semitone, bringing it to a minor semitone distant from A; a b on A lowers the note a major semitone, bringing it to a minor semitone distant from G. In the middle lies the comma, highly honoured by learned musicians and not superfluous, as Pre Zanetto said. He also claims it is useless to seek such hexachords since they do not proceed diatonically by semitone, tone, tone or by the Guidonian syllables; the tones and semitones would change their places and not fall on the lines or spaces, giving rise to a mixed genus, and no instrument is divided this way.

14. Our musicians have answered this above: given a sign or syllable, its consequence is given too. Since the string is a continuum, it can be adjusted to any harmonic distance. As for his claim that the tones and semitones would change places, our musicians say he makes a number of errors. First, he posits a difference between the same things by saying that if the tones and semitones do not fall on the usual lines and spaces, they will be of a mixed genus. Our musicians say that the diatonic tones and semitones can fall in any place, and even without consideration of lines and spaces, and they will still be in one genus, because in whatever place the species occurs, there it has its effect. Thus, since musical intervals have not a fixed position in the natural instrument, they have none in the artificial instrument either; art serves nature, and not vice versa. If such

divisions are not found on the artificial instrument, the fault lies not with musical science but with the craftsman, who does not know them, or with his handiwork, which cannot achieve them as precisely as the natural instrument can. They say that according to our philosophaster, if a man born in Bologna came to Venice, having changed places, he would no longer belong to the genus animal but would take on a composite nature. And it would follow that many works by excellent composers, using band  $\ddagger$  in the key signature or in the course of the piece, which changes the normal position of tones and semitones as indicated by the lines and spaces, would not be diatonic but of a different nature. Such a belief would proceed from little knowledge, for lines and spaces do not prove differences in genus, but it is the characteristic species that defines genus, as Mouton showed in his 'Missa sine nomine'¹⁴ and motet 'Peccata mea',¹⁵ which have a key signature of Bb and Eb. Thus the semitone, sung in the first order between B and C and E and F or between line and space and space and line, occurs between A and B, space and line, and D and E, line and space. Since the species of the diatonic genus are observed in these works, even though the tones and semitones occur in different places, they say that the works are diatonic and not in a mixed genus, that the diatonic tetrachord proceeds by semitone, tone, tone, and that one can sing them with Guidonian syllables.

15. Where our excellent Pre Zanetto says that even Aaron does not treat these hexachords in his latest treatise, our musicians respond that this does not invalidate their question, for if Aaron could achieve his purposes without dealing with those hexachords and accidentals, there was no point in his discussing more material than necessary.¹⁶ And if Pre Zanetto had considered the effect of b on C and F and # on B and E, perhaps he would not have gone into such irrelevant details. But they forgive him because 'the blind cannot judge colour' and 'that harvest is not to the taste of slow wits'.¹⁷

16. Further on, our excellent Pre Zanetto says there are two *coniunctae*, b used where *mi* is normally found and # used where *fa* normally occurs, as demonstrated by the old verses:

Specify the square and round kinds of conjunctae. The sign of the round conjuncta [b] will keep to A and E; the progression of the square one  $[\sharp]$  distinguishes F and C.

Our musicians say he tacitly contradicts himself when he claims that b is used where *mi* naturally occurs, for the verses place b on A, where *mi* does not occur naturally but arises only because of the flat *coniuncta* on Bb,¹⁸ as Hothby and Aaron show. If Pre Zanetto concedes that *mi* falls on A, and A can therefore be flattened, then he cannot deny that a b can be used on C

and F, for just as *mi* on A derives from Bb, so does *mi* on C derive from Db and *mi* on F from Gb. The same is true of # on B and E, which occurs by virtue of the *fa* that follows from A# and D#.¹⁹

17. With regard to why Hothby and Ramis did not allow b on C and F and  $\sharp$  on B and E, he gives two reasons: if a b were placed on F or wherever there is naturally a *fa*, it would not be a true *coniuncta*, and the same if  $\sharp$  is placed where *mi* occurs naturally. Therefore an accidental *fa* and *mi* placed in the natural positions of *fa* and *mi* would be useless and would destroy the natural order. Then he says it is true that musicians say where you find a flat you sing *fa* and where a sharp *mi*. But he confines this to the positions in the Guidonian hand where *fa* and *mi* are not found naturally. The first reason does not satisfy our musicians, who say that 'what the definition fits, the defined fits too'. Tinctoris defined *coniuncta* as the placement of a flat and a sharp in an irregular place.²⁰ Ramis said that *coniuncta* is making a tone of a semitone and vice versa and a major third of a minor third and vice versa, and also other intervals.²¹ Therefore they say that Cb and Fb and B $\sharp$  and E $\ddagger$  are correctly called *coniunctae* because they produce the effect assigned by the preceding definitions.

18. They prove this first by the definition of Tinctoris, for the signs are located in irregular places. If a flat is signed on C or F, there will be a difference between the sign and the place signed, for C and F are regular and natural places. But a flat on C and F is in an irregular, not a regular place; the regular place for such a sign is a major semitone lower than the place signed, C and F, as every musician agrees. Therefore, according to Tinctoris's definition, Cb and Fb, B# and E# are correctly called *coniunctae*. Ramis's definition also proves this, for the signs make a semitone out of a tone and vice versa and a minor out of a major third. A flat on C changes the whole tone Bb-C into a minor semitone, and the same on F, for the whole tone Eb-F becomes a semitone. They say the same occurs on B and E; B# changes the whole tone B-C# into a semitone and E# the whole tone E-F# into a semitone. Therefore our musicians say that it is reasonable to call those signs in those places coniunctae, since the definition fits them. If such subtle considerations are beyond ignorant practitioners, they are of great concern to speculative theorists and musicians, as the outstanding musician Messer Adriano [Willaert] of San Marco demonstrated in his ingenious composition on 'Quid non ebrietas'. In the tenor he placed a Cb with great logic and skill and yet with theoretical considerations approved by the speculative musician.

19. Pre Zanetto says that a flat should not be used where *fa* normally falls, nor a sharp where *mi* normally occurs, because they would be useless and also would destroy the natural order. Our musicians respond that those signs are not placed there in vain. They would be useless if they did

not change the pitch, such as if 'A' were placed where it naturally occurs, since it does not raise or lower the note. Because a flat on C and F lowers the pitch by a major semitone, useful for the completion of the tone, and a sharp on B and E raises the pitch by a major semitone, which is also very useful for completing the tone and other musical intervals, it follows that the signs are not placed in vain, as he thoughtlessly said. Nor is the natural order destroyed: the signs are to the natural order as an accident is to a subject; the accident can be added or removed without altering the subject.²² They say this is perfectly clear, because by removing the sign or accident the natural sequence or subject were removed, the accident or sign would be destroyed and without meaning, as can be demonstrated by many philosophical reasons, authorities, and examples.

20. Pre Zanetto concedes that musicians say fa when they see a flat and mi when they find a sharp, but he adds a gloss, saying this applies only to the positions of the Guidonian hand where fa and mi do not occur naturally. Our excellent musicians respond that since the rising and falling musical intervals are not subject to the various names invented by practitioners, clearly one can say fa on Cb and Fb. That fa has a different pitch from Cb and Fb, and this can be shown in two ways. In the first:

the first note is *mi*, the second *fa*, and the third is also *fa*, as it is the practice in mensural music to descend from *fa* to *fa* by a whole tone not expressed but understood. In the second way, the first note is *mi*, the second *fa*, which mutates to *sol* and then descends a whole tone to *fa* on the third note, as is done in plainchant and called mutation to descend from B $\natural$  to B $\flat$ . The following example:

can be sung in two ways: (1) mi, fa, fa, as is done in mensural music; (2) mi, fa mutating to sol, fa, as in plainchant. The mutation is made from fa to sol to descend from the coniuncta Gb to the coniuncta Fb. These examples show that a flat can be signed where the Guidonian hand has fa and it will not be useless because there will be a distance of a major semitone between the two places, just as in the other places where b and  $\ddagger$  are used on positions other than fa and mi. Our musicians also assert that mi can be sung on every natural position of mi signed with a sharp because the pitch will be higher by a major semitone:

# 9: 0 #0 # #

This can be solmized in two ways: the first is to proceed by syllables understood but not expressed. The second, more common and also easier, is to sing fa on the first note, mi on the second, mutate to re and ascend to mi on the third by a rising whole tone. In this manner, our musicians say that mi with a sharp can properly be sung in every natural position of mibecause there will be a difference of a major semitone between the two places.

21. In sum, our musicians say Pre Zanetto was correct in saying that Cb and Fb fall a comma lower than B and E and that B $\sharp$  and E $\sharp$  are higher than C and F by a comma, but this is irrelevant to their question: the position of *ut* and *la* of those notes. On this he strayed far from the truth, as shown above. Nor are they satisfied with his second answer, for, to show off his learning, he would not stick to his last²³ but sought to encumber speculative theory with the Guidonian syllables, to which he plainly states the art of music is subject. He puts too much faith in those verses he ascribes to the ancients that allow a flat only on B, A, and E and a sharp only on C and F. Hothby showed us that a flat can also be signed in D and G and a sharp also in G and A²⁴ with great art and utility to the human voice and to instruments, as our Pietro Aaron has also shown in his aforementioned treatise.

22. Finally, my dear Pietro, our excellent friend, perhaps seeing that virtue does not help him, has resorted to malice and cunning. Fearing that he may have made a fool of himself in answering our musicians, in order-since 'misery loves company'-to justify his own errors by trapping others, he sent our musicians two tenors by Giovanni de Sarto and Giovanni Brassart, composers of long ago, asking for their resolution because he can't sing them with the other parts. Our musicians were inclined to ignore them since it is unheard-of to ask for a resolution without sending the other parts; no canon is so clear that resolution is certain without examining the counterpoint, for the language is usually enigmatic. Still, they wanted to say something, although for the understanding of talea they know only my counterpoint treatise and Tinctoris's definition, which does not distinguish between talea and color.25 He, however, has a different conception, unknown to our musicians. Therefore they do not feel bound by it, but they might have understood it if Pre Zanetto had behaved decently and sent the other parts, as musicians commonly do. From these they could have worked out which of the subdupla superbipartiens proportions is meant, because they are infinite-3:8, 5:12, 7:16, etc. Because 'proportions of greater inequality diminish

the relation; those of lesser inequality augment the relation',²⁶ our musicians would have understood that the first *talea* indicates augmentation and the notes of the second, in *subdupla* proportion, double in value. In the third *talea*, 3:4, the notes would be augmented by one third, and in the fourth *talea*, 2:3, every duple value would become triple. This is how the learned would understand the first manner.²⁷ In the second manner, the notes of the first *talea* are diminished in *tripla* proportion, 3:1; those of the second *talea* are diminished 3:2. The third *talea* is as written. The notes of the fourth *talea* are transposed down a fourth.²⁸ The relations will be understood as above if they refer to the value of the notes under the sign O at the beginning of the tenor. But if each of the proportions refers to the one before, then the notes will have different values; this cannot be determined without seeing the other parts. Similarly, where the canon savs 'In the third way it is sung at the fifth. Note that the second and third times it is sung at the fifth', without the other parts they cannot understand whether it should be sung at the lower or higher fifth.

23. Regarding the second tenor, our musicians say that if the first two

*taleae* end at  $\frac{O}{3}$  the author['s canon], 'the first two *taleae* in perfect major

mode and imperfect minor mode', is superfluous, for the way the tenor is notated demonstrates the canon. The dot after the first and second *longa* rests shows that the maxima is imperfected by the *longa* rest, and the second and fourth longs are altered. Therefore it is superfluous for the canon to specify the perfection of the major mode, and also the imperfection of the minor mode, because the rest of two spaces clearly indicates the imperfection of the long. And where it says 'the other two

*taleae* the reverse', if the other two *taleae* begin at  $O_3$ , the canon is also

superfluous, for the sign (in the old manner) indicates perfect minor mode, imperfect major mode, and perfect *tempus*; the fourth and last breves will be altered. The dots after the first and second breve rests demonstrate the perfection of the minor mode. This is as much as our musicians want to say about the tenors. Perhaps Pre Zanetto thinks he is talking to the dead and his intrigues won't be understood. If he had sent the other parts, our musicians might have had more to say about his old fossils who delight him so, for 'birds of a feather flock together'.²⁹

24. My honoured and dear Pietro, on behalf of our musicians, who love you for your innumerable virtues and great fame, I am sending you their replies to certain answers Pre Zanetto made to their questions. Since they think he behaved boorishly and like a malicious, jealous, and insidious person by using unusual and impermissible terms regarding those tenors, they ask you to let him know that you have their replies.

You can show them to him and let him make a copy in your room if he likes, but don't let him take them away, because they think it would be more fitting not to satisfy him for his troubles than it was for him to be so ungenerous and impolite with his celebrated antiquities, none of his own work. We all humbly commend ourselves to you.

# **61** (J51). Fo. 171^{r-v}

Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 12 May 1535 (autograph)

^{171^v} Al venerando religioso Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago quanto fratello, etc. Vinegia, a Santa Soffia.

171^t Messer Gioanni quanto fratello, etc.

1. In questa sera a cena col magnifico capitano¹ si è trovato uno Messer Gioanni Sanese, maestro de' figliuoli del magnifico Messer Gioanni Cornaro, onde fu ragionato di musica, nella qual cena era lo arciepiscopo, episcopo, et el signore abate col cavaliere, et tutti li figliuoli del ditto Messer Gioanni. Et così discorrendo molte cose, fu ditto da quel maestro, quasi svilando, che el non era nessuno che havessi theorica di musica, ma che componevano per pratica.² Voi sapete la natura mia, et quasi ridendo pubblicamente gli risposi et dissi che lui haveva parlato molto prosuntuosamente, et che lui doverrebbe havere più rispetto allo honore de altri che non haveva. Et sopra questo mi riscaldai, provandogli che non haveva ben ditto, come al mio venire intenderete, saria troppo prolisso,^a tanto che, per una parola che in ultimo lui disse, restò confuso da tutti, ridendo ogni huomo. Non dirò altro; intenderete più a pieno. Bastavi che quando bisogna, non dormo.

2. Fra Giordano non è qua. Ho inteso da dui frati di Sancta Justina che el nostro Don Lorenzo è stato dui giorni a Vinegia, et andato da Messer Adriano, et ha molto biasimato et smachato el vostro tenore,³ per bocca di don Valeriano, et che Adriano gli ha domandato quatro dubii, et che lui gli ha subito resolti. Guardate se è quello che pensavi. Qua questi frati me hanno assai honorato. Vene[r]ia presto, ma el magnifico capitano non mi lascia partire. Se bisogna aiuto all'opera, non mancate. Nec plura.

Data in Padova el dì 12 maii 1535.

Piero Aaron subscripsi

1. This evening at dinner with the Magnificent Captain¹ were Messer Giovanni Sanese, tutor of the Magnificent Giovanni Cornaro's sons, the

^a A word such as 'scriverlo' seems to be missing here.

³ 'Multi sunt vocati'; see no. 86.

¹ Giacomo Cornaro; see the Biographical Dictionary.

² This is a subject to which Aaron returned in his *Lucidario in musica* (Venice, 1545), Book II, Oppenione 15: 'Che il comporre della Musica non è altro che Pratica.' In his rebuttal he leans heavily on the opinion 'dallo eccellente et consumato musico Messer Gioan Spadaro'.

archbishop, bishop, abbot, and *cavaliere*, and all Giovanni Cornaro's sons. In the course of the discussion, Sanese, in a deprecating manner, claimed that no one composed according to theory, only to practice.² Well, you know my temper; almost laughing out loud, I told him he was too presumptuous and ought to be more respectful of others. I got rather excited in disproving him, and in the end everyone laughed at his confusion. I'll tell you more later.

2. Fra Giordano [Passetto] is not here [in Padua]. Two friars of Santa Giustina told me that our Don Lorenzo [Gazio] was in Venice for two days; he went to Messer Adriano [Willaert] and censured and heaped insult on your tenor,³ according to Don Valeriano, and Willaert asked him four questions which he immediately answered. See whether it is what you thought. These friars have done me great honour, and the Magnificent Captain is reluctant to let me leave.

# **62** (J62). Fo. 183^{r-v}

Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 13 March 1536 (autograph)

^{183^v} Al mio quanto fratello Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago, musico dignissimo, etc. A Santa Fumia in Vinegia.

183^r Messer Pre Giovanni, quanto fratello carissimo, etc.

1. Colui che non pensa al fine è peggio che una bestia. Sappiate che Idio a me ha voluto meglio che non merito, perché al presente mi truovo in migliore essere et contento che mai fussi. Prima, io ho un patrone tanto magnanimo et da bene quanto si possa uno inmaginare, et uno che veramente fa grandissimo conto di me. Io sono da tutta questa terra honorato. Qua sono molti degni huomini in ogni facultà, et massimamente in musica. Io ho le spese alla tavola del mio patrone, medico, medicine-che Idio mi guardi-il barbiere, tenuto in una camera bellissima, et tenuto mondo et netto, et il mio putto che mi serve, con venti ducati l'anno da potermi vestire, de una mansioneria perpetua de una scuola del corpo di Christo. Qua non bisogna dire lo 'lassala" va'; ogni huomo sa el fatto suo. Io non ho voluto che altri col tempo si rida di me. Io [di] continuo son stato con gran maestri. Non ho sentito disagio, et dubitando per lo advenire di qualche mia fortuna, me ho proveduto. Voi sapete bene quello che in Vinetia al presente havevo. Se me fussi venuto una malattia, saria andato ramingo. Gli cinquanta ducati che mi lasciò Monsignor,¹ con la croce di ligiaro—sapete che non gli è stato mai mezzo poterli havere. Che volete voi che io perda più il tempo. Se portavo la croce in petto di lisaro senza utile alcuno,² al presente la porto in mano de argento^b con utilità et riposo perpetuo della vita mia.

2. Onde a vostra consolatione, el giorno del beatissimo Gregorio, da poi tutti li vespri, come piacque a Dio, tolsi l'habito della religione de' Crosachieri, da molto popolo honorato et aspettato, dove venne voluntariamente, per lo amore quale a me portono questi signori musici et cantori, Messer Gasparo maestro di cappella qua,³ con ventidui cantori, a honorarmi. Et qua fu cantato un vespro a dui chori da loro a psalmi spezzati, molto egregiamente, con un magnificat a dui chori, et tutte le antiphone in contrapunto--cosa che mai haria creduto, tanto bene che

^a MS: lasta la, which we take to be a slip of the pen. ^b MS: argente.

¹ Sebastiano Michiel, Aaron's patron in Venice.

² Lisaro is a colouring agent extracted from madder. Aaron seems to be referring to the cross on the robe of members of the Order of St John of Jerusalem (Knights of Malta), of which his patron was Prior in Venice; however, this cross was white.

³ Gasparo Alberti, composer and *maestro di cappella* at Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo. See the Biographical Dictionary.

sarebbe bastato in Vinegia. Da poi uno 'Veni creator spiritus', quando fu vestito, con tanta moltitudine che non si poteva stare in chiesa, né etiam all'altare,' da poi a me non fu mutato nome, et finito le ceremonie, fu acompagnato dal reverendo monsignore mio patrone in casa, con tutti li cantori et parte del popolo, dove era apparechiato una bellissima colitione [= colazione], abundante di marzapani et confetti. Da poi fu cantato un mandriale a 6 voci, del qual non sapevo niente, in lauda mia. Sì che, frate carissimo, io ho eletto questo partito. Se a voi et agli altri vi parrà cosa non ben fatta, tal sia di voi. Io mi contento et credo essere quel Piero Aaron ^{183^v} così come altrimenti. | Io non saria mancato, come fratello et amico mio, non vi havessi avisato del mio essere; et perché so che voi me amate, non penso che di questo non vi habbi a essere più tosto grato che altrimenti, dil che sempre vi amerò, et di voi [di] continuo mi ricorderò. Vi supplico quando harete tempo, scrivermi una vostra, acciò intenda del vostro bene

stare, la qual cosa mi sarà gratissima, et a voi sempre mi raccomando. Data in Santo Leonardo [Bergamo] el dì 13 martij 1536.

Vostro quanto fratello, Frate Piero Aaron subscripsi

I. He who does not think of the end is worse than a beast. God has loved me more than I deserve; I have never been so well off as now. First, I have the most generous patron imaginable, who truly appreciates me. Everyone here honours me, and there are many worthy men, especially in music. My patron provides meals, a doctor, medicine, a barber, a beautiful clean room, a boy to serve me, twenty ducats a year for clothing, and a benefice in the confraternity of Corpus Christi. Here one doesn't have to say 'never mind'; everyone tends to his own business. I've always had excellent masters, and I have provided for my future. You know what it was like in Venice; if I had fallen ill, I should have gone wandering. There was never a way of getting the fifty ducats and the red cross left me by Monsignore.¹ If the red cross on my chest was useless,² now I have a silver one in my hand and no more cares.

2. On St Gregory's day [12 March], after Vespers, I took the habit of the highly regarded Crutched Friars. To honour me, Messer Gasparo,³ choirmaster here, and twenty-two singers attended. They sang Vespers for double choir very beautifully, with *salmi spezzati*, a Magnificat for two choirs, and all the antiphons in counterpoint—something I should never have believed, and even worthy of Venice. After a 'Veni creator spiritus' I

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took the habit, not changing my name. There was hardly room for the crowd. Afterwards my patron offered refreshments for all the singers and some of the people, with marzipan and sugared almonds. Then they surprised me with a six-voice madrigal in my honour. So, you see I have made this choice. If you or others don't like it, so be it. I'm the same Pietro Aaron as before. Since you love me, I'm sure you will be pleased. When you have time, please write.

**63** (161). Fos.  $181^{r} - 182^{r}$ 

Giovanni del Lago to Pietro Aaron, 27 August 1539 (autograph copy)¹

181^r Al reverendo Frate Pietro Aaron, musico eccellente.

#### Salve reverende pater.

1. Il tardo realegrarssi con gli amici si suole degnamente riprendere, et spetialmente quando per negligentia procede. Ma considerando ch'io, impedito per il passato delle comune fatiche et occupationi assai, non ho potuto sodisfare al mio debito, ma farò come dice il proverbio, che 'meglio è tardi che non mai'. Darò al presente alle occupationi alquanto intervallo a congratularmi con V.P. della dignità et honori a quali per sua propria virtù è venuta. Mi fu significato dal vostro Frate Gregorio Corbelli venetiano et per una vostra letera diretiva a me [no. 62] come quegli reverendi padri vi hanno ricevuto per suo fratello nella religione sua con grande fausto, etc. Questa non è la fede promessa fra noi più et più volte: mai per alcun tempo di abandonarsi insino alla morte, et esser buoni fratelli, et conferir insiemi l'un l'altro i secreti nostri, massimamente di musica, et tutto è stato l'opposito. Hor mettiamo ogni cosa da canto; per lo advenire si visitaremo con letere.

2. Quel che desidero al presente intendere da V.P. è questo, che per sua inata gentillezza se degna resolvermi questo dubbio, cioè gli modi dagli antichi inventi dimostrati per i loro segni, quante spetie sono, et qual di loro deve esser primo in ordine numerato nella prattica. Et similmente quegli inventi dagli moderni demostrati per le pause de lunghe, perché io trovo che Frate Gioanne Othobi anglico dell'ordine de' frati Carmelitani, Eloi, et Tintoris sono tra loro differenti quant'all'ordine di ponere tali modi nel canto misurato, perché Frate Gioanne Othobi tiene un'ordine, ¹⁸¹^v come appar in | una sua rota, nella qual dimostra il valor delle notule.² Et Eloi in una soa messa composta sopra la antiphona 'Dixerunt discipuli ad beatum Martinum' tiene un'altro diverso di quello che ha tenuto Othobi.³ Et Tintoris in uno suo canto a tre voci fatto sopra alcuni versi, gli quali

² Hothby's *rota* seems not to have survived. His writings on mensuration have recently been published by Gilbert Reaney in Hothby, *Opera omnia de musica mensurabili*.

# 63. Del Lago to Aaron, 27 Aug. 1539

dicono così, 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus',⁴ etc. similmente tiene un'altro modo quanto all'ordine molto diverso a quello che hanno tenuto gli duoi sopranominati, cioè Othobi et Eloi, come appare nelle soe glosse fatte in dichiaratione di tal suo canto, cioè nella glossa del soprano, et in quella del tenore della prima parte, et similmente in quella del tenore della seconda parte. Ma Eloi et Tintoris dicono esser sedeci spetie di modi, et in questo solamente si concordano, ma quanto all'ordine,⁵ cioè primo, secondo, terzo, etc. molto sono discrepanti l'un da l'altro. Ma trovo anchora che Frate Stephano dell'ordine de' frati Eremitani, musico moderno, ha tenuto diverso modo et ordine quanto a tali modi oltra gli preditti, come appar nel suo trattato di musica intittolato Recanetum de musica aurea, nel capitolo vii del 2º libro, nel qual dimostra esser ventiquatro spetie de modi.⁶ Similmente, V.P. ha dimostrato nel suo trattato di musica intittolato Toscanello ventiquatro modi,⁷ et in questo anchor voi sete discrepanti quanto al procedere de tali modi dal sopradetto. Similmente, Messer Gioanne Maria Lanfranco nella soa opera chiamata Scintille di musica nella seconda parte, dove lui tratta delle sedeci 182^r spetie del genere quantitativo, dice queste parole: Dal genere quantitativo, il quale non è altro che la varia quantità causata dal mescolamento della perfettione et imperfettione di essi tre gradi, cioè modo, tempo, et prolatione, le quali spetie ad una ad una secondo l'ordine del mio reverendo Don Lorenzo Gazio cremonese, monacho di Santa Giustina, delle sistematiche dimensioni osservatissimo et delle ragioni della prattica grande intelligente, saranno sottoposte, etc.,⁸ le quali spetie le dimostra per essempi una per una, tutte diverse (dico quanto all'ordine del procedere, cioè prima spetie, seconda spetie, terza spetie, etc.) dalli prenominati. Ma tal modo et ordine di procedere dice esser del sopradetto Don Lorenzo Gazio, et non suo. Nientidimeno lui afferma tale oppinione, perché nulla dice in contrario. Pertanto prego V.P. che quella voglia esser contenta di scrivermi amplamente il parer suo sopra tal materia come

⁴ On this work, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide'. Del Lago's mention of 'glosses' indicates that he was familiar with an annotated version, such as that found in Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, MS 1013, fos. 118^v-122^t. For a modern edn., see ibid., pp. 105-16.

⁵ Tinctoris uses only five species in 'Difficiles alios'. Del Lago is alluding to Tinctoris's *Tractatus de regulari valore notarum* (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 125-38), which sets forth sixteen species.

⁶ Stefano Vanneo, Recanetum de musica aurea (Rome, 1533); see fos. 50'-53'.

⁸ Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di musica* (Brescia, 1533), p. 45.

¹ 'Copia' appears in the left margin of fo. 181'.

³ Éloy's five-part mass is found in Cappella Sistina MS 14, fos.  $56^{\circ}-65^{\circ}$ . For a modern edn. of the first Kyrie and third Agnus Dei, see R. G. Kiesewetter, *Geschichte der europäischabendländischen oder unsrer heutigen Musik* (Leipzig, 1834), Appendix, pp. xii-xiv. The seven-note cantus firmus is sung sixteen times, each time in a different mensuration, indicated by rests and mensuration-signs. The order differs slightly from that given in Tinctoris's *Tractatus de regulari valore notarum*. See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 90-2.

⁷ In Aaron's *Thoscanello* (1523) the *modi* are treated in Book I, chs. 6–28. While his tables show twenty-four combinations of signs and rests, he actually describes only sixteen different mensurations, in the same order as Tinctoris. See the Commentary on no. 64.

credo quella farà per l'amor et benivolentia che è tra noi, et di questo assai vi prego. Non altro. A V.P. m'araccomando.

In Vinegia, a dì xxvii di agosto, M.D.xxxviiii.

Pre Gioanne del Lago subscripsi

Io ho mandato a richieder lo soprascritto dubbio a Frate Pietro Aaron per tentarlo.

1. Late felicitations are inexcusable, especially when due to negligence, but 'better late than never', I shall now take time to congratulate you on your well-deserved honours, reported by your Fra Gregorio Corbelli and in your letter [no. 62] about your splendid reception. This is not what we had promised each other many times: never to abandon each other, to be good brothers, and to share all our secrets, especially musical ones. Well, let us leave that aside and visit by means of letters.

2. Would you, through your innate kindness, resolve the following problem concerning the modes as demonstrated by the older composers with signs: how many are there, and in what order? And the same as demonstrated by modern composers with longa rests, because I find that Hothby, Éloy, and Tinctoris differ. Hothby shows one way in his rota illustrating the value of the notes,² Éloy another in his 'Missa Dixerunt discipuli',³ and Tinctoris yet another in his 'Difficiles alios',⁴ as is evident from the glosses in the soprano and tenor of the prima pars and the tenor of the secunda pars. Eloy and Tinctoris agree that there are sixteen species, but their ordering differs.⁵ Frate Stephano, in his Recanetum de musica aurea, lists twenty-four,⁶ as you do in your *Toscanello*, and you too differ in the ordering.⁷ Lanfranco, in his Scintille di musica, specifies sixteen and says: On the quantitative genus, which is the varied quantity caused by mixing perfection and imperfection of the three degrees, mode, tempus, and prolation, whose species will be set forth below, one by one, according to the ordering of my Don Lorenzo Gazio of Cremona, monk of Santa Giustina, an acute observer of the system of measurement and well versed in practice,⁸ and he gives examples in a sequence different from the aforementioned. He says the order is Gazio's, but he doesn't disagree with it. Therefore I should be pleased to have your considered opinion on this matter.

PS. I sent this problem to Aaron to test him.

**64** (J111). East Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Mus. ms. autogra. theor. P. Aron 1 Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 7 October 1539 (autograph)¹

Al Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago, amico carissimo. In Vinetia o dove si truova.

1. Qual huomo vivente harebbe potuto dimostrarmi il tanto a me tardo р. 1 scriver vostro, che son passati tre anni e mezzo senza haver visto littera vostra alcuna, ma so ben ch'io a voi ne ho mandate. So certo che l'havete ricevute, massime una quando eri amalato, data per il comune amico nostro Messer Pre Mathio, maestro di scuola apresso Santa Justina, dove che lui me scrisse haverla data, et che per altri mi daresti risposta. Se hora vi scusate, è cosa honesta et lecita rimettere lo amico et accettarlo in pristino amore. Nondimendo quasi havete parte osservato lo intento et voluntà vostra di non mi scrivere et mai più parlare, se habito alcuno pigliavo da frate. Se io son frate, son Piero Aron, et non per questo penso esser discaduto. Sapete ben quanto tempo ho perso ne' signori, et più mi duole de' sedici anni in ultimo persi con Monsignor di San Giovanni,² che Idio volessi non l'havessi mai visto. Ch'io sia malcontento haver questo habito, no, ma duolmi non l'haver preso venticinque anni avanti. Io sto meglio ch'io stessi mai, ben visto, ben acharezzato, buon vivere, con riposo libero et qualche scudo in borsa.

2. Son stato in Brescia un mese, dirò questa materia quassi adorato, massime da tutti quegli conti da Marteningo, et il conte Zanpaulo da Cavriolo, et suo figliuolo, Messer Lorenzo, tutti buoni cantori, dagli quali havevo pasto dui giorni da' Marteninghi, et dui da' Cavrioli, tanto che consumai un mese con loro sempre in musica, et da altri gentili huomini in particulare acharezzato. Dove che ho fatto una amicitia con il conte Fortunale da Marteningo che certo me ama come suo fratello, et al mio partire mi mandò per Bergamo cavalcatura degna et servitore per Marteningo anchora. Dil che sua Signoria vuole che con lui in ogni modo mi truovi questo carnovale in Brescia a farlo con loro. Pertanto se loro non hanno rispetto al habito fratesco, mancho ne dovete haver voi. Loro considerano alle virtù, et non al habito. Se io ho mutato habito, non ho mutato le conditioni, perché più son amato in Lonbardia che non ero in

¹ This letter was edited by Johannes Wolf in 'Ein Brief Pietro Arons an Giovanni dal Lago', in Gustav Abb (ed.), *Von Büchern und Bibliotheken* (Berlin, 1928), pp. 65-70. Aaron writes carelessly, running many words together. Instead of littering the letter with *sic*, we shall simply observe that his spellings and grammatical forms are irregular.

² Sebastiano Michiel. Michiel died in 1534, which would indicate that Aaron entered his service in 1518; however, Aaron did not leave Imola until 1522.

Vinetia. Et sappiate che a molti ho scritto, senza haver di loro una risposta. Quando più gli scriverrò, se ne nettino il culo. Dil che certo havevo con voi deliberato non darvi risposta, né manco scrivervi, perché se voi prometesti usque a[d] mortem conservar l'amicitia come al presente p. 2 havete | scritto, dovevi scrivermi et non guardare al habito. Horsù sia con Dio; rece[ptui] canamus. Basta queste poche parole per concludervi che se io son frate, son da tutti ben visto et amato. Meglio faresti voi aprovedervi in altro luogo che in quel che vi trovate, et non star in paludi et in luoghi vili, senza riputatione, et perdergli la vita, perché tal luoghi son destinati a gente ignorante et di vil conditione, etc. Ma se io son frate, re, duchi, signori, cardinali, episcopi, et de ogni altra degna generatione han preso habito fratesco. Dil che concludo che preti et frati e mondani, o siano frati o no, havendo qualche virtù, sono esistimati et meritati apreso Idio et dagli huomini dil mondo, ma gli ignoranti et poltroni non hanno parte in regno Dei. Horsù ad rem nostram.

3. Voi desiderate il mio parere circa gli modi antichi et moderni, cioè qual sia prima spetie in ordine, et quanto siano le spetie di essi modi nella pratica musicale, et dite che Giovanni Othobi, Eloy, et Tintoris sono tra loro non simili quanto al ordine di ponere tali modi, cioè che loro si concordono circa le sedeci spetie, ma circa l'ordine no, et ch'io similmente ho dimostrato le sedici spetie, ma discrepante dagli sopraditti circa l'ordine,³ et che etiam Messer Gianmaria Lanfranco ne aduce anchora 16, et che tal dimostratione non è sua, ma è di Don Lorenzo Gazzo. So benissimo che è sua inventione, et come il ditto Messer Zanmaria, per non dir altro in contrario, fate iuditio che lui sia di quella medesima oppenione, alla quale risponderò nanzi la fine. Prima dirò che se Othobi, Eloy, Tintoris, et io siamo concordi al numero delle spetie et in contrario al proceder per ordine, credo che loro habbino considerato quello che considerai io, cioè che solo attesi a dimostrare gli precetti moderni, per essere io a tal tempo venuto senza ordine di primo, 2°, 3°, né quarto.⁴ Da poi pervenni agli antichi con la intelligentia et dichiaratione appartenenti a loro, et quando loro et io havessimo voluto procedere al ordine delle spetie, era idem per diversa, et così a noi è parso. Ma per tornare agli modi adutti da Messer Zanmaria tolti da Don Lorenzo Gazzo, vorrei, in servitio di loro, ne fuscino digiuni, perché non mancono solo del ordine, ma incorrono et conmetto[no] | assai errori. Vorrei intendere quale è quello autore che dice che il presente segno ut hic O3 sia segno^a di modo

^a MS: segni.

p. 3

maggiore imperfetto, [modo] minore, tempo et prolatione [perfetti], la qual figura dice lui essere  $3^a$  spetie,^b et similmente la quarta,  $7^a$ , ottava, undecima, 12, 15, et decimasesta, le quali tutte in contrario sono adutte con mille falsità. Costoro non fanno alcuna differentia tra la figura circulare et semicirculare con una cifra quanto siano quelle de dua cifre. Certo non mi maraviglio di loro, che molti et molti maggiori errori gli ho trovato, ma di voi più stupisco, tenendovi huomo qual tengo, che mi adducete tale opera o ver sententia connumerata a quelle di Othobi, Eloy, et Tintoris. Se Don Lorenzo ha messo tal dichiaratione, lui l'ha trovato in un fondo d'un tanburo. Non voglio più fatica circa a questo, ma solo cercherò in parte satisfarvi, perché tal segno e figura ut hic  $O_3 C_3 O_2$  etc. non saranno mai chiamati segni di modo maggiore imperfetto, modo minore, etc., ma solum modo minore con tempo et prolatione. Orsù transeat.

4. Per satisfarvi in parte alla domanda vostra, mi disconmoderò circa gli negotii miei, et forse se altri mi havessi fatto alcuna domanda, non so se da me havessi havuto risposta. Questo solo è che il scrivere in tal facoltà porta troppo tempo, perché quello che se ha a esprimere in carta è di maggior faticha et tempo, che quello che a faccia a faccia si conclude. Pur nondimeno a voi non mi sarà molesto, et così dico che il nascimento di tutte le figure essentiali, o vero creatione, nascono dal tempo più volte colto, dal qual tempo, o ver breve, è considerato il modo haver due varietà, scilicet modo minore et maggiore. Et similmente dividendo il tempo in parte sue minute, nasceranno due prolationi, una detta minore quale è la semibreve, et alla maggiore è constituito la minima.⁵ Ma il tempo, che è solo, fermo, et stabile, [et] non patisce divisione alcuna di maggiore né minore, sarà detto un transito invariabile, dal qual nascono tutte le altre spetie. Et dato che essa breve o tempo sia diviso in tre parte tertie, et in due parte medie, non si dirà esser due varietà di tempo, cioè maggiore et minore, ma si dirà perfetto et imperfetto, rispetto al ternario numero et binario, perché esso ternario, quanto al numero, par che sia maggiore, ma quanto alla virtù et atto, sarà equivalente al binario numero, p. 4 | il quale effetto non concede Franchino, come appare al capitolo VIII del  $2^{\circ}$  libro della *Pratica* sua, dove che lui dice che errano coloro gli quali dicono che la semibreve del tempo imperfetto è maggior di quella del perfetto, et dice che le semibreve del tempo perfetto et inperfetto son tutte equale,⁶ per la qual cosa lui grandemente se inganna, perché apresso tutto

^b The words in brackets are supplied from Lanfranco's description (Scintille di musica, p. 46).

³ Del Lago claimed (no. 63, para. 2) that Aaron described 24 species. On the discrepancy, see the Commentary.

⁴ Aaron's ordering follows that of Tinctoris; see the Commentary.

⁵ Aaron likens minor and major prolation to minor and major mode, following Spataro's doctrine; see no. 2 n. 10.

⁶ Gafurio, Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 88: 'Those who call a semibreve of tempus imperfectum greater in value [maior] because it equals half a breve, and lesser [minor] when it

64. Aaron to Del Lago, 7 Oct. 1539

The Letters

il mondo un terzo non sarà mai ditto essere equale a un mezzo. Ma per non scrivere in lungo, lascieremo tal disputatione per esser cosa certa. Dil che da esso tempo ne nasceranno cinque spetie principale, cioè tempo, modo minore, modo maggiore, prolatione minore et maggiore. Onde per esser ditto tempo nella musica stato creato et formato dagli antichi di natura binaria,⁷ sarà chiamato prima spetie. Da poi, per potersi tran[s]ferire de binario in ternario, essi antichi ordinorno la circular figura a significatione del ternario numero in essa breve. Et più oltre considerorno volersi tran[s]ferire della semibreve binaria nella ternaria, ordinorno il punto nella figura circulare et semicirculare. Onde per tal ordine da loro osservato per consequente ne seguiterà la vostra domanda et mio parere, cioè, che sì come dagli antichi fu ordinato il primo tempo o ver prima spetie di natura binaria, per non prevaricare' tal ordine, havendo ditto tempo creato il modo, dico che la prima spetie di essi modi antichi sarà la presente, ut hic: C2, la moderna ut hic: <u></u>, le quali spetie, per terminare il parlamento, le metterò gradatim tutte, come dimostra la figura:

2. $\bigcirc 2$ 10. $\bigcirc 2$ 3. $\bigcirc 3$ 11. $\bigcirc 3$ 4. $\bigcirc 3$ 12. $\bigcirc 3$ 5. $\bigcirc 2$ 13. $\bigcirc 2$ 6. $\bigcirc 2$ 14. $\bigcirc 2$ 7. $\bigcirc 3$ 15. $\bigcirc 3$ 8. $\odot 3$ 16. $\odot 3$	Ι.	C 2	9.	C 2 2
3. $C_3$ 11. $C_3$ 4. $O_3$ 12. $O_3$ 5. $C_2$ 13. $C_2$ 6. $\odot_2$ 14. $\odot_2$ 7. $C_3$ 15. $C_3$ 8. $\odot_3$ 16. $\odot_3$	2.	O 2	10.	O 2 2
$4. \ O_3$ $12. \ O_3$ $5. \ C_2$ $13. \ C_2$ $6. \ O_2$ $14. \ O_2$ $7. \ C_3$ $15. \ C_3$ $8. \ O_3$ $16. \ O_3$	3.	C 3	II.	C 33
5. C 2 $13. C 2$ $6. O 2$ $14. O 2$ $7. C 3$ $15. C 3$ $8. O 3$ $16. O 3$	4.	03	Ι2.	033
$6. \odot 2$ 14. $\odot 2$ $7. \odot 3$ 15. $\odot 3$ $8. \odot 3$ 16. $\odot 3$	5.	⊙ 2	I 3.	C 22
7. © 3       15. © 3         8. ⊙ 3       16. ⊙ 3	6.	⊙ 2	14.	O 2 2
8. 03 16. 03	7.	© 3	Ι5.	C 33
	8.	⊙ 3	16.	⊙33

Spetie 16 secundum morem anticum

	1	2	3	4	5	6	ू. 7	8
p. 5	<b>B</b> [		Ol	0	εI	C	OI	0

' MS: previricare.

equals a third of a perfect breve, are in error, since one semibreve is always equal to another in the same prolation. Neither does it matter that one semibreve equals half of a breve and the other a third of a breve, since these breves are in dissimilar mensurations.' Gafurio appended a similar remark to Ramis's *Musica practica*: 'Semibrevis minoris prolationis tam in tempore perfecto quam imperfecto semper est aequalis; nam semper duas minimas aequales comprehendit' ('a semibreve in minor prolation has the same value in perfect *tempus* as well as in imperfect, for it always is comprised of two equal minims'); *Musica practica*, ed. Wolf, p. 80 n. *.

Aaron proceeds from the assumption that a breve in *tempus imperfectum* is equivalent in value to a breve in *tempus perfectum*. Gafurio believes they are not equivalent because they are 'in dissimilar mensurations'. Aaron here is espousing Spataro's theory of the equivalence of the breve in perfect and imperfect *tempus*, contrary to his earlier opinion expressed in his *Toscanello*. On this central issue in the Correspondence, see Ch. 8.

⁷ On this erroneous notion, see the Commentary.

Me	odi s	ecuno	dum n	norem	n mod	ernur	n
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

Considerate se io non ho tenuto ordine retto circa gli modi per me nel *Toscanello* mostrati, è stato solum per la causa di sopra ditta, come etiam han proceduti Othobi, Eloy, et Tintoris, gli quali credo con la medesima oppenione habbino proceduto.

5. Ma torniamo allo autore da voi allegato, Maestro Stephano del ordine de' frati Heremitani,⁸ il quale se è allontanato da tutti coloro per voi allegati, cioè, che ha adutto in campo 24 modi. Lui certamente è stato contro alla autorità aristotelica, qual dice, come sapete, 'frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora'.⁹ Lui ha superato la quantità degli altri in mettere 24 modi, et non ha considerato che lui è stato frustratorio et superfluo, conciosia che quello che dimostrono i sedici modi, mostrano il medesimo i ventiquatro.^d Perché si vede chiaro che cominzando da la nona spetie, insino alla decimasesta, si comprehende per i precetti di tutti gli autori in questa facoltà eccellenti che 'l circulo et semicirculo con dui cifre significano modo maggiore [e] minore con tempo,¹⁰ cioè se la prima cifra, o ternaria o binaria, dimostra modo minor perfetto et imperfetto, et similmente del tempo, il che è dimostrato idem per diversa, onde concludo che più tosto sia stato frustratorio che altrimenti, perché in essi non sono altre figure che sono propriamente nella spetie 9 insino alla decimasesta. Pur nondimeno per la variatione che fanno dette cifre per esser prima et 2^a, si potranno appropriare, come ho ditto, idem per diversa, altre 8 spetie antiche et moderne, le quali hanno relasciate gli sopradetti, et io similmente, per essere spetie et segni dagli moderni non usitati ma in tutto abandonate, salvo che quelle che dimostrano modo minore con tempo et prolatione. Et se pur voi havessi desiderio da me vederle secondo lo antico p.6 et moderno modo, son molto contento darvene figura:

> > Antichi musici

^d MS: ventriquatro.

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⁸ Stefano Vanneo; see no. 63 n. 6.

⁹ See no. 6 n. 3.

¹⁰ Aaron is referring to the table he gave earlier; Vanneo does not indicate the modes with signs and figures.

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#### Moderni musici

6. Non ho potuto tanto considerare, né manco nella mia mente fantastichare, donde proceda tal domanda fatta per voi a me al presente, cum sit che per il passato me havete havuto a saccomanno anni 10. Sia per qual causa vi piace, che tutto ho fatto volentieri, et se da me sarete sadisfatto, ne harò consolatione, et se in contrario dispiacere, dil che voi cercherete migliore espositore di me, qual son infimo tra gli eccellenti.

Vale. Data in Sancto Leonardo di Bergamo el dì 7 ottobris 1539.

Vostro quanto fratello Piero Aron subscripsi

1

1

Di qua per un bergamasco ho inteso come è quasi un mese che il nostro eccellente Messer Zan Spataro è morto.¹¹ Vi prego per mio amore con diligentia interveniate se è vero o no, con quella prestezza che potete, con qualche amico vostro, et darmi subito risposta, perché qua non è via corrente da quelle bande, etc.

1. Who would have believed it would take three and a half years for me to hear from you! I know you received my letters, especially one when I was ill; our common friend, Pre Mathio, schoolmaster at Santa Giustina, gave it to you and wrote to me that you would reply. Since you apologize, it is only just to forgive and forget. But you almost kept your vow never to speak to me again if I became a friar. Friar or not, I'm still Pietro Aaron, and none the less for it. You know how much time I've wasted with lords, and I regret most the sixteen fruitless years with my lord of San Giovanni;² would God I had never seen him! I am only sorry I didn't take the habit twenty-five years ago; life couldn't be better for me now: well regarded, well loved, good living, as much rest as I want, and some pennies for my purse.

2. I was in Brescia for a month, positively almost adored, especially by the Counts of Martinengo, Count Gian Paolo da Cavriolo, and his son Lorenzo, all good singers. I ate two days with the Martinenghi, two with the Cavrioli, and so a whole month of music-making passed with them, and I was treated warmly by other gentlemen as well. Count Fortunato Martinengo cares for me like a brother and sent me to Bergamo with a mount worthy of a Martinengo. He absolutely wants me to celebrate Carnival with them, and if my friar's habit doesn't put them off, you

¹¹ The notice was premature; Spataro did not die until 1541.

64. Aaron to Del Lago, 7 Oct. 1539

should care even less. My status has not changed, for I am more highly regarded in Lombardy than I was in Venice. I wrote to many others, without response. If I ever write again, let them wipe their arses with it. I certainly considered not answering you, for if you promised friendship unto death, as you do now, you should have written without regard to my habit. Well, enough of this! You would do well to provide better for yourself than to waste your life in those marshy and miserable places without a reputation. If I am a friar, kings, dukes, great lords, cardinals, and bishops have become friars. What matters is virtue; ignorant and lazy men have no part in the kingdom of God.

3. You want to know my opinion on the ancient and modern modes, their number and order. You say that Hothby, Éloy, and Tinctoris agree there are sixteen but give different orders; that I too show sixteen but in a different order;³ and that Lanfranco also has sixteen, but that the credit is due to Lorenzo Gazio, and you think he agrees because he says nothing against it. First, if Hothby, Éloy, Tinctoris, and I agree on the number but not the order, they probably intended to show, as I did, only the modern usage, without consideration of the order.⁴ When I came to demonstrating the older practice, it was a case of showing the same things by different means. With regard to Lanfranco and Gazio, I wish for their sake that they had refrained, because they not only have no order but also commit many errors. I'd like to know which author claims that O3 indicates imperfect major mode and perfect minor mode, tempus, and prolation, which he calls third species. Also, the fourth, seventh, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, fifteenth, and sixteenth species are all wrong. They don't differentiate between a sign with one figure and one with two. Actually, I'm not surprised at them, for I have found many greater errors in their works, but I am certainly astonished that you should place them in the same company with Hothby, Éloy, and Tinctoris. If that is Gazio's contribution, he found it in the bottom of a drum. Signs such as  $\bigcirc_3 \bigcirc_3 \bigcirc_3$ ⊙2, etc. are never called signs of imperfect major mode, minor mode, etc., but only minor mode with tempus and prolation.

4. I shall take the trouble to satisfy you at least in part, for writing takes more time than a face-to-face discussion. The essential note-values arise from the *tempus* or breve, which is multiplied to obtain minor and major mode and divided to find minor and major prolation, semibreve and minim.⁵ *Tempus* is stable and fixed, neither major nor minor. Although it can be divided into thirds or halves, there are not two kinds of *tempus*, major and minor, but it is called perfect or imperfect with respect to the ternary or binary number, which are equal in value. Gafurio does not concede this: he says in Book II of his *Practica*, ch. 8, that those who claim that a semibreve in imperfect *tempus* is greater than one in perfect *tempus* 

are wrong, for they have the same value.⁶ But he deceives himself, for everyone knows that a third never equals a half. Five species originate from the breve: *tempus*, minor mode, major mode, minor and major prolation. Since the ancient musicians created *tempus* as binary in nature,⁷ it should be called first species. Then, to show the change to ternary number, they invented the circular figure. And to make the binary semibreve ternary they placed a dot in the circle and semicircle. Since the binary breve came first and then gave rise to mode, I say that the first

species of the old modes is C2, of the modern modes  $\Xi$ . The rest

follow in this order [see pp. 718–19 for the '16 species according to the ancient way' and the 'modes according to the modern way']. If I and Hothby, Éloy, and Tinctoris did not follow this order, it was for the reason mentioned earlier.

5. Stephano,⁸ with twenty-four modes, certainly contradicts Aristotle's maxim, 'it is pointless to do by more what can be done by fewer'.⁹ His twenty-four modes show no more than the sixteen do. From the ninth to the sixteenth species, all the best authors teach that the circle and semicircle with two figures indicate major and minor mode with *tempus*;¹⁰ the first figure shows perfection or imperfection of the minor mode, and the same with *tempus*. Therefore I conclude that he went beyond what was needed because these figures show the same ninth to sixteenth species in a different way. But because of the different position of these figures, eight other old and modern species can be adduced, which we omitted because they have long been abandoned, except for those showing minor mode with *tempus* and prolation. They are as follows [see example on pp. 719–20].

6. I can't imagine why you should ask me this now, since you have had me at your disposal for ten years. Be that as it may, I have done it willingly; if you are not satisfied, find someone better qualified.

PS. I heard that Spataro died nearly a month ago.¹¹ Please find out if it is true and let me know immediately, for here there is no news from those parts.

#### COMMENTARY

Aaron's description of the different mensurations is confused and confusing. He is right that there are only sixteen; Vanneo's additional eight modes are superfluous. But he does not explain which of the modes are superfluous and why, and Aaron's own list of sixteen modes in para. 4 includes duplications and omits essential mensurations.

In the mensural system of the fifteenth century, four note-values can be either binary or ternary: maxima, long, breve, and semibreve. Each mensuration combines these four notes in a different way. Tinctoris, in his Tractatus de regulari valore notarum,¹² describes and numbers them in a systematic order, beginning with the first species, in which all values are perfect, and ending with the sixteenth, in which all values are imperfect. According to Tinctoris's system, the modes are shown by a combination of signs and rests.¹³ Circle and semicircle indicate tempus and a dot represents major prolation. Major mode, the measurement of the maxima, is shown by a set of three or two rests; minor mode, the measurement of the long, is shown by the length of the individual rests, covering two or three spaces. Éloy, whom Tinctoris praises as 'in modis doctissimum', follows the latter's system in the cantus firmus of his 'Missa Dixerunt discipuli'.¹⁴ The slight difference in his ordering—the eleventh and twelfth species come first, but the rest are presented in the regular order—probably stems from a decision to use the shorter note-values of the eleventh and twelfth species for the short sections of the Kyrie.

Hothby, however, follows a different system. A circle or semicircle alone refers to the breve, and the presence of a dot indicates major prolation. A circle or semicircle followed by one figure, 2 or 3, shows minor mode and *tempus*. But if two figures follow, the sign stands for major mode, the first figure for minor mode, and the second for *tempus*.¹⁵

By the time Aaron wrote his *Toscanello* (1523), the measurement of mode by signs and figures was considered old-fashioned. After showing mensurations by signs and rests 'according to modern usage', Aaron devotes a chapter (Book I, ch. 27) to the 'cognitione del modo, tempo et prolatione . . . secondo l'uso degli antichi'. Here he agrees with Hothby's system of a sign plus two figures. Aaron, however, does not describe all the mensurations or list them in order.

Del Lago had claimed (see no. 63, para. 2) that Aaron demonstrated twentyfour modes in his *Toscanello*, but Aaron, in the present letter, speaks of sixteen: 'io similmente ho dimostrato le sedici spetie, ma discrepante dagli sopraditti circa l'ordine.' In fact, Aaron shows, in four diagrams, the proper signs and rests for the sixteen mensurations in the order given by Tinctoris (the third and fourth mensurations of each set are combined under the third arch in the diagram). But he also shows, in the fourth and fifth arches of each diagram, the mensurations in which the maxima is disregarded—mensurations equivalent to Hothby's sign plus one figure. Thus Del Lago was correct in stating that Aaron demonstrates

¹² Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 125-38.

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¹³ The rests are incorrectly shown in Seay's edn. in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 15th species. They should read as follows: Ex. 29: three 3-space rests; Ex. 30: three 2-space rests; Ex. 31: two 3-space rests; Ex. 35: two 3-space rests.

¹⁴ See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 90-1.

¹⁵ See Hothby's *De cantu figurato*, CS iii. 331, and *Opera omnia de musica mensurabili*, ed. Reaney, p. 28. If the mensuration of the maxima is not shown, there are eight possible combinations of the sign plus one figure. Ony four are given in MS Faenza 117, Coussemaker's source, probably by inadvertence. Gafurio explains this system, of which he did not approve, in ch. 8 of Book II of his *Practica musicae* (trans. Miller, pp. 88-9). twenty-four modes, and he points this out in his reply to the present letter (see no. 65, para. 2).

Between the *Toscanello* and the present letter, Aaron seems to have taken to heart the maxim 'frustra fit per plura', since he criticizes Vanneo for superfluity in showing twenty-four modes, tacitly passing over the fact that he too had demonstrated twenty-four. The eight additional modes are the ones that show mensuration only of the long, breve, and semibreve, called by some *modus longarum*. They are superfluous because the values of the notes are the same as those in which the major mode is imperfect. We have seen in no. 45 the application to notation of the concept of 'privation'.¹⁶ In the present case, privation forms the basis of the following reasoning: if the value of the maxima is imperfect, there is no need to use any special sign to indicate it. Imperfection, therefore, is indicated by privation.¹⁷ The same reasoning had already been applied to the measurement of the semibreve: a dot represents major prolation; in the absence of a dot, the prolation is minor.¹⁸

Aaron's explanation of the modes in the present letter fails in two respects, their correct designation and their ordering. In his table in para. 4 he shows eight modes that disregard the value of the maxima (nos. 1–8) and eight that include the maxima (nos. 9–16). Assuming that the use of a sign plus one figure means that the maxima is imperfect, Aaron's first eight modes are equivalent to Tinctoris's species 16, 15, 12, 11, 8, 7, 4, and 3. In the remaining eight species the maxima should be perfect, that is, each species should begin with a circle. But four of Aaron's species begin with C and are therefore duplications of four species in the first column (9=1, 11=4, 13=5, 15=8). The four missing species are found in his second chart at the end of para. 5: O23, O32, O23, O32. Aaron had called these latter signs 'spetie et segni dagli moderni non usitati ma in tutto abandonate'. They are obsolete in so far as the perfect maxima had fallen out of use by Aaron's time, but they are no more obsolete than the mensurations Aaron gives in his first chart.

Aaron's explanation of the ordering of the mensurations is based on the erroneous premiss that the 'natural' and original value of the breve was binary. Spataro and his correspondents refer frequently to 'gli antichi', but they do not always understand them correctly. Rarely do they seem to have consulted the original sources.¹⁹ In the present case, Aaron is relying either on a statement by Ramis, who, in his *Musica practica*, claimed that when no sign appears to the contrary, a composition is sung 'according to its nature, that is in duple

¹⁶ See the Notes on Problematical Terms under 'privatione'.

¹⁷ This explanation derives from Gafurio's Practica musicae (trans. Miller, p. 89).

¹⁸ According to Johannes de Muris in his *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, major prolation is shown by three dots in a circle, minor prolation by two (CS iii. 54). Ugolino of Orvieto, in his commentary on this work, severely criticizes some 'ignorant' contemporaries who 'use one dot to indicate major prolation and none instead of two to show minor prolation', for, as he says, 'unity, which is a part of a number, can never show perfection or imperfection . . . and likewise nothing can be created from nothing' (*Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. v1-2, ed. Seay, ii. 200).

¹⁹ Del Lago is an exception; see Ch. 7, 'Giovanni del Lago's "Authorities"'.

mensuration',²⁰ or, more likely, on Spataro's letter of 19 September 1523, in which he explained to Aaron that 'el binario è dicto naturale perché è prima invento et considerato' (no. 7, para. 6). 'Gli antichi', however, had precisely the opposite understanding; see the Commentary on no. 7. Thus Aaron inverts the order followed by all other authors and begins his table with the mensuration in which all values are binary.

What of Aaron's criticism of the Lanfranco-Gazio demonstration of the modes? He singles out the third species,  $O_3$ , and wonders which author is responsible for calling this imperfect major mode, perfect minor mode, perfect *tempus*, and perfect prolation, claiming that they make no distinction between a sign with one figure and one with two. Technically, he is correct, for if major mode is designated, the sign should be followed by two figures. But Gazio has evidently followed the precept 'frustra fit per plura' and used only the sign and one figure when the major mode is imperfect. He designates the mensurations in two ways, by signs and figures, as Hothby did, and by signs and rests, following Tinctoris. His order is that of Tinctoris. Aaron overlooked an error Gazio made in the second, sixth, tenth, and fourteenth species, where he gives the rests as  $\blacksquare$  instead of  $\blacksquare$ . In these mensurations the long is imperfect and should

be shown by rests covering two spaces.

B.J.B.

#### ²⁰ See no. 5 n. 7, and the Commentary on no. 7.

**65** (163). Fo. 184^{r-v}

Giovanni del Lago to Pietro Aaron, 12 May 1540 (autograph copy)¹

184^r Al reverendo Fra Pietro Aaron, musico eccellente.

#### Copia Salve reverende pater.

1. Forssi V.P. ha fatto molti et diversi pensieri per il passato nella mente vostra quanto al mio tardo scrivervi. Non pensate che sia stato altro se non perché io non ho potuto imprimere più presto queste mie picciole regolette di musica,² le quali a vostra reverenda Paternità le mando con questa mia legate, pregando quella che per vostra inata gentilezza voglia degnarsi di leggerle con diligenza, et se in quelle saranno errori, per vostra bontà mi scriverete sopra gli errori che in quelle troverete, acciò che io possa conoscer i miei errori ch'io non stia così lungamente nella fetida ignorantia, perché la ragione vuole che l'huomo se emendi degli suoi errori quando, o per se medesimo, o per altrui, li sianno manifestati. Pertanto prego quella voglia esser contenta di farmili noti, etc.

2. Quanto alla risposta vostra fattami delli sedici modi [no. 64], io non son in tutto rimasto sodisfatto, massimamente dove V.P. riprende Frate Stephano di l'ordine delle Eremitani, dove dite che lui [h]a posto ventiquatro modi, et allegate solamente questa autorità philosophica, 'frustra fit per plura', etc.³ Ma pare a me che sete caduto nella medesima sententia, perché anchor voi havete posto ventiquatro modi nel vostro *Toscanello*, come appar in quelle quatro demostrationi o ver figure i quali demostrati con queste pause ut hic:⁴

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S m	
$2$ $\pm$	

Ma perché io voglio esser vostro buono amico et fratello carissimo usque  $_{184^{v}}$  ad mort[em], altro non dico sopra tal materia (benché se potria dire cose

⁴ Aaron, *Toscanello in musica*, Book I, chs. 11, 16, 21, and 26. Del Lago combines the four tables into one.

assai) perché 'sapienti pauca'.⁵ Vi prego più presto sia possibile mandatimi risposta. Non altro a V.P. mi raccomando.

In Vinegia a dì xii di maggio M.D.XXXX.

Pre Gioanne del Lago subscripsi

Io ho mandato a richieder la soprascritta domanda a Frate Pietro Aaron per tentarlo.

1. You perhaps have wondered about my lateness in replying. It is only because my little rules on music were not printed until now.² I am sending them enclosed and beg you to be good enough to read them and advise me of any errors, for I wish to know them; a man should correct himself when his errors are pointed out.

2. I am not entirely satisfied with your response regarding the sixteen modes [no. 64], especially when you criticize the twenty-four modes of Frate Stephano [Vanneo] merely on the basis of the philosophical saying 'It is pointless to do by more', etc.³ It seems to me you shared his opinion, for you too have twenty-four modes in your *Toscanello* where you show the signs and pauses thus:⁴

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But since I want to be your friend unto death, I will say no more, though a lot could be said, because 'a word is enough to the wise'.⁵ Please answer as soon as possible.

PS. I sent this query to Pietro Aaron to test him.

⁵ See no. 15 n. 9.

¹ The word 'Copia' appears in the margin.

² Del Lago's Breve introduttione di musica misurata. The colophon reads: 'Finiscono le Regole di Musica molto necessarie a qualunche si diletta di sappere la pratica di canto misurato, stampate in Vinegia del Mese di Maggio Nel'anno M.D. XXXX.'

³ See no. 6 n. 3.

66 Paris 1110, fos. 29^r-35^r

Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. [early July 1540] (autograph)

1. Certamente, Messer Pre Giovanni mio, che non volentieri ho preso 29^r inconmodo circa il trattato vostro a me mandato per molte cause, et perché voi mi scrivete volere essere usque ad mortem amico mio,¹ ho preso faticha circa a ciò per satisfattione vostra, et più per esser cosa conveniente infra uno amico et l'altro comunicare le cose sue, massime dove ne resulta l'honore con l'utilità. Ma dubitando io di non incorrere in quello che molte volte può accadere, son stato dubbioso non perder con voi l'amicitia nostra vetusta, dil che mi sono confidato nella prudentia vostra, che ogni cosa piglierete in buona parte, conciosiaché sempre vi fui amico, et se da voi non fussi in questo stato pregato, sappiate certo che tal faticha non harei voluto, come per il passato fu anchora con littere più volte ricerchato da Messer Zanmaria Lanfranco dovessi rivedere l'opera sua,² onde per premio delle fatiche mie, et perché 'veritas odium parit',³ un tempo gli restai non troppo amico. Pur considerando lui che di tale impresa ne fu causa, si rimesse, et con una sua mi salutò et ringratiomi assai, con offerirmi tutto il suo potere, et era in animo per l'honor suo nuovamente imprimerla, ma per essergli stato inimica la morte, la quale al altro mondo l'ha portato, non ha potuto seguitar suo animo, dil che 'requiescat in pace'.4

2. Pertanto, Messer Pre Giovanni mio, se al trattato vostro vi parerà che io gli apponga, non è per malignare né im publico manifestarlo, ma solo per satisfare ai preghi vostri. Ben di voi mi doglio, tenendomi quello amico che per voi sento, che prima che adesso non mi habbiate di tale opera advisato et fatto noto nanzi lo imprimer suo. Questo può nascer da due note cause, prima che di voi solo vi siate confidato, cosa non certo da nessun laudata, perché non è sì sapiente che ad altri non conferisca le fatiche sue, onde se a me prima vi confidavi mandarle, più rettamente si sanava la piagha, la qual mi rendo certo satisfaceva a tutti, et perché voi sempre troppo vi siate reputato, senza altro parere l'opera havete impressa, et perché forse a voi è parso non si potere opponergli, a me scrivete intender l'oppenione mia. La mando come benivolo vostro, et se a voi parrà cosa alquanto strana, fate iudicio come a voi piacerà, perché el sì ^{29^v} e'l no col tutto a voi | rimetto. S'el dir contro di voi v'è noioso, non vi turbate, e a me date perdono, perché vi^a amo. Se i ditti miei vi saranno grati, ne harò sommo piacer con allegrezza. Se in contrario gli ritroverrete, tenetevi gli vostri, e i miei a me lasciate, perché non manco vi sarò amico, tenendo l'opera come se fussi la prima.

3. Ho inteso circa gli modi a me domandati, voi dite non in tutto satisfatto restate et che molte cose si potrebbe dire, ma [per] essermi amico altro non dite. Così anchora io nel ordine da voi tenuto non resto satisfatto. Hormai cerco riposo, né è più tempo consumar carta né inchiostro, massime in quelle cose che nulla aquistar posso. Solo ci basta reintegrar l'amicitia et con benivolentia perserverare in amore, et ritrovandoci come spero, piacendo a Dio, di curto, con più commodo modo il tutto extingueremo.

Vale.

Dubbio del primo capitolo dico così.

Frate Piero Aron

#### 30^r Salve carissime frater.

4. Considero che forse inadvertentemente havete dimostrato la mano in figura senza fare altra consideratione circa le positioni, perché nel primo et secondo bfa || mi havete dimostrato le due syllabe o ver note in eodem spatio et linea, la qual cosa a me non piace, perché essendo diverse et sotto due littere, è di bisogno in figura dimostrarle come qui: _______, respetto che infra loro chade distantia de uno apotome, come in processo voi dichiarate. Et più rettamente haresti anchor proceduto dimostrando la seconda positione o ver terza in questo modo || mi, et non così B mi, perché sapete che la figura o pur littera naturalmente è quadra et non rotonda. Il simile havete fatto nominando la proprietà quarta ut hic: b quadro acuto. Non licet, perché il b rotundo et quadro differunt in forma; si debbe dimostrarlo colla littera natural sua come qui: || quadro, il qual ordine tiene ciascun mediocre musico.

5. Appare seguitando dove date regola circa le chiave, dicendo così: Et nota che sempre dove è la chiave, li è sempre fa, salvo se el b molle non lo impedisce.⁵ In questo voi vi siate ingannato, dicendo che questa littera G alcuna volta in canto figurato si mette in luogo di chiave, dil che dimostrate non esser naturalmente chiave. Dico che tal littera per se è chiave naturalissima quanto siano le altre et più, perché in musica omnis littera vocatur clavis.

¹ A reference to Del Lago's letter of 12 May 1540 (no. 65), which contains this phrase.

² Lanfranco, Scintille di musica (Brescia, 1533).

³ See no. 17 n. 2.

⁴ According to this information, Lanfranco was dead by July 1540. However, Aaron must have been misinformed, for in May 1540 Lanfranco had taken up residence in Parma as *maestro di cappella* at the Steccata, where he remained until his death in Nov. 1545; see N. Pelicelli, 'Musicisti in Parma nei secoli XV-XVI', *Note d'archivio per la storia musicale* 8 (1931), 131-42 at 139.

^a MS: voi.

⁵ Del Lago, *Breve introduttione*, p. 7. Del Lago's wording is somewhat different: 'Et nota che sempre dove è la chiave li è sempre *fa*, salvo se per il b rotundo o ver molle non vien impedito.'

Pertanto havete errato quando dite 'dove è la chiave sempre li è fa'. Nella positione di G non è fa. Seguita adunque essere in contrario, dil che bisognava eccettuare tal chiave.

6. Da poi dove dite che *in* bfa $\exists$ mi *gli sono due proprietati, et per consequente* non si gli può far mutatione, per essere el mi distante dal fa un semituon maggiore, etc.,⁶ vi rispondo et dico che questo modo non è conveniente né al proposito, perché voi dimostrate che le due syllabe siano due proprietà, et per consequente seguiterebbe che dove sono due note, sono due proprietà, et dove è tre note ne sarebbe tre, quod falsum est. Bene è vero che tal note son cantate per due proprieta|ti; bastava dire che non gli era mutatione per esser le voci diverse di luogo et suono, come comanda la regola, et dire che 'l ditto *mi* era superiore al *fa* il spacio dello apotome, et non 'distante dal *fa*', perché il nuovo discipulo potrà così intendere che ['l] ditto *mi* possi esser così di sotto al *fa* come di sopra per la cognitione delle

sei syllabe ordinarie. 7. Et procedendo, dite che il segno del b molle *fu trovato per tre cause,^b la prima per torre la durezza al tritono et per potere procedere per il modo diatonico, la seconda per miglior sonorità, la terza per necessità.*⁷ Qua alquanto voi siate superfluo et quasi fuora del retto ordine, conciosiaché el bastava assegnare la regola di Guido nella quale se gl'include che 'l b molle fu trovato per la durezza del tritono et per la necessità, et però siate superfluo dicendo che 'l b molle fu trovato per causa della durezza del tritono et a miglior sonorità, perché ogni volta che voi mitigate il tritono colla figura b, subito si genera la sonorità, che l'una e l'altra è una cosa sola.

8. Che siate fuora del retto ordine, vi domando quale authore si truova che dica o disse mai che 'l segno del b mol[l]e fussi trovato per poter procedere per il modo diatonico. Questo certo non è da credere, perché il genere diatonico procede per semituono, tuono, et tuono, et non e converso,⁸ et dato che tal transito vostro fussi diatonico processo, io vi domando se sarà diatonico procedendo da F grave a a cuto senza b molle. Cosa certa è che sarà, perché nella musica esercitata et atta, ogni spetie naturale et accidentale resta diatonica, come Boetio al capitolo 21 nella *Musica* sua dice: *Et diatonicum quidem aliquanto durius et naturali*[u]s,⁹ il qual si dimostra con la proportion minore nella parte grave, come esso Boetio

30^v

al capitolo preallegato dice: In his omnibus secundum diatonum cantilene procedit 31^r vox per semitonium, tonum, ac to num in uno tetrachordo.¹⁰

9. Nel dar regola circa le mutationi, voi dite che la sesta mutatione si fa mutando ut in re per causa di ascendere da  $\natural$  duro in b molle, et queste tali mutationi le chiamo dirette et regulare.¹¹ Messer Pre Giovanni mio, qua mi pare che siate fuora della via, perché tutte le mutationi che si transferiscono di  $\natural$  quadro in b rotundo non possono esser ditte regulare né dirette; questo perché esso b molle, come voi confirmate, è accidentale et non regulare, come dimostra il venerando Don Franchin nostro al luogo medesimo nella Praticha sua al capitolo 4 dove che dice: ac sexta rursus irregulariter et indirecte procedit, id est quinte precedenti ex b molli in  $\natural$  duram ascendenti persimilis, ut hic:¹²



Et concludendo dice: Est enim adinventa irregularis et indirecta mutatio ad evitandum dissonum, etc.¹³

^b MS: causa.

⁶ Ibid. Again, Aaron has not quoted Del Lago exactly.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 7-8. Cf. no. 73, paras. 4-6.

⁸ Del Lago had written 'per poter procedere per il modo diatonico, cioè per tuono et tuono et semituono o ver per semituono, tuono, et tuono' (pp. 7-8).

⁹ Boethius, *De musica* 1. 21 (ed. Friedlein, p. 212). Boethius has 'diatonum'. Aaron seems to forget that Boethius is describing tetrachords, not hexachords, and his use of the term 'accidentale' is puzzling.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 213.

¹¹ Breve introduttione, p. 8.

 $^{^{12}}$  Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, Book I, ch. 4 (trans. Miller, p. 39). Aaron misunderstands Gafurio. For the latter, irregular and indirect mutation occurs not because of the change from the hard to the soft hexachord but because the melodic motion after the mutation ascends rather than descends. Del Lago's exposition of mutation is based on Gafurio, but he has carelessly conflated the two mutations from *ut* to *re*, the first descending, the second ascending. In the absence of music examples, his discussion is largely worthless.

¹³ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁴ Breve introduttione, p. 10. Aaron has misquoted Del Lago, who says that 'li segni erano maggior perfetto et imperfetto ut hic:  $\bigcirc$  C et minor perfetto et imperfetto ut hic:  $\bigcirc$  C', thus accepting the traditional meaning of circle and semicircle. 'Maggior' refers not to mode, as Aaron seems to think, but to prolation. Del Lago goes on to say that the mode is shown by rests.

¹⁵ Ibid.

libro secondo della Praticha sua: Nos' autem hec predictarum quantitatum signa duximus reprobanda, cum apud philosophum, etc.¹⁶ Et più il nostro eccellente Messer Giovanni Spataro, nel trattato suo de Sesqualtera al capitolo vi, più et più volte troverrete che gli sopraditti quatro segni furno inventi | da poi 31^v inventi da poi questi: O3 C3 O2 C2. Onde per venire alla conclusione, [i]l dire maggior perfetto et minor perfetto non è rationabile modo, et se in questo è due perfettioni  $\odot$ , cioè la breve et semibreve, in questo n'è solo una C, cioè la semibreve, il quale quanto alla perfettione sarà simile a questo O. Et questo C per consequente sarà detto minore imperfetto per non haver nota in sé perfetta. Pertanto se gli presenti segni sono da voi ut hic O C chiamati maggior perfetto et imperfetto rispetto al punto,¹⁷ io vi domando come da voi saranno chiamati questi O33 C33? Si hoc è che i vostri siano da voi chiamati maggior perfetto et imperfetto, per consequente quegli bisogneranno essere più che maggiore perfetti et imperfetti, dil che ne nascerebbe confusione. Ma perché gli antichi usavono cantare per tal segni in una misura una semibreve perfetta o ver tre minime, o suo valore, massime quando tutto il concento era segnato per uno degli duoi segni, tal modo da loro era chiamato cantar per maggior, et per tal causa preterite al suo vero nome, qual è tempo con prolatione, et non maggior perfetto né minore, et a gli altri modo con tempo et prolatione.

#### Degli segni

11. Da voi è concluso che nota alcuna si può perficere per virtù de' segni ut hic  $\odot$  O salvo che la breve et la semibreve, et la massima et longa per virtù delle pause.¹⁸ Dico che havete mal considerato, perché non solamente la breve si fa perfetta per virtù di questo segno O, ma anchora per virtù di pause et cifra numerale ut hic: O₃  $\longrightarrow$ , la semibreve ut hic  $\longrightarrow$ . Così troverrete in contrario circa la massima et longa che non solo resta perfetta per virtù delle sequente pause  $\longrightarrow$  quanto resta perfetta in questo segno O₃₃, nel quale la massima val 3 longhe, et la longa 3 breve, et la breve 3 semibreve. Pertanto dovevi dire che la breve si fa perfetta per virtù del circulo, pause, et cifra numerale ut hic: 3. Similmente la massima et longa per virtù delle pause si perfice, et etiam per virtù del segno et cifra numerale, come la semibreve per le pause, ut supra.

# Della imperfettione

12. Voi concludete che la breve è sempre perfetta quando sarà locata nanzi due semi breve ligate o ver dinanzi a due pause di semibreve parimente poste.¹⁹ Et se voi dite 'se la breve perfetta vien posta dinanzi', etc., se è perfetta, non siate voi superfluo a dire 'sempre resta perfetta'? Dovevi dire, 'Et se la breve atta alla imperfettione vien posta dinanzi a due semibreve ligate, sempre è perfetta.' Questo stava meglio, ma secondo me non v'el concedo, perché dicendo 'sempre è perfetta', ne parturisce errore. Et dico che tal breve, dato che si truovi nanzi le due pause o semibreve legate, non sempre resta permanente perfetta, ma in arbitrio compositoris, come in molte compositione chiaro si vede. Questo dir 'sempre perfetta' importa assai, et solo se intende simile nanzi la simile, col punto, et nanzi la sua propria pausa. Gli altri modi restano arbitrarii per non haver gli effetti di sopra ditti.

### Del punto in canto misurato

13. Messer Pre Giovanni, voi me inviluppate el cervello a metter tanta confusione, ma per havervi come sempre ho tenuto in luogo di fratello, non mi rincresce fatica alcuna. Qua voi non fate differentia alcuna dal punto di divisione a quello di perfettione. Et dite il punto di divisione è quello che divide le figure una da l'altra, o ver riduce, et questo tal punto è quello che anchora si pone appresso a ciascuna figura perfetta, il qual vien domandato da alcuni punto di perfettione.²⁰ Voi dite 'da alcuni domandato di perfettione', quasi che alcuni altri nol domandino così. Dovevi mettere in tal particula il parer vostro, o di altri, acciò coloro che imparar desiderano non restassino confusi. Et più di voi resto sospeso quando voi dite che tal punto 'si pone appresso di ciascuna perfetta figura'. Se la figura è perfetta, che gli bisogna punto? Non si direbbe tre alla nota perfetta? Et una al punto? Che sarebbon quatro. Pertanto dovevi dire che 'l punto di perfettione, come piace al nostro venerando Don Franchino, dove che al capitolo 12 del libro secondo della Pratica sua dice: Punctus autem perfectionis est qui postpositus alicui notule ipsam perficit, tris in partes equas divisibilem reddens.²¹ Et

^c MS: Non.

¹⁶ Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, p. 89. Aaron misquoted the first word as 'non', which changes Gafurio's meaning completely, since Gafurio said that such signs as  $C_2$  and  $C_3$  should be rejected as being more complex than is necessary. He made no statement about the chronology of the signs but referred to both usages as current practice. He also contended that both early and more recent musicians used the circle for *tempus perfectum* and the semicircle for *tempus imperfectum*.

¹⁷ Breve introduttione, p. 11.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 13. Del Lago specifies that this perfection is caused 'per la virtù unita', a reference to the saying 'virtus unita fortior est se ipsa dispersa' that he had used in arguing this same point with Spataro in 1532; see no. 43, para. 2, and no. 44, para. 15. Spataro did not agree and believed, like Aaron, that the breve could be imperfected before two semibreves in ligature (no. 45, para. 20).

²⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

²¹ Gafurio, Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 106.

non dire che 'l si pone a ci[a]scuna figura perfetta,²² come meglio vedrete al capitolo 32 al libro primo del *Toscanello* nostro. Et che 'l punto di

^{32^v} divisione sia dissimile a quello di perfettione, chiaro si vede, perché | esso punto di perfettione solo attende a reintegrare et perservare la nota alla perfettione, e quello di divisione separa la nota dall'altra et parturisce imperfettione et alteratione, et transporta la nota alla sua propinqua maggiore.

14. Negli essempli de l'alteratione considerate questa figura²³

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quale è falsa. Le due breve a mio iudicio vogliono esser longhe. Da poi ne truovo un'altra, la quale non molto mi piace, et da niuno quasi usata, ut hic:

	9	9			
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Dico che tal figuratione è superflua e vana, perché potendo havere le sue due terze parte in pause unite et continuate a reintegrare il modo maggiore, senza offendere la similitudine o altro precetto, non è di necessità transportare un terzo di esso modo da poi un'altro unito, non essendo constretto da qualche necessario inconveniente, come sarebbe in questo modo:

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o vero in questo:

Nel sopra dimostrato esemplo l'è di necessità che quella longa sola, per non si potere applicare alle tre pause sequente del modo maggiore unito, vadi a ritrovare le due parte sue terze da poi il modo, et nel secondo similmente per le due massime perfette, causate dalla similitudine, dil che alla mia oppenione tal vostro essemplo et altri simili saranno inusitati, che

causa mi stringe a questo essemplo

qual si vede essere con miglior ordine posto. Non ne

più che a questo

seguendo altro che taciturnità, l'è inconveniente a transportar pausa. Ben

vi concederò questo <u>O e per essere dimostrato la terza sua</u>

parte in nota et non im pausa, et questo è in arbitrio compositoris. Concludo che se tale essemplo fussi stato da voi adutto in questo modo

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rispetto alla pausa da poi la longa, qual non può alterare, et apparendo in ultimo la sua terza parte in nota, era iusta positione et rationale, et non nel modo da voi dimostrato.

15. Nella prima figura dove voi dite del punto di divisione,²⁴ havete conmodato il segno circulare del suo ternario numero circa le semibreve et excluso el ternario numero delle minime, dove che un tempo resta diminuto di una terza parte, la quale reintegrava el tempo, se l'ultima nota era semibreve et non breve.²⁵ Il simile errore nasce seguitando al punto di perfettione, dove manchate di numero, salvo se voi non intendessi che fussi alterata l'ultima semibreve, la quale subintelletta alteratione non conviene in tale essemplo, trattando solum del punto di perfettione, et perché etiam è intelligentia laboriosa et non consueta.²⁶ Et dato che voi havessi tale intentione, senza metter confusione dovevi dire 'perfectionis et alterationis', sì come in fine voi dite 'divisionis et alterationis'. Ma quella ultima breve cum punto, dico che tal punto è superfluo, perché si vede chiaro che essa breve non può patire da parte propinqua dinanzi, né da poi, ma resta perservata perfetta per esser mediata dalla sua simile et maggior di lei, et perché anchora è contrario alla operatione di tal punto, come di sopra è stato dichiarato. Ma perché io

²⁴ Ibid., p. 17.
²⁵ Del Lago's example is as follows:



punctus divisionis

At nine minims per measure, one-third of a breve is missing. If the last note were a semibreve instead, an even three measures would result.

²⁶ Del Lago's example:

33^r



There must be an error in the example, because the last semibreve could not be altered unless it were preceded by a semibreve rest instead of the breve rest.

 $^{^{22}}$  This statement by Aaron is not true, since Gafurio said that one way in which the dot of perfection is used is to attach it to a perfect note in order to keep the note perfect. See ibid.  23  Breve introductione, p. 16.

comprehendo che la intention vostra vuole che altri indovini circa il punto di reduttione, son contento per farvi cosa grata dirne alcuna cosa, perché io vedo che post mortem vi siate aderito alla oppenione Gafuria per quella semibreve da dui punti mediata, con una sola minima anchora mediata, i quali punti son da voi ditti di reduttione.²⁷ Messer Pre Giovanni carissimo, io non vorrei circa a questo che voi vi havessi fatto authore, dato che altri che Franchino habbi[no] usato tali punti, perché se bene advertirete, Franchino in questo non si fa authore ma recitatore, come dimostra al capitolo 12 de puncto, dicendo *sunt et qui notulam huiusmodi transportandam duobus utrinque punctis circumveniunt ut in tenore superposito percipitur*, etc.,²⁸ per le qual parole come di sopra ho dicto si dimostra recitatore, perché certamente se da lui fussi stato tal cosa creduta, non pocho harebbe errato, perché la nota sola infra dui punti mediata non si truova, ma ben si trovono più figure infra dui punti serrate ut hic:²⁹

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Perché se una sola figura atta alla reduttione fussi collocata in mezzo di dui punti, tal nota sarebbe immobile, questo perché gli dui punti dimostrano stabilità, fermezza, et permanentia, dil che non si può declinare né coniungere verso el principio, né al fine acciò si possi con qualche altra nota accompagnarsi.

33^v 16. | Non so se io mi debba credere, Messer Pre Giovanni mio, tutto quello che da voi truovo scritto, massime vedendo voi esservi in contrario. Nondimeno son sforzato per la amicitia nostra dirvi il parer mio, et dico che voi dimostrate et date regola che il modo maggior perfetto sia generato per alcuni accidenti, come punti, alterationi, et note





requettomb

A second example, 'divisionis et reductionis', shows a minim enclosed by two dots.

²⁸ Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, p. 105.

²⁹ The example is confusing; not only is it not clear which pair of dots encloses several notes, but three notes contradict Aaron's statement that 'a single note is not found between two dots'. The first dot is clearly of division; the second prevents alteration and draws the second semibreve together with the third breve. The third dot is of division, and the fourth dot prevents alteration. The fifth dot, marking the end of a perfection, prevents the semibreve from imperfecting the last breve:



negre,³⁰ adducendo uno essemplo di massime [et] longhe sotto la circular figura ut hic O. A tale oppenione vi rispondo et provo voi esservi in contrario, conciosiaché al capitolo de' segni, voi concludete che dove è circulo, la breve è perfetta, et dove è semicirculo, inperfetta, et dite sì che niuna figura si può perficere per virtù de' segni salvo che la breve et la semibreve, ma la massima et longa per virtù di pause.³¹ Se la breve adunque in questo segno è sol perfetta ut hic O et la semibreve in questi O C, et la massima solo è perfetta per virtù di pause, quale è la causa che voi la dimostrate perfetta sotto il segno appartenente alla breve senza le sue pause? Voi direte che sì come il tempo o ver breve senza la figura circulare, per note negre, punti infra le semibrevi, pause di semibreve parimente poste, si dimostra perfetta, per consequente la massima ancora debbe esser perfetta, quod falsum est, perché voi medesimo confirmate quello che ogni musico anticho et moderno dimostra, che la massima non può esser perfetta salvo che per virtù et apparenza delle 3 pause di longa parimente poste et per il segno dagli antichi invento, ut hic O33, et altri simili. Onde concludo che lo essempio da voi addutto non sarà chiamato modo maggiore perfetto, ma maggiore imperfetto, minor perfetto con tempo, per la regola da voi data.

[17. Nel ultimo essemplo dove dite degli accidenti^d appartenenti alla prolatione perfetta, non truovo numero, se le semibreve appresso le due pause di minime secondo il parer vostro restono perfette. Si hoc est, dico che havete preterito la regola qual voi affirmate circa la similitudine, perché la penultima semibreve resta imperfetta, ma numerando le ditte semibreve appresso le due pause di minime inperfette, tutto il processo 34^r harà iusto numero. Ma tale errore reputo non da ignorantia | ma da la poca advertentia vostra, perché havete considerato solo a gli accidenti, et non al

18. Sono arrivato per la gratia de Idio al capitolo delle proportioni, et ho visto come voi mettete gran confusione in voler mostrare i termini di inequalità in questo modo:

suo natural modo.]³²

 32  Aaron crossed out this paragraph with the note 'Havevo preso errore'. The example is as follows:



^d MS: del accidentie.

³⁰ 'De li accidenti i quali si segnano fra le notule in processu cantus dinotante la perfettione'; Breve introduttione, p. 18.

³¹ Ibid., p. 11.

# co 2 tre a 3 cinque 5 et otto 8 me è duo ad uno 1 due 2 a duo 2 a tre 3

etc.,³³ del qual ordine certo sarà a molti laborioso. Nondimeno appresso quegli che intenderanno sarà noto, et così in ogni altra comparatione havete proceduto, cosa che a me troppo non piace, perché è un ordine rotto et atraversato. Da poi seguitando dite alcuni tengono questa nostra oppenione, cioè che la perfettione et imperfettione delle note non si causi per cagione delle proportioni, ma per virtù de' segni.³⁴ Per questo parlar vostro el pare che ne' termini di proportioni [non] si possi generare perfettione. Dico che altra proportione che la sesqualtera potrà generare perfettione alle note, non per il segno, ma per lo effetto sesqualtero, secondo la oppenione dello eccellente Messer Giovanni Spataro, come in più luoghi nel trattato suo di sesqualtera si dimostra.³⁵ Et perché nelle opere mie non tengo tale oppenione, darò a questo per risposta il tacere. Et più, perché mi siate amico, vi advertisco che a voi medesimo siate contro et non tanto a voi, ma a coloro che alla vostra oppenione se aderiscono. Perché se di sopra voi dite che la perfettione non si causa per termini proportionati, quare dixisti ma perdendo ogni figura perfetta la sua terza parte per la negrezza, et che tal

Aaron probably read the example as:



Then he must have reconsidered the two pairs of minim rests; since the rests are placed on the same line, they belong to the same unit of counting. Moreover, in the first instance, we find five minims or minim rests between two semibreves, a condition Del Lago stated (p. 13 of his treatise, with regard to semibreves between breves) calls for alteration. There remains a problem at the end, however, where two minim rests and two minims occur between two semibreves. As Aaron states, the following semibreves cannot be imperfected because of the rule of similarity. It seems that Del Lago or his printer has left out a note. Addition of a minim will bring this passage into conformity with the other, leading to the following transcription of the last measures:



³³ Breve introduttione, p. 24.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 27.

³⁵ Spataro, Tractato di musica (1531).

note negre sono da molti chiamata emiolea?³⁶ Seguita la consequentia che nella sesqualtera proportione chade così perfettione alle figure come anchora per i segni, et chiaro lo manifestate quando dite adunque tali figure o ver notule presuppongono perfettione.³⁷ Et per meglio confirmarlo, voi dite che nella emiolea o ver sesqualtera, semper le pause restono permanente nella sua perfettione, et qua concludete contro di voi che la perfettione anchor si ^{34^v} truova nelle pro portioni quanto si truova per i segni, dil che se non harete a memoria gli ditti vostri primi termini facilmente chascerete in errore.

19. Certo io dirò un'altra volta esservi amico et fratello, et perché io so che da me sempre fusti reputato, vorrei per mia satisfatione non havessi tolto tale impressa circa queste vostre regolette, cum sit che in esse son cose da molti et molti dichiarate et ditte, onde essendo voi hormai consumato nel arte musicha, vi si richiedeva opera più alta et sublime di questa, considerando che in essa si contien solo i principii musicali per coloro che nulla sanno, et quando che dal mio Frate Gregorio intesi per sue littere che presto mi manderesti una operetta vostra nuova, stetti certo molto allegro, pensando veder da voi qualche processo non da molti ditto et dallo ingegno vostro alcune cosette non cognite. Pur nondimeno da voi l'ho accettate con quella benivolentia et amore quanto possa essere se ben passassi Boetio et gli altri dotti musici. Seguitando però il resto delle fatiche vostre:

20. Circa la seconda regola del contrapunto da voi data, massime dove dite che non si può fare due consonantie perfette eiusdem generis simul ascendentes et descendentes,³⁸ non resto da voi troppo satisfatto, perché alla oppenion mia quella non è la causa. Et poi dite, *Onde se volessimo procedere per spetie perfette ascendendo et discendendo, ne resulterebbe dissonantia.*³⁹ Questo è contro a natura a credere che un processo perfetto possi rendere dissonantia, ma ben può essere che non sarà grato quanto sarà interponendo infra esse alcune imperfette. Da poi ditte che non laudate colui che procederà in ascensu da la quinta alla ottava, ma ben si concedete in descensu da l'ottava alla quinta.⁴⁰ Io vi domando per che causa non sarà grato questo processo ut hic:



Voi dite che sarà questo ultimo per il moto che sarà tardo in descendendo, ^{35^r} cosa non più udita, perché tanta tardità ne resulterà alla pronun tia in

ascendere dalla quinta all'ottava con una figura medesima quanto che da l'ottava alla quinta. Ma pensando, io ho considerato che questa non sia la intention vostra, et per essere simile a voi, credo che diciate da la quinta a l'ottava in questo modo ut hic:



il qual processo non laudate, ma sì il sequente:

Si hoc est, io vi rispondo che né uno né l'altro non è conveniente processo né usitato appresso dotto alcuno ascendere et discendere insieme per consonantie perfette, dato che non siano eiusdem generis.⁴¹ Circa la sesta vostra regola, cioè che non volete che 'l si possi fare *mi* contro *fa* in consonanza perfetta,⁴² dico che si usa e fa da molti, et tal regola pure assai volte patisce, della quale altro non dirò, solum che il tutto vedrete, essaminando le compositioni dei dotti.⁴³ Dato che dagli authori et da noi sia evitata, nondimeno patisce.

21. Io farò fine, dato che nel resto del vostro contrapunto si potrebbe dire molte cose et perché in ultimo voi siate entrato in un lago non troppo al proposito.⁴⁴ Vi lascio et nella gratia vostra mi riposo. Vale.

1. Certainly I was rather unwilling to take the trouble to read your treatise for many reasons, but since you wish to be my friend unto death,¹ it is only right that friends share their efforts, especially when honour and usefulness result. I was afraid to run the risk, as often happens, of breaking our old friendship, but I am trusting your prudence to take it in good part. If you had not asked me, I should not have wanted to do it. Giovanni Maria Lanfranco begged me to review his treatise,² and because 'truth engenders hatred',³ we were not on friendly terms for a while. But

⁴¹ Zarlino, however, finds these progressions 'tolerable'; see *The Art of Counterpoint*, trans. Palisca and Marco, p. 75.

42 Breve introduttione, p. 35.

⁴³ On this rule and the exceptions, see Ch. 5.

⁴⁴ Aaron's 'lago' rather than 'laberinto' (cf. no. 9, para. 6) shows that he could not resist the pun on Del Lago's name.

he eventually recognized his reponsibility in the matter and thanked me. He intended to publish a new edition, but death intervened.⁴

2. Thus, my dear Pre Giovanni, if it appears that I attack your treatise, it is not out of ill will but only to satisfy your request. I regret you didn't show me your work before publication. Either you trusted yourself alone—but no one is so wise that consultation is useless, and if you had trusted me, the wound could have been healed better; you have always esteemed yourself too highly—or you think no criticism is possible. I send my critique as your well-wisher; if it disturbs you, do not become upset. If you like it, I shall be very pleased.

3. Concerning the modes, you say you are not entirely satisfied, but to remain friends you will say nothing more. I shall follow suit; such matters are not worth the paper and ink. Let us renew our friendship; when we meet again, it will be easier to put an end to the matter.

Frate Pietro Aaron

#### Criticism of the first chapter

4. Perhaps inadvertently, in the Guidonian hand you have placed Band Band Band on the same space and line; since there is the interval of a major semitone between them, the flat should be placed lower. The third position should be called and mi, not B mi, because the letter is naturally square. The same is true of the fourth propriety, which you call 'b quadro acuto'. Every average musician believes it should be 'and quadro', for the round and square b have different forms.

5. Where you say note that the clef always indicates fa unless Bb prevents it,⁵ you err in stating that G is sometimes used in place of a clef in mensural music, as if it were not a natural clef. I say it is as much a clef as the others, for in music every letter is a clef. Therefore you err in saying that 'the clef always indicates fa', for there is no fa on G.

6. You say that there are two proprieties in b fa b mi and consequently no mutation can be made since mi is distant from fa by a major semitone.⁶ This is not a proper manner of speaking; if you say the two syllables show two proprieties, then three syllables would show three, which is wrong. True, the two notes are sung in two proprieties. You should have said that mutation does not occur because the syllables differ in place and sound, as the rule states, and that *mi* is higher than *fa* by a major semitone, not 'distant from', for a beginner might understand *mi* to be beneath *fa* because of the order of syllables.

7. You say that the flat was invented for three reasons, first to mitigate the harshness of the tritone and proceed diatonically, second for better sonority, third for necessity.⁷ Here your statement is redundant and off the track. Guido's rule,

which refers to the harshness of the tritone and to necessity, is sufficient. Every time you mitigate the tritone you achieve better sonority.

8. To prove you are off the track, tell me what author ever says the flat was invented in order to proceed diatonically. The diatonic genus proceeds semitone, tone, tone, and not vice versa.⁸ Your progression is diatonic, but I ask if going from f to  $b \natural$  is diatonic. It certainly is, for every natural and accidental species is diatonic, as Boethius says in ch. 21 of his *Musica: Diatonic is somewhat harder and more natural*,⁹ which is demonstrated by placing the lesser proportion in the lower part; according to Boethius in the same chapter, *In all these [tetrachords] the diatonic progression is semitone, tone, tone in one tetrachord.*¹⁰

9. On mutations, you say that the sixth mutation is changing ut to re to ascend from  $B \natural$  to  $B \flat$  and I call these mutations direct and regular.¹¹ Here I think you go astray, for not all the mutations from  $B \natural$  to  $B \flat$  can be called regular or direct because  $B \flat$ , as you say, is accidental. Gafurio says in ch. 4 of his Practica: The sixth mutation also moves irregularly and indirectly, i.e. very similarly to the preceding fifth mutation ascending from soft  $\flat$  to hard  $\natural$ , as here:¹²



He concludes: Irregular and indirect mutation was devised to avoid the dissonant movement.¹³

10. When you call the signs O C 'major perfect' and O C 'minor perfect',¹⁴ you follow the common opinion, believing the dot to indicate major. But you know that old and modern musicians consider the semicircle and circle as signs of imperfect and perfect tempus, and when it is accompanied by one figure, as C3 O3, they call it 'mode with tempus'. And to show a perfect semibreve, they place a dot in the middle and call it 'tempus with prolation'. Moreover, you say the ancient composers used only these four principal signs:  $\odot \odot \odot \odot C$ .¹⁵ But these signs were invented after C 3 O3 C 2 O2, as Gafurio states in ch. 8 of the second book: We have said that the aforementioned signs of temporal value should be rejected, since the Philosopher, etc.¹⁶ And Spataro, in ch. 6 of his treatise on sesquialtera, repeatedly says that the above signs were invented after O3 C3 O2 C2. In conclusion, the terminology 'major perfect' and 'minor perfect' is not rational, for if O has two perfections, breve and semibreve, C has only one, the semibreve; as far as perfection, & would be similar to O. And C would be called minor imperfect because it has no perfect note. If you call O C 'major perfect', or 'imperfect' with regard to the dot,¹⁷ what would you call O33 C 33? They would be more than major perfect, which would create

confusion. Under these signs the older composers sang a perfect semibreve per measure and called it 'singing by major'. The correct term is 'tempus with prolation', not major or minor perfect, and the others are called mode with tempus and prolation.

#### On signs

11. You state that no note can be made perfect by virtue of the signs  $\odot$  and  $\bigcirc$  except the breve and semibreve; rests show perfection of the maxima and long.¹⁸ But the perfection of the breve can also be shown by rests and figures:  $\bigcirc_3$ 

and the semibreve by  $\overline{\bullet}$ . Nor are the maxima and long only

perfect because of the rests _____. The sign O33 shows perfection of

the maxima, long, and breve. You should have said that the breve is made perfect by a circle, rests, and the figure 3, and likewise the maxima and long by rests, the sign, and figure, and the semibreves by rests.

#### On imperfection

12. You say the breve is perfect when it occurs *before two semibreves in ligature or two semibreve rests placed together.*¹⁹ If you say 'a perfect breve ... always remains perfect', is this not redundant? You should have said 'if a breve capable of imperfection ...'. But I disagree, for such a breve is not always perfect; the composer may decide. 'Always perfect' applies only to like before like, [a note] with a dot, or before its own rest. The other cases are arbitrary.

#### On the dot in mensural music

13. You really addle my brain on this, but, having always regarded you as a brother, I do not regret my efforts. You don't distinguish between a dot of division and a dot of perfection. You say a dot of division *divides the notes or draws them together, and such a dot is also placed next to each perfect note and is called by some a dot of perfection.*²⁰ You imply that others do not call it this. You should have stated your own opinion to avoid confusion. I am the more perplexed when you say this dot 'is placed next to each perfect note note'. If it is perfect, why does it need a dot? If you count three for the note and one for the dot, you get four. You would have done better to follow Franchino, who says in ch. 12 of the second book: *But a dot of perfection is a dot which perfects the note it follows, dividing it into three equal parts*,²¹ or my *Toscanello*, Book I, ch. 32, and not say that it is placed after every perfect note.²² The dot of perfection only reintegrates and preserves the perfection of a note, whereas the dot of division separates notes and

creates imperfection and alteration and transfers the note to its next greater value.

14. In your examples of alteration this figure is false:  $18 \ 6 \ 12 \ \square \ \square \ \square \ \square \ .^{23}$  I believe the two breves should be longs. This figure:

	9 9	)		
#	9		E	

is superfluous since the two *longa* rests could be joined together to complete the major mode without contravening the rule of similarity; it is not necessary to transfer a third of the mode beyond a complete mode unless so compelled, as:



In the first example the long is united with its two parts after the mode; the same occurs in the second example, where the two maximas are perfect because of similarity. These and other examples are uncommon, so that I am driven to use  $\bigcirc$  rather than  $\bigcirc$  which is better. Since only silence follows, it is awkward to transfer the rest. I do concede your  $\bigcirc$  since the third part is a note, not a rest; this is up to the composer. If you had given your example as

it would have been rational and just.

15. In the first example of the dot of division,²⁴ under  $\odot$ , you have observed the ternary number of semibreves but not of minims; a third of a breve is lacking unless the last note is a semibreve.²⁵ You make a similar counting error in the example of the dot of perfection, unless you intended to alter the last semibreve, but alteration does not pertain here and is unusual and difficult.²⁶ If you intended it, you should have said 'of perfection and alteration' as you do at the end with 'of division and alteration'. The dot to the last breve is superfluous, for the note cannot be imperfected *a parte ante* or *a parte post*, being placed between its like and a greater note. Besides, the dot does not operate that way, as I explained above. But since you seem to want other people to make a guess concerning the dot of reduction, to please you I am willing to discuss it. I see that you agree with Gafurio's opinion on the semibreve enclosed by two dots, and also the single minim, and you call these dots of reduction.²⁷ I wish you hadn't said this; Gafurio, in ch. 12 on the dot, is citing someone else's opinion: There are also those who enclose such a movable note with a dot on each side, as this tenor shows, etc.²⁸ If he had believed it, he would have been in error, for a single note is not found between two dots, but several notes can be so enclosed, thus:²⁹

# 

If a single note capable of being transferred (*atta alla reduttione*) were placed between two dots, it would be immobile, for the two dots indicate stability and permanence; the note cannot join with earlier or later ones.

16. I'm not sure I should believe everything you write, especially since you contradict yourself. You say the perfect major mode is generated by various attributes such as dots, alterations, and blackened notes,³⁰ showing an example with maximas and longs under O. But in the chapter on signs, you conclude that where there is a circle, the breve is perfect, and where there is a semicircle it is imperfect, and you say that thus no note is perfected by virtue of signs except the breve and semibreve; [the perfection of] maximas and longs is shown by rests.³¹ Therefore how can you call the maxima perfect under O with no rests? You would say that since the breve without a sign can be shown to be perfect by blackened notes, dots between semibreves, semibreve rests on the same line, the same applies to the maxima. This is false: you yourself affirm what all old and modern composers say, that the maxima is perfect only by virtue of three longa rests or the old sign O33 and other similar ones. I conclude that your example does not show perfect major mode but imperfect major mode, perfect minor mode and perfect tempus.

[17. In the last example on attributes indicating major prolation, the number does not come out right if you hold that the semibreves next to the two minim rests are perfect. If you do, you contravene the rule of similarity by making the penultimate semibreve imperfect. If the semibreves are imperfect, the number comes out right. This error is probably due to inadvertence.]³²

18. In the chapter on proportions you create great confusion in showing the terms of inequality thus:

as 2 three to 3 five 5 and eight 8 two to one 1 two 2 to two 2 to three  $3^{33}$ 

Those who already know them will understand, but this order, which you follow throughout, is askew. Then you say *some agree with our opinion that perfection and imperfection of notes is not caused by proportions but by signs.*³⁴ You make it appear that the terms of proportions can[not] generate perfection. I say that proportions other than *sesquialtera* can generate perfection, not
by signs, but through the *sesquialtera* effect, as Giovanni Spataro demonstrates in his treatise on *sesquialtera*.³⁵ But since I don't hold this opinion in my works, I shall say no more. Here too you contradict yourself, for if you claim that perfection is not generated by proportional terms, why do you say *but every perfect note losing its third part through blackening, and such black notes are called* hemiolia *by many*?³⁶ It follows that under *sesquialtera* the notes are perfect just as under the signs, and you state clearly: *therefore such notes presuppose perfection*.³⁷ And to confirm this, you say that under *hemiolia* or *sesquialtera*, the rests remain perfect. Here you contradict yourself by stating that perfection occurs under proportions as well as signs; if you don't remember what you said before, you'll easily fall into error.

19. Let me repeat that we are friends and brothers, and since I have always esteemed you, I wish you hadn't written these rules, which are commonplaces. As a consummate musician, more was expected of you than these precepts for beginners. When Frate Gregorio [Corbelli] wrote to me that you would send me a new work, I was delighted, thinking your genius would come up with something new. Nevertheless I have accepted them with as much kindness as if you had exceeded Boethius and the other learned musicians.

20. Regarding your second rule of counterpoint, prohibiting two perfect ascending or descending consonances of the same kind,³⁸ I don't think you give the right reason. You claim that *if we wished to proceed ascending or descending with perfect intervals, it would result in dissonance.*³⁹ It goes against nature to think that a perfect process engenders dissonance, but it may be more pleasing if imperfect intervals are interposed. You advise against ascending from a fifth to an octave but allow an octave descending to a fifth.⁴⁰ Why should

not be as pleasing as

You say because the motion is slower in descending, but this is unheardof, since it takes just as long to ascend from fifth to octave as to descend. It occurs to me that what you have in mind is the following:

746

which you allow, but not

If so, I say neither is used by any skilled composer.⁴¹ On your sixth rule, prohibiting *mi* contra *fa* in perfect consonances,⁴² many do it and the rule suffers a number of exceptions.⁴³ You will find them in the works of talented composers.

21. I shall end here, even if more could be said about your counterpoint, and because in the end you get into a *lake* of irrelevance.⁴⁴

67 (J56). Fo. 176^{r-v}

Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 17 July 1540 (autograph)

^{176^t} Al mio quanto fratello M. Pre Giovanni dal Lago, musico honorato, etc. In Vinegia.

## 176^v Salve frater carissime.

So che da voi, per le cause occorse non a me grate circa Frate Gregorio mio, sarò sommamente escusato, se gli dubbii del trattato vostro [no. 66] saranno tardi a voi pervenuti. Gli mandai subito, ma per non essere Frate Gregorio in convento, et più venuto qua, furno a me dal cavallare riportati; questo perché gl'imposi gli dessi in le mani^a di ditto Fra Gregorio et non ad altri, acciò nessuno potessi sapere l'intento nostro. Hora ve gli mando meglio ch'io posso. So da altri non sono stati visti. Se grati a voi saranno, ch'Idio il voglio, ne harò sommo gaudio. Se in contrario, tenerete la oppenione vostra, et io la mia. Se altro per voi posso, sono paratissimo. L'opera vostra a me è gratissima per esser voi come scrivete amico perpetuo, dil che ne tenerò buon conto.

Data in Sancto Leonardo di Bergamo el dì 17 julii 1540.

Vester Frater Petrus Aron subscripsi

I know you will forgive me if my critique of your treatise [no. 66] is late in reaching you. I sent it immediately but Fra Gregorio [Corbelli] was away from the convent and never returned, so the rider brought it back, having been instructed to give it to no one else, to keep the matter between us. I am sending it as best I can. If it pleases you, I shall be glad. If not, let us each hold our own opinion. Your work is dear to me because you are, as you write, a perpetual friend.

^a MS: mane.

# B. Giovanni del Lago's Correspondence with Other Musicians

# **68** (J8). Fos. $53^{v} - 58^{r}$

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 6 January 1520 (Scribe A)

33^v A Messer Gioanne da Legge veneto, ecellente sonator d'organo.^a

I. Poi che l'anticha amicitia et la sincera fede ch'io tengo a V.S. in tal guisa mi inchinano | ch'io non le posso negar cosa alcuna, anzi mi sforzerò dì et notte pensar di farli cosa di piacer summo grata et per utilità di quella porre ogni ingegno, ogni industria, et ogni mio poter e forza. Perhò sono contento e fuggir non posso ch'io non le risponda al suo motivo o ver dubbio della sua lettera, la quale mi è stata tanto più grata quanto io vedo esser ricercato dil mio ufficio, il quale da voi è tenuto degno a potervi sodisfar sopra tal dubbio nel qual, benché io non mi senta tanto introdotto che interamente possa rispondere alla oppinione vostra, nondimeno parlando musicalmente, et non senza ragione, come fanno alcuni, mi sforzerò per far parte dil debito mio, il quale tanto vi è tenuto a rispondere.

2. Et se io mi ricordo bene la vostra lettera, oltra li dubbii i quali vi occorreno sopra il *Toschanelo* composto per Dum Pietro Aaron fiorentino,¹ de' quali il primo era un dubbio in che modo nasce dal tempo molte volte

^{54^v} sonto il modo minore et il maggiore, et similmente dividendo esso tempo in più parti, come nasce la prolatione, così minore come maggiore,² et perché dite la^b ragione detta da lui non vi satisfa niente, dil che voresti ch'io vi scrivesse il mio parere. Ma mi ricordo che già duoi anni circa tal dubbio vi scrisi pienamente. Pertanto al presente non farò altra risposta, ma quanto al secondo dubbio, sopra el qual io mal voluntiera scrivo per haver visto che de' più dottrinati di me ne' hanno parlato in molti suoi trattati musici, brevemente me ne passerò, solamente ponendo alcune ragioni, perché veggio molti haver malamente scritto sopra tal dubbio.

^a The original heading read: 'Pre Giovani de Lago al Messer Giovani da Legge ecellente sonator d'organo salute.' ^b MS: le. ^c MS: vi.

¹ The *Toscanello* was not printed until 1523; for an explanation of the discrepancy in dates between the treatise and this letter, see Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his *Epistole*'. ² Aaron, *Toscanello*, Book I, chs. 8 and 9.

3. Ma venendo al dubbio così dico:³ Sono alcuni compositori nel tempo imperfetto o ver in la prolatione imperfetta, per virtù della proportione sesqualtera et de la tripla et de la sestupla, consequire attestano il tempo et la prolatione la sua perfettione, consideranti solamente la perfettione del numero ternario o ver senario, ma niente 55^t attende[n]ti la imperfet|tione del numero binario et quaternario.⁴ Io per più ragioni con le loro opinioni non mi concordo, et primieramente dico che la loro consideratione non appartiene al musico, perché il musico la relatione ad aliquid, id est ad alcuna cosa, considera, et non il numero per se, come l'arithmetico, id est lo abbachista. Propriamente la consideratione et l'ufficio del musico è investigare et diligentemente perquirere et cercare circa l'habitudini o ver proportioni in che modo da esse proportioni resultino le symphonie, et se in questa pratica nostra per relatione come parti a parti sortiscano el suo effetto, per il che, utrum el numero per se sia perfetto o vero imperfetto, questa è cosa pertinente come ho detto allo arithmetico et sua propria consideratione et speculatione. Ma il musico, considerante solamente la relatione, vuole la medesima perfettione et imperfettione competere et quadrare ad essi segni et anchora ad esse proportioni, essendo el segno quid principale et funda|mento delle 55 relationi, per la qual cosa, come ho detto, le proportioni, di qualonche genere et qualità siano, per se stesse né perfettione né imperfettione concernano, se non in quanto fanno li segni perfetti o imperfetti, ma

solamente la diminutione concernano o vero agumentatione per relatione alle parti. 4. Secondariamente contra la loro opinione prendo et adduco tale argumento. V[0]glion loro il numero ternario o ver senario in esse proportioni causante ne' segni imperfetti la perfettione consistere, come nella sesqualtera, tripla, et sestupla, adonque (essendo una medesima disciplina quela de li oppositi) ne' segni perfetti medesimamente la dupla o vero la quadrupla dimostrerano la imperfettione de le figure, perché il numero binario o ver quaternario se chiama et è feminino, diminuto, o vero imperfetto, la qual cosa è falsa per le ragioni di sopra allegate. Et

³ The remainder of the letter, with the exception of the valediction to Da Legge, was printed by Del Lago in his *Breve introduttione* (Venice, 1540), pp. 26–9. Del Lago seems to have used the present version of the letter, and not the original (if one ever existed), as the printer's copy; the beginning and end of the passage appearing in the treatise are marked in Vat. lat. 5318 with lines and crosses in the margin. Most of Del Lago's editorial corrections in Scribe A's copy have been incorporated in the treatise. For several that were not, see nn. *e*, *f*, *g*, and *j*. This indicates that Del Lago continued to make corrections in his *Epistole* after the treatise was printed in 1540. It proves that the first part of Vat. lat. 5318 was copied by Scribe A before May 1540 and it suggests that Del Lago still intended to publish his letters after 1540, even though large parts of them had been incorporated in the treatise (see Ch. 6).

⁴ The main proponent of this view is Giovanni Spataro, whose major treatise, *Tractato di musica*...*nel quale si tracta de la perfectione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata* (Bologna, 1531), is dedicated to this proposition.

secondo le loro compositioni non volendo essi ne' segni perfetti denotare 56^r tali habitudini imperfettioni di figure, ma la dimi|nutione solamente de la quantità. Adonque, etc.

5. Alcuni tengono questa nostra opinione et la approbano et confermano, cioè che la perfettione et imperfettione delle notule o ver figure non si causa per cagione de le proportioni ma per virtù de' segni, perché le proportioni (secondo ho dimostrato per la relatione come parti a parti) in questa prattica solamente la virtù et operation sua conseguiscono. Nientedimeno, quasi nulla differentia concernenti tra le figure vacue et piene di colo^{*} negro, dicenti la sesqualtera concernere le figure vacue et la emiolia le piene,^d essendo quel medesimo la emiolia et la sesqualtera, come scrive Boëtio in l'Arithmetica nel primo libro al capitolo XXIIIIº, el quale dice così: Emiolia id est sesqualtera.⁵ Dicono anchora che la emiolia sortisce sempre la imperfettione, ma la sesqualtera no. Tengono etiamdio conside rarse la sesqualtera per la plenitudine de le notule, niente premeditanti et consideranti la diffinitione della proportione, ma solamente el numero per se, attento che non si conoscendo et non si sappiando la definitione, non si sa et non si conosce el definito. Proportione è (secondo Boëtio, Euclide et gli altri) habitudine ad invicem di duoi numeri o ver di duoi termini.⁶ Et perciò dirai che tali notule di color negro descritte equivagliono et convengono alla proportione della sesqualtera o vero emiolia, il che quanto al nome' quel medesimo è, et che tali notule presupongono perfettione. Et utrum questo sia vero el provo così ho la regola, che in tre modi la figura perfetta può consequire la imperfettione, cioè per virtù del numero, per necessità del punto, et per causa del colore,⁷ ma la imperfetta figura non. La ragione di questo è, perché se la è imperfetta da sé, più non

se può fare imperfetta,[/] ma perdendo ogni figura perfetta la | terza parte da la negrezza o ver da la nigredine, et in questa da quelli la dimandano emiolia, anchora questa medesima diminutione di figure sortiscono. Adunque tali figure o ver notule presuppongono perfettione, per il che essendo stabili o ver immobili le pause di esse notule, perché versano et

^c The words 'quanto al nome' do not appear in the printed version. In Vat. lat. 5318, they were inserted above the line in Del Lago's hand.

f The treatise reads 'più imperficere non si può', agreeing with the original version of Vat. lat. 5318.

⁵ Boethius, De arithmetica 1. 24 (ed. Friedlein, p. 50).

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57^r

⁶ Ibid. 2. 40 (ed. Friedlein, p. 137); Euclid, *Elements* 5, Def. 3 (*Euclidis Elementa*, ed. J. L. Heiberg, rev. E. S. Stamatis (5 vols.; Leipzig, 1969-77), ii. 1).

⁷ Cf. Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, fo. bb2^v: 'Tria quidem sunt quae imperfectibilem figuram imperfectam esse demonstrant. Numeralis imperfectio. Punctualis divisio, et Notularum plenitudo.'

 $^{^{}d}$  The beginning of this sentence is problematic: either the scribe has left out part of the sentence or he mistranscribed some words. We suggest emendation of 'concernenti' to 'comprendono'.

continuano nella quantità continua, sempre adunque consequentemente rimangono perfette. Et havemo la regola che la pausa accidentalmente come essa figura né imperficere né alterare si può. La raggione è, come ho detto, perché da sé la è immobile. E ben vero che le notule et le pause per consimili diminutione si considerano nelle proportioni secondo^g la loro naturale et propria potentia^b quanto alla quantità, ma quanto agli accidenti non così, ma altrimenti,ⁱ perché altrimenti si debbono considerare le diminutioni delle proportioni, alle quali le notule et le pause soggiaciono,

^{57^v} che le imperfettioni | delle notule o vero le alterationi di esse,⁸ perché le notule patiscono li accidenti. La ragione [è] la quantità (secundo dice Boëtio nostro nel proemio de l'*Arithmetica*) da sé è di immutabile sustantia, ma aggionta al corpo si permuta,⁹ come si dimostra nelle figure musicali. Adonque le figure consequiscono gli accidenti quanto alla[/] imperfettione et alteratione.

6. Ma potrebbe dire alcuno: 'Io ho, secondo el philosopho, "frustra fit per plura, quod fieri potest per pauciora",¹⁰ id est che in van si fa per più quello che si può far con manco, ma essendo così che la sesqualtera quel medesimo effetto et quella medesima potentia sortir possa come consequisce essa emiolia, adonque inane et vana è la dispositione de la emiolia o vero la plenitudine de le notule equivalente alla habitudine della sesqualtera.' Respondo che non senza causa li musici hanno instituita et ordinata questa plenitudine di notule equipolente alla sesqualtera (anzi diversi

^{58^t} effetti consequisce), et primo che sempre (come ho provato) | presuppone perfettione. Secondo, acciò che le parole disposte alli moduli alternatamente secondo li loro affetti correspondano,¹¹ perché come appresso gli oratori tre generi, cioè tre sorti et qualitati di dire se considerano, cioè dimostrativa, deliberativa, et giudiciale, et questo per la esigentia di diversi negotii et di diverse facende, cose, et operationi, così appresso li

8 The treatise has 'iusta', the original version in Vat. lat. 5318.

^b Here and on the next folio 'potentia' is replaced by 'possanza' in the treatise. This is the only substantial revision that does not already appear in Vat. lat. 5318. It may be a correction Del Lago made at the proof stage, for in the same line 'quanto alla quantità' appears as 'quanto alle sue quantità'.

^{*i*} The typesetter misread this word, corrected in the manuscript from 'altramente', as 'altri modi'.

^j The original version, 'circa la', appears in the treatise.

⁸ Cf. Gafurio, ibid., fo. gg4': 'aliter consyderandum esse proportionum diminutiones, quibus et notulae subiacent et pausae, aliter notularum imperfectiones quae connumeratione ut plurimum tertiae partis abstractae noscuntur.'

⁹ '... quantitates ... quae ipsa quidem natura incorporea sunt et inmutabili substantiae ratione vigentia, participatione vero corporis permutantur...'; Boethius, *De arithmetica* 1.1 (ed. Friedlein, p. 8).

¹⁰ See no. 6 n. 3.

¹¹ Del Lago probably refers to the phenomenon known as 'eye music', in which blackened notes embody such concepts as 'darkness', 'night', 'death', etc.

musici otto modi si considerano, per il che poco conto far si deve di quelli compositori i quali ignorano li effetti de' modi et de' segni et de le proportioni. ¹² Sì che intendete quanto allo effetto produtto dalla sesqualtera.

Se altro posso per V.S., quella mi adoperi senza alcun rispetto come buono amico.

In Venetia, a dì 6 di genaro, M.D.xx.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. Our old friendship and my sincere esteem incline me to deny you nothing; rather I shall strive day and night to please you and place all my talents and diligence at your disposal. I am happy to answer your letter, the more so since you have sought me out as worthy of satisfying your query. I do not feel competent to reply in full, but I shall do my best.

2. If I recall your letter well, apart from your questions about Aaron's *Toscanello*,¹ the first of which concerned how major and minor mode are created from the multiplication of *tempus* and how major and minor prolation result from its division,² in which you say his explanation doesn't satisfy you at all and you would like my opinion, I recall that I wrote to you on this two years ago and so will not answer again. As to the second question, I shall make some brief points, for many have written about it in their treatises, but ineptly.³

3. Some composers, in imperfect *tempus* or prolation, consider that *sesquialtera*, *tripla*, and *sextupla* proportions cause a change to perfect *tempus* and prolation, considering the perfection of the number 3 or 6 but overlooking the imperfection of 2 and 4.⁴ I do not agree, first of all because their consideration is not musical: musicians consider numbers relatively, and not absolutely like arithmeticians. The function of the musician is to investigate the proportions that result in musical intervals. Whether the number *per se* is perfect or imperfect belongs to the consideration of arithmeticians. But the musician wants the same perfection and imperfection to apply to these signs and proportions, the sign being the foundation of the relations. The proportions themselves, of whatever type, are neither perfect nor imperfect but depend on the signs that show perfection or imperfection; they [the proportions] concern only diminution or augmentation in relation to the parts.

4. Secondly, if they wish the numbers three and six to cause perfection

¹² The passage quoted in Del Lago's treatise ends here.

under imperfect signs, as in *sesquialtera*, *tripla*, and *sextupla*, then (arguing from the opposite), under perfect signs the numbers two or four should show imperfection of the notes, because the duple or quadruple number is feminine, diminished, or imperfect. This is false, for the reasons given above, and in their compositions under perfect signs they consider it diminution of quantity, not imperfection.

5. Some support our opinion that perfection or imperfection of notes is not caused by proportions but by signs, because proportions produce only their own force and operation. Nevertheless, they see hardly any difference between void notes and blackened notes, saying sesquialtera applies to white, *hemiolia* to black notes; yet as Boethius says in his Arithmetic, Book I, ch. 24, *hemiolia* is the same as *sesquialtera*.⁵ Moreover, they say that hemiolia results in imperfection, but not sesquialtera. They also hold that sesquialtera is obtained through blackening of notes, without a thought to the definition of proportion but only to the number itself. Proportion, according to Boethius, Euclid, and others, is the relationship of two numbers or two terms to each other.⁶ Therefore I should say that blackened notes are equivalent to sesquialtera or hemiolia and such notes presuppose perfection. I prove it thus: imperfection of perfect notes occurs in three ways: through the number, through the dot [of division], and through colour.⁷ The imperfect note cannot be further imperfected. But if every perfect note loses one-third of its value through blackening, which they call hemiolia, this too brings about diminution. Thus such notes presuppose perfection. And since the rests are unchangeable because they are part of a continuous quantity, they therefore always remain perfect. The rule states that a rest cannot be imperfected or altered, because it is unchangeable. True, the notes and rests are considered diminished under proportions with respect to their quantity, but not as regards their properties, for diminution of notes and rests caused by proportions is different from imperfection or alteration of notes.8 According to Boethius, quantity by itself is an immutable substance, but when added to a body it changes,⁹ as is shown in musical notes. Thus the notes are subject to change with regard to perfection and alteration.

6. But someone might counter with Aristotle's dictum, 'it is pointless to do by more what can be done by fewer',¹⁰ and argue that therefore, since *sesquialtera* and *hemiolia* have the same effect, *hemiolia* or blackening of notes is pointless. I reply that musicians invented blackening of notes as equivalent to *sesquialtera* (even if it produces different effects) first because they presuppose perfection, and secondly so that the words of the text can correspond alternately to their affects,¹¹ for orators recognize three ways of speaking, epideictic, deliberative, and forensic, depending on the subject-matter. In the same way musicians recognize eight modes. Those

who ignore the effects of the modes, signs, and proportions should be held in little esteem.¹² Thus you understand the effect produced by *sesquialtera*.

#### COMMENTARY

When he reviewed Del Lago's treatise in 1540, Aaron complained about the confused manner in which the perfection of *sesquialtera* was discussed, claiming that 'a voi medesimo siate contro et non tanto a voi, ma a coloro che alla vostra oppenione se aderiscono' (see no. 66, para. 18): if Del Lago claims that perfection is not caused by proportional terms but only by signs, it is illogical to say that every perfect figure loses its third part through blackening, and such blackening 'presupposes perfection'. By claiming that rests remain perfect under *sesquialtera* or *hemiolia*, Del Lago contradicts his earlier statement that *sesquialtera* does not cause perfection. Aaron himself, though he states his belief that proportions other than *sesquialtera* can also cause perfection, as demonstrated by Spataro in his treatise on *sesquialtera*, carries the argument no further because 'nelle opere mie non tengo tale oppenione'.

Aaron touches on only a few of the contradictions in Del Lago's discussion. There are others: when Del Lago complains that some composers believe that *sesquialtera* and triple metre indicate perfection, contrary to the signs, and states that the function of the musician is to investigate the proportions that result in intervals (para. 3), he confuses the two ways proportions can be applied in music: to note-values and to intervals. The latter is not relevant to the present discussion. In proportions applied to note-values, the composers cannot ignore the imperfect numbers, for the proportion  $\frac{3}{2}$  is different from  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Del Lago's second argument 'from the opposite' (para. 4) constitutes no proof, for proportions such as  $\frac{2}{3}$  and  $\frac{4}{6}$  indeed show that the notes of the new section are grouped in duple pairs.

Del Lago appears to waver regarding the equivalence of *sesquialtera* and *hemiolia*. At the beginning of para. 5 he states (on the authority of Boethius) that they are the same, yet in para. 6 he says that *hemiolia* produces different effects and he repeats that it 'presupposes perfection'. The sudden shift of subject at the end of para. 6 to a comparison of the three oratorical genres with the eight modes, which is no sooner raised than dropped, is puzzling.

How are we to explain these contradictions? Certainly the question of perfection under *sesquialtera* was a heated topic of debate between Spataro and Gafurio. Spataro, however, makes no mention at all of *hemiolia* or blackening in his treatise, but he probably would have considered it the same as *sesquialtera*. Much of Del Lago's discussion is based on Gafurio; he also incorporated two passages in translation from the *Practica musicae* without acknowledging their source (see nn. 7 and 8). Gafurio believed that the mensuration governed the perfection of notes, not the proportion. He speaks of the use of blackened notes as an alternative form of *sesquialtera*, but he states that the blackening shows imperfection, and he follows his teacher Bonadies in denying that this is equivalent to *hemiolia* because the blackened notes are 'in a duple ratio and not in

*hemiolia*, since they have not a ternary division'.¹³ On this Del Lago disagrees, since he believes that *hemiolia* presupposes perfection. The contradictions can probably be explained by Del Lago's habit of drawing on different authorities. In the present case we have identified Gafurio as a principal source, but there must be others, and Del Lago has not woven his witnesses together in a coherent fabric. The ending of para. 6 in particular looks as if it had been derived from another source.

B.J.B.

¹³ Gafurio, Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 176.

**69** (J20 and J26). Fo. 105^{r-v} Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 24 January 1520 (Scribe B, but autograph signature)¹

¹⁰⁵^r Allo excellente Messer Gioanne da Legge, dignissimo sonator de organo, Pre Gioanne del Lago, salute.

Excellente Messer Gioanne,

1. Ho inteso per una vostra letera fatta in risposta di una mia, dove dite che la nota breve perfetta vacua posta immediate dinanzi ad una negra la si può fare imperfetta dalla sua parte terza o ver dal suo valor, perché la non è tanquam similis ante similem respectu nigredinis, e così di ciascun'altra nota o ver figura perfetta. Io vi dico così che la similitudine (apud peritos) consiste et se intende respectu forme et non coloris, e che tali note debbono esser sotto un medesimo segno di medesima perfettione, cioè che tal similitudine di note debbe esser intesa cader nelle figure d'un medesimo segno, come qui: O , e non ut hic: O C , perché anchora che quanto al nome l'una delle brevi predette non sia dissimile da l'altra, nientedimeno l'una non sarà misurata da le sue minor come sarà l'altra. Pertanto la breve avanti alla breve a questo modo posta potrà farsi imperfetta a parte anteriori, ut hic:  $0 \diamond \Box C \Box$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  come vi scrissi nella mia lettera. Pertanto la non si può fare imperfetta da la sua terza parte o ver dal suo valor nisi per colorem,³ come si vede esser stato usato in prattica da molti dottissimi compositori nelle loro compositioni, come sono messe et motteti, anchora che Prosdocimo de Beldomando padoano, musico excellentissimo, nel suo Comento sopra Joannes de Muris,⁴ quando lui espone la prima regola del primo capitolo, è di contraria opinione, il quale così dice:

2. Supra qua parte est notandum quod hec similitudo attenditur circa duo: primo, scilicet, circa notas et figuras; 2°, circa prolationis mensuras. Circa notas et figuras, attenditur notarum similitudo, quia ut aliqua sit alteri similis in figura, scilicet, maxima maxime, longa longe, brevis brevi, etc., requiratur colorate qualitatis idemptitas ac corporee magnitudinis eadem quantitas. Primum requiritur,

¹ See the Commentary.

² The passage in lower half-brackets has been taken from Spataro's letter to Aaron of 8 Apr. 1523 (no. 6, para. 5); on this, see Ch. 6.

³ It would appear that this sentence contradicts the previous one. Once we realize, however, that the preceding passage is an interpolation, it is clear that the present sentence originally followed the words 'sotto un medesimo segno di medesima perfettione', and 'la' therefore refers to the breve in this situation, not to a breve in a different mensuration.

⁴ As F. Alberto Gallo discovered (see no. 44 n. 25), this quotation does not come from Prosdocimo but from Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. 111-6 (ed. Seay, ii. 104-6), which is likewise a commentary on Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*.

quia si maxima sit nigra ut altera maxima sit ei similis in qualitate eadem coloris qualitas sibi requiritur, scilicet, quod sit nigra et non rubea vel ad alium colorem transmutata. Si vero sit rubea vel alba, ut eius similitudinem gerat rubea vel alba debet esse reliqua, et sic de aliis colorum qualitatibus. Tunc enim similes sunt et ea[n]dem participant qualitatem colorum. Secus autem est et disimiles sunt si altera uno altera altero sit informata colore, ut si una sit nigra, altera sit rubea, vel e contra, etc. Eadem etiam corporee magnitudinis quantitas ad notarum similitudinem^a est necessaria, ut si una sit maxima, altera sit maxima et non due vel tres longe pro maxima, vel quatuor vel sex breves pro maxima, si una sit longa, altera sit longa et non due vel tres breves pro longa, et sic de aliis, ut quidam dixerunt. Item si erit eadem similitudo. Secus est si alio modo se habeant, quia plus continet de quantitate plenum quam vacuum, et ideo nota vacua et plena dissimiles^b sunt.

3. Circa prolationis mensuras attenditur figurarum seu notarum similitudo, super qua parte est notandum quod ut notę seu figurę ad invicem [similes] iudicentur, necessarium est eas eiusdem esse mensure, ut si una nota seu figura, scilicet, maxima sit mensure modi maioris perfecti, altera ut sit ei similis eiusdem mensure debet esse et modi. Si una, scilicet, longa sit modi minoris perfecti, altera ut ei sit similis eiusdem debet esse modi et mensure. Si brevis sit mensure temporis perfecti, altera sit eiusdem temporis et mensure. Si semibrevis sit mensure maioris prolationis, altera sit eiusdem prolationis et mensure. Alias inter notas seu figuras vera similitudo non est, ut si una unius sit mensure vel modi vel temporis vel prolationis, altera non eiusdem sed^c alterius, tunc inter eas vera (ut dicitur) similitudo non est.

4. Attenditur igitur huiusmodi similitudo circa duo, primo in figuris et notis, 2° in prolationis mensuris. Circa primum est colorate qualitatis idemptitas et corporee magnitudinis eadem quantitas. Circa secundum est prolationis eadem mensura (ut superius dictum est). His igitur modis similis ante similem non potest imperfici, ut maxima nigra plena mensure modi perfecti a.^{ris} [= maioris] ante maximam nigram

plenam eiusdem mensure non potest quo ad totum imperfici, ut bic:  $\neg$   $\neg$ . Similiter longa nigra plena mensure modi b.^{ris} [=minoris] perfecti ante longam nigram plenam eiusdem mensure non potest quo ad totum imperfici, ut bic:  $\neg$   $\neg$ . Brevis nigra plena mensure temporis perfecti ante brevem nigram plenam eiusdem temporis non potest quo ad totum imperfici, ut hic:  $\neg$   $\circ$ . Semibrevis nigra plena mensure a.^{ris} [= maioris] seu perfecte prolationis ante semibrevem nigram plenam eiusdem prolationis non potest quo ad totum imperfici, ut hic:  $\circ$   $\circ$ . Similiter si maxime, longe, breves, vel semibreves^d plures essent, semper altera ante alteram perfecta est, quia similis est ante similem. Si autem maxima ultima, vel longa ultima, vel brevis ultima, vel semibrevis ultima non sit eiusdem colorate qualitatis et eiusdem corporeę magnitudinis ac etiam prolationis et eiusdem mensure cum precedenti, tunc quia similes non sunt, pręcedens quo ad totum potest imperfici.

5. Si che intendete l'una et l'altra ragione; [e]legetevi de queste due la meglior. Se altro posso per V.S., quella mi comanda.

Vale.

In Venetia a dì xxiiij genaro. M.D.xx.

Pre Gioanne del Lago

1. I understand from your letter in response to mine that a perfect white breve before a black one can be imperfected because it is not 'like before like' with regard to colour, and the same with any other perfect note. I say that (according to the learned) this similarity concerns form and not colour and that such notes have to fall under the same sign of perfection, as  $O \square \square$  and not  $O \square C \square$ , for even if the name of one breve does not differ from the other, one is measured differently in its smaller parts than the other. The first breve can be imperfected *a parte ante*:  $O \circ \square C \square$ ,² as I said in my letter. Thus it [a breve before another breve in the same mensuration] can only be imperfected through coloration,³ as you can see in many masses and motets of learned composers, even though the excellent musician Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, in his commentary on Johannes de Muris,⁴ has a contrary opinion. He says:

2. On which part it should be noted that this similarity concerns two things, first the notes and note-shapes, secondly the mensurations. With regard to notes and noteshapes, the notes must be the same, for if a note is to be similar in shape to another, i.e. maxima to maxima, long to long, breve to breve, etc., they must have identity of coloured quality and the same quantity of bodily size. The first is necessary because if the maxima is black, for the other maxima to be similar, it must have the same quality of colour, that is, it has to be black and not red or changed into some other colour. If it is red or white, for the other to be similar, it must be red or white, and so forth with the other qualities of colours. For then they are similar and share the same quality of colour. Otherwise they are dissimilar if one has one colour, the other another, as if one were black, the other red, or vice versa. The same bodily size is necessary for the similarity of notes, that is, if one is a maxima, the other must be a

^a MS: similitudines. ^b MS: dissimilis.

[&]quot; MS: secundum. The scribe must have misread the abbreviation for 'sed'.

^d MS: brevis vel semibrevis.

maxima and not two or three longs in place of a maxima, or four or six breves in place of a maxima; if one is a long, the other must be a long and not two or three breves in place of a long, and so forth, as some have said. Similarly, if one is full, the other must be full. If one is void, the other must be void, and then they will be the same in quantity. The opposite is true if they are otherwise, since a full note is greater in quantity than a void one, and therefore a void note and a full one are dissimilar.

3. With regard to mensurations, the note-shapes or notes should be the same; on this point it should be noted that for notes or note-shapes to be judged similar to each other, they must be in the same mensuration, for if one note or note-shape, i.e. a maxima, is in the perfect major mode, the other, to be similar, must be in the same mensuration and mode. If a long is in the perfect minor mode, the other, to be similar, must have the same mode and mensuration. If a breve is in perfect tempus, the other must have the same tempus and mensuration. If a semibreve is in major prolation, the other must be in the same prolation and measure. Otherwise there is no true similarity between notes or note-shapes, for if one is in one mensuration or mode or tempus or prolation, the other not in the same but in the other, then there is no true similarity between them.

4. Thus this similarity concerns two things, first the note-shapes and notes, secondly the mensurations. The first pertains to the identity of quality of colour and the quantity of bodily size, the second to the same mensuration (as said above). For these reasons therefore, like before like cannot be imperfected; a full black maxima in the perfect major mode before a full black maxima in the same mensuration.

cannot be imperfected as to the whole:  $\neg \neg \neg$ . Similarly, a full black long in the perfect minor mode before a full black long in the same mensuration cannot be imperfected as to the whole:  $\neg \neg$ . A full black breve in perfect tempus before a full

black breve in the same tempus cannot be imperfected as to the whole:  $\blacksquare$  A full black semibreve in major or perfect prolation before a full black semibreve in the same prolation cannot be imperfected as to the whole:  $\bullet \bullet$ . Similarly, if there are several maximas, longs, breves, or semibreves, the one before the other is always perfect, for it is like before like. But if the last maxima, the last long, the last breve, or the last semibreve has not the same quality of colour or the same bodily size and also the same mensuration as the preceding one, then, since they are not similar, the preceding one can be imperfected as to the whole.

5. Thus you have the two arguments: choose which is better.

#### COMMENTARY

The present letter exists in two versions, one in Del Lago's hand on fos. 130^r-132^r, the other in the hand of Scribe B, but with Del Lago's corrections and

autograph signature, on fo. 105^{r-v}. The main difference between the two is that the lengthy quotation from the commentary on Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* is in Italian in the former, in Latin in the latter. It is this second version that Del Lago intended to include among his *Epistole*. His many autograph insertions in Scribe A's copy of the main body of the *Epistole* show that Del Lago systematically sought to bolster his arguments with quotations from earlier theorists. Presenting the quotation in the original Latin, in Del Lago's eyes, would lend more authority to the letter.

In line with Del Lago's intentions, we have edited the second version, but we present his Italian translation of the quotation from the commentary on Johannes de Muris below. Del Lago has made a few corrections in Scribe B's version, adding 'letera' in the first line, and changing 'dicete' to 'dite', 'inanti' to 'avanti', and 'in le sue' to 'nelle loro'.

The Italian translation of the passage from the first version of the letter on fos.  $130^{r}-132^{r}$  reads as follows:

Sopra la qual parte è da notare che questa similitudine si attende circa doi cose, la prima cioè circa le note et figure, la seconda circa le misure de la prolatione. Circa le note et le figure si attende la similitudine delle note, perché acciò che la nota l'una a l'altra sia simile in figura, cioè la massima alla massima, la lunga alla lunga, la breve alla breve, etc., si richiede la idemptità, cioè, la similitudine della qualità colorata, et la medesima quantità della magnitudine, cioè grandezza corporea. El primo si richiede perché se la massima è negra, acciò che l'altra massima sia a lei simile in qualitate, si le richiede la medesima qualità de colore, cioè che la sia negra et non roscia, o vero ad altro colore transmutata. Ma se la è roscia o ver bianca, acciò che l'altra habbia la similitudine di quella, debbe esser roscia o ver bianca. Et così è nelle altre qualitati de colori. Allhora certamente sono simili quando participano la medesima qualità de colori. Il contrario è et dissimili saranno, si l'una d'un colore, l'altra d'un altro sarà informata, come saria si una fusse negra et l'altra fusse roscia, o vero al contrario, etc. La [fo. 131^r] medesima quantità della grandezza del corpo è anchora necessaria alla similitudine delle note, cioè se l'una è massima, l'altra anchora bisogna sia similmente massima et non due o ver tre longhe per una massima et quatro o ver sei brevi per una massima. Si l'una è lunga, l'altra anchora sia lunga et non due o ver tre brevi per una lunga. Et così delle altre, come hanno detto alcuni. Similmente, si l'una è piena, l'altra sia piena, si l'una è vacua, l'altra anchora sia vacua, et così della quantità anchora sarà la medesima similitudine. Altramente sarà, se per altro modo le seranno, perché più della quantità contiene il pieno che il vacuo. Et però la nota vacua et la nota piena sono dissimili.

Circa le misure della prolatione si attende la similitudine delle figure o delle note. Sopra la qual parte è da notare che acciò che le note o ver le figure siano giudicate simili l'una a l'altra, è necessario che le siano d'una medesima misura, cioè si una nota o ver figura, cioè massima, è di modo maggiore perfetto, l'altra, acciò che sia a lei simile, dè essere della medesima misura et del medesimo modo. Così anchora si l'una, cioè la lunga, è de modo minore perfetto, l'altra, acciò che sia simile a quella, bisogna che anch'ella sia del medesimo modo et misura. Similmente se l'è breve di misura di tempo perfetto, l'altra convien che sia [fo.  $131^{v}$ ] anch'essa del medesimo tempo et misura. Si la sarà semibreve di misura di maggiore prolatione, così l'altra dè essere della medesima prolatione et misura. Altramente tra le note o ver figure non è vera et propria similitudine come è quando una è de una misura, o modo, o tempo, o ver prolatione, et l'altra non sia così, ma altramente. Allhora tra esse (secondo habbiam detto) non è vera similitudine.

S'attende adunque questa così fatta similitudine circa due cose. La prima consiste nelle figure et nelle note, la seconda nelle misure della prolatione. Circa la prima si deve attendere la idemptità della qualità colorata et la medesima quantità della corporea grandezza, circa la seconda la medesima misura della prolatione, come di sopra è stato detto. Per questi modi adunque et per queste ragioni similis ante similem non potest imperfici, et così la massima negra piena della misura del modo perfetto maggiore anti la massima negra piena della medesima misura non

si può quo ad totum, id est quanto al tutto, imperficere ut hic 🗂 🦳 . Simil-

mente, la lunga negra piena della misura del modo minor perfetto anti la lunga negra piena della medesima misura non se può quo ad totum imperficere ut hic

T. La breve negra piena della misura del tempo perfetto nanti la breve negra

piena [fo.  $132^{\circ}$ ] del medesimo tempo non se può quo ad totum imperficere ut hic **1**. La semibreve negra piena della misura della maggiore o vero della perfetta prolatione nanti la semibreve negra piena della medesima prolatione non si può quo ad totum imperficere ut hic  $\bullet \bullet$ . Similmente, se più fussino le massime, le lunghe, le brevi, o ver le semibrevi, sempre l'una nanti l'altra è perfetta, quia similis est ante similem. Ma si la massima ultima, o ver la ultima lunga, o ver la ultima breve, o vero l'ultima semibreve non sia della medesima colorata qualitate, né della medesima grandezza di corpo, né anchora della medesima prolatione et misura con la precedente, allhora, perché non sono simili, la precedente si può quo ad totum imperficere.

B.J.B.

70 (J21). Fo. 106^{r-v} Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 16 February 1520 (autograph copy)

106' Al eccellente Messer Gioanne da Legge, dignissimo sonator d'organo.

Excellente Messer Gioanne,

1. Ho inteso quanto scrivete nella vostra letera della *Musica* de Bartholomeo Ramis hispano,¹ la quale per una mia pregai che vi piacesse di trovarla et mandarmila. Ma dite che qui in Roma la non si trova, e che l'havete cercata con diligentia, ma che un cantore vostro amico vi ha detto che sono anni assai che dal predetto Bartholomeo ne furno portate alquante qui in Roma, e che le furno vendute in spatio di poco tempo, sì che non era ordine di trovarne pur una alle librarie, et che vi duole infino nel cuore di non havermi potuto servire, etc.

2. Messer Gioanne carissimo, quanto a questo, ringratio V.S. quella reputa di havermi servito; per questo non vi togliete affanno alcuno. Vedrò per altra via di trovarne una, ma vi prego quando sarete in Fiorenza, vedrete di havere una *Theorica²* la quale tratta di musica di Don Franchino Gafurio impressa in Napoli, la quale desidero di vederla.

3. Quanto al vostro dubbio che nella vostra letera domandate, s'el punto segnato appresso la nota se si pò fare imperfetto, al qual dubbio rispondendo dico di no, perché il punto non è quantità né pa[r]te dil tempo, ma è solamente segno dimostrativo, o di perfettione, o di divisione, o ver di agumentatione. Io ho trovato che Domarto, compositore antico, in una sua Gloria del quinto tuono irregolare nel tenore a segnato il punto appresso la lunga posta nel tempo perfetto, il quale lo fa ^{106^v} imperfetto dalla semibreve immediate seguente. Et Bar|bingant, nel tenore d'una sua canzone 'L'omme bani', ha posto similmente il punto appresso la lunga nel modo perfetto,³ il qual punto da loro è stato considerato come

¹ Musica practica (Bologna, 1482).

² Theoricum opus musice discipline (Naples, 1480).

³ Del Lago found the references to the works by Domarto and Barbingant in Tinctoris's *Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium* (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 154), but he interprets the examples differently: Tinctoris does not claim that it is the dot that is imperfected but rather the augmented note. In his twelfth general rule of imperfection, Tinctoris states that a note to which a dot of perfection or augmentation is attached cannot be imperfected; he then shows, in musical examples, how Domarto and Barbingant contravened this rule by writing a dotted long in the imperfect minor mode and perfect *tempus* that is imperfected by the following semibreve. Del Lago errs in assigning 'modo perfetto' to Barbingant's composition; since the dot to the long is one of augmentation (as he later specifies), the tenor is in the imperfect minor mode.

Del Lago mistakenly calls Domarto's work a Gloria; it is, as Tinctoris says, a Credo, and the example comes from the unnamed mass by Domarto in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS San Pietro B. 80, fos. 143^{v-154}, to which Egidius Cervelli contributed the Kyrie. Modern edns. of Barbingant's chanson may be found in Jacobus Barbireau, *Opera omnia*, ed. Bernhard Meier

simile in virtù et essentia alla nota breve, la qual cosa è falsissima, perché il punto posto dopo tali lunghe non ha quella consideratione che haria se fusse in forma di breve, ma sta in tali lochi come segno di agumentatione, il quale agumenta alle predette lunghe la mità del suo valor. Pertanto ei non si pò farlo imperfetto né alterare, ma ei se pò redurre oltra ad altra nota, o ver al valor di quella, per sincopa. Il simile accade della pausa. Per le predette ragioni potete comprendere che 'l punto non si pò fare imperfetto nec quoad totum, nec quoad partes, quia non est pa[s] prolationis, ma è solamente segno (come ho detto di sopra). [¬]Quia *punctus est pa[r]s cuius par[s] non est*, ut dicitur primo Euclidis.⁴ Sequitur punctum non posse imperfici. Tenet consequentia, quia omnis imperfectio est abstra[c]tio partis illius quod imperficitur.^{¬5}

4. Quant' a questo, altro non scrivo a V.S. Se altro posso, quella mi comandi senza alcun rispetto.

In Vinegia, a dì 16 febraro. м.р.хх.

#### Pre Gioanne del Lago

1. You write that despite diligent search, Bartolomeo Ramis's *Musica*¹ is not to be found in Rome, that a singer friend of yours said Bartolomeo brought a number of copies to Rome but they were sold out in a short time and not even one is available in the bookshops, and that you regret very much not having been able to serve me.

2. Many thanks for your efforts; do not be unhappy if you did not succeed. I'll try to find a copy elsewhere. But see if you can get a copy of Gafurio's *Theorica*,² printed in Naples, when you are in Florence.

3. Regarding your query whether a dot placed next to a note can be imperfected, I say no, because the dot is not a quantity or a part of time but is only a sign demonstrating perfection, division, or augmentation. I have found that the old composer Domarto, in a Gloria in the transposed fifth mode, dotted a long in perfect *tempus* and imperfected the dot by the following semibreve. And Barbingant, in the tenor of his 'L'omme bani', similarly placed a dot after a long in the perfect mode;³ they both considered it equivalent in effect to a breve, which is completely false because that dot is a sign of augmentation, increasing the long by half its value. Thus it cannot be imperfected or altered, but it can join with another note or its value through syncopation, and the same is true with the rest. For these reasons the dot cannot be imperfected as to the whole or as to its parts since it is not a part of mensuration but only a sign. Euclid says *a point is a part that has no part.*⁴ It follows that a dot cannot be imperfected, for every imperfection is the removal of a part of that which is imperfected.⁵

⁽Corpus mensurabilis musicae 7; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1954–7), ii. 13–14, and *The Mellon Chansonnier*, ed. Perkins and Garey, i. 97. In the Mellon Chansonnier, the only source apart from Tinctoris to name Barbingant as the author, the dotted long has been replaced by a long and a breve. This reading, found in several other manuscripts, corrects the error.

⁴ This is the first sentence of Euclid's *Elements*, which Del Lago may have taken from Erhard Ratdolt's edn. (Venice, 1482) of the 13th-c. Latin translation by Joannes Campanus of Novara, fo. az': 'Punctus est cuius pars non est' (*Opus elementorum Euclidis megarensis in geometriam artem*).

⁵ The source of this marginal addition has not yet been traced.

71. Del Lago to Da Legge, 29 Feb. 1520

# **71** (J22). Fos. 107^r–108^r Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 29 February 1520 (autograph copy)

107^t Al eccellente Messer Gioanne da Legge, dignissimo sonator d'organo.

1. LNon potrei haver recevuto il maggior piacer di quel ch'io hebbi in havervi sentito nella vostra a me stata molto cara, et certo mi allegro d'ogni vostro benstare.  $1^{1}$ 

2. Messer Gioanne honorando, V.S. mi domanda in quanti luochi si segnano le congiunte nel canto figurato et dove hanno i suoi principii. LBrevemente vi rispondo et dico: Sono stato ordinato dalli musici duoi segni, per li quali i suoni naturalmente considerati si possono remuovere dal luoco proprio, li quali sono questi: b, #. Il primo remuove il suono naturale dal luoco proprio dove sta segnato per semituono maggiore in grave. Il secondo remuove il suono naturale per semituono maggiore in acuto. Questo b da loro sono stato detto b rotondo. Et a questo # sono stato detto b quadro giacente.² Pertanto quando il b rotondo sarà segnato in uno delli luochi naturali, allhora quel tuono naturale resta diviso per semituono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto. Et quando il b quadro giacente è segnato in uno de' luochi predetti naturali, allhora quel tuono naturale resta diviso per semituono maggiore in acuto.]³

3. Venendo al caso, dico le congiunte familiare, cioè quelle che sono usate nel canto figurato, si segnano in molti luochi nella mano. La prima 107^v congiunta si segna con il b rotondo in B *mi* grave et ha il suo principio | in

F acquisito di uno tuono sotto  $\Gamma$  *ut* depresso, come qui in questo essemplo:

		-	
<u></u> _			
V		_	

La seconda congiunta si segna con il b quadro giacente in C fa ut et ha il suo principio in A re, come appar qui:

¹ This letter is not extant, and perhaps it never existed, for the whole first paragraph of Del Lago's letter has been 'borrowed' from Tromboncino's letter to Del Lago of 2 Apr. 1535 (see no. 89). Da Legge died in 1525.

² 'B quadro giacente' is the terminology of John Hothby; he used it to signify 'sharp' and wrote it as  $\bigotimes$  to distinguish it from 'b quadro recto', written  $\natural$ . See no. 12, para. 3. Del Lago changed the sign from  $\bigotimes$  to  $\natural$  throughout the letter; for the reason why, see no. 57 n. 1.

³ The passage in lower half-brackets reappears, largely word for word, in Del Lago's letter to Spataro of 15 Aug. 1533 (no. 57, para. 2), part of which, in turn, was derived from Spataro's letter to Aaron of 9 Sept. 1524 (no. 13, para. 4). On the complicated history of the present letter, see Ch. 6, pp. 137–8.

# ?_{#_₽}₽₽₽₽₽₽

La terza congiunta si segna con il b rotondo in E *la mi* grave et ha il suo principio in B *mi*, come qui:

La quarta congiunta si segna con il b quadro giacente in F fa ut grave et ha il suo principio in D sol re, come qui:



La quinta congiunta si segna con il b rotondo in A *la mi re* acuta et ha il suo principio in E *la mi* grave, come appar qui:



La sesta congiunta si segna con il b quadro giacente in C sol fa ut et ha il suo principio in A la mi re acuta, come vedete in questo essemplo:



La settima congiunta si segna con il b rotondo in E *la mi* acuta et ha il suo principio in  $bfa \perp mi$  acuta, sì come dimostra questo essemplo:



L'ottava congiunta si segna con il b quadro giacente in F fa *ut* acuta et ha il suo principio in D *la sol re*, come in questo essemplo è manifesto:



4. Et queste tali congiunte, o ver exachordi acquisiti, non sono dalli regolari differenti se non di luogo, perché anchora loro sono nella diatonica et naturale progressione di sei sillabe, cioè ascendendo con 108^r questo ordine: *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, et così descendendo: *la*, *sol*, *| fa*, *mi*, *re*, *ut*. Ma le predette congiunte sono state usate da compositori, così antichi come moderni, ne' loro concenti per sua comodità, come Dufai in una sua canzone 'Le serviteur' fatta del primo tuono irregolare,⁴ et 'Venus tu m'a pris' de Orto,⁵ et 'Porquoi non', Petrus de la Rue,⁶ et la messa sine nomine, Jo. Mouton,⁷ et 'O beata infancia', de Loyset Pieton,⁸ et molti altri canti, motteti, et messe, li essempli d'essi causa brevitatis omitto. Et questi tali canti composti per le predette congiunte dette di sopra sono facili nel cantare et facili anchora a redurli alla sua regolarità. Quanto a queste congiunte, altro non scrivo a V.S. Basta assai quello che di sopra è stato detto.

In Vinegia a dì ultimo febraro. 1520.

Pre Gioanne del Lago

I.  $_{L}$  I was delighted to hear from you and to find you well.  $_{1}^{1}$ 

2. You ask where the *coniunctae* are located in mensural music and where their beginnings are. Briefly, I say that musicians invented two signs to remove sounds from their natural places, b and #. The first lowers the sound by a major semitone. The second raises the sound by a major semitone. The b is called 'round b', the # 'slanted square b'.² When a flat is signed in one of the natural positions, it divides that tone into a minor semitone below and a major one above. And when a sharp is signed in one of those natural places, the tone is divided into a major semitone below and a minor one above. ³

3. Coming to the point, the *coniunctae* ordinarily used in mensural music are found in many places of the hand. The first is on B with a flat and begins on F, a tone lower than  $\Gamma$ :

⁴ Modern edn. in Dufay, *Opera omnia*, ed. Besseler, vi. 110. Besseler regards the ascription to Dufay in the Montecassino manuscript (the work is anonymous in sixteen other sources) as wrong; he believes 'Le serviteur' is by a composer younger than Dufay. Since it is unlikely that Del Lago knew the Montecassino manuscript, there must have been at least one other source that ascribed the work to Dufay. By designating it 'del primo tuono irregolare', Del Lago echoes Tinctoris's definition of its mode in his *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum* (ed. Seay, i. 86).

⁵ Modern edn. in Harmonice musices odhecaton A, ed. Hewitt and Pope, pp. 401-2.

⁶ Modern edn. ibid., pp. 252–4.

⁷ Printed by Petrucci without title, the mass is based on Compère's 'Dictes moy toutes voz pensées'. Spataro discussed the key signature in his letter to Aaron of 30 Oct. 1533 (see no. 60, para. 14, and n. 14 for the modern edn.).

⁸ Modern edn. in *Treize Livres de motets parus chez Pierre Attaingnant*, ed. Smijers, iii. 1–15. The works of Loyset Piéton, whose dates are unknown, first begin to appear in prints and manuscripts in the 1530s. The earliest source for 'O beata infantia' is Attaingnant's print of 1534. This is another reason to believe that the present letter was written after 1535.



The second *coniuncta* is on C with # and begins on A:



The third *conjuncta* occurs on e with  $\flat$  and begins on  $B[\flat]$ :



The fourth *coniuncta* is on f with # and begins on d:



The fifth *coniuncta* occurs on a with  $\flat$  and begins on  $e[\flat]$ :

The sixth *conjuncta* is on c' with # and begins on a:

The seventh *conjuncta* is found on e' with b and begins on b[b]:



The eighth *coniuncta* is signed with # on f' and begins on d':



4. These *coniunctae*, or acquired hexachords, are no different from regular ones except in location, for they also have the diatonic order of the six syllables, ascending and descending. They have been used in works by old and modern composers, such as Dufay's 'Le serviteur' in the first mode, transposed,⁴ de Orto's 'Venus tu m'a pris',⁵ Pierre de La Rue's

'Porquoi non',⁶ Mouton's 'Missa sine nomine',⁷ Loyset Piéton's 'O beata infantia',⁸ and many other works. Such compositions with the above *coniunctae* are easy to sing and to restore to a regular position. The above should suffice with regard to *coniunctae*.

#### COMMENTARY

In describing *musica ficta* by means of *coniunctae*, Del Lago is following a convention that dates back to the fourteenth century. The earliest known treatise to speak of *coniunctae* is the Berkeley theory manuscript of 1375.⁹ In it the author, called Goscalcus in another source, defines *coniuncta* in two ways: 'A *coniuncta* is the attribute, realized in actual singing, whereby one may make a semitone of a tone and conversely.'¹⁰ 'Or rather, a *coniuncta* is the mental transposition of any property or hexachord from its own location to another location above or below.'¹¹ According to these definitions, *coniunctae* can be viewed in two different ways, either as *ad hoc* alterations of single notes for harmonic or melodic reasons—what we generally think of as *musica ficta*—or as transpositions of hexachords. As discussed by theorists, however, a *coniuncta* itself is one note, not a whole hexachord, and it is frequently illustrated by a passage from Gregorian chant.

Theorists who speak of *coniunctae* normally list them, like Del Lago, by number, but the *coniunctae* recognized vary from as few as eight, which cover the normal range of Gregorian chant, to as many as eleven or twelve. Nearly all writers agree that the first *coniuncta* is low Bb, changing the Guidonian B *mi* into a Bb. Goscalcus, however, begins his list with Ab, a tone lower. Writers who limit the number to eight or nine generally give ab' as the last. Del Lago stops one short, with  $f\sharp'$ . Among twenty-two theorists from 1375 to 1533 who list *coniunctae*, only one agrees with Del Lago's manner of enumerating them, Nicholas of Capua.¹² Like Del Lago, he presents them as hexachords, but unlike Del Lago, he credits their invention to 'venerable Boethius', a notion that is not infrequent in medieval writings on music.¹³ Del Lago probably did not take his list directly from Nicholas of Capua but from one of the unnamed 'multis doctoribus' mentioned in Nicholas's title as his sources.¹⁴

B.J.B.

⁹ University of California, Berkeley, Music Library, MS 744. See *The Berkeley Manuscript*, ed. Ellsworth, and id., 'The Origin of the Conjuncta'.

¹⁰ 'Est enim coniuncta quedam acquisita canendi actualis attribucio in qua licet facere de tono semitonum, et e converso' (*The Berkeley Manuscript*, ed. Ellsworth, pp. 50, 52).

¹¹ 'Vel aliter: coniuncta est alicuius proprietatis seu deduccionis de loco proprio ad alienum locum secundum sub vel supra intellectualis transposicio' (ibid., p. 52).

¹² His Compendium musicale, dated 1415, was published by Adrien de La Fage in Essais de diphthérographie musicale, pp. 308-38. For the explanation of the coniunctae, see pp. 327-8.

¹³ See Ch. 7 n. 53.

¹⁴ On other contemporary views of allowable notes outside the gamut, see Berger, *Musica ficta*, pp. 48–55, 'The common and the unusual steps of *musica ficta*'.

72 (J29). Fo. 136^{r-v}

Giovanni da Legge to Giovanni del Lago, 24 December 1520 (autograph)

¹³⁶ Al molto famiggerato musico mio, Messer Pre Zaneto de Santto Apostolo, Venetiis.

136^r Carissimo et più che fratello.

1. Da poi mi son partito da Venecia non mi è accaduto scrivervi cosa alcuna circha a la musica come vi haveva promesso, et questo per esser sta[to] occupatissimo in le cose del credito di casa nostra. Al presente pur alquanto da fastidii aleviato, ho vi voluto scriver queste pocce rigge, significandovi come ne li zorni passati in Firenze rittrovai una opera di musicha di Franchino, zoè la *Theorica* stampata in Napoli,¹ de la qual non so se ne habbiate cognicion. Scrivete quello voi volete si ricerchi in Napoli di cosa simile, che spero servirvi.

2. Ben voria che quella bella cosa di Tinttoris² mi volevi dar al partir mio me la mandasti qui a Roma, et za me dicevati alora haver la resolucione qual facesti una volta per Zampiero, a chi Dio perdoni. Haveria molto a charo dicta cosa con qualche pocca dichiaratione, acciò apresso la resolucione io sapesse le rason perché, de la qual cosa molto ve ne saria obligato. Et voria veder de qui quello me saperiano dir alcuni valent'omeni vi sono. De questo asai ve ne prego, che volgiate esser contento di farme tal apiacer, et date la resposta a Zuan Maria di Pre Hector, el qual me la manderà secura.

Non altro. A voi mi raccomando. In Roma a dì 24 decembre M.D.XX.

Tuus Joannes Legius

1. After I left Venice, occupation with my family's business prevented me from writing to you on music, as I had promised. A few days ago in Florence I found Gafurio's *Theorica*,¹ printed in Naples, which you may not know. Shall I look for similar things in Naples?

2. Please send me that beautiful thing by Tinctoris that you wanted to give  $me_1^2$  and also the resolution you made for the late Zampiero. If you

¹ Theoricum opus musice discipline (Naples, 1480). In his letter of 16 Feb. 1520 (no. 70), Del Lago had asked Da Legge to look for a copy of Gafurio's *Theorica* when he was in Florence, but we suspect that this letter was fictitious (see Ch. 6).

 $^{^2}$  On the 'bella cosa' by Tinctoris, his pedagogical motet 'Difficiles alios', see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings Recovered'.

would include a short explanation, I should be most grateful. I'd like to see what some worthy men here have to say about it. Please give your answer to Zuan Maria, son of Pre Hector. **73** (J10). Fos. 60^v-68^r

61^r

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 13 May 1523 (Scribe A)

60^v A Messer Gioanne da Legge.^a

1. L'Havendo io diligentemente esaminato l'epistola de | V.S. a me da lei mandata, non posso trovar causa la quale mi contradica à non satisfare al desiderio di quella. Et questo solo procede da l'immenso amore quale io gli porto. Pertanto (quantonque a me questo al presente sia non poco incommodo) mi sforzerò, secondo le tenui et debili forze del mio basso ingegno, tali dubbii dichiarirli. 1

2. Dico adonque breviter respondendo quanto al primo, dove dice V.S.: 'Prego V.R. per lo amore quale mi portate che quella mi voglia scrivere la ragione perché in  $b fa \perp mi$  non si fa mutatione, anchora che da molti sia^b stato detto', etc. LChe però in  $b fa \perp mi$  non si può far mutatione anchora che ivi siano due proprietà diverse, cioè una di b duro et l'altra di b molle (la qual è accidentale) et consequenter due voci, et questo perché quelle due voci non si possono proferrire in un medesimo suono per esser il *mi* più alto del *fa* per un semituono maggiore₁,² il quale semituono maggiore sopera el minore di una comma, et essa comma è la nona parte del tuono. Precise la nona parte non può essere, perché tanto otto | supera quanto si discosta da nove.³ Et questa è la verità perché in tutte le divisioni del tuono si trova una parte maggiore et l'altra minore. La causa è perché

^a The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al preditto messer Giovani da Legge salute.'

^b MS: siano.

¹ Del Lago has appropriated the first paragraph from an anonymous letter without addressee that exists in a copy made by Aaron; see no. 99 below.

² Del Lago made use of several passages from this letter when writing his treatise *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* (Venice, 1540). The preceding passage appears as follows in the treatise (p. 7): 'Anchora che in  $b fa \ mi$  gli siano due proprietati, et per consequente due voci, non si può però far mutatione, perché quelle due voci non si può proferire in uno medesimo suono per esser el mi distante dal fa uno semituono maggiore.' In reviewing the treatise, Aaron criticized Del Lago for writing that *mi* is 'distante dal *fa*', since a beginner might think it was lower instead of higher than *fa* (see no. 66, para. 6). In the present letter, Del Lago originally had 'per esser il mi distante et più alto del *fa*', then crossed out 'distante et'. Here is another indication that Del Lago continued to revise his letters after the treatise appeared in print.

³ In his *Theoricum opus* of 1480 (Book IV, ch. 3), Gafurio reported that some people claim the comma is half the diesis, which implies that the whole tone contains nine commas. Aaron, in his *De institutione harmonica* of 1516, flatly stated that 'Comma vero nona est pars toni' (fo. 12'; see also no. 99 n. 14). Del Lago immediately qualifies this statement, however, to reflect a more proximate, but still not accurate, Pythagorean division of the tone. On the various 14th- and 15th-c. proposals for dividing the tone, see Herlinger, 'Fractional Divisions of the Whole Tone'.

il tuono è indivisibile in parti equali, come nella resolutione del secundo dubbio si dirà. Et il tuono nella proportione sesquiottava consiste. LEt perché mutatione altro non è che variatione del nome della nota, la quale representa la voce, in uno altro nome de nota che sia in un medesimo luogho et suono, intrando di una nell'altra proprietà o vero qualità ,⁴ pertanto non essendo equali in suono et luogho, non si può fare mutatione secondo la predicta definitione. Però da questa disparilità et differentia de' suoni nessuna in essi convenir può concordia di mutatione. Oltra questo, fa, proprietà di b molle, et mi, proprietà de b duro, si contrariano et discordano all'incontro l'una et l'altra di mollitie, cioè dolceza, et di dureza, o vero asperità. Altrimenti si converiano et concorderiano insiemi, sed 'duo contraria non possunt manere in eodem 62st subiecto'.⁵ Adonque fa et mi, li quali sono contrarie in molezza et asprezza, in un

medesimo luoco, tanquam in eodem subiecto, non possono per alcun modo stare, acciò si faccia nelle notule variatione di un medesimo suono.⁶

3. Ma se qualche volta noi da necessità constretti deducessimo la mutatione in  $bfa \mid mi$ , si potria fare, et questo accader potria ne' canti misurati per causa delle consonantie minori, le quali usar si sogliono nel contrapunto, cioè quando si ascende di terza minore in quinta per contrario moto et similmente di sesta minore in octava, così delle sue composite, come si vede in parechi compositioni di alcuni imperiti compositori, i quali non intendendo la natura et l'operatione produtta delle consonantie quando le sono da loro poste inconsideratamente ne' suoi concenti, procedendo insieme da una all'altra. Alhora di necesità convien farsi la permutatione, ^{¬la} quale è la variatione del nome d'una nota nel nome d'un'altra fatta in una medesima riga o ver spatio in diverso suono, ^{¬7} come appare qui in questi esempli:



Perché convien per forza che 'l secundo fa del primo et del secundo canto si permuta in *mi*, *et hoc causa et ratione consonantiarum ut dictum est, ma in* b fa  $\vdash$  mi *in cantu plano ratione diversarum proprietatum et vocum non potest fieri* 

⁴ Cf. Del Lago, *Breve introduttione*, p. 7: 'Perché mutatione altro non è che mutare il nome de la voce, o ver de la nota, in un'altro nome di nota che sia in un medesimo luogo et suono, intrando de una in l'altra proprietà, o ver qualità.'

⁵ See no. 44 n. 3.

⁶ This passage has been translated from Ugolino of Orvieto, *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book I, ch. 16 (ed. Seay, i. 38).

⁷ Cf. Marchetto of Padua, *Lucidarium musicae*, ed. Herlinger, p. 270: 'Permutatio est variatio nominis vocis seu note in eodem spacio seu linea in diverso sono.' Del Lago's examples are similar to the ascending chromatic progressions of Marchetto, minus the first consonance.

62^v mutatio, sed si fit tunc ipsa permutatio conveniet et qualitate et quantitate.⁸ De qualità dico, cioè dalla proprietà de b molle in la proprietà de b duro, mutando fa in mi per cagioni de lo ascendere, o vero al contrario per causa del descendere; de quantità (dico), cioè passando per fa a mi da più grave in più acuto suono per spatio di semituono maggiore, o vero per contrario descendendo da mi in fa da acuto in più grave, el qual transito perché certamente è difficile et molto dissono, li musici amoniscono et comandano con ogni industria et diligentia debbersi^c schifare et fuggire. Questo transito da Marchetto padoano et da molti altri musici è chiamato permutatione. È stata certamente trovata la irregolare et indiretta mutatione ad evitare et fuggire el dissono et inetto transito di questa tale permutatione, la quale permutatione è reciproca variatione di qualità et quantità insieme.⁹

4. Dove debbe sapere V.S. che quello semituono maggiore si causa per virtù del b rotundo o ver molle, el quale b molle è accidentale, perché può esser posto et non posto.¹⁰ Et tal b per tre cause fu trovato. La prima è per torre la durezza et l'asperità al tritono (e questo quando ne' canti si  $63^{r}$  trova incomposito o ver immediato per la difficoltà che è in pronuntiarlo, perché tale intervallo offende el senso del audito; ma ben si può pronuntiarlo composito o ver mediato, perché non offende così la soa asperità et durezza l'audito per li suoni medii che sono tra li duoi estremi, il quale tritono non è altro che congioncione de tre ascendenti o descendenti tuoni come è da F grave a 占 acuto et e contra et in altri lochi simili), et per poter procedere nel genere diatonico (cioè naturale) per diatessaron₁¹¹ come appare in lo hexacordo di b molle dove dispone la quarta corda fa, la quale divide et partisce la distantia del tuono tra mese et paramese, cioè tra A *la mi re* et el [mi di b*fa* [mi, il quale si divide in duoi semituonii inequali, cioè per semituono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto, et questo accade quando il b rotondo o ver molle è segnato nella chorda paramese, cioè nel *mi* di  $b fa \perp mi$ .^d

5. La seconda ragione è per cagione di miglior sonorità,¹² cioè

⁹ These three sentences have been translated from Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, Book I, ch. 4 (fo. a8°). Where Del Lago gives 'et da molti altri musici', Gafurio cites only 'Anselmus', that is, Giorgio Anselmi of Parma, author of a *De musica* written in 1434; see the edn. by Giuseppe Massera (Historiae musicae cultores 14; Florence, 1961), p. 160.

¹⁰ On the source of this statement, see n. 13 below.

¹¹ Cf. Del Lago, *Breve introduttione*, pp. 7–8: 'Dove dovete sapere che quello semituono maggiore si causa per virtù del b molle, il quale è accidentale, perché el può esser messo e non messo, et fu trovato per tre cause. Prima, per tor la durezza del tritono per poter procedere per il modo diatonico, cioè per tuono et tuono et semituono o ver per semituono tuono et tuono.' On this and the following paragraph, see Aaron's criticism in no. 66, para. 7.

¹² Cf. ibid., p. 8: 'Secondo per meglior sonorità.'

^{&#}x27; MS: diversi.

 $^{^{}d}$  At this point Del Lago deleted the following: 'procedendo per tetrachordum synemmenon coniunctum cioè per b rotundo o ver molle'.

⁸ We have not been able to trace the source of this quotation; it is not Marchetto, Anselmi, Gafurio, or Ramis.

quando del spatio del tuono accadendo si fa semituono et di semituono 63^v tuono, | et questo per concipere el transito più suave et dolce, perché spesse volte non manco dolce et suave canto se produce et fa dalla variata qualità di voci che dalla permutata quantità del modulato suono.

6. La terza è per causa di necessità, o ver ficta musica, vel potius et convenientius dicendo colorata, per la qual colorata musica facilmente si possono redintegrare et perficere le spetie delle consonantie esercitati ne' canti misurati, cioè le quinte et le ottave imperfette, quando le occorreno. Et così per esser accidentale, questo b rotondo o ver molle non deve essere connumerato con le lettere naturali usitate nella musica, perché non può correspondere per diapason o vero ottava, né con le gravi, né con le sopracute. Certamente con le gravi el diapason è diminuto, come è da B mi grave al b fa de bfa b mi acuto; con le sopra acute, cioè dal b fa de bfa b mi acuto il con le gravi, né con le sopra acute, ma esser accidentale.  $1^{13}$  Et haec sufficiant quantum ad primum dubium.

¹³ Cf. ibid.: 'Tertio per necessità, o ver colorata musica, et così per esser accidentale, e non dè esser connumerato nelle sette lettere musicali. La ragione è perché el non può corrispondere per diapason, o ver ottava, né con le gravi, né con le acute. Con le gravi il diapason è diminuto, con le sopra acute l'è superfluo. Dove concludo non esser in computo, ma esser accidentale.' Del Lago probably derived this statement from one of the versions of the anonymous Compendium musices or Tractatus musices first published in Venice by Giovanni Battista Sessa in 1499 and reprinted many times throughout the 16th c. under different titles; on these edns. see Anonymus, Compendium musices, Venetiis, 1499-1597, ed. David Crawford (Corpus scriptorum de musica 33; American Institute of Musicology-Hänssler-Verlag, Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1985). This brief compendium of the elements of music includes the following explanation of Bb: 'Preterea sciendum est quod B rotundum in dispositione litterarum non debet proprie lineam aut spatium occupare nec locum naturaliter habere, quia non est de computo septem litterarum musicalium; si enim esset aliqua de septem, per duplarum consonantiam alicui gravium vel superacutarum responderet. Gravibus quippe per duplarem respondere non potest consonantiam, quia minus esset semitonium. Superacutis vero per diapason nequaquam consonat, quia semitonium superabundat. Vocatur enim apud Graecos B rotundum sinemenon [orig.: sive menon], hoc est accidens vel accidentale, quod enim est accidentale non est proprium, et quod non est proprium non est naturale' (ed. Crawford, p. 38).

The original source of this passage, however, goes back much earlier: it is the treatise beginning 'Quoniam de canendi scientia', published by Albert Seay in 'An Anonymous Treatise from St. Martial', *Annales musicologiques* 5 (1957), 7–42, and the passage comes from ch. 13, 'De b rotundo'. This early 13th-c. treatise, also known as the La Fage Anonymous, has recently been shown by Sarah Fuller to belong to the Cistercian tradition of music theory, with no connection to Saint-Martial; see 'An Anonymous Treatise *dictus de Sancto Martiale*: A New Source for Cistercian Music Theory', *Musica disciplina* 31 (1977), 5–30. Curiously, it is transmitted only in late manuscripts: four from the 15th c., one from the 14th (see n. 6). The paragraph on Bþ also turns up in another source, Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, MS 1013, copied in Venice in 1509, in the midst of an anonymous treatise partly drawn from the *Introductio musicae* ascribed to Johannes de Garlandia. The passage was probably also taken from the *Tractatus musices*, since it too has the misreading 'sive menon' for 'sinemenon' (deriving from an incorrect transliteration of the Greek; *nu* resembles a Latin  $\psi$ ). The treatise has been edited by Albert Seay in *Anonymous (15th Century)*, *Quaestiones et solutiones* (Colorado College Music Press Critical Texts 2; Colorado Springs, 1077); see p. 3 for the passage in question.

7. Quanto al secondo dubbio, dico che 'l tuono secondo il musico, il quale considera ogni proportione in numeri, non si può dividere in due 64^t parti equali, et questo perché in quantità discreta niuna proportione non si pò dividere in due parti equali, se non quella li cui termini hanno proportione come di numero quadrato a numero quadrato.¹⁴ Ma la proportione del tuono, la qual è sesquiottava, cioè che 'l maggiore numero contiene el minore una volta et appresso la ottava parte di quello, come è da 9 ad 8, non è però che sia come da numero quadrato a numero quadrato, perché non si troveran mai due numeri quadrati che habbiano fra sé la proportione sesquioctava, come per le ragioni arithmetice si dimostra. Il tuono adunque non è divisibile in due parti equali in termini arithmetici, li quali sono considerati dal musico; ma in quantità continua, la quale non appartiene al musico, si può dividere, et in due parti equali, et in qualunque altro modo. Et per venire alle parti di esso tuono frequentate appresso li musici, V.S. intenderà come quel intervallo che rimane, sotrahendo il ditono dal diatessaron, perché dupplicandolo non può compire integralmente un tuono. Perché era vicino alla metà di esso 64 ^v tuono, fu | chiamato da' musici semitonio, et non perché fusse precisa-

mente la metà del tuono. Et poi più oltra procedendo, perché l'intervallo che rimane sotrahendo questo semitonio dal tuono era maggiore del primo, però per distinguere fra loro, il primo fu chiamato da' musici semitonio minore et il secundo semitonio maggiore, il qual semitonio maggiore non è per se in actu cantabile, come è il minore, ma solo si assume in potentia per integrare le consonantie. Più oltra poi, subtrahendo dal semitonio maggiore il minore, nasce la comma, la quale multiplicata otto volte non può compire il tuono, et nove volte multiplicato lo ecciede, et duplicato si accosta al diesis, che è quasi una quarta parte del tuono, le quali cose per la computatione de' numeri appariono, la quale non consilgio V.S. che debba tentare, perché a voler disponer questi intervalli in numeri integri, è necessario di venir a una tanta multiplicatione di numeri che appenna si possino comprehendere.

8. Quanto al 3° [dubbio], dove V.S. seguitando dice: 'Se una anti-65^r phona, o vero uno offertorio, o vero postcommunione | sarà terminato et finito in D *sol re* et ascenderà precise al diapente, né di sopra, né di sotto harà il diatessaron, perché il diapente è agli duoi tuoni commune, il canto anchora si fa commune, pertanto domando a V.R. di che tuono saranno li predetti canti, cioè se saranno del primo tuono, o vero secondo, o pur commune. Et di questo prego V.R. me risolva brevemente, perché

¹⁴ The arithmetic of the time dealt only in rational numbers, i.e. whole numbers and wholenumber ratios; irrational numbers were left to geometry. Since separate points can represent only whole numbers, but a line may be of any length, they were known respectively as discrete and continuous quantities.

desidero molto esser fatto chiaro di questo sì fatto dubbio', etc. Messer Gioanne mio honorando, voi sapete bene che quantonque il diapente et il diatessaron siano spetie communi tanto alli autentici quanto che alli placali, nulladimeno la diapente è più atta alli autentici et la diatessaron alli placali. Et perciò li autentici più presto in diapente che in diatessaron persistono, et al contrario li placali. La ragione è perché la acuità alli autentici è assignata, et la gravità alli placali è ordinata et attribuita. La simphonia diapente dalla proportione sesqualtera proviene et resulta. Ma la diatessaron dalla sesquitertia emana et deriva, que quidem sesqualtera

alla unità è più propinqua che la sesquitertia, et così 'la virtù unita è più 65^v forte della dispersa',¹⁵ et però la acuità si ha vendicata et attribuita, et la diatessaron la gravità, perché maggiormente (come ho detto) si discosta più dalla unità, etc. Concludo adunque per la ragione addutta di sopra che tali canti saranno del primo tuono et non del secondo, né anchora saranno communi, secondo mi pare cognoscere sia di vostro parere, perché li modi autentici o ver tuoni persisteno in diapente come specie ad essi determinata, et similmente li modi placali in diatessaron como spetie alloro conveniente et assignata, perché il diapente et il diatessaron sono parti et membri del diapason, dal quale si compongono i modi o ver tuoni, così autentici come placali.¹⁶ Et quanto à questo secondo il mio poco sapere ho risposto per far cossa grata a V.S.

9. Quanto al ultimo vostro dubbio, dove V.S. così dice: 'Et perché trovo da parechi musici et compositori, così antichi come moderni, nelle sue compositioni, come sono messe, motteti, et canzoni, questo segno integro ut hic:  $|O_2$ , et similmente così tagliato:  $\phi_2$ , esser stato usato da 66^r loro per segno de modo minore perfecto et tempo imperfecto, ma d'alcuni moderni, come Verbonet nella sua messa de 'Graciuse gent',¹⁷ il contrario, cioè per segno de modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto, cantato solamente in dupla proportione, come appare ne' tenori della preditta messa, sì che non pocho resto confuso, vedendo tra questi dotti compositori esser contrarietà in segnare et ponere questo tal segno in duoi modi diversi, cioè da alcuni per segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto et da alcuni altri per segno di modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto, dil che prego V.R. che quella si degni scriverme la resolutione di questo tal dubbio, come credo la farà, secondo il suo solito. Et di questo vi prego quanto so et posso', etc.

10. A questo vostro ultimo dubbio brevemente respondo et dico. É 66^v vero che molti compositori antichi, come è Domarto et Busnois, et etiam come sono parechi moderni, tutti questi vogliono che questo segno O2 et similmente questo  $\phi_2$  siino del modo minore perfetto per il circolo et del tempo imperfetto per virtù di questa cifra binaria ut hic: 2, il che è falso,

¹⁵ See no. 43 n. 2. ¹⁶ See the Commentary. ¹⁷ See no. 44 n. 11.

perché el circolo dimostra et fa il tempo perfetto o vero la breve perfetta. et non la lunga, et è certamente immutabile. Et che sia immutabile non bisogna altrimenti provarlo, perché è notorio. Et cossì secondo la loro opinione la cifra binaria non solamente accelera la misura in dupla, come proportio dupla, o vero anchora parturisce et produce la breve imperfetta, per il che la possanza dello accessorio saria maggiore della potentia del suo principale. Per questo fa mutare al circolo la sua naturale possanza, perché el proprio del circolo è di dimostrare el tempo perfetto, et non il modo minore perfetto, et el semicircolo el tempo imperfetto, et non il modo minore imperfetto, et questo è stato il proprio volere de' primi inventori 67^r de' preditti duoi segni principali, cioè del circolo et del semicircolo. Al tempo perfetto hanno ascritto el circolo come figura perfetta, et al tempo imperfetto il' semicircolo come figura imperfetta, perché i gieometri 'dicono che la figura spherica, cioè la figura circulare, mai è perfetta insino che el circolo non è compito nel punto dove è comminciato, o vero in fino a tanto che 'l fine si unischa et congiunga con el suo principio. Pertanto nella rotondità consiste la perfectione. Et però io concludo, nessuno segno essere del modo maggiore o ver minore perfetto (dico secondo il volere de' dotti compositori moderni) se non per la virtù delle pause. L'è da notare che le pause demostranti tanto el modo maggiore quanto che 'l modo minore perfetto se disponeno qualche volta solamente inditiale, cioè solamente per segno demonstrativo del modo, et così non se connumerano alle altre note del canto, et però si pongono tra la chiave et il segno. Qualche volta si pongono et segnano essentiale et indiciale | et si numerano, et allhora si dispongono poi al segno.¹⁸

11. LOltra di questo è da sapere che la pausa mai può consequire et acquistare o vero assumere alteratione, perché ella è immobile 1,¹⁹ et perciò quante volte noi intendiamo segnare la pausa la quale concerna l'integra misura, è necessario che li sia immediate dinanti a lei el numero perfetto ne' segni perfetti, o vero il numero imperfetto ne' segni imperfetti,²⁰ perché in simili pause non cade la sincopa, la quale certamente è reduttione di alcune note divise et separate insieme l'una da l'altra per la maggiore interposta, o vero più maggiori.²¹ Nondimanco a' nostri tempi noi vedemo

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[&]quot; MS: al.

¹⁸ Del Lago drew this paragraph, often quoting literally, from his letter to Spataro of 23 Aug. 1532; see no. 44, paras. 5 and 13.

¹⁹ Cf. Del Lago, Breve introduttione, p. 16: 'Circa l'alterare, è da sapere che la pausa mai non assume alteratione né perfettione da minore, perché la è immobile.'

²⁰ The source of Del Lago's statement is probably Ugolino's commentary on the Libellus cantus mensurabilis of Johannes de Muris; see Declaratio musicae disciplinae, Book III, ch. 1x-4 (ed Seay, ii. 254-5).

²¹ Cf. Gafurio, Practica musicae, fo. cc4^v: 'Sincopa in cantilena mensurabili est reductio notulae ultra maiorem vel maiores suas ad aliam vel ad alias quibus conveniat in connumeratione."

praticarsi et osservarsi l'opposito et il contrario ne' canti di molti egregii cantori et musici. Perché la nota passa la maggior pausa et perché pausa è segno di omissione o ver di aspiratione di voce misurata, ella è difficile a sincoparla.²² Per questa ragione la non si deve sincopare come si fa la nota la quale significa voce, essendo la voce segno^f degli affetti et passioni che sono nell'anima, 'quoniam anima | naturaliter delectatur in musicis melodiis', Aristoteles, viii. Physicorum,²³ etc.

12. Prego V.S. se io non la ho satisfatta come lei desiderava, che la me perdoni. Il buon volere non gli ho mancato. Se altro vi occorre, fatemelo^g intendere senza risguardo alcuno, perché mi sarà sempre gratissimo potere sempre compiacere ad ogni vostro desiderio secondo si estendono le mie picciole et debile forze.

In Venetia a dì xiii maggio. м. D. xxiii.

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# [Giovanni del Lago]

1. LHaving diligently perused your letter, I see no reason not to reply, given my great affection for you. Though it is not very convenient now, I shall do my best, according to my humble gifts, to answer your questions.  $]^1$ 

2. With regard to your first question, there is no mutation on  $bfa \ mi$ , even though there are two different proprieties, hard b and soft b (which is accidental), and therefore two syllables, because they have not the same sound; *mi* is higher than *fa* by a major semitone,² which exceeds the minor semitone by a comma, the ninth part of a tone. The comma is not precisely a ninth of a tone: it lies half-way between an eighth and a ninth.³ All tones are divided into a major and a minor semitone and cannot be divided into equal parts. The tone is in a 9:8 proportion. Mutation is the change of the name of a note, representing a syllable, to another name in the same place and sound, transferring from one propriety to another.⁴ If the syllables are not the same in place and sound, mutation cannot occur. *This difference in sound precludes a harmonious mutation*. Moreover, fa, the propriety of soft b, and

#### f MS: segni. & MS: fatemello.

'Reductio' does not mean 'reduction' but 'a leading or bringing back'. In this context it means the drawing together of notes forming one mensural unit but separated by a syncopating note. See the Notes on Problematical Terms.

²³ Del Lago errs in citing *Physics*; the citation comes from *Politics* 8. 5 (1340^e4), in the version found in the *Auctoritates Aristotelis* (ed. Hamesse, p. 262).

mi, the propriety of hard b, conflict in softness and hardness. Otherwise they would be concordant, 'but two contraries cannot exist in the same subject'.⁵ Therefore fa and mi, contrary in softness and harshness, cannot stand in one place for a variation of the same sound to be made in the notes.⁶

3. Sometimes circumstances force us to mutate on bfa b mi, such as in polyphonic music when we ascend from a minor third to a fifth by contrary motion or a minor sixth to an octave and their compounds, as one sees in the works of unskilled composers who don't understand the proper progression of consonances. Then we are forced to use permutation, which is the change of the name of a note into the name of another note on the same line or space but with a different sound, as here:⁷



The second fa has to be changed to mi because of the consonances. In plainchant mutation cannot be made in b fa mi because of the different proprieties and syllables, but if it is done, this permutation will be needed in quality and quantity.⁸ Quality concerns mutating fa to mi to ascend, or vice versa to descend; quantity concerns singing the interval between fa and mi, a major semitone, which is very difficult and dissonant and should be avoided. Marchetto and others call it permutation. Irregular and indirect mutation was invented to avoid this dissonant and awkward permutation, which is the mutual interchange of quality and quantity.⁹

4. You should know that the major semitone is caused by the soft b, which is accidental because it can be placed or not placed.¹⁰ The flat was invented for three reasons. The first is (a) to mitigate the tritone whenever it is approached by leap, for it offends the ear; when approached by step it is not so offensive and can be sung (a tritone is a succession of three ascending or descending tones), and (b) to be able to proceed in the diatonic genus by a fourth,¹¹ as in the hexachord with Bb; the fourth note, fa, divides the tone between A and B into two unequal semitones, with the minor semitone below, whenever a flat is signed on *mi*.

5. The second reason is for better sonority:¹² a tone is changed to a semitone or vice versa to achieve a more pleasant progression; variation in intervals often produces no less sweetness than variation in vocal quality.

6. The third reason is out of necessity, or *musica ficta*—more properly, 'coloured' music—which restores perfection to consonances such as the imperfect fifth and octave. Since it is accidental, the flat should not be counted with the natural letters used in music because it does not form a fifth or octave with lower or upper notes; with the lower it is diminished, e.g. B to bb; with the upper, it is augmented, e.g. bb to bb'. Thus I conclude it is accidental.¹³

²² This is an unacknowledged translation from Ugolino's commentary on Johannes de Muris's *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* in *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. 1x-1 (ed. Seay, ii. 249). The definition of 'pausa' comes from the succeeding chapter (ibid.).

7. With regard to your second question, the tone, according to musicians, who consider all proportions in numbers, cannot be divided into two equal parts because as a discrete quantity no interval can be divided in whole numbers unless the terms are in the proportion of square numbers.¹⁴ But a tone is 9:8, and no square numbers will ever have the proportion 9:8. In arithmetical terms, used by musicians, a tone is not divisible into two equal parts, but as a continuous quantity it can be divided ino two equal parts and any other way. As for the musical parts of the tone, the interval found by subtracting a ditone from a fourth, when doubled, does not fill out a tone. Because it was close to half a tone, musicians called it a semitone, not because it was precisely half a tone. Since the interval that remains after subtracting this semitone from a tone is larger, musicians distinguished the semitones as minor and major. A major semitone is not singable per se but is used to complete consonances. If you subtract a minor from a major semitone, you get a comma; multiplied by 8 it does not reach a tone, and multiplied by 9 it exceeds a tone. Doubled, it is close to a diesis, almost a quarter of a tone. All this is evident from mathematical calculations, but I shouldn't advise you to try it, because to arrange the intervals in whole numbers involves multiplication almost beyond comprehension.

8. Your third question is whether an antiphon, offertory, or postcommunion that ends on d and has no fourth above or below it and rises precisely to the fifth—a range that is common to both the modes—is to be considered first mode, second mode, or common. The species of fourth and fifth are common to authentic and plagal modes, but the fifth is associated more with the authentic, the fourth with the plagal. Authentic modes emphasize the fifth, plagal ones the fourth; high notes are assigned to authentic, low notes to plagal. The fifth has the proportion 3:2, the fourth 4:3, so the fifth is closer to unity, and since 'virtue united is stronger than virtue dispersed', etc.,¹⁵ I conclude that such chants will be in the first mode, not in the second, nor common. Authentic modes emphasize the fifth as their assigned species, plagal modes the fourth, for fifth and fourth are parts of the octave, of which the modes are composed.¹⁶

9. Your last question concerns the use of  $O_2$  and  $\phi_2$  by old and modern composers to mean perfect minor mode and imperfect *tempus*; you find that some modern composers, such as Verbonnet in his 'Missa Gratieuse gent',¹⁷ use these signs for imperfect minor mode and perfect *tempus* under duple proportion, and you ask me to clarify this confusing practice.

10. Older composers such as Domarto and Busnois, and some modern ones, consider  $O_2$  and  $\phi_2$  to show perfect minor mode because of the

circle and imperfect *tempus* because of the figure 2. This is false because the circle demonstrates a perfect breve, not a long, and this meaning is immutable, as is well known. In their opinion, the figure 2 not only accelerates the measure in duple proportion but also produces an imperfect breve, which results in the strength of the accessory being greater than the power of the principal. This changes the natural power of the circle and the semicircle as devised by the inventors of those signs. They designated the circle for perfect *tempus* since the circle is a perfect figure; geometricians say that a circle is never perfect until the end meets the beginning; thus perfection consists in roundness. I conclude that the only sign that indicates mode (according to modern composers) is rests, which are sometimes only 'indicative' and therefore are not counted when they are placed between the clef and the time signature. Other times they may be both 'essential' and 'indicative', in which case they are counted and are placed after the time signature.¹⁸

11. The rest never undergoes alteration because it is fixed;¹⁹ whenever we use a rest of a full measure, it must be preceded by the perfect number under perfect signs, or the imperfect number under imperfect signs.²⁰ These rests cannot be syncopated. Syncopation is the drawing together of several notes divided and separated from each other by a larger note or notes.²¹ Nevertheless, many outstanding modern musicians do the opposite. But it is difficult to syncopate a note over a larger rest.²² A rest signifies omission and should not be syncopated like a note which signifies a vocal sound, for the voice is a sign of the affects and passions of the soul; as Aristotle says, 'the soul naturally delights in musical melodies'.²³

12. Please forgive me if I have not satisfied you; it is not through lack of good will. Do not hesitate to call on me again; I shall be glad to respond to the best of my humble ability.

#### COMMENTARY

Aaron, in his *De institutione harmonica* of 1516, fo. 16^r, called melodies with a range of no more than a fifth 'common' to both authentic and plagal modes. He counselled judging their mode by the *chorda*, the third above the final: if more notes of the melody fall above the *chorda* than beneath it, the melody is in the authentic mode. This theory can be traced back to the anonymous thirteenthcentury *Summa musicae*.²⁴ Tinctoris, who finds the determination by *chorda* not entirely satisfactory, states that the melody is to be judged authentic if it reiterates the fifth note above the final more frequently than the fourth.²⁵ This theory was

²⁴ GS iii. 225-6; see Harold S. Powers, 'Mode', The New Grove Dictionary, xii. 391.

²⁵ See Tinctoris, Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum, ch. 35 (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 92-3).

first developed by Marchetto in his *Lucidarium musicae*, where he describes a 'common species of fourth' (the fourth rising from the final) and states that emphasis on this common fourth, if the melody rises no higher than a sixth above the final, indicates that the mode is plagal.²⁶ Del Lago seems unaware of either theory, basing his judgement solely on the notion that the higher range is more characteristic of the authentic mode.

B.J.B.

²⁶ Lucidarium, ed. Herlinger, p. 434. See Powers, 'Mode', p. 393. Powers has pointed out that Gafurio misunderstood Marchetto's 'common fourth' (*Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, p. 53); however, he was aware of the method of judging mode that derives from the concept of 'common fourth-species': 'In the opinion of many, frequent repetition of the note a fifth above a final will indicate an authentic melody, but repetition of a note a fourth above a final will indicate a plagal melody' (p. 65). This statement follows an exposition of the manner of judging mode by the 'chordae iudiciales'. Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 16 June 1523 (Scribe A)

68^r A Messer Gioanne da Legge.^a

68^v

69^r

1. Da Messer Giovan Maria de Lio ho ricevuto una vostra data a dì 6 di febraro, la quale mi è stata gratissima, et ho inteso quanto dite di Frate Alessandro. Ma sia stata la cosa come si voglia, mi parebbe che per tal causa non dovesse esser nato tra voi alcuno odio né veruna malivolentia perché non gli è accaduto donde causar si potesse | rissa et sdegno alcuno, ma più presto eccitamento et studio a questa nostra eccellente arte et scientia musicale.¹ Non posso io non mi dolere di lui, che l'habbia usate sì fatte parole contra di me, havendolo sempre servito da buono amico, et essendomi sempre sforzato giusta le mie poche forze compiacere et satisfare a tutti sui quesiti. Io mi ricordo che del 1520, per una sua mi chiedea li volesse dichiarare certi dubbii per li quali mi accorsi che lui sapea inter parum et nihil de musica, sì che io non mi curo che da lui siano laudati li mei componimenti, non intendendo lui queste sì fatte sottili et scientifice considerationi, perché le appertengono a buoni theorici et non a simplici prattici come è lui, perché è differentia tra el theorico el il prattico, 'quoniam theorici est considerare et disponere, practici vero exercere'.² Et bisogna altro che buona voce ad acquistarsi fama et gloria tra i musici; 'dona enim nature neque laudamus neque vituperamus'.³ Un puro et simplice cantore è come un corpo senza anima, perché senza buon contrapunto nesuno può | esser buon cantore. Ille etenim proprie et vere appellandus est bonus cantor qui cantat artificialiter et non usualiter tantum. Unde versus:

> Bestia non cantor qui non canit arte, sed usu. Non vox cantorem facit artis sed documentum.⁴

^{*a*} The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al predetto Messer Giovani da Legge salute.'

¹ The opening of this letter bears more than a passing resemblance to the beginning of Spataro's letter to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni of 10 Nov. 1524 (no. 14). On this, see Ch. 6.

² Del Lago is quoting the marginal remark at the end of Book I, ch. 1 of Gafurio, *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* (Milan, 1518), fo. A2^v.

³ The ultimate source is Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* 2. 6 ( $1223^{a}11$ ). For his help with this and nn. 6 and 10 we are greatly indebted to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens.

⁴ These lines, sometimes attributed to Johannes Hollandrinus, were often quoted in the Middle Ages; see Lambertus, *Tractatus de musica* (CS i. 252); Anon., *Quatuor principalia* (CS iv. 203); Anon. XI, *Tractatus de musica plana et mensurabili* (CS iii. 416); and Henricus de Zelandia, *Tractatus de cantu perfecto et imperfecto* (CS iii. 114). We have not traced the precise source of Del Lago's quotation. On the much-debated topic of the difference between musicians and singers, see Erich Reimer, art. 'Musicus — cantor', in *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminotogie*. The introductory sentence is not cited by Reimer.

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Questo medesimo afferma Giovan de Muris nel suo trattato di contraponto nella prima conclusione, el quale così dice: Contrapunctum non est aliud nisi punctum contra punctum ponere, vel notam contra notam facere seu ponere, et est fundamentum discantus. Et quia sicut quis non potest edificare nisi prius faciat fundamentum, sic aliquis non potest bene discantare nisi prius addiscat et sciat contrapunctum.⁵ Prova anchora questo et conferma Misser Baldo in l. jam hoc jure ff ad Trebellia. Parlando de' notari imperiti, li assimiglia et fa simili alli cantori ignoranti, le parole del quale sono queste: Tabelliones 69^v aliqui concipiunt substitutiones dicto modo | et non intelligunt quid ipsi dicant, ad instar illorum cantorum, qui bene cantant per naturam et nesciunt assignare rationem sui cantus.⁶ ^{[Et} similmente questi tali imperiti cantori Guido monacho gli asimiglia ad uno animale irrationale, come appare nella sua Musica per questi versi:

> Musicorum et cantorum magna est differentia. Illi sciunt, ipsi dicunt que componit musica. Et qui dicit quod non sapit reputatur bestia.⁷

Dice anchora così: Cantores vulgares qui vim toni et semitoni[i] discernere nesciunt in vanum laboraverunt, tantum tempus in cantando perdentes quantum in secularibus divinisque scripturis profecisse potuissent.⁸ Et Boetius dice: Ita est de illis qui sine arte canunt, sicut de litteratis qui nunquam [litteras] didicerunt.

2. Per le predette ragioni et auctoritati adonque molto pocho mi curo se Frate Alesandro lauda o biasma li mei scritti, per non haver intelligentia⁹ : ella theorica. Ma in lui si verifica quel detto volgare: 'Quod scit,

⁵ Ars contrapuncti secundum Johannem de Muris (CS iii. 60). What Coussemaker published as one treatise is actually two different treatises, the second (from which Del Lago's quotation comes) being an anonymous later addition ('Cum notum sit . . .'), found in many sources; see Ch. 7.

⁶ The 14th-c. jurist Baldo degli Ubaldi, commonly known as Baldus, likened notaries who inserted in testamentary substitutions the phrase 'vulgariter pupillariter et per fideicommissum' without understanding what it meant to the singer 'qui bene cantat, non tamen per rationem', a comparison he credited to Cino da Pistoia: see *Baldi Ubaldi Perusini iurisconsulti in primam et secun*. *Infortiati partem*... *Commentaria* (Venice, 1577), fo. 91th on *l. iam* [misprinted *nam*] *boc iure* § *boc itaque casu ff. de vulgari et pupillari substitutione* = Digest 28. 6. 4. 2. Del Lago's citation of *ff. ad senatusconsultum Trebellianum* = Digest 36. 1 is erroneous: there is no such *lex* in this title, though Baldus had just referred to his comments on *l. Scaevola ff. ad Trebellianum* = Digest 36. 1. 78.

⁷ These famous verses are from Guido's Regulae rhythmicae (GS ii. 25). The translation is taken from Lowinsky, 'Renaissance Writings on Music Theory (1964)', Renaissance News 18 (1965), 358-70 at 363 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 938-9.

⁸ These lines come from Guido's Prologue to his Antiphonary (GS ii. 34-35), but in a slightly different version. F. Alberto Gallo has suggested that Del Lago's source was the *Introductio musicae* attributed to Johannes de Garlandia; see 'Citazioni di theorici medievali', p. 173. The quotation, however, matches a passage in the *Brevis collectio artis musicae* of D. B. de Francia, a treatise owned by Del Lago, in which the following quotation (not to be found in Boethius' *De musica*) also appears; see Ch. 7, pp. 147 and 159.

⁹ At this point the following text was deleted: 'Quoniam imperiti quasi omnes sunt et invidi cantores.' The passage between the two :: signs was then added, and was written as a footnote on fo. 70'. This passage is the second version; the first version was written as a marginal note on

quisque colit. Quod nescit spernit et odit.'¹⁰ Ma quello che esso dice lo dice per invidia, perché quasi tutti i cantori imperiti sono invidi, per la qual cosa io non voglio esser laudato da questi, la laude de' quali è vituperio, né da questi mi vergogno di esser inculpa[to], il vituperio de' quali mi è laude.¹¹ Ma : : gli direte da parte mia che li esempi ho mandati a V.S. stano bene et in essi non è errore alcuno, perché il modo perfetto et il tempo perfetto, et similmente la prolatione perfetta si cognoscono così per li segni intrinseci, come per li extrinseci. Li segni extrinseci sono el circolo et il semicircolo et altri segni simili, et si pongono in fronte cantus et significano tempo perfetto et imperfetto: perfetto il circolo, et imperfetto el semicircolo. Ma li segni intrinseci sono li accidenti come è il colore, el quale consiste nelle note piene, come è il punto di divisione, le note alterate, ridotte, et le pause le quali dinotano tale perfettione, et altri simili accidenti i quali si segnano in processu cantus, cioè tra le notule cantabili, perché quando li antichi segnavano gli accidenti i quali dinotano il tempo perfetto fra le notule cantabili in processu di ciascuna particola di qualunque concento, allhora non poneano in principio di tali particole il segno circolare 1,¹² il quale dinota tempo perfetto. Et quando poneano gli accidenti dinotanti el modo maggiore et minore perfetto, et così quelli che dimostravano la prolatione perfetta, similmente non segnavano li segni primarii dinotanti sì fatte perfettioni, perché loro dicono esser superfluo et non necessario segnare con segno di ciascuna quantità perfetta in fronte cantus, essendo dimostrata la perfettione per li suoi proprii et primarii segni, come nelle loro compositioni si può comprendere. Et questo afferma il sottile musico Messer Bartholomeo Hispano nella sua Musica nella terza parte, trattato primo, in fine del terzo capitolo.¹³ Et questo anchora se conferma da Messer Giovani | Spataro in la sua opera di Musica intitulata al Signor Hermes Bentivoglio al capitolo 7º, el quale dice queste parole: Non solamente per li segni sopradetti si comprende et conosce quando le note

fo. 69°, but was deleted in favour of the second, which is less scholarly but more vehement. The deleted passage follows: 'de la theorica. Et però facendo poco conto di essa, secundo dice quel vulgare ditto, 'Quod scit, quisque colit. Quod nescit spernit et odit.' Ma quel che lui dice, lo dice per invidia, perché quasi omnes cantores imperiti sunt invidi. Pertanto voglio osservare quel preceto del buon Catone, el qual dice così: "Contra verbosos noli contendere verbis. / Sermo datur cunctis, animi sapientia paucis."' The source is *Disticha Catonis* 1. 10 ('Do not vie with the wordy in words; Speech is given to all, good sense to few').

¹⁰ Walther, *Proverbia sententiaeque*, ii/4, no. 27640: 'Scire volunt omnes, sed nullus discere quaerit; quod scit, quisque colit; quod nescit spernit et odit.'

¹¹ Del Lago may have taken this from Spataro's *Honesta defensio*, fo. C7^t, quoting Ramis: 'Nolo ab his laudari, quorum laus vituperium est: nec ab his culpari vereor, quorum vituperatio laus est.'

¹² The passage in lower half-brackets was later used by Del Lago in his *Breve introduttione*, p. 18. On the concept of notes 'drawn together', see the Notes on Problematical Terms under 'riducere'.

¹³ Ramis, Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 90.

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# 74. Del Lago to Da Legge, 16 June 1523

## The Letters

sono nella ternaria o ver binaria divisione, ma anchora per certi effetti, li quali sono produtti da essi segni, come per le note, le quali per essere divise, alterate o ver duplicate, redutte, piene, senza segno per la divisione di esse^b note, si può giudicare.¹⁴

3. Quanto al quesito, o ver motivo, che fa V.S. nella vostra lettera dove dite, 'Cur secunda semibrevis potius quam prima alterationem consequitur', quanto a questo io vi assegno due ragioni perché si debbe alterare la secunda semibreve et non la prima. Dico 1 che alteratione non è altro che il duplicare ciascuna nota o ver figura del suo proprio valore.¹⁵ Et si causa sempre nelle parti propinque delle figure perfette et nella seconda, o vero ultima, sempre. La ragione è perché la prima si ha la natura della unità, et la seconda della binalità, per le quali nature resulta la proportione dupla, come dimostra Boëtio nella sua Arithmetica nell'ultimo capitolo del primo libro, il qual dimostra che ogni inequalità si causa et procede della equalità 1.¹⁶ L'altra ragione | è perché la prima semibreve, come ho detto, custodisce la natura della unità et la seconda ha^c la natura della binalità, dalli quali numeri resulta la symphonia diapason, la quale consta di gravità et acuità, vendicandosi et appropriandosi più tempo la gravità che la celerità, la quale della virtù della binalità procede. Et però produce alteratione alla seconda.¹⁷ Et nota V.S. che l'alteratione è stata excogitata ad hoc, quoniam 'similis ante similem non potest imperfici'. Sì che V.S. intende la mia opinione quanto a questa alteratione, perché la seconda et non la prima nota si altera, o ver si duplica.

4. Se V.S. non rimane da me al tutto satisfatta, me ne rincresce assai. Se anchora in qualche parte essa di me si contenta, Dio ne sia laudato. Et ponendo fine, non dirò altro salvo che la prego che la me ami equalmente, alla qualle mi offero et raccomando pur assai.^d

In Venetia, a dì 16 giugno м. D. xxiii.^e

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### [Giovanni del Lago]

¹⁵ Cf. Tinctoris: 'Alteratio est proprii valoris alicuius notae duplicatio' (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 173).

1. I received your letter of 6 February from Giovan Maria de Lio and understand what you say about Frate Alessandro. I think that what occurred between the two of you ought not to produce rancour but rather increased devotion to our excellent art of music.¹ I am bound to complain because of his maligning me: I have always served him like a good friend and tried my best to answer his questions. I recall that in 1520 he asked me to clarify certain doubts, from which I realized the depth of his ignorance about music, so I don't care whether he praises my works since their subtle considerations are for good theorists and not simple practical musicians like him, 'for the theorist contemplates and puts things in order, the practitioner merely performs'.² A good voice isn't sufficient to acquire fame, 'for a gift of nature we neither praise nor disparage'.³ A pure and simple singer is like a body without a soul, for without good counterpoint no one can be a good singer. A truly good singer is one who sings with art and not just in the usual manner, whence the verses:

> He is an animal and not a singer who sings not by art but by rote. It is not the voice that makes a singer but the evidence of art.⁴

Johannes de Muris affirms this in his treatise on counterpoint: Counterpoint is nothing but the placing of point against point or note against note, and it is the foundation of discant. Just as one cannot build without first making a foundation, one cannot sing discant well without first learning and knowing counterpoint.⁵ Baldo, referring to incompetent notaries, compares them to unschooled singers: Some notaries draw up substitutions in this manner and do not understand what they are saying, like those singers who sing well naturally, but cannot explain what they do.⁶ Guido likens them to an unreasoning animal:

There is a great difference between musicians and singers. These merely perform; those know what music is. And he who sings what he does not understand is considered an animal.⁷

He also says: Common singers who can't distinguish a tone from a semitone have laboured in vain, losing as much time in singing as it would have taken them to become proficient in secular and sacred letters.⁸ And Boethius says: The same goes for those who sing without art as for the literate who have never had formal teaching.

2. Thus you can see that I care little whether Frate Alessandro praises or condemns my writings.⁹ :|: He confirms that trite saying, 'Everyone honours what he knows and scorns and hates what he doesn't.'¹⁰ He really speaks out of envy, for all poor singers are jealous; their praise is disparaging and their disparagement praise.¹¹ :|: You can tell him that the examples I sent you are right and free from error, 'because perfect mode and *tempus* can be recognized from intrinsic as well as extrinsic signs. The latter are the circle and semicircle and similar signs and are placed at the

^b MS: essere. ^c MS: sa. ^d All the letters in the first section of Vat. lat. 5318 originally ended with 'Vale'. At the end of this letter there is a marginal note, obviously directed to the printer: 'levare via tutti i vale'--'remove all the *vales*'.

^e The scribe originally wrote M.D.xxiiii; the first 'i' has been erased.

¹⁴ The italicized passage is very close to the version of Spataro's *Utile et breve regule di canto*, fo. 10^r.

¹⁶ This passage also reappears in Del Lago's *Breve introduttione*, p. 13. The last chapter of Book I of Boethius' *De arithmetica* is entitled: 'Demonstratio quemadmodum omnis inaequalitas ab aequalitate processerit' (ed. Friedlein, p. 66). See also *De musica* 2. 7: 'Omnem inaequalitatem ex aequalitate procedere eiusque demonstratio' (ibid., p. 232).

¹⁷ Del Lago's fanciful explanation of alteration, mixing number theory, proportions, and acoustics, has no theoretical (let alone rational) basis.

beginning of the composition and indicate perfect and imperfect *tempus*. The intrinsic signs are attributes such as colour (blackened notes), the dot of division, altered notes, notes drawn together, rests indicating perfection, and other similar attributes that occur in the course of the work, for when older composers used the attributes of perfect time in the course of a work, they didn't use a sign of perfect *tempus* at the beginning.¹² Similarly, they thought it superfluous to indicate mode and prolation at the beginning when the attributes of perfection appeared in the work, as can be seen in their compositions. This is affirmed by the subtle theorist Bartolomeo Ramis in his *Musica practica*¹³ and also by Giovanni Spataro in his treatise dedicated to Hermes Bentivoglio, who says: *Not only can you tell by these signs when notes have a binary or ternary division, but also by certain effects that they produce, as can be judged from notes that are divided, altered, drawn together, or blackened, without the signs for division of these notes.¹⁴* 

3. With regard to your question why the second semibreve rather than the first is altered, there are two reasons. Alteration is nothing other than the doubling of each note by its own value.¹⁵ It always takes place in the near parts of a perfect note and always in the second of them. The reason is that the first note has the nature of unity, the second of binality, creating the duple proportion, as Boethius demonstrates in his *Arithmetic*, where he shows that all inequality is caused by and proceeds from equality.¹⁶ The second reason is that this duple proportion of the first and second notes results in the interval of an octave, consisting of high and low notes; since the lower sound takes more time, the second note is altered.¹⁷ Alteration was devised for this reason because 'like before like cannot be imperfected'.

4. If I have not entirely satisfied you, I am very sorry. But if you are pleased even in small part, God be praised.

75 (J28). Fo. 135^{r-v}

Giovanni da Legge to Giovanni del Lago, 20 December 1523 (autograph)

^{135^t} Allo mio carissimo quanto fratello Messer Pre Zanetto veneto musico. Apresso la chiesia di Santa Sofia a canto le scovazze, Venetiis.

135^v Frater mi carissime.

1. Io sum certo che havereti preso admiracione per essermi partito da Venecia senza havervi parlato. Me perdonareti che re vera hebbi da far assai. Et si partissemo sotto sopra, siamo giunti in Roma alli 16 de l'instante sani et di bona volgia. Subito el di sequente andai a ritrovar quello mio amico, el quale ha quelli libri di musica, et ho tolto li tituli in nota et qui sotto ve li scrivarò.¹ Vero è che non sono grandi volumi. Pur mi sarà de non pocco incomodo a transcriverli per diverse cause. Tamen io farò el possibile per servirvi et per haver ancor io apresso di me qualche bella cosa.

2. Ho promisso a questo amico mio la messa de 'Dixerunt discipuli'² cum le annotacion di quelli modi dove sarà bisognio, per il che vi pregho fate sì che la possi intendere et servirlo. Haveria charo che facesti si possibil fosse in modo di uno comento sopra quello 'Difficiles' di Tintoris³ acciò lo potesse bene intendere et darlo ancor a lui a conosser, perché ge lo promisso. Sì che pilgiati questa faticha acciò che io habbi maggior causa di far habbiate el vostro intento. Et da voi expecto risposta. Et date a mio fratello el tutto, el quale vi portarà la presente. Altro non mi occorre. A voi sempre me riccomando.

Di Roma alli 20 di decembre 1523.

Vester ut frater Joannes Legius

1. You must have been surprised that I left Venice without speaking to you, but I really had a lot to do. And if we left all topsy-turvy, we arrived in Rome on the 16th healthy and cheerful. I immediately went to my friend who has those books on music. I enclose a list.¹ They aren't large, but it would be inconvenient to transcribe them, for a number of reasons. Nevertheless I'll do my best for your sake and also to have something nice for myself.

¹ The bottom of the page has been cut off.

² The mass is by Éloy d'Amerval; see no. 63 n. 3.

³ On this work, see no. 72 and Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide'.

2. I promised this friend the mass 'Dixerunt discipuli'² with the annotations on the modes. Please give me some help on this, if possible in the form of a commentary on Tinctoris's 'Difficiles alios'³ so I can understand it and explain it to him. This will provide me greater reason to see that you get your wish. Please give your answer to my brother, who will bring you this letter.

**76** (J9). Fos. 58^r-60^v Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 29 December 1523 (Scribe A)

^{58^r} A Messer Gioanne da Legge.⁴

Eccellente Messer Giovanni,

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58* I. Ho ricevuta una | vostra de dì xx di decembre, la quale me è stata summamente grata.¹ Et ho inteso quanto dite quanto a quella regola o ver precetto de contrapunto data dalli antichi musici, cioè che quando el tenore o vero il canto fermo ascende, il contrapunto debbe descendere, et e converso. Dico che questa regola, quanto a me, la mi pare facile da sé, et però non ha bisogno di espositione et di dichiaratione alcuna. Ma se la S.V. ben considerarà la difinitione dil contrapunto, quella vederà che la non sarà così difficile come quella dice. Ma per satisfatione de V.S. non restarò di dire il parer mio, perché desidero farvi sempre piacere in tutto quello che io so et posso.

2. Noti adonque V.S. quod contrapunctus non est aliud nisi punctum contra punctum ponere vel notam contra notam facere vel ponere,² perché la sua etymologia o vero derivatione è a contra et pono, quasi contraria positio, eo quod supra vel infra alteri altera contraponitur.³ Vel sic: a contra et punctus, eo quod una nota contra aliam posita tanquam unus punctus contra alium constituatur.⁴ Et questo si intende quando una parte del concento ascende et l'altra descende. Et di qui veramente il contrapunto ha sortito et assunto il vocabolo et il nome.

3. La ragione è perché la perfettione de l'harmonia si causa per la dissimilitudine, cioè per la varietà di suoni.⁵ Et però consonantia è una mistura di suoni gravi et acuti, la quale con suavità et uniformità perviene alle orecchie nostre,⁶ et di qui nasce che non possiamo ordinare così ascendendo come descendendo immediate due spetie perfette simili, perché quam

^{*a*} The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al predetto Messer Giovani da Legge salute.'

¹ Letter 75 is dated 20 Dec. 1523, but its contents do not agree with the letter Del Lago refers to. For the reason why, see Ch. 6.

² Johannes de Muris, *Ars contrapuncti* (CS iii. 60). Del Lago had already quoted this definition in his letter to Da Legge of 16 June 1523; see no. 74, para. 1.

³ Ugolino of Orvieto, Declaratio musicae disciplinae, Book II, ch. 2 (ed. Seay, ii. 4).

⁴ Johannes Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Book I, ch. 1 (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, ii. 14; CS iv. 78a). Tinctoris gives 'uno puncto', construing 'una nota' also in the ablative, with 'contrapunctus' as the subject.

⁵ Paragraphs 3 and 4 were incorporated by Del Lago in his *Breve introduttione*, pp. 33-4. In his review of Del Lago's treatise, Aaron criticized this passage; see no. 66, para. 20.

⁶ Cf. Boethius, *De musica* 1. 8: 'Consonantia est acuti soni gravisque mixtura suaviter uniformiterque auribus accidens' (ed. Friedlein, p. 195).

primum siamo pervenuti a qualonque specie perfetta, noi al fin siamo al quale tende essa musica. Dove se volessimo procedere per quel fine sì ^{59^v} ascendendo | come descendendo, per quella identità resulteria dissonantia, perché l'harmonia resulta per la dissimilitudine et variatione delle specie, sì come la consonantia per la variatione et dissimilitudine di suoni.

4. Nondimeno questa regola qualche volta fallisce, perché qualche fiata è di bisogno che tutte a due le parti insieme ascendino o ver discendino, precipue con specie imperfette, acciò habilmente possiamo pervenire alla specie perfetta. Ma ascendere con specie perfette non laudo, cioè quando andiamo con la parte dil soprano da una minore perfetta ad una maggiore perfetta, come dalla quinta alla octava, ma bene al contrario, come è dalla octava alla quinta. Ma in descendere sì. La ragione è acciò pervengamo alla cadentia o ver conclusione. Certamente descendendo i moti si tardano, per la qual tardità facilmente si discerne la diversità delle spetie, la qual non si comprende così ne' suoni acuti per la celerità delli moti,⁷ immo tendono ad una similitudine di specie, massimamente quando ascendono

con tutte a due le parti, come | ho detto, da una minore perfetta ad una 60^r maggiore perfetta. Né anchora approvo ascendere con tutte a due le parti, come è da una imperfetta maggiore ad una perfetta minore con disgiontione di tutte a due le parti, cioè andando dalla decima alla ottava, ma sì bene al contrario, cioè andando dalla ottava alla decima.⁸ La ragione di questo i moderni compositori non comprendono, quantonque l'habbiano avanti agli occhi. Ma chi gli domandasse questo sì fatto ascenso et descenso, se il soprano ascendesse da C sol fa ut ad E la mi et il tenore ascendesse da A la mi re ad E la mi predetto, che è da terza in unisono, si sta bene questo così fatto procedere, io credo certo che gli responderiano di no. Ma ben si può andare dal unisono ascendendo tutte a due le parti alla terza, sì che se ben considerassino dallo unisono alla ottava li effetti li quali se causano, sì nello unisono come in la terza, in la quinta, nella sesta, et nella ottava, la | quale è simile allo unisono, hariano similmente la 60^v cognitione degli effetti delle composite. Sì che si debbe attendere alla gravità la quale si ha vendicata più tardità di moti che l'acuità, et

gravità la quale si ha vendicata più tardità di moti che l'acuità, et similmente alla acuità la qualle si ha assunto et constituisse i moti più celeri o ver presti, dove facilmente occulta la durezza, la quale per la tardità de' moti causati per la gravità si comprendono et sentono, et similmente la differentia delle spetie.

⁷ The notion that lower intervals are more perceptible than higher ones derives from Pseudo-Aristotle, *Problems*, book 19, and Boethius, *De musica* 1. 3. Del Lago may have become acquainted with this idea through Book III, ch. 6 of the *Practica musicae* of Gafurio, who draws on this argument to show why 'a fourth between middle and upper parts is concordant, between middle and lower parts is dissonant' (trans. Miller, p. 132); see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 72-3. Aaron was also critical of this notion as applied to counterpoint; see no. 66, para. 20.

⁸ Zarlino does not approve of either progression, nor of the one given in the example below; see *The Art of Counterpoint*, trans. Palisca and Marco, p. 76.

5. Se io non ho satisfatto alla S.V. secondo il suo desiderio, quella mi perdoni. Satisfacciasi da lei o vero da qualche un'altro di più sano et buono giudicio del mio. Et si altro per quella posso, comandatime come a vero et buono amico.

In Venetia a dì xxix decembro M.D.xxiii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. Your letter of 20 December pleased me very much.¹ I understand your remarks on that old rule of counterpoint, 'when the tenor or cantus firmus ascends, the counterpoint should descend, and vice versa'. It seems to me that this rule is clear and needs no explanation. If you study the definition of counterpoint, you won't find the rule as difficult as you say. But to satisfy you I shall go into the matter, for my desire is always to please you.

2. Counterpoint is nothing but the placing of point against point or note against note;² it is derived from contra and pono, 'contrary position', as it were, since one is placed contrary to the other, above or below.³ Or: from contra and punctus, since it consists of one note placed against another just like one point against another.⁴ This is understood when one part ascends and the other descends.

3. The reason is that perfection in harmony is caused by dissimilarity, that is, the variety of sounds.⁵ Consonance is a mixture of low and high sounds that reaches our ears with smoothness and uniformity;⁶ thus we prohibit the succession of two similar perfect intervals, for perfection signifies the end. If we wanted to proceed by that end, ascending or descending, dissonance would result, because harmony arises from dissimilarity and variety of intervals, just as consonance though variety and dissimilarity of sounds.

4. This rule occasionally suffers exceptions: sometimes two parts have to ascend or descend together, especially in imperfect intervals, to reach a perfect interval. I do not approve of ascending with perfect intervals, that is, moving in the soprano from a lesser perfect to a greater perfect interval, such as from a fifth to an octave, but the opposite is allowed, to reach a cadence. For in descending, the motion slows down, leading to a clearer differentiation of the intervals than is possible in high sounds because of the quickness of motion,⁷ especially when both parts ascend from a lesser perfect to a greater perfect interval. Nor should the two parts ascend by leap from a greater imperfect interval to a lesser perfect one, such as from a tenth to an octave, but the contrary is acceptable, going from an octave to a tenth.⁸ These modern composers have no idea why, although the reason is right under their noses. If you asked them whether the following progression was permitted, they would say no:



But you can certainly ascend in both parts from a unison to a third. So if they were to consider the effects caused from the unison to the octave in the unison just as in the third, fifth, sixth, and octave, which is similar to the unison, they would also understand the effects of composite intervals. Thus attention has to be paid to low sound, with its slower motions, and high sound, in which the faster motions hide the harshness that you hear in lower intervals and likewise the difference of the intervals.

5. If this does not satisfy you, please forgive me. Work it out yourself or go to someone with better judgement.

77 (J30). Fo. 137^v

Paulo de Laurino to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. [25 March 1525]¹ (autograph)

137^v Venerabilis et mi honorande, salve.

1. So stato doe volte ogie per cactar [= cattare] V.R. et non ho possuto cactarlo. Li fazo intendere come parto hogie che son li 25 del presente et porto in mezo il core scolpita V.R., et me ha tanto infiamato che mai tal nome me iuserà [= uscirà] dal core. Dio il sa quanto mi doglio non ve havere possuto parlare.

2. Tamen prego V.R. gratiosamente se voglia degnare resolvere quelli dubii et scriver in carta et donarlle al presente [portatore] che mi lle manderà per un frate quale venerà adpresso di me da circa^a quindici dì. Pregola anchora se degne resolverme de cognoscere ogni canto figorato de che tono sia. Li do questi fastidii per la fiducia che tengo in V.R. et per possere dire che de tal cose sia resoluto da persona che so che in tal sciencia è resolotissimo. Non altro se non che ve so servitore.

Lo vostro più che suo Fra Paulo de Neapoli

1. I tried to track you down twice today without success. I am leaving today, the 25th, with your image engraved in my heart. You have so exhilarated me that your name will never leave my heart. God knows the pain it was not to have been able to speak to you.

2. Would you be good enough to answer those questions in writing and give them to the bearer? He will send them by a friar, who will bring them to me in about a fortnight. Also, please tell me how to recognize the modes in polyphonic music. I trouble you for this because I trust you and want to be able to say I learnt it from an expert.

" MS: cq^{*}.

¹ In the body of the letter, the writer refers to the date as 'li 25 del presente'; Del Lago's answer (see no. 78) is dated 15 Apr. 1525. This date is fictitious (for the reason why, see no. 78A n. 1), but 1525 is the correct year because Laurino refers to the present letter in his next one, dated 5 June 1525 (see no. 79).

**78** (Version A) (J12). Fos.  $71^{r} - 72^{r}$ 

Giovanni del Lago to Paulo de Laurino, 15 April 1525 (Scribe A)¹

- ^{71^r} Pre Giovani de Lago al venerabile religioso Fra Paulo de Laurino del ordine delli frati heremitani de Santo Augustino, salute.
- ^{71^v} I. Reverendo padre, li dubbii li quali V.P. mi ha richiesti | volentieri et sotto brevità li mando.

2. Dico che gli è da considerare circa le cinque figure essentiale nel canto misurato, le quali sono queste, scilicet  $\Box \Box \Box \circ \circ$ , delle quali la barre è canto reincipio di canto della prito della canto della contra di canto della contra di canto della cant

breve è capo et principio, sì come è la unità nella arithmetica. Dalla predetta brieve tolta o vero aggregata due o vero tre volte nasce il modo minore. Et similmente [da] essa breve o vero tempo tolta quatro o sei o ver nove volte nasce il modo maggiore. Per questo è detto el modo essere aggregatione di tempi. Ma dividendo el predetto tempo o vero brieve in due o vero in tre equali parti, nasce la prolatione minore. Et dividendo anchora esso tempo o vero principio in 4 o vero in 6 o vero in 9 equali parti, nasce la prolatione maggiore. Pertanto alla semibreve si assegna la prolatione minore et alla minima la maggiore.² Et questa denominatione di prolatione maggiore et minore non è intesa respectu habito alla virtù et essentia di esse figure le quali si dividono dal tempo, ma solamente nasce dal maggiore et minore numero che loro fanno in dividere esso tempo o

vero breve in più parti, cioè in due o ver tre semibrevi | o vero in 4 o vero in 6 o vero in 9 minime. Adonque prolatione non è altro che divisione di tempo in più parti diviso, et cetera.

3. Circa la cognitione di tutti li tuoni di canto figurato non dico altro, salvo che V.P. aspettarà un trattato nel quale si tratta di tal materia.³ Subito che sarà stampato, che tra pochi giorni si stamparà qui in Venetia, el mandarò a V.P., dal quale senza altra mia faticha, che assai grande

¹ In MS 5318 this letter appears twice, on fos.  $71^{t}-72^{t}$  and  $105^{t-v}$ . The first version was copied by Scribe A in the section of letters that Del Lago intended to have printed. Del Lago subsequently made a few editorial changes in the text, mainly modernization of the spelling. He then decided to rewrite the letter and struck this version out. Del Lago's new version appears on fo.  $109^{t-v}$  in his own hand (see Version B), within a group of letters that he seems to have intended to add to his prospective edn. after Scribe A had completed copying the first section.

Del Lago's letter is modelled on, and in part copied literally from, Aaron's letter of 29 Apr. 1525 to the same Fra Paulo de Laurino; the autograph survives as no. 100 in the Correspondence (see below) and was apparently in Del Lago's possession. On Del Lago's habit of 'borrowing' from other letters and the question of the real dates of his letters, see Ch. 6.

² On this notion, see no. 2 n. 10. Here Del Lago follows Spataro rather than Aaron.

³ This treatise must be Aaron's *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato*, published in Venice on 4 Aug. 1525.

sarebbe, V.P. sopra di ciò sarà assai ben resoluta. Se in altro io posso per V.P., quella mi commandi, alla cui buona gratia mi offero et raccomando. In Venetia a dì 15 aprile 1525.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. I shall gladly reply to your questions.

2. Of the five essential note-shapes of mensural music,  $\Box \Box \circ \diamond$ , the

breve is the principal one, like unity in arithmetic. Multiplied two or three times, it gives rise to the minor mode. Multiplied four, six, or nine times, it gives rise to the major mode. Therefore mode is called aggregation of *tempus*. Dividing the breve into two or three equal parts gives rise to minor prolation, and dividing it into four, six, or nine equal parts gives rise to major prolation. Minor prolation is assigned to the semibreve, major prolation to the minim.² Major and minor prolation are not to be understood as referring to the essence of these figures, but only to the greater and lesser number of parts into which the breve is divided, that is into two or three semibreves or into four, six, or nine minims. Thus prolation is the division of *tempus* into several parts.

3. Regarding the question of modes in polyphonic music, a treatise on this subject is just about to be printed in Venice.³ As soon as it is out I shall send you a copy. It will explain the matter very well and save me considerable trouble.

**78** (Version B) (J23). Fo. 109^{r-v} Giovanni del Lago to Paulo de Laurino, 15 April 1525 (autograph copy)¹

109^r Al reverendo Fra Paulo de Laurino del ordine delli frati eremitani.

1. Reverendo padre, la richiesta la quale V.P. mi ha fatta quanto al nascimento del modo così maggiore come minore, et similmente della prolatione maggiore et minore, brevem[ente] vi rispondo.

2. Gli è da considerare che l'arte del canto misurato è fondato in mathematica consideratione. Pertanto el si comprende che la musica misurata in altro non consiste che in continua et discreta quantità, cioè nel tempo per se, et nel tempo più volte tolto, et nel tempo in parti diviso, per la qual cosa è necessario sì come la unità appresso l'arithmetico è considerato principio del numero, così la breve o ver il tempo sia esistimato dal musico capo et principio nel canto misurato, anchora che la sia media tra le cinque figure essentiali, le quali sono queste, cioè

 $\Box \Box \diamond$ . Dalla predetta breve adunque tolta o vero aggregata due o tre

volte nasce" il modo minore, cioè la lunga. Et similmente [da] essa breve o vero tempo tolto quatro o sei o ver nove volte nasce il modo maggiore, cioè la massima. Per questo è detto il modo esser aggregatione di tempi. Ma la predetta breve o ver tempo può esser diviso in duoi modi, cioè per binario et per ternario, et similmente la parte media et la parte terza del predetto tempo potrano essere divise in due et in tre equali parti, per la qual cosa caderà che delle due prime divisione di tempo, cioè in due et in tre parti fatte, nasce la prolatione minore, cioè la semibreve. Ma dalla secunda divisione di esso tempo, cioè dividendo la sua parte media et la sua parte terza in due o in tre equali parti, nasceràth la prolatione maggiore, cioè la minima. Pertanto alla semibreve si assegna la prolatione minore et alla minima la prolatione mon è intesa respectu habito alla virtù et essentia

^{109^v} di esse figure, le quali si divideno | dal tempo, ma solamente nasce dal maggiore et minore numero che loro fanno in dividere esso tempo o vero breve in più parti, cioè in due o in tre semibrevi, o vero in quatro o in sei o ver in nove minime. Adunque prolatione non è altro che tempo in parti minute diviso, etc.

3. Quanto alla cognitione di tutti li tuoni di canto figurato non dico

^a MS: nesce. ^b MS: nescera.

altro, salvo che V.P. aspetterà un trattato nel quale si tratta di tal materia, il quale si stampa qui in Venetia.³ Subito che sarà stampato vi lo mandarò, dal quale senza altra mia faticha, che assai grande sarebbe, V.P. sopra di ciò sarà resoluta. Se in altro io posso per V.P., quella mi commandi, alla cui buona gratia mi offero et raccomando.

In Vinegia a dì 15 di aprile M.D.xxv.

Pre Gioanne del Lago

1. I shall briefly respond to your question about the origin of major and minor mode and major and minor prolation.

2. Mensural music has a mathematical basis and consists of continuous and discrete quantities, that is of *tempus*, of *tempus* multiplied, and of *tempus* divided. Just as unity in arithmetic is considered the beginning of number, the breve in music is the chief or beginning of mensural music, even though it is the middle one of the five essential note-shapes,

 $\Box \Box \Box \circ \diamond$ . Multiplied by two or three, it gives rise to minor mode, that

is, the long. Multiplied four, six, or nine times, it gives rise to major mode, that is, the maxima. This is why mode is called aggregation of *tempus*. The breve can be divided in two ways, by two or by three, and similarly the halves or thirds can be divided into two or three equal parts. From the first division minor prolation arises, that is the semibreve. From the second division major prolation arises, that is the minim. Thus minor prolation is assigned to the semibreve and major prolation to the minim.² Major and minor prolation are not to be understood as referring to the essence of these figures, but only to the greater and lesser number of parts into which the breve is divided, that is into two or three semibreves or into four, six, or nine minims. Thus, prolation is the division of *tempus* into several parts.

3. Regarding the question of modes in polyphonic music, a treatise on this subject is being printed in Venice.³ As soon as it is out I shall send you a copy. It will explain the matter very well and save me considerable trouble.

³ See Version A n. 3.

¹ The present letter is a revised and expanded version of the letter found on fos. 71'-72'; see no. 78 (Version A) n. 1. This is the version that Del Lago intended to publish.

² See Version A n. 2.

79 (J31). Fo. 138^{r-v}

Paulo de Laurino to Giovanni del Lago, 5 June 1525 (autograph)

¹³⁸^v In man del venerabile Pre Zoan dal Laco veneciano musico dignissimo intitulato ad Sancta Sophia, suo mazor et honorando fratello. Veneciis, in Sancta Sophia.

138^r Venerabilis et mi honorande, salve.

1. Per la presente li dono haviso come Dio gracia sto bene de sanità; desideruso molto intendere il semele di V.R. Dio sa con quanto dispiacere mi partecti da Venecia senza posserve vedere. Fui circha quactro o cinque volte per trovare V.R., et mai quella possecti havere. Puro li laxai un mucto li fosse dato da un nostro padre, dove li facea intendere alcuni mei dubii ne la musica per possere quelli da una semili persona havere resolocione, et per benché molte volte quelli foro da nui razonati, ma quando non se ha con chi le conferire, fuzeno [=fuggiono].

2. Scrivo anchora la presente per farli cognoscere che di poi che congnoscecti S.R., li so restato scavo. Et perché credo che de li musici et canturi de Italia havernde visti gran parte, non posso dire havere vista persona che più mi habia satisfacto et resoluto de la vera theorica et practica de la musica quanto V.R. Tantum est che mai domino Joani dal Laco mi parte dal core. Et vi promecto et do la fe che se vivo non più de uno o dui altri anni, ad istancia vostra voglio venire ad stare un'altro anno in Venecia per possere sopra la vostra doctrina far qualche profexione.

3. Ve prego me donati haviso se le opere de Tinthoris le haviti stampate, et cossì anchora se è sequita la opera de Aron una con la V.R. de tonis,¹ perché molto le desidero adpresso di me, o altra cosa che da V.R. fosse stata stampata, che quelle adpresso di me seriano in grande reverencia. Et quando per ventura ciascha una de queste fossero stampate, prego V.R. se degne mandarmende una, che lo valore de quella li serà mandato fi[n] in Venecia et anchora più che valerà. Se mottecto o matrighale alcuno havissi vo da posserme servire, prego quella graciosamente se degne servirmende, che tanto più li resterò obligatissimo.

4. La resposta de la presente la dariti al presente portatore o vero in San Stephano al padre rezente quale è neapolitano et è molto mio patrone et benefactore, et Sua Paternità dà recapito ad tucte mei lettere. Non altro se

¹ Aaron, *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato*. The colophon bears the date 4 Aug. 1525. Del Lago seems to have given Laurino the notion that this treatise was a joint effort by himself and Aaron.

non che lo mio corpo sta ne la insola de Candia, ma la anima adpresso de V.R.

Retimi [Rethymno], 5° junii 1525.

Quillo che notte et di sempre ve adora, Fra Paulo de Laurino del ordine de Santo Augostino de la Provincia de Neapoli

I. I am well and hope you are the same. God knows how sorry I was to leave Venice without seeing you; I tried to do so four or five times without success. I left you a packet with some questions on music. Even though we discussed the answers frequently, when you have no one to consult, they take flight.

2. I want you to know that since I met you, I am your slave. Although I have seen most of the musicians and singers in Italy, none has enlightened me in the true theory and practice of music as you have. Giovanni del Lago never leaves my heart. Even if I live only one or two more years, I wish to spend a year in Venice studying with you.

3. Have you the works of Tinctoris in print, and has your and Aaron's treatise on the modes¹ come out yet? I'd like to have it very much, and also any other work of yours that is printed. Please send me a copy and I shall remit even more than it is worth. I'd also be much obliged if you could send me any motets or madrigals.

2. Please give your answer to the bearer of this letter or to the Regent Father at San Stefano, who is a Neapolitan and my patron and benefactor. My body is in Crete, but my soul is with you. **80** (J13). Fos. 72^r-76^r Giovanni del Lago to Paulo de Laurino, 15 July 1525 (Scribe A)

72^r Al reverendo Fra Paulo de Laurino.^a

I. A giorni passati ho ricevuta una vostra molto a me grata, per la quale ho inteso come siete restato molto satisfatto quanto alla resolutione de quelli vostri dubbii | li quali V.P. me richiese. Et etiam ho inteso molte cose, delle quali non farò speciale mentione, per non procedere in lungo. Ma di ogni cosa che voi mi offerite vi ringratio, et al bisogno accadendo, vi operarò come buono amico.¹

2. Ma quanto al quesito, el quale V.P. mi ricerca, io non guardarò alla faticha et sinistro mio, et sarò contento, per farvi piacere, scrivervi la resolutione del tutto, anchora che ho male el comodo. Se fusse altri che voi, certo recusaria tal faticha.² Et perché allo amico non si può negare cosa alcuna licita, pertanto dove nella vostra lettera dite così: 'Prego V.R. che quella voglia esser contenta di mandarmi la resolutione, cioè come si deve intendere la figura breve et la sua pausa in questo segno ut hic ¢ et la semibreve et la sua pausa in questi O C poste sotto la sesqualtra segnata con questi numeri ut hic  $\frac{3}{2} \frac{6}{4} \frac{9}{6}$  ne' concenti del canto misurato, utrum se le sono perfette o vero imperfette', al' quale vostro quesito brevemente così respondo et dico, che per dedure alla prattica le proportioni, è da notare che ciascuna proportione atta alla musica debbe essere reducibile al segno, o veramente alla sesqualtera habitudine, et questa nostra regola è infallibile. Et sappiate che quella perfettione et imperfettione che si causa ne' segni, si causa nelle proportioni. La ragione è: [Nam proportionibus in musica a signis tanquam a radice dependentiam consequentur. Igitur suum principale sequi debent.³ Natura enim accessorii est, ut sequatur suum principale: De regulis

*iuris, liber vi*⁷⁴ perché li segni sono la radice. Et se ben molti ignari vogliono che la breve come nel semicircolo inciso ut hic ¢ et similmente la semibreve nel circolo et semicircolo non inciso ut hic O C essere

^a The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al predetto venerabile Fra Paulo salute.'

73^r

¹ This whole paragraph is drawn from the letter of Spataro to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni of 1 Aug. 1517; see no. 2, para. 1.

² This sentence and part of the following one also come from Spataro's letter to Cavazzoni; see no. 2, para. 4. perfetta per la sesqualtera proportione signata con questi numeri ut hic  $\frac{3}{2} \frac{6}{4}$  $\frac{9}{6}$ —et quello che io dico della sesqualtera si intende di ogni sorte et qualità di proportioni che potessino occorrere—dico certamente questo essere falsissimo, perché le proportioni, come accessorie et famule, per haver la dependentia da' segni, debbono sequitare i segni, et i loro effetti sono questi: la sesqualtera solamente dimostra che tre delle semibrevi subsequenti o vero el suo valore debbono cascare sotto la misura di due delle precedenti, | et così delle altre figure et proportioni. Di qui dovete sapere che sempre in ciascuna proportione el numero di sopra si referisce alle note che sequitano, et quello di sotto a quelle che sono state cantate. Et la proportione non dimostra essa, che la breve, o ver la semibreve, o ver altra figura, né etiam la sua pausa sia perfetta. Però quando volete dimostrare che alcuna figura sia perfetta in qualonque proportione, primo bisogna notare o ver segnare un segno che faccia quella figura qual vorrete sia perfetta.

3. Anchora advertisca V.P. che in tutti li segni dove la semibreve assume et riceve integra misura, come usano li moderni compositori in questi segni ut hic O C et altri simili, la sesqualtera non può caschare se non a minime. La ragione è manifesta da sé, se ben molti imperiti et pocho esperti questo non intendeno bene. Ne' segni per medium convenientissimamente cadeno nelle semibrevi, et consequenter nelle minime. La ragione è perché il maggiore include el minore, et magis dignum includit minus dignum, et non e converso.

4. Ultimamente nota V.P. che tanto presto una proportione, o dupla o 74^r sesqualtera, et così ciascun'altra, habbino assonta la sua determinata misura (et così per virtù de diverse proportioni, o ver per moltiplicatione de' numeri, perché la saria una medesima proportione), non possono quelle tali proportioni mutare misura, se non per interpositione di qualche altro diverso segno, perché, come principale, anchora lui assume et riceve la sua determinata misura, et allhora tal segno sta per se, cioè senza alcuna relatione. Onde se in principio di ciascuna particola di ciascun' canto sarà posto questo segno ut hic C, et in processu cantando si troverà questo ut hic O, o vero altri diversi segni, le proportioni messe di poi al secondo segno torranno la misura di questo, havendo però respecto alla prima misura, perché come radice et principio, è immutabile. Similmente è da sapere che se in principio di un concento sarà segnato questo segno ut hic ¢, o vero questo ©, et di poi in processo del canto si troverà questo O 74^v segnato immediate dinanzi alla proportione sesqual|tera a questo modo segnata ut hic  $O_2^3$ , et altri modi simili, dico che la detta proportione torrà similmente la sua determinata et conveniente misura da le notule imagi-

· MS: ciascum.

^b MS: il.

³ The Latin is ungrammatical; we follow Del Lago's translation in no. 81, para. 3.

⁴ The source of this quotation has not been traced. Cf. the Regulae iuris appended to the Liber Sextus Decretalium, book 5, tit. 12, rule 42: 'accessorium naturam sequi congruit principalis' (Corpus iuris canonici, ed. E. Friedberg (Leipzig, 1889), ii. 1123). (Our thanks go to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for tracking down this reference.)

nate de quel segno el quale è posto dinanzi a' numeri relati o vero comparati (et questa tal proportione si nomina et dice proportione immaginata) et non dalle notule o ver dal segno segnato et posto nel principio del concento, et questo per esser diverso di quantità et di valor et anchora di misura dal primo, el quale è segnato in principio cantus, havendo però respetto alla prima misura come radice, ut supra dictum est. 5. Ma ho trovato che Gioanne Spataro, in uno suo duo posto per esemplo nel suo trattato delle proportioni^d al capitolo 22°, è di contraria opinione quanto a questo, come appare dove lui dice queste parole: per la qual cosa s'el primo segno sarà integro, nulla importa se etiam el segno el qual harà dopo sé li numeri comparati non sarà etiam integro, et e contra, imperò che le comparationi de' numeri dopo tali segni così positi  $({}^{3}_{2}, {}^{0}_{1}^{3}$  comandano senza havere rispetto alla integrità o ver dimi nutione del segno ante sé posto, che tre figure poste dopo questo segno  $({}^{3}$  siano pronuntiate per due di questo C precedente et che tre di

- dopo questo segno  $\bigoplus_{2}^{3}$  siano pronuntiate per due di questo C precedente, et che tre di questo  $\bigcirc_{1}^{3}$  siano guidate per una de questo  $\oint$ , per il che dico che in tale ordine di proportionare, el diminuto sarà frust[r]atorio, imperò che nulla fruta, etc.⁵ Et similmente ho trovato dal preditto Giovan Spataro in una sua messa chiamata 'della pera', nella particola 'Et in terra pax' nel contrabasso, haver segnato ut hic  $\bigcirc_{4}^{3}$  et nella particola 'Patrem omnipotentem' della preditta messa nel contrabasso è così segnato  $\bigcirc_{2}^{9}$ . Et sequitando in essa particola, ha etiam segnato ut hic  $\bigcirc_{2}^{12}$ , et similmente nella particola della predetta messa detta 'Crucifixus' nel contrabasso ut hic  $\bigcirc_{1}^{6,6}$  et in molte altre sue compositioni, el quale [h]a segnato li detti segni dinanzi alle proportioni per segni solamente dimostranti la perfettione di tempo et della prolatione perfetta, cioè referendo le dette proportioni alle notule sotto el segno diminuto posto in principio di tali particole ut hic  $\diamondsuit$ , et non
- ^{75^v} al segno segnato o ver | alle notule imaginate di tale segno el quale è appresso a li numeri comparati, cioè alle proportioni, per il che non poco ha lui errato per la ragione detta di sopra. Ma se nel principio di ciascuna particola di ciascuno canto fusse segnato questo segno C, et poi in processu questo O, el quale non è diverso quantum ad mensuram di questo C, se non in quanto alla perfectione della breve, dico che allhora la proportione, la quale sarà segnata immediate appresso al secundo segno, porrà torre la sua misura così dal primo segno come dal secundo, perché tutti a duoi i segni sono simili et equali in misura, ma diversi di valore. Allhora tal segno se sol ponere per dimostrare et dare la perfettione alla

breve, o vero ad altre figure secundo che sarà dimostrato da quel segno, sì che non importeria se più da uno che da l'altro segno essa proportione assumesse et ricevesse la sua misura determinata, perché allhora si presupone esserli notule cantabili tra el segno et la proportione.

6. V.P. intende quanto a questo suo quesito la mia opinione, quantunque | siano molti compositori, i quali hanno altro parere, come appare ne' loro concenti, perché essi vogliono che la breve et la semibreve siano perfette, et così le sue pause, per virtù della proportione sesqualtera, quando è segnata sotto questi segni ut hic  $\varphi$ , C, et altri simili. Et tale oppinione tiene el preditto Messer Giovanni di Spatari bolognese,⁷ sed Johannes Tinctoris et etiam Franchinus Gafurius laudensis sono contrarii in opinione da questi, come si dimostra ne' loro trattati musici.⁸ Et io anchora concorro nella opinione di questi duoi ultimi che nella opinione de' primi per la ragione la quale ho detto di sopra.

7. Prego V.P. che quella me perdoni, se io non havesse così satisfatto al suo desiderio secondo lei haria voluto. Io ho fatto quello che ho possuto, et secondo le tenui forzze del mio piccolo et basso ingegno. Se altro posso per lei, comandi, perché tanto non farò quanto non potrò.

In Venetia, a dì 15 luglio M.D.xxv.

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[Giovanni del Lago]

1. I received your letter and was glad to hear that my answers to your questions satisfied you very much. I shall not respond to the rest, except to thank you for your offers; I shall call on you at need as a friend.¹

2. With regard to your question, I shall overlook the inconvenience of answering and explain it fully. Were it other than you, I should decline the effort.² But one cannot deny anything lawful to a friend. You ask: 'Please explain how one is to understand a breve and its rest under  $\Calculate{C}$  and a semibreve and its rest under O and C that occur after a *sesquialtera* proportion signed  $\frac{3}{2}$ ,  $\frac{6}{4}$ , or  $\frac{9}{6}$  in mensural music: are they perfect or imperfect?' The infallible rule is that each musical proportion refers back to a sign or to a *sesquialtera* relation. The perfection and imperfection that is caused under signs is caused under proportions. For proportions in music are dependent on signs as on a root; therefore they should follow their principal.³ For

⁷ Spataro's position is spelt out at length in his Tractato di musica.

^d MS: proportione.

⁵ Del Lago is quoting from a treatise that Spataro did not send him until May 1529 (see no. 23). We are thus given further proof that the present letter, dated 1525, was actually written long afterwards.

⁶ Spataro had sent a copy of this mass to Del Lago in 1529 (see no. 18), but it is striking that all these examples are discussed, in the same order, in his *Tractato di musica* of 1531, fos.  $e^{y} - e^{3t}$ .

⁸ In his *Proportionale*, Book II, ch. 5 (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, iia. 56; CS iv. 175), Tinctoris criticizes Domatto for writing *sesquialtera* under C as if the semibreves were in perfect prolation, and Cousin, under the same sign, for writing *sesquialtera* in *tempus perfectum*. For Gafurio, see *Practica musicae*, Book IV, ch. 5 (trans. Miller, pp. 182-3).

it is the nature of an accessory to follow its principal: Sext, Concerning the rules of law,⁴ because the signs are the root. Although many ignorant people think that the breve under & and the semibreve under O and C are perfect because of the sesquialtera proportion—and this goes for all proportions—they are in great error, because proportions, as accessories dependent on signs, have to follow those signs. Sesquialtera only shows that three of the succeeding semibreves or their value are equivalent to two under the previous sign. In every proportion, the upper figure refers to the notes that follow, the lower figure to those that have been sung. Proportions do not show that notes or rests are perfect. To indicate perfection, you must add a sign of perfection.

3. Note also that under all signs in which the semibreve occupies a full *tactus*—as modern composers observe under O and C and other similar signs—*sesquialtera* applies only to minims. The reason is obvious though not generally understood. In cut signs it applies to semibreves, and then to minims. The reason is that the greater quantity includes the lesser, and the more worthy includes the less worthy, and not vice versa.

4. Furthermore, as soon as any proportion assumes its determined *tactus*, it cannot change its *tactus* unless a different sign intervenes which, as a principal, assumes its own determined *tactus*. That sign stands by itself. If you have a piece that begins in C in all parts, and then changes to O or another sign, the proportions placed after the second sign take their *tactus* from it, but in relation to the first *tactus*, which, like a root, is immutable. Similarly, if a piece starts in  $\diamondsuit$  or  $\bigcirc$  and changes to  $\bigcirc_2^3$ , I say that the proportion draws its *tactus* from the imaginary notes following the sign placed just before the proportion (such a proportion is called 'imaginary proportion') and not from the notes or sign at the beginning of the composition, since both the value of the notes and the *tactus* are different from those under the first sign, though the first *tactus* is taken into account as a root, as explained before.

5. But Giovanni Spataro, in a duo in ch. 22 of his treatise on proportions, is of a different opinion. He says: If the first sign is uncut, it does not matter if the sign preceding the proportional terms is uncut or not because the proportions after signs such as  $(\mathbb{C}^3_2 \circ \mathbb{O}^3_1)$ , whether or not the sign is cut, demand that three notes after  $(\mathbb{C}^3_2)$  be performed in place of two under C, and three notes under  $\mathbb{O}^3_1$ be equal to one under  $(\Phi)$ . Thus I say that in this kind of proportional writing, it is superfluous to diminish the signs, for no fruit, etc.⁵ I also find that Spataro, in the bass of the Gloria of his 'Missa della pera', uses  $(\mathbb{C}^3_4)$ , and in the Credo  $(\mathbb{O}^9_2)$  and  $(\mathbb{O}^{12}_2)$ , and in the Crucifixus  $(\mathbb{O}^6_1)^6$  and in many other works he uses signs before proportions only to show perfection of tempus and prolation, that is, he relates the proportions to the notes under  $(\mathbb{C})$  at the beginning and not to the sign or the imaginary notes preceding the proportions, which is a great error. But if a work begins in C and then changes to O, which has the same *tactus* as C although the breve is perfect, I say that whatever proportion is placed after the second sign can draw its *tactus* from the first as well as from the second sign because they are equal in *tactus*, but different in value. Thus such a sign is used to demonstrate the perfection of the breve or whatever note that sign indicates, so it does not matter from which sign the proportion draws its *tactus*, for then one presupposes there are notes between the sign and the proportion.

6. This is my opinion, but many composers disagree, as their works show, for they regard the breve, the semibreve, and their rests as perfect because of the *sesquialtera* proportion when it follows signs such as  $\clubsuit$  and C. This is the opinion of Giovanni Spataro,⁷ but Tinctoris and Gafurio differ, as their treatises show,⁸ and I agree with them.

7. Please forgive me if I have not fully satisfied you. I have done the best that my humble talents allow.

# **81** (J14). Fos. 76^v-79^r Giovanni del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 6 January 1532 (Scribe A)

76^v Al venerabile religioso Fra Nazaro del ordine de Santa Maria delli Servi.^a

1. Havendo io ben considerato, el mio venerando padre, li dubbii mossi da V.P. nella vostra lettera, dove lei mi chiede che io li scriva la ragione perché d'alcuni compositori antichi et etiam moderni è stata da loro posta la integra misura in questo segno O o ver in questo E quando si pone in principio di una particola di ciascun canto, come è nel tenore, contra a questo O o ver a questo C posto in principio delle altre particole, et altri simili, nella minima. Respondendo dico è vero che la semibreve di questo segno O o ver di questo C secundo la opinione di alcuni compositori così antichi come moderni fa l'ufficio di tre semibrevi di questo O o ver di questo C quanto alla misura, ma non quanto al numero,¹ et così similmente in tutti gli altri segni et figure la equiparatione et similitudine assumere et pigliare si debbe, la quale opinione io sento et così esistimo essere erronea et non vera, attento che el suo accessorio debba seguire la natura del suo principale, et non e converso: [Accessorium] sequitur naturam principalis: De regulis iuris, liber VI,  $\gamma^2$  anzi che la minima di 77^r questo O o ver di questo C non è differente dalla minima similmente di questo O o ver di questo C, ma la differentia nasce per la perfectione della semibreve, et questo esser vero dimostro:

2. Il segno, cioè el circulo o vero el semicirculo, nella musica è un certo che principale, perché essendo premesso et antiposto el segno, subito si discerne et cognosce se ivi è il numero perfetto o vero imperfetto, cioè se la breve è perfetta o vero imperfetta. Ma il ponto è accessorio perché da se stesso è di nessuno momento se non viene accessorie, et però come lo aggiongiemo et applicamo, così ei significa: se si pone appresso la massima, serva la forza della lunga, se appresso la lunga, serva la forza della breve, se appresso la breve, della semibreve, et così delli altri. Nel segno per la sua virtù la semibreve si fa perfetta, et così ha sortito el suo effetto. Non certamente dimostra equipartirse, id est ugualmente dividersi, la sola semibreve della maggiore prolatione alle tre semibrevi della minore, perché se tante et tali operationi dimonstrassino, la forza sua sarebbe maggiore che del suo principale, il che è absurdo et incon-

veniente. [¬]Natura enim accessorii est, ut sequatur suum principale (ut dictum ^a The heading originally read: 'Pre Gioanni de Lago al venerabile religioso Fra Nazaro del ordine de Santa Maria delli Servi. Salute.'

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est).⁷ Adunque come il punto di ciascuna figura imperfetta è augumentatione et accrescimento della sua meza parte, et similmente augumento di ciascun segno, etc.

3. Quanto al 2º dubbio dove V.P. dice: 'Voria sapere da V.R. se per la sesqualtera segnata con questi numeri ut hic $\frac{3}{2}\frac{6}{4}\frac{9}{6}$  posta in processo de li concenti sotto questi segni ¢, ¢, la breve et la semibreve et similmente le sue pause sortiscono perfettione, come d'alcuni compositori è usitato.' A questo brevemente respondendo dico: ogni inequalità dalla equalità si produce et nasce,³ et alla equalità defluisce et discore. Così ogni inequalità a modulamini et concenti musici conveniente et atta dalla celerità o ver tardità delle figure alla equalità, id est, al segno o vero sesqualtera, declinerà, et quella medesima perfettione et imperfettione la quale si causa et produce ne' segni, anchora nelle proportioni si causerà et produrà, et quantunque vogliano molti fare la breve perfetta (nel semicircolo diminuto, et la semibreve nel semicirculo in tegro, et qualche volta nel diminuto o ver tagliato) per la sesqualtera, questa nientedimeno è cosa erronea et falsa, et la provo in questo modo. Le proportioni nella musica esercitate da' segni come dalla radice conseguita i dependenti. Adonque sequir deve il suo principale.⁴ Perché le proportioni non esplicano et non dichiarano se la figura sia perfetta o ver imperfetta se non in quanto i segni le fanno perfette, ma solamente dimostrano (come nella sesqualtera) che le tre semibrevi sortiscono la misura di due semibrevi, et così similmente tanto delle altre proportioni quanto delle altre figure, et però se in alcuna proportione alcuna figura deve consequire la perfettione, primo pretermettersi si deve el segno demostrante quella figura perfetta. ^rMa Maestro Gioanne Spataro bolognese tiene altra opinione, come appare nel suo trattato de le proportioni al capitolo 14, nel quale tratta de la perfettione de la sesqualtera, le parole del quale sono queste: e questa demostratione è assai clara, cioè che la sesqualtera perfice le note o vero figure imperfette, perché divide esse note in tre parte equale, et se la sesqualtera per se dechiara questo, adonque ivi altro segno de perfettione oltra la sesqualtera posito sarà frust[r]atorio, perché in tale loco basta segnare ut hic C 3 o vero così  $C_2^3$ , ma non così  $C_2^3$ , perché quello punto

4. Et notate che la sesqualtera ne' segni ne' quali la semibreve consequisce la piena et integra misura non cade mai nelle semibrevi ma nelle minime. La ragione per se medesima si dimostra. Altro è in | signis per medium, perché ivi la semibreve non sortisce et aquista la piena et

*nulla opera*, etc.,⁵ la qual opinione è falsissima per la ragione detta di sopra.⁷

³ From Boethius: see no. 74 n. 16.

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¹  $\odot$  or  $\in$  in one voice against  $\bigcirc$  or  $\bigcirc$  in the other voices commonly indicates augmentation: the minim in major prolation becomes equivalent to a semibreve in minor prolation.

² See no. 80, n. 4. This marginal remark was substituted for 'Natura enim accessorii est ut sequatur suum principale', a form of the saying that Del Lago uses later in the letter.

⁴ Del Lago had quoted this statement in Latin in no. 80, para. 2. At this point he added in the margin, then deleted, the following: 'unde accessorii potentia sui principalis maior esset (ut dictum est).'

⁵ Del Lago is quoting from the treatise on proportions, no longer extant, that Spataro had sent him in 1529; see no. 24.

integra misura. Et li numeri de esse proportioni, cioè i numeri superiori, se riferiscono ad sequentia et li inferiori ad precedentia (cioè tre semibrevi sequente si fanno equali a due sue simili precedente). Anchora è da notare che subito che alcuna proportione, o dupla o sesqualtera, et così delle altre, piglierà dependentia d'alcun segno, ha sortita et acquistata la sua misura determinata et dependente da tal segno, sì che per la virtù di diverse proportioni, o anchora per la moltiplicatione del numero, perché ella è (come ho ditto) una medesima proportione, non può mutare più la misura eccetto che per la interpositione di alcun segno, perché come principale acquista la sua determinata misura, per il che le proportioni di poi a tal segno sortiscono la dependentia di tal segno, percetta nientedimeno et havuta la prima misura, perché ella è come radice immutabile. Certamente, etc.

^{79^t} 5. Io mi ricordo nel anno M.D.XX ad | instantia de Messer Giovani da Legge eccellente sonatore d'organo, et etiam di Frate Paulo de Laurino del ordine de' frati eremitani di Santo Augustino, scrissi più difussamente sopra tal materia.⁶ Se havesse tal copia al presente non mi saria poco comodo. Hor sù; allo amico non se può negare cosa alcuna licita. Pertanto se posso altro per V.P., quella mi comandi senza rispetto alcuno come buono fratello, et se non ho satisfatto come quella desiderava, perdonatime [et] accettate il buon core.

In Venetia a dì 6 genaro M.D.xxxii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. Having considered the question raised in your letter, why some old and recent composers place the beat on the minim under  $\odot$  or  $\mathbb{C}$  when it occurs at the beginning in one voice against  $\bigcirc$  or  $\mathbb{C}$  in the other voices, I reply that it is true that some old and recent composers believe that the semibreve under  $\bigcirc$  or  $\mathbb{C}$  corresponds to three semibreves under  $\bigcirc$  or  $\mathbb{C}$ , but only with regard to the measure and not to the number,¹ and this comparison should hold for all other signs and notes. I believe this opinion is false because an accessory ought to follow the nature of its principal and not vice versa: An accessory follows the nature of the principal— Sext, Concerning the rules of law.² The minim under  $\bigcirc$  or  $\mathbb{C}$  is the same as the minim under O or C; the difference lies in the perfection of the semibreve, which I prove thus:

2. The sign—a circle or semicircle—in music is a principal; its placement immediately shows whether the breve is perfect or imperfect. But the dot is an accessory, having no meaning by itself unless it comes as an accessory. Its significance depends on how it is placed: if it follows a maxima, it stands for a long; if it follows a long, it stands for a breve; if it follows a breve, it stands for a semibreve. Placed within a sign, it indicates perfection of the semibreve. It certainly does not show the equivalence of one semibreve in major prolation to three in minor prolation; if it did, it would have more power than its principal, which is absurd. As I said, *the nature of an accessory is to follow its principal*. Thus since the dot after every imperfect note indicates augmentation by half, and similarly the augmentation of every sign, etc.

3. As regards your second question, whether sesquialtera signed  $\frac{36}{24}$  or  $\frac{9}{6}$ after ¢ or C causes the breves, the semibreves, and their rests to become perfect, as observed by some composers, I say that all inequality arises from equality³ and flows back to it. Thus all inequality pertaining to musical compositions will decline from the swiftness or slowness of notes to equality, that is, to the sign or sesquialtera. The same perfection and imperfection that is caused under signs is also caused under proportions. Even though many consider the breve perfect (under C, and the semibreve under C, and sometimes ¢) because of sesquialtera, this is false, for proportions in music are dependent on signs as on a root; therefore they should follow their principal.⁴ Proportions themselves do not show whether a note is perfect or imperfect but only demonstrate (to take sesquialtera as an example) that three semibreves are equivalent to two semibreves, and the same for all the other proportions and notes. Therefore if any note needs to be perfect under a proportion, a sign showing this has first to be placed in front of it. Giovanni Spataro differs: in ch. 14 of his treatise on proportions, dealing with the perfection of sesquialtera, he says: The proof is very clear: sesquialtera perfects imperfect notes because it divides these notes into three equal parts, and if sesquialtera by itself does this, then any other sign of perfection will be superfluous because in such a place it is sufficient to write C 3 or  $C_2^3$ , but not  $C_2^3$  because that dot has no effect, etc.⁵ As I said, this is completely false.

4. Note that under signs where the *tactus* is on the semibreve, *sesquialtera* never falls on semibreves but on minims. The reason is evident. It is different in cut signs because the *tactus* is not on the semibreve. And in proportions, the upper figure refers to the following notes, the lower figure to the preceding ones (three semibreves following are equal to two preceding). Note also that as soon as any proportion becomes dependent

⁶ See no. 68 (to Da Legge) and no. 80 (to Paulo de Laurino). The present letter and no. 80 are very similar in content. Del Lago's claim, in the next sentence, not to have copies of these letters at hand must be taken with a grain of salt: is it only by chance that he repeats here 'allo amico non se può negare cosa alcuna licita', a phrase he had used in no. 80, para. 2? In fact, both passages are derived from Spataro's letter to Cavazzoni of 1 Aug. 1517 (no. 2, para. 4).

on a sign, it receives a *tactus* determined by that sign; different proportions or multiplication of number, which is the same thing, cannot change the *tactus* unless another sign is interposed; as principal, it acquires its own determined *tactus*, and the proportions following it depend on that *tactus*, but with reference to the first *tactus* as an immutable root.

5. I recall that in 1520, at the request of the excellent organist Giovanni da Legge and of Frate Paulo de Laurino, I wrote more extensively on this matter.⁶ It would have been useful to have a copy, but nothing lawful can be denied to a friend. If I have not satisfied you, pardon me and accept my good will.

# **82** (J15). Fos. $79^{r}-80^{v}$

Giovanni del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 6 August 1533 (Scribe A)

79^r Al venerabile Fra Nazaro."

## Venerando Padre.

1. Ho inteso quanto alla richesta de V.P., la quale mi prega che io le dica la ragione perché la proprietà naturale senza segno et media fra la proprietà b durale et b mollare sia deduta o ver ordinata. Brevemente dico, et primo senza segno come media è ordinata, perché ogni mezo participa 79^v de l'uno et l'altro estremo.¹ Adunque parti cipando de l'uno et l'altro estremo, non haveva bisogno di segno alcuno, perché la proprietà naturale ne' concenti sta per se, cioè senza segno, et essendo chiamata naturale, non gli accade essere segnata con segno alcuno accidentale. Pertanto non ha segno determinato come hanno l'altre due proprietà, cioè di b duro et di b molle. Et media, id est in mezo, perciò ella è posta acciò che fusse fine del primo tetrachordo del primo hex[a]chordo et principio del 2°, et che el fine de esso tetrachordo sortisse il principio del terzo per diatonica dimensione, cioè per diatessaron, el quale procede per tuono et tuono et semituono,² e questo è affermato da Marchetto paduano nel capitolo 42°, dove lui definisce le tre proprietati del canto, cioè di natura, di b molle, et di b duro, el quale così dice: Est naturalis nanque cantus ille qui in omni quarta coniunctione sonorum semper diatessaron habet, nec unquam potest aliter naturaliter reperiri. Naturalis enim ob hoc dicitur, eo quod naturaliter vox humana in omni quarta voce sive inter quatuor voces semper proferre semitonium delectatur, etc.³ Si ^{80^r} che acquistando per questa tale iteratione da G sempre el principio, come da luogo naturale et principale giusta l'ordine et dispo[si]tion nostra, el processo sarà in infinito.

2. Di poi nota V.P. che 'l b quadro sempre induce tuono, et consequentemente il tritono, el quale tritono quanto[n]que da quatro suoni, come el diatessaron, depende, nientedimeno diatonice non procedit, causandosi

^a The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al predetto venerabile Fra Nazaro. Salute.'

³ Marchetto of Padua, *Lucidarium*, ed. Herlinger, pp. 300–1, from which the translation is taken. On the manuscript source used by Del Lago, see Ch. 7, pp. 148–9.

¹ Cf. Del Lago, *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* (Venice, 1540), p. 9: 'Natura è deduttione naturale, la quale in la mutatione serve il b molle, et il b quadro, perché l'è media tra l'un et l'altro, Quia omne medium de utroque participat extremo.' The source of the Latin phrase is Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* 3. 1 ( $661^{b}10-11$ ).

² Del Lago considers tetrachords not in the way the Greek tetrachords were commonly understood in the Middle Ages (semitone, tone, tone) but as the first four notes of the hexachord: tone, tone, semitone. Thus the first tetrachord begins on G, the second on  $\epsilon$ , the third on f. Aaron criticizes him for inverting the order of the tetrachords in no. 66, para. 8.

da' quatro suoni constituenti tre tuoni. Anzi adduce durezza grandissima et ingiocunda et insuave, perché da sé rovina et destruge la diatonica dimensione, et a toglier via al tritono quella durezza, et acciò che in ciascun luogo di essa dispositione per dimensione diatonica—cioè per diatessaron, duoi tuoni, et un semituono manco concernente—procedere potessino, fu trovato el segno b mollare. Et meritamente b molle si dimanda perché induce el semituono et toglie via la durezza et l'asperità del tritono, per il che presta et adduce suavità et mollezza grandissima, et così fa et produce la diatonica dimensione, [¬]come appare in fine nella preallegata autorità de Marchetto dove lui dice: *Naturalis enim ob hoc dicitur eo quod naturaliter vox humana in omni quarta voce sive inter quatuor voces semper proferre semitonium delectatur.*^{¬4} Fu nientedimeno necessario trovare la dimensione et misura del tritono a formar la 3ª specie del diapente, la quale

se forma del tritono et del semituono minore, el qual tritono se dà composito et incomposito, o ver mediato et inmediato, ma el tritono inmediato o ver incomposito da sé per la sua durezza è incantabile, cioè cantar non si può, que adeo nature inimica est, et non solum aures offendat, verum etiam a tenore in eam, vel ab ea in tenorem absque medio ascendere vel descendere voci humane quodammodo sit impossibile.⁵ Ma el tritono mediato o ver composito alcuna volta è cantabile, perché è tolerato dal senso de l'audito per i suoni medii che sono fra li estremi.⁶ Et sapiate che propriamente el b quadro si domanda duro, perché adduce la durezza del tritono; et facendose el tritono da quatro suoni, et perciò li musici quadrato hanno esso constituito et formato,⁷ et b molle rotundo a torre via quella durezza, attento che la perfettione nel circolo et nella rotundità consiste, et di questo assai per adesso, ma se altro alla P.V. gli occorre, quella mi comanda senza alcun rispecto.

In Venetia, a dì 6 agosto M.D.xxxiii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. You ask me to explain why the natural hexachord has no sign and is placed midway between the hard and soft hexachords. I say that every  4  See n. 3.

⁵ Del Lago is quoting from Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Book II, ch. 3, on the tritone (CS iv. 121; *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, ii. 93).

⁶ Cf. Spataro's refutation of Del Lago's claim that a mediated tritone is not a true tritone in no. 58, para. 3.

⁷ The explanation derives from Marchetto: 'Hec enim figura tritoni, sive coniunctio, quatuor sonos durissime amplectitur, et ob hoc b quadrum b durum meruit nominari, et quia quatuor sonos comprehendit in sui duritia, ideo a doctoribus ordinatum est ipsum quadre debere figurari' (*Lucidarium*, ed. Herlinger, pp. 300-2).

middle shares the two extremes,¹ and thus the natural hexachord, sharing the two extremes, has no need of any sign; it stands alone and has no accidental sign as the other two hexachords have, that is hard b and soft b. It is so placed that it is the end of the first tetrachord of the first hexachord and the beginning of the second [C] and that the end of this tetrachord [F] receives the beginning of the third in the diatonic order, that is a fourth tone, tone, and semitone [F G A Bb].² Marchetto of Padua affirms this in ch. 42, where he defines the three hexachords: A 'natural' melody is that in which every interval of a fourth is a diatessaron; nor can a 'natural' melody be obtained in any other way. It is called 'natural' because the human voice naturally delights in singing a semitone at every fourth note or within any four notes.³ Thus, beginning on G as its natural and principal place according to our ordering, the process repeats itself ad infinitum.

2. Note that square b always produces a whole tone and consequently a tritone, which, like a fourth, has four sounds, but it is not diatonic because they are arranged in three whole tones. It leads to great harshness because it destroys the diatonic order; to remove that harshness and restore the diatonic order (a fourth composed of two whole tones and a minor semitone), the flat sign was invented. It is justly called soft b because it produces a semitone and relieves the harshness of the tritone, conferring great smoothness, and thus it produces the diatonic order, as Marchetto says: It is called 'natural' because the human voice naturally delights in singing a semitone at every fourth note or within any four notes.⁴ None the less, the tritone was needed to form the third species of fifth, a tritone plus a minor semitone. The tritone occurs filled in or as a leap, but as the latter it is unsingable because of its harshness, so much so that it is opposed to nature and it not only offends the ear but is almost impossible for the human voice to sing without intermediate steps, either ascending or descending.⁵ But when it is filled in, the ear can tolerate it because of the intervening sounds.⁶ Square b is called 'hard' because it produces the harshness of the tritone; since it is formed from four sounds, musicians gave it a quadrilateral shape.⁷ Round b is called 'soft' for it removes the harshness, and perfection consists in the circle and in roundness.
# **83** (J16). Fos. $81^{r}-82^{v}$

Giovanni del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 15 September 1533 (Scribe A)

#### 81^r Al venerabile Fra Nazaro.^a

#### Reverende pater.

1. Ho recevuto una vostra, insieme con la messa di Don Franchino Gafurio composta sopra el tenore del canto chiamato 'l'home armé',¹ della quale ho tanto desiderato haverne copia. Hora per gratia sua io l['h]o havuta, dil che rengratio V.P., etc.

2. Ma dove V.P. dice nella sua lettera: 'Voria sapere da V.R. se la lunga posta sotto il² tempo perfetto quando li seguita o ver precede uno semibreve o ver el valor di essa, si deve intendere essa lunga imperfetta, o pur una delle sue parti?' Dico che essa lunga non si può far imperfetta da quella semibreve, la quale seguita o ver precede, et similmente dal valor d'essa, perché de sé et sua^b natura est imperfecta, ratio quia non est divisibilis in tres partes propinquas, perché solamente la nota perfetta è divisibile in tre parti, et quella solamente si può fare imperfetta dalla terza parte, *quoniam quicquid imperficitur, imperficitur a tercia parte*,³ et hoc quo ad

¹ The mass has not survived. Gafurio mentions it, together with two other masses, 'Illustris princeps' and 'Le souvenir', in his Apologia . . . adversus Joannem Spatarium, fo. A8v, adding that he sent these three masses to the illustrious singers of Leo X ('quas celeberrimis cantoribus Leonis decimi Pontificis Maximi misimus'). Gafurio criticizes the notation of the tenor of Ramis's 'Tu lumen', claiming that he treats the measure as if the minims were perfect. But, says Gafurio, minims are imperfect whether under major prolation, 'as in our tenor in the Crucifixus etiam pro nobis and the first Agnus Dei of the "Missa L'homme armé" and in the tenor of the Hosanna of the "Missa Illustris princeps" and the tenor of the second Agnus Dei of the "Missa Le souvenir"", or under minor prolation 'unless accompanied by the canon crescit in duple or written under proportio dupla as in our tenor in the Quoniam tu solus sanctus section of the "Missa L'homme armé", where  $\odot$  indicates perfect *tempus* and prolation and  $\odot_2^1$  proportio subdupla, under which the semibreve contains three minims and each minim is doubled' (fos. A8'-A9'). In his Errori de Franchino Gafurio, Spataro replied that the 'minimorum' of the canon of 'Tu lumen' referred to the smallest signs, not the note-value of the minim; see Annexe III of Wolf's edition of Ramis, Musica practica, pp. 110-12 (Wolf reprints the passages concerning Ramis's 'Tu lumen' from Gafurio's Apologia but leaves out the references to Gafurio's three masses). Nevertheless, Gafurio was right in claiming that Ramis believed a minim could be perfect, for his position is spelt out in his Musica practica (ed. Wolf, p. 87).

² Del Lago substituted 'posta sotto il' for 'imperfetta di', but his answer to Fra Nazaro makes no sense unless we know that the long is imperfect. He should have written 'se la lunga imperfetta posta sotto il tempo perfetto'.

³ Cf. Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, in the version incorporated in Ugolino's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. 111-13 (ed. Seay, ii. 134): 'Item notandum quod quidquid imperficitur, imperficitur a tertia parte.'

^{81^v} totum imperfici dicitur. Pertanto la semibreve non è parte | terza della lunga; adunque la detta lunga non si può far imperfetta dalla parte sua remota, quia *quicquid imperficitur a tertia parte imperficitur*, ut dictum est. Ma tale lunga si debbe dire valere due brevi perfette, delle quali brevi una sola è perfetta, et l'altra imperfetta.⁴ Il simile si deve intendere di simili figure imperfette che contengono in sé parti propinque remote et più remote perfette. Et noti⁶ V.P.: _Lmai se può far imperfetta la nota perfetta, et così le note perfette incluse in essa, oltra la terza parte, et allhora quella tal nota sarà imperfetta quo ad omnes eius partes. La ragione è acciò che almeno la possi remanere nello ultimo essere della sua imperfettione, cioè se la è massima, la resti in otto semibrevi imperfette, se lunga in quatro, et se breve in due. ⁵

3. Ma il mio precettore, Messer Giovanne Baptista Zesso padoano, voleva che non solamente la nota perfetta assumesse imperfettione, ma anchora la imperfetta la quale contiene numero perfetto, come la lunga et la massima in questi segni ut hic O, O, et altri simili, et assumesse questa  $32^{t}$  tal imperfettione da quelle note per le quali lei receve numero perfetto, le quali sono le semibrevi et consequenter dalle altre minori di quelle. Et diceva la ragione esser questa, perché le sono contenute da esse semibrevi, sì che la massima può esser fatta imperfetta dalla terza parte delle semibrevi, della quarta, et dalla sesta, et della duodecima, et la lunga della terza et della sesta, la quale imperfettione dice se diano dimostrare con il punto di divisione o ver di reduttione, et che tali note o ver figure si possono fare imperfette, così dinanzi come di drieto [dietro], etc. Sì che V.P. intende come tale lunga si può dire imperfetta, et consequentemente farsi imperfetta da una sola parte remota precedente, o ver sequente, et etiam da due, una precedente et l'altra sequente, et così dal valor di quelle, anchora che la non sia divisibile immediate in tre parti propinque. Dico però secundo la opinione del predetto mio precettore.⁶

⁴ It is puzzling why Del Lago states that one of the breves is imperfect; perhaps he has left out part of Fra Nazaro's letter.

^{*a*} The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto venerabile Fra Nazaro. Salute.'

^b MS: sue.

^{&#}x27; MS: nota.

⁵ The passage in lower half-brackets is found in Del Lago's Breve introduttione di musica misurata, p. 13.

⁶ At this point Del Lago deleted the following: 'Ma certamente poria respondere in contrario a tale sua opinione, ma basta assai di quello che da me di sopra è stato detto.' Del Lago's opinion goes against the mainstream of notation theory. Tinctoris, for example, allows imperfection of the semibreves of an imperfect breve under C; see his *Liber imperfectionum (Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 164-5). Gafurio gives a similar example; see *Practica musicae*, trans. Miller, p. 99. Del Lago even goes against his prime authority in matters of notation, Johannes de Muris, who states that 'Brevis imperfect amaioris prolationis potest imperfici ab una minima praecedente vel sequente' (in the version of Ugolino, *Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-16, ed. Seay, ii. 142). In his letter to Gazio of 6 May 1535, however, Del Lago does concede that an imperfect long in perfect *tempus* may be imperfected by a semibreve; see no. 86, para. 11.

## The Letters

4. Quanto alle pause che dimostra[no] il modo maggiore et il minore ^{82^v} perfetto, et così quelle | che dinotano il modo maggiore perfetto et il minore imperfetto, sapi V.P. che alcuna volta queste pause si pongono essentiali et indiciali, et alcuna volta inditiali solamente. Qui è da considerare che se nel principio di ciascuna particola di ciascun canto tali pause se preporrano al circolo o ver al semicircolo, i quali sono segni di tempo perfetto et imperfetto, allhora non sarano essentiali, cioè non si misurerano né connumeraranno con le altre notule, ma solamente dimostraranno tutta quella particola a principio infino alla fine esser di modo secondo che dimostrarano tali pause, ma se a sì fatto segno temporale si posporanno tali pause, allhora dimostrarano il modo, et etiam dichiararanno tanti tempi doversi pausare quanti spatii occuparanno, et similmente doversi connumerare con le altre notule, etc.⁷

5. Prego V.P. se io non l'ho satisfatta come lei desiderava, che la mi perdoni; il buon volere non gli è mancato. Se altro vi occorre, fatemelo^d intendere senza alcun rispetto, perché mi sfforzerò ad ogni vostro desiderio sempre compiacere.

In Venetia, a dì xv setembrio, M.D.xxxiii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. I received your letter, together with the 'Missa L'homme armé' of Gafurio,¹ which I have wanted for a long time. Many thanks.

2. You write: 'I wish to know if the [imperfect]  $long^2$  under perfect *tempus* can be imperfected by a semibreve or its value preceding or following it, or is one of its parts imperfected?' I say it cannot, because by its nature it is imperfect since it cannot be divided into three near parts; a perfect note can be imperfected only by removing a third part, for that which is imperfected, is imperfected by a third part,³ and this is called 'imperfection as to the whole'. Since the semibreve is not a third part of a long, the long cannot be imperfected by it. But such a long is composed of two perfect notes that contain smaller perfect parts. Note that La perfect note cannot be imperfected by more than a third of each perfect value in it; then it will be imperfect as to all its parts. The reason is that it has to retain its ultimate imperfect value; a maxima can be reduced to eight imperfect semibreves, a long to four, and a breve to two 1.5

3. But my teacher, Giovanni Battista Zesso of Padua, believed that not only a perfect note could be imperfected but also an imperfect note that contains perfect values, such as the long and maxima under  $\odot$  and O, which can be imperfected by semibreves and smaller values. He said the reason was that they are contained in the semibreves. Thus the maxima can be imperfected by a third part of the semibreves or a fourth, sixth, or twelfth part, and a long by a third or sixth part. He said that this imperfection should be shown by a dot of division or reduction and that such notes can be imperfected on either side. Thus you see how such a long can be called imperfect and yet can be imperfected by a remote part, before or after, or even by two, one before and one after, and also by their value, even though the long is not divisible into three near parts—this according to the opinion of my teacher.⁶

4. Regarding the rests showing major and minor mode, perfect and imperfect, sometimes these rests are essential and indicative, and sometimes only indicative. If they are placed before the signature at the beginning of a piece, they are not essential, i.e. not counted, but only show the mode. But if they come after the signature they show not only the mode but also the rests that should be counted.⁷

5. If I have not satisfied you, it is not for lack of good will. Do not hesitate to call on me again.

^d MS: fatemello.

⁷ Del Lago also discusses this matter in his letter of 23 Aug. 1532 to Spataro; see no. 44, para. 13.

# 84 (J17). Fos. 83^r-85^r

Giovanni del Lago to Lorenzo Gazio, 26 August 1534 (Scribe A)

83^r Al venerabile religioso Don Lorenzo Gazo cremonese, monacho di Santo Benedetto, musico eccellente."

I. Ho ricevuto dal mio carissimo fratello, Don Valeriano vostro nipote, el canto di Don Franchino Gafurio el quale mi havete mandato, del che ringratio infinite volte V.P.¹ Ma io trovo nel soprano della prima parte del ditto canto esserli errore, ma non so da chi sia proceduto tale errore, da Franchino o vero dal notatore de tal canto. Ma io credo che sia stato più presto per causa del notatore che per causa sua, perché lui non haria mai commesso sì fatto errore, essendo stato lui huomo intelligente, così in theorica come in pratica, come appare nelle opere sue. Pertanto, credo certo sia stato el poco sapere et la poca cura del notatore, o ver che sia stato qualche huomo arrogante et presuntuoso, el quale persuadendosi potere corregerlo, lo ha contaminato et guasto, come appare nel soprano dove è segnata questa proportione sesquitertia con questi numeri ut hic:  $\frac{8}{6}$ .

^{83^v} Io credo che sia errore ne' numeri, per quanto posso comprendere, et questo per causa di colui che ha copiato tal canto, perché quando lui segnava tali numeri, in loco di 4 ha segnato et posto el numero 8, cioè ha segnata la proportione sesquitertia per la subsesqualtera, la quale subsesqualtera dimostra che quatro brevi sequenti si fano equivalenti in quantità et misura a quatro brevi della proportione sesquitertia, la quale precede la sesqualtera, segnata con questi numeri ut hic: ⁴/₃, come per la relatione et pel contrapunto si può comprendere, perché la subsesqualtera è opposita et contraria alla sesqualtera; pertanto la destrugge et annulla, non essendo però interposto tra l'una et l'altra proportione alcun segno o vero altra proportione, et allhora le note sequenti si referiscano alle note più propinque precedenti, cioè le quali sono innanzi alla sesqualtera.² Et questo è affermato dal nostro Franchino nel quarto libro al capitolo 3 della sua *Prattica*, el quale così dice: *quod si subdupla proportio duple ipsi contraria* 

^a The heading originally read: 'Pre Giovane de Lago al venerabile religioso Don Laurentio Gazo cremonese, monacho di Santo Benedetto, musico eccellente.' 84^t eam fuerit inter notulas immediate | subsequuta, nullo [temporis] signo interposito quod naturalem eius potentiam impediat, ipsa statim dupla destruetur et sequentes notulę secundum priorem, ante scilicet duplę descriptionem, computabuntur numerositatem propter extremorum in ipsis proportionibus oppositis dispositam equalitatem,³ etc. Et quello che lui dice della subdupla proportione vuole che si intenda anchora di ciascun'altro genere di proportione, come appare ne' capitoli sequenti del predetto suo libro.

2. Similmente dico della proportione sesquiottava, la quale sequita immediate dopo, esserli errore in quanto ai numeri come è stato nella sesquitertia sopradetta. Et però dico che si debbe segnare nel loco della sesquiottava la dupla sesquiquarta proportione ut hic:  $\frac{9}{4}$ , et così starano bene tutte le preditte proportioni, secondo el mio parere, perché saranno immediate comparate l'una all'altra, videlicet per relationem ad numerum precedentem. Ma se pur dal ditto Franchino fussino state poste tali proportioni come si trovano segnate in detto canto senza removere

³⁴ altrimenti essi | numeri, io penso che lui habbia havuto opinione di fare la relatione di tali proportioni per altro modo, cioè referendo il numero superiore di ciascuna proportione subsequente al primo numero inferiore della prima proportione, la quale è la sesquitertia ut hic: ⁴/₃, posta sotto questo segno: ¢, come dimostra questa dispositione de' numeri ut hic: 3 4 6 4 9, o vero per il contrario, comparando sempre el primo numero inferiore della prima proportione a ciascuno de' numeri superiori de l'altre proportioni che sequitano, come lui dimostra al 13° et al 14° et 15° capitoli del predetto libro della sua *Prattica*, nel quale tratta delle proportioni.⁴ Et questa credo certo sia stata la sua intentione et volere, et per questa ragione ciascun rimane incolpato, cessando ogni errore, etc.

3. Prego V.P. mi perdoni et mi habbia per scuso se io non ho così pienamente satisfatto a tal materia, quia 'qui fecit quod potuit non debet 35^r reprehendi'. Pur se in aliquo ego erravi, prego la | P.V. si degni notificarmelo^b per sua lettera, perché come dice quel philosopho, 'Etiam si

¹ This is apparently the same composition Del Lago had requested of Spataro; in his letter of 16 Apr. 1533, Spataro replied: 'quello canto de Franchino io non lo vidi mai, né ancora non se trova fra nui' (see no. 52, para. 2). None of Gafurio's extant works makes extensive use of proportions, but he did write such a piece, as we know from the early version of Book IV of his *Practica musicae*, the *Tractatus practicabilium proportionum* of c.1481-3 (Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS A. 69). In discussing the effect of successive proportions, he mentions 'our motet to Johannes Tinctoris, "Nunc eat et veteres"'; see Miller, 'Early Gaffuriana', p. 377, and Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 30–1.

² The sequence of proportions described by Del Lago seems to be the following:  $\frac{468}{346}$ . Later in the letter the initial signature is given as C and the final proportion as  $\frac{9}{8}$ .

^b MS: notificarmello.

³ Gafurio, Practica musicae, fo. ee8^v (trans. Miller, p. 158).

⁴ Ibid., pp. 234-9 in the translation by Miller. In fact, Gafurio does not support the method of relating proportions described by Del Lago, but only the relation 'ad numerum precedentem', that is, to the immediately preceding proportion. Del Lago would have found theoretical support for his position in Tinctoris; ch. 2 of Book I of the *Proportionale* describes the two different ways of relating proportions, 'per relationem ad numerum precedentem' or 'per relationem ad notas alterius partis', that is, to the note-values in another voice (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, iia. 12-13). Tinctoris remarks that it is impossible to tell which is meant without studying the counterpoint, and therefore he counsels that the latter should be assumed, unless the former manner is indicated. In his pedagogical motet, 'Difficiles alios', all the proportions are marked with 'per relationem ad tenorem' or 'per relationem ad numerum precedentem'; see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 76-7.

alterum pedem in sepulcro haberem adhuc discere cuperem.'⁵ Se altro posso per la P.V., quella mi comandi come buon figliolo, quae diu valeat favente ei semper divina gratia.

In Venetia a dì 26 agosto M.D.xxxiiii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. I received from Don Valeriano, your nephew, the composition by Gafurio that you sent me, for which I thank you warmly.¹ But I find a mistake in the soprano of the first part; I don't know if it is due to Gafurio or to the copyist, but I doubt whether Gafurio would have made such an error, since he was very knowledgeable in theory and practice, as his works show. Therefore I'm sure the fault lies with the copyist, or some arrogant man who, thinking he could correct it, spoilt it. In the soprano, where the sesquitertia proportion is signed  $\frac{8}{6}$ , I think the copyist wrote 8 instead of 4, that is, sesquitertia instead of subsesquialtera, in which four of the following breves equal four of the breves under the sesquitertia proportion, signed  $\frac{4}{3}$ , that precedes the *sesquialtera*, as is evident from the relation and the counterpoint, because subsesquialtera cancels sesquialtera unless another sign or proportion intervenes; then the following notes are related to the closest preceding notes, that is those before the sesquialtera.² Gafurio affirms this in ch. 3 of the fourth book of his Practica: If proportio subdupla is written after proportio dupla without an intervening sign of tempus, which would affect its meaning, the proportio dupla is removed because of the opposing equal proportions, and the following notes are reckoned according to their former value preceding the proportio dupla.³ What he says about subdupla applies to all other kinds of proportions, as appears in the following chapters of his book.

2. Similarly, I believe there is an error in the *sesquioctava* proportion that follows immediately, which should be *dupla sesquiquarta*:  $\frac{9}{4}$ . In this way each proportion is properly related to each preceding one. But if Gafurio *did* place the proportions as written, I think he meant to relate them in a different way, that is referring the upper figure of each proportion to the lower figure of the first proportion, which is  $\frac{4}{3}$ , under  $\varphi$ , as shown by the sequence of figures 3 4 6 4 9, or vice versa, bringing the lower figure of the first proportion to to each of the upper figures of the

proportions that follow, as he demonstrates in chs. 13 to 15.⁴ I'm sure this is what he meant, and therefore everyone is at fault, if there is no error.

3. Please excuse me if I have not completely satisfied you; 'he who has done what he is capable of should not be blamed'. But if I have made a mistake, please let me know, because, as that philosopher says, 'even if I had one foot in the grave, I should still wish to learn.'⁵

⁵ This saying, a favourite of Spataro's (see no. 14, para. 5, and no. 17, para. 15), goes back to Solon of Athens: γηράσκω δ' aiei πολλά διδασκόμενος ('I grow old always learning much'); see fr. 18 of his poems in *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati*, ed. M. L. West, ii (Oxford, 1972), 131; it was recalled by Cicero in *De senectute* 8. (The source was kindly brought to our attention by Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens.)

**85** (J64). Fo. 185^{r-v} Lorenzo Gazio to Giovanni del Lago, 9 September 1534 (autograph)

^{185^t} Al suo molto reverendo comme padre et maestro Messer Pre [Zanett]o de l'arte de la musica excellentissimo. In Venetia.

185[°] Messer Pre Zanetto mio, caro più che padre et maestro.

1. Ho receputo una de la R.V. [no. 84] tutta ingeniosissima et piena de rasone cum belle sententie accommodate cercha la materia del canto de Messer Don Franchino¹ da satisfar ad ogni homo da bene, a la qual a parte per parte non farò resposta, servandome epsa resposta insiema cum la littera per fin a la venuta mia in Venetia. Et tunc diffusamente se poterà parlar quello che a me è fatica a scrivere. Saltem dirò queste poche de parole.

2. Li dove la V.R. dice che conciando li numeri de queste doi proportione  $\frac{8}{6} \frac{9}{8}$  in hunc modum  $\frac{4}{6} \frac{9}{4}$  che tutte le proportion serano immediate comparate l'una a l'altra per relationem ad numerum precedentem, et che cusì starano bene, a me pare, cum sopportatione de la R.V., che ancora non starano bene. Domando a la R.V. la sesquitertia in hunc modum  $\frac{4}{3}$ , quomodo est sesquitertia ad antecedentem? Et la sesqualtera sic signata  $\frac{6}{4}$ , come è anchora lei sesqualtera ad precedentem? Quella consideri^a bene el tutto avanti che se metta a corregere epso canto.

3. Cercha l'altra parte, io non ne ho più, et quello che ho lo atrovai comme derelicto et io lo recolse insiema cum una altra parte de un canto non ma[n]cho vechio, el qual ve mando. Che se per aventura quello lo havesse integro, el me seria caro haverlo; sin autem me lo rimanderà. Se havesse saputo de esso canto quando era in Milano, Don Franchino me ne haveria servito, el qual per humanità sua era nostro amicissimo. Ho datto ordine che 'l sia cerchato in Padua, et lo simile per littere nostre ho fatto in Verona et in Parma, talmente che vederò de haverlo. Che sapesse colui che ha hereditato li canti de Fra Pietro de San Zoannepolo,² che penso che 'l fusse un Frate Harmonio, facilmente lui l'averia. De quella opereta de Tintoris, tutto quello che io haveva del suo insiema cum uno Guido me fu robato in Milano. Se qualche altra cosa posso et valio in fatti et parole, tutto me offerischo in servitio de la V.R., a la qual molto et molto me recomando.

Datta in Santa Justina [Padua], a dì 9 septembrio 1534.

De V.R. tutto tutto Don Laurentio

1. I received your letter [no. 84] with its most eloquent and ingenious explanation of Gafurio's composition.¹ I shall not answer in detail; it will be easier to discuss it at length when I come to Venice. Just a few words for now.

2. Where you propose changing  ${}^{89}_{68}$  to  ${}^{49}_{64}$  so that each proportion will be properly related to the preceding one, it seems to me, with all due respect, that this is not right. How should *sesquitertia* as  ${}^{4}_{3}$  be *sesquitertia* to the preceding proportion? And the same with the *sesquialtera*  ${}^{6}_{4}$ . You should consider this further before making the corrections.

3. I no longer have the other part; the one I have I found among some discards together with another part from an equally old composition, which I enclose. If you have it complete, I'd like to have it; otherwise, return it. If I had known about this work when I was in Milan, Gafurio would have given it to me; he was my great friend. I have ordered a search for it in Padua, Verona, and Parma. Perhaps the person who inherited the music of Fra Pietro of SS. Giovanni e Paolo,² a Frate Harmonio, has it. Regarding that little work by Tinctoris, everything I had by him, together with a Guido, was stolen in Milan. If I can do anything else for you, I am at your service.

^a MS: considera.

¹ See no. 84 n. 1.

² On Fra Pietro, who was Petrucci's editor, see the Biographical Dictionary.

# **86** (J18). Fos. 85^r-101^v Giovanni del Lago to Lorenzo Gazio, 6 May 1535 (Scribe A)

85^r Al venerabile Don Lorenzo Gazio.^a

Reverendo padre.

1. A' giorni passati da Don Valeriano, vostro nepote, vi fu mandato un tenore composto di tempo imperfetto et modo minore perfetto, pregando V.P. che quella le mandasse la resolutione di tal tenore, et così ella la mandò de sua mano propria inclusa in una sua lettera [no. 108] nella quale V.P. così scrive: 'Don Valeriano, figliolo mio carissimo, ho ricevuto le vostre, alle^b quali più presto non ho potuto dar risposta per le grandi occupationi che mi sono state ne lo confessare. El tenore qual mi havete

- mandato l'ho visto, et brevemente vi concludo che in molti luoghi esso  $85^{v}$ tenore si trova falsissimo, per il che lauderia a Messer Adriano che quello che lui ha composto sopra esso tenore per niente el desse fora, perché certamente apud peritos più presto li saria di vergogna che di honore. Volentieri sapria chi è stato el compositore. Se pur vi piacesse la resolutione sua, giocando più presto ad indivinare et interpretare la mente del compositore che per l'arte che sia in esso, io ve la mando, sopra la quale vi dico che non è da componerli. Se esso compositore è in Venetia, voria che vedessino da lui haver la resolutione et mandarmela." Queste sono le formali parole della vostra lettera, alle quali parole respondendo dico che 'l predetto tenore è d'un mio canto a tre voci,¹ fatto già molti anni, el quale sta bene et è fatto con gran ragione et arte, bene intonato et pieno di sottilità quanto appartiene al modo minore perfetto, come per li suoi accidenti pertinenti ad esso modo posti tra le notule, cioè per le pause, per el colore, cioè per le note negre, et per il punto si può comprendere.
- 86^r Ma apertamente | si dimonstra che 'l mio tenore è stato da voi male inteso, et alla sua sottilità non siete potuto penetrare. Et però la vostra resolutione in molti luoghi è falsissima, et non el mio tenore, come per essa vostra resolutione scritta di vostro pugno appare et come seguitando vi dimostrarò con efficaci ragioni et autorità non improbabili.

^a The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovani de Lago al preditto venerabile Don Laurentio Gazio. Salute.' 2. Et primamente dico che non pocho havete errato in resolvere quella 19^a lunga in due brevi, la quale è infallibilmente perfetta per la regola generale, la quale è stata approbata dall'uso, cioè 'similis ante sibi similem semper est perfecta'. 「Dicono li giuristi che l'uso o ver consuetudine è una certa ragione et legge, et per legge et ragione si deve osservare.¹² Et questo afferma il vostro Don Franchino Gaffurio nel secondo libro della sua Musica al capitolo xi^o dove lui tratta della imperfettione delle note, el quale dice così: Generaliter item musici posuere notulam omnem ante sibi similem perfectione quantitatis disposita semper esse perfectam, nec ullo modo unquam casu reductione partis eius abstrate imperfici posse. Qua re ante maiorem vel minorem figuram imperfectibilis^d ipsa notula necessario disponetur,³ etc. Et poi sequitando in eodem capitolo dice: Quotienscunque punctus divisionis alicui notule sive pro se ipsa tantum, sive pro se et alia vel aliis apponitur, ipsa tunc notula imperfici maiorem precedentem vel sequentem, si possit imperfici, ut hoc monstratur tenore:



Et sequitando, dichiara el preditto tenore così: In hoc tenore tertia brevis imperficitur a parte post quo ad totum, quod monstrat punctus divisionis prime semibrevi postpositus. Quarta brevis imperficitur a parte ante quo ad totum, quod lucide indicat punctus divisionis antepositus duabus minimis ipsam precedentibus. Punctus vero divisionis inter duas semibreves ultimis brevibus interiectas descrittus, quintam ipsam brevem a parte post et sextam a parte ante declarat imperfici. Si

^b MS: alli. ^c MS: mandarmella.

¹ The text is 'Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi'; see the tenor and its resolution given at the end of the letter. This letter must be an edited version, for Del Lago has altered Gazio's letter, which originally read: 'et brevemente ve concludo che non solamente in quelli lochi che dice Messer Pre Zanetto, ma in molti altri, epso tenore se trova falsissimo' (see no. 108). The work, which seems not to have survived, is mentioned by Pietro Aaron in his *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni* (Venice, 1525), fo. C2^{*}, as an example of the seventh mode.

^d MS: imperfectibilem.

² As 'Usus est altera lex' this saying is quoted in no. 17, para. 14, no. 45, para. 12 and no. 48, para. 15. See no. 17 n. 15.

³ Gafurio, Practica musicae, fo. bb2'; trans. Miller, p. 93.

## The Letters

⁸⁷ autem maior illa figura precedens vel sequens | ipsam minore[m] cui appositus fuerit punctus non fuerit imperfectibilis, tunc ipsa minor reducetur sive transferetur ad priorem notulam ubi regulariter ternaria possit numerositate coniungi. Idem quoque cum minor notula sine puncto maiorem precesserit que imperfici non possit, tunc enim minor ipsa ad priorem transferetur locum ternaria connumeratione perficiendum, ut presenti tenore percipitur:



Et seguitando esso tenore, dichiara così dicendo: In hoc tenore punctus inter terciam et quartam semibrevem positus quartam ipsam tercie brevi ligature sequentis connumerandam esse demonstrat, cum nec prime nec secunde adiici possit, quia similis ante sibi similem (ut expositum est) non potest imperfici. Eadem etiam ratione semibrevis precedens tres ultimas breves disiunctas sine puncto reducitur et imperficit terciam ipsam brevem. Idem quoque sumitur iudicium cum appositus

87^v fuerit divisionis punctus | alicui brevi respectu longarum in minori modo perfecto et alicui longę respectu maximarum in maiori modo perfecto nec non et alicui minime respectu semibrevium in prolatione perfecta. Ac si etiam sine puncto transferendę sint ad distantiores figuras imperfectionis eiusdem receptibiles,⁴ etc.

3. Et similmente nel capitolo xii^o, nel quale tratta del punto, lui dice queste parole: Verum punctus ante eam semibrevem [quae] immediate precedit tres breves consequenter positas appositus semibrevem ipsam ad ultimam illarum brevium monstrat esse transferendam, ipsique ad perfic[i]endam ternariam temporis divisionem connumerandam, non enim prime brevi neque secunde semibrevi ipsi potest applicari. Nam similis ante sibi similem non potest imperfici.⁵ Et tale essemplo per manco mia faticha non lo noto qui. Et etiam nel capitolo 13^o dove lui tratta dell'alteratione, questo medesimo afferma, così dicendo: Secunda autem buiusmodi semibrevis alteratur quia ad hoc ut dupla sua ipsius quantitate concrescat alteram non potest sumere formam, nanque si quadratam brevis suscipiat descriptionem non duarum modo sed trium semibrevium | quantitatibus equabitur, cum similem tunc ante sibi similem que imperfici non potest evenire contingat.⁶

4. Queste sono le formali parole del vostro Dun Franchino, el quale da voi è tenuto huomo di autorità et di dottrina, le quali sono apertamente contra de voi. Et perché vi gloriate che lui vi ha mandate le opere sue a corregere, dico (si questo è vero, quod non credo) che tali opere da voi non possono esser state bene intese, ma che le sieno state così da voi ben percette como da' Giudei la sacra scrittura, [¬]qui ignorant quod legunt.[¬] Et questo perché voi non ponderate et ben considerate quello che voi leggete, contra l'autorità et instruttione del sapientissimo Catone, il quale così dice: 'Legere et non intelligere est non legere.'⁷ Et che questo sia el vero si dimostra perché se da voi fussino state bene intese l'opere sue et similmente quelle delli altri dotti musici, mai saresti incorso in tanti così

- manifesti errori, cioè in resolvere il mio tenore tutto al contrario di quello  $88^{v}$ che da lui et da' primi autori è stato descritto, come appare ne' loro musici trattati, et hoc approbatur da' dotti compositori così antiqui come moderni, ut in ipsorum concentibus liquido demonstratur. Ma nella vostra resolutione notata de vostra propria mano havete fatto tutto il contrario. Per le predette ragioni adunque potete facilmente comprendere che di necessità la detta lunga deve remanire perfetta et non potersi fare imperfetta dalla breve precedente, ratione predicta, ma che la si reduce alla 20 lunga, la quale si pò fare imperfetta per essere posta dinanzi la massima, acciò la non resti sola et senza società^e ternaria, perché la nota s'intende sola quando né con la nota immediate precedente né con la sequente o ver con il suo valore si può computare et connumerare. Et questo si afferma da Gioanne de Muris in la quinta regola al primo capitolo della sua Musica, dove tratta della imperfettione delle note, cuius verba sunt hec: Quando aliqua nota est sola, debet reduci ad priorem locum | quem potest habere.⁸ Il
- ^{89'} aliqua nota est sola, debet reduci ad priorem locum | quem potest habere.⁸ Il medesimo è quando se trovano due sole notule, o ver il suo valore, e questo similmente si afferma dal predetto Gioan de Muris nella septima regola del predetto capitolo, il quale così dice: Quando inveniuntur due note simul sole, ille non debent partiri sed simul computari,⁹ per la qual cosa in duoi modi sogliono accadere, uno quando sono due lunghe dinanzi alla

" Del Lago substituted this word for 'numero'.

⁴ Ibid., fos. bb5^v-bb6^r; trans. Miller, pp. 99-100.

⁵ Ibid., fo. bb8°; trans. Miller, p. 105. Del Lago omits the example, but the sequence of notes matches the  $\cdot \diamond$   $\Box$   $\Box$   $\Box$  pattern in the previous example.

⁶ Ibid., fo. cc3'; trans. Miller, p. 110.

⁷ This is the last sentence of the preface in the *Disticha Catonis*. The true text is: 'Legere enim et non intellegere neglegere est.' Curiously, this is the form in which the saying originally appeared in Del Lago's letter; he apparently revised it to suit the occasion.

⁸ Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, CS iii. 49. Del Lago's version matches that in Ugolino of Orvieto's commentary on de Muris (*Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book III, ch. 111-9, ed. Seay, ii. 116).

⁹ Ibid., CS iii. 49; *Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-11 (ed. Seay, ii. 119).

massima o ver tra due massime nel modo maggiore perfetto, et similmente quando sono due brevi dinanzi alla lunga o ver tra due lunghe nel modo minore perfetto, et etiam quando sono due semibrevi dinanzi alla breve o ver tra due brevi nel tempo perfetto, et similmente quando sono due minime dinanzi alla semibreve o ver tra due semibrevi nella prolatione perfetta. Allhora la seconda di tali notule si altera per compimento della perfettione, non essendo però impedita da qualche accidental segno, come è il punto o ver il colore. L'altro è quando si trovano due brevi o ver due semibrevi, et similmente due minime o ver il valor d'esse poste dinanzi ad una sua maggiore non propinqua, et che tale nota maggiore sia puntata

^{89^v} con il punto di perfettione, o ver sia dinanti ad una sua simile, o ver alla sua pausa. Alhora le dette notule si intendeno essere sole, et così le si transferiscono di lontano, perché tale nota non si può far imperfetta a quelle notule minori o ver dal valore di quelle, et per tal cagione la detta notula remane perfetta.

5. Et questa tale infallibile perfettione è stata osservata da Maestro Bartholomeo hispano nel contra alto di uno suo concento, scilicet 'Tu lumen, tu splendor patris',¹⁰ il quale fa che la breve sotto il tempo perfetto inanzi ad un'altra sua simile non si fa imperfetta dalla semibreve precedente, la quale è dinanzi alla prima breve, ma la si reduce alla lunga immediate sequente di poi le due brevi. Et questo istesso è stato usato da Tinctoris in una sua messa composta sopra il tenore di una canzone chiamata 'Elas' in la particola del soprano in l'Osana in duoi luoci,¹¹ et etiam in uno suo concento fatto a tre voci composto sopra certi versi, li quali così principiano, 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus', nella

^{90^r} particola del tenore della secunda parte.¹² Similiter, Philippo de Primis, in una sua messa composta sopra el tenore di una canzone de Busnois chiamata 'Pourtant ce mon',¹³ in lo tenore della prima parte della Gloria reduce la minima la quale è dinanzi a quatro semibrevi, le quali semibrevi

¹⁰ On this work, see Ch. 3.

¹¹ Tinctoris's mass appears to be lost. It may have been based on his own chanson, 'Helas', found in the *Odhecaton* and six other sources; see Johannes Tinctoris, *Opera omnia*, ed. William Melin (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 18; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1976), pp. 130–1.

¹² On this composition and Del Lago's commentaries on it, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide'. The passage Del Lago refers to is mm. 45–9 of the *secunda pars*:



The second semibreve c' cannot imperfect either of the two breves that follow it because of the rule; it therefore imperfects the last breve.

 $^{13}\,$  This mass has not yet been discovered. It is also mentioned in nos. 18, 21, and 48. On the model, see no. 18 n. 1.

con essa minima si cantano sotto la prolatione perfetta, alla quarta semibreve sequente. Et questo anchora nella prima parte nel soprano del Patrem della preditta messa reduce la pausa de la semibreve oltra a due brevi poste sotto il segno di tempo perfetto ad una delle due parti propinque la quale è inclusa in la prima lunga sequente. Et similmente di Orto, nella particola del tenore 'Et unam sanctam chatolicam' del secondo[/] Patrem fatta sopra 'Jam pris amours', in dui luoci di tale particola reduce la semibreve nel tempo perfetto oltra due brevi perfette.¹⁴ Et il buon Giosquino similmente, in la sua messa '[L'homme armé] sexti toni' in lo ultimo Chyrie del tenore, reduce la semibreve oltra a sei brevi, cioè alla ultima.¹⁵ Et Verbonet, in una sua messa composta sopra el tenore d'una

canzone chiamata 'Gratiuse gent' nel tenore in la particola del Patrem ditta 'Et resurrexit', reduce la minima ultra a due semibrevi poste sotto el segno inciso di tempo perfetto et prolatione perfetta ad una delle due parti propinque la quale è inclusa nella prima breve sequente.¹⁶

 $\mathcal{I}$  This word is crossed out in the original, but dots are written underneath it.

¹⁴ Petrucci published de Orto's mass in 1505. The 'Missa J'ay pris amours' has indeed two Credos. We have found only one passage that fits Del Lago's description:



## unum [baptisma]

¹⁵ Del Lago refers to the last phrase of the tenor of Kyrie II, mm. 65-74 in the edition by Smijers, *Werken van Josquin des Prés*, Missen 5, p. 111. Sebald Heyden used this example in his *De arte canendi* (Nuremberg, 1540), p. 64, as follows:

10			~					
	1		•	Q			 	 
- m 7		land.	~	7		1		 
10 "	- 07						 v l	
				•	1			

He remarks that 'the second semibreve is transferred to imperfect the last breve' (Heyden, *De arte canendi*, trans. Clement A. Miller (Musicological Studies and Documents 26; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1972, p. 70).

¹⁶ Verbonnet's 'Missa Gratieuse gent' is cited a number of times in the Correspondence. Sebald Heyden gives this passage as well (p. 133):

			1
m 7 7	0	A 8 .	
		$\sim$	
			•

He specifies that 'the first and second minims at the beginning of this example belong to the first breve following them, so that it is worth eight [*recte* seven] minims' (trans. Miller, p. 111). The mass has been edited by Clytus Gottwald in Ghiselin-Verbonnet, *Opera omnia*, iii. 1-34. The passage occurs in the Credo at mm. 180-93. (Gottwald has underlaid the text 'Et iterum venturus est' in this section; both Heyden and Del Lago follow Petrucci, in which the entire second half of the Credo carries only the incipit 'Et resurrexit'.)

6. Et questa reale et infallibile regola, cioè 'similis ante similem non potest imperfici', è stata osservata da tutti li dotti compositori, così antichi come moderni, nelle loro compositioni et etiam ne' loro trattati musici, come appare nella prima regola del primo capitolo della Musica di Gioanne de Muris, nella quale così si dice: Quod longa ante longam in modo minori perfecto semper est perfecta, et brevis ante brevem in tempore perfecto semper est perfecta, et semibrevis ante semibrevem in maiori prolatione semper est perfecta.¹⁷ Per la predetta regola adunque potete conoscere che nesum modo la simile nota dinanti la sua simile non si può fare imperfetta a parte anteriori dalla 911 sua terza parte o vero dal suo valore. Et questo anchora conferma il ditto Gioane de Muris nella secunda regola in confirmation della prima, la quale così dice: Quomodocunque aliqua nota debet imperfici, oportet quod eam sequatur inmediate nota maior vel minor in forma vel pausa maioris vel minoris forme, quia similis ante similem non potest imperfici.¹⁸ Hoc eodem modo in secundo notabili septime regule ubi dicitur: Et imperficiens potest preponi vel postponi illi quod imperficitur iuxta libitum ponentis, servata tamen hac regula, quod nulla nota potest imperfici ante sibi similem sed bene ante maiorem vel minorem se, ut superius dictum est.¹⁹ E non solamente in questo luoco siete incorso in errore per havere fatta la nota a parte anteriori imperfetta essendo posta dinanzi alla sua simile, ma etiam in molti altri luoci d'esso tenore, come seguitando si dirà. Sì che per tante auctoritati V.P. debbe credere che 'l tenore del mio canto non è falsissimo, come che ella scrive non troppo modesta et accuratamente nella sua lettera. Anzi è composto con grande arte et dottrina et con non mediocre industria et | solertia mia, et però non è 91^v indegno (come voi el riputate) che sopra di esso componga ciascuno dotto compositore.

7. Item havete errato nella vostra resolutione in resolvere la  $23^{a}$  lunga in due brevi, la quale è ligata cum la  $24^{a}$  lunga puntata, et similmente la  $25^{a}$ , per esser dinanzi la sua pausa, *quia pausa quo ad hoc vim tenet sue notę*, *scilicet pausa longę vim longę, pausa brevis vim brevis, pausa semibrevis vim semibrevis*,²⁰ etc. Pertanto la breve la quale è dinanzi alla  $23^{a}$  lunga né con la preditta  $23^{a}$  lunga né con la  $24^{a}$  si può connumerare: con la  $23^{a}$  per esser dinanzi la sua simile non si può computare; con la  $24^{a}$  per esser puntata con il punto di perfettione, el quale punto fa rimanire essa lunga perfetta

¹⁷ Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, CS iii. 47–8; Ugolino, *Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-5 (ed. Seay, ii. 100).

come s'ella fusse dinanzi alla sua simile, non si può connumerare et associare. Et questo è affirmato dal vostro Don Franchino nel capitolo wxii^o allegato di sopra, nel quale tratta del punto, le parole del quale sono queste: Punctus autem perfectionis est qui^g postpositus alicui notule ipsam perficit, tris in partes aequas divisibilem reddens. Hic item duobus modis consideratur: Primo quidem cum alicui notule in sua quantitate perfecta dis- $_{92}$ ^t posite apponitur. Tunc enim et si a minore eam prece dente vel sequente posset imperfici in propria facit perfectione remanere. Atque iccirco perfectionis nuncupatur punctus.²¹ Et etiam seguitando in fine d'esso capitolo, così lui dice: Solam itaque prepositus notulis punctus divisionem, postpositus vero et divisionem et perfectionem poterit pernotare, sed neque notula puncto perfectionis ornata (quod nonnullorum pace dixerim) imperfectionem tertie aut quotecumquevis partis sue sibi ipsi conducende poterit sustinere, cum perfectio et imperfectio invicem contrarie sint et contraria in eodem subiecto philosophus non admittit.²² E questo è la verità: quando la nota è puntata in ciascuna quantità perfetta, non si può per nissum modo farsi imperfetta, quia punctus perfectionis est signum quo nota cui adiungitur in quacumque mensura perfectionis est perfecta.²³ Adunque le preditte lunghe debbono remanere perfette, et la ditta breve, la quale è dinanzi alla 23ª lunga, si computa con la breve sequente, la quale è fra la lunga  $24^{a}$  et la  $25^{a}$  posta dinanzi alla sua pausa, perché essa breve non può imperficere la 25ª lunga per esser inanzi la sua pausa, come è stato già detto. Et pertanto essa lunga rimane perfetta, la quale brieve per causa del ₉₂^v numero, cioè per fare perfetto et redintegrare il | ternario numero, si altera, perché nel modo minore perfecto è ultima delle due sole poste dinanzi alla sua maggiore propinqua, cioè alla lunga, il che la seconda brieve dinanzi la lunga sempre si altera, quia nota alterata est finis perfectionis mensure. Ergo ubi est mensura perfecta sive mensure perfectio, ibi potest alteratio fieri.24 Et questa se causa per la reduttione. Reductio autem est unius aut plurium notarum cum maioribus quas imperficiunt aut cum sociis annumeratio.²⁵ Et questa tale reduttione si può dimandare syncopa, quanto però al numero, non quanto alla nota.²⁶

8 MS: quę.

¹⁸ Ibid., CS iii. 48. Del Lago's wording is closer to Ugolino's version, Book III, ch. 111-6 (ed. Seay, ii. 103).

¹⁹ Ibid., CS iii. 49; *Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-13 (ed. Seay, ii. 135). This is the second 'notandum est' following the set of seven rules.

²⁰ Cf. Ugolino's commentary on Johannes de Muris (*Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-6, ed. Seay, ii. 104): 'Intelligimus enim per hoc pausam quamcumque in imperfectione fienda quoad totum in notis vim suae notae tenere, scilicet, pausam longae vim longae, pausam brevis vim brevis, pausam semibrevis vim semibrevis . . . '.

²¹ Gafurio, Practica musicae, fo. cc1^r; trans. Miller, p. 106.

²² Ibid., fos.  $cc1^v$ - $cc2^i$ ; trans. Miller, p. 107. This matter is discussed in no. 70. On the saying of 'the Philosopher', see no. 44 n. 3.

²³ Ugolino of Orvieto, Declaratio musicae disciplinae, Book III, ch. v-l (ed. Seay, ii. 181).

²⁴ Cf. ibid., Book III, ch. 1V-1: 'modo nota alterata est finis perfectionis mensurae' (Seay ii. 169) and 'alteratio est inventa ut omnis mensurae perfectio compleatur, ubi est ergo mensura perfecta sive mensurae perfectio, ibi potest alteratio fieri' (Seay ii. 167).

²⁵ Tinctoris, *Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 54. On the various meanings of 'reductio', see the Notes on Problematical Terms under 'riducere'.

²⁶ Tinctoris defines 'sincopa' as 'aliculus notae interposita maiore per partes divisio' (*Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 58), a definition quoted by Del Lago later in the letter. Tinctoris

8. Et similmente è stato fatto da Tinctoris. Nel tenore della seconda parte del preditto suo canto, cioè 'Difficiles alios', etc. fa alterare nel tempo perfetto la seconda semibreve inanzi la brieve per la reductione della prima semibreve alla seconda, come appar in eius glossa in dichiaratione di tale semibreve, la quale così dice: 'Ista semibrevis alteratur eo quod in tempore perfecto ante brevem ultima [duarum] solarum inveniatur.'²⁷ Il medesimo è stato osservato da Philippo de Primis per la reductione o ver syncopa (quod parum differt) alterare la seconda semibreve inanzi alla brieve nel tempo perfetto, come appare nella prima parte della Gloria della sua preditta messa ['Pourtant se mon'] nel contrabasso, et similmente nella

93' prima parte | del contrabasso del Patrem. Questo accade sempre in ciascuna quantità perfetta quando la nota maggiore è posta tra due minori propinque puntata con il punto di perfettione, dopo le quali seguitano due o vero più maggiori propinque: sempre la seconda minore si altera. Et questo tale modo si dimanda da' musici syncopa, la quale da Tinctoris nel suo *Definitorio* si definisce così: *Syncopa est alicuius note interposita maiore per partes divisio.*²⁸ Et questa tale definitione di syncopa è commune, perché si può intendere così nel numero come che nella nota.

9. Item havete errato nella vostra resolutione in resolvere la seconda brieve la quale è posta tra la lunga  $27^a$  et la  $28^a$  in due brievi, et questo perché credete che la preditta brieve si alteri. Ma non havete bene considerato che la brieve precedente, la quale è posta tra la pausa della lunga perfetta et la lunga  $26^a$  puntata, si riduce alle preditte due brievi, le quali sono poste tra la  $27^a$  lunga et la  $28^a$ , et non alla lunga  $26^a$ , come voi inconsideratamente havete fatto, perché la lunga  $26^a$  remane perfetta per la ragione antidetta, cioè per esser puntata con il punto di perfettione. Ma la brieve la quale è tra la  $26^a$  lunga et la  $27^a$  non si altera, come si fa in la

restricts syncopation to the division of one note through the interposition of a larger note. 'Reductio' has the same rhythmic effect of displacement, but it is the note-value (which is what Del Lago means by 'number'), not the note itself, that is split, and more than one note may be interposed.

²⁷ Del Lago refers to the following passage (secunda pars, mm. 35-9):



The semibreves cannot imperfect the breves because of the dot of perfection after the first breve and the breve rest after the second breve. Therefore the second semibreve must be altered. See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', p. 94.

²⁸ On Tinctoris's definition see n. 26. Syncopation has nothing to do with alteration; Del Lago has seized upon two examples of alteration that happen to fit the literal meaning of Tinctoris's definition, which is uncharacteristically problematic. Tinctoris does not define syncopation in his treatises, but when he uses the word he applies it to passages where the rhythm is displaced, often by more than one note (see e.g. *Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, ii. 122 and 125). The definition implies that the divided note has the same pitch; this is not the case in any of Tinctoris's examples (including the one mentioned by Del Lago; see the previous note).

brieve la quale è tra la 24^ª lunga et la 25^ª, rationibus predictis, perché la 93 27^ª lunga è atta a farsi imperfetta dalla brieve la quale gli è dinanzi, per il che la detta lunga si fa imperfetta a parte anteriori dalla brieve precedente, come dalla sua terza parte. Pertanto el preditto punto non solamente è di perfettione ma anchora de divisione, perché opera duoi effetti: uno fa remanere la 26ª lunga perfetta, l'altro fa che la ditta breve si computa con la 27^a lunga sequente, sì che la non può alterarsi. Et questo si conferma da Gioanne de Muris nella sua Musica al primo capitolo nella terza regola, la quale così dice: Quando post longam de modo minori perfecto sequuntur due breves vel tres tantum, nulla sola brevi precedente a qua possit imperfici, perfecta est nisi punctus divisionis ponatur inter primam [brevem] et aliam vel alias sequentes,²⁹ etc. Adunque la brieve la quale è dinanzi la lunga 26ª resta sola et conviensi redure alle due brievi predette le quali sono poste tra la  $27^{a}$ lunga et la 28^a, per la quale reduttione si schiva alla secunda breve l'alteratione, perché la reduttione nelle quantità perfette opera quatro cose, cioè fa imperfetta la nota atta però a farsi imperfetta, redintegra il numero, fa alterare la nota, toglie alla nota l'alteratione, come appare nella prima parte del soprano del Patrem della preditta messa ['Pourtant se mon'] di Philippo de Primis | et etiam nella Osana del contralto della 94^r medesima messa, el quale pone due semibrevi tra due brevi di tempo perfetto, et per la reduttione toglie alla secunda semibreve l'alteratione.

10. Anchora non poco havete errato nella vostra resolutione in resolvere la 30^ª lunga in due brevi, perché contradite alla regola 'similis ante similem non potest imperfici', per il che la breve che è dinanzi alla preditta lunga non può fare imperfetta essa lunga, ma la si reduce alla 36ª lunga, perché quello è el suo primo luoco dove la si debbe redure, et hoc causa perfectionis, cioè acciò che se compisca la perfettione del numero ternario. Pertanto essa breve si accompagna cum la preditta 36^ª lunga et non con la preditta 30^ª lunga. Adunque la 36 lunga et la 37^ª restano in valore di due brevi o vero de 4 semibrevi, et non in valore di cinque semibrevi, come da voi è stato fatto nella vostra resolutione. Et di simile valore havete fatto la 38^a lunga et la 39^a. Perché esse lunghe non hanno parti propinque perfette incluse in esse, delle quali parti si possino fare alcune imperfette da quella semibreve immediate sequente, come sua terza parte, pertanto la ditta semibreve si reduce alla semibreve la quale è tra la 37^a lunga et la 38^a, la quale 37^a lunga si fa imperfetta dalle preditte due semibrevi per essere il valore della sua terza parte, quia quicquid imperficitur a tercia eius parte vel eius valore imperficitur.³⁰ Per simili ragioni non si possono fare imperfette le

²⁹ Johannes de Muris, *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, CS iii. 48. Del Lago follows Ugolino's commentary in the readings 'tantum' and 'aliam' instead of 'tamen' and 'alteram' (*Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-7, cd. Seay, ii. 107).

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³⁰ Cf. Johannes de Muris: 'quidquid imperficitur imperficitur a tertia parte' (*Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 111-13, ed. Seay, ii. 134). Del Lago had also quoted this in no. 83, para. 2.

ditte lunge d'alcuna di quelle semibrevi immediate sequenti, nec quo ad totum nec quo ad partes, per il che la 38^a lunga et la 39^a restino perfette, et la breve che è tra la 39^a lunga et la 40^a s'alteri, cioè duplica la sua quantità, o ver assume il valore de un'altra sua simile, perché da me è stata posta alterata et da voi è stata notata et resoluta nella vostra resolutione per brieve retta. Et anchora la connumerate con la 40^a lunga (quod deterius est) perché la detta lunga resta perfetta per esser dinanzi alla sua simile, et voi havete resolta in due brevi. Ma (come ho ditto) non intendete bene la natura della reduttione, perché la semibreve la quale è tra la 38^a lunga et la 39^a si reduce alla semibreve che seguita alla preditta 39^a lunga in modo che gli sono due semibrevi et una breve posta tra due lunge, et la seconda breve sempre si altera, non essendo però impedita da qualche accidental segno, come è per il punto o ver per il colore o altri simili accidenti.

11. Item dico che ciò che fa imperfetto la semibreve | lo fa imperfetto^b 95^r per cagione del tempo perfetto. Ma nella lunga predetta non è la ragione del tempo perfetto; adunque la semibreve non può imperficere la preditta lunga. La maggiore si prova perché la semibreve per se fa imperfetta la breve del tempo perfetto. Item se la semibreve fa imperfetta la lunga o ver la massima, questo è per cagione della breve del tempo perfetto, la quale si contiene in queste note. Et così la lunga o vero la massima dalla semibreve non per se si fa imperfetta sed per accidens, ratione brevis temporis perfecti incluse.³¹ Igiturⁱ, etc. La minor si prova perché quella lunga è del modo perfetto ratione longe perfette, et est temporis imperfecti ratione brevium imperfectarum. Igitur, etc. Item, dove non è il tempo perfetto, ivi non può stare dalla semibreve la imperfettione delle note, ma nella detta lunga non è il tempo perfetto, come apertamente si dimostra. Adunque nella detta lunga non può essere la imperfectione dalla semibrieve. Igitur¹, etc. Item omnis lunga la quale si fa imperfetta, o vero diventa imperfetta quo ad totum, et allhora questo è quando dalla lunga la quale si può dividere in tre brievi si remove la sua terza parte, cioè una brieve o ver il suo valore, o vero si fa imperfetta quanto alla parte o ver alle parti, et allhora questo procede quando esse parti propinque della ۹s^v lunga, cioè le brevi, sono divisibili, id est se possono dividere in tre semibrevi, dalle quali si può removere la terza parte, o vero si fa imperfetta quanto al tutto o ver quanto alla parte o ver parti,³² et questo allhora ha

^b MS: ciò che fa imperfetta la semibreve la fa imperfetta.

^{*i*} MS: Ingitur. ^{*j*} MS: ligitur.

³¹ Here Del Lago admits what he denied in no.  $8_3$ , para. 3 (disagreeing with his teacher; see n. 6): an imperfect note can be imperfected in one of its constituent perfect parts.

luoco quando el tutto et le parti si possono dividere in tre parti, et allhora dal tutto o vero dalla parte o vero dalle parti si remove la terza parte. Ma la preditta lunga, ratione perfectionis modi, è divisibile, id est si può dividere in tre parti, per cagion della qual cosa si può de lei remover la terza parte et consequentemente quanto al tutto farsi imperfetta. Ma le sue parti non sono divisibili in tre parti perché le sono imperfette. Adunque da esse no[n] si può remover la terza parte, né consequentemente possono imperficere. Adunque la lunga preditta per nessun modo si può imperficere dalla sola semibreve. Item, se tale lunga perfetta del tempo imperfetto si potesse fare imperfetta dalla sola semibreve, seguitaria quod esset dare aliquam notam imperfectibile que tamen non imperficeretur quo ad totum neque etiam quo ad partem vel partes, quod est impossibile, come qui di sopra è stato ditto. Et che se desse tale nota | si prova, quia iam supponitur.³³ Et che non si facia imperfetta quanto al tutto è cosa chiarissima, perché da lei non si toglie la terza parte, il che in tale perfettione si richiede. La semibreve certamente non è la terza parte di essa lunga, né anchora si fa imperfetta quanto alla parte o vero alle parti, perché la semibreve di alcuna delle parti di questa sì fatta lunga non è la sua terza parte. Adunque se tale lunga perfetta del tempo imperfetto si potesse farsi imperfetta dalla sola semibreve, seguitaria che si potesse trovare qualche nota imperfettibile^k la quale non si facesse imperfetta quo ad totum nec quo ad partem vel partes, quod est falsum et impossibile.³⁴

12. Similmente havete errato nella vostra resolutione in resolvere la 4^a massima in cinque brevi, pensando voi che una delle suoe parti propinque si faccia imperfetta da una di quelle brevi sequenti legate, et la breve che è tra la 49^a lunga puntata et la 50^a lunga negra, la reducete alla 51^a lunga, la qual cosa è falsissima, perché la ditta massima deve valere due lunge perfette o ver sei brevi per virtù delle due brevi ligate le quali sequitano immediate da poi la massima, Lperché quelle due brevi ligate insieme quasi habent vim unius longe imperfette, quia 'virtus unita fortior est se ipsa dispersa'.³⁵ Pertanto le due | brevi ligate hanno il valore di due terze parti unite insieme de la lunga perfetta et hanno tanta virtù (dico a compara-

^k MS: imperfettibele.

96^v

³² The third way of imperfecting the long seems to resume the first two ways. What Del Lago probably meant to say was that a perfect long in perfect *tempus* can be imperfected both as to the whole and to its parts; various examples of this type of imperfection can be found in Tinctoris's

^{&#}x27;Difficiles alios' (see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 68–71 and 81–3 and n. 86). Although Del Lago does not discuss imperfection as to the whole and to the parts in his treatise, he acknowledges the practice in no. 83, end of para. 2.

³³ This sentence does not make sense; either something has been omitted in copying or Del Lago cut his explanation short, wishing to suggest that he was using scholastic reasoning, without the bother of actually doing so.

³⁴ Del Lago covered this topic much more concisely in his letter to Fra Nazaro of 15 Sept. 1533; see no. 83.

³⁵ See no. 43 n. 2.

tione et similitudine quanto al tempo) quanto hanno due semibrevi insieme ligate poste sotto il tempo perfetto ut hic:

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[Per] la qual cosa in questo esemplo qui sopra posto la prima breve è perfetta, cioè val tre semibrevi, et la 2^a breve si fa imperfetta a parte anteriori della 4^a semibreve precedente, id est vale due semibrevi. Et questa perfettione et imperfettione di queste due brevi se causa per virtù d'essa ligatura, la quale fa che la prima breve remane perfetta et la 2^a si fa imperfetta della 4^a semibreve precedente, et questa virtù et essentia unita s'intende quanto a fare remanere la nota perfetta posta inanzi ad essa ligatura' ³⁶ ita quantum ad totum sicut quantum ad partes, o ver quanto alle parti propinque, remote, o ver più remote perfette incluse in la nota imperfetta, come è nella predetta massima, perché le due sopradette brevi ligate se piglia per due terze parti di una lunga perfetta et si connumerano con la terza breve immediate sequente, le quali insieme computate fanno el valore di una lunga perfetta, et computato el numero ternario, convien che la 4 breve resta sola, e questo perché la ditta breve non può fare imperfetta

 $_{97}$ ^r la 40^a lunga per esser | puntata con il punto di perfettione, ma la si reduce alla breve sequente che è tra la preditta 49ª puntata et la 50ª lunga negra, per la qual reduttione la detta breve si altera per esser 2ª dinanti alla lunga o ver tra due lunge, et questo secondo li antichi, perché quante fussino state le brevi tra le lunghe, subito dalla prima delle brevi cominciavano computare la perfettione del modo minore perfetto. Et così toglie[v]ano le tre prime per la prima perfettione et le altre tre per la seconda, et similmente se elle erano più. Ma quella che sola rimaneva computavano et connumeravano con la lunga sequente, eccetto se la non fusse puntata con il punto di perfettione, o vero posta innanzi la sua simile. Allhora la detta nota essi antichi riduce[v]ano al primo luoco dove habilmente la si potea connumerare o ver locare, cioè ad una nota maggior di sé o vero ad una sua simile, et altri modi che poriano accadere. Ma voi havete fatto tutto al contrario, cioè havete fatto imperfetta una delle parti propinque inclusa in la massima da una di quelle due brevi ligate immediate sequente, et la ditta breve la quale è posta tra la 49^ª et la 50^ª lunga negra | la riducete alla 51^ª 97^v lunga.

13. Ma se voi havessi ben inteso la forza et possanza della ligatura, non saresti incorso in così grandi errori. È vero che se le predette due brevi ligate fussino disciolte et separate, allhora si faria una delle due parti

propinque inclusa in la detta massima imperfetta dalla prima delle due brevi immediate sequenti, le quali erano prima ligate, e questo si dimostreria col punto di divisione dopo la prima breve, et similmente cessaria la reduttione de la 4^ª breve. Adunque per queste ragioni la ditta massima resta ne la sua quantità e valore, cioè in due lunge perfette, o ver il valore d'esse, et non possono per alcun modo nessuna delle sue parti propinque farsi imperfetta a parte posteriori, ma sì ben a parte anteriori se possono fare imperfette le preditte parti quando fusse dinanzi alla ditta massima una breve o due, o ver il suo valore d'esse, et allhora si debbe mostrare questa tale imperfettione con il punto, o ver per il colore, così immediate come mediate. Ma quando si fa tali imperfettione a parte posteriori, essendo tale ligatura dinanzi alla nota perfetta o ver imperfetta che contengano in sé parti propinque remote o ver più remote perfette, tale imperfettione si fa solamente mediata, et questo similmente se dimostra per il punto o ver per il colore, perché il colore, cioè la implettione di note, non solum dupla et sesqualtera significha, ma etiamdio (secondo si vede in molte opere di compositori) [im]perfettione et reduttione.³⁷ Ma che 'l colore significha [im]perfettione et reduttione ne' concenti musici, il vostro Don Franchino l'afferma nel predetto undecimo capitolo del 2º libro della sua Musica, le parole del quale sono queste: Quocie[n]scunque in ternaria ac perfecta quantitatis acervatione notula^l impletur, tunc de tertia proprie quantitatis parte imperficitur, cui pars ipsa tercia consimili plenitudine succedat neces[s]um est, qua quidem plenitudine sola reductio comprobatur, nec refert si immediate [an mediate] pars ipsa tercia reducibilis maiorem tanquam suum totum precedat aut sequatur, dummodo perficiende numerositatis gratia ad ipsam reducatur maiorem. Solet nanque ad maiorem partem tanquam ad suum totum minor semper pars ipsa deduci,³⁸ etc. Ma se V.P. volesse dire che da voi è stato considerato da fare una delle parti propinque della preditta massima imperfetta a parte posteriori da una de le brevi non immediate sequente, cioè o da la terza o ver da la 4ª breve, le quali sequitano dopo le due brevi ligate, et non da una delle due prime brevi ligate, anchora che non li siano tali segni, cioè il punto o ver il colore nelle notule, dico che né da me né da nessuno dotto compositore esser stata usata questa così fatta imperfettione, cioè mediata senza apparentia dell'uno o dell'altro segno preditto, cioè o con il punto o con il colore. E tale modo, cioè tale imperfettione mediata, è stata usata da

#### ¹ MS: notulę.

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³⁶ The passage in lower half-brackets derives from Del Lago's letter to Spataro of 4 Aug. 1532; see no. 43, para. 2. Spataro himself does not believe in Del Lago's theory of 'virtue united'; see no. 45, para. 20.

³⁷ This sentence comes from Tinctoris's *Proportionale (Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, iia. 20): 'Sed cum haec notarum impletio non tantum ut praedictum est duplam et sesquialteram, sed etiam ut patet per innumera compositorum opera [im]perfectionem aut reductionem designet . . .'. The inferior reading 'perfectionem' (found in two of the four manuscripts) was adopted by Seay. On the use of colour to signify 'drawing together' (*reductio*), see the Notes on Problematical Terms. ³⁸ Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, fo. bb7'; trans. Miller, p. 102.

Tintoris nel suo prenominato concento, cioè 'Difficiles alios', etc. nella prima parte del tenore. Sotto il segno di tempo imperfetto et prolatione perfetta reduce la sesta minima (la quale è puntata nella sumità della coda a parte posteriori)^m alla 2^a breve del predetto segno, la quale minima fa imperfetta l'altra sua parte propinqua inclusa in essa breve quanto al suo tutto,³⁹ la quale imperfettione mediata il predetto Tintoris la dimostra con il punto, qui punctus significat transitum localem, et tale imperfettione si dimanda mediata,ⁿ così a parte anteriori come a parte posteriori, quando la

^{99^t} si fa. Ma la imperfettione im|mediata [¬]si fa quando dopo la nota atta alla imperfettione li seguita la sua parte propinqua o ver il suo valore, cioè non essendo impedita d'altre notule o ver d'altro segno accidentale intramezo.[¬]^o Pertanto non essendo stato da me posto e segnato alle notule sequente nessum segno accidentale, cioè il punto o ver il colore, essa massima resta necessariamente in quantità et valore di due lunghe perfette, o ver il valore di esse, et non in valore di cinque brevi, come da voi inconsideratamente è stato fatto nella vostra resolutione.

14. Ultimamente non poco havete errato nella vostra resolutione in redurre o ver transportare la breve o ver le due semibrevi le quali sono poste fra la  $58^a$  lunga et la  $59^a$  alla  $60^a$  lunga, et etiam la breve la quale è fra la  $62^a$  et la  $63^a$ , la quale la connumerate con la preditta  $63^a$ , perché è contra la regola 'similis ante similem', etc. Dico che la semibreve che è tra la  $58^a$ lunga et la breve sequente si reduce per syncopam alla semibreve che è tra la preditta breve et la  $59^a$  lunga, le quali semibrevi si reducono insieme alla breve la quale è fra la  $62^a$  lunga et la  $63^a$ , et per tale reduttione la detta breve si altera. Et così la preditta  $58^a$  lunga si fa imperfetta dalla breve che è tra le due semibrevi, perché ella remane sola tra due lunghe, ma non

" The words 'è puntata a parte posteriori' are written over an erasure, and the words 'nella sumità della coda' were added above the line. At this point Del Lago added in the margin, then cancelled, the following: 'Alio modo reduce la sesta minima'la quale è puntata nella sumità della coda a parte posteriori alla quinta minima la quale seguita immediate dopo la seconda breve del predetto segno, le quali insieme redutte fanno imperfette le parti propinque contenute in essa breve quanto al suo tutto.'

" Del Lago first wrote 'irregolare', then added 'impropria et'. He then struck these words out and wrote 'mediata' in the margin.

^o Del Lago has revised this sentence. It originally read: 'Ma la imperfettione naturale et regolare si fa immediata et non mediata, cioè senza impedimento d'altre notule o ver d'altro segno.'

³⁹ Del Lago cites the following passage (mm. 28-32):



The second breve, or rather its two near parts, is imperfected by the minim that follows it and the minim with a dot next to the stem. The dot prevents alteration of the following minim, for two minims between two semibreves in major prolation normally call for alteration of the second minim.

come havete fatto voi redurre le due semibrevi alla 60^ª lunga, et la breve che seguita dopo la 62^a lunga la conumerate con la 63^a, la qual cosa è contra la regola allegata di sopra, 'similis ante sibi similem', etc. Anchora che la 60^a lunga sia dinanti alla 61 negra, per questo la non può farsi imperfetta, perché la similitudine s'intende virtute forme et non coloris. Certamente el colore non toglie alla notula o ver figura la sua forma, sed solum ex nigredine amittit tertiam partem sui valoris, perché la regola dice che la notula simile inanti alla sua simile non si debba fare imperfetta. Questo si intende quanto alla qualità et non quanto alla quantità, cioè quanto al nome et [non] quanto alla virtù quantitativa, s[c]ilicet che siano simile in equivocatione et non sempre in univocatione, o vogliam dire che basta che siano [simili] in nome et non in substantia, come maxima ante maximam, longa ante longam, brevis ante brevem, semibrevis ante semibrevem, et così inanzi alle sue pause 1,40 quia pause notularum quarum sunt pause vim habent.⁴¹ Sì che V.P. intende come quella [h]a errato molte volte a fare imperfetta la simile notula inanti ad un'altra sua simile.

15. Adunque concludendo, dico che 'l mio tenore non è falsissimo come quella dice, et anchora a Messer Adriano non può esser stato di 100^t dishonore, come dite voi, anzi gli è stato di grande laude et reputatione haver composto sopra tal tenore, et etiam dico che ciascuno mediocre dotto potrà credere che V.P. ha poca cognitione di musica per haver comesso tanti manifesti errori in resolvere il mio tenore tutto al contrario della verità, come appare nella vostra resolutione notata di vostra mano, la quale io servo appresso di me per più mia chiareza, per il che non asegnerò altre ragioni. Basta assai quello che è stato detto da me di sopra. Ma certamente quelli che leggerano tale mia diffesa conoscerano la vostra ignorantia, et che a voi conviene quello che è stato detto da Guido monacho nella sua Musica, 'nam qui facit quod non sapit diffinitur bestia'.⁴² Pertanto,⁷ se quella havesse ben considerato et ben studiato il mio tenore inanzi che havesse mandata fora la sua resolutione, non saria incorso in tanti puerili errori, et similmente non haria scritto nella sua lettera così superbamente che 'l mio tenore non sta bene et che 'giocando più presto ad indivinare et interpretare la mente del compositore' havete resolto tal tenore 'che per l'arte che sia in esso'. Ma veramente si conosce che dite la verità, che 'giocando ad indivinare et interpretare la mente del compositore' havete fatta la sua resolutione (falsa però), perché se da voi è ignorato li primi rudimenti et i primi amaestramenti della musica, non è

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⁴⁰ The passage in lower half-brackets has been borrowed from Spataro's letter to Aaron of Feb. 1523; see no. 5, para. 4.

⁴¹ Cf. Ugolino, *Declaratio*, Book III, ch. 1V-3 (Seay ii. 174): 'Tertio dicit autor quod pausae notarum quarum sunt pausae vim habent.'

 $^{42}\,$  The third line of the famous jingle about the difference between a musician and a singer; see no. 74 n. 7.

posibile che da voi sia stata fatta bene la sua resolutione se non falsissima. Come potete voi sapere ben la prattica della musica non sapendo theorica? Perché senza theorica non si può ben intendere la prattica, perché la 100° theorica dimostra la ragion et la causa della cosa | fatta per el prattico.

"'Practicus enim sine theorica est tanquam cecus sine baculo'," e questo è noto a ciascun intelligente. Pertanto, per dimonstrarvi li vostri errori, noto qui sotto il mio tenore con la sua resolutione di mia mano, la quale così vuol stare, nel quale tenore pongo li numeri sopra le ditte notule acciò che subito l'occhio discerna quella notula della quale parlo, come appare qui [Pl. 13].

16. Don Lorenzo mio honorando, per tante ragioni et auctorità dette di sopra et per la resolutione del mio tenore qui sopra notata di mia mano potete comprendere esser stato non poco temerario in resolvere le notule del preditto tenore tutte al contrario di quello che comandano le regole date da' dotti musici et da tutti i buoni compositori approbate et da loro rosservate ne' loro concenti, perché *regola è in qualunque arte un* | *comune mandato.*⁴³ r*Regula namque a regendo, sive recte dirigendo dicitur.*³⁴⁴ Pertanto per alcun modo opponer non si deve alle regole et alla dottrina di tanti

dottissimi musici, ma più presto a quelle accostarsi et fermarsi, le quali indubitatamente comprobamo et seguimo. Tal vostra temerità si è causata per soperchia falsa persuasione, reputandovi saper quello che non sapete. Apertamente adunque si conosce la vostra arrogantia.

17. Se vi ho scritto cosa che a V.P. non li piace, perdonatime, perché quello che ho scritto ho scritto per tre cause: prima per defendere l'honor mio et le cose mie; secunda acciò che accadendovi ad altri scrivere per lo advenire, siate più modesto et più acorto nello scrivere acciò che non caschiate così facilmente in errore, perché certo ho compasione alla vostra cecità; terza ho scritto per[ché] quelli i quali prestano troppo fede alle vostre parole et scritti non caschino anchor loro in sì fatti errori.

In Venegia, a dì vi maggio M.D.XXXV.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1

1. Don Valeriano, your nephew, sent you a tenor in the perfect minor mode and imperfect *tempus*, with a request to resolve it. You sent him the resolution with a letter [no. 108] as follows: 'My dear Don Valeriano, I was not able to answer your letter sooner because of the time I had to

⁴³ Cf. Odo, *Dialogus de musica* (GS i. 263): 'Regula enim est commune mandatum uniuscuiusque artis.'

⁴⁴ Del Lago probably found this definition in D. B. de Francia, *Brevis collectio artis musicae* (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 64 [3415], fo. 57'); on this treatise, see Ch. 7, pp. 155-61.

spend on confessions. That tenor, in brief, is full of errors, and I should advise Messer Adriano [Willaert] not to publish anything he composed on it, because it would certainly embarrass him among experts. I'd like to know who the composer is. I enclose the resolution, relying more on guesswork than on its art, and I repeat that it shouldn't be used for a composition. If the composer is in Venice, see if you can get the resolution from him and send it to me.' Those are your actual words, to which I reply that that tenor comes from a work of mine for three voices composed long ago,¹ and it is correctly written with great skill and replete with subtleties regarding the perfect minor mode, as is shown by the characteristics of this mode—rests, colour, and dots. You obviously misunderstood it and these subtleties went above your head. It is your resolution, not my tenor, that is full of errors, as I shall demonstrate with efficacious reasons and unexceptionable authorities.

2. First, you erred in resolving the nineteenth long into two breves: that long must be perfect because of the time-honoured rule that 'like before like is always perfect'. Lawyers say that custom is as good as a law and should be observed as such.² Your friend Franchino Gafurio confirms this in his Musica, Book II, ch. 11 on imperfection: In general musicians also have considered a note preceding another of the same kind (in a perfection) as always perfect, and in no case ever to be imperfected by a note of lesser value. Thus by necessity an imperfectible note is placed before a larger or smaller note.³ Further on he says: Whenever a dot of division is affixed to a note for the note's sake or because of it and another or other notes, the note will imperfect a preceding or following larger note if it can be imperfected, as this tenor shows:





86. Del Lago to Gazio, 6 May 1535



He explains it as follows: In this tenor the third breve is imperfected a parte post ad totum, which is shown by the dot of division following the first semibreve. The fourth breve is imperfected a parte post ad totum, which is clearly indicated by the dot of division before the two preceding minims. The dot of division between the two semibreves which separate the last two breves shows that the fifth breve is imperfected a parte post and the sixth breve a parte ante. If a larger note preceding or following a dotted smaller note is not imperfectible, then the smaller note is transferred to the first note to which it can be joined in a ternary grouping. The same is also true when an undotted smaller note precedes a larger note which cannot be imperfected, for then the smaller note is transferred to the first note which can unite with it in a ternary perfection, as is seen in the following tenor:





He continues: In this tenor the dot between the third and fourth semibreve shows that the fourth semibreve must be counted as part of the third breve of the following ligature, since it cannot be added to the first or second breve, for 'like before like' cannot be imperfected, as already stated. In the same way the semibreve without a dot preceding the last three disjunct breves is transferred to the third breve and imperfects it. The same is true when a dot of division is applied to a breve in relation to longs in perfect minor mode, to a long in relation to maximas in perfect major mode, and also in the relation of a minim to semibreves in perfect prolation. If they are undotted they are transferred to a more distant note which is receptive to their imperfecting quality.⁴

3. Similarly, in ch. 12, on the dot, he says: But the dot before the semibreve immediately preceding the three breves shows that the semibreve must be transferred to the last breve and counted with it to form a complete ternary grouping. For the semibreve cannot be applied to the first or the second breve, since 'like before like' cannot be imperfected.⁵ I omit the example, to save effort. Also in ch. 13, on alteration, he affirms the same: But the second semibreve is altered since it cannot take another form, even though it is doubled in value, for if it were written in the square shape of a breve it would equal not just two but three semibreves, since it might come upon 'like before like', which cannot be imperfected.⁶

4. These are the actual words of your Don Franchino, whom you so revere, and they are plainly against you. Since you pride yourself that he sent you his works to be corrected (if he did, which I don't believe), you must have understood them no better than Jews do sacred scripture, who do not understand what they read. This is because you don't reflect on what you read, going against Cato's dictum: 'To read and not understand is not to read.'⁷ If you had understood his works and those of other learned musicians, you wouldn't have made such egregious errors, for in resolving my tenor you broke all the time-honoured rules. For these reasons you can understand that of necessity that long remains perfect and the breve is transferred to the twentieth long, which can be imperfected







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because it stands before a maxima, so it won't remain alone without ternary companions, for a note is considered to be alone when it cannot be counted with the preceding or succeeding note or its value. Johannes de Muris affirms this in his Musica, ch. 1, rule 5: When any note is alone, it should be transferred to the first place possible.⁸ The same goes for two notes, or their value, alone, as he states in rule 7: When two notes are found together alone, they should not be separated but counted together.⁹ This usually occurs in two ways, (1) when there are two longs before a maxima or between two maximas in the perfect major mode, or two breves before a long or between two longs in the perfect minor mode, and also two semibreves before a breve or between two breves in perfect tempus, and similarly two minims before a semibreve or between two semibreves in perfect prolation; then the second note is altered to fill out a perfection, unless impeded by some accidental sign, such as a dot or colour; (2) when two breves or two semibreves or two minims or their value are placed before a larger remote note that has a dot of perfection or is before another similar note or its rest. Then the notes are considered to be alone and are transferred beyond the larger note, which cannot be imperfected by them.

5. Maestro Bartholomeo [Ramis] observed this kind of perfection in the alto of his 'Tu lumen',¹⁰ where under perfect *tempus* a breve before another breve is not imperfected by the preceding semibreve, which is transferred to the long following the two breves. Tinctoris, in the soprano of the Hosanna of his 'Missa Elas',¹¹ used it in two places, and also in his 'Difficiles alios' in the tenor of the second part.¹² Similarly, Philippo de Primis, in the tenor of the first part of the Gloria of his 'Missa Pourtant se mon' based on Busnois's chanson,¹³ transfers the minim preceding four semibreves under perfect prolation to the fourth semibreve. And in the soprano in the first part of the Credo he transfers the semibreve rest beyond two breves in perfect tempus to one of the near parts included in the first long following. Likewise de Orto, in the tenor at 'Et unam sanctam catholicam' in the second Credo of his 'Missa J'ay pris amours', transfers the semibreve in perfect tempus beyond two perfect breves in two places.¹⁴ And the good Josquin too, in his 'Missa [L'homme armé] sexti toni', tenor, last Kyrie, transfers the semibreve beyond six breves to the last breve.¹⁵ And Verbonnet, in his 'Missa Gratieuse gent', in the tenor at 'Et resurrexit' in the Credo, transfers the minim beyond two semibreves under  $\phi$  to one of the two near parts included in the first breve following.16

6. This infallible rule, 'like before like is always perfect', has been observed by all expert composers, ancient and modern, in their works as well as their treatises, and I cite Johannes de Muris, *Musica*, ch. 1, rule 1: *That a long before a long in the perfect minor mode is always perfect, and a breve* 

before a breve in perfect tempus is always perfect, and a semibreve before a semibreve in major prolation is always perfect.¹⁷ This rule tells you that a note before its like can never be imperfected a parte ante by a third part of its value. Johannes de Muris confirms this in rule 2: In whatever way any note should be imperfected, it must be followed immediately by a lesser or greater note or rest, for like before like cannot be imperfected.¹⁸ And likewise under rule 7: And the imperfecting note can be placed before or after the note it imperfects according to the composer's will, always observing the rule, however, that no note can be imperfected before its like but only before a note of greater or lesser value, as said above.¹⁹ Not only in this place did you commit this error, but in many others, as I shall point out. In the light of so many authorities, you will have to accept that my tenor is not full of errors, as you so immodestly and inaccurately write. Rather it is composed with great art and learning and no small effort on my part, and therefore it is not unworthy (as you think) of being used as a basis by any good composer.

7. You erroneously resolved into two breves the twenty-third long, which is in ligature with a dotted long, and likewise the twenty-fifth, standing before a longa rest, for a rest in this case has the same force as its note, that is, a rest of a long has the force of a long, a rest of a breve the force of a breve, the rest of a semibreve the force of a semibreve.²⁰ Therefore the breve before the twenty-third long cannot be counted with that long because of 'like before like', nor with the twenty-fourth because of the dot of perfection, which causes the breve to remain perfect just as if it were before another breve. In the words of your Don Franchino, in the above-mentioned ch. 12 on the dot: But a dot of perfection is a dot which perfects the note it follows, dividing it into three equal parts. This is also done in two ways. In the first it is attached to a perfect note so that the note can remain perfect, since it could be imperfected by a smaller note preceding or following it; therefore it is called a dot of perfection.²¹ At the end of the chapter he says: So a dot before a note can only indicate division. but a dot after a note can show division and perfection. Yet a note with a dot of perfection (this is mentioned here in pace to some) cannot be made imperfect in its third part or in any part belonging to it, since perfection and imperfection are mutually opposed and the Philosopher does not allow contraries in the same substance.²² This is the truth, for no dotted perfect note can ever be made imperfect, for a dot of perfection is a sign that the note to which it is added, in whatever measure of perfection, is perfect.²³ Therefore those longs have to remain perfect, and the breve is counted together with the breve between the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth longs, for the latter breve cannot imperfect the twenty-fifth long because it stands before a longa rest. To fill out a perfection, this breve is altered: it is the latter of two single breves in the perfect minor mode placed before the next greater note, a long, for an altered note terminates the perfection of a measure. Therefore where there is a perfect

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measure or the perfection of a measure, there alteration can occur.²⁴ This happens through drawing together (reduttione). Reductio is the counting together of one or more notes with greater ones which they imperfect, or with their companions.²⁵ Such drawing together can also be called syncopation, but with regard to the number, not the note.²⁶

8. Tinctoris did this in the tenor of the second part of his 'Difficiles alios', where in perfect *tempus* he draws together two semibreves and alters the second, as appears in his gloss: 'This semibreve is altered because it is found as the last of two single semibreves before a breve in perfect *tempus*.'²⁷ Philippo de Primis observed the same in the bass of the first part of the Gloria of his 'Missa Pourtant se mon', where he uses drawing together or syncopation (there is little difference) to alter the second semibreve before a breve in perfect *tempus*, and also in the bass of the first part of the Credo. This always happens in perfect quantities when a larger dotted note is placed between two notes of the next lesser value, after which two or more notes of the next greater value follow: the second lesser note is always altered. Musicians call this syncopation; Tinctoris defines it thus: *Syncopation is the division of any note into parts through the interposition of a larger note*.²⁸ This is a common definition and applies to the number as well as the note.

9. You also erred in resolving the second breve between the twentyseventh and twenty-eighth longs; you thought it should be altered, but you didn't consider the breve preceding the twenty-sixth long, which is drawn together with those two breves and does not imperfect the twenty-sixth long because of the dot of perfection. The breve between the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh longs is not altered (as was the breve between the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth longs) because the twenty-seventh long can be imperfected by it. Thus the dot is one of division as well as perfection: it perfects the twenty-sixth long and it causes the semibreve to be counted with the twenty-seventh long, obviating alteration. Johannes de Muris confirms this in his Musica, ch. 1, rule 3: When only two or three breves follow a long in the perfect minor mode, and no single breve precedes it which might imperfect it, the long is perfect unless a dot of division is placed between the first breve and the other or others following.²⁹ Thus the breve before the twenty-sixth long remains alone and has to be drawn together with the two breves between the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth longs, preventing alteration of the second breve. The process of 'drawing together' in perfect quantities has four functions: it imperfects a note that can be imperfected, it completes the number, it alters the note, and it prevents alteration, as appears in the soprano of the first part of the Credo of Philippo de Primis's 'Missa Pourtant se mon' and in the alto of the Hosanna, where he places two semibreves

between two breves in perfect *tempus*, but prevents alteration of the second semibreve through 'drawing together'.

10. You mistakenly resolved the thirtieth long into two breves in contravention of the 'like before like' rule; the breve that precedes that long has to be counted with the thirty-sixth long, the first place where it can complete a perfection. Both the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh longs have the value of two breves or four semibreves, not five, as you determined. You gave the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth longs the same value, but the near parts of these longs are not perfect, so they cannot be imperfected by the semibreves. The semibreve is counted together with the semibreve between the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth longs and they imperfect the thirty-seventh long by a third part, for that which is imperfected is imperfected by its third part or its value.³⁰ For the same reasons the semibreves cannot imperfect the thirty-eighth or thirty-ninth longs, which remain perfect, and the breve between the thirty-ninth and fortieth longs is altered, that is, doubles in value. I intended an altered breve, but you resolved it as a regular breve, and what is worse, you counted it with the fortieth long, which has to be perfect because it stands before its like. As I said, you do not understand how 'drawing together' works, for the semibreve between the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth longs is counted with the semibreve following the thirty-ninth long, so that there are two semibreves and a breve between two longs, which always calls for alteration of the second breve unless impeded by some accidental sign, such as a dot or colour or similar characteristics.

11. I say that that which the semibreve imperfects it imperfects through the factor of perfect tempus; but the aforesaid long does not contain the factor of perfect tempus; therefore the semibreve cannot imperfect the aforesaid long. The major premiss is proved because the semibreve imperfects a breve per se, but if it imperfects a long or maxima, it is because of the perfection of the breve included in these notes. Thus the long or maxima is not imperfected by the semibreve per se but accidentally, because of the breve in perfect *tempus* included in it.³¹ The minor premiss is proved because the long is in the perfect minor mode by reason of the perfect longs and in imperfect tempus by reason of the imperfect breves. Also, where there is no perfect *tempus*, a semibreve cannot imperfect, and there is no perfect tempus in that long. Therefore it cannot be imperfected by the semibreve. Every long that is imperfected either becomes imperfect as to the whole, that is when it can be divided into three breves, of which one or its value is removed, or as to its parts, that is when one of the near parts, i.e. the breves, is divisible into three semibreves and one is removed, or as to either the whole or the parts,³² that is when both the whole and the parts can be divided into three and a

third part is removed from one or the other. The long under discussion, by reason of the perfection of the mode, can be divided into three parts and therefore imperfected as to the whole. But its parts are not divisible into three because they are imperfect. Thus the third part cannot be removed and they cannot be imperfected. Therefore a single semibreve cannot imperfect that long. If such a long could be imperfected by a single semibreve, it would follow that one could posit an imperfectible note that however was not imperfectible either as to the whole or as to the parts, which is impossible. And that there was such a note is proved, since it is so ex hypothesi.³³ It is perfectly clear that it cannot be imperfected as to the whole because a third part cannot be removed. A semibreve certainly is not a third of a long nor is it a third part of any part of the long. Thus if such a perfect long in imperfect *tempus* could be imperfected by a single semibreve, it would follow that an imperfectible note could be found that could not be imperfected as to the whole or as to its parts, which is false and impossible.34

12. Similarly, you erred in resolving the fourth maxima into five breves, believing one of its near parts to be imperfected by one of the following breves in ligature, and you counted the breve between the forty-ninth and fiftieth longs with the fifty-first long. This is a real error because the maxima, by virtue of the two breves in ligature, must be worth two perfect longs, _because those two breves virtually have the force of an imperfect long, for 'virtue united is stronger than virtue dispersed'.³⁵ Thus the two breves in ligature have the value of two joined third parts of the perfect long and have the same force (*mutatis mutandis*) as two semibreves in ligature under perfect *tempus*:

In this example the first breve is perfect and the second breve is imperfected *a parte ante* by the fourth semibreve. This perfection and imperfection is caused by the ligature, and its force is sufficient to cause the first note to remain perfect₁,³⁶ both as to the whole and all its parts or as to the parts included in an imperfect note, as in the case of the maxima, for the two breves in ligature are equivalent to two third parts of a perfect long and are counted together with the breve that follows them, making a ternary number. Thus the fourth breve is alone; since it cannot imperfect the following long because of the dot of perfection, it is counted together with the next breve between the forty-ninth and fiftieth longs, and this breve is altered because it is the second before a long or between two longs. This was devised by the older composers because whenever they found breves between longs, they started counting a perfection with the

first breve, marking off groups of three breves. If one was left, they counted it with the following long unless it carried a dot of perfection or occurred before a like note. Then they transferred the note to the first place where it could be counted, that is with a larger note or a similar note. But you did just the opposite, imperfecting a near part of the maxima by one of the breves in ligature and counting the breve between the fortyninth and fiftieth longs with the fifty-first long.

13. If you had understood the force of the ligature you would not have made such great errors. True, if the ligature were dissolved, then one of the near parts of the maxima would be imperfected, and this would have been shown by a dot of division after the first breve, and the fourth breve would not have been transferred. Thus the maxima remains perfect, though it could be imperfected a parte ante if one or two breves or their value had preceded it; this imperfection would need to be shown by a dot or colour. But if the imperfection were to be made a parte post, it would have to be mediated and similarly shown with a dot or colour, because colour, the filling-in of notes, signifies not only dupla and sesquialtera but also (as shown in the works of many composers) [im]perfection and drawing together.³⁷ Gafurio in his Musica, Book II, ch. 11, states: Whenever a note is blackened in a ternary mensuration it is imperfected by a third part of its own value. The third part must also be blackened to establish its relationship to the other note. It does not matter whether the third part precedes or follows immediately [or remotely] the larger value (its total so to speak), provided that for the sake of perfect mensuration it is joined to the larger value. For a smaller part is always related to a larger (its sum as it were).³⁸ But if you intended to imperfect one of the near parts of that maxima a parte post by one of the breves that does not follow immediately, that is by the third or fourth breve following the two breves in ligature, and not by one of the two breves in ligature, even though there is no dot or colour, I say that no expert composer has ever used such mediated imperfection with no sign. Tinctoris wrote a mediated imperfection in his 'Difficiles alios' in the tenor in the first part. Under C he draws the sixth minim (which has a dot after the top of the stem) together with the second breve following the sign; this minim imperfects the other near part of the breve as to the whole,³⁹ and he demonstrates this mediated imperfection with a dot, which signifies a change of place, and this is called mediated imperfection, both a parte and a parte post. Unmediated imperfection occurs when an imperfectible note is followed by its near part or its value, unless impeded by other notes or accidental signs. Since I used no accidental sign, whether dot or colour, this maxima remains perfect and is not resolved into five breves, as you so thoughtlessly did.

14. Finally, you made a blunder in transferring the breve or the two

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semibreves between the fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth longs to the sixtieth long and also the breve between the sixty-second and sixty-third longs to the sixty-third long, for you contravene the rule of 'like before like'. The semibreve and the following breve between the fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth longs are drawn together in syncopation to the following semibreve, and these semibreves together are transferred to the breve between the sixtysecond and sixty-third long, causing that breve to be altered. Thus the fifty-eighth long is imperfected by the breve between the two semibreves because it is alone between two longs; the two semibreves are not counted together with the sixtieth long nor is the breve after the sixty-second long counted with the sixty-third, which goes against the 'like before like' rule. Since the sixtieth long stands before a black long, it cannot be imperfected inasmuch as similarity regards form and not colour. Colour does not change the form but only reduces the value by one-third because the rule states that like before like cannot be imperfected. This applies to quality rather than quantity, that is to the name and not the value or substance, like a maxima before a maxima, a long before a long, a breve before a breve, a semibreve before a semibreve, and the same for their rests 1,40 for rests have the same force as the notes of which they are rests.⁴¹ Thus you understand that you made many errors in imperfecting like before like.

15. In conclusion, I say that my tenor is not full of errors, that Willaert merits praise and not blame for composing over it, and that any moderately educated musician could believe that you knew little about music because of the glaring errors you made in your resolution of my tenor, which I shall keep for my enlightenment. But certainly your ignorance will be manifest to those who will read my defence; those verses of Guido fit you very well: 'He who sings what he does not understand is considered an animal."⁴² If you had studied my tenor well before making your resolution public, you wouldn't have made such childish errors and written so haughtily that my tenor was wrong and that you had resolved it 'relying more on guesswork than on its art'. In fact, you told the truth, for 'relying on guesswork' led you to a false resolution because you don't know the first thing about music, so how could it come out except full of errors? How can you understand practice without knowing theory? Theory is essential for practice because it demonstrates the reasons for it. 'A practical musician without theory is like a blind man without a stick.' Thus, to demonstrate your errors, I notate below my tenor and its proper resolution, numbering the notes I discuss [Pl. 13].

16. My dear Don Lorenzo, the reasons and authorities above and my own resolution of the tenor should show you that you were presumptuous in resolving those notes contrary to the time-honoured rules, because a rule in art is a general instruction.⁴³ 'Rule' comes from 'ruling', that is, properly

*directing.*⁴⁴ In no way should one go against the rules of so many expert musicians but rather conform to them. Your temerity derives from your excessive false conviction and arrogance.

27. Please forgive me if anything I have written displeases you. I wrote for three reasons: first to defend my honour, secondly so that you should be more modest in writing to others in the future, for I take pity on your blindness; thirdly to prevent others from lending you too much credence and falling into similar errors. 87 (157). Fo. 177^{r-v}

Pietro de Justinis to Giovanni del Lago, 27 November 1534 (autograph)

- 177^r Al reverendo Messer Pre Zuanne de Lago, signor suo osservandissimo. In Venetia.
- 177^v Reverendo signor mio.

La fama riportatrice delle actione humane più e più fiate per varii e diversi modi in questa nostra città [h]a divulgato il nome et virtù sue. Ultimamente per la Signoria del Reverendo Messer Francescho Susana mi sono state tanto comendate et laudate che io gli ne son più che devinto ligato con indissolubil nodo d'amore restato, per il che ho preso ardire, ingaliardito dal amore qual a V.S. cossì anchora a me per presentia incognita porto, qual come è cosa natural non pol star cellato, massime verso de la cosa amata, scriverli questa mia per dar principio alla futura amicitia, e per far notto a Sua Signoria che quella ha uno bon servitore costì in Udene, e la prega humilmente occorendoli cosa alcuna in queste parti vi voglia far prova, che la cognoscerà con effetto esser amata et reverita, anchora che incognita li sia. Et perché ho inteso quella dillettarsi di musica, dilettandomi anchor io, pregolla si degni, mercè di sua humanità e gentilezza, veder alcune cose nostre, al cui sano judicio e corectione sempre mi rimetto, et se vi serà frutto alcuno che li piacia, come frutti raccolti da giovenil arbore, che non sono de quella perfettione e maturità se li conveniria, si degnerà pigliarne quella parte ch'a lei sarà d'apiacere, pregandola^a si degni darmi aviso de che sapore gli saprano, et a V.S. et in sua bona gratia di continuo humilmente mi ricomando et offero.

Di Udene, il di xxvii novembris M.D.XXXiiii.

Di V.S. reverendo humil servitore Petro de Justinis

Fame, the broadcaster of human actions, has published your name and talent in our city many times and in many ways. Recently, you were so commended by the Revd Messer Francesco Susana that I feel bound to you in indissoluble esteem, whence I dare, though unknown to you, to initiate a future friendship through the present letter and to let you know that you have a good servant in Udine; if you have need of anything in

^a MS: pregandolla.

these parts, please put it to the test and you will truly know that you are loved and revered. Since I understand that you enjoy music, as I do, I beg you to be so kind as to look at some of my things, and I shall always bow to your judgement and correction. These are fruits of a young tree, not yet at the peak of perfection and maturity; take whatever pleases you, and I entreat you to advise me of their flavour. I humbly commend myself to your good graces.

# **88** (J19). Fos. 102^r-104^v

Giovanni del Lago to Pietro de Justinis, 3 June 1538 (autograph copy)

102^r Al excellente musico Messer Pre Piero de Justinis de Udene.^a

1. Certamente mi potete incolpare (Messer Pre Piero mio honorando) d'ingratitudine, essendo stato tardo a rispondere alle vostre letere [no. 87],^b ma in vero la sorte mia non ha voluto. Non vi starò ad narare le cause, ma la principale dalla quale procedeno tutte l'altre è stata l'infirmità, della quale vi potete informare dal mio reverendo Monsignore Messer Girolamo di Susana et Messer Francesco suo fratello. Hor mi è venuto un poco di commodità di potervi scrivere, ma non come è il voler mio.

2. M'havete mandato alcuni vostri componimenti di musica, sopra i quali mi pregate che io vi scriva il giuditio et parer mio, la qual cosa mal voluntiera faccio, reputandola troppo grave peso alla imbecillità del mio picciolo et debile ingegno. Pur per satisfar in parte al desiderio vostro, dirò alcune cose d'esse compositioni.

3. Et primo, io trovo nel vostro mottetto 'Tulerunt dominum meum' nel contr'alto sopra la parola 'dicunt' un tritono incomposito ascendente da trite synemmenon, cioè dal *fa* de  $\square$  *mi* acuto ad E *la mi* acuto, et nel predetto E *la mi* havete posto questo segno:  $\bigotimes$ , il quale segno per due ragioni è mal posto. La prima è perché rimove quella nota semibreve (la qual è posta immediate dopo el segno) dal loco proprio per un semituono maggiore in acuto; farà che dal segno del b molle segnato in  $\square$  *mi* predetto ad esso segno segnato in E *la mi* caderà spatio d'un tritono et uno semituono maggiore, cioè uno diapente et una comma, la qual distantia o ver intervallo per la sua durezza non è cantabile, cioè cantar non si può, né anchora è spetie pertinente al genere diatonico,  $\lceil que speties omni[n]o$ *fugiende sunt, nisi auditus intelligentis aliter sentiret*.¹¹ Et perché il tritono incomposito senza alcuno crescimento è difficile al cantore pronontiarlo, tanto più sarà difficile per quello accrescimento del semituono maggiore. ^{102°} Pertanto non si | debbe usare simili spetie ne' concenti.

4. La seconda ragione è che la predetta semibreve posta in E la mi acuta

imbatte et s'afronta con la semibreve del contrabasso posta in E *la mi* grave per distantia de diapason, ut hic:



la qual distantia sarà diapason o ver dupla superflua, et per tale modo tale diapason non sarà aggregata di cinque tuoni et duoi semituoni minori, come la diapason (in musica esercitata) bisogna havere, ma sarà completa de sei tuoni et uno semituono minore, la qual distantia sarà dissona. Et tale dissonantia sarà sensibile al senso de l'audito, perché la dupla sonorità non patisse eccesso né diminutione d'alcun minimo spatio o quantità si sia.

5. Dico anchora che in luogo de b quadro giacente, il quale si segna a questo modo  $\natural$ , ponete questa croce:  $\bigotimes$ , la quale realiter in musica nulla significa.² Non trovo che nessuno dotto musico anticho habbia segnato per segno di b quadro la predetta croce, come appare ne' libri antiquamente notati di canto ecclesiastico et etiam misurato, se non da Marchetto padoano, il quale credo che lui sia stato institutore di tale segno,³ perché lui et gli suoi seguaci lo nomina diesis, li quali sono in grande errore. Nam diesis (apud musicos) est medietas semitonii minoris.⁴ Et tale segno representa

² In the copy of Del Lago's letter to Spataro of 15 Aug. 1533 (no. 57), the scribe wrote  $\bigotimes$  for every sharp; Del Lago subsequently erased it and wrote  $\natural$ . Between the copying of the first part of Del Lago's *Epistole* and the present letter Del Lago seems to have obtained a copy of Prosdocimo's *Tractatus musice speculative*, in which the author severely criticizes Marchetto for his division of the tone and deplores the fact that the doctrine has become so widespread. Prosdocimo's treatise is the source of the quotation on the definition of the diesis (see n. 4 below).

³ Marchetto distinguished between the sign  $\frac{1}{2}$  (as in  $\frac{1}{2}fa + mi$ ) and  $\frac{1}{2}$ , the sign for musica

falsa. See his Lucidarium, ed. Herlinger, p. 27. However, only two of the manuscripts of the Lucidarium show the latter sign as Marchetto described it (ibid., n. 12). In other manuscripts the two signs are often not distinguished and appear as  $\natural$  or  $\ddagger$ . In five of the manuscripts the *musica falsa* sign is written  $\bigotimes$ , but not in Vat. lat. 5322, which probably belonged to Del Lago (see Ch. 7, pp. 148-9). However, one of the manuscripts of the Lucidarium that does use this sign, Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, MS 1013, may have been known to Del Lago; see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 88-95.

⁴ Cf. Boethius, *De musica* 1. 21 (ed. Friedlein, p. 213): 'diesis autem est semitonii dimidium.' Del Lago refers to the Greek understanding of the term 'diesis', used to indicate the quartertone in the enharmonic genus. However, 'diesis' could also mean semitone; cf. Boethius, *De musica* 2. 28 (Friedlein, p. 260): 'quod nunc quidem semitonium nuncupamus, apud antiquiores autem limma vel diesis vocabatur.' For Marchetto, 'diesis' indicated a fifth of a whole tone. The source of Del Lago's quotation is Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Tractatus musice speculative*; see the edition of Baralli and Torri in 'Il *Trattato* di Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi contro il *Lucidario* di Marchetto da Padova', p. 751. However, the substance of his criticism of Marchetto and his followers for using # and calling it 'diesis' comes from the revised version of Prosdocimo's *Contrapunctus*; for the passage, see the edn. by Herlinger, pp. 86–94. On the contemporary controversy over the term 'diesis' and the  $\bigotimes$  sign, see Berger, *Musica ficta*, pp. 20–9, 'The square b and the diesis (#)'.

⁴ The heading originally read: 'Al excellente musico Messer Pre Piero de Justinis de Udene, Pre Giovanni de Lago salute.'

^b At this point del Lago deleted the following: 'perché sempre son stato di animo de respondere alle vostre'.

¹ This quotation comes from Hothby's *Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musice* (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Pal. 472), fo. 9[°]: 'que coniunctiones omnino fugiende sunt nisi auditus intelligentis aliter sentiret.' See Ch. 7, pp. 163-4.

l'intervallo de due diesis et una comma, cioè un semituono maggiore, come è in  $b fa \square mi$ , cioè dal fa al mi in esso  $b fa \square mi$ . Ma se V.R. se volesse escusare dicendo che seguitate l'uso, vi rispondo quod 'debemus potius artem et veritatem sequi quam usum per imperitiam introductum a recto abduci'.

6. Un'altro simil errore (perdonatime) havete fatto nel tenore del vostro Magnificat del quarto tuono nel verso 'fecit potentiam' sopra la ¹⁰³' parola 'in brachio' per havere segnato in  $bfa \mid mi$  la predetta croce, | ut hic:



Dico che non sta bene per le predette ragioni dette di sopra, perché quella semibreve posta in  $bfa \perp mi$  con la croce segnata s'imbatte quinta con la minima del soprano posta in E *la mi* grave, la qual è superflua. Ma credo che V.R. la ha segnata solamente acciò che in tale loco si dica *mi*, per non fare quella quinta diminuta.⁵ Dico che saria stato meglio havere segnato il b rotondo in quel luoco che la croce, la qual representa (dico secondo il volgo cieco) il b quadro giacente. Il proprio de la quinta imperfetta o ver diminuta è andare alla terza, massime quando immediate una parte ascende et l'altra descende. Et anchora il contra alto staria meglio, perché la scenderia de terza minore in unisono (come la regola de contrapunto comanda) senza suspender⁶ la nota minima del contra'alto posta in G acuto, ut hic:



E questo è osservato de' buoni compositori. Se V.R. volesse dire che il quarto tuono non appetisce il b rotondo, come a lui incongruo et inconveniente, dico di sì che conviene, non solamente al quarto, ma anchora al terzo et a ciascun altro tuono, et questo per due ragioni. L'una è per toglier al tritono (accadendo) la sua durezza et asperità, l'altra per causa delle consonantie.

7. Similmente havete segnato il b rotondo o ver molle in principio del vostro Magnificat fatto del primo tuono. Dico che non si debbe comporre né cantare il primo tuono per b molle, perché si viciaria la sua diapason

dalla quale esso tuono si compone, cioè dalla quarta spetie del diapason, perché tale spetie di diapason si compongono della prima spetie del ^{103^v} diapente, che è *re la*, et della prima del diatessaron, che è *re sol*, posta di sopra del diapente. Ma cantando per b molle, non saria la prima spetie di diatessaron, ma saria la seconda, la qual è mi la. Pertanto il primo tuono non si deve cantare per b molle, perché fa mutare la sua reale compositione, se non quando semo constreti de necessità, cioè per schivare et fugire il tritono, o ver per causa delle consonantie. [[]Questo istesso conferma Maestro Prosdocimo de Beldomando, musico dottissimo, nella sua Musica, dove dimostra quando si deve schivare il b molle et quando si deve cantare o ver pronontiare nel canto, le parole del quale sono queste: Nullus tropus proprie et per se per b molle cantatur, sed ei accidit b molle commisceri. Ideo quilibet tropus suam formam servare debet et secundum eam cantari, et cum per b molle cantare contigerit^c b mollis forma servetur, si id per se vel per accidens fiat, donec illud accidens, quod evitandi causa interponitur, terminetur, quo^d terminato sua forma reddatur tropo, et secundum eam debet modulari,⁷ etc.⁷

8. Quanto al contrapunto d'esse compositioni, se potrebbe dire cose assai, ma per non estendermi in lungo, altro non dirò, perché certo ho male il comodo di scrivere. Ma se havesse più comodo di scrivere, avverteria a V.R. molte cose le quali non sono state da voi troppo bene considerate quanto apartiene alla ragione delle consonantie. Sì che havete il mio parere, il quale ve ho scritto non per altro se non per dimostrarvi il mio amore.

9. Item, quanto alle canzone le quali m'havete mandato di Messer Zuan Bailly, vostro precettore, io trovo in la quarta canzone (la quale è segnata con la letera D) non esser stato da lui segnato in principio del contratenore segno alcuno di tempo che si possan fare vera relatione della sesqualtera habitudine demostrata per la cifra ternaria, la qual è segnata in principio d'essa particola, ut hic:



Io pensa che sia stato errore nel scrivere, perché credo che voglia essere posto questo segno:  $\phi_2$ , o ver questo  $\Im$  dinanti la^t cifra ternaria. Si fusse stato errore nel scrivere, altro non dico, ma se lui ha fatto così, dico che non può stare, *nam proportionibus in musica a signis tanquam a radice dependentiam consequuntur.*⁸

^c MS: contingerit (an error also found in Ugolino). ^d MS: quę. ^e MS: lha.

⁵ This is an unambiguous example of a 'cautionary accidental', equivalent to our  $\natural$ .

⁶ Suspendere, literally 'to suspend', is used here, as it is in Aaron's *Toscanello* (see especially the 'Aggiunta' to the 1529 edition), to indicate the sharpening of a note. It is equivalent to 'sustinere', used by Tinctoris in his counterpoint treatise (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, ii. 92: 'per semitonium chromaticum sustinendam').

⁷ As shown above (see no. 44 n. 25), Del Lago is actually quoting from Ugolino of Orvieto's *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, Book I, ch. 165, entitled 'Demonstratio B mollis evitandi et proferendi' (ed. Seay, i. 230).

⁸ See no. 80 n. 4.

10. Anchora io trovo nella istessa canzone nella particola del contra-104 basso esser stato da lui segnata la proportione sesqualtera per la cifra ternaria, sotto la quale si canta una breve perfetta sotto un tempo, o ver tre semibrevi vacue, fra le quali semibrevi vacue di detta sesqualtera ha posto più volte semibrevi et minime nere per dimostrare un'altra volta/ la sesqualtera, le quali non sono racionabiliter posite, perché in questo luogo il colore è superfluo. Bastava solamente la cifra ternaria a dimostrare tale habitudine senza altro segno accidentale fra quelle. Ma [per] quanto posso comprendere, credo che lui habbia oppinione che la sesqualtera segnata con la cifra ternaria et quella dimostrata per figure nere, cioè per il colore, sia differente l'una da l'altra, che la cifra ternaria demostra che tre semibrevi vacue se pongono sotto un tempo, et per le figure piene, cioè nere, si pongono sei minime, che è quel istesso. Sì che saria stato meglio che sua Signoria havesse segnato le dette figure nere vacue, perché tutte si canteriano come l'altre le quali sono sotto la cifra ternaria, cioè tre semibrevi, o ver il valor di esse, etc.⁹

11. Similmente è errato per haver fatto la nota breve (la quale si canta sotto la detta sesqualtera) imperfetta a parte anteriori, essendo posta avanti alla sua nota simile, ut hic:

perché la regola generale vuole che 'similis ante similem nunquam potest imperfici, nisi per colorem'. Ma penso che sua Signoria creda^g che quando la nota vacua è posta dinanzi alla piena, cioè nera, non sia simile in figura per esser differente nel colore. Ma la similitudine sta e s'intende respectu forme et non coloris, [[]'nam forma est que dat esse rei'.¹⁰ Et questo è ^{104^v} chiaro appresso | tutti gli dotti musici.

12. Io harei molte cose da scrivervi oltra le predette, ma resto di scrivere per non entrare in lite con gli miei amici. LSe ho scritto cosa che a

f MS: di nuovo, deleted by subpunction.

8 MS: cereda.

V.R. non piace, perdonatime, perché quello che ho scritto ho scritto con puro cuore et perché io vi amo.  $1^{11}$ 

In Venegia a dì 3 giugno M.D.xxxviii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. You would be quite right to accuse me of ingratitude for not responding to your letter [no. 87], but fate intervened, principally in the form of illness, as Monsignore Girolamo di Susana and his brother Messer Francesco can tell you.

2. You sent me some of your compositions, asking for my judgement and opinion, which I give reluctantly owing to the deficiency of my feeble talent. Nevertheless, to satisfy you in part, I shall say a few words.

3. In the alto of your motet 'Tulerunt dominum meum' on the word 'dicunt' you have a leap of a tritone from bb to e' and you marked the e'with a sharp. This is wrong, for two reasons. First, it raises the semibreve immediately after the sign by a major semitone, making the interval with bb a tritone plus a major semitone or a fifth plus a comma, an unsingable interval not belonging to the diatonic genus, which species are to be totally avoided, unless the hearing of an intelligent person perceives otherwise.¹ The leap of a tritone alone is hard enough to sing; the more difficult would it be to increase it by a major semitone. Thus such intervals should not be used in composition.

4. The second reason is that the e' conflicts with the e an octave lower in the bass, thus:



This is an augmented octave comprised of six whole tones and a minor semitone, not the ordinary octave of five whole tones and two minor semitones, and it is dissonant. The ear can sense it, because the sonority of an octave cannot tolerate the least excess or diminution.

¹¹ This sentence has been borrowed from Spataro's letter to Del Lago of 4 Jan. 1529 (see no. 17, para. 15).

⁹ The composition has not survived, but from Del Lago's description it appears that Bailly has introduced *sesquialtera* within a *sesquialtera* section, but on different levels. The first *sesquialtera* is of semibreves, the second of minims, and this procedure, *pace* Del Lago, is possible. It is analogous to placing a passage in coloration in a section in triple metre: coloration can indicate imperfection or *sesquialtera*. For examples in Tinctoris's 'Difficiles alios', see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 95–9.

¹⁰ See no. 45 n. 24. Regarding the effect of colour on 'similarity', see no. 69.

5. In place of square b, written  $\natural$ , you use a cross,  $\bigstar$ .² No learned composer of old ever used this sign, as appears in books of plainchant and also mensural music, except Marchetto of Padua, who I believe invented it.³ He and his followers call it diesis—quite mistakenly, *for diesis (among musicians) is half of a minor semitone*.⁴ That sign represents the interval of two dieses and a comma, i.e. a major semitone, such as Bb-Bb. If you wanted to excuse yourself by saying you follow practice, I respond that 'we must follow art and truth rather than let practice that results from inexperience lead us away from what is right'.

6. You made a similar error in your Magnificat in the fourth mode in the verse 'Fecit potentiam' at 'in brachio', signing b with that cross, thus:



It makes an augmented fifth with the soprano on e. But I think you used the sign simply to ensure that the note is sung as mi, to avoid a diminished fifth.⁵ However, it would have been better to use a flat than a cross, which (as the blind masses will have it) indicates a sharp. A diminished fifth tends to move to a third, especially when one part ascends and the other descends. This would improve the alto, which would descend from a minor third to a unison (as the rule of counterpoint demands) without sharpening⁶ the minim g in the alto:



This is observed by good composers. If you object that a flat has no place in the fourth mode, I say it has, not only in the fourth and third but in every other mode, for two reasons: to mitigate the tritone and for the sake of consonances.

7. Similarly, you used a flat in the signature of your Magnificat in the first mode. This mode should not be composed or sung with a flat because it vitiates its octave species, composed of the first species of fifth, *re la*, and the first species of fourth, *re sol*. A flat would change it to the second species of fourth, *mi la*. Thus a flat must be avoided in the first mode

unless demanded by a tritone or because of the consonances. Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, in his *Musica*, confirms this in his discussion of when to use and when to avoid  $B_0$ : No mode is properly and per se sung with  $B_0$ , but it happens that  $B_0$  is mixed in. Therefore each mode must observe its form and be sung according to it, and when it chances that  $B_0$  is sung, the form of a flat is used, whether per se or accidentally, until the event it was designed to avoid is past; then the mode should resume its normal form and should be sung according to it.⁷

8. Regarding the counterpoint, much could be said. Had I more leisure for writing, I should point out a number of oversights in the treatment of consonances. As it is, you have my opinion, as proof of my friendship.

9. With regard to the songs by your teacher, Messer Zuan Bailly, that you sent me, in the fourth song (labelled D) he did not give any sign at the beginning of the contratenor that would stand in relation to the passage in *sesquialtera* marked with a 3:



I think it was an error in copying and that the sign  $\varphi_2$  or  $\Rightarrow$  is missing. But if he wrote no sign, I say it cannot stand, for proportions in music are dependent on signs as on a root.⁸

10. In the same piece he wrote *sesquialtera* with 3 in the bass, where a perfect breve, or three imperfect semibreves, passes per measure, but he mixed in some blackened semibreves and minims to show *sesquialtera* again, which is not logical because the coloration is superfluous: the figure 3 suffices to show the proportion and no other accidental signs are necessary. I suspect he thinks that *sesquialtera*, as shown by the figure 3, and coloration are different—that *sesquialtera* indicates three imperfect semibreves per measure and coloration six minims per measure, which is the same thing. He really should have written all the semibreves in void notation because they are all sung the same way:⁹

11. He also erred in imperfecting the breve under *sesquialtera a parte ante* that stands before another breve:



because the rule states 'like before like cannot be imperfected unless by coloration'. He probably thinks that the rule does not apply because of the coloration of the second breve. But similarity is understood with respect to form and not to colour, 'for it is form that gives essence to a thing'.¹⁰ All skilled musicians know this.

12. I could go on at length, but I refrain in order to avoid getting into disputes with my friends. LIf I have written anything that does not please you, do forgive me, for I wrote with a pure heart and out of love. 11

# **89** (J68). Fo. 188^{r-v}

[Bartolomeo] Tromboncino to Giovanni del Lago, 2 April 1535 (autograph)¹

188[°] A lo excellente Messer Pre Joanne da Lago honorandissimo mio, in la cale apresso Sancta Sufia. In Venetia.

188' I. Non potrei haver riceputo il maggior piacer di quel che io hebbi giovedi sera in havervi sentito in una vostra a me stata molto cara, et certo mi allegro d'ogni vostro benstare, honorandissimo Messer Pre Joanne.

2. V.S. mi richiede la minuta de 'Se la mia morte brami',² et così molto voluntier ve la mando, advertendovi ch'io non la feci se non da cantar nel lauto, cioè senza contr'alto, perché chi cantar la volesse, il contr'alto da lei seria offeso.³ Ma se pressa non haveste havuto, gli n'harei fatta una che se cantaria a 4 senza impedir l'un l'altro, et alla ritornata mia a Venetia, che serà a principio de maggio se accaderà, gli ne farò una al modo supradicto, facendovi intender^{*a*} ch'io fui et sempre serò minor vostro, facendomi però questo piacere, racomandarmi al magnifico et gentilissimo gentilhomo amator dei virtuosi, Messer Hyeronimo Molino, che Dio cent' e cent' anni in sua gratia lo conservi. Item a Messer Pre Bastiano mi racomandiate et a Madonna Paula, che tutti 4 v'ho scolpiti in core. Adonque altro non dirò se non sempre a tutti racomandandomi.

In Vicenza, a 2 aprile 1535.

Quello c'ho ditto di supra, Tromboncino

#### ^a MS: interder.

¹ A transcription of the present letter, together with an English translation, appears in Einstein, *Italian Madrigal*, i. 48. A facsimile and a more accurate transcription of the letter are given in Jeppesen, *La Frottola*, i. 150–1. Jeppesen believed that the present letter was not an autograph but had been dictated to a copyist, since he found 'so große Unterschiede' between the handwriting of this letter and another, written 'manu propria', of 10 June 1489 (see the facsimile ibid., p. 151). The similarities are greater than the differences, however, and considering that forty-six years separate the two letters, it is not surprising if the handwriting is not exactly the same. After this letter, written when he was about sixty-five years old, we lose all trace of Tromboncino.

² Tromboncino's composition has not survived.

³ Although Fernando Liuzzi, who transcribed the text for Einstein, read 'affiso [?]', 'offeso' is clearly written and can be interpreted as meaning that an alto would merely get in the way, for it was customary to omit the alto when intabulating for voice and lute; see the title of Franciscus Bossinensis, *Tenori e contrabassi intabulati col sopran in canto figurato per cantar e sonar col lauto* (1509).

1. I received your letter of Thursday evening with great pleasure and am glad to hear that you are well.

2. You ask for a copy of 'Se la mia morte brami',² and I enclose it willingly. I composed it to be sung to the lute, so it has no alto, which would only get in the way of the singer.³ If you had not been in a hurry, I should have made a version that could be sung for four voices without one disrupting the other. Upon my return to Venice at the beginning of May I shall write one, for I was and always shall be your servant. Please commend me to that kind gentleman, Girolamo Molino, admirer of artists; may God be infinitely gracious to him. And do commend me to Pre Bastiano and Madonna Paula; all four are graven in my heart.

90 (J54). Fo. 174^{r-v} Nicolò Olivetto to Giovanni del Lago, 1 October 1535 (autograph)

174^r Al reverendo Misier Pre Zuaneto de Lago maior suo honorando, Venetijs, Avente la giesia de Santa Sofia.

174^v Reverendo mio patrono et maestro.

Hier sera arrivò el reverendissimo nostro vicario et questa matina andai ad fare reverentia et apresentai la vostra lettera, et come luy la hebbe letta, me adomandò se congnoscea V.R., et luy disse quello debitamente se convien d'ung pare de V.R. Et me disse che volentieri vi averebba visto et se dubitava che non fosti quello per il qualle già a parlato. Me disse che per amor di quello gentilhomo et le virtù et bona fama de V.R. farà tutto quello piacero et favor che potrà. V.R. se dignerà dare la inclusa a Sancto Stephano ne le case nove del Pasqualigo, et se posso et vuglete quivi per V.R., se dignerà quella commandar come ad uno vostro servitor et scholare.

De Trevize, die primo octobris 1535.

De V.R. servitor et scholare

Nicolaus Olivetus magister cappelle indignus

Yesterday our vicar returned and this morning I went to see him and presented your letter. He asked if I knew you, and I responded with words appropriate to someone of your station. He would have been glad to see you, and thinks you were the one he has already spoken for. He is willing to do all he can out of regard for that gentleman and your virtue and reputation. Please give the enclosed in the new houses of Pasqualigo at Santo Stefano. If I can do anything for you here, command me as your servant and pupil. 91 (J58). Fo. 178^{r-v}

Francesco di Pizoni to Giovanni del Lago, 2 June 1537 (autograph)

178[°] Al molto mio reverendo Messer Pre Zuane da Lago diacono de Santta Sophia, fratelo mio honorando. In Venetia in la contra[da] de Sancta Sophia in cale da le velle.

178^r Reverendo Messer Pre Zuane et fratello mio honorando.

La pace del signor Dio sia sempre cum voi. Vui sapeti como al presente mi trovo a la residentia del mio benefitio in domo de Padoa. Et certo molto mi son admirato aver trovato in uno libro antigo fatto del anno M^o ccccº ix, xxvi maij, le notte o ver ziphre de canto fermo, et tute sono cantabile cum sue chiave signate al modo qui subscripto cum soi b molli et b quadri, né mai in algun loco dove mi son stato, come in terra todesca, né in Aquilegia, né a Cividal de Austiria, né in altre parte mai [h]o visto tale note o ver ziphre come qui sotto noterò. Et perché la R.V. è molto consumato in questa degna arte musicale et haveti visto molti et molti libri et opere de diversi dottori nostri in questa degna arte, et specialmente aveti visto insieme cum el nostro comune fratelo Dun Pietro Aaron uno libro de lo excellente Messer Zuan Spatari da Bologna fatto sopra el canto fermo,¹ voria intender la opinion vostra, piacendove, come va questo canto et chiave, et si in alcuna opera haveti trovato questa forma de note, et como se canta, et si non me credeti, venite da me fin a qui a Padoa, che ve mostrerò el libro et certo vi sarà molto acaro, et aspecto vostra degna risposta, et mandove questo pocho de exempio, videlicet:



¹ Pizoni seems to refer to a treatise by Spataro on plainchant. If so, this is the only known reference to it, unless it is identical with Spataro's 200-page critique of Aaron's treatise on the modes; see Ch. 4, pp. 87–8.

Tute queste chiave et note sono in uno libro de l'officio de la Trinità facto del millessimo ut suprascripto. Pregove di gratia mandatime risposta cum la resolutione, a la qual gratia per infinite volte me ricomando. Vale.

Paduae, a di 2 zugno 1537.

Il vostro fratello honorando

Pre Francesco di Pizoni capellan in domo subscripsi

The peace of God be with you always. You know that I am now in residence at the Duomo of Padua. Imagine my surprise to find, in a book dated 26 May 1409, plainchant—with all its notes and clefs and Bbs and Bbs—of a type I have never seen before, neither in Germany, Aquileia, Cividale [del Friuli], nor anywhere else. I shall copy a sample below. You are very experienced in this musical art and have seen many books by scholars in this field, and especially, together with our common friend Pietro Aaron, a book by Giovanni Spataro of Bologna on plainchant.¹ Would you please tell me if you have ever seen notes like these and how they are sung. If you don't believe me, come to Padua and I'll show you the book. I await your response. [For music example see opposite.] The notes come from a book of the Office of the Trinity, dated as above. Please send me a reply together with a resolution.

**92** (J59). Fo. 179^{r-v}

Fra Seraphin to Giovanni del Lago, 30 April 1538 (autograph)¹

^{179^t} Al suo reverendo D. Pre Zanetto de Lago, eccelentisimo theorico, mazor honorando.

179^v Reverende Domine, salutem, etc.

Agli 28 del presente recevi una vostra epistola cum il modo de l'ascender de tuti toni a me più che grata,² et altro non so che mandarvi in recompenso de le vostre fatiche salvo l'amor mio, el qual dedico insieme con la vita al comando di V.R., a la qual humilmente mi racomando, etc.

Di Treviso,^a agli 30 aprile del 1538.

#### De V.R.

deditissimo Frate Seraphino subscripsi

On the 28th I received your welcome letter explaining the range of all the modes.² I can send you nothing in recompense except my affection, which, together with my life, is at your command.

^a Abbreviated tr°. Treviso seems the most likely resolution.

¹ A facsimile of this letter is given in Don Harrán, 'The Theorist Giovanni del Lago', p. 127. The letter is transcribed and translated on p. 128.

² This letter is not extant, unless Fra Seraphin refers to an earlier version of the first section of the next letter, the date of which is problematic (see Ch. 6).

Giovanni del Lago to Fra Seraphin, 26 August 1541 (autograph copy)¹

^{2^r} Al reverendo Fra Seraphin di l'Ordine de' Servi, musico eccellentissimo.

#### Salve reverende pater.

£

1. La richiesta la quale V.P. mi ha fatta quant'alla intelligentia de' modi, o ver tuoni.  $\langle Otto sono i tuoni nel canto \rangle^a LDico sotto brevità che i tuoni$ nel canto sono otto, cioè primo, secondo, terzo, quarto, quinto, sesto, $settimo, et ottavo, de' quali quatro sono autentici et quatro plagali. <math>\langle Quali$ sono i tuoni autentici? I tuoni autentici sono questi, cioè primo, terzo, quinto, et settimo, et tali tuoni si dimandano autentici, perché sopra il suo fine regolarmente possono ascendere otto, nove, et alcuna volta dieci voci, et descendere una.  $\langle Quali sono i tuoni plagali? \rangle$  Ma i tuoni plagali sono questi, cioè secondo, quarto, sesto, et ottavo. Plagali si dimandano perché di sotto dal suo fine regolarmente possono descendere quatro o ver cinque voci, et ascendere cinque o ver sei al più.

2.  $\langle Dove finiscono li tuoni regolari? \rangle$  I predetti tuoni finiscono accompagnati a due a due, cioè primo et secondo finiscono in D sol re, terzo et quarto in E la mi, quinto et sesto in F fa ut, settimo et ottavo in G sol re ut. Et tali fini sono detti regolari, ^{[b}benché anchora in altre letere per causa di schivare mi et fa accidentali, o ver per conseguir meglior consonantia, è licito finire. ^[] (Quali sono il fine delli tuoni irregolari?) Ma il fine irregolare del primo et del secondo tuono sono in G sol re ut, del terzo et del quarto in A la mi re, del quinto et del sesto in  $b fa \ mi$ , del settimo et del ottavo in C sol fa ut, et questo mediante il segno del b rotundo o ver molle datto in  $b fa \ mi$ . Et questi tali tuoni sono detti irregolari, perché finiscono in altro loco che nel suo proprio et determinato. (In ciascuno luoco della mano pò terminare et finire ciascheduno tuono) Ma ciascuno tuono può terminare et finire in quolibet loco manus, ubi speties

^a Angle-brackets are used to enclose marginalia.

¹ Large portions of the present letter (delimited with lower half-brackets) were incorporated in Del Lago's treatise, *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* (Venice, 1540): paras. 1–4, except for the opening and closing sentences and the marginal addition, appear on pp. 29–30; paras. 5–6, up to the marginal addition on fo. 5', appear on pp. 39–40 and 42. Paras. 7–9, with the exception of the marginal addition defining grammar and several sentences in para. 8, are found in the treatise on pp. 40–2. Paras. 13–15, with the exception of the marginal addition and the last two sentences, occur on pp. 42–3 of the treatise. The first author to draw attention to the relationship was Raphael Molitor, *Die Nach-Tridentinische Choral-Reform*  $2\mu$  Rom: *Ein Beitrag*  $2\mu$ r *Musikgeschichte des* XVI. *und* XVII. *Jahrbunderts* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1901–2), i. 130. For a discussion of the relation between the letter and the treatise, see Don Harrán, 'The Theorist Giovanni del Lago'. A facsimile of fo. 4' is given on p. 109. On the dating of the letter, see Ch. 6.

#### The Letters

^{2^v} proprie | reperiri possunt.² Et ciascuno de' predetti tuoni può esser perfetto, diminuto, superfluo, misto, commisto, regolare, et irregolare.

3. (Quali sono i tuoni autentici perfetti?) I tuoni autentici perfetti sono quegli che ascendono in fino al diapason, cioè una ottava sopra il suo regolare fine, et se ascendono più, si dimandano superflui, et se manco, si dimandano diminuti. (Quali sono i tuoni plagali perfetti?) I tuoni plagali perfetti sono quegli che descendono una quarta sotto il suo regolar fine, et se descendono più, si dimandano superflui, et se manco, si dimandano diminuti. (Quali sono i tuoni misti?) Ma i tuoni misti veramente sono quegli che participano del ascendere et descendere del suo socio, come è il primo con il secondo, il terzo con il quarto. (Quali sono i tuoni commisti?) I tuoni commisti sono quegli che participano del ascendere et descendere et anchor mediatione con altro tuono che non sia suo compagno, come è il primo con il terzo, etc. (Quali sono i tuoni regolari?) I tuoni regolari sono quegli che finiscono ne' luoghi suoi proprii et determinati. (Quali sono i tuoni irregolari?) I irregolari sono quegli che finiscono in altro luoco che nel suo proprio.

4. (Compositione del primo et secondo tuono) Anchora notate quanto alla compositione de' predetti tuoni che il primo et il secondo tuono si compongono della prima spetie del diapente, re, la, et della prima spetie del diatessaron, re, sol. El diatessaron nel primo tuono è di sopra del diapente, nel secondo è di sotto. (Compositione del terzo et quarto tuono> Il terzo et quarto tuono si compongono della seconda spetie del diapente, mi, mi, et della seconda del diatessaron, mi, la. Il diatessaron nel terzo tuono è di sopra del diapente, nel quarto è di sotto. (Compositione del quinto et sesto tuono > Il quinto et sesto tuono si compongono della terza spetie del diapente, fa, fa, et della terza del diatessaron, ut, fa. Il diatessaron nel quinto tuono è di sopra del diapente, nel sesto è di sotto. (Compositione del settimo et ottavo tuono) Il settimo et ottavo tuono si compon gono della quarta spetie del diapente, ut, sol, et della prima spetie del diatessaron, re, sol. Il diatessaron nel settimo tuono è di sopra del diapente, nel ottavo è di sotto. Tutti i tuoni plagali hanno medesimi diapente et diatessaron come i suoi autentici, ma sono differenti in questo, che gli autentici hanno il diatessaron sopra il diapente, et i plagali di sotto, come appar qui in questo esempio:

3^r



² Cf. Marchetto of Padua, *Lucidarium*, ed. Herlinger, p. 414: 'et hiis rationibus dicimus quod quilibet tonus potest terminare in quolibet loco manus ubi eius species possunt proprie reperiri.'



Et questo basti quanto alla cognitione dei tuoni o ver modi detti di sopra.

5. (Notabile buono quanto al comporre ciascheduno concento) Quanto alla osservatione di comporre un concento, Lprimieramente è da notare: ogni volta che vorrete comporre un madrigale o sonetto o barzeletta o altra canzone, prima bisogna con la mente diligentemente cercando ritrovare uno aëre conveniente alle parole, ut cantus consonet verbis, cioè che convenga alla materia, perché 'quante volte che i dotti compositori hanno da comporre una cantilena, sogliono prima diligentemente fra se stessi considerare a che fine et a che proposito quella potissimamente instituiscono e componghino, cioè quali affetti d'animo con quella cantilena movere debbino, cioè di qual tuono si debba comporre',³ perché altri sono allegri, altri plausibili, altri gravi et sedati, alcuni mesti et gemibondi, di nuovo iracondi, altri impetuosi. Così anchora le melodie de' canti, perché chi in un modo et chi in un'altro commuovono, variamente sono distinte da' musici.⁴ (Quanto deve ascendere il soprano di qualunque concerto)

³ Claude Palisca has pointed out the close relationship of this passage to a portion of a letter by Mattheo Nardo preserved in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5385, fo. 57^v: 'Quante volte i dottori della Musica hanno da componere alcuna Canzone, sogliono prima diligentemente tra si stessi considerare, à che fine, et à che proposito quella potissimamente instituiscono, & componeno, cioè quali affetti d'animo con quella cantilena mover debbano'; see Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, p. 342. Little is known about Nardo, who seems to have studied in Venice with the humanist Egnazio (Giovanni Battista Cipelli). In 1550 he published a biography of Giovanni Battista Prodromia, mayor of Padua (see Palisca, p. 344). The letter itself is a partial copy, without addressee or date. On the basis of language and context, Palisca believes that it is Del Lago who borrows from Nardo. Del Lago's habit of borrowing, especially in the present letter, lends weight to Palisca's hypothesis.

Nardo was acquainted with Aaron, whom he calls 'nostro senza fine laudabile Piero Aron fiorentino prencipe de musici' (fo. 59'). In using the word 'nostro', Nardo seems to imply that he too was Florentine. He may have been related to Jacopo Nardi, the author of *Istorie della città di Firenze*, who was among the Florentine exiles living in Venice.

⁴ The attribution of ethos to the individual modes goes back to Greek writers; it continued to be discussed in treatises of the Middle Ages, notably those by Guido, Hermannus Contractus, and Johannes Afflighemensis, but with the advent of humanism, which led composers to emphasize expression of the text, description of and prescriptions for modal quality are found in many treatises. Del Lago's source for his characterization of the modes, however, is not an Italian humanistic treatise but Sebald Heyden's *De arte canendi* (Nuremberg, 1340), Book II, ch. 8, 'Quid est Tonus?': 'Est certa quaedam qualitas melodiae, seu potius affectus cantionis. Ut enim affectuum animi, alij alacres ac plausibiles, alij graves et sedati, quidam tristes ac gemebundi, rursus iracundi alija cimpetuosi: ita et melodiae cantuum, quòd aliae aliter afficiant, varie distinctae sunt Musicis' (p. 136). See the translation by Miller, p. 113. For a brief survey of modal ethos in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, see Harold S. Powers, 'Mode', *The New Grove Dictionary*, xii. 398-9. On the confusion between the Greek and medieval tonal systems by Italian humanists and the effect this had on their characterization of modal ethos, see Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, pp. 344-7.

Dico adunque et primo che 'l soprano di ciascuno concento non deve ascendere più di sedici voci sopra l'ultima nota inferiore del tenore di ciascun tuono, sì autentico come plagale. Perché si ascendesse più, saria incommodo al cantore, et oltra questo eccederia il suo conveniente termine asegnato ad essi tuoni. Similmente quando diminuirete le notule, farete il contrapunto con bella diminutione et sincope. Spesse volte fugare il soprano hor con il tenore, hor con il basso, o con altra parte. Alcuna volta finger di far cadentia, et poi nella conclusione di essa cadentia pigliare una consonantia non propinqua ad essa cadentia per accommodarsi è cosa laudabile, et questo se intende con il soprano o altra parte, ma bisogna che sempre il tenore in questo caso faccia egli la cadentia o ver distintione, acciò che sia intesa la sententia delle parole cantate. ^TLa sententia è dittione generale alla emendatione della vita in commune appertinente.⁷⁵

6. (Osservatione nelle compositioni delli canti quanto al numero) Osservarete anchora questo nelle vostre compositioni: sempre compire il numero ternario o binario o ver quaternario nella penultima nota della conclusione o ver cadentia, cioè non si debbe computare la penultima nota con la sequente, la quale include la cadentia o ver distintione, perché ella è principio di numero. Similmente si debbe finire il numero nella penultima nota del concento et non nell'ultima, perché la penultima include il numero precedente et l'ultima nota è fine del canto, et però non si computa con altra nota. Le cadentie veramente sono necessarie et non arbitrarie, come alcuni inconsideratamente dicono, massimamente nel canto composto sopra le parole, et questo per distinguer le parti della oratione, cioè far la distintione del comma et colo et del periodo, acciò che sia intesa la sententia delle parti della oratione perfetta, sì nel verso come nella prosa. (Prima diffinitione della cadentia) Perché la cadentia in musica è come il punto nella grammatica. (Seconda diffinitione) La cadentia è una certa distintione et riposo nel canto, o vero la cadentia è una terminatione di essa parte del canto, come è nel contesto dell'oratione la media distintione et la finale. (Il luoco dove far si debbeno le cadentie) Siete adunque diligente di far le cadentie dove la parte dell'oratione o vero il membro finisce,⁶ (Il loco della cadentia con la sententia delle parole si concordi) et non sempre in un medesimo luoco, perché il luoco proprio delle cadentie è dove finisce la sententia del contesto delle parole, perché gliè cosa conveniente tendere et parimente insieme finire

⁵ Cf. Victorinus, *Ars grammatica*, in Keil (ed.), *Grammatici Latini*, vi. 191: 'Sententia quid est? Dictio generalis ad vitae rationem in commune pertinens, ut puta ne quid nimis.'

la distintione, et delle parole, et delle notule.⁷ (Donato Grammatico) DONATO Grammatico dice: Tre sono le positure, o ver le distintioni (le quali i greci chiamano thesis): distintione, subdistintione, media distintione. (Distintione) Distintione è dove si finisce et termina la sententia perfetta, di cui il punto poniamo alla summità di la letera. (Subdistintione) Subdistintione è dove non molto rimane et avanza della sententia, il che nientedimeno di necessità separatamente subito poi se·lli deve inferire, di cui il punto abasso la letera ponemo. (Media distintione > Media distintione è quando quasi tanto della sententia rimane et avanza quanto già habbiamo detto, essendosi nulladimeno ivi da rispirare, di cui il 4^v punto mettiamo a mezo la letera. (Periodo si dimanda l'ultima distintione, o ver punto > In la lettione tutta la sententia si dimanda periodo, le parti della quale sono coli et commati. 18 r | [Le] p[arti] della lettione s[ono] q[uesti]: accento, ۶r discritione, pronuntiatione, modulatione. Lo accento è qualità di ciascuna sillaba che si ha à pronuntiare in suono. La discritione è piana significatione di confuse significationi. La pronuntiatione è similitudine di cose scritte per persone accomodata^b per distintione, come il fanciullo^c quando o del vecchio il temperamento, o del giovane il troppo ardire, o della femina la infirmità, o la qualità è da mostrare di ciascuna persona, o sono da esprimersi i costumi di ciascuno habito. La modulatione è uno convertimento di continuato parlare in più giocondi ripieghi secondo la ragione del dire dello artefice et in delettabile forma di dire dello artefice per causa di evitare la 4[°], acerbità.^{¬9}

l.4

^b MS: accomodate. ^c Del Lago has mistranslated 'puta' as if it were 'putto'.

⁷ Ibid., fo. 93^{*}: 'Cadentiarum denique numerus, maior quam deceat, non fiat, mira enim debet esse paucitas, nec in eodem semper loco.... Legitimus autem peculiarisque Cadentiarum locus est, ubi verborum contextus desinit sententia, nec immerito, decet enim et verborum et notularum distinctionem pariter tendere, unaque desinere.'

⁸ In Del Lago's treatise, the quotation from Donatus is in Latin. It comes from his Ars grammatica; see Keil (ed.), Grammatici Latini, iv. 372: "Tres sunt omnino positurae vel distinctiones, quas Graeci  $\theta \epsilon \sigma \omega s$  vocant, distinctio, subdistinctio, media distinctio. distinctio est ubi finitur plena sententia; huius punctum ad summam litteram ponimus. subdistinctio est ubi non multum superest de sententia, quod tamen necessario separatum [var. separatim, which Del Lago translates] mox inferendum sit; huius punctum ad imam litteram ponimus. media distinctio est ubi free tantum de sententia superest, quantum iam diximus, cum tamen respirandum sit: huius punctum ad mediam litteram ponimus. In lectione tota sententia periodus dicitur, cuius partes sunt cola et commata.' Following the quotation in the letter is the sign :/., a mark of insertion. The passage on the small slip of paper foliated 5 follows logically, but since the top line is partly torn off, there is no matching sign. We place the passage here, supplying the missing words or parts of words in square brackets. The scribe of Bologna MS 106, who copied this letter from Vat. lat. 5318 before the pages had been separated and rebound, also inserted the slip at this point; he was unable to read the top line.

⁹ This addition, on a separate slip of paper, is taken from Victorinus (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vi. 188): 'Partes lectionis quot sunt? Quattuor. Quae sunt? Accentus, discretio, pronuntiatio, modulatio. Accentus quid est? Unius cuiusque syllabae in sono pronuntiandi qualitas. Discretio quid est? Confusarum significationum perplana significatio. Pronuntiatio quid est? Scriptorum secundum personas accommodata distinctione similitudo, ut puta cum aut senis temperamentum aut iuvenis protervitas aut feminae infirmitas aut qualitas unius cuiusque

⁶ Del Lago has taken these two definitions of cadence from Stefano Vanneo, *Recanetum de musica aurea* (Rome, 1533): 'Est enim cadentia veluti punctum, et distinctio quaedam et quies in Concentu' (fo. 93°) and 'Vel cadentia est quedam ipsius Cantilenae partis terminatio, perinde atque in orationis contextu Media distinctio, atque Distinctio finalis. Studentque periti Musici, ut Cadentiarum Meta fiat, ubi et orationis pars, seu membrum terminat' (fo. 86').

7. Oltra questo, sforzatevi di far il concento vostro che sia allegro, suave, pieno d'harmonia, dolce, resonante, grave, et [a]gevole nel cantare, cioè di consonantie usitate, come sono terze, quarte, quinte, seste, et ottave. Ma schivatevi di porre nelle vostre compositioni il tritono, il diapente ^{[et} diapason[]] diminuto, et il diapason superfluo, così ascendenti come descendenti; per esser intervalli distonati et mali agevoli a pronuntiarli, non si debbono porre ne' concenti. Et così la settima, la nona, et la undecima; ob earum difficultatem raro accedunt in usum musicum. Similmente non fatte che 'l contrabasso del vostro concento sia incommodo, cioè che non continui^d in profundum. Et siate cauto di non far barbarismi nel comporre le notule sopra le parole, cioè non ponete lo accento lungo sopra le sillabe brevi, o ver l'accento breve sopra le sillabe lunghe, quia est contra regulam artis grammatices, senza la quale niuno pò esser buono musico, la quale insegna pronuntiare et scrivere drittamente. Che cosa è grammatica? E arte et scientia di rettamente parlare et scrivere, la quale per usu et autorità et anchora per ragione consiste. 710 (Diffinitione del barbarismo' secondo Isidoro > Schivatevi adunque dal barbarismo, il quale secondo Isidoro è enuntiatione di parole corrota la letera, o ver il suono.¹¹ Pertanto osservarete li accenti grammatici i quali hanno quantità temporale, cioè tempo lungo et breve, benché sono pochi compositori che osservano li accenti grammatici nel comporre le notule sopra le parole (de indoctis loquor).

8. (Che cosa è accento?) Accento è un certo segno scritto per il quale si conosce la integra prolatione o pronuntiatione delle voci, di tempo, et di spiriti, et è la differentia del significato delle dittioni. | (Diffinitione del accento) L'accento anchora è certa legge et regola di alzare o di abassare la sillaba di ciascuna particella di oratione, et debbasi fare causalmente nella letera, initialmente nella sillaba, et dittionalmente nella dittione, et particolarmente nella oratione.¹² (Dove deriva l'accento) Accento si dice quasi

#### ^d MS: continuano. ^e MS: barberismo.

6r

¹⁰ Jo. Sulpicius, [*De arte grammatica*] (Rome, 1490), fo. a2': 'Grammatica est recte loquendi recteque scribendi et verba interpretandi scientia: quae usu ratione auctoritateque constat.' This marginal addition originally ended with the words 'et è quasi una certa chiave la quale apre l'uscio di tute le arti liberali', which were subsequently deleted.

¹¹ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 1. 32. 1: 'Barbarismus est verbum corrupta littera vel sono enuntiatum.'

¹² For the beginning of the sentence cf. Pseudo-Priscian, *De accentibus* (ed. M. J. Hertz in Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, iii. 519): 'accentus namque est certa lex et regula ad elevandam et deprimendam syllabam uniuscumque particulae orationis.' The remainder probably comes from a medieval or Renaissance treatise on grammar. The sense is not clear. By 'causalmente nella

accanto, cioè appresso il canto, perciò che nella cantilena della voce ne face conoscere le sillabe. Da gli antiqui anchora accento era detto anima delle parole, o ver voce delle sillabe. Altri lo chiamano voculatione, chi gubernatore delle voci. I greci lo dicono prosodia. Da' latini anchora si chiama tuono et tenore, perché quivi il suono cresce et finisce. 13 Ma li accenti non hanno potestà alcuna di allungare né abbreviare le sillabe. 1 tenori delli accenti sono tre: acuto, grave, et circunflesso. Accento acuto è detto perché acuisce et eleva la sillaba; grave perché deprime et depone, perché è contrario allo acuto; il circunflesso ^rperché è composto dallo acuto et del grave, perché cominciando dallo acuto finisce nel grave, et così mentre che saglie et descende si fa circunflesso.¹⁴ Et lo acuto et il circunflesso sono simili, perché l'uno et l'altro inalza la sillaba. Il grave appare essere contrario ad ambeduoi, perché sempre deprime le sillabe, elevandole quelle.¹⁵ Le figure degli accenti (li quali da' grammatici si pingono per le distintioni delle parole) sono tre, cioè acuto, grave, et circunflesso. (Accento acuto) Accento acuto è linea tendente dalla sinistra nella destra allo in sù a questo modo: . (Accento grave) Grave è linea tendente dalla destra nella sinistra allo in giù in questo modo: . (Accento circunflesso) Il circunflesso si compone di ambeduoi in questo modo ^{^16} Lo accento acuto si pone sopra la ultima, penultima, et antepenultima sillaba, ut quís, ámo, péramo. Grave si pone solamente sopra l'ultima (et di raro usano questo i latini), ut ferè, fermè, ponè. Circunflesso si pone sopra l'ultima, ut lettera' he may mean that the written accent is the cause of the spoken accent, by 'initialmente nella sillaba' that the accent affects the entire syllable, by 'dittionalmente nella dittione' that it may distinguish between words otherwise alike, and by 'particolarmente nella oratione' that it

6^v

divides continuous speech into units. ¹³ Cf. Nicolaus Wollick, *Enchiridion musices* (Paris, 1512), fo. g1^v: 'Accentus est elevandarum deprimendarumque syllabarum lex et preceptio uniuscuiusque orationis particulam instar elementorum harmonicaliter exprimens. Diciturque quasi ad cantus: hoc est iuxta cantum ut adverbium iuxta suum verbum: quandoquidem per vocis cantilenam nos syllabas cognoscere facit. Greci vero prosodiam dicunt. Pros enim grece valet ad latine: et oden cantum. Latini si quidem accentus tonos et tenores appellant eo quod cantus ibi crescit et desinit. Verumenimvero a nonnullis definitur quod sit anima verborum: vel ab aliis quod sit vox sillabe. Hos quoque prisci nunc moderamenta: nunc accentiunculas: nunc voculationes appellabant.' Wollick is dependent on Donatus and Priscian, but the juxtaposition of statements in comparison with Del Lago's passage is worth noting.

¹⁴ Cf. ibid.: 'Sunt autem tres accentus: Acutus videlicet: gravis et circunflexus. Acutus ut Isidorus inquit [1. 18. 2] ideo dictus quod acuat et erigat syllabam. Gravis ideo quod deprimat aut deponat: necnon acuto contrariatur. Circunflexus qui de acuto et gravi constat. Incipiens enim ab acuto in gravem desinit. Atque ita cum deprimat et acuat circunflexus efficitur.'

¹⁵ Cf. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 1. 18. 3: 'Acutus autem et circumflexus similes sunt. Nam uterque levant syllabam. Gravis contrarius videtur ambobus. Nam semper deprimit syllabas, cum illi levent.'

¹⁶ Cf. ibid. 1. 19. 1-4: ' $O\xi\epsilon\hat{a}$ , id est acutus accentus, linea a sinistra parte in dexteram partem sursum ducta, fit ita: *Bapeîa*, id est gravis, linea a summo sinistrae in dexteram deposita, fit ita: *Περισπωμένη*, id est circumflexus, linea de acuto et gravi facta, exprimitur ita: *î*. The interchange of right and left in Del Lago's description of the grave accent goes back to a corruption in his text of Isidore.

personae ostendenda est et mores unius cuiusque habitus exprimendi. Modulatio quid est? Continuati sermonis in iucundiorem dicendi rationem artificialis flexus in delectabilem auditus formam conversus asperitatis vitandae gratia.' In the last sentence, Del Lago's double 'dire dello artifice' may result from a copyist's error.

#### The Letters

illius ergô. Si trova anchora appresso (Vergilio) Vergilio nel sesto sopra la penultima, ut Rôma, Românus, fortûna.¹⁷

9. (Perché sono stato trovati li accenti?) Li accenti sono stati trovati o per la distintione, o per la pronuntiatione, o per causa di discernere la ambiguità.¹⁸ Quanto à gli accenti nel verso volgare, sono tre modi: primo, quando cade nella sillaba antepenultima, quale rende il suono sdruccioloso; quando cade poi sopra l'ultima sillaba, rende il suono grave; et quando cade sopra la penultima, rende il suono temperato. Se caderà lo accento sopra l'ultima in fine del verso, et che sia d'una sillaba, si può numerare per due sillabe, che verria il verso essere di dieci sillabe, il che molto si usa. (Utile et necessaria osservatione delli lochi delli accenti nel verso volgare Alla formatione del verso volgare necessariamente richiede che gli accenti caggino sopra la quarta o sesta o decima sillaba, perché ogni volta che in altro luoco cadesse, non saria più verso, et che sotto uno accento non stanno più che tre sillabe comunemente, et non si pongono gli accenti se non sopra le sillabe lunghe. (Regola da osservare nello allungare delle sillabe nel verso volgare Notate ultimamente questa regola, che in tutti i versi volgari di sette sillabe, sempre la penultima si tiene, et in tutti quegli di otto, la terza et la penultima, et in tutti quegli de undeci, la sesta et la penultima, et qualche volta la quarta, ma rare volte accade. Ma quando accadesse tenere la quarta, non terrete la sesta, ma la quarta et la penultima. Et questo si fa per la ragione del verso et per schivare et fuggire il barbarismo che pò accadere componendo le notule sopra le parole.¹⁹

10. La²⁰ sillaba è comprensione de letere, la quale sotto uno accento et uno spirito senza dimoranza si pronuntia et proferisce,²¹ o ver è enuntia-

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¹⁷ Del Lago refers to Vergil, *Aeneid* 6. For 'fortuna' see ll. 62 and 96; for 'Roma' l. 781. 'Circumflex' forms of 'Romanus' can be found in ll. 851, 857, and 870.

¹⁸ Cf. Diomedes, *Artis grammaticae libri III* (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, i. 433): 'Accentuum legem vel distinguendi vel pronuntiandi ratio vel discernendae ambiguitatis necessitas saepe conturbat.'

¹⁹ Del Lago's discussion of accent in Italian verse seems to be drawn largely from the second book of Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua*. For the three types of word-accent, see p. 161 of the edn. by Dionisotti. On ten-syllable lines caused by ending with a grave accent (not necessarily a one-syllable word), see p. 162. The observation on the placement of accents within a verse closely paraphrases Bembo: 'con ciò sia cosa che a formare il verso necessariamente si richiegga che nella quarta o nella sesta e nella decima sillaba siano sempre gli accenti, ogni volta che qualunque s'è l'una di queste due positure non gli ha, quello non è più verso, comunque poi si stiano le altre sillabe' (ibid., p. 164). The 'regola' with which Del Lago ends this section is not found in Bembo; indeed, there are too many exceptions for it to be considered a rule. It should rather be viewed as advice to the composer in setting verse.

²⁰ A lengthy insertion, comprising two smaller sheets foliated 7 and 8, begins here; this section does not appear in the printed treatise. Up to this point, Del Lago's excursion into grammar has been more or less relevant to music; indeed, he seems to have gathered his knowledge largely from music treatises, especially Wollick. He now evidently decided to make full use of his learning by including the basics of grammar.

²¹ Cf. Priscian, Institutionum grammaticarum Libri XVIII (ed. Hertz in Keil, Grammatici Latini,

tion[e] de una vocal[e] capace di tempi, perché ogni sillaba o ver è breve et riceve un sol tempo, il qual i poëti il chiamano atomo, cioè parte indivisibile come páter, o ver è lunga et riceve duoi tempi, come mâter, perché mâ, per la lunghezza del suo circunflesso, due volte tanto tempo occupa quanto occupa una volta pá, conciosiacosa che páter è detto con l'accento acuto.²² Dicta autem syllaba est à syllambano quod est comprehendo, vel capio, perché propriamente quella è detta sillaba la quale è composta da due, da tre, da quatro, da cinque, et da sei lettere al più, come stirps.²³ Ma quella sillaba che è fatta d'una sola vocale non propria|mente ma abusivamente si dimanda sillaba, et si dimanda una lettera. Le altre sillabe si dimandano de due lettere, come ne, per infino à sei lettere, come stirps.²⁴

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11. Accadeno alla sillaba quatro cose: tenore, spirito, tempo, et numero di lettere. Li tenori sono tre: acuto, grave, et circunflesso. Li spiriti sono duoi: aspero et lene. Li tempi sono tre: breve, lungo, et comune. Il numero, perché el pò esser composto de due, de tre, de quatro, de cinque, et de sei.²⁵ ^{[Letera} è una minima parte della voce composta dalle letere. ⁷²⁶ Le lettere le quali usano li latini sono ventidue, cioè a, b, c, d, e, f, g, [i], k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, x, y, z. h non è lettera ma è solamente una nota et un segno di aspiratione; per questo non se connumera tra le soprascritte lettere.²⁷ Et si compone da questi duoi accenti greci, cioè  $\vdash$  2, et la grande così:  $\vdash$  4. Congiungendo questi duoi primi si fa h. Congiungendo questi duoi altri si fa H.²⁸

ii. 44): 'Syllaba est comprehensio literarum consequens sub uno accentu et uno spiritu prolata... . syllaba est vox literalis, quae sub uno accentu et uno spiritu indistanter profertur.'

²² Bede, *De arte metrica liber* (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vii. 229): 'Syllaba est comprehensio litterarum, vel unius vocalis enuntiatio, temporum capax, quia omnia syllaba aut brevis est, et tempus recipit unum, quod atomum metrici vocant, ut *pater*; aut longa est, et duo recepit tempora, ut *mater*. Hic enim *ma*, cum dicimus *mater*, longitudinem sui circumflexus tantum temporis bis occupat, quantum *pa* semel, cum acute dicitur *pater*.'

²³ The following was deleted at this point: 'Letera è una minima parte della voce composta dalle lettere.' It was then inserted in para. 11; see n. 26.

²⁴ Cf. Priscian, *Institutiones* (ed. Hertz in Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, ii. 44): 'abusive tamen etiam singularum vocalium sonos syllabas nominamus... a singulis tamen incipiens, non plus quam ad sex literas procedere syllaba potest in Latino sermone, ut: "a", "ab", "arx", "mars", "stans", "stirps".'

²⁵ Sulpicius, *De arte grammatica*, fo. a3^r: 'Accidunt syllabae quattuor: Tenor, Spiritus, Tempus et numerus litterarum. Tenores id est accentus sunt tres: Acutus, Gravis et circumflexus. Spiritus duo sunt: Asper et lenis. Tempora tria: Breve, Longum et Commune. Numerus: quia syllaba constare potest ab una ad sex litteras: ut a. ab. abs. stra. trans. stirps.'

²⁶ Priscian, *Institutiones* (ed. Hertz in Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, ii. 6): 'Litera est pars minima vocis compositae, hoc est quae constat compositione literarum...'.

²⁷ Not all grammarians agree on the number of letters in the alphabet, or which should be included; Bede lists 21, Diomedes and Priscian 23. The ancient sources disagree on whether 'h' is a letter or a mark of aspiration. Del Lago's source may be modern; Sulpicius gives 22 letters, and his definition of 'h' is close to Del Lago's: 'H non est littera sed aspirationis nota' (*De arte* grammatica, fo. a2').

²⁸ This explanation of H is the inverse of the truth: the breathings were derived by halving a heta. The distinction between capital and lower case indicates a modern source. (We are grateful to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for this observation.)

8^r

 $8^{v}$ 

12. Le letere consonante sono sedici, cioè b, c, d, f, g, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Le mute sono nove, cioè b, c, d, f, g, k, p, q, t. Le liquide sono quatro, cioè l, m, n, r. Le lettere dopie, cioè quelle che hanno la forza de due lettere, sono due: x et z. Ma x si pone per la c et s, ma la z si pone per duplice ss. Le lettere vocali sono cinque, cioè a, e, i, o, u, et se dividono in duoi modi, cioè in prepositive et in le soggiuntive. Le prepositive sono tre, cioè a, e, o. Le soggiuntive sono altretante, cioè e, u, i. Et si dimandano soggiuntive perché soggiunte alle prepositive constituiscono et fanno le diphthongi. Le diphthongi sono cinque, cioè ae, oe, au, et eu, et una greca, cioè ei. Ma essa anchora usano hormai per latina. Le diphthongi le quali se scriveno et se proferiscono sono tre, ae, oe, ei. Le diphthongi le quali se scriveno et se proferiscono sono due, au, come aurum, eu, come eurus. Dittione è una voce articulata con qualche significatione, dalla quale voce si constituisce et compone, et in la quale anchora se risolve la

oratione.²⁹ Oratione è una compositione et ordinatione di parole, la quale dechiara una congrua et perfetta sententia.³⁰ Et si divide in due parti, in oratione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta è quella la quale [h]a il senso perfetto. La imperfetta è quella che non ha perfetto il senso. Et questo ⁹ basti quanto alle sillabe et letere.

13. (Il compositore debbe havere cognitione del verso latino)  $\dot{E}$ necessario che 'l compositore habbia cognitione del metro o verso, cioè saper che cosa è piede et quante sillabe può havere, et quali sono lunghe, et quali sono brevi, et quali sono comune, et saper scandere il verso et dove si fa la cesura et la collisione, et similmente saper dove cade lo comma et lo colo nel periodo, sì nel verso come nella prosa. (Diffinitione del comma secondo Beda prete > BEDA diffinisce il comma et il colo in questo modo: dice, comma è genere o ver qualità della distintione quando dopo duoi o ver tre piedi avanza una sillaba, la quale termini la parte della oratione. (Diffinitione del colo> Ma quando dopo a duoi o ver tre piedi niente rimane, si dimanda colo, li quali comma et colo appresso li oratori indifferentemente si pongono, (La perfetta sententia si dimanda periodo) et da loro oratori la integra sententia si dimanda periodo, le parti della quale comma et colo sono dette. Lo essempio è appresso lo Apostolo, dove così si legge: 'Sustinetis enim si quis vos in servitutem redigit.' Questo si dimanda colo. 'Si quis devorat': et questo è colo. 'Si quis accipit' è similmente colo. 'Si quis extollitur': et questo anchora è colo. Et altri simili per fina alla perfetta sententia coli sono et commati. Ma questa perfetta sententia si dimanda periodo. Colum in latino si dimanda membro, comma incisione, periodo clausula o

²⁹ Cf. Diomedes (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, i. 436): 'Dictio est vox articulata cum aliqua significatione ex qua instruitur oratio et in quam resolvitur: vel sic, dictio est ex syllabis finita cum significatione certa locutio.'

³⁰ Cf. Diomedes (ibid. i. 300): 'Oratio est conpositio dictionum consummans sententiam remque perfectam significans.'

ver circuito.³¹  $\ulcorner$  Clausula è compositione di parole terminata con esito di plausibile struttura.³² Struttura è una ordinatione di parole, così detta à struendo, id est componendo.³³

14.  $\langle \text{Diffinitione del piede nel verso latino} \rangle$  Il piede nel verso è elevatione et positione di due o tre o più sillabe compresa dallo spatio.  $\langle \text{Altra diffinitione del piede nel verso latino} \rangle$  O vero piede è compositione di sillabe con certa osservatione di tempi riceventi la levatione et | la positione, le quali si dicono in greco arsis et thesis,³⁴ perché di una sillaba, anchora che fusse lunga, non si pò fare il piede, perché si fa di due repercosse, non con dui tempi, perché bisogna ferire due volte anchora due brevi.  $\langle \text{Diffinitione della cesura} \rangle$  La cesura nel metro è una decora terminatione di voce notata nel mezzo de' versi.³⁵  $\langle \text{Diffinitione della scansione} \rangle$  La scansione è legitima distintione e dimensione del metro in ciascuno piede. La collisione, che in greco si dice synalephe et ecthlip[s]is, si fa quando finisce alcuna dittione in vocale o ver in m letera et la sequente comincia anchora da vocale, perché allhora la prima vocale o ver m con la sua vocale si esclude. Fassi anchora nel fine del verso, quando finiendo in vocale o in m letera suprabunda la sillaba et il sequente verso comincia dalle vocali.

15.  $\langle Prima \text{ diffinitione del metro} \rangle$  Il metro è una certa connessione et ordinatione di piedi trovata alla delettatione degli orecchi.  $\langle Seconda diffinitione \rangle$  Medesimamente il metro è una struttura et copulatione di voci finita con numero et modo,³⁶ et è il medesimo che il verso, il quale per

³¹ In Del Lago's treatise the quotation from Bede is given in Latin. It comes from his *De arte metrica liber* (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vii. 246): 'ubi post duos pedes superest syllaba, comma dicitur; ubi post duos pedes nihil remanet, colon vocatur. quae tamen nomina apud oratores indifferenter ponuntur, qui integram sententiam periodon appellant, partes autem eius cola et commata dicunt. ut puta "sustinetis enim, siquis vos in servitutem redigit" colon est: "siquis devorat" colon est: "siquis accipit" colon est: "siquis extollitur" et cetera usque ad plenam sententiam cola sunt et commata. plena autem sententia periodus est. interpretatur autem colon membrum, comma incisio, periodus clausula sive circuitus.' The biblical quotation is from 2 Cor. 11: 20: 'Sustinetis enim si quis vos in servitutem redigit, si quis devorat, si quis accipit, si quis extollitur, si quis in faciem vos caedit.'

³² Victorinus (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vi. 192): 'Clausula est compositio verborum plausibilis structurae exitu terminata'; also in Diomedes (ed. Keil, i. 300).

³³ Probus, *Catholica* (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, iv. 40): 'Est autem structura verborum compositio dicta a struendo, id est componendo.' The marginal addition was substituted for a different one at the bottom of the page: 'Clausula è una particula di ciascuna parte dell'oratione, in fine della quale si trova il riposo generale, o vero la perfettione.' Del Lago borrowed this definition from Tinctoris's *Diffnitorium*, changing *cantus* to *oratione*: 'Clausula est cuiuslibet partis cantus particula, in fine cuius vel quies generalis vel perfectio reperitur' (*Dictionary*, trans. Parrish, p. 14).

³⁴ Diomedes (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, i. 474): 'Pes est sublatio ac positio duarum aut trium ampliusve syllabarum spatio conprehensa. Pes est poeticae dictionis duarum ampliusve syllabarum cum certa temporum observatione modus recipiens arsin et thesin.'

³⁵ Franciscus Niger, *De grammatica* (Milan, 1514), fo. 85⁵: 'Cesura metri est decora terminatio vocum in versuum notata medio.'

³⁶ Cf. Papias, *Vocabularium* (Milan, 1476), s.v. Metra: 'Metra dicta quia certis mensuris pedum terminentur. Mensura enim graece metrum dicitur. Metra instituta sunt pro delectatione

questo si dice così, che tanto lungamente si debba voltare infino a che rettamente si constituisca. (Terza diffinitione) Metro in greco in latino si dice dimensione, perché misuriamo il verso con certi piedi, i piedi con sillabe, le sillabe con tempi, et è differente dal rhythmo, il quale Fabio (Fabio Quintiliano) vuole che sia numero, che il metro ha certo et finito spatio. Il rhythmo né ha fine certo, né alcuna varietà nel contesto, ma perché comi[n]ciò per la elevatione et positione, scorre in fine al fine.³⁷ (Che cosa è rhythmo secondo Beda prete) Ma Beda interpreta il rhythmo una modulata compositione essaminata non per metrica ragione ma per numero di sillabe a giuditio degli orecchi, come sono versi volgari, et appare il rhythmo essere simile a' metri, et certamente per se

sono versi volgari, et appare il rhythmo essere simile a' metri, et certamente per se senza metro non può essere, perché metro è ragione con modulatione, rhythmo modulatione senza ragione. Nondimeno il più delle volte per certo caso troverrai anchora la ragione nel rhythmo non servata per la moderatione dello artificio ma per suono, et essa modulatione conducente, il quale i volgari poëti di necessità rusticamente, dotti fanno dottamente.³⁸ (Diffinitione del rhythmo secondo i greci) Ma i greci affermano il rhythmo essere composto di arsis et thesis et di tempo, il che alcuni chiamavano vacuo. (Diffinitione del rhythmo secondo Aristoxeno) Aristoxeno disse questo essere tempo diviso in ciascuno di questi che numerosamente si possono comporre. (Diffinitione del rhythmo secondo Nicomacho) Ma secondo Nicomacho, rhythmo è una ordinata compositione di tempi.³⁹ Medesimamente rhythmo volgare è uno genere di dettare. Dettare niente altro è che una congrua et ordinata o decora loquutione di

aurium' and Diomedes (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, i. 474): 'Metrum est pedum iunctura numero modoque finita.' Curiously, a passage in Zarlino's *Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558) is very similar to Del Lago's: 'Ma il Metro, et il Verso è una certa compositione, et ordine de piedi, ritrovata per dilettar l'udito: overamente è un'ordine, et compositione di più voci, finita con Numero, et modo' (Part II, end of ch. 8).

 37  Institutio oratoria 9. 4. 46, 50, 55: 'Nam rhythmi, id est numeri, spatio temporum constant. . . . Sunt et illa discrimina, quod rhythmis libera spatia, metris finita sunt. . . . Nam rhythmi, ut dixi, neque finem habent certum nec ullam in contextu varietatem, sed, qua coeperunt sublatione ac positione, ad finem usque decurrunt.' At 9. 4. 48 he uses 'dimensio' for metre.

³⁸ Bede, *De arte metrica liber* (ed. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vii. 258): 'Videtur autem rhythmus metris esse consimilis, quae est verborum modulata compositio non metrica ratione, sed numero syllabarum ad iudicium aurium examinata, ut sunt carmina vulgarium poetarum. Et quidem rhythmus sine metro esse potest, [metrum vero sine rhythmo esse non potest: quod liquidius ita definitur:] metrum est ratio cum modulatione, rhythmus modulatio sine ratione. plerumque tamen casu quodam invenies etiam rationem in rhythmo non artifici moderatione servata, sed sono et ipsa modulatione ducente, quem vulgares poetae necesse est rustice, docti faciant docte.' The quotation comes by way of Gafurio's *Practica musicae* (see n. 39 below). Miller has pointed out that Gafurio omitted the bracketed words, inverting Bede's meaning.

³⁹ The quotations from 'the Greeks', Aristoxenus, and Nicomachus were translated from Gafurio, *Practica musicae*, Book II, ch. 1 (fo. aaij'; trans. Miller, p. 71): 'Graeci vero Rythmum ex arsi et thesi atque tempore quod vacuum nonnulli vocabant constare asserunt. Aristoxenus dixit esse tempus divisum in unoquoque eorum que numerose componi possunt. Secundum vero Nichomacum Rythmus est ordinata temporum compositio.' Gafurio, who did not read Greek, took the first quotation from the opening sentence of the first of the Anonymi of Bellermann

qualunque cosa. Ma della struttura o di simile¹ contesto non appartiene à noi diffinire regole o canoni a tutte le cose, perché lasciamo ad essi poëti le loro cose proprie. ⁴⁰ Quanto a questo, altro non scrivo à V.P. perché 'sapienti pauca'.⁴¹ Se altro posso per V.P., quella mi comandi.

In Vinegia a dì xxvi di agosto, M.D.XXXXI.

Pre Gioanne del Lago subscripsi

1. In answer to your request for information on the modes, briefly I say that there are eight modes, first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, of which four are authentic, four plagal. The authentic modes are the first, third, fifth, and seventh, and are called authentic because they can ascend an octave, a ninth, or sometimes a tenth above the final and descend a whole tone. The plagal modes are the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth, and are called plagal because they can descend four or five notes below the final and ascend five, or six at most.

2. The modes are paired, so that the first and second end on d, the third and fourth on e, the fifth and sixth on f, and the seventh and eighth on g. These are the regular endings, but other endings can be used to avoid sharps and flats or for better sonority. The irregular ending of the first and second modes is g, of the third and fourth a, of the fifth and sixth, b, and of the seventh and eighth c', all with Bb. They are called irregular because they end in a place other than their proper one. But every mode can end on whatever position of the hand its proper species can be found.² Each of these modes can be perfect, diminished, superfluous, mixed, commixed, regular, and irregular.

3. Authentic perfect modes ascend an octave above the final; if more, they are called superfluous, if less, they are called diminished. Plagal perfect modes descend a fourth below the final; if more, they are called superfluous, if less, diminished. Mixed modes share the ascent and descent

(recently re-edited by Dietmar Najock, Drei anonyme griechische Traktate über die Musik: Eine kommentierte Neuausgabe des Bellermannschen Anonymus (Göttinger musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten 2; Kassel, 1972), p. 66; the statement is repeated in the third treatise at § 83, p. 138). It was translated for him by Giovanni Francesco Burana (see Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought, pp. 111-12). The quotations from Aristoxenus and Nicomachus both come from Bacchius, Introductio, § 93, likewise translated by Burana. For the Greek text, see Musica scriptores graeci, ed. Jan, p. 313. The quotation from Aristoxenus was garbled in translation; his definition of rhythm was 'time divided according to each of the things susceptible of rhythm'.

⁴⁰ This sentence also comes from Gafurio (Miller, p. 71). ⁴¹ See no. 15 n. 9.

^f MS: dissimile.

## The Letters

of each pair, such as first with second, third with fourth. Commixed modes share the ascent, descent, and mediation of a mode outside the pair, such as first with third, etc. Regular modes end in their proper and determined places; irregular ones end elsewhere.

4. The first and second modes are composed of the first species of fifth, *re la*, and the first species of fourth, *re sol*. In the first mode, the fourth is above the fifth, in the second mode beneath it. The third and fourth modes are composed of the second species of fifth, *mi mi*, and the second species of fourth, *mi la*. The fourth is above in the third mode, below in the fourth mode. The fifth and sixth modes are composed of the third species of fourth, *tf a*, and the third species of fourth, *ut fa*. In the fifth mode, the fourth is above the fifth, in the sixth beneath it. The seventh and eighth modes are composed of the fourth in the seventh mode is above the fifth, in the eighth below it. All plagal modes have the same fourth is above the fifth, in the plagal modes below the fifth, as follows:



This should suffice regarding the modes.

5. Regarding composition, the first thing to do, whether you are setting a madrigal or sonnet or barzelletta or canzone, is to find a melody that fits the words; 'whenever good composers undertake a composition, they first decide on what the purpose is, that is, which affects they want to portray, and therefore which mode to choose',³ for [as] some [affects] are gay, others agreeable, some solemn and sedate, others sad and plangent, some choleric, others impetuous, so melodies, since some move us in one way and some in another, are differentiated by composers in various ways.⁴ The soprano should not go higher than sixteen notes above the lowest note of the tenor, whether in authentic or plagal modes. If it went higher, it would be awkward for the singer and exceed its proper range. When you use short note-values, vary the counterpoint with ornaments and syncopations. Let the soprano frequently imitate the tenor, bass, or another part. Occasionally, it is advisable to pretend to cadence but end deceptively on a more distant degree in the soprano or another voice; the tenor, however, must cadence so that the meaning [*sententia*] of the text may be understood. A sentence is a general saying pertaining to the emendation of life in common.⁵

6. Be sure to complete the mensural unit, whether binary, ternary, or quaternary, on the penultimate note of the cadence, for the last note is always the beginning of a new unit. Similarly, the unit should be completed on the penultimate note of a composition because the penultimate is part of the previous number and the last note, as the end, stands alone. Cadences are necessary, not arbitrary-as some thoughtlessly claim-especially in vocal music in order to distinguish the parts of speech-comma, colon, and period-and to make clear the meaning of the text, both in prose and poetry. A cadence in music is like a point in grammar. Cadence is a certain distinction and resting point in song, or cadence is an ending of that part of the song just as the medial and final distinctions are in an oration. Take care to cadence where the parts of speech end⁶ and not always in the same place: the right place for cadences is where the sentence ends, for it is proper that the grouping of words and notes should run and end concurrently.7 According to Donatus the Grammarian, There are three positions or pointings (which the Greeks call theseis): distinctio, subdistinctio, and media distinctio. A distinctio is where a complete sentence ends; we place a point at the top of the letter. A subdistinctio is where a small part of the sentence remains, but nevertheless must be added separately; we put the point at the bottom of the letter. A media distinctio is when almost as much of the sentence remains as has been spoken, but a breath must be taken; we put a point by the middle of the letter. In reading, the whole sentence is called a period, the parts of which are cola and commata.⁸ The parts of reading are accent, distinction, pronunciation, modulation. Accent is the quality of each spoken syllable. Distinction is the clarification of ambiguities. Pronunciation is the assimilation of the text to the person portrayed in appropriate characteristics, such as when we need to portray the moderation of an old man, or the ardour of a young man, the weakness of a woman, or the quality of each character or the ways of each type. Modulation is the conversion of continuous speech into happier turns of expression according to the artificer's way of speaking and in delightful form in order to avoid harshness.⁹

7. Apart from this, try to make your composition lively, smooth, full of harmony, sweet, resonant, low, and comfortable to sing, that is with the usual consonance of thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and octaves. Avoid the tritone, the diminished fifth and octave, and the augmented octave, ascending or descending; these intervals are discordant and hard to sing. Likewise, the seventh, ninth, and eleventh are rarely used because of their difficulty. Don't let your bass be uncomfortably low. Avoid barbarisms in text-setting: don't set a long accent to a short syllable or a short accent to a long syllable, which is against the rules of grammar, which teaches how to
pronounce and write correctly; without it no one can be a good musician. What is grammar? It is the art and science of speaking and writing correctly, which consists in use and authority and also reason.¹⁰ Avoid barbarisms, which Isidore calls a word enunciated with a wrong letter or sound.¹¹ Therefore observe grammatical accents that have temporal quantity, long and short, though few are the composers who observe grammatical accents in setting text (I speak of the unlearned).

8. Accent is a certain written sign that indicates the pronunciation of sounds, time, and breath and shows the difference in the meaning of words. Accent is also a certain rule of raising or lowering the syllable in each part of speech and occurs causally in a letter, initially in a syllable, lexically in a word, and itemically in speech.¹² It is derived from *accanto*, 'near song', because in singing the voice reveals the syllables. The ancients called it soul of the words or voice of the syllables. Others call it voculation, some governor of the voices. The Greeks call it prosody. Latins call it tone and pitch (tenor) because the sound rises and falls in it.¹³ But accents have no power to lengthen or shorten syllables. The pitches of the accents are acute, grave, and circumflex. The acute is so called because it sharpens and raises the syllable, grave because it depresses and lowers it; the circumflex, composed of acute and grave, because by raising and falling it bends round.¹⁴ The acute and circumflex are similar because both raise the syllable; grave appears to be the opposite to them because it always lowers syllables, whereas the former raise them.¹⁵ The figures of accents used by grammarians are for acute, for grave, and a combination for circumflex.¹⁶ Acute accents occur on final, penultimate, and antepenultimate syllables, such as quis, ámo, péramo. Grave accents occur on the last (but rarely in Latin), as ferè, fermè, ponè. Circumflex accents occur on the last, as *illius ergô*. In Vergil's sixth book they are also found on the penultimate, as Rôma, Românus, fortûna.¹⁷

9. Accents were invented for distinction, pronunciation, or to clarify ambiguity.¹⁸ In vernacular poetry there are three kinds: an accent on the antepenultimate makes the sound slippery, on the last makes it low, and on the penultimate makes it temperate. If the accent falls on the last syllable of the line and consists of one syllable, it may be counted as two, though the line will have ten syllables, which is very common. Vernacular poetry requires that accents fall on the fourth, sixth, or tenth syllable otherwise it will not be verse—and no more than three syllables can go under one accent, and accents fall only on long syllables. Finally, in all vernacular verses of seven syllables, the penultimate is stressed; in those of eight syllables, the third and the penultimate, and in those of eleven, the sixth and the penultimate and sometimes the fourth, but rarely. If the fourth is stressed, then the sixth should not be. This is done for the sake of the verse and to avoid a barbarism in text-setting.¹⁹

10. A²⁰ syllable is a group of letters pronounced with one accent and breath without a pause,²¹ or it is the enunciation of a vowel susceptible of time, because every syllable is either short, with one beat, which the poets call an atom or indivisible part, such as pater, or long, receiving two beats, such as mater, because mâ, through the length of its circumflex, takes twice as much time as pa, because pater is said with an acute accent.²² Syllable comes from syllambano, meaning 'I grasp', and a syllable is composed of two, three, four, five, or six letters at the most, such as stirps.²³ A single vowel is improperly called a syllable; it is a letter. The other syllables have from two to six letters, such as stirps.²⁴

11. Syllables have pitch, breathing, duration, and number of letters. There are three pitches: acute, grave, and circumflex. There are two breathings: rough and smooth. There are three durations: short, long, and common. Number, because it can have two, three, four, five or six [letters].²⁵ Letter is the smallest part of the sound composed of letters.²⁶ Latins use twenty-two letters: a, b, c, d, e, f, g, [i], k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, x, y, z. h is not a letter but only a note and a sign of breathing and therefore is not counted with the above letters.²⁷ It is composed of two Greek accents,  $\vdash$ ? and  $\vdash$ . Joining the former two yields h, joining the latter H.²⁸

12. There are sixteen consonants: b, c, d, f, g, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: b, c, d, f, g, k, p, q, t. Four are liquid: l, m, n, r. Double letters, or those with the force of two letters, are x and z. X takes the place of cs, z the place of ss. There are five vowels: a, e, i, o, u. Three are prepositive: a, e, o, and three subjunctive: e, u, i. They are called subjunctive because, added to the prepositives, they make diphthongs. There are five diphthongs: ae, oe, au, and eu, and one Greek, ei. But the Latins use it now. Diphthongs that are written but not pronounced are ae, oe, ei. Those that are written and pronounced are au, as in *aurum*, and eu, as in *eurus*. Diction is a sound articulated with a certain meaning, of which speech is constituted and composed and into which it is resolved.²⁹ Speech is a composition and ordering of words creating a coherent and complete sentence.³⁰ It is divided into two parts, complete and incomplete. Complete is that in which the sense is complete, incomplete that in which the sense is not complete. Let this suffice for syllables and letters.

13. The composer must be acquainted with metre or verse, that is know what a foot is and how many syllables it can have, which are long, which short, and which common, and know how to scan verse and where to make the caesura and elision, and also know where in the period the comma and colon fall, both in poetry and prose. Bede defines comma and colon in this manner: *comma is the quality of the distinction when a syllable*  remains after two or three feet and ends the part of speech. But when nothing remains, it is called colon. Orators use both of these, and they call the whole sentence a period, the parts of which are called comma and colon. The example is from the Apostle: 'For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage'; this is a colon. 'If a man devour you'; this is a colon. 'If a man take from you'; this too is a colon. 'If a man be lifted up' is likewise a colon. And so forth to the end of the complete sentence; these are cola and commata. But this complete sentence is called a period. The Latin term for 'colon' is membrum, for 'comma' incisio, for 'period' clausula or circuitus.³¹ A clausula is a composition of words resulting in a pleasing structure.³² A structure is an ordering of words, derived from strucre, to put together.³³

14. A foot in [Latin] verse is the raising or lowering of two or three or more syllables comprised within a space. Or: a foot is the putting together of syllables with respect to raising and lowering in time, which the Greeks call arsis and thesis,³⁴ because one syllable, even a long one, cannot make a foot, since that consists in two beats, not two durations, because two short syllables also take two beats. The caesura is the suitable ending of a word in the middle of a verse.³⁵ Scansion is the distinction and division of the metre into each foot according to rule. Elision, called synaloepha and ecthlipsis in Greek, occurs when a word ends in a vowel or in m and the following word begins with a vowel, which causes the first vowel or the m with its vowel to be suppressed. It also occurs at the end of a verse, when it finishes with an extra syllable or m and the following verse begins with a vowel.

15. Metre is a certain connection and ordering of feet devised to please the ear. Or: metre is a structure and joining of sounds finite in number and measure.³⁶ and is the same as verse, which is so called because it keeps turning until it is properly constituted. In Latin metre is called dimension because we measure the verse by defined feet, the feet by syllables, the syllables by units of time, and it is different from rhythm, which, according to Ouintilian, is number, whereas metre has a defined extent. Rhythm has no fixed end nor any internal variety but because it began with a raising and lowering, it flows on to the end.³⁷ Bede defines rhythm as a patterned composition not considered metrically but determined by ear according to the number of syllables, as in vernacular verse; and rhythm seems to be similar to metre, and certainly by itself it cannot exist without metre, because metre is regulation with pattern, rhythm pattern without regulation. Nevertheless you will usually find rhythmical organization not regulated by metre but by sound and movement; such verse unlearned poets necessarily make clumsily, but learned ones skilfully.³⁸ But the Greeks affirm that rhythm is composed of arsis and thesis and what some call empty time. Aristoxenus said that rhythm was time divided into each of those things which can be rhythmically organized. But according to Nicomachus, rhythm is an orderly arrangement of time.³⁹ Vernacular rhythm is a kind of diction. Diction is a congruous and ordered speaking about

something. But regarding structure it is not up to us to define rules, for we leave to poets what is theirs.⁴⁰ I write no more, for 'a word to the wise is sufficient.'⁴¹

### COMMENTARY

This letter shows Giovanni del Lago from an entirely different angle. Up till the early 1530s his interest has been focused almost exclusively on the mensural system and notation, especially as exemplified in fifteenth-century compositions. In the present letter he forsakes mathematics for rhetoric, or, more precisely, grammar, although the two subjects were closely intertwined, especially in the Renaissance.⁴² He does not, however, abandon his habit of quoting authorities, but in the present letter he has covered his trail, citing by name only a few of the many sources on which he drew. The ancient Roman grammarians, principally Donatus, Diomedes, and Priscian, may have come to his knowledge through secondary sources and compilations; it was often difficult to pinpoint his exact source. And he has complicated our task by translating their writings into Italian. Since his style is often murky, we have included the original versions in footnotes as an aid to the reader.⁴³ We suspect that many more of his sources will eventually be traced.

In spite of the largely derivative nature of his letter, it is Del Lago's most original contribution to the Correspondence and to musical theory in the 1540s. As we have suggested in the Introduction, the discussion of grammar as it relates to musical settings must have been of great interest to Del Lago's patron, the poet Girolamo Molino, and the literary circle around Domenico Venier, of which Molino was a prominent member. Martha Feldman has recently examined Del Lago's letter in this context; she thinks that 'his writings seem to mirror the intense preoccupations with language of Venetian culture'.⁴⁴ More precisely, Del Lago's emphasis on syntactical structure coincides with the new style of setting poetic texts that marks the Venetian madrigal of the 1540s, in which the verse is no longer set line by line but according to its syntax as prose.⁴⁵

B.J.B.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 87–91.

⁴² See W. Keith Percival, 'Grammar and Rhetoric in the Renaissance', in James J. Murphy (ed.), Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric (Berkeley, 1983), pp. 303-30.

⁴³ We are grateful to Dr Paul Gehl of the Newberry Library, Chicago, for his helpful comments on the section concerning grammar, and to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for supplying additional references.

⁴⁴ See 'Venice and the Madrigal in the Mid-Sixteenth Century' (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1987), p. 82. The letter is discussed on pp. 72–98.

94 (J66). Fo. 186^{r-v} (lower half) Francesco Lupino to Giovanni del Lago, 24 April 1541 (autograph)

186^v Al mio da padrono honorando Messer Pre Zanetto da Lago dignissimo professore dell'arte musicha in Venetia.

186^r Messer Pre Zanetto padrono honorando.

Per il presente aportador qual è Daniel ho receputa una de V.R. insieme con quella bella opera di musicha,¹ la quale m'è stata tanto grata quanto si pol dir al mondo, et dogliomi che al presente no[n] ho di podervi rimeritar di tanto dono. Como V.S. mi mandarà quella altra, che pur assai ve ne prego, mi sforzarò far parte del mio debito verso V.S., alla quale con tutto il cuor me li offerisco bon et fidel servidore, et nostro Signor Dio vi dega longa vita.

Di Fano alli 24 aprile 1541. Tutto di V.S.

Pre Francesco Lupino, canonico di Fano

The bearer of the present, Daniel, brought me your excellent work on music,¹ which pleased me no end. I regret I have nothing to give in return. When you send the other work, I shall try to discharge my debt.

¹ Probably Del Lago's *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* (Venice, 1540). Since the rest of Del Lago's correspondence with Lupino is lost, it is not possible to say what the other 'opera di musicha' was. Could it have been the projected publication of Del Lago's letters?

95 (J43). Fo. 159^{r-v} Girolamo Malipiero to Giovanni del Lago, 27 November 1543

159^r. Al reverendo Messer Pre Giovani da Lago a S. Martino delle Contrade.

159^v Reverende et honorande Domine, salus in Domino.

1. Havendo io frate Hieronymo Maripetro¹ dell'ordine di San Francesco di osservantia dato a Messer Adriano uno volume del canto della messa et officio del glorioso nome JESU et della messa et officio della disponsatione della gloriosa vergine Maria, acciò che sua Signoria corregesse esso canto acciò che fusse degno ad essere posto alla stampa, et perché novamente habbiamo habuto la confirmatione delli ditti officii et messe,² et perciò facendone bisogno al presente il canto delle prefate messe, perché volendole poner in stampa, non si può differire, essendo hora quelli del Zonta [= Giunta] che stampano li graduali alla fine de l'opera,³ alla quale opera vogliono aggiongere le prefate messe et anchora farne tante copie che la religione nostra si possa servire, pertanto fui heri da Messer Adriano, credendo che fusse fatta la corretione del prefato canto, et sua Signoria mi disse haver dato il tutto alla R.V. acciò che quella li ponesse la sua censura, come in tale arte dottissima, il che molto ne è piacciuto, et rengratiamo quella et li restamo obligatissimi, offerendosi noi ad ogni suo commando.

2. Ma perché al presente ci fa bisogno haver il canto delle messe, però pregamo la R.[V.] per quella charità che ha mossa quella a prender questa fatiga, che la voglia più presto che la pole transcorrere le ditte do messe et notare dove a quella parerà il canto essere dissono, perché noi de qui poneremo alla stampa chi saperà intendere le corretioni di V.S., sì che ne resolti la gloria del Signor Dei et la consolatione delli suoi servi nella psalmodia et cantillena. Et V.S. farà che per tutta questa settimana habbiamo il libro, perché havuto che noi l'haveremo, si caverà le messe per essere necessarie al prestare alla stampa. Poi remanderemo subito a V.R. la parte de lo antifonario, cioè le antifone delli vesperi et li toni delli

¹ On Girolamo Malipiero, see the Biographical Dictionary.

² In 1530 Clement VII approved the Office of the Holy Name composed by Bernardino de Bustis, and shortly thereafter he gave permission to the Franciscans to observe the feast on 14 Jan. See *Dizionario ecclesiastico*, ed. Antonio M. Bozzone, ii (Turin, 1955), 1155. The Franciscans were granted permission to celebrate the Feast of the Espousals of Our Lady by Paul III in 1537. The date was set as 7 Mar.; in some dioceses it is celebrated on 23 Jan. See Juniper B. Carol, OFM (ed.), *Mariology* (3 vols., Milwaukee, 1955–61), iii. 51.

³ The Gradual was published in Jan. 1544; see Paolo Camerini, *Annali dei Giunti, I. Venezia, Parte prima* (Florence, 1962), no. 495, p. 352. The Antiphoner followed in Jan. 1545 (ibid., no. 500, pp. 355–6).

hynni. Et quando a V.R. fu necessario mandar uno messo a posta, de qui sarà satisfatto. Et a V.S. si raccommandamo.

Dalla libraria del Zio⁴ in Venetia a dì 27 di novembre 1543.

V.S. mandi il libro in mano nostra o vero a Messer Adriano.

1. I, Fra Hieronymo Maripetro¹ of the Observant Franciscan order, gave Messer Adriano [Willaert] a volume of chant for the Mass and Office of the Glorious Name of Jesus and the Mass and Office of the Espousals of the Blessed Virgin Mary to correct for publication. The Offices and Masses have recently been confirmed² and the Giunta firm, which has nearly finished printing the gradual, needs the music to place at the end of the volume.³ Yesterday I went to Messer Adriano's to pick up the corrections, but he said he had given it all to you to criticize, as an expert in this field. We are very pleased and much obliged to you.

2. However, we need the music now and ask you kindly to look over the two masses and mark the dissonant spots. We shall have a knowledgeable man here to enter the corrections, to the greater glory of God and the comfort of his servants in song. Please see that we get it this week and we shall take out the masses and return the section of the antiphoner to you, that is the antiphons for Vespers and the tones of the hymns. We'll be glad to pay the messenger.

From the Zio bookshop in Venice.⁴

PS. Please return the book to us or to Messer Adriano.

⁴ 'Zio' in Venetian dialect is equivalent to 'Giglio' (see Cicogna, *Delle inscrizioni veneziane*, v. 59), and the name of the bookshop is probably 'Giglio'—at the sign of the Lily, which might refer to the heraldic lily that is the printer's emblem of the Giunta. The 'Libraria del Zio' might also be the printing firm of Domenico Zio, active in Venice at this time; see Ester Pastorello, *Tipografi, editori, librai a Venezia nel secolo XVI* (Florence, 1924), pp. 102–3. It does not seem to have occurred to Pastorello that the Domenico Giglio who printed books between 1537 and 1566 (see p. 41) might be the same printer.

**96** (J24). Fos. 110^r–115^v Giovanni del Lago to Girolamo Molino, n.d. (Scribe A)

^{110^r} Seguitano alquante definitioni di musica difinite per il reverendo sacerdote Messer Giovanni del Lago venetiano, titulato in la Chiesa di Sancta Sophia di Vinegia, scritte al Magnifico Messer Girolamo Molino, patritio veneto, patrono suo honorandissimo.^{*a*}

## De intervallis¹

Suono è un cadere de una voce et de una medesima intensione.²

Phthongi unisoni quelli si dimandano li quali non hanno differentia né in gravità né anchora in acuità.³

Consoni phthongi quelli così sono chiamati li quali insiemi l'un con l'altro equalmente commisti cadono con suavità et dolcezza nelle orecchie.⁴

Dissoni si dimandano^b quelli i quali quasi insieme essi medesimi propulsanti si esasperano lo audito.⁵ Ma quelli i quali quantunque non

^a The heading originally read: 'Alquante definitioni musicali in vernaculo et volgare sermone fatte per il venerabile religioso Pre Giovanni de Lago venetiano, diacono titulato in chiesa di Sancta Sophia de Venetia, ad instantia del Magnifico Messer Girolamo Molino patritio veneto patrono suo honorandissimo.' The changes were made after Aug. 1542, when Del Lago was promoted from deacon to titular priest (see Ch. 6).

^b Del Lago deleted 'si dicono et' before 'dimandano'.

¹ Del Lago's definitions are all borrowed from Greek music theory. On his interest in this subject, see Ch. 7, pp. 145–6. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Professor Thomas J. Mathiesen of Indiana University in tracking down Del Lago's sources. Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens kindly supplied further references; it was he who discovered Del Lago's debt to Ptolemy and provided us with the translations. The definitions of many writers are very similar; we have attempted to find a source that matches Del Lago's wording closely.

² Cf. Aristoxenus, *Elementa barmonica* 1. 15, ed. Rosetta da Rios (2 vols., Rome, 1954), i. 20, ll. 16-17; *The Harmonics*, trans. Henry S. Macran (Oxford, 1902), p. 176: 'it [a note] is the incidence of the voice upon one point of pitch'. The definitions of Cleonides and Gaudentius are similar. Closer to Del Lago's wording is the definition of Ptolemy, *Harmonics* 1. 4: 'A note is a sound maintaining one and the same tone' (*Die Harmonielebre des Klaudios Ptolemaios*, ed. Düring, p. 10, l. 19). Del Lago's 'et de' makes no sense; it must be 'in'.

³ Cf. Gaudentius, *Harmonica introductio* 1 (ed. Jan in *Musici scriptores graeci*, p. 337; trans. Meibom, p. 11): 'Et quidem unisoni sunt, qui nec gravitate, nec acumine inter se differunt.' We give Meibom's 17th-c. Latin translation rather than English because it makes comparison with Del Lago's Italian easier.

⁴ Cf. Boethius, *De musica* 4. 1 (Friedlein, p. 302): 'Consonae quidem sunt, quae simul pulsae suavem permixtumque inter se coniungunt sonum.'

⁵ Cf. Boethius, *De musica* 1. 8 (Friedlein, p. 195): 'Dissonantia vero est duorum sonorum sibimet permixtorum ad aurem veniens aspera atque iniucunda percussio'; ibid. 5. 11 (Friedlein, p. 361): 'Dissonae vero sunt, quae non permiscent sonos atque insuaviter feriunt sensum' (after Ptolemy).

siano consoni non però offendono le orecchie, si dimandano medii.⁶ Et avenga che li phthongi dissoni si chiamino così ecmelis,^c come che emmelis. Nondimeno dissoni noi chiamamo quelli qua in questo loco, li quali si dimandano emmelis.⁷

Intervallo è quello il quale sotto duoi soni di acuità et gravità differenti si contiene.⁸

Intervallo maggiore di intervallo è quello che sopra l'altro intervallo ^{110°} abonda di qualche cosa. Del medesimo genere inter vallo anchora si dice et nomina in la partitione o ver divisione del quale solamente si ritrova.

Consono intervallo è quello il quale sotto li estremi consoni si comprende, et dissono è quello che sotto li dissoni, cioè discordanti, et medio è quello et così si chiama el quale si comprende sotto li medii, cioè participanti del l'uno et dell'altro.

Consonanti intervalli in systemate immutabile sono solamente quatro. Il primo è diapente, il secundo diapason, il terzo diapason et diapente, il quarto bisdiapason.⁹

Medii intervalli (secundo piace a Ptolomeo nel primo libro al settimo capitolo) sono tutti l'intervalli superparticulari qualunque componeno il diatessaron.¹⁰ Ma quelli i quali sono in uso alli cantori diatonici, cioè i quali usano el diatono toniço, quali sono i cantori di qui del nostro paese, sono questi, cioè primo trihemitonio, 2° ditono, 3° diatessaron, 4° tritono, il quale tritono, quantunque dalli nostri non se connumeri^d tra li medii intervalli, nondimeno li antichi lo hanno usato, et Gaudentio philosopho el connumera et pone tra li emmeli. 5° è diapente et semitonio, 6° diapente et tuono, 7° diapason col sesquituono, 8° diapason et ditono, 9° diapason et diatessaron, x° diapason et tritono, x1° diapason diapente et semituo-

^c MS: ecmelie. ^d Del Lago deleted 'co[m]puti et³ before 'connumeri'.

⁶ Cf. Gaudentius, *Harmonica introductio* 8 (ed. Jan, p. 338): 'Paraphonous are those intermediate between consonant and dissonant, but appearing consonant in collision; for example the tritone from parhypate meson to paramese and the ditone from diatonic lichanos meson to paramese.'

⁷ Cf. Boethius, *De musica* 5.11 (Friedlein, p. 361): 'Emmelis autem sunt, quaecunque consonae quidem non sunt, possunt aptari tamen recte ad melos, ut sunt hae, quae consonantias iungunt. . . . ekmelis vero, quae non recipiuntur in consonantiarum coniunctione' (after Ptolemy). Boethius does not name ecmelic sounds, but the tone is considered emmelic (5.12).

⁸ Cf. Cleonides, *Isagoge harmonica* 1 (ed. Jan in *Musici scriptores graeci*, p. 179): 'An interval is that which is bounded by two notes in height and lowness.'

⁹ Most Greek sources list six consonant intervals: fourth, fifth, octave, eleventh, twelfth, and fifteenth.

¹⁰ Cf. Ptolemy, *Harmonics* 1. 7: 'Following on from 4:3, the ratios nearest equality are those that compound it in commensurate differences, i.e. the smaller superparticulars; after the consonant notes next in virtue are the emmelic, such as the tone and all those that compound the smallest of the consonances, so that with these are matched the superparticular ratios below 4:3' (ed. Düring, p. 16, ll. 12-17).

nio, XII^o diapason diapente et tuono.¹¹ Alli nostri cantori pare essere cosa propria della consonantia se 'l diapason non solamente alle altre consonantie se aggionge, servare la specie di quelle, secondo Aristoxeno primo volse nel secundo libro delli Harmonici elementi,¹² col quale Ptolomeo un' anchora conviene et concorda nel primo libro delli Harmonici al 6º capitolo,¹³ disputando contra li pythagorici,¹⁴ ma etiandio se a qualvuoi altro intervallo si aggionge, il che né alli pythagorici piacque, né anchora ad Aristotele,¹⁵ perché non vogliono essi che 'l diapason et diatessaron siano consonantia, non si considerando né in ragione multiplice né superparticolare. Et nondimeno esistimano et giudicano diatessaron esser consonantia. Ma li prattici nostrati, cioè di queste nostre bande, non paiono dissentire d'Aristoxeno né esser di contraria opinione. Paiono ben qualche cosa sopragiongere a quella, vogliendo che 'l diapason a qualvuoi intervallo aggionto non muti la spetie di questo, et alli pythagorici pareno assentire et con quelli convenire et concordarse, volendo che 'l diapason et diatessaron dissonino et discordino insieme, perché hanno collocato et posto il diatessaron tra l'intervalli dissoni. Ma perché noi qui di quelle cose habbiamo cura et pensiero trattare le quali spettano et appertengono

¹¹ Here Del Lago reverts to contemporary practice in listing twelve consonant intervals, from the minor third to the octave plus major sixth, according to Pythagorean intonation (mistakenly called 'diatono toniço'). Curiously, he includes the tritone, saying that the ancients counted it among the 'emmeli', according to Gaudentius. Giorgio Valla, *De expetendis et fugiendis rebus* (Venice, 1501), fo. h8', calls the tritone a consonance, but does not refer to Gaudentius. We know of no translation of Gaudentius that Del Lago might have consulted. Zarlino, however, cites 'Gaudentio filosofo' in the *Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), Part IV, ch. 3, and in the *Sopplimenti musicali* (Venice, 1588), p. 8, he says he has read Gaudentius. The passage that Del Lago refers to in Gaudentius' *Harmonica introductio* follows the definition of medial intervals given above (see n. 6). Jan interpreted 'in collision' as playing in rapid sequence, which would tend to mask the dissonance. Other theorists did not include the tritone among the 'paraphona'; indeed, the term itself has different meanings: Theon of Smyrna, for example, calls the fourth and fifth paraphonous. The Greeks seem not to have regarded the tritone as an extreme dissonance, since it could be expressed in rational numbers (see Cleonides, *Isagoge harmonica* 5, ed. Jan, p. 189, ll. 4–6).

¹² Elementa harmonica 2. 45 (ed. da Rios, i. 56, ll. 11-12; trans. Macran, p. 198): '... if any concord be added to the octave the sum is a concord.' A similar statement occurs in 1. 20 (da Rios, i. 25, l. 18-26, l. 1; Macran, p. 179): 'If we add to an octave any concord, whether greater than, equal to, or less than, an octave, the sum is a concord.'

¹³ Harmonics 1. 6: 'For in all cases the octave, since the notes composing it do not differ in force from a single note, when added to one of the others preserves the latter's type unchanged, in the same relation, one might say, as the ten stands to the units following' (ed. Düring, p. 13, 11. 3-7).

¹⁴ The Pythagoreans denied that the eleventh was a consonance, since its ratio of 8:3 was not superparticular.

¹⁵ We have not been able to find this statement in Aristotle. In Pseudo-Aristotle, *Problems* 19. 34, 41 (920³24-7, 921^b1-14) the reason why the double fourth and double fifth, unlike the double octave, are not consonant is that the ratios of those intervals are neither multiple nor superparticular. Del Lago's statement is somewhat muddled: the subject is the property of consonances, but the words 'qualvuoi altro intervallo' must refer to dissonances; the Greek writers, however, do not speak of adding an octave to a dissonance.

ad praxin, cioè allo essercitio et alla prattica, habbiamo pensato et esistimato così et talmente delli musici intervalli trattare come alli prattici è parso et secondo è stata la lor fantasia. Questo medesimo fece primo Euclide elementario, il quale habbiando in li musici instrumenti dimostrati li placiti pythagorici, cioè quello che alli pythagorici sopra tal cosa piaceva, el seguitoe la maggior parte et quasi sempre in l'harmonica instruttione quelle cose le quali erano secondo el parere et giuditio de' prattici.¹⁶ Dissoni sono tutti gli altri intervalli.

^{111^v} Incomposito intervallo si dimanda quello il quale si contiene sotto li poi disposti et ordinati phthongi in qualunque genere. Ma lo composito si dimanda quello el quale non sotto li poi dispositi phthongi si contiene. Alcuni qualche fiata sono composti et qualche fiata incomposti, come sono quelli li quali dallo hemitonio sino al ditono si trovano, perché il semitonio nel genere enharmonio è composto, et in lo genere chromatico et così nel genere diatonico è incomposito. El tono è nel chromatico composto et nel diatonico è incomposito. El ditono in diatono et chromate è composito et nella harmonia è incomposito. Tutti et qualunque sono infra il semituonio, tutti sono incompositi. Ma quelli i quali sono sopra el ditono sono tutti compositi.¹⁷

#### De generibus

Genere è certa habitudine de suoni i quali componeno et fanno il diatessaron.¹⁸

Generi spessi si dimandano quelli delli quali ambo duoi li intervalli insieme i quali sono alla parte più grave sono dell'a[l]tro minori.

Li non spessi sono quelli in li quali nessuno de' tre intervalli è maggiore degli altri insieme.

Li generi spessi sono lo enharmonio et lo chromatico.

Il genere non spesso è il diatonico.¹⁹

¹⁶ This is not correct. Dr Holford-Strevens suggests that Del Lago was using a manuscript (such as Venice, Marc. gr. 322) in which Euclid was assigned not only his Pythagorean *Sectio* canonis but also Cleonides' Aristoxenean *Isagoge harmonica*.

¹⁷ Cf. Cleonides, *Isagoge harmonica* 5 (ed. Jan, p. 188, l. 4–p. 189, l. 2): 'Incomposite intervals are those bounded by consecutive notes, such as hypate and parhypate, lichanos and mese; the same applies to the other intervals. Composite are those [bounded] by non-consecutive [notes]. There are, however, some common to composite and incomposite, those from the semitone up to the ditone. The semitone is composite in the enharmonic, incomposite in the chromatic and diatonic. The tone is composite in the chromatic, incomposite in the diatonic; the trihemitone is incomposite in the chromatic, and diatonic. All those less than the semitone are incomposite; likewise those greater than the diaton are all composite.'

¹⁸ Cf. Ptolemy, *Harmonics* 1. 12: 'Genus in harmony is a particular relation to each other of the sounds composing the consonance of the fourth' (ed. Düring, p. 28, II. 27–8).

¹⁹ Cf. Ptolemy 1. 12 (ed. Düring, p. 29, ll. 5-8): 'Proper to the enharmonic and the chromatic is what we call the *pyknon*, when the lower two ratios together are smaller than the one

¹¹² Le specie de' generi sono sei, cioè una specie è della harmonia, tre specie sono del chromate, et due del diatono.²⁰

Enharmonia è quella la quale poi doi volte assunta la quarta parte del tuono insieme col ditono procede dal grave allo acuto, per il che la quarta parte anchora del tuono si dimanda diesis enharmonia.²¹ Diesis, secundo testifica Aristide Quintiliano nel primo libro, si chiamava minimo intervallo di voce, quasi dialysis, cioè disolutione di voce.²² Medesima è anchora la partitione et divisione del genere enharmonio, per la qual cosa Porphyrio esistima et giudica che el genere enharmonio non si debba chiamar propriamente genere, come quello che non ha sotto di sé alcuna specie.²³

Chromatica molle è quella la quale alla più grave parte ha duoi volte la terza parte del tuono et l'altro intervallo el tuono cum dimidio et 3ª parte, cioè un tuono, et la mità con la terza parte,²⁴ et per questa causa la terza parte del tuono si chiama diesis del chromate molle.

Chromatica hemiolia è quella della quale l'uno et l'altro intervallo il quale è alla parte più grave si equipara et pone in comparatione et similitudine alla quarta parte con la ottava del tuono, et l'altro al tuono et ^{112^v} alla metà et alla quarta parte,²⁵ et però la quarta parte con | la ottava del tuono se dimanda diesis chromate hemiolio.

remaining one, and to the diatonic what we call the *apyknon*, when no one of the three ratios is greater than the other two together.' Cf. also Boethius, *De musica* 5, 16 (Friedlein, p. 366).

²⁰ Cf. Ptolemy 1. 12 (ed. Düring, p. 29, ll. 16–20): 'From which he [Aristoxenus] sets up six kinds of unmixed genera: one that of the enharmonic, three of the chromatic, of the soft, hemiolic, and tonic, and the other two of the diatonic, one of the soft, the other of the intense'. Cf. Boethius 5. 16 (Friedlein, p. 365).

²¹ Cf. Gafurio, *De harmonia*, fo. 37': 'Ennharmonicum [*sic*] genus ita tetrachordi dividit intervalla ut duo graviora densi duas dieses ennharmonicas teneant: ac reliquum acutissimum duos incompositos tonos.' The divisions of the tetrachord that follow are those of Aristoxenus, after Ptolemy, *Harmonics* 1. 12 (ed. Düring, pp. 29–30). Ptolemy divided the whole tone into 24 units (rather than Aristoxenus' 12) so that all divisions used should be in whole numbers.

²² Aristides Quintilianus, De musica libri tres 1. 7, ed. R. P. Winnington-Ingram (Leipzig, 1963), p. 12, ll. 6–8; On Music In Three Books, trans. Thomas J. Mathiesen (Music Theory Translation Series; New Haven and London, 1983), p. 81: 'Now the smallest interval of the voice was called diesis because this is the point of the dissolution of the voice.'

²³ See Porphyry, *Commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics* 2. 2, in *Porphyrios Kommentar zur Harmonielehre des Ptolemaios*, ed. Ingemar Düring (Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift 38/2; Göteborg, 1932), p. 157, ll. 13–14. We are grateful to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for kindly tracking down the reference.

²⁴ Cf. Gafurio, *De harmonia*, fo.  $37^{\circ}$ : 'Chromaticum molle genus utrunque intervallum spissi id est singula intervalla graviora in tetrachordo facit tertiam partem toni octonario numero distincta, reliquum vero quod maius est et acutissimum: facit tonum cum dimidio et tertia toni parte.' This and the following definitions are taken from Ptolemy 1. 12 (ed. Düring, pp. 29–30). The references to the various dieses, however, come from Boethius 5. 16 (ed. Friedlein, pp. 366–7).

²⁵ Ibid.: 'Chromaticum sesqualterum genus utrunque intervallorum spissi id est duo graviora tetrachordi intervalla facit quartam partem cum octava unius toni utrunque novenario describens. Ac reliquum maius et acutissimum unius toni est cum dimidio et quarta toni parte.' Chromatica toniça è quella la quale dividemo et partimo in la mità del tuono et in la mità del tuono et in tuono con la sua metà, et di quella medesima partitione et divisione la è, della quale il suo proprio genere.²⁶

Diatonica molle el primo intervallo ha semitonio et la metà del semitonio et la quarta parte del tuono, et l'ultimo o ver il fine ha il tuono acutissimo et la quarta parte di quello.²⁷

Intensa diatonica è quella la quale noi modulamo et cantamo dalla gravità in lo acume per semitonio et per tuono et tuono, et la medesima partitione et divisione hebbe che 'l proprio genere.²⁸

r	nolle	hemiolia	tonięa	molle	in[t]ensum
48 6	44 8 8	42 9	36 12	30 18	24 24

113^r

Diesis enharmonia.	6
D[i]esis chromatis mollis	8
Diesis chromatis hemiolii	9
Semitonium	I 2
Tonus	24
Trihemitonium.	36
Diatonum	48
Diatessaron	60
Tritonum	72

" MS: 18.

²⁶ Ibid., fo. 38: 'Chromaticum toniaeum genus utrunque intervallum densi id est duo graviora intervalla uniuscuiusque tetrachordi efficit semitoniaea numero 12 pernotata. At reliquum maius et acutissimum tonus est et semitonium numero 36 deductum.'

²⁷ Ibid.: 'Diatonicum molle genus non densum gravissimum intervallum habet semitonii numero 12 notatum sequens vero quod medium est semitonium et quartum unius toni 18 numero descriptum. At reliquum acutissimum intervallum habet toniaeum cum quarta parte toni numero 30 deductum.' Del Lago mistranslated Gafurio's 'quod medium est', referring to the second interval, as 'et la metà del', making it seem as if the first interval consisted of a semitone, a half-semitone, and a quarter-tone. This would add up to 24. Indeed, his table is wrong, but the first interval is given as 18 rather than the correct 12.

²⁸ Ibid.: 'Diatonicum incitatum genus non densum est. Et habet gravissimum intervallum semitoniaeum numero 12 ductum, reliqua duo toniaea numero 24.'

²⁹ This table follows Ptolemy, *Harmonics* 1. 12 (ed. Düring, p. 30), and Gafurio, *De harmonia*, fos. 37'-38', reflecting Ptolemy's division of the tone into 24 units. The table following lists the intervals according to Ptolemy's division of the tone.

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Diapente	84
Diapente et semitonium	96
Diapente et tonus	108
Diapason	144
Diapason et trihemitonium	180
Diapason et ditonum	192
Diapason et diatessaron	204
Diapason et tritonum	216
Diapason et diapente	228
Diapason, diapente, et semitonium	240
Diapason, diapente, et tonus	252
Bisdiapason	288

Diapason è intervallo del quale li estremi sono in dupla ratione.³⁰ Diapente del quale in la sesqualtera.

Diatessaron in la sesquitertia.

Diapason et diatessaron è quella la quale dal diapason et dal diatessaron continuati consiste.

¹¹³^v Diapason et diapente la quale per aggiontione del diapente a diapason se constituisce.

Disdiapason è quella la quale a doi diapason se copula et congionge. Tono è del quale diapente sopra diatessaron abonda.

Ditono è quello che doi toni componeno.

Semitonio minore è quello che aggionge el ditono sopra el diatessaron.³¹

Semitonio maggiore è quello per quale il tono è maggiore del semitonio minore.

Comma è per quale el semitonio maggiore supera el minore.

Diaschisma è la mità del semitonio minore.³²

Schisma è la mità del comma, o ver del commate.³³

Trihemitonio è quello che se compara et equipara al tono et al minore semitonio.

Tritono è quello che contiene tre toni.

Diapente et semitonio è quello che se compone et consiste dal diapente et dal minore semitonio.

³⁰ The following definitions can be found in all treatises.

³¹ This definition is incorrect; 'ditono' and 'diatessaron' should be reversed.

³² Cf. Boethius, *De musica* 3. 8 (Friedlein, p. 278): 'diaschisma vero dimidium dieseos, id est semitonii minoris' (after Philolaus).

³³ Ibid.: 'schisma est dimidium commatis' (after Philolaus). The terms  $\delta \iota \dot{\alpha} \sigma \chi \iota \sigma \mu a$  and  $\sigma \chi \dot{\iota} \sigma \mu a$  do not appear in extant Greek sources. For Philolaus, see H. Diels, rev. W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (6th edn., Berlin, 1952), i. 140.

The Letters	4	to Molino, n.d.		
Diapante et topo è quello che se compone da diapente et dal topo. Che	II4 ^v	Pentadecachordun	Pentadecachordum diatonici generis ³⁵	
se a qualunque de questi se aggionge diapason, farà l'intervalli da questi et da diapason composti, como sono diapason et trihemitonio.			t pythagorici	
Intervalla incomposita in minimis numeris ³⁴	Nete	hyperboleon	3456	
Diapason	Para	nete hyperboleon	3888 ^g	
Diatessaron	Trite	hyperboleon	4374	
Diapason et diapente	Nete	diezeugmenon	4608	
Tonus	Para	nete diezeugmenon to.	5184	
Semitonium minus	Trite	e diezeugmenon	5832	
Semitonium maius	Para	mese diezeugmenon to.	6144	
Comma	Mese	to.	6912	
Diaschisma	Lich	anos meson	7776	
Schisma	Pary	pate meson	8748	
Diesis maior et minor	Нура	ate meson	9216	
Trihemitonium	Lich	anos hypaton	10368	
Diapente et semitonium	Pary	pate hypaton	11664	
Dies. et s. mi. Diapente et tonus	Нура	ate hypaton	12288	
Diap. tonus	Pros	lambanomenos	13824	

f MS: 61208.

³⁴ This table omits the tritone but includes the ratios of the diaschisma and schisma. Cf. the more complete table in Lanfranco, Scintille di musica, pp. 97-100, which also includes the ratios of intervals in the chromatic and enharmonic genera.

³⁵ This and the following two tables, apart from the easily calculated Aristoxenean divisions, come from Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, Elementa musicalia (Paris, 1496), Book IV, props. 8, 13, and 16 (fos. h1^v-2^r, h3^r, h3^v-4^r); for their derivation see Faber's explanations ad locc. For

variety's sake, Del Lago has adopted the normal Greek note-names for the diatonic genus, Faber's Latin names-set out at Book IV, proem (fo. g7')-for the chromatic, and for the

enharmonic the letters that Faber assigned to each line of his tables for ease in explaining his

& MS: 3858.

calculations.

ut Aristoxenus et practici

24

24

I 2

24

24

I 2

24

24

24

I 2

24

24

12

24

The Letters Immutabilis systematis maioris chromatica partitio ³⁶				96. Del Lago to Molino, n.d. Bisdiapason enharmonie divisa				
			1 1 5 ^v					
	ut pythagorici	ut Aristoxenus et practici	t		ut pythagorici	ut Aristoxenus et practici		
Ultima excellentium	1492992	36	1	r q				
Subultima excellentium	1974272	12		p	3456 ^j	48		
Tertia excellentium	2108268			0	4374	6		
se. mi. Ultima disiunctarum	2221056	12		n	4491 ^k	6		
trihemi. Subultima disiunctarum	2359296	30	1	m	4608	0		
se. ma. Tertia disiunctarum	2519424	12	X.	dit. 1	5832	48		
se. mi. Submedia disiunctarum	2654208	12		die. k	5988	6		
to.	2985984	24		die.	6144	6		
trihemi.	2528044	36		to.	6912	24		
se. ma.	)))°944	I 2	;	dit.	8748	48		
Subprincipalis mediarum	3//9130	I 2		die.	8-8-	6		
Principalis mediarum	3981312	36		die.	8982	6		
Index principalium	4718592	I 2		e	9216	48		
Subprincipalis principalium se. mi.	5038848	I 2		d	11664'	6		
Principalis principalium	5308416 ⁱ	24	ſ	c	11976	6		
Acquisita	5971968		t	b	12288			
^b MS: 265428. ⁱ MS: 5388416.				a	13824	24		

³⁶ The 'Pythagorean' figures for paranete hyperboleon, trite hyperboleon, and nete diezeugmenon should be 1 769 472, 1 889 568, and 1 990 596 respectively. Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens traced the error to an intermediate column in Faber's table, where the figure for nete diezeugmenon is given as 964 instead of 864; multiplying the figures in this column by 2304, he obtained 2 221 056 instead of 1 990 656. Successive division by 246:243 and 2187:2048 yielded the other two wrong figures.

í

1 MS: 11564.

907

* MS: 4991.

Some definitions of music by Giovanni del Lago written for Girolamo Molino, his patron

#### On intervals¹

Sound is the falling of a voice on the same pitch.²

Unison sounds are those that have no difference in pitch.³

Consonant sounds are those that when sounded together strike the ear sweetly.⁴

Dissonant sounds are those that when sounded together strike the ear harshly.⁵ Those that are not consonant but do not offend the ear are called medial.⁶ Dissonant sounds are also called ecmelic or emmelic. We call the dissonant sounds emmelic.⁷

Interval is that which is bounded by a higher and a lower sound.⁸

A greater interval is one that exceeds another interval. Within one genus, an interval is called after the division in which it is found.

A consonant interval is one encompassed by two consonant sounds, a dissonant interval one encompassed by two dissonant sounds, a medial interval one encompassed by two medial sounds, which partake of both qualities.

There are four consonant intervals in the immutable system, fifth, octave, octave plus fifth, and double octave.⁹

Medial intervals, according to Ptolemy, Book I, ch. 7, are all the superparticular intervals that compose the fourth.¹⁰ But those used by diatonic singers, i.e. in the tonic diatonic, such as are used by singers of our country, are trihemitone, ditone, diatessaron, tritone (we don't count this as a medial interval, but the ancients used it and Gaudentius included it among the emmelic intervals), diapente plus semitone, diapente plus tone, diapason plus semiditone, diapason plus ditone, diapason plus diatessaron, diapason plus tritone, diapason plus diapente and semitone, and diapason plus diapente and tone.¹¹ Our singers consider it self-evident that consonants preserve their type when the octave is added to them, as Aristoxenus stated in Book 2 of his Harmonic Elements¹² and Ptolemy agreed in Book I, ch. 6 of his Harmonics,¹³ disagreeing with the Pythagoreans,¹⁴ and also if it is added to any other interval, which was not approved by the Pythagoreans or by Aristotle¹⁵ because they did not consider that the octave plus fourth is a consonance, having neither a multiple nor a superparticular ratio; but they considered a fourth consonant. Our practical musicians seem not to disagree with Aristoxenus. They agree that adding an octave to a consonant interval preserves the type of that interval, but they seem to agree with the Pythagoreans that

the octave plus fourth is a dissonance, because they include the fourth among the dissonances. But since we intend to deal with practice, we shall treat intervals according to current usage. Euclid, the author of the *Elements*, did the same: after demonstrating Pythagorean propositions on musical instruments, he followed the majority and in his teaching accepted the judgement of practical musicians.¹⁶ All the other intervals are dissonant.

An incomposite interval is one that is contained by successive notes in whichever genus. A composite interval is one that is not contained by successive notes. Some intervals can be composite and incomposite, such as those from the semitone to the ditone, because a semitone in the enharmonic genus is composite but is incomposite in the chromatic and diatonic genera. The tone is composite in the chromatic but incomposite in the diatonic and chromatic genera but incomposite in the enharmonic. All those within a semitone are incomposite, all those above a ditone are composite.¹⁷

#### On genera

Genus is a certain disposition of sounds within a fourth.¹⁸

Dense genera are those in which the lowest two intervals together are smaller than the higher interval.

Non-dense genera are those in which none of the three intervals is larger than the other two together.

The dense genera are the enharmonic and the chromatic.

The non-dense genus is the diatonic.¹⁹

There are six kinds of genera, one enharmonic, three chromatic, and two diatonic.²⁰

Enharmonic consists of a succession, low to high, of two quarter-tones and a ditone. The quarter-tone is called an enharmonic diesis.²¹ Aristides Quintilianus, Book I, called it the smallest interval of the voice, from dialysis or dissolution of voice.²² There is only one division of the enharmonic genus; Porphyry therefore said it was not properly a genus, having no species under it.²³

The soft chromatic has as its lowest intervals two-thirds of a tone plus a tone and five-sixths.²⁴ The third of a tone is called a soft chromatic diesis.

The hemiolic chromatic consists of two intervals of three-eighths of a tone plus a tone and three-quarters.²⁵ The interval of three-eighths of a tone is called the hemiolic chromatic diesis.

The tonic chromatic consists of a half-tone, a half-tone, and a tone and a half; its division is the same as that of the genus.²⁶

The soft diatonic consists of a semitone, and a half-semitone and quarter-tone, and a tone and a quarter.²⁷

The intense diatonic consists of semitone, tone, and tone; its division is that of the genus.²⁸

Enharmonic ²⁹	Chroma	tic	Diatonic		
	Soft	Hemiolic	Tonic	Soft	Intense
48	44	42	36	30	24
6	8	9	I 2	18	24
6	8	9	I <b>2</b>	I 2	I 2

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Enharmonic diesis	6
Soft chromatic diesis	8
Semitone	I 2
Tone	24
Trihemitone	36
Ditone	48
Fourth	60
Tritone	72
Fifth	84
Fifth plus semitone	96
Fifth plus tone	108
Octave	144
Octave plus trihemitone	180
Octave plus ditone	192
Octave plus fourth	204
Octave plus tritone	216
Octave plus fifth	228
Octave and fifth plus semitone	240
Octave and fifth plus tone	252
Double octave	288

The octave is the interval in which the extremes are in duple ratio.³⁰ The fifth in sesquialtera ratio. The fourth in sesquitertia.

The eleventh consists of a continuous octave and fourth.

The twelfth consists of the The fifteenth is two octav The tone is the excess of a The ditone is composed of The minor semitone is the The major semitone is the The comma is the excess of The diaschisma is half of a The diaschisma is half of a co The trihemitone is equiva The tritone is three tones. The augmented fifth consist added to any of these, they diapason and trihemitone.	e addition of a fifth to an octave. es joined together. a fifth over a fourth. if two tones. e excess of a ditone over a fourth. ³¹ e excess of a tone over a minor semitone. of a major over a minor semitone. a minor semitone. ³² omma. ³³ lent to a tone and a minor semitone. ists of a fifth and a minor semitone. ists of a fifth and a whole tone. If an octave is r will become composite intervals, such as
diapason and timeintone.	
Incomposite	intervals in least numbers ³⁴
Octave	2:I
Fifth	3:2
Fourth	4:3
Eleventh	8:3
Twelfth	3:1
Fifteenth	4:I
Tone	9:8
Ditone	81:64
Minor semitone	256:243
Major semitone	2187:2048
Comma	531441:524 288
Diaschisma	$\sqrt{62\ 208:243} = 256:\sqrt{62\ 208}$
Schisma	√278 628 139 008 : 524 288 =
	531 441: \sqrt 278 628 139 008
Major diesis	499:486
Minor diesis	512:499
Trihemitone	288:243

288:243 Augmented fifth 768:486 Fifth plus tone 27:16

	<i>T</i>	the Letters		 )		96. Del Lago	to Molino, n.d.	
	The fifteen notes of the diatonic genus ³⁵				The chromatic division of the Great Perfect System ³⁶			
		According to Pythagoreans	According to Aristoxenus and practical musicians				According to Pythagoreans	According to Aristoxenus and practical musicians
a'		3 4 5 6		Ì	a'		I 492 992	
,	tone		24		,	trihemitone		36
g	tone	3 888	2.4	J	g		1 974 272	
f	tone	1 371	24		f	major semiton	2 108 268	12
-	semitone	4 ) / 4	I 2		1	minor semiton	e 2 100 200	12
e'		4 608			e'		2 221 056	
	tone		24			trihemitone		36
ď	4	5 184			d'		2 359 296	
c'	tone	6 8 2 2	24	1	c'	major semiton	e	12
C	semitone	, 0, 2	I 2	ţ	C	minor semiton	e 2 ) 19 424	12
b		6 144		·	b		2 654 208	
	tone		24			tone		24
а		6 91 2			а		2 985 984	,
a	tone	7 776	24		~	trihemitone		36
8	tone	/ //0	24		g	major semiton	3 3 3 0 9 0 4 e	12
f		8 748		2	f	inajor senneon	3 779 136	
	semitone		I 2	/		minor semitor	ie	I 2
e		9216		1	e		3 981 312	<i>,</i>
d	tone	10 168	24		1	trihemitone		36
u	tone	10 308	24		a	major semitor	4 718 592	τ 2
с		11 664	- 7		с	major semitor	5 038 848	
	semitone		I 2			minor semitor	ie i	I 2
В		12288			В		5 308 416	
Δ	tone		24	1	٨	tone		24
Π		13 824			А		5 971 968	
				)				

	The enharmonic division of the double octave						
		According to Pythagoreans	According to Aristoxenus and practical musicians				
a'		3 456					
	ditone		48				
gʻ	11 1	4 374	,				
f'	diesis	4.401	6				
1	diesis	4 491	6				
e'		4 608	-				
	ditone		48				
ď	1	5 832	,				
c′	diesis	5.088	6				
U	diesis	, 900	6				
b		6 144					
	tone		24				
а	ditono	6912	. 0				
ø	attone	8 748	48				
ð	diesis	0 /40	6				
f		8 982					
	diesis		6				
e	ditore	9216	.0				
d	ditolle	LT 664	48				
	diesis		6				
с		11976					
D	diesis		6				
В	tone	12 288	- <i>i</i>				
А	tone	T2 824	24				
-		17 -4					

97. Paris 1110, fos. 5^r-6^v

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Anonymous to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. (copy, with corrections by Del Lago)

^r Reverendo Messer Pre Zuane mio honorando.

1. Il molto magnifico mio signore et compadre^a Meser Hieronimo Molino hammi referto con quanto dispiacere V.R. ci habbia ditto che io biasimi la musica, quanto sia alieno da lei, dimmandandomi inimico capitale delle muse et dolendosi, sì come ella mi ama, di questa mia falsa et biasimevole opinione, il che mi è stato di grandissima molestia, considerando di quanto dishonore me seria se altri risapesse che io fusse alieno dalle muse, havendo sempre fatto profesione di amico loro, et che ogni mio costume, ogni mia manera et modo di vivere dependesse da quelle. Et apresso istimando doversemi ascrivere a grandissima presuntione, che io ardisse nelli bene educati homini biasimare quella scientia od arte che volgiamo dire, la quale molti, altramente benissimo et liberalissimamente instituti, per non la sapere ha fatto reputare molto da meno et rozzi, et massimamente a nostri tempi quando questa sola se ha reservato il nome de vertude, sì che soli hogidì virtuosi se dimandano li musici, virtute la musica. Ma quello che più mi movea era che essendo io sempre stato il più inamorato homo dil mondo et hora più che mai fosse, in niun modo mi paria convenirsemi che io biasimase la musica, la quale so quanto sia conciliatrice del amore, et (dirò così) non biasimata et odiata, ma lodata et amata rufiana. Et imperò non volendo io ne lo animo di V.R. lassare questa mala impressione di me, ho volesto con questa mia rozza literuza dimostrarli qual sia la mia opinione dela musica, che se altrimente qualche volta ne ho parlato, non dela musica ma del modo che il più delli musici hogidì la usano ho inteso di dire, le quai cose son certissimo che V.R. volentieri legerà, perché essendo ella tanto in questa arte eccelente quanto tutta questa cità et Italia grida, et ne è amplissimo testimonio il detto magnifico Messer Hieronimo, li serà apiacer grande legere le lodi di quella arte nella quale ha fatto tanto profitto, se forse non si sdegnerà che a cusì alta impresa se sia messo così basso ingegno come è el mio.

2. Dico dunque la musica prima esser stata necessaria al ordinare et regolare la vita humana, di poi summamente utile a conservar la già ben da lei instituta vita, et apresso summamente essere delettevole et piena di gratia, le quai cose quando harò dimostrato di lei qual maggior lodi se li potrano dar da questi suoi inamorati lodatori, o per dir meglio adulatori. Viveano quelli antiqui et primi homini sì come li guidava il senso. Li menava la voluntade senza alcun culto, alcuna politia, né solamente non se

^a MS: comprade.

regeano per ragione, ma pur che vi fusse ragione in sé non conosceano che se in alcuno ve n'era qualche sentilla, era di sorte vinta et suffocata dal appetito che non operava cosa veruna. Era alhora il mondo di chi più potea, né alcuno si potea gloriare di havere o casa o roba o molgiera o altra cosa nella vita istessa propria et sua, se non quanto la potea per forza defendere da chi fusse venuto voglia di tor lui alcuna di quelle cose o tutte insieme. Non solamente non davano li debiti honori a Idio, ma né pur lo conosceano o pensavano che li fusse.

3. Il che tanto durò fin che pur sorsero certi homini, li quali o diretti da un più divino intelletto che in loro si trovasse, o, che più verisimile è, da Dio inspirati, deliberaron di vedere se possibile era non sforzare (che ciò seria stato impossibile et alloro pericolosissima cosa) ma persuadere li homini ad una vita più civile et più moderata, insegnarli esser Idio, et quello doverse dagli homini honorare et reverire, persuaderli che ad ogniuno quello si lasasse, che per preoccupatione o per longo uso già se havesse fatto suo, ogniuno cognoscese la sua mogliera, et non communamente se mescolasseno come pria faceano, non sparmiando né le sorelle, né le madri, né le figliole, persuaderli ad farsi una comune habitatione che li defendesse, et dalle fiere, et da qualunque strano che li volesse far violentia, et a quella darli ordini con li quali unitamente havessero di vivere, li quali chi li observasse fusse come bono premiato, chi li sprezasse fusse come malo punito. Ma perché non solamente il sforzarli era impossibile et pericolosissimo, ma anchora il persuaderli era molto difficile et perico[lo]so, offendendosi le orechie di coloro, alli quali per essere più potenti, parea in quella natia libertà poter meglio sodisfare alli appetiti loro, li fu necessario di inseme gratificare a quelle orechie con un suono delicato, che offendeano con dir le cose che non li piaceano. Et perciò trovarono di compiacerli, chi con suono, chi con canto (divina veramente inventione della musica) che quello che^b | in altro modo non harianno tolerato di odire, tratti dalla dolcezza di quel concento, patientemente ascoltavano, et fatti poscia a poco a poco capaci della ragione, accetavano quello che prima li havea sumamente dispiaciuto, non altramente che vediamo fare alli medici, li quali volendo dare o reabarbaro o semealina^e alli putti o altro medicame che li resani dalli vermini o altra infirmitate, li mescolano il zucaro, acciò che cum quella dolcezza inseme ingiotino l'utilitade della medicina.¹

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4. Né altro fu quello che si lege di Orpheo et di Amphione, l'un de' quali si dice al suono della sua citara haver tratto le selvage fiere, l'altro li sassi con li qual cinse de mura la cità di Thebe, se non che quello con la musica redusse li homini efferati et boscareci al vivere più culto et civile et l'insignò il culto divino, questi persuasse li suoi compagni ad edificare et habitar la cità de Thebe, nella quale securi et quieti vivesero.² Altro non fu quello che di Arione si narra, che al suo sono et lamentabil canto vene il dolfino, che il liberò dalli nochieri che haveano deliberato di toltoli la roba ammazarlo, se non che eli, conosuto la mala loro opinione, seppe con la musica adolcirli lo animo et persuaderli che li sparmiasero la vita.³

5. La musica insegnò li numeri della poetica a Lino, Museo,⁴ Homero, et li altri antiqui, che poi con questo mezo mostraron alli homini qual fusse la vita convenevole al huomo così in pace come in guerra, che senza il lenocinio della musica non mai sariano stati oditi. Né meno poi fu utile la musica a conservare le citadi, de quello che fusse stata necessaria ad edificarle, a darli li ordeni, a darli le lege, conciosiacosa che molte volte si legga li animi delli populi irati et accesi con quella essersi placati, molte volte li sbatuti esser sollevati, quelli che, oltra il dever placidi, non si resentiano al utile della patria alla vendeta de chi la offendea, dalla musica esser stati inanimati et spinti. Erano già stanchi li atheniesi per la longa guerra che con danno del'una et l'altra parte haveano havuto con megaresi per l'isola de Salamina, tanto che desperati di recuperarla de mano delli adversarii che la teneano, fecero la lege, che fusse tagliata la testa a chi più ardisse di preponer in consiglio di far guera per tal causa con li megaresi. Vedea il divin Solone quanto questo di vergogna reccasse e di danno alla sua patria, né però cum altro mezo che dela musica li diede lo animo di rimediarli, imperò che conposto circa ciò una elegia et sopra un canto, et quella al suono della cithara cantando nelli loci publici, di modo accese li animi di quel populo, che tratto da quella harmonia l'odiva, che levata la

² The legend of Orpheus charming wild beasts is a commonplace in Renaissance literature on music. The writer of this letter also credits Orpheus with being a teacher of religion. Various cults claimed him as their founder, but the existence of an Orphic religion is now open to dispute. Amphion, son of Zeus and Antiope, was given a lyre by Hermes, with the sound of which, according to Hesiod, he and his brother Zethus drew together stones to build the walls of the city of Thebes. For the interpretation of Orpheus' and Amphion's myths our author is following Horace, Ars poetica 391–6. Tinctoris, in his De inventione et usu musicae, Book IV, ch. 5, gathers together quotations from Horace, Statius, and Seneca concerning Amphion. See Karl Weinmann, Johannes Tinctoris und sein unbekannter Traktat 'De inventione et usu musicae', ed. Wilhelm Fischer (Tutzing, 1961), p. 44.

³ Arion (fl. late 7th c. BC) was a Greek singer to the cithara and the first known composer of dithyrambs. The legend of his rescue by a dolphin comes from Herodotus 1. 23-4. Tinctoris quotes two passages on him from Ovid (Weinmann, *Johannes Tinctoris*, p. 44).

⁴ Linus and Musaeus have shadowy existences in ancient literature as singers. Aristotle quotes Musaeus at *Politics* 8.  $5(1339^{b_2}1-2)$  as saying 'Song is to mortals of all things the sweetest' (ed. Barnes, ii. 2125).

^b 'Che quello che' is repeated at the beginning of the next page.

⁶ Del Lago has substituted 'semealina' for 'altra medicina'.

¹ Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens points out that this image is derived from Lucretius' Dererum natura 1. 935–950~4. 10–25. Our annotations in this letter have greatly benefited from his expert knowledge.

lege et parlatosi liberamente, et di novo presa la guera, ne reportaron la desiderata vittoria con ruina delli antiqui adversarii.⁵

6. Non meno stracchi li lacedemonii dalla guera de mesenii (come suoleno li homini in tutte le dificultadi), recorsero a Dio et allo oraculo, il qual conoscendo che d'altro non haveano bisogno che d'uno che sapese inanimare li soldati, li comandò che dimandasero dalli atheniesi un capitano. Et a quello obedisero. Dieronli li atheniesi Tyrteo poeta, non senza sdegno delli lacedemonii, che si istimarono sbefati dalli atheniesi, loro perpetui adversarii et emoli, imperò che invece de valoroso et prode capitano, li havesero dato un strupiato [= storpiato] dicitore (che zoppo era Tyrteo). Ma dimostrò il sucesso quanto fusse stato utile et veramente divino il consiglio del oraculo, imperò che seppe Tyrteo con li versi et canto accomodato sollevar li animi delli soldati già inveliti per tre havute sconfitte, et di modo accendere che, proposti o di vincere o di morire, ^ret desperatamente combattendo, 7 reportaron la vittoria da quello inimico al qual più volte havean già volto le spale, dove se dice esser stata tale la ostinatione delli soldati, che non dovendo vincere, non voleano anchor più vivere, et solo pensando della morte et sepultura, cia[s]chaduno il giorno della battaglia se havea ligato a il brazo un breve con il nome suo et dil patre acciò fussero reconosciuti nel sepelirli, tanto li havea accesi il divin canto.6

7. Longo saria s'io volesse scriver quante volte la musica ha acceso li demessi animi delli soldati et populi, né mancho sonno li essempii quando li incitati ha racquetati, ma uno voglio per hora basti degnissimo de memoria. Nella gravissima sconfitta, che hebero li atheniesi in Sicilia dalli syracusani et lacedemonii loro accerbissimi inimici, questi per la longa guera, quelli perché senza causa alcuna et solo per cupidità de imperio li haveano volsuto tore la libertade, et li haveano fatto gravissimi danni in quella sconfitta, dico niuno delli atheniesi servò la vitta, se non chi seppe cantando versi di Euripide indolcir lo animo del efferatissimo vittorioso inimico.⁷ | Ma che vogliamo noi con essempii dimostrare quanto sia la musica utile alle cose della guera? Non ha trovato la musica il modo che il capitano pos[s]i parlare allo exercito et farli intendere quello fa bixogno che faci?⁸ A che altro effetto sonno stati trovati la tromba, il tamburo, et il flauto, se non per denotar alli exerciti quando denno andare, denno far alto

⁵ Solon (eponymous archon 594/3 BC). Eight lines of his elegy, composed to exhort the Athenians in the battle for Salamis, survive; see M. L. West (ed.), *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati* (2 vols., Oxford, 1971-2), ii. 120-1.

⁶ The source of this story is Justin, *Epitome* 3. 5.

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⁷ The battle took place in 413 BC. Euripides wrote an epitaph on the fallen Athenian soldiers, cited in Plutarch's *Life of Nicias* 17.

o tornare? Et apresso quelli per excitare et acendere li animi delli soldati, questo per temperarli che non tratti dal empito et furore, usiscano de l'ordenanza, la qual cosa fu estimata di tanto momento dalli lacedemonii, grandissimi maestri di guerra, che non mai volsero che le lor bataglie caminasero se non al suono de' flauti et quasi che in modo de ballo.⁹ Baccho con lo exercito de' musici puote penetrare et soggiogare tutto l'oriente, et con la musica così ammaestrò li soggiogati populi che meritò da loro esser dimandato dio et come dio honorato.

8. Né meno però è stata utile la musica nella pace che in la guerra et lassato stare, che senza lei non ha volesto niuna religione, niuno populo, niuna provincia che se honori Idio, il che è sta[to] fatto con grandissima ragione, sì per esser lei simulacro della quiete et vera harmonia del animo tanto accetta a Dio, sì per esser la più eccellente operatione fra le corporee et quasi più da esser numerata fra le actioni del'anima che del corpo. Credo anchor essendo ella di tanta utilitade a reger li popoli così in pace come in guera, per darli authoritade con dedicarla al culto divino. Ma lassato hora questo, cosa non è che più conservi l'unione delli citadini che la musica. onde meritamente li greci, che prima detero il nome di muse, onde poi è derivato musica, così le dimandaron perché nel idioma loro altro non dice muse che inseme et unitamente dimoranti.¹⁰ Li arcadi per esser in loci montuosi, fredi et aspri, sono li più efferati et inimici della quiete popoli di Grecia, il che conosciuto per li saggi loro antiqui legislatori, volsero per temperare quella natia ruvideza, che tutti divenisero musici, imposero pena a chi non imparasse di cantare et sonare, statuireno li magistri publici, ordinarono li statuti tempi nelli quali li chori de' puti, gioveni et vechi, separatamente^d secondo l'etade, se reducesero et insieme cantassero, sonass[ero]. Il qual instituto, quanto fusse santo et bene inteso lo dimostrò lo infelice esito de Cimeta, cità de Arcadia, la quale non prima lassò il studio della musica che vi entraron le parte et guerre civili, le quali non cesar[ono] sin tanto che chiamando in la cità l'una parte li etholi, l'altra li inimici di quelli (sì come hora habbiamo visto di Casale di Monferrato), in brevissimo spacio di tempo et l'una et l'altra parte fu sachezata, ruinata et amazata, et la misera citade tutta arsa et desolata.¹¹

^d MS: separatamento.

⁸ On the use of music in battle tactics, see Aristides Quintilianus 2. 6 (ed. Winnington-Ingram, p. 62; trans. Mathiesen, pp. 125–6).

⁹ Frequently noted by ancient writers: see esp. Thucydides 5. 70.

¹⁰ The etymology, as Dr Holford-Strevens discovered, comes from Plutarch, On Brotherly Love 6. 480 E-F: 'Hesiod does ill to advise that an only son should be heir to his father's goods [Works and Days 376], and that after being a pupil of the Muses, whom they called Muses as being always together in good will and sisterly love [sc. Moûgau <  $\delta\mu$ oû gau].'

¹¹ The source of this passage on music in Arcadia is Polybius, *Histories* 4. 20–1, although our author has misunderstood Polybius: the Cynaethians were unlike the other Arcadians, and their savage and lawless behaviour was attributed to their abandonment of the practice of music.

9. Ha trovato la musica in la pace il modo de lodando li homini virtuosi et fatti loro degni di lode invitar li gioveni ad assimigliarseli, et quello che naturalmente habbiamo a schifo, di odir le lodi altrui, et massimamente dalla bocha de lui medesimo, ci ha fatto ella che con buon animo l'odiamo, lo amiamo et sforzamosi d'imitare, onde li lacedemonii, di roza severità altrimente et inimici delle muse, nelli chori loro cantavano quella famosa canzone nella quale, se medesimi lodando, li vechi se esser stati valenti et utili alla patria homeni, li gioveni essere, li putti dover essere diceano.¹²

10. Ha trovato nella pace la musica il modo di reprehendere li vitii senza offender lo animo delli represi, né altro sonno la comedia et tragedia, tutte due trovate dalla musica, se non una grata corretione della vita humana, metendozi avanti li ochi, questa in quante calamitadi incoressero li homini grandi che operassero male, quella come fussero sbefati li vitii delli homini bas[s]i. Et da poi né meno operavano li balli, inventione pur della musica, quando (sì come faceano li antiqui) con il numeroso moto delli piedi et braccia representavano l'antique historie et faole, che altro non erano alhora li balli, che mute tragedie et comedie.¹³

11. Ma che diremo nui della divina eloquentia, senza la quale è cosa imposibile governar bene citade, popolo o stato alcuno, essendo ella la inventrice delle sante leggi, premiatrice delli boni, castrigatrice delli rei, quella che conserva quando fa bisogno la pace, aricorda et persuade quando fa bisogno la guerra, conserva la libertade, et brevemente, è causa de tutti li beni delle citade, stati et provincie—non riceve ella grandissima utilitade della mueica? La pronunciacione, principal parte di quella, anzi

6^v

utilitade dalla musica? | La pronunciacione, principal parte di quella, anzi (se volemo credere al principe d'oratori) nella quale consiste tutta la eloquentia, è regolata dalla musica, imperò che ella ce insegna qual sia l'acuta, qual la grave voce, qual la remessa, qual la concitata, qual l'aspera, qual la molle, qual la grande et sonora, qual la piccola et bassa. Né meno ella si insegna quando o quella o questa debiamo usare, sì come o in questo o in quel modo vogliamo movere li animi delli auditori. Onde non fu mai apresso li antiqui alcun buono oratore che non formasse la voce sua sotto il maestro musico.¹⁴ Le delitie del populo romano, C. Gracho, la cui eloquentia fu di tanto terrore alli adversarii suoi, che temendo quelli non cum quella tirasse la repuplica in qual parte egli volesse, et mossi da invidia l'amazaron. C. Graccho, dico, conoscendo quanto la musica regolasse la voce, et quanto quello fusse di momento nella oratione, ogni volta che parlava in puplico, havea apreso di sé un musico che con una piveta d'avolio li dava secondo il bisogno la voce,¹⁵ non altramente che vediamo fare li organisti nelli chori. Chi n[on] sa quanto il parlare più ce faci differenti dalle bestie, che altra cosa che habiamo doppo l'intelletto? Et quanto quello sia regolato et ornato dalla musica? Vedete il mio padre, quanto la musica sia stata et necessaria et utile, et anchor sia.

12. Che quanto di apiacer la ci recchi, quanto la sia delettevole, niuno credo sia che habi senso, che in sé medesimo non lo senta, onde ben disse quel antiquo savio, che il vero condimento delli bancheti era il canto.¹⁶ Ma molto meglio per mio judicio si potea dire, che la musica fusse il condimento de tutti li apiaceri, tutti li beni, né solo il condimento ma la causa, la minera, il thesoro. Ella nelle cose liete et nelle feste aionge tanto di allegria quanto ogni di vediamo et proviamo, nelle tristeze et infermitadi sumamente ci consola, nelle prosperitadi è di grandissimo ornamento, nelle adversitadi sollevamento et solazo, onde meritamente ella face li seguaci suoi cari alli popoli, carissimi alli principi, carissimi (che non reputo io la minima dote) alle donne. Li romani, severissimi homini et forsi rozi, non havendo boni cantori deli loro, li condoceano con grossissime provissioni de Thoscana, et havendosi voluto quelli una volta per non so qual sdegno partirsi di Roma, non li volsero però sforzare di restare, in tanta reverencia li haveano, ma mandaron ambasatori alle patrie de quelli che li persuadesero di tornare et a quelli che ritornassero, et ritornati, li honorarono di grandissimi honori et volsero che il giorno del lor ritorno fusse celebrato con solennissima festa.¹⁷

13. Apresso li greci et massimamente li atheniesi, inventori de tutte le lodevoli et liberali dis[c]ipline, non era reputato bencreato chi non fusse musico.¹⁸ La nostra etade in tanta veneratione ha la musica che quello sola como ho detto dimanda virtude et soli li musici virtuosi. Vedo nel animo di V.R. restare un scropolo di quanto io nel principio disse che se io n'havea qualche volta ditto male, havea biasimato non la musica, ma quelli musici, delli quali forsi intendendo li antiqui finsero le faole de Marsia

⁽Polybius does not speak of a chorus of old men; perhaps our author was thinking of the arrangements prescribed in book 2 of Plato's *Laws.*) In the autumn of 1536 Casale was seized by French troops, then recaptured by the army of Charles V.

¹² This paragraph is drawn from Plutarch's essay on inoffensive self-praise, ch. 15 (*Moralia* 544 D-E).

¹³ This paragraph seems to reflect familiarity with Aristotle's *Poetics*. On the educational function of music, see *Politics* 8. 7.

¹⁴ Quintilian, in his *Institutio oratoria* 1. 10, treats music first among the arts necessary to the formation of the orator. On Demosthenes, see Cicero, *De oratore* 3. 213 (cf. Quintilian 11. 3. 6). Zarlino cites the example of Demosthenes in explaining the value of music to the orator (*Istitutioni harmoniche*, Part I, ch. 2, 'Delle laudi della Musica').

¹⁵ This story is also reported by Gafurio, *Theorica musicae* (Milan, 1492; repr. Rome, 1934), fo. A6^r, and Zarlino, *Istitutioni harmoniche*, Part I, ch. 2. The source is Cicero, *De oratore* 3. 225.

¹⁶ Homer, Odyssey 1. 152: 'Song and dance are the adornments of a feast.'

¹⁷ A confused recollection of the tale concerning auletes at Livy 9. 30. 5-10 (cf. Ovid, *Fasti 6.* 653-92; Valerius Maximus 2. 5. 4; Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae* 55 = *Moralia* 277 E-278 F), perhaps conflated with Livy 9. 2. 4, on actors invited from Etruria to Rome.

¹⁸ See Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* 1. 4; Isidore, *Etymologiae* 3. 16. 2; and Pausanias 10. 7. 3 (Zarlino, *Istitutioni harmoniche*, Part I, ch. 2, cites the last two).

scorticato da Apolline,¹⁹ et delle figliole de Pierio transmutate dalle muse in tante pute,²⁰ ma adesso non è tempo di parlare de ciò. Basti per hora che la musica è cosa eccellente.

Adio

1. Messer Girolamo Molino reported to me with what displeasure you said that I censure music, calling me a capital enemy of music and lamenting my false and blasphemous opinion, which greatly disturbed me, considering the dishonour it would bring me if others thought me alienated from the Muses, on whom my whole way of living has been founded, and further judging that I should be guilty of such great presumption among learned men for condemning that art which many, otherwise well educated, are esteemed the less for not knowing, and especially in our times, when it alone is called virtue and only musicians are called virtuosi. But that which most swayed me was that (being the man the most enamoured thereof in the world) it should seem in no wise fitting that I should be thought to censure music, the conciliator of love, the beloved bawd. Not wishing to leave you with this bad impression, I shall express my opinion of music in this unpolished little letter. What I said before was about present-day practice, not about music, and I am sure you, whose fame in matters musical is on all lips in Venice and Italy, as Messer Girolamo can testify, will enjoy my praise, however unworthy, of that art.

2. Music was first necessary to regulate human life, then useful to conserve its institutions, and finally pleasureable and full of grace. Early man lived as he pleased, without religion, government, or even reason, whose spark in him was fated to be smothered by his appetite. Everyone held his possessions by force, and God was not honoured or even known.

3. Then certain men arose who, directed by a more godlike intelligence or more probably inspired by God, decided to lead men to a more civilized life, teaching about God and his due honour and reverence, persuading them to respect the property of others, to recognize their own wives instead of mingling indiscriminately, to build a common habitation to protect themselves from wild animals and enemies, and to set up rules, rewarding those who obeyed and punishing those who did not. But since imposing this would have been impossible, and even persuasion dangerous, they were obliged to combine it with delicate sounds that would gratify their ears. Thus, through the truly divine invention of music, they listened patiently to what they would otherwise have refused to hear, and gradually became capable of reason. Even so do our doctors mix the rhubarb or bran they give children with sugar.¹

4. Nor was anything else meant by the stories of Orpheus leading wild beasts with the sound of his cithara and Amphion with music drawing together stones to build the wall of Thebes than that the former brought men to a civilized life, the latter persuaded his companions to build Thebes and live in it securely.² Nothing else, too, by what is told of Arion, whose mournful song attracted a dolphin who saved him from sailors who were about to kill him, than that he was able by his music to soften their hearts and persuade them to spare his life.³

5. Music taught poetic metres to Linus, Musaeus,⁴ and Homer and other ancient poets, who then showed men how to live in peace and in war. Music was also useful for preserving cities, in giving orders and laws; it calmed the angry and roused the over-peaceable to defend themselves. The Athenians, exhausted by a long war with the Megarians over the island of Salamis, passed a law imposing capital punishment on anyone who proposed war. Solon, seeing how damaging this was to his country, wrote an elegy set to music and, singing it in public, so aroused the spirits of the people that the law was repealed and the war renewed, with the desired victory.⁵

6. The Lacedaemonians, worn out by war with the Messenians, consulted the oracle, which told them to ask the Athenians for a captain. The Athenians, their perpetual adversaries, in mockery gave them, instead of a valorous captain, a crippled poet, Tyrtaeus. But the oracle was right: Tyrtaeus, with his verses and music, inspired the soldiers to desperate combat, gaining the victory. Determined to conquer or die, the soldiers had tied their names to their arms so that they could be identified when they were buried.⁶

7. I could go on at length on the power of music to revive flagging spirits, but shall mention only one more example. In the great defeat of the Athenians in Sicily by the Syracusans and Lacedaemonians, their bitter enemies, the latter because of the long war, the former because of the unprovoked attack upon their liberty, none of the Athenians survived

¹⁹ The satyr Marsyas, having learnt to play the aulos, challenged Apollo to a contest and lost. His punishment was to be flayed by Apollo. On the use of the Apollo and Marsyas myth in the context of 16th-c. music theory, see Lowinsky, 'Music of the Renaissance as Viewed by Renaissance Musicians', pp. 147–8 = *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance*, p. 95.

²⁰ Various legends call the Muses daughters of Pierus or their dwelling-place Pieria. In speaking of 'the daughters of Pierus transformed by the Muses', the writer is referring to the story in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 5. 295–678. Minerva, visiting Mount Helicon, asks a Muse about the nine talking jays complaining about their fate. The Muse explains that they were the nine daughters of Pierus, who challenged the Muses to a competition. The Nymphs judged the Muses to be the winners and the challengers were turned into jabbering jays.

### 97. Anon. to Del Lago, n.d.

## The Letters

except those who, singing verses of Euripides, mollified the spirit of the victors.⁷ But why should we give examples of how useful music is in war? It allows the captains to give orders to the army.⁸ Trumpets, drums, and flutes signal when to march, to halt, to turn. Music keeps the soldiers in order; the Lacedaemonians, great warriors, never went to battle except to the sound of the flute, almost dance-like.⁹ Bacchus, with his army of musicians, subjugated the East and so taught the people with music that he became their god.

8. In peace too music is useful; all religions use it and rightly, for it is an image of the true harmony of the soul and operates the relations of the body and even more of the soul. Music's usefulness in peace and war is connected with its role in religion. Nothing unites people like music; the Greeks invented the name *muse* for the Muses, from which is derived *musica*, for *muse* means 'living together'.¹⁰ The Arcadians, because of their harsh and cold climate, are the most savage and violent people in Greece. Their ancient legislators, to tame their roughness, decreed that all should become musicians, providing public teachers and dividing the population into choruses of children, young men, and old men. The success of this policy was shown by the fate of Cynaetha in Arcadia, which gave up music and became involved in civil war, one side calling in the Aetolians, the other their enemies, to the complete ruin of the city (similar to Casale Monferrato in our days).¹¹

9. In peacetime, music found a way of praising virtuous men and their deeds as an example to the young. By nature we cannot bear to hear the praise of others, especially from their own mouths, but through music we gladly hear it and attempt to emulate them. The Lacedaemonians, otherwise inimical to the Muses, sang that famous song of self-praise in which the old men said that they had been valiant and serviceable to their country, the young men that they were, and the boys that they would be.¹²

10. In peacetime music is able to criticize vices without offence; indeed, comedy and tragedy, invented by music, are nothing but a pleasurable correction of human life, placing before the eyes the downfall of great men through evil deeds in the latter and the mocking of vices in common men in the former. They made no less use of dance, itself discovered through music: the ancients moved their arms and legs rhythmically in reciting stories, for dances are nothing but mute tragedies and comedies.¹³

11. And what about godlike eloquence, without which government is impossible, for it devises laws, rewards the good, punishes the bad, promotes peace, summons to war, preserves liberty, and, in short, is the cause of all good in government? Is not music of the greatest usefulness? Delivery, the principal part of eloquence according to the prince of orators, is regulated by music, which teaches high and low voice, relaxed, excited, harsh, gentle, great and loud, and small and soft. And it teaches when to use these qualities to move the listeners. All orators of old had music teachers.¹⁴ The eloquence of Gaius Gracchus, the darling of the Roman people, brought terror to his adversaries, who feared his ability to sway the state; they killed him out of envy. He knew how important music was and always had a musician in public to give him the pitch on a pipe,¹⁵ just as organists do in our choirs. After intellect, the main difference between us and animals is speech. How much music ornaments it! You see, Father, how necessary and useful music has been and still is.

12. As to the pleasure it affords us, no sensitive person does not feel it; music, according to that ancient sage, is the true condiment of banquets.¹⁶ But it is really the condiment of all pleasures, and not just the condiment but the cause. It contributes to gaiety, consoles us in sorrow, adorns prosperity, gives solace in adversity; thus its adherents are dear to people, princes, and (not the least) to ladies. The Romans, stern men and perhaps rough, having no good singers, brought them from Tuscany with huge allowances. For some reason they wanted to leave Rome, and the Romans, out of reverence, did not force them to stay but sent ambassadors to persuade them to return, honouring those who did so with solemn festivities.¹⁷

13. The Greeks, and especially the Athenians, the inventors of all the liberal disciplines, considered no one cultivated who was not a musician.¹⁸ In our age, as I said, music is held in such veneration that it alone is called virtue and only musicians virtuosi. I can see that you still harbour a scruple about my having said that it was not music itself I criticized but those musicians for whom the ancients invented the fables of Marsyas flayed by Apollo¹⁹ and the daughters of Pierus transformed by the Muses into so many magpies,²⁰ but now is not the time to go into that. Suffice it that music is a thing of excellence.

### COMMENTARY

The author of this letter is unknown. He is probably one of the members of the literary circle around Girolamo Molino. His knowledge of music is entirely non-technical and seems to have been gathered from various historical and poetical sources. Thus we should not be surprised that this letter is quite different from the 'praise of music' that often appears in musical treatises, or even in the writings of learned amateurs such as Carlo Valgulio, author of an essay on the same subject, *Contra vituperatorem musicae*, printed in 1509.²¹ Our author ignores, for example,

²¹ On this treatise, see Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought, pp. 100-6. Professor Palisca kindly sent us a copy of this rare work and shared his translation of Valgulio's Proem to Pseudo-Plutarch's *De musica* (on which see ibid., pp. 89-100). There is an indirect connection between Valgulio and Del Lago through Matteo Nardo, whose fragmentary letter

such favourite stories of the effects of ancient music as the aulete Timotheos rousing Alexander to arms through the use of the Phrygian mode and Pythagoras calming a youth frenzied by the same mode by changing to a spondaic melody. He even neglects Plato's and Aristotle's view on the moral effects of music, a subject of great interest to Valgulio, as was the correspondence between the harmony of the heavenly spheres and the musical rhythms of the soul, mentioned in passing in para. 8 of the present letter.

The letter could not have been written before late 1536, because the author refers to an event that took place in the autumn of that year (see n. 11).

B.J.B.

on music, preserved in a manuscript containing an Italian translation of Valgulio's Proem, was incorporated in part by Del Lago in no. 93. See no. 93 n. 3, and Palisca, *Humanism*, pp. 342-5. It is unlikely that Nardo is the author of the present letter: he seems to have had a deeper understanding of the technical aspects of music.

## **98** (J67). Fo. 187^v Bernardino da Pavia to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. (autograph)¹

187^v Reverendo Messer Pre Zanetto.

Heri fussimo Messer Adriano et io per invitarvi ad essere questa mattina insieme cum lo ambassatore nostro d'Ingliterra a disinare, dove se haverà da parlare alcune cose de musicha, et per questo lo ambassadore desidera il iuditio vostro insieme cum Messer Adriano. Sareti anchor contento portare cum voi la vostra divisione de tuti tre li generi, perché sopra quella se haverà a fare la diffinitione. Trovareti qua alcuni auctori quali hanno scritto de musicha, dico antiqui che non credo V.R. li habii ancora maii visti. Altro non accadde, se non ch'io son sempre alli comandi vostri. Vi aspetteremo a disinare.

Di V.R. servitore

Bernardino da Pavia

Yesterday Messer Adriano [Willaert] and I visited you to invite you to come this morning to our English ambassador for lunch. We shall have some musical problems to talk about. The ambassador is interested in hearing your and Messer Adriano's opinions. Please bring your division of the three genera, which are to be defined. At his home you'll find some [books by] ancient authors on music which I'm sure you have never seen.

### COMMENTARY

The English ambassador to Venice, not further identified in the present letter, is Giambattista Casali, a native Bolognese and an acquaintance of Spataro's. In his letter to Aaron of autumn 1532 (no. 46), Spataro describes a gathering at the home of the ambassador in which the latter, alluding to the marvellous effects of ancient Greek music, raised the question whether music today could be composed in other genera than the usual diatonic genus.²

Bernardino's letter carries no date. Spataro's letter can with great probability be placed in the autumn of 1532, and at any rate not later than April 1535, when Casali left Venice. It is very likely that Henry VIII's Venetian ambassador made

¹ This letter was first transcribed, translated, and commented on by Lowinsky in 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo" Re-examined', p. 13 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 686, as evidence for the interest that laymen took in the 'burning musical questions' of the time.

² For further on Casali's interest in ancient music, see Ch. 7 and the Biographical Dictionary.

both *démarches* to inquire about the ancient Greek genera at approximately the same time, so that we may date the present letter to autumn 1532. If so, there is no denying the ambassador's zeal and solicitude in obtaining the most up-to-date information available in Italy at that time.

E.E.L.

# C. Pietro Aaron's Correspondence with Other Musicians

99 (J69). Fos. 189^r-191^v Anonymous to [Pietro Aaron?], n.d. [before 1523] (copy in Aaron's hand)

189^r Reverende pater, uti frater amantissime, etc.

1. Havendo io diligentemente esaminato una epistola di V.R. a me mandata, non posso trovar causa la quale mi contradisca a non satisfare allo appetito et desiderio di quella, et questo solo procede per lo inmenso amore portato a V.R. Pertanto quantunque che al presente a me incommodo assai mi sia, non mancherò, secondo la solita mia di voi amichevole benivolentia, con quella migliore et breve che a me sarà possibile, tal domanda dichiarire.¹

2. Dico adunque che essendo lo instrumento organico secondo il comune ordine diviso in quantità maggiore di voci che non dimostra la ordinata nostra mano, è stato necessario mettere ventinove tasti bianchi così dal universale uso chiamati, cioè voce naturale, et accidentali 18, chiamati tasti negri. Non per altro harete a sapere, solamente per la conmodità et facilità degli sonatori, gli quali possino meglio esercitarsi agli intenti loro, perché non si trovando altro che le venti chorde della man nostra, facilmente, et senza dubbio alcuno, sarebbono^d impediti et disturbati.

3. Per la qual cosa dal primo tasto, chiamato  $\Gamma$  *ut* secondo l'ordine nostro della mano, è^b collocato di sotto un'altro distante dal sopradetto  $\Gamma$ la quantità di uno tuono, nel qual luogo gli sarà ditto et pronuntiato *fa*, per conrispondere alla chorda di F *fa ut* primo, lontano per uno diapason, o vero ottava. Ma da  $\Gamma$  *ut*, detto prima chorda nostra, a proslambanómenos greco, chiamato A *re*, è similmente uno intervallo de un tuono. Così sarà da A *re* a  $\models$  *mi*, dagli greci detto hypáte hypatôn. Sequitando dal  $\models$  *mi* al C *fa ut*, detto parhypáte hypatôn, non sarà tuono ma un simituono minore. Hora che fra A *re* et  $\models$  *mi* appare un tasto negro, sappi che quella voce è sopra di detto A *re* la quantità del semituono minore, et da  $\models$  *mi* la quantità del semituono maggiore, dagli greci chiamato apotome, come

^a MS: sarebboni. ^b MS: et.

¹ Del Lago appropriated this opening paragraph, with minor changes, in his fictitious letter to Giovanni da Legge of 13 May 1523; see no. 73.

chiaramente si vede per la quantità apparente fra hypáte hypatôn a parhypáte mesôn, chiamati da noi atual mi et F fa ut, diminuta del ditto semituono maggiore. Et per tale reintegratione è stato di bisogno ordinare quella voce o ver tasto negro, la quale quinta viene suave et grata allo udito.

4. Da C fa ut a D sol re, detti parhypáte hypatôn et licanòs hypatôn, sarà uno spatio del tuono, fra gli quali si vede il tasto negro in mezzo, onde in questo luogo sarà el semituono maggiore da C fa ut al tasto detto negro, et seguitando al bianco, qual è D sol re, sarà minore. Questo appare da A re et C fa ut, essendo terza minore. Et bisognandola acrescere alla perfettione o quantità della maggiore, gli mancherà un semituono maggiore, qual sarà 189^v quella distantia che è da C fa ut al tasto negro. Dal detto D sol re al' tasto negro cade un semituono un poco più maggiore del suo bisogno,² per il quale non si può aiutare la terza minore la qual cade da a mi a D sol re, come in tutti gli altri tuoni divisi si cognosce. Volendo adunque in questo luogo fare che ditta terza sia maggiore, bisogna che quel tal semituono, o tasto negro di sopra della positione o chorda D sol re, sia alguanto sbassata, et sbassandosi, vengono guaste le quinte et ottave conrispondenti al detto tasto negro, cosa inconveniente et di grandissima confusione, et molto peggio che prima non era. Questo inconveniente solamente si truova tra D sol re et E la mi et nelle ottave et quintedecime, perché sempre mai l'acuto et sopracuto conrispondono al grave. Nascono questi inconvenienti per cagione degli organisti, gli quali più attendono al commodo del C fa ut per la terza minore che il a mi della maggiore, per essere da loro questa positione poco exercitata. Et per tal cosa manca che quella terza minore non si può far maggiore, se non si tagliassi il tasto di sopra detto negro, il quale farebbe che una parte di esso sarebbe più bassa che la prima, et in questo modo sarebbe aiutata di quel semituono maggiore che a lei manca.

5. Et passando più oltre col tasto negro alla chorda di E *la mi*, troverrai similmente el semituono maggiore, il quale dà la perfettione alla quinta dimostrante dal ditto E *la mi* alla chorda di b *fa* acuto. Da E *la mi* et F *fa ut*, ovvoi dire hypáte mesôn a parhypáte mesôn, naturalmente cade el semituono minore. Ma da parhypáte mesôn a lichanòs mesôn, nominati F *fa ut* et G *sol re ut*, il tuono si cognosce, et diviso in mezzo con il tasto

negro, venirà da esso F fa *ut* la quantità del semituono maggiore per cagione della sesta minore, la quale nasce da A *re* et F *fa ut* quando anderai alla sua ottava. Ma da esso tasto negro al bianco di G *sol re ut* tu troverrai el simituono minore.

6. Da G sol re ut ad A la mi re, chiamato mése, cade un tuono naturale, nella qual divisione appare il tasto negro, dal qual tasto negro, venendo in giuso alla chorda di G sol re ut, nasce il simituono maggiore per quella sesta minore di  $\natural$  mi a G sol re ut, la quale per cagione del ditto tasto negro diventa maggiore. Et discorrendo dal tasto negro alla chorda del sopradetto A *la mi re*, sarà apunto el semituono minore, come facilmente si vede dicendo ut in E *la mi* grave, et il re al quarto tasto negro, la voce mi al quinto, che son dui tuoni, et el semituono minore da esso ditto tasto negro 190[°] quinto al seguente bianco, quale è A *la mi re*, la qual | compositione genera un dià tessáron.

7. Da A *la mi re* a trite synemenon, ditto  $\ddagger$  *mi* acuto,³ cade un tuono, et diviso sarà da ditto A la mi re al tasto negro un semituono minore, et seguitando al bianco il maggiore, come chiaramente tutti gli musichi dimostrano, massimamente quando delle mutationi parlono. Da 🛱 mi acuto a trite diezeugmenôn, chiamato C sol fa ut, cade il minore semituono, negli quali intervalli non è mezzo alcuno. Da C sol fa ut a paranéte diezeugmenon, detto D la sol re, cade un tuono, diviso dal tasto negro, dal qual tasto negro al C sol fa ut preditto è una distanza d'un semituono maggiore. Et seguitando da esso tasto negro al seguente bianco è il semituono minore, et questo per cagione della sesta minore, formata da E la mi a C sol fa ut. Volendo adunque farla maggiore, è di bisogno toccare il sopraditto tasto negro, perché formando il diatessaron terzo, non troverrai nell'ultimo intervallo altro che un semituono minore, dicendo ut in A la mi re, re in bfatmi, mi al settimo tasto negro, qual son dui tuoni, et il semituono per consequente sarà dal settimo tasto negro al bianco, che è D la sol re.

8. Da D *la sol re* a néte diezeugmenôn, chiamato E *la mi*, è un natural tuono diviso dal semituono negro, il qual sarà distante quanto fu quello che da  $\natural$  *mi* et D *sol re* fu dichiarato. Da E *la mi* a trite hyperboleôn, detto F *fa ut*, cade un semituono minore. Da F *fa ut* a paranete hyperboleon, chiamato G *sol re ut* secondo, similmente un tuono, et in mezzo il tasto negro, il quale è distante da F *fa ut* un semituono maggiore. Essendo adunque il semituono maggiore in detto luogo, resta il minore al sequente bianco, chiamato G *sol re ut*. Da G *sol re ut* a nete hyperboleôn, detto A *la mi re*, cade un tuono, diviso dal tasto negro, il quale è distante per uno semituono maggiore, lo qual augumenta la sesta cadente da  $\natural$  *mi* acuto a G

^c MS: et.

² Up to this point, the description of the keyboard has been in strictly Pythagorean terms. But in labelling the interval D-Eb as 'a semitone somewhat larger than usual', but Eb-E a major semitone, the author is describing a tempered interval. This becomes clear when he says that in order to play a D# it would be necessary to split the key and *lower* part of it; therefore the interval D-Eb must be greater than a minor semitone. In this case, the 'wolf fifth' must fall between G# and Eb.

 $^{^3}$  The author has confused the conjunct and disjunct tetrachords: B mi is paramese, B fa is trite synemmenon.

sol re ut secondo. Segue adunque che il semituono minore sarà da A la mi re al tasto negro di sopra ordinato. Da A la mi re a atua mi sopra acuto cade naturalmente un tuono, nel qual si vede diviso dal tasto negro, il quale è di sopra ad A la mi re la quantità del semituon minore, et seguendo all'altro tasto bianco il maggiore.

9. Seguendo più oltre alla chorda di C sol fa, alla^d chorda di D la sol similmente è un tuono, et da ditto C sol fa al suo seguente tasto negro un semituono maggiore, et seguitando el minore. Da D la sol ad E la, ultima^e positione, cade un tuono, et da ditto D la sol al tasto negro è la quantità del semituono dinanzi detto cadente tra lichanòs hypatôn ad hypate mesôn, et da paraneté diezeugmenon a nete diezeugmenôn. Et da esso tasto negro ad E la il maggior semituono nasce, et tal positione si può intendere quella che nella^f consonantia diapason risponde, quale è E la mi replicato, perché passando sopra di E la, bisogna replicare sempre l'ordine medesimo di 190[°] sotto di mostrato, la qual consideratione sarà intesa per il medesimo ordine di sopra dimostrato, et secondo che dinanzi dette hanno havuto ordine, così le chorde aggiunte saranno conrispondenti alle^g parti acute et gravi.

10. Et perché forse a vostra reverenda Paternità sarà grato intendere anchora quanta^b distantia sia da tasto negro a negro, torrò volentieri la faticha acciò che quella habbi notitia et intelligentia di tutto lo instrumento, et così dirò. Dal primo tasto negro al secondo seguente è la distantia di un tuono et semituono maggiore, gli quali congiunti insieme generano la compositione d'un semidittono et comma, perché da esso semituono negro al sequente resta in mezzo il semituono minore, come dal terzo al quarto, sesto et settimo, ottavo et nono, undecimo et duodecimo, terzodecimo et quartodecimo, sestodecimo et decimosettimo quel medesimo intervallo troverrai.

11. Da poi seguitando dal secondo al terzo ne resulta un tuono alquanto maggiore di sua natura, dal terzo al quarto un semidittono quasi superfluo, et dal quarto al quinto un tuono. Da quinto al sesto dui semituoni minori, dal sesto al settimo un tuono et semituono maggiore, dal settimo allo ottavo un tuono alquanto maggiore. Ma dallo ottavo al nono è una quantità di trihemituono. Dal nono al decimo un semituon maggiore et minore, dal decimo allo undecimo duoi semituoni minori, dal undecimo al duodecimo un tuono et semituon maggiore. Dal duodecimo et terzodecimo è quella distantia qual fu tra 'l settimo et ottavo. Dal terzodecimo al quartodecimo tre semituoni, sì come fu infra l'ottavo et nono tasto. Dal quartodecimo al quintodecimo nasce un tuono, et dal

^d MS: allo. ^e MS: ultimo. ^f MS: nello. ^g MS: alla. ^b MS: quanto. quintodecimo al decimosesto sono dui semituoni minori, dal sestodecimo al decimosettimo un tuono et semituono maggiore, dal decimosettimo al decimoottavo un tuono alquanto maggiore.

12. Della qual comparatione, reverendo padre mio, poca suavità et harmonia si cognosce, excetto che dal secondo et quinto, ne' quali si sente la consonanza dià pénte, et così dal terzo et sesto, quarto et settimo, et similmente dal settimo et decimo. Dal primo al sesto, et dal secondo al settimo un dià pasôn nasce, et el medesimo dal terzo allo ottavo, et dal quarto al nono, da l'ottavo al undecimo la quinta, così anchora dal nono al duodecimo. Ma dallo ottavo et terzodecimo una ottava, come si vede dal nono al quartodecimo. Similmente dal decimo et quintodecimo la quinta harai, come dal]⁴ terzodecimo al decimosesto. Dal duodecimo et decimo-191^t settimo | el dià pasôn, come dal terzodecimo et ultimo si comprehende, dal quartodecimo et decimosettimo la quinta, et concludendo anchora dal quintodecimo al ultimo.⁵

13. Onde, reverendo padre honorando, se in questa presente mia dichiaratione non havessi satisfatto a quella, mi duole assai, et domandone perdono. Io mi sono affaticato con quel miglior modo che a me è stato capace el mio piccolo ingegno. Pigliarò nuova fatica in demostrarvi il modo del participare le voci secondo che si richiede in tali instrumenti. Dirò adunque così.

14. Da poi che sarà intonato la chorda di C fa ut in tuo beneplacito, piglierai la ottava sopra di esso C fa ut, et fa che sempre sia bene unita, perché come dice Aristotile, 'nichil datur ultra perfectum, neque diminuitur.'⁶ Et seguitando, piglierai la terza di sopra, quale è E *la mi*, et fa che sia giusta terza maggiore, et advertisci che ditta terza sia bene concordante et sonora. Da poi unisci la quinta in mezzo, la quale è G sol re ut. Nota che ditta quinta vuole essere un poco scarsa et spuntata. Et seguitando a l'altra quinta di sopra, qual sarà nella chorda detta D *la sol re*, a quella medesima natura come è stato la prima. Da poi achorda D sol re, ottava di detto D *la sol re*, et seguitando, piglia la sua quinta sopra di D sol re, qual sarà A *la mi* re, [la qual bisogna mancare tanto da E *la mi*, quanto da D sol re, cioè che sia tanto equale da una quanto da l'altra],⁷ le qual quinte in questo accordo non si uniscono al suo perfetto, massimamente allo extremo superiore, come sono le quinte di sopra a C fa ut, D sol re, et E *la mi*. Considerando che el C sol fa ut è unito giusto, bisogna che la quinta sua inferiore, quale è

⁴ Aaron's eye must have skipped from one *come dal* to the next. We have supplied the missing words from his *Toscanello* (1529), Book II, ch. 40, fo. M4^t.

⁵ The last interval named [g#''-eb''] is not a perfect fifth in the Pythagorean tuning system, much less in mean-tone, if the wolf falls here (see n. 2 above).

⁶ Cf. e.g. Aristotle Metaphysics 5. 16 (1021^b12-13).

⁷ The missing words have been supplied from the *Toscanello*, fo. M4^{*}.

F fa ut, sia accordata allo opposito delle altre di sopra dette, cioè che siano unite al possibile, et sopra avanzino alquanto la perfettione, onde per tal participatione torna giusta et vera unione, et di qua nasce che tutte le terze et seste restono spuntate et diminute. Et così passando più inanzi, accorderai el semituono di bfa |mi sotto di F fa ut, et quello di E la mi sotto bfa |mi, el quale è quinta, con quel medesimo ordine et modo che accordasti F fa ut con C sol fa ut. Et ultimamente advertirai di concordare gli semituoni maggiori fra le sue terze, come è el semituono di C fa ut, toccando A re insieme con E la mi, et medesimamente la terza in mezzo di D sol re et A la mi re con il semituono di F fa ut con quel modo che fu la passata. Seguitando insino al fine del tuo instrumento, tutte le ottave accorderai, della qual consideratione ne resulta la vera participatione delle voci.

^{191^v} 15. Io, reverendo padre honorando, non | mi estenderò in altro, salvo che sempre mi offero a vostraⁱ reverenda Paternità affaticarmi con tutto il cuore in qualunque bisogno sarà possibile a lingua humana esplicare. Raccomandomi adunque alla sua gratia buona.

Vale, etc.

1. Having diligently perused your letter, I see no reason not to respond, given my great affection for you. Though it is not very convenient now, I shall do my best to answer your question.¹

2. Because the ordinary organ has more notes than those found on the [Guidonian] hand, it was necessary to place twenty-nine white or natural keys and eighteen accidental or black keys on it—this for the convenience of organists, who certainly would be hampered by having only the twenty notes of the hand.

3. Beneath the first key, called gamma *ut* on our hand, is placed another a tone below, called fa, which corresponds with f an octave higher. From gamma *ut* to proslambanomenos or A is also a tone, and likewise from Ato B, called hypate hypaton by the Greeks. From B to c, called parhypate hypaton, is a minor semitone. The black key that appears between A and B is a minor semitone above A and a major semitone, called apotome, below B. This can be seen by the interval  $B \not\models$  to f, which is diminished by a major semitone; the black key makes the interval of a fifth sweet.

4. From c to d, parhypate hypaton and lichanos hypaton, is a tone. The black key in the middle is a major semitone from c and a minor semitone from d. To increase the minor third A-c to the major third, it is necessary  $\frac{i}{MS}$ ; vostro.

to add a major semitone, the distance between c and the black key. From d to the [next] black key is a semitone somewhat larger than usual,² which prevents making the minor third  $B \natural -d$  major, as you can do with all the other divided notes. To achieve it, you would have to lower the black key a little, but this would spoil all the fifths and octaves corresponding to that key and you would be worse off than before. This problem only occurs between D and E, in all octaves. The reason is that organists use Eb far more than D $\sharp$ . The problem could only be solved by splitting the black key and lowering one part.

5. From the black key to e is a major semitone, forming a perfect fifth with bb above. From e to f, or hypate meson to parhypate meson, falls a minor semitone. But from f to g, parhypate meson to lichanos meson, is a tone divided by a black key, providing a major semitone for the minor sixth from A to f when going to the octave. From the black key to g is a minor semitone.

6. From g to a, called mese, is a whole tone divided by a black key forming a major semitone to increase the minor sixth between b and g. From that key to a is a minor semitone, as you can see by singing ut on e, reon the fourth black key, mi on the fifth, equalling two whole tones, and a minor semitone to a, composing a fourth.

7. From *a* to trite synemmenon, called b mi,³ is a tone divided by a black key a minor semitone from *a* followed by a major semitone to *b*, which all musicians are familiar with, especially when speaking of mutations. From *b* to trite diezeugmenon or *c'* is a minor semitone, which is not divided. From *c'* to *d'*, paranete diezeugmenon, is a tone divided by a black key a major semitone from *c'* and a minor semitone from *d'* for the sake of raising the minor sixth e-c'. If you form the third diatessaron on *a*, singing *mi* on the seventh black key, you will find a minor semitone from there to *d'*.

8. From d' to nete diezeugmenon, called e', is a natural tone divided by a black semitone as in the lower octave. From e' to trite hyperboleon, f', is a minor semitone. From f' to paranete hyperboleon, g', is also a tone divided by a black key a major semitone from f', leaving a minor semitone to g'. From g' to nete hyperboleon, a', is a tone divided by a black key a major semitone above g' raising the sixth b'-g', and a minor semitone to a'. From a' to b' is a tone divided by a black key a minor semitone above a' and a major semitone from b'.

9. From c'' to d'' is a tone, and from c'' to the following black key is a major semitone followed by a minor one. From d'' to e'', the last position, is a tone divided by a black key just as in the lower octaves. From this black key to e'' is a major semitone. The notes above e'' correspond to those an octave below, as demonstrated earlier.

10. Perhaps you'd like to know the distances between the black keys. From the first to the second  $[B \not -c \#]$  is a tone plus a major semitone, equivalent to a semiditone plus comma, because between this black semitone and the next the minor semitone is in the middle  $[B \not = -c]$ , just as between the third and fourth, sixth and seventh, eighth and ninth, eleventh and twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth, and sixteenth and seventeenth black keys.

11. From the second to the third  $[c \ddagger -eb]$  is a tone somewhat larger than usual, from the third to the fourth  $\left[e_{p}-f^{\sharp}\right]$  a semiditone slightly augmented, from the fourth to the fifth [f # -g #] a tone. From the fifth to the sixth [g#-bb] two minor semitones, from the sixth to the seventh [bb-c#'] a tone and major semitone, from the seventh to the eighth [c #' - eb'] a somewhat augmented tone. From the eighth to the ninth [eb'-f#'] is a trihemitone, from the ninth to the tenth [f#'-g#'] a major and minor semitone, from the tenth to the eleventh  $\left[g^{\pm \prime}-bb^{\prime}\right]$  two minor semitones, from the eleventh to the twelfth [bb'-c#''] a tone and major semitone. From the twelfth to the thirteenth [c #'' - eb''] is the same as between the seventh and the eighth. From the thirteenth to the fourteenth [eb''-f#''] three semitones, as between the eighth and ninth keys. From the fourteenth to the fifteenth [f #'' - g #''] is a tone, and from the fifteenth to the sixteenth [g #'' - b b''] two minor semitones, from the sixteenth to the seventeenth [bb'' - c #'''] a tone and major semitone, from the seventeenth to the eighteenth [c #''' - e b'''] a somewhat augmented tone.

12. From these relations little harmony is apparent except for the fifths between the second and fifth, third and sixth, fourth and seventh, and seventh and tenth keys. There is an octave between the first and sixth, second and seventh, third and eighth, fourth and ninth, and a fifth between the eighth and eleventh and the ninth and twelfth, an octave between the eighth and thirteenth and the ninth and fourteenth, tenth and fifteenth, [eleventh and sixteenth, a fifth between the twelfth and fifteenth and the]⁴ thirteenth and sixteenth, an octave between the twelfth and seventeenth, thirteenth and last, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth a fifth, and also from the fifteenth to the last.⁵

13. If this present explanation does not satisfy you, I am sorry. I did the best that my poor intellect allows. Now I shall show you how to temper (*participare*) the keys.

14. Tune c as you wish, then join the upper octave as closely as possible, for as Aristotle says, 'Nothing is added to or taken away from a perfect quantity.'⁶ Then take the third above, e, and make it a just third, very concordant and sonorous. Then add the fifth in the middle, g. The fifth should be a little narrow. Then tune the fifth above, d', like the first one. Next tune d an octave below, then a, [which should be equidistant

between e' and  $d]^7$ . These fifths should not be quite as perfect, especially the upper note, as those above c, d, and e. Considering that c' is precisely tuned, its lower fifth, f, must be tuned the opposite of the others, that is, slightly larger than perfect. This tuning results in a true union, and hence the thirds and sixths are all narrowed. Continuing, tune the semitone b and the e a fifth below it just as you did f and c'. Lastly, tune all the major semitones between their thirds, e.g. c# by playing A and e, and f# by playing d and a. Then tune all the remaining octaves, which results in a true temperament.

15. I should be delighted if you called on me in any need whatever.

#### COMMENTARY

The present letter does not carry the name of the author or the addressee. It is not an original but a copy, in Pietro Aaron's hand. Jeppesen believed it to be written by an organist (he suggests Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni) and addressed to Del Lago.⁸ He was not aware that the letter forms the basis of two chapters in Aaron's *Toscanello*: Book II, ch. 40, 'Divisione del monachordo per tuoni, et semituoni naturali, et accidentali', and ch. 41, 'De la participatione et modo d'acordare l'instrumento'. Here Aaron introduced the material as an afterthought ('Pervenuto al fine de la promessa opera . . . son stato assaltato da nuovo pensiero'), and indeed it occupies a separate gathering at the end of Book II. The wording in the printed version has been somewhat revised and the opening and closing paragraphs of the letter omitted. Two of the errors in the present letter slipped through into the printed edition,⁹ but the missing words in paras. 12 and 14 were included.¹⁰

Peter Bergquist recognized the relationship between the treatise and the letter, which he calls a 'condensation', suggesting that 'it is probably a copy of a letter he [Aaron] sent in response to a query'; he notes the similarity in style to Aaron's letters to Gazio.¹¹ Bergquist also thought it possible that Aaron had expanded the letter for the *Toscanello*. The latter would seem more logical, for if the material had been printed, Aaron could have referred the addressee to his treatise. Bergquist raised the possibility that 'the letter was addressed *to* Aaron and that someone else first described a meantone temperament', but in the absence of evidence to support this notion, he decided 'to leave the credit with Aaron'.

We should like to suggest that the present letter is a copy made by Aaron of a letter sent to him by an organist, possibly Cavazzoni or Giovanni da Legge, which he revised and included in his *Toscanello* in 1523. This hypothesis rests on the following foundation: Aaron was not an organist himself, as far as we know,

⁸ 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 6.

⁹ See nn. 3 and 5.

¹⁰ See nn. 4 and 7.

¹¹ Bergquist, 'Theoretical Writings of Pietro Aaron', p. 116 n. 60.

although he did possess a harpsichord.¹² Prior to 1523 he seems not to have had a clear idea of the distinction between flats and sharps in the matter of tuning. In his *De institutione harmonica* of 1516, Book III, ch. 16, he tried to solve the problem why both Bb and F# can perfect the diminished fifth B#-F, although, he says, a different semitone is added in each case, since he believed that the tone was always divided with the major semitone above, the minor semitone below.¹³ He suggested two reasons: (1) that the major and minor semitone are separated only by a comma, the ninth part of a tone, which is so small that 'even if it is lacking, it engenders no dissonance that would give offence to the ears',¹⁴ and (2) 'that the pitches of a monochord and similar instruments are so tempered by musicians skilled in that art that neither thirds, fifths, nor sixths are stretched to their full complement; they take away a minute indefinable amount so that those minor semitones are assisted in such a temperament to the degree that they sound concordant in polyphony and do not offend the ears'.¹⁵

The first reason shows Aaron on shaky ground: he does not seem to recognize that the tone can be divided either way, and in the case of F# the major semitone is beneath the minor semitone. The second reason is irrelevant: although temperament is indeed a necessary compromise in order to play a number of different fifths in a polyphonic composition, the intervals  $B_{D}$ -F and  $B_{H}$ -F# are perfect fifths on the untempered scale. Aaron's remarks about temperament in the *De institutione harmonica* show that he is acquainted with the practice, but that he lacks a precise idea how it is done. Something must have happened between 1516 and 1523. An errata-sheet inserted into some copies of the *De institutione harmonica* reveals that Aaron did indeed receive a critique of his treatise after publication (he alludes to statements that 'seemed somewhat obscure to certain people', one of whom, as we know from another source, was Gafurio; see Ch. 4). In it Aaron modifies his statement concerning the division of the tone, saying that occasionally it is necessary to do the opposite and place the minor semitone above the major.¹⁶ In his letter to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni of 1 August 1517, Spataro

¹² See no. 13, para. 3, and no. 30, para. 5, where Spataro ascribes Aaron's confusion of D $\mathfrak{b}$  with C $\sharp$  to the lack of D $\mathfrak{b}$  'nel vostro monochordo'.

¹³ 'Et ex communi quidem sententia maius semitonium superiorem locum tenet. Sed ex iis quae supra diximus: videri potuit inferiorem illi locum esse tribuendum. . . . Attamen cum necessarium sit semitonium maius quod solum quidem illam reddere plenam debet, unum tantum habere locum, et quidem (uti omnes asserunt) superiorem, quomodo et qua ratione fit, ut etiam per semitonium minus, quod inferiori parte toni positum est, illa perfici videatur?' (*De institutione harmonica*, fo. 42^{r-v}).

¹⁴ '... inter semitonium maius et minus ea tantum differentia est, quod semitonium maius uno tantum commate semitonium minus superat. Comma vero (ut iam monstravimus) minima est quedam toni particula, ut pote nona: Nam tonus (ut dictum est) in novem commata dividitur ... etiam si absit, nullam dissonantiam ingeneret quae aureis offendat' (ibid., fo.  $42^{\circ}$ ). The tone, in Pythagorean tuning, is not divided into nine commas; see nos. 102-3 below for a more correct interpretation.

¹⁵ 'Monochordi ac talium instrumentorum voces a peritis artis illius sic temperantur, ut neque tertias, neque quintas, neque sextas ad summum vocis intendat, et minimum nescio quid adimant, sic quidem, ut semitonia illa minora tali temperamento in tantum iuventur, ut in concentu concordent, ac nihil aures offendant' (ibid., fos.  $42^{v}-43^{v}$ ).

¹⁶ 'Verum hoc in loco sic nostram sententiam accipi volumus: ut non semper id verum sit: Namque aliquando contrarium fiet vel necessitate quadam: vel dividentis arbitrio: quemadmo-

mentions errors in the treatise and offers to send Cavazzoni the corrections if they are printed in time (see no. 2, para. 2). Spataro, in fact, had read the treatise before publication and suggested improvements; he was also the recipient of Gafurio's critique of the treatise. Now Spataro was fully cognizant of the division of the tone, but he was not an organist (in one letter he admits that he plays no instrument-see no. 14, para. 4). Perhaps he, or Gafurio, suggested to Aaron that he should consult an organist in order to obtain a more precise understanding of the temperament of keyboard instruments. The present letter seems to be an answer to just such a query: not only does it make clear that a sharp divides the tone with the major semitone beneath the minor semitone, it explains in detail how to temper a keyboard instrument, although the precise amount to subtract or add is still stated in approximate terms ('un poco scarsa et spuntata'; 'non si uniscono al suo perfetto') and the meaning of 'giusta' cannot be pinpointed.¹⁷ In a number of respects this letter coincides with remarks on keyboard intonation made by Gafurio: the four-octave range, the Greek note-names,¹⁸ the characterization of fifths as 'a little narrow', and especially the term 'participare' for 'temper'.¹⁹ However, it is unlikely that Gafurio is the author of the letter. It seems the work of a purely practical organist and not a theorist; otherwise the description of the temperament would have been more exact. Aaron was content to incorporate it nearly verbatim, either because he had no expertise to add or, more likely, because it suited the practical nature of his Toscanello.

If Aaron included in his treatise, with few modifications, the work of another person without crediting him, it would not be the only example of this practice. In his *Toscanello* of 1523, Aaron incorporated passages from a letter Spataro had sent him,²⁰ and in the second edition of 1529 he drew on another letter.²¹ Spataro evidently had no objection to this, as we learn from an exchange of letters in 1531. Spataro sent Aaron a critique of ch. 26 of the *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni* (1525) concerning the 'six syllables found on each position of the hand', pointing out that Aaron had used only flats, whereas sharps were necessary in order to find all thirty positions. Spataro offered to send Aaron a complete

dum dicimus de illis tonis: quae semiton[i]um habent cantabile in acutum dividitur enim cum semitonio minore in grave: maius vero in acutum. De aliis vero erit contratium.' The unnumbered leaves are included in the facsimile edn. published by Broude Bros. (New York, 1976).

¹⁷ It is unlikely that just intonation is meant (a subject not discussed in the Correspondence; but see pp. 67-8). Mark Lindley contests the view that Aaron's tuning system results in 'regular  $\frac{1}{4}$ -comma meantone temperament', pointing to the vagueness of the term 'giusto' and the 'problematical remarks about thirds and sixths'; see 'Early 16th-Century Keyboard Temperaments', *Musica disciplina* 28 (1974), 129-51, esp. 139-44, including a translation of the chapter on tuning from the *Toscanello*.

¹⁸ Aaron had not used Greek note-names in his *De institutione harmonica*, but he did in the *Toscanello*, including the accents. This suggests that Aaron may have received a letter from a critic in which the Greek note-names are used as a matter of course. It is unlikely that it was the letter from Gafurio, who did not use the accents, but it may have been an earlier communication from the author of the present letter.

¹⁹ Practica musicae, fo. dd1^v (trans. Miller, p. 125).

²⁰ See no. 4 nn. 5-8.

²¹ See no. 12 nn. 8, 10, and 16.

exposition of the matter, which he could publish under his own name.²² The little treatise came out later in 1531 with no reference to Spataro (see the Commentary on no. 34).

B.J.B.

²² See no. 31, para. 3.

# 100 (J85). Fo. 218^{r-v1}

Pietro Aaron to Paulo de Laurino, 29 April 1525 (autograph)²

218^v Al reverendo padre Frate Paulo napolitano come fratello amantissimo, etc.

^{218^r} I. Gli dubbii gli quali V.P. a me ha domandati, brevemente a quella gli mando.

2. Et prima intenderete essere cinque figure o vero note essentiale, cioè massima, longa, breve, semibreve et minima, delle quali si genera quello che dicemo modo, tempo et prolatione, el qual modo è dato alla figura massima et longa, la breve al tempo, et la semibreve alla prolatione, delle qual note una è prima et principale, la quale è la breve, detto tempo, del qual tempo due volte sumpto fa el modo minore imperfetto, et tre volte sumpto genera el modo minore perfetto, o siano le breve di tre semibreve o due, come sarà quando la longa valerà due breve perfette o vero imperfette, et anchora tre breve o due, perfette et imperfette. El modo maggiore perfetto et imperfetto è generato dalla figura longa, perché sumto tre longhe nella figura massima, o siano degli tempi perfetti o imperfetti, è domandato modo maggiore perfetto. Ma quando in essa massima sono la valuta di due longhe perfette o imperfette si chiama alhora modo maggiore imperfetto. El qual modo si diffinisce essere una regola data et ordinata alla figura massima e longa. Tempo è quello intervallo che passa nella positione et elevatione di una breve cantando per el presente segno ¢ detto una battuta. Tempo anchora è detto quando una semibreve è pronuntiata sotto al seguente segno O, cioè che è mandata in una battuta sola di due minime. La prolatione nasce dal tempo diviso in parte minime, cioè semibreve. Quando adunque la semibreve valerà 3 minime, diremo essere prolatione perfetta o vero maggiore, ma quando valerà la semibreve due minime, diremo prolatione imperfetta o vero minore, la qual si diffinisce essere una figura semibreve constituente 3 minime o veramente due.

3. Circa la cognitione di tutti li tuoni di canto figurato, non dico altro salvo che V.P. aspetterà el trattato di questo³ che subito si stamperà, del

¹ A copy of this letter (lacking para. 3 to the end) is found in Paris 1110, fo. 44' (no. 17).

² It is not certain whether this is the original or a copy. Although the addressee's name is given on the back, there is no address. However, since Laurino's post was forwarded by his patron in Venice (see no. 79, para. 4), the address may not have been necessary. But if it is the original, why did it end up in Del Lago's possession? The question is complicated by the discovery that Del Lago used the present letter as a model for his letter to Paulo de Laurino dated 15 Apr. 1525 (see no. 78, Version A). Could Aaron have given the letter to Del Lago for forwarding, and could Del Lago have sent his own version to Laurino instead?

³ Aaron's Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato, published in Venice on 4 Aug. 1525.

quale senza altra fatica mia, la quale saria grande, sarete chiaro, della qual cosa potendo per V.P. altro che a voi sia in piacere, sempre sono paratissimo per quella, alla quale mi offero et racommando.

> El vostro come fratello Messer Pietro Aaron musico Fatta in Vinetia el dì 29 aprilis 1525

1. I am briefly replying to your questions.

2. There are five essential figures, maxima, long, breve, semibreve, and minim, which generate mode, *tempus*, and prolation. Mode is formed by the maxima and long, tempus by the breve, prolation by the semibreve. The breve is the principal note: doubled, it makes the imperfect minor mode; tripled, it generates the perfect minor mode, whether the breve contains two or three semibreves, just as when the long is worth two or three perfect or imperfect breves. Perfect and imperfect major mode is generated by the long: tripled, whether the tempus is perfect or imperfect, it is called perfect major mode; doubled, whether the longs are perfect or imperfect, it is called imperfect major mode. Mode is defined as a rule given to the maxima and long. Tempus is the time that passes in the singing of a breve under ¢, called a beat. Tempus also applies to the semibreve under O, with a beat of two minims. Prolation results when the tempus is divided into smaller parts, i.e. minims. When the semibreve is worth three minims, we have perfect or major prolation, when two minims, imperfect or minor prolation. Prolation is defined as a semibreve of two or three minims.

3. Regarding the modes in polyphony, please wait for the treatise on this,³ which is about to be printed; it will save me a lot of time. I am always at your command.

101 (J84). Fo. 217^{r-v} Pietro Aaron to [Lorenzo Gazio], 14 February 1534 modern style¹ (copy in Del Lago's hand)

217^r Copia

#### Reverende pater."

1. Cerca el quesito da V.P. fattomi, cioè dove diceti: 'Domando a V.E. qual sia quella proportione la quale manca agli otto commi per arivare al tono, o vero che manca al tono per arivare agli novi commi', a mi pare essere difficilissimo da risolvere et quasi existimato impossibile. Non dico perhò che quello che domanda V.P. non si potessi trovare, ma dico quando fussi trovato el saria in numeri tanti grandi che non si potrebbono relevare, et anchora le loro proportioni non potriano essere nominate, come dimostra Boetio nel capitolo 12 del 3º libro della sua Musica cerca questi termini,² nelli quali insieme comparati cade el comma ut hic 531441 ad 524288. Onde che 'l spatio preditto del comma ridutto al genere superparticolare cade in maggior proportione di 75 ad 74 et in minore di 74 ad 73, et perché sono difficili da conducerli, sono da Boetio senza altra terminatione rilasciati, dil che in maggiore dificoltà se incorrerebbe volendo affaticarsi in componere lo intervallo del tono per spatii de comma, come domanda V.P., cioè di voler vedere se intra tale extremità cade più de otto o manco di novi commi, etc. Onde essendo el quesito difficile et arduo, et quasi inresolubile, io non vorrei spendere il tempo in vano, perché cognosco che tal vostro quesito nasce dal capitolo 15 del 3º libro della Musica di Boetio, dove dice che el spatio del minor semitonio piglia più de tri commi, et manco di quatro, et che el maggiore coglie più de quatro et manco de cinque, alla quale sententia Jacobo Fabri assai contradice, perché nel cogliere insiemi gli preditti commi, insiemi si discordano, perché Boetio dice che più di tri commi et manco di quatro al semitonio minore, et più di quatro commi et manco di cinque appartiene 217^v al semitonio maggiore, onde che insiemi tolti | fanno più di otto commi, et manco di nove, delli quali dice che el tono sarà reintegrato. Ma el

" 'Uti frater amantissime etc.' has been struck out.

¹ Although the addressee is not given, comparison with the following two letters indicates that the recipient must be Lorenzo Gazio. These three letters concern the division of the tone by commas. The present letter is dated 14 Feb. 1533, the answer 'penultimate' Feb. 1534, and the reply 29 Apr. 1534. Since it is unlikely that a whole year passes between the first two letters, Aaron may have dated his letter Venetian style, in which the year begins on 1 Mar.; see A. Cappelli, *Cronologia, cronografia e calendario perpetuo* (Milan, 1930), p. 16. On the other hand, Del Lago may have misdated the letter intentionally when he copied it, with the idea of presenting it as his own in his *Epistole*, as he did with the letter that follows this one in the Vatican manuscript; see no. 100 n. 2.

² Boethius, De musica 3. 12 (ed. Friedlein, pp. 286-91).

dottissimo Jacobo dice che più di tre commi, et manco di quatro al semitonio minore, et più di quatro et manco di cinque al semitonio maggiore, onde messi insiemi faranno più di sette commi et manco di otto.³ Di qua veramente si comprende che intra loro è non poca discordia in quello più di tre et manco di quatro, et più di quatro et manco di cinque, imperò che secundo Boetio più di tre, et manco di quatro et più di quatro et manco di cinque in questa comparatione faranno più di otto commi, et manco di nove.

2. Vedendo adunque questa discordia infra questi dui sapienti, V.P. me achorderà questa cithera, et di poi si degnerà darmi adviso del suo parere con qualche dimostrationi di termini comparati, et quando cerca questo sarò chiaro, mi sforzerò dare conveniente risposta al quesito di V.P., alla quale per mille volte me ricomando, et se altro vi accade, comandatime.

In Venetia, a dì 14 febraro M.D.xxxiii [1534 modern style].

Tutto de V.P. Frate Petro Aaron

1. You ask: 'What is the proportion that is lacking between eight commas and the tone, or between the tone and nine commas?' This is very difficult, if not impossible, to answer, that is, the numbers would be huge, and yet the proportion still could not be found, as Boethius demonstrates in Book III, ch. 12 of his *Musica*.² He gives the comma as 531 441:524 288, between 75:74 and 74:73, but leaves it at that. You would get into that much more difficulty trying to work out what proportion of a comma is needed to complete the tone. The question being so difficult, I don't want to spend time on it in vain. I know it arises from Book III, ch. 15 of Boethius, where he says that the minor semitone has more than three but less than four commas and the major semitone more than four but less than five, and that Jacobus Faber Stapulensis disagrees on the sum, saying the tone is more than seven but less than eight commas,³ whereas Boethius reckons it at more than eight but less than nine.

2. In view of this discord between two such authorities, please tune this lyre and then advise me, with proportional terms, and once I have understood it I shall answer you. 102 (J53). Fo. 173^{r-v} Lorenzo Gazio to [Pietro Aaron], 27 February 1534 (copy in Aaron's hand)¹

173^r Reverende Pater, salutem, etc.

1. Ho ricevuto le vostre [no. 101] con grande appiacere et considerato ben ciò che scrive la V.R., ma nanti che più avanti vada, vi prego in visceribus Jesu Christi, che togliate le nostre parole con quella amorevolezza, che ve le porgo.

2. Circa quella particola ultima, dove me invitate a concordare la oppenione di Boetio con quella del Fabro, vi rispondo brevemente. La V.R. confessa quello che è el vero, che essi son concordi in la comma, et che in ricogliere sono discordi. Per due ragione vi provo che sono concordi. La prima sì è che togliando li suoi numeri grandi, che fanno 4 com[m]e coniunte, mettendone^a una comma dentro alla parte grave, o vero alla acuta, la qual lascio per manco fatica,² et essa grave comma divisa per medium in 2 schisma, maggior et minore, da poi esso schisma minore diviso anchora lui per meçço, manifestamente vedete el semi[tuono minore] contenere 3 comme, et più di 3 quarti della quarta comma et li duoi mezzi, sì che vedete che 2 fra 3 quarti fanno 6, delli quali 4 reintegrano la comma, et li duoi mezzi. Pertanto dico che in uno tuono accade più de otto comme et più di 3 quarti della nona comma, come vi potria mostrare quando fussimo appresso con la presente figura,³ che è pur

^a MS: mettendeno.

¹ Jeppesen ('Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 16) suggested that this letter was written to Del Lago. But a comparison with the letters of 14 Feb. 1534 (no. 101) and 29 Apr. 1534 (no. 103) shows that Aaron must be the recipient.

 2  It is unclear whether the method Gazio calls 'too much trouble' is finding the number of commas in the major semitone or reducing four commas by fractions of a comma till the ratio falls below that of the minor semitone.

³ The table was not copied. The problem of finding how many commas there are in the whole tone may be stated as that of finding how many times 531 441:524 288 must be multiplied by itself to yield 9:8; the task was beyond the power of contemporary arithmetic, which could merely state a rational number than which it was higher or lower. Faber, Elementa musicalia, Book II, prop. 35 (fo. g2^{-v}), demonstrated that the number of commas in the minor semitone was greater than 3 but less than 4; Gazio, who detects some errors in his table, attempts to find a closer approximation. His calculations have not survived; since his answer was wrong (the true figure, 8.691 812 to six places of decimals, is less, not more, than  $8\frac{3}{4}$  and the exposition, at least as we have it, is chaotic, exact reconstruction is impossible. If, after 'da poi esso schisma minore diviso anchora lui per meçço', there was originally a statement that this half-schisma should in turn be halved, and if the first appearance of 'et li duoi mezzi' is a slip for 'et mezzo', we should then have the assertion that the number of commas in the minor semitone was greater than  $3\frac{7}{2}$ ('three commas and more than three and a half quarters of the fourth comma'). This would be false (the true figure, to six places of decimals, is 3.845 906), but consistent with his result for the whole tone, which is found by doubling the figure for the minor semitone and adding 1: the whole tone would be more than (7 commas +) 6 quarter-commas plus 2 half-quarter-

³ See Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, *Elementa musicalia* (Paris, 1496), Book II, prop. 35 (fo.  $g2^{r-v}$ ): 'Semitonium minus tribus commatibus maius est vero quattuor. Unde manifestum est apotomen plura quattuor et pauciora quinque continere commata', and prop. 36 (fo.  $g2^{v}$ ): 'Tonum plura septem continere commata necesse est.' (Faber does not say that the tone contains less than eight commas.)

li numeri ricolti secondo la dottrina di esso Fabro, et ideo la V.R. non si affaticherà altrimenti circa el quesito nostro, che 'gratia Dei sum id quod sum'.⁴

3. La seconda ragione, benché vi parerà debile, sì è che in quello che esso Fabro dice, che el tuono è più di 7 et mancho di otto,⁵ l'è error del stampatore. Che 'l sia el vero, vedete li nostri numeri ricolti ut dixi. Gli vedrete discordevoli da quegli che sono stampati. Anchora troverrete errato in essi numeri la linea segnata o insieme con li sopradetti r, p. Anchora in quella  $35^a$ , troverrete errato in quello loco dove el dice *Duco d in h et c in k et d in l*, che doverriano dire 'Duco e in h et f in k et e in l',⁶ et molti altri errori che non est presentis dicere, gli quali tutti atribuisco agli stampatori. Sì che se la V.R. considererà questi errori ultimi esser vero, potrete apresso pensare el primo esser verissimo, et tunc li sopraditti sapienti si vederanno essere conformi, et de hoc satis.

4. In quella particola che dicete che el quesito nostro o ver proportione 173° nostra, allegando Bac|cheo greco, allegato dal mio reverendo Don Franchino, sia irrationale, o ver quasi irrationale, vedete se l'è a questo proposito a quello che lui parla in quello capitolo. Tutte le proportione da le multiplice et superparticulare excetto le domanda quasi irrationale, et dice del semituono el simile, el quale al suo proposito è quasi irrationale, al nostro no.⁷ Alberto di Sasonia in lo primo capitolo delle sue *Proportione* circa al mezzo dice così: *Proportio irrationalis non in discretis, sed tantum in continuis reperitur.*⁸ Che fusseno difficile da levare, servando la dottrina del Laxo, et del Saliceo,⁹ et altri, non parrebbono così difficile.

commas =  $8\frac{3}{4}$  commas. (We owe this explanation to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens, who was challenged by our inability to explain 'li duoi mezzi'.)

⁴ I Cor. 15: 10. Gazio's good opinion of himself was reinforced by Gafurio's having referred to him as 'a very acute musician' who taught Gafurio's division of the chromatic tetrachord, which does not agree with that of Faber Stapulensis; see Gafurio, *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, trans. Miller, p. 78. Gazio refers to Gafurio as 'nostro amicissimo' in no. 85, para. 3.

⁵ See no. 101 n. 3.

⁶ Faber Stapulensis, Book II, prop. 35. Gazio is right on these two points.

⁷ 'Although they [intervals with ratios other than multiple and superparticular] are commensurate with a certain common number (at least number one), because of the problem of their extraneous quality, the Greek writer Bacchius in *Introductio musices* called them irrational when you find the falser and higher sizes on the monochord forming an excessive proportion in which the successive and natural order of multiplicity is broken' (Gafurio, *De barmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, Book II, ch. 38; trans. Miller, p. 148). In fact, Bacchius was not speaking of intervals but of a duration of time longer than a short syllable but shorter than a long one. The part of Aaron's letter to which Gazio responds is missing in Del Lago's copy of no. 101.

⁸ Excellentissimi Magistri Alberti de Saxonia tractatus proportionum (Venice, 1487), fo. a1^v.

⁹ The Spanish mathematician Gaspar Lax (c.1487–1560), author of *Proportiones magistri* Gasparis Lax Aragonensis de Sarinyena and Arithmetica speculativa magistri Gasparis Lax Aragonensis de Sarinyena duodecim libris demonstrata (both printed in Paris in 1515), and Joannes Martinus Siliceus (Juan Martínez Guijarra, 1486–1557), author of Ars arithmetica in theoricen et praxim 5. Non altro a V.R., excetto che son tutto vostro et molto mi raccomando, et se ho scritto cosa che vi dispiaccia, perdonatemi.

Data in San Fortunato de Basciano,¹⁰ a di penultimo di februario 1534.

Di V.S. tutto Don Laurentio Gazio cremonese

1. I received your letter [no. 101] with great pleasure, but before proceeding, I beseech you in the bowels of Jesus Christ to take my answer in the friendly spirit in which it is written.

2. Regarding the last part, where you ask me to reconcile Boethius and Faber, what you say is true: they agree on the commas but disagree on the sum. They agree for two reasons.: The first is that, taking his [Faber's] high numbers that represent four commas, putting a comma in the lower part (or indeed in the higher, but that would be too much trouble),² and dividing this low comma into two schismas, major and minor, and then in turn dividing the minor schisma in half, you can clearly see that the minor semitone contains three commas and more than three-quarters of the fourth comma and the two halves; hence you see that twice three quarters is six, of which four make up the comma, and the two halves. Thus a tone has more than eight commas and more than three-quarters of the ninth comma, which I could demonstrate in your presence with the enclosed table³ of the figures given by Faber, and thus you needn't trouble yourself with this further. 'By the grace of God I am what I am.'⁴

3. The second reason, though you'll find it weak, is that there is a printer's error in Faber's statement where he says that the tone is more than seven and less than eight commas;⁵ compare my figures with Faber's. Also, the figures on his lines o, r, and p are wrong, and in proposition 35, where he says *I multiply d by h and c by k and d by l*, it should be 'I multiply e by h and f by k and e by l',⁶ and there are many other errors that I believe are typographical. If these are errors, so can the first one be an error, and therefore the two authorities are in agreement.

4. Where you say that our problem or proportion, referring to Bacchius cited by my Franchino [Gafurio], is irrational or quasi-irrational, does he speak to the purpose? He calls all the proportions except multiple and superparticular quasi-irrational, including that of the semitone, but I don't.⁷ Albert of Saxony, in the first chapter of his *Proportions*, says: *An irrational proportion is found only in continuous, not in discrete, quantities.*⁸ Even

¹⁰ Basciano is a small town 21 km from Teramo.

scissa omni hominum conditioni perquam utilis et necessaria (Paris, 1514). Our warmest thanks go to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for identifying these two authors.

if they are difficult to calculate, following the doctrine of Laxo, Saliceo,⁹ and others, they would not seem so difficult.

5. If I have written anything that displeases you, forgive me.

## **103** (J107). Fo. 252^{v1}

Pietro Aaron to Lorenzo Gazio, 29 April 1534 (autograph copy)

252^v Reverendo Don Laurentio quanto fratello honorando, etc.

1. Per una di V.P. a me mandata [no. 102] et examinata, el tutto ho inteso, et con tutto el core et forze mie la ringratio, et del dubbio quale havevo resto satisfatto, et già sino ad hora havevo dato principio di componere dui extremi sesquiottavi per spatii di comma con entegri numeri, solo per vedere de quanto⁴ otto commi mancavono al compimento degli extremi preditti sesquiottavi, et di quanto tali extremi sesquiottavi erano da nove commi superati. Et perché a me era molto faticosa, non tanto per gli grandi numeri che gli occorrevano, quanto per essere in altre cose più necessarie occupato, non ho seguito tal mia deliberatione, perché da me non è tenuto che in numeris si possi dare proportione inrationale. Et dico che la proportione del comma, et altre simile, per la dificultà della sua propria misura et denominatione è stata da Boëtio^b ditta per incerta^c proportione superparticulare,² cioè come si denominano dui extremi proportionati arythmetice divisi, come el spatio sesquiottavo, 16. 17. 18, el mezzo del quale spatio sesquiottavo si dice esser minore di 17 a 16 et maggiore di 18 a 17. Et questo tale modo et ordine è stato observato da V.P. dove dicete che in uno tuono cadono più di otto commi et più di tre quarti di uno comma, el quale ordine è da quella observato per schivare quella difficile et quasi inpossibile denominatione della proportione cadente intra quegli termini dimostranti la differentia la quale cade intra el minor semituono et quatro commi. Onde a me pare che dove V.P. dice che in uno tuono cadono più di otto commi et più di 3 quarti, che quella erri, perché si doverrebbe dire di otto comi, et non più di otto. Et similmente a me anchora non piace, dove dicete più di 3 quarti, perché contradicete alla figura vostra a me mandata, in la qual figura V.P. dimostra che 'l spatio del comma non si potrà in due parte equalemente dividere. Per tanto seguiterà che dove non si potrà dar mezzo, che anchora geometrice non si potrà dar quarta parte. Per la qual cosa io credo che da Boëtio sia meglio stato scritto, dove dice che 'l spatio del tuono contiene in sé più di otto et manco di nove commi. Onde concludo essere meglio ditto che el spatio del tuono contiene in sé più di otto commi, el quale più di otto commi più si avicina alli nove commi, che

^a MS: quante. ^b MS: Buëtio. ^c MS: incerte.

¹ A copy of this letter is found in Paris 1110, fo. 45^t (no. 18).

² This statement is puzzling, since the comma has not a superparticular ratio. Boethius gives the correct ratio, 531 441:524 288, and observes that it lies between the superparticular ratios 75:74 and 74:73 (*De musica* 1. 16, ed. Friedlein, pp. 286–7); cf. no. 101, para. 1.

agli otto. Et per tale modo V.P. potrà cognoscere che siate huomo et non Idio, et che el bel ditto quale dite, cioè 'Gratia Dei sum id quod sum', non si conviene a voi, ma solamente a lui.³

2. Mi duole molto non potere confabulare con seco, dil che V.P. mi perdonerà, per esser assai occupato. Mi basta che quella si degni acettarmi per suo amico et benivolo, come sempre io tenere voglio V.P. reverenda per mio maggiore, alla quale humilmente mi raccomando.

In Vinegia el dì 29 aprilis 1534.

Di V.P. Frate Piero Aaron

1. From your letter [no. 102] I have understood everything and thank you; my doubt is now resolved. I had started to divide the 9:8 proportion by commas with whole numbers, just to see the difference between eight commas and the tone and between the tone and nine commas, but I had to stop, not because of the high numbers, but for pressure of other business, because I don't think irrational proportions can be expressed in numbers. Boethius called the proportion of a comma, and other similar intervals, uncertain superparticular proportions,² just as he divided the tone arithmetically as 16:17:18, half being smaller than 17:16 and larger than 18:17. You follow the same method when you call a tone more than  $8\frac{3}{4}$ commas and avoid the same difficulty of labelling the proportion that falls between the minor semitone and four commas. It seems to me that instead of saving more than 8 and more than three-quarters, you should have said 8 commas, not more than 8. Your 'more than three-quarters' contradicts the table you sent me showing the impossibility of dividing the comma equally. If you cannot make a geometric division in halves, you can't make one in quarters. I think Boethius said it better, i.e. that a tone contains more than eight commas, closer to nine than to eight. Thus you can recognize that you are a man and not God, and that pretty saying, 'by the grace of God I am what I am', doesn't apply to you but only to Him.³

2. I regret I have no more time to confer with you. Please accept me as your friend and well-wisher.

**104** (J109). Fos. 254^r–255^v Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Pietro Aaron, 10 August 1534 (autograph?)¹

^{255^v} Allo eccellentissimo musico M. Pietro Aron, maggior mio honorando. In Venetia.

^{254^t} I. Voi vi dimostrate con le vostre lettere tanto amorevole, honorato, et excellentissimo, Messer Pietro, verso me, ch'io non saprei disiderar tanto, quanto mi bisognerebbe per adempire l'obligo che verso di V.E. mi par di havere. Ma poscia che per me non si può più di quel che si può, sarete almen contento di accettar il buon animo mio in luogo de' buoni effetti che farei, s'io potessi.

2. Essendo adunque nato fra noi questo buon volere (siane qual si voglia di questo la cagione), non è da pensare dal canto di V.E. ch'io mi turbassi, quando essa mi dicesse con quel modo che fra gli amici dire si conviene, la verità nelle cose mie, cosa che altramente so ben non potreste fare, essendo il vero che me amiate, come certamente tanto credo, quanto s'io 'l vedessi o toccassi con mano. Perché che vi faria dire quel che diceti, se dalla radice del vostro buon volere il detto non nascesse? Adonque perché dal vero amico non si dè volere se non quello che ad esso piace, io per me non son più per caricarvi circa alle addimandate notationi, se non di quello che voi medesimo vi volete caricare. Però così in questa, come nelle altre cose per lo avenire, farete come a voi piacerà, che purché V.E mi tenga per suo come sono, a me basta.

3. Appresso io non debbio odiare per alcun modo le nostre *Scintille*,² né il nostro canto fugato,³ essendo state quelle (quali esse siano) cagione della nostra amicitia, et questo apportatore di quella⁴ del nostro reverendo Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago, al quale in risposta^a de' tri dubbi addiman-

^a MS: rispostra.

⁴ This letter is not extant.

¹ There are two letters by Lanfranco in the Correspondence, the present one addressed to Aaron, and an earlier one addressed to Willaert (no. 106). Both seem to be originals, since they carry postal addresses, but the handwriting is quite different. The music example of no. 106, however, resembles the hand of no. 104, which looks more like that of a copyist. The handwriting of no. 106 is distinctly personal. It is possible that no. 106 is an autograph and that Lanfranco had the music example and present letter copied by someone else; unlike most letters in the present correspondence, it is carefully paragraphed. However, it is more logical to suppose that the letter to Aaron is an original, since it appears with his correspondence, and no. 106 a copy of the letter that was sent to Willaert.

² Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di musica* (Brescia, 1533).

³ 'Threicium memorat' *a 5*; see no. 106.

datomi sopra il detto canto fatto per noi già sono qualche anni, così gli dirà.

4. Che perché il descenso di 10^a in 8^a non sia osservato dal musico grato,⁵ se per grato non si vol haver Brumel nel suo 'Victimae paschali', sopra le parole, 'Dux vitae mortuus',⁶ et colui che fece 'Quid retribuam Domino', che sopra le parole 'Alleluia alleluia' fa il descenso di terza in unisono, che è quasi il medesimo,⁷ et forse degli altri, et né perché di presente io no'l comporti alli nostri scholari, non ho però (che mi sovenga) mai letto regola che ci vieti più il descenso che l'ascenso d'una consonanza imperfetta ad una perfetta, siano quali esser si vogliano, il qual descenso nel nostro canto, s'altro non lo scusa, iscusillo la necessità della fuga, quantunque la via della compositione sia larga.

5. Circa al secondo dubbio, che dice 'Grave, cui sol lumen affert',⁸ dico che la voce *sol* da me è intesa per la chorda attribuita al sole, che è lychanos hypaton, o vogliamo dire D *sol re.*⁹

6. Ultimatamente, a questo segno C discendendo, che manca del suo numero,¹⁰ con che tutta la somma della compositione in potentia et risolutione sia intera, si dir così, che sì come per inavertenza, et non per ignoranza (che purtroppo poco chi non sa numerar i canti) si vede nei maggiori mancar il numero de' seg[ni] chi propongono nel principio per fondamento del lor numero, che così con questo argomento il nostro

⁵ See no. 106, mm. 48 and 49.

⁶ This work seems not to have survived, unless it is transmitted anonymously or under the same of another composer.

⁷ Lanfranco has in mind the following passage from the anonymous four-part 'Quid retribuam' in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS Q. 20, no. 47, mm. 33-4 (and its repetitions, mm. 70-1 and 109-10):



⁸ This phrase is the beginning of the canonic instructions of Lanfranco's composition; see no. 106.

⁹ The interconnections between *musica mundana* and *musica instrumentalis* are discussed by Ramis, *Musica practica*, in the chapter 'in quo musicae mundanae, humanae ac instrumentalis per tonos conformitas ostenditur' (ed. Wolf, pp. 56–60). Spataro, too, had used the names of planets in canonic directions as clues to pitch; see no. 2.

¹⁰ Lanfranco refers to the Quintus, at the words 'quintus nec ipse sonora' (see no. 106, mm. 37-9). Del Lago had apparently pointed out that the passage from C to  $\updownarrow$  contains only two and a half breves.

canto si può salvare. Chi non volesse aiutarlo con la risposta, che a me fu fatta da uno, il qual in simil caso da me fu avertito, la qual fu questa, che quando la misura è posta nella semibreve, che allhora il canto va numerato a semibrevi, essendo la elevatione et depositione in simil caso posta nella minima a somiglianza della semibreve risguardando alla  $\square$ , cosa che io non niego né affermo, rimettendomi a quel che la ragione sopra di ciò et l'uso porta.

7. Oltra di ciò difendasi, se 'l si può, con la autorità di Josquino, il qual produce questo segno ¢ nello contra alto della sua messa 'Fasiant regreth' sopra le parole 'Qui locutus est per prophetas',¹¹ il qual segno dopo sé del suo numero manc[a], si comprende. O vero con quella di Brumel, che nella messa 'de Beata Virgine', nel contra alto sopra le parole 'Marie virginis Matris',¹² propone questo altro C, il qual medesimamente dopo sé manca del numero binario. Contra de' quali, per salvarme, non intendo haver detto, perché essi con ragione oltra la autorità loro hanno il modo da difendersi. Benché quando di questa cosa se ne tenesse gran conto, per levarne il dubbio, senza mover la compositione, per aventura in questo modo ridur si potrebbe.¹³



8. Or se le Signorie Vostre son da me mal sodisfatte, me ne rincresce assai. Se ancora in qualche parte esse di me si contentano, Iddio ne sia lodato, et ponendo fine, non dico altro, salvo che pregandole ad amarmi, ^{255^t} esse debbiano attendere a vivere | felicemente, a quelle sempre offe-

rendomi et raccommandandomi.

Data nella Canonica del Domo di Brescia alli x de agosto M.D.xxxiiii. Il tutto di V.E. Giovanni Maria Lanfranco

1. Your letter is so kind that I hardly feel I can answer adequately. Please accept my good will.

¹¹ See Josquin, *Werken*, ed. Smijers, Missen, xiii. 44. In MS Cappella Sistina 23, fo. 124', the triplet passages are preceded by 3 and followed by  $\$ ; the last  $\$  falls in the middle of a measure.

¹² See Brumel, *Opera omnia*, ed. Hudson, iv. 9, m. 102. After a passage of triplets, C appears in the middle of a measure.

 $^{^{13}}$  Lanfranco has changed C to  $\mbox{\tt C}$  and doubled the note-values up to the next  $\mbox{\tt C}$  ; see no. 106, mm. 37–9.

2. Do not think I am disturbed to hear your criticism, for I know that you truly love me and accept me for your friend, as I am.

3. I do not at all disfavour my *Scintille*² and canonic composition,³ for they are the cause of our friendship, as the present bearer of Zanetto del Lago's letter⁴ can tell you. I respond to his three questions concerning the work, which was composed several years ago.

4. Regarding the progression of a tenth descending to an octave as not practiced by good musicians,⁵ was it not used by Brumel in his 'Victimae paschali' at 'Dux vitae mortuus'?⁶ The author of 'Quid retribuam Domino' used a third descending to a unison, almost the same thing, at 'Alleluia alleluia'.⁷ I don't permit it to my students now, but I've never seen a rule that forbids the descending more than the ascending progression of an imperfect to a perfect interval. If that progression needs an excuse, let the exigency of the canon excuse it, though the composer's path is broad.

5. On the second point, 'Grave, cui sol lumen affert',⁸ sol indicates the note attributed to the sun (sol), lichanos hypaton or d (D sol re).⁹

6. Finally, that the metrical unit is incomplete after C.¹⁰ As through inadvertence, not through ignorance (for there are few who cannot count their compositions), one can see greater men disregard the measurement required by the signs, so too can my composition be saved. But it could be justified by the reply someone gave me when I criticized a similar case: when the measure is on the semibreve, the work should be counted in semibreves; the beat is on the minim, comparable to the semibreve with respect to the breve. I do not accept or reject this argument but refer to common usage.

7. It could be defended with Josquin: in the alto of his 'Missa Faisant regretz' on 'Qui locutus est per prophetas',¹¹ the correct number is lacking after  $\diamondsuit$ . Or with Brumel: in the alto of his 'Missa de Beata Virgine' at 'Marie virginis Matris' he writes C,¹² which also lacks the proper number after it. I leave them, for they can defend themselves by reason, apart from their own authority, but to remove any doubt in this matter, I suggest the following emendation:¹³



8. If the two of you are not satisfied, I am sorry, but if I have pleased you in some small part, God be praised.

## 105 (J52). Fo. 172^{r-v}

Pietro Aaron to Gregorio Corbelli, 26 December 1538 (autograph)

172^v A frate Gregorio de Corbegli venetiano, figliuolo carissimo. Nel convento de' Crosachieri in Vinegia.

1. Per un'altra mia te ho scritto a sufficientia. Non replico altro, solum 172^r che tu per il primo mi dia adviso quello che è di Pre Zanetto da Lago, qual veniva da me continuo. Tu sai ben chi io dico. Mandami il tutto come si truova et quello che attende, et se gli puoi parlare, leggigli la presente partita, cioè come maestro Zanmaria Lanfranco è fuggito da Verona, dove che era come sai maestro di cappella, vituperosamente, con perder la fama con tutta la sua roba, svaligiato la casa. Et se non si fuggiva, faceva male i fatti suoi, questo per causa di haver guasto un putto, cosa veramente che mi rincresce molto. O che el sia altro non so; qua si dice quello essere stato la causa. Fallo intendere anchora a Fra Giovanbatista nostro. Il mondo dà di questi frutti. O che 'l sia per disperatione, o per vergogna, lui è fatto frate di Sancto Augustino qua in Bergamasco, in una villa et vilissimo castelletto chiamato a Romano, presso a Bergamo dodeci miglia, convento poverissimo, et pien di disagii, cosa che molto mi maraviglio. Et più, ditto convento è lontano dal castello un miglio. Dubito non si muora per dolore et vergogna. Idio lo aiuti.

2. Non scrivo altro. Raccomandami al reverendo priore et a tutti i frategli, et tu dite satis dixi. Salva l'honor tuo, et quel che è stato sia stato, et attendi alle virtù, acciò che tu non sia un'altro Fra Leonardo da Bergamo.

3. Io te ho advisato che non so che libri tu vogli. Daranmi adviso; se ci sarà commodità gli mandorò. Saluta tua madre, benché la non mi scrive.

Data in Bergamo el dì 26 decembris 1538.

Frate Piero Aaron

Di' a Pre Zanetto che io non pensavo mai che con meco dovessi usare tanta superbia che in tre anni non se sia mai degnato scrivermi un verso, come io a lui ho fatto, et che se bene io son frate, come lui non voleva, che io non son malcontento, perché io son Pietro Aaron come ero, et se lui è prete, che non è altro che Pre Zanetto, il qual forse patisce più di me, et che da lui non merito questo.¹ Non mancare di leggergli queste poche parole, etc.

¹ See Aaron's letters to Del Lago of 1536 (no. 62, para. 2) and 1539 (no. 64, para. 1).

I. I have written to you fully in my other letter. Please give me word immediately of Pre Zanetto del Lago, who used to come to me all the time. You know whom I mean. Tell me how he is and what he is doing, and if you can speak to him, read him the following and tell our Fra Giovanbattista too. Giovanni Maria Lanfranco has fled Verona, where he was *maestro di cappella*, losing his good name and all his belongings, his house ransacked, because he violated a boy—or so they say. Whether out of desperation or shame, he has become an Austin friar in a miserable little convent twelve miles from Bergamo, where he is likely to die of sorrow. God help him.

2. Give my regards to the prior and all the brethren, and attend to your own honour so you don't become another Fra Leonardo of Bergamo.

3. If you tell me which books you mean, I'll see if I can send them. Give my love to your mother, although she doesn't write to me.

PS. Tell Pre Zanetto I never thought he would be so arrogant as not to write in three years. He didn't want me to become a friar, but I am happy and the same Pietro Aaron as ever, and if he is a priest, he's still just Pre Zanetto, and I don't deserve this of him.¹ Don't forget to read him this.

## D. Miscellaneous Letters

**106** (J70–72). Fos. 192^r–195^{v1} Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Adrian Willaert, 20 October 1531 (autograph?)²

¹⁹⁵ Allo eccellente Messer Adriano Villaert, Maestro di capella di San Marco di Venetia, maggior mio osservandissimo, in Venetia in San Marco.

1. Non fu mai mio costume, excellente Messer Adriano, di provar né di 192 far provare se uno sa, o se 'l non sa. Né mai mi son meravigliato né del saver, né del non saver di uno altro, perché io tengho che 'l saver e 'l non savere sia cose naturale. [H]o ben sempre cercato, et di continuo cerco, di imparare da coloro che sanno, ma non con loro dispiacere. Però, excellente Messer Adriano, ho inteso che voi vi sete turbato um poco con me, pensando che io habbia fatto assagiarvi se intendete o no, et io di questa cosa non ne so niente. Vero è che essendomi capitato nelle mani una certa rotta fatta^a (come credo) dal Spadaro da Bologna,³ ch'io disse ad uno mio amico frate che 'l volesse esser contento di scrivere a Bologna ad uno altro suo amico per vedere se 'l poteva havere la risolutione di essa rotta dal proprio maestro, et ciò era perché parte io ne intendeva, et parte no, et disiderava de intendere il tutto con manco mia faticha, la qual cosa forse che esso frate, ritrovandosi a Venetia et disideroso di farmi piacere, serà venuto dalla Eccellentia Vostra per la resolutione, ma non già né per parte mia, né anchora perché a·llui havesse detto che di questa cosa con voi ne facesse prova, perché questa cosa io l'aspettava più tosto dal proprio maestro che da altri. Et questa prova mai non l'haveria fatta con voi, ansi seria venuto con certezza di havere la risolutione da voi, perché io credo che intendiate et so che quella cosa che non havereste trovata con una via, che l'havereste trovata con una altra, né è sì gran cosa il sapere a quali stelle quali corde siano atribuite, ch'io non creda che con quel mezzo et col gran contrapunto che havete che non l'havesse trovata. Et quando anchora non l'haveste trovata, io per me non ve haveria tenuto in manco

^a MS: fatto.

¹ This letter was transcribed and translated in Edmond Vander Straten, La Musique aux Pays-Bas avant le XIX' siècle (8 vols.; Brussels, 1867–88), vi. 195–9.

² See no. 104 n. 1.

³ Probably Spataro's 'Ubi opus est facto', in which 'Saturn' indicates the clef of the soprano part; see no. 2, para. 5. In the course of the letter Lanfranco indicates that the resolution of the canon requires knowledge of the connection of notes with planets.

conto di quello ch'io vi tengho, perché non mi par gran cosa che uno non sappia la mente di uno altro che parla per via di enigmi, et maggiormente

¹⁹²^v che il più delle volte gli canoni fatti da un tempo in qua sono più tosto contra le regole che regolari. Onde et per questo et anchora perché quella cosa ch'io fuggiva (cioè la faticha di cercar simili canoni) non era honesto ch'io la desse né a voi né ad altri, sperando come io sperava di haverla dal proprio auttore, il qual senza sua faticha me la poteva dare, et certamente quando io havesse creduto che l'havese fatta voi, a voi l'haverei domandata et non ad altri.

2. Adunque, excellente Messer Adriano, se sete turbato con me per questa cosa, et non essendo giusta la cagione, come non è, voi dovete remetervi alla ragione et tener quel bon conto di me (quantunque io sia minimo presso di voi) ch'io tengho di voi et delle cose vostre, le quali me sono carissime, et ne canto et faccio cantare per quanto ne posso havere. Et così faccio perché non son sì grosso ch'io non sappia che le cose de' grandi sono atte a far grande uno picciolo. Però se V.E. haverà remesso la perturbatione che l'ha verso di me senza causa, quella serà contenta per segno di questo di mandarmi uno delli soi vesperi. Et quando questa cosa gli paresse troppo grande, lassassi stare l'hym[n]o et il magnificat, et quando anchora gli cinque psalmi paressero troppo, mandatemene 4 o 3 o 2 o per il manco uno, perché non son per credere che V.E. se sia remessa per fin che da·llei non habbia qualche cosa, et questi psalmi mi serano carissimi.

3. Apresso, io mando a V.E. una certa mia fuga fatta da me altre volte, la qual se non l'havete veduta, mi serà caro che la vediate per esser anchora lei fatta sotto la guida de' canoni.⁴ Et per manco faticha di V.E., nella

⁴ The resolution of the canon is given not only in the canonic directions but also in the text itself. The verses appear to mean: 'Whoever mentions the Thracian [Orpheus], Amphion, Zethus, and Verdellus, let him sing of one who is the greater artist [or possibly 'whoever mentions the Thracian, let him sing of Amphion, Zethus, and Verdellus, who is the greater artist']. This is he whom Lanfranco wishes four to celebrate with various voices to a single tune. Let the fifth [the quintus] begin, nor will it be slow to sing his praises in a sounding voice.' (Metre requires the transposition of 'ipse' and 'voce'.) 'Verdellus' is not an ancient name; perhaps for Verdelot? Lanfranco has not respected the quantitative structure of the text in his setting, except perhaps for the first two measures, if 'Threicium' is properly treated as a tetrasyllable. But the remaining clearly shows that he has been guided by word-accent, although some stresses are quite wrong.

The canonic instructions read: 'Canon. The low, to which the sun gives light, precedes the less low by one *tempus* in a 3:2 proportion. In the same manner the less high precedes the high, but the less low precedes the less high by three *tempora* in a 4:3 proportion. And the quintus, separate from the others, precedes the low by one *tempus* in the smallest of the multiplex proportions.' Lanfranco was susceptible to enigmas himself. Translated into musical terms, the canon indicates the following: 'The bass starts on *d*, followed after one measure by the tenor at the upper fifth. The alto, paired with the superious in the same manner, follows at the upper fourth after three measures. The non-canonic quintus begins one measure before the tenor at the upper octave.' For the explanation of *d* as the starting-note, see no. 104, in which Lanfranco answers the three questions posed by Del Lago.

propria carta serà la resolutione, alla qual di continuo mi raccomando.

Data im Bressa nelle case della canonica del domo alli 20 di ottobrio 1531.

Di V.E. servitore

Gio. Maria Lanfranco parmesano



Canon. Grave, cui sol lumen affert, uno tempore precedit minus grave in emiolia proportione. Eodem modo minus acutum precedit acutum, sed minus grave temporibus tribus precedit minus acutum in epitrita proportione. Et quintus ab aliis divisus per minimam multiplicis uno tempore grave precedit.

194^r Quintus divisus



^{195^t} 4. V.E. sappia che qui io ho il suo Magnificat del secondo tono⁵ et una sua 'Ave maris stella'.⁶

⁵ Willaert's Magnificat in the second mode seems not to have survived; it is not listed in Kirsch, *Die Quellen der mehrstimmigen Magnificat- und Te Deum-Vertonungen*.

⁶ The Vespers hymn for the Feast of the Assumption was printed in Willaert's *Hymnorum musica* of 1542; a modern edn. may be found in Willaert, *Opera omnia*, vii. 107–13. Or possibly Lanfranco refers to the motet 'Ave maris stella' that was published in the 1539 edn. of Willaert's five-voice motets (modern edn. ibid. iii. 107–14). Since it appears in the Vallicelliana manuscript of c.1530-1, it is early enough to have been known to Lanfranco in 1531.



1. It was never my habit to test anyone's knowledge. I have always sought to learn from others, but not when it displeases them. I have heard that you are upset with me, thinking I tried to test you, but I know nothing about it. I wanted to understand the canonic directions of a piece by (I think) Spataro,³ and I asked a friar friend of mine to ask a friend of his in Bologna to get the resolution from Spataro himself. Perhaps the friar was in Venice and asked you, but that was not my intention. I'm sure you, with your great knowledge of counterpoint, could have worked it out one way or the other. It's not such a great thing to know which planets go with which notes. And even if you hadn't resolved it, I should not have thought the less of you. These enigmatic canons in older pieces are often irregular. Only if you had been the author would I have asked you.

2. Since there is no cause to be upset, you should set your mind at ease and regard me as I do you and your works, which are very dear to me, and I sing and have sung as many as I can get. As a sign of your composure, would you send me one of your Vesper services? If this is too much to ask, leave out the hymn and Magnificat, and if five psalms are still too much, then four or three or two, but at least one. I shall not believe you have set your mind at rest unless I have something from you.

3. I am enclosing a canonic piece written some time ago,⁴ and to save you trouble I add the resolution.

4. I have your Magnificat in the second mode⁵ and your 'Ave maris stella'.⁶










Prin – ci – pi –

t

967

966



re -

# **107** (J65). Fo. 186^{r-v} (top)

Lorenzo Gazio to Don Valeriano, 23 November 1534 (autograph)

186^v Al suo carissimo et devoto monacho Don Valeriano da Cremona. In S. Georgio mazore. In Venetia.

186^r Don Valeri[a]no mio carissimo, più che filiolo.

1. [H]o receputo lo vostro canto, el qual desyderava lo nostro comune amico Don Stephano, et anche ve lo remando. Io ho visto el duo secondo lo desyderio vostro, sì comme potereti veder in la inclusa poliza,¹ la qual ho così fatta aciò ve ne potiati servire. Se 'l ve paresse de persuader a Messer Adriano che non lo desse fora per honor suo, ben seria. Pur fati talmente cum lui et altri che non se faciamo inimici.²

2. Per satisfation vostra ho domandato et optenuto de venir a Venetia insiema cum Don Stephano vostro et ivi staremo una parte de uno mese, et più et mancho tanto quanto se vederemo carezati da voi. Questo serà per lo carneval de la quaresma et alhora visitaremo li parenti cum li amici. Li nostri libri a voi mandati tali quali sono apud me. Ve ne ho servito. Più non ne so, né più ve ne dico. De Prosdocimo paduano ad me non ignoto, grato imperò me serà a la venuta nostra vederlo così ben vestito,³ el qual pò essere non esser statto caro per li soi belli vestimenti. Grato me seria intender da voi, se io domandasse a questi amici et maestri nostri qualche dubio si se offenderano. Altro non me occorre excepto che a voi et tutti me recomando.

Datta in Corrigiola a 23 novembrio 1534.

Avertiti che sopra lo milesimo non se debe far quella virgula. La se fa ben in abbacho antico et non in lo moderno, comme ve dirò a la venuta nostra. Don Laurentio

1. I received your composition, which our friend Don Stefano wanted, and return it herewith.

2. I looked over the duo, as you can see from the enclosed note,¹ made

for your use. It would be good if you could persuade Messer Adriano [Willaert], for the sake of his reputation, not to publish it, but see that we don't make ourselves any enemies.²

3. Don Stefano and I shall come to Venice for part of a month or so for Carnival. I have the books for you with me. Prosdocimo the Paduan is not unknown to me, and I shall be pleased to see him so well dressed.³ Please tell me whether these friends would be offended if I were to ask some questions.

PS. The stroke over the thousands is used only in roman numerals, not in arabic.

¹ The enclosure is missing.

² The reference is probably to a composition of Willaert's on a tenor by Del Lago, 'Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi'. Gazio did indeed succeed in making enemies; see nos. 86 and 108.

³ Since Gazio's reference to Prosdocimo follows immediately upon his discussion of books, it is possible that he is speaking of a manuscript of Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi's treatises, newly rebound.

108 (J55). Fo. 175^{r-v}

Lorenzo Gazio to Don Valeriano, Easter Sunday [28 March] 1535 (autograph)

- 175[°] Al suo carissimo filiolo Don Valeriano, Monaco in S. Giorgio Mazore. In Venetia.
- ¹⁷⁵^r Don Valeriano, filiol mio carissimo.

1. Ho receputo le vostre, a le qual più presto non ho possiuto dar resposta per le grande occupation che mi sono statte in lo confessare. Del tenore vostro lo ho visto, et brevemente ve concludo che non solamente in quelli lochi che dice Messer Pre Zanetto, ma in molti altri, epso tenore se trova falsissimo, per il che laudaria a Messer Adriano che quello che lui ha composto sopra esso tenore che per niente lo desse fora, perché certamente apud peritos più ge seria de vergogna che de honore.¹ Voluntiera saperia chi^a è statto lo compositore. Se pur ve piacesse la resolution sua, giugando più presto a indivinar et interpretar la mente del compositor che per l'arte che sia in epso, i' ve la mando, sopra la qual ve dico che non è da componerge. Se epso compositor è in Venetia, voria che vedestivi de haver da lui la resolutione et mandarmela.

2. Del libro de musica che molti mesi già me scrivesti, non lo vedo anchora. Se fustivi da altri servito comme voi serviti a loro, l'averia già visto et restituito. Dubito che ve vien datto parole, et comme giovene tutto credeti. Vedeti de parlar talmente cum chi parlati de epso tenore, che non faciamo inimicitia, più presto lassandoge la venta che voler contender. Non altro.

Datta in S. Justina [Padua] lo zorno de la resurrectione 1535.

Laurentius

1. I was not able to answer your letter sooner because of the time I had to spend on confessions. That tenor, in brief, is full of errors, not only in the places mentioned by Pre Zanetto, and I should advise Messer Adriano [Willaert] not to publish anything he composed on it, because it would certainly embarrass him among experts.¹ I'd like to know who the composer is. I enclose the resolution, relying more on guesswork than on its art, and I repeat that it shouldn't be used for a composition. If the composer is in Venice, see if you can get the resolution from him and send it to me.

2. I still haven't seen that music-book. If others treated you as you do them, it would long have been returned. I think you are being cheated, and believe everything like a youngster. Watch how you speak about this tenor; better to let it go than get involved in controversy.

^a MS: che.

¹ On this tenor, and Del Lago's reaction to the present letter, see no. 86. In quoting this letter in no. 86, Del Lago omitted the words 'non solamente in quelli lochi che dice Messer Pre Zanetto'. Evidently, Valeriano had sent the work to Gazio, then tried to decipher the tenor by himself; upon getting stuck, he must have asked the author for help, who then had to admit that he (or the copyist) had made some errors.

## 109. Memorandum by [Gazio]

# 109 (J60). Fo. 180^r [Lorenzo Gazio], memorandum (autograph)¹

180^r La prima parte del so[p]rano et anche la prima del contratenore se canta una semibreve a la batuta. Le pause de breve valen tre batute.

In la seconda parte del so[p]rano sono tutti li infrascripti segni o ver proportione huiusmodi

 $O_1^2$  qui andarà dui semibreve per batuta

 $\frac{3}{1}$  qui va tre semibreve per batuta



 $C_1^4$  una longa per batuta ⁶/₁ tre breve per batuta

 ${}_{6}^{1}O$  una semibreve per batuta. Le pause son perfecte.

- $\frac{2}{1}$  doi semibreve per batuta
- ³ tre semibreve per batuta
- $\frac{4}{3}$  quatro semibreve per batuta. Le tre breve son perfecte.
- $\frac{3}{2}$ 6 semibreve per batuta
- $C_3^1$  doi semibreve per batuta per fin al fine. La prima longa vale sei et le pause el simile. Le altre longe sono imperfecte. In la seconda parte del contratenore sono li infrascripti segni o ver proportione huiusmodi
- $O_1^2$  dui semibreve per batuta. Le pause sono perfecte.
  - $\frac{3}{2}$  tre per batuta
  - $\frac{2}{3}$  dui per batuta. Le negre son facte per imperficerle.

 $C_2^1$  una per batuta. La pausa vale doi semibreve.

- ³/₁ tre per batuta
- $O_2^1$  tre minime per batuta
- $C_3^8$  una longa a la batuta
- $O_4^1$  una semibreve a la batuta
- $C_1^2$  una breve a la batuta. Le breve valen doi semibreve. La longa vale^{*a*} 4. Le pause de longa valen 6 per fin in fino.

The first part of the soprano and the first part of the contratenor are sung one semibreve to a beat. The breve rests are worth three beats.

In the second part of the soprano are the following signs or proportions:

4 beats

- $O_1^2$  two semibreves per beat
- $\frac{3}{1}$  three semibreves per beat



⁶ three breves per beat

 $^{1}_{6}$ O one semibreve per beat. The rests are perfect.

 $\frac{2}{1}$  two semibreves per beat

 $\frac{3}{1}$  three semibreves per beat

 $\frac{4}{3}$  four semibreves per beat. The three breves are perfect.

³/₂ six semibreves per beat

 $C_3^1$  two semibreves per beat until the end. The first long is worth six semibreves and the rests the same. The other longs are imperfect. In the second part of the contratenor are the following signs or proportions:

 $O_1^2$  two semibreves per beat. The rests are perfect.

³/₂ three per beat

- $\frac{2}{3}$  two per beat. The notes are blackened to imperfect them.
- $C_{2}^{1}$  one per beat. The rest is worth two semibreves.
- ³₁ three per beat
- $O_2^1$  three minims per beat
- $C_3^8$  one long per beat
- $O_4^1$  one semibreve per beat
- $C_1^2$  one breve per beat. The breves are worth two semibreves. The long is worth four. The *longa* rests are worth six until the end.

#### ^a MS: valen.

¹ This memorandum lists the proportions in Tinctoris's pedagogical motet, 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus', several examples from which were included in Del Lago's letter to Gazio of 6 May 1535 (see no. 86). On this composition, which figures in the correspondence of Del Lago, Giovanni da Legge, and Spataro, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide to Tinctoris's Teachings'.

110. Anon. to [Del Lago?], [1533]

110 (J108). Fo. 253^{r-v1} Anonymous to [Giovanni del Lago?], n.d. [1533] (copy in Aaron's hand)

## 253^r Pater venerande, salutem, etc.

1. Anchora che havessi pensato di non volere rispondere altrimenti di quello che ho fatto al mio Messer Pietro Aaron per rispetto o ver dubbio di cavillatione, pur son contento di rispondere, non come mi, ma come quello che seguita la dottrina de Guido et di Giovanni Othobi, che non dispiaciono, immo acettano el tuono in sesqui  $\frac{1}{8}$  et el semituono in super  $\frac{13}{243}$ , et anchora le syllabe *ut*, *re*, *mi*, et *fa*, *sol*, *la* applicative indifferentemente ad epsi tuoni, et anchora li segni, cioè di b indicativo di *fa* et lo  $\natural$  quadrato o vero così  $\bigotimes$  indicativi di *mi*, et el tuono esser divisibile in duoi semituoni minori, talmente che tra lo grave segnato con uno degli segni di  $\natural$  quadro et lo acuto segnato con lo b molle sia la comma in mezzo, sì come anchora io ho visto nel vostro organo et al Santo in Padova in alcuni luoghi, onde essi semituoni el grave segnare in la inmediate riga o ver spatio acuto, et lo acuto doversi segnare in la inmediate accidente riga o ver spatio grave, et his stantibus et concessis.

2. Circa li primi dui dubii, cioè segnando el b molle in F o vero in C, dico che questo si è a simile che si segna el b molle in lo  $\natural$  quadrato, volendo dimostrare che si partiamo dal ordine naturale de uno tuono sbassato,^{*a*} da poi volendo tornare ad esso ordine naturale, el si segna el  $\natural$ quadrato, et altrimenti non si doverrebbe segnare el  $\natural$  quadro indicativo di *mi*, perché esso *mi* è naturalmente. Così accade in F et in C se in essi el fussi stato segnato uno  $\natural$  quadrato per causa di temperare el tritono da quella parte, o vero per reintegrare qualche terza minore in maggiore, o vero quinta imperfetta farla perfetta, etc. Tunc non havendo più bisogno di tal rispetto, et volendo tornare al ordine naturale, alhora si segnerà uno b molle in C o in F. Lo *ut* di F sarà in C et quello di C sarà in Gamma *ut*.

3. Circa lo terzo dubbio, dicendo *fa* in voce del *mi* di  $\natural$  *mi*, lo suo *mi*, come anchora ho ditto, sarà più basso del *mi* naturale de uno semituono minore, collocato perhò in A con tal segno  $\natural$ , o vero così  $\bigotimes$ . Alhora se intenderà esso *mi* più alto del loco dove sarà scripto per uno semituono maggiore.

4. Al quarto dubbio, mettendo una nota in G a questo modo: **B** *# s*, la sua syllaba *ut* sarà in E et *la* sarà in C con tal segno \(\beta\) o vero **#**, et non solamente esso C sarà segnato come ho detto, ma tutta la scala sarà segnata così:

^a MS: sbassati.

¹ A copy of this letter is found in Paris 1110, fo. 45[°] (no. 19).

₿ ## # III re mi fa sol la

etc. Circa il quarto dubbio, voi segnate una nota in G in questo modo:  $253^{v}$   $\stackrel{1}{\longrightarrow}$  . In la littera | la segnate così:  $\stackrel{1}{\longrightarrow}$  . Faccio assai differentia tra l'uno et l'altro, et quando fussimo apresso, cercheria satisfarvi, anchora che a me parano parvi momenti, etc.

1. Although I had not intended to answer otherwise than I did to Pietro Aaron, I shall reply not as myself but as one who follows the doctrine of Guido and Hothby, who accept the tone as 9:8 and the [minor] semitone as 256:243, and the syllables *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la* as applicable to all these tones, and  $and \$  as *fa* and  $\$  or # as *mi*, and the tone divisible into two minor semitones with a comma between the lower sharp and upper flat, as I have seen in your organ and in some places on the organ in the basilica of Sant'Antonio in Padua, where the lower semitone is in the higher space, the higher semitone in the lower one.

2. Concerning the first two questions, signing the flat on F or C, this is similar to writing a b before Bb to show departure from the natural order and then a b to return to it; otherwise one should not use b because *mi* is already natural. Thus if you use a square B [#] in F or C to mitigate a tritone or raise a minor to major third or make an imperfect fifth perfect, then, to return to the natural order, you sign b. The *ut* of F will be C and the *ut* of C gamma *ut*.

3. Concerning the third question, saying fa on B $\natural$ , its *mi* will be lower than the natural *mi* by a minor semitone, written on A with  $\natural$  or #. This *mi* will be higher than its regular place by a major semitone.

4. Concerning the fourth question, about G#, *ut* will be on E and *la* on C#, and not just this C but the whole scale will have sharps:



You wrote the sharp beneath the note, but in your letter you wrote it in front of the note. I think there's quite a difference and if we were together I would explain it, though it seems to me of minor importance, etc.

## COMMENTARY

This is an answer to the 'Dubbii di musica' that Giovanni del Lago posed to Spataro in May 1533 (see no. 53). Del Lago's letter is lost, but from Spataro's reply (see no. 54) we learn that the matter arose from a discussion between Del Lago and a certain singer named Don Raphaello. The present letter, unsigned, is another contribution to that discussion. It is a partial copy in the hand of Pietro Aaron. That it was not written to Aaron is clear from the first sentence. The writer appears to be a friend of Aaron's. We suppose that Aaron asked his opinion (Spataro had informed Aaron of the dispute in his letter of 30 July 1533; see no. 55), then communicated it to Del Lago, who subsequently asked the writer to send an explanation to him, allowing Aaron to make a copy of it. The questions are not in the same order as Del Lago's original 'dubbii'.

The writer proposes an explanation of Fb and Cb not considered by Del Lago, Don Raphaello, or Spataro, which is the use of a flat as a sign cancelling a sharp. It is regrettable that he did not explain, in his response to the fourth question, what difference the position of the sharp-sign makes.²

In discussing the division of the tone into two minor semitones and a comma, the writer speaks of split keys on the addressee's organ and the organ of the basilica of Sant'Antonio in Padua. Interestingly, he says that the sharp is placed lower than the flat. The organs, therefore, must have some kind of mean-tone temperament; in this tuning, the sharps are lower than the flats.³

B.J.B.

² In his letter to Aaron of 23 May 1524, Spataro too remarked that the sharp should be placed before, not under, the note (no. 12, para. 5).

³ That this division of the tone could engender confusion is proved by the discussion between Spataro and Aaron on the placement of C $\sharp$  and D $\flat$ ; see no. 30, para. 5 and n. 5.

# BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

THE Correspondence provides a wealth of information on musicians great and small and on the people who touched their lives, personages as mundane as Spataro's new housekeeper and as exalted as the ambassador of the King of England to the Venetian Signoria. The Dictionary includes all contemporary figures mentioned in the Correspondence who were known personally to the writers.

Aaron, Pietro. See Ch. 4.

#### Alberti, Gasparo

Mentioned in no. 62.

Born in Padua, c.1480, Gasparo Alberti became a singer at Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo in 1508, where he spent the rest of his career, serving as *maestro di cappella* until an advanced age. He died c.1560. He was a respectable composer in various sacred genres, including masses, passions, lamentations, and motets, most of which are preserved in his manuscripts, which still survive.¹

Pietro Aaron left Venice in 1536 to become a friar of the Order of the Crutched Friars in San Leonardo in Bergamo. Gasparo Alberti and twenty-two singers attended his investiture and sang Vespers, with the psalms and Magnificat in two choirs and all the antiphons in counterpoint. At a reception afterwards, the singers performed a six-part madrigal in praise of Aaron. This too was probably composed by Gasparo Alberti, but none of his secular works has survived.

#### Allexandro

Mentioned in no. 25.

Allexandro was a young Bolognese in the service of Bishop Giambattista Casali, English ambassador to the Venetian Signoria. He lived in the house of Adrian Willaert. In June 1529 Spataro sent him a letter by way of Giovanni del Lago (para. 2). He is probably too young to be identical with Alexandro Demophoonte, a Bolognese composer mentioned in Giovanni Philoteo Achillino's *Viridario* (see 'Musici bolognesi' below), the author of two frottole published in Petrucci's *Libro VII* of 1507 and a lauda in Petrucci's second book of laude, who was in the service of Cardinal Ippolito d'Este I from 1508 to 1520.²

Allexandro, Frate. See Friars.

## Andrea, Messer

Mentioned in no. 51.

In 1533 Spataro wrote to Aaron that the late Messer Andrea, a singer in the Papal Chapel, had been succeeded by 'Vilano tenorista' (para. 1). He must be

¹ Viktor Ravizza, 'Alberti, Gasparo', The New Grove Dictionary, i. 211-12.

² See Lewis Lockwood, 'Adrian Willaert and Cardinal Ippolito d'Este: New Light on Willaert's Early Career in Italy, 1515-21', *Early Music History* 5 (1985), 85-112 at 110.

Andreas de Mantua, also known as Andreas de Casale, who appears on the lists for the first time in June 1529. His name occurs for the last time in December 1532.³

The records do not reveal any information about Andreas de Mantua other than his two names, but the connection with Mantua raises the intriguing possibility that he might be identical with Andreas de Silva, who was a member of the Papal Chapel in 1519 and 1520 as well as a 'cantor secretus' in Leo X's private chapel.⁴ The last recorded information about De Silva is a payment from the Marquess of Mantua on 17 December 1522 of 21 ducats and 21 ells of damask.⁵ The award might allude to De Silva's having composed music for an event having to do with the number 21. If De Silva had come from Mantua to Rome, it might explain why he appears as Andreas de Mantua in the account-books, the accountants not always having been too meticulous about the exact names of the musicians whose salaries they report, as long as the given name was correct. Kirsch proposes that 'extant sources suggest that he was still alive and in Italy at the end of the decade'. Until further documents come to light, the identity of 'Andreas de Mantua' with Andreas de Silva can remain no more than a suggestion-a possible point of departure for further research on this brilliant, but elusive composer.

## Antonio Pifaro

#### Mentioned in no. 6.

Antonio Pifaro, to whom Spataro gave two French chansons in April 1523 (para. 12), was probably a member of the Concerto Palatino, the organization of Bolognese town musicians that went back as early as 1200.⁶ Spataro went to find him 'in palazzo'. He is perhaps the 'Antonio Pifaro' mentioned in Giovanni Philoteo Achillino's *Viridario* of 1513, although as an artist and goldsmith: 'Antonio pifar ci è quale è divino / Col suo disegno, et orafo è perfetto.'⁷

## Armonio, Frate

### Mentioned in no. 85.

Frate Giovanni Armonio was born c.1477 in Lago Fucino, a small community east of Rome in the Abruzzi. He came to Venice before 1500. A member of the Order of the Crutched Friars, he was a poet, an author and reciter of comedies, a singer, and an organist at San Marco. His neo-Latin comedy *Stephanium*, praised by numerous Venetian writers, was performed in the cloisters of Santo Stefano in

³ Fr. X. Haberl, Die römische 'Schola cantorum' und die päpstlichen Kapellsänger bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrbunderts (Bausteine für Musikgeschichte 3; Leipzig, 1888), p. 74. June 1529 is the earliest list to survive after the Sack of Rome in 1527; Clement VII did not return from Orvieto until Oct. 1528.

⁴ Winfried Kirsch, 'De Silva, Andrea', The New Grove Dictionary, v. 389.

⁵ A. Bertolotti, Musici alla corte dei Gonzaga in Mantova dal secolo XV al XVIII (Milan, 1890), p. 34.

p. 34. ⁶ See Osvaldo Gambassi, 'Origine, statuti e ordinamenti del Concerto Palatino della Signoria di Bologna (1250–1600)', *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* 18 (1984), 261–83. We owe thanks to Dr Susan Forscher Weiss for this and the following reference.

7 Viridario (Bologna, 1513), fo. 1884.

1500 and printed shortly thereafter by Bernardino de Vitali. His career at San Marco spanned the first half of the sixteenth century.⁸

Frate Armonio seems to have been well known as a collector of music. In a letter to Del Lago of 9 September 1534, Lorenzo Gazio suggests that 'Frate Harmonio', whom he believes to have inherited the music of 'Fra Pietro de San Zoannepolo' (q.v.), would probably own a certain composition by Gafurio involving complicated proportions (para. 3).

## Averoldi, Altobello

## Mentioned in no. 16.

Altobello Averoldi is the person Spataro refers to as the Bishop of Pola. He was born in Brescia c.1468 and became Bishop of Pola on 13 November 1497. He held various administrative ecclesiastical positions, mostly in Venice and Bologna. Spataro must have known him when he was vice-legate in Bologna, from 1505 to 1515 and again in 1523–4. He was named papal nuncio to Venice in 1517, where he remained until mid-January 1523; he returned there in 1526, serving in a difficult period of relations between the Holy See and the Signoria. He died in 1531.⁹

When he was in Bologna, he had in his household Francesco dall'Organo (q.v.), who later became a canon of San Petronio (no. 16, para. 1).

## Bailly, Giovanni

Mentioned in no. 88.

In his letter of 1538, Del Lago criticizes four songs by Giovanni Bailly, the teacher of Pietro de Justinis, which the latter had sent him. Giovanni Baijli (or Bayli) was a singer and chaplain at the Duomo of Udine by 1503, when paper was purchased for him to copy a music-book. At some unknown time he was appointed *maestro di cappella*, an office he held until his last illness in 1540.¹⁰

### Baldasera

Mentioned in nos. 6, 11, 35.

Baldasera, never further identified, is mentioned in Spataro's letter to Aaron of 8 April 1523 (no. 6, paras. 7 and 11). He was known to Spataro and to Aaron, and both had written to him. Spataro had heard that Aaron wanted Baldasera to come to Venice, and on 6 May he forwarded a letter from Aaron to Baldasera (no. 11, para. 2).

A third letter in the Correspondence allows us to identify Baldasera with a high degree of probability. On 24 October 1531 Spataro wrote to Aaron that he was sending on a letter from Imola which he believed was directed to Baldasera, their common friend (no. 35, para. 6). Baldassare da Imola became second organist at San Marco in Venice on 29 March 1533; before that he had been organist in the

⁸ See the introduction to Johannis Harmonii Marsi comoedia Stephanium, ed. Walther Ludwig (Munich, 1971), pp. 9–17, and M. Quattrucci, 'Armonio, Giovanni', Dizionario biografico degli italiani, iv (1962), 242–3.

⁹ F. Gaeta, 'Averoldi, Altobello', Dizionario biografico degli italiani, iv (1962), 667-8.

¹⁰ See Giuseppe Vale, 'La cappella musicale del Duomo di Udine', Note d'archivio per la storia musicale 7 (1930), 87-201 at 98-9.

parish church of San Geremia (a position he may have received on Aaron's recommendation, for Aaron must have known him when he was in Imola). He died in 1541.¹¹

## Bandera, Benvenuta and Antonio

Mentioned in no. 32.

Benvenuta Bandera became Spataro's housekeeper in 1531. She and her late husband, Antonio, had lived in Venice for a long time and knew Aaron there (para. 5).

#### Bastiano, Pre

#### Mentioned in no. 89.

In 1535, writing from Vicenza, Bartolomeo Tromboncino asked Del Lago to give his greetings to Pre Bastiano and Madonna Paula (para. 2).

#### Bellabusta, Benedetto

#### Mentioned in no. 2.

Benedetto Bellabusta, a Bolognese who was friar at Santa Elena in Venice, had asked Spataro to make a resolution of the latter's motet 'Ubi opus est facto' for the prior of his order (Olivetan) in Bologna (para. 4). He is the composer of a lauda in Petrucci's *Laude libro secondo* of 1507, 'Ave verum corpus Christi', attributed to 'Fr. Benedictus Belabusca'.¹²

## Benedicto libraro. See Faelli.

#### Bentivoglio, Hermes

Mentioned in nos. 16, 18, 20-1, 28, 30, 44-5, 47, 74.

Hermes was the tenth of the eleven children of Giovanni Bentivoglio (1443–1508), 'first citizen' of Bologna. He was born in 1482, married Jacopa Orsini in 1504, and died in 1513 in Venetian military service. He was a violent and disagreeable person.¹³ In 1501, without his father's knowledge, he engineered the assassination of four members of the Marescotti family who had been confined after discovery of their plot to overthrow Giovanni Bentivoglio.¹⁴ In 1506 the entire Bentivoglio family was driven out of Bologna by papal troops.

Spataro must have been on friendly terms with Hermes in his younger years. He wrote a brief treatise on mensural music for Hermes which does not survive. Later he expanded it, and around 1526 he revised it once more and offered it to Giovanni del Lago for publication (no. 16, para. 4). Later references to this treatise in the Correspondence frequently mention Hermes's name, but no further relationship between him and Spataro is discussed. In no. 20, however, Spataro says that he composed his 'Missa de la pera' for Hermes Bentivoglio, who at that time (probably in the 1490s) was very interested in music. It was given that

¹¹ Francesco Caffi, Storia della musica sacra nella già Cappella Ducale di San Marco in Venezia dal 1318 al 1797 (2 vols., Venice, 1854-5; repr. Milan, 1931), i. 106-7.

¹² See Jeppesen, Die mehrstimmige italienische Laude, p. 99.

¹³ A Bolognese chronicler described him as 'uomo subito e iracondo con poco ordine de rasone, iniquo, perverso et maledetto . . . bestiale quanto più si può dire'; see Ady, *I Bentivoglio*, p. 192 n. 22.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 173.

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name to please Hermes, who bore a pear in his coat of arms (no. 20, para. 4). Spataro's early career, before he joined San Petronio as a singer in 1505, is unknown. Perhaps he held some position in the Bentivoglio household; his treatise of 1491 against Nicolò Burzio was dedicated to the protonotary Antongaleazzo Bentivoglio, Hermes's elder brother, then aged nineteen.

## Bergomozzi (Burgomozo), Lorenzo

Mentioned in no. 12.

Lorenzo Bergomozzi was born in Modena in 1480. He was a singer at the Duomo there from 1506 to 1513. In May of that year he became a member of Leo X's private chapel, where he is listed for the last time in February 1521. He eventually returned to Modena, where he died in 1549.¹⁵

It was Lorenzo Bergomozzi who told Spataro the story of the disastrous performance of Willaert's chromatic duo at the court of Leo X (para. 8).

#### Bernardino da Pavia

Author of no. 98.

Bernardino da Pavia was apparently a member of the household of the English ambassador to Venice, Giambattista Casali (q.v.). He was perhaps a musician, for the ambassador was greatly interested in music. The letter, inviting Del Lago to lunch at the ambassador's house to discuss ancient music, is undated, but probably was written in autumn 1532 (see Commentary on no. 98).

### Boca de Ferro (Boccaferro), Bastiano

Mentioned in no. 9.

When Aaron's *Toscanello* was published in 1523, Spataro ordered six copies for his friends, among whom was 'Bastiano Boca de Ferro' (para. 1). He is probably one of the 'musici bolognesi'; he is mentioned in Giovanni Philoteo Achillino's *Viridario* of 1513 among the 'musici' with whom Bologna is blessed (see 'Musici bolognesi' below). He may possibly be the 'S. B. De Ferro', author of the frottola 'Fiamma dolce e soave' in Antico's *Canzoni nove* of 1510.¹⁶

## Bonini, Piermaria

## Mentioned in no. 4.

A Florentine, Piermaria Bonini is the author of *Acutissime observationes nobilissime disciplinarum omnium musices* (Florence, 1520), dedicated to Leo X. Spataro had obtained a copy in 1521. He was tempted to contest Bonini's ideas but decided against doing so, on the grounds that 'he is too much of a novice in musical studies' (para. 6).

## Burgomozo, Lorenzo. See Bergomozzi.

#### Camillo, Messer

Mentioned in nos. 50-1.

In his letter to Aaron of 4 March 1533 Spataro wrote that he was glad that 'la Signoria de Messer Camillo' had accepted his excuses and was no longer angry

¹⁵ Herman-Walther Frey, 'Regesten zur päpstlichen Kapelle unter Leo X. und zu seiner Privatkapelle', *Die Musikforschung* 8 (1955), 432-7.

¹⁶ See Jeppesen, La Frottola, i. 124.

with him (no. 50, para. 1). In his next letter to Aaron he sent regards to 'la Signoria del nobilissimo Messer Camillo' (no. 51, para. 4). Unfortunately, the letters that would tell us who he is are missing. He may be the 'Magnifico Messer Camillo Michele Vinitiano' listed among the 'cantori a liuto' in Aaron's *Lucidario* of 1545 (Book IV, fo.  $31^{v}$ ). The form of address indicates that he is not a professional singer but a nobleman (perhaps related to Sebastiano Michiel, if not one of his sons) who practised music as a cultivated amateur.

## Campeggio, Cardinal. See under Victorio.

Cantora, Lucretia. See under Pepoli, Camillo di.

#### Casali, Giambattista

Mentioned in nos. 25, 46, 98.

Giambattista Casali, a native of Bologna born c.1490, was an apostolic notary who spent his entire career in the diplomatic service. In January of 1525 Clement VII sent him to London to explain the new alliance with France. He may already have been known to Henry VIII because his brother Gregorio was English ambassador to the Pope. In December 1525 Henry named Giambattista his ambassador to Venice. He was then about thirty-five years old, and Marino Sanudo, the great Venetian chronicler, judged him 'very inept and inexperienced in state affairs'. His main tasks were to conclude the anti-imperial league signed at Cognac in May 1526 and later to aid Henry's secretary Richard Croke in collecting scholarly and legal opinions favourable to Henry in the matter of the impending divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Casali was elected Bishop of Belluno in 1527 but never succeeded in obtaining possession of his diocese; his competitor was a Venetian, Giovanni Barozzi, and the Venetian senate, which had jurisdiction, was unwilling to favour a 'foreigner'. In 1534 Henry VIII decided to send Casali on a delicate diplomatic mission to the Vaivode of Transylvania, claimant to the Hungarian throne. Casali was captured by imperial agents shortly after leaving Venice in April 1535. His captivity, lasting until May 1536, broke his health, and he died in Bologna between September and October 1536.¹⁷

Casali was keenly interested in music, and especially in Greek music. He is first mentioned in the Correspondence in a letter of Spataro of 30 June 1529; Spataro asked Del Lago to give the enclosure to a young Bolognese named Allexandro who was in the service of 'el reverendo episcopo da Caxale' but who lived in the house of Adrian Willaert (no. 25, para. 2). In a later letter, of autumn 1532, Spataro told Aaron about a gathering in Bologna in the home of 'Reverendo Monsignore da Caxale nostro bolognese', ambassador to Venice of the English king. The Bishop, having in mind the marvellous effects of Greek music, asked whether compositions could be written in other than the ordinary diatonic genus, and a lively discussion ensued (no. 46, para. 1). At about the same time Casali arranged a luncheon in Venice, to which his messenger, Bernardino da Pavia, invited Adrian Willaert and Giovanni del Lago. The latter was asked to bring his

¹⁷ The above account is drawn from L. Cajani, 'Casali, Giambattista', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, xxi (1978), 85-8.

division of the three genera and was promised a display of books on music by ancient authors (no. 98).

Casali must have known Greek: he borrowed four Greek manuscripts from the library of San Marco in September 1527. It is very likely that the manuscripts of Greek music theory that he showed his guests were also borrowed from San Marco; unfortunately, the loan-records for the period October 1527 to 1545 are lost.¹⁸

Spataro corresponded with Casali: he had lent him his copy of Gafurio's *Theorica*, which Casali neglected to return when he left Bologna, and he wanted to remind Casali of his promise to send him Fogliano's *Musica theorica*.¹⁹ Spataro suggested that Aaron introduce himself to Casali when he delivered Spataro's letter (no. 46, para. 4).

## Castellanus, Petrus. See Pietro de San Zoannepolo.

#### Cavalaro, Nicolò (Nicolao Mantovano)

Mentioned in nos. 20, 30, 32-3, 36, 38-9, 49, 55, 58-9.

Nicolò Cavalaro was a pupil of Spataro. Dates on his life are sparse. He was a singer at San Petronio in Bologna from October 1527 to May 1531.²⁰ In August 1542, when he acquired a parcel of land in Bologna, he was called 'cantore e Maestro di cappella della chiesa di Bologna', that is, the Cathedral. In 1551 he succeeded Domenico Ferrabosco as *maestro* at San Petronio. He died on 28 November 1558.²¹

Cavalaro was one of the 'musici bolognesi', and probably among the sharper theoretical minds: in 1545 he commissioned a copy of a Latin translation of Ptolemy's *Harmonics* by the humanist Giovanni Battista Augio.²²

In 1529 Spataro asked Del Lago to send him letters addressed 'to my dear Messer Nicolao Mantoano, accomplished musician. In Bologna by the public schools' (no. 20, para. 5). He promised to explain the reason in another letter, but to the best of our knowledge never did so.

In 1531, when Spataro resumed correspondence with Aaron after a hiatus of several years, he sent him a psalm for five voices by 'one of our singers and a disciple of mine, Nicolò Cavalaro; others call him "mantuano"; he is an agreeable person, young, and very gifted in practical music and in theory' (no. 30, para. 12). Aaron responded with a composition for Nicolò (no. 32, para. 3). By the next letter Spataro sent greetings from Nicolò, 'our common friend' (no. 33, para. 1). In July 1533 Spataro sent Aaron a six-part work by Nicolò (no. 55, para. 6), and in August he reminded Aaron that Nicolò was still waiting to hear his opinion about it (no. 59, para. 4).

¹⁸ Coggiola, 'Il prestito di manoscritti', p. 47. On Del Lago's interest in Greek theory, perhaps stimulated by the ambassador, see Ch. 7.

¹⁹ On the possibility that Casali was the patron of Fogliano, see under the latter.

²⁰ Gaspari, 'Memorie risguardanti la storia dell'arte musicale in Bologna al XVI secolo', in *Musica e musicisti*, p. 158.

²¹ Lodovico Frati, 'Per la storia della musica in Bologna,' pp. 471-2.

²² See Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, p. 123. The manuscript is now in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan.

## Cavazzoni, Marc'Antonio

Recipient of nos. 2 and 14.

Mentioned in nos. 6, 13, 16, 17, 19, 23, 29, 30.

Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, born in Bologna c.1485, had a long and varied career; he has been placed in Urbino, Ferrara, Venice, Rome (where he was greatly admired by Leo X), and possibly France: in 1526 he received permission to accompany the Venetian ambassador to France. His career as singer at San Marco spanned the years 1517 to 1569; he was acting choirmaster during Willaert's absences and in the interim period before Zarlino was installed. Outside Venice his greatest renown was as a harpsichordist and organist, which was one reason why his fame spread quickly and he changed positions and patrons easily. The Procurators of San Marco seem to have been generous in granting him leave of absence. In 1523 he brought out his only publication, a book of ricercari, motets, and chansons for organ. Willaert named him an executor in all four of his wills. In June 1569 Cavazzoni was given permission to go to Brescia to recover his health, and he probably died shortly thereafter.²³

The earliest dated letter in the Correspondence, of 1 August 1517, is from Spataro to Cavazzoni. It is a copy in a contemporary hand and therefore lacks an address (no. 2). From the first paragraph it would seem that Spataro and Cavazzoni have been in correspondence for some time; Spataro probably knew Cavazzoni during the latter's boyhood in Bologna and may even have been his teacher. From the letter we can gather that Cavazzoni had an interest in music theory and in difficult compositions; he wanted an explanation of the obscure canonic directions in Spataro's motet 'Ubi opus est facto' and his 'Missa Da pacem'. In 1523 Cavazzoni was in Brescia. Spataro wanted to write to him to ask for the return of his letters (to add to his collection) but did not know how to reach him. He therefore wrote to Aaron and asked him to leave his letter for Cavazzoni at the home of 'that Venetian gentleman who has assumed an office in Brescia', thinking he would know how to find Cavazzoni (no. 6, para. 10).²⁴

Cavazzoni played an important role in the debate on Willaert's chromatic duo, which he must have discussed with Willaert in person. In a letter to Aaron, Spataro praised the wisdom of 'Messer Marco Antonio nostro', who, aware of the subtlety of the problem, preferred to reserve judgement rather than criticize the work (no. 13, para. 3). Cavazzoni thereupon wrote directly to Spataro, who replied to him on 10 November 1524 (no. 14); the letter is addressed simply to Venice. By this time Cavazzoni had formed an opinion about the duo and argued with Aaron over it. He thought it an ingenious undertaking and worthy of great praise, though he conceded that the composition was a little harsh because the intervals were not exact. Cavazzoni apparently claimed that it could be played on the lute because all its frets formed minor semitones.²⁵

In September 1528 Cavazzoni was still in Venice, since Spataro wished to use

²⁵ On this point, see no. 14 n. 5.

him as an intermediary in sending his treatise on mensural music to Del Lago, whom he did not entirely trust (no. 16, para. 4). Cavazzoni assured Spataro that Del Lago was trustworthy (no. 17, para. 5; the letter itself is lost, as is all further correspondence between Spataro and Cavazzoni). On the basis of other letters of Spataro, we can determine that Cavazzoni was in Venice in February 1529 (no. 19, para. 5) and May 1529 (no. 23, para. 1). He may have been absent later in the year, because Spataro discovered that two letters he sent to Del Lago in care of Cavazzoni had not arrived (no. 29, para. 1). Nevertheless, Spataro intended to write Cavazzoni to complain about Del Lago's conduct (para. 9). In January of 1531, not having heard from Aaron in some time and fearing for his health, Spataro had almost decided to write to Cavazzoni to investigate the reason (no. 30, para. 1). This is the last time Cavazzoni's name appears in the Correspondence.

## Cavriolo, Count Giovanni Paolo da, and his son Lorenzo Mentioned in no. 64.

In 1539, after he had moved to Bergamo and become a friar, Aaron visited Brescia for a month. He ate meals twice a week with the 'conte Zanpaulo da Cavriolo' and his son Lorenzo, and twice a week with the Martinengo family, 'all good singers', and happily passed the month in music-making. 'Conte Fortunale da Marteningo' treated him like a brother (no. 64, para. 2). All these men belong to two patrician families of Brescia, Capriolo ('Cavriolo' is a dialect form) and Martinengo. Aaron's *Lucidario* of 1545 was dedicated to 'conte Fortunato Martinengo'. And the first name on the list of 'cantori al liuto' is that of 'Il Signor Conte Ludovico Martinengo' (fo. 31^v).

In the dedication of his *Scintille di musica* (Brescia, 1533), Giovanni Maria Lanfranco mentions 'i colmi di virtù, sostentamenti di virtuosi, et Prencipi della Academia Bresciana i due Magnifici fratelli M. Antonio et M. Giovan Paolo Cavrioli' (fo. ii^v).

## Cimatore, Michele

#### Mentioned in no. 58.

In August 1533, Spataro wrote to Aaron to say that he had a new, much better, assistant to help him with the clerics (para. 5). This was Michele Cimatore, who was elected 'novo mastro de canto' at San Petronio in April 1533. Spataro, however, had no intention of resigning, even at the age of seventy-four; Cimatore succeeded only on Spataro's death.²⁶

## Corbelli (Corbegli), Gregorio

Recipient of no. 105.

Mentioned in nos. 63, 66-7.

Gregorio Corbelli was a friar in the Venetian convent of the Order of the Crutched Friars, the same order that Aaron joined. Aaron corresponded with him after he left Venice, but only one of the letters has survived (26 December 1538; no. 105). They seem to have been on terms of some familiarity; Aaron calls him

²³ Oscar Mischiati, 'Cavazzoni, Marc'Antonio', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, xxiii (1979), 58–62. This article offers a number of new sources on Cavazzoni's life.

²⁴ Cavazzoni held the secular equivalent of a benefice in Brescia, the 'contestabelleria della porta de S. Alessandro'; in 1564 he transferred it to his nephew; ibid., p. 60.

²⁶ Frank Tirro, 'Cimatore, Michele', The New Grove Dictionary, iv. 403.

'tu' and sends greetings to his mother, 'even though she doesn't write'. It is from this letter that we learn the ignominious fate of Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, who was forced to flee Brescia after having violated a boy. Gregorio is to read this passage to Del Lago and 'Fra Giovanbatista nostro' and to attend to his own honour to avoid Lanfranco's fate. Corbelli kept in touch with Del Lago, as we learn from no. 63, para. 1 and no. 66, para. 19. However, he failed Aaron in July 1540 when he left his convent and never returned (no. 67).

## Cornaro (Corner), Giacomo

## Mentioned in no. 61.

In the year following Sebastiano Michiel's death, Aaron spent some time in Padua. In his letter to Del Lago of 12 May 1535 he describes a conversation with Giovanni Sanese (q.v.) over dinner in the home of the 'Magnificent Captain'. At the end he tells Del Lago that he would return to Venice soon, but the Magnificent Captain is reluctant to let him go (no. 61). The Captain must be Giacomo Corner (or Cornaro, as the name was frequently spelt at that time), a member of one of the most prominent and wealthy Venetian patrician families. He was born in 1483 and was a nephew of Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus. In 1515 he became a Senator. As was the Venetian custom, he filled a number of government posts: in 1535–6 he was Captain of Padua; in June 1537 he was named Procurator of San Marco. He died in 1542.²⁷ Aaron's stay in Padua was probably not of long duration, yet long enough to send a letter back to Venice. He may have been staying with some friars, for he remarks that 'these friars have done me great honour'.

Cornaro, Giovanni. See under Sanese, Giovanni.

'Crutched Friars, Reverend General of the'. See under Veturio.

### Da Legge, Giovanni

Author of nos. 72 and 75.

Recipient of nos. 68-71, 73-4, 76.

Giovanni da Legge is one of the minor musicians with whom Del Lago corresponded, addressing him as 'dignissimo sonator d'organo'. Up till now nothing has been known of him outside the present Correspondence; Jeppesen suggested that he might be identical with the Venetian patrician Giovanni da Legge, procurator of San Marco, to whom Annibale Padovano dedicated his first book of ricercari in 1556.²⁸

Both Da Legge's letters are written from Rome, to which he travelled on family business. While there and in Florence, he searched for music-books that Del Lago wished to obtain, perhaps even making copies of some manuscripts (no. 75, para. 1). In return Del Lago favoured him with the explanations of certain compositions celebrated for their complexities. If we were to judge from Del Lago's letters to Da Legge, the latter would seem to be nearly unlettered in music; Del Lago explains the mensural system (no. 68), imperfection and the rule

²⁷ See G. Gullino, 'Corner, Giacomo', Dizionario biografico degli italiani, xxix (1983), 206–8.
²⁸ 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 5 n. 3.

'like before like' (no. 69), the impossibility of imperfecting a dotted note (no. 70), the *coniuncta* (no. 71), mutation from *fa* to *mi*, the reasons why the flat was invented, the division of the tone, the assignment of mode to a chant with the range of a fifth, and the use of certain mensuration signs (no. 73), how to recognize perfect mensuration in the absence of signs and the reason for alteration (no. 74), and advice on counterpoint (no. 76). These letters are dated between January 1520 and December 1523, but in large part they are fictitious and were written considerably later (see Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his *Epistole*'). It is highly unlikely that Giovanni da Legge, being a 'distinguished organist', would have needed these disquisitions. What then would he have thought if he were to see Del Lago's letters in print? The answer is that Giovanni da Legge was safely dead by 1525, and Del Lago was free to use the cover of correspondence with him to treat whatever topic he wished to include in his collected letters.

Giovanni da Legge did indeed belong to the patrician family Da Leze (to use the Venetian spelling). He was the illegitimate son of Ser Donado da Leze, son of Priamo, who held various offices in the Signoria, culminating in the Lord Lieutenancy of Cyprus, to which he was appointed on 14 May 1525.²⁹ Giovanni da Legge is mentioned twice in Sanudo's diaries. On 24 May 1521 the Signoria instructed its *oratore* at the papal court to assist Giovanni in recovering the debt owed Ser Donado by the Pope.³⁰ This is the 'family business' to which Da Legge alludes in his letter of 24 December 1520 (no. 72); it apparently kept him in Rome for some time.

The second reference is to the sad end of Da Legge's brief career:

By private letters [from Lorenzo Orio, Venetian ambassador in London] it is heard that Zuan da Leze (the natural son of Ser Donado da Leze, Lord Lieutenant of Cyprus), who played most excellently on the organ (*organo*), went to England anticipating that the King would give him a stipend, and having played, it seems that the performance did not please his Majesty; so Zuan da Leze hung himself—a very horrible case, and of evil nature....

Having written above that Zuam da Leze, the natural son of Ser Donado, hanged himself in London, as our ambassador writes in date .., the particulars are as follows:

He was a consummate musician, most especially on the '*clavicimbalum*' [Sanudo gives *clavicembano*], and having had a very perfect instrument made here, he went with it by land to England at a cost exceeding 100 ducats, believing that the King, who delights in music, would give him a salary, as he did to the Crutched friar of Cà Memo, for whom he provided largely, and subsequently Memo departed for fear of his life, and is said to be in Portugal.

Zuam da Leze on arriving in England, played before the King, who it seems was not much pleased, and made him a present of 20 nobles, equal to .. ducats; so Zuam de Leze in despair, being at table in company, stabbed himself in the breast to commit suicide, which was prevented. They dressed the wound, and put him to bed; but he rose in the night, and hung himself with his dagger-girdle (*con la cintura di la sua cortella*)—a very lamentable case. He was .. years old, highly accomplished, and dearly loved by his father, who has no other children, and is Lord Lieutenant of Cyprus.³¹

²⁹ Marino Sanudo, *I diarii*, ed. Rinaldo Fulin *et al.*, xxxviii, col. 290. He died in 1526 (ibid., xliii, col. 198).

³⁰ Ibid., xxx, col. 286.

³¹ Ibid., xl, cols. 532-4, both notes under the date 24 Dec. 1525. The English translation is

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The tragic end of the young and gifted musician (probably due more to Henry VIII's suspicion of Venetians than to Da Legge's lack of talent) touched the imagination of the writer Marco Mantova, who used the story in a novella to illustrate 'the avarice of modern princes'.³² Mantova surely exaggerates when he calls 'Gianetto Da Legge' the most outstanding player of the clavicimbano in Italy, whose fame had spread to Hungary and France, and he certainly alters the biographical facts in making Da Legge's father a rich merchant who loses all his wealth in a shipwreck and dies leaving his only son a pauper, but the essence of the story remains intact. And perhaps the reason he gives for Da Legge's suicide really is true. According to Mantova, Giovanni was accompanied to England by the maker of his instrument. When it became clear that the musician was not going to be taken into Henry's service, the two decided to bid the king farewell, leaving the harpsichord behind as a gift. Whereupon they were called back by the king's chamberlain and treasurer and given gifts: twenty-five florins to Giovanni and two hundred to the instrument maker. Giovanni was crushed, 'thinking that the king should have had more regard for his talent and esteemed him above all the instruments in the world, these being mute and pieces of wood if they have no one to play them', and this was the reason he decided to kill himself. The king, upon hearing the terrible news, was overcome by grief and exclaimed that he would have given not just two hundred florins but his whole realm and his crown to prevent the tragic outcome.

Mantova's *novella*, besides illustrating the 'avarice of modern princes', throws into relief the high regard for the virtuoso that characterizes the Renaissance. No longer is musical performance seen as a mechanical art: the performer takes his place beside the theorist and the composer.

## Dall'Aquila, Marco

Mentioned in no. 14.

Marco dall'Aquila, born c.1480, was a lutenist who lived in Venice. He applied to the Signoria for a privilege to publish lute tablatures in 1505, but no publication is known. A number of his works exist in manuscript and show him to be a master of an idiomatic lute style. Hé was highly praised by his contemporaries, and in 1537 Pietro Aretino called him 'my master Marco Dall'Aquila'.³³

In 1524 Spataro and Aaron were debating Willaert's chromatic duo. Aaron consulted 'uno maestro Marco da l'Aquila, sonatore digno de leuto', a 'very

from Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, relating to English Affairs, existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy, ed. Rawdon Brown, iii (London, 1869), 515. Sanudo frequently left dates and monetary equivalents blank.

³² The original edn. is entitled: A Monsignore Messer Paolo Francesco Palavicino. Della avaritia. The work has no colophon, and not even the author's name. On the title-page of the copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana of Venice is written in a contemporary hand: 'Novella dello eccellentissimo M. Marco da Mantova'. For an edn., see Novelle di Marco Mantova scrittore del sec. XVI novellamente stampate a fac-simile del testo originale, ed. Gaetano Romagnoli (Scelta di curiosità inedite o rare dal secolo XIII al XIX 22; Bologna, 1862), pp. 59–72.

³³ Arthur J. Ness, 'Dall'Aquila, Marco', The New Grove Dictionary, v. 162.

intelligent man', who confirmed Spataro's opinion. Spataro was gratified but not a little chagrined to think that Aaron would consult a mere instrumentalist on theoretical matters (para. 2).

## Dalle Anelle, Antonio

Mentioned in no. 12.

Don Antonio dalle Anelle, a Bolognese, brought a letter from Aaron to Spataro in 1524 (para. 1).

## Dalle Arme, Gasparo

Mentioned in nos. 6 and 29.

Gasparo dalle Arme is one of the many messengers Spataro used to send his letters to Venice. In April 1523 Spataro claimed that he always had bad luck when he sent letters by Gasparo (no. 6, para. 11). He was still using him as a messenger in November 1529, with the same distressing results (no. 29, para. 1).

Gasparo was perhaps related to Francesco dall'Arme, a Bolognese to whom Pietro Aretino wrote in 1537.³⁴

## Dall'Organo, Francesco

Mentioned in no. 16.

Francesco dall'Organo was a canon at San Petronio who had formerly been in the service of the Bishop of Pola and governor of Bologna, Altobello Averoldi. Spataro asked him to send on some letters to the bishop's house in Venice in 1528 (no. 16, para. 1). Spataro gives no hint whether Francesco is an organist, as his name implies.³⁵

#### Daniel

Mentioned in no. 94.

Daniel was a messenger between Del Lago and Francesco Lupino in Fano in 1541.

Del Lago, Giovanni (Pre Zanetto). See Ch. 6.

## Faelli, Benedetto di Ettore

Mentioned in no. 9.

Faelli was a Bolognese bookseller and printer, whose editions of music theory included Burzio's *Musices opusculum* of 1487, Aaron's *Libri tres de institutione harmonica* of 1516, and Spataro's *Errori de Franchino Gafurio* of 1521.³⁶ On 6 November 1523 Spataro informed Aaron that 'maestro Benedecto libraro' had died (para. 2).

³⁴ See Aretino, *Selected Letters*, trans. George Bull (Harmondsworth, 1976), pp. 88–9. Bull was unable to discover anything more about him.

³⁵ Antonio Squarcialupi was also known as Antonio degli Organi, and had a son Francesco, likewise an organist, who succeeded his father as organist of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence; since he died in 1509, the two cannot be identical. See Frank A. D'Accone, 'Alessandro Coppini and Bartolomeo degli Organi: Two Florentine Composers of the Renaissance', *Analecta musicologica* 4 (1967), 38–76 at 46.

³⁶ See Claudio Sartori, *Dizionario degli editori musicali italiani* (Biblioteca di bibliografia italiana 32; Florence, 1958), p. 23. Burzio's volume was done at Faelli's expense, but set in type by Ugo de Rugeriis.

#### Fogliano, Lodovico

Mentioned in nos. 46, 51, 60.

Few dates in Fogliano's life are secure. According to *The New Grove Dictionary*, he was born in Modena in the late fifteenth century and was a brother of Giacomo Fogliano, organist at the Cathedral until his death in 1548. He was a singer in the Cathedral in 1503 and in 1513–14 a singer in the Cappella Giulia. He seems then to have returned to Modena, where a manuscript containing a mass of his calls him and Giacomo 'olim cathedralis mutinae magistri', although there is no record of his service as *maestro*. He is thought to have died c.1539.³⁷

Claude Palisca has recently published an excerpt from a letter of 1580 that sheds further light on Fogliano. In it the writer reports on a conversation with Zarlino, who said that Fogliano 'was neither priest, friar, nor monk, and he never practiced music in public, but . . . lived in Venice for a very long time . . . [F]or someone who went slowly into musical things, he wrote better than anyone else on the subject'.³⁸ Fogliano's presence in Venice helps to explain why this singer and composer became a speculative music theorist. It must have been here where he learnt Greek—and well enough to consider translating Aristotle, as we know from a letter to him by Pietro Aretino, written in 1537.³⁹ His knowledge of Aristotle informed the method and subject of his only published treatise, *Musica theorica* (1529).⁴⁰

A study of Aretino's correspondence yielded a letter written by Giacomo Fogliano confirming that Lodovico was his brother and suggesting that he had died shortly before the letter was written, on 7 May 1542. Overlooked by music historians, this letter was published in the second book of Lettere scritte al Signor Pietro Aretino da molti signori, comunità, donne di valore, poeti et altri eccellentissimi spiriti (Venice, 1551), p. 245:⁴¹

Al divin signor Pietro Aretino, Signor mio osservandissimo.

Signor Pietro mio osservandissimo: Piacerà a V.S. di dare a messer Francesco Maria Calora, nostro onorevole cittadino modonese e presente portatore di questa mia, quello libro composto già da messer Lodovico Fogliano mio fratello, rimasole nelle mani dopo la

³⁷ Henry W. Kaufmann, 'Fogliani, Lodovico', *The New Grove Dictionary*, vi. 687. Is he possibly the 'Ludovico da Modena' who was a singer in the chapel of Ercole d'Este in 1493, 1503 and 1504, who may be identical with the singer 'Ludovigo da Fulgano' listed in the years 1499–1501? It is not uncommon for the 'l' and 'g' to be reversed at this time (see e.g. the letters by Giovanni da Legge, nos. 72 and 75). The names appear in the 'Chronological List of Musicians Active at Ferrara, 1377–1505' in Lewis Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara* 1400–1505 (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 1984), pp. 314–28 at 325–8. Kaufmann overlooked the appearance of Fogliano's name as early as 1494 in the records of the Cathedral of Modena. See Gino Roncaglia, *La cappella musicale del Duomo di Modena* (Historiae musicae cultores 5; Florence, 1957), p. 14.

³⁸ Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought, pp. 235-6.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 235. The Bibliothèque nationale preserves his manuscript of excerpts from Aristotle and Averroës' commentaries (MS lat. 6757).

⁴⁰ See ibid., pp. 236–44.

⁴¹ Both books were edited by Teodorico Landoni as vol. 132 of the series 'Scelta di curiosità letterarie inedite o rare dal secolo XIII al XVII' (Bologna, 1873-5); see pt. 4, pp. 47-8. For Aretino's letter to Lodovico, see Lettere: il primo e il secondo libro, ed. Francesco Flora, in Tutte le opere di Pietro Aretino (I Classici Mondadori; Verona, 1960), pp. 327-8.

morte sua, sì come l'altro giorno, la sua buona mercè, mi fece intendere: et appresso la prego per l'osservanza, che il predetto mio fratello portava a quella et io ancora porto e per sua innata cortesia, si degni d'informarlo come possa sapere se libro, o scrittura, o altro de mio fratello fosse restato, o in casa dove egli morì, o altrove e come il possa riavere: che facendo di bisogno darà in Venegia sufficiente cauzione de recarmelo fedelmente, acciò che io possa almeno con la lettura d'alcuno frutto di suo ingegno, o con la memoria de cosa stata di lui mitigar il dolore che a ragione della perdita di così fatto fratello ho sentito e sento. Il qual frutto se serà per aventura riputato meritare di essere messo in luce dal divino giudicio di quella, dal qual solamente il mondo tutto contentandosi d'essere giudicato s'appaga pienamente, noi potremo entrare in pensiero di non invidiare longo tempo a gli uomini cosa, che V.S. abbia stimata degna d'essere da loro veduta e specialmente dovendo quindi fama perpetua et onore seguire alla memoria del mio caro et onorato fratello. Et a V.S. umilmente e con tutto il core mi raccomando, offerendomi prontissimo, così valendo le divine sue virtù, ad ogni menomo suo cenno a fare ogni cosa che per me si possa, che Dio ce la conservi lungamente.

In Modena il di vII di Maggio 1542.

Di V.S. servitor Giacopo Fogliano

From this letter it appears that Aretino had written to inform Giacomo that he was in possession of 'the book written' by Lodovico, and Giacomo has sent a messenger to retrieve it and other books or writings of his brother that might have remained in the house where he was living or elsewhere. He also asks Aretino's judgement on the possibility of publishing the book.

We know that Fogliano had written a book entitled *Refugio de' dubitanti*, completed by 1538, the year in which the publisher Caterino Ferri sought a privilege for it.⁴² Henry Kaufmann assumed that it was a musical treatise, now lost.⁴³ In fact, the 'doubts' were philosophical. On 5 October 1538 Nicolò Franco, Aretino's one-time secretary and a good friend of Antonio Gardane, began a letter to Fogliano as follows:

Se mai fu dato battesimo ad opra alcuna per mano del vero San Giovanni, è stato data a la vostra. Onde l'invidia non le potrà opponere che l'habbia mancato del sale in bocca. Ella è veramente quel refugio de dubitanti, che voi chiamate, poi che in ogni parte di lei se veggono i più gran dubbi resolversi con le più gran facilità: di sorte, che la nostra anima fatta dubbiosa da la natura, si fa risoluta dal saper vostro.⁴⁴

Franco goes on to praise Fogliano for his ability to clarify difficult philosophical questions and his modesty in presenting his ideas. Just what these philosophical questions consisted of is not clear; Franco complains (perhaps tongue in cheek) that Fogliano omitted an explanation of why Apollo, with his long locks, never underwent the barber's shears, why Janus has two faces, why Proserpine spends Carnival with her husand in the underworld but Easter with her mother in heaven, and other mythological puzzles. But then Franco admits that he

⁴² Roncaglia, *La cappella musicale del Duomo di Modena*, pp. 14–15, refers to the letter, in the Archivio di Stato at Modena.

⁴³ 'Fogliani, Lodovico', p. 687.

⁴⁴ Le pistole vulgari di M. Nicolò Franco (Venice, 1539), fo. 111^r. The book was printed by Antonio Gardane, who also published another work by Franco.

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understands philosophy about as well as an ass understands the sound of a lyre. For this reason he declines to write a verse in praise of the work, suggesting that Luigi Querini, who is well acquainted with these matters, 'will give you that praise that I am not capable of'. The book, then, was not yet published, and the 'Refugio de' dubitanti' must be the manuscript that remained in Aretino's hands after Lodovico's death.

Zarlino remarks on the fact that Foglino had no public position and was not a cleric; he must therefore have been supported by a patron. Spataro's letter to Aaron of autumn 1532 (no. 46) allows us to suggest who that patron may have been. In it Spataro tells Aaron that he is writing to Bishop Casali in Venice to remind him that he had promised to send him the treatise by Lodovico Fogliano (no. 46, para. 4). We know that Casali was avidly interested in Greek music and that he read Greek (see the entry for Casali). He would have been precisely the person to appreciate Fogliano's talents. That he was to send Spataro Fogliano's treatise, three years after its publication, may be regarded as circumstantial evidence for his patronage; the treatise itself bears no dedication. It was in Spataro's hands by March 1533, when he told Aaron he hoped to find the time to read it, because a glance at it told him that something could be learnt from it (no. 51, para. 3). In a later letter he refers to Fogliano's discussion of the comma (no. 60, para. 11). After Casali's death in 1536, Fogliano may have been supported by Aretino, whose generosity was legendary.

## Francesco da Cremona

## Mentioned in no. 42.

Francesco da Cremona, an Observant Franciscan friar and a great lover of music, visited Spataro in July 1532 on his way to the Holy Land. Spataro recommended him to Aaron (para. 4).

## Francesco da Milano (Francesco milanese)

### Mentioned in no. 49.

Francesco Canova da Milano was born on 18 August 1497. He was the most esteemed lutenist, and the most prolific composer for the lute, of the sixteenth century, and his varied career was spent mainly at the courts of princes, secular as well as ecclesiastic, including three popes, Leo X, Clement VII, and Paul III. He died on 15 April 1543.⁴⁵ Francesco seems to have accompanied Clement VII to Bologna for his meeting with Charles V in January 1533. While there he met various Bolognese musicians, including Victorio (q.v.), whom he encouraged in his desire to go to Rome. Spataro calls him 'Francesco milanese, optimo sonatore de leuto' (no. 49, para. 6).

## Friars

A number of friars make their appearance in the Correspondence. Those who are known as musicians have been listed under their names. The rest have been gathered under this entry. Spataro mentions an Austin friar in nos. 6 and 9. He hoped to persuade this learned man to translate his treatise on the *sesquialtera* relation into Latin in 1523, but he had to wait till after Lent because the friar was preaching daily in Santo Stefano in Bologna (no. 6, para. 9). He is probably the same Austin friar who was eager to buy Aaron's *Toscanello* (no. 9, para. 1).

All the other friars appear as messengers: in 1523 a Crutched friar brought Spataro a letter from Aaron (no. 7, para. 9); a 'frate del diavolo' is suspected of failing to deliver Muradori's compositions to Aaron (no. 33, para. 1). The main letter-carriers are, however, Canons Regular of San Salvatore, who served the churches of that name in Bologna and in Venice. It was the practice of this Congregation to transfer its members to different convents.⁴⁶ This is perhaps one reason why Spataro rarely found the friars satisfactory as messengers. For example, Frate Allexandro, mentioned in nos. 46, 49, and 74, was in Bologna in 1525–7, in Treviso in 1530–1, in Mantua in 1533, and again in Bologna in 1534. He is not listed in the general acts of the order in 1528–9 and 1532.⁴⁷

The following friars of this order are mentioned in the Correspondence:

(i) 'Sacristano de Sancto Salvatore'

Mentioned in nos. 19 and 20.

When one of Spataro's letters went astray in 1529, Spataro asked Del Lago to check with the sacristan of San Salvatore in Venice (no. 19, para. 1), a great friend of Del Lago's (no. 20, para. 2).

### (ii) 'Priore de Ferrara'

Mentioned in nos. 19 and 20.

The Priore de Ferrara was the prior of the convent in Ferrara. In January 1529 he was in Bologna, visiting the affiliated church of San Salvatore, and was to send one of Spataro's letters to the Venetian church of San Salvatore (no. 19, para. 1). It finally reached the sacristan of San Salvatore in February (no. 20, para. 2).

## (iii) Fra Sebastiano da Ferrara

## Mentioned in nos. 18-21.

Spataro's letter to Del Lago of 4 January 1529 was sent by Fra Sebastiano (see no. 18, para. 1). When it did not arrive on time, Spataro went to the friar to complain. Sebastiano explained that he had given it to the Prior, who was on his way to Venice (no. 19, para. 1). It finally turned up in Venice, but to Spataro's chagrin, it had been opened. 'If one can't trust friars,' he writes to Del Lago, 'I don't know whom to trust. I shall try to find another way in the future' (no. 20, para. 2). Fra Sebastiano was also in correspondence with Del Lago (see no. 21, para. 5).

⁴⁶ See Oscar Mischiati, *La prassi musicale presso i Canonici regolari del Ss. Salvatore*, p. 13. The Congregation was greatly expanded towards the end of the 16th c. Among its illustrious musicians were Giovanni Maria Artusi and Teodoro Clinio. Through the records of this order Mischiati was able to identify the scribe of a large complex of manuscript scores in Bologna and connect the dates and locations noted in the manuscripts with the movements of the scribe between the various convents of the congregation.

⁴⁷ Venice, Archivio di Stato, Corp. Rel. Soppr., S. Salvatore, Busta 42, fos. 347^v ff.

⁴⁵ On his life and works, see H. Colin Slim, 'Francesco da Milano (1497-1543/44): A Biobibliographical Study', *Musica disciplina* 18 (1964), 63-84 and 19 (1965), 109-28.

## (iv) 'Frate de Sancto Salvatore'

Mentioned in no. 29.

Spataro gave this unnamed friar his letter of 23 August 1529 to deliver to Del Lago (no. 29, para. 1).

(v) Frate Tomaso de Sancto Salvatore

Mentioned in nos. 30-1.

In January 1531 Frate Tomaso brought Spataro Aaron's letter and some music from Venice (no. 30, para. 1). Spataro's reply was sent by the same friar (no. 31, para. 1).

## (vi) Frate Allexandro

Mentioned in nos. 46, 49, 74.

In the autumn of 1532 Spataro sent no. 46 to Aaron via Frate Allexandro. He does not, however, seem to have been a reliable messenger. In January 1533 Spataro complains about his bad behaviour (no. 49, para. 1), and that is the last time he is mentioned in Spataro's letters. A 'Frate Alessandro' is discussed in Del Lago's letter of 16 June 1523 to Da Legge (no. 74): Del Lago alludes to an argument between him and Da Legge, but judges it not worthy of the rancour it caused. However, this passage is untrustworthy as a biographical source since it seems to have been borrowed from a letter of Spataro's to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni (no. 14), in which the falling-out occurred between Cavazzoni and Pietro Aaron (see Ch. 6, pp. 136–7).

## Gafurio, Franchino

Mentioned in nos. 2, 4, 11, 15–17, 22, 27, 32, 36, 45, 49, 85–6, 102.

Franchino Gafurio, the maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Milan, was still alive at the beginning of the Correspondence. In August 1517 Spataro was busy reading Nicolaus Wollick's Enchiridion musices, which Gafurio had sent him for criticism, praising it highly. Spataro wondered if they would remain friends after his answer, although they had corresponded for twenty-four years (no. 2, para. 4). He had good cause to worry: his eighteen letters criticizing Gafurio's De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum of 1518 led to a bitter pamphlet war, and Spataro told Aaron that he feared the same reaction from him, once he received Spataro's critique of the Toscanello (no. 5, para. 12). In his letter to Del Lago of 23 August 1529 Spataro tells how the controversy came about (no. 27, para. 2). With the passing of years, Spataro did not forget the drubbing he received from Gafurio: Aaron's rule of beginning and ending on a perfect consonance derives from that 'pazo et insensato Franchino' (no. 11, para. 4); Gafurio found 'many intolerable errors' in Spataro's 'Missa Maria Magdalena' but was a mediocre composer himself (no. 15, para. 1 and no. 16, para. 1). Yet when it came time to publish his treatise on sesquialtera, Spataro was willing for Aaron to change his intemperate remarks about Gafurio, but without altering the meaning (no. 32, para. 2). A decade after Gafurio's death, Spataro began to concede that some of his old adversary's positions were authoritative: rests cannot hide parallel octaves, as Gafurio teaches in his Practica musicae (no. 36, para. 4); the old mensuration-signs followed by Del Lago are not approved by Gafurio, among others (no. 45,

para. 3). By 1533 Spataro had mellowed so far that he could quote to Aaron Gafurio's 'beautiful and true words' on the stillness between musical sounds (no. 49, para. 2). Spataro was not done with Gafurio, however: he still intended to publish his *Appostille*, written in answer to the annotations Gafurio had made in Ramis's *Musica practica* (how this came about is described in no. 36, para. 11), and his *Epistole*, the exchanges between the two scholars (no. 22, para. 2). As Spataro remarked in a letter of 1529, Gafurio used to say that Spataro's letters were more than a letter, less than a treatise (no. 17, para. 15).

The only other person in the Correspondence who seems to have known Gafurio personally is Lorenzo Gazio (q.v.).

## Garganello, Giovanni Battista

Mentioned in nos. 55 and 58.

Spataro frequently sent letters to Venice by travelling friars, but it was more difficult to send packages. In 1533 he asked Aaron to return the treatise on mensural music. If Aaron had no messenger, he could give the packet to Alessandro degli Orazii, a merchant in Venice whose relatives in Bologna, Orazio and Antonio, Spataro had known for a long time. In case he should refuse, Aaron should take it to the shop of the Saraceni, merchants in Venice of Bolognese origin, with a covering letter to Giovanni Battista Garganello in Bologna. Garganello was a doctor of sacred and civil laws, and had a nephew who worked for the Saraceni (no. 55, para. 7). Aaron followed the latter course (no. 58, para. 5).

## Gazio (Gazo), Lorenzo

Author of nos. 85, 102, 107–9. Recipient of nos. 84, 86, 101, 103.

Mentioned in nos. 41, 61, 63-4.

Lorenzo Gazio is one of the persons hardly known outside the Correspondence. A native of Cremona, he was a Benedictine monk in the monastery of Santa Giustina in Padua. His nephew, Don Valeriano, was a monk in the Benedictine monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. Gazio knew Gafurio personally (no. 85, para. 3) and even boasted that Gafurio gave him his works to correct (no. 86, para. 4). Del Lago doubted this claim; the longest letter in the Correspondence (no. 86) is a breve-by-breve refutation of Gazio's disastrous attempt to resolve the tenor of Del Lago's 'Multi sunt vocati'. Gazio was so upset by the thought that Willaert had actually written a composition over this tenor that he went to Venice personally to dissuade the master from publishing it (no. 61, para. 2; no. 107, para. 1; no. 108, para. 1).

Gazio also corresponded with Aaron in 1534 about the calculation of the proportion between eight commas and a whole tone or a whole tone and nine commas (nos. 101-3).

Spataro too knew Gazio. In 1532 he told Aaron that he had been searching for Ramis's 'Tu lumen' for many years, saying that 'a certain monk, Don Lorenzo Gazio, has asked me for it many times; I want to use it to engage in a musical polemic with this disciple of Franchino so that just as I have crushed the head, the members too shall be destroyed' (no. 41, para. 6). The origin of the controversy with Gazio goes back to 1520 or earlier; Gafurio alludes to it in his *Apologia*... adversus Joannem Spatarium (Torino, 1520).⁴⁸

If the circle of correspondents around Spataro seems to have disdained the learning of Lorenzo Gazio, he nevertheless had supporters who were willing to praise him in print. Gafurio mentions him in his *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* (1518) as 'a monk of St. Justina and a very acute musician, [who] has diligently taught our concept of the measurement of this system [the tetrachord] in three genera'.⁴⁹ Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, in his *Scintille di musica* of 1533, called Gazio a man 'delle sistematiche dimensioni osservatissimo et della ragioni della prattica grande intelligente' (p. 45) and he credited to him the table of mensurations on pp. 46–50. Del Lago referred to this table in his letter to Aaron of 27 August 1539 (no. 63, para. 2). Aaron replied that he knew very well that the table was Lanfranco's own invention: it is not only out of order but it contains errors, and if Gazio is the author, he found it at the bottom of a drum (no. 64, para. 3).

Gazio would have been pleased to know that Cerone, in his *El melopeo y maestro* of 1613, listed as one of his authorities 'Don Laurencio Gazio Cremonense Monje de S. Benito'.⁵⁰

#### Giovanbattista, Fra. See under Corbelli, Gregorio.

Hector, Pre. See under Zuan Maria de Pre Hector.

Juliano. See Veludaro.

Julio. See Muradori.

Justiniano, Maestro

Mentioned in no. 9.

Maestro Justianiano was a bookseller in Bologna who sent Spataro six copies of Aaron's *Toscanello* with Aaron's letter in November 1523 (para. 1).

## Justinis, Pietro de

Author of no. 87.

Recipient of no. 88.

'Pre Pietro de Iustinis da Tricesimo' was a singer in the cathedral at Udine. In April 1540 he succeeded his teacher, Giovanni Bailly, as 'mansionario'.⁵¹ He sent Del Lago a motet and two Magnificat settings in 1534, asking for his 'judgement and correction'. He must have been quite young at the time, since he calls them 'fruits of a young tree'. Del Lago replied four years later with detailed criticisms, also of the works of Pietro's teacher Bailly (q.v.).

⁴⁸ See Ramis, Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 110.

⁴⁹ De harmonia, trans. Miller, p. 78.

⁵⁰ See F. Alberto Gallo, 'Il Melopeo di Pietro Cerone', *Quadrivium* 9 (1968), 111–26 at 121. Cerone probably took the reference from Lanfranco's treatise, which follows next in his list of authorities.

⁵¹ See Vale, 'La cappella musicale del Duomo di Udine', p. 103. He was still a singer in 1543. Since Vale does not furnish lists of singers, we do not know how long his employment lasted.

## Lanfranco, Giovanni Maria

Author of nos. 104 and 106.

Mentioned in nos. 66 and 105.

Lanfranco, a native of Terenzio, near Parma, born c.1490, was maestro di cappella at the Cathedral of Brescia from 1528 to about 1536, when he assumed the same position in Verona. In 1538, as we learn from Aaron's letter in this Correspondence (no. 105), Lanfranco had to flee his position in disgrace, rumour having it that he had violated a boy. He became an Augustinian monk in a poor monastery near Bergamo. After two years he seems to have been rehabilitated, for he returned to his native city to take up the duties of maestro di cappella at Santa Maria della Steccata, where he remained until his death in 1545. His Scintille di musica was published in Brescia in 1533.⁵²

There are two letters by Lanfranco in the Correspondence. The earlier one, of 20 October 1531 (no. 106), is addressed to Willaert. It is not clear why it ended up here, unless it is a copy; however, it bears Willaert's address on the back. This letter gives a good measure of the awe with which Willaert was regarded, even in his earliest years at San Marco. Lanfranco, curious about a puzzle-piece written by Spataro, had asked a friar friend of his to write to another friend in Bologna to see if he could obtain the resolution from Spataro (as a matter of pride, evidently, Lanfranco did not wish to address Spataro himself). To Lanfranco's acute embarrassment, the friar, being in Venice, went to Willaert and asked for the resolution. Willaert was offended, thinking that Lanfranco wanted to test his ingenuity at solving puzzles. In the letter, Lanfranco apologized profusely. Then, to make sure that he had Willaert's forgiveness, he asked him for one of his Vesper services, or, if that was too much, at the very least one of the psalms. Lanfranco enclosed one of his own canons, together with the resolution, 'per manco faticha'.

The second letter was written to Aaron in August 1534 (no. 104). As we know from a letter of Aaron to Del Lago, Aaron had criticized Lanfranco's *Scintille* when it came out, and for a while the two were not on friendly terms. Eventually they made up their quarrel (no. 66, para. 1).⁵³ The present letter is proof of that. Lanfranco even said he was happy for the criticism because it was the cause of their friendship. He answered three more questions about his canonic composition, drawing on works by Brumel and Josquin to defend some of his usages.

#### Laurino, Paulo de

Author of nos. 77 and 79.

Recipient of nos. 78, 80, 100.

Paulo de Laurino, a native of Naples, was an Austin friar in the ecclesiastical province of Naples. At the time of the Correspondence he was attached to the convent at Rethymno in Crete (in Italian Candia, a Venetian dependency from 1204 to 1669). Laurino was visiting Venice in 1525, where he became acquainted

⁵² Peter Bergquist, 'Lanfranco, Giovanni Maria', The New Grove Dictionary, x. 441.

⁵³ According to Aaron, Lanfranco intended to bring out a revised edition of his treatise, but death intervened; Aaron was unaware that Lanfranco had left the monastery in Bergamo and was still alive.

with Del Lago, his musical mentor. Preparing to depart on 25 March, he left some questions on music for Del Lago to answer (no. 77). A few months later he asked Del Lago to send him works by Tinctoris, Aaron's treatise on the modes, anything Del Lago himself had written, and motets and madrigals. His patron and benefactor in Venice, the Regent Father of Santo Stefano, a Neapolitan, will forward the letters (no. 79). Both these letters drew replies from Del Lago, but both seem to have been made up after the fact (nos. 78, 80; see Ch. 6).

Laurino also corresponded with Aaron; one reply by Aaron is preserved in the Correspondence (no. 100).

#### Leonardo, Don

Mentioned in nos. 30, 38-9, 49, 55, 58-9.

Don Leonardo is one of the coterie of musicians that Spataro refers to as 'i musici bolognesi'. Spataro shared Aaron's letters and compositions with him (no. 30, para. 12) and forwarded his greetings to Aaron in the other letters. Don Leonardo himself corresponded with Aaron (no. 55, para. 6).

#### Lio, Giovanni Maria de

Mentioned in no. 74.

'Lio' is Venetian dialect for 'leone'. Giovanni Maria, the bearer of a letter from Da Legge to Del Lago (para. 1), may be a native of the parish of San Lio.

#### Lupino, Francesco

#### Author of no. 94.

Born in Ancona c. 1500, Lupino was a singer in the Santa Casa of Loreto from September 1532 to October 1533, when he was promoted to *maestro di cappella*. In 1540 he undertook the same position in the cathedral at Fano, moving in 1543 to Urbino. He stepped down as *maestro* in 1555, but is still listed as canon in 1563. He published a book of four-part motets in 1549.⁵⁴

In his letter to Del Lago of 24 April 1541, Lupino signs himself as 'canonico di Fano'. He thanks Del Lago for sending him his treatise and regrets that he has nothing to give in return.

#### Malipiero (Maripetro), Girolamo

#### Author of no. 95.

Girolamo Malipiero, an Observant Franciscan friar, is probably to be identified with the author of *Il Petrarcha spirituale*, a spiritualized rendition of Petrarch's *canzoniere* published in Venice in 1536. He also wrote a Latin metrical poem on the life of St Francis, published in 1532. He was no longer living in 1547.⁵⁵

According to Giovanni degli Agostini, Malipiero founded a confraternity in honour of St Bernardino of Siena in San Francesco della Vigna in Venice in 1535, with particular devotion to the Sacred Name of Jesus. From his letter, it appears that Malipiero prepared two offices for the Franciscan order, one on the Sacred

⁵⁴ 'Lupino, Francesco'. The New Grove Dictionary, xi. 335-6.

⁵⁵ Giovanni degli Agostini, Notizie istorico-critiche intorno la vita, e le opere degli scrittori viniziani (2 vols., Venice, 1752-4), ii. 439-46. His Vita S. Francisci, in nine books, dedicated to Clement VII, is to be found in the Vatican Library, MS Vat. lat. 3728; see Paul Oskar Kristeller, Iter italicum (4 vols., London and Leiden, 1963-89), ii. 323 and 583. Name, the other on the Espousals of the Virgin. Adrian Willaert was asked to look over and correct the chant, and he in turn gave the task to Del Lago.

Marteningo (Martinengo), Count Fortunale. See under Cavriolo.

## Mathio, Pre

#### Mentioned in no. 64.

Pre Mathio, a common friend of Aaron and Del Lago, was 'maestro di scuola' at the Benedictine monastery of Santa Giustina in Padua (para. 1).

## Michiel (Michele), Sebastiano

Mentioned in nos. 5-13, 30, 33-9, 49-51, 55, 58-9, 62, 64.

Sebastiano Michiel, member of a patrician Venetian family, was Aaron's patron. He was a well-known figure as Grand Prior in Venice of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem (later known as the Knights of Malta); elected in 1492, he was not confirmed by the Grand Master till 1498. He used his position to become a wealthy man, having obtained permission from the Holy See to confer all the Priorate's benefices on himself. The few personal documents remaining in the Archive of the Grand Priorate show that he declined to present himself, when ordered, at the siege of Rhodes in 1519 on account of illness, which he offered to have attested by a physician; he did, however, send a cannon at his own expense.⁵⁶

Michiel's administration was marked by controversy, both civil and ecclesiastical, that lasted many years and did not cease even with his death. In a protracted struggle with the Signoria concerning the jurisdiction over the Scuola degli Schiavoni, he threatened to take the matter to Rome, claiming that the Signoria was not superior to the Pope.⁵⁷ To this day a cloud remains over his reputation in the eyes of his order for alienating ecclesiastical property. Two years after becoming prior, Michiel leased to his father some of the Priorate's possessions on the mainland and a house on the Calle dei Furlani near the Priory. When his father died Michiel invested his brother Bernardino with the property. After Michiel died in November 1534 the new prior contested Bernardino's possession of the property, which he held 'in dano gravissimo de esso priorato et pesimo exempio a quelli che manegiano li beni de la giesia'. Bernardino lost the case in 1543, but the sentence was overturned on appeal in 1545. The controversy was still going strong as late as 1640.⁵⁸

The Grand Priory stands next to the church of San Giovanni, called San Giovanni del Tempio or San Giovanni dei Furlani after the nearby street, which was inhabited by settlers from Friuli. All the letters to Pietro Aaron bear the latter address. On one side of the main altar of the church is a painting by Giovanni Bellini of the Baptism of Christ. Sebastiano Michiel, in a black cape with a white

⁵⁶ G. Sommi Picenardi, 'Del Gran Priorato dell'Ordine Gerosolomitano in Venezia', *Nuovo archivio veneto* 4/1 (1892), 101-51 at 151.

⁵⁷ Marco Celio Passi, Il Gran Priorato di Lombardia e Venezia del Sovrano Militare Ordine ospedaliero di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme—di Rodi—di Malta (Venice, 1983), p. 20. The controversy lasted sixteen years.

⁵⁸ Legal papers are in the Archivio del Gran Priorato, Venice, Buste 685 and 694. We wish to extend here our thanks to Giovanni Tonegato, who graciously allowed B.J.B. to consult the relevant materials in the archive in the summer of 1986.

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cross, kneels devoutly on the left side, and it is he who must have commissioned this painting. This vestment allows us to identify Michiel in other Venetian paintings of the time: in Gentile Bellini's famous 'Procession in St Mark's Square' (standing at the lower right, not part of the procession), in Carpaccio's 'Miracle of the True Cross',⁵⁹ and in the same painter's 'The Calling of St Matthew' in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni,⁶⁰ which is contiguous with the Grand Priory.

Pietro Aaron had entered the household of Sebastiano Michiel by February 1523, the date of Spataro's first letter sent to him in Venice (no. 5, para. 11). In closing, Spataro recommends himself to 'vostro reverendo patrone', saying he would like to be counted among his servants (para. 12). Most of the letters from here on include Spataro's greetings to 'Monsignore reverendo'. In 1524 Spataro sent him sausages, with the mysterious remark that 'Monsignore says that unless I send him two pairs of sausages he will see to it that those things that are now in press against me will be burnt' (no. 13, para. 5). Aaron dedicated both his *Toscanello* (1523) and his treatise on the modes (1525) to Michiel. In the latter he calls himself 'maestro di casa del reverendo et magnifico cavaliere hierosolimitano Messer Sebastiano Michele Priore di Vinetia'. In fact, as the letters make clear, Aaron's main function was as tutor to Michiel's sons: beginning in June 1531 Spataro sends greetings to 'li soi molto da me amati figlioli' (no. 33, para. 3). Since Michiel was a cleric, the sons must have been illegitimate; they are not mentioned in any of the documents concerning Michiel.

Aaron had a comfortable life in Michiel's household, but when his patron died in November 1534 he suddenly found himself without a shelter and income. Michiel had left him fifty ducats and a cross in his will, but Aaron never received them (no. 62, para. 1); the Order must have regarded them as ecclesiastical property, as they did the house and lands Michiel had given to his brother.

#### Molino, Girolamo

Recipient of nos. 1 and 96.

## Mentioned in nos. 89 and 97.

Girolamo Molino was born in 1500 into the noble Venetian family Molino or Dal Molin. Never interested in acquiring wealth through industriousness, he elected to spend his life as a gentleman of letters, much to the dismay of his father, who refused to support him. As a patrician, Molino was obliged to serve in the government; he managed to hold the least significant offices, allowing him time to write poetry and spend his days in the company of his famous literary friends, Domenico Venier, Federigo Badoaro, Bernardo Tasso, and others.⁶¹ He often attended musical events arranged in Venier's house by Girolamo Parabosco. He

⁵⁹ Sitting in a gondola near the Rialto bridge; see *L'opera completa del Carpaccio*, ed. Manlio Cancogni and Guido Perocco (Classici dell'Arte 13; Milan, 1967), pl. XXX, upper left-hand corner.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 97, pl. 33A; see the figure standing behind St Matthew.

⁶¹ One of the frequenters of these literary salons must have been the anonymous author of no. 97, who defends himself against Del Lago's charge (relayed by Molino) that he is 'a capital enemy of music'. In this learned but fragmented account of music in Greek life, we may perhaps catch a glimpse of a fashionable topic of conversation in literary circles.

left one book of poems, R*ime di M. Girolamo Molino*, published posthumously in 1573 by his great friend Giulio Contarini, who also was responsible for his funeral monument in Santa Maria del Giglio (then called Santa Maria Zobenigo). Molino died on 25 December 1569.⁶²

In the biography by Giovanni Mario Verdizzotti published with the Rime, we learn that Molino frequented 'every sort of gentlemen of virtù and honour, and every rare and excellent artist in whatever noble art, such as music—in which he, a thorough connoisseur, took pleasure—painting, and sculpture' (fo.  $+8^{\circ}$ ). In one of Pietro Aretino's letters it is reported that Molino borrowed a 'Christ' by Titian to have a copy made, as well as a portrait of the Grand Duke of Florence.⁶³ Contarini had Molino's tomb inscribed 'Hieronymo Molino vero Musarum alumno'.

We do not know when Molino became Del Lago's patron: Del Lago mentions him in none of his letters. However, it must have happened by 1535, for in April of that year Bartolomeo Tromboncino asked Del Lago to be recommended to the 'magnifico et gentilissimo gentilhomo amator dei virtuosi, Messer Hyeronimo Molino' (no. 89, para. 2). Del Lago wished to dedicate his letters on music to Molino (no. 1), in which he included a small dictionary of musical terms written for his patron (no. 96). The collection was ready by about 1538, though Del Lago was still making corrections as late as 1542 (see Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his Epistole'). Why was the intended publication not carried through? It is likely that the answer lies in Molino's personal circumstances: he simply had not the funds to support the publication. After his father declined to contribute to his living expenses, Molino moved to the house of an elderly aunt. He instituted a lawsuit against his father in 1543 to recover property belonging to the aunt, and this protracted suit continued against his brother after the father's death in 1552. We know from his will that Molino received some kind of a subvention from a lady living in Vicenza.⁶⁴ We also learn that he had to borrow one hundred ducats from his friend Giulio Contarini to pay for a trip to Rome in 1556.65 In these circumstances it is understandable that, much-beloved a person as Molino was, he was not the kind of patron on whom one could depend for financial favours. When Del Lago published his Breve introduttione di musica misurata in 1540, he dedicated it to the Venetian patrician Lorenzo Moresino. Perhaps he kept hoping that Molino, still a young man, would eventually be able to sponsor the publication of the letters, but Del Lago died soon thereafter, in 1544.

#### Muradori, Julio

Mentioned in nos. 9, 35-7.

Julio Muradori was a singer at San Petronio in Bologna from 1510 to 1561⁶⁶ and undoubtedly one of 'i musici bolognesi'. He was among the friends of

⁶² On Molino's life and poetry, see Elisa Greggio, 'Girolamo da Molino', *Ateneo veneto*, 18th ser., 2 (1894), 188–202 and 255–323.

⁶³ Il quinto libro delle lettere di M. Pietro Aretino (Paris, 1609), no. CLXXX, dated Jan. 1549.

⁶⁴ Greggio, 'Girolamo da Molino', pp. 255 and 264.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 269. Repayment was effected in his will.

⁶⁶ Gaspari, 'La musica in San Petronio', in *Musica e musicisti*, p. 147, and Osvaldo Gambassi, La cappella musicale di S. Petronio, pp. 60–77.

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Spataro's who ordered a copy of Aaron's *Toscanello* in 1523 (no. 9, para. 1). From the present Correspondence we learn that he was also a composer. In 1531 the organist of San Petronio, Messer Petro, sent twenty-five of Julio's madrigals to Adrian Willaert. Unfortunately, they arrived just at the time when Lanfranco (q.v.) had inadvertently incurred Willaert's wrath over a composition by Spataro, and Spataro had to depend on Aaron's good offices in having the madrigals returned (no. 35, para. 2, no. 36, para. 13, and no. 37, para. 2). One may have been published by Gardane in 1539; see below under Petro.

## Musici bolognesi

#### Mentioned in nos. 9, 12–13, 34–8, 56–60.

The 'musici bolognesi' were a group of Spataro's friends and disciples who seem to have met on a regular basis to discuss musical matters. Spataro often refers to them as a group but never says just who belongs to it. We may guess that it included all the Bolognese musicians Spataro mentions at one time or another—Nicolò Cavalaro (Mantovano), Julio Muradori, Juliano Veludaro, Don Leonardo, and Bastiano Boca de Ferro. Only the first three appear on the because Spataro regularly sends Aaron greetings from 'nostri musici et cantori' (nos. 35-8, 58-9). The others may be identified with some of the musicians praised in Giovanni Philoteo Achillino's *Viridario* (Bologna, 1513), fo.  $186^{\circ}$ :

> De Musici è dorata questa terra, Che cantano improvisi ogni bel punto; D'assai compositori, a cui non erra L'arte, e molti hanno il canto seco aggiunto. Il Spadaro, il Tovaglia qui si serra, Demophoonte col suo contrapunto, Sebastian Boccaferro, e lo Albergato De questa, e de l'altre arti è decorato.

Fra gli altri, cinque organisti ci sono, Che ogniun di lor stimato è per divino. Chi sente il loro armonizzante suono Stupisce, o conterraneo, o peregrino. Rugiero, Cesare, Hannibal Rangono, Il dolce Ludovico, el Bolognino, Convien che in alto le sue laudi sorgano Poi che si excelsi artisti son di l'organo.

Sonatori ci son tanto perfetti, Che col leuto in braccio fama i fregia. L'Albergato, Alexandro, quel da i letti, Lorenzo, Piermatteo, il gentil Tiregia, Il Cambio è con la lyra fra gli eletti; Il calamo anchor questo privilegia. Al gentil Poggio, giovenetto ephebo, Si come ad Orpheo diè la Cethra Phebo.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Gaspari, 'Ricerche, documenti e memorie', in *Musica e musicisti*, pp. 84-5. The only one of these musicians known as a composer is Alessandro Demophoonte (see the entry for

Perhaps the group also included Bolognese noblemen who took an interest in music (see no. 46). In an early letter Spataro explained ruefully that he must be responsible for his friends' bad behaviour in ordering copies of Aaron's *Toscanello* but then refusing to buy them because they were too expensive; 'they think every-one must be Giovanni Spataro, who gives away his own things' (no. 9, para. 2).

The 'musici bolognesi' figure prominently in two episodes. Spataro gave them Aaron's new little treatise on how to find the six Guidonian syllables on each position of the hand to study. They came up with diverse opinions. When Spataro then praised it to the skies, they were dumbfounded and teased him that he was entering his second childhood; never had they heard him approve of anyone who contradicted his teacher, Bartolomeo Ramis. But Spataro gave them a 'condecente resposta', and they completed their disputation with general praise for Aaron (no. 34).

The second episode involved Giovanni del Lago. Spataro, irked at Del Lago's unmusical reasoning and sophistic answers with regard to remote accidentals. decided to give him a real musical problem to solve. He introduced it as a question that the 'musici bolognesi' had been debating for some time without being able to resolve it; they hope that such a 'speculative and subtle spirit' as Del Lago is will solve the problem. Where are the *ut* and  $l_a$  of Fb and Cb and B $\sharp$  and E# (no. 56, para. 5)? Del Lago sensed a trap and suspected that the 'musici bolognesi' were a fiction (no. 57, para. 1) but attempted to answer none the less. He took revenge in the last paragraphs by sending Spataro two isorhythmic tenors to resolve (para. 6). The burden of replying to this letter fell to Spataro, who reported at length the reaction of the 'musici bolognesi' (no. 60, paras. 22-3). They were unable to resolve the tenors properly because Del Lago did not send the other parts; this, protested Spataro, is unheard-of among musicians, and Del Lago's boorish behaviour is beyond the pale. The letter closes with a few choice epithets, after which each side retreated into its own corner, never to make contact again.

Gafurio too was irritated by the 'musici bolognesi', for his *Apologia* of 1520 against Spataro also includes the 'complices musicos Bononienses'.

#### Nazaro, Fra

Recipient of nos. 81-3.

Fra Nazaro, a friar of the Servite Order, is another one of the minor musicians with whom Del Lago corresponded. He is perhaps identical with the 'Dominus f. Nazarius de Brixia vicarius' present at a chapter-meeting in the convent of Santa

Allexandro, above). Sebastian Boccaferro is mentioned in the Correspondence (see above). Bonaparte dalle Tovaglie was *maestro di cappella* at the cathedral of San Pietro; he and two unidentified singers are depicted in Lorenzo Costa's 'Concerto Bentivoglio', painted c.1493; see Susan Forscher Weiss, 'Bologna Q 18: Some Reflections on Content and Context', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 41 (1988), 63–101 at 90–3. A Francesco Bolognino was a virtuoso shawm-player; both he and Annibale Rangoni were members of aristocratic Bolognese families (ibid., p. 89). Don Ruggiero di Borgogna (Rogier Saignand, from Dijon) was organist at San Petronio from 1474 to 1522 (Gaspari, 'La musica in San Petronio', pp. 123–7). The others have not been identified so far.

Maria dei Servi in Venice in 1523.⁶⁸ One might ask why Del Lago should write to a person in it; perhaps Fra Nazaro was at a different convent of the order in 1532-3.

Nicolao Mantovano. See Cavalaro, Nicolò.

## Olivetto, Nicolò

## Author of no. 90.

That Nicolò Olivetto is French appears from such peculiarities of his letter as the forms 'luy' and 'ung'. He wrote to Del Lago from Treviso on 1 October 1535, signing himself 'magister cappelle' (of the Duomo). He had succeeded Francesco Santacroce by 15 August 1529 and served at least until 25 March 1537; by July of that year Santacroce was reinstalled. Olivetto remained in Treviso until 1538, then became *maestro di cappella* at the Cathedral of Verona. He died in 1549.⁶⁹ He was also a composer of liturgical music: a manuscript containing at least nine of his hymns, destroyed during the Second World War, has survived in a photocopy.⁷⁰

### Orazii, Allexandro, Orazio and Antonio de li. See under Garganello.

#### Passetto, Giordano

Mentioned in nos. 28 and 61.

Giordano Passetto was a Dominican friar of Venetian origin. His early years were passed in the convent church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, where Pietro da Castello was his teacher.⁷¹ In 1504 the Ferrarese ambassador to Venice sent Ercole d'Este a Credo by 'a friar of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, a conventual of the Order of San Domenico, a young man of twenty years of age, named Fra Giordano da Venezia, who is considered very gifted in these things'.⁷² The work was to be shown to Josquin for his evaluation. It must have been deemed acceptable, because a few months later Giordano sent the whole mass and also offered to compose a work over any tenor the Duke might care to send him.

Fra Giordano was also an organist. In April 1505 he was given permission to play the organ at the nunnery of Santo Spirito in Venice.⁷³ When the regular organist of Santi Giovanni e Paolo left the church in 1509, Giordano assumed the post. He remained there until May 1520, when he moved to Padua to become *maestro di cappella* at the Duomo; there he spent the rest of his career. He died in

⁶⁸ Archivio di Stato, Venice, Corp. Rel. Soppr., S. Maria dei Servi, Cartacei, Busta 2, Matricola prima, fo. 83^r.

⁶⁹ Giovanni D'Alessi, La cappella musicale del Duomo di Treviso (1300-1633) (Vedelago, 1954), pp. 90-1.

⁷⁰ See Luigi Lera, 'Un manoscritto musicale cinquecentesco e la figura di un compositore recuperati insieme a Treviso', Rassegna veneta di studi musicali 1 (1985), 33-58.

⁷¹ On Pietro, Petrucci's editor, see the entry for Fra Pietro de San Zoannepolo.

⁷² Lewis Lockwood, 'Josquin at Ferrara: New Documents and Letters', in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin des Prez: Proceedings*, pp. 103-37 at 116 and 134-5.

⁷³ Rome, Archivio Generalizio dell'Ordine dei Predicatori, Reg. IV. 15, fo. 49^t. This and the following references are drawn from a study in progress by B.J.B. on music and musicians at the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo.

1557.⁷⁴ Passetto published a book of madrigal settings in 1541. He is the author of Vesper psalms for eight voices and a few other works. He is best known as the copyist of the large motet manuscripts Padua A. 17 and D. 27, which undoubtedly preserve some of his motets (most of the authors are not named).

Giovanni del Lago must have known Passetto in Venice; he speaks of the time 'when we argued together' about the correct definition of *fuga*, on which Del Lago set him right (no. 28, para. 8). Aaron, too, must have known Passetto; visiting Padua in 1535, he reported to Del Lago that Passetto was not there (no. 61, para. 2).

Paula, Madonna. See under Bastiano, Pre.

## Pepoli, Count Camillo de'

Mentioned in no. 19.

In 1529 Spataro was trying to find a correct copy of his motet for Leo X. He remembered that it was in a manuscript, in his own hand, that he had given to the count Camillo de' Pepoli, a Bolognese citizen and a 'very noble gentleman', and that this manuscript was now in the hands of the 'venerable matron' Madonna Lucretia Cantora (para. 4). Thus he was able to check an error in the copy of the motet in Del Lago's possession. The manuscript, unfortunately lost, must have been written after December 1515; on the date of the motet, see Ch. 3.

Camillo de' Pepoli, son of Count Guido de' Pepoli, was the dedicatee of a poem in Girolamo Casio de Medici's *Libro intitulato cronica* (Bologna, 1525), fo. 19^r, which begins 'Di Apol pel canto, e pel Corsier di Marte, / Di Vener per beltà fu elievo il Conte'. After his death the poet imagines him 'Salendo a star su nel Parnaso monte / Ove nel Chor cantarà la soa parte'.⁷⁵

## Petro

## Mentioned in nos. 35-7.

Petro, a Frenchman, first appears in the records of San Petronio in Bologna as a temporary singer hired for Holy Week in 1528. From 1529 to 1561 he was the organist at San Petronio.⁷⁶ In 1531 Petro sent to Willaert by way of Aaron twenty-five madrigals by Julio Muradori (q.v.), a singer at San Petronio. Perhaps 'Calde lacrime mie, sospir cocenti', ascribed however to 'Petrus organista', in *Il quarto libro di madrigali d' Archadelt a quatro voci* (Venice: A. Gardane, RISM 1539²⁴), was one of these.

⁷⁴ See Raffaele Casimiri, 'Musica e musicisti nella Cattedrale di Padova nei secoli XIV, XV, XVI', Note d'archivio per la storia musicale 18 (1941), 1-31, 101-214 and 19 (1942), 42-92; see 18, pp. 101-3.

⁷⁵ The poem was kindly brought to our attention by Dr Susan Forscher Weiss. A Taddeo de' Pepoli, perhaps a son of Camillo, was a singer at San Petronio in 1523-5; see Gaspari, 'La musica in San Petronio', in *Musica e musicisti*, p. 145, and Gambassi, *La cappella musicale di S. Petronio*, pp. 64-5.

⁷⁶ Gaspari, 'La musica in San Petronio', in *Musica e musicisti*, p. 145, and Gambassi, La cappella musicale di S. Petronio, pp. 65-77.

## Petro Zoanne

## Mentioned in no. 6.

Petro Zoanne, a common friend of Spataro and Aaron, was a chancellor of the Captain Ramazotto in Bologna. When Antonio Pifaro (q.v.) declined two French chansons sent by Aaron in 1523, Spataro gave them to Petro Zoanne, and they sang them together several times (no. 6, para. 12). Captain Ramazotto was Michele Malchiavello, called 'il prete Ramazotto', a famous warrior. One of his sons, Domizio, became a composer. No doubt he had grown up in a musical environment.⁷⁷

#### Pietro de San Zoannepolo, Fra

#### Mentioned in no. 85.

In response to a guery by Del Lago in 1534 about a composition by Gafurio making use of proportions, Lorenzo Gazio suggested that Frate Armonio, who had inherited the music of Fra Pietro de San Zoannepolo, might have it (no. 85, para, 3). Fra Pietro was a Dominican friar in the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, where he appears in the records as early as 1486. In 1505 he was appointed, apparently for the second time, as maestro di cappella. In March 1514 he was living outside the order, and he died on 16 May 1516.⁷⁸ In the documents of the church he is called 'Petrus de Castello'. He was a native Venetian; Castello is one of the sestieri of Venice. It is certain that Petrus de Castello is identical with the Dominican friar Petrus Castellanus who served as Petrucci's editor. In the letter of Bartolomeo Budrio of Capo d'Istria that appears in the prefatory matter of the Odhecaton, Castellanus is praised as 'a Dominican, famous in religion and the discipline of music', from whose 'rich and extensive collection' the music of the Odhecaton was drawn and diligently emended.⁷⁹ Pietro was well known in his day. In a Dominican chronicle of 1516, he is called 'a man gracefully adorned with many talents, especially in the art of music, of which he was a monarch'.⁸⁰ Even as late as 1534 his fame as a collector of music had not been forgotten.

⁷⁷ On Ramazotto, see Gaspari, 'Memorie risguardanti la storia dell'arte musicale in Bologna', in *Musica e musicisti*, pp. 257–8. Domizio Ramazzotto is the composer of a book of psalms that appeared in Ferrara in 1584 (RISM R111). He died in 1594.

⁷⁸ The main documents on his life are in Venice, Archivio di Stato, Corp. Rel. Soppr., SS Giovanni e Paolo, Busta 11, Liber consiliorum 1450–1542. The date of his death is recorded in an 18th-c. chronicle of the church now in Vicenza, Biblioteca Bertoliana, MS G. 3. 4. 9, p. 397. Documents concerning him will be published in the study cited above, n. 73.

⁷⁹ '... ex uberrimo ac numerosissimo seminario Petri Castellani e praedicatorum familia, religione et musicae disciplina memoratissimi; cuius opera et diligentia centena haec carmina repurgata'; see Augusto Vernarecci, Ottaviano de' Petrucci da Fossombrone inventore dei tipi mobili metallici fusi della musica nel secolo XV, 2nd edn. (Bologna, 1882), pp. 54-5.

⁸⁰ 'Frater Petrus Castellanus venetus, vir multarum virtutum decore adornatus, permaxime autem in arte musice cuius erat monarcha, hoc tempore floruit.' From the chronicle of Albertus de Castello (a contemporary of Pietro, in the same convent) printed in the 3rd edn. of *Tabula super privilegia papalia ordini fratrum predicatorum concessa* (Venice, 1516); see Raymond Creytens OP, 'Les Écrivains dominicains dans la chronique d'Albert de Castello (1516)', Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum 30 (1960), 226-313 at 301.

## Pizoni, Francesco di

## Author of no. 91.

In 1537 Francesco di Pizoni held a benefice at the Cathedral of Padua. His name does not appear among the singers in the Cathedral, but he seems to have been familiar with music. He was perhaps of Venetian origin; he knew Del Lago and speaks of Aaron as 'our common friend'.

## Pozzo, Giovanni Battista da

Mentioned in no. 6.

Pozzo was one of the many people Spataro employed as letter-carriers; he seems to have travelled between Imola, Bologna, and Venice (paras. 7 and 11).

#### Primis, Philippo de

Mentioned in nos. 18 and 21.

Philippo de Primis, from Fano, was a tenor in the Papal Chapel from 1492 to 1506.⁸¹ In 1491 he had been a singer in the chapel of Ercole d'Este. He stunned the Duke by leaving his service in the same year, resisting all attempts to get him to come back. In a letter to the Duke he explained that he had to return to Fano because of illness in the family. This led to a lawsuit, which he went to Rome to pursue, accepting an offer to join the Papal Chapel in order to cover his living expenses.⁸²

Philippo de Primis was the author of a mass, 'Pourtant se mon', much admired by Spataro (no. 18, para. 3) and owned by Del Lago (no. 21, para. 2). Neither this nor any other music by him seems to have survived.

'Priore de Ferrara'. See Friars.

Ramazotto, Captain. See under Petro Zoanne.

## Ramis, Bartolomeo

3

Mentioned in nos. 5, 8–12, 15, 17, 21–2, 28–9, 34, 38, 41, 45, 48, 54, 56–8, 60. Spataro revered his teacher, Bartolomeo Ramis,⁸³ to whom he frequently refers in the Correspondence as 'mio preceptore'. Ramis was born in Spain c.1440 and studied there with Johannes de Monte. He taught for some time in Salamanca, then went to Italy, where he seems to have spent the rest of his life. He arrived in Bologna some time in the 1470s, and he taught music there privately. In 1482 he published his treatise *Musica practica*, one of the earliest printed music treatises. Full of novel ideas and written in a provocative manner, it did not fail to antagonize his fellow theorists; it cost him the public lectureship he had sought,

⁸¹ Haberl, *Die römische 'Schola cantorum*', pp. 58–9. Haberl listed him until 1502, after which there is a gap in the records until 1507, when his name no longer appears. He is listed as a member of the chapel in a supplication dated Mar. 1506; see Richard Sherr, 'Verdelot in Florence, Coppini in Rome, and the Singer "La Fiore"', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 37 (1984), 402–11 at 408.

⁸² See Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, p. 194.

⁸³ The correct Spanish form of the name is Bartolomé Ramos de Pareja. We have opted for the spelling that Spataro uses. Wolf has remarked that the spelling 'Ramos' does not appear before the end of the 16th c. (*Musica practica*, p. xii).

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and in consequence he went to Rome, where he was still living in 1491. Nothing at all is known about his Roman sojourn or the date of his death.⁸⁴

Nearly all our knowledge about Ramis comes from remarks in his own book and in Spataro's treatises and letters. In his *Honesta defensio* of 1491, Spataro writes that the book published by Ramis in 1482 was only a third part of what he had written ten years earlier (fo. 14'). Moreover, Ramis had also written a compendium in the vernacular (whether Spanish or Italian is not clear), which remained unpublished; Aaron refers to it in his *Lucidario* of 1545, Book III, fo. 18^v. This may be the same as the 'piculo tractato' of which Ramis gave Spataro an autograph copy in 1484 (see no. 29, para. 7). The books (or book) being lost, Spataro's references to theoretical pronouncements by Ramis are particularly valuable; many of the points are not to be found in the published treatise. For this reason, we think it is useful to include a full list of the references here:

- no. 5, para. 6. Ramis stated that older musicians used a rest covering two-thirds of the space between two lines as the sign of a rest of imperfect *tempus* (see *Musica practica*, p. 86).
- para. 9. Ramis believed that the natural mensuration is binary, not ternary, and when no mensuration-sign is given, the piece is in duple mensuration (*Musica practica*, p. 88).
- no. 8, para. 3. Ramis sometimes blackened a breve next to a void long to indicate that the breve should not be altered (not in *Musica practica*).
- para. 3. Ramis claimed that in coloration, it is not necessary that the long be blackened if the breve is; notes should be joined according to their value, not their appearance (not in *Musica practica*).
- no. 9, para. 4. Ramis showed Spataro that certain irregular ligatures can be explained by the scribe's having added a tail to correct an error (not in *Musica practica*).
- no. 10, para. 4. Ramis used a void flagged minim to represent a semiminim in major prolation (not in *Musica practica*, but see p. 87 for another meaning of this note).
- no. 11, para. 7. An allusion to Ramis's teachings on two-part counterpoint (see *Musica practica*, pp. 62-76).
- no. 12, para. 3. Ramis called the sign X 'b quadro' (Musica practica, p. 29).
- no. 15, para. 4. Ramis demonstrated that the hexachord beginning on A as ut derives from the first sharp conjuncta, c# (Musica practica, p. 31).
- no. 17, para. 8. Ramis demonstrated that there are two *coniunctae*, b and # (*Musica practica*, p. 28).
- para. 12. In the fifth chapter of the first part of his *Practica*, Ramis demonstrates that changing from *mi* to *sol* on e' is a mutation not from hexachord to hexachord but from the natural hexachord to the sharp *coniuncta* on c' (pp. 34–40; actually chap. 5 of Treatise II).
- no. 28, para. 9. Del Lago cites Ramis's definition of *fuga* after a lost treatise by Spataro (*Musica practica*, p. 68).
- no. 29, para. 2. Spataro defends his examples of *fuga* by quoting Ramis's definition (*Musica practica*, p. 68).
- para. 7. Spataro says his definitions of *fuga*, *redicta*, *color*, and *talea* are correct because he has them from a small autograph treatise that Ramis gave him in 1484.

⁸⁴ The most extensive treatment of Ramis's life and writings is in Robert Stevenson, 'Spanish Musical Impact beyond the Pyrenees (1250–1500)', in *España en la Música de Occidente, Actas del Congreso Internacional* (2 vols., Madrid, 1987), i. 115–64, esp. 125–35, an updated version of pp. 55–63 of his *Spanish Music in the Age of Columbus* (The Hague, 1960).

- no. 34, paras. 1-2. When the 'musici bolognesi' claim that Aaron contradicts Ramis by giving thirty mutations, Spataro explains that Ramis listed only eighteen mutations in his treatise because he kept strictly to the Guidonian hand (*Musica practica*, p. 34). This is the only letter in which Spataro is willing to concede that any theorist exceeded his revered teacher. He reports to Aaron that his admission so startled his Bolognese colleagues that they laughingly accused him of having entered his second childhood.
- no. 41, para. 3. Ramis's teacher, Johannes de Monte, used the sign  $\phi^2$  to indicate O twice diminished, in order to avoid confusion with  $\phi_2$ , which stands for O₂ once diminished (not in *Musica practica*).
- no. 45, para. 4. Ramis said that older musicians used Ø or Ø to indicate a faster tempo than O (not in *Musica practica*).
- no. 48, para. 8. Ramis claimed that all dots are superfluous for a good theorist except those of augmentation and perfection (not in *Musica practica*).
- no. 54, para. 5. Spataro refers to Ramis's chart to show that *fa* on G and D arises from the *ordo accidentalis (Musica practica*, p. 35, fig. 4).
- no. 56, para. 5, and no. 58, para. 2. Ramis excluded the use of b on F and C and # on B and E (*Musica practica*, p. 30).
- no. 60, para. 3. Ramis demonstrated three diatonic orders equivalent to Guido's one (Musica practica, pp. 34-40).
- paras. 17-18. Ramis defined a *coniuncta* as making a tone of a semitone and vice versa or a major third of a minor third and vice versa (*Musica practica*, pp. 29-30).

It is Spataro who informs us about Ramis's departure from Bologna in a huff. In a letter to Aaron of 13 March 1532, Spataro explains why Ramis never finished his treatise. He published only part of it because he thought he would receive a stipend to teach publicly. When this did not come about (for certain unexplained reasons, perhaps the controversy over his treatise), he gathered up his books and left for Rome, 'quasi sdegnato', intending to finish the treatise there. But his lascivious lifestyle led to his death (no. 38, para. 2).

Two compositions by Ramis are mentioned in the Correspondence, a 'Missa Requiem eternam' and a motet 'Tu lumen'.⁸⁵

## Raphaello, Don

#### Mentioned in no. 54.

Don Raphaello was a singer with whom Del Lago had discussions about the location of *ut* and *la* of G $\beta$  and D $\beta$  (paras. 2 and 4). Since he was known to Bolognese musicians, he may be identical with Raphaele, nephew of Spataro's predecessor as *maestro di canto* at San Petronio in Bologna, Gabriele de Luneris. Raphaele received a stipend, probably as a choirboy, in 1505. From 1525 to 1528 he was a regular singer at San Petronio.⁸⁶ A 'Rafaello da Bologna musico' is found

⁸⁵ See Table 4 on p. xli. On the tenor of 'Tu lumen', see Ch. 3, pp. 67–8. In 1482 a Bolognese nobleman, Floriano Malvezzi, sent Ercole I d'Este the Kyrie and Gloria of a mass by Ramis and a 'canzoneta' composed for Ercole's wife, Eleanora. The fascicle also contained a Magnificat by Ramis's disciple, who can be none other than Spataro. Malvezzi sent the works so Ercole could see 'se le opere sue hanno fato bon fructo appresso de nui'. Just what Ercole had done is unclear; we know of no previous connection with Ramis. In the event, Ercole was disappointed in the music; Malvezzi apologized in a later letter that 'non habeno del tucto satisfacti, benchè siano stati facti per man de uno sufficiente'. See Mischiati, 'Un'inedita testimonianza su Bartolomeo Ramis', p. 86.

⁸⁶ Gambassi, La cappella musicale di S. Petronio, pp. 64-5.

among the musicians of Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este in 1513.⁸⁷ From 11 May 1514 to 13 July 1515 Raphael Lunerius was a *musicus secretus* of Leo X.⁸⁸ 'Don Raphaele' is mentioned as a musician recently decreased in Innocenzio Ringhieri, *Cento giuochi liberali et d'ingegno* (Bologna, 1551).⁸⁹

## 'Rezente, Padre'

## Mentioned in no. 79.

A patron and benefactor of Paulo de Laurino, this Neapolitan Austin friar was Regent Father at the church of Santo Stefano in Venice (para. 4).

### Ridolfi, Cardinal

## Mentioned in no. 50.

Niccolò Ridolfi, a Florentine and nephew of Leo X, was made Cardinal in 1517. Like many other princes of the Church, he seems to have had a particular interest in music. In 1533 he took a Bolognese singer, Victorio (q.v.), into his service, with a provision of ten ducats a month, a furnished room, expenses for himself and a servant, and a horse. New clothing was to be provided once a year, and benefices were promised for the future (para. 4). Sixteen years later Cardinal Ridolfi's home resounded with chromatic and enharmonic music. In 1549 Nicola Vicentino drew up an agreement to teach five or six members of the Cardinal's household how to sing chromatic and enharmonic pieces, upon promise of secrecy for ten years.⁹⁰

Ridolfi was also interested in musical thought. A thorough humanist, at home in Greek and Latin, he collected a valuable library that included Aristoxenus' *Elementa harmonica*, the nineteenth book of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, Ptolemy's *Harmonics* with Porphyry's commentary, Aristides' *De musica libri tres*, and the *Harmonics* of Bryennius.⁹¹

#### **Rigom**, Antonio

Mentioned in nos. 9 and 12.

Spataro mentions Antonio Rigom in two letters. In 1523 he told Aaron that he had written to his friend in Ferrara, Don Antonio Rigom, that the *Toscanello* was about to be published, and Antonio replied that he wanted a copy (no. 9, para. 2). In 1524, while reviewing a chapter of Aaron's treatise, Spataro recalled that his friend in Ferrara had said that Aaron made several mistakes in discussing the psalm-tone endings (no. 12, para. 1).

Rigom seems to have been a singer at the Cathedral of Ferrara. From a note of Luigi Napoleone Cittadella we learn that in 1532 he was 'maestro di cappella, e

⁸⁷ Lockwood, 'Adrian Willaert and Cardinal Ippolito d'Este', p. 112.

⁸⁸ See Frey, 'Regesten zur päpstlichen Kapelle', 9 (1956), 50.

⁸⁹ James Haar, 'On Musical Games in the 16th Century', Journal of the American Musicological Society 15 (1962), 22-34 at 30.

⁹⁰ See Henry William Kaufmann, *The Life and Works of Nicola Vicentino (1511-6.1576)* (Musicological Studies and Documents 11; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1966), p. 22. The information comes from Ghiselin Danckerts's unpublished *Trattato*.

⁹¹ See Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought, pp. 34-5. The manuscripts are now in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale.

precettore del canto'.⁹² Further notices of his career are surely to be found in the Cathedral's archives.

#### Rosino da Fermi (Fermo)

Mentioned in nos. 8 and 24.

Rosino da Fermi was the author of a 'Veni Sancte Spiritus' a f in which white and black notation were mixed (no. 8, para. 4). In 1529 Spataro said it had been written long before and had a tenor full of artifice (no. 24, para. 3). Fermo is a small community in the province of Ascoli Piceno, in central Italy.

### Rubeis, Philippo Maria de

Mentioned in no. 25.

A Bolognese citizen who brought Spataro news from Del Lago in 1529 (para. 1).

'Sacristano de Sancto Salvatore'. See Friars.

San Giovanni, Monsignor di. See Michiel, Sebastiano.

#### Sancta Marina, Petro de

Mentioned in no. 30.

Aaron asked Spataro in 1531 for a certain 'canto' by Petro de Sancta Marina; Spataro had never seen it (para. 12). If Petro is Venetian, he might have lived in the parish of Santa Marina.

#### Sanese, Giovanni

Mentioned in no. 61.

In May 1535 Aaron paid a visit to Padua, where he dined at the home of the 'Magnificent Captain' (Giacomo Cornaro) in illustrious company, including Giovanni Sanese, tutor of Giovanni Cornaro's sons, and the sons themselves. Sanese claimed that no one composed according to theory, only to practice, and Aaron hotly disputed with him (no. 61, para. 1).

## Saraceni, li

Mentioned in nos. 20, 24-6, 31, 33, 55.

The Saraceni were Bolognese merchants in Venice. Spataro used them as messengers for his letters to Aaron and Del Lago.

### Scotto, Paulo

## Mentioned in nos. 6-9.

Paulo Scotto was a musician living in Venice. Six of his frottole were published in Petrucci's books 7–9 in 1507–8, five of them with the note 'cantus et verba'. He was surely the bookseller Paolo Scotto, son of Bernardino and cousin of Amadio, director of the Scotto publishing enterprise in Venice in the early sixteenth century. He had died by 1529: his widow Faustina is mentioned in a will drawn up in that year by Paolo's cousin Giovanni Battista Scotto.⁹³ Paulo was a friend of

⁹² Notizie relative a Ferrara per la maggior parte inedite ricavate da documenti (Ferrara, 1864), p. 68.

⁹³ See Claudio Sartori, 'La famiglia degli editori Scotto', *Acta musicologica* 36 (1964), 19-30 at 23-4.

both Aaron and Spataro, who sent him greetings in four letters, all from 1523. In September 1523 Aaron transmitted Scotto's request for one of Spataro's masses (no. 7, para. 9).

#### Sebastiano da Ferrara, Fra. See Friars.

## Seraphin, Fra

Author of no. 92.

Recipient of no. 93.

Fra Seraphin, of the Servite Order, wrote to Del Lago from Treviso on 30 April 1538 to thank him for his explanation of the ranges of the modes. Del Lago's letter to him of 26 August 1541 (no. 93) is one of the most interesting in the Correspondence (on the dating and contents of this letter, see Ch. 6). The Servite church in Treviso was Santa Caterina; thus Fra Seraphin is not identical with the only Serafin mentioned in Giovanni D'Alessi's book on music at Treviso, a bass singer hired by the Cathedral in 1512 who was a member of the Franciscus Seraphin who published the *Fior de mottetti e canzoni novi da diversi* in Rome in 1523, to which he contributed two motets (RISM [c. 1526]⁵). A motet of his, 'Veni sponsa Christi' from Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS DCCLX, was published by Jeppesen in *Italia sacra musica*, i. 87–9. A composer of this competence, however, would hardly need to have asked a theorist for the ranges of the modes, and so we believe that the two are not identical.

Spataro, Giovanni. See Ch. 3.

#### Stephano, Don

### Mentioned in no. 107.

Don Stephano was a common friend of Lorenzo Gazio and Don Valeriano, who wanted a composition by Valeriano in 1534. He was apparently living in Padua, perhaps in the monastery of Santa Giustina, because he intended to come to Venice at Carnival-time together with Gazio. There is a remote possibility that he might be Stefano Vanneo, *maestro di cappella* at the Cathedral of Ascoli, but Ascoli is very distant from Padua.

#### Susana, Francesco and Girolamo

#### Mentioned in nos. 87-8.

These are two brothers, both priests, known to Del Lago and Pietro de Justinis of Udine. Francesco apparently had met Del Lago in Venice and encouraged Pietro to write to him.

#### Tomaso de Sancto Salvatore, Frate. See Friars.

#### Tromboncino, Bartolomeo

Author of no. 89.

Bartolomeo Tromboncino was born c.1470 in or near Verona. Son of Bernardino Piffaro, he seems to have grown up in Mantua, where he was highly

94 D'Alessi, La cappella musicale, p. 65.

esteemed by Francesco Gonzaga and his wife Isabella d'Este as a singer and composer. He served at the court of Lucrezia Borgia in Ferrara between 1502 and at least 1513. In 1521 he went to Venice, where he apparently spent most of the remainder of his life. His letter to Del Lago, dated 2 April 1535, is the last record we have of him.⁹⁵ He wrote from Vicenza in response to a letter from Del Lago, asking for one of his compositions, but said he would return to Venice in a month.

## Valeriano, Don

Recipient of nos. 107–8.

Mentioned in nos. 61, 84, 86.

Don Valeriano of Cremona, a nephew of Lorenzo Gazio, was a monk in the Benedictine monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. He was interested in musical questions and composed as well (no. 107, para. 1). He served as intermediary in the exchange of music between Gazio and Del Lago and was the unwitting party to an embarrassing episode in his uncle's life (see no. 86).

## Vanneo, Stefano

Mentioned in nos. 63-5.

Vanneo, a native of Recaneti, was born in 1493. An Augustinian monk, he became a singer at the cathedral in Ascoli in 1529. By 1533, the date of publication of his treatise *Recanetum de musica aurea*, he had become organist and choirmaster. He died after 1540.⁹⁶ Vanneo mentions both Spataro and Aaron in his treatise, but we have no evidence that either ever met him. Del Lago, who calls him 'Frate Stephano', asked Aaron in 1539 about Vanneo's ordering of the mensural system into twenty-four species (no. 63, para. 2). Aaron, who calls him 'Maestro Stephano', claims that eight of these are superfluous (no. 64, para. 5); Del Lago reminds Aaron that he too demonstrated twenty-four species in his *Toscanello* (no. 65, para. 2).

## Veludaro, Juliano

## Mentioned in nos. 32-3, 36-9.

Juliano Veludaro was a singer at San Petronio in Bologna from 1506 to 1550.⁹⁷ Spataro shared with him the letters and music he received from Aaron in 1531-2 (no. 32, para. 3; no. 33, para. 1; no. 39, para. 4). He had a young son who was starting to compose; Spataro sent Aaron two 'canti' by him in 1531 and 1532 (no. 36, para. 13 and no. 37, para. 7). From a document in San Petronio we know that the son's name was Vincenzo. He served as a singer in the church from 1532 to 1534.⁹⁸

## Veturio

#### Mentioned in no. 9.

Veturio was one of the Bolognese music-lovers ('uno homo da bene, amatore di musica') who wanted to buy Aaron's *Toscanello* in 1523. By the time it arrived,

⁹⁷ See Gaspari, 'La musica in San Petronio', in Musica e musicisti, p. 138.

98 Gambassi, La cappella musicale di S. Petronio, pp. 66-7.

⁹⁵ William F. Prizer, 'Tromboncino, Bartolomeo', The New Grove Dictionary, xix. 161-3.

⁹⁶ Peter Bergquist, 'Vanneo, Stephano', The New Grove Dictionary, xix. 525-6.

however, he had gone to Venice with the Reverend General of the Order of the Crutched Friars (para. 1).

## Victorio

Mentioned in nos. 49-50.

Victorio was a singer whose uncle was a canon of San Petronio in Bologna. He is probably the young man to whom Spataro was reading Aaron's *Toscanello* in 1532 (no. 46, para. 2). Apparently Spataro had recommended him to Aaron for a position in Venice with Aaron's patron Sebastiano Michiel. But Victorio had other ideas: he wanted to go to Rome, and 'Francesco milanese' (see under Francesco da Milano) was encouraging him to do so. His uncle told Spataro that Cardinal Campeggio had taken him under his protection (no. 49, para. 6). All these events took place in Bologna in January 1533 during the second meeting between Charles V and Clement VII. Shortly thereafter Victorio joined the service of Cardinal Niccolò Ridolfi under very favourable conditions (no. 50, para. 4; see under Ridolfi). He is probably the musician referred to as 'our own Vittorio' in Innocenzio Ringhieri's *Cento giuochi liberali* (Bologna, 1551).⁹⁹

## Villano

Mentioned in no. 51.

In March 1533 Spataro answered Aaron's query about 'Vilano tenorista'. He says he entered the Papal Chapel in place of 'Messer Andrea' and that he is a deceitful person; whatever he said in his letter to Aaron is false (no. 51, para. 1). Johannes Franciscus Villanus, also known as Johannes Franciscus de Padua and Francesco de Zonatis da Padova, first appears in the payment-lists of the Papal Chapel in February 1533. He died on 22 July 1539 and was buried in St Peter's.¹⁰⁰ Before this he had been a singer at San Marco, where he was hired on 5 January 1524 with an annual salary of fifty ducats.¹⁰¹ He may have begun his career in Ferrara; the list of singers for 1504 and 1505 includes a 'Zoanne Francesco da Padova',¹⁰² and he was still there in 1509.¹⁰³ After the dissolution of the Ferrarese chapel Villano went to Mantua, arriving in March 1511, and in November of the same year he was sent to Venice to recruit singers.¹⁰⁴ He remained at the Gonzaga court until 1514, when he left to join the Papal Chapel, much to Francesco Gonzaga's dismay.¹⁰⁵ In 1517 he decided to return to Padua and resume his former vocation as a Franciscan friar, resigning his benefice in favour of his

¹⁰¹ 'D. Dominus Franciscus dictus Villanus de Padua'; see Giulio Maria Ongaro, 'The Chapel of St. Mark's at the Time of Adrian Willaert (1527–1562): A Documentary Study' (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1986), p. 275, Doc. 21.

¹⁰² Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, p. 328.

¹⁰³ William F. Prizer, Courtly Pastimes: The Frottole of Marchetto Cara (Ann Arbor, 1980), p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 22. See the letter transcribed in Frey, 'Regesten', 9 (1956), 149-50, and also pp. 151-2.

thirteen-year-old illegitimate son Antonio Maria.¹⁰⁶ But religious life seems not to have suited him, for by 1520 he was again a singer in the Papal Chapel.¹⁰⁷

### Volpe, Prevosto de la

Mentioned in no. 4.

Spataro's letter to Aaron of 7 March 1521 is addressed 'Imole in caxa del Reverendo prevosto de la Volpe'. The Provost de la Volpe was the head of the chapter of the Cathedral of Imola. When Aaron's contract as *maestro di cappella* was renewed on 15 February 1521, five of the canons promised to share the cost of sixteen measures of grain to be given him annually; 'D. Prepositus' contributed the largest share, four.¹⁰⁸

## Willaert, Adrian

## Recipient of no. 106.

Mentioned in nos. 12-14, 25, 28, 33, 35-7, 59, 61, 86, 95, 98, 107-8.

Adrian Willaert was born in Bruges or Roeselare c.1490. He went to Paris with the intention of studying law but was drawn instead to music, becoming a pupil of Jean Mouton. In 1515 he arrived in Italy, where he was in the entourage of Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este. He became a singer at the court of Alfonso I d'Este in 1522, transferring to the patronage of Ippolito d'Este, Archbishop of Milan, in 1525. In December of 1527 he was called to the prestigious post of *maestro di cappella* at San Marco in Venice, a position he filled with distinction until his death in 1562. Much loved as a person, he was renowned as a teacher and highly admired as a composer.¹⁰⁹

The correspondence gathered in this volume gives a highly interesting picture of the contemporary view of Willaert. He was held in the greatest esteem, even awe. Undeniably, it was the audacious chromatic duo that set the stage. This work is discussed at length in nos. 12–14. As early as 1524 Spataro calls him a 'musico celeberimo' (no. 12, para. 8). He was gratified to receive a copy of Willaert's duo in the master's hand (ibid.), but there is no indication in the Correspondence that the two exchanged letters. Spataro did, however, send him greetings in 1529 through Del Lago, who was asked to deliver a letter to Allexandro, a young Bolognese who lived in Willaert's house (no. 25, para. 2).

It was not always easy to deal with Willaert. When Julio Muradori, a singer at San Petronio in Bologna, wanted Willaert to look over and criticize twenty-five of his madrigals, Spataro sent them to Aaron in 1531 and asked him to give them to Willaert (no. 33, para. 1). The madrigals, it develops in a later letter, were the property of Petro, the organist at San Petronio. Four months later Spataro mentions the madrigals again, saying he has understood how Aaron handled the matter with Willaert, about which nothing more will be said, if Aaron is mollified. He believes Willaert loves him and asks Aaron to see that the madrigals

⁹⁹ See Haar, 'On Musical Games', p. 30.

¹⁰⁰ See Haberl, Die römische 'Schola cantorum', pp. 74 and 79.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 8 (1955), 181-3.

¹⁰⁷ An excerpt from his letter of 22 July 1520 to Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este is given in Knud Jeppesen, 'Eine frühe Orgelmesse aus Castell'Arquato', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 12 (1955), 187–205 at 192 n. 3.

¹⁰⁸ See Ch. 4, Annexe, no. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Lewis Lockwood, in The New Grove Dictionary, xx. 421-3.

are returned (no. 35, para. 2). He repeats the same request a month later (no. 36, para. 13). Only two months after this are the madrigals back in Bologna (no. 37, para. 2).¹¹⁰

Just how the matter of Muradori's madrigals upset Willaert is never made clear, but an answer is suggested by a letter from Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Willaert preserved by chance in the present correspondence (it is the only letter addressed to Willaert). It was written on 20 October 1531, only four days before the letter in which Spataro speaks of the matter with Willaert. In his letter (no. 106), Lanfranco apologizes profusely to Willaert for a breach of decorum, indirectly involving Spataro, that was entirely unintended (see the entry for Lanfranco). As a sign that Willaert has accepted his apology, Lanfranco begs to be favoured with one of Willaert's Vesper services, but if that is too presumptuous a request, then just the five psalms, or four, or three, or even two of them, but at least one. In order to avoid duplication, Lanfranco mentions that he has Willaert's Magnificat in the second tone and an 'Ave maris stella'. With the letter Lanfranco encloses an enigmatic canon of his own making, together with its resolution, for Willaert's 'manco faticha'. No further letters that would indicate Willaert's response are extant.

Even Spataro, normally so outspoken and self-assured, does not feel confident enough to approach Willaert directly with a request for a composition. Not having forgotten the contretemps of two years earlier, he asks Aaron to make the overture to Willaert, 'if it will not turn out to your disadvantage'. The feast-day of St Petronius is approaching, and Spataro hopes that Willaert will compose three verses of the prescribed hymn. He already has many hymns by Willaert, which are pleasing to the listeners because they are 'composed learnedly and with great art' (see no. 59, para. 3).

Willaert was indirectly involved in another controversy that pitted Lorenzo Gazio against Giovanni del Lago. Don Valeriano, a nephew of Gazio, had sent his uncle a notationally complex tenor, saying that Willaert had used it as the basis of a composition. Gazio was perturbed since, according to him, the tenor was full of errors and could only embarrass Willaert. if it were made public (see nos. 107–8). In fact, he felt so strongly about it that he went to Venice to dissuade Willaert from publishing the work (no. 61, para. 2). To show the tenor's deficiencies, Gazio made a resolution for his nephew, 'relying more on guesswork than on the art in the composition'. The tenor, as it turns out, was from a composition of Giovanni del Lago, his 'Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi'.

¹¹⁰ Willaert must have been inundated with similar requests. An interesting episode has recently been recounted by Maurizio Tarrini in 'Una gara musicale a Genova nel 1555', *Note d'archivio per la storia musicale*, NS 3 (1985), 159–70. Two musicians in Genoa, Andrea Festa and Benedetto Spinone, vied with each other in 1555 in composing a sixth part to a madrigal by Willaert and one by Rore. Each claimed that his part was 'at once more beautiful and more artful and in more conformity' with Willaert's style. They decided to submit the parts to Willaert, wagering 25 gold scudi on the outcome. According to one of the documents in the notarial file, Willaert at first refused, saying that 'he never felt like undertaking such requests, even though many had begged him', but he eventually acceded (p. 166). According to another document, Willaert never agreed to make a judgement.

Somehow Gazio's resolution, together with his letter to Don Valeriano, fell into Del Lago's hands. In righteous indignation he defends his tenor and picks apart Gazio's erroneous resolution, breve by breve. This response occasioned the longest letter in the Correspondence (no. 86). In conclusion, Del Lago asserts that it brought Willaert praise and fame to have composed over this tenor. The composition, however, does indeed seem to have been suppressed by Willaert, if it ever existed. A glance at the tenor (see Pl. 13, pp. 848–9) shows that the composition would have been dissimilar to anything else in Willaert's œuvre.

Willaert and Del Lago seem to have been on good terms. When the English ambassador wanted to discuss ancient Greek music, he invited Venice's foremost composer and its leading theorist to lunch (see para. 98). The latest letter in the Correspondence, of 1543 (no. 95), shows their relationship in a new light. When the Franciscans received permission to celebrate two new feasts in the 1530s, they needed to provide music to be printed in the Gradual and Antiphoner. Fra Girolamo Malipiero, who prepared the offices, gave Willaert the chants to correct. When he went to pick them up, Willaert told him that he had given them to Del Lago, 'in tale arte dottissima', to look over. Thus what at first sounded like a typical boast on Del Lago's part, that Willaert was 'familiarissimo nostro' (no. 28, para. 5), may not be wide of the mark after all.

#### Wollick, Nicolaus

Mentioned in nos. 2 and 37.

Nicolaus Wollick was a music theorist, born in Lorraine c.1480. He attended university at Cologne, where he obtained the MA in 1501 and brought out the *Opus aurem musicae*, the third and fourth parts of which, on composition, were by his teacher, Melchior Schanppecher. In 1506–7 he moved to Metz as master of the choirboys at the Cathedral, and in 1508 he transferred to Paris, where he taught music. The next year he published his *Enchiridion musices*, an expanded version of his earlier treatise. In 1513 he became secretary to the Duke of Lorraine, and his interests turned to history. He died after 23 May 1541.¹¹¹

Wollick was not known personally to any of the musicians in the Correspondence, but Spataro was reading his treatise in 1517. He refers to the author as 'uno francese chiamato Nicholao Baroducense' and to the book as 'almost entirely taken out of the works of Franchino'; indeed, it was Gafurio who had sent it to Spataro (no. 2, para. 3). Spataro's attitude towards it was therefore prejudiced (and the 'errore de alcuni moderni scripturi' mentioned in no. 58, para. 3, is traceable to Wollick), but he did borrow a plainchant from the treatise in a motet he wrote in 1532, 'Hec virgo est preclarum vas' (no. 37, para. 6). Del Lago also seems to have been familiar with Wollick's treatise: he paraphrases Wollick's exposition of accent in no. 93, para. 8.

#### Zampiero

Mentioned in no. 72.

Some time before 1520 Del Lago wrote an explanation of Tinctoris's 'Difficiles alios' for 'Zampiero', who was no longer living in 1520 (para. 2). He may possibly

¹¹¹ Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, 'Wollick, Nicolaus', The New Grove Dictionary, xx. 512.

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be the 'Zuan Piero' whose fame was eclipsed by a young lutenist, protegé of Dionisio Memo, who so impressed Henry VIII in May 1517 that 'his majesty never wearied of listening to him'.¹¹² Ivy Mumford identifies Zuan Piero with the Italian musician 'John Peter' whom Henry VIII sent to Alfonso d'Este in October of that year (see Commentary on no. 46) and suggests that he may be the same as the 'John Peter de Bustis' who visited the court of Mantua as Henry's messenger in the same month.¹¹³ 'De Bustis', as Mumford points out, is a Lombard surname. Sagudino, however, writes as if 'Zuan Piero' were known to Foscari and therefore probably a Venetian. Of course, the name is very common. Another possible candidate is 'Zampiero da Bressa', a musician of Cardinal Ippolito d'Este in the years 1507 and 1509.¹¹⁴

#### Zanetto, Pre

This is the name by which Giovanni del Lago was known to Spataro and Aaron. See Ch. 6.

## Zesso, Giovanni Battista

#### Mentioned in no. 83.

Zesso was the teacher of Del Lago, who refers to him in a letter of 1533 as 'mio precettore, Messer Giovanne Baptista Zesso padoano' (para. 3). It is not known whether Del Lago studied with him in Padua or Venice. He was also a composer: six frottole and two laude were published by Petrucci between 1507 and 1511.¹¹⁵

#### Zuan Maria di Pre Hector

Mentioned in no. 72.

Giovanni da Legge asked Del Lago in 1520 to give his answer to 'Zuan Maria di Pre Hector', who will forward it to Da Legge in Rome.

¹¹² According to Nicolò Sagudino, secretary to the Venetian ambassador at the English court, in a letter to Alvise Foscari in Venice dated 19 May 1517; see Mumford, 'The Identity of "Zuan Piero"', p. 179.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 182.

¹¹⁴ Lockwood, 'Adrian Willaert and Cardinal Ippolito d'Este', p. 112.

¹¹⁵ Stanley Boorman, 'Zesso, Giovanni Battista', The New Grove Dictionary, xx. 670.

# NOTES ON PROBLEMATICAL TERMS

THESE Notes are limited to certain key terms and concepts, illustrated in selected quotations: in particular, words that have both a musical and a non-musical meaning, such as *riducere*, *virtù*, *numero*, *accidentale*, and *taciturnità*. For the Greek note-names, which are used in a number of the letters, see Fig. 1 in the Principles of the Edition.

#### Accidentale/accidente

Accidentale is used in the modern sense of sharps and flats added in the course of the composition, but it clearly retains its original meaning of a non-essential quality, one that modifies a substance but does not change its essence. Spataro explains the concept in a letter to Aaron in discussing the effect of a two-breve rest in a composition in the perfect minor mode: 'Such a rest cannot remove the perfection assigned by the sign of perfection to this composition, because it stands in that place like an accident in a subject, which can be added to and removed from the subject without corrupting the subject' (no. 5, para. 8). He uses the same words to describe the sharp- and flat-signs (no. 60, para. 19). The philosophical concept underlying this notion is discussed in Aristotle, *Categories* 5, and in Porphyry's *Isagoge*; Spataro cites the latter's definition as translated by Boethius: 'accidens vero est quod adest et abest praeter subjecti corruptionem.' The closest analogy would be to the relationship between adjectives and nouns; indeed, 'adjective' is one of the meanings of 'accidens'.

Spataro uses the word accidentale or accidente for signs and dots (no. 4, para. 3), ternary metre (no. 7, paras. 6-7),¹ blackened notes and rests on separate lines (no. 41, para. 3), as well as for sharps and flats (no. 15, para. 2). When Del Lago suggests that the sign  $\phi_2$  could be understood to mean perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus, diminished, Spataro replies that it means O twice diminished, as shown by 'li accidenti proprii del tempo perfetto', that is, blackened breves, semibreve rests on separate lines, and dots of perfection (no. 45, para. 6). Rests of longs are not signs but accidentals of primary signs: 'le pause de longha ... non sono proprii signi, ma sono accidenti et ordini considerati et comprehesi da li primi signi' (no. 45, para. 15), and they cannot be used in the course of a work 'senza sustantivo o vero subietto cioè signo circulare o semicirculare' (ibid.). In one letter, Del Lago calls them 'segni intrinseci', as opposed to 'segni extrinseci', the mensuration-signs: 'ma li segni intrinseci sono li accidenti come è il colore, el quale consiste nelle note piene, come è il punto di divisione, le note alterate, ridotte, et le pause le quali dinotano tale perfettione, et altri simili accidenti i quali si segnano in processu cantus' (no. 74, para. 2).

The characterization of all these elements as accidental may stem from Marchetto of Padua's *Pomerium*. Marchetto begins his strikingly Aristotelian treatise with a quotation from Aristotle's *De anima*: 'Accidentia multum conferunt

¹ On this notion, see the Commentary on no. 7.

ad cognoscendum quod quid est'.² For Marchetto, everything in music is accidental except the notes. He lists these accidentals as tails, rests, dots, and the sign for *falsa musica*.³

The note Bb, formerly belonging to *musica vera*, is considered an accidental by both Spataro and Del Lago. The latter writes: 'nel soprano diremo *sol* in G *sol re ut* sopra acuto, et *fa* in bfabmi (accidentaliter) per virtù del b rotondo segnato nel predetto luogo' (no. 28, para. 4), and 'el quale b molle è accidentale, perché può esser posto et non posto' (no. 73, para. 4). The flat sign 'rimove il canto da b quadro o ver duro, et anchora naturale, in b molle accidentale' (no. 28, para. 6). Spataro, in discussing how to cancel a Bb, says: 'volendo retornare el canto de b molle accidentale in b duro naturale, alhora el serà licito segnare in bfabmi el b quadrato drito, ut hic b' (no. 36, para. 5).

#### Anfratto

Anfratto is a translation of the Latin anfractus, which in classical Latin means 'a bending, recurving, turning', also used metaphorically as 'circumlocution, prolixity'. Spataro uses it only in canonic directions; 'et anfractus superparticularis primi intensi' means 'li anfratti o salti ascendenti', or ascending melodic leaps (no. 2, para. 12; also no. 3, para. 4). This was a word he had learned from Ramis, who also used it in a musical sense: 'quantum tenor incipiat saltus et anfractus facere'.⁴

#### Canon

*Canon* is used only in its earlier sense as 'rule' or 'precept', not as imitation or canon. In no. 2, para. 6 Spataro writes: 'In lo tenore del preditto canto se trova uno canon, o vero una regula o vero precepto'. In no. 3 (para. 2) he uses the word *subscriptione* to refer to the Latin instructions on resolving the tenor, so called because they are placed under the tenor part. Ramis uses both terms in the chapter 'In quo canones et subscriptiones subtiliter declarantur' in his *Musica practica*.⁵ See also *fuga*.

#### Cartella

A cartella is a type of score used for composition. See Ch. 5.

#### Chromatico/chromatice

Chromatico is used to describe the chromatic genus and notes located in its tetrachords. Spataro wrote several compositions in which the tenor is to be sung in the diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic genera (on these works, see Ch. 3). Since the intervals are different in each of these tetrachords, calling the notes by their Guidonian solmization syllables poses difficulties. Spataro solved this problem by adding the word 'chromatico' to the variable intervals. In the diatonic genus, C fa ut to D sol re is a whole tone; in the chromatic genus it is a semitone. In

the motet 'Ubi opus est facto' Spataro avoided the successive semitones of the chromatic genus by combining the two lower intervals in the tetrachord: 'se debba saltare da  $\mid mi$  ad D *sol re* chromatico [i.e. C#/Db] et non tocare C *fa ut*', and thus the composite tone falling 'tra  $\nmid$  et D (cromatice loquendo)' becomes an incomposite tone (no. 2, para. 7). In Spataro's motet for Leo X, two notes of the tenor are on D *la sol re*; 'volendo procedere chromatice', the note has to be provided with an accidental, as C#, and then it will be understood to be 'la terza chorda chromatica del tetrachordo diezeugmenon' (no. 15, para. 3).

In 1532 Spataro composed a motet in which he divided the octave *B-b* harmonically with  $f^{\ddagger}$ , which he called 'la terza chorda chromatica' (no. 46, para. 1).

#### Color

Spataro defined *color* as a passage 'repeated in one voice-part on the same pitch but with note-values that differ in force, shape, and value (*virtù, forma, et valore*)' (no. 28, para. 16).⁶ His example shows a melodic phrase repeated on the same pitch in proportional diminution. Del Lago cites the different definitions of Johannes de Muris, 'other learned old musicians', and Tinctoris (no. 28, para. 16), which do not agree with each other, and he does not accept Spataro's contention that Obrecht used *color* in his 'Missa Si dedero' (para. 17).

## Composito/incomposito

These terms go back to Aristoxenus (*Elementa harmonica* 3. 60) and were taken over by Boethius (1. 23). They describe the melodic disposition of any interval. If a fourth, for example, is sung as a melodic progression, C D E F, it is 'composito', or composed of smaller intervals. If it is sung as a leap, C-F, it is 'incomposito' or, as Spataro says, 'in uno intervallo pronuntiato' (no. 2, para. 7). In no. 12, para. 4 Spataro says instead 'così in semplice come in composito' to describe the leap or the filling-in of a minor third. In one letter (now lost) Del Lago had claimed that the melodic progression of three whole tones, or 'composito tritono', did not make a tritone. This amazed Spataro, who thought that Del Lago incorrectly wanted to restrict the term to 'tale immediata [unmediated] distantia del tritono perché, essendo incomposito pronuntiato, la sua asperità et dureza è molto nota, et molto spiace al senso de lo audito' (no. 58, para. 3).

#### Coniuncta

Coniuncta is a term that we have left untranslated because it has no exact equivalent in English. It is synonymous with *musica ficta*, except that it describes single notes or signs, which is why it has a plural form, whereas *musica ficta*, referring to the whole class of notes outside the Guidonian hand, is usually singular. Spataro severely criticized Aaron's exposition of mutation involving *musica ficta* in his *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni* (1525) because he used only flats and referred to 'la coniuncta': 'qua pare che intendeti solo de una et

² Spataro quoted this in no. 41, para. 3; see no. 41 n. 4.

³ See Pomerium, ed. Vecchi, pp. 39-40.

⁴ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 71.

⁵ Ibid., p. 90.

 $^{^{6}}$  Spataro normally uses the word *virtà* as synonymous with *valore*. Here he makes a distinction between the two, probably because the passage could be written out once, but performed under different proportional signs, which would make the notes differ in rhythmic effect.

non de più, perché haresti dicto le coniuncte, et non la coniuncta' (no. 30, para. 4). Aaron eventually conceded that he had treated the subject incorrectly; in this same letter Spataro writes that he is happy that Aaron now believes 'che l'è più de una coniuncta, et non solamente quella de b molle' (ibid.). For Spataro, 'le coniuncte' are the sharp- and flat-signs. Most theorists who use the term *coniuncta* consider it to be a single note. Del Lago describes eight *coniunctae*, with a music example for each, in a letter to Giovanni da Legge, listing them as 'la prima congiunta' (Bb), 'la seconda congiunta' (c#), etc. (no. 71, para. 3). For further on the *coniuncta*, see the Commentary on no. 71.

The term *coniuncta* originated as the Latin equivalent of *synemmene*, after *trite synemmenon*, which designates Bb in the conjunct tetrachord. Indeed, one of the earliest treatises to treat *musica ficta* is headed 'Sequitur de sinemenis'. Here the anonymous author says that this term is the one that is used by philosophers: 'uno modo secundum philosophos, et sic nominatur synemenon', whereas commonly, 'secundum vulgus', it is called 'falsa musica vel false musice'.⁷

See also synemmenon.

#### Corda

A corda, literally 'string', is both the string on a lute (no. 14, para. 4) and the note of the Greek tetrachord, conceived as the string producing it ('ascendendo da la predicta chorda mese ad paramesen'; no. 12, para. 3). It is a useful term because it does not indicate the exact pitch (the 'corda' parhypate meson, for example, has a different pitch in the diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic tetrachords). For this reason, Spataro uses it to describe intervals in Willaert's chromatic duo that are removed by a major semitone or a comma from their apparent location: 'intra la corda data per semitonio minore più acuta de F grave [i.e. Gb] e la corda data per semitonio minore più acuta del b rotondo de be fa be mi caderà etiam diatessaron' (no. 13, para. 3) and 'se tale b rotondo serà due volte exercitato, la chorda sonora alhora serà depressa per dui semitonii magiuri, li quali (inseme colti) producono uno spacio el quale suppera el tono per uno spacio de uno coma' (no. 14, para. 2). Sometimes he seems to use 'corda' as synonymous with 'sound', again when the sound is not in a normal location: 'uno suono o vero corda, la quale sia subposita ad A acuta per spatio di coma' (no. 13, para. 3). Spataro uses the terms 'acordato' and 'temperato' to describe a tuned lute (no. 14, para. 4).

For another meaning of *corda* see the Commentary on no. 73.

## Diesis

Diesis is used in several senses in the Correspondence. In nos. 2 and 3 it is the

⁷ This fragmentary treatise was published by Coussemaker as an appendix to the treatise of Anonymus IV (CS i. 364-5). It has recently been presented in an improved edn. in Appendix B to Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Brevis summula proportionum quantum ad musicam pertinet* and *Parvus tractatulus de modo monacordum dividendi*, ed. and trans. Jan Herlinger (Greek and Latin Music Theory 4; Lincoln, Nebr., and London, 1987), pp. 123-35 at 128. It occurs only in two English manuscripts, the earliest datable c.1275 (p. 123). Anonymus IV refers to Eb as 'deutera sinemenon'; see Fritz Reckow, *Der Musiktraktat des Anonymus* 4 (2 vols., Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 4-5; Wiesbaden, 1967), i. 71.

quarter-tone in the enharmonic tetrachord. Del Lago calls the *diesis* 'quasi una quarta parte del tuono' (no. 73, para. 7) and 'medietas semitonii minoris' (no. 88, para. 5). In no. 12 *diesis* is the name given to the sharp-sign (a usage that has been preserved in modern Italian and French). In his *Toscanello* Aaron had claimed that the sign showing the singer whether a note is augmented or diminished 'per generale uso è chiamato diesis, et è figurato in questo modo  $\overset{}{\times}$  ' (para. 2). Spataro objected to the name *diesis*, preferring Ramis's terminology, 'b quadro tantum' (as distinguished from the natural sign, called 'b quadro recto'), for, he says, it is more proper to call the sign 'b quadro tantum' because it follows from its effect, raising the note by a major semitone (para. 3). Spataro takes it for granted that Aaron understands the true meaning of *diesis* when he says that 'dicendo diesis, lo effecto et el nome non hano inseme corespondentia'. Del Lago objects both to the sign itself (which he calls 'croce') and the term diesis, for 'tale segno representa l'intervallo de due diesis et una comma, cioè un semituono maggiore' (no. 88, para. 5).

#### Distantia

Literally 'distance', this word is also used in a musical sense for 'interval' or 'chord'. In the canonic directions to his 'Missa de la tradictora' Spataro explains 'anfratti intensi', ascending melodic intervals, as 'le distantie le quale ascendeno' (no. 3, para. 4). In a *fuga*, one voice follows the other 'per quelle medesime distantie et vestigii che ha tenuto l'altro' (no. 28, para. 4). The phrase *sonora distantia*, 'sounding interval', is sometimes used to indicate the simultaneous sounding of two notes: 'nui habiamo che intra le sonore distantie in la similitudine cadere tuta la integrità de la perfectione' (no. 6, para. 3), and 'la integra immutabilità de le distantie perfecte et la mutabilità de le distantie imperfecte' (no. 11, para. 4). A more specific adjective is *concorde*, which Spataro uses later in the same letter (para. 7). In a letter in which he discusses the use of the chromatic and enharmonic genera in contemporary music, Spataro says that they assist the diatonic, 'così in modulatione come in le distantie concorde', in melodic as well as harmonic intervals (no. 46, para. 1).

Spataro uses the word *distantia* because of the ambiguity of the word 'interval'. In its non-musical use, it always indicates successive space or time between events, never simultaneity. Even today, we must use an adjective to distinguish the two meanings of interval as a musical phenomenon: melodic and harmonic. Harmonic intervals have also been called 'two-note chords' or, recently, 'simultaneities'. Tinctoris, who always paid the closest attention to the meaning of words, was aware of this problem; he generally avoids the word 'intervallum', preferring 'coniunctio' for a melodic interval and 'concordantia' or 'discordantia' for a harmonic interval, but he seems to have had few followers.

Equivocatione. See univocatione.

Essentiale. See indiciale.

### Figura cantabile/pausabile, nota cantabile/non cantabile

Figura is a graphic sign indicating temporal value, either a note that is sung (figura cantabile) or a rest (figura pausabile, figura non cantabile). A nota is a sign

## Notes on Problematical Terms

representing a sound.⁸ Thus, the shape of a semibreve is called a *figura*, but a semibreve placed on a music staff with clef is a *nota*. The tenor of Spataro's 'Ubi opus est facto' is only a canonic instruction, 'senza apparentia de figure o note cantabile' (no. 2, para. 6). In no. 3 Spataro refers to 'le note cantabile et non cantabile' in the tenor of his 'Missa de la tradictora' (para. 3). Here the 'note non cantabile' are those non-diatonic notes that are to be suppressed: 'El canon comanda che lo enharmonico et el chromatico debiano tacere o vero convertire quelle figure cantabile in pause le quale discrepano dal diatonico' (para. 6). In no. 4 Spataro refers to two semibreves following a breve, 'una in pausa et l'altra in forma cantabile', contrasting this example with a dotted breve followed by a semibreve. Alteration can take place in the first example because 'le figure, le quale representano la voce, come la semibreve, etc., et etiam quelle che respresentano taciturnità, come la pausa de la semibreve ... son posite per quantità et parte del tempo', whereas the dot of perfection is not a quantity of time but merely a sign indicating that the breve remains perfect (para. 5).

#### Fuga

Spataro's definition of *fuga* was the subject of an argument between him and Giovanni del Lago. For Spataro, *fuga* requires at least two voices, in which one follows the other using the same melodic intervals, at the interval of a unison, fourth, fifth, or octave, or a compound. The intervals must be the same, although the solmization syllables may be different (no. 28, para. 4). Spataro maintained that his example 'serà dicto essere fugato, perché procederà per intervalli et specie simile' (no. 29, para. 2). Del Lago, however, insisted that the solmization syllables must be the same, citing the definitions of Tinctoris, Gafurio, and Aaron (no. 28, paras. 7-8). A true *fuga*, according to Del Lago, has three requirements: 'che la sia simile quanto al nome delle notule o ver sillabe, quanto alla forma, et etiam quanto al valore di esse notule' (para. 9).⁹

While Spataro insisted that the melodic intervals of fuga be exact, he made no distinction between fuga as canon and fuga as imitation. His example in no. 28 really shows imitation, since the exactness breaks off at the end of the phrase. In one of his motets, Spataro excused the sixths between lower voices, which occurred because 'da me fu considerato fare la fuga de diapente a similitudine del subjecto o vero tenore del canto plano sumpto'; he conceded that a better sonority could be achieved 'removendo tale fuga et similitudine' (no. 35, para. 3). Since the motet survives, it can be verified that the passage is in imitation, not canon (see no. 35 n. 2).

#### Harmonia

In the Correspondence, *harmonia* is mostly used in the general sense of a composed work rather than in the more technical sense Spataro had given it in his treatise *Honesta defensio*, where he wrote 'Let harmony be (defined as) the mixture of consonances and dissonances in a composition.¹⁰ Spataro speaks of 'compos-

⁸ Cf. Tinctoris, *Dictionary*: 'Nota est signum vocis certi vel incerti valoris.'

⁹ 'Forma', which Del Lago took from Tinctoris's definition of *fuga*, means melodic shape. See the Commentary on no. 29.

¹⁰ 'Harmonia sie la mistura che si fa nel canto de consonantie e dissonantie' (fo.  $E_3^{v}$ ). On the

ing harmony': 'essa docta antiquità sapeva che l'arte et la gratia del componere la harmonia non se pò insignare' (no. 11, para. 7). Harmony should not be straitjacketed by old-fashioned metric requirements, 'le quale circa la bona harmonia nulla importano' (no. 45, para. 12). In a musical discussion in which Spataro took part, it was concluded that good harmony could not be composed in the diatonic genus alone: 'el diatonico genere non era per se exercitato in la formatione de la harmonia usitata'; the chromatic and enharmonic genera 'asai davano aiuto al diatonico predicto, così in modulatione come in le distantie concorde' (no. 46, para. 1).

Del Lago rarely talks about harmony. He mentions it when he discusses the prohibition of parallel perfect intervals in counterpoint: such a progression results in dissonance, whereas 'la perfettione de l'harmonia si causa per la dissimilitudine, cioè per la varietà di suoni' (no. 76, para. 3).

There is a highly interesting discussion of harmony as a chord in Spataro's letter to Aaron of 24 May 1524 (no. 12). Aaron, in his *Toscanello*, had said that the following chord, without the sharp added to g', would be a 'dispiacevole harmonia':

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Spataro objected on the grounds that if every minor third were considered to produce a 'trista harmonia', the chord of a triad (which he calls 'intervallo de diapente mediato') would produce 'spiacevole et trista harmonia et mala sonorità', because such a triad must always include one minor third. Spataro feels that the interval of minor third or tenth does not produce 'spiacevole harmonia, ma bona et suave'. However, by making the interval major, 'la harmonia serà più grata al senso de lo audito', and this conversion would not be from 'spiacevole harmonia in grata et bona', but 'de bona in meliore', because there is no such thing as 'harmonia spiacevole': 'quello che non piace a lo audito non è harmonia' (no. 12, para. 4).

## Incomposito. See composito.

## Indiciale/Essentiale

This pair of contrasting terms is applied to certain elements of notation that may be viewed as signs, principally accidentals and rests. Three-breve rests are a sign that a composition is in the perfect minor mode: every long is worth three breves. Such rests can be used in the course of a composition as both 'indicative' of the perfect minor mode and 'essential', that is, fulfilling the normal function of rests to indicate a period of silence. But, in the theory of the time, these rests can

concept of harmony in Spataro's time, see Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', pp. 224–33.

also be used as a sign of the perfect minor mode only, in which case they are placed before the mensuration-sign. This was the method of indicating both minor and major mode that was favoured by Tinctoris and Gafurio. Hothby, however, preferred to show mode by a combination of a sign and two figures, the sign indicating major mode, the first figure minor mode, and the second figure *tempus*. Prolation was shown by the presence or absence of a dot within the sign.¹¹

Although the perfect modes had largely fallen out of use by the sixteenth century, the argument over how to indicate mode in compositions is transmitted in the Correspondence by Del Lago, who adhered to the school of Gafurio and the 'moderni', and Spataro, who preferred the system used by Hothby and the 'antichi'. As usual, Spataro's preference is grounded not in authority but in reason. The dispute began when Del Lago criticized Spataro for (as he thought) using 'accidenti' (q.v.) to indicate a change of mode in the course of his compositions. Del Lago believed that mode was fixed at the beginning of a piece and could not be changed in the course of it:

But I know well that mode is invariable and fixed and never changes within compositions. And this happens in two ways. One is when the rests are placed at the beginning of the piece, either before the mensuration-sign or just after it. The other is when it is signed in the course of the composition, with the aforesaid rests ... Then it is understood that this composition, from beginning to end, is in the perfect mode, even though there may be different signs, that is signs of perfect or imperfect *tempus* with perfect or imperfect prolation. (No. 44, para. 12.)

#### These rests, he goes on to say,

invented by modern writers, are sometimes placed *indiciali* and are not counted, but are only a sign demonstrating the mode, and this when they are placed between the clef and the mensuration-sign, and sometimes they are signed *indiciali et essentiali*, and then they are located immediately or later after the circle or semicircle, and they are counted with the other notes. (Para. 13.)

Del Lago then quoted from Spataro's *Errori de Franchino Gafurio*, in which Spataro says he has advised Gafurio many times that he is not on the right track in using rests to indicate mode. The ancients, Spataro maintains, invented the signs of perfect and imperfect mode to allow one to change the larger mensurations in the middle of a piece just as one can change *tempus* and prolation.

Otherwise the composer would be forced, in compositions in perfect major and minor mode, without changing signatures, to proceed to the end in the mode in which the work began, which would mean that the musician is controlled by the sign and not vice versa. For this legitimate reason older composers used signs for perfect and imperfect modes; in the course of a work, a new sign cancels the old one, just as happens with proportions in mensural music; a new proportion cancels the old one. (Ibid.)

In replying to Del Lago's criticism, Spataro complained that modern musicians fail to distinguish between the sign and the signed, and he maintained that rests are not true signs but accidents of signs. In the modern system, if the composer wanted to change mode in the course of a composition, he would have to use rests ('note le quale representasseno taciturnità'), and this would lead to great confusion over their meaning. Moreover, accidents can never change the nature of any sign or subject (no. 45, para. 15). As to the possibility of changing mode in the middle of a composition, Spataro says that if it can be shown clearly with signs, there is no reason why it cannot be done. He concludes that Del Lago pulled this notion out of his own head because he offered no support for it, in reason, authority, or example (para. 16).

The terms *indiciale* and *essentiale* come from Gafurio's *Practica musicae*: 'Solent a plerisque pausae huiusmodi longae essentialiter et indicialiter inter cantilenae notulas pernotari'.¹² But Del Lago may have taken them directly from the annotations to Tinctoris's pedágogical motet, 'Difficiles alios', which he was familiar with. The tenor is in the perfect major and minor modes, indicated by three *longa* rests covering three spaces. The annotation reads: 'Iste pause ante signum temporis prolationisque posite non sunt essenciales sed utriusque modi tantum indiciales.'¹³

Del Lago also applied these terms to the flat-sign. When it is placed in the course of a composition, he considers it 'solamente inditiale' and says that 'its effect extends only to the note or notes near the b, (no. 28, para. 4, in the original version). But when it occurs in the key signature he views it as 'essentiale'. According to Del Lago, Spataro made an error in placing a Bb in an example of fuga and considering it to be 'essentiale'. Spataro sharply criticized Del Lago's terminology, saying that the sharp- and natural-signs 'sempre serano inditiali et non mai serano essentiali' because they are primary signs and not 'accidents' of other signs: they cannot be understood to be present in a composition by any accident among the notes but only by their proper form and shape. In this they differ from mensuration-signs, for while mensuration-signs too are primary signs and are only indicative, they have accidents, such as two semibreve rests on the same line, or altered or divided notes, or coloration, and these accidents are secondary signs and are called 'essentiali' 'because besides demonstrating what was first demonstrated by the sign, they are also used with mensural consequences'. But flat- and sharp-signs have no mensural consequences; they only change the sound and pitch of the note. It is wrong to call them indicative and essential; preferable would be to say 'continuato et non continuato, o vero stabile et mobile' (no. 29, para. 4). Del Lago took Spataro's advice and changed the terms to 'stabile' and 'mobile' throughout his letter.

As long as Spataro considers 'essence' to concern rhythm, his reasoning holds up. But one could certainly object that a flat signed in a key signature causes essential changes in the course of the music: a B in the music that is sung Bb by virtue of the key signature is no different from a semibreve in perfect *tempus* that becomes subject to alteration by virtue of the mensuration-sign. But Spataro was

¹¹ See the Commentary on no. 64, on Aaron's exposition of the two systems.

¹² Practica musicae, fo. aa7'; p. 85 in the translation by Miller.

¹³ See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', p. 67 (where 'tantum' was erroneously transcribed 'tamen'). In his *Tractatus de regulari valore notarum* Tinctoris says that rests placed before the mensuration sign 'non sunt de cantus essentia' (*Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 130).

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right to criticize Del Lago's terminology in the present context, for the question of the duration of the accidental is not addressed by the terms 'indicative' and 'essential'.

#### Intenso/remisso

These terms, like *anfratto*, are derived from the Latin: *intensus*, the past participle of *intendere* ('to stretch'), means 'raised' or 'upward', *remissus*, the past participle of *remittere* ('to send back' or 'to relax'), means 'lowered' or 'downward'. In the canonic directions to Spataro's 'Missa de la tradictora', 'li anfracti intensi' are 'le distantie le quale ascendeno', and 'remissa' means 'descendente' (no. 3, para. 4). Spataro also learnt these terms from Ramis: 'vocis elevatio sive intensio et depressio sive remissio'.¹⁴

#### Introito

Del Lago distinguishes 'color' from 'introito', which he says occurs 'when one part of a composition receives the end of the other part of the same composition; it should be found at the end of the voice-parts and is improperly called *color*, although it can commonly be so called' (no. 28, para. 13). The only other theorist who has used this term seems to be Ugolino of Orvieto, in his *Declaratio musicae disciplinae*, and, in fact, Del Lago has simply translated the passage word for word from Ugolino. Just what *introito* may be is puzzling.¹⁵

#### Musica activa

Spataro uses the term *activa musica* when he refers to intonation used by practical musicians that differs from theoretical (Pythagorean) intonation. According to him, 'el semitonio in la activa musica usitato' is 16:15 (no. 3, para. 4), not the Pythagorean minor semitone 256:243. Here Spataro is following Ramis's monochord division (similar to Ptolemy's syntonic diatonic), in which the major and minor thirds are calculated as superparticular ratios, 5:4 and 6:5. For further detail on this, see Ch. 3.

#### Numero/numerare

The concept of 'number' is fundamental to the operation of the mensural system. In every composition the maxima, long, breve, and semibreve are divided into two or three notes of the next smaller value. Thus each level is counted, or numbered, in twos or threes. Fifteenth-century theorists, such as Ugolino of Orvieto, stressed that each unit of measure shown by the mensuration-sign must be complete in every composition. If the maxima is shown by means of three-long rests, the composition should be divisible into units of nine or six breves (excluding the last note, which is always the beginning of a new mensural unit). Thus the composer must count the metric units on each level of mensuration. Spataro held that these metric requirements had nothing to do with good harmony, but if a signature of a composition showed  $\phi$ , it would be proper that

¹⁵ F. Alberto Gallo's suggestion (see no. 28 n. 32) does not satisfactorily account for the 'ends', either of the voice-part or the composition.

claramente fusse apparente el numero de le minime a tre numerate, et similemente el numero de le semibreve perfette fusse a tre mensurato, et le breve per reintegrare el valore de la longha fusseno condutte per binario numero, et le longhe similemente fusseno a doe inseme colte per reintegrare el valore de la massima. (No. 45, para. 12.)

Del Lago advises composers that the number must be concluded on the penultimate note of the cadence, for the following note is always the beginning of a new number or measure:

sempre compire il numero ternario o binario o ver quaternario nella penultima nota della conclusione o ver cadentia, cioè non si debbe computare la penultima nota con la sequente, la quale include la cadentia o vero distintione, perché ella è principio di numero. Similmente si debbe finire il numero nella penultima nota del concento et non nell'ultima, perché la penultima include il numero precedente et l'ultima nota è fine del canto, et però non si computa con altra nota. (No. 93, para. 6.)

Aaron had criticized Josquin's 'Praeter rerum seriem' on the grounds that it did not proceed according to the perfect minor mode shown by the signature. Spataro replied that the soprano, from beginning to end, moved in three-breve units, but that the tenor, alto, and bass 'non observano tale numero': to impart more grace to the ending Josquin had added a few notes 'che non observano tale numero ternario integro' (no. 4, para. 2). In one of Aaron's compositions, Spataro discovered certain syncopations not allowed by Aaron in the *Toscanello* 'numerando le breve a doe come vole el segno' (no. 30, para. 6; see also no. 36, para. 4). The 'wrong number' was considered a solecism in music. When Del Lago criticized a passage in a motet by Giovanni Lanfranco 'che manca del suo numero', Lanfranco said it was out of inadvertence, not ignorance, 'che puttroppo poco chi non sa numerar i canti' (no. 104, para. 6).

The singer, too, is obliged to count the number. A syncopated note displaces the measure and interrupts the normal number. The singer must keep track of the number by counting the part of this unit that precedes the syncopating note together with the remaining part that follows it. This counting or drawing together or restoration is called *reductio* (q.v.). In compositions in triple metre a singer cannot know where notes must be imperfected or altered unless he has a firm grasp of the number: 'la alteratione non è stata inventa se non per complemento del ternario numero' (no. 48, para. 5).

Ligatures are often clues to the division of measures. Del Lago says ' la ligatura il più delle volte esclude il numero precedente, cioè se pone in principio perfectionis mensure', and this practice is observed by the best composers, who place ligatures 'in principio del numero, così binario come ternario. Ma più se osserva nel numero ternario, nel quale consiste la perfettione' (no. 43, para. 4).

Likewise, rests of a breve or longer should be placed according to the metre: 'quante volte noi intendiamo segnare la pausa la quale concerna l'integra misura, è necessario che li sia immediate dinanti a lei el numero perfetto ne' segni perfetti, o vero il numero imperfetto ne' segni imperfetti', although this rule is frequently not observed (no. 73, para. 11).

#### Privatione

Spataro says that four signs occur at the beginning of the last Kyrie of his

¹⁴ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 26.

## Notes on Problematical Terms

'Missa Tue voluntatis', two of which are recognizable 'per la apparentia' and two by 'la privatione'. The two apparent signs are the circle and the dot:  $\phi$ , which show that *tempus* and prolation are perfect. 'Privation', however, shows that the major and minor mode are imperfect (no. 45, para. 8). In para. 16 he quotes Tinctoris: 'the sign of minor prolation is the absence of a dot in the middle of a perfect or imperfect circle'. The 'sign of privation', therefore, is the absence of a sign. The concept goes back to Aristotle, *Categories* 10 (11^b18, 12^a26–13^a36), where 'privation and possession' form one of the four pairs in the category of opposites.¹⁶

#### Pugna

According to Del Lago, *pugna* is another word for *reditta* (no. 28, para. 18), which he had earlier defined (following Tinctoris) as 'the continuous repetition of one or more melodic intervals' (para. 10). He applies the term to Josquin's multiple use of the notes *la sol fa re mi* in his mass of the same name. Spataro had apparently never heard the term, but he liked it, 'for fights break out when many who disagree come together', which he thought was an apt way to describe *color*. But he refused to concede that his *color* was the same as *reditta* (no. 29, para. 8).

#### Reditta. See pugna.

Remisso. See intenso.

## Riducere, riducto, reductio

*Riducere* is a difficult verb to translate because it is tied to an aspect of the mensural system that has not survived in modern practice, the imperfection of perfect notes by their surrounding smaller notes. *Riducere* is the Italian equivalent of *reducere*. In classical Latin this means 'to lead or bring back, to draw back, to conduct to some place, to restore'. In music theory, it means to connect notes in perfect groups. Tinctoris defines *reductio* as 'the counting together of one or more notes with greater ones which they imperfect, or with their companions'.¹⁷ 'Reductio' operates in perfect mensurations and, according to Del Lago, it does four things: 'la reductione nelle quantità perfette opera quatro cose, cioè fa imperfetta la nota atta però a farsi imperfetta, reintegra il numero, fa alterare la nota, toglie alla nota l'alteratione' (no. 86, para. 9). Coloration can also indicate *reductio*: when coloured notes are separated by void notes they do not imperfect them but are counted together to form a perfection.¹⁸

Del Lago objected to a 'reduttione' made by Spataro in which a dotted semibreve and minim had to skip over a breve to join with a semibreve rest: 'la qual semibreve pontata con la ditta minima si reduce da V.E. a quella pausa della

¹⁸ See the exception to Tinctoris's ninth general rule of imperfection in the *Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium (Opera theoretica*, ed. Seay, i. 151) discussed in Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 99–100.

semibreve la quale è tra la breve et la pausa de la breve' (no. 44, para. 13). Aaron castigated Del Lago for surrounding a note 'atta alla reduttione' with dots, which immobilize the note, 'dil che non si può declinare né coniungere verso el principio, né al fine acciò si possi con qualche altra nota accompagnarsi' (no. 66, para. 15).

In the Correspondence riducere also is used in a number of other contexts in a sense closer to the Latin. Spataro uses it as a synonym of 'to translate': 'per fare riducere l'opera de la sesqualtera in latino' (no. 6, para. 9). Riducere has the meaning 'to restore' or 'to conduct to' in the following phrases: 'se tale exemplo adonca serà riducto tuto soto al signo' and 'volendo riducere tale nota plena [blackened] de diminuta a la recta integrità' (no. 9, para. 3), and 'riducte a le linee et spatii usitate' (no. 15, para. 2). In discussing Willaert's duo, Spataro says that in order to obtain a double flat that lowered a note by a 9:8 whole tone, it would be necessary to invent two signs, one lowering the note by a major semitone, the other by a minor semitone, and thus 'ogni spatio di tono naturale per arte si potria rectamente reducere del suono suo acuto nel suono suo propinquo grave' (no. 13, para. 4). By means of the comma, the intervals of two minor semitones on the monochord 'non solamente se reducono alla debita integrità, ma etiam reduce lo intervallo sonoro non ottimamente grato al senso de lo audito, in modo che lo audito molto ben resta satisfatto et contento' (no. 60, para. 11). In other contexts, it is possible to use the English term 'reduce': 'se tutte le scientie et facultà fusseno redutte plane et a facilità per complacere alli rudi, el non se cognosceria el dotto dal indotto' (no. 45, para. 6).

### Subscriptione. See canon.

#### Synemmenon

Synemmenon is the Greek conjunct tetrachord beginning on mese. The canonic directions to Spataro's 'Ubi opus est facto' include the words 'synemmenon utique devitans', meaning that 'el terzo tetracordo, el quale è el synemmenon, è ecceptuato et levato de tale tenore' (no. 2, para. 8). Because the synemmenon tetrachord translates into practical music as  $a b \beta c'' d''$ , Spataro also uses the term synemmenon as synonymous with  $B\beta$ . The canonic directions to his 'Missa de la tradictora' include the phrase 'per maius in mesen per sinemenon reiterabis', meaning 'esso tenore debia principiare nel principio in mesen, scilicet in A *la mi re* acuta, per synemenon, scilicet per b molle' (no. 3, para. 3).

See also coniuncta.

## Taciturnità

The concept of *taciturnità*, 'silence' or 'stillness', is central to Spataro's attitude towards dissonance. It was his contention that the ear accepts a suspended note as equivalent to *taciturnità*: 'quella suspensione, la quale cade tra l'una et l'altra percussione del tempo sumpto, è acceptata da lo audito in loco de taciturnità (no. 11, para. 10) or 'el quale durare da lo audito è inteso quasi come taciturnità' (no. 39, para. 2). Therefore, according to Spataro, dissonances that occur under a suspension are permissible: 'se adonca (come è la verità) nel medio o vero intra le percussione sonore cade taciturnità, restarà (come ogni doctrinato consente) che

¹⁶ See The Complete Works of Aristotle, ed. Barnes, i. 19-21.

¹⁷ 'Reductio est unius aut plurium notarum cum maioribus quas imperficiunt aut cum sociis annumeratio' (*Diffinitorium*). This translation differs from that given by Parrish (*Dictionary*, p. 55). who was misled by the false cognate 'reduction'. On this, see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', p. 93 n. 127.
el serà quasi frustratorio affaticarsi circa el consono de tale tacito intervallo, perché la taciturnità non è nota al senso de lo audito' (no. 49, para. 2). Spataro's theoretical understanding of *taciturnità* derives from Gafurio, but not its application to counterpoint. For further on his concept, see Ch. 5.

#### Talea

Spataro defines *talea* as 'a manner of singing which occurs when one voice-part repeats the same passage on various degrees' (no. 28, para. 11). His example shows an ostinato on three pitch-levels. Del Lago pointed out that his definition did not agree with those of Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, Tinctoris, and Johannes de Muris, nor with the tenor of a motet by Giovanni da Bologna (no. 28, para. 11). He also objected to Spataro's spelling, 'tala'.

### Univocatione/equivocatione

In the course of discussing the notational rule 'like before like cannot be imperfected', Spataro says that a breve placed before two semibreve rests cannot be considered 'like before like', for 'intra la breve predicta et le predicte pause non cade univocatione né etiam equivocatione' (no. 5, para. 3). These terms come from Aristotle, Categories 1 (1°1-2, 6-7): 'When things have only a name in common and the definition of being which corresponds to the name is different, they are called homonymous. ... When things have the name in common and the definition of being which corresponds to the name is the same, they are called synonymous."¹⁹ The two semibreve rests combined are equivalent to an imperfect breve, but since there is (in Spataro's time) no rest of an imperfect breve, there is no 'equivocatione'. In the following paragraph Spataro shows that 'like before like' applies even when the first note is perfect, the second imperfect; in this case the two notes are similar in name but not quantity, that is, equivocally but not univocally: 'Imperò che dove la regula dice che la nota simile non debe imperficere inanti a la sua simile, questo se intende in quanto a la qualità et non in quanto a la quantità, scilicet in quanto al nome et non in quanto a la virtù quantitativa, cioè che siano simile in equivocatione et non sempre in univocatione' (no. 5, para. 4). Quality and quantity are likewise discussed in Aristotle's Categories, as are the proper words to describe them, similar/dissimilar and equal/ unequal respectively. Spataro refers specifically to Aristotle when discussing these terms in no. 6, para. 5.

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#### Virtù

This word appears many times in the Correspondence, both in a general and a musical sense. Musically, it means 'effect' or 'force', and it is often synonymous with 'value', meaning temporal value. In no. 2 (para. 11) Spataro says that the long and semibreve are similar in 'numero' (q.v.) but not in 'virtù', that is, both can be divided into two or three parts, but their temporal value is different. Spataro not infrequently writes 'in virtù o valore' (no. 5, para. 3; no. 10, para. 1) or 'virtù quantitativa' (no. 6, para. 5).

Virtù is also used exactly as in the English expression 'by virtue of', in Latin

¹⁹ See The Complete Works of Aristotle, ed. Barnes, i. 3.

*virtute*: 'per virtù del sesquitertio effecto' (no. 9, para. 3). *Virtualiter* means 'actually' or 'in effect': in describing the  $E \not > \not >$  in Willaert's duo, Spataro says: 'dato che el predetto spatio di diapente incomposto in quanto alla aparentia cada situato in E grave, tamen virtualiter sarà inteso cadere tra C et D grave in modo che con D restarà depresso per spatio di coma' (no. 13, para. 3).

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