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 These letters form a unique and highly significant historical document.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.
El ánimo del Músico que no conversa con otros Músicos, húzese perezoso por no tener quien le incite y punc, con requerirle de lo que sabe y arguyrle; o sobervio por la vana persuasión: porque no cotejando su habilidad cola de algún otro, endemasiado atribúyese á sí mismo. Por el contrario, quien conversando siente alabar sus estudios, mayormente está deseeso de perfeccionarse: y quien es algún tanto negligente, viene agujonado de la competencia, y como el hombre estudianto se toma á verguença el ceder á un ygual; así tiene por honra grande el poder sobrepajar y ganar á un mayor.

Pietro Cerone, *El melopeo y maestro* (Naples, 1613), Book I, ch. 34, fo. 93
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 1–19. 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
Preface

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

CONTENTS

Order of Letters xiii
List of Illustrations xvii
Tables xix

PART I. INTRODUCTION
1. A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians 3
2. History of the Manuscripts 15
3. Giovanni Spataro 51
4. Pietro Aaron 74
5. The Art of Composition 101
6. Giovanni del Lago and his Epistole 127
7. Giovanni del Lago's 'Authorities' 143
8. Mensural Notation 183

PART II. THE LETTERS
Principles of the Edition 195
Letters
A. The Correspondence between Giovanni Spataro, Marc' Antonio Cavazzoni, Giovanni del Lago, and Pietro Aaron (nos. 1–67) 201
B. Giovanni del Lago's Correspondence with Other Musicians (nos. 68–98) 749
C. Pietro Aaron's Correspondence with Other Musicians (nos. 99–105) 929
D. Miscellaneous Letters (nos. 106–10) 957

Biographical Dictionary 979
Notes on Problematical Terms 1021
Bibliography 1037
Index 1051
ORDER OF LETTERS

A. The Correspondence between Giovanni Spataro, Marc' Antonio Cavazzoni, Giovanni del Lago, and Pietro Aaron

1. Title-page and dedication of Giovanni del Lago's Epistole 201
2. Spataro to Cavazzoni, 1 August 1527 203
3. Spataro to Del Lago, 20 July 1520 217
4. Spataro to Aaron, 7 March 1521 232
5. Spataro to Aaron, [February 1523] 240
6. Spataro to Aaron, 8 April 1523 252
7. Spataro to Aaron, 19 September 1523 262
8. Spataro to Aaron, 1 November 1523 272
9. Spataro to Aaron, 6 November 1523 279
10. Spataro to Aaron, 8 November 1523 286
11. Spataro to Aaron, 6 May 1524 291
12. Spataro to Aaron, 23 May 1524 300
13. Spataro to Aaron, 9 September 1524 311
14. Spataro to Cavazzoni, 10 November 1524 318
15. Spataro to Del Lago, 30 October 1527 323
16. Spataro to Del Lago, 1 September 1528 330
17. Spataro to Del Lago, 4 January 1529 335
18. Spataro to Del Lago, 25 January 1529 330
19. Spataro to Del Lago, 26 February 1529 333
20. Spataro to Del Lago, March 1529 337
21. Spataro to Del Lago, 31 March 1529 361
22. Spataro to Del Lago, 5 April 1529 363
23. Spataro to Del Lago, 28 May 1529 366
24. Spataro to Del Lago, 5 June 1529 368
25. Spataro to Del Lago, 30 June 1529 370
26. Spataro to Del Lago, 3 July 1529 372
27. Spataro to Del Lago, 23 August 1529 373
28. Del Lago to Spataro, 8 October 1529 377
29. Spataro to Del Lago, 24 November 1529 401
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of Letters</th>
<th>Order of Letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30. Spataro to Aaron, 30 January 1531</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Spataro to Aaron, 8 February 1531</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Spataro to Aaron, 28 March 1531</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Spataro to Aaron, 19 June 1531</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Spataro to Aaron, 24 October 1531</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Spataro to Aaron, 24 October 1531</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Spataro to Aaron, 27 November 1531</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Spataro to Aaron, 30 January 1532</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Spataro to Aaron, 13 March 1532</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Spataro to Aaron, 5 April 1532</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Spataro to Aaron, 12 April 1532</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Spataro to Aaron, 19 July 1532</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Spataro to Aaron, 22 July 1532</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Del Lago to Spataro, 4 August 1532</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Del Lago to Spataro, 23 August 1532</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Spataro to Aaron, [autumn 1532]</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Spataro to Aaron, [autumn 1532]</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Del Lago to Spataro, 22 November 1532</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Spataro to Aaron, [December 1532]</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Spataro to Aaron, 2 January 1533</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Spataro to Aaron, 4 March 1533</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Spataro to Aaron, 8 March 1533</td>
<td>628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Spataro to Del Lago, 16 April 1533</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Memorandum by Del Lago, 25 May 1533</td>
<td>634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Spataro to Del Lago, 4 June 1533</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Spataro to Aaron, 30 July 1533</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Spataro to Del Lago, 30 July 1533</td>
<td>648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Del Lago to Spataro, 13 August 1533</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Spataro to Aaron, 20 August 1533</td>
<td>665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Spataro to Aaron, 29 August 1533</td>
<td>674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Spataro to Aaron, 30 October 1533</td>
<td>678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Aaron to Del Lago, 12 May 1533</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Aaron to Del Lago, 13 March 1536</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Del Lago to Aaron, 27 August 1539</td>
<td>712</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Giovanni del Lago's Correspondence with Other Musicians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of Letters</th>
<th>Order of Letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64. Aaron to Del Lago, 7 October 1539</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Del Lago to Aaron, 12 May 1540</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Aaron to Del Lago, early July 1540</td>
<td>728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Aaron to Del Lago, 17 July 1540</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of Letters</th>
<th>Order of Letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68. Del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 6 January 1520</td>
<td>749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. Del Lago to Da Legge, 24 January 1520</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. Del Lago to Da Legge, 16 February 1520</td>
<td>763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. Del Lago to Da Legge, 29 February 1520</td>
<td>766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. Da Legge to Del Lago, 24 December 1520</td>
<td>771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. Del Lago to Da Legge, 13 May 1523</td>
<td>773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. Del Lago to Da Legge, 16 June 1523</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. Da Legge to Del Lago, 20 December 1523</td>
<td>791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76. Del Lago to Da Legge, 29 December 1523</td>
<td>793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. Paulo de Laurino to Del Lago, [25 March 1525]</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77a. Del Lago to Laurino, 15 April 1525</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77b. Del Lago to Laurino, 15 April 1525</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. Laurino to Del Lago, 1 June 1525</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80. Del Lago to Laurino, 15 July 1525</td>
<td>804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81. Del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 6 January 1532</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82. Del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 6 August 1533</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83. Del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 15 September 1533</td>
<td>818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84. Del Lago to Lorenzo Gazio, 26 August 1534</td>
<td>822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85. Gazio to Del Lago, 9 September 1534</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86. Del Lago to Gazio, 6 May 1535</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87. Pietro de Justinis to Del Lago, 27 November 1534</td>
<td>838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88. Del Lago to Justinis, 3 June 1538</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89. Bartolomeo Tromboncino to Del Lago, 2 April 1535</td>
<td>869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90. Nicolò Olivetto to Del Lago, 1 October 1535</td>
<td>871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91. Francesco di Pizoni to Del Lago, 2 June 1537</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92. Fra Seraphin to Del Lago, 30 April 1538</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93. Del Lago to Fra Seraphin, 26 August 1541</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94. Francesco Lupino to Del Lago, 24 April 1541</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
95. Girolamo Malipiero to Del Lago, 27 November 1543
96. Del Lago to Girolamo Molino, n.d.
97. Anonymous to Del Lago, n.d.
98. Bernardino da Pavia to Del Lago, n.d.

C. Pietro Aaron's Correspondence with Other Musicians
99. Anonymous to [Pietro Aaron?], [before 1523] 929
100. Aaron to Paulo de Laurino, 29 April 1525 941
101. Aaron to [Lorenzo Gazio], 14 February 1534 943
102. Gazio to [Aaron], 27 February 1534 943
103. Aaron to Gazio, 29 April 1534 949
104. Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Aaron, 10 August 1534 951
105. Aaron to Gregorio Corbelli, 26 December 1538 955

D. Miscellaneous Letters
106. Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Adrian Willaert, 20 October 957 1531
107. Lorenzo Gazio to Don Valeriano, 23 November 1534 970
108. Gazio to Don Valeriano, 28 March 1535 972
109. Memorandum by [Lorenzo Gazio] 974
110. Anonymous to [Giovanni del Lago?], [1533] 976

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS
1. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 2' 17
2. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 110' 18
3. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 116' 19
4. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 185' 20
5. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 228' 23
6. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 406' 114
7. MS Vat. lat. 5322, fo. 50' 150
8. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS lat. viii. 64 (3415), fos. 17'–16' 156
9. Franchino Gafurio, Musices practicabilis libellus, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Mus 142, fo. 1' 171
10. Giovanni Spataro, Tractato di musica (Venice, 1531), diagram at end of ch. 13 473
11. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 239' 476
12. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fos. 245'–245a' 550–1
13. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fos. 100'–101' 848–9
MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 178' 873
MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 193' 959
MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 194' 960

Fig. 1. Comparative table of note-names 198
TABLES

1. Missing letters in Spataro's correspondence  xx
2. Inventory of Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Var. lat. 5318  xxii
3. Inventory of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS it. 1110  xxxiv
4. Compositions mentioned in the Correspondence  xxxviii
### Table 1. Missing letters in Spataro’s correspondence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer</th>
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<td>Spataro</td>
<td>9 Oct. 1523</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>end of Oct. 1523</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>3 letters between Nov. 1523 and May 1524</td>
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<td>21 Apr. 1524</td>
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<td>Spataro</td>
<td>21 Oct. 1524</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
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<td>Spataro</td>
<td>correspondence of 1527</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15-16</td>
</tr>
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<td>22 Aug. 1528</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>4 Dec. 1528</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spataro</td>
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<td>before Christmas 1528</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>correspondence of 1529</td>
<td>17, 23, 29</td>
</tr>
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<td>17, 23, 29</td>
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<td>10 Feb. 1529</td>
<td>19-20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>14 May 1529</td>
<td>23-1</td>
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<td>28 May 1529</td>
<td>24-1</td>
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<td>9 Aug. 1529</td>
<td>27-9</td>
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<td>Dec. 1529</td>
<td>30</td>
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xx

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xxi
TABLE 2. Inventory of Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 1318

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Venice, 26 Aug. 1541 | Bol. 106, p. 3 | Autograph; dedicatory letter
Venice, 8 Oct. 1529 | Bol. 106, pp. 4-23 | Autograph copy
Venice, 23 Aug. 1532 | Bol. 106, pp. 21-10 | Scribe A
Venice, 22 Nov. 1532 | Bol. 106, pp. 50-78 | Scribe A
Venice, 4 Aug. 1532 | Bol. 106, pp. 79-94 | Scribe A
Venice, 11 Aug. 1533 | Bol. 106, pp. 94-105 | Scribe A
Venice, 6 Jan. 1520 | Bol. 106, pp. 80-90 | Scribe A
Venice, 29 Dec. 1523 | Bol. 106, pp. 127-31 | Scribe A
Venice, 13 May 1523 | Bol. 106, pp. 131-47 | Scribe A
Venice, 16 June 1523 | Bol. 106, pp. 147-15 | Scribe A
Venice, 15 Apr. 1525 | Bol. 106, pp. 151-61 | Scribe A
Venice, 15 July 1535 | Bol. 106, pp. 156-22 | Scribe A
Venice, 6 Jan. 1532 | Bol. 106, pp. 161-7 | Scribe A
Venice, 4 Aug. 1532 | Bol. 106, pp. 167-71 | Scribe A
Venice, 15 Sept. 1533 | Bol. 106, pp. 171-1 | Scribe A

xxii
### Tables

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Section IV. Letters originally forming part of Vat. lat. 5318 but now dispersed

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* Bologna = Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale; Vienna = Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS S.m. 4830; Paris = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS it. 1116.
* This letter actually belongs among the letters of Section III. It is a copy that Del Lago had made for himself. Spataro's letter, though addressed to Aaron, is in answer to Del Lago, and at the end he gives Del Lago permission to copy it 'in Aaron's room'.
* Nos. 161 and 166 have been pasted together.
* Jeppesen gave separate numbers to musical enclosures.
* The two letters by Lanfranco (J7o and J109) both carry postal addresses, as if they were originals, but the handwriting of the two is very different; J70 is written in a hasty, ill-formed scrawl, J109 in a regular italic hand.
### Table 3. Inventory of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS it. 1110

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PART I

Introduction
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,
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 Thesauri di 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. 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, folio-number, 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.


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. 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'. 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 sixteenth-century music theory, which was characterized by a strong polemical element, begun by Spataro's teacher, the hot-headed Spaniard Bartolomeo Ramis, 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 D₂ (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. 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
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. 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.

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, none of the dates were discovered to be false. 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 1535, 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. xxv-xxvii), 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 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. xxi-xxiii.

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. 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 1534 and January 1535, although we

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6 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 (17 and 148) are actually the second halves of one letter and have been reunited (no. 5). 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).

7 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.
know that letters were exchanged in 1527 and that correspondence was resumed at least by November 1550.

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 introduzione 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. 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, 50-1, 54, 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 1551 (see no. 34).

With the introduction of such notes as $F_b$ and $C_b$, $E_b$ and $B_b$, 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 edited 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. 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

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10 The modal system is treated ‘sotto brevità’ at the beginning of no. 91. 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.

11 These passages are assembled in the entry on Ramis in the Biographical Dictionary.
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 venerable. His prime witness, in matters notational, was the fourteenth-century 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 1330s and 1340s. 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. 15, 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. 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–xlv. 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 Tincorius.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. 17). Dufay scholars have already used one of Spataro's letters to identify a masse and attribute several mass propers to Dufay (see no. 48). Both Del Lago and Spataro seem to have had access to fifteen-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 arme' by Gafurio, a 'rona' (perhaps a puzzle canon) by Hothby, a madrigal composed in honour of Aaron by Gasparo Alberti, a 'Missa Je ne fays' by Isaac, Tincorius'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. 10, para. 11). But little of this area comes under discussion in the Correspondence.

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 cognizione 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 alternation 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. 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. 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-acents 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. 16, para. 3). 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’. Del Lago lived in Venice, a centre of humanism, and the subjects treated in this 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.

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. 55, para. 1).

The passage is discussed in Ch. 5.

15 The Theorist Giovanni del Lago: A New View of the Man and his Writings*, *Musica disciplina* 27 (1973), 107-11 at 111. 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. 5.
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).

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 epistolae; 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 (J1-26),1 a series of autograph letters largely written to Del Lago (J27-72), and another series of autograph letters, mostly from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron (J73-106). Of the miscellaneous letters that fall outside these three categories (J107-12), two originally belonged to Section II (J110-11), one to Section III (J112). The remaining letters, J107-9, 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.
Introduction

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
(J3–18), as we shall call him. He transcribed Del Lago's epistole consecu-
tively 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. 11r and ending with fascicle 13 on fo. 99r. 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. J20, copied by Scribe B, is a revised copy of J26,
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 J13 in Del Lago's hand. In this
instance Del Lago substituted a more elegant and informative version (see
no. 78a) 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

Pl. 1. Giovanni del Lago to Fra Seraphin, 26 Aug. 1541 (no. 93). MS Vat. lat.
5318, fo. 2r (autograph)
Giovanni del Lago, definitions of music written for Girolamo Molino (no. 96). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 110v (Scribe A, with corrections in Del Lago's hand)

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 5 Oct. 1533 (no. 60). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 116v (copy in hand of Scribe C)
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 27 Nov. 1531 (no. 36). MS Vat. lat. 5318, fo. 228 (autograph)
residents 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
1810, 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 bifolios 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 22 x 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 1317 to 1545, 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. 11–242) 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. 5480 (dated
Reggio Emilia, 1541) and no. 3477 (Padua, 1547; also Graz, 1534; Vicenza,
1551; Padua, 1553; Udine, 1565–6). 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, 161, 167, 169, 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*, 161–165, 178*, outside margin of 196*, 199–200*, 204–206*, 209*, 211*, 213*, 240–247*, 249*, 214*. 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.

4 However, J17 and J48, two parts of the same letter that we have reunited on the basis of
internal evidence (see no. 5), 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, xiiij, xiv, and xv. The second hand has struck these through and substituted I62-5. Subsequently, when it renumbered the whole codex, it changed 162-1 to the modern 149-12. One other folio carries a roman numeral: viij on fo. 200 (= modern fo. 183). The meaning of the two sets of 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. 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 numbering 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, 55-6, 51-2, 62, 57-61, 111 (now in East Berlin), 63-73. This order is preserved by the older numeration. The remainder of the manuscript is preserved in its original order, according to the first numbering, 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 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 1338 (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 1336 (see his enthusiastic report of his reception in his letter to Del Lago of 13 March 1336, no. 62). Del Lago replied to this letter three years later, 'better late than never', and the two exchanged several letters in 1339 and 1340.

The present state of the manuscript offers no clues to the fate of the Correspondence after Giovanni del Lago's death in 1344. 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 Epistolae compositae 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 did not intend to publish them. How did this unbound manuscript of 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). 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,
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.1535–98), entered the library in 1599. Vat. lat. 5318, a copy of the Orationes by the humanist Francesco Maturanzio (d. c.1572), was bequeathed to the library in 1614 by Baldassarre Ansiei, 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 Francesco 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. 115v) read as follows:

5318 Ioannis de Lago, et aliorum Epistolae italicae continentes dubia et declarationes artis musicae.

E’ instinto naturale

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

...minc notas fac mi-

5320 Ioannis Ottobi Carmelitani Anglici artis musicae liber. 10

In prefatione novea

7 Ibid., pp. 109-2 and 119-23.
9 This manuscript has been edited by Bruno Stäblein and Margareta Landwehr-Melnicki, Die Gesange des altromanischen Graduale Vat. lat. 5319 (Monumenta monodica medii aevi z; Kassel, 1998). The treatise is actually Johannes Ciccione’s Nova musice; 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 fo. 78 and 81. It also contains Franco’s Compendium brevissimo artis musicae.
10 Fischer, p. 98–9. The manuscript also contains Johannes de Muris’s Musica speculativa (Vatican, 1594). We know this from the inscription 5323 Ioannis de Muris practica cantus mensurabilis. Quilibet in arte prac-

Aegidij de Murino tractatus cantus mensurabilis. Quoniam sicut Deo

Prosdocimi de Beldemandis Patavini contrapunctus. Scribit Aristoteles

Eiusdem ars calculatoria, et tabula. Quoniam operanti

Philippi de Vitiario ars contrapuncti. Volentibus introduci

Johannes de Muris ars summariaria contrapuncti. Quilibet affects

5322 Marchetti de Padua Lucwardium artis musicae planae. Cum inquit Caympre


Eiusdem Pomerium artis musicae mensurabilis. Qutauor sunt causae

5323 Hieronymi Maej. florentini de modis musicis antiquorum ad Petrum Victoriae Libri quattuor. Quod tibi pergratum

5324 Liber declarationis musicae disciplinae incerto Auctore. Homo dictur esse liber

5325 Musicae artis libellus sine nomine Auctoris. Musica est veracter

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].’ 11 We know this from the inscription 5323, an autograph bequeathed to the Vatican by Mons. Antonio Gualenghi, who acquired it after Mei’s death [1594]. 11

11 Fischer, p. 98–9. The manuscript also contains Johannes de Muris’s Musica speculativa (Vatican, 1594). We know this from the inscription 5323 in the library of Mons. Antonio Gualenihi, who acquired it after Mei’s death [1594].
on the second flyleaf: 'Antonius Quaerengus hunc librum bibliothecae Vaticani dono dedi'. 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. 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 543 manuscripts and 1564 prints were selected and added to the Library's collection. The handwritten catalogue of Manuzio's books still exists in the Vatican Library, where it bears the call-number Vat. lat. 5711. The manuscript consists of two separate inventories. The original catalogue, now renumbered fos. 51r–108v, was drawn up 'Die 18 martij 1160' (fo. 51r). 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 Manuzio'. The inventory, however, covers Manuzio's whole library; the titles of manuscripts and prints chosen appear on fos. 1r–48r. 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.

The identity of 'Epist( olae) varior(um)' with the Spatario Correspondence might seem problematic; however, there is no other manuscript 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

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17 Bignami Odier, Le 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.

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According to a note on fo. 63r, the appraisal of the 343 manuscripts and 1564 prints amounted to 530 scudi—surely a gross undervaluation. 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 5323, 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. 1r, 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. 1r, 3rd and 12th items:
  10 Jo. Ottobi Carmelitani musica [= Vat. lat. 5320]
  20 Jo. de Muris Musica [= Vat. lat. 5321]

- fo. 3r, 8th item from bottom:
  10 Tractatus de musica [= Vat. lat. 5325]

- fo. 4r, 9th item from bottom:
  De Musica [sic; entered from previous inventory by mistake]

- fo. 5r, 14th item:
  50 Tractatus musicae [= Vat. lat. 5324]

Manuzio also owned three printed works on music theory, listed on fo. 50r, items 18–20:

- 5 Jacobi Fabri Musica. Parr. 1533
- 20 Andreae Papii de consonantiis. Ant. 1581
- 10 Pietro Aron Lucidario in musica. Ven. 1545

Preceding entries made the choice of books and manuscripts, the other in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS J. 100 inf.

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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. 52 was paid 6 scudi for copying 28 folios in 1610; see José M. Llorens, Le opere musicali della Cappella Giulia, I. Manoscritti e edizioni fino al 1570 (Studi e Testi 265; Vatican City, 1971), p. 59. The same scribe received 7 scudi in 1600 for copying the 18-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 Soldano 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 Heilandsamen Sancte (Rome, 1585); ibid., p. xix).
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 50 folios and measures only 91 x 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 x 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 285 x 202 mm. A glance at the spacing of the text provides the answer; the text area measures only 150 x 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 inherited from his father? The answer to the first question would seem to be negative, for in the whole inventory there is not one 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 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. 11.
22 The first indication of the invitation from Pius IV is found in Paolo’s letter to Ottaviano Maggi of 17 Feb. 1519 (= 1560 modern style); see Lettere volgari di M. Paolo Manuzio, divisi in quattro libri (Venice, 1560), fos. 14v–15r.

History of the Manuscripts

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.’ 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 vgil.27 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

26 ‘che ne faccia querela in Collegio, accio che le mie opere, i miei libri, le vesti, et altro ch’io dimando, mi sia mandato subitamente. . . . Vederemo, se tu, o io sarò 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 pignorar me medesimo le cose mie. . . . Scrisso 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. 149).
28 ‘E anche una vergogna, ch’io sia tenuto principe di gli humanisti, e che non habbia un Virglio, un Horatio, un Sallustio, un Livio. . . . Si che me ne sto come un ignorante: e tu, che non studia mai, hai le camere piene con le fatiche, e vigeille mie!’ ibid., p. 301.
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 were never realized.

Of music theory entered at the same time will be presented in Ch. 7.

Inheritance Del Lago’s literary estate. Evidence that the other manuscripts reflect 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 were never realized.

Of music theory entered at the same time will be presented in Ch. 7.

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 fulfill 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 (fss. 1-109). Bound in at the beginning is a receipt for the copying of the manuscript. It reads as follows: Io sottoscritto ho ricevuto dall’Illustissimo 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.

Elia Baldi35

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

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

See Pompeo G. Molmenti, La storia di Venezia nella vita privata dalle origini alla caduta della Repubblica (3 vols., Bergamo, 1824-9; repr. Trieste, 1971), ii. 215-6. Among the other members of the short-lived Academy (it dissolved in 1561) was Giuseppe Zanini; see Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, Delle inscrizioni veneziane (6 vols., Venice, 1824-5), iii. 12 n. 1.

Molmenti’s letter is printed in Della lettere di M. Bernardo Tasso (1 vol., Padua, 1723-5), ii. 318-61. 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. 361-3).
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 Rafaele Vernazza, 'scriptor graecus', becoming chief Greek scribe in 1780. He died in 1799.

'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 benefici concistorii' from 1749 to 1761. He was also secretary to Cardinal Domenico Passionei, Cardinal Librarian from 1753 to his death on 5 July 1761. The names of Elia Baldi and Giacinto Speranza do not appear in the letters of Martini, but Martini did count the Cardinal among his correspondents. 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 began his career in...

...history of the manuscripts...

...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'. 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. 109v–196, is now in the Civico Museo with the signature 107. It is prefixed by the following letter from Bernardino Sebastiani, scribe of the Papal Chapel, to Padre Martini:

Molto Reverendo Padre Signore, Signore Padrone Collendissimo
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, affinché in quest'Ordinario di Posta le spedissi quel tanto, che avessi copiato. In questa mi dunque le compiego un altro foglio, che unisce a prima la mia annotazione, che si manda di Gaetano Gaspari, sopra il codice Vat. lat. 107, 41 MSS. 107. 1 e 107. 2. 43 Il primo è un manoscritto italiano, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice Vat. lat. 107, 1, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice Vat. lat. 107, 1, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice Vat. lat. 107, 1, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice Vat. lat. 107, 1, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice Vat. lat. 107, 1, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice Vat. lat. 107, 1, il secondo è un manoscritto francese. Il primo è una copia del codice...
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. Sabbatini had studied with Padre Martini and in later years carried on an extensive correspondence with him. 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'. Two weeks later, apparently having found a competent copyist, Sabbatini reported that 'the copying of the manuscript is proceeding'. 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.' This person surely is Sebastiani, who signs himself 'scrittore della Cappella Pontificia'. Sabbatini made rapid progress in copying, for already on the second of February Sabbatini was able to send the first fascicle to Padre Martini. 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 them because he has not heard whether Martini has received any of them. He resumes delivery on the 12th, again asking that Martini acknowledge their arrival in good order, inasmuch as they are all duly numbered. 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'. In his letter of 21 April Sabbatini announces: 'Ecco il solito foglio'. 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.' 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 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.

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 Kinisky, 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.

Unlike Bol. 107, 2, Vienna 4850 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.

42 Schnoebelen, Padre Martini's Collection, p. 541, no. 4180.
44 '... quella mattina l'è venuto da me il copista che avevo destato per farlo copiare tutto spaventato a dirmi che lui non ne può fare niente mentre essendo tutto gotico scritto ed abbellito e pieno di musica che non gli dà animo, dicche 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. 144, 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'.

History of the Manuscripts

37
joined to the other two in Bologna. According to Jeppesen, who gives no source for the information, this last section was copied c. 1830 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 gratitude for his careful annotations and indices of the Bologna copies of Vat. lat. 1318: 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 heirs 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 colledge at the Liceo in 1840, took over as librarian in 1851. 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

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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).
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.

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. 3518 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, 1. 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. 3518 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 toFra Seraphin (no. 93) as example:

**Bol. 106, p 9**

Alcuna volta fingere di far cadenza pigliare una consonantia ma propinquad essa cadenza per accomplorla è cosa laudabile.

**Vat. lat. 3518, fo. 3v**

Alcuna volta fingere di far cadenza et poi nella conclusione di essa cadenza pigliare una consonantia non propinquad essa cadenza per accomplorla è cosa laudabile.

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**Introduction**

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**History of the Manuscripts**

Instead of counselling the composer to form a deceptive cadence by resting on a consonance near the cadence, 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 'anicitur' 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 159 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. 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 traddictora'.

Perhaps the most useful aspect of the Bologna copies is the light they cast on the previous order of Vat. lat. 3518. 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 (1110-12) all were originally part of it. 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.

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57 Ibid., p. 21. 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 sì, e principalmente della copia fattane lo scorso secolo . . . .'

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

59 See no. 15 nn. a and d. 60 Ibid., no. 112, Aaron's letter to Del Lago of 7 Oct. 1559 (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, Verzeichung von Musikalischem Praktischer Musik und Musiker-Autographen des 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert aus dem Nachlass des Herrn Kommerzienrates Wilhelm Heyer in Köln. . . . Bescheidendes Verzeichnis (Berlin, 1925), iv. 70-1. 1112 (no. 49), Spataro's letter to Aaron of 2 Jan. 1555, was also in the Heyer collection; its provenance is not listed (ibid., p. 104). It may have come from the Lozzii collection, together with Sebastiani's copy of the second section of Vat. lat. 3518. Leo Olschki reported in 1901 that among the autograph letters that Lozzii possessed was:

Spataro Giovanni | la.f. di sommo interesse musicale
Aaron Pietro    | l.a.f. di sommo interesse musicale

From the form it is not clear how many letters are involved; perhaps it was just one, 1112, Spataro's letter to Aaron. 'l.a.f.' stands for 'lettere autografi firmate'. See Leo S. Olschki, 'Una visita alla collezione del Comm. C. Lozzii di autografi e documenti riguardante la musica e il teatro', La bibliotheca 3 (1901-2), 231-39 at 237.
Introduction

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*. 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, BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE, MS FONDS IT. 1110

The manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds it. 1110 is a collection of sixteenth-century letters concerning music, both original copies and variants, in various hands. It consists of seventy-nine folios, numbered in ink by a modern hand. 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 Diverse’.

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, 1727–1731) does not go beyond Greek music, it may not be superfluous to explain how he made use of 15th- and 16th-c. treatises 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 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 nel Tempio’ (pp. 165–252), the third ‘Del Canto, e degli Strumenti musicali degli Ebrei’ (pp. 253–446). In the second dissertation that Martini cites authors as diverse as Bach and Prudentine de’ Beldornandi. Three entries from the comprehensive ‘Indice delle Materie’ on pp. 406–502 will reveal succinctly what use he made of these musicians and theorists:

Bach (Gio. Sebastiano), suo esempio pratico della Quarta come sia Dissonante. 184 [There is an identical entry for Handel.]

de Beldornandi [Prudentine] segue di Boezio non amisse, che il tuono maggiore. 272 [Aaron is cited for the same belief, as well as Marchetto da Padua, Tintorius, Buzzio, Guillermo de Podio, and several 16th-c. writers.] suo particolare sentimento sopra l’intonazione dell’In vacuo. 420.

Cassonio (Costanzo) descrive con vari vocaboli la diversità dei Punti caudati. 183; suo sentimento sopra le cadenze finali. 98.

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.
Introduction

difficult; Carlo, who had no children, took a paternal interest in the education of Gandolfo's sons, recommending them to his friend Camillo 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'.

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. 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. 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.

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 II 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,

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, 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 lterni, due lire, una violina et un trasvero 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.' Signor Cavaghier 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 'consenza perfetta'. Our author disagrees, calling it 'semidiapente, semiquinta, quinta dimi-

68 Giovanni Franciosi, Della vita e delle opere di Carlo Sigonio (Modena, 1872), p. 76: 'Non può essere smentita la disposizione avvenuta in porto, ma è stata tutta sua inconstanza, 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', Annaletlo musicologica 4 (1966), 1-44.

71 See Ercole Bottrigari, II desiderio ove de' concerti di vari instrumenti musicali, ed. Kathi Meyer (Veröffentlichungen der Musik-Bibliothek Paul Hirsch 1; Berlin, 1942), 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 (Musico logical Studies and Documents 9; Rome, American Institute of Musicology, 1962), pp. 9-11.

72 Ascanio Trombetti, also known as Ascanio del Corretto, 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 musice 4, 14 (ed. Friedlein, p. 359, II. 1-4), where the interval parhypate meson by hypate hypaton is listed as one of the four species of diapente. Zarlino (Le Instituzioni harmoniche [Venice, 1558], Book III, ch. 15) excuses it as an oversight on Boethius's part. The error had already been pointed out in the 11th c. by Hermannus Contractus (Musicus, ed. W. Brambach (Leipzig, 1884), pp. 17-18, or GB ii. 145). See Henry Chadwick, Boethius: The Consalllations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy (Oxford, 1981), pp. 97-8. I am grateful to Dr Leopold Holford-Strevens for suggesting the possible source of the Carmelite father's error.
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 'Accioche humanissimi lettori possa 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 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 (piosa) so well. But this is to be reserved for 'another book'. Thus it seems 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 musica' 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. 25r and 27r-28t 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 B fis. It is written in a later sixteenth-century hand. We know that among the Greek and Latin treatises Bottigari translated for the benefit of Melone was Fogliano's Musica theorica. Indeed, 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 Bottigari's surprise, 'for he had been a most careful scrutinizer of all the other imperfections of the consonances and a good authority for them) because in Ptolemy's syntonic diatonic some intervals involving these notes are short or long by an 8:1:80 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. 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
Introduction

printed edition of Spataro's Dilucide et probatissime demonstratione (Bologna, 1521). The handwriting is very similar to that of nos. 25 and 26. 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 mutici adversus Joannem Spatarium (Turin, 1520). These items could have been of interest to either Giovanni del Lago or Annibale Melone.

We have said that there 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'. Melone (whom Bottrigari has cast as interlocutor in the dialogue) showed himself 'not to be one of those run-of-the-mill musicians'. 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'.

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 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. 11. 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 (120) with this hand, but there are too many variants to make this identification secure.

Bottrigari first speaks of Spataro's letters to Gafurio, 'delle quai con molte altre e ... rottami di Epist. e di considerazioni del nostro Spataro da cartozzi assai men vili de' ...' (ibid.). In his Honesta defensio (Bologna, 1493), fo. 80', Spataro had lambasted Burzio for pointing out that he had found in Melone's estate two preliminary drafts, a dedication to the reader, in which he gave the 'true' author's name as Annibale Melone, and that Melone was the real author. In 1600 Artusi published L'Antartus, 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 1611. 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,
At some point he studied in Venice with Zarlino, whose ardent defender he became in a polemic with Vincenzo Galilei. This must have been in 1574, the only year he was acquainted with friends of his, and possibly he had an entree to the publication of his *lucubrationes ... de dissonantia musica*. Artusi was born after Giovanni del Lago died, but he may have been acquaintances with friends of his, and possibly he had an entree to the publication of his *lucubrationes ... de dissonantia musica*. 85 Venice, which no longer exists. Letter r 3 also is found in (see no. r 3). Artusi claims that he had possession of Spataro's autograph, other from the letter sent to Aaron. To which did Artusi have access? 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. 1318 must have been transcribed in Venice. Unfortunately, we have no samples of Artusi's handwriting that would confirm the hand as his. But time, place, and motive are on his side, and he is the most logical person to have brought together the items in Paris 1110. Perhaps Artusi had both versions 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. 1318 must have been transcribed in Venice. Unfortunately, we have no samples of Artusi’s handwriting that would confirm the hand as his. But time, place, and motive are on his side, and he is the most logical person to have brought together the items in Paris 1110. Perhaps Artusi had both versions 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 following account of Spataro’s life is based on the article by Ludovico Frati, ‘Per la storia della musica in Bologna dal secolo XV a 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 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*.

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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 1533 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 Spataro’s verses turn out to have a factual basis, the epigram loses its sting, for Gafurio wanted to emphasize Spataro’s common origins and lack of education. 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 1470s and may have continued to 1484, when Ramis gave Spataro a ‘piccolo 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’. 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 to his shop to give him lessons. 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. In several letters Spataro mentions a relationship with Hermes Bentivoglio, Antongaleazzo’s younger brother, who was born in 1484. 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. 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. 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. Once Spataro was promoted to ‘maestro de canto’, on 30 June 1512, he received a regular salary of 10 lire a month. He kept this position throughout his life, although from May 1533 he had the assistance of Michele Cimatore. He welcomed the help,

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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. B6v); how many of these ten years were spent in Bologna is not known. On Ramis, see the Biographical Dictionary.
7 Di harmonia musitern instrumentorum (Milan, 1518), fo. 77v. 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.

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8 Castigating Burzio for his faulty explanation of proportions, Spataro says: ‘Legi un poco questo mio proportione, le quale m’ingegnò lo mio Ramus Musicorum princioper stando a solazo cum mi nella mia apotecha’ (Honesta defensio, fo. F4v).
10 See the Biographical Dictionary.
13 See Frati, ‘Per la storia’, pp. 416–7. In 1514 he was able to give 100 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 canto plano’, the other a mass called ‘La Comune de S. Petronio’ (pp. 417 and 462).
15 Ibid., p. 142.
as he remarked to Aaron, because it allowed him more time to revise his treatises for publication (no. 18, para. 5). Unfortunately, his extant letters stop shortly thereafter; the last is dated 30 October 1533 (no. 60). By 1533 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.’

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. Spataro died on 17 January 1541 and was buried in the church of San Petronio, as he had wished.

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). 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 sequiplatera 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 regulæ’ in British Library, Add. MS 4910, 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 1533), was temporarily removed in 1644 and apparently never replaced; it has not been found.
19 Spataro uses strikingly similar language in ‘training’ Gafurio: ‘tali errori so non son da me manifestar et in luco adacto per vivere et per odio et rancore comne lui dice. Ma solo per ammaestrarlo, et per diffusione 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 Dilsio et probatissimae demonstrationes... contra certe ... etc. (Bologna, 1511), fo. 35v.

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 swordsman’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’.

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 antiquitá’ 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. 15). 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.
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 'i rudi principianti' and theory for experienced composers. When Aaron criticized certain contrapuntal rules transmitted by fifteenth-century 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). 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.

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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. 43-53.

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The origin of the Tractato di musica di Giovanni Spataro musicista bolognese nel quale si tratta de la perfectione da la sesquialtera 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 Q and C and the breve in sesquialtera under Q and C. 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 Toscanello 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.
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.

The second version was somewhat expanded. 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 half-blackened 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
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 Ioanne Spataro, musico bolognese, ad instantia de lo illustre Signore et patrono suo observantissimo, Messer Hermes Bentivoglio', that is, 'con la addizione de'ui altri trattati, scilicet uno di contrapunto 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 it 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. 1117, he says that he and Gafurio have exchanged letters for twenty-four years, and that he has been reviewing the Enchiridion musices of Nicolaus Wollick at Gafurio's request (no. 2, para. 8). 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 musicarum instrumentorum of 1518, to which Gafurio never responded, but at the end published his Apologia . . . adversus Ioannem Spatarium et complures musices humaniores (Turin, 1520) and sent copies to various canonici at San Petronio, 'hoping to strip me of my honour with one stroke' (no. 27, para. 3).

60

Giovanni Spataro

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 ('cosi nel scripoto come faculta'), 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 3 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 tenea 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.
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). 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 be sent 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 gratitude 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

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

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. 18, para. 5).
Introduction

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 1541, published after Spataro's death, he frequently refers to 'l'eccellente et consumato musico Messer Gion Spataro'.

Besides the treatises on mensural music, counterpoint, proportions, and sequen
tera, and the Appostille and Epistolae, 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 Taboscatello, he sent him the manuscript of his Trattato della natura et cognizione 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. 1). 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 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. xii–xiii). 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, and a motet that Spataro must have sent to Gafuro, since it appears in one of his choir-books.

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. 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. 1, para. 2). Nine years later Del Lago asked for the 'Missa de la pera'. Spataro was reluctant to send it 'because of its proximity 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. Two masses are discussed in some detail, with music examples. Spataro's great
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 $\Phi$ and the proportions $9:6 \quad 21:6 \quad 9:8 \quad 23:18 \quad 2:1$ (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 Tuc voluntatis' we can see that all these works had tenors with complicated proportions, as well as complex notational problems. The 'Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalenæ' 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:

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\begin{Verbatim}
\text{\textbf{\large Giovanni Spataro}}
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The canonic inscription reads: 'In perfectione mininorum per tria genra caniter melorum.' Ramis explains that each note equals six 'measures', as if the mensuration-sign were $\mathbb{C}$. 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 trichemitone 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 $\text{\textit{tu}}$ and $\text{\textit{lu}}$ 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

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35 The transmutation of the melody is discussed in the Commentary on no. 3.
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, 1513), Error 18, fos. 44–45. 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. 21–22). 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.
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. 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.'

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 'theoretico', 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. 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 spatia 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 practico et usitato, et tu arguisse theoretice'; ibid., fo. 45v.

Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought

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.

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 parastre diezeugmenon, or D la sol re. In the chromatic tetrachord, this note is two semitones distant from paramese (6) and therefore it cannot be located on e' (as Del Lago had it) but must be signed with a sharp. Similarly, the syllables 'o' and 'pon', written on parastre 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 pannoto', 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 'xii' and 'muts' (two whole tones plus a quarter-tone). The rest is that of a breve under O (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':

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{F} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{F} & \quad \text{E} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Le} & \quad \text{o} & \quad \text{pon} & \quad \text{ti} & \quad \text{fex} & \quad \text{ma} & \quad \text{xi} & \quad \text{mus}
\end{align*}
\]

In the chromatic version, the tetrachords become $b\,' e\,' e'$ and $e\,' f\,' f\,' d'$, and so the tenor must read:\textsuperscript{43}

In the enharmonic version the tenor appears as:

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chromatic_version.png}
\caption{Chromatic version}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{enharmonic_version.png}
\caption{Enharmonic version}
\end{figure}

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 $\emptyset$ 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 cætus' 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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{43} In nos. 15 and 16 Spataro mistakenly wrote the last $f$ and $e$ with sharps. He corrected his error in no. 17.


\textsuperscript{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.

\textbf{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 canonical 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.\textsuperscript{46} All these mottoes are used in place of a clef; Saturn being the seventh planet, the clef falls on $g$, the seventh note above prosalambanomenos (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 maxima are accumulations of breves, semibreves and minims are divisions of the breve.\textsuperscript{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,

\textsuperscript{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 sufficiunt', which means 'where there is need of action, words are not sufficient'.

\textsuperscript{47} His great opponent in this matter was Goffurio, 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.
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 1530’s, 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 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 3 composed in March 1529 (no. 20), and a ‘Salve Regina’ written around 1493 (no. 32). 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. 35, 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 dell 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 Pareja’, Fontes artis musicae 15 (1966), 84-6 at 86.

48 See Tirro, Renaissance Musical Sources.
49 Tirro was able to attribute only 64 of the 162 compositions in the complex; ibid., p. 7.
50 See Ch. 5, ‘The Art of Composition'.
4

Pietro Aaron

Of all the letter-writers in the Correspondence, Pietro Aaron is the best-known and the most enigmatic.1 Author of five published treatises spanning the years 1516 to after 1546, 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 away 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 personal models Josquin, Obrecht, Isaac, and Agricola, ‘with whom I had 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 1495 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 cosi ho voluto fargli il titolo de la terra patria et nativa’); see Book I, ch. 6.


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 1480 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.


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. 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, 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 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 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 classical sources. 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 classical sources. 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

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10 Flaminio (1466–1550), a native of Imola, was a humanist and the father of the more famous poet Marc’Antonio Flaminio.
11 Identified by Bergquist as Sycharum libri II of 1515 (‘The Theoretical Writings’, p. 29 n. 33). Bergquist includes a partial transcription of the preface to De institutione harmonica on pp. 487–94 and comments on it briefly on pp. 29–30.
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. 50–2.
13 The list does not appear with the letter in the printed edn., nor is it found in Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, M 3958, a 16th-c. copy of Flaminio’s letters, including the exchange with Gafurio on fos. 225v–227.
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

from the Campione, or Libro degli annali imolesi, deliberations of the General Council of the city of Imola, under the date 5 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 lawes 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 singing-school 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
black beans notwithstanding, the above proposal was carried and passed as above.\textsuperscript{17}

This was a high honour indeed for Pietro Aaron, and it confirms the warm feelings exhibited by Flaminio and his circle.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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 \textit{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 \[the \textit{seguita}\] 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.\textsuperscript{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 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.\textsuperscript{21} By February 1523, the date of Spataro's next extant letter to him,\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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 \textit{Toscanello 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...
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 Piermario 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 'arithmetorum 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'Otonaio, Florentine printers, to print music, in response to their petition of 8 March 1520. As far as is known, no music was published by them. 28

26 'Donde la sorte del suo pontificato molti si sono affaticati, ciascuno secondo le lor forze, di far profitto in essa per gli ampi premi, 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 sostenersi la mia tenacità negli studi 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 fosse offerta unico presidio a la afflitta mia fortuna: la quale quantunque di potere a Leone non sia pari, non però e in alcuna virtù a quello inferiore, ne 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 institutione harmonica, fo. 12.' (On Spataro's motet, see Ch. 1.) 28 See Martin Picker, 'A Florentine Document of 1515 concerning Music Printing', Musicae scientiae, 12 (1972), 288–90. For the dedication, see Gaetano Gaspari, Catalogo della Biblioteca del Liceo Musicale di Bologna (3 vols., Bologna, 1890–1943), i. 197.

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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 hierosolimitano'. 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 cognizione 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. 35, para. 1). 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.
30 On the possibility that 'Messer Camillo', mentioned in two of Spataro's letters of 1531, 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 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

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

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. 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."

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. Aiguino disagrees, believing that 'perfect' denotes a range of an octave,

This led Feit 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. CAPITANO. 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 Paolo, 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.

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and my honoured teacher Pietro Aaron confirms this in his book called *De institutione harmonica*, chs. 16 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 excellent 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 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 1701 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 cognizione di tutti gli tuoni* it is Aaron. In the *Toscanello*, *Lucidario*, and *Compendio* it is Aron. In his letters he signs himself both Aaron*45* 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?*

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.*47* Perhaps most surprisingly, a large contingent of Italian musicians at the court of Henry VIII was recently discovered to be of Jewish origin.*48* Our knowledge of Jewish musicians and musical practice varies inversely with the degree to which Jews were able to enter society without restriction, as Israel Adler has pointed out.*49* 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

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*42* ... *questo mi conferma il mio onorato 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. 19r._

*43* ... *come afferma il mio onorato maestro Pietro Aron per lettere di propria sua mano, mandate al lauroate [sic] musico M. Giovan Spadaro Bolognese, et anchora esso autore afferma il detto del mio irrefregabile maestro*; 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 (1551); no. 62 (1556); nos. 100 and 103 (1554); no. 105 (1548).

*46* No. 64 (1559); no. 66 (1540); no. 67 (1540).

*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 Israel Adler, _La Pratique musicale savante dans quelques communautés juives en Europe aux XVe et XVIIe siècles_ (2 vols., Paris and The Hague, 1966), i. 43 n. 171.


*50* Adler, _La Pratique musicale_, p. 46.
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, and a term of one year was set for them to leave Florence. The effect of the decree, however, was postponed until all 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). \(^{56}\) And perhaps the somewhat surprising remark by Giovanni Antonio

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51 Prior, 'Jewish Musicians', p. 211.
53 See Umberto Cassuto, Gli ebrei a Firenze nell'eta del Rinascimento (Florence, 1918), pp. 213–1.
54 Ibid., p. 144.
55 Or possibly Aaron was his father’s name.
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’ (1159 edn., fo. Ba'), turned out to be no witness at all, since the whole of ch. 1, except for a few small passages, is translated from Isidore of Seville, Etymologies 5. 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 distichs by Nicolo 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

Nicolo 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 146, 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 rutit.
Ergo digna feret tantorum dona laborum:
Praemia quis tanto digna neget capitii?
Vos vivum, vates, statua et decorate corona:
Post obitum sidus, dii, facite esse novum.60
Longe et nitidior, comptior, venustior.
Therm, o gods, fashion of him a new constellation.

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 been a gifted amateur musician: Aaron places ‘Il Signor Conte Nicolo 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 Lusium 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.
Errbat olim Musica per florida
Novem sororum prata, qua Biverticis
Late comant amoena Parnasi iuga,
Iambque longe celsior quam assueverat,
Longe et nitidior quam assueverat.

Hanc vultu, ait, Vah, vah, Quid hoc; unde hic furo?
Unde hie Licentia; unde fastus hic novus?
Quid ceteris, quid præstat hie sororibus?
Hie 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 grece latineque doctissimus utrisque nostrum familiaris qui Farrantium postride profecturus ad Flaminium suum veterem hospitem diversaret’ (Libri tres de institutione harmonica, fo. 1v).
62 ‘Achilles meum Philerotem Bochium, qui quidem (ut nosti) organi ac instrumentorum eiusmodi peritissimus est’, ibid., fo. 42v.
63 See A. Rotondo in Dizionario biografico degli italiani, iii (1961), 79-8. Rotondo cites two manuscripts, one in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS plat. 53, 42, the other an 18th-c. copy in Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 1751 (ibid., p. 69). Unknown to him are further copies in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 1753 (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.
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 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 splendour.

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 the name of Aaron, the noble glory of Florence, has lately rescued her from the leader and glory among the other sisters, now that the renowned 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 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 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

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

65 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS plut. 53. 42, fo. 6'. Löwinsky discovered this poem in 1948.

94

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To Pietro Aaron

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. 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, and his little treatise on
mutations may have been written in large part by Spataro (see the Commentary on no. 14), 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. C3r) and 'giudicioos et dotto' (Book III, fo. 16v).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. 17v). 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. 33r).

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 cognizione di tutti gli toni of 1521 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.

Introduction

Pietro Aaron

documents were copied in the 1580s 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.


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 dissensionis discessit.

Qui omnes, accusata contumacia 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 quatuor 4
D. Vincentius Cavina c. tres 3
D. Baptista et D. Bartholomeus de Angelinis c. quatuor 4
D. Jacobus de Pictoribus c. una

et D. Vincentius Cavina nomine domini Archidiaconi de Brocardis alias corbes duas frumenti

Imole

Et predicti Syndicus Mansionariorum, et Mansionarii predicti, obtento partito per fabas quatuor albas ex quinque de dando dicto D. Petrus Aron Corbes XVI frumenti de predicta mensura, se obligaverunt dare et consignare in recollectum proxime futuro dicto Domino Petro Aron dictas Corbes XVI frumenti, pro eo quod promisit in Choro divinis interesse et cantu se occupare diebus solemniis et festisivis per annum incipientium in Kalendis Martii proxime futuris, et ut
sequitur, hac tamen conditione, quod non facta interpellatione per semem ante finitum annum per alteram partem de conducta non perseveranda: intelligatur perseverare eo modo et forma quo anno tunc preterito, et sic per transitum semem perdurare per alium annum cum eodem salario... Qua omnia et singula... obliquerunt... 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 scripsit.

Pages 17-8 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 ibidem Domino Francisco de Dutia, et... obligaverunt... Renunciavit... juraverunt... et fiat plenum...

Actum Imole in Cappella Sancti Laurentii sub volitatis Papae县 in manibus...

Ego Vincentius Gybettus Notarius rogatus s.s.

From Protocol VII of Vincentius Gybettus, fo. 666; transcribed in Gaspari's Miscellanea, MS UU. 12. 1, pp. 38-9. Gaspari queries two words in the document, cantorismam et rassionem. In the same Protocol on fo. 68v the notary entered the following note: 'Die 17. Octobris 1521. Nominationem in Minstriorum de D. Petro Aron habetur in ficta mei notariv.' Zardi was not able to find this folder.


Ven. Vir D. Petrus Aaron Florentinus Mansionarius Ecclesie Imolensis sponte... fecit constituir creativ et solemniter ordinavit Ven. virum Dominum Jacobum de Capitis de Imola presentem procuratorem ad ipsius constituentum nomine, et pro eo Mansionarium seu locum quem obtinet inter Mansionarios Ecclesii Sancti Cassiani Imolensis in manibus S. D. N. papae, sive Vice Cancellarij, aut Ordinarij Imole, aut ejus Vicarij Generalis, vel alterius cujusvis ad hoc postestatem habentibus... et ad favorem honorabilis viri D. Thomae quandam Magistri Egidii Clerici Imolensis, et non alter alias nec alicui modo pure libere et simillime resignare et renuntiare, et ressignationem desuper receptum petendum et letterarum expeditioni consentiendo. Jurando quoque in animam Constituentis quod in hujusmodi rassionem [sic] non interventerit quodcumque interesse... Item ad omnia alia et singula... dans... promittens... sub obligatione omnium et singulorum suorum bonorum... super quibus voluit a me notario fieri annnotationem irrevocabilitatis, promittens nunquam revocare, et si quondumque revocari voluerit, revocationem non vale.
Actum Imolē in Capella S. Egidij in domo Octaviani quondam Eximij Legum
doctoris Domini Joannis Lilij, presentibus ibidem Ser Jacobo Andrea de
Gentilinis, et Magistro Gaspare Totto testibus vocatis . . .
Ego Vincentius Gybettus.
Die ddicta
Postquam incontinenti ddictus Petrus Aaron présens sponte constituit Ven. virum
D. Thomam quondam Magistri Egidij de Imola presentem ad ipsius constituen
tis 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 Imolē 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 Micellanea musicale, MS

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 faculti' 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
extent—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 'Threicum memorat quicumque' (see no. 106).
Were it not for these letters, we should never have known 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),
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). 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. 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

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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. 157-48 = Music in the Culture of the
Renaissance, pp. 88-91.

4 On Spataro's belief in the guiding principle of reason, see Ch. 3.
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 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 two-part 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’.6 ‘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

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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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. 11. 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.
Spataro does not say that the two are identical. He aims at elucidating the difference between a note sounded (percussiones) and a note held over (suspensiones). 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 percussiones and taciturnitā, 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.’8 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’), 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

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 ‘fila Sion’:

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

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7 Glareanus also believed that in a syncopation a dissonance such as a whole tone ‘is not heard’; see Dodecachordon, trans. Clement A. Miller (Musicalological Studies and Documents 6; 2 vols., [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1965), i. 64.
8 ‘Omnis sonus in percussionis non autem omnis percusso in tempore sed in temporis termino. In medio enim percussionis quae per sonos fiunt: quaedam event sunt taciturnitates quibus solet invicem discernitur’ (De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum, fo. 11r, i. 8 from bottom).
9 On the scansion of ‘Sion’, see no. 36 n. 5.
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. 57.
11 See Italia sacra musica, ed. Knud Jeppesen (3 vols., Copenhagen, 1965), i. 114, mm. 25-7. The same motif is repeated in the alto and tenor.
Introduction

Spataro wonders what moved Aaron to bring up this subject. It may have been an acquaintance with Biagio Rossetti's *Libellus de rudimentis musicae*, 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. 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 3 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. Neither of these works found its way into the repertory of San Petronio, to judge from the surviving choir-books.

Most of the criticisms each levelled at the other have to do with contrapuntal faults. Parallel unisons, fifths, octaves, and their compounds 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 & 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 semimimnims, such as the following, are impermissible:

![Diagram of music notation]

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). 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 countepoint, which unfortunately is lost. Since the motet survives, it is possible to locate the consecutive fifths sanctioned by Spataro.

![Diagram of music notation]

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.
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. 7v), cites the passage from Ramis and adds a music example:

The passage from Verdelot's 'Infirmatatem 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 'Soys 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):
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 Toscaneiio', 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:

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.

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). But, he continues, invoking again a favourite concept, ‘it certainly doesn’t matter, because in your and my compositions that imperfect fifth 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 C, 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 C and G 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). The difference occurs in the tactus or, as Spataro and the Italians called it, battuta. Under C the measure has one down-beat and up-beat, under G 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 G or 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).

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
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.' 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):

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\end{array} \]

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. 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 accentuated passing dissonance when attacked simultaneously with another note, a quite ordinary phenomenon in music of his time. 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

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\end{array} \]

does not please me because it could be arranged in a better way (no. 35, para. 1). In Aaron's mass for five equal voices

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\end{array} \]

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

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\end{array} \]

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:

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\text{\texttt{J}} \\
\end{array} \]

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

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

26 See also his remarks on the way one hears the melodic tritone in no. 18, para. 3.

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

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 half-step.28 Thus Spataro’s sensitivity here 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.29 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.30 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.

29 Liber de arte contrapuncti, in Opera theoretica, ed. Albert Seay (Corpus scriptorum de musica 221; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1975-8), ii. 36.
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.\(^{35}\)

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.


\(^{34}\) Zarlino sanctions it in occasional cases; see *The Art of Counterpoint*, p. 97.

\(^{35}\) See also no. 32, para. 3, where he mentions the same process.
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 so diligent in examining my disordered compositions; the disorder is due to trusting myself too much, because without otherwise having them sung.’

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. In a subsequent article he discussed a number of manuscript scores that have survived, but none before mid-century. 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’.

Spataro’s letters anedate 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 concerto, 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 cm (c. 12½ 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. ‘Abaco’ 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 di 27 del presente ho receputo una vostra de di 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...’

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120

10 This in a later letter he postpones sending a mass until he has had it performed at least once (no. 11, para. 1).


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

41 Ibid., p. 281. In no. 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.
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. 50, para. 2):

Ma dove dici 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 chiarezza) 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 12 x 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.36 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 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. 16, para. 2).

In June 1533 Spataro wrote to Del Lago requesting another cartella, this time in a different size (no. 14, para. 6):

Ma prego V.E. me voglia mandare una cartella come già facesti, la quale sia grande quanto è la medieta di tuo questo foglio, ma sia uno digito, o poco più, più larga. Et datime adviso del costo, che subito ve remeterò el prezzo.

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 10.5 x 20 cm, so the cartella would have been about 6 x 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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36 On this point, which is discussed in several letters, see especially no. 44, pars. 10–11 and no. 53, para. 6. Zarlino also adheres to the practice; see The Art of Counterpoint, trans. Palisca and Marco, pp. 248–9.

44 This is 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.
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. 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.

At the time Spataro and Aaron were exchanging compositions, new developments in ‘l’arte de la harmonica faculta’ were taking place in Venice. Under the aegis of Adrian Willaert a new music was being developed, though laborious, works. 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.

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At the time Spataro and Aaron were exchanging compositions, new developments in ‘l’arte de la harmonica faculta’ 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 1539. The music itself, however, largely dates from the 1540s, when one contemporary writer was already calling Willaert ‘nuovo Prometheo della celeste Armonia’. 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:

45 See Book II, pp. 11–12.
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 rinnovare detta compositione: che sarà sicuro modo di correggere i fatti’); see L’antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica (Rome, 1555), Book IV, ch. 41.
47 Sylvestro Ganassi in the second part of his Regola Ruberina (Venice, 1543), dedication.

The Art of Composition

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). 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.49

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. 1). 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. 1). 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

49 Much of the section on composition in this lengthy letter is already found in Del Lago’s Breve introduzione di musica misurata (Venice, 1540). On the dating of the letter, see Ch. 51.
50 Don Harrán, noting Del Lago’s references to Aristoxenus, Bede, Donatus, Isidore, Nicolachus, 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 Pratica musicae (see no. 93 nn. 38–39). Del Lago’s humanist clothing is mostly second-hand.
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. 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.

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Giovanni del Lago and his Epistole

Fortune did not smile kindly on Giovanni del Lago. To a man so self-esteeming, 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. 

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 scovazzze’; no. 75). In 1528 and

1329 he lodged at the barber's shop at the sign of the Sun in the Campo Santa Sofia (nos. 16–29),\(^2\) By 1331 he had moved to a street near the church (no. 89). In 1336 Aaron addressed a letter to him at 'Santa Fumita' (no. 62), the church of Santa Eufemia on the Giudecca. But in 1337 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. 93), a church in the settiere 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 piovano 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, to the position of deacon.

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Introduction

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 registers—remained in office until 1570, when he died at the age of eighty-four.\(^6\) 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 piovano 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.\(^7\)

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 imperfecton and alteration (see no. 86). It must be an early work, since it is mentioned by Pietro Aaron in his Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni of 1521.\(^8\) 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

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\(^2\) 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 was added another storey to his house, from Francesco Longino for 6 ducats a year. This 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. 16–19 of a small vellum register that begins with excerpts from wills.\(^2\)

\(^3\) Between 1517 and 1520 he had the church completely restored, in 1523 the new organ was built ('ex sumptibus meis et parogianorum'), in 1531 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. 16–19 of a small vellum register that begins with excerpts from wills.\(^3\)

\(^4\) Ivan Jacopo Fontana, Illustrazione storico-critica della Chiesa di S. Sofia (Venice, 1816), p. 42.

\(^5\) 'I 544 a di 8 marzo moriote pre Zaneto prete intitolado'; Register D (the folios are unnumbered, but the entries occur in chronological order).

\(^6\) Aaron cites it as an example of the seventh mode; see fo. C2. He also mentions several times that his statements are confirmed by 'el venerabile messer pre Zaneto musico Veneto'. Del Lago was known as 'Pre Zanetto' throughout his life.
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 ingeniously admits in the postscripts to some of his letters, also annoyed 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 Austrian 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 fos. 11r–101r, 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. 1r–10r 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 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

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11 See Table 1, J18 and J19.
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 Gundolf Sigonio to Annibale Melone are found in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fr. 11100, on these letters see Ch. 2.
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 Epistoie. His Breve introduttione di musica misurata, published in 1540, was dedicated to another patrician, Lorenzo Moresino. Since this work was conceived after the Epistoie, 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 Epistoie 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 Epistoie copied by Scribe A are addressed to Aaron because none were written during the period when both men were living in Venice, before

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15 The additions are set off by upper half-brackets in the edn.
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 1532 (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 1 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?

Pl. 6. Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 4 Aug. 1532 (no. 43). MS Vat. lat. 1318, fo. 46v (Scribe A, with corrections and additions in Del Lago’s hand)
Introduction

As long as the identity of Giovanni da Legge remained unknown, 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, 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 coat-rack, so to speak, on which Del Lago could hang points he wished to cover in his 'resolution of reconcile 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 original layer of the Epistole, that Del Lago 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 1525 to Da Legge 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 vostra data a de di 21 otobris signata, la quale m'è stata gratissima perché scio che me amati. Ho inteso quanto diceti circa Messer Prate Alessandro. Ma sia la cosa come si voglia, mi parebbe che per tal causa non dovesse esser nato tra voi alcuno odio né veruna malvolentia perché non gli è accaduto donde causar si potesse risa 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. 1 and 15). 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. 11).

Nor was Del Lago content with furnishing 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 1528; 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).

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, 2 and 9, 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 Anoniale 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 Domenico Memo, took his clavichord to England to play for Henry VIII. His sad end is related in the Biographical Dictionary.
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.
Introduction

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: 'deo à duoi, removere à removere, se à sti, etc.' 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. 11, 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 Pléton'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 1533 (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 F♭, C♭, B♭, and E♭ in Pythagorean temperament. In no. 57 Del Lago claimed that st of F♭ and C♭ 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 introduzione di musica misurata, published in Venice in May 1540. 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, 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.' 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. 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.
23 Ibid., p. 159.
24 Ibid., p. 166.
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'. 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’. 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. 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.

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. He probably was persuaded that the audience would be different; the Breve introduction 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. 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 1526. He obviously regarded the letter to Fra Seraphin as

25 See the passage from Matteo Nardo’s letter, borrowed by Del Lago in no. 93, para. 5. See Harrán, Word–Tone Relations; Del Lago’s treatise is discussed on pp. 156–66. See also the Commentary on no. 93.

26 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. 155). 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. 71r 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’.

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.

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 time—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.

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. Music historians have not been so fortunate. Apart from Antonfrancesco Doni’s ideal but somewhat sketchy library, publishers’ catalogues (mostly from the latter part of the sixteenth century), and bibliographies such as Conrad Gesner’s *Pandectae* of 1548, we have only one outstanding example of the library of a

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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 humanists’ 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, ‘Cittazioni di teorici medievali nelle lettere di Giovanni del Lago’, Quaderni 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.
sixteenth-century music-lover before mid-century, that of Ferdinand Columbus, whose treasures are the basis of the Biblioteca Colombina in Seville. 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. 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

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**Introduction**

Giovanni del Lago's rare forays into Greek theory occur only in the 1541 letter to Fra Seraphino (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 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 definitions—and more. In it Del Lago cites Potema, 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. However, they were all accessible in Venice during Del Lago's lifetime in Greek manuscripts. Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS graec. 322, for example, a fifteenth-century manuscript that belonged to Cardinal Bessarion, includes treatises by all the above authors. Possibly, these were the works discussed over lunch. The English ambassador was a Bolognese protonotary, Giambat-
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 introduzione 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, adding
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 than 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
wards 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
12 The manuscripts, one of Procopius and three of Origen, came from the library of Cardinal
Bessarion; see Giulio Coggiola, ‘Il presto di manoscritti della Marciana del 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.
14 See no. 93 nn. 17-9 (cf. Ch. 1 n. 50).
15 Introduzione musicale, ed. E. de Coussemaker in Scriptorum de musica mediæ aetatis (4 vols.,
Paris, 1864-76), i. 161a.
16 Scriptorum ecclesiasticorum de musica sacra, ed. Martin Gerbert (3 vols., Saint-Blaise, 1744), ii. 14-7
(hereafter abbreviated GS); English translation in Source Readings in Music History, ed. Oliver
17 ‘Citazioni di teorici medievali’, p. 173. For the passage Del Lago quotes, see CS i. 161a.
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 1 (Certaldo, 1968), 49-76.
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. 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. As Cesarino Ruini notes, Del Lago’s reading diverges slightly from the main obscure thirteenth-century English theorist Amerus (some manuscripts more so since there are no surviving Italian sources of his treatise. As contemporaries, Amerus’ treatise, or did he take the reference from a secondary source? It 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. 75), and once claiming him as the inventor of the sign $2$ 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. 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). 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...’).

20 See no. 73 n. 11.
21 See Amerus, Practica artis musicæ [1271], ed. Cesarino Ruini (Corpus scriptorum de musica 251; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1977), pp. 11–14. Only two complete sources have come down to us: Bamberg, Staatliche Bibliothek, MS Lit. 111 (written in Bamberg, early 14th c.) and Trier, Seminarbibliothek, MS 44 (written second half of 11th 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. 17–9.
23 Since inverted word-order was omitted from the variant readings noted in the published ed. 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’ ~ fo. 25’ of Vat. lat. 5322; p. 426, § 71 ~ fo. 59 of Vat. lat. 5322.

Giovanni del Lago’s ‘Authorities’

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. 17–9.

24 Lucidarium, p. 304.
25 Ibid., p. 298.
26 See the description ibid., pp. 53–4.
27 Ibid., p. 272, source ‘R’ ~ fo. 25’ of Vat. lat. 5322; p. 426, § 71 ~ fo. 59 of Vat. lat. 5322.
Giovanni del Lago's 'Authorities'

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 Libell/us 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 can tu mensura to’. Whether the quotations actually come from a separate copy of the Libell/us cantus mensurabilis or from the version incorporated with commentary in Ugolino of Orvieto’s Declaratio musicae disciplinar, 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.
31 Forty-seven manuscript versions of the Libell/us exist, six of which were known to Coussemaker when he prepared his edn. in GS iii. 46-58. A critical edn. is lacking.
Introduction

contains a copy of de Muris’s *Libellus* (fos. 2r–6r), 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. 2r)—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 contrapporto’; he cites it only once, for the definition of counterpoint (no. 74). Coussemaker published an *Ars contrapuncti secundum Johanneum 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. 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 ‘addiscet et’ (’nisi prius addiscat et sciat contrapunctum’). It is found closest to Washington, Library of Congress, MS ML 171. J. 6, a manuscript copied in Venice between 1461 and 1472. Thus we may adduce a lost manuscript, perhaps of Venetian origin, for Del Lago’s quotation.

Philippe de Vitry

Another of Del Lago’s ‘grosi 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 ‘green’ (no. 77). Del Lago’s ‘grossi antichi’ was Albert Gallo discovered, his quotations from the latter do not come from Prosdicomo’s own commentary but from that of Ugolino of Orvieto, in Book III of the *Declaratio musice disciplinae*. The ‘Musica’, likewise, is identifiable with Book I of Ugolino’s treatise. Del Lago must have used a copy that either gave Prosdicomo as author or, more likely, was anonymous. Since Prosdicomo did write a commentary on the *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, 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 musice 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. In four other letters (nos. 28, 75, 76, 77) for a description of this source, see Kurt von Fischer, ‘Eine wiederaufgefundene Theoretikeraufschriften der späten 14. Jahrhunderts (Chicago, Newberry Library, Ms. 1410 Codex cajusdam ignoti bibliothelli Vindobonensis)’, Schweizer Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft 1 (1972), 23–31.

Prosdicomo de Beldomandi

Del Lago cites three treatises by Prosdicomo de Beldomandi, a ‘Trattato di contrapunto’ (nos. 28, 77), 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 Prosdicomo’s own commentary but from that of Ugolino of Orvieto, in Book III of the *Declaratio musice disciplinae*. The ‘Musica’, likewise, is identifiable with Book I of Ugolino’s treatise. Del Lago must have used a copy that either gave Prosdicomo as author or, more likely, was anonymous. Since Prosdicomo did write a commentary on the *Libellus cantus mensurabilis*, 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 musice 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. In four other letters (nos. 28, 75, 76, 77) for a description of this source, see Kurt von Fischer, ‘Eine wiederaufgefundene Theoretikeraufschriften der späten 14. Jahrhunderts (Chicago, Newberry Library, Ms. 1410 Codex cajusdam ignoti bibliothelli Vindobonensis)’, Schweizer Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft 1 (1972), 23–31.

Giovanni del Lago’s ‘Authorities’

Coussemaker’s source, a manuscript in private possession in Vienna, is now in Chicago, Newberry Library, MS 14. 1. Two other sources of this treatise, beginning with the words ‘Omni desideranti notitiam artis mensurabilis musicae’ (CS iii. 29a), are known: Seville, Biblioteca Colombina, Ms. 5–2–25, no. 14, and (greatly condensed) Siena, Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati, MS L. v. 30, fo. 129r–9. 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.
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 Verdana.44 The other three manuscript sources of the counterpoint treatise, including that in the later version of the treatise, dated 1412, in Padua, MS 3359. 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 treatise—the earlier, dated 1412, in Padua, MS 3321, 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 talae he quotes in no. 28 without source agrees with the third definition (the 'opinio quorumdam modorum') given by Prosdocimo in the chapter 'De colore et talae' 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 of a tone a diesis. The source of the quotation in no. 88 is Prosdocimo's treatise against Marchetto, the Tractatus musicœ speculative,48 whereas the objection to Marchetto's institution of the sign ♭ 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' Beldemandi, Contrapunctor (Greek and Latin Music Theory I; Lincoln, Nebr., and London, 1984).
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.

Giovanni del Lago's 'Authorities'

'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 continuar (no. 57, para. 4):

Notandum est quod signum b mollis nunquam est ponendum nisi super situm huius vocis mi quam semper commutat 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, Tincolor, and Hotthy 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 γ with a tail sharply bent to the right. The title on fol. 2r reads: 'Incipit brevis Collectio Artis Musicœ per Reverendum D. B. de Francia'. The explicit on fol. 64v gives more information:

Explicit brevis Collectio Artis Musici tam ex Terminationibus Antiquorum, quam modernorum Magistrorum in hac Arte proterum pro utilitate Incipientium et horum libelli aggregata ut simpliciores ad divinas laudes decantandam fortiter scripti. Deo gratias, per me scripta Emericum de Siler ad placentiam presbyteri Jacobi de Gravia.50

49 See Giuseppe Valentinielli, Bibliotheca Manuscrita ad S. Marcii Venetiarum. Codices Manuscripti Latinœ (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 307. 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 Valentinielli reads 'Soler' and 'Guidi'. 'Gravia' may possibly be 'Gravina': the head serif of the final a extends over the s and could therefore indicate an abbreviation for s, although the scribe writes many of his as in this manner. If the name were Gravina, Jacobus might be identical with Jacobus de Cincinnati de Gravina, a canon in Pesaro, who in 1477 ordered the copying of Ugolino of Orvieto's Declaratio musicæ disciplinæ, as the colophon of London, British Library, Add. MS 33119 states; see Declaratio musicæ disciplinæ, ed. Seay, i. 4. The manuscript later came into the possession of Franchino Gafurio.
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 decantandras in ecclesia Dei est valde necessaria. The chapter headings will give an idea of D. B.'s interests:

De sex vocibus et earum locali situatione capitulum primum (fo. 2bis)
De tribus proprietatibus, et septem principiorum assignatione capitulum secundum (fo. 7)
De vocum multiplicatione, et earum dispositione capitulum tertium (fo. 9)
De mutationibus et earum investigatione capitulum quartum (fo. 10)
De totius cantus distinctu, et de specierum cognitione capitulum quintum (fo. 15)
De huius artis practica, et human vocis reparatione capitulum sextum (fo. 23)
De mutationum electione, et disiunctarum descriptione capitulum septimum (fo. 32)
De coniunctarum utilitate, et earum positione capitulum octavum (fo. 45)
De notitia tonorum, et eorum modulatione capitulum nonum (fo. 56)

D. B.'s major concerns are two: how to produce a chorus of well-trained voices (see eh. 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. 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 secundum Boetium est variatio 51. For Augustine's views on church music see Epistulae 51. 18. 34; less positive is Confessions 10. 41. 49-50. 52. He names nine coniunctae used in plainchant, with examples, plus two found only in 'cantus figuratus', e and, by implication, f, and one 'que transcendent omnes regulars cantus figurati', f 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 Goscalc; see The Berkeley Manuscript: University of California Music Library, MS. 744 (olim Phillipps 4495), ed. Ellsworth (Greek and Latin Music Theory: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 11-15.

from D. B.'s treatise, with no indication that he is quoting anyone. 56 F. comparison with the manuscript treatise of Bonaventura da Brescia called
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But it is possible to push the

late fifteenth-century theory including many works by John Hothby. 55

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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 15oo 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 vii. 82 (3547), fos. 22'-26', a compendium of
late fifteenth-century theory including many works by John Hothby. But
it is possible to push the terminus ante quem back to 1489 through
comparison with the manuscript treatise of Bonaventura da Brescia called
Venetin, 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
'nonnis 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'), conflict with D. B.'s teachings ('nam tonus constat sive
coniunctur ex novem punctis seu indivisibilibus, quod idem est'; fo. 17'). The scribe of the
Venetin 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
Apollinica Vatican, MS Capponi 206, fo. 41', for example, also credits Boethius with a
statement about mutation: 'Dicit enim Boethius quod mutatio fuit inventa causa necessitatis'; fo.
Venetin, says: 'Mutatio secundum Boetium est dimissio unius vocis
propter alteram sub uno signo et una littera et in eadem voce' (fo. 1'). Another version of this
treatise, however, lacks the ascription to Boethius; see Adrien de La Fage, Essais de
déchiffreographie 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 mensurabilis, ed. Gilbert Reaney
(Corpus scriptorum de musica 31; Neustad Montreal, American Institute of Musicology,
56 Bologna, Cive Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS A. 17. A modern ed. has recently been
published by Albert Seay, Bonaventura da Brescia, Brevis collectio artis musicae (Venturina)
(College music Press Critical Texts 11; Colorado Springs, 1980). On p. 9, sentences 3 (to col. 1a) and 6 are found on fo. 25b' of the Venice manuscript; on p. 13, sentences 2-4 appear
on fo. 15; on p. 17, sentences 16 (beginning 'sicut in grammatica') to 8 are on fo. 46'-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; but
Bonaventura's indebtedness goes further. His first sentence, continuing
'tam ex determinationibus antiquorum quam modernorum magistrorum
in hac arte peritorem, pro utile 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 acknow-
ledgement, as is commonly the case). His second substantial source is the
Florum libellus (Bologna, 1487) of Nicolo 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 antiques in arte musica doctissimus,
Canores vulgaris, qui vini & semitorn discerne nescient, in vanum
laborant, tantum tempus in cantando perdentes, quantum in secularibus divinissimos
scripturis profecisse potuissent. Item Boetius in Musica sua dicit, Ita est de illis, qui sine arte canunt, sicut de litteratis qui nunquam [litteras]56 dicuerint. (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
aedificavit eam.' Otherwise the two passages agree exactly, except for Del
Lago's erroneous 'semiton'. The etymology of regul in no. 86, para. 16,
may likewise come from D. B. (fo. 17').

The terminus post quem of D. B.'s treatise might be narrowed down to
1485 through the quotations from 'Papias'. Papis is a fourteenth-century
grammarians whose great dictionary went through four fifteenth-century
printings, one in Milan (1476) and three in Venice (1485, 1491, 1496). He
included a number of musical terms, of which D. B. quotes cantor, clavis,
Edition except the definition of diapason:

Diapason musica 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. (Foss. 21v–22r).60

The 1476 edition lacks the word omnes in the last sentence. Omnes, however, is found in the Venetian editions of 1483 and 1496.61 If D. B. used a printed copy of Papias’ Vocabularium, we could assign a date of between 1481 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. 47r) 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 1513 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. 111).

61 I wish to thank Carey S. Bliss, Curator of Rare Books of the Huntington Library, for kindly comparing the readings of the later eds. of the Vocabularium, both in the possession of the Huntington Library.


Giovanni del Lago’s ‘Authorities’

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. 17, 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 alius 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 F# and G# and Bb 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 A# 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 copies. It bears a label listing the provenance as ‘Somaschi della Salute’. On the transfer of the manuscripts to the Marciana, see Francesco Luisi (ed.), Landario Giustiniano (2 vols., Venice, 1981), i. 4–6.
Introduction

sources under different titles.\(^6^5\) 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\(^v^\):

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 iterum, 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. 17). Did he perhaps not understand Hothby's idiosyncratic system of indicating flats and sharps? The 'second order' stands for the flats: G\#, A\#, B\#, D\#, E\#, 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 B\#, not A\#. '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 (B\#) and A of the third (A\#).\(^6^6\) 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\(^v^\)) does; but the latter manuscript seems to have originated in Florence (or Pisa) and to have stayed there.\(^6^7\) If Del Lago had incorporated an error in this quotation, it would be easier to determine his source.

Stung by Spataro's devastating criticism in his letter of 30 October 1333 (no. 60), Del Lago seems never to have corresponded with him again; no further letters between the two are found in Vat. lat. 1318. 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 'tritone incomposito', the leap of a tritone, from B\# 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, qu(ie) specieum omnino fugienda sunt, nisi auditus intelligentis alter 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' accidental\(^6^8\) to ensure that the singer did not sing an E\# 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\# 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\#:

Semitonium inter A primi et A secundi ordinis vocatur molle acutum vel superacutum, quod non cantatur nisi A secundi ordinis depingatur, vel quando F accurreret B per quatuor voces trium tonorum causa tritoni [sic], vel per quinque voces duorum tonorum et duorum semitoniorum, que coniunctiones omnino fugienda sunt, nisi auditus intelligentis alter sentiret.\(^6^9\)

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

\(^6^5\) See Albert Seay, 'Hothby, John', *The New Grove Dictionary*, viii. 750, who lists the treatises as if they were different works: 'Ars plane musicus' (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl. x. 36), 'De musica intervallosa' (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS plut. 29. 48, and Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS viii. 82 [3047]), and 'Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musicus' (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Pal. 472, and London, British Library, Add. MS 6986). Not mentioned by Seay is the 'Regula venerabilis Magistri Johannis Octobi' in Rome, Biblioteca Corsiniana, MS 16. D. 11. 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 counterpart 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.

\(^6^6\) The second and third orders figure prominently in the *Callispea*, but in this treatise Hothby does not say that a comma separates the two orders.


\(^6^8\) On such accidentals, see Don Harrison, 'New Evidence for Musica Ficta: The Cautionary Sign', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 29 (1976), 77–78.

\(^6^9\) Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS viii. 82 (3047), fo. 41\(^v^\). In Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Pal. 472, the same passage (without the words 'causa tritonis') is found on fo. 9\(^v^\).
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, 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 difinitiorum highly useful and authoritative. Commenting on doubtful statements in Spataro's manuscript treatise on counterpoint, Del Lago refers to 'Giovan Tintoris nel suo difinitorio' 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).

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 Difinitorium 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 Coussmaker (CS iv. 177-91). It is, however, found in the fifteenth-century manuscript at Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS B. 2, fo. 4r: 'B molle est proprietas per quam in omni loco cuius clavis est. f. ut cantitur et ex illo ceterae voces deducturum.' 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 'secilicet' (full stops enclosing figures and single letters are characteristic of writing of this period).

Spataro's scathing denunciation of Tinctoris and all his works 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

70 On the novelty of this position, see Lowinsky, 'Music of the Renaissance as Viewed by Renaissance Musicians', pp. 131-8 = 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. Tinctoris' approvingly, since in this case Tinctoris contradicts Del Lago (para. 11).

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 F# and G® 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. 91), 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 Difinitorium, but Del Lago substituted 'parte dell'oratione' for Tinctoris's 'partis cantus'. 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 Difinitorium, it is clear from his letters that he also knew other treatises by Tinctoris. His definitions of 'reducta' (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. 86, para. 6). In no. 70, Del Lago mentions in one breath a 'Gloria del quinto tuono irregolare' by Domarto and Barbibant'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 Barbibant's chanson. Del Lago also refers to Domarto in another context, citing his use of O2 and ß2 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. 53.
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 examples 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.  

Franchino Gaffurio

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 institutio 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 quanunquam median mediam coniunctam tenet, et preter semibreuem, qu in medio nunquam pariter constituit nisi in ligatura cum opposita proprietate. Ignari tamen nonnulli longam in media collocatione constituunt cum cauda descendentis lateris eius dextro applicata, nullam penitus inter ligatam longam et simplicem differentem figurationem sentientes ut hic... Quod est intolerabile, nam alia est figuratio long simpeccis, alia ligata, ut ex predictis regulis facile reprehendi potest. At cum omnes eius discipline clarissimi medias figuris semper breves concluunt, 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 appararent accidentia quae 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 di 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 compositions written by very learned men’ against Del Lago’s ‘rule observed by rude antiquity’ (no. 48, para. 13). 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:


It seemed possible that we were dealing with a lost treatise of Gafurio’s, 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.  

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 jugurate published in Milan in 1492 by Gafurio’s pupil Francesco Caza ‘is actually a vernacular condensation of Book II of Practica’. Gafurio’s introduction to this

75 Practica musicae (Milan, 1496), fo. 227v.  
76 In his article ‘Early Gaffuriana’, Clement Miller discusses five extant manuscripts of early writings by Gaffurio; in none of them is Guido Antonio Arcimboldo the dedicatee. Of two lost manuscripts, the Flora musicae was dedicated to Ludovico Gonzaga, Marquess of Mantua; the dedicatee of the Musica institutionis collationes, written in Verona about 1476, is unknown; see Caretta et al., Franchino Gaffurio, p. 114. The references to the two treatises come from the contemporary biography of Gaffurio by Pantalone Melego 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 M. 4. 37, fo. 2-20v); see Miller, ‘Gaffurio’s Practica musicae: Origin and Contents’, Musica disciplina 22 (1968), 103-28.  
78 Gaffurio’s Practica musicae’, p. 108.
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 mezzo le ligatura 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 piu 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*-24*), 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 mezzo [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 ignoranti che nello megio constituiscano la longa cum la virgula descendante dal canto dextro sentendo che non sia alcuna differentia [sic!]; figuratione tra la simplece longa et ligata, come appare in questo exemplo 79, lo qual acto non è per modo alcuno da fare comportato perché una è la figuratione della longa simplece 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 star nello megio nella ligatura. Adunque ogni figure che se possi ligare et non sia ligata se tollera et non è vitiosa, ma quella che è ligata et non possi ligare è vitiosa et intollerabile, e finalmente alle figure ligate se applicano tute gli accidenti che soleno accadere se ad epso [sic] simplece figure. (Fo. 21*–)

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 precekto mio Franchino Gaffuro nela seconda parte del opera sua praticabile’ (fo. a1r). Thus, by 1492 the overall plan of the Practica had taken shape—and probably already by 1487, when Alessandro Assolari copied the ‘Liber primus musicæ 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 it 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 Arcimbudus’ 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

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79 See the facsimile edn. and translation by Johannes Wolf, Francesco Caza: Tractatus vulgaris de canto figurato (Berlin, 1922), fo. 21r.
80 See Miller, ‘Early Gaffurian’, pp. 185–4. The chapter, headed ‘Capitolo delle ligature’, is in a different hand from that of the Micrologus vulgaris et does not carry Gafurio’s name.
81 Miller, ‘Gaffurio’s Practica musicalis’, p. 106.
82 A sketch of his life is given in Lydia Cerioni, La diplomazia sforzesca nella seconda metà del Quattrocento e i suoi siffatti segreti (Fonti e studi del Corpus membranarum italicarum; 2 vols., Rome, 1970), i. 151–2.
83 See Caterina Santoro, Gli Uffici del Dominio Sforzesco (1430–1500) (Milan, 1948), pp. 14, 497, 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 Casetta 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 ‘Gaffurio’s Practica musicalis’, pp. 101–9.
86 Ibid., pp. 106–7.
manuscript copy such as exists for Book I makes this supposition rather conjectural. With the rediscovery of Gafurio's lost manuscript at the Houghton Library of Harvard University, that supposition becomes fact. 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 Ar- cimbolbo Equiti aurato præstantissimo viro ac duci Insubri, Senatori dignissimo.' In the preface, Gafurio says that since he recently dedicated his 'Theoricum musicæ disciplinæ' to Guido Antonio's brother, the cardinal, it seemed right to dedicate the present 'musices practicabilis 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 v) 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.' 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 practicabilis libellus' and the version printed as Book II of the 'Practica musice' are of the same kind that Clement Miller found in his comparison of the 'Tractatus practicabilium 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, Dufay, Domarto, and Busnois and...
Ockeghem, and again Domarto, together with Barbingant. At the end of ch. 11, on imperfection, Gafurio refers to a statement concerning blackened notes of 'Godendach carmelitie musici docimissimi preceptoris mei' (fo. 15v). 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'. 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 the use of mensuration-signs. In the present treatise, the criticisms of Dufay, Domarto, Busnois, and Ockeghem echo those made by Tinctoris in his Proportionale, 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. 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. 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...').

In the Practica, Tinctoris cites the other in the Tractatus practicabilium proportionum ('Early Gaffuriana', p. 179).

96 Ibid., p. 176.
97 Tinctoris, Opera theoretica, iii. 17, 15, 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 aliique et præcipue unus non modo hic sed etiam in omni alia honesta ac liberali institutione, velat cunctarum bonarum artium exper, nominari indignus, merito vituperi nota me afficiendum'; ibid., i. 61.
100 Gafurio, Practica musicorum, trans. Miller, p. 178.

172

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...'). 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 practicabilis 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 prolongation, 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 unidentified, 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 all the whole passage was omitted in the published version of the Practica musicorum.

Del Lago probably owned all Gafurio's printed treatises. He does not quote from the Theorium 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 musicorum 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 musiceorum 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...

100 Ibid., pp. 179, 180, 181, 185.
101 See no. 44 n. 23.
Giovanni Spataro is known to posterity more as a polemicist than a theoretist; author of three contentious critiques, he published only one theoretical treatise (itself not without polemical overtones), the *Tractato di musica di Giovanni Spataro musico bolognese nel quale si tratta de la perfectione da la sesquialtera producta in la musica mensurata exercitata* (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 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

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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. 5.
Hermes Bentivoglio, con la additione de due altri trattati, scilicet uno de contrapunto et l’altro de proportione a le figure del canto mensurato (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 treatise 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 intitolato prima al Signore Hermes Bentivoglio, di poi a Frate Piero Aaron, carissimo 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 intitolato 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, bene for bene, 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 compositae 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.

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106 That 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 regole 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 celebrità facta’, as Spataro characterized the first version (ibid.).

107 On these two compositions, see Blackburn, ‘A Lost Guide to Tinctoris’s Teachings Recovered’.
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 musicæ, a work that is not mentioned at all in the Correspondence and seems to have been little known in the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{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. 1).\textsuperscript{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 introduttione of 1540, based in large part on his letters (see Ch. 6), he quotes no more than one passage from a music theorist, Gafurio,\textsuperscript{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. 45, the reference to Ramis’s Musica prattica 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’.\textsuperscript{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 Nicea 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 1545 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.\textsuperscript{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,\textsuperscript{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 musicæ’, Early Music History 5 (1981), 259–68.

109 Del Lago may also have found the music examples of de Orto’s ‘Missa J’ay pris amours’ and Ghiselin’s ‘Missa Gratiae gent’ in Heyden; see no. 86 nn. 15–16.

110 Breve introduttione di musica misurata, p. [16]. 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 1; Rome, 1979), p. 23. The following account is drawn from pp. 24–92.

112 See Maria Luzoni, La Biblioteca di San Marco nella sua storia (Collana di monografie delle biblioteche d’Italia 1; Florence, 1954), p. 53.

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. Unfortunately, the records of loans from 24 September 1527 to 1545 are lost.

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**

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Tessarolo (Venice, 1523 or 1529) (nos. 63, 65, 68).
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Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1525) (no. 57).
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[Treatise on mutations] (Venice, 1531) (no. 57).
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Amerus Anglicus, *Practica artis musicae* (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).
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114 ‘Et da anni 60 in qua stiano in alcune casse, con non vulgar nota del honor del stato nostro, pero havendosi trovato loco sopra ditta chiesia dove se potranno abelmente reponere, et dari etiam adaddito de fora via senza andar per la ditta chiesia, sia preso che li procuratori de supra siano obligati immediate de i primi datari che scoderano adattar ditto loco, et farli l’addito conveniente de fora via’; Venice, Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Cod. Gradenigo 127, fo. 577; last paragraph of ‘Diversi ordini 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 (1885), 611–86.

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**Giovanni del Lago’s ‘Authorities’**

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*Tractatus de contrapuncto* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).
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*Tractatus de contrapuncto* (revised version) (nos. 28, 57, 88).
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*Tractatus musicus speculative* (no. 88).
---

*Tractatus praxis cantus mensurabilis* (no. 28).
---

Boethius, *De arithmetica* (nos. 68, 74, 81).
---

*De musica* (nos. 57, 76, 96).
---

Ciconia, Johannes, *Novus musica* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5320).
---

D. B. de Francia, *Brevis collectio artis musicae* (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS lat. VIII. 64 [3411]) (nos. 57, 74, 86).
---

Del Lago, Giovanni, *Brevis introductione de musica misurata* (Venice, 1540) (no. 61).
---

Epistole composite in lengua 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 musicae* (Milan, 1508) (no. 28).
---

*De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus* (Milan, 1518) (no. 74).
---

Musica intitulata a Messer Guido Antonio Arcimboldo (Musices practicabilis libellari) (nos. 44, 47).
---

*Practica musicae* (Milan, 1496) (nos. 28, 44, 68, 73, 80, 84, 96, 93).
---

Theoricum opus musicae discipline (Naples, 1480) (nos. 70, 72).
---

Gaudentius, *Harmonica introductio* (no. 96).
---

Guido, *Regulae rhythmicae* (nos. 74, 86).
---

Heyden, Sebalde, *De arte canendi* (Nuremberg, 1540) (nos. 86, 93).
---

Hothby, John, *Tractatus quarundam regularum artis musicae* (De musica interlappenda) (nos. 57, 78).
---

Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* (no. 93).
---

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Marchetto of Padua, *Brevis compilatio* (no. 47).
---

*Lucidarium* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5322) (nos. 28, 73, 82, 88, 91).
---

*Pomerium* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5322).
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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, 85, 86).
---

*Musica speculativa* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 5321).
---

Odo, *Dialogus de musica* (no. 86).
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), 47 (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: 1-7, 9-10, 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, 47 (and Commentary)
Del Lago to Spataro: 43-4, 47
Aaron to Del Lago: 66
Del Lago to Da Legge: 70
Introduction

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
\( \Phi \): 3, 44-5, 47-8
\( \Omega, \Theta \): 45
\( \Phi \): 44-5

\( \xi \): 44
\( \Omega_2 \): 5, 8, 41, 44-5 (and Commentary on no. 45), 64, 66, 73
\( \Phi_2 \): 41, 42, 44-7 (and Commentary on no. 45), 47-8, 73, 88
\( \Phi_2 \): 41, 45
\( \Phi_2 \): 44-5
\( \Omega_3 \): 44, 64, 66
\( \Phi_3 \): 44
\( \Phi_4 \): 44-5
\( \Omega_2 \): 44-5, 64
\( \Phi_2 \): 44-5
\( \Omega_3 \): 64
\( \Omega_3, \Omega_5, \Omega_5 \): 80

Mensural Notation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \Omega, \Omega )</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>5, 6, 30, 45, 66, 80-1, 104</td>
</tr>
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<td>C_2</td>
<td>50, 44-5, 64, 66</td>
</tr>
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<td>C_3</td>
<td>44-5 (and Commentary on no. 45), 47-8, 64, 66, 81</td>
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<td>( \Omega_3 )</td>
<td>44, 47-8</td>
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<td>88</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>( \Omega_3 )</td>
<td>44, 47, 64, 66</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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: 81
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 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: 84

Rests
Spataro to Aaron: 5, 7, 45
Aaron to Del Lago: 66
Del Lago to Da Legge: 73

Rests as mensuration-signs
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'.

184
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
Del Lago to Gazio: 86
Del Lago to de Justinis: 88
Del Lago to Laurino: 80
Del Lago to Da Legge: 68 (and Commentary)

**Rule of like before like**
Spataro to Aaron: 1-6, 42
Del Lago to Da Legge: 69, 74
Del Lago to Gazio: 84
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: 86
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 'dubi' 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 43 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 C in temporal duration, then three semibreves under C equal two semibreves under C. This means that three semibreves under C move at the same speed as two semibreves under C, and thus are in a sesquialtera 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. 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 Tintorius, Gafurio, Aaron (before 1545), and Del Lago. Although there are no letters in the Correspondence by Tintorius 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 Toscanello di musica of 1533 he favoured the equal minim. 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

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3 Ibid., p. 6.

4 In the Lucidario, Book II, fo. 15r, the relevant passage is: 'gli antichi et doni Musici sesquialteravan le note di questo segno o compararle al seguente C perchè per un tempo di questo C pronontiavano due semibrevi, et sotto questo C ne passavano tre; ... non ostante che dannoi sia stato in contrario osservato al cap. 18 del primo libro del nostro Toscanello'.
In his letter to Cavazzoni of 1 August 1517, which is the earliest chief and the beginning, like unity in arithmetic. Thus the minor mode, breve. In discussing the five essential notes, he says that ‘the breve is the 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. 41, para. 17).

Throughout his long life Spataro adhered to the equal-breve principle. In an early manuscript treatise, Utile et breve regula di canto (1510), he states that the breve in mensural music is an unchangeable measure by which all notes are reckoned (fo. 2'). The Trattato di musica, printed in 1531, is an entire book on sesquisilalera, 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’. Spataro had another follower in the theorist Lanfranco, whose Scintille advocates the equal-breve principle.

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). 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. 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 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), the explanation (and much of the wording) is already found in Spataro’s letter to Cavazzoni of 1 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 C, which is no different as to measure from this C, except as regards the perfection of the breve ... ’ (no. 80, para. 3). On the other hand, Del Lago disagrees with Spataro’s theory of perfection under sesquisilalera (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 O or in 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 ... [II], for example, wishing 3 to 2 to be related as sesquisilalera, we arranged three breves of imperfect tempus against two of perfect, we should not make sesquisilalera, nor indeed any proportion of inequality, but of equality, namely, 6 to 6.’ 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’. 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.
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.
various proportions and mensuration-signs, as well as complex examples of imperfection, alteration, and coloration. The beginning of the motet has $\sigma$ in the cantus and contra, while the tenor has $\zeta$. All voices are in integer valor, and the equal-minim principle is followed.\textsuperscript{14}

The only other major theorist of the time who advocated the equal-minim 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.\textsuperscript{15} Their dedication to the equal-minim 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 prolration. 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.'\textsuperscript{16} Gafurio also opposes the use of different mensurations as proportional signs. In a musical example he has $\sigma$ 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 equal-minim principle.\textsuperscript{17}

In her study of twenty-two Italian Renaissance theorists, Berger found that the far greater number of theorists up to 1510 adhered to the equal-breve concept.\textsuperscript{18} 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

\textsuperscript{14} See the transcription, ibid., pp. 105-16, and p. 42.
\textsuperscript{15} The 16th-c. poet and musican Tomaso Camello said that Gafurio was closely associated with Tinctoris, 'suo carissimo amico'. See Miller, 'Early Gaffuriana', pp. 577-8.
\textsuperscript{16} Practica musicae, trans. Miller, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 155, ex. 45, m. 4.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p. 179.
\textsuperscript{19} Berger, 'The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time', pp. 6, 23.
PART II

The Letters
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. 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.

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: si come (= siccome), o vero (= ovvero), accio 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
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 ( ^ ); these additions were made some years later and show how he revised his letters. Lower half-brackets ( _ ) 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 '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 2. In no. 57, however, 2 indicates a sharp, and we have changed it to # 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 Calmata, the poet

\[ 3 \text{Tinctoris (Expositio manus) follows the mainstream in placing g among the graves; Spataro, Aaron, and Del Lago, however, begin the acutae with this note: see no. 53 n. 2.} \]
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*, *predetto*, *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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Correction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>de, el</td>
<td>di, il</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legata, resposta</td>
<td>ligata, risposta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cerca</td>
<td>circa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ditto, preditto</td>
<td>detto, predetto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insiemi</td>
<td>insieme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>signare, dinata</td>
<td>segnare, denota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>como</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boni, soni</td>
<td>buoni, suoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punto, adunque, longa</td>
<td>punto, adunque, lunga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>officio</td>
<td>ufficio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luio</td>
<td>luglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuole</td>
<td>toglie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negre</td>
<td>nere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raggione, caggione</td>
<td>ragione, cagione</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opinione</td>
<td>oppinione</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pocho, luogho</td>
<td>poco, luogo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dinanti, inanti</td>
<td>dinanzi, inanzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reducere</td>
<td>redurre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dicete</td>
<td>dite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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**A. The Correspondence between Giovanni Spataro, Marc’Antonio Cavazzoni, Giovanni del Lago, and Pietro Aaron**

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Title and Dedication of Giovanni del Lago’s *Epistole* (autograph)

Epistole composte in lingua volgare nelle quali si contiene la resolutione de molti reconditi dubbii della Musica oscuramente 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.

Al Magnifico Messer Girolamo Molino, patricio venetiano, patrone honorandissimo.

È instinto naturale, Magnifico Signor, desiderare quello che a sé proprio si conosce simile. É sendo adunque V.S. di virtù piena et tra gli altri percìo celebrata, merita non solamente la dedicazione delle presenti epistole, nelle quali si contengono diversi dubbi di musica, ma esser essaltata ad ogni altro onore. Et certo si vede che pochi al di d’hoggi si trovano (come voi) dottata non solamente di tale scienza, ma anch’ora di gentilezza et costumi ornato. Onde per non trovare a chi meglio si possino tali dubbi rimettere ad esser giudicati, et per esser voi quello, il quale nell’arte di musica tiene il primo grado fra le altre virtute, et anch’ora per mostrare alcun segno del amore et benignolentia ch’io vi porto per infinite obligazioni, ve ne fo uno presente, il quale anch’ora che sia picciol dono a V.S. (alla quale maggior piu 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
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 virtù 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. 240v–243r
Giovanni Spataro to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, 1 August 1517
(Scribe D)

240v Messer Marco Antonio mio honorando, salutem.

1. Alii 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 speciale mentione per non proceder in lungo, ma de ogni cosa che voi mi proferetemi vi ringrazierò et al bisogno vi operarò.

2. Circa el Diffinitorio¹ che voi dicesti haver de Tintoris, non curo, perché assai mi basta quello che io tengo. Circa etiam a quello che dicesti 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[ch]ino⁴ Gafurio che sta a Millano, el quale assai ha scritto in musica, mi ha mandato uno certo trastato musicato de uno francese chiamato Nicolao Barolducense,⁵ el qual trastato tutto è stato quasi tolto da le opere

¹ The right margin is ragged and some letters have been lost on this folio.

¹ Johannes Tinctoris, Terminorum musicae diffinitionum. 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 treatise because Gafurio had sharply criticized it; on a possible point of contention, Aaron's discussion of counterpoint, see Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', pp. 219–20. Another subject of controversy, the use of C 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 or 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 3 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 1511, which carries the title: Enchiridion musicae 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 1481. Wollick, however, considered himself as 'Nicolaus Gallus' in his letter of dedication. See Klaus Wolfgang Niemoller, Nicolaus Wollick (1470–1514) und sein Musicalkurs (Beiträge zur rheinischen Musikgeschichte 13, Cologne, 1976), pp. 52, 291.
esso Franchino. Ma non so come al fine resteremo amici, benché bene se consumato molti giorni in vedere tale opera et in scriver el mio parer ad del preditto Franchino. Et perché Franchino sumamente laudava tale cognoscemo, perché

Millano et far capo a Franchino che 'Saturnus', tale nome assignato ad hypate hypaton, o vero ad consente) da praslambanomenos ad meson, o vero da A in A in A

luna per esser inferiore Venus voglio scrivere, ma se fusse altri che voi, recusarei tale impresa, non a la quale per el tempo caldo et per

quinto, chiama[to] Marte, opera. Io mi aricordo che ad instantia de Frate Benedetto Bellabusta mi, frate prior in Ferara. Se havesse al presente havuto tale copia, non mi saria feci una altra declaratione, scilicet del mottetto o vero in F suo loco in licanos meson, o vero in G del suprano non dico, perché oltra che quello che significa quello nome, b

actual source is Boethius, Ramis asserted that he derived the theory from Cicero but adds the nine Muses and the eight modes.

7, where the heavenly bodies are connected with Greek note-names. The title-page of Gafurio's Pratica musicae (1496) shows the same correspondence, but adds the nine Muses and the eight modes.

Ho veduto quanto scrivete circa quello vostro postscritto; vi voglio scrivere, ma se fusse altri che voi, recusarei tale impresa, non a la quale per el tempo caldo et per [l']eta 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 Ferrara. Se havesse al presente havuto tale copia, non mi saria feci una altra declaratione, scilicet del mottetto 'Ubi opus', etc., ad uno suo frate prior in Ferrara.

1 MS: restata.

5 On the prices of other music-books, see no. 9, para. 1. Here Spataro applies the teaching of Ramis in his Musica pratica (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 Pratica musicae (1496) shows the same correspondence, but adds the nine Muses and the eight modes.

El secondo genere, chiamato cromatico, divide ciascuno di li cinque tetracordi prediti per semitonio, tono, et tono, ut hic:

Hypaton

Meson Synemmenon Diezeugmenon Hyperboleon

El secondo genere, chiamato cromatico, divide ciascuno di li cinque tetracordi prediti in questo modo, che da la prima corda a la seconda sarà quella medesima distanza di semitonio, la quale è stata in la diatonica partitione, et da la corda seconda a la terza etiam sarà distanza di semitonio, li quali insieme gionti (come a molti piace) reintegrano el spazio del tono.7 Ma da la terza corda a la quarta cade uno intervalllo de
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. In speaking about the chromatic and
genere cromatico de li primi due intervalli solo faciamo uno intervallo, come in questo primo
tetracordo, chiamato hypaton, demostraremos: 

Si per el secondo genere, chiamato cromatico, vogliamo cantare o procedere in esso tetracordo da sol re ed ut, sarà semitono, et da C fa ut ad D sol re similmente sarà semitono. Ma volendo procedere secondo che
canone comanda, se debba saltare da sol re ad C, non se

tocare C fa ut, et per tale modo de quello tono composito cadente tra sol re et D (cromatico loquendo) se ne fa uno tono incompitoso, scilicet in uno intervallo pronuntiato, et da poi da D ad E se procederà con intervallo de semiditono incompitoso, cioè in uno intervallo pronuntiato, et acio che
più claro questo sia compreso, adducendo questi esempi sequenti:

Ciascuno tetracordo sempre ha quattro corde, ma perché nel predito
genere cromatico de li primi due intervalli solo faciamo uno intervallo,

8 Here (and in the description of the enharmonic tetrachord) we run into a problem of
terminology. Spataro in able to describe the intervals of the semitone and diesis (quartern-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 CS or D0 (later he calls it 'D sol re cromatico'). 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.

206
9. Havendo deliberato et ad longum posito el tenore del canto predito, hora a la declarazione del contr'alto de tale canto attenderemo, nel principio del qual contr'alto è così scritto, sicilicet 'Jovis parentis equalitias', le quali parole ivi sono state posite per clave, sicilicet per manifestare donde la prima nota de tale contra alto habbia il suo principio, il quale principio (ut supra) è ditto esser la equalità del parente o vero padre de Giove, il qual padre de Giove (come da li poeti si dice) è Saturno. Adunque perché (ut diximus) Saturno è in G sol re ut, et non ascende ad G superacuto, perché esso contrabasso sarebbe molto incomodo et sinistro. Et per tale razone esso contrabasso hàrà principio in G ut. Ma nel canone del predito contrabasso, el quale dice così, sicilicet 'illud quod est divisio aggregatio sit et e converso, et anfractus superparticularis primi intensi sint eiusdem generis secundi et e contra', questa è la conclusione, sicilicet che le maxime appa[r]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 lunghe, et le breve sono inmutabile, sicilicet che so[n]o cantate per breve. Anchora li intervalli ascendenti per quinta se faranno de quarta et quelli de la quarte ascendenti se faranno de quinta.9

11. Se voi di queste predite cercate la razone, attenderete a ciò che segue. Gli è da considerare che essendo il predito canone costituito in canto mensurato, el [bis]ogna advertere circa le figure in esso canto mensurato usitate, per la qual cosa bisogna recorsere a quelle figure che intra loro sono similitudinarie, le quale sono chiamate essentiale, le quale profatio minor è normalmente la divisione de 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; prolataio minor is treated as analogous to modus minor.

9 On Spataro’s abstruse canons, see Ch. 3 and the Commentary on no. 3.
(ut diximus), la longa sarà cantata per semibreve, et la semibreve sarà cantata in loco de longa. Similmente nui havemo che la maxima potra solo esser agregata de quattro o se' o nove breve, et così etiam la breve solo (da la minima) sarà divisa in quattro o se' o nove parte. Per la qual cosa dico che in numero caderà intra loro non po[ca] 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 eguale diviso. Per tale similitudine adunque la 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 aggregazione de tempi, sarano cantate per semibreve et minima|cantate per la maxima, et per tale modo le longe et le maxime, et per tale modo le longe et le maxime, et per tale modo le longe et le longe.

12. Da poi esso canon seguita cosi, 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 sexquintia, se fanno del secondo anfratto superparticulare che è la diatessaron che nasce da la sextupla, '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 mottetto chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto', etc., 1517, die primo augusti. 

14. Voi etiam diciet voler la declaratione de quello canon in la particula 'Qui sedes' de la mia missa de 'Da pacem Domine' assignato, el qual dice cosi, scilicet 'proportionum alpha in o dedatur et per contrarium motum proportionalium piu non mi extendo, perche havuto la declaratione preditta, so che da per voi bene le intendereti, ma per più chiaressa vi mando tale tenore, el quale resoluto sta ut hic:

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1. Thank you for your recent informative letter and your kind offer.

2. With regard to the Diffinitorium of Tinctoris, I already have a copy; I have heard nothing about his retraction of it. A certain Pietro Aaron has published a book here which I neither praise nor criticize. I'll send you a copy because it prints certain errors contained in the work.

3. I have been busy reading the treatise by Nicholas of Bar-le-Duc [Wollick] 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.

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 prosllamomenos to mese, A to a, the moon is A, Mercury B, Venus C, the Sun D, Mars E, Jupiter F, and Saturn G. The soprano therefore begins...
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:

Hypaton

Meson Synemmenon Diezeugmenon Hyperboleon

The chromatic proceeds by the same diatonic semitone, another semitone (which together, as many agree, make a whole tone), 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. The canon instructs them to be combined, skipping over c, so the second order will be sung as tone and semiditone:

Hypaton

Meson Synemmenon

Diezeugmenon Hyperboleon

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, \[ \begin{array}{c} \text{O} \\ \text{O} \end{array} \] 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, 5:2, 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; at the beginning the values of the notes are exchanged, then and 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:

214

2. Spataro to Cavazzoni, 1 Aug. 1517

COMMENTARY
This is the earliest letter in the chronology of MS Vat. lat. 1318. 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 Dif\$initorium, 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 years—wanted to retract the Dif\$initorium, or parts of it. There are a number of significant differences between the printed version of the Dif\$initorium and the Brussels manuscript (Bibliotheque Royale, MS 114147). Unfortunately, the dictionary was excluded from Albert Seay's critical edition.11 One important difference is in the definition of 'tonus' and its parts. In the printed version 'tonus' is defined as 'conjunctio ex distantia quinque dies\$iu\$um constituta' ('an interval constituted of five dies\$iu\$um').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 maior 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 diatema, 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 icisma and dicisma, not present in the printed version.

The date of printing of Tinctoris's Dif\$initorium had previously been assumed

11 Tinctoris, Opera theoretica.
12 See the Dictionary, trans. Parrish.
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 1475 is a more likely date, but he wonders why the printer, Gerhardus 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 Gerhardus 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 Diffusatorio’.

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 ‘Pythagoric’ 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’.17 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.

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, Macrobius: Commento al Somnium Scipionis, Libro I (Biblioteca di studi antichi 38; Pisa, 1983), pp. 248–9.

Venerabilis vir et amice honorande, salutem.
1. A di 2 juli ebi una vostra de di 22 juni signata[1], et da poi ho receputo un’altra a di 11 del predetto del 10 juli signata, le quali son de uno medesimo tenore. A la prima vostra predicta son stato tardo circa la resosta, et questo è sta[to] perché da di 23 juni sino a questa hora son stato gravemente amalato de una in[m]itaria molto grave, de la quale (per essere già carico de multi anni) non credo potermi liberare.
2. Ho compreso quanto sia il vostro desiderio, sicilicet la declarazione de quelle mie subscriptione d[alida] me sino al tempo de la mia quasi adolescentia facte, le quale a me al presente son più incognite et laboriose circa la sua intelligenta che non erano in quello tempo. Pure al meglio che io potrò et saperò (acò che il vostro oporto desiderio habia effetto), tale subscriptione et ca[no]ni serano da me declarati.
3. Et prima V.S. me recerca circa quello canon posito [rapra] la particula de la Gloria de la ‘Missa de la tradictora’ chiamata ‘cum Sancto Spirito’, et questo canon dice ut hic: ‘Hoc in hypate meson precipue cantabbi; in tertia [mi]noris multiplicitis canendo reverteris; per in[i] usus mesen per sinemerion reitera[bis].’ Appare claro che tale canon comanda che esso tenore se debba cantare tre volte, sicilicet la pr[ima] cominciando in hypate meson, cioè in E la mi grave, et sequitando usque in finem. Per la seconda volta esso canon comanda che esso tenore debba tornare dal fine al principio cantando, sicilicet che nel ritornare quella pausa de breve posta in fine de esso tenore non se tace. Vole etiam [ro] esso canon che quando esso tenore in la seconda volta torna dal fine al principio, che le note cantabile et non cantabile siano governate da la tertia spatie de

3 (J48 and J27).1 Fos. 167r-v and 153r–154v
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 20 July 1520
(autograph)

dignissimo [m]aiori hono[rando]. [Vener]ijis.

167 Venerabilis vir et amice honorande, salutem.
1. A di 2 juli ebi una vostra de di 22 juni signata[1], et da poi ho receputo un’altra a di 11 del predetto del 10 juli signata, le quali son de uno medesimo tenore. A la prima vostra predicta son stato tardo circa la resosta, et questo è sta[to] perché da di 23 juni sino a questa hora son stato gravemente amalato de una in[m]itaria molto grave, de la quale (per essere già carico de multi anni) non credo potermi liberare.
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minore [mol]tiplice, scilicet da la subquadrupla, et per tale modo ciascuna figura cantabile et non cantabile stara in quadruplo, scilicet che ciascuna figura sarà quadruplicata. Ma in ertzia vice il can[on] predicto comanda che esso tenore debia principiare nel principio in mesen, scilicet in A la mi re [acuta], per synemenon, scilicet per b molle. Ma vole che tale reiteratione proceda 'per maius', scilicet che quelle figure le quale (in seconda vice) son state cantate in ertzia minoris multiplicis, scilicet in la subquadrupla come ..., vole che in la ertzia volta siano cantate in essa ertzia spetie del genere multiplice de magiore, scilicet in la quadrupla come...

Et per tale modo quello maius fu dame inteso, el quale maius ad altra non atende che a fare che le figure conducte (in la seconda volta) dal subquadruplo, in la ertzia volta siano condu[c]te dal quadruplo, come in questa resolutione V.S. potrà vedere:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{resoluzion}
\end{align*}\]

4. In quanto a quello che V.S. domanda circa el canon supra la particula 'et in Spiritum' signato, el quale dice ut hic: 'in primo signo anfractus intensi superparticularis quarte decimi funt ex ertzia eiusdem generis remissi. In secondo et e converso et quarta superpartientis secundum ordinem numerorum in illam redeundo. Tertio et quarto ut 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 quarte decima del ge[nere] superparticulare, la quale son la sesquiquinta, in la quale consiste el semitonio in la activa musica usitato, vole che siano cantate et prese per la ertzia spetie del medesimo genere superparticulare, scilicet per la sesquiquinta, ma che debia essere remissa, scilicet descendent. 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 ascendente, et questo advene perché in essa

\[\begin{align*}
\text{[1: C]}
\end{align*}\]

6. Circa el canon posito supra el tenore de la particula 'Benedictus', esso tenore è governato 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 terza per diatonicum. El canon comanda che lo enharmonico et el chromatico debiano tacere o vera convertire quelle figure cantabile in pause le quale discrepano dal diatonico. Questo discrepare se intende che quando esso tenore se debia procedere 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 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 piu rasone et impedimenti, ma la sua resolutione sta ut hie:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{[2: O]}
\end{align*}\]

3. Spataro to Del Lago, 20 July 1520

\[\begin{align*}
\text{[3: C]}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{[4: ]}
\end{align*}\]
Basta che in lo enharmonico genere non haiverti cantare el primo suo intervallo, el quale sera de una diesis, et in lo chromatico non haiverti cantare el secondo suo intervallo, el quale se crede essere de magiore semitonio, li quali intervalli non sono exercitati in genere diatonico.  

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 remissa et remissa intensa’; introvo questo genere del tenore, el quale prima tende ad un interso, li quali intervalli non sono exercitati in genere diatonico.  

8. Circa la proportione in tale tenore occurrente, non ci cade poca considerazione, perché son subtilmente conducere. Pure al meglio che t'potrò con brevità circa esse alcuna cosa explicaro.  

...
The Letters

predice septime parte de la predicta pausa minima giunete con la integra minima et 2/3 predicte, se reintegra el valore de due pause de minima de la tertia comparatione cosi signata: \(\text{1/2}\).

11. Circa la sexta et ultima comparatione in esso tenore locata ut hic signata: \(\text{2/2}\), tale proportione se pò declarare per multi modi, de li quali el piu breve a me pare che sia considerare che tanta virtù harano le tre longe perfecte contenute da le maxime vacue dapò la proportione \(\text{2/3}\) posite quanto harano septe longe perfecte da la precedent proportione cosi signata: \(\text{2/5}\) guidate. Di sopra è stato dicto che la pausa de longa perfecta da questa comparatione \(\text{2/4}\) governata solo ha el valore de due septime parte de una minima de le figure o note de questa comparatione, scilicet \(\text{1/4}\). Adonca se tre aquisitarano el valore de septe de questa proportione, scilicet \(\text{1/4}\), resterà che el maxime vacue dapò questa proportione \(\text{2/3}\) posite (perché hano el valore de tre longe perfecte) ciascuna valerà 14 septime parte de una minima de questa proportione, scilicet \(\text{1/6}\), le quale 14 septime parte faranone due minime de la predicta comparatione, scilicet \(\text{1/6}\). Pertanto tanto valerà una de le predicte maxime vacue quanto vale una de le semibreve governate da questa proportione, scilicet \(\text{1/6}\).

Il. Et questo hasti in quanto a queste vostre petizione, circa la quale piu 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, perche per multi modi facili et clari inseme parlando, tale difficiltà se possono demonstrare. Pertanto se integremente V.S. non restarà da me satisfacto, quella me harà per excusato per multe rasone, et prima perche (ut dixi) son non in bona sanità. Pure quella acceptarà la optima mi[a] voluntà et non l'opera, la quale per essere incult[a] et con grossi vocaboli pronuntiata sarà da V.[S.] excusata, et (ut dixi) guardando al core mio serà con lieta fronte acceptata.

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 \(\text{b}^\flat\), 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 \(\text{b}^\uparrow\). ‘Per maus’ 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:
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:

- **Enharmonica resolutio**

- **Chromatica resolutio**

- **Diatonica positio**

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, \(\phi\), 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 \(\frac{2}{3}\) equal six semibreves of the first sign. The three long rests after \(\frac{2}{3}\) equal three semibreves. Therefore these nine long rests equal 36 semibreve rests under \(\phi\).

9. Of the three following black maximas, each one has the value of two semibreves under \(\phi\). After the proportion \(\frac{6}{5}\) 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 \(\frac{27}{2}\) you figure out the value of the perfect long rest by counting minims. If twenty-one minims under \(\frac{27}{2}\) have the value of two minims under \(\frac{1}{3}\), how many minims under \(\frac{27}{2}\) are equivalent to the eighteen minims of the perfect long rest under \(\frac{27}{2}\)? You multiply 18 by 2 and divide by 21. Therefore the rest is worth \(\frac{18}{21}\) minims of the preceding proportion.

10. Under the fifth proportion, \(\frac{21}{10}\), six minims are equivalent to one under \(\frac{1}{3}\). The perfect long rest of eighteen minims is equivalent to three minims under the previous proportion. These three minims have the value of \(\frac{21}{10}\) of a minim under the third proportion, which, added to the rest of \(\frac{21}{10}\) minims, result in the value of two minim rests under \(\frac{21}{10}\).

11. Under the last proportion, \(\frac{7}{6}\), there are various ways to calculate the value. The easiest is to consider that the three perfect longs comprised in the black maximas after \(\frac{7}{6}\) are equal to seven perfect longs under \(\frac{6}{5}\). Since the latter were worth \(\frac{6}{5}\) of a minim, each black maxima under \(\frac{7}{6}\) will be worth \(\frac{6}{5}\) of a minim under \(\frac{7}{6}\), 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, the original version of which, to judge from the

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\(^2\) '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 (Aarhus 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 voti bene' ('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'Arte is. ove delle imperfezioni della moderna musi- ca (Venice, 1601), p. 45. Spataro's inganno is not based on solmization syllables: he achieves it by virtue of a canonical 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'. Ramis sets out by defining canon as 'regula voluntatem componentis sub quadam ambiguitate obscure et in enigmate

\[ \text{you love me}\] '. He gives two further melodies, one a keyboard version with the text of Fogliano's quodlibet, another a villotta that includes the words 'O tradictora facts fea nut'. An anonymous dance setting in Basle, Offentliche Bibliothek der Universitat, MS F. x. 17-20, no. 10, derives from the tune of the keyboard version cited by Jeppesen, and an anonymous frottola in Sambonettus' Canzoni Saneti Strambotini et Frottolo, libro primo (RISM 1517), fo. 157, sets the text 'Tradictora me al tradictro' ('Traitors, 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: 'Traditora, il tuo gran pianto / non restaura el mio ardore' ('Treach'rous woman, all thy tears / Win thee not my love again'). 'La tradictora' also appealed to lutenists; see Howard Mayer Brown, Instrumental Music Printed before 1600: A Bibliography (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 1550, 1553, 1560, 1569, 1571, 1575, 1585, 1589, 1592, None of the melodies matches the cantus firmus of Spataro's mass.


Spataro to Del Lago, 20 July 1320

\[ \text{3. Spataro to Del Lago, 20 July 1320}\]

insinuata'. As an example he quotes Busnois's canon: 'ubi aibi \( \omega \) et ubi \( \omega \) 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 [\( \varepsilon \)crepta, ibi assis et \( \varepsilon \) contra'. Thesis stands for descending, assis for ascending melody; assis is a variant for assint, and scestrum 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 as much as it appeared it had to be lowered).

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 tradictora' makes sense.9 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 Bacchus and 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. 193-282, esp. the section on 'The Term "Canon" in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Music Theory', pp. 205-14 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 103-5.

8 ... canon doctet cantere per contrarium, ineptientes a fine in principio finiunt, ut fecit Busnois'.

9 Ramis erroneously interchanged \( \omega \) and \( \varepsilon \) (Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 93). In Busnois's mass the motto appears in the correct order, as above; see Monumenta polyphonica italicae et sanctae ecclesiae romanorum, ser. 1, vol. i, fasc. 2, ed. Laurence Veninger (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 Bacchus and the Andrians: Origin and History of the Canon per tonos'.
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. 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 deathbed. 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 pena' for the youngest Bentivoglio, Hermes, who bore a spear in his coat of arms; he had also dedicated his first printed work, the *Honesta definicio* of 1493, 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 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 pretense 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 *domina traditrica* of having cheated him of the reward for his cure; barring 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 celebrated their first triumph in Boccaccio's *Decameron*; they reappear in the *novelle* of Matteo Bandello (1480–c.1516), imitator of Boccaccio; and they find a double climax in Machiavelli'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

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11 Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, _Le Porretane_, ed. Giovanni Gambarin (Bari, 1914), *novella* XLIII, pp. 237–95. (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. 415–18. This *novella* did not appear in the original edn. The editor published it from an autograph manuscript in the Vatican Library (Cod. Var. Urbini. 1201). It was written for and dedicated to Francesco Gonzaga, the renowned Marquess of Mantua, with the title _Astonia_ and dated 21 July 1493.

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.
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 duet and to Spataro’s letter to Aaron about it. 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 submultiplicem’. 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 sesquisiquintadecima’ (I6: 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 superpartient genus, 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). 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’, Spataro directs the tenor to be sung in the three genera, enharmonic, chromatic, and diatonic. ‘If you 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.’ 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 B—B ) 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. 1.
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. 1.
16 See Ch. 1 for an explanation of this monochord, 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 alia 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—B produces a major semitone between mi and fa, a process, exceptional in medieval theory, that is called permutation; it is discussed in no. 71.

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—B are ‘unsingable’; each note may be sung separately. The first interval of the diatonic melody, A—B, coincides with the first interval of the chromatic tetrachord, but the note C of the diatonic melody converts to B. It may be sung when it follows E, but the next interval, C—B, in the diatonic melody, produces B—B 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, 2112, and 5:7 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 Gaffurio’s Practica musicæ 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.
Venerabilis ac musicus peritissimo domino Petro Aron florentino maiori honorando. Imolé in cæsa del Reverendo prevosto de la Volpe.

Venerabilis vir et maior honorande, salutem.

etiam non ho de altri che de li mei, perche pochi ne trovo che siano che a V.E. per li tempi passati non sia a quella da me stato mandato, comodi al nostro choro per causa de l'organo, el quale alto.

questi son giurni de ricordarsi del tempo passato, al manco a me che son potria havere tempo da notare. Si che ve conforto fare come poteti, perche più che dal principio usque in ternario de le breve. Se le altre sua parte, scilicet tenore, contra alto, et basso, non observano tale numero, per questo io non lo imputarei errore a che non observano tale numero ternario integro per dare 

Juschino, perche lui [h]a agiuncto (in de esso canto. 3 Ma basta che el fundamento, el quale me pare esso suprano,

Commentary is confined to the mode. The commentary is confined to the prima pars of the motet, written under Do, the perfect minor mode. The seconda pars, for the larger half, is written in tempus imperfectum dominium.

5 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 forges where the otherwise more liberal Aaron censors; 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. 5; and Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius—Evolution and Origins of a Concept', pp. 481 and 72. 'Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 11) and for Josquin in particular ('ho trovato Josquen [sic] desposto opinio de li compositori del tempo nostro'; see Trattato di musica, fo. 64). 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:

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.

Alhora la seconda breve seria imperfetta, perche 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 el quale al secondo breve habia in sé el valore perfecto, a lui sera più licio poner el punto dapre tale breve che una semibreve in forma cantabile, perche se lui li ponera la semibreve, el sequitarà che tale seconda breve predica sera perfecta, et che la seconda sequente semibreve [sera] alterata ut hic: 

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.)
essendo così notato: \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) solo sequitano quattro posizione, scilicet la prima breve, el puncto, la semibreve sequente, et l'altra breve, et in questo modo seriano cinque considerazione, scilicet la breve prima, la semibreve sequente, el puncto de divisione, la semibreve sequente, et la seconda breve, ut hic: \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\). Per queste demonstratione appare che el puncto posito dapo la breve | nel vostro exemplo non harà quella consideratone che saria se fusse in forma de semibreve. Imperò che \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) tale 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 perfezione, la quale perfezione (per el precepto regulare) li seria tolta, o vero levata, [da] la semibreve sequente,\(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) per la quale cosa advene che numerando le semibreve a tre, se fa differentia da numerare queste figure \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) a queste \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\). Perché numerando queste \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\), a la breve se dice due, et a la sequente semibreve se dice una, che insieme giunete fano tre. Ma numerando questo passo \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) a la breve non se dire du et al puncto una, ma se coglie essa breve et puncto insieme dicendo tre, come se fusse una breve, la quale (senza alcuno accidentale signo o puncto) per se fusse integra et perfecta, ut hic \(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\). Pertanto, esso puncto è dicto de perfezione, perché demonstra che tal 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 imperfecte comando.\(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) come etiam da V.E. è stato inteso.

4. In lo secondo exemplo ut hic posito:

\(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) When Aaron wrote his \textit{Tessarion de la musica} (Venice, 1523), he incorporated several passages from Spataro's letter in ch. 39 of Book I, 'Della cognitione, et natura del puncto.' The passage marked with lower half-brackets appears as: 'tal punto mai non... 

\(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) Cf. ibid., fo. Dz: 'ché se tal punto fusse inteso essere una semibreve, come qui: la breve restaria perfetta: et la seconda semibreve non sarebbe alterata come si dimosterà nel sequente cap, perché resteria in tal processo et figura ... 

\(\text{\textcopyright{\textsuperscript{109}}}\) Cf. ibid., fo. Dz: 'che se tal punto fusse inteso essere una semibreve, come qui: la breve restaria perfetta: et la seconda semibreve non sarebbe alterata come si faccia col punto.'
The Letters

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. 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', 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 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 grace to the ending; it is sufficient that the fundamental part, the soprano, fits it. 

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 or or and that breves are perfect when they are not preceded or followed by an isolated breve, 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 , but this would give a divided note and require you to write five elements instead of four. In your example, the dot does not stand in place of a breve but is a sign that the breve preceding the dot is perfect, which perfection (according to the rule) would be removed by the succeeding semibreve. You count differently from . With you count 2 for the breve and 1 for the semibreve, which equals 3. But with you don't count 2 for the breve and 1 for the dot, but give 3 to the breve, as if it were perfect per se. Therefore this dot is called one of perfection because it shows that the breve preserves its perfection; without the dot the breve would be imperfected by the following semibreve, as the rule of imperfection demands.

4. In your second example:

If the dot were a breve, the breve would remain perfect and the second semibreve would not be altered because it would appear thus:

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. Since the second semibreve is altered, following the common rule regarding two breves 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 with a rest, it has a different effect from replacing it with a dot, for a rest...
The Letters

has temporal value, 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. 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. 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.

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].'

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. 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. xxxv, datable 1527 or earlier since the manuscript is described in Spataro’s will of 1527, are by Spataro, than those in MS A. xxxv, which must have been copied after 1533. This is because the pitch of the organ was changed between the copying of these 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 A♭. The alterations were carried out in 1533.

B.J.B.


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 Kirch, Die Quellen der meisterwerke des Magnificat- und Te Deum-Vertonung bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts (Tutzing, 1966), pp. 41 ff.

12 See Tirro, Renaissance Musical Sources, p. 159.

13 Ibid., pp. 16–17.

14 Ibid., pp. 51–2.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [February 1523]

Venerabilis vir et decus musicorum, salutem.

1. Ad di 31 Januarii proximo passato, ho receputo una de V.E. de di 15 del predico signata, per la quale certamente a me è parso che a me sia scripto da uno estraneo et non da uno amico. Et questo nasce da tanti respecti et laude le quale xua V.E. in tale vostra a me missa. A me (certamente) piu presto tali termini pareno da essere usatiti tra li estranei che tra li amici et conferatati in quello vinculo de amicitia in lo quale et io siamo (per mera virtu, et antiquo amore) ligati. ma io non voria tante laude, perche (come qualche particula de questa harmonica stata concessa, io (per questo) non me movo sempre inanti a li ochii de lo intellecto mio tengo el vera specula de la mia ignorantia et poco sapere, el quale specula fa che (per le laude de da altri a me date) io non me levo in superbia, et che io non me existimo io scio bene che nullo son intra li docti et che nulla sempre quello el quale cercaa imparare, sempre studio et di continua sto in lo musico exercitio. Et (solo per imparare) multo me piace vedere le altrui opinione, per la quale cosa a me havere notitia de queste vostre occurrentie et litigii virtuosi, circa li quali (essendo io da che ne senta la mera contento a la opinione et mia sententia, ma da poi pigliareti quello che ve pareri esse el meglio, perché scio che V.E. el saperfa fare come quello che non manca de mera doctrina et intelligenta.

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 spatti in lo signo del modo minore perfecto, ut hic: \[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \] tale come pò imperficiare la breve nel tempo perfecto inanti a due pause de semibreve equamente posite ut hic: \[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \] A la quale cosa (respondendo) aduco el regulare et usatito precepto de la perfectione, el quale dice ut hic, scilicet: Brevis ante brevem, vel ante pausam brevis, in tempore perfecto; semibrevis ante semibreve, vel ante pausam semibrevis in prolacione perfecta; similiter longa ante longam, vel ante pausam longam in modo minore perfecto non debent imperfecti; per la quale regulare considerazione appare che la breve in tempore perfecto non debe esse imperfecta inanti a la sua pausa, ut hic: \[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \] Et similmente la semibreve inanti a la sua pausa in la prolacione perfecta non debe imperficiare, ut hic: \[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \] Et etiam per tale sententia appare che la breve del tempo perfecto potrà imperficiare inanti a due pause de semibreve equamente posite ut hic: \[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \] Et etiam la semibreve de la prolacione perfecta potrà imperficiare inanti a due pause de minima (similmente) equamente giuncte ut hic: \[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \] 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. Similmente acaderà de queste due pause de minima, scilicet una, 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 sequessasse tre semibreve, de le quale le prime due fussono ligate, o vero non ligate, ma esse prime due in una sola linea o spatio posite, ut hic:

\[ \text{\texttt{Q2}} \rightarrow \square \]

Imperò che cosi come ciascuna de le predicte tre breve pò imperficiare a parte ante, cosi dico che (similmente) la breve del tempo perfecto posita
inanti a queste pause \( \equiv \) potrà imperficere a parte ante, et similemente acaderà de la semibreve inanti a queste pause posita \( \equiv \) in la prolatione perfecta. Et questo acaderà perché dapò se non sequita sola pausa a se simile in virtù o valore, né etiam in nome. Per la quale cosa V.E. potrà claramente comprendere che intra queste pause \( \equiv \) et la breve plena ut hic: \( \equiv \) non è poca distantia. Imperó che questa breve plena \( \equiv \) (in questa considerazione per proprio nome) è chiamata breve imperfecta, et queste due pause \( \equiv \) non se chiamano pausa de breve imperfecta, pertanto non se potrà dire che la breve vacua posita a le predictive due pause ut hic: \( \equiv \) sia inanti a la sua simile, perché intra la breve predicta et le predictive pause non cade univocatione né etiam equivocatione,\(^4\) et per consequente tale breve (per tale modo posita) \( \equiv \) potrà imperficere a parte ante, la quale 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: \( \equiv \). Imperó che così come in tale segno et altri simili (in nota o figura cantabile) se dà longa perfecta et longa imperfecta, ut hic: \( \equiv \), etiam se dà pausa sola de longa perfecta et pausa sola de longa imperfecta, ut hic: \( \equiv \).

4. Similmente dico che così come in tale signo una longa vacua posita inanti ad una longa imperfecta non debe imperficere, ut hic: \( \equiv \), così etiam la longa vacua posita inanti a la pausa de la predetta longa imperfecta non lice essere facta imperfecta. Et questo è osservato da ciascuno perito, così antico come moderno. Imperó 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 siaono simile in equivocatione et non sempre in univocatione, o vogliam dire che basta che siaono 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: \( \equiv \) et pausa de longa imperfecta, ut hic: \( \equiv \) le quale pausa (senza contrarietá) son usitate nel signo del modo minore perfecto, pertanto (ratione predicta) dico che se la longa vacua será 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 duplice pause, scilicet pausa sola de tempo perfecto, et

\(^4\) On these terms, see the Notes on Problematical Terms.

5. Spaturo to Aaron, [Feb. 1323]

paua sola de tempo imperfecto, le quale (inter se) havesseno forma diversa. Imperó che alhora el non serba 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: \( \equiv \) similemente acaderà che essa breve vacua non serba 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 conformité integra, perché così come la longa ut hic posita: \( \equiv \) non debe essere perfecta 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 simile in nome, seria così-perfecta come se la fosse posita inanti a la pausa a se non dissimile in nome et quantità. Similmente, 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: \( \equiv \) 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 convenienzia, perché così come nel tempo perfecto la breve vacua ut hic posite: \( \equiv \) son posite per el valore de uno tempo imperfecto, et così come queste: \( \equiv \) 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: \( \equiv \) 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 particolare. Et così come la breve vacua del tempo perfecto pò imperficere inanti a queste pause \( \equiv \) et la semibreve in la perfecta prolatione pò etiam imperficere inanti a queste \( \equiv \), così etiam la longa vacua (nel modo minore perfecto) potria imperficere inanti a due pause de breve parimente posite, ut hic: \( \equiv \). Adonca\(^4\) non bisogna volere asimilaré la posizione de queste pause \( \equiv \) 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 \( \equiv \) la breve imperfecta posita nel signo del tempo perfecto è demonstrata per le sue parte, ma per

\(^4\) MS: Andoca.
imperfecto non se trovà né è stata inventa per se, scilicet con forma differente da la perfecta, excepto se nui non volessemo considerare che la pausa occupante due tertia 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 sería de aducere in luce per essere in tutto remota da l'uso et da la exercitatione.

7. V. E. etiam dice che questi vostri amici concludono che così come la breve vacua inanti a la breve plena (la quale è diminuita del suo tertio) resta sempre perfetta in tempore perfecto, ut hic: O 0 0 0 0, che similmente dicono advenire de la longa vacua del modo minore perfetto posita inanti a la pausa de la longa diminuita del suo tertio, ut hic: E 0 0 0 0. Circa questo (come di sopra è stato concluso) dico che dicono la verità, perché ut dixi, così come questa breve vacua O 0 0 0 0 sarà brevis ante brevem, così tale longa sarà longa ante longam. Et dove V. E. dice che pure teneti la pugna che la pausa de due tempi non è simile a la figura longa plena, etc., Messer Pietro mio honoringo (con suportatione), dico che a me pare che errati non poco, perché certamente ogni demonstratione è contra V. E.5

Imperò che se ne li canti de modo minore imperfecto la pausa occupante due tempi è chiamata pausa de longa imperfecta, tale pausa (in li canti del modo minore perfetto) sarà etiam dicta pausa de longa imperfecta. E perché in lo predico modo minore perfetto la longa imperfecta è compresa in dui modi, scilicet vacua con la abstractione de la sua parte tertia, ut hic: O 0 0 0 0 etiam per essere plena, ut hic: O 0 0 0 0, pertanto dico che tale predica pausa, occupante dui tempi, non sarà dissimile a la predica longa plena, ma sarà la sua pausa propria. E così come essa longa plena è dicta longa imperfecta, così tale pausa occupante dui tempi sarà dicta la propria pausa de tale longa imperfecta. Ma perché el non se dà

5 M5: imperfecto. Two dots have been placed under 'im', indicating cancellation.

5 Perfecto etiam temporis pausae brevium denotatur alter secundum nos, alter 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 demonstravit; si autem tantum unus, unicam partem moralitasse, qua unam minorem ostendit (Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 86). Ramis attributes the opinion to 'magister Franciscus', that is, Franco of Cologne. See his Ars canis mensurabilis, ed. Gilbert Reaney and André Gilles (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 18; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1974), p. 151: 'semibrevis maior duas partes consimili rectae brevis'. The distinction between the two tests is made because Franco recognizes a major and a minor semibreve.

5 Apparently, Spataro succeeded in convincing Aaron, for in the Toccata (Book I, ch. 20) Aaron writes: 'la lunga del modo minor perfetto appresso la pausa del tre tempi, o due, sempre sarà perfetta, benché alcuni a questo siano contrarii: ciò che essa lunga nanzi la pausa delle due tempi nel modo minor perfetto antedetto, non sempre sia perfetta, per molte cause, quali (per non essere prolisso) lascieremo' (fo. C4').
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 spazi (nel modo minore perfetto posita) non sarà equi, opera a la longa imperfecta o vero plena, a quale sola nota cantabile tale pausa sarà simile?

8. Da poi sequendo dicet che ogni volta che la pausa longa appare diminuta de uno tempo, ut hic: \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] che alhora tale pausa demonstra che la longa vacua a sé anteposita resta ancora lei diminuta del suo tertio, come farà questa breve \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] quale resta perfecta, ma in questo \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] sarà imperfecta. Messer Petro mio honorando, V.E. (in tale loco) fa una comparatione et similitudine non similitudinaria, perché vui fai 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 comprende per questi signi differenti, scilicet O C. Ma nel modo minore perfecto (ut dixi) non acaderà per tale modo, perché se dano due pause de | longa, scilicet la perfecta et la imperfecta, inter se dissimile de forma apparente, per la quale dissimitudine et varietà de forma (senza altro signo apparente) tale pause son comprese. Imperò che la pausa de la longa imperfecta, la quale sola occupa dui spazi, sarà comune, scilicet che pò stare nel signo del modo minore perfecto, et etiam nel signo del modo minore imperfecto, senza chiarienza de altro signo, perché la sua forma (la quale è de dui tempi) asai claro dimostra la sua imperfectone. 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 compresa, scilicet se sarà 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 \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] in li canti del modo minore perfecto (perché non occupa più de dui spazi) sta per signo de imperfectone, a questo respondet 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 signa de imperfectone. Et questo acaderà perché tale pausa è famulata o vero comune al signo del modo minore perfecto et etiam al signo de modo minore imperfecto, et quello che a multi convene se attribuisse essere de quello al quale lui se acosta. Se tale pausa adonca sarà 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.

6. See the Notes on Problematical Terms s.v. ‘accidentale’.

7. ‘Cum igitur aliud signum non reperiretur in contrarium, natura sua canendus est cantus, scilicet per binarium numerum. . . . Ipse enim inscius doctrinae artem praeponens naturae, cuius contrarium manifestum est, qua 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. The Letters

5. Spataro to Aaron, [Feb. 1323]

come sta lo accidente nel supecto, el quale accidente pò essere posito et remosso da esso supecto senza corruptione del supecto.7 Pertanto, se tale pausa serà data o ablata dal supecto de la perfectione, mai tale pausa non potrà removere tale perfectione dal supecto perfecto. Similmente, se tale pausa serà posita ne li canti del modo minore imperfecto, dico che tale pausa non sarà 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 spazi, el non se diria che tale concerto 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 se non se trova signo de perfectione, et per tale modo la pausa de dui spazi (circa el signo de imperfectione) non opera. Ma la natura del canto è quella la quale opera, perché, come dice el mio preceptor: Dove non cade signo alcuno accidentale, scilicet de perfectione, el canto allhora 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 \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] non pò essere signo de modo minore imperfecto, sia posito o vero dato uno concerto nel quale (senza apparentia de alcuno de questi signi, scilicet \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] ) habia nel principio et etiam nel medio la predicta pausa occupante dui spazi, ut hic:

\[ \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \text{C}\text{C} \]

In tale canto (per le longe plene et le breve divide) 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 governa, ma è governata, 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: \[ \text{C}\text{C} \] li quali dicono che così come tale breve (alcuna volta) è perfecta et alcuna volta non, che etiam la longa

\[ \text{C}\text{C} \]

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 praeponens naturae, cuius contrarium manifestum est, qua 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.

246

247
vacua del modo minore perfecto, ut hic posita: $\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{bre}}$ harà tale condictione, ma che V.E. (circa questo) dice non essere bona resoluzione, perché la breve predicta respecto a queste pause $\text{e}$ non observa tale proprietet et natura quale cade intra la longa predicta et questa sola pausa $\frac{\text{bre}}{\text{dur}}$ perché tale pausa de longa è una sola, et queste $\text{e}$ son due pause. Imperò che questa $\frac{\text{bre}}{\text{dur}}$ è chiamata pausa o vero signo de longa, et queste $\text{e}$ non così, ma son due pause de semibreve, etc. Circa questo dico che V.E. dice benissime et circa questo più ultra non dò perché di sopra al proposito è stato dicto asai.

11. Ho receputo un’altro breve scripto de V.E. de di 29 januarii signato per il quale V.E. me recorda le olive et salsizioni. De olive non bisogna parlare, come (per un’altra mia a V.E. missa con tre para de salsizioni) potreti intendere, ma io piglio male voluntiera tale cure, perche io ho affano in trovare el portatore che non ho a trovare la roba. Pertanto, questo dico che V.E. dice benissime et circa questo longa, et parler, come (per un’altra mia a V.E. missa con tre para de potreti intendere, ma io piglio male voluntiera tale cure, perche io ho quando qualche cosa ve acade, voria che V.E. mandasse el portatore, 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, acio che non acada tru nui come advene tra Franchino et io, el quale haveva de l’asino et de lo ingrato, et pigliava el mio scriveri in mala parte, el quale mio scrive[re] non era se non per darli lume, como la carità ce amestra. 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 conumertarmi nel numero de li soi servitori. Vale Petre mi, et ut soles me ana 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.

2. It seems that you are asking whether a long in $Oz$ can become imperfect if placed before a rest covering two spaces ($\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{bre}}$), just as a breve in $O$ or $\varnothing$ can be imperfect if put before two semibreve rests placed alike as here: $\frac{\text{bre}}{\text{dur}}$. I reply with the general rule of perfection, that is, a breve before a breve or a rest of a breve in perfect time cannot be imperfected; neither can a semibreve in perfect prolation in the same circumstances, nor can a long before a long or its rest in the perfect minor mode. From this rule it follows that a breve in perfect time before a rest of a breve cannot be imperfected, nor can a semibreve before a semibreve rest. But a breve in perfect time before two semibreve rests can be imperfected, as can a semibreve in perfect prolation before two minim rests. Even though the two rests equal an imperfect breve or semibreve, they are not the proper rest for those notes, and the same with two minim rests, which are not equivalent to a semibreve rest.

3. If three semibreves follow a breve in $O$ or $\varnothing$, 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 $\text{e}$ 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' for the same holds for a void breve. Therefore a breve thus $\frac{\text{bre}}{\text{dur}}$ can be imperfected a parte ante, but not a long thus $\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{bre}}$ 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 $\varnothing$ 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 $Oz$ 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 $\frac{\text{bre}}{\text{dur}}$ would be equivalent to $\text{e}$ for an imperfect breve and $\text{e}$ for an imperfect semibreve.
Likewise, a long could become imperfect before such a rest. Thus there is no similarity between \( \text{two} \) and \( \text{three} \).

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 \( \text{C} \), 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 \( \text{C} \). 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 \( \text{C} \) remains perfect before a blackened breve, and that a long in \( \text{C} \) 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.\(^5\) 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?\(^7\)

8. Then you say that just as a long rest of only two spaces in \( \text{O} \) shows that a preceding long also loses a third of its value, so a breve in \( \text{O} \) preceding a breve rest will remain perfect, but in \( \text{C} \) it will be imperfect. Here you compare what is variable with what is invariable. A breve rest in \( \text{O} \) and a breve rest in \( \text{C} \) look the same; their perfection or imperfection is shown by the signs \( \text{O} \) and \( \text{C} \). 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 \( \text{O} \) 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 perfect minor mode, the presence of a rest of two spaces does not remove 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.

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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{The blackened longs and the breves separated by a dot show that it is in the perfect minor mode and not in the imperfect mode because of the imperfect long rests.}
\end{align*}
\]

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 \( \text{O} \) 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 (J76). Fos. 204r–204v
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 April 1523 (autograph)


204v Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.
1. A li giorni passati io scrisse a V.E. havere recepito una vostra de di ultimo februarii signata, et che per essere da malte cause impedito non poteva respondere a li quesiti vostri, per la quale cosa al presente abstractione de la sua parte tertia. Questa imperfectione adonca (infalibilmente) assignano altra rasone. Questa similitudine, et etiam domandati per quale causa da li predicti 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 integritate de la perfectione, come appare intra le voce unisone et le equisone, le quale son existimate da li compostitori essere de integerima perfectione decorate. Ma certamente che da me è considerato altramente circa questo. Imperò che io considero se (ut dictum) l'e de necessitè che el si trova la figura perfecta realiter et senza exceptione, dico che el serà de bisogno che tale demonstrazione de infalibilité de perfectione apparra in modo che da po la nota constituta perfecta s[e]quita un'altra nota la quale non possa essere compreshe da essa nota perfecta. Pertanto serà de bisogno che da po essa nota sequita una sua simile, o vero una magiore. Imperò che la simile non pò comprehender ne imperferie la sua simile, et etiam la magiore non potrà essere compreshe da la minore. Pertanto qua bisogna disputare et vedere inanti a quale de le predicte figure tale nota serà più rectamente considerata infalibilmente essere perfecta, scilicet inanti a la sua simile, o vero inanti a la magiore. Se adonca (come è stato dicto di sopra) l'e necessario che la nota infalibilmente 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', et da tale rasone credo che (circa questo) la docta antiquità fusse construeta, perché se la semibreve perfecta et le altre similmente possono havere la clara notitia de la

2 Spataro refers to unisons and octaves; cf. Bartolomeo Ramis, Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 63; 'Octava ... perfectissima vocatur et aequisona, quia aequo videtur sonare cum prima sicur unisons.'

This is one of Spataro's favourite expressions, and we encounter it many times in the Correspondence. The ultimate source is Aristotle, Physic. 1. 4 (193b17–18): 'And it is better to assume a smaller and finite number of principles, as Empedocles does' (The Complete Works of Aristotle, ed. Barnes, i. 121). Spataro's wording, which had great currency in the Middle Ages, probably derives from some medieval commentary.

6. Spataro to Aaron, 8 Apr. 1523

253
infallibile perfectione per essere locate inanti a la sua simile, el seria vano et frustratorio assignarli tale immutabile perfectione inanti a le sue sequente
inanti a la longa et inanti a la maxima. Et etiam el simile 

magior, come la semibreve inanti a la breve, a la longa, et a la maxima. Impero che (senza neccessiti) el non se debe lassare quello 

maxima locata, perche quello che se 

claramente se 

inanti a la magiore, el sequitaria che le figure essentiale (le quale tendeno 

perfectione de la figura perfecta fusse stata ordinata in la figura posita 

propinqua o in la remota et etiam in la remotior.

hariano fine, come de la maxima, la quale (per demonstrarsi perfecta) 

procederia in infinitum. b 

scilicet perfecto et imperfecta, da loro furno assignati certi medii, li quali 

essere comprehesa perfecta inanti a la 

frustratorio comprehendere et assignare tale sua perfectione J 

et el non se debe lassare quello 

maxima locata, perche quello che se 

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propinqua o in la remota et etiam in la remotior.

hariano fine, com...
The Letters

stile lor...per superfluità o per diminutione non observano la ternaria conumeratione, et così de altre figure più minute riducent a le propinque.
6. Haveti etiam inteso essere più licioe constitutede tale infalibile perfectione in la simile inanti a la sua simile locata che non serà se sera posta inanti a la magiore, perché se tale cognizione de clara et nota perfectione se pò havere intra le simile (intra le quale cada maxima propinquità), el seria frustratorio cognoscere tale perfectione in la nota posta inanti a la magiore, el quale ordine è etiam stato observato da li antiqui in la divisione del monochordo: impero che cognoscendo loro che 'l era necessario che inanti o intra o vero dopu due toni occuressere el semitonio, tale | monochordo fu da loro diviso per tetrachordi, o vero per quattro chordie, chiamate diatessaron, et non per pentachordi o vero per cinque chordie, chiamate diapente, el quale spazio 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. Similmente, se tale firma et immutabile perfeczione pò (con quella rasoni medesima) apparere inanti a la sua simile che acederia essendo posta inanti a la magiore, dico che el sera vano se tale perfectione fusse stata constituita inanti a la magiore, perché el seria frustratorio se (senza necesità) el se lassasse la simile (tra le quale non cade eccesso né differentia alcuna) et avincere la dissimile, tra le quale cada maxima distanța 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 Zozanne Batista da Pozzo 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 daretì questa missa et mutetto, 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 prestanțe per la copia de tale missa et mutetto. Et perché tale copia era de uno non troppo amico mio, m'è bisogno haverla per terza persona et notare presto et ocultamente. Pertanto dopo che api no notato, m'è bisogno rendere la copia senza potere vedere se erano corretta, si 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 vostra et mio patrone Monsignore reverendo [Sebastiano Michiel], el quale (perché è amico de le virtù) più che tuti li uomini viventi è da me amato, et altro non bramo che fare cosa lì sia de piacere.
9. Finita che questa quadragesima, io serò con uno frate de Sancto Augustino molto docto per fare riducent l'opera de la sesqualtera in latino. Se io me acordarò con lui, l'opera passerà. 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, si che hora è impedito.
10. Perché da Messer Marco Antonio Cavaznon non ho mai havuto quale pie sifata, et etiam perché non ho via alcuna de scriverti, prego V.E. voglia cercare quale è quello gentilhom homo venetiano, el quale è andato in offito a Bressa, et trovando el nome de quello, prego dati a la sua caxa questa mia derita a Messer Marco Antonio predotto, che forsa faranno migliore via de mandarla a Bressa che non ho me, et de questo asai ve pregò. Et perché io li scrivo se lui havesse più facile modo de mandare le predette 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 procurasti mandarme a Bologna per misso fidaro.
11. Da poi che hebi scripto quanto di sopra se contente, et mentre che io aspectava la certeza se V.E. era andato a Roma o non, a li di 7 del presente hebi una de V.E. de 12 martii signata, per la quale de la littera de Messer Guasparro da le Arme hebi clara notitia, el quale asai me marveglio, perché mai le littere mie (per lui mandate) non hebbono ventura. Horsù sia con Dio. Me renCREASE habiati havuto fatica et starbo, Messer Petro mio honorando; se ho falato per dare la littera mia (derictiva a Baldasera) a Zanetto dareti questa missa et mutetto, et a li altri amici ma voleva che Bal dasera venisse qua, e diceva che Baldasera li haveva dicto el tuto. Pertanto non solo allhora el pregai (ma etiam dapoi io li scrissere) che el pregasse Baldasera che lui voleesse respondere a V.E. o veramente a me, et credo che tanta sia stara la solicitudine del predotto Zozanne 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 piaeneco, me piace. Se ancora non ve satisfano, inculpati el mio poco sapere et (adoperando el vostro subtile ingenio) cercasti de 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 ponerà da parte ogni altra cura et venizia qua, perché sempre ho havuto desiderio vedere questa tanto digna cità, et tanto più volentera veneria per visitare el nostro comune patrone Monsignore

Augustino 702
8 6. Spataro to Aaron, 8 Apr. 1523

On this, see Ch. 4.

6 In 1525 Easter fell on 5 Apr.; as becomes clear in para. 11, Spataro wrote by instalments.
The Letters

reverendo et vedere et abrazar V.E. Ma io son tanto impedito da li sinistri, li quali produce la trista et annosa mia età, che certamente non credo che io potesse arivare vivo a la medietà del desiderato camino.

Pertanto [ad altro atenderemo. Bastame asi 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 alcuo. Sempre ve rengreato de lo officio faceti con sua Signoria et ne le vostre oratione.

12. El tractato de la sesqualtera mandaró come seró resoluto con el frate predicto, circa el quale tractato altro no dico poiché non voleti che dica. Quando V.E. me mandò quelle due canzone francesi, io le portai in palazo, et non trovai Antonio pifarò. Ma io le lassai ad uno cancelero del capitaneo Ramazzotto, chiamato Petro Zoaante, amico de V.E., de Antonio, et mio, et lui me promisse darle al predicato Antonio pifarò, et cosi fece. Da poi io intesi dal predicto cancelero che Antonio ne fece poca existimatione perché non erano notate in clave da sonare, et cosi le rendete credo che io potesse arivare vivo a la capitaneo Ramazzotto, chiamato dica. Quando officio faceti con sua Signoria et ne le vostre oratione.

le littere mie, perche certamente (per la longa nostra amicitia, la quale Antonio, et mio, et lui me promisse darle al predicato Antonio pifarò, et recomandati, et se a Bologna per sua Signoria et per palazo, et non trovai Antonio pifarò. Ma io le lassai ad uno cancelero del presente a la sua zentileza, si 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 rencrese 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 gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letitia, et conforto a me son le vostre littere plene de ogni gaudio, letzia.

Et vedendo che piacevano al predicato petro Zoaante, io ne feci uno presente a la sua zentileza, si che Antonio ha havuto el modo torne copia, se ha voluto. Se altro circa ciò voleti che io facia, dati adviso.

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], 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 • • • • • • • • • .

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: O • •, or following it: O • • •, or if three semibreves form one composite: O • • • •, 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. 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'—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.

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 • • • . 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' and refers to the numerical value of an object. Similarity, then, applies to names, such as a semibreve before a semibreve,
either perfect or imperfect, as thus: $\cdot \cdot \cdot | \cdot \cdot \cdot$ [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: $\cdot \cdot \cdot$ and not $\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot$. In the latter case, the first breve could be imperfected by a preceding semibreve. In the case of $\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot$ the first breve is always perfect, because $\cdot \cdot \cdot$ 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 $\cdot$, as shown in my treatise on the sesquialtera relation. 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. 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 over 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. 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.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 19 September 1523 (autograph)

1. Per due altre mie a V.E. misse quella ha potuto intendere del trattato vostro musico' receputo, et etiam che se quella ne mandara a Bologna, credo se ne spazara alcuno, ponendoli condecente pretio.

2. Hora perché da me è stato dato principio di leggere tale vostro trattato, fa bisogno (come tra li amici acade) di qualche sue circostanze et parte per trattare, et questo non per disputare né etiam per volermi opponere a le clare et mere vostre sententie, ma solo per mia satisfazione ch' etiam molto a me piace quello che dicto haveti nel terzo, quarto, et quinto capitula secondo dove de li inventori de essa musica faceti discurso. Et questa positione de pause: da imperfecta, el quale serve a lo opposito de queste: Impero che dove (nel capitula primo del primo libro) pertractati de magiore imperfecto la maxima

3. Ma da poi, nel capitulo 10, a me pare che V.E. sia stato diminuto, perché (circa il fine de tale capitulo) dicti ut hic, scilicet: nel modo maggiore imperfecto la maxima valera due longe, sei breve, 12 semibreve, et minime 24, ut hic:  \[\text{\(\text{\textcopyright} \)}\] 2 perché (secondo questa vostra conclusione) el pare che in altro modo se non trovi el modo maggiore imperfecto, se non quando la maxima valore due longe perfetta, et questo facilmente potria essere creduto da multi, perch' etiam capitoli precedentii dove trattati del modo magiore, V.E. aduce due varietà de positione de pause: da imperfecta, et da poi solo assignati questa positione de pause:  \[\text{\(\text{\textcopyright} \)}\] per la cognitione del modo maggiore imperfecto, et quae serve a lo opposito de queste:  \[\text{\(\text{\textcopyright} \)}\]. Et da poi non aduceti alcuna positione binaria de pause occupante dui spatii, la quale sia a lo opposito de questa positione ternaria:  \[\text{\(\text{\textcopyright} \)}\], come seriano

1 Tossanello de la musica, published in Venice on 5 July 1523. The second edn. (1529) gives the title Taccuine della musica. We shall use this spelling hereafter.


3 Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

4 Similmente sequitando tale musico trattato, son pervenuto al capitulo 34° del predico primo libro, 4 el quale capitulo è stato3 da me molto bene considerato et più volte let[lo], et maxime dove V.E. dice ut hic, scilicer: Ma nota che tale diminutione ne la terza parte de lo note negre non solo si trova quando la maxima valore tre longe et la longa tre breve, ma ancora me li signi che demonstrano tale figure essere imperfecte come qui: O, nel quale signa la maxima et la longa possano essere divise in tre parte egale, cioè la maxima in 12 semibreve de tempo imperfecto et la longa in sei. Così in questo ancora C, nel quale se pò trovar divisa la maxima in tre parte egale, cioè in minime 24 et longa in 12 minime. Togliendo adunque nel primo signo el terzo a la maxima, resta in semibreve 8 et la longa in 4, et nel secondo diminuta resta la maxima in minime 18 et la longa in minime 8, come qui appare:  \[\text{\(\text{\textcopyright} \)}\] . Primamente circa questo io dubito dove dicti che in questo signo la maxima pò essere divisa in 12 semibreve de tempo imperfecto, perché a me pare che le semibreve di questo signo O siano subiecte al tempo perfetto, 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 prolatazione perfetta. Et pure se sta bene secondo che sta scripto, prego V.E. me facia claro de tale dubitatione.
5. Dubito etiam dove V.E. dice che la maxima et la longa in questo signo 0 possono essere divise in tre eguale parte, et per tale modo el pare che vogliati concludere che quattro semibreve siano la tertia parte de la maxima predica et che due semibreve siano la parte tertia de la predica longa. Questo a me non pare consono, perché el sequitaria che se quattro 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 la quale tale nota resta resoluta et in parte divisa. Pertanto essendo la maxima predica resoluta primamente in due longe imperfecte de dui tempi perfecti, et secundariamente in quattro tempi perfecti, tertia in 12 semibreve perfette, 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 complessa de due breve perfette, o vero de quattro tempi o vero breve perfette, et etiam de 12 semibreve perfette, o vero de 36 minime, et non mai de quattro semibreve perfette tre volte scripte, come (tacite) da vui sei stato concluso. Impero che se per el pleno dato in tale maxima sequita 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 convenne, scilicet lo incompleto, et al tempo (el quale è perfette) seria tanto quello che li convenne, scilicet esso incompleto, perché removendo da la maxima 4 semibreve perfette, quelle quattro breve perfette 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 0 governate non opera circa la diminutione de essa maxima et longa. Ma solo tale pleno non li convene, scilicet breve, le quale son contenute da essa maxima, solo siano imperfecte.

6. 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).

7. Spataro to Aaron, 19 Sept. 1323

opera circa la imperfectione de quelli quattro tempi, o vero breve, le quale da la maxima vacua son contenute primamente perfette.

6. 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).

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. 51, 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.
accidenti, scilicet la parte tertia de ciascuna, octo minime, le quale faciano imperfecte quale essa maxima, essendo vacua, restava aggregata) son stati tolti li naturale binario' prima considerato, restano perfecte in la maxima da poi el pleno de essa maxima ut hie: solamente da le sue parte, scilicet da le breve suo proprio valore et natura binaria, semibreve et octo minime ut hie: afirmata.  

11. In two previous letters I notified you of the receipt of your treatise. 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.

MS: binaire.

11 See the Commentary.
The Letters

3. But towards the end of ch. 10, 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: $\{\text{maxima}\}$, 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 $\{\text{maxima}\}$, 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'.

4. The next point involves ch. 34 of your treatise, 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 $\{\text{maxima}\}$, 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 $\{\text{maxima}\}$ 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: $\begin{array}{cccccccccccc} & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 \\ \end{array}$. I question this because under $\{\text{maxima}\}$ 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'? If this is not what you intended, please explain it.

5. I am further puzzled by your statement that the maxima and long under $\{\text{maxima}\}$ 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 $\{\text{maxima}\}$ does not diminish the maxima and the long but imperfections 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. 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. 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.

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.

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 Magdalen. 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.

10. 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 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 Magdalen. 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.
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. 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. 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.' Ramis transmits this number theory in ch. 8 of the first part of Musica practica.

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.

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 Compendiole of c.1545, could say that those who believe the opposite 'possono essere intimati nel arte di Musica falsatori, et di una minima intelligenza' (Del canto figurato, ch. 15).

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. 41, para. 17.
16 'Et quia omnis cantus de se et naturaliter plus respicit tempus perfectum quam imperfectum, cum illud dicat imperfectionem et istud perfectionem, idem cantus ex natura sua non determinatur ad tempus imperfectum, sed ad perfectum; ex voluntate autem insinuatur proprius modus armonizandi et quod cantus respecicat tempus imperfectum, dimisso perfecto. Et ideo est necessario quod ipse instituens ponat signum innuentes 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; 'In', 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 semplice pratico' 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.' 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.
Venerabilis vir et musicæ amatorum caput, salutem.

1. A li di 27 otobris ho receputo una de V.E. de di 9 del predicto signata, per la quale (per havere comprehsato tuto el contrario di quello che io, con grande paura, aspettava) molto me son alegrant. Imperò che (certamente) de due cose da V.E. io ne aspettava al manco una, scilicet o che circa quella mia de di 19 a V.E. missa [no. 7] io restaria senza resposta, o vero che respondendo, io seria da V.E. accramente rebuffato et represo. Pertanto (vedendo essere reusito tuo to lo opposito) ogni mio timore et suspecto è retornato in gaudio, et a me pare (poi che le mie dubitazione son state benignamente da V.E. acceptate et 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 come acade intra liberi amici et fratelli amatori de virtu, li quali l'uno con l'altro (confabulando) de qualche sua virtuose la mera gentileza, la quale sempre ho trovato regnare in tractato, et questo mio novo tractato in lingua materna, et etiam perche io aspectava dignus procumbens solvere corrigiam' ('There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and lose').

2. Ma da poi io non ho più scripto 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, etiam perche io aspettava

Dal mio predicto preceptore era inteso che ciascuna de le due predette breve plene fusse facta plena per evitare alteratione, la quale alteratione acaderia in ciascuna de le predite breve se non fussono plene. Et da poi accompagnava ciascuna de le predicte breve plene con la sequente longa vacua. Et per tale modo acaderia che la vostra regula data in tale 35 capitula faleria, benche V.E. potria dire che tale ordine seria più facile quando le breve plene fussono plene, la quale cosa non afirmava el mio preceptore. Et diceva che tale longa non doveva[n] essere plene, perche in questo loco la nota magiore non deve servire a la minore, si che la longa non se deve fare plena per obedire a la breve, ma si bene et e contra, scilicet che le breve se fano plene per unirsi con la longa. Et questo da V.E. è affirmedo dove nel proprio loco diceti ut hic, scilicet: Adunque è di bisogno che tale breve siano conumerate a le longe o vero per se sole in quantità senaria. Et etiam el
predicto mio preceptore diceva che se tale longa vacua fusse facta plena, che tale pleno seria frustratorio et senza necessitati producto, perché se la breve plena anteposta sta come una breve simplice vacua, sicilicet non alterata, el sequitarì che la longa sequente vacua, la quale è receptaculo de tale breve plena intesa vacua, deve essere etiam vacua. Imperò che el vacuo se debbe congiungere con el vacuo secondo la tale breve plena intesa vacua, debe essere etiam vacua. Imperò che el breve plena anteposta sta come una breve simplice vacua, sicilicet non siano intese come vacue, alhora essa breve, circa el modo, debe etiam siano plene et che (secondo la sua essentiale secondo la apparentia, perche 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. Pertanto appare etiam che congiungendo ciascuna de le predicte breve plene con la longa plena, el non seria trovare el complemento vacuo. Pertanto appare etiam che congiungendo secondo esempi di sopra signato con el circulo complecto acaderano etiam le predicte consideratione, et etiam la longa giungere plenum ad plenum, ma seria giungere vacuo ad plenum. Ma nel servitio de la breve plena. Et tanto la longa postposta a la breve plena fusse plena (ultra li inconvenienti di lo loco son due perfectione, scilicet el modo minore et el tempo. Pertanto, se la longa postposta a la breve plena fusse plena (ultra li inconvenienti di sopra demonstrati), etiam sequitaria che (non volendo forsà el compositore) quelle due breve perfecte, de le quale essa longa vacua è receptaculo, mediante el pleno seriano imperfecte, perché essendo tale longa faca imperfecta, el seu modo anterta de la breve plena a sè anteposita, el sequitaria che el pleno dato ad essa longa tenderia ad imperficer le due breve predicte da la longa predetta contenute, et per tale modo sequitaria che el vacuo et perfecto tempo se congiungeria con due pleni et imperfecte 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 fatto ancora io in certo tenore de una mia missa dicta 'Tue voluntatis', et etiam ho trovato certi auctori da li quali el predetto conducere de longa con le vacue è stato usitato, et maxime da Rosino da Ferri in uno tenore de uno suo 'Venire Sancte Spiritus' a cinque voce facto. Pertanto, Messer Pe[tt]ro mio honorando, a me pare che circa tale figure plene V.E. doveva parlarie 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 assai bastava ponere uno puncto tra la

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 suspicilura (see Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 86).

9 The motet 'Difficiles allus delectat pangerere 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 suspicilura; 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 suspicilura.
imperfecta de la sequente semibreve vacua. Pertanto tale plena in tale breve dato più non potrà tendere ad imperficerre, ma atenderà al sesqualterare, per la quale cosa advenirà che tale breve plena insieme con la sequente semibreve coniuncta non producerà uno tempo perfetto, 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, sicilicet:

et altra declarazione non aduco perché scio bene che circa tale positione saperetì elegere el vera dal falso, benche circa questa particula V.E. se li signi perfecti simplici, et non quando tra le figure de tali signi' occurreno 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 augmento del numero perfetto. A me questo dicto (sicilicet augmento) non pare bene dicto, perché ogni augmento excede la integrità de la cosa augmentata. Però a me pare che meglio seria stato dire complemento, o vero suplemento. Ma questo poco importa al practico, el quale poco atende alla significazione de li vocabuli. Potria essere stato culpa de lo impressore, perche ho compreheso particule del vostro tractato predicto che a perficere da molest, pigliatele per non dicte, et se ancora per nonce havere affaticati in scrivere, perche io vi voglio vivo, contento, et sano, et non non che quella con deligentia (ut dixi) quella si digni vedere quello tractato mio predicto et del suo parere darmi adviso morto. Ancora io pigliaro qualche riposo. Altro non voglio da V.E. se sicuramente el possa ponere in publico, el quale tractato credo che V.E. l’havera, et a Messer 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

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.' You have completely clarified my doubts regarding your treatise. 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; 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 braves accompanying blackened longs; these braves 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. I remember having seen two examples in the ‘Missa Requiem eternam’ of my teacher where a blackened breve is joined with a white long. Ramis blackened the breve to prevent its alteration. 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 braves 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. 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 braves 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 braves 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 7. 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: O₂ o ○ □ 0 0 0 0, and that your treatise is 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
The Letters

all the black semibreves accompanying these breves serve only to fill out the tempus and have the same value as if they were white. In this connection I recall a very difficult motet by Tinctoris that shows a black breve followed by a black semibreve, thus: ♭ ♭ ♭ ♭ ♭ ♭ ♭ ♭. 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.
poco existimano havere intellegentia 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 occurreno certe negra per de una sua quarta parte, quale semibreve con uno puncto, o voi dire, una semibreve et una minima.\(^6\) Certamente, Messer Petro mio, io non scio tanto\(^7\) pensare che io me arecorda havere mai trovato tale breve plena posita per la valuta di una semibreve con el puncto, etc., et quanto più cerco per farmi conforme al vostro dicto (el quale credo non sia senza fundamentuo), 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 \(\circ\) , havia natura de sesquiteria, la quale sesquiteria credo che mai non sia stata trovata (per tale modo signata) da auctore alcuno autentico, né antico né moderno. Imperò che se la sesquiteria sarà ut hic data: C \(\circ\) \(\bullet\) \(\circ\) \(\bullet\) \(\circ\) \(\circ\) \(\bullet\) , quella breve posita dapo li termini producenti la sesquiteria 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 sarà riduotu tuto sotto al signo, scilicet senza apparentia de li termini comparati, tale [exemplo] se sarà ut hic signato, scilicet: 

\[ C \circ \bullet \circ \bullet \circ \circ \]  
Se adonca (secondo la V.E.) tale breve dapo li termini comparati posita sarà (senza tali termini relati) ut hic posita, scilicet: 

\[ C \circ \bullet \bullet \circ \circ \circ \circ \]  
el sequitaria che el pleno in essa breve dato sarà signo producente la sesquiteria, et per tale modo sarà forza considerare che tale 

\(^5\) 'Virtù' seems to be used here in the sense of 'theory' or 'learning'. For other meanings, see the Notes on Problematical Terms.


\(^7\) Ibid. (1529 edn., fo. E4). Aaron has in mind the notation \(\circ\) \(\bullet\) , used by some scribes in place of \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) . Spataro acknowledges this practice in para. 4, but it probably did not occur to 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.
ancora che siano contra l'uxo et contra l'arte, son però da loro intesi come volgono stare rectamente figurate et notate. Imperò che (al proposito) io ho trovato in multe copie con celerità scripta et notate (aliqualmente) una sola figura ut hic posita $\frac{1}{2}$ per una semibreve, et pure al se scia che una semibreve sola per tale modo figurata non è data in la mensurata musica, ma perché el notatore aliqualmente (per errore) havendo scripta o vero posita una breve, ut hic $\square$ per una semibreve, ut hic posita $\circ$, et dapre che se è acorto de lo errore, senza removere essa figura de breve tira uno tracto ascendente a lato sinistro de essa breve, ut hic $\circ$, 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 accaduto a V.E., scilicet che qualla haria trovato qualche copia con celerità scripta, et che el notatore (notando), dove dovèra ponere' una semibreve punctata et dapre no minima, ut hic $\circ$, li venne posito una breve, ut hic $\square$, 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 $\square$, et questo potria essere la mera verità, perché multi cantano queste figure plene $\square$ a similitudine de queste $\circ$. 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 dicve, scilicet $\square$. Et perché io dubitava, el mio preceptore prediclo disse che colui, el quale scrisse tale tenore, doveva notare tale figure ut hic $\square$, ma perché tale notatore haveva poca cognitio de ligature, scilicet che da lui non era facta alcuna differentia intra queste note ligate: $\square$ et queste: $\square$,10 pertanto da lui era stato notato ut hic: $\square$, per la quale cosa, essendo poi examinato tale canio da qualche intelligenze, per havere a memoria tale errore, fu da lui a mano sinistra dato uno tracto descendente a la nota seconda per signo che denotasse che tale nota non era longa, ut hic: $\square$.11 Per conclusione de tale nota ut hic plena: $\square$, 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 imperfecti, non assigna altra diminuzione che solo el sesquitalere, come da ogni perito se concede.

5. Ma dove sequitando V.E. dice ut hic, scilicet: el quarto modo è quando tu truvi 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 scrissi circa el modo, credo havere dicto al proposito et da V.E. fui chiarito del tuto, et etiam V.E. asi denota la verità nel fine de tale quarto, notando dove quella dice ut hic: et per consequente tale figura et forma de colore pieno demonsra che le due sue semibreve in tale corpo formate restano diminute de la sua tertia parte per la sua negresa apparente.13

6. Horsù non più per questa, la quale procede come le altre mi[i]e, scilicet che queste non son disputatione né ancora contradiczione, 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 serbarei queste fatiche et resposte al tempo che a V.E. harò manda[to] quello mio traxtato,14 che scio che ce serà che fare. Io son intrato in uno laborinto, che Dio voglia et mi conceda gratia che io ne sia resuito con honore. Tamen, l'opera non è ancora in publico, si che ancora se pò ocultare et emendare, et se bene spòresso a V.E., credo che non manco haret 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 tutti li altri amici nostri, scilicet a Pre Zanetto et a Messer Paolo Scotto, a li quali V.E. farà le condecente salutazione.

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

4 MS: disputatione.

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.
the other Austin, Julio [Muradori], Bastiano Boca de Ferro, and my friend
the Austin friar, complain that it is too dear: one can buy Gafurio’s
Practica,6 which is twice the size and has many music examples, for two
marcelly, and his Italian treatise,7 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,3 being more interested in
singing.

5. 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 prololation; 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 sesquiteria. If it
were written thus: C • • • C C C C C C C, the breve after \( \frac{3}{4} \) would lose a
fourth part, that is a minim, because four minimis equal three under C.
Without the proportion it is written C C C C C C C C. If it were written
C C C C C C C C C, the black breve would be in sesquiteria, 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 sesquilteria: C C C C C C C C C. The dot restores the imperfect
note by half its imperfection.4 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.8 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 sesquilteria.

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

9. Spataro to Aaron, 6 Nov. 1523

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 \( \circ \) when he intended \( \bullet \), and he then added a tail thus: \( \bigcirc \), to
indicate a semibreve. So perhaps the copyist wrote \( \circ \bigcirc \) instead of \( \bullet \bigcirc \),
then blackened the breve. This explanation fits your example the better
since many sing \( \bullet \bullet \bullet \) as \( \bullet \bigcirc \). I also remember a piece I copied for Ramis
that had the following ligature: \( \bigcirc \bigcirc \). Ramis told me that the copyist should
have written \( \bigcirc \), but since he was not very familiar with ligatures, he
wrote \( \bigcirc \bigcirc \) 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 sesquitera.

5. Where you say, the fourth manner is when you find a blackened breve under
imperfect tempus and perfect prololation,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

6. Let me stress again that these observations are neither disputations
nor contradictions; they are merely queries. You may not feel like taking
the time to respond to the doubts of an ignorant and foolish old man—
why not wait with your answer until you receive my new treatise14 so that
I learn what is still to be done? I feel I have entered into a labyrinth and
hope to God that I shall get out of it with honour. The work is not yet in
print, so that it can still be kept out of sight and emended. I trust that you
will have my honour at heart no less than I should myself, for I would do
the same for you.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 November 1523 (autograph)

Venerabilis vir, et amatorum musicæ doctissime, salutem.

1. Havendo già (per altre tre mie) fatto 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 capitolo 36 del primo libro de tale tractato,3 nel quale multe dignæ et subtile considerazioni ho trovate. Et per tale modo legendo, son pervenuto dove V. E. dice ut hie, scilicet Il quarto modo se trova ne la prolatione perfecta, et tempo imperfecto, etc. Et cosi (ultra procedendo) V.E. pone questo exemplo:

Da poi V.E. dice che ritrosandosi 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 compreso che V.E. non ignora che tale semibreve plena con la sequente minima plena son sesqualterate, et che essendo sesqualterate (ancora che colte insieme in virtù et valore faciano tanto quanto fa una minima punctata et una semiminima insieme colte), tamen per la apparenza forma et positione de tale note el non se pò negare che (in quanto al nome) quella semibreve plena non sia chiamata semibreve, et che la sequente figura plena, ut hic posita ‧, non sia chiamata minima, le quale figure plena (ut dixi insieme colte) hano virtù et valore de una semibreve imperfecta o vero de due minime de questo c a sé precedente. Et questa considerazione è nota et clara apresso el docto musico comerto.

2. Ma ultra de le predette, li dubitanti domandano che figure o vero note serano quelle altre due figure sequente plene, ut hic posite ‧, dapò 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 apparenza forma) in alcuna cosa non son dissimile da la'

3. Ma se la predicta seconda et la tertia nota ut hic signate, scilicet plene, ‧ ‧, 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, attento che le semiminime in tale signo punctato,4 et in tale caxo et occurrence, non se fano plene per quello modo che occurreno in li signi non punctati. Et questo acade perché non seriano compresshe né cognoscitute dale minime plene, le quali multe volte acedono in li signi punctati, per multi casi, li quali li possono occurrere, come da li optimi musici et stato observato—le quale semiminime da loro son usitate vacue, ut hic: ⬤. Pertanto dico che (secondo el mio de bile 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. asi bene comprende quello che | ho dicto, el quale mio dicto non voglio (ut

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1 A late 16th-c. copy of this letter may be found in Paris it. 1110, fos. 49v-50v.
2 Toscanello.
3 Ch. 36 is entitled 'Della figura semibreve plena' (fo. D4'; 1529 edn., fo. E3').
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 flat, but they lack the requisite flags.
supra) sia preso da V.E. per reprehensione né 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 sè è ridotta a memoria per havere già (ne la mia juvenil età) veduto ne'de opere de li optimi antiqui, come de Dufai, de Ockgem, et del preceptore mio optimo, occurrente 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 inteligenzio) scio che non opera senza considerazione. Horsù non più circa questo.

5. El mio trattato è ligato et finito. Ad altro non atendo che solo de trovare uno qualche amico fido che el porti qua a V.E.,' bene che a me adviene come fà a lo infirmo, el quale per longo spatio de tempo ha portato supra el corpo suo la longa et molestia 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 trovare uno qualche amico fido che el porti qua a V.E.,' bene che a me opera senza consideratione. Horsù non più circa questo.

6. Pertanto, Messer Petro mio, così ad me adviene. 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 serrà grata perché la mera verità è quella la quale reduce l'home de la egritudine a la mera sanità. Et prima voglio aroscrire et cognoscere li errori mei da li amici mei et da li invidi emuli et detractori. O quanto io ser[o] lieto e alegro quando io sentiro 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; nientedimeno farò el possibile per mandarlo piu 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 salutazione, et etiam con li altri amici.

Vale. Bonone, die 8 novembris 1523.

Vester J. Spatarius

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The Letters

10. Spataro to Aaron, 8 Nov. 1523

1. You have already received three of my letters concerning some problems in your recently printed treatise in the vernacular. As a devotee of your elegant works, for my edification, I come now to Book I, ch. 36, where you say the fourth manner is found in perfect prolation and imperfect tempus, and you give this example:

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 C, while the second white note would combine with the altered or doubled third white note to make another semibreve. 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 blackened but should be written thus: , as the best musicians do under dotted time signatures, to avoid confusion with blackened minims.

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 seen this practice in the best composers, such as Dufay, Ockeghem, and my teacher Ramis, in his 'Tu lumen' and other works.

5. My treatise 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.

11 (J79). Fos. 209r–210v
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 6 May 1524 (autograph)


209r Venerabilis vir et musicorum caput, salutem.

1. A dì primo mai ho receputo una de V.E. de dì 21 aprilis signata, a la quale non darò altra resposta perché credo V.E. già haver hauuto una mia per la quale quellà ha potuto intendere la receputa del mio trattato musicò, et etiam credo quella haver hauuto un’altra mia, ne la quale se trattano alcune mie dubitatione circa quello vostro musicò trattato materno.2

2. Per questa mia adviso V.E. che per fido misso ho mandato la littera a Baldasera. Similmente, per essere stato admonito da V.E. che io debia sequittare circa tale mie dubitatione per fàrvi apiacere, et non perché io mi voglia opponere a le sententie de V.E., havendo a quella già circa ciò mandato septe epistole,3 hora vi mando4 la octava, la quale prima nasce da una dubitatione, la quale me occurre circa el capitula r5 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 si habiamo suavità grandissima, sono a compiacenca 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 stabilirlo et ordinato da li docti et inteligenti preceptori, da li

2 M8: manda.

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 Toscanello de la musica (Venice, 1523).

3 Only four of these are extant (see nos. 7–10).

4 Toscanello, fo. 1v: “Se la consonanza, o concordanza è necessaria al principio del canto” (1529 edn., fo. 1v).

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 deve 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 adusto 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. Pertanto cadendo tale immutabilità in le specie perfecte, tale specie son state assignate al rudo principiante per principio et fine del concetto, et etiam perché son più facile da considerare che non sono le imperfecte.

3. Et questa verità la habiamo da Boetio nel capitolo 32 del secondo libro de la sua Musica, dove dice che el non è più facile da considerare a l'ochio o vero a lo aspetto che dapo uno simplice numero o vero una linea considerare el suo duplo, come la diapason, dapo el duplo la parte media, come el sesquialtro, el quale produce la distanza de diapente. Da poi dice (in facilità) sequitare el triplo, del quale nasce diapason diapente, et da poi el triplo sequita la considerazione de la parte tertia, la quale (in sonis) produce la diatessaron distanza. Et per tale modo appare che in le distante multiplice et in le superparticolarìa, 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 ditionale, et in la sexta minore et magiore, perché cadeno in lo genere superparticolarìento, el quale genere non consiste de multiplicità, né etiam de superparticolarità, scilicet del tuto et de una sola parte aliquota, ma consiste del tuto et de più parte aliquota, la quale (inseme guinete) 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 rasonie, 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

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8 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 please their imagination or fancy (quod imaginatis seu fantasiae suae placet). In both Ramis's and Spataro's usage, the word 'fantasia' has a negative connotation.

9 The reference is actually i. 32 (ed. Friedlein, p. 222): 'Etiam namque modo auris fortis eam voce cantat, audivit anima laudis, et in eum vocabatur.' In both Musica practica and Spataro's usage, the word 'fantasia' has a negative connotation.

10 The reference is to the eighth rule of counterpoint in his Pratica 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 1021b24-5.
et perfecta et finita. Et per tale modo acaderà de uno concerto musicò composto et finito de varia materia, scilicet de distantia perfectè et de distantia imperfectè, perché siano le perfecte dove se vogliano, scilicet in principio o in fine, sempre el concetto (in quanto al fine) sarà completo et perfecto, perché la perfectione et fine de l'opera non consiste in la varia posizione de la materia de la quale l'opera è composta, ma consiste in lo complemento de l'opera, perché ancora che l'opera havesse initio de la più pretesa et degna materia che trovare se potesse, et non sia completa et finita, tale opera non potrà essere dicta perfecta, et de questo ha inteso el philosopho.

5. A me pare che questa vostra oppinione sia assai contra la moderna exercitatione, perché rare volte acade che nel fine de li congetti, come de 4 o più voce facti, non cada qualche distantia imperfecta, per la quale cosa accadere che in uno solo fine de uno solo concetto caderia contrarietà, scilicet perfecto et imperfecto, et de questo ve potria aducere multi esempi de docti compositori, li quali lassaro perché scio che bene cognosceretì questa essere una clara verità.

6. Item V.E. (sequitando) dice ut hic, scilicet: Ancora li antiichi musicì, dando lo unisono al tenore col canto, seguiano la terza, dopo la terza la quinta, dopo la quinta la sexta, dopo la sexta la octava, dopo l'octava la decima, et così in longo andamento procedevano. Et per il contrario el simile modo observavano, cioè de la decima in octava, etc. Et perché manifestamente tale modo non se observa da li moderni, da mai sarà conceduto libero arbitrio potersi fare dopo lo unisono la quinta, et dopo la terza la sexta o vero octava, et dopo l'octava la quinta e (come a te piacerà) farai mutatione, perché si vede che multi più begli et grati canti in questo modo non componsi che non se facevano in quello antiico ordine, nel quale l'uomo più strettì se trovava. 10

7. Messer Petro mio honorando, a me pare che V.E. (in questo loco) reprehenda li antiichi de inconvenienti reprehensione, perché se V.E. havesse veduto et bene examinati li esempi assegnati da li antiichì in li soi compendii et trattati, forsa qualla haria trovato che ancora da essi antiichì è stato concesso (aliuando dopo lo unisono) dare la quinta, la sexta, et la octava, et questo acade secondo che la nota la quale seguia dopo lo unisono, scilicet ascendendo o descendentì, dista da la predicta nota la quale ha unisono con el tenore, come V.E. troverà se legeretì quello discurso del contrapuncto facto da Ugolino 11 et dal mio preceptrice, 12 et da altri musicì, et similemente de le altre distantie concorde, perché la docta antiquità dà vui (così senza consideratione) reprehensa 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 ulter che li rudi principii, perché essa docta antiquità sapeva che l'arte et la gratia del componere la harmonia non se pò insinuare, perché el bisogno che li compositori nascono così come nasconso li poeti. Pertanto primamente de loro era dato el modo de componere a due voce, scilicet a nota contra nota, et da poi demonstavano de minuire el tempo. Chi da poi più ulter voleva procedere bisognava che (mediante lo aiuto del preceptrice) 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 concetto è composto) dati al compositore libero arbitrio che facia come li piece et vole, pure che concordantemente proceda, el quale arbitrio non è conceduto in doctrina alcuna. Perché dato che uno concetto se possa fare in multi modi, tamen el se debbe 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 sarà 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 facoltà se posì[sì]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 etertici a li canti diminuiti che sempre la prima nota et l'ultima in uno discurso diminuito vole essere concordante et li mezi diversi alquanto con dissonantìe, come el discurso naturale comporta. 15 Contra la quale vostra sententia aduco questi sequenti esempi:

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10 Tuscanelli, fo. 1r (1519 edn., fo. 14).
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).
13 See Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius—Evolution and Origins of Concept', pp. 481-9, Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 11-2, and no. 22 below.
14 Spataro's remarks are not entirely clear. By 'observing the species of the mode' he may mean that the composer should avoid accidentals that would lead to what Tintinoris calls a 'dislocation of the mode' (distonatio), that is, creating cadences on inappropriate degrees (Opera theoriae, ed. Sean, 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 progression, not 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.
Quelle quattro semiminime del primo tenore dividono in quattro parte la seconda semibreve del primo supran, et l’ultima semiminima non concorda perché è seconda con el supran. Similmente la seconda minima del secondo tenore et la semiminima del tertio tenore sono ultime particelle de la seconda semibreve del secondo supran, 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 fatto de simili in le sue compositione.

10. Item sequiando (circa el fine del predicato capitolo 17), V.E. dice che per la velocità che in si hanno le voce in tale diminuzione, essendo in essa alcune dissonanze, non sono incommode a lo auditore del cantore.16 Questa rasonse dico non essere bona, perché se per la velocità le dissonanze non fussero incommode al senso de lo auditore, el sequitaria che cosi in principio de la nota diminuta se potranno cosi fare le dissonanze come nel medio de essa figura diminuta, et per tale modo di diminuire le quantità cantabile seria arbitrario, et non regulare. Et questo è stato osservato da alcuni, ma è tanto raro che se pò dire non mai. Ma certamente la causa che lo auditore non sente le medie et extreme note de la diminuzione nasce che solo el principio et primo moto che fa la voce in la nota (per la in[ten­sidd]ione) è solamente sentito et compreso da lo auditore, et da poi quello stare suspenso et durare che fa la voce sino a l’altra percussione del tempo sumpto in cantando sequente è accetpato da lo auditore in loco de taciturnità. Pertanto, abstracta dal tempo la prima sonora percussione (a la quale lo auditore sta attento), da poi de tutto el resto del tempo esso auditore non cura, perché (ut dixi) quella suspensione, la quale cade tra l’una et l’altra percussione del tempo sumpto, è acceptata da lo auditore in loco de taciturnità, come se vede claramente in li canti ligati o vero incathenati, li quali dimostrano che in uno tempo pronuntiato la ultima sua sonora percussione (a la quale lo auditore sta attento), da poi de tutto el resto del tempo esso auditore non cura, perché (ut dixi) quella suspensione, la quale cade tra l’una et l’altra percussione del tempo sumpto, è acceptata da lo auditore in loco de dice la velocità che in si hanno le voce in tale diminuzione, essendo in essa alcune dissonanze, non sono incommode a lo auditore del cantore.

11. V.E. pigliata 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 affatico male voluntiera perché ho paura che ad uno tracto perderò la fatica et lo amico, che sarà molto peggio. Ma perché da V.E. son stato pregato al sequitare, così secolarò per obbedire a l’al precepti di quella, credendo farvi apiaceere, perché di questo io non ho

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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 superparticulurs (i.e. of one number and another containing that number
plus one 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) 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. 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 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.

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 Ugolino or my teacher, 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-against-note, 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.

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. Such freedom is not conceded in any theory of art.

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. 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. 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 suspension. 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.

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.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 23 May 1524 (autograph)

Venetiis, Sancta Illustrissimo Domino Musicorum peritissime et maior honorande, salutem.

una de V.E. da me receputa da Don Antonio da le Anelle, nostro vostro musico tractato et trovate [no. 11]. Et perche da quella son bolognese, et l'altra quale pertracta de certe mie dubitatione in quel stato advertito che io debia senza alcuno dubio dovere sequitere, havenclavi nona, 3 per la quale cosa essendo pervenuto al capitula 19 del libro secondo, nel quale V.E. demonstra l'ordine el quale deve tenere (nel supranopo) quello el quale vole componere psalmi et Magnificat in canto secondo, nel quale V.E. demonstra l'ordine el quale deve tenere (nel supranopo) quello el quale vole componere psalmi et Magnificat in canto mensurato, et per tale modo legendo el quale m'e venuto a memoria certa particula la quale (circa tale 19 capitula) me scripse quello amico mio da Ferrara, al quale mandai uno volumine de esso vostro tractato. Tale particula la quale (circa tale 19 capitula) me scripse quello amico mio da Ferrara, al quale mandai uno volumine de esso vostro tractato. Tale amico mio diceva che V.E. haveva errato, perche da quella non era stato considerato che cosi come li toni hano diversi securorum et terminazione, che cosi possono finire in diversi loci, et non in uno solo loco, come da V.E. è stato demonstrato. Diceva etiam che V.E. haveva errato dove in tale capitula haveti dicto che el secondo tono ha el principio de la sua intonatione in C sol fa ut. Et diceva che V.E. da poi se contradice circa questo, perche (in li exempli che V.E. pone in fine del predicato capitulo) ponete el principio de esso secondo tono in F fa ut. Et perche 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 molto considerato dove (circa el principio de tale capitulo) V.E. dice ut hic: pero è stato necessario stabilire una figura o signo per el quale si habia el canore a dimostrare quale sia la nota augmentata, o diminuita, etc., el quale segno per generale uso è chiamato diesis, et è figurato in questo modo *. A me pare che V.E. in tale loco habia dicto meglio dicendo, scilicet, per el quale segno se habia a dimostrare quale sia el spazio o vero intervallo augmentato o diminuito, perché questo signo * non aecresce nel minuisce la nota ultra el suo valore, ma bene aecresce et minuisce el spazio et intervallo tra nota et nota apparente in quanto a la' immaginazione et opperatione, ma non in quanto a la sua apparente locatione. Et questo advene perche el spazio reale et naturale considerato (mediante la apparentia del signo predicto) resta permutato, come de tono in semitonio, et e contra, et cosi de altri similii. Ma la nota (in la sua temporale quantità cantata) non mai mediante tale signo cresce, né etiam decresce, el quale vosa sententia será 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 augmentata per el positio postio dapre tale nota dal signo perfecto gubernata. Et etiam sapeti che lì signi diminuiti son signi de la nota diminuita, come questo §, et altri similii, et etiam per termini comparati producenti proporzione de magiore inegualità, ut hic: 3 3, et altri similii, come in multe particule de tale tractato da V.E. è stato concluso. Ma tale dimunitione non mai è compresa per questo signo *. Ma sequitando bene appare che V.E. ha inteso che (mediante tale signo) la nota non se muta, ma lì el spatio et intervallo naturale cadente intr el sono grave et lo acuto. Ma pure el vostro parlare inducerà confusione infra quelli che a l'arte dano principio, li quali non san[n]o cosi bene distinguere el vero dal falso.

3. Questo signo * predicto è stato chiamato dal mio preceptore signo de b quadro tantum, et da Frate Zoanne Othobi è stato chiamato

1 A late 16th-c. copy is in Paris 1110, fos. 45r, 47r.

2 Toscanella de la musica (Venice, 1521).

3 Of the nine instalments Spataro wrote in criticizing the Toscanella, three are missing (nos. 1-7).

4 This must be Antonio Rigom, whom Spataro mentions in his letter of 6 Nov. 1523 as wishing to have a copy of the Toscanella (see no. 9, para. 2).

5 Rigom correctly criticizes Aaron for stating that the beginning, middle, and end of psalmtone, just as in Gregorian Chant, should be 'stabile, fermo et ordinaria' 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 Toscanella of 1529, deleted the end of the passage in the 1523 edition ('... in C sol re ut. La quale intonatione, et modo è osservato nel canto fermo, come sono introtti, graduali, alleluia, offerlioni, sanctus, agnus dei, post comuniones, responsorii, antiphona, et litanii, nelli quali non si remouve l'ordine dimani (zero, ma in ogni altra composizione la fine sottorgia alla necessita, et li principii alcuna volta al arbitri') and substituted the following: '... in C sol re ut, et in molti altri modi secondo le differenze di securorum' (Book II, ch. 19). He let stand, however, the endings he had previously specified.

6 In Willaert's (and Jacquet's) psalm settings of 1529 (RISM 1529) 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.

4 MS: Io.

5 MS: sequitanto.

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 Toscanella, fo. 1r (1529 edn., fo. K1r).

8 In the Aggiunta to the 1529 edn. of the Toscanella, Aaron quotes the following passage verbatim, without referring to Spataro (fo. N4); see Commentary.
signo de b quadro jacente. Et questo s da lui è stato chiamato signo de b quadro recto, li quali nomi son più rectamente considerati che non è chiamando questo signo \( \times \) diesis, perché el nome è conseguente al suo effecto. Pertché così come procedendo da mese ad trite sinemenon cade intervallo de semitonio, et che da poi ascendendo da la predicta chorda procede per intervallo de tono, el quale paramese (more pythagorico) dista che diesis, perche dicendo diesis, lo effecto et el name non hano mese ad paramesen (al quale practico se atribuisce el b quadrato), el se recto da questo signa da trite sinemenon per semitonium maius intensum, cosi acederà de questo signo \( \times \), scilicet, che acadendo che el canto ascenda de spatio in linea et et contra, ut hic:

\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c} \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \]

et altri simili, sempre convertirà el spazio naturale del semitonio in tono. Pertanto, opperando questo signo effectivamente, come fa el b quadrato recto \( \text{[intervallo]} \) predetto, dico che tale signo sera più rectamente chiamato b quadro che diesis, perché dicendo diesis, lo effecto et el nome non hano insieme corespondentia, ma si bene, essendo chiamato b quadro, comme credo che da V.E. sequitando sia stato inteso.10

4. Da poi sequitando in lo predetto 20 capitulo V.E. dice che quella tertia minore cadente intra \( \text{mi et sol} \), come tra E la \( \text{mi et G sol re ut} \), senza la positione del signo de diesis in G posito, dando octava in grave con E, nascerà dispiacevolence harmonia con la nota posita in G.11 A me questo non pare bene dicto, perché el sequitaria che ogni tertia minore cosi in

\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c} \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \]


11 In the Aggiunta to the 1329 edn. of the Tresamena, Aaron quotes this paragraph almost literally, including Spataro's musical example (fo. Na’4”); see Commentary.

Aaron's own words are helpful in understanding Spataro's comments. They are: ‘questo signo [the sharp] ... nello ascenso accresce, et nel discenso diminuisce, come sarà nel seguente discorso da E la \( \text{mi acuto a G sol re ut} \) secondo con questo sylla\( \text{ba mi sol} \), con il qual \( \text{sol} \) sarà il tenore in terra di sotto, et il contrabasso per una decima minore, per la qual conjunctione naserà dispiacevolence harmonia, come per la esperienza udirai’ (fo. 13’; 1529 edn., fo. K1’). To avoid this ‘displeasing harmony’ Aaron makes the third major and presents this example:

\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c} \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \]

In later editions Aaron replaced ‘dispiacevolence’ with ‘non grata’, no doubt in an attempt to escape Spataro’s criticism that an ‘harmonia dispiacevolence’ constitutes a contradiction in logic.

12. Spataro to Aaron, 23 May 1224

simplice come in composto produceria trista harmonia. Pertanto ogni intervallo de diapente mediato produceria späcevolence et trista harmonia et mala sonoriti, perché el se vede che ciascuno spacio de diapente non pò essere concordabilmente mediato senza la occurrentia de la tertia minore, imperò che se la tertia magiore (in la diapente mediata) sera data in grave, la tertia minore restara in acuto, la quale non lice essere augmentata, perché li extremi soni passariano in proprietà de sexta, et se la tertia magiore sera locata in acuto, la minore restara in grave, la quale tertia minore (ratione predicta) non potrà essere augmentata in gravità. Ma certamente a me pare che la decima minore et la tertia etiam minore con la octava in grave non producano spiacevolence harmonia, ma bona et suave. Ma convertita la minorità de tale decima et tertia in majorità, scilicet, de semiditono in ditono, la harmonia sera più grata al senso de lo audito. Pertanto tale conversione non sera de späcevolence harmonia in grata et bona, ma sera conversione de bona in meliore, perché el non se dà né trova harmonia späcevolence, 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 haverre la bona harmonia l’è necessario signare sotto a quella sylla\( \text{ba sol del suprano el signo de diesis, acio che quella decima minore del contrabasso, quale era alquanto dissonante per essere diminuta de uno semitonio magiore, essendo sollevata a lo loco suo si senta più suave.} \)

A me pare che tale signo non sia sotto la nota, scilicet, sol, come V.E. dice, ma è tuto el contrario, perché la sillaba \( \text{sol} \) predetta è sujecta et obedisce al signo de diesis per due rasonie: la prima perché tale signo in positione et apparentia se prepone a la sillaba o vero nota, scilicet \( \text{sol} \); la seconda perché el signo de diesis (ut diximus) remove la syll\( \text{ba} \) \( \text{etiam minore con la octava in grave non producano spiacevolence harmonia, ma bona et suave.} \)

Ma convertita la

10 Fori Aaron, 2} May 1524

12 Tresamena, fo. 13” (1529 edn., fo. K1”).

13 Ibid.
bona, ma transmutata in tertia magiore sarà migliore, 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 indotti, perché in ogni loco dove acade tale decima minore il canto non deve sempre essere levato per semitonio, se non quando stante el canto in tale loco firmo, non cade con altra sua particula li docti come a li indocti, perché sequitando diceti che alcuna volta el compositore varia le consonantie, scilicet, che in tali loci sempre non darà la decima, ma aliquando 5°, 8°, 12°, e et 15°. Pertanto concluso che (ut dixi) tale signo è così conveniente a li docti come a li indotti. Et dico che el cantore non è tenuto nel primo moto levar le note ne li loci dove tal signo pò acadere se tale signo non appare, perché potria errare, imperò che non pò stare, et non pò stare. Pertanto deve apparere al tempo opportuno, et quando non bisogna, non se debe aducere in luce.

7. Da poi le predicte son pervenuto al capitolo 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 discorsi incomodi al cantore et unire le consonantie prossime l'una a l'altra piu che sia possibile, et questo è dato per primo principio.17 Questo precepto è ottimo 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 dicito nel capitolo 17° precedente, dove dati al principiante plena auctorit et arbitrio che facia come li piace.


MS: quinte.

14 That is, the second semibreve on g.
15 Spataro calculates the intervals as if the second g were a♯; that is, he treats the intervals as if g and a♯ 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.
ordine non fors' mai à li nostri tempi veduto, et aciò che quella da poi me dia adviso del suo parere, remotà 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 orazione orareti.

Vale. Bononia, die 23 mai 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 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 j'. 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 diesis 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 * sign has been called simply 'square b' by Ramis and 'slanted square b' by Hothby, who called 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 raised 13 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 * 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:

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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', Tydskrifte der Vereeniging vir Nederlandse Muziekgeskiedenis 15 (1939), 166-215, 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', Tydskrifte voor Muziekgeskiedenis 18 (1956-9), 1-36 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 681-98.
The Letters

12.

COMMENTARY

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Spataro to Aaron, 23 Mqy 1524

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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 ~ sign should be indicated for all singers. L This is especially
important when singing at sight. J You yourself acknowledge that the
composer can vary the consonances. Thus I conclude 16 L:hat both ~killed
and unskilled singers need this sign, for they are not obhged to ratse the
note without the sign and could make errors if there is a choice. It should
appear when necessary, otherwise not J.
7. In Book II, eh. 2 I, you rightly say note that the voice-parts should alwqys
be arranged so that they are convenient for the singers, and that one consonance should
move to another as c!ose(y as possible; this is the first precept. 17 This contrapuntal
precept is excellent, but I believe it conflic:s with what ~ou said in eh. I 7,
where you give complete freedom of chotce to the begmner.
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8. Three or more years have passed since Lorenzo Bergomozzt 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 wa~ then pla~ed
on viols, but not very well. Through the good offices of a fnend of mme
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 ~~u so that
you, with your acute intellect, and the other Venettan mustctans ma,r
examine the work and send me your unprejudiced opinion on a compost.
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18
tion the like of which may never have been seen 10 our ttmes.
9.' I shall continue reading your work, which I want to finish soon in
order to get on to other important work.

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 Waiter Gerstenberg in Die Musik in Geschichte
und Gegenwart. The present letter, dated 2 3 May I 524, 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 ftcta in compositions sung by sight
('conceflti non previsti, scilicet non prima cantati o vero considerati').
In I 529 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 ftcta: 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.
I 66). 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. Hansjorg 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 Glare:mus'
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. 16r-82, esp. rGs·-7. Lockwood cites two
passages; we were able to find only the second one in Spataro's letter (cited in n. 16 above).
2 1 See e.g. Harold Ogden White, Plagiarism and Imitation during the English Renaissance
2 2 See 'On "Parody" as Term and Concept in 16th-Century Music', in LaRue et al. (eds.),
2 3 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 9 April 1524 (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 send him a copy, because he wanted to see if Aaron had made use of his criticisms (see no. 27, para. 3). The Letters

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. 47v-49r
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 9 September 1524

17 Venerabilis vir et musicorum decus, salutem.
1. A li di 3 settembris ho ricevuta una di V.E. de di 19 agosto segnata, la quale a me è stata molto grata et ioconda, non tanto per esser restato claro di certe mie dubieti 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 Eccelentia tale canto prima fu fatto a due voci, et da poi a quattro 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 concerto 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 piu grande se l'opera adamus[sim]² 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 Eccelentia solo è stato ateso a dimostrare che con arte et industria el spatio aparente della settima virtualliter sia [spatio de ottava, o vero de diapason, el qual canto di] nostri cantori et musici è stato molte volte cantato et sopra instrumenti artificiali sonato, et sono rimasti molto sattisfatti⁴ et contenti perché non hanno ateso né considerato più oltra di quello che da li artificiali instrumenti è dimostrato. Ma io, conoscendo che li organi, arpicordi, violonti, et altri instrumenti de la mano de li artefici produtto 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 prodotti da l'arte, non son stato contento a quello li pratici pulsatori preditti (mediante li soi instrumenti) hanno detto et predicato, ma considerando

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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 Latin, meaning 'exactly, accurately'.

³ MS: sattisfatto.

⁴ MS: prodotto.

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.

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. 42-8 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 660-3. 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.

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con la ragione et con el lume de l'intelletto speculando, credo haver trovato la meravigliosa verità, la qual verità certamente non poi essere aparente per li instrumenti a tempi nostri prodotti da la mano de l'artefice, perché tali instrumenti mancano de molti intervalli et partimenti, li quali son necessarii, volendo sonar tale tenore sopra tali usitati instrumenti. Per la qual cosa, Messer Pietro mio honorando, dove V.E. dice che haverse trovato che il detto tenor per il procedere (con la esperienza dello strumento) termina in lo loco de D grave, dico che quest’è impossibile, et etiam dico che tal tenore non manca di uno comma della integrità di diapason con el canto, come dicete che molti dicono, perché quanto con el compasso et monocordo musico considero, io trovo che (rationalmente) tale tenor exubera et transcende oltre la diapason per un comma, in modo che fa che intra esso tenore et el canto cade uno spatio di diapason completo de sei toni, come era la opinione di Aristoxeno, scilicet composto di cinque toni et due semitoni, de tali semitone uno sarà magiore et l’altro minore, come per esperienza V.E. comprenderà se (ponendo da parte li pratici instrumenti per mano de artefici facili) guardarete in tal tenore a quel segno de b rotondo in Ge sol re et acuto posito ut hic $\text{B}^1_\text{b}$ per el quale segno de b rotondo la nota seguente resta locata tra G acuto et F grave, in modo che quello tono cadente intra G predetto et F resta diviso per semitono minore [in] grave et maggiore in acuto, scilicet che da F grave al predetto segno de b rotondo cade spatio di minore semitono, et da esso segno de b rotondo al $G^1$ acuto cade spatio de maggiore semitono. [Notate che io parlo teorico, et non practice.] Et perché tale spatio de tono, scilicet tra F et G cadente, nel vostro arpicordo ne etiam in altri instrumenti similii non resta per tal ordine diviso, scilicet con semitono minore in grave, et maggiore in acuto, ma per molte cause resta diviso, teorico loquendo, per maggior semitono in grave, et

*4 M5: b; Artusi gives G.

*See Commentary for this and other passages in square brackets.

5 Aristoxenos 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 Lownisky, 'Adrian Willaert’s Chromatic “Duo” Re-examined', pp. 2-3, 12 n. 25, 20-2, 27-8; Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 64-6, 650, 662; contralt Malcolm Lichfield, 'Aristoxenus and Empiricism: A Reevaluation Based on his Theories', *Journal of Music Theory* 32 (1988), 51-75. 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.

13. Spataro to Aaron, 9 Sept. 1524

minore in acuto, però primamente] dico che tal tenore non potrà esser stato bene né rettamente modulato da V.E. in tale arpicordo, ma haveret/ proceduto extra naturam ipsius tenoris.

3. Da poi la nota ut hic in G segnata $\text{B}^1_\text{b}$ tale tenore procede

b $\text{b}$ gradatim ad C acuta ut hic $\text{B}^1_\text{b}$ procederemo per diatessarono intenso, tale diaete[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 diatessarono, così seguirà che intra la corda data per semitono minore più acuta de F grave e la corda data per semitono minore più acuta [del b rotondo] de be fa be mi caderà etiam diatessarono, la quale corda sopra il b rotondo de be fa be mi per semitono minore considerata non potrà attingere a paramese o vero al mi de be fa be mi, perché se intra trine sinemenon et paramese cade spatio de magiore semitono, resterà che subtracto il minore semitono dal maggiore semitono, le resterà 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 trine sinemenon et paramese, dividendo el spatio del maggiore semitono [intra el b rotondo et el b quadro assignato] per semitono 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) descendé per incomposta distancia de diapente, et dato che in aparentia tale descensó di diapente sia locata in F grave ut hic $\text{B}^1_\text{b}$ pure perché in essencia si parte per uno coma più depresso de paramese, resterà che tale figura segnata in F grave non potrà cadere supra E grave' come da molti è stato creduto, ma caderà sotto E grave per spatio di uno coma, perché così come intra’ paramese et hipate meson cade diapente remisso, così se nui ci rimetteremo 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 coma per coma

/ M5: haveret. 

* M5: destende. 

* M5: destenso. 

* M5: C; Artusi gives E.

/ M5: entra.

312
esser conducto né pulsato in tale vostri instrumenti. Ma da poi seguitando, tale tenore procede in lo intenso per diatemassinar[n] imcomposita ut hic $E\flat$, per la qual cosa quella minima puntata et etiam la etiam la sua sequente, le quali in apparentia son segnate in be $fa$ be $mi$, caderano tra $C$ et $A$ acute, in modo che con $A$ la mi re conjugano$^4$ per spatio di comta. Et perché li predetti vostri instrumenti non sono per tal modo divisi, resterà che (ut dixi) tale tenore non potrà in tali instrumenti esser modulato, de le quali figure o note predicie per comta sotto $A$ acuta virtualmente considerate, el predetto tenore si rimette per diapente incomposta ut hic $B\flat$ $C\flat$ $D\flat$ $E\flat$ $F\flat$ et dato che el predetto spatio di diapente incomposto in quanto alla apparentia cada situato in $E$ grave, tamen virtualiter sarà inteso cadere tra $C$ et $D$ grave in modo che con $D$ resterà depresso per spatio di comta, la qual cosa è assai chiara, perché se da uno suono o vero corda, la quale sia subposita ad $A$ acuta per spatio di comta, ce remeteremo per diapente, tale diapente etiam caderà più grave per comta rispetto al $D$ grave. Et per tale modo accaderà che procedendo in tale tenore usque in finem, ciascuna nota la quale in apparentia incomposta ut hie $E\flat$, ma tale diapente potria meglio essere modulato con l’organo naturale et vostro arpicordo perche manca delli spatii delli comi di sopra dimostrati. Tale tenore et el canto predicto (in tali lochi) cadeno sei toni. Et etiam tamen virtualiter producere uno uno comi, che se io mandaro li salzizotti a sua Reverentia che tale opere, etc. 6

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

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 farà abrusare. Questo vostro parlare sona che se io mandarò li salzizotti a sua Reverentia che tale opere, etc. 6

9 settembre 1524.

Jo. Spatarius

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4 $MS$: congiurano.  $^1$ Arusi skips from 'sua Eccellentia' to 'incurere'.  

6 The scribe left out the ending, which Lowinsky supplied conjecturally ('Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Duo"', p. 16 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, p. 692).
The Letters

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, 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. 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. If you observe the $\flat$ [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.

3. The $\flat$ [of m. 21 of the tenor] was played incorrectly as $\flat\flat$ by some of our practical musicians, but I showed them that this was wrong. $\flat\flat$ is a fourth higher than $\flat$, so it falls one comma beneath $b\flat$, 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 distances between notes, our mechanical instruments 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].

COMMENTARY

Letter 11 exists in two versions, neither of which is the original. One, the version presented above, is found in Paris 1110, fos. 47’-49’, 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 ovvero delle imperfezioni della moderna musica. Ragionamenti diari (Venice, 1600), fos. 22’-24’. Artusi claims (through the interlocutor, Signor Vario, who shows the letter to his companion, Luca) that the letter is in Spataro’s own hand: ‘Eccoli la lettera di sua man propria, legetela, et se ne! legerla, legesti qualche parola non cosi Toscana, scusate l’est, e’l tempo, che cosi comportava all’ora’ (fo. 22’). 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] il fine del tenore con il canto concordando in diapason finiva in settima, pertanto solo cercai havere tale concerto a due voci’, Artusi gives ‘Ma perché a me bastava vedere come el fine del Tenore con el Canto finiva in Settima concordante in diapason, per tanto io non dimandai a 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 predicata, governata instead of gobernata, compresa instead of comprehsa, 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. 10), 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.

B. J. B.
Giovanni Spataro to Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni, 10 November 1524 (autograph)

215 [Al mio carissimo Messer Marco Antonio [Cavazzoni, musicista eccellentissimo, Venetia.

216 Messer Marco Antonio, quanto mio maggiore honorando, salutem.

1. Da V.E. et Nobilità ho receputo una de di 21 otobre signata, la quale me è stata gratissima perché scio che me amati. Ho inteso quanto dicesti circa Messer Petro Aron. Sia stata la cosa come se voglia, a me parería 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 odio quale me.

2. V.E. me scrive che Adriano (per haver filo facto tale canto) merita grandissime laude, et che vui pare molto ingiusti a la quale cosa non rispezzo et dico che a me pare che uno artefice merita laude cercare de pervenire a qualche sua opera di per se. Ma 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, allora è bono et (merita) laude cercare de pervenire a qualche sua propinquità, la quale (per impossibilità) sia presa in loco de integrità, come acadet ad Archimenide, et che se non se trova inventa et che è possibile per essere incognita al comerto phylosopho (non potendo trovare la debita integrità), lui se stofà di 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 dopo lui non s'è trovato alcuno che più a la integrità de tale quadratura sia asceso, la quale cosa non è stata osservata da Messer Adriano, perché lui (per certe sue vie da}

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1 The present letter was transcribed, translated, and commented on in Lowinsky, 'Adrian Willaert's Chromatic "Due" Re-examined', pp. 14–21 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 687–90. See no. 15 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. 16).
3 The chromatic duo, 'Quid non ebrietas'.

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318
4. Similmente non poco son stato admirato dove V.E. dice che el leuto ha tutti li suoi semitoni minori.² Benché io non dia opera al sonare el leuto né altro instrumento, pure (da certa musicale rason se mosso) a me pare che tutti li tasti del leuto non possono essere tutti semitoni 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 spazio de diatessaron (el quale cade in tra tuta la longitudine del canto respecto a tuta la sonora longitudine de le mezzanelle, ⁶ et altre simile) solo seria constituto de

cinque semitonii predicti, alcuni siano magiori et alcuni minori. Altramente credo che li harmonici concerti composti da tuta la longitudine del canto non se potranno sonare el leuto. Pertanto bisogna che el leuto sia subiecto et serva a lo instrumento regulare o vero monochordo musico, a similitudine del quale tutsi li concerti musici non se compositi et ordinati.

5. V.E. se degnara pigliare queste mie considerazione 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 el vostr sententia et consideratione, perché scio bene che a me non lice 'ponere os in celum'.³ Ma quello che da me a V.E. è stato scripto nasce da intezergero et cordiale amore, et etiam aci 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 merita reprehensione, prego quella se dignera darmi adviso aci che io piu 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 humilmente me arecomando.

Vale. Bononie, die 10 novembris 1524.

Vester J. Spatarius

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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

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² MS: ordinate.

³ 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 Galieli, Martin Mersenne, and Girolamo Cardano (ibid.).

⁴ Spatari confuses the mezzanella with the octanella, which form the second-highest course of the lute.

⁵ Cf. Ps. 72:9 Vulg.: 'possessunt in caelum os suum, et lingua eorum transivit in tera' ('They have set their mouth against heaven: and their tongue hath passed through the earth').
The Letters

one major and one minor semitone? The distance of a fourth, which falls between the two highest strings, 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'. If I err, please correct me; even with one foot in the grave, I still wish to learn.
I positivo, la quale distantia de tono non se diezeugmenon, o vero in E mente locate in trite diezeugmenon, o vero in C stato demonstrato in la resolutione a me missa. Ma spatii usitate, caderano in trite hyperboleon, o vero in F et el simile con fo.

O chromatic resolution of 'maximus' in nos. I b the letter) do not coincide with those on the bottom of fo. I4o. In his letter to Del Lago of 4 Jan.

Trecento, le quale sono signate in paranetehyperboleon, le quale, per tono, chromatice loquendo, et per tale modo, riducte a le linee et spatti usitate, caderano in trite hyperboleon, o vero in F fa ut acuto signate con questo signo $, come vederei signato in la propria resolutozione a me missa, la quale in questa inclusa a V.E. mando. 3

Et in questo loco io non sono discorde da la mera verita, né etiam dal nostro Messer Petro Aron nel capitolo 40 del 2° libro del suo Toscanello, dove lui tracta del tasto nero positio monochordone infra C fa ut et D sol re et inftra F fa ut et G sol re ut. Ma a me pare che da poi, in quello suo Tractato de tonis, non poco sua Excelletia se sia alontanato da la mera verità, perché da uno solo signo de b molle signato in D sol re lui fa nascere due exachordi inter se diversi et differenti, e desti haretire clara notitia, 5

3. Et in questo loco io non sono discorde da la mera verità, né etiam dal nostro Messer Petro Aron nel capitolo 40 del 2° libro del suo Toscanello, dove lui tracta del tasto nero positio monochordone infra C fa ut et D sol re et inter F fa ut et G sol re ut. Ma a me pare che da poi, in quello suo Tractato de tonis, non poco sua Excelletia se sia alontanato da la mera verità, perché da uno solo signo de b molle signato in D sol re lui fa nascere due exachordi inter se diversi et differenti, e desti haretire clara notitia, 5

The Letters

15. Spataro to Del Lago, 30 Oct. 1127

se principiando al predicto signo de b molle signato in D sol re. El quale perché (virtualiter) è più basso di D sol re per semitonio maggiore, sequitara che (descendendo gradatam) trovereti 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 di magiore semitonio, et etiam el suo ut caderà più basso de A re per magiore semitonio. Ma el suo sol caderà intrna D sol re et E la mi, in modo che con D sol re serà semitoniono minore et con E la mi serà magiore, et el suo la caderà in parisonantia con F fa ut naturale. El quale ordine predicato è in tuto proibotto et remoto da l’uxo. Et per non essere [apparente n]elo mono­chordo et altri instrumenti usitatii, 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 il sequitarà che da esso b molle, o vero fa, signato in D sol re nascerà un’altro

exachordo diverso dal predicto,8 perché se esso exachordo harà el suo ut equale in sono con A re naturale, bisognerà che el suo re sia equale in sono con B mi naturale, et harà el suo mi cadente intrna C fa ut et D sol re, in modo che con C fa ut serà semitonio maggiore 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 intrna F fa ut et G sol re ut, in modo che con F fa ut sia maggiore semitonio et con G sol re ut sia 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 positio in mese, pertanto acederà che el fa da lui considerato in D sol re resterà senza el suo

6 Spataro believed that Aaron derived two different sets of hexachords from D$, one on A$, 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 to be understood as A$ when the solmization syllables are flats, and as A# when sung as re, mi, and la. Aaron states (Trattato, ch. 27) that A as ut is derived from D$, and therefore he refers to A$, not A#. Moreover, he does not call the note ‘A re naturale’ but ‘non naturale’; ‘La prima voce ut non naturale viene da un’ altro fondo posto in Lychanos hypaton cioè D mi 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 b mutating to a hexachord a fifth lower, and in the upper octave d’ as fa comes 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 componatur, those with sharps as well as those with flats. In a small pamphlet without title, printed in Venice in 1131 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 perche ne! capitolo predetto

(footnote continued from p. 323)


Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1121).
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. Ma lui non ha potuto rectamente pertractare de tale importantie, perché el credè che el non sia altra coniuncta che solo quella de b molle. Ma le lui non ha potuto rectamente pertractare de tale importantie, perché el signa el ordine) la sillaba cjuadrato signata in C l'altra se chiama coniuncta de b quadrato, la quale se signa con questo signo in ciascuno loco dove naturalmente 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 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 scripto et è affamato da ciascuno docto. Perché solamente exercitando la coniuncta de b molle el non se potrà producere uno monochordo rectamente diviso, et questo nacherà perché quello tono, el quale inmediate sarà supra el semitonia naturale, cioè che caderà intra C et D et intra F e G, non potria restare diviso per semitonia magiore in grave et minore in acuto, come appare in ciascuno monochordo rectamente diviso. Et circa questo multe altre importantie se potranno dire, le quale sono lassate da me perché 'intelligenti pauca'.

5. Ma al mio Messer Petro Aron me recomandarei, 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 cadrò qualche bastonata. Ma se sua Excellentia havesse ateso a quello che gli era scripto da me, forsa che al preceptore, et cosi io da patre et da maestro me portava verso sua officio, et al mio Messer Sancta Petronio me scrive, drizati vostre littere in Bologna in la sacristia de l'opera per soi bisogni et per soi amici.

Vele. Bononie, die 30 otobris 1527.
Se V.E. più me scrive, drizati vostre littere in Bologna in la sacristie de Messer Sancto Petronio.

Vester J. Spatarus

Resoluto Canonis

Enharmonica Resoluto Chromatica Resolutio Diatonica Posito

Cardine cètus

Resolutio figurarum

Cardine cètus

2ª pars

Partibus intulerat

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
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.

1. In explanation of the chromatic resolution of the tenor of this motet, 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 $c~'$, 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.

2. And here I am in agreement with what our Pietro Aaron writes in ch. 40 of the second book of his Toscanello, where he treats the black keys between $c$ and $d$, and $f$ and $g$. But later on, in his treatise on the modes, when he tries to derive two different sets of hexachords from one single $d\flat$, he strays from the simple truth. And this you will clearly comprehend when you begin with $d\flat$ ($=fa$) and continue downwards with $c$ ($=mi$), $b\flat$ ($=re$), $a\flat$ ($=ut$). In each case the flat notes are one major semitone lower than their natural counterparts. Likewise, $sol$ will fall on $e\flat$, 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.

3. With the same $d\flat$ Aaron construes a hexachord with $ut$ on $A$ natural. But I say this would result in a different hexachord, with $c\flat$ and $f\natural$. 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 $d\flat$ 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 $f$.

4. 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, $c\flat$, as my teacher wrote.

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'.

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.
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 1 September 1328

16 (J33), Fos. 141v-142r

Venerabile Messer Pre Zoanne veneto, diacono [dignissimo de Sancta Sophia], musica peritissimo. In Venetia, [in la Barberia del] Sole sopra el campo de [Sancta Sophia].

141 Venerabilis vir et amice honorande, salutem.

1. A li giorni 27 del presente ho receputo una de V.R. de di 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 giorni 24 setembris de l'anno 1327 passato circa certi dubii, li quali haveti in quello mio tenore cantato per li tri generi de li canti. Et pare quasi che V.R. dubita che io sia sdegnato con quella, la quale cosa veramente non procede da sdegno, ne etiam da mia pigritia, perché da quella non ho receputo inutia per la quale io me debia nove a sdegno. Ma sumamente credo essere tenuto a V.R., perché ve seti degna 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 gia mandai quella mia 'Missa de sancta Maria Magdalena', et lui me scrissi che in li tenori erano multi inexcusabili errori. Similmente li mandai quello mio concerto fato 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 le opere mie, le quale da multi (per excusare la sua ignorantia) sono state procedite da sdegno,
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 giorni 24 setembris de l'anno 1327 passato circa certi dubii, li quali haveti in quello mio tenore cantato per li tri generi de li canti. Et pare quasi che V.R. dubita che io sia sdegnato con quella, la quale cosa veramente non procede da sdegno, ne etiam da mia pigritia, perché da quella non ho receputo inutia per la quale io me debia nove a sdegno. Ma sumamente credo essere tenuto a V.R., perché ve seti degna 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 gia mandai quella mia 'Missa de sancta Maria Magdalena', et lui me scrissi che in li tenori erano multi inexcusabili errori. Similmente li mandai quello mio concerto fato 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 le opere mie, le quale da multi (per excusare la sua ignorantia) sono state procedite da sdegno,

2. V.R. dice dubitare in lo canon del predito tenore in quella dictione, la quale dice 'tritas pausato', et etiam nel genere chromatico. Pertanto dico perché exercitando tali generi, el non sera cosa licita né laudabile procedere per distantie et intervalli non usitati, pertanto perché la sexta sillaba in tale tenore posita, zoë 'ma' (la quale è posita et locata in triite hyperboleon, o vero in F fa ut acuto) con la sequente syllaba, zoë '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 tacitura, et similmente acaderà de l'ultima syllaba, zoë 'mus', la quale in tale tenore cade in triite diezeugmenon, o vero in C sol fa ut, perché procedendo da la septima predica syllaba, cioè 'xi', posita în nete diezeugmenon, o vero in E la mi acuto (la quale è chorda stabile), ad essa syllaba ultima, zoë 'mus', enharmonice, tale distantia o vero destenso non sera intervallo usitato, perché intra nete diezeugmenon et triite diezeugmenon, enharmonice procedendo, cade intervall o vero distenio de dui toni et una diesis. Adonca (per tale causa), zoë per observare li usitati intervall, el valore de le chorde o vero syllabe, la quale in tale genere sortisse el nome 'trite' in tale tenore, sono state da me riducite in tacitura, o vero in tacita quantità, de uno tempo de questo signo Ω in principio de tale tenore posito.

3. Ma circa el sequente genere dicto chromatico, nel quale dicei dubitare, per declaratione de le vostre dubia dico perché la prima syllaba de tale tenore, zoë 'Le', la quale è posita in parantene diezeugmenon, o vero in D la sol re, la quale è la seconda chorda del tetrachord diezeugmenon

Francesco da l'Organo, che già fu [familiare del reverendo episcopo de Pola], quando sua Signoria era governatore in Bologna. Et el predito Messer Francesco (con altre sue littere) dirizò tale mia resposta qua in Venetia in casa del predito episcopo de Pola, et molto 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 avvenuto de un'altra mia resposta mandata qua al mio honorando Frate Petro Aron, la quale per simile via mandai a sua Excellencia, che da lui altro non ho sentito, al quale Frate Petro faretri la mia excusatione, ació che forsia lui non cada in qualche pensiero strano, asi dissimile a la mia innocentia et puro amore, el quale porto a sua Excellencia per li soi beni meriti et virtù.

4 4. Uncharacteristically (and perhaps accidentally), Spataro is reckoning the tetrachord in the middle of the page, instead of the bottom, as is usual in this correspondence.
The Letters

(el quale ha el suo initio in paramese, o vero nel mi de b fa b mi acuto), secundo genus chromaticum dista da esso parame[se] per due semitonii, li quali insieme colti fano uno spatia de tono. Dico che el serà necessario 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 sera riducto in spacio de tono, et similmente acadera 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 signa~ 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 mia 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 celerit:l facta per el Signore Messer Hermes, ma non fu bene complecta. La seconda volta tale opera fu alquanto augmentata. Ma da poi, circa due 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

1. On the 27th of this month 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. 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'. You may rest assured that I did answer your first letter; I sent it through a canon of San Petronio of Bologna, Francesco dall'Organo, who directed it in care of the Bishop of Pola 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...

3. 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.

Tuus J. Spatarius
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’, 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 nete diezeugmenon (g); the distance from the syllable ‘xi’, placed on nere diezeugmenon (g), 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 0.

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 second’ note of the tetrachord diezeugmenon (beginning with paramese, or b2), is two semitones removed from paramese. It will be necessary therefore to place the syllable ‘Le’ on ． Likewise, the ‘o’ and ‘pon’ on paranete hyperboleon (g), will have to be placed on ． as shown in the example.

4. You say you own one of my treatises. 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 which I wrote an ending in tune with my intentions, and this version is not yet 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 which I wrote an ending in tune with my intentions, and this version is not yet

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 do not know you. 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.
I compone la harmonia, la quale tione. Ma el terzo membro sàr el contrapunto, el quale insigna componere la harmonia, la quale è significata et demonstrata per le figure o note predicte, perché la3 harmonia consiste in la mensura del tempo, o per se o aggregato, o in parte minute diviso.

3. De le proporzioni 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 caratteri li quali ancora non ho veduto in stampa, et ce sono altre figure molto difficile, a le quale non cadera poca spesa, et bisognaria essere impresso in foglio integro.

De contrapuncto io4 ancora ho scripto molto in longo. Pertanto, volendo ridursi tale opera a brevità, ci bisognaria non poco tempo et fatica, la quale a me e molto molesta, si per havere la cura de la molesta scola de li clerici, si etiam per essere già intrato in l’anno 70. Et ancora poco et quasi nula curo che siano impress, perché certamente io comprendo che la fatica et la spesa seria getata via, perché più intrà musica et cantori non se observano li canoni et regolari precepti da la docta antiquità ordinari. V.E. vede bene che a tempi nostri li signi ordinati da la docta antiquità et se scrivendo a V.E. non debe celare la verità, ancora che ‘veritas odium parit’.2

8. Da poi, V.E. scrivendo dice le sequente parole, cioè: ‘Circa la dubitation, la quale mi occorre in nel prenominato tenore vostro, cioè in nel genere chromatico,3 non scrisi a V.E. circa esso genere che da me fusse ignorant lo soi intervalli et processo suo, come V.E. ha possuto comprendere in la resolutione de mia mano inclusa in una mia littera directa a V.E., perché volendo rimovere li intervalli del diatonico et convertirli in el genere chromatico, bisognia 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 teni 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 diciet 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 hie;

Come volete vui che per la prescripta vostra resolutione io habia possuto comprendere che da vui non siano stati ignorati li intervalli et processi chromatici, li quali (come diceti) conveneno essere apparenti con questo $, se in tale vostra resolutione non haveti posito tale segno | in loco alcuno al chromatico genere pertinente? Ma veramente che ho tenuto per firme che V.E. sia asai lontano da tale cognitione, perché se da vui questo fusse stato bene inteso, vui non haresti lassato incore 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 posizione de la mano sono li sei nomi officiale, cioè $, $, $, $, $, $, $.

Et de tali errori non solamente Petro predico resto incolpat, ma


2 Terence, Andria 68.

3 In Spataro’s motet for Leo XI.

4 Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1529), fo. fr: ‘Dichiarazione come in tutte le posizioni over lughi della mano sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o veramente voci’.
etiam V.E., perché esso Petro in molte parte de tale tratto ve allega. Pertanto se crede che con Petro siati convenuto permente in sententia et iudizio, et tali errori nascono perché lui et etiam V.E. credei che el sia solamente una coniuncta in la musica ficta, come esso Frate Petro apertamente demostra nel 26 capitolo de tale tratto, dove lui dice queste parole, cioè: Bencché ad alcuni qualche volta puia cosa strana che in tanti li sopradetti 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. 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 lecto tale stato demonstrato da Frate Zuanne Othobi, e da Bartolomeo Ramis, mio preceptore, saltel 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 z, le quale coniuncte (rationabilmente exercitate) producono lo musico instrumento rectamente diviso.

Adonca dico che a me pare impossibile che (ignorando la coniuncta de b duro), sapiti raonabilmente collocare le chorde chromatica intra le linee et spatii usinati, et questo a me pare assai claro. Imperò che in quello tenore resoluto, el quale a V.E. ho mandato, trovarti uno errore in fine de la resolutione chromatica da me facto per non bene havere advertito al tenore resoluto, el quale a V.E. ho mandato, trovarei 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 z, el quale signo non li convene, perché essendo la sillaba 'ma' (nel tenore non resoluto) posita in trite hyperboleon, qu o vero in F fa ut acuto, tale chorda (chromatiche 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 semitono, et essendo con questo signo z signata, non seria la seconda chorda chromatica, ma seria la terza, chiamate paranete hyperboleon chromatica.

Ma se vui voleti excusarvi, dicendo che seti incorso in questa inconsiderazione perché haveti creduto a la mia resolutione male signata, risponderò et dico che questa sarà una debile excusatione, perché così come da vui son stato reproheso de le octave et quinte superfite che li occorenovo
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 esso nota supra quello tasto negro el quale cade intra F acuto et G superacuto, el quale tasto negro el quale cade intra F acuto. Dirano anchera che non sonarano la terza chorda del predicto canto in F naturale acuto, ma (bone sonoritatis causa) sonarano tale nota supra F acuto. Et per tale modo tasto negro da li optimi exercitanti acuto. Dirano anchora che non sonarano la terza chorda del predicto canto quale cade intra C et D acuto, el quale tasto negro el quale cade intra linee et spatii in F naturale acuto, ma (bone sonoritatis causa) sonarano tale nota supra in C acuto in esso C, ma che sonarano essa nota supra quello tasto negro el usitato non signata ut hie:


Ma se da poi serano posite le note sequente:

\[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{La} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{Re} \]

la sol re, el quale b rotondo, el quale b rotondo in grande errore, et questo advene perché (ut dixi) vui non credeti\(^{11}\) che el sia altra coniuncta che solamente quella de b molle. Ma ad [majorem declarationem ve aduco questo processo: \[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{Re} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{La} \]

dico che intra tali extremi caderà così la seconda specie diatessarono 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: \[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{Re} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{La} \]

similmente la coniuncta de b duro remove esso naturale semitonio de grave in acuto, come seria reducendo questo predito naturale processo \[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{Re} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{La} \]

questo accidentale \[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{Re} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{La} \]

et queste remotione de semitonio sono in lo arbitrio del compositore.

Volendo adonca V.E. cantare el mio tenore resoluto con facilità, el sarà 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 dapò descendendo per semiditone, se dirà mi in quella sequente nota chromatica, la quale nel tenore resoluto è posita in C acuto con questo signo $$. Et da poi (ultra procedendo) diremo la a la sequente nota posita in F acuto signata con questo predito signo $$. Et per tale ordine comprenderebberi 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 capitolo 38 de quello suo vulgare trattato, etc.\(^{12}\) Perché se la predita syllaba, cioè sol, nascesse dal b rotondo signato in D la sol re, el sequitaria che (in ordine) tra sol et fa caderà uno intervallo de uno tono et uno semitonio mazzore, perché se simpliciter da E la mi a D la sol re cade distanti de tono remisso ut hic: \[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{Re} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{La} \]

sequitara che da esso E la mi a D la sol re ut hic signato: \[ \text{Sol} \quad \text{Re} \quad \text{Mi} \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{Do} \quad \text{La} \]

serà tanto più del spatio de uno tono quanto sarà 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 maggiore più

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\(^{11}\) At the top of fo. 141 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: 

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\(^{12}\) Trattato . . . di tutti gli tuoni, fo. 49r.
grave de D la sol re, et tale mutatione dicta di sopra, cioè mutare el mi de E la mi in sol, non sarà mutatione de proprietà in proprietà, come acaede in l'ordine simile de la mano de Guido, perché el mi de E la mi nasce dal ut postico in C acuto, el quale (secondo praktica) 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 incierto signato in C acuto. Adonea, el sol predetto in E la mi considerato non tenterà l'ordine de le tre proprietà de l'ordine simile, perché non harà el suo ut ne in G ne in C ne etiam in F, ma harà el suo ut equale in sono con A la mi re acuto. Adonca, come a multi piace, tale mutatione sarà de natura in la coniuncta de b quadrato signata in C sol fa ut, come ce demonstra Bartolomeo Ramis, mio preceptore, nel capitolo quinto de la prima parte de la sua Pratica.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 spazio de diatessaron: , el quale (composto ut hic): forma la terza specie 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 segnal il resoluto mia con questo signo ♭, etc. Per le predicte vostre parole vui claramente dimostrato che mediante l'esemplio del contrapunto haveti compreso quello che lo ingegno vostro ha potuto cognoiscere, et non perché la cognitione de locare tali generi tra linee et spatii sia vostra scientia, perché se (realmente) dà vui fusse stata compresa la merà verità, vui (senza alcuna dubitatione) me haresti mandata la vostra prima resoluzione 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 di 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 resoluzione a V.E. missa, questo è signo che de tali importanti haveti poca intelligenzia et che etandi titubando. Ma se cosi non fusse, vui non me haresti mandato la vostra prima resoluzione così simplicitamente et senza li debiti signi signata, la quale per 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 intelligenzia, vui me haresti mandata la vostra resoluzione debitamente notata et signata, et senza dubitatione, et da poi se vui li havessi trovato errore alcuo, 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 troppo creduto senza esaminare 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
Nel concerto precedente, claramente appare che da l’ultima semibreve posita in G superacuto signato con questo signo \( \text{\textsuperscript{3}\text{n}} \) (immediate et senza interposizione de taciturniti) se ascende ad C superacuto, non signato con tale signo, tra li quali cade el spatio de diatessaron diminuto. Tale processo ancora e exercitato da C acuto ad F senza discrepantia, ut hie:

Pertanto dico che tale spatio non sed dicto incomodo et irregulare, perché non è incomodo a lo audito, et etiam perche e exercitato/et 'usus est altera lex'.

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 3, 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', 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'.

8. You wonder about the use of the chromatic genus in the tenor. You say you understand its intervals, as I could have seen from your resolution, for changing diatonic intervals to chromatic will require the
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:

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:

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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, 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 coniuncta. 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 Hothby and Ramis have demonstrated, there are two coniunctae, b and , 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 resolution 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 , which is the second note of the tetrachord. Since it lies a semitone above the first note, is also the proper location of the second note in the chromatic tetrachord. 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; 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? If you correct the bass in the following manner, the augmented octave will be removed:

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10. Further on in your letter you say that the fourth from e' to f 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 for the sake of good sonority, and also the f' as . In the following example they would play and in tenths:

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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 e' to is not used, you are mistaken, because you believe there is only one coniuncta, the flat. Take the second species of fourth, b to e'. The fourth e' to has exactly the same intervals as the progression a b b' e'. 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, ‘xì’, which falls on e', you should mutate from mi to sol. Descending a minor third, you reach the first note of the chromatic resolution, , which is mi. The next note, , is la. Thus sol, on e', derives from the sharp coniuncta on e' and not from , as Aaron writes. If sol were to originate from , there would be an interval of a tone and a major semitone between sol and fa, e'-db'.

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17. Spatara to Del Lago, 4 Jan. 1529

Further on in your letter you say that the fourth from e' to f is awkward and not used in any old or modern composition. You should ask some organists how they would play the following passage:
Changing from \textit{mi} to \textit{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 e', as my teacher Ramis demonstrates in the fifth chapter of the first part of his \textit{Practica}. 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, e' 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. 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:

It is not perceived as awkward by the ear, and 'practice is as good as a law'.

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. Spataro to Del Lago, 25 Jan. 1529

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 'Pourvant se mon' by Philippo de Primis, 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

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 lungo questo foglio2 o vero littera, [a] quale tabula o vero cartella voglio per componere alcuna volta qualche concerto, 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 cognoisce che l'arte del mensurato canto oggidì è tenuta in poca existimazione et pretio. A li amici me recomandarei.


Vester J. Spatarius

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1. The mass, which seems to be lost, is also discussed in a letter from Giovanni del Lago to Lorenzo Gario (no. 86), where he states that the tenor comes from a chanson by Busnois, Pietro Aaron, in his Trattato . . . di tutti gli tuoni, fol. ba, lists a 'Pour tant sement' by 'Antonio Busnois' as an example of the first mode ending on D la sol. Catherine Brooks, who found no chanson by Busnois with this title, believes it to be by Caron ('Antoine Busnois, Chanson Composer', Journal of the American Musicological Society 6 [1954], 321–35 at 324). A modern edn. of Caron's 'Pourvant se mon volatile 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 dispose d'-d', which Aaron considers a characteristic of the first mode. For further references to the mass, see nos. 11, 48 (para. 18), and 86 (para. 1). It is also mentioned as an example of proportions in Spataro's Trattato di musica, fol. es5'. The

2. 'Officium philippin' in Hradec Králové, Museum, MS 11. A. 7 ('Speciálník'), p. 89, is not based on Caron's 'Pourvant se mon', nor has it any notational subtleties. It appears in other sources as the 'Missa de Franza', ascribed to Philippus Buxor, also known as Philippus de Bourges.

3. The length of this letter is 12 cm.
sides about the length of this letter? I need it for composing. Please let me know the price and I shall reimburse you.

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 (f. 15). Fos. 147-148
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 26 February 1529
(autograph)


143° Venerabilis vir et musicorum peritissime, salutem.

1. A li di 24 del presente ho receputo una de V.E., la quale è a li 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 resposa a V.E., la quale resposa [no. 17] io assignai al predicto frate de l'ordine de Sanzio Salvatore chiamato Frate Sebastian da Ferrara sino inanti a la fructuosa nativita del nostro Signore Messer Jhesu Christo proxima passata, et de tale cosa ho havuto grande despiacere perché io scripsipe tale resposa con mio grande incomodo, per essere el fredo molto intenso, per essere etiam male disposto, et perche scrivendo a tempo de notte (come bisognava fare), li ochii mei molto male me servivano. Ma come hebi la vostra predicta de di x del presente signata, subito io fui a trovare el predicto frate, el quale molto se maraveglio et disse che haveva data tale mia resposa al priore de Ferrara, 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 resposa.

2. Dapo la quale mia resposa (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 esserne giunta qua in Vinetia quando V.E. scripsipe quella de di x februarii, et che potria essere che hareti l'una et l'altra a uno tempo medesimo. Poteva essere vero, tamen V.E. darà advisorio. Et el predicto Frate Sebastiano dice che scriverà al predicto priore de Ferrara circa questo. Per certo io sono pure disgratiato in queste mie lettere scripte qua a V.E. Non scio da che proceda. V.E. da uno canto se maravegliava di

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
stare tropo in longo la vostra risposta, commenzen[v]a a dubitare | che cosi
serebbe come stato. Horsì sia con Dio.

3. Ma io me arecordo che io ve scrissi che se V.E. bene advertiva a
quello mio concetto facto per papa Leone, che el non li cadevano tante
tabacchi et quinte superstite 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, silicet
‘ma’ et ‘mus’, non debbono essere signate con questo signo $ in genere
chromatico, ma la prima, silicet ‘ma’, debe stare in F acuto senza altro
signo accidentale, et la seconda, zoe ‘mus’, debe stare in C acuto senza
altro signo. Et in tale mia risposta ve demonstrava la mera rasone.

4. Io scripsi ancora a V.E. che l’era la verità che nel contrabasso primo
de la prima particula de tale concetto 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 cadè supra questa littera, zoe ‘o’, chromaticc
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
concetto, solamente a fine de emendare tale errore me arecordai che una
venerabile matrona chiamata Madonna Lucretia Cantora haveva uno libro
tutto de mia mano notato, el quale jà donai a uno nobilissimo gentile
homo chiamato el conte Camillo de' Pepoli, ciptadino nostro bolognese, et
tanto feci che ebi tale libro. Ma quando io voleva corregere el predotto
contrabasso, trovai che quella nota non era semplicemente in F grave
posita, ma era con questo signo signata $, de la quale cosa asi mi ne
alegrai, et con certi amici mi molto intelligenti tale caxo consulti. Ma per
livare via ogni errore et dubitatione, et a complacentia de multi, io remosxi
questo loco et lo ridusse come a V.E. l’[h]i mandato. Pertanto se V.E. bene
advertisse, trovarì che in tale concetto non sera alcuno errore de quilli che
diciet, et cognosceri che haveti demonstrato non harete quella mera
cognitione et intelligenta de li generi de li canti la quale diciet havere,
purché vui haveti invitato senza vedere prima se la resolutione mia a vui
missa quadrat et convene con el tenore resoluto, perché bene | tale
ordine fusse stato tenuto da V.E., quella haria claramente compreso che
io meritava restare incolpato$ solamente de la resolutione non bene a V.E.
missa, et non del concetto composito respecto a suo tenore non resoluto,
per la quale cosa appare essere la verità quello trito proverbio, el quale se

147. MS: grenere.
148. MS: incolpato.

19. Spatario to Del Lago, 26 Feb. 1529

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. 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
tabasci 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 / 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°–164°
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
musico acutissimo, et [quanto maggiore suo honorando. In] Vinetia, [in
la Barberia del So]le posita sopra el campo [de Sancta Sophia].

165° Venerabilis vir et musicorum doctissime, salve.
1. A li di 13 del presente ho receputo una de V. E. de di 25 februarii
signata, per la quale ho inteso de una vostra a me missa de 10 februarii
signata, 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 di 4 januarii signata [no.
17], la quale cosa asai a me è piauzta. Ma ho bene havuto in grande
despiacere che tale mia sia prima stata aperta et da altri veduta. Che V. E.
sapia' che questo non è de mia volontà. 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 iudizio et parere, questo
inconveniente nasce da li frati, et se l’homo non se pud fidare de li frati, io
non scio horamai de chi potermi piu tider. Io cercarò per lo avviure 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 scripta molto diffusamente in contrapuncto,
ma non sono in termine de potere mandare qua, et bisognarebe che fusse
scripta de novo, a la quale cosa io non potria dare opera al presente,
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 sera sanato et che
hara 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 predicte, et se a V.E. parerà aspectare sino che io mandarò el contrapuncto, a me parerà bono, perché (secondo l'ordine) meglio sarà che dopo el canto mensurato seguiti el contrapuncto, et dopo el tractato de proportione, che prima le proportione et da poi el contrapuncto, perché volendo procedere per exempli clari, el se pò bene trattere de contrapuncto senza proportione, ma non e contra. Adonca, carissimo mio, io me resolvo et concludo che inanti pasqua io non potria eclesia. Ma dopo pasqua prima ve mandaro el tractato de le proportione et validitute, quanta per essere etiam occupato circa el mio officio de la eclesia. Ma dopa pasqua prima ve mandarò el tractato de proportione predicte, et questo se intende piaceo a Dio che io torni a la prestina sanita. 

4. Io ve mando el contra alto, el quale V.E. me ha domandato, cioè 'Deprecor te', etc. Ancora vi mando una orazione 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, ve posso mandarle un'orazione a cinque, e ci sono molti inter se differente. La prima che io feci fu questa che 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 predicte 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 fatto 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 clava 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 creditava in Bologna, ut hic:

\[\text{pera pera}\]

Si che V.E. ha la causa perché una de tale misse è dicta 'de la pera' et l'altra 'pera, pera'.

3. Non altro per hora. Pregati Dio per me, che mi conceda tanto de vita sino che io habia sastfieco a li vostri et mei desiderii. Lì qualci certamente sono iusti et senza vanita et desiderio de vana fama. A V.E. me reco-mando. Se V.E. me scriverà et manda el suo lettera per la via del banco de li Saraceni, facili sopra una cuperta, la quale dica: 'Al mio carissimo Messer Nicolao Mantoano, musico peritissimo. In Bologna sotto le scule publice.'

1. On the 14th 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'.

1. 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.
The Letters

habita bona advertentia a corregere la stampa, et ancora quello che de mia mano haveti scripta 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 maraviglia che ancora non li haveti scripto, como li prometesti. Io darò opera de ponere in seme 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, si che non dubitati.

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 part 1 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 other two 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.

Vester J. Spatarius subscripsi

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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.
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 insignire) 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. Habita bona advertentia circa questo tractato de proportione, et se gli sed errore, cosi nel scripto come faculta, corregitelo.

Vale. Bononiæ, die 5 aprilis I529. 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. 2 I], 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.
23 (J39). Fo. 115r-v
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 28 May 1529

autograph

115r [Al venerabile Messer Pre Zoa]ne veneto, diacono [de Sancta Sophia] et
musico peritissimo, [quanto maggiore] honoringo. [In Ve|netia, [in la
Barberia del S]pole supra el campo de Sancta [Sophia].

115v Venerabilis vir etc., salutem.

A li di 27 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de di 14 del presente
signata, et ho inteso quanto dici et circa quello mio tratato de propor-
tione, el quale ve promise mandarvi da poi pasqua. Ma siati certo che
haveva ligato tale tratato 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 mercantante. Pertanto aspectava che el tornasse a
Bologna quello fante el quale me portò la cartella, al quale io voleva dare
tale tratato et pagarlo, ma mai non venne, et da me era dubitato che qua
non potessano venire littere, perché el se diceva che qua non se clava
recepto a quilli che venivano da Bologna, per suspecto de peste. Proce-
dendo per tale modo la cosa in longo, io comencéi havere suspecto che a
V.E. non fusse acaduto qualche incomodo et spiacere, et questo era perché
da quella io non haveva adviso alcuno. E per essere claro de questo, io
scrisse a Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono ació 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 tratato 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 tratato de le proportione, el quale non seio 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 bisognia 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 neglia. Pure
farò quanto per me fare se potrà, ació che l'habiati presto.

Non altro per hora. Tuto son vostro.
Bononie, die 28 maii 1529.

El vostro piú 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. Spataro to Del Lago, 3 June 1529

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.

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 duca 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, 1935), 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 Nicolo Rangoni and his wife Bianca, daughter of Giovanni II Bentivoglio; see Cecilia M. Ady, *I Bentivoglio*, trans. Luciano Chiappini (Varese, 1967), p. 195.
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 June 1529

(autograph)

154 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 Messer Pre Zoanne mio honorando, salutem.

1. Con una mia [no. 23] (in responsione de una vostra de di 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 di 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 giorni fano per parte
de V.E. me disse che vui ancora non havevi havuto tale tractato, allora
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 arrivata, 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, si che
più presto che potrò ve lo mandarò. Una gratia voglio da V.E., che dati o fati
dare questa qua ligata a uno giovane bolognese chiamato Allexandro, el
quale sta con el reverendo episcopo da Caxale, 1 ambasator del Re de
Inghillette, el quale giovane trovareti in la habitacione 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
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.
me scripe che lui haveva compreceso el tuto de quello che io li scriveva, et che circa tale mie demonstratione che lui per una sua epistola me daria plena risposta del tuto, per el quale suo scriverne non poco dubitai che lui non voleesse fare come fece Franchino Gafurio, el quale per 18 mie epistole fu da me adverio di multi soi errori comissi in quello suo tractato De harmonia instrumentorum,2 dal quale Franchino mai non hebi alcuna risposa sino al fine de l'opera. Da poi lui me fece una apologia contra,3 et molte ne mandò a Bologna a diversi canonici de la nostra ecclesia, credendosi tormi a un tracto lo' honore et la utilità. Ma la cosa reusi altramente che lui non haveva pensato, perché (Dei gratia) io sono cognosuto essere asi 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 non havea pensato, perche (Dei gratia) io sono cognosuto essere asai scripti a lui missi. Pertanto ho grande desiderio vedere tale tractato con qualche emendatione, che tale emendatione seriano tolte da li mei cosa alcuna non posso guadagnare, perché circa questa noviter impresso,4 per la quale impressa, el quale tu to ve satisfaro. Al venerabile perché lui apresso di me.5 Et questo verid., sententie, non caminano per la via de le tenebre et de li errori, in li quali (Turin, 1525).

1. On the 26th I received yours of the 9th with great pleasure, since I learned 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 should be satisfied 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, and I want to avoid Aaron's mistake of being too self-confident; his three treatises have brought him little honour among the intelligent. I pointed out many errors in his Toscanella,1 with no response. Finally he wrote me 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 Toscanella, 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 (veramente) per la sua poca advertentia et troppo 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, acio che restano in la sua ignorantia et pertinatia, come credo saperà fare V.E., alla quale humilmente me recomando et offero. 

Vale. Bononie, die 23 augusti 1529. 

Vester J. Spatarius

1 MS: lho.

2 Di harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus (Milan, 1518).

3 Apologia Franchini Gafurii musici adversus Joannem Spatarius et complures musicos bonominas (Turin, 1520).

4 The second, revised edn. of the Toscanella, published in Venice on 5 July 1529.

5 Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni di cano siglato (Venice, 1523).

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.

7 In 1604 Tomaso Buoni listed 'Tu passi da Piacenza' as an idiom meaning 'il compiacere ad altri, et el descender facilmente alle voglie d'altri; che altro non è, che piazenza'; see Nuovo thesoro de' proverbi italiani (Venice, 1604), pp. 355-6
because I tried to dissuade him from publishing his treatise on the modes. I wrote him 200 pages about it; just as I predicted, it came out without order and truth. 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 humoured and left alone in their ignorance and obstinacy.

28 (J3). Fos. 11r–22r
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 8 October 1529 (Scribe A)

Al Eccellente Messer Gioanne di Spatari Bolognese Musico Dignissimo.

1. A di nove d’agosto scrissi una mia a V.E. in risposta d’una vostra fatta a di 5 di luglio [no. 26], la quale era insieme legata col trattato vostro del contrapunto a me intitolato, nella quale mia lettera ringraziava 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 intitolarlame, ma etiam rimetterlo a mia correzione, 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 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 trovate superfluiti o diminuzione o altro errore, o vero cosa che non vi sia piacere, emendatelo come cosa vostra, che sono molto contento. Et 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 intitolato, 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 di 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 cosi dice V.E.: ‘Ma perché dite che vi occorrano certi dubbi in tal trattato, et similmente in quello delle proportioni, ha[ro] piacere intendere il tutto quando a V.E. sarà commodo, benché (ut scripsi) ogni cosa ho messa alla vostra correzione. 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

* The passage in quotation-marks is quoted from Spataro’s letter of 5 July 1529 (no. 26).

\* The succeeding words, ‘Pre Giovanni de Lago salutem’, have been cancelled.
esaminate. Ma mi sono confidato in V.E., la quale, per essere perita et dotta in tal facoltà, satisfarà al tuto. Pur harò piacer intende tuere dove dubitate, perché anch'ora che io sia con ambedue li piedi in la fossa, anch'ora desidero imparare, etc. 2

3. Adunque conoscendo io esser così il voler di quello, cioè che io gli scriva il mio parere, volontieri io tal cosa farò, perché desidero compiacerti, et sempre farli cosa grata, et non perché io voglia opponere et contradire al giudizio et parere suo, perché io potrei anch'ora esser delli minimi sui discepoli discepolo. Et per tal cagione mal volentieri io piglio

4. Dico adunque così, et primo quanto alla seconda parte nel capitolo vii, il quale tratta della fuga, della reditta, de talea, et del colore, dove difiniti che cosa sia fuga in questo modo, dicendo: che alla fuga al manco bisogni siano due, delli quali l'uno in cantando seguiti l'altro per quelle medesime distanze et vestigi che ha tenuto l'altro, le quali medesime distanze et vestigi caderanno procedendo per unisona, per diatessaron, per diapente, per diapason et per le distantie et vestigii che ha tenuto.

Il predetta fuga consiste nelle similitudini de li intervalli musicali che sono compiti et vestigii che ha tenuto, et per tal cagione mal volentieri io piglio tale carico. Pur harò altro, le quali medesime distantie et vestigii che ha tenuto, et non occultare quello che forse li potria tornare in danno et dishonore, perché anch'ora che io sia con ambedue li piedi in la fossa, et non restaro dire il mio parere circa i dubbii occorrenti.

5. E questo si conferma da Marcheto Padoano nel capitolo 42, dove cosi dice: Sed notandum est quod dictum est supra, quod ubique positi b rotundum dicitur vocem sola, ubique vero positur b quadrum dicitur vocem mi. He enim notul quibus predicta duos signa scilicet b e dervisum semper habent sequentia, faturam tenuiones, quae natura et incipit per desreveniem notam a fa, ibi positur b rotundum. Si vero a mi, ibi positur b quadrum, et he sunt proprietates proprue b rotundum et b quadrum, et he est ratio quae ibidem in cantu scribuntur, et ea sequuntur

28. Del Lago to Spataro, 8 Oct. 1529

Dico adunque che se questo qui sopra notato esempio ben noterà et bene esaminerà, V.E. troverà essere dissimile alla sua definizione o vero descrittione, come da questo luogo del soprano sino alla fine vedere et cognoscere si può ut hic:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cantus} & \\
\text{Fuga per diapason} & \text{fuga per unisona} \\
\text{Fuga per diatessaron} & \text{fuga per diapente} \\
\text{Tenor} &
\end{align*}
\]

perché il tenore, il quale fuga et sequita in questo luogo il soprano per diatessarono con questi nomi de sillabe ut hic:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Fuga per diapason} & \\
\text{Fuga per unisona} &
\end{align*}
\]

dice re in D la sol re et fa in F fa su 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 et sopra acuto, et fa in b'abmi (accidentaliter) per virtù del b rotundo segnato nel predetto luogo, et la in A la mi re et sol in G sol re et re in A la mi re per causa di ascendere, et questo perché il b rotundo o ver molle da voi posto et segnato in b'abmi sopra acuto è mobile, la forza et possanza del quale non si estende se non alla nota o vero note le quali sono propinque ad esso b rotundo, il quale b rotundo 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 immediati 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 rotundo, ma solamente serve a quella sola nota alla quale è segnato et posto tal segno, come seguindolo si dirà.

3 MS: vestigie.

2 Quoted from Spataro's letter of 23 Aug. 1529 (no. 47).

3 We place in italics those passages Del Lago seems to be quoting from Spataro's treatise, which, unfortunately, is lost.

4 MS: 'de Guido monacho' has been cancelled.

5 'Mobile' was substituted for 'solamente indutile'.
I et seguitando in esso capitolo dice:
rotundum est clavis utriusque

6. Ma io in questo tengo altra opinione, et dico quel tale b rotundo posto in quel luogo da V.E. è mobile. Perché (come credo sappia V.E.) quando il b rotundo è segnato in principio di una particola o vero di più particole di ciascun concerto, tutta quella particola o vero processo di sillabe o vero de voci si canta per la proprietà di b molle, perché allora il b rotundo est signum demonstrativum si come fanno l’altre chiavi, delle quali una dimostra la proprietà di natura e l’altra dinota la proprietà di b duro, et il b rotundo (ut dixi) la proprietà di b molle, e questo conferma Giovan Tintorius nel suo Diffisorigio al capitolo 2°, il quale cosi dice: b rotundum et clavis ursinque falso mi, designatis ibi per b molle fu canendum esse, et seguitando in esso capitollo dice: b molle est proprietatis per quem in omni loco

4 Del Lago wrote ‘essentiale’, cancelled it by placing dots underneath it, and wrote over it: ‘stabile’. Del Lago has substituted ‘stabile’, come fuses segnato in principio del concerto for ‘essentiale’.

5 The following was deleted at this point: ‘Quando b rotundum positum est in principio concerto, scilicet inter clavem et signum, tunc dicitur esse stabilis’.

6 The cancellation ‘im mobilis, added above, has also been cancelled. Essentiale io intendo qui in questo luogo cito secondo la sua naturale [1°] potestà et il suo essere, la quale o vero il quale è in dimostrare che...

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 definizione della fuga, perché fuga (secondum Joannem Tinctorius) è definita partium quantus quo ad valorum, nomen, formam, et interdum quo ad locum

8 The definition is missing in both the printed edn. and the Brussels manuscript, Bibliothèque royale, MS II. 4147. However, in MS B. 2. of Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, the above definition non occur. Del Lago misread F as J, the abbreviation for ‘scollet’. Both quotations from Tinctorius are added in the margin of Del Lago’s letter.

9 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 Trattato de contrapunto. Del Lago’s version agrees with the redaction of Lucca, Biblioteca Governativa, MS 359, where the passage occurs on fo. 42. For a comparison of Del Lago’s quotation and the two versions of Prosdocimo’s treatise, see Callo, ‘Citationi 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’ Beldamondi, Contrapunctus, whose translation we have used; see p. 78 for the extract quoted by Del Lago.
Il nostro carissimo amico Don Pietro Aaron nella sua musica latina, De institutione harmonica, nel capitolo 52, il quale difinisce così: "Est autem idem dicta imitatio sita fugatio, qua sequax vel antecedens precedens voces partis, vel sequax vel antecedens eadem nomine, sed locis diversis repetit, et vel quasi imitando praeomiant [1] vel quasi sequax vel fugatio videatur." Ed poi seguendo dà l'esempio cosi dicendo: "Si cantus in D la sol re incheiustur et dicitur re mi fa sol la, tenor sub i eo quintum facit quaecumque subae omne de minimis expectando, quod quinta in G sol re ut acuto erit et easdem cantus notas retinet. Illud tamen scientia oportere tunc ipsum tenorum per b molle et aliter notas cantus imitetur et quas dicamus, etc." Ed questo medesimo ha osservato

8. Et similmente il nostro carissimo amico Don Pietro Aaron nella sua musica latina, De institutione harmonica, nel capitolo 52, il quale difinisce così: "Est autem idem dicta imitatio sita fugatio, qua sequax vel antecedens precedens voces partis, vel sequax vel antecedens eadem nomine, sed locis diversis repetit, et vel quasi imitando praeomiant [1] vel quasi sequax vel fugatio videatur." Ed poi seguendo dà l'esempio cosi dicendo: "Si cantus in D la sol re incheiustur et dicitur re mi fa sol la, tenor sub i eo quintum facit quaecumque subae omne de minimis expectando, quod quinta in G sol re ut acuto erit et easdem cantus notas retinet. Illud tamen scientia oportere tunc ipsum tenorum per b molle et aliter notas cantus imitetur et quas dicamus, etc." Ed questo medesimo ha osservato

10. Del Lago's description fits the third verse, 'Virgo singularis,' of Willaert's hymn 'Ave maris stella', first published in the Hymnorum musicae of 1542. For a modern edition see Adrian Willaert, Opera omnia, ed. Hermann Zeitck, Walter Gerstenberg, et al. (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 13). Rome, 1910-, vii. 107-11. What Del Lago calls the tenor is labelled CII in the edition. The two voice parts are written on one line with two different clefs; the canon voce is the only one that has B in the signature. Del Lago's letter of 1539 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.'

11. The quintus follows the quintus of 1542. For a modern edition see Adrian Willaert, Opera omnia, ed. Hermann Zeitck, Walter Gerstenberg, et al. (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 13). Rome, 1910-, vii. 107-11. What Del Lago calls the tenor is labelled CII in the edition. The two voice parts are written on one line with two different clefs; the canon voce is the only one that has B in the signature. Del Lago's letter of 1539 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.'
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 conseguenter in spetie, et questo per variare, che fa el semitono, dal quale nasce la differentia di nomi di ciascuna spetie nella musica esercitata, cioè prima, 2ª, 3ª, 4ª, etc. 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, si che V.E. intende che non gli essendo simile imitazione di nome, non gli può essere fuga reale et vera, [perché seguitiarono tutti li predetti errori, perché è necessario che la fuga habbia tre condizioni, 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 condizioni 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 opinione, perché Redicta nihil aliud est quam unius aut plurium coniunctionum continua repetitum.20

11. Di poi seguendo in esso capitolo, son pervenuto alla definitione di talea, da V.E. così definita: Talea è un modo di cantare il quale accade quando in una sola particola del concerto si procede con un medesimo passo o ver processo, variando per diversi luoghi, come si dimostra nel sopran del sequente concerto, ut hic:

\[
\text{Soprano: } \begin{array}{c}
1^\text{a} \\
\text{prima talea} \\
\text{seconda talea} \\
\text{terza talea} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\text{Tenore: } \begin{array}{c}
1^\text{a} \\
\text{prima talea} \\
\text{seconda talea} \\
\text{terza talea} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{Canon. Dictur ad primam et tertiam taleam de modo et tempore perfecto, ad secundam et quartam taleam de modo imperfecto et tempore perfecto.22}\]

In questo modo di talea qui di sopra notato nel prescritto tenore V.E.

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20 A 'Johannes Bagu Corregarius 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, organistri, cantori e strumentisti dal 1456 al 1520 (Historiae musicae cultores 44; Florence, 1987), p. 54.

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 talea, which we have supplied conjecturally.
The Letters

vede come la terza talea corrisponde et è simile in quanto alle figure, ma ben diversa di luoghi, et conseguenter anchora di voci, dalla prima, et la quarta similmente dalla seconda, 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 plurites in aliquo cantu secundum eundem ordinem, et abique medio,20 et etiam da Johannes Tincoritis, il quale definisce talea nel suo Definitorio in questo modo: si dice, Talea est idempitas particularum in una et cadem parte cantus existentium, quod ad nomen, locum et valorem notarum, et passarum suarum.21 Ma Giovan de Murius nel suo Treatato de cantu mensurato al capitolo nono definisce talea (tacitamente però) come fa il colore, la definizione del quale parliamo quando d’esso si tratterà, perché lui non pone differenza alcuna tra la talea et il colore.1 Et per tal cagione lui non pone alcuna definizione de talea ma solum del colore e del prolocum et valorem notarum, et pausarum suarum. 24 Definisce talea ne! suo成为中国, la definitione del quale parlaremo quando d’esso si trattari, perché lui non pone differenza alcuna tra la talea et il colore.1 Perche lui non pone differentia veruna tra talea et il colore.

* 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 'plurites repetitus'.

** MS: repenturut. **

3. Trovas[n]si anchora parecchi altri modi de talea, li quali per brevità io lascio al presente, per esser questo assai sufficiente in dimostrazione de eundem ordinem, et absque mediocris in via di comparazione con quel definitions of Talea 'tala' di Duns Scotus.27 Et similmente siete stato deficente in definire el colore (come intenderete al suo luogo quando d’esso tratterò) perché non solum si fa il 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, et il quale niente altro è che una certa melodia nel canto più volte repetita, et questa si fatta repetizione è voluntaria, non lasciato et posto da canto l’ordine delle misure del modo, del tempo, et della prolataion, per il quale anchora si serva il modo delle pausse. Si replicano adunque le figure, cioè le notule et le pause, due, tre, et quatro volte, secondo la volontà che compone, la quale repetizione si dimanda colore nella musica, perché la musica si colora, id est si ornà et abellisce per tal colore, per el quale alli occhi de’ risguardanti et alle orechlie degli audienti si representa et dimostra decora et bella.30 Curdente il colore appresso li musici è ornamento del canto si come è el qual vocabulo in musica altro non significa che repetizione di medesime figure o ver notule, come appresso di Giovan de Murius si legge, et di molti altri musici antichi perittissimi. Però dove V.E. ha scritto ‘tala’ in la sua opera predetta, io, se a l’lei piacerà, ponerò ‘talea’. Oltra di questo siete stato deficiente dove dite nelle 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 metteto de Joannes Dunstable, ‘Ven! Sancte Spiritus’,27 et similmente in uno altro suo metteto composto sopra una antiphona ‘Inter natos mulierum’28 di Sancto Giovon Baptista, et etiam in uno metteto de presbyter Joannes de Sarto composto sopra lo introito della messa dei morti ‘Requiem eternam’,29 et in molti altri concenti de dottissimi compositori.

11. Et similmente siete stato deficiente in definire el colore (come intenderete al suo luogo quando d’esso tratterò) perché non solum si fa il 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, et il quale niente altro è che una certa melodia nel canto più volte repetita, et questa si fatta repetizione è voluntaria, non lasciato et posto da canto l’ordine delle misure del modo, del tempo, et della prolataion, per il quale anchora si serva il modo delle pausse. Si replicano adunque le figure, cioè le notule et le pause, due, tre, et quatro volte, secondo la volontà che compone, la quale repetizione si dimanda colore nella musica, perché la musica si colora, id est si ornà et abellisce per tal colore, per el quale alli occhi de’ risguardanti et alle orechlie degli audienti si representa et dimostra decora et bella.30 Certamente il colore appresso li musici è ornamento del canto si come è

27 Modern edn. in Dunstable, Complete Works, ed. Manfred Bukofzer; rev. edn. by Margaret Bent, Ian Bent, and Brian Trowel (Musica Britannica 7; London, 1970), pp. 88–91 (a 4) or 92–4 (a 5); both motets are isorhythmic, but the four-part version has more isorhythm in the upper voices. Gaffurius includes the tenor of the four-part motet in his Praticia musicae (trans. Millot, p. 81) as an example of rests indicating mode.


29 This is the motet ‘Romanorum rex’, anonymous in the unique source, the Aosta Codex, fos. 67v–68r. 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 Murius’s definition of color. ‘Huiusmodi autem repetitio voluntaria est, mensurarum modi tempus et prolataionis ordinem non dimispus, quo etiam pausarum modus servatur, repetitutur ergo figurae, id est, nota et pausae, hos et vel quorad ad componentem voluntatem quae repetitio colore 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.\footnote{This marginal addition probably derives from Prosdocimo's \textit{Tractatus practicus} (CS iii. 226a): 'quod color in musica sit sumptus sub quadam similitudine ad quemdam colorum rethoomiqui repetitio nominatur.'} Et è differente questo processo da quello il quale si dimanda 'introito', perché questo processo si fa quando alcuna parte di alcun canto riceve il fine de l'altra parte del medesimo\footnote{CS iii. 19; Ugolino, \textit{Definitorio}, ed. Seay, ii. 266 (Del Lago follows Ugolino's wording).} canto. Nel fine adunque delle parti del canto questo processo si dove trovare, il quale improprie si dimanda colore quantunque commonmente così si possa chiamare.\footnote{Another unacknowledged translation from Ugolino (ed. Seay, ii. 266): 'sed quamvis ii processus servetur in quampluribus tenoribus mottettorum, non tamen servatur in compoesitori tra el colore et la talea, nel quale cosi se legge: que differentia quamvis servetur in quampluribus tenoribus mottettorum, non tamen servetur in ipsis mottettis. Exempla patent in mottettis, etc.'\footnote{The introductory duos of some isorhythmic motets, for example Du Fay's 'Apostolo venecie mundi splendor'. See also n. 24.} perchi et similmente \footnote{Another unacknowledged translation from Ugolino (ed. Seay, ii. 266): 'sed quamvis ii processus servetur in quampluribus tenoribus mottettorum, non tamen servatur in compoesitori tra el colore et la talea, nel quale cosi se legge: que differentia quamvis servetur in quampluribus tenoribus mottettorum, non tamen servetur in ipsis mottettis. Exempla patent in mottettis, etc.'\footnote{The introductory duos of some isorhythmic motets, for example Du Fay's 'Apostolo venecie mundi splendor'. See also n. 24.} \textit{primo colore secundo colore re terzo colore re}}

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 prelallegato capitolo del predito Gioane de Muris, dove lui recita la differentia che al suo tempo facevano alcuni compostori 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.\footnote{Prosdocimo, reporting on the opinion of some of Johannes de Muris's contemporaries (ibid. iii. 226b).} Perch'è con osservato ordine delle misure queste differentie del colore et della talea ne' tenori, superiori, cioè nelle parte più acute, et ne' contratenori, lo che intendete come siete stato diminuito in più parti nel definire la talea et il colore.\footnote{Horace, \textit{Ari poetica} 539; see also no. 7 n. 1.}

15. Et similmente è casato in errore el predito Tinctoris nel definire il colore et la talea, ma in questa sola parte lui ha errato dove dice 'in una et cadem parte cantus'.\footnote{See above, n. 24.} Ma certamente non in che modo l'uno et l'altro di voi meglio escusarsi possa quam per hoc dictum Oratii, 'qua[\footnote{Prosdocimo, reporting on the opinion of some of Johannes de Muris's contemporaries (ibid. iii. 226b).} n]que quando color in musica sit sumptus sub quadam similitudine ad quemdam colorum rethoomiqui repetitio nominatur'. Hie enim processus eadem parte cantus'.\footnote{CS iii. 58; Ugolino, \textit{Declaratio}, ed. Seay, ii. 264; again, Del Lago's wording agrees with Ugolino's version.} Ma certamente non in che modo l'uno et l'altro di voi meglio escusarsi possa quam per hoc dictum Oratii, 'qua[\footnote{Prosdocimo, reporting on the opinion of some of Johannes de Muris's contemporaries (ibid. iii. 226b).} n]que quando color in musica sit sumptus sub quadam similitudine ad quemdam colorum rethoomiqui repetitio nominatur'. Hie enim processus eadem parte cantus'.\footnote{CS iii. 58; Ugolino, \textit{Declaratio}, ed. Seay, ii. 264; again, Del Lago's wording agrees with Ugolino's version.} Ma certamente non in che modo l'uno et l'altro di voi meglio escusarsi possa quam per hoc dictum Oratii, 'qua[\footnote{Prosdocimo, reporting on the opinion of some of Johannes de Muris's contemporaries (ibid. iii. 226b).} n]que quando color in musica sit sumptus sub quadam similitudine ad quemdam colorum rethoomiqui repetitio nominatur'. 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particularum in una et eadem parte cantus existentium, quo ad formam et valorem notarium, et pausarium suavem.\textsuperscript{10} Per le quali definitioni V.E. può comprendere facilmente esser stata lei (perdonemne) deficiente in essa definitione di esso colore, come in quella di talea, per trovarsi etiam tutti questi altri modi diversi, de' quali abbiamo poco dinani parlato, l esempi de essi brevitas causa omittito.

17. Pretere a dove V.E. allega Jacomo Obrecht in conformazione della sua definitione del colore sopradetta ne' tenori della messa sua chiamata 'Si dedero',\textsuperscript{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, secondo 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 intenzione di Jacomo Obrecht primo et principalmente, per dimostrare haver cognizione de' segni di tempo con prolatione, come saria delle sue quantita ternarie et binarie, et de il valore delle sue note, cioè quelli sono perfette et imperfette, et quali alterano, et che proporzioni nascono da quegli, comparando li detti segni del tenore a segni posti in principio delle parti del concento, et della misura anchora di ciascuno di essi segni, et etiam per dimostrare haver cognizione de' segni di tempo con prolatione, come sare in un medesimo atto o ver processo di note replicato più volte per più et manco valore diversificare il suo contrapunto. Et questa credo sia stata la mera intenzione et il proprio volere di esso Jacomo Obrecht, perché al suo tempo tango certo tal modo di procedere per colore pochi, anzi nessuno, havesse piena cognizione di si 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 opera de V.E., quantonque li bisogni lungo tempo, et massimamente per l'intaglio de essi esempli. Pur non sono per mancarli in cosa alcuna. Ma da usarli ogni diligentia et fede, vorria ben che V.E. mi facesse vedere il suo trattato chiamato 'pugna' o vero 'reditta' et non colore, perche alli sui tempi non se usava questo modo di colore.

17. Parmi che io sia stato, honorando mio, molto arrogante et temerario nello scrivere circa queste dubitationi. Ma volendo dimostrare quello che è di mio giudizio et parere, non ho possuto dire altamente. E se gli paresse che io contrarissesse et repugnasse a qualche sua opinione, come di sopra haviamo detto, non è proceduto da veruna malignità, né per volermi prenere a' lei 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 occultà et asconde la verità con il velo della blandiloquentia et fallace adulazione.

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 del si esempli. Pur non sono per mancarli in cosa alcuna. Ma da usarli ogni diligentia et fede, vorria ben che V.E. mi facesse vedere il suo trattato chiamato 'pugna' o vero 'reditta', il quale allega spesso in le opere sue, accio che io possa vedere alcuni altri dubbi quali io ho in alcuni lochi di questo suo trattato de contrapunto et in quello de le proporzioni, et etiam in quello intitolato a Messer Hermes Bentivoglio de canto misurato, delle quali dubitationi altro per adesso scrivere non posso a V.E., se prima io non veggo el detto trattato. Si che la prego quanto so et posso si degni mandarmelo.' Et quanto più presto V.E. se degnarà darmi risposta, tanto più ch'io sarà.

In Venetia a di VIII ottobre M.D.XXIX.

[Giovanni del Lago]


\textsuperscript{41} Modern edn. in Obrecht, \textit{Werken}, ed. Wolf, All. 12, Missen 6. For a facsimile of the tenor, see Apel, \textit{The Notation of Polyphonic Music}, p. 185. 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.

\textsuperscript{42} MS: mandarmelo. The following passage has been cancelled: 'presto. In tutto quello che io so et posso sono sempre a comandamenti di V.E., offrendomi sempre a quelli p. [illegible word] come suo buon figliolo et desideroso haver spesso lettere da lei.'

The Letters

1. 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.’

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.’

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, tala, and color, you define fuga as follows: the fuga calls for at least two parts, one of which follows the footsteps 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. But your definition is contradicted by your example:

This passage in the soprano:

\[
\text{fuga at the octave}
\]

is answered a fourth below by the tenor:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{re fa mi re mi}
\end{align*}
\]

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
The Letters

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 b is set down we sing mi, wherever round b is set down we sing fa. The notes these two signs, b and B, 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 b is placed there. These are the true properties of the round b and the square b, 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. You seem to believe that the Bb 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'.

6. But I hold a different opinion, and I say your Bb is variable, because (as I think you know) 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/Bb, showing that fa should be sung. And: Bb indicates the hexachord where F is sung as ut and the other syllables derive from it. 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, whereas the notes 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). 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, with which Gaffurio 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 fugua. 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 voice-parts of a song move in imitative style.

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 alters them by imitating or appears as it were to chase them by following. He gives an example with the following remarks: If the tenor 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. The excellent musician Adrian Willaert placed a Bb in the key signature of the canon follower in his hymn 'Ave maris stella' to preserve the same intervals and syllables, as a true fugua requires. Jacquet, in his Plorabunt sacerdotes et levite' for five parts, did the same, though Fra Giordano 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 fugua 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 fugua 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 fugua begins to disagree, the dissimilarity of the fugua becomes evident. 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 fugua. For the fugua has three conditions: similarity in syllables, form, and note-values. Lacking one of these, it is not a real fugua.

10. I like your definition of redicta because redicta is nothing but the continuous repetition of one or more melodic intervals.

11. You define tales 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', composed in 1440:

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. Tinctoris says: *Talea* is the identity of small passages in one and the same voice-part regarding solmization, pitch, note-values, and rests. 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.

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. 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' and his motet on the antiphon 'Inter natos mulierum' and a motet by the priest Johannes de...
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. 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. Others say: Color is a progression of similar pitches only, repeated several times in some voice-part in the same order without intervening material. 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. 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'. 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', 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 light of all these others.

Moreover, you say Obrecht used color as you define it in the tenor of his 'Missa Si dedero'. 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.

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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.

Honour at heart. You have asked my opinion; a real friend does not hide the truth under a veil of flattery and false adulation.

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 (f. 149r–152v)
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 24 November 1529
(autothraph)


249r Venerabilis vir, salutem.
1. A li di 5 del presente ho receputo una vostra de di 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 comprescho che non haveti havuto una mia [no. 27], la quale ve mandai per uno frate de Sancto Salvatoro, in responsa de quella vostra de di 9 augusti signata a me missa. 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 aggiuncta che ha facta el nostro Frate Petro Aron al suo Toscanello.

2. L’altra causa per la quale questa vostra ultima a me è stata molesta nasce de la vostre puerile et impensate argumentatione, le quale vui facetti nel 7° capitolo de la seconda parte del mio tractato de contrapunto a vui misso, dove diceti che io sono contra me medesimo in questo passo de fuga:

\[\text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}\]

Et questo diceti advenire perché el tenore, el quale fuga dapoi el soprano ut hic: \[\text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}\], non potrà fugare con quelle medesime voce o vero syllabe de Guido, perché el tenore farà el suo processo con queste denominatione de syllabe:

\[\text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}\]

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. Nr1). In his previous letter (no. 17, 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:

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{C} \quad \text{C} \\
\text{E} \quad \text{E} \\
\text{G} \quad \text{G} \\
\text{B} \quad \text{B} \\
\text{F} \quad \text{F} \\
\text{G} \quad \text{G} \\
\text{F} \quad \text{F} \\
\text{E} \quad \text{E} \\
\end{array} \]

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, stiano 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 concetto fugato, et per tale modo è stato inteso da Tintorisi, se sanamente advertere a quella sua diffinizione da vui aducuta in luce, 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 imitatione tenorem in ascensu aut in descensu, non in eodem tempore, sed post unam notulam vel plures incipit in eadem voce eundem cantum facere, aut simillem in diatessaron vel in diapente, aut etiam in diapason vel in suis compositis ac decompositis sub aut supra, quem modum practica fugam apellet, propertia quod una vox aliam sequitur similis arsi aut thesi.* Questo doctissimo musicus 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 clamamente da vui sera compresa considerando che se da due cantori tale mio exemplo sera cantato senza denominare alcuna de le syllabe de Guido, tale exemplo o vero canto mio doctissimo musico conclude che la fuga solo consiste in la similitudine de li intervalli et specie, et non in la similitudine de la fuga, sia inteso da me essere signo inditiale et essentiale. A la quale vostra male pensitata consideratione respondo et dicco 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 accidentaliter proprie de altri signi, et perché non possono essere comprehesi né etiam essere intesi stare in li concenti per alcuno suo accidente occurrente in le note esercitate in li concenti, se non per la sua apparente et usitata forma propriamente. Imperò che el non acade del signo del b molle et del b duro come acede del signo circulare et altri similiter usitati in canto mensurato per la clara notizia 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, et vero figure, el quale dapoi 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, se o vero mensuratamente pausati in li concenti, et vero canti, come acade del signo circulare signato in fronte canti, el quale (ut dixi) sempre sera signo inditiale. Ma se da poi (in processu cantius) se trovarà qualche suo effecto, o vero proprio accidente, come seriano queste pause in essenza.

4. Da poi oltra procedendo in tale vostra, vui scoprí 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. 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 accidentaliter proprie de altri signi, et perché non possono essere comprehesi né etiam essere intesi stare in li concenti per alcuno suo accidente occurrente in le note esercitate in li concenti, se non per la sua apparente et usitata forma propriamente. Imperò che el non acade del signo del b molle et del b duro come acede del signo circulare et altri similiter usitati in canto mensurato per la clara notizia 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, et vero figure, el quale dapoi 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, se o vero mensuratamente pausati in li concenti, et vero canti, come acade del signo circulare signato in fronte canti, el quale (ut dixi) sempre sera signo inditiale. Ma se da poi (in processu cantius) se trovarà qualche suo effecto, o vero proprio accidente, come seriano queste pause...

5. 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.

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3 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. 6-7 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.

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29. Spataro to Del Lago, 24 Nov. 1529

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403
semibreve alterate, o vero divise, o vero breve plene per evitare perfec- 
tione, etc., alhora tali effetti o vero accidenti proprii (del circulo producti 
et considerati) serano signi secondi, et serano dicto essentiali, perché altra 
che loro demonstrano quello che prima dal circulo è stato demonstrato,
110 che quale cosa non potrà acadere in li signi del b molle et del b duro, perché el non se dà signo 
in notulis per il quale tali signi possano essere compresi, ma sempre 
sono extra. E la nota per tali signi signata non muta valore per virtù 
de esso signo, ma tantummodo 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 sera stato dicto, dicendo che tale signo potrà 
esser continuato et non continuato, o vero stabile et mobile. Per le 
predicte demonstrationi potreti intendere che tale signo non è stato posito 
da me in tale loco per signo essentiale, come vui credeti. E per meglio 
demonstrare el vostro poco sapere, diecti che da Messer Adriano è stato 
posto 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.

7. Da poi ultra procedendo, diecti che seti pervenuto dove io tracto de 
talla, o vero talea, et diecti che non confessati né negati che tale modo da 
me assignato possa stare o non possa stare, ma che in le antiche 
compositione haveti trovato altri modi de talea asai diversi dal mio 
assignato in tale mio tractato, et aduceti in vostra diffensione quello che 
apertamente è conra de vui, et questo advene perche fati come fano quilli 
che poco sciano, li quali perché vano con poco respecto, se recano ogni 
sterco in seno.

poi per meglio fortificare la vostra male pensitata predica diffinitione, aduceti in luce la diffinitione di Tintoris, con el quale haveti cercato concordarvi, perché ogni simile petisse el suo simile. 11 Tintoris era uno aduceti in luce la diffinitione de Tintoris, con el quale haveti cercato pazote, et molto identitas particularum in una et eadem parte m cantus existentium quo ad formam et esso Tintoris demonstrano la natura del colore, litteram et de verbo ad verbum, sona come fa quella, la quale lui ha posito natura de la redicta, perché el colore sequita la cosa colorata con qualche de note, perché de la identita de le particule facta in una medesima particula del concento, senza mutare la forma et valore de le note, nasce la errore non ve seti acorto. 13 Et questo nasce perche haveti aducto in luce redicta, o vero la particula replicata et iterum dicta, et de questo vostro circa la fuga, redicta, colore, et talla, o vero talea, da me quadrano con el rare, et multe diffinitione haveti scripti che da vui non sono intese, et uno piculo tractato, el quale me fu donato dal mio preceptore de l'ano

Adagiorum chiiiades quatuor exempla magis do cent quam verba' .14 Haveti solamente ate so a chiachia Adagiorum chiiiades quatuor exempla quam ratiocinationis verba compungunt.'

Christianorum, series Latina I42; Turnhout, I37r), p. 317 (2. 1484, 16 el quale tractato tengo scripta de sua propria mano, et credo che Tinctoris, para. Io). Spataro's example of composto in lingua materna .. .'(which Aaron cites for the definition of counterpoint according to 'lingua materna' that he wrote while he was in Salamanca.

15 Aaron in his Lucardio (Venice, 1545), Book III, fo. 18r: 'Barnabale Rami in un certo suo compendio compostoc in lingua materna ... ' (which Aaron cites for the definition of contrary according to 'gli antichi'). Ramsi himself, in his Musica practica (ed. Wolf, p. 42), mentions a treatise in 'lingua materna' that he wrote while he was in Salamanca.

29. Spataro to Del Lago, 24 Nov. 1529

quello che lui ha scripto in tale tractato sia la mera verità, perché lui era doceto et havaeva grande cognizione de li termini usiati da li antichi, et etiam lui andava con altro respecto che non ha fatto Johannes de Muris et Tintoris, li quali, dato che l'uno fusse existimato bono theologia,11 et l'altro bono astrologo,12 non sono però stati boni musicisti,13 come l'opere sue demonstrano.

8. Io non dico che la intentione de Jacobo Obrecht sia stata che li tenori de la sua missa de 'Si dedero' fussono intesi da altri essere stati facci 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 compreso, perché spesso acade che multi, parlando et tractando de diverse scientie, fano de li syllogismi et altri termini pertinenti a li optimi logici, et loro ignorano logica. Se da Jacobo Obrecht è stato ignorato quello processo colorato el quale cade in li soi tenori predetti, da poi da altri musicisti (più docti de lui) tale colorato processo è stato compreso, la quale cosa è stata da vui tacite affirmata, dove sequiendo dici che al tempo del predicto Jacobo non era alcuno el quale havesse intelligentia de tale processo colorato, per le quale vostre parole se verifica quello che da me è stato dicto di sopra, siilett che multi (alquando) fano quello che non intendono et che non cognoscono, che da poi è compreso et denomnato da coloro che in tale facultà sono docti. Quanti sono li quali scrivono in latino et in lingua materna che fano de li interrogativi et de le parenthesis, et altri puncti et termini che non li intendono, che da poi sono intesi da li periti et boni gramatici. Pertanto se tale modo è stato tenuto da Josquin per demonstrarsi copioso de arte de contrapunto, et non per procedere per musica colorata, questo non contradice perché che lui non habia aducito in luce el canto colorato da lui non inteso né considerato, el quale canto colorato diciet essere stato chiamato [da loro 'pugna' et 'redicta'], et non 'colore'. A me certamente
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 concordì in unione, la quale cosa acade nel colore. Imperò che intra el colore et el colorato non cade poca discrepanzia, 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 denominazione 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 andamento. Pertanto non aspectati da me facto senza causa, perche prima io haveva inteso qualche vostro mandasse le opere mie) io volsi el suo consenso et parere, et questo non fu con Messer Marco Antonio Cavazono, del quale (prima che io ve

...
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:

\[
\begin{align*}
1: & \text{ re fa la sol re} \\
2: & \text{ re fa mi re mi}
\end{align*}
\]

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 \( \mathbf{B} \) in my example to be indicative and essential.\(^5\) \( \mathbf{B} \) and \( \mathbf{E} \) are always indicative and never essential, for they are primary signs and not attributes of other signs; they have only one form. The signs \( \mathbf{B} \) and \( \mathbf{E} \) 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 are found in the course of a piece, such as these rests \( \square \), altered and 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 \( \mathbf{B} \) and \( \mathbf{E} \), 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 \( \mathbf{B} \) as an essential sign. Your lack of intelligence shows in your statement that Adriano used the \( \mathbf{B} \) 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 \( \text{fuga} \) 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 \( \text{fuga} \): 

\( \text{Fuga is the identity of voice-parts in a composition with respect to time-values, solmization, form, and sometimes the location of notes and rests.} \)\(^8\) 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 \( \mathbf{C} \), another under \( \mathbf{G} \). 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 \( \text{talla} \) or \( \text{talea} \), 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 \( \text{talea} \) in this tenor? You define \( \text{talea} \) 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 \( \text{color} \) agrees word for word with his definition of \( \text{talea} \): 

\( \text{Color is the identity of small passages in one and the same voice-part regarding the form and the value of the notes and rests.} \)\(^12\) I don't know if one definition can cover two different terms, but you both are describing not \( \text{talea} \) or \( \text{color} \) but \( \text{redicta} \). 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 \( \text{redicta} \).\(^13\) 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 \( \text{fuga} \), \( \text{redicta} \), \( \text{color} \), and \( \text{talla} \) or \( \text{talea} \) 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
17 theologian and the former a good astronomer, yet they were not good musicians, 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 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.

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 you 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 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: our 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, thought-provoking that Spataro challenges Del Lago's use of the terms essentia 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 essentia 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 matter. 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 so 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.

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 Karl Berger's claim in Musica ficta, p. 138. However, Del Lago's point, which was not clearly expressed, was that Spataro's example did not fit his definition because the B9 did not have prolonged validity; thus the following B2s 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 'verbam ad verbam'. In his dictionary, however, Tinctoris defines color as 'identitas particularum in una et eadem parte cantis existentium quoad formam et valorem notarum et pausarum suarum'²³ and talea as 'identitas particularum in una et eadem parte cantis 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'; 'valorem 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. 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 these two concerns color, the rhythmic shape. Because Tinctoris says that the color 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.
²⁴ CS iv. 189; Dictionary, trans. Parrish, p. 64.

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 January 1531 (autograph)

30 (ff. 219r–221v)


Ve pare meglio. Ma dove dicesti che non gli se a V.E. pare che stia bene. Se pure non ve pare, emendatelo al modo che ve pare meglio. Ma dove dicesti che non gli è il 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 chiarezza) segnai el numero
octonario dove voleva essere segnato el novenario.¹ Ma de questo poco curo, perché esso responso è segnato con questo segno C, nel quale cantando se bate la a. Se fusse segnato con questo C, seria errore evidentissimo, perché non gli seria la mensura integra del tempo dato in la breve, come varle tale segno diminuto. Ma se pure non osservare il binario numero in le semibreve in tale mio responso ho commisso uno errore, dico che V.E. in quella sua canzonetta a me mandata n'haverà commisso dui, et el primo sera simile a quello che V.E. dice essere stato mio errore, perché tale canzonetta è segnata con questo segno C₂, nel quale se deve bater la mensura in la breve et cogliere doe breve per una longa, mensurando el concetto, et tale binario numero de breve non li cadi integro. Et etiam in processo de tale canto, volendo bater la breve come denota el segno (in fronte cantus posito), li cade desordine asai de multe integro. Et etiam in processo de tale canto, volendo bater la breve come mensurando el concento, et tale binario numero de breve non li cade perché in cantando, semibreve senza havere respecto al segno posito in principio cantus.² Sincope evitate da li docti, le quale non sono bene note et comprehese, fusseno riducte in breve et le breve in longe et le minime in semibreve, etc., V.E. seria stato tacito senza pensare mio responso fuse signato con questo segno C₂ et che le semibreve el non se...

Ma se dapo, questo segno ² sera posito in C fa ut ut hic:

Ma se se n'havera no naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o veramente voci'.
The Letters

Quale cade intrada semitonio minore in grave et mazore in acuto, in modo che dal predetto segno de b molle a D sol re sarà spatio de semitonio mazore, et da esso b molle a C fa ut sarà minore. Et circa questo non rispondeti al proposito, perché vui dicitci che a vui pare sia tu to el contrario, cioè che dal besto negro, o vero semitonio, a C fa ut sia semitonio mazore, et non minore, et che dal predetto besto negro a D sol re sia minore. Tale vostra risposta non sona al proposito, perché io parlo de con questo segno
cognitione de le sei sibbl et in ciascuna positione de le mano equammente
questo segno
 senha dì vostro monochordo, ma bene se lì trova quello el quale nasce da b molle in appaire.

Considerate, dico che a me pare impossibile che da V.E. ne son stato come forza alcuni se credeno, li quali rectamente pertractato, come per clarissimi effecti ne li vostri scripti che fu a di 22 del presente, ne la sacristia del nostro divo Petronio, non trovano in li soi arctificiali instrumenti.

Spataro gives the correct division of the tone in Pythagorean tuning.

6 Spataro appliche l'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.

6. Ho receputo li canti de V.E. et quilli sono stati cantati domenica, che fa a di 22 del presente, ne la sacristia del nostro divo Petronio, non

In mean-tone temperament the diatonic semitone (here C-D♭) is larger than the chromatic semitone (C-C♯). Spataro gives the correct division of the tone in Pythagorean tuning.

A brief rest between the semibreves would be incorrect notation, for it would contradict the measure.

Spataro mistakenly wrote ' coma' for ' semitonio minore'. The error is surprising, in view of his correct exposition in para. 5.

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.
li perdonati et lasatilo stare, et ancora io li perdono, dica pure al pegio che 

easai utile che, piacendo a me, lo faria stampare, et io li mandai tale tractato. Dapo lui me scripsì che 

1. A version of Spataro's Utile et breve regole di canto; see no. 16 and Ch. 5.

30. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1531

30. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1531

domandava un’altro mio trattato chiamato Appostille, perché diceva volersi chiarire de certi soi dubbi.

10. Pensate, Frate Petro mio carissimo, che alhora non potete stare el 

segno, né haverne patienza, el fu forza che io li scrivesse el mio parere, et 

io che dissi che a lui non era ancora chiarito il suo trattato. Et non è 

potere stare a manco el spatia de uno anno con 

4. MS: scrisse. 

Spataro seems to have unconsciously confused 'speculatore' with 'receptaculo'.

5. MS: et.

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 Giovanni Spataro musicista bolognese nel quale si tratta de la perfecione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata exceritate.
imperiale cità. Et ogni cosa sarà al comando de V.E., perché non curo fare guadagno, tanto (gratia di Dio) ho che me basta. Ma come io già scripsì 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 volontera 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 emendate, se errore se li trova. Cognosco bene che l'opera del contra­mandaro qua a quella tute quelle opere le quale a lui haveva mandate, puncta seria laboriosa per li exempli, li quali sono molto prolixi per havere adviso quello che V.E. vole che io facia et quello che haveti pensato et concluso molte diverse particule in uno solo exemplo. delibero, perché tanto deti a Don Leonardo. Da poi ho inteso che l'ha mandata, et perché a non ho al presente cosa nova alcuna che sia mia da mandare a V.E., altri lo chiamano mantuano. E homo da bene; V.E. tale psalmo a 5 voce. Tale discipulo havendo facto uno nostro cantore et mio discipulo uno psalmo, mando a practica et in theorica. Circa el canto, del quale dice alquanto vederlo. Se in questo mezo, V.E. havesse qualche amico suo Sancta Marina, mai non l'ho veduto, si che altro circa affidato, el quale volesse andare a Bologna, dati adviso, et io gli tractato. Non scio come mandarlo; sono 2 5 foglii integri.

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 Nicoalo 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, si che altro circa ció non dico.


14. Non altro per ora. Se in questa mia [non] fusse cosa scripta con quella modestia et reverentia la quale s'apartene a V.E. et intra li boni et veri amici, non incolpati el mio bono animo et intentione, ma si la mia ignorantia, et non me reputati maligno ne superbo, ma si 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 1331.

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. 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. 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, 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
...of Guido’s hand, and this is because they do not understand the coniuncta. 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 f. 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 f 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 [D G B G A B]. 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 D f divides the tone into a minor semitone from C and a major semitone from D. It differs from C G by a comma. You claim the opposite because you haven’t got a D f on your monochord, 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 to the signature C 2, you have some syncopations that you do not allow in Toscanello: a semibreve is syncopated beyond a breve rest.

7. I also have been considering the semibreve e f 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. 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. 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. 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 fugae, taelae, 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 Proportion. 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. I also have my letters to the late Gafurio on his De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum, 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. 216r-v
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 February 1531 (autograph)


216v 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 trattati de V.E. me occureno.1 Et aciò che a V.E. siano manco molestie, legendo tali mei scripti, ho fineto 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 rancho, atento che in me non è ranco né superbia, né livore, ma solo uno gelo de amore de la virtù et del proximo con uno certo ardent de desiderio de union, la quale io voria vedere intra li docti de questa facoltà, aciò che tutti fusseno uno corpo et sequeitasseno parimemente in uno volere, fondato in la disciplina de la mera verità. Pertanto, el mio honorando Frate Petro, V.E. lega li scripti mei. Se alcuna cosa li sera che a V.E. sia grata, quella tenereti, et l’altre ponereti da parte, come inutile. Et considerareli che ancora io posso errare, perché 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 trattati non è stato bene inteso la vostra ordinacione et fantasia, al manco in quilli capitolii dove V.E. ha trattato de le sei sillabe considerate equale in sono in ciascuna positione de la mano, et de questo me sono acerto per quella vostra ultima a me missa.2 Pertanto, havendo io già scripto como vedereti, per fugire fatica non sono tornato a scrivere altramente. Ma tale vostre consideratione non possono stare senza errore, perché in molti locii opportuni non haveti usato questo segno 3, 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.
materia non se potrà rectamente retráctare, et perché in ciascuno loco de la mano dove serano le sei syllabe predicte equale in sono, se possono trovare rationabilemente trenta mutatione. Pertanto sequitará che senza tale segno ut hic $,$ signato, tale mutatione non se potranno trovare. Io tengo le figure de ciascuna posizione, le quale claramente demonstrano la merà verità, le quale sono 20, le quale al presente non mando a V.E. perché non è opera da fare a tempo de nocte. Come el giorno serà più lungo, che io possa scrivere, voglio mandarle a V.E. aciò che quella resti chiaro del tutto. Ma credeti a me, che siano tale vostre considerazione come voler, che non possono stare senza errore, come appare in li mei scripti a V.E. missi. Ma se possibile fusse, con qualche licita excusatione, che tale 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 porta 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 perche se tale opera sed examine 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. Bononiæ, die 8 februarii 1531.

El vostro servitore J. Spataro

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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; 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;

3 In Aaron's Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1531), chs. 21-41, only flats are used in hexachord transpositions.

4 Spataro had spoken before of thirty (trenta) mutations, which is correct. The 'to' 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'.
Ho inteso di le havute mie dubitatione, a la quale cosa a me o' [Venerabile et reverendo]o et excellentissimo musico Frate Giovanni florentino de l'ordine hyrosolomiano, quanto maggiore honorando. In Venetia, Sancto Zoanne de li furlani. salutem. Excellentissimo et clarissimo de li musici, el mio honorando Frate da me molto desiderata, perche parendomi che considerava molte cause le quale in questa misera vita possono occurere. ne faza [faccia] come cosa soa propria, et se a degno de essere impressa, datilo a lo impressore; se ancora non ve pare cosa de haverne honore, non durati fatica, perche seria male spendere el tempo in cosa che a! fine retornasse in vergogna. Et de questo asai ve etiam de non probate opinione. prego, perche io non curo aquistare fama de auctore de false sententie, posita ne! principio de !'opera a quella intitulata non sta a vostro modo, che ve dignati darli quella forma quale voleti. Et similemente ne! processo de !'opera, et maxime dove ho tractato de Franchino, se ho dicto tropo tale opera, Franchino era vivo et eramo inseme in litigio. Pertanto, io haveria potuto incorere in qualche parlare degno de reprehensione, perche vero insegna, non la faceti stampare. Ma haria bene acaro che quella figura 'ira impedit anno'm' etc. 2 Quella arma la quale posita ne! fine del perche quelle linee applicate al tempo et a! modo mazore et minore, et a la prolatione, non sono de poca importantia. Ma ho speranza che la cosa passara bene, perche seti sapiente. 3 In questo mezo io daro opera de riducere (con facilita) quelli exempli positi in quelli tractati li quali gia mandai al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto, et riducci et a V.E. intitolati, a quella ne faro uno presente, perche ho deliberato che quella (come el piu degno che oggidi intra musici se trova) sia herede de le opere mie, benché non siano digne de tale herede. Et questo voglio che sia perche sempre me haveti amato.

1. Io non ho dato el vostro canto a Messer Nicolao, perche 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 faro el debito. Ho facto lo offito con Juliano et altri cantori. Tutti se recomandano a V.E. Ma perché veneredi passato, che fu a di 24 del presente, Juliano me restituite la vostra epistola, et poi io solo, con uno clerico, cantai le sue particole con el sopranino et li trovai certe particole dove io dubito, le quale al presente non ve scriverò, perche non ce haria tempo, ma per un'altra mia dirò el tuto.

3. Io non ho dato el vostro canto a Messer Nicolao, perche 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 faro el debito. Ho facto lo offito con Juliano et altri cantori. Tutti se recomandano a V.E. Ma perché veneredi passato, che fu a di 24 del presente, Juliano me restituite la vostra epistola, et poi io solo, con uno clerico, cantai le sue particole con el sopranino et li trovai certe particole dove io dubito, le quale al presente non ve scriverò, perche non ce haria tempo, ma per un'altra mia dirò el tuto.
intemperately about Gafurio, who was then alive and with whom I was in conflict, for ‘anger blocks the mind . . .’. 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. 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.

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.

I am glad to hear that you received my critical remarks, 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.

My old servant has fallen ill, 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.
The Letters

1. 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] 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 Nicolo [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 1st 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.

4. (J89). Fos. 224r-225v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 24 October 1531 (autograph)
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 similiemente non mutò fa in la et la in fa per le rasoni predicte, le quale varietà di mutatione potevano essere aduate in luce da lui perché procedevano con eguale sonorità secondo el loco et sotto uno solo segno o vero littera, come da lui è affermato mentre che diffinisce che cosa sia mutatione, dicendo ut hic: Mutatio est durum vocum equalium inter se per diversas proprietates in uno signo et una voce variatio, bencè alcuni de li nostri musici dicono che questa diffinzione demonstra che solamente le mutatione cadono intrà le tre proprietà del canto, cioè intrà b duro, natura, et b molle, la quale cosa lì dimostrarì essere falsa, perché se così fosse 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 satisfatti.

2. Ma pure alcuni de essi nostri musici dicevano che tacite V.E. era asai contra el predito mio preceptore, perché lui dice che le coniunti 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 naturalmente cade mi, come in E et in E, et che quella de b duro se pone dove naturalmente 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 intrà Bartolomeo Ramis mio preceptore et vui non cade pare consideratione perché Bartolomeo solo atese et hebe respecto a producere tante positione de la mano de Guido signate quanto de biso[gu]no 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 recommandarei, et io a V.E. me recomendando.

Bonomiè, die 24 otobris 1531.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

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3. Although his terminology in the Calliope lege is confusing, Hothby does show the six syllables on each position of the hand. 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 contradier 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 at and mi, at 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 hexacords under one sign and one note. Some objected, saying that...
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 B♭ and E♭, and ♭ where there is normally a fa, as in C and F, but you have a ♯ 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 ♯ 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.

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 solmizatio syllabes, published as ch. 26 of his Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1523). 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 1533 (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. 33, para. 6). The letter was designed to gratify Aaron and preserve the fiction of his authorship—and to confound Del Lago.

E.E.L.
24° Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 24 October 1531 (autograph)

35° [Reverendo et venerabile] et doctissimo musicō Frate [Pietro Aron florentinō de l'ordine hyrosolomitano, quanta maggiore honorando].

[In Venetia, Sancto] Zoaane de li furiani.

26° Reverendo et excellentissimo de li musici, el mio honorando et molto da me amato Frate Pietro, salutem.

1. A li giurni 18 del presente hebi una de V.E. de di 7 signata, la quale a me è stata piu che gratissima, perché parendomi (piu che el dovere) tardare la responsta de le mie a V.E. mise, io dubitava de qualche vostro incomodo et dispiacere. Hor sia laudato Dio, imperò che tarde non furno mai grattie 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. Ancor io starò tacito, et a Messer Adriano offerte tuto el mio potere, perché credo che lui me ama. Et pregatilo che voglia mandare quilli 2 5 madrigali, li Julio [Muradori] nostro arnica et cantore, et iterum a sua Excellentia me excusatione la quale ha facta per me V.E. a quilli doctissimi cantori, uno de quilli mei due canti, 2 et ho inteso la honesta, recta, et vera altra meliore sonorita, la quale (removendo tale fuga et similitudine) gli che da me fu considerato fare la fuga de diapente a similitudine del subiecto o vera tenore del canto seria potuta cadere, et da me (con ellume de la intelligentia et cognitione de la veriti) non erano molto grate, et da poi ancora meglio n'hebi certezza quando el feci cantare, ma pure me piache che cosi stesse, perche el dovere) tardare per excusato. Ma la sua veniste 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 contra alto sta ut hic:

\[B\] che quello puncto posito dapolo quella minima cade in per tale modo restaro satio et de fastidio pleno che prima patiria ogni grand supplizio che mai piu 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, la quale credo che stà bene, perché è stata deligentemente con amore de leta lectione et suma sollicitudine 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, ciòè signata da li impressori, che poco ne curo.

5. Frate Petro mio carissimo, io voglio che sapiate 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 el amico se debe andare con la verità et non occitare quello che li potria tornare in scandalo et vergogna, et similmente 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. Mi da poi (perché io tengo bono conto de l'opere vostre), io, con certo mio discipulo, discorsi tale canto, cantando lio particole a do voce insieme, et ci trovaro certi passi che non me piaciono, de li quali el primo è che a me pare che tale canto seria più comodo et più regolare se fusse cantato senso quello segno del b molle posito nel principio del predicto concetto, ma solamente ponerne in processo tale segno dove fa bisogno. V.E. ancora advertisce dove el contra alto sta ut hic:

\[B\] che quello puncto posito dapolo quella minima cade in

1 For the explanation of this matter, see the Biographical Dictionary under Willaert.
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, t. 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 four-voice version earlier. On the various passages criticized in this letter, see Ch. 5.
3 The Trattato di musica on seguitatun, 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 B is frequently needed.
octava con el contrabasso, et ancora quella semibreve sequente\(^6\) cade in octava, in modo che per la velocità et poca portione de tempo le quale hano queste doe intermedie note \(\uparrow\downarrow\) ascendente (a lo audito), pareno doe octave, et de questo sereti claro se tale passo sarà da vui cantato. Et credo che in alcuna compositione de homo perito trovereti simile processo. Similmente dove el tenore procede ut hic

\[\text{\textbf{B}r\text{e} \text{a} \text{\textbf{B}r}}\]

trovereti 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 perche 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 giorni 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. Scio che è cosa da nulla, ma sciò che per amore mi o acceptaretie con lieta fronte, et se cosa mendoza li trovereti, per amore li emandaretie. 6


Vale. In Bologna, a li di 24 de otobre \(1531\).

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

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\(^5\) 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.

\(^6\) 'Virgo prudentissima'; see no. 36, para. 2.

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1. 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:

\[\text{\textbf{B}r\text{e} \text{\textbf{B}r}}\]

the semibreve creates a second with the soprano

and a ninth with the bass. In another place the figure

\[\text{\textbf{B}r\text{e} \text{\textbf{B}r}}\]

barely conceals parallel octaves. Where the tenor has

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\(^*\) MS: sequenta.  \(^*\) MS: nobilissime.

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442

35. Spataro to Aaron, 24 Oct. 1531

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443
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.\footnote{Fos. zz8r-229v}

7. I am sending you another motet of mine on a Marian antiphon.\footnote{I.}
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.

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36 (J91). Fos. 228\textsuperscript{v}–229\textsuperscript{v}
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 27 November 1531

\textsuperscript{228} Reverendo et de li musici excellantissimo, el mio honorando Frate Petro,
salutem.

1. A li di 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 sat[s]facto. Et ho etiam inteso come seti stato a parla­
mento con el reverendo Pre Zanetto, circa el quale altro non se dira,
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 comprehseso come per demon­
strare che non seti ingrato ma sempre disposto a la satisfactione de li
beneficci receputi da li amici, li quali per honore vostro se affaticano,
havendo io demonstrato quattro errori vostri commissi nel predicto canto,
V.E. (per vincermi de liberalitá) 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, cioe una perfecta et una imperfecta,
sono usitate (senza vicio) ascendento l'una dopu l'altra, de la quale cosa
potreti havere clara notitia se guardareti in quello mio tractato de
contrapuncto a V.E. misso.\footnote{1} Et se el non fusse che io tengo per firmo et
certo che me amati, io diria che per garire et per vendicarvi manifesta­
mente ve opponeti a la mera verid. Pettanto de li predecti cinque errori
solo uno ve concedo, cioe quello che cade nel tenore con el contra alto
soto la parola 'genitrix', ut hic:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

1 On this progression, and on Spataro's criticisms of Aaron's motet, see Ch. 5, pp. 109–11
and 115.
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 arbitrrio al musico et farlo subieco a li accenti grammatici, li quali ancora che (in quantità temporale) habiano tempo longo et breve, tamen intrà tale sua temporale quantità non se dà certa et nota proporzion, perché non cadeno mensuratamente sotto quello tempo et mensura la quale considera el musico mensurando el suo tempo e a systole et diastole, o vero arsis et thesis, cioè levare et abbassare. Che el musico non sia constretto sequitare li grammatici accenti, el se proba per el canto plano de tale antiphona da me sumpto per subie[cto] o vero tenore, perché a la syllaba 'fi', la quale secondo el gramatico [h]a lo accent longo, et a la sequente syllaba, cioè 'li', cadeno doe note eguale in tempo separate, et pure la syllaba 'li' (secondo el gramatico) [h]a lo accent breve, et etiam hara la sequente vocale, la quale dal gramatico è conumerata breve. Similmente serà contrarietà intra el tempo musico assignato a la sequente syllaba, la quale [h]a lo accent 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 eguale in tempo a la prima, cioè 'fi', la quale, ut dixi, ha lo accent longo ut hic:

\[
\begin{align*}
  & \hline
  & fi \quad li \quad a \quad si \quad on \\
\end{align*}
\]

Io non scio dove proceda che hora in le compositione de li altri andati con tanti respecti gramatici, ma credo che siano pochi compositori che observano li accenti grammatici in canto mensurato. Pertanto, ut dixi, el musico è libero, ma più se debe osservare in canto plano. Non vogliati adonca, Frate Petro mio honorando, uscire de la vostra facoltà, et non fareti poco se saperete guardarle de li musici errori

2 Spataro's motet survives in MS A. xxxxy of the Archivio di San Petronio, on fos. 1r-4. The second minim in the tenor is also e. For a modern edn., see Jeppesen, Italia sacra musica, i, 111-17. The passage quoted is found at mm. 19-51. 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 1602; this version lacks the second note of the ligature. A source showing this ligature is Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Barbentini 541, fo. 167, from an Antiphoner of c. 1100, possibly of Sieneese provenance; see Monumenti Vaticani di paleografia musicale latina, ed. H. M. Bannister (Leipzig, 1915), Teini, p. 93, no. 266, and Tarolo, no. 134, top. The 1 of Sam is long in Hebrew and in Christian poetry of c. 400 but both vowels are short in Bernard of Cluny's line 'Uros Synon aera, parwa laetca, cive decorc' (De contemptu mundi, i, 269) and in those that follow. (Our thanks to Dr Leofranc Holford-Stevens for this observation.)
et el contrabasso sta ut hic: a
alto, vui poneti queste note:

octava, da alcuno docto non mai trovata per tale modo facto. Et oltra procedendo, volendo vui pervenire al particole, et maxime con el contra basso, perche descende de sexta in
Quella ultima semibreve cade con molto malo contrapuncto con le altre
el soprano predicto fa questo processo:
ascendere de sexta in unisono, come da vui del contra alto se moveno senza concordare con el soprano. Ancora dove note:
diminuto
guardareti circa al
in mensura, perche el canto nel principio volete batere la semibreve, la quale sequita dapo la precedente octava data (per essere solamente la medierà de la nota baruda assignata dal signo ut hic § posito in principio cantus) non potrà bene occultare al senso de lo audito quella sonorità de octava già da lo audito sentita inanti a la pausa predica. Pertanto dico che in mediare le octave, meglio asi será la sonorità che non serà la taciturnità, et questo nasce perché al senso de lo audito tanto pièce lo audire che dapo la cosa grata da lui audita, meglio atendera 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 capitolo 12 del terzo libro de la soa Practitii. 6

5. Ancora dico che questo segno § da vui posito nel fine del contra alto de la prima parte de tale vostro canto non é bene posito, perché el non se dà segno accidental sopra segno accidental. Pertanto così come mediante el segno del b molle haveti remosso el canto da § quadro o vero 260 duro et naturale in b molle accidentale, cosi per contrario, volendo retornare el canto de b molle accidentale in § duro naturale, allhora el serà licto segna[re] in §fa/mel el b quadrato drito, ut hic §, et non el [b] quadro iacente, el quale b quadro iacente solo se segna sopra le positione naturale, come é stato dicto da Frate Zoanne Orthobi. 7

6. Ma perché io sono repreheso da vui de una 14a data nel contrabass con uno puncto posito da uno minima nel soprano, 8 peranto 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 7o con quello puncto posito dapo la

6 MS: dico.
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. 14.
7 See his Callimachus 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 1145, Aaron transmits Spataro's ideas in much the same words (Book II, fos. 3°–4°).
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).
prima semibreve. Non dico già che questo non se possa fare, perché a qualunque' punto el quale non importa tutta la integrità de la nota batuada, se pò dare 7° et 14° quando la nota cantabile a lui sequente descende al loco propinquo, et tale punto alhora se accepta in loco de sexta o de 13°, et la rason se tace per non procedere in longo.

7. Ma non poco me sono maravegliato dove in questo processo del soprano:

\[ B_5 \cdot \cdot \cdot D_4 \cdot \cdot \cdot \]

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 descendo), dati octava. Questo a me pare uno processo da uno principiante et rude fanciullo. Ma certo era asai meglio ascendere con tale tenore in terza con el soprano, e dapò, ultra sequitando, tale processo haria havuto più gratia et più seria con arte facto, perché el contrabasso non sería 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 mio descesa, et essendo breve el giorno et non havendo ochiali che me serviro, me dati adviso senza respecto alcuno, perché io non me curo che sia veduta, perche altri, che non intendeno li termini de lo auctore, facilemente potranno crederlo a quello che li scripta da Franchino, et se io ne trovasse un'altra, io la compraria, et perché tale appostille non fusseno vedute, io getaria questa che tengo ne! foco.

11. Me spacie che Pre Zanetto habia comprato l'opera mia, perché senza fallo lui ce trovarà qua[ll]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 correggere l'opera impressa, acendo che altri dubitasse. Circa le altre opere mie, fatine el vostro parere, che sono contento. Haveva dato principio de livare via certe figure per commodità de la stampa da le Epistole, ma el me' sopragniuncto questa mia descesa, et essendo breve el giorno et non havendo ochiali che me servano a scrivere la not[re] a la lume, credo che non potrò sequitare piu oltra al presente.

13. A V.E. mando uno canto per parte de Juliano nostro, el quale ha fatto uno suo figliolo molto giovenetto, et a V.E. molto se recomanda insieme con Messer Nicolao et tuti li altri nostri cantori et musici. Ancora mando a quella uno mio canto a cinque voce, circa el quale ve prego che 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. Già un'altra volta io scripsi a V.E. che acendo parliare con Messer Adriano, che el pregati per parte de nostro horganista che el voglia mandarli quilli 2 madrigali che lui li mandò qua in Vinetia, perché sono de Messer Julio nostro cantore.

Al vostro et mio patrone [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li soi nobilissimi figlioli me recomandareti, et a V.E. me recomando.

Vale. Bononiæ, die 27 novembris 1531.

Tuto de V.E. J. Spatarius

10 Musica practica (Bologna, 1482).

11 Spataro first wrote to Aaron about his 'epistole' on 5 Jan. 1531 (no. 30, para. 11). Evidently, Aaron had suggested in one of his lost letters that Spataro prepare the 'epistole' for publication.

12 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix' (see no. 37, para. 3).

13 See no. 35, para. 2.
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. 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':

\[ \text{Please change the second minim to } e,\] which is the way it appears on my score (cartella), where I have originally composed it.

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) and a breve:

\[ \text{It is childish; it would have been much better to put the tenor on } f\] and the alto on a. At the words 'in cena recubuit' 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 C 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 C the rest is too brief and you hear parallel octaves:
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.

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 ♭, the 'straight square b', and not ♮, the 'slanted square b', which, as Hothby says, occurs only in natural positions.

6. Since you criticize a fourteenth against a dot after a minim in my motet, 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 ♭; 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 book 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).

On Ramis's Musica, 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.

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 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 Nicoló [Cavalaro] and all the other singers and musicians, and my own five-part motet. Do not hesitate to criticize it, for truth does not breed hatred in me. Again, when you see Messer Adriano [Willaert], please ask him to return Julio [Muradori]'s twenty-five madrigals.
37 (J94). Fos. 232r-233v
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 January 1532 (autograph)

231" [Reverendo et venerabile et] musicus excellensissimo Frate Petro Aron [florentino] de l'ordine hyerosolimitano, [quanto maggiore] mio hono-

232" Excellentissimo et de li musicae doctissimo, el mio honoando et magiore Frate Petro, etc.

1. A li di 24 del presente ho recepito una de V.E. de 10 del presente signata, la quale, nel suo principio, a me è stata non poco molestia 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
contenerne le meste lacrime. Certamente io non me arecordo quello che ho scripto a V.E., ma bene scio che piu che altro homo vivente ve amo de
optimo et puro core, et se alhora forsa io scripsi qualche coseta non forsa
contenere le meste lacrime.

Excellentissimo et de insulso per darmi baglia et per demostrarmi che ne! mio concento erano
vostra
piu
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,
perche e
abandonare uno tanto et fido amico.
et stulto, per una poca cosa che nulla importa) lassare da parte et
certamente seria grande vituperio et biasemo apresso a li viventi, havendo
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
alcuna) ve desse noglia. Et se haveti scripto errori o dubitatione, poco ne
et disposto circa le laude mie nel futuro tempo, et da poi io (come insano
giunto) io son caduto in tanta tristeza che non lo potresti credere, et
di ciò iterum vi chiedo venia et perdono. Un'altra volta non serò così
paz.

2. Ma pure alquanto sono confortato per havere inteso che V.E. tene
apresso di sé el mio originale,1 aciò che se possano correggere 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 alguno dubio et
tale canto trovati, al quale canto è stato agiunta da me la sexta voce et a
V.E. iterum mandato a giorni pasati. Tale sexta voce è stata agiunta da
e a tale canto più per esaminare 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.2 Ma
non ho però tanto potuto aprire li ochii et guardarmi da li errori che non
gli e né sia rimasto qualche uno, et maxime quelle due quinte, de le quale
hora me advisati, che cadeno intra el contrabasso et el contra alto nel

1 The manuscript of Spataro's Trattato di musica, printed 8 Oct. 1533 in Venice.
2 As it stands, 'li soi cantù' could refer either to Willaert or to Pietro the organist. From the
preceding letters (see nos. 31 and 33-6) we know that Pietro 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 29 June 1531,
and since Aaron 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 Pietro).

3 Spataro speaks of his letters to Gafurio, extracts of which he had already published in the
Errari di Francesco 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. xxxx, fol. 7-8). For a

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. xxxxx with five voices.
Il primo a canto. Pertanto V.E. emendari tale contro alto in questo modo.\(^6\)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{La seconda semibreve del tenore batte sopra la ultima medietà di la prima} \\
\text{semibreve del canto in seconda, et \[|\] si poi coglie la sequente minima in unisono, el quale passo pò stare et trovasi essere stato usitato da li compositori.}
\end{array}
\]

La seconda semibreve del tenore batte sopra la ultima medietà de la prima 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:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{et per tale modo ogni dubitatione serà remossa, et serà ancora più grato al senzo de lo audito, el quale, per la sua inconstantia et imperfectione, male pò dare iudicio de tutte le importanità considerate da la rasonie o vero theoria, la quale consiste nel lume de lo intellecto et cognizion de la verità. Circa li altri dei errori li quali diciet, credo che li trovaritei correctamente et emendati nel medemo concetto, el quale ho mandato più giorni fano a V.E.}
\end{array}
\]

\[5\]. Da poi, Frate mio honorando, V.E. me fa restare pleno de mestitia et

\[37. \text{Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1532}\]

pare che vogliati dire che in tale loco sia errore. Ma certamente che da me tale passo è stato studiosamente e non senza rasoni messo, imprevé che ogni processo el quale pò stare intra dui soni in simplice (non li occorrente 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:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{et per tale modo ogni dubitatione serà remossa, et serà ancora più grato al senzo de lo audito, el quale, per la sua inconstantia et imperfectione, male pò dare iudicio de tutte le importanità considerate da la rasonie o vero theoria, la quale consiste nel lume de lo intellecto et cognizion de la verità. Circa li altri dei errori li quali diciet, credo che li trovaritei correctamente et emendati nel medemo concetto, el quale ho mandato più giorni fano a V.E.}
\end{array}
\]

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\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{et per tale modo ogni dubitatione serà remossa, et serà ancora più grato al senzo de lo audito, el quale, per la sua inconstantia et imperfectione, male pò dare iudicio de tutte le importanità considerate da la rasonie o vero theoria, la quale consiste nel lume de lo intellecto et cognizion de la verità. Circa li altri dei errori li quali diciet, credo che li trovaritei correctamente et emendati nel medemo concetto, el quale ho mandato più giorni fano a V.E.}
\end{array}
\]

\[37. \text{Spataro to Aaron, 30 Jan. 1532}\]

pare che vogliati dire che in tale loco sia errore. Ma certamente che da me tale passo è stato studiosamente e non senza rasoni messo, imprevé che ogni processo el quale pò stare intra dui soni in simplice (non li occorrente 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:
stupore et tuto pleno de admiratione, perché dicet che io non mi voglia turbare ne sdirnare con quella, etc. Al quale vostro parlare pleno de tutte le virtù, altro non risponderò, 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 connumerì nel numero de li amici de quella, ma nel numero de li soi servitori. Veramente io seria bene da essere reputato uno solemme pazo se io me sdegnasse con V.E., ne la quale consiste ogni honore et laude mia, et quando hebi quelli quattro libri impressi con la vostra, et che io vidi che V.E. non rispondeva a quella mia la quale chiamati irrata, io fui molto virtu, altro non risponderò, perché a me pare che quello che di sopra ho disturbo non a le vostre mane pervenuta, ma quando da poi vidi la resposta, et che pigliatene gioco et piacere, perché in ciascuno vechio el senso puerile non stata tropo bene cantata et perduta et non a le vostre mani pervenuta, ma quando da poi vidi la resposta, et che V.E. ha preso tanto affanno, sono restato in tanto certamine et combattimento, et quando hebi quilli quattro libri impressi con la vostra, et che io vidi che adviso, et de questo asai ve prego, perche

6. A V.E. mando uno mio canto nel quale ho imitato uno canto con le parole posto da Nicolao Wolucio in uno suo trattato musicò, et de questo asai ve prego, perche piu a me piace che li amici mei debbano prova de li errori che li extranei. Emendarò el canto de V.E.12 come da quella m'e stato scrito.


Vale. Bononiæ, die 30 januarìi 1532.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

1 Mes numeri.

11 Nicolas Wollick, Enchiridion musices (Paris, 1512), fo. Ca4: 'Hec est preclarum vas'. A modern edn. of Spataro's 'Hec Virgo est preclarum vas' 4 4 (after Bologna A. xxxv, fo. 1r–4r) may be found in Jeppesen, Italia sacra musica, i. 118–23.

12 The motet on St John, Apostle and Evangelist; see no. 36.
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. In the six-voice version I removed the augmented octave, but only to accommodate the sixth voice.9

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:

\[ \text{\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) -- (1,0);
\draw (1,0) -- (1,1);
\draw (1,1) -- (2,1);
\draw (2,1) -- (2,0);
\end{tikzpicture}} \]

If you transpose the tenor up an octave it becomes a seventh resolving to an octave, which is allowed.9

\[ \text{\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) -- (1,0);
\draw (1,0) -- (1,1);
\draw (1,1) -- (2,1);
\draw (2,1) -- (2,0);
\end{tikzpicture}} \]

But to remove all doubt, and so that my honoured Fra Pietro shall not have laboured in vain,10 please emend it as follows:

\[ \text{\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) -- (1,0);
\draw (1,0) -- (1,1);
\draw (1,1) -- (2,1);
\draw (2,1) -- (2,0);
\end{tikzpicture}} \]

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.

1. 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 Wullick’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. 236r-v, 225v

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 13 March 1532 (autograph)


236v Venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, etc., salutem.

1. A li di ii del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de di 17 febbrai signata, con la quale era uno ‘Patrem’ a sei voce molto soave et con grande arte composito, et quale fu piu 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 e sumamente piacuto. Et di ciò molto ve rengrazi.

2. In quanto a l’opera del mio preceptore,1 la quale desiderati de habe[re] tuta et complecta, ve dico certamente che lui mai non dete complemento a tale opera, et quella che se trova non e 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 tr[ac]tato complecto et che io el tenga oculto che li mei furti non restino scoperti, ma certamente sono in grande erre. 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 tutti li capitoli de tale opera,2 et inscontratili con li capitoli del tractato da vui qua trovato. Se tanti capitoli e tali ce sono, certamente haviet tuta l’opera la quale dal mio preceptore fu impressa. Se alguno li manca, dati adviso, che ve li mandarò scripti, se li voreti.


---

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. 225v of MS Vat. lat. 1318.

Data in Bologna a di 13 de marzo 1532.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro

[MS: quo.]

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 alia 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).

4. A while ago I wrote you two letters on my need for eyeglasses.3 Would you be able to get me a pair? Nicolo [Cavalaro], Don Leonardo, Juliano [Veludaro], and all the others send their greetings.

Enclosure: a list of chapter-headings in Ramis, Musica practica4

38. Spataro to Aaron, 13 Mar. 1532

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,7 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,7 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? Nicolo [Cavalaro], Don Leonardo, Juliano [Veludaro], and all the others send their greetings.

Enclosure: a list of chapter-headings in Ramis, Musica practica4
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 5 April 1532 (autograph)


Excellentissimo et de li musici doctissimo, el mio reverendo et honorando Frate Petro, etc.

1. A li xi del pasato ho receputo una de V.E., circa la quale non me extenderei, perche il vostro humile et tanto dolce parlare fa che li ochii mei debili non possono le lacrime retenere. Pertanto io passaro oltra, rergnando quella che e dignato de examinare con deligentia quello mio canto facto a quattro voce et ancora la quinta sua voce agiuncta, et dove haveti trovato loco degno de emendatione me ne haveti claramente advertito, et perche in tali lochi mendosi ho facto deligente correctione, a me pare licito che a quella ne dia adviso acio che emendati tale concento in li soi lochi debit. Pertanto primamente dove diceti che el tenore con el canto sopra la parola 'gloriosa' stano ut hie:

\[\text{V.E. emendarà tale tenorea ut hic:}\]

2. Diceti ancora che haveti trovato che el canto con el tenore in la seconda parte sopra la parola 'et pia' fa questo processo:

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:

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\footnotesize

1' Hec Virgo est preclarum vas'; see no. 37 n. 11.
2 Spataro's corrected version is found in MS A. xxxxv, fo. 1'; see Jeppesen, Italia sacra musica, t. 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. 112, mm. 46-48 (this is a corrected version that Spataro proposes later in the letter; see n. 7).

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4 'Nativitas tua Dei genitrix'; see no. 37, para. 4.
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. voleste dire che appresso ad alcuno compositore non haveti trovato tale processo, rispondo et aducovi quella sententia de Boetio, la quale dice ut hic: 'Quippe miserrimi est ingenii semper inventis, et non inveniendis uti', perché, essendo la musica arte liberale, l'è da credere che li soli termini sono senza fine et che quello che oggi scianno li musici et compositori è la superficie di quello che se pó sapere. Ma se pure [a] V.E. [per completare a coloro che non hano tali respecti] gli pare mutare tale passo dove nel tenore sta ut hic:

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{fareti che stia ut hic:} \\
&\text{et dove etiam diciet che intra dicto contra alto et el basso agiuncto sopra la parola 'serpentis' essere due quinte come qui:} \\
&\text{emendareti tale contra alto ut hic:} \\
&\text{fareti che el contra alto stia ut hic:} \\
&\text{Circa li altri errori,} \\
&\text{6 Pseudo-Boethius, De disciplina scolarium 5. 4: 'Quippe miserrimi est ingenii semper inventis uti et munitam inventiendis'. See Pseudo-Balte, De disciplina scolarium: Edition critique, introduction et notes, ed. Olga Weijers (Leiden and Cologne, 1976), p. 121. This is a notion that appealed to Zarlino, who quoted this passage at the beginning of the Ragionamento Terzo of his Dimostrazioni harmoniche (Venice, 1571), p. 145: 'Cosa propria di uno Ingegno miserrimo et povero, usar sempre le cose, che sono state da altri ritrovete: et non mai quelle, che ritrovare si possono.} \\
&\text{7 This musical example refers to the earlier example on 'et pia'.} \\
&\text{8 This version is also found in MS A. xxi, fo. 4'} \\
&\text{9 This version also appears in MS A. xxv, fo. 1'} \\
&\text{10 Spataro's Trattato di musica.}
\end{align*} \]

proceduti dal calamo, da V.E. emendati, stano bene, et de tuti ve rengario, 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 vecchio, son tornato in la età puerile.

4. A Messer Juliano ho dato el vostro madrigale, el quale da lui è stato benignemente et con lieta fronte receputo, et a V.E. molto se recomanda. A giorni passati ho mandato a V.E. el canto fermo del vostro 'Patrem' a sci voce, si che altramente non lo mando perché credo l'habiati havuto. Al presente non mando l'opera mia correcta perché sono ancora amalato et male ce posso dare opera, et etiam perché appresso de me non è rimasta alcuna de quelle quattro le quale me mandò V.E. Ma come potrò comodamente accedere, ne trovarò una et a quella la mandarò correcta.

5. Io sono stato octo giorni a scrivere questa littera, tanto sono molestato da diversi mali. Circa li ochiali rengario V.E., li quali non aperti et non serrati non sono boni per me, de li quali era uno vetro rotto, come V.E. potra vedere, perché così faci come sono, a quella li remando, et molto mi doglio che habiati havuto fatica et danno. Circa li quali ochiali altro non fareti perché cognosce che seria bisogno che io fusse qua, con li ochii mei male disposti.


Vale. In Bologna a di 5 de aprile 1532.

De V.E. servitore Zoanne Spataro subscripsi
2. You mention the staggered octaves at 'et pia', mediated by a seventh:

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{octaves.png}} \]

If the passage were written as:

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{passage.png}} \]

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. 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:

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example.png}} \]

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.' 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:

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{emend.png}} \]

3. Where there are parallel octaves between the 16th and 17th semibreves in the added bass, please change it from

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{octaves_change.png}} \]

Regarding the fifths at 'serpentis':

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fifths.png}} \]

change the alto to:

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{alto_change.png}} \]

Where there are unisons at 'clemens' between the alto and the added bass:

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{unisons.png}} \]

change the alto to:
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 treatise 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.

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40 (J97). Fo. 257v
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 12 April 1532 (autograph)


257 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 trattati impressi qua in Vinetia emendato et correcto de mia mano, pertanto al presente a V.E. mando questo, il quale molto bene examinare si de foglio in foglio, et in ciascuno loco dove (nel margine) sara trovatì questo signo, et dove tale segno trovarì due volte posito, in tale loco sono due errori. De li errori gli è ne asai, ma quelli che più importano, l'uno si nel capitolo 3° dove in margine ho scripta ut hie: ‘Queste’ non sono parole de lo auctore, perché in tale loco (non scio da chi) e stato aggiunto uno certo parlare che non è mio et etiam non è al proposito de l'opera. Similmente la figura nel fine del 14° capitolo (la quale sopra tutte le altre importato) fu da me a V.E. recomandata non sta bene et non concorda con la declaratione facta nel capitolo 14° sequente, perché quella linea la quale è assignata al tempo semplice et la linea assignata a esso tempo in la creazione de la prolatione debeno essere eguale, et in tale figura la linea assignata al tempo semplice o vero non diviso ut hic signata:

\[ C \text{Z}_2 \text{C}_3 \text{O}_2 \text{O}_3 \]

C è minore de la linea assignata a la prolatione o vero tempo diviso in parte, come per semibreve et per minime. Item guardareti nel capitolo 21° dove è una figura che secondo la stampa sta ut hic: \[ C \text{Z}_2 \text{C}_3 \text{O}_2 \text{O}_3 \]

semicirculo, el quale sta sotto questo \[ C \text{Z}_2 \text{C}_3 \text{O}_2 \text{O}_3 \] sta ut hic: \[ C \text{Z}_2 \text{C}_3 \text{O}_2 \text{O}_3 \]

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1 The Tractato di musica (1531) on sesquialtera.
2 Actually the diagram at the end of ch. 13. See PI. 10.
3 See no. 32, para. 2.
4 This figure shows that Spataro considers semibreves under the signs \( C \) and \( O \) 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...
The Letters

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 corrett et emendati. Questo che ho dicta non è stato dicto da me per incolpare V.E., perché credo firmamente che tali errori non pendono 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 richiesto circa questo. Ma poi che la cosa è reusita per tale modo, se vole dare laude a Dio, el quale ogni cosa dispone, et se alcuno de tali trattati pervirà a le vostre mane, ve prego che cercati de emendarlo al meglio che poteti per amore mio.


Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro

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1. Since you have written in several letters sent to me recently that you would like to have the emendations in my treatise, 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 (the importance of which I had stressed) 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 under C should be printed as .

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.

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474
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.

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475

4.2.3. The dispute had its origin in Gafurio's critique of Aaron's De institutione harmonica, where Aaron had called 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. 109r-11r. 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.
Passages from Spataro’s ‘Missa Tue voluntatis’ and Ramis’s ‘Tu lumen’ copied by Del Lago.

41 (fols. 238r–239v)
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 19 July 1532 (autograph)

[In] Vinetia, [Sancto] Zoanne de li furlani.

239v Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, et molto da me amato, el mio honorando Frate Petro, salutem.

1. A li di 17 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de di 6 del predicto signata, et etiam uno optimo et bene composito madriale, el quale da optimi cantori fu piu volte subito cantato et molto laudato, et io insieme con loro molto ce ne allegrassemo, perché tuit siamo amici de V.E. Et de tale concerto molto ve rengriato, 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 comprendere che haveti poca fede in me. Ma certamente che a me non pare fatica, ne havere incomodo alcuno quando me exercito in quelle cose che a V.E. sono grate, et maxime in quelle importantie la quale a la nostra delectabile harmonica facultà se aperteneno; et questo a me pare lico per molte rasonie: et prima per imparare, seco 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 $\phi_2$, primamente in quella sola polliza da lui signato con la croce, cioè se tale segno serà inteso essere questo $\phi$, demostrante el tempo perfecto, doe volte diminuto, o vero serà questo $\phi_2$, demostrante 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 aggiungerà 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 apparentt et proprii accidenti. Pertanto dico se Pre Zanetto, o altri chi si sia, considerara bene a le figure o vero note posite dapo questo signo $\phi_2$, 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. 239v of Vat. lat. 5318. See Pl. 11 opposite.
loco ne stare in questo segno $O_2$ de modo minore perfecto et de tempo [im]perfecto. Similmente la longa sequente plena non farà convenienza con tale segno, né etiam le doe pause de semibreve disive, le quale sequitano dopo la prima breve. Et etiam similmente acederà 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 dubitazione) tale segno sarà inteso essere questo $O$ doe volte diminuito, et non questo $O_2$ una sola volta diminuito, 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 lungo. Lè la verità che quando li proprii accidenti mancesseno, che tale non varia positione de segni seria dubiosa. Pertanto (per livare via ogni dubieta) il mio preceptore diceva che questo $O$ doe volte diminuito era dal suo preceptore$^2$ signato ut hic $\phi$ et per tale modo tale segno era compreso da questo $O_2$ una sola volta diminuito, ut hic posito $\phi_2$. Ma io non ho voluto uxare tale varitie de signi, perché non sono usitati, et perché asai claro (ut dixi) me parea$^3$ procedere dimostrando el segno per li proprii accidenti. Imperò che 'accidentia multum conferunt ad cognoscendum quicquid est 'ident, etiam le doe pause de semibreve divise, le quale segno era compreheso da questo $O$ et non del modo minore perfecto et de modo minore $O_2$ per li proprii accidenti del tempo perfecto et non del modo minore perfecto, dico che (senza alcuna dubitazione) tale segno era inteso essere questo $O$ doe volte diminuito, et non questo $O_2$ una sola volta diminuito, 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 lungo. Lè la verità che quando li proprii accidenti mancesseno, che tale non varia positione de segni seria dubiosa. Pertanto (per livare via ogni dubieta) il mio preceptore diceva che questo $O$ doe volte diminuito era dal suo preceptore$^2$ signato ut hic $\phi$ et per tale modo tale segno era compreso da questo $O_2$ una sola volta diminuito, ut hic posito $\phi_2$. Ma io non ho voluto uxare tale varitie de signi, perché non sono usitati, et perché asai claro (ut dixi) me parea$^3$ procedere dimostrando el segno per li proprii accidenti. Imperò che 'accidentia multum conferunt ad cognoscendum quicquid est 'ident.

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, como 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[n]tra basso del mutetto chiamato 'Tu lumen' del mio preceptore diceva che questo $O$ doe volte diminuito era dal suo preceptore$^2$ signato ut hic $\phi$ et per tale modo tale segno era compreso da questo $O_2$ una sola volta diminuito, ut hic posito $\phi_2$. Ma io non ho voluto uxare tale varitie de signi, perché non sono usitati, et perché asai claro (ut dixi) me parea$^3$ procedere dimostrando el segno per li proprii accidenti. Imperò che 'accidentia multum conferunt ad cognoscendum quicquid est 'ident.

* MS: havero.
* Spataro repeats 'asai claro' here.

$^2$ 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. 2 (402b20–1): '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 universalis Aristotelis (Bologna, 1488), fo. C1, the passage occurs in this wording: 'Accidentia magnam partem conferunt ad cognoscendum quicquid est sanguis quiquid est sanguis quid autem quid est id est subiectum.' 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. 19); Marchetto may well have been his source.

* The notes in question are blackened in Del Lago's example (see Pl. 11); Spataro must have filled them in.

* MS: havero. 6 Spataro repeats 'asai claro' here.

* 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.

* An allusion to Ramis's refutation of Guido and his followers, specifically Hothorp: 'Ego enim captue contenter voleo, ut corpus in rebus constitutum cadaver iam fat nee amplius vivere possit' (Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 42). Spataro, having demolished Gafuro, now wants to stamp out his musical offspring. Gafuro cites Gario 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). Gario and Spataro had already discussed the meaning of the canon in Ramis's motet, according to Gafuro, see his Apologia, fo. A8r (the passage is reprinted in Wolf's edn. of Ramis, Musica practica, pp. 110–111).
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, it seems to me that Pre Zanetto wonders whether $\phi_2$ is equivalent to $\phi$, that is, tempus perfectum, twice diminished, or to $\omega_2$, 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 $\phi_2$, you find a half-blackened 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 $\phi_2$ indicates $\omega$ twice diminished and not $\omega_2$ 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 teacher wrote $\phi^\prime$ for the sign of $\omega$ twice diminished to avoid confusion with $\omega_2$, meaning $\phi_2$ once diminished. 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. 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. 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, 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.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 22 July 1532 (autograph)

1. Non sono però passati molti giorni che (rispondendo a una de V.E. de di 6 juli signata) da me fu a quella scriptio circa certe dubbietà 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 scrisse che io mandava inclusa (in la quale tale copia imperfecta) a tale longa (la quale dallato dextro appare media plena et dallato sinistro apparente per l'altra parte sua vacua, la quale insieme con la precedente quella prima longa (la quale dallato dextro appare media plena et dallato sinistro vacua, la quale in apparente per l'altra parte soa vacua, la quale insieme con la precedente quella prima longa (la quale dallato dextro appare media plena et dallato sinistro vacua) che per la similitudine de li corpori o figure dà la clara notitia de la perfectione, peiche alhora in tali locchi sarà primo et secondo o vero simile inanti a la simile, ut hic: \( \Box \). 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 sinistrox secondo la apparentia soa. Et alcuna volta acederà che in quelle note vacue, la quale in sé conteniràno piu note perfecte, non caderà dextro né sinistro apparente ut hic: \( \Box \), et altre simile. Alhora claro se vede che quella breve harà el valore de tre semibreve perfecte, de le quale solo dove sono imperfecte, de le quale dextro imperfecte non se pò certamente dare notitia quale siano de le tre predicte, le quale siano imperfecte, si se sarà la prima et la seconda, o la prima et la terza, o vero la seconda et la terza. De vari et simil simili exempli per varie note et signi se potranno aducere in luce, li quale non comemoro perché 'intelligenti pauca'.

2. Accio 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, peiche el sequitaria che la simile se farià imperfecta inanti a la soa simile, la quale cosa non harà loco in questa consideraione perché altro respecto se ha quando dapo una nota del segno demonstrata perfecta sequita la soa simile in denominatione et forma, et altra cosa se considerare el virtuale valore de doe note perfecte dal segno demonstrate, compreseso in uno solo corpo o quantità, perché se ivi sarà el valore et la virtù, ivi mancarà la clara et distincta soa forma separata, la quale è quella che per la similitudine de li corpori o figure dà la clara notitia de la perfectione, peiche alhora in tali locchi sarà primo et secondo o vero simile inanti a la simile, ut hic: \( \Box \). 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 sinistrox secondo la apparentia soa. Et alcuna volta acederà che in quelle note vacue, la quale in sé conteniràno piu note perfecte, non caderà dextro né sinistrox apparente ut hic: \( \Box \), et altre simile. Alhora claro se vede che quella breve harà el valore de tre semibreve perfecte, de le quale solo dove sono imperfecte, de le quale dextro imperfecte non se pò certamente dare notitia quale siano de le tre predicte, le quale siano imperfecte, si se sarà la prima et la seconda, o la prima et la terza, o vero la seconda et la terza. De vari et simil simili exempli per varie note et signi se potranno aducere in luce, li quale non comemoro perché 'intelligenti pauca'.

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, peiche el sequitaria che la simile se farià imperfecta inanti a la soa simile, la quale cosa non harà loco in questa consideraione perché altro respecto se ha quando dapo una nota del segno demonstrata perfecta sequita la soa simile in denominatione et forma, et altra cosa se considerare el virtuale valore de doe note perfecte dal segno demonstrate, compreseso in uno solo corpo o quantità, perché se ivi sarà el valore et la virtù, ivi mancarà la clara et distincta soa forma separata, la quale è quella che per la similitudine de li corpori o figure dà la clara notitia de la perfectione, peiche alhora in tali locchi sarà primo et secondo o vero simile inanti a la simile, ut hic: \( \Box \). 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 sinistrox secondo la apparentia soa. Et alcuna volta acederà che in quelle note vacue, la quale in sé conteniràno piu note perfecte, non caderà dextro né sinistrox apparente ut hic: \( \Box \), et altre simile. Alhora claro se vede che quella breve harà el valore de tre semibreve perfecte, de le quale solo dove sono imperfecte, de le quale dextro imperfecte non se pò certamente dare notitia quale siano de le tre predicte, le quale siano imperfecte, si se sarà la prima et la seconda, o la prima et la terza, o vero la seconda et la terza. De vari et simil simili exempli per varie note et signi se potranno aducere in luce, li quale non comemoro perché 'intelligenti pauca'.
The Letters

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 ♭ marked with a cross 2 is correct and also the following notes, for if he considers it to mean ♭ twice diminished, he will find that four semibreves or a long of two imperfect breves are the equivalent of a semibreve under ♭, and the imperfect breve equals a minim. Thus the long will equal a breve under ♭ 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: ♭ ♭ ♭ ♭. 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.

Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 4 August 1532 (Scribe A)

43 (J6). Fos. 41r–46v

A Messer Gioanne di Spatari. 5

1. Già molti giorni per il nostro comune amico Messer Pietro Aaron feci intendere a V.E. che la si degnasse de scrivermene sopra alcuni dubbi i quali mi occorrevano in la missa 'Tu lumen', et anchora sopra una lunga posta nel principio del contrabasso del motetto del suo preceptrice, "Tu lumen, tu splendor patris", i quali tutti dubbi erano segnati con una croce. V.E. in resoluzione di ditti mei dubbi non ha mi rescritto ma al predetto Messer Pietro Aaron, come appare per una sua a di xix di luglio [no. 41].

2. Et quanto apparietene alla longa i del predetto motetto, scrivette cosi: 'Ma cerca quella breve prima da lui segnata con la croce nel contrabasso del motetto chiamato "Tu lumen" del mio preceptrice, direi che lì intenda come li pia[ce], purché da lui sia inteso qui 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 semibreve o vero della terza breve, perché faccia come lì piace, che gli è necessario che in tal luoco sia il valore di due lunghe 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 rispondendo 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'. 6 Et questa virtù unita si 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 immediatamente 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 esempio ut hic:

* The original heading, 'Il melesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto Messer Giovanni di Spatari [sic] salute', has been crossed out.

1 Since Del Lago marked the breve rather than the long (see Pl. 11 on p. 426), Spataro began his answer with the breve.

2 Pseudo-Aristotle, Liber de causis 16: 'Omnis virtus unita plus est infinita quam virtus multiplica'; see Otto Bardenhewer, Die pseudo-aristotelische Schriften Uber das reine Genre 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.
41' Et questa virtù et essentia unita si intende quanto a fare rimanere la nota anteposta ad essa ligatura perfetta. Per la qual cosa in questo esempio 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 colo 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 'Tu voluntatis', come appare per quelle due semibrevi ligate innanti alle quali li sono due brevi ligate, le quali si cantano sotto la subtripla proportione, per le quali semibrevi ligate la seconda breve si fa perfetta. Et anchore le predette due semibrevi ligate fanno redurre quella semibreve punctata 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 di essa ligatura, la quale fa che la seconda breve ligata resta perfetta, et reduce anchora quella semibreve punctata et la minima sequente (ut dictum est) a quella pausa della semibreve la quale è tra la breve et la pausa della breve. Ma se le fussino discolte et disligate, allora la seconda breve ligata si faria imperfetta dalla prima delle due semibrevi le quali erano prima ligate, la quale sequita immediate. Et poi computato il numero ternario, convien che resti una dichiarazione et la nota breve, o vero 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 impetizione de essa nota. Pertanto non gli essendo né il punto, né il colore, la resta essa lunga necessariamente perfetta propret 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 inanzi a due brevi ligate, essa lunga similmente rimane perfetta. Et sic quoque dicendum est quando troviamo la breve nel tempo perfetto inanzi 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 faro la lunga antidetta negra, cioè impiauta, con la prima breve sequita ligata similmente negra, o vero anchora una di quelle brevi non immediate sequenti, cioè lontane et distanti, di simile colore piena, o il suo valore, alhora si torriano tutte le dubitazioni le quali porriano accadere al cantore cantando, perché la nota 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 dimostra reductione. Concludo adunque breviter che non si essendo da lui osservate tutte le predette cose, non può in tal posizione non esser dubitatione di errore.

4. Di poi seguitando, trovo una breve ligata tra due semibrevi insieme ligate, et una lunga meza vacua et meza piena, dopo la quale sequita immediata una semibreve negra per supplemento del numero ternario, come qui in questo suo esempio si dimostra:

42' 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 impetizione de essa nota. Pertanto non gli essendo né il punto, né il colore, la resta essa lunga necessariamente perfetta propret 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 inanzi a due brevi ligate, essa lunga similmente rimane perfetta. Et sic quoque dicendum est quando troviamo la breve nel tempo perfetto inanzi 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 faro la lunga antidetta negra, cioè impiauta, con la prima breve sequita ligata similmente negra, o vero anchora una di quelle brevi non immediate sequenti, cioè lontane et distanti, di simile colore piena, o il suo valore, alhora si torriano tutte le dubitazioni le quali porriano accadere al cantore cantando, perché la nota 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 dimostra reductione. Concludo adunque breviter che non si essendo da lui osservate tutte le predette cose, non può in tal posizione non esser dubitatione di errore.

45' 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.

46' 'Impetizione' 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 impetitur signum est quod tertia parte totius sui valoris imperficitur' and 'quoniam notarum inpletione non solum imperfectionem, sed aequalitatem, sesquialteram et duplam significat ...'; see his Libri imperfectiorum notarum musicarum (Opera theoretica, ed. Saey, i. 166).

3 For the musical example, which Del Lago gives in his next letter, see no. 44, para. 14.
Dico anch’ora esserli errore, perché quelle due semibrevi insieme ligate, le quali sono ligate con la breve e con la lunga, hanno il valore di una breve, et la breve ligata tra le due semibrevi ligate et la lunga conviene alterare, et questo acciò che quella breve ligata con le due semibrevi precedenti ligate non restino sole et senza il ternario numero, perché quando trov[i]amo due lunghe insieme ligate con la massima nel modo maggiore perfetto, sempre la secunda lunga si altera. Dico però secolo li compositori moderni, perché li antichi non vogliono che la lunga possa stare in mezo della ligatura, cioè fra le note estreme, per alcun modo, come appare per le sue regole date. Ma questi ignari compositori moderni, perché non intendono bene le regole delli dotti antichi, non si avveggano del suo errore a porre due lunghe ligate insieme con la massima. Li antichi, quando volevano che la seconda lunga fusse alterata innanzi la massima, 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 seconda breve si altera. Ettiamo quei che troviamo due semibrevi insieme ligate con la breve nel tempo perfetto, et sempre la secunda breve si altera, et questo per perfezionare il numero ternario, non gli essendo però alcun segno il quale mostrasse che la seconda nota in ligatura non si debba alterare, come sarebba col punto o vero pel colore, cioè per la impetione de essa seconda nota o ver figura. Allhora se evitaria per questi segni questa tale alterazione. Non si essendo adonque questo osservat o in dimostrare tal differenza da lui con alcuno de preddetti 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 e posta et locata per breve retta, et non alterata, cioè ella è posta per il simplice valore della sua forma, ma non per duplex 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, come far si suole nel tempo, cioè nella nota breve. Et questo essendo osservato dalla maggior parte de dotti compositori, i qualiponeno la ligatura fatta di qualunque sorte et qualità di note o ver figura ligabili, cioè atti a potersi ligare, in principio del numero, così binario.

1 At this point Del Lago has deleted the words: 'Et quasi sempre include il numero sequente.'

2 'Perfectionis mensure' has been substituted for 'del numero'.

3 'Number' can be understood in the sense of 'measure' when it occurs in the context of tempus: three semibrevi 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.

4 On the possibility of placing a long in the middle of a ligature, see nos. 47-8.

44 Dico anch’ora esserli errore, perché quelle due semibrevi insieme ligate, le quali sono ligate con la breve e con la lunga, hanno il valore di una breve, et la breve ligata tra le due semibrevi ligate et la lunga conviene alterare, et questo acciò che quella breve ligata con le due semibrevi precedenti ligate non restino sole et senza il ternario numero, perché quando trov[i]amo due lunghe insieme ligate con la massima nel modo maggiore perfetto, sempre la secunda lunga si altera. Dico però secolo li compositori moderni, perché li antichi non vogliono che la lunga possa stare in mezo della ligatura, cioè fra le note estreme, per alcun modo, come appare per le sue regole date. Ma questi ignari compositori moderni, perché non intendono bene le regole delli dotti antichi, non si avveggano del suo errore a porre due lunghe ligate insieme con la massima. Li antichi, quando volevano che la seconda lunga fusse alterata innanzi la massima, 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 seconda breve si altera. Ettiamo quei che troviamo due semibrevi insieme ligate con la breve nel tempo perfetto, et sempre la secunda breve si altera, et questo per perfezionare il numero ternario, non gli essendo però alcun segno il quale mostrasse che la seconda nota in ligatura non si debba alterare, come sarebba col punto o vero pel colore, cioè per la impetione de essa seconda nota o ver figura. Allhora se evitaria per questi segni questa tale alterazione. Non si essendo adonque questo osservat o in dimostrare tal differenza da lui con alcuno de preddetti 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 e posta et locata per breve retta, et non alterata, cioè ella è posta per il simplice valore della sua forma, ma non per duplex 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, come far si suole nel tempo, cioè nella nota breve. Et questo essendo osservato dalla maggior parte de dotti compositori, i qualiponeno la ligatura fatta di qualunque sorte et qualità di note o ver figura ligabili, cioè atti a potersi ligare, in principio del numero, così binario.

45 Dico anch’ora esserli errore, perché quelle due semibrevi insieme ligate, le quali sono ligate con la breve e con la lunga, hanno il valore di una breve, et la breve ligata tra le due semibrevi ligate et la lunga conviene alterare, et questo acciò che quella breve ligata con le due semibrevi precedenti ligate non restino sole et senza il ternario numero, perché quando trov[i]amo due lunghe insieme ligate con la massima nel modo maggiore perfetto, sempre la secunda lunga si altera. Dico però secolo li compositori moderni, perché li antichi non vogliono che la lunga possa stare in mezo della ligatura, cioè fra le note estreme, per alcun modo, come appare per le sue regole date. Ma questi ignari compositori moderni, perché non intendono bene le regole delli dotti antichi, non si avveggano del suo errore a porre due lunghe ligate insieme con la massima. Li antichi, quando volevano che la seconda lunga fusse alterata innanzi la massima, 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 seconda breve si altera. Ettiamo quei che troviamo due semibrevi insieme ligate con la breve nel tempo perfetto, et sempre la secunda breve si altera, et questo per perfezionare il numero ternario, non gli essendo però alcun segno il quale mostrasse che la seconda nota in ligatura non si debba alterare, come sarebba col punto o vero pel colore, cioè per la impetione de essa seconda nota o ver figura. Allhora se evitaria per questi segni questa tale alterazione. Non si essendo adonque questo osservat o in dimostrare tal differenza da lui con alcuno de preddetti 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 e posta et locata per breve retta, et non alterata, cioè ella è posta per il simplice valore della sua forma, ma non per duplex 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, come far si suole nel tempo, cioè nella nota breve. Et questo essendo osservato dalla maggior parte de dotti compositori, i qualiponeno la ligatura fatta di qualunque sorte et qualità di note o ver figura ligabili, cioè atti a potersi ligare, in principio del numero, così binario.

46 Che se pur V.E. volesse dire che queste tali note [fatte negre pel colore denotassino et significassino la sesqualtera habitudine, dioc ho non esse aliquo pacto admitendum. 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 accompagnare [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 discolte et separate queste tali note fatte predite ligate vacue però, perché poco importa in questo luogo che le siano ligate o ver disligate et distinguite, perché qui non glie può intraverenre alcuno errore, come seria nel cantare et pronuntiare le parole, anchora che nella prima nota solamente si pronuntia [e] 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 venerable presbyter Annuerus Anglicus nella sua Musica, el quale così dice: cognoscant qui canere volunt, quod nondum inter.
syllabas eadem dictionis pasuare licet de iure rationis cantus, nisi forte plures note super eadem syllabam fuerint. Tunc inter notas eadem syllabae poterunt pasuare, ita quod residuas notas resumant cum eadem syllaba ipsa incepta, et note comunitae naturaliter non debent disiungi, etc. Similmente non glie puo accadere errore alcuno per queste altre ragioni, non essendo cosa composta sopra le note di canto plano, come sono Antiphone, Responsorii, Intriniti, et altri si fatti cantii tolte dal compositore per soggetto di un suo concerto. Pertanto acciò se toglia via questa tal dubitatione et prolissita, cioè lunghezza di tempo, la quale potria retardare et far stare sospeso il cantore cantando, sarea stato meglio che lui havesse segnate dette note con uno de’ modi i quali io ho segnate negli esempli qui di sopra posti et dimostrati. Pregò adunque V.E. che la si degni per sua talii dubbii. Ne restaro obligato. Et a’llei pur assai mi raccomando.

In Venetia, a di 4 agosto m.b.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, 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 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’. 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:

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. 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.
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:

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\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.2\textwidth]{ligature.png}} \]
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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. 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. 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:

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\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.2\textwidth]{ligature_with_dot.png}} \]
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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:

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\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.2\textwidth]{ligature_in_coloration.png}} \]
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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 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*, who says: *let those 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.*

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. 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. 41, para. 2.

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 Tintorius, the alterable note must be whole, but its companion may be divided. 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.

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10 "Quinta generalis regula est quod omnis nota veniens alteranda quoad formam necessario est integra. Eius vero socië per partes potest esse divisa" (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 176).
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 23 August 1532 (Scribe A)

A Messer Giovanne di Spatari.

1. A giorni passati per Frate Piero Aaron mandai a richiedere certi dubbi da V.E., li quali mi occorrevano in la messa vostra chiamata 'Tue voluntatis' nel primo Kyrie del tenore, et in molti loci de detta messa, et etiam nel motetto 'Tu lumen | tu splendor patris' del vostro precettore, nel principio del contrabasso, circa li quali V.E. per sua bontà se è degnata compiacermi.

2. Nientedimanco sono rimasto quasi confuso, massimamente circa questo segno ut hie Φ2 posto nel tenore del primo Kyrie di detta messa, il quale da V.E. è posto et considerato per segno de modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto, due volte inciso o ver tagliato, e questo dite quale da V.E.

3. Et questo è affirmando da V.E. nel Trattato suo di canto misurato al quinto capitolo intitolato prima al Signore Hermes Bentivoglio, di poi a Frate Piero Aaron, charissimo amico nostro, dove così da V.E. è scritto: Havendo opitimitamente io compreso la natura et [proprietà de] suoi segni predetti, facto ente barmemo la chiara notizia degli altri suoi segnati, de' quali uno sarà questo segnato, scilicet Ω2, per il quale sarà compreso che l'uno minore sarà perfetto et la longa varrà tre brevi, come nel 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 predito circolo, etc.

4. Pertanto dico che questo segno Φ2 non è differente da questo Ω2 quanto alla perfettione della longa et l'imperfection della breve, eccetto che in questo Ω2 passa una breve per battuta, o vero due semibrevi, o vero il suo valore, ma in questo Φ2, 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 note di esso segno, non si muta la sua naturale potenza, perché ponendosi questo segno Φ2 (secondo voi) per segno de modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto due volte diminuito, seguirà ancora che non gli fusse alcuna differentia tra questo Ω2 et questo Φ inciso et senza cifra, quanto alla perfection del tempo, et quanto alla battuta, la qual cosa è falsissima, perché la cifra binaria che è apreso il segno non opera come virgola, quanto a comprendere posso in questo loco esser il vostro giudizio et parere, ma solamente tal cifra significa et dimostra tempo imperfetto come segno secondario, et per se, ut modo demonstratum est, perché sono doui segni ciascuno per se soli; 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 doui segni, cioè ciascuno per si posti, uno apreso l'altro, ut hic Φ2 Ω2, come da li più antichi se usavan, ma li loro successori in loco di quelli hanno usato questi: O2 Ω2 C 3 C 2. E questo è affirmando da Maestro Bartolomeo Ramis, vostro precettore, in la sua Musica in la 5ª parte, trattato primo, capitolo terzo.

4. Et questo se conferma' dalla E.V. nel suo Trattato antidetto de canto mensurato primamente da lei composto et intitolato al Signore Hermes

MS: conferma.

1 For the passages queried, see no. 41.
2 See Spataro's letter to Aaron of 19 July 1532 (no. 42).
3 Aristotle, Topics 2. 7 (1152a2–5): 'Impossibile enim est contraria simul eadem inesse' (in the translation by Boethius; see Aristotelis latinus, vi, 1–3 (Brussels and Paris, 1969), p. 45); cf. also De interpretatione 14 (24a9).
4 On these signs, and Spataro's reply, see no. 45, para. 4 and n. 6.
Bentivoglio, al quarto capitolo, nel quale cosi ella dice: El primo si chiama modo con tempo, el secondo con tempo con prolazione. Modo con tempo si fa cosi, cioè O3 C3 C2. El circolo et el semicircolo dimostrano il modo, ma la zigra 3 2 dimostra il tempo, etc.8 Et che sia el vero che la virgola dinota solamente la diminuzione delle figure o vero notule, et non la cifra ternaria et binaria, V.E. Io afferma anch'io nel prefetto trattato al capitolo 6, dove la tratta de segni del numero diminuto, nel quale cosi dice, scilicet: la quale diminuzione, in quanto per li segni si sognesse, quando sono secati o ier tagliati, et perciò se el segno del modo col tempo sarà tagliato a questo modo: Φ3 C3 Φ2 C2 si chiamerà modo cum tempo diminuito. Similmente se il tempo con prolazione sarà tagliato per tale modo: Φ C Φ C, si chiamerà tempo con prolazione diminuta. Et anch'io è da notare che benché tali segni siano diminuiti, le note sempre restano nel suo numero, cioè perfetto et imperfetto, etc.9 Et similmente questo è affermato da voi nella opera vostra intitulata Della perfectione prodotta dalla sequazza, sequazza, al capitolo 2710, dove dite queste parole, scilicet: Ma se la sequazza sarà data tra le figure de questi segni simplici: Ω2 C2, o vero tra le note di questi diminuiti ut hic: Φ C, etc.10 Dico adonde per le predette vostre parole che V.E. afferma che questi duoi segni ut hic Ω2 C2 non sono segni diminuiti rispetto habito alla cifra binaria posta appresso li predetti segni, scilicet Ω2 C2, ma che la virgola è quella che dimostra la diminuzione delle figure o vero note, et non la cifra, perché la cifra ternaria, dico secondo gli antichi, quando è posta sola appresso al circolo o vero al semicircolo, dimostra solamente il tempo perfetto, et la cifra binaria il tempo imperfetto.

6. 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 questo segno O2, et similmente in la particola 'Et resurrexit' del predetto Patrem questo Φ2 per segno de modo minore imperfetto et di tempo perfetto et prolazione | perfetta sotto la dupla proportione, e questo secondo la opinione di alcuni moderni, benché la habbia segnata diminuta, perché la dovea segnare in questo modo ut hic O2 O2, perché non essendo ivi la unità sottoposta alla cifra binaria, non può indurre altro al cantore se non dubitazione (come havette fatto voi nel predetto Kyrie) utrum se gli è posto per segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto con prolazione perfetta, secondo che gli è usato dagli antichi, o vero secondo alcuni moderni per segno de modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto con prolazione perfetta, come per il circolo et per il punto si dimostra. E questo è la verità, quia circulus in cantu mensurato perficit brevem, pul[n]ctus vero signo temporis infixus semibrevem, perché altra si intenderia tal segno stare per se et essere sottoposto et sugettio alla dupla proportione come radice et fundamentum delle proportioni, come dimostra essa cifra, la quale 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' musica al tempo perfetto o vero alla breve perfetta, et el semicircolo al tempo imperfetto o vero alla breve imperfecta, li quali sono segni certamente immutabili, et che siano immutabili, non bisogna altruiamente provarlo, perché è notorio a ciascun buon music. Et la cifra ternaria et binaria sono accessorie et famule, perché la possanza dello accessorio serva maggiore della potenzia del suo principale.

7. Per questo si può comprendere che dal predetto Verbonet si ha per cosa certa che non sia altro segno ne’ congetti el quale dimostrò el modo maggiore o vero minore perfetto, se non per la virtù delle pause. Et tale opinione tengono molti altri dotti compositori, come è Tinctoris et Don Franchino Gaurio, secondo appare ne’ suoi congetti, e similmente ne’ loro trattati musici, ne’ quali pareche compositori antichi sono stati da loro represi et reprobati per haver segnato il modo minore perfetto et imperfectum cum la cifra ternaria et binaria segnata appresso al circolo o vero al semicircolo, e similmente el tempo perfetto et imperfetto.12 Perranto torne a dire che in quanto voi dite queste parole al capitolo 29 del predetto trattato, videlicet: pertanto, sarà necessario che quanto alla divisione del fermo tempo si cagia differenza tra le semibrevi di questi duoi segni simplici: Ω2 C2, il quali dimostravano che il tempo o ver la breve resta in due eguali parti partita, etc.13 Dico anch’io che per le predette vostre | parole allegate di 

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8 The quotation is found on fo. 6o of Uito et breve regula. When Del Lago wrote his breve introduzione 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. 44-51 of the facsimile edn.) is taken from Spataro’s treatise; compare fo. 6o of the Uito et breve regula.

9 Spataro, Uito et breve regula, fo. 97.

10 Spataro, Tractato di musica (Venice, 1551), fo. 85v.

11 See Johannes Ghiselin-Verbonet, Opera omnia, ed. Clitus Gottwald (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 23; [Romae], American Institute of Musicology, 1961-8), ii. 13. In his book Johannes Ghiselin Johannes Verbonnet (Wiesbaden, 1962), pp. 43-50, Clitus 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, Bibliographia operis musicalis 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 Busoni’s ‘Gratias 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).

12 For Tinctoris’s opinion of these mensuration-signs, see his Proportionale (Opera theoretica, ed. Seyf, ii. 35-6; Cl 4v. 175-6); for Gaurio’s comments, see his Pratica musicas, trans. Miller, pp. 88-9.

13 Spataro, Tractato di musica, fo. 207v. Del Lago left out the following words after ‘tempo’: ‘o ver la breve resta in due eguali parte divisa, et le semibreve de questi altri duoi semplici: Ω3
sopra si comprende come da voi sono chiamati segni simplici, cioè integri, quelli che non sono incisi o ver tagliati ut hic O C C, et similmente questi O C; C 2 con la cifra ternaria o ver binaria posta appresso el circolo o ver semicircolo. Ma solamente da voi sono intesi segni diminuti et non integri quelli che hanno la virgola traversata per mezo il circolo o ver semicircolo in questo modo: Φ Φ Φ, o vero cosi: Φ Φ Φ; C Φ Φ. E questo si afferma da voi nella predetta vostra opera intitulata al preditto Aaron al capitolo segno de diminutione.

7. Et questa è la verità perché la cifra ternaria o vero binaria è differente dalla virgola per natura et essenza, et si vi adduco la autorità et opinione de Giosquino (el quale è stato divino) nel componere nella sua messa [L’homme armé] super voces musicalis nel principio del ultimo Chirie del soprano, el quale pone questo segno Φ contra a questo € posto nel tenore per segni eguali,16 perché lui ha opinione che non sia differentia quanto alla batuta da questo segno Φ prima integro comparato a questo €, ma poi per la virgola vuole che sotto questo Φ passa una semibreve o vero il suo valor, et sotto questo € una minima, per che la virgola resulta la dupla proportione.17 Il medesimo ha fatto Pr Erasmo Lapicida in uno

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C 2, li quali dicono che el tempo . . . . As noted elsewhere, Del Lago felt free to change Sparato’s spellings.

14 Cf. Sparato, Unità et breve regole, fo. 8. Presumably Del Lago is quoting from Sparato’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 dall’arte di Pietro Aretino, ed. Etore Camusascus [1 vols., Milan, 1917-60], I, 64). In 1518 the Venetian Simonetano Ganazia del Fontego speaks of the Flemish composer Nicolas Gombert, the Emperor’s chapelsmaster, as humano divino in tal perfectione. And in the second part of the same work, published one year later, he calls Adrian Willaert nuo Promotus della celeste Armonia. The same Aretino who had called Michelangelo ‘divine’ speaks in his Marsicano (Act V, Sc. 1) of Willaert as saggio 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 Loyinsky, ‘Musical Genius—Evolution and Origins of a Concept’, p. 484 = Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 52-5. Del Lago would seem to precede our witnesses by ten years; however, the epitaph appears in a marginal addition, probably added after 1538 (see Ch. 6). Undoubtedly, since he, Aretino, and Ganazia 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. 328 n. 40, David Summers points out that ‘Michelangelo was first called “divine” by Aretino (Orlando furioso, xxviii.14, 1542)’. The epitaph 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, Muzam, I, p. 1. The original mensuration-sign in the tenor of Kyrie II is Φ, not Φ; 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 Φ that is augmented. Arthur Mendel, in the Workshop on the Performance and Interpretation of Joosquin’s Missae (Louvain), Isinus in die quattuor eorum (Mechelen and Amsterdam, 1993), pp. (14)-(18).
ponevano et davano la misura sopra il tempo come principio, et secondo alcuni altrui sopra la breve | come media tra le cinque figure essenziali. Ma quando erano diminuiti o vero tagliati tali segni, davano la misura sopra la lunga imperfetta o vero il suo valore, et similmente in questi quattro segni, scilicet O C O. In li primi duei davano la misura sopra la semibreve perfetta, et nelli suoi altrui sopra la imperfetta. Et questo era da loro osservato quando le parti del concetto erano eguali et simile in segno. Ma da alcuni moderni in questi duei O si pone la misura sopra la semibreve imperfetta o vero il suo valore, et aliando sopra la minima, et questo quando questo segno O o vero questo C è posto in principio di alcuna particola di ciascun' concetto, pada nel tenore, comparato a questo O o vero a questo C segnato in le altre particole di esso qualunque concetto. Et questo anch'era si afferma da alcuni moderni in questi duei quando questo segno particola di ciascun' concento, puta nel tenore, comparato a questo vero a questo C segnato in le altre particole di esso qualunque concetto. Dimostra in quel suo concetto chiamato dove la definisce la misura di ciascun segno, le quali parole lascio di et questo anch'era si afferma da per segno de modo [ minore] perfetto et di tempo imperfetto. Et etiam ho trovato in molte altre sue compositioni, come si dimostra in quel suo concetto chiamato 'Ubi opus est facto, verba non sufficienti', perché in esso V.E. ha posto questo medesimo segno ut hic Q2 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 Q2 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 predetto segno et questo Q, le quali pause dimostrano il modo maggiore et minore perfetto, la qual cosa rationalmente non può stare, perché tal segno, secondo li antichi, dimostra il modo minore imperfetto, et le pause le quali occupano tre spazi dimostrano il modo minore perfetto, per il che V.E. non può negare per modo alcuno non havere errato, sed 'quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus', perché tra il segno et il segnato cade repugnancia,' dimostrandose 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, et per la qual cosa dico par che V.E. se contraddica quando questo segno Q2 da lei si pone in significazione di duoi diverse cose, cioè per modo minore imperfetto et tempo perfetto, come si dimostra nel primo Kyrie della predetta messa, et nel motetto preligrato, scilicet 'Ubi opus est facto', etc. per segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto. Ma anch'era che quella potria dire che non sono accidenti alcuni tra le figure le quali denotino el tempo perfetto in questo segno piu che in quello, rispondendo dico che dove è el modo perfetto o vero imperfetto, anch'era ivi può essere tempo perfetto o vero imperfetto, dato che non vi siano accidenti alcuni apparenti. Perché può ben stare che tra le figure cantabili sotto questo segno ut hic Q2, non vi essendo accidenti alcuni (cioè brevi, lunghe 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 semibreve, unite insieme a questo modo ut hic (e altre simile occorrente), essere di modo perfetto et tempo perfetto, come saria se in una parte d'un concetto non gli fusse altro che massime, lunghe, et brevi, perché allora si potria intendere così il tempo perfetto come imperfetto. Concludo adonque, ponendose questo segno Q2 in doi modi diversi, si produce dubitatione et dilazione di tempo al cantore. Et questo basti quanto al primo dubbio.  

10. Item nell'ultimo Kyrie del tenore della detta messa me occorre un'altro dubbio quanto al modo che da V.E. è stato usato, [e mai ho veduto da altro musicista 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 science musicali, pertanto la prego se degni rendermi tal dubbio, perché da questo segno posto in principio di esso tenore ut hic Q infino a questo Q, cioè tra l'uno et l'altro, da V.E. non è considerato esser di modo minore perfetto, se non da questo Q 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, videlecit di tre brevi perfette o vero il suo valore, et etiam manca della quantità della massima imperfetta, cioè del modo maggiore imperfetto, perché ne' concetti 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 satti errori, debbono dedurci al fine i suoi canti con ordine de tutte le mesure, et secondo | la perfettione et imperfettione di queste compiere, perché le misure, le quali assiamo 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 maior qualitativo accidenti minus temper immediate subsequens necess est insa. É questo dice Franchino Gaffurio, perché ogni maggiore include

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44. Del Lago to Spataro, 23 Aug. 1532

 segment of the image that is not relevant to the transcription.
Quidam vero modorum maioris vel minoris perfectionibus non curantes in suis partem vel partes modi sed completum debet habere modum, et tunc cantus perfectus et qualunque contiene e include. Questo esser vero si prova, perche la semibreve, che la longa, ivi anchora sono le brevi implicite, tamen non si possono mai removere e vero altri accidenti ad esso modo pertinenti, si intende el modo esser perfetto. Ma so ben che 'l modo è inmobile et stabile, et mai si varia ne' concerti. Et questo in due modi accade. L'uno è quando le pause sono poste in principio del canto, così intanti al segno temporale come immediate di poi. L'altro è quando è segnato in processu cantus, cioè con le pause predette, come da voi è stato segnato nello antedetto tenore, et similmente nella particola 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 imperfecto con prolatione perfetta o vero imperfecta, così innanti come di poi di tali pause, perché allhora solamente si varia il tempo, cioè di perfetto in imperfecto, et e contra, et similmente di prolatione perfetta in prolatione imperfecta. Ma il modo resta fissa 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.

11. E questo si conferma dal dottissimo musicista Maestro Prosdocimo de Beldomando padoano, commentatore sopra Gioanne de Muris, come appare nella Espositione de la 8ª particola del primo capitolo del predittò Gioanne de Muris, la quale particola cosi principio: Item duplex est prolatis, scilicet perfecta que vocatur maior, [et] imperfecta que vocatur minor, etc., 24 el quale la espone in questo modo: Est igitur mensura prolatis aliasum omnia fundamentum et vocatur prolatis, quia ad eis prolatisin maiores vel minorum omnes allie reducuntur, et si bene concipimus proferuntur. Esas enim mensuras omnes quilibet | bene compositus debet habere cantus, scilicet modum, tempus, et prolatisem, modum scilicet maiores vel minores, tempus perfectum vel imperfectum, prolatisem perfectum sive maiores vel imperfectum sive minorum. Quidam vero modorum maioris vel minoris perfectionibus non curantes in suis cantibus, solum tempora et prolatisiones perficient, qui absque defectu non transuent, quia perfectus cantus hauriam perfectiones conficit. Ideo cantus omnis non paratam prolatisiones sed completam, non partem vel partes temporis sed completam, non partem vel partes modi sed completam debet habere, et tunc cantus perfectus

14. Del Lago to Spataro, 23 Aug. 1352

est cum his omnibus completur perfectionibus. Cum antem aliquid istorum deficit, cantus perfectus non est. 25

12. Ma credo che V.E. pensa che quando in una particola di ciascun concetto se transferisce, cioè si varia di tempo perfetto in tempo imperfecto, et e contra, non essendo segnato il modo tra l'uno e 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 seguirono le pause, o vero altri accidenti ad esso modo pertinenti, si intende el modo esser perfetto. Ma so ben che 'l modo è inmobile et stabile, et mai si varia ne' concerti. Et questo in due modi accade. L'uno è quando le pause sono poste in principio del canto, così intanti al segno temporale come immediate di poi. L'altro è quando è segnato in processu cantus, cioè con le pause predette, come da voi è stato segnato nello antedetto tenore, et similmente nella particola 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 imperfecto con prolatione perfetta o vero imperfecta, così innanti come di poi di tali pause, perché allhora solamente si varia il tempo, cioè di perfetto in imperfecto, et e contra, et similmente di prolatione perfetta in prolatione imperfecta. Ma il modo resta fissa 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 predittà messa, et similmente da Tintorius in uno suo canto a tre voci | fatto sopra alcuni versi, li quali principiano così: 'Difficiles' alias delactat pangere cantus, 26 nel tenore della prima parte, et similmente nella seconda parte del tenore, et nella parte superma, 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 ponenon indici et non si connumerano, ma sono solamente segno demonstrativo del modo, et questo quando le ponevano

9 MS: quedam.

10 MS: Deficiles.

24 Johannes de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 47.

170-2. The earlier part of Del Lago's quotation is derived from Ugolino's commentary on Johannes de Muris (see n. 23 below): 'Quatuor ergo sum mensurae quibus utimur in Libellum cantus mensurabilis, scilicet modum maioris, modum minoris, tempus et prolatisiones' (Ugolino of Orvieto, Declaratio musicae disciplinae, ed. Seay, ii. 81).

25 As P. 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. Seay, 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 Tintorius'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 essenziali, et allhora le locano immediate o vero mediate da poi al cirolo 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 perfettone dimostrato da tali pause, quia immobiles quidem sunt, ma se 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 che il minore perfetto non si possino removere quando le sono poste in principio o vero in processus di una o ver più particole di qualvoli concetto, V.E. lo afferma tacitamente nella sua apologia, cioè defensione fatta contra Don Franchino Gafurio, nella seconda parte nella errore 17', dove dite queste parole formali: Molte volte etiam da me se 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 occupati eti tre spati, che non era appresso alli antichi per il circolo et lo semicircolo con la zifra ternaria et binaria di poi se poste, etc. Et seguittando in lo errore 18', questo istesso anchora è affermato da V.E. dove dice la dice così: perché è provato per li dotti musici che è bisogno che essi modi habbino segno de perfetto et imperfecto valore, acciò che li canti in mezo o vero in processo si possino transmutare di perfetto in imperfecto, et e contra, come etiam si usa cantando che in una sola particola di un concetto si varia di tempo perfetto in tempo imperfecto, et e contra. Altramente il compostore tara sforzato ne' canti del modo maggiore et minore perfetto, senza numero et compagna. Et questo afferma Johannes de Muris in lo capitolo de imperfectione notularum delia Musica sua in la septima regola dove così dice: Quando inveniuntur due note simul sole, ille non debent partiri se simul computari. 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 di perfectione, o ver sia posta dinanzi ad una sua simil, o ver alla sua pausa. Allhora le ditte notule se intendono 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 imperfecta 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, allhora si reducono di lontano per trovare la sua terza parte. Si fa anchora questa tale reduttione per integrar el numero perfetto et altri modi similii.

14. Oltra di questo, trovo nell'aneditto Agnus Dei una certa reduttione da voi fatta di una semibreve puntata con la minima accompagnata, le quali si cantano sotto la subtripla proporzione, la qual semibreve puntata con la ditta minima si reduce da V.E. a quella pausa della semibreve la quale è tra la breve et la pausa della breve, et per la tale

15. Ulterior quanto a quella lunga nel principio del contrabasso del motetto 'Tu lumen tu splendor patris' del vostro preceptore, lo quale sta ut hic:
The Letters

506

1. 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 O₂ 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 O₂ is imperfect minor mode and perfect tempus twice diminished, it would follow that there is no difference between O₂ and O 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 O O C C C C; their successors write O₂ O₂ C C C. 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 O₂ O C C O₂ C₂. 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 O₂ O₂ C O₂ C₂. Tempus with diminished prolation is written O C C O C O C. Even though the signs show diminution, the notes preserve their perfection and imperfection.9 You affirm the same in your treatise on the sesquialtera in ch. 27: If sesquialtera occurs after the simple signs O₂ C₂ or the diminished signs O C C, etc.10 Therefore you acknowledge that O₂ and C₂ are not diminished signs because of the figure 2 but that diminution is shown by a stroke. I repeat what the older musicians say: 5 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 Gratiaeuse gent',11 uses O₂ and in the 'Et resurrexit' O₂ 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 C 2 and O C 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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507

1. See no. 43 n. 4.
2. This philosophical notion does not apply to notation; see Spataro's reply in no. 41, para. 20.
3. See no. 43 n. 4.
4. Quanta alla richiesta de V.E.
5. See Spataro's reply in no. 45, para. 6.
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 2 and 3 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 2 and 3 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 C3, which demonstrate that the tempus or breve is divided into two equal parts, and the semibreves in O3 and C3, which show that the breve is divided into three equal parts, etc.13 It appears that you call O C O C simple signs and likewise O3 C3 O C 2, but you consider diminished signs only those with a stroke: O C O C or O3 C3 O C 2. And this is affirmed in your treatise dedicated to Aaron in ch. 71 but if the circular sign is diminished or cut thus O, 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 O in the soprano against C in the tenor as equivalent signs because he believes the beat is the same under O and C. The stroke produces duple proportion, making a semibreve under O equivalent to a minim under C. Erasmo Lapicida did the same in his 'Tandernaken' a 3, placing O 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. 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 O3 O2 C3 C2, placed the measure on the breve as the principal of the five essential notes; others called the breve the middle note.19 But when the signs are diminished, the measure falls on the imperfect long or its value (two breves), likewise in O C O 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 O C, place the measure on the imperfect semibreve or its value, and sometimes on the minim, when one voice has O or C against O or 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 O2 for perfect [minor] mode and imperfect tempus. In the tenor of the Benedixus of your 'Missa Tue voluntatis', O2 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 O2 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 O2 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 O2 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, O, and the O, you do not consider there is perfect minor mode, but only from O 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. 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' Beldi-mandi 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. 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.

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 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'. You fall into the same error in the tenor of
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.\footnote{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.} This is understood in different ways when two breves or two semibreves or two minimis 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 \textit{(reduttione)} serves to complete a perfect number.

15. As to the long at the beginning of the bass of 'Tu lumen':

\begin{center}
\includegraphics{image}
\end{center}

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’.\footnote{Bartolomeo Ramis, 'Tu lumen'.} 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.\footnote{For the music, on fo. 149v, see p. 476.}

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.
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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. 68r–77r
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [autumn 1532] (Scribe E)\(^1\)

60' Reverendo et excelltissimo de li musici, el mio carissimo et honorando
Frate Pietri, etc.

1. A li di 4 settembris ho receputa una de V.E. de di 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 preceptrice da me tanto desiderato, et etiam per havere
anchora receputo una del nostro comune amico Messer Pre Zanetto [no.
44], la quale è plea de multu subtili argomentui musici, a li quali per
non mancare de la promessa fatta a V.E. et etiam perché lui non resti
dubbioso, et in li sei errori, per questa mia gli farò condecente resposta, la quale
resposta a V.E. serà directiva acio 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 di 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
chiamara ‘Tu 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 \(\phi^2\) posto da me nel tenore del primo Kyrie de la predetta
mia missa, el quale segno sta in tale loco per segno di 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, perche da tutti li musici,
cosi antichi come 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 \(\Delta^2\), o vero
ut hic \(\phi\), cioè che la zifhra 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
proporzione.

3. Quanto al primo suo argumento, dico che lui erra dicendo che
questo segno \(\phi^2\) sia stato posito et inteso da tutti li musici antichi et
moderni per segno de modo perfetto et tempo imperfetto, 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, see fo. 239'. seep. 476.
\(^4\) In the version of the 23 Aug. letter that appears in his collected letters, Del Lago does not
say that \(\phi^2\) 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.
trovo che tale segno è stato demonstrato et signato da Verbonetto, autore moderno, nel tenore de la prima parte del Patrem de la sua missa de ‘Gratiose gent’; dove nel principio de tale tenore pone questi doi segni l’uno a l’altro subposito ut hic 2. le quali signi sono remossi da l’ordine de li antichi constituito, perché el primo da essi antichi era inteso per signo de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto et de prolatazione perfetta, et el secondo da essi antichi era inteso essere segno de modo minore imperfecto et de tempo imperfecto et de prolatazione perfetta, et tali segni (in tale tenore positi) sono stati intesi dal preditto Verbonetto come questi 2 et subietti a la dupla comparatione. Similmente el preditto Verbonetto (nel tenore de la particula ‘Et resurrexit’ de la preditta missa) da lui è stato positio questo processo  

68” Tale segno è stato inteso da lui stare per questo signo 2 dove volte diminuito. Et assai de simili esempi se potranno allegare, ma assai le posito per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto, la appresso tutti li musici antichi et moderni questo signa quale cosa appare non essere vera, perché da molti dotti scrittori moderni, come da Tinctoris, 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 resposte, perché questi tali signi 2, 2 da lui assignati non sono regolati né de commune mandato, né mai intrai musici usitati, ma perché sono stati solo inventi da lui, a lui li lassaremos come sol. Ma dico che se noi ce vogliamo a esso stare a an exception to the norm; this statement must have been added after he received Spataro’s reply.

5 See no. 44 n. 11. In the final version of the letter, Del Lago says that Verbonetto’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 sequiudria, for there (in ch. 24, fo 47v) 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 [ai antichi] inteso come quadruplo rispetto al medesimo segno semplice.’ The only theory found by Johannes Wolf who suggested two strokes as a sign of double diminution is Artusi, in his Arte del contrapunto (1886, see Johannes Wolf, Handbuch der Notationskunde (2 vols., Leipzig, 1913-1919), 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 idea of the double stroke in his Compendio (Milan, 1545), fo. 24r of the second part, and he is followed by his pupil Illuminato Aigion, who even goes so far as to show signs with four strokes in Il teatro illuminato di tutti i tuoni di canto figurato (Venice, 1881), fo. 51r. Lodovico Zacconi, Pratica di musica (Venice, 1592), has a sign with demonstrating ‘doppia diminuzione della Semibreve’, but he conceals that ‘questa maniera è stata sempre in uso’

la anticità, che questo segno 2 da lui posito per questo 2 dove volte diminuto sarà male inteso da lui, perché el mio preceptore diceva che li musici antichi ponevano questo segno 2, non per el recto medio secato, per segno de procedere (in cantando) con piu celerità, rispetto a questo. 2 Dico adunque che quello segno circulaire da lui aduto dove volte non per el suo medio recto inciso, non sarà inteso stare per el diminuito del segno una volta diminuito, ut hic posito 2, perché questo prima ut hic posito 2 era inteso che el canto dovesse cantarsi cito. Da poi data l’altra virgula ut hic 2, sarà inteso che el canto deve essere cantato citius, et non per la medietà di questo 2 et primamente per medium cantato. Ma per complacere a li rudi et ignoranti, se potria usare questo segno 2 in loco de questo 2 un’altra volta diminuito, come diceva el mio precettore essere stato usato dal maestro suo, el quale ordine è stato osservato da me nel tenore de il ‘Benedictus qui venit’, etc. de la predetta missa, dove nel principio ho posito questo segno 2 et non ut hic 2, aciò che el semidotto non creda che tale segno ut hic posito 2 sia questo 2 diminuto, il quale segno da li antichi era inteso per segno de modo minore imperfetto et de tempo et prolataione imperfetta, da po el quale segno non potrano rationabilmente stare le sequente pause de lunga occupante tri spatii, perché el sequitoria che intra el segno et el signato, o vero intri la causa et el causato, caderia contrariet et non pare convenien­tia, perché in tale loco el signo demonstraria essere de 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 numero de le note cantabile sequente (anchora che tale signo fusse da me mostrato ut hic posito 2), tale canto da li dotti potesse essere inteso cadere sotto questo signo 2 dove volte diminuito. Tamen ad maiorem declarationem tale signo fu da me ut hic posito 2 et non ut hic 2. Ma chi più clamamente volresse procedere per li rudi, meglio era signare tale segno nel tenore del primo Kyrie predittio ut hic 2, ma alhora tale signo (come a molti piace) non seria governato da la diminuzione, ma si da la dupla proportione, la quale dupla non seria apparente ma seria subintel­lecta, perché intra questo segno 2 inanti ad essa dupla posito et la dupla ut hic signata 2 non cadeno note alcune governate da questo segno 2, le quale a le sequente (dopo la data dupla) siano comparate. Ma perché in quello mio tenore predito io non ho atteso a complacere a li rudi ma si alli...
dotti, pertanto da me è stato proceduto con termini da dotto, cioè che per li accidenti propri e al segno conveniente in le note apparenti, il dotto comprenda che le note de tale tenore sono subiette et governate dal tempo perfetto, el quale sarà compreso per el segno circulare, et per la prima data diminuzione per la virgula apparente, la quale incide o vero taglia esso circulo, et da poi per la seconda diminuzione, significata per la ziphra binaria, sia inteso che le sequente note serano pronuntiate in quadruplo più veloce rispetto a questo segno O integro et non diminuito.

5. Et dove l'ui sequitando dice che questo segno O non è differente da questo Q e per consequente che così come questo Q2 assegna modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfetto, che etiam questo Q (anchora che 'l sia inciso) harà tale significazione et natura, a questo rispondo et dico che considerando che l’uno et l’altro vario effetto da ciascuno de essi signi prodotto primamente depende da uno medesimo signo, cioè dal circulo, che el non sarà da maravigliare se essercitando tale circulo prima considerato circa la diminuzione, tale circulo pigliara qualche forma in apparentia non dissimile, per la’ quale se potrà comprendere diverse quantità et valore essere assignate a diverse note. Perché auvi abbiamo per regola ferma che la diminuzione non è altro che ponere una nota per el valore de la sua propinquia minore, la quale diminuzione (da li moderni) simpliciter se segna in doi modi, cioè primamente per la sezione del segno ut hic φ ἦ, l’altra per la ziphra binaria dapò el segno tachet tagliato, ut hic Q2, Q2, per la quale cosa dico che intra questo segno Q2 et questo Q2 caderà non poca differentia, imperò che (ut diximus) questo signo Q2 se trova posito per questo Q oat volte diminuto, perché in tale circulo apparenli li preditori doi ordini de la considerata diminuzione, cioè primamente per la virgula la quale incide el circulo, et poi per la ziphra binaria dapò el circulo locata. Ma in questo signo Q2, dove primamente dapò esso solamente la binaria ziphra appare, non se trova mai essere stato dato alcun ordine de diminuzione, cioè la prima per virgula, né la seconda per binaria ziphra dapò se posita, per la quale cosa se dirà che intra tali signi caderà grande differentia in consideratione, perché (rationibus predictis) questo Q2 sarà inteso come questo O oat volte inciso o vero diminuto, et questo Q2 (ut dixi) sarà come signo integro et significarà che diverse proprietà caderanno intra le note de tale signo a le note de questo Q2 predito, le quale differentie più claramente apparenno quando da poi tali signi nascono qualche soli accidenti proprii, come nel predito 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 Q2, non osserverà la sua natura, perché ponendose questo segno Q2 per segno de tempo perfetto et prolatione imperfetta dove volte tagliato, sequitarà che anchora intra questo Q2 et questo φ senza ziphra non caderà alcuna differentia in quanto a la perfectione del tempo. Circa questo rispondo al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto et dico che l’ui ha assai male in practica la cognitione de li signi, perché lui non considera che quanto primamente questo signo O se fa diminuto, tale sua prima diminuzione (ut dixi) non se segna con la ziphra binaria posita dapò tale circulo, ut hic Q2, ma se segna virgulato et inciso ut hic φ. Ma se dapò gli accaderà un’altra diminuzione, tale diminuzione potrà essere signata con la ziphra binaria posita dapò el circulo preditto primamente inciso ut hic Q2, et maxime ut dixi apparendo in le note li accidenti propri del tempo perfetto. Et questo dico essere claro et potersi essercitare, perché rarissime, et forsa non mai, lui non ha trovato autore alcuno antico né moderno che habia adotto in luce questo segno Q2 per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto diminuito, per la quale cosa accaderà che tale signo non sarà approbatò né da la musica università usitato. Pertanto dico ‘Que enim rarissime fiunt, nullius artis solet regula approbari.’ Ma perché tale segno (ut dixi) con rason de Verbonetto et etiam da me, con la clara apparentia de li proprii soi accidenti, è stato addotto in luce, dico che senza alcuna dibatuzione potere essere inteso per segno de tempo perfetto dove volte diminuto. Et se questo simile signo Q2 è stato posito da me in quello mio concetto chiamato ‘Ubi opus est facto’, etc. et etiam in quello Trattato de canto mensurato intitulato al Signore | Messer Hermes Bentivoglio per segno de modo minore perfetto et de tempo imperfetto una volta diminuto, tale signo è stato addotto 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 Q2 significante el modo minore imperfetto et el tempo perfetto, perché potrà acader che una taberna er magazzino teneano uno indifferentie 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 indifferentie de forma posito per li diversi accidenti da lui demonstrati sarà 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 compilare alli rudi, el non se cognoscerà el dotto dal indotto.

7. Et oltra sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che io potria dire che in tale mio concetto, scilicet ‘Ubi opus est facto’, etc., non se trovano
accidenti proprii tra le figure o vero note li quali demontrano 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 rispondere 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 stano accidenti alcunni apparenii, perché dice che el potrà ben stare che tra le figure cantabile sotto questo segno φ₂, non li essendo alcun 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 occurrente, 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 φ₂ in dui modi diversi, gli nasceria confusione et dubitatione al cantore. Alle quale soe parole rispondendo et dico che occurring tale caso, cioè che in tali indifferenti signi de forma apparenii non se potesse l uno da l altro per li soi propri accidenti comprendere et discernere, che alhora la seconda diminuzione seria signata con la proportione dupla ut hic φ₂.

8. Da poi sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto procede con molte mie laude a le quale non attendo, perché sempre tengo inanti agli ochi el speculo de la mia cognizione. Ma pure dapo, lui cerca de darsi dentro de una dura petra nel calcagno, et paredne che lui se move con uno certo modo de molta reverencia, dice che gli occorre un altro dubbio circa el modo che da me è stato usato, el quale dice che da lui non mai [c] stato veduto che da altro musicò 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:

![Figure](image.png)

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 conduce de 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 perfete, 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 predito da altro musicò 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 musicò alcuno, essistimane.

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**The Letters**

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**Notes on Problematical Terms.**

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 prolaction; 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.
stato trovato tale processo, lui doveria però pensare che così come in uno principio de uno concerto (essempi gratia) sarà dato questo segno C et che se da poi in processu cantus sarà dato questo altro segno O, o vero altri simili signi che el se usa, che le note posite dopo questo segno O, posito dopo questo C posito nel primo loco, non sono stato trovato tale processo, lui doveria che se da poi in processu cantus gubernate secondo el prima signa ut hic C posito, ma sono gubernate dal secondo, scilicet dal circulo, et per tale modo sempre se intende che la positione del sequente destrue l precedente.

10. Ma perché el nostro Pre Zanetto potria dire che tale mio esempio non ha vera similitudine con quello che da lui è stato arguito, perché lui ha arguito nel signo del modo minore perfetto, et io rispondo con lo esempio del signo del tempo perfetto, alla quale cosa rispondo che quello che ho ditto di sopra accaccerà 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 tulti, come (esempi gratia) de questo signo moderno fi da me posito nel principio del preditto ultimo Kyrie de la mia missa preditta. Trovarono che da la dotta antiquità tale segno era ut hic figurato C 23, el quale signo apresso a li predetti antichi denotava modo mazzore imperfetto, modo minore imperfetto, tempo perfetto, et prolatione perfetta, et el sequente signo da me ut hic posito ₀ era la preditta antiquità signato ut hic C 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 concerto (nel suo principio) fusse signato con questo signo C 33, tale concerto (non essendo in processo impedito da altro signo a sé differente) era usque in finem per tale signo cantato. Ma se in processu cantus fusse stato trovato el secondo signo ut hic positio C 33, allora el primo signo restava escluso et el preditto secondo era essercitato, et per tale modo una sola particula cantus era cantata per due signi diversi o vogliam dire per due canti diversi, cioè prima per modo mazzore et minore imperfetti et per tempo et prolatione perfetti, et da poi per modo mazzore imperfetto et modo minore et tempo et prolatione imperfetta, et etiam per tale ordine erano numerati et mensurati differen
temente. Et per tale modo accadeva de ciascuno altro signo dopo un'altra dato et posito, perché ciascuno per se era considerato. Pertanto ciascuno osservava la sua propria natura et proprietà, el quale ordine é stato osservato dal dottissimo Frate Zooanne Horbi anglico et carmelitano in uno suo mutterto chiamato 'Ora pro nobis,' etc. dove nel principio del

soprano prima pone questo signo O de tempo perfetto et de modo maggiore et minore et de prolatione imperfecti. Et da poi in processu cantus signa questo altro signo C 22, el quale demonstra che el modo maggiore, et minore, et'tempo, et emmi apparenti signi, sono imperfecti, et che la prolatone per la privatione del punto resta imperfecta, 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 annullato et excluso. Et sequitando dopo le figure del secondo preditto signo ut hic posito C 22 procedendo, pone questo altro fi, el quale denota modo maggiore perfetto, modo minore, tempo, et prolatione imperfecti, et fin che non pervene a l'altro signo sequente, sotto la numerosità di 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 predito, el quale (nel suo initio) appare signato con questo signo fi, 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 demontra che tempo et prolatione perfetta, et per la privatione demonstra nel modo minore né etiam nel mazzore essere perfec
tione, pertanto se dapo in processo se dato questo altero 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 da questo C 33 da li antichi usitato, dico che el primo in fronte cantus | ut hic posito fi 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 demonstrate che in quelle note posite dapo questo signo predito ut hic

se trova quello medesimo completo modo minore perfetto el quale se trova in questo segno sequente

Imperò che el modo minore perfetto considerato in questo segno \( \phi \) coglie tre breve perfette o vero nove semibreve imperfette, el quale numero novenario indifferenter etiam se quali dui tempi insemi colti harano tre breve perfette o vera nove semibreve imperfette, el quale numero nel modo minore perfetto dato in questo signo perfetti, le quale a la imperfettione reddutte farano uno novenario numero perfetti, de li quali ciascuno de semibreve, 12 le quale semibreve eo si in numera como in non serano differente da le predette nove semibreve imperfette considerate quanto al modo minore perfetto preditto in tale preditti signi non propinquas de discrepantia, ma si bene maxima similitudine et conformità et proportione de equalità.

12. Ma perché queste sono cavilazione et termini usitati da huoomini litungiosi et poco dottrinati et non da reali, pertanto l'e uno perdere tempo circa ciò adafforciarsi, come etiam appare dove sequitando questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che ultra che nel preditto mio tenore ut hic signato \( \phi \) 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 necessarià trovarsi, perché el non se dà el modo minore senza el mazore, perché el mazore contiene esso minore più volte. Circa questo risposto 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 estendono in mensurare li concerti se non tanto quanto demonstrano li signi modali apparenti in essi concerti, et non circa quei signi li quali da la privatione sono intesi, come se essampi gratia questo signo \( C \) demonstrante el tempo imperfetto sarà dato nel principio del concerto. La apparentia del signo demonstra che el tempo è imperfetto et che la breve vale doe semibreve, et la privatione del puncto non posito nel semicirculo | denota che la prolazione sarà imperfetta, et similmente el modo minore et el mazzore, per la privatione de li signi de perfectione a loro pertinenti, restarano imperfecti, per la quale cosa el musico o vero compositore atenderà a conducere el suo concerto 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 atenderà che el breve predicte habiano el completo numero binario per complementamento de la longha, né etiam che le longhe cadano a doe parimente posite nel concerto 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 converà conducere el suo concerto 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 completa, non cercano più oltra, et similmente cantando o vero battendo la breve nel preditto segno diminutto, ut hic posito \( \text{C} \), per la quale cosa li nostri contemporanei hano lassato da parte li segni da li antichi usitati per essere più liberi et non subietti a tante variété de mensure, le quale circa la bona harmonia nulla importano. Ma quando questo signo preditto \( C \), more antigo, fusse signato ut hic \( C22 \), allhora perché ciascuno signo de modo et de tempo sono apparenti et al habito reduitti, aciò che el signato havesse convenienzia con el signo apparente, seria licito che in tale concerto signato le breve et le longhe osservasseno el binario complemento et ordine. Pertanto in quello mio tenore predito nel suo inizio con questo signo \( \phi \) signato (per complacere a l'uso) ho solo ateso 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 punto 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 rispetto alcuno del suo binario numero. Ma se ciascuna de le specie de tale signo fusse stata da me signata more antico ut hic \( C23 \), allhora per sequirare 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 \( \phi \) claramente fusse apparente el numero de le minime a tre numerate, et similmente el numero de le semibreve perfette fusse a tre mensurate, et le breve per reintegrare el valore de la longha fussero condite per binario numero, et le longhe similmente fussero a doe
insieme 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 non per la privazione del signo proprio. Ma non dio 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 lu tene tale ordine bene est; se ancora non sequitarà tal ordinazione (perché sequita l'uso), non debe essere incolpato, perché ‘usus est altera lex’, el quale uso è stato sequitato da Dufay, da Okgem, da Busnois, da Eloy, et da altri compositori più moderni in molti soi musici concerti, come da Verbonet, da Josquinho, da Jacobo Obret, 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 concetto se transferisse et fa variatione de tempo perfetto in tempo imperfecto, 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 dopo el quale sequitano le pause o vero altri accidenti se intende el modo esser 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 imperfecto con prolazione perfetta et imperfetta. Et dice che nel medesimo errore sono incursi 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 sua aggregazione chiamata modo, et circa la divisione de esso tempo chiamata prolazione) pos[sa] stare per se, et che se uno de tali signi serà posito dopo un'altro, che la natura et proprietà del segno precedente se debbìa lassare, et pigliare quella del seguente, come esempli gratia, se questo signo C serà posito in principio cantus et che in processo (ut dixi) sequiti questo O, alhora sequitarà che el concetto, el quale prima era mensurato o vero numerato sotto el tempo imperfecto et prolazione imperfetta, et etiam de ciascuno modo imperfecto, serà transferito in tempo perfetto et prolazione imperfetta et etiam de ciascuno modo imperfecto, et cosi per lo contrario, et per tale modo accederà de li altri similì signi, perché ciascuno pò stare per se, et è libero et non famulare, et per tale modo etiam accederà se nel principio del concetto serà dato questo signo C2, el quale appresso a li antichi demonstrava el modo

13 See no. 17 n. 15.
14 Del Lago says that the Agnus Dei is from Spataro's 'Missa Da pace' (see no. 44, para. 12).
potrebbe conseguire, pertanto quando trovano che in medio cantus li accidenti del modo perfetto per le pause de le longhe apparenti, come ceci credono che tutto el concetto 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 cognoisce queste prevarications et cognoisce che li accidenti non possono né hano facultà de potere removere la natura de alcuno signo o vero subieito, non sequita tale loro fantasie, ma sequitando la mera verità, crede che dove se darà varietà de signi, che in tale loco anchora se troverà mensurae nel signato musico figurativo, per la quale cosa è stato demonstrato da Tinctoris che le positione de li signi esercitati occorreno in sedici modi inter se differenti,15 et che ciascuno, regolarmente dopo l’altro posito, potrà privare il precedente, li quali signi predetti, ancora che differentemente siano picti et figurati da li signi da li antichi addutti, tamen in significazione minime inter se differunt, et li preditti signi antichi sono veri signi, perché la sua apparentia sta extra signatum, et li signi cadenti nel signato, come le pause de le longhe occupante duo o tri spati 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 substantivo o vero subieito, cioè signo circulare o semicirculare.

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 sera posito questo signo C₂, el quale (come ditto habiamo) demonstra ciascuno modo essere imperfecto, et che da poi, in processu cantus, sia posito questo Q₂, el quale tantum demonstra el modo minore essere perfetto, se dimanda al nostro Prez Zanetto, in quali de li preditti duo signi demonstranti el modo minore essere differente, se osserverà tale modale stabilità, firmezza, et immutabilità, la quale lui dice doverosi osservare usque in finem cantus? Se sera quella la quale è demonstrata per questo signo C₂ posito in principio cantus, allora sequitara che la propria natura assignata al secondo signo ut hic posito Q₂ sera frustratoria et vana, perché sera come quella causa la quale non potrà producere el suo effetto, et cosi per contrario, cioè che se el concento sera tutto gubernato per el secondo signo, ut hic posito, Q₂, el primo, ut hic signato C₂, sera vano et indarno posito per le rason predicte. Credo che questa sua opinione venga dal suo proprio senso, perché lui a comprobatione de quello che lui dice non adduce rasone né autorità, né etiam essempi 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 la pause de le longhe occupante tri spati parimenti a tre insieme 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 Q et altri sequenti signi, dico che questo non sera contra l’arte né etiam contra la rason, perché così come l’è usitato che per la apparentia et positione de questo signo Q de tempo perfetto demonstrata dapo questo C la imperfettione del tempo demonstrata per tale signo resta destrutta, così etiam sequittara che le preditte modale perfettione in tale tenore nel principio date per la sequente positione de questo signo Q et altri sequenti (non sequitando dopo esso signo accidenti proprii demonstranti tali modi essere perfetti) restarano annullate et del concetto abstratte et tolte, perché se come lui afferma in ciascuno signo se trova modo mazzore, modo minore, tempo, et prolatazone, sequitara che in ciascuno de li signi positi dapo le prime 4 pause de longha perfetta in principio de tale tenore posite sera ancora modo mazzore, modo minore, tempo, et prolatazone. Ma el modo minore in tali signi et el mazzore serano imperfetti, le quale imperfettione per signo proprio non sono apparente, ma si per la privatione de tali proprii signi, per le quale privatione asi claro se cognoisce che tale spetie sono in tali signi senza perfettione, perché procedeno secondo la natura et non per accident. Ma che la privatione in questa facultà sia signo de imperfettione mui l’habbiamo da Tinctoris, dove mentre che tra tra valore notularum, dicendo ut hic: Signum prolatazio nis minoris est non habentia puncti in medio circulari perfecti vel imperfecti, ut hic Q C.17 Pertanto dico che tale mio tenore predito farà varietà de modo mazzore et minore perfetti in modo mazzore et minore imperfetti, et etiam la natura et proprietà de questo signo C₂, in fronte cantus prima dato, sera annullato da questo Q sequente, redsectando el concento del tempo imperfetto in tempo perfetto, et tale ordine sera tenuto usque in finem cantus.

17. Ma dove lui dice che el non se dà modo minore senza mazzore, dico che lui non dice bene, perché el deveria dire che el non se deveria dare modo minore senza mazzore per osservare regola et ordine de la discreta et continua quantità, le quale dal musico sono considerate finamente cadere in le cinque note essenziale in canto mensurato essercitate.18 Ma perché, ut dixi, a tempi nostri se vede che se li concenti sono signati con el
The Letters

signo del modo mazore et minore et tempo et etiam de prolacione
denotante perfettione, alhora se attende alla ternaria
connumeratione de quelle note le quale sono propinque in ordine
alle note per il signo demonstratione perfettione, et ietiam se in uno
concento serano alcune note
demonstratne perfettile 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
perfecta per integrare la sua perfettione. Dico anchora che lui erra
dicendo che il non se dà modo minore senza mazore, sperò che l'uno et
altro in quanto al suo origine (el quale è el tempo) sarà subietto alla
quantità discreta. Pertanto ciascuno de essi modi sarà numero, et la sua
unità sarà el tempo musicio, per la quale cosa dico che di come la unità in
la arithmetica pò stare per se, cioè senza el numero,⁹ et el numero binario
pò stare senza el ternario, etc., dico etiam che el tempo musicio (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
quaternario, similmente dico che el modo minore imperfetto et perfetto,
lí quali sono aggregati de dui et de tri tempi, potranno 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, perche essendo el modo ut dixi
subietto alla discrettaglia quantità, sequirà che el numero minore sarà
piore et el mazore sera posteriore. Ma in continuo, come seria considerando
la prolacione (la quale divide el tempo in parte), nascerà el contrario, perché
alhora la mazore parte del tempo considerata sera prior e la minore sera
posteriore. Che le quantità minore possano stare senza la mazore, l'è stato
apertamente declarato da Joannes Tinctoris mentre che lui ha trattato de
valore notularum, dicendo ut hic: Quattuor autem quantitates ab artis musicæ
precepto deductæ institutæ acceptimæ, videlicet modum majorem et modum minorem,
temps, et prolactionem, ex quibus quidem quattuor quantitates omnis cantus
demonstravit, non quod necessarium sit in quilibet cantus omnes concurrere,
namque si prolatis sola sit, cantus est ut hic: "O O O O O O O O . Sed ubi
modus maior minor ibi tempus. Ubique modus minor ibi tempus. Ubique
tempus est ibi prolatis, quoniam maior et minor in sequenti tempore
esse necesserit."

Di sopra pare che el nostro Pre Zanetto voglia affirmare che in tale
modo tenore per tale modo notato non sia cosa alcuna mendosa, perché lui non
dice che tale mio tenore non stia bene.⁹¹ 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 essere questa, perché quella pausa
di semibreve la quale sta in tale tenore stesse ancora bene in questi tri
modi diversi dal mio:

et da poi sequitando dice che secondo la sua imbecilità et basso ingegno
che a lui paretaria che tale tenore stesse ancora bene in questi tri modi
diversi dal mio:

⁹ 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 (3 vols., New York, 1973), iii. 401. This concept goes back to the ancient Pythagoreans. Tinctoris, in his Proportionale, writes: 'Number is a multitude composed of units, 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 unibus constituita, ut 2, 3, 4... Neque unus proprius numerus est, sed materiae numeri et elementum arithmeticæ; Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, ii. 138). See also the Commentary on no. 7.

⁹¹ Tinctoris, Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, l. 127-6.

⁹² 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.
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, ne etiam da alcuna altra nota a se minore propinquia in tale tenore apparente, perché le note le quale possono imperficcere alhora sono imperfette de la soa parte terza quando ultra el ternario numero de la soa propinqua minore superavanza quella breve posta inanti alla pausa de la semibreve non seria intesa essere quale possono imperficere alhora sono imperfette de la soa parte terza tre nel predito tenore, el quale tiene una nota, o vero el suo valore. etiam quella pausa de semibreve posta dapo la sequente breve, se completto ternario numero de semibreve, o vero una breve perfetta, et da hie, un'altro completto ternario de semibreve claro et esspettato, et per poi, cogliendo la sequente semibreve punttata con la sequente breve, se faran un'altro completto ternario de semibreve claro et espeddito, et per consequente quella breve posta inanti a quella pausa de semibreve restara 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 potra occurrere. Per le quale demonstratione appare che quelli tri differenti modi circa esso tenore da lui addutti serano fatti indarno et frustratorie 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 punctata et la sequente minima per una longha et prolissa sincopa insituita et da alguno dotto ne indotto non mai considerata, cioè che ultra una breve perfetta et la pause de essa breve perfetta lui conduce le predite 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 punto posito dapo la terza breve nel secondo esemplu da lui addutto sarà superfluo, perché se (rationibus predictis) tale breve sarà perfetta senza quello punto, restarà che tale punto sarà in vano locato et posito. Ma bene volunta intenderia dal nostro Messer Pre Zanetto, con quale rasone da lui è stato posito quello punto tra quella pausa de semibreve et la pausa de la breve nel terzo esempio da lui demonstrato? Lui potria essere esscusato circa quello punto posito dopo la terza breve, dicendo che tale punto è stato posito da lui per punto de perfettione per più chiarezza per li rudi, ma circa l'altro punto predito 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 punctata et la sequente minima (come lui dice che piace a Zoanne de Muris), debbono essere ridutte et computate insieme et non divisere per trovare la soa terza parte, sequitarà che sequitando immediate la breve per el punto de perfettione demonstrata perfetta, che senza el punto posito intra la preditta pausa de semibreve et la sequente pausa de breve, tale semibreve punttata con la minima sequente non potria essere ridutte né computate con altra nota che solo con la pausa de la semibreve predittta. A me certamente pare che lui non habbia osservata quella regola de Zoanne de Muris da lui allegato, la quale dice quod quando inventurat duq notœ simul sole, ille non debent partiri, sed simul copulari. 22 Se le predite doe note debeno essere copulate o vero computate, sequitarà che tenteranno 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 punto predito posito intra la pausa de la semibreve et la breve preditta, per el quale punto se demonstra che le doe note predite sono fisse et immobile, cioè che non tendeno ad locum, ma che la pausa de la semibreve predittta sera quella la quale farà transito de loco ad locum per associare con le doe preditte note, come demonstra quello punto dapo se posito, el quale non potra producre altro effetto che retrograd[e]datione, perché non potrà significare permanentia né esspettazione, perché remoto tale punto, tale pausa non potra essere intesa andare né a desstra né a sinistra, per la quale cosa concluso essere vano chiudere et ligare quello el quale non se potrà movere et mutare loco. 23 Ma per demonstrare al predito Pre Zanetto amico nostro che lui non è ascso a quella completa et mera integrità che lui se esstima haverie, per più clara demonstratione, demonstrata per le tre varietà da lui di sopra assignate nel predito mio tenore, pertanto oltra le soe tre predite demonstratione li adduco questa consideratione, la quale al rudo cantore sarà assai più facile da comprendere, più rationale, et più frequentata intra musici ut hic:

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1 MS: frustratorie.

350

22 Johannes de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 49. De Muris and Del Lago give 'computari'.

23 On the notion of dots tying down a note, see no. 66, para. 15.
Et per tale retta apparentia et per le rasoni di sopra assignate, lui potrà comprendere che la semibreve puntata con la minima sequente non restarono sole et senza ternaria integrità, et ancora non serano divise in parte, ma unitamente serano computate et reddutte, come pike a quello suo autore chiamato Joannes de Muris, al quale da lui è stato dato uno senso a suo modo.

20. Et altra 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 hie:

[l'immagine della nota musicale]

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 insieme 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, fusesseno disciolte et separate, perché stando in tale modo ligate, essa longha resterà perfetta, perché non ha alcuna breve a parte anteriori da la quale se possa fare imperfecta, etc. Circa quello che lui dice, cioè che la preditta longha debbe essere perfetta per virtù de le doe breve le quale sono insieme con essa longha ligate, etc., io rispondo et dico che la regola generale la quale ce amastra circa la cognizione de le note perfette non dice che la nota dal signo demonstrata perfetta debb'esse sempre essere perfetta inanti a tutto né etiam alla mazzore parte del suo valore, ma dice che sarà sempre perfetta, sequitando immediata 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, resterà etiam perfetta quando inanti a sé et dopo sé se trovarà el completto numero ternario de le soe minore propinque. Per la quale cosa dico che la longha preditta potrà imperficerre, perché dato che quelle doe sequente breve con essa longha ligate habeanz vim imperfecte longe, tamen a forma longe deficiunt, et perché 'forma est que dat esse rei et [non materia dispersa]',²⁴ dico che per tale rasona tale longha potrà imperficerre. Et questo è stato demonstrato da quello suo autore predetto, cioè Joannes de Muris, in la soa Musica mentre che dà la prima regola, dicendo ut hic: Prima regula est qua longa ante longam

Et per tale retta apparentia et per le rasoni di sopra assignate, lui potrà comprendere che la semibreve puntata con la minima sequente non restarono sole et senza ternaria integrità, et ancora non serano divise in parte, ma unitamente serano computate et reddutte, come pike a quello suo autore chiamato Joannes de Muris, al quale da lui è stato dato uno senso a suo modo.

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24 Hammasse (Les Auctoritates Aristotelis, p. 148) refers to St Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on Aristotle, Metaphysics, viii. lect. 17 n. 1668. A closer reference is viii, lect. 4 n. 1743, but neither has the exact words used by Spataro.

45. Spataro to Aaron, [autumn 1532]
The Letters

17

Pertanto dove cade qualche dubitazione | da li rudi non intesa, cerca, forsa per parere dotto, opponersi et dire in contrario.

21. Per le ragione predite, Frate Petro mio honorando, el nostro Pre Zanetto potrà comprendere che questo signo \( \Phi_2 \) et altri simili, quando diversi accidenti se li appoggiàn, non essendo diverso de forma, darà diversa intelligentia et cognitione, et etiam lui potrà comprendere che questo signo \( \Phi_2 \) da lui in dici modi ut hic \( \Phi_0 \), \( \Phi_2 \) signato, per non essere usitato nè invento, sarà frustratorio et solo inteso da lui et non da altri, et etiam potrà cognoscere che etiam questo signo \( \Phi_2 \) sarà differente da questo \( \Phi_0 \), et che questo signo \( \Phi_2 \) per essere inciso harà diversa intelligentia et natura da questo non inciso \( \Phi_2 \), et etiam potrà comprendere che in testo questo signo \( \Phi_2 \) et questo \( \Phi \) caderà massima differentia. Potrà etiam intendere el nostro Pre Zanetto che circa la harmonia nulla importa se de quelle specie de quale non se da signo apparente non se trovarà in li concenti el numero completo de le soe minore propinque, et etiam cognoscere che sempre el signo sequente destruggi el precedente, et li concenti per alcuno signo accidentale non possono variare se tali accidenti non saranno appoggiati a qualche sustantivo, 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 sarà così mutabile come sono li altri signi et mensure, et potra sapere che solamente el modo perfetto sarà considerare procedere a principio usque in finem cantus quando in processo de esso canto non se da signo differente dal primo in fronte cantus positio, et intenderà come lui è stato in tutto frustratorio circa quelli tri vari esempi assignati in quello mio tenore de l’ultimo Agnus Dei de la mia preditta missa [‘Da pacem’], et che circa el terzo de li esempi predetti, lui non ha osservato quella regola da Joannes de Muris data et da lui allegata, et vedera come la nota potra essere perfetta, havendo el numero tennario 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 cognoscoere 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 teacher 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, 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 \( \Phi_2 \) in the tenor of the first Kyrie as indicating imperfect minor mode with perfect tempsus twice diminished. He claims I erred because he says all old and modern musicians use that sign to signify perfect minor mode and imperfect tempsus and that I should have written \( \Phi \) or \( \Phi_2 \) (with the figure clearly separated from the sign) to indicate unmistakably perfect tempsus twice diminished.

3. He err in stating that all old and modern musicians use \( \Phi_2 \) to indicate perfect minor mode with imperfect tempsus\(^3\) because Verbonner, in the tenor of the Credo of his ‘Missa Gratiaeuse gent’\(^5\), uses \( \frac{2}{2} \) not in old sense of perfect minor mode with imperfect tempsus and perfect prolation and imperfect minor mode with imperfect tempsus and perfect prolation, respectively, but as \( \frac{2}{2} \) under duple proportion. Similarly, in the ‘Et resurrexit’ he writes \( \Phi_2 \) as a sign of \( \frac{2}{2} \) 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 \( \Phi \) and \( \Phi_2 \) 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 \( \Phi \) or \( \Phi_\text{a} \) (with the stroke at the side) to indicate a faster tempo than \( \frac{2}{2} \). Therefore, \( \Phi \) should indicate an even faster tempo, and not \( \Phi \) again diminished. But for the untutored, one could write \( \Phi_\text{a} \), as my teacher said was done by his teacher. I did this in the Benedictus of my mass, writing \( \frac{2}{2} \) instead of \( \frac{2}{2} \) lest the half-learned should think it was \( \frac{2}{2} \) diminished and therefore, according to older practice, imperfect minor mode with imperfect tempsus and prolation, after which the three-breve rests would have no place, the rests being contrary to the sign. Even if I had written \( \frac{2}{2} \), learned musicians, because of the rests and the number of the notes, would understand it to mean \( \frac{2}{2} \) twice diminished. Nevertheless, I wrote \( \frac{2}{2} \), not \( \frac{2}{2} \). To make things perfectly clear for beginners, it would have been better to write \( \frac{2}{2} \), but that would not indicate diminution but duple proportion. Such duple proportion would not be apparent but understood, since between \( \frac{2}{2} \) and \( \frac{2}{2} \) there are no notes to compare with those after the sign. But since I wasn’t writing for...
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 Φ to indicate quadruple proportion.

5. When he says Φ2 is no different from O2 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: Φ O and Φ2 O2. There is quite a difference between Φ2 and O2, for the first indicates O twice diminished (having both the stroke and the figure 2), whereas in O2 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 Φ2 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 Φ2 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 Φ2 in my motet ‘Ubi opus est facto’ and my treatise on mensural music as a sign of perfect minor mode with diminished imperfect tempus, 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 Φ2 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 Φ2 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: Φ2.

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.
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 used to be written as C 23, which indicated imperfect major mode, imperfect minor mode, perfect tempus, and perfect prolation. My second sign, \( \Phi \), was formerly written C 33, understood as imperfect major mode, perfect minor mode, perfect tempus, and imperfect prolation. When the older musicians began a composition in C 23, the whole work was sung in that mensuration unless another sign intervened. But if C 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’. He places O in the soprano to indicate perfect tempus; both modes and prolation are imperfect. Further on he writes C 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 C 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. \( \Phi \) 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 C 33, I say that the first sign \( \Phi \) 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 fail. 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 \( \Phi \): just as one can in the succeeding passage: \( \Phi \) calls for

three perfect breves or nine imperfect semibreves. The number nine will also be found after \( \Phi \), 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, equal to those under \( \Phi \) 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 quarrelsome, ill-informed men and it’s a waste of time to answer them. Similarly, Pre Zanetto says that not only does the passage under \( \Phi \) 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 our longs or whether the longs pair off into binary units to make maxims. 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 C. 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, C 22, 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 \( \Phi \), 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 C 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; but if he prefers to work, he should be criticized, for practice is as good as a law, and this practice has been adhered to by Dufay, Ockeghem, Busnois, Eléonore, and other more modern composers such as Verbonnet, Josquin, Obrecht, and countless others.

13. Continuing, our friend believes that I think when one changes
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. 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, which older composers consider as imperfect minor mode and imperfect tempus, and then at some point changes to O, turns into perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus. Pre Zanetto claims, given C or C at the beginning and then O

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 (meaning perfect minor mode and imperfect tempus) and then changes to C, imperfect minor mode and perfect tempus. These signs preserve their temporal and modal nature. Under O three imperfect breves complete a perfect long; under C 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, 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, 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 C, showing both modes to be imperfect, with imperfect tempus, and changes to O, 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, then the properties assigned to O will be in vain, like a cause that cannot produce its effect, and the same holds for O followed by C. 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 ["Tu voluntatis"], and then in the course of the work used O 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 can cancel the modal perfection because there is no attribute after C 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. Therefore I say that my tenor does change from major to minor mode, and C at the beginning is cancelled by O, 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, 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, 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: \(\bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc\). Similarly, if tempus without either mode, thus: \(\bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc\). 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. 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, 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 anyone 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. 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. 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 imperf ect 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'. This is demonstrated by Johannes de Muris: The first rule is that a long before a long in a perfect mode is perfect. 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. 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, 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 this 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 Q₂ and similar signs are to be understood in different ways according to the attributes found with them, (2) that Φ and Φ₂ are figments of his own imagination, understood by no one else, (3) that Q₂ is different from Q₂ and there is the greatest difference between Q₂ 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.
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 Praiser rerum orem, 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 Q2 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 Q2 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. 2; no. 45, paras. 4–7). When Del Lago points out that Spataro used Q2 in his motet 'Ubi opus est' and Q2 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. 14–16). 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 the mensura! 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 O2 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 duplo or sesquialtera, or other proportions with the figure 2. He contends that it should be written as a proportion, Q2, 'prout ars requirit'.33 He also criticizes Domarto for writing

30 See the Notes on Problematical Terms, s.v. 'Indiciale/Essemtiale'.
31 Spataro discusses its mensuration in no. 4, para. 2.
32 Ramis approves this practice; see Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 84.
33 Proporsionali musices (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, ii, 45 and 50).
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [autumn 1532]
(autohraph)


245' Reverendo et de li musici excellentissimo, etc.

1. Dopò che ebi scripto questa prima qua ligata [no. 45], in la quale se tracta de la responsione da me facete la quale ho quasi dubiedo, et mentre che io aspectava che Frate Allexandro, presente lactore, se partisse da Bologna et a V.E. (come messo l'ordine hyeroso[mitano, quanto maggi]ore honorando. In Vinetia, l'era impossibile, volendo havere la bona harmonia, solo havere la li soi concenti nel tempo anticho, pertanto sua Signoria domandava se el Reverendo et de li musici excellentissimo, etc.

2. Et perché alhora uno certo amico nostro, el quale mi portasse tale mie resposte, me pervenne a li mane uno certo mio canto a exercitatione de uno solo genere, perche dato che in una sola particula de quattro voce composto, el quale canto a li giurni passati fu dame facto, dro, presente lactore, se partisse da Bologna et a V.E. (come messo l'ordine hyeroso[mitano, quanto maggi]ore honorando. In Vinetia, l'era impossibile, volendo havere la bona harmonia, solo havere la li soi concenti nel tempo anticho, pertanto sua Signoria domandava se el Reverendo et de li musici excellentissimo, etc.

3. Et docto, disse che lui non haveva mai trovato tale diapason per tale modo divisa, quasi volendo dire che tale divisione non potriano essere harmonice divisa, cioè con el diapante in grave et diatessaron in acuto, senza lo aiuto de la terza chorda chromatica, chiamata lycanos meson chromatica, la quale cadera nel monocordo sopra quello tasto negro intra parhypane meson et lycanos meson diatonica postio, o vero intra F fa ut et G sol re ut, la quale chorda o vero tasto serà recta diapente con b mi grave et optima diatessaron diatessaron.

4. Et docto, disse che lui non haveva mai trovato tale diapason per tale modo divisa, quasi volendo dire che tale divisione non potriano essere harmonice divisa, cioè con el diapante in grave et diatessaron in acuto, senza lo aiuto de la terza chorda chromatica, chiamata lycanos meson chromatica, la quale cadera nel monocordo sopra quello tasto negro intra parhypane meson et lycanos meson diatonica postio, o vero intra F fa ut et G sol re ut, la quale chorda o vero tasto serà recta diapente con b mi grave et optima diatessaron diatessaron.

1 Jeppesen believed the letter was written in July 1532 (‘Eine musiktheoretische Korrespon-
denz’, 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 25 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 di le responsa 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 2 Jan. 1533 (no. 49). Spataro complains about ‘il mali portamenti de Prate Allexandro’ (who perhaps was dilatory in delivering Spataro’s letter) and he discusses Aaron’s criticisms of the motet ‘Ave gratia plena’.

2 ‘Ave gratia plena’. Spataro copied the motet at the end of his letter; the soprano and tenor are found on fo. 244v, the alto and bass on fo. 245a (see Pl. 12 and transcription on pp. 155-61). The motet has been published in Luigi Torchi, L’arte musicale in Italia, i, 137-46, and transcribed in Tirro, ‘Giovanni Spataro’s Choirbooks’, pp. 237-40.

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 10, see no. 49, paras. 2 and 5.

4 Tossanello in musica (probably the Venice, 1532 edn.). The nephew is probably the Victoria mentioned in no. 49, para. 6.

5 On this treatise, see no. 34.
Pl. 12. Giovanni Spataro, 'Ave gratia plena'. MS Vat. lat. 3318, fos. 245r and (right) 245a (autograph)
3. V.E. trovarà nel mio canto predicato che in D è signato questo segno 2, el quale segno denota che con la mi cade in terza magore, la quale corda se trova in pochissimi monochordi. Pertanto alcuni potranno dire che in tale loco non lice signare tale segno, perché non havendo loco nel monochordo, che tale segno sarà indarno in tale loco posto. A questo se risponde che l'arte sempre deve imitare la natura et non e contra. Pertanto dico se el non se potrà sonar, 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 prodotto. Ma credo che meglio se sonaria nel letuto, et ancora meglio se 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 dico. Ma bene prego V.E. voglia fare che questa qua ligata' directiva al reverendo Monsignore Casale sia data a soa Signoria, et quando a soa Signoria io prestai la li musici qua in promisse mandarmi uno de li tractati musici de Messer Lodovico Signoria, credo che volontiera ve vederia, perche a Bologna (parlando de in la soa partita facta da Bologna, et etiam perche soa Signoria me Fogliano/et etiam el musico tractato predicto.

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1. After I had written the enclosed letter answering Pre Zanetto’s queries [no. 41], 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. I happened to be at the home of Monsignore da Casale, a Bolognese, who is at present ambassa­tor to Venice of the King of England; he asked whether—in view of the

2. In his Compendiolo, fo. Ey' 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 Istrumenti nella Italia'.

3. You will find a D$ in my composition, indicating a major third with B, which is found in very few monochords. 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 Theoria I lent him before he left Bologna, and he did not send me one of Lodovico Fogliano’s treatises, which he had promised to do.
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. 45), 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

9 Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, ed. J. S. Brewer, v
The Letters

46. Spataro to Aaron, [autumn 1552]

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To these accounts may be added a highly interesting letter from Alfonso d’Este of Ferrara to Henry VIII of 15 October 1517, written in impeccable humanistic Latin, 9 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 Italian-born 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

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 E for, our readers will say, but what about the notorious clash between G♯ in the alto and C♭ in the bass of measure 14, which Spatarò 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 dissonance so brief and unaccented was hardly perceptible—would the same oversight; in the present case the exaggerated care taken by mi contra fa; Besides, should the word the goal to prove harmonic division of the enormous universe of his sacred or even secular works. E.E.L.

47 (J5). Fos. 34r–41r
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 22 November 1532
(Scribe A)

14 A Messer Giovanne di Spatar.*

1. Da l’eccellente musico Misser Pietro Aaron amico nostro ho ricevuta una vostra direttriva a’lui [no. 41] in risposta di una mia fatta alli 23 de agosto’ [no. 44], in la qual alcuni dubbi se contenevano, la risoluzione de’ quali io desiderava havere da V.E., alla quale io per adesso non voglio altramente rispondere 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 usare io molto maggiore riverentia a voi che voi a me. Ma io essendo homo di natura pacifica, pigliarò in bona parte et in loco de paterner ammonitioni le parole vostre. Et de hoc satis.

2. Pregò V.E. che per sua innata gentilezza se degne de responderme a questi pochi dubbi, i quali mi restano circa la se composizioni, scilicet in quel suo concetto ‘Ubi opus est facto, verba non sufficiunt’, nel soprano et nel contra alto, et etiam nel contrabasso. Et questo io non lo per tentare V.E., volendomi equiparare a’llei, ma solum per vedere se ne concordamo in opinione, quantunque (io ingenuamente el confessò) sono di altro parere de che è V.E., ‘et primo nel soprano del detto concetto circa quel punto posto tra quelle due semibrevi, le quali sono tra la Quinta breve et la prima lunga, dopo la quale sequitan immediate quatro semibrevi, le quali se cantano sotto la dupla proportione segnata sotto questo segno φ. Et qui ho posto el proprio vostro esempio:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Dico questo punto predetto (con bona vostra venia) a no}^{*} \text{ pare sia superfluo. La ragione è questa: perché quella breve dinanzi alle due semibrevi tra le quali è posto il detto punto rationabilmente si fa imperfetta dalla prima semibreve che seguita immediate, anchora che non gli fusse tal punto, come parte terza di essa breve, o vero come dalla sua minore propinquia, et la prima breve, la quale è inclusa nella lunga, si fa imperfetta dalla seconda semibreve a parte anteriori. Et la prima semibreve delle quattro che sequitan immediate da poi la lunga fa imperfetta la seconda breve, la quale è inclusa in essa lunga a parte posteriori. Ma penso}\end{align*}
\]

14 ‘Circa questi dubbi’ has been deleted in the original.  
15 Changed from ‘mi’.  
16 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 evitare alla seconda semibreve la alterazione, dico non poter esser di divisione, perché l’alterazione si causa tra due parti maggiori propinque perfette, cioè quando due semibreve 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’alterazione 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 alterazione. Et questo è affermato da Giovan de Muris in la terza regola de alteratione, il quale così dice: Quandounque inter duas longas de modo perfecto vel pausas longarum vel inter punctum et longam inveniuntur duae breves sine punto in medio, secunda alteratur, id est valet duas breves. Similiter quando inveniuntur duas semibreves inter duas breves de tempore perfecto, vel pausas brevium, vel inter punctum et brevem sine punto in medio, secunda alteratur, id est valet duas semibreves, etc. Ma lui non dice tra una breve et una lunga, et per questo perché l’alterazione convien essere fatta tra due note maggiore propinque, come sono due semibreve tra due brevi nel tempo perfetto. Non essendo punto di divisione tra l’una et l’altra semibreve, all’hora rationalmente la seconda 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 propinquu sequente, cioè alla breve, la quale contiene in sé perfettione, quia ubi est perfectio, ibi est perfectio, etc. Dico ancora non poter causarsi alterazione tra la breve et la lunga et e contra perché la lunga nel tempo perfetto di sé et sui natura è imperfetta. 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 la semibreve dinanzi alla lunga alterarsi, et questo medesimo è affermato da voi in l’opera vostra intitulata al Signor Hermès Bentivoglio al capitolo 14 dell’alteratione, dove dite queste parole, cioè: Similmente mentre che del punto de divisione habbiamo parlato abbiamo detto che quando tra due note che contengono in sé perfettione si trovano due sue minori propinque cosi , o vero così , et in molti altri modi occorrenti, la seconda altera o vero duplica il valore suo, etc. Et queste sono vostre parole formali. Et queste altre anchora nel ditto capitolo, dove così seguitate dicendo: Est primo è da sapere che la nota alterata o vero atta all’alteratione maso 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 lunga, et alle pause sue, ne anchora alla massima. Et la semibreve inanzi alla breve et alla sua pausa, et non alla lunga, et alla sua pausa, ne similmente alla massima. Et la breve inanzi alla lunga, et alla sua pausa, et non inanzi alla massima, et la lunga inanzi 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.

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 esempio:

\[ \text{\ldots} \]

Dico anchora per la predetta ragione questo punto anche esso esser superfluo et non necessario, perché la preallegata regola sequita cosi: Idem est de duabus minimis inter duas semibreves de maiori prolatione, nam quandounque remanent duae sine puncto in medio, secunda est alterata, id est valet duas minimas. V.E. ha inteso come la regola è contra de lei, perché la regola non dice che la minima deba alterare tra la breve et la semibreve. Ma se ella ha posto questo punto per punto di imperfettion, dico senza esso regolarmente (ut dixi) ciascunavera di esse’ note farsi imperfetta dalla sua minore immediate sequente, come è quella breve nel primo esempio dalla prima semibreve, et la prima breve, la quale è inclusa in la lunga che sequita, dalla seconda semibreve sequente, et similmente nel secondo esempio la seconda 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 esempio del soprano soprannotato, prego V.E. si degni notificarmi se lo ha posto per se, id est sine aliqua relatione, o vero relato a questo , et quale è segnato nel principio del soprano, o vero alla sue note, o a qualunque altro modo. Et questo basti quanto alli dubbii del soprano.

2 Jo. de Muris, Libellus cantus memorabillis, CS iii. 52.
3 The source of Del Lago’s quotation from Johannes de Muris’s Libellus cantus memorabillis is the version of this treatise contained in Book III of Ugolino of Owino’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. Sessy, ii. 167).
4 The words in square brackets, omitted by the copyist, have been supplied from Spataro’s quotation of this passage in no. 48, para. 6.
5 MS: essere.
6 Jo. de Muris, Libellus, CS iii. 52.
5. Item nel contrasto quell' punto segnato da V.E. dopo quelle due semibrevi poste tra la lunga et la breve, le quali si cantano sotto la dupla proporzione segnata sotto questo segno C 3 et anchora sotto questo C 3. Credo per questa ragione sia stato così segnato da quella acciò che la seconda semibreve dopo la quale segue immediata la breve non si alterasse. Et che sia al vero, dimostrate sequitam in un po' per quelle due semibrevi messe tra la lunga et la massima quasi al fine del detto contrasto sotto questo segno C 3, perché lei non ha posto il punto tra la seconda semibreve et la massima, perché la intenzione 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 seconda 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 proporzione segnata sotto questo segno C 3. Ma si potria escusare V.E. dicendo haver segnato quel si 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.

37 Ma si potria divergere che V.E. havesse voluto satisfare più tosto a' periti che alli imperiti, perché appresso li dotti si reputa quel punto superfluo et non necessario, perché di tutti li periti musicisti se fariano 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 C 3, et similmente le due lunghe incluse in la massima sotto questo segno C 3. 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 seconda 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' tra due lunghe, ma ben tra due brevi o vero tra '1 valore di una breve et poi la breve,' perché sarà contra la regola della alteratione. Né manco le restarino sole, perché la seconda breve vacua inclusa in la prima lunga si fa imperfetta dalla prima semibreve immediata sequente a parte posteriori. Et la prima vacua della seconda lunga sequente si fa imperfetta dalla seconda semibreve a parte anteriori.

6. Oltra di questo mi occorre anchora un dubbio de la lunga in mezo della ligatura molte volte da V.E. posta nel contrasto 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 del dello esemplatore, perché spesso suole tal cosa accadere per negligenza 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 caso possono occorrere molti errori et non pochi inconvenienti, come saria cantando le parole o vero viciare el tenore fatto sopra el canto plano o vero fermo, et etiam in un tenore d'un canto compostol toto per soggetto, 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 autorità di Maestro Philippo di Vitriaco, musico antiquissimo, et huomo di non mediocre autorità, il quale parlando delle note ligate così dice: Item omnis tractus ascendens in prima nota positus cuinicumque ligaturae faciat duas primas esse semibreves. Et omnes medii sunt breves.8 Similmente questo è affirmmato da Gioanne de Muris nel suo trattato de cantu mensurato in capitolato de ligaturis in octava regula, el quale così dice: In omni ligatura omnes mediis sunt breves, nisi prima | esset cum opposita proprietate, etc.9 Et questa verità è stata dilucidata da Prosdocimo di Beldomando padoano, dottissimo in tutte le arti, come appare per le opere sue, commentatore et espositore sopra Giovan de Muris, quando lui espose detta regula 8. Così dice: Sed quidam moderni viam scientia ignorantes medii notu in ligatura tractum descedendentem apponunt, qui ratione perfectiones eam efficiat notum longum; et qui contra auctorum regulam et contra Francnonem faciant, dicerent in libro suu mensurante musice in capitolo de ligaturis quod nota in medio ligaturae nullo modo est ponenda, etc.10 Adonque per l'autorità de questi dotti musici antichi, dali quali havemo havuto il lume et la inteligencia della nostra musicale scientia, dico non se

8 The quotation is similar to a passage in the 'Ars perfecta in musica Magistri Philippi di Vitriaco', CS iii. 35. See Ch. 7, p. 154, for a comparison of the two readings. Del Lago's letter originally indaded at this point a quotation from Marchetto of Padua that was subsequently struck out: 'E questo istesso afferma Marchetto padoano nel suo Breve compendio di musica mensurata nel ultimo capitolo, nel quale tratta delle note composite o ver ligare, el quale così dice: Omnes vero medii breves dicantur.' On the Breve compendio of Marchetto, see Giuseppe Vecchi, 'Su la composizione del Pomerium di Marchetto da Padova e la Breve complessa', Quaderni 1 (1956), 153-205, which includes a transcription of the Breve complessa. The passage cited by Del Lago occurs on p. 204.

9 Jo. de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 16.

10 As pointed out above (see no. 44 n. 25), Del Lago is actually quoting from Ugolino of Pescina in his Declaratio musice disciplinae, Book III, ch. viii (ed. Stey, ii. 216). For Franco, see his Ars cantus mensurabilis, ed. Reaney and Gilles, pp. 43 and 10.
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 autorità et celebrissimo nome, ma anchora dalli moderni, come è don Franchino Gafurio, eccellente musicò, nel quinto capitolò del secondo libro de la sua Musica intitolato a Messer Guido Antonio Arcimboldo, il quale questò affermando, così dice: Omnes itaque notule in medio ligaturarum sunt ligabiles preter longam que nunquam medium coniunctionem tenet, et preter semibrevem, que in medio nunquam pariter constituitur nisi in ligatura cum opposita proprietate. Ignarì tamen nonnullì longam in media colocatione constituitur cum causa descendente lateri eius dextro applicata, nullam penitus inter ligatam longam et simplicem differentem figurationem sentientes, ut hic. Quod est intolerabile, nam alia est figuration longi simplicis, alia ligata, ut ex predictis regulis facile deprimi potest. At cum omnes huius discipline clarissimi medias figuras semper breves concludant, hie minime concedendum est longam ipsam inter extrema posse coniungì. Omnis iigitur figura ligabiles non ligata est toleranda nec est viciosa, ligata vero non ligabiles est viciosa et intolerabilis. Omnia denique figuris ligatis applicanter accidentia que et simplicibus ipsi accidere solent. Et anchora, quantonque d'aluni (imperiti pero) et antichi et moderni si sia fatto il contrario, dico quelli havere errato et fatto contra le predette regole et contra la antiquità, perché questi si 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 loci dove havete posto et segnato questo punto, si debba annullare et tor via accio non fusse causa di far errare quelli che dopo noi verranno, perché ciascuno dotto di mediocre giudizio 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 brevitá ho lasciato ponere lo esemplo del contrabasso.

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 continuo mi racomando. 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 di xxii di novembre m.d.xxxii.

[Giovanni del Lago]
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. 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. 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: $\text{\textdagger}$ or $\text{\textdaggerdash}$. 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, 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.  

3. I say the same about the dot dividing the two minims between the
breve and semibreve in this example:

```
\begin{verbatim}
\texttt{\textdaggerdash} \texttt{\textdagger} \texttt{\textdaggerdash} \texttt{\textdagger} \texttt{\textdaggerdash} \texttt{\textdagger} \texttt{\textdagger}
\end{verbatim}
```

For the foregoing reason the dot is superfluous, because the rule
continues: The same obtains for two minims between two semibreves in major
prolomation, for whenever two remain without a dot in between, the second is altered,
that is, it counts for two minims. 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 $\text{\textdagger}$ in the second example above, did you intend it
to stand by itself, or is it related to $\text{\textdagger}$ at the beginning of the soprano,
or to the notes, or some other way? This is all concerning the soprano.

5. In the alto, the dot after the two semibreves between the long and
the breve in duplo proportion under $C_3$ 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 $\text{\textdagger}$, 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 duplo proportion under $\text{\textdagger}$.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 $\text{\textdagger}$. 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 $\text{\textdagger}$, and the two longs in the maxima under $\text{\textdagger}$.2
But I think you placed a dot dividing the two semibreves under $\text{\textdagger}$
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 $\text{\textdaggerpost}$
and the first, void breve in the second long would be imperfected by the
second semibreve $\text{\textdaggerante}$.  

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: 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. 66r–67r
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, n.d. [December 1532] (Scribe E)1

66r Excellentissimo et de li musici doctissimo, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Petro Aron, etc.

1. Essendo alli giorni passati da V.E. stato pregato che qualeunqua volta io sero 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 risposte le quale a li soi quesiti se aparteneno, per la quale cosa, per essere obediene a li preghi de V.E., li quali, come mio magiore, tengo in loco de iustissimi precepti, a li giorni passati per una mia a V.E. directiva [no. 45], a multi soi argumenti et dubietà deti risposta, circa la quale mia risposta, secondo che per una soa de di 22 novembris signata me advisa, pare che assai restasse satisfatto. Et al presente iterum torna dubitando, o vero fingendo de dubitare, a chiedermi la declararion de altre soi dubitatione, a le quale di continua V.E. dà opera. Pertanto prego quella sia contento mostrare tale risposta al predicito nostro Pre Zanetto, et quando le

66v breve et la prima longa, da poi la quale immediate sequitano quattro, la quale immediatamente sequitano da poi la longa, la quale è inclusa in essa longa, a parte postermi. 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 molle altre parole indarno dice per demonstrare che anchora che tale puncto [non fusi se ivi posito, che tale semibreve non seria alterata, et circa tale alterarione lui aduce una sola rasone male considerata, come sequitando se dirà.

2. El predicito nostro Pre Zanetto primamente dice che nel soprano de la seconda semibreve a parte anteriori, et la prima semibreve de le

3. Circa le predette soe argumentatione, et altre le quale in processo demonstraremos, primamente dico che lui non ha considerato bene a quello che el docto musico potria considerare con rasone, perché se tale puncto (intra le predette doe semibreve posito) serà abstracto, tale processo alhora (rationabilemente) potra essere inteso in dui modi diversi, de li quali el primo sera come da lui e stato dicto, el quale da li rudi e considerato come termine et fine, perché (essendo senza lume) piu oltra non tentano né considerano. El secondo sera inteso ut hic, cioè, che non essendo el puncto posito intra le doe semibreve predette, perché serano sole, cioè senza societate ternaria, sarano computate o vero conumermate insieme con quelle quattro semibreve, le quale sequitano dapo la sequente longa, et per tal modo (insieme colte) fariano uno numero, et la longa restara in valore de doe breve perfecte. Et questa sera optimar considerarione, perché l'e più conveniente che le doe semibreve predite siano computate con le quattro dapo la longa posite, le quale sono inter se simile, che non sera se non serano divise et computate in la longa sequente, la quale non è soa simile né propinqua, ma si remota, et etiam perche in la similudine cade la vera amicitia et conformità, et tale ordine harà in sé piu rasone et iustitia che non harà l'ordine da lui assignato di sopra, perché ciascuna nota restara 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 insieme giunette perficerano doe voite el ternario numero, o vero dui tempi perfecti, per le quale rasone concluso che el puncto predetto posito intra le predette doe semibreve da lui chiamato superficile non sera superficile, ma sera necessario, così per li docti come per li semidociti, perché la declaratione de le cose dubie è amica, così al docto come a lo indocto. Et per questo sequarione che secondo lui li puncti positi da li grammatici per distinguere le dictione de la oratione, per complacere a li docti, non se doveriano ponerne, et similmente li comenti facti sopra le altre facoltà 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. (‘a 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 dopo la longa fa imperfecta la seconda breve, la quale è inclusa in essa longa a parte posteriori, circa questo dico che lui ha malsissimamente parlato, perché alle doe breve in la longa predetta 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 post, o vero qualche habitudine o vero respecto come dextro et sinistro. Se intra tale doe breve considerate in la longa fusse considerato dal musico trovarse prima et seconda, el sequitaria che tale breve in tale longa incluse non seriano differente da queste impostione: ☐ ☐ et etiam in considerazione, et anchora sequitaria che l'ultima de le predite doe semibreve, remoto el puncto nel medio de loro posito, seria alterata, perché caderiano doe semibreve intra doe breve ut hic ☐ ♞ ☐ ☐.

4. Circa quello che lui dice, volendomi dimostrare le condizione le quale a la nota alterata se conveneno, altro non dico, perché più altra alcuna cosa se ne trascara. Ma sequitando lui dice che la alteratione [se] causa tra le parte propinque et perfecte, et sequitando adduce una auctorità de Zoanne de Muris, dopo la quale iterum dice che la alteratione conviene essere faccia tra doe parte propinque et perfecte, et non tra una perfecta et l'altra imperfecta, et e contra, come lui dice essere stato fatto da me in lo anteposito exemplo. Et dice questo mio errore nasce perché la longa ex se è imperfecta, pertanto non li potrà cadere alterazione, perché ubi est perfectio ibi alteratio, et e converso. El nostro Pre Zanetto molto s'è affaticato indarno per voiremi insegnare et dare ad intender che quello puncto posito intra le predite doe semibreve sia stato posito da me per punto 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 quali sono sue parte propinque, ma si intra quelle note de le quale essa nota alterata una sarà parte propinqua, et l'altra remota, etc., come etiam sequitando se dirà.

5. Anchora el nostro Pre Zanetto contradice a sé medesimo dove dice che la semibreve predetta non potrà alterare inanzi a la longa sequente, perché tale longa non è perfecta. Qua lui tacite conclude che la semibreve predelta potria alterare inanti a la maggiore 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 maggiore propinqua né remota, né remotor, né remotissima, ma che etiam potrà acadere dove non sequitara nota alcuna a sé magiore, adduco questi exempli sequenti: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ | ☐ ☐ ♞. Nel primo exemplo de necessit qua seconda semibreve posta intra la prima breve et la longa plena sarà alterata per complemento del ternario numero de la semibreve. Da me se concede quello che la simplice regola dice, cioè che la nota deve alterare inanti a la soa maggiore propinqua demonstrata perfecta dal suo signo. Questa tale predetta regola se intende osservarsi quando dopo la nota alterata sequitasse una nota magiore la quale potesse essere receptabile de le doe note ut hic posite ☐ ☐ ☐ | ☐. Ma quando (ut supra o vero ut hic ☐ ☐ ☐, et altri simili modi) quelle doe semibreve non possono essere conumerate con alcuna nota magiore a sé sequente, allhora (rationibus predictis) tale nota apica a la alteratione debe alterare de necessit. Potria etiam la nota disposta a la alteratione essere alterata senza haverne a parte ante né etiam a parte post alcuna nota magiore, ut hic ☐ ☐ ☐, et altri simili modi, o vero ut hic ☐ ☐ ☐. Potria anchora rationabilmente alterare essa nota inanti a la nota simile de un'altrio signo imperfecto, ut hic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐, o vero ut hic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐, et in altri modi simili, come è stato demonstrato da Jacobo Obrecht 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 sarà 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 alternatione non potrà stare senza perfectione.

6. Et altra 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:

\[\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}\]

dopo el quale exemplo lui sequitando dice che per la predicta rason, che anchora dice che tale puncto è superfluo et non necessario, perché la soa

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2 Modern edn. in Obrecht, Werken, ed. Wolf, Missen, 4, and Obrecht, Opera omnia, ed. A. Smijers, 1/4 (Amsterdam, 1931). Sparauro 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 Sparauro's description, nor could he be referring to Josquin's 'Missa Malheur me bat'.
6z' allegata regola sequita ut hic: *Idem est de duabus minimis inter duas semibreves de maiori prolatione, nam quandoquaque remanent due sine puncto in medio, secunda est alterata,* et sequitando anch'ora che bene me ha dimostrato che la regola è contraria di me, perché la regola non dice che la minima deba alterare, ma si tra doe semibreve. Benché, Frate Petro mio honorando, per responsione de quello che ha dicta el nostro Pre Zanetto assai bastaria quello che da me è stato detto di sopra nel primo esempio dove abbiamo dimostrato che la regola antica semplicemente per li rudi assignata in molti modi pò essere exceptuata et potrà patire, perché così potrà alterare la seconda de le doe minime in questi signi \( \circ \circ \) posite, non havendo ante se la semibreve ut hic \( \circ \circ \circ \), come se tara tale semibreve inanti ut hic \( \circ \circ \circ \), et anch'ora dico che la minima predicata potrà così essere alterata inanti a la nota a sé

61' vero ut hic \( \circ \circ \circ \), 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) restaranole sole et sia l'ultima in la propris forma inanti a quale altra nota a sé mazore se voglia, o sia tale mazore propinquoa, o remota, o remotor, o vero remotissima, o perfetta, o imperfecta, de la 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 sarà alterata. Et circa questo altro esempio non se assignerà, 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 regolaremenz ciascuna de tale note senza tale puncto sarà intesa farsi imperfetta de la sua minore sequente, come quella breve in nel primo esempio de la prima semibreve et la prima breve la quale è inclusa in la lunga che dapò sequita sarà facta imperfecta de la seconda semibreve, et similmente accaderà nel secondo esempio, la seconda semibreve la quale è inclusa in la predica breve sera facta imperfecta de la prima minima, et la sequente semibreve sera facta imperfecta de la segunda minima, a le quale soe parole respondendo et dico che remosso quello puncto, el quale è posito in tra le doe minime predicte, tale concetto potrà dal teorico et speculativo essere considerato rationabilemente stare in cinque varii modi differenti, de li quali el primo sarà come lui dice, che finamente considerano le rude antiche regole, cioè che senza tale puncto la prima minima potrà essere intesa imperfectere 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 predica breve vacua potrà rationabilmente essere riducta con quelle doe minime immediate posite dapò la sequente breve per accompagnarsi con le doe simile a complemento del ternario numero, et per tale modo la breve anteposta a le doe prediche minime restara complecta del suo integro valore, cioè de doe semibreve perfecte, et etiam l'ultima semibreve restara perfecta, et questo sarà recto processo perché (come a multi piace) l'è meglio a reintegrate che deficere et mancare. El terzo modo sarà questo, cioè che quelle doe pausa de minima non egualmente posite potranno essere intese imperfectere 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 appalrendo tale puncto intra le predice doe minime posito, el musico speculativo potria considerare che una de le prediche doe minime fusse transportata ad imperfectere una de quelle doe semibreve considerate in quella breve vacua, la quale è posita dapò 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 imperfectere quella semibreve vacua la quale sequita immediate dapò le prediche doe minime. El quinto et ultimo modo, dico che el buono teorico, senza tale puncto, potrà considerare che una de le prediche doe minime fasesse imperfecta la sequente semibreve vacua et che l'altra fusse connunata con l'ultima breve posita in tale esempio per imperfectere una de la semibreve in tale breve incluse, non essendo tale breve recepibile de più di un'altra minima a sé precedente o vero sequente.

8. Per le prediche rasone dico che remoto tale puncto intra le prediche doe minime posito, perché el teorico et docto musico potria restare in molte dubieti, tale puncto non dovire essere dicto frustratorio né indarno posito. Imperò che quilli processi li quali in ciascuna faculta sono dubiosi, et che in varii modi posseno essere intesi, la sua declaratione non serà vana ne superflua, perché ad ogni exercitante sera grata. Ma che tale processo, non apparendo el predicato puncto intra le predi de doe minime, possa essere inteso da li docti potere stare per li cinque modi predici, dico che ciascuno dubioso processo, el quale per positione de uno o piu puncti potrà essere reducto a la clara et nota intelligentia, che remoti tali puncti,

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48. *Spataro to Aaron, [Dec. 1532]*

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\( ^4 \) We have deleted a superfluous 'e' following 'perché'.

\( ^3 \) See no. 47 n. 6.

578

4 On the five ways of resolving this passage, see the Commentary.
etiam tale intelligentia potrà etiam per tale modo essere intesa dal speculativo et buono theoretico, per la quale cosa el mio preceptor diceva che tutti li puncti esercitati in la mensurata musica erano frustratorii respecto al docto theoretico, excepto che el puncto de augmentatione 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 minimse, se da lui seriano stati considerati in tanti vari [modi] potersi mensurare le note⁶ predicte. Ma aciò che lui non possa dire che quelle cinque mie demonstracione theoretie assignate di sopra non pos[i]no essere per tale modo considerate dal theoretico, perché claramente non se posseno resolveare né riducere a la clara demonstratione per posizione de puncti, pertanto ponendo da parte la prima, la quale è assai clara et apparente, adduco in luce la seconda ut hic:

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Et le ultime doe predicte consideracione, cioè la quarta et la quinta, serano assai conforme a la soa opinione, 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 ejemplo precedente è stato da me posito come segno per se o vero relato o comparato a questo € posito nel principio del soprano de tale mio concetto. 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 tenere el stillo da li più oggidì usitato, in tale segno 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 € in principio cantus positus.

10. Et ultra procedendo, el preditto nostro Pre Zanetto dice che vole

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et dicte 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

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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 opinione è che [senza il punto] la seconda semibreve debia alterare. Et etiam dice che similemente ho signata el predicto puncta dapo quelle doe breve posite intra la maxima et la longa, le quale se cantano sotto la dupla proportione signata sotto questo segno €, ut hic

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6 MS: note.

5 The 'current convention' of which Spataro speaks is the habit of treating ¥ as a sign of augmentation, so that the tactus falls on the minim rather than the semibreve. According to Spataro, the sided stroke indicates diminution; therefore two minim or an imperfect semibreve pass for a tactus.
demonstrari a le quale el nostro predicto Messer Pre Zanetto non pò ascendere, perché, ut dixi, l'e 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 sue predicte argumentatione assai bastasseno le rasone da me di sopra assignate con varii exampli, pure a magiore soa chiazzera, li adduco in contrario la sequente auctorità del subtile J. Tintoris, el quale circa questo molto bene ha inteso, come appare nel suo tractato musicò dove mentre che lui tracta de la alteratione de le cantabile note, dice ut hic: Tertia regula est quod omnis nota quae alteratur, necessario ante suam maiorem propinquam alteratur, 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 imperfectur. Unde que alterationem valent tantum duas, necessce valore tres, ad quod evitandum secunda primè similis est alterabilis. Secunda est quando dve note minores1 eiusdem speciei ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam, ut due breves ante maximam, due semibreves ante longam, et sic de singulis, possunt eam imperfectur, et sine alteratione numeros eos perfectur.2 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, remotor, et remotissima. Et de questo sarà claro el nostro Pre Zanetto se bene lui adverterà a quello che nel secondo modo è stato dicto dal predicto Tintoris, cioè che quando dvo note minore de una medesima specie sono posite inanti a un'altra nota a sè magiore remota, etc., che se tale dve note potrano imperficere tale nota mazore remota, che alhora la seconde de tale note minore non sarà alterata, et | perché negatio unius (in hoc loco) è afirmatorio alterius, sequita che se tale dve note minore non potrano imperficere la nota

64' MS: proxime.  6' MS: minoris.  7' MS: imperfectus.

5 Spataro’s quotations from Tintorí is do not agree with any known version of the Tractatus alterationum, and they contain several errors. Cfr. Tintorí, Tractatus alterationum, CS iv. 67, and Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 173: Tertia generalis regula è quod omnis nota quae alteratur, necessario ante suam maiorem propinquam alteratur, ut longa ante maximam, brevis ante longam, semibrevis ante brevem et minima ante semibrevem. Cuius ratio duplex est, prima, quoniam loco note alterandae maior propinquae poni non potest, eo quod similis ante similem non imperfectur. Unde que per alterationem valent tantum duas, necessce valore tres. Ad quod evitandum secunda primè similis est alterabilis. Secunda ratio est, quoniam dvo note minores eiusdem speciei ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam, ut due breves ante maximam, due semibreves ante longam, due minime ante brevem et due semibreves ante maximam, due minime ante longam, au due minime ante maximam possunt eam imperfectur, et sic abaque alteratione numeros eos perfectur. Spataro’s substitution of ‘quando’ for Tinctorí’s ‘quoniam’ in the last sentence obscures the meaning.

6 Spataro’s belief that Tinctorí 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 Tinctorí’s treatise or in his pedagogical note, Dificíles alios (see Blackburn, A Lost Guide, pp. 67, 70, 81, 83). In Tinctorí’s fourth rule (discussed below) alteration is allowed after, but not before, a remote value.
Molte altre soe sententie et exempli potria assignare del predicto Tintoris, li quali apertamente sono contra le frivole rasoni del nostro Pre Zanetto, el quale più oltra non tenda sapere se non quanto sonano le grosse parole de quello che è stato scritto da quelli soi rudi auctori antichi, ma saran no da me tacite passate per non procedere in longo, et etiam perchè assai credo haverse 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, perchè (ut dixi) la declaratione de me tacite passate per non procedere in longo, et etiam perchè assai credo necessarii, eos si per el docto come per el semidocto, predicti da me in quello mio canto positi non sono superflui, ma sono queUe importantie, le quale possono per diversi modi essere intese, non dal quale ogni altro livore et passione quello puncta da me signata intra queUe doe semibreve posite intra queUe prima che tale puncta sia stato da me per tale modo posito per doe rasoni, 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 anchera che non li fusse tale puncto, che mai la seconda semibreve non seria alterata, perchè la alteratione se causia intra doe breve et non intra doe longe. Dice anchera che le predicte semibreve senza tale puncto non restariano sole, perchè 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, perchè lui dice che la prima longa ha la seconda breve vacua, et che etiam la seconda longa ha la breve prima vacua; lui tacite concede che le predicte doe semibreve non sono intra doe longe, ma si intra doe breve vacue, cioè intria la seconda breve de la prima longa et intria la prima breve de la seconda longa, et per consequente sera da lui (tacite) afirmato 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 rason e è stato da me posito tale puncto intra le predicte doe semibreve, ma solamente da altra mera considerazione, et da la terza regola da Tintoris di sopra assignata mosso, dove lui dice: Seconda est quando due note minores eiusmod species ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam, ut due breves ante maximum, due semibreves ante longam, et sic de singulis, possunt eam imperficer, ut sic sine alteratione numerus esset perfectus. l{10} Pertanto dico che se tale puncto non fusse posito intra le doe predicte semibreve, che la seconda de esse semibreve potria essere alterata, perchè remoto tale puncto, tale doe semibreve (inseme colte) non possono essere comprehese in la sequente longa ad imperficer quale doe breve in essa longa considerate, et perchè l'è meglio perficere et reintegrate che non sera imperficer e minuire, se tale puncto intra le predicte semibreve non fusse posito, per tale rasonie la seconda de le doe semibreve predicte da ogni docto seria più presto intesa essere alterata, che imperficer la breve de la prima longa et etiam de la seconda, perchè come piace a Tintoris predicto, la imperfectione è molto più odiosa che non è la alteratione, et come a Guido monaco piace, l'è meglio a crescere che minuire. Ma lui che non se parte da la aparente et grossa regola de quello suo Joannes de Muris antico non potrà attingere a queste suulte consideratione.

12. Anchora sequitando, questo nostro Pre Zanetto dice che circa quello puncto da me signato intra quelle doe semibreve posite intra quelle doe longe medie vacue et medie plene ut hic: C: sq • • • l, che lui crede che tale puncto sia stato da me per tale modo posito per doe rasoni, et primo 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 anchera che non li fusse tale puncto, che mai la seconda semibreve non seria alterata, perchè la alteratione se causia intra doe breve et non intra doe longe. Dice anchera che le predicte semibreve senza tale puncto non restariano sole, perchè 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, perchè lui dice che la prima longa ha la seconda breve vacua, et che etiam la seconda longa ha la breve prima vacua; lui tacite concede che le predicte doe semibreve non sono intra doe longe, ma si intra doe breve vacue, cioè intria la seconda breve de la prima longa et intria la prima breve de la seconda longa, et per consequente sera da lui (tacite) afirmato 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 rason e è stato da me posito tale puncto intra le predicte doe semibreve, ma solamente da altra mera considerazione, et da la terza regola da Tintoris di sopra assignata mosso, dove lui dice: Seconda est quando due note minores eiusmod species ante maiorem remotam aut remotiorem aut remotissimam, ut due breves ante maximum, due semibreves ante longam, et sic de singulis, possunt eam imperficer, ut sic sine alteratione numerus esset perfectus. l{10} Pertanto dico che se tale puncto non fusse posito intra le doe predicte semibreve, che la seconda de esse semibreve potria essere alterata, perchè remoto tale puncto, tale doe semibreve (inseme colte) non possono essere comprehese in la sequente longa ad imperficer quale doe breve in essa longa considerate, et perchè l'è meglio perficere et reintegrate che non sera imperficer e minuire, se tale puncto intra le predicte semibreve non fusse posito, per tale rasonie la seconda de le doe semibreve predicte da ogni docto seria più presto intesa essere alterata, che imperficer la breve de la prima longa et etiam de la seconda, perchè come piace a Tintoris predicto, la imperfectione è molto più odiosa che non è la alteratione, et come a Guido monaco piace, l'è meglio a crescere che minuire. Ma lui che non se parte da la aparente et grossa regola de quello suo Joannes de Muris antico non potrà attingere a queste suulte 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 auctoriz de certi antichi musici, le quale sono de poco momento et de nulla existimatione et importantia, perchè non sono producte con rasonie alcuna demonstrativa, ma solo per proprio sensa considerate. Io trovo che li antichi han solo dato regola de cognoiscere le note liegare nel suo principio et nel fine, et circa el principio hanno adducti tri modi differenti per cognizione de le figure o vero figura nel principio constituta. El primo è stato da loro chiamato con propriet, et questo era quando la prima nota era breve. El secondo da loro è stato dicto senza propriet, et questo era quando essa prima nota era longa. El terzo da loro è stato chiamato con opposit propriet, et questo era quando la prima et seconda nota erano semibreve. Et circa el fine de le predicte note liegare è stato da loro considerato dui modi, de li quali uno è stato da loro chiamato con perficione, et questo accadeva quando l'ultima nota era longa. Et el secondo modo era da loro chiamato senza perficione, et questo accadeva quando l'ultima era breve, de le quale denominatione non se trova alcuno auctore, ne antico né moderno, che ne assigni rasonie alcuna, cioè che una medesima nota come la breve, per la quale rasonie nel principio de la ligatura posit, sia chiamata con propriet, et nel fine locata sia dicta senza perficione, et la longa posita nel principio de la ligatura sia dicta senza propriet, et posita nel fine sia chiamata con perficione, altra che (ut dixi) non è mai trovato auctore che di ciò adduca rasonie alcuna. Ma alcuna

\[1\] MS: imperfectus. See n. 6. 
\[2\] MS: dice.
\[3\] See n. 6.
volta molto ce ho pensato et studiato, et mai non ho saputo trovarne rasone alcuna. Pertanto ho pensato che tale denominazione siano state trovate più presto per un certo ordine de brevità per essere inteso nel parlare, che per rasone.

14. Se adocca 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 quelle 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 ciascuno scia, che se le regole date solo trcludo de la note posite nel principio et nel fine, et che solamente nel principio de la ligature potranno condizionalmente stare la longa, la breve, et doe semibreve, et nel fine solamente stare la longa et la breve, che alhora le note intermedie serano breve, se semplicemente, 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) quele note ligate posite nel principio et nel fine, se simplicemente, o vero senza altro tracto, serano notate et posite. Ma se tale nota media, mediante la additione del tracto o vero cauda descendente (senza confusione posita) potrano intesa essere semplice longa, se domanda al nostro Pre Zanetto quale rasone lui potrà assignare contra tale clara positio, la quale chiamo clara perché ‘forma est quæ dat esse rei’. 

Ma certamente che troppo audacemente circa questo è stato parlato da Prosdocimo padoano, expositore de Joannes de Muris, dal nostro Pre Zanetto allegato, dicendo che alcuni ignorantissimi moderni, il quali ignorano 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. E dal nostro Pre Zanetto iterum voria sapere, dove Prosdocimo dice, *sed quidam moderni viae scientiae ignarus*, etc., con quale scientia et rasone lui potrà dimostrare che la longa con el tracto descendente figura a mano dextra non possa essere intesa et stare come longa nel medio de le note ligate? Lui non trovarò howo che di questo possa assignare alcuna vera rasone, ma ogni rasone sarà 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. E’ adocca da credere che Prosdocimo è stato superfluo et transgressore, perché (parlando senza rispetto) è uscito fora de li termini rationali et de la intentione de lo auctore da lui exposito 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, il sequitoria 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 predette note ligate in longa, lui non potria fare, secondo la erronea opinione 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 sequitoria el canto plano secondo le debite vocale demonstrate nel canto plano dal compositore tolto per subiecto.  

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 semibrevs vacue ligate con la breve, sempre la seconda altera, etiam nel modo minore perfecto, doe breve ligate con la longa, la seconda sarà 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

Per la terza rasone dico che così come el modo minore perfecto (senza altro proprio segno o vero accidente proprio de perfectione) pò essere inteso essere perfecto in li concerti per la positione de tre breve insieme ligate ut hic et altri simili modi, che etiam el modo magiore per tre longe ut hic ligate potrà essere inteso perfecto, come da molti boni musici è stato exercitato, li quali accidenti proprii non potrano conseguire se la longa non se potesse dare con la propria forma intra la extremitate de le note ligate. La quarta rasone dico essere perché ‘usus est altera lex’, perché dato et concesso che da quella prima rudis antiquità anchora fusse observata tale regola da Prosdocimo audacemente adducta, dapò da la posterità a tempi nostri tale regola senza rasone considerata non è observata, perché se trovano multi concerti da doctissimi homini compositi, così anch’etichetti moderni, che circa le note ligate

1 *MS: stata.
2 *MS: note medie.
3 See no. 41 n. 14.
4 Del Lago is actually quoting from Ugolino’s commentary on Johannes de Muris; see no. 47 n. 10.
5 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.), *Johannes de Préc*, 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 underlying text; see Johannes Lupi, *Opus omnium*, 1, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 84; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1988), pp. xiii-xliv.
6 See no. 17 n. 11.
hanno avuto poco respecto a le predette regole antiche senza rasone adduce, di li quali, per satisfactione del nostro Pre Zanetto, alcuno sequitando ne adducero in luce.

16. Et prima ho trovato che Gulielmo Dufay in lo contrabasso de uno suo introito 'de Appostolis' pone le sequente note ligate \( \text{\textcopyright} \). \cite{s1} Se domanda a Pre Zanetto, defensorre de la ruda antiquitá, che nota serà quella la quale è posita nel fine de tale ligaturá, cioè se tale nota (per essere più bassa de la penultima et etiam quadrata) serà (more antiques) dicta con perfectione, et per consequente se serà longa, come le regole soe antichie vogliono? Ma a me pare che sia maxima, la quale è conosciuta perché tene la forma propria de la soa simplicitá. Similmente el predicato G. Dufay in una particula de uno suo introito 'de Confessoribus' pone ut hic \( \text{\textcopyright} \).

17. Iterum se domanda al predicato defensorre 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 antiquitá dice. Item el predicato Dufay, in la prima parte della Gloria del tenore de la soa 'Missä de Sancto Antonio da Padoa', pone questa ligatura \( \text{\textcopyright} \) in la quale ligaturá la longa con el tracto a mano dextra, contra Prosdocimo et Pre Zanetto, sta nel medio de le note ligate. Anchora el predicato Dufay in la seconda parte de la predicta Gloria ha posto queste note per tale modo ligate \( \text{\textcopyright} \), de le quale la prima serà extra regulam antiquam, perché non potrà essere dicta con proprietá, né senza proprietá, et etiam con opposita proprietá, come vogliono le antiche regole. E stato etiam posito 66. \cite{s1}

18. Alejandro Enrique Planchart has identified this passage in Dufay's 'Missä Sancti Jacobi', mm. 27-8 of the contratenor of the Introito; see 'Guillaume Dufay's Masses: Notes and Revisions', The Musical Quarterly 88 (1972), 1-21 at 14. Modern edn. in Guillaume Dufay, Opera omnia, ed. Heinrich Besseler (Corpus mensurabilis musicae I; Rome, American Institute of Musicology, 1967), pp. I-I8. David Fallows has traced the Puloys passages; see Dufay (London, 1984), 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 91) give the same ligature:

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).}
Spataro’s first example shows that the third note of the tenor is a maxima, and, indeed, a maxima on “f” 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:

\[\text{Spataro's first example shows that the third note of the tenor is a maxima, and, indeed, a maxima on "f" fits the harmonic context. Once again, Spataro's ligature indicates the spatial relation of the notes, but not their exact pitches.} \]

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28 Anchors nel tenore

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28 Anchors nel tenore
modo accade de la longa con el tracto posito a mano dextra notata intra le extremità de le note ligate, la quale sarà cognita per la propria sua forma apparente, et rason alcuna a questo non potrà contrariarla.

19. Per quello che di sopra è stato detto, il nostro Pre Zanetto potrà comprendere se da lui è stato detto la verità dove lui dice che el non se doviera contraddire a li precepti antichi, et maxime in quelle cose le quale anch'ora sono approbate da l'uso, non solo da li moderni, sed etiam da li antichi de summa autorità, perché per li esempi di sopra assignati adduciti 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 sono stati da lui intesi, et che le note ligate dame posite non sono contra le adduciti da qualche sua mala dispositione o peccato, dove lui dice che el non se

Zanetto wasted a lot of effort in trying to teach me that my dot is 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 o o , and therefore the second semibreve would have to be altered since two semibreves would occur between two breves: o o .

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.

3. Pre Zanetto, furthermore, contradicts himself when he says the
The Letters

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: \( \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \). 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: \( \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \). But when (as above, or thus: \( \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \), or other similar examples), those two semibreves cannot be reckoned together with a longer note-value following them, then (for the reasons given) the alterable note must of necessity be altered. Alteration can also occur without any greater note before or after, as \( \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \text{O} \), as in the soprano of the Credo of Jacob Obrecht's 'Missa Malheur me bat'.

Alteration was invented to fill out a ternary unit, and it is less restrictive than some beginners believe, but it has to be used with care and with art. But when he says that where there is perfection, there is also alteration, and vice versa, he is misguided, for alteration does not always occur in a perfect mensuration, because a ternary number, wherever two notes in perfect mensuration stand alone without alteration, but alteration cannot occur without perfection.

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.

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 imperfections 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.

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:
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 C 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, 2 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:

![Example]

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:

![Example]

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 \( \Phi \):

![Example]

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 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.

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.
placed between two half-blackened longs: \( \text{\textcircled{3}} \cdot \circ \cdot \circ \). 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, at 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 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 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
times 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
two 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–briefe–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 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 ‘Pourrant se mon’,31 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’.32

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: O · · · . Del Lago contends that the dot is superfluous: Spataro used it to prevent alteration, but alteration does not occur 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: O Δ · Δ . 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 warns 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:

First way

Second way
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:

Second way

Third way

Fourth way

Fifth 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, 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 either 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 imperfectation of the preceding breve a parte post. (In discussing the imperfecting minims in the fourth and fifth ways rather than the imperfecting minims 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:

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 = 1 longs = 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).

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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 1513 (see no. 44, paras. 10–11). Since this example shows the mensuration of the maximas, 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 Proportionales, in all of which the correct number of longs is given, and one in the counterpoint treatise. 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 11 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 11½ maximas. 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 Augustana, MS M. 1013, the source of Tinctoris's 'Difficiles alios', indicate major mode (nos. 114–115, 116, 117); 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. 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. The mass bears no title in the unique source in which it appears complete, Trent 90, but Heinrich
The Letters

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 (\(\text{\textcopyright}\)), 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 (\(\text{\textcopyright}\)) comes from 'the second part of the Gloria'. As 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'):

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 (\(\text{\textcopyright}\)) David Fallows proposes the passage at mm. 70–1, written thus in Trent 90 (fo. 396'):

40 Fos. 96–97; see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', p. 57, no. 30.

48. Spataro to Aaron, [Dec. 1532]

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 (\(\text{\textcopyright}\)), 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 (\(\text{\textcopyright}1\)) appears 'near the end of the tenor', can easily be identified with the final notes of the tenor (Besseler, p. 51, mm. 100–1), which ends with two long–maxima progressions, although neither is in ligature:

Spataro's last example (\(\text{\textcopyright}1\)) 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. 101', second staff; fo. 110', top staff; fo. 111', seventh staff; fo. 119', seventh staff; fo. 157', 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. 607
breves, with the exception of a second semibreve \textit{cum opposita proprietae}, does include longs in the middle of a ligature in some of his music examples.\footnote{For the rule, see \textit{Opera theoretica}, ed. Seay, i. 115. For the music examples (in different treatises), see ibid. i. 155–6, 178, 193.} He also recognizes that maximas can be used in ligatures.\footnote{Ibid. i. 116.}

B. J. B.

\footnote{For the rule, see \textit{Opera theoretica}, ed. Seay, i. 115. For the music examples (in different treatises), see ibid. i. 155–6, 178, 193.} \footnote{Ibid. i. 116.

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\textbf{Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 2 January 1533 (autograph)}


\[ \text{Excellentissimo et de li musici dorissimo, el mio honorando Frate Petro, Idio vi mantenga in sanità et in la gratia soa.} \]

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 Appostolo\footnote{A facsimile of the first page of this letter is given in Tirro, \textit{Renaissance Musical Sources}, p. 58.} 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 et al’altra de V.E. con la copia mia de la resposta facta al nostro reverendo Pre Zanetto [no. 41], 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 fidarlo de simili poltroni frati.

2. Et etiam con tute le mie forze et virtù rengratio V.E. che s’e dignato discorete 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:

\[ \text{emendareti el basso, che stia ut hic:}\]

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:

\[ \text{cioè, che dapo la decima magiore sequita una octava superflua, et che in tale loco sono tre semiminime molto discordante continue, cioè la prima}\]

\[ \text{A facsimile of the first page of this letter is given in Tirro, \textit{Renaissance Musical Sources}, p. 58.}\]

\[ \text{21 Dec.}\]

\[ \text{The corrected version is found in MS San Petronio A. xxxxy, fo. 10’. For a modern edn., see Tirro, ‘Giovanni Spataro’s Choirbooks’, pp. 130–41. The corrected passage occurs at mm. 35–7.}\]
Et etiam dove V.E. dice haver trovato nel tenore de' la prima parte del predicto mutetto sopra la parola 'de tribu' dui unisoni con el contrabasso' come qui:

V.E. emenderà el basso ut hie:

et el contra alto ut hie:

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 faculta. Circa le note le quale mancavano in lo tenore et nel canto, haveti facto bene a ponerle, come diceti, a li soi locchi debiti.

5. Et molto rengratio V. E., che s'e dignato fare deligente discorso circa tali mei male ordinati concerti, el quale male ordine e nato per tropo fidarmi de mi medesimo, perché senza altramente farli cantare li notai de la cartella et V.E. li mandai. Ma da poi de alquanti de tali errori me acorsi, et alcuni ne furno dame 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 risposta, et mandarò el canto 'Ora pro nobis' de Othobi11 come potro, perché sono alquanto occupato per la causa gia 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 Victoria dice che non vole venire qua, ma vole ogni modo andare a Roma a la partita del papa, et a questo l'ha esortato Francesco milanese, optimo sonatore de leuto. Et io ho parlato con el barba de esso Victoria, el quale e canonico nel nostro Sancto Petronio, el quale dice che el reverendissimo Cardinale da Campeggio ha tolto Victoria in protectione, et vole che vada a Roma.13 Pertanto bisognari sperare in altro. Se altro se trovarà, darò aviso. Asai me ne duole, perché credo che seria piaciuto al reverendo vostro patrone

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49. Spataro to Aaron, 2 Jan. 1533

[Sebastiano Michiel], al quale et a li soi figlioli me recomendareti, et etiam a V.E. me recomando, pregando quella me voglia conumerare nel numero de li vostri amici et servitori.

Vale. Bononiæ, die 2'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:

please change the bass as follows:

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,¹ and I think it can stand, not so much for the quickness of motion as for the
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. 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 ’, 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 . 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, 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. I say no more, for ’a word to the wise’, and ’it’s a disgrace for a teacher’, etc.

4. In my ‘Nativitas glorioso’ you point out a progression of three unisons in soprano and alto:

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’ once I am free of these tedious people of the Pope’s and the Emperor’s. Nicolò [Cavallo] and Leonardo send their greetings. Nicolò says that Victorious 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. Victorious’s uncle, a canon at San Petronio, says Cardinal Campeggio has taken Victorious under his wing and wants him to go to Rome. 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 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.”'

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~ in the bass against a held-over semibreve dr 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 ‘taciturniti’, 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 taciturniti 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—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. 23v–25v), he changed the alto so as to avoid the contested dissonance.

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’:

Es war einmal ein Lattenzaun,
mit Zwischenraum, hindurchzuschauen.
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- Americo.

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.

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.

14 Helmuth Osthoff, Josquin Desprez (2 vols., Tutzing, 1962–71), i, 82.
15 For a modern edn. of this revised version, see Tirro, ‘Giovanni Spataro’s Choirbooks’, pp. 564–70.
246 Reversendo et venerabile et de li musici excellentissimo, el mio honorando et molto da me amato Reverendo et venerabile et doctissimo musico Petro Arvon florentino in dubitatione, quanta per havere ancora inteso che la Signoria de Messer ha receputola resposta dame facta a Camillo non resta con mi sdegnato, ma che da soa Signoria de V.E. cresca verso dime indigno. Io non respondero 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 quale V.E. me ha facta per parte del reverendo Monsignore vostro che per temo adveniria tuto el contrario, perche tali pasti sono Sebastiano Michiel, la quale aceptarei se io credesse ringiovenire, ma comodo piacere el stare nel fondico de li todeschi che altra cosa a. 1 Nientedimanco, rengratio soa Signoria reverenda da la soa bona intenzione, et a tuti humilemente me recomando.

2. Ho etiam inteso quanto V.E. dice de Pre Zanetto, al quale gia per complacere a V.E. con mio incomodo doe volte ho dato resposta circa le

* MS: el.

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 Lautzenheiser, 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, 1921), i, 72-3.

50 (f. 103). Fos. 246v-247v
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 4 March 1533 (autograph)


Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici excellentissimo, el mio honorando et molto da me amato Reverendo et venerabile et doctissimo musico Petro Arvon florentino in dubitatione, quanta per havere ancora inteso che la Signoria de Messer ha receputola resposta dame facta a Camillo non resta con mi sdegnato, ma che da soa Signoria de V.E. cresca verso dime indigno. Io non respondero 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 quale V.E. me ha facta per parte del reverendo Monsignore vostro che per temo adveniria tuto el contrario, perche tali pasti sono Sebastiano Michiel, la quale aceptarei se io credesse ringiovenire, ma comodo piacere el stare nel fondico de li todeschi che altra cosa a. 1 Nientedimanco, rengratio soa Signoria reverenda da la soa bona intenzione, et a tuti humilemente me recomando.

50. Spataro to Aaron, 4 Mar. 1533

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 produrre alcuno bono fructo, et soto umbra de disputazione cercano imparare, et con soi frivoli argumenti et de poco momento cercano farsi tenere docti. Et qui me maraveglio che in questa città, la quale è la prima del mondo, non sia homo che li risponda. Ma da poi penso che qua sono homini sapienti, li quali asai bene sano che la più condescente resposta la quale se possa dare ad uno pazo et arrogante è el tacere et lasare tali pari in la soa ignorantia et mateza. 1. Circa el mio tractato de canto mensurato, fareti el parere vostra, 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 di 27 del predicto feci legere al barba suo la vostra liltera circa la sua particula. In suma lui me disse che Victorio era acunzato cum el reverendissimo cardinale Redupho, et che li dava dieci ducati | el mexe et la camera fornit, 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 benefitt nel futuro tempo, si che ‘intelligenti pauxa’.5 1. A li giurni passati V.E. me mandò uno suo mutetto a cinque vuoce composito sopra el canto plano ‘Da pacem domine’, el quale fu alhora cavalcatura, et etiam li haveva promisso de vestirlo de novo una volta l’anno et provederlo de benefitt nel futuro tempo, si che ‘intelligenti pauxa’.

6. MS: noe.

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.

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 most begins with the responsory text ‘Esaudiat Dominus orationes vestras, et reconcilietur vos, nec vos deserat in tempore malo. Dominus Deus tester. Det vobis omnes, ut colatis eum, et faciat eum vos ornem. Antiphona monastica... de Lucques (Psalterium musicale s; Tournai, 1906), p. 299). The second part of the text comes from the beginning of the responsory ‘Impetrum infirmorum et timoros; memores etsi, quomodo salvi facti sunt patres nostri. Et si non clamamus in coelum, et miserebitur nostris Deus nostri’ (Antiphona monastica... de Worcester, 181). The responsories are based on 2 Mace. 1: 5, 1 and 1 Mace. 4: 8-10. The remainder of the text probably comes from the responsory ‘Aperi oculos [per oculos] tuis Domine et vide afflictionem nostram. Circumdederunt nos gentes ad punitiendum nos. Sed tu Domine extendi brasium tuum et libera animas nostras’ (ibid., p. 181).
meglio, come sequestando a V.E. dimostrarò, et prima nel soprano quasi nel principio sopra la parola 'reconcilietur' ut hic notato:

\[\text{Staff Image}\]

L'ultima minima et la sequente semibreve con el contrabasso cadeno in quintadecima ut hic:

\[\text{Staff Image}\]

Et dove, oltra procedendo, el contrabasso predicto fa questo processo:

\[\text{Staff Image}\]

quella seconda minima posita in E grave cade in quinta imperfecta sopra la quarta longa del tenore primo posita in \(\text{Staff Image}\). E perche de tale processo da V.E. già fui repreheso nel contrabasso de quello mio canto chiamato 'Ave gratia plena', V.E. potrà indicare che se in tale loco ho errato, che etiam quella in questo predicto loco non restara senza colpa.

Ma certamente che nulla importa, perche nel vostro et nel mio concerto tale quinta imperfecta cade nel tacere che fa la voce intra la data percussione di uno tempo a l'altro. L'è vero che il vostro seria mazore errore, ancora che il vostro concerto sia signato con questo segno \(\text{Staff Image}\). Pure l'uxo moderno (in cantando) bate le semibreve, et per tale modo la vostra predica seconda minima nel predicto contrabasso in E grave posita caderia in la prima percussione del tempo in cantando.

Ma V.E. potria dire che voleti che el vostro concerto sia cantato secondo

\[\text{Staff Image}\]

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 \(b\)

\[\text{Staff Image}\]

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 finta, 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 Toscanello, Book II, ch. 20, and especially the Aggiunta to the 1149 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 finta', 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. 36 n. 2.

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 (iudicio meo) non è processo da docto. Ancora nel contra alto sopra la parola ‘ne timueritis’ ut hie notato:

ho trovato che quella seconda nota descedne con el tenore primo ut hie notato de sexta in quinta, cosa asai incomoda al mio parere et non usitata:

Similemente nel secondo tenore sopra la parola ‘estote’ ut hie notato:

quella terza semibreve con modo non grato né usitato descede de decima in octava con el contrabasso ut hie figurato:

Item nel contrabasso sopra la parola ‘et nunc’ cosi notato:

ho trovato che la terza minima cade in undecima con el contra alto ut hie notato:

Et nel tenore secondo sopra la parola ‘extende’ ut hie notato:

la seconda et terza minima descenden con doe octave con el contrabasso ut hie notato:

Ancora dove el secondo tenore sopra la parola ‘libera animas’ ut hie notato:

1. MS: extote.

17 Spataro corrected the g to d.

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 hie notato:18
dede la quintadecima intra la semibreve del soprano et dapo, sequitando doe semiminime, sequita un’altra volta essa 15, la quale cosa non è laudabile apresso a multi docti, perché la perfectissima distantia et sonorità de le doe quintadecime predicte è male occultata 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. bene, et cosi per bene prego quella voglia acceptare, perché le corretione a me da quella facta circa li mei concerti me sono molto grate, et cosi prego quella voglia acceptare le mie se sono digne da essere acceptate.19 Et etiam prego quella facia el simile in questa mia missa20 la quale ho composita per dare alcuna volta refrigero a le mie adversità, et del tuto darme adviso, acio che io possa securamente ponerla in luce, la quale a V.E. mando non como cosa docta, ma per la più humile et bassa compositione che mai fusse da me et etiam da altri facita, et a V.E. genuflexo humilemente me recomando. Vale. Bononiæ, die iiiii 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

18 Spataro replaced the two semiminimes with one minim g'.

19 'Missa O salutaris hostia'; see no. 55, para. 1.
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. 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. 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.

4. Regarding your reverend patron’s wish to know about Victoria, his uncle told me Victoria had settled down with Cardinal Ridolfi, 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. 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. 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. Later on, the bass sounds a diminished fifth with the tenor (eb against bb), an interval you criticized in my 'Ave gratia plena'. If I have erred, you too are not without blame. But it doesn’t matter because in both our motets the diminished fifth occurs in the silent interval between beats. True, yours would be the greater error even though your signature is Ĉ.

50. Spataro to Aaron, 4 Mar. 1533

Nevertheless, modern practice is to beat the semibreve, and your diminished fifth falls on a down-beat. But you could save yourself by saying the motet should be sung under Ĉ.

6. At 'in tempore' you have a ninth.

At 'deus vester' there is an eleventh.

And at 'cor omnibus' an octave leaps down to a fifth.

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.

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 'estate' a tenth of the tenor with the bass descends to an octave, an unpleasant progression not commonly used:

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:

nor the parallel fifteenths barely concealed at 'brachium tuum':

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 mass (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.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 8 March 1533 (autograph)


Reverendo et de li musici doctessimo, el mio carissimo et honorando Frate Pietro Aron.

1. A li di 4 del presente ho receputo una de V.E., a la quale subito brevemente feci risposto solo perché pareva che quella desiderasse sapere presto del capella del papa in loco de uno el quale è morto, che era chiamato Messer Andrea,1 si che el predicato Villano ha scripta qua el falso per pervenire a qualche suo disegno, perché come multi dicono, è molto molto dipo.

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 respondere, ma 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 signa,3 dico questo potere essere proceduto da me nel copiare, perché la copia la quale teneva imperfectum, et del mutetto de quello docto antico a me mandato, per parte mia lo etiam non dico perche molte altre particole in questa altra mia prima scripta se

1 On Villano and Messer Andrea, see the Biographical Dictionary.

2 Spataro refers to Hothby’s motet ‘Ora pro nobis’, which he discussed in his letter to Del Lago, no. 41, 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 ‘’, however, Spataro says that no such sign has ever been used (no. 45, para. 4). He therefore might mean ‘’; this he considers to be tempus imperfectum, twice diminished (ibid., para. 5). In the unique source of Hothby’s motet (see no. 41 n. 11), the sign is ‘’ 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, Gaffurio. 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), 401-3. 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 ‘’ as signs of augmentation.) It is certainly interesting that Hothby the theorist and Hothby the composer are not entirely consistent.

3 Probably ‘Tinctoris’s treatise on alteration, which Spataro had quoted in no. 48.

4 ‘Missa O salutaris hostia; see no. 55, para. 1.

5 Fogliano, Musica theorica (Venice, 1529).
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, 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 him 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 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.

3. Thank him for the motet by that ancient author and tell him that I shan't send the treatise by Tinctoris just now because I am enclosing a semibreve of the superius and contra tenor under double diminution at the beginning of the tenor is correct and stands for defence against those who presume too much. Tell him that the sign with 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.
The Letters

mancano, et più volte me ne sono asai doluto, perché a me crano de non poca importanza. Pertanto quella harà patientia.

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 petizione. Io non direi che V.E. fusse impudente né temerario et presumptuoso, ma quella me faria despiaciere a non adoperami 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 firma, a quella offerisco ogni mia facoltà 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, perche li vostri scripti me hano molte volte svegliato dal somno et da la infructuosa accidia, da la quale l'omo (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 pó recuperare, come credo 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 Aaron.

Vale. Datum in Bologna a di 16 aprile 1533.

Servitore de V.E. J. Spataro da Bologna

Venerable and much beloved Pre Zanetto, most learned of musicians. 1

1. 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.

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 slander 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.
Acui, in modo che tale ut cadrà per semitono maggiore, remesso con A la mi re acuta, et sarà semitono minore intenso con G sol re ut detto, et il suo la cadrà equamente in suono con F fa ut acuto.

Terzo, lo ut del b quadro giacente segnato in b cade per semitono maggiore più intenso di G sol re ut acuto, et per semitono minore più remesso di A la mi re acuta, et il suo la cadrà per spatio di maggior semitono 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 semitono più intenso di C fa ut et per minore semitono più remesso di D sol re, et il suo la cadrà per spatio di maggior semitono più intenso di A la mi re acuta.

Quarto, lo ut del b quadro giacente segnato in G sol re ut acuto cade eguale in suono con E la mi grave et il suo la cade per semitono maggiore più alto di C sol fa ut et più depresso per semitono minore di D la sol re.

Quinto, lo suo mi è più depresso del mi naturale d'uno semitono minore, collocaro però in A la mi re acuta con tal segno §. Allhora s'intenderà esso mi più alto del loco dove sarà scritto per un semitono maggiore.

The following are the questions sent me on 25 May 1333 to ask the excellent musician Maestro Giovanni Spataro of Bologna.

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, where are its syllables ut and la?
5. If you say fa on Bb, where is its mi?

Solutions to the above problems

1. The ut of f lies a major semitone below c and its la a major semitone below a. The ut of f' lies a major semitone below g and its la a major semitone below c.
2. The ut of g 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 b. The ut of g' falls between a and g, a major semitone below a and a minor semitone above g, and its la is on f'.
The Letters

(3) The ut of $b\flat$ 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 $e\natural$ lies a major semitone above $c$ and a minor semitone below $d$, and its la a major semitone above $a$.

(4) The ut of $g\natural$ 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 $b\flat$] is a minor semitone below $b\natural$, placed, however, on $a$ with a sharp, indicating that it is a major semitone above $a$.

54 (J50). Fos. 160v-170v
Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 4 June 1533 (autograph)


169' Salve vir doctissime, etc.

1. Nel di primo del presente ho recevuto una de V.E. et nobilit: et a molte particule de essa non darò resposte, 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'.

Pertanto trattaremo de quello che più importa et che a me pare più laudabile et utile.

2. V.E. dice che quello cantore etc. dice che $ut$ del b rotondo signato in $G \ sol \ re \ ut$ acuto sarà equale in sono con $D \ sol \ re$, et che el suo $la$ sarà equale con el $mi$ de $fa \ mi$ 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 incen$e$ 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 $ut$ sarà distante da $D \ sol \ re$ per spatio de mazore semitonio, et con $C \ fa \ ut$ sarà 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 seque$3$ rà 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 $re$ sarà distante da $E \ la \ mi$ per maggiore semitonio et sarà distante $d[a]$ $D \ sol \ re$ per minore semitonio. Se dapо voremo descendere dal predicto $re$ per tono, scilicet al suo $ut$, tale $ut$ caderà intra $D \ sol \ re$ et $C \ fa \ ut$, el quale $ut$ sarà

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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 deest peccatum.'
3 Don Raphaello; see para. 4. On his identity, see the Biographical Dictionary.
The Letters

54· Spataro to Del Lago, 4 June 1533

...spato de tono, el quale caderà (ut dixi) equale in sono con el fa de yfa 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 uno mazore semitonio. Et dove V.E. dice che [lui dice che] questo segno fa vero si 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 sera semitonio minore intenso con G sol re ut, de la quale mera verità seteti certo se considerati che tale fa signato in D acuto non cade equale in sono con esso D acuto, et da poi descenderei per l'ordine de la sillabe cantabile, perché trovarerci che el suo mi caderà equale in sono con C acuto, et el suo re caderà equale in sono con el fa de yfa b mi acuto, et da poi et descendendo per spatio de tono haremlo el suo ut intra A et G acuto locato, el quale con A sera mazore semitonio remisso, et con G sera 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 ut intra E et D acuti, cioè che tale sol sera distante da D acuto per minore semitonio intenso, et con E acuto sera distante per mazore semitonio remisso. Et da poi sera ascenderà ad F acuto per tono. Et a me pare che questa sia la mera verità, come etiam V.E. potrà comprendere se con deligentia bene advertireti.

5. Dieti etiam che da V.E. il fu resposto che quella voce fa in G et in D signata con el b rotondo nasceva da la conjuncta del b quadrato o vero duro, la quale se segna in F grave et in C acuto con el segno del b quadrato inacente, ut hic t, la quale verità dico non essere stata bene pensiata da V.E. Una causa non potrà mai produrre uno effecto a se contrario.4 Nui habiamo che in qualunque loco dove questo signo t sera dato che la voce...

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4 Practically speaking, one cannot explain the origin of a flattened note through a hexachord with sharps.

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5 See Ramis, Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 35, fig. 4: D and G in the ordo naturalis (hexachord on A) are sung as fa in the ordo accidentalis (hexachord on A).

6 Aaron's untitled pamphlet of 1533; 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 sequinaturalia published in Venice (see the Commentary on no. 14). It gives him evident pleasure to quote it as if Aaron had written it.

7 The page measures 10.5 × 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 humilmente me recomando. Al nostro Frate P. Aron dareti saluti senza fine.
Vale. Da Bologna, a di 4 junii 1333.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

1. I received your letter\(^1\) 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 singer\(^3\) as claiming the \(ut\) of \(g\) to have the same pitch as \(d\) and its \(la\) the same as \(mi\) of \(fa\) \(b\) \(mi\), and the \(ut\) of \(d\)' to be the same as \(a\) and its \(la\) the same as \(f'\)\. You replied that \(G\) and \(D\) originate from the \(coniuncta\) of the sharp signed in \(F\) and \(C\). In my humble opinion, the \(ut\) of \(g\) is not \(d\) but falls between \(d\) and \(a\), a major semitone below \(d\) and a minor semitone above \(a\). This is verifiable by measurement and stands in the first degree of certainty; it can be proved as follows.

3. You say that from \(g\) to \(f\) is the interval of a minor semitone. Granted. Thus if \(g\) is \(fa\), \(mi\) will be \(f\) and \(re\) will be a tone lower than \(f\). It will be a major semitone below \(a\) and a minor semitone above \(d\). \(Ut\) will be a tone lower, a major semitone below \(d\) and a minor semitone above \(e\). And the \(la\) of \(g\) cannot be on \(mi\) of \(fa\) \(b\) \(mi\), but falls on its \(fa\). This is how you prove it: \(g\) 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 \(fa\) \(b\) \(mi\) 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 \(d\)' 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 \(d\)' is not the same pitch as \(d\). Descending through the hexachord, \(mi\) falls on \(c\), \(re\) on the \(fa\) of \(fa\) \(b\) \(mi\), 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 \(d\)' 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 \(G\) and \(D\) derive from the \(coniuncta\) of the \(\sharp\) 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 \(\sharp\) is placed, the

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 \(-\) \(G\) and \(C\) \(-\) \(D\), but will be a comma higher than \(G\) and \(D\). 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 \(G\) and \(D\); there is a difference of a major semitone between them. Therefore, the testimonies of Ramis and Hothby are irrelevant, for the question concerns \(G\) and \(D\), and you talk about \(F\) and \(C\). Without the flat, \(G\) and \(D\) are sung as \(fa\), as appears in the chart by Ramis\(^5\) 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 \(G\) and \(D\). There is no small difference between the \(fa\) of \(G\) and \(D\) and the \(fa\) of \(G\) and \(D\).

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.
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 July 1533 (autograph)


1. Nel dì primo Julli ho receputo una de V.E. de di 21 Juhnii signata, a la quale sono stato tardo a la resposta, perche quella scrisse che quella (con certi gentilhominis veneti) voleva per 13 giorni andare a stare a Vicenza. Ma io ponorò 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, et che se l'omo durasse sino che el mondo pò durare, sempre harà da imparare.

Et questa tale considerazione è acutata a li giorni passati intra uno docto amico mio et me, el quale arguendo contra a uno certo passo da me facto in quello dux del Pattrum 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, et che se la musica era finita et consumata, et per conseguente non sera arte liberale, come sono le altre arte quadriviale, de le quale non se stato tar dispo a la resposta, perche quella scripse che quella (con mazzore confusione) ho dato condecente resposta, la quale cosa non è acutata in quelle importantia le quale tra V.E. et me sono state occurrente, perché sono solamente intra V.E. et me, et non ad altri sono state manifeste et note. Pertanto | prego quella levi da sé ogni suspectione et dubieta, perché io tengo che V.E. et io siamo due uniti parimenti in uno volere et puro amore.

2. Dal predicto Pre Zanetto a li giorni passati hebi una soa de di 26 giunni signata, la quale è in responsione de quella mia a lui missa de di 4 del predicto data [no. 14], per la quale el poverello non solamente cerca excusarsi, ma cerca inculparsi, dicendo che da me non è stato inteso che quando lui tracta de la nota in G acuto et etiam in D signata con el b molle, ut hic:

3. Ma pure al fine lui diceva non havere da lui, et da altro non curo havere da lui, et da altro non curo havere da lui, et del tutto li dava la repulsa, che mai più non me scriveva né desse avviso 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 dicta et scripta per recto et irreprehensibile, la quale cosa non redondavano in piacere, che io la fasse tale piacere a loro, per la quale cosa non fatevo esigere a li giorni passati a uno docto amico mio et me, el quale cognosco claramente

4. De mazore et me sono

5. Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 30 July 1533

M5· June. June must be an error, because in the first line Spataro speaks of receiving a letter from Aaron on 1 July.

We have deleted a superfluous 'in' at this point.
The Letters

4. El predetto Pre Zaneto me domanda dove sarà la syllaba ut et la syllaba la de la nota in G sol re ut, ut hic signata:

5. Ho receputo le risposte già fatte a Pre Zanetto, et el concento facto per quelli signori veneti con le varie parole, il quali sono molto stati grati a li nostri musici, et molto da loro et et da m[e] molto comodati. Pertanto rengratio V.E.

6. Circa Don Leonardo alttro non dico, perché per una soa qua ligata intenderei 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 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 trovò medicina nè exercitio che mi vaglia. Pertanto da V.E., more solito, prego sia examinato et castigato con quello amore el quale tengo a fermo che me portate, et del tuto da poi me dati adviso.

7. Ancora, Messer Petro mio honorando, prego V.E. che sia contento mandarne quello mio tractusato de canto mensurato, perché ho preso grande amicitia con uno intagliatore optimo, el quale in ligno molto bene et de ogni virtù colmi me recomando.

8. Pertanto 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 ingenisio, nel fine de questa soa qua ligata[ no. 56] (per parte de li nostri musici bolognesi) li chiedo la declaratione de uno dubio music. Ma prima voglio vedere come risponderà. Pertanto se lui, circa tale dubii, recerca el parere de V.E., cercati de fare che lui dia tale resoluzione, perché da poi a V.E. darò adviso del tuto.


Vale. In Bologna, a di 30 juli' 1533.

Tuto de V.E. J. Spataro

1. On 1 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; 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 salutari 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 quodrival arts, which are boundless. 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,
The Letters

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 G and D, 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 e' and d', a major semitone above e' and a minor semitone below d'.

5. I have received my answers to Pre Zanetto and the composition on various texts for those Venetian gentlemen, which pleased our musicians very much.

6. On the matter of Don Leonardo, I am enclosing a letter from him. Niccolò [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.
Salve venerabilis vir, etc.

1. A li di 13 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de 26 junii signata per la quale quella dice che io debia bene advertere, perché dove diceti che quella nota o vero voce \( fa \) in G et in D signata con el b rotondo naesperda la coniuncta del b quadro o vero duro, el quale se segna in F grave o vero in C acuto con el signo del b quadro accente, perché diceti che da quella è stato inteso parlare de quella syllaba \( ut \), la quale è equamente 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 signo del b quadro accente, ut hic \( fa \). A la quale cosa risponde 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
& B_1 \cdot b_1 \cdot b_1 \cdot b_1 \\
& B_2 \cdot b_2 \cdot b_2 \cdot b_2
\end{align*}
\]

Imperò che se da vui era inteso parlar de la syllaba \( fa \) equamente considerata in G et in D' naturali, el non bisognava dire che tale \( fa \) era signato con el b rotondo in G et in D' naturali predici, perché (in tale considerazione) intra el signato et non signato cade ineguale distanza et denominatione asai dissimile, come da poi V.E. (mossa piu poi recta considerazione) ha compreso. Ma vui, per non sapere scrivero il concetto del vostro core, voleti che da altri sia inteso che se vui chiedeti de la syllaba \( fa \) equamente in tale positione considerata et non signata. Ma dove V.E. procedendo dice che per livare ogni dubitato da li dubitant et etiam acci che io non habia indars[na]o spexo el tempo et le fatiche, et etiam per complacermi, serì contento emendarvi nelloco dove haveti scripta, etc., a la quale cosa risponde che bene haveti considerate, la quale vostra emendatione non voglio acceptare essere facta per a me complacer, ma solo per sequitare la mera verità et per honore de V.E., la quale non scio per quale causa era usito del recto sentiero et 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
& B_3 \cdot b_3 \\
& B_4 \cdot b_4
\end{align*}
\]

Potria essere che a tale vostro quesito, quando da me a V.E. [fu] dato resposto a quella vostra de di 25 maii, non fu dato altra resposto perche alhora dal portatore io era molto sollicitato, perché presto diceva volersi partire da Bologna. Ma meglio è tardi che non mai. Ma a me pare che qua in Vinetia habiari el bono et vero maestro et cognoscitore de quello che tanto lontano andati cercando, cioè el nostro doctissimo Frate Petro Aron,
The quae in quello suo ultimo et breve tractato che lui fece de la inventione de li sei nomi offiziiali in ciascuna de le naturale posizione 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 inacente signato in G acuto. Pertanto sequiterà che el suo sol caderà pare in sono con el mi de fa e mi sequente, et el suo la caderà per semitonio mazzore più alto de C acuto et più depresse per semitonio minore de D acuto. Et per tale modo gradatim descendo, trovaremos 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 gratia senza fine, la quale è molto al mio proposito. Ma molto a me seria stato a piacere che quella etiam me adopri insieme con ogni mio potere e facultà a soi bisogni et piaceri, a li quali sempre serò parato.

5. Li nostri musici bolognesi a li giorni passati hano messo in campo certi dubii musici, per li quali sono nate intra loro varie considerazione, in modo che el pari che no[n] se possano firmare ne restare resoluti, et perché sciano che questa tanto nobile et magnì cità habbona de ogni bene et virtù, me ha[n]o pregato che io voglia per la loro parte et etiam mia, come quello che è tuto speculativo et de subtile ingenio seti' che V.E. scrivero dove sarà la syllaba ut et la syllaba la del b rotondo signato in F o vero in C et similiemente del b quadro inacente signato in si e in E. Et perché el mio preceptore et Tinctoris, et etiam frate Zoanne Othobi dicono che tali signi non se signano in li predicti loci naturali,5 domandano a quella quale sia la rasone perché tali signi non se debeno signare in li predicti loci naturali. Et de questo da V.E. aspecterno plena

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 D9 arises from ffas and cfs, you intended to speak of ut on d and a, which arises from fas and cfs. I reply that I answered according to the letter of your writing and the clear examples you gave of Gb and D9. 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 placed 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,6 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 fas and cfs. 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 Fas and Cfs. That singer, and perhaps you too, did not realize that if Fas and Cfs 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 D9 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 cfs 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

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3 Aaron's untitled pamphlet of 1531; see no. 34.
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. 10).
5 Although Tinctoris defines coniuncta in his Definitoriam, in his treatises he prefers the term 'musa ficta'. Tinctoris does not specifically prohibit placing b on C or F and $ on B or E, but his definition states that the coniuncta are substituted for 'regular' tones, that is, whole tones; thus $, for example, would not change a 'regular' tone because the interval Bc - C is a semitone. In Hotby's three orders (Colinnae leges, ed. Coussemaker, p. 293), the flat order omits C and F, the sharp order B and E.
his latest treatise, on how to find the six syllables on every position of the hand, shows that $fa$ on $a$ arises from $\#$. Therefore $sol$ falls on $b\flat$ 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 $F$ and $C$ and $B:\!$ and $E:\!$? And, since my teacher, Tinctoris, and Hothby all say that such signs should not be used in those natural places, what is the reason? We await your full answer and send our greetings.

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1. Throughout the letter, this sign was originally written as $\#$, then changed to $\natural$. In his letter of 5 June 1538 to Pietro de Justinis (see no. 88), Del Lago criticized the latter for writing $Eq$ with the sign $\natural$, 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 $\#$, since he meant it as a sharp.

2. The passage in lower half-brackets seems to have been taken from Spataro's letter of 9 Sept. 1524 to Pietro Aaron; see no. 33, para. 4. It would therefore have been added when Del Lago
48v

48v

The Letters

però quando questo segno ♩ sarà segnato in uno deli luoghi naturali de la mano di Guido monacho, allhora quel tuono naturale resta diviso per semitono 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 semitono maggiore in grave et minore in acuto. Et questo anchora accade tra ciascun spatio di tuono accidentalmente considerato. Ma se questo segno ♩ si segnase in F et in C naturali, el suo suono saria più depresso ♩ de E et de ♩ per spatio de un comma. Et se questo segno ♩ fusse dato in E et in ♩ 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 distancte 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 spezie nella musica esercitate. Et questo si approva 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 minus superat minus, de cuius speciebus sive proportionibus non est curandum, et sic de aliis eius accidentibus, cum non ponatur in alio quo genere melorum, etc. Et questa è l'autorità perché el spatio deli comma in nessun' genere d'alchun perito in l'arte musica non è stato posito per intervallo accio si proferisca, ma solamente alla formatione et perfection del tuono et delle consonantie (come ho detto di sopra) perché con gran difficoltà si può percipere dalle orecchie per el suo minimo spatio o ver intervallo, dato che sia ultimo spatio sensibile, come al nostro Boetio piace in Libra solamente alia formatione et perfettion del tuono et delle consonantie et per il suo minima spatia o ver intervallo, data che sia ultimo spatia del comma in naturale, ma sarìa un'altr' genere misto et non diatonico simplice. Né anchora di sìi hexachordi fa menzione nel nostro amico Don Pietro Aaron in quello ultimo suo trattatello, nel quale lui tratta delle congiunzioni, fatto in retrattazione et corretzione di alcune cose dette da lui sopra tal materia non troppo ben considerate, come appare nel capitolo xxvii et xxviii del suo trattato de tonis, ne' quali dichiara 'come in tutte le positioni o vero luoghi della mano de Guido sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o ver voci,' et questo, perché credea che non fusse altra congiunzione che solo quella di b molle, come se può facilmente comprendere nel capitolo xxvi del predetto suo trattato. Ma certamente le congiunzioni in cantu mensurato sono due, cioè una di b molle, la quale si sarà più depressa de A et de E per spatio di semituno maggiore. Ma la sillaba ♩ del b quadro giacente, ut hic ♩ segnato in E et in ♩ naturali, tale sillaba ♩ sarà più intensa de C et de G per spatio d'un semitono maggiore, et al medesimo modo la sillaba ♩ più intensa sarà di A et di E per spatio d'un semitono maggiore, o ver sopra B [rotundo et E (quod idem est)] per spatio d'un comma. Il quale spatio non è per se in actu cantabile per esser transitio difficile, et molto incomodo sarea al cantore cantando, 'perché anchora che sia compreso da l'audito, l'instrumento naturale non potria esso pronunziare,' per la qual cosa, tale ordine è in tutto reprobato et remosso dall'uso. Etiam per non essere anchora el monochordo et altri instrumenti per tale divisione disvisti, cioè per commi, si potria dire frust[ratorio et non necessario in questo caso,] Pertanto è vano et ci 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 semituno, tuono, et tuono, et per il contrario per tuono, et tuono, et semituno, et al medesimo modo è per le sillabe di Guido, cioè per ♩, ♩, ♩, ♩, ♩. Ma se volessimo procedere con questo altro ordine predetto, non saria diatonico | naturale, ma sarebbe un'altr'un genere misto et non diatonico semplice. Né anchora di sìi hexachordi fa menzione nel nostro amico Don Pietro Aaron in quello ultimo suo trattatello, nel quale lui tratta delle congiunzioni, fatto in retrattazione et corretzione di alcune cose dette da lui sopra tal materia non troppo ben considerate, come appare nel capitolo xxvii et xxviii del suo trattato de tonis, ne' quali dichiara 'come in tutte le positioni o vero luoghi della mano de Guido sono naturalmente et accidentalmente sei note o ver voci,' et questo, perché credea che non fusse altra congiunzione che solo quella di b molle, come se può facilmente comprendere nel capitolo xxvi del predetto suo trattato. Ma certamente le congiunzioni in cantu mensurato sono due, cioè una di b molle, la quale si 11.sparsa di F et in C naturali, tale sillaba ♩ sarà più depressa de C et de G per spatio d'un semituno maggiore, et similiamente la syllaba detta ♩...
segna con questo segno δ in ciascun luogo della mano di Guido dove naturalmente et accidentalmente si trova mi, et l’altra congionta si chiama di b duro, la quale si segna con questo segno τ in ciascuno luogo della mano di Guido dove naturalmente et accidentalmente cade fa, et di questo chiaramente si dimostra esser due coniunte per questi versi fatti dall’antichi, i quali così dicono:

Die cominctorum quadrum genus atque rotandum.
A consuetudine et e consuetudo figura rotunda;
in F et in C diesinest progressio quadri.

Et tali congionte segnate con i predetti segni nelle antidette lettere sono chiamate naturali, perchè procedono diatonicamente. Ma se tale segno δ sarà segnato in C o ver in F naturali, et questo τ in δ o ver in E naturali, allhora tali congionte non saranno al genere diatonico nè ad alcun altro genere pertinenti.

4. Da poi procedete in la vostra lettera dicendo così: ‘Et perchè el mio precettore et Tintoris et Fra Giovanni Ottobi dicono che tali segni non si segnano ne’ luoghi predetti naturali, domandano a quella qual sia la ragione che tali segni non si debbano 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 [τ] segno di b rotondo o ver molle si ponesse in tale lettere o vero in altri luoghi ove naturalmente fusse fa, non sarea real et vera coniunta, et similmente se il segno di b quadro o vero segnasese nel quale naturalmente fusse mi.

La ragione è perché da δ ad C et da E ad F naturali cade immediato lo spatio del semitono minore, et non del tuono, il quale si possa dividere per semitono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto, o ver per maggiore

5. L’altra ragione è che se li predetti segni accidentali [se possessino et segnassino nelle antidette lettere naturali, cioè in δ et in E o ver in C et in F, non sarea similmente congionta, perchè la congionta, secondo piace a Giovanni Tintoris, altro non è se non far di tuono semitono et di semitono tuono. Essendo adunque sopra δ et E sotto C et F spatio proprio di semitono minore, il quale spatio secondo l’ordine naturale è fisco et immobile, et non di tuono, pertanto non portano tali segni operare il suo effetto secondo la sua natura et proprieta, perchè seguirebbe che la definizione et il definito sarianno contrarii tra loro, et ancora per questo seguirebbe che non si potranno commodamente tali congionte pronunciare dal cantore ascendendo et descendendo con la voce, se non con grandissima difficoltà et fatica, per esser spatio et o ver intervallo insusitato, et questo è per defetto della pratica, la quale per in fine a hora non ha dato, nè manco è per dare per lo adventire, segno alcuno che sotto C et F di uno semitono maggiore et non sotto δ e E d’un comma (quod idem est) si possano dire fa per compire el semitono minore che doveria esser esser fa e esso sopraddetto luogo, si come si fa in tutte le altre lettere, le...
55' Canon: Dicitur ter. Primo modo: prima talea in subdupla | superbipartiente proportione. Seconda talea in subdupla proportione. Tertia talea in subsesqui-capitur in diapente. Tertio modo: dicitur in diapente. Et est notandum quod secunda et tertia vice delle altre parti, per esser equali in parti del concento. Ma nel segno del secondo tenore si pone una semibreve imperfetta, o vero il valore d'essa, contra una semibreve, o vero il suo valore, di questo C posto in principio delle altre parti, per esser equali in virtù et valore. Li predetti tenori sono qui sotto notati:

Præbyter Joannes Brasart de Ludo

Requiem pteram

Romanorum rex.

19 The resolution of the canon shows that 'subdiatessaron' is identical with 'subsesquitertia'.

20 Seguita l'altro tenore:

7 Here del Lago interposes a Latin word, the second person plural of the present subjunctive active of advertere.

21 No composition by Brassart with this tenor survives. The canon inscription is similar to that of Brassart's 'Magne decus potencie/Genus regale esperie': 'Iste dicitur his, primo de modo perfecto, minori existente imperfecto. Aliq vero duæ taleæ et contrario, secundo per semiterni de primo.'

22 Del Lago refers to a treatise by Spataro that is no longer extant. He had already criticized Spataro's definition of talea. 22 Del Lago refers to a treatise by Spataro that is no longer extant. He had already criticized Spataro's definition of talea. 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).

23 Et quanto a questo, altro non scrivié per hora.

57. Del Lago to Spataro, 13 Aug. 1333

Præbyter Joannes Brasart de Ludo

Hoc locundum dulce melos

Canone: Qui dicitur bis, duæ prime taleæ de maiori modo perfecto, minori existente imperfecto. Aliq vero duæ taleæ et contrario, secundo per semiterni de primo.

Ma di questi tali ordini di talea, i quali sono ne' duoi soprannotati tenori, non fa mentione alcuna V.E. nel opera sua di contrapunto, come appare nella seconda parte al capitolo 70, dove lei definisce talea. Trovandosi anchora | questo altro modo essersi usitato ne' canti oltra quello che V.E. ha posto et per esempio 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 di 8 di ottobre m.d.xxxii [no. 28] come si trova altro modo diverso dal vostro usitato da' dottissimi compositori antichi ne' loro harmonici concerti. Et però credo che tali soprannotati tenori saranno facilmente intesi da voi per essere voi stato così advertiti da me nella detta mia lettera sopra tal materia di talea. Et quanto a questo, altro non scrivié per hora.

In Venetia a di xv agosto m.d.xxxiiii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

Io mandai a richieder6 in questa mia risposta la resoluzione dei duoi soprascritti tenori a maestro Gioante di Spatari per tentarlo.24
The Letters

1. On 1 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.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 F♯ and C♯ and of B♭ and E♭?' Briefly, I say that musicians established two signs to remove notes from their natural places. The first, ♭, 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 G, 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 comma excluded from practice. Moreover, since monochords and other instruments are not yet divided by commas,³ it can be called useless.⁴ Hence it is pointless to demand such hexachords since they don’t follow the natural diatonic order, which is semitone, tone and, in reverse, 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 the comma exceed the minor, whose species or proportions are of no concern, and therefore their properties too, since it is not used in any melodic genus.⁵ 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.⁶

3. Therefore ut of F♯ and C♯ 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 B♯ and F.⁷ 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,⁸ it can be called useless.⁹ Hence it is pointless to demand such hexachords since they don’t follow the natural diatonic order, which is semitone, tone and, in reverse, 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 the comma exceed the minor, whose species or proportions are of no concern, and therefore their properties too, since it is not used in any melodic genus. 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. But if C or F is signed with ♭ and B and E with ♮, these commae 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,¹⁰ what is the reason?' I answer that the reason is twofold. First, if a ♭ 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 ♭ you should sing fa and where ♮ mi, but that applies only to those positions on Guido’s hand where ♭ and ♮ do not occur, as is affirmed by the Revd D. B. de Francia in ch. 8 of his Musica, concerning the commae. The ♭ 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.¹¹ The learned Prosdocimo de’ Beldomandi confirms this in his counterpart treatise under rule 3 of ch. 2, concerning ‘coloured music’: The third rule is that the signs of musica fleta are two, round or soft ♭ and square or hard ♮. These two signs indicate at times alteration of the notes or their placement where they cannot ordinarily be.¹²

¹. 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.¹³ 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. B♭ – C, E♭ – F♭] 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenor</th>
<th>Præsbyter Joannes de Sarto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requiem qeternam</td>
<td>amen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanorum rex.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Canon: It is sung three times: (i) The first talea in subdupla superhisparsitaria proportion [1:2]19; the second talea in subdupla proportion [3:5]; the third talea in subsesquitertia [1:4]; the fourth in subsesquialtera [2:3]. (ii) The first talea in proportio tripla [3:1]; the second in hemiola [3:2]; the third as written [3:5]; 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenor</th>
<th>Præsbyter Joannes Brassart de Ludo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hoc locundum dulce melos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 662 |

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 talea 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. 267v–268v, 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 1459, 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 Fridrici/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. O 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 in the second and third, as written. The proportions always refer back to the integer color and are not cumulative. The use of ‘subsesquiaterra’ and ‘sesquialtera’ to describe the proportions subsesquitertia and sesquisaetera, as Mixter points out,28

24 Johannes Brassart, Seci Motetten (Musik alter Meister 13; Graz, 1960), pp. 28–57, which includes a facsimile of the source (p. xiv).
25 On the evolution of the meaning of O and E in Tintorri’s thought, see Blackburn, ‘A Lost Guide’, p. 44.
26 Seci Motetten, p. ix. Mixter has analysed the isorhythmic structure of the motet in ‘Isorhythm Design in the Motets of Johannes Brassart’, in James W. Pruett (ed.), Studies in
Theological 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 5:4.

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 autograph is small: three introits and three antiphon motets, all for three voices. 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*’). 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 autograph resembles it. Nevertheless, de Sarto’s ‘*Verbum Patris hodie*’ in Oxford, MS Canonici Misc. 213, fos. 12r–13r, 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 ‘Magnum decus potentiae/Genus regale esperie’. ‘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 ♪, figure allegorismi parae algoritismi ponuntur pro modis neonix circuli pro temporibus.’ We take it to mean: ‘It is sung in ♪. The Arabic figures denote the modes and the circles the *tempus*. The first ♪ is in perfect major mode, perfect minor mode, and perfect *tempus*. The second part, ♦, is in imperfect minor mode, perfect *tempus*, and major prolongation.

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.


8 See Keith E. Mixter, ‘*Johannes de Sarto*, The New Grove Dictionary, 1. viii.

9 See *Brassart, Opera omnia*, 1. p. xi.

10 Charles van den Borren, who edited the piece in *Polyphonia sacra* (Bumham and London, 1942), pp. 286–1, had understandable difficulty in deciphering the inscription; he quoted 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 (J91). Fos. 234–235

Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 20 August 1533 (autograph)


254° Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, el mio molto da me amato Frate Pietro Aron, etc.

1. A li di 11 del presente ho receputo una de V.E. de di 7 signata, a me piu che gratissima, per la quale ho claramente compreso quello che da me sempre è stato per certo tenuto, cioè che con optimo core et puru amore me amati. Ma pure el vostro in tante me laude et humilmente scrivevite piu presto retu essermi incarico che laude et honore. Ma da poi che el vero Idio a V.E. come homo ha dato libero arbitrio, io non intendendo già essere quello che de tale arbitrio vi voglia privare. Pertanto quella a me scriverà come gli piacerà, et io sempre cercaro 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 piu 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 giorni passati io fui da lui recercato de certe dubietà tra soa Excellencia et uno altro musicus 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 *vo* e 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:

\[ B^\flat \]

et perché allora da me li fu dato recta resposa secondo el sono del suo quesito et etiam secondo li signi di sopra da lui aducti in luce. Ma lui, per excusarsi di li soi manifesti errori, a me scrive che io non havaeu inteso la sua intentione, perché lui diceva intender pertraccare de la syllaba *fa* equamente considerata in sono con D *la sol re* et con G *sol re ut* predicti. Et allora da me gli fu scrito che lui andasse a imparare de parlare piu rectamente musicalmente, perché se da lui era inteso pertraccare de la syllaba *fa* equamente giuntca in sono con G et D predicte, assi piu recto.

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 *Roman de la Rose*, 2. 7, ‘ne subtracto fundamento rei gestae, quasi in aere quaeratis aedificare’ (cf. also 8. 2). The *Roman de la Rose*, I. 2442, has ‘*lois fezes chausius 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 intrè il signato et lo egualmente immaginato non cade poca distanza, perché una syllaba diversa in una positione naturale immaginata sarà equale in sono con tale naturale positione. Ma se una naturale positione sera con tali signi signata, allhora intrè il signo et el naturale loco signato caderà differente sonorità et intervalló. Et perché lui diceva che io doveva bene pensare che lui non sera caduto in tale puerile errore, et che il pareva che lui volesse dire essere stato mio errore perché io non haveva arrognato, come dovuta bene pensare che lui non seria caduto in tale puerile errore, et etiam che con certo suo parlare distantia, perche una syllaba diversa in una positione naturale immaginata inteso el suo inordinato et male parlare, et etiam che con certo suo parlare veduta da certi amici mei non mediocriter docti, da li quali fui pregato che per el loro amore io volesse...
The Letters

58. Spataro to Aaron, 20 Aug. 1533

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 cognoorse bene el mio core, perché la cognizione del core humano solo se aspecta a Dio. Io non fui mai inganatore, né mai fui mia usanza de inganare alcuno, et quello che ho havuto nel pecto io l'ho portato scupertamente in fronte. Ma che bisogna più dite, V.E. scia bene che mai non cercarli davri batta, ma bene ho cercato mantenermi in la vostra benivolenta, per la quale ogni giorno mi trovo de[g]iessere 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 questi de li nostri musici facita, ancora nulla habiamo havuto. Credo che lui ne parla così fredamente con V.E. per sentire se alcuna cosa ne haventi sentito. Ma potria essere che se lui la tene petitione da puto, che lui ancora responderà da puto, come è sua solita usanza. Horsì non più per hora, perché el foglio è già pleno, et per essere alquanto ancora venuto in colera, al presente altro non dico.4


Vale. Bononie, die 20 augusti 1533.6

Servidor 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, 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 id are of D9 and G9; and I answered according to the letter of his question and his examples. But he, trying to wriggle out

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668

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3 Nicolaus Wollick, Enchiridion musices (Paris, 1512), fo. By, lists three names for the & sign, the first of which is calld 'e durum [=b durum] proper 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. 51, para. 6.

6 D. Michele Cimatore. He was elected as ‘novo mastro de canto’ in 1533 and succeeded Spataro in 1534; see Ludovico Frati, ‘Per la storia della musica in Bologna’, p. 467, and Frank Titze, ‘Cimatore, Michele’, The New Grove Dictionary, iv. 403.

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669
The Letters

58. Spataro to Aaron, 20 Aug. 1333

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. 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. I understand what you say about Nicolò [Cavalaro]'s composition and mine, 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. 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. 4) that not only can we speak of a tritone when there is a melodic...
The reason is, he continues, that the ear attends more to the succession of two notes than to the extreme notes (f–h) 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. 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 the sense of hearing, in contradistinction to the medieval musician, who to the judgements of the parts to music. A
d 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. 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. Is it possible that Spataro thought otherwise? To determine

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 (421–5) and a bibliography (425–7) 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. 191; the original source is 'Uber Gestaltqualitaten', Vierteljahrsschrift wissenschaftlicher Philosophie 14 (1892), 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 (1965), col. 1138, and id., 'Gehörspsychologie', ibid. iv (1955), col. 1195.

58. Spataro to Aaron, 20 Aug. 1533
Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aaron, 29 August 1533 (autograph)

Reverendo et venerabile et de li musici doctissimo, el mio da me molto amato Frate Petro Aron, etc.

1. A li giorni passati per una mia [no. 58] io feci noto a V.E. de molte occurrentie, et infra le altre come io haveva receputo el mio tractato de amato Prate Petro Aron, io haveva voglia de vederlo una sola volta almanco prima che fusse in vostra asai me sono atristato, vedendo che quella quasi ha[veva]tuto in Giovanni Spataro a Pietro Aaron, 29 August...

59. Spataro to Aaron, 29 Aug. 1533

andava a bon camino et non da maligno, come lui sole andare, et da me tale soa domanda non fu tolia a sdegno, perché io credeva che lui dubitasse perché io l’ho trovato dubitare in particelle de minore importan-
tie. Ma le vostre littere me hanno aperto lo intellecto, le quale vostre ho portate in seno sino al di de oggi, et è stato tale giorno | che (pleno de sdegno et ira) l’ho let[ta] 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 parerìa butare in oichi a lo amico quello che ho facto per mio debito et per amore et gelo de lo honore del mio honorando Frate Petro, al quale più credo essere tenuto che a me stesso, perché asai più che altro vivente et piü che me stesso è stato solito et s’e affaticato circa el mio utile et honore. Pertanto non creda V.E. che io sia venuto con trufè et inganni, perché o impresso o non impresso, io ve mandarlo el tractato mio asai meglio formato che non era prima, al dispuesto de Pre Zanetto, el quale voglio che se menta per la gala et che crepi de invidia, et che sempre resti uno ignoranzo che non existima vergogna, come appare dove lui dice che bene o male che lui risponda, non spenderebe uno bagatino. Prego V.E. non voglia parlare con lui de questo hymno, ai di di questo signa in G acuto, perche io...
The Letters

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 humilmente me recomando, et genuflexo prego quella gli piaza conumermarmi nel numero de li soi servitori, et che al reverendo vostro patron [Sebastiano Michiel] et a li figlioli me recomandati. Don Leonardo se recomanda a V.E. insieme con Messer Nicolao, el quale aspetta 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 1333.

De V.E. servitore J. Spataro

1. 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. 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 at and la of G2 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 than though it must be printed or not. 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 [Williaert] 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 Williaert 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.
Venerabile et reverendo et delli musici dottissimo, el mio honorando Frate ami eo Messer quesito a sua Eccellentia fatto dalli nostri musici bolognesi, dalli quali, secondo el non tanto per esser mal disposto quanto perche secondo dovere alegre et rengratlarme, et non dolerse, quello el quale li mova tale bus virtus perficitur', et etiam 'ferrum ferro acuitur. Ma perche cognosco che la considero che tutta questa faticha fuggir faticha, et anchora gran pretio stimata, et io (ut dixi) esser mal disposto al scrivere, solo stato amico della V.E. le dimostri al preditto altre volte ha fatto V.E., prego; et credo che volontieri el farrete, perche de maggiori importantie sono da V.E. liberamente servito. 2 al suo quesito, per el quale anchora che allhora io a tale suo quesito ho data resposta secondo el mio intencion.

Frates Pietro mio honorando, el nostro preditto Pre Zannetto, io li ho fatto uno quesito, suspetto et dubitatione, hora comprendo che tal suo quesito venea da male considerazione con Fanno Zannetto, et che quando le dimostrato come quello el quale li mova tale bus virtus perficitur', et etiam 'ferrum ferro acuitur.1 Ma perche io considero che tutta questa faticha e mia pel scrivere, et etiam perche cognosco che la faculta pertrattata e molto sortile et dotta, et da esser de gran pretio stimata, et io (ut dixi) esser mal disposto al scrivere, solo per fuggir faticha, et anchora accio che da V.E., come quello el quale sempre e stato amico della verità, siano giudicate le loro risposte, et etiam accio che V.E. li dimostro al preditto Pre Zannetto, et che quando le daro tenute al suo piacere, habbiate cura de remandarmele2 a Bologna, come anchora nelle altre volte ha fatto V.E., accio che io le pona con le altre considerazioni musice tra sua Eccellentia et me accadute. Et de questo, quanto posso vi prego; et credo che volontieri el farrete, perche de maggiori importantie sono da V.E. liberamente servito.

Frates Pietro mio honorando, el nostro preditto Pre Zannetto, per una sua de il 18 agosto segnata [no. 17],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 parlate me e stato molesto et strano, perche io credo havere rettamente satisfatto al suo quesito, per el quale anchora che allhora io andasse senza anchora suspetto et dubitatione, hora comprendero che tal suo quesito venea da mala intentione. Horsù transeat. Ma seguitando, lui dice che per parte et in 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 potra se sforzarà dechiararlo, etc., el qual dubio lui dice esser questo, scilicet: Dove sta la syllaba ut e la syllaba la de questo segno b segnato in C et in F, et similmente de questo segno f segnato in # e in E. Et seguitando, lui dice che questo segno b et etiam questo segno # sono stati ordinati delli musici per removere li suoni naturali [per semitonia minore in grave et maggiore in acuto et]4 per semitonia maggiore in grave et minore in acuto, accio che l' spazio de ciascuno tuono resti partito in doi semitoni. Et se questo # sara segnato in # e in E naturali, dice che 'l suo suono sara piu intenso de C e F per uno spatio de comma. Et se questo # sara segnato in # e in E, dice che 'l suo suono sara piu intenso de C e F per uno spatio de comma, etc.

3. Messer Pietro mio honorando, questo nostro amico, scilicet Pre Zannetto, assai tempo ha speso in vano cerca le sue demonstrationi de sopra allegate, perche delli nostri musici bolognesi, senza discrepare dalla natura circa tali segni intesa delli musici, sentono altramente che sua Eccellentia non dice.4 Impero che lui non se parte dalla prima et bassa costituzione de Guido, per tale ordine de segni segnata. Ma loro, speculated più alto, dicono che 'dans signum dat consequentiam signi', per la qual cosa dicono che dato uno de tali segni preditti, scilicet questo # o ver questo $, anchora seguitara quello che a ciascuno de tali segni sara consecutamente. Se adonque medianti tali segni li tuoni trovati in la simplice mano de Guido restano divisi in doi semitoni, etc., dicono che anchora questo segno b dato in C et in F et etiam questo [$] dato in # e in E non mancaranno de tale effetto. Et dicono che tale verità sara compresa da lui, se sua Eccellentia se arrescat a mente dove V.E. in quello ultimo nostro trattato impresso,5 nel quale insegnate trovare li sei nomi officiali in ciascuna delle posizioni della mano de Guido, in quello loco dove V.E. demonstra dove habbia origine et dependantia la syllaba mi eletmano in suono considerata con C et in F, perche in tale luoco, et vere dicete, che la syllaba mi eletmano in suono considerata in C hara il suo nascimento da questo segno b segnato in D sequente, et che la syllaba mi eletmano in suono considerata con F nascerà da questo segno $ posito in G, et similmente, dove date regola de trovare el nascimento della syllaba fa eletmano posita in # e in E, la quale nasce da questo segno # segnato in A et in D, lui chiaramente comprenderà che, come e stato inteso da Frate Giovanni Spataro, in condensing Del Lago's answer, omitted these words, which are necessary for the explanation (see no. 17, para. 7).6

1 Spataro, in para. 5, admits that Del Lago determined the position of C#, F#, Bb, 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.

2 Aaron's untitled treatise of 1531; see no. 34.
Ottobi e dal mio preceptore nel capitolo quinto del trattato secondo della sua Pratica, che sono tre ordini diatonici, da di venire considerati, non de natura et sostanza diversi, ma si diversi secondo la sua apparente posizione locale, cioè che in apparentia l’uno è più intenso de l’altro per debiti et convenienti spazi musicali circa el principio della sua monochordo apparente, o vero imaginato, delli quali tre ordini diatonici, per tenere ordine, dal predicato Frate Giovanni Ottobi uno è stato chiamato primo o vero naturale, l’altro da lui è stato ditto secondo, et l’altro terzo. E l’uno in li concentrati sta per se, scilicet senza segno alcuno, perché essendo chiamato naturale, non il cade in essere segnatamente con segno alcuno accidentale. El secondo ordine appare in li concentrati segnatamente questo segno $ in ciascun luogo dove rispetto al primo | ordine non caderà la syllaba $a. Et lo terzo ordine è segnato con questo segno $ in ciascun luogo del primo ordine dove non cade la syllaba mi. Adonque li nostri musicisti, considerando a tali ordini predetti, dicono se ciascuno degli ordini predetti tre ordini non è altro che un solo ordine per se apparente nel monochordo o vero mano de Guido, seguirà che nel secondo ordine, et etiam nel terzo, se potrà segnare questo segno $ in ciascun luogo ove non caderà la sua syllaba ja, et questo $ dove non caderà la sua syllaba mi. Pertanto considerando che per la regola data dal nostro Frate Piero Aaron, per etiam in tali luochi, scilicet in C et F, dicono ragionabili mente stare questo segno $ non rispetto alla syllaba ja del primo ordine in tal locho cadente, ma rispetto la syllaba mi del secondo ordine, la quale in tali luochi cade in tal modo con la syllaba ja de l’ordine primo.4

4. Se adonque il nostro Messer Pre Zanetto bene adverterà, lui comprenderà che con efficissime raggioni questo segno $ sarà segnato in $ et in E del primo ordine. Imperò che in tali lettere predicato cade equamente in suono la syllaba ja del terzo ordine, la quale nascerà da questo segno $ segnato in A et in D del primo ordine, per le quali demostrazioni sia la sua Eccellentia potrà intendere che questo segno $ in $ et in E naturali posto non starrà in tali luochi rispetto la syllaba mi de l’ordine primo, ma si rispetto la syllaba ja, la quale pende da questo segno $ de l’ordine terzo segnato in A et in D, la quale cade in parisonanza con $ e $ del primo ordine, da molti chiamato naturale.5 Per le quali demostrazioni

6. Lui dice ancora che per sussistare a tale quesito, che la syllaba ut dependente da questo segno $ segnato in C et in F del primo ordine chiamato naturale sarà più bassa de G et C per uno spatio de comma,10 cerca la qual cosa i nostri musicisti dicono che alloro parle che lui habbia non pocho errato, perché dicono che seguitaria che tra $a et ut e contra non caderia diatessaron, ma solamente elle caderia spatio de ditono, come lui chiaramente potrà cognoscere componendo li estremi, li quali cadeno tra il comma posito sotto $, il quale nasce da questo segno $ segnato in C, et il comma posito sotto G, perché el comma posito sotto $ ad A caderà spatio de doi minuti semitoni, et da poi da A al spatio del comma posito sotto G caderà uno spatio de tono et de uno comma. Et per tal modo tra tali estremi se includeranno solamente doi tonii, et non diatessaron. Et il

10. In the present version of no. 57, Del Lago has ‘semitono maggiore’, not comma; see no. 57, para. 5. 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 ‘semitono maggiore’. On the revision of Del Lago’s letters, see Ch. 6.
simile accaderà dal comma posito sotto E prodotto da questo segno in F al spatio del comma posito sotto C.

7. Ancora 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 in C et in F, sarà più bassa de E et de A per spatio de un comma, perché seguitaria che da fa al suo la in ordine caderia spatio di diatessaron et non de ditono, la qual cosa dicono esser assai chiara, perché se questo segno δ sarà dato in C et in F, el suo suono, come etiam da lui di sopra è stato affirmato, caderà per un spatio de comma più basso de δ et de E, dal qual comma locato sotto δ et sotto E al comma locato sotto E et sotto A caderà integra diatessaron. Et questo sará assai chiaramente demonstrato per diatonico processo. Imperò che da questo tuono, el qual tuono supra, Et da poi procedendo da questo segno δ dato in F caderà et similmente chiaramente da lui G et sotto segno diatessaron et non de ditono, la qual cosa dicono esser assai chiara, et etiam lui la sua syllaba ditta essendo tal segno segnato in F, el suo errato dicendo che la syllaba apertamente se comprende procedendo diatonico ut hie, scilicet, che da questo segno δ segnato in δ a questo δ segnato in A caderà spatio de tono remesso, il quale tono per δ naturale resterà diviso per minore semitonio diviso per maggiore semitonio in grave et minore in acuto. Et dal preditto δ segnato in δ a questo δ segnato in D sequente caderà spatio de tuono, el qual tuono resterà diviso da C naturale per maggiore semitonio in grave et minore in acuto. Et dal preditto δ segnato in δ a questo δ segnato in E caderà anchora spatio di tuono, el qual tuono da δ naturale, ut supra, resterà diviso per maggiore semitonio in grave et minore in acuto. Et da poi procedendo da questo segno δ segnato in δ a questo δ segnato in F se farà spatio di minor semitonio, li quali doi toni predetti col predicito semitonio minore insieme tolli² perferceranno un completo spatio de diatessaron et non de ditono, come rettamente tra fa et la et la fa debbe cadere, et similmente accaderà da questo segno δ dato in F al spatio del comma posito sotto A, come, mediante quello che e sopra è stato detto, chiaramente da lui potrà esser compreso. Pertanto dicono che se lui bene adverdirà, che 'l troverà che la syllaba ut, la quale sarà prodotta da questo segno δ segnato in C et in F, caderà per spacio di maggior semitonio sotto G et sotto C. Se lui bene adverdirà, dove da lui è stato detto che questo segno δ dato in C remette el suo suono per maggior semitonio sotto C, et che 'l predetto segno dato in F remette etiam el suo suono per maggior semitonio, et etiam lui adverdirà, che se questo segno δ sarà dato in C, che la sua syllaba ditta la caderà più depressa de E per maggior semitonio. Et essendo tal segno segnato in F, el suo la caderà per maggior semitonio più depresso de A, come da lui sarà compreso se lui atenderà alla intelligenzia della certezza, la quale è prodotta dalla infallibile quantità.

8. Ancora li musici nostri dicono che sua Eccellentia ha non pocho errato dicendo che la syllaba ut de questo segno δ segnato in δ et in E sarà 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 δ segnato in δ a questo δ segnato in A caderà spatio de tono remesso, il quale tono per δ naturale resterà diviso per minore semitonio per un spazio 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 δ segnato in δ a questo δ segnato in A caderà spatio de tono remesso, il quale tono per δ naturale resterà diviso per minore semitonio.

² The scribe has probably mistranscribed Spataro's 'colt' and also 'colto' a few lines below.
demostare come il minore semitonio resta superato dal maggiore per un spatio de comma, et come il 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 il duplo intervallo, è superato dalli estremi de sei toni per uno spatio de comma. Et etiam a lilii sarrj[a] sta vano demostare in quali termini comparati cade il spatio del comma.11 et similmente da tutti gli altri musici, dalli quali è stato scritto in teorica et musica speculativa, sarria stato in vano scritto. Imperò che da ciascuno 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 spatia del comma alla debita comma sensibile et luochi opportuni convenienti et debiti. Imperò che mediante la addictione del coma molti spatii de toni compositi de doi minori semitonii nel ma etiam reduce lo intervallo sonoro non ottimamente grato al sensa de lo monochordo apparenti non solamente se reducono alla debita auditura, in modo che lo audita molto ben resta satisfatto et contento. La qual cosa, non dotti connumerato, demostra havere assai segno restara inferiore naturale, tale Pietro mio honorando, pare che sia ignorata da questo dottor, ma li nostri musici dicono che se lui bene procedera secondo il genere diatonico naturale et usitato. Imperò che nel monochordo se trova lo spatio del comma nel locho preditto dove quello tono posito tra G et A naturali restara diviso per maggiore semitonio in grave et minore in acuto, et e contra, come doveria essere ciascuno 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,16 la quale verità, Frate Pietro mio honorando, da V.E. è stata tacite approbatà in quello vostro trattato dove insegnate de trovare li sei nomi officiali in ciascuna positione della mano de Guido monacho, li quali se fussero misuratamente per termini numerali comparati cerca la sonora chorda produtti et apparenti, se comprenderia che ciascuno 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 differente divisione de tono sarria solalmente compresa mediante il spatio del coma, il quale, stando nel medio de doi minori semitonii, darria aiuto in grave et in acuto alli musica interivalenti secondo la opportunità et bisogno, come appare tra questo segno segnato in G et questo segnato in A naturali, tra li quali cede differentia de uno spatio de coma. Et questo aviene perché questo segno segnato in G se disjunge dal preditto G per semitonio maggiore in acuto et se accosta con A per spatio de minore semitonio, et questo segnato in A se disjunge dal preditto A per maggiore semitonio in gravita et se appropinquà ad G per spatio de minore semitonio, et nel medio de tali segni (ut diximus) se interpone il spatio del coma, il quale è molto honorato dalli dotti in questa facoltà, et non esistimato superfluò, come da nel nostro Pre Zannetto è stato detto, el quale, oltra procedendo, dice che l'e 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

11 All these matters are treated in book 3 of Boethius' De musica (ed. Friedlein, pp. 267–100).
12 Lodovico Fogliano, Musica theorica (Venice, 1539), fo. 25r: 'De commatis utilitate'.

60. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Oct. 1553

117 Pertanto fu dalli dotti tolta una minima particella [ del spatio del maggiore

16 Del Lago had quoted, in Latin, from Hothby's 'Musica', which turns out to be the Tractatus quondam regularum artis musicae (see no. 17 n. 1, 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.
volessimo procedere per questo altro ordine predetto, li toni et etiam li semitonii naturalii mutariano loco, scilicet che non starriano in li loci soi naturalii et usitati in pratica tra linea et spatio. Et per questo dice che nasceria un'altro genere misto et non diatonico semplice, et anchora dice che non se trova alcuno instr[um]ento per tale modo diviso.

14. Cerca questo assai chiaro di sopra dalla nostri musici è stato concluso, scilicet che dualo 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 predetto, che li toni et etiam li semitonii mutariano loco, etc., a questo i nostri musici rispondono 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 rispondendo dicono che siano li toni et li semitonii diatonici in qualunque 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 adverdere perché in quocunque loco species resiinet, et ibidem virtus. Pertanto dicono che così come li soni et distantia harmonice non hanno loco proprio per lo instr[um]ento naturale, così etiam non hanro loco proprio in lo instr[um]ento per arte fatto. Imperò che l'arte serve alla natura, et non e contra. Et se l'instr[um]ento fatto per arte manca de tale ordine et divisione, tale effetto non pende dall'arte et scientia musica, ma pende dallo artifici, il quale ignora tale divisione, et etiam dalla manuale secondo l'ordine simplice, non saranno secondo el solo genere diatonico prodotti, 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 specie et forme usitate sono quelle che danno la varia cognizone generica, come è stato dimostrato da Giovanni Moton in una sua messa 'sine nomine', et anchora in un suo muttetto ditto 'Peccata mea', in li quali congetti da lui in ciascuna delle particolle è stato segnato questo segno ♮ dove cade ♮ et ♯ naturali, per el qual segno el semitonio, el quale nel primo ordine cadeva tra ♮ et ♯ et tra E et F, o vero tra linea et spatio, et tra spatio et linea, resta cantato tra A et ♮ e tra spatio et linea, et il semitonio cadente tra E et F naturalmente costituito de spatio in linea mediante el segno predicto posito in E, caderà tra D et E predicto, procedendo de linea in spatio. Ma perché in la messa predicta et muttetto se osservano le specie 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 etiam tali concetti se potranno cantare per la syllable de Guido, scilicet ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la.

15. Et oltre seguendo, il nostro eccellente Pre Zannetto dice ut hic: anchore de si fatti hexachordi non fa menzione il nostro dottissimo musiche Messer Frate Pietro Aaron in quello suo ultimo trattatelo, in lo quale lui tratta delle congionte, etc. dove declara che in tutte le positioni della mano de Guido sono naturalmente et accidentalmente se nòe o vero voci, etc. Alla qual cosa rispondono 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 demonstrazione del suo intento senza pertrattare de tali hexachordi et segni in tali lochi segnati, el sarria stato vano et incarco a sua Eccellentia sumere, attento che se 'frustra fit per plura', etc. Et dicono che se dal nostro Pre Zannetto fesse considerato allo effetto produtto da questo segno ♮ segnato in C et in F et da questo ♮ dato in ♮ et in E, el non haria fatti ditto tante particolle extra propositum. Ma dicono che l'hanse per excusato perché 'cecus non iudicat de colore', et 'stolido non sapit ista segres'.

16. Et anchora seguendo, questo nostro eccellente Pre Zannetto dice che certamente le congionte sono doi, cioè una de b rotondo, la quale se
segna con questo segno $b$ in ciascuno loco dove naturalmente si trova $mi$, e dice che l'altra congiunta si chiama de $q$ quadrato, la quale se segna con questo segno $s$ in ciascuno loco dove naturalmente caderà la syllaba $fa$. Et dice che questo chiaramente se dimostra per questi versi fatti dalli antichi, li quali così dicono:

Die coniunctarum quadrum genus atque rotundum.

A servabit et $E$ coniuncta figura rotundae.

In $F$ et in $C$ discurrerit progressio quadrarum.

Circa le quali autorità et ditti dal nostro Pre Zannetto di sopra assignati, li nostri musicici rispondono et dicono che lui tacite contraddice a sé medesimo, dicendo che la congiunta de $b$ molle se segna in ciascuno loco dove naturalmente cade la syllaba $mi$. Et dopo, in quelli versi assignati dalli antichi da lui addotti, dice che la congiunta de $b$ molle $[e]$ segnata in $A$, nel quale $A$ dicono che naturalmente non cade $mi$ perché la syllaba $mi$ egualmente considerata in $A$ nascerà dalla congiunta de $b$ molle con questo segno $b$ segnato in $z$ naturale,18 come da Frate Giovanni Ottobi et dal nostro prelalegato Messer Pietro Aaron nel prelalegato suo trattatelo è stato ditto. Pertanto dicono che l'"il nostro Pre Zannetto (ut dixi) ha concluso contra de lui, perché se 'l se concederà che per ragione della syllaba $mi$ data egualmente con $A$ che 'l segno del $b$ rotondo sia dato in $A$, anchora per tal ragione el non se negerà che tal segno del $b$ rotondo non se possa dare in $C$ et in $F$. Imperò che così la syllaba $mi$ egualmente considerata in $A$ pende et nasce da questo segno $b$ segnato in $z$ 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 ragione concluso de questo segno $b$ segnato in $i$ et in $E$, il quale starrà in tali lochi segnato per ragione della syllaba $fa$ prodotta da questo segno $s$ in $A$ et in $D$ segnato, come etiam de sopra è stato ditto.19

17. Et seguendo, il nostro Pre Zannetto dice che dove li nostri musicici li domandano quale sia la ragione che da Frate Giovanni Ottobi et da Messer Bartholomeo Ramis è stato ditto che in $C$ et in $F$ naturali non se deve segnare questo segno $b$, et anchora perché in $z$ et in $E$ naturali non se segna questo $s$, alla quale petizione lui rispondendo dice che dalli preditti authori tali segni non sono stati segnati in tali lochi naturali per doi raggiunci. 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 hexachordum molle. Furthermore, to call $b$ a coniuncta is not correct, for $fa/b$ $mi$ 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 $B$ to be an accidental (see the Notes on Problematical Terms under "accidental").

19 See para. 4. The reasoning is: where you find $mi$ you can also have $fa$, and vice versa.
el quale nello intenso cadrà intra questo segno b segnato in si et C naturale resterà ridotto in minore semitono, et il simile accadrà se tal segno sarrà segnato in F, perché quello tono e quale nello intenso cade tra questo segno b posito in E et F naturali resterà ridotto in spatio de semitono. Dicono anch'essa che 'l simile accadrà de questo segno Z dato in si et in E naturali, perché se questo segno Z sarrà segnato in si, all'ora quello spatio de tono e quale nel remesso cade tra questo segno Z segnato in C et si naturali resterà ridotto in spatio de semitono, et il simile accadrà del predicato segno segnato in E naturale, per lo qual segno quello tono remesso cadente tra questo segno Z segnato in F naturale et E naturale resterà ridotto in spatio de semitono. Pertanto, come è stato provato, li nostri musici dicono che li segni predetti in tali luoghi naturali segnati sarranno rationabilmente chiamati congiunti, perché la definizione gli è competente. Et se tale sottile considerationi sono remosse dalli rudi practici, sono però in massima considerazione appresso il music et teorico speculativo, come dallo eccellentissimo music Messer Hadrianio in Santo Marco qua in Venetia, della musica maestro dignissimo, è stato demostrato in un suo concerto con grande arte et industria fatto, le parole del quale | concerto sono queste, scilicet: 'Quid non ebrietas designat', etc., como nel tenore de tal concerto appare dove in C acuto ha posto questo segno b con gran ragionie et magisterio et anch'essa teorica considerazione dal music et teorico speculativo approbata.

19. Anch'essa il predicato eccellente nostro Pre Zannetto seguando dice che essendo naturalmente fa in C et in F naturali, che in tali luochi non lice segnare questo segno b, et similemente dice che questo segno Z non lice esser posto in quelli luochi dove naturalmente cade mi, come in si et in E, perché dice che sarriano indarno positi et anch'essa destruggerian et guastariano l'ordine naturale. Al quale suo parlare li nostri musici rispondono et dicono che li segni predetti in tali luoghi naturali segnati non sarranno indarno positi. Imperò che quelli segni in queste considerationi sarranno indarno positi li quali per intensione et remissione non removeranno el sono per spatio musicum dal luogo dove sarranno positi, come accadrà se in processu cantus questa lettera A naturale et altre simili fusesse segnata dove naturalmente cada tale lettera, scilicet A. Allhora perché tale lettera, scilicet A, sarrà data dove tale A cade naturalmente, allhora tale A sarrà indarno posita, perché non produrria alcuna musicale intensione né remissione respetto al luogo segnato, et similemente accadrà delle altre lettere naturalmente considerate. Pertanto dicono perché questo segno b segnato in C et in F remove el suono dal luogo segnato per spatio de maggior semitono remisso, molto commodo per la reintegrazione del tono, et etiam perché questo segno Z dato in si et in E naturali remove etiam el sono dal loco segnato per maggiore semitono intenso, similmente molto commodo per la redintegrazione del tono et altre musices distantes, sequitarà che non sarranno in vano in tali loci segnati, come da lui impensatamente è stato ditto. Dicono anch'essa che per l'apparentia de predetti segni in tali loci segnati, l'ordine naturale non resterà destrutto, come da lui è stato concluso. Imperò che tali segni rispetto all'ordine naturale segnato sanno come sta l'occasioni nel subietto, el quale accidente se dà et toglie dal subietto senza corrupzione del subietto.22 Et questo dicono essere assai chiaramente compreso, imperò che tolto o vero remesso el segno o vero lo accidente, l'ordine naturale o vero subietto resterà integro et non destruito, et non e contra, perché tolto via l'ordine naturale o vero el subietto, lo accidente o vero el segno resterà destrutto et in vano et senza effetto et alcuna significatione posito, come per molte ragioni, autoritati, et esempi philosophic i dicono potersi chiaramente dimostrare.

20. Et ulter procedendo, questo nostro amico, scilicet Pre Zannetto, dice che l'E ben vero che l'E stato osservato dalli musicum che dove questo segno b sarrà segnato, sempre se debba dire fa, et che dove sarrà questo segno Z, sempre se debba dire mi. Ma lui dapo glie aggiunge una glessa, dicendo che questo se intende in ciascuno luogo della mano de Guido dove naturalmente non sarrà ne fa ne mi, alla quale sua glessa rispondeno li optimi nostri musicum che dato che li intervalli musicum in la sua intensione et remissione alle varie denominationes ad placentum invente dalli esercitanti de questa facultà non siano soggetti, che etiam chiaramente se potrà dire fa in C et in F segnati con questo segno b. Et dicono che tale fa, el quale sarrà inteso nascere da questo predicato segno b in C et in F segnato, sarrà differente in suono da fa, et in F naturalmente considerati, la quale cosa dicono poter stare in doi modi. El primo dicinone esser chiaro per questo esempio:

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690

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691

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\[ \text{The Letters} \]

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60. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Oct. 1533

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La prima nota in cantando sarrà ditta mi, et da poi la seconda sarrà ditta fa, et etiam alla terza sarrà dicit fa, come in canto misurato è usitato descenderde da fa a fa sequente per tono subintelletto. El secondo modo accenderà dicendo mi (ut supra) alla prima nota et seguendo dicendo fa alla seconda, et di poi, mutando tal fa in sol, se descederà regolarmente per tono remesso, dicendo fa alla terza nota, come è usitato da quelli li

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MS: falcita.

22 See the Notes on Problematical Terms s.v. 'accidentale'.

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* The MS has 'apposito' for 'ha posito'; this type of error indicates that the letter was dictated to the copyist. Cf. no. 48 n. 4.
quali cantano canto plano, el quale
in questo esempio et processo:

\[\text{\textmusica{\textit{\textbf{mi} \textbf{sol} \textbf{fa} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{do}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{re} \textbf{fa}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{sol} \textbf{la}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{mi} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{fa} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{la} \textbf{mi}}}}\]

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 \(\flat\),
et dopò etiam dire fa sopra la terza nota, come è usitato in canto misurato.
Et pel secondo modo etiam rettamente se potrà dire fa descendendo, come
è usitato in canto piano, scilicet dicendo etiam mi sopra la prima nota et
seguire con fa sopra la seconda posita in G con questo segno \(\sharp\) segnata,
et di poi mutando el predetto fa in sol se desenderà per spazio de tono,
dicendo fa in F fa ut segnato con questo segno \(\sharp\), la quale mutazione,
scilicet mutando fa in sol in tal luogo, sarà mutazione per descendere
dalla congionta de b molle segnata in G in la congionta de b molle segnata
in F sequente, per le quali demonstrazioni appare che in quelli luochi dove
naturalmente in la mano de Guido sarà fa, mediante el segno del b molle
tali lochi segnato se potrà etiam dire fa senza superfuità et senza esser
frustratorio, perché tali denominationi sarranno tra loro distanti per spazio
de maggiore semitonio, così come anchora accade tra le altre positione
naturali dove non cade né fa né mi segnati con questi segni \(\flat\), \(\sharp\). Dicono
anchora i nostri musici che se potrà esercitare la syllaba mi in ciascuno
loco della mano de Guido dove naturalmente cada mi segnato con questo
segno \(\sharp\), il qual mi dicono che non sarrà frustratorio et superfuo, perché
tra el mi naturale et el mi segnato con questo segno \(\sharp\) in tal luogo naturale
non cadrà pare convenienza né sonorità. Et tra loro cadrà distanza de
maggior semitonio, come dechiarè l'el seguente esempio:

\[\text{\textmusica{\textit{\textbf{mi} \textbf{sol} \textbf{fa} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{do}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{re} \textbf{fa}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{sol} \textbf{la}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{mi} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{fa} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{la} \textbf{mi}}}}\]

Nel precedente se potrà procedere in doi modi, dicendo mi sopra la terza
nota posita in \(\flat\) segnata con questo segno \(\flat\). El primo sarà procedendo
per le denominationi subintellette. Per il secondo modo, el quale piú se
accosta all'uso, et etiam è piú facile, sopra la prima nota se potrà dire fa et
dà poi sopra la seconda se dirà mi, el quale mi sopra la seconda nota
predetta dato, mutato in re, se potrà con piú facilità ascender 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
\(\flat\)] in ciascuno loco della mano de Guido dove sarà naturalmente tal
syllaba mi, perché tra el mi naturale in una naturale positione locato et el mi

\[\text{\textmusica{\textit{\textbf{mi} \textbf{sol} \textbf{fa} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{do}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{re} \textbf{fa}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{sol} \textbf{la}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{mi} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{fa} \textbf{sol}}} \text{\textit{\textbf{la} \textbf{mi}}}}\]

\(1^1\) MS: dechiarè.

692

60. Spataro to Aaron, 30 Oct. 1333

causato da questo segno \(\sharp\) in tal luogo segnato cade differente de
maggiori semitoni, come etiam di sopra dal predito 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 \(\sharp\) segnato in C et in
F naturali caderà piú remesso de \(\flat\) et E naturali per spatio de uno coma. Et
anchora dicono che lo ha ditto bene dicendo che questo segno \(\sharp\) segnato
in \(\flat\) et E naturali hara el suo suono piú 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 si 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 avvenuto che per mostrarsi dotto, lui ha voluto
transcendere fibulam et pertrattare assai piú che al quesito da loro fatto
era pertinenti et intricare quelle importantie le quali se competano al
musico et theoretico 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 antiqui, li quali dimostrano che in A et in
\(\flat\) et in E naturali tantum se debba segnare questo segno \(\sharp\), et che questo
\(\sharp\) solamente debba segnarse in C et in F naturali. Et dicono che da Fra
Giovane Ottobi abbiamo che etiam questo predito segno \(\sharp\) potrà stare
segnato in D et in G, et questo \(\sharp\) è stato segnato da lui etiam in G et in A
naturali et senza grande arte et commodità de isti settamento della
natura, et etiam fatto per mano dello artifice, et etiam come dal nostro
Frate Pietro Aaron in quello suo preallegato trattatello è stato demonstrato.

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 perche forsi el dubita che
assai antichi, et alli nostri musici domanda la resolutione de tali tenori, et
ancora che cerea el secondo quesito sono etiam da lui restati assai male
resoluti, et questo è avvenuto che per mostrarsi dotto, lui ha voluto
transcendere fibulam et pertrattare assai piú che al quesito da loro fatto
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natura, et etiam fatto per mano dello artifice, et etiam come dal nostro
Frate Pietro Aaron in quello suo preallegato trattatello è stato demonstrato.

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.

Tinctoris's definitions are in fact not the same; see the Commentary on no.

Practica musicae

minuunt comparatum, minoris ipsum comparatum augent', 26 dalli nostri

positioni cerea tale talea, le quali alli nostri musica sono incognite et

inaudite. Pertanto a l'loro pare che non siano soggetti a tal legge, le quali

varietà de talea forsi da loro saranno state comprese se dal nostro Pre

Zannetto fussino stati usatari li termini da bombero da bene et tra musica

usatati, sllicicet con tali tenori mandare le altre sue parti, le quali essendo

col suo tenore esamine, hariano forsi chiaramente compreso dove nel

primo tenore primamente dice ut hic: 'Prima talea', et etiam hariano

havuto intelligencia quale delle proportioni chiamata subdupla superbi-

partiens sia quella della quale se tratta in tale canone, perché tali

proportioni sono senza fine, come comparando tre ad otto et 5 a I 2 et 7 a

quarta longa saranno alterate. Pertanto in tal ordine el primo modo

havuto intelligentia quale delle proportioni chiamata subdupla superbi-

partiens sia quella della quale se tratta in tale canone, perché tali

proportioni sono senza fine, come comparando tre ad otto et 5 a I 2 et 7 a

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havuto intelligentia quale delle proportioni chiamata subdupla superbi-

partiens sia quella della quale se tratta in tale canone, perché tali

proportioni sono senza fine, as
etiam quello el quale è posito dopo la seconda, dimostrano la perfettione del modo minore cadere in tal tenore. Li nostri musici dicono che vogliono che queste predette demonstrazioni bastino per la resoluzione del tenori predetti domandati dal nostro Pre Zanetto, 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 farria stato ditto più oltra cerca queste sue grosse antiquitati, le quali li sono tanto grate, perché 'ogni simile appetisce el suo simile'.

24. Frate Pietro mio honorando et charissimo, per parte deli 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 da rustico et da homo maligno, invido, et insidioso per havere usati lassate leggerle, et etiam pigliarne copia in camera vostra con vostro

termini non liciti et non usitati cerea quelli tenori de sopra nominati, musici a sua Eccellentia fatti. Ma perche a loro pare che lui se sia portato mandate le altre parti, forsi che cerea tali tenori dalli nostri musici sarria

non cortese de quelle sue tanto celebrate antiquitati, le quali non sono risposte. Et se lui le vole vedere, sono contend che glielle mostrate et resposte le quali ha fatte el nostro Pre Zanetto [a certi quesiti dalli nostri musici a sua Excellencia fatti. Ma perché a lor 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,

Zannetto, el quale forsi se crede illustri de quelle sue tanto celebri antiquitati, le quali li sono risposte. Et se lui le vole vedere, sono contend che glielle mostrate et resposte le quali ha fatte el nostro Pre Zanetto [a certi quesiti dalli nostri musici a sua Excellencia fatti. Ma perché a lor 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, neloto. Et si chelie habbia in suo dominio, perché a lor pare che 'l sia più licito a non compiacere Pre Zanetto delle sue fatiche et vigili, che non è a lui esser stato avaro et non cortese de quelle sue tanto celebri antiquitati, le quali li sono risposte. Et de questo quanto possono pregano V.E., alla quale humilmente, et io insiemecon loro, se recommandano.

Da Bologna alli 30 ottobre 1553.

Servitor de V.E. J. Spataro

1. 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'.

2. My dear Pietro, Pre Zanetto, in his letter of 18 August [no. 57], 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 h on C and F and s on B and E? He says that h and s 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 F# and G# 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. 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 h or s, 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, h will have the same effect in C and F and s 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, where you show the origin of mi on the pitches of C and F to be D# and G#, and the origin of fa on B and E to be A# and D#. As Hothby and my teacher show, 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. 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 s 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 h can be used wherever there is no fa and s wherever there is no mi. Therefore, following the rule given by our Pietro Aaron—that mi occurs on C and F by virtue of D# and G# 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.

4. If Pre Zanetto pays close attention, he will see there are excellent reasons for signing s in B and E of the first order. B and E are fa in the
third order, originating in a $f$ on A and D of the first order. Therefore $Bf$ and $Ef$ do not stand in relation to $mi$ of the first order but to $fa$ of the third order arising from $A_5$ and $D_5$, which is the same pitch as B and E of the first or natural order. 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 $f$ 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 $Cf$ and $Fb$ lies a comma$^{10}$ 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 $Ch$ (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 $Cf$ and $Fb$ lies a comma lower than E and A, for $fa$ to $la$ would be a fourth and not a major third. $Cf$ 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: $Ch$ to $Df$ is a whole tone, $Df$ to $Fb$ 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 $Cf$ 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 invariable quantity.

8. They further say he erred in claiming that $ut$ of $Bf$ and $Ef$ 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: $Bf$ to $A_5$ is a whole tone, $A_5$ to $Gf$ another whole tone, $Gf$ 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 $Ef$ 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 $Bf$ is a major semitone higher than G and a minor semitone lower than A. $Ut$ of $Ef$ is a major semitone higher than C and a minor semitone lower than D.

10. They say that $la$ of $Ef$ is a major semitone higher than A and not a comma, as he states. And $la$ of $Bf$ 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 ill-conceived 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. 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 comma on G and a comma on A, the difference between them being a comma. A comma on G raises the note a major semitone, bringing it to a minor semitone distant from A; a comma 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 # and b 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’ and motet ‘Peccata mea’, 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, note, note, 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. And if Pre Zanetto had considered the effect of # on C and F and b 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’.

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 coniunctae.
The sign of the round coniuncta [#] will keep to A and E;
the progression of the square one [~] distinguishes F and C.

Our musicians say he tacitly contradicts himself when he claims that # 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, 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 # can be used on C.
and F, for just as mi on A derives from B⁰, so does mi on C derive from D⁰ and mi on F from G⁰. The same is true of ♭ on B and E, which occurs by virtue of the ♭ that follows from A♭ and D♭. 19

17. With regard to why Hothby and Ramis did not allow ♭ on C and F and ♭ on B and E, he gives two reasons: if a ♭ were placed on F or wherever there is naturally a ♭, it would not be a true coniuncta, and the same if ♭ is placed where mi occurs naturally. Therefore an accidental ♭ and ♭ placed in the natural positions of ♭ and ♭ 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 ♭ and where a sharp ♭, 'what the definition fits, the defined fits too'. Tinctoris defined ♭ a minor third and vice versa, and also other intervals. 21 Therefore they say that ♭ located in irregular places.

8. 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, C♭ and F♭, 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 major third of a minor third and vice versa, and also other intervals. 21 Therefore they say that C♭ and F♭ and B♭ and E♭ 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, C♭ and F♭, 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 B♭–C into a minor semitone, and the same on F, for the whole tone B♭–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 ebitias'. In the tenor he placed a C♭ 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 ♭ normally falls, nor a sharp where ♭ 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 remains complete, but not vice versa, for if 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 ♭ when they see a flat and ♭ when they find a sharp, but he adds a gloss, saying this applies only to the positions of the Guidonian hand where ♭ and ♭ 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 ♭ on C♭ and F♭. That ♭ has a different pitch from C♭ and F♭, and this can be shown in two ways. In the first:

\[ \begin{align*}
&0 \quad 0 \\
&\{ \text{♭} \}
\end{align*} \]

the first note is mi, the second ♭, and the third is also ♭, as it is the practice in mensural music to descend from ♭ to ♭ by a whole tone not expressed but understood. In the second way, the first note is mi, the second ♭, which mutates to sol and then descends a whole tone to ♭ on the third note, as is done in plainchant and called mutation to descend from B♭ to B⁰. The following example:

\[ \begin{align*}
&0 \quad 0 \quad 0 \\
&\{ \text{♭} \}
\end{align*} \]

can be sung in two ways: (1) mi, ♭, ♭, as is done in mensural music; (2) mi, ♭ mutating to sol, ♭, as in plainchant. The mutation is made from ♭ to ♭ to descend from the coniuncta C♭ to the coniuncta F♭. These examples show that a flat can be signed where the Guidonian hand has ♭ 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 ♭ and ♭ are used on positions other than ♭ and ♭. Our musicians also assert that ♭ can be sung on every natural position of ♭ signed with a sharp because the pitch will be higher by a major semitone:
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 mi because 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 C♯ and F♭ fall a comma lower than B and E and that B♯ and E♯ 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 last 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 A 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 because he can't sing them with the other parts.

23. Regarding the second tenor, our musicians say that if the first two taleae end at 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 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'.

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.

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1. This evening at dinner with the Magnificent Captain¹ were Messer Giovanni Sanese, tutor of the Magnificent Giovanni Cornaro’s sons, the

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¹ A word such as 'scriverlo' seems to be missing here.

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'.

² ‘Multi sunt vocati’; see no. 86.
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. 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, 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.

2. Al mio quanto fratello Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago, musico dignissimo, etc: A Santa Fumia in Vinegia.

185 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, perchè al presente mi trovo in migliore essere et contento che mai fusi. Prima, io ho un patrone tanto magnanimo et da bene quanto si possa immaginare, et uno che veramente fa grandissimo conto di me. Io sono da tutta questa terra honorato. Qua sono molti degni huomini in ogni faculta, et massimamente in musica. Io ho le spese alla tavola del mio patrone, medico, medicine—che Idio mi guardi—I barriere, 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 ad venire 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 lascio Monsignor, con la croce di ligiaro—sapete che non gli è stato mai mezzo poterli havere. Che volete voi che io perda piu il tempo. Se portavo la croce in petto di lisaro senza utile alcuno, al presente la porto in mano de argento 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, rolsi l’habito della religione de’ Croschieri, 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, con ventidui cantori, a honorarli. 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

62 (J62). Fo. 185v
Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 13 March 1536 (autograph)

185 Al mio quanto fratello Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago, musico dignissimo, etc: A Santa Fumia in Vinegia.

1 Sebastian 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 appareciato una bellissima colizione [= colazione], abundante di marzapani et confetti. Da poi fu cantato un mandriale a 6 voci, del qual non sapevo niente, in lauda mia. Si che, frate carissimo, io ho eletto questo partito. Se a voi et agli altri vi parra cosa non ben fatta, tal sia di voi. Io mi contento et credo essere quel Pietro Aaron così come altrimenti. Io non sarìa 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 piu tosto grato che altrimenti, dil che sempre vi amerò, et di voi [di] continuo mi ricorderò. Vi supplico quando harete tempo, scrivermi una vostra, accio intendi del vostro bene stare, la qual cosa mi sarà gratissima, et a voi sempre mi raccomando.


Vostro quanto fratello, Frate Pietro Aaron subscripsi
I8Iv come appar in
AI reverendo
valore notarum.
cantus firmus is sung sixteen times, each time in a different mensuration, indicated by rests and
abendlandtschen oder unsrer heutigen Musik
of the.
Et Tintoris in uno suo canto a tre voci fatto sopra alcuni versi, gli quali
publt~hed
modi nel canto misurato, perche
trovo che
quegli inventi dagli moderni demostrati per le pause de lunghe, perche io
loro deve esser primo in ordine numerato nella prattica. Et similmente
Eloi, et Tintoris sono tra loro differenti
inata gentillezza se degna resolvermi questo dubbio,
lo advenire si visitaremo con letere.
fratelli, et conferir insiemi l'un l'altro i secreti nostri, massimamente di
musica, et tutto
volte: mai per alcun tempo di abandonarsi insino alia morte, et esser buoni
sua con grande fausto, etc. Questa non
quegli reverendi padri vi hanno ricevuto per suo fratello nella religione
propria
Corbelli venetiano et per una vostra letera diretiva a me [no. 62] come
intervallo a congratularmi con
meglio
impedito per il passato delle comune fatiche et occupationi assai, non ho

1 Giovanni del Lago to Pietro Aaron, 27 August 1539 (autograph copy)

181' Al reverendo Frate Pietro Aaron, musico eccellente.
Salve reverende pater.
1. Il tardo realagrasssi con gli amici si suole degnamente riprendere, et
spetialmente quando per negligenta procede. Ma considerando ch'io,
impedito per il passato delle comune fatiche et occupationi assai, non ho
potuto sodisfare al mio debito, ma faro 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 honorì 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 habbe ricevuto per suo fratello nella religione
suon 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 secrets nostri, massimamente di
musica, et tutto è stato l'opposto. Hor mettiamo ogni cosa da canto; per
lo advenire si visitaremo con letere.
2. Quel che desiderò al presente intendere da V.P. è questo, che per sua
inata gentilezza se degna resolvermi questo dubbio, cioè gli modi dagli
antichi inventi dimostrati per i loro segni, quante specie 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, perche 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,
come appar in una sua rota, nella qual dimostra il valor delle notule. Et
Eloi in una sua messa composta sopra la antifona 'Dixerunt discipuli ad
beatum Martinum' tiene un'al Grant diverso di quello che ha tenuto Othobi. Et
Tintoris in uno suo canto a tre voci fatto sopra alcuni versi, gli quali
dicono così, 'Difficiles alios delectat pangere cantus', etc. similmente tiene
un'al Grant modo quanto all'ordine molto diverso a quello che hanno tenuto
gli suoi sopranominati, cioè Othobi et Eloi, come appare nelle sue glosse
fatte in dichiarazione di tal suo canto, cioè nella glosse 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 specie di modi, et in
questo solamente si concordano, ma quanto all'ordine, cioè primo,
secondo, terzo, etc. molto sono discrepanti l'un da l'altro. Ma trovo
anchora che Frate Stephanello dell'ordine de' frati Eremitani, music0
moderno, ha tenuto diverso modo et ordine quanto a tali modi oltfa gli
preditti, come appar nel suo trattato di musica intitolato Recanetum de
musica auroa, nel capitolo vii del 2° libro, nel qual dimostra esser
ventiquattro specie de modi. Similmente, V.P. ha di mostrato nel suo
trattato di musica intitolato Tascamello venitiquattro modi, et in questo
anchor voi sete discrepanti quanto al procedere de tali modi dal sopra
detto. Similmente, Messer Gioanne Maria Lanfranco nella sua opera
chiamata Sintille di musica nella seconda parte, dove lui tratta delle sedeci
specie 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 gradì, cioè modo, tempo, et prolazione, le quali spetie ad una
ad una secondo l'ordine del mio reverendo Don Lorenzo Gario cromeno, monaco di
Santa Giustina, delle sistematiche dimensioni osservatissimo et delle ragioni della
prattica grande intelligente, saranno sottoposte, etc., 181 II quale specie le dimostra
per essempi una per una, per tutte diverse (dico quanto all' ordine del
procedere, cioè prima specie, seconda specie, terza specie, etc.) dalli
pronomini. Ma tal modo et ordine di procedere dice esser del sopradetto
Don Lorenzo Gazio, et non suo. Nientidimeno lui afferma tale opinione,
perché nulla dice in contrario. Pettanto prego V.P. che quella voglia esser
contenta di scrivermi amplamente il parer suo sopra tal materia come

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1 'Copia' appears in the left margin of fo. 181'.
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 mensurabilis.
3 Eloy's five-part mass is found in Cappella Sistina MS 14, fos. 16'-62'. For a modern edn. of the first Kyrie and third Agnus Dei, see R. G. Kiesewetter, Geschichte der europäisch-avendlandtschen 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.
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 Perugi, Biblioteca Comunale Augustana, MS 1013, fos. 118'-122'. 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 theoria, ed. Seay, l. 123-128), which sets forth sixteen species.
6 Stefano Vanneo, Recanetum de musica aurea (Rome, 1533); see fos. 50'-51'.
7 In Aaron's Tassamello (1534) the modes 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.
8 Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, Sintille di musica (Brescia, 1533), p. 41.
The Letters

credò 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 di xxvii di agosto, m.d.xxxxviii.

Pre Gioianne 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, Éloy another in his 'Missa Dixierunt discipuli', and Tinctoris yet another in his 'Difficles alias', as is evident from the glosses in the soprano and tenor of the *prima pars* and the tenor of the *secunda pars*. Éloy and Tinctoris agree that there are sixteen species, but their ordering differs. Frate Stephano, in his *Recanetum de musica aurea*, lists twenty-four, as you do in your *Toscanella*, and you too differ in the ordering. 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 prolacion, 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*, 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.

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64 (J111). East Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Mus. ms. autogra. theor. P. Aron 1
Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, 7 October 1539 (autograph)

Al Messer Pre Zanetto dal Lago, amico carissimo. In Vinetia o dove si trova.

p. 1
1. Qual huomo vivente harebbe potuto dimostrarmi il tanto a me tardo 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'havette 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, e' cosa honesta et lecita rimettere lo amico et accettarlo in pristino amore. Nondimeno quasi havette parte osservato lo intento et volontà 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, 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 quasi adorato, massime da tutti quegli conti da Marteningo, et il conte Zanpaulo da Cavriolo, et suo figliuolo, Messer Fortunale da Marteningo, non hanno rispetto al habito fratesco, ma che lui me scrisse haverla data, et che per altri mi daresti risposta. Dico 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 servitò per Marteningo anchora. Dil che sua Signoria vuole che con lui in ogni modo mi tuovisi questo carnovale in Brescia a farlo con loro. Pertanto se loro non hanno rispetto al habito fratesco, manco che ne dovete haver voi. Loro considerano alle virtù, et non al habito. Se io ho mutato habito, non ho mutato le condizioni, perché più son amato in Lombardia che non ero in
Veneto. Ettappiati che a molti ho scritto, senza haver di loro una risposta. Quando più gli scrivemerò, se ne nertino il culo. Dil che certo havevo con voi deliberato non darvi risposta, né manco scrivervi, perché se voi prometeste usque a[d] mortem conservar l'amicitia come al presente havete [scritto, dovevi scrivermi et non guardare al habito. Horsù sia con Dio; recep[m] canamus. Basta queste poche parole per concludervi che se io son frate, son da tutti ben visto et amato. Meglio faresti voi aprovendervi 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 a di vilt condizione, et ala. Ma se io son frate, re, duchi, signori, cardinali, episcopi, et de ogni altra degna generazione han preso habito fratesco. Dil che concluso che preti et frati e mondani, o siano frati o no, havendo qualche virtù, sono estimati et meriti apreso Idio et dagli huomini diil mondo, ma gli ignoranti et poltroni non hanno parte in regno Dei. Horsù ad rem nostram.

3. Voi desiderate il mio parole 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 dice 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 sedici spetie, ma circa l'ordine no, et ch'io similmente hio dimostrato le sedici spetie, ma discarente dagli sopradetti circa l'ordine, et che etiam Messer Gianmaria Lanfranco ne aduce anchora 16, et che tal dimostrazione non è, 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 fiduotio che lui sia di quella medesima oppenione, alla quale risponderò nanzi la fine. Prima dìro 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. 1 Da poi pervenivi agli antichi con la inteligentia et dichiaratione appartenenti a loro, et quando loro et io havessimo voluto procedere al ordine delle spetie, era idem per diversa, et cosi a noi è parso. Ma per tornare agli modi adulti da Messer Zanmaria tolti da Don Lorenzo Gazzo, vorrei, in servitio di loro, ne fuscino digiuni, perche non mancino solo del ordine, ma incorrono et commetto[no] 3 assai errori. Vorrei intendere quale è quello autore che dice che il presente segno ut hic Θ; sia segno 4 di modo maggiore imperfetto, [modo] minore, tempo et prolatione [perfett], la qual figura dice lui essere 5 spetie, et similmente la quarta, 7°, ottava, undecima, 12, 15, et decimasesta, le quali tutte in contrario sono adute 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 Θ 1 C 3 Ω 2 et non saranno mai chiamati segni di modo maggiore imperfetto, modo minore, et, o siano l'omin minore con tempo et prolatione. Orsù transeat.

4. Per satisfarvi in parte alla domanda vostra, mi discomnodderò 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 essenziali, o vero creatione, nascono dal tempo più volte colto, dal qual tempo, se 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 costituito la minima. 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 divisio in tre parte tette, et in due parte medie, non si dirà esser due varietà di tempo, cioè maggiore et minore, et si dirà perfetto et imperfecto, 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, il quale effetto non concede Franchino, come appare al capitolo VIII del 2° libro della Pratica sua, dove che lui dice che errano coloro gli quali dicono che la semibreve del tempo imperfecto è maggiore di quella del perfetto, et dice che la semibreve del tempo perfetto et imperfecto son tutte equale, per la qual cosa lui grandemente se inganna, perché apresso tutto

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3 Del Lago claimed (no. 61, para. 2) that Aaron described 24 species. On the discrepancy, see the Commentary.

4 Aaron's ordering follows that of Tintoris; see the Commentary.

5 The words in brackets are supplied from Lanfranco's description (Scintille di musica, p. 46).

On dissimilar mensurations. Aaron here is espousing Spataro's theory of the equivalence of the breve to a semibreve in perfect and imperfect prolation. Onde per esser ditto tempo nella musica stato creato et formato dagli antichi di natura binaria, would be chiamato prima specie. Da poi, for potersi trasferire della semibreve binaria nella ternaria, ordinario il punto nella figura circulare et semicirculare. Onde per tal ordine da loro osservato per conseguente ne seguirà la vostra domanda et mio parere, cioè, che si come dagli antichi fu ordinato il primo tempo o ver prima specie di natura binaria, per non prevaricare' tal ordine, havendo ditto tempo creato il modo, dico che la prima specie di essi modi antichi sarà la presente, ut hic: C₂, la moderna ut hic: C₂, le quali specie, per terminare il parlamento, le metterò gradatim tutte, come dimostra la figura:


Spetie 16 secundum morem anticum

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

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 mesdesima opponшение habbino proceduto.

Ma torniamo allo autore da voi allegato, Maestro Stephano del ordine de' frati Heremitani, 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.' 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 mesdesimo i ventiquattro. Perché si vede chiaro che cominciando da la nona specie, insin alla decimasesta, si comprende per i precetti di tutti gli autori in questa facoltà eccellenti che 'l circolo et semicircolo con dui cifre significano modo maggiore [e] minore con tempo, cioè se la prima cifra, o ternaria o binaria, dimostra modo minor perfetto et imperfecto, 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 specie 9 insino alla decimasesta. Pur nondimeno per la variatione che fanno dette cifre per esser prima et 2*, si potranno appropriare, come ho ditto, idem per diversa, altre 8 specie antiche et moderne, le quali hanno relasciate gli sopradetti, et io similmente, per essere specie et segni dagli moderni non usiati ma in tutto abbandonate, salvo che quelle che dimostrano modo minore con tempo et prolatione. Et se pur voi havessi desiderio da me vederle secondo lo antico modo, son molto contento darvene figura:

Aaron proceeds from the assumption that a breve in tempus perfectum is equivalent in value to a semibreve in tempus imperfectum. 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.

1 On this erroneous notion, see the Commentary.

64. Aaron to D. L. G., 7 Oct. 1539

Modi secundum morem modernum

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

C₂ C₃ C₄ O₂ O₃ C₃ C₄ O₂ O₃

Antichi musicisti

718
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 sarette satisfatto, ne harò consolazione, 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 di 7 ottobris 1539.

Vostro quanto fratello Piero Aron subscripsi

Di qua per un bergamasco ho inteso come è quasi un mese che il nostro eccellente Messer Zan Spataro é morto. 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 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 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 asses 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 Hotby, Éloy, and Tinctoris agree there are sixteen but give different orders; that I too show sixteen but in a different order; 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 Hotby, 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. 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 $\Theta_3$ indicates imperfect major mode and perfect minor mode, $\text{tempus}$, and prolacion, 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 Hotby, Éloy, and Tinctoris. If that is Gazio's contribution, he found it in the bottom of a drum. Signs such as $\text{tempus}$, $\text{tempus}$, and $\text{tempus}$, etc. are never called signs of imperfect major mode, minor mode, etc., but only minor mode with $\text{tempus}$ and prolacion.

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 $\text{tempus}$ or breve, which is multiplied to obtain minor and major mode and divided to find minor and major prolacion, semibreve and minim. $\text{Tempus}$ is stable and fixed, neither major nor minor. Although it can be divided into thirds or halves, there are not two kinds of $\text{tempus}$, 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 $\text{tempus}$ is greater than one in perfect $\text{tempus}$...
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 C\(_2\), of the modern modes \(\begin{array}{c}
\hline \\
\end{array}\). 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 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 added, 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.

COMMENARY

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.

\(\begin{array}{c}
\hline \\
\end{array}\)

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 measure-
ment 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 doctissimis',
follows the latter's system in the canons 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, eh.
c. 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. 65, para. 2) that Aaron demonstrated twenty-
four 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. 1-58.

\(^{13}\) The rest is incorrectly shown in Seay's edn. in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 15th species. They
should read as follows: Ex. 26: three 3-space rests; Ex. 30: two 3-space rests; Ex. 32: two 3-
space rests; Ex. 33: two 3-space rests.

\(^{14}\) See Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 90-1.

\(^{15}\) See Hothby's De cantu rigurato, CS iii. 311, and Opera omnia de musica mensurabili, ed. Resacy,
p. 28. If the mensuration of the maxima is not shown, there are eight possible combinations
of the sign plus one figure. Only four are given in MS Faenza 117, Coussemaker's source, probably
by inadvertence. Gaffano explains this system, of which he did not approve, in ch. 8 of Book II
of his Pratica musicale (trans. Miller, pp. 88-9).
twenty-four modes, and he points this out in his reply to the present letter (see no. 61, 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 longerum. 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, O25, O52. Aaron had called these latter signs ‘spetie et segni dagli moderni non usitati ma in tutto abbandonate’. 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 premise 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 composition it is sung ‘according to its nature, that is in duple

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64. Aaron to Del Lago, 7 Oct. 1539

mensuration’,20 or, more likely, on Spataro’s letter of 19 September 1531, in which he explained to Aaron that ‘el binario è diotto 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, O₃, 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 instead of . In these mensurations the long is imperfect and should be shown by rests covering two spaces.

B.J.B.

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16 See the Notes on Problematical Terms under 'privatione'.
17 This explanation derives from Gafurio’s Pratctica musice (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 (Ch. 28, 14). 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. v:1, ed. Seay, II. 200).
19 Del Lago is an exception: see Ch. 7, ‘Giovanni del Lago’s “Authorities”’.

724
Copia. Salve reverende pater.

1. Fossi V.P. ha fatto molti diversi pensieri per il passato nella mente vostra quanto al mio tardo scrivervi. Non pensaste che sia stato altro se non perché io non ho potuto imprimer più presto queste mie piccole regole di musica, 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 conoscere i miei errori ch'io non stia così lungamente nella fetida ignorantia, perche la ragione vuole che l'huomo se emendi degli suoi errori quando, o per se medesimo, o per altrui, li si siano manifestati. Pertanto prego quella voglia esser contenta di farmi 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 ventiquattro modi, et allegate solamente questa autorid philosofica, 'frustra fit per plura', etc. 3 Ma pare a me che sete caduto nella medesima sententia, perche anchor voi havete posto ventiquattro modi nel vostro Toscanello, come appar in quelle quattro demonstrationi o ver figure i quali demostrati con queste pause ut híc:

Ma perché io voglio esser vostro buono amico et fratello carissimo usque ad mortem[, ] altro non dico sopra tal materia (benchè se potria dire cose assai) perché 'sapienti pauca'. 5 Vi prego più presto sia possibile mandatimi risposta. Non altro a V.P. mi raccomando.

In Vinegia a di xii di maggio m. d. xxx.

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. 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. 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:

![Pause symbols]

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'. Please answer as soon as possible.

PS. I sent this query to Pietro Aaron to test him.

5 See no. 15 n. 9.
66 Paris 1110, fos. 29v-35v
Pietro Aaron to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. [early July 1540] (autograph)

1. Certamente, Messer Pre Giovanni mio, che non volentieri ho preso 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 fatica circa a ciò per satisfazione vostra, et più per esser cosa convenientemente infra uno amico et altro comunicare le cose sue, massime quello che molte volte dove ne resulta l'honore con voi l'amicizia nostra vetusta, dil che mi sono confidato nella prudentia impresa ne fu causa, si rimesse, et con una sua mi saluto et volte ricerchato da Messer Zanmaria Lanfranco dovessi rivedere l'opera (autograph)

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 notoanzi lo imprimer suo. Questo fatica sue, onde se a me prima vi confidavi mandarle, imprima, et perche forse a 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 si 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 vi² amo. Se i ditti miei vi saranno grati, ne harò sommo piacer con allegrezza. Se in contrario gli ritroverete, tenetevi gli vostri, e i miei a me lasciate, perché non manco vi sarò amico, tenendo l'opera come se fusse 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'amicizia et con benvoliencia 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

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66. Aaron to Del Lago, early July 1540

voi parrà cosa alquanto strana, fate iudicio come a voi piacerà, perché el si 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 vi² amo. Se i ditti miei vi saranno grati, ne harò sommo piacer con allegrezza. Se in contrario gli ritroverete, tenetevi gli vostri, e i miei a me lasciate, perché non manco vi sarò amico, tenendo l'opera come se fusse la prima.

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Vale.

Dubbio del primo capitolo dico così.

Frate Piero Aron

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1 A reference to Del Lago's letter of 12 May 1540 (no. 65), which contains this phrase.
2 Lanfranco, Studio 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', Nota d'archivio per la storia musicale 8 (1931), 157-42 at 159.

5 MS: voi.

5 Del Lago, Breve introduzione, p. 7. Del Lago's wording is somewhat different: 'Et nota che sempre dove è la chiave li è sempre fa, salvo se el b molle non lo impedisce.'
Pertanto havete errato quando dite 'dove è la chiave sempre li è fa'. Nella posizione di G non è fa. Seguita adunque essere in contrario, dil che bisognava eccettuare tal chiave.

6. Da poi dove dite che in tal chiave gli sono due proprietati, et per consequente non si gli può far mutatione, per essere el mi distante dal fa un semitono maggiore, etc., 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 proprietati; 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 ad il fa lo spazio dello apotome, et non 'distanza 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 cognizione delle sei syllabe ordinarie.

7. Et procedendo, dite che il segno del b molle fu trovato per tre cause, 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. Qua alquanto voi siete superfluo et quasi fuora del retto ordine, conciosiachè il bastava assegnare la regola di Guido nella quale se gli include che 'l b molle fu trovato per la superfluo et quasi fuora del retto ordine, conciosiachè el bastava assegnare durezza del tritono et per la b molle fu trovato per causa della durezza del tritono et a miglior perche ogni volta che voi mitigate il tritono colla figura che dica o disse mai che 'l segno del b molle fussi trovato per poter procedere per il modo diatonico. Questo certo non genero diatonico procede per semitono, tuono, et tuono, et non e domando se b naturale et accidentale resta diatonica, come Boetio al capitolo 2 I nella sua dice: 

Et concluding dice: Est enim adinventa irregularis et indirecta mutatio ad evitandum dissonum, etc.

10. Io ho considerato, domandando voi questi sequenti segni O C 'maggior perfetto', et 'minor perfetto' questi O C, che anchor voi siete della oppenione del vulgo, perché dite che 'l si chiama maggior perfetto per il punto, et gli altri minore perché non hanno punto. Voi sapete pure che gli antichi et moderni hanno il semicirculo et circulo per segno di tempo imperfetto et perfetto, et quando gli accompagnorno una sola numeral cifra, lo domandorno 'modo con tempo', come qui: C 3 O 3. Et volendo prevalersi della semibreve perfetta, gli dimostrorno con ponto in medio, gli quali furono da loro domandati 'tempo con prolattione'. Et più dite che apresso gli antichi erano solamente questi quatro / segni / principali: O C O C. Io vi dico essere in contrario, perché tali segni furono inventi da poi questi: C 3 O 3 C 2 O 2, come testifica Franchino al capitolo viii nel al capitolo preallegato dice: In his omnibus secundum diatonum cantilenae procedit vox per semitonium, tonum, ac tonum in uno tetrachordo.

11. Ibid., p. 211.
12. Ibid., p. 8.
13. Ibid., p. 10. Aaron has misquoted Del Lago, who says that 'li segni erano maggior perfetto et imperfetto ut hic: O C et minor perfetto et imperfetto ut hic: O 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.

The Letters

libro secondo della Pratica sua: Nos autem hoc predictarum quantitatum signa ducimus reprobanda, cum aequ philosopham, etc. Et più il nostro eccellente Messer Giovanni Spataro, nel trattato suo de Sexagualiter al capitolo vi, più et più volte troverrete che gli sopradetti quattro segni furono inventi da poi inventi, da poi questi: O 3 C 3 C 2. Onde per venire alla conclusione, [il] dire maggior perfetto et minor perfetto non è rationabile modo, et se in questo è due perfettioni, cioè la breve et semibreve, in questo nè 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 imperfecto rispetto al punto, io vi domando come da voi saranno chiamati questi O 3 C 3? Si hoc è che i vostri siano da voi chiamati maggior perfetto et imperfecto, per conseguente quelli bisognaranno essere più che maggiore perfetti et imperfecti, il che ne nascerrebbe confusione. Ma perché gli antichi usavano cantare per tal segni in una misura una semibreve perfetta o ver tre minime, o suo valore, massime quando tutto il concerto era segnato per uno degli duoi segni, tale modo da loro era chiamato cantar per maggior, et per tal causa preterite al suo vero nome, qual è tempo con prolazione, et non maggior perfettone nè minore, et a gli altri modo con tempo et prolazione.

Degli segni

11. Da voi è concluso che nota alcuna si può perfiscere per virtù de' segni ut hic O C salvo che la breve et la semibreve, et la massima et longa per virtù delle pause. Dico che havete mal considerato, perché non solamente la breve si fa perfetta per virtù di questo segno O, ma anch'era per virtù di pause et cifra numerale ut hic: O 3 3, la semibreve ut hic 3. Così troverrete in contrario circa la massima et longa che non solo resta perfetta per virtù delle sequente pause 3, quanto resta perfetta in questo segno O 3, 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 circolo, pause, et cifra numerale ut hic: 3. Similmente la massima et longa per virtù delle pause si perficce, et etiam per virtù del segno et cifra numerale, come la semibreve per le pause, ut supra.

Della imperfectione

12. Voi concludete che la breve è sempre perfetta quando sarà locata nanz' et altra, o ver riduce, et questo tal punto è quello che anch'era pone appresso a ciascuna figura perfetta, il qual sari in una al punto? Che se alla nota perfetta? Et una al punto? Che se la breve perfetta vi en posta dinanzi, etc., se è perfetta, non siate voi superfluo a dire 'sempre resta perfetta'? Dovevi dire, 'Et se la breve atta alla imperfectione vien posta dinanzi a due semibreve ligate, sempre è perfetta.' Questo stava meglio, ma secondo me non v'è conce do, perché dicendo 'sempre è perfetta', ne parturisse errore. Et dico che tal breve, dato che si tuovu nanz' le due pause o semibreve legate, non sempre resta permanente perfetta, ma in arbitrario compositoris, come in molte compositione chiaro si vede. Questo dir 'sempre perfetta' importa assai, et solo se intende simile nanz' la simile, col punto, et nanz' 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 haverti 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 anch'era pone appresso a ciascuna figura perfetta, il qual sari in una al punto? Che se alla nota perfetta? Et una al punto? Che se la breve perfetta vi en posta dinanzi, etc., se è perfetta, non siate voi superfluo a dire 'sempre resta perfetta'? Dovevi dire, 'Et se la breve perfetta vi en posta dinanzi a due pause parimente poste.'

66. Aaron to Del Lago, early July 1540

circulo, pause, et cifra numerale ut hic: 3. Similmente la massima et longa per virtù delle pause si perficce, et etiam per virtù del segno et cifra numerale, come la semibreve per le pause, ut supra.
The Letters

non dire che '1 si pone a ci[a]scuna figura perfetta, come meglio vedrete al capitolo 32 al libro prima del Toscanello nostro. Et che '1 punto di 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.


\[
\begin{align*}
\text{quale è falsa. Le due breve a mio iudicio vogliono esser longhe. Da poi ne truovo un'altra, la quale non molto mi piace, et da niuno quasi usata, ut hic:} \\
\begin{align*}
\text{Dico che tal figuratione è superflua e vana, perché potendo havere le sue due terze parte in pause unite et continuata a reintegrare il modo maggiore, senza offendere la similitudine o altro precetto, non è di necessità transportare un terzo di esso modo da poi un'altra unito, non essendo constretto da qualche necessario inconveniente, come sarebbe in questo modo:} \\
\begin{align*}
\text{o vero in questo:} \\
\text{Nel sopra dimostrato esempio l'è di necessità che quella longa sola, per non si potere applicare alle tre pause sequente del modo maggiore unito, vadi a ritrovare le due parte sue terze da poi il modo, et nel secondo similmente per le due massime perfette, causate dalla similitudine, dil che alla mia oppenione tal vostro esempio et altri simili saranno inusitati, che causa mi stringe a questo esempio piú che a questo qual si vede essere con miglior ordine posto. Non ne}
\end{align*}
\end{align*}
\]

22 This statement by Aaron is not true, since Gaffurio 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 introduzione, p. 16.

66. Aaron to Del Lago, early July 1540

seguendo altro che taciturnità, l'è inconveniente a transportar pausa. Ben vi concederò questo per essere dimostrato la terza sua parte in nota et non im pausa, et questo è in arbitrio compositoris. Concludo che se tale esempio fussi stato da voi adutto in questo modo

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, havete commodato il segno circulare del suo ternario numero circa le semibreve et escluso el ternario numero delle minime, dove che un tempo resta diminuito di una terza parte, la quale reintegra el tempo, se l'ultima nota era semibreve et non breve. 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 esempio, trattando solum del punto di perfettione, et perché etiam è intelliginta laboriosa et non consueta. E dato che voi havessi tale intentione, senza metter confusione dovevi dire 'perfectionis et alterationis', si 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 all'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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{At nine minims per measure, one-third of a breve is missing. If the last note were a semibreve instead, an even three measures would result.} \\
\text{Del Lago's example:}
\end{align*}
\]

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735
comprendendo che la intention vostra vuole che altri indovini circa il punto di riduzione, 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 due punti mediata, con una sola minima anchora mediata, i quali punti son da voi ditti di riduzione.27 Messer Pre Giovanni carissimo, io non vorrei circa a questo che voi vi h vessi fatto autore, dato che altri che Franchino habbito usato tali punti, perché se bene adverteteste, Franchino in questo non si fa autore ma recitatore, come dimostra al capitolo 12 de puncto, dicendo sunt et qui notalam huiusmodi transportandum duobus utrinque punctis circumveniunt ut in tenore superposito perceptione, etc.28 per le qual parole come di sopra ho detto si dimostra recitatore, perché certamente se da lui fussi stato tal cosa creduta, non pocho haverrebbe errato, perché la nota sola infra due punti mediata non si trovoa, ma ben si trovono più figure infra due punti serrate ut hic:29

Perché se una sola figura atta alla redttione fussi collocata in mezzo di due punti, tal nota sarebbe immobile, questo perché gli due punti dimostrano stabilita, fermezza, et permanenta, di che non si può declinare né coniungere verso el principio, né al fine accio si possi con qualche altra nota accompagnarsi.

16. Non so se io mi debba credere, Messer Pre Giovanni mio, tutto quello che da voi trovero 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 el modo maggior perfetto sia generato per alcuni accidenti, come punti, alterationi, et note

27 The example is as follows:

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</table>

A second example, 'divisionis et reduttioni', shows a minim enclosed by two dots.


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:

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

277
66. Aaron to Del Lago, early July 1340

negre,30 adducendo uno esemvaro 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 concluete che dove è circulo, la breve è perfetta, et dove è semicirculo, imperfetta, et dite si 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 sola 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 direste che si come el tempo o ver breve senza la figura circulare, per note negre, punti infra le semibreve, 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 el segno dagli antichi invento, ut hic O 33, et altri simili. Onde conclude che lo esemvaro da voi addutto non sarà chiamato modo maggiore perfetto, ma maggiore imperfecto, minor perfetto con tempo, per la regola da voi data.

17. Nel ultimo esemvaro dove dite degli accidenti' appartenenti alla prolazione perfetta, non trovo numero, se le semibreve appresso le due pause di minime secondo el parer vostro restono perfette. Si hoc est, dico che havete preterito la regola qual voi afirmate circa la similitudine, perché la penultima semibreve resta imperfecta, ma numerando le ditte semibreve appresso le due pause di minime imperfecte, tutto el processo 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 suo natural modo.32

18. Sono arrivato per la gratia de Idio al capitolo delle proportioni, et ho visto come voi mettete gran confusion in voler mostrare i termini di inequalità in questo modo:

4 MS: del accidente.

30 'De li accidenti i quali si segnano fra le notule in processu cantus dinotante la perfection'; Breve introduttione, p. 18.

31 Ibid., p. 15.

32 Aaron crossed out this paragraph with the note 'Havevo preso errore'. The example is as follows:

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

prolatio perfecta
note negre sono da molti chiamate emiolea. Seguita la consequentia che nella sesqualtera proportione chade cosi perfettione alle figure come anchora per i segni, et chiaro lo manifestate quando dite adunque tali figure o ver note preseppongono perfettione. Et per meglio confirmarlo, voi dite che nella emiolea o ver sesqualtera, semper le pause restono permanente nella sua perfettione, et qua concludeste contro di voi che la perfettione anchor si trova nelle proportioni quanto si trova per i segni, dil che se non harete a memoria gli diti vostri primi termini facilmente chascrete in errore.

19. Certo io dirò un'altra volta esservi amico et fratello, et perché io so che da me sempre fosti reputato, vorrei per mia satisfactione 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 normai 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 lettere 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 benvolentia et amore quanto possa essere se ben passassi Boetio et gli altri dotti musici. Seguendo 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 ascendetes et descendentes, non resto da voi troppo satisfatto, perché alla oppenion mia quella non è la causa. Et poi dite, Onde se volessimo procedere per specie perfette ascendendo et descendendo, ne resulterebbe dissonantia.

Questo è contro a natura a credere che un processo perfetto possi rendere dissonantia, ma ben può essere che non sarà grato quanto sarà interpungendo infra esse alcune imperfette. Da poi dite che non laudate colui che procederà in ascensu da la quinta alla ottava, ma ben si concedete in descensu da l'ottava alla quinta. Io vi domando per che causa non sarà grato questo processo ut hic:

[diagram]

Voi dite che sarà questo ultimo per il moto che sarà tardo in descensendo, cosa non più udita, perché tanta tardità ne resulterà alla pronuncia 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 intenzion vostra, et per essere simile a voi, credo che dicate da la quinta a l’ottava in questo modo ut hic:

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{B} \\
\text{E} \\
\text{F} \\
\text{E} \\
\text{B} \\
\end{array} \]

il qual processo non laudate, ma si il sequente:

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{E} \\
\text{D} \\
\text{C} \\
\text{D} \\
\text{E} \\
\end{array} \]

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.43 Circa la sesta vostra regola, cioè che non volete che ‘I si possi fare mi contro fa in consonanza perfetta,’ 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 siete 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

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 B♭ and B♮ 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 si 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 ‘l quadro’, for the round and square b have different forms.

5. Where you say that the clef always indicates fa unless B♭ 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 C♯ 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. Your progression is diatonic, but I ask if going from $f$ to $b\flat$ 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,* 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.*

9. On mutations, you say that the sixth mutation is changing ut to re to ascend from $B\flat$ to $B\natural$ and I call these mutations direct and regular. Here I think you go astray, for not all the mutations from $B\flat$ to $B\natural$ can be called regular or direct because $B\natural$, 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 $b$ to hard $b$, as here:

\[ \text{\textbf{\begin{tikzpicture}[baseline=-.5ex]
\node[draw] at (-0.5cm,0) {\textbf{\textit{b}}};
\node[draw] at (0,0.5cm) {\textbf{\textit{b}}};
\node[draw] at (0.5cm,0) {\textbf{\textit{b}}};
\node[draw] at (1cm,0) {\textbf{\textit{b}}};
\end{tikzpicture}}} \]

He concludes: Irregular and indirect mutation was devised to avoid the dissonant movement.

10. When you call the signs $\ominus$ 'major perfect' and $\ominus$ 'minor perfect,' 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 $C \ominus O_3,$ 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: $\ominus \in C \in O.$ But these signs were invented after $C \ominus O_3 C \ominus O_2,$ 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.* And Spataro, in ch. 6 of his treatise on *sesquialtera,* repeatedly says that the above signs were invented after $O_3 C \ominus O_2 C \ominus.$ In conclusion, the terminology 'major perfect' and 'minor perfect' is not rational, for if $\ominus$ has two perfections, breve and semibreve, $C$ has only one, the semibreve; as far as perfection, $C$ would be similar to $O.$ And $C$ would be called minor imperfect because it has no perfect note. If you call $\ominus$ 'major perfect,' or 'imperfect' with regard to the dot, what would you call $O_3$ $C \ominus$? 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.

11. You state that no note can be made perfect by virtue of the signs $\ominus$ and $O$ except the breve and semibreve; rests show perfection of the maxima and long. But the perfection of the breve can also be shown by rests and figures: $O_3$ $\overset{\ominus}{O}$ and the semibreve by $\overset{\ominus}{O}.$ Nor are the maxima and long only perfect because of the rests $\overset{\ominus}{O}.$ The sign $O_3$ 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.

12. You say the breve is perfect when it occurs before two semibreves in ligature or two semibreve rests placed together. 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.

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. You imply that others do not call it this. You 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'. 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,* or my *Toscanello,* Book I, ch. 32, and not say that it is placed after every perfect note. 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 23 I believe the two breves should be longs. This figure:

\[ \text{Figure: } \]

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:

\[ \text{Figure: } \]

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 \( \text{Figure: } \) rather than \( \text{Figure: } \), which is better.

Since only silence follows, it is awkward to transfer the rest. I do concede your \( \text{Figure: } \) since the third part is a note, not a rest; this is up to the composer. If you had given your example as \( \text{Figure: } \) it would have been rational and just.

15. In the first example of the dot of division, 24 under \( \text{Figure: } \), 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 \( \text{Figure: } \) or \( \text{Figure: } \), 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

\[ \text{Figure: } \]

If a single note capable of being transferred (\( \text{Figure: } \)) 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, showing an example with maximas and longs under \( \text{Figure: } \). 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; \( \text{Figure: } \). Therefore how can you call the maxima perfect under \( \text{Figure: } \) 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 \( \text{Figure: } \) 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:

\[ \text{Figure: } \]

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 \( \text{Figure: } \) can generate perfection, not
The Letters

by signs, but through the sesquialtera effect, as Giovanni Spataro demonstrates in his treatise on sesquialtera. 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 hemiola by many? It follows that under sesquialtera the notes are perfect just as under the signs, and you state clearly: therefore such notes presuppose perfection. And to confirm this, you say that under hemiola 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, 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. 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. Why should not be as pleasing as.

You say because the motion is slower in descending, but this is unheard-of, 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:

which you allow, but not

66. Aaron to Del Lago, early July 1540

If so, I say neither is used by any skilled composer. On your sixth rule, prohibiting mi contra fa in perfect consonances, many do it and the rule suffers a number of exceptions. 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.
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.

* MS: mane.

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**B. Giovanni del Lago’s Correspondence with Other Musicians**

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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.

* MS: mane.
3. Ma venendo al dubbio così dico: Sono alcuni compositori nel tempo imperfetto o ver in la prolazione imperfetta, per virtù della proporzione sesqualtera et de la tripla et de la sestupla, conseguire attestano il tempo et la prolazione la sua perfettione, consideranti solamente la perfettione del numero ternario o ver senario, ma niente attenden[n]ti la imperfettione del numero binario et quaternario. Io per più ragioni con le loro opinioni non mi concordo, et primieramente dico che la loro considerazione non appartiene al musico, perché il musico la relazione ad aliqui, id est ad alcuna cosa, considera, et non il numero per se, come l'arithmetico, id est lo abbachista. Propriamente la considerazione et l'ufficio del musico è investigare et diligentemente perquirere et cercare circa l'habituidini o ver proportioni in che modo da esse proportioni risultino le symphonie, et se in questa pratica nostra per relazione come parti a parti sortiscano il suo effetto, per il che, utrum el numero per se sia perfecto o vero imperfecto, questa è cosa pertinente come ho detto allo arithmetico et sua propria considerazione et speculazione. Ma il musico, considerante solamente la relazione, vuole la medesima perfettione et imperfettione competere et quadraire ad essi segni et anchora a esse proportioni, essendo il segno quid principale et fundamento delle relazioni, per la quale cosa, come ho detto, le proportioni, di qualsichè genere et qualità siano, per se stesse né perfettione né imperfettione concernano, se non in quanto fanno li segni perfetti o imperfecti, ma solamente la diminuzione concernano o vero augmentazione per relazione alle parti.

4. Secondariamente contra la loro opinione prendo et adduco tale argomento. V[og]lion loro il numero ternario o ver senario in esse proportioni causante ne' segni imperfecti la perfettione consistere, come nella sesqualtera, tripla, et sestupla, adonque (essendo una medesima disciplina quella de li oppositi) ne' segni perfetti desiderata la dupla o vero la quadrupla dimostranro la imperfettione de le figure, perché il numero binario o ver quaternario se chiamà et è feminino, diminuito, o vero imperfecto, la qual cosa è falsa per le ragioni di sopra allegate. Et

The remainder of the letter, with the exception of the valediction to Da Legge, was printed by Del Lago in his Briefe introductions (Venice, 1540), pp. 16–9. 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 Var. lat. 5118 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 Epistles after the treatise was printed in 1540. It proves that the first part of Var. lat. 5118 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).

The main proponent of this view is Giovanni Spataro, whose major treatise, Trattato di musica... nel quale si tratta de la perfettione da la sesqualtera producta in la musica mensurata (Bologna, 1551), is dedicated to this proposition.

secondo le loro composizione non volendo essi ne' segni perfetti denotare tali habitudini imperfettioni di figure, ma la diminuzione solamente de la quantità. Adonque, etc.

5. Alcuni tengono questa nostra opinione et la approbanro 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 relazione come parti a parti) in questa pratica solamente la virtù et operation sua conseguiscono. Niente-dimeno, quasi nulla differentia concernenti tra le figure vacue et pieno de color negro, dicenti la sesqualtera concernere le figure vacue et la emiolia le piene, essendo quel medesimo la emiolia et la sesqualtera, come scrive Boeito in l'Aritmetica nel primo libro al capitolo xxiiii, e quale dice così: Emiolia id est sesqualtera. Dicono anch'essi che la emiolia sortisce sempre la imperfettione, ma la sesqualtera no. Tengono etiamdo consi-de'rarse la sesqualtera per la plenitudine de le notule, niente premeditanti et consideranti la diminuzione della proporzione, ma solamente il numero per se, attento che non si conoscendo et non si sappiando la definitio, non si sa et non si conosce el definito. Proportione è (secondo Boeito, Euclide et gli altri) habituidinie ad invicem di duoi numeri o ver di duoi termini. Et perciò dirai che tali notule de color negro descriventi esclude gliono et convengono alla proportione della sesqualtera o vero emiolia, il che quanto al nome' quel medesimo è, et che tali notule presuppongono perfettione. Et utrum questo sia vero el provo cosi ho la regola, che in tre modi la figura perfetta può conseguire la imperfettione, cioè per virtù del numero, per necessità del punto, et per causa del colore, ma l'imperfetta figura non. La ragione di questo è, perché se la è imperfettda 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, anch'essi questa medesima diminuzione di figure sortiscono. Adunque tali figure o ver notule presuppongono perfettione, per il che essendo stabili o ver immobili le pause des esse notule, perché versano et

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'.

The words 'quanto al nome' do not appear in the printed version. In Var. lat. 5118, they were inserted above the line in Del Lago's hand.

The treatise reads 'più imperfettede non si può', agreeing with the original version of Var. lat. 5118.
continuano nella quantità continua, sempre adunque consequentemente rimangono perfette. Et havemo la regola che la pausa accidentalmente come essa figura ne imperfezze ne alterare si può. La ragione è, come ho detto, perché da sè la è immobile. E ben vero che le notule et le pause per consimili diminuzione si considerano nelle proporzioni secondo la loro naturale et propria potentia quanta alla quantità, ma quanto agli accidenti non così, ma altrimenti, perché altrimenti si debbono considerare le diminuzioni delle proporzioni, alle quali le notule et le pause soggiacciono, che le imperfezioni delle notule o vero le alterationi di esse, perché le notule patiscono li accidenti. La ragione [è] la quantità (secondo dice Boezio nostro nel proemio de l’Arithmetica) da sè è di immutabile sustanza, ma aggiunsa al corpo si permuta, come si dimostra nelle figure musicali. Adonque le figure conseguiisono gli accidenti quanto alla imperfezione et alteratione.

6. Ma potrebbe dire alcuno: ‘Io ho, secondo el philosopho, “frusta 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 conseguise essa emiolia, adonque inane et vana è la dispositione de la emiolia o vero la plenitudine de le notule equivalente alla habitudine della sesqualtera. 11 Respondo che non senza causa li musici hanno instituita et ordinata questa plenitudine de li notule equi polarity alla sesqualtera (anzi diversi effetti conseguissene), et primo che sempre (come ho provato) presuppone perfettione. Secondo, acciò che le parole disposte alli moduli alternamente secondo li loro affetti corrispondano, perché come appresso gli oratori tre generi, cioè tre sorti et qualitati di dire se considerano, cioè domostrativa, deliberativa, et giudiciale, et questo per la esigentia di diversi negotii et di diverso facende, cosi, et operazioni, cosi appresso li

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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 Tosaneto, the first of which concerned how major and minor mode are created from the multiplication of tempus and how major and minor prolongation result from its division, 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 prolongation, consider that sesqualtera, tripla, and sextupla proportions cause a change to perfect tempus and prolongation, considering the perfection of the number 3 or 6 but overlooking the imperfection of 2 and 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...
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, hemiola to black notes; yet as Boethius says in his Arithmetic, Book I, ch. 24, hemiola is the same as sesquialtera. Moreover, they say that hemiola 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. Therefore I should say that blackened notes are equivalent to sesquialtera or hemiola 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. The imperfect note cannot be further imperfected. But if every perfect note loses one-third of its value through blackening, which they call hemiola, 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. According to Boethius, quantity by itself is an immutable substance, but when added to a body it changes, 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’, and argue that therefore, since sesquialtera and hemiola have the same effect, hemiola 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, 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. 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 hemiola, 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 3 is different from 2 Del Lago’s second argument from the opposite (para. 4) constitutes no proof, for proportions such as 3 and 4 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 hemiola. 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 hemiola 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 hemiola 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 hemiola because the blackened notes are ‘in a duple ratio and not in
hemiolia, since they have not a ternary division. 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.


69 (J20 and J26). Fo. 105r
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 24 January 1520
(Scribe B, but autograph signature)

Allo excelente Messer Gioanne da Legge, dignissimo sonator de organo, Pre Gioanne del Lago, salute.

Excellente Messer Gioane,
1. Ho inteso per una vostra lettera 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 cosi di ciascun’altra nota o ver figura perfetta. Io vi dico così che la similitudine (apud peritos) consiste et se intende respectu formæ 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♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭ﬄ

Pertanto la breve avanti alla breve a questo modo posta potrà farsi imperfetta a parte anteriori, ut hic: O♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭ﬄ

1 See the Commentary.
2 The passage in lower half-brackets has been taken from Spataro’s letter to Aaron of 8 Apr. 1543 (no. 6, para. 1); 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. 21), this quotation does not come from Prosdocimo but from Ugolino of Orvieto’s Declaratio musicae disciplinae, Book III, ch. 111-6 (ed. Sessa, ii. 104-6), which is likewise a commentary on Johannes de Muris’s Libellus cantus mensurabilis.
qua si maxima sit nigra et altera maxima sit et similis in qualitate eadem coloris qualitas sibi requiritur, scilicet, quod si nigra et non rubra vel ad alium colorum transmutata sit. Si vero sit rubra et alba, ut eius similitudinem gerat rubra et alba debet esse relqua, et sic de aliis colorum qualitatis. Tunc enim similis sunt et ea(n) dem participanti qualitatem colorum. Secus autem est et dissimiles si altera uno altero altero sit informata colore, ut si una sit nigra, altera sit rubra, vel e contra, etc. Eadem etiam corporis magnitudinis quantitas ad notarum similitudinem etiam necessaria, ut si una sit maxima, altera sit maxima et non due vel tres longa pro maxima, vel quaesit 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 dicuntur. Item si una sit plena, altera sit plena. Si una sit vacua, altera sit vacua, et sic quantitatis erit eadem similitudine. Secus est si alio modo se habeant, quia plurum continet de quantitate plenum quam vacuum, et ideo nota vacua et plena dissimilè sunt.

1. Circa prolationis mensuris attenditur figurarum seu notarum similitudo, super qua parte est notandum quod ut note se figure ad imicem (similes) indicentur, necessarium est eas eundem esse mensure, ut si una notae se figura, scilicet, maxima sit mensure modi maioris perfecti, altera ut si eum similis eundem mensure debet esse et modi. Si una, scilicet, longa sit modi minoris perfecti, altera ut e si et similis eundem debet esse modi et mensure. Si brevis sit mensure temporis perfecti, altera sit eundem temporis et mensure. Si semibrevis sit mensure maioris prolationis, altera sit eundem prolationis et mensure. Alius inter notae se figura vera similitudo non est, ut si una unius sit mensure vel modi vel temporis vel prolationis, altera non eundem sed alterius, tunc inter eas vera (ut dictum) similitudo non est.

2. Attendatur igitur hactemodi similitudo circa duo, primo in figuris et notis, z in prolationis mensuris. Circa primum est colorata qualitatis et corporis magnitudinis eadem quantitas. Circa secundum est prolationis eadem mensura (ut superius dictum est). His igitur modis similis ante similis non potest imperfici, ut maxima nigra plena mensure modi perfecti. Similiter longa nigra plena mensure modi perfecti ante brevem nigram plenam eundem mensure non potest quo ad totum imperfici, ut hic: ☐ ☐. 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 di xxiiij genaruo. m.d.xx.

Pre Gioanne del Lago
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: • •. 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: • •. A full black breve in perfect tempus before a full black breve in the same tempus cannot be imperfected as to the whole: • •. 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: • •. 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. 130v–131r, the other in the hand of Scribe B, but with Del Lago's corrections and autograph signature, on fo. 105v. The main difference between the two is that the lengthy quotation from the commentary on Johannes de Muris's Libelli canxi mensurabilis 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 'lettera' in the first line, and changing 'dicere' to 'dite', 'inniti' to 'avanti', and 'in le sue' to 'nelle loro'.

The Italian translation of the passage from the first version of the letter on fos. 130v–131r reads as follows:

Sopra la qual parte è da notare che questa similitudine si attende circa doi cose, la prima cioè circa le note e 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 l'identità, cioè, la similitudine della qualità colorata, e 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, se l'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. E così è nelle altre qualitati de colori. Allora certamente sono simili quando participano la medesima qualità de colori. Il contrario è e dissimili saranno, se l'una d'un colore, l'altra d'un altro sarà informata, come sarà si una fusse negra et l'altra fusse roscia, o vero al contrario, etc. La [fo. 131r] medesima quantità della grandezza del corpo è anch'ora necessaria alla similitudine delle note, cioè se l'una è massima, l'altra anch'ora 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 anch'ora sia lunga et non due o ver tre brevi per una lunga. Et così delle altre, come hanno detto alcuni. Similmente, se l'una è piena, l'altra sia piena, si l'una è vacua, l'altra anch'ora sia vacua, et così della quantità anch'ora sarà la medesima similitudine. Altramente sarà, se per altro modo le saranno, perché più della quantità contiene il pieno che il vacuo. Ett però la nota vacua e la nota piena sono dissimili.

Circa le misure de la 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'un medesima misura, cioè se 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 anch'ora 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.
The Letters

Similmente se l’è breve di misura di tempo perfetto, l’altra convien che sia [fo. 131'] anch’essa del medesimo tempo et misura. Si la sarà semibreve di misura di maggiore prolazione, così l’altra dè essere della medesima prolazione 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 prolazione, et l’altra non sia così, ma altramente. Allhora tra esse (secondo habbiaim 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 prolazione. Circa la prima sì deve attendere la idemptitá della qualità colorata et la medesima quantitá della corporea grandezza, circa la seconda la medesima misura della prolazione, come di sopra è stato detto. Per questi modi adunque et per queste ragioni similis est ante similem. Ma si la massima ultima, o ver la ultima lunga, o ver la semibreve ultima breve, o vero l’ultima semibreve non sia della medesima colorata qualitate, si possono adotum imperfici, et cosi la massima negra piena della misura del modo perfetto maggiore anti la massima negra piena della medesima prolazione, do la semibreve negra piena della misura della maggiore o vero della perfetta prolazione nanti la semibreve negra piena della medesima prolazione non si può adotum imperfici, ut hic |

La breve negra piena della misura del tempo perfetto nanti la breve negra piena [fo. 132'] del medesimo tempo non se può adotum imperfici, ut hic |

La semibreve negra piena della misura della maggiore o vero della perfetta prolazione nanti la semibreve negra piena della medesima prolazione non si può adotum imperfici, ut hic |

Similmente, se più fusino 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 prolazione et misura con la precedente, allhora, perché non sono simili, la precedente si può adotum imperfici.

B.J.B.

70 (J21). Fo. 106r
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 16 February 1120 (autograph copy)

106v Al eccellente Messer Gioanne da Legge, dignissimo sonator d’organo.

Excellente Messer Gioanone,

1. Ho inteso quanto scrivete nella vostra lettera della Musica de Bartholomeo Ramis hispano,1 la quale per una mia pregai che vi piacessi di trovarla et mandarmila. Ma dire 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 spazio di poco tempo, si che non era ordine di trovarne pur una alle librarie, et che vi duole infino nel cuore di non havermii potuto servire, etc.

2. Messer Gioanne carissimo, quanto a questo, ringrazi V.S. quella reputa di havermi servito; per questo non vi toglieffe affatto alcuno. Vedro per altra via di trovarne una, ma vi prego quando sarete in Fiorenza, vedrete di haver una Throrica2 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 lettera domandate, s’èl 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 del tempo, ma é solamente segno dimostrativo, o di perfettione, o di divisione, o ver di augmentazione. 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 fò imperfetto dalla semibreve immediate seguenti. Et Barbingant, nel tenore d’una sue 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 Theo
cus discip

3 Del Lago found the references to the works by Domarto and Barbingant in Tinctoris’s Liber imperfectorum notarum musice (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 114), 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 unnumbered mass by Domarto in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS San Pietro B. 8o, fos. 141'-154', to which Egidius Cervelli contributed the Kyrie. Modern eds. 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 considerazione che ha risse se fusse in forma di breve, ma sta in tali loci come segno di agumentazione, 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 '1 punto non si può fare imperfetto nè quoad totum, nè quoad partes, quia non est partis prolomionis, ma è solamente segno (come ho detto di sopra). Quia punctus est partis cuius non est, ut dicitur primo Euclides. Sequitur punctum non posse imperfici. Tener consequentia, quia omnis imperfectio est abstrahitio partis illius quod imperfectitur. Pertanto ei non si può farlo imperfetto nee alterare, ma ei se può 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 '1 punto non si può fare imperfetto nee quoad totum, nee quoad partes, quia non est partis prolomionis, ma è solamente segno (come ho detto di sopra). Quia punctus est partis cuius non est, ut dicitur primo Euclides. Sequitur punctum non posse imperfici. Tener consequentia, quia omnis imperfectio est abstrahitio partis illius quod imperfectitur.

4. Quant' a questo, altro non scrivo a V.S. Se altro posso, quella mi comandi senza alcun rispetto.

In Vinegia, a di 16 febraro. M. D.xx.

Pre Gioanne del Lago

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1. You write that despite diligent search, Bartolomeo Ramis's Mucca 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, 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; they both

\[\text{(Corpus mensurabilis musicae \textit{7}; [Rome], American Institute of Musicology, 1934-7), il. 13-14, and The Mellon Chansonnier, ed. Perkins and Garre, l. 97. In the Mellon Chansonnier, the only source apart from Tinctoris to name Barbingant as the author, the dotted long has been replaced by a long and a breve. This reading, found in several other manuscripts, corrects the error.}\]

\[\text{4 This is the first sentence of Euclid's \textit{Elements}, which Del Lago may have taken from Erhard Ratdolt's edn. (Venice, 1482) of the 13th-c. Latin translation by Joannes Campanus of Novara, fo. 37r: 'Punctus est partis cuius non est' (\textit{Opus elementorum Euclidis magoniss in geometram artem}).}\]

\[\text{5 The source of this marginal addition has not yet been traced.}\]

764
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 29 February 1520 (autograph copy)

107° Al eccellente Messer Gioanne da Legge, dignissimo sonator d'organo.

1. Non 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.

2. Messer Gioanne honorando, V.S. mi domanda in quanti luochi si segnano le congiunte nel canto figurato et dove hanno i suoi principii. Brevemente 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: δ, σ. 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 δ da loro sono stato detto b rotondo. Et a questo σ sono stato detto b quadro giacente. Pertanto quando il b rotondo sarà segnato in uno deli 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 grave et minore in acuto.

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 congiunta si segna con il b rotondo in B mi grave et ha il suo principio in F ut depressa, come qui in questo esempio:

La seconda congiunta si segna con il b quadro giacente in C fa ut et ha il suo principio in A re, come qui:

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 , come dimostra questo esempio:

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 esempio 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

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 1535.

2 ‘B quadro giacente’ is the terminology of John Hothby; he used it to signify ‘sharp’ and wrote it as # to distinguish it from ‘b quadro recto’, written %. See no. 12, para. 1. Del Lago changed the sign from % to # 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 11 Aug. 1535 (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. 157-8.
The Letters

come moderni, ne' loro concerti per sua commodità, come Dufai in una sua canzone 'Le serviteur' fatta del primo tuono irregolare, et 'Venus tu m'a pris' de Orto, et 'Porquoi non', Petrus de la Rue, et la messa sine nomine, Jo. Mouton', et 'O beata infancia', de Loyset Pieton, et molti altri canti, motetti, et messe, li essempi 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 di ultimo febraro. 1520.

Pre Gioanne del Lago

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1. I was delighted to hear from you and to find you well. 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, and . The first lowers the sound by a major semitone. The second raises the sound by a major semitone. The 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 Γ:

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, de Orto's 'Venus tu m'a pris', Pierre de La Rue's

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71. Del Lago to Da Legge, 29 Feb. 1520

The second coniuncta is on C with flat and begins on A:

The third coniuncta occurs on e with and begins on B[♭]:

The fourth coniuncta is on f with flat and begins on d:

The fifth coniuncta occurs on a with and begins on d[♭]:

The sixth coniuncta is on e with and begins on a:

The seventh coniuncta is found on e[♭] with and begins on b[♭]:

The eighth coniuncta is signed with on f[♭] and begins on d[♭]:

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 adlocutio A, ed. Hewitt and Pope, pp. 401-2.

6 Modern edn. ibid., pp. 212-4.

7 Printed by Petrucci without title, the mass is based on Compère's 'Dictes moy toutes vos pensees'. Spatharo discussed the key signature in his letter to Aaron of 30 Oct. 1535 (see no. 60, para. 14, and n. 14 for the modern edn.).

8 Modern edn. in Treize Livres de motets para chez Pierre Attaingnant, ed. Smijers, iii. 1-35. The works of Loyset Péton, whose dates are unknown, first begin to appear in prints and manuscripts in the 1530s. The earliest source for 'O beata infancia' is Attaingnant's print of 1534. This is another reason to believe that the present letter was written after 1535.
"Porquo non", Mouton’s ‘Missa sine nomine’, Loyset Piéron’s ‘O beata infantia’, 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.

COMMENTS

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. 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.' Or rather, a coniuncta is the mental transposition of any property or hexachord from its own location to another location above or below. 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 Bflat, changing the Guidonian B mi into a Bflat. Goscalcus, however, begins his list with Ab, a tone lower. Writers who limit the number to eight or nine generally give Gb as the last. Del Lago stops one short, with F#. 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. Like Del Lago, he presents them as hexachords, but unlike Del Lago, he credits their invention to ‘venerable Boethius’, a notion that is not the number to eight or nine generally give.

In describing the attribute, realized in actual singing, whereby one may make a semitone of a property or hexachord from its own location to another location above or below, it is frequently illustrated by a passage from Gregorian chant. As discussed by theorists, however, a coniuncta itself is not a whole hexachord, and it is frequently illustrated by a passage from Gregorian chant. 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. Like Del Lago, he presents them as hexachords, but unlike Del Lago, he credits their invention to ‘venerable Boethius’, a notion that is not the number to eight or nine generally give. In this last, Del Lago stops one short, with F#. 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. 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. 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.

B.J.B.

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 Thetoria, 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, and also the resolution you made for the late Zampiero. If you
The Letters

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 (f. 110). Fos. 60r–68r
Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni da Legge, 13 May 1523 (Scribe A)

60r A Messer Gioanno da Legge.

61r 1. Havendo io diligentemente esaminato l'epistola de V.S. a me da lei mandata, non posso trovar causa la quale mi contraddica a non sastare 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 dubbi 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 Fa mi non si fa mutatione, anchora che da molti sia stato detto', etc. Che però in Fa 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 maggiore, 2 il quale semituono maggiore sopra el minore di una comma, et essa comma è la nona parte del tuono. Precise la nona parte non può essere, perché tanto ottu 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

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 introduzione di musica misurata (Venice, 1540). The preceding passage appears as follows in the treatise (p. 7): 'Anchora che in Fa mi gli siano due proprietati, et per consequenter due voci, non si può però far mutatione, perché quelle due voci non si può proferrire 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 ili 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, eh. 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 Du iustitio et harmonia dius 1116, Italy 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'.

* The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto messer Giovanni da Legge salute.'
* MS: siamo.
il tuono è indivisibile in parti equali, come nella resolutione del secundo dubbio si dirà. Et il tuono nella proportione sesquiottrava consiste. Et perché mutatione altro non è che variatione del nome della nota, la quale rappresenta la voce, in uno altro nome de nota che sia in un medesimo luogo et suono, intrando di una nell'altra proprieta o vero qualitati,1, pertanto non essendo equali in suono et luogo, non si può fare mutatione secondo la predicta definitione. Però da questa disparitati et differentia del suoni nessuna in essi convenir può concordia di mutatione. Oltre questo, fa, proprieta di b molle, et mi, proprieta de b duro, si contrariar et discordar all'incontro l'una et l'altra di mollezia, cioè dolceza, et di dureza, o vero asperita. Altrimenti si con-
veriano et concorderiano insieme, sed 'dubl contraria non posse movere in eodem subiecto'.5 Adonque secondo composite, come si vede in parciati compositioni di alcuni imperiti contrario moto et similmente di sesta minore in octava, cosi delle sue contrapunto, delle consonantie quando le sono da loro poste inconsideratamente ne' nota nel nome d'un'altra fatta in una medesima riga over spatia in diverso suono, l7 come appare qui in questi esempi:

4. Dove debe sapere V.S. che quello semitono maggiore si causa per virtu del b rotundo o ver molle, el quale b molle è accidentale, perché puo esser posto et non posto.10 Et tal b per tre cause fu trovato. La prima è per torre la durezza et l'asperita al tritono (e questo quando ne' canti si trova in composito o ver immediato per la difficoltà che è in pronuntiarlo, perché tale intervallo offende el senso del audita; ma ben si può pronuntiarlo composito o ver mediatamente, perché non offende così la sua asperita et dureza l'audito per li suoi medi che sono tra li suoi estremi, il quale tritono non è altro che cagionevole de tre ascendentii o descendentii tuoni come è da F grave a b acuto et contra et in altri loro simili), et per poter procedere nel genere diatonico (cioè naturale) di diattessar11, come appare in lo hexacordo de b molle dove dispone la quarta corda fa, la quale divide et parzirsi la distanza del tuono tra mezze et paramese, cioè tra A la mira et el b mi di ḫa ḫa mi, il quale si divide in due semitoni ineguali, cioè per semitono minore in grave et maggiore in acuto, et questo accade quando il b rotundo o ver molle è segnato nella chorda paramese, cioè nel mi di ḫa ḫa mi.6

5. La seconda ragione è per cagione di miglior sonoritii, la quale è la variatione del nome d'un'altra fatta in una medesima riga o ver in diverso suono,12 come appare qui in questi esempi:

Perché convien farsi la permutatione, 'la quale è la variatione del nome d'un'altra nota nel nome d'un'altra fatta in una medesima riga o ver spatio in diverso suono,13 come appare qui in questi esempi:

\[
\begin{array}{cc}
\text{Cantus} & \text{Tenor} \\
\text{Cantus} & \text{Tenor}
\end{array}
\]

Cf. Del Lago, Breve Introduzione, p. 7: 'Perché mutatione altro non è che mutare il nome de la voce, o ver de la nota, in un'altro nome de nota che sia in un medesimo luogo et suono, intrando de una in l'altra proprieta, o ver qualitati.'

6 See no. 44 n. 1.

7 This passage has been translated from Ugolino di Orvietto, Declaratio musicae disciplinarum, Book 1, ch. 16 (ed. Sedita, i. 38).

8 Cf. Marchetto of Padua, Facetiae 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.

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64a mutatio, sed si fit tunc ipsa permutatio | conventit et qualitatem et quantitatem.8 De qualitati dico, cioè dalla proprietate de b molle in la proprietate de b duro, mutando fa in mi per cagioni de lo ascendir, o vero al contrario per cagioni del descendir; de quantitati (dico), cioè passando per fa a mi di piu grave in piu acuto suono per spatio di semitono maggiore, o vero per contrario descendiendo da mi in fa da acuto in piu grave, el qual transito perché certamente è difficile et molto dissono, li musicci amoniscon et comandano con ogni industria et diligienza debbitteri' sciatire et fuggere. Questo transito da Marchetto padovano et da molti altri musicci è chiamato permutatione. È stata certamente trovata la irregolare et indiretta mutatione ad evitare et fuggere el dissono et inetto transito di questa tale permutatione, la quale permutatione è reciproca variatione di qualitati et quantitati insieme.9

4. Liste dots indicated some of the complications and challenges in performing such transpositions, particularly in the context of the different temperaments used at the time. This passage discusses the relationship between the different temperaments and the resulting sonorities, emphasizing the need for musicians to be aware of the properties of each note and how they interact to create a harmonious sound. The author notes that certain transpositions, such as those involving the b-flat and b-natural, were considered problematic, requiring careful consideration and practice to avoid dissonance.

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73. Del Lago to Da Legge, 13 May 1523

64a diatonico, sed si fit tunc ipsa permutatio | conventit et qualitatem et quantitatem.8 De qualitati dico, cioè dalla proprietate de b molle in la proprietate de b duro, mutando fa in mi per cagioni de lo ascendir, o vero al contrario per cagioni del descendir; de quantitati (dico), cioè passando per fa a mi di piu grave in piu acuto suono per spatio di semitono maggiore, o vero per contrario descendiendo da mi in fa da acuto in piu grave, el qual transito perché certamente è difficile et molto dissono, li musicci amoniscon et comandano con ogni industria et diligienza debbitteri' sciatire et fuggere. Questo transito da Marchetto padovano et da molti altri musicci è chiamato permutatione. È stata certamente trovata la irregolare et indiretta mutatione ad evitare et fuggere el dissono et inetto transito di questa tale permutatione, la quale permutatione è reciproca variatione di qualitati et quantitati insieme.9

4. Liste dots indicated some of the complications and challenges in performing such transpositions, particularly in the context of the different temperaments used at the time. This passage discusses the relationship between the different temperaments and the resulting sonorities, emphasizing the need for musicians to be aware of the properties of each note and how they interact to create a harmonious sound. The author notes that certain transpositions, such as those involving the b-flat and b-natural, were considered problematic, requiring careful consideration and practice to avoid dissonance.
quando del spatio del tuono accadendo si fa semitonio et di semitonio
nuo, | et questo per conciperlo il 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 fita musica, vel potius et
convenienius dicendo colorata, per la qual colorata musica facilmente si
possono redintegrare et perficere le specie delle consonantia esercitati ne'canti misurati, cioè le quinte et le ottave imperfette, quando le occorrecno.
E così per esser accidentale, questo b rotundo o ver molle non deve essere
connumerato con le lettere naturali usitate nella musica, perché non può
corrersponde per diapason o vero otta, 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 $2$ la mi acuto; con le sopra acute, cioè dal b fa de $2$ la mi
acuto allo mi de $2$ la mi sopra acuto l'e' superfluo. Concludendo adunque
dico non esser in computo né con le gravi, né con le sopra acute, ma esser
accidentale.13 Et haec sufficient quantum ad primum dubium.

13 Cfr. ibid., "Terro per necessità, o ver colorata musica, et così per esser accidentale, e non dà
esser connumerato nelle sette lettere musicali. La ragione è perché el non può corrispondere per
diapason, o vero otta, né con le gravi, né con le acute. Con le gravi il diapason è diminuto,
con le sopra acuto l'e' superfluo. Dove conclouo non esser in computo, ma esser accidentale." Del
Lago probably derived this statement from one of the versions of the anonymous *Compendium
musicum* or *Tractatus musices* first published in Venice by Giovanni Batta Bessa in 1499 and
reprinted many times throughout the 16th c. under different titles; on these edns. see *Anonymous,
Compendium musicum, Venetius, 1499–1597*, ed. David Crawford (Corpus scriptorum de musica 33;
American Institute of Musicology–Hänssler-Verlag, Neuhauen-Stuttgart, 1985). This brief
compendium of the elements of music includes the following explanation of B: 'Preretta
scindendi, 'que B rotundum in dispositione litterarum non Seht proprio linea
occupare nec locum naturalet habere, quia non è de computo septe litterarum musicalium;
si enim esset aliquia de septem, per duplaram consonantium aliqui gravi omnem superacuturam
respondere. Gravibus quippe per duplarem respondere non potest consonantium, quia
minus esset semitonum. superacutis vero per diapason nequeaquam consonatum, quia
semitonum superacutis nonesse aeternum sine loquela. [sic] per se in actu cantabile, como
esse acciden vel accidental, quod enim essent accidentale, et quod non essent 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 canonicis scientiis', published by Albert Seay in 'An Anonymous Treatise
from St. Martial', *Annales musicologiques* 5 (1957), 7–44, 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 Mariâ: A New Source for
Cistercian Music Theory', *Musica disciplina* 33 (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 B 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 musicæ*
scribed to Johannes de Garlandia. The passage was probably also taken from the *Tractatus
musices*, since it too has the misreading 'sive menon' for 'sinimenon' (deriving from an incorrect translit-
eration of the Greek, μν resembles a Latin n). The treatise has been edited by Albert Seay in
*Anonymous (13th Century). Quaestionis et solutiones* (Colorado College Music Press Critical Texts 2;
Colorado Springs, 1977); see p. 3 for the passage in question.

73. Del Lago to Da Legge, 13 May 1523

7. Quanto al secondo dubbio, dico che 'il tuono secondo il musico, il
quale considera ogni proporzione in numeri, non si può divide in due
parti equi, et questo perché in quantità discreta niuna proporzione non si
può divide in due parti equali, se non quella li cui termini hanno
proporzione come di numero quadrato a numero quadrato.14 Ma la
proporzione del tuono, la quale è sesquiottava, cioè che l maggior 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 se la proporzione sesquiottava, come per le ragioni aritmetiche si
dimostra. Il tuono adunque non è divisibile in due parti equali in termini
aritmetici, 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,
sottrahendo il ditono dal diatessoro, perché dupplicandolo non può
compire integralmente un tuono. Perché era vicino alla metà di esso
tuono, fu chiamato da' musici semitonio, et non perché fusesse precisamente
la metà del tuono. Et poi più oltre procedendo, perché l'intervallo
che rimane sottrahendo questo semitonio dal tuono era maggiore del
primo, però per distinguere fra loro, il primo fu chiamato da' musici
semitonio minore et il secondo 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 consonantia. Più oltre poi, sottrahendo
dal semitonio maggiore il minore, nasce la comma, la quale multipla
to volte non può compire il tuono, et nove volte multiplicato lo eccie,
et duplicato si accosta al diesis, che è quasi una quarta parte del tuono, le
quali cose per la computatione de' numeri apparrono, la quale non
consigliò V.S. che debba tentare, perché a voler disponer questi intervalli
in numeri interi, è necessario di venir a una tanta multiplicatione di
numeri che appenna si possino comprendere.

8. Quanto al 3° [dubbio], dove V.S. seguendo dice: 'Se una anti-
phona, o vero uno offeritorio, o vero postcommunione sarà terminato et
finito in D sol re et ascenderà precise al diapente, né di sopra, né di sotto
hara il diatessoro, 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 whole-
number 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 si fatto dubbio, etc. Messer Giovanne mio honoreando, voi sapete bene che quantonque il diapente et il
diattessaron siano spetie communie tanto alli autenticii quanto che alli
placali, nulladimeno la diapente è più atta alli autenticii et la diattessaron alli
placali. Et perciò li autenticii più presto in diapente che in diattessaron
persistonno, et al contrario li placali. La ragione è perché la acuità alli
autenticii è asignata, et la gravità alli placali è ordinata et attribuita. La
simphonia diapente dalla proporzione sesqualtera proviene et resulta. Ma
la diattessaron dalla sesquitteria emana et derivex, que quidem sesqualtera
alla [ unità } è più propinqua che la sesquitteria, et così 'la virtù unità è più
forte della dispersa', et però la acuità si ha vendicata et attribuita, et la
diattessaron la gravità, perché maggiormente (come ho detto) si discosta
più dalla unità, etc. Concludo adunque per la ragione addotta 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
autenticii o ver tuoni persistono in diapente come specie ad essi determina-
eta, et similmente li modi placali in diattessaron come spetie allora
conveniente et assignata, perché il diapente et il diattessaron sono parti et
membri del diapason, dal quale si compongono i modi o ver tuoni, così
autenticii come placali. Et quanto à questo secondo il mio poco sapere ho
risposto per far cosa grata a V.S.
9. Quanto al ultimo vostro dubbio, dove V.S. così dice: 'Et perché
trovo da parchei musicì et compositori, così antichi come moderni, nelle
sue compositioni, come sono messe, motetti, et canzoni, questo segno
integro ut hic: 2, et similmente così tagliato: 2z, esser stato usato da
loro per segno de modo minore perfetto et tempo imperfecto, ma d'alcuni
moderni, come Verbonet nella sua messa de 'Graciuse gent', ma il contrario,
cioè per segno de modo minore imperfecto et tempo perfetto, cantato
solamente in dupla proporzione, come appare ne' tenori della preditta
messa, si che no non pocho resto confuso, vedendo tra questi dotti composi-
tori esser contrarietà in segnare et poner questo tal segno in duoi modi
diversi, cioè da alcuni per segno di modo minore perfetto et tempo
perfetto et da altri segno di modo minore imperfecto et tempo imperfetto,
dil che prego V.R. che quella si degni scrivermi la resoluzione 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 rispondo et dico. È
vero che molti compostori antichi, come è Domarto et Busnois, et etiam
come sono parchei moderni, tutti vogliono che questo segno 2z e
similmente questo 2 è sino del modo minore perfetto per il circolo et del
tempo imperfecto per virtù di questa cifra binaria ut hic: 2, il che è falso,
66'

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practicarsi et osservarsi l'opposto et il contrario ne' canti di molti egregi 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' degli affetti et passioni che sono nell'anima,
oa' 'quoniam anima | naturaliter delectatur in musicis melodiiis', 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
intendere senza risguardo alcuno, perché mi sarà sempre GRATISSIMO POTERE
sempre compiacere ad ogni vostro desiderio secondo si estendono le mie
piccole et debile forze.

In Venetia a di xiii maggio. m.d.xxiii.

[Giovanni del Lago]

1. Having 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 "fa", 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,4 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.5 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.1 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

\[ \text{\textsuperscript{5} MS: \textit{segni}.} \] \[ \text{\textsuperscript{6} MS: \textit{fatemelo}.} \]

The second fa has to be changed to mi because of the consonances. In plainchant
mutation cannot be made in "fa" mi because of the different proprieties and
syllables, but if it is done, this permutation will be needed in quality and quantity.3
Quality concerns mutating fa to mi, 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.5

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.16 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
diatomic genus by a fourth,11 as in the hexachord with Bf; 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:10 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,
\( \text{\textsuperscript{e.g.} } B \) to \( \text{\textsuperscript{e.g.} } b \); with the upper, it is augmented, \( \text{\textsuperscript{e.g.} } b \) to \( b' \). Thus I
conclude it is accidental.13

73. Del Lago to Da Legge, 15 May 1323

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.' Therefore fa
and mi, contrary in softness and hardness, cannot stand in one place for a variation
of the same sound to be made in the notes.6

The second fa has to be changed to mi because of the consonances. In plainchant
mutation cannot be made in "fa" mi because of the different proprieties and
syllables, but if it is done, this permutation will be needed in quality and quantity.3
Quality concerns mutating fa to mi, 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.5
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. But a tone is 2:2, 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 into 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 post-communion that ends on 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., 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.

9. Your last question concerns the use of ω and φ 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 Gratiae gent’, 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 ω and φ 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.

11. The rest never undergoes alteration because it is fixed; 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. 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. Nevertheless, many outstanding modern musicians do the opposite. But it is difficult to syncopate a note over a larger rest. 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’.

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. 16r, 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 thirteenth-century Summa musicæ. Tintoret, 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. This theory was developed by Tinctoris, Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum, ch. 55 (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, i. 91–3).
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.

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26 *Lucidarium*, ed. Herlinger, p. 434. See Powers, 'Mode', p. 393. Powers has pointed out that Gafurio misunderstood Marchetto's 'common fourth' (Practica musice, trans. Miller, p. 15); 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'.

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68 A Messer Giovanne da Legge.6

1. Da Messer Giovan Maria de Lio bo ricevuto una vostra data a di 6 di febraro, la quale mi è stata grattissima, 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 malvolentia perché non gli è accaduto donde causar si potesse | rissa et sedegno 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 si 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 m 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, si che io non mi curo che da lui siano laudati li mei componimenti, non intendendo lui queste si fatte sottili et scientifice considerationi, perché le appertengono a buoni theorici et non a simplici practici come è lui, perché è differentia tra el theorico et il pratico, '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 propriè et vere appellandus est bonus cantor qui cantat artificiè et non usualiter tantum. Unde versi:

Bestia non cantor qui non canit arte, sed usualiter. 
Non vox cantorem facit artis sed documentum.4

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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. Az; the ultimate source is Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* b. 6 (1223'11). For his help with this and nn. 6 and 10 we are greatly indebted to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens.
3 These lines, sometimes attributed to Johannes Hollandrinus, were often quoted in the Middle Ages; see Lambertus, *Tractatus de musica* (CS i. 112); Anon., *Quaestiones principales* (CS iv. 201); Anon. XI, *Tractatus de musica plana et mensurabilis* (CS iii. 416); and Henricus de Zelandia, *Tractatus de canone 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. 'Musici — canori', in *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie*. The introductory sentence is not cited by Reimer.
Questo medesimo afferma Giovan de Muris nel suo trattato di contra-
punto nella prima conclusione, el quale così dice: Contrapunctum non est
aliius nisi punctum contra punctum ponere, vel notam contra notam facere se ponere,
et est fundamentum discantus. Et quia sicut quis non potest edificare nisi prius faciat
fundamentum, sic aliquis non potest bene discantare nisi prius adissicat et sciat
contrapunctum. Prova anchora questo e conferma Misser Baldo in l. jam
hoc jure ff ad Trebbellia. Parlando de' notari imperiti, li assimiglia e fa
allo sì simili canitori ignoranti, le parole del quale sono queste: Tabulaciones
69' aliius concipiant substitutions dicto modo e non intelligunt quid ipsi dicent, ad
instar illorum canorum, qui bene cantant per naturam et nesciunt assignare
rationem sui cantus.6 7E't simili queste tali imperiti canitori Guido
monacho gli assimiglia ad uno animale irrationale, come appare nella sua
Musica per questi versi:

Musicae et cantorum magna est differentia.
Ili scintia, ipsi dicunt quid componit musica.
Et qui dicit quod non sapit reputatur bestia.7

5 Ares contra punctis iussandum Johannis de Muris (GS 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 notam sit '), found in many sources; see Ch. 7.

6 The 14th-c. jurisprudence Baldo degli Ubaldi, commonly known as Baldus, likened notaries who
inserted in testamentary substitutions the phrase 'vulgariter papillariet et per fideicommissum'
without understanding what it meant to the singer 'qui bene cantat, non tamen per rationem', a
being an anonymous later addition ('Cum notum sit '), found in many sources; see Ch.

7 Per i predetti ragioni e auctoritati adonque molto pocho mi curo se Frate Alessandro lauda o biasma li mei scritti, per non haver intelligen-
tia9:9 della theoria. Ma in lui si verifica quel detto volgare: 'Quod scit,

Dice anchora così: Cantores vulgares qui sim toni et semitoni discerne
nesciunt in vanum laboraverunt, tantum temporibus in cantando perdentes quantum in
secularius divinique scriptoris proficiat poterint.8 Et Boetius dice: Ia è de
illis qui sine arte canunt, sicut de litteratis qui non sequuntur litteras dicunt.1

2. Per le predette ragioni e auctoritati adonque molto pocho mi curo se Frate Alessandro lauda o biasma li mei scritti, per non haver intelligen-
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DEL OGO And Da Legge, 16 June 1523

74. Del Lago to Da Legge, 16 June 1523

Di questa lettera, che è la conclusione del tempo perfetto, vengono
lasciati altresì li segni sopradetti, se e quando se li comprende et conosce quando le note
"In questo caso, le note perfette e perfettamente uguali si omettono, mentre le note

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The Letters

sono nella ternaria o ver binaria divisione, ma anch'ora per certi effetti, li quali sono prodotti da essi segni, come per le note, le quali per essere divise, alterate o ver duplicate, redutte, tene senza segno per la divisione di esse note, si può giudicare. 1

3. Quanto al quesito, o ver motivo, che fa V.S. nella vostra lettera dove dite, ‘Cur secunda semibrevis potius quam prima alterationem consequatur?’ quanto a questo io vi assegno due ragioni perché si debba alterare la seconda semibreve e non la prima. Dico, che alterazione non è altro che il duplicare ciascuna nota o ver figura del suo proprio valore. Et si causa sempre nelle parti proprie 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 proporzion dupla, come dimostra Boëthio nella sua Arithmetica nell’ultimo capitolo del primo libro, il qual dimostra che ogni inegalità si causa et procede della equalità. 10 L’altra ragione è perché la prima semibreve, come ho detto, custodisce la natura della unità et la seconda ha 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’. Si 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 satisatta, me ne rincresce assai. Se anch’ora 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 quale mi offero et raccomando pur assai. 4

In Venetia, a di 16 giugno m. d. xxiii. 2

[Giovanni del Lago]

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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 disapprove’. 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 note.
It is not the voice that makes a singer but the evidence of art.

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. Those merely perform; those know what music is.
And he who sings what he does not understand is considered an animal.

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. 7 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. 8: He confirms that trite saying, ‘Everyone honours what he knows and scorn what he doesn’t.’ 9 He really speaks out of envy, for all poor singers are jealous; their praise is disparaging and their disparagement praise. 10 He really means that these 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
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."  

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* 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.  

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. 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. 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. 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.
2. I promised this friend the mass ‘Dixerunt discipuli’ 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’ 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.
primum siamo pervenuti a qualunque specie perfetta, noi al fin siamo al quale tende essa musica. Dove se volessem procedere per quel fine si ascendendo | come descendendo, per quella identità resulteria dissonantia, perché l'harmonia resulta per la dissimilitudine et variatione delle specie, si 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, precipe con specie imperfette, acciò habilitemente possiamo pervenire alla specie perfetta. Ma ascendere con specie perfette non laudo, cioè quando andiamo con la parte del 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 si. La ragione è acciò pervengano alla cadentia o ver conclusione. Certamente descendingo i moti si tardano, per la qual tardità facilmente si discerne la diversità delle specie, la qual non si comprende così ne' suoni acuti per la celerità delli moti,1 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 maggiore perfetta. Né anch'ora approvo ascendere con tutte a due le parti, come è da una imperfetta maggiore ad una perfetta minore con disgiuntione di tutte a due le parti, cioè andando dalla decima alla ottava, ma si bene al contrario, cioè andando dalla ottava alla decima.2 La ragione di questo i moderni compositori non comprendono, quantunque l'habbiano avanti. Ma chi gli domandasse questo si fatto ascenso et descenso, se il soprano ascendasse 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 risponderiano di no. Ma ben si può andare dal unisono ascendendo tutte a due le parti alla terza, si che se ben considerassino dal uno unisono alla ottava li effetti li quali se causano, si nello unisono come in la terza, in la quinta, nella sesta, et nella ottava, la quale è simile allo unisono, avranno similmente la cognizione degli effetti delle compositio. Si che si debbe attendere alla gravità la quale si ha vendicata più tardità di moti che l'acuità, et similmente alla acuità la quale si ha assunto et constituitse 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 specie.3

1 The notion that lower intervals are more perceptible than higher ones derives from Pseudo-Aristotle, Problems, book 19, and Boethius, De musica 1. 1. Del Lago may have become acquainted with this idea through Book III, ch. 6 of the Practica musicae of Gaffurio, 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. 152); see Blackburn, 'A Lost Guide', pp. 72–1. Aaron was also critical of this notion as applied to counterpoint; see no. 66, para. 20.

2 Zarlino does not approve of either progression, nor of the one given in the example below; see The Art of Counterpoint, trans. Palese and Marco, p. 76.
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.

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77 (J 30). Fo. 137v
Paulo de Laurino to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. [25 March 1525]¹
(autograph)

⁴ Venerabilis et mi honorande, salve.

1. So stato do volte ogie per cactar [≈ cattare] V.R. et non ho possuto
cactarlo. Li faco intendere come porto in mezzo il core scolpita V.R., et me ha tanto inflamato che mai tal
nome mi userà [≈ uscirà] dal core. Dio il sa quanto mi doglio non ve
haveri 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 venera adpresso di me circa quindici di.
Pregola anchora se degne resolverme de cognoscer ogni canto figurato
de che 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

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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. 2), but 1525 is the correct year because Laurino refers to the present letter in his next one,
dated 5 June 1525 (see no. 79).
Pre Giovani de Lago al venerabile religioso Fra Paulo de Laurino del ordine dell' frati heremitanì de Santo Augustino, salute.

1. Reverendo padre, li dubbi li quali V.P. mi ha richiesti volentieri et sotto brevità li mando.

2. Dico che gli è da considerare circa le cinque figure essenziale nel canto misurato, le quali sono queste, scilicet , , , , , delle quali la breve è capo et principio, si come è la unità nella arithmetica. Dalla predetta breve tolta o vero aggregata due o vero tre volte nasce il modo minore. Et similmente [da] essa breve o vero tempo tolta quattro o sei o vero nove volte nasce il modo maggiore. Per questo è detto el modo essere aggregazione di tempi. Ma dividendo el predetto tempo o vero breve in due o vero in tre eguali parti, nasce la prolatione minore. Et dividendo anch'esso tempo o vero principio in quattro o vero in sei o vero in nove eguali parti, nasce la prolatione maggiore. Pertanto alla semibreve si assegna la prolatione minore et alla minima la maggiore.

3. Circa la cognitione di tutti li tuoni di canto figurato non dico altro, salvo che V.P. aspettàrà un trattato nel quale si tratta di tal materia. Subito che sarà stampatò, che tra pochi giorni si stamparà qui in Venetia, el mandarò a V.P., dal quale senza altra mia fatica, che assai grande

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1. I shall gladly reply to your questions.

2. Of the five essential note-shapes of mensural music, , , , 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. 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. As soon as it is out I shall send you a copy. It will explain the matter very well and save me considerable trouble.
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 in continuo e discretamente, cioè nel tempo per se, et nel tempo più volte tolto, et nel tempo in parti diviso, per la qual cosa è necessario si 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 essenziali, le quali sono queste, cioè...

Dalla predetta breve adunque tolta o vera aggregata due o tre volte nasce il modo minore, cioè la lunga. Et similmente [da] essa breve o vero tempo tolto quattro o sei o vero nove volte nasce il modo maggiore, cioè la massima. Per quanto è detto il modo esser aggregazione di tempi. Ma la predetta breve o ver tempo può esser diviso in due modi, cioè per binario et per ternario, et similmente la parte media et la parte terza del predetto tempo potranno essere divise in due et in tre eguali 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 seconda divisione di esso tempo, cioè dividendo la sua parte media et la sua parte terza in due o in tre eguali parti, nasce la prolatione maggiore, cioè la semibreve. Pertanto alla semibreve si assegna la prolatione minore et alla minima la prolatione maggiore. Et questa denominazione di prolatione maggiore et minore non è intesa rispetto habito alla virtù et essenza 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 in tre semibrevi, o vero in quatro o in sei o vero in nove minime. Adunque prolatione non è altro che tempo in parti minute diviso, etc.

3. Quanto alla cognizione di tutti li tuoni di canto figurato non dico...

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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, \( \square \). 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. 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 minimi. 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. As soon as it is out I shall send you a copy. It will explain the matter very well and save me considerable trouble.
79 (J31). Fo. 138r–s
Paulo de Laurino to Giovanni del Lago, 5 June 1525 (autograph)

138r In man del venerabile Pre Zoan dal Laco veneciano musico dignissimo intitulado ad Sancta Sophia, suo mazor et honorando fratello. Veneciis, in Sancta Sophia.

138v Venerabilis et mi honorande, salve.

1. Per la presente li dono haviso come Dio gracia sto bene de saniti; desideruso molto intendere il semele di V.R. Dio sa con quanto dispiacere mi partecti da Venecia senza posservve vedere. Fui circha quatro 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 resolucione, et per benché molte volte quelli foro da nai razonati, ma quando non se ha con chi le conferire, fuzeno [= fuggiono].

2. Scrivo anchora la presente per farli cognoscere che di poi che congnoscetli S.R., li so restato scavo. Et perché credo che de li musici et canturi de Italia havenne 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 piu 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 cossi anchora see 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 mandarmene una, che lo valore de quella li serà mandato fi[n] in Venecia et anchora piu che valera. Se motecto o matrighale alcuno havissi vo da posserme servire, prego quella gracioso­mente se degne servirmene, che tanto piu li restero 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 benefactor, et Sua Paterniti di recapito ad tucte mei lettere. Non altro se

non che lo mio corpo sta ne la insola de Candia, ma la anima adpresso de V.R.

Retimi [Rethymno], 5º juni 1525.

Quillo che notte et di sempre ve adora,
Fra Paulo de Laurino del ordine de Santo Augustino de la Provincia de Neapoli

1. 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.

1 Aaron, Trattato della natura et cognizione 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.
Giovanni del Lago to Paulo de Laurino, 15 July 1525 (Scribe A)

71' Al reverendo Fra Paulo de Laurino.⁶

1. A giorni passati ho ricevuta una vostra molto a me grata, per la quale ho inteso come siete restato molto soddisfatto quanto alla resoluzione de' numeri che voi mi dite, et sappiate che quanto alia breve et alia semibreve, e ma non sia se ne concenti della proposizione del tutto, anchora che ho male el comodo. Se fusse altri che li segni sono la radice. Et se ben molti ignari questo non intendono bene. Ne' segni per medium convenientissimo cadeno nelle semibrevi, et consequenter nelle minime. La ragione è perché il maggiore include el minore, et magis dignum inludit minus dignum, et non e converso.

3. Anchora advertiscia V.P. che in tutti li segni dove la semibreve assume et riceve integra misura, come usano li moderni compositori in questi segni et altri simili, la sesqualtera non può caschare se non a minime. La ragione è manifesta se sé, se ben molti imperiti et pocoh esperiti questo non intende 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 proporzione, o dupla o sesqualtera, et così ciascun'altra, habbono assunta la sua determinata misura (et cosi per virtù de diverse proporzioni, o per moltiplicazione de' numeri, perché la saria una medesima proporzione), non possono quelle tali proporzioni mutare misura, se non per interposizione di qualche altro diverso segnno, perché, come principale, anch'ora lui assume et riceve la sua determinata misura, et allhora tal segnno sta per se, cioè senza alcunarelatione. Onde se in principio di ciascuna particola di ciascun canto sarà posto questo segnno ut hic C, et in processu cantando si troverà questo ut hic C, o vero altri diversi segni, le proporzioni messe di poi al secondo torranno la misura di questo, havendo però rispetto alla prima misura, perché come radice et principio, è immutabile. Similmenteè da sapere che se in principio di un concerto sarà segnato questo segnno ut hic C, et di poi in processo del canto si troverà questo C segnato immediatamente alla proporzione sesqualtera a questo modo segnata ut hic C, et altri simili, dico che la detta proporzione torrà similmente la sua determinata et conveniente misura da le notule magis dignum includit minus dignum, et non e converso.

⁶ Ms.: il.

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.

3 The Latin is ungrammatical; we follow Del Lago's translation in no. 81, para. 5.

4 The source of this quotation has not been traced. Cf. the Regulae inrnes appended to the Liber Secundae Decretalium, book 5, tit. 12, rule 42: 'accessorium naturam sequi congruit principalis' (Corpus iuris canonici, ed. E. Friedberg (Leipzig, 1889), ii. 1113). (Our thanks go to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for tracking down this reference.)
nate de quel segno el quale è posto dinanzi a' numeri relativi o vero comparati (et questa tal proporzione si nomina et dice proporzione immaginata) et non dalle notule o ver dal segno segnato et posto nel principio del concetto, 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 rispetto alla prima misura come radice, ut supra dictum est.

5. Ma ho trovato che Gioanne Spataro, in uno suo duo posto per esempio nel suo trattato delle proportione\(^6\) al capitolo 23, 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 barà dopo se li numeri comparati non sarà etiam integro, et e contra, imperò che le comparationi de' numeri dopo tali segni così posti \(Q^{2}\), \(Q^{1}\) comandano senza havere rispetto alla integrità o ver diminuzione del segno ante se posto, che tre figure poste dopo questo segno \(Q^{2}\) siano pronuntiante per due di questo \(C\) precedente, et che tre di questo \(Q^{2}\) siano guidate per una de' questo \(Q\), per il che dico che in tale ordine di proporzione, el diminuto sarà strutturatorio, imperò che nulla frutta, et simile similmente ho trovato dal predito Giovan Spataro in una sua messa chiamata 'della pera', nella particola 'Et in terra pax' nel contrabasso, haver segnato ut hic \(C^{2}\) et nella particola 'Patrem omnipotentem' della predetta messa nel contrabasso è così segnato \(Q^{2}\). Et seguendo in essa particola, ha etiam segnato ut hic \(C^{2}\), et similmente nella particola della predetta messa detta 'Crucifixus' nel contrabasso ut hic \(C^{2}\), et in molte altre su compositioni, el quale [ha] segnato li detti segni dinanzi alle proportione per segni solamente dimostrando la perfettione di tempo et della prolazione perfetta, cioè referendo le dette proportione alle notule sotto el segno diminuto posto in principio di tali particole ut hic \(C\), et non al segno segnato o ver \(Q\) alle notule imagine di tale segno el quale è appresso a li numeri comparati, cioè alle proportione, 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 perfettione della breve, dico che allhora la proporzione, la quale sarà segnata immediatamente appresso al secundo segno, potrà 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. Alhora 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, si che non importeria se più da uno che da l'altro segno essa proporzione assumesse et ricevesse la sua misura determinata, perché allhora si presupone esserli notule cantabili tra el segno et la proporzione.

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 concetti, perché essi vogliono che la breve e la semibreve siano perfette, et così le sue pause, per virtù della proporzione sesquialtera, quando è segnata sotto questi segni ut hic \(C\), \(C\), et altri simili. Et tale opinione tiene el preditto Messer Giovanni di Spatari bolognese,\(^7\) sed Johannes Tinctoris et etiam Franchinus Gafurio laudensis son contrasti 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 satisfacto 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 altrò posso per lei, comandi, perché tanto non farò quanto non potrò.

In Venetia, a di 15 luglio M.D.XXV.

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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 \(C\) and a semibreve and its rest under \(O\) and \(C\) that occur after a sesquialtera proportion signed \(3\) \(2\) \(4\) or \(6\) 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

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\(^{1}\) Del Lago is quoting from a treatise that Spataro did not send him until May 1529 (see no. 25). We are thus given further proof that the present letter, dated 1525, was actually written long afterwards.

\(^{2}\) 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, fol. 22-23.

\(^{3}\) Spataro's position is spelt out at length in his Tractato di musica.

\(^{4}\) In his Proportionale, Book II, ch. 1 (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, ii. 36, CS iv. 175), Tinctoris criticizes Domarto for writing sesquialtera under \(C\) as if the semibreves were in perfect prolongation, and Cousin, under the same sign, for writing sesquialtera in tempus perfectum. For Gafurio, see Practica musicæ, Book IV, ch. 3 (trans. Miller, pp. 182-3).

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it is the nature of an accessory to follow its principal: Sext. Concerning the rules of
law, because the signs are the root. Although many ignorant people think that the breve under \( \Phi \) and the semibreve under \( C \) and \( \Phi \) 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 \( \Phi \) 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 \( \Phi \) 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 \( C \) or \( \Phi \) and changes to \( \Phi^2 \), 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 \( C^2 \) or \( \Phi^2 \), whether or not the sign is cut, demand that three notes after \( \Phi^2 \) be performed in place of two under \( C \), and three notes under \( \Phi^2 \) 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. I also find that Spataro, in the bass of the Gloria of his 'Missa della pera', uses \( C^3 \) and in the Credo \( \Phi^3 \) and \( \Phi^2 \), and in the Crucifixus \( \Phi^3 \), 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 \( C \) at the beginning and not to the sign or the imaginary notes preceding the proportions,
81 (J 14). Fos. 76°–79°
Giovanni del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 6 January 1532 (Scribe A)

1. Havendo io ben considerato, el mio venerando padre, li dubbi 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 0 o ver in questo C quando si pone in principio di una particella di ciascun canto, come è nel tenore, contra a questo 0 o ver a questo C posto in principio delle altre particelle, et altri simili, nella minima. Respondendo dico è vero che la semibreve di questo segno 0 o ver di questo C secundo la opinione di alcuni compositori così antichi come moderni fa l’ufficio di tre semibrevi di questo 0 o ver di questo C quanto alla misura, ma non quanto al numero, et così similimente in tutti gli altri segni et figure la equiparazione et similitudine assumere et pigliare si deve, 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,‘1) anzi che la minima di questo 0 o ver di questo C non è differente dalla minima similimente di questo 0 o ver di questo C, ma la differentia nasce per la perfezione della semibreve, et questo esser vero dimostra:

2. Il segno, cioè el circolo o vero el semicircolo, 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 imperfecto, cioè se la breve è perfetta o vero imperfecta. Ma il punto è accessorio perché da se stesso è di nessuno momento se non viene accessorie, et però come lo aggiungo et applico, 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 dei altri. Nel segno per la sua virtù la semibreve si fa perfetta, et così ha sortito el suo effetto. Non certamente dimostra equiparitarse, id est et ugualmente dividersi, la sola semibreve della maggiore prolatione alle tre semibrevi della minore, perché se tante et tali operazioni dimostrassino, la forza sua sarebbe | maggiore che del suo principale, il che è absurdo et inconveniente. ‘Natura enim accessorii est, ut sequatur suum principale‘ (ut dictum 0 ° C 0 2). The heading originally read: ‘Pre Giovanni de Lago al venerabile religioso Fra Nazaro del ordine de Santa Maria dell'Iervi. Salute.’

1) V.P. 3° e 4° in one voice against O o C 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.

3) From Boethius: see no. 74 n. 16.

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 potestia 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 1519; see no. 24.
The Letters

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). Anch'ora è da notare che subito che alcuna proportione, o dupla o sesqualtera, et così delle altre, piglierà dependentia d'alcan segno, ha sortita et acquistata la sua misura determinata et dependente da tal segno, sì che per la virtù di diverse proportioni, o anch'ora per la moltiplicazione del numero, perché ella è (come ho ditto) una medesima proportione, non può mutare più la misura eccetto che per la interposizione 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, percutta nientemeno et havuta la prima misura, perché ella è come radice immutabile. Certamente, etc.

In Venetia a di 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 O or C when it occurs at the beginning in one voice against O or C in the other voices, I reply that it is true that some old and recent composers believe that the semibreve under O or C corresponds to three semibreves under O or 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 O or C is the same as the

812

813

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 proportion to three in minor proportion; 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 signed3 4 or 5 after C 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 equality4 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 C) because of sesquialtera, this is false, for proportions in music are dependent on signs at a root; therefore they should follow their principal.5 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 5 or C 6, but not C 7 because that dot has no effect, etc.6 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 minimis. 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

7. 3 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: it is 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. 27. 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 immutible 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. 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. 79r–80v
Giovanni del Lago to Fra Nazaro, 6 August 1533 (Scribe A)

79' Al venerabile Fra Nazaro.6

Venerando Padre.

1. Ho inteso quanto alla richiesta 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 de l'uno et l'altro estremo.1 Adunque partecipando de l'uno et l'altro estremo, non aveva bisogno di segno alcuno, perché la proprietà naturale ne' congetti 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'altra 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 hexa[chord]o et principio del 2º, 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 semitono,2 e questo è affermato da Marchetto paduano nel capitolo 42º, 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 sempem diatessaron habet, nec unquam potest alter naturaliter referiri. Naturalis enim ob hoc dicitur, eo quod naturaliter vox humana in omni quarta voce sit inter quatuor voce semper proferre semitonium delectatur, etc.3 Si che acquistando per questa tale iteratione da G sempre el principio, come da luogo naturale et principale giusta l'ordine et dispo[s]ition nostrna, 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

6 The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto venerabile Fra Nazaro. Salute.'

1 Cf. Del Lago, Breve introduzione di musica misurata (Venice, 1540), p. 9: 'Natura è deduzione naturale, la quale in la mutatione serve il b molle, et il b quadro, perché l'e 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 (665b10–11).

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 C, the third on F. Aaron criticizes him for inverting the order of the tetrachords in no. 66, para. 8.

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.
da' quattro suoni costituenti tre tuoni. Anzi adduce durezza grandissima e ingiunca e insuevve, perché da sè rovina e destrue la diatonica dimensione, et a toglier via al tritono quella durezza, et acciò che in ciascun luogo di essa disposizione per dimensione diatonica—cioè per diatessaron, duei suoni, et un semitono manco concernente—procedere potessino, fu trovato il segno b molle. Et meritamente b molle si dimanda perché induce il semitono et toglie via la durezza e 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 dictatur co quod naturaliter vox humana in omni quarta voce sive inter quattuor voces semper proferre semitionium delectatur. 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 semitono minore, el qual tritono se dà composito et incompatito, o ver mediato et inmediato, ma el tritono immediato o ver incompatito da sè per la sua durezza è incantabile, cioè cantar non si può, que adove natura inimica est, et non solum aureis offendat, verum etiam a tenore in eam, vel ab ea in tenorem abique medio ascendere vel descendere voces humane quaddammodo sii impossibile. Ma el tritono mediato o ver composito alcuna volta è cantabile, perché è tolerato dal senso de l'audito per i suoni medi che sono fra li estremi. Et sapiate che propriamente el b quadro si domanda duro, perché adduce la durezza del tritono; et facendose el tritono da quattro suoni, et perciò il musici quadrato hanno esso costituito et formato, 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 rispetto.

In Veneta, a di 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. 5.

5 Del Lago is quoting from Tinctoris's Liber de arte contrapuncti, Book II, ch. 5, on the tritone (CS iv. 121, Opera theoretica, ed. Seyf, ii. 95).

6 Cf. Spataro's refutation of Del Lago's claim that a mediated tritone is not a true tritone in no. 18, para. 3.

7 The explanation derives from Marchetto: 'Hec enim figura tritoni, sive coniuncto, quattuor sonos durissimn amplectitur, et ob hoc b quadratum b durum meritum nominari, et quia quattuor sonos comprehendit in sui duritia, ideo a doctoribus ordinatum est ipsum quadre debere figuratur' (Luciderum, ed. Herlinger, pp. 300–2).
Al venerabile Fra Nazaro.

Reverende pater.

1. Ho recevuto una vostra, insieme con la messa di Don Franchino Gafurio composta sopra il tenore del canto chiamato 'l'home arme', della quale ho tanto desiderato haverne copia. Hora per gratia sua io l'hgetto, dit che rengrentio V.P., etc.

2. Ma dove V.P. dice nella sua lettera: 'Voria sapere da V.R. se la lunga posta sotto il 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 havuta, dil che rengratio pasta sotto il 2 tempo perfetto quando li seguita o ver precede uno semibreve o ver el valor di essa, si deve intendere essa lunga imperfetta, o imperfetta posta sotto il tempo perfetto'.

The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Pre Giovanni de Lago al predetto venerabile Fra Nazaro. Salute.'

\*\* The mass has not survived. Gafurio mentions it, together with two other masses, 'illustres princeps' and 'Le souveni', in his Apologia ... aduersus Ioannem Spatarium, fo. A8', adding that he sent them to three of the illustrious singers of Leo X ('quas celebratissimis canoris Leo X') (cf. 'L'homme arme', where \*\* indicates perfect tempus and prolation and \*\* propotion dupla, 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 Ramis' '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' (in the version incorporated in Ugolino's Declaratio musicae disciplinae, Book III, ch. 111-13) (ed. Seay, ii. 154): 'Item notandum quod quiquid imperfectur, imperfectur a tercia parte.'
4. Quanto alle pause che dimostrano il modo maggiore et il minore perfetto, et così quelle che dinotano il modo maggiore perfetto et il minore imperfetto, sapi V.P. che alcuna volta queste pause si pongono essenziali et indici, et alcuna volta indici solamente. Qui è da considerare che se nel principio di ciascuna particola di ciascun canto tali pause se preporranno al circolo o ver al semicircolo, i quali sono segni di tempo perfetto et imperfetto, allhora non saranno essenziali, cioè non si misureranno né connumeraranno con le altre notule, ma solamente dimostreranno tutta quella particola a principio infino alla fine esser di modo secondo che dimostreranno tali pause, ma se a si fatto segno temporale si posporranno tali pause, allhora dimostreranno il modo, et etiam dichiararanno tanti tempi doversi pausare quanti spazi 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 intender senza alcun rispetto, perché mi sforzerò ad ogni vostro desiderio sempre compiacere. 

In Venetia, a di xv setembrio, M.D.xxxiii. [Giovanni del Lago]
84 (J 17). Fos. 83'-84'  
Giovanni del Lago to Lorenzo Gazio, 26 August 1534 (Scribe A)

83' Al venerabile religioso Don Lorenzo Gazo cremonese, monacho di Santo Benedetto, musico eccellente.  

1. Ho ricevuto dal mio carissimo fratello, Don Valeriano vostro nipote, il canto di Don Franchino Gafurio el quale mi havete mandato, del che ringrazio infinite volte V.P. Ma io trovo nel sopranino della prima parte del ditto canto esserti 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 si 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 correggerlo, lo ha contaminato et guasto, come appare nelle soprano sia stato qualche huomo arrogante et presuntuoso, el quale persuadendosi potere correggerlo, lo ha contaminato et guasto, 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 correggerlo, lo ha contaminato et guasto, come appare nelle soprano sia stato qualche huomo arrogante et presuntuoso, el quale persuadendosi potere correggerlo, lo ha contaminato et guasto, 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 correggerlo, lo ha contaminato et guasto, come appare nelle 

83 Io credo che sia errore ne' numeri, per quanto posso comprendere, et questo per causa de colui che ha copiato tal canto, perché quando lui segnava tali numeri, in loco de 4 ha segnato et posto el numero 8, cioè ha segnata la proportione sesquitertia per la subsesquiquarta; la quale subsesquiquarta dimostra che quattro brevi sequenti siano equivalenti in quantità et misura a quattro brevi della proportione sesquitertia, la quale precede la sesquiquarta, segnata con questi numeri ut hic; 4 come per la relatione et pel contrapunto si può comprendere, perché la subsesquiquarta è opposita et contraria alla sesquiquarta; pertanto la destrugge et annulla, non essendo però interposta 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 sesquiquarta.  

2. Questo è affermato dal nostro Franchino nel quarto libro al capitolo 5 della sua Pratica, el quale così dice: quod si subdupla proportio dupla ipsi proportione, etc. Et quello che lui dice della subdupla proportione vuole che si intend a anch'altre genere di proportione, come appare ne' capitoli sequenti del predetto suo libro.

2 Similmente dico della proportione sesquiquarta, la quale sequita immediato dopo, esserli errore in quanto ai numeri come è stato nella sesquiquarta sopradetta. Et però dico che si debbe segnare nel loco della sesquiquarta proportione ut hic; 4 così stanno bene tutte le predette 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 rimuovere alcun errori, esserli errore in quanto ai numeri come è stato nella sesquiquarta sopradetta. Et però dico che si debbe segnare nel loco della sesquiquarta proportione ut hic; 4 così stanno bene tutte le predette 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 rimuovere 

2 Purtanto, credo certo sia stata la sua intentione et volere, et per questa ragione ciascun rimane insolcato, cessando ogni errore, etc.

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2 3 Gafurio, Pratica musicale, fo. 68' (trans. Miller, p. 158).

2 4 Ibid., pp. 314-9 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, Ia., 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.\textsuperscript{6} Se altro posso per la P.V., quella mi comandi come buon figliolo, quae diu valeat favente ei semper divina gratia.

In Venetia a di 26 agosto m.d.xxxiii.

[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.\textsuperscript{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 \textit{sesquitertia} proportion is signed $\frac{8}{6}$, I think the copyist wrote $\frac{8}{4}$ instead of $\frac{4}{4}$, that is, \textit{sesquitertia} instead of \textit{subsesquialtera}, in which four of the following breves equal four of the breves under the \textit{sesquitertia} proportion, signed $\frac{4}{4}$, that precedes the \textit{sesquialtera}, as is evident from the relation and the counterpoint, because \textit{subsesquialtera} cancels \textit{sesquialtera} unless another sign or proportion intervenes; then the following notes are related to the closest preceding notes, that is those before the \textit{sesquialtera}.\textsuperscript{2} Gafurio affirms this in ch. 3 of the fourth book of his \textit{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.\textsuperscript{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 \textit{sesquioctava} proportion that follows immediately, which should be \textit{dupla sesquiquarta}: $\frac{8}{6}$. 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 $\frac{4}{4}$, under $\frac{6}{6}$, as shown by the sequence of figures $3, 4, 6, 4, 9$, or vice versa, bringing the lower figure of the first proportion into relation to each of the upper figures of the proportions that follow, as he demonstrates in chs. 13 to 15.\textsuperscript{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.'\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{6} This saying, a favourite of Spataro’s (see no. 14, para. 1, and no. 17, para. 11), goes back to Solon of Athens: γεράκοις δ’ αεί πολλά διδαξάμενος ('I grow old always learning much'); see fr. 18 of his poems in \textit{Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati}, ed. M. L. West, ii (Oxford, 1972), 131; it was recalled by Cicero in \textit{De re publica} 8. (The source was kindly brought to our attention by Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens.)

824
Lorenzo Gazio to Giovanni del Lago, 9 September 1534 (autograph)


Messer Pre Zanetto mio, caro piu 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 Pranchino da satisfar ad ogni homo da bene, a la qual a parte per parte non faro resposta, servandome epsa resosta insiema cum la littera per fin a la venuta mia in Venetia. Et tunc diffusamente se potera 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 \( \frac{8}{9} \) in hunc modum \( \frac{9}{4} \) che tutte le proportion serano immediate comparate l'una a l'altra per relationem ad numerum precedentem, et che cusi starano bene, a me pare, cum sopportatione de la R.V., che ancora non starano bene. Domando a la V.R. la sesquitertia in hunc modum \( \frac{8}{9} \), quomodo est sesquitertia ad antecedentem? Et la sesquialtera sic signata \( \frac{8}{9} \), come è anchora lei sesquialtera ad precedentem? Quella consideri bene el tutto avanti che se metta a corregere epso canto.

3. Cercha l'altra parte, io non ne ho piu, et quello che ho lo atrovai comme derelicta 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 vedérò de haverlo. Che sapessi colui che ha hereditato li canti de Fra Pietro de San Zoaanepolo, 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,

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1. I received your letter [no. 84] with its most eloquent and ingenious explanation of Gafurio's composition. 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 \( \frac{8}{9} \) to \( \frac{9}{4} \) 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 \( \text{sesquitertia} \) as \( \frac{8}{9} \) be \( \text{sesquitertia} \) to the preceding proportion? And the same with the \( \text{sesquialtera} \) as \( \frac{8}{9} \). You should consider this further before making the corrections.

3. I no longer have the other part; the one I have 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, 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.

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1 See no. 84 n. 1.
2 On Fra Pietro, who was Petrucci's editor, see the Biographical Dictionary.
Giovanni del Lago to Lorenzo Gazio, 6 May 1535 (Scribe 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 resoluzione 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, figliol mio carissimo, ho ricevuto le vostre, alle quali più presto non ho potuto dar risposta per le grandi occupazioni che mi sono state ne lo confessare. E il tenore qual mi havete mandato l'ho visto, et brevemente vi concludo che in molti luoghi esso tenore si trova falsissimo, per il che laudiero a Messer Adriano che quello che lui ha composto sopra esso tenore per niente el dresse fora, perche certamente apud peritos non siete potuto penetrare. E il tenore qual vi dico che non pocho havette errato in resolvere quella 19^ lunga in due brevi, la quale è infallibilmente perfetta per la regola generale, la quale è stata approbata dall'uso, cioè 'simili ante sibi similèm 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. 2 Et questo afferma il vostro Don Franchino Gaffurio nel secondo libro della sua Musica al capitolo x^6 dove lui tratta della imperfettione delle note, el quale dice così: Generaliter item musici posure notulam omnem ante sibi similèm perfectione quantitati disposta semper esse perfectam, nec ullo modo unquam casu reductione partis eius abstrae imperfici poss. Qua re ante maiorem vel minorem figuram imperfectibilis ipsa notula necessario dispositur, etc. Et poi sequitando in codem capitolo dice: Quandoque punctus divisionis aliqui nota in pro se ipsa tantum, sive pro se et alia vel aliis apponitur, ipsa tunc notula imperfici maiorem precedentem vel sequentem, si possit imperfecti, ut hoc monstratur tenore:

2. Et primamente dico che non pocho havette errato in resolvere quella 19^ lunga in due brevi, la quale è infallibilmente perfetta per la regola generale, la quale è stata approbata dall'uso, cioè 'simili ante sibi similèm 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. 2 Et questo afferma il vostro Don Franchino Gaffurio nel secondo libro della sua Musica al capitolo x^6 dove lui tratta della imperfettione delle note, el quale dice così: Generaliter item musici posure notulam omnem ante sibi similèm perfectione quantitati disposta semper esse perfectam, nec ullo modo unquam casu reductione partis eius abstrae imperfici poss. Qua re ante maiorem vel minorem figuram imperfectibilis ipsa notula necessario dispositur, etc. Et poi sequitando in codem capitolo dice: Quandoque punctus divisionis aliqui nota in pro se ipsa tantum, sive pro se et alia vel aliis apponitur, ipsa tunc notula imperfecti maiorem precedentem vel sequentem, si possit imperfecti, ut hoc monstratur tenore:

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4 The heading originally read: 'Il medesimo Bre Giovani de Lago al preditto venerabile Don Laurentio Gazio. Salute.'


1 The text is 'Muli 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 lotti che dice Messer Prè Zanetto, ma in molti altri, epis 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 cognizioni di tutti gli tuoni (Venice, 1525), fo. C2', as an example of the seventh mode.

6 M5: imperfectibilis.

2 As 'Usus est altera lex' this saying is quoted in no. 17, para. 14, no. 45, para. 12 and no. 48, para. 11. See no. 17 n. 15.

3 Gaffurio, Practica musice, fo. bba'; trans. Miller, p. 93.
Et seguitando esso tenore, dichiara così dicendo: *In hoc tenore punctus inter terciam et quartam semibreves positus quartam ipsum terti et brevi ligature sequentis connumerandam esse demonstrat, cum nec prime nec secunde adici possit, quia similis ante sibi similem (ut expositum est) non potest imperfecti*. Eadem etiam ratione semibrevis precedens tres ultimas breves distinctas sine puncto rectractat et imperfecti terciam ipsum brevem. *Idem quoque semiturs vindicat cum appositus punctus alicui brevi respectu longarum in minori modo perfecto et alicui longarum respectu maximarum in majori modo perfecto nec non et alicui minime respectu semibrevium in proportione perfecta. Ac si etiam sine puncto transferender sint ad distantiores figurae imperfectionis eiusdem receptibilis*, etc.

3. Et similmente nel capitolo xii⁶, nel quale tratta del punto, lì dice queste parole: *Verum punctus ante semibreves (quae) immediate precedit tres breves consequenter positas appositas semibreves ipsam ad ultimam illarium breviam monstrat esse transferendum, ipseque ad perfectum tenet ternaria temporis divisionem connumerandam, non enim prime brevi neque secunde semibrevi ipsi potest applicari. Nam similis ante sibi similem non potest imperfecti*. Et tale esempio per manco mia fatichà non lo noto qui. Et etiam nel capitolo xiv⁷ dove lì tratta dell’alterazione, questo medesimo afferma, così dicendo: *Secunda autem bina semibrevis alteratur quia ad hoc ut dupla sua ipsius quantitate conrester alteram non potest sumere formam, namque si quadratam brevis suspendit descriptionem non duorum modo sed trium semibrevium quantitatem*.

*Del Lago substituted this word for 'numerum'.

*This is the last sentence of the preface in the Disticha Catonis. The true text is: 'Legere enim et non intelligere 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.

*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 musicarum disciplinarum, Book III, ch. 111-11, ed. Seay, ii. 116).


*Del, fo. bb'; trans. Miller, p. 101. Del Lago omits the example, but the sequence of notes matches the • o □ □ □ pattern in the previous example.
The second semibreve cannot be imperfect if either of the two breves that follow it is because of the rule, it therefore imperfects the last breve.

832
6. Et questa real e infallibile regola, cioè 'similis ante similem non potest imperfectis', è stata osservata da tutti li dotti compositori, così antichi come moderni, nelle loro composizioni 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 semibrevesm in maiori prolongatione semper est perfecta.*

Per la predetta regola adunque potete conoscere che nessun modo la simile nota dinanzi la sua simile non si può fare imperfetta a parte anteriori dalla sua terza parte o vero dal suo valore. Et questo anchora conferma il ditto Gioane de Muris nella seconda regola in confermazione della prima, la quale così dice: *Quodomodocunque aliqua nota debet imperfecti, oportet quod eam sequatur inmediata nota maior vel minor in forma vel pausa maioris vel minoris forma, quia similis ante similem non potest imperfectis.*

Hoc eodem modo in secundo notabili septime regule ubi diciut: *Et imperfectios potest preponi vel postponi illi quod imperfectius inocta libitum ponentis, servata tamen hac regula, quod nulla nota potest imperfecti ante sibi similile sed bene ante maiorem vel minorem se, ut superius dictum est.* 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 luoci d'esso tenore, come seguendo si dirà. Sì che per tante auctoritatis V.P. debbe credere che 'l tenore del mio canto non è falsissimo, come che elia scrive non troppo modesta et dottrina et con non mediocre industria et accuratamente nella sua lettera. Anzi è composto con grande arte et dottrina et con non mediocri industria et solerizia mia, et però non è indegno (come voi el riputate) che sopra di esso componga ciascuno dotto compositore.

7. Item havete errato nella vostra resoluzione in resolvere la 23 a lunga in due brevi, la quale è ligata cum la 24 a lunga puntata, et similmente la 24 a, per esser dinanzi la sua pausa, quia pausa quo ad hoc vuc tenet suae nota, scilicet pausa longa cum longa, pausa brevis cum brevis, pausa semibrevis cum semibrevis, etc. Pertanto la breve la quale è dinanzi alla 24 a lunga né con la preditta 23 a lunga né con la 24 a si può connumerare: con la 24 a per esser dinanzi la sua simile non si può computare; con la 24 a per esser puntata con il punto di perfettione, et il quale punto fa rimanere essa lunga perfetta

6. Et questo è afirmado dal vostro Don Franchino nel capitolo xvii²° allegato di sopra, nel quale tratta del punto, le parole del quale sono queste: *Punctus autem perfectionis est quia postpositus aliiquainotula ipsum perfectum, tris in partes eqwas divisiblem reddens. Hic item duobus modis consideratur: Primo quidem cum aliiquinote in sua quantitate perfecta dispo sita apponitur. Tunc enim et si a minore eam precedente vel sequente posset imperfecti in propria facit perfectione remanere. Atque ictico perfectionis nuncupatur punctus.*

Et etiam sequitando in fine d'esso capitolo, così lui dice: *Solum itaque prepositus notulis punctus divisionem, postpositus vero et divisionem et perfectionem potest pernotare, sed neque notula puncto perfectionis ornata (quod nonnullorum pace dicere) imperfectionem tertiis aut quotcumquevis partis sic ipsi conducente potest sustinere, cum perfecto et imperfecto invicem contrarie sint et contraria in eodem subjecto philosophus non admitit. E questo è la verità: quando la nota è punta in ciascuna quantità perfetta, non si può per nissun modo farsi imperfetta, quia punctus perfectionis est signum quod nota cui adingitur in quacunque mensura perfectionis est perfecta.*

Adunque le predette lunghe debbono remanere perfette, et la ditta breve, la quale è dinanzi alla 25 a lunga, si computa con la breve sequente, la quale è fra la lunga 24 e la 25 a posta dinanzi alla sua pausa, perché essa breve non può imperficerie la 25 a lunga per esser inanzi la sua pausa, come è stato già detto. Et pertanto essa lunga rimane perfetta, la quale breve per causa del 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 breve dinanzi la lunga sempre si altera, quia nota alterata est fins perfectionis mensura. Ergo ubi est mensura perfecta sive mensure perfecti, ibi potest alteratio fieri.*

Et questa se causa per la redottione. *Reductio autem est unius aut plurium notarum cum maioribus quas imperficient aut cum sociis annumeratio.*

E questa tale reduttione si può dimandare syncopa, quanto però al numero, non quanto alla nota.

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86. Del Lago to Gario, 6 May 1553

come s'ella fusse dinanzi alla sua simile, non si può connumerare et associare. Et questo è afirmado dal vostro Don Franchino nel capitolo xvii° allegato di sopra, nel quale tratta del punto, le parole del quale sono queste: *Punctus autem perfectionis est quia postpositus aliiquainotula ipsum perfectum, tris in partes eqwas divisiblem reddens. Hic item duobus modis consideratur: Primo quidem cum aliiquinote in sua quantitate perfecta dispo sita apponitur. Tunc enim et si a minore eam precedente vel sequente posset imperfecti in propria facit perfectione remanere. Atque ictico perfectionis nuncupatur punctus.*

E etiam sequitando in fine d'esso capitolo, così lui dice: *Solum itaque prepositus notulis punctus divisionem, postpositus vero et divisionem et perfectionem potest pernotare, sed neque notula puncto perfectionis ornata (quod nonnullorum pace dicere) imperfectionem tertiis aut quotcumquevis partis sic ipsi conducente potest sustinere, cum perfecto et imperfecto invicem contrarie sint et contraria in eodem subjecto philosophus non admitit. E questo è la verità: quando la nota è punta in ciascuna quantità perfetta, non si può per nissun modo farsi imperfetta, quia punctus perfectionis est signum quod nota cui adingitur in quacunque mensura perfectionis est perfecta.*

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Et questa se causa per la redottione. *Reductio autem est unius aut plurium notarum cum maioribus quas imperficient aut cum sociis annumeratio.*

E questa tale reduttione si può dimandare syncopa, quanto però al numero, non quanto alla nota.

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²¹ Gafurio, Practica musicar, 60, ccc; trans. Miller, p. 106.

²² Ibid., 60, ccc-1. 91a trans. Miller, p. 107. This matter is discussed in no. 76. On the saying of 'the Philosopher’, see no. 44 n. 3.

²³ Ugolino of Orvieto, Declaratio musicae disciplinae, Book III, ch. iv-1 (ed. Seay, ii. 181). This is the second 'notandum est' following the set of seven rules.

²⁴ Cf. Ugolino's commentary on Johannes de Muris (Declaratio, Book III, ch. i-1-6, ed. Seay, ii. 103).

²⁵ Ibid., CS iii. 40. Del Lago's wording is closer to Ugolino's version, Book III, ch. 111-6 (ed. Seay, ii. 110).

²⁶ Cf. Ibid., CS iii. 49. Del Lago's wording is closer to Ugolino's version, Book III, ch. 111-3 (ed. Seay, ii. 133). This is the second 'notandum est' following the set of seven rules.

²⁷ Johannes de Muris, Libellus cantus mensurabilis, CS iii. 47-8; Ugolino, Declaratio, Book III, ch. 111-3 (ed. Seay, ii. 102).

²⁸ Ibid., CS ii. 48. Del Lago's wording is closer to Ugolino's version, Book III, ch. 111-6 (ed. Seay, ii. 103).

²⁹ Ibid., CS iii. 49. Del Lago, Book III, ch. i-1-1 (ed. Seay, ii. 133). 'This is the second 'notandum est' following the set of seven rules.'

³⁰ 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 perfectione fitenda quod totum in notis visum sue notae tenere, scilicet, pausam longae vis longae, pausam brevis vis brevis, pausam semibrevis vis semibrevis..."
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 breve 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] solumarum inveniatur.’

The semibreves cannot imperfect the breves because of the dot of perfection after the first breve.

9. Item havete errato nella vostra resolutione in risolvere la seconda breve la quale è posta tra la lunga 27a et la 28a in due brevi, et questo perché credete che la preditta breve si alteri. Ma non havete bene considerato che la breve precedente, la quale è posta tra la pausa della lunga perfetta et la lunga 26a puntata, si riduce alle predette due brevi, le quali sono poste tra la 27a lunga et la 28a, et non alla lunga 26a, come voi inconsideratamente havete fatto, perché la lunga 26a remane perfecta per la ragione antidetta, cioè per esser puntata con il punto di perfettione. Ma la breve la quale è tra la 26a lunga et la 27a non si altera, come si fa in la restritts 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.

Del Lago refers to the following passage (secunda pars, mm. 33-39):

```
\begin{align*}
\text{\#3} & \quad \text{\#4} \\
\text{\#5} & \quad \text{\#6} \\
\text{\#7} & \quad \text{\#8} \\
\text{\#9} & \quad \text{\#10} \\
\text{\#11} & \quad \text{\#12} \\
\end{align*}
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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.

27 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 theorica, ed. Seay, ii. 122 and 124). 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).

836

86. Del Lago to Gasio, 6 May 1351

brieve la quale è tra la 24a lunga et la 25a, rationibus predictis, perché la 27a lunga è atta a farsi imperfecta dalla breve la quale gli è dinanzi, per il che la detta lunga si fa imperfecta a parte anteriori dalla breve precedente, come dalla sua terza parte. Pertanto el preditto punto non solamente è di perfettione ma anchora de divisione, perché opera duei effetti: uno fa remanere la 26a lunga perfetta, l’altro fa che la ditta breve si computa con la 27a lunga sequente, si 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 sequatur duo breves vel tres tantum, nulla sola breve preecedente a qua possit imperfici, perfecta est nisi punctus divisionis ponatur inter primam [breven] et aliam vel alia sequentem,’ etc. Adunque la breve la quale è dinanzi la lunga 26a resta sola et convieni reduce ale due brevi predette le quali sono poste tra la 27a lunga et la 28a, per la quale reductione si schiva alla seconda breve l’alteratione, perché la reductione nelle quantità perfette opera quatro cose, cioè fa imperfecta la nota atta a farsi imperfecta, redintegra el numero, fa alterare la nota, togli al numero l’alteratione, come appare nella prima parte del sopran del Patrem della preditta messa [‘Pourtant se mon’] di Philippo de Primis et etiam nella Osana del contratello della medesima messa, el quale pone due semibrevi tra due brevi di tempo perfetto, et per la reductione toglie alla seconda semibreve l’alteratione.

10. Anchora non poco havete errato nella vostra resolutione in risolvere la 30a lunga in due brevi, perché contradice alla regola ‘similis ante similern non potest imperfici’, per il che la breve che è dinanzi alla preditta lunga non può fare imperfecta essa lunga, ma la si reduce alla 36a lunga, perché quello è el suo primo luoco dove la si debbe reduce, et hoc causa perfectionis, cioè acciò che se compisca la perfectione del numero ternario. Pertanto essa breve si accompagna cum la preditta 36a lunga et non con la preditta 30a lunga. Adunque la 36 lunga et la 37a 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 38a lunga et la 39a. Perché esse lunghe non hanno parti propinque perfette incluse in esse, delle quali parti si possino fare alcune imperfecte da quella semibreve immediate sequente, come sua terza parte, pertanto la ditta semibreve si reduce alla semibreve la quale è tra la 37a lunga et la 38a, la quale 37a lunga si fa imperfecta dalle predite due semibrevi per essere el valore della sua terza parte, quia quicquid imperfectur a tercia eius parte vel eius valore imperfectur. Per similare ragioni non si possono fare imperfecte le
ditte lunghe d’alcuna di quelle semibrevi immediate sequenti, nec quo ad totum nec quo ad partes, per il che la 5ª lunga et la 5ª restino perfette, et la breve che è tra la 5ª lunga et la 4ª s’altera, 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 resolta nella vostra resoluzione per breve retta. Et anchora la connumerare con la 4ª lunga (quod deteriorius 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 redttione, perché la semibreve la quale è tra la 5ª lunga et la 5ª si reduce alla semibreve che seguita alla preditta 5ª lunga in modo che gli sono due semibrevi et una breve posta tra due lunghe, 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 imperfecta la semibreve 1 lo fa imperfetta 2 per cagione del tempo perfetto. Ma nella lunga predetta non è la ragione del tempo perfetto; adunque la semibreve non può imperfere la preditta lunga. La maggiore si prova perché la semibreve per se fa imperfecta la breve del tempo perfetto. Item se la semibreve fa imperfecta 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 imperfecta sed per accidents, ratione brevis temporis perfecti inclusa. 3 insistitur, etc. La minor si prova perché quella lunga è del modo perfetto ratione longe perfettt, et est temporis imperfecti ratione brevium imperfectarum. Institur, 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 imperfettione dalla semibreve. Instituros, etc. Item omnis lunga la quale si fa imperfecta, o vero diventa imperfecta quo ad totum, et allhora questo è quando dalla lunga la quale si può dividere in tre brevi si remove la sua terza parte, cioè una breve o ver il suo valore, o vero si fa imperfecta quanto alla parte o ver alle parti, 4 et allhora questo procede quando esse parti propinque della lunga, cioè le brevi, sono divisibili, id est se possono dividere in tre semibreve, dalle quali si può removerne la terza parte, o vero si fa imperfecta quanto al tutto o ver quanto alla parte o ver parti, 5 et questo allhora ha

91 1 MS: ciò che fa imperfecta la semibreve la fa imperfecta.
  2 MS: insistitur.
  3 MS: instituros.

838

86. Del Lago to Gazio, 6 May 1533

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, est divisible, id est si può dividere in tre parti, per cagion della qual cosa si può de lei removere la terza parte et consequentemente quanto al tutto farsi imperfecta. Ma le sue parti non sono divisibili in tre parti perché le sono imperfecte. Adunque da esse no[n] si può remover la terza parte, ne conseguentemente possono imperfere. Adunque la lunga predetta per nessun modo si può imperfere della sola semibreve. Item, se tale lunga perfetta del tempo imperfecto si potesse fare imperfecta dalla sola semibreve, sequitor 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 imperfecta 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 imperfecta quanto alla parte o vero alle parti, perché la semibreve di alcuna delle parti di questa si fatta lunga non è la sua terza parte. Adunque se tale lunga perfetta del tempo imperfecto si potesse farsi imperfecta dalla sola semibreve, sequitoria che si potesse trovare qualche nota imperfectibile la quale non si facesse imperfecta quo ad totum nec qua ad partem vel partes, quod est falsum et impossibile. 34

12. Similmente havete erroto nella vostra resoluzione in resolvere la 4ª massima in cinque brevi, pensando voi che una delle sueo parti propinque si faccia imperfecta da una di quelle brevi sequenti legate, et la breve che è tra la 4ª lunga pontata et la 5ª lunga negra, la redctee alla 5ª lunga, la qual cosa è falsissima, perché la ditta massima deve valere due lunghe perfette o vero sei brevi per virtù delle due brevi ligate le quali sequitan immediate da po la massima, perché quelle due brevi ligate insieme quasi habent vim unius longe imperfecte, 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-

91 1 MS: imperfecte.

1 'Difficiles alias' (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. 1531; 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:

\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c}
3 & 4 & 5 & 1 & 2
\end{array} \]

[Per] la qual cosa in questo esempio qui sopra posto la prima breve è perfetta, cioè val tre semibrevi, et la 2\textsuperscript{a} breve si fa imperfetta a parte anteriori della 4\textsuperscript{a} semibreve precedente, id est val 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\textsuperscript{a} si fa imperfetta della 4\textsuperscript{a} semibreve precedente, et questa virtù et essentia unita s'intende quanto a fare remanere la nota perfetta posta inanzi ad essa ligatura.\textsuperscript{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 immediata sequente, le quali insieme compute fanno il valore di una lunga perfetta, et computato el numero ternario, convien che la 4\textsuperscript{a} breve resta sola, e questo per che la detta breve non può fare imperfetta la 49\textsuperscript{a} lunga per esser puntata con il punto di perfettione, ma la si reduce alla breve sequente che è tra la preditta 49\textsuperscript{a} puntata et la 50\textsuperscript{a} lunga negra, per la qual reductione la detta breve si altera per esser 4\textsuperscript{a} dinanti alla lunga o ver tra due lunghe, et questo secondo li antichi, perché quante fussino state le brevi tra le lunghe, subito dalla prima delle brevi cominciano computare la perfettione del modo minore perfetto. Et così toglie[\textsuperscript{4}] lano 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 fussse puntata con il punto di perfettione, o vero posta inanzi la sua simile. Allhora la detta nota essi antichi riducev[\textsuperscript{4}] lano al primo luoco dove habitabilmente 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 immediata sequente, et la ditta breve la quale è posta tra la 49\textsuperscript{a} et la 50\textsuperscript{a} lunga negra la riducete alla 31\textsuperscript{a} 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 propinqune 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 reductione de la 4\textsuperscript{a} breve. Adunque per queste ragioni la ditta massima resta ne la sua quantità et valore, cioè in due lunge perfette, o ver il valore d’esse, et non possono per alcun modo nessuna delle sue parti propinqune farsi imperfetta a parte posteriori, ma si ben a parte anteriore se possono fare imperfette le predette 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 se parti propinqune 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 sesquialtera significha, ma etiamdo (secondo si vede in molte opere di compositori) [im]perfettione et reductione.\textsuperscript{37} Ma che i colore significha [im]perfettione et reductione ne' concerti musici, il vostro Don Franchino l'afferra nel predetto undecimo capitolo del 2\textsuperscript{a} libro della sua Musica, le parole del quale sono queste: Quacie[n]scunque in ternaria ac perfecta quantitatis acervatione notarum nota illaperturbare, lune de tertiae propriae quantitatis parte imperfetict, cui pars ipsa tercia consimilis plenitudine succedat neque[\textsuperscript{5}] sum est, quia quidem plenitudine sola reducta comprobatur, neque si immediata [an mediate] pars ipsa tercia reducibilis maiorem tanquam sumum totum preceiat aut sequatur, dudummo perficiendique numerositatis gradus ad ipsam reducatur maiorem. Soleo nuncv ad maiorem partem tanquam ad sumum totum minor pars ipsa deducti,\textsuperscript{38} etc. Ma se V.P. volesse dire che da voi è stato considerato da fare una delle parti propinqune della preditta massima imperfetta a parte posteriori da una de le brevi non immediate sequente, cioè o da la terza o ver da la 4\textsuperscript{a} breve, le quali sequitan 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 stato usata questa così fatta imperfettione, cioè mediate senza apparentia dell’uno o dell’altro segno predito, cioè o con il punto o con il colore. E tale modo, cioè tale imperfettione mediata, è stata usata da

\textsuperscript{37} This sentence comes from Tinctoris's Proportionales (Opera theoretica, ed. Seay, iia. 20): 'Sed cum hinc notarum impetratio non tantum ut precisum est duplum et sesquialterum, sed etiam cum tatem pater per innumera compositorum operar [im]perfessionem aut reductionem desinetur . . . '. 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.

\textsuperscript{38} Gaffurio, Practica musicar, fo. bby7; trans. Miller, p. 102.
Tintoris nel suo prenominato concerto, 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) alla 2\textsuperscript{a} breve del predetto segno, la quale minima fa imperfetta l’altra sua parte propinqua inclusa in essa breve quanto al suo tutto.\textsuperscript{10} la quale imperfezione mediata il predetto Tintoris la dimostra con il punto, qui punctus significat transitum localem, et tale imperfezione si dimanda mediata,\textsuperscript{a} così a parte anteriori come a parte posteriori, quando la si fa. Ma la imperfezione im\textsuperscript{mediata} ‘si fa quando dopo la nota atta alla imperfezione li seguita la sua parte propinqua o ver il suo valore, cioè non essendo impedita d’altre notule o ver d’altro segno accidentale intermezzo.\textsuperscript{10} Pertanto non essendo stato da me posto e segnato alla notule sequente nessum segno accidentale, cioè il punto o ver il colore, essa massima resta necessariamente in quantity 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 resolución.

14. Ultimamente non poco havete errato nella vostra resolución in redurre o ver transportare la breve o ver le due semibrevi le quali sono poste fra la 58\textsuperscript{a} lunga et la 59\textsuperscript{a} alla 60\textsuperscript{a} lunga, et etiam la breve la quale è fra la 62\textsuperscript{a} et la 63\textsuperscript{a}, la quale la connumerate con la preditta 64\textsuperscript{a}, perché è contra la regola ‘similis ante similem’, etc. Dico che la semibreve che è tra la 58\textsuperscript{a} lunga et la breve sequente si reduce per syncopam alla semibreve che è tra la preditta breve et la 59\textsuperscript{a} lunga, le quali semibrevi si reducono insieme alla breve la quale è fra la 62\textsuperscript{a} lunga et la 63\textsuperscript{a}, et per tale reduzione la detta breve si altera. Et così la preditta 58\textsuperscript{a} lunga si fa imperfetta dalla breve che è tra le due semibrevi, perché ella remane sola tra due lunghe, ma non

\textsuperscript{a} The words ‘et punctata a parte posteriori’ are written on 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: ‘Allo modo reduce la sesta minima la quale è puntata nella sumità della coda a parte posteriori alla quinta minima la quale seguita immediata dopo la seconda breve del predetto segno, le quali insieme reduce fanno imperfette le parti propinque contenute in essa breve quanto al suo tutto.’

\textsuperscript{10} Del Lago first wrote ‘irregolare’, then added ‘impropria et’. He then struck these words out. It originally read: ‘Ma la imperfezione naturale et regolare si fa immediata et non mediata, cioè senza impedimento d’altre notule o ver d’altro segno.’

\textsuperscript{10} Del Lago cites the following passage (mm. 28-32):

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (0,0) rectangle (1,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (1,0) rectangle (2,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!50, draw=black] (2,0) rectangle (3,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (3,0) rectangle (4,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!50, draw=black] (4,0) rectangle (5,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (5,0) rectangle (6,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (6,0) rectangle (7,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (7,0) rectangle (8,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (8,0) rectangle (9,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (9,0) rectangle (10,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (10,0) rectangle (11,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (11,0) rectangle (12,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (12,0) rectangle (13,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (13,0) rectangle (14,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (14,0) rectangle (15,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (15,0) rectangle (16,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (16,0) rectangle (17,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (17,0) rectangle (18,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (18,0) rectangle (19,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (19,0) rectangle (20,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (20,0) rectangle (21,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (21,0) rectangle (22,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (22,0) rectangle (23,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (23,0) rectangle (24,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (24,0) rectangle (25,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (25,0) rectangle (26,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (26,0) rectangle (27,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (27,0) rectangle (28,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (28,0) rectangle (29,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (29,0) rectangle (30,1);
\filldraw[fill=blue!10, draw=black] (30,0) rectangle (31,1);
\filldraw[fill=white, draw=black] (31,0) rectangle (32,1);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

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 minimi between two semibrevi in major prolation normally call for alteration of the second minim.
The Letters

possibile che da voi sia stata fatta bene la sua risoluzione se non falsissima. Come potete voi sapere ben la pratica della musica non sapendo teorica? Perché senza teorica non si può bene intendere la pratica, perché la teorica dimostra la ragion et la causa della cosa fatta per il pratico. 'Practicus enim sine teorica est tanquam cecus sine baculo', e questo è noto a ciascun intelligente. Pertanto, per dimostrarvi li vostri errori, noto qui sotto il mio tenore con la sua risoluzione di mia mano, la quale così vuol stare, nel quale tenore pongo li numeri sopra le ditte notule accio 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 risoluzione del mio tenore qui sopra notata di mia mano potete comprendere esser stato non poco temerario in risolvere le notule del predetto tenore tutte al contrario di quello che comandano le regole dateda' dotti music et da tutti i buoni compositori approbate et da loro osservate ne' loro concerti, perché regola è in qualunque arte un comune mandato. Regula namque a regendo, sive recte dirigendo dicitur. Pertanto per alcun modo opponer non si deve alle regole et alla dottrina di tanti dottissimi musici, ma 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 arroganza.

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 defender l'honor mio et le cose mie; secunda accio che accadendovi ad altri scrivere per lo advenire, siate più modesto et più acerto nella scriver accio che non caschiate così facilmente in errore, perché certo ho compassione alla vostra cecità; terza ho scritto per ché quelli i quali prestano troppo fede alle vostre parole et scritti non caschino anchor loro in si fatti errori.

In Venegia, a di vi maggio m.d.xxxv.

[Giovanni del Lago]

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 spend on confessions. That tenor, in brief, is full of errors, and I should advise Messer Adriano [Williaert] 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, 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. 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. 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:

![Resolution example](image-url)
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 minimis. 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 imperfmissible, 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 imperfections 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.*

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.* 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."

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.’ 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.
Pl. 13. Giovanni del Lago, tenor of 'Multi sunt vocati' with its resolution. MS Vat. lat. 5318, fos. 100v (left) and 101r.
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 Muriis affirms this in his Musica, ch. 1, rule 5: When any note is alone, it should be transferred to the first place possible. 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. 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 prolongation; 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', 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', used it in two places, and also in his 'Difficultes alios' in the tenor of the second part. 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, transfers the minim preceding four semibreves under perfect prolongation 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 catholican' in the second Credo of his 'Missa J'ay pris amours', transfers the semibreve in perfect tempus beyond two perfect breves in two places. 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. And Verbonnet, in his 'Missa Gratieuse gent', in the tenor at 'Et resurrexit' in the Credo, transfers the minim beyond two semibreves under Φ to one of the two near parts included in the first breve following.

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 Muriis, Musica, ch. 1, rule 1: That a long before a long in the perfect minor mode is always perfect, and a breve

850

before a breve in perfect tempus is always perfect, and a semibreve before a semibreve in major prolongation is always perfect. 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 Muriis 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. And likewise under rule 7: And the imperfection 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 after a note of lesser or greater value, as said above. 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. 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 eh. I, rule 5:

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851

before a breve in perfect tempus is always perfect, and a semibreve before a semibreve in major prolongation is always perfect. 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 Muriis 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. And likewise under rule 7: And the imperfection 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 after a note of lesser or greater value, as said above. 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. 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 eh. I, rule 5:

When any note is alone, it should be transferred to the first place possible. 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. 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 prolongation; 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.
measure or the perfection of a measure, there alteration can occur. 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.

Such drawing together can also be called syncopation, but with regard to the number, not the note.

8. Tintorius 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.' Philippo de Primis observed the same in the bass of the first part of the Gloria of his 'Missa Poustian 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; Tintorius defines it thus: Syncopation is the division of any note into parts through the interposition of a larger note. 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 twenty-seventh 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 perfect 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. 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 Poustian 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. 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. 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, 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 imperfectable 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. 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 imperfectable note could be found that could not be imperfected as to the whole or as to its parts, which is false and impossible.

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'. 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:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
  \text{3} & \text{2} & \text{1} \\
\end{array}
\]

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 perfect, 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 forty-ninth 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) imperfection and drawing together.

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). 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. Tinctorius wrote a mediated imperfection in his 'Difficiles alii' 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, and he demonstrates this mediated imperfection with a dot, which signifies a change of place, and this is called mediated imperfection, both a parte ante 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
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 sixty-second 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. Thus you understand that you made many errors in imperfecting like before like.

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.' 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].

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. 'Rule' comes from 'ruling', that is, properly
87 (J17). Fo. 177v
Pietro de Justinis to Giovanni del Lago, 27 November 1534
(autograph)

17v Al reverendo Messer Pre Zuanne de Lago, signor suo osservandissimo. In Venetia.

17v Reverendo signor mio.
La fama riporatrice delle actione humane più e più fatte 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 devinti ligato con indissolubil nodo d’amore restato, per il che ho preso ardire, ingaliardito dal amore qual a V.S. cossì anch’io per presentia incognita porta, qual come è cosa natural non po’ star celato, massime verso de la cosa amata, scriverti questa mia per dar principio alla futura amicizia, e per far noto a Sua Signoria ch’ella ha uno bon servitore costi 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, anch’io che incognita li sia. Et perché ho inteso quella dilettarsi di musica, dilettandomi anch’io, preggolla si degni, merce di sua humanità e gentilezza, veder alcune cose nostre, al cui sano judicio et 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 et maturità se li conveniria, si degnadella 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.xxxiii.

Di V.S. reverendo humil servitore

Pietro 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 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.
Al excellente musico Messer Pre Piero de Justinis de Udene. ⁴

1. Certamente mi potete incolpare (Messer Pre Piero mio honoringo) d’ingratitudine, essendo stato tardo a rispondere alle vostre letere [no. 87], ma in vero la sorte mia non ha voluto. Non vi starò ad narrare le cause, ma la principale dalla quale procedono tutte l’alte è stata l’ininfinità, della quale vi potete informare dal mio reverendo Monsignore Messer Girolamo di Susana et Messer Francesco suo fratelllo. Hor mi è venuto un poco di commodità di potervi scrivere, ma non come è il voler mio.

2. M’havette mandato alcuni vostri componimenti di musica, sopra i quali mi pregate che io vi scriva il giudizio et parer mio, la qual cosa mal voluntiera faccio, reputandola troppo grave peso alla imbecillità del mio picciolo et debile ingegno. 

3. Et primo, io trovo nel vostro mottetto ‘Tulerunt dominum meum’ nel contr’altro sopra la parola ‘dicunt’ un tritono incompuesto ascendente da trite synemenmon, cioè dal fa de b mi acuto ad E la mi acuto, et nel predetto E la mi havete posto questo segno: X, il quale segno per due ragioni è mal posto. La prima è perché rimove quella nota semibreve (la quale è posta immediata dopo el segno) dal loco proprio per un semitono maggiore in acuto; farà che dal segno del b molle segnato in b mi predetto ad esso segno segnato in E la mi caderà spazio d’un tritone et uno semitono maggiore in acuto; ciò che dal segno del b molle segnato in b mi predetto ad esso segno segnato in E la mi caderà spazio d’un tritone et uno semitono maggiore in acuto; ciò che dal segno del b molle segnato in b mi predetto ad esso segno segnato in E la mi caderà spazio d’uno diapente et una comma, la qual distanza o ver intervallo per la sua durezza non è cantabile, cioè cantar non si può, né anchora è spetie pertinente al genere diatonico, ‘que spetie omnis[n]o fugiende sunt nisi auditus intelligentis aliter sentiret.’ ⁵ Et perché il tritone incompuesto senza alcuno cresimento è difficile al cantore pronuntiarlo, tutto più sarà difficile per quello accresimento del semitono maggiore.

4. La seconda ragione è che la predetta semibreve posta in E la mi acuta

[^4]: The heading originally read: “Al excellente musico Messer Pre Piero de Justinis de Udene."

[^5]: This quotation comes from Hothby’s Tractatus quadrivium regulorum artis music (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Pal. 472, fo. 91): ‘que conjunctiones omnino fugiende sunt nisi auditus intelligentis aliter sentiret.’ See Ch. 7, pp. 161-4.
l'intervalllo de due diesis et una comma, cioè un semituono maggiore, come è in $\text{h}_2/4 \text{b}_2 \text{mi}$, cioè dal $\text{fa}$ al $\text{mi}$ in esso $\text{h}_2/4 \text{b}_2 \text{mi}$. Ma se V.R. se volesse escusare dicendo che seguito l'uso, vi rispondo quod 'debemus potius artum 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 della particolare 'in brachio' per havere segnato in $\text{e}_9/2 \text{b}_2 \text{mi}$ la predetta croce, ut hic:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
cantus \\
\text{tenor} \\
\text{altus}
\end{array}
\]

Dico che non sta bene per le predette ragioni dette di sopra, perché quella semibreve posta in $\text{h}_2/4 \text{b}_2 \text{mi}$ con la croce segnata s'imbette quinta con la minima del soprano posta in E la mi grave, la qua è superflua. Ma credo che V.R. la ha segnata solamente acciò che in tale loco si dica $\text{mi}$, per non fare quella quinta diminuita.\(^5\) Dico che stava stato meglio havere segnato il b rotondo in quel luogo che la croce, la qua presenta (dico secondo il volgo cieco) il b quadro giacente. Il proprio de la quinta imperfetta o ver diminuita è andare alla terza, massime quando immediata una parte ascende et l'altra descende. Et anch'ora il contra alto staria meglio, perché la scenderia de terza minore in unisono (come la regola de contrapunto comanda) senza suspendere\(^6\) la nota minima del contra'alto posta in G acuto, ut hic:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
cantus \\
\text{tenor} \\
\text{altus}
\end{array}
\]

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 anch'ora al terzo et a ciascun altro tuono, et questo per due ragioni. L'una è per toglier al tritono (accadendo) la sua durezza et quartro tuono non appetisce il b rotondo, come a lui incongruo et l'altra descende. Et anch'ora il contra alto staria meglio, perché la scenderia de terza minore et una comma, dico che non si deve cantare o ver pronontiare nel canto, le parole del quale sono queste: Nullus tropus proprius et per se per b molle cantatur, sed et accurit b molle commisseri. Ideo quilibet tropus suam forma servare debet et secundum eam cantari, et cum per b molle cantare contigerit b mollis forma servetur, si id per se vel per accidentes fiat, donec illud accurit, quod evitandi causa interponitur, terminetur, quod terminato suam forma reddatur tropo, et secundum eam debet modulari, 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 de scrivere. Ma se havesse più comodo de scrivere, avverteria a V.R. molte cose le quali non sono state da voi troppo bene considerate quanto appartiene alla ragione delle consonantie. Si 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 de' buoni compositori che avverto in la sua forma riduttura tropo, et secundum eam debet modulari, quidam proferendi' (ed. Seay, p. 230).

\[\text{MS:} \text{contigerit (an error also found in Ugolino).}\]

\[\text{MS:} \text{que.}\]

\[\text{MS:} \text{bha.}\]

\[\text{As shown above (see no. 44 n. 25), Del Lago is actually quoting from Ugolino of Orvieto's Declaratio musicarum disciplinarum.}\]

\[\text{Book I, eh. 165, entitled 'Demonstratio B mollis evitandi et circiterius', where dimostra quando si deve schivare il b molle et quando si deve cantare o ver pronontiare nel canto, le parole del quale sono queste: Nullus tropus proprius et per se per b molle cantatur, sed et accurit b molle commisseri. Ideo quilibet tropus suam forma servare debet et secundum eam cantari, et cum per b molle cantare contigerit b mollis forma servetur, si id per se vel per accidentes fiat, donec illud accurit, quod evitandi causa interponitur, terminetur, quod terminato suam forma reddatur tropo, et secundum eam debet modulari, etc.}\]

\[\text{MS:} \text{contigerit (an error also found in Ugolino).}\]

\[\text{MS:} \text{que.}\]

\[\text{MS:} \text{bha.}\]

\[\text{88. Del Lago to Justinis, 3 June 1558}\]

\[\text{88. Del Lago to Justinis, 3 June 1558}\]
Anch'io trovo nella stessa canzone nella particola del contrabasso esser stato da lui segnata la proporzione sesquialtera per la cifra ternaria, sotto la quale si canta una breve perfetta sotto un tempo, o ver tre semibrevi vacue, fra le quali semi brevi vacue di detta sesquialtera ha posto più volte semibrevi et minime nere per dimostrare un'altra volta la sesquialtera, 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 sesquialtera segnata con la cifra ternaria et quella dimostrata per figure nere, 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 sesquialtera) 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 colorum''. Ma penso che sua Signoria creda 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 formae et non coloris, 'nam forma est quae dat esse rei'.10 Et questo è chiaro appresso [tutti gli dotti musici].

12. Io harei molte cose da scrivervi oltra le predette, ma resto a scrivere per non entrare in lite con gli miei amici.

V.R. non piace, perdonatime, perché quello che ho scritto ho scritto con puro cuore et perché io vi amo.11

In Venegia a di 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 b♭ 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 b♭ 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. 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.
In place of square b, written q, you use a cross, ~. 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. He and his followers call it diesis—quite mistakenly, for diesis (among musicians) is half of a minor semitone. That sign represents the interval of two dieses and a comma, i.e. a major semitone, such as B–B. 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'.

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. 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 sharpening 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.

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: No mode is properly and per se sung with B, but it happens that B is mixed in. Therefore each mode must observe its form and be sung according to it, and when it chances that B 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.

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.

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 D or D 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.

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.

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'. All skilled musicians know this.
The Letters

12. I could go on at length, but I refrain in order to avoid getting into disputes with my friends. If I have written anything that does not please you, do forgive me, for I wrote with a pure heart and out of love. 11

Bartolomeo Tromboncino to Giovanni del Lago, 2 April 1535 (autograph) 1

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 Frotto/a, 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 'affaso [P]', '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 Bossinemus, Tenori e contrabassi intabulati col sopran in canto figurato per cantar e sonar col lauto (1509).
The Letters

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', 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. 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. 174v
Nicolò Olivetto to Giovanni del Lago, 1 October 1535
(autohgraph)

91 Al reverendo Misier Pre Zuanelo de Lago maior suo honorando, Venetias,
Avente la giesia de Santa Sofia.

91" 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 congosceva 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 quale già a parlato. Me disse che per amor di quello gentilhomo et le virtu et bona fama de V.R. farà tutto quello piacero et favor che potrà. V.R. se digrerà dare la inclusa a Sancto Stefano ne le case nove del Pasqualigo, et se posso et vuglete quiivi per V.R., se digrerà 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.
Francesco di Pizoni to Giovanni del Lago, 2 June 1537

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 $B\text{ss}$s and $B\text{ss}^\prime$s—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. 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.

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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.
Fra Seraphin to Giovanni del Lago, 30 April 1538 (autograph)\(^1\)

Al suo reverendo D. Pre Zanetto de Lago, eccentrisimo theorico, mazor honorando.

Reverende Domine, salutem, etc.

Agli 28 del presente recevi una vostra epistola cum il modo de l’ascender de tuti toni a me piu che grata, 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, agli 30 apriile 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.

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\(^1\) Abbreviated tr'. Treviso seems the most likely resolution.

\(^2\) 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).
The Letters

1. proprie reperiri possunt. 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 diminuiti. Quali sono i tuoni plagali perfetti? I tuoni plagali perfetti sono quegli che descendono una quarta sotto il suo regolare fine, et se descendono più, si dimandano superflui, et se manco, si dimandano diminuiti. Quali sono i tuoni misti? Ma i tuoni misti veramente sono quegli che partecipano 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 partecipano del ascendere et descendere et anchor mediatione con altro tuono che non sia suo propri et determinati.


5. Quanto alla cognizione dei tuoni o ver modi detti di sopra. Notabile buono quanto al comporre ciascun concerto. Quanto alla osservatione di comporre un concerto, primieramente 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 aere conveniente alle parole, ut canthus consonet verbis, cioè che convenga alla materia, perchè quant'ancora che i tuoni composti non possono da componer una cantilena, solgono prima diligentemente della sua potissima istituzione e componghino, cioè qual affetti d'animò con quella cantilena moverebbe, cioè di qual tuono si debba comporre, perche altri sono allegri, altri placentis, altri gravi et sedati, alcuni medi et gemibondi, di nuovo iracconti, altri impetosi. Così anch'io le melodie de' canzoni, perché ci in un modo et ci in un 'altra componiamo, variamente sono distinte da' musici.

3 Claude Palisca has pointed out the close relationship of this passage to a portion of a letter by Matteo Nardo preserved in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS lat. 538, fo. 157: 'Quante volte i dottori della Musica hanno da componere alcuna Canzone, solgono prima diligentemente che si stessi considerare, a che fine, et a che proposito quella potissimamente istituiscono, & componono, cioè quali affetti d'animò con quella cantilena moverebbeno? See Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought, p. 142. Little is known about Nardo, who seems to have studied in Venice with the humanist Egnazio (Giovanni Battista Cipelli). In 1515 he published a biography of Giovanni Battista Prodromia, mayor of Padua (see Palisca, p. 144). The letter itself is a partial copy, without addresser 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 principe de musica' (fo. 19). 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 Istoria della civitá di Firenze, who seems to have studied in Venice with the humanist Ignazio (Giovanni Battista Cipelli). In 1515 he published a biography of Giovanni Battista Prodromia, mayor of Padua (see Palisca, p. 144). The letter itself is a partial copy, without addresser 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.

4 The accuracy of the 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 rather was Florentine. He may have been related to Jacopo Nardi, the author of Istoria della civitá di Firenze, who was among the Florentines exiling in Venice.

42 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 rather was Florentine. He may have been related to Jacopo Nardi, the author of Istoria della civitá di Firenze, who was among the Florentines exiling in Venice.

5. 'Quid est Tonus?' 'Est certa quaedam qualitas melodiae, seu potius affectus cantionis.' From 'Quid est Tonus?' (p. 1), 118: 'Ut certa quaedam qualitas melodiae, seu potius affectus cantionis.'
Dico adunque et primo che 'l soprano di ciascuno concerto non deve ascendere più di sedici voci sopra l'ultima nota inferiore del tenore di ciascun tuono, si autentico come plagale. Perché si ascendsse più, sarebbe incommodo al cantore, et oltra questo eccideria il suo conveniente termine assegnato ad essi tuoni. Similmente quando diminuirlette le notule, farete il contrapunto con bella diminuzione 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 propinquia 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 distinzione, acciò che sia intesa la sententia delle parole cantate. La sententia è dittione generale che sia intesa la pronuntiatio et non nell'ultima, perche la penultima include il principio di numero. Similmente si debbe finire il numero nella penultima conclusione o vero cadentia.

6. <Osservazione nelle composizioni delle canti quanto al numero> Osservarete ancho que 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 distinzione, perché ella è principio di numero. Similmente si debbe finire il numero nella penultima nota del concerto 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 incconvenientemente dicono, massimamente nel canto composto sopra le parole, et questo per distinguere le parti della oratione, cioè far la distinzione del comma et colo et del periodo, acciò che sia intesa la sententia delle parti della oratione perfetta, si nel verso come nella prosa. <Prima dittinzione della cadentia> Perché la cadentia in musica è come il punto nella grammatica. <Seconda dittinzione> La cadentia è una certa distinzione et riposo nel canto, o vero la cadentia è una terminazione di essa parte del canto, come è nel contesto dell'oratione la media distinzione et la finale. <Il luoco dove far si debbono le cadentie> Siete allunque diligente di far le cadentie dove la parte dell'oratione o vero il membro finisce. <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 finisse la sententia del contesto delle parole, perché gli cosa conveniente tendere et puramente insieme finire...
accanto, cioè presso il canto, perciò che nella cantilena della voce ne face conoscere le sillabe. Da' antiqui anchora accento era detto anima delle parole, o ver voce delle sillabe. Altri lo chiamano vocabolazione, chi governatore delle voci. I greci lo dicono prosodia. Da' latini anchora si chiamà tuono et tenore, perché quivi il suono cresce et finisce. Ma li accenti non hanno potestà alcuna di allungare né abbreviare le sillabe. I tenori degli accenti sono tre: acuto, grave, et circunflesso. Accento acuto è detto perché accisce et eleva la sillaba; grave perché depressive et depone, perché è contrario allo acuto; il circunflesso perché è composto dallo acuto et del grave, perché cominciando dallo acuto finisce nel grave, et così mentre che saglie et descende si fa circunflesso. 

Et lo acuto et il circunflesso sono simili, perché uno et l'altro inalta la sillaba. Il grave appare essere contrario ad ambedue, perché sempre deprome le sillabe, elevantole quelli. Le figure degli accenti (li quali da' grammatici si pungono per le distinzioni delle parole) sono tre, cioè acuto, grave, et circunflesso.  


Grave si pone solamente sopra l'ultima (et di raro | usano questo i latini), ut ferè, féreme, ponè. Circunflesso si pone sopra l'ultima, ut lettera' he may mean that the written accent is the cause of the spoken accent, by 'inizialmente 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 orazione' that it divides continuous speech into units.

<Acento grave> Grave si pone sopra un certo segno scritto per le distintioni delle voci, et di tempo, et di spiriti, et è la differentia del significato delle dizioni.  

<Definizion del circunflesso> L'accento anch'oe legge et legula di alzare et di abassare la sillaba di ciascuna particella di orazione, et debbasi fare causalmente nella lettera, initialmente nella sillaba, et dittionalmente nella dittione, et particolarmente nella orazione.  

<Dove deriva l'accento> Accento si dice quasi...
...
9' 12. Le lettere consonanti 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, l, m, n. Le lettere alte sono quattro, cioè c, j, o, u. Le lettere brevi, cioè quelle che hanno la forza di due lettere, sono due: e e z. Ma x si pone per la c e s, ma la z si pone per duplice ss. Le lettere vocali sono cinque, cioè a, e, i, o, u, e se dividono in due modi, cioè in prepositive e in le soggiuntive. Le prepositive sono tre, cioè a, e, o. Le soggiuntive sono altrettante, cioè e, u, i. Et si dimandano soggiuntive perché soggiunte alle prepositive costituiscono e fanno le diphthongi. Le diphthongi sono cinque, cioè ae, oe, au, eu, ei. Ma essa anch'essa usano normalmente la detta alla perfetta sententia e sono date. La drittia simile al modo.

10° Orazione è una composizione et ordinazione di parole, la quale declara un congruo et perfetto senso. 32 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 33 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta declara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 30 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 32 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 30 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 30 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 30 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia. 30 Et si divide in due parti, in orazione perfetta et imperfetta. La perfetta deehara una congrua et perfetta sententia.
questo si dice così, che tanto lungamente si debba voltare infino a che rettamente si constituiscia. <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 ritmo, il quale Fabio <Fabio Quintiliano> vuole che sia metro, che il metro ha certo et finito spazio. Il ritmo ne ha fine certo, né alcuna varietà nel contesto, ma perché cominzi per la elevazione et positione, scorre in fine al fine.37 <Che cosa è ritmo secondo Beda prete> Ma Beda interpreta il ritmo una modulata composizione assai divisa non per metrica ragione ma per metricali ragioni, et ordinata composizione, et modicius, et certamente se senza metro non può essere, perché metro è ragione con modulazione, ritmo modulazione senza ragione. Non dimeno il più delle volte per certo caso troverai anchora la ragione nel ritmo non servata per la moderazione dello artificio ma per sonno, et essa modulazione conducente, il quale i volgari poteti di necessità rusticamente, detti fanno dottamente.38 <Diffinitione del ritmo secondo i greci> Ma i greci affermano il ritmo essere composto di arsis et thesis et di tempo, il che alcuni chiamavano vacuo. <Diffinitione del ritmo secondo Aristoxeno> Aristoxeno disse questo essere tempo diviso in ciascun di questi che numerosamente si possono comparre. <Diffinitione del ritmo secondo Nicomacho> Ma secondo Nicomacho, ritmo è una ordinata composizione di tempi.39 Medesimamente ritmo volgare è uno generi di dettare. Dettare niente altro è che una congrua et ordinata o decora loquutione di au-rium' et Diomedes (ed. Keil, Grammatici Latini, i. 474): "Metrum esto puncta 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 composizione, et ordine de piedi, ritrovata per dilettar l'udito: overamente poetae rusticamente, dotti Janno dottamente. 38 The quotations from 'the Greeks', Aristoxenus, and Nicomachus were translated from Zarlino (1558). 39 This sentence also comes from Gafurio (Miller, p. 71).
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 fifth, fa fa, 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 species of fifth, ut sol, and first species of fourth, re sol. The fourth in the seventh mode is above the fifth, in the eighth below it. All plagal modes have the same fourth and fifth as the authentic ones, but in the authentic modes the fourth is above the fifth, in the plagal modes below the fifth, as follows:

![Diagram of modes](image)

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. For [as] some [affects] are gay, others agreeable, some solemn and sedate, others sad and plaintive, some choleric, others impetuous, so melodies, since some move us in one way and some in another, are differentiated by composers in various ways. 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 end 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. According to Donatus the Grammarians, There are three positions or pointings (which the Greeks call theseis): distinctio, subdistinctio, and media distinctio. 6 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 comata. 7 The parts of reading are ascent, distinction, pronunciation, modulation. Ascend 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. 8
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. Avoid barbarisms, which Isidore calls a word entounded with a wrong letter or sound. 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. 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 socyssey. Latins call it tone and pitch (tenor) because the sound rises and falls in it. 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. 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. The figures of accents used by grammarians are for acute, for grave, and a combination for circumflex. 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 feré, fermi, poné. Circumflex accents occur on the last, as illius ergó. In Vergil's sixth book they are also found on the penultimate, as Róma, Romanus, fortína.

9. Accents were invented for distinction, pronunciation, or to clarify ambiguity. 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.

10. A syllable is a group of letters pronounced with one accent and breath without a pause, 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 mā, through the length of its circumflex, twice takes as much time as pā, because pāter is said with an acute accent. 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. A single vowel is improperly called a syllable; it is a letter. The other syllables have from two to six letters, such as stirps.

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]. Letter is the smallest part of the sound composed of letters. 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. It is composed of two Greek accents, Ἰ and Ἱ. Joining the former two yields ϖ, joining the latter Η.

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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: 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, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. Nine are mute: b, c, d, f, g, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x, z. A single vowel is improperly called a syllable; it is a letter. The other syllables have from two to six letters, such as stirps.

13. The composer must be acquainted with metre or verse, that is to 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

The Letters

93. Del Lago to Fra Seraphin, 26 Aug. 1141

890

891
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 strucere, 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 ektlhipsis 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 Quintilian, 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 rhythmic organization not regulated by metre but by sound and movement; such verse unlearned poets necessarily make clumsily, but learned ones skillfully.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 1500s 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, Diosmades, 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.
Francesco Lupino to Giovanni del Lago, 24 April 1541

Al mio da padrono honorando Messer Pre Zanetto da Lago dignissimo professore dell‘arte musicha in Venetia.

Messer Pre Zanetto padrono honorando.

Per il presente aportador quale Daniel ho receputa una de V.R. insieme con quella bella opera di musicha, la quale mi‘e stata tanto grata quanta si pot dir al mondo, et dogliimi che a! presente no[n] ho di podervi rimeritar di tanto dono. Como V.S. mi mandar:li 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

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Girolamo Malipiero to Giovanni del Lago, 27 November 1543

1. Havendo io frate Hieronymo Maripetro1 dell‘ordine di San Francesco di osservantia data a Messer Adriano uno volume del canto della messa et officio del glorioso nome JESU et della messa et officio della dispensazione 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 prelate messe, perché volendole poner in stampa, non si può differire, essendo bora quelli del Zonta [= Giunta] che stampano li graduali alla fine de l‘opera,3 alla quale opera vogliono aggiungere le prelate 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 haverlato alia R.V. acciò che quella li ponesse la sua censura, come in tale arte dottissima, il che molto ne è piaciuto, 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 preghiamo la R.[V.] per quella chariti 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 saper:l intende le corretioni di V.S., si 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 caved le messe per essere necessarie al prestare alla stampa. Poi remanderemo subito a V.R. la parte de lo antifonario, cioè le antifone degli vesperi et li toni dell'i
hynni. Et quando a V.R. fu necessario mandar uno messo a posta, de qui sarà sastituto. Et a V.S. si raccomandiamo.

Dalla libraria del Zio in Venetia a di 27 di novembre 1543.

V.S. mandi il libro in mano nostra o vero a Messer Adriano.

1. I, Fra Hieronymo Maripetro 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 confirmed and the Giunta firm, which has nearly finished printing the gradual, needs the music to place at the end of the volume. 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.

De intervallis

Suono è un cadere de una voce et de una medesima intensione.

Phthongi unioni quelli si dimandano li quali non hanno differentia né in gravità né anchora in acuità.

Consoni phthongi quelli così sono chiamati li quali insiem i'un con l'altro egualmente commisti cadono con suavitet et dolcezza nelle orecchie.

Dissoni si dimandano quelli i quali quasi insieme essi medesimi propulsanti si esasperano lo auditum. Ma quelli i quali quantunque non erano dissonanti ora sono divenuti dissonanti.

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 Santa 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).

De 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. 141-6. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Professor Thomas J. Mathiessen of Indiana University in tracking down Del Lago's sources. Dr Loofran Holford-Strevens kindly supplied further references; it was he who discovered Del Lago's debt to Morelli.

2 Cf. Aristoxenus, Elementa harmonica 1.15, ed. Rosetta da Rios (2 vols., Rome, 1954), l. 20, l. 16-17; The Harmonics, trans. Henry S. Macran (Oxford, 1902), p. 176: 'It 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, r. 1: 'A note is a sound maintaining one and the same tone' (De Harmoniæ des Claudius Ptolemaios, ed. Düring, p. 10, l. 19). Del Lago's 'et de' makes no sense; it must be 'et'.


4 Cf. Boethius, De musica 4.1 (Friedlein, p. 102): 'Consonae quidem sunt, quae simul pulsae suavem permutatamque inter se coniungunt sonum.'

5 Cf. Boethius, De musicæ 1.8 (Friedlein, p. 151): 'Dissonantia vero est duorum sonorum sibimet permixtorum ad aurem veniens aspersa atque inuicuanda percussio'; ibid. 5.11 (Friedlein, p. 351): 'Dissonae vero sunt, quae non permiscere solvuntur etiam sonantur.'
siano consoni non però offendono le orecchie, si dimandano medi. Et
avenga che li phthongi dissoni si chiamino così ecmeles, come
che emmelis. Non dimeno dissoni noi chiamamo quelli qua in questo loco, li
quali si dimandano emmelis.6

Intervallo è quello il quale sotto duei soni di acuità et gravità differenti
si contiene.4

Intervallo maggiore di intervallo è quello che sopra l’altro intervallo
abonda di qualche cosa. Del medesimo genere intervallo 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 medi, cioè
partecipanti del l’uno et dell’altro.

Consonanti intervalli in systemate immutabile sono solamente quattro. Il
primo è diapason, il secondo diapason, il terzo diapason et diapente, il
quarto biadiapason.7

Medii intervalli (secundo piace a Ptolomeo nel primo libro al settimo
capitolio) sono tutti l’intervalli superparticulari qualunque componeno il
diatessaron.8 Ma quelli i quali sono in uso alli cantori diatonici, cioè i
quali usano el diatonico tonico, quali sono i cantori di qui del nostro paese,
sono questi, cioè primo trimetitonia, 2° ditono, 3° diatessaron, 4° tritone,
il quale tritone, quantunque dali nostri non se connumerl7 tra li medi
intervalli, nondimeno li antichi lo hanno usato, et Gaudentio philosoh el
conna torna e pone tra li emmelis. 5° è diapente et "semiprime", 6° diapente
et diapason, 7° diapason col sesquitono, 8° diapason et ditono, 9° diapason
di diatessaron et diapason, x° x° diapason diapente et semituo-

6 Cf. Gaudentius, Harmonica introductio 8 (ed. Jan, p. 318): ‘Paraphonous are those
intermediate between consonant and dissonant, but appearing consonant in collision;
for example the tritone from parhpyate mean to paramene and the ditone from diatonic lichanos
mean to paramene.’

7 Cf. Boethius, De musica 5. 11 (Friedlein, p. 161): ‘Emmelis autem sunt, quaecunque
consonae quidem non sunt, possunt aptari tamen recte ad melos, ut sunt haec, quae consonantias
iungunt. Saepe vero, quae non recipuerunt in consonantiam coniunctione’ (after
Pseudo-Boethius). Boethius does not name ecmele sounds, but the tone is considered ecmele (5. 12).

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. Pseudo-Boethius, Harmonica 1. 7: ‘Following on from 4:3, the ratios nearest equality are those
that compound in commensurate differences, i.e. the smaller superparticulars: after the
consonant notes next in virtue are the ecmeles, 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).
De generibus

Genere è certa habitudine de suoni i quali componeno et fanno il diatessaron.

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 lexis canonet but also Cleonides’ Aristoxenian Isagoge harmonica.

17 Cf. Cleonides, Isagoge harmonica 5 (ed. Jan, p. 188, l. 4–p. 189, l. 2): ‘Incomposto 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 tritemitone is incomposite in the chromatic, composite in the diatonic; the ditone is incomposite in the enharmonic, composite in the chromatic and diatonic. All those less than the semitone are incomposite; likewise those greater than the ditone 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, ll. 27–8).

19 Cf. Ptolemy 1. 12 (ed. Düring, pp. 29, ll. 16–20): ‘From which he [Aristoxenus] sets up six kinds of unmixed genera: one 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. 165).

20 Cf. Ptolemy 1. 12 (ed. Düring, p. 29, ll. 16–20): ‘From which he [Aristoxenus] sets up six kinds of unmixed genera: one 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’.

21 Cf. Gafuro, De harmonia, fo. 57: ‘Enharmonicum [sic] genus ita tetrachordi dividit intervalla ut duo graviora densi duas diesnemias enharmonicas teneant: ac reliquum acutissimum unius toni est cum dimidio et quarta toni parte.’ The divisions of the tetrachord that follow are those of 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 libros 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, 1981), 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 Harmonik der Ptolemais, ed. Ingmar Düsing (Göttingen: Hängskås Årskrift 38/2; Göttingen, 1954), p. 157, ll. 13–14. We are grateful to Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens for kindly tracking down the reference.

24 Cf. Gafuro, De harmonia, fo. 57: ‘Chromaticum molel genus utroque intervallum spissi id est singula intervalla graviora in tetrachordo facit tertiam partem toni octavonum numero distincta, reliquum vero quod maius est et acutissimum: facit tonum cum dimido et tercia 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 sequentiae genus utroque intervallorum spissi id est duo graviora tetrachordi intervalla facit quartam partem cum octava unius toni utroque novenario descripta. Ac reliquum maius et acutissimum unius toni est cum dimido et quarta toni parte.’
The Letters

Chromatica toniēa 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 propio genere. 28

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

| Enharmonia | Chromatica toniēa | Chromatica hemiolia | Chromatica toniēa | Diatonica molle | Diatonica in|c|t|i|s|n|u|m|s|
|-----------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| 48        | 44               | 42                 | 36              | 30            | 24          |
| 6         | 8                | 9                  | 12              | 18            | 24          |

26 Ibid., fo. 3: 'Chromaticum toniaeum genus utrunque intervallum densi id est duo graviora intervalla uniuscuiusque tetrachordi efficit semitonio numero 12 pernotata. At reliquam maius et acutissimum tonus est et semitonio 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 anius toni 18 numero descriptum. At reliquam acutissimum intervallum habet toniæum cum quarta parte tonii numero 30 deductum.' Del Lago mistranslated Gafurio’s ‘quod medium est’, referring to the second interval, as ‘et la meti 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 semitonii numero 12 notatum sequens vero quod medium est semitonium et quartum anius toni 18 numero descriptum.

29 This table follows Ptolemy, Harmonics 1. 12 (ed. Düring, p. 103), and Gafurio, De harmonia, fos. 177–178, reflecting Ptolemy’s division of the tone into 24 units. The table following lists the intervals according to Ptolemy’s division of the tone.

902

Diapason è intervallo del quale li estremi sono in dupla ratione. 30

Diapente, Diapente et semitonium, Diaplete et tonus

Diapason, Diapason et trihemitonium, Diapason et ditonum, Diapason et diatessaron

Diapason et diapente, et semitonium, Diapason, diapente, et tonus.

Disdiapason e quella la quale a doi diapason se copula et congione.

Ditono è quello che doi toni componeno.

Semitonio minore è quello che aggiunge el ditono sopra el diatessaron.

Semitonio maggiore è quello per quale il tono è maggiore del semitonio minore.

Diaschisma è la mità del semitonio minore.

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.

903
Diapente et tono è quello che se compone da diapente et dal tono. Che
se a qualunque de questi se aggiunge diapason, farà l'intervalli da questi et
da diapason composti, como sono diapason et trihemitonio.

Intervalla incomposita in minimis numeris

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diapason</td>
<td>2 : 1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3 : 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diatessaron</td>
<td>4 : 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diapason et diatessaron</td>
<td>8 : 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diapason et diapente</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonus</td>
<td>8 : 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditonus</td>
<td>6 : 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semitonium minus</td>
<td>243 : 256 : 288 : 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semitonium maius</td>
<td>1944 : 2048 : 2187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comma</td>
<td>472392 : 497664 : 524288 : 551441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>243 R : 62208</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schisma</td>
<td>524288 R : 27862819008 : 531441</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diesis maior et minor</td>
<td>486 : 499 : 512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesis ma. Diesis minor</td>
<td>243 : 256 : 288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trihemitonium</td>
<td>243 : 256 : 288</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diapente et semitonium</td>
<td>486 : 729 : 768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diapente et tonus</td>
<td>16 : 24 : 27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table omits the tritone but includes the ratios of the diacisma 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.

96. Del Lago to Molino, n.d.

Pentadecachordum diatonici generis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Pythagorean ratio</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Nete hyperboleon</td>
<td>3416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranete hyperboleon</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Trite hyperboleon</td>
<td>4374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nete diezeugmenon</td>
<td>4608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranete diezeugmenon</td>
<td>5184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trite diezeugmenon</td>
<td>5812</td>
</tr>
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<td>Paramese diezeugmenon</td>
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<td>Mese</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lichanos meson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parypate meson</td>
<td>8748</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hypate meson</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hypate hypaton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proslambanomenos</td>
<td>13824</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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 (tos. h²–2, h¹, h²–4); 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
calculations.

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,
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 2 221 016 instead of 1 990 616. Successive division by 246:243 and 2187:2048 yielded the other two wrong figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subprincipalis principialium</th>
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<th>12</th>
<th>5971968</th>
<th>24</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1 382416</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisita</td>
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<td>5971968</td>
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<td>Media</td>
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<td>3450 3456</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Index mediarum</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>3450 3456</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subprincipalis mediarum</td>
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<td>3450 3456</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Principalis principalium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquisita</td>
<td>5971968</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3450 3456</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MS: 265428.  
MS: 5388416.
Sound is the falling of a voice on the same pitch. Unison sounds are those that have no difference in pitch. Consonant sounds are those that when sounded together strike the ear sweetly. Dissonant sounds are those that when sounded together strike the ear harshly. Those that are not consonant but do not offend the ear are called medial. Dissonant sounds are also called emmelic or emmelic. We call the dissonant sounds emmelic.

Interval is that which is bounded by a higher and a lower sound. 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. Medial intervals, according to Ptolemy, Book I, ch. 7, are all the superparticular intervals that compose the fourth. 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. 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 Elements and Ptolemy agreed in Book I, ch. 6 of his Harmonics, disagreeing with the Pythagoreans, and also if it is added to any other interval, which was not approved by the Pythagoreans or by Aristotle 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. 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 genus. The ditone is composite 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.

On genera

Genus is a certain disposition of sounds within a fourth. 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. There are six kinds of genera, one enharmonic, three chromatic, and two diatonic.

Enharmonic consists of a succession, low to high, of two quarter-tones and a ditone. The quarter-tone is called an enharmonic diesis. Aristides Quintilianus, Book I, called it the smallest interval of the voice, from dialysis or dissolution of voice. There is only one division of the enharmonic genus; Porphyry therefore said it was not properly a genus, having no species under it. The soft chromatic has as its lowest intervals two-thirds of a tone plus a tone and five-sixths. 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. 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.
The Letters

The soft diatonic consists of a semitone, and a half-semitone and quarter-tone, and a tone and a quarter.\textsuperscript{27}

The intense diatonic consists of semitone, tone, and tone; its division is that of the genus.\textsuperscript{28}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enharmonic\textsuperscript{29}</th>
<th>Chromatic</th>
<th>Diatonic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soft</td>
<td>Hemiolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Enharmonic diesis 6
Soft chromatic diesis 8
Semitone 12
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.\textsuperscript{30}
The fifth in \textit{sesquialtera} ratio.
The fourth in \textit{sesquitertia}.
The eleventh consists of a continuous octave and fourth.

The twelfth consists of the addition of a fifth to an octave.
The fifteenth is two octaves joined together.
The tone is the excess of a fifth over a fourth.
The ditone is composed of two tones.
The minor semitone is the excess of a ditone over a fourth.\textsuperscript{31}
The major semitone is the excess of a tone over a minor semitone.
The comma is the excess of a major over a minor semitone.
The diachisma is half of a minor semitone.\textsuperscript{32}
The schisma is half of a comma.\textsuperscript{33}
The trihemitone is equivalent to a tone and a minor semitone.
The tritone is three tones.
The augmented fifth consists of a fifth and a minor semitone.
The fifth plus tone consists of a fifth and a whole tone. If an octave is added to any of these, they will become composite intervals, such as diapason and trihemitone.

Incomposite intervals in least numbers\textsuperscript{34}

\begin{align*}
\text{Octave} & : 2 : 1 \\
\text{Fifth} & : 3 : 2 \\
\text{Fourth} & : 4 : 3 \\
\text{Eleventh} & : 8 : 3 \\
\text{Twelfth} & : 3 : 1 \\
\text{Fifteenth} & : 4 : 1 \\
\text{Tone} & : 9 : 8 \\
\text{Ditone} & : 81 : 64 \\
\text{Minor semitone} & : 256 : 243 \\
\text{Major semitone} & : 2187 : 2048 \\
\text{Comma} & : 531441 : 512288 \\
\text{Diaschisma} & : 62208 : 243 = 256 : \sqrt{6208} \\
\text{Schisma} & : 278628 : 139008 : 524288 = \sqrt[3]{278628} \\
\text{Major diesis} & : 4999 : 486 \\
\text{Minor diesis} & : 512 : 499 \\
\text{Trihemitone} & : 288 : 243 \\
\text{Augmented fifth} & : 768 : 486 \\
\text{Fifth plus tone} & : 27 : 16
\end{align*}
The Letters

The fifteen notes of the diatonic genus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>According to Pythagoreans</th>
<th>According to Aristoxenus and practical musicians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</table>

96. Del Lago to Molino, n.d.

The chromatic division of the Great Perfect System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>According to Pythagoreans</th>
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The Letters

The enharmonic division of the double octave

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<th>According to Aristoxenus and practical musicians</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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97. Paris 1110, fos. 5r–6v
Anonymous to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. (copy, with corrections by Del Lago)

1. Il molto magnifico mio signore et compadre’ Meser Hieronimo Molino hammi referito con quanto dispiacere V.R. ci habbia ditto che io biasimi la musica, quanto sia alieno da lei, dimandandomi inimico capitale delle muse et dolendosi, si 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 professione di amico loro, et che ogni mio costume, ogni mia maniera et modo di vivere dependesse da quelle. Et apresso istimando doversemi ascrivere a grandissima presuntione, che io ardissi 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 rozzì, et massimamente a nostri tempi quando questa sola se ha reservato il nome de vertude, si che soli hogidi virtuosi se dimandano li musici, virtute la musica. Ma quello che più mi movea era che essendo io sempre stato il più inamorato homo di mondo et hora più che mai fosse, in niun modo mi paria convenirsi che io biasimase la musica, la quale so quanto sia conciliatrice del amore, et (din) cosi) 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 degli musici hogidi la usano ho inteso di dire, le quai cose che son certissimo che V. R. volentieri leggerà, perché essendo ella tanto in questa arte excellente quanto tutta questa cità et Italia gridà, et ne è amplissimo testimonio il detto magnifico Messer Hieronimo, li sera apiacer grande legere le lodi di quella arte nella quale ha fatto tanto profitto, se forse non si sdegnera che a cusi 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 deleterevole 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 si come li guidava il senso. Li menava la voluntade senza alcun culto, alcuna politia, né solamente non se

* MS: comprade.
regano per ragione, ma pur che vi fusse ragione in sé non conosceano che se in alcuno v'era qualche sentina, era di sorte vinta et suffocata dal appetito che non operava cosa veruna. Era allora il mondo di chi più potea, né alcuno si potea gloriar 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 fosse venuto voglia di tor lui alcuna di quelle cose o tutte insieme. Non solamente non davano li debiti honoro a Idio, ma nè pur lo conosceano o pensavano che li fusse.

3. Il che tanto durò fin che pur sorsero certi uomini, li quali o diretti da un più divino intelletto che in loro si trova, o, che più verisimile è, da Dio inspirati, deliberaron di vedere se possibile era non sforzare (che havesse fatto suo, ogniuno cognoscese la sua mogliera, et non communemente ad una vita

potea et pur lo

la musica a conservare le citadi, al suono della sua citara haver tratto le selvage fiere, l'altro li sassi con li qual cinse de mura la città di Thebe.

5. La musica insegnò li numeri della poetica a Lino, Museo, Homereto, et li altri antiqui, che poi con questo mezo mostraren alli uomini qual fusse la vita convenevole al huomo così in pace come in guerra, che senza il lenocinio della musica non mai sariano stati oditi. Nè meno poi fu utile la musica a conservare le citadi, di quello che fusse stata necessaria ad edificarle, a darli li ordeni, a darli le legge, conciosiaché che molte volte si leggian animi delle populi irati et accesii con quella essersi placati, molte volte li sbatuti esser sollevati, quelli che, oltra il cler feder placidò, non si resientano al utile della patria alla vendetta de chi la offendea, dalla musica esser stati inanimati et spinti. Erano già stanchi li Athenesii per la longa guerra che con danno dell'una et l'altra parte haveano havuto con megarei 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 de preponer in consiglio di far guera per tal causa con li megarei. Vedea il divin Solone quanto questo di vergogna reccasse e di danno alla sua patria, nè però cum altro mezo che dela musica li diede lo animo di rimediari, imperò che composto circa ciò una elegia et sopra un canto, et quella al suono della citara cantando nelli loci pubblici, di modo accese li animi di quel populo, che tratto da quella harmonia l'odiva, che levata la
The Letters

97. Anon. to Del Lago, n.d.

The source of this passage on music in Arcadia is Anon. to Del Lago, n.d. Polybius: the Cynaethians were unlike the other Arcadians, and their
to

6' Non meno stracchi li lacedemonii della guerra de mesenii (come suoleno li homini in tutte le difficoltà), recorsero a Dio et allo oracolo, il
quel conoscendo che d'altro non haveano bisogno che d'uno che sapesse
inanimare li soldati, li comandò che dimandassero dall'atheniesi un
capitano. Et a quello obedirono. Dieronli li atheniesi Tyrteo poeta, non
senza sdegno dei lacedemonii, che si istimavano sfesati dall'atheniesi,
loro perpetui adversarii et emoli, imperò che invece de valoroso et prode
capitano, li havessero dato un strupito [= storpito] dicitore (che zoppo
era Tyrteo). Ma dimostrò il successo quanto fusse stato utile et veramente
divino il consiglio del oracolo, imperò che sepppe Tyrteo con li versi et
canto accomodato sollevare li animi delli soldati, et 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 ail brazo un breve con il nome suo et
quella
del patre
giorno della battaglia se havea ligato ail brazo un breve con il nome suo et
qual
desperatamente combattendo, reportarono la vittoria da quello iminico, et
il patre acciò fussero riconosciuti nel sepelirli, tanto li havea accesi il
divin can
to.

7. Longo saria s'io volesse scrivere quante volte la musica ha acceso li
demessi animi dei soldati et populi, né manco sonno li essempi quando
li incitati ha racquetati, ma uno voglio per hora basti degnissimo de
memoria. Nella gravissima scinfita, che hebero li atheniesi in Sicilia delli
syracusani et lacedemonii loro accerbsissimi inimici, questi per la longa
guerra, quelli perché senza causa alcuna et solo per cupidità de imperio li
haveano volsuto tore la libertate, et li haveano fatto gravissimi danni in
quella scinfita, dico niuno dell'atheniesi servò la vittoria, se non chi sepppe
cantando versi di Euripide indolete lo animo del efferatissimo vittorioso
inimico. Ma che vogliamo noi con essempi dimostrare quanto sia la
musica utile alle cose della guerra? Non ha trovato la musica il modo che il
capitano pos[s]i parlarlo allo esercito et farli intendere quello fa bisogno
che faci? A che altro effetto sonno stati trovati la tromba, il tamburo, et il
flauto, se non per denotarli all'esi exerciti quando denno andare, denno far alto

8. Non meno stracchi li lacedemonii della guerra de mesenii (come
suoleno li homini in tutte le difficoltà), recorsero a Dio et allo oracolo, il
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capitano. Et a quello obedirono. Dieronli li atheniesi Tyrteo poeta, non
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dil patre acciò fussero riconosciuti nel sepelirli, tanto li havea accesi il
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dil patre acciò fussero riconosciuti nel sepelirli, tanto li havea accesi il
divin canto.
Gv utilità dalla musica?

et fatti loro degni di lode invitar li gioveni ad assimigliarseli, et quello che altrimente et inimici delle muse, nelli chori loro cantavano quella famosa non erano alhora li balli, che mute tragedie et comedie. 13

naturalmente habbiamo a schifo, di odir le lodi altrui, et massimamente senza offender lo animo delli represi,

quando fa bisogno la guerra, conserva la libertade, et brevemente, apresso li antiqui alcun buono oratore che non formasse la voce sua sotto delli homini has[s]i. Et da poi

o in que! modo vogliamo movere li animi delli auditori. qual la molle, qual la grande et sonora, qual la piccola et bassa.

della musica, quando (si come faceano li antiqui) con il numeroso moto canzone nella quale, se medesimi lodando, li vechi se esser stati valenti et

imposibile governar bene citade, popolo o stato alcuno, essendo ella la

arrangements prescribed in book 2 of

I, eh. 2, 'Delle laudi della Musica').

1 3 This paragraph seems to reflect familiarity with Aristotle's

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 oratoribus 3. 135 (cf. Quintilian 15. 6. 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').

The pronunciation, principal parte di quella, anzi (se volemo credere al principe d'oratori) nella quale consiste tutta la eloquentia, senza che la quale è cosa impossibile governar bene citade, popolo o stato alcuno, essendo ella la

La pronunciacione, principal parte di quella, anzi

Eloquio, see Cicero, De oratoribus 3. 125.

Homer, Odyssey 1. 152: 'Song and dance are the adornments of a feast.'

A confused recollection of the tale concerning auletes at Livy 9. 10. 510 (cf. Ovid, Fasti 6. 635-642; Valerius Maximus 2. 5. 4; Plutarch, Quaestiones Romanae 53 = Moralia 277 e-278 f), perhaps confused with Livy 9. 2. 4, on actors invited from Etruria to Rome.

The Letters

...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 presumed 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 virtuosi. But that which most swayed me was that (being the man 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, 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 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. 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...
except those who, singing verses of Euripides, mollified the spirit of the victors. But why should we give examples of how useful music is in war? It allows the captains to give orders to the army. 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. 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'. 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).

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.

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.

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. 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, 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. 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.

13. The Greeks, and especially the Athenians, the inventors of all the liberal disciplines, considered no one cultivated who was not a musician. In our age, as I said, music is held in such veneration that it alone is called 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 virioperatorem musicae, printed in 1509. Our author ignores, for example, the 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. 142–3. 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. 187v
Bernardino da Pavia to Giovanni del Lago, n.d. (autograph)¹

187v Reverendo Messer Pre Zanetto.

Heri fiummo Messer Adriano et io per invitarvi ad essere questa mattina insieme cum lo ambassatore nostro d’Ingliterra a disinar, dove se haverà da parlare alcune cose de musiche, et per questo lo ambassatore desidera il iuditio vostro insieme cum Messer Adriano. Sareti anchor contento portare cum voi la vostra divisione de tutti tre li generi, perche sopra quella se haverà a fare la diffinitione. Trovareti qua alcuni auctori quali hanno scritto de musiche, dico antiqui che non credo V.R. li habib ancora maii visti. Altro non accadde, se non ch’io son sempre alli comandi vostri. Vj aspetteremo a disinar.

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 1533, 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.
1. Da $C\,fa\,ut$ a $D\,sol\,re$, detti parhypâte hypatón et licanôs hypatón, sarà uno spatio del tuono, fra gli quali si vede il tasto negrom in mezzo, onde in questo luogo sarà l'elemento maggiore da $C\,fa\,ut$ al tasto detto negro, et seguendo al bianco, qual è $D\,sol\,re$, sarà minore. Questo appare da $A\,re$ et $C\,fa\,ut$, essendo terza minore. Et bisognandola accrescere alla perfettione o quantità della maggiore, gli mancherà un semituono maggiore, qual sarà quella distanza che è da $C\,fa\,ut$ al tasto negrom. \[\text{Dal detto } D\,sol\,re \text{ al tasto negro cade un semituono un poco più maggiore del suo bisogno,}\]

2. per il quale non si può aiutare la terza minore che la qual cade da $b\,mi$ a $D\,sol\,re$, come in tutti gli altri tuoni divisi si conosce. Volendo adunque in questo luogo fare che ditta terza sia maggiore, bisogna che quel tal semituono, o tasto negro di sopra della posizione o chorda $D\,sol\,re$, sia alquanto sbassata, et sbassandosi, vengono guaste le quinte et ottave corrispondenti al detto tasto negro, cosa inconveniente et di grandissima confusione, et molto peggio che prima non era. Questo inconveniente solamente si trova tra $D\,sol\,re$ et $E\,la\,mi$ et nelle ottave et quinte decade, perché sempre mai l'acuto et sopraccuto corrispondono 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 $b\,mi$ della maggiore, per essere da loro questa posizione poco exercitata. Et per tal cosa manca che quella terza minore non si può far maggiore, se non si tagliassì il tasto di sopra detto tasto negro, il quale sarebbe 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.

3. Et passando più oltre col tasto negro alla chorda di $E\,la\,mi$, troverai similemente l'elemento semituono maggiore, il quale dà la perfettione alla quinta dimostrando del detto $E\,la\,mi$ alla chorda di $b\,fa$ acuto. Da $E\,la\,mi$ et $F\,fa\,ut$, ovvero diye hypátè mesôn a parhypátè mesôn, naturalmente cade il semituono minore. Ma da parhypátè mesôn a lichanôs mesôn, nominati $F\,fa\,ut$ et $G\,sol\,re\,ut$, il tuono si conosce, et diviso in mezzo con il tasto negrom, 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 anderrai alla sua ottava. Ma da esso tasto negro al bianco di $G\,sol\,re\,ut$ tu troverai el semituono minore.

4. Da $G\,sol\,re\,ut$ ad $A\,la\,mi$, chiamato mèsè, 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 semituono maggiore per quella sesta minore di $b\,mi$ a $G\,sol\,re\,ut$, la quale per cagione del detto tasto negro diventa maggiore. Et discorrendo dal tasto negro alla chorda del sopradetto $A\,la\,mi$, 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 due tuoni, et el semituono minore da esso ditto tasto negro quinto al seguenti bianco, quale è $A\,la\,mi$, la qual | compositione genera un diąż tessaron.

5. Da $A\,la\,mi$ a trite synemenon, ditto $b\,mi$ acuto,\[\text{cede un tuono, et diviso sarà da ditto } A\,la\,mi\text{ al tasto negro un semituono minore, et seguendo al bianco il maggiore, come chiaramente tutti gli musichi dimostrano, massimamente quando delle mutationi parlono. Da } b\,mi\text{ acuto a trite diazeugmenón, chiamato } C\,sol\,fa\,ut\text{, cade il minore semituono, negli quali intervalli non è mezzo alcuno. Da } C\,sol\,fa\,ut\text{ a paranète diazeugmenon, detto } D\,la\,mi\text{ re, cade un tuono, diviso dal tasto negro, dal qual tasto negro al } C\,sol\,fa\,ut\text{ predetto è una distanza d'un semituono maggiore. Et seguendo da esso tasto negro al seguenti bianco è il semituono minore, e questo per cagione della sesta minore, formata da } E\,la\,mi\text{ a } C\,sol\,fa\,ut\text{. 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,\text{ re in } b\,fa\,mi,\text{ il settimo tasto negro, qual son due tuoni, et il semituono per conseguente sarà dal settimo tasto negro al bianco, che è } D\,la\,sol\,re\text{.}

6. Da $D\,la\,sol\,re$ a nète diazeugmenón, chiamato $E\,la\,mi$, è un natural tuono diviso dal semituono negrom, il quale sarà distante quanto fu quello che da $b\,mi$ et $D\,sol\,re$ fu dichiarato. Da $E\,la\,mi$ a trite hyperboleon, detto $F\,fa\,ut$, cade un semituono minore. Da $F\,fa\,ut$ a paranète hyperboleon, chiamato $G\,sol\,re\,ut$ secondo, similemente 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 seguenti bianco, chiamato $G\,sol\,re\,ut$. Da $G\,sol\,re\,ut$ a nète hyperboleon, detto $A\,la\,mi\text{ re, cade un tuono, diviso dal tasto negro, il quale è distante per uno semituono maggiore, lo qual augumenta la sesta cadente da } b\,mi\text{ acuto a } G$

7. The author has confused the conjunct and disjunct tetrachords: $B\,mi$ is paramese, $B\,fa$ is trite synemenon.

8. Up to this point, the description of the keyboard has been in strictly Pythagorean terms. But in labelling the interval $D\,-\,E$ as 'a semitone somewhat larger than usual', but $E\,-\,F$ a major semitone, the author is describing a tempered interval. This becomes clear when he says that in order to play a $D\,G$ it would be necessary to split the key and lower part of it; therefore the interval $D\,-\,E$ must be greater than a minor semitone. In this case, the ‘wolf fifth’ must fall between $G\,a$ and $E\,b$.

9. The author has confused the conjunct and disjunct tetrachords: $B\,mi$ is paramese, $B\,fa$ is trite synemenon.
The Letters

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 E 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 semitono minore, et seguendo all’altro tasto bianco il maggiore.


10. Et perché forse a vostra reverenda Paternità sarà grato intenderne anchora quanta’ distanza sia da tasto negro a negro, torrò volentieri la faticha acciò che quella habbi notizia et intelligentia di tutto lo instrumento, et così dirò. Dal primo tasto negro al secondo seguente è la distanza di un tuono et semitono maggiore, gli quali congiunti insieme generano la composizione d’un semitono et comma, perché da esso semitono negro al sequente resta in mezzo il semitono minore, come dal terzo al quarto, sesto et settimo, ottavo et nono, undecimo et duodecimo, terzodecimo et quartodecimo, sestodecimo et decimosesto, sesto et settimo, ottavo et nono, undecimo et duodecimo, tasto bianco il maggiore.


13. Onde, reverendo padre honorando, se in questa presente mia dichiaratione non havesi satissato 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, pigliare la ottava sopra di esso C fa ut, et fa che sempre sia bene unita, perché come dice Aristotile, ‘nichil datur ultra perfectum, neque diminui tur.’ Et seguendo, pigliare la terza sopra di D 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 seguendo 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 acherba D sol re, ottava di detto D la sol re, et seguendo, pigliare la sua quintina 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 quantità da l’altra], le qual quinte in questo accordo non si uniscono al suo perfetto, massimamente allo estremo superiore, come sono le quinte di sopra a C fa ut, D sol re, et E la mi. Considerando che il C sol fa ut è unito giusto, bisogna che la quinta sua inferior, 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 (1196), Book II, ch. 40, fo. M4.  
5 The last interval named [G^5] 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 (1021b12-14).  
7 The missing words have been supplied from the Toscanello, fo. M4.
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.

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 tone below, called fa, which corresponds with f ut, and another tone below gamma, called re, which is a whole tone higher than ut, and a minor semitone above ut. This can be seen by the interval between the black key and the key of gamma, which is diminished by a major semitone; the key of gamma makes the interval of a fifth sweet.

4. From e to d, parhypate hypaton and lichanos hypaton, is a tone. The black key in the middle is a major semitone from e and a minor semitone from d. To increase the minor third, e to d, it is necessary to add a major semitone, the distance between e and the black key. From d to the next black key is a semitone somewhat larger than usual, which prevents making the minor third Be-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 Bb for more than Db. 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, re on 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, 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 e is a minor semitone, which is not divided. From e to d', paranete diezeugmenon, is a tone divided by a black key a major semitone from e 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 e'' to d'' is a tone, and from e'' 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 [Eb–c] is a tone plus a major semitone, equivalent to a semiditone plus comma, because between this black semitone and the next minor semitone is in the middle [Bc–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–d] is a tone somewhat larger than usual, from the third to the fourth [eb–f] a semiditone slightly augmented, from the fourth to the fifth [d–g] a tone. From the fifth to the sixth [g–b] two minor semitones, from the sixth to the seventh [b–e] a tone and major semitone, from the seventh to the eighth [e–a] a somewhat augmented tone. From the eighth to the ninth [e–g] is a trihemitone, from the ninth to the tenth [g–c] a major and minor semitone, from the tenth to the eleventh [c–f] two minor semitones, from the eleventh to the twelfth [f–b] a tone and major semitone. From the twelfth to the thirteenth [b–e] is the same as between the seventh and the eighth. From the thirteenth to the fourteenth [e–a] three semitones, as between the eighth and ninth keys. From the fourteenth to the fifteenth [a–d] is a tone, and from the fifteenth to the sixteenth [d–g] two minor semitones, from the sixteenth to the seventeenth [g–c] a tone and major semitone, from the seventeenth to the eighteenth [c–f] 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 seventh and twelfth, an octave between the eight and thirteenth and the ninth and fourteenth, tenth and fifteenth, eleventh and sixteenth, a fifth between the twelfth and fifteenth and the 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.

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.' 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, e', like the first one. Next tune b an octave below, then a, which should be equidistant between e' and f.

Between e' and f: These fifths should not be quite as perfect, especially the upper note, as those above c, d, and e. Considering that e' 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 e'. Lastly, tune all the major semitones between their thirds, e.g. e 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.
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 B♭ 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 pitch 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 some 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♭–F and B♭–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, who is_Report_ to I 523 he seems not to have had 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 B♭ 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 pitch 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 some minor semitones are assisted in such a temperament to the degree that they sound concordant in polyphony and do not offend the ears'. 15

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12 See no. 34, para. 1, and no. 30, para. 3, where Spataro ascribes Aaron's confusion of B♭ with C♯ to the lack of B♭ 'nel vostro monochordo'.

13 'Ei ex communi quidem sententia maius semitonium superiorem locum tenet. Sed ex his quae supra diximus:videri potuit inferiorum illi locum esse tribuendum... Attamen cum tantum habebat locum, et quidem (ut omnes asserunt) superiorem, quomodo et quo ratione fit, ut etiam per semitonium minus, quod inferiori parte toni posita est, illa perfecti videatur?' (ibid., fo. 102-3).

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 potest nota: Nam tonus (ut dictum est) in novem commatis dividitur... etiam si absit, nullam dissonantiam ingenere quae aures offendat' (ibid., fo. 43v). 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 etiam per semitonium minus, quod inferiori parte toni posita est, illa perfecti videatur' (De institutione harmonica, fo. 42v).

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: quemadmodum quae supra diximus: videri potuit inferiorem illi locum esse tribuendum.... Attamen cum tantum habebat locum, et quidem (ut omnes asserunt) superiorem, quomodo et qua ratione fit, unum semitonium maius quod solum quidem illam reddere plenam debet, unum vero semitonium minus, quod inferiori parte toni posita est, illa perfecti videatur? (De institutione harmonica, fo. 42v).

17 See no. 12 nn. 8, 10, and 16.
exposition of the matter, which he could publish under his own name. 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. 218v–v1
Pietro Aaron to Paulo de Laurino, 29 April 1525 (autograph)

218v Al reverendo padre Frate Paulo napolitano come fratello amantissimo, etc.

218v 1. Gli dubbi gli quali V.P. a me ha domandati, brevemente a quella gl’i
mendo.

2. Et prima intenderete essere cinque figure o vero note essenziale, 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
notte 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 imperfecto 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 imperfecte si chiama
alhora modo maggiore imperfecto. El qual modo si difinisce essere una
regola data et ordinata alla figura massima et longa. Tempo è quello
intervallo che passa nella positione et elevatione di una breve cantando per
el presente segno <t: 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 imperfecta o vero
minore, la qual si difinisce essere una figura semibreve constitute 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 questo che subito si stamerà, del

1 A copy of this letter (lacking para. 3 to the end) is found in Paris 1110, fo. 44v (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.
The Letters

quale senza altra fatica mia, la quale sarebbe stata, sarete chiaro, della quale 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 Venetia el di 29 apriles 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. 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 $\gamma$, called a beat. Tempus also applies to the semibreve under $\sigma$, 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, which is about to be printed; it will save me a lot of time. I am always at your command.

101 (J84). Fo. 217
Pietro Aaron to [Lorenzo Gazio], 14 February 1534
modern style (copy in Del Lago's hand)

217° Copia
Reverende pater.

1. Cerca el quesito da V.P. fattomi, cioè dove dicesti: ‘Domando a V.E. qual sia quella proporzione la quale manca agli ottobre commi per arivare al tono, o vero che manca al tono per arivare agli novi commi’, a mi pare esser: 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 3° libro della sua Musica circa questi termini, nelli quali insieme comparati cade el comma ut hic 531441 ad 534288. Onde che l’intervalo predetto del comma ridotto al genere superparticolare cade in maggior proporzione di 75 ad 74 et in minore di 74 ad 73, et perche sono difficili da conducerli, sono da Boetio senza altra terminazione rilasciati, dil che in maggiore difficoltà se incorrerebbe volendo affaticarsi in componere lo intervallo del tono per spazi de comma, come domanda V.P., cioè di voler vedere se intrà tale extremità cade piu de otto o manco de novi commi, etc. Onde essendo el quesito difficile et arduo, et quasi irresolubile, io non vorrei spendere il tempo in vano, perche cognosco che tal vostro quesito nasce dal capitolo 15 del 3° libro della Musica di Boetio, dove dice che el spazio del minor semitonio piglia piu de tri commi, et manco di quatro, et che el maggiore coglie piu de quattro et manco de cinque, alla quale sententia Jacobo Fabri assai contradice, perche nel cogliere insiemi gli predetti commi, insiemi si discordano, perché Boetio dice che piu de tri commi et manco di quatro al semitonio minore, et piu di quattro commi et manco di cinque appartiene al semitonio maggiore, onde che insiemi tulti fanno piu de ottobre commi, et manco di nove, delli quali dice che el tono sarà reintegrato. Ma el

4 ‘Ut 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. 1534, the answer ‘penultimare’ 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 Epistolae, as he did with the letter that follows this one in the Vatican manuscript; see no. 100 n. 2.

2. Vedendo adunque questa discordia infra questi dui sapienti, V.P. me achorderà questa cithera, et di poi si degnerà darmi avviso del suo parere con qualche dimostrazioni 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 di 14 febraro M.D.xxxiii [1534 modern style].

Tutto de V.P. Frate Petro Aaron

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. He gives the comma as 531.441:524.288, between 71.74 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, whereas Boethius reckons it at more than eight but less than nine.

In view of this discord between two such authorities, please tune your lyre and then advise me, with proportional terms, and once I have understood it I shall answer you.

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2. In view of this discord between two such authorities, please tune your lyre and then advise me, with proportional terms, and once I have understood it I shall answer you.

See Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, Elementa musicalia (Paris, 1496), Book II, prop. 35 (fo. g2 Recto): "Semitonium minus tribus commati minus est vero quattuor. Unde manifester est apomenum plura quattuor et pascioura quinque continere commata", and prop. 36 (fo. g3 Verso): "Trocam plura sepetm et continere commata necessire est." (Faber does not say that the tone contains less than eight commas.)
I.

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), 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 table 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.’

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; compare my figures with Faber’s. Also, the figures on his lines o, r, and p are wrong, and in proposition 3\textsuperscript{5}, where he says ‘I multiply d by h and c by k and d by f,’ it should be ‘I multiply c by h and f by k and e by l’; 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 Bucchus 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. Albert of Saxony, in the first chapter of his Proportions, says: An irrational proportion is found only in continuous, not in discrete, quantities. Even

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.

102. Gazio to Aaron, 27 Feb. 1534

1. Non altro a V.R., eccetto che son tutto vostro et molto mi raccomando, et se ho scritto cosa che vi dispiaccia, perdonatemi.

Data in San Fortunato de Basciano,\textsuperscript{10} a di penultimo di febbraio 1534.

Di V.S. tutto Don Laurentio Gazio cremonese

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\textsuperscript{10} Basciano is a small town 21 km from Teramo.
if they are difficult to calculate, following the doctrine of Laxo, Saliceo, and others, they would not seem so difficult.

5. If I have written anything that displeases you, forgive me.

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Reverendo Don Laurentio quanto fratello honorando, etc.

1. Per una di V.P. a me mandata [no. 102] et esaminata, et tutto ho inteso, et con tutto el core et forze mie la ringratio, et gia sino ad hora havevo dato principio di componere dei estremi sesquiottavi per spazi di comma con entegri numeri, solo per vedere de quanto' otto commi mancavano al compimento degli estremi predetti sesquiottavi, et di quanto tali estremi sesquiottavi erano da nove commi superati. Et perche a me era molto faticosa, non tanto per gli grandi numeri che gli occorrevano, quanto per essere in altre cose piu necessarie occupato, non ho seguito tal mia deliberazione, perché da me non è tenuto che in numeris si possi dare proporzione irrationale. Et dico che la proporzione del comma, et altre simile, per la difficultà della sua propria misura et denominazione è stata da Boetio² ditta per incerta' proporzione superparticulare, cioè come si denominano dei estremi proportionati arithmetice divisi, come el spazio sesquiottavo, 16. 17. 18, el mezzo del quale spazio 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 piu di otto commi et piu di tre quarti di uno comma, el quale ordine è da quella observato per schivare quella difficile et quasi inpossibile denominazione della proporzione 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 piu di otto commi et piu di 3 quarti, che quella erri, perché si doverrebbe dire di otto commi, et non piu di otto. Et similmente a me anchora non piace, dove dicete piu di 3 quarti, perché contradicete alla figura vostra a me mandata, in la qual figura V.P. dimostra che 'l spazio del comma non si potrà in due parte equamente dividere. Per tanto seguirà che dove non si potrà dar mezzo, che anchora geometriche non si potrà dar quarta parte. Per la qual cosa io credo che da Boetio sia meglio stato scritto, dove dice che 'l spazio del tuono contiene in sé piu di otto et manco di neve commi. Onde concludo essere meglio ditto che el spazio del tuono contiene in sé piu di otto commi, el quale piu di otto commi piu si avicina alli nove commi, che

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² A copy of this letter is found in Paris 1110, fo. 49' (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 71:74 and 74:71 (De musica 1. 16, ed. Friedlein, pp. 286–7); cf. no. 101, para. 1.
The Letters

agliotto. Et per tale modo V.P. potra cognoscere che siete 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
perdonera, 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 di 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 arith-
metically 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 2
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 saying 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.

5 A pointed reference to Exod. 3:14. See no. 102 n. 4.
datomi sopra il detto canto fatto per noi già sono qualche anni, così gli dirò.

4. Che perché il descenso di 10° in 8° non sia osservato dal musicista grato, se per grato non si vol haver Brumel nel suo 'Victimae paschali', sopra le parole, 'Duc vitae mortuus', et colui che fa 'Quid retribuam Domino', che sopra le parole 'Alleluia alleluia' fa il descenso di terza in unisono, che è quasi il medesimo, è forse degli altri, et né perché di presente io not l'comporti alli nostri scholari, non ho fuga, quantunque la via della compositione sia larga.

Consonanza imperfetta ad una perfetta, siano quali esser si vogliano, il quale ignora (che purtroppo poco chi non sa numerar i canti) si vede nei grato, se per grato non si vol haver Brumel nel suo 'Victimae paschali', che sopra le parole, 'Dux vitae mortuus', et colui che fa 'Quid retribuam' in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, suo numero manca, si comprende. O vero con quella di Brumel, che nella messa 'de Beata Virgine', nel contra alto sopra le parole 'Mariæ virginis Matris', propone questo altro C, il quale medesimamente dopo se manca del numero binario. Contra de' quali, per salvarme, non intendo haver detto, perché essi con ragione oltre 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.

214" 6. Ultimamente, a questo segno C discendendo, che manca del suo numero, con che tutta la somma della compositione in potentia et resolutione sia intera, si dir così, che si 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 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 avvertito, la qual fu questa, che quando la misura è posta nella semibreve, che allhora il canto va numerato a semibrevi, essendo la elevatione et dispositione in simil caso posta nella minima a somiglianza della semibreve risguardando alla a, cosa che io non ne glie 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 Josquin, il qual produce questo segno C nello contra alto della sua messa 'Fasiant regreth' sopra le parole 'Qui locutus est per prophetas', il qual segno dopo se del suo numero manca, si comprende. O vero con quella di Brumel, che nella messa 'de Beata Virgine', nel contra alto sopra le parole 'Mariæ virginis Matris', propone questo altro C, il qual medesimamente dopo se manca del numero binario. Contra de' quali, per salvarme, non intendo haver detto, perché essi con ragione oltre 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 no potrebbe.

5 See no. 106, mm. 48 and 49.

6 This work seems not to have survived, unless it is transmitted anonymously or under the name 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):

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 musices mundanae, humanae sc instrumentalis per tonos conformitas ostenditur' (ed. Wolf, pp. 16–60). Spatato, 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. 57–9). Del Lago had apparently pointed out that the passage from C to F contains only two and a half breves.
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 and canonic composition, for they are the cause of our friendship, as the present bearer of Zanetto del Lago's letter 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, was it not used by Brumel in his 'Victimae paschali' at 'Dux vitae mortuus'? The author of 'Quid retribuam Domino' used a third descending to a unison, almost the same thing, at 'Alleluia alleluia'. 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', sol indicates the note attributed to the sun (sol), ichanos hypaton or d (D sol re). 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.

6. Finally, that the metrical unit is incomplete after C. 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', the correct number is lacking after C. Or with Brumel: in the alto of his 'Missa De Beata Virgine' at 'Marie virginis Matris' he writes C, 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:

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.
The Letters

1. 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 Giovannibattista 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. 192r–193v
Giovanni Maria Lanfranco to Adrian Willaert, 20 October 1531

All 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, eccellente Messer Adriano, di provar né di 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 cosa naturale. [H]o ben sempre cercato, et di continuo cerco, di imparare da coloro che sanno, ma non con loro dispiacere. Però, eccellente Messer Adriano, ho inteso che voi vi sete turbato un 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 rottura (come credo) dal Spadaro da Bologna,² ch’io disse ad uno mio amico frate che volesse esser contento di scrivere a Bologna ad uno altro suo amico per vedere se poteva havere la risoluzione di essa rottura 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, ritrovando a Venetia et disideroso di farmi piacere, sarà venuto dalla Eccellentia V ostra per la resolutione, ma non già né per parte mia, né anchora perché allui 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 risoluzione da voi, perché io credo che intendiate et so che quella cosa che non havereste trovata con una via, ch’io non credo 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

¹ This letter was transcribed and translated in Edmond Vander Straeten, La Musique aux Pays-Bas avant le XIXer siècle (8 vols.; Brussels, 1867–88), vi. 195–97.

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.
The Letters

contro 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 ch’io fuggiva (cioè la fatica di cercar simili canoni) non era honesto ch’io la desse a voi né ad altri, sperando come io sperava di haverla dal proprio autitore, il qual senza sua fatica me la poteva dare, et certamente quando io havesse creduto che l’havesse fatta voi, a voi l’haverei domandata et non ad altri.

2. Adunque, excellent Messer Adriano, se sete turbato con me per questa cosa, et non essendo giusta la cagione, come non è, voi dovete remettervi 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 si grosso ch’io non sappia che le cose de’ grandi sono atte a far grande uno picciolo. Però se V.E. ha remesso la perturbatione che l’ha verso di me senza causa, quella sarà contenta per segno di questo di mandarmi uno delli suoi vesperi. Et quando questa cosa gli paresse troppo grande, lassassi stare l’hym[no] et il magnificat, et quando anchora gli cinque psalmi paressero troppo, mandatemene 4 o 3 o 2 o per il manco uno, perche non son per credere che V.E. se sia remessa per fin che da.lli 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. Et per manco fatica di V.E., nella

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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 also, paired with the superius 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.
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, 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.

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 six 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.

I am enclosing a canonic piece written some time ago, and to save you trouble I add the resolution.

I have your Magnificat in the second mode and your 'Ave maris stella'.

---

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. It appears in the Vallicelliana manuscript of c.1530-1, it is early enough to have been known to Lanfranco in 1531.
4. V.E. sappia che qui io ho il suo Magnificat del secondo tono et una sua 'Ave maris stella'.
5. 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.
Threicium memorat qui-cum-que

Amphioma zetum

Verdelumque canat qui valet arte

962

963
Ver-del-lum-que ca-nat, qui va-let ar-te
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Lorenzo Gazio to Don Valeriano, 23 November 1534 (autograph)


Don Valeriano 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 vista el duo secondo lo desyderio vostro, si comme potereti veder in la inclusa poliza, la qual ho cosi 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 satisfaction vostra ho domandato et optenuto de venir a Venetia insieme cum Don Stephano vostro et ivi staremo una parte de uno mese, et più et mancho tanto quanto se vederemo carezati da voi. Questo sarà 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 piú ve ne dico. De Prosdocimo paduano ad me non ignoto, grato me sera a la venuta nostra vederlo cosi ben vestito, el qual po essere non esser stato caro per li soli 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, 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 (J33). Fo. 175<sup>r</sup>
Lorenzo Gazio to Don Valeriano, Easter Sunday [28 March] 1555
(autograph)

171 Al suo carissimo filiolo Don Valeriano, Monaco in S. Giorgio Mazore. In Venetia.

171 Don Valeriano, filiolo mio carissimo.
1. Ho receputo le vostre, a le qual più presto non ho possiuto dar resosta 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, perche certamente apud peritos più ge seria de vergogna che de honore.¹ Voluntiera saperia chi è stato lo compositore. Se pur ve piacesse la resolution sua, giugando più presto a indlinar et interpretar la mente del compositore 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 ve lo manda et mandarmela.

² Del libro de musica che molti mesi gia me scrivesti, non lo vedo anchora. Se fustivi da altri servito come voi serviti a loro, l'averia gia 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 1555.

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

¹ MS: che.

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.

² 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.
La prima parte del soprano 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 soprano sono tutti li infrascripti segni o ver proportione huiusmodi:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semibreve per batuta</th>
<th>Tre breve per batuta</th>
<th>Una longa per batuta</th>
<th>Quattro semibreve per batuta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Le pause son perfecte.

In la seconda parte del contratenore sono li infrascripti segni o ver proportione huiusmodi:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semibreve per batuta</th>
<th>Tre breve per batuta</th>
<th>Una longa a la batuta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Le pause son perfecte.

Le breve valen doi semibreve. La longa valen 4. Le pause de longa valen 6 per fin in fino.

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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 1555 (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’. 

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109. Memorandum by [Gazio]
110 (1108). Fo. 253*科学技术
Anonymous to [Giovanni del Lago?], n.d. [1533] (copy in Aaron's hand)

Pater venerande, salutem, etc.

1. Anchora che havesi pensato di non volere rispondere altrimenti di quello che ho fatto al mio Messer Pietro Aaron per rispetto o ver dubbio di cavallitome, pur son contento di rispondere, non come mi, ma come quello che seguita la doctrina de Guido et di Giovanni Othobi, che non dispiaciamo, immo accetano el tuono in sesqui 3/4 et el semitono in super 2/3, et anchora le syllabe ut, re, mi, et fa, sol, la applicative indifferente ad epsi tuoni, et anchora li segni, cioè di b indicativo di fa et lo q quadrato o vero così × indicativi di mi, et el tuono esser divisibile in duoi semitoni minori, talmente che tra lo grave segnato con uno degli segni di q quadro et lo acuto segnato con lo b molle sia la comma in mezzo, si come anchora io ho visto nel vostro organo et al Santo in Padova in alcuni luoghi, onde essi semitoni el grave segnarsi in la sequente inmediate riga o ver spatio acuto, et lo acuto diverso segnare in la inmediate accidente riga o ver spatio grave, et his stantibus et concessis.

2. Circa li primi dui dubbi, cioè segnando il b molle in F o vero in C, dico che questo si è a simile che si segna il b molle in lo q quadrato, volendo dimostrare che si partiamo dal ordine naturale de uno tuono sgrassato, da poi volendo tornare ad esso ordine naturale, el si segna el q quadrato, et altrimenti non si dovrebbe segnare el q quadrato indicativo di mi, perché esso mi è naturalmente. Così accade in F et in C se in essi el fissi stato segnato uno q quadrato per causa di temperare el tritone 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 q mi, lo suo mi, come anchora ho ditto, sarà più basso del mi naturale de uno semitono minore, collocato però in A con tal segno q, o vero così ×. Alhora se intenderà esso mi più alto del loco dove sarà scripto per uno semitono maggiore.

4. Al quarto dubbio, mettendo una nota in G a questo modo: ut re mi fa sol la, la sua syllaba ut sarà in E et la sarà in C con tal segno q, o vero q, et non solamente esso C sarà segnato come ho detto, ma tutta la scala sarà segnata così:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fa</th>
<th>Re</th>
<th>Mi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ut</td>
<td>Re</td>
<td>Mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa</td>
<td>Re</td>
<td>Mi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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etc. Circa il quarto dubbio, voi segnate una nota in G in questo modo: ut re mi la, etc. Faccio assai differentia tra l'uno et l'altro, et quando fussimo apresso, cercheria satisfarvi, anchora che a me parano parvi momenti, etc.

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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 q as fa and q or p 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. Concerning the first two questions, saying the flat on F or C, this is similar to writing a b before Be, 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 q 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 q. The ut of F will be C and the ut of C gamma ut.

Concerning the third question, saying fa on B, its mi will be lower than the natural mi by a minor semitone, written on A with b or q. This mi will be higher than its regular place by a major semitone.

Concerning the fourth question, about G q, ut will be on E and la on C q, and not just this C but the whole scale will have sharps:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fa</th>
<th>Re</th>
<th>Mi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ut</td>
<td>Re</td>
<td>Mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa</td>
<td>Re</td>
<td>Mi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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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 F# and C# 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.

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.²

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. 2).

³ That this division of the tone could engender confusion is proved by the discussion between Spataro and Aaron on the placement of C# and D#; see no. 50, 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. 2). He must be

¹ Viktor Ravizza, 'Alberti, Gasparo', The New Grove Dictionary, i. 231-12.

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. 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 'canter secretus' in Leo X's private chapel. 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. 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 remains uncertain, 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 1500. Spataro went to find him 'in palazzo'. It is possible that 'Antonio Pifaro' mentioned in Giovanni Filiberto Achillino's Viridario of 1513, although as an artist and goldsmith: 'Antonio pifar ci e quale e divino / Col suo disegno, et orato e perfetto.'

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 1530 and printed shortly thereafter by Bernardino de Vitali. His career at San Marco spanned the first half of the sixteenth century. Frate Armonio seems to have been well known as a collector of music. In a letter to Del Lago of 9 September 1534, Lorenzo Gazzio suggests that 'Frate Harmonio', whom he believes to have inherited the music of 'Fra Pietro di San Zanmepolo' (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 1511 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.

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 1518, Del Lago criticizes four songs by Giovanni Bailly, the teacher of Pietro de Justinis, which the latter had sent him. Giovanni Bailly (or Baili) was a singer and chaplain at the Duomo of Udine by 1501, 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.

Baldaseria
Mentioned in nos. 6, 11, 35.
Baldaseria, never further identified, is mentioned in Spataro's letter to Aaron of 8 April 1524 (no. 6, paras. 7 and 11). He was known to Spataro at Aaron, and both had written to him. Spataro had heard that Aaron wanted Baldaseria to come to Venice, and on 6 May he forwarded a letter from Aaron to Baldaseria (no. 11, para. 2). A third letter in the Correspondence allows us to identify Baldaseria 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 Baldaseria, 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 Papal Chapel (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. 1532.

6 See Osvaldo Gambassi, 'Origine, statuti e ordinamenti del Concerto Palatino della Signoria di Bologna (1500-1600)', Nuova rivista musicale italiana 18 (1964), 261-8. We owe thanks to Dr Susan Forscher Weiss for this and the following reference.
7 Viridario (Bologna, 1513), fo. 188v.
8 See the introduction to Johannis Harmonii Mori comedia Stephanium, ed. Walther Ludwig (Munich, 1717), pp. 9-17, and M. Quattrucci, 'Armonio, Giovanni', Dizionario biografico degli italiani, iv (1962), 2427-8.
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 1542.11

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. 3).

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 Belabusa'.12

Benedicto librario. 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 (1444-1508), '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.

When Aaron's Toccacello was published in 1525, 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 Philotoe Achillino's l'Arte del 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 Canzone nova of 1510.15

Bonini, Piermaria
Mentioned in no. 4.

A Florentine, Piermaria Bonini is the author of Acutissime observationes subtilissime 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 Bergomozzo.

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.

Bergomozzo (Burgomozo), Lorenzo
Mentioned in no. 12.

Lorenzo Bergomozzo 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 1540.15

It was Lorenzo Bergomozzo 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 Toscacello was published in 1525, 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 Philotoe Achillino's l'Arte del 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 Canzone nova of 1510.15

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Burgomozo, Lorenzo. See Bergomozzo.
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 Viniziano' listed among the 'cantori a liuto' in Aaron's Lucidario of 1545 (Book IV, fo. 31'). 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 Viavode 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 June 1529, when he acquired a parcel of land in Bologna, he was called 'canto re e musicista', that is, the Cathedral. In 1532 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 division of the three genera and was promised a display of books on music by ancient authors (no. 50). 18

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. 19

Spataro corresponded with Casali: he had lent him his copy of Gafurio's Theoria, 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. 20 Spataro suggested that Aaron introduce himself to Casali when he delivered Spataro's letter (no. 46, para. 4).

Castellanus, Petrus. See Pietro de San Zuanepolo.

Cavalaro, Nicolò (Nicola Mantovano)


Nicolo 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. 21 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 Ferberisco as maestro di San Petronio. He died on 28 November 1558. 22

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 Nicolò 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. 35, para. 6), and in August he reminded Aaron that Nicolò was still waiting to hear his opinion about it (no. 39, para. 4).

18 Coggiola, 'Il prestigio di manoscritti', p. 47. On Del Lago's interest in Greek theory, perhaps stimulated by the ambassador, see Ch. 7.
19 On the possible 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 musici in, p. 118.
22 See Palsika, 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, 36.
Marc' Antonio Cavazìoni, 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 Zarlinò 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 had 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 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. 7) and May 1529 (no. 21, 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 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. 50, para. 1). This is the last time Cavazzoni's name appears in the Correspondence.

Cavrioli, 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 Cavrioli' and his son Lorenzo, and twice a week with the Martinengo family, 'all good singers', and happily passed the month in music-making. 'Conte Fortunato 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 'cantiari al liuto' is that of 'Il Signor Conte Ludovicus Martinengo' (fo. 31').

In the dedication of his Seintilie de musica (Brescia, 1539), Giovanni Maria Lanfranco mentions 'i colmi di virtu, sostentamenti di virtuosi, et Prencipi della Academia Bresciana i due Magnifici fratelli M. Antonio et M. Giovann Paolo Cavrioli' (fo. ii').

Cimatore, Michele
Mentioned in no. 78.
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
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), 598–602. 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.
25 On this point, see no. 14 n. 5.
honour to avoid Lanfranco's fate. Corbelli kept in touch with Del Lago, as we were 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 learn from no. 63, para. I 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 1535 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 Padvano 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. 71, 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 'like before like' (no. 69), the impossibility of imperfecting a dotted note (no. 70), the sonumus (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 1540 and December 1543, but in large part they are fictitious and were written considerably later (see Ch. 6, 'Giovanni del Lago and his Epistolae'). 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 1535, and Del Lago was free to use the cover of correspondence 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 Lieutenan 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 Zuan 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 clavisimbalum], 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 Cæ Memo, for whom he provided largely, and subsequently Memo departed for fear of his life, and is said to be in Portugal.

Zuan 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 Zuan 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 organo), 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

28 'Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz', p. 5 n. 3.
29 Marino Sanudo, I diarii, ed. Rinaldo Fulin et al., xxiix, col. 290. He died in 1526 (ibid., xliii, col. 198).
30 Ibid., xxx, col. 286.
31 Ibid., xl, cols. 132–4, both notes under the date 24 Dec. 1525. The English translation is
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'. Mantova surely exaggerates when he calls 'Gianetto Da Legge' the most outstanding player of the clavicembalo 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 by 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 1503, 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.

In 1524 Spataro and Aaron were debating Willaert's chromatic duo. Aaron called 'Gianetto Da Legge' the most outstanding player of the clavicembalo 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 by 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.
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 1505 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 'oliem cathedrals mutinae magistri', although there is no record of his service as maestro. He is thought to have died c.1550.\(^{37}\)

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 Zarlinio, 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 theoretica* (1559).\(^{40}\)

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:

Piacerà a V.S. di dare a messer Francesco Maria Calora, nostro onorevole cittadino modenesi e presente presente di questa mia, quello libro composto già da messer Lodovico Fogliano mio fratello, rimasole nelle mani dopo la sua morte, si come l'altro giorno, la sua buona mercé, mi fece intendere: et appresso la prego per l'osservanza, che il predetto mio fratello portava a quella et io ancora poeta e per sua innata cortesia, si degno d'informarlo come possa sapere se libro, o scrittura, o altro de mio fratello fosse restato, o in casa dove egli mori, o altrove e come il possa riavere: che facendo di bisogno darà in Venizia sufficiente cauzione de recarmelo fedelmente, acciò che io possa almeno con la lettura d'alcuo 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 et sento. Il qual frutto se serà per avventura riputato meritevole di essere messo in luce da divino giudicato di quella, dal qual solamente il mondo tutto contentandosi d'esser giudicato s'appaga piemiamente, noi potremo entrare in pensiero di non inviare lungo tempo a gli uomini cosa, che V.S. abbia stimata degna de' loro veduta ed specialmente dovenendo 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, offrendomi prontissimo, così valendo le divine sue virtù, ad ogni menomo suo cenno a fare ogni cosa che per me si possa, che Dio ci la conservi lungamente.

In Modena il di viti di Maggio 1542.

Di V.S. servitior
Giacopo Fogliano

From this letter it appears that Aretino had written to inform Giacomo that he had 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' dubbianti*, 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 batesismo ad opra alcuna per mano del vero San Giovanni, è stato dato a la vostra. Onde l'invidia non le poter opporre che si abbia mancato del sale in bocca. Ella è veramente quel refugio de dubbianti, che voi chiamate, poi che in ogni parte di lei se veggono i più gran dubbi e come si dovrebbero risolvere con le più gran facilità di sere, che la nostra anima fata di dubbiosa da la natura, si fa risolta 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 husband in the underworld but Easter with her mother in heaven, and other mythological puzzles. But then Franco admits that he

\(^{37}\) Henry W. Kaufmann, 'Fogliani, Lodovico', *The New Grove Dictionary*, vi. 689. Is he possibly the 'Ludovico da Modena' who was a singer in the church of Ercole d'Este in 1493, 1503 and 1504, who may be identical with the singer 'Ludovigo da Fulgano' listed in the years 1499-1515? It is not uncommon for the 'I' and 'g' to be reversed at this time (see e.g. the letter by Giovanni da Legge, nos. 72 and 73). The names appear in the 'Chronological List of Musicians Active at Ferrara, 1377-1501' in Lewis Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 1420-1501* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 1984), pp. 174-28 at 175-8. Kaufmann overlooked the appearance of Fogliano's name as early as 1494 in the records of the Cathedral of Modena.


\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 211. La Bibliothèque nationale preserves his manuscript excerpts from Aristotle and Averroes' commentaries (MS lat. 5717).

\(^{40}\) See ibid., pp. 216-44.

\(^{41}\) Both books were edited by Teodoro Landoni as vol. 132 of the series 'Scelta di curiosità letterarie e note dal secolo XIII al XVII' (Bologna, 1871-3); 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. 127-8.

Biographical Dictionary

Fogliano, Lodovico

Mentioned in nos. 46, 51, 60.


\(^{43}\) 'Fogliani, Lodovico', p. 687.

\(^{44}\) La pistola vulgari di M. Nicolò Franco (Venice, 1539), fo. 111. The book was printed by Antonio Gardane, who also published another work by Franco.
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' dubianti' must be the manuscript that remained in Aretino's hands after Lodovico's death.

Zarlino remarks on the fact that Fogliano 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. 11, 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, of 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 13 April 1545.45 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.


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 Alessandro, 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 1532 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. 7).

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 Clino. 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.

(iv) 'Frate de Sancto Salvatore'
Mentioned in no. 29.
Spataro gave this unnamed friar his letter of 25 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 Allesandro
Mentioned in nos. 46, 49, 74.
In the autumn of 1552 Spataro sent no. 46 to Aaron via Frate Allesandro. 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 1525 to Da Legge (no. 74): Del Lago alludes to an argument between him and Da Legge, but judges it not worthy of the recourse 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, 56, 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 Wulck's Enchiridion musicæ, 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 25 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. 11, para. 1 and no. 16, para. 1). Yet when it came time to publish his treatise on musiquatena, 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 musicæ (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 Apposito, 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. 53 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. 53, 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, 104.
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 Spatarum* (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. Justinia 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 melopeyo y maestro* of 1612, listed as one of his authorities 'Don Laurencio Gazio Cremonense Monje de S. Benito'.50

**Giovannibattista, 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 Justiniano 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.

Pietro de Justinis 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.).

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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 1541. Since Vale does not furnish lists of singers, we do not know how long his employment lasted.
with Del Lago, his musical mentor. Preparing to depart on 23 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

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. 35, 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. 91.

Girolamo Malipiero, an Observant Franciscan friar, is probably to be identified with the author of Il Petarcha 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 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

55 Giovanni degli Agostini, Notizie istorio-critiche intorno la vita, e le opere degli scrittori rinascimentali (2 vols., Venice, 1732-4), ii. 459-66. His Vita S. Francisci, in nine books, dedicated to Clement VII, is to be found in the Vatican Library, MS Vat. lat. 1728; see Paul Oskar Kristeller, In articulum (4 vols., London and Leiden, 1963-9), ii. 323 and 385.

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. 7-15, 30, 35-9, 49-51, 53, 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 1515 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 danno gravissimo di esso prioreto et pensiero esso 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 1646.58

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
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’, and in the same painter’s ‘The Calling of St Matthew’ in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, which is contiguous with the Grand Prato.

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 ‘voestro 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 Tovamello (1525) 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 Venetia’. 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 mol to dame 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 1548 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. He often attended musical events arranged in Venier’s house by Girolamo Parabosco. He 10002

left one book of poems, *Rime 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 1560.

In the biography by Giovanni Mario Verdizotti 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’ (ff. 2o + 8*). 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. 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 1555, for in April of that year Bartolomeo Tromboncino asked Del Lago to be recommended to the ‘magnifico et gentilissimo gentilhomao amator dei virtusi, 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 1558, though Del Lago was still making corrections as late as 1542 (see Ch. 6, ‘Giovanni del Lago and his Epistolae’). 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 introduzione di musica miraturata* 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 151666 and undoubtedly one of ‘i musici bolognesi’. He was among the friends of
Spataro's who ordered a copy of Aaron's Tresantello 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. 15, 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, 36–60.

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 referred 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—Nicolo Cavaloro (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, 1533), fo. 186:

*De Musici* è sorta questa terra, Che cantano improvisi ogni bel punto; D'assi compositori, a cui non erra
Il Spadaro, il Tovaglia qui si serra,
Demopeonete 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
Tupinze, o concierano, o peregrino.
Rugiero, Cesare, Hannibal Rangono,
Il dolce Ludovico, el Bolognino,
Convien che in alto le sue laudi sorgano
Poi che si eccelse artisti son di l'organo.
Sonatori ci son tanto perfetti,
Che col leuto in braccio fama i frega.
L'Albergato, Alessandro, quel da i letti,
Lorenzo, Pierrateto, il genti Tiregna,
Il Cambio è con la lyra fra gli eletti;
Il calamo anchor questo privilegia.
Al genti Poggio, giovenetto ephebo,
Si come ad Orpheo diede la Cerba Phebo. 67

67 Gaspari, 'Ricerci, documenti e memorie', in *Musica e musicisti*, pp. 84–1. The only one of these musicians known as a composer is Alessandro Demopeonete (see the entry for
Josquin des Orazii, acceptable, because a few months later Giordano sent the whole mass and also a person in it; perhaps Fra Nazaro was at a different convent of the order in Pietro, mentioned in nos. 28 and 61.

Mentioned in nos. 28 and 61.

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 of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, where Pietro da Castello was his teacher.11 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.'12 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 1501 he was given permission to play the organ at the nunnery of San Giorgio in Venice.13 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

1006

Pepoli, Count Camillo de'

Mentioned in no. 19.

In 1529 Sforza 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 1535, 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 intitolato cronica (Bologna, 1525), fo. 19', which begins 'Di Apol pel canto, e pel Corsier di Marte', 'Di Vener per belta fu elice il Conte'. After his death the poet imagines him 'Salendo a star su nel Parnaso monte / Ove nel Chor cantarà la stoa parte'.

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.14 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, sospir cocenti', ascribed however to 'Petrus organista', in Il quarto libro de madrigali d'Archibald a quatro voc (Venice: A. Gardane, RISM 153926), was one of these.

1007
Pietro de San Zoanepolo, Fra
Mentioned in no. 81.

In response to a query by Del Lago in 1534 about a composition by Gaspari making use of proportions, Lorenzo Gazio suggested that Fra Armonio, who had inherited the music of Fra Pietro de San Zoanepolo, 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. 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 Budri 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. 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'. Even as late as 1534 his fame as a collector of music had not been forgotten.


78 The main documents on his life are in Venice, Archivio di Stato, Corp. Rel. Seppe, SS Giovanni e Paolo, busta 11, Liber consiliorum 1490-1544. The date of his death is recorded in an 18th-c. chronicle of the church now in Vicenza, Biblioteca Bertoliana, MS G. 4.49. P. 597. Documents concerning him will be published in the study cited above, n. 73. 

79 In response to a query by Del Lago in 1534 about a composition by Gafurio making use of proportions, Lorenzo Gazio suggested that Fra Armonio, who had inherited the music of Fra Pietro de San Zoanepolo, 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. 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 Budri 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. 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'. Even as late as 1534 his fame as a collector of music had not been forgotten.

79 '...ex uberrimo ac numerosissimo seminario...'

80 '...ex umberto ac numerosissimo seminario Petri Castellani et praedicatorum familia, religione et musicae disciplina memorativissimis; eurus opera et diligentia centena haec carmina repugnavit'; see Augusto Vernarecci, Oratorio de Petrucci et Fabbricum inventore de tepi modelli melliciti Uniti della musica nel secolo XI', 2nd edn. (Bologna, 1882), pp. 54-5.

80 'Fraer Petru Castellanus venetus, vir multorum virorum doctissimus, per maximam in artem musicam cuius erat monarcha, hoc tempore floruit.' From the chronicle of Alberto de Castello (a contemporary of Pietro, in the same convent) printed in the 3rd edn. of Tabula super præcelia papalea ordinis fratrum predicatrorum coeneti (Venice, 1610); see Raymond Creytens OP, 'Les Ecritains dominicains dans la chronique d’Albert de Castello (1510)', Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum 30 (1960), 225-313 at 301.

Biographical Dictionary

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 Inola, Bologna, and Venice (paras. 7 and 11).

Primis, Filippo de
Mentioned in nos. 18 and 21.

Filippo de Primis, from Fano, was a tenor in the Papal Chapel from 1492 to 1506. 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.

Philippo de Primis was the author of a mass, 'Pourrant se mon', much admired by Spataro (no. 18, para. 1) and owned by Del Lago (no. 21, para. 2). Neither this nor any other music by him seems to have survived.

'Priere de Ferrara'. See Friars.

Ramazotto, Captain. See under Pietro Zoanone.

Ramis, Bartolomeo
Mentioned in nos. 5, 8-12, 15, 17, 21-2, 28-9, 34, 38, 41, 45, 48, 14, 56, 8, 60.

Spataro revered his teacher, Bartolomeo Ramis, 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 Habelr, Die römische 'Schola cantorum'; pp. 58-9. Habelr listed him until 1518, after which there is a gap in the records until 1557, when his name no longer appears. He is listed as a member of the chapel in a supplication dated Mar. 1506; see Richard Sherr, 'Vedeldot in Florence, Coppini in Rome, and the Singer "La Fiore"', Journal of the American Musicological Society 37 (1984), 402-11 at 408.

82 Spataro revered his teacher, Bartolomeo Ramis, 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.

82 The correct Spanish form of the name is Bartolome 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).
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 defensione 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. 85 This may be the same as the 'picudo 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:

- para. 3. Ramis demonstrated that there are two mensuration-signs given, the piece is in duple mensuration (Musica practica, p. 88).
- 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).
- para. 5. Ramis sometimes blackened a breve next to a void long to indicate that the breve should not be altered (not in Musica practica).
- para. 6. 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).
- para. 7. An allusion to Ramis's teachings on two-part counterpoint (see Musica practica, pp. 62-70).
- para. 8. Ramis demonstrated that the hexachord beginning on A as at derives from the first sharp coniuncta (Musica practica, p. 31).
- para. 9. Ramis demonstrated that there are two coniunctas, b and c (Musica practica, p. 31).
- para. 10. In the fifth chapter of the first part of his Practica, Ramis demonstrates that changing from m1 to solon c is a mutation not from hexachord to hexachord but from the natural hexachord to the sharp coniuncta on c (pp. 34-40; actually chap. 1 of Treatise II).
- para. 11. Del Lago cites Ramis's definition of fuga after a lost treatise by Spataro (Musica practica, p. 68).
- para. 12. Spataro defends his examples of fuga by quoting Ramis's definition (Musica practica, p. 68).
- para. 13. Spataro says his definitions of fuga, redicta, color, and tala are correct because he has them from a small autograph treatise that Ramis gave him in 1484.

among the musicians of Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este in 1513. From 11 May 1514 to 13 July 1515 Raphael Lunerius was a musicus secreto of Leo X. Don Raphael is mentioned as a musician recently deceased in Innocenzo Righieri, Canto giunchi liberali et d'ingegno (Bologna, 1511).

'Zerente, Padre'

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.

Niccolo 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 chromatic and enharmonic pieces, upon promise of secrecy for ten years. 90

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 precettore del canto'. 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' 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). Fermi 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, 53.

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 'cantes et verba'. He was surely the bookseller Paulo 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

87 Lockwood, 'Adrian Willaert and Cardinal Ippolito d'Este', p. 112.
91 See Palisca, Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought, pp. 34–5. The manuscripts are now in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale.
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. 91.

Recipient of no. 91.

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. 91) 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 Franciscan order.94 Knud Jeppesen believed that Fra Seraphin was the same as the Franciscus Seraphin who published the Fior de mottetti e canzoni novi da diversi in Rome in 1525, to which he contributed two motets (RISM [c. 1526]). A motet of his, ‘Veni sponsa Christi’ from Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS dccex, 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 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 1533, 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

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 1491. An Augustinian monk, he became a singer at the cathedral in Ascoli in 1529. By 1533, the date of publication of his treatise Recantum 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 superficial (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. 47, 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, 95 William F. Prizer, ‘Tromboncino, Bartolomeo’, The New Grove Dictionary, xix. 161–3.


98 Gambassi, La cappella musicale di S. Petronio, pp. 66–7.
however, he had gone to Venice with the Reverend General of the Order of the Crutched Friars (para. 1).

**Villano**

Mentioned in nos. 49-50.

Villano says he entered the court until Chapel in February 153. Johannes Franciscus Villanus, also known as Johannes Franciscus de Padua Francesco de Zonatis da Ferrara; the list of singers for these events took place in Bologna in January. Vittorio in Innocenzio Ringhieri's para. 4; see under Ridolfi). He is probably the musician referred to as 'our own position in same year he was sent to Venice to recruit Gonzaga's 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 Vittorio 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 Villano 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 Spatharo 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. 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. 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. 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.103 He remained at the Gonzaga court until 1514, when he left to join the Papal Chapel, much to Francesco Gonzaga's dismay. In 1517 he decided to return to Padua and resume his former vocation as a Franciscan friar, resigning his benefice in favour of his 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

**Vollac, Prevosto de la**

Mentioned in no. 4.

Spatharo's letter to Aaron of 7 March 1521 is addressed 'Imole in casa del Reverendo prevosto de la Vollac'. The Prevost de la Vollac was the head of the chapter of the Cathedral of Imola. When Aaron's contract as *maestro di cappella* was renewed on 11 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.


Adrian Willaert was born in Bruges or Roeselaar 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 1523. 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 Spatharo 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. Spatharo did, however, send him greetings in 1529 through Del Lago, who was asked to deliver a letter to Alessandro, 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, Spatharo 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 Spatharo 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

100 See Haberl, *Die römische Schola cantorum*, pp. 74 and 76.
104 Ibid., p. 16.
105 Ibid., p. 22. See the letter transcribed in Frey, 'Regesten', 9 (1916), 149-50, and also pp. 151-2.
are returned (no. 35, para. 2). He repeats the same request a month later (no. 36, para. 1). Only two months after this are the madrigals back in Bologna (no. 37, para. 2).

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 1535, 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. 19, para. 4).

Willaert was indirectly involved in another controversy that pitted Lorenzo Gazio against Giovanni del Lago. Don Valeriano, a nephew of Gazio, had sent over the parts 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. 19, para. 4).

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be the ‘Zuan Piero’ whose fame was eclipsed by a young lutenist, protégé of Dionisio Meno, 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 Giovanni Battista 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.

NOTES ON PROBLEMATIC 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 riduere, virtù, numero, accidentale, and tautunma. For the Greek note-names, which are used in a number of the letters, see Fig. 1 in the Principles of the Edition.

Accidentale

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. 1, 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 Inaugur. Spataro cites the latter’s definition as translated by Boethius: ‘accidens vero est quod adse aet et adse praeter subiecti 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. 1), as well as for sharps and flats (no. 15, para. 2). When Del Lago suggests that the sign φ₂ 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 propri del tempo perfetto’, that is, blackened breves, semibreve rests on separate lines, and dots of perfection (no. 41, para. 6). Rests of longs are not signs but accidentals of primary signs: ‘le pause de longha ... non sono proprii signi, ma sono accidentali et ordini considerati et comprehesi da li primi signi’ (no. 45, para. 11), and they cannot be used in the course of a work ‘senza sustantivo o vero subietto cioe 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 ...’ (ibid.).

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
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.

The note B⁹, formerly belonging to musica vera, is considered an accidental by both Spataro and Del Lago. The latter writes: 'nel soprano direemo sol in G sol re at sopra acuto, et fa in G/a/ mi (accidentaler) per il rotondo segnato nel predetto luogo' (no. 28, para. 4), and 'el quale b molle è accidentale, perche può esser posto et non posto' (no. 73, para. 4). The flat sign 'rimove il canto da b molle accidentale in G/a/ mi el b quadrato drito, ut hic ²' (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, subscriptione' (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'.³

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 predetto canto se trova uno canon, o vero una regula o vero precepo'. 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.⁴ 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, cromatic, 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, Cfa ut to D sol re is a whole tone; in the chromatic genus it is a semitone. In

² Spataro quoted this in no. 41, para. 5; see no. 41 n. 4.
⁴ Musica practica, ed. Wolf, p. 71.
⁵ Ibid., p. 90.

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 b mi ad D sol re cromatico [i.e. C⁹/D⁹] et non toccare C fa ut', and thus the composite tone falling 'tra b et D (cromatico 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 C⁹, and then it will be understood to be 'la terza chorda cromaticata del tetrachordo diezeugmenon' (no. 11, para. 1).

In 1532 Spataro composed a motet in which he divided the octave B⁹ harmonically with /", which he called 'la terza chorda cromaticata' (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 (viris, forma, et salores) (no. 28, para. 16). 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 Tintorius (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 (I. 2 3). 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] distanza del tritono perché, essendo incomposito pronuntiato, la sua asperità et durezza è molto nota, et molto spacie al senso de lo audito' (no. 58, para. 5).

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 cognizione di tutti gli tuoni (1525) because he used only flats and referred to 'la coniuncta': 'qua pare che intendeti solo de una et
non de piu, perche 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'e piu 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' (B9), 'la seconda congiunta' (B3), etc. (no. 71, para. 5). For further on the coniuncta, see the Commentary on no. 71.

The term coniuncta originated as the Latin equivalent of synemmenon, after trite synemmenon, which designates B9 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'.

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 predicata chorda mese ad paramesene'; no. 12, para. 3). It is a useful term because it does not indicate the exact pitch (the 'corda' parhypate mononon, 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 chromaticic that are removed by a major semitone or a comma from their apparent location: 'intra la corda data per semitonio minore piu acuta de F grave [i.e. G#] e la corda data per semitonio minore piu acuta del b rotondo de be fS be mi cadera etiam diassessoron' (no. 11, para. 3) and 'se tale b rotondo sera due volte exercitato, la chorda sonora alhora sera depressa per dui semitoni maguiri, li quali (insieme colti) producono uno spacio el quale suppper la 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. 75.

Diesis

Diesis is used in several senses in the Correspondence. In nos. 2 and 3 it is the quarter-tone in the enharmonic tetrachord. Del Lago calls the diesis 'quasi una quarta parte del cuono' (no. 71, para. 7) and 'medietas semitonion minoris' (no. 88, para. 5).

In no. 102 diesis is the name given to the sharp-sign (a usage that has been preserved in modern Italian and French). In his Tessaracton Aarwn had claimed that the sign showing the singer whether a note is augmented or diminished 'per generale uso e chiamato diesis, et e figurato in questo modo X'. (para. 2).

Spataro objects 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. 1). Spataro takes it for granted that Aaron understands the true meaning of diesis when he says that 'dicondo diesis, lo effetto et el nome non hano insieme corrispondentia'. 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, cioe un semitono maggiore' (no. 88, para. 5).

Distantia

Literally 'distance', this word is also used in a musical sense for 'interval' or 'chord'. In the canonical directions to his Mis a de la tradictora Spataro explains 'anamenti 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 tutta la integrata de la perfectione' (no. 6, para. 3), and 'la integra immutabilita de le distantie perfette et la mutabilita 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, 'cosi 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 'conciunctio' for a melodic interval and 'concordantia' or 'discordantia' for a harmonic interval, but he seems to have had few followers.

Equivocatione. See unaequivocate.

Essentiale. See indicule.

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
representing a sound. 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 canon incipit instruction, ‘senza apparentia de figura 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 discepano 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 rappresentano la voce, come la semibreve, etc., et etiam quelle che rappresentano tacentiur, come la pausa de la semibreve . . . son posite per quantit 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. 1).

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 ‘sera dicto essere fugato, perche procederad 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).

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 di diapente a similitudine del subiecto 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 definitio, where he wrote ‘Let harmony be (defined as) the mixture of consonances and dissonances in a composition.’ Spataro speaks of ‘composizione, figura di suoni’ (no. 76, para. 3). Harmonia 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 formazione de la harmonia usitata”; the chromatic and enharmonic genera ‘assi davano aiuto al diatonico predicato, cosi in modulazione come in le distanze concorde’ (no. 46, para. 1).

Del Lago rarely talks about harmony. He mentions it when he discusses the prohibition of parallel perfect intervals in counterpart: 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 1514 (no. 12). Aaron, in his Tostanilla, had said that the following chord, without the sharp added to C, would be a ‘dispiacevole harmonia’.

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 mediatore’) would produce ‘spiaciuvole 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 ‘spiaciuvole harmonia, ma bona et suave’. However, by making the interval major, ‘la harmonia sera piu grata al senso de lo audito’, and this conversion would not be from ‘spiaciuvole harmonia in grata et bona’, but ‘de bona in meliore’, because there is no such thing as ‘harmonia spiaciuvole’; ‘quello che non piace a lo audito non è harmonia’ (no. 12, para. 4).

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. 224–31.
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 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 indicated 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. 15.)

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 taciturniti'), 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 indiciali and essentiali come from Gafurio's Practica musicae: 'Solent a plerisque pausae hujusmodi longae essentialiter et indiciali inter cantilenae notulas pernotari.' But Del Lago may have taken them directly from the annotations to Tinctoris's pedagogical motet, 'Difficulties alias', 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 prolationisquse posite non sunt essenciales sed utriusque modi tantum indiciales.'

Del Lago also applied these terms to the flat-sign. When it is placed in the course of a composition, he considers it 'solamente indicitali' and says that its effect extends only to the note or notes near the 5, (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 B 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 indicitali 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 'stable' 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 B 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.
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: intenxis, the past participle of intendere ('to stretch'); means 'raised' or 'upwards'; remissi, 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 tradictoria', 'li anfratti intensi' are 'le distanzia le quae ascendendo', and 'remissa means 'descendente' (no. 3, para. 4). Spataro also learnt these terms from Ramis: 'vocis elevatio sive intensio et depressio sive remissio'.

**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.

**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 256:243 (no. 3, para. 4). Spataro also learnt these terms from Ramis: 'vocis elevatio sive intensio et depressio sive remissio'.

**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 practical musicians that differs from theoretical (Pythagorean) intonation.

Thus the composer must count the metric units on each level of mensuration. 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.

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:

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:

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 along with the remaining part that follows it. This counting or drawing together or restoration is called redactio (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 invenita 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 perfectio mensurae', and this practice is observed by the best composers, who place ligatures 'in principio del numero, così binario come ternario. Ma più si 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 concerne l’integra misura, è necessario che li sia immediato dinanzi a lei el numero perfetto ne’ segni perfetti, o vero li 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
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: Ø, which show that tempus and prolaction 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 prolaction 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 (1678, 12a26-13a56), where 'privation and possession' form one of the four pairs in the category of opposites.10

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 si 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.

Remissio. See intona.

Riducere, riduco, 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 notes by their surrounding smaller notes. 'Reductio' operates in perfect mensurations and, according to Del Lago, it does four things: 'la reduttione nelle quantita perfette opera quatro cose, per connuere verso el conio, per restauro et levato de tale tenore' (no. 2, para. 8). Therefore, according to Spataro, dissonances that occur under a suspension are permissible: 'se adonca (come ogni doctrinato consente) che la privatione, per la apparentia, 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 spazio di tono naturale per arte si potria rectamente reducere del suono suo acuto ne! suono suo propinquo grave' (no. 45, para. 6).

Subscriptione. See canon.

Synemmenon

Synemmenon is the Greek conjunct tetrachord beginning on mese. The canonical directions to Spataro's 'Ubi opus est facto' include the words 'synemmenon utique deviantis', meaning that 'el terzo tetracordo, el quale è el synemmenon, è exceptuato et levato de tale tenore' (no. 2, para. 8). Because the synemmenon translates into practical music as a b3 c 7 d, Spataro also uses the term synemmenon as synonymous with B7. The canonical directions to his 'Missa de la tradictora' include the phrase 'per maius in mesen per synemmenon reiterabis', meaning 'esso tenore debia principiare nel principio in mesen, scilicet in A la mi re acuta, per synemmenon, scilicet per b molle' (no. 5, para. 3).

See also coniuncta.

Tacturnitatis

The concept of tacturnitatis, '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 tacturnitatis: 'quella suspensione, la quale cade tra l'una e l'altra percussione del tempo sumpto, è accettata da lo audito in loco di tacturnitatis (no. 11, para. 10) or 'el quale durare da lo audito è inteso quasi come tacturnitatis' (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 tacturnitatis, resterà (come ogni doctrinato consente) che
Notes on Problematical Terms

el será quasi frustratorio affaticarsi circa el consenso 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. 3.

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 (11a1-2, 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.’ 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: ‘Impero che dove la regula dice che la nota simile non debe imperficere inanti a la sua simile, questo se intende in quanto a la qualid et non in quanto a la quantid, scilicet in quanto a la virtu quantitativa, cioè che siano simile in equivocatione et non sempre in univocacione’ (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.

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. 1, 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.
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— ‘A Treatise on Text Underlay by a German Disciple of Francesco de
INDEX

The letters are indexed by letter-number (in bold) and paragraph. 'Com.' stands for Commentary. Cities are indexed, with the exception of Bologna and Venice.

Aaron, Pietro 979-1011, passim; 14. 1-2, 15.
    3-7, 16. 1, 4, 17. 13, 18. 2, 43-1, 44-1, 5,
    47. 1, 5, 52. 1, 57. 1, 91, 93 n. 2, 110. 1, Com.
and Aiguino 86-8
on binary number as natural 7 Com. character 91-6
on commma 73 n. 5
Compendio 86-8, 89; 7 Com., 45 n. 6, 46 n. 6
compositions 12, 71, 91, 101, and in Credo a 6; 'Da pacem', motet on; 'Letatus sum';
mass for 5 equal voices; unidentified 30. 2,
6, 32-1, 33-1, 36-4-7, 37. 6, 39. 4, 41-1, 55-1
on cantusae 15, 17-8, 17-8, 17-8; see also
treatise on mutations
on counterpoint 103-4; 12, 7
critique of Del Lago's treatise 6, 130-66-7
68 Com., 73 n. 2, 76 n. 7
critique of Lanfranco's treatise 8, 999, 66. 1,
104-1
on dissonance treatment 11, 9-10, 49-1
on fughe 28, 8
and Leo X 81-2, 86
letters from 61-2, 64, 66-7, 100-1, 103, 105
letters to 4-11, 32-20, 41-6, 48-51, 55,
58-60, 63, 65, 99, 102, 104
Libri tres de institutione harmonica 68, 74-6,
18-9, 91, 97-6, 180, 99; 1, 2, 28. 8, 40 n.
4, 73 n. 1, Com., 99 Com.; corrections 2, 2
life 74-86
Ludovico in musica 29, 64, 74 n. 15, 85, 87,
89, 92-3, 96, 110, 187, 984, 987, 1004
99 n. 16, 34 n. 1, 36 n. 7, 61 n. 2
on modal theory 73 Com.
on notation: mensural modes 63-2, 64-5;
menusura 45 n. 28
poems in praise of 91-1
possible Jewish origin 89-92
relations with Del Lago 96 n. 68
relations with Sparano 54, 97-6, 15-1, 27-
2-3
on sharp-sign 12, 2, 4-6
Toscanillo in musica 7-8, 13, 26 n. 74, 16-8,
64, 74 n. 1, 81, 83, 85, 86, 92, 91, 104, 111
n. 18, 112, 135, 140-4, 180, 187, 191, 983,
995-6, 998, 1002, 1004-1, 1012, 1013-16,
1021, 1027, 1031, 1038, 105-13, 15-1, 27-2, 29-1,
30-5, 34 n. 2, 46, 49-1, 50 n. 10, 69-1,
64, 4, Com., 65. 2, 66. 13, 68. 2, 88 n. 6,
99 nn. 4, 7, Com.; passages borrowed
from Sparano 4 nn. 5-8, 5 nn. 1, 6, 7 n. 4,
12 n. 1, 10, 16, Com., 27-3; translation
of 76
Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli
bommi 12, 64, 83, 89, 97, 100, 1004,
1022; 11, 17, 8, 12, 18 n. 1, 27, 1, 30. 4,
31. 1, 34 n. 2, Com., 57. 1, 78 n. 1, 79. 1,
86 n. 1, 99 Com., 100 n. 3
treatise on mutations 9, 64, 95-6, 180, 1001;
15 0 n. 6, 34, 35-6, 46, 4, 47, 56, 51, 57. 1,
60. 1, 11-16, 21, 99 Com.;
visit to Bologna in 1521 17, 80
accidentale 1021
accidentale 1021, 1028
Achillino, Giovanni Filoteo 979-80, 983, 1004
Adler, Israel 89
Agostini, Giovanni degli 1000
Agricola, Alessandro 74
Aiguino, Bernardino 86 n. 16
Aiguino, Illuminato 71 n. 9, 86-8; 27 n. 6, 30
n. 7
Il teatro illuminato 45 n. 6
Albergo (Bolognese musician) 1004
Albert of Saxony 104. 4
Alberti, Gasparo 84, 970; 4 Com., 62. 2
madrigal in honour of Adam 11; 62. 2
Albrecht II 97 Com.
Alexandre (Bolognese musician) 1004
Alicorni, Tristano de 81
Alexandros 979, 984, 1017; 25. 2
Alexandro, Frate 99-1, 46. 1, 49. 1, 74. 1-2
Alazro, Silvestro 47
Ambrose of Milan 90
Amerus (Anueros Anglicus, Amerus) 148
Practica artis musicae 180; 45. 1
Amphion 97. 4, 106 n. 4
Andrea, Messer 979-80, 1016, 51. 1
Andreas de Casale 980
Andreas de Mantua 979
Annuario 1022
Annuros Anglicus see Amerus
Anonymous Bellermannianus 93 n. 19
Anonymous IV 1024 n. 7
Anonymous V 28 n. 26
Anonymous XI 74 n. 4
Anonymous XII 48 Com.
Anselmi, Grigorio 73 n. 9
Anthony, John 89
saying and proverbs—cant

Ego sed, quoscumque. Quod nescit

temper e t e o

'Regole et il quale arte un commune

'reason and authority

'Spago, Giovanni—cant.

relations with Aaron 14, 14, 18-2, 4-2, 80-1, 99-10, 10-3

'simplicity; 'Missa Du

pazem Domine; 'Missa della pera, 'Missa di Sancta Maria Magdalen; 'Missa Peras,

Canto di Roma; 'Nativitas tuar Dei genitor. 'Pater noster, 'Rabbi opus est factum; 'Virgo prudentissima; unidentifed 6, 8, 3

on concavo 15, 17, 8-4, 30-1
don counterpoint 12, 7, 22

7, 12, 4
tone of Aaron's treatises 19, 33, 7-3, 32, 4

Teatrum dialeticae et cognizitione di tutti gli tuoni 6, 88, 27, 3, 30-1

27, 34

91 n. 1

on work 4, 32-4, 19, 22; 17, 27, 28, 32; 22

on modal theory 174-6, 182, 174-7, 982, 986, 997; 27, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Nativitas; 'Hec Virgo

'Deprecor te; 'Gaude Maria'; 'Hee Virgo

praelus vari'; 'Magnificat; 'Missa Du

pazem Domine; 'Missa della pera, 'Missa di Sancta Maria Magdalen; 'Missa Peras,

Canto di Roma; 'Nativitas tuar Dei genitor. 'Pater noster, 'Rabbi opus est factum; 'Virgo prudentissima; unidentifed 6, 8, 3

on concavo 15, 17, 8-4, 30-1
don counterpoint 12, 7, 22

7, 12, 4
tone of Aaron's treatises 19, 33, 7-3, 32, 4

Teatrum dialeticae et cognizitione di tutti gli tuoni 6, 88, 27, 3, 30-1

27, 34

91 n. 1

on work 4, 32-4, 19, 22; 17, 27, 28, 32; 22

on modal theory 174-6, 182, 174-7, 982, 986, 997; 27, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Nativitas; 'Hec Virgo

'Deprecor te; 'Gaude Maria'; 'Hee Virgo

praelus vari'; 'Magnificat; 'Missa Du

pazem Domine; 'Missa della pera, 'Missa di Sancta Maria Magdalen; 'Missa Peras,

Canto di Roma; 'Nativitas tuar Dei genitor. 'Pater noster, 'Rabbi opus est factum; 'Virgo prudentissima; unidentifed 6, 8, 3

on concavo 15, 17, 8-4, 30-1
don counterpoint 12, 7, 22

7, 12, 4
tone of Aaron's treatises 19, 33, 7-3, 32, 4

Teatrum dialeticae et cognizitione di tutti gli tuoni 6, 88, 27, 3, 30-1

27, 34

91 n. 1

on work 4, 32-4, 19, 22; 17, 27, 28, 32; 22

on modal theory 174-6, 182, 174-7, 982, 986, 997; 27, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Nativitas; 'Hec Virgo

'Deprecor te; 'Gaude Maria'; 'Hee Virgo

praelus vari'; 'Magnificat; 'Missa Du

pazem Domine; 'Missa della pera, 'Missa di Sancta Maria Magdalen; 'Missa Peras,

Canto di Roma; 'Nativitas tuar Dei genitor. 'Pater noster, 'Rabbi opus est factum; 'Virgo prudentissima; unidentifed 6, 8, 3

on concavo 15, 17, 8-4, 30-1
don counterpoint 12, 7, 22

7, 12, 4
tone of Aaron's treatises 19, 33, 7-3, 32, 4

Teatrum dialeticae et cognizitione di tutti gli tuoni 6, 88, 27, 3, 30-1

27, 34

91 n. 1

on work 4, 32-4, 19, 22; 17, 27, 28, 32; 22

on modal theory 174-6, 182, 174-7, 982, 986, 997; 27, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Nativitas; 'Hec Virgo

'Deprecor te; 'Gaude Maria'; 'Hee Virgo

praelus vari'; 'Magnificat; 'Missa Du

pazem Domine; 'Missa della pera, 'Missa di Sancta Maria Magdalen; 'Missa Peras,
Index

Tinctoris, Johannes—cont.
on proportions 51 n. 2, 84 n. 4. 92
Traiecta alterationum 166, 182, 94, 10-12. 112. 125
Com., 51. 3
Tractatus de motu et pari 48 n. 18
Tractatus de regulari motus motorum 183, 1029
n. 11, 33, 43, 45, 13-17; 40, 11, 17, 47.
45 n. 1, 14; 54 n. 1
on tritone 82, 2
on voice-leading 116-18
works in major modes 48 Com.
s. 3
see also 'Difficultes alias', 'Missa Helas'
Tregis (Bolognese musician) 1004
Trio, Tenet 1007
Trio, 46 Com.
Triano 1006
Tomasso da Sanuto Salvatore, Frate 996; 30, 1,
12, 31
Tractatus musices (Venice, 1499) 180
'Travises', compositions on 3 Com.
'Traditora me ai tradito' 3 n. 4
Treviso 1006, 1019, 90, 93
tritone 1023, 58, 1; Com., 65, 7, 73, 3, 82, 2,
88, 6-7, 96, n. 11
see also under compositional process
Trombetti, Aescano (del Corretto) 41
Tromboncino, Bartolomeo 11, 116, 118, 1003, 4.
924-11
letter from 89
see also 'Se la mia morte brami'
Tu lumen, tu splendor patriis' (Ramis) 67-8,
73-7, 51 n. 1, 997, 1011; 3 Com., 16, 4,
41-6, 42, 143, 44, 1, 11-16, 45, 1, 14,
20-1, 49, 1, 83 n. 1, 86, 1
'Tubularia Dominum meum' (de Justitiis) 165;
88, 5-5
Turmaer, Johann 102 Com.
Tyrtaeus 97, 6
Ubaldi, Baldo degli 182; 74-1
'Ubi opus est facro' (Sparaco) 71-2, 982, 986,
1023, 1039, 1055; 44, 9, 45-57; Com., 47,
922, 925, 931
Florentia 1009
explanation of canons in 105, 2-4, 11
Udine 981, 998, 1014; 87
Ugolino of Orvieto 1024, 153, 178
on color 28, 13
on counterpoint 11, 7, 76, 2
Declaratum musicae disciplinae 13, 27 n. 14, 131,
118, 155 n. 6, 18, 181, 182, 1020; 11 n. 13, 138
nn. 21, 10, 12-4, 37, 44 nn. 23, 25, 47 nn.
5, 10, 48 nn. 14, 18, 64 n. 18, 69 n. 4, 73
nn. 6, 20, 22, 76 n. 1, 86 nn. 20, 23, 44, 1
44, 88 n. 7
on introductions 28, 13
on major prolongation 64 n. 18
on mensural modes 1010
on rule of like before like 69
un Cinofilo 1014
Urbino 986, 1000
‘Valde honorandus est’ (Anon.) 36 n. 5
Valeriano, Don 997, 1018-19, 1028-19; 61, 2,
84, 1, 86, 4
letters to 107-8
Valgulo, Carlo 97 Com.
Valla, Giorgio 98 n. 11
Van, Guillaume de 117
Vanneo, Stefano 1014-15
on mensural modes 63, 2, 64, 1, Com., 65, 2
Recantum de musicae carminium 182, 1015; 63, 2, 93
nn. 6-7
Veladaro, Juliano 1004, 1019; 32, 3, 33, 1, 36,
13, 37, 7, 38, 2, 36
Veladaro, Vicentino 32, 36, 13, 37
Venecie mundi splendor' (Ciconia) 28 n. 12
Vien, Sancte Spiritus' (Dunstable) 28 n. 12
Viena Sancte Spiritus' (Rosino da Ferreri) 1015;
8, 4, 44
Vieni sponso Christi' (Franciscus Scarpin) 1014
Venier, Domenico 1002, 93 Com.
Venus tu m’a pris’ (de Orto) 71, 4
Verbonnet, Johannes see ‘Missa Gratiae gentis’
‘Verbum Patris hodie’ (de Sarto) 57 Corn.
Venus tu m’a pris’ (de Orto) 71, 4
Victoria, Tom:is Luis de 29 n.
Ventricino, Nicola 102, 46 Com.
Vespers service:
Verdizzotti, Giovanni Mario 1023
Verdelot, Philippe 110
Verdizotti, Giovanni Mario 1003
Vergil 93, 8
Vergilius 1009, 1014, 85, 3
Vesper service:
Alberti 979, 62, 2
Willart 999, 1018, 106, 2
Vetusio 1015-16; 9, 1
Vincentino, Nicola 102, 46
L’unica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica 43,
124 n. 46
Visa 982, 1009, 1011; 35, 1, 89, 2
Vicentino paschali’ (Beuuel) 104, 4
Victoria, Tomás Luis de 29 n. 20
Victoriae musices 126 nn. 5, 9, 12
Victoriae musices 1024, 1031, 16, 4, 49, 6, 50, 4
Villano 979, 1016-17; 51, 1
Villanus, Johannes Francisca 1016
viscivio 13, 2
viscidus 12, 2
‘Virgo prudentissima’ (Spataro) 107, 109, 114
n. 23; 35, 7, 36, 2
Voci 1014-15
Vosi, Bernardino de 981, 34 Com.
Voci see Philippe de Vitry
Volpe, Prevost de la 81, 97, 1017, 4, 6
whole tone, division of 33-7, 101, 1, 102, 2,
103, 3
Willart, Adrian 91, 102, 108, 124, 5, 145-6,
979, 981-4, 986, 990, 997, 1001, 1002,
1007, 1017-19; 18, 8, 14, 1, 35, 2, 28, 1,
33, 1, 32, 35, 13, 37, 2, 44, 15, 46
Zacconi, Lodovico, Pratica di musica 45 n. 6
Zampiero 1029-20, 72, 2
Zampiero da Bressa 1024
Zanetto, Antonio Gabriele 97-9
Zarlin, Giovanni Antonio 97-9
Zanzotto, Pre de Del Lago
Zardini, Antonio Gabriele 97-9
Zaro, Libriarum del 95
Zonatis, Antonio Maria de 1017
Zonatis, Francesco de 1016
Zuan Maria di
Zio, Libraria del 95
Zurillo, Giovanni Battista 9, 127, 1020; 83, 3
Zieth 106 n. 4
Zio, Libraria del 95
Zonatis, Antonio Maria de 1017
Zonatis, Francesco de 1016
Zuan Maria di Precio 1020
Zuan Maria di