

MUSIC AT THE COURT OF THE SFORZA:
THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF A MUSICAL CENTER*

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The Sforza, rulers of Milan during the last half of the Quattrocento, were among the preeminent patrons of music of their time. Building on the seemingly slim musical tradition of their predecessors, the Visconti, the Sforza dramatically increased the size, number, and quality of musical ensembles at court. Just as dramatically, the brilliant musical life of their court ceased with their overthrow and exile by Louis XII of France at the end of the century. They thus were in power for approximately fifty years. Nevertheless, for this brief period, the family was among the two or three greatest sponsors of the art, ranking with the courts of the popes in Rome, with the Este in Ferrara, and with the Medici in Florence. In spite of the Sforza's importance to musical life in Italy, however, no general examination of their patronage has been attempted in English.¹ Using published documents from the Sforza court as well as documents from

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A thorough-going study of music in Renaissance Milan has yet to be written, partly because of lack of documentation. The basic writings on music at the court of the Sforza to date are a series of Italian articles, including the following:

Emilio Motta, "Musicisti alla corte degli Sforza," *Archivio storico lombardo*, anno XIV (1887), 29-64, 278-340, and 514-61; reprinted Geneva (1977).

Gaetano Cesari, "Musica e musicisti alla corte sforzesca," in Francesco Malaguzzi Valeri, ed., *La corte di Ludovico il Moro*, vol. IV (Milan, 1923), 183-254.

Claudio Sartori, "La musica nel Duomo dalle origini a Franchino Gaffurio," in *Storia di Milano*, vol. IX (Milan, 1961), 723-48.

Federico Mompellio, "La cappella del Duomo da Matthias Hermann di Vercore a Vincenzo Ruffo," in *ibid.*, pp. 749-85.

Guglielmo Barblan, "Vita musicale alla corte sforzesca," in *ibid.*, pp. 787-852.

idem, "La vita musicale in Milano nella prima metà del Cinquecento," in *ibid.*, pp. 853-95.

Francesco Degrada, "Musica e musicisti nell'età di Ludovico il Moro," in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro: atti del convegno internazionale* (Milan, 1983), vol. II, 409-15.

other, neighboring centers, it is the purpose of this study to provide such an examination.

The Visconti in the Trecento and earlier Quattrocento had supported a few composers and musicians. Luchino Visconti (r. 1339-1349), for example, was a patron of the Trecento composer Jacopo da Bologna (fl. 1340-1360?), and is named in three of his works: the madrigal "Lo lume vostro," the motet "Lux purpurata radiis-Diligite iusticiam," and "O in Italia," the last a celebration of the birth of twins to Luchino and his wife Isabella del Fiesco.² The Visconti supported both trumpeters and a shawm band throughout the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. The Cathedral choir, which was not directly supported by the Visconti, was founded in the late Trecento and subsequently included two major composers: Matteo da Perugia (ca. 1385-ca. 1417-18; in Milan 1402-1416) and Beltrame Ferragut (d. ca. 1450; in Milan 1425-1430).³ This choir was a small one, however, generally consisting of only four adult singers throughout the first half of the fifteenth century. Thus, although serious music patronage by the noble families of northern Italy begins in the early Quattrocento, in Milan it is necessary to await the rise of Francesco I Sforza in 1450 for a new attitude toward music.

Systems of Patronage at Milan and at the Principal Courts

Before tracing the rise of music at the Sforza court, it will be helpful to sketch the main outlines of the methods and manners of integrating music into court culture during the period.⁴ The mechanisms of music patronage differ intrinsically from those of the visual arts and literature, since throughout this time there is little trace of what has been called a

² See Kurt von Fischer, "Jacopo da Bologna," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980), vol. IX, pp. 449-50. The works of Jacopo mentioned here are published in, among other places, Nino Pirrotta, ed., *The Music of Fourteenth-Century Italy*, vol. IV (American Institute of Musicology, 1963).

³ See Sartori, "La cappella del Duomo," pp. 723-34, and *idem*, "Matteo da Perugia e Bertrand Ferragut, i due primi maestri di cappella del Duomo di Milano," *Acta musicologica*, XXVIII (1956), 12-27.

⁴ A general introduction to music patronage at the North Italian courts is William F. Prizer, "The North Italian Courts, 1460-1560," in *The Renaissance*, ed. by Iain Fenlon, vol. 2 of *Man and Music* (London, 1989), 133-55.

“made-to-measure” system in music patronage.⁵ In this procedure, which is typical of patronage of the visual arts, rich people or a member of the nobility would commission a painting or a statue from an artist or a workshop; they would pay the artist’s fee and for whatever materials were necessary, but their relationship to the maker, in theory at any rate, would last only until the work was delivered and the fee was rendered.

Music, as a performance art, could not easily function in this way, since even if noblemen were to commission a musical work, they would still need to have musicians to hand who could translate the intentions of the composer into a sounding artifact. Musical patronage therefore tended to operate under a “household” system, also seen upon occasion in artistic patronage, in which patrons would hire on a more-or-less-permanent basis groups of musicians who would perform for their pleasure.

By the later 1470s, four of these groups of musicians were resident at North-Italian courts and in Milan: the corps of trumpeters, the wind band of shawms and trombones (known collectively as the “pifferi”), the string and keyboard players who were also the singers of secular music, and the chapel of singers responsible for the performance of chant and polyphony for the services of the church. (This group too might include a keyboard player for the organ accompaniment to its music.) To these ensembles should be added the “tamborini,” the players who performed on drum and three-holed pipe for the dance. Although there was some overlap in their duties, the four bodies were essentially separate, even though, loosely speaking, all were part of the ruler’s household and were employed on a continuing basis.

The duties and skills of these four groups of musicians were naturally different. The trumpeters, generally native Italians who numbered between four and twenty, had responsibilities as much ceremonial as musical: they sounded fanfares for the proclamation of decrees, played to announce the arrival of courses at banquets, and performed as signal instruments in battle. In a purely non-musical capacity, they also functioned as high-speed

⁵ The systems of patronage in Renaissance Italy are discussed in Michael Baxendall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford, 1972); and Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy* (Princeton, 1986), first published as *Culture and Society in Renaissance Italy* (London, 1972), especially Chapter 4, “Patrons and Clients.”

couriers, delivering crucial messages to other courts or to allied troops during time of war.

The pifferi, often musicians imported from Germany who played not only shawms and trombones but also wind instruments like recorders and crumhorns, numbered between three and six during the fifteenth century. They also had ceremonial duties: they performed at jousts and in the innumerable processions and "triumphs" of the court; as the rightful accouterments of the war-like prince, they sometimes went into battle with their lord. Unlike the trumpeters, they had additional, more purely musical duties, providing the music for court dances and other entertainments, both within the walls of palaces and outdoors. They were integral parts of the *intermedi* presented between the acts of the classical comedies done at court and, upon occasion, they performed with the chapel of singers in the celebrations of the mass and offices of the church.⁶

The string players, generally two to eight Italian or Northern European musicians, performed on lute, *viola da mano*, fiddle, *lira da braccio*, and, later, *viola da gamba*. Although they performed purely instrumental music, the string players were also the singers of secular polyphony at court, accompanying themselves with their instruments, and their duties were more intimate than those of the trumpeters or pifferi. Like the pifferi, they performed at banquets and for the *intermedi* of comedies, although more frequently they performed after meals for the entertainment of their lord and lady and invited guests. They too served at court dances and in religious processions, when they would play and sing laude. They could also be called upon to provide musical instruction to their employers and their children.⁷

The duties of the princely chapel, which might number, depending upon time and place, from six to thirty members, were obvious ones. They were responsible for the performance of sacred music in the court chapel or town cathedral. On ordinary days, this music might simply be the chant of the

⁶ The duties of the pifferi are examined in William F. Prizer, "Bernardino Piffaro e i pifferi e tromboni a Mantova: strumenti a fiato in una corte italiana," *Rivista italiana di musicologia*, XVI (1981), 151-84.

⁷ The instruments and duties of the secular singers are discussed in Prizer, "Lutenists at the Court of Mantua in the Late Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries," *Journal of the Lute Society of America*, XIII (1980), 4-34; and *idem*, "Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia, 'Master Instrument Maker,'" *Early Music History*, II (1982), 87-127.

Church, but on festive days they would perform the latest polyphonic works by one of their members or by a non-resident master. They too might be called upon to sing at table and to perform in the *intermedi* of comedies. The membership of the chapels presents a rich mix of nationalities, the most valued employees coming from the mercenary singers of Northern Europe: France, the Low Countries, Germany, and sometimes England; there are also a few cases of Spaniards in the groups.

At its fullest, the household of musicians at court might count up to approximately sixty members, although the typical number is smaller than this. Maintaining so many people on the court payroll was no small expense, and it is incumbent upon us to examine the wages paid to the performers and to indicate ways in which the ruler could finance this rather substantial enterprise.

The salaries earned by the court musicians and their systems of support differed widely. If they were clerics, as were many members of the chapel and some of the secular singers, then the location of benefices, generally chapels within the churches of the *signore's* territory from which the singer would draw the income, was an important consideration, since this would allow the lord to pay the singer a lower salary and would serve to bind the singer to the local area. Wherever there was a chapel – in Milan, Ferrara, or, later Mantua – the frantic search for benefices and the importuning of the pope for local collation of whole series of them is a characteristic of the financial scene.⁸ Even so, the maintaining of a chapel was an expensive undertaking, roughly equaling in itself the total expenditures for the other three groups of musicians, principally because the number of musicians necessary was far greater.

If the musicians were laymen, as were the majority of the secular singers and virtually all of the trumpeters and pifferi, then other means of support had to be found. In general, the salaries of these artists were higher than those paid to the members of the chapel. Here too, in a basically agrarian economy, the *signori* found ways to decrease the necessary periodic disbursement of funds and to ensure the musicians' continued services: they presented the leading secular musicians with farms in their territory; these

⁸ The importance of benefices in the patronage system is discussed in Christopher Reynolds, "Musical Careers, Ecclesiastical Benefices, and the Example of Johannes Brunet," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXXVII (1984), 9-97.

the musicians would either rent out to tenant farmers or else hire farm workers themselves and sell their crops for profit. Upon occasion, too, they might assign a particularly favored musician a portion of one of the rich variety of taxes that came to the ruler's treasury and that were the principal source of his income.

The economic status of the musicians differed considerably even within the various categories. In general, however, all the salaries were greater than musicians could expect were they to accept employment outside the court: singers and instrumentalists employed by the church or by towns could expect a lower wage, although, particularly among church musicians, their employment was certainly more stable and their salary was paid more regularly.⁹ Court musicians had to await the pleasure of the ruler for their stipends, and he in turn often had to await the pleasure of greater lords for his income as a *condottiere*.

What then was the total expenditure for music on the part of a ruler at a North-Italian court? In Milan in 1469, before he instituted his chapel, Galeazzo Maria Sforza (r. 1466-1476) spent L. 5,758 on his musical household.¹⁰ The true expense of supporting a complete musical staff becomes evident when we add the salaries of the members of the chapel to our totals. In 1473, Galeazzo Maria spent almost 4,000 ducats (L. 12,127) on his chapels alone.¹¹ This figure represents an astounding 200 percent increase in the cost of maintaining musicians at the Sforza court; if Galeazzo continued to support his secular musicians in 1473 at the same rate he did in 1469, his total expenditure on his musical forces would have been

⁹ Although dated, the standard source for the economic position of musicians during the period remains Carl Anthon, "Some Aspects of the Social Status of Italian Musicians during the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of Renaissance and Baroque Music (= Musica Disciplina)*, I (1946), 111-23 and 222-34. Valuable contributions have also been made by Lewis Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 1400-1505: The Creation of a Musical Center in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984), pp. 173-84.

¹⁰ This figure derives from two separate orders to the treasurer, one for the seventeen ducal trumpeters and the other for the remaining musicians, five pifferi, a lutenist, a viola player, and a pipe-and-tabor player ("tamborino"). See Barblan, "Vita musicale," pp. 794-5 and 806.

¹¹ Barblan, "Vita musicale," p. 826, reproduces a payment list of 1473 in which the monthly total for the chapel is 326 ducats, or 3,912 ducats per year. (Throughout this section, I use an exchange rate of L. 3.1 to the ducat.) Using other figures, Lockwood, "Strategies of Music Patronage in the Fifteenth Century: The *Cappella* of Ercole I d'Este," in *Music in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Patronage, Sources, and Texts*, ed. by Iain Fenlon (Cambridge, England, 1981), p. 233, estimates that Galeazzo Maria was spending 5,000 ducats annually for his chapel.

L. 17,885 (5,769 ducats) per annum. These figures in Milan are far greater, in fact, than those at other Italian courts of the time. At Ferrara, Ercole I d'Este (r. 1471-1505), Galeazzo Maria's principal rival for musicians in northern Italy, spent in 1476 L. 2,678 on his secular musicians and L. 4,068 on the salaries of his chapel.¹² Thus his total expenditure for his musicians was L. 6,746, or roughly 38 percent of that of Galeazzo. Nevertheless, the climate of competition that Milan, Ferrara, and the papacy created for the best musicians was fierce, and individuals could become rich almost overnight: at Milan in the early 1470s one tenor, Johannes Cordier, earned 100 ducats a month.¹³ As Lauro Martines points out, this is a phenomenal sum, since, in theory at any rate, Cordier could have retired on an investment of six-months salary.¹⁴

Early Patronage of the Sforza

Before about 1470, courtly patronage of music at Milan, as it was at other North-Italian courts, was focused primarily on the forces for instrumental and secular vocal music, for the *signori* did not immediately identify the maintenance of a personal chapel of singers with an expression of their power. Nevertheless, from the early Quattrocento the rulers did begin to support the forces necessary for secular festivities and entertainments. There remains little trace of the music itself, however, since the art of the wind players and secular singers was basically an oral one. In this practice, called "the unwritten tradition" by Nino Pirrotta in a series of seminal articles,¹⁵ musicians would memorize tunes and melodic and harmonic formulae over which they would improvise settings of lyric and narrative verse, dances, and the like.

¹² For these figures see Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara*, pp. 177-80, and my review of Lockwood's book in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XL (1987), 98-9.

¹³ Bernardino Corio, *Storia di Milano* (Venice, 1554); cited from Anna Morisi Guerra, ed., *Storia di Milano di Bernardino Corio* (Turin, 1978), vol. II, p. 1398.

¹⁴ Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 1979), p. 227.

¹⁵ These articles are now conveniently collected in Pirrotta's *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984). See also Prizer, "The Frottole and the Unwritten Tradition," *Studi musicali*, XV (1986), 3-37, and the additional bibliography cited there.

Under Francesco I Sforza (r. 1450-1466), there are traces of a quickening interest in musical patronage. He supported a group of first twelve and then eighteen trumpeters, as well as an ensemble of three or four pifferi, mostly from German-speaking lands.¹⁶ Among the singer/string players there were also the Northern “Janni Bertholdo de Basilea [Basel]” and “Stefano Monachis [Munich], alemanni,” as well as the native Italian Giacomo da Bologna, “sonador de arpa.”¹⁷ Characteristic of Francesco’s attempts to improve the quality of his musicians is a letter from 1461: the duke had apparently sent a certain Picenardi to Vigevano to study lute and singing, for the youth’s teacher reports to Francesco himself that “in four or six months at the most ... he will become a good lutenist, [an ability] that goes very well with singing,” and that “he has learned singing very well, both in theory and in practice.”¹⁸

The visit of Florentine ambassadors in November 1461 is a particularly telling occasion with regard to Francesco’s musicians and the ways in which they functioned in court culture. The ambassadors entered Milanese territory by way of Parma, where “trombetti e pifferi” welcomed them. At Piacenza, “pifferi e trombetti” again hailed them. They next proceeded to Lodi, where they were greeted by the sound of bells from the churches and were accompanied to their lodgings by “pifferi et trombe.” Three miles from Milan, they were met by five sons of Francesco and “all the principal men of Milan,” as well as the by-now-usual sounds of “trombetti et pifferi.” On this day, the ambassadors gave tips to eight “trombetti dello Illustrissimo Duca di Milano” and to six “pifferi et uno trombone del signore Duca,” among others.¹⁹ While staying in Milan, they were entertained by a

¹⁶ Barblan, “Vita musicale,” p. 789, and Motta, “Musici,” p. 43. In 1461, the pifferi included Giorgio, Ghirardo, Giovanni Mayno, and Giovanni Piccinino, all from the North.

¹⁷ Motta, “Musici,” pp. 53-4.

¹⁸ “Et credo che in quatro o sey mesi al più ... sarà facto uno bono sonatore de liuto che molto si conviene cum el cantare ... ha imparato molto bene cantare per raxon e per praticata.” Barblan, “Vita musicale,” p. 809. In Mantua during the late fifteenth century there was a Giovanni Francesco Picenardi, an improviser to the *lira* known also as “Il Poeta,” possibly the son of this Picenardi. See Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier, *Mantova e Urbino: Isabella d’Este ed Elisabetta Gonzaga nelle relazioni famigliari e nelle vicende politiche* (Turin, 1893; reprint Bologna, 1976), pp. 60-2.

¹⁹ It is likely that some of these pifferi were actually the pifferi of the *comune*, since Francesco otherwise seems to have supported only four players.

lutenist and his *tenorista*, two pipe-and-tabor players (presumably for a dance), and a player of an "instrumento grande" (perhaps a harpsichord), who performed with the lutenists. Indeed, the Florentine author of the account, Giovanni di Francesco di Neri, specifically states that they were entertained "night and day by different and new players of lutes, harps, trumpets, shawms, dulcimers, and other instruments."²⁰

During their sojourn in Milan, the Florentines also attended a mass according to the Milanese (Ambrosian) rite in the Cathedral. Although Francesco himself did not maintain a personal chapel, the Cathedral did have an ensemble of singers responsible for the performance of the liturgy, and the first Sforza duke took a personal interest in the choir. Already in 1450, at the beginning of his reign, Francesco and his wife Bianca Maria Visconti urged the *fabbrica* to replace their late organist, Giacomo da Arzago, with an organist of the duke's own choice; in 1462, when the post again became vacant, they once more induced the *fabbrica* to accept their candidate, and, in the following year, Francesco offered to help fund the construction of a new organ for the Cathedral.²¹

In 1447, at the death of Filippo Maria, the last ruling Visconti, the choir consisted of only four adult members; in 1459, there were seven adult singers, as well as possibly a small number of boy sopranos. One of these adult singers was a new member in 1459: on 1 July of this year Josquin Desprez (*ca.* 1440-1521) joined the choir of the Cathedral. He was to remain a member, with several brief absences, through 1472.²² For the mid-fifteenth century, the choir of the Milan cathedral under Francesco I was a fairly large one: the choir of the Baptistry in Florence at this time varied between four and six adult singers; in 1465 at St. Peter's in Rome

²⁰ "sera et matina, vari et nuovi sonatori di liuti, arpe, trombe, pifferi, dolcimeli et altri instrumenti." Neri's account of the Florentine ambassadors' trip is published in Gaetano Milanese, "Il viaggio degli ambasciatori fiorentini al Re di Francia nel MCCCCLXI," *Archivio storico italiano*, ser. 3, vol. I (1874), 3-62, especially pp. 8-12 and 48-50.

²¹ Francesco had already had restored the organs of San Nazaro and Sant' Ambrogio. Claudio Sartori, "Organs, Organ Builders, and Organists in Milan, 1450-1476: New and Unpublished Documents," *Musical Quarterly*, XLIII (1957), 58-60.

²² On the choir of the Cathedral under Francesco I, see Sartori, "La cappella nel Duomo," pp. 735-7, and, on Josquin, *idem*, "Josquin des Prés, cantore del Duomo di Milano (1459-1472)," *Annales musicologiques*, IV (1956), 55-83.

there were only five singers; others had as few as three adult singers.²³ These small numbers will contrast strongly with the private chapels of North-Italian princes in the next decade.

The duties of the Milanese choir can be ascertained, at least in part, from Cathedral documents. In 1463 the *fabbrica* drafted a statute outlining the choir's responsibilities: they sang polyphonic music at "mass, vespers, or other divine offices" ("missas, vesperos seu alia divina officia biscantare") at all solemnities and were to be fined sixteen *soldi* for missing services on solemn feasts and twelve *soldi* for missing those on other days. Particularly important is the second article of the statute, which gives specific liturgical items they were to perform polyphonically ("in contrapunctum"): at mass they were required to sing the *Ingressa* (the Ambrosian equivalent of the Roman Introit), the *Transitorium* (the Ambrosian Communion), and the *Confractorium* (sung during the breaking of the bread at the same liturgical position as the Agnus Dei in the Roman rite); at vespers they were to sing the *Lucernarium* (the Responsory for the lamp-lighting).²⁴ On some feasts, they were also required to sing at other churches; we are told this not only in the 1463 statute ("in Ecclesia Cathedrale sive extra dictam Ecclesiam ad omnia loca"), but we also have a specific, earlier instance of this practice: in 1461 the choir refused to sing vespers at the Church of Sant' Ambrogio on 7 December, the feast day of the patron of the city, St. Ambrose.²⁵ This refusal resulted in the firing of the entire choir and, after their rehiring, in the statute of 1463.

Galeazzo Maria Sforza and Music

In spite of the growth of the choir of the Cathedral and the early presence there of Josquin Desprez, the true inauguration of music on a grand scale

²³ See Frank A. D'Accone, "The Performance of Sacred Music in Italy during Josquin's Time," in *Josquin des Prez. Proceedings of the International Josquin Festival Congress*, ed. by Edward E. Lowinsky (London, 1976), pp. 601-41, esp. p. 603.

²⁴ Of these items the most important were apparently the *Confractorium* and the *Transitorium* ("pro maiori parte honore Ecclesie teneantur aliquem cantum per contrapunctum cantare ingressum vel lucernarium vel alium cantum: prout cantoribus videbitur: et maxime in confractorio vel transitorio"). The entire 1463 document, entitled "Capitula autem per eosdem biscantores observanda sunt hec," is published in Sartori, "Josquin des Prés," p. 71.

²⁵ Sartori, "Josquin des Prés," pp. 69-70.

is the result not of Francesco I, but of his son Galeazzo Maria (r. 1466-1476). Galeazzo seems to have been particularly taken with music, having studied it himself as a boy. In 1452, when he was only eight years old, Galeazzo's tutor Sceramuccia Balbo wrote to Francesco I that the youth was studying hard and that "he has begun Latin and is also doing well at learning to sing. He has learned eight French chansons and every day he learns others, and all these things he learns with the greatest pleasure."²⁶ This reference is crucial in two ways. First, it makes clear that Galeazzo was musically literate; this was a necessity for an informed music patron. Second, when combined with the knowledge that he read with pleasure French books,²⁷ it shows an early interest in French music and culture; this may in turn explain at least partly his later determined search for Northern singers for his chapel.

In 1473, Galeazzo Maria wrote to the Bishop of Novara, confessing that music was his principal pleasure: "Having for some time taken delight in music and song more than any other pleasure, we have taken steps to hire singers."²⁸ It should come as no surprise, then, that he almost immediately increased the size and quality of his musical forces after succeeding to the duchy in 1466. Already in this year he enlarged the body of trumpeters to twenty; in 1469, as a part of his general interest in pomp, he decreed that half of these were always to travel with him wherever he went.²⁹ By the latter year, the number of ducal pifferi had been increased to at least six, four shawm players and two trombonists.³⁰ On special occasions, however, he might require more. One illustration will suffice: in 1471, for his

²⁶ "Lo Illustre Conte Galeazzo ... è entrato in latino et ancora atende benissimo ad imparare cantare et à imparato octo canti francesi e oni di ni impara de li altri, e tute queste cose impara cum suo grandissimo piacere". Adriano Cappelli, "Guiniforte Barzizza, maestro di Galeazzo Maria Sforza," *Archivio storico lombardo*, anno XXI (1894), 405. For Galeazzo as a player of keyboard instruments, see p. 193 below.

²⁷ See p. 212 below for the court's reading French books.

²⁸ "Havendo nuy dalcuni tempi in qua pigliato delectatione de musica et de canto più che de veruno altro piacere, havemo dato opera de havere cantori per fare una capella." Barblan, "Vita musicale," pp. 823-4.

²⁹ Barblan, "Vita musicale," pp. 790-1, and 794-5.

³⁰ Edmond Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas avant le XIX^e siècle*, vol. VI (Brussels, 1882; reprint New York, 1969), 26.

grandiose *andata* to Florence, he was constrained to write frantically to Ludovico I Gonzaga, marchese of Mantua:

In this our *andata* to Florence we lack our shawms and trombones, whom we had [originally] planned to take with us. We have put them in prison because they committed a certain offense, and, not wishing to free them at present, we ask your Lordship to be pleased to lend us yours for this trip, for which we shall be most grateful.³¹

Ludovico hastened to comply with Galeazzo's request,³² and three of his pifferi are included in the list of the company for Florence, along with four of the duke's own pifferi and other musicians, including three singer/string players and all twenty of the ducal trumpeters.

The most magnificent of the recorded events, however, is that on New Year's Day 1468, when eleven pifferi and thirty-nine trumpeters, many visitors loaned by neighboring magnates, were paid. Galeazzo Maria's wedding to Bona of Savoy in the same year saw some thirteen trumpeters, seven pifferi, and a secular singer paid, in addition to the musicians of the duke himself.³³

Like his father, Galeazzo was particularly fond of keyboard instruments, including the organ, although he seems to have preferred smaller, chamber organs for court use over those for churches. In 1467 he borrowed the organist Gaspare dall'Organo from Borso d'Este of Ferrara, and in 1472 he hired the Greek Isaac Argyropoulos as organist, harpsichordist, and organ builder. Galeazzo turned to Modena in the following year, when he

³¹ "Perché in questa nostra andata ad Fiorenza ne manchano li nostri pifari et tromboni, quali havevamo deliberato menarli con noi; havendo loro commisso certo delicto li havemo facto mettere in prigione: et non volendoli noi liberarli al presente, pregamo la Vostra Signoria ne voglia in questa andata, prestarne li soi, il che haveremo gratissimo." Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Archivio Gonzaga (hereafter abbreviated ASMN-G), Busta 3551, fol. 99v.

³² Ludovico wrote to his wife, Barbara of Brandenburg, on 13 February telling her to send them to Milan immediately and to have the treasurer give them an advance on their salary so that they could go. ASMN-G, Busta 2981, Libro 66, fol. 86v.

³³ Barblan, "Vita musicale," pp. 791-4. The secular singer was Zanino Dasse, a harpist from Mantua. Also at the wedding was a woman singer, a certain "Anna cantatrice," sent to Milan by Marchese Guglielmo Paleologo of Monferrato. See Motta, "Musici," pp. 299-300. On Italian women singers in this period, consult Howard M. Brown, "Women Singers and Women's Songs in Fifteenth-Century Italy," in *Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950*, ed. by Jane Bowers and Judith Tick (Urbana and Chicago, 1986), pp. 62-89.

requested the organ-maker Costantino da Tantino to bring to Milan a harpsichord, a clavichord, and an organ.³⁴ The list of Galeazzo's organs is an impressive one: at various times, he probably owned instruments by Argyropoulos, Giovanni da Gaeta, Petrus Lieb, Giorgio di Gerardo, and Passino de Eustachio.³⁵ A letter from Passino concerning one of his instruments is particularly enlightening with respect to Galeazzo's interest and abilities. In 1476 Passino asks permission to give an organ bearing the ducal arms to the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie if it no longer pleases the duke. Passino indicates, in fact, that Galeazzo himself played the instrument, since he specifically requests this if the duke no longer "puts his hands on it."³⁶

In addition to these keyboard players and makers, Galeazzo of course had his own secular singers and string players as well. In 1469 a certain "Philipeto Romeo" is recorded as a singer of the duke, and in 1472 another Filippo, "Filippo Siciliano," is mentioned along with his son and a companion as singers. In 1471 there were at least two lutenists in the duke's services as well as a player of the fiddle and a pipe-and-tabor player; although they are not documented, the seemingly ubiquitous harpists must also have been present. In addition to these figures, Galeazzo's younger brothers Ludovico il Moro and Sforza Maria had singer/string players in their employ in the same year. That the younger Sforza employed their own musicians is an essential datum, since it tends to indicate not only that they,

³⁴ Letter from Galeazzo to Costantino published in Barblan, "Vita musicale," p. 813.

³⁵ Galeazzo's interest in keyboard instruments and his instrument makers are discussed in Sartori, "Organs, Organ Builders, and Organists," pp. 60-7; Barblan, "Vita musicale," pp. 809-14; and Giulio Porro, "Lettere di Galeazzo Maria Sforza, duca di Milano," *Archivio storico lombardo*, anno VI (1879), 252. Sartori examines the work of Argyropoulos in his "Henricus Isaac o Isacco Argiropulo?," *Collectanea historiae musicae*, III (1963), 177-86.

³⁶ "non metendoli mane la Signoria Vostra saranno altre persone li interesano." Sartori, "Organs, Organ Builders and Organists," pp. 66-7.

like Galeazzo, had enjoyed a musical education,³⁷ but also because it demonstrates that other Sforza had their own courts with musicians in them. Indeed, that the children of the court, including the Sforza themselves, were expected to study music is suggested in a letter of the early 1470s from Galeazzo's secretary Cicco Simonetta to Venice, apparently writing on behalf of the duke:

You will learn from Girardo [de' Colli, the ducal ambassador to Venice] that I have written asking him to have a book copied for me containing all the *canzone* of Leonardo Giustinian, and all the others that are lovely and that can be found in Venice, and thus all those that would be useful. You should get this from Maserato [a Venetian singer], who knows music and similar things very well ... but do this as quickly as possible and include the musical notation for two or three *canzone* so that one can understand the Venetian style of singing....

Please also do the following, with the advice of Maserato: find a young boy of twelve to fifteen years of age and no more, of good habits and good ability, not [necessarily] handsome but rather with a good mind and with prudence, who knows how to sing well. He should have a good voice and also a good grounding in the theory of music ("raxone del canto") and be capable of improving and fit to serve [me], as I told you in person, since I want him in my house for my children. This boy should know how to play the lute well and to sing to the lute or without it³⁸

This letter is vital for our understanding of the role of music in court society in several ways. First, it suggests the kind of musical education children attached to the court were expected to receive: singing lessons, lute instruction, and, since the new singer was to have a good grounding in it, presumably at least the rudiments of music theory.³⁹ Second, it

³⁷ On Galeazzo's sister Ippolita as a lutenist see Barblan, "Vita musicale," p. 814. For the possibility that Ascanio was a musician, see Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life: A Key to Josquin's Biography and an Aid to the Chronology of His Works," in *Josquin des Prez*, p. 45. Lowinsky accepts Barblan's assertion (p. 804) that Galeazzo's youngest brother, Ottaviano Maria, had in 1460 a certain "maestro Barbante cum la sua violeta" as a teacher. This should perhaps be discounted. Since Ottaviano was not born until 1458, it is much more likely that Barbante was simply an entertainer of the young Sforza.

³⁸ Letter published in Motta, "Musici," pp. 554-5.

³⁹ That "raxone di canto" refers to theory is suggested in the letter from the Bishop of Novara to Galeazzo of 5 February 1473, in which he states that a Roman singer confesses that "he does not have a good knowledge of music theory, but only of practical music" ("non ha bona rasone de canto, ma solamente de la practica"). Motta, "Musici," p. 311.

demonstrates the kind of repertory that was fashionable in courtly society: the florid songs of the Venetian patrician, poet, and singer Leonardo Giustinian and his imitators. Giustinian (*ca.* 1383-1446) was one of the major North-Italian figures in secular music of his day, and the letter stands as another testimony that the vogue for his songs and those like them extended long after his death.⁴⁰ Third, in a purely musical sense, the letter suggests strongly the formulaic nature of Italian secular song in the fifteenth century: the duke wanted all the poetry (“canzone”) of the Venetian patrician, but required only two or three with music; presumably, these would be sufficient for him to see both the basic melodic phrases of the songs and their typical vocal embellishments. Finally, the letter hints that court singers were entertainers chosen for their physical attractiveness (“bellezza”) as well as their musical talent. Although Simonetta was at pains to explain that the duke was not as interested in this aspect of the boy as he was in his abilities and discretion, the preference for handsome performers should be expected in a society that viewed everything and everyone at court as a mirror of the ruler himself.

The Rise of the Cappella

Bernardino Corio, who was one of Galeazzo Maria’s chamberlains, reports that “the duke delighted greatly in music, and for this reason kept approximately thirty Northern singers, honorably paid by him.”⁴¹ The existence of this group is surely the most important of the changes wrought by Galeazzo: the establishing of a princely chapel for the performance of sacred polyphony. The new duke was one of the first North-Italian princes to found such a chapel, and he did so in direct competition with the equally determined Ercole I d’Este of Ferrara. It is not clear exactly when Galeazzo conceived the idea for his *cappella*, but in 1469 he invited two singers from the royal chapel of Naples, a certain Raynero and Antoine Pons, to come

⁴⁰ On Giustinian and his *poesia per musica*, see Walter H. Rubsamen, “The Justiane or Viniziane of the 15th Century,” *Acta musicologica*, XXIX (1957), 172-84, and Pirrotta, *Ricerchare e variazioni su ‘O rosa bella,’* *Studi musicali*, I (1972), 59-77; English translation, as “Ricerchare and Variations on O Rosa Bella,” in Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy*, pp. 145-58.

⁴¹ “Assai se delectava il duca di canto, il perché tenea circha a trenta cantatori oltramontani, honorevolmente stipendiati da lui....” Morisi Guerra, ed., *Storia di Milano di Bernardino Corio*, vol. II, p. 1398.

to Milan,⁴² and it seems likely that his decision to begin a *cappella* was intimately tied to his building projects, which included a chapel in the Castello itself. By 1471, there is clearer evidence: in October of that year, he sent Raynero and Aloysio [Loyset Compère?] to Northern Europe and England (“in loca transalpina et in Angliam”) in search of singers for his planned group. In the following year, he dispatched missions to Flanders, Burgundy, France, and Naples to search for new singers.⁴³

By early 1473, at least the nucleus of the new musicians was *in situ*, although Galeazzo was still searching for further singers and auditioning those who had arrived in Milan. One letter, of March 1473, written to Galeazzo by Zaccaria Saggio, the Mantuan ambassador at the Sforza court, reports the need for new singers. Zaccaria recounts that he had heard the solemn mass for St. Joseph performed by the new choir in the Cathedral but that “the choir needed more voices than were there.”⁴⁴ Another letter of Zaccaria, to his master Ludovico Gonzaga, is especially piquant in its description of the frequent auditions and the enormous salaries being paid; tacitly present, too, is the competition with Ercole d’Este for the recruitment of singers:

His most illustrious Lordship [Galeazzo Maria] thanks your Lordship greatly for the effort you have made concerning the tenor [Andrea da Mantova, previously in the services of Ercole d’Este]. He wishes very much to have him and says that he pays tenors twelve ducats a month in salary and that he shall do the same for him and that he can come assured that he will be accepted. His Excellency has certainly made a fine beginning with these singers and is spending fabulously for them. He has given to one alone [Heinrich Knoep?]⁴⁵ the equivalent of four thousand ducats in a house, land, money, clothing, and so forth and has made him his personal chamberlain. He is a young man of twenty-four from Liège in Germany [*recte* the Low Countries], which was destroyed by the Duke of Burgundy. He is a tenor and is married.

⁴² Barblan, “Vita musicale,” p. 820. The two musicians are shown to have been members of the chapel of Ferrante I of Naples in Allan Atlas, *Music at the Aragonese Court of Naples* (Cambridge, England, 1985), p. 95.

⁴³ Motta, “Musici,” pp. 307-9.

⁴⁴ Motta, “Musici,” p. 521, and Cesari, “Musica e musicisti,” p. 192.

⁴⁵ The only singer known to be from Liège is Knoep, who, however, is listed as a priest and accumulated many benefices. See Motta, “Musici,” pp. 330-1. On the other hand, if this singer was Knoep, then it would help to explain the wording of a 1482 document which states that Knoep was helpful “in music as well as in a number of other fields....” Lowinsky, “Ascanio Sforzas’ Life,” p. 39. If Knoep had been a chamberlain of the duke, then these other fields would be explained.

His Lordship has also given others houses in Milan worth seven or eight hundred ducats each and has written to Rome to request the pope to agree that every bishop of his principal cities – Milan, Pavia, Novara, Cremona, Piacenza, and Parma – can confer benefices up to the sum of three hundred ducats for each city specifically for singers in order to have in every city a *cappella* in the cathedral. And he says that, in addition to the three hundred ducats in benefices, he will give the rest necessary for the said singers from his income from those cities. For this he has written most insistently to the [papal] court and says that he wants to sustain music in Italy. And then his Excellency will be able to choose from these *cappelle* the best singers and in this way will have the best chapel of all, and then when he wants to hear a great noise, he will send for all [the singers] and have them shout at once in such a way that their voices will go up to heaven. I, my lord, as an accomplished musician, have often been a judge of these singers and have been in the chapel every day....⁴⁶

It is apparent from this letter that Galeazzo was spending a good deal of his time with matters concerning the new chapel. Too, there is the sense of grandiose expectations and spending in which he is indulging, and his quaint conceit of calling all the choirs together for performance *en masse*, as well as his egocentric belief that he was “sustaining music in Italy.” In

⁴⁶ “Sua Illustrissima Signoria ringratia assai Vostra Signoria di l’opera fata de quello tenorista et ha gran voglia di haverlo e dice che a li tenoristi dà ducati 12 il mese di provisione e che così darà a lui e che l’ venghi pure sicuramente, che lo acceperà per ogni forma. Per certo Sua Exellentia ha fato grandissimo principio in questi cantori e gli spende grossamente. Ha donato ad uno solo quel che vale ducati 4000 in una casa, possessione, in denari e vestimenti e tuta via li dona et halo fato suo camoriero di camera. E’ homo giovine de 24 anni et è da Legie d’ Alemagna, quella che fue distrutta per lo duca di Borgogna. E’ tenorista, è bonissimo et ha moglie. Ha donato anchora ad alchuni altri case in Milano da 700 et 800 ducati l’una et ha scritto a Roma per potere impetrare dal papa che ogni vescovo di queste sue cità principale, che è Milano, Pavia, Novara, Cremona, Piasenza è Parma, possi conferrire beneficii per fin a la summa di 300 ducati per cità a fine di poterli dare a cantori per far che ogni cità di queste habbi una capella de cantori nel duomo, e dice che oltra li 300 ducati de beneficii, darà de l’ entrate sue di quelle terre il resto de la provisione che bisognerà a detti cantori e sopra ciò ha scritto caldamente in corte e dice volere suscitare la musica in Italia. E poi starà a Sua Exellentia di ellegere sempre di tante capele li migliori cantori che gli seranno. Et a questo modo Sua Signoria verrà havere la sua capella avvantaggiata e miglior de l’altre e poi, quando gli verrà voglia di sentire un grande romore, manderà per tuti e faralli cridare ad un tratto per modo che le voce n’ anderanno fin al cielo. Io, Signor mio, come gran musico, sonno spesso fato giudice di questi cantori e capella e tuti questi di sonno stato il tuto....” Milan, 5 February 1473. ASMN-G, Busta 1624, fol. 738. Partially published in Pietro Canal, “Della musica in Mantova,” *Memorie del R. Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, XXI (1879), 660-1; reprint in *La musique à Mantoue aux XV^e et [sic] XVIII^e siècles* (Geneva, 1978). Motta, “Musici,” p. 309, cites the letter from Canal, but doubts Canal’s information that Galeazzo was concerning himself with the choirs for his other cities. As the letter itself shows, he was in fact doing so. For further on the competition between Milan and Ferrara, see Lockwood, “Strategies of Music Patronage.”

fact, Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471-1484), himself involved in the creation of a *cappella*, refused Galeazzo's request for the collation of such a great number of benefices, but did promise to give him individual ones as they came vacant and complimented him on his "religious and honorable work" in establishing a chapel for ornamenting the divine services.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, Galeazzo's chapel was truly the most grandiose seen in Italy at the time, far surpassing in size the choir of the Milanese Cathedral and even surpassing that of his rival Ercole I d'Este at Ferrara, who had begun to form his choir within four months of becoming duke on 21 August 1471. At first, Ercole kept two choirs, one of adults and the other of German boys, although he released the latter group in 1476. By 1473, Ercole had twelve adult singers plus fourteen "garzoni tedeschi" as boy sopranos; after the release of the boys, he increased the number of his adult singers.⁴⁸ Galeazzo also supported two chapels, although not in the same way that Ercole did. Galeazzo rather maintained two chapels of adult singers: the first of these was simply known as the "Cappella"; the second was the "Cappella di Camera." The separation of duties of these two groups is not clear from the known documentation, although it is possible that the *cappella di camera* was expected to travel more usually with the duke as he went from city to city and villa to villa within his territory. Certainly, given his interest in calling together all his choirs, both ensembles must have performed together on particularly festive occasions.

Unlike Ercole d'Este, Galeazzo apparently did not use boy sopranos: on two occasions when he asked to borrow the chapel of Savoy, he explicitly requested the adult singers only.⁴⁹ Furthermore, Galeazzo specifically recruited for adult sopranos. In January 1473, he sent the singer Gaspar van Weerbeke to Flanders with instructions to hire up to twenty singers for the two *cappelle*. Of these, ten were to be sopranos; two, basses; one, an alto; and another, a tenor.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Motta, "Musici," p. 310.

⁴⁸ Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara*, pp. 130-4 and 319-20.

⁴⁹ Letter of 19 January 1472: "li cantori grandi et non li picolini"; letter of 30 October 1473: "lassino li picolini come fecero l'anno pasato." Motta, "Musici," pp. 301-3.

⁵⁰ Motta, "Musici," p. 308.

The earliest payment list for the two groups is not dated, but must represent the state of the chapels after March 1473.⁵¹ On this list are contained the names of thirty-four men, twenty-one in the *cappella* and thirteen in the *cappella di camera*. Three further lists of the chapel are extant for Galeazzo's period; these show the chapels growing to forty by July 1474 (twenty-two in the *cappella* and eighteen in the *cappella di camera*), but declining to perhaps thirty-three in 1475.⁵² Many of the singers of these *cappelle* were foreigners; men came from France, Burgundy, the Low Countries, and Spain to sing in Galeazzo's ensemble and to receive his lavish salaries and many fringe benefits.

Galeazzo's chapels also boasted an extraordinary number of well-known composers, many more than was normal in other choirs of the period, when one or two was the usual number; the choirs in Milan, on the other hand, had no fewer than eight during the years 1471 – 1476. Of these, the most important were undoubtedly four Northerners, all composers of the first rank, who must have furnished much of the choir's repertory: Gaspar van Weerbeke (*ca.* 1445 – after 1517), Loyset Compère (*ca.* 1445 – 1518), Alexander Agricola (*ca.* 1446 – 1506), and Josquin Desprez. Gaspar, from Oudenaarde in Flanders, had arrived in Milan by winter 1471/72 at the latest. He served as the master of the *cappella di camera* during its first years, and eventually left Milan in 1481 to join the papal chapel, although he returned to court under Ludovico il Moro. Compère, from Hainaut, is first listed in the 1474 payment notice, although it is possible that he is the "Aloysio" sent with Raynero on the 1471 recruiting trip mentioned above. Agricola, from the Low Countries, was in Milan by 1471 and served as a member of the *cappella* until June 1474, when he was released from Sforza service. Josquin, a Frenchman, had already been in the choir of the Milan Cathedral since 1459, but transferred to the ducal chapel in 1473. A fifth

⁵¹ Barblan, "Vita musicale," pp. 826-7 dates the list as after December 1472. It is possible, however, to show that it must come from after March 1473: Don Andrea da Mantova arrived from Ferrara around 1 April. See Motta, "Musici," p. 521.

⁵² The list of 15 July 1474 is published in Motta, "Musici," pp. 322-3; the two lists of 1475, which are not salary records and do not separate the members of the two chapels, were originally published by Porro, "Lettere di Galeazzo Maria Sforza," anno V (1878), 255-6 (30 March: thirty-three singers to receive a new vestment), and anno VI (1879), 259 (4 December: twenty-six singers to receive another vestment). The 1475 lists may therefore not represent the total number of singers in the chapels, but simply those in need of new vestments. Porro's lists were republished by both Motta and Barblan.

distinguished composer was also briefly a member of the ducal chapel: Johannes Martini (d. 1497 or 1498), from the Brabant in modern-day Belgium,⁵³ came to Milan from Ercole d'Este's chapel by 1474, although he returned to Ferrara by November of this year.⁵⁴ Moreover, Edward Lowinsky discovered a document of 1477 which indicates that three further composers, all Frenchmen, must have arrived during 1476 to serve in the chapels: Colin de Lannoy, Jean Fresneau, and Jean Jappart.⁵⁵

Josquin, Weerbeke, Compère, and to a lesser extent Martini, Agricola, and the other composers combined to create a novel, indigenous style at court. This style was newly based on the syntax of the text itself: for the first time the composers were minutely attentive to the meaning and rhetoric of the text and adopted the rhythms and textures of their music to it. On the one hand, in their more complex works, they adopted imitation, sometimes called accordingly "syntactic imitation," as a primary structural element. Although earlier composers had been moving in the direction of more highly imitative works, Josquin above all brought the technique to a rapid and artful apogee. In other works, on the other hand, the "Milanese school" developed a much simpler, often almost purely homorhythmic style that may have derived its inspiration from the local Italian lauda; whatever its precise roots, it clearly evolves from Italian as opposed to Northern techniques.⁵⁶ Too, under the influence of the local Ambrosian liturgy, the

⁵³ Martini came to Ferrara from Constance, in Germany, and is often referred to as "d'Allemagna" in Ercole's payment registers. In 1475, however, he is called "Zoanne Martini de Barbante," i.e., from the Brabant. Archivio di Stato di Modena, Archivio Segreto Estense, Camera Ducale, Boletta No. 7 (1475), Estratto, under the name Martini.

⁵⁴ On these composers see the relevant articles in *The New Grove Dictionary*. In addition see, on Gaspar, Gerhard Croll, "Gaspar van Weerbeke: An Outline of His Life and Works," *Musica Disciplina*, VI (1952), 67-81. The standard work on Compère is Ludwig Finscher, *Loyset Compère (c. 1450-1518): Life and Works* (American Institute of Musicology, 1964). The most recent and up-to-date treatment of Josquin's biography is that by Jeremy Noble and Gustave Reese in *The New Grove High Renaissance Masters* (New York, 1984), pp. 1-90, which includes material not in *The New Grove Dictionary*. On Josquin and Ascanio, see Lowinsky, "Josquin des Prez and Ascanio Sforza," *Il duomo di Milano: congresso internazionale* (Milan, 1968), pp. 17-22; and *idem*, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," pp. 31-75. On Martini, see Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara*, pp. 131-4 and *passim*.

⁵⁵ Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," pp. 40-1.

⁵⁶ On the trend toward more imitative works, see Lowinsky, "Canon Technique and Simultaneous Conception in Fifteenth-Century Music: A Comparison of North and South," in *Essays on the Music of J. S. Bach and Other Divers Subjects*, ed. by Robert L. Weaver

composers began to compose cycles of motets, called “motetti missales,” which substituted for parts of the Ordinary and Proper of the mass.⁵⁷ Particularly telling is Josquin’s *Missa D’ung aultre amer*, probably composed during his stay in Milan, which substitutes the *prima pars* of Josquin’s own lauda-style motet “Tu solus qui facis mirabilia” for the Benedictus portion of the Sanctus.⁵⁸ This same influence is heard in Compère’s independent and large-scale Passion motet, “Crux triumphans,” and in Gaspar’s “Verbum caro factum est,” to mention but two other examples.⁵⁹

So similar to the lauda were many of these works that Ottaviano Petrucci could include the *prima pars* of Josquin’s “Tu solus” with a substitute text, “O Mater Dei et hominis,” and could include a truncated version of Gaspar’s “Verbum caro” with the text “O inextimabilis dilectio caritas” in his second book of laude.⁶⁰ Particularly revealing, too, is Gaspar’s “Ave, panis angelorum,” published by Petrucci in the same source.⁶¹ The text

(Louisville, Kentucky, 1981), pp. 181-222. On the homorhythmic and imitative styles of the “Milanese school,” see Ludwig Finscher, “Zum Verhältnis von Imitationstechnik und Textbehandlung im Zeitalter Josquins,” in *Renaissance-Studien: Helmuth Osthoff zum 80. Geburtstag* (Tutzing, 1979), 57-72. Joshua Rifkin has kindly furnished me with a copy of his “Josquin in Context: Toward a Chronology of Josquin’s Motets,” a paper read at the Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society in 1978. There he arrives independently at many of the conclusions concerning the Milanese style that I offer here and examines them in more detail than can I in the context of this article.

⁵⁷ The question of the *motetti missales* is a complex one and the body of literature on them is extensive. For a recent contribution on the subject see Lynn Halpern Ward, “The *Motetti Missales* Repertory Reconsidered,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXXIX (1986), 491-523, where the previous writings on the subject are discussed.

⁵⁸ Modern edition in Josquin, *Werken*, Missen, Bundel 11. The motet is published in *ibid.*, Motetten, vol. I, Bundel 2, No. 14.

⁵⁹ “Crux triumphans” was published in *Motetti A* (Venice: Petrucci, 1502), fols. 8v-10; modern edition in Compère, *Opera Omnia*, ed. by Ludwig Finscher, vol. IV (American Institute of Musicology, 1961), pp. 11-13. “Verbum caro factum est” was published in *Motetti de passione, de cruce, de sacramento, de beata Virgine, et huius modi. B* (Venice: Petrucci, 1503), fols. 19v-21.

⁶⁰ *Laude. Libro secondo* (Venice: Ottaviano Petrucci, 1508 [n. s.]), fols. 25v-26, and 51, respectively. Modern editions in Knud Jeppesen, *Die mehrstimmige italienische Laude um 1500* (Leipzig and Copenhagen, 1935; reprint Bologna 1971), pp. 40-41 and 90-91.

⁶¹ *Laude. Libro secondo*, fol. 8v. The work is anonymous there, but is a truncated variant of Gaspar’s motet “Panis angelicus,” published in *Motetti de passione ... B*, fols. 41v-42.

Ave, panis angelorum

[Superius]

[Gaspar van Weerbeke?]

Altus A - ve, pa - nis an - ge - lo - rum,

Tenor A - ve, pa - nis an - ge - lo - rum,

Bassus A - ve, pa - nis an - ge - lo - rum,

5

10 A - ve, pa - nis an - ge - lo - rum,

Dei - ta - tis - que lux sanc - to - rum. Tu est

Dei - ta - tis - que lux sanc - to - rum. Tu est

Dei - ta - tis - que lux sanc - to - rum. Tu est

Dei - ta - tis - que lux sanc - to - rum. Tu est

15 20

no - stra glo - ri - a, Vir - tus et eu - ca - ri - sti -

no - stra glo - ri - a, Vir - tus et eu - ca - ri - sti -

no - stra glo - ri - a, Vir - tus et eu - ca - ri - sti -

no - stra glo - ri - a, Vir - tus et eu - ca - ri - sti -

25

a, Ca - ro, ci - bus, sa - cra - men - tum.

a, Ca - ro, ci - bus, sa - cra - men - tum.

a, Ca - ro, ci - bus, sa - cra - men - tum.

a, Ca - ro, ci - bus, sa - cra - men - tum.

30

Quo non est

Quo non est ma - ius in - ven - - - tum. Quo

Quo non est ma - ius in - ven - - -

Quo non est ma - ius in - ven - - - tum. Quo

35

ma - ius in - ven - - - tum.

est ma - ius in - ven - tum.

tum. Quo non est ma - ius in - ven - tum.

non est ma - - - ius in - ven - tum.

of this work concerns the sacrament and thus is appropriate for an elevation motet (or a substitute for the Benedictus), exactly like "Tu solus." Moreover, it bears a striking similarity to "Tu solus" in both general style and musical detail: its basically homorhythmic texture enlivened by slight figurations (mm. 32 ff.), its emphasis on euphony in its full triadic harmonies, its extensive application of *coronae*, its move to triple mensuration (mm. 14-29), and its four-measure reduction in voices (mm. 30-33) with simple imitation make it in many ways the twin of Josquin's work.

Thanks to Lowinsky and others, it is now a historical commonplace to assert that this "syntactic style" arose in Italy (and at the North-Italian courts) as a result of the new, humanistic interest in the structure and meaning of the text itself. This statement is undoubtedly true, although it is also possible that composers felt another influence at the same time: the new and relatively grandiose size of the chapels themselves. The kinds of music most appropriate for these unprecedented, larger forces differed sharply from that of earlier masters like Dufay and Ockeghem, who had been writing, in general, for groups of many fewer members. In this view, then, the novel style at Milan (and, although slightly different, also at Ferrara) would have been the dual result of an intellectual interest in humanistic concerns and a practical interest in felicitous music for greater forces.

On Christmas Day 1476 Galeazzo, dressed in particularly elegant fashion, "with his singers, according to custom, heard three masses in the chapel in the Castello he had constructed and decorated."⁶² It was the last time he would hear his *cappella*, for he was assassinated the next day on his way to the church of Santo Stefano. With his sudden death, the political life of Milan was thrown into confusion. Gian Galeazzo (1469-1494), his son and heir to the duchy, was only six, and there was the inevitable struggle for power among the late duke's brothers. At first Bona of Savoy, the new duke's mother, served as regent, and Ludovico il Moro was banished to Pisa. In 1479 he was permitted to return, Bona went into retirement in Abbiategrasso, and Ludovico (regent, 1479-1494; Duke of

⁶² "Venuto il giorno de tanta solemnitade, Galeazzo Sforza se misse una vesta sine a piede di damasco cremesino e puoi con li cantatori, secundo l'usanza, odi tre messe entro la capella in castello constructa et ornata per lui." Morisi Guerra, ed., *Storia di Milano di Bernadino Corio*, vol. II, p. 1399. Corio reports that he was with Galeazzo when he was killed.

Milan, 1494-1499), now officially the Duke of Bari, took the reins of the duchy, not to release them even when Gian Galeazzo achieved majority.

Amid this political tumult, made worse by the North-Italian wars of the early 1480s, the musical life of the court naturally suffered. Many of the singers from Galeazzo Maria's choirs left, and musicians from the other ensembles also must have departed to seek work elsewhere. Bona did not disband the chapels entirely, however. On 7 January 1477 she wrote to Rome that, "[we] continue to be of the opinion not to release these singers completely, but to choose some of the best [to remain], among whom will be [Johannes] Cordier."⁶³ In spite of Bona's intention, Cordier left Milan to join the chapel of Maximilian in the Low Countries, and on 6 February, the duchess issued orders that no fewer than twelve singers be allowed to leave Milan without paying duty on their belongings.⁶⁴

Among the major figures from Galeazzo's chapels, only Weerbeke remained: Martini and Agricola had already departed before the duke's death and Compère left as well. The remnants of the chapels thus were deprived of both their principal members and, with the exception of Weerbeke, their principal composers. There is evidence, in fact, that even these singers remaining lost some of their privileges under Bona's regency. After the death of Galeazzo the chapel members wrote to the duchess requesting that they be given their annual vestments, as they had been given by the duke each Easter or St. George's day.⁶⁵ It is almost impossible to reconstruct the members of the choirs during the *interregnum* following Galeazzo's death; nevertheless, it should be noted that only approximately six of the singers from the chapels can be documented in Milan during the period 1477-1480.⁶⁶

⁶³ Letter of 7 January 1477: "Perseverando nuy in opinione di non licentiare in tuto questi cantori, ma farne una eleccion de alcuni de li meliori, fra li quali haverà ad eszere Cordiero." Motta, "Musici," p. 535.

⁶⁴ Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," pp. 40-1. Compère, Colin de Lannoy, Fresneau, and Japart were all included in these orders.

⁶⁵ Motta, "Musici," p. 317.

⁶⁶ Motta, "Musici," *passim*.

Josquin and the Sforza

Although it leads us past the reign of Galeazzo Maria, a brief discussion of Josquin's career with the Sforza is necessary, for Josquin may have remained intermittently linked to Milan throughout the reign of Galeazzo and beyond, perhaps until as late as 1499. I have already noted that Josquin was a member of the choir of Milan's Cathedral by 1459 and that he joined Galeazzo Maria's *cappella* in 1473. Josquin was apparently not the most steadfast of employees, however, at least during his tenure at the Cathedral, for there are major gaps in his payments there which may well indicate that he was elsewhere. His name is missing, for example, from November 1460 to April 1461, for the entire year of 1462, from May through October 1467, and for the same months in 1468.⁶⁷ It is also possible that Josquin continued to take leaves of absence once he joined Galeazzo's court chapel, although the meager documentation makes a definite answer impossible.

It is definite, however, that Josquin did leave Milan on the death of Galeazzo Maria, at least for a time. In April 1477 he is listed as a member of the chapel of René d'Anjou, titular king of Sicily and Jerusalem, in Aix-en-Provence.⁶⁸ Until recently, this has been merely a tantalizing reference, but now another scholar, without knowing the 1477 document, has found that René gave Josquin an expectative for a benefice in Château de Bar in March 1478.⁶⁹ This makes it likely that Josquin was in the chapel of René for at least a year and possibly longer. The next reference to the composer is on 12 April 1479, when he received a travel-pass in Milan for a three-month pilgrimage to St. Anthony of Vienne in southern France; this document calls Josquin "capellano nostro," that is, a member of the Milanese chapel.⁷⁰

The newly discovered documents concerning René d'Anjou add previously unknown elements to Josquin's biography, for they indicate a hiatus in what would have been considered otherwise an unbroken Italian period in

⁶⁷ Sartori, "Josquin des Prés," pp. 65-6.

⁶⁸ Yves Esquieu, "La musique à la cour provençal du roi René," *Provence historique*, XXXI (1981), 301.

⁶⁹ Françoise Robin, "Josquin des Prés au service de René d'Anjou?," *Revue de musicologie*, LXXI (1985), 180-1.

⁷⁰ Helmut Osthoff, *Josquin Desprez*, vol. I (Tutzing, 1962), p. 16.

his career. The travel-pass thus becomes not merely a brief departure from Milan, but rather a further departure after a return to the city sometime in late 1478 or early 1479. In fact, another document, discovered by Herbert Kellman, suggests that Josquin returned to the North periodically during the Milan years: in 1483, the chapter of Notre Dame in Condé-sur-l'Escaut presented him with a gift of wine "on his first return after the French wars."⁷¹ Since these wars had already begun in 1477, the reference to a "return" must indicate that Josquin had made trips there before 1477-1478. This in turn would offer logical dates for the composition of Josquin's obviously early motet "Ut Phoebi radiis," which I have shown elsewhere was written for the Order of the Golden Fleece in the Low Countries. I now believe that one of three meetings is the most likely: the meeting of 1461 in St. Omer, the meeting in Bruges in 1468, or the meeting in Bruges in 1478.⁷²

It is not evident exactly when Josquin returned to Milan after his 1479 trip to St. Anthony of Vienne, though the travel-pass itself allowed the composer three months absence. Although Josquin was definitely a member of the papal chapel for five months beginning in September 1486 and in September 1487,⁷³ Lowinsky produced strong circumstantial evidence that he was in the service, at least intermittently, of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza between 1479 and 1489 and pointed to a sonnet by the Italian poet/musician Serafino dall'Aquila addressed to "Josquin, his fellow musician of Ascanio," as well.⁷⁴ Ascanio (1455-1505, cardinal from 1484)

⁷¹ Noble and Reese, *The New Grove High Renaissance Masters*, p. 6. Since they do not concern Milan, I pass over here the fundamental significance of Kellman's discovery for Josquin's later career (from 1504 until his death, Josquin was provost of Notre Dame in Condé) and the possibility that a portion of his early training took place there.

⁷² Prizer, "Music and Ceremonial in the Low Countries: Philip the Fair and the Order of the Golden Fleece," *Early Music History*, V (1985), 113-53, esp. pp. 129-35. Note, however, that Jaap van Benthem, "A Waif, A Wedding and a Worshipped Child: Josquin's *Ut phoebi radiis* and the Order of the Golden Fleece," *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, XXXVII (1987), 64-77, believes that the work was composed for a cancelled meeting in 1479. I am grateful to Professor van Benthem for providing me with a copy of his study in advance of its publication.

⁷³ For the dates of Josquin's service in the papal chapel, see Jeremy Noble, "New Light on Josquin's Benefices," in Lowinsky, ed., *Josquin des Prez*, pp. 76-8.

⁷⁴ See Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," p. 56. I do not agree with Lowinsky's translation of "Ad Jusquino suo compagno musico d'Ascanio" as "To Josquin, his companion, Ascanio's musician." I have shown elsewhere that Serafino was a virtuoso lutenist and singer, and therefore a musician. For further on Serafino, see below, pp. 186-8.

was the fifth son of Francesco Sforza and, like his siblings, may have been a musician: Lowinsky believed that his asking for his clavichord during his exile from Milan in 1480 indicates that he must have played the instrument.⁷⁵

The evidence for Lowinsky's arguments, as so often in the study of Josquin's biography, is not entirely decisive, although it is highly likely that Josquin was serving Ascanio in the years immediately before 1490, at the least, and Lockwood and others have quite logically suggested that Josquin was with Ascanio in 1480 and 1481 in Ferrara and that he composed his *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae* during his stay there.⁷⁶ Lowinsky also believed that Josquin was in Ascanio's service in the later 1490s, but at the time of his article on Josquin and Ascanio was unable to prove his hypothesis. There is, however, a complex of documents that suggests strongly that Lowinsky was correct. These documents concern the court of Mantua and date from 1499, when Josquin's whereabouts are otherwise unknown. In February of this year, Ascanio wrote separate letters to Isabella d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga, rulers of Mantua, from Rome thanking them for the gift of hounds for his favorite sport, hunting.⁷⁷ I quote the letter to Isabella in full:

From Josquin ("Juschino") our servant we have received the hunting dog that your Ladyship has sent us as a gift. It is most appreciated both because it was sent by your Ladyship, whom we know loves us cordially, and also because of its quality; and thus we will use it because of our love for your Ladyship. We thank you as much we can and inform you that, if we can do anything at all to help you, please inform us, since you will find us always most ready. Rome, 8 February 1499.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," p. 46. On Ascanio, see now also Giulia Bologna, "Un fratello del Moro letterato e bibliofilo: Ascanio Maria Sforza," in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, vol. I, 293-332.

⁷⁶ Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara*, p. 207.

⁷⁷ The letter to Isabella was independently discovered by Lowinsky with Bonnie Blackburn; Lowinsky announced their discovery at the Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society in Los Angeles in 1975.

⁷⁸ "Da Juschino nostro servitore havemo riceputo lo livrero che la Signoria Vostra ce ha mandato a donare, che c'è stato summamente grato sì per esserne mandato da la Signoria Vostra, quale sapemo ne ama cordialmente, come anche per la qualità sua; et cusì se ne serveremo per amore de la Signoria Vostra. Ringratiandola quanto più possemo, alla quale facemo intendere che, quando per noi si possa fare cosa alcuna a satisfatione sua, ce lo voglia fare intendere, che sempre ce troverà promptissimi. Romae, VIII

A third letter in this correspondence does not mention Josquin at all. It simply informs us that Francesco and Isabella lost no time in asking the favor of Ascanio to which he alludes in the letter above and which must have been their primary motive in the original gift of hounds: Ascanio's support for their attempt to have Sigismondo Gonzaga, younger brother of Francesco, named a cardinal.⁷⁹

Although these letters do not mention music at all, they are of central importance. If this is in fact Josquin Desprez (and this does seem the most logical conclusion for a Josquin who is Ascanio's servant), then they establish that the composer left the papal chapel at some point after April 1494 and re-entered the service of Ascanio.⁸⁰ These letters, in fact, must come just at the end of Josquin's employment with Ascanio, since Louis XII invaded Milan in 1499 and Ascanio himself was captured and exiled in April 1500. Nevertheless, the letters serve both to place Josquin in Italy at the end of the fifteenth century and to close the gap between the composer's service in the papal chapel and his next known location: in 1500 or 1501 he was in Flanders recruiting singers for Ercole d'Este of Ferrara.⁸¹

Josquin may thus have been in Milan or with the Sforza at least intermittently during a lengthy period of his career: from 1459 to 1499. Although he left Sforza employ for extended periods and possibly also for repeated returns to Condé, a significant portion of his working life could have been spent under the influence of the Sforza family. Because of his returns to the North, however, and the known connection of works written during the Sforza years with other patrons and locations (e.g., "Ut Phoebi radiis" and the *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae*), it is difficult to isolate specific works that were written for the family. Lowinsky pointed to a series of masses

Februarij 1499." The letter to Francesco is exactly the same as this one except that there, Ascanio refers to "livreri." Both letters are found in ASMN-G, Busta 853. See also the addendum, pp. 192-3 below.

⁷⁹ Letter from Ascanio to Isabella, 28 February 1499. ASMN-G, Busta 2191 (Minute della cancelleria).

⁸⁰ The payment registers of the chapel are lacking from May 1494 for six years. When they resume, Josquin is not present. See Noble, "New Light on Josquin's Benefices," p. 77.

⁸¹ On 13 December 1501 Bartolomeo de' Cavalieri wrote to Ercole d'Este that Josquin was in Blois with Louis XII and Philip the Fair and that he had been in Flanders before this date recruiting singers for Ercole. Osthoff, *Josquin Desprez*, vol. I, p. 51.

and motets which he believed were the results of these years, although some of his suggestions have met with wider acceptance than others.⁸² Recently, too, Howard Mayer Brown argued convincingly that many of Josquin's (and Compère's) motet-chansons, i.e., songs built on a liturgical *cantus prius factus*, were written in Milan, and, indeed, that many of Josquin's three-part chansons were written there as well.⁸³

I should like here to concentrate briefly on four secular works, three with Italian texts and one with a French text, that seem to me likely to have been written at different times during Josquin's Sforza service. The first of these is the setting of the Italian popular tune "Scaramella va alla guerra." Compère elaborated this same tune as "Scaramella fa la galla,"⁸⁴ and the two settings must have been written during the 1470s when Josquin and Compère served together in Milan. The works are very close to French *chansons rustiques* in style, and show elements in common which may indicate that they were composed in a spirit of friendly competition.⁸⁵

Two further compositions on Italian texts, "El grillo è buon cantore" and "In te domine speravi," are clearly later works and derive from Josquin's service with Ascanio; indeed, both are ascribed by Petrucci to "Josquin d'Ascanio" and therefore also serve as proofs of Josquin's employment with the cardinal.⁸⁶ "El grillo," a work with bawdy overtones, is nearly unique in the Italian-texted repertory of the time. In its formal anomalies, its possibly all-vocal texture, and its imitation of animal sounds, it could

⁸² Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," pp. 63-70, and idem, "Josquin des Prez and Ascanio Sforza," pp. 17-22.

⁸³ Brown, "Josquin and the Fifteenth-Century Chanson," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. LXXI (1985), 119-58.

⁸⁴ Modern editions in, respectively, Josquin, *Werken*, Wereldijke Werken, Bundel V, No. 54; Compère, *Opera Omnia*, vol. V, p. 65.

⁸⁵ On the *chanson rustique* the fundamental study remains Howard M. Brown, "The *Chanson rustique*: Popular Elements in the 15th- and 16th-Century Chanson," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XII (1959), 16-27. On the two Scaramella settings, see Claudio Gallico, "Josquin and the Frottola," in Lowinsky, ed., *Josquin des Prez*, pp. 447-50. All of Josquin's settings on Italian texts are discussed in Gallico's study.

⁸⁶ "In te domine speravi" appears in *Frottole. Libro primo* (Venice: Petrucci, 1504), fols. 49v-50; it is edited by Rudolf Schwartz, *Ottaviano Petrucci. Frottole, Buch I und IV*, Publikationen älterer Musik, vol. VIII (Leipzig, 1935; reprint Hildesheim, 1967), pp. 37-8. "El grillo" is in *Frottole. Libro tertio* (Venice: Petrucci, 1505 [n.s.]), fols. 61v-62. It is edited in Josquin, *Werken*, Wereldijke Werken, Bundel V, No. 53.

be called a “proto-villotta” and resembles most closely Michele Pesenti’s “Dal lecto me levava,” which imitates the sounds of the stork and also features a bawdy undercurrent in its text.⁸⁷ The macaronic “In te domine speravi,” on the other hand, is completely frottola-like in its style. It is a *barzilletta* and has the characteristic melody-carrying superius and seemingly instrumental lower voices, the inner voices rhythmically active and the bass, structural.⁸⁸ Neither “In te domine speravi” nor “El grillo” can be earlier than the 1490s.

The date of composition and destination of the chanson “Adieu mes amours, on m’atent/Adieu mes amours,” on the other hand, are more conjectural. The text of this work is often interpreted as Josquin’s request for payment from a “king” mentioned in the text. Accordingly, it has sometimes been tentatively associated with the court of Louis XII in France, as is the genre to which the work belongs, the *chanson rustique*.⁸⁹ The chanson is, however, at least in one source (Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana MS 2794), a combinative chanson, i.e., it combines a popular monophonic tune and text with newly written melodic lines and a separate text. This seems to be among the earliest types of the *chanson rustique*.⁹⁰ Moreover, the setting appears in the manuscript Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense 2856, copied in Ferrara in 1480 or 1481.⁹¹ It cannot, therefore, have been associated with Louis XII (r. 1498-1515); indeed, if as the text suggests it refers to a king, then the most likely candidate is now René d’Anjou.

⁸⁷ “Dal lecto me levava” was first published in Petrucci’s *Frottole. Libro primo*, fols. 27v-28, where all voices have text underlaid; modern edition in, among other places, Schwartz, *Ottaviano Petrucci*, pp. 20-21. On the villotta, see Prizer, *Courtly Pastimes: The Frottole of Marchetto Cara*, Studies in Musicology, vol. XXXIII (Ann Arbor, 1980), pp. 81-5 and 126-8, and the literature cited there.

⁸⁸ For further on the macaronic frottola, see Prizer, *Courtly Pastimes*, pp. 93-4.

⁸⁹ See, for example, Osthoff, *Josquin Desprez*, vol. I, pp. 42-3. The work is edited in Josquin, *Werken*, Wereldijke Werken, Bundel II, No. 35. It is also edited, with both texts, in Howard M. Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier From the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent: Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale MS Banco Rari 229*, Monuments of Renaissance Music, vol. VII, pt. 1 (Chicago and London, 1983), pp. 345-8.

⁹⁰ See Maria Rika Maniates, “Combinative Chansons in the Dijon Chansonnier,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXIII (1970), 228-81. A detailed discussion of “Adieu mes amours” is included in Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, vol. VII, pt. 2, pp. 64-5.

⁹¹ Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara*, pp. 224-6.

On the other hand, even if Josquin did compose the chanson as a supplication for payment, there appears to be no reason that he had to intend the request for “l’argent du roi” literally, and the chanson could well have been written for Ascanio Sforza. The primary reference to “the money of the king” is found in the popular *bergerette*, which Josquin borrowed, and it was surely this phrase that gave rise to the reference to “the king” in the added *rondeau* (“je suis en desarroy/Jusquez à ce qu’il plaise au roy/Me faire avancer du content”). If this is the case, then the chanson, like Josquin’s *Missa La sol fa re mi*, may have been intended to remind Ascanio that Josquin’s salary was due. It should also be noted that both “El grillo è buon cantore” and “In te Domine speravi” can easily be interpreted as requests for payment.⁹²

Ascanio, in fact, must have been fond of the chanson, since he had in his youth a servant who sang French songs.⁹³ Moreover, the ability to read and understand French appears to have been general at the Sforza court. In 1457, the young Galeazzo Maria wrote his father, asking for the key to a chest of French books, saying that “in spite of enjoying more the reading of Latin books than French, nonetheless with the French ones I can take pleasure *with my whole company* [italics mine].”⁹⁴ Although Galeazzo mentions Latin works first, the central point in the present context is his familiarity with, and his and the court’s ability to read, French literature, here presumably chivalric literature. This makes entirely possible, and perhaps likely, the normal vocal performance of French chansons for the court, including Josquin’s “Adieu mes amours.”

⁹² The *Missa La sol fa re mi* and its origins are discussed in James Haar, “Some Remarks on the ‘Missa La sol fa re mi,’” in Lowinsky, ed., *Josquin Des Prez*, pp. 564-88. Note, however, that this interpretation of Ascanio’s difficulty in paying the salaries of his servants is expressly denied by Lowinsky, “Ascanio Sforza’s Life,” pp. 42 and 45, who maintained that Ascanio was the wealthiest cardinal of his time. Against this view should be placed David S. Chambers, “The Economic Predicament of Renaissance Cardinals,” *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, III (1976), 287-313. Chambers believes that cardinals were strapped for money because of the style of life they were expected to lead. Even Cardinals Galeotto della Rovere and Giulio de’ Medici, Vice-Chancellors like Ascanio, ran up huge debts (pp. 306-7).

⁹³ Lowinsky, “Ascanio Sforza’s Life,” p. 45.

⁹⁴ “Benche più volentieri io lega libri latini che franciosi, nondimanco perchè de franciosi potero prendere dilecto con tuta la compagnia....” Cappelli, “Guiniforte Barzizza,” p. 406.

Ludovico il Moro and Music

Ascanio, of course, was only in Milan upon occasion and lived mostly in Rome, acting partly as a representative of Milanese interests at the Vatican court. The government of Milan was under his older brother, Ludovico il Moro. Bernardino Corio, in his *Storia di Milano*, reports of the court of Ludovico that “there singing and playing of every kind were of such beautiful and of such sweet harmony that they appeared to have been sent from heaven to that lofty court.”⁹⁵ Ludovico thus shared the musical interests of his father Francesco I and his brother Galeazzo Maria. He kept a strong musical establishment and may have played the *lira da braccio* himself. His wife Beatrice d’Este was from the highly musical court of Ferrara and had been raised partly there and partly at the equally musical court of Naples. She also was musically educated: she sang and played keyboard and string instruments. Captain Galeazzo Visconti, in a famous letter of 1491 to Isabella d’Este, recounts that

This morning, Friday, the duchess [Beatrice] with all her ladies and I in the company, went on horseback ... to Cusago, and to keep your Ladyship informed of all our pleasures, I tell you that at the beginning of the trip I climbed in the carriage with the duchess and Diodato [a court fool], and here we sang more than twenty-five songs well suited for three voices, that is Diodato the tenor, I sometimes the bass and sometimes the soprano, and the duchess, soprano.⁹⁶

Beatrice too was a patron of music. Her secretary Vincenzo Calmeta, in dedicating his *Triumphs* to her memory, writes that “she was a lady of

⁹⁵ “quivi de canti e soni da ogni generatione erano tante suave e dolcissime armonie che dal cielo pareano fussen ma[n]date a la excelsa corte.” Morisi Guerra, ed., *Storia di Milano di Bernardino Corio*, vol. II, p. 1480.

⁹⁶ “Questa matina, che è venerdì, la Duchesa cum tute le sue done et io in compagnia siamo montati a cavallo ... et siamo andati a Cuxago; et per avixare bene la Signoria Vostra de tuti li piaceri nostri, la advixo che prima per la via me bixognò montare in careta insiema cum la Duchesa et Dioda, et qui cantasemo più de XXV canzone molto bene acordate a tre voce, cioè Dioda tenore, et io quando contrabaso et quando soverano, et la Duchessa soverano....” Letter of 11 February 1491. ASMN-G, Busta 1630, fols. 2-3. Partially published in Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier, “Delle relazioni di Isabella d’Este Gonzaga con Ludovico e Beatrice Sforza,” *Archivio storico lombardo*, anno XVII (1890), 108.

letters, of music, instruments, and every other virtuous exercise."⁹⁷ There is also at least slight evidence that she may have had her own, personal musical establishment, just as did her sister Isabella d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia. In 1491 Isabella wrote her sister promising to return "Riciardetto, formerly your pipe-and-tabor player, who has fled from you" if he should come to Mantua.⁹⁸ That Beatrice had her own musicians would also offer a logical explanation for Riciardetto's return to Mantua from Milan in 1497, shortly after Beatrice's death, along with a youth "who sings as beautifully as Serafino [dall'Aquila] and even sings in Spanish style."⁹⁹

Sacred Music under Ludovico il Moro

When Ludovico took power in 1479, he undoubtedly attempted to rectify the deteriorating musical situation at court. Although we have no payment registers for the ducal chapel during his reign, it is clear that there was one, since there are a number of letters from Ludovico showing determined and continued recruiting attempts for the choir, and since there are documented performances for the group.

Already in 1482, Ludovico attempted unsuccessfully to obtain the return of Gaspar van Weerbeke from Rome, promising him, in the mold of Galeazzo Maria, a salary and whatever benefices came vacant in his territory, as well as twelve ducats travel money.¹⁰⁰ Gaspar actually did not return until the end of the 1480s and had departed again by 1495, when he was in the chapel of Duke Philip the Fair in the Low Countries. In 1490, Ludovico once more attempted to recruit singers for his chapel. In November of this year he wrote to a certain tenor named "Ruth," from the Brabant, asking him to come to Milan to replace the recently deceased

⁹⁷ "Fu donna de littere, musica, sono e d'ogni altro essercizio virtuoso...." Quoted from Calmeta, *Prose e lettere edite e inedite*, ed. by Cecil Grayson, Collezione di opere inedite o rare, vol. CXXI (Bologna, 1959), p. XXXII.

⁹⁸ "Riciardetto, già suo tamburino, fugito da lei." ASMN-G, Busta 2991, Libro 1, fol. 75r-v. On noblewomen and their musical establishments, see Prizer, "Isabella d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia: The Frottola at Mantua and Ferrara," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXXXIII (1985), 1-33.

⁹⁹ "Rizardetto che stasia a Milano è venuto a Mantua et g'è venuto uno zovene ... che chanta benissimo como fa Serafino et anchora chanta a la spagnolla per exelentia...." Letter of 24 July 1497. ASMN-G, Busta 2449, fol. 555.

¹⁰⁰ Motta, "Musici," p. 326.

Heinrich Knoep among “cantoribus nostris.”¹⁰¹ Again in 1498, the year before his fall from power, Ludovico wrote that Weerbeke had found three singers for the ducal chapel in France; these were a tenor and two sopranos, for he promised “the tenor sixteen ducats a month and the sopranos twelve, just as we pay all our other singers.”¹⁰² Ludovico had thus increased the salary of his singers, since tenors under Galeazzo Maria had received just twelve ducats a month, rather than the sixteen ducats the new duke was paying.¹⁰³

From the 1490s there are documented performances of the ducal chapel. Visiting Pavia in 1492, the ambassador from Lucca heard a mass sung by Ludovico’s *cappella*,¹⁰⁴ and in 1493 the members accompanied Beatrice d’Este to Venice, where they performed on several occasions, among them at a solemn mass in San Marco. Beatrice writes that, when she arrived at the church, Ludovico’s own trumpets played and then that the mass “was ornamented by our singers.” Among these was Johannes Cordier, who had re-entered Ludovico’s chapel by this date.¹⁰⁵ A further occasion is particularly characteristic of the ways in which the chapel and other musicians could be used on festive occasions. In 1493, Beatrice d’Este writes to her sister Isabella describing the church services for the wedding of Bianca Maria Sforza to Maximilian I, celebrated in the Cathedral of Milan. The letter reveals not only the presence of the *cappella*, but also that they were

¹⁰¹ Motta, “Musici,” p. 332.

¹⁰² Motta, “Musici,” p. 327; and Cesari, “Musica e musicisti,” p. 195. In 1496, Ludovico had already ordered that “our singers have their pay.” Cesari, “Musica e musicisti,” p. 197.

¹⁰³ This is confirmed by the letter of 1490 to Ruth. Here, Ludovico states that Knoep’s salary had been sixteen ducats a month instead of the twelve ducats he was paid under Galeazzo Maria.

¹⁰⁴ “Uscendo poi de rocca, in quello medesimo tempo accadete che se cantava la messa in la capella ove havendolo accompagnato, stete tanto che fò fornite la messa et cum incredibile attenzione olditi li cantori, [l’ambasciatore] dicendo che non havere mai vista capella quale sia de tale dignità.” Motta, “Musici,” p. 542. Motta and Cesari, “Musica e musicisti,” p. 197, interpret this document as meaning that the ambassador was particularly taken with Ludovico’s choir. It is more likely, however, that he was commenting on the physical appearance of the chapel in the Castello of Pavia and that these writers were confused by the word “cappella,” which means both musical chapel and the location in which services are celebrated.

¹⁰⁵ Motta, “Musici,” pp. 537-8. Motta conjectures there that Cordier may have returned to Milan in the late 1480s.

accompanied by the organ and that the ducal pifferi and trumpeters performed at various points in the service:

In the two extreme corners of the choir were constructed two high stands, one for the singers, and the other for the trumpeters, in the middle of which were gathered all the doctors, both of law and of medicine.... The most Reverend Archbishop of Milan, accompanied by the ordinary clergy, began to celebrate the mass with the greatest ceremony and solemnity and with the sounds of trumpets, pifferi, and organ and singing of the *cappella*, who accommodated themselves to his pace in celebrating the mass.¹⁰⁶

The chapel was still serving Ludovico on the eve of his downfall. Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua reports to his wife Isabella d'Este in October 1499 that he had attended a mass according to the Ambrosian rite in Sant' Ambrogio in Milan sung by the duke's singers and those of Louis XII of France together.¹⁰⁷

Franchinus Gaffurius

The major Milanese figure in sacred music during Ludovico's reign was not a member of his chapel, however, but a lecturer in music at Ludovico's *gymnasium* and *maestro di cappella* of the choir of the Cathedral. Franchinus Gaffurius was born in Lodi in 1451 and was thus a close contemporary of Josquin, Weerbeke, and Compère. He became master of the Cathedral choir in 1484, after periods in Lodi, Mantua, Verona, Genoa,

¹⁰⁶ "Ne li dui extremi canti del coro erano facti doi lochi eminenti, l'uno per li cantori, l'altro per li trombetti, tra el mezo de li quali erano collocati tutti li doctori, juristi et de medicina.... Vene el Reverendissimo Arcivescovo de Mediolano parato cum li ordinari, et comenzò a celebrare la missa cum grandissime solemnitate de soni de trombe, pifferi et organi et canti de la capella, li quali nel celebrare de la missa se accomodavano al tempo suo." ASMN-G, Busta 1612. Published in Luzio and Renier, "Delle relazioni di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga con Ludovico e Beatrice Sforza," pp. 184-8, and in Prizer, "Bernadino Piffaro," p. 175. Also cited and translated in Julia Cartwright, *Beatrice d'Este, Duchess of Milan* (New York, 1920), pp. 211-6; unfortunately Cartwright (p. 214) mistranslated "pifferi" as "flutes," thereby obscuring the implication that the shawms and trombones are present. For further on the wedding, see A. Ceruti, "Il corredo nuziale di Bianca M. Sforza-Visconti, sposa dell'Imperatore Massimiliano I," *Archivio storico lombardo*, anno II (1875), 51-75.

¹⁰⁷ "Siamo doppoi questa mattina stati con la Maestà dil Re ad udire una messa cantata a la Ambrosiana in la chiesa de Santo Ambroso, dove sonno intervenuti li cantori dil Duca Ludovico et quelli de la prefata Maestà...." Letter of 7 October 1499. ASMN-G, Busta 2113 (Lettere originali dei Gonzaga).

Naples, and Bergamo. Already thirty-three at the time of his appointment in Milan, Gaffurius was to spend the rest of his life in the city and its environs, dying there in 1522. Gaffurius's many activities place him at the very forefront of the native Italian musicians of his generation. His importance for Milan and for the musical Renaissance in general rests on four foundations: his direction of the choir of the Cathedral for thirty-eight years, his supervision of the copying of manuscripts for the choir's use, his own artful musical compositions, and, above all, his influential theoretical treatises.

As *maestro di cappella*, Gaffurius was responsible for the day-to-day direction of the Cathedral choir and its services.¹⁰⁸ Upon taking his position, Gaffurius had eleven adult singers and an organist, all Italians; he maintained the choir at this size for many years, although later he increased the number of singers to twelve and then thirteen. He also insisted that the majority of members be native Italians, many of them from Milan and its territories. In his earlier years there, the complexion of the Cathedral choir thus contrasted strongly with that of Ludovico, who searched throughout northern Europe for his singers.

Gaffurius also had a second duty as *maestro di cappella*, that of *maestro di canto*, or teacher of the boy sopranos in the *schola* of the Cathedral. He took this job seriously, decreasing the number of boys in the school from thirty to approximately ten and attempting to add a tone of professionalism to the group by instituting salaries of twenty *soldi* a month. The more talented boys performed with the choir at Cathedral services, and from this ensemble came later many of the church's adult singers. In order to be sure that their education was not neglected, Gaffurius introduced the teaching of grammar and named a separate *maestro* responsible for this task.

Intimately tied to Gaffurius's direction of the choir was his selection and direction of the copying of repertory for its use. Three of these large manuscripts and part of another are extant in the archives of the Cathedral (Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo, Archivio della Cappella Musicale, Libro-

¹⁰⁸ On the Cathedral choir see Sartori, "La musica nel duomo," pp. 744-8, and idem, "Franchino Gaffurio a Milano," *Universitas Europae*, nos. 4-5, 8-9, and 11-12 (1952-1953).

ni 1-4).¹⁰⁹ Dating from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the codices contain the works that formed the choir's repertory: many of the masses lack a Kyrie and some are wanting the Agnus Dei as well; neither was a normal part of the Ambrosian rite. Others, however, do include the Kyrie and Agnus, and it must be that these movements were performed occasionally at masses in the Cathedral.

The manuscripts, although copied at various times, were evidently designed as a set, since their repertoires vary: Librone 1 (*ca.* 1484-1490), labeled on the guard-sheet "Liber capelle ecclesie maioris Milani factus opera et solitudine Franchini Gaffori Laudensis prefecti prefate capelle impensa vero venerabilis fabrice dicte ecclesie anno domini MCCCCLXXXX die 23 Junii," contains motets and Magnificats; Librone 2 (*ca.* 1490-1500) is dedicated principally to masses; and Librone 3 (*ca.* 1500), mostly masses and *motetti missales*; Librone 4 (early sixteenth century) again contains *motetti missales*.¹¹⁰ The manuscripts incorporate several layers of repertory, ranging from local works written for the ducal chapels at the time of Galeazzo Maria to those written by Gaffurius himself to those by the leading composers of the day imported from elsewhere. Librone 4, for example, includes local works intended to be sung at the *Transitorium* and the *Confractorium* (respectively, "Magnificamus te" and

¹⁰⁹ On the first three of these manuscripts, see Knud Jeppesen, "Die 3 Gaffurius-Kodizes der Fabbrica del Duomo, Milano," *Acta musicologica*, III (1931), 14-28, and Sartori, *La Cappella Musicale del Duomo di Milano: catalogo delle musiche dell'Archivio* (Milan, [1957]), pp. 43-53. The fourth codex is discussed in Sartori, "Il quarto codice di Gaffurius non è del tutto scomparso," *Collectanea Historiae Musicae*, I (1953), 25-44; and in Ward, "The *Motetti Missales* Repertory Reconsidered." These manuscripts were formerly numbered differently, and these numbers, still seen upon occasion in later scholarship, are as follows:

Librone 1: MS 2269

Librone 2: MS 2268

Librone 3: MS 2267

Librone 4: MS 2266

All four manuscripts are now available in facsimile editions. Libroni 1-3 are published as volumes 12a-c of the series *Renaissance Music in Facsimile*, ed. by Howard M. Brown (New York and London, 1987). The remnants of Librone 4 are published as volume XVI of *Archivum musicus metropolitanum mediolanense*, ed. by Angelo Ciceri and Luciano Migliavacca (Milan, 1968).

¹¹⁰ On the dates of these manuscripts, see Charles Hamm and Herbert Kellman, eds. *Census-Catalogue of Manuscript Sources of Polyphonic Music 1400-1550*, vol. II (American Institute of Musicology, 1982), 151-4.

“Virgo verbum concepit”),¹¹¹ thus indicating that the practice of singing these selections, already specified in the 1463 statute discussed above, was still alive in Gaffurius’s time. Particularly striking is the number of works by members of Galeazzo Maria’s chapels, including Gaspar van Weerbeke, Josquin, and Compère. One work by the last composer is a [*Missa*] *Galeazesca*, a cycle of *motetti missales* obviously written for Galeazzo Maria himself. The work is thus a group of substitution motets intended to replace (“loco”) eight liturgical items at a mass in honor of the Virgin. The cycle, in Librone 3, takes the following form:¹¹²

Loco Introitus: Ave Virgo gloriosa
 Loco Gloria: Ave salus infirmorum
 Loco Credo: Ave decus virginalis
 Loco Offertorii: Ave sponsa verbi summi
 Loco Sanctus: O Maria in supremo
 Ad elevationem: Adoramus te Christe
 Loco Agnus: Salve Mater salvatoris
 Loco Deo gratias: Virginis Marie laudes

Other works clearly originated elsewhere and arrived in Milan via scribal copies, which were then recopied into the Cathedral’s codices. Josquin composed his *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae* (Librone 3, fols. 141v-47), for example, in honor of Ercole I d’Este of Ferrara, and Heinrich Isaac’s *Missa Chargé de deuil* (Librone 2, fols. 151v-60) was imported as well, since the composer worked principally in Florence and is not known to have served in Milan.¹¹³ In both these instances, however, Gaffurius

¹¹¹ Librone 4, fols. 92v-93 and 93v-94, respectively. Both works are anonymous.

¹¹² Librone 3, fols. 125v-35 (anonymous), and Librone 1, fols. 143v-49 (Nos. 1, 2, and 4 only); modern edition in Compère, *Opera omnia*, vol. 2 (American Institute of Musicology, 1959), pp. 1-25. See Finscher, *Loyset Compère*, pp. 92 and 101-6. Cesari, “Musica e musicisti,” p. 198, believed incorrectly that the work was composed for Gian Galeazzo. Gaffurius himself called these motet cycles “ducal motets,” thus referring to their origin in the ducal chapels. David E. Crawford, in his review of Thomas Lee Noblitt, “The *Motetti Missales* of the Late 15th Century,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1963), published in *Current Musicology*, X (1980), 102-8, suggests that the cycle was written at the death of Galeazzo Maria.

¹¹³ On Isaac’s career, see Frank A. D’Accone, “Heinrich Isaac in Florence: New and Unpublished Documents,” *Musical Quarterly*, XLIX (1963), 464-83.

tailored the masses to local use, since the scribe copied only the central movements (Gloria, Credo, and Sanctus) and omitted the Kyrie and Agnus extant in other, non-Milanese sources.

A further value of the manuscripts lies in their large number of works by the Cathedral's *maestro di cappella* himself. Virtually all of Gaffurius's known works are contained in the books, and these reveal a composer of high originality and skill who writes often in the manner of Josquin with alternating, imitative pairs of voices and often in simpler, more nearly homorhythmic textures. Included are *motetti missales* cycles, a large number of Magnificats, and masses – both complete (e.g. the *Missa de tous bien pleine*) and with only the Gloria, Credo, and Sanctus sections (e.g. the *Missa trombetta*, composed on Guillaume Dufay's "Gloria ad modum tubae").¹¹⁴ Of particular interest are two motets, "Ambrosi doctor venerande," in honor of Milan's patron saint, and "Salve, decus genitoris," written to honor Ludovico Sforza and certainly performed in his presence.¹¹⁵

Gaffurius's modern reputation rests principally, however, on his theoretical writings. These in turn were linked to his teaching in the *schola* of the Cathedral and to his position as "musicæ professor" at Ludovico's *gymnasium* in Milan.¹¹⁶ Gaffurius wrote many treatises; of these, three, all published in Milan, are central to the history of music theory: *Theorica musicae* (1492), *Practica musicae* (1496), and *De harmonia musicorum*

¹¹⁴ Librone 2, fols. 84-93 and 65v-69, respectively. Both are published in Amerigo Bortone, ed., *Franchino Gaffurio: Messe*, vol. II, Archivum musices metropolitanum mediolanense (Milan, 1959).

¹¹⁵ Librone 4, fols. 68v-69 and Librone 1, fols. 82v-83. The first quatrain of the latter motet reads as follows: "Salve, decus genitoris,/Virtus orbis productoris,/Splendor aevi conditoris,/Ludovice Sfortia." For the entire text as well as a modern edition of this work, see Luciano Migliavacca, ed., *Franchino Gaffurio: Motetti*, Archivum musices metropolitanum mediolanense, vol. V (Milan, 1959), pp. 69-74, or Cesari, "Musica e musicisti," pp. 227-36. The text is also reproduced in Degrada, "Musica e musicisti nell'età di Ludovico il Moro," p. 409.

¹¹⁶ In the *Theorica musicae*, for example, Gaffurius writes, "since the nature of boys is restless and desirous of amusements all the time and on that account does not tolerate severe discipline, Plato himself orders that boys be educated in honest music, the pleasure of which most commonly offers the pathways of virtue." This must surely relate not only to Gaffurius's classical learning but also to his practical experiences with the high-spirited boy sopranos of the *schola*. Passage quoted from Claude V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven and London, 1985), p. 193. Palisca includes a lengthy and valuable discussion of Gaffurius's theoretical works.

instrumentorum opus (1518).¹¹⁷ Together, the three works represent a complete course in both theoretical and practical music.

The *Theorica musicae* is a speculative treatise on the nature of music and is based on theories of Boethius and the Greeks; Gaffurius had the latter's writings translated for his use. The *Practica musicae*, on the other hand, is just that: it treats the practical aspects of musical performance at the time. In it Gaffurius discusses the church modes, mensural notation, *musica ficta*, tempo, and even rules on deportment for the singers during services. *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus*, in spite of its title, returns to the consideration of *musica speculativa*, now more strongly and humanistically grounded in translations of Greek sources.

Secular Music under Ludovico il Moro

Ludovico of course maintained the typical musicians for secular music as well. The pifferi and trumpeters continued to play an integral role in the life of his court; in 1488, for example, the party traveling to Naples to accompany Isabella d'Aragona (the future wife of Giovanni Galeazzo Sforza) to Milan was constrained to request Ludovico to send them the ensemble of pifferi along with "the shawms, dolzaine, pipes and drums, crumhorns, horns, and all the other instruments with which they play" in order to make their voyage more pleasant and also to render their arrival at Naples "honorable."¹¹⁸ Arriving in Pavia in 1492, Isabella d'Este of Mantua was met by the dukes of Milan and Bari, Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, and by "an infinite number of horses and trumpets."¹¹⁹ There is also some evidence that Ludovico was attempting to improve the quality of the wind ensemble: in 1490, after a request from Ludovico himself, Ercole d'Este

¹¹⁷ The *Theorica musicae* is published in a facsimile edition (Bologna, 1969). Both the *Practica musicae* and the *De harmonia* have been translated by Clement A. Miller (Musicological Studies and Documents 20 and 33 [American Institute of Musicology, 1968 and 1977, respectively]). On the *Practica musicae*, see also Miller, "Gaffurio's *Practica musicae*: Origins and Contents," *Musica Disciplina*, XXII (1968), 105-28.

¹¹⁸ "pifari, sordine, tamborini, dopijni, corni et tutti quilli altri instrumenti, con li quali se accordano." Motta, "Musici," p. 49. Some of the translations of the instruments' names, e.g., "sordine" and "dopijni," are by no means certain.

¹¹⁹ Letter of 16 August 1492 from Isabella d'Este to Francesco Gonzaga. ASMN-G, Busta 2991, Libro 2, fols. 48-49. Partially published in Luzio and Renier, "Delle relazioni di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga con Ludovico e Beatrice Sforza," p. 350.

of Ferrara wrote him that “Piero our trombonist will always be ready to teach Bartolomeo your trumpeter the manner and art of playing the trombone.”¹²⁰

Nor were the singer/string players absent from Ludovico’s court. In 1478 the harpist Ruggero da Venezia is mentioned, and in 1481 another harpist, Lanzaroto da Milano, is listed as a ducal musician.¹²¹ The famous *lira da braccio* player Giacomo da San Secondo, extolled for his performance by Castiglione in his *Book of the Courtier*, was one of the duke’s musicians in the 1490s, as was a certain “Augustino, sonatore de viola.”¹²² Giovanni Pietro Fiorentino, also called Giovanni Pietro dalla Viola, was a member of the musical household, both as an improviser and as a poet for dramatic presentations at court. Finally, the famous sculptor Gian Cristoforo Romano also must have served as a singer at court, for Marchesino Stanga reported to Isabella d’Este on 18 October 1491 that the artist could not come to Mantua as she had requested:

If I have not yet sent your Most Illustrious Ladyship Gian Cristoforo the sculptor, [this is because of] ... his absence from here [Milan] and his labors both on the construction of the Certosa di Pavia as well as to obey the most Illustrious Madame the Duchess of Bari [Beatrice d’Este], in the services of whom he has been engaged in the company of the other singers now in one place and now in another, just as he is at the moment in Genoa with her.¹²³

¹²⁰ “Piedro nostro trombono serà sempre apparecchiato insegnar Bartholomeo suo trombeta el modo et l’arte del sonare el trombono.” Barblan, “Vita musicale,” p. 800.

¹²¹ Motta, “Musici,” p. 56.

¹²² Barblan, “Vita musicale,” p. 805. The listing published by Barblan actually gives only “Jacomo sonatore da viola”; that this is Giacomo da San Secondo is confirmed by a letter of 7 July 1493, from Beatrice d’Este to Francesco Gonzaga, asking him to return “Jacomo da Santo Secondo” so that Ludovico, ill with a fever, can hear him play. ASMN-G, Busta 1612. For further on Giacomo, see Prizer, “Lutenists at the Court of Mantua,” pp. 13-14.

¹²³ “Se non ho mandato a la Signoria Vostra fin questo dì Johanni Christoforo scultore ... sua absentia de qui et a le occupatione ha havuto, sì per la fabrica de la Certosa de Pavia sì etiam per obedire la Illustrissima Madonna duchessa de Bari, in servitij de la cui Eccellentia è stato occupato in compagnia con gli altri cantori mo’ in un loco, mo’ in uno altro, como e di presente ad Genoa con epsa.” ASMN-G, Busta 1630, fol. 39. Letter published in A. Venturi, “Gian Christoforo Romano,” *Archivio storico dell’arte*, I (1888), 55. That Gian Cristoforo was a particularly accomplished musician is confirmed by his friend Sabba da Castiglione, who places his abilities in music before those in sculpture: “Mio Giovan Cristoforo Romano, il quale oltra le virtù, et massimamente della musica, fu al suo tempore scultore eccellente et famoso.” *Ricordi di Monsignor Sabba*

In fact, the singer/string players are particularly important under Ludovico and Beatrice, since the era of their reign witnessed the transition from an unwritten tradition in Italian secular music to a written one: beginning shortly after 1490, first manuscripts and then printed books of frottola began to appear and quickly became the rage of the North-Italian courts. Textually, the frottola set amorous and mock-amorous poems in the Italian fixed poetic forms: first the *strambotto* and then the *barzelletta* enjoyed the favor of the court musicians and their audience. Musically, the genre was most usually a solo song, accompanied by a lutenist and his *tenorista*, who played lute, fiddle, or *lira da braccio*.¹²⁴ Plate 1, a *Madonna and Child* with angel musicians by Vincenzo Foppa, demonstrates this practice: the angel lutenist at the left is accompanied by the angelic *tenorista* playing fiddle. Foppa (between 1427 and 1430 to 1515 or 1516) was a Brescian artist who worked in Milan and Pavia for the Sforza.¹²⁵

da Castiglione (Venice: Paolo Gerardo, 1560; first published in 1546), fol. 56v.

¹²⁴ On the textual and musical nature of the frottola, see Prizer, *Courtly Pastimes*. Older and still valuable treatments include two by Walter Rubsamen, *Literary Sources of Secular Music in Italy* (ca. 1500) (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943), and "From Frottola to Madrigal: The Changing Pattern of Secular Italian Vocal Music," in James Haar, ed., *The Chanson and Madrigal, 1480-1530: Studies in Comparison and Contrast* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964), pp. 51-87. See also James Haar, *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350-1600* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1986).

¹²⁵ Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler*, vol. XII (Leipzig, 1916), pp. 195-7.



Plate 1 Vincenzo Foppa, *Madonna and Child*, with angel musicians (lute and fiddle). Florence, Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies.

el mio amar grande et del tuo ampe pocho.

No ae biafema amor ma tua natura.

Vedito o fructi i un sol tpo et lo ho visto ho la cera el fango a un sol fudo.

Vn dulce el alt' mas no se matura. Un se liquefa el alt' sin dura.

enor Del mio amar grande

Plate 2 Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, MS 55, fol. 53v. Superius and Tenor of Serafino dall'Aquila's *strambotto*, "Del mio amar grande."

At least two frottola manuscripts of Milanese origin are still extant: Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, MS 55, copied just at the end of Ludovico's reign or shortly thereafter,¹²⁶ and Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio, MS Basevi 2441, copied slightly later.¹²⁷ The latter contains sixty-eight frottole, mostly by composers resident at other centers, including Mantua and Ferrara. Trivulziana 55, which contains sixty-four frottole, seems a more accurate barometer of the poetic and musical life at court. The musical settings are for the most part anonymous, although the majority must have been furnished by members of the ducal musical establishment. Many of the texts in the manuscript, on the other hand, can be assigned to figures resident in Milan. Present are settings of the poetry of Vincenzo Calmeta, secretary to Beatrice d'Este; Pietro Garavini, another Sforza secretary; Leonardo Corvino, Mantuan ambassador to the Sforza court; and, above all, Serafino de' Ciminelli dall'Aquila.

Serafino dall'Aquila (1466-1500) was the major poet of *strambotti* of his day and was also a virtuoso lutenist. The basic source of his biography is a Milanese one: the "Vita de Serafino Aquilano" by Calmeta, first published in 1504.¹²⁸ From late 1484 to 1490, Serafino was in the service of Ascanio Sforza and must have accompanied the cardinal to Milan in November 1487 when Ascanio served as regent for the ailing Ludovico. It was surely at this time that Serafino heard Ludovico's servant, the Neapolitan courtier Andrea Cossa (or Coscia), perform to the lute the *strambotti* of Benedetto Gareth, called "Il Cariteo," a Spaniard resident at the court of Naples. According to Calmeta, Serafino adopted this method of singing and poetry and began to concentrate on *strambotti* within his

¹²⁶ MS Trivulziana 55 is inventoried in Knud Jeppesen, *La Frottola*, vol. II, *Zur Bibliographie der handschriftlichen musikalischen Überlieferung des weltlichen italienischen Lieds um 1500*, Acta Jutlandica 41:1 (Copenhagen, 1969), pp. 162-5. It is edited in *idem*, *La Frottola*, vol. III, Acta Jutlandica 42:1 (Copenhagen, 1970), pp. 179-324; and in Remo Giazotto, "Onde musicali nella corrente poetica di Serafino dall'Aquila," in *Musurgia nova* (Milan, 1959), pp. 3-119.

¹²⁷ Joshua Rifkin, "Scribal Concordances for Some Renaissance Manuscripts in Florentine Libraries," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXVI (1973), 306, has shown that portions of Basevi 2441 were copied by one of the scribes of Librone 3 from the Duomo. See Jeppesen, *La Frottola*, vol. II, pp. 140-3 for an inventory of the contents of Basevi 2441.

¹²⁸ Calmeta's biography of Serafino is included in the former's *Prose e lettere*, pp. 60-77. The most recent interpretation of this material is Lowinsky, "Ascanio Sforza's Life," pp. 51-60.

own work.¹²⁹ By November 1490 Serafino left Ascanio's service and went to Naples himself, perhaps to perfect this new fashion in poetry and music. In 1495 he returned to Milan, where he passed intermittent but lengthy periods until the fall of Ludovico in 1499.

There are perhaps six works by Serafino in Trivulziana 55. Of these, the *strambotto* "Del mio amar grande" (See Plate 2) is typical in its rhyme scheme (ABABABCC, the pattern of a *strambotto toscano*), its play on antithetical metaphors drawn from nature, and its theme stemming from the doctrine of *amour courtois*: the tormented lover who suffers from the unrequited love he bears his aloof and pitiless lady.

Del mio amar grande et del tuo amor pocho,
 non ne biastema Amor, ma tua natura.
 Veduto ò fructi in un sol tempo et locho,
 un dolce e l'altro mai non se matura;
 visto ho la cera e'l fango a un sol focho:
 l'un se liquefa e l'altro s'indura.
 Cussì consendo [= cocendo] nui d'un focho amore:
 Tu te indurissi, et me disfaze el core.

For my great love and your slight one,
 Do not curse Love, but your nature.
 I have seen fruit in the same time and place,
 The one sweet and the other that never matures;
 I have seen wax and clay on the same fire:
 The one melts and the other hardens.
 Thus are we cooking on a fire of love:
 You become hard, and my heart melts.¹³⁰

One of the anonymous musicians who set material in the Trivulziana manuscript was perhaps Ludovico Milanese, who contributed eight frottole and a lauda to the repertory. In 1496, court records contain a "Ludovico musico ducis Mediolani," most likely to be identified with the frottolist.¹³¹ After the fall of the Sforza, he must have gone to Lucca, where he is recorded as organist and *maestro di cappella* of the church of San

¹²⁹ Calmeta, *Prose e lettere*, pp. 62-3.

¹³⁰ MS Trivulziana 55, fols. 53v-54. This version of Serafino's *strambotto* differs slightly from that in other sources: for a reading after the Giunta edition of 1516 of his poems, see Barbara Bauer-Formiconi, *Die Strambotti des Serafino dall'Aquila*, Freiburger Schriften zur Romanischen Philologie, vol. X (Munich, 1967), pp. 209-10.

¹³¹ The 1496 document is published in Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas*, vol. VI, p. 27, with the incorrect date of 1456; corrected in Motta, "Musici," p. 547.

Michele from 1512.¹³² Of particular interest is Ludovico's "Ameni colli," one of the few works in the frottola repertory for five voices rather than four.¹³³ Another of these five-voiced works is an anonymous setting of a further *strambotto* of Serafino, "Non te smarir cor mio."¹³⁴ There, however, the fifth voice is derived from the tenor through canon; in Ludovico's setting, the fifth voice is freely composed. The anonymous text of "Ameni colli," again a *strambotto toscano*, represents another important conceit in frottola poetry, the idealization of the bucolic:

Ameni colli, aprici monticelli,
 fresche fontane e dilettose rive,
 di fiori adorni verdi praticelli,
 che a voi pensando el cor se apaga e vive.
 Boscheti albergo di cantanti aucelli,
 che fanno de martir l'anime prive,
 O come volentier tra voi staria
 pur che li fusse anchor la nimpha mia.

Pleasing hills, sunny mountains,
 Cool springs and delightful river banks,
 Green meadows adorned with flowers,
 Thinking of you my heart becomes peaceful and alive.
 Trees, the home of singing birds
 That remove the martyrdom from my soul,
 O how gladly I would remain with you
 If only my nymph were there too.

Leonardo da Vinci and Music at Milan

It is well known by art historians that Leonardo da Vinci was in Milan at the invitation of Ludovico il Moro from 1482-1483 until the French invasion in 1499. Until the recent work of Emanuel Winternitz, however,

¹³² Luigi Neri, *Storia della musica in Lucca* (Lucca, 1879; reprint Bologna, 1969), p. 46.

¹³³ *Frottole. Libro octavo* (Venice: Petrucci, 1507), fols. 29v-30; a modern edition of the version for voice and lute, after *Tenori e contrabassi intabulati col soprano in canto figurato per cantar e sonar col lauto. Libro secondo* (Venice: Petrucci, 1511), fols. 49r-v, is included in Benvenuto Disertori, *Le frottole per canto e liuto intabulate da Franciscus Bossinensis* (Milan, 1964), pp. 570-1.

¹³⁴ *Strambotti, ode, sonetti et modo de cantar versi latini e capituli. Libro quarto* (Venice: Petrucci, [1505]), fol. 28; modern edition in Schwartz, *Ottaviano Petrucci*, p. 73.

little attention was focused on Leonardo's musical abilities and interests.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, Leonardo was, among his many other accomplishments, an important Renaissance thinker about music and a fine musician as well. The "Anonimo Gaddiano," one of the earliest sources of the artist's biography, reports that

he was an eloquent speaker and a fine player of the *lira* [*da braccio*] and was the teacher for this [instrument] of Atalante Migliorotti.... He was sent, together with Atalante, by Lorenzo il Magnifico [de' Medici] to the Duke of Milan [Ludovico], to present to him a *lira*, for he was unique in playing this instrument.¹³⁶

Although he errs in the year Leonardo arrived at Ludovico's court, Vasari echoes these statements, writing that he

was sent to Milan with great accolades to play for the duke, who had a great liking for the sound of the *lira*. And Leonardo brought the instrument he had built with his own hands, made largely of silver in the shape of a horse's skull – a new and bizarre thing – so that the resonance ["l'armonia"] would be greater and [so that] it would have a more sonorous tone. With this he surpassed all musicians who met there [at court] to play. In addition to this, he was the best improviser to poetry of his time.¹³⁷

Taken together, these two statements demonstrate that Leonardo was deeply occupied with music: he was a player of the *lira da braccio*, a teacher of the instrument to one of the major performers of the day, an instrument builder, and an improviser squarely in the mold of other fif-

¹³⁵ Winternitz, *Leonardo da Vinci as a Musician* (New Haven and London, 1982).

¹³⁶ "Fu eloquente nel parlare et raro sonatore di lira, et fu maestro di quella d'Atalante Migliorotti.... Dal detto Magnifico Lorenzo fu mandato al duca di Milano insieme con Atalante Megliorottj a presentarli una lira, che unico era in sonare tale extrumento." Cited from Carl Frey, *Il codice magliabecchiano, cl. XVII, 17* (Berlin, 1892; reprint Farnborough, 1969), p. 110. On Migliorotti, a Florentine player of the *lira da braccio*, see Prizer, "Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia," pp. 107-9.

¹³⁷ The entire passage from Vasari reads as follows: "Avvenne che morto Giovan Galeazzo duca di Milano, e creato Lodovico Sforza nel grado medesimo l'anno 1494, fu condotto a Milano con gran riputazione Lionardo al duca, il quale molto si dilettaua del suono della lira, perchè sonasse; e Lionardo portò quello strumento ch'egli aveva di sua mano fabbricato d'argento gran parte, in forma d'un teschio di cavallo, cosa bizzarra e nuova, acciocchè l'armonia fosse con maggior tuba e più sonora di voce; laonde superò tutti i musici che quivi erano concorsi a sonare. Oltre ciò, fu il migliore dicitore di rime all'improvviso del tempo suo." Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. by Gaetano Milanesi, vol. IV (Florence, 1879), p. 28.

teenth-century improvisers like the two already mentioned, Leonardo Giustinian and Serafino dall'Aquila. Moreover, if one accepts that Vasari was merely mistaken concerning the year of Leonardo's arrival in Milan, then both statements make it clear that Leonardo came originally to court not as an artist or as an architect of military fortifications, but as a musician.

It is also likely that Leonardo played additional string instruments. H. Colin Slim has recently revealed a previously unknown Leonardo drawing from the Milanese years (1485-1490) that presents a lutenist's hand, its fingers clearly positioned on the neck of a lute to play an E-flat triad.¹³⁸ Furthermore, in December 1498 Marchese Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua wrote his treasurer:

We want you to give Leonardo Fiorentino, the bearer of this letter, eleven ducats, which we are giving him in payment for the many lute and viola strings he has given us, releasing [the money] immediately so that he can continue his journey.¹³⁹

The word "viole" in this passage is ambiguous, since it may refer to *lire da braccio*, fiddles, or even *viole da gamba*; "leuti," on the other hand, is unambiguous, and the strong implication is that, if Leonardo carried enough extra lute strings with him to sell a good number to Francesco Gonzaga, he must have played the instrument himself.

There are other indications of Leonardo's profound interest in and knowledge of music. He did basic research in acoustics, including the origins of sound and the phenomena of vibration and sympathetic vibration. He invented instruments (many equally as "bizarre" as the *lira* in the shape of a horse's skull), including pitched drums, keyed flutes, and the "viola organistica," a keyboard instrument with strings vibrated by a friction band. The importance of music to his thought is particularly apparent in his

¹³⁸ H. Colin Slim, "The Lutenist's Hand," *Achademia Leonardi Vinci*, I (1988), 32-4.

¹³⁹ "Thesaurario. Charissime noster. Volemo che tu daghi ad Leonardo Fiorentino, exhibitore presente, undecce ducati, quali gli damo impagamento de tante corde da leuti et viole che lui ne ha date, expendendolo subito a ciò che ge ne possa andare al viaggio suo, et questo è nostra intentione. Godij [Goito], XIIJ Decembris 1498." ASMN-G, Busta 2908, Libro 160, fol. 146v. Published in, among other places, Alessandro Luzio, "I ritratti d'Isabella d'Este," *Emporium*, XI (1900), p. 352. As Luzio points out, Leonardo is almost always designated simply "Leonardo Fiorentino" in Mantuan documents.

Paragone: although he places painting at the apex of all arts, he accords music a position immediately below this and before the other arts.¹⁴⁰

Music in Milan After the Fall of Ludovico

After the fall of Ludovico il Moro in 1499, Sforza patronage of music came to a virtual end in the city. The choir of the Cathedral continued through the sixteenth century, however; at the death of Gaffurius in 1522, the group consisted of eleven adult singers and six boy sopranos. Gaffurius's position as master of these singers was taken by others, first by the Fleming Matthias Hermann, and later by the native Italian composer Vincenzo Ruffo.¹⁴¹ Music at court, however, had suffered a near fatal blow and was not to recover until the regency of Ferrante Gonzaga in the mid-sixteenth century. Even during his brief restoration, Duke Massimiliano Sforza (1493-1530, r. 1512-1515) seems to have had few musical retainers and was forced to borrow both loud musicians and singer/lutenists from the Gonzaga at Mantua.¹⁴²

The brilliant musical life of the Sforza court was thus cut short at the end of the fifteenth century and did not endure in the same fruitful way seen at the courts of Ferrara and Mantua. Because of their stable dynasties these courts were able to extend their patronage of music and to draw major figures throughout the sixteenth century, and, in the case of Mantua, well into the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, while it flourished, the court of Milan was one of the major sponsors of music in the Italian peninsula and, indeed, throughout Europe. With its early support of a princely chapel and its important patronage of secular musicians, the court of the Sforza was second to none in the last half of the Quattrocento, and the patterns it helped establish became those for all Italian courts of the later Renaissance.

¹⁴⁰ See Winternitz, *Leonardo da Vinci*, pp. 204-23.

¹⁴¹ On music in the Cathedral during this period, see Mompellio, "La cappella del Duomo da Matthias Hermann di Vercore a Vincenzo Ruffo."

¹⁴² See Prizer, *Courtly Pastimes*, pp. 43-5. For what can be said about secular music during the first half of the sixteenth century, see Barblan, "La vita musicale in Milano nella prima metà del Cinquecento."

ADDENDUM

Since submitting this study to *Musica Disciplina*, I have been able to discover additional documents concerning the Josquin who was in Mantua to receive hunting dogs for his master Cardinal Ascanio Sforza (see pp. 168-9 above). Since these documents serve to clarify both the period in which Josquin was in Mantua and the political context that occasioned the gifts, I take the opportunity to discuss them briefly here. On 23 December 1498, Ludovico Gonzaga, Bishop of Mantua, wrote Ascanio from Rivarolo, in the Mantovano:

Learning from Josquin ("Juschino") of your most Reverend and Illustrious Lordship's wish for hunting dogs, I was unhappy not to have known of it sooner, since I had already left myself without any because I had given them to the most Reverend Cardinal [Federico di] San Severino, not knowing otherwise your wish, or else I would have kept more of them on hand. In order to satisfy at least partly my debt to you, I have given Josquin four hounds including a spayed bitch. I beg your most Reverend Lordship to deign to accept them, together with my good wishes. If they [the hounds] corresponded [to the wish], they would be the most perfect in the world.¹⁴³

Josquin was thus in Mantua and its surrounding territories in late December 1498. If he arrived in Rome shortly before Ascanio wrote his letters to Francesco and Isabella in early February 1499, then he may well have remained in Mantua until sometime around the middle of January before travelling south with the Gonzaga gifts.

With the addition of Ludovico's hounds, the presents to Ascanio form parts of two separate campaigns to have a Gonzaga named cardinal, rather than the single one referred to in the body of this article. As stated above, Francesco and Isabella were trying to achieve the red hat for Francesco's brother Sigismondo. At the time of Josquin's stay in Mantua, they had

¹⁴³ "Inteso da Juschino lo desiderio[o] di Vostra Reverendissima et Illustrissima Signoria d'haver livrerì, sum restato in displicentia per non essermi più presto facto premonito, per ciò che, essendome spogliato in donami al Reverendissimo Cardinale Santo Severino, non sapendo altramente del desiderio di quella, haveria retenuta più la mane. Tutta per satisfare al meno in quello ch'io posso al debito de la servitù mia, ho consignato a Juschino 4 livrerì computata una cagna castrata. Supplico Vostra Signoria Reverendissima se degni acceptarli insieme cum lo buon mio animo al quale, se correspondesseno, sarebbeno li più perfecti dal mondo." Archivio di Stato di Parma, Fondo Gonzaga di Guastalla, Busta 41, No. 5 [Registro 2], unfoliated.

already been importuning Ascanio for some time. Thus, for example, there is in the archives in Mantua a copy of a letter from Ascanio to Ludovico il Moro of 10 February 1498, in which Ascanio assures his brother that he will support the “fratello del prefato Illustrissimo Signor Marchese” for the cardinalate.¹⁴⁴ Nor was Ascanio the only cardinal on whom the Gonzaga showered gifts: in 1499 they gave velvet, hunting dogs, and horses to Cardinal Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI.¹⁴⁵ Sigismondo finally became Cardinal in 1505.

On the other hand, Bishop Ludovico, Francesco’s uncle, was himself trying to become a cardinal. This too was a long campaign: already in 1485, Ludovico wrote from Rome to Girolamo Stanga in Mantua asking for Francesco’s support in his quest.¹⁴⁶ Ludovico’s wish was never to be achieved; already by the date of his letter to Ascanio, his resentment of his nephew’s lack of support was intense and he rarely entered Mantua, preferring to remain in his court outside the city in the Mantovano.¹⁴⁷

Josquin’s visit to Mantua thus seems fortuitous. He may have been in Milan and on his way to Rome via the Mantovano when the Gonzaga decided for their own reasons to send hunting dogs with him for his master Ascanio. If he engaged in any musical activity while he was in Mantua, the documents do not mention it. On the other hand, it is clear from the wording of two later letters that the Gonzaga knew of Josquin Desprez and his music.¹⁴⁸

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¹⁴⁴ ASMN-G, Busta 852.

¹⁴⁵ There are three separate letters of thanks from Cesare to Francesco and Isabella, of 14 February, 18 February, and 1 June 1499, all in ASMN-G, Busta 853.

¹⁴⁶ Letter of 25 July 1485. ASMN, Fondo D’Arco, Busta 85, pp. 62–3.

¹⁴⁷ Relatively little research has been done on Ludovico Gonzaga. For a capsule biography that includes a brief discussion of his quest for the red hat, see Umberti Rossi, “Commedie classiche in Gazzuolo nel 1501-1507,” *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, XIII (1989), 305–15.

¹⁴⁸ See the letter from Johannes Vivaysius [= Johannes Vivas] of 19 December 1499 (ASMN-G, Busta 1235, fol. 768) and the letter from Giacomo d’Atri of 12 April 1503 (ASMN-G, Busta 629, fols. 436-7). Both are published in Claudio Gallico, “Josquin nell’Archivio Gonzaga,” *Rivista italiana di musicologia*, VI (1971), 207-8.