

the development of musical forms and styles. Starting with the monophonic songs of the *trouvères*, Machaut himself created the accompanied solo song. In so doing, he developed the compositional techniques and the arrangement of vocal and instrumental parts that remained in use for more than a century. Beyond their revelation of this creative process, Machaut's songs illustrate the transformation of simple music for dancing into highly elaborated art forms. It is especially significant to note that the coexistence of all stages of this transformation rules out undeviating progress from the simplest to the most complex secular songs. Machaut apparently moved with ease from the dense four-part polyphony of the double ballade (No. 34) to the dancelike tune of the monophonic Ballade 37. Moreover, we cannot assume that the *virclais* belong to an earlier period than the ballades and *rondeaux* or than the motets, for that matter. Indeed, it is an important measure of Machaut's greatness that he could range at will between the extremes of intellectual constructivism and folklike simplicity. No other medieval composer left proof of such versatility. No other wrote with equal success in all the forms and styles of his time. Not until the beginning of the Renaissance do we find composers of comparable universality. Even then, few could match and fewer still surpass Machaut's towering achievements.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Italian Ars Nova

Italian secular polyphony suddenly appeared and flourished in the fourteenth century with no apparent antecedents. It is sometimes argued, therefore, that the term *Ars Nova* should not be applied to music that seems to have developed independently of the musical forms and the notational system that characterize the French *Ars Nova*. Italian music, it is true, does not form part of the new art described by Philippe de Vitry and Johannes de Muris. Moreover, it was not new in the sense of being contrasted with an older musical practice that could be called an *ars antiqua*. For this very reason, however, it was a far more radical innovation than any of the new developments in France and fully deserves to be called an *Ars Nova*.

Attempts to find the ancestry of this new polyphony in the *conductus* or in melismatic *organum* seem strained and generally lacking in credibility. A more plausible hypothesis sees the beginnings of Italian polyphony in an indigenous art of solo song with an improvised instrumental accompaniment.¹ This art has left no earlier monuments, but its existence is well documented. As we have seen in Chapter XI, the Albigensian Crusade (1209–29) drove many troubadours and jongleurs to find refuge at courts in Spain and Sicily or with members of an emerging aristocracy in northern Italy. Even before this time, moreover, the poetry of southern France had been known in Italy and emulated by Italian poets who continued to write in Provençal throughout most of the thirteenth century. Only with the coming of Dante (1265–1321) and his less well known contemporaries did Italian begin to be accepted as a proper language for lyric verse in the *dolce stil nuovo* (sweet new style). Strongly influenced by the forms and spirit of troubadour poetry, this new style was cultivated by a host of fourteenth-century poets of whom Petrarch (1304–74) is deservedly the most famous. Through the works of these poets, then, as well as through many literary references to music, we can trace a continuing tradition of monophonic song that

1. K. von Fischer, "On the Technique, Origin, and Evolution of Italian Trecento Music," *MQ*, 47 (1961), pp. 41–57.



Detail from *The Dormition and Assumption of the Virgin* by Fra Angelico (1387–1455) showing the angel musicians (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston).

overlapped with the sudden blossoming of Italian secular polyphony, a blossoming that coincides with what literary and cultural historians generally regard as the beginning of the Italian Renaissance.

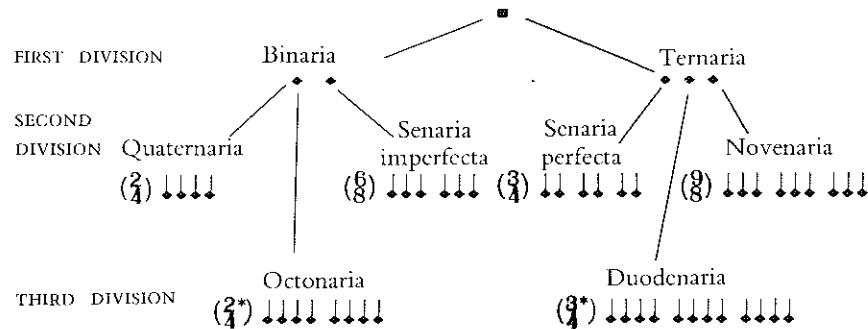
Rather than concern itself with conjectural antecedents, the present chapter shall deal with the actual music of the *trecento* (literally, the “three hundreds”), the Italian way of designating the fourteenth century. Instead of a collection of music, however, the earliest surviving document that deals with Italian polyphony is a treatise by Marchettus of Padua with the fanciful title *Pomerium artis musicae mensuratae* (Orchard-Garden of the Art of Measured Music). Although monophonic songs were being written in measured notation in the fourteenth century, the phrase *measured music* in the title of a treatise ordinarily implied a concern with polyphony. Moreover, the *Pomerium* was a promised sequel to Marchettus’s first treatise, the *Lucidarium in arte musicae planae*, an “Explanation” of the art of plain or unmeasured music (plainchant). The dating of these two treatises has been the subject of much discussion, but it is now established that the *Lucidarium* was completed in the years 1317–18 and the *Pomerium* shortly thereafter, probably by 1319 and certainly no later than 1326.² The exaggerated concern over this dat-

2. N. Pirrotta, “Marchettus de Padua and the Italian Ars Nova,” *MD*, 9 (1955), p. 60 ff.

ing arose in large part from an effort to prove that the Italian system of measured notation described by Marchettus was independent of the French system and could not have been influenced by the French *Ars Nova* treatises. In reality, the *Pomerium* itself provides sufficient and more reliable evidence for judging the truth of these assertions. Marchettus cites Franco of Cologne on a number of occasions, and his comparisons of Italian and French procedures—sometimes with a stated preference for the latter—show that he was by no means ignorant of contemporary French principles of notation. Whether those principles had yet been formulated by Philippe de Vitry and Johannes de Muris is of little importance. Despite some areas of similarity between the two systems, Italian notation quite obviously was based on different principles and followed different procedures than the French. Moreover, the Italian system introduced mensural combinations unknown in French notation. Because these notational differences gave Italian polyphony a new and distinctive rhythmic style, it is important to discuss the principles of Italian notation before considering Italian composers and their music.

THE ITALIAN NOTATIONAL SYSTEM

Although no historical connection can be proved, Italian notation appears to have branched off from the procedures characteristic of Pierre de la Croix and the *Roman de Fauvel*. At any rate, the Italians continued to use the dot of division to set off groups of semibreves that equaled the value of a breve. In French notation, as we have seen, the different values of these semibreves were determined by rule until the treatises of Vitry and Muris established the principles of using semibreves and minims (\blacklozenge and \blacktriangle) in the four combinations of time and prolation. The dot of division then became unnecessary except in a few special instances, and French music was free to develop its flexible and highly complex rhythmic style. In Italian notation, on the other hand, dots of division remained an essential feature and functioned in almost the same way as modern barlines. They proved to be even more restrictive, however, for they severely limited, when they did not entirely eliminate, the possibility of tied notes or syncopation across the barline. It was undoubtedly such restraints that eventually led Italian composers to adopt the principles of French notation in a revolt against the tyranny of the barline some five hundred years in advance of the twentieth century. In the beginning, however, the Italian notational system took the breve as the unit of measure and then classified the mensurations in a series of three “divisions” according to the number of smaller notes within the breve (Example XVIII-1).

Example XVIII-1: *The Divisions of Italian Notation*

The similarities between Italian and French mensurations are obvious enough, but the differences call for some comment. The binary and ternary forms of the first division parallel the French concept of imperfect and perfect time but are rarely used alone. Normally they are further subdivided into one of the second or third divisions, indicated in the manuscripts by their initial letters: *q*, *si* or *i*, *sp* or *p*, *n*, *o*, and *d*. Although the four forms of the second division correspond with Vitry's four combinations of time and prolation, Italian composers used them much less often than the two forms of the third division, which have no counterpart in French notation. Octonaria and duodenaria are not merely subdivisions of quaternaria and senaria perfecta, which could have been obtained by the use of semiminims, nor are they simply combinations of two or three units of quaternaria. Instead, they are independent mensurations, best transcribed as $2^*/4$ and $3^*/4$, with the asterisks to distinguish them from the same meters in the second division.³ Minims in the third division thus become sixteenth notes instead of eighths; breves still equal a full measure (♩ or ♪); and the semibreve serves for all values in between. A later development removed this ambiguity of the Italian system by introducing the French concept of mood in the notation of octonaria and duodenaria. Now the long becomes the unit of measure; breves equal quarter notes; semibreves, eighths. That this more precise notation did not change the musical effect is proved by a few instances in which the same piece is notated in the two different ways in different manuscripts.⁴ Nevertheless, modern editors usually distinguish the new manner of notating octonaria and duodenaria by using the signature $2 \times 1^*/4$ and $3 \times 1^*/4$.

The need for distinguishing mensurations of the third division arises from their proportional relationship to mensurations of the second. In this latter division, as in French notation, minims have the same value in

3. Pirrotta introduced the system of signatures used here in MFCI (see Vol. 1, p. ii).
4. In MFCI, 1, No. 9, Pirrotta gives three versions of a madrigal in duodenaria, of which two are notated in the old style and one in the new. See also Nos. 3, 12, and 14.

all four mensurations. They also maintain a constant value within the third division, but now they move at a faster pace in a slower tempo. One measure of octonaria, for example, equals a measure and a half of quaternaria, and four minims occupy the place of three. To put it another way, the quarter note of $2^*/4$ and $3^*/4$ equals the dotted quarter of $6/8$ and $9/8$. Numerous Italian pieces confirm this relationship by introducing measures of octonaria or duodenaria in one part against measures of senaria imperfecta or novenaria in the other.⁵ Distinctive time signatures for the third division thus indicate the proportional relationship that should also apply when all voices change from one mensuration to another, as they frequently do in Italian music.

Although these tempo relationships may have been somewhat unstable in the formative stages of Italian polyphony and its notation, Marchettus's comparison of the Italian and French manners of interpreting a series of undifferentiated semibreves makes it clear that the tempo equivalence of duodenaria with novenaria and octonaria with senaria imperfecta formed part of the oldest Italian practice. The description in the *Pomerium* is so precise that a composite example showing the differences between the two manners can easily be compiled (Example XVIII-2).⁶ The rules that govern the two notational systems need not concern us here, but the contrast of rhythmic style that results from the Italian interpretation is readily apparent. Marchettus himself was aware of this contrast and of its national origins. He proposed that when the French interpretation was desired the letter *g* (for *gallica*) should be used as a sign "because we had this division of imperfect time from the French." Clearly the Italians—or Marchettus—could have adopted the French manner had they so desired.⁷ Instead, they showed a decided preference for the mensurations of the third division—octonaria and duodenaria—which gave their music a rhythmic style peculiarly its own.

Example XVIII-2: *French and Italian "Manners" of Reading Groups of Semibreves (After Marchettus)*

The example shows three staves of musical notation. The top staff is the original notation, showing a sequence of notes on a five-line staff. Below it are two staves: 'ITALIAN' and 'FRENCH'. The Italian staff uses a 2/4 time signature and shows a sequence of notes with varying durations. The French staff uses a 3/4 time signature and shows a sequence of notes with varying durations.

5. E.g., the first piece cited in fn. 4 above. See Ch. XIX, p. 482 and Example XIX-5.
6. For part of the *Pomerium* in English with the examples from which Example XVIII-2 is compiled, see Strunk, SR, pp. 168-69.
7. Pirrotta, MFCI, 2, Nos. 23 and 28, are two pieces from *R*s with the indication *s.g.* (*senaria gallica*). No. 29 alternates between *s.y.* (*senaria ytalica*) and *g.* For a facsimile of No. 28, see Apel, NPM, p. 383.

THE ROSSI CODEX AND MUSIC IN NORTHERN ITALY

The earliest extant collection of Italian secular polyphony is the Vatican manuscript Rossi 215 (*Rs*), now a fragment containing twenty-nine pieces, of which a few are incomplete. The recent discovery of four additional folios of the Rossi Codex raises this total to thirty-seven pieces. All are anonymous, but concordances in later manuscripts establish the authorship of two pieces by "Piero" and two by Giovanni da Firenze, composers whom we shall shortly meet again.⁸ Despite the general anonymity of its contents, the Rossi Codex clearly originated in northern Italy and is believed to preserve the repertory of a musical circle connected with Alberto della Scala in the years between 1330 and 1340–45. Alberto was a member of the Scaliger family, the elder son of the famous Can Grande della Scala, Prince of Verona, and patron of Dante. Even more than his father, Alberto was a patron and lover of art, literature, and music. "Frail and very impatient of labor and discomfort,"⁹ he preferred to live in Padua—which the Scaligeri also ruled until 1337—and to leave the burden of government in Verona to his younger brother Mastino. Numerous aspects of the songs in the Rossi Codex seem to confirm its connection with Alberto and the city of Padua. The language of the texts betrays the influence of the local dialect, and the poetic forms correspond with descriptions given by Antonio da Tempo, a poet and native Paduan who dedicated a treatise on vernacular poetry to Alberto della Scala in 1332. Two poems mention Iguane or Euguane, nymphs who were supposed to live in hills near Padua still known as the Euganean Hills (*Colli Euganei*). One poem may even be related to the Scaligeri themselves. It speaks of a brother (Mastino?) who leaves the beautiful castle of Peschiera—built on the south shore of Lake Garda by Can Grande in 1328—to seek his elder (Alberto?).¹⁰ The musical notation of the Rossi Codex, finally, is closer to that described by Marchettus of Padua than in any other source of Italian polyphony. This must be due in part to the age of *Rs*, but it adds one more bit of evidence to support the suggestion that Padua and the court of Alberto della Scala played a primary role in the early development and diffusion of Italian polyphony.

Although its origins remain obscure, the Rossi Codex sets the stage

8. A transcription of *Rs* (without the eight newly found madrigals) is available in Pirrotta, *MFCI*, 2, Nos. 9–33. The two pieces by Piero are Nos. 2 and 8 in the same volume. Those of Giovanni da Firenze are Nos. 8 and 9 in Vol. 1. For a list of the other pieces, see W. T. Marrocco, "The newly-discovered Ostiglia Pages of the Vatican Rossi Codex 215. . . ." *AcM*, 39 (1967), pp. 84–91.
9. From an eighteenth-century history of Verona quoted in Pirrotta, "Marchettus," p. 67.
10. Pirrotta, *MFCI*, 2, No. 12. For more historical details, see Pirrotta's Forewords to Vols. 1 and 2, and pp. 67–68 of the article cited in fn. 2 above.

for the flowering of secular polyphony that was soon to take place in northern Italy, particularly at the courts of the Visconti in Milan and the Scaligeri in Verona. Of the thirty-seven pieces that have been preserved, one is a rare example of an Italian rondeau (*rondello*). The rest of the repertory presents for the first time the three forms of secular song in the Italian Ars Nova. Twenty-nine madrigals and two cacce are polyphonic, while five ballate are monophonic songs. Both the relative importance of these forms and their musical styles changed considerably in the course of the fourteenth century, but we may describe them here because the Rossi Codex marks the beginning of their recorded history.

THE MADRIGAL

As far as we know, the first form of Italian secular poetry to receive polyphonic settings was the madrigal. The derivation of this name has been the subject of much discussion and disagreement since the earliest references to the form. Writing in 1313, Francesco da Barberino used the spelling *matricale*, apparently with the implication that the poetry was in the vernacular or mother tongue. Antonio da Tempo in 1332 derived the name *mandriale* from *mandria* ("herd" or "sheep-fold") to designate a rustic kind of pastoral poem. This etymology, no less famous than arbitrary, cannot be accepted, but it does indicate the pastoral character of many early madrigal poems. Other and later madrigals cover a wide range of subject matter, from the amorous to the moralizing and satiric. Moreover, the poetic form appears to be a wholly Italian invention. It seems probable, therefore, that the name does derive from *matricale* and that *madrigale* and other variant spellings all refer to the same thing—one of the earliest forms of a distinctively Italian poetry.

POETIC AND MUSICAL FORMS OF THE MADRIGAL

At the beginning of the madrigal's history, its poetic form was perhaps even more variable than the spelling of its name. The basic form consisted of a varying number of three-line stanzas, or *terzetti*, followed by a *ritornello* of one or two lines. The number of ritornelli might also vary, however, as might their placement. A few texts have no ritornello; others have one after each *terzetto*; still others have two at the end. Some early pieces even have texts in other poetic forms but are usually classified as madrigals because of their musical form and style. In all of these forms, including true madrigals, further variety results from different combinations of rhyme schemes and line lengths. With regard to the latter, it should be noted, Italian poets showed such a strong prefer-



A page from the Squarcialupi Codex containing the madrigal *Ita se n'era star nel paradiso* and a portrait of its composer, Vincenzio de Arimino (Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana).

ence for eleven-syllable lines that modern scholars indicate them by capital letters in analyzing poetic forms. Lower-case letters then identify shorter, "broken" lines, usually of seven syllables. This use of capitals in analyses of Italian poetry must not be confused with their quite different use to indicate poetic and musical refrains.

The standardized form that gradually emerged as the fourteenth century progressed consisted of two or three *terzetti* followed by a single two-line *ritornello*. Only eleven-syllable lines were used throughout the poem, and the rhyme scheme too became almost invariable: ABB CDD EE or ABB CDD EFF GG. Settings of madrigal texts reflect this poetic form by providing two separate sections of music, one that is repeated for each *terzetto* and another for the *ritornello*, which often contrasts with the first section by being in a different mensuration.

The resulting musical form of a complete madrigal may thus be expressed in letters as *aab* or *aaab*. This simplified representation of the standardized madrigal should neither lead us to forget the existence of variant forms nor be taken as an indication that the madrigal is similar, or in any way related, to the French ballade and chanson forms. To do the latter is to ignore the entirely different poetic forms of ballade and madrigal as well as the equally different structure and function of the musical sections in the two national forms. For the ballade, it will be remembered, the overall form of a single stanza is *a₀a_cbC*. If the music for each line of the stanza is represented by a letter, the form of a typical seven-line stanza becomes *ababcdE*. In the madrigal, on the other hand, each

line of the stanza (*terzetto*) normally receives its own setting, often a unit complete in itself with a strong concluding cadence followed by rests or dividing barlines. The first section, therefore, consists of three subsections in an *abc* pattern. The two-line *ritornello* may be treated in different ways. In some madrigals both lines are sung to the same music; in others, each line has its own setting. If, then, we indicate the music for each line of a complete madrigal, we get the following patterns:

Terzetti	Ritornello
<i>abc abc (abc)</i>	<i>dd or de</i>

Comparison of these patterns with that of the ballade, which must be tripled to indicate the complete form, makes it obvious that the madrigal is no more indebted to the French secular song for its musical than for its poetic form.

Given the indigenous nature of the madrigal as a poetic and musical form, it is no surprise to find that its musical style was equally independent of foreign influence. The most obvious characteristic of that style is a two-part polyphony in which both voices sing the text. A further characteristic is the alternation of extended melismas with shorter passages that are nearly or wholly syllabic. These obvious aspects of the madrigal have led to the assumption that it derived from the conductus. The improbability of this ancestry has already been suggested at the beginning of the present chapter. It is difficult to believe that the long-neglected conductus could have been twice "revived" in such different styles as the rondeaux of Adam de la Hale and the madrigals of the Rossi Codex. The stylistic contrast between madrigals and the few, nearly contemporary Italian settings of hymns, sequences, and processional songs in conductus style is equally striking, as the excerpts in Example XVIII-3 show. The first excerpt, dating from around 1300, has been claimed as "concrete evidence" of a connection between the conductus and the madrigal.¹¹ That the second excerpt from an early madrigal differs radically in style is indisputable.

In addition to the obvious contrasts of meter and melodic character, Example XVIII-3 illustrates more subtle differences that distinguish the madrigal from the conductus.¹² In the normal conductus, the voices cover the same general range, move largely in contrary motion, and hence must frequently cross. As a result of the note-against-note or neume-against-neume counterpoint, moreover, the rhythmic patterns of the voices in a conductus are similar, when not identical. To all of

11. NOHM, 3, p. 42. Ex. 19 is a longer excerpt from this "concrete evidence." A comparison of this piece and the corroborating Ex. 20 (p. 44) with the later Ex. 22 (p. 55), which is presented as a "typical" madrigal, will reveal the radical differences between the two styles.

12. See the article cited in fn. 1 above.

Example XVIII-3: *An Early Madrigal Contrasted with Its Supposed Link to the Conductus*

a. BONAIUTUS DE CASENTINO, FROM VATICAN MS. LAT. 2854 (c. 1300)

b. *Quando i oselli canta* (Rs 5)

a. May this treatment of the body yield the fruit of spiritual love and joy.

b. When the birds sing, shepherdesses go into the open country.

these aspects of conductus style, the early madrigal offers exact opposites. Its two voices may overlap in range, but they are clearly distinguished as upper and lower parts that rarely cross or remain crossed for more than a few notes. Parallel motion in unisons, fifths, or octaves is common and may occur in note-against-note counterpoint or disguised by ornamental figures. Such figures are particularly characteristic of the

upper voice and make it generally more elaborate and melismatic than the lower, which tends to move more slowly, in longer note values. In many instances, repeated notes in the lower voice suggest that sustained notes have been broken up to accommodate the addition of a text. Another distinguishing feature of the madrigal is its decided preference for cadential progressions in which the tenor rises to the final and the harmonic interval of a third contracts to a unison. In the most common cadences of contemporary French polyphony—and of the older conductus—the tenor descends to the final. Intervals of a third therefore expand to fifths, and fifths or sixths expand to octaves. The divergent form of Italian cadences is but one more indication that the traditional process of adding voices to a tenor foundation did not provide a starting point for Italian polyphony. Only the hypothesis that the madrigal developed from secular monophony with an improvised accompaniment satisfactorily accounts for all of its idiomatic features. Conversion of the improvised instrumental part into a composed vocal melody scarcely disguised that part's function as an accompaniment to the more florid upper voice. The texture became a bit more homogeneous, perhaps, but the idiomatic features persisted. Indeed, they never disappeared entirely from this most typical form of Italian polyphony in the fourteenth century.

THE CACCIA

The second form of Italian secular polyphony to appear in the Rossi Codex is the caccia. Questions as to the origin of the form are even more complex and difficult to answer than for the madrigal. *Caccia*, of course, is merely the Italian equivalent of *chace*, and both terms designate canonic technique. Nevertheless, structural differences between the French and Italian forms seem to deny any direct relationship between the two. The chace, it will be remembered, is normally a three-part vocal canon. The typical caccia is also in three-part polyphony, but only the two upper parts form a vocal canon with words. The third and lowest part is a tenor in free counterpoint—that is, noncanonic—and usually without text. We may thus describe the polyphonic texture of a caccia as a two-voice canon supported by a presumably instrumental tenor. This texture occurs in nineteen of the twenty-six canonic pieces in the Italian repertory.¹³ In addition to the differing structure of the polyphony, a formal aspect of the caccia distinguishes it from the chace and relates it to the madrigal. With only five exceptions, Italian cacce subdivide in two separate sections, of which the second is a ritornello. The first and longer section is always canonic, with the second voice fol-

13. As with the madrigal, variant musical and textual forms of the caccia will be discussed in a supplemental essay.

lowing the first at a rather long time interval. The treatment of the ritornelli is more various. Slightly more than half are also canonic, but because of their brevity the time interval between the first and second voices is generally shorter than in the first sections. In most of the non-canonic ritornelli, the two upper voices begin together with the tenor, but a few make a pretense of being canonic by beginning with imitative entries, which may even include the tenor. The result is not a true canon, however, because each voice lapses into free counterpoint to accompany the next entry of the opening phrase.¹⁴

CACCIA TEXTS

In both subject matter and form, the texts of cacce show even greater variety than does the musical treatment of the ritornello. Fifteen of the twenty-six texts are descriptive, with dialogue and exclamations that provide an opportunity for programmatic effects in the musical setting. Italian poets and composers were no slower than the French in connecting the musical technique of the caccia with the hunt, but only seven pieces actually depict hunting scenes. The other eight concern themselves with such varied subjects as fishing and boating expeditions, a fire, market scenes, and walks in the country. All of these descriptive texts are cast in long stanzas with no fixed poetic form except that they usually begin and end with couplets of eleven-syllable lines. Lines of this length may also occur at irregular intervals among shorter lines of dialogue and the cries of the participating actors. In setting these texts, composers sometimes continued the canon without interruption through the final couplet, but more often that couplet forms the text of the separate ritornello. Some cacce have two or even more stanzas that require repetition of the first section before the ritornello, and a few have two stanzas with a ritornello after each. Performance of the complete text in these pieces results in *aab* or *abab* forms that reinforce the suggestion of a relationship between the caccia and the madrigal.

This relationship becomes even more obvious in cacce with texts in the poetic form of the madrigal. Pieces of this sort are often called *canonic madrigals* to distinguish them from the "true" caccia that uses dialogue and exclamatory cries for dramatic representation. With respect to both subject matter and poetic form, however, the distinction between the two groups tends to become blurred. One of the early cacce, *Con dolce brama* (With sweet longing), depicts a sailing expedition, yet its

14. See, for example, W. T. Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, Nos. 14 and 15. The ritornello of the latter is published in NOHM, 3, p. 59 (Ex. 24), where it is erroneously described as a triple canon. It may be compared with a true three-voice canon in the ritornello of Landini's *De, dimmi tu* (Alas, tell me), Marrocco, *Cacce*, No. 10, and Schrade, PM, 4, p. 216.



The caccia *Or qua compagni* attributed to Piero, from the Rossi Codex (Rome, Vatican Library).

text is cast as a madrigal with five terzetti and no ritornello.¹⁵ On the other hand, texts that tell of a hunt without attempting a realistic portrayal occur in two of the so-called canonic madrigals, *Per larghi prati* (Through open fields) and *Nel bosco senza foglie* (In the leafless wood).¹⁶ The composer of both these cacce was Giovanni da Firenze, a member of the first generation of known Italian composers. His contemporary and compatriot Gherardello da Firenze, it is curious to note, set a number of similar hunting texts as normal (that is, noncanonic) madrigals.¹⁷ Gherardello also composed one of the best-known, because most widely reprinted, of all the hunting cacce, *Tosto che l'alba* (As soon as dawn).¹⁸ A third member of this first generation, Jacopo da Bologna, provided yet another illustration of the close connection between the madrigal and the caccia by writing an example of each form with the same text, *Oselletto selvazo* (Little wild bird). The poem itself is a madrigal that has no connection with hunting. Instead, it heaps scorn on the multitude of unskilled composers who set themselves up as the equals of Philippe (de Vitry) and Marchettus (of Padua).¹⁹ To this already considerable variety of textual form and subject matter we may add one caccia, *Dal traditor* (From the traitor), that is a setting of a ballata and another, *Quan ye voy* (When I see), that is a French chanson!²⁰ From the foregoing discussion it appears impossible to claim that the depiction of

15. Marrocco, *Cacce*, No. 6, and Pirrotta, MFCI, 2, No. 7.

16. Marrocco, *Cacce*, Nos. 20 and 15, and Pirrotta, MFCI, 1, Nos. 19 and 20.

17. See, for example, Pirrotta, MFCI, 1, Nos. 24, 25, 27, and 29.

18. HAM, No. 52; Marrocco, *Cacce*, No. 25; Pirrotta, MFCI, 1, No. 33.

19. For a reading of the text that proposes a third *maestro*, Fioran or Floran, see Pirrotta, MFCI, 4, p. ii. The same volume contains the two pieces (Nos. 17 and 31). See also Marrocco, *The Music of Jacopo da Bologna*, pp. 78 and 111; and PM, 6, Nos. 18 and 20a & b.

20. Marrocco, *Cacce*, Nos. 8 and 22; Pirrotta, MFCI, 5, No. 6, and 2, No. 44.

hunting scenes gave the caccia its name. Instead, as with the French chace, the name designated a musical technique—the canon—that might be and was used to set poems of widely differing form and content. We may therefore identify all canonic pieces in the Italian repertory as cacce with the same justification that Machaut had for identifying the canonic stanzas of a lai as chaces.

THE BALLATA

The third form of fourteenth-century Italian secular song, the ballata, also makes its first appearance with music in the Rossi Codex, but as a monophonic rather than a polyphonic composition. The Italian ballata is not to be confused with the French ballade, although both began as dance songs. By the middle of the fourteenth-century, however, the French ballade had become an elaborate polyphonic song with only its name to suggest its humble origin. The ballata, which still retained its close connection with the dance, was the contemporary and counterpart in both form and function of the French chanson balladée or virelai. An opening *ripresa* (refrain) was followed by a stanza that began with two *piedi* (feet), each of which was sung to the same new music. The stanza then concluded with a *volta* (turning) that used the music of the refrain with new words. Theoretically, the *ripresa* returned after each stanza of a ballata, but these repetitions may have been omitted in performance. In this case, the theoretical form of the ballata with several stanzas—*A bba A bba A bba A*—would have become *A bba bba bba A* in practice. In the latter part of the fourteenth century, however, the great majority of ballate have only one stanza and a refrain in the form *AbbaA*.

With regard to the sectional divisions of both its text and music, the Italian ballata may be called a fixed form; but, as in the French virelai, the number of poetic lines in each section may vary from one ballata to another. A few poems have only one line for each section. More often, the *ripresa* and *volta* have three or four lines, while each *piede* has two or sometimes three. Rhyme schemes and line lengths are also variable, but the ballata normally makes one use of rhyme that is not characteristic of the virelai. In most cases, the rhymes of the *volta* link its first line to the preceding *piede* and its last line to the *ripresa*. The following rhyme scheme of a ballata with two stanzas illustrates this typical procedure:

ABBA cd cd dea ABBA fg fg ghha ABBA²¹

That the linking continues through stanzas with different rhymes seems to indicate that the poets, at least, expected each *volta* to lead into a repetition of the *ripresa*.

21. Pirrotta, MFCI, 5, No. 19. All lines have seven syllables. Capital letters in the scheme given here indicate the refrain.

In musical style, ballate differ from madrigals and cacce as much as they do in poetic and musical form. Not only do the two sections of the ballate tend to be nearly equal in length, but they lack the contrasts of mensuration that usually distinguish ritornelli in the other forms. Perhaps the most obvious difference, however, lies in the less elaborate melodic style of the ballata. Melismas are present in most ballate, but they are generally shorter, fewer in number, and much less florid than in the madrigal. This greater simplicity undoubtedly reflects both the origin of the ballata as a dance song and its continued fulfillment of that function in the fourteenth century. Whether or not the later polyphonic ballate were also sung and danced, they generally retained this simpler and more restrained melodic style.

The question of French influence on the origin of the ballata is difficult to resolve. Although the ballata and virelai have the same poetic and musical forms, the same holds true for some Italian laude and many Spanish cantigas. As we have seen, moreover, the virelai only came into its own as an independent musical form in the works of Machaut. Many of his monophonic virelais may well be contemporary with or even later than the ballate of the Rossi Codex. We shall probably be safe in assuming, therefore, that the ballata, like the madrigal and caccia, was not dependent on French models.

In the course of its development, the ballata takes on an importance never enjoyed by its French counterpart. Both in numbers and in musical interest, the virelai remained subordinate to the rondeau and especially to the grande ballade throughout the fourteenth century. The ballata, on the other hand, captured the attention of Italian composers to such an extent that it almost completely replaced the older forms of secular polyphony.²² It is quite clear that the three forms of Italian secular song, though they may seem of equal interest to us, were decidedly unequal in importance to fourteenth-century composers.

LATER SOURCES OF ITALIAN POLYPHONY

Several decades separate the Rossi Codex—presumably copied before 1350—from the later sources of Italian polyphony. In addition to a number of fragmentary manuscripts, these sources include five or six large collections that, when taken together, contain almost the entire repertory of trecento music.²³ The dating of these collections has been a

22. In a catalogue of the Italian repertory, Kurt von Fischer lists 423 ballate, 177 madrigals, and only 25 cacce. The last figure does not include the canonic ballata. See K. von Fischer, *Studien zur italienischen Musik des Trecento und frühen Quattrocento* (Bern, 1956), pp. 18–73 and 82. Marrocco later discovered the eight additional madrigals from *Rs*; see fn 8 above.

23. They are listed, with summary descriptions of their contents, in Fischer, *Studien*, pp. 83 and 88 ff.