

CHAPTER XIX

Transition to the Renaissance

Periods of transition from one historical age to another are always complex and difficult to define. The various aspects of human life that characterize an age—political, economic, social, and cultural—do not change overnight. Neither do they all change at the same time. Some fundamentals never change. The Middle Ages may have “waned” during the fifteenth century, but they had already contributed many ideas and institutions that were to persist for centuries. It is wholly arbitrary, therefore, to take the year 1500 as the “time-honored boundary between the medieval and modern periods.”¹ The division may be convenient and workable for historians who are primarily concerned with the political, economic, and social aspects of Western civilization. It does not work for cultural historians, who insist on following the Middle Ages with a Renaissance. The impetus for this Renaissance came in the field of literature with a new and passionate concern for the “more humane letters” of classical antiquity. Beginning with Petrarch and some of his fourteenth-century contemporaries, Italian humanists scorned both the vernacular language and the “barbaric” Latin of the Middle Ages. Instead, they devoted themselves to the rediscovery and reinterpretation of classical literature and learning. That they themselves could think of their activities as a “rebirth” implies a supercilious disdain for the achievements of the immediate past. And the continued use of the term *Renaissance* implies that the Middle Ages were much darker than they really were. Humanism was an intellectual movement that became an academic fad. As such, it profoundly changed the course of university studies both for good and for ill. Its influence on the arts was less direct and often long delayed. Vernacular literature not only survived but flourished. Architecture, painting, even sculpture showed the effects of humanism in their secondary, much more than in their primary, characteristics. In all fields of artistic endeavor it is not the slavish imitations of classical models that we remember and most admire.

Music, of course, had no classical models at hand to imitate. There can



A scene of aristocratic music making portrayed in this fourteenth-century Gobelin tapestry (Paris, Musée de Gobelins).

be no question, therefore, of a renaissance that abruptly changed the course of musical development. Music in the fifteenth century continued the practices it had inherited from the past, while transforming itself at the same time by the introduction of new compositional procedures and techniques. Even less direct than on the other arts, the influence of humanism on music made itself felt scarcely at all before the beginning of the sixteenth century. How then can we justify the common practice of making the first decades of the fifteenth century the dividing line between the music of the Late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance? The answer to this question lies in the attitude of fifteenth-century musicians themselves toward the music of their own time. The most explicit statements of that attitude appear in the dedications of two treatises by Johannes Tinctoris (c. 1435–1511), a practicing musician, mathematician, and the first author who deserves to be called a Renaissance musical theorist. In his treatise on musical proportions, written no later than 1476, Tinctoris remarked that “the possibilities of our music have been so marvelously increased that there appears to be a new art, if I may so call it, whose fount and origin is held to be among the English, of whom Dunstable [d. 1453] stood forth as chief.”² According to Tinctoris, the “moderns” of his own time followed directly on Dunstable’s contemporaries Dufay (c. 1400–74) and Binchois (c. 1400–60). Now, however, it is the French who “contrive music in the newest manner for the new times.” In the dedication of *The Art of Counterpoint*,

1. C. Stephenson and B. Lyon, *Medieval History: Europe from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 4th ed. (New York, 1962), p. 399.

2. Strunk, SR, p. 195.

which is dated October 11, 1477, Tinctoris reaffirmed the excellence of contemporary composers who had learned their art from Dunstable, Dufay, and Binchois. He also made the surprising statement that no music composed more than forty years earlier was regarded as worth hearing.³

From these remarks we may draw a number of important conclusions. Composers in the latter part of the fifteenth century were evidently aware that their music was a new art, that it represented, in other words, a new period in the development of musical forms, techniques, and styles. For Tinctoris, at least, that period began about 1435. He perhaps overstated his case when he assigned the origin of the new art to the English, but he obviously recognized the importance of English contributions to the formation of that art. He also recognized its continuing development by composers who were chiefly French by culture, if not always so by birth. Tinctoris himself came from Nivelles, near Brussels, and wrote his treatises in Naples, where he was attached to the court of Ferdinand, King of Sicily.

Modern historians generally agree with Tinctoris's evaluation of the state of music in the fifteenth century. They may find the beginnings of the new art to be less sharply defined and to occur somewhat earlier than Tinctoris suggests, but they too regard it as the starting point for the development of what has been called "the central musical language of the Renaissance."⁴ Whatever name we may give to this new style period in the history of music, its continuation through the sixteenth century and the amount of music it produced make it the proper subject of another book. The task of the present chapter will be to survey the transitional period from the death of Machaut in 1377 to the years 1420–25 when Dufay and Binchois became active as composers.

THE MANNERISTIC STYLE OF THE LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

The final decades of the fourteenth century witnessed one of the strangest developments in the entire history of music. Characterized primarily by extremes of notational and rhythmic complexity, this development resulted in what are now usually known as *mannered notation* and *manneristic style*. To counter any derogatory implications in these terms it has been suggested that, compared to the earlier subtlety of the French *Ars Nova*, the music of the late fourteenth century should instead be called an *ars subtilior* (more subtle art).⁵ With regard to the his-

3. See *ibid.*, pp. 193–99, for English translations of both dedications.

4. Reese, MR, Part I is entitled: "The Development of the Central Musical Language of the Renaissance in France, the Low Countries, and Italy."

5. See U. Günther, "Das Ende der *Ars Nova*," *Die Musikforschung*, 16 (1963), pp. 105–20.

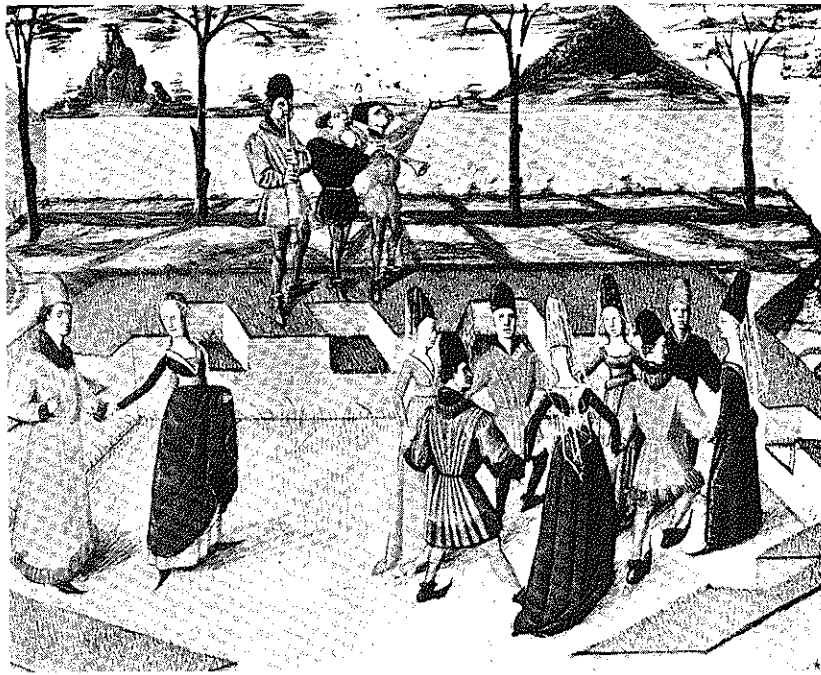
tory of Western music as a whole, we might more appropriately use the superlative, *ars subtilissima*. Not until the twentieth century did music again reach the most subtle refinements and rhythmic complexities of the manneristic style.

Before describing this end-of-the-century phenomenon, we should pause to note the geographical regions and centers in which it flourished. We have already seen that, during the "Babylonian captivity" of the papacy (1309–77), Avignon was the most important center for the cultivation of sacred polyphony (see Chapter XVI). That importance continued after the Great Schism (1378–1417) produced rival popes in Avignon and Rome, but now we find that the city on the lower Rhone had also become a center for the composition of French secular songs. Two other centers with close musical ties to Avignon were situated just south and north of the Pyrenees: the courts of Peter IV (1335–87) and John I (1387–96), Kings of Aragon, and of Gaston Phebus, Count of Béarn and Foix (1343–91).

Our chief source for the secular repertory of Avignon, Aragon, and Foix in the last quarter of the fourteenth century is a manuscript from Chantilly.⁶ Only a few of the thirteen motets and one hundred secular songs in *Ch*, including three ballades by Machaut, came from northern France or from the older Avignon repertory of the Ivrea Codex. Most of the newer pieces that can be dated with some precision refer to historical events or persons connected with one of the three courts during the papacy of Clement VII (1378–94). Taken as a whole, the collection may be said to exemplify the complex manneristic style cultivated and prized at both ecclesiastical and secular courts in southern France and Spain.

Although it tended to be simpler and more restrained, the music of northern France and even of England (see Chapter XX) did not escape the influence of southern mannerism. When composers from northern France became attached to one of the southern courts, however, they wholeheartedly adopted the manneristic style. So too did a number of Italians who devoted themselves to the composition of French secular polyphony of extreme rhythmic complexity. In all likelihood some of them came in contact with the manneristic style in Avignon, but the style itself seems to have been transplanted to northern Italy in the first decades of the fifteenth century. In part, at least, this development is related to the election of still a third pope by the Council of Pisa in 1409. Intending to bring the Great Schism to an end by deposing both the Roman and Avignonese popes, the Council chose as their successor Pietro Filargo, cardinal archbishop of Milan and patron of the composer Matteo da Perugia (see below). The other two popes—as might have been expected—refused to step down, and Filargo, who took the name Alexander V, died less than a year after his election. His place was im-

6. Musée Condé, 564 (formerly 1047)—*Ch*.



In this fifteenth-century miniature, instrumental accompaniment is provided for a round dance in the garden (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale).

mediately filled, however, by the election of Cardinal Baldassare Cossa as John XXIII. (Because the Church considers this first John XXIII an antipope, there could be another in the twentieth century.) Established primarily in Bologna, the court of these northern Italian popes became the focal point for an already flourishing musical life in such other cities as Genoa, Milan, Venice, and Padua. Even after the Council of Constance successfully disposed of all three papal contenders, the newly elected Martin V (1417–31) stayed in Florence and Bologna as much as in Rome itself. It is undoubtedly to the widespread and continued musical activity in all of these cities that we owe the many manuscripts of northern Italian origin in which so much of western Europe's music from the waning Middle Ages and the early Renaissance has been preserved.

Our concern with these manuscripts must be limited to the one source in which we can see both the flowering and fading of manneristic style on Italian soil, a manuscript now in Modena.⁷ In the kinds of music it includes, the repertory of *Mod* is unusually diverse. French secular songs account for exactly 66 percent of the 100 complete pieces—17 rondeaux, 18 virelais, and 31 ballades. Five more songs in ballade form and one virelai have Latin texts. Italian secular songs are sparsely represented by two madrigals, one caccia, and six ballate. Two three-voice canons—one with Latin text, one with French—complete the secular

7. Biblioteca Estense, α, M. 5, 24 (formerly Lat. 568)—*Mod*.

polyphony. More unexpected is the presence of religious and liturgical polyphony in the form of five motets, the Christmas hymn *Puer natus in Bethleem* (A Boy is born in Bethlehem), and eleven Mass movements (eight Glorias and three Credos). This motley collection reflects the diverse origin of both the music and the composers who are represented. The preponderance of French songs, which include twelve concordances with *Ch*, and the presence of three texts in honor of Pope Clement VII suggest an origin in Avignon for some of the repertory, if not for the manuscript itself. Yet many of the French texts were set to music by Italian composers who are not known to have been outside of Italy. Much of the music, moreover, must date from the first ten or fifteen years of the fifteenth century. A good deal of evidence—both documentary and circumstantial—connects this later music and its composers with Genoa, Milan, Padua, and the courts of Alexander V and John XXIII. It seems probable, therefore, that the compilation of *Mod* began in Bologna around 1410. Presumably, all the music in the manuscript had been composed by the time the Great Schism came to an end in 1417.⁸

Having briefly introduced the two largest and most typical collections of music in manneristic style, the Chantilly and Modena manuscripts, we may now examine the constituent elements of that style in some detail. One of its goals (or results) was the creation of polyphony in which the individual lines achieved a maximum of rhythmic independence. In this respect, French secular songs, the primary vehicle for displaying the full measure of manneristic complexity, recall the motet style of Pierre de la Croix at the end of the previous century. The tenor of a chanson was newly composed; but, by maintaining the basic mensuration with few metrical changes and with relatively simple rhythmic patterns, it provided the same kind of stable foundation as the plainchant tenors of the earlier motets. This foundation enabled the cantus to indulge in a wide variety of rhythmic complications, sometimes to the point of destroying all feeling of a consistent metrical organization. Neither as complex as the cantus nor as simple as the tenor, the contratenor established its own distinctive character and moderated the contrast between the two extremes. It seems clear that the differentiated lines in manneristic style resulted at least in part from the practical necessity of supporting a virtuoso singer who could read and perform the most extravagant notational and rhythmic complexities that composers could devise. In addition to the mensural stability of the tenor, however, counterpoint based on progressions of consonant intervals also holds the seemingly independent voices together. Almost without exception, the rhythms of

8. A supplemental essay will deal more fully with the schismatic popes and their relationships with composers represented in *Ch* and *Mod*. See also the discussion of Matteo da Perugia below.

all voices converge in strong cadences at the end of phrases. In between, the tenor and cantus still constitute a two-voice framework that can be reduced to traditional progressions of perfect and imperfect consonances. As in the music of Machaut, ornamentation of these consonances by a variety of nonharmonic tones often disguises the intervallic structure and creates a highly dissonant effect. Devices such as syncopation and the lateral displacement of an interval's constituent tones raise the dissonance level to even greater heights and sometimes make the individual lines seem as independent harmonically as they are rhythmically. Yet despite all appearances, the traditional consonances and mensurations of the French Ars Nova provide the twin bases on which the intricacies of the style depend.

Overemphasis on the manneristic exaggerations of a few composers has tended to bring the artistic movement as a whole into disrepute. To some extent, this judgment must be regarded as a survival of the nineteenth-century romantic notion that a composer's primary function was to express his emotions and to arouse similar emotions in the listener. In dealing with medieval music, we must remember that its composers were at least equally concerned with stimulating the mind. Some may have gone too far in their search for intellectual *subtilitas*, but the music they produced was by no means all bad. Listened to without prejudice, many songs in manneristic style prove to be both fascinating and attractive. Moreover, they provide one of the clearest reflections of the sophisticated society for whose amusement and delight they were created. Finally, the experiments with notational and rhythmic complexities developed many of the devices that were to become the common property of Renaissance composers. For its own sake, then, as well as for its historical importance, the music of the mannerists deserves close scrutiny.

As was suggested in connection with the music of Paolo Tenorista (Chapter XVIII), composers drew on both Italian and French practices in their efforts to notate the rhythmic complexities of manneristic style. They have been accused, indeed, of greater interest in notational puzzles than in rhythmic complexity for its own sake. It is true, certainly, that relatively simple rhythms were often notated in needlessly complex ways. By thus presenting the performer with problems that did not affect the musical result—unless the performer solved them wrongly—the notation itself deserves the epithet “mannered.” Yet the music too presents problems that only a virtuoso in the performance of difficult rhythms could solve. Notational devices that affect only the performer and most of those that affect the music need not concern us here. It is more important to classify and illustrate the kinds of rhythmic complexities that characterize the manneristic style. To do so will deepen our understanding and appreciation of the ways medieval *subtilitas* expressed itself in music. It will also explain why the products of this *ars subtilissima* are so rarely performed today.

RHYTHMIC COMPLEXITY WITHIN THE NORMAL MENSURATIONS OF FRENCH NOTATION

One of the most common means of achieving rhythmic complexity involved the combination of patterns that suggest different mensurations. Perhaps the simplest manifestation of this practice is the fluctuation, either apparent or specifically indicated, between imperfect time with major prolation ($6/8$) and perfect time with minor prolation ($3/4$). Fluctuation of this sort had already appeared in some pieces by Machaut, and may have stimulated later composers to seek even greater contrasts between individual melodic lines. In a few cases, they wrote each voice in a different mensuration, sometimes with shifting combinations as the composition progressed. More often they exercised their ingenuity in devising independent or conflicting rhythms and meters while remaining within one basic mensuration.

The variety of their achievements in this regard makes illustration difficult, but we may single out the repetition of conflicting rhythmic patterns as a particularly characteristic device. In many cases only the note values of the pattern are repeated in what may be called a rhythmic sequence. It is not uncommon, however, to find that one or more voices also repeat the intervallic progressions at different pitch levels to create a melodic or even harmonic sequence. The seven measures from Trebor's ballade *Hélas, pitié* (Example XIX-1) present an unusual concentration of sequences with different and unexpected rhythmic patterns. Although the basic mensuration is perfect time with minor prolation ($3/4$), the contratenor seems to be in $6/8$ throughout the passage. It states the pattern of the first measure four times in a purely rhythmic sequence before becoming a series of undifferentiated dotted quarter notes. The syncopated pattern of the cantus in the first measure shifts to the tenor for a three-measure rhythmic sequence and then back to the cantus for another three-measure sequence that is both rhythmic and melodic. Still another sequence begins in the cantus on the second half of measure 2. This sequence too is both melodic and rhythmic, but the pattern has a value of only four eighth notes and thus suggests $2/4$ instead of $3/4$ meter.⁹

If the concentration of sequences in Example XIX-1 is unusually dense, the passage nonetheless typifies the mannered achievement of complexity within essentially simple mensurations. Particularly in the first four measures, indeed, any feeling for the original mensuration is almost totally lost. To obtain this effect in a variety of ways seems to have been one of the tests of a composer's skill. One of the favorite devices was the sequential repetition of figures longer or shorter than the units of mensuration. Such a figure in the cantus of Example XIX-1

9. For complete transcriptions of *Hélas, pitié*, see Apel, FSM, No. 42, and FSC, 1, No. 109.

Example XIX-1: *Trebor*, Hélas, pitié, measures 48–54 (*Ch*, fol. 42).



(mm. 49–51) merely creates a temporary change of mensuration in that one voice. If the figure is of irregular length, however—say, five or seven minims—the effect is more disturbing and more complex. Still further complexity results when patterns in all voices are of different and irregular lengths.

A particularly instructive example of the complexity possible in even the simplest mensuration—imperfect time and prolation (2/4)—occurs in the ballade *Le point agu* (The sharp point) from the French repertory of the Court of Cyprus (Example XIX-2). Using only breves, dotted and undotted semibreves, and minims, the unknown composer created completely independent rhythms in all three voices. Only the tenor maintains a strict sequence of a rhythmic pattern that Bartók might have notated as $\frac{3+2+3}{8}$. The other two voices have shifting patterns of irregular lengths that finally return to rhythmic stability with a cadence on

Example XIX-2: *Rhythmic Complexities in the Ballade*
Le point agu (measures 21–33)

F at the close of the tenor's sequence. Transcription of such a passage in 2/4 facilitates reading the score but obscures the rhythmic structure of the individual lines. A "modern" barring according to the rhythmic patterns, on the other hand, could be done in several ways but would make the score extremely difficult to read. Perhaps the original notation in separate parts without barlines was the best solution after all. Apart from rhythmic problems, it should be remarked that both the tenor's descent through a full octave and the progression from a C-major triad to a cadence on **F** are characteristic tonal procedures in music of the early fifteenth century.¹⁰

DISPLACEMENT SYNCOPATION

The rhythmic complexities illustrated thus far are also characteristic in their introduction of syncopated notes in both 2/4 and 3/4 meters. Syncopation of this sort differs in no way from later practices and was already a normal procedure in the works of Machaut. For fourteenth-century theorists, however, *syncopa* included a special device that has no modern counterpart. This involved separating the notes of a triple unit or "perfection" by the insertion of one or more perfections. In relation to the other voices, they would thus be displaced from their normal position by one or two notes. This displacement syncopation was first described—in somewhat enigmatic terms—by Philippe de Vitry and Johannes de Muris.¹¹ It first appears in its simplest form in a few pieces by Machaut, although his modern editors sometimes failed to recognize its existence. A characteristic pattern that occurs several times in Machaut's Motet 20 may be seen in the third measure of the duplum, Example XIX-3a. Here, a minim (♪) displaces two perfect semibreves (♩ ♩) before its perfection is completed by an imperfect semibreve (♩).

Example XIX-3: *Displacement Syncopation in Machaut*

a. MOTET 20, MEASURES 1–4

10. The passage occurs near the close of the ballade's first section (mm. 21–33) and returns in the refrain (mm. 76–88). Complete transcription in Hoppin, CFR, 3, p. 80 (No. 47).

11. See Apel, NPM, p. 395.

b. LAI 12, MEASURES 501-06



(♩) at the end of the measure. Two similar but longer passages, each with five displaced semibreves, occur in the tenth stanza of the canonic Lai 12 (Example XIX-3b).¹²

Compared with later developments, Machaut's treatment of displacement syncopation was simple in the extreme. It was characteristic, however, in applying this kind of syncopation to the triple units of perfect prolation. Machaut's successors generally followed the same practice and only rarely applied it to the larger units of perfect time with imperfect prolation ($3/4$). What they did do was to extend the length of the displaced passages and to include all the note values and normal rhythmic patterns of the basic mensuration. The result is one of the most common and distinctive features of late fourteenth-century mannerism. It is also one of the most difficult to indicate clearly in a modern transcription. We may illustrate the problem with the opening phrase of a rondeau, *Dame gentil* (Gentle lady), by Anthonello da Caserta (Example XIX-4). The excerpt is particularly complex because both the cantus and contratenor have displaced passages but at different time intervals above the tenor, which, as is usually the case, maintains a stable rhythmic foundation to support the syncopations. To notate all three voices within the $6/8$ measures of the tenor gives the false impression that the displaced passages have syncopations within themselves. The alternate barring and notation above the staves indicates the way performers would have understood the rhythmic organization of their melodies. As in Example XIX-2, the three voices of Anthonello's rondeau resolve their differences on the final chord of the cadence that completes the phrase. The cantus immediately begins another displacement, however, and the entire piece becomes a prime example of the way this kind of syncopation could be used to achieve extremes of medieval subtilitas.¹³

12. The passages are incorrectly transcribed in Schrade, PM, 2, Lai 12, but are correct in Ludwig, *Machaut*, 4, Lai 17 (mm. 248-49, 251-52).

13. Complete transcriptions in Apel, FSM, No. 29, and FSC, 1, No. 10; facsimile of the original notation in Apel, NPM, p. 415.

Example XIX-4: *Displacement Syncopation in Dame gentil*
by Anthonello da Caserta



PROPORTIONS

The devices for achieving rhythmic complexity that we have thus far examined have all depended for their effect on the equality of the minim (♩) in the four mensurations of French notation. This equality provided a stable basis for the performance of rhythmically independent lines, including those created by displacement syncopation or by the simultaneous use of mensurations with measures of different lengths. Composers in the latter half of the fourteenth century added another dimension to the subtlety of their art by introducing combinations of mensurations that replaced equality of the minim with proportional values. Medieval theorists had developed an elaborate system for classifying and naming what they called proportions and what we would call ratios. In earlier centuries, these ratios had been put to musical use primarily to determine and describe intervals such as the octave (2:1), fifth (3:2), fourth (4:3), and so on. Now, the ratios began to be applied in a so-called proportional notation that continued in use throughout most of the Renaissance.¹⁴ We need not concern ourselves with theoretical excesses that constructed proportions far beyond the limits of musical practicality. Nor need we consider such simple proportions as 2:1, which merely called for the written note values to be diminished by half in performance.

As their most common audible result, proportions reduce to equal length mensural units that are normally unequal. This use of proportions obviously contrasts with the combination of mensurations in which the minims remain of equal value, although both procedures may have been suggested by the mensurations that produce $3/4$ and $6/8$ meters. In these mensurations, the six minims in each breve create measures of the same length, but three imperfect semibreves in $3/4$ equal two

14. See Apel, NPM, p. 145 ff.

perfect scmbreves in 6/8. The combination of these mensural units, because it was so easily achieved and because the minim remained a constant value, is not usually regarded as an example of proportions. Yet it played an essential part in developing the rhythmic complexities of manneristic style, and it remained a characteristic feature of music throughout much of the fifteenth century.

If the alternation and combination of patterns in 3/4 and 6/8 seems to have been primarily a French procedure, the principles of Italian notation gave rise to a similar treatment of 2/4 and 6/8, *but in measures of equal length*. As was indicated in Chapter XVIII, three minims in senaria imperfecta () were the equivalent of four minims in octonaria (). Or, stated another way, the dotted quarter in 6/8 and the quarter in 2*/4 covered the same span of time. Similarly, of course, units of novenaria (9/8) and duodenaria (3*/4) were also equal in length. The theoretical examples given by Marchettus of Padua already imply this relationship, and one of its earliest practical applications appears in the madrigal *Nascoso el viso* (With my face hidden), by Giovanni da Firenze, who belonged to the first generation of Italian trecento composers (Example XIX-5a). Here, the upper voice shifts from duodenaria to novenaria and back, while the lower continues with unchanging values in duodenaria. The later composer Bartolino da Padova frequently exploited this equality of mensural units in more complex ways. In his three-voice ballata *Per un verde boschetto* (Through a green wood), for example, the shifts between senaria imperfecta and octonaria occur in all voices, sometimes together, sometimes separately. As a result, the contrasting metrical patterns of the two mensurations appear in simultaneous combination as well as in successive alternation (Example XIX-5b).¹⁵ Although Bartolino did not here use minims in the passages in octonaria, there can be little doubt that the 4:3 proportion of minims was an Italian contribution to the complexities of manneristic style. It did not take long, however, for composers of all nationalities to make equal measures of 6/8 and 2/4 one of the hallmarks of that style.

Example XIX-5: Proportional Mensurations in Italian Polyphony

a. GIOVANNI DA FIRENZE, *Nascoso el viso*



The score shows three staves of music. The top staff has lyrics 'So - pr'u - na fon - te' and mensural unit markings 'd.' and 'n.' above the notes. The middle and bottom staves have lyrics 'So - pr'u - na fon - te' and mensural unit markings 'd.' and 'n.' above the notes.

15. Facsimile in Parrish, NMM, Pl. LV. The confused discussion and erroneous conclusion (p. 175 ff.) could have been avoided by checking the version in the Squarcialupi manuscript where the alternations between senaria imperfecta and octonaria (not quaternaria, as Parrish says) are specifically indicated.

b. BARTOLINO DA PADOVA, *Per un verde boschetto*



The score shows three staves of music. The top staff has lyrics 'vo - ce qua - si hu - ma - na' and mensural unit markings 'Cum' and '3' above the notes. The middle and bottom staves have lyrics 'vo - ce qua - si hu - ma - na' and mensural unit markings 'Cum' and '3' above the notes.

- Above a spring
- With an almost human voice

A second commonly used proportion (3:2) replaces two minims with three to produce measures of 9/8 against either 3/4 or 6/8. This proportion completed the devices that permitted writing the four mensurations of French notation in measures of equal rather than different lengths. Composers rarely combined all four at the same time, however, probably because they reserved the extremes of manneristic style, as has already been noted, for the cantus in three-voice secular songs.

Without being excessively complex, the anonymous ballade *Medee fu en amer veritable* (Medea was true in loving) illustrates the common proportions as well as the other features of mannered style that have previously been discussed (AMM, No. 68). The tenor has unusually simple rhythms and remains in 6/8 from beginning to end. The contratenor changes a few times from 6/8 to 3/4 or 2/4 with equal minims and also makes extensive use of the 4:3 proportion. For the most part, the units of this proportion correspond with, and thus emphasize, the divisions of the tenor's imperfect time, but unusual rhythms and syncopations in measures 12-14 produce a more complex effect. In a longer passage (mm. 28-33), the cantus makes equally complex use of the same proportion. This voice also introduces the 3:2 proportion of minims, usually in the normal rhythms of 9/8 meter. In measure 9, however, displacement syncopation adds to the subtlety of the proportion. The same

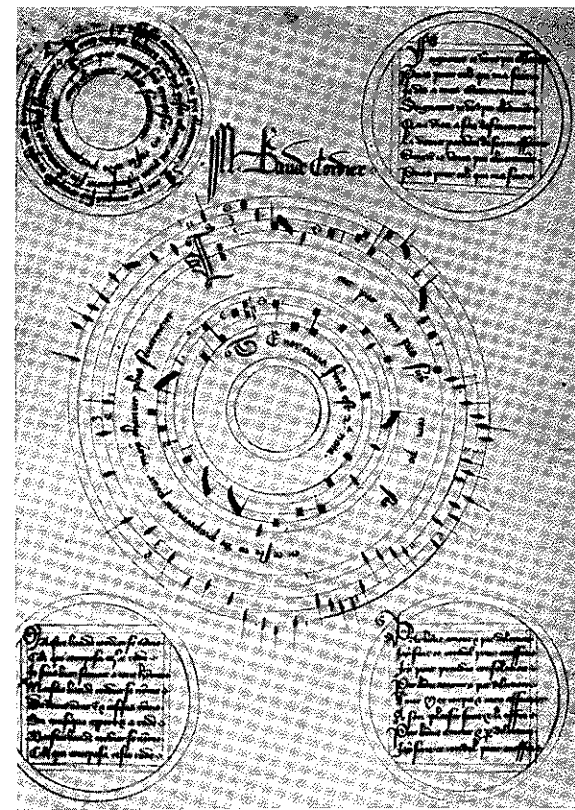
kind of syncopation occurs in normal 6/8 meter (mm. 2–4), and in combination with irregular rhythmic patterns of various sorts (see especially mm. 25–26 and 55–59). In addition, the cantus illustrates a problem that frequently arises in connection with the use of proportions. In this voice, all of the measures in the modern transcription that have sixteenth notes in 6/8 meter were written in duple proportion—that is, with a minim equal to ♩ instead of ♪. Where we find nothing but minims, as in measure 23, their rhythmic organization in groups of two or three remains ambiguous. In measure 34, on the other hand, the use of displacement syncopation proves that the composer thought of duple proportion as producing two units of 6/8 in the time of one. Whenever he used this proportion, therefore, a correct transcription and performance would be in measures of 6/16 (or 12/16). The distinction is slight, perhaps, but it adds one more subtlety to this typical example of a most subtle art. It is interesting to note that the text of this ballade—like many others in the later Middle Ages—introduces characters from classical Greek and Roman stories to exemplify the conventions of courtly love.

From the foregoing examples of manneristic style it is obvious that composers freely combined the various rhythmic devices we have been discussing. Unusual and conflicting rhythmic patterns, syncopations of duple note values, and displacement of triple units occur in both normal and proportional mensurations. Moreover, different proportions often appear in combination or successively in a single voice. Not content with these seemingly limitless possibilities, a few composers achieved even greater complexity by introducing unusual proportions—such as 9:8, 5:2, 7:3—or by applying the more common proportions to unexpected mensurations. An example of the latter practice occurs in the first measures of the rondeau *Amans, ames secretement* (Lovers, love secretly) by Baude Cordier.¹⁶ In perfect time and prolation (9/8), a duple proportion in the cantus results in two measures of 9/16 (Example XIX–6). In other words, it divides a 9/8 measure into equal halves! At the same time, the contratenor is written in triple proportion (3:1), which produces no

Example XIX–6: *Amans, ames secretement*, by Baude Cordier, measures 1–4 (O, fol. 123)

16. HAM, No. 48a.

The famous perpetual canon *Tout par compas* *suy composé* by Baude Cordier (Chantilly).



visible effect in a modern transcription and no audible effect in performance. The rondeau is very short, but, in the equivalents of fourteen measures of 6/8 and four of 2/4, its three voices manage to introduce all four basic mensurations in their normal values as well as in six different combinations with duple and triple proportions.¹⁷

The concentration of proportions in Cordier's rondeau is almost unparalleled and contrasts strikingly with his much simpler rondeau *Belle, bonne* (Beautiful, good [lady]). The more flowing melodic line of this rondeau and its opening bit of imitation in all three voices probably reflect the Italian influence that helped to bring manneristic excesses under control at the beginning of the fifteenth century. At any rate, the relative simplicity of *Belle, bonne* points toward a new musical era and makes it one of Cordier's most attractive songs.¹⁸ Its chief claim to fame, however, arises from its original notation in the form of a heart, a symbol of the poet-composer's gift to his lady of his own heart together with his "new song."¹⁹ Visual representations of this sort were more common in poetry than in music, and they must be regarded as another, if rare, manifestation of manneristic tendencies. Cordier himself provided another example when he used circular staves to notate the perpet-

17. For a facsimile and explanation of the proportions, see Apel, NPM, p. 175.

18. Cordier's known works—1 ballade, 9 rondeaux, and 1 Gloria—are published in Reaney, EFCM, 1, pp. 1–18.

19. Facsimiles in Apel, NPM, p. 427, and Grout, HWM, p. 135.

ual canon *Tout par compas suy composés* (All by compass am I composed).²⁰ The music resembles an Italian caccia in having two canonic voices above a free tenor, but its text is a three-line rondeau refrain. The remainder of this rondeau's text appears—again written in a circle—in the upper left-hand corner of the page and includes directions for performing the canon. Three more rondeau texts in the other three corners of the page are written in squares within circles. One of these is of special interest because it asserts that Baude Cordier composed the round, that he came from Reims, and that his music was known in Rome. We know nothing else about Cordier except the eleven pieces that have been preserved. The heart and circle appear together as additions to the Chantilly Codex, but his name is found with other pieces only in two later manuscripts of northern Italian origin. It seems probable, therefore, that Cordier was one of the many northern composers who made Italy a French musical province in the early decades of the fifteenth century.²¹

Much less well known than the heart and circle pieces of Cordier is a virelai written in the form of a harp, *La harpe de melodie*, by Jacob Senleches or Selesses (see jacket of this book and AMM, No. 69). Like Cordier's circle canon, this virelai has two canonic voices above a free and textless tenor. Although the scribe of *Ch* copied *La harpe de melodie* in the normal way on staves, both its text and an added rondeau that explains the method of performance prove the notation within a harp to be the composer's original intent. Written on the ribbon spiraling down the curved right side of the harp, the explanatory rondeau indicates somewhat enigmatically that the lines represent strings and notes are not written in the spaces as on a normal musical staff. The rondeau also indicates the beginning pitch of the canonic voices, the time interval between them, and the diminution by one half of all their black and white (hollow black) notes. The values of red notes are not diminished, and they function as usual to produce measures of 3/4 against the normal 6/8 meter of the tenor. To the unnecessary—because inaudible—mannerism of the 2:1 diminution in the canonic voices, Senleches added a number of special note shapes with downward stems, both straight and hooked. When the riddle of their meaning has been solved, the chief

20. Facsimile in Parrish, NMM, Pl. LXII. For corrections of all previously published transcription, see R. Meylan, "Reparation de la roue de Cordier," MD, 26 (1972), p. 70 (lowest example).

21. Craig Wright, in "Tapissier and Cordier: New Documents and Conjectures," MQ, 59 (1973), pp. 177–89, has conjectured that Baude Cordier was the Baude Fresnel (d. 1397–98) who was a harper and chamber valet to Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and a companion of the composer Tapissier, who was also in the duke's employ. As Wright has shown, the name Tapissier appears in numerous archival references, both alone and in connection with his "real" name, Jean de Noyers. Thus, the absence of the name Cordier in the same archives that refer to both Tapissier and Fresnel argues strongly against the likelihood of Wright's conjecture.

function of these note shapes proves to be the introduction of short figures in either 3:2 or 4:3 proportion. As a result, the smaller note values in a modern transcription appear in a wide variety of unusual and irregular rhythmic patterns. Such patterns make *La harpe de melodie* typically manneristic in style, but they are particularly characteristic of Senleches, one of the most mannered of all composers.²²

COMPOSERS REPRESENTED IN THE CHANTILLY AND MODENA MANUSCRIPTS

Because they preserve the names of so many composers, the Chantilly and Modena manuscripts clearly reveal the cosmopolitan nature of the society that produced mannered notation and the ars subtilior.²³ In addition to Baude Cordier, some thirty-one composers of secular songs are named in *Ch*, twenty of whom are represented by only one or two works. The remaining eleven are credited with from three to ten songs apiece. Many of the names are otherwise unknown, and some are given in shortened forms that make it difficult to connect them with archival references to singers in the papal chapel or to men in the service of various princes. Most of the texts are conventional love songs, and therefore they too give no information about their composers. It is well to remember, moreover, that even a song in honor of a particular person need not have been written by a member of that person's household. Its composer might equally well have honored a visiting prince in the hope of receiving a princely reward. All of these difficulties notwithstanding, a number of composers represented in *Ch* have been identified and their affiliations with princes or popes determined with reasonable certainty.

It is probable that at least half, if not a majority, of the composers came from various regions of northern France. We have no indisputable information about Cordier's life beyond his own statement that he came from Reims, but we do know a good bit more about some other song composers in the original repertory of *Ch*. Brief consideration of two men—Philipoctus de Caserta and the already-mentioned Jacob Senleches—will illustrate both the diverse origin of manneristic composers and the ways in which their association with courts in southern France and Spain can be established.

Jacob (or Jacomi) Senleches probably came from Senlecques in the Pas-de-Calais province of northwestern France.²⁴ From the rich ar-

22. All six of Senleches' known pieces are published in Apel, FSC, 1, Nos. 88–93 (see also FSM, Nos. 47–51). Unfortunately, the first section of *La harpe de melodie* (only in FSC, No. 92) is wrongly transcribed (see note to No. 69 in AMM).

23. Apel, FSC, 1, includes all French secular songs in *Ch* and *Mod* that are ascribed to a composer, except the two by Cordier in *Ch*.

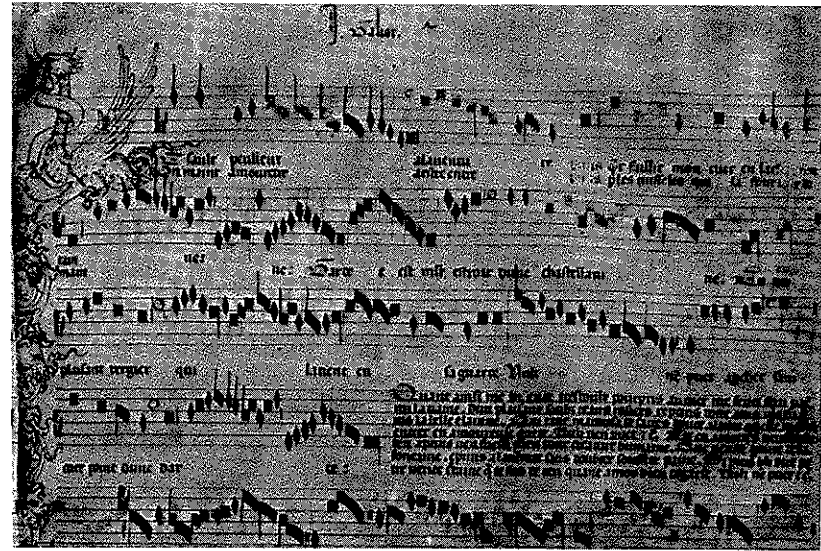
24. Senleches's name appears, with some variant spellings, as J. Senleches, Jacomi, Senleches Jakob, and Jakob de Senleches in *Ch*, and as Jacopinus Selesses in *Mod*.

chives of Aragon, we learn that in 1378 "Jacomi" was attached to that court or to the household of the future King John I. That same year and again in 1379, he traveled to the minstrels' schools in Flanders. Returning to Spain, Jacomi was sent by John I to his sister Eleanor, wife of another John I, King of Castile. After Eleanor's death in 1382, Senleches wrote a famous lament, the ballade *Fuions de ci* (Let us flee from here). The future for musicians in Castile evidently looked bleak—as the ballade's refrain says—"since we lost Eleanor," and by August 1383 Senleches was in the service of Pedro de Luna, cardinal of Aragon and future Benedict XIII.²⁵ How long he remained with the cardinal is unknown. He was not in the papal choir in Avignon when Benedict succeeded Clement VII in 1394, and no further clues as to his activities can be found in any of his other songs. Senleches' works in *Ch* consist of the virelai *La harpe de melodie* and three ballades, to which list *Mod* adds two more virelais.

Of all the composers' names in *Ch*, only that of Philipoctus de Caserta is clearly of Italian origin. It is unexpected, therefore, to find that his seven pieces in *Ch* are all settings of French texts—six ballades and one rondeau—and comprise all of his known compositions. Four of the ballades also appear in *Mod*, thereby correcting the ascription of one ballade in *Ch* to Jo. Galiot. How an Italian composer from a town near Naples came to Avignon—if that is where Philipoctus was—remains uncertain. Perhaps he joined the papal court when Queen Joanna of Naples welcomed and supported Clement VII shortly after the Great Schism began. At any rate, Philipoctus's ballade *Par les bons Gedeon et Sanson* (By the good Gideon and Samson) mentions the Schism and praises "the sovereign pope who is named Clement." Another ballade refers in enigmatic terms to the expedition of Louis, Duke of Anjou, to restore Joanna to her throne, usurped by her nephew Charles Durazzo. Joanna and Charles are disguised as Ariadne and Theseus, and Louis's name is hidden in the riddle of the refrain, "Qu'avoir ne puet sanz O couvert de Lis" (That she cannot have without O covered by the lily). As the emblem of French royalty, the lily was applicable to the duke of Anjou, brother of King Charles V, and when the *lis* covers O it yields Lois (or Loys), common medieval spellings of the duke's name.²⁶ With the spiritual blessing and financial support of Clement VII, Louis set out from Avignon in March of 1382, and Philipoctus's ballade probably dates from about this time. Certainly it could not have been written much later, for Charles Durazzo had Queen Joanna strangled with a silken cord in March of 1382, and Louis's campaign ended in total failure.

25. U. Günther, "Zur Biographie einiger Komponisten der *Ars subtilior*," *AMW*, 21 (1964), p. 195.

26. For a full discussion of this text and the connection with Naples, see N. Wilkins, "Some Notes on Philipoctus de Caserta," *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies*, 8 (1964), p. 84 ff.



The ballade *Le saut perilleux*, by J. Galiot, found in the Chantilly manuscript.

Perhaps the strangest circumstance connected with three of Philipoctus's ballades is the quotation of their incipits—words *and* music—in the virelai *Sus un fontayne* (Above a spring) by Johannes Ciconia of Liège.²⁷ The quantity and variety of Ciconia's music make him—for us—a much more important composer than Philipoctus, and his act of homage therefore seems inconceivable unless the two men were personal friends. Yet we have no evidence that they were ever associated, even though we are unusually well informed about Ciconia's life and works (see below, pp. 493–500). Moreover, Ciconia was the first northern composer to be so strongly influenced by Italian music that he wrote numerous madrigals and ballate, but only this one virelai in the manneristic style. Philipoctus, as we have seen, did just the reverse. All of his preserved music reveals him as a mature and skillful composer who wholeheartedly adopted the French style current in Avignon in the 1380s.

Several composers whose works appear in *Ch* are also represented in the Modena Codex. Some of these composers' names were unknown to the scribe of *Mod*, but the works that he left anonymous include pieces by Hasprois (1), Galiot (1), Matheus de Sancto Johanne (2), and Machaut (4). He did know the names of Jacob Senleches and Philipoctus de Caserta, however, to each of whom he ascribed four French songs. Among all these pieces we find Senleches's lament for Eleanor of Aragon and ballades by Matheus and Philipoctus that honor Clement

27. In the order of their quotation, the three ballades of Philipoctus are: *En remirant* (While watching); *En attendant* (While waiting); and *De ma douleur* (From my sorrow). The scribe's error in attributing *En attendant* to Galiot in *Ch* probably arose because Galiot did set a different text that also begins *En attendant* (*Ch*, No. 59). Apel still attributes both pieces to Galiot (FSC, 1, xxxiv, note to No. 14) and makes the improbable suggestion that Philipoctus and Galiot extracted internal passages from Ciconia's virelai to begin the three ballades. To quote the opening words and music of three already existing pieces is surely a far more likely procedure.

VII. Another ballade that honors Clement as the rightful pope, *Courtois et sages* (Courtly and wise), appears only in *Mod* and a Paris manuscript (*PR*) that originated in northern Italy.

MATTEO DA PERUGIA

Although the relationships with Avignon and the music of *Ch* might suggest French origin, at least 30 percent and perhaps more of the repertory in *Mod* is devoted to compositions by Matteo da Perugia, who has no known connection with southern France or Spain. All of Matteo's pieces in *Mod* are unica, and none sheds any light on his life. Biographical information about him is not entirely lacking, however. A singer at the cathedral of Milan in the years 1402–07 and again in 1414–16, Matteo enjoyed the patronage of Pietro Filargo, the cardinal archbishop of Milan. His generous salary was once reduced because he was "maintained with food and drink" by the cardinal, and in 1406 he accompanied Pietro on a journey to Pavia. The coincidence of Matteo's first period of service with the cardinal's residence in Milan makes it probable that the musician remained with his patron when the latter became involved in the intrigues that led to his elevation to the papacy as Alexander V. Presumably, Matteo remained at the papal court in Bologna under John XXIII and returned to Milan only when John set out to begin the Council of Constance. The last payment to Matteo recorded in the cathedral archives was for the month of August, 1416, and his subsequent history remains unknown. Although it is not certain, he is believed to have died in (or before) the month of January, 1418.

That Matteo da Perugia was somehow involved in putting the Modena Codex together is suggested by the extraordinary number of his pieces that it contains and even more by the distribution of those pieces in the five fascicles of the manuscript. The three central fascicles are devoted to a chiefly secular repertory that contains—with one exception—all of the music ascribed to composers other than Matteo da Perugia as well as some anonymous works. It is here that we find the four pieces of Machaut, all the concordances with *Ch*, and eight pieces by Matteo himself. The bulk of Matteo's compositions appear in the first and last fascicles, where no other composer is named except Grenon, the author of a ballade for which Matteo provided a contratenor. Of the twelve pieces and two contratenors in the first fascicle, Matteo is credited with only five; but of the twenty-one items in the last fascicle, his authorship is indicated for all but three: another single contratenor, a motet, and the ballade of Grenon. Whether any of the anonymous pieces in these two fascicles should be attributed to Matteo remains an open question. Some of the Mass movements resemble his style, and his habit of composing new contratenors for preexistent com-

positions makes it probable that he was responsible for the three examples.²⁸ If not prepared for or by Matteo himself, the first and last sections of the manuscript must have come from a musical circle of which he was an active member. The contratenor of Grenon's ballade and a fragmentary cantus with only the initial letter of the text aside, we still have thirty pieces ascribed to Matteo da Perugia in *Mod* and another ten that may also be his.²⁹ The authentic works fall into three distinct but most unequally represented categories. The only settings of Italian texts are two rather undistinguished ballate in the Italian form of vocal duets with instrumental contratenor parts. Sacred pieces with Latin texts include five settings of the Gloria and an isorhythmic motet. The remainder of Matteo's work—22 pieces in all—consists of French secular songs: 4 ballades, 7 virelais, 10 rondeaux, and one canon. We must assume that the preponderance of French songs in Matteo's output reflects the taste and interests of his ecclesiastical patron. After studying in Padua, Oxford, and Paris, Pietro Filargo taught at the University of Pavia and was a trusted counselor of Gian Galeazzo Visconti in Milan. By the time Pietro became cardinal archbishop of Milan, he was powerful and rich, a humanist and Maecenas who held a joyous court and gave much time to convivial pleasures. He might well have preferred music such as Matteo wrote, even if the general vogue of French manners and styles had not all but overwhelmed the native Italian product.

As might be expected, Matteo set most of the French texts for a solo voice (cantus) with instrumental tenor and contratenor parts. Of the six pieces that depart from this traditional pattern, one virelai and two rondeaux lack contratenors. Another two-voice rondeau has a different text in each voice, and one rondeau is a vocal duet (cantus and tenor) with an instrumental contratenor. The canon has a four-line text that reveals how it is to be sung by three voices in the manner of the French chace. A few of Matteo's French chansons show him to have been in full command of the highly mannered style.³⁰ In the majority of his pieces, however, he tends to moderate the complexities of that style. This is especially true of pieces in the last section of *Mod*, some of which approach the rhythmic clarity, the harmonic solidity, and the lyric grace of the early Renaissance. To what extent Matteo led the way in this return to a simpler style and whether it reflects Italian influence are difficult questions to answer. The first decades of the fifteenth century saw a general reaction against mannered complexity, and Matteo may seem a

28. One contratenor is for a rondeau by Machaut that appears in the central portion of *Mod* (AMM, No. 63). Another is for a ballata by Bartolino da Padova; the third is for a composition now unknown.

29. See U. Günther, "Das Manuskript Modena. . .," MD, 24 (1970), p. 24 and index, pp. 52–67.

30. For example, *Le greynour bien* (The greatest good), Apel, FSC, 1, No. 51, and FSM, No. 1 and Pl. 1 (facs.). For a discussion of Matteo's stylistic development, see FSM, pp. 13b–14a and the commentary on individual pieces.

leader in this respect merely because so much of his music has been preserved.

Matteo's few sacred works also reveal his general adherence to French musical traditions. Only one of the five Glorias may be called Italian, by virtue of being written as a caccia with two canonic voices above a free instrumental tenor. Two of the remaining four Glorias are in three-voice song style with text only in the cantus; one is in four-voice motet style with text in both upper voices; and one is a curious mixture of motet and song styles. One of the two voices with text lies in the same range as the tenor and functions as a contratenor whose notes are often broken into smaller values to accommodate the words. The third voice, a fifth higher in range than the other two, resembles the cantus of a secular song in a highly ornate and manneristic style. Like this hybrid, the other two Glorias in song style are written in 6/8 meter, the most common mensuration of the contemporary French chanson, but their cantus melodies range from moderate complexity to extreme rhythmic simplicity. In contrast to the French secular songs, the simplest of the three Glorias appears in the oldest section of *Mod* (No. 40), while the hybrid and most manneristic style appears in the manuscript's fifth fascicle (No. 101), which presumably contains Matteo's latest compositions. It almost seems that, as soloist in the Milan cathedral, Matteo here provided himself an opportunity for public display of his virtuosity in the performance of intricate rhythms and elaborate vocal ornaments.³¹

It is important to note that Matteo introduced isorhythmic procedures in the tenor and contratenor of the four-voice Gloria in motet style and in the tenor of the hybrid combination of motet and song styles. Another curious hybrid that might be classed as a motet or a troped Agnus Dei (*Mod*, No. 1) is fully isorhythmic. These technical devices, as well as the song and motet styles of his sacred music, are just as obviously derived from French practices as are the forms and styles of almost all his secular songs. Despite his Italian origin and his connection with Milan, then, we need not hesitate to regard Matteo da Perugia as a typical composer of French music at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Critics have rated him as a good craftsman of mediocre talent and have denied him a place in music history as an "epoch making" composer. These adverse judgments rest in part on the apparently limited distribution that Matteo's music achieved. They also seem to result from Matteo's position as an Italian who chose to write in French forms and styles at a time when rhythmic and structural complexities were more highly prized than sensuous melodic charm. Yet it is that choice, together with the quantity and diversity of his music, that makes Matteo an important

31. Matteo's sacred polyphony, as well as the anonymous pieces in *Mod* that may be his, are published in F. Fano, *Le Origini e il primo maestro di cappella: Matteo da Perugia*, Vol. 1 of *La Cappella musicale del Duomo di Milano* (Milan, 1956). A supplemental essay will consider the technical and formal aspects of Matteo's sacred music in some detail.

historical figure. The quality of his music may be subject to dispute; his influence may have been slight; but his significance as a representative of his age cannot be denied.

JOHANNES CICONIA

The last composer to be considered individually, Johannes Ciconia (c. 1335–1411), presents almost a reverse image of Matteo da Perugia in his reaction to the crosscurrents between French and Italian musical cultures. Coming from the city of Liège, Ciconia's musical training must have been wholly in the French tradition. Yet he wrote only two French chansons, as far as we know, and the bulk of his secular music consists of Italian songs—four madrigals and nine ballate. In further contrast to Matteo, Ciconia's settings of Latin texts make up slightly more than half of his total output. These works include nine Mass movements, (five Glorias and four Credos), eleven motets, and one canon. Another canon, but with French text, has been attributed to Ciconia because it appears beneath one of his madrigals in the only manuscript source. In addition to these thirty-seven pieces, fragments of two ballate, one Gloria, and two motets complete the list of works by or attributed to Ciconia. No other composer of the transitional period between Machaut and Dufay left such a large body of music. Only Matteo da Perugia came close to equaling it, and just as Matteo has been included with composers of French secular music, so Ciconia has often been listed as an important Italian composer. Such a designation for Ciconia is both misleading and wrong. Instead, we should regard him as the first northern composer of stature to succumb to the charms of Italian musical forms and styles.

Although Ciconia's life is unusually well documented, there are still many gaps in our knowledge of his activities. He himself attested to his origin in Liège, but the date of his birth is unknown. Presumably that event occurred between 1330 and 1335, for in 1350 he appears in Avignon as clerk and "familiar" of Eleanor of Comminges, the wife of Guillaume, Viscount of Turenne and nephew of Pope Clement VI. From 1358 to 1367, Ciconia was in Italy with Cardinal Gil Albornoz, the papal legate who was then making his second attempt to regain control of the Papal States. As clerk and dispenser of alms for Albornoz, Ciconia must have followed the cardinal-legate in his many travels throughout Italy—to Pisa and Florence, to the court of Queen Joanna of Naples, to Ancona, Cesena, and Bologna, and to meetings with his allies, including Francesco Carrara of Padua, the patron of Bartolino. During these years in which Ciconia first encountered Italian music on its native soil, he also became a priest (1362) and received a canonicate at the Church of St. John the Evangelist in his native city. Cardinal Albornoz died in 1367, and we lose track of Ciconia until 1372, when we find him residing in

Liège. Missing records from the city's archives make our knowledge of his next thirty years scanty indeed. He retained his canonicate at St. John the Evangelist until 1402, but his presence is not documented between 1372 and 1385 or in 1396, 1398, and 1400. During these years Ciconia may well have made one or more trips to Avignon or to Italy, even though he had found a "companion" in Liège by whom he had several natural children. (The circumstance was by no means unusual.) Particularly in the last years of the fourteenth century Ciconia seems to have renewed or established connections with Padua and the Carrara family. One of his two motets in praise of Francesco Zabarella appears to have been written after the eminent jurist became a professor at the University of Padua but before he was made archpriest of the cathedral in 1397. Another motet honors Stefano Carrara, a natural son of Francesco Novello. For both motets Ciconia received handsome rewards. In 1401 Zabarella granted him a benefice in a church near Padua. The next year Stefano Carrara became bishop of Padua, and Ciconia received a second prebend, this time in the cathedral itself. By April, 1403, Ciconia was in residence in Padua, where he remained until his death in December, 1411. During Ciconia's long life, then, we know that he spent at least two periods of about nine years each in Italy. Much of his music is obviously connected with these two periods, and direct evidence of his musical activity in Avignon and Liège is almost totally lacking. Taken as a whole, however, Ciconia's works present an amalgam of French and Italian elements that make him one of the most important forerunners of the new international musical style.

As might be expected, Ciconia's madrigals and ballate are his most Italianate compositions. Three of the madrigals and five of the ballate are vocal duets in the traditional forms and styles. The fourth madrigal is apparently a vocal trio, although the scribe failed to copy the first two lines of text beneath the contratenor part. Of the four ballate for three voices, two follow the model of the French solo song with instrumental tenor and contratenor parts. The other two appear to have been written in the Italian manner as vocal duets with an instrumental contratenor. In some manuscripts, however, these pieces have the text only in the cantus or lack the contratenor part. Two more ballate cannot be classified because only their cantus parts have been preserved. The adoption of song style for three-voice ballate is by no means unusual, of course, but even in his successful imitations of Italian style Ciconia betrays his own individuality, if not his northern origin and training. Perhaps he differs from his Italian models most often and most obviously in his greater concern for melodic organization and structural unity. Instead of using a variety of rhythmic and melodic patterns within a phrase, Ciconia was more apt to reiterate a small number of related figures. He often applied this procedure to sequential passages in the traditional style with a more active upper voice above a simpler tenor (Example


XIX-7a). A more distinctively personal characteristic, however, is his frequent equalization of the two voices by alternating short motives and figures in imitation (Example XIX-7b). These two excerpts from Ciconia's madrigal *Per quella strada* provide typical examples of the different procedures. The second excerpt comes from a melisma between lines of text and may have been intended as an instrumental interlude.

Example XIX-7: *Two Excerpts from Per quella strada*
by Ciconia

a. MEASURES 10-16

Through that milky way of the sky

b. MEASURES 28-32

Many of the same devices appear in Ciconia's two-voice ballate, although they are traditional in being smaller in scale and simpler in style than the madrigals. One of the most attractive pieces in this group—and indeed in all of Ciconia's works—is the ballata *Con lagrime bagnandome el viso* (With tears bathing my face; AMM, No. 70). In this lament on the death of his "signore," Ciconia tempers the sweetness of Italian lyricism with expressive dissonances and syncopations. Imitative figures in the two voices are perhaps more frequent than one would find in the work of a native Italian, and a motive dear to Machaut () provides material for an extended melisma at the close of the second musical section.

Ciconia's only work that adopts the mannered style current in southern France is his already-cited virelai *Sus un fontayne*, which quotes the opening words and music of three ballades by Philipoctus de Caserta (see above, p. 489 and n. 27). In a different way, Ciconia's other setting of a French secular text is just as unusual. Only the upper voice has been preserved of the virelai *Aler m'en veus en strangne partie* (I would leave for foreign parts). The piece can be reconstructed, however, because it also exists as a two-voice motet, *O beatum incendium* (O blessed ardor), with

the same text in both voices.³² That the motet must be a contrafactum is proved by its retention of repeat signs after the open ending of the second musical section, although the text does not call for such repetition. The virelai, therefore, must represent the original form of the piece. Another motet by Ciconia is also for two voices of equal range, both of which sing the same text.³³ In this case, however, extensive melismas and the overall form suggest a derivation from the madrigal rather than the virelai or ballata.

That Ciconia should create motets from or in secular forms is another indication of his eclectic tendencies, but it also reflects a general trend toward simpler and more personal expression of religious feeling. We should not be surprised, then, to find other motets in which he abandoned isorhythmic techniques and four-voice writing with different texts in the two upper parts. Ciconia did write motets with this typical structure, to be sure, but they account for only five of the eleven pieces. One of the five, moreover, is not isorhythmic, and none of the tenors makes use of a repeated plainchant melody. The four motets for three voices diverge even more from traditional motet style. None is isorhythmic, and again none has a plainchant tenor. Three do have two vocal parts above the tenor, but in two pieces (Nos. 34 and 36) both voices sing the same text. Only one of the three-voice motets (No. 40) has a different text for each of the upper parts. Even this motet is unusual, however, in that the tenor is not entirely without text. Instead, it occasionally has words, phrases, and even complete lines drawn from the text of the triplum.

Ciconia's fourth motet for three voices, *Regina gloriosa* (Glorious Queen; No. 32), is like *O beatum incendium* in being a contrafactum of a virelai or ballata. An unusually short text is spread—with some repetitions—over two sections of music, the second of which again has unnecessary open and closed endings. The texture is that of a French chanson, and performance with text in the cantus only is a possibility. The manuscript source, however, gives almost all the text beneath the tenor part, and Ciconia probably intended the motet to be a vocal duet with an instrumental contratenor. Whatever the arrangement, the position of *Regina gloriosa* as a forerunner of the early Renaissance song motet is clear.³⁴

Adapting sacred Latin texts to secular song forms is not the only way in which Ciconia foreshadowed future developments in motet composition. His six motets with only one instead of two or more texts presage the gradual abandonment of medieval polytextuality. By writing his own tenors instead of using preexistent melodies, he achieved

greater control over tonal organization and paved the way for the creation of counterpoint above a harmonic bass. This function of the low-est voice becomes particularly obvious in the fanfarelike passages that so often add brilliance to the close of Ciconia's motets (Example XIX-8). The reiteration and imitation of short motives in such passages—almost always above *f* and *c'* in the tenor—clearly stem from traditional ways of creating rhythmic climaxes in isorhythmic motets. Italian influence, however, probably accounts for the more general use of imitation, both of short motives and of longer melodies, throughout the motets. And when the imitation involves the tenor as well as the upper voices, Ciconia seems to anticipate the Renaissance ideal of a homogeneous texture in which all voices are of equal melodic importance.

Example XIX-8: *Melismatic Amen of O felix templum*
by Ciconia

Italian influence on the melodic style of Ciconia's motets is difficult to pin down. Many of his figures and motives belong to the common melodic vocabulary of his French predecessors and contemporaries. Yet even in the isorhythmic pieces his melodies often seem tinged with Italian sweetness and lyric charm. Indeed, Ciconia's motto as a composer may well have been the opening words of the duplum in his motet No. 41: "Melodia suavissima cantemus" (Let us sing the sweetest melody).

32. The two pieces are Nos. 17 and 30 in S. Clercx, *Johannes Ciconia*. Further references to Ciconia's works follow the numbering of pieces in Vol. 2.

33. No. 31: *O Petre, Christi discipule* (O Peter, disciple of Christ).

34. See Reese, MR, p. 94.

CICONIA'S POLYPHONIC MASS MOVEMENTS

After the combinations of new and old procedures and the mixtures of French and Italian elements encountered in Ciconia's motets, it is no surprise to find that the forms and styles of his Mass movements are equally various. That he composed such movements at all may have resulted from his early contacts with the musical life at Avignon. Some, if not all, of the movements, however, may have been written for use at Liège or Padua. At any rate, there seems to be considerable justification for regarding Ciconia as a link between the liturgical polyphony of Avignon and the more widespread composition of Mass movements and complete Masses in the early Renaissance.

Four musically unified Gloria-Credo pairs plus a single Gloria comprise all of the preserved Mass movements by Ciconia that are legible and complete. Suzanne Clercx's edition does not bring together the members of each pair, but a number of features make them easily recognizable. The usual but superficial indications of musical unity in paired movements are identity of mensuration, mode, and number and ranges of voices. More profound indications come from the identity of style and of structural procedures in both members of a pair. Ciconia's four pairs are particularly instructive in this respect, because each has its own distinctive style. Nos. 22 and 29 are in four-voice motet style (4²) with isorhythmic repetitions of tenor and contratenor colores. Nos. 21 and 27 are in three-voice madrigal style (3³), and Nos. 23 and 28 are in three-voice song style (3¹). The fourth pair, Nos. 24 and 26, alternates two-voice solo sections (2²) with sections for chorus in three-voice motet style (3²). The single Gloria (No. 20) also alternates solo and choral sections, but the latter are here in four-voice motet style. Ciconia's obviously systematic approach to the composition of unified Gloria-Credo pairs makes it probable that a matching Credo for the single Gloria is now lost.

In general, it is clear, the basic styles of Ciconia's paired movements correspond with the song, motet, and simultaneous styles of the fourteenth-century Avignon repertory described in Chapter XVI. For the second pair listed above, however, madrigal rather than simultaneous style is a much more appropriate designation. Only rarely in these two movements do all three voices sing the same syllables at the same time, and the style is clearly not related to the chordal writing of French composers as exemplified in the Gloria and Credo of Machaut's Mass. Instead, these movements adopt the more imitative style of the later madrigal and ballata, as well as their declamatory and dramatic elements. Nowhere in Ciconia's works does he exploit the dramatic effect of repeated words more tellingly than at the beginning of the Gloria (Example XIX-9). By his treatment and repetition of the word "pax," the opening phrase becomes a personal plea for peace in times that were singularly troubled by civil, political, and religious strife.

Example XIX-9: *The Opening Measures of Ciconia's Gloria in Madrigal Style*

For a number of reasons, Ciconia's paired Mass movements must be regarded as his most innovative and influential compositions. Discussion of those reasons, with analyses of the individual pairs, cannot be undertaken here, but we may at least note some of the topics such a discussion would have to consider. Because of uncertainty as to the dates of specific compositions, chronological developments are difficult, if not impossible, to determine. As far as we can tell, however, Ciconia was the first composer who consistently wrote musically related Gloria-Credo pairs. Moreover, his association of structural relationships with the unities of mode, mensuration, and basic style was a contribution of singular importance. Later composers, both on the continent and in England, continued his search for ways to establish a unity of structural procedure that could support a rich variety of surface details. Their first satisfactory solution to this problem was the cantus firmus Mass, in which one melody serves as the tenor for all five movements. With the achievement of this solution, the cyclic Mass became, in Bukofzer's words, "the most representative and extended form of Renaissance music."³⁵

No less innovative, again as far as we can tell from uncertain chronology, was the introduction of what we may call responsorial polyphony in three of Ciconia's Mass movements. At any rate, most of the other composers who alternated duets with choral sections were much younger men, and examples of the practice are particularly abundant in the three decades following the death of Ciconia in 1411. Because the manuscript sources designate the alternating sections by the words *unus* or *duo* and *chorus*, it has been argued that these pieces mark the beginning of choral polyphony. That they do not has already been suggested in Chapter XVI. In the various pieces that introduce solo duets, we find choral sections in all three of the styles cultivated by composers of Mass movements in the fourteenth century. Ciconia, as we have seen, alternated duets with choral sections in three- and four-voice motet style. What was new, then, was not the style of the choral sections but the unaccompanied duets for soloists. This solo performance had to be iden-

35. SMRM, p. 217.

tified, and it therefore became necessary to label the choral passages as well. Of course, we must not think of this music in terms of modern choirs. Even in the larger religious establishments, it is unlikely that the membership of medieval choirs exceeded, or often reached, a total of twelve or at most sixteen singers. Yet there is no reason to insist that fourteenth-century Mass movements were always performed with only one singer for each vocal part. Where choirs did exist, as in the papal chapel, performance with three or four singers on a part may well have been the norm with which the innovation of duets for two soloists provided an effective contrast.³⁶

ITALIAN SOURCES OF EARLY FIFTEENTH-CENTURY MUSIC

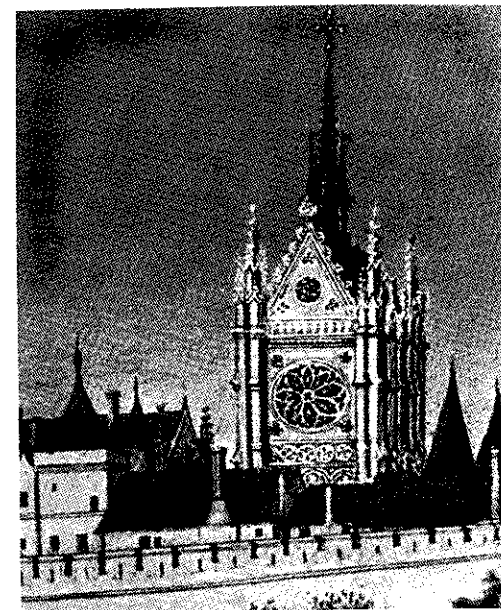
One of the more curious aspects of music from the early fifteenth century is the preponderance of manuscript sources that originated in northern Italy. Only in small part can the loss of manuscripts from other regions of Europe explain this situation. We know of musical activities at various centers in northern France and England, but apparently it was in cities from Milan to Padua and Venice in the north, and from Bologna to Florence and Lucca in central Italy, that the international polyphonic repertory of the early fifteenth century was largely created and almost wholly preserved.

The Modena manuscript, with its varied collection of both secular and sacred music, represents the earliest phase of this international activity in Italy, while a Bologna manuscript (*BL*) includes works of Ciconia in a later and much more extensive sacred repertory by many composers of widely diverse origins.³⁷ Some were Italians, of whom several were associated with Padua during the last years of Ciconia's life or shortly thereafter. A few were Parisians, and a few more were English. By far the largest number, however, came from Liège and the regions that lie on either side of the present French and Belgian border. A good many of the younger men in this group of northern composers served in the papal chapel at one time or another between the years 1418 and 1437, and during the first half of the century—it is well to remember—the popes lived in Lucca, in Florence, and especially in Bologna far more than they did in Rome. Among the northerners most abundantly represented in *BL* are Dufay, Binchois, and other men commonly regarded as the first generation of Renaissance composers, the "school" from which sprang the "central musical language" of the Renaissance. From the evidence

36. These views conflict with M. Bukofzer, "The Beginnings of Choral Polyphony," *SMRM*, pp. 176–89. Bukofzer gives the impression that only song style appears in sections marked *chorus*, and he is clearly mistaken when he connects Ciconia with "choral monophony" supported by two instrumental parts (p. 179).

37. Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, Cod. Q 15.

A picture of the Sainte Chapelle in Paris from a fifteenth-century manuscript now in the Musée Condé, Chantilly.



of this and other manuscripts, therefore, we may assume that school most often kept in Italy.³⁸ It was there, certainly that the fusion of French and Italian musical elements—perhaps most complete in the works of Ciconia—began the development of a new and international style.

English influence on this new musical language and style came somewhat later and will be considered briefly in the closing chapter of this book. Before the effects of that influence became evident, French traits naturally predominated in the music of continental composers from the North. Few of these men—even those who spent considerable time in Italy—adopted Italian forms and styles as wholeheartedly as Ciconia had done. Few of them were untouched, however, by the "sweetness" and gentle lyricism of Italian music. Northern French composers, as we have seen, had rarely carried the manneristic style to the extremes that were reached in Avignon, Aragon, and Foix. Yet they never lost their typically French concern with structural subtlety. What was new in the early fifteenth century, then, was less a return to simplicity than a tempering of northern constructivism by an infusion of southern sensuousness. Not humanistic in the sense of reviving the classic culture of Greece and Rome, music nevertheless began to be humanized. It was now prepared to receive the English contributions that would complete the creation of Tinctoris's "new art" and thus begin the musical Renaissance.

38. One of the largest Italian manuscripts from about the same period as *BL* is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (Canonici misc. 213). This collection of some 325 pieces is largely devoted to secular songs, although it also includes a number of motets and Mass movements. Ciconia and other transitional composers are represented, but at least half of the repertory consists of pieces by Dufay, Binchois, and their contemporaries. See G. Reaney, "The Manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canonici Misc. 213," *MD*, 9 (1955), pp. 74–104; and *Early Fifteenth-Century Music*, *CMM*, 11, 6 vols. (AIM, 1955–75).