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A

AMBIGUOUS ARTISTS

Music-Making among Italian Renaissance Courtesans

(with particular reference to

Tullia of Aragon, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco)

by

Sheila Schonbrun

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of  
Musical Arts, The City University of New York

1998

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## Abstract

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Adviser: Professor Barbara Hanning

I have brought together previously scattered information concerning the music-making, and particularly the singing, of Italian Renaissance courtesans, concentrating on three women: Veronica Franco, Tullia of Aragon, and Gaspara Stampa. The singing of these women was word-oriented, and beautiful in the sense of expressive.

Included in the dissertation is a large section of music--a hypothetical evening's entertainment representing the variety of music performed by these women, and an appendix of pieces dedicated to particular courtesans, indicating their importance in the social/musical world of sixteenth-century Venice.

## PREFACE

The musical life of the Renaissance often appears to us in large-scale religious works: in the masses, motets, and celebratory pieces that were written for grand occasions of both State and Church. Yet the music of late-Renaissance Italy was also full of intimate moments, none more so, perhaps, than those which played out in the private salons or *accademie* of Venice, where men of learning, wealth, nobility, and reputation gathered for discussion, instruction, music-making, and entertainment. Often they were joined by women, not their wives or other noble ladies, but elegant courtesans, prized for their beauty and sexual accommodation, as well as for their wit, sparkling conversation, and talent in poetry and music. This dissertation will study some of the music-making of these women, with an eye to shedding light on the music and its place in such social settings.

The women on whom we shall focus attention are three *cortegiane oneste*, famous as poets and as singers: Tullia of Aragon (c.1508-1556), Gaspara Stampa (1525-1544), and Veronica Franco (1546-1591). Our knowledge about these women is available only indirectly and is scattered throughout the literature. Although much

attention has been lavished on their writing,<sup>1</sup> very little work has been done on their music. I have, however, been able to infer some conclusions about their art from the few known facts about the three women themselves, as well as about other gifted women of the *demi-monde*. By piecing together the bits of information, the beginning of a coherent picture of the lives of these extremely important and interesting women emerges. Our understanding of secular musical life in Renaissance Venice, and northern Italy in general, is clarified by the knowledge of the place of courtesans in that life.

As a significant part of that clarification, I have invented a hypothetical evening's entertainment of music, including some of the rich variety of styles and genres that were enjoyed in gatherings of *letterati* and courtesans. I have also included an appendix of works dedicated to specific *cortegiane oneste*.

Courtesans were a fascinating part of Renaissance society. The ambiguity of their social position makes them particularly appealing to modern sensibilities. Their participation in the arts is important not only for the study of women's entrance into the public world of art, but also as evidence that they were integral members of that world.

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<sup>1</sup> All three women had their works published: Tullia and Veronica in their lifetimes, Gaspara posthumously, under her sister Cassandra's direction. All three had contemporary supporters and detractors.

## Acknowledgements

I wish to give special thanks to Barbara Hanning, my dissertation advisor, for her continuing support and encouragement, as well as for her steering me toward much valuable information. I would also like to thank my other two main readers, Allan Atlas and Leo Treitler. Each, in his own way, pushed, pulled, and prodded me to complete this undertaking, encouraging me in my work and dealing with my woeful laxity in details. My other readers, John Graziano, Michael Griffel, and Joel Lester also raised interesting questions for me to answer, at the same time that they were very supportive. They were much appreciated.

For help with the translations I want to thank my good friend Alessandra Visconti, who spent many hours working with me on them. I am also grateful to Professor Linda Carroll, who generously gave her time and expertise to unravel the Venetian/Greek text for Willaert's *greghesca*.

I also wish to thank my friend and neighbor Grant Herreid for his gift of lute playing on many of the pieces I gathered, which helped bring them to life.

Many others in the scholarly community put me in touch with helpful people and documents, always responding to my requests for assistance. I thank you all.

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## I

## The Social Context

## Women in the Renaissance

*I wanted to keep only the books, my writings, and the writings of my ancestors shut up . . . in such a way that my wife could never see them, much less read them. . . . I never gave my wife permission to enter this place, neither with me nor alone, and I often commanded her that if ever she ran across some of my writing, to hand it over to me immediately. And in order to take away any desire she might have to see either my writings or my secret matters, I often criticized those daring and insolent women who spend too much energy in learning about affairs outside their house or about their husbands or other men.*

Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, ca. 1430<sup>1</sup>

In recent years there has been a great deal written both about male domination in public and private life in the Renaissance and about the restrictions on women's lives. Margaret King,<sup>2</sup> Ann

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<sup>1</sup> Marilyn Migiel and Juliana Schiesari, eds., *Refiguring Woman: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 125-26.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret King, *Women of the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Rosalind Jones,<sup>3</sup> E. William Monter,<sup>4</sup> and Judith Brown<sup>5</sup> are some of the scholars pursuing this line of investigation. This scholarship has been of great value in enriching our vision of society, adding the dimension of forgotten female characters and their lost opportunities. We find that in the Renaissance, women were losing, or had lost, what had been an increasingly more powerful position in society. The early Middle Ages saw women, especially those in northern Europe, with many of the same privileges as men—they could inherit property, manage estates, belong to most guilds, and take over a husband's business at his death. (Charlemagne's daughters were well endowed at his death, and able to live independently.)<sup>6</sup> By the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, Italian noblewomen were increasingly removed from public concerns--economic, political and cultural--and although they did not disappear into a private realm of family and domestic concerns as fully as their

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<sup>3</sup> Ann Rosalind Jones, "City Women and their Audiences," *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 299-316.

<sup>4</sup> E. William Monter, "Pedestal and Stake: Courtly Love and Witchcraft," *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, eds. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 119-36.

<sup>5</sup> Judith C. Brown, "A Woman's Place Was in the Home," *Rewriting the Renaissance*, 206-24.

<sup>6</sup> Maria V. Coldwell, "Jouglersesses and Trobairitz," *Women Making Music*, eds. Jane Bowers and Judith Tick (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 39-40.

sisters in the patrician bourgeoisie, their loss of public power made itself felt in new constraints placed upon their personal as well as social lives. . . . All the advances of Renaissance Italy, its protocapitalist economy, its states, and its humanistic culture, worked to mold the noblewoman into an aesthetic object: decorous, chaste, and doubly dependent--on her husband as well as the prince.<sup>7</sup>

A similar situation obtained for German women, who were accorded importance only in the domestic sphere.<sup>8</sup> In general, women in the Renaissance were not expected to be educated or to participate in public life, artistic or political. A few significant cases from the body of scholarship should give us a perspective on the attitudes prevalent during the lives of the women in this study.

A typical Renaissance male attitude is expressed in this quotation from Juan Luis Vives:

If women's treasures are chastity, silence and obedience, chastity ranks highest of all: "chastity is woman's particular concern; when she is clearly taught about this, she is sufficiently instructed."<sup>9</sup>

There were, however, revered women such as Irene di Spilimburgo

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<sup>7</sup> Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible*, 160-61.

<sup>8</sup> Steven Ozment, *The Bürgermeister's Daughter* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>9</sup> King, *Women of the Renaissance*, 166.

(1538-1559) and Vittoria Colonna (1492-1547) whose writings were well known and respected. But it was their chastity and high moral tone--qualities not necessary for male writers--that were most often praised. Earlier, in the fifteenth century, the humanist Isotta Nogarola was slandered for her erudition. It was regarded as fostering promiscuity and incestuousness, and an admonition from Guarino Veronese, an admirer who nevertheless reproved her for her learning and writing, caused her to retreat from further public writing.<sup>10</sup> Margaret King indicates the inability of most women to receive training in Latin, "the language of the powerful and their advisers."<sup>11</sup> Even upper-class women were by and large denied this opportunity. Any education lacking in this basic skill would, of course, severely hamper a woman's ability to act in the public sphere.

Some women, however, benefitted from having humanist fathers who were concerned about their daughters' education. Some women learned from brothers who shared their education with them. There were always exceptions, but respectability fairly well precluded the woman from the active life of an artist.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 195-96.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 175.

One of the respectable opportunities for women (outside of the security of marriage) was entrance into a convent. Though denied to women without money, the convent was certainly an important option for some. The situation in some convents, however, was far from respectable. Described satirically by Aretino, and with moral outrage by others, these centers for well-to-do women who could not or would not marry were often centers of illicit sexual activity and often, also, of learning and discourse among the nuns and their illicit male visitors. According to the Venetian diarist Girolamo Priuli, the convent of Sant'Angelo in Venice was particularly noted for:

the ostentatious and dishonest life of these Venetian nuns, who being truly of noble blood and origin are most beautiful, delicate and filled with every *virtù* especially in song, playing and every other musical ability. . . . Many . . . foreigners having fallen in love with these young and pretty nuns, leave them money to make them happy and these nuns, intelligent, astute, and prudent enough . . . do not leave it so it is left for nothing. To speak frankly these nuns, especially those with long experience accustomed to such ostentation and lasciviousness, because they are abandoned by the young Venetian nobles . . . turn to boatmen and others not up to their level in order to satisfy their sexual appetites.<sup>12</sup>

Intelligent and aggressive women, impotent in the normal social avenues, thus managed to salvage in the convent an

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<sup>12</sup> Guido Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex, Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 82-85.

exciting and stimulating life.

### Courtesans

The rather repressed nature of women's lives in this period, especially in Venice, has been acknowledged by many writers. Barring a few exceptions, women were expected to stay at home, or be well chaperoned, and certainly not take part in public affairs or entertainments, or enjoy themselves too much when they were entertained.<sup>13</sup> This situation allowed the courtesan, because of her lack of normal social acceptance, to exercise a unique freedom.<sup>14</sup> She could fraternize with men, go to public spectacles, take part in salons and academies--mainly male gatherings--and exercise publicly whatever talents and skills in the arts she had. Of course, this also afforded men a much needed camaraderie, for without the courtesan they were limited to exclusively male companionship and discourse.

Although the "daring and insolent"--and therefore freer--women of this study came from different generations and different

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<sup>13</sup> Nino Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984), 466.

<sup>14</sup> The term courtesan or *cortegiana onesta* is used to describe the top in a hierarchy of women involved in disreputable sexual practices, and usually being paid for sexual services. The prostitute, streetwalker, whore, and *meretrice* were definitely considered of lower quality because of their lack of literary and musical skills, and/or inability to project an image of wealth and artistry.

family and social backgrounds, they formed what has been called the "Golden Age of Courtesans," *circa* 1520-1590.<sup>15</sup> Their popularity was enhanced by their skill in the fine arts. Many were expert musicians and reportedly possessed beautiful voices, which they knew how to use well. They were thus the Renaissance equivalents of the ancient Greek *hetaere* (prostitutes who were able to amuse, entertain, and engage in witty and edifying discourse, as well as perform sexual services), a powerful recommendation among the elite *letterati* and humanists seeking classical models for the arts, and one not neglected by the women themselves in their own self-descriptions; their talents and accomplishments set them apart from the lower-ranked *meretrice* or common prostitutes.

The social phenomenon of these surrogate companions is a complex of many interwoven and knotted threads. Along with the many other dichotomies in Renaissance thought, the attitude toward courtesans was laced with ambiguities. Since the appearance of Boccaccio's *Concerning Famous Women* (begun in 1361 and worked on and revised till 1375), the compilation of lists of women of noble character and virtue was an important intellectual pastime. Antonfrancesco Doni and his colleagues indulge in it in his *Dialogo*

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<sup>15</sup> Georgina Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), 59.

*della musica* (1544). Parabosco's *I diporti* (1550) contains instances of such list-making, apparently for entertainment. Often famous women are paired with courtesans, or their noble characteristics are compared to and associated with those of ancient courtesans. According to Boccaccio, for example, the goddess Flora was a real Roman courtesan who left a fortune to the city upon her death and in whose name the Floralia festival was established.<sup>16</sup> Julius Held has shown the many incarnations of this deity in paintings of beautiful women of the Italian Renaissance: paintings that are not portraits of particular women, but of ideals of beauty; paintings that incorporate flowers (Flora) as icons of the seductiveness of beauty, its vanity, ultimate withering, and, therefore, latent harm.<sup>17</sup> The courtesan, connected with this concept of beauty as an image of seduction and decay, was also associated with beauty as virtue. Though these two images--seduction/decay and beauty/virtue--seem to be polar opposites, such are the antitheses of Renaissance thought. In her study of sixteenth-century Venetian portraiture, Lucie Wehn calls attention to the many portraits, sensuous and often suggestive, that combine

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<sup>16</sup> Julius Held, "Flora, Goddess and Courtesan," *Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky: De artibus opuscula*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University Press, 1961), I, 208.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

features of known courtesans with such historical figures as Judith, Salome, Lucrezia, the Magdalene, St. Catherine, Cleopatra, and Flora.<sup>18</sup> Often these paintings of women are allegorical in nature: sibyls, or women with books or musical instruments, indicating wisdom or harmony in the world. The image of the Magdalene epitomizes the paradox in such paintings, as she combines eroticism with ideal virtue. The ideas of Marsilio Ficino in particular are behind these paradoxes, for according to him and his followers, man can, through union with human beauty, achieve spiritual union with the divine. Through sensual love he can ascend spiritually.

Courtesans fulfilled more than the sexual needs of their male patrons. Theirs was not merely a cash transaction, but--especially with the *cortegiana onesta*--often a romantic love relationship, so that men were able to find not only stimulating discourse and literary and musical entertainment, but also the excitement and challenge of courtship and romance. *Cortegiane* were the inheritors of *amour courtois*.

It was Renaissance courtesans such as . . . Gaspara Stampa who consciously took up the role of preserving and rendering socially valid those delicate conceptions [of Provençal traditions of

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<sup>18</sup> Lucie A. H. Wehn, "Icons of Beauty: The Sensuous Half-Length Images of Early Sixteenth-Century Venice", Master's thesis, University of Arizona, 1990, 32-40, *passim*.

romantic love].<sup>19</sup>

### Courtesans and Music

That courtesans were also musicians is of particular interest. Knowledge of this aspect of their skills and its relation to their lives adds one more level to our understanding of the function of music in the lives of the intellectuals and nobles with whom they were associated; we can learn more about the panorama of styles of music in social intercourse, and perhaps something of the musical training available to women, especially women not privileged with the educational resources of upper-class and noble families.

How did these women become educated, sophisticated, and able to hold their own in the company of musicians and writers in the way that they did? Since few specific details of the lives of courtesans are available to us, we will have to piece together a generic picture from various sources.

We might begin with a fragment from Zoppino's Ragionamenti:

. . . By frequenting high-placed prelates she learned how

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<sup>19</sup> William F. Prizer, *Courtly Pastimes: The Frottole of Marchetto Cara* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1980), 32.

to dress and speak like a lady.<sup>20</sup>

The other speaker in this dialogue goes on to tell us that the courtesan in question knows Petrarch and Boccaccio, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, presumably also by absorbing learning from those around her. In Doni's *I marmi*, Verdelot tells La Zinzera (a popular courtesan), “. . . you keep surprising me. You know so many verses, Petrarch, and *novelle*. You must have been under many *maestri*” (an obscene pun, no doubt, considering the bantering context in which Verdelot and La Zinzera are speaking), illustrating the same possibilities for education.<sup>21</sup>

Musical training was available to the courtesan in several forms. One can infer from the Venetian musician Parabosco's having trained one of his lovers, a courtesan named Maddalena,<sup>22</sup> that many possibilities for this kind of interaction existed.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Lynne Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 32.

<sup>21</sup> My translation. “. . . tu sei si capace per tutti i versi! tu sai di Petrarca, sai dir novelle; tu debbi essere stata sotto molti maestri . . .” Antonfrancesco Doni, *I marmi* (Bari: G. Laterza e Figli, 1928 ), 207.

<sup>22</sup> Two Maddalenas--Maddalena Muschiera and Madalena de Jacomo de Chimesini-- are listed in the famous *Catalogo* of 1565, a tourist's guide to prostitutes in Venice, giving names, addresses, and fees. Rita Casagrande de Villevieras, *Le cortigiane veneziane nel cinquecento* (Milan: Longanesi, 1968), Appendix.

<sup>23</sup> Giuseppe Bianchini, “Girolamo Parabosco: Scrittore e organista del secolo XVI,” *Miscellanea di Storia Veneta*, Ser. 2, vol. 6 (Venice: Società di Storia Veneta, 1899), 225.

Still another avenue for learning music was by means of the individual pieces that circulated in manuscript and were often enclosed in letters, thus enabling those in certain social *milieux* to learn new music and to teach themselves. As James Haar puts it:

. . . it is not difficult to imagine many amateurs such as those depicted in the "Dialogo" [of Antonfrancesco Doni] having a chest full of individual pieces, of widely differing character, written on scraps of paper.<sup>24</sup>

Printed music also appeared regularly, analogous to the circulation of *Opuscoli* containing "popularized versions of well-known poetry."<sup>25</sup>

The great interest in vernacular literature after 1525, along with the tremendous amount of reading material made available both by printing and by epistolary exchange, made it possible for gifted, motivated persons to develop language skills without the tutoring in classical languages required of the learned in the Quattrocento. There were also some parish schools for poorer children. Unfortunately these parish schools were for males, except for neighborhood schools that met only occasionally to teach moral

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<sup>24</sup> James Haar, "Notes on the 'Dialogo della musica' of Antonfrancesco Doni," *Music and Letters* 47 (1966): 210.

<sup>25</sup> James Haar, *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350-1600* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 179-80.

precepts and simple activities.<sup>26</sup> However,

. . . society still expected girls from upper-class and prominent commoner families to be able to read and write in the vernacular. Maternal tutoring helped fill the gap between expectation and resources.<sup>27</sup>

One such mother was Modesta da Pozzo, who taught her sons and daughter to read and write in Latin and to sing and play viola da gamba.<sup>28</sup> In addition, we should remember that Venice was a crowded city, alive with sounds and music, day and night, which could instruct anyone with ears to hear.

Courtesans were by no means the only women to achieve public reputation and publication, but they did represent a strange paradox in Renaissance life. The disreputable and "unchaste" were the only women able to move freely among men in the public realm, to express themselves publicly, and have sexual lives. Although they were proud of their status and the admiration they received, they were also eager to shed their dependence upon men and be acknowledged as artists. Perhaps they even wanted to be regarded

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<sup>26</sup> Paul Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 95.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

as equals. Their musical activities represent a step in the development of women as professional performers in this period, a development that would reach fruition with the great women singers of Ferrara in the 1580s.

The *cortegiana onesta* found a way to live independently and to begin to make her life in the image she wanted. Most came to the profession because of economic need and lacked access to the same education as men or upper-class women, the dowry to marry, or the fortune required to enter a convent. Rather they represent a class of women who, through a combination of intelligence, financial acumen, and literary and musical gifts, were able to advance to a position of prominence, and certainly to consort with powerful and educated men.

Of course, their situation had drawbacks. *Cortegiane* were still dependent on men for their livelihood. They had to fear reverses in their fortunes, reprisals for a man's sense of slight or any other anger. These reprisals could be extremely severe; witness the famous *trent'uno*, described with great relish by the talented misogynist Maffeo Venier. The *trent'uno* was nothing more than a brutal gang-rape, performed as revenge for what was considered a personal slight. It was also intended to embarrass the woman and discourage possible future clientele, out of fear of contracting

syphilis. In the case of Maffeo Venier's victim, La Zaffetta, her strength and wit enabled her to make a "comeback" and return to her profession with honor even after her rape.<sup>29</sup>

Many men distrusted the artistic gifts of courtesans and belittled them, publicly denouncing them and trying to destroy their credibility. This distrust was possibly fueled by the competition they represented in the world of public opinion. Pietro Aretino is the most famous of these detractors.<sup>30</sup> His dialogues instructing a young woman on becoming a successful prostitute (*Ragionamenti*) are filled with details of the deceits and pretenses of the profession, especially their pretense to learning and high artistic aims. In one such dialogue, Nanna, the accomplished prostitute, instructs her protégé on the importance of going to church, not out of devotion, but to advertise her wares.<sup>31</sup>

In another exchange, on the subject of song, a midwife advises:

. . . nevertheless, courtesies were courtesies, and songs were quite the fashion. And a woman who did not know a batch of the newest, most beautiful songs would have been ashamed, and

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<sup>29</sup> Pietro Aretino, *Opere di Pietro Aretino e di Antonfrancesco Doni* (Milan: Riccardo Ricciardi Editore, 1976), 535, n. 3.

<sup>30</sup> In a letter to La Zaffetta, Aretino expressed his admiration of her precisely because she had no artistic pretensions. *Letters*, tr. and ed. Thomas Chubb (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 120-22.

<sup>31</sup> Aretino, *Dialogues*, tr. and ed. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), 212.

whores as well as bawds enjoyed them.<sup>32</sup>

Nanna advises on music-making:

The humour of fiddling on the guitar took me, not for the sake of pleasure, but to appear to delight in the things of art. Of course the accomplishments which Whores acquire are fine snares for catching the dull; they cost people dearer than the fennel, olives and gellies that tavern men serve up. A Whore that goes as far as to sing canzones and read music at sight, away bare feet!<sup>33</sup>

Other authors have more to say on this subject. Thomas Coryat, the intrepid traveller in Italy, says:

. . . shee will very neare benumme and captivate thy senses and make reason vale bonnet to affection. . . . but beware of her craftiness and her Ruffiano who will cut your throat if you do not pay and see that you go to prison. . . .<sup>34</sup>

In her interesting work on courtesans in works of art, Lynn Lawner alludes to the “little volume of Petrarch . . . an indispensable accessory for both ladies and courtesans,”<sup>35</sup> while Grendler quotes

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 362.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 272.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's Crudities* (London: 1611; reprint, London: W. Cater, 1776), 226-28.

<sup>35</sup> Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*, 52.

from Niccolò Franco's *Pistole vulgare* concerning the deceitfulness of prostitutes as a symbol of contemporary life.

. . . prostitutes were honored because they were the teachers of the contemporary world. They used their blond hair and snow-white bosoms to overhear secrets and penetrate walls. Who did not imitate their crafts, deceits and strategems?<sup>36</sup>

It is perhaps enlightening that that great critic of deceit, Pietro Aretino, described himself and was described by his colleagues, Doni, Franco, and Lando, as a prostitute, for trying to maintain his small land-holdings by playing up to the French and Charles V in the midst of Italy's war-struck misery.<sup>37</sup> Like the courtier, both the writer without a patron (such as Aretino and Doni, who came to Venice to try their luck at "free-lancing") and the courtesan had to manufacture a *persona* and be constantly ingratiating, sometimes through deceit and manipulation.

Most courtesans were unmarried and provided companionship and romantic interest for men. They were also often gifted in arts and letters, and led quasi-independent

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<sup>36</sup> Paul Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World, 1530-1560: Anton Francesco Doni, Niccolò Franco and Ortensio Landi* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 92.

<sup>37</sup> Grendler, *Critics*, 71-72.

lives. Therefore it is possible that all women who satisfied those conditions might have been viewed as courtesans. From our vantage point the issue is a bit murky. Certainly a cash transaction was not always the criterion. Gifts of many kinds were "payment." A mistress, in some circles, would have the same ambiguous station that an "independent" courtesan might have. She would be accepted, but only at certain times and places, and she would not be "respectable." Since the window of respectability was so confining, its opposite was necessarily much more open. Our modern sense of the prostitute is perhaps a bit out of place here. Rita Casagrande alludes to a Venetian law of 1542 which

considered *meretrice* [as] those not having husbands and having *commercio et pratica* with one or more men. . . . Also considered *meretrice* were those having husbands and not living with them and having *commercio* with one or more men.<sup>38</sup>

This is certainly far from what we would consider a prostitute today. Ruggiero has made an extensive study of sexual mores in Renaissance Venice and highlights several significant issues. Financial exchange was not the focus of secular or church law

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<sup>38</sup> Casagrande de Villavieras, *Le cortigiane veneziane*, 87.

in judicial decisions. Any sexually immoral woman could be a whore. And it was not necessarily the judgment of a court, but reputation or "common Fame" that were criteria.

Beyond prostitution there was a more informal network of concubinage that was of questionable legality. But even at this level many of these relationships were probably regularized by some kind of financial commitment and by an ex post facto willingness to raise the illegitimate children . . . from such liaisons.<sup>39</sup>

There was no separate category for a single woman engaging in sex.

Another twist to the courtesan's life-style is revealed in the story, not so unusual, of the woman kept by several different men, who divided her time amongst them and was paid cooperatively for her services. Matteo Bandello alludes to the custom--in his *Novelle* (II, 31)--in which each of the several lovers has his day of the week with the lady. Of course this had many comic possibilities. There is a document that actually indicates such an arrangement among six gentlemen who undertook to support Tullia of Aragon and

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<sup>39</sup> Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*, 161.

divide her time.<sup>40</sup> What is of significance here is that many different and unorthodox situations for a woman were possible, and all might lead her to be named “courtesan.”

In his travel journal *Crudities*, Coryat tells us of a rather cynical economic reason for the toleration of prostitutes: they were a source of great tax revenue; but he was also impressed by an important social reason for the existence of courtesans:

But they . . . doe graunt large dispensation and indulgence to them, and that for these two causes. First . . . for they think that the chastity of their wives would be the sooner assaulted. . . . But I marveille . . . For the Gentlemen do even coope up their wives alwaies within the walls of their houses for feare of these inconveniences [cuckolding], as much as if there were no Cortezans at all in the City. . . . So that you shall very seldome see a Venetian Gentleman's wife but either at . . . a great marriage, or at the Christning of a Iew [*sic*] or late in the evening rowing in a Gondola.<sup>41</sup>

Ruggiero expresses this same idea somewhat differently:

In Venice the sexuality of marriage faced great obstacles. Especially at the upper social levels, males [through enforced, protracted adolescence] had established a sexual identity and habits well before marriage in the culture of illicit sexuality.

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<sup>40</sup> Salvatore Bongi, “Il velo giallo di Tullia d’Aragona,” *Rivista critica della letteratura italiana*, vol.3 (Florence: G. Camasacchi, 1886), 157-58.

<sup>41</sup> Coryat, *Crudities*, 265.

Young girls in their early teens when married to such men must have had trouble competing with those habits and that other culture of sexuality.<sup>42</sup>

The term "culture of sexuality" is particularly appropriate for this study, since we are dealing with a life-style and activities that go far beyond the simple act of sex. If we consider the loose definitions that abided, we should not be surprised that there is some disagreement as to whether some women were courtesans (this is an issue for some concerning Gaspara Stampa in particular). We can be sure that these women adopted a challenging and semi-independent approach to life, in which they attempted to transcend the conventional image of women. It is of less concern whether they can be called "courtesans." One of the great ambiguities of courtesans' lives was that they both subverted and stabilized society. They undermined the popular notion of womanhood as chaste and subservient, but they contributed to the stability of marriage by allowing an accepted outlet for men confined to marriages arranged for political or financial convenience. Perhaps they also gave wives cause to ponder their own situations. Whatever the impetus, individual courtesans made use of their "freedom" to try to establish themselves as independent artists to be

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<sup>42</sup> Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*, 163.

reckoned with. Their efforts can be seen as part of a continuum that leads eventually to the success of professional women actors and singers, able to support themselves on their artistry alone.

There is no doubt that music increased a courtesan's attractiveness and, in the competition for business, was considered a handy tool for a "working girl." However, another ambiguity of their lives is that some women in the profession actually achieved great skill in music. Nino Pirrotta tells us:

Such ladies [Venetian courtesans] were very frequent characters in the comedy and, at the time of Parabosco, almost its only feminine public; moreover, they were often talented both in playing and singing, and so found little trouble in passing sometimes from their own profession to that of actress.<sup>43</sup>

The art of music itself was ambiguous and viewed in contradictory manners by differing philosophical camps. On the one hand, music appeared capable of raising the spirits, bringing one closer to God, and was a seemly activity for women, a respectable pastime with which to while away the hours spent by themselves. On the other hand, it was seen as inherently vicious or lascivious, softening resolve and melting away manliness. It was also intimately connected with courtesans as one of their particular

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<sup>43</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy*, 347.

entertainments and was, therefore, dangerous.

Where do you think these songs, dances, jokes, parties, etc. come from but from the intent to seduce with angelic soprano voices, and attract with divine sounds of harpsichord and lute . . . to make prisoners serving an insidious love? . . .<sup>44</sup>

Garzoni also speaks of *i ruffiani*, this time giving us a marvelous compendium of popular musical pastimes:

With music [the pander] often delights young men's ears, softens their resolve with each lascivious temptation, ruins their manners and banishes character, inflames their soul with fires of love and carnal desire; while singing laments, songs of desperation, frottole, etc. and playing on the lute a lovely bergamasca, a courteous fiorentina, a decorous gagliard, a graceful moresca, and slowly drawing them into dancing, where touches are exchanged, kisses are offered, and secret words . . . [pass between the dancers].<sup>45</sup>

A courtesan might possess a beautiful voice or a mediocre

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<sup>44</sup> My translation. Tomaso Garzoni da Bagnacavallo, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Venice: Gio. Battista Somasco, 1589), 605.

<sup>45</sup> My translation. "Con la musica [il ruffiano] diletta sovente le orecchie delle giovani, mollifica l'animo d'ogni lascivia, ruina i costumi, disperde la onesta, infiamma l'alme di cocente amore, incende i spiriti di concupiscenza carnale; mentre si cantan lamenti, disperazioni, frottole, stanze e terzetti, canzoni, vilanelle, barzalette, e si tocca la cetra, a una bergamasca gentile, a una fiorentina garbata, a un gagliarda polita, a un moresca graziosa, e pian pian s'invita ai balli ed alle danze, dove i tatti vanno in volta, i baci si fanno avanti, le parole secrete . . ." Remo Giazotto, *Harmonici concenti in aere veneto* (Rome: De Santis, 1954), 18.

one. Her gifts could, perhaps, lie in her singing style, and as indicated by Pirrotta above, she could be a talented instrumentalist. Parabosco praised the courtesan Polissena Frigera for her angelic singing accompanied by the sweetest lute playing.<sup>46</sup> In her wonderful study of Venice and the madrigal, Martha Feldman describes the salon that gathered at the home of Domenico Venier:

[Venier] . . . had contacts with female singers who accompanied themselves on the lute. His poems included an encomium to one Franceschina Bellamano who played and sang.<sup>47</sup>

Pietro Aretino was also captivated by Franceschina's gifts:

The things which Franceschina sang yesterday to the tune of her lute, penetrated my heart with so sweet a sort of musical persuasion that I must needs come to the point of amorous conjunction.<sup>48</sup>

The lute became iconographically associated with the purveyor of sex. Georgina Masson tells us that the great Roman courtesan Imperia (1481-1512) had a table in the center of her boudoir on

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<sup>46</sup> Donna G. Cardamone, *The "Canzona villanesca alla napolitana" and Related Forms, 1537-1570* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), 168.

<sup>47</sup> Martha Feldman, "Venice and the Madrigal in the Mid-Sixteenth Century," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania (1987), 483.

<sup>48</sup> Aretino, *Letters*, ed. and tr. Thomas Chubb (New York: Penguin, 1976), 294.

which there was always a lute or viola da braccio and music.<sup>49</sup>

Similarly, Cathy Santore convincingly demonstrates the lute's use as an icon for sensuality.<sup>50</sup> Alessandro Arrighi wrote of Tullia of Aragon:

O s'udissi talor quando accompagna  
 La voce al suon de la soave cetra,  
 O quando assisa tra Ninfe e Pastori  
 Move tra lor la lingua a dolci note,  
 S'udissi, dico, come in nuovi accenti,  
 E come in soavissimi sospiri  
 L'aria intorno addolcisca . . . <sup>51</sup>

Accompanying oneself on the lute was a skill practiced by many for presentation of poetry. The poet would improvise music according to sets of musical formulae for different poetic forms. Veronica Franco, Tullia, and Gaspara Stampa were all adept at this skill. But we also have evidence that courtesans could read music notation and performed from it. (See below, pp. 30, 31, and 34.)

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<sup>49</sup> Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*, 39.

<sup>50</sup> Cathy Santore, "La Bella, The Painted Venetian Beauty in Renaissance Art and Society", Ph.D. dissertation, New York University (1990), 195-96.

<sup>51</sup> O if you heard her when accompanying her voice with the sweet sound of the lute, or when seated among nymphs and shepherds her tongue sends out sweet notes, if you heard, I say, how in new accents, and in the softest sighs, the very air about you sweetens . . . (my translation). Guido Biagi, "Un'etera romana: Tullia d'Aragona," *La Nuova Antologia*, 3rd series, vol.4 (Florence: R. Paggi, 1886), 672.

It seems fairly certain that courtesans in general were expected to sing, play the lute, improvise, and read music if they were to be successful and avoid the situation of common prostitutes. It also seems certain that the repertory they performed was as varied as were the poetic essays of the intelligentsia: this repertory included works of high seriousness as well as popular works; new works that were read and performed at salons, and that exhibited the latest in new ideas of composition; improvisations on traditional airs presenting new poetry; and works in the lighter vein of popular Neapolitan and Venetian songs, simple *balli*, *mascherate*, *canzone villanesche*, and *villotte*.<sup>52</sup>

### Venice

After the sack of Rome in 1527, the center of activity of courtesans in the "Golden Age" moved from Rome to Venice. Though courtesans often travelled frequently, finding it necessary to change residence for various reasons (bad press for some offense, or the need to find new patrons when they had lost their charm in one place), Venice remained, until the end of the sixteenth century, the most lucrative venue and the center for prostitution, for the elegant

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<sup>52</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Culture*, 351.

courtesan, as well as the lowly streetwalker.<sup>53</sup> Venice was a fantastic, exciting, expensive, cosmopolitan city, much as New York is today. And like New York today, it had the reputation of wickedness and sin (one out of ten women was a prostitute, according to Marin Sanudo). It was a hotbed of cultural life, a center of publishing, and an oasis of freedom for those escaping tyrannical courts.

The city was ruled not by a noble family or prince who inherited power, but by several different councils. The head of government was an elected Doge, who, with the council members, was required to be a "citizen" of Venice (a requirement satisfied by the exclusive few who were both born in Venice and possessed great wealth). Issues were decided by vote in the various councils. The councils also functioned as tribunals for trying judicial cases, thereby avoiding the arbitrariness of decisions by a single powerful prince that prevailed in other Italian city-states. Venice was also a commercial center in which people from East and West met and through which they passed. In this rather rich mix of culture, commerce, sub-culture, and vice, there are indications of severely repressed family and sexual life. Coryat alludes to this in a passage

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<sup>53</sup> Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*, *passim*.

quoted earlier as a rationale for support of courtesans. Ruggiero gives many instances of the limitation of women's sexual life compared to that of men (see pp. 20-21 above).

Many writers and travellers make reference to the somber dress of Venetians in general, as well as to the accompanying ascetic and highly moral stance of the city. Yet it was home for those committed to its freedom, and a mecca for those wishing a taste of it. And into it came, and profited, women who supported themselves by sexual favors.

Women who form the subject of our study advanced to the top echelons of courtesantry through wit, skill in entrepreneurship, friends in high places, and various intellectual skills that, in addition to good looks, made them attractive to the wealthy and noble patrons they sought. The art of language, and especially poetry and letter-writing, could spread the name of an attractive courtesan abroad, and what better place than Venice--with its cosmopolitan population, its rich commerce with the world, its greater freedom and, of course, its attraction for the greatest writers as the center of publishing and printing--for the courtesan to contact and develop relationships with prominent *letterati*? Veronica Franco was fortunate enough to be born in Venice, and both Tullia and Gaspara gravitated to that great city because of the opportunities it offered.

## II

Tullia d'Aragona, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco:  
Biographical Sketches

*If my destiny had allowed it, I would have spent all of my time agreeably in the circles of talented persons. . . . Surely you know that among all of those who try to win my affections the dearest ones to me are those who practice arts and letters. . . .*

Veronica Franco, letter to Tintoretto<sup>1</sup>

The three women who are the subject of this dissertation have been written about extensively. Here I will merely provide short biographical sketches in order to set the stage for our view of their music-making. Tullia d'Aragona was the oldest of the three women, born *circa* 1508 in Rome to a courtesan, Giulia Campana, possibly of her mother's liaison with Cardinal Luigi d'Aragona. If she was the daughter of the Cardinal, she would have had access to excellent education through his influence. But, like many courtesans, she may have relied only on her mother for her early education. (In any case, Tullia did eventually make much of her possible connection with Luigi d'Aragona, and tried, as did many courtesans, to insist on her right to a noble coat-of-arms). As a young woman, Tullia moved with her mother to Siena, but soon

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<sup>1</sup> Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*, 57.

returned to Rome, which offered more in the way of lucrative opportunities. Since Giulia was aging by then, Tullia undoubtedly began to sell herself under her mother's tutelage, thus following a long tradition in which the daughters of courtesans became prostitutes with their mothers as panderers. (Several mother-daughter pairs appear in the 1565 list of Venetian prostitutes offered for tourists.)<sup>2</sup> Tullia undoubtedly learned much from her mother, but since Giulia is never credited with being either a writer or musician, we must assume that it was elsewhere that Tullia learned whatever literary and musical skills she possessed beyond the ordinary. Possibly Cardinal d'Aragona arranged some education for her, though there is no evidence of this. On the other hand, she might have accompanied her mother to various public social occasions, where she would have heard music and perhaps even have been able to pick up, in the act of socializing, the qualities alluded to by Zoppino (see p.10). We know that she was musically skilled, able to read music, and to sing and play well. A letter to Isabella Gonzaga at Mantua, written by Battista Stambellino in 1537, describes Tullia as delightful and intelligent: "She can sing at sight any motet or song. In conversation she has a voice of unique charm.

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<sup>2</sup> Casagrande de Villavieras, *Le cortigiane veneziane*, 158.

... Her house is always full of virtuosi. ... ”<sup>3</sup>

And from the description of Tullia's possessions at her death in 1556, we learn that she left a box containing thirty-five Latin and Italian books and twelve well-worn books of music, thus confirming her ability to read music. She also possessed a broken lute and a harpsichord.<sup>4</sup>

Tullia travelled widely in Italy. After her return from her early stay in Siena, she became, in the early 1530s, one of the most respected courtesans in Rome. Forced to flee because of a scandal, she spent the years 1534-1537 at Venice and Ferrara, where she was extremely successful. Back in Siena in 1543, she married Silvestro Guicciardini, with whom she had a child, and who soon after faded from her life. In 1547 she was in Florence because of trouble with the authorities that will be explained later. She was forced by her loss of face in this incident to return to Rome, leaving the “academy” that she had so successfully developed in Florence, and apparently travelled between Rome and Venice until her death in 1556. Her position at her death was rather less than she had enjoyed earlier in her life--financially she was considerably poorer,

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>4</sup> Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*, 130.

and her interested patrons were no longer in evidence.<sup>5</sup>

During her first trip to Venice Tullia became the friend and protégé of Sperone Speroni, whose mentoring and patronage was no doubt of great importance both for her education and for her later success. (She had already earned the hostility of Pietro Aretino, who mentioned her in his *Ragionamenti*. Although she was not actually named, all who read Nanna's description would have thought of Tullia: [Venetians like] "a bottom, breasts and a body that are firm and soft, from fifteen to sixteen years old, or at least not over twenty [Tullia was then at least twenty-five], and not affected Petrarchan rubbish.")<sup>6</sup> As one of the interlocutors in Speroni's *Dialogo dell'amore* (1542), she shared a platform with such noted figures as Bernardo Tasso, Niccolò Grazia, and Francesco Maria Molza.<sup>7</sup> Although he was later forced to censor this work and to write his *Orazione contre le cortegiane* (1575) as a bitter diatribe against courtesans, Speroni's early support was extremely important for Tullia, and it was through him that she developed long-term relationships with the writers Bernardo Tasso and Girolamo Muzio, which no doubt contributed to her social standing.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 128-29.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*, 99.

<sup>7</sup> Bongi, "Il velo giallo," 163.

Bernardo Tasso, the father of Torquato, was a well-known and influential poet, whose great work, *Amadigi*, is referred to later in this paper. Muzio, also a renowned poet, was a political figure of note as well, performing many diplomatic duties.

In 1547, Tullia's writing became an issue in her battle with Florentine authorities over sumptuary laws. She was accused of wearing overly elegant clothing (for a prostitute) and not wearing the required yellow veil, charges that subjected her to imprisonment at the very least. She appealed to Cosimo de' Medici's wife, Eleanora di Toledo, through whose intercession she was pardoned for "the reason that she was a poet" and therefore not to be punished as a prostitute. In gratitude she dedicated her next book of poems to Eleanora. Tullia's lifelong attempt to establish herself as an artist, to rise above being merely a prostitute, is revealed in this incident; so also is her resourcefulness when confronted with the courtesan's typically ambiguous position.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, although she was pardoned for this infraction, her reputation never fully recovered from the insulting nature of the charge.

An important work of Tullia's, her *Dialogue on the Infinity*

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<sup>8</sup> Julia Lombardo (d.1542), another famous and seemingly valued courtesan, was also able to call on public figures for aid. She appealed for justice to the *Consiglio dei Dieci* of Venice after she was attacked, and the council offered a reward for anyone who could identify her attackers. She was described as a "*somtuosa meretrize*," referring to her wealth and artistic accomplishments, and separating her from the common prostitute for whom they undoubtedly would not have provided the same support. Cathy Santore, "Julia Lombardo, 'Somtuosa Meretrize'," *Renaissance Quarterly* 41 (1988): 44-46.

*of Love*, edited by Muzio in 1547, was an interesting departure from customary cultural ideas. In it she proclaimed the concept of *amore onesto*, thereby legitimizing the courtesan's emotional, romantic attachments--still another of her efforts to be regarded seriously, on an equal footing with her male patrons.<sup>9</sup>

Gaspara Stampa was born to a middle-class family in 1525. Her father, Bartolomeo, educated all his children--two daughters and one son. After her father died, she moved with her family from their home in Padua to Venice, where, despite her father's death, she continued her education, studying poetry, mythology, Roman history, and art and music, an unusual curriculum for a woman. Bassanese suggests that she was trained by her parents with the hope of being a profitable "virtuosa."<sup>10</sup> Both Gaspara and her sister Cassandra studied lute and voice with Perissone Cambio.<sup>11</sup> Gaspara no doubt benefited from her brother, Baldassare, who provided her entrance to the right social circles. Since he was a poet, the circles he

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<sup>9</sup> Rinaldina Russell, ed., *Italian Women Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Resource* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994), 26-27.

<sup>10</sup> Fiora A. Bassanese, *Gaspara Stampa* (Boston: Twayne, 1982), 3-4.

<sup>11</sup> Laura Anna Stortoni and Mary Prentice Lillie, *Gaspara Stampa, Selected Poems* (New York: Italica Press, 1994), xi. Giazotto, in his *Harmonici concerti* (pp. 27-29), stated that her musical tutor was Tuttovale Menon.

frequented would have stimulated her and answered her needs. She continued to take part in these intellectual circles even after his early death in 1544.<sup>12</sup>

Gaspara was apparently at the height of her musical career when, in 1548, she met Collalto Collaltino at Domenico Venier's salon and began a long liaison with him. This liaison was to transform her from *cantatrice* to *poeta*. Her greatest works are chronicles of and meditations on her relationship with him.<sup>13</sup>

One of the many interesting aspects of Gaspara's life is her admiration of, and connection to, the nun Suor Angelica Paola de' Negri, to whom she was related. Suor Angelica apparently feared for Gaspara's virtue in the lively social milieu of the Stampa household. A letter to Gaspara warns her of the dangers of her mother's home, which had become a center for artists.<sup>14</sup> Gaspara revered her relative, as is apparent in the *terze rime* (see below, 68) she wrote in praise of her. Gaspara died in 1554, at the age of twenty-nine.

Veronica Franco was born in Venice in 1546. Though she was

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<sup>12</sup> Casagrande de Villavieras, *Le cortigiane veneziane*, 202.

<sup>13</sup> Collaltino was also a friend of Aretino, Muzio [one of Tullia's lovers], and Lodovico Domenichi [possibly another of Tullia's lovers], *letterati* who appear in all the intellectual circles of Venice. Stortoni and Lillie, *Gaspara Stampa, Selected Poems*, xiii-xiv.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, xi-xii.

the daughter of “citizens,” her financial circumstances did not afford her the opportunity for education; as she tells us in wills dating from 1564 and 1570, she lacked one of the few resources women had for their education: the support of her father.<sup>15</sup> Veronica's mother was also named in the Venetian list of prostitutes, and the family probably depended on both of the women's earnings. Perhaps Veronica benefited indirectly from the education of her three brothers. She seems to have gained what education she had mainly through her associations with the *ridotti* in Venice, especially the salon at the home of Domenico Venier, who became her mentor and friend. And through her associations with other powerful Venetians she was able also to present herself as an elegant and beautiful courtesan.

Veronica began her rise to fame as a courtesan in 1562 at the age of sixteen. In 1574 Veronica's career received a boost by the state visit of Henri III of France, who came to Venice amid incredible splendor and rich entertainments. Apparently he sought out the famous Veronica as an antidote to the public entertainments. Veronica returned the compliment by writing a sonnet for him and presenting it to him together with her portrait. The gifts are significant of the stance that she wished to establish: equal status,

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<sup>15</sup> Margaret Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 83.

significant of the stance that she wished to establish: equal status, not that of a paid servant.

Veronica maintained her friendship with Domenico Venier until his death in 1582, and it was at his salon that she played and sang. She managed, because of her ability, to keep herself in the "*teatro della pubblica concorrenza*" through Venier and the many great writers, artists, and musicians who frequented his salon.<sup>16</sup>

Yet by 1582 Veronica's life-style had seen better days. Although her two wills, mentioned earlier, reveal a great deal of wealth and a large, luxurious household, including her own children and an extended family, the plague of 1575-1577 (when she was "in exile" from Venice) and the theft from her home of part of her dowry (silver and precious jewels given her by her mother for her marriage to Paolo Panizza, and a point of contention between her and her husband) caused her to lose a good portion of her property. By then she had also become the guardian of and means of support for her brother's children, which further impoverished her. Finally, in 1580 she was brought before the Inquisition for practicing witchcraft, though she successfully defended herself and brought about the suspension of the trial.<sup>17</sup> Veronica died in 1591, never

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<sup>16</sup> Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan*, 87.

<sup>17</sup> Russell, *Italian Women Writers*, 138.

having recovered from her losses. Such was the bitter insecurity from which even the most eminent of the *cortegiane oneste* suffered.

### III

## Venues

The intimate settings in which courtesans performed music included not only their own salons and entertainments, but those of others as well. The same *accademie* that played such an important part in the wide spectrum of music-making in Venice were also of central importance for the women we are studying. Thus, music at these gatherings can tell us a great deal about the role of women musicians at this time. And to the extent that we can identify that music, the talents and styles of performance of Veronica Franco, Gaspara Stampa, and Tullia d'Aragona will be revealed.

*Accademie* were organizations formed for discussion, education, and entertainment. As Feldman has suggested, it was the absence of "the centralized umbrella organization of a court that made Venetians draw together in these interest-groups in a more or less structured framework."<sup>1</sup> These groups were sometimes loosely, sometimes strictly organized. Some had grand and formal goals, others less lofty ones. Characteristically, the members of these groups often overlapped. Antonfrancesco Doni was a leader in the *Ortolani*, an academy organized in Piacenza, where he lived before

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<sup>1</sup> Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 429.

coming to Venice. In Venice he began to frequent the home of Domenico Venier but, according to Pirrotta, may also have heard music at a specifically musical academy sponsored by the merchant/actor/dramatist Antonio Molino and Fra Giovanni Armonico.<sup>2</sup> Pietro Aretino, too, was a visitor to Ca' Venier, where every excellent performer and writer or composer came, if mainly for literary pastime, according to Pierantonio Serassi, the editor of the only edition of Venier's poetry.<sup>3</sup> Yet music was not neglected, and

to these pastimes they added quite often academies of singing and playing; no musician or singer of account turned up in Venice whom Venier did not want to hear more than once. And if it happened that they were really excellent, not only did he reward them according to their merit, but he celebrated them with his lovely verses, wanting the poets of his noble company to do the same. <sup>4</sup>

Pietro Aretino himself had a coterie of young men and women who lived under his roof and called themselves "Aretine." Their salon was perhaps of not such a high order as that of the academies,

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<sup>2</sup> Nino Pirrotta, *Music and Theatre from Poliziano to Monteverdi* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982), 102.

<sup>3</sup> *Rime di Domenico Veniero senatore viniziano raccolte ora per la prima volta ed illustrate* (Bergamo, 1751).

<sup>4</sup> Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 477.

but other writers and the great painter Titian were frequent guests, along with favored courtesans for entertainment.

In the Casa Aretino there was a harem of Venetian beauties ranging from lady poets to "servant girls of 24 carats" who were so closely associated with him in reality and in the popular mind that they were known as Aretines.<sup>5</sup>

At Venier's, Perissone Cambio, Irene da Spilimbergo, and Franceschina Bellamano (a courtesan/musician much admired by Aretino) often performed music under the direction of Girolamo Parabosco.<sup>6</sup> Organist, composer, and dramatist, Parabosco seems to have been the liaison among many different artists in these circles.<sup>7</sup> According to Feldman:

The ties of some musicians to the academy—principally Girolamo Parabosco, but also, Perissone Cambio, Gasparo Fiorino, Franceschina Bellamano, and the poet-singer Gaspara Stampa—can be firmly documented, while others are less certain.<sup>8</sup>

All three of the courtesans discussed here passed through Venier's social gatherings and, as mentioned above, Veronica Franco

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<sup>5</sup> Aretino, *Letters*, 55.

<sup>6</sup> Carol MacClintock, "A Court Musician's Songbook: Modena MSC 311," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 9 (1956): 181.

<sup>7</sup> Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 476.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 432.

considered herself his protégé. From their love of discourse and witty conversation we can easily imagine the kinds of exchanges that took place among the artists and *letterati* at the Venier residence. Poets and writers of all kinds, as well as musicians and performers, were eager to hear and demonstrate the latest theories and compositions. The different aspects of love or the good lover might be discussed; the compositions of the great Willaert might be performed and analyzed; a new poem performed musically by a singer playing the lute, or a popular song that everyone in the street was singing, might catch the group's fancy. In all, a rich interchange of ideas among artists and thinkers was expected, along with the entertainment of having at least one of the fair sex present. If she could take part in the aesthetic activities, so much the better. Willaert may not himself have been present, but certainly his music was. His students Parabosco, Donato, and Perissone certainly attended. Parabosco, musician, literary figure, and man-about-town, was a friend of Andrea Calmo, who possibly attended as well. The poets Girolamo Muzio, Benedetto Varchi, Bernardo Tasso, and Sperone Speroni, among others, would very likely have at least passed through at one time or another. Domenico Venier was a friend of Cardinal Bembo as well. And even if the cardinal himself did not take part in the salons, his ideas, through Venier, would have

been an important part of the discussion. Apparently the printer Antonio Gardano, on the lookout for sources for his publications, also frequented this scene and made the acquaintance of these composers.<sup>9</sup>

Another extremely important *accademia* was that led by Neri Capponi. His was a circle initiated by Florentines, many of whom sought refuge in Venice after the fall of the Florentine republic and the return of the Medici. Capponi's was the circle in which Willaert and his lover and colleague, Polissena Pecorina, performed so brilliantly.<sup>10</sup> Doni, again, gives us a brief view of the brilliance of these gatherings in a letter describing the splendid singing he heard in Venice. Writing to Ottavio Landi, he claims that after hearing the musical wonders of Venice he has kicked aside all the instruments he played and decided to "sew up my mouth, and candy my ears."<sup>11</sup> In another letter of April 1544, Doni writes to Annibale Marchese

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<sup>9</sup> Mary S. Lewis, *Antonio Gardano, Venetian Music Printer, 1538-1569* (New York: Garland Publications, 1988), 212.

<sup>10</sup> Armen Carapetyan deduced from various bits and pieces that Willaert and Polissena Pecorina had a long-standing relationship: for instance, there is a portion of a capitolo by Girolamo Fenaruolo that states: "You have gout and prostate trouble/ And so many encumbrances that you didn't have/ In the good time of Pecorina"; in another instance Willaert is chided that his bed must be cold when he travels far from Pecorina. Carapetyan, "The Musica Nova of Adriano Willaert: With a Special Reference to the Humanistic Society of 16th-Century Venice." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1945.

<sup>11</sup> Haar, "Notes on the 'Dialogo della musica' of Antonfrancesco Doni," *Music and Letters* 47 (1966): 201.

Malvicino:

There is a gentlewoman, Polissena Pecorina (consort of a citizen from my native land), so wonderful and refined that I cannot find praise high enough to commend her. I have heard one evening a concert of *violini* and voices in which she played and sang together with other excellent souls; the perfect *maestro* of that music was Adrian Willaert whose diligent inventions, no longer used by musicians, are so unified, so sweet, so appropriate, so marvelously adapted to the words that I confess never to having known in all my days what true harmony was until that evening. The enthusiast of this music and lover of such divine composition is a gentleman, an excellent spirit, also Florentine, called messer Neri Capponi. . . . This messer Neri spends hundreds of ducats annually on such enterprises, and he keeps them to himself; not even if it were his own father would he let go one song.<sup>12</sup>

The *Accademia Veneziana* (or *Accademia della Fama*), founded by Federigo Badoer, concerned itself mainly with serious philological study and discussion; it was an extravagant organization and failed after less than four years.<sup>13</sup> Presumably Badoer, a friend of Venier, and other members of his group were absorbed into the activities of Venier's circle, which was undoubtedly of great influence on Venetian intellectual and artistic life for many years.

By 1542 Venier's reputation as a poet had become public.

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<sup>12</sup> Quoted and translated in Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 168.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 451-52.

Certainly his circle of intellectuals was coalescing by 1544. The debilitating and painful disease of gout caused Venier to give up his public position as a Venetian senator in 1546. The resultant restriction of his activity to his home brought about the intensification of his salon's activities, confirming its centrality in Venetian culture.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to this and other rather famous and influential gatherings of artists in Venice, courtesans themselves each had their own gatherings and social circles. It was important to a courtesan's standing to have a luxurious establishment and to offer high-quality entertainment and refreshment--emulating the offerings of the noble or upper classes. Coryat writes:

For when you come into one of their [courtesan's] Palaces . . . you seeme to enter into the Paradise of Venus. . . . Besides you may see the picture of the noble Cortezan most exquisitely drawn.<sup>15</sup>

There are some specific sources to which we can turn for descriptions of activities in the *accademie*. Antonfrancesco Doni's *Dialogo della musica*, with its interjections of poetry and music, gives us, according to James Haar, a possible picture of a typical

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 442-44.

<sup>15</sup> Coryat, *Crudities*, 265.

informal gathering of intellectuals.<sup>16</sup> Doni describes the entertainments they enjoy "con musiche, donne et altri piacere." They sometimes meet in the home of Marco Pasqualigo and sometimes go "al Lito a pescare," to Giudeca, to San Giorgio "in un bel claustro," and to Santo Spirito. Present in the *prima parte* of Doni's gathering are: Michele, Oste, Bargo, and Grullone. They tire of dancing new dances which require them to "jump here and there" and "turn and twist their legs," so they decide to rest and sing instead. In the *seconda parte* there are eight interlocutors, who now include a woman--Selvaggia (Doni's mistress, Isabetta Guasca), Parabosco, Perissone, Bargo, Domenichi, Michele, Landi, and Claudio Veggio. Whereas in the first part they sing pieces for four men's voices, in the second, Selvaggia also sings in pieces of up to eight parts. The discussions range over a wide field: poetry, composing, the skills of different musicians, the amazing and irritating (to Claudio Veggio) virtuosity of Parabosco, and astrology; many discussions of women and love take place and include compilations of long lists of both virtuous and beautiful women, classical and biblical heroines. The position of Selvaggia in this circle of friends is interesting. She is treated graciously and is generally impatient with the talk and wants music. She usually diplomatically cuts off

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<sup>16</sup> Haar, "Notes on the 'Dialogo della musica'," 209.

argument or too much talking with a request for singing or someone else's opinion. She is often the initiator of their activity, and the others defer to her opinions:

**Selvaggia:** Vedete questo mottetto si bello di Cipriano, or cantiamolo, e poi ragionerete.<sup>17</sup>

(Look at this beautiful motet of Cipriano; now let's sing it. Afterward you can discuss it.)

**S:** Tornate alle donne d'i Poeti.<sup>18</sup>

(Now talk about poets' sweethearts.)

**S:** Bargo, che dite d'una bella donna? O come ne favellerete? Incominciate.<sup>19</sup>

(Bargo, what do you have to say about a beautiful woman? How would you say it? Begin!)

Obviously, she is not a necessity or constant in these gatherings since she is not present in the *prima parte*, but we can observe that she is respected and holds her own among the men when she is there.

Doni is also the source of another short description of a courtesan's relationship to music. In his novello *I marmi*, he recounts a scene between the composer Verdelot and a

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<sup>17</sup> Antonfrancesco Doni, *Dialogo della musica*, ed. G. F. Malipiero (Venice: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 1965), 244.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 211.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

courtesan/singer, *La Zinzera*, in which they talk about a very popular song beginning with the words “Reti, pesci. . .” and with lewd double meanings, which she sang at the Rucellai Gardens in Florence (where she sang regularly), and of which Verdelot claims authorship.<sup>20</sup>

Other occasions at which women (including courtesans) would perform music also existed, as did male-female working partnerships in artistic efforts. I would like to mention two of these unusual partnerships, since they indicate another possibility in the continuum of women’s participation in the arts at this time. One such relationship is that between Machiavelli and his lover, La Barbera (*Barbera Salutati*). Apparently an experienced singer and courtesan, she seems to have collaborated with him in preparing at least some of his plays, including the performance of music for their accompanying *intermezzi*. Verdelot wrote the music for at least four *canzone* in Machiavelli’s plays, with those for *La Clizia* undoubtedly written specifically for her.<sup>21</sup> The performance of this play was unusual in that the *intermezzi* were musically unified and performed throughout by the same musicians. Also new was the ensemble, a group of four singers rather than a solo singer with lyra,

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<sup>20</sup> Doni, *Dialogo della musica*, 203.

<sup>21</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Theatre*, 102.

as had been conventional.<sup>22</sup> This ensemble was likely under the direction of La Barbera. The four parts for these works are distributed among soprano and three male voices.<sup>23</sup> All of this suggests that La Barbera was at least somehow involved in the working-out of the musical/dramatic ideas.

La Barbera often accompanied Machiavelli when he visited the gardens of Il Fornaccio (Jacopo di Filippo Falconetti) outside Florence. Her singing ability and relationship with Machiavelli suggest that she performed the canzone in *La Clizia*.<sup>24</sup>

A letter of Machiavelli indicates something of the working relationship between himself and La Barbera, and also gives us an idea of her ensemble.

. . . Lodovico Alamanni and myself recently had dinner one night with Barbera and spoke of the comedy, so that she happened to suggest coming herself with *her singers* to be the chorus between the acts; and I undertook to write the canzonette, *suiting them to the acts* [italics mine].<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 124-25.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 134-35.

<sup>24</sup> Colin Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets*, I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 95.

<sup>25</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Theatre*, 139.

Thus she was in charge of, and negotiated for, the group of singers, and the "chorus between the acts" was planned to be appropriate to the play. La Barbera, a courtesan, had the connections and prestige to direct the music for Machiavelli's play.

Verdelot's *Amor, io sento l'alma* (see appendix) is addressed to La Barbera<sup>26</sup> and indicates some of the range and style characteristics typical of these singers. The range of the top line, presumably that sung by La Barbera, has a compass of an octave and a fourth, a rather easy and moderate range, and the tessitura lingers in the lower-middle range of a soprano. The total compass of all the parts is two octaves and a fourth, keeping it within the range thought appropriate at the time.<sup>27</sup>

The other partnership to which I wish to call attention, once more, is the apparent working/love relationship between the renowned singer Polissena Pecorina and Willaert. She seems to have been the principal singer of his works, and performed them often at the home of Neri Capponi. Willaert attempted to provide for

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<sup>26</sup> Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals*, 54.

<sup>27</sup> One finds this limitation of range in most madrigals of the early and middle sixteenth century, whereas later on one finds gradually widening, dramatic extensions of range. In a letter from Giovanni Del Lago to Fra Seraphin of August 26, 1541, Del Lago remarks on this point specifically, saying that the soprano should not sing higher than sixteen notes above the lowest of the tenor, because if it did exceed this, it would be "awkward" for the singer. See Bonnie J. Blackburn, Edward Lowinsky, and Clement A. Miller, eds., *Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 888.

her financially by giving her his *Musica nova* and the exclusive rights to it. He thus was apparently providing for her future, for she was able to come to an agreement with Alfonso d'Este for her heirs to receive a regular income in return for the music. Alfonso, though an admirer of Willaert's music, undoubtedly agreed to this arrangement as an act of friendship to Willaert and Pecorina, since the size and duration of the payments represented an unusual and enormous gift.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Anthony Newcomb, "Editions of Willaert's *Musica Nova*: New Evidence, New Speculations," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 26 (1973): 132-34.

## IV

## Music for an Evening Entertainment

In sixteenth-century Venice, as in New York today, a diverse population possessing richly diverse musics, collided and interacted with each other. Street music of various kinds and in various dialects abounded and was often incorporated into "art" music. The madrigal in its beginning and developing styles was popular in both public and private gatherings. Masses and motets were performed in churches, but motets and other secular works were also included in private festivities. Although *frottole* were no longer being composed, they were still being performed. Musicians not only could read music from notation, but they also still practiced the art of improvisation. As the century progressed, even highly educated nobles became less disdainful of the skill of the professional *improvvisatori*, and began to emulate them. These stylistic fashions, along with Doni's and others' references to high and low style, must lead us to believe that the entertainment in the circles of well-placed courtesans included, at one time or another, the entire panoply of secular styles--high and low, foreign, Venetian, and international.

Extremely important for understanding the spirit of the *ridotti*

(regular gatherings of intellectuals, performers, and wealthy patrons) is their rather free-wheeling form, combining the love of learning and intellectual exercise with entertainment. In *A Feast of Words*, Michel Jeanneret draws attention to the connection between food and conversation, and in so doing gives us a sense of the tone of many of these informal gatherings.

Whatever the variations, one custom remained which affected the status of literature [since antiquity]: the reception of books and ingestion of food were often linked. . . . The scenario of sharing good food and good stories [and we might add, good music] allows various sixteenth-century authors to enliven their material and to organize it without subordinating it to a rigid structure or to a single tone.<sup>1</sup>

. . . The most significant form in this respect is the dialogue--a widespread genre in Renaissance Europe, which is polymorphous and used to many different ends, but which expresses the conceptual and experiential structure of a period of non-uniform impulses.<sup>2</sup>

This “experiential structure” is seen in the works of many of the writers of the Venetian circles, including Doni, Parabosco, Bandello, and Andrea Calmo, and seems a very apt description of the meetings of the informal *ridotti* and *accademie* that we are considering--meetings which would seem to have been gatherings for serious and

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Jeanneret, *A Feast of Words* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 113-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 174. We have already mentioned Aretino's dialogues. Tullia also wrote dialogues, and many of Veronica Franco's and Gaspara Stampa's works are in dialogue form.

mock-serious discussions of literature, philosophy, love, and music, along with entertainments of music and beautiful women. We have seen how Sperone Speroni's *Dialoghi* of 1542 indicated that a woman--Tullia of Aragon--was taken seriously as an interlocutor, and how Doni's *Dialogo* integrated Selvaggia's participation in music-making and dialogue; but it would be helpful to know how seriously their art was taken, what skill they actually had, and how one could reproduce in modern practice what was performed.

As James Haar has pointed out, Doni's group sang not only madrigals from part-books but also solo songs.<sup>3</sup>

Landi: Datemi orecchia e porgetemi la viuola.

(Give me your ears and bring me the viuola).

[He proceeds then to recite a poem to the accompaniment of the *viuola*--a lyra, or perhaps a generic bowed string instrument.]<sup>4</sup>

The works they sang were by some of the most prominent composers of the day--Willaert, Verdelot, Rore, Berchem, Arcadelt, Parabosco, Perissone, Claudio Veggio, Jaches Buus, and Vincenzo Ruffo, among others. Doni's is perhaps an idealized presentation, but nevertheless an enlightening compilation of what a group of musicians and *letterati*, including a not completely respectable

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<sup>3</sup>James Haar, *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350-1600* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 89.

<sup>4</sup>Doni, *Dialogo*, 209.

woman, did for entertainment in a cultivated circle.

But courtesans lived in the center of a world of contradictions: the ideal of chastity existed alongside that of the much sought-after and beautiful courtesan; sexuality inspired both repression and indulgence, elegant love lyrics and bawdy, vulgar songs; writers composed in both high and low styles, works that partook of lofty ideals and earthy, popular works in the vernacular dialects.

Domenico Venier's salon is characterized thus by Martha Feldman:

. . .the disparity between his [Venier's] Tuscan and Venetian lyrics corresponded verbally to the stylistic bifurcation of secular music into the sober polyphonic madrigal on the one hand, and the light--often obscene--*canzone villanesca alla napolitana* on the other.<sup>5</sup>

We can assume that both these styles of secular music were enjoyed at Venier's salon.<sup>6</sup>

Adriano Willaert, regarded as the greatest composer in Italy and the model for all other composers, would not have been neglected by the serious devotees at Venier's, even though evidence that he himself actually appeared there does not exist. Parabosco,

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<sup>5</sup> Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 472.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Hope, in his work on the great painter Titian, finds the erotic nature of 16th-century painting to be influenced by the "volgarizzamenti" of such writers as Ludovico Dolce and Francesco Sansovino. *Titian* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), introduction. Thus, the visual arts also seemed to reflect the same spirit as evidenced in Venier's earthy and sometimes obscene writings in Venetian dialect, and in the *canzone villanesca alla napolitana*.

however, was there (being a great man-about-town and libertine, he was probably invited everywhere) and presumably played his own music, as well as that of his colleagues at St. Mark's, Perissone Cambio and Baldassare Donato. The serious music of these composers was undoubtedly played and discussed. But they all also wrote their own "arrangements" of music in popular style: *canzone*, *villanesche*, *villotte*, and *moresche*.

This music of the street and other popular venues, such as theatrical *intermezzi*, was a lively entity, with a constantly growing repertoire, subject to new influences, and enjoyed by upper and lower classes. It was also reviled--another of the contradictory dynamics of the Renaissance. For example, Vicentino in *L'Antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* says:

. . . one should not be surprised if, in these times, music is not held in high esteem, since it has been applied to low things, such as *balli*, *napolitane*, *villotte* and other ridiculous items, contrary to the opinion of the ancients, who reserved it for the singing of hymns.<sup>7</sup>

Venetians also enjoyed the exotic in the music of different cities and provinces and their different dialects. These differing dialect styles were spread throughout Italy through the publication

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<sup>7</sup> Donna G. Cardamone, *The "Canzone villanesca alla napolitana" and Related Forms, 1537-1570* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981), 165.

of miniature books of four to five pages which kept a diverse population up-to-date on the "most recent and fashionable texts," or old favorites.<sup>8</sup> In 1588 Giambattista Del Tufo observed the interaction between oral and written lyric in the urban setting.<sup>9</sup> *Citaredi*--itinerant performers and improvisers--also carried this mixture of styles and dialects about with them. We can find some of the same stock characters and situations in *villanesche* and *strambotti* as in *commedia dell' arte*. We can also find the same clichés and proverbs, as for example--in one of Nola's pieces--"*Che non è donna chi n'è cortesana*."<sup>10</sup> The *moresca*, another "exotic" form, is a compendium of many entertaining qualities, including the parody of madrigals, street ballads, African folklore, gibberish, and lewdness. *Moresche* were written for the entertainment of Neapolitan society and Venetian patricians.<sup>11</sup> A manuscript anthology of poetry in the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice contains both madrigals and *canzone napolitane*, thus illustrating the "peaceful co-existence" of popular music and the learned madrigal. This manuscript is dedicated to Annina, Honorata, and Virginia, who

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>9</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy*, 468.

<sup>10</sup> Cardamone, *The Canzona villanesca*, 40-43.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

were all possibly courtesans. Often, popular music was inspired by, and dedicated to, courtesans and sung in their circles.<sup>12</sup> In any case, the presence of this amalgam of styles gives us some indication of the possible repertoire of an entertainment in a noble or literary circle such as those in which Tullia, Gaspara, and Veronica traveled.

Nino Pirrotta has offered us some insights into this music and its place in society:

We can and should perceive in the *frottola* repertory, which dates from the end of the fifteenth century, the surfacing in written tradition of forms and modes which until then had been employed in oral tradition.

And again:

In the daily life of the fifteenth century they [songs, poetry, and instrumental improvisations in the unwritten tradition], not written music, were the elements of a resounding open-air stream, which gave pleasure and *dulcedo* to every layer of society.<sup>13</sup>

Aretino's Nanna confirms this in her descriptions of songs heard in the street, which she could then use in her trade.<sup>14</sup> We must not forget also that, in Venice especially, life in the streets was packed

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 167-69.

<sup>13</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy*, 75-76.

<sup>14</sup> "The *calendari* [itinerant street musicians] did not know these madrigals as precisely as I used to; and I learned them due to a certain play, but that's enough of that. . . . It came in handy, and that's all you need to know." Aretino, *Dialogues*, 258.

rather closely. All classes mingled in the restricted space that Venice had to offer, thus insuring the cross-fertilization of "high" and "low" styles.

The topos of peasant or rustic music has been a constant in western culture, often parallel to, but always distinct from, the "pastoral" topos. In the urban setting, this "peasant" topos could refer also to the unrefined lower classes.<sup>15</sup> (Aretino, for example, refers to Tullia teaching her clients to dance the *rosina* as a symbol of her degrading them.) Masson quotes a letter of November 1546 that provides another instance of popular music included in a courtesan's entertainments. Here a young nobleman, Lelio Capilupi, tells of his first visit to a Roman courtesan:

I found her simply divine, and the next morning I made her the courtesy of two beautiful shirts with white embroidery, and two pairs of silk stockings that Messer Uberto had brought me from Mantua. We remained happily alone together all the next day, dining in my house, and singing Neapolitan songs.<sup>16</sup>

The songs in dialect mentioned above (p. 55), along with forms peculiar to outsiders--Neapolitans, Moors, Paduans, Germans, Greeks, Sicilians, etc.--were another topos (often chauvinistic and

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>16</sup> Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*, 139.

derogatory) that enriched the body of poetry and music enjoyed by the entire populace. And, of course, Venetian dialect, in contrast to the elegant Tuscan of Petrarch and the Petrarchisti, was the language in which the Venetian intellectuals also wrote for their entertainment. Veronica Franco challenged her enemy Maffeo Venier to match her ability in writing in both Tuscan and Venetian.

You use the Venetian tongue to cut and thrust. If this pleases you, it pleases me too. If you want to, try Tuscan, the serious or the burlesque style, because the one and the other are equally simple and easy for me.<sup>17</sup>

We can be sure that the courtesans knew and sang and played serious works. We know this from their serious literary interests and the fact that they all read music. We can also assume from all the examples given that they knew a healthy smattering of popular street music. And since they were poets and could play the lute, they undoubtedly improvised music, especially to present their own or others' poems for an evening's entertainment. A *ridotto* at which they were present could therefore include a rich and varied sampling of music and musical styles.

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

I have endeavored, with the following musical examples, to represent a hypothetical repertory for such an entertainment. Included are poetic works of all three women-- Tullia, Veronica, and Gaspara--though there would obviously have been no single event at which all three would have gathered and performed.

1. A sonnet by Gaspara Stampa set to a stock *aria di cantar sonetti*
2. Two ornamented versions of this sonnet
3. *Terze rime* by Gaspara Stampa set to a stock *aria di capitolo*
4. A *ballo*-*La lavandara*- possibly the one mentioned in *I marmi*
5. *Passer mai solitario* by Verdelot
6. A *canzone villanesca* by Baldassare Donato
7. A motet by Adriano Willaert
8. A sonnet by Tullia d'Aragona set to a stock *aria di cantar sonetti*
9. A sonnet/dialogue by Tullia d'Aragona with a reply by Benedetto Varchi, set to a stock *aria di cantar sonetti*
10. A sonnet by Veronica Franco set to a stock *aria di cantar sonetti*
11. A *greghesca* by Willaert
12. An excerpt from Bernardo Tasso's *Amadigi* set to the *aria di romanesca*

13. *Torelamo vilan*, a canzone villanesca by Verdelot
14. *Hoime che la brunetta mia*, a canzone villanesca by Verdelot
15. *Chi bussa?*, a humorous dialogue by Verdelot

Most of the following musical examples have been taken from Benvenuto Disertori's edition of *Le frottole per canto e liuto intabulate da Franciscus Bossinensis*.<sup>18</sup> For the poems of Gaspara and the other poets, I have used pre-existent compositions and set the poems to them as contrafacta. I do not intend to suggest by this that these women would actually have sung these particular pieces, but only to give examples of the extremely simple, skeletal structures from which a poet might begin to improvise. Although Petrucci began to publish *frottole* in 1504 and 1505, he continued to issue them till 1513, and they appeared in other publications as late as 1535. In addition, this same very simple style can be seen in the later *Bottegari Lute Book* (1574); thus the style of the pieces I have chosen, although taken from an earlier time, seems to be appropriate for the women in question.

In the case of the *sonetto*, I have used a slightly different procedure from the usual for setting the words. Since the form of

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<sup>18</sup> Milan: Ricordi, 1964.

the *sonetto*—4 lines, 4 lines, 3 lines, 3 lines—is an important poetic consideration, I have eliminated the extra musical phrases from the tercets (which are usually inner repetitions in any case), rather than repeating the poetic lines. I believe this serves the poetry, of prime concern to the women of this study, in a much better fashion.

Most often the sonnet begins with upbeats. In the eleven-syllable sonnet line, the first main accent is on the fourth or sixth syllable. Because of this, some verses require a five-note upbeat figure, some a three-note figure. By paying attention to the accents, the singer can give different notes accentuation in different verses by simply extending the upbeat figure from three notes to five. Moreover, the upbeat phrase is ambiguous enough to accept accents on different syllables in each verse within the upbeat figure.

1. Gaspara Stampa *Sonetto*

Se di rozzo pastor di gregge e folle  
 il giogo ascreo fe' diventar poeta  
 lui, che poi salse a sí lodata meta,  
 che quasi a tutti gli altri fama tolle,

che meraviglia fia s'alza ed estolle  
 me bassa e vile a scriver tanta pièta,  
 quel che può piú che studio e che pianeta,  
 il mio verde, pregiato ed alto colle?

La cui sacra, onorata e fatal ombra  
 dal mio cor, quasi súbita tempesta,  
 ogni ignoranza, ogni bassezza sgombra.

Questa da basso luogo m'erger, e questa  
 mi rinnova lo stil, la vena adombra;  
 tanta virtù nell'alma ognor mi desta!

If the Ascrean mountain made a poet  
 Of the rough shepherd with his flocks and herds,  
 Raising him up to such a peak of fame  
 As stole the praise from all other writers,

What marvel is it if my high green hill<sup>19</sup>  
 Much more than any planet or deep study  
 Has raised me, low and common as I am,  
 To write my story that will touch all hearts—

The hill whose sacred and resistless shade  
 Like a swift tempest, swept out of my heart  
 All ignorance and all baseness from my life.

This lifts me from my low position; this  
 Renews my style, whets my poetic vein,  
 And wakes the sleeping talent in my soul.

The translation, by Laura Anna Stortoni and Mary Prentice  
 Lillie, appears in *Gaspara Stampa: Selected Poems* (New  
 York: Italica Press, 1994), 7.

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<sup>19</sup> This is a word-play on the name of her lover, Count Collaltino di Collalto.

# Se di rozzo pastor di gregge folle

originalty

Gaspara Stampa

O tempo o ciel volubil, Petrarch

Paolo Scotti

Bocsinensis, Libro II, p. iv

1 Se di roz - zo pas - tor di greg - ge fol - le 2 il gio - go as -  
 5 che me - ra - vi - glia fia s'al - za ed es - tol - le 6 me bas - sa e  
 9 La cui sa - cra, o - no - ra - ta e fa - tal om - bra 10 dal mio cor.  
 12 Ques - ta da bas - so luo - go m'er - ge. e ques - ta 13 mi n - no -

creo fe' di - ven - tar po - e - ta 3 lui, che poi sal - se a si  
 vi - le a scri - ver tan - ta pie - ta. 7. quel che può più che stu -  
 qua - si sù - bi - ta tem - pes - ta.  
 va lo sul. la ve - na a - dom - bra:

lo - da - ta me - ta. 4 che qua - si a tut - ti gli al - tri fa - ma tol - le.  
 dio e che pia - ne - ta. 8 il mio ver - de. pre - gra - to ed al - to col - le.  
 11 o - gni - gno - ran - za. o - gni bas - sez - za sgom - bra.  
 14 tan - ta vir - tù nell' al - ma o - gnor mi des - ta!

2. Two ornamented versions of Stampa's sonnet.

The following ornamented vocal lines for the *sonetto* are my own invention, based loosely on Renaissance manuals of instrumental performance: Silvestro Ganassi, *Opera intitulata Fontegara* (Venice, 1535),<sup>20</sup> and Diego Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas sobre clausulas* (Rome, 1553),<sup>21</sup> and my own experience with the repertoire. They are intended to suggest possible inventions of Gaspara Stampa.

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<sup>20</sup> Facsimile ed, ed. Hildemarie Peter and tr. Dorothy Swainson (Berlin: Robert Lienau, 1959).

<sup>21</sup> Ed. and tr. Peter Farrell, *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* 4 (1967).

## Suggested Ornamented Versions of Sonetto by Gaspara Stampa

1

Original

1st ornamented version

2nd ornamented version

Se di roz-zo pas-tor di greg-ge  
che me-ra-vi-glia fia s'al-za/ed e-  
La cui sa-cra/o-no-ra ta e tal-  
Que-sta da-bas-so luo-go m'er-ge e

2

ol-le i gio-go/as-creo le di-  
stol-le me-bas-sa e vi-le scri-  
om-que-bra-sta dal mio cor qua-si su-bi-  
ven-tar po-ta lui che poi-  
ver-tan-ta pie-ta quel che  
fa-tem-pe-sta mi-ni-no

3

sal-se/a si lo-da-ta-me-ta-  
puo piu che stu-dio e che pia-ne-ta-  
va lo stii, la ve-na/a-dom-bra

10

sal-se/a si lo-da-ta-me-ta-  
puo piu che stu-dio e che pia-ne-ta-  
va lo stii, la ve-na/a-dom-bra

4. che qua - si/a tut - ti giva -  
8. i mi - o ver - de pre - gia  
11- o - gn'i - gno - ran - za o -  
14. tan - ta vir - tu nell' al -

tri fa - ma tol - le.  
to ed al - to col - le?  
gni ma bas - sez - za mi sgom - pra  
o - gnor o - gnor mi de - sta!

3. *Terze rime* by Gaspara Stampa set to an *aria di capitoli*

Since the *capitolo* is a long form consisting of many *terze rime* verses (three-line hendecasyllabic strophes), I have chosen to set only the first and last, in order to show how they would sound. The last strophe contains an additional line, an *envoi*, to complete the rhyme. The poem is dedicated to Suor Angelica Paolo, mentioned above, the nun who exerted a strong influence upon Gaspara.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Gaspara Stampa, *Selected Poems* (New York: Italica Press, 1994), 227.

Felice in questa e più ne l'altra vita  
 chi fugge, come voi, prima che provi,  
 la miseria del secolo infinita;

prima che dentr'al cor si turbi e movi  
 per tanti inaspettati uman cordogli,  
 e poi d'uscirne al fin loco non trovi.

Felice anima, tu, che qui ti spogli  
 di questi affetti miseri e terreni,  
 e de le nostre pene non ti dogli!

Tutti i tuoi dí saran lieti e sereni,  
 senz'ira, senza guerra e senza danni,  
 di pace, di riposo e d'amor pieni.

Felice chi si fa, sotto umil panni,  
 di Cristo, signor suo, devot'ancella,  
 né prova i nostri maritali affani!

E, gli occhi alzando a la divina stella,  
 lascia quest'aspro e periglioso mare,  
 ch'aura giamai non ha senza procella!

Felice chi non ha tant'ore amare,  
 né sente tutto'l dí pianti e lamenti  
 o di troppo volere, o poco fare!

Qui s'odon sol al fin con gran tormenti  
 o querele di figli o di consorte,  
 e mai de l'esser tuo non ti contenti.

Infelice colei, ch'a questa sorte  
 chiama la trista sua disavventura,  
 ch'in vita sa che cosa è inferno e morte!

Questa è una valle lagrimosa e scura,  
 piena d'ortiche e di pungenti spine,  
 dove il tuo falso ben passa e non dura.

Infelici noi povere e meschine,  
 serve di vanità, figlie del mondo,  
 lontane, aimè, da l'opre alte e divine!

Altre per far il crin piú crespo e biondo  
 provan ogn'arte e trovan mille ingegni,  
 onde van de l'abisso l'alme al fondo.

Infelice quell'altra move a'sdegni  
 il marito o l'amant, e s'affatica  
 di tornar grata e far che lei non sdegni.

Ad altri piú che a se medesima  
 quella con acque forti il viso offende,  
 de la salute sua propria nimica.

Infelice colei, che sol attende  
 da mezzo dí, da vespro e da mattina,  
 e tutto 'l giorno a la vaghezza spende;  
 per parer fresca, bianca e pellegrina  
 dorme senza pensar de la famiglia,  
 e negli empiastri notte e dí s'affina!

Infelice ques'altra de la figlia  
 grande, che per voler darle marito,  
 senza quietar giamai, cura si piglia!

E, perché al mondo ha perso l'appetito,  
 non fa se non gridar, teme e sospetta  
 de l'onor suo che non gli sia rapito.

Infelice qualunque il frutto aspetta  
 de' cari figli, e sta con questa speme,  
 lagrimando cosí sempre soletta!

Questo l'annoia poi, l'aggrava e preme,  
 che misera da lor vien disprezzata,  
 e di continuo ne sospira e geme.

Infelice chi sta sempre arabiata,  
 e col consorte suo non ha mai posa,  
 mesta del tutto, afflitta e sconsolata!

Tropp'accorta al suo mal, vive gelosa,  
 e col figliuolo suo spesso s'adira,  
 non gusta cibo mai, mai non riposa.

Infelice quell'altra, che sospira,  
 ché sa che 'l suo marito poco l'ama,  
 e di mal occhio per mal far la mira!

Alcuna in testimonio il cielo chiama,  
 che sa di non aver commesso errore,  
 e pur talor si duol de la sua fama.

Infelice via piú chi porta amore,  
 e di vane speranze e van desiri  
 si va pascendo il tormentato core!

Altre pene infinite, altri martíri,  
che narrar non si sanno, il mondo apporta,  
mill'altre angosce e mill'altri sospiri.

Felice per seguir piú fida scorta  
chi elegge di Maria la muglior parte,  
e si fa viva a Cristo, al mondo morta!

Felice chi sue voglie ha volt e sparte  
al sommo Sole, al ben del paradiso,  
e qui con umiltá pon cura ed arte!

A voi convien, che 'l bel leggiadro viso  
celate sotto puro e bianco velo,  
avere il cor da uman pensier diviso.

Felice voi, che d'amoroso zelo  
accesa, v'aggirate al vero Sole,  
che luce eternamente in terre e 'n cielo!

Voi correte qua giú rose e viole,  
sará del viver vostro il fin beato,  
ch'altro non è di chi tal vita vuole.

Felice voi, che avete consacrato  
i vaghi occhi divini, il bel crin d'oro  
a chi sí bella al mondo v'ha creato!

questo il ricco, il caro e bel tesoro,  
quest'è la preziosa margherita,  
onde, di palme al fin cinta e d'alloro,  
vittoria porterete a Cristo unita.

Happy in this life, happier in the next  
Is she who flees, like you, before she tastes  
The misery of living in this world,

Before her heart is moved and deeply stirred  
By all the unexpected human sorrows  
From which she cannot find how to escape.

A happy soul are you, who have stripped off  
Our pains, and do not need to weep for them,  
These wretched passions of our earthly life.

All of your days will be serene and happy,  
No anger, never warfare, never losses,  
Filled full of peace, of rest, and quiet love.

Happy is she who, dressed in humble garb,  
Becomes the handmaid of our Lord, of Christ,  
And never feels the pains of married life.

Raising her eyes up to the Holy Star,  
She leaves behind this perilous wild sea  
Which never feels a breeze without a tempest.

Happy is she who knows no bitter hours  
And never hears the crying and complaints:  
"She wants too much!" "She never does enough!"

On earth, one feels so many kinds of torments,  
Quarrels of children, angry words of husbands--  
Never is one contented with her life.

Unhappy she, whom sad misfortune calls  
To such a fate! For in this way of life  
She learns the meaning of both death and hell.

This is a vale of tears and utter darkness,  
Full of sharp nettles and of stinging thorns,  
Where fleeting happiness will not endure.

Unhappy ones are we, wretched and sad,  
Vanity's slaves, we women of the world,  
So distant from the noble works of God!

Some strive to make their hair curly and blond,  
Try every art, every ingenious trick  
Which only drives their souls to the abyss.

Unhappy is the one, who provokes to anger  
Her husband or her lover--then takes pains  
To win him back so that he won't reject her.

Wanting more to please others than herself,  
One spoils her face with acids and bleaches,  
Injuring in this way her own good health.

Unhappy she, who spends both night and day,  
Morning and evening, taking endless pains  
On nothing else besides her own adornment.

And one, to seem forever young and fresh,  
Sleeps all day long, her family forgotten,  
Smears ointments on her face both night and day.

Another one worries about her daughter,  
A grown girl, now to find her a good husband,  
She never rests, taking this so to heart.

And one has lost all pleasure in the world;  
She cries all day, fearful and apprehensive  
That she might somehow lose her reputation.

Unhappy she, who dotes upon her children,  
Expecting, hoping, they'll return her love.  
She cries all day because she's left alone.

This pains her then, and weighs upon her spirits;  
Poor thing! Always neglected by them now,  
She weeps and wails on this account all day.

Another's always angry with her husband,  
She's not at peace, even when he's at home,  
Unhappy all the time, in her affliction.

She knows the cause too well—it's jealousy!  
And she is also angry with her son,  
Till she can't eat, can't get a good night's rest.

Another sighs...her husband does not love her.  
She's sad because she knows how very little.  
He, in his guilt, looks on her with distaste.

Another calls on heaven to bear witness  
That she has never done an evil deed—  
Yet without cause, her honor has been blemished.

Still more unhappy is the one who loves  
And broods on fruitless hopes, with vain desires  
Forever feeding her tormented heart.

How many other pains, infinite griefs  
That no one could describe, grow in the world!  
Thousands of anguishes, thousands of sighs!

Happy are you, who walk a path more sure,  
who chose the better part that Mary chose,  
and live in Christ but to the world are dead.

Happy are you, who turn your every thought  
Up to the highest Sun, to paradise,  
And humbly give your thoughts and cares to God.

How right you are to hide your lovely face  
Beneath a spotless veil of purest white,  
And keep your heart untouched by human cares!

Happy are you, aflame with loving zeal,  
Turning completely to the one true Sun  
Which shines eternally on earth and heaven.

Cloistered, you gather violets and roses.  
You can look forward to a happy death:  
None other comes to one who lives your life.

Happy are you, you who have consecrated  
Your lovely eyes to heaven, your gold hair  
To Him who gave you beauty on the earth.

This is the beautiful, the priceless treasure,  
This is the precious pearl of which we read;  
So, crowned in heaven with the palm and laurel,  
You will be joined by Christ in victory.

This translation is also from Stortoni and Lillie, *Gaspara Stampa*, 207-13.

*Felice in questa e più ne l'altra vita*  
(Se mai per maraveglia)

Gaspara Stampa

*Anonymous*  
Bossinensis, Libro II, p.vi

1. Fe - li - ce in ques - ta e più ne l'al - tra vi - ta  
97. E ques - to vil ne - co. il ca - ro e bel te - so - ro

2. chi fug - ge. co - me voi. pri -  
98. quest' e la pre - z - o - sa mar -

2C

- ma che pro - vi, 3 la mu - se - na del se - co -  
- ghe - n - ta. 99 on - de, di pal - me al fin  
100 vit - to - na por - te - re - te a

lo in - fi - ni - ta: Coda  
cin - ta e d'al - lo - ro  
Cri - sto u - ni - ta: E'

#### 4. *La lavandara*

*Balli* were extremely popular amongst the courtesans and their patrons. Marco Facoli's *Balli d'arpicordo*, printed in Venice in 1588, contained dance pieces, instrumental versions of monodies, and *Arie* (merely meaning songs, not denoting particular forms), most with feminine names. According to Pirrotta, such a name often was an indication that the piece was the favorite song of particular courtesans, and thus they could be considered counterparts to Andrea Calmo's fourth book of *Lettere*, in which each letter (to a courtesan) ends with a *strambotto*.<sup>23</sup>

One might imagine the group that gathered for an evening singing and dancing to these simple and tuneful works, much as today we might sing a popular folk song. *La lavandara* does not come from Facoli's collection, but revolves around a popular song subject and is mentioned in Doni's *I marmi*. There, in the same conversation in which the song beginning "Reti, pesci e pescatori" is mentioned, Verdelot, the courtesan La Zinzera, and their companions say that after this song they sang *Lavandiera*.<sup>24</sup> (See page 47 above.) My transcription is based on the version in Giorgio Mainerio, *Il primo libro de balli a quattro voci, accomodati per cantar*

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<sup>23</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Culture*, 466, n.9.

<sup>24</sup> Doni, *I marmi*, parte seconda, 203.

*et sonar d'ogni sorte de istromenti* (Venice: Gardano, 1578;  
reprinted by London Pro Musica Edition, 1979), 6.

*La lavandara**Anonymous*

The first system of musical notation consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The middle and bottom staves are grouped by a brace and represent the piano accompaniment, with the middle staff in treble clef and the bottom staff in bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a key signature of one flat.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It features a repeat sign at the beginning of the top staff. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines in both hands.

The third system of musical notation concludes the piece. The top staff shows the final notes of the melody, and the piano accompaniment ends with a final chord in both hands.

## 5. *Passer mai solitario*

In his *Dialogo della musica* (see above, pp. 47-49), Antonfrancesco Doni speaks of singers who could not cope with the new madrigals in *note nere* style, let alone a madrigal which was by this time old-fashioned but had formerly been the test of a good singer. Verdelot's *Passer mai solitario* is possibly this madrigal, the "Passera" that Doni refers to as a test of a competent musician.<sup>25</sup> The text is a sonnet by Petrarch. The difficulties Doni alludes to may be the conflicting meters beginning in measure 30 (cantus and bass are in a 3/4 meter for two measures, while the inner parts are still in a duple meter), and the chains of syncopation in measures 56-59, 97-100, and 106-09. My edition is taken from that of Donald Lee Hersh (Don Harrán) in *Verdelot and the Early Madrigal*, Ph.D. dissertation (University of California at Berkeley, 1963), 82-91.

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<sup>25</sup> Doni: "There are some who can hardly perform Verdelot's *Passera*, while in my time he who could sing that madrigal was considered a Josquin. As soon as a singer was famed for being outstanding, this status was granted him: 'he sings the *Passera*'; nor could anybody go further, unless he were to plunge into the sea. To be brief: music has now reached its apogee." Quoted in Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets*, 53.

Passer mai solitari'in alcun tetto  
 Non fu quant'io, ne fer'in alcun bosco.  
 Ch'io non veggio'l bel viso et non cognosco.  
 Altro sol,ne quest'occhi hann'altr'obietto.

Lachrimar sempr'e'l mio sommo diletto;  
 El rider, dogli'e'l cibo assenti'e toscò;  
 La nott'affanno e'l ciel seren m'e fosco;  
 E duro campo di battaglia e'l letto.

Il sonn'e veramente, qual huom dice,  
 Parente della morte; e'l cor soffrage  
 A qual dolce pensier che'n vita'l tene.

Sol al mondo, paes'almo felice.  
 Verde rive, fiorit'ombrose piaggie  
 Voi possedet'et io piango'l mio bene.

No sparrow was ever so alone on any roof as I am, nor any beast in any wood, for I do not see her lovely face, and I know no other sun, nor do these eyes have any other object.

To weep always is my highest delight, laughing is pain, food is gall and poison, night is labor, and a clear sky is dark to me, and my bed is a harsh battlefield.

Sleep is truly, as they say, akin to death, and relieves the heart of the sweet care that keeps it in life.

Sole in the world, rich, happy country, green flowering banks, shady meadows: you possess and I yearn for my treasure.

This translation is from *Petrarch's Lyric Poems*, translated and edited by Robert Durling (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), 382.

*Passer mai solitario*

Verdelot

5

Musical score for measures 5-9. The score is written for four staves: Treble clef (Soprano), Treble clef (Alto), Treble clef (Tenor), and Bass clef (Bass). The lyrics are: Pas - ser mai so - li - ta - n'in al - cun. The melody is in a major key with a common time signature. The lyrics are printed below each staff.

Pas - ser mai so - li - ta - n'in al - cun

Pas - ser mai so - li - ta - n'in al -

Pas - ser mai so - li - ta - n'in al -

Pas - ser mai so - li - ta - n'in al - cun

10

Musical score for measures 10-14. The score is written for four staves: Treble clef (Soprano), Treble clef (Alto), Treble clef (Tenor), and Bass clef (Bass). The lyrics are: tet - to Non fu quan - t'io, ne. The melody continues from the previous system. The lyrics are printed below each staff.

tet - to Non fu quan - t'io, ne

cun tet - to Non fu quan - t'io, ne

cun tet - to Non fu Quant' i -

tet - to Non fu quan - t'io, ne

15

Musical score for measures 15-19. The score is written for four staves: Treble clef (Soprano), Treble clef (Alto), Treble clef (Tenor), and Bass clef (Bass). The lyrics are: fe - rin al - cun bos - co. Ch'io non ve -. The melody continues from the previous system. The lyrics are printed below each staff.

fe - rin al - cun bos - co. Ch'io non ve -

fe - rin al - cun bos - co.

o, ne fe - rin al - cun bo - - - sco.

fe - rin al - cun bos - co. Ch'io non ve -

20

gioi - bel vi - so et  
Ch'io non ve - gioi bel vi -  
Ch'io non ve - gioi bel vi -  
gioi - bel vi - so et

25

non co - gno - sco et non co -  
sco et non co - gno -  
sco et non co - gno - sco et  
non co - gno - sco et non co -

30

gno - sco. Al - tro sol, ne  
sco, et non co - gno - sco Al - tro sol,  
non co - gno - sco Al - tro sol, ne  
gno - sco Al - tro sol,

35

quest' oc - - chi hann' ai - tr'o - biet - -  
 ne quest' oc - chi han - n'ai - tr'o - biet - -  
 que - -st'oc - chi han - n'ai - - tr'o - - - biet - -  
 ne quest' oc - chi han - n'ai - tr'o - - - biet - -

40

to. La - -  
 to. La - -  
 to. La - -  
 - to. La - -

45

chri - mar sem - pr'e'l mio som - mo di - let - -  
 chri - mar sem - pr'e'l mio som - mo di - let - -  
 - chri - mar sem - pr'e'l mio som - mo di - let - -  
 chri - mar sem - -pr'e'l mio som - mo di - let - - to

50

to; Et ni - der, do - gli'e! ci - bo/as -

Et ni - der, do - gli'e! ci - bo/as - sen -

55

sen - ti'e los - co; La not - t'af -

ti' e los - co; La not - t'af -

60

fan - nc'e! ciel se - ren m'e b -

fan - no, e! ciel se - ren m'e fos -

fan - nc. e! ciel se - ren m'e b -

fan - nc. e! ciel se - ren m'e b -

65

sco; E du - ro cam - po di bat - ta - glia/e'l let - to. Il son - n'e

sco; E du - ro cam - po di bat - ta - glia/e'l let - to. Il son - n'e

sco; E du - ro cam - po di bat - ta - glia/e'l let - to. Il son - n'e

sco; E du - ro cam - po di bat - ta - glia/e'l let - to. Il son - n'e

70

ve - ra - men - te. qual huom di - ce, Pa -

ve - ra - men - te. qual huom di - ce, Pa -

ve - ra - men - te. qual huom di - ce, Pa -

ve - ra - men - te. qual huom di - ce Pa -

75

ren - te del - la mor - te;

ren - te del - la mor - te;

ren - te del - la mor - te e'l cor

ren - te del - la mor - te e'l cor sci -

80

et cor sof - frag - ge A qual dol -  
 e'l cor sof - frag - ge A qual dol -  
 sof - fra - ge, e'l cor sof - fra - ge A qual dol -  
 frag - - - ge e'l cor sof - frag - ge A qual dol -

85

ce pen - sier che'n vi - ta' te - - ne.  
 ce pen - sier che'n vi - ta' te - - ne.  
 ce pen - sier che'n vi - ta' te - - ne.  
 ce pen - sier che'n vi - ta' te - - ne.

90

Sci ai mon - do, pa - e - s'ai - mo fe - i - ce.  
 Sci ai mon - do, pa - e - s'ai - mo fe - i - - ce.  
 Sci ai mon - do, pa - e - s'ai - mo fe - i - ce  
 Sci ai mon - do, pa - e - s'ai - mo fe - i - ce

95

Ver - de n - ve, fio - n - l'om - bro - se  
 Ver - de n - ve, fio - n - l'om - bro - se piag - gie, om -  
 Ver - de n - ve, fio - n - l'om - bro - se piag - gie, om -  
 Ver - de n - ve, fio - n - l'om - bro - se piag - gie, om -

100

piag - gie, Voi pos - se - de - t'et o pian -  
 bro - se piag - gie Voi pos - se - de - t'et o pian -  
 bro - se piag - gie, Voi  
 bro - se piag - gie, Voi pos - se - de - t'et o

105

goi mic be - ne.  
 goi mic be - ne pian - goi mi - o de -  
 pos - se - de - t'et i - o pian - goi mic be -  
 pian - goi mi - o be

110

Vci pos - se - de - t'et o pian - gol mio  
 ne Voi pos - se - de - t'et o pian - gol mio  
 - - - ne Voi pos - se -  
 ne. Voi pos - se - de - t'et o pian - gol

115

be - ne.  
 be - ne. pian - gol mi - o be - ne.  
 de - t'et i - o pian - gol mio be - - - ne.  
 mi - o be - - - ne.

## 6. *Canzone villanesca*

One of the lighter musical forms, such as this *canzone villanesca*, would certainly have found a place in an evening's entertainment. This particular piece by Baldassare Donato might very well have been performed at Ca' Venier, since Donato was a regular visitor there.

Repetition, typical for this form, occurs not only at the large-scale strophic level, but in connection with internal repetitions in the refrain and playful repetitions of individual words. The rhythm throughout is quite asymmetrical, reinforcing the lighthearted, "rustic" quality of this genre, in contrast to the smoother, more through-composed style of "serious" polyphony. I have based my edition on that of Donna G. Cardamone, *The "Canzone villanesca alla napolitana" and Related Forms, 1537-1570* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), number 20.

Non t'ho possuto mai donna mostrare  
 L'accesa fiamm'e mia sincera fede,  
 Deh per mercede  
 Donami il loco  
 Ch'io ti possa scoprir mio ardente foco.

Io t'ho amato quanto si possa amare  
 Et l'arnor mio ogn'altr'amor eccede.  
 Deh per mercede  
 Donami il loco  
 Ch'io ti possa scoprir mio ardente foco.

Non vi convien chi v'ama disamare  
 E men fuggir chi col pensier vi vede.  
 Deh per mercede  
 Donami il loco  
 Ch'io ti possa scoprir mio ardente foco.

E se non vuoi ch'in tutto me divora  
 Donami presto il tempo, il loco, e l'hora.  
 Deh per mercede  
 Donami il loco  
 Ch'io ti possa scoprir mio ardente foco.

I've never been able to show you, lady, the burning flame and my true  
 loyalty .

Refrain: For God's sake tell me where I can disclose my passion to you.

I've loved you as much as it is possible to love, and my love exceeds all  
 others.

Refrain.

It doesn't suit you for me to stop loving you, nor does it suit you to flee  
 the one who has you constantly in his thoughts.

Refrain.

And if you don't want me to be totally destroyed, tell me quickly the day,  
 the place and the hour.

Refrain.

The translation is mine.

# Non t'ho possuto mai

*Baldassare Donato*

(Baldassre Donato. *Il primo libro  
di canzon villanesche alla  
quatro voci. Venice. Gardane. n d*)

1. Non t'ho pos - su - to ma - i non t'ho pos - su - to mai mai mai  
 3. lo t'ho a - ma - to quan - to lo t'ho a - ma - to quan - to quan -  
 5. Non v con - vien chi v'a - ma non v con - vien chi v'a - ma chi  
 7. E se non vuoi ch'in tut - to e se non vuoi ch'in tut - to ch'in

mai don - na mo - stra - - - - re  
 to si pos - sa/a - ma - - - - re  
 v'a - ma di - sa - ma - - - - re  
 tut - to me di - vo - - - - ra

2. Lac - ce - sa fiam - me mia  
 4. E' l'a - mor mio o - grai  
 6. E' men fug - gir chi co'  
 8. Do - na - mi pre - stov' il tem

sin - ce - ra fe - de.      Deh      per      mer - ce - de,  
 - tr'a - mor ec - ce - de.      Refrain  
 pen - sier vi ve - de.      Refrain  
 - po/il lo - co/e l'ho - ra      Refrain

10

Do - na - mi i lo - co      Chio ti pos - sa sco - pri

Chio ti pos - sa sco - pri mio ar - den - te lo - co

## 7. *Ave Maria*

Undoubtedly, many a serious work by the “Divine Willaert” would have been performed. This particular motet is quite intricate and complex, giving a meaningful challenge to the performers, especially in the richness of its rhythms, though the ranges of all the voices are moderate. It could easily have been sung by a group of men, or by three men with a woman singing in a very low, moderate range.

Although not a cantus-firmus work, it is based on the chant antiphon *Ave Maria* in the *Liber Usualis*, in which the opening falling fourth is very significant. In the tenor this is followed by the very dramatic rising fifth in measures 3 and 4, also taken from the antiphon. Willaert makes use of the chant’s falling fourth in an extremely effective manner, bringing the bass in on E flat falling to B flat. Soprano and alto also imitate this interval, but fill it in ornamentally. The piece is in transposed Dorian mode, and plays with the raised and lowered sixth degree, as in bars 36 and 40-42. Willaert also makes use of the fourth in the bass, creating 6/4 chords (see measures 9-10 and 14).

I have taken my edition of this work from that of Fritz Jöde, *Geistliche Chorgesänge für gemischte Stimmen* (Berlin: Kallmeyer, 1931).

## Ave Maria

*Adrian Willaert*  
 (Adriano Willaert *Musica*  
*quatuor vocum*. Gardane.  
 1545)

A - ve Ma - ri - a, a - ve Ma - ri - a

A ve Ma - ri - a a - ve Ma - ri - a

A - ve Ma - ri - a, a - ve Ma - ri - a

A - ve, A - ve - Ma - ri - a

5  
 gra - ti - a ple - na gra - ti - a ple - na! Do - mi - nus

a gra - ti - a ple - na, gra - ti - a ple - na, gra - ti - a ple - na Do - mi - nus te

a gra - ti - a ple - na, gra - ti - a ple - na Do - mi - nus

a gra - ti - a ple - na, gra - ti - a ple - na!

10  
 nus te - cum Do - mi - nus te - cum Do - mi - nus te - cum

cum Do - mi - nus te - cum; be - ne - di - ctus tu - es

te - cum Do - mi - nus te - cum Do - mi - nus te - cum;

15

be - ne - di - cta tu in mu - si - e - ri - bus

- - - cta tu, be - ne - di - ta tu in mu - si - e - ri - bus

be - ne - di - cta tu, be - ne - di - cta tu in mu - si - e - ri - bus

tu, be - ne - di - cta tu in mu - si - e - ri - bus, in mu - si - e - ri - bus, et be - ne - di - ctus,

in mu - si - e - ri - bus et be - ne - di - ctus

e - ri - bus, et be - ne - di - ctus

i - e - ri - bus, in mu - si - e - ri - bus, et be - ne - di - ctus fru -

et be - ne - di - ctus fru - ctus ven - tris fru - ctus ven - tris tu -

fru - ctus ven - tris tu - i Je - sus, fru - ctus ven - tris fru - ctus ven -

- ctus ven - tris fru - ctus ven - tris tu - i Je - sus, fru -

ctus ven - tris tu - i Je - sus et be - ne - di - ctus fru - ctus

25

- i Je - sus. San - cta Ma - ri - a

tris tu - i Je - sus. San - cta Ma - ri - a re - gi - na cae - li,

ctus ven - tris tu - i Je - sus. San - cta Ma - ri - a re - gi - na cae - li,

ven - tris tu - i Je - sus. Sancta Ma - ri - a re - gi - na cae - li

30

o ma-ter De - i: o - ra pro no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus. o - ra pro -  
 dul - cis et pi - a, o ma-ter De - i: o - ra pro - no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus o - ra pro -  
 dul - cis et pi - a, o ma-ter De - i - o - ra pro no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus o - ra pro -  
 dul - cis et pi - a, o ma-ter De - i: o - ra no - bis, o - ra pro

35

no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus, ut cum e - le -  
 no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus, ut cum e - le - ctis ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de -  
 no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de - mus  
 no - bis pec-ca - to - ri - bus ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de - a

40

ctis te vi - de - a - mus, ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de - a -  
 - a - mus, ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de - a -  
 ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de - a - mus, ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de -  
 mus ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de - a - mus, ut cum e - le - ctis te vi - de -

mus, te vi - de - a - mus. mus.  
 mus. te vi - de - a - mus  
 a - mus  
 a - mus, te vi - de - a - mus

## 8. *Sonetto*

This sonnet by Tullia d'Aragona was dedicated to Cosimo de' Medici in gratitude for securing her reprieve from prosecution for disobeying the sumptuary laws. Although dedicated to him, it could have been used to celebrate some other worthy gentleman if the occasion warranted. Such multiple uses for poems were common.

The texts of Tullia's poems (see also numbers 9 and 10) come from *Rime della S. Tullia di Aragona, et di diversi a lei nuovamente corrette et ristampate* (Venice: G. Giolito de Ferrari, 1560), micropublished in *History of Women* (New Haven: Research Publications Inc., XXVIII, 1975). Again, my source for the stock musical form is Disertori's edition of *Le frottole . . . intabulate da Franciscus Bossinensis*.

This particular *aria per cantar sonetti* uses five phrases for the four-line and three-line groupings; the composer had in mind, therefore, the repetition of the last line of each group of verses. The music is extremely attractive; one is only too happy to repeat the line, and thereby to add an emphasis to the end of each strophe.

\* Measure 9 in the last verse requires a slight change of rhythm to accommodate the word accent. Measures 16 and 17 do not. These subtle adjustments would have been extremely easy for a musician/poet to perform during the course of the work.

Se gli antichi pastor di rose e fiori  
 Spargersi tempii, e vaporar gli altari  
 D'incenso a Pan, sol perche dolci e cari  
 Havea fatto a le Ninfe i loro amori

Quai fior degg' io Signor, quai deggio odori  
 Sparger al nome vostro che sian pari  
 Ai meriti vostri e tante e cosi rari,  
 Ch'ogn'hor spargete in me gratie e favori

Nessun per certo tempo, altare, o dono  
 Trovar si può di cosi gran valore  
 Ch'a vostra alta bon tà sia pregio equale.

Sia dunque il petto vostro, tutte sono  
 Le virtù, tempio, altare il saggio core,  
 Vittima l'alma mia, se tanto vale.

Suppose the ancient shepherds scattered roses and flowers among their temples, and lit incense before altars of Pan, only to offer their love to the Nymphs,

What flowers and perfumes should I scatter, Signore, at your name, that will be worthy of your merits, so many and so rare, that hourly increase my gratitude to you.

None can find such great merit equal to yours, be it in temples, altars, or gifts.

For in your breast are all the virtues, temples, and altars of the wise heart. I offer my soul to you, if it is worthy.

The translation is mine.

*Se gli antichi pastor di rose, e fiori*  
(S'io sedo a l'ombra)

*Tullia d'Aragona*

*Marco Cara*

Bossinensis, Libro II, p. xix

Dedicated to S. Duca di Firenze

5

1: Se gli van - ti - chi pa - stor di ro - se/e fi - no - n  
 5: Quar - fior degg' io Si - gnor. qua - deg - gio/o - do - n  
 9: Nes - sun per cer - to tem - - po/al - ta - re/o do - no  
 12: Sia dun - que il pet - to vo - - stro, tut - te so - no

2: Spar - ger - si  
 6: Spar - ger - al  
 10: Tro - var si  
 13: Le vir - tu.

10

tem - pi/e va - po - rar gli al - ta - n  
 no - me vo - stro che sian pa - n  
 puo - di co - si gran va - lo - re  
 tem - pi/ai - ta - re: il sag - gio co - re.

3: D'in - cen - sova Pan. sci per - che  
 7: Ai mer - ti vo - strive tan - te.  
 11: Ch'io - strava - ta ben - ti sia  
 14: Vit - ti - ma l'al - ma mia. se

\*

\* See page 96.

15

dol - ce ca - ri - ta - te  
 co - si ra - ti - on - e  
 pre - gi - o - sa - que - re  
 tan - to va - le

4. Ha - vea fat - to/a - le Nin - fe - ri - o - ro/a - mo - ni - um  
 8. Ch'o - gn'hor spar - ge - ta - n - me gra - tie/e - fa - vo - ri - um

20

4. Ha - vea fat - to/a - le - - Nin - fe - ri - o - ro a - mo - ni - um  
 8. Ch'o - gn'hor spar - ge - te in me gra - tie: et fa - vo - ri - um  
 11. Ch'a - vo - str'a i - fa - bon - ta - si - a pre - gi - o - sa - que - re  
 14. Vit - ti - ma i - ma - ni - a se tan - to va - le.

### 9. *Sonetto/Dialogo*

Since the dialogue was such a popular form of entertainment, I include this one from Tullia d'Aragona's *Rime* (cited above), in which several such sonnets and their *riposte* are included. This particular dialogue is between Tullia and Benedetto Varchi, a long-time admirer and supporter. Typical of the dialogue form, Varchi answers her using exactly the same rhymes that she had initiated (part of the game of dialogue), and, of course, with the same rather strained praise, but with his own imagery, which is quite lovely. Again, I have chosen an already existing work of music by Tromboncino from the Disertori edition, written to accommodate the *sonetto* form.

Quel che'l mondo d'invidia empie, di duolo  
 Quel che sol di virtute è ricco e adorno  
 Quel che col suo splendor un lieto giorno  
 Chiaro ne mostra a l'uno e a l'altro polo

Quel sete VARCHI voi: quel voi che solo  
 Fate col valor vostro oltraggio e scorno  
 Ai piu lontan, non ch'ai vicin d'intorno  
 Ond' io v'ammiro, riverisco e colo

Et di voi canterei mentre ch'io vivo  
 S'al gran soggetto il mio debile stile  
 Giunger potesse di gran spatio almeno.

O pur non fosse a voi noioso e schivo  
 Questo mio dire scemo e troppo humile:  
 Che per voi render assi altero, e pieno.

He who fills the world with envy and regret, He who alone is rich and  
 decked with merit, He who with his brilliance brings joyful, clear  
 daylight to either pole,

This man, VARCHI, is you: you, who alone by your merit bring contempt  
 and scorn to men both far and near; so that I admire, revere and  
 worship you, whose worth makes outrage and scorn flee, and for that I  
 admire and honor you.

I would sing of you my whole life long, if my feeble style could rise to  
 this great subject, or even close.

Oh, if only this, my weak and all too humble speech, does not annoy and  
 repel you—it will, through you, become lofty and eloquent.

This translation is in Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of  
 Eros* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press,  
 1990), 108-09.

*Quel, che'l mondo d'invidia empie*

(Acciò ch'el tempo e i cieli)

*Tullia d'Aragona*

*B. Trombancino*

Bossinensis, Libro I, p.iii

5

1 Quel che'l mon - do d'in - vi - - dia/em- pie, di du - o  
 5 Quel se - te VAR- CHI voi: quel voi che so - lo  
 9 Et di voi can - te - rei men- tre ch'io vi - vo  
 12 O pur non fos - se/a voi noi - o - sc/e schi - vo

10

2 Quel, che soi di vir - tu - te, è ric - co a/a - dor - no  
 3 Quel che col suo splen- dor un lie - to gior - no  
 6 Fa - te cci va - lor vo - stro/oi trag-gio/e scor - no  
 7 Ai piu lon - tan, non ch'ai vi - cin d'in - tor - no  
 10 Sai gran sug - get - tor/ mio de - bi - le sti - le  
 13 Que- sto mio di - re sce - mo e troppo/hu - mi - le.  
 4 Chia - ro ne -  
 8 Ond' o v'am -  
 11 Giun - ger po -  
 14 Che per voi

4.. 8.. 11 | 14.

mos - tra/a fu - no/e/a l'ai - tro po - lo, pie - no.  
 mi - ro, n - ve - n - sco/e co - lo  
 tes - se di - gran spa - tio/al - me - no  
 ren - der - as - si/al - te - ro/e

9. Benedetto Varchi's *riposta*

Se da i bassi pensier talhor m'involo  
 Et me medesmo in me stesso ritorno  
 S'al ciel, lasciato ogni terren soggiorno  
 Sopra l'ali d'amor poggiando volo

Quest'e sol don di voi TULLIA, al cui volo  
 Lume mi specchio e quanto posso adorno  
 La' ve sempre con voi lieto soggiorno,  
 Da santo e bel disio levato a volo.

Et se quel, che entro'l cor ragiono, e scrivo  
 Del vostro alto valor Donna gentile,  
 Ch'avete quanto puo bramarsi a pieno,

Rider potessi, o beato anzi Divo  
 Ma, per me proprio tutto oscuro, e vile  
 Se non quant' ho da voi pregio, e sereno.

If ever I fly above lowly thoughts, and rediscover myself in myself,  
 If, leaving every earthly dwelling behind, I fly upward soaring on the  
 wings of love,

This is your gift alone, TULLIA; in your light I am reflected, and as  
 much as I can, I praise that place where I stay, delighted, with you,  
 Lifted into flight by holy and lovely desire.

And if I could declare aloud what I recite and write in my heart of your  
 high worth, noble lady,  
 Which you possess as fully as can be desired,

I could call myself blessed, no, even a god although unknown and lowly  
 in myself, except  
 For the esteem and joy I win through you.

The translation is by Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of  
 Eros*, 109.

# Se da i bassi pensier talhor m'invola

(Chi vi darà più luce)

B. Varchi

B. Tromboncino

Bossinensis, Libro I, p. xxvi

1- Se da i bas - si pen - sier      tal - hor m'in -  
 5- Que - st'è sci don di vci      TUL - LIA dai cur  
 9- Et se quel che/en - tro i cor      ra - gio - nove  
 12- Ri - der po - tes - s'io be - a      to an - zi

5

vo - lo      2- Et me me - des - m'in me stes - sc  
 so - ic      3- S'al ciel la - scia - to/gi - gn ter - ran sog -  
 scri - ve      6- Lu - me mi spic - cante quan - to pos - scia  
 Di - ve      7- La ve sem - pre con voi ne - to sog -  
 10- Del vo stro/al - to ra - ion Don - na gen -  
 13- Ma per me pro - pro tut - to - scu - ro/ve

*1C*

tor - no  
 gior - no  
 dor - no  
 gior - no.  
 ti - le,  
 v - le

**4.** So - pra l'a - i d'a - mor pog - gran - do  
**8.** Da san - to/a bel di - sic le - va - to/a  
**11.** Ch'a - ve - te quan - to puo bra - mar - siva  
**14.** Se - non quant' ho da noi pre - gio, e se -

**4.. 8.. 11**      **14.**

vo - lo;      re - no.  
 ce - lo.  
 pie - no.

## 10. Veronica Franco, *Sonetto*

This particular sonnet by Veronica Franco is the one she wrote for Henry III of France after their encounter. By giving this work and her portrait to him, she attempts to put herself in the role of equal partner, rather than paid server, and a generous partner at that. The music I have chosen (from *Disertori*) by Francesco Varoter for the *sonetto* has a slightly different form from others in my collection, and parallels exactly the two quatrains and two tercets found in the sonnet form.

Prendi, re per virtù sommo e perfetto  
 quel che mala no a porgerti sistende  
 questo scolpito e colorato aspetto  
 in cui'l mio vivo e natural s'intende

E, sa esempio si basso e si imperfetto  
 la tua vista beata non s'attende  
 riguarda a la cagion, non a l'effetto  
 Poca favilla ancor gran fiamma accende

E come'l tuo immortal divin valore  
 in armi e in pace mille prove esperto  
 m'empio l'alma di nobile stupore,

cosi'l desio, di donna in cor sofferto  
 d'alzarti sopra'l ciel dal mondo fore,  
 mira in quel mio sembiante espresso e certo.

My king, paragon of virtue and perfection, pray take what my extended hand holds out to you: this carved and colored face which is meant to present my true and living one.

And if your blessed gaze is unaccustomed to such lowly and imperfect work, consider the cause and not its effect, for even so small a spark can kindle a great flame.

And, just as your valor, immortal and divine, tried in a thousand tests in peace and war, filled my soul with noble surprise, of times,

So, now observe a woman's heartfelt desire to raise you above the world and to the skies steadfastly expressed in this likeness of mine.

The text and translation of this sonnet are taken from Margaret F. Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 110.

*Prendi, re per virtù sommo e perfetto*  
(Chi vi darà più luce)

Veronica Franco

Francesco Varotter  
Bossinensis, Libro I, p. xxvi

5  
1. Pren - di, re per vir - tù som - mo e per - fet - to 2. quel che ma - lano/a  
5. E, sa es - sem - pio si bas - so/e si im - per - fet - to 6. la tu - a vi - sta

10  
por - ger - ti si - sten - de 3. que - sto scch - pi - to/e co - lo - ra - to/a - spat - to  
be - a - la non sa - ten - de 7. in - sguar - da/ra la ca - gion, non a l'ef - fet - to

15  
4. in cui'l mio vi - ve e na - tu - ra: sin - ten - de 9. E co - ma! tuo/im - mer ta:  
8. Po - ca fa - vi - la an - cor gran fiam - ma/ac - cen - de 12. cc - sil' de - sio, di don -

20

di - vi va - lo - re 10 in ar-mi/en pa-ce mi - le pro-ve/e - scar - to  
na/in cor sci - fer - to 13 d'al - zar - ti so-pra l'ciei dal mon-do lo - re.

25

11. m'em - pio l'al - ma di no - bi - le stu - po - ra.  
14. mi - ra/in quel mio sem - bian - te es - pres - so/e car - to.

## 11. *Greghesca* by Willaert

*Dulce padrun* is one of a very popular genre of songs mimicking some of the many dialects that crossed paths in Venice. This *greghesca* is a mixture of the Venetian dialect sprinkled with Greek words, therefore suggesting the person of a Greek workman in Venice. It would have been understood and its humor appreciated by a Venetian audience. The same composer of the rich and serious *Ave Maria* here allows himself the playfulness and humor which were also an integral part of Renaissance music. The work is possibly Willaert's last, published in 1564.<sup>26</sup> Only Veronica Franco was still alive at this time, Gaspara and Tullia having died in 1554 and 1556, respectively.

The subtitle, "Seconda apparition. . .," refers to the "dog days" of August--so called because of the Dog Star in the skies at that time. The convention of considering servants as dogs--faithful followers of their masters--adds to the humor of the text, which, as well as its mixture of tongues, plays upon a reversal of roles: this servant's presumption that from his vantage point in the heavens (after his own death) he has cured his master of an illness brought on by the heat of August.

The two-part form is typical of works often used for

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<sup>26</sup> Willaert, *Collected Works*, Introduction, xii.

celebratory occasions. The second section dwells on the “heavenly” servant, ending with a traditional statement of loyalty.

My transcription is from Adriano Willaert’s *Collected Works, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 3*, edited by Helga Meier (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1977), XIV, 85-89.

*Dulce padrun/ Mi xe stà chel*

Dulce padrun, mi ho cognosuo cha in celo,  
 Chie un caldo ti l'habuo frevuso in panza,  
 Chal te puzeva, co fa'l spad'e lanza,  
 Si ben chie tel suava'l carne'l pelo.  
 Mo mi chie t'ho amà sempre del bun zelo,  
 Cul canicula ho fado mio pusanza,  
 Tando chiel caldo fora del sousanza  
 La xe anda via currand'a remi'a velo.  
 Nol creder chie sia cassia o'l mendesina,  
 Cure e syropii, pirule ò bursette,  
 Chie dal fevre fogusa t'ha gario.

Mi xe stà chel c'hà fado dulce ghina  
 Vegnir so bucca al can cul carezzette,  
 Va pia mo dal giatròs to sold'in drio.  
 Padrun, resta cun dio,  
 Mi no tel porrò dir plio veritate,  
 Per fin chie no la turna l'aldro istae,  
 Via da cheste cundrae  
 Andemo all' aldro polo cun sto can:  
 Me recumando a vui, te baso'l man.

Sweet master, I have learned here in heaven  
 that a heat has lit a fever in your belly  
 that it pricked you, like a sword or a lance  
 So well that your flesh and pelt sweat.  
 Now I, who have always loved you with faithful ardor,  
 With the dog days have done everything in my power  
 Such that the heat has left its lodging,  
 its flight powered both by oar and sail.  
 Do not believe that it was cassia or medicine  
 Treatments or syrups, "pirule" [possibly a Greek word meaning  
 medicines] or poultices  
 That have cured you of the fiery fever.

It was me who smiled on you  
Bringing his mouth to the dog with little pets.  
Go get your money back from the "giatros" [probably a Greek word  
meaning healer]  
Master, go with God  
I will not be able to tell you any more truths  
Until I return next summer.  
We are going to the other pole with this dog  
Far from these neighborhoods  
I commend myself to you, I kiss your hand.

The translation is by Professor Linda Carrol of Tulane  
University.

## Dulce padrun / Mi xe stà chel

Seconda apparition del Cagnola del Mese d'Agosto

Adrian Willaert

5

Dul - ce pa - drun, dul - ce pa - drun, mi/ho co - gno - suo cha/in

Dul - ce pa - drun, dul - ce pa - drun, mi/ho co - gno - suo cha/in

Dul - ce pa - drun, dul - ce pa - drun, mi/ho co - gno - suo cha/in

Dul - ce pa - drun, dul - ce pa - drun, mi/ho co - gno - suo cha/in

Dul - ce pa - drun, dul - ce pa - drun, mi/ho co - gno - suo cha/in ce -

10

- ce - lo, Chierun cal - do ti l'ha - buo fre - vu - scin

ce - lo, Chierun cal - do ti l'ha - buo fre - vu - scin

ce - lo Chierun cal - do ti l'ha - buo fre - vu - scin pan

ce - lo Chierun cal - do ti l'ha - buo fre -

lo, Chierun cal - do ti l'ha - buo fre - vu - scin

15

pan - za Chal te pun-ze - va chal te pun-ze - va. co fal'spa-d'e lan -

pan - za Chal te pun-ze - va chal te pun-ze - va. co fal'spa-d'e lan -

za Chal te pun-ze - va chal te pun-ze - va co fal'spa-d'e lan -

wu - so'n pan - za, Chal te pun-ze - va, chal te pun-ze - va. co fal'spa-d'e

pan - za. Chal te pun-ze - va, chal te pun-ze - va. co fal'spa-d'e lan -

20

za, Si ben chie tel su-a - - va chie tel su-a - va! car -

za, Si ben, si ben chie tel su-a - va chie tel su-a - va! car-ne!

za. Si ben chie tel su-a - va si ben chie tel su-a - va chie tel su-a - va! car-ne!

lan - za. Si ben chie tel su-a - - va, chie tel su-a - va! car - ne!

za. Si ben, si ben chie tel su-a - - va, chie tel su-a - va! car

25

ne! pe - - lo Mo mi, mo mi, chie t'ho/a - mã sem - pre del bun

pe - lo. Mo mi, mo mi Chie t'ho/a - mã sem - pre del bun

lo. Mo mi, mo mi, chie t'ho/a - mã sem - pre del bun

pe - lo Mo mi, chie t'ho/a - mã sem - pre del bun

- ne! pe - lo. Mo mi, mo mi, chie t'ho/a - mã sem - pre del bun

30

ze - lo, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio pu - san - za, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio  
 ze - lo, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio pu - san - za, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio  
 ze - lo, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio pu - san - za, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio  
 ze - lo, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio pu - san - za, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio  
 ze - lo, Cul ca - ni - cu - la/ho fa - do mio pu - san - za.

35

pu - san - za Tan - do chiel cal - do bo - ra del scu - san -  
 pu - san - za, pu - san - za Tan - do chiel cal - do bo - ra del scu - san  
 pu - san - za, Tan - do chiel cal - do bo - ra del scu -  
 pu - san - za, Tan - do chiel cal - do bo - ra del scu -  
 pu - san - za, Tan - do chiel cal - do bo - ra del scu - san -

Tan - do chiel cal - do bo - ra del scu - san -

40

za La xe/an - da via cur - ran - d'a re - mi'a ve - lo. Nci cre - der chie sia cas - sia.  
 za La xe/an - da via cur - ran - do la xe/an - da via cur - ran - d'a re - mi'a ve - lo.  
 san - za La xe/an - da via cur - ran - do la xe/an - da via cur - ran - d'a re - mi'a ve - lo. Nci cre - der chie sia cas -  
 za La xe/an - da via cur - ran - d'a re - mi'a ve - lo. Nci cre - der chie sia cas -  
 za La xe/an - da via cur - ran - d'a re - mi'a ve - lo. Nci cre - der chie sia cas -

za La xe/an - da via cur - ran - d'a re - mi'a ve - lo. Nci cre - der chie sia cas -

45

noi cre-der chie sia cas - sia/o'l men- de - si - -na. Cu - re/esy - ro - pi.

Noi cre-der chie sia cas - sia/o'l men- de - si - na. Cu - re/esy - ro - pi

-sia, noi cre-der chie sia cas - sia/o'l men- de - si - na, Cu - re/esy - ro - pi.

sia, noi cre-der chie sia cas - sia/o'l men- de - si - -na, Cu - re/esy - ro - pi.

sia, noi cre-der chie sia cas - sia/o'l men- de - si - na,

50

pi - ru - le/ò burset - te, Chie dal fe - vre, chie; dal fe - vre fo - gu - sa l'ha ga - n - o.

pi - ru - le/ò burset - te, Chie dal fe - vre, chie; dal fe - vre fo - gu - sa l'ha ga - n - o.

pi - ru - le/ò burset - te, Chie dal fe - vre chie dal fe - vre fo - gu - sa l'ha ga - n - o.

pi - ru - le/ò burset - te, Chie dal fe - vre, chie dal fe - vre fo - gu - sa l'ha ga - n - o.

Chie dal fe - vre, chie dal fe - vre fo - gu - sa l'ha ga - n - o.

## Seconda parte

55

Mi xe stà chel c'hà fa - dc dul - ce ghi -

Mi xe stà chel c'hà fa - dc dul - ce ghi -

Mi xe stà chel c'hà fa - dc dul - ce ghi -

Mi xe stà chel, mi xe stà chel c'hà fa - dc dul - ce

Mi xe stà chel, mi xe stà chel c'hà fa - dc dul - ce

60

na Ve - gnir so buc - ca/al can cul ca - rez - zet - te, cul ca - rez - zet

- na Ve - gnir so buc - ca/al can cul ca - rez - zet - te, cul ca - rez - zet

na Ve - gnir so buc - ca/al can cul ca - rez - zet - te, cul ca - rez - zet

ghi - na Ve - gnir so buc - ca/al can cul ca - rez - zet - te, cul ca - rez - zet - te

ghi - na Ve - gnir so buc - ca/al can cul ca - rez - zet - te, cul ca - rez - zet

65

- te, Va pia mo dai gia - tròs to sol'din dri - o.

te, Va pia mo dai gia - tròs to sol'din dri - o. Pa - drun, re - sta cun

te, Va pia mo dai gia - tròs to sol'din dri - o. Pa - drun, re - sta cun

Va pia mo dai gia - tròs to sol'din dri - o. Pa - drun, re - sta cun

te, Va pia mo dai gia - tròs to sol'din dri - o.

70

Pa - drun, re - sta cun di - o, Mi no tel por - rò dirpio ve - ri - ta - e, Per fin chie

di - o Pa - drun, re - sta cun di - o, Mi no tel por - rò dirpio ve - ri - ta - e, Per fin chie

di - o, Pa - drun, re - sta cun di - o, Mi no tel por - rò dirpio ve - ri - ta - e, Per fin chie

di - o, Pa - drun, re - sta cun di - o, Mi no tel por - rò dirpio ve - ri - ta - e, Per fin chie

Pa - drun, re - sta cun di - o, Mi no tel por - rò dirpio ve - ri - ta - e, Per fin chie

75

no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta- e, Per fin chieno la tur-na l'ai-dro/i sta - e.

no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta- e, Per fin chieno la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta - e.

no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta- e, Per fin chieno la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta - e.

no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta- e, Per fin chie no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta - e, l'ai-dro/i-sta- e.

no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta- e, Per fin chie no la tur-na l'ai-dro/i-sta - e, l'ai-dro/i-sta - e.

80

Via da che - ste cun - dra - - - e An - de - mc/all' ai - dro

Via da che - ste cun - dra - - - e An - de - mc/all' ai - dro

Via da che - ste cun - dra - - - e An - de - mc/all' ai - dro po

Via da che - ste cun - dra - - - e An - de - mc/all' ai - dro

Via da che - ste cun - dra - - - e An - de - mc/all' ai - dro

85

po - lo cun - sto can: Me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me

po - lo cun - sto can: Me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me

po - lo cun - sto can: Me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me

po - lo cun - sto can: Me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me

po - lo cun - sto can: Me re - cu - man - do/a wu - i, me

90

re - - cu - man - do / a - vu - i, te ba - so - l man, te ba - so - l man.

re - cu - man - do / a - vu - i, te ba - so - l man.

re - cu - man - do / a - vu - i te ba - so - l man, te ba - so - l man.

re - cu - man - do / a - vu - i, te ba - so - l man, te ba - so - l man.

re - cu - man - do / a - vu - i, te ba - so - l man, te ba - so - l man.

## 12. Excerpt from *Amadigi*

Bernardo Tasso apparently worked on his great epic poem *Amadigi* over a long period of time. Part of this work he did “in the company” of his friends and colleagues in Venice, many of whom frequented the home of Domenico Venier.

His friends in Venice included Paolo Manuzio, the Academy’s printer, Patrizio, also a member, Veniero, Gradenigo, Molino, and Ruscelli, as well as Atanagi, who had come from Urbino with him. In their company Tasso spent some eighteen months in a final revision of his work [*Amadigi*].<sup>27</sup>

It is very possible that a portion of his work could have been presented at a gathering of some of these colleagues, set to music by one of the many musicians/poets who gathered there, including the courtesans. I have written a musical sketch as one of these courtesans might have improvised it--in a very simple style that sets the words in relief. The form, *ottava rima*, consists of eleven-syllable verses similar to the sonnet, but arranged in strophes of eight lines. I have based my musical sketch on the *Romanesca*, a popular vehicle for epic poems in *ottava rima*, in which the singer/improviser works with a given bass and harmonic pattern, weaving new melodies above it.

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<sup>27</sup> Edward Williamson, *Bernardo Tasso* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1951), 114.

*Amadigi* excerpt (Canto II, stanza 63)

Ella, che gli occhi in lui fermi tenea,  
 Siccome Clizia nell'amato Sole;  
 E che'l suo desiderio conoscea  
 Dall'efficace suon delle parole;  
 Di compiacerlo oltre misura ardea:  
 E tinta il volto del color, che suole  
 Viola ornar, con la bocca di rose  
 Così con bassa voce gli rispose:

Io farò ogn'opra, perchè possi avere  
 Il fin dell'onorato tuo desio;  
 Ma pria Donzel vorrei da te sapere,  
 Da quanto tempo in qua sei fatto mio:  
 Da indi in poi, che con vostro piacere  
 Mi vi dis la Reina, e volse ch'io  
 Vi fossi servo, il Giovinetto disse,  
 Con le luci tremanti in terra fisse.

Volea più dir; ma'l troppo amor gli avvinse  
 L'ardita lingua, e tolse la parola;  
 E di color vermiglio gli dipinse  
 Il vago viso, e la candida gola.  
 Ne d'onesto rossor manco si tinse  
 Del famoso Lisuarte la figliuola:  
 E risposto gli avria; ma sopraggiunse  
 Invida compagnia, che lor disgiunse.

She, who had her eyes fixed on him, like Clizia on her lover Sole,  
 and whose desire she knew as the result of his words, burned to delight  
 him:  
 And her face, tinted with the color which often decorates the violets,  
 with her rosy mouth answered him in a low voice:

"I will do everything to achieve the honored goal of your desire";  
 But first, Donzel, I would like to know how long have you been mine,"  
 "From now on, with your pleasure, I will call you Queen, and turn all  
 that I may serve you,"  
 the young man said, as light made the earth tremble.

He wanted to say more, but too much love filled him,  
His brave tongue was speechless, red coloring his handsome face and  
candid throat.  
Of no less honest russet than that of Lisuarte's daughter: And answer he  
would have; but  
unexpectedly, envious company arrived and separated them.

The translation is mine.

## Excerpt from *Amadigi*

Bernardo Tasso

*Simulation of improvisatory sketch based on Romanesca pattern*

5

El - la che gli oc - chi in lu - i fer - mi te - ne - a Sic - co - me Chi - zia

10

nell' a - ma - to So - le E che! su - o de - si - de - no co - no - sce

15

- a Dall' et - ti - ca - ce such del - le pa - ro - le

20

Di com pia - cer - lo! - tra mi - su - ra ar - de - a E tin - ta i voi - to da co -

25 30

- lor che suo - le Vi - o - la or - nar con la bcc - ca di ro

35

se Co - si con bas - sa vo - ce gli ri - po - se.

### 13. *Canzone villanesca* by Verdelot

The origin of this piece seems to have been a popular song that existed in many guises. One version, according to Marin Sanudo,<sup>28</sup> was heard on the street in Venice in 1500 sung by a group of young men. Knud Jeppesen has traced it through several *frottole*. He finds it as a refrain in a 1507 Petrucci edition of *frottole*, again in a Quodlibet “L’ultimo di di maggio,” and in several other settings. The beginning of the song is also transformed as “fortuna d’un gran tempo,” another much used tune. Verdelot employs as his opening a figure from the bass in Ms. R. 142 (Liceo Mus., Bologna).<sup>29</sup> He then continues with the descending fifth that is the opening of the Torelamo vilan/Fortuna di gran tempo melody. Einstein characterized it as “a coarse street-ballad.”<sup>30</sup>

All of the following transcriptions of pieces by Verdelot (numbers 13, 14, and 15) have been taken from the editions of Donald Lee Hersh (Don Harrán) in his dissertation, *Verdelot and the Early Madrigal*. The translations are mine.

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<sup>28</sup> Marin Sanudo, the author of *I diarii (1496-1533)* (Venice: Visentini, 1873-1903), is a source of many of the details of life in Venice at the time of his writing.

<sup>29</sup> Knud Jeppesen, *La Frottola III: Frottola und Volkslied* (Copenhagen: Hansen, 1970), 20-22.

<sup>30</sup> Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal*, tr. Alexander Krappe, Roger Sessions, and Oliver Strunk (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), 85.

*Torelamo vilan*

(Verdelot's text)

Torelamo vilan  
 La puta dal guarnel  
 La ti fara stantar  
 filar al molinel  
 La ti fara la corna  
 Per manco d'un marcel

Torelamo, the city wench, little girl (whore) in a petticoat  
 She will make you stay spinning at the mill  
 And she will give horns for less than a marcel (a coin).

(L'ultimo dì di maggio)

(Petrucci, book 7, 1507)

Torelamo vilan  
 la putta del guarnel  
 la ti fara stentar  
 la ti dara el martel  
 Cu cu cu cu cu cu  
 la ti fara tottare  
 a modo d'asinel

Torelamo vilan  
 La puta del guarnel  
 Tu la fare stentar  
 filar al molinel

## Torelamo vilan

Verdelot

5

Musical score for measures 1-4. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves. The lyrics are: To - re - la mo. The melody is simple and repetitive, with the lyrics appearing on each staff.

10

Musical score for measures 5-8. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves. The lyrics are: To - re - la mo vi - lan La pu - ta del guar - nei. The melody continues with the same simple, repetitive pattern.

15

Musical score for measures 9-12. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves. The lyrics are: La ti fa - ra La ti fa - ra pu - ta del guar - nei La ti fa - ra La ti fa - ra stan - tar. The melody continues with the same simple, repetitive pattern.

20

ra stan - tar fi - lar al mo - fi - nel To - re -  
 La ti fa - ra stan - tar fi - lar al mo - fi - nel To - re - la  
 ti fa - ra stan - tar fi - lar al mo - fi - nel  
 tar fi - lar al mo - fi - nel

25

la mo, To - re - la mo vi - lan  
 mo To - re - la mo vi - lan, To - re la mo  
 To - re - la mo vi - lan, To - re la mo  
 To - re - la mo

30

To - re - la mo vi lan To - re - la  
 - lan, To - re - la mo  
 vi - lan To - re  
 vi - lan To - re - la mo

35

mo To - re - la mo vi - lan La pu - ta del guar - nel

To - re - la mo vi - lan La pu - ta del guar - nel

la mo. To - re - la mo vi - lan La pu - ta

To - re - la mo vi - lan La pu - ta

40

La ti fa - ra la cor - na Per man - co d'un mar - cel

La ti fa - ra la cor - na Per man - co d'un mar - cel

del guar - nel La ti fa - ra la cor -

del guar - nel La ti fa - ra la cor -

45

La ti fa - ra La ti fa -

La ti fa - ra La

na Per man - co d'un mar - cel La ti fa - ra la cor -

na Per man - co d'un mar - cel La ti fa - ra La ti fa - ra

50

ra la cor-na Per man-co d'un mar-cel Per man-co  
 ti fa-ra la cor-na Per man-co d'un mar-cel Per man-co  
 na La ti fa-ra la cor-na Per man-co d'un mar-cel. Per man-co  
 La ti fa-ra la cor-na Per man-co d'un mar-cel. Per man-co

55

d'un mar-cel. Per man-co d'un mar-cel Per man-co d'un mar-cel.  
 d'un mar-cel. Per man-co d'un mar-cel Per man-co d'un mar-cel.  
 d'un mar-cel. Per man-co d'un mar-cel Per man-co d'un mar-cel.  
 d'un mar-cel. Per man-co d'un mar-cel Per man-co d'un mar-cel.

14. *Hoime che la brunetta mia*

(text by Michele Pesenti)

Hoime che la brunetta mia  
Che l'e di fuora  
Ne vuol tornar ancora  
Hoime ch'ella m'accora  
Che meco non dimora  
Almen' una sol hora

Alas, my dark-haired love who is now away, does not want to return.  
Alas, she grieves me, for she won't stay, even for an hour.

*Hoime che la brunetta mia*

Verdelot

5

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-5. The score is for six voices: Cantus, Altus, Tenor, Quintus, Sextus, and Bassus. The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are:

Cantus: -  
 Altus: - Hoi-me che la bru-net-ta mi-a  
 Tenor: Hoi - me che la bru-net-ta - mi - a Che fe Che  
 Quintus: Hoi-me che la bru-net-ta - mi - a mi -  
 Sextus: - Hoi-me che  
 Bassus: - Hoi-me che la bru - net -

10

Musical score for the second system, measures 6-10. The score continues for the six voices. The lyrics are:

Cantus: - Hoi - me che la bru-net -  
 Altus: Che l'e di fuo - ra Ne vuol tor - nar Ne vuol tor - nar  
 Tenor: l'e di fuo - ra Che l'e di fuo - ra  
 Quintus: a Che l'e di fuo - ra, Che di fuo - ra  
 Sextus: la bru - net - ta mi - a Che l'e di fuo - - ra Che  
 Bassus: ta mi - a Che l'e di fuo - ra

15

ta mi a che l'e che l'e di fuo -  
 Ne vuol tor - nar Ne vuol tor - nar  
 Che l'e di fuo - ra Ne vuol tor - nar an - co - ra Ne  
 Ne vuol tor - nar, Ne vuol tor - nar Ne vuol,  
 l'e di fuo - ra Che l'e di fuo - ra

Che l'e di fuo ra Ne

20

ra Ho - me chi - la mac - - co - ra  
 an - co - ra Ne vuol tor - nar an - co - ra  
 vuol tor - nar an - co - ra tor - nar an - co - ra an -  
 Ne vuol tor - nar an - co - ra tor - nar an - co - ra, an - co -  
 ra Ne vuol tor - nar an - co - ra, an - co -  
 vuol tor - nar an - co - ra tor - nar an - co - ra

25

Hoi - me ch'el - la m'ac - co - ra Che  
 ra Hoi - me ch'el - la m'ac - co - ra  
 co - ra Hoi - me ch'el - la m'ac - co - ra Che me - co non di - mo -  
 ra Hoi - me ch'el - la m'ac - co - ra Che me - co  
 - - ra Hoi - me ch'el - la m'ac - co - ra Che  
 Hoi - me ch'el - la m'ac - co - ra Che me -

30

me - co non di - mo - ra Al - men' u - na sol ho  
 Che me - co non di - mo - ra Al - men' u -  
 ra non di - mo - ra Al - men' u - na sci:  
 Che me - co non di - mo - ra Al - men' u - na sol ho - ra u -  
 me - co di - mo - ra Al - me - no  
 co non di - mo - ra Al - me - no Al - men' u - na sol

35

ra  
na sol ho - ra Hoi - me che  
ho - ra Hoi - me che la bru - net - ta mi -  
na sol ho - ra Al - men' u - na sol ho - ra. Hoi - me che la bru - net - ta  
Al - men' u - na sol ho - ra  
ho - ra.

40

la bru - net - ta mi - a Che l'e di fuo - ra Ne vuol ter -  
a Che l'e Che l'e di fuo - ra Che l'e di fuo -  
mi - a. mi - a Che l'e di fuo - ra Che l'e  
Hoi - me che la bru - net - ta mi - a Che l'e di fuo -  
Hoi - me che la bru - net - ta mi - a Che l'e

45

Hoi - me che la bru-net - ta mi - a Che l'e Che  
 nar Ne vuol tor-nar Ne vuol tor - nar an - cc -  
 ra Che l'e di fuo - ra Che l'e di  
 di fuo - ra Che l'e di fuo -  
 ra Che l'e di fuo -  
 di fuo - ra

50'

l'e di - fuor - ra.  
 ra Che l'e di fuor - ra.  
 fuor - ra Che l'e di fuo - ra.  
 ra Che l'e Che l'e di fuo - ra.  
 ra Che l'e di fuo - ra.  
 Che l'e di fuo - ra.

## 15. *Chi busa?*

Dialogues were not only an opportunity for word-play, but also excellent vehicles for the composer to display his wit. Verdelot wrote many of these, as did later composers, such as Lassus; they also appear in the madrigal-comedies of Alessandro Striggio and Orazio Vecchi.

Here the two upper voices seem to represent the woman inside her home, while the lower four voices portray the importuning lover. As with all the other secular polyphonic pieces I have presented, many different performance possibilities exist. This one could be sung *a cappella*, or as a dialogue with solo voice and instrument for the top two parts and solo voice accompanied by instruments for the bottom four parts.

A peculiarity exists in the text for this piece. Sprinkled throughout are single letters with a period following them, as if to indicate abbreviations. As yet no complete explanation of these has been found. Don Harrán felt that the f., p., and Z. we encounter are types of exclamations by the two singing characters, a sort of spitting and hissing in general irritation and frustration. This does not seem reasonable to me, but I am not yet able to offer another explanation. It is possible that they are truly abbreviations.

Chi bussa?  
Chi e tu?  
Va via.

Apri.  
Sta quieta. f.  
Non andaro. Sentimi. f.  
Non mi fuggir, Donna scoltami. f.  
Apri.  
Rompero luscio.

Aspetta Z.  
Non far che t'apriro.

Su presto. f.  
fa rumor luscio.

Entra pian pian

Z

Z

E spento'l lume?

No

Spengilo

p.

Vien qua Z.

p.

Spetta ch'io vengo,

p.

Spetta ch'io vengo

Spetta ch'io vengo

p.

Who's knocking?  
Who are you?  
Go away.

Open up.  
Be quiet. f.  
I won't go. Listen to me. f.  
Don't run away, Lady, hear me. f.  
Open up.  
I'll break down the door.

Wait Z.  
Don't make me open.

Hurry up. f.  
The door is creaking.

Come in. Quietly.

Z.

Z.

Is the light out?

No.

Blow it out.

Come here. Z.

p.

Wait, I'm coming,

p.

Wait, I'm coming

Wait, I'm coming

p.

# Chi bussa?

Verdelot

5

Cantus  
 Quintus  
 Tenor I  
 Tenor II  
 Sextus  
 Bassus

Chi bus-sa? Chve tu? Va vi - a  
 Chi bus-sa? Chve tu? Va vi - a  
 A - pri. Sta que - ta. f. Non  
 A - pri. Sta que - ta. f. Non  
 A - pri. Sta que - ta. f. Non  
 A - pri. Sta que - ta. f. Non

10

an - da - ro Sen - ti-mi. f. Non mi fug - gir. Con -  
 an - da - ro Sen - ti-mi. f. Non mi fug - gir. Con - na.  
 an - da - ro Sen - ti-mi. f. Non mi fug - gir. Con -  
 an - da - ro Sen - ti-mi. f. Non mi fug - gir. Con - na.

15

na scol - ta - mi. f. A - pri. Rom - pe - ro lu - scio.

scol - ta - mi. f. A - pri. Rom - pe - ro lu - scio.

na. scol - ta - mi. f. A - pri. Rom - pe - ro lu - scio.

scol - ta - mi. f. A - pri. Rom - pe - ro lu - scio.

20

Z Non far che t'a - pri - ro.

spet - ta Z Non far che t'a - pri - ro.

Su pre - sto. f. fa ru - mor

Su pre - sto. f. fa ru - mor

Su pre - sto. f. fa ru - mor

Su pre - sto. f. fa ru - mor

25

En - tra pian pian Z. No  
 En - tra pian pian Z. No  
 lu - scio. E spen - to'l lu - me? Spen - gi -  
 lu - scio. E spen - to'l lu - me? Spen  
 lu - scio. E spen - to'l lu - me? Spen - gi - io.  
 lu - scio. E spen - to'l lu - me? Spen - gi - io.

30

p. Vien qua Z. p. Spet - ta ch'io ven - go  
 p. Vien qua Z. p. Spet - ta ch'io ven -  
 lo. Spen - gi - io p. Spet - ta ch'io ven - go. Spet - ta ch'io ven  
 - gi - io. p. Spet - ta ch'io ven - go. Spet - ta ch'io ven -  
 p. Spet - ta ch'io ven - go. Spet - ta ch'io ven  
 Spen - gi - io. p. Spet - ta ch'io ven - go. Spet - ta ch'io ven -

The image shows a musical score for six voices, arranged in six staves. The lyrics are: "Spet - ta chi - o ven - go p. go Spet - ta chi o ven - go p. - go. p. go p. - go. Spet - ta chi o ven - go. p. gc. Spet - ta chi o ven - go p." The score is written in a single system with a common time signature. The lyrics are placed below the corresponding staves. The first staff has the lyrics "Spet - ta", "chi - o", "ven - go", and "p.". The second staff has "go", "Spet - ta", "chi o", "ven - go", and "p.". The third staff has "- go." and "p.". The fourth staff has "go" and "p.". The fifth staff has "- go.", "Spet - ta", "chi o", "ven - go.", and "p.". The sixth staff has "gc.", "Spet - ta", "chi o", "ven - go", and "p.". The music consists of simple rhythmic patterns, primarily quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The lyrics are hyphenated across measures to indicate syllables.

## V

## Style

The panorama of musical styles heard at Ca' Venier and other salons was indeed wide, and the variety of pieces I suggest as repertory no doubt was in evidence all over Venice in this period. The present chapter examines both the talents of courtesans in general and the artistry of Tullia d'Aragona, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco, renowned for their singing, in particular; yet the evidence of their talents and artistry is much more elusive.

A beautiful voice or style of singing is extremely difficult to define, especially at the remove of so many centuries and without audible records. Critics in the Renaissance, as always, must have judged singers in an extremely subjective manner, according to their own taste and predilections. Since singing is the most personal and subjective musical means of expression, this is totally reasonable and natural. To understand, then, what this "beautiful singing" meant in the sixteenth century, particularly in northern Italy and especially in Venice, we must find as many specific descriptions as possible of musical events and, in the absence of enough of these, explore the concerns of discerning listeners. What were the reputations as singers of Tullia of Aragon, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco?

The descriptions we have of Veronica Franco are very few. What we know of her is the general information that *cortegiane oneste*, in order to be attractive, all played, sang, and wrote poetry, and discussed it with wit and intelligence. There are also some rather unspecific statements from several secondary sources that she sang well and could play more than one instrument. We may also infer that, since she had regular musical entertainments at her home in which she took part, she must have been at least a decent performer, or people would have stopped coming. A letter of Orazio Brunetti (who also met and admired Gaspara Stampa) states that Veronica Franco sang with "*soavissimo suono e dolcissimo canto*" and that she knew how to interpret "*le strofe del Petrarca*."<sup>1</sup> This tiny number of words actually yields quite a bit of information. The last credit--interpreting "*le strofe del Petrarca*"--is a reference to the art of improvising music on poetic texts, usually done to the accompaniment of the lute. Since Veronica was a practicing poet, and appeared regularly in the circle of writers who gathered at Domenico Venier's, her singing of Petrarch verses must have been a popular entertainment and one for which she would have been well schooled. Secondly, the words *soave* and *dolce* show up over and over in descriptions of music and musicians and seem to have a

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<sup>1</sup> Casagrande, *Le cortigiane veneziane nel cinquecento*, 200.

special meaning. I will speak to this point later, since all the descriptions of the singing women share these adjectives. Maffeo Venier, Veronica's enemy on many levels, refers to her singing to indicate her pretentiousness.<sup>2</sup> We do, however, have an indication in one of her letters of her priorities with reference to music:

Please do me the favor of coming early tomorrow, before the music begins, so that I can enjoy the sweet harmony of your Lordship's gentle conversation.<sup>3</sup>

The delights of sweet conversation with this man are more appealing than that of music. In another letter, though, she writes to a friend to lend her a harpsichord that she will play for the evening's entertainment.<sup>4</sup> She certainly must have been a competent player to make such a request. In her *Rime* she very openly advertises the richness of her sensual appeal:

Such a priestess of Venus am I  
That whoever experiences me this way

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<sup>2</sup> Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan*, 317, n.58.

<sup>3</sup> "A me fara grazia e favore che Ella venga . . . domani alla musica per tempo, perch'io, avanti il cominciare del suono musicale, possa, si come desidero, godere della dolcissima armonia de' soave ragionamenti di Vostra Signoria . . ." This is a portion of Letter 45 of Franco's *Lettere familiari*, quoted in Casagrande de Villavieras, *Le cortigiane veneziane*, 265.

<sup>4</sup> Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan*, 317, n.58.

Quickly forgets my singing and rhyming.<sup>5</sup>

She seems to be saying that music at her establishment, like the music at the gatherings at Ca' Venier, is incidental, a pleasant entertainment compared with her skills as a lover. This point, I believe, is one peculiar to Veronica's character. She is a proud woman and does not seek to hide what she does for a living. In several instances she is openly sensual and proud of it. This attitude does not diminish her literary or musical skills, but merely represents her honesty and sensuality. In this she differs from the other two artists in this study.

Gaspara Stampa was "renowned for her improvised singing to the lute."<sup>6</sup> Her biographer, Fiora Bassanese, thinks that she was possibly trained--and expected--by her family to be a profitable *virtuosa*.<sup>7</sup> There are other indications that she was highly thought of as a singer, having more than just the ordinary facility of a *cortegiana onesta*. One of Parabosco's *Lettere amoroze* of 1545 is dedicated to her:

I must say of her angelic voice, that, whenever it pierces the air with such sweet harmony, not only in the manner of a siren does

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*, 58.

<sup>6</sup> Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 332.

<sup>7</sup> Bassanese, *Gaspara Stampa*, 4.

it make everyone who is worthy of hearing her master the brother of death; but also it infuses with spirit and life the coldest stones, making them with incredible sweetness weep. . . .<sup>8</sup>

Perissone Cambio dedicates his *Primo libro di madrigali a quattro voci* to Stampa:

No woman in the world loves music more than you do, nor possesses it to such an unusual degree; and thousands upon thousands of fine and noble spirits attest to this, who, having heard your sweet harmonies, have given you the name of divine siren.<sup>9</sup>

Again, there is the use of *dolce*, or sweet, this time in conjunction with "harmonies." Ortensio Landi also said of her that she was an "excellent Musician."

Giazotto, in his *Harmonici concerti in aere veneto*, finds a sonnet by Gerolamo Fenaruolo dedicated to Gaspara, *musicista*. He has also found margin notes in Speroni's *Dialogo* that refer to the insertion of a madrigal of Gaspara's into a 1577 collection brought out by Bartoli. It is a madrigal for four voices, and was either

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<sup>8</sup> "Che dirò io di quella angelica voce, che qual'hora percuote l'aria de' si dolce harmonia, che non pure a guisa di sirena fa d'ogn'uno, che è degno . . . d'ascoltarla, insignorire il fratel della morte; ma in fonde spirito, et vita nelle piu fredde pietre, facendole per soverchia dolcezza lagrimare. . . ." Quoted in Casagrande de Villavieras, *Le cortigiane veneziane*, 197.

<sup>9</sup> Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 484.

transcribed or set by Antonio Dueto, a Piedmontese musician.<sup>10</sup>

Whether or not Giazotto's conclusion that she was a composer, and that her music was performed at an academy in Genoa, is correct, it is obvious that Gaspara was recognized as a fine singer and musician.

Tullia was an interesting and far more problematical character than either of the other two women. First of all, she belonged to an earlier generation, and came not from Venice, but from Rome. If her amount of travelling is to be considered, it would seem she had great difficulty in finding a situation where she could both make a living and be respected as the artist she felt herself to be. During her years of activity in Rome as a courtesan (1527-1531), she was considered to be at the "height of her profession,"<sup>11</sup> yet she could not stay there. Not beautiful by ordinary standards, she nevertheless had a surprising appeal. Giraldi Cinthio said of her in *Hecatommithi Book I* :

This man was so crazy about her. . . . She was overly tall, not at all noble in her bearing, with a homely face that in addition to a large mouth and thin lips was spoiled by a long nose with a hump in it. . . . She possessed two devilish eyes that as they skipped about inflamed men's hearts.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Giazotto, *Harmonici concerti*, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*, 91.

<sup>12</sup> Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*, 72-73.

She certainly amassed a number of important literary lovers, including Girolamo Muzio, Benedetto Varchi, and Bernardo Tasso. Haar mentions her as the "often-serenaded Tullia d'Aragona" for whom many musical settings were commissioned, as there were in praise of other specific women.<sup>13</sup> She was the lover of Filippo Strozzi (a member of Nero Capponi's circle) in 1531, with whom she shared an interest in music. As Strozzi sang in the Passion choruses in Florence during Holy Week, they possibly sang together on social occasions.<sup>14</sup> The letter describing her success in Ferrara, mentioned earlier, alluded to her skill as both an improviser and a singer of written polyphony. In *La tariffa*, Maffeo Venier, even as he insults her bitterly, says how well she practices *solfeggio*.<sup>15</sup> Guido Biagi says she played the lute with great mastery and sang with a harmonious voice.<sup>16</sup> He quotes another of her lovers, Alessandro Arrighi:

O s'udissi talor quando accompagna  
La voce al suon de la soave cetra . . .

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<sup>13</sup> Haar, *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music*, 174.

<sup>14</sup> Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*, 46.

<sup>15</sup> Maffeo Venier, *La tariffa of 1535*, quoted in Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*, 60.

<sup>16</sup> Biagi, "Un'etera romana," 671.

L'aria intorno addolcisca. . .<sup>17</sup>

Again, *soave* and *dolce* are the terms of importance, as well as her ability to accompany herself on the lute. Muzio also praised her singing in a poem:

E col dolce cantare il dolce suono,  
Che fan di marmo una persona viva<sup>18</sup>

If we examine the writings of the many poets and artists who frequented the academies and *ridotti* in which performances took place, and look to the prescriptions for satisfying works of music made by theorists and aestheticians, we can certainly find a reasonable basis for knowing what was pleasing and "beautiful" to listeners. The prime requisite for music is appropriate text-setting, which must include wit and ingenuity as well as balance--fine words and fine melodies that fit them. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the beauty attributed to the singers of this study was a result of the taste and balance, and the clear and expressive presentation, of the words and music that they sang. This argument is supported by the fact that these women were all poets and

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<sup>17</sup> Quoted above, p. 25.

<sup>18</sup> (And the sound of whose sweet singing that can bring marble to life) Quoted in Biagi, "Un' etera romana," 671.

therefore familiar with the importance of words. Even without being the most skilled writers, they had to have been sensitive to words, and concerned with how best to communicate. Each of the women in question was also purported to be a fine improviser, and presumably each singer improvised on many occasions to present her own poetry.

An analogy between these singers and their expressive "beauty" and the singing of a modern legend, Billie Holiday, might at this point be appropriate. Billie Holiday's charm as a singer was in her expressive phrasing and her extremely individual way with words: a combination of personalized diction and agogic accentuation. She sang in a limited range, without the extended range and virtuosity of some of the other great improvising singers (Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald, for example), expressing the lyrics with subtlety and nuance.<sup>19</sup> It is my contention that this same ability and charm was possessed by the three great women artists of this study.

It is, of course, a truism that pedagogues as well as composers from the 1530s to the 1580s were preoccupied with the relationship between word and music. But, when seen as a possible requisite of

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<sup>19</sup> On this idea, see, among others, Donald Clarke, *Wishing on the Moon* (New York: Viking, 1994); John Hammond, *John Hammond on Record: An Autobiography* (New York: Ridge Press, 1977); Katherine Cartwright, "Quotation and Reference in Jazz Performance: Ella Fitzgerald's 'St. Louis Blues,' 1950-1979," Ph.D. dissertation, The City University of New York, 1998.

performers, this relationship is perhaps significant in a new way.

For one thing, the concern for the word/music relationship was already strong prior to Zarlino's *L'istitutione* of 1558,<sup>20</sup> and therefore it was an issue already acknowledged during the period of the courtesans under discussion.

Theories in print usually lag behind actual practice, and we have seen, in the many discussions and *dialoghi* that took place at gatherings, the preoccupation with these issues among the musicians and poets of this study. In Parabosco's *I diporti, lo Speroni*, after a long exchange of *bon mots* and clever *riposte* with other interlocutors, says:

. . . we want some lively Madrigals, sauced with invention and elegant and graceful, if not spirited "*con bella tessitura*" [in a good range] and many beautiful verses and words; but above all the Madrigal and strambotto must have wit and invention so it will seem "*il motto*" [to the point].<sup>21</sup>

There follow many madrigals, *canzone*, *capitoli*, and *sonetti*, as each interlocutor contributes and praises the other's contributions. They are all addressed to love and ladies, and are then followed by a list

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<sup>20</sup> Don Harrán, "New Light on the Question of Text Underlay Prior to Zarlino," *Acta Musicologica* 45 (1973); Martha Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 90-98.

<sup>21</sup> Girolamo Parabosco, *I diporti di Messer Girolamo Parabosco* (Milan: G. Silvestri, 1814), 205.

of the *Gentildonne* of the city.

The three courtesans of this study undoubtedly took part in these types of discussions (as did Selveggia in Doni's *Dialogo*), at least when poetic ideas were involved. We do not have any evidence of the women involved in discussions of music, but their poetic works, dialogues, letters, and participation in *accademie* attest to their literary engagement. I believe that their singing would have been greatly influenced by such ideas and dialogues, as well as by their own sensitivity, as poets, to words. Their singing must have been extremely word-oriented, and insofar as it was considered beautiful, that beauty came from their expression of text, not from the virtuosic display associated with later singers.

The image of the singer who, by his or her expressivity, makes inanimate objects come to life (originating in the gift attributed to Orpheus) is applied to both Tullia (by Muzio) and Gaspara (by Parabosco). Marble comes alive and stones weep, indicating the power that made their song appealing. Sweetness and harmony (harmony between words and music, the sweetness of expression) are the attributes of all three singers, though undoubtedly their skills and abilities were not exactly the same.

## VI

## Conclusions

Cultural life in Venice depended in good part on the participation of beautiful and gifted women. The gift that our three courtesans shared was that of lyric poetry and song, and chief among their attributes as singers was their skill with words. *Words* were the primary focus of most *ridotti* and certainly the center of interest in Domenico Venier's salon. As poets, these women would have been concerned with the appropriate setting of their own words, and would have been sensitive to settings of others. Discussions of music and poetry in intellectual circles centered around propriety, wit, and harmony. Part of their skill with words *and* music involved their improvising music to poetry.

From Vincenzo Calmeta . . . we gather glimpses of a habit common among poets of publicizing verses by singing them personally or entrusting them to an established singer. . . . Calmeta observes that by "hearing today some poet's sonnet, elegy, *strambotto*, or epigram sung or recited, and then ten or fifteen days later hearing another, and a week later still another, and so on" one formed an impression quite different from the more careful and considered judgment which came from reading the same works collected in one volume.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pirrotta, *Music and Theatre*, 23.

Though women were delightful companions, respected for their wit and skills, the *ridotti* were still male-dominated, and it was the men's works that were discussed prominently in evening entertainments. Women would have entrusted their own work to the "more considered judgment" of friends and advisors, at least the first time it was presented. As performers of the works of others, however, they could be useful and attractive.

The "beauty" in these singers lay in their exquisite ability to match sound and meaning. This no doubt involved their use of timbre, inflection, accent, rubato, and ornamentation. The words "armonia," "dolce," and "soave" had a very particular meaning for musicians at this time. The instructions of such theorists as Giovanni Del Lago (c.1490-after 1543) and Giovanni Maria Lanfranco (1490-1545) repeatedly stress the proper setting of words in terms of syllable placement, word repetition, proper accentuation, and "accord[ing] one's voice to the sense of the words." Beauty was a function of "harmony" and "dulcedo," which in turn hinged upon appropriate expression.<sup>2</sup> A passage from the life of Irene di Spilimbergo also uses similar words: when she was urged to study music, she chose to work with Tromboncino, because his music was

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<sup>2</sup> Harrán, "New Light on the Question of Text Underlay Prior to Zarlino"; Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal*, 90-98; Bonnie Blackburn, Edward E. Lowinsky, Clement Miller, eds., *Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 888-89.

*“più armoniosa e soave delle altre.”*<sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly, the range of the women singers was "low and comfortable," as prescribed by Del Lago, for the sake of expressive possibilities.<sup>4</sup> If we look at some of the pieces in Doni's *Dialogo*, we see ranges from middle C or D to F or G above the staff--a very easy low and middle range for the soprano voice. Even with possibilities of transposition, which was certainly a common practice, the range is still not more than an octave and a fourth. The same is true of the pieces I present in the hypothetical repertory for an evening's entertainment. This is consistent with the poets' focus on words, and with the somewhat lesser priority that music held in their social circles. It is possible that Gaspara Stampa and Francesca Bellamano, the gifted lutenist, were more musically oriented and virtuosic than the other women mentioned. Certainly Polissena Pecorina was, but the details of her performances remain a subject for further study.

A mixture of musical styles, including both "high" and "low," written and improvised, was in each singer's repertory. We must assume that Veronica, Gaspara, and Tullia were called on to sing certain popular music favorites, with music or text in a less elevated

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<sup>3</sup> Anne Jacobson Schutte, "Irene Spilimbergo: The Image of a Creative Woman in Late Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (Spring, 1991), 50-51.

<sup>4</sup> Del Lago advises that song should be "full of harmony, sweet, resonant, low and comfortable to sing." Blackburn *et al.*, *Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 888-89.

style, along with more complex art music. Often popular pieces, especially *balli*, were connected with a particular courtesan as her favorite piece. This repertory, and the skills of improvisation necessary to perform it, are not as well known to modern performers. Modern instrumentalists in the field of early music are beginning to develop this area, but singers have not yet turned to this very important part of Renaissance music. Even to the lofty Willaert the popular music that abounded in Italy was extremely important, and he also wrote in the "low" style of the *villanesca*.

Finally, another important aspect of the courtesans' talents was their sense of performance. Their very lives were in a sense performances, necessary to attract and keep alive passion, interest, and support. Courtesans created public *personae*. These *personae* exuded great luxury, in their dress and in their homes. They spent time and money to preserve and enhance their beauty. (The mirror, along with combs, bottles, boxes, hair ornaments, curlers, and many cosmetics, played an important part among the paraphernalia of the courtesan.)<sup>5</sup> They discoursed with intelligence and knowledge, and they played the part of *gentildonne* with courtesy and humor. They performed music, either by reading from written scores or by improvising.

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<sup>5</sup> Santore, "La Bella," 92-97.

Courtesans prepared a pathway for the great women singers to come; their quasi-independent lives paved the way for those able to support themselves as singers alone, although with a subtle and somewhat unfortunate spin. The courtesan has left her legacy to modern singers--like it or not (though this is perhaps changing somewhat in our own time)--in the image of the female singer, the diva, who is singular, separated from other musicians, especially instrumentalists, and even from the male singer. She is recognized by her elaborate, luxurious, and colorful dress and her aura of beauty, even when, like Tullia of Aragon, she does not have conventionally beautiful features (one might think here of Maria Callas). Her *persona* is a constant "performance." Like the courtesan, she accepts a public *persona* other than that of her own personal identity. She can be a "free spirit" and not subscribe to norms of morality; in fact, she is most interesting when she does not, though, as in the case of the courtesan, this "freedom" can be a mixed blessing. Although the singing style of the diva is not that of the women of this study--the modern diva possesses technical virtuosity and power--her trappings resonate with the *style* of the courtesans' lives. Elaborate dress, the aura of physical beauty, and a romantic *persona* have become forever the attributes of "the singer."

## Appendix

The wealth of works associated with particular courtesans is another bit of evidence of the importance, socially and musically, of these women. I have consulted only the most accessible works in this abundant repertory.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Courtesan</u>	<u>Composer</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Quando col dolce suono	(Polissena Pecorina)	J. Arcadelt	167
2. Qual dolcezza giamai	(Polissena Pecorina)	A. Willaert	173
3. Non gemme, non fin'oro	(Chiara)	C. de Rore	182
4. Sciocco fu'l tuo desire	(Chiara)	A. Willaert	188
5. Amor, da che tu vuoi/Gentil coppia eccellente	(La Sirena & La Basilisca)	A. Willaert	199
6. Carissim' Isabella	(Isabella)	J. Arcadelt	207
7. Non mai donna più bella	(Tullia d'Aragona)	P. Verdelot	211
8. La bella Greca	(Ortensia Greca)	C. de Rore	218
9. Amor io sento l'alma	(Barbera Salutati)	P. Verdelot	223

## Dialogues between courtesan and patron

- |     |  |             |     |
|-----|--|-------------|-----|
| 10. | Donna fra più bei volti honesti e cari | J. Arcadelt | 226 |
| 11. | Si come dit'ogn'hor bella vi paio      | J. Arcadelt | 231 |

Instrumental *Balli* and *Arie*

- |     |   |           |     |
|-----|---|-----------|-----|
| 12. | Padoana seconda dita la Chiareta (Chiara) | M. Facoli | 238 |
| 13. | Aria della Signora Fior d'Amor            | M. Facoli | 241 |
| 14. | La bella Franceschina                     | Anonymous | 242 |
| 15. | La bella Berssanina                       | Anonymous | 243 |
| 16. | Aria della Signora Ortensia               | M. Facoli | 244 |

1. My edition of *Quando col dolce suono* is taken from Jacobus Arcadelt, *Collected Works*, edited by Albert Seay, *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae* 31 (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1977), II, 99-101, and is from Arcadelt's First Book of Madrigals (1539). Together with the Willaert madrigal that follows (No. 2), it praises Polissena Pecorina. (The poets are unknown.) Both have a range of no more than a ninth in the top voice, making it possible for either a woman or a man (falsettist) to sing that part. However, Willaert's work, probably written much later but published at approximately the same time, is considerably more complex; it uses five voices, making the overall compass of voices much greater, the bass descending to G, as compared to C in the Arcadelt.

Quando col dolce suono,  
 s'accordon le dolcissime parole,  
 ch'escon fra bianche perl'e bei rubini,

maravigliando dico: hor come sono  
 venut' in ciel, che si dappresso il sol  
 rimiro,et od' accent' alt' e divini,

O spirti pellegrini,  
 s'udeste Pulisena direste ben,  
 d'udir doppia sirena,

io che veduta l'ho,  
 vi giuro ch'ella è più ch'el sol  
 assai lucent' e bella.

When with sweet sound, sweetest words are joined, and issue from among white pearls  
 and lovely rubies,

With wonder I say: now I am as if come to heaven, and so close to the sun I gaze, hearing  
 accents elevated and divine,

O pilgrim spirits, if you heard Polissena, you would say you have heard the Sirens twice  
 over,

I who have seen her swear that she is more radiant and beautiful than the sun.

The translation is mine.

# Quando col dolce suono

Jacques Arcadelt

5

Treble: Quan - do col dol - ce suo - no s'ac - cor - don  
 Alto: Quan - do col dol - ce suo - no s'ac - cor - don le dol -  
 Bass: Quan - do col dol - ce suo - no, s'ac - cor - don le dol - cis - si -  
 Bass: Quan - do col dol - ce suo - no, s'ac - cor - don

10

Treble: le dol - cis - si - me pa - ro - le. ch'è - scon fra bian - che  
 Alto: cis - si - me pa - ro - le. ch'è - scon fra bian - che per - le ch'è - scon fra  
 Bass: me, dol - cis - si - me pa - ro - le. ch'è - scon fra bian - che per - e  
 Bass: le dol - cis - si - me pa - ro - le. ch'è - scon fra bian - che per - e

15

Treble: per' e bei ru - bi - ni, ma - ra - vi - glian - do di - co: hor co - me so -  
 Alto: bian - che per' e bei ru - bi - ni, ma - ra - vi - glian - do di - co: hor co - me so -  
 Bass: bei ru - bi - ni, ma - ra - vi - glian - do di - co: hor co - me so -  
 Bass: bei ru - bi - ni, ma - ra - vi - glian - do di - co: hor co - me so -

20

no ve - nut' in ciel, che si dap-pres-so che si dap-pres-so, che  
 no ve-nut' in cie - - lo, che si dap-pres-so che si dap-pres-so, che  
 - no ve - nut' in ciel, ve - nut' in ciel che si dap-pres-so che si dap-pres - so, che  
 no ve - nut' in ciel, ve - nut' in ciel che si dap-pres-so che si dap-pres-so, che

25

si dappres- so/il sol ri-mi - ro, et od' ac-cent' alt' e di - vi - ni. O  
 si dappres - so/il sol ri - mi - ro, et od' ac-cent' alt' e di - vi -  
 si dappres- so/il sol ri-mi - ro, et od' ac-cen-ti, alt' e di - vi -  
 si dappres- so/il sol ri-mi - ro, et od' ac-cent' alt' e di - vi -

30 35

spir - ti, o spir - ti pel - le - gri - ni, s'u-de-ste Pu - fi - se -  
 ni, O spir - ti pel - le - gri - ni, s'u - de - ste Pu - fi - se - na di -  
 ni, O spir - ti pel - le - gri - ni, s'u - de - ste Pu - fi - se - na di -  
 ni, O spir - ti pel - le - gri - ni, s'u - de - ste Pu - fi - se - na di -

40

na di - re - ste ben d'u-dir dop - pia si - re - na, io che ve - du - ta l'ho, vi  
 re - ste ben, di - re - ste ben s'u - dir dop - pia si - re - na, io che ve - du - ta l'ho,  
 re - ste ben d'u-dir dop - pia si - re - na, dop - pia si - re - na, io che ve - du - ta l'ho, vi  
 io che ve - du - ta l'ho

45

giu - ro ch'el - la, vi giu - ro ch'el - la è più ch'el sol as - sai lu - cent' e bel -  
 vi giu - ro ch'el - la è più ch'el sol as - sai lu - cent' e bel -  
 giu - ro ch'el - la è più ch'el sol as - sai lu - cent' -  
 vi giu - ro ch'el - la è più ch'el sol as -'

50

la. è più ch'el sol as - sai lu - cent' e bel -  
 la, lu - cent' e bel - la è più ch'el sol as - sai lu - cent' e bel -  
 te e bel - la è più ch'el sol as - sai lu - cen -  
 sai lu - cent' e bel - la, è più ch'el sol as -'

55

la.

la, lu-cent' e bel - la, lu - cent' e bel - - - - - la.

- te e bel - la, è più che'l sol as-sai lu - cent' e bel - la.

sai lu - cent' e bel - - - - - la, lu - cent' e bel - - - - - la.

2. Willaert's encomium to La Pecorina is taken from the facsimile edition (Brussels: Corpus of Early Music, 1970) of Verdelot, *Le dotte et eccellente compositioni de madrigali a cinque voce* (Venice: A. Gardane, c.1538), a compilation consisting of works by Verdelot, Willaert, Giachet Berchem, Leonardus Barre, Arcadelt, Nolet, and Costanzo Festa.

Willaert uses a bit of special word painting for the text "E si rallegra'l ciel di gir' in giro" (and they rejoice in each circle of heaven), changing to a triple meter (the perfect circle); at measures 68-69, Tenor and Quintus make somewhat of a circle as they cross each other in opposite motion, one descending an octave, the other ascending a fifth.

Qual dolcezza giamai  
 Di canto di sirena  
 Involò i sensi e l'alma chi l'udiro  
 Che di quella non sia minor assai  
 Che con la voce angelica e divina  
 Desta ne i cor la bella Pecorina.

Et la dolci armonia  
 si fa serena l'aria,  
 s'acqueta'l mar,  
 taccio' i venti  
 E si rallegra'l ciel di gir' in giro  
 I santi angeli intenti  
 Chi nand' in questa part'il vago viso  
 s'oblian ogni piacer del paradiso  
 Et ell' in tant' honore  
 Dice con lieto suon  
 qui regn' amore.

The sweetness of siren song never stole the senses and soul of the listener more than she whose angelic and divine voice awakens the heart--the beautiful Pecorina.

And with sweet harmony it (her song) stills the air, calms the sea, silences the wind, and makes the holy angels in each circle of heaven rejoice;  
 He who meets in these parts that lovely face, forgets all the pleasures of paradise  
 And she, honored, says with happy sound, that here reigns love.

The translation is mine.

# Qual dolcezza giamai

Adriano Willaert  
5

Cantus

Altus

Tenore

Bassus

Qual dol - cez - za gia - ma - i Qual dol -

Qual dol - cez - za gia - ma - i qual dol -

Qual dol - cez - za gia - ma - i qual dol -

Qual dol - cez - za gia - ma - i qual dol -

10

dol - cez - za gia - ma - i Di can - to

dol - cez - za gia - ma - i Di can - to di si -

cez - za qual dol - cez - za gia - ma - i Di can - to di

dol - cez - za gia - ma - i Di can - to di si - re -

15

di si - re - na In - vo - lo'i sen - si/e l'al - ma

re - na

si - re - na In - vo - lo'i sen - si/e l'al - ma chi

na In - vo - lo'i sen - si/e

na In - vo - lo'i sen - si/e l'al - ma

20

chi fu - di - ro Che di  
 In - vo - lo'i sen - si/e l'al - ma chi fu - di - ro Che  
 fu - di - ro i sen - si/e l'aim - a chi fu - di - ro Che di  
 l'al - m'a chi in - vo - lo'i sen - si/e l'al - m'a chi fu - di - ro Che  
 chi fu - di - ro i sen - si/e l'al - m'a chi fu - di - ro

25

quel - la non sia mi - nor as - sa - i  
 di quel - la non sia mi - nor as - sa - i che di quel - la non  
 quel - la non si - a mi - nor as -  
 di quel - la che di quel - la non sia mi -  
 Che di quel - la non sia mi - nor as - sa - i non sia mi -

30

Che con la vo - ce/an - ge - li - ca e  
 sia mi - nor as - sa - i che con la vo - ce/an - ge - li - ca/e di - v -  
 sa - i che con la vo - ce/an - ge - li - ca/e di - v -  
 - nor as - sa - i Che con la vo - ce an - ge - li - ca/e  
 nor as - sa - i Che con la vo - ce

35

di - vi - na Des - ta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co -  
 Des - ta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na  
 - na Des - ta nei cor des - ta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n -  
 di - vi - na De - sta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n -  
 De - sta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n -

40

ni - na Des - ta nei  
 Des - ta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na des - ta nei  
 na Des - ta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na des - ta  
 na De - sta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na de - sta nei cor  
 na De - sta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na De -

45

cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na.  
 cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na la bel - la Pe - co - n  
 nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na.  
 ds - sta nei cor la Bel - la Pe - co - n - na la bel - la Pe - co - n -  
 sta nei cor la bel - la Pe - co - n - na la bel - la Pe - co - n -

## Seconda Parte

50'

na. Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni -  
 na. Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni -  
 na. Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni -  
 na. Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni -  
 na. Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni -

55

a  
 a Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni - a  
 a Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni - a si fa se - re - na  
 a et la dolc' ar - mo - ni - a si fa se - re -  
 Et la dolc' ar - mo - ni - a si fa se - re

60'

si fa se - re - na l'a - na s'ac -  
 si fa se - re - na l'a - na s'ac -  
 l'a - na s'ac - que - ta: mar  
 - na l'a - na si fa se - re - na l'a - na s'ac - que  
 - na l'a - na S'ac -

65

que - ta! mar tac - cion' i ven - ti E si  
 que - ta! mar tac - cion i ven - ti E si rai -  
 tac - cion' i ven - ti E si  
 - ta! mar tac - cion' i ven - ti E si  
 que - ta! mar tac - cion' i ven - ti E si

70

ral - le - gra! ciel di gir in gi - ro  
 le - gra! ciel di gir in gi - ro di gir in gi -  
 ral - le - gra! ciel di gir in gi - ro di gir in gi -  
 ral - le - gra! ciel di gir in gi -  
 ral - le - gra! ciel di gir in gi - ro di gir in gi -

75

I san - ti an - ge - fi in - ten - ti  
 I san - ti an - ge - fi in - ten - ti  
 ro I san - ti an - ge - fi in - ten - ti Chri - stand' in  
 ro Chri - stand' in  
 ro I san - ti an - ge - fi in - ten - ti Chri -

80

Chi nand' in que-sta par-t' il va-go vi-so  
 Chi nand' in que-sta par-t' il va-go vi-so  
 que-sta par-te Chi nand' in que-sta par-t' il va-go vi-so s'o-blian' o-  
 que-sta part' i va-go vi-so i va-go vi-so s'o-blian' o-  
 nand' in que-sta part' i va-go vi-so i va-go vi-so S'o-

85

s'o-blian' o-gni pia-cer del pa-ra-di-so  
 s'o-blian' o-gni pia-cer del pa-ra-di-so del  
 gni pia-cer s'o-blian' o-gni pia-cer del pa-ra-di-so Et  
 gni pia-cer del pa-ra-di-so del pa-ra-di-so del pa-ra-  
 bian' o-gni pia-cer del pa-ra-di-so del pa-ra-di-so

90

Et ell' in tan-t' ho-no-re  
 pa-ra-di-so Et ell' in tant' ho-no-re Et  
 ell' in tan-t' ho-no-re Et ell' in tan-t' ho-no-  
 di-so Et ell' in tant' ho-no-re  
 Et ell' in tan-t' ho-no-re

95

re Di - ce con lie - to suon  
 ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re Di - ce con  
 re Di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re di - ce con  
 Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re Di - ce con

Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re Di - ce con

100

di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re qui  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re Et  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re

105

Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re  
 re - gn'a - mo - re Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re Et  
 ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re  
 mo - re Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re

Et ell' in tan - l'ho - no - re

110

re Di - ce con lie - to suon  
 et in tan - t'ho - no - re in tan - t'ho - no - re Di - ce con  
 re Di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re Di - ce con  
 Et et in tan - t'ho - no - re Di - ce con  
 Et et in tan - t'ho - no - re Di - ce con

115

di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re.  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re qui  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re.  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re qui re  
 lie - to suon di - ce con lie - to suon qui re - gn'a - mo - re qui

re - gn'a - mo - re.  
 - gn'a - mo - re.  
 re - gn'a - mo - re.

3. The following work refers to the courtesan La Chiara. It is typical of gallant courtesy. This edition of *Non gemme, non fin'oro* is from Cipriano de Rore's first book of madrigals for four voices (1550) in Rore, *Collected Works*, CMM 14, edited by Bernhard Meier (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1969), IV, 44-45. Some of the madrigals in this "first book" were printed separately as early as 1547.

Non gemme, non fin'oro  
 Nè de i pan'il lavoro  
 Fatto con arte mirabile'et opra,  
 Ma quel ch'ogn'altre sopra,  
 L'accorto ragionar, gl'atti e costumi  
 Son quei lucidi lumi,  
 Che vi fan chiara, e tanto rilucete  
 Ch'a le gemm'il splendor dar mi parete.

Neither gems, nor fine gold, nor works of skill, made with fine art, but that which is above all others: intelligent speech, gestures, and manners, and those bright lights make you resplendent [a play on the name of the courtesan CHIARA], and so much do you shine, that it seems to me that gems receive their splendor from you.

The translation is mine.

# Non gemme, non fin'oro

Cipriano de Rore

Non gem - me, non fi - no - ro, Nè de'i pan -  
 Non gem - me, non fi - no - ro, Nè  
 Non gem - me, non fi - no - ro,  
 Non gem - me, non fi - no - ro,

5

n'ill la - vo - ro Fat - to con  
 de'i pan - n'ill la - vo - ro Fat - to con ar - te, fat -  
 Nè de'i pan - n'ill la - vo - ro Fat - to con ar - te  
 non fi - ni - ro, Nè de'i pan - n'ill la - vo - ro Fat - to con ar - te

10

ar - te mi - ra - bi - l'et o - pra, Ma  
 to con ar - te mi - ra - bi - l'et o - pra Ma  
 mi - ra - bi - l'et o - pra Ma  
 mi - ra - bi - l'et o - pra, Ma

15

quel ch'o - gn'al - tr'è so - pra. L'ac - cor - to ra - gio - nar, l'ac -  
 quel ch'o - gn'al - tr'è so - pra. L'ac - cor - to ra - gio - nar, l'ac -  
 quel ch'o - gn'al - tr'è so - pra. L'ac -  
 quel ch'o - gn'al - tr'è so - pra, L'ac -

21

cor - to ra - gio - nar, gl'at - tu/e/i co - stu - mi Son quel  
 cor - to ra - gio - nar, gl'at - tu/e/i co - stu -  
 cor - to ra - gio - nar, gl'at - tu/e/i co - stu mi  
 cor - to ra - gio - nar, gl'at - tu/e/i co - stu - mi Son quel

lu - ci - di lu - mi, Son quel lu - ci - di lu - mi Che vi fan chia  
 - mi Son quel lu - ci - di lu - mi Che vi fan chia -  
 Son quel lu - ci - di lu - mi Che vi fan, che vi fan  
 lu - ci - di lu - mi Che vi fan

25

ra. e tan - to n - lu - ce - te

ra. e tan - to n - lu - ce

chia - - ra. e tan - to n - lu - ce

chia - - ra. e tan - to n - lu - ce -

30

Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa -

te Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa - re - te. dar

te Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa - re - te. dar

te Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa - re - te

35

re - te. e tan - to n - lu - ce

mi pa - re - te. e tan - to n - lu - ce - te. e tan - to n - lu -

mi pa - re - te. e tan - to n - lu - ce -

e tan - to n - lu - ce - te. e

#C

te Ch'a le gem - mil splen -  
 ce - - te Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa -  
 te Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa - re - te,  
 tan - to n - lu - ce - te Ch'a le gem - mil splen - dor dar mi pa -

dar mi pa - re - te.  
 re - te, dar mi pa - re - te  
 dar mi pa - re - te.  
 re - te, dar mi pa - re - te

4. This second work pertaining to La Chiara is a bit more interesting than the first. It is a diatribe in which the woman herself unleashes her anger at her highly placed lover. The work appears in Adrian Willaert, *Collected Works, CMM 3*, edited by Helga Meier (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1977), XIV, 76-81, originally included in Rore's *Secondo libro a cinque*, 1544.

Sciocco fu'l tuo desire  
 Veramente pensando ch'a miei danni  
 Teco n'entrassi a gli amorosi affanni.  
 Mi maraviglio, quando  
 Non anchor chiaro sei del foll'errore,  
 E come desiando  
 L'amor mio ne perdest'i giorni e l'hore.

Donna cortes'e humana  
 Con vil amante certo mal s'accorda,  
 Non mi conosci, o cieca mente insana  
 Di bastardo, nè vo' che per me leggi  
 El suon di privilegi  
 Tuoi ch'ogni orecchia assorda.

Hor tienti al mio consiglio:  
 Pon giù, se puoi, l'insania e cangia l'ire,  
 Ch'assembl'al vespertil e non al giglio,  
 Chiara son io, qual fu, nè mi scompiglio  
 A fart'il vero udire:  
 Se di te mai pensai, poss'io morire.

Foolish was your desire, thinking that I would enter into the pains of love with you, to my disadvantage.  
I marvel, when still caught in your foolish mistakes, desiring my love, you lost days and hours of it.

I, a Lady, courteous and humane, at odds with a vile lover,  
You do not know me—blind, insane, and bastardly mind—nor do I want you to trumpet to me, deafening every ear, your high standing and privilege.

Now, listen to my advice: Rid yourself, if you can, of insanity, and change your anger that resembles the wasp, and not the lily.  
I am Chiara, as always, nor do I shrink from making you hear the truth:  
If I ever think of you, may I die.

The translation is mine.

## Sciocco fu'l tuo desire

Adrian Willaert

from Cipriano de Rore. *Secondo libro a cinque*. 1544

5

Musical score for the first system, featuring five staves. The lyrics are: Scioc - co fu'l tuo de-si - re Ve - ra - men - te pen - san - do. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a 4/4 time signature, and various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

Scioc - co fu'l tuo de-si - re Ve - ra - men - te pen - san - do

Scioc - co fu'l tuo de - si - re Ve - ra - men - te pen - san - do

Scioc - co fu'l tuo de - si - re Ve - ra - men - te pen - san - do

Scioc - co fu'l tuo de - si - re Ve - ra - men - te pen - san - do

Scioc - co fu'l tuo de - si - re

10

Musical score for the second system, featuring five staves. The lyrics are: ch'a miei dan - ni Te - co n'en - tras - si/a gli/a - mo - ro - svaf - fa - ni. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a 4/4 time signature, and various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

ch'a miei dan - ni Te - co n'en - tras - si/a gli/a - mo - ro - svaf - fa - ni

ch'a miei dan - ni Te - co n'en - tras - si/a gli/a - mo - ro - svaf - fan - ni

ch'a miei dan - ni Te - co n'en - tras - si/a gli/a - mo - ro - svaf - fan - ni. Mi

ch'a miei dan - ni Te - co n'en - tras - si/a gli/a - mo - ro - svaf - fan - ni

Te - co n'en - tras - si/a gli/a - mo - ro - svaf - fan - ni

15

ni. Mi ma - ra - vi - glio, quan - do Non an - chor chia - ro sei dei fci - l'er -  
 ma - ra - vi - glio, quan - do Non an - chor chia - rosei dei  
 ni. Mi ma - ra - vi - glio, quan - do Non an - chor chia - ro  
 ni. Mi ma - ra - vi - glio, quan - do Non an - chor chia - ro

20

Non an - chor chia - ro sei dei fci - l'er - ro - re.  
 ro - re. dei fci - l'er - ro - re. dei fci - l'er - ro - re. E co - me  
 fci - l'er - ro - re. dei fci - l'er - ro - re. E co - me  
 sei dei fci - l'er - ro - re. dei fci - l'er - ro - re. E  
 sei dei fci - l'er - ro - re. E co - me

25

E co - me de - si - an - do L'a - mor mio ne per - de  
 de - si - an - do L'a - mor mio ne per - de - st'i gior -  
 de - si - an - do L'a - mor mio ne per - de - st'i gior -  
 co - me de - si - an - do L'a - mor mio ne per - de  
 de - si - an - do L'a - mor mio ne per - de - st'i



45

man - te cer - to mal s'ac - cor - da.

man - te cer - to mal s'ac - cor - da Non mi co - no - scio cie - ca

vi a - man - te cer - to mal s'ac - cor - da. Non mi co -

man - te cer - to mal s'ac - cor - da. Non mi co - no - scio

Non mi co - no - scio/cie - ca

50

Non mi co - no - scio cie - camen - te/in -

men - te/in - sa - na Di ba - star - do, o cie - ca men - te/in - sa - na Di ba - star -

no - scio cie - camen - te/in - sa - na Di ba - star - do, di

cie - ca men - te/in - sa - na, Non mi co - no - scio cie - camen - te/in - sa - na Di ba -

men - te, non mi co - no - scio/cie - ca men - te/in - sa - na Di ba - star -

55

sa - na Di ba - star - do, nè vo' che per me leg - gi E' suoi di

do, di ba - star - do, nè vo' che per me

ba - star - do, di ba - star - do, nè vo' che per me leg - gi E'

star - do di ba - star - do, di ba - star - do.

do, di ba - star - do, di ba - star - do.

64

pr - vi - leg - gi Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da,  
 leg - gi E suon di pr - vi - leg - - gi Tui, E suon di pr - vi -  
 suon di pr - vi - leg - gi Tui, E suon di pr - vi - leg - gi  
 nè vo che per me leg - gi E suon di  
 nè vo che per me leg - gi E suon di pr - vi -

65

E suon di pr - vi - leg - gi Tui ch'ò -  
 leg - gi Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da, di pr - vi - leg - gi Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec  
 Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da, E suon di pr - vi - leg - gi Tui ch'ò -  
 pr - vi - leg - gi Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da, di pr - vi - leg - gi  
 leg - gi Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da, E suon di pr - vi - leg - gi

70

gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da.  
 - chia/as - sor - da  
 gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da. Hor tien - ti/a! mio con - si -  
 Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da. Hor tien - ti/a! mio con - si -  
 Tui ch'ò - gn'ò - rec - chia/as - sor - da. Hor tien - ti/a! mio con - si -

75

Hor tie - t'at mio con - si - glio:  
 Hor tien - ti'at mio con - si - glio:  
 glio: Hor tien - ti'at mio con - si - glio: al mio con - si - glio:  
 glio: Pon giù, se puoi, fin - sa - nia/e can -

80

Pon giù, se puoi, fin - sa - nia/e can - gia  
 Pon giù, se puoi, fin - sa - nia/e can - gia fi - re, e can -  
 glio: Pon giù, se puoi, pon giù, se puoi, fin - sa - nia/e  
 - gia fi - re, Ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til,  
 sa - nia/e can - gia fi - re, e can - gia fi - re, e can -

85

fi - re, Ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til, ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til e  
 gia fi - re, Ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til, ch'as - sem - brai ves - per -  
 can - gia fi - re, Ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til, ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til, al  
 ch'as - sem - brai ves - per - til e non al

9c

non al gi-glio, e non al gi-glio, e non al  
 ti e non al gi-glio e non al gi-glio, al ves-per-ti e non al gi-  
 ves-per-ti e non al gi-glio, e non al gi-glio, e non al  
 gi-glio al ves-per-ti e non al gi-glio, e

e non al gi-glio, al ves-per-ti e

95

gi-glio. Chia-ra son  
 gio. Chia-ra son io, qual fui Chia-ra  
 gi-glio. Chia-ra son io, qual fui, Chia  
 non al gi-glio. Chia-ra son io, qual fui, Chia-ra  
 non al gi-glio. Chia-ra son io, qual fui, Chia-ra

100

io, qual fui, nè mi scom-pi-  
 son io, qual fui, nè mi scom-pi-glio A far-ti  
 -ra, Chia-ra son io, qual fui, nè  
 son io, qual fui, nè mi scom-pi-glio A far-ti-ve-ru/u-  
 son io, qual fui, nè mi scom-pi-glio, nè mi scom-pi-

105

glio A far - t'il ve - ro/u - di - re: Se di te  
 ve - ro/u - di - re, A far t'il ve - ro/u - di - re: Se di te  
 mi scom - pi - glio A far - t'il ve - ro/u - di - re:  
 di - re, A far - t'il ve - ro/u - di - re: Se di te  
 glio A far - t'il ve - ro/u - di - re:

110

mai pen - sa - i  
 mai pen - sai, pos - s'io mo - ni - re, po - s'io mo - ni - re,  
 Se di te mai pen - sa - i pos - s'io mo - ni - re, Se di te  
 mai pen - sai, se di te mai pen - sa - i pos - s'io mo - ni -  
 Se di te mai pen - sa - i se di te mai pen - sai, pos - s'io mo - ni

115

se di te mai pen - sa - i, pos - s'io mo -  
 Se di te mai pen - sa - i, pos - s'io mo - ni - re, pos -  
 mai pen - sa - i, se di te mai pen - sai, pos - s'io mo -  
 re, Se di te mai pen - sai, pos - s'io mo - ni -  
 re, Se di te mai pen - sai, se di te mai pen - sai, pos -

n - re, Se di te mai pen - sai, pos -  
 s'io mo - ni - re, Se di te mai pen -  
 n - re, Se di te mai pen - sai, se di te mai pen -  
 re, Se di te mai pen - sai, pos - s'io mo - ni - re, pos -  
 s'io mo - ni - re, Se di te mai pen - sa - i,

12c

s'io mo - ni - re.  
 sai, pos - s'io mo ni - re.  
 sai, pos - s'io mc - ni - re.  
 s'io mc - ni - re.  
 pos - s'io mc - ni - re.

5. Andrea Calmo was one of the *letterati* active in Venice and seemingly acquainted with everyone of note. His fourth volume of letters is devoted to various popular courtesans to whom he writes, praising them in both prose and poems (*strambotti*).<sup>1</sup> Both *La Sirena* and *La Basilisca* of Willaert's piece are addressed by Calmo in different letters. Obviously they were well known, hence Willaert's substantial musical setting. We do not know whose text he set, however.

The work is in two sections. The edition is from Willaert, *Collected Works*, XIV, 92-96.

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<sup>1</sup> Andrea Calmo, *Lettere*, ed. V. Rossi (Turin: 1888).

*Amor, da che tu vuoi/ Gentil coppia eccellente*

Amor, da che tu vuoi  
 pur ch'io m'arrischi  
 In udir e vedere  
 Sirene e Basilischi?  
 Fammi gratia, signore,  
 S'egli avvien che mi strugga lo splendore  
 Di due occhi sereni,  
 e ch'io sia preda  
 D'un ragionar accorto,  
 Che chi n'ha colpa creda  
 Che per udir e per veder sia morto.

Gentil coppia eccellente  
 Chi vi mira et ascolta  
 Solamente una volta  
 E non mor di piacere,  
 Può gir arditamente  
 Ad udir e vedere  
 Le Sirene d'amor ei Basilischi.

Love, what do you want me to risk in hearing and seeing Sirens and Basilisks? Have mercy, ladies, if I happen to succumb to the splendor of two serene eyes, and if I am prey to a witty speech. Those at fault should know that to listen and see is to die.

Lovely, excellent couple [the courtesans LA SIRENA and BASILISCA], he who sees and hears you, even for a single time, and does not die of pleasure, can go boldly to hear and see Sirens and Basilisks.

The translation is mine.



20

Fam - mi gra - tia, si - gno - re.  
 Fam - mi gra - tia, si - gno - re, Fam - mi gra -  
 Fam - mi gra - tia  
 mi gra - tia, si - gno - re Fam - mi  
 mi gra - tia, si - gno - re, Fam - mi

25

Fam - mi gra - tia, si - gno - re, S'e - gl'vav -  
 tia, si - gno - re, S'e - gl'vav - vien che mi strug - ga lo spien -  
 si - gno - re, S'e - gl'vav - vien che mi strug - ga lo spien -  
 mi gra - tia, si - gno - re, S'e - gl'vav - vien che mi.  
 gra - tia, si - gno - re S'e - gl'vav - vien che mi strug -

30

vien: che mi strug - ga lo splen - do - re Di due oc - chi se -  
 do - re Di due oc - chi se - ra - ni, di due oc -  
 do - re Di due oc - chi se - ra - ni, di due oc -  
 strug - ga lo splen - do - re Di due oc - chi se - re -  
 ga lo spien - do - re Di due oc - chi se - re - ni.

35

re - ni, di due oc - chi se - re - ni.  
 oc - chi se - re - ni di due oc - chi se - re - ni  
 chi se - re - ni di due oc - chi se - re - ni  
 - ni, di due oc - chi se - re - ni, e chio sia  
 di due oc - chi se - re - ni, e

40

e chio sia pre - da D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to.  
 e chio sia pre - da D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to, D'un  
 ni, e chio sia pre - da D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor -  
 pre - da D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to D'un ra - gio -  
 chio sia pre - da D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to

45

D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to, Che chi n'ha col - pa  
 ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to Che chi n'ha col - pa cre - da Che per u -  
 - to D'un ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to Che chi n'ha  
 nar ac - cor - to Che chi n'ha col - pa cre - da  
 ra - gio - nar ac - cor - to, Che chi n'ha col - pa cre - da

50

cre - da Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor - to.  
 dir e per ve - der sia mor - to, Che per u - dir e per ve -  
 col - pa cre - da Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor - to, Che  
 Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor - to Che per u - dir e  
 da Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor - to, Che per u - dir e

55

Che per u - dir. che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor -  
 der sia mor - to, Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor -  
 per u - dir che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor - to  
 per ve - der sia mor - to, Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor -  
 per ve - der sia mor - to, Che per u - dir e per ve - der sia mor -

Seconda Parte

60

to. Gen - til cop - pia/ec -  
 to. Gen - til cop - pia/ec - cel -  
 to. Gen - til cop - pia/ec - cel - len - te  
 to. Gen - til cop - pia/ec - cel - len - te



80

re Può gir ar-di-ta-men - te Ad  
 Può gir ar-di-ta-men - te Ad u-dir  
 Può gir ar-di-ta-men - te Ad u-dir e  
 pra-ce - - - re Può gir ar-di-ta-  
 Può gir ar-di-ta-men - te

85

u-dir e ve-de - - - re Le Si-re - ne d'a  
 e ve-de - re Ad u-dir e ve-de - re Le Si-  
 ve-de - re Ad u-dir e ve-de - - - re Le  
 men - - - - te Ad u-dir e ve-de - - - re  
 Ad u-dir e ve-de - re Le Si-re -

90

- mor ei Ba-si-fi - - - schi. Le Si-re - ne  
 re - ne d'a - mor ei Ba-si-fi - - - schi. Le Si-re - ne  
 Si-re - ne d'a-mor ei Ba-si-fi - - - schi, Le Si-re - ne d'a  
 Le Si-re - ne d'a - mor le Si-re - ne d'a - mor  
 ne d'a-mor ei Ba-si-fi - - - schi Le Si-re - ne

95

The musical score consists of five staves, each with a vocal line and corresponding Latin lyrics. The lyrics are: "d'a - mor ei Ba - si - i - schi, ei Ba - si - i - schi." The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs. The first staff is the highest voice, and the fifth staff is the lowest voice. The lyrics are distributed across the staves as follows:

- Staff 1: d'a - mor ei Ba - si - i - schi, ei Ba - si - i - schi.
- Staff 2: d'a - mor ei Ba - si - i - schi, ei Ba - si - i - schi.
- Staff 3: mor ei Ba - si - i - schi, ei Ba - si - i - schi.
- Staff 4: ei Ba - si - i - schi.
- Staff 5: d'a - mor ei Ba - si - i - schi.

6. This work appears in Arcadelt's *Collected Works*, III, 19-21. It is from his *Secondo libro di madrigali* (1539).

Carissim' Isabella  
 Il vincer l'altre di beltà fra noi,  
 E'l manco bel che'l mond' honor' in voi,  
 Ma la divina mente  
 Che serg' al ciel con spedito volo,  
 Si de gradir perchè da l'alto polo,  
 Colma di gel' ardente,  
 Tornand' a rivestir il mortal velo,  
 Fa fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cielo.

Dearest Isabella, among all our beauties, is the winner,  
 But the beauty the world honors in you is less than the divine spirit,  
 That, rising easily to heaven, enjoys its high vantage point, its summit  
 of burning ice, and, returning to its mortal shell,  
 Entrusts to you what has been seen in heaven.

The translation is mine.

# Carissim'Isabella

Jacques Arcadelt

5

Ca - ris - sim | I - sa - bel - la. Ca -  
 Ca - ris - sim | I - sa - bel - la. Ca - ris - sim | I - sa -  
 Ca - ris - sim | I - sa - bel - la. Ca - ris - sim | I -

10

ris - sim | I - sa - bel - la. Il vin - cer l'ai - tre di bel - ta fra  
 bel - la. I - sa - bel - la. Il vin - cer l'ai - tre di bel - ta fra  
 sa - bel - la. Il vin - cer l'ai - tre di bel - ta fra no  
 sa - bel - la. Il vin - cer l'ai - tre di bel - ta fra

15

no - i, E! man - co bel che! mond' ho - nor in  
 vo - i, E! man - co bel, che! mond' ho - nor in vo -  
 - i, E! man - co bel che! mond' ho - nor in vo -  
 vo - i, E! man - co bel che! mond' ho - nor in vo - i, in

20

vo - i, Che! mond' no - nor in vo - i.  
Et man - co bel che! mond' ho - nor in vo - i, in vo - i.  
Et man - cc bei che! mond' ho - no in vo - i.  
vo - i, Et man - co bel che! mond' ho - nor in vo - i.

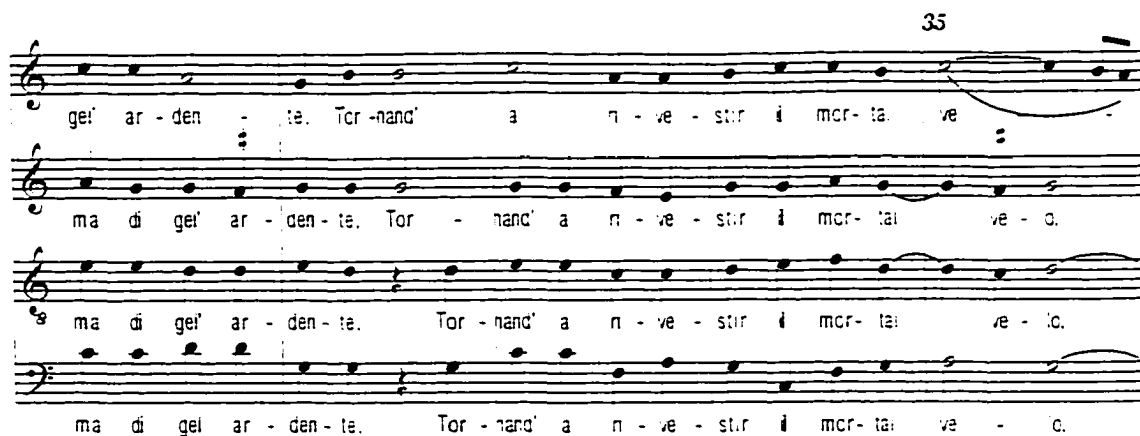
25

Ma la di - vi - na men - te Che serg' al ciel con si spe - di - to vo - i.  
Ma la di - vi - na men - te Che serg' al ciel con si spe - di - to vo - i.  
Ma la di - vi - na men - te Che serg' al ciel con si spe - di - to vo - i.  
Ma la di - vi - na men - te Che serg' al ciel con si spe - di - to vo - i.

30

lo, Si de gra - dir per - che da l'ai - to po - lo, Col - ma di -  
lo, Si de gra - dir per - chè da l'ai - to po - lo, Col -  
lo, Si de gra - dir per - chè da l'ai - to po - lo, Col -  
lo, Si de gra - dir per - chè da l'ai - to po - lo, Col -

35

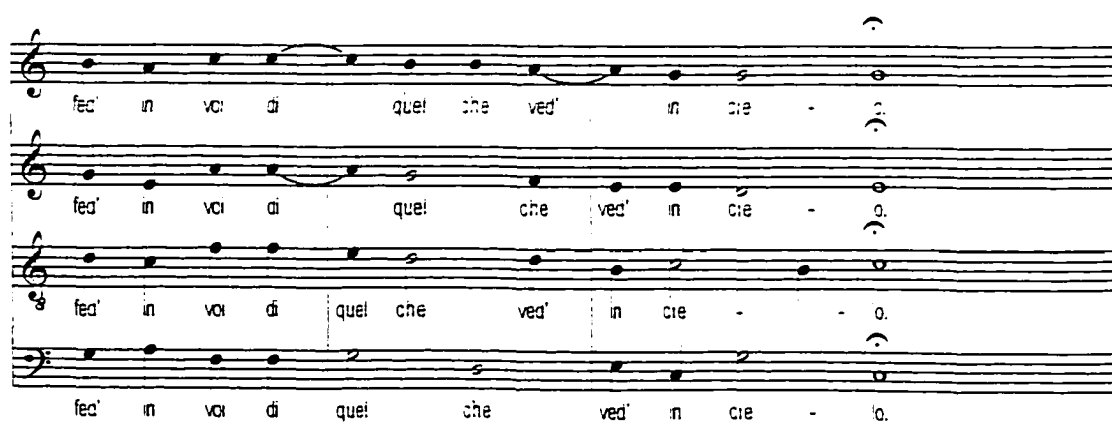


gei' ar - den - te. Tor - nand' a n - ve - stir i mor - tai ve - o.  
 ma di gei' ar - den - te. Tor - nand' a n - ve - stir i mor - tai ve - o.  
 ma di gei' ar - den - te. Tor - nand' a n - ve - stir i mor - tai ve - o.  
 ma di gei' ar - den - te. Tor - nand' a n - ve - stir i mor - tai ve - o.

40



lo, Fa fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo. Fa  
 Fa fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo. Fa  
 Fa fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo. Fa  
 Fa fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo. Fa



fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo.  
 fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo.  
 fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo.  
 fed' in voi di quel che ved' in cie - lo.

7. Tullia of Aragon had many works dedicated to her, probably more than any other courtesan. This work by Verdelot attests to her beauty, her legendary eyes, and her words--possibly meaning her poetry--but not to her singing or music-making. It is transcribed from the facsimile edition (Brussels: Corpus of Early Music, 1970) of Verdelot, *Le dotte et eccellente compositioni de i madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice: A. Gardane, c.1538).

Non mai donna più bella  
 viddi nel mond' o vedra mai persona  
 Che Tullia di Ragona  
 vaga cortese leggiadrett' e snella.  
 Gli occhi ch'oscurar fann' in ciel il sole  
 Il bel candido viso  
 Le benigne parole,  
 I bei sembianti e l'angelico riso  
 Del ben ch'e'n paradiso  
 Fan fed' in terra a chi mirar gli vuole  
 O gratie rare e sole  
 Per voi questa mia stella  
 Fra l'altre donne belle e la più bella.

Never was seen in the world, or will be seen, a lady more beautiful than  
 Tullia of Aragon,  
 Lovely, courteous, comely, and slim.  
 Her eyes obscure the sun in heaven; a beautiful, candid face, benign  
 words, beautiful features and an angelic smile,  
 She replicates on earth, for those who want to gaze on her, the goodness  
 in paradise,  
 O rare and unique graces that make my star, among other beauties, the  
 most beautiful.

The translation is mine.

*Non mai donna piu bella**Verdelot*

Soprano Non mai don - na piu bel - la vo - di nel

Alto Non mai don - na piu bel - la vo - di nel

Tenore Non mai don - na piu bel - la vo - di nel mon -

Quinta Non mai don - na piu bel -

Basso Non mai don - na piu bel - a

5

mond' o ve - dra mai per - so - na

mond' o ve - dra mai per - so - na

so vo - di nel mon -

- a vo - di nel mon - so vo - di nel

vo - di nel men - so vo - di nel mon -

*10*

Che Tu - lia che Tu -

Che Tu - lia che Tu - lia che

soo ve - dra mai per - so - na Che Tu - lia che

mon - do/o ve - dra mai per - so - na Che Tu -

soo ve - dra mai per - so - na - Che

15

lia che Tu - lia di Ra - go - na  
 - Tu - lia che Tu - lia  
 Tu - lia che Tu - lia di Ra - go - na  
 lia che Tu - lia che Tu - lia di Ra - go - na che Tu - lia  
 Tu - lia che Tu - lia di Ra - go - na che Tu -

20'

va - ga cor - te - se leg - gia - drett'  
 di Ra - go - na va - ga cor - te - se - leg -  
 na va - ga cor - te - se - leg -  
 di Ra - go - na va - ga cor - te - se leg - gia -  
 lia va - ga cor - te - se leg -

e - snel - - - - - ia.  
 - gia - drett' e - snel - - - - - ia.  
 gia - drett e snel - - - - - ia.  
 drett e snel - - - - - ia la la leg - gia - drett' e snel -  
 gia - drett e snel - - - - - ia.



#C

I dei sem-bian-tive lan-ge-i-co

I dei sem-bian-tive lan-ge-i-co

ro-le dei sem-bian-ti

I dei sem-bian-tive lan-ge-i-co

ro-le I dei sem-bian-ti

n-so Dei ben-chen pa-ra-di-

co so

e lan-ge-i-co n-so Dei ben-chen pa-ra-di-

n-so Dei ben-chen pa-ra-di-

e lan-ge-i-co n-so

45

so Fan-fed' in terra

Fan-fed' in terra Fan-fed' in terra chi mi-

so Fan-fed' in terra chi mi-

so Fan-fed' in terra chi mi-rar gli vuo-

Fan-fed' in terra chi mi-rar gli vuo-le

50

Oni mi - rar gli | vuo - le O | gra - tie - ra - re  
 rar gli vuo - le O | gra - tie - ra - re  
 rar gli vuo - le O | gra - tie - ra - re  
 O | gra - tie - ra - re so -  
 O 55 gra - tie - ra - re

so - le Per | ci que -  
 so - le Per | ci que -  
 so - le Per | ci que - sta mia stel - a  
 - le Per | ci que - sta mia stel - a  
 so - le Per | ci que - sta mia stel - a Fra

60

sta mia stel - la Fra | tal - tre don - ne  
 sta mia stel - la Fra | tal - tre don - ne. Fra | tal - tre don - ne.  
 Fra | tal - tre don - ne bel - le e la piu  
 Fra | tal - tre don - ne bel - le e la piu bel -  
 tal - tre don - ne bell' e la piu bel - la

65

bell' e la piu bel - la Fra l'ai - tre don - ne bell' e  
 bell' e la piu bel - la Fra l'ai - tre don - ne Fra l'ai - tre don - ne bell' e  
 bel - la Fra l'ai - tre don - ne bel - le e la piu bel  
 la Fra l'ai - tre don - ne bel - le e a piu bel - la e  
 Fra l'ai - tre don - ne bell' e la piu bel - la e la piu

70

la piu bel - la.  
 la piu bel - la e a piu bel - la.  
 la.  
 la piu bel - la e a piu bel - la.  
 bel - a e a piu bel - la.

8. Often courtesans were referred to by their nationality, since Venice was such a crossroads for world travelers, and attracted courtesans from far and wide. Aretino, disagreeing with the sentiments of Rore's madrigal, apparently resented the rise in fortune of La Greca (possibly Ortensia Greca) and suggested that she would be more appropriately serenaded with a rustic rebec than with a lute or other salon instrument.<sup>2</sup>

The edition is taken from Rore, *Collected Works*, CMM 14, IV, 82-84, from his fourth book of madrigals for five voices, 1557.

La bella Greca, ond'el pastor Ideo  
 In gloriosa fiamm'il suo tempo arse,  
 S'al vostro lume di mia morte reno  
 Potess'hoggi aguagliarsi  
 Perderebbe sua prova.  
 O chiaro splendor d'Adria,  
 Helena nova,  
 Che da begli occhi,  
 ond'Amor vuol ch'io moia,  
 è vinto'l ciel, non pure Sparta, Troia.

The beautiful Grecian, for whom the shepherd Ideo burned in a glorious flame,  
 If compared to that light of yours, o cause of my death,  
 Would lose the contest.  
 O radiant splendor of the Adriatic, new Helen, because of whose lovely eyes Love wishes me to die, Heaven is won over by you, not only Sparta and Troy.

The translation is mine.

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<sup>2</sup> Lawner, *The Lives of the Courtesans*, 51.

# La bella Greca

Cipriano de Rore  
5

La bel - la Gre - ca. on - d'ei pa -  
 La bel - la Gre - ca. on - d'ei pa - stor - de - o  
 La bel - la Gre - ca. la bel - la Gre - ca  
 La bel - la Gre - ca. on -

stor - i - de - o in glo - ri - o - sa  
 o in glo - ri - o - sa fiam - mi suo tem - po  
 on - d'ei pa - stor i - de - o in glo - ri - o -  
 d'ei pa - stor i - de - o in glo - ri - o - sa fiam - m  
 in glo - ri - o - sa fiam - m

fiam - mil suo tem - po ar - se. S'ei vo - stro u -  
 po/ar - se S'ei vo - stro u - sa fiam - mil  
 - sa fiam - mil suo tem - po/ar - se. S'ei vo - stro u - me  
 suo tem - po/ar - se. S'ei vo - stro  
 suo tem - po/ar - se. S'ei vo - stro u - me

20

me di mia mor - te re - o. Sai Je - stro lu -  
 lu - me di mia mor - te re - o. Sai Je - stro  
 di mia mor - te re - o. Sai Je - stro  
 lu - me di mia mor - te re - o. Sai Je - stro lu - me  
 di mia mor - te re - o. Sai Je - stro lu - me

25

me Po - tes - shog - gua - gua - ghar - si. Per - de -  
 ma Po - tes - shog - gua - gua - ghar - si.  
 lu - me Po - tes - shog - gua - gua - ghar - si. Per -  
 Po - tes - shog - gua - gua - ghar - si. Per - de - reb - be sua pro - va  
 Po - tes - shog - gua - gua - ghar - si Per - de - reb - be sua pro - va.

30

reb - be sua pro - va.  
 Per - de - reb - be sua pro - va. C onia -  
 de - reb - be sua pro - va. C onia -  
 Per - de - reb - be sua pro - va C onia -  
 Per - de - reb - be sua pro - va. C onia -

35

ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. C onia - ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. C onia - ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. C onia - ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. C onia -

40

d'A - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. Che da be - giucc - on. - ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. Che da be - giucc - on. onia - ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. Che da be - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. Che da be - giucc - on. - ro spien - dor d'A - dn - a. He - le - na no - va. Che da be - giucc - on. on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io'

45

on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io mo - ia. E an - to pre. Che da be - giucc - on. on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io mo - ia. Che da be - giucc - on. on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io mo - ia. Che da be - giucc - on. on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io mo - ia. Che da be - giucc - on. on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io mo - ia. Che da be - giucc - on. on - d'A - mor vuol ch'io mo - ia.

50

E in - to' ciel, non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - a.  
 vuol ch'io mo - a. E in - to' ciel, non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - a.  
 vuol ch'io mo - a E in - to' ciel, non pu - re  
 mor vuol ch'io mo - ia. E in - to' ciel, Che da be - gioco - nu' E  
 E in - to' ciel, non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - ia. E in - to' ciel, non

55

E in - to' ciel, non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - ia. E in - to' ciel,  
 Che da be - gioco - nu' E in - to' ciel, non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - a, non  
 Spar - ta, Tro - a E in - to' ciel, Che da be - gioco - nu' E in - to' ciel,  
 in - to' ciel. E in - to' ciel, non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro -  
 pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - a. E in - to' ciel. E in - to' ciel, non

non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - a.  
 pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - ia.  
 non pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - ia.  
 ia.  
 pu - re Spar - ta, Tro - ia.

9. This is the piece, mentioned in chapter 3, that Machiavelli wrote for Barbera Salutati; Verdelot set it to music for the play *La Clizia*.

Amor, io sento l'alma  
 Tornar' nel foco ov' io  
 Fu liet' et più che mai d'arder desio.  
 S' tu mi raccend' il core,  
 Et io ne son contenta  
 Et ritorn' humilment' al giogh' antico.  
 Opra ch'el mio signore  
 Parte del foco senta  
 Ov' io dolci ardo e i mei pensier' nutrico;  
 Fa che ponga in oblio  
 Mia fugh' e dilli el mio novo desio.

Love, I feel my soul  
 Return to the fire where I  
 Was happy and more than ever want to burn.  
 If you rekindle my heart,  
 And I am happy about it,  
 And I return humbly to the former yoke,  
 Let it be that my lord  
 Feels part of the flame  
 Where I sweetly burn and where I feed my thoughts.  
 And have him forget  
 My flight and tell him of my renewed desire.

Edition and translation from Colin Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets*, II.

# Amor, io sento l'alma

Machiavelli

Verdelot

5

A - mor, o sen - to l'ai - ma Tor - nar nel b - so - ro - vi - o Fu

A - mor, o sen - to l'ai - ma Tor - nar nel b - so - ro - vi - o Fu

A - mor, o sen - to l'ai - ma Tor - nar nel b - so - ro - vi - o Fu

A - mor, o sen - to l'ai - ma Tor - nar nel b - so - ro - vi - o Fu

10

lie - t'et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o, et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o.

lie - t'et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o, et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o.

lie - t'et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o, et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o.

lie - t'et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o, et piu che mai d'ar - der de - si - o.

15

S'iu mi rac - cen - d'il co - re, Et io ne son con - ten - ta Et in - tor - n'hu - mi -

S'iu mi rac - cen - d'il co - re, Et io ne son con - ten - ta Et in - tor - n'hu - mi -

S'iu mi rac - cen - d'il co - re, Et io ne son con - ten - ta Et in - tor - n'hu - mi -

S'iu mi rac - cen - d'il co - re, Et io ne son con - ten - ta Et in - tor - n'hu - mi -

20

men-tal gio-gnan-ti - co O - bra ch'el mio si - gno - re Par - te de' fo - co

men-tal gio-gnan-ti - co O - bra ch'el mio si - gno - re Par - te de' fo - co

men-tal gio-gnan-ti - co O - bra ch'el mio si - gno - re Par - te de' fo - co

men-tal gio-gnan-ti - co O - bra ch'el mio si - gno - re Par - te de' fo - co

25

30

sen-ta O - vio dol - clar - do/ri mai pen-sier nu - tri - co: Fa che pen-

sen - ta O - vio dol - clar - do/ri mai pen-sier nu - tri - co: Fa che pen-

sen - ta O - vio dol - clar - do/ri mai pen-sier nu - tri - co: Fa che pen -

sen - ta O - vio dol - clar - do/ri mai pen-sier nu - tri - co: Fa che pen-

35

ga'in ob - fi - o Mia fu - gna dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o e dil - l'el mio no - jo de -

ga'in ob - fi - o Mia fu - gna dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o e dil - l'el mio no - jo de -

ga'in ob - fi - o Mia fu - gna dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o e dil - l'el mio no - jo de -

ga'in ob - fi - o Mia fu - gna dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o e dil - l'el mio no - jo de -

40

- si - o.

si - o. e dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o.

si - o e dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o.

si - o e dil - l'el mio no - jo de - si - o.

10. Arcadelt's two humorous works that follow are a dialogue, the first from the point of view of the lover/patron, the second from the point of view of the desired courtesan. Both settings seem intended to be sung by men because of the clefs and range, although the second, the courtesan's answer lies a bit higher. Arcadelt here uses more dissonances, in the form of suspensions and appoggiaturas, than he does in his settings of more elegant texts. This work appears in Arcadelt's *Collected Works*, V, 41-43. It is from his *Madrigali libro quarto* (1539).

Donna fra più bei volti honesti e cari  
 Il vostro saria'l primo,  
 Se'l chieder nol guastasse de denari,  
 Se volete d'ogni altra esser corona,  
 Come si spera e crede,  
 Non chiedete de nulla mai persona,  
 Che gli è men bella sempre chi più chiede,  
 E se io con molta fede vi adoro  
 per mia diva e per mia stella,  
 Di grazia non toccate la scarsella.

Lady, among the most beautiful, honest, and dear faces, yours will be the first,  
 But if you request money, you will fall from your elevated position,  
 If you want to be crowned above all others, as one hopes and believes,  
 don't ask anything of anyone,  
 For they who ask more are less beautiful, and if I am to adore you, with  
 great loyalty, as my Goddess and my star, please don't reach for my  
 purse.

The translation is mine.

## Donna fra più bei volti honesti e cari

Jacques Arcadelt

5

Don - na fra più bei  
 Don - na fra più bei volti honesti e cari  
 Don -

10

volti honesti e cari. Il vostro sal primario.  
 cari. Il vostro sal primario. Il vostro  
 na fra più bei volti honesti e cari. Il vostro sal primario.  
 Il vostro sal primario.

15

Il vostro sal primario. Se chiedete noi guardate da vicino.  
 sal primario. Se chiedete noi guardate da vicino.  
 sal primario. Il vostro sal primario. Se chiedete  
 Il vostro sal primario. Se chiedete noi guardate da vicino.

20

Sei chie-ter noi qua-stas-se de de-na-n. Sei jo-le-te do-  
 - na-ni qua-stas-se de de-na-n. Sei jo-le-te do-  
 noi qua-stas - se de de - na - n. Sei jo - le - te do -  
 na - ni. Sei jo - le - te do -

25

grava - traves - ser co - ro - na. Co - me si spe - rare cre -  
 grava - traves - ser co - ro - na. Co - me si spe - rare cre -  
 grava - traves - ser co - ro - na. Co - me si spe - rare cre -  
 grava - traves - ser co - ro - na. Co - me si spe - rare cre -

30

de. Co - me si spe - rare cre - de. e cre - de.  
 de. Co - me si spe - rare e cre - de.  
 Co - me si spe - rare cre - de. Non chie - de - te de  
 me si spe - rare cre - de. Non

35

Non cre-de-te de-ni-a mai per-so-na.  
 Non cre-de-te de-ni-a mai per-so-na.  
 nu-la mai per-so-na. Che-guè men-bel-la  
 cre-de-te de-ni-a mai per-so-na. Che

40

Che-guè men-bel-la sem-pre-ri più cre-de.  
 Che-guè men-bel-la sem-pre-ri più cre-de. E se-rio con  
 sem-pre-ri più cre-de.  
 guè men-bel-la sem-pre-ri più cre-de.

45

E se-rio con mor-ta-fe-de wa-do-ro per-mia di-va.  
 mor-ta-fe-de wa-do-ro per-mia di-va. wa-do-ro per-mia  
 E se-rio con mor-ta-fe-de wa-do-ro  
 E se-rio con mor-ta-fe-de wa-do-ro per-mia di-va.

50

va - so - ro per mia di - va, e per mia stel - la, per mia stel  
 di - va, e per miaster - la, e per mia ste -  
 per mia di - va e per mia stel - la, e per  
 va - so - ro per mia di - va e per mia stel - la.

55

- la, Di gra-zia, Di gra - zia, Di  
 - la, Di gra - zia, Di gra-zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a.  
 mia stel - la, Di gra - zia, Di gra-zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a, Di  
 Di gra - zia Di gra-zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a, Di.

60

gra - zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a.  
 Di gra-zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a, a scar - sei - a.  
 gra - zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a, la scar - sei -  
 gra - zia non toc - ca - te la scar - sei - a, la scar - sei - a.

11. The courtesan's answer to the importuning of her suitor (or was this the original statement, since it appears earlier?) is from Arcadelt's *Collected Works*, IV, 56-58, and was originally from his *Terzo libro di madrigali* (1539).

Si come dit' ogn'hor bella vi paio,  
 Non vi paia fatica,  
 Darm' un poc' alla man qualche danaio,  
 Se voi pensasti pur tenerm' in ciance,  
 E pagar di parole,  
 Voi non m'avrete mai con mille lancie,  
 Che sempre scambieren folle con folle,  
 Ma chi godermi vuole,  
 Siavi detto per sempre o brutta o bella  
 Metta spesso le man alla scarsella.

Since you always say, without tiring, that I am beautiful to you, give me  
 a little money,  
 If you thought, however, of keeping me in idle conversation, and  
 paying me only with words,  
 You will not have me, even if a thousand lances assisted you,  
 But you will heap error upon error, for whoever wants to enjoy me,  
 whether ugly or handsome,  
 Should put his hand into his purse.

The translation is mine.

# Si come dit'ogn'hor bella vi paio

Jacques Arcadelt

Si co-me dit' o - gn'hor bel - la vi -  
 Si co-me dit' o - gn'hor bel - la vi pa - io.  
 Si co-me dit' o - gn'hor bel - la vi pa - io. Si co-me dit' o -  
 pa - io. Non vi pa - a fa - ti -  
 co-me dit' o - gn'hor bel - la vi pa - io. Non vi pa - a fa - ti -  
 pa - io. Non vi pa - a fa - ti - ca. Non vi pa -  
 gn'hor bel - la vi pa - io. Non vi pa - a fa - ti - ca. Non vi pa - a fa -  
 ca. Darm un poc' al - la man qual - che da - na -  
 ca. Darm un poc' al - la man qual - che da - na - io. Darm un poc'  
 ti - ca. Darm un poc' al - la man qual - che da - na - io. Darm un

20

che da-na - io. Se voi pen - sa - sti pur te-nerm in  
- o. Se voi pen - sa - sti pur te-nerm in  
ai - a man qual - che da - na - o. Se

poi ai - la man qual - che da - na - o. Se voi pen - sa - sti

25

30

bian - de. E pa-gar di pa - ro - le. e pa-gar  
bian - de. E pa-gar di pa - ro - le. e pa-gar  
voi pen - sa - sti pur te-nerm in bian - de. E pa-gar di pa - ro -  
pur te-nerm in bian - de. E pa-gar di pa - ro - le. e pa-gar di pa -

35

di pa - ro - le. Voi non ma - vre - te mai.  
di pa - ro - le. e pa-gar di pa - ro - le. Voi non ma - vre - te mai con  
- le. Voi non ma - vre - te mai con mi - le.  
ro - le. Voi non ma - vre - te ma - vre - te mai con

40

Che sem-pre soam-bie-ren fol-le con fol-le con  
mi-le lan-cie. Che sem-pre soam-bie-ren fol-le con fol-le  
an-cie. Chi sem-pre soam-bie-ren fol-le con  
mi-le lan-cie. Che sem-pre soam-bie-ren fol-le con fol-le con

45

fol-le. Ma chi go-der-mi vo-e. Sia-a det-to  
Ma chi go-der-mi vo-e.  
- fol-le. Ma chi go-der-mi vo-e. Sia-a det-to per sem-  
fol-le. Ma chi go-der-mi vo-e. Sia-a det-to per sem-

50

per sam-pre o brut-ta-o bel-la. Met-ta spes-so e  
brut-ta-o bel-la. Met-ta spes-so le man ai-la scar-  
pre/obrut-ta o bel-la. Met-ta spes-so le man ai-la scar-  
-pre/obrut-ta o bel-la. Met-ta spes-so le man ai-la scar-

55

man ai - la scar - se: - - - - a. ai - la scar -  
 - se: - a Met - ta spes - so e man ai - a scar - se: - a.  
 - la Met - ta spes - so e man. Met - ta spes - so e man ai - a scar  
 se: - la. Met - ta spes - so e man ai - a scar - se: - a. ai - la scar -

60

se: - - - la. ai - la scar - se: - - - la.  
 ai - la scar - se: - - - la  
 - se - - a. ai - a scar - se - - a.  
 se: - a ai - a scar - se: - a.

## Instrumental *Balli* and *Arie*

As noted above, in reference to *La lavandara*, courtesans were often associated with a favorite *ballo*. Here the titles of the *balli* correspond to the names of courtesans, either indicating the woman whose favorite it was, or perhaps its dedicatee (or both). I have used the editions in *Marco Facoli, Collected Works*, edited by Willi Apel (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1963), and Knud Jeppesen's *Balli antichi Veneziani* (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1962).

12. *Padoana seconda dita la Chiareta*. This refers to Chiara, this time in the diminutive. The term *Padoana* (*padovana*) would indicate a popular dance-tune from Padua. The very simple tune and harmony lend themselves to elaborate keyboard embellishments.

13. *Aria della Signora Fior d'Amor*. The aria in this case is not one of the stock forms for reciting, but merely a twelve-bar melody, apparently well-liked by Signora Fior d'Amor. Andrea Calmo mentions a courtesan named La Fiore in his letters. This may be she, but Fior d'Amor certainly indicates a lady who is known for her romantic appeal.

14. *La bella Franceschina*. La bella Franceschina is the lutenist/singer/improviser so admired by Aretino. Again, the piece is quite simple, with ordered repetitions. The musical text has been left free for the performer to improvise, rather than, as in Facoli's settings, coming with florid embellishment already in place.

15. *La bella Berssanina*. Berssanina is a word indicating a woman from Brescia, and so this possibly refers to a courtesan from that area. The bass line that repeats in this dance bears some resemblance to the *passamezzo moderno*. Again, most embellishment is left to the performer, in contrast with Facoli's virtuosic runs and ornaments.

16. *Aria della Signora Ortensia*. Ortensia is another courtesan addressed in Andrea Calmo's fourth book of letters. She is possibly Ortensia Greca, who may be La Greca praised by Rore in number 8 of this appendix. This aria is a balanced 16-bar dance with written-out inner repetitions that are varied and completed by a very flashy four-bar coda.

*Padovana seconda dita la Chiareta**Facoli*

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time. The upper staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The lower staff provides harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. The upper staff features a more complex melodic line with sixteenth notes and a fingering '5' above a note. The lower staff continues with accompaniment, including a measure with a fermata over a chord.

The third system of musical notation shows the continuation of the melody and accompaniment. The upper staff has a series of sixteenth notes, and the lower staff has chords and moving lines.

The fourth system of musical notation includes a measure with a fermata in the upper staff, marked with the number '10'. The lower staff continues with accompaniment.

The fifth system of musical notation concludes the piece. The upper staff features a final melodic flourish with sixteenth notes and a fermata. The lower staff provides the final accompaniment.

Musical score for piano, measures 15-28. The score is written in treble and bass clefs. Measure numbers 15, 20, and 25 are indicated above the treble staff. The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and various chordal textures. The bass line provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

30

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a brace on the left. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. It contains measures 30 and 31. Measure 30 features a half note chord (F#4, A4, C5) followed by a sixteenth-note melody: F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Measure 31 features a half note chord (F#4, A4, C5) followed by a sixteenth-note melody: F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass staff contains a half note chord (F#2, A2, C3) in measure 30 and a half note chord (F#2, A2, C3) in measure 31. The second system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a brace on the left. The treble staff contains a half note chord (F#4, A4, C5) in measure 32. The bass staff contains a half note chord (F#2, A2, C3) in measure 32.

*Aria della Signora Fior d'amor**Facoli*

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing a melodic line with a long note followed by a series of eighth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef, providing a harmonic accompaniment with chords and a few moving lines.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melodic line with a slur over several notes. The lower staff continues the accompaniment. A fermata is placed over a note in the upper staff. The number "5" is written above the second staff.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melodic line with a series of eighth notes. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

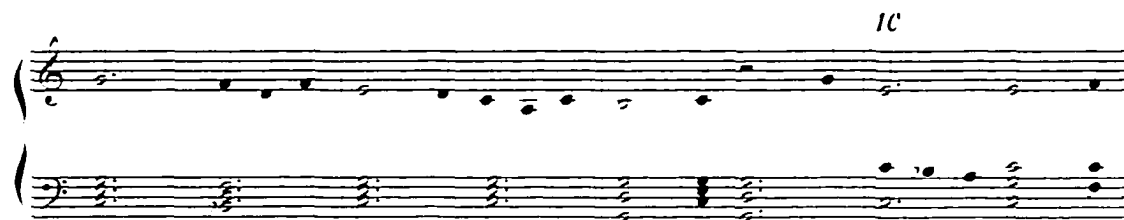
The fourth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melodic line. The lower staff continues the accompaniment. The number "10" is written above the second staff.

The fifth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a long note with a slur above it. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with a few notes.

*La bella Franceschina*

Knud Jeppesen  
Balli antichi veneziani  
(Copenhagen: Hansen, 1962)

Venezia, Bibl. Marciana  
MS Ital. IV. 1227 - coll. 11689



*La bella Bressanina*

Knud Jeppesen  
Balli antichi veneziani

Venezia, Bibl. Marciana  
MS Ital. IV. 1127 (est. 11699)

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in 3/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melody starting with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

Musical notation for measures 6-10. The melody continues with a mix of eighth and quarter notes. The bass line features some longer note values and rests.

Musical notation for measures 11-15. The melody shows some rhythmic variation with eighth notes and quarter notes. The bass line continues with a steady accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 16-20. The melody features a sequence of eighth notes. The bass line has some longer note values and rests.

Musical notation for measures 21-25. The melody concludes with a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The bass line provides a final accompaniment.

*Aria della Signora Ortensia**Facoli*

The image displays a musical score for piano accompaniment, consisting of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The music is written in 3/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests. The score includes several measures of music, with measure numbers 5, 10, and 15 clearly marked. The notation includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*, and articulation marks like slurs and accents. The overall style is characteristic of 19th-century piano music.

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, including some beamed sixteenth-note pairs. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a harmonic accompaniment with several chords and a few moving notes.

The second system continues the musical piece. The upper staff features a similar intricate melodic line. The lower staff provides harmonic support with chords and some melodic fragments.

20

The third system begins with a measure marked '20'. The upper staff has a few notes and rests, while the lower staff continues the harmonic accompaniment from the previous systems.

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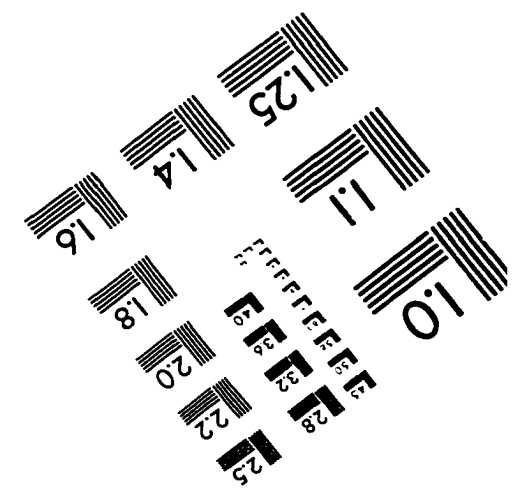
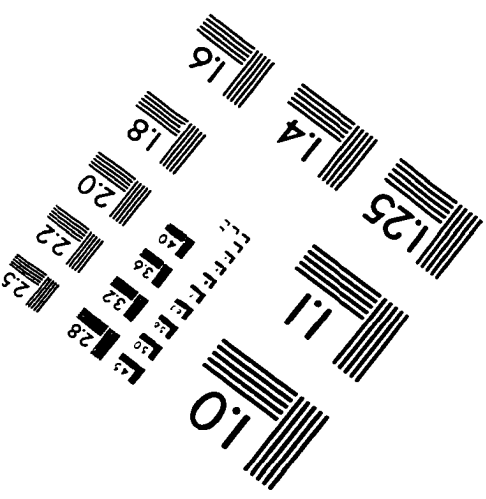
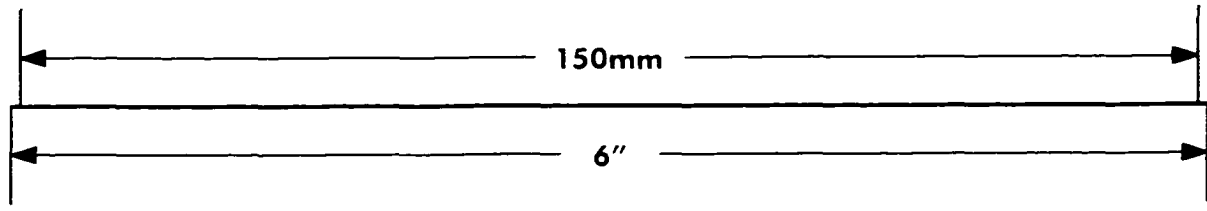
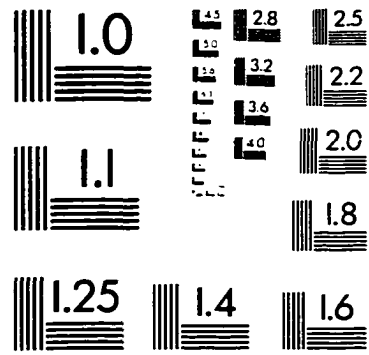
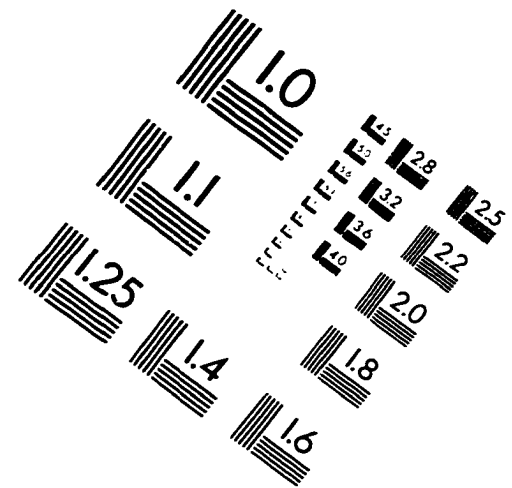
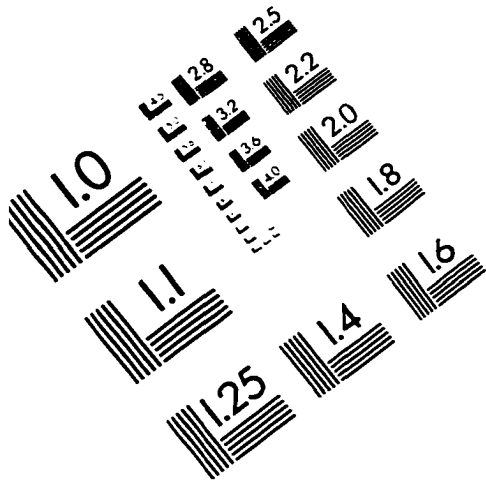
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