

CORPVS SCRIPTORVM DE MVSICA

13

**ANONYMVS
DE MVSICA MENSVRABILI**

**Edidit
CECILY SWEENEY**

**ANONYMVS
DE SEMIBREVIBVS CAVDATIS**

**Ediderunt
ANDRÉ GILLES & CECILY SWEENEY**



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

1971

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1.

ANONYMOUS

DE MUSICA MENSURABILI

(MS. Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Barberini 307)

Edited by Cecily Sweeney

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ANONYMOUS

DE SEMIBREVIBUS CAUDATIS

(MS. Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève 1257)

Edited by André Gilles & Cecily Sweeney

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

ARMEN CARAPETYAN, Ph. D., DIRECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

The anonymous treatise formerly thought to be by Theodoricus de Campo is one of a number of theoretical writings on music in the Vatican manuscript Barberini lat. 307, the contents of which are described in the introduction to the edition of de Vitry's *Ars Nova* treatise by Reaney, Gilles, and Maillard.¹ The date of the manuscript corpus is estimated to be about 1400, but a *Nachtrag* in a different hand begins on f. 30^{1a} and the date 1432 is inscribed on the last folio.² The contents presently include the only complete version of de Vitry's *Ars Nova* treatise, the treatise by Johannes Vetulus de Anagnia, a chapter from Isidorus' *Etymologiae*, an excerpt from *Musica disciplina* of Aurelian of Réôme, a short treatise on organ playing c. 1400, and the fifteenth century additions.

The date of our particular treatise has been subject to speculation. Wolf, although considering it one of the main theoretical works of the fourteenth century, thought it was written about 1440.³ Apel's date of c. 1350 is too early, like Anglès' date 1360.⁴ We know the treatise of Johannes Vetulus is earlier than this one because he is mentioned in our work along with de Vitry and Marchetus de Padua, albeit in the second part.^{4a} A date that would bring our treatise closer in time to the *Quatuor principalia musicae* (c. 1380) seems reasonable because of various similarities between the two.⁵ They both base certain of their ideas about the nature of music on Lambertus and Isidorus, and the *flos totius mundi musicorum*, as Philippe de Vitry is called by the anonymous author of *Quatuor principalia*, seems related to *flos et gemma cantorum* in the second part of our treatise.⁶ Probably the best clue to its proper chronology is the discussion of the semiminim, which would place the treatise in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. The only other manuscript of the

¹ G. Reaney, *Ars Nova*, pp. 10-11.

^{1a} The *Regulae contrapuncti*, dated 1431, and a fragment of the *Libellus cantus mensurabilis secundum Johannem de Muris*.

² Cf. also G. Reaney, "The Question of Authorship in the Medieval Treatises on Music", *MD XVIII* (1964), 15-16.

³ J. Wolf, *HdN I*, p. 332.

⁴ H. Anglès, "'De cantu organico.' Tratado de un catalán del siglo XIV," *Anuario Musical XIII* (1958), 13.

^{4a} Cf. F. A. Gallo, "Il Liber de Musica di Johannes Vetulus de Anagnia" in *La teoria della notazione in Italia dalla fine del XIII all'inizio del XV Secolo*, Bologna, 1966, p. 66.

⁵ However, both treatises in their final form may be elaborations of slightly earlier works. It is conceivable that the date 1351 given in 3 manuscripts of the *Quatuor principalia* is basically correct, though the discussion of slightly later notational features towards the end of the treatise suggests a date c. 1380.

⁶ CS IV, 257a = CS III, 337a.

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◁ DE MUSICA MENSURABILI ▷¹

<Prooemium>

f. 21 Omnis ars sive doctrina honorabiliorem habet rationem quam artificium quod manu et opere artificis exercetur. Multo enim maius est scire quid quis faciat, quam scire quid ab alio discit. Etenim artificium corporale quasi serviens famulatur, ratio vero quasi domina imperat.² Cum multi sint qui musicam digitis operentur vel sono promant, eius tamen vim atque naturam minime intelligunt, hinc accidit quod corporales artifices non ex musicae disciplina, sed ex eius ipsius potius instrumentis acceperint vocabula. Musicus enim non ab aliquo instrumento,³ sed ab ipsa musica nomen accepit. Non enim dicitur musicus quia voce vel manibus operatur tantummodo, sed quia de musica novit regulariter loqui et certis rationibus eius sensum plenius enodare.

Est enim musicus qui, ratione perpensa, canendi scientiam non servitio operis, sed imperio speculationis assumpsit.² Quisquis igitur, qui huius scientiae armoniae⁴ vim atque rationem penitus ignorat, frustra sibi nomen cantoris usurpat <etiamsi> cantare sciat.⁵ Neque qui litteras legit, sed qui eas intelligit, lector sufficiens nuncupatur.

Cum etiam nostrae intentionis sit aliquid de musica tractare, primo videamus obmissis omnibus quid sit musica, et quae sint eius partes, et unde dicatur.

Musica⁶ est disciplina quantitatis relatae ad aliquid virtute proportionum, contemplativa ad notitiam qualitatum; vel musica est peritia modulationis sono cantuque consistens; et dividitur musica in naturalem et artificialem.⁷ Naturalis quae est tripartita; nam alia est⁸ mundana, alia est humana et alia est

1 not in ms

3 instruminto ms

4 armonia ms

5 cum enim si cantare sciat ms

6 in margin de musica ms

8 est nam alia est ms

2 Boethius, *De Institutione Musica Libri quinque*, ed. G Friedlein, Leipzig, 1867, Bk. I, ch. 34, pp. 223-224.

7 Cf. Isidore, GS I, 20a; Regino Prumiensis, GS I, 236b.

necessitate vocis fuerunt inventae pausae, et non possunt recipere perfectionem per punctum, nec imperfici natura notulis, nec ut dictum est alterantur. Sed a supradicta pausa non descendit nota alicuius formae, nec in corporibus quadratis nec obliquis ut ad ipsam possint reduci. Idcirco non perficitur nec imperficitur, et ideo non patitur alterationem, posito quod in dicta pausa includatur tempus parvum² obmissum et vacuum; et quod est vacuum non facit vocem, quia vox procedit ab ore animalis prolatus secundum Philosophum. Tamen alteratio permittitur causa necessitatis; haec est verum; sed modus perfectus et imperfectus necessitatem non habent ut pausa alteretur. Sed bene potest ipsa pausa facere notas alterare, specialiter longas, breves et semibreves et minimas, quae reducuntur per ternarium numerum in gradu ternario; sed minima nunquam imperfici potest nec ante, nec post.

Et est sciendum quod nota quae alteratur semper habet valorem duplicatum in modis perfectis vel divisionibus ubi posita est. Et notandum quod nota quae non recipit imperfectionem non potest recipere alterationem prout minimam, et si aliquando videtur quod pausa imperficiatur ab aliqua nota, non est verum, quia tunc computatur in reductione ternarii numeri propter modum perfectum qui semper reducitur per ternarium numerum. Ad hoc specialiter et diffuse notatur in tractatu Reverendi Magistri Johannis de Vetulis de Anagnia musicae doctoris, quod pausa nunquam alterari potest.

«APPENDIX III»

Quaestio de minima utrum possit imperfici vel non

Quia larga, longa, brevis et semibrevis imperficiuntur a notulis minoribus vel a valoribus, quaelibet in genere suo, nunc videndum est utrum simplex minima possit imperfici a semiminima, quae est minoris valoris quam dicta simplex minima, cum de similibus sit idem iudicium. Dicendum est quod cum dicta simplex minima sit per oppositam proprietatem minuta¹ ad differentiam aliarum semibrevium, quia opposita proprietas semper diminuit valorem notae in quacumque nota ponatur, et

² parvum est *ms*

¹ minata? *ms*

¹ Cf. Odington, *Summa de speculatione musicae*, CS I, 236 a.

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INTRODUCTION

The only source of the anonymous treatise *De semibrevis caudatis* is the manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, 1257 (f. 37-40). The treatise would seem to be predominantly French in content, although it was considered to be a principal source of late Italian trecento notation by Johannes Wolf.¹ The other contents of the manuscript would hardly suggest an Italian origin, and Gilbert Reaney suggests the provenance is the Valais.² However, the exchange of notational practices between France and Italy was a factor even at the time of Marchetus de Padua; and it is still more evident at this later period, where the differences are based more on local interpretations of the same problems, particularly the interchange of red notes, dragmas, and semiminims. The date of the manuscript is 1431, but the treatise was most likely written at the end of the fourteenth century.

The treatise itself is devoted entirely to the practical application of mensural notation. It has no prologue discussing the nature of music, which is so much a part of the usual treatise of the period. On the contrary, it is a straightforward, systematic presentation of the varieties of *Ars nova* notation with ample musical examples. Unfortunately, it is not itself related to other treatises, nor are names of other theorists or composers mentioned, so that it is difficult to establish chronology and date except through some of the examples, by which we can at least verify a late fourteenth century practice.

Our anonymous author begins his treatise with a paragraph based largely on Anon. III's chapter *De notulis aequivocis*, which concerns the *semibrevis caudata a parte inferiori*.³ These downward tailed semibreves in general seem to be used to indicate a shift in quantitative accent, not *via artis* as in Italian notation. We know these notes were well-known at the time of Marchetus' *Pomerium*,⁴ and de Vitry hints at their existence in the treatise *Ars Nova*.⁵

...si sunt signatae, secundum quod signatae debent proferri.

¹ J. Wolf, *GdM* I, p. 289.

² G. Reaney, *RISM B IV*, 2 Munich, 1969, p. 200. The *RISM* abbreviation for the ms is F—*Psg* 1257.

³ *MD XV* (1961), 32 and *CSM* 8, p. 87.

⁴ G. Vecchi, *Marcheti de Padua Pomerium* in *CSM* 6, pp. 172-180.

⁵ *Ars Nova*, p. 23.

