

### CHAPTER III

#### MATTEO DA PERUGIA

The circumstance that so many compositions by Matteo da Perugia (thirty, not counting an incomplete textless piece and four contratenors added to secular works by other composers) have come down to us, combined with the fact that rather more than the usual amount of information about his life is known, has caused the figure of this composer to take on a certain importance in the eyes of modern historians. That this reputation is probably exaggerated has been pointed out more than once,<sup>1</sup> and it is an evaluation that was certainly not shared by Matteo's contemporaries, for all of his compositions — discounting the contratenors — are found in only one manuscript, Mod. This may be compared to the eighteen or twenty manuscripts in which the works of Ciconia are preserved, and easily leads to the assumption that Mod had some kind of personal connection with Matteo, especially since the more recent part of the codex — Gatherings I and V — contains almost exclusively works by him.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.g., Bessler, "Hat Matheus de Perusio Epoche gemacht?" MF, VIII (1955), p. 19f.; Pirrotta, "Il codice estense . . .," loc. cit., p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>See the analysis of the manuscript by Pirrotta, ibid., pp. 102ff.

The biographical facts have been collected by Pirrotta,<sup>1</sup> Fano,<sup>2</sup> and Sartori,<sup>3</sup> and are briefly summarized here. Matteo was appointed santor at the Duomo of Milan on September 3, 1402, the first singer of polyphony at the cathedral, although an organist, Antonio Monti da Prato, had served since 1394. His duties were to biscantare at Vespers and Mass on solemn feasts and Sundays, to "honor the service with sweet melodies." Matteo was a professional musician, called magister -- he was permitted to maintain a school of music on Church property, and was required to instruct gratuitously three choirboys selected by the officials -- and musicus, leading one to assume that he was not a cleric, but a layman. It is probable that Matteo had been brought to Milan by Pietro Filargo di Candia, who was appointed archbishop of Milan in 1402, and in whose service Matteo seems to have been. Throughout his tenure of service at the Duomo Matteo was often on bad terms with the officials because of frequent absences when he was away with the archbishop, such as a stay in Pavia in 1405-06. His first period of employment at the Duomo ended in August 1407. Filargo had been elevated to Cardinal in 1405, and was later to be elected Pope Alexander V (making the third one at the time) at the ill-fated Council of Pisa in 1409. He died in Bologna the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 142ff.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., pp. 14ff.

<sup>3</sup>"Matteo da Perugia e Bertrand Feragut, i due primi maestri i cappella del Duomo di Milano," Acta, XXVIII (1956), 12ff.

following year. Matteo probably followed Filargo to Bologna in 1408, and may have accompanied him to Pisa at the end of that year, to Prato and to Pistoia in 1409, and finally back to Bologna in 1410. He may also have served Alexander's successor, John XXIII, in Bologna, but there is no evidence of any of this.

Meanwhile, Matteo's duties (but not his title) in Milan had been carried out from 1407 by two priest-singers -- "perché la voce di uno è voce di nessuno," according to the deliberations of the deputies at the Duomo -- and then from 1411 by the priest Ambrogio da Pessano. Matteo returned to the Duomo from June 1414 until August 1416 (Ambrogio also remaining). According to a (reliable?) nineteenth-century copy of a document now lost, he died on January 13, 1418.

Mod contains twenty-two French works by Matteo (four ballades, seven virelais, ten rondeaux, and one canon), two Italian ballatas, one textless fragment, one Latin motet, and five settings of the Gloria:<sup>1</sup>

- No. 2 (ff. 1v-2) Et in terra 3<sup>1</sup>: Idem [M. de perusio]
- No. 11 (ff. 9v-10) Et in terra ("fuga") 3<sup>2</sup>: M. de perusio
- No. 40 (ff. 22v-23) Et in terra 3<sup>1</sup>: de perusio

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<sup>1</sup>Mod also has a contratenor added to a ballade by Grenon, and Parma three more contratenors to works by Antonello da Caserta, Pierre Fontaine, and Ciconia. Inventories of Parma are in Besseler, AFMW, VII (1925), 231f., and Fano, op. cit. All the French works are published in Apel, French secular music of the late fourteenth century (Cambridge, Mass., 1950). Thirteen of them are published in Fano, op. cit., which also contains transcriptions of the two ballatas, the motet, the Mass pieces, and seven anonymous works in Mod which Fano attributes to Matteo. Thus, all of Matteo's completed works are now available in modern editions.

No. 99 (ff. 48v-49) Et in terra 4<sup>2</sup>: Idem [M. d. p.]  
No. 100 (ff. 49v-50) Et in terra 3<sup>2</sup>: Idem [M. d. p.]<sup>1</sup>

It is only reasonable to assume that the liturgical works were written primarily for the Milanese Duomo sometime between 1402-1416, the period of Matteo's appointments there, although we should avoid taking this too much for granted, since he may have held other ecclesiastical positions at some time or other. Apel, dealing with the secular works, has placed Matteo as the main figure in the movement away from the "manneristic" style in French secular music, which he dates ca. 1370-1390, to the modern, simpler style which begins ca. 1390.<sup>2</sup> Both the position of Matteo and the chronology have been disputed by Besseler,<sup>3</sup> but Clercx has supported Apel in the chronology.<sup>4</sup> We have already indicated above our agreement with Besseler's evaluation of Matteo, but Clercx has proved decisively that Ciconia (ca. 1340-1411) is an entire generation earlier than Besseler had thought, and since Ciconia's dates are a keystone in Besseler's whole system of chronology

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<sup>1</sup>In this and the succeeding lists of works the first figure after the title indicates the number of voices and the raised figure the number of those which have texts. Transcriptions in Fano, op. cit.: No. 2, pp. 196ff.; No. 11, pp. 206ff.; No. 40, pp. 213ff.; No. 99, pp. 224ff.; No. 101, pp. 235ff. The last is also edited separately by Fano for the Editions de l'Oiseau Lyre.

<sup>2</sup>French secular music of the late XIV century, pp. 9ff.

<sup>3</sup>MF, VIII (1955), 19ff.

<sup>4</sup>"Question de chronologie," RBM, IX (1955), 47ff.

for this period (The "Ciconia Epoch": ca. 1400-1430),<sup>1</sup> he does not raise a valid objection to the chronology proposed by Apel.

The possibility should not be overlooked, however, that Matteo's manneristic works may have been written in a style that was already outdated in France itself at the time Matteo was writing them. In the absence of more precise information about the compositions of French composers as well as Matteo, this must remain an open question. If he were a truly provincial, isolated master -- not that this seems likely -- he could well have worked in an idiom which had been abandoned by French composers twenty or thirty years previously.

The Et in terra No. 2 has certain characteristics which remind one of French practice of the third quarter of the fourteenth century, although the great use of long syncopated passages and irregular rhythms clearly show that it is a later composition. Conservative features are the basically very simple, moderately melismatic, conjunct melodic lines which, in spite of the artifice which sometimes overlays them with manneristic elaborations, do not conceal the fact that they are formed from a few traditional cadential formulas. These formulas are phrases

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<sup>1</sup>E.g., he places Pad in the early fifteenth century solely because it includes a work by Ciconia (AFM, VII [1925], 228). Clercx has shown that Ciconia was first in Italy as early as between 1358 and 1367, but even without this evidence, of course, the mere presence of a work in a manuscript of a particular locality does not by any means imply a personal connection of the composer with that locality.

of from two to eight breves in length, the average being four. Three or four of the phrases are grouped into each of the periods, all of which end on longs followed by double bar lines, and only one of which (out of eight) ends on a degree other than the tonic. This breaking up the composition into many separated periods is also a conservative feature, as is the use of the semibreve (often followed by a minim on the same syllable) as the standard declamation unit in imperfect time with major prolation. Two of the cadences are stronger than the normal ones by virtue of a breve rather than a shorter note as penultimate, and one cadence with a penultimate long is the strongest of all. This results in a four-sectioned form:

		breves	cadence
I	1. Et in terra	14	D
	2. Laudamus	15	D
II	3. Gratias	21	E
	4. Domine Fili	18	D strong
III	5. Qui tollis ... miserere	27	D
	6. Qui sedes	26	D very strong
IV	7. Cum Sancto	11	D
	8. Amen	18	D strong

The final cadence of the Amen is actually the strongest of all, as would be expected, because of the conventional harmonically strong sequences and repetitions which lead up to it. (It has six exactly repeated statements of a short rhythmic phrase of two measures in all three parts.)

Surprisingly, practically no use is made of recurring motives in this piece. The only thing which might be taken as such is the very weak

connection between the opening phrases of the first three sections, in reality nothing more than variations of a highly conventional formula:

Ex. 52. Beginnings of Sections I, II, III from  
Et in terra, Mod No. 2 — Matteo  
(upper voice only)

The image shows three staves of musical notation for the upper voice part of 'Et in terra'. The first staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). It begins with a quarter rest followed by a dotted quarter note, then a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The lyrics 'Et in ter-ra' are written below the staff. The second staff is in alto clef with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. It begins with a quarter rest followed by a dotted quarter note, then a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The lyrics 'Gra-ti-as a-gi-' are written below the staff. The third staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. It begins with a quarter rest followed by a dotted quarter note, then a series of eighth notes: G3, A3, Bb3, C4, Bb3, A3, G3. The lyrics 'Qui tol-lis' are written below the staff. Each staff is enclosed in a double-lined box.

The beginning of the Amen is slightly related to these. Otherwise, the only motives which recur are some unimportant cadential figures.

The third of the three examples above illustrates a device which is used several times in this composition, and one that is a favorite with Matteo in his whole production. This is the chord of a long with a *minim appoggiatura* in the top voice. In this place and in one other ("yhesu xri-ste" at the end of Section III), the contratenor has a certain amount of motion to carry on the momentum. In two other cases ("domine deus [rex]" and "miserere no-bis. [Quoniam]") all three parts

pause on a long. Finally, the beginning of Section IV has two examples in succession, this time marked with fermata signs.

Ex. 53. Beginning of Section IV from Et in terra,  
Mod No. 2 — Matteo

Only one special note form is used in this composition, a minim with a semiminim tail underneath, corresponding to a dotted minim. Its employment makes it possible to avoid the point of addition entirely in the vocal part, which is useful because now there can be no confusion between this and the very frequent point of syncopation. The latter, white notes, and imperfect time in diminution are the means used to notate the passages in irregular rhythm, some of which are rather long,



and some not entirely without ambiguity for the transcriber.

Ex. 54. Cadential phrase of Period 5 from Et in terra,  
Mod No. 2 — Matteo (upper voice only)

(stem erased?)

sus-ci-pe de-pre-ca-ti-o-nem no-stram

sus-ci-pe de-pre-ca-ti-o-nem no-stram

Detailed description: This musical example shows a cadential phrase in two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line with a note that has a stem that has been removed, indicated by an arrow and the text "(stem erased?)". The lyrics "sus-ci-pe de-pre-ca-ti-o-nem no-stram" are written below the staff. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment. Its lyrics are "sus-ci-pe de-pre-ca-ti-o-nem no-stram".

The V - I harmonic cadence is sometimes used by Matteo, as it is generally in this period. Most often it has the characteristic leap of an octave in the contratenor.

Ex. 55. From Et in terra, Mod No. 2 — Matteo

Qui se-des ad dex-te-ram

Detailed description: This musical example consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line with the lyrics "Qui se-des ad dex-te-ram". The middle and bottom staves are in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics "Qui se-des ad dex-te-ram" are written below the middle staff.

but the composition has one example of the much more rare direct voice leading.

Ex. 56. From Et in terra, Mod No. 2 -- Matteo

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics 'u-ni-ge-ni-te ye'. The middle and bottom staves are instrumental accompaniment. The music is in a 15th-century style, featuring a mix of whole, half, and quarter notes. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is enclosed in a dashed rectangular box.

It must be emphasized, however, that here and elsewhere in this period, V - I was employed as a weak harmonic articulation, almost never used for the final cadence of a period, but only for phrases within a period. Its greater and greater use in the fifteenth century was the result of the drive toward consonance and full triadic harmony, resulting finally in a preference for root-position triads at important points such as the cadence rather than the traditional penultimate VII<sup>6</sup>. The late fourteenth century saw the beginning of this development, and no one at the time was more up to date than Matteo in matters of harmony -- not even Ciconia, who often gives the impression of being harmonically more modern because of the greater simplicity and clarity of his forms. We must

attribute this aspect of Matteo's musical language -- clear, simple harmony; functional tonality -- to his Italian heritage, in spite of the fact that he worked almost exclusively in the French style.

One may agree with Fano's opinion that is the least interesting of all the five Gloria settings by Matteo,<sup>1</sup> at least from the point of view of technique; although, all things considered, it is probably a superior composition to the Gloria No. 11. This piece has the marking "fuga" written next to the single cantus part and a sign after nine breves showing the entrance of the canonic voice. The instrumental tenor has the character of a harmonic accompaniment; thus, the texture is exactly that of a secular form -- the caccia. The perfect time with minor prolation with semibreves varied by minims as declamation units, the predominantly syllabic text-setting and continuous motion -- the texture is consistent from beginning to end (except for some faster notes and quick syncopation in the leading voice at the Amen), the whole piece falling into one section -- all combine to create a modest, extremely compact little composition.

The tenor line behaves like a harmonic filler, jumping around from one missing chord tone to another, frequently crossing over one of the upper voices. It has the appearance of those typical added contratenors which serve to give fullness to the harmony in the compositions of this period. Lack of purposeful melodic design is to be

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<sup>1</sup>Op. Cit., p. 45.

expected in a voice which has such a function, but it is a bit surprising to find a certain awkwardness in the cantus part after the canonic voice has entered. A two-part canon with free accompaniment is hardly a great technical problem, and Matteo deserves no accolades for the way in which he has met this mild challenge. In other compositions and with different techniques he shows considerably greater command of his resources.

Ludwig pointed out that the canon is arranged in such a way that the invocations to the Father and to the Son occur at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

Ex. 57. From Et in terra, Mod No. 11 — Matteo

♩ = 1

-ste Do-mi-ne de-us a-gnus de-i fi-li-us pa-tris Qui tol-lis pec-ca-

do-mi-ne de-us rex ce-les-tis de-us pa-ter om-ni-po-tens do-mi-

(d'insms)

<sup>1</sup>"Die mehrstimmige Messe des 14. Jahrhunderts," AFM, VII (1925), 423.

Similarly, "Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis" is echoed closely by "Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis." These are the only obvious relationships between the musical technique of the canon and the text.

The Gloria No. 40 is the only one of the five which is in the earlier part of Mod, and, as if in confirmation of this, it presents an older stylistic picture. Completely devoid of manneristic elaboration, moving in a flowing imperfect time with major prolation, usually with the undivided semibreve and the breve carrying the syllables, it stands close to the French Mass piece of the third quarter of the fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup> If other of Matteo's compositions, such as the motet Ave sancta mundi salus (Mod No. 1), seem to be in the "post-manneristic" style, the Gloria No. 40 must be classified as "pre-manneristic."<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>W. Korte (Studie zur Geschichte der Musik in Italien im ersten Viertel des 15. Jahrhunderts [Cassel, 1933], p. 51) has classified this Gloria as a "Conductus-Ballade-Mass," i.e., in cantilena style with a texture approaching the conductus since there are no great differences between the rhythmic values of the three parts.

<sup>2</sup>I cannot agree with the chronology proposed by Fano (op. cit., p. 47), wherein he places the Gloria No. 101 earlier than all of the others because it is the most manneristic of the liturgical works. In this he is merely following uncritically the general hypothesis of Apel (see above, p. 164) -- which may be true for the majority of Matteo's compositions -- that the composer at first wrote in the manneristic style and later turned to a modern, simplified style. However, the present Gloria No. 40 has every indication of belonging to an earlier stage than No. 101. Fano almost says as much when he states (p. 45) that No. 40 has a cantus which moves with an agility which recalls the primitive Italian Ars Nova (although I can see a much closer affinity with the French Ars Nova).

tempo is undoubtedly faster than in No. 2 and No. 11 or in the two other Gloria settings to be considered; otherwise, the piece would move at an unbearably slow pace.

Although double bar lines are written only at the end of the main part and at the end of the Amen, the three parts cadence on a long at other places, clearly resulting in the following scheme of three short sections separating and encompassing two long ones.

breves

I	Et in terra	13	
II	Laudamus	(11 + 5 + 11) + 14 + 13 + 11	= 65
III	Qui tollis (8+7)	+ 14	= 29
IV	Qui sedes	(10 + 7) + (10 + 10) + 16	= 53
V	Amen	32	

Another way of looking at it would be to consider the main part as consisting of two large sections, each subdivided into a short plus a long section, and separated from the Amen:

A	1.	13	
	2.	65	total 78
B	3.	29	
	4.	53	total 82
	Amen	32	

Nearly all the cadences of the periods within the sections (all those shown above except other than the last of each group in parentheses) end on a long followed by a rest of one long or breve in the vocal part while the instruments continue the motion with some recognizable

connecting link which returns. Every one of these cadences is on G, and the lesser cadences for phrases (all those in parentheses except the last of each group) are closely related to the tonality: F, A (twice),  $A_3^{6\#}$ , and  $D_3^5$ .

This brings up the question of the very interesting formal procedure in this work. The whole composition consists of variations of a few phrases which fall clearly into three types: an opening phrase type (the A themes), a closing phrase type (the B themes), and a short modulatory connecting phrase or half-cadence (the C theme). The following example gives the entire vocal part of the composition arranged in such a way that the relationships and identities of the various phrases will be obvious. There are basically two types of openings, a 1 a and a 2 a, each ordinarily connected to a continuation. The first opening, a 1 a, is followed only by a 1 b ( $a 1 a + a 1 b = A 1$ ), but the other, a 2 a, may have either its own continuation ( $a 2 a + a 2 b = A 2$ ) or be fused into the continuation of A 1 ( $a 2 a + a 1 b = A 3$ ). There are three B themes, but B 2 and B 3 are closely related and together distinguished from B 1. The single C phrase is by nature unstable and usually returns

in a varied or transposed form.

Ex. 58. Analysis of upper part of Et in terra,  
Mod No. 40 — Matteo

The musical score is a handwritten analysis of the upper part of 'Et in terra' by Matteo. It is organized into five sections, each with its own staff and key signature. The sections are:

- Sec. I:** Treble clef, 3/8 time, key of F#. Contains a phrase labeled 'a1a' and a circled 'a1b'.
- Sec. II:** Treble clef, 3/8 time, key of F#. Contains phrases labeled 'a2a', 'a2b', 'a3', 'a3'', and 'a3'''.
- Sec. III:** Treble clef, 3/8 time, key of F#. Contains a phrase labeled 'a1a var.'.
- Sec. IV:** Treble clef, 3/8 time, key of F#. Contains phrases labeled 'a2a', 'a2b'', 'a2a transposed', 'A3', 'A3' var.', 'A2'', and 'a2a var.'.
- Sec. V:** Treble clef, 3/8 time, key of F#. Contains phrases labeled 'a1a'', 'a1a var.', 'A1 var.', and 'a2a'.

Annotations 'A1' through 'A3' and their variations are placed above the staves, indicating the structural analysis of the phrases. Brackets and lines connect these phrases across different sections, showing their relationships and transformations.



Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a2b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B3'.

(B2)

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a2b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a1b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'C transposed'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B3'.

(B2')

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a1b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B1'.

(B2)

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a2b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'C var'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B1''.

B3''

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a2b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'C var'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B3''.

B2

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a2b'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B1' var'.

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'a1b'.

(C)

Handwritten musical notation on a staff, featuring a circled 'C' and a bracketed section labeled 'B2'.

(B2')

The encircled symbols indicate those phrases in which not only the vocal part but also the two instrumental parts recur in the same or slightly varied form. In addition, many other motives in the lower parts return from time to time — something which is ignored in the analysis given.

Did Mattei invent such a form or derive it from elsewhere? I know of no specific composition which could have served him for a model, although a search of the French repertory might disclose one. But even if a fourteenth century model was not used, the idea of such a procedure could have been easily derived from certain plainchant settings of the Gloria. Many of these have a few melodic formulas which recur in irregular succession to make up just this sort of strongly integrated, essentially simple, but apparently complex formal design. After all, the various themes here are closely related within three distinct groups, as was stated above: opening (A) — connecting or half-cadential (C) — closing (B). In the final analysis is this not functionally the same as a simple psalmodic formula: intonation — mediant — termination?

The Et in terra No. 99 is a pure example of the motet-type Mass piece, with two vocal parts of equal range over instrumental tenor and contratenor in long notes. The form is divided into two sections of forty-two and twenty-one longs, with the two lower voices repeated in exact diminution in the second ("Qui tollis . . . suscipe"; the

repetition, but not the diminution, is indicated in the manuscript).

The mensuration is duple on all levels: imperfect major mode,

imperfect minor mode, imperfect time, and minor prolation (2, 2, 2, 2).

Although no isorhythmic elements are present,<sup>1</sup> the two lower voices show a very clear and well-organized arrangement, with several points of relationship between the two. In the following example, the scale

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<sup>1</sup>Korte's use of the word "isorhythm" in connection with this composition (and others) hardly corresponds to a rigorous definition of that term. (Op. cit., p. 61.) In the present study, the term is restricted to the device of the repetition of a rhythmic phrase with different melodic content.

of reduction is that of the second section, where the values are one-half those of the first. (The ligatures are disregarded.)

Ex. 59. Two lower parts of Et in terra,  
Mod No. 99 — Matteo

Particularly ingenious is the manner in which the y-complex is varied upon its return with a completely different tonal orientation. The tonal design of the whole piece is exceptionally strong.

Over this solid foundation the upper voices toss the interest back and forth lightly with short overlapping phrases, ordinarily not in imitation (although the beginnings of the two sections are in strict imitation). The words of the two voices almost never coincide, and the easy and natural play of lines creates a graceful effect. The motion of the first section is arrested on a long in all parts at "gloriam tuam," dividing the first section into 20 + 22 longs (compared to the total of 21 longs in Section II), but this is not a regular cadence: F - A. Also, the penultimate chord of one cadence <sup>6#</sup> (A3#) is stretched out to break the motion at the first "xpiste," but the only unquestionably clear division in the form is that between the two sections.

The most important aspect of this composition, however, is yet to be considered. This is the extremely interesting relationship between the two sections. The two lower parts are identical, of course, except for the diminution by one-half, but a closer look at the upper parts reveals that they, too, are related in a much freer way -- that the second section, in fact, is nothing less than an elaborate variation or condensation of the first section. One could hardly expect a very close correspondence; not only must the music of Section II be fitted to entirely different words, but -- although the degree of rhythmic motion does not greatly change -- the phrases of Section I must be compressed into one-half of their former duration. It is of

great interest to observe the manner in which Matteo has handled this problem. Grasped easily by musical examples, but rather difficult to describe in words, the technique does not so much reply upon motivic correspondence -- although this is used to some extent -- as it does upon the underlying structure of the individual phrases, the important or pivotal tones recurring in the same relative positions, occasionally with interchanges between the two parts for a short passage, or transpositions up or down or octave (once a fifth) for a few notes.

Approximately half of the composition is given below in such a manner that the interrelations may be easily perceived.

Ex. 60. Beginnings of Sections I and II from  
St in terra, Mod No. 99 — Matteo

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the beginning of Section I and the start of Section II. The second system shows the continuation of Section I and Section II. The score includes parts for Cantus I, Cantus II, Contralto, and Tenor. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is annotated with 'N.B.' (Nota Bene) and arrows indicating specific musical relationships and transitions between sections. The Contralto part includes the instruction '[diminished 1/2 in Sec. II]'. The score is written on a grand staff with four staves per system.

As though he wanted to point up the whole idea of the form, Matteo has made the final cadential passage of Section II in the top voice an exact diminution of the end of Section I.

Ex. 61. Ends of Sections I and II (top voice)  
of Et in terra, Mod No. 99 — Matteo

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Sec. I' and is in 2/4 time. It contains a melodic line with lyrics 'Qui tol-lis pec-ca-ta-mu-ni-se-re-re no-bis.' The bottom staff is labeled 'Sec. II' and is in 3/4 time. It contains a melodic line that is a diminution of the end of Section I, with the lyric '-men.' below it. A bracket labeled '[A-]' is placed under the first few notes of Section II. There are double bar lines at the end of each section.

Was Matteo the first to use such a variation procedure? The answer to this question involves an aspect of fourteenth-century isorhythmic forms that, to my knowledge, has heretofore escaped notice. It is well known that a standard type of the fourteenth century isorhythmic motet consists of a tenor melody divided into three or four isorhythmic periods with the whole repeated in diminution. Ten of Machaut's twenty isorhythmic motets follow this pattern. In many, if not most, of these motets one can observe that when the tenor melody is repeated the upper voices show a clear interrelationship between the sections, that this type of motet, in fact, may be considered a variation form. The interrelations are not quite so obvious as in the case of Matteo's Gloria, but it should not be forgotten that Matteo was not



working within an isorhythmic form, and hence could permit himself a good deal more flexibility in the melodic lines.

An example from Machaut's motet Bone pastor from the year 1324<sup>1</sup> may serve to illustrate this technique in its earlier stages. This motet has a tenor melody (A) divided into two isorhythmic periods (A I, II) which is followed by an exact repetition (B I, II). Both

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<sup>1</sup>see Ludwig, "Die mehrstimmige Musik des 14. Jahrhunderts," SIMG, IV (1902), 27. The motet is published in Guillaume de Machaut, Musikalische Werke, ed. Ludwig, III (Leipzig, 1929), 65ff.; and Schrade, Polyphonic music of the fourteenth century (Monaco, 1956- ), III, 4ff.

are then repeated in diminution (C I, II; D I, II). Sections A and C are given below:

Ex. 62. From Bone pastor — Machaut

The musical score is presented in two systems. Each system contains three parts: Trip. (Trio), Mo. (Morgan), and Tenor. The first system shows the first iteration of sections A and C. The second system shows the second iteration, with parts labeled AII and CII. The notation includes rhythmic values (minims, crotchets, quavers) and melodic lines. A double bar line is present at the end of the first system. Annotations include arrows pointing to specific notes and a double bar line with repeat slashes at the end of the first system.

Musical score for Tenor and Armonica. The Tenor part is marked *Armonica* and *[dim. 1/2 in c]*. The Armonica part is marked *Mo.* and *AI*. The score includes a double bar line and a *dim.* marking.

Musical score for Tenor and Armonica. The Tenor part is marked *Tenor* and *Armonica*. The Armonica part is marked *Mo.* and *AI*. The score includes a double bar line and a *dim.* marking.

This technique may also be found in motets by Philippe de Vitry; e.g., Adesto, sancta trinites.<sup>1</sup> Skeptics who may suspect that the alleged variation technique is merely the inevitable result of limited contrapuntal possibilities may be referred to those compositions which repeat the tenor exactly but have quite different upper parts; e.g., Machaut's motet Corde mesto,<sup>2</sup> where the tenor has a melody unchanged three times.

Thus, it is clear that Matteo was following a well-established precedent in the Gloria No. 99. The feature which once made a special type of isorhythmic form has now become the principal form-building element in a non-isorhythmic structure. This use of a free variation technique in place of the older isorhythm is characteristic of the early fifteenth century, and was widely used in Italy, as we shall see when we discuss the works of Ciconia and other composers of the period. It is most unlikely that Matteo was a leader in this development; it would probably be more correct to consider his works as evidence of a general practice of the time.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., I, 60 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., II, 147 ff.; Ludwig ed., III, 44 ff.

<sup>3</sup>For a later example of this variation technique, see the illustrations from Dufay's motet Nuper rosarum flores (1436) which are given in Reese, Music in the Renaissance, p. 80.

The Et in terra No. 101 has an instrumental tenor, a relatively simple vocal contratenor, and an extremely florid cantus which is much in the manneristic style, with frequent syncopations, quick melodic flourishes, irregular rhythms and changes of meter. (The piece uses many special note forms, including both solid and hollow red as well as hollow black.) In fact, this composition may be singled out as the most elaborate example of the manneristic style applied to a Mass piece by any composer from the entire period covered by the present study. In spite of this, however, the vocal line shows no trace of a forced unnaturalness. The intricate passages are blended together with simple ones into flowing, arched phrases, and the whole may be considered an excellent example of the coloratura vocal style -- to be sure, rather more secular than sacred in effect to our ears.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>One passage (at "Agnus Dei") is troublesome to the transcriber since it probably involves some errors in the original -- at least, this seems to me to be the most likely explanation. Fano's version (op. cit., p. 238) is overly-complicated, and the semiminims under the reversed half-circle (diminished imperfect time) move so fast that the tempo must be taken slower at this point. This is because he equates a semibreve (four semiminims) in diminished imperfect time with a minim after the half-circle with dot (imperfect time with major prolation):  $\text{C} \downarrow \times \text{P} = \text{C} \diamond = \text{C} \downarrow$ ; it is more likely that the breve (eight semiminims) of the first is equivalent to the semibreve (three minims) of the second:  $\text{C} \text{P} \times \text{P} = \text{C} \blacksquare = \text{C} \diamond$ . This results in only slightly faster motion: eight semiminims in place of the usual six, and also has the advantage of making the cadential formula which follows come out together with the two lower parts in the conventional manner. However, this solution leaves too many notes for the following measure; the six minims preceding the semibreve should probably be emended to read as six semiminims.

This Gloria uses exactly the same cantus firmus in the tenor as does the Gloria No. 99. Even the relative durations of the notes remain unchanged, although the mensuration is different. No. 99, it will be remembered, is duple on all levels (2, 2, 2, 2), whereas No. 101 is in perfect major mode, imperfect minor mode, imperfect time, and major prolation (3, 2, 2, 3). Fano's statement that this tenor has many errors<sup>1</sup> is not correct, for it all works out perfectly in the mensuration indicated. (This is one of the very rare cases of notated perfect major mode.) The alterations, imperfections, and syncopations are written properly, even if they are somewhat unfamiliar with such large values. In the example below the scale of reduction is very great (1:16) in order

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<sup>1</sup>Op. Cit., pp. 422-23.

to facilitate the reading. (The prolation plays no part in the tenor, so it is disregarded here.)

Ex. 63. Tenor of Et in terra,  
Mod 101 — Matteo

The key to the mensuration is given by the first dot, which would make no sense if the maxim were imperfect. (The long is obviously imperfect because of the rests.) Coming after a maxim plus the equivalent of three longs, it serves to mark off a perfection of three longs, thus ensuring that the first maxim is understood to be perfect. If, instead, the dot had been placed after the maxim, there would be some confusion whether it was a point of addition (indicating imperfect major mode) or a point of perfection (indicating perfect major mode).

If no dot at all were used the first maxim would certainly be read as imperfected by the following long.

The tenor of No. 101 is repeated in diminution, just as in No. 99, and here again we find that Section II is a free variation of Section I in the upper parts, although the correspondence is not quite so obvious because the abundant use of smaller notes in No. 101 requires a greater degree of contraction in Section II. Note that the variation character is not apparent in the very beginning of Section II (because



of the change to a chord on B-flat instead of F), but it becomes so later on.

Ex. 64. Beginnings of Sections I and II from  
Et in terra, Mod No. 101 — Matteo

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains the beginning of Section I, and the second system contains the beginning of Section II. Each system has two staves: the upper staff is for Cello (labeled 'Cen') and the lower staff is for Contrabass (labeled 'Con').

**Section I (First System):**

- The Cello part begins with a melodic line starting on G4, moving through A4, Bb4, and C5, with various rhythmic patterns including eighth and sixteenth notes.
- The Contrabass part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern.
- Two 'N.B.' (Nota Bene) annotations are present: one above the Cello staff with a bracket covering the first four measures, and another below the Contrabass staff with an arrow pointing to a specific note in the fifth measure.

**Section II (Second System):**

- The Cello part continues with a more complex melodic line, featuring many beamed sixteenth notes and a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#).
- The Contrabass part continues with a similar eighth-note accompaniment, including some longer note values.

Handwritten musical score for Soprano and Tenor. The Soprano part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Tenor part is written on a single staff with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music is in common time. The Soprano part features a melodic line with various ornaments and a large section of sixteenth-note runs. The Tenor part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and some melodic fragments. There are several dynamic markings, including *dim.* and *rit.*, and a section marked *M.B.* (Messa di Voce).

Handwritten musical score for Alto and Tenor. The Alto part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Tenor part is written on a single staff with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music is in common time. The Alto part features a melodic line with various ornaments and a large section of sixteenth-note runs. The Tenor part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and some melodic fragments. There are several dynamic markings, including *dim.* and *rit.*, and a section marked *M.B.* (Messa di Voce).

Those readers with sharp eyes may have already noticed the most remarkable fact of all about Matteo's two Gloria settings Nos. 99 and 101. Not only are both constructed on the same cantus firmus, each piece consisting of two sections of which the second is a variation of the first, but No. 101 is nothing else than a complete variation of No. 99! If Examples 60 (p. 180) and 64 are compared the relationship can be established. The cantus of No. 101 is derived almost entirely from Cantus I of No. 99, and the vocal contratenor of No. 101 is drawn predominantly from the instrumental contratenor of No. 99 with a few references to Cantus II. These relationships can be perceived more readily by the ear than by the eye, and are more evident if one's attention encompasses whole phrases rather than smaller units. It is interesting to note that the text-phrases (not given in the examples) do not correspond to the respective musical phrases in the two pieces after "Glorificamus te"; e.g., Section II of No. 99 begins with "qui tollis . . . suscipe," whereas Section II of No. 101 begins with "qui sedes" -- yet another illustration of the well-known fact that in the compositions of this period the words and the music often follow independent formal plans, coordinated but not integrated.

Of course, one cannot be absolutely certain that No. 101 was modelled upon No. 99 or whether the reverse was the case. Since the instrumental contratenor of No. 99 is so carefully and skilfully written to go with the tenor, whereas the vocal contratenor of No. 101 seems

to be much more casual — not to say awkward — at times, it is reasonable to assume that they were composed in the sequence in which they appear in the manuscript.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, a word should be said about the composition which opens the manuscript Mod (ff. a<sup>v</sup>-1: M. de perusio). This is a motet in three parts, the two cantus parts with the same words, Ave sancta mundi salus, a rhymed metrical text addressed to the Host, and the tenor has the words and melody (in chant notation) of the Agnus Dei GR IV, transposed from F to G and with slight variants. GR IV has the form A + X, B + X, A + X, but the motet uses only A + X with a repetition sign, and carries the following canon: Tenor dicitur de secundo modo .1<sup>o</sup>. postea gradatim .2<sup>o</sup>. et .3<sup>o</sup>. diminuitur, which means it is to be read in the second of the old rhythmic modes (breve-long), repeated in diminution, and repeated again in further diminution. Even if we cannot accept wholeheartedly de Van's thesis that this is one of several pieces of evidence for what he considers the pedagogical nature of Mod,<sup>2</sup> it is certainly remarkable to find such a reference to Ars Antiqua theory at this late date.

There is some doubt about whether the Agnus text under the melody indicates that the tenor is meant to be sung, or whether it is there

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<sup>1</sup>Fano (*op. cit.*, p. 46) places No. 101 earlier than all the other sacred pieces by Matteo because it should fall into Apel's "Manneristic Period," c. 1370-90. Concerning this point, see above, p. 173, note 2. It is not criticism of Apel's general hypothesis to point out that it is, as it must be in this period, based upon scanty evidence, and has neither been proved nor disproved as yet. It hardly seems prudent to apply it to an individual composition when any other evidence at all points in a different direction.

<sup>2</sup>"La pédagogie musicale à la fin du moyen âge," MD, II (1948), 87.

merely for the purpose of identification. This brings up the more important question of the purpose of the composition. Is this a kind of tropic motet for the Agnus? Most likely, it is not. If it is true that Mod had a special connection with Matteo, and that his sacred works were primarily created for the services at the Duomo in Milan, then this composition does not belong to the Ordinary of the Mass, for the Ambrosian Mass has no Agnus Dei.<sup>1</sup> The motet was probably sung before (or after?) the Transitorium, which is somewhat analogous to the Gregorian Communion. Probably Matteo, writing a Communion-motet and desiring a tenor which would be non-liturgical but which would still have the sanction of a certain traditional significance, took the obvious expedient of drawing upon another rite, and one with which he must have been very familiar since he was not Milanese by origin. The Gregorian Agnus would have had a kind of semi-official status, but he was free to use it in any manner and in any part of the service without violating liturgical propriety.

The form of the work is rigidly isorhythmic. The tenor melody in its three statements decreases from forty-eight to twenty-four to twelve breves (Sections I, II, III), while the upper voices have three isorhythmic periods of twenty-four breves each (thus, the first two

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<sup>1</sup>The modern Ambrosian Mass for the Dead does include an Agnus. I have been unable to ascertain in which period it was introduced into this service.

coincide with the first statement of the tenor melody — Section I —, and the third period in the upper voices correlates with Section II) plus one period in diminution of twelve breves, the Amen.<sup>1</sup> Just as we have seen in the two Gloria settings by Matteo and in Machaut's motet where the tenor melody is repeated in diminution, here, too, the upper voices of Sections II and III are free variations of Section I — as much as they can be with the inflexible isorhythmic structure. As a matter of fact, Section III (which, it will be remembered, is an exact rhythmic diminution of Section II in all parts) is so closely derived from Section II that it would be more accurate to call it a varied repetition rather than a variation.<sup>2</sup>

The most impressive thing about this motet is how well Matteo has succeeded in remaining uninhibited by all the formidable technical restrictions. The melodic flow seems unconstrained, light and fresh — and this is a remarkable achievement. Fano has arrived at the same opinion, and he calls the work "clear," "Italian," "pre-humanistic."<sup>3</sup> Matteo, or whoever it was who directed the arrangement of Mod, must also have felt that this was a work of importance, for otherwise he would not

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<sup>1</sup> Korte (op. cit., p. 38) is wrong in stating that the Amen is "free."

<sup>2</sup> Fano apparently was aware of this correspondence only at the ends of the sections when he referred to "musical rhymes." (Op. cit., p. 43.)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

have accorded it the place of honor at the beginning of the manuscript.

If one surveys the five Gloria settings by Matteo, he is struck by their diversity. Each has a completely different formal plan except for the variation-pair, Nos. 99 and 101, and even these are strikingly different in texture and melodic style (one being a duet of equal voices and the other highly soloistic with a subsidiary vocal part). No. 2 is an "ordinary," functional composition in through-composed, sectionalized form; No. 11 is highly economical in the form of a continuous canon; and No. 40 is based upon the idea of variation of a few conventional formulas in irregular sequence. Each of the five has a definite stamp and character which is not repeated in any other. Matteo's style, especially in the emphasis upon harmony and clear, simple melodic phrases, was forward-looking, and this native Italian gift is what saved him from succumbing completely to the decadent over-refined sterility which always lay ahead as the end-result of his love for scholastic subtleness, a love nurtured and encouraged by the aging French culture in which he found himself. Even if Matteo was not the leading composer of his time, he was one of the more interesting personalities, an important lesser master in an epoch in which great ones were rare.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For five anonymous works which may be by Matteo, see below, pp. 368 and 371ff.