

CORPUS MENSURABILIS MUSICAE

PAUL L. RANZINI
General Editor

KEYBOARD MUSIC
OF THE LATE MIDDLE AGES IN
CODEX FAENZA 117

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

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57

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Edited by
Dragan Plamenac



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

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Introduction

The manuscript published in the present volume in modern transcription is a landmark in the history of instrumental music and the earliest unified collection of music intabulated for the keyboard that has come down to us. It is the only source for music of the *Ars nova* in the instrumental field that can compare in size and importance to the great sources of vocal music of the same period. Like some of the vocal sources, the Faenza codex testifies to the merging of Italian and French musical styles and notational practices that characterize the late phase of the *Ars nova* in northern Italy at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; its importance is all the greater since it includes, in addition to instrumental elaborations of French and Italian vocal compositions of secular character, the earliest known sets of organ-Mass sections organized for performance in alternation by organ and choir. Basically, the keyboard pieces assembled in *Fa* are paraphrases of vocal originals, sacred or secular. This applies to pieces based on plainsong melodies (elaborations of sections of the Ordinary and of *Ave maris stella*) as well as to those based on French ballades and virelais and Italian madrigals and ballate. However, a certain number of pieces—such as Nos. 21, 23, and 36—do not seem to derive from vocal models but to be related to dance forms and to have been intended for performance on an instrument from their inception. The profuse and highly diversified ornamental figuration displayed throughout the volume far exceeds anything found in the sparse examples remaining of instrumental music of the late fourteenth and earlier fifteenth centuries.

The body of instrumental pieces in *Ars nova* notation constitutes the original contents of the codex. Interspersed with these pieces we find material from the later fifteenth century (vocal compositions in white notation and copies of musical treatises) entered by Johannes Bonadies in the 1470s on pages left blank by the original scribe or from which previously entered keyboard material had been eradicated. These later elements have no connection with the original contents of the manuscript and have not been taken into account in the present edition.

The instrumental character of the original portions of the Faenza manuscript was duly recognized by the scholars who first occupied themselves with the volume after its surprising reappearance in 1939. However, opinions regarding the nature of the instrument or instruments for which this music was intended differed greatly; but the consensus seemed to be that the music written down on two six-line staves in trecento fashion should be considered ensemble music, whether performed by two wind instruments, or two string instruments, or a combination of both. In the first essay I

1. [Kyrie (I)]

[„Cunctipotens Genitor Deus”]

Kyrie I,1: Choir

Ky-ri-e e - le - i - son.

Kyrie I,2: Organ

Organ introduction in 6/8 time, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 2nd ending bracket and a flat (b) marking. The bass staff has a flat (b) marking. The lyrics "Ky - ri -" are written below the bass staff.

Organ accompaniment for the first system of the choir part. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a flat (b) marking, a 5th fingering, and an asterisk (*) marking. The bass staff has a flat (b) marking. The lyrics "e -" are written below the bass staff.

Organ accompaniment for the second system of the choir part. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 10th fingering and a 3rd fingering. The bass staff has a 3rd fingering. The lyrics "e" are written below the bass staff.

Organ accompaniment for the third system of the choir part. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 15th fingering, a sharp (#) marking, and a 3rd fingering. The bass staff has a 3rd fingering. The lyrics "e -" are written below the bass staff.

Organ accompaniment for the fourth system of the choir part. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a flat (b) marking, a 20th fingering, and a 3rd fingering. The bass staff has a 3rd fingering. The lyrics "e -" are written below the bass staff.

Organ accompaniment for the fifth system of the choir part. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 25th fingering and a 3rd fingering. The bass staff has a 3rd fingering. The lyrics "le -" are written below the bass staff.

* Partly illegible