

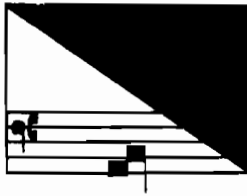
MUSICOLOGICAL STUDIES & DOCUMENTS

41

THE MUSIC TREATISE OF ANONYMOUS IV

A NEW TRANSLATION

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY
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PREFACE

The treatise of the thirteenth-century writer known today as Anonymous IV is central to an understanding of the music of Notre Dame. It contains detailed discussions of the rhythmic and contrapuntal theory of that monumental repertoire, comments about composers and their works, citations and analyses of specific pieces, and significant observations on the different musical genres and the manner of their performance.

It is now over twenty years since Luther Dittmer published an English translation of this treatise,¹ based upon the text transmitted by Coussemaker.² Coussemaker's editions, however, are notoriously unreliable, and the Anonymous IV text contains many errors – a situation only partially remedied by Dittmer's emendations. The translation itself has received mixed reviews.³

In 1967 an excellent critical edition of the treatise appeared,⁴ by Fritz Reckow, based on the three surviving manuscripts housed now in the British Library in London. This edition provides not only a stable and reliable text for study – variant readings are given in the *apparatus criticus* – but also parallel or comparable passages from other theorists.

The present translation is based directly on the Reckow edition and is designed to be used in conjunction with it. Each paragraph is numbered with a page and line reference (separated, for clarity, by a colon, rather than by a comma as in Reckow) so that the reader may closely compare Latin and English versions. Where variant readings have been adopted, these are indicated. In such cases the alternative reading has been based upon scrutiny of the manuscripts in the British Library, as well as careful consideration of overall context. Occasional changes

¹ Luther Dittmer, trans., *Anonymous IV*, Musical Theorists in Translation, vol. 1 (New York: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1959).

² Charles Edmond Henri de Coussemaker, *Scriptorum de musica mediæ ævi*, vol. 1 (Paris: Durand, 1864), pp. 327–364.

³ Gilbert Reaney, review, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 12 (1959): 226–233; Janet Knapp, review, *Journal of Music Theory* 3 (1959): 306–310; Andrew Hughes, *Medieval Music: The Sixth Liberal Art*, revised ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 137, entry 988, annotation.

⁴ Fritz Reckow, *Der Musiktraktat des Anonymus 4*, 2 vols., Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft, vols. 4–5 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1967).

⟨CHAPTER ONE⟩

⟨Part One⟩

Having understood the formation of melodies according to the system of eight modes [*tropoi*]¹ and according to the use and custom of the Catholic faith, we must now consider the measuring of them according to length and shortness, as the *antiqui*² dealt with them, and as Master Leo³ and very many others arranged them more fully according to their *ordines* and *colores*.⁴ They proceeded thus: the mode [*modus*] or *maneries*,⁵ or consideration of time, is the understanding of the length and shortness of melody and sound. There are six general modes. The first consists of long short, long short, long short, etc. The second consists of short long, short long, short long, etc. The third consists of a long and two shorts, a long and two shorts, etc. The fourth consists of two shorts and a long, two shorts and a long, etc. The fifth of long, long, long, etc. The sixth of short, short, short, etc. 22 : 3

If the first mode is combined with the others or with itself, then there are five combinations plus one. If the second is combined with the others and with itself, there are five more plus one. If the third is combined with the others and with itself, there are five more plus one. 22 : 15

¹ The melodic modes.

² This term is vague, perhaps deliberately so, and appears often in the course of the treatise. It is given greater focus, however, in 46:1–2:

Istae regulae utuntur in pluribus libris antiquorum, et hoc a tempore et in suo tempore Perotini Magni. . . .

(These rules are used in very many books of the *antiqui*, from the time of Perotin the Great, and in his own time. . . .)

and in 50 : 25, where Anonymous IV uses the comparative *antiquiores*.

³ For this, and the other names in the treatise, see Reckow, *Der Musiktraktat* . . . Vol. I, Personen-Register.

⁴ This word is used in the treatise as a descriptive term of approval, and five times out of seven in conjunction with, or as an alternative for, the word *pulcritudines*. There is no parallel passage in which *colores* are mentioned as a factor in organization. The term is a rhetorical one. See Cicero, *de Oratore* 3, 25, 95; Quintilian, *Institutiones Oratoriae* 6, 3, 110; and R. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage*, pp. 211–213.

⁵ *Maneries* occurs in the first chapter of Johannes de Garlandia's treatise as an alternative for the word *modus*. The ordinal numbers for the musical examples also imply the feminine noun.