

# The 'Stupendious' Nicola Matteis

An exploration of his life, his works for the violin  
and his performing style

Vol. 1 of 3

Simon Jones  
PhD, University of York

March 2003

# Abstract

The rôle of Nicola Matteis in the adoption of an Italianate violin style in seventeenth-century England, clearly acknowledged by contemporary commentators, has now largely been forgotten. Overshadowed towards the end of his life by his own son, Matteis's work was marginalized further by the popularity of more famous virtuosi such as Corelli and Geminiani whose music was to become so well-known in England after his death. His music and performance style appear to have been surprising, shocking, challenging and liberating to amateur and professional musicians alike. Assessments of Matteis's life and work have been attempted before but not without certain substantial misunderstandings and misattributions.

Section one deals with the biographical details of Matteis's life and aims to address the confusion that has always existed in the attribution of the works of Matteis and those of his son and explains the further confusion that has arisen from the move of Matteis's grandson John-Nicola to Shropshire in the early part of the eighteenth century.

Section two looks at the extant printed and manuscript sources of Matteis's music. Analysis of watermarks, paper, format, musical content, engraving and handwriting leads to a suggested chronological order for the sources. Evidence is examined for the way in which the manuscript copies were produced and different hands are examined in an attempt to identify Matteis's own handwriting.

Section three looks at the extant sources from the viewpoint of the performer and the variety of Matteis's output is explored for clues as to whether or not they offer an understanding of his playing style. This evidence is then compared with contemporary descriptions and tested in performance.

The Appendices contain lists of his work as well as a discussion of how he rewrote certain *Ayres* for his 1685 publication. There is also a selection of works in an *a2* and *a3* medium, edited from Matteis's surviving printed and manuscript sources, many of them in all probability unperformed for centuries.

# Declaration

The material presented in this thesis is solely the work of the author, though not without the help and encouragement of a great many other people. This study has not previously been published nor has it been submitted for examination for any other qualification. The substance of Section One appeared in an article for *Early Music* journal but it was subsequently re-written with the addition of new material. All translations, except where acknowledged, are the responsibility of the author, as are all mistakes.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Peter Holman for having first introduced me to the remarkable Nicola Matteis, and to Dr. Peter Seymour and Dr. Jonathan Wainwright for their unfailing assistance and encouragement. I received so much help from various libraries and librarians that I cannot mention them all, though I am particularly grateful to Dr. David Griffiths in York, David Coppen in Rochester, New York and the ever-helpful staff of Washington Library of Congress. Viola Scheffel helped with some translations and with tracing important material in the Italian archives – not an easy task. Lynda Sayce has been consistently generous with help and advice and her proof reading was an invaluable help whilst Dr. Robert Thompson was a tireless source of information on manuscripts, paper and watermarks. Finally I wish to thank my wife for her support, proof reading and suggestions (and for letting me off the housework for so long) and my family and close friends who now all know more about Matteis than they ever thought they needed to.

# Contents

## Volume 1

	Page
Abstract	i
Declaration	ii
Library Sigla	viii
Recital Notes	x

### Section 1: ‘A Spice of Italy’

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	The Early Years	4
1.3	Employment	8
1.4	Family	11
1.5	Attribution of the music	14
1.6	The third generation and the likely date of Matteis’s death	22

### Section 2: The printed and manuscript sources

2.1.	Introduction	31
2.2	The Sources	32
2.3	Matteis’s own publications	37
2.4	Watermark evidence	41
2.5	Towards a history of the printed sources	48
2.6	The printed sources in detail	50
2.7	The manuscript sources	73
2.8	Comparison of the hands	79
2.9	Conclusions	115

### Section 3: Playing style, ‘The conference of extreams’

3.1	Introduction	122
3.2	The developing solo form and the unreliability of printed sources as a record of virtuosity	122
3.3	Matteis’s musical background	128
3.4	The sources for Matteis’s music	130
3.5	Basic formal considerations of the <i>Ayres</i>	140

3.6	Categorizing the <i>Ayres</i>	145
	(i) The Dances	146
	(ii) The Trumpet tunes	150
	(iii) Counterpoint	152
	(iv) The Fantasias	156
	(v) National titles	164
3.7	The Italian style	
	(i) ‘When the Raptures came’	171
	(ii) The expressive, <i>Affetto</i> style	175
3.8	Matteis’s manner of performing in the expressive style	
	(i) The Violin hold	190
	(ii) The Violin set-up	198
	(iii) The Bow	199
	(iv) The Speaking style and Matteis’s ‘Conference of Extreams’	206
	(v) Rubato	212
	(vi) <i>Curling</i> graces and the cadential flourish	215
3.9	Further expressive bowing techniques	
	(i) Tremolo	219
	(ii) Staccato	226
	(iii) Slurring	230
	(iv) Double-dotting	236
3.10	Divisions	
	(i) ‘Per far la mano’	238
	(ii) Rhetorical underpinnings and the preparatory movements	244
3.11	Trilling	253
3.12	Multiple-stopping	261
3.13	The status of the Basso	266
3.14	Matteis’s extra violin parts	269
3.15	The Bodleian Manuscript	275
	<b>Section 4: Conclusions</b>	<b>281</b>

## Volume 2

Appendix 1	The complete sources of Matteis's music	286
Appendix 2	The titles of the <i>Ayres</i>	296
Appendix 3	Development of the <i>Ayres</i>	305
Appendix 4	Editorial notes to the editions	322
Bibliography		350

## Volume 3

### Suites from Book 5, in three parts

#### Suite in G Major

<i>Balletto for ye young Nicola</i>	368
<i>Balletto for ye young Nicola</i> (in score form)	369
<i>Entrata di Balletto</i>	371
<i>Nova Burlesca</i>	372
<i>Minuet</i>	374
<i>The horn Pipe</i>	375

#### Suite in C Major

<i>Aria Grave</i>	377
[Untitled]	379
<i>Adagio</i>	380
<i>Aria</i>	381
<i>Maniera Italiana</i>	382
<i>Roundo</i>	383
<i>Bore</i>	384

#### Suite in C Minor

<i>Preludio in C solfaut ♭</i>	385
<i>Bore</i>	386
<i>Balletto</i>	387
<i>Andamento</i>	388
<i>Aria</i>	389
<i>Aria</i>	390

#### Suite in G Minor

<i>Preludio</i>	391
<i>Corrente</i>	392
<i>Minuet</i>	393
<i>Adagio</i>	394
<i>Fancy called hold the tongue</i>	395
<i>Adagio</i>	396
[Untitled]	397
[Untitled]	398
<i>Devision</i>	400

#### Suite in D Major

<i>Andamento</i>	402
<i>Sarabanda</i>	403
<i>Aria Allegro</i>	405

### Suites of *Ayres a2* and *a3* from Books 1 and 2

#### Suite in C Major

<i>Aria tra la maniera Francese, e la Spagnola</i>	406
<i>Sarabanda</i>	409
<i>Aria burlesca con molte bizzarrie</i>	410
<i>Diverse bizzarrie sopra la Vecchia Sarabanda ò pur Ciaccona</i>	415

#### Suite in A Minor

<i>Adagio</i>	423
<i>Gavotta</i>	425
<i>Sarabanda Amorosa</i>	427
<i>Scaramuccia</i>	429
<i>Movimento Incognito</i>	431

## Suite in D Major

<i>Allegro</i>	434
<i>Aria</i>	435
<i>Andamento</i>	437
<i>Arietta</i>	440

## Suite in G Minor

<i>Andamento Malinconico</i>	442
<i>Ricercata in G–Solreut terza minore</i>	444
<i>Sarabanda</i>	446

## Suite in G Major

<i>Burlesca</i>	448
<i>Sarabanda</i>	450
<i>Al Genio Turchesco</i>	452

## Sonatas and miscellaneous works

<i>Sonata by Nicolla Mathise (Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.22)</i>	453
<i>Sonata by Nicolla Mathise (Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.23)</i>	462
<i>Variations on La Folia by N.M. (Ob Mus. Sch. C.61 Fol. 16v)</i>	470
<i>Variations on La Folia anon. (Ob Mus. Sch. C.61 Fol. 17v)</i>	474



## Library Sigla

### England — GB

CDu	Cardiff, University of Wales/Prifysgol Cymru
Cfm	Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Department of Manuscripts and Printed Books
Ckc	Cambridge, King's College, Rowe Music Library
DRc	Durham, Cathedral Church, Dean and Chapter Library
En	Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Music Department
Ge	Glasgow, Euing Music Library
HAdolmetsch	Haslemere, Carl Dolmetsch, private collection
Lbl	London, British Library
Lcm	London, Royal College on Music, Library
Mch	Manchester, Chetham's Library
Mp	Central Public Library, Henry Watson Music Library, Manchester
Ob	Oxford, Bodleian Library
Ob Tenbury	Collection from Tenbury Wells, St Michael's College Library, now housed in Oxford, Bodleian Library
Och	Oxford, Christ Church Library
WOr	Worcester, Record Office

### Germany — D

Bs	Stadtbibliothek, Musikbibliothek Berlin
Dl	Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek — Staats- und Universitäts-Bibliothek, Musikabteilung

**WD** Wiesentheid, Musiksammlung des Grafen von Schönborn-  
Wiesentheid

### **France — F**

**Pn** Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France

### **Italy — I**

**Bc** Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale

**Fc** Florence, Conservatorio Statale di Musica Luigi Cherubini

**Vnm** Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana

### **United States of America — US**

**Cn** Chicago, Newberry Library

**LAuc** Los Angeles, University of California at Los Angeles, William  
Andrews Clark Memorial Library

**NHub** New Haven (CT), Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and  
Manuscript Library

**NYp** New York, Public Library at Lincoln Centre, Music Division

**R** Rochester (NY), Sibley Music Library, University of  
Rochester, Eastman School of Music

**SM** San Marino (CA), Huntington Library

**Wc** Washington, DC, Library of Congress, Music Division

# Recital notes

Enclosed with this submission are two CDs, which are recordings of the two halves of a recital given on the evening of May 13<sup>th</sup> 2003. The programme for this recital, which formed a part of the performance practice PhD, was chosen specifically to contrast the music of Matteis with that of two of his most important contemporaries. The two suites of *Ayres* by Matteis in this recital are taken from the 1676 publication; the Biber *Mystery Sonatas* date from perhaps a decade earlier and the *Sonatas* of Lonati, although presented to their dedicatee in 1701, were almost certainly written earlier than this. Thus we are able to contrast the music of the professional, virtuoso performer from England (albeit an Italian performer), Italy and Germany at roughly the same stage in the seventeenth century.

The music of Biber has long been celebrated as perhaps one of the ultimate challenges to the violinist, replete as it is with complex figurations, fast passagework and various scordatura tunings. What is less well-known is that the Italians were also fond of such virtuoso techniques and for this reason I have chosen to include the music of Lonati, which demonstrates that there were Italian virtuosos who were writing equally complex and demanding music. As has been discussed in Section Three of this study, the fact that the music was presented as a manuscript rather than as a print has strong implications for the level of technical difficulty it contains. This is the reason why Lonati's music was chosen for this recital in preference to that of his better-known contemporary Corelli, whose printed music is almost certainly less representative of the high standards of professional playing at this time.

Throughout the present study, particularly in the third section, which deals with performance practice issues, references are made to various technical aspects of seventeenth-century performance practice. In some instances these issues are illustrated by certain passages in the recital programme, and in such places a small icon (♪) has been included in the text to point the reader towards the pertinent point in the recital.

The programme for the recital is as follows:

## **The Mystery Sonatas —**

Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber

### **Sonata 1 (The Annunciation)**

**Praeludium** – The angel came in unto her, and said: ‘Hail, thou that art highly favoured.

**Aria allegro, Variatio and Adagio** – Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son.

He shall be called the Son of the Highest, and of his kingdom there shall be no end’.

Mary said: ‘How shall this be?’

The angel answered: The power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee.’

Mary said: ‘Be it unto me according to thy word.’

**Finale** - And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:28 38)

## **Sonata VII**

Carl’Ambrogio Lonati

Sonata VII is in the key of G minor but the scordatura requires that the violin is tuned with the top two strings lowered by a tone. This means that with two open G and D strings the instrument resonates much more fully, resulting in a richer more viola-like tone. The greater insistence of the southern Italian composers for a demarcation between church and chamber sonatas was not so much in evidence in the north and this sonata is typical of the late seventeenth-century northern Italian style with a combination of movements based on tempo and dance forms, ending with a stylised minuet. Lonati employs a great deal of variation within all his sonatas which gives him the opportunity to explore various technical devices and extend the element of virtuosity in his work beyond that of any of his Italian contemporaries.

**Sostenuto – Largo – Alemanda, Adagio – Variato – Spiritoso – Presto – Vivace – Variato I – Variato II – Variato III – Minuet**

## **Preludio X (1640)**

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsperger

## **Toccata arpeggiata (1610)**

**Suite in A minor – ‘con qualche bizzarrie’**

Nicola Matteis

**Passaggio rotto – Adagio – Scaramuccia – Fantasia – Diverse bizzarrie Sopra la Vecchia  
Sarabanda o pur Ciaccona**

This suite follows the practice employed by Matteis whereby he constructed his own ‘sonnatas’ by choosing combinations of various short pieces from his published works. The selection here demonstrates the huge variety within Matteis’s writing, from an unaccompanied, ad libitum style, through complex polyphonic writing, tender Italianate slow movements and a jocular variation movement which is so typical of the energy and joy present in so much of Matteis’s music.

**Interval**

**Suite in G**

Nicola Matteis

**Preludio – Sarabanda Adagio – Aria Burlesca – Giga Al Genio Turchesco**

This suite is again drawn from various published *Ayres*. The beauty and simplicity of the writing marks Matteis out as both a capable composer and, it seems to me, one of great spirituality. The fast movements again confirm both his sense of humour and capable grasp of the percussive and resonant qualities of the violin. The accompaniments to all the Matteis *Ayres* in this recital programme have been varied to create a range of textures, from solo violin, to violin with lute or violin with cello and organ. Matteis himself was a capable exponent of the guitar and is recorded as having accompanied his son’s violin playing on that instrument alone. Such combinations were very popular in the seventeenth century when it is also true that the choice of instruments in an ensemble was often down to what was available rather than what was desired.

**Ciaccona [*from Sonata 12*]**

Carl’Ambrogio Lonati

This is the last sonata in Lonati’s set of twelve and is the longest as well as one of the most technically demanding. Built over an unvarying simple descending tetrachord, the work employs nearly every possible bowed technical device, including arpeggiando, bariolage, double, triple and quadruple stopping, high position work, scales, arpeggios and some extremely fast passage-work.

**Largo – Spiritoso – Allegro – Largo – Piu Adagio assai – Vivace – Allegro – Largo – Allegro –  
Sostenuto – Sostenuto – Spiritoso – Largo – Sostenuto**

**The Mystery Sonatas —**

Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber

## **Sonata 10 (The Crucifixion)**

**Praeludium** – There they crucified him, and two others with him.

**Aria – Variatio** When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother: ‘Woman, behold thy son’. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also derided him. And the soldiers also mocked him. After this he said: ‘I thirst.’ When he had received the vinegar, he said: ‘It is finished.’

**Adagio** – And he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

**[Untitled]** – And behold the earth did quake, and the rocks rent’. (John 19: 18-30: Luke 23: 35 36).

# 1. 'A Spice of Italy'

## 1.1 Introduction

It was the fate of Nicola Matteis (d. c.1699) that his role in the development of violin playing in England, though a significant one, was to be almost immediately forgotten in the excitement which greeted the works of the great Arcangelo Corelli. Posterity has not been overgenerous to a man whose importance was eagerly acknowledged by many of his illustrious contemporaries. In the words of Roger North:

As a gratefull legacy to the English nation, [Matteis] left with them a generall favour for the Itallian manner of harmony, and after him the French was wholly layd aside, and nothing in towne had a relish without a spice of Itally. And the masters here began to imitate them, wittness Mr H Purcell in his noble set of sonnatas, which however clog'd with somewhat of an English vein, for which they are unworthily despised, are very artificiall and good musick. But that which contributed much to an establishment of the Italian manner here, was the travelling of divers yong gentlemen into Italy, and after having learnt of the best violin masters, particularly Corelli, [they] returned with flourishing hands; and for their delicate contour of graces in the slow parts, and the stoccata, and spirit in other kinds of movements, they were admired and imitated. But even this humour of learning in Italy is moderne, and sprang out of an ambition inspired by the musick of old Nichola. I doe not remember to have heard of any gentleman that traveled with such designe or brought home the Italian manner, before he was settled in England, and gave them their cue.<sup>1</sup>

Matteis arrived in England at a time when the predominant style of violin music was still the mostly dance-inspired music so beloved of the Francophile court of Charles II. However, there was a growing awareness of, and admiration for, the more technically advanced and exuberant Italian style; manuscript and printed versions of recent Italian sonatas were available in England, often very soon after their Italian publication. The English were well informed of the latest developments and were ready for the influences which Matteis's innovative playing style would provide. By the end of the century England had become a prime destination for Italian violinist composers; the works of Corelli were embraced there with more enthusiasm than anywhere else in Europe.<sup>2</sup> North is quite clear that Matteis played a major role in

---

<sup>1</sup> Roger North *on Music: Being a Selection from his Essays Written During the Years c.1695–1728*, ed. J. Wilson (London, 1959), p.310, n.65.

<sup>2</sup> Compelling evidence that Corelli's works were available in England much earlier than has been assumed is contained in R. Thompson, *English Music Manuscripts and the Fine Paper Trade, 1648–*

this transformation, but how important was he? Was he chicken or egg, catalyst or consequence? To answer this question it is first necessary to define his period of activity.

Any evaluation of Matteis is hampered by the biographical fog that obscures the details of his life. Historians have not yet established the date and place of either his birth or his death and extant contemporary biographical references tend to be undated, as are the manuscript versions of his compositions. His engraved prints, on the other hand, were often dated, but, since they were issued and reissued over a long period with few or no changes to the title-pages, they are of little help in establishing his period of activity. That he chose to name his son Nicola only adds to the confusion, especially since the latter also became a violinist. A web of variously spelt references to 'Matteis, 'Mr Nicola' and 'Signor Nichola the famous musitian' or 'the famous violinist' appear in relation to both father and son. Caution is needed, particularly for the period 1690–1700, since, as it will be seen, the younger Matteis was older than has hitherto been realized.

The music of neither Matteis is especially well known today. Although the violin *Ayres* of Matteis senior were very influential works in their day, they are not now widely performed, even by 'period' instrumentalists, which is at least partly due to the lack of good performing editions. Facsimiles of Matteis's own engraved editions are very clear but do not appear to have been produced in score, the lack of which is less than ideal for ease of accompaniment.<sup>3</sup> Matteis's treatise on continuo playing for the guitar, *The False Consonances of Musick* (London, 1682), is equally neglected for, whilst it is generally familiar to lutenists and guitarists, it is not usually accorded the importance it deserves as a record of late 17th-century continuo technique.<sup>4</sup>

The various attempts that have been made to unravel the biographical cat's-cradle in

---

1688 (PhD, University of London, 1988); Purcell would almost certainly have known at least the Op.1 when he wrote his 1683 *Sonnatas in Three Parts*. The great popularity of Corelli's music in England is discussed in P. Allsop, *Arcangelo Corelli: New Orpheus of our Times* (Oxford, 1999), p.171.

<sup>3</sup> For some reason Walsh and Roger also appear to have replicated this omission in their later editions.

<sup>4</sup> A manuscript copy of this treatise is held by the Sibley Music Library at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, New York. The work also appeared in print in both English and Italian. A modern facsimile, based on GB-Ge B.e.20, is also available (Monaco, 1980).



which the Matteis family history lies tangled have met with varying degrees of success. George Proctor and Michael Tilmouth have provided valuable information, but both fail to differentiate accurately between father and son during their London years.<sup>5</sup> After Matteis junior's move to Austria in 1700 it becomes much easier to follow his career, and the work of Andrew McCredie, Paul Nettl and Peter Keuschnig is invaluable in charting his later life.<sup>6</sup>

By far the greatest assistance in the search for a definitive account of the lives of the Matteis family is to be found in Roger North's collection of memoirs and notes.



ROGER NORTH AS A YOUNG MAN  
Engraved by Vertue after the portrait by Sir Peter Lely.

**Plate 1-1: Roger North by Vertue after Lely<sup>7</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> G.A. Proctor, *Nicola Matteis* (PhD, University of Rochester, 1960).

<sup>6</sup> A.D. McCredie, 'Matteis, the Younger: Caldara's Collaborator and Ballet Composer in the Service of the Emperor, Charles VI', *Antonio Caldara: Essays on his Life and Times*, ed. B. Pritchard (Aldershot, 1987); A.D. McCredie, 'Nicholas Matteis—English Composer at the Habsburg court', *Music and Letters* 48 (1967), pp.127–37; P. Nettl, 'An English Musician at the Court of Charles VI in Vienna', *Musical Quarterly* 28 (1942), pp.318–28; P. Keuschnig, *Nicola Matteis junior als Balletkomponist* (PhD, University of Vienna, 1968).

<sup>7</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, from the un-numbered prefatory pages.

Born in 1651, North was a remarkable man from a remarkable family. Both a Member of Parliament and Queen's Attorney General, he was one of the pre-eminent amateur musicians and musicologists of his time, with a seemingly inexhaustible appetite for theorizing. In the 1690s he began a gradual process of retrenchment to Rougham in Norfolk, where he lived in long and productive semi-retirement, making regular visits to London and indulging his love of music. His notes on music, dating from c.1695–c.1728, address both scientific and artistic principles, and range from deliberations on the details of Greek theatre to various criticisms of contemporary musical life, including a piquant lament that 'older' music was being unjustly neglected in the face of new developments. Matteis is particularly well served by these memoirs, respect and even friendship shining clearly through each recollection. The way in which North talks about Matteis and his playing suggests that he might have been his pupil. Such a possibility gives an exciting extra credibility to North's recollections and comments on Matteis's playing which touch on Matteis's physique, playing style, character and influence, and offer our only real chance of approaching an understanding of him, other than through his music.

## 1.2 The early years

The only real clue as to Matteis's birthplace is the wording of the title-pages of some of his publications: 'Nicola Matteis. Napolitano'.

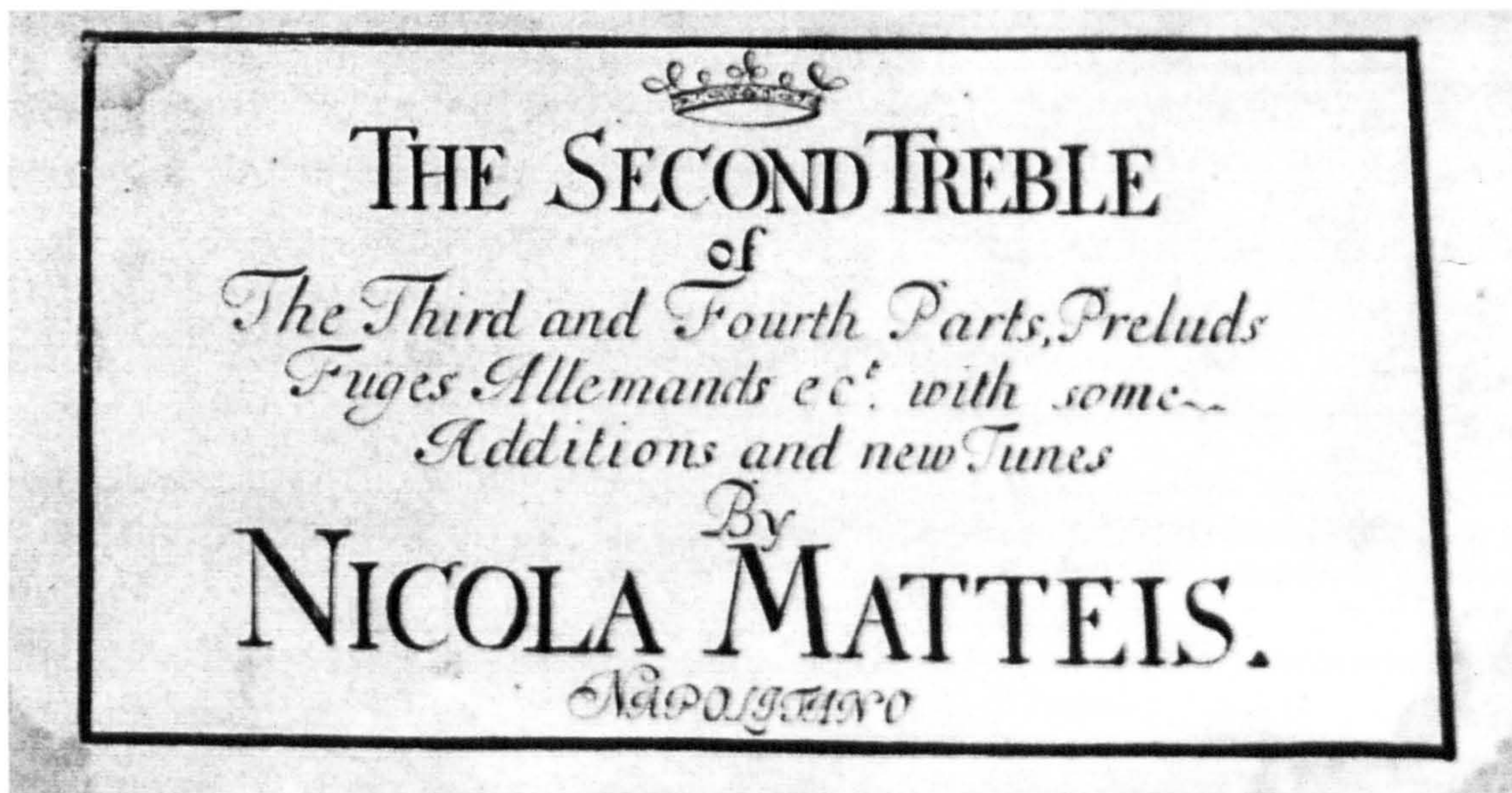


Plate 1-2: Title-page of GB-CDu MC109 (London, 1687) (Courtesy of Cardiff University Music Department).

This is not a surprising addition to the early Italian issue of Books 1 and 2 in that it was, presumably, seeking to make something out of his Italian heritage, though the same information appears, once in English and once in Italian, in later issues of Books 3 and 4. Evidently his Italian origins were still considered a selling point all those years later. Despite the lack of any corroborating evidence, there seems no real reason to doubt that Matteis was from the Neapolitan region though this does not narrow the search to any great extent. The term Napolitano unfortunately implies no more than does Corelli's epithet, 'Il Bolognese' insofar as Corelli was born in Fusignano, not Bologna, and only spent a handful of years in the city itself.<sup>8</sup> Matteis could have been brought up anywhere in the Neapolitan region, which at that time covered much of Spanish-ruled southern Italy. The name Matteis (or, more usually, de Matteis) is quite common in the Neapolitan area: Paolo de Matteis (a painter and rough contemporary of the present Matteis) and Domenico de Matteis (a violinist known to have worked with Pergolesi) are two notable examples.<sup>9</sup>

In the 17th century Naples, like Venice, fostered a system of musical training in institutions originally conceived as orphanages and children's homes, though the possibility of Matteis having been brought up in such a home seems unlikely, since his name does not appear in any of the rosters of pupils of the four Neapolitan conservatories up until the beginning of the 1670s.<sup>10</sup> It has been suggested that he may have played in the Royal Chapel orchestra with Carl' Ambrogio Lonati, but despite certain similarities between the music of these two violinists — one source of Matteis's music was even attributed to Lonati for a while<sup>11</sup> — it appears highly unlikely that Matteis ever played in this orchestra.<sup>12</sup>

At this stage the only possible suggestion of a birth date for Matteis comes from Sir Godfrey Kneller's portrait of him, though even here there is a certain amount of

---

<sup>8</sup> Fusignano is about fifty miles east of Bologna, nearer to Ravenna. It was obviously natural for a player to be associated with the nearest major city in terms of music, as was probably the case for Matteis.

<sup>9</sup> D. Fabris and A. Garofalo, *Henry Purcell* (Palermo, 1999), p.164. Professoressa Laterza informs me that the name (de) Matteis was particularly common in the region of Puglia.

<sup>10</sup> *Henry Purcell*, p.164, n.35. Burney gives an interesting, albeit later, account of his experiences in these homes in 'The present state of music in France and Italy', reproduced in O. Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. L. Treitler (New York, R/1998), pp.989–99.

<sup>11</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms.Vm<sup>7</sup> 741.

<sup>12</sup> The link with the Royal Chapel orchestra is suggested in M. Doran, 'Lonati, Carlo Ambrogio', *New Grove I*. Scholars working in the Neapolitan archives, however, have found no evidence for it. I am very grateful to Guido Olivieri for sharing some of the fruits of his archival research with me.

mystery. The portrait is said to have been painted in 1684 by Kneller, who was at that time one of the most important portrait artists in England.



**Plate 1-3: Nicola Matteis by Sir Godfrey Kneller (1684)**

It would have been entirely understandable for an important, and wealthy, musician such as Matteis to have had his portrait painted by such an eminent artist. However, this portrait appears in no record of the known works of Kneller and is not noted in

any catalogue of his works held by any of the main galleries.<sup>13</sup> No age is given for the sitter, though an age of around thirty-five to forty would seem consistent with both the evidence of the canvas and Matteis's journey to England some fifteen or more years previously. This suggests a date of birth of somewhere around 1644–49.

What prompted Matteis to travel to England is another open question, particularly given the relatively undeveloped state of violin playing there. The preponderance of English merchants in Naples at this time might provide a clue: North mentions that, on his arrival in England, Matteis 'lay obscurely in the citty, by the favour of a merchant whom he had converted to his profit'.<sup>14</sup> More startling even is that Matteis's supreme self-confidence, a character trait discussed by North, led him to set out across Europe, apparently on foot.<sup>15</sup>

In the absence of first-hand accounts, the only way to work out his likely route is to examine the records of others who undertook similar journeys.<sup>16</sup> For a variety of geographical and safety considerations, travellers within Italy were discouraged from taking detours away from major routes. Assuming Matteis did not travel by sea via Genoa and Marseilles, a route passing through Rome and Florence would be direct, and in keeping with established itineraries.<sup>17</sup> At this point he might have headed for the port of Leghorn, another popular departure point for England, but is more likely to have travelled to Bologna, which, after Rome, was arguably the most important musical centre in Italy. This was particularly true for instrumental music: the huge church of San Petronio and the famous Accademia Filarmonica attracted composers and instrumentalists of the highest rank. From here he could have gone on to Genoa and taken a sea passage to England, but it is perhaps more probable that a violinist

---

<sup>13</sup> See M. Tilmouth, 'Nicola Matteis', *Musical Quarterly* 46 (1960), pp.22–40. The only known reproduction of this work appears in the article on Matteis by Michael Tilmouth since when the painting has completely disappeared. The collection in which it was held was broken up on the death of its owner, Sir William Barrow of Llandudno, in 1969 and much of it was sold by Sothebys in 1970. They have no record of this painting having been a part of that sale and, despite talking to people who knew Sir William and who can remember the sale of the collection, I have not managed to find anyone who can recall what happened to it.

<sup>14</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308, n.60.

<sup>15</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308, n.60: 'It was say'd that he travelled thro' Germany on foot with his violin under a full coat at his back.'

<sup>16</sup> For example, those of John Evelyn, carefully described in *The diary of John Evelyn*, i, ed. E. S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955).

<sup>17</sup> A fuller discussion of routes and travelling conditions within Europe can be found in A. Maczak, *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, trans. U. Philips (Cambridge, 1995), and J. Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667: their Influence in English Society and Politics* (New Haven, 1989). I am grateful to Dr. Simon Ditchfield for his invaluable help.

would have aimed further north, for the cities of Cremona and Brescia and thence to Venice. Once there he would have been ideally placed to travel over the Brenner Pass and into Austria, which would be consistent with North's comment that Matteis was said to have travelled on foot through Germany.<sup>18</sup> It would be natural for a violinist who was clearly intent on developing the technical possibilities of his instrument to immerse himself in as many musical milieux as possible on his travels, and this might give some substance to Matteis's apparent boast that he composed 'in the style of all nations'.<sup>19</sup>

Nor does the picture become any clearer on Matteis's arrival in England, the date of which we are unlikely ever to know. The usual sources of information on foreigners arriving or living in England do not mention him, though it is not clear whether this is due to omission or destruction of records.<sup>20</sup> The first concrete evidence for Matteis's presence in London comes from the diaries of John Evelyn, who, in an entry for 17 November 1674, extols the talents of 'that stupendious Violin Signor Nicholao' whom he had heard at a musical evening at the home of his friend Henry Slingsby.<sup>21</sup> However, there is significant evidence that Matteis had arrived much earlier than that. North recounts that: 'It was said that a nobleman, the Duke of Richmond (I think it was), would have given him a pension, but he did not like his way of playing.'<sup>22</sup> If North remembered correctly, then Matteis was in London several years earlier, for the duke left England in 1671.<sup>23</sup>

### 1.3 Employment

Given Matteis's obvious talents, one might have expected him to be offered a position at court. While it is evident that such a post was considered, it seems that

---

<sup>18</sup> Perhaps Matteis's time in Austro-Germany might be relevant in another respect. His son moved to Austria in 1700/01 and spent the rest of his life there. Might there have been some link there through his father?

<sup>19</sup> See page 164.

<sup>20</sup> The Recusancy Rolls, Papists Declaration of Property and Denizations, and Naturalizations Roll in the Public Record Office all contain information from this period, but none includes a reference to Matteis.

<sup>21</sup> De Beer, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iv, p.48.

<sup>22</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.355.

<sup>23</sup> Charles Stuart, Third Duke of Richmond, was appointed ambassador to the Danish court in 1671 and died at Elsinore 12 December 1672. After his death the title reverted to Charles II but was then granted in 1675 to Sir Charles Lennox, who was only three years old. Consequently, the Duke of Richmond mentioned by North must have been the third duke.

his arrogance militated against it. North offers a typically lenient explanation: 'He was brought to play afore the King and divers great persons, in order to be pensioned, but his manner did not take, tho' none could deny it was admirable.'<sup>24</sup> A further description points out that '... no person must whisper while he played, which sort of attention had not bin the fashion at Court.'<sup>25</sup>

Nor was Matteis backward at defending himself, as can be seen from his printed reaction to someone having claimed authorship of his *False Consonances of Musick*:

The Reader is desired to take notice that a certain Lutenist has had ye confidence to call himsef ye Author of this Book when ye truth of it is that I presented a Copy of it to a Person of Condition which was Transported by my self to the French Lute how this Lutenist came by the Copy of it I know not but he has got it & has ye face to entitle himself to ye Composition.<sup>26</sup>

Mr Cruys Letter of Attorney. I do hereby order direct and appoint M<sup>r</sup> Charles Colman my Attorney to ask require and receive of the officers of his Ma<sup>ty</sup> Great Wardrobe for me in my name and to my use all such Debentors that are due to me in and from the said office as one of his late Ma<sup>ty</sup> Wifes from the first of St Andrew One thousand Six hundred and Eighty and to give his hand to y<sup>e</sup> book for y<sup>e</sup> said Aug<sup>t</sup> to receive all such monies as shall be appointed me to receive on the same and also en y<sup>e</sup> Debent<sup>rs</sup> for the years 1679 & 1680. and the monies thereon or upon all or any or either of them as it shall be directed And his hand for y<sup>e</sup> Debent<sup>rs</sup> & this receipt or receipts for all monies so received in y<sup>e</sup> same shall be to you or any y<sup>e</sup> all of you sufficient warrant & discharge for so much as if personally present to deliver or any of y<sup>e</sup> my self In witness whereof I have put my hand and Seals this 18<sup>th</sup> day of Aug<sup>t</sup> 1686

Thomas Cruys

To y<sup>e</sup> Hon<sup>ble</sup> M<sup>rs</sup> Colman of his Ma<sup>ty</sup> Great Wardrobe  
M<sup>r</sup> Townson and y<sup>e</sup> Deputys & w<sup>ch</sup> it may concern.

Sealed & signed in his presence  
of Nicola Mellis  
Thomas Colman

Plate 1-4: 'Mr Cruys letter of Attorney' 1686

<sup>24</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308, n.60.

<sup>25</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.355.

<sup>26</sup> N. Matteis, *The False Consonances of Musick* (London, 1682), p.2. The whereabouts of this plagiarised copy are not now known. Many of the pages of the treatise are appended to the *Euing Lute manuscript* (GB-Ge Ms. R.d.43) but these are not arranged for French lute and thus cannot be the pages to which Matteis was referring.

Matteis was left to make a living outside court circles, thus simultaneously avoiding official records and depriving us of this accurate means of charting his life. His name appears once or twice as he made tangential contact with officialdom, but these references do not greatly enhance our understanding of the man. Plate 1-4 shows a letter witnessed by Matteis which, frustratingly, only survives as a Court copy.<sup>27</sup> Another example is a travel warrant, which incidentally confirms North's account of Matteis's short stay in France.<sup>28</sup> Paradoxically, it may have been that the very arrogance that prevented Matteis from enjoying a court sinecure actually gave him the confidence to pursue his business interests so assiduously, for it is clear that, despite his lowly beginnings in London, he eventually acquired considerable wealth. Just how this happened reflects well on his pragmatism and ingenuity. By using the relatively uncommon process of copperplate engraving he produced beautiful editions of his violin *Ayres* for which, as his fame grew among London's amateur music makers, there was a commensurate rise in demand. The musical dilettantes of London were keen to welcome the cream of musical talent into their homes, and a foreign virtuoso added extra spice to such consorts. However, Matteis at first obviously disadvantaged himself by his arrogant manner, and struggled for some time to make a living. North refers to this period of anonymity on a number of occasions, and suggests that Matteis only began to be accepted into the musical circles in which he eventually thrived on account of the ministrations of three eminent amateur musicians — Sir Roger L'Estrange, William Bridgman and Sir William Waldegrave. Despite their exalted position in society these men were clearly musicians of a high calibre. Pepys commented on Waldegrave: 'Dr. Walgrave, an Englishman bred at Rome, who plays the best upon the lute that I ever heard man...'<sup>29</sup>

From what North says about them, Matteis seems to have owed them a great deal:

He [Matteis] lay obscurely in the city, by the favour of a merchant he had converted to his profit; his circumstances were low ... and if he had not found that easy merchant, he had starved before he could have bin known.<sup>30</sup>

When he came over first he was very poor, but not so poor as proud, which was

---

<sup>27</sup> London, Public Record Office [PRO], sp lc 9/259.

<sup>28</sup> PRO SP Domestic Entry Book 334, p.577, 29 Nov 1678: 'Nicola Mattei, an Italian musician with Gaspar Kayling, his servant to France.'

<sup>29</sup> *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, v, ed. Latham and Matthews (London, 1971), p.119.

<sup>30</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308, n.60.



the reason that kept him back, so that he had no acquaintance for a long time, but a merchant or two who patronized him; and he valuing himself at an excessive rate, squeezed considerable sumes out of them ... In short he was so outrageous in his demands, especially for his high peices solos, that very few would come up to him, and he continued low and obscure a long time.<sup>31</sup>

Dr Wal[de]grave a prodigy of an arch-lutnist, Sir R[oger] L'Estrange an expert violist, and Mr Bridgman the Under-Secretary, a thro-base man upon the harpsicord. These got him into their acquaintance; and courting him in his owne way, by discourse shewing him the temper of the English who if they were humoured would be liberall, but if not humoured would doe nothing at all, and [how] by putting on an air of complaisance, and doing as they desired, he would not want imployment or mony, they brought him by degrees into such good temper as made him esteemed, and sought after. And having got many scollars, tho' at moderate rates, his purse filled apace, which confirmed his conversion and he continued very mansuete as long as he lived.<sup>32</sup>

## 1.4 Family

One of the methods of ascertaining a rough date for Matteis's arrival in England has been to relate his arrival to accounts of his son. Tilmouth is one to have done so, suggesting that Nicola Matteis junior was born 'shortly after Matteis's arrival in England, for one of the pieces in the Dalhousie Manuscript is marked "Balletto for Young Nicola".'<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, this tells us little, since the manuscript is reasonably late, most likely dating from the early 1680s. There is also no way of determining if, and by how much, the composition of the piece pre-dated its appearance in this manuscript, and 'young' in any case is a comparative term that could refer to the boy at any age; even as an adult he was differentiated from his father in such a way.<sup>34</sup> Fortunately, there are official records from which we can determine a fairly likely date of birth for 'young Nicola', although even here there is a certain amount of confusion. Peter Keuschnig has unearthed the younger Matteis's will and burial record from the Austrian archives; these give his age at death as being 'around 60', suggesting a birth date of around 1677:

---

<sup>31</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.355. The curious phrase 'high peices solos' almost certainly refers to one of the striking facets of Matteis's technique, mentioned elsewhere by North, which involved playing in very high positions. The descriptions of the frenzy that descended on him during his performances bear comparison with contemporary descriptions of the playing of Corelli; see Section Three for a fuller discussion of these aspects of his playing style.

<sup>32</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356. This unusual word is an Anglo-Norman word meaning 'gentle'. See J.O. Halliwell, *Dictionary of Archaic Words* (London, 1850).

<sup>33</sup> Tilmouth, 'Nicola Matteis', p.31. The Dalhousie Manuscript is now in the possession of the National Library of Scotland, Panmure Ms. 9464.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. GB-Lbl Add. Ms. 31466, Fols 24v-26r and 29v-31r.

Nicolaus de Matteis, Anno 1737, die 23 Octb ... aetatis suae circiter 60 annorum, vir magna sapientia in omni scibili, non minoris pietatis.

[Nicolaus de Matteis, 23 October 1737 ... About 60 years of age, a man of great wisdom in every kind of knowledge, and of no less piety.<sup>35</sup>]

However, this date is completely contradicted by an English record — a marriage licence dated 14 April 1692:

Nicholas Matteis of St Martin in the Fields. Midd., Gent., Bach<sup>r</sup>, a<sup>bt</sup> 25 & Frances Williams of the same, s<sup>pr</sup>, a<sup>bt</sup> 27 at own disp; alleged by Edwd Taylor, Par. Clerk of St Mary's Savoy, Midd; at St Mary, Savoy<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, the parish records for St Martin-in-the-Fields contain a reference to the birth of 'Bridget Matteis of Nicola and Francis' on 16 January 1690/91.<sup>37</sup> An official record of the birth of their first child appearing a year and more before their marriage record does, of course, raise questions of a different nature, but also further undermines confidence in the Austrian death record, especially since it would have meant Matteis becoming a father at the tender age of 13 or 14 with a wife of around 27. The age recorded in the death notice must be incorrect.

Bridget was fairly swiftly followed by five other children:

17 July 1693 — Bridget Matteis<sup>38</sup>

27 December 1694 — John-Nichola, son of Nichola Matten (sic) by Francis his wife<sup>39</sup>

27 February 1695/6 — Elizabeth, daughter of Nichola Matteis by Francis his wife<sup>40</sup>

4 June 1697 — Sarah daughter of Nichola Matteis by Frances his wife<sup>41</sup>

8 September 1699 — Katharin daughter of Nichola Matteis by Francis his wife<sup>42</sup>

Sadly most of them also appear all too soon in the death records:

31 July 1693 — Bridget Mettis<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Keuschnig, *Nicola Matteis junior*, 1, p.9. Translation kindly provided by Dr S.F. Ryle, University of Leeds.

<sup>36</sup> *Allegations for Marriage Licences Issued by the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canterbury, July 1687–June 1694*, Harleian Society 31, ed. G. Armytage (London, 1890).

<sup>37</sup> Westminster Record Office, *Parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Roll 7–8*.

<sup>38</sup> *Parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Roll 7–8*.

<sup>39</sup> *The Registers of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden: Vol. 1, Christenings 1653–1752*, Harleian Society 33, ed. W. Hunt (London, 1906), p.93.

<sup>40</sup> *The Registers of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden*, p.97.

<sup>41</sup> *The Registers of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden*, p.102.

<sup>42</sup> *The Registers of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden*, p.110.

<sup>43</sup> *Parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Roll 7–8*.

8 June 1697 — Sarah daughter of Nichola Matteis<sup>44</sup>

22 September 1699 — Frances wife of Nichola Matteis.<sup>45</sup>

27 September 1699 — Catherine d. of Nicholas Mattis (sic).<sup>46</sup>

Various inconsistencies arise from these records. Why, for instance, would they have christened their second daughter Bridget when their first child had already been given that name? If the first child had died then this would offer the clearest explanation though there are no records of a burial in the St Martin-in-the-Fields and St Paul's Covent Garden registers in which all the other births and deaths listed above appear. It is possible that the family were visiting another city or were otherwise away from home when she died but I have not been able to find any evidence of this. The other possibility is that the date is wrong in the register though the staff at Westminster Archives Centre confirm that it would have been most unusual for records to have been put into the register at a later date and the general consistency of these tightly-spaced and chronologically-ordered records would seem to militate against such a possibility.

We are left therefore with what appear to be three surviving children — Bridget, John-Nichola and Elizabeth — which makes it all the more confusing that Matteis's will, published 8 November 1737, refers only to 'Meine Tochter Maria aus erster Ehe' and 'Meinen Sohn Joanni', with no mention of Bridget or Elizabeth.<sup>47</sup> We know from Keuschnig that there were no children from Matteis II's second marriage and that Maria and Johannes joined Matteis in Vienna sometime in 1701. Maria could, of course, be the second name of either Bridget or Elizabeth or a name adopted at a later date. If the first daughter, having been christened Bridget (Bridget Mary?) was thereafter known as Mary it could explain why a second daughter might have been given the same name. Meanwhile, the only record which could even vaguely relate to Elizabeth is to be found in the registers of Christ Church, Newgate Street:

June 20 1709 — burial of Elizabeth Matas<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> *The Registers of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden: Vol. 4, Burials 1653–1752*, Harleian Society 36, ed. W. Hunt (London, 1908), p.160.

<sup>45</sup> *The Registers of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden*, p.171.

<sup>46</sup> *Parish of St James, Clerkenwell: Vol. 5, Burials 1666–1719*, Harleian Society 19, p.199.

<sup>47</sup> *Gerichtsarchiv der Stadt Wien*; Bd. 1790–59, f.253, Nr. 7252; quoted from Keuschnig, Nicola Matteis junior, p.12.

<sup>48</sup> *The Registers of Christ Church Newgate: 1538–1754* Harleian Society 21, ed. W. Littledale (London, 1895), p.331.

This in turn raises even more questions — Why would she still have been in England eight years and more after the others left for Vienna? Why was she living in Newgate? The name is similar but does occur in other records as the eighteenth century progresses. It would seem more likely that the Matas family was unrelated to the Matteis family and that for some reason, the death record of Elizabeth has not survived.

## 1.5 Attribution of the music

Having established that ‘Young Nicola’ was born in around 1667 it is frustrating not to be able to confirm exactly where. If it was in London then the ‘divers years’ Matteis senior was in England before coming to public attention must have been far more numerous than has hitherto been realized. Alternatively, young Nicola could have been born elsewhere and travelled to England with his father. Matteis himself seems to confirm his long-term presence in England in a note to the reader in the Italian version of his first publication, *Arie Diverse per il violino, Preludy Alemande* ..., which first appeared in 1676:<sup>49</sup>

E cosa onorevole e guista d’uniformarsi a l’umore di quelle Persone con qui si vive, essendo io vissuto alcuni anni sotto il cielo settentrionale ...

[It is honourable and just to adapt to the mood of the persons with whom one lives. Since I have lived for some years under the Northern sky ...]

In any case, it is clear Matteis junior reached adulthood much earlier than has been generally accepted. By 1690 he would have been in his early 20s and in the process of establishing what was clearly to become a distinguished career. North confirms this, referring to ‘the two great violin masters, Sigr Nicolai Matteis, and his son’, and commenting that: ‘He [Matteis senior] left a son Nicholai, whom he taught upon the violin from his cradle ... He grew up and was a celebrated master upon the violin in London for divers years.’<sup>50</sup> But what else occupied the ‘celebrated master’ in London for those ‘divers years’? He certainly wrote some violin music, for we have some examples in manuscripts and prints dating from the 1690s and beyond. However, after 1690 a large proportion of the publications bearing the name Matteis

---

<sup>49</sup> GB-Lbl K.1.f.12 is one example of this edition.

<sup>50</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.358.

were of vocal music. Strangely, 'Young Nicola' is hardly ever considered in connection with these works, though there are many reasons to assume that he, rather than his father, composed them.

Piano.

si mi be-b' il dol-re con-ten-to e be-thin-do ne co-re chiudo nel co-re narrar non si pub-  
pi-do tempro per farmi be-a-to due lu-ci-de sfere. lu-ci-de sfere for-tu-na giro

Aria.

Ma temo ch' Amore in-vi-di-o-so un di del mio gio-i-re non can-gi

Plate 1-5: *Il dolce contento* (*Scelta di Canzonette Italiane*, London, 1679)

Presto.

A-ro vol-to pal-li-det-to dol-ce fiam-ma del mio cor  
Va-go vis'o in cui per vizzo lan-gue' amor che m'ar-d' il sen

dol-ce fiam-ma del mio cor A si te-nero pal-lor  
lan-gue'a-mor che m'ar-d' il sen A si pla-ci-do ba-len

Plate 1-6: *Caro volto pallidetto* (*Scelta di Canzonette Italiane*, London, 1679)

The first vocal works by a Matteis to appear are two Italian songs in a collection titled *Scelta di Canzonette Italiane de Più Autori*, published in London in 1679 by Girolamo Pignani. *Caro volto pallidetto* and *Il dolce contento* are simple, mostly syllabic settings, which, though attractive, display few of the melismas and graces we

find in the later song publications. The style of *Il dolce contento* in particular is quite backward-looking, as Plate 1-5, with its recitativo-like section demonstrates. In the other example from this collection, the pace is faster and the harmonic progressions are very similar to many of those found in the violin *Ayres* (Plate 1-6).

After *Scelta di Canzonette* there was a gap of over 12 years before the song *When e're I Gaze on Sylvia's face*, appeared in the *Gentleman's Journal* in 1691/2:

A Song set by Mr. Nicola Matteis, The words by the Author of this *Journal*.

WHen e're I gaze on Sylvia's Face, in rap-ture lost each

Grace I view; Fond Nature there such Charms did place, as can

all Con-que-rors sub-due: The God of Day seems not; so

Plate 1-7: *When e're I Gaze on Sylvia's Face* (*The Gentleman's Journal*, 1691/2)

It has always been assumed that the elder Matteis wrote this song but I would contend that it is far more likely to have been written instead by his son, who would have been around 25 years old at this date. It seems he was on the verge of getting married (see the records on page 12) and could quite easily have been starting out on his musical career with commissions such as this. The style is remarkably simple,

noticeably more so than in the *Scelte di Canzonette* songs of twelve years previously and it is surely unlikely that the elder man's style would have simplified, and to this extent, over those years?

Following this, in 1696, came *Assist, Assist you Mighty Sons of Art*, an ode for the St Cecilia's Day celebrations.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, a ticket still exists for the St Cecilia's Day Ode bearing the signature of Nicola Matteis (whichever one), possibly the only surviving example of such a signature:



Plate 1-8: Ticket for the 1696 St Cecilia's Day celebrations

<sup>51</sup> Only the text for the Ode survives in Chetham's School library (GB-Mch H.P.34) although it has been suggested that the music exists in the Bodleian (Ob Mus. Sch. C.16, Fols 3-21). See M. Tilmouth, 'The Beginnings of Provincial Concert Life in England', *Music in 18<sup>th</sup> Century England: Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, ed. C. Hogwood and R. Lockett (Cambridge, 1983), p.9. However, the music neither bears Matteis's name nor corresponds accurately to the text.

In the same year the first book of *A Collection of New Songs* was published by John Walsh, with the second book appearing in 1699. More songs then appeared in collections of 1699 and 1700, which will be discussed further below. The only other known vocal work is a motet, *Crudele gadium*, for tenor, violin and continuo, which is referred to in a Hamburg library catalogue as part of a manuscript of English sacred music although this undated source is now lost.<sup>52</sup> The combination of tenor, violin and continuo may well be significant since Peter Leech has suggested that Matteis may well have been a regular performer at the queen's Catholic chapel together with Draghi and Bartolomeo Albrici and between them they would have provided just such a combination.<sup>53</sup> It is frustrating that many of the Catholic records for this period have not survived since they would almost certainly have mentioned Matteis in some respect.

So it would appear that, in terms of language and style, the Italian songs of 1679 stand apart from the songs of the 1690s; their publication date alone indicates that they are almost certainly by the older man. In any case, could these two simple songs really have heralded a complete change of direction for Matteis? And if they did, why did he wait another 12 years before publishing any more songs? When the song appeared in the *Gentleman's Journal* in 1692, Matteis senior had been in England for about 25 years, during which time he had established a considerable reputation, not to mention fortune, on the basis of playing, teaching and performing upon the violin. The announcement of his first publication—books 1 and 2 of the *Ayres*—in the *London Gazette* on 11 December 1676 seems to confirm the scope of Matteis's activity at this time:

The famous and long expected Musicks of Two Parts, by Nicola Matteis are now published; consisting of Ayres of all sorts, fitted for all hands, and capacities ... They are to be sold by John Carr ... And also by the Author, at an Apothecaries over against Exeter street in Catherine street: Where such as desire to learn Composition, or to play upon the Violin, may be instructed accordingly.<sup>54</sup>

The *Ayres* were reissued several times over the years, generally with very few

---

<sup>52</sup> See R. Charteris, 'The Music Collection of the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg: a Survey of its British Holdings Prior to the Second World War', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 30 (1997), p.52.

<sup>53</sup> See P. Leech, 'Musicians in the Catholic Chapel of Catherine of Braganza, 1662–92', *Early Music* 29 (2001), pp.580–81.

<sup>54</sup> Tilmouth, 'Nicola Matteis', p.23.



alterations. They evidently sold well, and it was not until 1685 that Matteis published the third and fourth books. These also appeared in various versions, including an expanded edition of 1687 that added a second violin part. Significantly, none of the title-pages of these prints, nor any of the advertisements or contemporary accounts, suggests that the elder Matteis taught singing. Thus it is likely that the publication in 1696 of *A Collection of New Songs set by Mr Nicola Matteis Made Purposely for the Use of his Scholers ...* is evidence of the son's burgeoning career rather than a belated change of direction by his father.<sup>55</sup> By the mid- to late-1690s it was evidently deemed unnecessary to differentiate between the younger and older man, which suggests that only one of them was still active. The last song published under the name of Matteis gives sufficient supplementary information to determine that its author was the son:

*A SONG Set by Mr. Nicola, being the last he did before he took his Voyage to France.*

Er-mi-lia, Her-mi-lia con-...-quers

with such Art; Her-mi-lia con-...-quers, con-...-quers with such

Art, Wins so engage-ingly, Wins so, so... engage-ingly, of

Plate 1-9: *Hermilia, Hermilia Conquers with Such Art* (*Mercurius Musicus*, 1700)

<sup>55</sup> *London Gazette*, 30 May 1698; quoted in Tilmouth, 'Nicola Matteis', p.31. Similarly, it is unlikely to have been the older man who was being referred to in an advertisement for a performance by 'Mr Nicolas's Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick' at York Buildings.

*Hermilia, Hermilia Conquers with Such Art*, ‘A song set by Mr Nicola, being the last he did before he took his voyage to France’ appeared in the January/February 1700 edition of *Mercurius Musicus*.<sup>56</sup> Matteis junior began his Austrian employment in July 1700; the rather final-sounding wording of this publication is consistent with his leaving the country at this time for Vienna. The author was evidently widely admired, for in the same collection there is a song by ‘Mr Weldon of New Colledge [sic] Oxford’ entitled *A Song on a Lady in Imitation of Mr Nicola’s Manner*. The melismatic nature of *Hermilia, Hermilia Conquers with Such Art* (a style well copied by Mr Weldon, incidentally) compares closely with that of *In Cynthia’s Face—A New Song, Sett to Musick by Mr Nicola*, which appeared in William Pearson’s collection of *Twelve New Songs* in 1699:

[ 4 ]

A New . S O N G , Sett to Musick by Mr. Nicola.



Plate 1-10: *In Cynthia’s Face* by Matteis the younger.

Thus the two volumes of *A Collection of New Songs* (1696, 1699) can also fairly confidently be ascribed to Matteis junior, as can the St Cecilia’s Day Ode.

The title-pages to the two volumes of *A Collection of New Songs* make it plain that the author taught singing. For example the wording of the second volume is:

<sup>56</sup> *Mercurius Musicus, or The Monthly Collection of New Teaching Songs for the Year 1700* (London, 1700). I am most grateful to Anthony Rooley for bringing this publication to my attention.

A Collection of New Songs Set by Mr. Nicola with a Through Bass to each Song ... being all teaching songs, made for his Scholars ... .

This fact is also mentioned by Walsh in his highly sycophantic dedication in that volume:

To Mr Nicola

Sir

Having the good Fortune to meet with some new Songs of your composing & being pressed with great Importunity to give out written Copy's of them I hoped that since such a Treasure coul'd no longer lye hid ... you wou'd pardon my presumption in putting them in Print... . S<sup>r</sup> the greatest Character I can give them is that they are yours & indeed of all those Persons of Quality to whom you have taught them none have learned them without the greatest pleasure and satisfaction.<sup>57</sup>

One can certainly imagine the younger Matteis choosing to develop his singing teaching to bring himself out of his father's shadow, but at this time it was also a fairly astute career move. Until the expansion of public concerts from around the 1680s, musicians outside the court had derived their prime source of income from giving private tuition to the gentry. In the 1690s singing lessons might still have been unlikely to result in a singing career, but they would have been considered by a certain social stratum to be an essential complement to a person's — and particularly a lady's — education, and a skill possibly serving to enhance her marriage prospects.<sup>58</sup> The Matteis who wrote the two books of songs was clearly interested in opportunities presented by links with 'the quality'; the patronage of the first collection by William, 4th Lord Byron (an enthusiastic patron and amateur musician), suggests that Matteis may have secured more than his lordship's musical interest. It is also possible that the younger Matteis would have been able to take advantage of his father's newly acquired wealth and social standing to grant him access to the social circle from which his singing pupils would undoubtedly have come.<sup>59</sup>

One further circumstantial argument is that, had the elder Matteis dared to try his hand at teaching singing, we should almost certainly have heard about it from Roger North, who was typically robust in his condemnation of those he saw as stepping

---

<sup>57</sup> Matteis, *A Collection of New Songs ... . Book 2* (1699).

<sup>58</sup> This subject is entertainingly discussed in J.A. Westrup, 'Domestic Music Under the Stuarts', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 57 (1942), pp.19–53.

<sup>59</sup> This has interesting implications for Matteis's later wedding. See page 23.

outside the boundaries of their speciality:

It is observed that if glaciers build an house, it is set off with glass; if by a carpenter, with wainscote ... And in like manner, if a violin master makes a song, it will be a clever violin lesson; and one [of them] had the impudence, by the strength of his violin hand, without any capacity of voice, to profess teaching ladys to sing.<sup>60</sup>

Once it was a mode in London to learne to sing of a famous violin master, who had no manner of voice, but had the corrupting of many good ones.<sup>61</sup>

It is conceivable that North was aiming these rather vitriolic words at 'young Nicola', of whom he seems to have had a less than flattering opinion:

On which to pick, however convic't, I will not stay to dispute, but alledge onely their different manners. The father's was virile and the son's effeminate.<sup>62</sup>

## 1.6 The third generation and the likely date of Matteis's death

If we accept, as surely we must, that the works of the 1690s are by the younger Matteis, then what is the evidence that his father was even still alive at this time? One of the clearest indications has always appeared to be the wedding in 1700, in which: 'Signior Nicolao, the famous Italian Musician, is married to one Madam Timperley, a widow of 300 pounds Joynture, with one child about 12 years of Age ...'<sup>63</sup> 'Madam Timperley' was Susanna, daughter of Sir John Sparrow, widow of the late Sir Henry Timperley. The family appear to have spent some years in St Germain but Susanna returned in 1694 to live at Hintlesham in Suffolk, one of the family estates, where she was guardian to her son (also Henry), heir to the Timperley's considerable estates in Suffolk and Norfolk.<sup>64</sup> Tilmouth equated this marriage and the apparent purchase of Colkirke Manor in Norfolk with North's comment: 'He took a great house, and lived as one that was marryed'. This is echoed elsewhere in North's writings, where it is explained that Matteis 'took a large hous and had a thing called a wife'. It would be interesting to know exactly what North meant by these rather vague and seemingly disparaging comments about Matteis's marital status.

---

<sup>60</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.114.

<sup>61</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.238.

<sup>62</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.358, n.128.

<sup>63</sup> *London Post*, 29 Jan 1699/1700; quoted in Tilmouth, 'Nicola Matteis', p.32.

<sup>64</sup> This is confirmed by an entry in the Calendar of State Domestic papers for 1689/90, p.376 which mentions her specifically in the assessment of wealth of those living in St Germain.

Was Matteis actually unmarried but living with someone? Was he married but to someone so awful that the marriage existed in name only? Whatever the significance of the wording, these comments about a 'large hous' cannot relate to any purchase of Colkirke, since Henry Kelsall appears in the Norfolk Manor Roll for 1719/20 as lord of the manor.<sup>65</sup> In fact, the Feet of Fines records for 1714 contain an obscure reference to 'Nicolo Matteis and wife' in relation to Colkirke: 'Nicholas and Susan grant to Henry whatever they have therein for the life of Susan'. In return for this Henry was to pay them £1600, but this refers not so much to the sale of a property as to the leasing of chattels.<sup>66</sup> Colkirke remained at that time the property of Henry Timperley and was never occupied by Matteis and Susanna.

A more fundamental misunderstanding is the assumption that it was the elder Matteis who married Susanna, when it was actually his son. As noted above, the younger Matteis married Frances in the early 1690s, and she bore him six children between 1691 and 1699. The last child, Katherin, died shortly after her birth in September 1699, as did Frances herself, suggesting that she may well have died from complications following the delivery. Matteis then married Susanna some four months later, just before leaving to take up his position in Vienna. He may possibly have come to know Susanna in his capacity as her singing teacher, which may explain the rather swift courtship they seem to have enjoyed.

Another strong aspect in bringing Susanna and Nicola together seems to have been a shared strength of faith. The Timperleys were one of England's foremost Catholic families and a shared faith seems to have continued to play an important part in their lives in Austria. A little light shines briefly on their day-to-day lives through the preservation of the letters of Lewis Sabran who was the Jesuit rector of the college of St. Omers in the Netherlands.

January 20<sup>th</sup> 1715 .

From Madame Matteis. Vienna, 29 December. A long account of her fortune; happiness in her husband. Her great joy in receiving my letter of 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1714...The desire of her pious husband, Mr. Nicolas Matteis, Directeur de la

---

<sup>65</sup> Norfolk Record Office, 19633 ZIC.

<sup>66</sup> The error, initially made in W. Rye, *Norfolk Families* (Norwich, 1913), resulted from a misunderstanding of the labyrinthine concept of Feet of Fines, a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this thesis. The mistake came to light after study of the copious notes collected by G. Ryan and L. Redstone in preparation for their book, *The Timperleys of Hintlesham* (London, 1931). The existence of these records was kindly drawn to my attention by the staff of the Suffolk Records Office.

musique instrumentale de sa Majeste...by patent, a very honourable charge — desires to withdrawe from ye world; would come to live att Watten or St. Omers as I shall direct by my answer. She and her husband one heart; never separated 12 hours since marriage — 14 years. He would bee a Jesuit could he leave her. She is selling her estate in England to pay debts contracted by relieving her father.<sup>67</sup>

Sabran's reply makes it clear that they were not only considering holy orders for the two of them:

24<sup>th</sup> January 1715

To Madame Matteis. A long answer to hers. I propose St. Omers for the properest place for her and her husband's designes. Brugis for the fittest monastery for the yong person in her care.<sup>68</sup>

Meanwhile her son Henry was still frittering his fortune away:

11<sup>th</sup> February 1715

Will write to Mrs. Mattei (sic) when he [Fr. Kennet, another priest to whom Susanna had been corresponding via Sabran] can send a satisfactory account. Her son, now his wyfe is dead, may, without selling, come to pay his other debts, and those to his mother, without selling.<sup>69</sup>

Despite Sabran's continuing encouragement they do not seem to have taken this step and the letters, which stop in 1715, have no more information on them. Shortly after moving to Vienna, Matteis sent for his children from his first marriage but his relationship with his son was not good:

Der Sohn Johannes wurde im Jahre 1701 mit seinem schwester Maria von seinem Vater nach Wien gebracht, studierte in Wien, Prag und Rom Medizin, kehete jedoch bis zum Tode seines Vaters nicht mehr nachhause zurueck.<sup>70</sup>

[The son Johannes was brought, with his sister, to Vienna in 1701, studied medicine in Vienna, Prague and Rome and from then until his father's death never again came home.]

Matteis's own words, taken from his will, imply a painful rift: 'Meinen Sohn Joanni, kan ich nichts Vermachen, weilen er mich allzu viel gekost.' ['I cannot leave my son

---

<sup>67</sup> *Sabran Letter Book 1713–15*, ed. G. Holt (Catholic Record Society, 1971), p.217.

<sup>68</sup> *Sabran Letter Book*, p.218. A footnote adds that Sabran had apparently suggested an Augustinian nunnery in Bruges for 'the young lady'. This must therefore have been Maria whom Matteis was planning to take with them into holy orders. Presumably John-Nichola had by this time already left.

<sup>69</sup> *Sabran Letter Book*, p.226. We now know, of course, that Henry did not pay off his debts and that Hintlesham was sold in 1719. Keuschnig's work has shown that Henry died in Flanders not long after this. *Gerichtsarchiv der Stadt Wien, Appendix 2, p.15*, cited by Keuschnig.

<sup>70</sup> *Verlassenschaftsabhandlung, Haus und Hof Staatsarchiv 1737*; quoted from Keuschnig, *Nicola Matteis junior*, app.8, p.23. Strangely, admission records from the universities concerned do not support this version of events.

Joanni anything because he has cost me all too much’].<sup>71</sup> The existence of Johannes (christened John-Nicola) adds another male Matteis into an already muddled picture. Burney seems to have been one of the first to fall foul of this further confusion, to judge from the following entry in his memoirs:

The younger Matteis must have returned to England soon after Mr. North’s *Memoirs of Music* were written; as I remember to have seen him at Shrewsbury, where he settled as a language master as well as performer on the violin, in 1737. I afterwards learned French and the violin of this master, who continued at Shrewsbury till his decease, about the year 1749. He played Corelli’s solos with more simplicity and elegance than any performer I ever heard.<sup>72</sup>

Various explanations have been put forward for this apparent contradiction,<sup>73</sup> but there is a more simple reason for the confusion as can be understood from a study of the wording of a burial notice in the parish records for St Chad’s, Shrewsbury: ‘Bur 26 Oct 1760 Mr J. Nichola Mattee’.<sup>74</sup> This can be no coincidence but must surely be the John-Nicola born to Nicola junior and Frances on 27 December 1694 and known in Austria as Johannes. Obviously drawn both by the land of his birth and the instrument of his father and grandfather, John-Nicola returned to England, and appears to have had a successful career as a player and teacher, though he evidently had not inherited his grandfather’s confidence, to judge from the following reminiscence by Burney:

#### Character of L<sup>y</sup> Tankerville

This L<sup>y</sup> was the daughter of S<sup>r</sup> Jno Ashley of the Abbey forgate, Shrewsbury ... She manifested a passion for Music very early in practicing on the German Flute wch was then little known in the country. She used to have little Matteis, the language master & 1st Violin of the place to accompany her. She was an espiegle in her younger days, loved mischief; & finding Matteis timid & helpless in the slightest distress or danger, insisted during summer on taking her lesson in an old and lofty Oak tree, in the middle of wch she had a seat & desk formed for her accommodation, and another tottering seat & desk for poor Matteis, who was so terrified and nervous that he cd not stop a note in tune.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> *Gerichtsarchiv der Stadt Wien*; quoted from Keuschnig, *Nicola Matteis junior*, app.1, p.12.

<sup>72</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* (London, 1776–1789; R/New York, 1957), Vol.2, p.410.

<sup>73</sup> First in Nettle, ‘An English musician at the Court of Charles VI’, and most recently in N. Zaslav, ‘The Vanishing Violinist: Nicola Matteis the Younger’, *Country Life*, (24 Mar, 1988), p.176.

<sup>74</sup> Salop. Par. Reg. Soc. Lichfield Dioc., xvi, 1224 (St. Chad’s, Shrewsbury). I am indebted to Mr James Lawson, archivist at Shrewsbury School, for bringing this and many other interesting facts to my attention.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Fragment 18 Shrewsbury 1742–43’, *Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney, 1726–1769*, ed. S. Klima, G. Bowers and K.S. Grant (Lincoln, NE, 1988), p.35.

Meanwhile, the fact that the eldest Matteis did not marry Susanna in 1700 removes the only unequivocal piece of evidence to suggest that he was even alive at that date. In 1702 Estienne Roger printed a complete edition of Matteis's music, incorporating material that only exists elsewhere in manuscript. A year later, John Walsh's slightly less comprehensive edition nevertheless managed to include the previously unpublished second violin parts to books 1 and 2, which Walsh claimed to have engraved from Matteis's own manuscript. That these two publishers chose to produce editions of Matteis's *Ayres* — many of which were by this time over 25 years old — is testament to his popularity, but also confirms that there had been no new collections of violin music since the 1687 edition, for if there had, we can be fairly sure that either Roger or Walsh would have managed to find them, and each would no doubt have tried their utmost to be the first to publish them.

Perhaps it is not entirely surprising that there were no further books of *Ayres* after 1687, for it seems that Matteis, having acquired wealth and social standing, was not disinclined to enjoy the fruits of his labours:

He soon found his account by scollars, of which sort he had plenty, and began to feel himself grow rich, and then of course luxurious.<sup>76</sup>

In short, waiving the mention of other excellences in particular, he fell into such credit and imployment, that he took a great house, and after the mode of his country, lived luxuriously, which brought diseases upon him, of which he dyed.<sup>77</sup>

He came at last to loose both his invention, and hand, and in a miserable state of body, purse, and mind, dyed; leaving his son capable to shift, for he was soon taken into the front of musicall exercises.<sup>78</sup>

He took a great house, and lived as one that was married, had a child, whom he forewarded in his owne way (and is now an excellent artist), contracted bad diseases which ended in dropsyes, and so he became poor. And dyed miserable.<sup>79</sup>

Once again there is no definite date given for this decline, but some reading between the lines produces a convincing case for its having occurred a considerable time before his son's move to Vienna. North stresses the link between Matteis's financial

---

<sup>76</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308.

<sup>77</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.358.

<sup>78</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308, n.62.

<sup>79</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308.



success, which he appears to have enjoyed right from the first publications in 1676, and the 'dropsyes' which his subsequent over-indulgence seem to have precipitated. There is every reason to suppose that his decline might have been quite advanced by the end of the 1680s. Most of North's comments were written long after Matteis's death, but even in the earliest writings (between 1695 and 1701) he was referring to him in the past tense:

This old Nicola was a compleat master of the violin, and the art of composing for either a single or many instruments.<sup>80</sup>

Even the press announcement of his son's marriage seems tacitly to confirm the absence of the father, for, as previously mentioned, if the elder Matteis were still alive, it is surely odd that the reference to 'Signior Nicholao, the famous Italian musitian', makes no attempt to differentiate between the two masters. Presumably *The Daily Courant* of 26 April 1707 was also referring to the son when advertising a concert given by a 'scholar of Signior Nichola'.<sup>81</sup>

The fame of Matteis's son has a further implication for the date of the older man's death. As we have seen, by 1696 Matteis junior was already a successful and published musician. North confirms that he was a celebrated player and his singing teaching presumably increased his wealth even more after 1696. This being the case, why did his father die in poverty? There can be only two explanations, the first of which being that the two men had fallen out, as subsequently happened with Matteis and his own son John-Nichola. Whilst this is possible, any disagreement would have had to have been fairly major for Matteis to have seen his father die in illness and poverty rather than use some of his wealth to save him. This is particularly so since he was evidently a deeply religious man to whom the concept of 'honouring thy father' must have been ingrained. Also, had this been the case then this is exactly the sort of information that one would expect North to have provided, particularly since he seems to have disliked the younger Matteis and would have been likely to have seized on any opportunity to have criticised him in relation to his father. The other possibility is that Matteis died before his son had enough fame or wealth to be able to make any difference to his fate. This would imply a date before the mid-1690s and

---

<sup>80</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.62.

<sup>81</sup> Tilmouth, 'Nicola Matteis', p.33.

would also be consistent with North's comment about Matteis dying and leaving his son 'capable to shift' which implies he was yet to make his professional mark.

Perhaps the first time that Matteis is specifically referred to as being dead is in Tom Brown's series of imaginary *Letters from the Dead to the Living*, in which he gave an imaginary 'opportunity' to recently (and in some cases not so recently) departed, eminent people to vent their spleen at a variety of perceived injustices. One letter appears from 'Seignior Nichola to Mr Buckly, at the Swan Coffee-House near Bloomsbury', complaining that after his death his Ayres were used in taverns:

It is impossible to suffer it any longer! What, my diviner airs made the sordid entertainment of drunken footmen, scoundrel fellows, and I know not what ragamuffins ... The powerful offspring of my harmonious conceptions is miserably torn to pieces betwixt them; and what would have charmed all mankind is dishonourably employed to the lighting of pipes and cleaning of tables.<sup>82</sup>

This letter does not appear in the first two editions of 1702 and 1703, but is first printed in the 1707 edition by James Drake. However, this is probably not especially significant in establishing a date of death, since the letter from Purcell to Blow also first appears in this edition, some 12 years after Purcell's death. Its inclusion is a testament to Matteis's fame, as well as seeming to confirm that however 'mansuete' Matteis had become, he was still known for having something of a temper.

It seems likely that the stubbornness that was such a marked feature of Matteis's personality prevented him from giving up, right to the end. North comments that in his illness 'he made his condition knowne to his friends, but would take no bounty, but upon his obligation to repay it, such was his pride'.<sup>83</sup> Thus the following record for the issue of a travel warrant may refer to one of Matteis's final attempts to stave off his poverty:

August 15 1693 Passes ... for Christopher Cuyper, Christian Staver and Nicholas Matthy, sen., to go to Harwich and Holland.<sup>84</sup>

This spelling is rather similar to that which appeared in Estienne Roger's edition of

---

<sup>82</sup> *Amusements Serious and Comical, and other Works by Tom Brown*, ed. A.L. Hayward (London, 1927), p.356.

<sup>83</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.308, n.62.

<sup>84</sup> PRO, SP Domestic Warrant Book 37, p.122.

his works, 'les solos de Nicolas Mathys', and it is possible that Matteis had decided to seek out Roger in a final business deal over the *Ayres*. If this were the case, it might also explain how Roger seems to have enjoyed access to manuscript sources that eluded Walsh. Of course, the issuing of a travel warrant does not prove that the journey was ever made, and I have been unable to find any corroboration for it. If the destination was Holland, we find ourselves in familiarly murky waters, since many of the Dutch records of the period do not survive and it would necessitate searching through another haystack for the same needle to find a reference to Matteis there.

With the destruction of the Catholic records there seems to be little hope of finding out any more, but one entry in the St. Martin's ledgers just might be significant. Written on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1699 it simply says: 'Bur Nicola from St Martins'.<sup>85</sup> As we have seen with the records relating to Matteis's son, it is not unheard of for Catholics to appear in Protestant records: indeed, officially, it was a legal requirement for Catholic families to register births, marriages and deaths through the official channels. However, questions still remain. Does 'Bur' stand for buried or is it a shortened form of a Christian name? Is Nicola really Matteis? Was he still living in St. Martins? And, returning to an earlier point, if this is true then had his son done anything to help?

Although it seems that we are to be frustrated at every turn in the search for a categorical date for Matteis's death, it is probably safe to assume that he died in England. If it were otherwise, Roger North would surely have commented, or at least would not have been able to document Matteis's decline in health and wealth with such evident authority. Whatever the date of his death, the influence of the elder Matteis stands apart from any factual discrepancies or biographical uncertainties. His violin music of the 1670s and 80s was sufficient to provoke a sea change in both the expectations of audiences and the ambitions of performers. All the available evidence suggests that his playing brought the English their first real taste of the developing Italian violin style, though to see Matteis as a mere appetizer to the 'Bolognese' main course is to do him an injustice. North says as much:

---

<sup>85</sup> Westminster Record Office, *Parish of St Paul's Covent Garden, Roll 1-2*.

I know of no master fitt to be named with Corelli but him; all his compositions are full of the most artfull harmony, & his fire exquisite.<sup>86</sup>

His undoubted talent and the variety and theatricality with which he imbued his performances played an important part in the development of virtuoso performance in England. A fuller understanding of the techniques he employed, both in purely violinistic terms but also in relation to the construction and embellishment of his *Ayres*, will crucially enhance our conception of the performance style both of English players influenced by Matteis and of the next generation of Italian violinists who built upon his achievements.

---

<sup>86</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309.

## 2. The printed and manuscript sources

### 2.1. Introduction

The lack of clarity surrounding the life of Matteis, referred to in Section One, unfortunately to some extent carries over into the exploration of his musical output. On the one hand we are fortunate that there are several examples of his music surviving, both in beautifully produced engraved prints and well-preserved manuscripts. On the other hand, these copies display many and often contradictory differences which makes it difficult to suggest either a chronological order or a categorical period over which they might have been produced.

Various circumstances have thus far conspired to prevent the production of a definitive catalogue of Matteis's works. Principal among these are:

- 1) The lack of reliable dates in many of the prints and in any of the manuscripts.
- 2) A misleading mark in one of the prints which has been misinterpreted as a date mark many years away from the actual date of publication.
- 3) The broad similarity, and hence confusion, between so many of the different impressions of the prints and copies of manuscripts.
- 4) Later additions of pages (including title-pages) in some of the prints which have led to them being wrongly catalogued.
- 5) Small but telling differences between ostensibly identical copies of both printed and manuscript sources which make it next to impossible to determine either the order in which they were produced or from which exemplar they were copied.
- 6) The hitherto uncorrected misattribution of the works of Matteis the younger to his father.

This has meant that the *RISM* catalogue and the *New Grove I* and *II* articles (in addition to the two previous studies of Matteis referred to in Section One) all have certain omissions, misattributions and mistakes which have hitherto precluded an accurate assessment of Matteis's output. As well as correcting these mistakes, the

present Section will show that Matteis seems to have controlled the preparation of his work to a high degree and that production of both prints and manuscripts probably spanned most of his active musical life.

The main editions of the prints are fairly straightforward to identify but not so the issues and impressions within those editions, a task made all the harder by the varying states of the bindings. Some of the copies are in near-pristine, original, condition whilst others are falling apart. Some have been expertly rebound and yet others have pages missing or copy pages which have been inserted in their place. In fact, such is the state of the surviving copies that a full bibliographical analysis becomes a prohibitive task. In order to create a framework within which each surviving copy is placed in its own individual bibliographical and chronological pigeonhole, it would be necessary to employ a wide range of in-depth bibliographical techniques. Beta-radiographic analysis, detailed consideration of chain-lines, paper quality, binding and rustration, and precise palaeographical examinations would certainly be appropriate but are well beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the various editions of the prints as well as the several manuscript copies of the *Ayres* show a remarkable level of consistency from copy to copy which raises the question of just how desirable is it to differentiate between the dates of more or less identical books whose issue might in any case only be a few months apart? A more pressing task, and one more in keeping with the focus of the present study, is to aim to place the different print editions and manuscript versions in a chronological order whilst assessing the whole range of Matteis's output. This assessment will involve, where possible, an analysis of paper, printing techniques, watermarks and graphological techniques combined with consideration of the music itself. The evidence of the latter alone is sufficient to answer many questions of chronology.

## **2.2 The sources**

Matteis produced five volumes of suites of *Ayres* for solo violin with bass — four of these are printed and one is in manuscript. In addition there are manuscript versions of second violin parts to all five books, a printed version of the second part to Books 3 and 4 and a manuscript version of the tenor part to Books 1 and 2. Certain of these

*Ayres* have concordances in other manuscript collections of the period and there are further works, principally to be found in the Bodleian library, that have no concordances in any of Matteis's five main volumes of music. The surviving works fall into the following categories:

- 1) Various isolated examples from the *Ayres* which appear in manuscript collections alongside the works of Matteis's contemporaries.
- 2) Estienne Roger's 1702 edition of Matteis's violin works in five volumes and John Walsh's 1703 version of Books 1 and 2 of the violin *Ayres*.
- 3) Two songs in a collection made by Girolamo Pignani.<sup>1</sup>
- 4) Lost works mentioned specifically either by Matteis's contemporaries or referred to in library catalogues.
- 5) Works for one and more violins with no concordance in the printed *Ayres*.
- 6) Matteis's own engraved editions. These are principally of the violin music but also include Italian and English versions of the treatise *Le False Consonanze della Musica (The False Consonances of Music)*.

The least interesting works from the point of view of this study are those from category one above — the part-transcriptions of printed *Ayres* which appear in various manuscripts of the 1680s and 90s. For example, the catalogue of Matteis's works (Appendix 1) lists various collections in the British Library which include hand-written copies of one or more of the printed *Ayres*. Whilst these can often be dated reasonably accurately they are more or less exact transcriptions or arrangements for other instruments, usually lacking any precise performance information and no technical information for the violinist. Of all these sources, only one is of more than passing interest.<sup>2</sup> Manuscript Ckc Ms. 247 is an expensively-bound copy containing solely works by Matteis. In its style of presentation it seems to have been copied from Matteis's own volumes although there are many differences (in terms of size, format, contents, presentation and writing style) to show that it was prepared outside of Matteis's control. Inscribed to David Murray, 1693,

---

<sup>1</sup> G. Pignani, *Scelte de canzonette di piu autori* (London, 1679), p.49 and p.100. The later song in the *Gentleman's Journal* for 1691/2 is probably by his son. See pp.16 and 17.

<sup>2</sup> GB-WOr 705:24/1780 (a collection of instrumental music from c.1690) contains some *Ayres* in G and D major from Book 5. I have only just become aware of these volumes and have yet to examine them, although it does appear they only number a handful of pages and are in an unknown copyist's hand.

this volume actually consists of the first violin part to Book 5 (complete) and selected *Ayres* from Books 1 and 2. The order in which the *Ayres* are presented bears no resemblance to the order in Matteis's copies though the copying is almost exact, even down to matters of slurs. In fact, one particular similarity could be suggestive of the exemplar from which it was copied; the *Stravagance* (No.58 in the Cambridge source) has an erroneous a# in bar three, which is the same mistake that occurs in GB-Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 (No.124).<sup>3</sup> Of the nature of the other transcriptions, a case in point is GB-Lbl Add. 29283–5, which contains only one the *Burlesca* (Book 2, No.6). Between the three parts this source provides the first and second violin parts plus bass in an exact transcription from the print. The hand is not that of Matteis and the transcription offers no new information about any aspect of the music, a point which seems to be common to most of these extrapolated *Ayres*.

In the same way, the later editions produced by John Walsh and Estienne Roger (Category 2 above), though important in attesting to the continuing popularity of Matteis's work, are actually faithful copies either of the editions produced by Matteis himself or of the manuscripts which appeared under his likely control. The informational lacuna surrounding Matteis extends to our knowledge of his success abroad but the fact that Roger produced an edition of his works does argue that Matteis's fame had spread beyond the English shores. Dr. Rudolf Rasch tells me that Roger developed strong connections with the English musical market partly through Huguenot connections. He suggests this was mostly from about 1698 onwards which ties in well with the Matteis edition which must have been in preparation not long after this date. Dr. Rasch also points out that there are two editions of works by Pointel which contain catalogues mentioning Matteis. The first is from 1685 or 1686 and, within a list of works all engraved by Pointel, mentions '*Les Livres du Sr. Nicholas Mattheys, a 2. 3. et 4 Parties. Imprimé à Londre*'.<sup>4</sup> The second catalogue is to be found in Pointel's edition of airs from *Thetis et Pelée* where he mentions '*Livres de Mr. Nicholas Matheys. Opera 1.2.3 & 4.*' The works on either side of this in the catalogue were editions by Pointel but since no evidence has ever come to light of a separate edition of Matteis's *Ayres* by Pointel, it would seem most likely that both of these refer to the editions that Matteis had produced himself and were

---

<sup>3</sup> See pages 296–95 for a full key to the sources mentioned in this study.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Rasch informs me that this catalogue is in Pointel's publication, *Recueil de tous les plus beaux airs de l'opera de Roland, prepress pour toutes sortes de voix et d'instruments* (Amsterdam, ?1685/6).



simply being sold on his behalf. The Roger edition of the *Ayres* which initially appeared in 1702 under the title *Les solos de Nicolas Mathys, livre premier, second, troisième, quatrième, cinquième* was the only complete publication of all the works (including the otherwise unpublished manuscript works produced by Matteis in the early 1680s) although it would appear that he only ever published the first violin and bass parts.<sup>5</sup> The survival of Books 4 and 5, in a private collection in Wiesentheid, allow us our only opportunity to compare a mature print with the extant manuscript versions of Book 5.<sup>6</sup> However, despite its importance as a record of Matteis's continuing popularity, this edition is actually rather disappointing. Roger has not included any of Matteis's own titles, referring to nearly all instead simply as 'Ayre' followed by a number; small changes in barring, beaming or insignificant details of melodic line are the only real differences. Also, there are no dynamics and no ornaments beyond simple *trills* which means that, as a record of performing technique, it is sadly lacking. Walsh's selling point with his edition, which comprises only Books 1 and 2, was that he had managed to print, for the first time, a copy of the second violin part which he had apparently prepared from Matteis's own manuscript. His second violin part does not correspond exactly with any of the known manuscript versions of this part but there are a sufficient number of close similarities (with the Oxford source in particular) to attest to its likely authenticity. Moreover, the nature of the differences are the same as those that exist those between the extant sources of Matteis's own second violin manuscripts confirming that Walsh could easily have copied from a source that no longer survives. Beyond these changes the first violin and bass are almost exact transcriptions from Matteis's engraved edition. Furthermore, both Walsh's and Roger's editions were almost certainly prepared after Matteis's death, and neither offers any new performance information, so they will play no further part in this discussion.

The songs (Category 3) are attractive in their own right though apart from their obvious irrelevance to the discussion of violin music are also clearly dated and are

---

<sup>5</sup> This is confirmed by the wording of a later advertisement for the music in 1716, which appeared in one of Roger's own catalogues: 'Arie cantabile à violino solo e violoncello o bc. Del signore Nicola Mathys, libro primo (-quinto)'.  
<sup>6</sup> The existence of this 'extra' book has been known about for some time, though its place in the chronology has always been in question. With some prescience, Peter Holman christened it Book 5 (although at the time he was unaware of the Roger edition) and I was happy to appropriate this nomenclature. The numbering is of course not entirely logical as it turns out because they were actually produced between Books 1 & 2 and 3 & 4, between about 1680-82.

thus easy to fit into the overall catalogue of his works.<sup>7</sup>

As regards lost works (Category 4), the motet *Crudele Guadium* for tenor, violin and continuo is the only one that has been specifically referred to by name and has been discussed on page 18. However, various comments by North suggest that there may be many more pieces, some of which may tie in with the works in Category 5. The possible link is through the existence of some four-part music other than the printed *Ayres*, which North comments on, mentioning that such works were hard to find even in the early eighteenth century:

These books of his [the published *Ayres*] were of grounds and short peices or lessons onely; his full consorts and solos were not printed, and I think are very scarce if at all to be mett with<sup>8</sup>

The works that have no concordances with the printed *Ayres* occur in two sources in the Bodleian library (selected parts of them also appear in libraries at Yale and Tokyo). These works were copied into manuscripts in the 1680s and 1690s and contain some of the most interesting of Matteis's writing. For example, both the sonatas in GB-Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403 (Nos.22 and 23) are in four parts and could accord with this description by North:

To oblidge his English freinds [Matteis] composed severall full consorts for 4, in which, and in all his peices, he used the bold and best accords; and likewise to oblidge himself and conforme to the English he made books of inner parts to those he had published, which brought in fresh ginnys.<sup>9</sup>

Also in the Bodleian are manuscript copies of some solos, undoubtedly by Matteis although once more with no concordances, which provide some of the most interesting of Matteis's work. These sources will be discussed further in Section Three.

The most important of works for the present purposes are those contained in Category 1, which are the works Matteis produced himself and over which he appears to have exerted more or less total control. The prints of *Le False Consonanse della Musica*

---

<sup>7</sup> The songs are dealt with at more length in Section One.

<sup>8</sup> Roger North on Music: Being a Selection from his Essays Written During the Years c.1695–1728, ed. J. Wilson (London, 1959), p.357.

<sup>9</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356, n.124. By mentioning the inner parts to the *Ayres* separately from the 'full consorts' North seems to be making clear that there were some examples of Matteis's 'free' composition aside from the *Ayres*.

will not be looked at in any depth because of their limited relevance to the discussion of the violin music but the Italian manuscript copy of this treatise will be of central importance later on as an exemplar for handwriting comparison.<sup>10</sup>

### 2.3 Matteis's own publications

Of all the characteristics linking copies of Matteis's music the most immediately noticeable is that of format. As Roger North said, regarding Matteis's prints:

And he found out a way of getting mony which was perfectly new. For seeing his lessons, (which were all duos), take with his scollars, and that most gentlemen desired them, he was at some charge to have them graven in copper, and printed in oblong octavos, and this was the beginning of engraving musick in England. And of these lessons he made books, and presented them, well bound, to most of the lovers, which brought him the 3,4 and 5 ginnys; and the encouragement was so great, that he made 4 of them.<sup>11</sup>

The process of using an engraving process in order to produce music was not new, although it would still have been seen as a fairly extravagant method, even by the time of Matteis's prints. North uses the phrase 'at some charge' which seems to confirm that it was not a cheap process.<sup>12</sup> As time went on engraving became the method of choice for music printers and after the turn of the century it became the norm to have music engraved rather than typeset.<sup>13</sup> In the earliest period, the music

---

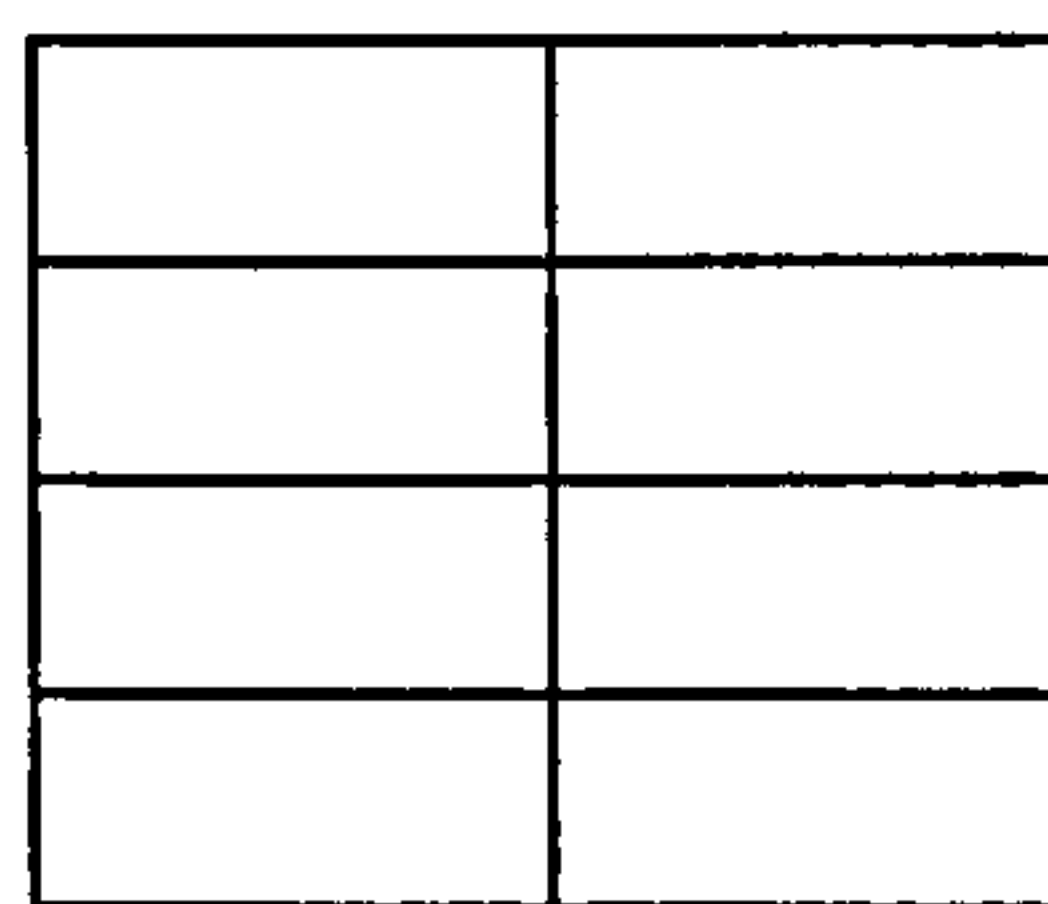
<sup>10</sup> A complete list of Matteis's known works can be found in Appendix 1, giving the full shelf-mark for each source. Hereafter, country codes will only be used for non-UK sources.

<sup>11</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356. North rather overstates the case regarding Matteis's influence on engraving since this technique was far from unknown in England. Gibbons' *Fantazies* as well as Simpson's *Division-Violist* of 1659 had already appeared in engraved format earlier in the century and these were not alone. North himself later acknowledges this fact: 'There was another incident which tended to propagat musick in generall as well as the Italian manner, and that was printing from copper plates. The first that I have seen were in *The Division Violist* (1659), and since by sigr Nichola's books. But it's well knowne the old way was by setting, and all the Italian musick, even of the best masters, are so publisht; and that manner was much mended by one John Playford ... . When Nicola's books were found to please so well by being fairely graved, and the demand for musick grew strong, the way of etching, with a little graving (and perhaps worse ways) have bin used, but most of it very slovenly. It hath bin a vast advantage to all lovers, that musick was to be bought at reasonable prises, and now wonderfull fair, as they have bin put out by Stephen Rogers in Holland, who ought to have a statue in England as a benefactor for what he hath done of that sort. Wee copy, and print, but spoil our owne trades, (not onely in that but in other matters), by undoing for a little gaine, which disgraces the manufacture, and by consequence it falls from us.' Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.311, n.66.

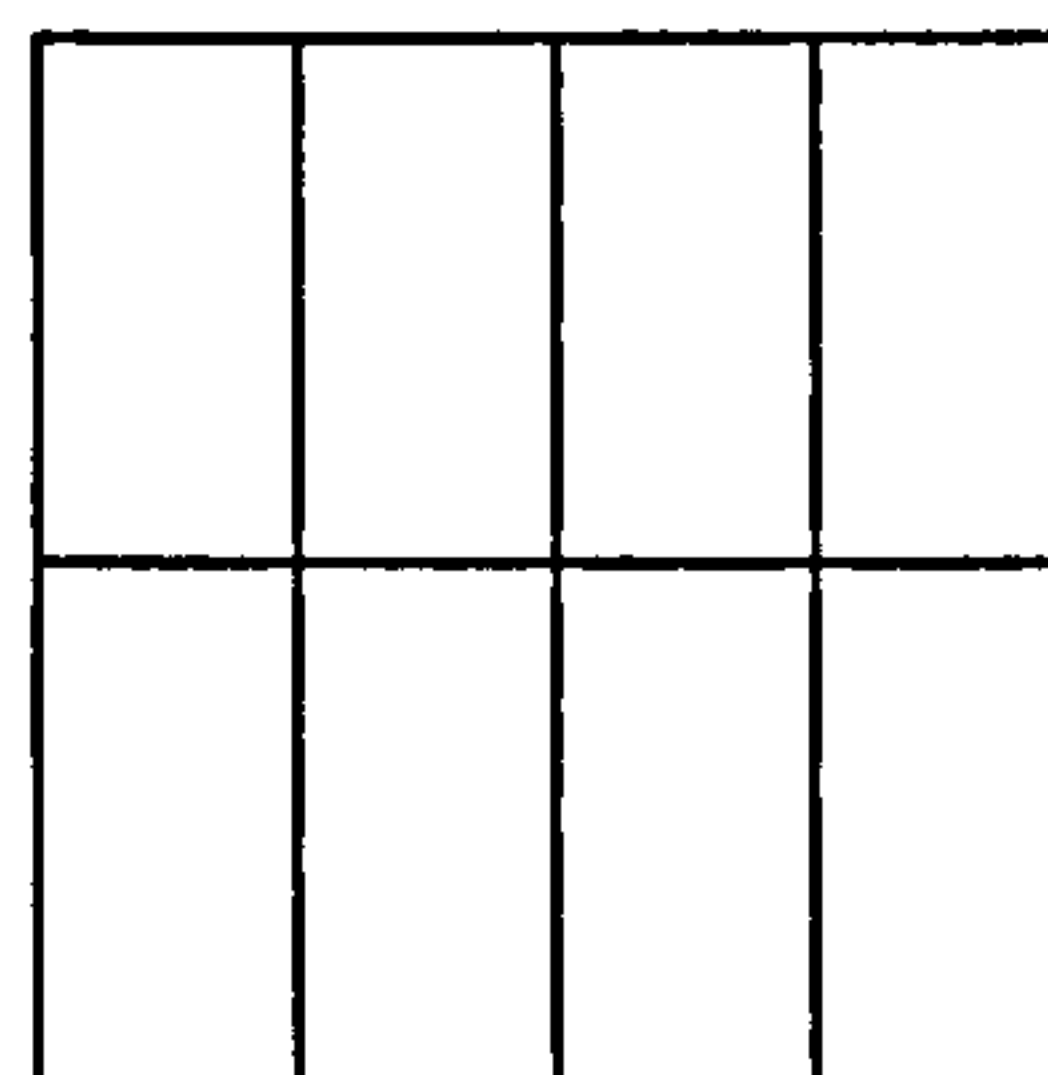
<sup>12</sup> See W. Gamble, *Music Engraving and Printing* (New York, 1971). The earliest work thus produced in England is indeed possibly Gibbons *Fantasia of Three parts for Viols* but there is some discussion about the actual date. See *Music Engraving and Printing*, p.51.

<sup>13</sup> Gamble, *Music Engraving and Printing*, p.51. Also, when Cosimi published his Op.1 in 1702, these were advertised in the *London Gazette* of 5 November as having been 'Curiously Engraven on Copper Plates'. M. Tilmouth, 'A Note on the Cost of Music Printing in London in 1702', *Brio* Vol. 8 (Spring 1971), p.2.

was engraved on copper or pewter plates but in the late seventeenth century, and increasingly after the turn of the century, it became more normal to save on time-consuming work by using punches which could be formed into the shape of note-heads and rests.<sup>14</sup> Initially copper was too hard a surface for punching although the Dutch appear to have devised a process in the 1690s by which the metal was sufficiently softened to allow it.<sup>15</sup> However, North quite specifically states that Matteis had the music engraved on copper plates and this would appear to accord with the historical evidence. Matteis's printed *Ayres* show evidence of having been engraved by hand which was still both a common and quick method to judge from an advertisement by Thomas Cross in about 1710 that 'Gentlemen may have their Works fairly Engraved, as cheap as Punct & sooner'.<sup>16</sup> Whilst the main developments in engraving seem to have occurred after about 1683 with the work of Thomas Cross, it is possible that Matteis's music was sufficiently in demand and well-known that it influenced others as to the manner of the presentation of their music. Matteis's choice of the octavo format is eminently sensible for a musician since it results in a volume small enough to slip into a pocket or take to a music meeting. In this format, the sheets would be printed with eight impressions at once and with the paper at right angles to that which would be expected for common octavo:



(i) Regular octavo



(ii) Oblong octavo

**Example 2-1: Octavo formats**

---

<sup>14</sup> For a comprehensive explanation of the processes involved see Gamble, *Music Engraving and Printing*, pp.136–53.

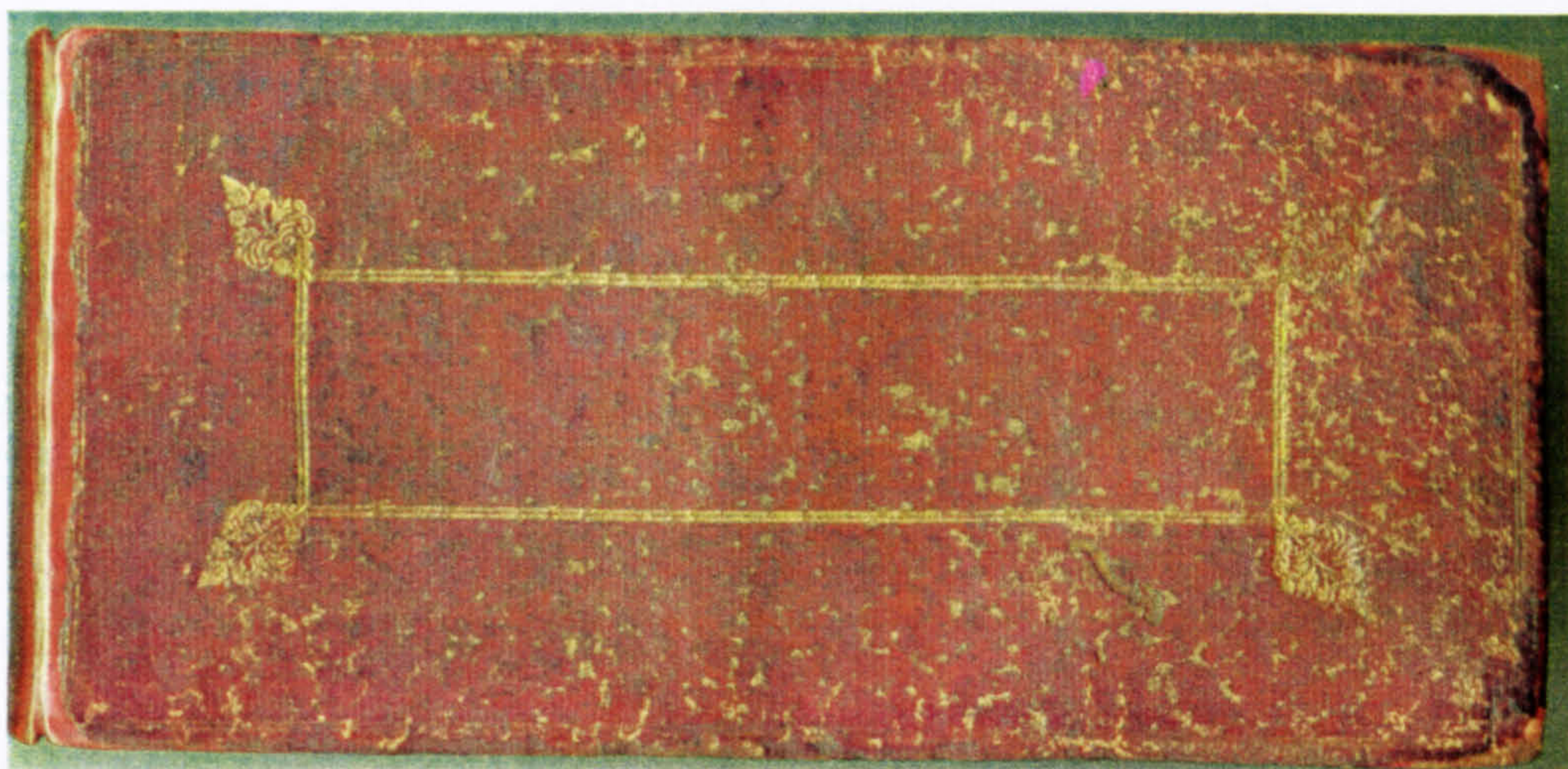
<sup>15</sup> Gamble, *Music Engraving and Printing*, p.59.

<sup>16</sup> Tilmouth, 'A Note on the Cost of Music Printing in London in 1702', p.2.

Thus the chain-lines, which are perpendicular to the longest edge, will be running horizontally in the common octavo format but vertically in the oblong octavo, as is found in all those copies of Matteis's extant work that I have examined.

North mentions that Matteis had copies bound for 'the lovers', i.e. the wealthy amateurs who were to be Matteis's mainstay over the years. This would accord perfectly with the normal practice of the day whereby the publisher would supply the work either with a trade binding (perhaps calf or sheep) or with just end papers to protect it.<sup>17</sup> Some of the extant copies of the sources do contain some noticeably dirty pages among the flyleaves, probably indicating that they had been delivered unbound. These were possibly ones of which Matteis had not made gifts, but it is also possible that they were delivered unbound in order to allow the recipient to supply his or her own favoured binding. Most of the copies do not include such evidence of wear and were presumably the ones which Matteis chose to have bound himself. Amongst the volumes whose original binding is preserved there is a great deal of uniformity. To some extent this is not altogether surprising since they are almost certain to have been bound in London at one of only a relatively few bookbinders working at the time. It was normal for leather bindings to be tooled with hot stamps and many of the Matteis volumes still preserve the gilding which was applied to the tooled leaf designs:

[Original in colour]<sup>18</sup>



**Plate 2-1: A typical binding, taken from US-Wc M1490.M43 Case Music 4078 Item 1 (Vol. 3)**

<sup>17</sup> This process is very clearly explained in P. Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford, 1972), pp.146–153.

<sup>18</sup> Where a page bears colour plates, the bracketed confirmation will be placed over the first such plate and will apply to all other plates on that page unless otherwise stated.

With a few slight variations this is the binding and tooled design that is most often found with both prints and manuscripts. Of course, not all the volumes are this well preserved and in some cases repairs and rebinding have been undertaken. Sometimes the original covers have been retained inside the new ones (as in Lbl Hirsch IV 1632), though in other cases it is not clear whether the binding is original or not, such as in the case of the heavy card covers of HAdolmetsch. The insides to the covers also differ between copies, the majority being trimmed with white paper, though others use marbled paper. This latter technique was more common in the eighteenth century but was not unknown earlier for specially produced prints such as in the case of Lbl K.1.f.10 (2), which is a presentation volume bearing a dedication to Pietro Capponi, the representative of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who visited London in the 1680s.<sup>19</sup> In addition to having a beautifully inscribed cover, Lbl K.1.f.10 (2) has marbled endpapers which appear to have been copied in the companion volume Lbl K.1.f.10 (1) when it was rebound by the British Library. It is often not clear whether the endpapers are original or were introduced in a later re-binding since several of the volumes show evidence of broken bindings, and yet others have pages which are clearly out of order, missing or are copies made from other volumes. Nevertheless the surviving volumes of both printed and manuscript sources all measure within 2.5cm of the same dimensions in terms of height and width, and most are even closer than this. The following is a list of those sources which have been measured to date:

Shelf-mark	Page height (In cm)	Page width (In cm)	Shelf-mark	Page height (In cm)	Page width (In cm)
Lbl K.1.f.10 (1)	11.2	22.2	D-Bs Mus.ant.pract. M 397	11	22.6
Lbl K.1.f.10 (2)	11.5	23	US-NYp Mus. Res. *MYK (No.2)	11.6	23.1
Lbl K.1.f.12	10.6	22.5	US-NYp Mus. Res. *MYK (No. 1)	11.4	22.9

<sup>19</sup> Pietro Capponi (1641–1718) had married into the Medici family in 1666 and was in London between November 1685 and February 1686 to convey both sadness at the death of Charles and happiness at the accession of James. Whether it was Matteis directly who presented the volume or someone who decided to do so quite separately is not known. Intriguingly, a wood-carving produced at this time for the Medici court by Grinling Gibbons replicates two pages from *Le False Consonanse della Musica*, a fact pointed out by Dr. Lynda Sayce. It could well be that there is some link between Matteis and Florence which may become clear one day.

Lbl Hirsch 1425	11.4	22.3	US-Cn Case VM 286 M43a	11	22.5
Lbl K.1.f.11 (1)	10.8	23	US-Wc M1490.M432 Case	11.4	22
Lbl K.1.f.11 (2)	11.6	22.5	US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 1)	11	22.8
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a	11.2	22.8	US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 2)	11.8	23
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632	11.6	23.5	US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3)	11.4	22.7
Lbl Hirsch III 397	11.7	23	US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 4)	11.2	23
Lbl Hirsch IV 1633	11.3	23	En Panmure Ms. 9464	10	22.8
HAdolmetsch	10.4	22	US-R ML96. M435	12.3	23.7
Ob Mus. Sch. G.629	11.5	22.8	US-R Vault M1490. M435	12	23
Och Mus. 939	10.9	21.5	CDu MC60	11.3	23
Ob Mus. Sch. G.630	11.5	23.0	CDu MC61	11.2	22.7
Ob Mus. Sch. 628	12	23.5	CDu MC62	11.6	23.5
Ob Mus. Sch. G.613	9.9	22.7	CDu MC63	11.8	23.6
Lcm II.c.26 F21	10.8	22.3	CDu MC109	11	22.7
Lcm II.c.26 F22	11.1	22.7	I-Vnm Contarini 9988 (secondo)	11.2	23.5
Private collection of Books 3 and 4	11.3	23	I-Vnm Contarini 9989	11.2	22.5

**Table 2-1: The dimensions of extant copies**

## 2.4 Watermark evidence

One of the most valuable aids to the bibliographer is the evidence of watermarks. A significant bar to making chronological sense of Matteis's output is that so few of the

prints and none of the manuscripts bear a meaningful date. The first unequivocal date — 1685 — appeared in a coronet on the title-page of the first edition of Books 3 and 4, and remained unchanged for the revised edition of 1687. This new date was only added when a new issue was produced to accompany the newly-printed second violin parts. There were no attempts to date individual impressions of any of the editions despite their having been produced over a substantial period of time. Almost the only facts that are beyond question are that the first edition was initially published in 1676 and the last edition was initially published in 1687. Other than this, the picture is one of varying degrees of confusion, albeit a confusion onto which watermark analysis can shed some welcome light, although it must be stressed that without strong concordances and additional evidence from sources for which the date is known and which bear the same marks it is unusual to be able to date a manuscript solely by the evidence of the watermarks.

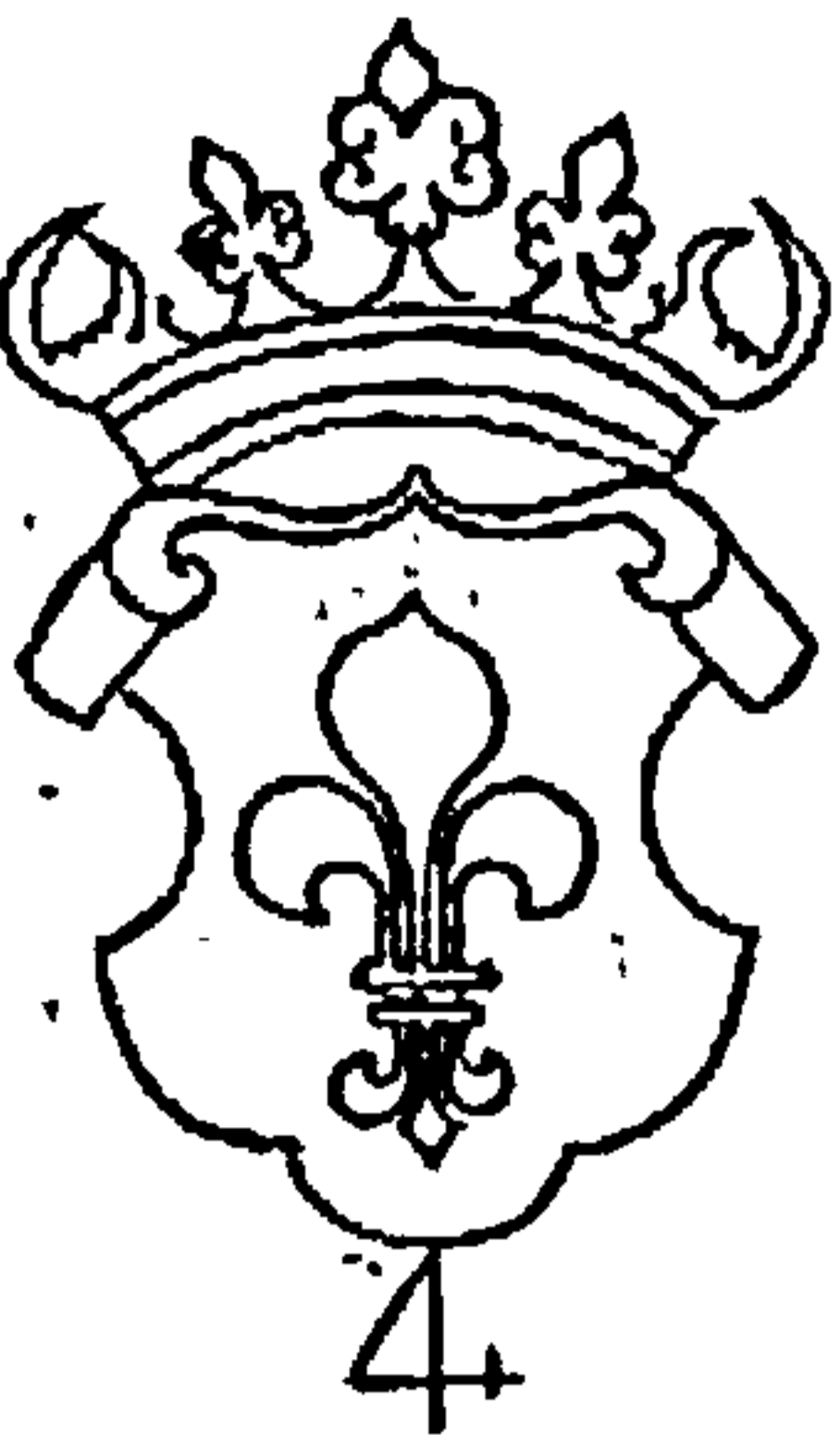
Some of the sources do not contain many watermarks, at least not enough in isolation either to provide a meaningful comparison with other sources or to suggest a likely age. Others, meanwhile, have a whole variety of marks, many of which have been discussed in detail in the work of Heawood or Thompson and which are, therefore, useful in suggesting a period during which the paper may have been produced.<sup>20</sup> Thompson and others have pointed out that the relatively high price of paper means that it was rarely if ever stored and so a date of production of the paper is usually a good indication of the rough period in which it would have been used by the copyist. It has not been possible to view every single copy of the *Ayres*, though those that have been consulted are suggestive of a broad pattern. Certain marks appear consistently throughout most of the sources and others seem to apply for a specific period only. Occasionally one finds a mark that does not appear in any other copy but more often than not this is because of a sheet that has been inserted at a later stage. The following is a list of the principal watermarks from the sources that have been consulted. In accordance with the focus of the present study, watermarks from sources produced outside Matteis's control have generally been ignored, except where they may be useful in giving a later date for Matteis's own copies.<sup>21</sup>


---

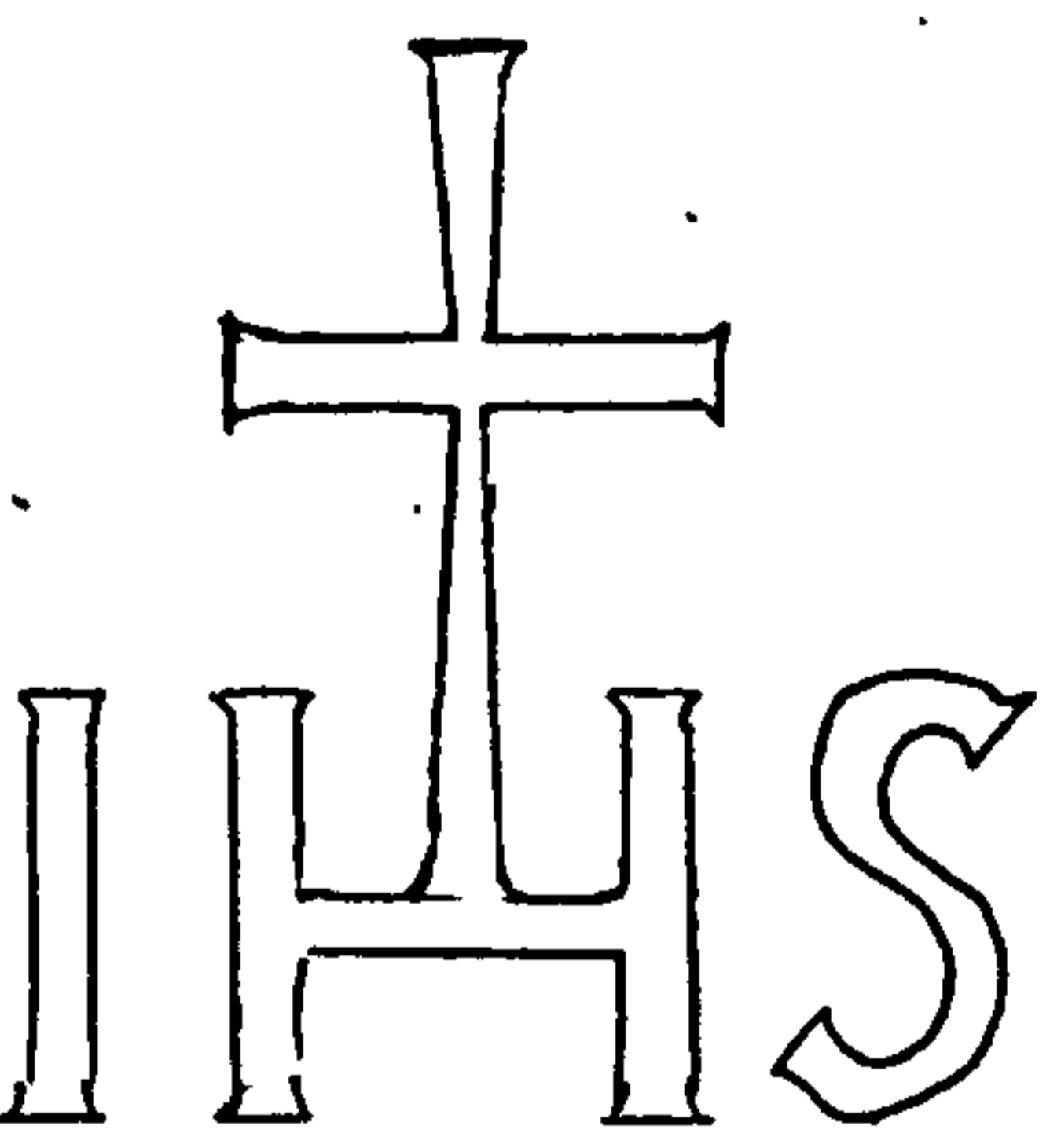
<sup>20</sup> I was fortunate to have access to the private notes of Dr. J. Wainwright, which included many of the examples from the work of Thompson and Heawood which were such a help in the present study.

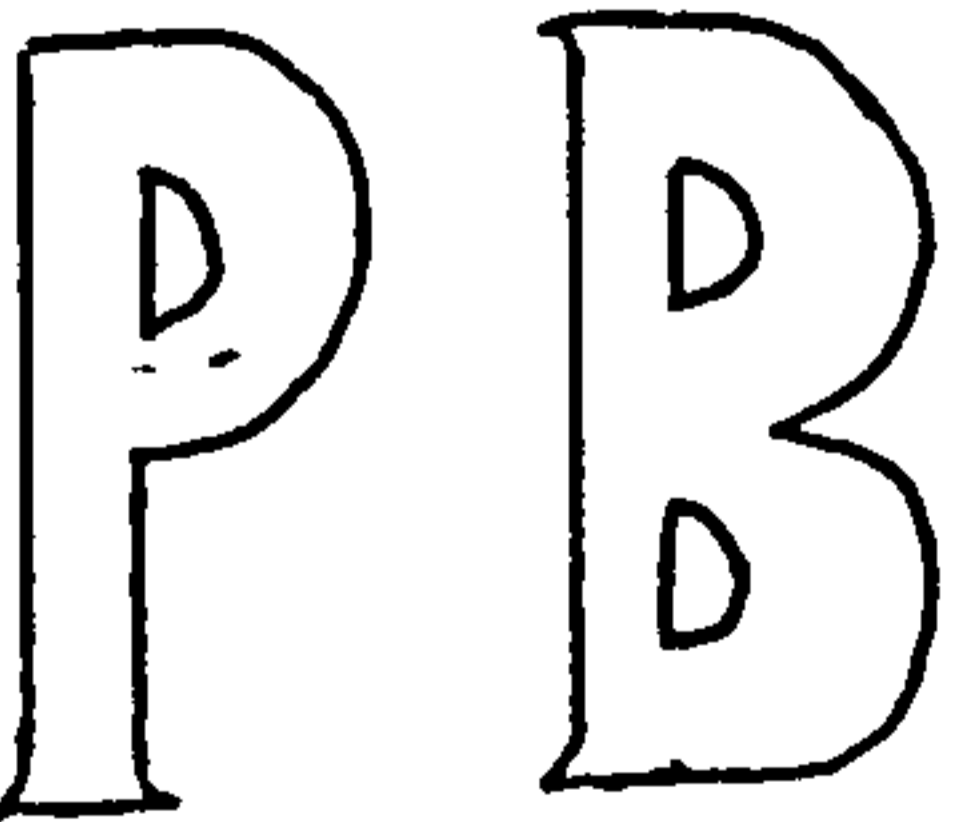
<sup>21</sup> Some of the later sources, e.g. Lbl Add. 35043 (which contains *Ayres* by Matteis within a collection of the music of various composers) have been studied by Thompson and confidently dated to a



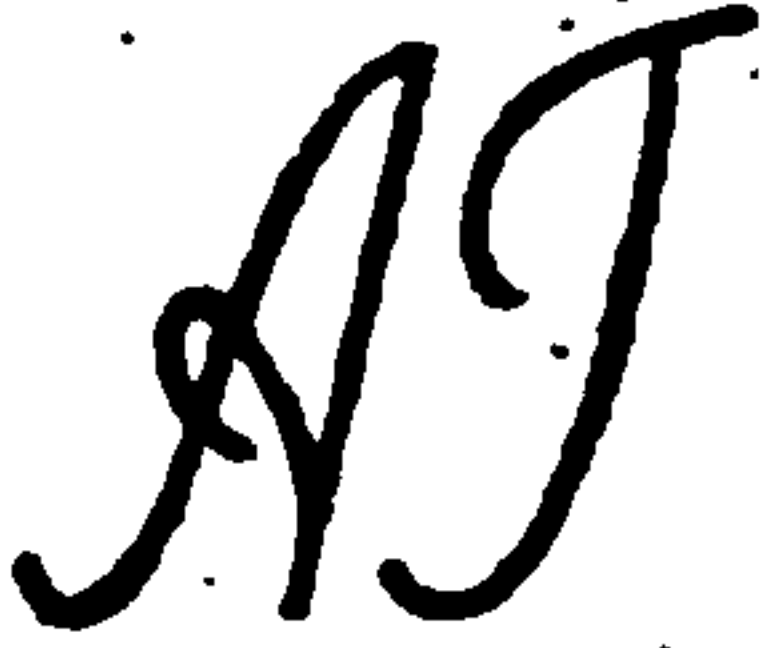
<b>Watermark 1</b>	
	<p>The Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys is one of the commonest watermarks found in paper of the late seventeenth century. From the mid-1660s this more ornate design was quite common in Angoûmois paper in which it was often accompanied by the IHS mark as it so often is in the Matteis sources. The size of this mark did tend to vary over time so a consistent size between sources is indicative of a similar date for the paper.</p>

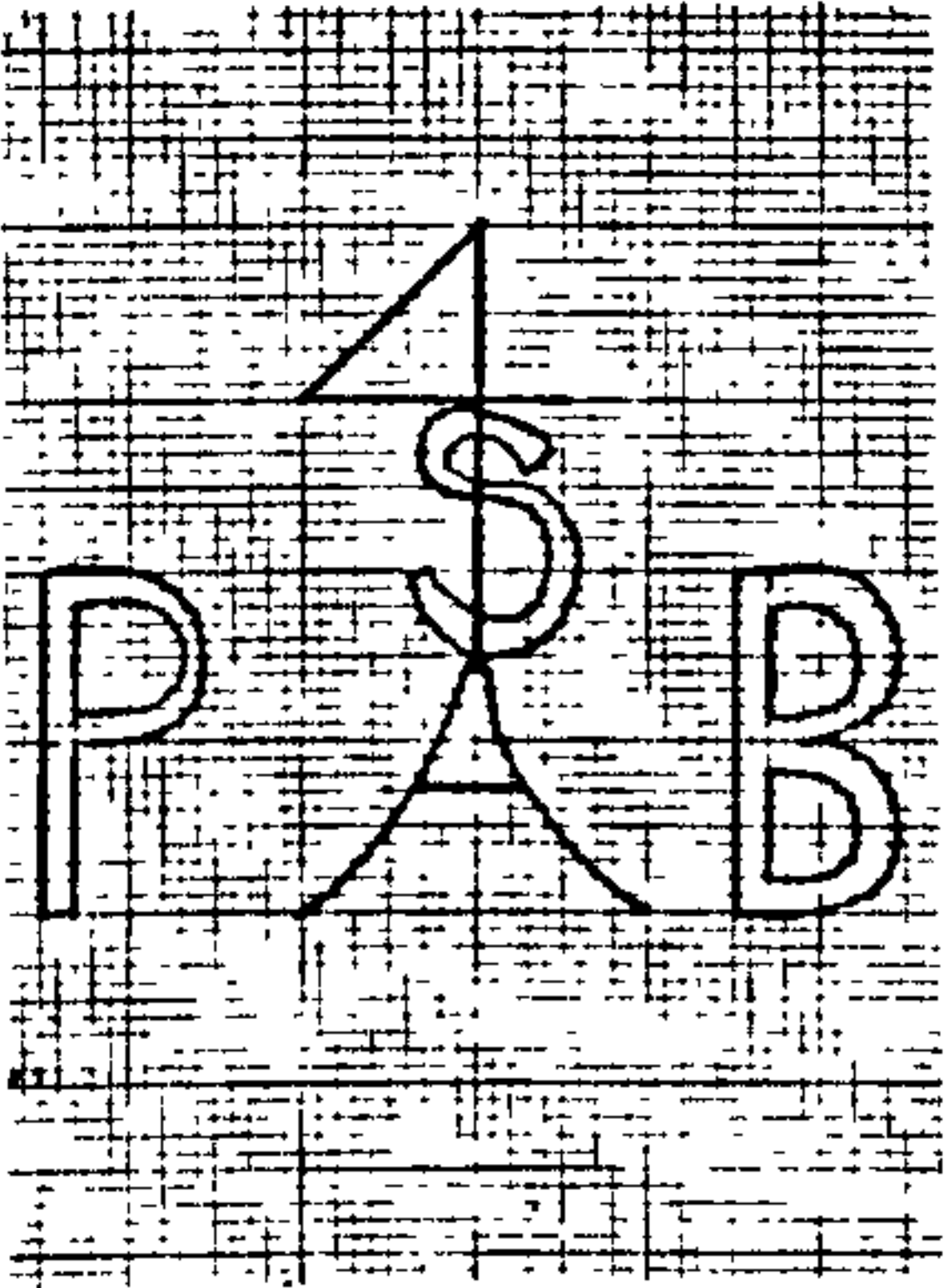
<b>Watermark 2</b>	
	<p>This mark is attached to the bottom of the Fleur-de-Lys, just underneath the 4, but due to the way the paper is folded it often appears on its own when the rest of the mark is not visible.</p>

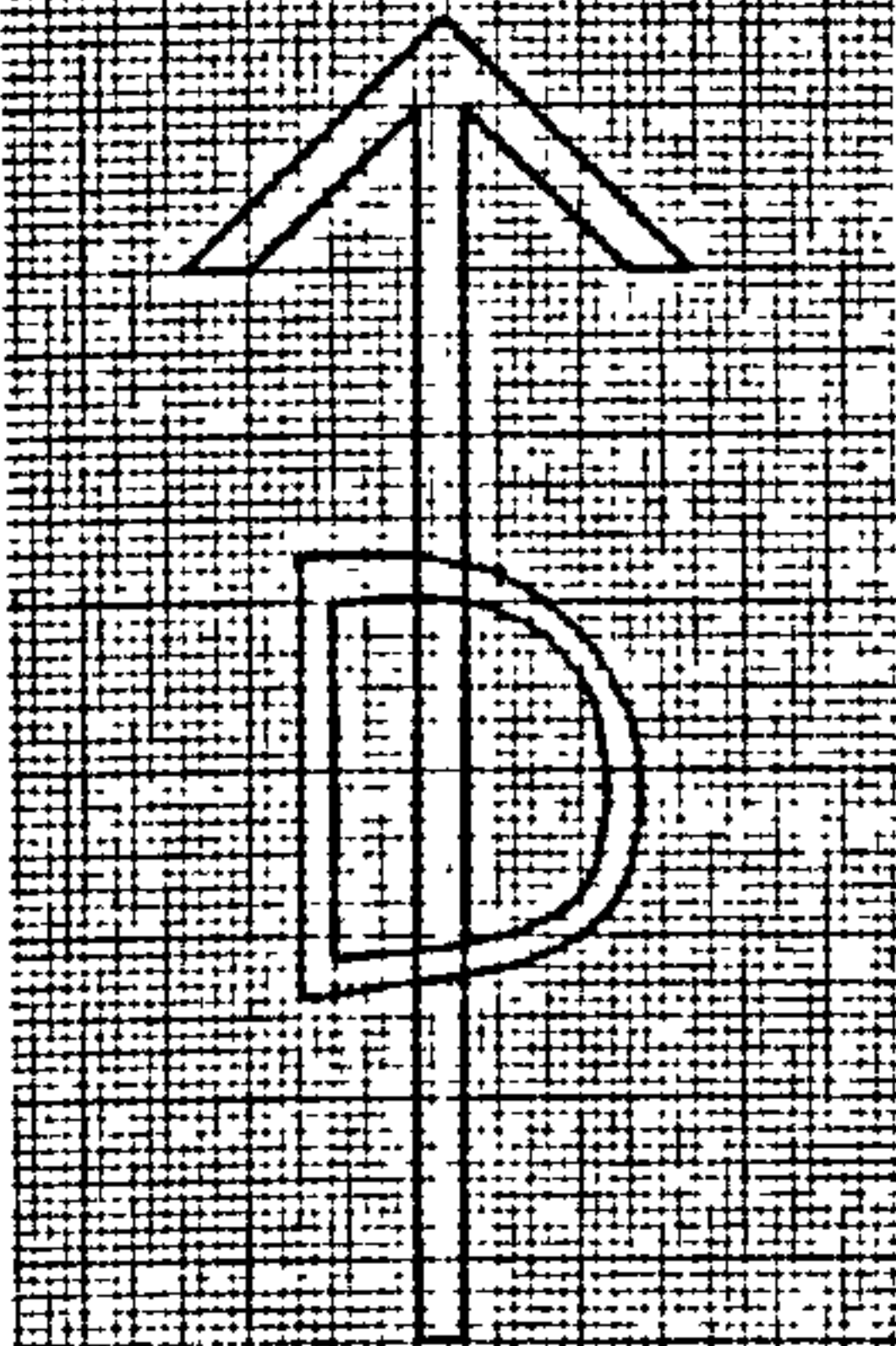
<b>Watermark 3</b>	
	<p>The IHS generally denotes paper of Angoûmois origin, the principal supplier of paper during Matteis's period. The letters IHS referred to the fact that the mill stood on Jesuit land. After the 1688 outbreak of war, exports from the Angoûmois region were interrupted, thus giving a fairly reliable cut-off date for this particular paper. This mark exists in Matteis's works with various factors' initials underneath and with no initials at all.</p>


<b>Watermark 4</b>	
	<p>The initials PB appear underneath the IHS mark in at least one source. They are those of the factor of the paper — in this instance unidentified but commonly found in the 1670s and 1680s.</p>


slightly later period than the present volumes of Matteis's own music. The watermarks from such sources have not been dealt with here. See R. Thompson, *English music manuscripts and the fine paper trade, 1648–1688* (PhD, University of London, 1988), pp.260-322.

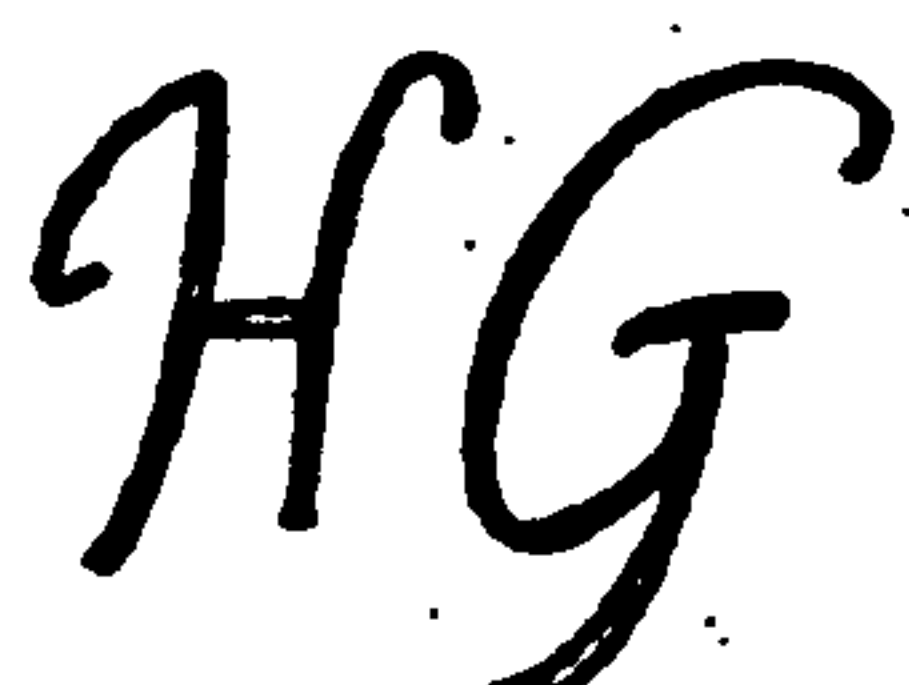
<b>Watermark 5</b>	
	This is the factor's mark of Abraham Janssen. Dr. Jonathan Wainwright has determined that this mark first appeared in 1674. It is particularly common in the period 1678 to 1688. Other examples of it are in 1680 (in Add. 29558) and 1682 (Add. 33234).

<b>Watermark 6</b>	
	<p>In his thesis, Robert Thompson links this countermark with these sources:</p> <p>Ob Mus. Sch. C.27 (Purcell) London (?) 1680  Lbl Add. Ms. 33235 — Oxford  Bu 5002, Oxford c. 1680&lt;  Ob Mus. Sch. C.20–23 — 1 May 1680  Lbl R.M. Ms. 20.h.9 — 1679–1683</p> <p>All of these are consistent with Matteis's mid-period.</p>

<b>Watermark 7</b>	
	This countermark is one belonging to the Van der Ley family. From the mid-1680s Peter Van der Ley used quite a different mark and so paper bearing this mark is unlikely to date from much after 1685.

<b>Watermark 8</b>	
	This is the mark of Claude de George, an Angoumois paper manufacturer who was active from 1673/4 to 1683. On occasions the final G appears, as it does here, more similar to a C but it is not clear if this is relevant.

<b>Watermark 9</b>	
	This is the countermark of a paper manufacturer who was active around 1685.

<b>Watermark 10</b>	
	This mark appears in paper of around 1680 as a countermark and also as a factor's mark from about 1676–1686. In the Matteis prints it is sometimes not clear whether the second letter is G or C.

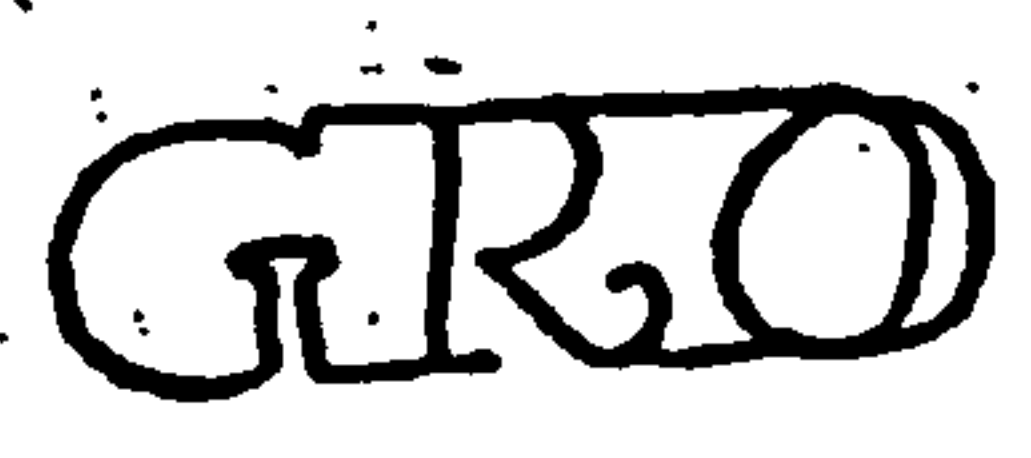
<b>Watermark 11</b>	
<b>AI/IV</b>	It is generally impossible to decide whether this mark is the first or second of these. However, neither is terribly helpful in isolation in dating the paper.

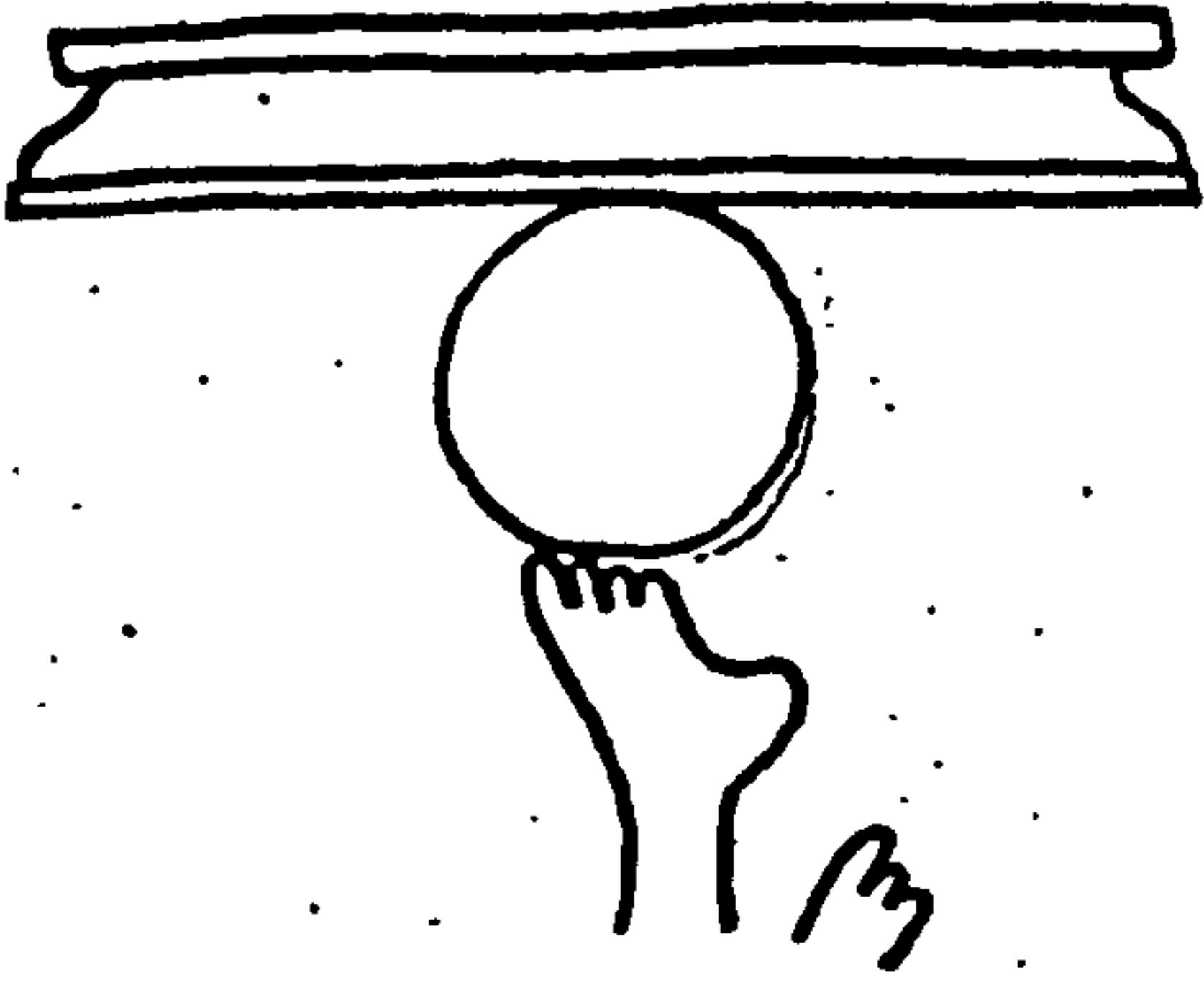

<b>Watermark 12</b>	
<b>VI</b>	This is possibly the same as Watermark 11 in a different presentation. However, it appears thus in sufficient sources to warrant separate inclusion here.

<b>Watermark 13</b>	
<b>IM</b>	The Countermark of Jean Monédière, an Angômois maker of the 1670s/80s.

<b>Watermark 14</b>	
<b>LB</b>	Again, this is Angômois — probably from the 1680s, which would be consistent with its appearance in the second violin part to Books 1 and 2.

<b>Watermark 15</b>	
<b>VA</b>	A countermark for which there is no established date as yet though it usually appears in sources from the late seventeenth century

<b>Watermark 16</b>	
	This mark only appears in the flyleaves of one of the Washington sources. It is a Norman countermark, quite usual in printed music dating from around 1670–80. In this instance, it is found in one of the latest prints and must be from at least the late 1680s.

<b>Watermark 17</b>	
	<p>This mark only appears in the flyleaves of one of the Washington sources. It is very possibly a later insertion. It is similar to Heawood 1364/5 which dates from c.1769/70.</p>
<b>Watermark 18</b>	
	<p>This only appears in E Panmure Ms. 9464.</p>

**Table 2-2: Watermarks in Matteis's extant sources**

Given the sizes of the volumes combined with the choice and presentation of the particular watermarks found therein, it should be possible to work out the size of paper chosen for these volumes.<sup>22</sup> Gaskell provides a selection of tables from which one can attempt to deduce some of the more common sizes and according to his examples the paper used for some of Matteis's prints may have been a slightly cut-down large-format paper.<sup>23</sup> One possibility which contains the correct watermark and is from the right date-range is a Dutch 'super-royal' from about 1674, though there are two reasons why this might not be the case. Firstly there would have been quite a lot of wastage, perhaps as much as 20cm, from the height of the paper (the width, of course, in oblong octavo) which would almost certainly have been avoided given the high price of paper. Secondly, the position of the watermarks is not as one might expect since, according to Gaskell, a sheet producing octavo pages, of whatever orientation, should exhibit few if any watermarks since they will mostly be in the wasted space between pages.<sup>24</sup> In fact, the marks are generally at the top of the page and sometimes even in the middle. An alternative paper source has been suggested

<sup>22</sup> In general the dateable watermarks in Matteis's works seem consistent with the period 1670 to >1690 which is entirely consistent with the range of his activity as suggested in Section One.

<sup>23</sup> Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, pp.57-117.

<sup>24</sup> Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, pp.92-95.

by Dr. Cathie Gaherty after an examination of Ob Mus. Sch. G.630, which is a print comparable with most of the other extant prints in size, layout and arrangement of watermarks. The pages in the volume measure 114mm x 238mm, so if the music was printed so that the sheet was divided into 3 parts along its width, and then each of those pages was folded double (folio) then the original size of the paper may have been 476mm x 342mm. Some trimming would have been necessary, thus allowing for an original size of 495mm x 380mm, which would be consistent with a 1674 'Dutch Demy with ecu' as mentioned by Gaskell.<sup>25</sup> If this interpretation were correct then despite the sizes being essentially octavo the volumes would be more correctly termed oblong sexto. Arguing against this is the observation that much of the watermark evidence suggests paper of an Angoumois origin. Although Dutch manufacturers eventually appropriated many of the traditional Angoumois watermarks, this did not happen until a later date than that with which we are presently concerned.

Before moving on, a final note of caution perhaps needs to be sounded. Whilst watermarks can and do play a vital part in dating musical sources, there are certain limitations which do cast something of a shadow over any conclusions. Firstly, the date of a source can only realistically be tied down to a period of plus or minus five years at best, due to considerations of paper transport, storage and the copyist's rate of work. Also, if watermarks are being used to compare the date of two or more sources then one must be sure that the marks are exactly the same in terms of dimensions and design. This is particularly relevant in cases where the same mark appears over a long period as is the case with the Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys which appears in virtually every extant copy of Matteis's music over a period of around fifteen years. In general terms the mark is the same from the earliest source to the latest but the details do vary, unsurprisingly given that each new vat of paper pulp would have required that a new watermark be made — each one from a complicated twist of wire. This means that where two or more sources exhibit the same watermark whose detailed measurements correspond exactly then the paper is unarguably from the same batch and can thus be dated to within a relatively small time-span. Equally, when the marks differ, even in small ways, it denotes a new

---

<sup>25</sup> Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, p.73. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Cathie Gaherty who was kind enough not only to answer my many questions regarding paper but also to look at the above-mentioned Bodleian source to give her expert opinion.

paper batch from a different date, even though it might be from the same producer at virtually the same time. In order to arrive at a rough date for the source in such cases it is necessary to find another, dated, work that bears exactly the same mark, for without this guide there is simply too large a date-range during which the paper could have been produced. On a more positive note, however, there is still much use that can be made of the marks in terms of progression of production. Once a rough chronology has been arrived at (by using such dates as are in the volumes, analysis of changes to the musical plates etc.) the appearance and disappearance of particular watermarks can take on more significance. If there is a mark that appears in, for example, an early impression of the 1685 edition but is then not present in any of the later ones, it can be useful in suggesting a date for an undated manuscript which may have the same mark. Combinations of watermarks and factors' marks are particularly helpful in this respect. Such techniques have provided valuable extra tools in the preparation of the chronological table that appears at the end of this Section.

## **2.5 Towards a history of the printed sources**

Matteis's choice of presentation for his own editions shows that he was aiming at an elite market, as witnessed by some of the inscriptions on surviving volumes. For example, Lbl K.1.f.10 (2) is inscribed:

All illmo Sigr Marchese/ Pietro Capponi/ Inviato del sermo gran duca/ di  
Toscana alla Maesta della/ Gran Bretania

Another volume of Book 3 and 4 *Ayres* in private hands is inscribed:

A son altesse Mons. Le Prince Electoral Palatin

And Ob Mus. Sch. G.629 is dedicated to:

The Rt Hoble L,D CHIEFE : IUSTICE : NORTH

This eminent man's younger brother, Roger North, makes it clear how successful the

newly 'mansuete'<sup>26</sup> Matteis was at making friends with, and clients out of, the nobility. Such associations were tremendously positive for his career, both in terms of his rising profile and also for the ready market they provided for his beautifully bound volumes of *Ayres*. We know from newspaper advertisements that the first of these (Books 1 and 2) appeared in 1676 though it was not until 1685 that Books 3 and 4 followed. One of the main reasons for the fairly large gap was that the first two books sold extremely well and there were clearly many re-prints, with a few alterations, in the intervening years. In addition, Matteis also produced a separate volume of *Ayres* in about 1680/81. This set (Book 5) was only produced in manuscript and was never published in Matteis's lifetime. Moreover, it is also clear from manuscript evidence that Matteis was producing, or was having produced, numerous hand-written copies which were variously of the second violin part and tenor part to the *Ayres*, as well as various other consort and solo pieces. For some reason Matteis appears never to have printed the second violin part to Books 1 and 2 which seems an uncharacteristic move from such a commercially-aware person. Despite the many versions that appeared in manuscript, it was not until John Walsh reprinted Books 1 and 2 of the *Ayres* in 1703 that these second parts finally appeared, a note being added confirming that the second part had never been published before and that he (Walsh) had copied it from Matteis's own manuscript.<sup>27</sup> In contradistinction, Matteis seems to have decided to publish a second part to Books 3 and 4 fairly swiftly after the original 1685 edition of the first violin part was published. He also appears to have provided manuscript copies of this second part and whilst it is not clear at what stage he began producing them, it seems that copies were being circulated which were not sanctioned by Matteis, for a note at the beginning of the printed edition of the second violin book points out that he had printed them after having come across various copies which were poorly copied:

Finding several written Coppies of this Booke scattered up and/ down that are false strancib'd and full of mistakes by falling into the/ hands of persons that doe not understand Musick; to serve my freinds/ I have resolved not only to cause them to be printed, but likewise to see/ them perfected and corrected that they may be more easily play'd.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> This is another one of North's rather archaic terms. See page 11 for an explanation.

<sup>27</sup> The differences between the various versions are mostly restricted to small melodic alterations although there are movements or parts of movements missing in some sources. The Bodleian copy seems to correspond very closely with Walsh's edition and for a while I was convinced that this was the one to which he referred, but in fact the two have many small differences which rule out that possibility.

<sup>28</sup> This comment appears in two forms in several issues and impressions of the Books 3 and 4 *Ayres*.

Such copying can be taken as further evidence of Matteis's popularity as well as a reminder that there was no system of copyright at this date and that composers were more or less completely vulnerable to having their work copied by the unscrupulous.<sup>29</sup> Matteis's provision of a printed version of the second part for his second publication in the mid-1680s could also reflect his increasing awareness of the commercial benefits of providing consort parts to satisfy the evident demand from English amateurs. Although, since it was more expensive to produce an engraved print than a manuscript copy it may also have been the case that Matteis did not print the second part to the first two books because it was commercially speaking the sensible thing to do.<sup>30</sup> From a player's point of view the violin *Ayres* are very much solo pieces but the general trend towards the turn of the century was towards the sonata *a3*, no doubt hugely fuelled by Corelli's Opus 1–3 which were becoming so popular in England.

## 2.6 The printed sources in detail

To ensure uniformity of approach in this task it has been necessary to determine how best to apply principles of bibliographical description to musical scores. The main reference books for the bibliographer remain those by Fredson Bowers and Philip Gaskell.<sup>31</sup> Encompassing a degree of detail far beyond the needs of the present study, these books touch yet only briefly on the specific question of music, although the essential definitions of Edition, Issue Impression and State are thoroughly discussed. Essentially the terms are defined as:<sup>32</sup>

### 1) Edition

All the copies of any book made from basically the same typesetting, including all issues, states and impressions. This allows for small changes (rule of thumb says that if more than half the type has been reset then it is a

---

<sup>29</sup> Matteis also suffered when another, unnamed, person tried to pass off his continuo treatise *Le False Consonanse* as his own. See page 9.

<sup>30</sup> John Playford's, *A General Catalogue of all the Choicest Music Books* (London, 1698), p.427 shows that a printed version of the second violin parts to Books 3 and 4 of the *Ayres* was one pound whereas a 'prick'd' (i.e. handwritten) version was fifteen shillings. A copy of the catalogue can be found in Lbl Bagford Collection, Harleian 5936, No.145b.

<sup>31</sup> F. Bowers, *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (Princeton, 1949) and Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*.

<sup>32</sup> Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, pp.313–16.



new edition) and for copies to be produced over a long period.

**2) Issue**

A set of copies of an edition, which consciously form a separate group within the edition. A separate issue will normally have an altered title-page.

**3) Impression**

All copies of an edition printed at any one time. The high cost of type (generally 2/3 of the costs of setting up a printing room<sup>33</sup>) meant that type was nearly always reset elsewhere as soon as it had been through the presses which often made edition and impression the same thing.

**4) State**

Differences of state can be said to relate to small, often accidental, differences between copies of the same edition. These include mistakes corrected during a print run, addenda and errata, the insertion of advertisements and other small differences.

These definitions are a useful starting point for an examination of Matteis's output yet they clearly apply mainly to typeset editions, whereas Matteis's printed music is all engraved. When the plates had been engraved they were inked and placed within a *forme* in the same way as for a typographical print run. However, unlike typographical *formes*, the plates did not need to be immediately disassembled following printing in order for the type to be used elsewhere. It is not that the plates could not be reused, since it was a fairly easy matter to hammer out the engraving and start again with a blank plate, but given the amount of time it must have taken to engrave each plate this was an unlikely thing to do. In all probability the plates would have been put aside in readiness for the next impression, which practice has clear implications for the bibliographical descriptions outlined above since there was clearly a limit to how much of the music could be altered between impressions. Plates were replaced for various reasons; perhaps a movement was changed sufficiently to require re-engraving and presumably some plates were broken or lost over time. But for small changes it was a fairly straightforward matter to excise small areas and re-engage without the need for a wholly new plate. This factor has led to

---

<sup>33</sup> Gaskell states that, 'The price of a common press was only about one-tenth of the cost of the 1000kg of type that kept it occupied in a busy shop'. *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, p.163.

some refinement of the above bibliographical terms as exemplified in the work of Krummel, who notes that a difference of state can result from a changed or replaced plate.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, in a typographical print-run a new impression may necessitate re-setting the *formes* thus producing, technically, a new edition, whereas with an engraved edition the plates can be reused time and again, even with changes of state as outlined above, resulting in several impressions of the same edition. The evidence suggests that Matteis used the plates for as long as possible and changed things only rarely. Thus a study of his output is mostly concerned with many impressions of few editions which nevertheless appear in various issues and states.

The first edition appeared very soon after Matteis's rise from obscurity. His appearance at various important musical evenings clearly opened up a new avenue of violin playing possibilities to the wealthy amateurs hungry for the latest novelties and it was only a matter of time before this demand resulted in the appearance of published editions.



Plate 2-2: *Sminuita* from *Burlesca* (Book 2, No.6), engraved by King

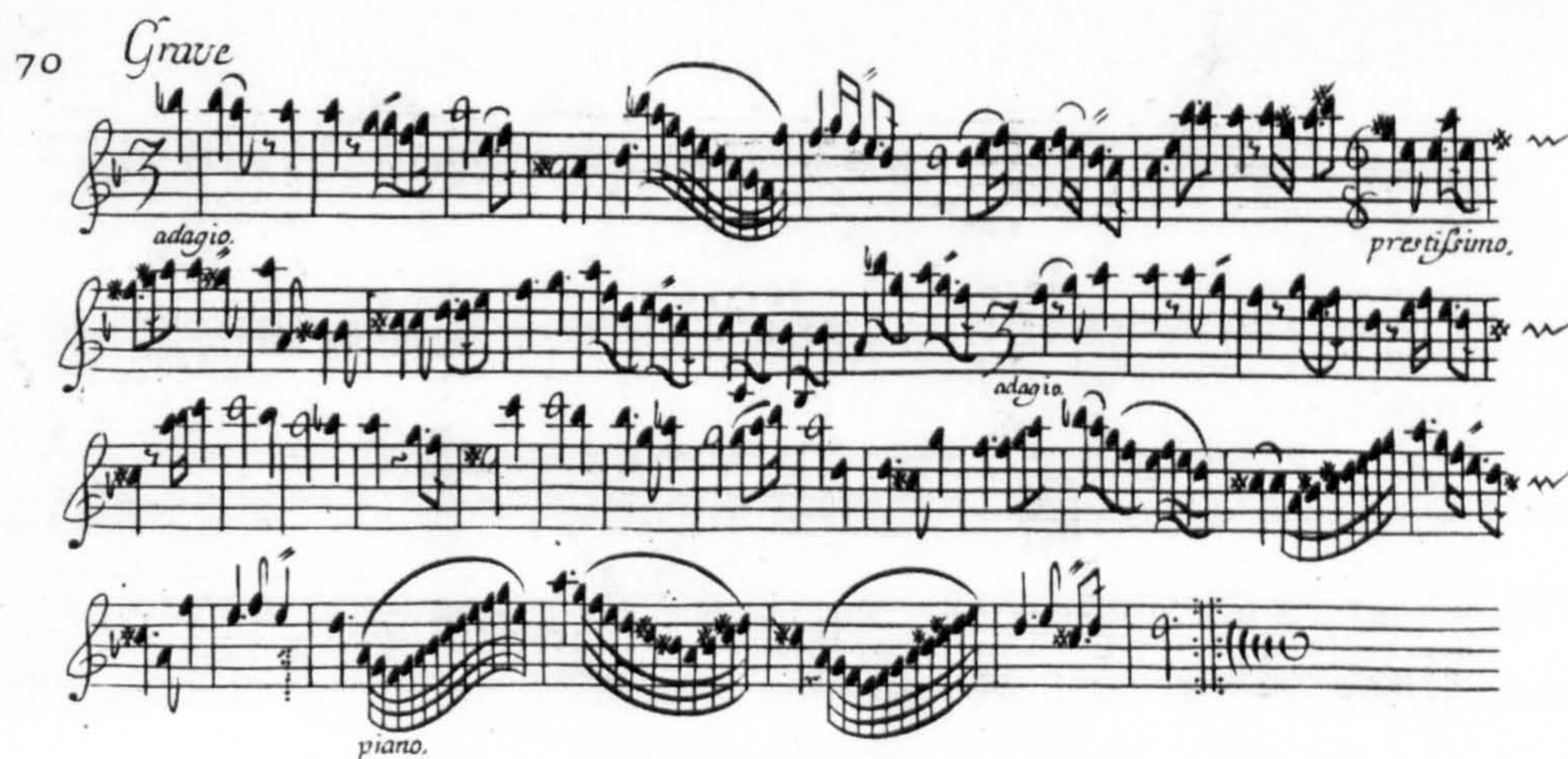


Plate 2-3: *Grave* from *Ayres for the Violin Books 3 and 4* (London 1685) engraved by Greenhill. (Courtesy of the Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY).

<sup>34</sup> D.W. Krummel, *Guide for Dating Early Published Music* (Hackensack, N.J., 1974).

Unfortunately, nothing is known about King and Greenhill, the two engravers mentioned in Matteis's prints. King's engraving style (Plate 2-2) seems to have been based in part on Matteis's own writing style (as will be discussed later in the Section) but, as Plate 2-3 exhibits, Greenhill's work is by far the more skilful and elegantly produced. The beauty of Greenhill's work is even more noticeable when compared with the later engravings of Walsh and Roger which are far less artistically fluent:



Plate 2-4: *Adagio* (No.247), *Airs et Sonates Par Mr. Nicola Matteis* (Roger, Amsterdam, 1702)



Plate 2-5: *Sonata Book 2, No.22* (Walsh's edition, London 1703)

Given the time necessary to produce a whole volume for print it is likely that the project would have been well under way not long after Evelyn's reported attendance at Henry Slingsby's musical evening in November 1674. It would have been time-consuming work to produce such careful engravings and though data is not available from the specific period of Matteis's editions, an idea of the preparation time involved can be gleaned from the record of payments made to Thomas Cross by Wriothsesley, Second Duke of Bedford for the engraving of a set of violin sonatas by Nicolo Cosimi. The payments start in 1701 (month unspecified) for the engraving

and continue in March, April and July 1702 for the actual printing. The sonatas were not advertised until 5 November 1702 and a further advertisement on 1 December confirmed the publication, giving a time of at least one year and possibly nearer two from the start of the payments to the sale of the finished products.<sup>35</sup> Possibly the engraving started even earlier than the date of the first payments which gives a potentially even longer time. By 1700 engraving was more common than it had been in 1676 and it is possible that Cross was a faster worker than King. Nevertheless the following advertisement from the *London Gazette* of December 11<sup>th</sup> 1676 would seem to suggest that work had started on the edition in early 1675 if not before:

The famous and long expected Musicks of Two Parts, by Nicola Matteis are now published... cut at the Desire and Charge of certain Well-wishers to the Work. J. Carr, T. Fisher, and the Author, at an Apothecaries over against Exeter street in Catherine street: Where such as desire to learn Composition, or to play upon the Violin, may be instructed accordingly.<sup>36</sup>

Interestingly, this notice tells us that Matteis was already teaching both violin and composition. On a practical level this is only to be expected given his failure to attain a court appointment but the teaching of composition, taken alongside the publication of *The False Consonances of Musick* some years later with its fairly comprehensive discussion of harmony and accompaniment, suggests that Matteis had been well grounded in theoretical matters. The wording of the advertisement also suggests that Matteis had not paid for this edition himself. The evidence, discussed in Section One, that Bridgman, Waldegrave and L'Estrange had been so keen to expose Matteis to a wider public, may suggest that it was also these men, perhaps alongside other eminent gentlemen and amateur musicians, who paid for this edition to be produced. This almost seems to be what Matteis is implying in the wording of this edition's 'To the Reader':

To the Reader | At the Instance of some Particular Persons, and for the Service  
of | the Lovers of Musique, I have been prevailed upon to Publish These |  
Compositions (such as they are) which I hope my Noble Friends | will accept of  
in part of Acknowledgement, and the rest of the World | not repent of upon  
Perusal. | Nichola Matteis

At the same time the tone of this address conforms more to the usual standards of

---

<sup>35</sup> Tilmouth, 'A Note on the Cost of Music Printing in London in 1702', pp.1 and 2.

<sup>36</sup> M. Tilmouth 'A Calendar of References to Music in Newspapers Published in London and the Provinces 1660–1719' *Royal Musicological Association Research Chronicle* 1, (1961), p.3.

obsequiousness found in dedications than one might have expected from a man who would not allow people to whisper when he played. This is no doubt the Matteis who was well aware on which side his bread was buttered, and who was doing the buttering.

There are six surviving copies of this first edition, in the following locations:

- 1) **Lbl Hirsch M1425** This version would appear to be one of the earlier versions despite its date as 1679 in pen on the title-page. This is because both numbers 6 and 7 in Book 1 (the treble and bass respectively of the *Sarabanda Amorosa*) have the misspelling *abagio* which was corrected in subsequent impressions.
- 2) **US-NYp Mus. Res. \*MYK (No. 1)** I have been unable to view this source though I have ascertained that it is in fair condition, with no annotations and seems to concord with Lbl Hirsch M1425.
- 3) **HAdolmetsch.** Almost certainly the same version as Lbl Hirsch M1425 but in a poorer state. Certain pages are missing and it has clearly been rebound at some stage.
- 4) **Och Mus. 939** This version has also been rebound at some stage with the inclusion of several pages in manuscript to replace pages which may have gone missing as the original binding deteriorated. It is clear from the many concordant details that whoever copied the pages was using a printed copy as an exemplar. Watermarks in the inserted leaves are different from any found in any other versions of Matteis's work, confirming that these copy pages are from a later date.
- 5) **Ob Mus. Sch. G.629** This copy is wrongly described in *RISM* as being a copy of the Italian version. The binding is not intact and many pages have been lost (the first page is now 75). At some stage during his ownership of this volume, Thomas Taphouse inserted a reproduction of the title-page from his own copy of the Italian issue, thus precipitating the misunderstanding as to its issue.<sup>37</sup> Further circumstantial evidence that the English version was

---

<sup>37</sup> This Italian copy now belongs to the Washington Library of Congress, along with versions of all Matteis's other prints. These copies bear the Taphouse library plate and records show that they were bought in an auction at which Taphouse's large musical collection was dispersed. The sale was at

produced by Matteis's supporters comes in the inscription of the cover of the Bodleian copy which bears the name of Francis North, Roger North's elder brother who may well have been a supporter of Matteis in his early years of fame.

- 6) **Lbl K 1 f 10 (1)** A complete volume, rebound at some stage and in excellent condition. The correct spelling of *adagio* in Book 1 number 7 shows that this was not one of the first books issued.

The same title-page occurs in each of the above examples.<sup>38</sup>

Ayrs | For the violin | Preludes Allmands Sarabands Courantes | Giges  
Divisions and double Compositions | fitted to all hands and Capacities | by |  
NICOLA MATTEIS | The First Part

Other Ayrs | Preludes Allmands Sarabands &C | with full stops for the Violin |  
By | NICOLA MATTEIS | The Second Part

There is also an Italian version of this work in which the musical plates are nearly all exactly the same as in the English version. Occasional small changes to the music, a new title-page and some pages of prefatory material inserted before the music qualify this as a separate issue from the English version:

ARIE DIVERSE PER IL VIOLINO; | Preludy Alemande Sarabande Correnti |  
Gighe Fantasie sminuite ed altre Toccate a due Corde | COMPOSITIONE DI |  
NICOLA MATTEIS | Napolitano | LIBRO PRIMO

ALTRE ARIE | Preludy Alemande Sarabande &c. | Piu difficile e Studiose  
per il Violino, | COMPOSITIONE DI | NICOLA MATTEIS | Napolitano |  
LIBRO SECONDO

It is not immediately obvious whether this separate issue of the first edition pre- or post-dates the English issue or is more or less contemporaneous. Up until now, catalogues have all given it a much later date because of a misunderstanding of the details of a coronet figure on the title-page. In all extant printed copies of Books 3 and 4 this coronet appears on the title-page and includes the date of publication.<sup>39</sup> This date always appears as the full year — 1685 or 1687 — but in the early Italian

---

Sotheby's on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> July 1905 according to A. Hyatt King, *Some British Collectors of Music c.1600-1960*, (Cambridge, 1963), p.141.

<sup>38</sup> The exception is Ob Mus. Sch. G.629 which has an inserted title-page (as mentioned above). The wording is the same but the title-page to Book 1 is handwritten.

<sup>39</sup> In fact, this date is of only limited use since it was usually left unchanged from impression to impression. It was even left unaltered for the first revision of the work in 1687. This matter will be discussed shortly.

issue there are only what appear to be two 8s, which in the past has led to an assumption that the publication dates from 1688:



**Plate 2-6: Coronet appearing on the title-page of the Italian issue of Books 1 and 2**

It is far from clear, though, why Matteis would have wished to re-issue his old material at this stage even if he were able to lay his hands on the original plates after such a long time. Could it not be that the figures in the coronet are not 8s at all but simply ornamental shapes which just happen to resemble the number 8 in the same way that the other marks therein resemble inverted commas? Perhaps the idea of including the date only began with Books 3 and 4. Everything else about the issue supports the conclusion that it dates from a much earlier period; for example the wording of the various prefaces therein.



Al lettore | E Cosa honoreuole, e giusta d'uniformarsi a l'Umore di quelle  
 Persone con | chi si viue, essendo io vissuto alcuni anni sotto il Cielo  
 Settentrionale, ho cercata in- | contrare il genio de gl'abitatori di quello, nel  
 stile musicale, benche no tutto affatto, per | non distaccarmi di molto dalla  
 Scuola Italiana. Ecco dunque dono alle stampe alcune | composizioni  
 consistenti in Aria, e queste anco brevi, senza che alcuno accio me ne dasse |  
 impulso: Ne tam poco per mendicare utile, ne protezione de Grandi, come  
 ordinariamente | s'accostuma, ma solo per compiacere in qualche parte  
 l'affettione e curiosita de virtuosi, | se ci trovi qualche cosa di tuo gusto restaro  
 in un tempo stesso appagato, e pagato delle | mie fatiche, e se cio non  
 succedesse, haverai la bonta di comporne delle migliori. Così mi | si porgera  
 l'occasione di studiare, con piu profitto, per Scambievolmente apparecchiarmi |  
 di servirti a miglior occasione ed opportunita. | Nicola Matteis:

[To the Reader/ It is an honourable and proper thing to conform to the customs of those persons with whom one lives. Seeing that for some years I have lived under the northern skies I have sought to adopt the musical tastes of the inhabitants of this country without distancing myself too far from the Italian style. Here therefore are printed some compositions consisting of Arias, quite short ones, without anyone's assistance: not, as is usually the case, to seek an advantage or the protection of the great but only to appeal in some way to the affection and interest of the worthy. If you find something here to your taste then I shall be both contented and rewarded for my pains, and if I have not succeeded then have the goodness to write something better. In this way I will



have the opportunity to study it to greater advantage, so as to be ready to serve you on a more excellent occasion and opportunity. Nicola Matteis].

The comments Matteis makes about trying to conform to the English style read very much as his way of laying out his wares and introducing (as well as ingratiating perhaps?) himself to a wider public. Such explanations would clearly only be truly necessary in the relatively short period between his very first publication and his rise to public fame. There is also a strong suggestion here that Matteis was trying to temper his natural arrogance but he seemingly could not resist the temptation to lay down a challenge to anyone who dared to find his music unrewarding. Such confrontational rhetoric seems to suggest that Matteis had grown a little in stature and confidence, perhaps as a result of the successful publication of the first, English issue. He also makes the point in this preface that he has not produced this music to gain protection from a wealthy person — possibly a somewhat tongue-in-cheek statement when clearly he had received a considerable amount of grooming, encouragement and help from his three protectors, amongst others. He was perhaps forgetting rather quickly what they had done for him.

The ‘virtuosi’ for whom Matteis declared he was producing these short *Ayres* were the wealthy dilettantes for whom such a collection would be the must-have publication of the moment. That the technical difficulty of the writing was toned down in later publications would seem to confirm that he was aiming rather high with some of the writing in Books 1 and 2, though at this stage his music was being eagerly acquired by those whose enthusiasm and optimism had perhaps temporarily overshadowed their self-awareness. The inherent technical difficulties would no doubt have provoked many to enrol in Matteis’s violin and composition classes, which were advertised along with the first edition of the *Ayres*. Perhaps significantly, compared to the English issue the Italian does seem to have an added didacticism, such as the two new prefatory sections in the first of which he explains the musical signs that he uses in the *Ayres*:

Dichiaratione de i Segni che in detto Libro sono ~ Questo segno // vuol dire Trillo | Questo altro  si scioula in una Arcata tutte quelle note che il detto archetto lega | Questo **P.** e **F.** vuol dire Piano e forte | Questo ce [backward-facing slashed C] alta riversa significa prestissimo cioe piu veloce che per medium | Questo altro segno  Arcata dolce, e lunga | Questa stella \* significa repetitione~ |



[Explanation of the signs that are found in this book. This sign // signifies a trill. This other  means you play all the notes under it in one bow. This P and F signify Piano and Forte. This (backward-facing slashed C) signifies prestissimo, that is to say faster than normal. This other sign  bow long and sweetly. This star \* signifies a repeat.]

There is then a short paragraph explaining that he uses a sharp instead of a natural because naturals are not used in Italy.<sup>40</sup> Then, displaying his mastery of the commercial opportunity, he adds:

In questo Libro non mi son prevaluto del bequatro cioe questo Segno [natural sign] perche li Signri | Oltramontani non l'usano, ma si bene si servono del diesis in cambio di detta cifra. | Io sapere che a queste compositione ci e il Secondo soprano, et anco il Tenore dove me | lo servo a presso di me a mano scritto; per poterne a l'occasione Servirne quelli Signori, che | desiderano goder maggiore Armonia, cioe che vogliono havere il concerto.

[In this book I have not used a natural, that is this sign [natural] because people over the mountains [i.e. Italians] do not use it, but use instead the sharp instead of this sign. There are, to these compositions, a second soprano part as well as a tenor part where I use one, in manuscript which will allow me to serve those gentlemen who desire a greater harmony, that is who wish to have a fuller consort.]

After this he provides a basic index of the *Ayres*. In later issues he used this opportunity to divide the *Ayres* depending on their technical demands but at this stage the index seems to be more or less random.

The Italian issue, like the English, survives in six copies:

- 1) **US-Wc M1490.M432 Case** This appears to be the “best copy” since it contains all the preliminary pages and a full set of collation signatures. Moreover, the *adagios* of numbers 6 and 7 have been corrected.
- 2) **Lbl K.1.f.12** This is nearly as complete as the Washington source and is only lacking one signature — K2. Otherwise the two are identical, both having the corrected *adagio* in numbers 6 and 7 of Book 1
- 3) **Lcm II.c.26 F21** This version again seems to have nearly all the signatures except C5. On this page the end flourish is different as is the engraving style, suggesting that this had a page replaced or provided from another version.

---

<sup>40</sup> The word ‘oltramontano’ means literally over the mountains. Proctor, in his dissertation, took this to refer to England, though it was clearly speaking from an English viewpoint and not an Italian and as such refers to Italy. A brief look at any seventeenth-century Italian score will confirm that the Italians did indeed use sharps but not naturals.

- 4) **US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 1)** This version has either lost some pages or was perhaps a later copy made from leaves that were left over. There is a near complete set of signatures but no *Al Lettore* or *Dichiaratione*. The *adagio* of numbers 6 and 7 have been corrected from the earlier *abagio* which shows that this is not the original plate and is therefore not the original impression. The crown in the title-page is shaded which is not the case in other versions
- 5) **F-Pn Rés 796/7** This copy has not been viewed.
- 6) **I Fc B.2557 (a and b)** This copy has not been viewed.<sup>41</sup>

As noted above the musical plates are almost identical in each of the two versions but certain differences would appear to go along with the idea of a later issue date for the Italian version. For example, in what is probably the earliest extant copy of the English version (Lbl Hirsch M1425), both the treble (number 6) and the bass (number 7) of the *Sarabanda Amorosa* in Book 1 have the marking *abagio*. Then in Lbl K.1.f.10 (1) number 7 appears as *adagio*. If you look very closely at the paper it is possible to see a very faint mark where the ascender of the letter 'b' has been excised from the plate prior to being corrected. By the time the Italian versions were produced, the *abagio* of number 6 had also been corrected to *adagio* and appears thus in all extant versions. Other spelling mistakes appear not to have been corrected between versions, such as the misspelling of *L'Inconstanza* as *L'Incostanza* in all treble parts, or occasional instances of *proludio* instead of *preludio* and *inuitatione* instead of *imitatione*.<sup>42</sup> Such spellings seem to have little importance either in differentiating editions or in dating them and will not be considered in any further detail here.

The only difference in musical terms between the English and Italian issues occurs in number 24 of Book 1, *Proludio (sic) in fantasia*, where the Italian version has two fewer bars of semiquavers. It seems slightly perverse to shorten rather than develop a movement in a subsequent issue, a change made all the more difficult to understand since it appears to have no strong musical implications. Objectively, the clefs in the Italian version of the *Proludio* are angled differently both to those in the English one as well as to those elsewhere in the same version. There is also a faint suggestion of

---

<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately I have been unable to obtain any information by letter, fax or email from the Biblioteca Cherubini in Florence.

<sup>42</sup> Sometimes a tilde appears above an incorrect word in both manuscripts and prints, presumably to show that the engraver/copyist had noticed the mistake.

haziness about the notes in the Italian version which is reminiscent of the lack of clarity of the word *adagio* in those versions where it had been corrected. These small points all seem to go along with the likelihood of the Italian version being later.

The other difference between English and Italian issues concerns what is almost certainly the most confusing aspect of the prints, which is the matter of collating signatures — the letter/number combinations which were placed at the bottom of various pages to facilitate collation of the printed sheets. In a typographic print-run the signatures would have been added to the *forme* just underneath the block holding the print, and would have been re-used along with the rest of the type after printing. This could also happen in an engraved print-run if the signatures were added separately to the *forme* but in the case of the Matteis prints, the signatures have actually been engraved on the plates though it is not possible to tell with absolute confidence whether the signatures were engraved on the original plate or perhaps were added in a second impression, having been engraved on an otherwise blank plate.<sup>43</sup> In theory the presence or absence of signatures should be very useful in helping to determine the chronological order of the prints, for it would usually follow that those copies which had fewer signatures would be later in date. The logic of this, at least as regards non-engraved signatures, is that over time signatures may have been lost or merely dispensed with as they were either considered surplus to requirements or perhaps needed for other settings in the print shop. However, the situation is more complex where the signatures are engraved since they can neither be removed nor lost. It nevertheless seems to follow that the later Matteis prints do have fewer signatures but there are also various anomalies. Principal among these is that the Italian issue has a full set of signatures whereas the earlier (English) issue has none. It would seem to be illogical when the English issue had been printed, collated and distributed without recourse to signatures that someone went to the trouble of engraving or otherwise adding them for the next issue. Also confusing is why there are sometimes two copies of the same edition and issue, each having a signature that is lacking in the other. This is especially odd considering that many of the copies have only a handful of signatures in the whole volume. The other anomaly concerns the bass figures in number 6 of Book 3. At a certain stage, Matteis obviously decided

---

<sup>43</sup> The signatures do not take a standard form and vary between lower and upper case, sometimes with a full stop between letter and number and sometimes not. Small variations occur even within the same copy.

to add some extra figures which were written in pen in one of the copies on a page which has an 'a4' collation signature.<sup>44</sup> Later impressions of this page have the figures engraved and yet there are versions with the figures and with the signature, with the figures and without the signature and without the figures yet with the signature.

It appears to me that the only logical explanations are as follows:

- 1) The same musical plates were used in both the English and Italian issues of Books 1 and 2 but the printer of the earlier (English) issue seems to have decided that he could collate the pages without recourse to signatures, perhaps by using the engraved page numbers instead. This may have turned out to be more difficult than he thought, precipitating the use of signatures when he came to prepare the Italian issue. Alternatively, perhaps the plates were passed on to a different printer who decided to add signatures.
- 2) The signatures in the surviving copies of the Italian issue are erratic, later impressions generally having fewer signatures, as is the case with the issues of Books 3 and 4. This gradual erosion of engraved signatures over time can only be due to:
  - i) The signature having been excised from the plate
  - ii) The plate having been re-engraved either because the original was lost or damaged or because the music has been changed necessitating a new plate.
  - iii) The signatures being added erratically at a second impression.

There seems to be no logical pattern as to which signatures continue to be used. The following examples are from two ostensibly identical versions of the second violin part to Books 3 and 4. As can be seen, each copy has at least one signature that does not appear in the other:

**Lbl K 1 f 11 (2):** [Bk3] 8.9-A2, 60.61-C, 106.107-D2 (on verso), [Bk4] 29-F, 36.37-F2, 57-G, 61-G2

**CDu MC 109:** [Bk3] 8.9-A2, 106.107-D2 (on verso), [Bk4] 8.9-E2, 29-F, 36.37-F2, 57-G.

Aside from these inconsistencies, it is hard to see how useful it can be to have a

---

<sup>44</sup> The copy inscribed to the 'Le Prince Electoral Palatin' which is now in private hands.

matter of only five or so signatures in an entire volume since this could hardly have made any difference to the collator. I would therefore suggest that the most likely explanation is that the signatures were not engraved on the same plate as the music. In addition to this it is possible that on certain occasions there would have been a larger print run of certain pages resulting in a surplus of particular sheets. When the next impression was produced it is possible that some of the older pages from the previous impression could have been collated into the newer version. Presumably, it would have been the later impressions that were produced without signatures at all and the odd pages that do have them could have been those that were used from previous print-runs. This would explain both why there is a mixture of pages with and without signatures and why their disposition throughout the copies seems to be so random. Certainly there are so many variations amongst the impressions, and the variations are seemingly so arbitrary, that signature evidence alone cannot confirm the chronological progression, although the number of signatures does seem to decrease with time. Taken in conjunction with musical and watermark evidence this information becomes more useful.

After the long wait the *Ayres* seem to have sold well, to judge from the following announcement:

Feb 15 1677

*London Gazette*

'Ayrs for the Violin' by N. Matteis. The first impression 'almost all sold; and the remainder of them will be disposed of at 12s. a Book; or the first Part only, at 7s.' Author, and J. Carr.<sup>45</sup>

It would be useful to know how many copies of the work comprised the first impression but such details were rarely recorded. The information which Krummel collected on the subject suggests that first impressions might usually have comprised from twenty-five to two hundred copies with the average more likely to be around one hundred.<sup>46</sup> This information, whilst useful, mostly applies to publications from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and makes no allowance for the stature of Matteis at the time, which may well have prompted a larger than average print run.

---

<sup>45</sup> Tilmouth, 'A calendar of references to music in Newspapers published in London and the provinces 1660–1719', p.3.

<sup>46</sup> Krummel, *Guide for Dating Early Published Music*, p.38. The most relevant example he gives here is for Thomas Cross's first impression of Cosimi's *Sonate da Camera* Op.1 in 1702 which had a run of 200 copies.

The above announcement, presumably referring to the English version, also shows the disparity between the price of the unbound versions (which, as was common practice at the time, were clearly being sold), and the presentational bound volumes which Matteis produced for his more special pupils and for which North suggests he charged '3, 4 and 5 ginnys'.<sup>47</sup> This, however, would seem to contradict the evidence of a catalogue of music for sale at Playford's shop which offered:

Seignior Nichola Matteis 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>d</sup> Books, containing choice Ayres, Solo's and Grounds	Price bound 1.00.00
Seignior Nichola's 3 <sup>d</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Books,	1.00.00 <sup>48</sup>

The price difference may be explained by the type of binding provided though without firm information it is not possible to compare. Assuming North's recollections were correct, from a musicological perspective the high price of the binding would appear to have been justified judging by the proportionately high survival rate of these earliest editions. Perhaps the price of the edition was on the high side as a reflection of the publisher's anticipation of a good reception for the work.<sup>49</sup>

Another problem with dating subsequent impressions and issues of Matteis's *Ayres* is that changes were made only slowly between impressions. For example, the misspelt *adagio*, which originally appeared in numbers 6 and 7 of Book 1, was only corrected in the later impressions of the English issue. Meanwhile, other potentially more revealing details such as the date on the title-page went unchanged for long periods of time. The issues of Books 1 and 2 were undated anywhere but for Books 3 and 4 Matteis incorporated the date in the coronet at the top of the title-page. However, these books were re-issued with a second violin part in 1687 and yet continued to incorporate the title-page from 1685 for some time. On a practical level any change to the printed text was only achievable by excising the existing engraving, though the available evidence would appear to suggest that this was not a major operation and could be quite quickly accomplished which makes it all the more surprising that this

---

<sup>47</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356.

<sup>48</sup> Playford, *A General Catalogue of all the Choicest Music Books*, p.427.

<sup>49</sup> Later publications such as the Nicolo Cosimi violin sonatas sold for a guinea (at that time £1 1s 6d.) which was nearly twice the price of the (albeit earlier) Matteis edition (which also had more pages). However, Walsh's 1700 edition of Corelli's Op.5 sold at 8 shillings a copy suggesting that the Cosimi was not necessarily typically priced. See Tilmouth, 'A Note on the Cost of Music Printing in London in 1702', p.3.

was not done at the date of re-issue.<sup>50</sup>

The Italian and English versions of the first two books remained the only versions of these *Ayres* until Walsh published his own version in 1703, although such was Matteis's popularity that it seems likely that various impressions continued to be made of these throughout the intervening period. The fact that he did not publish Books 3 and 4 until 1685 should not be taken as laziness since the wealth he was amassing during this period is witness to his enterprise; his playing, publishing and teaching, combined with preparation and overseeing of manuscript production gainsaying any accusations of lassitude on his part. There was evidently enough demand for Books 1 and 2 for him not to feel the need to publish any new works for quite some time and the watermark evidence, which shows correlations with other sources dated into the 1680s, would seem to confirm that Books 1 and 2 were being produced for several years after the initial 1676 issue. Walsh would presumably not have committed himself to the not inconsiderable task of engraving all the 190 *Ayres* of Books 1 and 2 unless he was fairly sure that demand still existed for the works. His 'unique selling proposition' appears to have been that he had managed to acquire a manuscript copy of the second violin part which had never been published by Matteis, thus enabling him to present the books as a complete set. This was presumably an astute move considering that the demand for Italian sonatas *a2* and *a3* had soared over the period during which Matteis had been in England. Either Walsh had not managed to get hold of one of the tenor parts Matteis mentioned in his Italian preface, or he did not consider this to be as commercially desirable.<sup>51</sup>

Unfortunately the poor condition of Ob Mus. Sch. G.629, HAdolmetsch and Och Mus. 939 makes it very difficult to decide a full chronological order for the extant copies of Books 1 and 2. However, there is still strong evidence to show that the English issue predates the Italian issue, even if the reasons for the co-existence of the two versions are harder to ascertain. If one ignores the copies whose condition makes it impossible to date accurately and those that have not yet been viewed, the remaining sources are most likely to have appeared in this order:<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> Gamble, *Music Engraving and Printing*, pp.150–53.

<sup>51</sup> The rediscovery of one of the tenor parts is therefore all the more exciting and some suites from four-part version of Books 1 and 2 of the *Ayres* will appear in Appendix 4.

<sup>52</sup> F-Pn Rés 796/7 and I-Fc B.2557 (a and b) have yet to be examined and are omitted from the table.

Shelf-mark	Signatures	Suggested issue
Lbl Hirsch M1425	None	Dated 1679 in flyleaf. Has misspelt <i>adagio</i> in 6 and 7. English 1 <sup>st</sup> edition — earliest impression?
K.1.f.10 (1)	None	Has been corrected in 7 so subsequent impression
US-Wc M1490.M432 Case	Complete set of collating signatures	Most complete. Italian first edition?
Lbl K.1.f.12	Missing one signature only	<i>Abagio</i> has been corrected to <i>adagio</i> by now, so later.
Lcm II.c.26 F21	Missing one signature only	Ditto
US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 1)	Missing one signature	Ditto but no prefatory pages

**Table 2-3: Suggested order for Books 1 and 2**

There was no new published work until the first edition of the Books 3 and 4 appeared in 1685. The intervening years which had done so much to improve Matteis's bank balance had clearly also liberated some of the old arrogance for which he had at one time been so criticised. The *To the Reader* section of this new publication confirms that Matteis was no longer particularly concerned with what people thought of him, although he does make it clear that his efforts are very much aimed at the better sort of people:

It is not my business to entertain the World with ye Philosophy of ~ | Number & Tone; But rather to furnish Matter for Practice & Diversion~ Not doubting but that ye Pieces which I have here Exhibited to ye Publique will | stand all Tests of ye Severest Criticks, as well as ye Lovers and Masters of Musique | It is for the Satisfaction of my Friends and out of a Respect to ye more Curious | and Judicious Patrons of this Noble Science, that I have Exposed these ~ | Ayres to the Light: And when I shall have either Served or Pleas'd the ~ | better sort of Men, I have my End and for ye Rest the Care is taken | Nicola Matteis.

Broadly speaking this edition exists in three separate issues with different title-pages. The earliest bears the following title-page:

AYRES FOR THE VIOLIN | TO WIT | Preludes, Fuges, Allmands, Sarabands, Courants, Giges, Fancies, Divisions, | And likewise other Passages, | Introductions, and Fuges, for Single | and Double Stops; with Divisions, Somewhat more Artificial, For | the Emproving of the Hand upon the Basse Viol or Harpsechord. | THE THIRD AND FOURTH PARTS | COMPOSED



BY | NICOLA MATTEIS

OTHER AYRES AND PIECES | For the Violin Bass-Viol and Harpsechord  
Somewhat more~ | Difficult and Artificial then the former: Composed for the~ |  
Practice and Service of greater Masters upon those Instruments | By | NICOLA  
MATTEIS | THE FOURTH PART

This edition exists in the following locations:

- 1) **US-R Vault M1490. M435** I have not viewed this copy but have been given various details by David Coppen, the music librarian of the Sibley library. From what he has told me I have ascertained that musically this concords with the earlier versions of Books 3 and 4, with the earlier version of the *Motivo*, Book 4 No.44 for example. The signature evidence is inconclusive.
- 2) **Ob Mus. Sch. G.630** There is a suspicion that the title page and two of the other prefatory pages are not original. The signature evidence would suggest it is slightly later than K.1.f.10 (2) but it is certainly one of the 1685 versions since it lacks the extra *Ayres* and the two *Motivo* movements are of the first type.
- 3) **Lbl K.1.f.10 (2)** An early issue.
- 4) **Lbl Hirsch III 397** Has even more collation signatures than the other British library source and lacks that copy's tables of hard and easy *Ayres*.
- 5) **Lcm II.c.26 F22** A near-complete set of signatures. All the other details concord with the early edition — perhaps this is one of the earliest of those?
- 6) **US-NYp Mus. Res. \*MYK (No. 2)** This source has not been seen.
- 7) **Private collection**<sup>53</sup> The most important distinguishing feature of this source is that there are some handwritten annotations in the form of extra bass figures in Book 3, No.6. These figures were subsequently engraved, thus giving this the status of a mid-point source (see pages 99–100).

For the new edition Matteis decided to update the list of explanations of the performance instructions which had originally appeared in the Italian issue of Books 1 and 2. Given the technical sophistication of much of his music this would have been a perfect opportunity to give some fairly detailed performance suggestions,

---

<sup>53</sup> This copy has only recently come to light although it is known to have existed in the collection of Taphouse. When his collection was sold in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century most of Taphouse's Matteis prints went to the Washington Library of Congress but this copy was sold into private hands and has only just resurfaced. I am very grateful to Herr Dr. Schneider of Tutzing for providing me with information about this copy.

though instead he seems to have concentrated on the more basic elements:

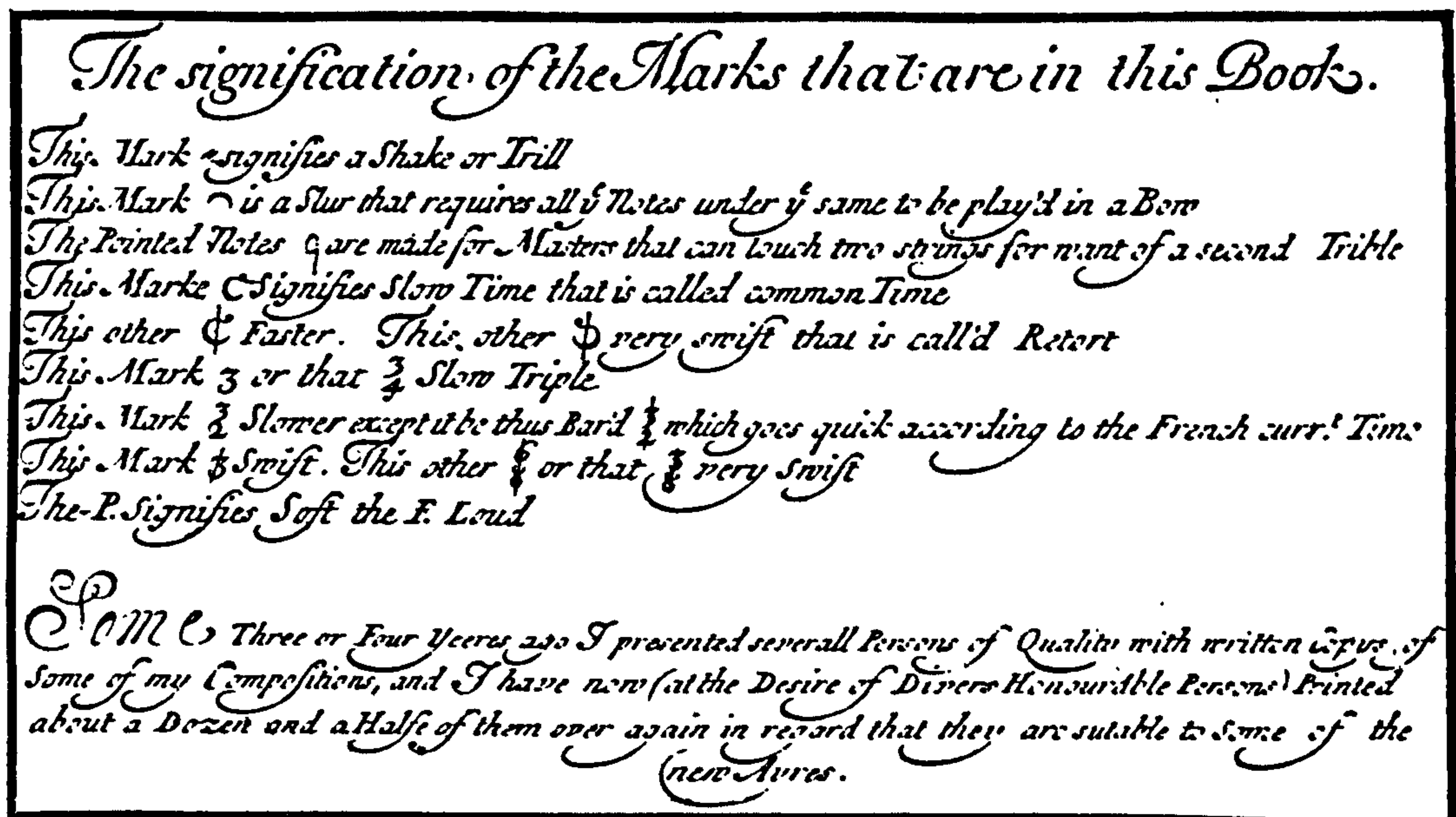


Plate 2-7: 'Signification' page from Books 3 and 4

His concentration on notated instructions as they appear in his music, at the expense of insights into the unnotatable nuances of performance technique is obviously frustrating, though fairly common for the period.<sup>54</sup>

In 1687 Matteis chose to publish a second violin part to the Books 3 and 4 Ayres:

THE SECOND TREBLE | of | The Third and Fourth Parts, Preluds | Fuges  
 Allemands ect. with some~ | Additions and new Tunes | By | NICOLA  
 MATTEIS | and  
 THE SECOND TREBLE | of | The Fourth Part | some Peeces Harder then ye  
 former | By | NICOLA MATTEIS | NAPOLITANO

Extant versions of this edition can be found in:

- 1) Lbl K.1.f.11 (2) An inserted leaf points to this being one of the later copies of the 1687 issue.
- 2) Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a This copy lacks the replaced version of Book 4, No.8 and as such is probably slightly earlier than Lbl K.1.f.11 (2).
- 3) US-Wc M1490.M43 Case Music 4078 (Vol. 4)<sup>55</sup> The title-page of Book 3 is something of a variant but aside from this, the source shows signs of being similar to Lbl Hirsch 1632a.
- 4) CDu MC109 More signatures than the Washington source and a different

<sup>54</sup> The section appended to this prefatory page beginning 'Some three or four yeeres...' is significant in that it refers to the Book 5 Ayres that had been re-worked for this edition (see Appendix 3).

<sup>55</sup> The title-page to Book 3 of this source reads, THE SECOND TREBLE | of | The Third Part | some Peeces Harder then ye former | BY | NICOLA MATTEIS | NAPOLITANO

title-page but otherwise very similar.

At the same time as producing the second violin part, Matteis took the opportunity to produce a new issue of the first violin part to these books. There are two versions of the title-page to this new issue and it is not immediately clear which one is the earliest since there is at least one extant version of each type bearing a 1685 date. It is clear that whatever date is shown in the coronet, both re-engraved title-pages cannot have been produced earlier than 1687 because of the mention of the second violin part.

AYRES FOR THE VIOLIN | TO WIT | Preludes, Fuges, Allmands, Sarabands,  
Courants, Giges, Fancies, Divisions, | And likewise other Passages, Introductions,  
and Fuges for Single | and Double Stops; with Divisions, Somewhat more Artificial,  
For | the Emproving of the Hand, upon the Basse Viol or Harpsechord. | THE THIRD  
AND FOURTH PARTS | COMPOSED BY | NICOLA MATTEIS

OTHER *AYRES* AND PIECES | For the Violin Bass Viol and Harpsechord Somewhat  
more~ | Difficult and Artificial then the former: Composed for the~ | Practice and  
Service of greater Masters upon those Instruments~ | BY | NICOLA MATTEIS | THE  
FOURTH PART | The Book enlarged and perfected with a Second Treble

They exist at:

- 1) **US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3)** The reasonably full set of signatures and the wording of the title-page (plus a 1685 date) suggest this is an early version of the 1687 issue.
- 2) **D-Bs Mus.ant.pract. M 397** This source has been rebound and in the process has lost some of the prefatory pages. However, it would appear to concord with volume 3 of the Washington sources.

The other version of the title-page reads:

AYRES FOR THE VIOLIN | Att Two or Three and Four Parts | Preludes Allemands  
Sarabands Fuges single & Double Stopps | w.th several passages to emprove the  
hand | A Concert of three Trumpetts. | w.th an addition of some new tunes for Violins  
& Flutes | att the end of this Book never before publish'd | with a Second Treble | By |  
NICOLA MATTEIS | of Naples

OTHER *AYRES* AND PIECES | For the Violin Bass Viol and Harpsechord Somewhat  
more~ | Difficult and Artificial then the former: Composed for the~ | Practice and  
Service of greater Masters upon those Instruments~ | BY | NICOLA MATTEIS | THE  
FOURTH PART | The Book enlarged and perfected with a Second Treble

- 1) **Lbl Hirsch IV 1632** Still dated 1685 despite the replaced title-page.
- 2) **US-Cn Case VM 286 M43a** Dated 1687.

3) F-Pn Rés. Vmf 28 (1 and 2) Dated 1687 but no information on signatures or watermarks has been collected.

It will be noted that in each case, the wording of the title-page to Book 4 is the same. With the publication of this version, Matteis printed another prefatory page:

Being now to Publish the Second Treble of this Book~| I have thought fit for  
ye sake of ye Curious to send abroad some new| Compositions along with it,  
here is a Concert for Three Trumpets| w.ch may be Playd wth either Violins or  
Flutes, and an addition of| Other Ayres att the end of ye Book for the more  
ample Divertise-|ment of the Generous Lovers of Musick of this Cuntry and for  
ye| Encouragement of this Noble Science. | Nicola Matteis

Perhaps the most logical explanation for these inconsistencies is as follows. When the second treble was first published and it was necessary to re-issue the extended first violin part, the original title page from Book 3 was used and extra engraving added to the title-page for Book 4 to explain the extra *Ayres* (which only appear in Book 4). Subsequently it was decided to engrave a new title-page for Book 3 but the dated coronet (which was possibly added by a prepared punch rather than by free engraving) still bore the date 1685. This mistake was not immediately noticed but when it was, a new date was added to the punch, meaning that subsequent impressions bore the correct date of 1687. This explanation would appear to make sense of the various existing versions, and is also consistent with watermark and musical evidence within the printed sources.

In addition to the differences in the wording between various different title-pages, there are also other, smaller, differences which possibly mark out differences of *state* which occurred between impressions. These comprise such small differences as the appearance of a small triangle in some of the sources (e.g. in US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 4) after Matteis's name) and must also include the inevitable differences in collating signatures.

Given the available evidence regarding collating signatures and other textual or musical considerations, the most likely order of appearance of the various impressions/issues of Books 3 and 4 is as in the following table:<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> As before, certain sources have not yet been consulted and have been left out of this chart. In this instance the sources concerned are F-Pn Rés.Vmf 28 (1 and 2), US-NYp Mus. Res.\*MYK (No.2). and the private copy inscribed to the 'Prince Electoral Palatin'.

Shelf-mark	Signatures	Reasons for placing at this point in the order
Lcm II.c.26 F22	Most	Has most signatures so is possibly the earliest impression.
Lbl Hirsch III 397	Slightly fewer	Identical to Lbl K.1.f.10 and Ob Mus. Sch. G.630 except for lacking 'To the Reader' and having a different signification page. It could be that they went missing and were re-engraved or even that these were the first, were lost and then engraved anew for all later versions. This might explain why there is no 'To the reader'.
Lbl K.1.f.10 (2)	A couple fewer than Lbl Hirsch III 397	The <i>Motivo</i> in Book 4, No.44 is in split 3 with a two bar adagio to end. This is demonstrably the earliest version of this movement.
US-R Vault M1490. M435	Roughly similar to the ones either side in the table.	The <i>Motivo</i> in Book 4, No.44 is in split 3 with a two bar adagio to end. The signatures differ slightly but there is no strong reason for placing it anywhere else.
Ob Mus. Sch. G.630	Fewer than Lbl K.1.f.10	Has the <i>Adagio</i> in Book 4, Nos. 8.9 but it is not marked thus. The <i>Motivo</i> in 44 is in split 3 with a two bar adagio to end. Slightly later than Lbl K.1.f.10?
US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3)	More than in the above issues. Perhaps the plates were re-engraved with signatures, or even entirely re-engraved for some reason with the new issue? This latter possibility does not seem terribly likely given that the plates look identical for the most part save for the differences in signatures.	First version of the 1687 issue (though dated 1685 still). Has the newer form of the <i>Motivo</i> and has a note added to title-page referring to it being 'enlarged and perfected'.
D-Bs Mus.ant.pract. M 397	Slightly fewer though re-binding makes it hard to know.	Seems to be the same as US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3)
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632	Same number of signatures as in US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3) but different ones.	The title-page is different though it is still dated 1685 and there is a mistake where one plate has been put in upside down. There is an

		extra ‘To the Reader’ beginning ‘Being now to publish the second treble part...’ It is not clear whether this is an earlier or later title-page nor why they would reprint the title-page and not change the date.
US-Cn Case VM 286 M43a Books 3&4	Same as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632 except for two instances.	Musically the same as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a. Shares prefatory material and music with Lbl Hirsch IV 1632 but has a 1687 date in the coronet despite the rest of the title-page being the same as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a	This one has the signature E2 on the page with the extra <i>Adagio</i> section. Apart from that it is the same as Lbl K.1.f.11 (2).	This is the same as Lbl K.1.f.11 (2) except in binding and the fact that this source has a longer <i>Adagio</i> in Book 4 No. 8/9. There is no way to tell which is earlier.
CDu MC109	Fewer than Lbl K.1.f.11 and 1632a but still has E2	Has the <i>Adagio</i> section in 8/9 of Book 4. Same edition as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a and Lbl K.1.f.11 (2).
US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 4)	Fewest of all signatures	Same music but different title-page to part 3. This does have the <i>Adagio</i> and the E2 signature which makes it a companion of Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a
Lbl K.1.f.11(2)	Only lacks E2	See above. Same as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a save for the comments noted. The page lacking E2 has been stuck in on the stub of a cut-out page which seems to confirm this is later than Lbl Hirsch 1632a

**Table 2-4: Suggested order for Books 3 and 4**

Some of the copies are very nearly identical — a case in point being Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a and Lbl K.1.f.11 (2). The only difference between the two is in number 8/9 of Book 4. Lbl Hirsch 1632a has an added *Adagio* and also bears the signature E2. Lbl K.1.f.11 (2), meanwhile, lacks both the signature and the *Adagio* but in this copy the page in question is stuck onto the stub of a previous page. This stuck-in version lacks the *Adagio*, showing that Matteis had (not for the first time) revised a piece by shortening it. This would also make sense of the fact that the signatures seem to have gradually declined in number over time, which, despite the occasional exception, would appear to be what one would reasonably expect to have happened.

## 2.7 The manuscript sources

The above examination of the printed sources does seem to confirm that the impressions were reasonably numerous, which might go at least some way to explain the large time lapse between the respective first editions of Books 1 and 2 and Books 3 and 4. We know from North that Matteis was ready to enjoy the trappings of his hard-won success. It could be that he only published as much as he needed to in order to both help fund his lifestyle and provide study for his pupils. The fact is that though Matteis might not have published any more than two main editions, he still provided a considerable number of works in manuscript, to which can be added those that appeared outside his direct control. Throughout the period of his activity these can be broadly categorised as follows:

- 1) The manuscript copy of *Le False Consonanse della Musica*<sup>57</sup>
- 2) The companion volumes to the printed *Ayres* such as the second violin and tenor parts to the four Books of *Ayres*.
- 3) Various parts (first and second violin plus bass) to Book 5 of the *Ayres*
- 4) Works with no concordances in the *Ayres*.
- 5) Works taken from the *Ayres* and appearing in various manuscripts alongside the works of other composers.

The works of Category 5 will not be examined in any detail since they are more or less exact transcriptions of Matteis's own publications or manuscripts. As such they add nothing to our understanding of his playing style or the transmission of Matteis's own sources. Equally, since they are in various copyists' hands, they do not help in determining Matteis's handwriting. Their use is purely as a contemporary barometer of fashion and popularity, in which capacity they are a useful indication of Matteis's perceived worth. Similarly, it is fairly certain that the surviving works that fall into Category 4 were produced outside Matteis's direct control though they provide a taste of what was clearly an extremely healthy dissemination of his works.<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> The printed versions of this work have not been considered in this study since they have no bearing on the question of developing violin technique. Moreover, their date of publication has no implication for the order of the violin editions.

<sup>58</sup> It is in this category that we find some of the most interesting works from the point of view of performance technique and to this end these works will be discussed in greater detail in the following Section.

The remaining categories of manuscripts consist of works which, for the most part, were almost certainly produced either by Matteis himself or under his supervision. It is through a study of the content of this music that we can determine the musical styles in which he worked and through an analysis of the dissemination of this music that we can approach an understanding of the extent of his output. Appendix 1 itemises all the manuscripts but the following list concentrates on the most important ones, violinistically speaking. Mostly they are works that were prepared under Matteis's supervision, though some have been included because of their importance to the present discussion, despite their, sometimes, tenuous links to Matteis's own copying circle. Copies and excerpts that have neither authority nor particular interest have been omitted from this particular list.

Shelf-mark		Title
1	US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 2)	Books 1 and 2 second violin part
2	Ob Mus. Sch. G.613	Books 1 and 2 second violin part
3	CDu MC62	Books 1 and 2 second violin part
4	Lbl K.1.f.11 (1)	Books 1 and 2 second violin part
5	I-Vnm Contarini 9988	Books 3 and 4 second violin part
6	CDu MC63	Books 3 and 4 second violin part
7	I-Vnm Contarini 9989	Books 1 and 2 Tenor part
8	Lbl Hirsch IV1633	Book 5 first violin part
9	En Panmure Ms. 9464	Book 5 first violin part
10	CDu MC59	Book 5 first violin part
11	CDu MC60	Book 5 second violin part
12	CDu MC61	Book 5 second violin part
13	Ckc Ms. 247	Books 1, 2 and 5 first violin only
15	Och Mus. 939	Various pages inserted in a print of Books 1 and 2
16	F-Pn Rés. Vm7 741	Various <i>Ayres</i> from Books 1 and 2.
17	Lbl Add. 31466	<i>Ayres</i> taken from Books 1 and 2.
18	Lbl Add. 35043	Violin Sonatas by 'Old Nicola'
19	Ob Mus. Sch. C.61	Variations by N.M and anon.
20	Ob Mus. Sch. E300– 403 <sup>59</sup>	Sonatas by Nicola Mathise
21	US-NH Osborn Ms. 515 fo. 22v–23r	A concordance for the three-violin work in Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.23 (first violin only).
22	US-LAuc M401 P98s	Bass part to an unknown sonata by Nicola Matheis
23	J-Tn N2/15	Concordance with Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403 Nos.22 and 23

**Table 2-5: Extant manuscripts of violin music by Matteis**

<sup>59</sup> Robert Thompson dates Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403 to between 1682 and 1686 with the suggestion that copying could have begun even earlier than this. The relatively early date makes it very unlikely therefore that any of the works therein are by the younger Matteis.



It is not possible to know quite how representative the extant manuscript copies are, but it is immediately noticeable that except for where they exist as extracts within another collection, all Books 1 to 5 *Ayres* share the same format and binding as the printed copies.<sup>60</sup> Whereas it is possible to see in some of the prints that they had originally existed in an unbound state, there is no such internal evidence in the manuscripts. This is perhaps not surprising since, unlike the prints, these works would all have been specially produced for individual clients and Matteis did seem to like to provide these bound in his characteristic fashion. The evidence for them being prepared for special clients is strong for, as has been seen in the prefaces to the prints, Matteis does mention that he had copied second and tenor parts for those who wanted better harmony. One of the pieces of prefatory material found in many of the copies of the Books 3 and 4 *Ayres* seems to refer to the Book 5 manuscripts:

Some Three or Four yeeres ago I presented several persons of quality with written copys of some of my compositions; and I have now at the desire of divers honourable persons printed about a dozen and a halfe of them over again in regard that they are suitable to some of the new Ayr's.<sup>61</sup>

This explanation tallies with Book 5 in terms of date and also in that 18 of the pieces were re-used in the later Books 3 and 4 publication of 1685 (See Appendix 3). Other than these few, the Book 5 collection of *Ayres* remained unpublished until after his death.

Similarities of format and binding have been put forward as a strong argument for a common source of preparation, and many other similarities in such matters as layout, numbering, slurring and ornamentation would appear to back up this argument. From the evidence of the basic uniformity of the manuscripts it would appear that Matteis kept tight control over the output, perhaps unsurprisingly given that copyright did not yet exist.<sup>62</sup> In addition to the bibliographical similarities between manuscript sources there are a sufficient number of musical details in common to remove any remaining doubts as to whether or not there was a related source of production. This is not to say that there are no differences in such basic things as melodic line or number of

---

<sup>60</sup> With the aforementioned exception of Ckc Ms. 247. The two volumes of WOr 705:24/1780 measure 8.3cm x 21.6cm, putting them outside Matteis's 'preferred' size but clearly being intended for carrying about as a performance copy.

<sup>61</sup> This paragraph appears in two different versions in various sources, differing only in very small matters of spelling.

<sup>62</sup> Gaskell points out that author copyright did not exist in England until 1710. See *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, p.183. See page 10 for a reminder of Matteis's reaction to 'copyright' infringement.

bars, the variety of which is well demonstrated in the three extant versions of the first violin part to Book 5: Lbl Hirsch IV 1633, En Panmure Ms. 9464 and CDu M59. For the most part these sources concord very closely but, just as one begins to think that they could easily have been copied from a common exemplar, a quite major difference will occur in such fundamental aspects such as metre, the number of bars or the shape of the melodic line. This would seem to suggest that either there was more than one version of the *Ayres*, more than one exemplar from which the copyists were working or that the copyists had a degree of latitude in certain aspects. Perhaps it even suggests that Matteis was overseeing or copying the music himself.

At the outset it must be stated that there is no categorical evidence to tell which hand, if any, is that of Matteis. The only known signature linked to Matteis, which appears on the St Cecilia's Day ticket (see page 17), is most likely to be that of his son and the witnessing signatures to Francis Cruys's letter only exist in a copyist's hand (see page 9). There are no known diary entries or letters in Matteis's hand and, moreover, no external factors linking any of the manuscripts directly with him. Nor are any of the manuscripts sufficiently different from any of the other copies to suggest a substantially more authoritative preparation.

Turning to the manuscripts themselves for clarification it is immediately apparent that there are going to be no obvious and easy answers. Some sources have very characteristic hands and others exhibit sufficient similarities with other sources to be tentatively grouped together, but the majority sit in a graphological no-man's land, exhibiting at the same time many characteristics which respectively both link and separate them from the other manuscript sources. The seventeenth century was a time of great change in many ways and no less so for the various styles of handwriting. In the early part of the century the style of a person's writing was determined as much as anything by the degree of formality the writing demanded, and depending on this there were as many as five writing styles which could be chosen.<sup>63</sup> Perhaps the most important 'native' style was the secretary hand which had been dominant since the beginning of the sixteenth century. As it became the accepted hand for commerce and business so it spawned other variants, collectively known as Court and Legal

---

<sup>63</sup> Sir F. Meynell, 'According to Cocker' in *Calligraphy and Palaeography Essays presented to Alfred Fairbank on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday*, ed. A.S. Osley (London, 1965), p.171.

hands.<sup>64</sup> These native styles soon came under threat from the italic style which (in the form it became known in England), had developed in Italy throughout the previous century. This style was sufficiently popular for Charles I to have decided to adopt it and it became particularly popular with educated women. The secretary hand did not immediately die out and was still to be found even late in the seventeenth century but to all intents and purposes the italic style was the principal style from about mid-century onwards. In a practical sense this meant that there was a fairly long period when both hands were more or less equally prevalent and the work of many scribes displayed elements of both styles of writing, even if only in such a simple fashion as the use of italics to highlight a title or a name. In other cases a personal hand was developed which used elements of secretary and italic together, a practice that was very common in the mid- to late-seventeenth century. It is therefore no surprise to find that this is the predominant style in the Matteis manuscripts. Dawson and Kennedy-Skipton point out that subtle changes of style can help to date a hand to within 50 years, though a high degree of expertise is needed.<sup>65</sup> Any source can exhibit many differences of style which are often only identifiable by an expert in handwriting.

However, a further complication for the musician is that it was perfectly usual for different copyists to be involved in the preparation of a single manuscript. For example, one might write out the music and another add the titles. It was also natural for a musical scribe to have more than one version of the treble clef and different ways of writing rests or the tails on notes. Adding these variations to the possible permutations of hands for the actual writing gives such a patchwork of possibilities as to preclude categorical attribution in many cases. As with the printed sources though, it is still possible to reach certain useful conclusions, despite this element of uncertainty and patterns can be found in Matteis's manuscripts which help to suggest how they may have been prepared.

First of all, in terms of the handwriting itself it is possible to isolate certain characteristics of various sources which can then be used to link them to yet other sources. In expert graphology the way this is achieved is by focusing on the

---

<sup>64</sup> G.E. Dawson and L. Kennedy-Skipton, *Elizabethan handwriting 1500-1650 A Guide to the Reading of Documents and Manuscripts* (London, 1966), pp.10 and 11.

<sup>65</sup> See Dawson and Kennedy-Skipton, *Elizabethan handwriting 1500-1650 A Guide to the Reading of Documents and Manuscripts* for further details.

subconscious movements and details of the hand rather than on those which might possibly have been changed by intent. A more contemporary example of this technique can be found in the work of forensic graphologists working to uncover deliberate fraud. Whilst the immediate parallels with music copying are few, it is interesting to learn slightly more about how one can tell one style of writing from another — or more to the point, how one can link two together. In her work on handwriting analysis, D.M. Ellen distinguishes between those factors which, on the one hand, are fairly consistent and unchangeable and those, on the other hand, which are habitually variable and easily disguised. It is the former of these features, for the most part subconscious movements of the pen in terms of direction of strokes and formation of letters, which are most relevant to the present discussion. These movements are essential in identifying hands in legal cases, where distinguishing a ‘hidden’ hand can have far-reaching consequences:

Generally to give the most positive conclusion about a handwriting comparison requires about 15–20 letters or characters which match in the features referred to above [pen strokes, relative proportions of letters, spacing on the page] ... Around 11–15 resemblances is usually not adequate for an identification, but suitable for the conclusion that there is a high probability that these writings are by one person...Less than ten letters in common without any unusual features but with a reasonably close resemblance is best reported as “these could have been made by one person”...in some cases there may be a number of approximate matches. As there are two opposite explanations for this, one is that one person is writing in different styles and the other that two people are writing, and little to choose between the two possibilities it is right that a completely inconclusive result is reported. Something like “I cannot exclude the possibility that they are by one person” is a suitable report.<sup>66</sup>

It is clear from even a cursory examination of the manuscripts that most of them have an insufficient number of identifiable similarities to make a positive identification — even in the eyes of an expert — possible. As in any era, there was a certain degree of conformity in the seventeenth century between the styles of different scribes. This is true, for example, in terms of beaming and barring where similar traits can be isolated in different hands and, for this reason, it is necessary to isolate as many characteristics as possible for comparison before it becomes reasonably safe to suggest firm similarities. As a general rule, the following criteria have been borne in mind for purposes of comparison:

---

<sup>66</sup> D.M. Ellen Handwriting comparison, (n.p., n.d.) p.10. Taken from the personal notes of Dr. J. Wainwright.

- 1) General 'look'. The visual aspect and density of a hand on the page tends to be individual and can often be a useful pointer to authorship. This is one of the features that graphologists look at as a 'subconscious' facet of writing.
- 2) Shape of key signature.
- 3) Shape of clefs. Although it was common to use more than one style of clef it is nevertheless quite possible to see how the clef has been drawn.
- 4) Shape of time signature
- 5) Slant of the writing.
- 6) Formation of accidentals
- 7) Formation and thickness of the pen strokes
- 8) Beaming patterns — shape, pen direction and fluency.
- 9) Bar lines — do they, for example, protrude above and below the stave lines?
- 10) Note heads — shape and size.
- 11) Note tails — how are they attached and from which direction are they drawn.
- 12) Flourishes at the end of the pieces.
- 13) Shape and size of rests.

Even where there are insufficient concordances to reach a positive conclusion, it is often still possible to suggest general groupings. Because of the difficulty in knowing whether or not the titles were written in by the same scribe, the writing and musical elements will be treated as separate areas.

## **2.8 Comparison of the hands**

In the broadest sense, the manuscripts appear to fall into three broad groups. This is based on the number of stylistic concordances between them as well as the overall 'look'. The following groupings need to take into account the fact that the titles may not be in the same hand as the music:

### **Group A**

These are manuscripts which have sufficient features in common to suggest a common hand in both music and text. Of all the extant sources there are only two groups which seem to fall into this category, although isolated elements will be identified in other sources.

CDu MC59 and CDu MC60

Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, US-R ML96.M435 and Lbl K.1.f.11 (1)

### **Group B**

This group contains manuscripts which link either to each other or to a source in Group A. The links may be either through the music or the text. In some cases there may be insufficient concordances to establish beyond any doubt a common hand and yet some similarities may persuasively suggest a link of some description. Perhaps the most obvious linking factor in this group is the hand of US-R Vault M1490.M435, which also appears in the titles of Ob Mus. Sch. G.613 and Lbl K.1.f.11 (1) from Group A. This hand also appears in certain parts of I-Vnm Contarini 9989 and I-Vnm Contarini 9988 and once in an addendum to Lbl Hirsch IV 1633. CDu MC59 and CDu MC60 may be to all intents and purposes identical but the other Cardiff sources share sufficient similarities with these two to be considered a possible set, either being prepared by the same scribe or else by a small group of scribes working very closely together. US-R Vault M1490.M435 also has possible links with the less neat of the two hands in F-Pn Rés. Vm<sup>7</sup> 741 as well as Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 although by this stage there are more questions than categorical answers.

### **Group C**

These are the manuscripts which seem to stand apart from the others, sharing insufficient features in common to be firmly linked with any other category, although there may still be elements that appear to link them with other individual sources. This section mainly consists of En Panmure Ms. 9464, US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 2) and the addenda in Och Mus. 939.

Whilst such a rough compartmentalisation can be used to separate those that are definitely in the same hand from those that are almost certainly not, it leaves quite a large middle-ground into which the majority of the sources fall. Given this fact, perhaps the most productive way to look at the manuscripts is to begin with those that bear the most similarities, isolate defining features and then attempt to trace them in the rest of the output.

[Original in colour]



Plate 2-8: *Corante al Genio Alemanno* CDu MC59, No.49



Plate 2-9: *Corrente al Genio Alemanno* CDu MC60, No.64

These first two examples show the similarities between CDu MC59 and CDu MC60, respectively the first and second violin parts of Book 5, which are part of the Cardiff Mackworth collection, originally held by Cardiff Public Library but now on permanent loan to the city's University music department.<sup>67</sup> The writing, the clef, key signatures, sharps, time signature, rests, note head shapes, beaming and quaver tails are all the same and exhibit characteristics of the italic style. By any standards these examples provide enough correlations to confirm a common copyist. There is

<sup>67</sup> This collection provides the second most substantial collection of Matteis's works outside the British Library, consisting of one print and five manuscripts. Although MC59 and 60 are in the same collection as well as the same hand, they appear to be from slightly different musical sources, as is the other second violin source MC61. This is clear in such numbers as *Balletto for the young Nicola* (No.8) where neither second part really works with MC59.

not the same level of agreement between these and the other sources in Cardiff and, convenient though it would undoubtedly be, it does not appear that this is a complete set of works by Matteis. However, despite this, there are sufficient similarities to suggest that there may be important links between them. The idea that will be examined shortly is that these similarities are perhaps evidence that Matteis operated a copyists' circle. This would certainly explain the many features they share in common, and might further offer an explanation for those places where the similarities stop just short of being an exact concordance:

[Original in colour]



Plate 2-10: *Preludio* CDu MC61, No.114



Plate 2-11: [Untitled] CDu MC62, No.40



[Original in colour]

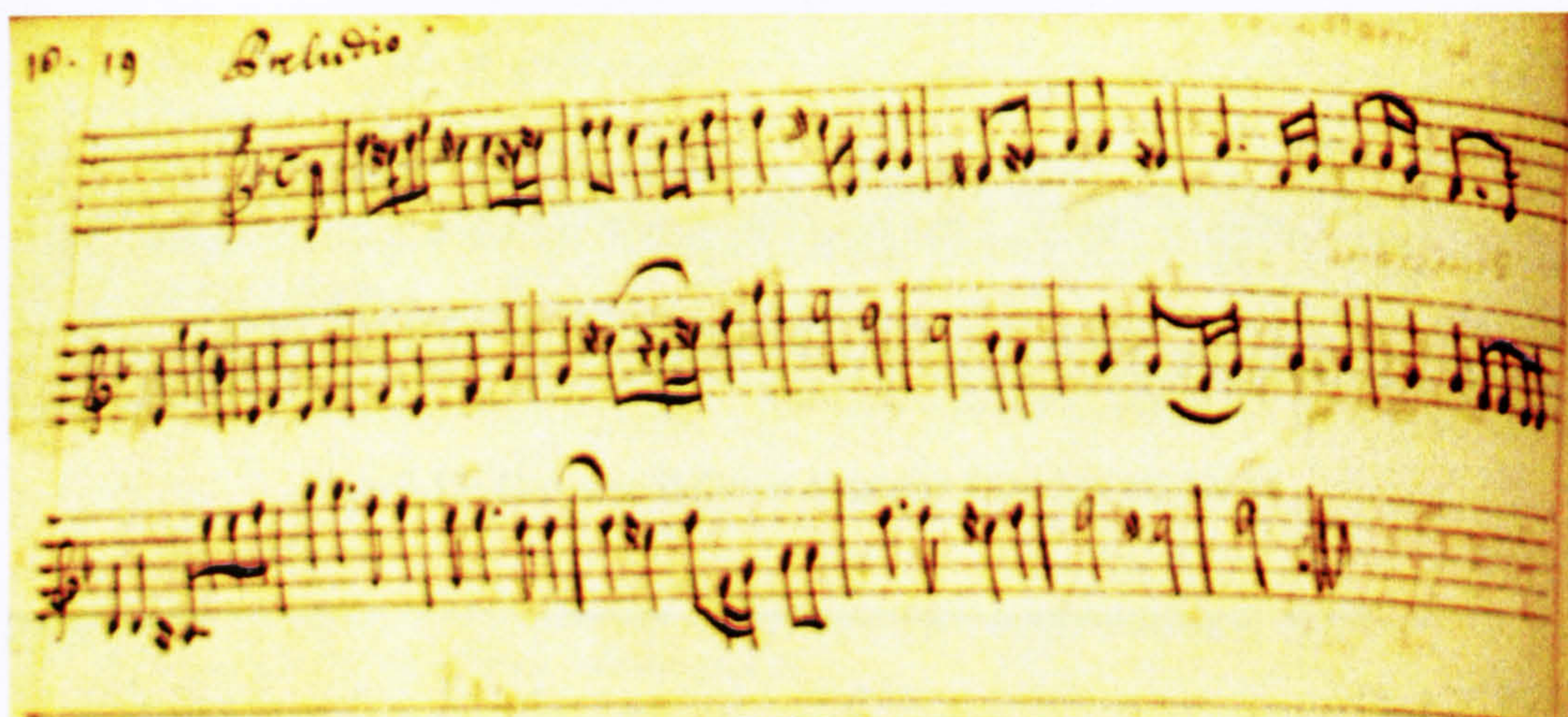


Plate 2-12: *Preludio* CDu MC63, No.18

On the most general level, the adoption of a common format and rastrum immediately create a feeling of unity. Then there are more specific features such as the grade of ink used, which again is a fairly standard colour for the period and yet creates yet more of a feeling of cohesion. The titles are all written in what appears to be a fairly typical transitional hand displaying elements of both secretary hand and italic. The secretary 'e' which is found in other manuscripts has been almost entirely replaced in these sources by the italic 'e' and the more cursive style is evident in the slanting elisions of 'm's and 'n's in particular. Meanwhile the 'd', especially in CDu MC63, is classic secretary hand style. The combination of factors here is entirely consistent with a hand of the late seventeenth century but there are no characteristics that help pinpoint the date more than this. The only further observation that could be made is that this sort of transitional hand is perhaps more likely to be that of an English scribe than an Italian who would have been more schooled in the italic style. The music hand (which it must be remembered is not necessarily the same person as copied the titles) is linked across these sources by such general factors as the slight slant, the shape of the beaming, the overshooting barlines and various other characteristics which will shortly be looked at in more detail. Exact correlations within this group may be limited to the aforementioned CDu MC59 and MC60 but the same movement from CDu MC61, the other second violin part to Book 5, provides an interesting comparison:

[Original in colour]

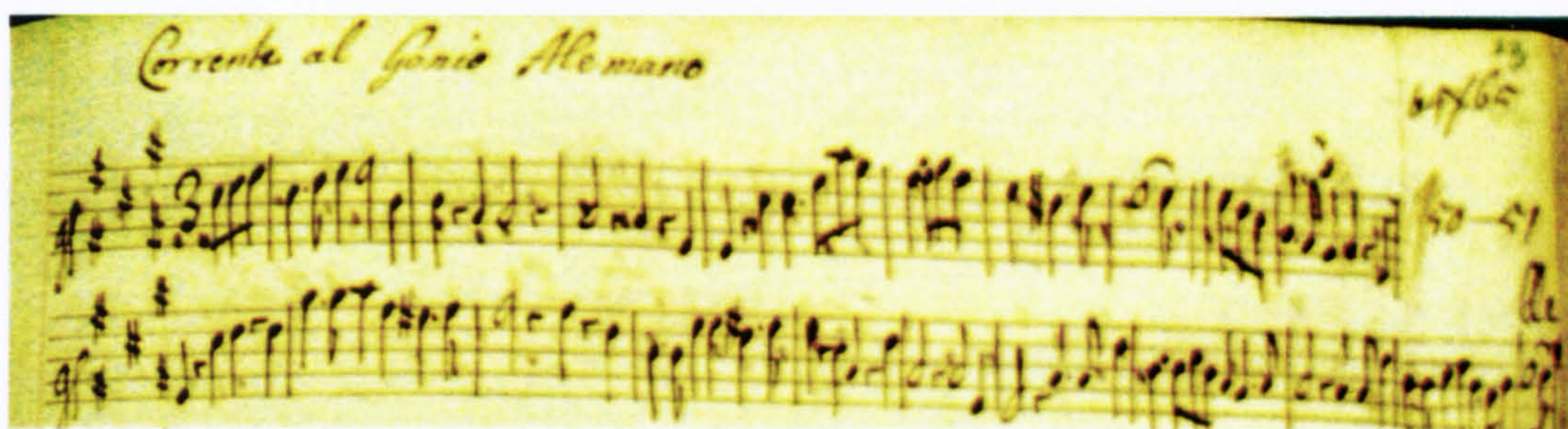


Plate 2-13: *Corrente al Genio Alemanno* CDu MC60, No.64



Plate 2-14: *Corrente al Genio Alemanno* CDu MC61, No.64

This is the first example of how two sources often display an almost equal mix of similar and dissimilar features. Allowing for the fact that both the music and the writing are in a finer nib in CDu MC61 than in CDu MC60, there is nevertheless a high degree of correlation. Nearly every letter of the title has been formed in the same way, though in a slightly freer style. The same goes for the 3 of the time signature, the rests, the quaver tails and the majority of the note-heads. The slightly confusing details are the occasional change to a rounder note head shape (although there are still examples where they are more oval and thus compare better with CDu MC60), the different slant of the sharps and the different attachment points of the descending note tails. There are three possibilities that might explain these variations. The first is that this is simply evidence of the variety that typically exists within examples of the same hand. The second possibility is that this is evidence of a remarkably tightly controlled source of preparation where two or more different copyists take on characteristics of each other's style. The other possibility is a combination of the first two in that there are two copyists but one of them did both titles.

Although some of the differences highlighted in the above two examples are repeated in the following comparison, this time the musical hand seems much more similar:

- 3) Rests
- 4) Beaming
- 5) Barlines
- 6) Dotted notes
- 7) Slurs
- 8) Time signature
- 9) Sharps
- 10) Handwriting of the titles
- 11) Semi-quaver tails

Meanwhile the inherent differences can be summarised as:

- 1) Slant of the sharps
- 2) Size and confidence of the writing
- 3) End flourish
- 4) Position of rests
- 5) Size and alignment of time signature
- 6) The point of attachment of descending note tails.

On the basis of this evidence one would have to conclude that there is a strong possibility of a common scribe and yet, the evidence within sources can be variable:

[Original in colour]

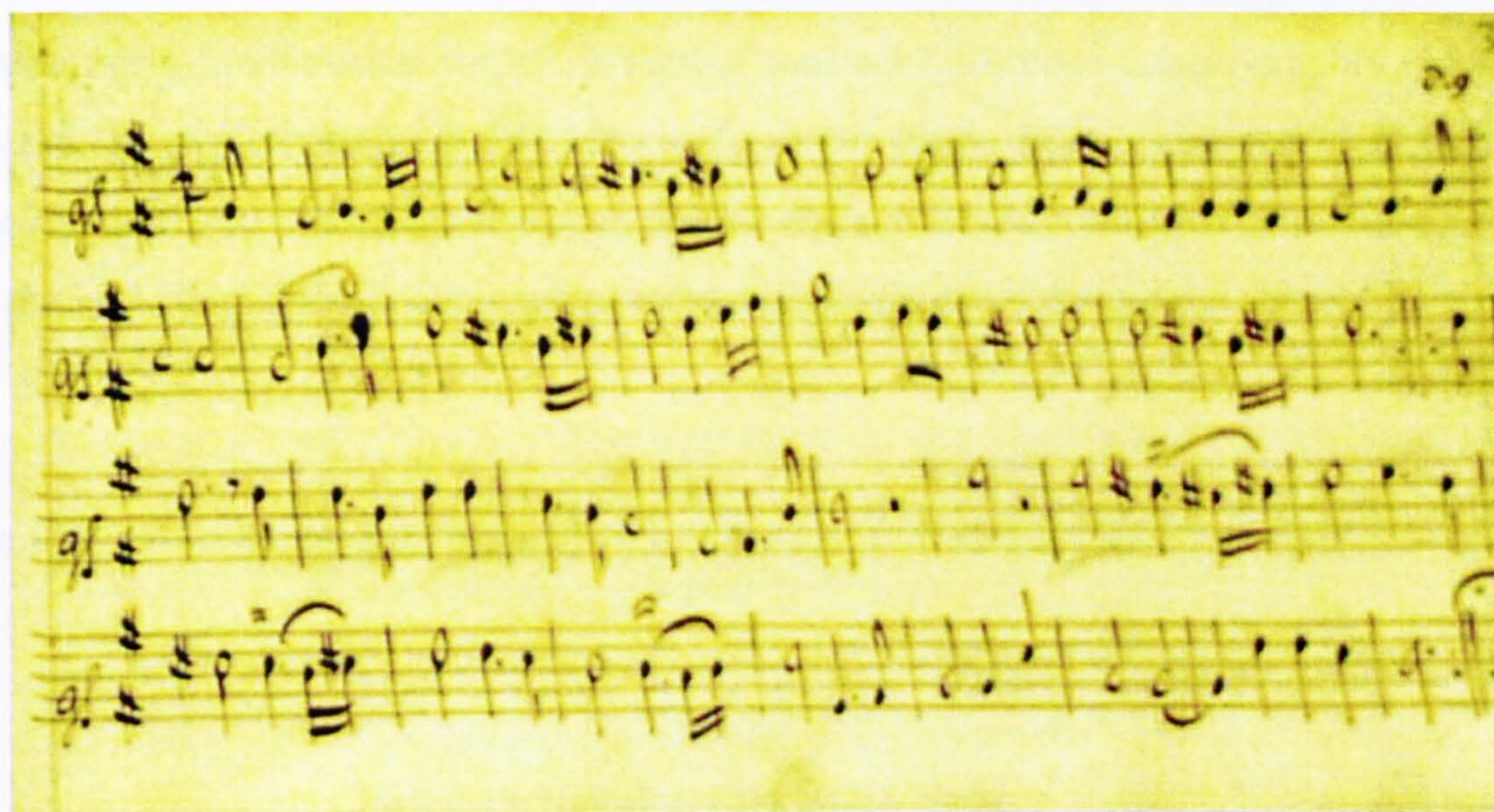


Plate 2-17: [Untitled] CDu MC60, No.8

Plate 2-17 shows one of the second violin parts for Matteis's famous *Ayre* for his son. A comparison with the other second violin part shows that not only are they clearly not copied from the same source, but the differences between the hands (in terms of the above-mentioned factors) suddenly outweigh the similarities:

[Original in colour]



Plate 2-18: *Balletto for the young Nicola* CDu MC61, No.8

The lack of a title in CDu MC60 suggests that they were to have been added to this source at a later stage and the differences in terms of melody and rhythm suggest that the copyist(s) was (were) working from more than one exemplar. Perhaps the copyist was Matteis himself, for who else would have had the authority to change the works in these fairly fundamental ways? A further musical difference unaccountably exists between the two otherwise nearly identical sources in the *Borre* (number 74 in CDu MC60 and 102/103 in CDu MC61) where the former is essentially written in quavers and the latter in crotchets, although proportionately the rhythms are the same.



Plate 2-19: [Untitled] CDu MC62, No.34

The hand of CDu MC62 (a second violin part to Books 1 and 2 of the *Ayres*, Plate 2-

19) adds another variant into the Cardiff pool of sources. If it is compared with the two previously-viewed Cardiff similarities can again be seen, despite the lack of titles which removes one important method of comparison:

[Original in colour]



Plate 2-20: *Corrente al Genio Alemanno* CDu MC61, No.64

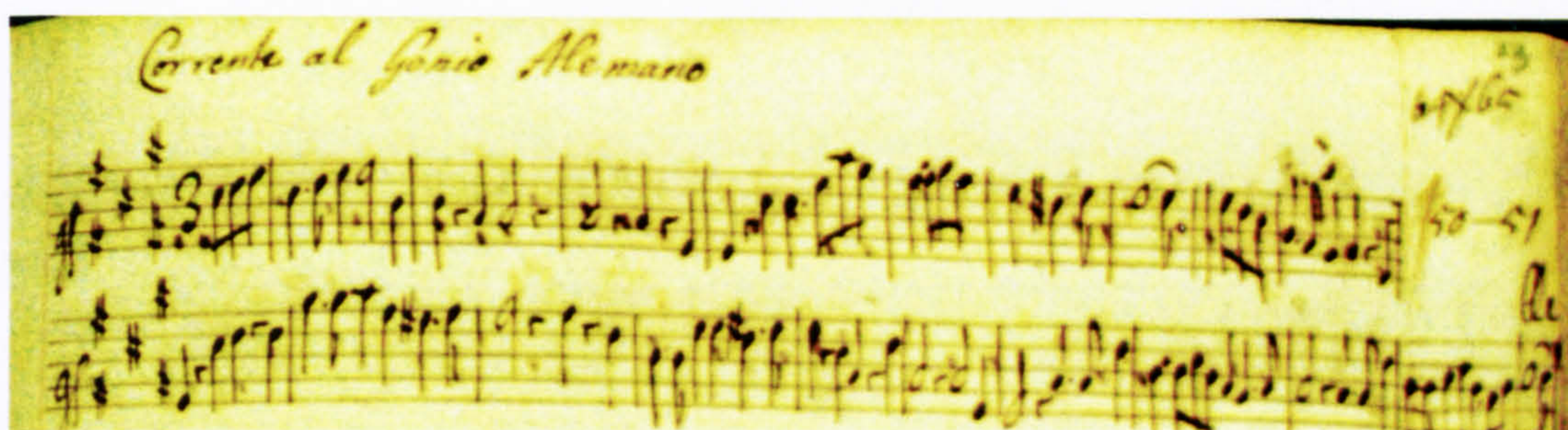
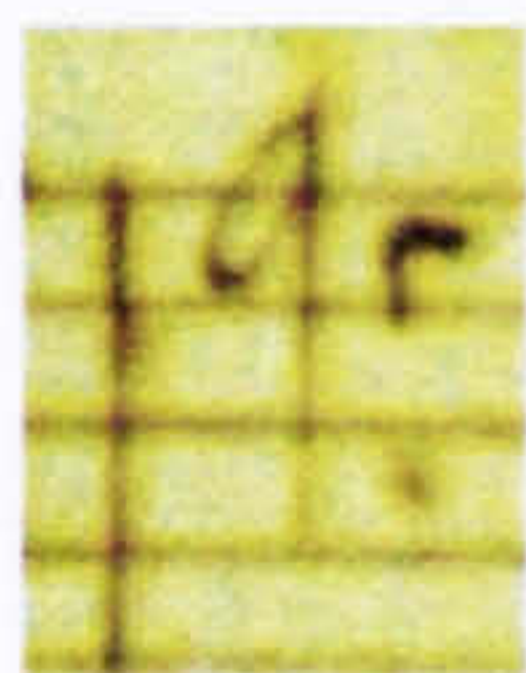
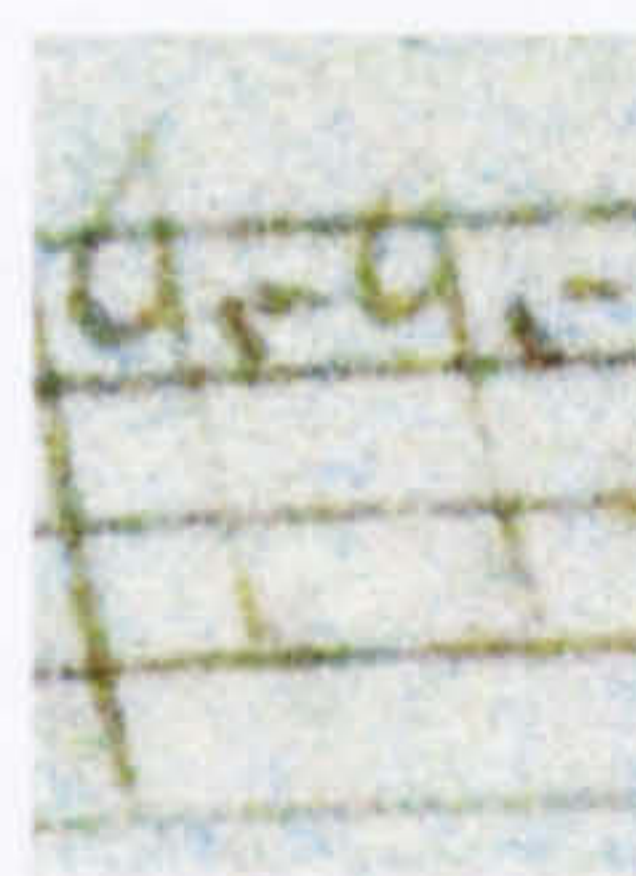


Plate 2-21: *Corrente al Genio Alemanno* CDu MC60, No.64

CDu MC62 does appear at first sight to be part of the same 'production' as the other Cardiff manuscripts, and like CDu MC61 it is written with a slightly thinner pen. The clef is different, though of roughly the same type; the 3 is similar and the sharps are the same as those in CDu MC60. The noteheads also retain their characteristic oval shape when there is a descending tail:



CDu MC60



CDu MC62

Plate 2-22: Comparison of note-heads

The notes have been formed by first drawing the elliptical shape of the head and then finishing with a downward stroke for the tail, whereas those with ascending tails appear to require one movement only. The rests are both formed from two pen strokes which are slightly more separated in the example of CDu MC62. This could

just as easily be due to normal variation as to a different scribe and as such proves little. These three manuscripts are a case in point insofar as there is insufficient detailed corroboration between them to suggest these are definitely linked in the way that CDu MC59 and CDu MC60 are and yet there is a strong subjective similarity, backed up by certain detailed concordances. When this evidence is laid alongside the other similarities in terms of format and detailed musical concordance it is almost certainly sufficient to link them at least to the same copyist's circle.

The remaining manuscript source from Cardiff is CDu MC63, a handwritten copy of the violin two part to Books 3 and 4, which has a parallel in I-Vnm Contarini 9988:

[Original in colour]

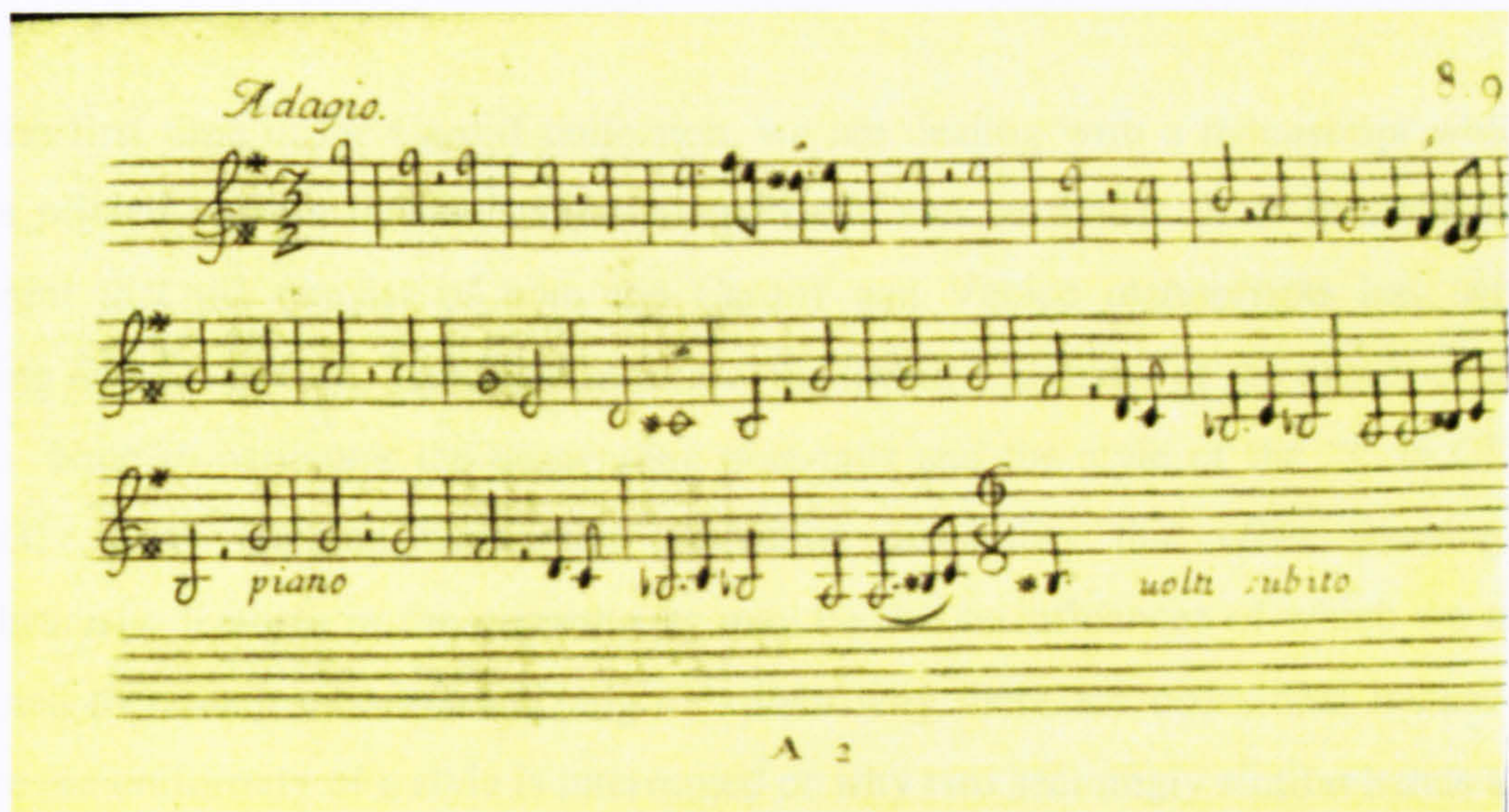


Plate 2-23: *Adagio* CDu MC109, No.8



Plate 2-24: *Adagio* CDu MC63, No.8

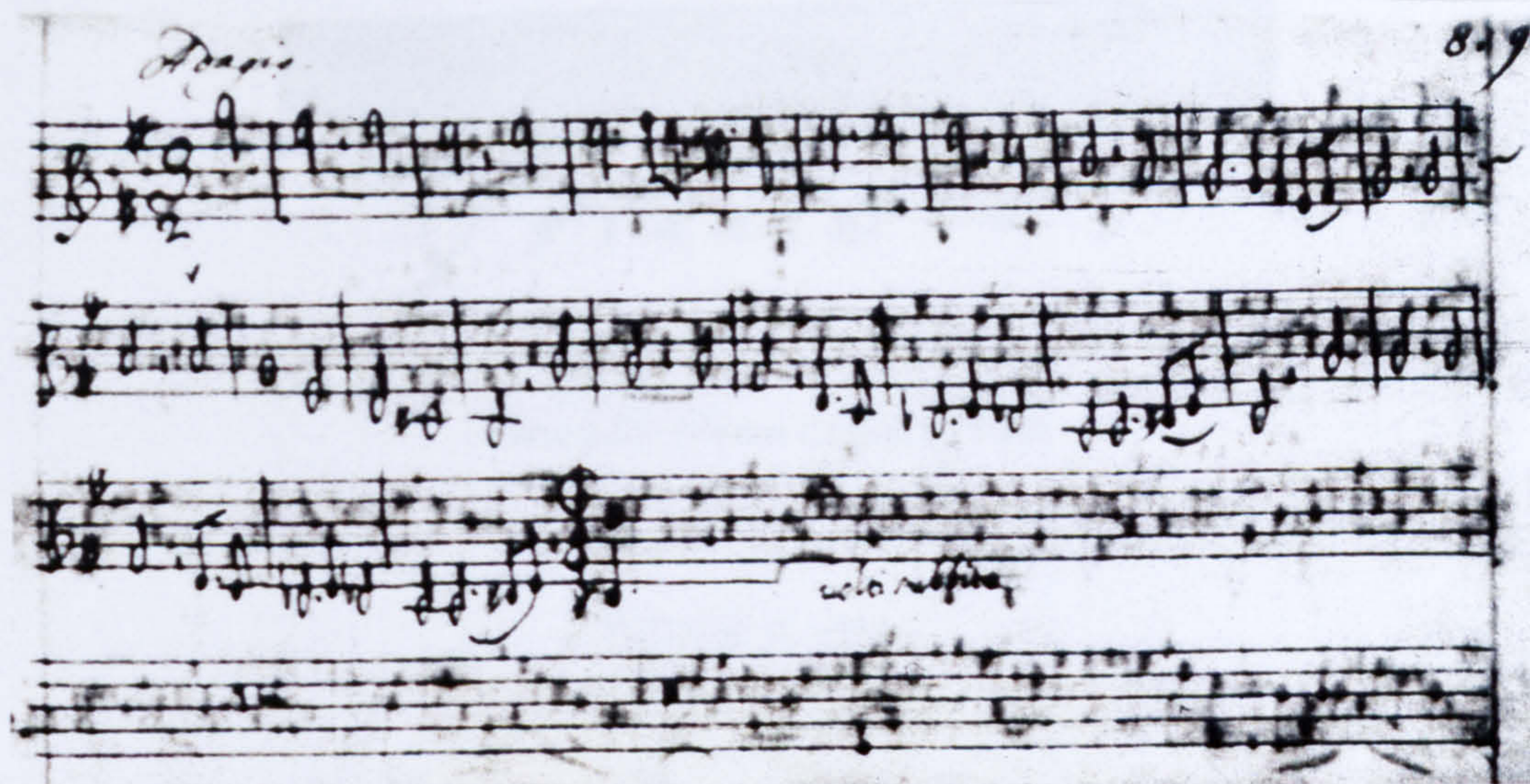


Plate 2-25: *Adagio*, I-Vnm Contarini 9988, No.8

For the first time in the Cardiff collection, we are dealing with a manuscript which has a printed version against which comparisons can be made. It is immediately apparent that the copyist of both the Cardiff and Venice manuscripts has, with varying degrees of care, attempted to follow the layout and many of the details of the print. Note in particular the descending note-tails and the style of the '3' in CDu MC63. Such copying raises the interesting possibility that other seemingly anachronistic features in the manuscripts may be due to influences of which we are destined to remain unaware and might explain why there are occasional instances where the uniformity of a style is interrupted or why two seemingly similar hands are confused by, for example, a different clef or time signature. Whilst we cannot hope to know when and if the copyist has momentarily changed his style in imitation of another copyist or an aspect of another print or manuscript that he happened to come in contact with it nevertheless is a possibility that ought to be allowed for in these comparisons. As with CDu MC62, there are several examples in CDu MC63 and I-Vnm Contarini 9988 of correlations of style and content both with each other and also with CDu MC61:

[Original in colour]



Plate 2-26: CDu MC61



Plate 2-27: I-Vnm Contarini 9988

[Original in colour]



Plate 2-28: CDu MC63

The small difference of the 'd' being looped fully in CDu MC63 is quite common and occurs pretty much at random from time to time throughout these sources and so should not be taken as a distinguishing factor. The following two examples confirm the similarities of writing style as well as correlations between various musical elements. Note in particular the final bar and flourish, the shapes of the note-heads and the tails, the way the beaming of the quavers is drawn in a soft arc; and also the shape and angle of the clef:

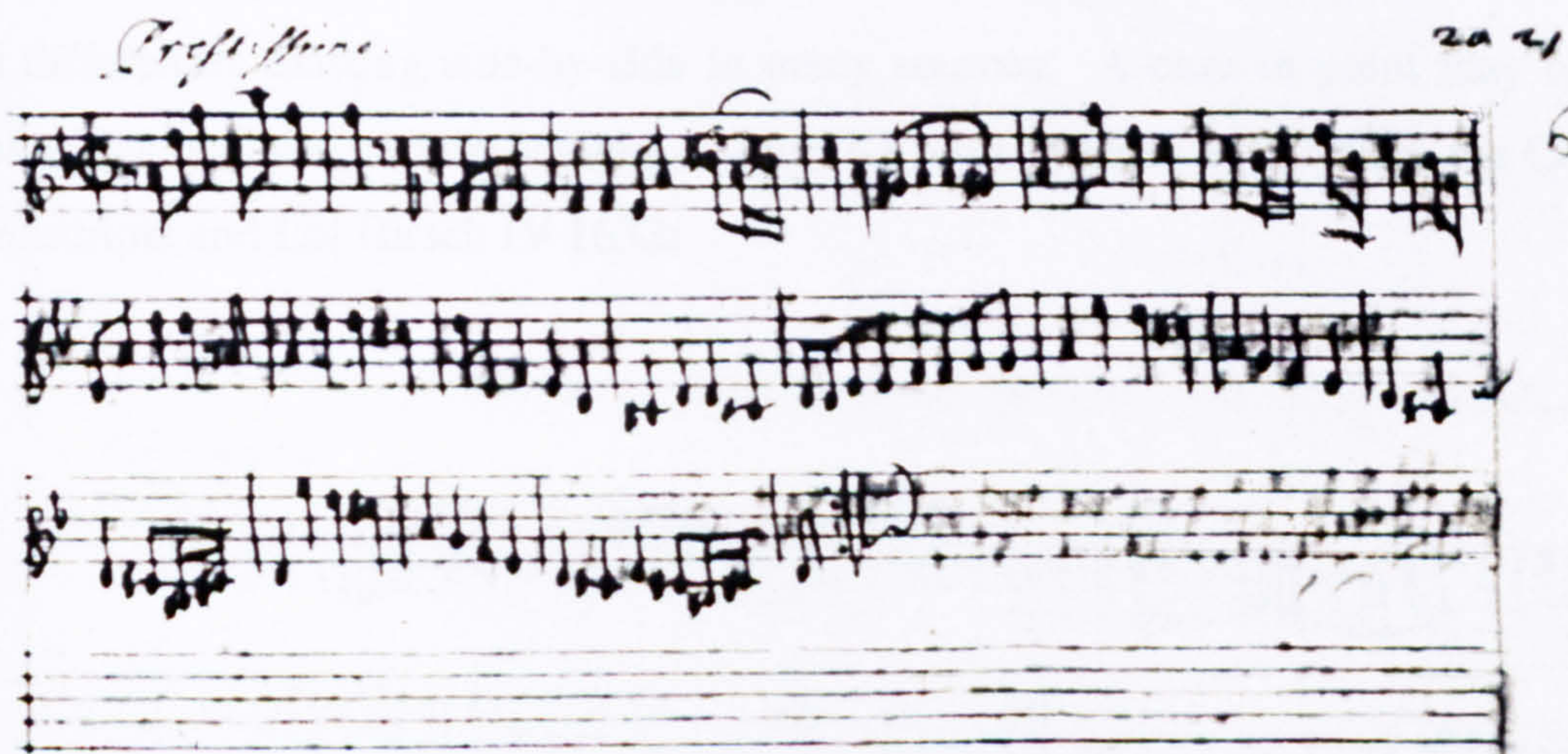


Plate 2-29: *Prestissimo* I-Vnm Contarini 9988, No.20



[Original in colour]

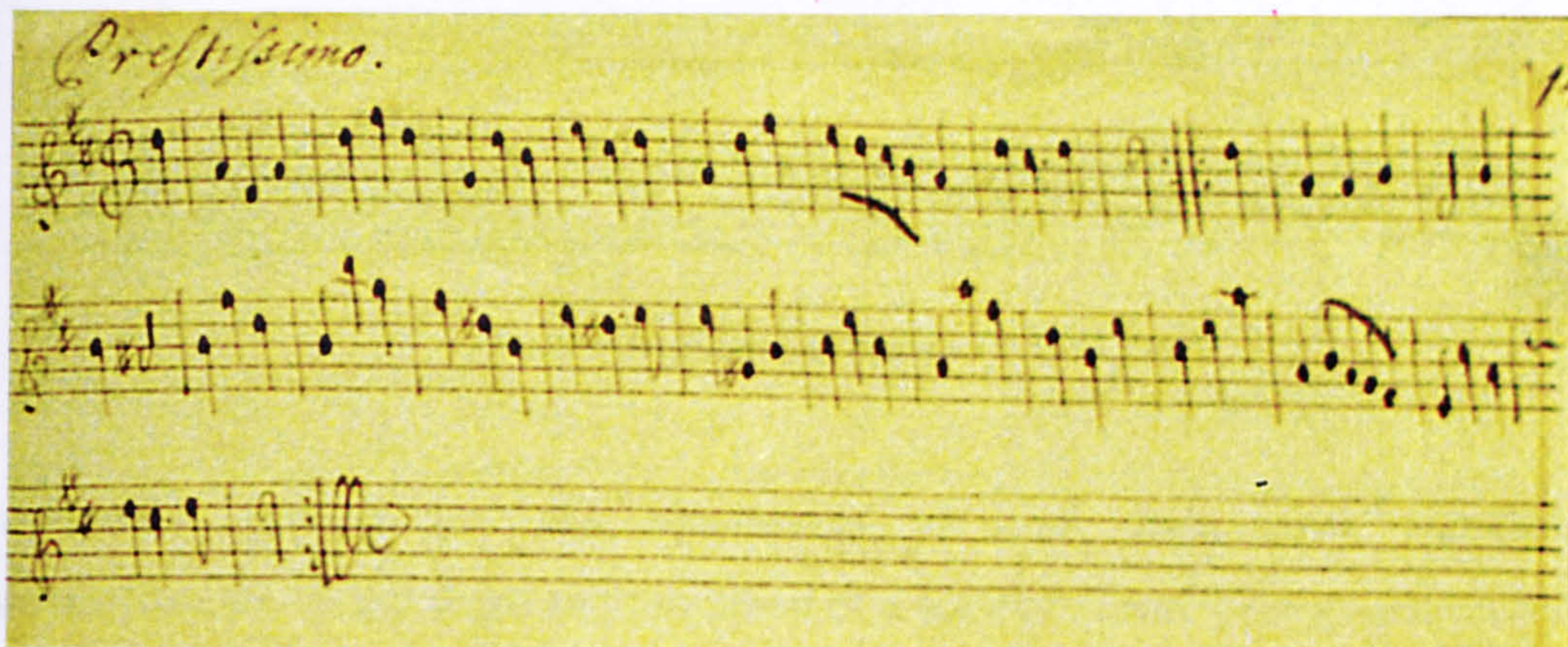


Plate 2-30: *Prestissimo* CDu MC61, No.75

Matteis clearly prepared manuscript copies of various types of his works, ranging from harmony parts to the printed sources through to the handwritten-only Book 5 *Ayres*. This scale of production would almost certainly have been beyond him had he been the sole copyist, notwithstanding the fact that as he became more successful and more wealthy he is hardly likely to have needed or wanted to spend time doing something that he could easily employ someone to do instead. I consider that there are sufficient similarities between these various sources to suggest that he was operating his own copyists' circle, the members of which were working very closely together in the preparation of any music that was needed. Since the copyists were working closely together, providing the same music and using a common format and layout, it would not be surprising to find that they had begun to share other aspects in common, perhaps even unconsciously or even consciously adopting certain aspects of each other's style. This would also explain the seeming contradiction of similarities and differences existing side-by-side in many sources. A case in point may be the similarities between certain features of both I-Vnm Contarini 9988/9989, the Cardiff manuscripts and Lbl Hirsch IV 1633:

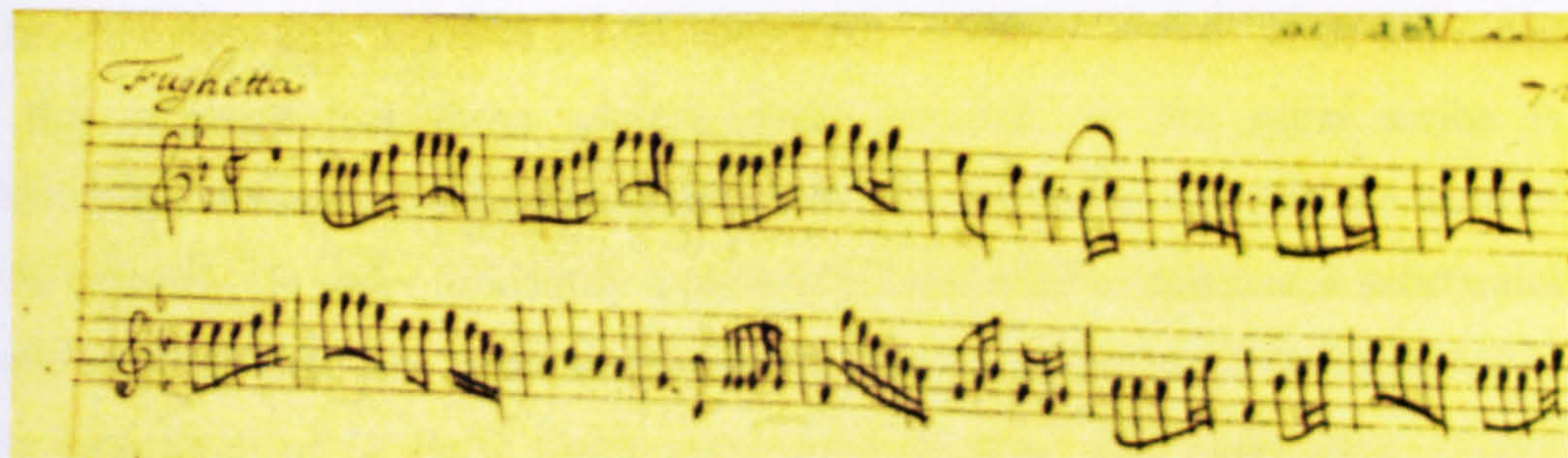


Plate 2-31: *Fughetta* CDu MC63, No.72

nr Fuga

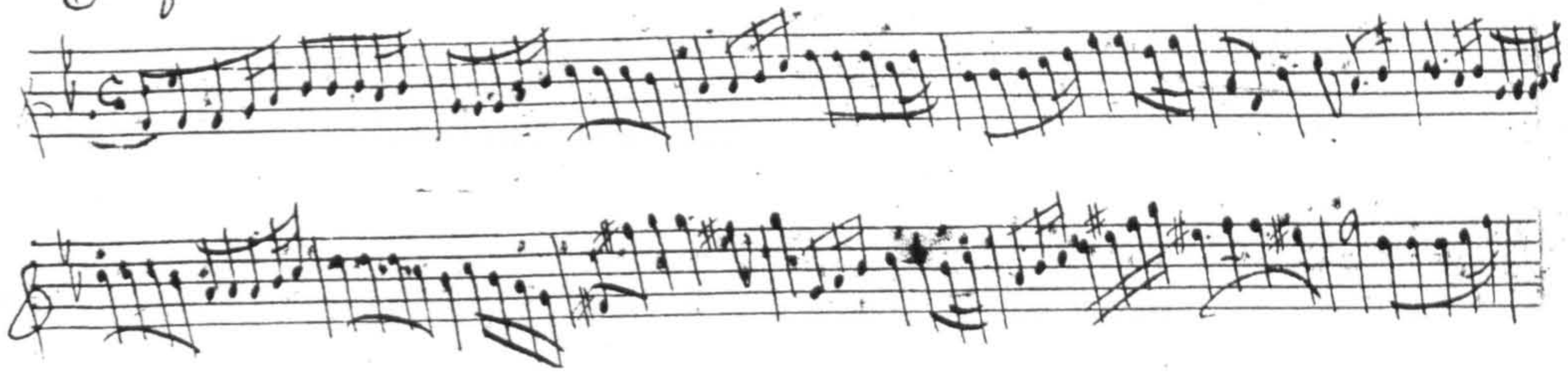


Plate 2-32: *Fuga* Lbl Hirsch IV 1633, No.82

Immediately striking are the similarities of clef, flats, time signature (characteristically in the shape and formation of a secretary hand 'c') note shapes and beaming. The titles are vaguely similar though it is the case that Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 exhibits a more pronounced secretary hand influence than do the Cardiff sources though it is difficult to draw conclusions from this.

Ad Fuga

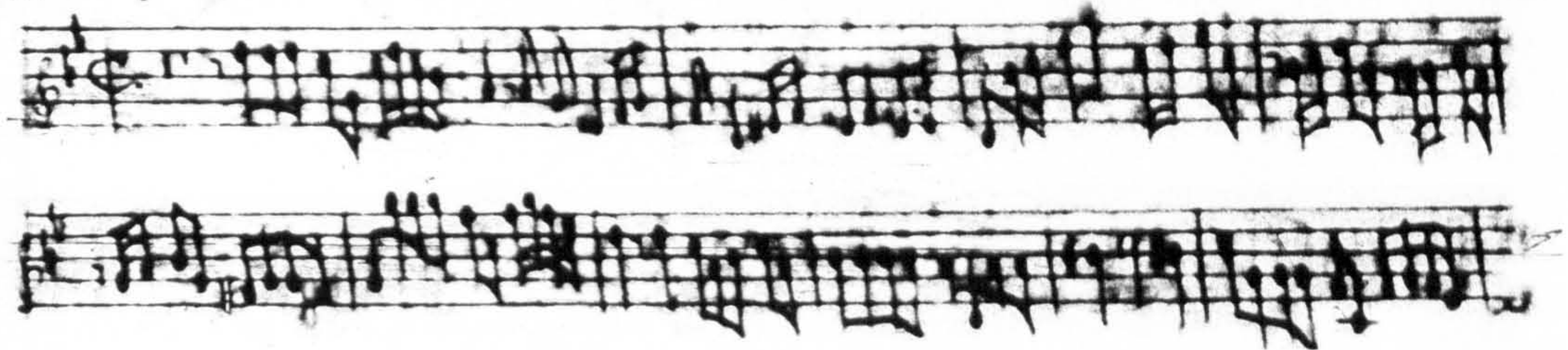


Plate 2-33: *Fuga* I-Vnm Contarini 9988, No.42

With somewhat fewer similarities I-Vnm Contarini 9988, despite the different pen used, has a similar overall feel to the hand and also exhibits such common features as the same clef and flats. Ostensibly, this source bears scant resemblance to CDu MC59 and CDu MC60 but there is a certain amount of evidence to at least suggest that it might share a common scribe or scribes.

The second group of sources that are incontrovertibly linked, as outlined on page 80, are Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, US-R ML96.M435 and Lbl K.1.f.11 (1). More important than the evidence that these sources were prepared by the same scribe is supplementary evidence from other sources that this is in all probability the hand of Matteis himself. In order to identify a particular hand with confidence, a substantial example is needed and it is fortunate that in this case one exists in US-R ML96.M435 — the manuscript of *Le False Consonanse della Musica*. The many pages of this

treatise provide ample material from which to glean examples of all letters and letter combinations, which facilitates comparison with the other sources in which this hand appears. Examples of the hand are found in:

- 1) The manuscript copy of *Le False Consonanse della Musica*
- 2) Ob Mus. Sch. G.613
- 3) Lbl K.1.f.11 (1)
- 4) The title to the second violin part of I-Vnm Contarini 9988 (although the rest of the manuscript is in another hand).
- 5) Various titles in the tenor part in I-Vnm Contarini 9989.
- 6) Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 — in a single word at the bottom of page 83
- 7) A copy of Books 3 and 4 which, at the time of writing, was being offered for sale by Dr. Hans Schneider.<sup>69</sup>

*Le False Consonanse* is written in an attractive italic script with many highly distinctive letter shapes:

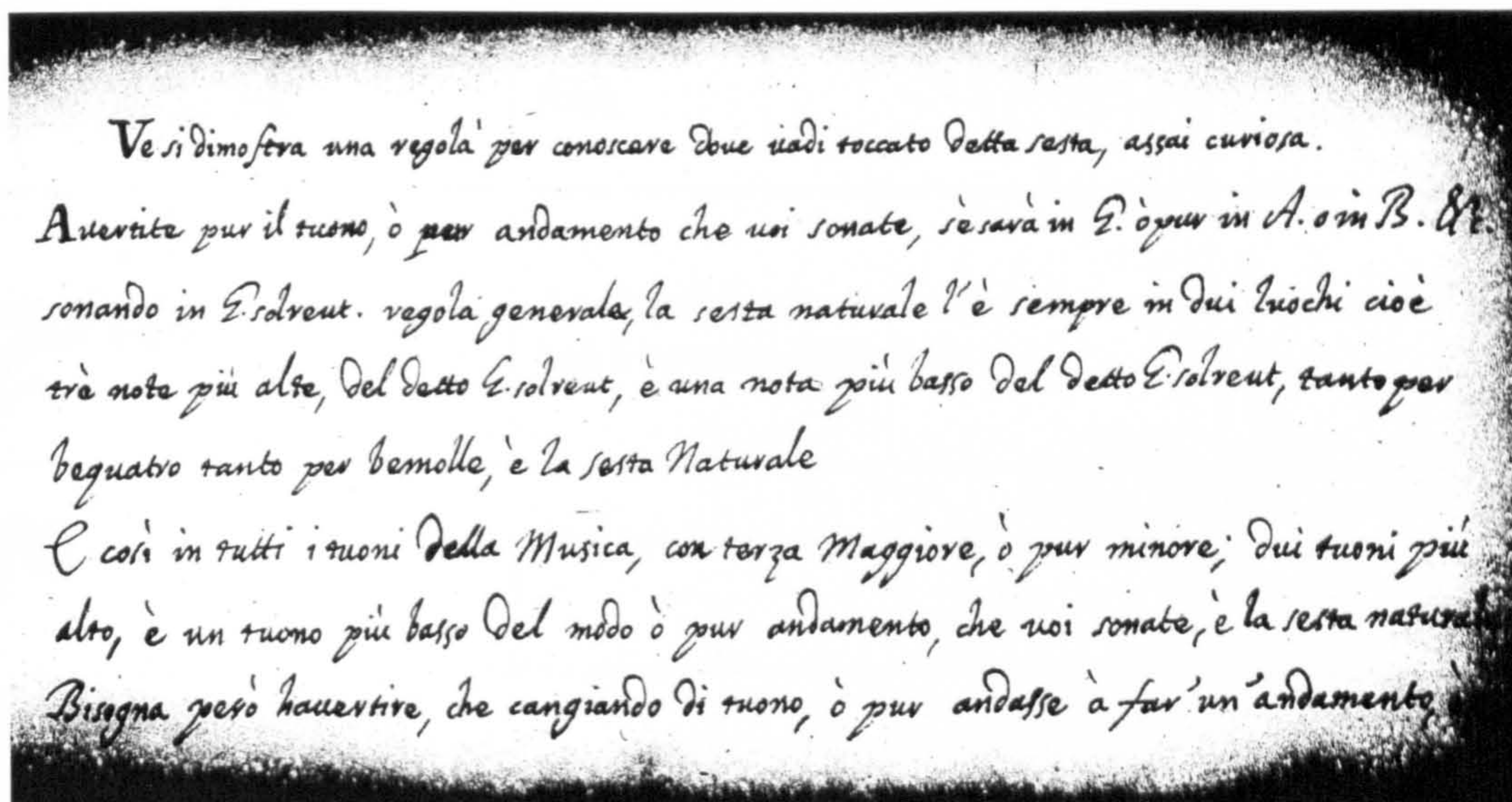
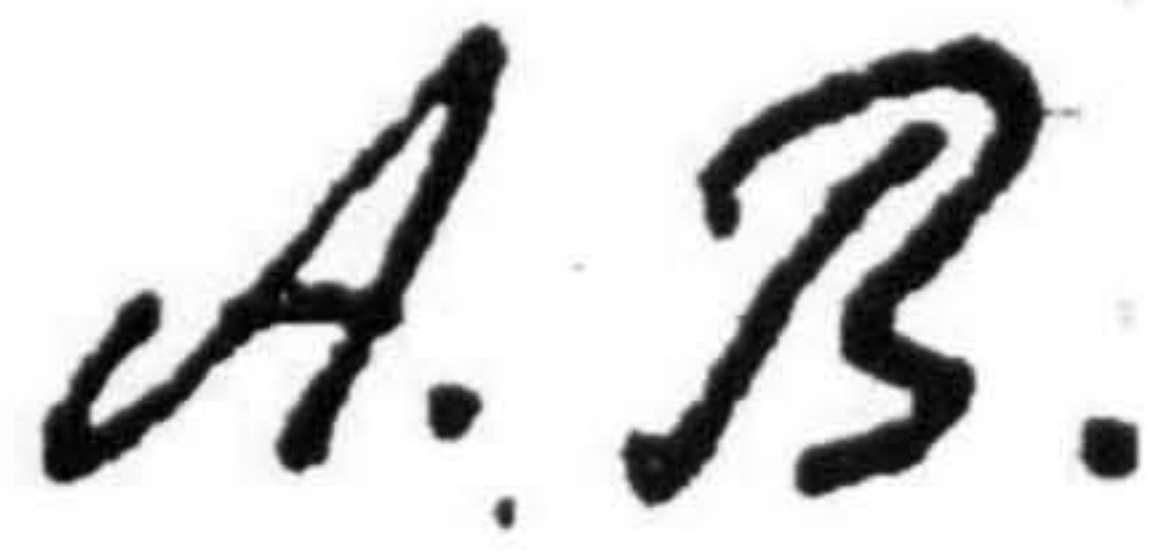

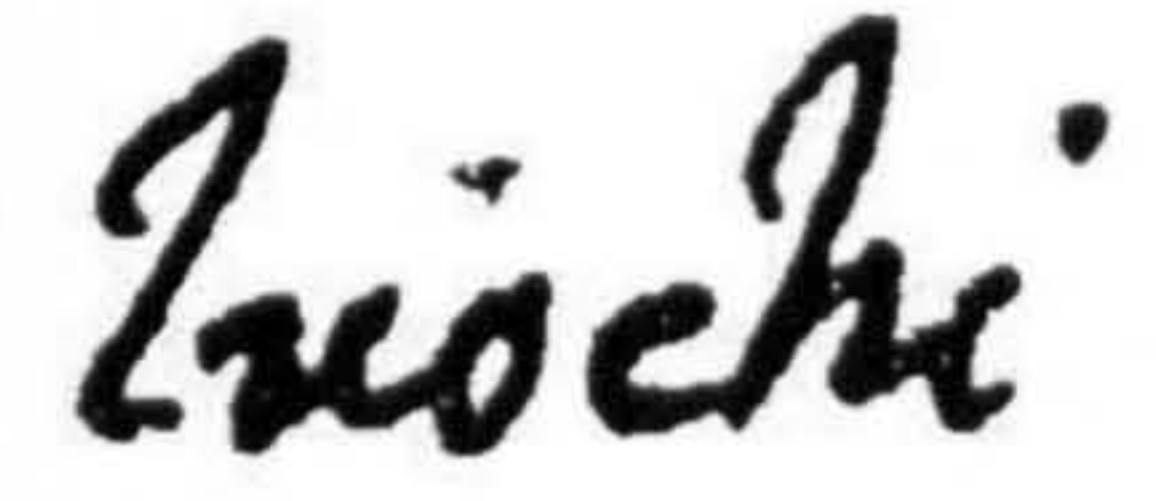


Plate 2-34: *Le False Consonanse della Musica*

Fortunately, having a substantial example of a hand also obviates the problem of catering for the inevitable variation within it. The occasional use of a different clef, a different slant or size to an accidental or a differently formed numeral can all be confusing when working with a small sample of the hand whereas such details are

<sup>69</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Schneider for kindly providing a copy of the relevant page of this source.

more easily placed into perspective when occurring within a larger and more representative sample. The more distinctive letter shapes are:

	<p>Whilst these two letters are formed in a conventional way the uniformity of their appearance from page to page makes them distinctive.</p>
	<p>Similarly the 'd's are conventional but always have a significant degree of back-curve.</p>
	<p>This capital 'e' is perhaps not the shape one would automatically expect for upper case.</p>
	<p>Perhaps the most distinctive letter shape, this 'G' is very helpful in tying sources together.</p>
	<p>'L's and 'h's always have this characteristic back-flick.</p>
	<p>Another highly distinctive letter, the 'p' nearly always has a reverse-flick tail.</p>
	<p>The 'z' is reminiscent of a crotchet rest shape.</p>
	<p>A classic version of the italic 'Q'.</p>

**Table 2-6: Distinctive letter forms in Matteis's hand**

These letterforms can be seen throughout the following examples in sufficient numbers to confirm that it is almost certainly the same hand in each case. The only real differences, apart from small matters such as the size and shape of the clef (which are small enough to ignore), are the different shapes of the rests. Given the general

overall consistency these small differences can be put down to the inevitable inconsistencies which do appear within different examples of the same hand. Similarly, the examples appear to confirm that differences of barring had no particular importance:

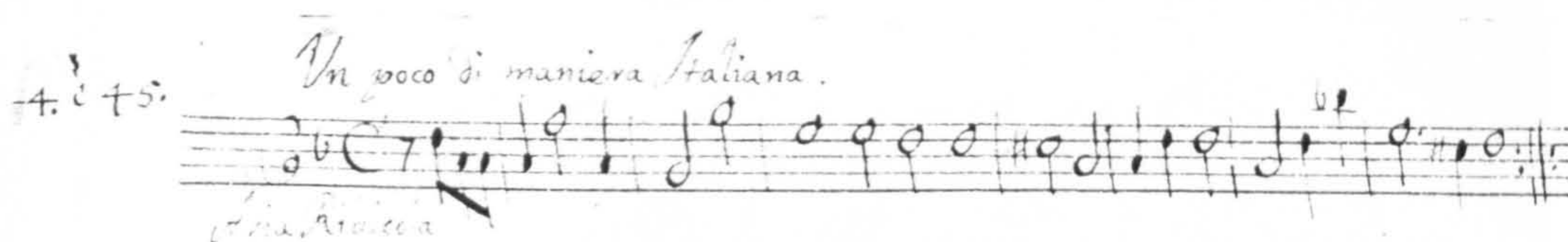


Plate 2-35: *Un poco di maniera Italiana* Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, No.44

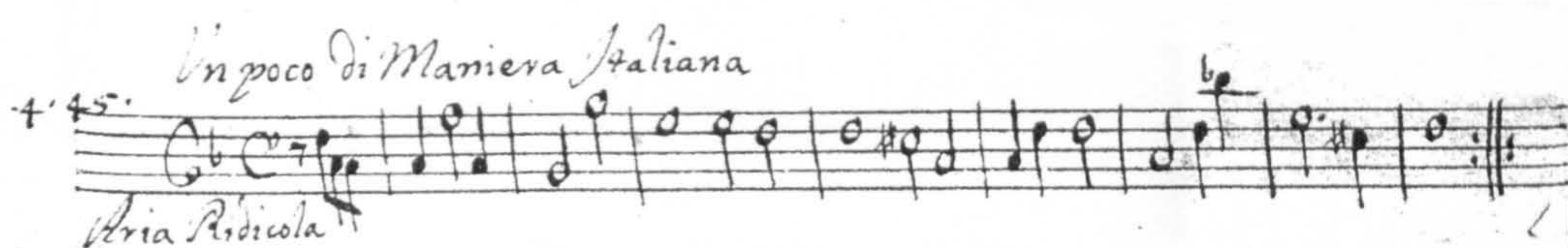


Plate 2-36: *Un poco di maniera Italiana* Lbl K.1.f.11, No.44

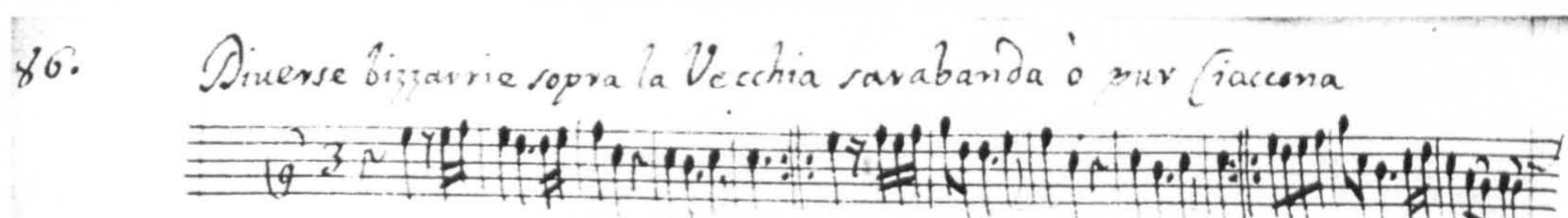


Plate 2-37: *Diverse bizzarrie* Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, No.86



Plate 2-38: *Diverse bizzarrie* Lbl K.1.f.11, No.86

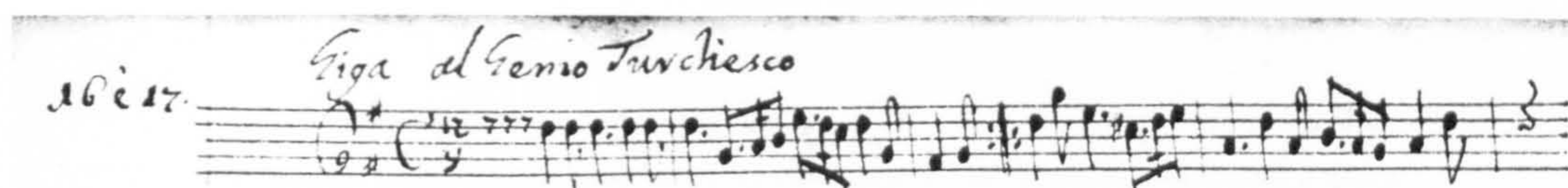


Plate 2-39: *Giga al Genio Turchesco* Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, No.16

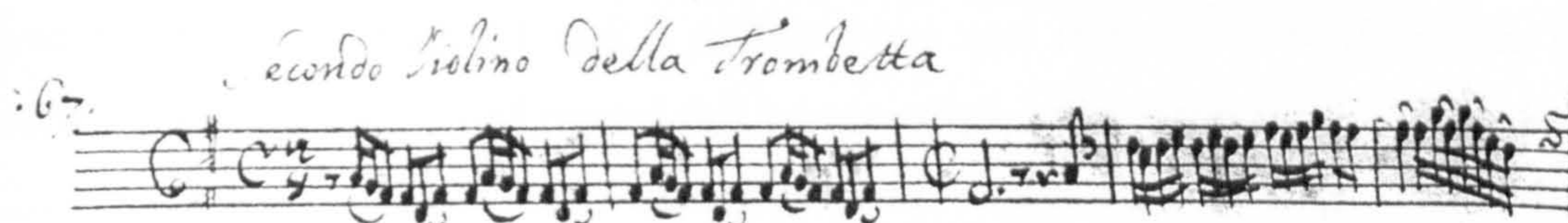


Plate 2-40: *Secondo Violino della Trombetta* Lbl K.1.f.11, No.67

The similarity between the formation of the number '8's in the numbering and in the time signatures is striking, and the confident strokes of the tails in the music find clear echoes in the beautiful italic hand of the titles.<sup>70</sup>

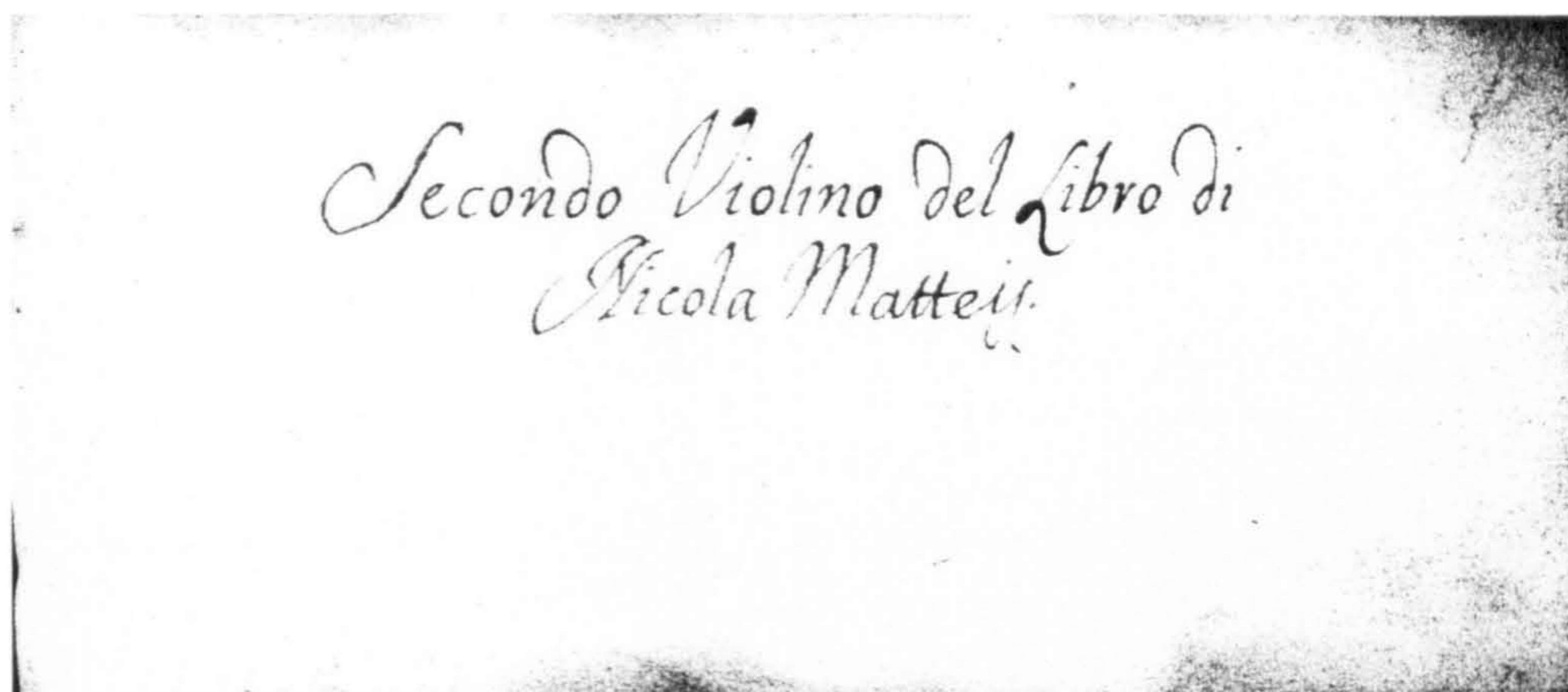


Plate 2-41: Title-page of Ob Mus. Sch. G.613

Plate 2-41 shows that the title-page is in the same hand and compares closely with that of I-Vnm Contarini 9988, despite its different formation of the capital 'N':

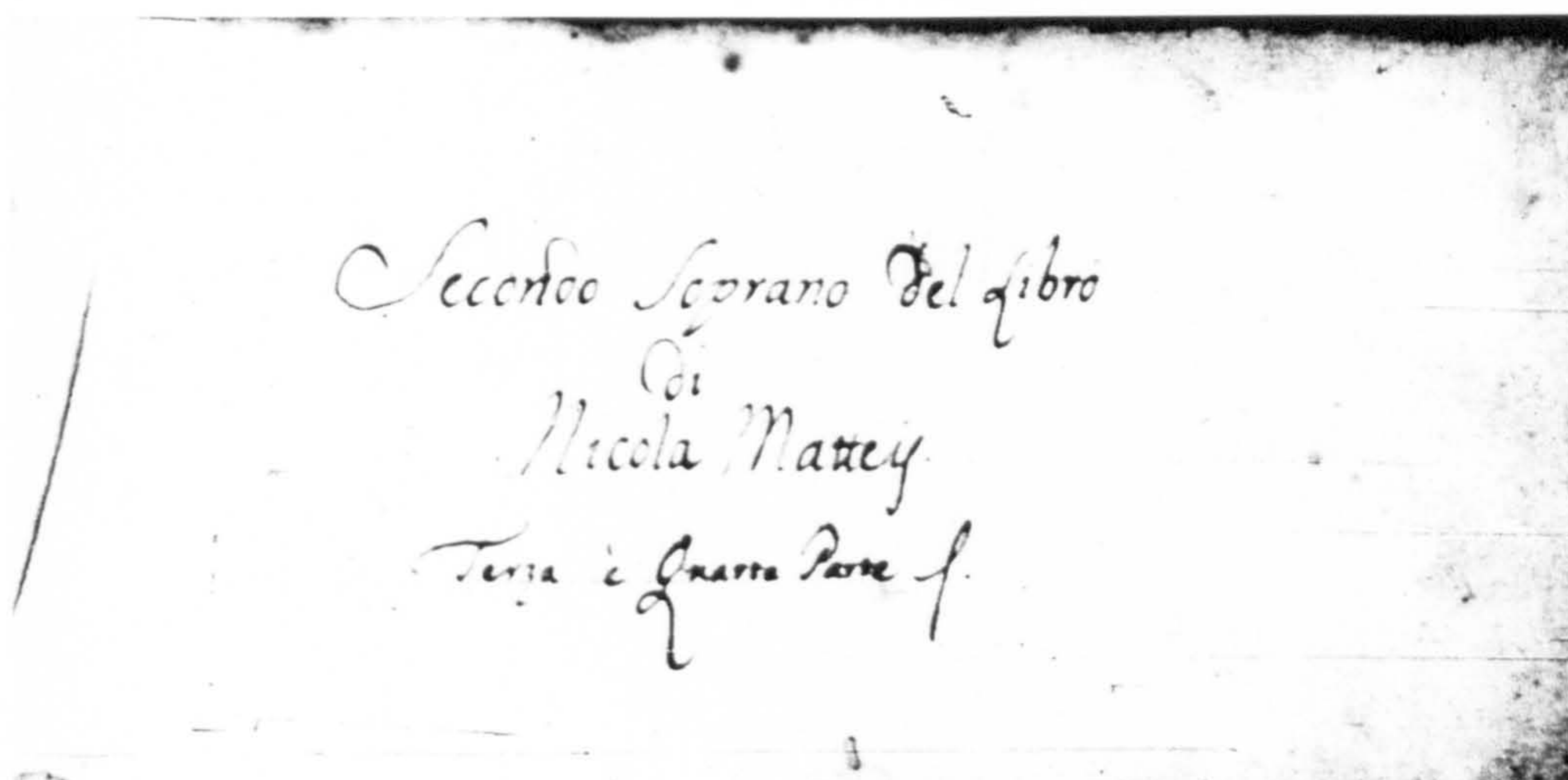


Plate 2-42: Title-page of second violin part, I-Vnm Contarini 9988

Examples of this hand also occur in I-Vnm Contarini 9989. This manuscript is a unique tenor part to Books 1 and 2 of the *Ayres* and is exciting confirmation of Matteis's assertion that he had copied this inner part along with the second violin part

<sup>70</sup> Note also the inclusion of the linking word 'e' [and] in between numbers in the Bodleian source which would clearly be as compatible with an Italian scribe as would the italic style of the script.

of which there are so many more examples extant. This important find has not yet been photographed and it has therefore been impossible to include photocopied examples. For the most part, the copy actually shows great similarity with the Oxford second violin part. In matters such as quaver tails, beaming and rests it is similar to those we have come to expect of the Cardiff group but as with Ob Mus. Sch. G.613 the minims are rounder and with the descending note tails attached at the mid-point rather than to the left or right. Lower case 'g's and 'e's are formed in the same way, in both sources the semiquavers in the dotted quaver/semiquaver groups are characterised by a cut across the note stem and the end flourishes are quite similar in execution. Meanwhile, the titles are written in what appears to be a different hand from any that have been seen so far in the other manuscripts, although in certain places the scribe was clearly copying the printed form of the titles. Further examination shows that the 'p' of stampato in the title-page is very similar to the type of 'p' found in CDu MC59 and there are further slight resonances in terms of some of the capital 'T's, 'P's and 'G's, although in not enough instances to reach any firm conclusions. However, everything seems to change at number 60 of part 1 where the style alters for this number; the clef is a different shape, the C time signature is smaller and neater and the music itself, whilst retaining the same overall look, is smaller and neater. Alongside these changes, the hand of the titles is now the same as in *Le False Consonanse della Musica*. The same thing happens in various other numbers throughout the rest of the manuscript and in each case the hand (at least in terms of the titles) is very different. It is beyond the scope of this study to determine absolutely whether the music in these cases is the same scribe writing more neatly or whether it is a different hand. Similarly it is once more not possible to tell whether the titles are in the same hand as the music in each case. However, it is clear that the person who wrote out *Le False Consonanse della Musica* had at least some input into this source.

Lbl K.1.f.11 (1) concords strongly with Ob Mus. Sch. G.613: the clefs and time signatures are similar, as is the slant of the music, the sharps and flats, the end flourishes, the use of a custos at the end of lines to show the continuation of the music and the predilection for attaching descending note tails to the middle of minims. All of these features would argue for the same hand although it is not quite this straightforward. The shape of the rests differs, though this also happens within *Le False Consonanse*, and the music differs slightly as well, both in details of the

melody and in a general lack of consistency between Lbl K.1.f.11 (1) and Ob Mus. Sch. G.613. Watermark evidence is not of much use in this instance for all the marks found in both sources are those which could place the paper anywhere within a time frame of ten or more years.

Another significant appearance of 'Matteis's' hand is in the printed source of the third and fourth books of the *Ayres* dedicated to the 'Prince Electoral Palatin':



Plate 2-43: Possibly Matteis's hand in *Minuetto con sua Divisione* Book 4, No.20

I consider it significant that the writing in this instance is an instruction to the player as it seems consistent with the idea of Matteis checking through the prints and manuscripts and amending or adding as he thought necessary. Although there is rather too little of the handwriting to be readily identifiable, the same post-engraving corrections occur elsewhere in this copy of Books 3 and 4. In number 6 of Book 3 extra figures have been written in for the bass line:

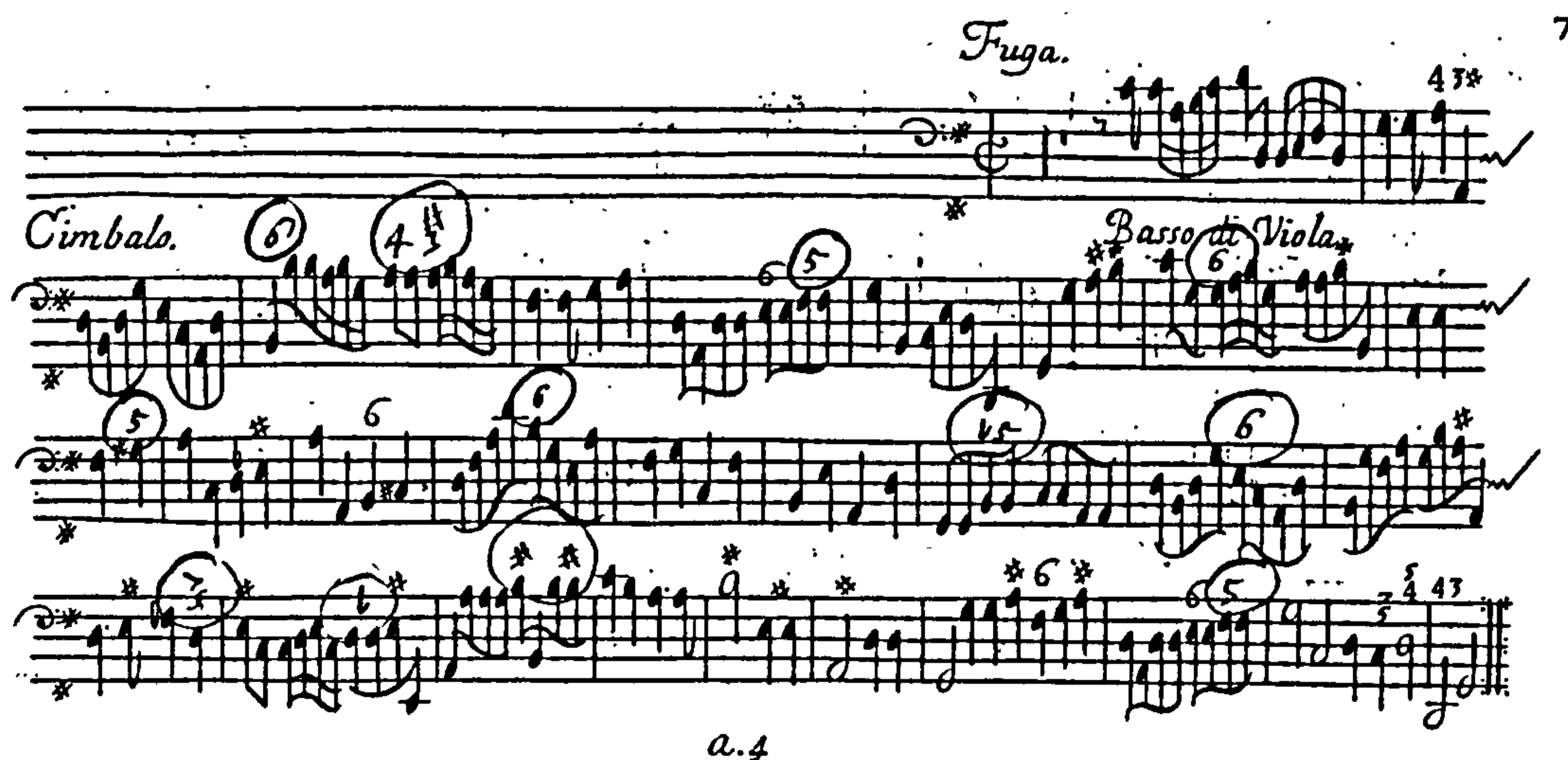


Plate 2-44: *Fuga* Book 3, No.6

The circled figures are hand-written. Significantly, these additional figures were all



printed in the 1687 re-issue of this edition which begs the question who other than Matteis would have had the authority to add features which would then appear in a print? And, moreover, the '3' of the inserted '43' figure is identical to the '3's found in other sources, including *Le False Consonanse della Musica* (see page 115):

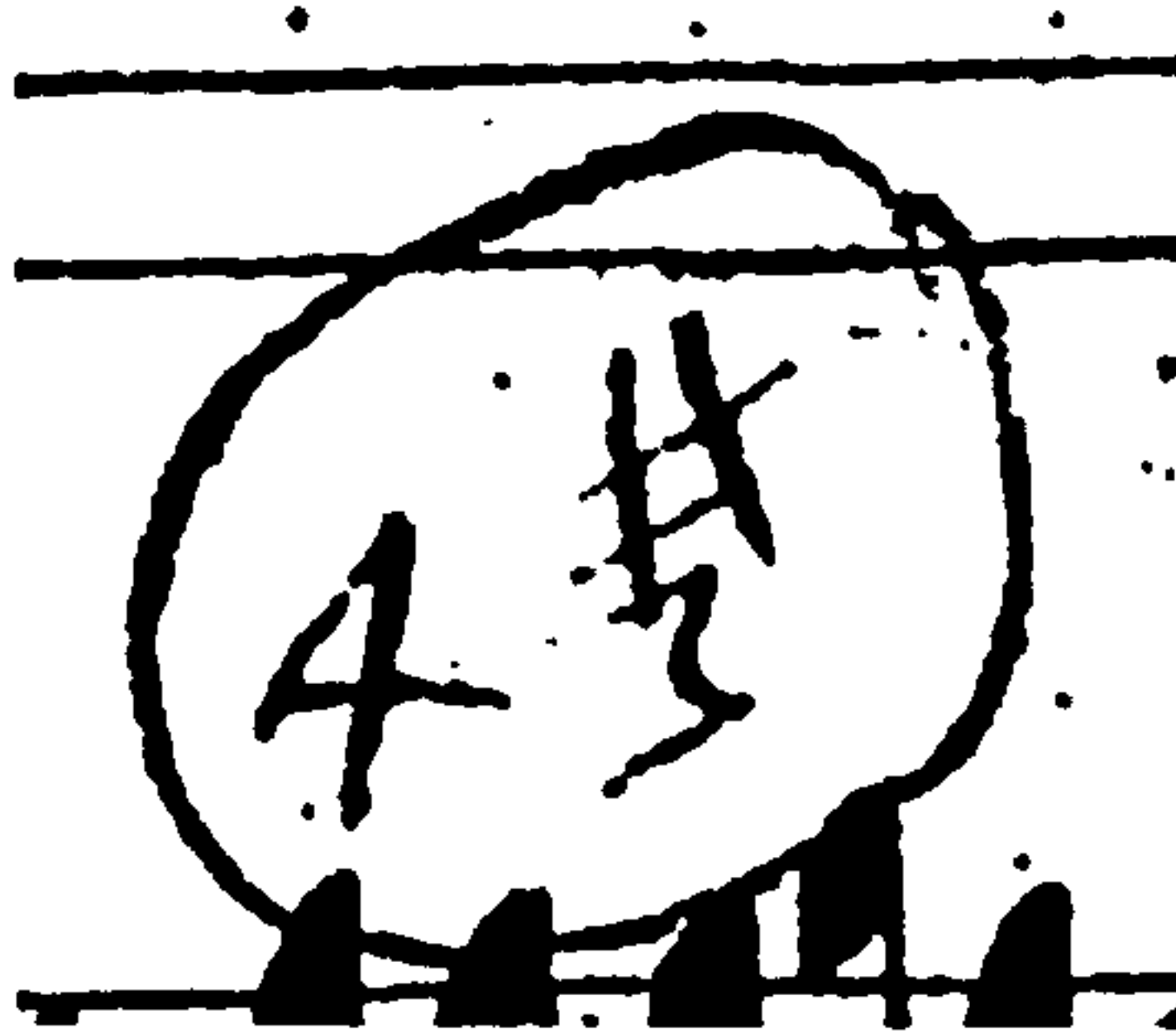


Plate 2-45: Close-up of the distinctive '3' in the figured bass of Lbl Hirsch IV 1633

The same type of instructional input occurs in Lbl Hirsch IV 1633:



Plate 2-46: *Fuga* Lbl Hirsch IV 1633, No.83

At the bottom right of the page the word "Goan" appears to use the same distinctive G. It is not entirely clear what exactly is being referred to although a best guess would appear to be that it means 'Go on' — i.e. attacca into the next movement. This is the only example of this style of writing in the source but is yet again consistent with the idea of Matteis providing performing instructions for his clients.

Unless one is careful, any assessment of manuscript sources risks turning into an involuntary form of Chinese Whispers, since there are quite often one or two aspects which link manuscript A with manuscript B, yet others which link B to C and so on. But compare A with E and there is no apparent link. Sometimes one just needs to look at the two parts side by side to know that they are not in the same hand, despite evidence of similarity. A case in point is the Washington source of the second violin part to Books 1 and 2, which its one-time owner, Taphouse, claimed was in the same

hand as the Bodleian copy of the same part.

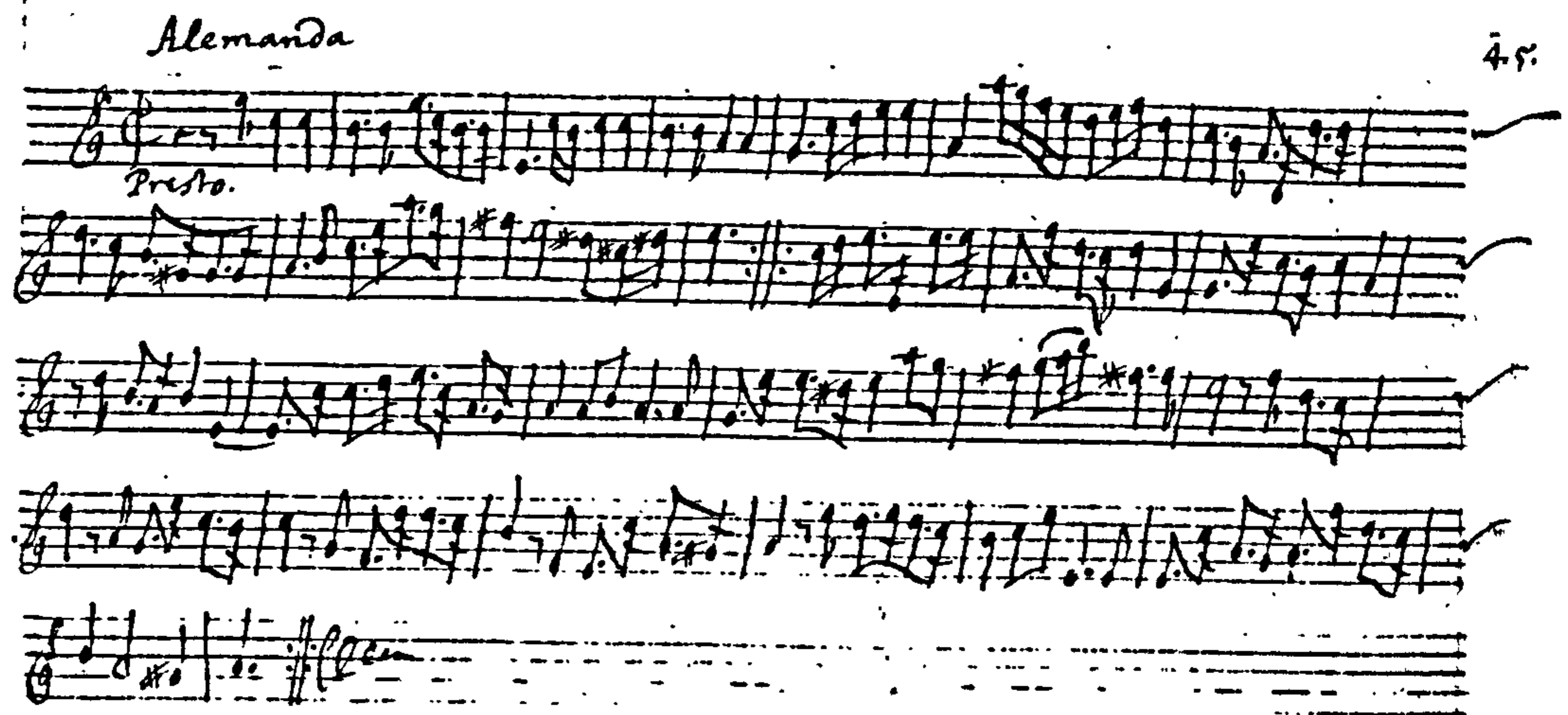


Plate 2-47: *Alemanda* US-Wc M1490.M43 Case Vol. 2, No.45

One glance, however, shows that the hands are not the same; the scribe here is clearly not as experienced as that of the Bodleian for whilst it is neat, the pen does not flow in the same way, being more careful and stilted.<sup>71</sup> The clefs, rests and slant of the hand are different also but the main difference is perhaps the less confident beaming as will be seen by comparing with this short example:

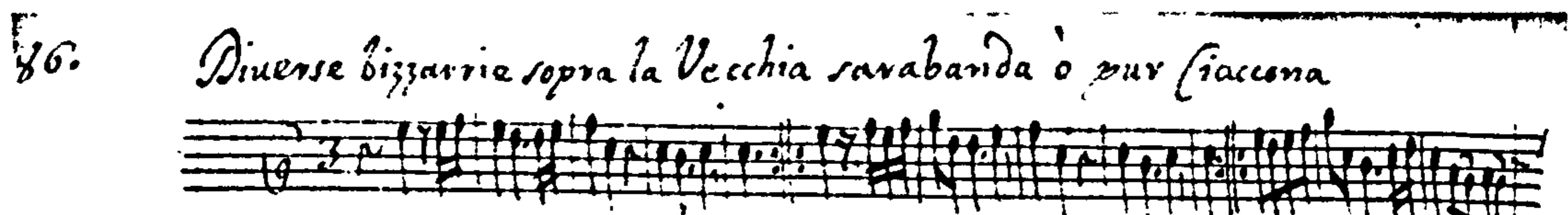


Plate 2-48: *Diverse bizzarrie* Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, No.86

The Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 hand is hard to place in the overall scheme of things because, whilst it shares some similarities with the 'Cardiff style' (the curve of the beaming and the projection of the note-tails proud of this beaming for example), in many details it appears to be more similar to *Le False Consonanse della Musica*. Note the shape of the bass clef, the hand of the bass figures, the density of the notes, the shape

<sup>71</sup> The practice of placing a slash across the beam for a single semi-quaver is found throughout most of the Matteis sources but, having looked at many other hands from the time, this seems to be a very common characteristic of the period and is not indicative of a specific scribe.

of the note-heads, the beaming and the barlines. In each hand the note-heads are connected to the right-hand side of the note head whether the tails rise or fall.



Plate 2-49: *Le False Consonanse della Musica*<sup>72</sup>



Plate 2-50: *Fughetta Lbl Hirsch IV 1633, No.83*

A closer look at the beaming of the quavers between elements of Hirsch and *Le False Consonanse della Musica* shows a similar shape to the note-head, a similar curve to the beam and a similar propensity to overshoot the beaming with the note tails:

<sup>72</sup> This plate (along with many others in the study) has been 'cleaned' as well as possible using computer technology. However, the age of the sources here allied to lightly less than perfect copying and occasional show-through does makes them difficult to read from time to time. The instruction in Plate 2-49 simply refers to the recommended manner of accompaniment when the bass is moving in quavers (crome).

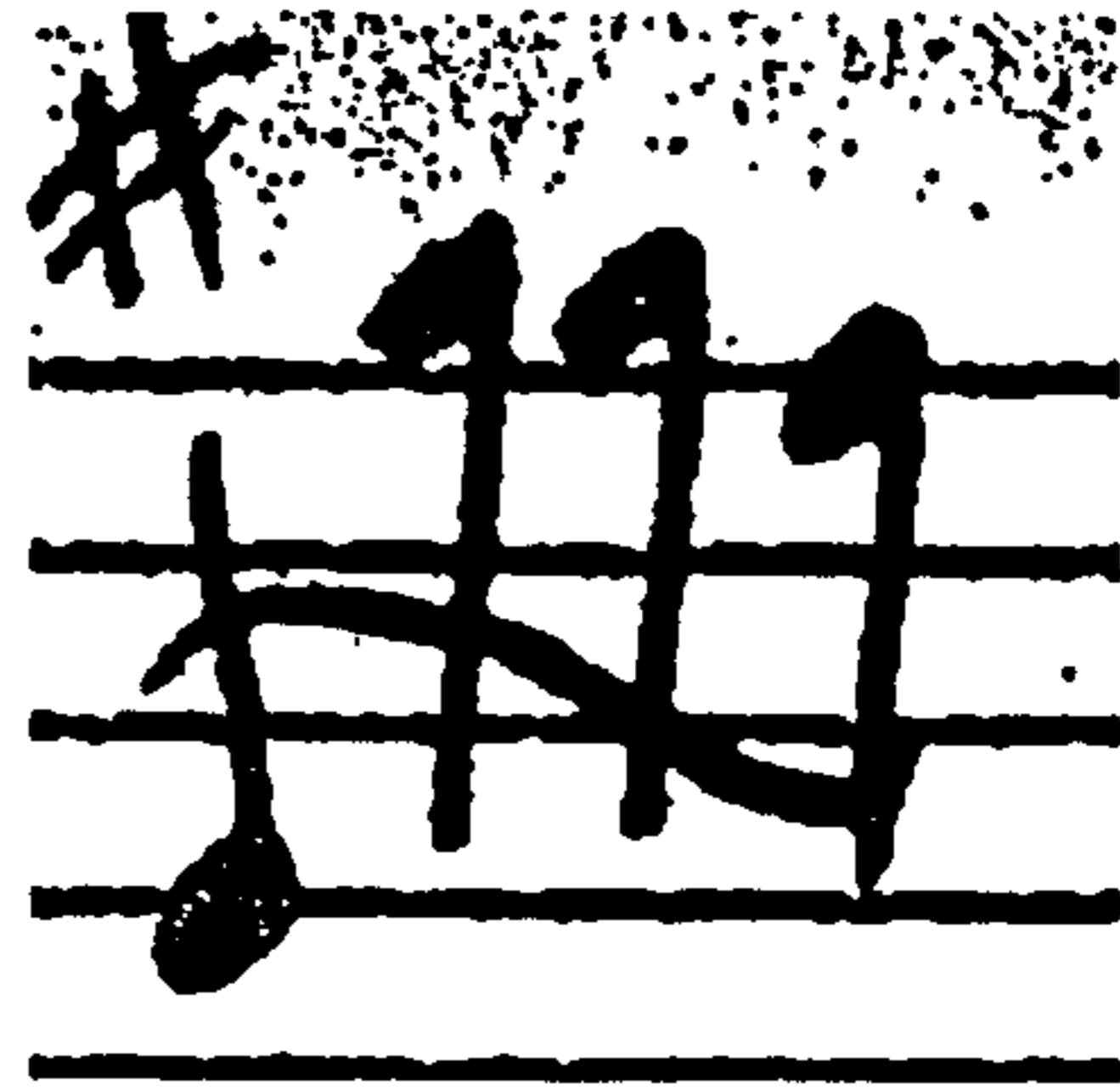
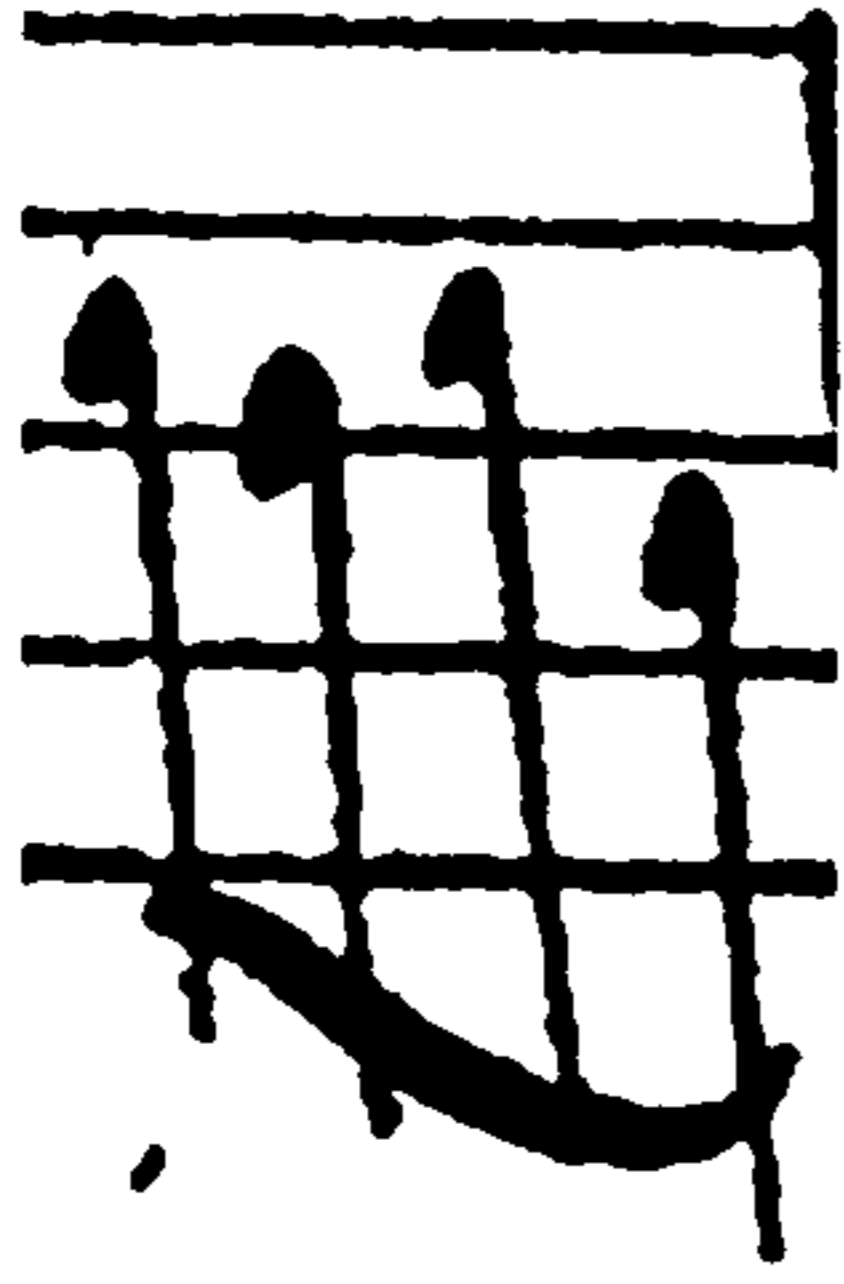


Plate 2-51: Note heads and beaming from Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 (left) and *Le False Consonanse*

Despite a thinner pen stroke in Hirsch, these two sources generally display the same method of formation and roughly similar angles in respect of the sharps and flats:<sup>73</sup>

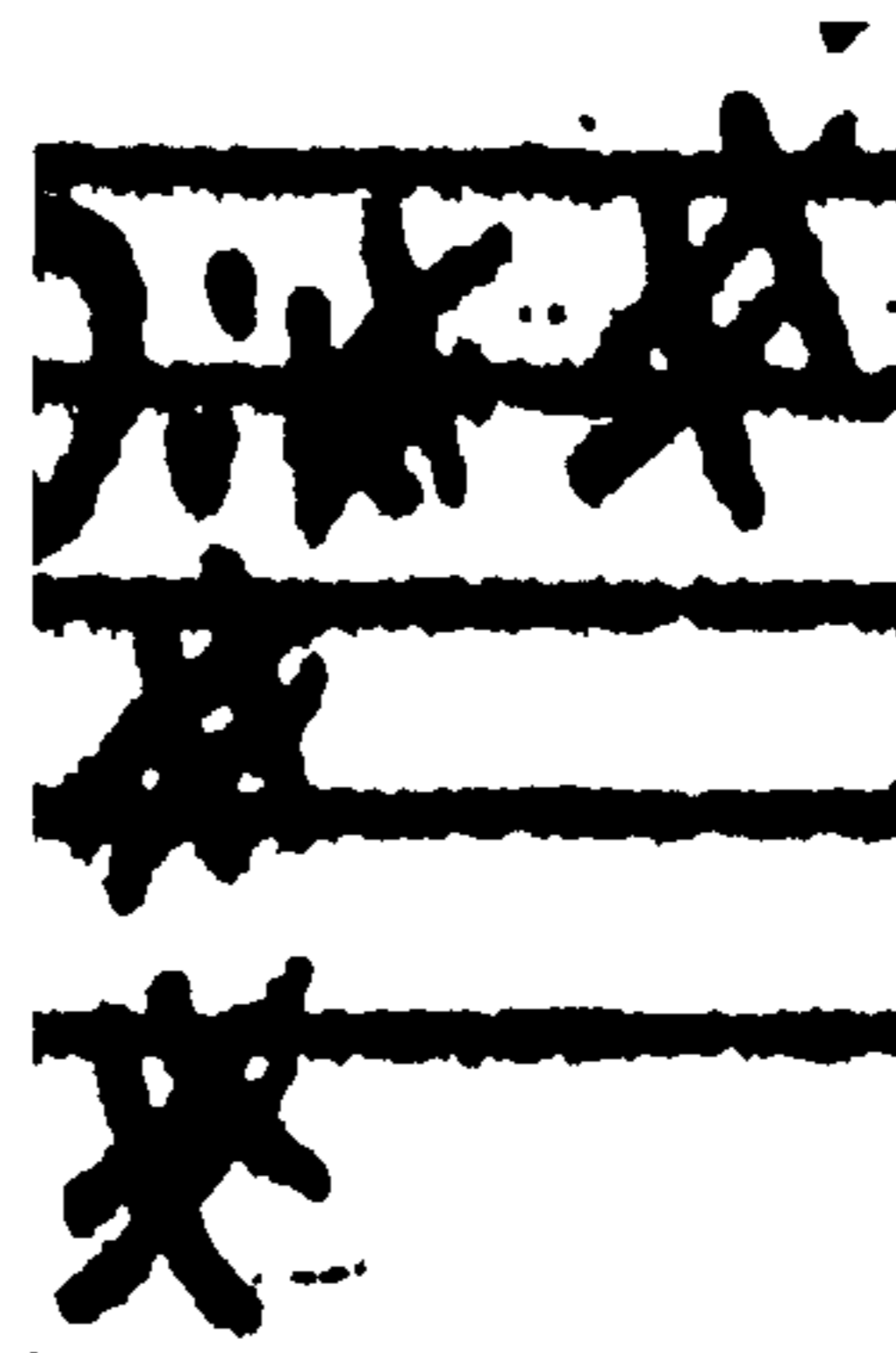
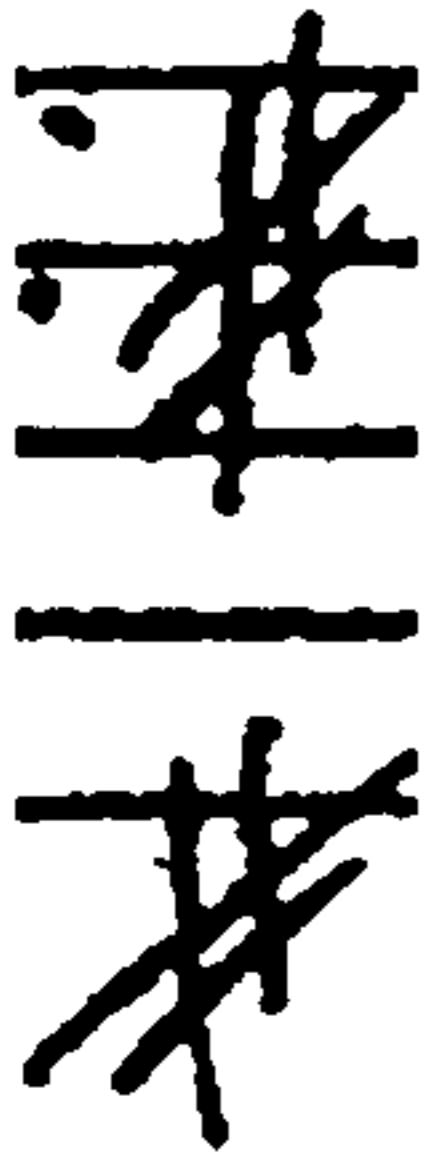


Plate 2-52: Sharps from Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 (left) and *Le False Consonanse della Musica*

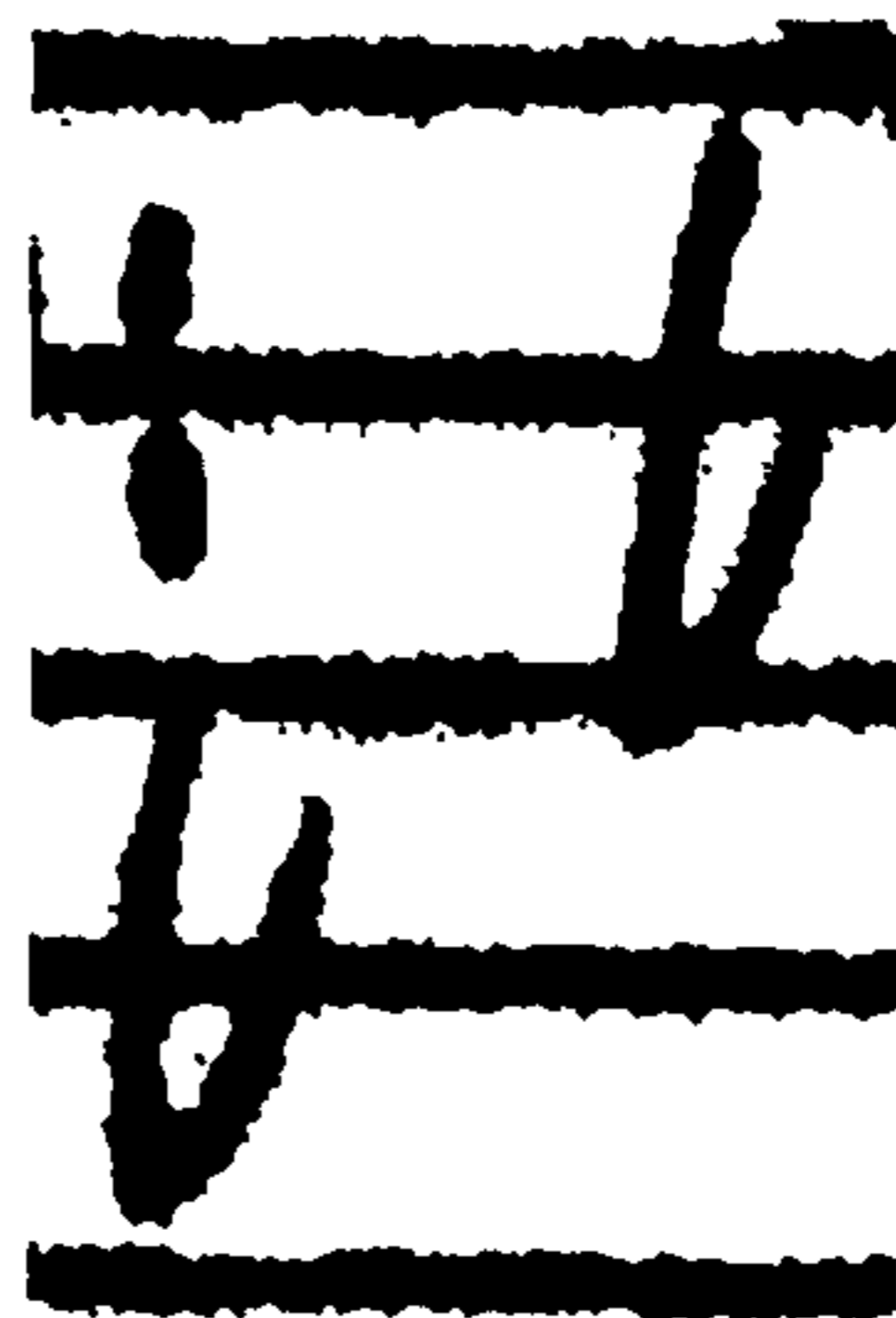
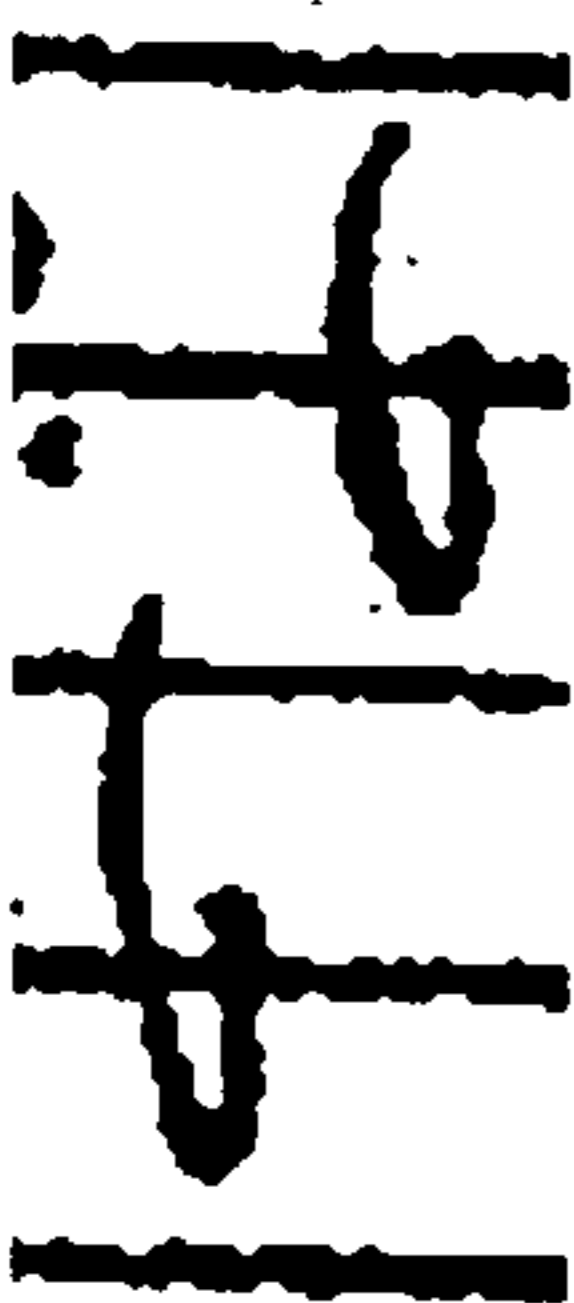


Plate 2-53: Flats from Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 (left) and *Le False Consonanse*

<sup>73</sup> D.M. Ellen points out that the angle of the writing is of far less relevance than the way the shapes are formed in comparing handwriting, so it is possible to ignore slight variations in the direction of the accidentals.

There is also a similarity in the distinctive shape of the capital 'E':

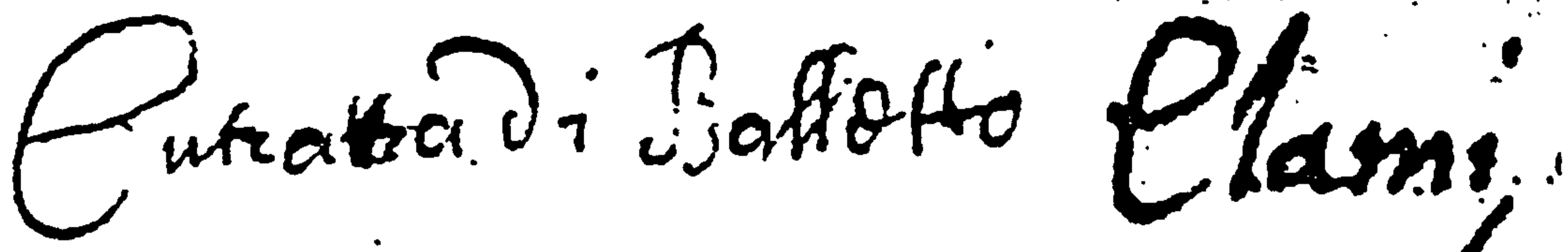


Plate 2-54: Formation of 'E' from Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 (left) and *Le False Consonanse*

Allowing for a variation in nib thickness, it can nevertheless be seen that the letter 'E' has a similar overall shape and in each case seems to have been formed by two pen strokes. On its own this evidence means little, but when combined with several other points of similarity it provides an indication that there might be a common hand.

The main drawback to this type of analysis is that there is often no real consistency between the shapes even within a single source. Variations can be found in nearly all shapes and, conversely, exceptions can be found in the most seemingly consistent features. Whilst a single example is not enough on which to base an argument it is certainly enough to sow a seed of doubt. A good example of this regards the formation of number '8s' in these previously-mentioned sources:

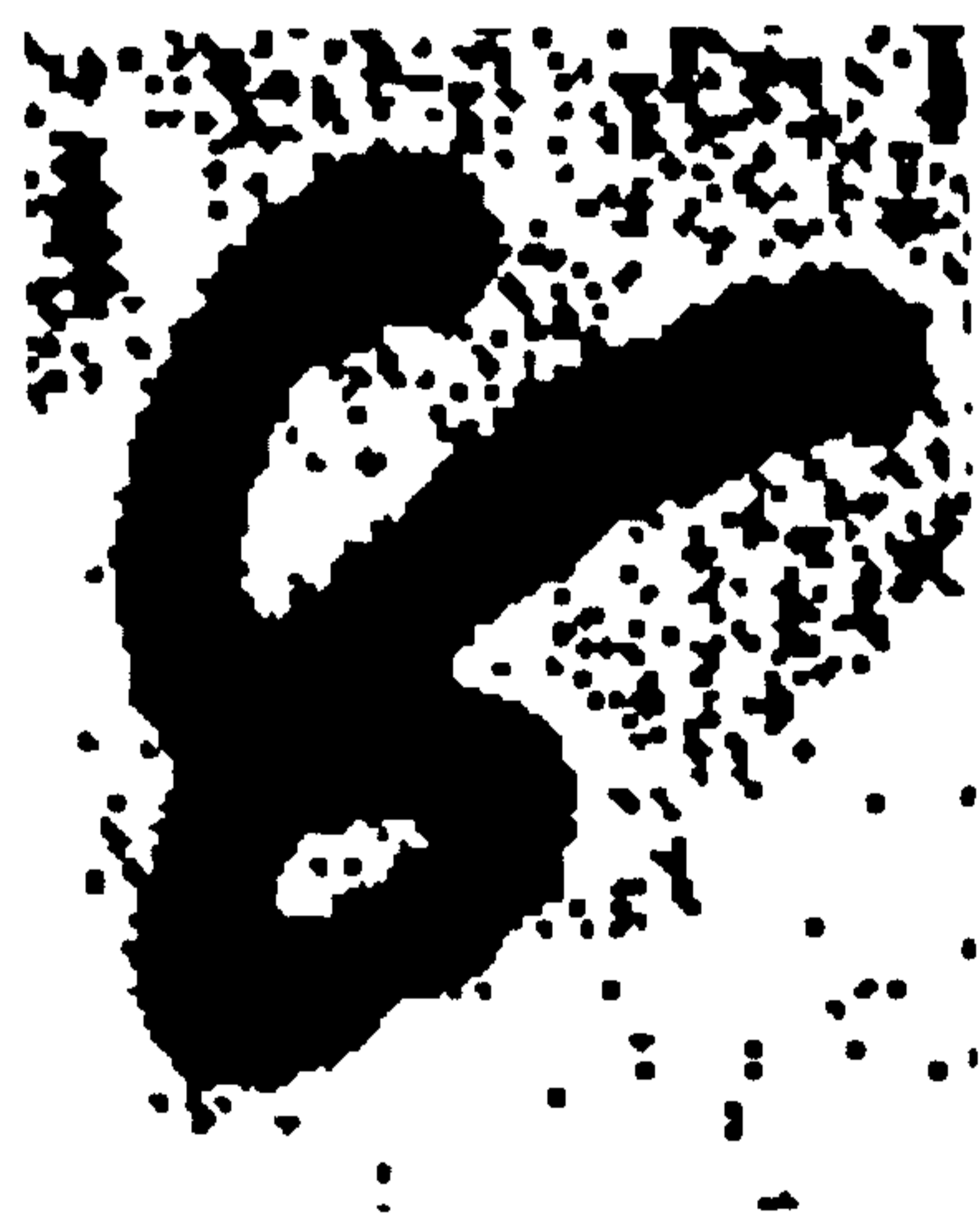
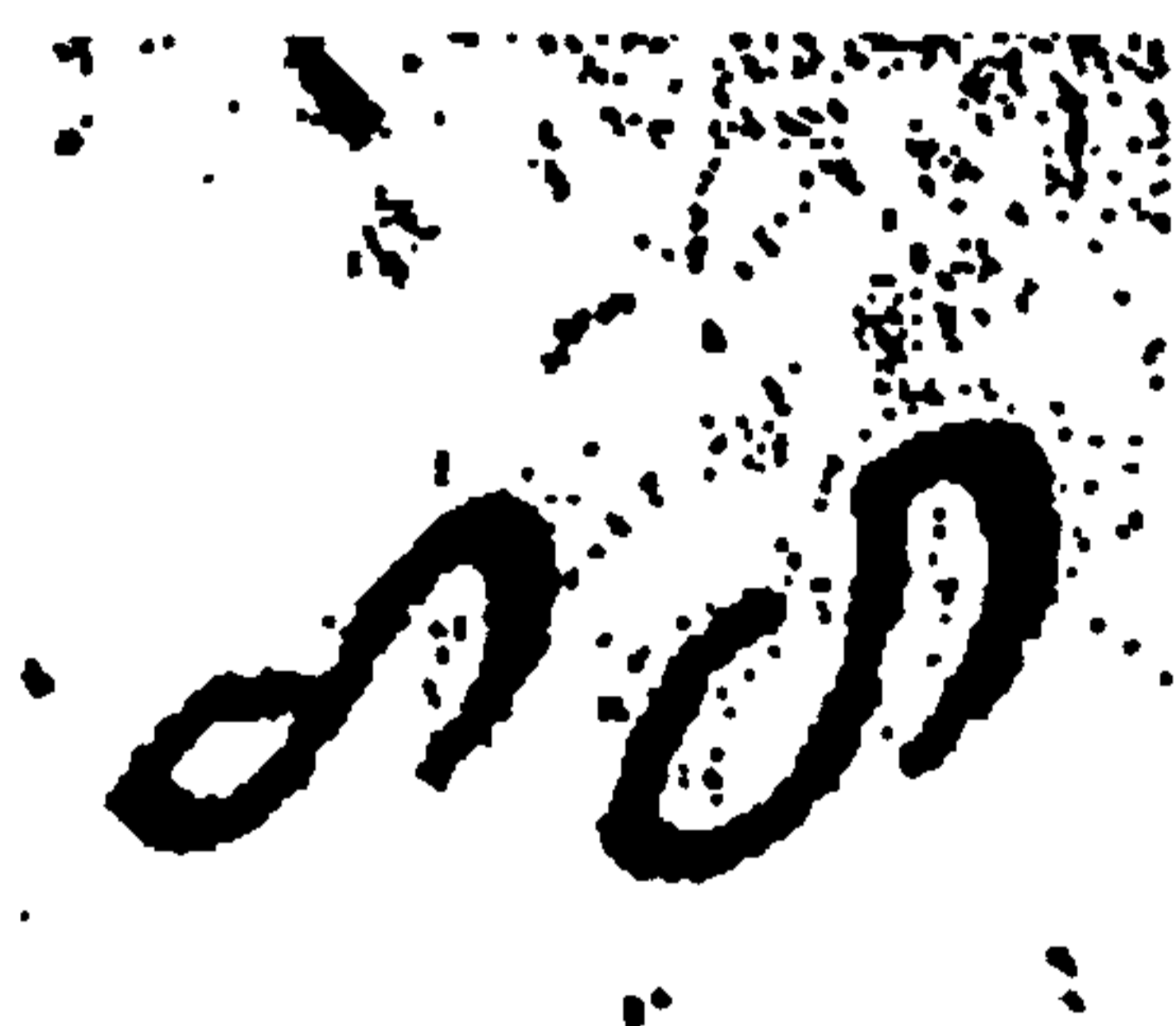


Plate 2-55: Figure '8's in Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 (left) and *Le False Consonanse*

However, compare the following '8' which also appears in Lbl Hirsch IV 1633:



**Plate 2-56: Contrasting '8' in Lbl Hirsch IV 1633**

Is this possible evidence that someone else (perhaps even Matteis) had an input into the preparation of Lbl Hirsch IV 1633?

Despite the musical similarities, the written titles (aside from occasional examples such as the capital 'E') are seemingly quite unrelated. *Le False Consonanse della Musica* adheres to an italic style whilst Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 displays an older, transitional secretary hand with elements of italicism. Whilst the most probable explanation is that there was a different scribe for each source, it is not impossible that it was in fact one scribe using two handwriting styles. Certainly the more rough and ready feel of Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 could suggest that it was more of a working copy, for if it were destined for a special client one might have expected fewer mistakes and more neatness. It is also slightly strange that this source has a doctored title-page from the Italian issue of Books 1 and 2. Whether Matteis would have used such a thing in a presentation copy is open to discussion and there are certainly several suggestions that this source was quite close to Matteis. It is possible that a brief consideration of any marginalia and addenda in the various volumes might help clarify the situation since various pieces of writing and drawing have been added to many of the sources over the years. Very few of these bear any dates but there are nevertheless various interesting pieces of information contained therein:

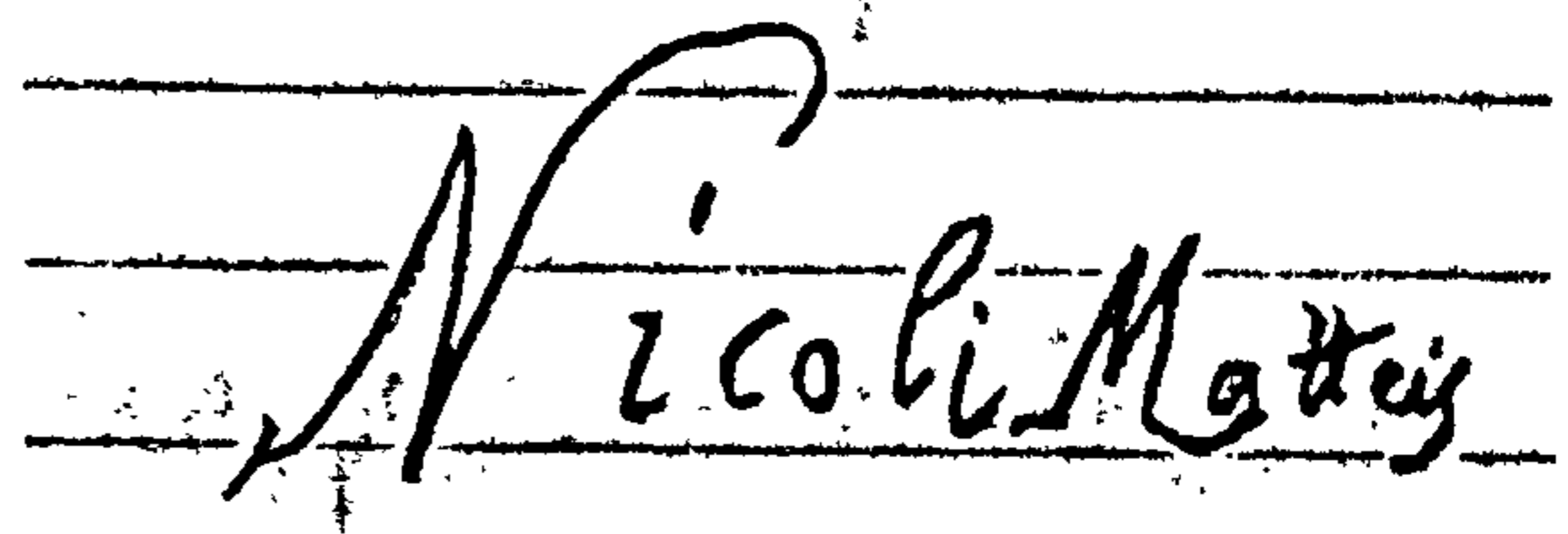
<b>Source</b>	<b>Marginalia</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Lbl Hirsch M1425	Flyleaf bears the following: 'Charles Tufton 1679', then in a different hand, 'Ex Dono Ceculii Bisshop Baroneti' then 'Nov 20th 79 Mune Johannis Rumney Donum Caroli Tufton Equitis'. Then on the next page in what could be the same hand as 'mune Johannis' is the name 'John	The information that the volume was not a direct gift from Matteis might explain the slightly late date for this first edition.

	Godschalke’.	
Lbl K.1.f.10 (1)	Doodles and lists of monetary additions	Linking to CDu MC62?
CDu MC62	Doodles and lists of monetary additions	Linking to Lbl K.1.f.10 (1)?
Och Mus. 939	Attempts to copy the ‘z’ of <i>Le False Consonanse della Musica</i> and one instance of a drawing of a face.	Linking Lbl Hirsch III 397 perhaps?
Lbl Hirsch III 397	In the flyleaf: ‘Dear Lady Barbara Legge...has a sweet voice’, ‘Anne Duncoumb’ ‘mr gnu’ (or something that looks remarkably like this). Then three drawings: a small face, a larger face and a full figure of a woman. The recto has five more heads, an eyebrow, one set of eyes, one face without head and a side view of an eye. Then at the end of the book on the verso of the last flyleaf it says something like ‘Dum cecinour vire or vive Faminee seftn (or sesin or resin)’ Also the words ‘Preludio’ and ‘Adagio’ have been written in (in the same hand) next to the printed words in the first number of the first book.	The hand is identical to doodles found in Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a and the faces recall the cover of Lbl Hirsch IV 1633. Lady Barbara Legge was the wife of George Legge, 1 <sup>st</sup> Baron Dartmouth. They married shortly before 1670. Anne Duncoumb has evaded identification but may be related to the family at Duncombe Park near Helmsley, North Yorkshire. Clearly links to Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a.
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a	‘Anne Duncoumb, a’ (then page tear) and underneath ‘Catherine’ and ‘nicola’ written twice. These are in the same hand as the doodles in Hirsch III 397.	Clear links to Lbl Hirsch III 397
Lbl Hirsch IV 1633	The back cover has writing on including the name of Lady Essex Finch and also ‘Nicoli Matteis’. There are also faces drawn in the inside of the front cover.	This is probably Lady Essex Rich, daughter of the Earl of Warwick who married Daniel Finch, second Earl of Nottingham.

Table 2-7: Marginalia in the sources

Whilst it is mostly in the prints that one finds the ‘doodling’, the most interesting marginalia is that found in Lbl Hirsch IV 1633. It is striking that there are such clear links between many of these sources and that in so many cases they mention — or draw — various women. Taken alongside the references to singing and given Matteis junior’s eventual success in the area of singing teaching I cannot help but feel that these sources were close to the Matteis family. The name ‘Nicoli Matteis’ at the back

of Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 is a further suggestion that this might be the case. My feeling is that these copies may well be the ones that Matteis prepared either for his own use or for use in his violin lessons. Were the sums in the flyleaves evidence of Matteis's great interest in his monetary affairs? Perhaps the drawings of people were his own and concern people whom he taught? Perhaps the subject matter charts his growing acceptance into 'society'? Perhaps the pet-name form of Nicola Matteis (Nicolì) was his reference to his young son? Another possibility is that the author of the marginalia may have been the young Nicola writing in his own practice copies. By the time Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 was copied he would have been in his mid to late teens and possibly at an age when he may have developed crushes on some of the attractive women he was meeting through his father. Perhaps the addenda are later still and these marks are evidence of a more mature infatuation. Was the younger Matteis even one of the copyists of Matteis senior's work? A comparison of the writing of the name Nicola Matteis with the only example of what is almost certainly the younger Matteis's writing (on the St Cecilia's Day ticket) is inconclusive though shows certain similarities:



**Plate 2-57: Detail from the St Cecilia's Day ticket of 1696 compared with a tracing of the signature in Hirsch 1633**

Certain letters, such as the 'i' in Nicola, the elision of 'i' and 's' in Matteis and the capital 'N' are quite similar, especially bearing in mind that there would have been more than a decade between these two signatures. No proof is really possible but these possibilities provide a very human dimension to the otherwise fairly depersonalised subject of handwriting and source analysis.

Still to be looked at is manuscript F-Pn Rés. Vm<sup>7</sup> 741 which contains a suite of *Ayres* made up from Books 1 and 2. As has been mentioned, this is likely to be one of the copies Matteis took with him on his journey to France in 1679. Perhaps temporarily displaced because of the Test Act of that year, along with many other Catholics in England at the time, he went to France aiming to duplicate his English success



though, according to North, he found that 'pistolls did not walk as fast as ginnys' and he came back to resume his career in England.<sup>74</sup> The source contains two hands, the less neat of which shows evidence of having followed the printed source quite closely to judge from the rather approximate attempts to copy the engraved flourishes. This is not a terribly attractive hand and gives the appearance of having been executed with rather more haste than care:



Plate 2-58: *Preludio*, F-Pn Rés. VM<sup>7</sup> 741 (Book 1, No. 1)

Though there are vague similarities between the overall 'look' of this hand and that of, particularly, *Le False Consonanse della Musica*, by any rational system of comparison there are insufficient correlations to make a particularly strong case for any sort of link.

The other hand in this source is equally hard to tie down. Like that of the Washington second violin part, it has no obvious concordances in terms of handwriting style though it is certainly a distinctive hand:

<sup>74</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356.

3<sup>e</sup> suite. *amila re a la terza miquela* V. n. 1482 3.

*fantasia*  
*Violino*  
*Solo senza*  
*Basso.*

Plate 2-59: *Fantasia*, F-Pn Rés. VM<sup>7</sup> 741 (Book 2, No.50)

This 'French' manuscript does link, though rather tenuously, with En Panmure Ms. 9464 in that this latter volume has some extra music in the spare pages towards the back of the book. Although I have not been able to identify the music (at least not as any of Matteis's known works) it is written in an ornate hand and with titles in French.

Plate 2-60: French titles from the back pages of En Panmure Ms. 9464

The musical hand is very different to either of those in F-Pn Rés. VM<sup>7</sup> 741 and there is an insufficient example of the handwriting to come to any firm conclusions but there is at least a possibility that there may be a common copyist — perhaps the same one who helped prepare the music for Matteis's trip to France? Generally, the Panmure manuscript loses some authority by having a title-page which has clearly

been copied from that of Lbl Hirsch IV 1633:

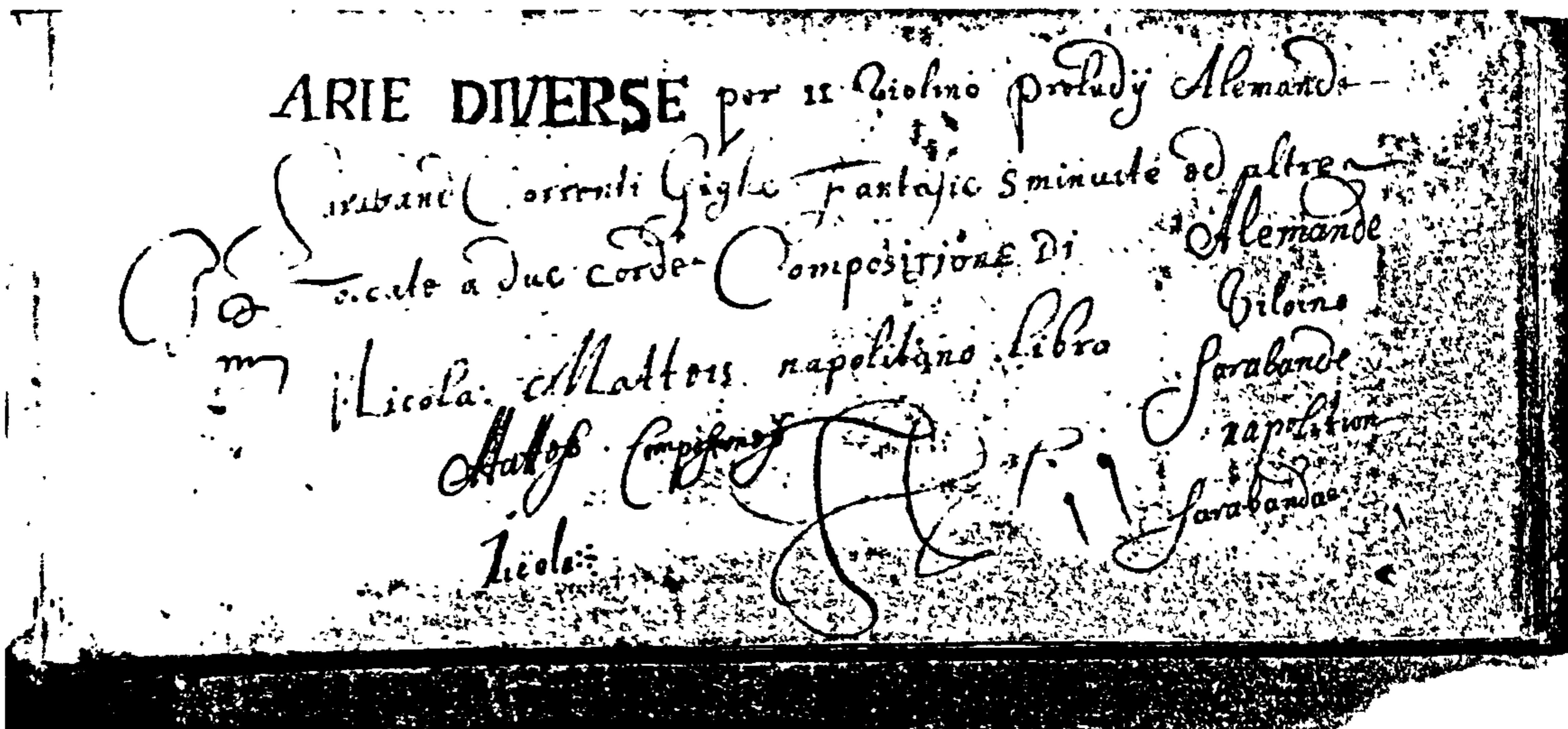


Plate 2-61: Title-page of En Panmure Ms. 9464

As well as the verbatim copy of the title-page<sup>75</sup> the copyist has apparently been practising the form of various words. Of course this does not mean that the copy is any less important but it does mean that the Hirsch version almost certainly pre-dates it; a fact which, when allied to the noticeable scarcity of marks of expression or *trills*, makes En Panmure Ms. 9464 one of the least informative of the manuscripts. This following example shows how the general hand of this source bears little resemblance to any of the other manuscripts:



Plate 2-62: [Untitled] En Panmure Ms. 9464, No.36

<sup>75</sup> The use of an old title-page from the Italian print of books 1 and 2 for Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 is confusing. Since no one else is likely to have had access to such a thing it has to be assumed this was Matteis's decision. The word 'Primo' has been stamped out with a blanking plate (perhaps it was intended to re-engage it with 'quinto'?) and this has been copied word for word in Panmure.

The watermarks in En Panmure Ms. 9464 are also different from those in most of the other printed and manuscript sources. For example, there are no Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys marks anywhere. In fact there is not one single concordance between the marks in this source and any other source that I have examined. The paper is particularly thick which makes the watermarks all the fainter, though it was possible to see that there are only two marks in this source, each of which repeats regularly throughout. Unfortunately, the second mark is almost impossible to discern although it would appear to consist of an ornate ring containing three small Fleurs-de-Lys. It is odd that this paper source should have been so different from all the others used by Matteis but it may suggest either that it is a later copy or that it was done by someone who was not a regular copyist for Matteis but who was familiar with his methods of presentation and the format he used.

It has been noted above that, on occasions, the printed sources were taken as an exemplar from which to copy the manuscripts. Occasionally, this was in order to produce what one might term a 'house-style' presentation but in other instances it was to replace missing or damaged pages. One such case involves the following title-page from Christ Church, Oxford.

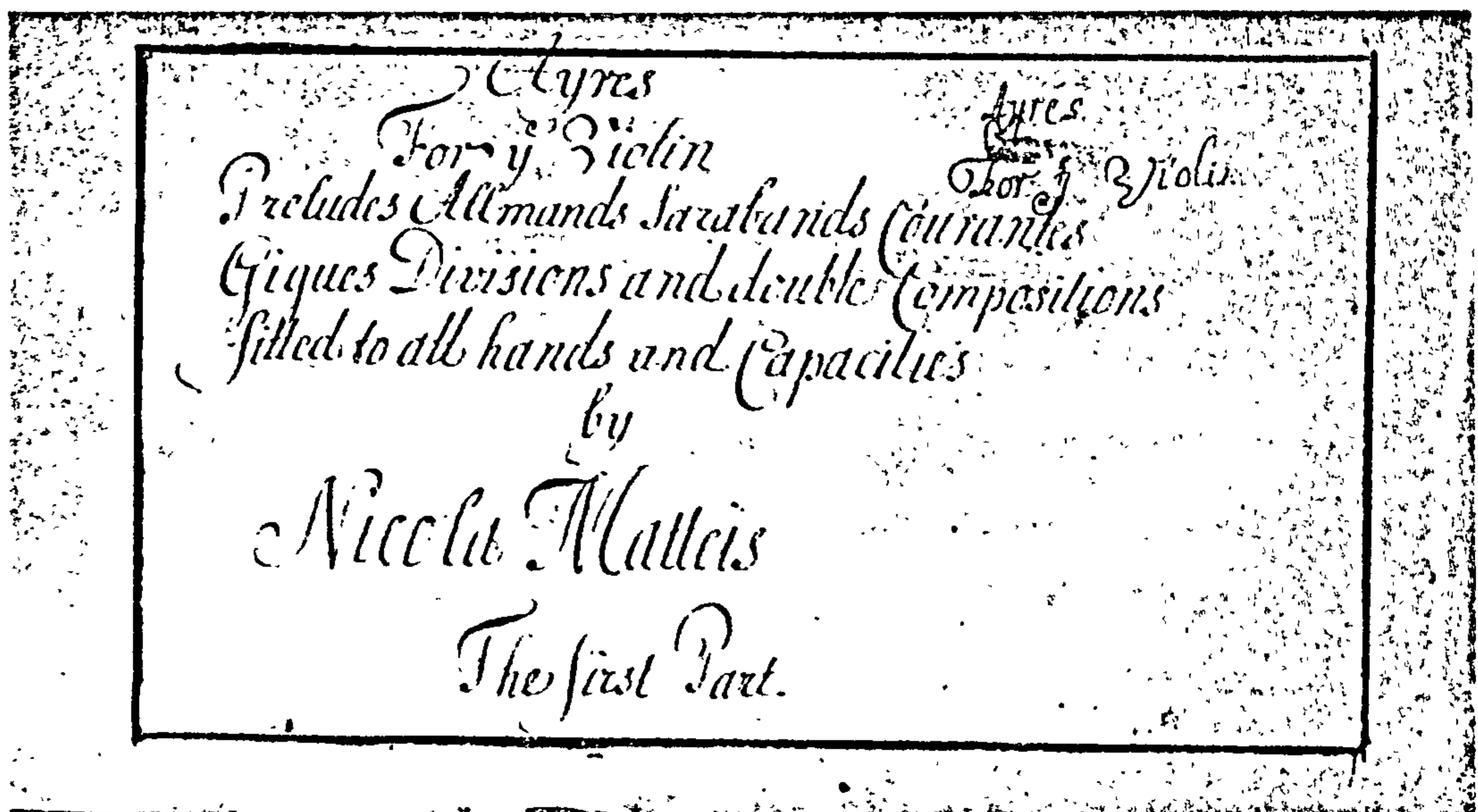


Plate 2-63: Title-page, Och Mus. 939

In this instance the title-page and several pages of the music have been copied with close attention to the original. However, quite the reverse procedure must have occurred at some stage for in order for the prints to have been engraved in the first

place, the engraver would have needed an exemplar form which to work, possibly provided by Matteis himself. Due to the nature of engraving, the printer had a great deal of freedom in terms of layout and style and was not limited by a set of type. I am not aware of any other surviving examples of the work of Matteis's two engravers, King and Greenfield. This is particularly frustrating in the case of King whose engraving it was in the first edition of Matteis work, since without other known examples of his engraving style, it is not possible to determine to what extent he copied from the exemplar with which Matteis must have provided him. However, I would suggest that there is sufficient evidence to show that he followed his exemplars quite closely. We can start by comparing the engraved style with Ob Mus. Sch. G.613, which is almost certainly Matteis's hand:

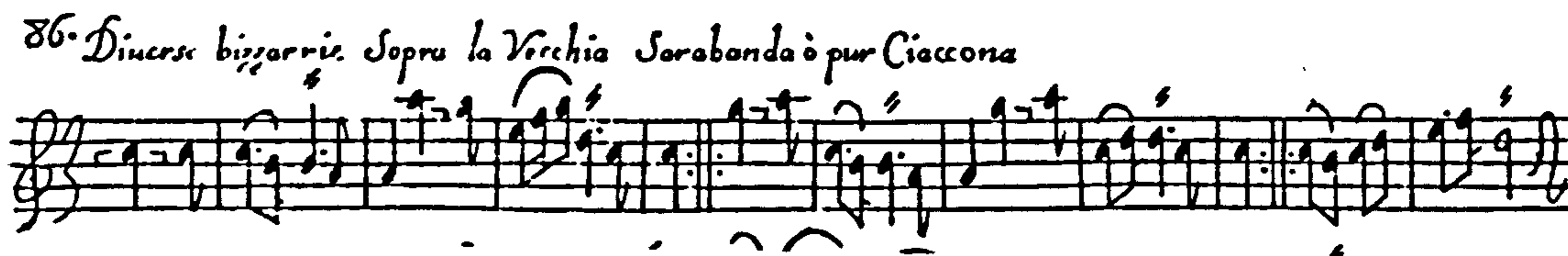
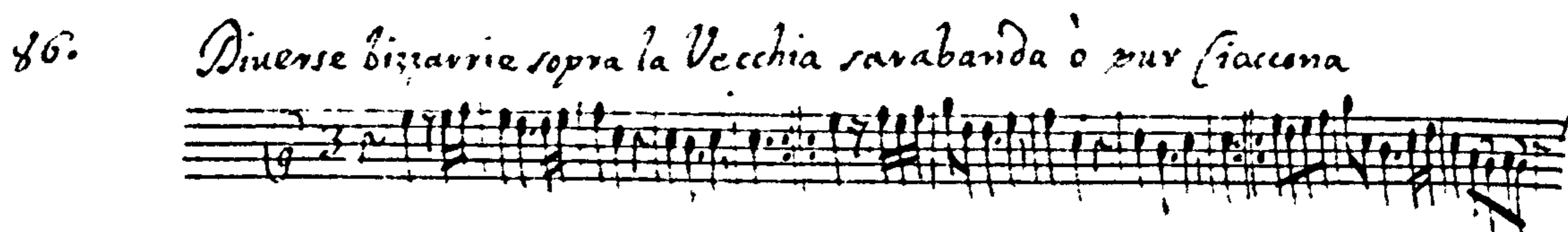


Plate 2-64: *Diverse bizzarrie* Book 1, No.86 Second violin from Ob Mus. Sch. G.613 and first violin from 1676 print.

The similarities — down to the page numbers — are obvious though it is not possible to say with authority which was copied from which. If we accept that the hand in the Oxford manuscript is that of Matteis then another interesting possibility presents itself. As we know, this hand occurs in many sources, including the manuscript of *Le False Consonanze*. This latter is a long manuscript and yet it displays a great consistency in the style and formation of the script. If the copyist had merely been reproducing the style from another exemplar or printed source then one would expect the style to slip occasionally, especially when the writing becomes more careless as it does later in the manuscript. It would be at this stage that letter formations would begin to differ and the more natural style of the copyist would start to show through. However, as the following example shows, this is not the case at all:

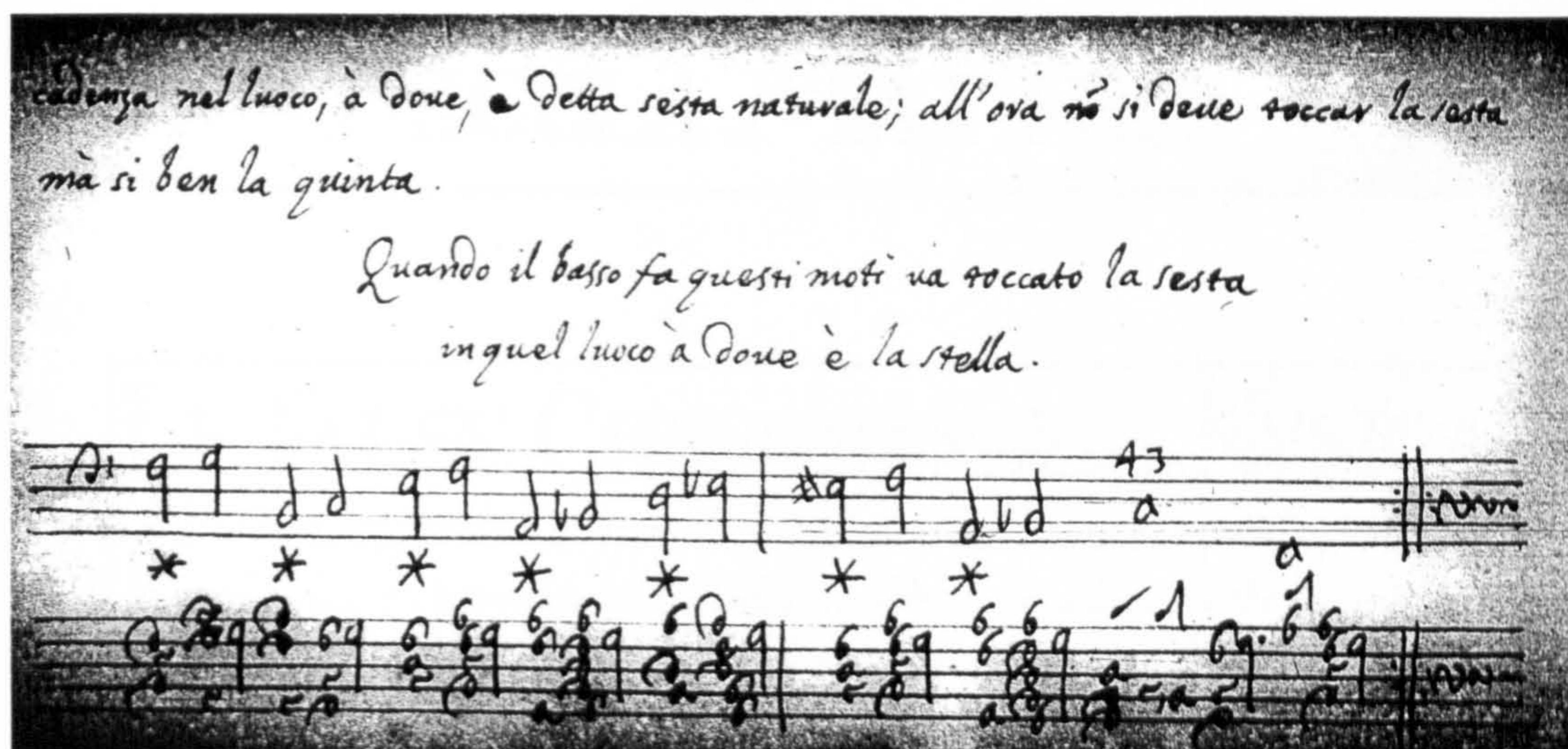
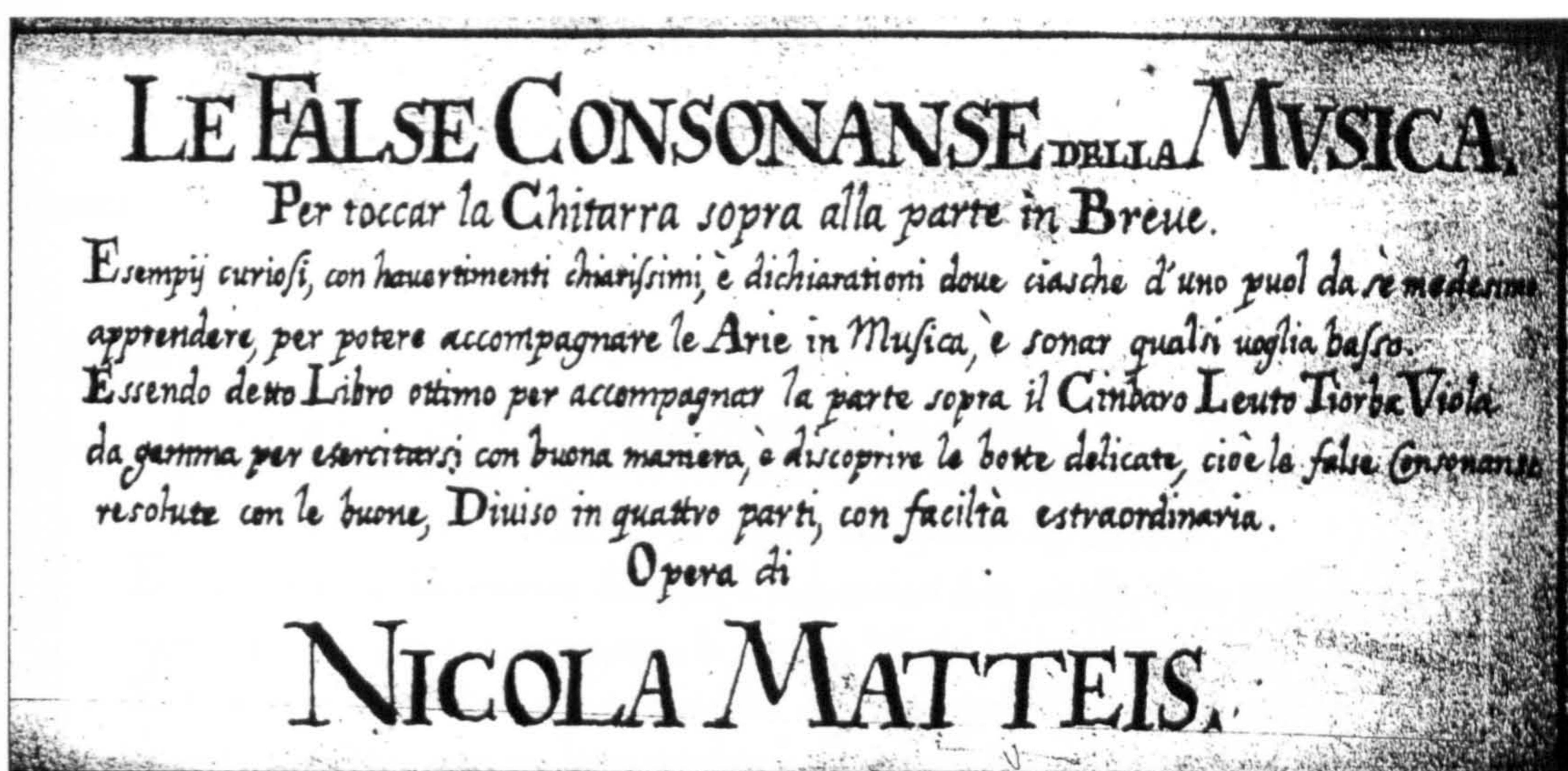


Plate 2-65: Showing the neat and less neat versions of the hand in *Le False Consonanse*<sup>76</sup>

And there is a yet more convincing reason for thinking that the manuscript in this case was not merely a copyist at work. *The False Consonances* exists in three versions: manuscript, English and Italian. The only version whose date we know with relative certainty is the English one which appeared in London in 1682. This was a reworking of the Italian version which had appeared sometime earlier, possibly around 1680. Many, though not all the same musical plates were used but the explanatory pages were re-engraved in English. For some reason, in the printing of the English version, in addition to various additions and prefatory pages, the content

<sup>76</sup> Further to this point, whilst there are many similarities in terms of letter forms between the Italian print and the manuscript version of *Le False Consonanse della Musica*, some distinctive shapes — such as ‘z’ and ‘Q’ — are not the same at all. Anyone making as careful a copy as this clearly is would surely have taken the trouble to copy all the details of the letters and not just some of them. This seems to me to be strong evidence on its own that the manuscript was not copied from the print.

was reorganised in a less satisfactory order than it had appeared in the Italian version.<sup>77</sup> Despite the clear similarities in terms of layout, it is immediately obvious that the manuscript was not the exemplar for the printed version since the wording is different, starting from the title-page:

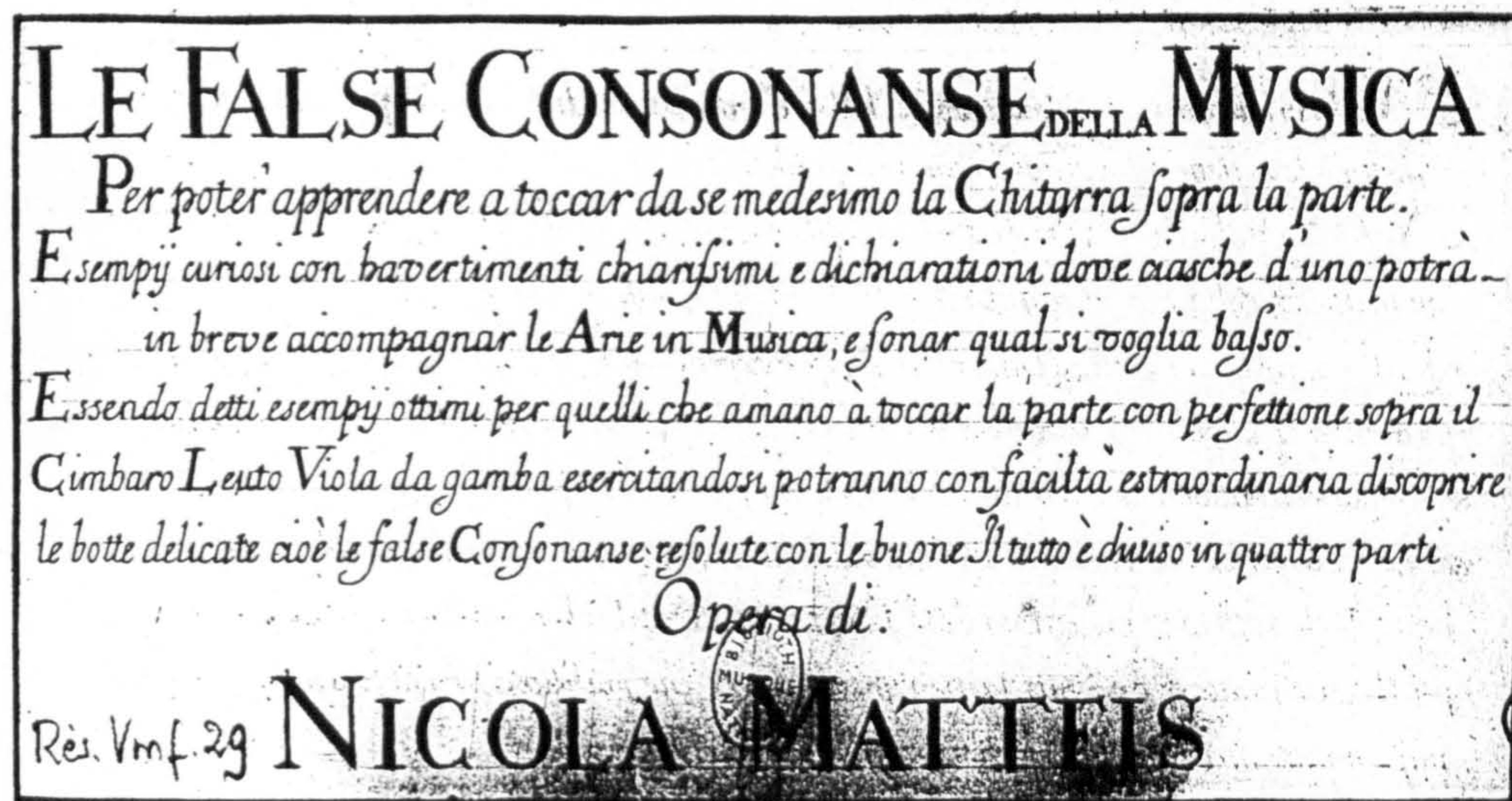
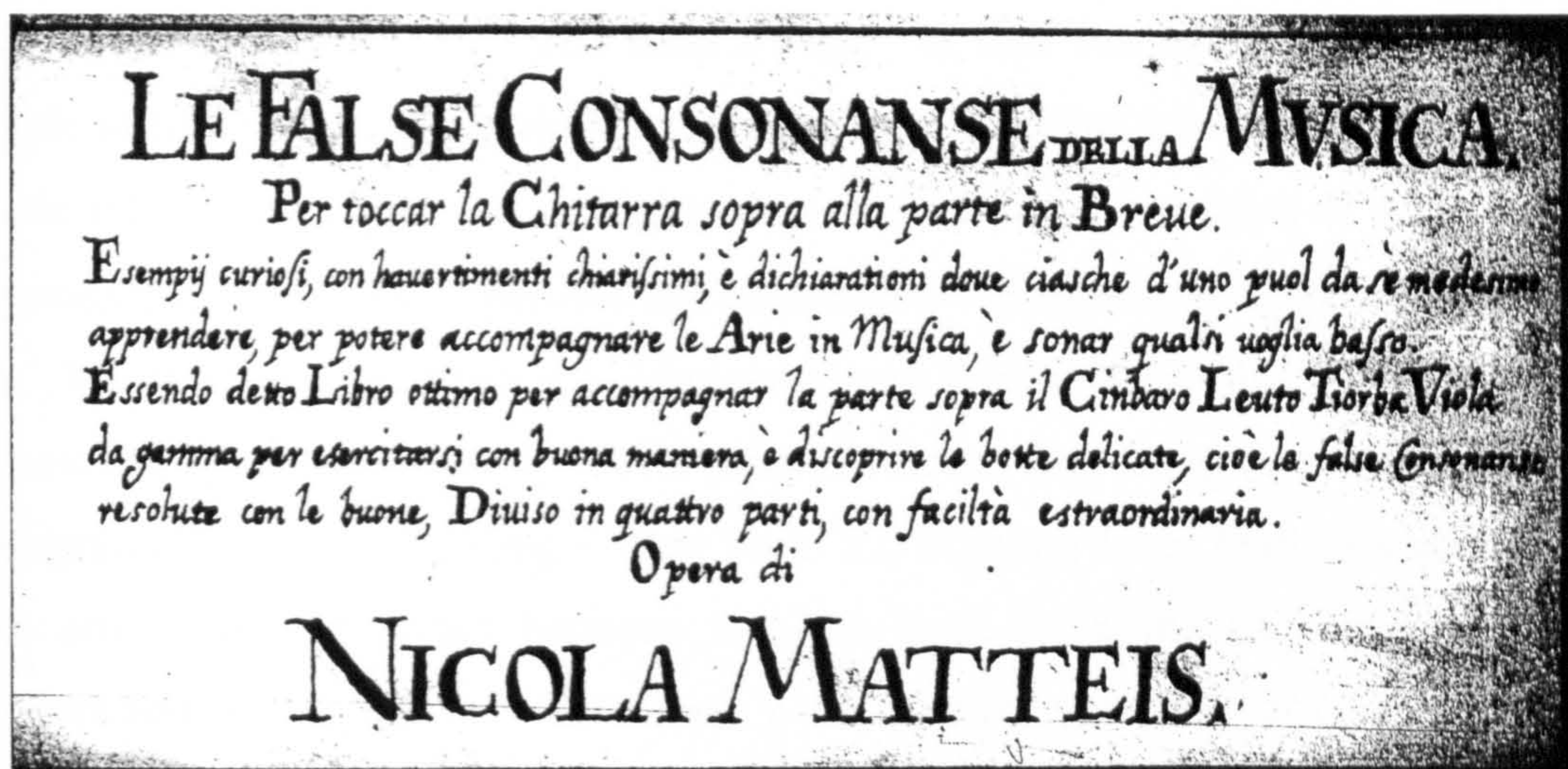


Plate 2-66: Title-pages from the manuscript (above) and printed Italian versions of *Le False Consonanze della Musica*

Despite the obvious attempts to present the material in the same format, there are clear differences in the wording. However, the differences are more fundamental than this. There are elements missing from the manuscript, which could be easily explained, but more significantly there appears to have been an attempt to improve on

<sup>77</sup> This is the opinion of an experienced guitarist and scholar. Dr. Lynda Sayce has very kindly examined all three versions of the treatise and has pointed out some of the apparent anomalies between the various copies.

certain elements compared with the print. Strum marks have been inserted and changes in tablature have been included in order to improve the playability of certain passages. These, according to Dr. Sayce, have all been done by someone who was a fairly expert guitarist; but who and why? It has been noted frequently that Matteis prepared copies of his works, printed and otherwise, for various clients and the most likely explanation is that this was such a copy. In that case this could be another example of Matteis acting as interface between the music and pupil and providing the didactic role for which he was so highly regarded. It is hard to think of anyone else who would have had the expertise, not to mention the reason, to rewrite this entire work. The likelihood that this was Matteis's work then suggests that the similarities between this hand and the early violin printed sources may have been as a result of the engraver (in this case, King — see page 52) copying from Matteis's exemplar. There are many similarities between the two such as in the back-flicks on the ascenders and descenders, the 'd', 'b' and 'p' and the characteristic 'z' (see Plate 2-64 on page 112 and on Table 2-6 page 95), and even the shape of the time signature:

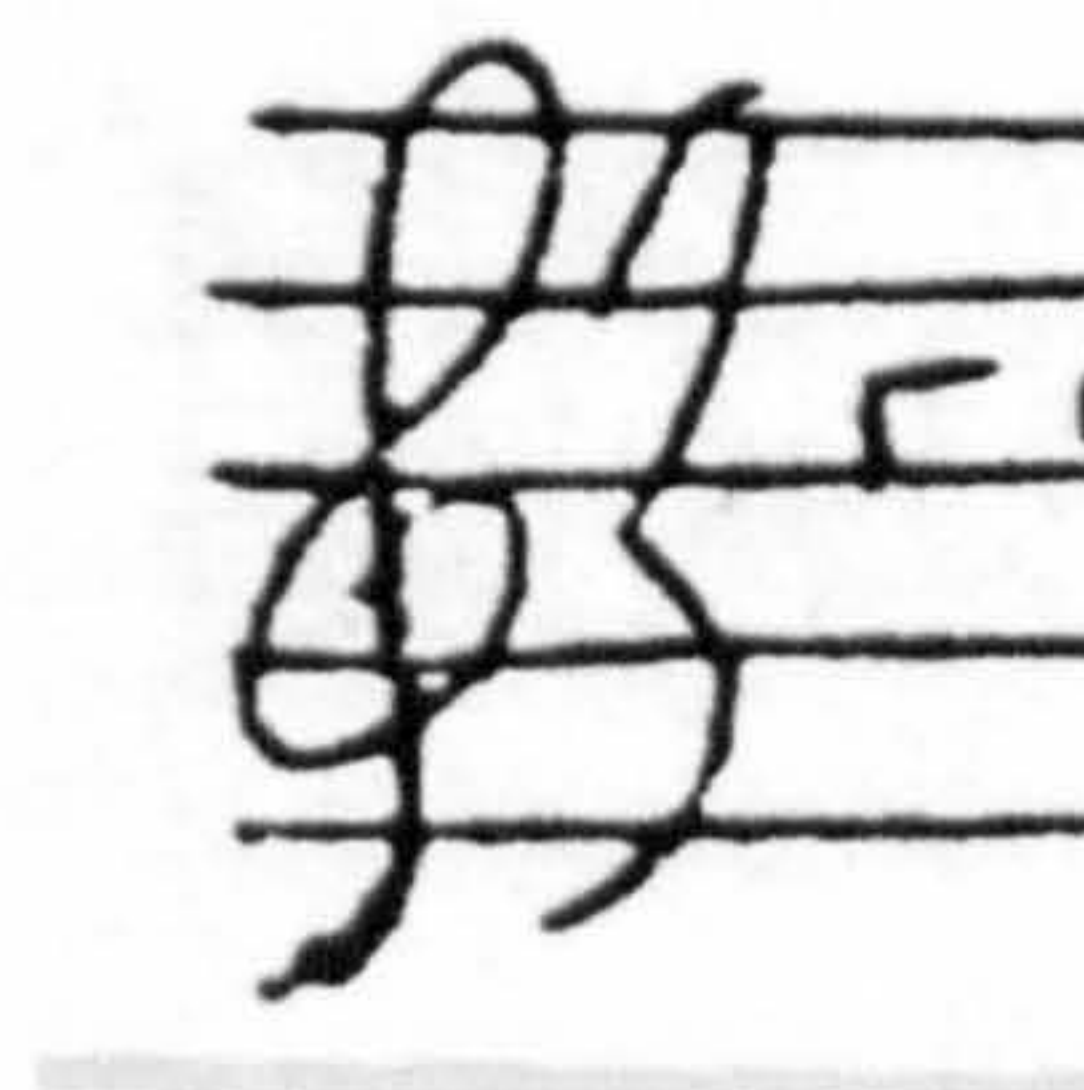


Plate 2-67: Comparison of '3' from *Le False Consonance* (left) and the printed source of *Book 1*

## 2.9 Conclusions

As has been seen, Matteis's hand occurs in small ways time and again in various sources. His contributions may be quite small but they nevertheless seem to suggest that he was very much involved in the preparation of all his music. This, along with the recurrent similarities of written and musical style throughout the manuscripts seems to strongly suggest that Matteis was helped by only a small number of people and that he oversaw production of virtually all the music. He clearly set great store by offering the best practical information he could to his clients and was more than



happy to provide manuscript copies of his work, whether or not they were in print at the time. Sadly, there appear to be relatively few examples in the manuscripts of cadenzas or suggested ornamented versions of any of the *Ayres* aside from the *Sminuita* versions and small matters of the occasional written-out ornament. Overall, the printed sources are probably a richer seam for such information though even they are rather limited. One can only regret that he never produced an equivalent of *Le False Consonanse della Musica* for the violin.

There is a clear suggestion from the accumulated evidence of watermarks, signatures and the evidence of musical development in the prints that the production of his work was not concentrated around the key dates of 1676 and 1685/7. The Book 5 manuscripts were produced in 1680/1 or thereabouts, and the companion second violin and tenor parts to all the *Ayres* appear to have been produced on demand over a wide time-scale. All of this adds up to a more or less constant period of activity from the mid-1670s to his disappearance from the musical scene some time in the 1690s. Common sense would perhaps also suggest that Matteis is hardly likely to have become as wealthy a man as North suggests without having a consistently successful business.

Despite the difficulties outlined at the beginning of the Section and despite the many question marks which inevitably will remain, it is possible to suggest not only the order of the prints and manuscripts but the way each surviving copy fits into this overall picture. Inevitably there are cases where the evidence is inconclusive or the condition of the source precludes an accurate enough assessment to suggest its place in the chronology. Moreover, as has been pointed out already, there are certain sources which have not been consulted for various reasons. In such cases it has sometimes been possible to suggest a rough position in the chronology but in other cases even this has not been possible. In the following chart of the most likely order of production of the sources, the items that I have not physically examined myself are marked with a triangle [▲], although in most cases I have been assisted by the generosity of many librarians in various libraries places who have checked details for me and which, in some cases, I have included here. There are very few sources which remain completely unexplored. To further differentiate the manuscript sources from the printed sources, the cells of the following table containing the former will be


shaded grey:

Call Mark	Watermarks	Signatures	Notes
Lbl Hirsch M1425 English version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS, HG.	None but there are two <i>abagio</i> movements.	Earliest extant issue. This is dated (in pen) 1679 on the title-page which either suggests this may have been a later impression or a later gift.
Lbl K.1.f.10 (1) English version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS, HG.	None — ‘abagio’ corrected in 7 to <i>adagio</i> .	Later issue than Lbl Hirsch M1425 due to corrected <i>adagio</i> movement.
HAdolmetsch English version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS, HG. The IHS mark only appears once and seems to be slightly different — almost appearing as IHI with a cross below as well as above.	None. Missing pages make it harder to decide which impression.	It is not possible to differentiate between this and Och Mus. 939 and Ob Mus. Sch. G.629.
Och Mus. 939 English version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, HG. Some later Dutch marks appear on the inserted manuscript sheets seeming to confirm that they are later additions.	None.	It is not possible to differentiate between this, HAdolmetsch and Ob Mus. Sch. G.629.
Ob Mus. Sch. G.629 English version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, HG.		It is not possible to differentiate between this, HAdolmetsch and Och Mus. 939.
▲US-NYp MUS. RES. *MYK (No.1).	Not examined.	Not examined.	It is not known where this fits in exactly but it appears to be similar in outline terms to the three immediately above. Apparently there are no annotations to help either.
▲US-Wc M1490.M432 Case Italian version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS, VI, P4SAB.	All present.	Complete set of signatures argues for 1 <sup>st</sup> impression of this issue. Corrected <i>adagios</i> put this issue later than English one. The P4SAB mark has been dated to c.1680 which is a viable date for this impression. The mark also links these early Italian impressions with Lbl Hirsch IV 1633, the music for which appeared first in around 1680/1681.
Lbl K.1.f.12 Italian version	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS; P4SAB, HG,	One missing.	Later impression?

Books 1&2.	IV; Plus part of a mark which may be the Dutch Arms.		
Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 Book 5 first treble Manuscript.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR, P4ASB; Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys is two different sizes in this source.		P4ASB links this date-wise to the Italian issue and is entirely consistent with a date of the early 1680s for Book 5.
Lcm II.c.26 F21 Italian version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS, HG, VI, IM, plus one mark that may possibly be the same as appears in Panmure. Unfortunately the mark is too faint in each case to confirm this.	One missing.	Lacks P4SAB mark but the IV/VI mark (along with the more familiar marks) still links it with the other Italian impressions.
▲US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. ) 1 Italian version Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, IHS, VI.	One missing.	As with Lcm II.c.26, could be same as Lbl K.1.f.12.
▲F-Pn Rés. 796/ 797 Italian version Books 1&2.			Not yet consulted.
▲I-Fc F10035			Not yet consulted.
Lbl K.1.f.11 (1) Second treble o: Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys WR with HG; VI; LB, PB; the Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys are of two sizes in this source.		PB as a countermark appears in Lbl Add. 33234 (dated 1682). The WR with HG had appeared from about 1676 so this is consistent with early 1680s. The IV/VI mark also links it with the sources of the Italian print which are <i>c.</i> 1680.
Ob Mus. Sch. G.613 Second treble o: Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys VI.		If Lbl K.1.f.11 (1) is around this time then this might also be from this time given the links between the two.
Lcm II.c.26 F22 Books 3&4.	None.	Most signatures of all Book 3 and 4 sources.	Has most signatures so earliest? This could be <i>c.</i> 1685
Lbl Hirsch III 397 Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys; WR/AS, IHS, IHS/PB CDC; VI; The Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys varies in size in this source too.	Slightly fewer.	WR/AS mark appears in Lbl Add. 31427 in <i>c.</i> 1679–1683. This mark and IHS/PB link this to Lbl K.1.f.10 (2). Even the earliest edition of Books 3 and 4 would have been 1685 of course.
▲US-R Vault M1490. M435.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, CDC, PB.	Similar number to other first issue Bks 3 and 4 sources.	Both signature and watermark evidence seem to suggest a placing here, or perhaps more linked with CDu MC63.
I-Vnm	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys		There are some watermark

Contarini 9988 (secondo) Second part Books 3&4 Manuscript.	with WR, Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR and HG, IHS with PB.		similarities between this, CDu MC63 and Lbl Hirsch III 397, which might suggest that this was copied at around this time. There are also watermark similarities with Ob Mus. Sch. G.630 which is likely to be slightly later than this though it is possible that all these sources are only separated by months rather than years. Both this and CDu MC63 lack the extra <i>Ayres</i> and as such are companion volumes to the first edition of Bks 3 and 4 which date them in all probability prior to 1687. Could even be as early as 1685.
CDu MC63 Second part to Books 3&4 Manuscript.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR, IHS with PB, CDC.		As with I-Vnm Contarini 9988, this is an early second part — in all likelihood pre-1687 and, again, could be as early as 1685.
CDu MC62 Second treble of Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR; D with arrow, IV/VI.		Links with Lbl K.1.f.10 (2) through D with arrow watermark. This mark tends to suggest an outside date of the mid-1680s because the Van der Ley family changed their mark after this. This may be slightly before Lbl K.1.f.10 or around the same time — about 1685/6.
I-Vnm Contarini 9989 Tenor part Books 1&2 Manuscript.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR, D with arrow.		D with arrow watermark suggests this was copied at about the same time as CDu MC62.
CDu MC61 Book 5 Violin 2 Manuscript.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR, D with arrow.		Watermarks suggest this was copied at about the same time as CDu MC62 and I-Vnm Contarini 9989.
Lbl K.1.f.10 (2) Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, AS; IV/VI; WR/AS; WR/HG; IHS; IHS/PB; IHS/PT; Arrow with D, CDC, VA.	Fewer still.	WR/HG mark appears in Ob E.401 for which the outside dates are 1676–86 (most prob.c.1682). This may well be about 1686. This source also has the D with arrow mark.
Ob Mus. Sch. G.628 The False Consonance (English	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, AS, AI, WR/HG, Arrow with D.	N/A.	Pages missing thus no title-page but this work in English first appeared in about 1682 supposedly. These watermarks could suggest that

version).			this particular impression was later putting it in the mid-1680s along with the other volumes around this point in the list?
▲US-R Vault M1490. M435.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, CDC, PB.	Similar number to other first issue Bks 3 and 4 sources.	Cannot be placed accurately without further watermark information.
Ob Mus. Sch. G.630 Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR; Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with VA, IHS, IHS with PT, AS, HG.	Fewer than Lbl K.1.f.10.	Seems similar to Lbl K.1.f.10 in watermarks and could well be from roughly the same date but just probably slightly later because of the fewer signatures.
▲US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3) Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys WR, AS, HG.	More signatures here.	1st impression of 1687 issue (still dated 1685).
DBs Mus.ant.pract. M 397 Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, IHS, Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys not consistent but this is possibly affected by rebinding.	Rebound so hard to know.	Probably same issue as US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 3).
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632 Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, IHS; IHS/PB, AS, CDC, HG.		Change of title-page — probably first impression which coincided with issue of violin 2 part.
▲US-Cn Case VM 286 M43a Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, PT, HG.		Musically the same as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a and with the same signatures as Lbl Hirsch IV 1632. There is, though, a new title-page to Book 3, dated 1687 (although Book 4's is still dated 1685). The watermark HG is normally thought of as only going to about 1686 so this is interesting evidence of a later version.
CDu MC59 Book 5 first treble Manuscript.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR, PT.		Possible links with watermarks of US-Cn Case VM 286 M43a Books 3&4 seems to suggest a fairly late copying date for this.
CDu MC60 Manuscript.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys with WR, PT.		Likewise, here there are possible links with watermarks of US-Cn Case VM 286 M43a Books 3&4.
Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a Second part to Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, IHS with AS, AS, CDC.	Only difference with Lbl K.1.f.11 (2) is the E2, present here.	E2 was added on the plate bearing the extra <i>Adagio</i> to the <i>Aria in passaggio</i> number. Seems most likely the <i>Adagio</i> was removed for later versions and that this copy

			therefore predates Lbl K.1.f.11 (2) This version now has a 1687 date on the title-page to Book 4.
CDu MC109 Second part to Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, AS, CDC.	Has E2 but fewer signatures than Lbl K.1.f.11 (2) or Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a.	Because of the signature evidence, this is likely to be a later version than Lbl Hirsch IV 1632a
▲ US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 2) Second treble o: Books 1&2.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys AS, CDC.		Same watermarks as CDu MC109 so possibly copied at about this time? Unique hand might also be suggestive of a late copying date.
▲ US-Wc M1490.M43 Case (Vol. 4) Second part to Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, WR, AS, CDC, GRO and 'Pedestal' mark. The last two appear in the flyleaves and are in no other sources. It is possible this leaf is a later insertion.	Fewest of all signatures.	Changed title-page to Bk3, fewest signatures and different watermarks but the older version of Book 4 Nos.8/9 which links this copy with Lbl Hirsch 1632a
Lbl K.1.f.11 (2) Second part to Books 3&4.	Strasbourg Fleur-de-Lys, AS, CDG, HG.	Only difference from Lbl Hirsch 1632a is the E2 which is not present here.	Second part to Books 3 and 4. The pasted in page minus the <i>Adagio</i> bars suggests this is the later of the two.
GB-En Panmure Ms. 9464 Book 5 first treble Manuscript.	 and another, illegible, mark containing three Fleurs- de Lys.		Unique watermarks for the Matteis sources, plus evident copying would seem to suggest this is rather later than the other sources.

Matteis's legacy is an extremely important one. We are still fortunate enough to have examples of prints and manuscripts which he prepared or the production of which he oversaw and we also have other examples of his work which were preserved by other copyists. The quality of the prints speaks for itself and reminds us that we should not be surprised that he became such a wealthy man at least in part due to them. Between these sources and the reminiscences of Roger North we are armed with a whole range of information regarding the performance practice of this extremely good music, music that was written within the framework of a vibrant and theatrical performance style. It is to a discussion of this style that we now turn.

## 3. Playing style

### The 'conference of extreams'

I have found very few who will believe it possible he could performe as he did in that posture. But our experience will have the better of all posthumous opinion of him.<sup>1</sup>

#### 3.1 Introduction

Sections One and Two have dealt with the questions surrounding Matteis's life in England, the extant sources of his music and over what period his activities as performer and composer may have extended. This section sets out to approach a definition of Matteis's likely playing style through comparison of the evidence of the manuscripts and prints together with contemporary descriptions of his playing and other relevant primary source material. In doing so, consideration will be given to the wider question of how his playing can be seen to be linked with the philosophical and musical mores that had shaped the emerging Baroque sensibility nearly a century earlier. This assessment of the music will thus not concentrate so much on an analysis of its formal structure as on aspects of phrasing, bowing, ornamentation and other technical issues. Of the contemporary treatises and other written sources, by far the most useful are the memoirs of Roger North whose detailed reminiscences of Matteis and his careful consideration of various aspects of performance technique will be extensively drawn upon. The study as a whole will be approached from the viewpoint of the performer and the evidence of both written word and music will be tested practically, to assess its likely authority.

#### 3.2 The developing solo form and the unreliability of printed sources as a record of virtuosity

Throughout the seventeenth century the defining attributes of the solo sonata varied from country to country and even from city to city, but certain fundamental principles serve both to define the Italian style and to contextualise the mature works of Matteis. In the years around the beginning of the seventeenth century the increasing virtuosity of the instrumental canzona, allied to the emergence of an

---

<sup>1</sup> *Roger North on Music: Being a Selection from his Essays Written During the Years c.1695–1728*, ed. J. Wilson (London, 1959), p.309, n.63.

idiomatic solo instrumental style outpaced all attempts to codify such developments with a suitable and consistent nomenclature. Sartori's records of printed music confirm that instrumental compositions were referred to by a wide range of titles such as *sinfonia*, *sonata* and *canzona* and that these names were frequently not consistent between title-page, score and parts.<sup>2</sup> There is still far from unanimous agreement about the particular significance of the term *Sonata* in the early repertoire but some evidence would appear to suggest that it had become associated with the breaking of ties to the old *canzona*:

The use of the word 'sonata' emphasises the significance of the development of independent instrumental works — their new title contains no homage to their vocal predecessors. The gradual adoption of the term is demonstrated by Banchieri — his 1612 publication, *Moderna armonia*, includes four independent *canzoni* which later appear in the 1622 edition of *L'organo suonarino* with the title *Sonata*.<sup>3</sup>

Others have pointed out that from an early date, the term *sonata* became associated with solo instrumental music and the development of idiomaticism:

These early solo compositions do not follow the constructive principles of the old *canzona da sonare* as closely as did the contemporary trio *sonata* but seem to grow out of the desire to find a form which will better exploit the newly found violin virtuosity. The movements of the solo *sonatas* are short, of a virtuoso type, extremely varied, and make use of sharp contrasts in tempo and style. Unity and the logical working out of the distinctive character of each movement are neglected in the instrumental monody for the exploitation of inherent violin qualities, brilliance and agility.<sup>4</sup>

This inherent element of showmanship is perhaps implicit in North's reference to 'The Itallian composed *enterteinements* (my italics) of musick which they call *Sonnata's*'.<sup>5</sup> This aspect of virtuosity seems to be pivotal, for it is with the development of 'pure' technique that the *sonata* began to find a clearly-delineated path of its own. Unfortunately, the technical standard attained by performers of this period is rather difficult to judge since we are unable to take too literally the level of

---

<sup>2</sup> C. Sartori, *Bibliografia della musica strumentale Italiana stampata in Italia fino al 1700* (Florence, 1952).

<sup>3</sup> C. Dew, 'Passion and Persuasion', *The Art of Rhetoric and the Performance of Early Seventeenth-Century Solo Sonatas* (DPhil, University of York, 1999), p.23.

<sup>4</sup> H.J. Mishkin, 'The Solo Violin Sonata of the Bologna School', *The Musical Quarterly* 29 (1943), p.96. It is notable that already early in the century players were building up reputations based on their technical ability on their chosen instrument. Cesario Gussago, who was organist of S. Maria delle Grazie in Brescia, dedicated his *Sonate a quattro, sei et otto...* (Venice, 1608) to 'Li signori D Ludouicao Cornale dal Cornetto e Gio Battista Fontana dal Violino'. See *Bibliografia della musica strumentale Italiana stampata in Italia fino al 1700*, p.159.

<sup>5</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.302, n. 47.



technique called for in the printed sources, which was certainly not commensurate with the abilities of the experienced performer. There are two main limitations of the prints as technical ‘markers’ throughout much of the seventeenth century. Firstly, the printed sources were commercial ventures and their success depended on developing and fostering a wide clientele. These limitations were purely pragmatic and were felt all across Europe by those who composed for a particular audience on whom they relied for their livelihood. Witness the problems of John Jenkins:

But els as to activity of movement, and true musically ayre in his passages, none had more then Mr. Jenkins; but the unhappyness is, that all his earlyest and most lively compositions are sunk and lost, and none remaine but those of his latter time, when he lived in country familys, and could compose no otherwise then to the capacity of his performers, who could not deal with his high flying vein.<sup>6</sup>

It is therefore no surprise to find that there is little instrument-specific idiomatic writing in the early printed repertoire which tended more to be directed towards ‘ogni sorte d’istromenti’. As the violin joined the cornett as the *soprano* instrument of choice most prints began loosely to cater for either of these instruments, although in some instances the real decisions of instrumentation were imposed by the tessitura of the parts.<sup>7</sup>

The second and perhaps more important problem with the printed sources is that they were limited in their ability to reflect advanced technical devices because of the practical exigencies of the moveable-type system of printing. This system persisted in Italy far longer than it did in Germany, which has contributed to the still widely-held misconception that the playing of, for example, Biber, Walther and Westhoff was of an entirely different level of virtuosity to that of the Italians. This attitude is fairly well exemplified by the following words from Boyden: ‘A good violinist of the time [seventeenth century] was accustomed to playing in the third and fourth position in Italy, and in Germany a virtuoso confidently navigated the sixth and seventh position.’<sup>8</sup> And, in a rather optimistic reckoning of the Italians’ unanimity of purpose, ‘The Italians, after abandoning multiple stops about 1625, began to use

---

<sup>6</sup> Roger North’s *The Musically Grammarian 1728*, ed. M. Chan and J.C. Kessler (Cambridge, 1990), p.258.

<sup>7</sup> For example, the sonata seconda from D. Castello’s *Sonate Concertate in stil moderno a 2 & 3 voci, libro primo* (Venice, 1621) requires a g, which is possible on the violin but not on the cornett.

<sup>8</sup> D.D. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (Oxford, 1990), p.250.

them again after 1671.’<sup>9</sup> Allsop has comprehensively challenged these assumptions and offered strong evidence to support the contention that the Italians were just as advanced in their playing style:

If ever the accusation of generalisation on the basis of too few instances were justified, it would be of Italian violin playing in the seventeenth century. In reality little information about the true extent of violinistic excellence has been preserved either in writing or in the music itself. Solo violin music was rarely published in Italy in the seventeenth century simply because it was not within the capabilities of the Italian presses with their outdated technology to produce it. We cannot take the half-dozen or so collections of solo sonatas issuing from the commercial presses as in any way representative of the advanced violin technique of the period, since a composer would automatically have been obliged to adapt his style to the limits of a typography which virtually ruled out such intrinsic aspects of technique as chordal playing. Virtuoso violinist-composers of the first rank such as Paganini, Gaibara, Benvenuti, Mannelli, Lonati and Corelli circulated their solo violin music in manuscripts which have since been lost. Conversely, a far more realistic impression may be gained of German violin music in the last quarter of the seventeenth century not only because substantial manuscript holdings have survived but also because the Germans moved over to copper plate music engraving much earlier than the Italians.<sup>10</sup>

The question is should we really be so surprised at the notion of the Italians having an advanced idiomatic violin technique, even in the early seventeenth century? Would it not actually be more surprising if the printed sources were a true reflection of their level of attainment? Stringed instruments had been in existence for centuries and, by 1600, even the violin was approaching its centenary — at least. We are only now beginning to appreciate the sheer variety of the designs produced by the many luthiers of the era, in terms of shape, size, pitch, stringing, thickness of the wood and dimensions of the fittings etc. and there is little reason to think that inquisitive hands would not have long before examined the possibilities presented by the very modifications with which the luthiers were experimenting. The few treatises and tutors that exist are, admittedly, very basic but then the audience for such publications was usually the same one at which the published music was also aimed. Human nature has always been to explore the boundaries of what is considered possible and the absence of absolute proof of the virtuosity of early seventeenth-century violinists is not proof of the absence of such standards. The suspicion that instrumentalists, having provided their students and other possible clients with music of sufficient difficulty to tax them, were recording their real developments in

---

<sup>9</sup> Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*, p.271.

<sup>10</sup> P. Allsop, ‘Violinistic Virtuosity in the Seventeenth Century Italian Supremacy or Austro-German Hegemony?’, *Il Saggiatore Musicale* 3 (Florence, 1996), p.257.

technique (if at all) in manuscript form is a persuasive one though few manuscripts survive to bear witness to this. Allsop's work in this area is of prime importance and his discussion of the evidence of the manuscript works of Colombi and Lonati provides convincing proof that we have for too long misunderstood the real level of achievement of the Italians. Guisepe Colombi (1635–1694), a possible pupil of Uccellini, is an excellent example of this, for here is an undistinguished composer with no particular reputation as a violinist and no published violin solo music who was nevertheless incorporating a whole range of virtuoso devices into his work such as high positions, multiple-stops and advanced bowing techniques (up-bow staccato, bariolage, arpeggiando figurations) and, most importantly, scordatura — a technique that at one stage was thought to have been the province of the Germans alone. Carlo Lonati (c.1645–c.1710–15) had more of a reputation as a violinist and it comes as no surprise to find that his manuscript works are of a higher level of difficulty but in each case the manuscripts display a greater complexity than the *published* output of many of their far more illustrious contemporaries and the likelihood is that a similar disparity can be implied in the works of others — Matteis included.

In fact, Lonati and Matteis collide, historically speaking, in various ways. Firstly, Lonati is known to have played at the Cappella Reale in Naples from December 1664 to the end of 1667 placing him roughly within Matteis's orbit at a time when it is just about possible they could have met.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, there is a collection of violin pieces in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale which were initially attributed to Lonati before it was realised they were extracts from Matteis's *Ayres for the Violin*. The cause for confusion is not so hard to understand as there are certain similarities between the work of the two men, not least in the virtuoso nature of their writing. Both use unusually high registers in their prints:



Example 3-1: Matteis, *Aria burlesca con molte bizzarrie* Book 2, No.52

<sup>11</sup> It is also possible that they may have met (again?) in England since Hawkins declared that, '... and above all, Carlo Ambrosio Lunati, of Milan, surnamed Il Gobbo della Regina, who with Sifacio, a famous singer, was here in London in the reign of James II.' Sir J. Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (London, 1776; R/London, 1875), vol.2, p.808.

Example 3-2: Lonati, *Simfonia* (A9)<sup>12</sup>

However, once again it is the unpublished solo sonatas of Lonati that suggest the 'hidden' level of virtuosity he employed (♩<sup>2:2</sup>):<sup>13</sup>

141

Plate 3-1: Lonati, *Sonata 12*<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> C.A. Lonati, *Simfonia a 3*, ed. P. Allsop (Crediton, 1988).

<sup>13</sup> This icon denotes a reference to the attached CDs. In the reference ♩<sup>2:2</sup>, the first digit refers to the CD number and the second digit to the position of the work on the CD. Thus, in this case the reference is to the second item on the second CD which in this case is *Sonata 12* by Lonati. Unfortunately it has not been possible to include track numbers.

### 3.3 Matteis's musical background

The lack of evidence regarding Matteis's birthplace has already been mentioned, and without this information it is hard to determine the manner of his early musical education. He was clearly well-schooled in harmony and music theory and, though there appears no way to prove or disprove this, it may be that he had an education in one of the more important centres. One possibility is Rome whose musicians tended to be well-versed in theoretical matters, or Bologna whose musicians were no strangers to theoretical discussion.<sup>15</sup> A theoretical link between Matteis and Rome has been suggested by Graham Dixon, based on the inclusion of two of Matteis's songs in Pignani's *Scelta di canzonette Italiane de più autore* of 1679, the clear majority of contributors to which were associated with Rome.<sup>16</sup> Instrumental interest in Naples in the early part of the century, possibly reflecting its different political and social leanings, seems to have centred around the double harp and the Spanish guitar and it is consequently no surprise to find that Matteis was also renowned as a guitarist, with the accompanying qualities of which he was to later impress English observers. Of his treatise *Le False Consonanze della Musica* it was said that, 'And [in it] his exemplars were for the Guitarre, of which instrument he was a consummate master, and had the force upon it to stand in consort against a harpsichord.'<sup>17</sup> The evident power of Matteis's guitar playing was put to good use in his training of his son:

He left a son Nicholai, whom he taught upon the violin from his cradle; and I have seen the boy in coats play to his father's guitarre.<sup>18</sup>

Later in the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth the Neapolitan violin school was to become highly influential across Europe but Matteis would have long since left the region before even the first wave of violinists such as G.C. Cailò (? 1659–1722), Pietro Marchitelli (? 1643–1729) and G.A. Avitrano (1670–1756) rose to prominence. The violin school of early seventeenth-century Naples has been relatively little researched and the first Neapolitan violinist about whom anything

---

<sup>14</sup> *12 Sonatas for Violin and Basso Continuo*, 1701. Now lost, originally held in Dresden Landesbibliothek. ed. F. Giegling (Winthertur, 1981).

<sup>15</sup> For an example of the theoretical argument between Corelli in Rome and Colonna in Bologna see P. Allsop's explanation of 'The affair of the fifths' in *Arcangelo Corelli*, pp.35–40.

<sup>16</sup> G. Dixon, 'Purcell's Italianate Circle', *The Purcell Companion*, ed. M. Burden (London, 1995), pp.38–51. See also pp.15–16 of the present study.

<sup>17</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356.

<sup>18</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356.

substantial is known is Andrea Falconieri who arrived at the Neapolitan Royal Chapel in 1639. He was appointed lutenist but, like Matteis, he played guitar and violin as well. His 1650 collection *Il primo libro di canzone, sinfonie, fantasie etc.* was the first solo violin publication from the region and, as such, must be considered a possible early influence on Matteis. Unfortunately, once again the use of movable type has resulted in a rather denuded representation of the music from which little can be gleaned in terms of performance directions:



Plate 3-2: A. Falconieri, *L'Eroica* from *Il primo libro di canzone*, Page 8

The compositional style is still rooted quite firmly in the older *canzona* style with its characteristic contrasting triple and duple sections. Division figurations abound and occasionally devices such as the repeated *concitato*-style semiquavers in the *Battalla*

*de Barabaso Yerno de Satanas* hark back to a Monteverdian idiom.<sup>19</sup> From the available evidence it does not seem possible to suggest any link between this collection and the music of Matteis.

Of course, it is almost certain that the principal publications of the Venetian and, later, Bolognese presses would have found their way to the Neapolitan region and Matteis is likely to have been fully informed of the latest developments, both from performers in the region and this influx of printed sources. With no specific information about Matteis and little to go on in terms of isolating possible influences from known teachers it is necessary to concentrate purely on what we can learn about Matteis's playing from his music and the comments of those that knew him.

### 3.4 The sources for Matteis's music

The matter of printing limitations on virtuosic representation do not have such fundamental implications for the work of Matteis, primarily because his printed works were produced using copperplate engraving which could, theoretically, have reproduced whatever technical devices he desired. However, his prints were produced commercially for the dilettante market and North's comment that 'he [Matteis] performed in surprising perfection, not as his book expres't, which was chiefly his grounds, but with flights of humour not to be expres't' seems to confirm that they are unlikely to represent the music as he himself performed it.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the printed and manuscript sources contain much useful information and provide the principal means of approaching an understanding of his style. The extant works divide roughly into the following stylistic categories:

Category	The Nature of the Sources
Category One	The four books of printed <i>Ayres</i> and the manuscript <i>Ayres</i> of book 5 and companion parts to books 1–4. To this list can be added a <i>Prelud</i> (sic) by Matteis which appears as an exercise in the treatise on violin playing by John Lenton, <i>The Gentleman's Diversion</i> .
Category Two	The untitled manuscript sonatas. <sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Matteis uses a similar feature in his *Arie e Passaggi ad imatione [sic] della Trombetta* Book 4 No.76 where the *Guerra* section has sudden semiquaver arpeggio figures.

<sup>20</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.310.

<sup>21</sup> As in Section Two, I am ignoring the various part-transcriptions of the printed *Ayres* that survive in manuscript collections since these were outside Matteis's control and, more importantly, as direct transcriptions they add nothing to our understanding of either the music or the manner in which it was performed.

Category Three	The incomplete and questionable attributions.
Category Four	The posthumous prints of Walsh and Roger.

**Table 3-1: The nature of the sources**

**Category One** — The printed and manuscript versions of the *Ayres* form by far the bulk of the surviving material and represent the bread and butter of Matteis’s compositional output. These are the works he published both to capitalise on his growing fame as a performer and to provide examples of his music for his growing band of pupils and associates. Produced under Matteis’s tight control, the *Ayres* are remarkably consistent throughout the long period of their production in terms of style, length and nomenclature. There is evidence that Matteis continued to adapt and refine certain aspects of the works through successive copyings — for example a bass part to the *Violino solo ad imitatione della Trombetta* appears in I-Vnm Contarini 9989 whereas there was none in the original printed version. The consistency of the printed music is demonstrated by the very few specific differences across the output:

#### **Differences in the printed sources**

1. Book 1 No.24 *Proludio [sic] in fantasia* was lengthened by two bars for the Italian issue.
2. Book 4 No.32 *Motivo* exists in two versions. The first is a prestissimo in slashed-C time ending with a two bar adagio, whereas the later version has a slashed-3 time signature and, after 23 bars, a two-bar adagio.
3. Book 4 No.44, *Motivo* also exists in two versions. The first is 41 bars of presto with a slashed-3 time signature, ending with a two bar adagio in C time. The second version is 47 bars long and instead of ending with an adagio cadencing in b minor, there is an imperfect cadence and the instruction *volti subito*.
4. No.8 in Book 4 has a 14 bar adagio in earlier versions which was removed for later issues.
5. The *Adagio* in part 4 No.36 ends with a 4-bar prestissimo with an optional double-stopped part printed in underneath in what Matteis termed ‘pointed notes’ — i.e. with broken rather than solid lines.
6. The earlier versions of Book 4 had an *Arie è Passaggi ad immatatione* (or



*imitatione* in some, presumably later, copies) *della Trombetta*. In later versions this *Ayre* was developed into a trumpet concerto titled *Concerto di Trombe a tre Trombette con violini e Flauti*.

7. The first version of Book 4 ended at No.78 whereas the later versions finish with an *Aria ò pur Rondeau* at No.92.<sup>22</sup>

### Differences in the manuscript sources

1. The three first violin parts of Book 5 have certain small differences. Whilst some of these differences are interesting, they have no real technical implications. Where alterations were made in the printed sources, they were always in basically the same style and displayed no increased ornamentation or technical devices.



Example 3-3: *Balletto for the young Nicola*, Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 No.8 (top line) and Cardiff MC59 No.8/9 (bottom)

Example 3-3 is typical of the small differences in terms of melody and written-out ornamentation which abound in the various manuscript versions of the *Ayres*. These differences are never particularly important but just offer a slightly different side of the same musical coin.

2. The same sort of differences apply to the two second violin parts of book 5 and the four versions of the second violin part to Books 1 and 2.
3. The 18 *Ayres* that were re-written from Book 5 for inclusion in Books 3 and 4 underwent certain changes. Judging from the lesser technical demands of Book 5, which appeared in 1681/2, Matteis seems to have been prevailed upon to cater for those of a lower technical proficiency. The *Ayres* of the original 1676 publication of Books 1 and (particularly) 2 were significantly harder though I suspect that to some extent this can be explained by the circumstances surrounding their publication, which was amidst great critical and social acclaim for Matteis and his playing. It is only natural that these publications would have sought to reflect at

<sup>22</sup> Two copies have the engraved title *Aria ò Pur R*.

least some of the technical wizardry which had marked his rise to prominence, possibly at the expense of making them less accessible for amateurs. Books 3 and 4, published in two editions of 1685 and 1687, saw a slight increase in technical difficulty over Book 5, although to nothing approaching the level of the earlier printed *Ayres*. Some eighteen of the Book 5 *Ayres* were re-written for inclusion in this new edition and Appendix 3a contains a discussion of the changes he made during this adaptation together with some examples.

4. Lbl Add. 31466 'Old Nicola' is a compilation of *Ayres* from Books 3 and 5 with certain small changes, though none that are important in terms of the present discussion.

The clamour for Matteis's music must thus have been tempered in time by a growing realisation amongst his clientele of the scale of the technical challenge involved. It was one thing to wish to emulate what was clearly a wonderfully virtuosic style but quite another to reach the level of technical proficiency required, despite the fact that the printed *Ayres* were avowedly of a lower technical level than Matteis's own performed style:

He published some books of lessons for his scollars that shew much of his air, and skill, but nothing of his manner of playing, which made them much richer than the prints shew, and now it is impossible either to find out or describe the musick he made of them.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the third and fourth books being easier there still seems to have been a slight reaction against the difficulty of the music which was clearly a surprise to North:

But one thing to be observed was very extraordinary, which is that while folks were acquainted with his manner of playing as he often did in full companys out of his books, no person pretended to doe the like, for none could comand that fulness, grace, and truth as he did; so that in time his books suffered for the difficulty, and since as much because unknowne, and yet there is nothing in them puzling or seeming difficult for the hand; and now no person can have an idea of this that I have observed here, who was not a wittness of his playing in person. In short his books, well observed, are a sufficient tutor of artfull composition.<sup>24</sup>

**Category Two** — The untitled manuscript works contain arguably some of Matteis's most exciting writing and comprise the following:

---

<sup>23</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.310.

<sup>24</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356.

1. **Ob Mus. Sch. E.400 No.22** by Nicolla Mathise (sic).

This suite is one of the very few miscellaneous works that does not have a concordance in the printed or manuscript *Ayres*. It consists of 6 proto-movements; no name (slow), fuga prestissimo, adagio, prestissimo, grave, presto (adagio). This slow fast alternating pattern is highly redolent of the developing *da chiesa* style and the use of a fugue for the second movement accords with Italian practice of developing the canzona into such a movement.<sup>25</sup>

2. **Ob Mus. Sch. E.400 No.23** by Nicolla (Nicolas in violin 2 source) Mathise (sic).

A one movement 118 bar piece for three violins over a repeated bass line.

3. **Lbl Add. 31466 'Old Nicola'**. This is a sonata made up of the following printed *Ayres*:

- i. *Malinconico* Book 3 No.44 (also *Preludio in C solfaut B*, No.114 from Book 5)
- ii. *Aria con divisione* Book 3 No.46
- iii. *Aria For the Flute* Book 3, No.122
- iv. *Fuga* Book 3, No.116

These works were copied sometime in the 1680s/90s into collections which also contain violin works by several other eminent composers including Corelli and Vitali, pointing to the high regard in which the works of Matteis were held. If Matteis did not show his true technical expertise in the didactic works then perhaps he, too, reserved such revelations for his manuscripts? North says that: 'He left divers solos and some full consorts, which tended most to aggrandize the harmony, but what is become of the latter I know not.'<sup>26</sup> Elsewhere he is a little more specific about the 'full consorts':

To oblige his English freinds Matteis composed severall full consorts for 4, in which, and in all his peices, he used the bold and best accords...<sup>27</sup>

There are two types of Matteis's compositions that can be said to be 'for 4'.<sup>28</sup> The first of these are those where there are two violin parts and both a melodic bass and

---

<sup>25</sup> See E.C. Crocker, *Introductory Study of the Italian Canzona for Instrumental Ensembles and its Influence upon the Baroque Sonata* (PhD, Radcliffe College, MA, 1943).

<sup>26</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.310.

<sup>27</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356.

<sup>28</sup> Even though the works are for four players they can be more strictly termed 'a3' works after the number of melody instruments involved.

basso continuo part, as in the following example from Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.22:

Example 3-4: Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.22<sup>29</sup>

Examples of this also occur in the printed *Ayres*, such as in *Aria sminuita per far la mano* Book 3, No.84 and *Aria facile* Book 4, No.4, both of which have a more melodic version of the bass in addition to the keyboard continuo part. In the above example it is a moot point whether the infrequent and minor changes to the melodic bass line would qualify it as a wholly separate part, and certainly makes the appellation ‘full consort’ quite hard to justify. There are no concordances for Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403 No.22 within the printed *Ayres*, and there are certain differences that serve to mark it out as a slightly different genre. Firstly, the aforementioned slow-fast alternation of sections seems to ape the *da Chiesa* style and the two fugue-type sections show a better development of material than is the case in the other printed or manuscript fugues. The *Adagio* section in Example 3-4 is notable for having a much slower harmonic pulse than Matteis seems generally to have dared elsewhere. His *Adagios* are usually characterised by more embellished or at least more mellifluous melodic lines but here the structure is more one of simplicity.

<sup>29</sup> Editorial procedure concerning such features as the bracketed figures (bar 79 of Example 3-4) is explained in Appendix 4.

The second type of work by Matteis that could be termed ‘four-part’ involves the use of inner, harmony parts:

and likewise to oblige himself and conforme to the English he made books of inner parts to those he had published, which brought in fresh ginnys.<sup>30</sup>

Isolated examples in the printed *Ayres* show such a format, as in the *Preludio a due corde* Book 4, No.14 which has an optional ‘tenor’ part (violin register). This part is to be used by the second violin when the first violin is playing all the double-stopped notes, the lower of which would normally comprise the second violin part. This is a rather cut-back version of what Matteis did when he provided a manuscript tenor part for most of the *Ayres* from Books 1 and 2. In this instance the tenor part was to be played alongside both the first and second violin, creating a three-violin texture.<sup>31</sup> Up until the discovery of the afore-mentioned tenor part, the only real example of true three-violin writing from Matteis has been the work in D minor from Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.23 Though the writing is not technically demanding it is fresh and rhythmic and the intertwining dactyls of the three instruments create an engaging texture:

Example 3-5: Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.23

<sup>30</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.356. See also page

<sup>31</sup> This important development of the *Ayres* will be discussed later in the Section.

The sonata in Lbl Add. 31466 is a transcription of various of the *Ayres* into a sonata but remains in three part texture and thus seems unlikely to be one of the full consorts. The *Ayres* that were used in this sonata seem at first to have been copied from the print, as they are for the most part identical. The only differences are:

- 1) The first two sections have been joined together whereas in the *Ayres* they exist as separate movements.
- 2) There are two 'pointed note' double stops in the prints which have not been copied.<sup>32</sup>
- 3) There are one or two rhythmic and melodic mistakes in 'Old Nicola' which would appear to be no more than transcription errors.
- 4) The last two bars of the last movement are missing in the manuscript but are only a reiteration of the cadence.
- 5) The last movement is in slashed 3 time in the print but is in 3/8 time in the manuscript. This would seem to confirm that slashed 3 time really was 'swift', as Matteis says in his table of tempi (see Plate 2-7, page 68).

These differences, small though they are, would seem to show that this was not simply a case of someone copying verbatim. Either it suggests that Matteis had prepared another version (perhaps in manuscript) from which this was copied or else that this was an adaptation, either with or without Matteis's knowledge. The fact that in the case of the last movement only the time signature was changed and not the notes suggests that this was not an important development. The opening section of the first movement of Lbl Add. 31466 also appears in Book 5, which predated Book 3 by some four years or so. The way in which Matteis altered some of the Book 5 *Ayres* for inclusion into the 1685 publication of Books 3 and 4 is discussed in Appendix 3. The version of this *Ayre* in Lbl Add. 31466 seems to have been either contemporaneous with the Book 3 publication or later since it is identical except for one missing slur. In each case there is the addition of a written-out ornament (not present in Book 5) which gives a clear suggestion of how Matteis might routinely ornament such a cadence:

---

<sup>32</sup> For a fuller discussion of the 'pointed notes' system, see pages 263–64.

Example 3-6: *Preludio in C solfaut B* Book 5, No.114

Old Nicola

Example 3-7: Lbl Add. 31466 'Old Nicola'

The last bar of Example 3-6 has been extended slightly to provide a fitting conclusion for the expressive ornament in the antepenultimate bar of Example 3-7, whose elegance and contour are an object lesson in graceful cadential formulations.

**Category Three** — The works of this category comprise either incomplete sources or those which have a question mark over their authorship. A *Sonata by Sig Nichola Matteis* (US-LAuc M401 P98s), of which only the bass line survives, does not concord with any of the known *Ayres* nor is it possible to ascertain whether it is by

Matteis the elder or the younger, though since there is no violin line extant this is hardly relevant to the question of violin style. Far more interesting is a set of variations based on *La Folia* which occur in Ob Mus. Sch. C.61. This manuscript was copied by Francis Withy, almost certainly sometime in the late 1680s, and contains the works of several composers.<sup>33</sup> At one point there are two double pages of violin variations on *La Folia* on the second double page of which are the letters N.M. Mostly the composers in this source are referred to merely by initials (thus Henry Purcell appears only as H.P.) and, though there are no concordances categorically to link the music to Matteis, the advanced nature of the violin writing and the lack of any other prominent violinist with those initials at the time increases the likelihood that these are works by Matteis.<sup>34</sup> The writing therein will be considered later.

The second work that falls into this somewhat more doubtful category is a *Fantasia* for solo violin from D-Dl Mus. 2045-R-1. Again, a work of great technical difficulty, this *Fantasia* is most likely to be by Matteis's son and will be considered in more detail on pages 162–63.

**Category Four** — Walsh first printed the songs of Matteis's son in 1696 and did not in fact print any of the elder man's work until 1698 when he included a flute version of a trumpet *Ayre* in one of his collections.<sup>35</sup> It was not until 1703 that he chose to publish the *Ayres for the Violin* which was after Matteis's death and more than a quarter of a century after the *Ayres* were first published. Even then he only published the first two books, in a version for two violins, and the closeness of these versions to the originals shows that they were copied quite carefully. This was presumably from a combination of prints and manuscript sources although there is no clear information to suggest exactly which sources were used as exemplars. In the case of the Walsh edition, the second violin part is most similar to the manuscript version of Ob Mus. Sch. G.613 although there are sufficient differences to show that this was not the actual copy used. In the case of the Roger edition, which appeared

---

<sup>33</sup> See R. Thompson, "Francis Withie of Oxon" and his Commonplace Book, Christ Church. Oxford MS 337', *Chelys* 20 (1991), pp.3–27 and R. Shay & R. Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts: The Principal Musical Sources* (Cambridge, 2000), pp.153–57.

<sup>34</sup> Both Robert Thompson and Peter Holman agree with the attribution of these works to Matteis.

<sup>35</sup> W.C. Smith, *A Bibliography of the Music Works published by John Walsh 1695–1720* (London, 1948).



in 1702, there seems to have been a removal of information on quite a substantial scale, although, unlike Walsh, he printed all five of the books of *Ayres*. Firstly, the works appear only as solo works, with no suggestion of any harmony parts and many of the descriptive titles and much of the written-out ornamentation has been removed, making the melodic lines appear even simpler and effectively taking away most of the performing information that we might otherwise have been offered.

### 3.5 Basic formal considerations of the *Ayres*

There has been much discussion about the significance of the word *Ayre* in seventeenth-century musical sources though in the case of Matteis's work it would appear that it is used generically in its least complex meaning of a short musical movement. In fact, Matteis only uses the term for the title-pages since the individual movements are either termed *aria* or, more often, one of a variety of other titles, also mostly Italian.<sup>36</sup> One of the conclusions of Section Two was that in all likelihood Matteis exercised fairly strict control over the prints and manuscripts and this probably explains why there is such consistency in the titles throughout the output. Within the overall context of the catch-all term *Ayre*, Matteis uses a mixture of conventional and not so conventional titles. It is noticeable that these titles are much more inventive in the printed copies than in the Book 5 manuscript which relies much more on standard French/English dance movements and has far more that are simply titled *aria* or that have no title at all. This could suggest that in preparing manuscript copies for specific clients he was less concerned with evocative titles which he reserved for the printed copies whose saleability relied more heavily on elements of novelty such as exotic-sounding titles.

Irrespective of title or style, the movements in all five books are short and arranged into suites of between 2 and 12 movements — the most common being 4 — which allowed performers to mix and match to create their own suites, as Matteis himself did in his performances.<sup>37</sup>

And out of those books he used, by taking here and there, [to] make out

---

<sup>36</sup> For more detail about the philosophical and musicological significance of the term 'Ayre', see Chan and Kessler, *Roger North's 'The Musicall Grammarian 1728'*.

<sup>37</sup> Appendix 1 contains a list of the names of all of the printed and manuscript *Ayres*.

admirable sonatas a solo.<sup>38</sup>

For the most part the movements are arranged by key, though there are certain exceptions such as the *Adagio* Book 4 No.36 which, despite being placed within a suite in C major, begins in A minor and ends in G major. Elsewhere a suite in A minor ends with a *Diverse bizzarrie* movement in C major.

The majority of movements are dances in binary form and, though they are written within a tonal framework, there is little use of planned modulations. Instead, Matteis relies on the use of repetition and sequential treatment of short motivic fragments, passing rapidly through a series of implied keys. Occasionally, thematic unity is suggested by the recurrence of such motifs in several *Ayres* within a suite though they are generally not treated to any substantial development. Matteis invariably follows conventional practice by including repeat marks at both the mid- and end-points of the *Ayres*, though some of the manuscript sources lack these signs. In any case it is not clear whether the signs necessarily implied repeats although there is evidence that sections, or whole movements, could be repeated at will.<sup>39</sup> Though it is extremely hard to understand the practice of the time regarding repeats, Matteis does sometimes put in specific requests for repeats within a section which he designates by the use of asterisks. The implication seems to be that in some instances it would have been in order to repeat any particular section that the performer so desired:



Plate 3-3: *Diverse bizzarrie sopra la Vecchia Sarabanda ò pur Ciaccona* Book 1, No.86 (♩<sup>1:4</sup>)

<sup>38</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.85. This approach was emulated in the associated recital CDs.

<sup>39</sup> Muffat, for example, says in his *Prima Eletta* that serious airs should be played twice and fast ones three times.

The repeats could either be seen as an invitation to create imaginative ornamentations of specific passages or perhaps, somewhat more self-indulgently, to repeat a particular passage or even note that had given particular pleasure.<sup>40</sup>

One of the differences between Matteis's writing and that of his great near-contemporary Corelli is that for Matteis there was no Church/Chamber distinction within his musical output although, for Corelli, the *Sonata da camera/Sonata da chiesa* distinction was largely one of context and instrumentation rather than stylistic intention.<sup>41</sup> Matteis, meanwhile, was writing not for an institution or a specific patron but for a wider audience of acquaintances, pupils and the general public. He had no church appointment and was not constrained by any liturgical limitations but rather was self-avowedly attempting to take on the 'popular' style of his new countrymen, which at this stage was substantially French-influenced. Consequently we should not be surprised to find that his printed oeuvre contains a significant percentage of dance movements and no printed sonata/suite of the more serious slow-fast-slow-fast type. The dance movements are intermixed with other, more Italianate, movements as well with those of a more didactic intent so that overall there is a good range of contrast, both in terms of tempo, style and purpose. The concept of contrast — the *chiaroscuro* that so informs Baroque arts in general — was obviously an integral part of Matteis's working method. Not only do we find contrasts between individual *Ayres*, but also, occasionally, within them. The following two examples each have tempo contrasts within them, switching from slow to fast and back again without warning — all the better for increasing the excitement of the performance. In Plate 3-4, we can see how a very quick slashed  $\frac{6}{8}$  metre (See Plate 2-7 on page 68 for Matteis's own explanation of how tempi relate to time signatures) starts without warning in the middle of the bar. The contrast between this *prestissimo* and the opening *adagio* would be startling enough but their juxtaposition within the space of a bar seems to be suggesting that the switch from one tempo to

---

<sup>40</sup> Such a practice finds interesting resonances in the comments of Alessandro Piccinini who said that 'Where the music is dissonant, you can play as they do in Naples: When they play a dissonance, they repeat it now soft, now loud; and the more dissonant it is, the more often they repeat it. In truth, this succeeds better in fact than in words, particularly with those who like to hear expressive playing.' A. Piccinini, *Intavolatura di liuto et di chitarrone, Libro Primo* (Bologna, 1623; R/Florence, n.d.). The reference to Naples is particularly relevant. I am grateful to David Miller for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>41</sup> See P. Allsop, 'Da Camera e Da Ballo — alla Francese et All'Italiana, Functional and National Distinctions in Corelli's Sonate da Camera', *Early Music* 26 (1998), pp.87–96 and S. Bonta, 'The Uses of the Sonata da Chiesa', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 22 (1969), pp.54–84.

another really should be as sudden and surprising as possible:

70 *Grave*  
*adagio* *prestissimo*  
*adagio*  
*piano*

Plate 3-4: *Grave* Book 4, No.70

A virtually identical juxtaposition appears in the following:

6 *Adagio*  
*Presto*  
*Adagio*

Plate 3-5: *Adagio* Lbl Hirsch IV 1633, No.76

If the individual suites are played as a whole, with no mixing and matching, they can still work dramatically, though overall there is perhaps a slight preponderance of faster movements. A strong feature of Matteis's writing is the emphasis on contrast — of tempo, rhythms, dynamics and bowing — which on one level results in a powerful rhythmic element to many of the *Ayres*, an element which was surely one of those that made his performances so electrifying. Matteis generally gives good indications about the tempo of his movements, starting with the traditional method of

suggesting a tempo through the choice of time signature.<sup>42</sup> Details of his instructions in this area have already been reproduced (as, for example, on page 68) and they seem to agree with information given in other sources of the time such as that in John Lenton's *The Gentleman's Diversion* of 1693. Beyond these indications, Matteis employs a certain variety of methods to indicate speed. At one extreme he provides no more than a time signature; in others there is also a dance name to help clarify the likely tempo; others have a more descriptive title, implying mood (and hence, to some extent, tempo or 'affect') such as *L'Amore* or *L'Inconstanza* or *Sarabanda con affetto* whilst at the other extreme he also adds in a specific tempo indication such as *adagio* or *allegro*. In certain instances one has to be careful to distinguish between the separate implications of many of these combinations of instructions, as North explains:

Now it is done by description, as *Adagio*, *Grave*, *Allegro*, *Presto*, *Prestissimo*; and for humour *Andante*, *Ricercata*, *Affectuoso* [*sic*], *Maninconico*, *Cantabile* and others daily new.<sup>43</sup>

Occasionally, the instructions can sound somewhat contradictory as in Book 1, No 56 which has a reversed, slashed C time signature, the title *Andamento* and the direction *presto e con affetto*. The question of the *affetto* style and the possibly incompatible combination of the term with a *presto* tempo will be discussed shortly but the combination of *presto* and *Andamento* also requires elucidation. It would seem that at this time the term *Andamento* had implications beyond that of speed alone and in fact often referred to the character of the accompaniment and, by extension, the type of melody line:

That species of consort musick that proceeds with an easy familiar air, and a basso andante, is my option. The cheif reason is that it expresseth steddyness of mind, not affected or altered by the cantabile of the upper parts. And it humours a voice most exquisitely; for that is always melodious, and moves with a self-

---

<sup>42</sup> Such a reliance on time signatures for tempo was changing, certainly within Matteis's work, and North hinted that tempi were far from regularised when he commented: 'But the Itallians had great reason, if not a necessity, to barr their musick, because their standard of time often changed. Their *arsin* and *thesin* did not act always by \*semibreve\*, but often by \*minim\*, and those of various celeritys. And their triplas were without rule; all notes were ordered to be swift or slow by *capriccio*. And there was no way to define what the time of the sonnata was but by referring to the barrs; that is, declaring aforehand how many of any species of the notes shall be contained in a barr. And then swift or slow as the direction *Adagio*, *Grave*, *Allegro*, &c, dictated. And without this expedient nothing is so confused as the supposed time of the Itallian musick, for sometimes (semibreve) shall be swift, and [sometimes] (quaver) very slow, which I must needs say is fantastical, for why should not the forme of the note help a litle to guess at the designed measures?' See Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.101.

<sup>43</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.100.

regard, as if unconcerned with what waits upon it. And the steps of the base make out the time, which is not in the voice distinguishable, and that is a constant vertue of it; for it keeps the time of the whole consort and all fall into just measure with it; as one may fancy a rider singing finely while his horse trots the time.<sup>44</sup>



Example 3-8: *Andamento con inuitatione [sic] del basso* Book 1 No.12

This example would seem to agree with North's comments regarding the regular stepping feel of the andante style and the fact that it often keeps the time of the consort. It further explains the ubiquitous Baroque 'walking' bass, which not only seems to characterise the *Andamento* style in Matteis's work but is found so frequently in the music of Matteis's contemporaries, perhaps most notably in the *Concerti Grossi* of Corelli.

### 3.6 Categorizing the *Ayres*

Matteis wrote very little about the process of composing, and nothing to shed light on his choice of movements. The sum total of his words on composing are the following two paragraphs:

Good advice to play well.

You must not play allwayes alike, but somtimes Lowd and sometimes softly, according to your fancy, and if you meet with any Melancholy notes, you must touch them sweet and delicately.

Secondly it is very necessary to make a Clever shake sweet and quick which is the Chief method for those that play of these sort of instruments.

Thirdly that you dont play your tune to fast, because your quick playing is apt to

<sup>44</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, pp.194–95.

Confuse you, so that you ought too play clearly and easily.

To set your tune off the better, you must make severall sorts of Graces of your one Genius, it being very troublesome for the Composer to mark them.<sup>45</sup>

Advice about Composing in a few Words

When you will Compose any Tune as an Almand Saraband & cet: upon ye Harpsecord, Theorb, Lute, Kittar, or any other Instruments, you must be sure to intermix a Base now and then because your naked playing has little Harmony, and [is] not Gratfull at all.

Secondly it is very necessary to give a discord now and then which is as much as to say a false Strook ending pleasantly which will set your Composition Extremely of.

Thirdly that your Tune be not to Long and tedious, nor yet to Short but of a Medium.

When you will make a cadens out of ye key you must Steal out delicately with a pleasant Stroak and return handsomely that your hearers may not rest dissatisfied.

Let not your movement be so ordinary & your Base must not goe un naturally soe your Composition will be very Agreeable.

Remember to Compose so as it may bee easy & commodius for ye hand.<sup>46</sup>

Some of these comments will be discussed in context later on but for the most part it is clear that this information is rather general, as might be expected when the information is intended for inexperienced players.

## (i) The Dances

Matteis's choice of dances for the *Ayres* seems to have been fairly commonplace:

I shall not medle in particular with the divers other species brought into sonnatas, tho' comon to all other more trifling occasions, such as Gavotts, Courants, Giggs and the like, calculated for merry feasting and dancing; all which draw the air into a single upper part, and nothing but the measure allowed to divert the rest.<sup>47</sup>

Allowing for North's predilection for more serious music, it is nevertheless true that a substantial proportion of Matteis's *Ayres* are dances of a type popular in mid-seventeenth-century suites. More specifically, his choice of movements would appear to concord quite closely with the *Brando-suites* of Vitali and Bononcini which began to be written from the 1660s and may provide yet further evidence of Matteis's presence in Bologna at some stage.<sup>48</sup> A more specific comparison of

---

<sup>45</sup> N. Matteis, *The False Consonances of Musick*, (London, 1682), p.79.

<sup>46</sup> Matteis, *The False Consonances of Musick*, p.80.

<sup>47</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.197.

<sup>48</sup> For more on the *Brando-Suites* see S. Mangsen, 'The Sonata da Camera before Corelli: a Renewed Search', *Music and Letters* 76 (1995), pp.19–31.

Matteis's choice of dances with those of his contemporaries may well identify more exact reasons for his choice of movements though this is not the focus of the present discussion.

Generally speaking there are no real surprises in Matteis's choices of dances with the most common being (in descending numerical order of examples) *Sarabandes*, *Gigues*, *Courantes*, *Allemandes*, *Gavottes*, *Minuets* and *Bores*. As a rule the dances tend to be leavened with a fairly strong French flavour though it is not possible to decide whether this is symptomatic of Matteis's attempt to adopt the English style or a result of direct French influences upon him on his journey to England. As an example of this, the *Allemandes* seem to display some of the graceful contours of the French style with their characteristic rising cadence:

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled 'Allemanda Book 1, No. 100'. The score is presented in four systems, each consisting of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The first system begins with a treble clef staff containing a melodic line with several trills marked with a 'tr' symbol. The bass clef staff provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. The second system starts at measure 5 and includes a repeat sign. The third system starts at measure 11 and continues the melodic and harmonic development. The fourth system starts at measure 15 and concludes the piece with a final cadence. The notation is clear and legible, typical of a printed musical score.

Example 3-9: *Allemanda* Book 1, No.100

Equally, the following Sarabande is one of the more technically demanding of the type amongst Matteis's works but in its use of a fragmented, often upwardly-lifting



melodic line with many feminine phrase endings it captures the grace and elegance with which the French style had become associated (♩<sup>2:1</sup>):

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled 'Sarabanda Book 2, No. 4'. The score is arranged in three systems, each consisting of four staves. The top two staves of each system are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system starts at measure 23 and ends at measure 43. The second system starts at measure 28 and ends at measure 43. The third system starts at measure 33 and ends at measure 43. The music features a melodic line with many feminine phrase endings, characterized by grace notes and trills. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, trills (tr), and ornaments (7#).

Example 3-10: *Sarabanda Book 2, No.4*

In his *Courantes* Matteis sometimes treads a middle path between the Italianate and French style, but mostly tends towards the latter style of two strong compound beats in the bar.<sup>49</sup> Not atypically, though, Matteis manages to maximise the rhythmic

<sup>49</sup> For discussions of dance tempi at this period, see W. Hilton, 'A Dance for Kings: the 17<sup>th</sup> Century French Courante, its Character, Step-Formations, Metric and Proportional Foundations', *Early Music* 5 (1977), pp.160–172 and R. Harris-Warrick, 'Interpreting Pendulum Markings for French Baroque Dances', *Historical Performance* 6 (1993), pp.9–22.

potential of these movements by playing on the slight instability between a two in a bar and three in a bar metre — usually switching from the former to the latter at cadence points:

The musical score is presented in three systems. Each system contains three staves: a top staff in treble clef, a middle staff in alto clef, and a bottom staff in bass clef. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first system includes a trill (tr) in the first staff. Measure numbers 6, 43, and 43 are indicated below the staves.

**Example 3-11: *Corante al Genio Alemano* Book 5, No.64**

Matteis's choice of dance movements is not unusual for a suite of this period. However, what makes his examples stand out is his command of the rhythmic possibilities of the music — which seem to become more pronounced as he adds more harmony parts to the overall texture. This facet of his writing is demonstrated by the fact that he often chooses to end the suites with a *Jigg*, which usually swings

along with pace and vitality:



Example 3-12: *Giga Book 1, No.20*

## (ii) The Trumpet tunes

Another element of variety is added to the *Ayres* with the inclusion of two trumpet tunes — one at the end of book two and the other at the end of book four. The trumpet sonata was largely a product of the Bolognese school, particularly of the composers working at the huge church of San Petronio, where the vast spaces seem to have been acoustically ideal for the trumpet plus strings sonority.<sup>50</sup> Its popularity ensured a brief vogue in England, with even the great Purcell writing a work in the style. Initially Matteis's inclusion of the trumpet tunes was for violin *in imitation* of the trumpet, although he later developed it into a real trumpet concerto — possibly as a result of the increasing popularity of the genre. The style of trumpet imitations seems to have been associated closely with division-based ornamentation:

And this is called flourish, deviation, or breaking whereof the manner is when the sound passeth from the key note to the severall notes of the accord, either per saltum, or by such degrees as the scale of the key hath prefixt. And thro' all the varieties of this kind, the air of the key is preserved; as may well be perceived in the comon Trumpet Ayre which depends thereon.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the rather limited harmonic possibilities of these movements and the

---

<sup>50</sup> See New Grove 2, *Bologna*; A. Pinnock and B. Wood, 'A Counterblast on English Trumpets', *Early Music* 19 (1991), pp.437–43; P. Holman, 'English Trumpets, a Response', *Early Music* 19 (1991), p.443 and P. Downey, 'What Samuel Pepys Heard on 3 Feb 1661: English Trumpet Style under the Later Stuart Monarchs', *Early Music* 18 (1990), pp.417–28.

<sup>51</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.73–74.

repetitive nature of the figures used to imitate the trumpet, these works are both attractive and of technical interest to the violinist:

76 *Arie e Passaggi ad imitazione della Trombetta*

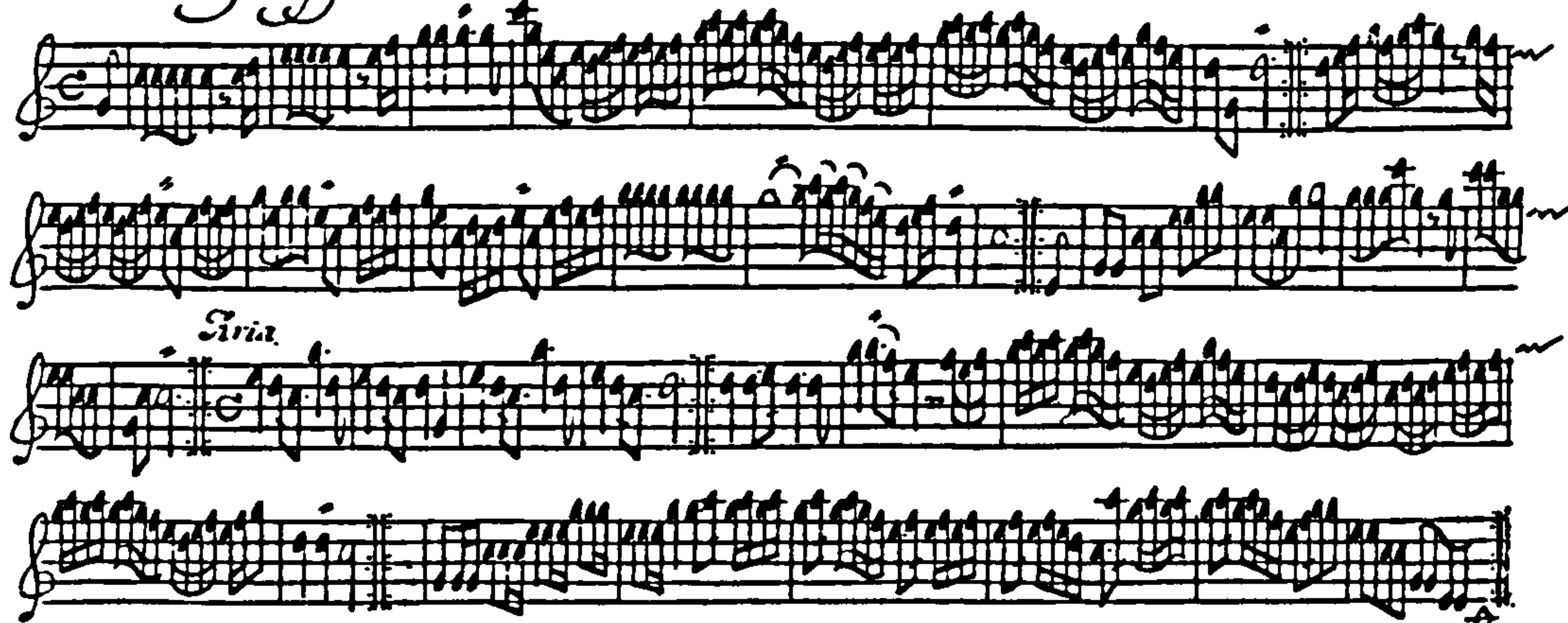


Plate 3-6: *Aria e Passaggi ad imitazione (sic) della Trombetta* Book 4, No.76

The *Violino solo ad imitazione della Trombetta* in Book 2 is similar yet uses slightly more difficult figurations:

66 *Violino solo, ad imitazione della Trombetta-*



Plate 3-7: *Violino solo ad imitazione della Trombetta* Book 2, No.66

Unsurprisingly, arpeggio passages make up much of the writing (as in the above example) though Matteis sometimes develops this for use in a dramatic fashion as in the following *Guerra* passage:



Plate 3-8: *Guerra* from *Violino solo ad imitazione della Trombetta* Book 4, No.76



Example 3-13: *Aria* Book 2, No.66

It would appear that Matteis was revising his books 3 and 4 at just the time that interest in the genre reached a peak for he evidently thought it worthwhile not only to rework the original version into a three-trumpet concerto with strings but to offer it for optional flutes.<sup>52</sup>

### (iii) Counterpoint

Matteis, despite his obvious training in harmony (vide *Le False Consonanze della Musica*) does not seem to have written any particularly advanced counterpoint. In some *Ayres* he employs a simple rhythmic aping of the melody line, as in the following *Imitatione della basso*:



Example 3-14: *Aria ad Imitatione della basso* Book 3, No.42

The few *Ayres* where he writes a *fuga* or *fugetta* are usually a development of this

<sup>52</sup> See Downey, 'What Samuel Pepys heard on 3 Feb 1661: English Trumpet Style under the Later Stuart Monarchs', p.417. Both these trumpet tunes appear in various manuscript arrangements (See Appendix 1 for details). Such was their evident popularity that a printed arrangement for flute was still in Walsh's catalogue in 1730. See Smith, *A Bibliography of the Music Works Published by John Walsh 1695-1720*, p.224.

'theme' and employ such imitative writing as was seen above but with the addition of some development of thematic or motivic material:

Example 3-15: *Fugetto* Book 5, No.35

The following example, with its *stretto* entries is essentially still structurally based on motivic repetition and simple development of the material. However, the rhythmic strength of the opening motif, combined with the rising tessitura of the parts and the close imitation, does produce an exciting texture in performance. It is such uses of rhythm and pace that inject such vitality into so much of Matteis's music:

Example 3-16: *Fuga* Book 5, No.62

The most developed use of fugue in Matteis's work is not to be found in the printed *Ayres* but in the sonata Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.22. As has been pointed out, this work is quite possibly one of the 'full consorts' to which North referred and seems to be of a more sophisticated construction than the printed output, at least in terms of overall cohesion. There are two fugal sections in this work, the first of which follows the common mid-century pattern of being the second movement:<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See Crocker, *Introductory Study of the Italian Canzona for Instrumental Ensembles and its Influence upon the Baroque Sonata*. The term 'movement' can only rarely be applied to Matteis's works which are generally presented as suites of short *Ayres*. The freer works such as Ob Mus. Sch. E.400-403 No.22 are still very sectional, and as such bear resemblance to the early canzonas and

Example 3-17: *Ob Mus. Sch. E.400-403, No.22* — first fugal section

The theme of the second fugue in this work (Example 3-18) is rhythmically similar to that of Example 3-16 and provides the same impulse through the section. As seems to be common in his work, Matteis develops only the opening motif of the theme and there is still no strict fugal structure. In this section it is only really the dactylic opening motif that receives any attention and Matteis introduces some echo effects between top and bottom lines such as were seen in the *Aria ad Imitatione della basso* above. Of course, these sections are all relatively short and we, unfortunately, do not have any particularly extended compositions by Matteis against which to judge them. It is possible that in his own performances he would have developed such quasi-fugal elements somewhat and created longer passages which may or may not have been more technically strict:

---

sonatas (e.g. Castello). This proto-movement structure is quite typical of the mid-century style and it is not surprising to find Matteis composing in this manner in his free sonatas.



58 Presto

62

66

Example 3-18: *Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.22* — second fugal section

#### (iv) The Fantasias

Based on an Italian form, itself descended from vocal models, the Fantasia was, according to North, ‘much of the same nature with our modern Sonatas, but had the stamp of elder times’.<sup>54</sup> Matteis’s use falls into two quite specific areas. Firstly there is the type that would have been prevalent in England when he arrived, particularly in the viol consort repertoire. He cannot have failed to be influenced by this repertoire and, as seems to have been part of his nature, he took on elements of this

<sup>54</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.289. The history of the *Fantasia* in England is long and varied, and in this section I am referring principally to the form as it occurs in the mature works of Purcell.

style and attempted to adapt them into his own work:

16

# 4 #3 6 6  $\flat$ 4 6 6

21

7 6 7  $\flat$ 6 6 6 #

26

#6 6 7 6  $\sigma$  4 #3

Example 3-19: *Fancy call'd Hold thy tongue* Book 5, No.32

This example from the *Fancy call'd Hold thy tongue* (Book 5, No.38) was in all likelihood based on a well-known melody of the time and its use does suggest that Matteis was attempting to tap into a slightly different musical aesthetic for at least some of Book 5. It is in this work that he perhaps comes closest to a Purcellian idiom, the chromatically-spiced movement, active part-writing and angular figurations being most distinctive. Particularly noticeable is the manner in which the bass line slowly rises from a bottom F#, reversing in a powerful descending scale to a dominant pedal underpinning spiky violin figurations. In its use of leaping fourths and the strong descending and ascending bass, this piece is strikingly reminiscent of the second section of the overture to *Dido and Aeneas*:

Plate 3-9: H. Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas*, Overture

The relationship between Purcell and Matteis, although uncharted, is likely to be of significance to the work of each man since aside from the evident influences of Purcell's style on Matteis, it would seem likely that Italianate elements of both compositional style and performance style had been absorbed by Purcell and it is very possible that the 'fam'd Italian masters' to whom Purcell alluded as having been influential on his 'sonnatas' may have included Matteis.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> This matter is touched upon, for example, in Sir J.F. Bridge, 'Purcell's Fantazias and Sonatas', *Proceedings of the Royal Musicological Association* (1915), pp.1-13.

The second type of *Fantasia* in the works of Matteis is one which is linked to a body of music altogether more relevant to the history of the violin as a virtuoso instrument. From the earliest years in Italy and throughout Europe there was a strong tradition of solo, often unaccompanied, violin music in which the virtuoso element was uppermost.<sup>56</sup> According to Allsop there are relatively few unaccompanied violin works up to the middle of the century but various manuscript collections seem to confirm that this was actually a thriving and virtuosic medium.<sup>57</sup> Matteis includes three *Fantasias*, two of which are unaccompanied, a *Fuga in fantasia* and a *Proludio [sic] in fantasia* in his *Ayres*, the movements seeming to perform a generally preparatory function within the suites, offering both a method of warming the fingers but also for exploring the technical abilities of the player:

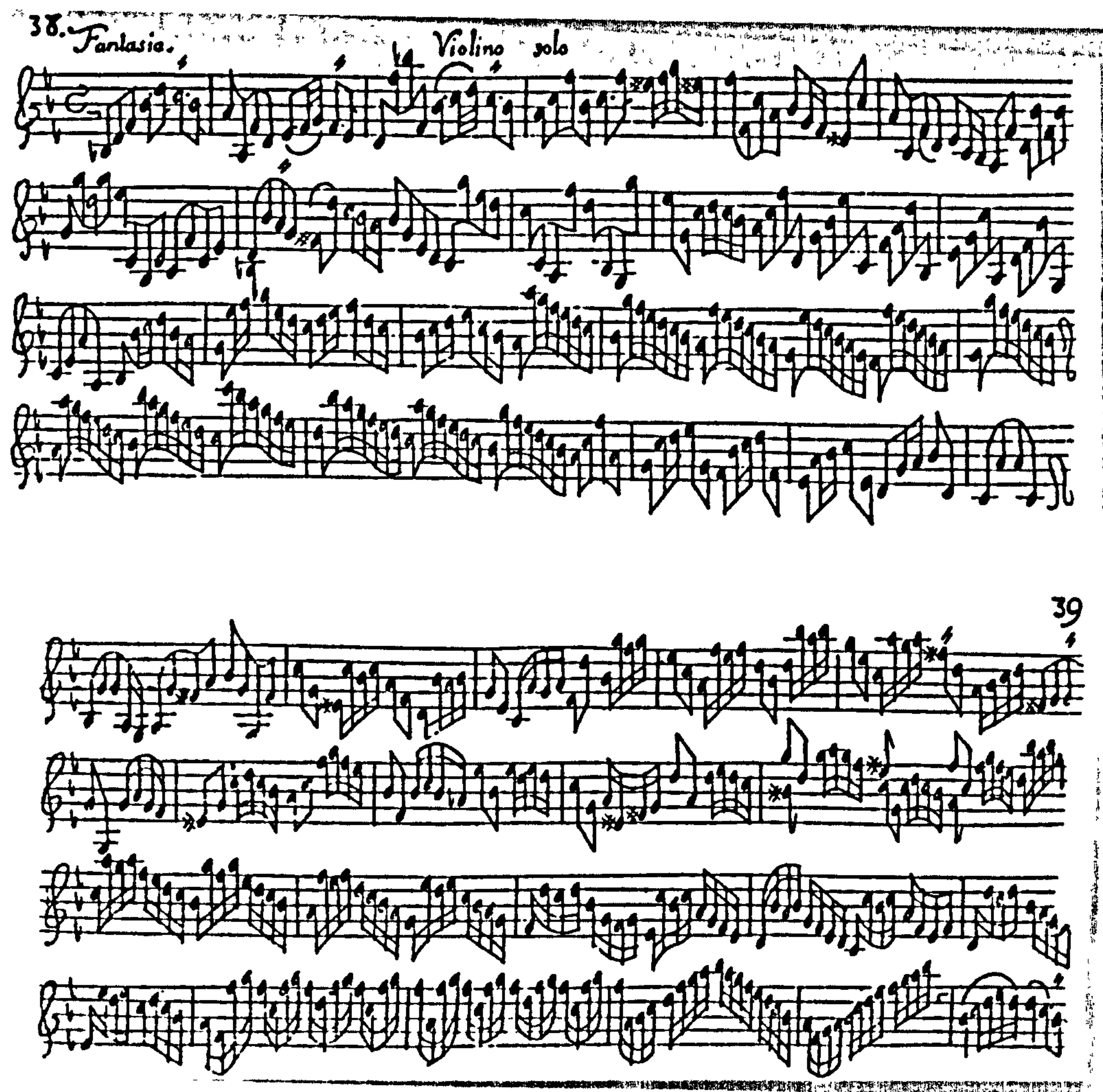


Plate 3-10: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.38

<sup>56</sup> Dr. Pauline Nobes has written extensively about examples of this music by, amongst others, Vilmäyr and Nogueira. See P. Nobes, *Neglected Sources of the Solo Violin Repertory Before ca.1750* (PhD, University of Exeter, 2000).

<sup>57</sup> See Allsop, 'Violinistic Virtuosity in the Seventeenth Century'.



Plate 3-11: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.36

The three movements that are titled unequivocally *Fantasia* and the *Proludio in Fantasia* all share a certain common currency in terms of string-crossing, scalic and arpeggionic figures and a meandering *ad libitum* feel. From a technical point of view the most interesting is the second of the unaccompanied *Fantasias*, where Matteis seems to be more openly flexing his virtuosic ‘muscles’ (♩<sup>1:4</sup>). This movement is much more than just an exercise in double- and triple-stopping and, rather, seems to employ such techniques with a thematic end. This is perfectly demonstrated at the opening where the multiple-stopping both gives a feeling of quasi-fugue but also adds depth to the harmonic progression as well as a sense of counterpoint. The shifting of the thematic material between ‘voices’ is suggested visually through the beaming patterns employed. This is a factor of the engraved prints that occurs frequently, not least later in this same movement as can be seen in Plate 3-13:



Plate 3-12: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.50

Towards the end of the movement, a combination of intertwining falling motives means the harmonic rhythmic flow is effectively doubled, the succession of descending fourths sounding as though two violins are answering each other:



Plate 3-13: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.50

There are few real modulations though the music races through many implied keys, which helps to provide the *Fantasia* with an appropriately *ad libitum* feel. The *Fuga in fantasia* in Book 4 also seems to rely on this aspect and is similar in respect of contrapuntal double-stopping in the quasi-fugal opening as well as later contrapuntal effects:



Example 3-20: *Fuga In fantasia* Book 4, No.68 (opening)



Example 3-21: *Fuga In fantasia* Book 4, No.68 (mid-point)

Matteis's son clearly inherited from his father both an advanced technique and a command of expressive ornamentation. The *Fantasia* by Sig. Nichola Matteis which survives in a manuscript in Dresden is almost certainly by the younger Matteis.<sup>58</sup> In three movements of substantial size and ferocious difficulty, the technical demands of this work are of an order several times removed from that of anything in the elder Matteis's extant works. This in itself is not especially relevant, since the lack of specific printed or manuscript evidence does not preclude his having performed to this standard or even beyond but stylistically the music sits in the early eighteenth century. Note how, architecturally, the first movement bears striking similarities to Bach's unaccompanied violin music, specifically the opening movement of the G minor Sonata:



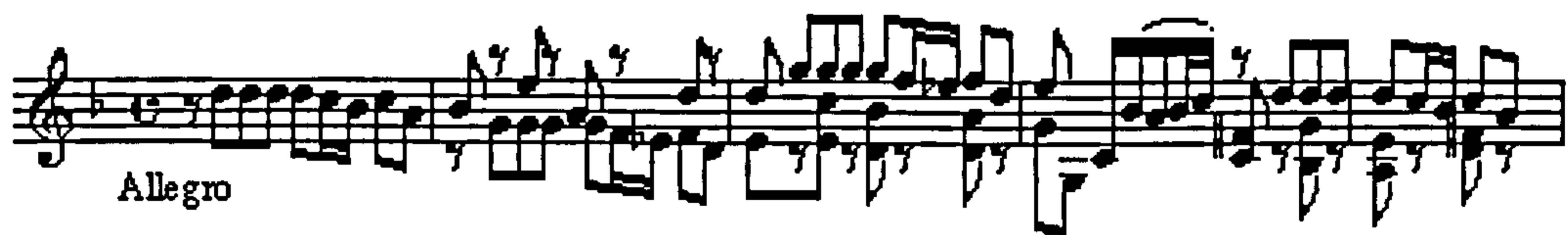
Example 3-22: N. Matteis junior, *Fantasia del Sigr. Matteis*, 1st movement

<sup>58</sup> D-DI Mus 2045-R-1. Quantz mentions Matteis junior's ornaments for Corelli's Op. 5 — 'he [Matteis] has done somewhat more than Corelli himself, since he has concluded them with a kind of short embellishment'. J.J. Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, (Berlin, 1752; R/London, 1966), p.180. These embellishments are now lost. See N. Zaslav, 'The Vanishing Violinist. Nicola Matteis the Younger', *Country Life*, (March 24, 1988), p.176.



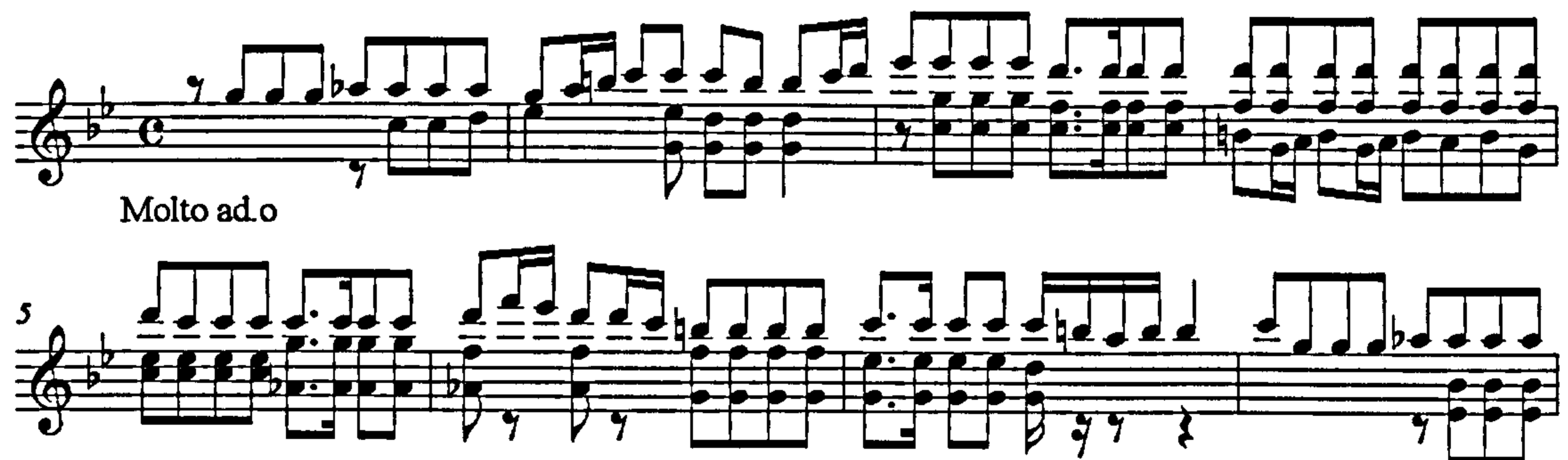
**Example 3-23: J.S. Bach, *Adagio* from *Sonata in G Minor for Violin solo senza Basso* BWV 1001**

In each case, lines of filigree passagework are suspended between strong harmonic ‘pillars’. The chords used are even very similar such as the A<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G minor progression in the Bach and the C minor, A<sup>b7</sup>, G minor in the Matteis. More similarities occur in the next movements of each where Bach’s pointed quavers introduce a slowly thickening polyphonic texture:



**Example 3-24: J.S. Bach, *Fuga* from *Sonata in G Minor for Violin solo senza Basso* BWV 1001**

Despite a different tempo marking, a similar motif in the Matteis leads swiftly into comparable multi-stop writing:



**Example 3-25: N. Matteis junior, *Fantasia del Sigr. Matteis*, 2nd movement**

Such similarities may be circumstantial to some degree but suggest that this work is not likely to be the work of the eldest Matteis.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> It will be noticed that the youngest Matteis — John-Nichola — is not credited with any compositions. Despite Burney’s flattering comments about his ability to ornament Corelli’s sonatas, there is no surviving music nor contemporary references to any that can be attributed to him.



## (v) National titles

Some of the *Ayres* have titles that refer to specific countries, bringing to mind North's reflection that Matteis 'pretended to compose in the style of all nations, and of the French in particular'.<sup>60</sup> One must take this boast with a slight pinch of salt since the main flavour is firmly an Italian/French/English stylistic mix, despite the occasionally more exotic titles:

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'Giga al genio Turchesco'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and a bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system has a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a supporting line. The second system continues the piece. Fingering numbers (5, 6, 7, #) are placed below the notes in both systems.

Example 3-26: *Giga al genio Turchesco*: Book 2, No.16

This *Giga al genio Turchesco*, for example, seems to be characterised by no more than a romping  $^{12}_8$  pulse, an active melodic line and an accented 9-8 appoggiatura every two bars, all of which do give the movement a swing but perhaps do not produce such an exotic effect as one might expect from the title ( $\text{♩}^{2:1}$ ). Such nomenclature was probably employed to serve a commercial purpose in making the works sound more exotic than they actually were in order to increase sales. It must be remembered that Matteis was something of an exotic to the English who would, in any case, not have been in a particularly strong position to judge the authenticity or otherwise of 'Turkish-style' movements.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, given his Neapolitan background, more might have been expected from the *Aria tra la maniera Francese e la spagnola*, but nothing out of the ordinary is readily apparent in this fairly conventional courant, although it is possible that the melody held associations at the time that have been lost in the intervening years:

<sup>60</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.357.

<sup>61</sup> The Book 5 manuscript, which was produced to order for specific clients, is notable for the absence of such titles.

**Example 3-27: *Aria tra la maniera Francese, e la Spagnola* Book 1, No.84**

Perhaps Matteis's most successful adaptation of regional style and therefore the exception that rather proves the rule as far as such movements are concerned is the *Ground after the Scotch humour*. The use of Scottish musical characteristics was a feature that would continue to flourish for some time, not only through the Baroque period but into the classical and romantic repertoire and North confirms its contemporary interest:

The Court, about this time, entertained onely the theatricall musick and French air in song, but that somewhat softened and variegated; so also was the instrumentall, more vague, and with a mixture of caprice or Scottish way, than was used by the French'.<sup>62</sup>

Matteis's adaptation of this style is very cleverly accomplished:

**Example 3-28: *Ground after the Scotch humour* Book 4, No.60**

<sup>62</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.25.

He selects one fairly simple feature, in this case the quaver crotchet rhythmic displacement at the end of each phrase and half phrase, but he spins around this a most memorable movement full of catchy melodic twists and increasingly tricky rhythmic figurations, thus creating one of his most enduringly-popular *Ayres*.

One of the most significant aspects of Matteis's use of national titles is in relation to the overture style. North unequivocally states that this was a prime influence on English instrumental composers:

But now to observe the steps of the grand metamorfosis of musick, whereby it hath mounted into those altitudes of esteem it now enjoys; I must remember that upon the Restauration of King Charles, the old way of consorts were layd aside at court, and the King made an establishment, after a French model of 24 violins, and the style of the musick was accordingly. So that became the ordinary musick of the court, theaters, and such as courted the violin.<sup>63</sup>

The overture style was a fundamental feature of the Lullian manner of composition which clearly influenced Matteis's writing and, once again, North is clear on its contemporary importance:

The manner was theatricall, and the setts of lessons composed, called branles (as I take it) or braules, that is beginning with an entry, and then courants etc. And the entrys of Babtist ever were, and will be valued as most stately and compleat harmony, and all the compositions of the towne were strained to imitate Babtist's vein.<sup>64</sup>

Though Matteis never enjoyed an official court appointment he was mixing in circles which would have kept him closely abreast of developments.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, though he never uses the term 'Overture', he clearly was very familiar with the style

---

<sup>63</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musicall Grammarian 1728'*, p.261. Holman talks about the way the old 'broken consort' was replaced by the dance-based orchestral style of the 'Four and Twenty Fiddlers', a band largely set up by Banister, fresh from his visit to study Lully's immaculately-trained *Vingt-quatre violons du Roi* — possibly the best-disciplined and most highly trained orchestra in Europe. See P. Holman, 'Consort Music', *The Purcell Companion*, pp.254–96.

<sup>64</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musicall Grammarian 1728'*, p.261.

<sup>65</sup> It is also very likely that he was involved in music at the court of Catherine of Braganza, whose retinue of Portuguese musicians she brought with her to England in 1662 were not welcomed very warmly by the English, her reciprocation being antipathy towards the English and French musicians with which she was provided by Charles. The history of music at Catherine's court — and Matteis's part in it — is still largely to be written but it is clear that there was quite a significant influx of players both to Catherine's and Charles' courts around the time of the abdication of Queen Christina of Sweden and the disbanding of her musical entourage. Of those who visited and stayed were Bartolomeo Albrici and Giovanni Battista Draghi who may have been associated with Matteis at Catherine's court. Leech speculates that Matteis may well have been involved in the catholic chapel and that his motet *Crudele Gadium* may well have been written with these two musicians in mind. This is highly plausible but at present there is little evidence to back up such a supposition. See P. Leech, 'Musicians in the Catholic Chapel of Catherine of Braganza, 1662–92', *Early Music* (2001), pp.571–87.

which had become so important in the openings to dramatic works and odes (witness Purcell's overtures). The introductory function of the genre plays an important part in Matteis's *Ayres* in which he often acknowledges the French derivation, such as in this example from Book 5 whose duple metre opening section with its characteristic dotted rhythms is followed by a dance-like triple section:

The musical score for Example 3-29 is presented in two systems. The first system consists of three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs) in 2/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble staff is characterized by dotted rhythms. The bass staff contains a simple accompaniment. Below the first system, the number '6' is written under the first and second measures. The second system also consists of three staves in 3/4 time. The treble staff continues the melody with a more rhythmic, dance-like character. The bass staff provides a steady accompaniment. Below the second system, the numbers '76', '#', '#', and '65b' are written under the first, second, third, and fourth measures respectively.

**Example 3-29: *Maniera Francessa* Book 5, No.68 (opening)**

The musical score for Example 3-30 is presented in two systems, each with three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs). The first system is in 3/4 time and features a dance-like triple section. The treble staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is rhythmic and dance-like. The bass staff provides a steady accompaniment. The second system also consists of three staves in 3/4 time, continuing the dance-like triple section. The treble staff continues the melody, and the bass staff continues the accompaniment.

**Example 3-30: *Maniera Francessa* Book 5, No.68 (second section)**

Matteis seems to show through his titles that he was associating the overture style both with the French and the English — presumably because the English had adopted

it so fundamentally themselves. In the Book 1 *Ayre Il Genio Inglese*, the style is extremely similar to that of the *alla Francese Ayres* and yet something about the writing almost seems to caricature the style:

Il genio Inglese

**Example 3-31: *Il Genio Inglese* Book 1, No.32**

The suggestion of caricature arises from the lack of double-dotting in the second violin and tenor parts. These parts should probably be dotted by implication with bars 3–4 and 6–7 following the pattern of dots laid down by the first violin. Furthermore, the first violin might choose to double-dot the first of each group of three, as in bar 3 for example, with the bass dotting the quavers in that bar and the next also. But what if Matteis meant the rhythms to be played more or less as written? This approach could give rise to two different effects depending on how the disparity in rhythm is approached. On the one hand the insistent equal quavers in the middle parts answering the much more French dotted rhythms of the first violin, could give a somewhat martial air to the work, or alternatively could even be viewed as a parody. Could it be that to Matteis's ears the desire of the English to perform in a convincingly French style was not always matched by their ability to do so and this was his way of poking fun at that? We can never know, though ultimately it is most

likely that the general level of inconsistency in the dotting suggests that all the parts should be uniformly dotted.<sup>66</sup> The overture style certainly seems to have been important to Matteis as he uses it several times throughout his *Ayres*, with a variety of titles. In the following two-section *Preludio* we find Matteis combining Italianate written-out ornaments and falling motifs with the characteristic dotted figurations of the overture, which also continue into the following *Aria* section:

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system, labeled 'Preludio', contains three staves of music. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music features dotted rhythms, trills (marked 'tr'), and slurs. The second system continues the Preludio, with measure numbers 43 and 76 indicated. The third system is labeled 'Aria' and also consists of three staves, with measure numbers 43 and 43# at the bottom.

Example 3-32: *Preludio and Aria* Book 5, No.40

<sup>66</sup> Double-dotting issues will be discussed further on pages 236–38.

Stylistically there are a number of similarities between the overture style and a more Italianate form found in Matteis's work — the *Balletto*. This form, like the *Fantasia* inhabits more than one stylistic area though fundamentally it is a dance-derived form. Musically, the *Balletto* is usually characterised by a strongly-marked duple metre, often with a contrasting section, also usually in a duple metre but sometimes triple. The dotted rhythms of the *Balletto* are very similar in style and intent to those in the French overture style and it is no surprise to find that in Matteis's work the two styles seem almost interchangeable. There is a possibility that the *Balletto* might have been something of a favourite form for Matteis to judge from the fact that he chose such a style of movement when writing an *Ayre* for his son:

**Example 3-33: *Balletto for ye young Nicola* Book 5, No.8**

Despite this, there are not a large number of *Balletti* in Matteis's work and the majority of those are in Book 5. In each case Matteis writes in duple metre and employs a characteristic dotted rhythm in the melody. The more Italianate style of these movements, especially as compared to the French overture style, is shown in the slightly more sinuous bass-line, with more chromaticism and a more *affetto*-like melodic contour. The fourth complete bar of the following example is a perfect example of this, with its falling figurations from the expressive  $A^b$ :

Example 3-34: *Belletto* Book 5, No.64

### 3.7 The Italian style

#### (i) When the Raptures came

And when the raptures came...one would have thought the man [Matteis] beside himself... all which and other signall excellencys might then be perceived but now may not be described, so violent was his conference of extreams, whereof the like I never heard before or since.<sup>67</sup>

One might be tempted to consider North's above description to be somewhat hyperbolic but John Evelyn was equally impressed and said of Matteis that 'he seem'd to be spiritato'd and plaid such ravishing things on a ground as astonish'd us all ... .'<sup>68</sup> Evelyn had neither the musical ability nor musical experience of North but was far from unfamiliar with the Italian style through his experiences in Italy on his 'Grand Tour', and his reactions cannot be assumed to be particularly provincial. These descriptions of Matteis's playing echo that of a famous description of Corelli:

I never met with any man that suffer'd his passion to hurry him away so much

<sup>67</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.63.

<sup>68</sup> *Diary of John Evelyn* iv, ed. E.S. De Beer (Oxford, 1955), p.48. The word 'spiritato'd' is equally evocative and apparently was an expression of the time which referred to an extreme of religious frenzy.



whilst he was playing on the violin as the famous Arcangelo Corelli, whose Eyes will sometimes turn as red as Fire; his countenance will be distorted, his eyeballs roll as in an agony, and he gives in so much to what he is doing that he doth not look like the same man.<sup>69</sup>

This last comment was appended to Raguene's considered opinion of the Italian manner of playing, the effects of which are manifest in his rather startled descriptions:

Every stroke of the bow sounds harsh, if broken, and disagreeable, if continued<sup>70</sup>

The more hardy Italian changes the tone and the mode without any awe or hesitation ... He'll have passages of such an extent as will perfectly confound his auditors at first, and upon such irregular tones as shall instill a terror as well as surprise into his audience, who will immediately conclude that the whole concert is degenerating into a dreadful dissonance.<sup>71</sup>

North confirms elsewhere that this was certainly not comparable with the more sedate English style:

But to doe the right in shewing what was most amiss in ye manner of Mr. Jenkins, It was wholly devoid of fire & fury, such as the Itallian music affects, In their stabbs & stoccatas, wch defect is onely excusable upon ye humour of the times, those were pleased with ye sedate, wch these will not bear and for that matter, as to reall vertue, or goodness of the musick, I referre to what hath bin sayd ... And it may be alledged also as a defect, that Jenkins did not dash upon Harsh notes, as ye Itallians doe, wch makes their consorts more Saporite, then the musick was when the parts did but hunt one and other, from concord to concord.<sup>72</sup>

Eyewitness descriptions, perhaps inevitably, are occasionally less than factual, with awe-struck adjectives tending to outweigh precise information. Comments about how the player went up to the top of the fingerboard are only of real use if we know how long the fingerboard is, and whilst 'fire and fury' conjures an evocative image it provides little clue as to whence such extroversion came or the manner of its practical manifestation. Moreover it is an impossible task to 'put on' seventeenth-century ears — for example what do we make of North's stated opinion that it is preferable for two violins playing in unison to play slightly out of time with each other since the only thing to be gained by playing together is volume whereas

---

<sup>69</sup> From an anonymous annotation to Raguene's *Parallèle des Italiens et des Français en ce qui regarde la Musique et les Opéras* (Paris, 1702), cited by Allsop in *Arcangelo Corelli*, p.53. A further annotation says 'Corelli is a conceited fellow half madd for all hee is so great a master'. See N. Zaslav, 'Ornaments for Corelli Opus 5' *Early Music* 24 (1996), p.95.

<sup>70</sup> F. Raguene, 'Comparaison de la musique Italienne et de la Musique Français', Cited in O. Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History* (London, 1952), p.475.

<sup>71</sup> Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, p.477.

<sup>72</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.24.

playing apart ‘by the frequent dissonances there is a pleasant seasoning obtained’?<sup>73</sup> We shall probably never know to quite what extent North advocated playing out of time since there is no way of second-guessing at what point he would have considered it excessive. And in like manner, decisions of taste are generally determined by the extent of our ability to understand the intent behind the music. To understand the playing style of Matteis — or indeed any performer — through examinations of the music alone is an impossible task since one is dealing partly with factors which defy notation. There is no reason to think that Matteis’s style of playing differed substantially from other illustrious Italian violinists, and thus the surprise which greeted his playing in England must be seen within the wider context of Italian violin playing across Europe. Bearing in mind the same caveat about descriptions only being as reliable as the person recording them, many descriptions of the Italian style versus that of the French seem to have the same tenor:

A symphony of furies shakes the soul; it undermines and overthrows it in spite of all its care; the artist himself, whilst he is performing it, is seized with an unavoidable agony; he tortures his violin; he racks his body; he is no longer master of himself, but is agitated like one possessed with an irresistible motion. If, on the other side, the symphony is to express a calm and tranquillity, which requires a quite different style, they however execute it with an equal success. Here the notes descend so low that the soul is swallowed with ‘em in the profound abyss. Every string of the bow is of an infinite length, lingering on a dying sound which decays gradually till at last it absolutely expires.<sup>74</sup>

Clearly there is an admixture here of the expressive and the theatrical, the Italian predilection for which can be no mystery to anyone with even a fleeting acquaintance with that country and its inhabitants. Few would argue that the Italians have a great vibrancy in the way they communicate and are wonderfully expressive in the way they use their voices and their bodies. Historical evidence also shows that the expressive intent provided a very large piece in the jigsaw that was the seventeenth-century performing style. As instrumental music developed throughout the century there was a bifurcation in the development of ornamentation, with division-based embellishments on the one hand and expressive, *affetto* ornaments on the other. Of course the distinctions are not quite so clear-cut as this and the boundaries do blur, but to a large extent this demarcation can still be seen in the music of Matteis. Rognoni gives an important differentiation between the two sorts of ornamentation:

---

<sup>73</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.172.

<sup>74</sup> Ragueneau, *Parallèle des Italiens et des Français*, cited by Allsop in *Arcangelo Corelli*, p.53. Allsop points out that this description may in fact have been of Corelli’s playing.

If the articulate voice is nothing other than the instrument which expresses the concept of the soul, let them see that the work is, even more so, the instrument with which one does something, or rather this very thing. . . one must still guard against making *passaggi* on words that signify pain, anguish, misery, torment, and similar things, because instead of *passaggi* one uses graces, accents, and exclamations, now diminishing the voice, now increasing it, with sweet and gentle movements, and sometimes with a mournful and sorrowful voice.<sup>75</sup>

These vocal instructions do seem to have passed over into the instrumental canon and can still be seen operating in the music of Matteis. It is fortunate that North took such an interest in the subject of ornamentation since his descriptions give valuable first-hand evidence and are a microcosm of the English-meets-Italian atmosphere of late seventeenth-century London. Moreover, North's evident affection and admiration for Matteis makes it very likely that some of his more general references to the Italian style are often partly based on his experience of Matteis's playing.<sup>76</sup> In their work on North, Chan and Kassler have opined that 'A detailed comparison of Matteis's printed works with North's comments about performance practice on the violin could be revealing'.<sup>77</sup> Whilst this is not the place for this, a certain amount of comparison will be undertaken where possible. North is not always consistent, or clear, in his terminology and neglects to describe certain elements on the basis that they would have been sufficiently familiar with his readers to make such descriptions unnecessary — witness his description of the basic types of ornaments:

Graces are comonly distinguisht into smooth and tremulous. I shall have litle to doe with the latter becaus it is as I say'd wholly a dexterity which words will not express and onely imitation can acquire.<sup>78</sup>

These categories of 'smooth' (expressive, linear ornamentation of the melodic and rhythmic structure), 'tremulous' (trills and tremolo-based) and 'curling' (mostly referring to cadential flourishes) are found in Matteis's work and often can be seen to correspond quite closely with North's descriptions. There are further similarities with other works of the same period such as the table of 'Graces proper to the Viol or Violin' which appeared in editions of Playford's *Introduction to the Skill of*

---

<sup>75</sup> F. Rognoni, *Selva di varii passaggi* (Milan, 1620).

<sup>76</sup> It should also be pointed out that John Playford's *Introduction to the Skill of Musick* contained an English translation of Caccini's *Le Nuove Musiche*, which could have been an influence on North and certainly shows that the influences of this important work were still being felt in England at this time.

<sup>77</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.165.

<sup>78</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.164.

*Musick* from around this time.<sup>79</sup>

## (ii) The expressive, *Affetto* style

It was noted earlier that Italian instrumentalists were almost certainly endowed with a much higher level of technical skill than has often been acknowledged, though it is not a necessary concomitant that all their violinistic endeavours were predicated on a desire for ever greater virtuosity. Central to the aesthetic of the emerging monodic style around the beginning of the seventeenth century was the concept of beauty and variety of expression, and it does seem that these qualities continued to be valued both within Italy and by those other countries, cities and courts that sought to engage the services of Italian musicians throughout the period. Despite the acknowledged virtuosity of Germanic seventeenth-century violinists such as Biber and Walther, it was Corelli who was 'said to be the best in Europe'<sup>80</sup> and it may be that one of the fundamental differences between the playing style of the Germans and that of the Italians related to the greater insistence of the former on an expressive playing style.<sup>81</sup> The Bolognese school, for example, in the orbit of which Corelli received much of his early influence, fostered many players who were primarily known for the expressivity of their writing. Perhaps the ideal example of such a composer is one of the great founding fathers of the *Accademia Filarmonica*, Pietro degli Antonii. Antonii's music is perhaps best characterised by the fact that he wrote a disproportionately large number of slow movements of which Apel says 'His [degli Antonii's] slow movements ... are among the most beautiful compositions in the violin literature of the late seventeenth century. Here he appears to be in the domain of the vocal music of the time, with regard to both form and style.'<sup>82</sup> This is not the place for conjecture but it is not beyond the realms of possibility that Matteis might have spent time in Bologna in which case such influences may well have played an

---

<sup>79</sup> For example in the seventh edition of 1673. Though clearly heavily French-influenced, many of these ornaments concur with both North's advice and the kind of ornaments found notated in Matteis's music.

<sup>80</sup> A. Bulifon, *Diario della città di Napoli (May 1, 1702)*. Quoted by Allsop in *Corelli, New Orpheus of our Times*, p.55.

<sup>81</sup> When Thomas Baltzar came to England, his virtuosic achievements were not considered sufficient to overcome the general feeling that his playing was too harsh — or as Anthony Wood put it, 'his Hand was rough alla Tedesca' (Lbl Add. Ms. 32436, f. 73v). Whilst this can not be taken as complete proof of the playing style of a nation it is nevertheless interesting that Wood should have used such a turn of phrase.

<sup>82</sup> W. Apel, *Italian Violin Music of the Seventeenth Century* (Bloomington, 1990), p.209. For example, Degli Antonii wrote a sonata with successive movements labelled *Largo*, *Grave*, *Affettuoso* and *Posato*.

important part in his stylistic development. The vocal aspect of his writing was much commented upon by English writers and seems to have formed a fundamental part of his playing style. It is in terms of this expressive style that the works of Matteis can be seen to have inherited the aesthetic of the early Baroque style, aspects which to a large extent came to epitomise the Italian style of the Seicento. This aesthetic was initially characterised by the desire of certain singers and composers to find an expressive style of ornamentation that was different from that employed by instrumentalists. Paradoxically, it would seem that this style — often termed *affetto* — was then seized upon by instrumentalists to increase the scope for their own expressive playing. Moving the ‘passions’ through the spoken word had been a fundamental concept of developing humanist thought in the sixteenth century though it was something of which instrumental music was traditionally held to be incapable:

... no concert of instruments should ever be given without the addition of a human voice... . From the words, especially when they are well mimed by a good musician, truly comes the greater part of the emotions aroused in the minds of the listeners.<sup>83</sup>

But the manifold possibilities of musical rhetoric were already being voiced as early as 1555 by Vicentino:

What effect would an orator have if he were to recite a fine oration without organizing accents, pronunciations, fast and slow rates of motion, and soft or loud levels of speaking? He would not move the audience. The same is true of music. If an orator moves listeners with the devices described above, how much greater and more powerful will be the effect of well co-ordinated music recited with the same devices, but now accompanied by harmony.<sup>84</sup>

The earliest instrumental *canzone* were adapted from vocal music, meaning that the performers and, presumably in many instances the audience, were likely to be aware of the underlying text and to some extent could not help but be receptive to any expressive devices the instrumentalists might make to point out the ‘words’. As the seventeenth century progressed, instrumental music gradually became unshackled from this textual basis and yet the main rhetorical principles seem to have continued to inform performances in clear and important ways. As a practical expression of the expressive details of this emerging style, Caccini’s 1601 *Le Nuove Musiche* stands

---

<sup>83</sup> Hercole Bottrigari, *Il Desiderio, or Concerning the Playing Together of Various Musical Instruments* (1594). Cited by Dew, ‘*Passion and Persuasion*’, *The Art of Rhetoric and the Performance of Early Seventeenth-Century Solo Sonatas*, p.9.

<sup>84</sup> Nicola Vicentino, *Ancient Music Adapted to Modern Practice*. Cited by Dew, p.18.

out as a clear attempt to categorise many of the ornamental and expressive devices which he considered suitable to the *affetto* style. The various trilled and expressive ornaments he highlighted were adapted to varying degrees by instrumental composers, and by the time of Matteis were an integral part of the violinist's expressive palette.<sup>85</sup> To this palette were added many more musical 'figures of speech' with which the performer could highlight certain *affects* in the music. It was to these that North was referring when he said:

But as in oratory there are certain formes and modes of speech so in musick there are certain passages, which are promiscuously assumed by the masters, and that I have termed comon places of ayre.<sup>86</sup>

To a large extent such figures would have contextualised the performances but, as Cathryn Dew has pointed out, they would have been specific to relatively limited periods in time and it is unlikely whether we could hope to unlock their specific range of relevance in Matteis's music at this distance removed in time.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, it would appear that certain expressive figures, first advocated by the early vocalists, were taken up by early sonata composers (such as Marini, Cima, Fontana and Castello) and still appear to have been used in the same way by Matteis. Castello's *Sonate Concertate in Stil Moderno* of 1629 offers good examples of techniques that instrumental composers seem to have adopted as the essence of the expressive style — factors such as a slow harmonic movement, long melodic note lengths, frequent clashes of harmony providing expressive dissonances (examples of which can be seen at the beginning of bars two and ten in Example 3-35), expressive intervallic leaps (falling and rising) and, from time to time, cascading passages of ornamental passagework. The expressive possibilities of chromatically-moving harmonic patters were acknowledged by North when he said that 'These [Neapolitan 6<sup>th</sup> harmonies] are notes which the Italians affect much, and are rather an expression of passion than harmony.'<sup>88</sup> The following example shows how the slow-moving bass and the use of chromaticism and dissonance within a falling tessitura epitomise

---

<sup>85</sup> See H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Giulio Caccini, Le Nuove Musiche* (Madison, WI, 1970). The importance of *affetto* devices is highlighted by the fact that between 1582 and 1626, 23 separate publications used the word *affetto* or *affetti* in the title. See the preface to B. Marini, *Affetti Musicali*, ed. Franco Piperno (Venice, 1617; R/Milan, 1985).

<sup>86</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.196. One such example would have been the descending tetrachord motif (see page 179).

<sup>87</sup> This point is clearly made throughout her study by Dew in '*Passion and Persuasion*', *The Art of Rhetoric and the Performance of Early Seventeenth-Century Solo Sonatas*.

<sup>88</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.26, n.32.

the *affetto* style:

Affetto

Example 3-35: Dario Castello, *Sonate concertate* Libro 2, Sonata 3

Chromaticism combined with intervallic leaps — often of diminished or augmented intervals — is a fundamental of the *affetto* style:

Example 3-36: *Adagio* Book 1, No. 2 ( $\text{♩}^1:4$ )

These expressive intervals colour not only Matteis's music but also those of his Italian contemporaries, such as the illustrious Corelli. Note the similarity of the repeated falling motif in Examples 3-36 and 3-37, and the falling seventh leading into the cadence. Also very similar is the antiphonal voicing of the first and second violin parts as they follow each other in the downward motif:

Example 3-37: A. Corelli, *Concerto Grosso Op. 6, No. 6, Largo*

The falling figurations in *affetto* movements were specifically calculated for an expressive *affect*, as in the falling tetrachord which was much used in vocal music to represent lamentation.<sup>89</sup> Similarly, the ornamented descending fourth has been identified in many early instrumental sonatas including some by Gabrieli, Rossi, Turini and Castello.<sup>90</sup> Frequently the early sonatas present these expressive passages in a very plain fashion. In this example, the bass implies certain expressive harmonies with its chromatic movement but the melody is quite static:

<sup>89</sup> See E. Rosand, 'The Descending Tetrachord — an Emblem of Lament' *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979), pp.346–59.

<sup>90</sup> Marini, *Affetti Musical*, pp.35–37. All but one of these are over an alternating tonic/leading note/tonic figure in the bass (as in many of the above examples) which was almost certainly another common *affetto* device. This further demonstrates that there are many musical figurations that we cannot hope to pick up on today which would have had affective resonances for audiences and performers alike three hundred years ago.





Example 3-38: B. Marini, *Sonata XII, Op.8* (1626)

However, the strong suggestion is that the player would have been expected to have ornamented the melodic line and, in fact, Caccini gives an example with a passage that is quite similar in *Le Nuove Musiche*:<sup>91</sup>



Example 3-39: G. Caccini, *Le Nuove Musiche*

Matteis's use of the expressive phrase is still remarkably similar a half century later.



Example 3-40: *Adagio* Book 4, No.42

<sup>91</sup> Wiley Hitchcock, *Guilio Caccini, Le Nuove Musiche, Le Nuove Musiche*, p.53.

The bass line is very similar, although Matteis uses a faster movement than was found in the Caccini, but the overall falling tessitura is the same and the expressive roulades and cascatas are very similar. Such passages in the early sonatas were often titled *affetto* but, even where such a label was absent, the effect, and affect, were clearly the same. For instance, the following example by Castello is not specifically labelled *affetto* but quite clearly contains all the important characteristics from the slow moving (and occasionally chromatic) bass-line, ornamented falling lines and expressive dissonance as in bar 9 of Example 3-41. This expressive passage is juxtaposed with a prior division-based section thus maximising the contrast between the two affects:

The image shows two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The top system features a treble staff with a rapid, ornamented melodic line and a bass staff with a slower, chromatic line. The second system continues this texture with similar melodic and bass line characteristics.

Example 3-41: D. Castello, *Sonata primo* from *Sonate Concertate in stil moderno*

It would be an interesting study to identify the many different *affetto* devices in the early sonatas and then to trace the various ways in which they were taken up by successive generations of sonata composers right up to the time of Matteis. However, such a comparative study would need to take in so many composers across such a relatively wide time-scale as to be prohibitive. The work of Castello and Marini has been selected as typical of the early manifestations of the style and, for the purposes of the present study, it will suffice to point out that by the time Matteis wrote his *Ayres*, the *affetto* style, as defined by an expressive, harmonically plangent and melodically embellished style, had been well-integrated into general compositional and performing practice. In fact, Matteis still uses the specific term *affetto* or similar in various printed *Ayres*:

Sarabanda con affetto

adagio

13

13

13

13

Trills (tr) are present in the first staff.

18

18

18

18

Trills (tr) are present in the first staff.

Example 3-42: *Sarabanda con affetto* Book 1, No.30

5

9

Trills (tr) are present in the first staff.

Example 3-43: *Andamento affettuoso* Book 4, No.18

Presto e con affetto

Example 3-44: *Andamento* Book 1, No.56

The first two of these examples mostly conform to that which we might expect from an *affetto* movement. The ornate melodic line is underpinned by a slow-moving bass line which creates frequent expressive turns of harmonic tension, mainly through the use of  ${}^6_3$  and  ${}^6_5$  harmonies (such as in bars 1,3 and 5 etc. of the Examples 3-43, and bars 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 etc. of Example 3-44). Once again there is a preponderance of falling figures, as in the third, fourth and fifth bars of the first example and nearly every bar in the second example. The first example also displays one of the devices on which North was to later comment:

And so from a sharp key[note], slurring up to the 3rd and so to the fifth, in such a manner as the notes shall seem to joyne in the full accord; for the reall sound as well as the memory continue one into another, and make a full accord, as in the second example [following]. And it is next to a rule not to rise a 3rd without a faint touch of the intermediate, and so descending allwais emphasising the accords for that distinguisheth the nature of the notes and the air of the key . . . and numberless instances might be given of these libertys, which belong to every performer of course.<sup>92</sup>

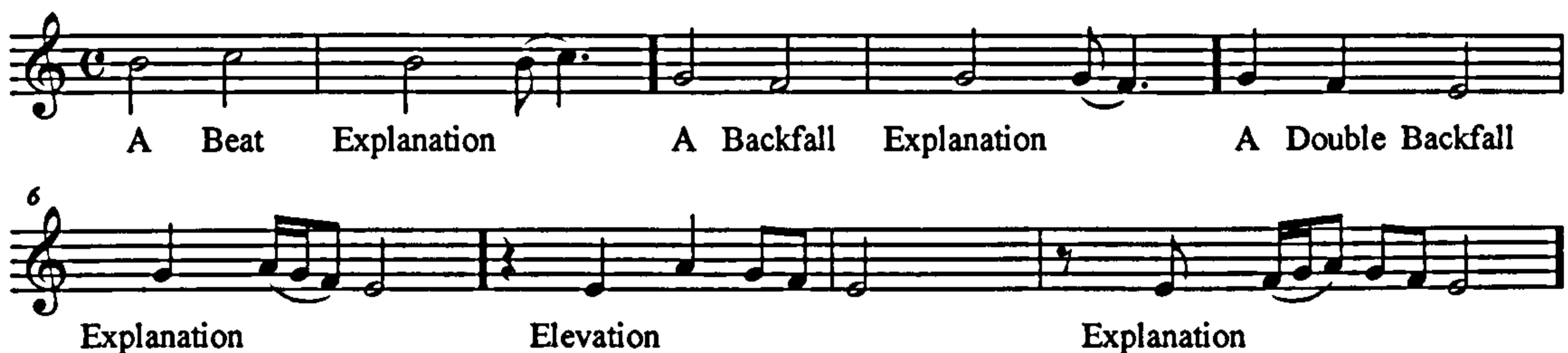
<sup>92</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.160.

The example Wilson gives is:<sup>93</sup>



**Example 3-45: Examples from North of slurred linking notes**

These also have strong parallels with the first few items on the list of ornaments that Playford published as being suitable for the violin:



**Example 3-46: Taken from 'A table of graces proper to the viol or violin'<sup>94</sup>**

Meanwhile, Example 3-44 must call into question Matteis's exact intentions regarding the term *affetto* since it is marked *Andamento* but also *presto e con affetto*. The use of the term *Andamento* for a walking bass has already been discussed (see pages 144–45) and perhaps the implication here is that is the nature of the firm *Andamento* walking bass that allows the melody line the freedom to be expressive in an *affetto* style. But is there not still a slight paradox in the direction *Presto, e con affetto*, even if the two refer to different aspects of the performance? Can *affetto* movements really be fast? Actually this direction does not appear in all the parts. The tenor part, for example, has the direction *Presto e Malinconico*. This latter term is another that Matteis uses quite commonly for his expressive movements; for example the *Andamento Malinconico*, Book 2, No.20 which exhibits so many of the

<sup>93</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.160.

<sup>94</sup> Transcribed from Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (10<sup>th</sup> edition, London, 1683), Lbl B 347.k.

expressive features of the early Italian *affetto* style. It would appear that Matteis related the term *affetto*, in this movement at least, not to specific ornamental devices but to an overall expressive style. Other common elements between this movement and the slower type of *affetto* are certain harmonic features, such as the  $^6_5$  harmonies (in bars 26, 28, 30 and 32 of Example 3-47) which suggest that for Matteis such progressions were integral to the expressive intent. The seeming incongruity of an expressive fast tempo occurs again in Book 1:

Presto e malinconico

Example 3-47: *Presto e malinconico* Book 1, No.118

Not only are the same harmonic progressions in evidence but there is still a very expressive upper part with the same falling motifs (for example the falling tetrachord (bar 26), the diminished fourth in the fifth bar) and plangent intervals such as the seventh harmony over the  $D^b$  bar 35.

The ability to grace music with a variety of *ad libitum* gestures and ornaments was very much part of the musician's stock-in-trade and it is clear that composers often left the parts uncluttered to allow the performer freedom to create their own embellishments:

masters are infinitely to blame that print these graces with their musick, which is an affront to an ordinary player, who may justly say, did not I know that? And by this means they make puzle and confusion in the notation. The elder Itallians in their finest cantatas have expres't no graces, as much to say whoever is fitt to sing this, knows the comon decorums. And in generall it is enough to

say that it is the habit of a good performer, to express the harmony of the key and proper gradations of the scale, and he doth it without thinking which is enough to say of smooth gracing.<sup>95</sup>

Matteis appears to have held the same opinion for he writes, 'To set your tune off the better, you must make severall sorts of Graces of your one Genius, it being very troublesome for the Composer to mark them.'<sup>96</sup> Despite this, the printed *Ayres*, particularly in the first publication of 1676, contain substantial amounts of written-out ornamentation, if not quite the 'flights of humour not to be expres't' with which North unwittingly taunts us.

Matteis seems to have reserved his most lyrical writing, however, for those *Ayres* which he consciously associated with the Italian style, such as those titled *Alla maniera Italiana* or, on two occasions only, *Sonata*. The following *Sonata* has an *ad libitum* quality and level of written-out ornamentation that perfectly demonstrates the *affetto* style:

The image displays a musical score for a sonata, consisting of three systems of music. Each system contains a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is written in a style characteristic of the 17th century, featuring a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The treble staff is highly ornamented with many grace notes and slurs, while the bass staff is much simpler, primarily consisting of a slow-moving line of quarter and eighth notes. The first system has a measure number '1' above the first measure of the treble staff. The second system has a measure number '5' above the first measure. The third system has a measure number '10' above the first measure. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4.

Example 3-48: *Sonata* Book 2, No.58

This complete sonata movement is a mere fifteen bars long and so Matteis evidently did not see the *Sonata* as a chance to produce anything more formally complex as, if anything, the *Ayre* is shorter than the norm. Once again the bass line is very slow-moving, in complete contrast with the florid melody line, which now has even more

<sup>95</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.166.

<sup>96</sup> Matteis, *The False Consonances of Musick*. See page 145 for full quotation.

developed written-out ornamentation. It is surely relevant that Matteis has employed some rhythmic alteration, such as the back-dotting in bar three and the crushed notes in the pre-antepenultimate bar, which techniques Caccini had advocated in *Le Nuove Musiche* as a method of increasing both expressivity and interest. The *Sonata* in Book 4 also has a high degree of notated filigree and if this layer is removed then it is immediately apparent that the underlying melody line is very similar to that which we saw in Marini (see Example 3-38 above):

Example 3-49: *Adagio* Book 4, No.22 showing underlying melodic shape

There are several examples in this short movement of a technique that Matteis employs a great deal around cadences, which is to preface a trill with an ornamented turn (see the later section discussing *trilling* for details), but as ever he is careful to ensure that neither these passages nor the scales interrupt the harmonic flow which can be seen in the unornamented version to move slowly and implacably throughout the movement. Moreover, the contrasts between the slow-moving parts of the melody (bars 2, 6, 8, 11 etc.) and the fast figurations (4, 7, 9 etc.) once more imbue the whole with a feeling of spontaneity of movement that feels *ad libitum*. The same



features characterise many of the *Ayres 'alla Maniera Italiana'*:

Example 3-50: *Un poco di maniera Italiana* Book 1, No.44

As in the Sonatas, Matteis uses a static bass line against a florid melody line. The particularly expressive devices in this instance are the chromatic rising line (in both melody and bass) in bar 5, the *cascata* in bar 3, the expressive falling seventh in bar 7 and the written-out ornament in bar 9 — all consistent and comparable with usages in the earlier Italian sources, both vocal and instrumental. The rising figure in the opening bar of the following example echoes advice in both Caccini's and Rognoni's treatises regarding how to start a piece:

Example 3-51: *Movimento Incognito* Book 2, No.46

Caccini says that singers can begin a piece with l'intonazione *della voce*, that is by starting a third below the first note and rising in a short roulade. Rognoni is slightly more logical about this practice, allowing that since a third below may not be harmonically felicitous it is also possible to begin from the fourth below, as Matteis

does in this example.<sup>97</sup> It is possible, since Matteis uses this device, that he may also have used the other possibilities that Caccini presented which were either to begin with a crescendo on the first note or else an attack, followed by a diminuendo then a 'strengthening' of the voice (*scemar di voce e esclamazione*) though this is hard to ascertain due to the small likelihood of such devices being notated.

There is a suggestion in Matteis's *Ayres* that one should perhaps not assume a requirement for added ornamentation is always implicit, since the absence of embellishment can itself have an expressive effect. In the following example, the less static bass allows less textural and temporal freedom for the melody line to be embellished, whilst the included trills and repetitive dotted motifs provide alternating moments of tension and release and the overall falling nature of the melodic line creates the expressive *affect*, removing the need for further substantial ornamentation. In this way Matteis seems to have provided 'ready-made' Italianate movements of a technical level that would not put them out of the reach of any reasonably proficient amateur:

Example 3-52: *Adagio* Book 1, No.2 (♩¹:⁴)

It is possible that a similar intention was behind the following *Ayre* which shares certain features with Example 3-52. For example, the bass line has a similar rhythmic movement and also contains (in bar 1/2) the familiar alternating 5-3/6-3/5-3 harmonic figuration which seems to occur in so many *affetto* movements. The combination of this with the plangency of the bare, descending intervals in the melodic line could be said to increase the expressive *affect* of the piece and might possibly be another example of a work which is expressively self-sufficient without the need for added ornamentation:

<sup>97</sup> Rognoni, *Selva di varii passaggi*, 'Avvertimenti all benigni lettori. No.5', where he points out that beginning under the note can be from either the third or the fourth below depending on the harmonic implications.



Example 3-53: *L'Amore*, Book 1, No.46

### 3.8 Matteis's manner of performing in the expressive style

#### (i) The Violin hold

Probably the most immediately arresting thing about Matteis's performance style was the manner in which he held the violin. Even North who was clearly quite close to Matteis finds it difficult not to sound a little perplexed when he describes Matteis's violin hold:

He was a very robust and tall man, and having long armes, held his instrument almost against his girdle, and his bow was as long as for a base violl, and he touched his deviation with the very point; and I have found very few that will beleve it possible he could performe as he did in that posture.<sup>98</sup>

He was a very tall and large bodyed man, used a very long bow, rested his instrument against his short ribs, and with that (having onely a full accompanement) could hold an audience by the ears longer than ordinary, and a whisper not be heard amongst them.<sup>99</sup>

These descriptions bring to mind a certain playing position almost without thinking but, if we examine North's actual words, they are far from specific. He mentions two tell-tale positions: against the 'short ribs' and nearly 'against his girdle'. Anatomically speaking, the shortest ribs are the first ribs, i.e. the ones closest to the neck. The ribs then get longer until, after the seventh rib, they begin to shorten again, though generally without becoming as short as the first ribs. There are also two girdles in the skeleton — the pelvic girdle and the pectoral girdle, the latter of which is the clavicle/sternum area. Therefore if we are to take North absolutely at

<sup>98</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.63.

<sup>99</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309.

his word, the position which he seems to be describing is a hold somewhere in the region of the clavicle. Such a hold, either against or just below the collarbone is one that is frequently advocated in contemporary sources and is the one most often advocated by ‘chin-off’ players nowadays.<sup>100</sup> After all, this was the hold advocated by Playford, which rather suggests it was common in England:

The violin is usually plaid above-hand, the Neck thereof being held by the left hand; the lower part thereof is rested on the left breast, a little below the shoulder.<sup>101</sup>

However, the reference to Matteis’s long arms is somewhat incompatible with this hold since there would be no relevance to having long arms if one were to hold the violin so relatively high. Moreover, the collar-bone hold was certainly reasonably common at this time and it would be confusing for someone of North’s experience to find such a hold surprising. It is much more likely that the ‘short ribs’ to which he was referring are the ones near the bottom of the rib-cage, near the pelvic rather than the pectoral girdle. Daniel Merck offers a description which could accord with this: ‘Hold the violin neatly below the left breast, leaving the arm free and not resting it on the stomach’.<sup>102</sup> Lenton also seemed to be making reference to an unusually low hold when he wrote his treatise in 1693:

As I would have none get a habit of holding an Instrument under the Chin, so I would have then avoid placing it as low as the Girdle, which is a mongrel sort of way us’d by some in imitation of the Italians.<sup>103</sup>

It is sometimes assumed that Lenton was specifically referring to Matteis when he made this remark though it is surely equally plausible that his wording ‘imitation of the Italians’ — plural — is significant and that the low violin hold was actually chosen by many Italians. It would also be rather odd had he chosen to refer pejoratively to Matteis when he had approached him to compose a short piece for inclusion in the treatise. Lenton boasted that he had ‘prevailed with several of the most Eminent Masters to adorn my Book with some Easie Lessons in Two Parts,

---

<sup>100</sup> The ‘chin-on/chin-off’ debate has calmed somewhat in recent years but there is a school of thought that holds it to be inauthentic to hold the violin with the chin at all. As it will shortly be seen, such an opinion is historically untenable.

<sup>101</sup> J. Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, (London, 1674; R/Ridgewood, N.J., 1986), p.114.

<sup>102</sup> D. Merck, *Compendium Musicae Instrumentalis Chelicae...*, (Augsburg, 1695).

<sup>103</sup> J. Lenton, *The Gentleman’s Diversion* (London, 1693), p.11. This is the earliest known surviving violin treatise.

made purposely upon this occasion' and is surely unlikely to have immediately ridiculed the playing style of one of his 'Eminent Masters'?

Anyone wanting to find historical precedent for any sort of violin hold can probably do so somewhere. Even the supposedly frowned-upon chin hold was mentioned as early as 1677:

If you want to play the violin properly you must. . . hold the violin so firmly with your chin that there's no reason to hold it with the left hand.<sup>104</sup>

Perhaps, aside from the contradictory evidence of the treatises the most important evidence on violin holds is that provided by contemporary iconography, although the major weakness of this evidence is that it is first necessary to decide where artistic licence ends and historical record begins. Prinner puts this problem in a nutshell and, whilst doing so, also provides a timely warning against assuming a universally low violin hold based solely on the evidence of paintings:

Nevertheless I have known virtuosi of repute who put the violin against the chest, thinking it looks nice and decorative, because they have taken it from a painting where an angel is playing to St. Francis and found it more picturesque: but they should have known that the painter was more artful with his paintbrush than he would have been with a violin bow.<sup>105</sup>

For the most part such stylised holds are usually so exaggerated as to be easily distinguishable, as in Plate 3-14.<sup>106</sup> Despite such holds being obviously stylised there are nevertheless quite serious difficulties in interpreting the iconographical evidence. Not the least of these difficulties is the sheer variety of holds one finds, often within the same painting. Also one is faced with such apparent paradoxes as, on the one hand strong evidence from Lenton and North (amongst others) that a low hold was not usual in England and yet, on the other hand, early iconographical evidence that such holds were not unheard of here, even a century previously. Each of these situations is illustrated by the beautiful painting reproduced in Plate 3-15:

---

<sup>104</sup> Cited from J. Prinner's *Musicalisch Schlissel* (autograph held by US-Wc) by C. Medlam in 'On holding the violin', *Early Music* 7 (1979), pp.561-63.

<sup>105</sup> Medlam, 'On holding the violin', pp.561-63.

<sup>106</sup> I am very grateful for the permission of Dmitri Badiarov to reproduce examples of paintings which he has catalogued on his website, <http://violadabbraccio.com>. He has kindly given me permission to reproduce Plates 3-14 to 3-17 in this study.

[Original in colour]



Plate 3-14: Pietro Novelli detto il Monrealese (early 17<sup>th</sup> C), (Musee des Beaux-Arts, Caen)



Plate 3-15: *Queen Elizabeth I Dancing with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester* Anon (c.1580), (Penshurst Place, Rt.Hon. Viscount de l'Isle)

Most seventeenth-century iconography would seem to suggest that a mid-chest hold was more normal. The hold in Plate 3-16 is convincing, not only because of the position of the violin (which agrees with so many other written and painted descriptions) but because the rest of the details are so accurate. For instance, the clear representation of the Italian bow grip allied to the shape of the bow which accords well with contemporary evidence.<sup>107</sup> Note also the lifted little finger of the right hand and the rounded thumb of the left hand (possibly to steady the violin?) which small details seem to add verisimilitude to the representation:



**Plate 3-16: [Untitled] Anon, (Italian 17<sup>th</sup> C), (Musee des beaux arts, Besançon)**

---

<sup>107</sup> See Bow, §1: History of the Bow. 3. c.1625–1800.  
<http://www.grovemusic.com/grovemusic//article/section/0/037/03753.1.3.html>

An equally detailed image from mid-seventeenth-century Italy shows an almost identical hold:

[Original in colour]



**Plate 3-17: *Blind Homer*, Mattia Preti (1613–1699), (Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice)**

There is equally persuasive evidence for such a hold in the iconography of Germany and the Low Countries, which may be yet more evidence of the Italian influence spreading throughout Europe. The following French painting from around 1640 shows a pochette player using a similar hold:





Plate 3-18: [Untitled] Louis le Nain, (c.1640), (Musikinstrumenten-Museum of Karl-Marx-Universität, Leipzig)<sup>108</sup>



Plate 3-19: *Frauenzimmersgesprächsspielen*, G.P. Harsdörffers (1647), (Stadtbibliothek, Nürnberg)<sup>109</sup>

<sup>108</sup> W. Salmen, *Musikgeschichte in bildern — Haus und Kammermusik* (Leipzig, 1982), p.51.

<sup>109</sup> Salmen, *Musikgeschichte in bildern — Haus und Kammermusik*, p.51.

Meanwhile, Plate 3-19, dating from 1647, shows a hold that seems to be getting quite close to the bottom of the rib-cage. Despite Prinner's warning about the evidence of paintings, it is hard to see why such detailed representations would have been made if this were not a common technique. The same applies to a higher hold, and though this does not seem to be as commonly depicted, there are paintings that suggest it was not unheard of. Though the illustrated hold in Plate 3-20 is somewhat compromised by the elbow resting on the table, the posture still seems to suggest a higher hold. Note also the Italian bow grip with the fingers on the stick and not on the hair:



**Plate 3-20: [Untitled] Valentin de Boulogne (Rome, 1st quarter 17<sup>th</sup> C), (Kunsthistorischesmuseum, Vienna)<sup>110</sup>**

The implication of Lenton's disapproving association of the hold with the Italians and North's evident surprise presumably means that Matteis's hold really was something out of the ordinary for England in that period. The iconography would seem to add that there was little standardisation during this period — perhaps even less that we normally acknowledge — and that there was clearly even more experimentation with, and as little standardisation of, holds in the seventeenth century as there are theories about them in the twenty-first. It is axiomatic that

---

<sup>110</sup> Salmen, *Musikgeschichte in bildern — Haus und Kammermusik*, p.57.

players and teachers alike would have advocated holds which they found either comfortable or conducive to technical assurance within the repertoire that they played. For simple dance music it was of little relevance exactly where the violin was held because there was no need to change position. However, we have seen that the technical standard of players even by the early seventeenth century was such that position changes up and down (the latter being the real problem for those using a low hold) were more commonplace than was once thought. But even then, Matteis's technical mastery shows that a low hold was no bar to ease of playing. A general pragmatism seems to have been the order of the day with a myriad different influences and requirements being born out in an equally diffuse number of playing styles. There was no right or wrong, one merely took the approach that suited one's needs and we can probably do no better than emulate this approach today.

## **(ii) The Violin and its set-up**

This is a huge area of study which can only be touched on very briefly here. The implications for performing style were certainly affected by the set-up of the violin and in this aspect the Italians seem to have been typically robust:

In truth mademoiselle your Italians carry too far a certain desire to elicit sound from their instruments. My intelligence, my heart, my ears tell me all at once that they produce a sound excessively shrill and violent. I am always afraid that the first stroke of the bow will make the violin fly into splinters, they use so much pressure<sup>111</sup>

Their violins are mounted with strings much larger than ours; their bows are longer, and they can make their instruments sound as loud again as we do ours.<sup>112</sup>

Partly due to the greater interest in the viol for much of the seventeenth century, England seems to have lagged behind somewhat in terms of violin making though this did not prevent a general recognition of the quality of Italian violins and a considerable demand for Cremonese violins from a relatively early date.<sup>113</sup> English court records from 1637 onwards distinguish between the purchase of Cremonese

---

<sup>111</sup> Le Cerf de la Vieville, Seigneur de Freneuse (1647–1710) *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française "Traite du bon gout en musique" (1705)*. Cited by Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, pp.489–507.

<sup>112</sup> Ragenet, 'Parallèle...', *Source Readings in Music History, The Baroque Era*, ed. O. Strunk (Toronto, 1965), p.126.

<sup>113</sup> John Banister paid £42 in 1662 for 2 Cremonese violins. See J. Dilworth, 'Violin Making in England in the Age of Purcell', *Performing the Music of Henry Purcell*, ed. M. Burden, (Oxford, 1996), pp.39–48.

and other, by implication more ordinary, violins. In the early eighteenth century Roger North observed that many fine instruments had been imported:

and the best utensill of Apollo, the violin, is so universally courted, and sought after to be had of the best sort, that some say England hath dispeopled Italy of violins.<sup>114</sup>

Meanwhile, Dilworth says that Brescian violins — principally those by Da Salo and Maggini — were more often used by performers, presumably since they were more affordable.<sup>115</sup> Of a generally less sophisticated construction, the large size of many of these instruments could nevertheless unleash considerable power and might be another reason why Italian players were noted for the strength of their sound. A fundamental aspect of the sound of any instrument resulted from the details of its stringing. Much work has been done in this area over the last two decades but it seems that, as yet, we have not approached a completely satisfactory understanding of the full sophistication of seventeenth-century string making techniques.<sup>116</sup> What is clear is that there was a move in the mid-century towards a metal-covered string, certainly for the bass string (i.e. g in the case of the violin), for more power and stability.<sup>117</sup> This was essential in the development of multiple-stop playing on the violin for, with a wholly gut g-string, there are problems of tone and of sound focus. It can be no coincidence that for the first decades of the seventeenth century the g-string was only occasionally used whereas later on (presumably after the general adoption of the covered g) the g-string was used both melodically but also as the bass note in multiple-stop passages. Matteis uses the g-string consistently in both these way in his *Ayres* from which I would conclude that it is likely that he would have used some sort of metal winding on his lowest string.

### (iii) The Bow

All other factors being equal, the essence of the sound of the violin is most affected

---

<sup>114</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.359.

<sup>115</sup> See J. Dilworth, 'Violin Making in England in the Age of Purcell', *Performing the Music of Henry Purcell*, ed. Burden, M., (Oxford, 1996), p.40.

<sup>116</sup> See E. Segerman, 'Deep Tensions', *The Strad* (April, 1988), pp.295–99 and 'Highly Strung', *The Strad* (April, 1988), pp.52–55. Oliver Webber discusses the situation in more depth in 'Real Gut Strings: Some New Experiments in Historical Stringing.' *The Consort* (1999), pp.3–29.

<sup>117</sup> Such strings must have reached England by an early date since John Playford advertised them then as a 'late invention ... which sound much better and lower than common Gut Strings, either under the Bow or Finger. It is a small wire twisted or gimp'd upon a gut string or upon silk'. See, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (London, 1664).

by the bow and it would appear that Matteis was equally revolutionary in this aspect, using what was evidently considered a longer bow than the norm. Again this was something on which North chose to comment on more than one occasion, saying, ‘and his bow was as long as for a base violl, and he touched his devisions with the very point.’<sup>118</sup> and ‘He was a very tall and large bodyed man, used a very long bow.’<sup>119</sup>

North elsewhere comments of Matteis that, ‘after a violent stoccata, he entered at once with the bipedalian bow’.<sup>120</sup> This word has long since fallen out of common usage but could possibly suggest ‘relating to bipeds’ and as such be another reference to the human or vocal aspect of Matteis’s playing (see section 3.7 (iv) on page 206). More likely, though, is that it was a reference to the length of the bow — i.e. two feet long. Although short by modern standards this was evidently considered to be exceptionally long by North, perhaps unsurprisingly given the English predilection for dance music where a short bow was sufficient and would have given a lively articulation. John Lenton’s advice was to ‘let your Bow be as long as your Instrument’<sup>121</sup> which would suggest a considerably shorter and lighter bow than that of Matteis — depending, of course, on the size of the violin.<sup>122</sup> The Hill collection of bows at the Ashmolean museum in Oxford includes a bow, nowadays named after its catalogue number, Number 19, which is almost exactly two feet long and dates from around 1680 to 1700. The bow may well have developed at least in part due to Matteis’s influence, which was also felt in the manner of holding the bow:

In short the character of that man, to those who never saw or heard him, is incredible; but out of that awkwardness he taught the English to hold the bow by the wood onely and not to touch the hair, which was no small reformation.<sup>123</sup>

Putting the thumb on the hair was considered to be the ‘French’ hold but Muffat makes clear that it was favoured by nearly everyone other than the Italians:

The majority of German violinists and other players of upper string instruments hold the bow as the French do, pressing the hair with the thumb and resting the

---

<sup>118</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.63.

<sup>119</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309.

<sup>120</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.168–69.

<sup>121</sup> Lenton, *The Gentleman’s Diversion*, p.11.

<sup>122</sup> Lenton mentions the variation in size of violins: ‘But because there are much difference in the Size of Instruments. . . from the Least *Violin* to the Biggest’. Such a variation would obviously mean a variation in the length of the bow, according to his rule, but even with a full-size ‘modern’ violin the bow would be significantly shorter than two feet. *The Gentleman’s Diversion*, p.3.

<sup>123</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309.

other fingers on the stick of the bow; the French hold it the same way when playing the bass. The Italians, amongst others, differ in playing these upper instruments, in that they never touch the hair.<sup>124</sup>

Lenton was still advocating the 'French' grip in 1693, long after Matteis's influence had percolated throughout English musical society: 'Hold it with your thumb half under the nutt, half under the hair from the nutt, and let it rest upon the middle of the furst joynt.'<sup>125</sup> North called the change of bow hold 'no small reformation' but it is very hard to know how limiting it might have been to play using the thumb-on-hair style. I have tried this latter technique and it is incontrovertibly very awkward, however a colleague has persisted in experimenting with this and maintains that after a relatively short time it becomes much easier and in fact allows for a very lively articulation in dance movements. And therein lies the rub — this hold was suitable for the technically-simple dance repertoire of the period, whilst the importation of an Italian style of playing, with its wider variety of effects and technical devices brought with it the necessity for a more controlled hold, which was why Matteis was such an influence in both areas.

One of the most contentious areas of performance practice — and one that occupies much time in the present-day period instrument band — is the pursuit of unified bowing. On a practical level it is desirable to find generalised rules to facilitate the coordinated bowing of a violin section but such rules were evidently hard to find, even in the seventeenth century:

It would be a difficult undertaking to prescribe a general rule for Bowing, the humours of Masters being very Various, and what is approved by one would be condemned by another.<sup>126</sup>

In the preface to *Florilegium Secundum*, Muffat suggests that, at this period, only Lully's band amongst the Europeans had really refined the discipline of group bowing:

However, it is well known that the Lullists, whom the French, the English, those from the Low Countries, and many others follow, all observe an identical way of bowing, even if a thousand of them play together. They all observe the same

---

<sup>124</sup> 'Georg Muffat's observations on the Lully style of performance', from the preface to *Florilegium Secundum* (Passau, 1698), Trans. K. Cooper and J. Zsako, *Musical Quarterly* 4 (1969), p.223.

<sup>125</sup> Lenton, *The Gentleman's Diversion*, p.11. In France it was not until Corrette's *L'Ecole d'Orphée* (1738) that the thumb-on-stick grip was offered as an alternative (though it was still identified as an Italian practice).

<sup>126</sup> Lenton, *The Gentleman's Diversion*, p.7.

way of playing the principal notes in the measure: above all those that begin the measure, those that define the cadence, and those that most clearly emphasize the dance rhythm.<sup>127</sup>

There is actually very little information on which to base any theory since there are remarkably few textual or musical documents surviving that tell us anything about bowing in the seventeenth century. Castello and Marini both include short phrasing/bowing marks but perhaps the most interesting early source is a violin sonata by Montalbano dating from 1629:

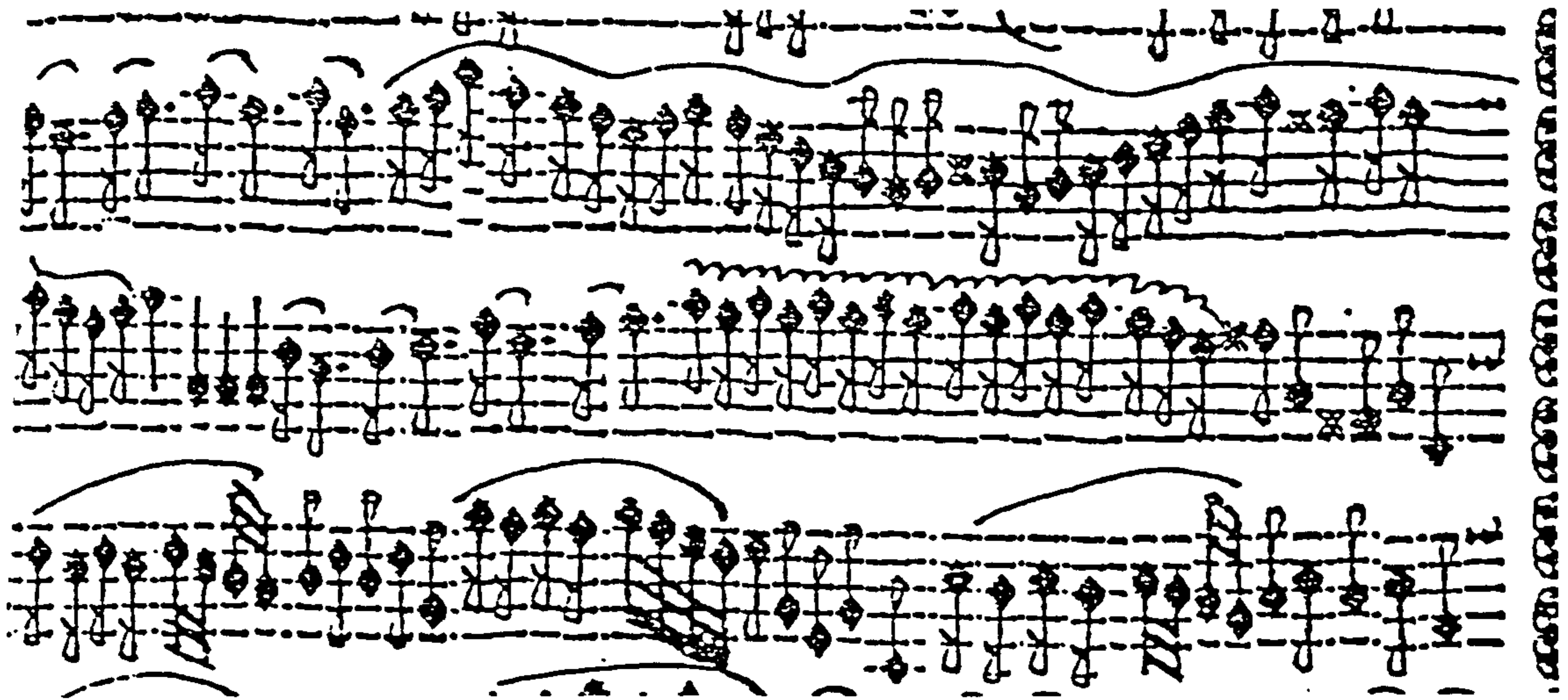


Plate 3-21: Montalbano excerpt from *Sinfonia 4*

The interesting thing about these marks is that it seems to imply that long slurred bows were used even at this early date. There is a tendency nowadays to think that cadential ornaments should be played with separate bows but this does not seem to be implied here (although the exact meaning of the wavy line is not clear). Interestingly, the longest melisma in this extract, on the first system, is marked as being slurred all the way through. As far as treatises are concerned, one of the oldest to deal with the practical aspects of playing the violin is Gasparo Zannetti's *Il Scolaro per imparare a suonare di violino, et altri stromenti* which was published in Milan in 1645. The work consists almost entirely of short, didactic pieces requiring a limited technical proficiency and providing little information regarding technical matters, save a few bowings. As ever, it is hard to imagine the level of knowledge of the average reader of this treatise though judging from Zannetti's comment that

<sup>127</sup> Cooper and Zsako, 'Georg Muffat's observations on the Lully style of performance', p.224.

movements should start with a down-bow, or else an up-bow if beginning on the off-beat, one assumes that he was taking little for granted. Generally however, Zannetti only includes a bowing where a retake is required. Unfortunately, because there are no written explanations of his working method it is not possible to know whether this implies 'bowing out' in those places where there are no bowings or whether we are to bow by implication from the examples he does include. It is not intended that the present study should attempt to apply bowing information from this treatise to Matteis's music but it does seem possible to infer that since there are certain bowings in this treatise that differ from what might nowadays be expected then in the absence of specific information we should perhaps open our imaginations *in general terms* and *in other repertoires*, including that of Matteis. We cannot assume any lack of inventiveness on the part of the seventeenth-century musician and nor should we assume that our solutions are either what they would have chosen or are somehow superior.

Certain of Zannetti's examples will serve to illustrate this point. In the following examples, P is an up-bow and T a down-bow.



Example 3-54: Zannetti, *Il Scolaro*, p.6

In this first example the down-bow re-take is consistent with the French style though it suggests the dotted minim would be cut a little short to accommodate it. The later up-bow retake would more nowadays more probably be done either with a *craqué* stroke on the second pair of quavers or by simply bowing out which makes it all the more interesting to see this quite different suggestion. The same kind of up-bow retake occurs in the following example:



Example 3-55: Zannetti, *Il Scolaro*, p.26



In this one, rather than two up-bows on the seventh and eight notes, Zannetti suggests another down-bow:



Example 3-56: Zannetti, *Il Scolaro*, p.44

The more usual approach nowadays would be to take two up-bows on the following d" and c" crotchets rather than on the e" as marked. Each method results in the same thing — a stress on the strong beat b', but in Zannetti we find a tendency always to prepare for strong beats well before they arrive. This perhaps has the result that the retake (which can result in a slight break in the sound) occurs well before the important or stressed note thus resulting in a less broken-up phrase. The relevance of all this to Matteis lies in the question of stresses and rhythmic vitality, which both form part of the broader question of contrast. I believe that in our modern-day performances of music from this period we are often guilty of prizing bowing solutions that are unobtrusive, rather higher than those which create a certain effect. In playing Matteis's music one is continually struck by the spirit of the music and I think it is very likely that he used his bowings — retakes *et al* — in order to bring out this quality. Take, for example, the following *Burlesca* (♩<sup>2:1</sup>):



Example 3-57: *Burlesca* Book 2, No.6

The stress pattern in this fast triple-time movement is quite heavily weighted towards the first beat, partly because of the metre but also partly because of the necessity for

a fairly quick bow-stroke on the low notes of each bar of the first violin part. However, the lengthened notes in the top and bottom lines suggest an equally strong accent on to the second beat which, in performance, gives a feeling of 'throwing' the beat and increasing rhythmic interest. Given this feeling it would actually make much more sense to bow the downbeats of the first violin part on an up-bow and the minims on a down-bow. I believe that players should embrace the possibilities that such decisions offer to increase the dramatic potential of their performances. Perhaps some of the best evidence for this lies in the examples of Matteis's contemporary John Lenton. Having warned of the widely varying 'humours of the Masters' as regards bowing, (see page 201 above) Lenton presents a selection of bowing possibilities, which cater both for the variety of suggestions of teachers and also of whims of performers. His suggestions for variations in bowings in two and three time are most comprehensive:<sup>128</sup>



**Example 3-58: Bowing patterns from John Lenton's *The Gentleman's Diversion***

He is particularly keen to point out that one can take two down-bows or up-bows at any time and clearly says that the bow should be lifted and the string re-struck in the course of such a bowing:

Where two Crotchets come after a Minim they may both be struck with an up-bow, thus when the length of the Minim is accomplished, take not the Bow off of the string, but let it quickly return upward to express the first Crotchet, (when done) raise the Bow from the string, immediately dropping it again upon the

<sup>128</sup> Lenton's suggestions are very similar to those of Bismantova, especially in respect of the re-taken down-bow. See page 230.

string, you hand still moving leisurely upward till the time of the last Crotchet is out.<sup>129</sup>

Some of these suggestions certainly surprised me and I am sure that most performers would not immediately have considered the second bar of the first example or the last of the second as their first choice solutions to those phrases, despite their impeccable logic.

Muffat, too, warns against the assumption of regular bowing in his observations on the Lully style of performance, where he notes that ‘It is clearly being false to the Lullian method to play the first note of a measure up-bow, but among the Germans and Italians this often occurs in triple metre.’<sup>130</sup> The writings of Zannetti, Muffat and Lenton all have the same relevance to Matteis, which is not in suggesting specific bowings but rather the copious possibilities we have when we seek to perform his music.

#### **(iv) The Speaking style and Matteis’s ‘Conference of Extreams’**

The violin was in an almost unrivalled position to recreate the sounds of the human voice and players clearly took this as an important part of their playing style. It was none other than Corelli who liked to ask of his pupils, ‘non udite lo parlare?’ [can you hear it speak?]<sup>131</sup> Meanwhile, even the earliest reference to Matteis’s playing made reference to its vocal qualities:

I heard that stupendous Violin Signior Nicholao (with other rare Musitians) whom certainly never mortal man Exceeded on that Instrument: he had a stroak so sweete, and made it speake like the Voice of a man; and when he pleased, like a Consort of severall Instruments.<sup>132</sup>

To judge from contemporary comment, one of the most immediately arresting things about Matteis’s bowing style was the fundamental contrast between his violent staccatas and legato arcatas — the latter of which required a much longer bow in

---

<sup>129</sup> Lenton, *The Gentleman’s Diversion*, p.8.

<sup>130</sup> Cooper and Zsako, ‘Georg Muffat’s Observations on the Lully style of performance’, p.229.

<sup>131</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.359. Even much later makers were still talking in these terms about the sound of the instruments. Antonio Bagatella said that he got his great chance to advance as a violin maker because Tartini sent many violins to him for adjustment. He described altering a great many old violins to give them either a ‘voce humana’ (suitable for solos) or a ‘voce argentina’. See Antonio Bagatella, *Regole per la costruzione dei violini-viole-violoncelli-violoni* (Padua, 1782; R Cremona, 1995).

<sup>132</sup> De Beer, *The Diary of John Evelyn* iv, p.48.

order successfully to be performed. North clearly categorises Matteis's repertoire of bowings:

His manner was singular, but in one respect he excelled all that had bin knowne before in England, which was the Arcata; his stoccatas, tremolos, devisions, and indeed his whole manner was surprising, and every stroke of his was a mouthfull.<sup>133</sup>

And then came his superior powers, an Arcata as from the cloud, and after that a querulous expostulatory style, as just not speaking.<sup>134</sup>

It is important to note that North specifically states that the expressive arcata was juxtaposed with this 'expostulatory' style of playing. Exactly what he meant by 'as just not speaking' is not terribly clear but the implication, consistent with the use of such 'vocal' words as querulous and expostulatory, is possibly that North was once more highlighting the similarities between Matteis's manner of playing and the sound of the human voice. Elsewhere North confirms that this 'querulous expostulatory' stroke was indeed the stoccata:

Old Sigr Nicola Matteis used this manner to set off a rage, and then a repentance; for after a violent stoccata, he entered at once with the bipedalian bow, as speaking no less in a passion, but out of the contrary temper.<sup>135</sup>

The violence of his stoccata took the English by surprise and is extremely unlikely as a result to have been performed with an off-the-string stroke since, even with a modern bow, it would be difficult to imbue the note with sufficient power using this sort of stroke. With the much more insubstantial bow of the period (which, despite it being longer than the English norm would still have been the case with Matteis's bow) it would be a near impossibility. This stroke was evidently one of the things that the amateur instrumentalists were keen to learn when they travelled to Italy on their Grand Tour:

and after having learnt of the best violin masters, particularly Corelli, [they] returned with flourishing hands; and for their delicate contour of graces in the slow parts, and the stoccata, and spirit in other kinds of movements, they were admired and imitated. But even this humour of learning in Italy is moderne, and sprang out of an ambition inspired by the musick of old Nichola.<sup>136</sup>

But North counsels caution that the stroke should not be overused:

---

<sup>133</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.355.

<sup>134</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.63.

<sup>135</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.168–69.

<sup>136</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.310, n. 65.

Another grace, or rather manner, is the Stoccata or stabb, which is a peculiar art of the hand upon instruments of the bow. And [in so far] as it is an occasionall imitation, so it hath a due acceptance; but to use it at all turnes, whensoever the movement will allow it, creates a fastidium. For it doth not, as the other [referring to within-the-bar rubato], mend the harmony, but rather by an affected snatching deprive it. And it appears manifestly so, when some consideration doth not goe along with it; for tho' [a harmony be] short, it ought to sound full, else it is lost.<sup>137</sup>

North does mention one other type of stroke that would appear to be related to the stoccata:

And there is another way of gracing passing notes, which gives them a fullness scarce describable. It is as if every stroke were a mouthfull, and procured, as I take it, by (not a trill, beat, or the like, but) a sort of shock or concussion of the finger upon every touch, as if every note were torne discerptim from another; and this comprehends a very short mixture of every note with the next before or behind it, which doth not corrupt or stay, but rather fringes the tone, as colours are seen onely at the entrance of a refraction.<sup>138</sup>

Based upon this description, John Wilson suggests two possible bowings:



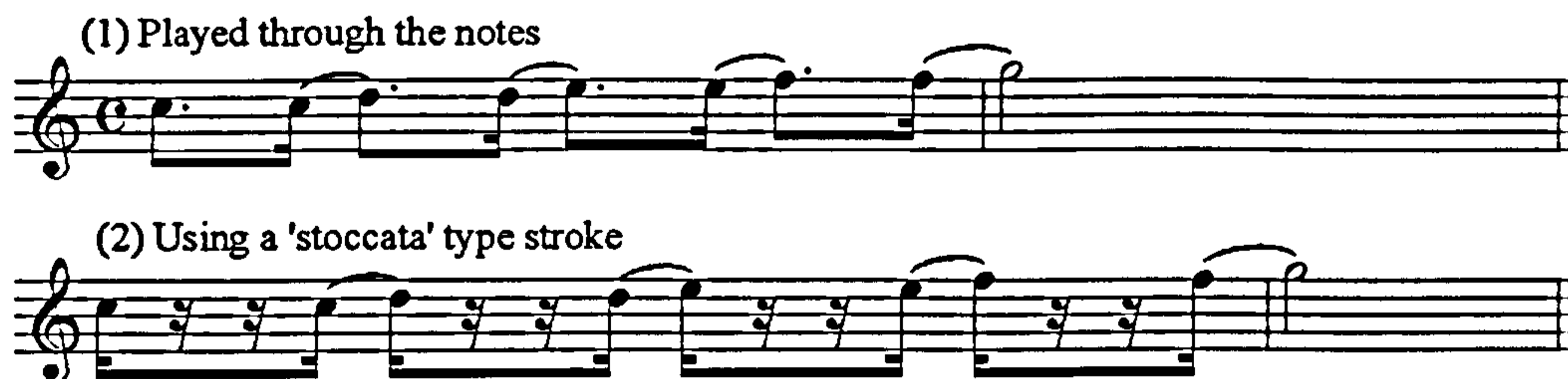
Example 3-59: *Roger North on Music*, p.169

These bowings do seem to correspond with what North says about the ‘unwritten rule’ of joining notes a 3<sup>rd</sup> apart together (see pages 183–84) but the use of the somewhat violent term ‘torne discerptim’ might also imply a possible link with the aggression of Matteis’s stoccata stroke in the manner of blending the notes together. This being the case I would suggest that the second of the above examples is perhaps the more literal interpretation of North’s description and implies that, in order to emphasise the beat, the speed of the bow would be increased mid-way through the stroke — something that would create an effect entirely consistent with the description of ‘shock or concussion of the finger’ whilst ‘tearing’ the note away.

<sup>137</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.168.

<sup>138</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.169.

North refers to the ‘short mixture’ of notes and, if it was performed as a staccata, then it is possible that the effect would have sounded more like it is notated in the second of the following examples:



**Example 3-60: Possible representation of North's ‘Torre Discerptim’ stroke.**

One slightly complicating feature is another description of North’s where he says:

Then next the grace of passing from one to another, which in some sort connects them, though severall; as if they were links in a chaine, very distinct, yet connected all together. For if there be any pause between note and note, it is amiss; but with the same breath as one note ends, the next begins And if you would take a distinct breath to each note, it must not begin with the entrance of [the] next, but with the expiring of the last, otherwise there will be a stopp more sensible upon the taking breath. This is that is (sic) called a slide, and in hand instruments is done with the finger, mixing the neighbour notes a litle in the transition. Even the organ and harpsicord will doe the same thing, as may be observed upon any one’s playing.<sup>139</sup>

He is obviously talking about *legato* here but the practice relates differently to voice, stringed and keyboard instruments. It is easy to understand what he means by the voice sliding, and it is equally clear that a keyboard instrument cannot slur pitch-wise but only by the overlap of pressure and release of the keys. It seems unlikely that he really means that the finger slides up the string from note to note and the logical conclusion is that he is here again talking about the type of elision between notes as shown in Example 3-59 and 3-60, although presumably now without the ‘shock’ and ‘percussion’.

The opposite stroke to the staccata is the Arcata, the performance of which seems to relate to two of the expressive devices mentioned by Caccini — the *esclamazione affettuosa* (which is described as a decrescendo followed by a ‘strengthening’ of the voice), and a gradual crescendo and then decrescendo (*il crescere e scemare della voce*) which Caccini thought more suitable to longer notes. In the following example

<sup>139</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.19.

from *Le Nuove Musiche*<sup>140</sup>, Caccini advocates the use of an *esclamazione* on the last note (the *a'*) which has obvious parallels with the long notes in *Ayres* such as the *Passaggio rotto* (see Example 3-62 below):



Example 3-61: *Le Nuove Musiche*

North paints a vivid picture of this stroke and, having previously related it so closely to Matteis's playing, gives us perhaps the most evocative picture of Matteis's expressive style:

The Italians have brought the bow to an high perfection, so that nothing of their playing is so difficult as the *Arcata* or long bow, with which they will begin a long note, clear, without rubb, and draw it forth swelling lowder and lowder, and at the ackme take a slow waiver; not trill to beak the sound or mix 2 notes, but as if the bird sat at the end of a spring [and] as she sang the spring waived her up and downe, or as if the wind that brought the sound shaked...<sup>141</sup>

This rather beautiful phrase gives as completely clear a description of vibrato — or as North tended to term it, the wrist shake — as one could hope to find, and makes it clear that integral to the expressive power of the *arcata* stroke is the manner in which the note is finished. Once again, Raguenet's comments on this practice suggest the startling effect of such a lyrical device:

He'll make a swelling of so prodigious a length that they who are unacquainted with it can't choose but be offended at first to see him so adventurous, but before he has done they'll think they can't sufficiently admire him.<sup>142</sup>

North's impatience with those who did not play lyrically may be suggestive of a general trend prior to Matteis's influence:

<sup>140</sup> Wiley Hitchcock, *Guilio Caccini, Le Nuove Musiche*, p.53.

<sup>141</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.164.

<sup>142</sup> Cited by Strunk in *Source Readings in Music History*, p.477. See also Tartini's later comments on the same technique in *A Letter from the Late Signor Tartini to Signora Maddalena Lombardini* (London 1779, R/London, 1967).

as I have knowne plain tripla notes broken into snatches, which whole, if the performers could have afforded a full drawne sound, had bin more musicall; but the short windedness, or want of bow in those that performe often stabbs the musick.<sup>143</sup>

The contrast of these strokes can be seen in the following example (♩<sup>1:4</sup>):

Example 3-62: *Passaggio rotto* Book 2, No.48

This section starts with preparatory arpeggionic figurations, changing to a more *ad libitum* style after the long held a' in bar ten — surely one of the notes on which Matteis would have employed his swelling arcata. The rising and falling of the tessitura and the varying note lengths added to the intrinsic rhythmic variety combine to conjure up the 'speaking' feel of the section, which is all the more effective for being unaccompanied. The triplet semiquavers that follow work out on a down-bow and require a reasonably long stroke in order to allow sufficient bow for the two semiquavers that follow. This is just the sort of place where a short, sharp stoccata stroke might have been employed, the short passage giving way after only one bar to another long slur and longer note-lengths. Thus the passage would accord well with the description of North's reminder that 'after a violent stoccata, he entered at once with the bipedalian bow, as speaking no less in a passion, but out of the contrary temper'.<sup>144</sup>

Interestingly for those trying to replicate this period's approach to vibrato, North also

<sup>143</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Muscicall Grammarian 1728'*, p.185.

<sup>144</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.168–69.



makes it clear that he prefers the use of the arcata phrasing to the more continuous use of vibrato which was clearly being practised by some.<sup>145</sup>

I must take notice of a wrist shake, as they call it, upon the violin, which without doubt is a great art, but as I think injured by overdoing; for those who use it well ever let a note rest without it whereas it ought to be used as the swelling wavee [*sic*], coming and going, which would have a much better effect.<sup>146</sup>

## (v) Rubato

It is implicit in the descriptions of Matteis's contrasts that at least part of the expressivity of his playing depended on a loosening of the temporal strictures of the music. This loosening and subsequent allowance of the melody line to be ornamented depended to a vital degree on the bass line giving both support and sufficient 'space' for the melody to be performed in a free manner. The bass lines tended to be principally harmonic and sufficiently uncomplicated for any rhythmic liberties in the melody to be easily conformed to. The importance of the bass player being able to follow the melody line in order to be able to accommodate any freedom of tempo is perhaps one explanation for those *Ayres* where the bass part is printed directly underneath the violin part. Matteis chose to do this in, for example, the *Sonata*, Book 4, No.22, the *Maniera Italiana*, Book 5, No.153 and, again, in the *Preludio Serio*, Book 5, No.134, all of which have slow bass lines and ornate melody parts.<sup>147</sup> This relates directly to an essential part of Caccini's preface where he recommends a performance 'senza misura, quasi favellando in armonia con la suddetta sprezzatura' [without measure, as if speaking in harmony with the aforementioned studied carelessness].<sup>148</sup> There are important implications for instrumentalists in this approach for, as Caccini comments, it allows a freedom of tempo and bending of the normal rules of harmony and by doing so approaches closer to the

---

<sup>145</sup> Slightly later on, Geminiani was one of those who advised using a large amount of vibrato — 'for this reason it should be made use of as often as possible', *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (London, 1751), p.8.

<sup>146</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.165, n.21.

<sup>147</sup> The exception to this 'rule' is in the *Aria* immediately preceding the *Maniera Italiana* in Book 5, which is in triple metre and a gently lilting French style and yet is nevertheless scored as in these *affetto* movements. Panmure Nos. 92, 106 and 107 are the equivalent movements and are not written out in score format.

<sup>148</sup> The term *sprezzatura* denotes a kind of laissez-faire attitude that is born out of confidence in one's ability and derives from Castiglione's, *The Book of the Courtier*, 1528, trans. George Bull (London, 1967), p.67.

essence of speech. North's various explanations would appear to concur with this concept:

It is not pretended here that the barrs which I have esteemed as totums should have a constant measure, for the unite or crotchet may be taken swifter or slower according to humour, and to say truth nothing is amiss when equallitys are fitly preserved.<sup>149</sup>

It was this attitude of conforming to the whim of the performer that was at the basis of the ability to be both expressive and exciting. North gives an evocative description of Matteis's own *sprezzatura*-like moments:

And when the raptures came, which his attendant bases were aware of, and conformed to, one would have thought the man beside himself.<sup>150</sup>

This description would appear to support the contention that, for Matteis, *rubato* was an intrinsic part of the expressive style and that the continuo players needed to be able to adapt to this rhythmic flexibility. At its simplest, this freedom manifests itself as an almost inconsequential slackness in notated rhythm, as in the last three semiquavers of the third complete bar of the following:

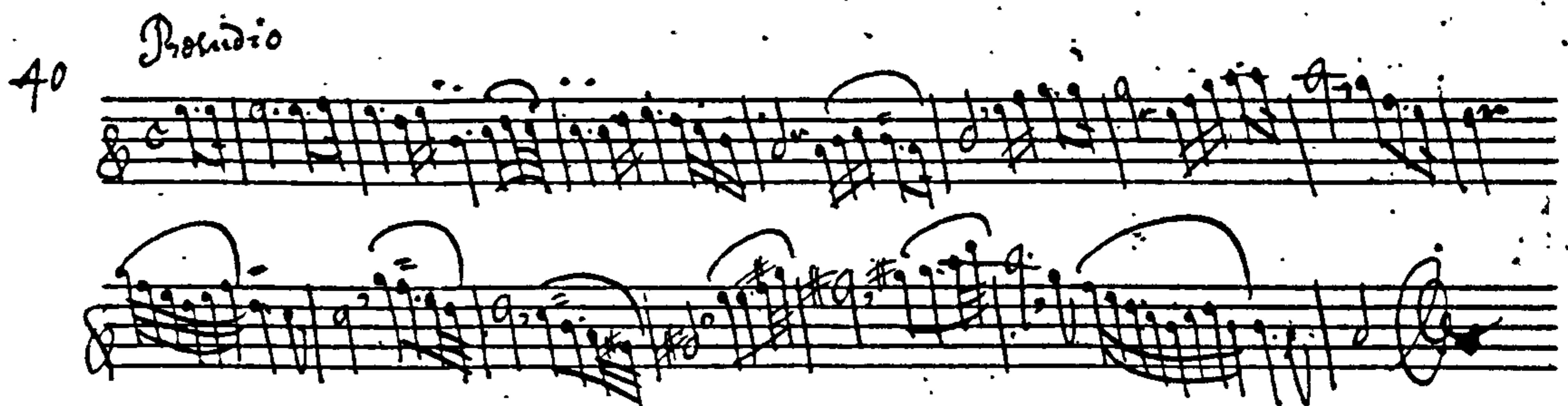


Plate 3-22: *Preludio* Hirsch IV 1633, No.40

In such instances it would almost certainly have been accepted practice to either slightly hold up the pulse or, more likely, fit the requisite number of notes into the available time — this technique in itself increases the *ad libitum* feel and adds to the expressive, 'speaking' nature of the performance. The question is, to what extent did Matteis employ *rubato* beyond these simple devices? If we were once again to take North's fondness for Matteis as tacit approval of his style of playing then it would appear likely that Matteis did not tend towards extremes since it is quite evident that

<sup>149</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.120.

<sup>150</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.63.

North was not entirely happy with the amount of freedom he encountered in Italian music:

For smooth and sliding graces, the great secret is to break and yet keep the time. Our ordinary scollars thinck there is such vertue in graces, that they will (for want of readyness) dwell too long, and so break the step or time of the consort, which in walking musik is intollerable, and no grace can make amends for it.<sup>151</sup>

It is in this respect that North's advice would appear to differ from the reality of Matteis's playing, for having said that the basses 'conformed to' Matteis's raptures he elsewhere explains his own idea of rubato as being something that implies no real flexibility on the part of the continuo section:

Graces I take to be the same, or coincident with the art of composition, onely this is deliberate; and that extempore. I was once told by an e[u]nuch, Signor Tosi, that the greatest art of performance lay in breaking the time, and healing it againe. That is either to hold the notes longer, or come off and goe upon others sooner then the time allows, but being sure at the close of the measure, to fall into the time exact. The meaning of this, is that the playing is a continuall sincopation, and interspersion of discord, which is as gross and manifest if one considers it, as the most elaborate composition. And it [is] so effectually done this way, that there is no necessity for the composer, to express half his sincops, and discords but he may leav them to the ingenious performer, and the success shall be full as well; which I may make more plainely appear anon.<sup>152</sup>

Due to the nature of rubato it is not usual to find it notated, though Matteis's 'raptures' seem sure to have involved more than subtle nuances of tempo. The following excerpt from one of the printed *Ayres* suggests that Matteis may have used equally sharp contrasts in his tempi as he evidently did in his bowing:

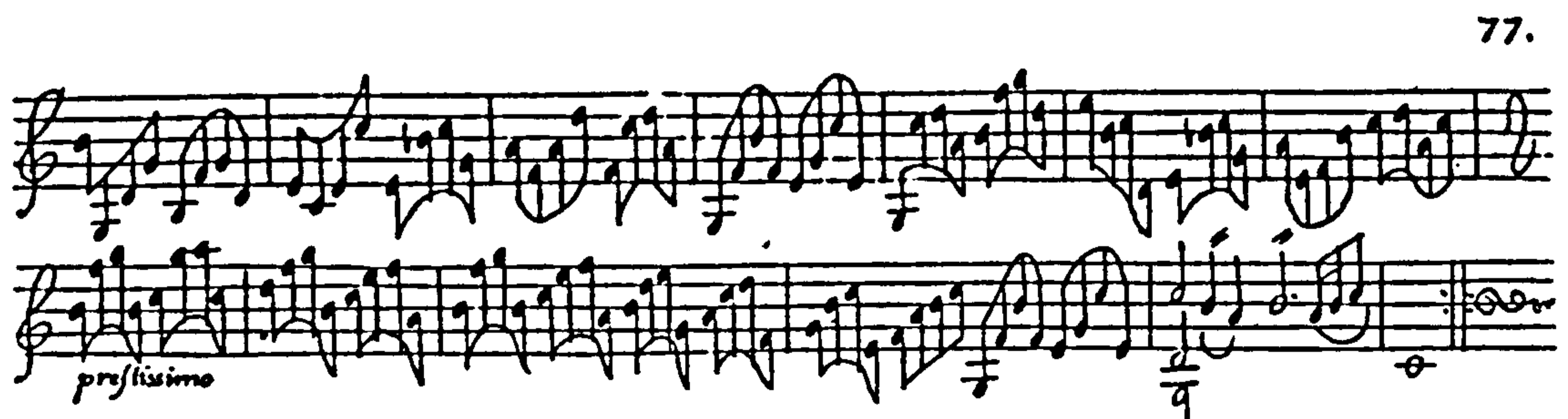


Plate 3-23: *Proludio in C solfaut* Book 1, No.76

The previous twenty bars or so have all contained similar figurations but it is only at the point that the bass reaches a long dominant pedal that he marks 'prestissimo' in

<sup>151</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.152.

<sup>152</sup> *Roger North's Cursory Notes of Musicke (c. 1698–c. 1703), A Physical, Psychological and Critical Theory*, ed. M. Chan and J.C. Kessler, (Kensington, Australia, 1986), p.219.

the violin part. This is another clear example of a proto-cadenza but in this instance it has been done with an alteration of the tempo rather than through any change in difficulty of the writing.<sup>153</sup> Such examples suggest the likelihood that, despite North's disapproval, Matteis's 'raptures' did demand noticeable, perhaps even violent, contrasts in tempo and that this was yet another way in which the expressive and the virtuosic elements of his music were maximised.

## (vi) *Curling* graces and the cadential flourish

One final category of graces relevant to Matteis's work are those which North termed 'curling graces', by which he seems to have meant some sort of cadential flourish:

It would be endless to call in all those elegant turnes of voices and instruments which are taught by the Itallian masters (and perhaps outdone by the English Banister) [and] accounted glorious ornaments, and to subject them to a resolution. They are such as I may terme curling graces, and are applyed often at cadences, and other principall passages, resembling a near lesson contracted with a soft slurre more or less as there is occasion or time to lett it in. These are shewed as fine things neer [a t] hand [in] solo[s], but have no use or effect at [a] distance or in consort, and for that reason the best masters in such cases decline them, and sound plain.<sup>154</sup>

These comments of North's appear in *The Muscally Grammarian* which was written in 1728 but, despite the relatively late date, he nevertheless would appear to be talking about the practice at around the time of Matteis. One main reason for supposing this is his use of the famous Opus 5 violin sonatas of Corelli as an example for these 'curling' graces. The sonatas had appeared with a highly ornamented version of all the slow movements of sonatas 1-6:

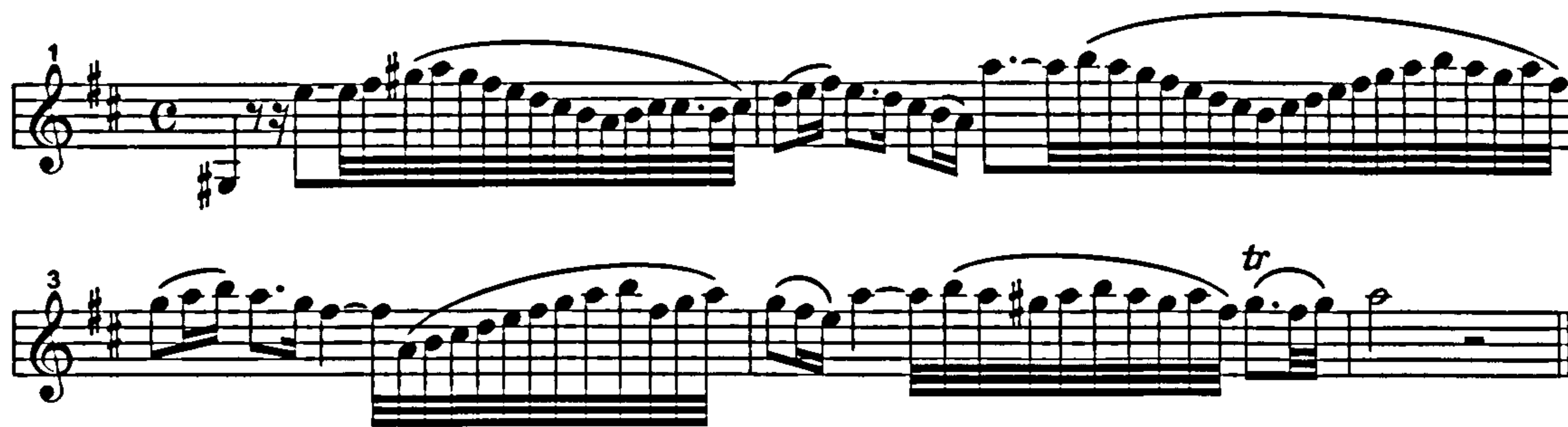
Some presumer hath published a continuall cours of this sort of stuff [the 'curling graces'] in score with Corelli's solos, and is thereby intituled onely to a tolle for his reward; upon the bare view of the print any one would wonder how so much vermin cold creep into the works of such a master. And nothing can resolve it but the ignorant ambition of learners and the knavish invention of the musick sellers to profit thereby. Judicious architects abominate any thing of imbroidery upon a structure that is to appear great, and trifling about an harmonious composition is no less absurd.<sup>155</sup>

---

<sup>153</sup> There are further resonances with the way in which some of the *Ayres* have small sections of contrasting tempi — see page 143.

<sup>154</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Muscally Grammarian 1728'*, p.167.

<sup>155</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Muscally Grammarian 1728'*, p.167.

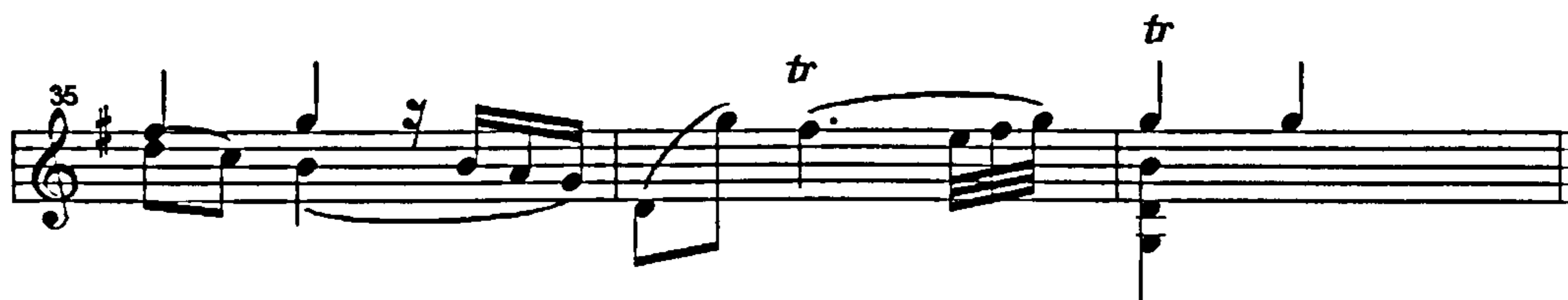


Example 3-63: Corelli, *Sonata 1 in D major Op.5*, Adagio

It is impossible to know how far North's opinion was shared by his contemporaries and, to this day, no-one has definitively proved whether or not they were actually graced by Corelli himself. What is far more certain is that whether or not they were by Corelli, and whether or not North liked them, they were put forward *at that time* as genuine examples of Corelli's ornamentation style and, as such, are living testimony to an actual performing tradition. There seems to be ample suggestion that the practice of this period stopped short of the extended cadence following a fermata, as was to become accepted practice in the eighteenth century. Quantz is clear on this when he talks about the younger Matteis's graces of these same sonatas of Corelli:

The celebrated violinist Nicola Matteis ... composed still other graces for the same twelve adagios ... . But there are still no cadenzas *ad libitum* like those made at the present time.<sup>156</sup>

What is more, these graces can be seen to have resonances in many of the cadential flourishes printed by Matteis in his *Ayres*. At their simplest, these flourishes consist of a short figuration in which the tonic harmony is pre-empted at the end of a trill in the penultimate bar. These figurations, of which there follow a few examples, seem to have been quite a common Matteis trademark:

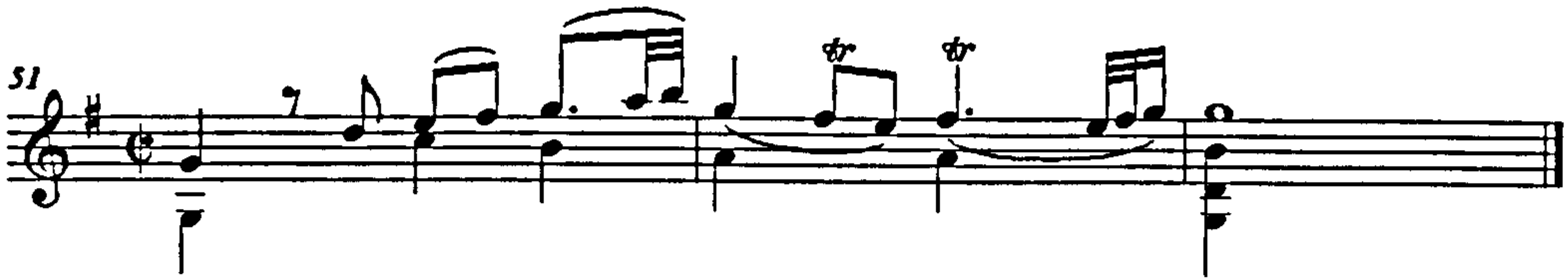


Book 2, No.4

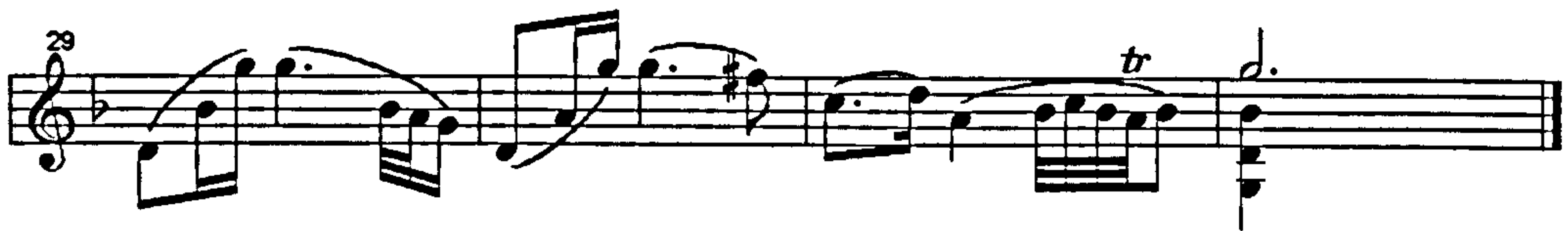
<sup>156</sup> Quantz, *On playing the Flute*, p.180.



Book 2, No.18



Book 2, No.14



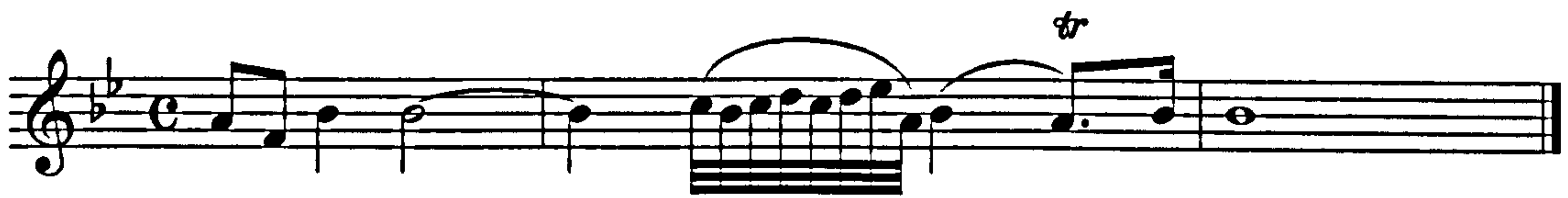
Book 2, No.22



Book 5, No.1

**Example 3-64: Cadential trills in Matteis's *Ayres***

In the following examples, the principle is the same and yet the figurations are more advanced. In many of these the similarities in terms of shape and scope mirror those in the 'Corelli' examples very closely:



Book 1, No.96



Book 1, No.54



Book 1, No.120



Book 2, No.18



Book 2, No.36



Book 4, No.6



Book 4, No.70

**Example 3-65: Cadential ornamentation in Matteis's *Ayres***

Whilst there are clear similarities between the printed ornaments of Matteis and Corelli, it is impossible to know how much further Matteis went in his own

performances. It is tempting to conclude that since North was so complimentary about Matteis and yet was so scathing about the possibly spurious Corelli ornaments that Matteis was more reserved in his own performances. He certainly would not have been the first Italian to eschew the more extreme versions of such ornamentation:

Nowadays there are some of so little intelligence in the are that when they sing or play they always wish with their ill-ordered and indiscreet caprices of Bow or Voice to alter or deform compositions (however carefully made) so that the authors have become obliged to ask these singers and players to sing and play things simply as they are written.<sup>157</sup>

### 3.9 Further expressive bowing techniques

#### (i) Tremolo

If we can infer Matteis's likely style of vibrato from North's writings then perhaps the same is possible in relation to tremolo which he also mentioned as being part of Matteis's variety of strokes (see page 207 above). Tremolo and its manner of performance are recorded in many sources from the early part of the seventeenth century. Many of the explanations liken the desired effect to that of the tremulant stop of the organ — a most striking and particular effect.<sup>158</sup> It was evidently felt that the vocal equivalent, which was essentially Caccini's trillo,<sup>159</sup> was best represented instrumentally by slurring the notes under a single bow as can be seen in the following extract from a sonata by Castello:



<sup>157</sup> G. M. Bononcini in the preface to his *Sonate da chiesa*, 1672. Taken from P. Allsop, *The Italian 'Trio' Sonata* (Oxford, 1992), p.44.

<sup>158</sup> Examples of this direction also occur in Marini's sonata *La Foscarina* (1617) and Farina's *Capriccio Stravagante* (1627). Hammerschmidt's *Musicalischer Andachten dritter Theil* (1662) contains the direction 'play four notes in one stroke with your bow (like the tremulants in an organ)'. See S. Carter, 'The String Tremolo in the Seventeenth Century', *Early Music* 19 (1991), pp.42–59.

<sup>159</sup> See Bovicelli *Regole Passaggi di Musica* (Venice 1594): 'Il tremolo nondimeno, che non e altro, che un tremar di voce sopra ad una stessa nota' [The tremolo, however, which is nothing other than a trembling of the voice on a single note].





Example 3-66: D. Castello, *Sonata due* from *Sonate concertante in stil moderno*

North tacitly confirms that this was how the Italians performed the stroke when, in devising a method of playing long notes in strict tempo, he advised violinists to ‘play [crotchets] with the same bow, but distinguishing the notes, as in the Italians tremolo.’<sup>160</sup> Moreover, North complained elsewhere about those who performed the stroke with separate bows, pointing out his own preferences which also include a reference to the organ tremulant:

There is another mode of the grave that frequently occurs in our Itallianized sonnatas, which I have knowne intituled, tremolo, and is now comonly performed with a tempered stoccata. And that I take to be an abuse, and contrary to the genius of that mode, which is to hold out long notes inriched with the flowers of harmony and with a trembling hand, which of all parts together resembles the shaking stop of an organ; whereas the breaking the notes with repeated strokes, doth not well consist with the nest of harmony, and of it self (out of consort) hath not so much as melody in it, but rather a fastidium, like the ticks of a spring pendulum, nor is there any humane action to which it may be referred, unless it be stabbing often in the same place, or the andante or walking and not moving one stepp forwards, which is absurd; and not the less so becaus it is a comon practise ...<sup>161</sup>

That this had long been a common way of performing the tremolo stroke is further suggested by the slurs in some of the expressive adagios of Castello’s sonatas. Generally, these early sources contain extremely few bowings so one must assume that their presence was to signal something important:

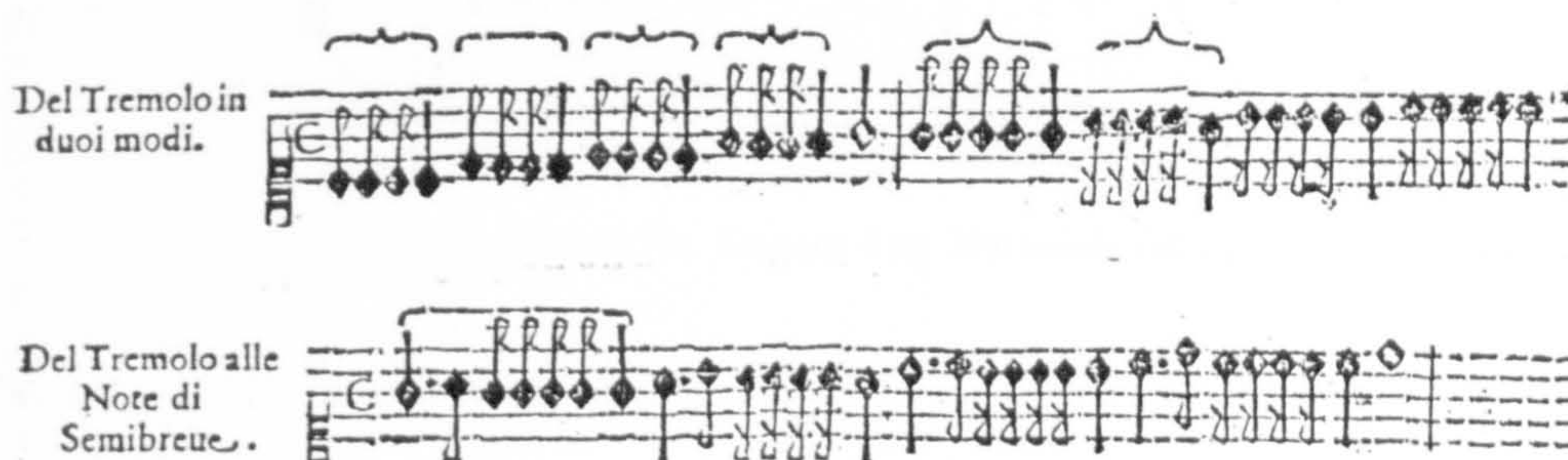
<sup>160</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, pp.22–23.

<sup>161</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North’s ‘The Muscill Grammarian 1728’*, p.185.



Example 3-67: D. Castello, *Sonata primo* from *Sonate concertate in stil moderno*

Castello marks 't.' twice in this passage, each time next to a slur over repeated notes. This most probably stood not for trill but tremolo and referred, once again, to the repeated bowing. These examples are not quite as regularised as in Example 3-66 since there are three semiquavers on one note and in each case the fourth note drops. Such a freedom in tremolo figures might be further confirmed by the following vocal examples from Rognoni's treatise *Selva di varii passaggi* of 1620 where the rhythms are altered and the figures extended slightly:

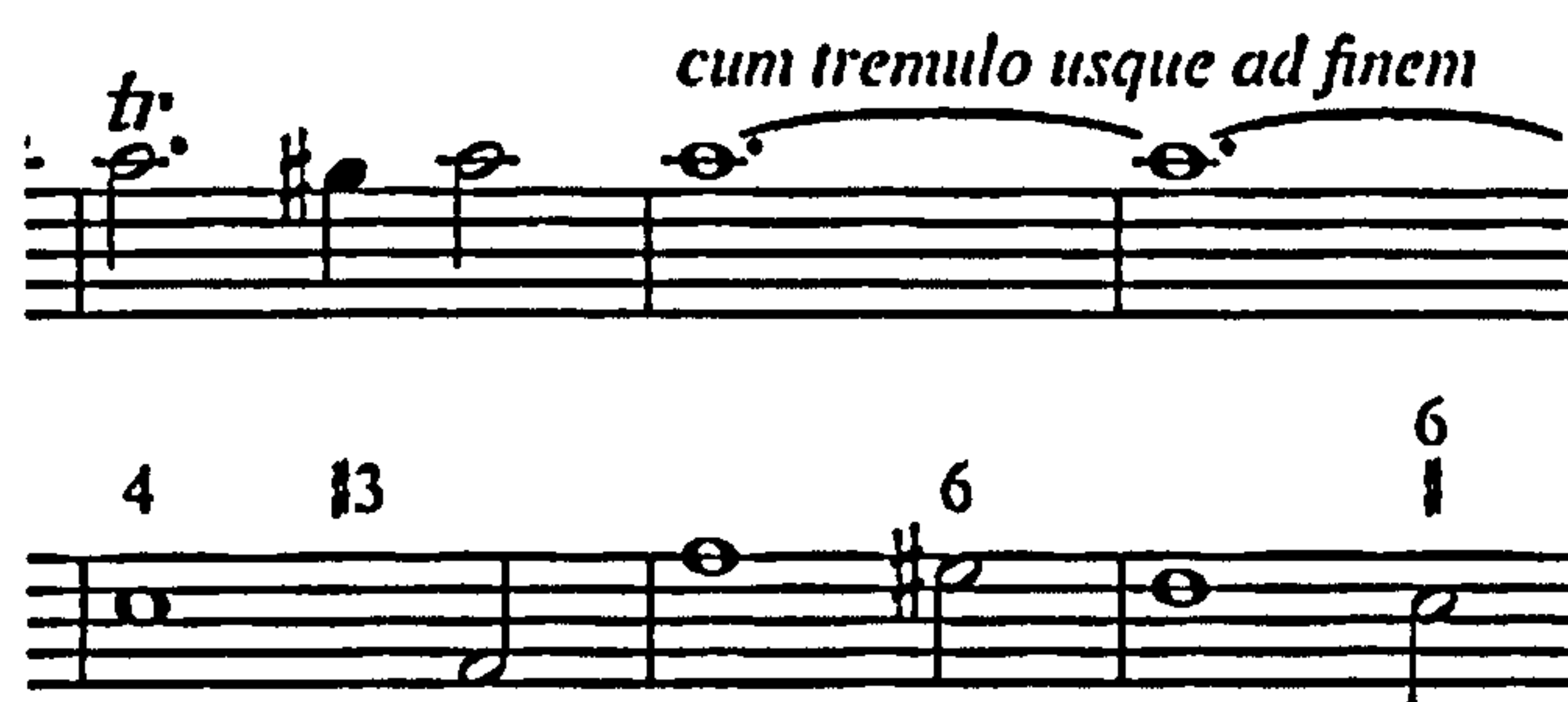


Example 3-68: *I veri principii per cantar polito, e bene* from *Selva di varii passaggi*, p.3

It is surprising that when Rognoni moves onto a discussion of the violin he refers to tremolo only once and then it is clear that he is linking it with vibrato, for he advises that players should perform *tremoli* not with the finger stopping the note (as he complains that many do) but, instead, with the finger above. This implies a very close trill which would also have the same aural effect as the tremulant stop and so appears to be consistent with other sources.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>162</sup> The use of vibrato instead of a bowed tremolo is also suggested by Ganassi; see S. Carter, 'String Tremolo in the 17<sup>th</sup> century', *Early Music* 19 (1991) pp.42–59. Wiley Hitchcock has suggested that, in performance, the vocal tremolo was much looser than theoretical works suggest and that its real *raison d'être* was the trembling effect (see H. Wiley Hitchcock 'Vocal ornamentation in Caccini's *Nuove Musiche*', *Musical quarterly* 56 (1970), pp.389–404). North also advises that bass instruments use a close shake (i.e. *trill*) rather than a wrist shake (i.e. vibrato): 'But as it [violin wrist-shake] is an

As with most areas of technique, it seems that there was no absolute standardisation of the manner of performing tremolo. For example, two *Sonatas* by Heinrich Döbel (1651–93), a rough contemporary of Matteis, contain the following:



Example 3-69: Sonata 1 by Heinrich Döbel<sup>163</sup>



Example 3-70: Sonata 4 by Heinrich Döbel<sup>164</sup>

What sort of stroke did he intend in Example 3-69? Is this a bowed or a fingered tremolo? Or perhaps did he expect a combination of the two? In Example 3-70, he could only be referring to a bowed vibrato if the chords were first spread, possibly with either a bowed or fingered tremolo on the top. Or perhaps instead it may imply a form of arpeggiation.<sup>165</sup>

Matteis, meanwhile, seems to have used the term *affetto* in the ‘Caccinian’ sense of

---

exquisite action, it hath an excellent grace; and bases, with a slight touch at the nut or finger, doth the same’. Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.165.

<sup>163</sup> ‘Solo Compositions for Violin and Viola da Gamba with Basso Continuo’, *Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era Vol. 82*, Ed. C. Brewer, (Madison, WI, 1997), p.19.

<sup>164</sup> Brewer, ‘Solo Compositions for Violin and Viola da Gamba with Basso Continuo’, p.38.

<sup>165</sup> Rognoni’s description of *il lireggiare affettuoso*, with several notes under a bow, has been equated by some with the tremolo stroke and has led to the suggestion that this is what the instruction *affetto* refers to when it is found in instrumental music. However, the examples Rognoni gives (see pages 231–32) differ in two substantial ways from other examples of the tremolo stroke. Firstly, they are never limited to only four notes but include slurs of many more notes and, secondly, they do not consist of several iterations of the *same* note under a slur (which would be necessary for it to resemble the tremulant stop). Moreover, the explanation he gives suggests a somewhat livelier stroke than the pulsed notes of the tremolo which, have been described elsewhere.

period (particularly so in the works of Corelli) and there are no particularly obvious reasons to associate it with any *affetto* devices. However, when the other violin/violins are also playing the effect is somewhat different and the first to the fifth bars of Example 3-71 show why this is the case. Each instrument is playing the same notes but out of phase — i.e. the first plays an e' whilst the second plays an a' and vice versa. The overall effect of this is that one hears eight repetitions of the same note in each bar rather than four groups of e' / a', which is what is heard when only a single instrument is playing. Such an effect is reminiscent of Monteverdi's *concitato* style of repeated notes but also could imply the same effect as Rognoni was describing with the 'jumping bow'. Later on in the same movement a similar figure appears but this time the quavers are not undulating and the effect is similar no matter how many violins are playing:

Example 3-72: *Andamento* Book 1, No.56

Such quavers, grouped into fours, could be seen to equate with the 'tremulant' effect. It is even possible that each four quavers would have been performed with a single bow although there is nothing to confirm the truth or otherwise of this supposition since Matteis does not include any phrasings at these points. Despite these possible

links with the ‘repeated quavers’ concept of *affetto*, it is perhaps rather more likely that Matteis was using the term *affetto* in the expressive sense:

Example 3-73: *Andamento* Book 1, No.56

There is a certain train of logic which leads to the same conclusion in that on page 184 we saw that Matteis had treated the terms *affetto* and *malinconico* as effectively synonymous. Then in the second violin part to Books 3 and 4 he calls the *Ground* in E major (Book 4, No.54) *Bizzarrie sopra un basso Malinconico*. This equation of the bass line with *Malinconico* (= *affetto*?) begins to make sense when we see that it is, once again, a slow moving line with a substantial amount of chromatic movement. These features, which are shared by the bass line of the *Andamento* in Example 3-73 above, are independent of tempo and, I believe, are one of the fundamental secrets to an understanding of Matteis’s concept of *affetto*. In fact, the same chromatic bass line also occurs in Examples 3-71 and 3-72, which further suggests that it was this aspect which defined the *affetto* element rather than the repeated quavers. Ultimately it is, of course, impossible to know which features were uppermost in Matteis’s mind when he named the movement though the weight of probability seems to suggest that it was the same mixture of harmonic structure, chromatic movements and melodic contour as informed the earliest manifestations of the *affetto* style in the sonatas of Castello and his contemporaries. It is significant to see that these specific devices are still being used in such a variety of ways by Matteis.

Ultimately I consider the equation of *affetto* purely with tremolo to be spurious, not only because of the contradictions within Rognoni’s advice (see page 229) but because Caccini’s clear advice on the *affetto* style implies a wide variety of effects,

ornaments and roulades and there seems no reason to think that instrumental players would choose to limit the palette of expressive colours available to them. Also it must be noted that Matteis's other *affetto* movements do not have these tremolo figurations whereas, conversely, he does use a bowed tremolo stroke in an *Ayre* that does not have any reference to *affetto*:



Plate 3-24: *Pavana Armoniosa* Book 2, No.40

It would appear that Matteis was using the tremolo stroke here to emphasise the richness of the harmony.<sup>166</sup> Throughout the movement, a preponderance of dominant seventh chords within the double-stopping gives a harmonic richness that suggests that the English viol consort sound may have been Matteis's inspiration here. I would maintain that the sighing effect created by several notes under one bow was very likely to have been only one aspect of expressive bowed devices, alongside vibrato, *messa di voce* and other graceful ornaments, that performers would have employed in relation to the *affetto* style.

## (ii) Staccato

The importance of the staccata stroke, as described above, should not blind us to the use of the ordinary staccato stroke. This stroke was talked about in certain treatises and quite commonly notated in music, including (albeit rarely) in that of Matteis. As with the staccata, this stroke would have provided good contrast with the expressive

<sup>166</sup> Perhaps significantly he marks the effect in the part by using the same wavy line that Purcell was to use in his writing in the famous 'frost scene' from *King Arthur*.

slow bows but would also have added great life to fast movements. By the middle of the next century the practice was commented upon by Tartini, who says that to play fast one needs to play staccato and also by Tassarini, who says, in his *Gramatica di Musica* ‘Note con li puntini di sotto, o sopra vanno saltate con l’arco.’ [Notes with small dots under or over them are played with a jumping bow].<sup>167</sup> Meanwhile, Muffat’s experience of time in Italy studying with Corelli led him to note:

The Italian manner is mostly to be followed in the opening Sonatas, the fugues and the tender Graves which are mixed in: syncopation, notes which begin a tie, notes which resolve a dissonance (as those experienced in the art already understand) must always be played strongly, and preferably by lifting the bow from the string (staccato in Italian), since a horrible echo weakens them.<sup>168</sup>

There is nothing in Matteis’s music to suggest whether or not he would have approved of these instructions although mostly they would seem to accord with what, even today, we would term ‘good taste’. The only confusing aspect of this passage is how one is supposed to play the first note of a tie in a staccato fashion. It seems more likely that Muffat was referring to a generally ‘lively’ stroke (which one would hope to play with in syncopated passages in any case) which would also make sense of the instruction not to play too long (the ‘horrible echo’) on notes which resolve a dissonance. Matteis’s music displays consistent and fundamental aspects of rhythmic excitement and as such Muffat’s descriptions almost certainly would have applied to his playing. In Matteis’s music it is usually obvious from the writing when a staccato stroke is called for, there being certain instances in the *Ayres* where the writing would seem to make such a stroke appropriate if not actually unavoidable due to the wide string crossings within a presto tempo. Again, a perfect example of this is this Burlesca from Book 2 (♩<sup>2:1</sup>):



Example 3-74: *Burlesca* Book 2, No.6

In some instances Matteis does notate the dots, with quite specific results in mind, such as in the *Violino solo ad imitatione della Trombetta* where four quavers have

---

<sup>167</sup> *A Letter from the Later Signor Tartini*, p.15 and C. Tassarini, *Gramatica di Musica Insegna il modo facile, e breve per bene imparare di suonare il violino su la parte* (Urbino 1741, R/Rome, 1986).

<sup>168</sup> *Georg Muffat on Performance Practice* ed. D.K. Wilson, (Bloomington, 2001), p.76.

dots over them, presumably to show the notes should resemble the ‘lipped’ sound of a trumpet (although a few bars earlier the same notes go un-dotted):



Plate 3-25: *Violino solo ad imitatione della Trombetta* Book 2, No.66

In general Matteis seems to have left the more obvious staccato places to the intuition of the player and saved their notation for more specific, and specialised, instances where they imply a more virtuosic bowing:



Example 3-75: *Movimento incognito* Book 2, No.46

In the first bar the dots on the dotted quaver/semiquaver necessitate an (easy) double up-bow at the end of the slur. The dots in the following bar are again performed in an up-bow but necessitate a quite advanced technique usually referred to as up-bow staccato (although this stroke could also be used on down-bows). Another example appears in the opening *Ayre* of Book 4:



Plate 3-26: *Preludio in A la mi re #* Book 4, No.1



This is often assumed to be more of an eighteenth century bowing, partly because of its scarcity in the printed sources but also, I suspect, partly because it has been considered to be beyond the abilities of what we have traditionally assumed to have been the capabilities of the seventeenth-century professional violinist. By the mid-century there were various examples, such as in Colombi's manuscripts, but perhaps the first mention is the afore-mentioned *lireggiare affettuoso* in Rognoni's 1620 treatise from 1620:

Legato bowing in the affettuoso manner (il lireggiare affettuoso), that is, with affetti, is the same as the kind described above [i.e. a slurred stroke with several notes in one bow] as far as the bow is concerned. However, it is necessary for the wrist of the bow hand, almost jumping, to beat each note, one at a time, This is difficult to do well, and thus much practice is needed to be able to do it with the beat, conforming to the note values, you should be careful not to make more noise with the bow than with the sound.<sup>169</sup>

The examples that Rognoni gives to accompany these instructions show very specific articulations. It must be noted that, as with Zannetti (see above), he uses the abbreviations of the letters T and P to refer to down-bows and up-bows respectively. This should not be confused with a similar use of the letter in the music of, for example, Castello where it refers to a tremolo stroke:

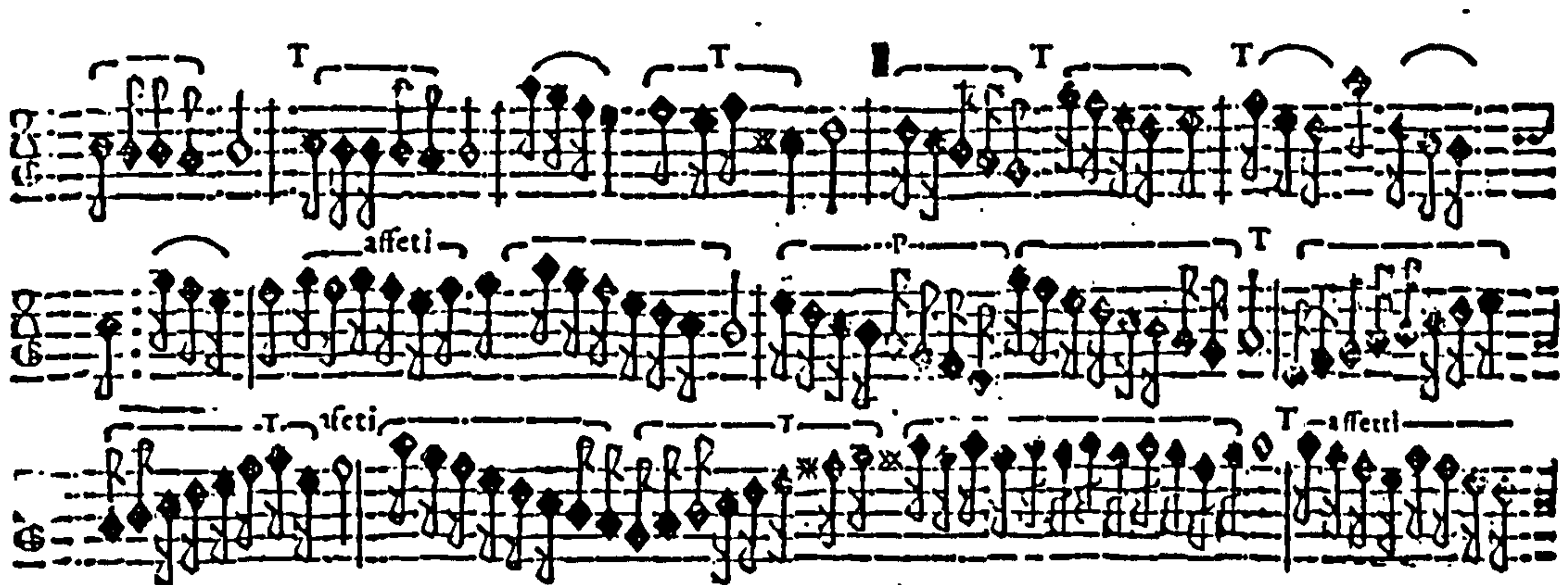


Plate 3-27: Rognoni, *Selva di Varii Passaggi*

The figurations seem to be roughly the same in the *affetti* passages as in the other slurred passages in this excerpt so Rognoni appears to have specifically equated *affetto* with this 'jumping' bow stroke rather than solely with the use of the slur. This same stroke is also mentioned in Bismantova's treatise from 1694 although he makes no mention of *affetto*:

<sup>169</sup> 'Instruptione per archeggiare, o lireggiare gli instrumenti d'arco', Rognoni, *Selva di varii passaggi* (unnumbered page).

*Le note; che sono Legate assieme; si faranno in  
una sola arcada; e à mezza battuta l'arcada.  
Esempio.*



Plate 3-28: B. Bismantova, 'Regole per accordare e suonare il violino', *Compendio Musicale*, (Ferrara, 1677).

Thus Bismantova shows the stroke can be performed as down and up-bows (denoted by whether the dots are above or below the notes).<sup>170</sup> The Matteis examples above seem to imply up-bow only, though there is an example where he implies both up and down-bow versions of a simplified version of this stroke by the slurs over the rests:



Example 3-76: *Gavotta*, Book 1, No.8

### (iii) Slurring

Matteis's prints earn their didactic stripes in the area of slurring, though the manuscripts are rather less clear and have various differences and omissions. As with other questions of ornamentation, the apparent randomness of the notated slurs tends to suggest that matters of slurring were so much a part of the living performance idiom that their meticulous notation was not necessary — or perhaps

<sup>170</sup> It is worth pointing out that the second bar of the above example requires that the player performs a slur with four down-bow quavers followed immediately with another down-bow which is quite contrary to what we would probably assume: most players today would almost certainly take an up-bow on the third beat of the bar. See Lenton's bowing suggestions for similarly surprising retakes (page 205).

even that slurs were randomly performed. Such inconsistencies in Matteis's manuscripts are common and it is quite usual that two or more different manuscripts copies may show two or more different slurrings for a given example. Players obviously employed a variety of bowings in order to attain their expressive end and would not have been constrained by over-strict adherence to a set of rules, which in any case could not possibly have been universally upheld. It should also be pointed out that, inevitably, the manuscripts are not always clear regarding placing of the slurs and that, in such situations, it is rather dangerous sometimes to leap to a quick conclusion because, in doing so, we are in danger of imposing our own solutions onto phrasings that could be bowed in any number of ways. Usually there is a fair amount of variety within even a single *Ayre* and when phrases are repeated (as often they are) it is far from unusual to see different phrasings or bowings indicated on subsequent iterations. In a way this implied variety makes it less of an issue when there is some confusion. A slightly different problem occurs when the bowing is clear but seems unlikely, such as in the following extract from Lbl Hirsch IV 1633:



Plate 3-29: *Preludio* Book 5, No.40

In the fourth and fifth bars of this extract the slur is clearly over both 'e"s' and both 'g#"s' respectively, suggesting the repeated notes be taken in the same bow, which is not something that one would normally expect in a phrase such as this. Possibly, in such cases the slurs are more phrasing marks than specific bowings, but I consider it more likely that the marks imply a bowing along the lines of the *lireggiare affettuoso*. In this case the wider implication is that there may be much more variety in the bowing strokes called for in Matteis's music. Following on from this, Matteis sometimes uses careful bowing indications to create particular rhythmic effects, such as in this following example where the cross-beat slurs create a somewhat 'jazzy' effect:



Example 3-77: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.36

At the end of this movement after a re-iterated scale in separate bows he suddenly switches to a long slur for an accelerating and tumbling flourish to end the movement:

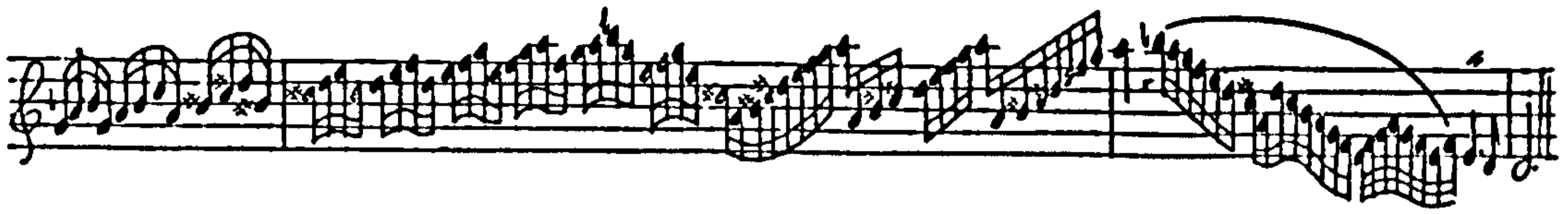


Plate 3-30: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.36

Yet again Matteis is imbuing the music with contrast — in this instance in terms of the spikiness of the separately-bowed semiquavers against the long slur. It is noticeable that in the engraved editions, Matteis often seems to have made a particular point to present a visual representation of the phrasings and bowings that are implied in the music. Thus one is often guided in the direction of the music by the sheer ‘look’ of the music on the page, and beaming patterns visually suggest the structure of the phrasing.<sup>171</sup> In the above example the measured pattern in the first bar gives way to a whirlwind scale, stuttering in the second instance but then regaining momentum and heading into the long slur.

In Example 3-78, the combination of a great variety of different bowings evokes a wonderfully expressive, *ad libitum* feel. Once again there is an arpeggiic opening but the first six bars are much more legato and appear to be written out ornamentations of a more lyrical kind rather than fast passage-work. Then a few bars later the two demi-semiquavers/one semiquaver patterns give a complete change of mood to a predominantly rhythmic pattern followed by still angular but more regular cross-string patterns. The movement ends with another lyrical sweep in a slurred bow, which is a feature found in many of Matteis’s *ad libitum* style movements. The quasi-improvisatory feel is reinforced by the appearance of a fermata on the first beat of bar eight, the expressive element of which is increased by the use of the supertonic harmony of e minor. This movement is also notable for the fact that Matteis has provided very precise bowing instructions for much of it in the form of slurs. These marks demonstrate a high degree of attention to the practicalities of bowing and appear to have been included both to promote improved bow control and to heighten the expressive elements of the music. Such contrasts suggest the need for a very flexible approach to the subject of bowing when performing Matteis’s music.

---

<sup>171</sup> See Plate 3-31, *Ricercata in B fabemi* on page 234.

Example 3-78: *Proludio in delasolre terza maggiore* Book 1, No.54

There are other instances where Matteis's clear bowing marks indicate a technical imperative and demonstrate that he considered a variety of phrasings to be integral to the overall effect of a work. Once again this was probably a two-edged sword inasmuch as it facilitated improved bow control but also enabled a more expressive approach to the phrasing, and one which would increase the contrast within the work — something that seems to be fundamental to Matteis's playing style.



Example 3-79: *Fantasia* Book 2, No.36

Three quavers slurred over two and three strings is difficult to perform evenly but, as an exercise, is excellent for promoting bow control — in fact, a similar exercise was later included in Geminiani's *The Art of Playing on the Violin*.<sup>172</sup> Similarly suitable for preparation is the following example where the bowing patterns are constantly changing:



Plate 3-31: *Ricercata in B-flat major terza minore* Book 1, No.74

In the first complete bar of the second system the slurs go across the dotted rhythms on the second and fourth beats of the bar, then in the next bar the slur on the second beat only goes onto the dotted quaver. Other slurs are left out completely in the next bar and are subsequently reintroduced with the slurs going over into the next bar on

<sup>172</sup> F. Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (London, 1751), p.28.

occasions. The engraved version has been reproduced above in order that it can be seen that the slurs are very carefully positioned and there is no suggestion that the variety of bowings is because of a lack of care in the engraving. These continual changes are excellent practice for apportioning the correct amount of bow to each phrase though they raise another important point which is that the above example could be played as written for several bars without the need for any re-takes. In bar 6 accepted practice nowadays would be to take another up-bow on the b' demisemi-quaver at the end of the second beat, so as to be on a down-bow for the half bar and, more importantly, the next whole bar. Having made this adjustment it is then possible to continue bowing out for the rest of the movement with only one more adjustment necessary at the end. But, bar 7 is where the pattern changes from the quaver being slurred into the two demi-semiquaver/one semiquaver figure to it being bowed separately. If we assume that there is a slur missing on the first beat and that it should be bowed as for the preceding 6 bars then the whole movement works out right until the ante-penultimate bar. The other possibility is that the movement is slurred exactly correctly and that no retakes are needed at all. In this case there would be several bars that would feel 'upside down' to most violinists nowadays but this cannot be taken as proof that it is wrong. For this would be excellent practice in smooth bowing and in fact is very similar to the sort of advice that Tartini gave later on in his *Traité des Agréments de la Musique* saying that all exercises should be bowed both ways.<sup>173</sup> Tessarini, too, had advocated a complete lack of re-takes in his *toccata* passages (see page 245–46). Whether or not it was accepted practice to bow out for exercises but not so much in performance is another aspect of the question. The second section (*Largo*) of Corelli's 'Christmas' Concerto (Op. 6, No 10) has the instruction 'Arcate sempre legato e come sta' [Always bow smoothly and how it is — i.e. as it comes]. Such an isolated instruction to bow without re-takes could be considered as a suggestion that this was not the norm. Alternatively it could be seen as a note to less experienced performers of accepted Corellian practice. There are many other examples in Matteis's *Ayres* where, if one carries on bowing without retakes it eventually works out and I think this is an aspect of seventeenth-century bowing that we should be ready to experiment with. The

---

<sup>173</sup> 'As regards bowing there are no definite rules for determining whether one should begin with a down-bow or up-bow. On the contrary, all passages should be practised in both ways, in order to gain complete mastery of the bow in both up and down strokes'. N. Tartini, *Traité des Agréments de la Musique* (Paris, 1771; R/New York, 1961), p.56.

reorganisation of the bowing in order to give stresses to certain notes and to shape phrases individually is one of the prime means of imbuing music with our own musicality and expression. It should be a cause for celebration that there is an almost unlimited palette of possibilities with which to do so.

#### (iv) Double-dotting

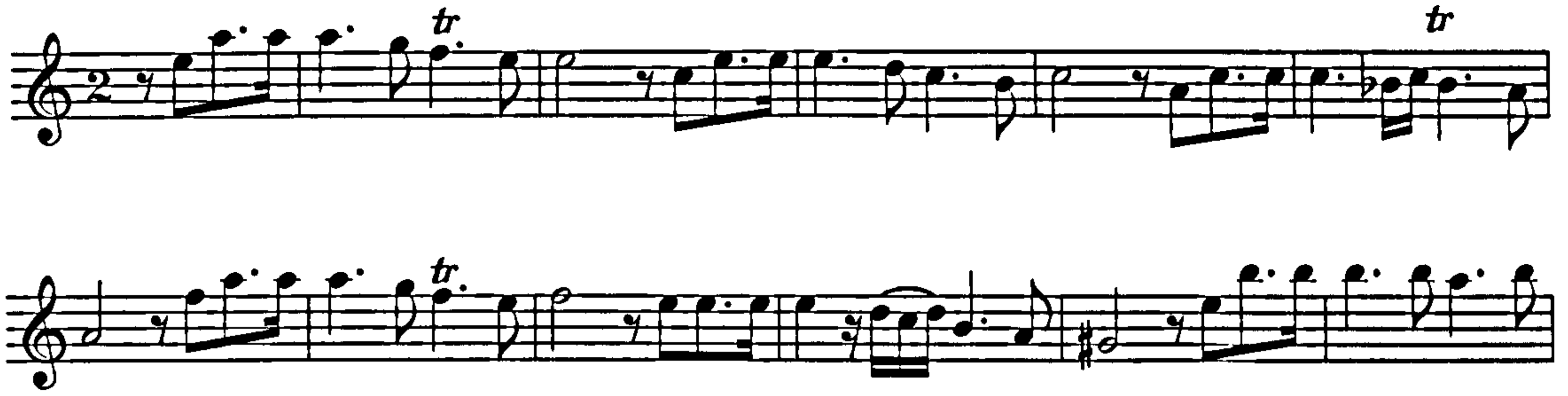
The issue of double-dotting is not one on which a great deal of light is shed by the work of Matteis, though there are certain passages which might provide some useful additions to the argument. In the following example, the first complete bar could allow for several possibilities including the bass quaver B eliding with the second of the quavers (d<sup>''</sup>) in the first violin, or perhaps the bass B remaining a quaver whilst the violin quavers are crushed into two semiquavers, and so on:

The image displays two systems of musical notation, each consisting of three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs). The first system is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second system includes a trill (tr) marking above a note in the first staff. Measure numbers 7, 43, and 65b are indicated below the staves.

Example 3-80: *Preludio in B Mi* Book 5, No.70

The matter is more unclear still when the dotted figurations are quaver-based, in which instance the first note in each group remains a quaver with the rest preceding it also a quaver:





Example 3-81: *No title* Book 5, No.48

This sort of anomaly is of course not unique to Matteis's music but the questions remain the same:

- 1) Does the first quaver become a semiquaver to match the third note?
- 2) Are the quavers in the second bar played as semiquavers?
- 3) Are the semiquavers in the third bar crushed; i. e. the rest extended by a dot and the semiquavers played as demi-semiquavers?

In the absence of any specific clarification from Matteis it is possible that similar cases in other *Ayres* may shed some light on the subject. In the following example the dotted semiquavers of the top parts contrast strongly with the quaver dotting of the bass:



Example 3-82: *Preludio* Book 5, No.18

Given that this dotted figure predominates, it would seem unlikely that the bass was expected to hold fast to the quaver dots against the semiquavers above it. Double dotting would remove this rather pedantic, ungainly feel and give the *Ayre* more lightness. The decision is not quite so straightforward when there are fewer obvious rhythmic clashes but in the following example there is still a suggestion that the basic pattern should be double-dotted:



Example 3-83: [Untitled] Book 5, No.24

The penultimate bar of this example would appear to provide the answer since it is far more natural to elide the f# (last note in the bass) with the a' semiquaver in the first violin, and likewise to make the a' quaver in the second violin into a semiquaver also. Having done this then it would seem logical to do the same at the end of the second bar and, by extrapolation at all other points where there is a dotted quaver rhythm. The extra dots in the Cardiff first violin part strengthen the likelihood that the whole movement would have been performed in a double-dotted style:



Example 3-84: [Untitled] Book 5, No.24 (Lbl Hirsch IV 1633 on top and CDu MC59 beneath)

Of course, there are many more instances where there is no such corroboration and, in the absence of evidence of intention, such decisions must always be made on the basis of available information, with each case being taken on its own merits. Beyond that the issue becomes one of individual taste.

### 3.10 Divisions

#### (i) 'Per far la mano'

Throughout the Renaissance the practice of divisions or diminutions had been developed to quite startling levels of complexity, as attested to both by the

complexity of contemporary published tutors<sup>174</sup> and by some of the impatient remarks recorded by those for whom this practice was more frustrating than inspiring:

Because of the presumptuous audacity of performers who try to invent passaggi I will not say sometimes but almost continuously all trying to move at the same time as if in a passage-making contest, and sometimes showing their own virtuosity so far from the counterpoint of the musical composition they have before them that they become entangled in their dissonance, it is inevitable that an insupportable confusion should occur.<sup>175</sup>

The division technique was predicated on strong concepts of harmonic structure and freedom of the melodic line over a supportive and yet compliant bass, which features can be seen in part as defining principles of the *basso continuo* style. This aspect seems to have struck North who commented that:

Wee have many makers of songs and instrumentall tunes, but very few of good aire, the reason of which is partly not knowing wherein it consists, and partly the giving way to fancy and caprice without regard to foundations, as if those might be added after the house is built. Whereas the best composers, as Corelli and N. Matteis senr, in all their most capriccious aires, have held a strict alliance with the most obvious, but as to ayre unexceptionable bases.<sup>176</sup>

In his divisions, which he variously titled *Divisione*, *Per far la mano*, *Passaggio*, *Variata (-tione)* or *Sminuite* and occasionally left unannounced, Matteis sometimes followed the practice of stating the theme clearly at the beginning in its simplest form and dividing it according to fairly standard patterns:



Example 3-85: Book 5, No.27

<sup>174</sup> S. Ganassi, *Opera Intitulata Fontegara* (Venice, 1535), pp.80–81 for example.

<sup>175</sup> Ercole Bottrigari in *Il Desiderio* (Venice, 1592), cited by Allsop in *The Italian 'Trio' Sonata* (Oxford, 1992), p.44.

<sup>176</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.85.



Example 3-86: Book 5, No.27 — division

Thus in this most basic form of division the bass remains the same, the second part only changes slightly and the upper part takes the same overall outline but through repetition as well as small melodic twists and turns keeps up a quaver movement. Occasionally there is an alternative divided bass part, the performance of which is commented on by Matteis in various numbers (see section 3.13, pages 266–69). It was clearly important that the original melody was still recognisable underneath the complexity of the variations. As North said:

His devisions was wonderfull swift; but whether upon a comon or tripla ground, the plain song was distinctly perceivable under it and (so far from loosing his time and emphases that) one might imagine an harmony in each note.<sup>177</sup>

From his music we can see that Matteis would follow the virtuoso tradition of dividing into quavers and then semiquavers (and so on until, presumably, he could play no faster). This was obviously a general Italian technique and one that Raguenet commented on:

He [the Italian player] makes double or treble cadences of seven or eight bars together upon tones we should think incapable of the least division.<sup>178</sup>

Whilst the examples in Matteis's prints are not quite so outlandish as to conform to this description, we do have clear evidence of the way he was able to comply with North's above description of keeping to the underlying harmony. In the following *Aria* from Book 1 it will be noticed that the angular quaver shapes are echoed by the contours of the semiquaver patterns:

---

<sup>177</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.309, n.62.

<sup>178</sup> Raguenet, *Parallele des Italiens et des Francais*, Cited by Strunk, p.477. The 'double' and 'treble' presumably refer to the halving and halving again of the note values.

Example 3-87: *Aria Book 1, No.60*

Example 3-88: *Aria Book 1, No.60*

North called this sort of division *Correnti*; ‘when a part takes a carriere thro’ a whole strain without ceasing, and the other parts favour the action, by short touches in the accords’.<sup>179</sup> He complained that players often performed such divisions too quickly and said that they should either slow down or else make stronger accents at the start of bars to bring out the underlying rhythm:

The other means is a powerfull application of emphases, which, falling upon the accord places, would produce a shape of a consort; and the gross measures of the proper times would be seen (as it were) thro’ the tinsell devision; as if there were a kind of pause upon the first of every 4,6 or 3 [notes], whereof the notion is obvious, and the effect manifest.<sup>180</sup>

North was very insistent that the bass was absolutely integral to the question of divisions and warned against the practice of composing the melody without considering the bass at the same time:

In this work, the base and its accords must be formed *pari passu* together, and not one after the other, as when novices or ignorants make tunes or songs, and court their betters to substruct bases to them; which at last will be but a sort of nonsense, it scarce being in the power of accident to make it better. And therein may be discerned the difference between good, and bad or dull Ayre.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>179</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.191.

<sup>180</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.191.

<sup>181</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.85, n.16.

One can imagine the effect of stressing each group of semiquavers being employed in the teaching *Prelud* [sic] which Matteis wrote specially for inclusion in John Lenton's violin tutor. This *Prelud* does not appear in any other printed or manuscript source and is a good demonstration of how the basic currency of divisions (fast passagework and varying cross-string figurations) had long since become an integral part of the lexicon of the performer. A very typical aspect of this is the simple harmonic scheme, use of sequence, relative lack of movement in the bass allied to a meandering melody line and a cadenza-like feel to the last four bars.

**Prelud** Nicola Matteis

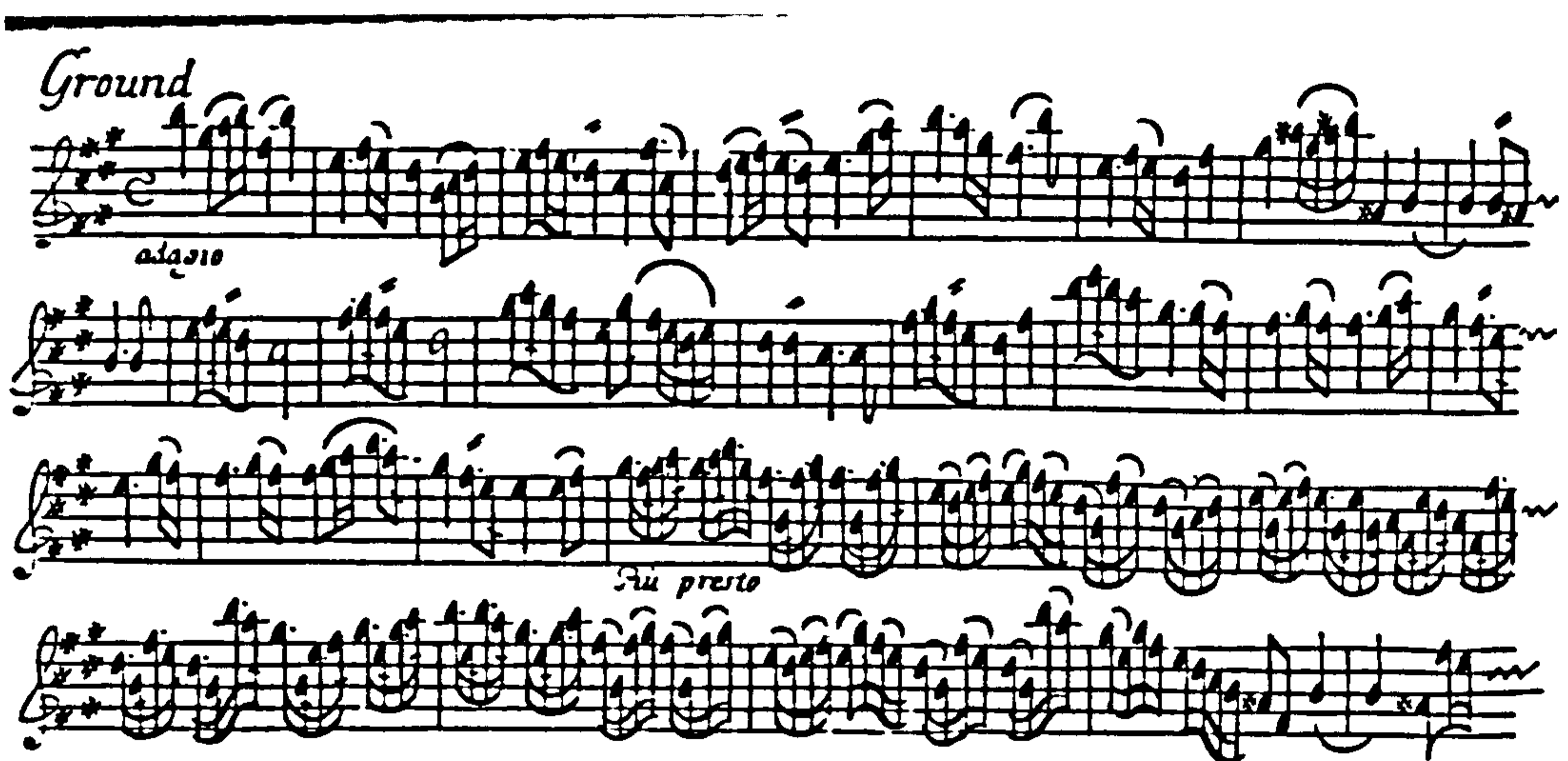
The musical score consists of 20 measures, organized into five systems of two staves each. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music is characterized by rapid semiquaver passages in the upper voice, often with trills (tr) and slurs. The lower voice provides a steady accompaniment with simple harmonic intervals. Measure numbers 4, 7, 11, 14, 17, and 20 are marked at the beginning of their respective systems.

**Example 3-89: *Prelud* From Lenton's violin tutor (1693)**

Of course, not all Matteis's divisions are this regular but North once again makes clear that even in the more complex divisions, the sense of underlying rhythmic structure was still uppermost:

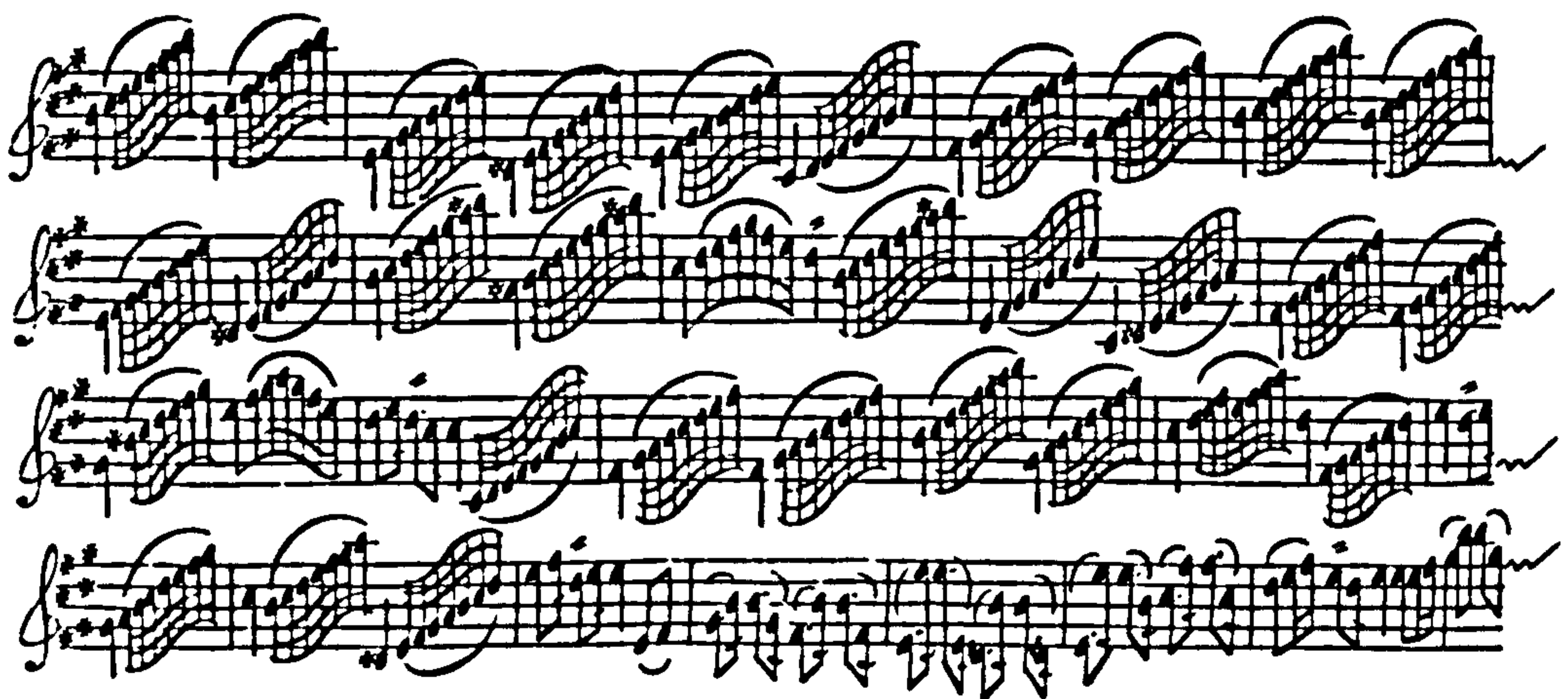
Whatever [the] divisions and subdivisions are, they must take the distinguishing touch to shew the comunis mensura as if it were plaine, else the measure is lost. And as important as this is to be done, I have not observed it in any one's playing of devisions, but old Nicolai Matteis, who devided a Minuit as swift as I though possible to be done, yet a dancr might have stept to it, as if it had bin plain; and that was done by an emphatick stroke at the entrance upon every crotchet, or other notes in the Minuit, that distinguisht it from the rest, and so kept time exactly.<sup>182</sup>

One can imagine the following *Ayre* maintaining strict tempos in the bass whilst the violin follows the opening expressive *adagio* passage with various virtuoso devices:



The image shows the opening of a musical piece titled 'Ground' from 'Ground Book 4, No. 54'. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff is marked 'adagio' and features a slow, expressive melody with many slurs and ornaments. The second and third staves continue this melody. The fourth staff is marked 'Fu presto' and shows a rapid, intricate passage with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, indicating a significant tempo change.

Plate 3-32: *Ground* Book 4, No.54 (opening)



The image shows the middle section of the same musical piece. It consists of four staves of music. This section is characterized by complex rhythmic patterns, including many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and features a high level of technical difficulty with numerous slurs and ornaments. The overall texture is dense and intricate.

Plate 3-33: *Ground* Book 4, No.54 (middle)

<sup>182</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.192, n.29.

However, the most interesting thing about this *Ayre* is the inclusion of dots in the *più presto* semiquavers (third system of Plate 3-32). The dots seem to provide a contrast with the slurred, equal semiquavers and as such can be seen as yet another example of the great variety of expression with which Matteis adorned his work. Such dotting would also make sense of another of North's comments:

But in short notes it [dotting] gives a life and spirit to the stroke, and a good hand will often for that end use it. tho' not expres't. . . And next it gives a spirit to swift playing which they call devision, thus:<sup>183</sup>



Example 3-90: North's own example of dotted divisions

Such dotting may actually be an example of *inégale* which some argue was used by many Italians in semiquaver passages in common time.<sup>184</sup>

## (ii) Rhetorical underpinnings and the preparatory movements

As partly didactic publications, it is not surprising to find Matteis providing preparatory *Ayres* with copious amounts of embellishments calculated to warm the players fingers (and, more often than not, brain!) for subsequent endeavours. As North said, 'He contrived to make mony of his music ... by having his lessons made for his scollars — short aires, toccatinos, recercatos, and the like pur far la mano.'<sup>185</sup> Although the subject has been dealt with exhaustively elsewhere<sup>186</sup> it would be hard to talk about the various preparatory functions of some of Matteis's movements without mentioning rhetorical theory. Within the framework of the suites as a whole, the preparatory-style movements seem to equate, rhetorically speaking, with the *exordium*; that part of the oration which Quintillian held should make the listener 'benevolum, attentum, docilem' [well-wishing, attentive and responsive].<sup>187</sup> In the

<sup>183</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.223.

<sup>184</sup> See J. Byrt, 'Some New Interpretations of the *Notes Inégales* Evidence', *Early Music* 28 (2000), pp.98–111.

<sup>185</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.310, n.64.

<sup>186</sup> For the most comprehensive work on this subject see Dew, 'Passion and Persuasion', *The Art of Rhetoric and the Performance of Early Seventeenth-Century Solo Sonatas*.

<sup>187</sup> U. Kirkendale, 'The Source for Bach's Musical Offering — The Institutio Oratia of Quintillian', *Journal of American Musicology Society* 33 (1980), p.88.



same way, Aristotle compares the orator opening a speech with a flute player preparing to perform. Both, he says, should 'say at once whatever one likes, give the keynote and continue ... whatever they can execute skilfully'.<sup>188</sup> The following eyewitness account suggests that Corelli also adhered to this practice on occasions:

After a brief *ricercata*, which was his way of testing the tuning, [he] embarked on those beautiful and brilliant sonatas which he improvised in every key or mode'.<sup>189</sup>

And North comments on a similar (and very neglected) aspect of English practice:

[An opening flourish] may be performed in severall manners by any number of instruments, with perpetuall variety of fancy in each, and no one much regard what another doth; and in all that disorder upon the key the sound will be rich and amazing.<sup>190</sup>

In fact, North gives a rather wonderful glimpse into contemporary performance practice when he further describes the idea of an opening flourish. He begins with the rather contentious idea that any degrees of the scale can be mixed together without being discordant, and goes on to explain:

This may be thought an uncouth sentence, but it will be less wondred at, when the common flourish at the opening of a consort is considered: for all the instruments are moving, some slow, others fast, and none together, and no regard is had but onely to the proper key and its accords; and it is seldom that any formed musick strikes the mind with more force and delight than that.<sup>191</sup>

This idea of using a short piece as a preparatory movement seems to have persisted throughout the Baroque and we still find it being discussed in Carlo Tassarini's *Gramatica di Musica* of 1741, which includes a section of preparatory *toccatas* in every key. Though this work dates from two or more generations beyond Matteis it almost certainly to some extent represents some elements of an enduring performance practice. Tassarini advises that in playing these *toccatas* 'non si deve riprender l'arco, e vanno adagio tutte legate senza rigor di Tempo' [you must not retake the bow, and play adagio and legato without any strictness of tempo].<sup>192</sup> Significantly, the figurations Tassarini uses are short and simple and yet usefully both work the fingers in a particular key:

---

<sup>188</sup> W. Kirkendale, 'Ciceronians Versus Aristotelians on the Ricercar as Exordium from Bembo to Bach, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 32 (1979), p.1.

<sup>189</sup> L. Rovighi, trans. H. Ward-Perkins, preface to C. Tassarini *Gramatica di Musica*, p.17.

<sup>190</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.143.

<sup>191</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.172. This rather adventurous idea is similar to his statement about two violins playing together — see page 173.

<sup>192</sup> Tassarini, *Gramatica di Musica*, section one.



Example 3-91: Tessarini *Gramatica di Musica* (no page number)

Matteis's exercises were rather more substantial, which probably makes them better able to 'attract the listener's attention and to attach their soul to their ears for the real piece which follows'.<sup>193</sup>

Matteis uses a wide variety of titles for his preparatory movements — such as *Ricercata*, *Preludio*, *Fantasia*, *Sonata*, *Ostinazione* and *Capriccio* — and is not particularly meticulous in maintaining a strict name/function differentiation. These improvisatory movements inhabit a somewhat quirky, *ad libitum* area of Matteis's output and tend to employ a mixture of reasonably conventional division-based formulae together with a more technically complex style of figurations which are demonstrably his own. The sum total of these two approaches lends his music its unique flavour. At their most simple the preparatory nature of the writing is evident only in standard scale/arpeggio figurations such as in the following simple arpeggionic exercise over a static bass:



Example 3-92: *Passaggio* Book 4, No.50

<sup>193</sup> Kirkendale, 'Ciceronians versus Aristotelians on the Ricercar as Exordium from Bembo to Bach.' p.9.

Elsewhere Matteis chooses to develop the figurations quite substantially:

Example 3-93: *Proludio in fantasia* Book 1, No.24

For the first twenty bars or so the continual changing of cross-string figurations forms a perfect example of writing to prepare the fingers. Matteis then increases the difficulty and bars 24–27 have a fast string-changing pattern which is truly awkward to master. The opening arpeggio figurations are of a style that North referred to as the *Arpeggianti* or *Arpeggio deivision*. For him the beauty of this was that the player could imply all the harmonies of chords without going to the (for North) extreme of using a lot of multiple-stops: ‘because ‘thro’ the deivision may be heard all the concords, commixtures, and passing notes, as if they were all in full action’.<sup>194</sup> Of the performance of these North says:

In the performance of this Arpeggio the usuall manner is, not to distinguish every stroke but to pass the notes with a slurr bow and rolling hand, which may be

<sup>194</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.193.

knowne but not described.<sup>195</sup>

Such a description would apply well to much of Matteis's cross-string writing, whether arpeggionic or not. North was clearly saying that the bow, as it crosses the strings, should not be pulled jerkily but in a smooth arc so that the notes appear in a legato fashion one from the other — hence the 'rolling hand'. North adds some more information about the arpeggio which is relevant to Matteis, referring to the 'hyper-superior octave which they call high notes, and with which is comonly joyned the arpeggio'.<sup>196</sup> Elsewhere he refers to this as 'a whistling way of high arpeggio, much prized for the difficulty of handling',<sup>197</sup> and talks of Banister's playing of the flageolet in consort 'which was never heard before nor since, unless imitated by the high manner upon the violin'.<sup>198</sup> These comments can be read alongside North's early comments about Matteis and his 'high peices solo' which would tend to suggest that Matteis used arpeggio figures up to the higher positions in his solo playing. The jumping from one tessitura to another (as in bars 25–27 of Example 3-93) seems to be another Matteis characteristic and occurs in several of the *Ayres*.

Example 3-94: *Ricercata in C-solfaut Book 1, No.78*

The above example shows how Matteis often utilises a very circular harmonic pattern to make sure that as many keys as possible are visited. As in the following:

<sup>195</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.194.

<sup>196</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.234.

<sup>197</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.131.

<sup>198</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.303.

**Example 3-95: Ricercata in G-solreut terza minore Book 2, No.22**

The nature of such movements is rather meandering but this was clearly the intention:

The recercata is a this-way-that-way manner. Like searching; then, adagio, malencholico affectuoso allegro, grave and some others all relating to the ordinary behaviour of men under such passions.<sup>199</sup>

Technically speaking the preparatory nature of this writing is characterised not only by string-crossing but by the sliding of fingers between naturals, sharps and flats. These movements, aside from any musical function, serve to coordinate the fingers and provide practice for the half-shifts necessary when playing in a variety of keys or for chromatic passages. However, the underlying ‘mood’ of the piece, characterised by the slow bass movement and the repetitive, meandering figurations is somewhat melancholy and the long slurs create a legato sound which further adds to the expressive qualities of the writing. The addition of dissonant passing notes in the Example 3-97 has the effect ‘throwing’ both the harmony and the rhythm, though North’s stricture still stands and the basic shape of the melody is still conformed to:

<sup>199</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North’s ‘The Muscally Grammarian 1728’*, p.284.

Example 3-96: *Ballaseo (sic)* Book 5, No.131

Example 3-97: *Per Far la Mano* Book 5, No.132

These examples create, through repetitious, broken figurations, an aurally and technically awkward line, rather like the violinistic equivalent of a tongue-twister.

In what are probably Matteis's most extrovert and varied division compositions he uses what is more or less a theme and variations format. There are a number of these throughout the *Ayres* and they all follow a similar pattern. Built upon a ground bass, the 'theme' is gradually spiced with a variety of sometimes extreme bowings and effects. This accords well with Matteis's use of the word 'Bizzarrie' in the titles for such movements. In the following example, the quavers and semiquavers of the 'theme' are 'varied' with, first, semiquavers, then angular patterns of cross-string quavers, then spiced with semiquavers and syncopations<sup>200</sup>:

<sup>200</sup> Although the first violin part has the title *Ground in D la sol re per far la mano*, the second violin print is titled *Bizzarrie sopra un Basso, per fare un poco di Mano* and is thus consistent with the nomenclature of other similar *Ayres*.

72 *Ground in D la sol re per far la mano*

*allegro*

Plate 3-34: *Ground in D la sol re per far la mano* Book 4, No.72 (opening)

A compound-time section follows, harder technically and made all the more so by the seemingly random inclusion of dotted rhythms:

Plate 3-35: *Ground in D la sol re per far la mano* Book 4, No.72 (middle)

After a C-time section in the manner of an Italianate adagio, comes the following:

*Un poco di difficile per far la mano.* 75

*Ground*

Plate 3-36: *Ground in D la sol re per far la mano* Book 4, No.72 (end)

Matteis's return to compound-time this time thus includes a string of figurations reminiscent of written-out mordents and trills. Such technical effects characterise many of these 'variation' movements and seem to be one of the defining attributes of the style of movement that Matteis referred to as *Bizzarrie*.<sup>201</sup> For example, the *Diverse bizzarrie sopra la vecchia sarabanda ò pur ciaccona* (Book 1, No.84) consists of several sets of divisions over a repeated *ostinato* bass, which allows for great rhythmic and textural variety in the upper part(s). The theme first appears in a simple yet characteristically-inflected *ciaccona* style (♩<sup>1:4</sup>):

Example 3-98: Theme from *Diverse bizzarrie sopra la vecchia sarabanda ò pur ciaccona* Book 1,  
No.84

Following this there are several variations on the theme, each constructed to test a different aspect of the player's technique and becoming more and more demanding:

<sup>201</sup> Two *Ayres* bear this title: the *Aria burlesca con molte bizzarrie* (Book 2, No.52) and the *Diverse bizzarrie sopra la vecchia sarabanda ò pur ciaccona* (Book 1, No.84). In addition, the *Ground in D la sol re per far la mano* and the *Ground after the Scotch Humour*, whilst so termed in the printed version of Book 4, are both titled *Bizzarrie* in the second violin printed source.





Example 3-99: Excerpts from *Diverse bizzarrie sopra la vecchia sarabanda ò pur ciaccona* Book 1, No.86

Once again it is the rhythmic and textural variety that is most noticeable in this writing. These works offer a kaleidoscope of violin figurations which demand as much contrast in performance as possible.

### 3.11 Trilling

From the earliest descriptions, the practice of trilling has inhabited its own grey area; the word trill being used to describe tremolo (or, vocally, the fast repeated notes Caccini referred to as trillo) through to the standard trill we know today. With his years of acquaintance with Matteis already behind him, North wrote at reasonable length about trilling — one of his *tremulous* graces:

Nothing is more expresly taught, and less correctly, than [the trill] is; which may be perceived by observing the manners of the severall performers upon the same notes. For some trill with spring, and very swift, and on all occasions the same: which must be wrong, for the trill ought to be a just devision of the time used; and such a spring must needs be out of comand, so whether the measures are swift or slow, the spring works all alike. Others that have or use not that spring, but stay or accelerate their trill according to the occasion, conforme much better to the musick, of which an interrupted measure is a cheif perfection.<sup>202</sup>

And, fortunately for the present study, North goes on to give a specific description of Matteis's trill:

This difference was seen in the two great violin masters, Sigr Nicolai Matteis, and his son. The former had an absolute power of his trill, and used it always in time; and so slow, as permitted the ingredients in his shakes to be distinctly heard sounding; which made some, that understood no better, say that he had

<sup>202</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, pp.166–67.

not a good shake. But the other had a spring so active, that during his trill the sound was stopt, because the notes had not time to sound. And that is an objection to all prolonged trilling, so strong that the Itallians have omitted it wholly rather than corrupt the sonorousness of the parts.<sup>203</sup>

So North is most specific that the failing of many was to trill too quickly and always at the same speed, whereas 'Old Nicola Matteis was reputed to have no trill, and the reason was that in the grace of his play, he conformed to, and subdivided his time according as it was in the measure of the notes.'<sup>204</sup> Another passage, when taken alongside North's other comments about trilling seems to suggest that here is a direct reference to Matteis's trill:

Now it seems that a trill is but a species of devision, and ought to keep time, and fall in with that of the consort. This I have heard done, but it was in a slow and not a swift manner, which will by no means admit that decorum<sup>205</sup>

Interestingly, this conflicts with Matteis's own comments in *The False Consonances of Musick* where he says, 'Secondly it is very necessary to make a Clever shake sweet and quick which is the Chief method for those that play of these sort of instruments.' Although he is of course here talking about the guitar it nevertheless highlights the difficulties of taking one word over another. Fortunately, there are many instances in the printed sources which would appear to back up North's description of Matteis's trill. One excellent example occurs in the *Ayre Violino solo ad imitatione della Trombetta* (Book 2, No.66). In the first instance the trill is a written-out ornamentation of a falling line:



Example 3-100: *Violino solo ad imitatione della Trombetta* Book 2, No.66

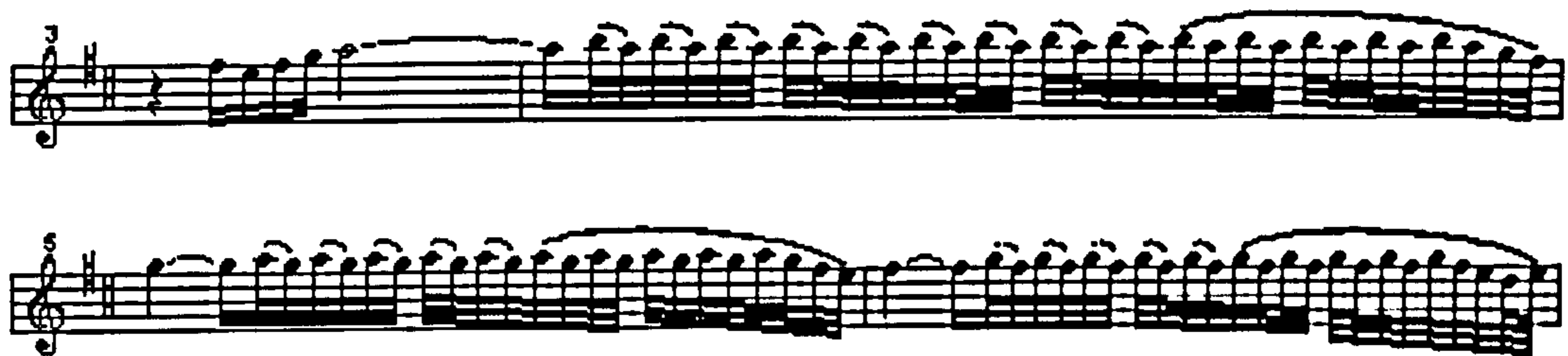
---

<sup>203</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, pp.166–67.

<sup>204</sup> Chan and Kassler, *Roger North's 'The Musickall Grammarian 1728'*, p.165. This use of the word grace could be compared to Caccini's *grazia* which implies more than we would normally understand by the word grace. Wiley Hitchcock quotes from the dictionary of the *Accademia della Crusca* which calls *grazia* 'beauty . . . which seduces one unto love.' Caccini, *Le Nuove Musiche*, p.44.

<sup>205</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.166.

Later on in the same movement, Matteis extends the trill whilst creating the effect of an acceleration. He does this, not by subdividing the notes still further, but by slurring more notes to a bow half way through the trill. This creates the effect of a faster trill without actually using more percussions, or in North's terminology without a faster 'spring':



**Example 3-101: *Violino solo ad imitazione della Trombetta* Book 2, No.66**

In other cases the trills that Matteis writes out are short cadential ornaments, incorporating a trill, of the kind we would now add without thinking, irrespective of whether or not they were notated. However, it is interesting to see how Matteis shapes the ornament, the short flourish preceding an appoggiatura and shake:



**Example 3-102: *Preludio* Book 1, No.96 Violin 1, last three bars**

These examples suggest that Matteis's practice was to begin a trill on the upper note. For example, the above *Preludio* has two trills which really are one long written-out ornamented  $b\flat'$ . The second beat of the second bar has the beginning of a simple trill starting on the upper note  $c'$  but then, instead of 8  $c'' - b\flat'$  repercussions he rises to an  $e\flat'$ , falling to an  $a'$  and back to the original  $b\flat'$ . From this point the  $b\flat'$  becomes an appoggiatura to yet another part of the trill, this time notated with the usual " marks. The fact that the  $b\flat'$  is tied over to the  $a'$  shows that this particular trill, however it is to be performed, at least starts on the upper note. Throughout the manuscripts there

are examples of cadences of a similar appoggiatura tied to a lower note but there is also evidence that Matteis's practice was to put in similar appoggiaturas even where they are not notated. The following example shows how two cadences from Book 5 have various renditions of the cadential ornaments:

**Example 3-103: *Preludio* Book 5, No.18**

The written-out appoggiatura in the first bar, top stave, suggest that this was Matteis's accepted practice in cadential trills and the last bar suggests that it was perfectly in order to put in a trill on an appoggiatura at such points. Though these are practices that we would probably follow in any case, it is nevertheless useful to find such clear corroboration in Matteis's music.

**Example 3-104: *Preludio* Book 5, No.18**

In Example 3-104, we find a similar cadential figure. Again, the implication is that even where the trill is not notated it would have been performed, and performed on the upper note. For if the cadence was left plain or the trill was on the note then there would be consecutive fifths with the bass, something that someone with Matteis's knowledge of harmony would surely never have countenanced. It is most likely in this example that the trill would have resolved onto the e" in less than a crotchet so that there would still be a suspension between the e" and the d" before the latter note resolves onto the c#".<sup>206</sup>

In a similar instance, it is Matteis's figured bass that may imply these sort of appoggiatura-with-trill figurations. In Example 105 a) the 4 of the 4-3 figure in the bass either refers to the second quaver beat in violin 3 or it might show that Matteis was expecting the first violin to hold the a' as an appoggiatura to precede the trill. In this case it is a moot point how long the appoggiatura should be held for though I would suggest that either a quaver or a crotchet would be a suitable length in this case:

The image contains two musical examples, labeled a) and b). Each example consists of four staves: Violin 1 (VI 1), Violin 2 (VI 2), Violin 3 (VI 3), and Bass (bc or ba).  
 Example a) starts at measure 7. The first violin has a trill on the note A4. The bass has a figured bass of 4 3#. The second violin has a note G4.  
 Example b) starts at measure 23. The first violin has a trill on the note C5. The bass has a figured bass of 4 3#. The second violin has a note D5.

**Example 3-105: Two different implied trills**

In Example 105 b), there is an equal ambivalence of intent. Either the 4-#3 refers to the move from the first to the second beat (and, once again, the position of the figures in the original is wholly unclear) or there is another implied appoggiatura. In this case, just as in Example 3-104, it is most likely that the trill on the e" would resolve in time for there to be a clash against the d" appoggiatura in the second violin

<sup>206</sup> The probability that trills and appoggiaturas were commonly combined by Matteis finds additional support in the comparison of the figured bass and the harmony parts. See Appendix 4 for a fuller discussion of this aspect of the *Ayres*.

which is itself implied by the figured bass. Alternatively the two violins could trill in thirds. The other performance question over appoggiaturas tied over to a trilled note is where exactly did the trill start? It is not unusual nowadays in such instances to begin the trill rather lazily and certainly not on the stroke of the downbeat. This is all but unnotatable so we should not be surprised that there is no evidence for or against this. In fact the only evidence of a late-starting trill comes in the Book 4 trumpet tune where at one point the trill on a semibreve g" is notated as starting part of the way through the trill (see Plate 3-6 on page 151, bar 5 of the second system).

There is also a certain amount of evidence for how Matteis liked to end trills, as in the following example where the Book 5 version includes a turn:



Example 3-106: *Minuet* Book 5, No.46 on the lower staff and Book 3 on the upper staff.

The fact that these manuscripts were demonstrably prepared under Matteis's guidance shows that he countenanced a certain amount of disparity in the way that ornaments were notated as well as performed. Matteis used a double dash ("") to notate his trills and it is surprising just how frequent these signs are in the printed sources:

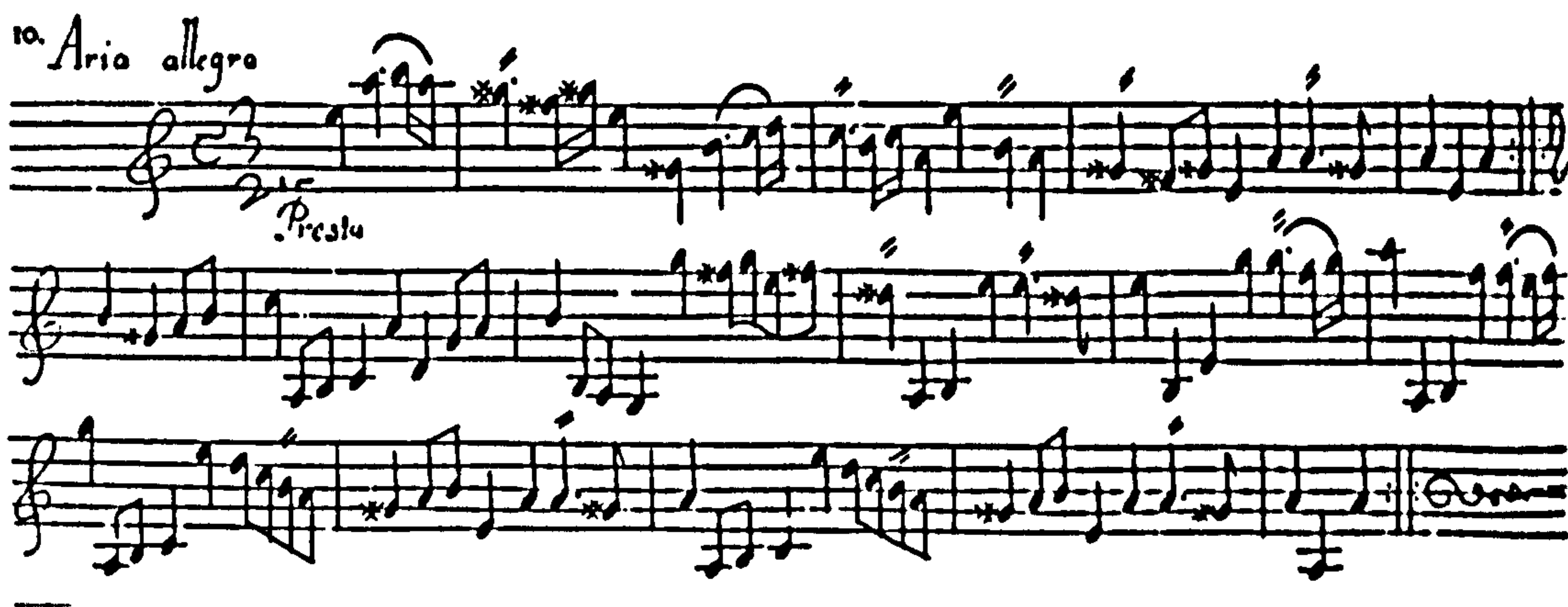


Plate 3-37: *Aria allegra* Book 1, No.10

If otherwise unacquainted with North's comments on Matteis's trill one might be tempted, particularly in a presto movement like the above example, to produce fast 'doorbell' type trills. However, given both North's comments and the evidence of Matteis's own written-out ornaments it is perhaps more likely that Matteis was intending something far more adaptable by these marks, especially since he includes trills in even faster places such as in the following presto *Ayre*:



Plate 3-38: *Burlesca* Book 2, No.6 (2nd variation)

There is insufficient time for the fingers to move and the ear to distinguish trills at this speed and it raises the suggestion that Matteis would have employed a simple mordent. In the example above it is possible that the trill on the g could be played by a fast g"-a"-g" figure. Whilst it is not necessarily possible to know exactly what is intended I feel that if one bears in mind North's comments about Matteis's own trills — that they sounded measured — then this combined with the practicalities of what appears possible at the prevailing tempo will be sufficient to shape the ornaments appropriately. In fact there is a further intimation of this in the following:



Example 3-107: *Aria burlesca con molte bizzarrie* Book 2, No.52

One can imagine these as single notes with a trill written on them and this may suggest one of the ways in which Matteis 'measured' a trill.

Another factor pointing to great diversity in the performance of trills is the variety of written-out trill-like ornaments in various *Ayres*. These stop short of being trills per se but are clearly serving the same purpose. The differing figurations involved suggests strongly that Matteis had a very fertile imagination for such ornaments and is another reason why we should not be too ready to assume that all his trill signs simply refer to a basic trill. Matteis generally places these extended embellishments over a static bass pedal and the effect is almost to 'wind the music up' to the actual written trill, which would then presumably be played in either the same semiquaver pulse or a division thereof:



Example 3-108: *Proludio in fantasia* Book 1, No.24

In the second bar of this example it would have been equally possible for him to have gone straight into a conventional trill whereas the undulating figure used instead is far more arresting.



Example 3-109: *Proludio in delasolre terza maggiore* Book 1, No.54

In this example, the fluctuating figurations alter the perceived angularity of the line



and move inexorably towards a smoother scalar passage in bar 21. This ‘closing up’ of the ornament is helped by the gradual addition of slurs, first in pairs and then in a longer melisma, creating both a smoother line and the afore-mentioned feeling of speeding up the ornament.

Perhaps the last word on ornamentation should go to North who speaks for every one of us who ever attempted to embellish:

The Italians who I thinck may be our masters, never express graces, but write the true note which governes in the harmony, and leave the gracing to the skill and capacity of the performer, who not being a master had better performe plaine, than make excursions.<sup>207</sup>

### 3.12 Multiple-stopping

Matteis surprised his audiences by speaking with the ‘voice of several instruments’, that is, by employing multiple-stopping. There was certainly precedent in England for multi-voiced string playing, perhaps the most obvious being the tradition of viol playing in a ‘lyra’ fashion. Copious manuscript examples in the Bodleian Library attest to what was evidently a common practice among an apparently very able group of players. North remembers that John Jenkins was one of those who played in such a way:

In this time Mr. Jno. Jenkins began to be famous, And his compositions much sought after; he was a lutinist profest, & used the Lyra way upon ye violl, wch followed the manner of the lute.<sup>208</sup>

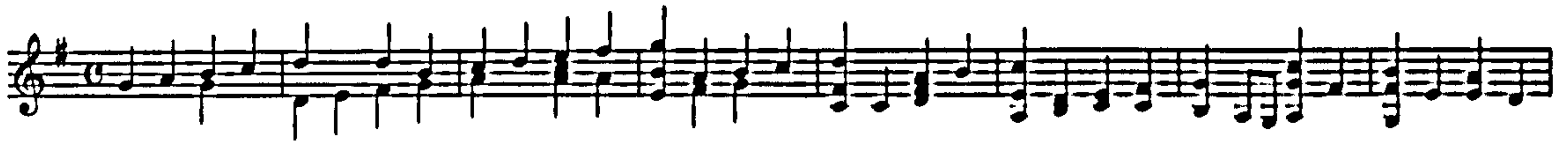
As the violin began to become more common, so it too began to be used in the ‘lyra way’, though not perhaps to the same extent. The best examples of this technique prior to Matteis’s arrival are those of Davis Mell and Thomas Baltzar whose rivalry was well documented in the early 1660s. Baltzar joined the select band of the Private Music in 1661 and Holman suggests that it may have been his familiarity with the work of Jenkins *et al* which influenced him in the use of chordal writing and

---

<sup>207</sup> Wilson, *Roger North on Music*, p.150.

<sup>208</sup> *Historical Extract from MS notes by the Hon Roger North 1650–1734 entitled The Musickall Gramarian*, ed. H. Andrews (Oxford, 1925), p.21.

variant string tunings.<sup>209</sup> What is most striking is that some of these works by Baltzar are very similar to some of Matteis's multiple-stop works:



Example 3-110: Baltzar *Prelude in G*<sup>210</sup>



Example 3-111: Matteis Book 2, No.12

Aside from the more obvious similarities of key and metre, both of the above examples consist of similarly short motifs repeated sequentially, with many implied modulations but little overall structure or development of thematic material. It is equally likely that Matteis's chordal style was developed either in Italy or on his travels through Germany but, since it is possible that Matteis was in England from the mid-1660s, it is not impossible that he may have become aware of Baltzar's music one way or another and decided to develop this aspect of his playing once in England.<sup>211</sup>

The amount of multiple-stopped writing varies between the extant sources. It does not play a particularly significant rôle in the first book of *Ayres* and, where it does exist, is usually presented almost as if it is a variation of the initial theme — i.e. after a plain exposition of the *Ayre* there is a version incorporating double stops. In Book 2, the most technically demanding of all the *Ayres*, there is considerable multiple-stop writing, however. In Book 5 there is but one solitary example and that is in an 'Italian' style movement:

<sup>209</sup> There is a further suggestion that he had received influence in his native Germany from the music of, amongst others, William Brade, who had originally lived and worked in England, thus suggesting a circular influence might be at work here. See P. Holman, 'Thomas Baltzar (?1631–1663), the 'Incomperable *Lubicer* on the Violin'', *Chelys* (1984), pp.3–37 for details.

<sup>210</sup> Holman, 'Thomas Baltzar (?1631–1663), the 'Incomperable *Lubicer* on the violin'', p.24.

<sup>211</sup> If Matteis became acquainted with Baltzar's music in England then it is unlikely to have been through personal contact since the latter died in 1663.

Example 3-112: *Maniera Italiana* Book 5, No.75

It has already been mentioned that the writing in Books 3 and 4 is easier than that in the earlier publication (with Book 4 being more advanced than Book 3) and it seems that one of the simplification methods employed by Matteis was to offer a system of optional double stops which he achieved by having them engraved in outline:

Plate 3-39: *Adagio* Book 3, No.48

For the most part these 'pointed' notes simply replicate the optional second violin

part and were there for the extra challenge they provided for more able students.<sup>212</sup> Matteis also used the system of 'pointed' notes in Books 3 and 4 to suggest ornaments as in the following two instances:



Plate 3-40: *Aria* (in C minor) Book 3, No.58<sup>213</sup>



Plate 3-41: *Fuga* (In C major) Book 4, No.28

In fact, much of Matteis's multiple-stop work seems intended either to add simple harmonic interest and/or to provide a little technical difficulty. Both of these factors apply in the following example of a 'Turkish' Ayre, and though the multiple-stops are generally of a not terribly advanced level of difficulty, they nevertheless add a combination of liveliness and harmonic resonance which greatly increases the overall effect of the movement:

<sup>212</sup> As an example of this, in the second violin print, Book 3, No.48, it says 'Questo non si deve toccare quando il Primo Violino sona le due parte insieme' [This should not be played if the first violin plays both parts together]. Such an instruction would seem to confirm that Matteis viewed his works primarily as solo pieces.

<sup>213</sup> Although in C minor the key signature, following common practice of the time, is two flats. Presumably the 'pointed' notes would have an f# as well as an a' natural.



Example 3-113: *Giga Al Genio Turchesco* Book 2, No.16

In the above example, presumably Matteis would have played the two note ‘chords’ with both notes sounding at the same time ( $\text{♩}^{2:1}$ ). It is harder to know how he would have performed his three- and four-note chords although we are given a clue in works such as that shown in Example 3-64 (page 217) where the lower three notes are notated as shorter than the top note. Thus we can assume that he tended to spread the chords from the bottom upwards and that the top note was held on after the others had been released. It is possible that the many movements that include string-crossings (such as Examples 3-79 and 3-95) are an indication that he advocated working on such techniques at least in part to ensure that such chords were evenly spread. Occasionally Matteis uses his multiple-stops in a more contrapuntal fashion as in the following fugue where he increases the independence of the second line, elevating it out of its primarily harmonic rôle and providing motivic interplay:



Example 3-114: *Fuga* Book 2, No.30

Elsewhere Matteis uses double-stopping to add to the rhythmic sparkle that characterises much of his music. In Example 3-115, Matteis has used the double-stopped notes for a specific effect. The first seven beats include the double-stops on the main beats but at the end of bar two he shifts them to the off-beat which induces a stuttering feeling. In bar eight he then enters a long cycle of implied modulations though many keys which, despite no longer being off-beat, are now almost dizzying due to their sheer frequency:



Example 3-115: *Ostinazione* Book 2, No.10

Perhaps the most important and the most difficult of the multiple-stopping is reserved for the unaccompanied violin works and in particular the *Fantasia* (No.50, Book 2), which has already been discussed (see pages 160 and 161). By combining contrapuntal factors, motivic interplay and constant quasi-modulations, Matteis creates a piece which stands out as being extremely advanced for its time, both in terms of the technical demands made upon the player but also in terms of the construction of the dramatic structure of the movement. One can only wonder what ‘flights of fancy’ he would have indulged in when he was not limiting himself to his written music and had his audience well and truly ‘held by the ears’.

### 3.13 The status of the *Basso*

Another difference of intent between the 1676 and 1685 publications concerns the status of the bass player. Matteis had clearly come to realise the need to provide

more interest in the bass as witnessed by the title-page to Books 3 and 4 which contains the line 'For the Emproving of the Hand upon the Basse Viol or Harpsechord.' In fact Matteis was not really writing anything very different for the bass in these later books in terms of either difficulty or the prominence given to the instrument. Matteis had provided some divisions for the bass in Books 1 and 2 but in the second two books these examples are somewhat more numerous:

*Aria sminuita per far la mano.*

*Semplice*

*Basso facile* *questo basso si tocca due volte*

*Basso di Viola per l'Aria semplice*

The image shows a musical score for 'Aria sminuita per far la mano'. It consists of two main parts. The first part is titled 'Aria sminuita per far la mano' and is written for a simple bass line. The second part is titled 'Basso facile' and is written for a divided bass line. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, notes, rests, and fingerings. There are also some annotations in Italian, such as 'questo basso si tocca due volte' and 'Basso di Viola per l'Aria semplice'. The score is arranged in four staves, with the first two staves for the simple bass and the last two staves for the divided bass.

Plate 3-42: *Aria sminuita per far la mano* Book 3, No.84

The instructions above the bass part are open to various suggestions but I think that the likeliest solution is that the simple bass is played on the harpsichord (or other keyboard) twice through (once for the divided version and once for the 'aria semplice') but that the cello or gamba plays the simple line once and the divided bass underneath the simple melody. This would then make a four-part texture which would make sense of the wording of the title-page in some versions of Books 3 and 4 which claim that the *Ayres* are in 2, 3 and 4 parts. This is also the implication of the handwritten addition to the *Minuetto con sua Divisione* which is found in the 'Prince Electoral Palatin' copy of the *Ayres* and which states that 'dopo questa divisione il

basso sminuito si deve toccar con l'aria semplice da capo' [after this division the divided bass must play with the simple aria on the return]. This instruction does not appear in the first printed edition but was added to the later issues (as with the bass figures — see pages 99 and 100) and clarifies Matteis's intention for the bass divisions which seems to be that they should be played under the simple melody line, thus increasing their prominence. The following example is not quite so clear but probably implies the same manner of performance:

*Aria* *For the Flute*

*Questo Basso si tocca due volte cioè per l'Aria semplice e per la sminuita* 39

Plate 3-43: *Aria for the Flute* Book 4, No.38

The instruction points out that the simple bass line must be played twice — once for the *Aria* and then once for the divisions. The divided bass was then presumably played under the simple version of the first violin part.

The bass lines in both the printed and manuscript sources are reasonably well-provided with figures which, due to the overall similarities across the extant sources and given the control which Matteis evidently exerted over his output generally, we should probably assume are his own. Usually, the most detailed figuring is reserved



for cadential sequences though these are more often than not relatively straightforward variations on a suspension. Elsewhere the figuring is minimal and is mostly concerned with successions of first inversion chords, with a smattering of added sevenths and an occasional  $^4_2$ . The figures are reasonably accurate but are frequently absent at points where they would be useful (e.g. to show a major third) and present where they are not strictly necessary. Moreover, sometimes they are a little misleading in both their format and their positioning.<sup>214</sup>

### 3.14 Matteis's extra violin parts

In the preface to the Italian issue of Books 1 and 2, Matteis's mentions that he had prepared harmony parts for the *Ayres*:

Io sapere che a queste compositione ci e il Secondo soprano, et anco il Tenore dove me/ lo servo a presso di me a mano scritto; per poterne a l'occasione Servirne quelli Signori, che/ desiderano goder maggiore Armonia, cioe che vogliono havere il concerto.

[I own that there is a second soprano part to these compositions, and also a tenor part in manuscript, where I use one; to be able to have the opportunity to serve those persons who wish for greater harmony, that is to say who wish to play concerted music].

Not only did Matteis not provide a printed second violin part at the time of publication of Books 1 and 2 in 1676, he never thought it profitable to publish a second part at all until Books 3 and 4 were re-issued in 1687. We have seen how North seems to suggest that Matteis was providing these harmony parts mostly to respond to the English taste (see page 136) and this impression is somewhat strengthened by the slightly different slant of the later publications where the title-page makes clear that there are works in 'two, three and four parts'. As with other aspects of the marketing of the *Ayres* this has to be taken with a slight pinch of salt for this only occurs once in the entire publication. Furthermore, it is only a four-part work inasmuch as there is an optional tenor part for the second violin to play if the first violin is playing the optional double-stopping. The note in Book 4, No.42 reads, 'Secondo soprano quando il primo Violino no puol toccara due corde' [second soprano when the first violin cannot play double-stops] and an alternative 'Tenore quando il Primo Viol' tocca a due corde' [Tenor when the first viol[in] plays the

---

<sup>214</sup> These points will be discussed in more depth in the editorial notes to the editions in Appendix 4, Volume 3.

double-stopping]. In fact, quite to the contrary, Book 3, No.48 has a note saying ‘Questo non si deve toccare quando il Primo Violino sona le due parte insieme’ [This part must not be played when the first violin plays both parts together (i.e. double-stopping)]. The decisive factor seems to be that whilst Matteis liked the parts to be close he clearly did not expect any line to be actually doubled.<sup>215</sup>

Meanwhile, the existence of manuscript versions of the first two books attests to the demand for consort music but, clearly the demand was in sufficiently small numbers for Matteis to be able to satisfy it by copying, or rather having the manuscript copied. There is a clear lessening of technical difficulty between the first and second violin parts and, then again, between the second part and the tenor part. The publication of *Le False Consonanze della Musica* shows that Matteis was far from unfamiliar with musical theory and, indeed, the inner parts do display a command of harmony, texture and rhythmic interest that raise them above the humdrum. The discovery of the long-lost tenor part to accompany books 1 and 2, which Matteis mentioned in his Italian preface, has added another dimension to the printed *Ayres*. The title-page of the only known surviving version this manuscript appears to be in the hand I have identified as that of Matteis, which gives it an authority equal to that of some of the second violin parts. His choice of the name *tenor* for this part is one of function in the texture rather than pitch range (as is ‘second soprano’ for Ob Mus. Sch. G. 613 — also in his writing). Though the parts are written out in soprano clef, the range of the tenor part is carefully placed so that the highest note is e’ and the lowest is g. In general terms there are many instances of e’ but only one of a g although there are several as and bs. Consequently this tenor part can be played by either a violin or by a viola which is surely yet another example of Matteis’s practical approach in making the part playable by as many instrumentalists as possible. In one respect Matteis went against the advice of Purcell, who wrote in the preface to *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, ‘When you make a Second Treble to a Tune, keep it always below the upper part, because it may not [then] spoil the Air’.<sup>216</sup> It is

---

<sup>215</sup> The other way in which some *Ayres* qualify as four-part is in those numbers that have two different bass-lines, one more ornamented than the other. This is not a particularly common part of Matteis’s style.

<sup>216</sup> Quoted from the preface to Playford’s *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition, Corrected and Amended by Henry Purcell* (London, 1694; R/New York, 1972). It is likely, however that Purcell was specifically referring to works with a principal melody rather than free compositions where both violin parts could take over from one another in terms of thematic importance.

debatable whether this trait does in fact spoil Matteis's *Ayres* since I would contend that the interplay of the two instruments (and three in those with the added tenor parts) adds something very positive to the overall texture. The harmonic interest is actually enhanced in such places as bar 2 with the chromatically rising second violin and the octave leap to a top b" in bar five, and the subsequent descending line gives a 'pass-the-parcel' effect that is more expressive than if the second part had stayed below. The alternating, mirroring of bars 7 and 8 also increases the rhythmic interest.

Example 3-116: *Adagio* Book 1, No.2

Example 3-117: Book 1, No.36

In Example 3-117, the continual swapping over of the high tessitura adds terrifically to the excitement. The cascading effect of the semiquavers is most striking and, again, would be much less so were the second violin relegated to a lower line. Such interplay is evident in all of Matteis's writing, with violins one and two (and to a lesser extent the third part) continually weaving around each other.

Example 3-118: Book 1, No.38

It would appear that Matteis was happy for the parts to be as close as possible, so long as they did not end up being doubled (see page 270).<sup>217</sup>

The addition of the tenor part to the *Ayres* is particularly interesting because, whilst it has been known for sometime that Matteis wrote one work for three violins (Ob Mus. Sch. E.400–403, No.23), it was not realised that his 'tenor' parts actually fit into the same category. Holman argues persuasively that it may possibly have been partly as a direct influence from Baltzar that Matteis chose to write a work for three violins.<sup>218</sup> However, Purcell, too, wrote for this combination and it is not impossible that he might have been influenced in this by the work of Matteis, although there were several other composers whose music for three violins could have been known in England at this time.<sup>219</sup> Matteis's third parts do not quite compete on equal terms

<sup>217</sup> It should be pointed out, though, that there were many versions of the second part produced and that not all of them survive. One has to assume that the same was true of the tenor part. Any version of the *a2* or *a3* scores must be viewed with this in mind and any particularly awkward passages might have other solutions.

<sup>218</sup> See Holman, 'Thomas Baltzar (?1631–1663), the 'Incomperable *Lubicer* on the violin'' and *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, p.277.

<sup>219</sup> Bononcini and Schmelzer for example.

with the other two, apparently having been provided for those whose desire to indulge in chamber music would otherwise have been denied them by the difficulty of the first two parts. The writing may be simple but it involves imitative interplay, crossing of tessituras and an added rhythmic interest that makes for a much more satisfying overall texture. Matteis is always careful to give each part its own moments of importance and it is this as much as anything else that creates such good chamber music from the *Ayres*. North, said the 'full consorts' 'tended most to aggrandize the harmony' and it is certainly true that the four-part works have a harmonic depth which completely alters them from the solo versions.<sup>220</sup>

The harmony parts are not without their quirks however, such as a melodic motif incorporating a falling seventh as in the tenor part in the following three examples.

Example 3-119: *Il Genio Inglese* Book 1, No.32

Example 3-120: *Gavotta* Book 1, No.8

<sup>220</sup> Elsewhere North commented that 'it cannot be denied that a full consort of 4. may be adapted to 3. violins (taking their turnes) and a Bass. See Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, p.277.



Example 3-121: *Adagio* Book 1, No.2

There are examples of this mannerism in the tenor part of nearly every *Ayre* within the first two books as well as frequently in the second part as well, as in Example 3-122 from the three-violin work in the Bodleian. Thus it becomes a highly recognisable device in Matteis's writing:



Example 3-122: Ob Mus. Sch. 400-403 No.23

As with the second violin sources, the tenor parts are copied clearly but with the minimum of information included. Not only is there little in the way of difficult writing but there are also few slurs, trills or other performance information. A rare example of detailed information is in the addition of *piano* and *forte* marks to the tenor part of the *Adagio* of Book 1, No.2. The placement of these marks is rather peculiar for, taken at face value, they imply sudden (very unsubtle) contrasts. Since the likelihood is that these are Matteis's markings do we take this as suggesting that he favoured such gauche contrasts? Or is it more the case that these are suggestions of a more general shape? More information is needed before a conclusion can be drawn but their presence should caution us not to leap to swift conclusions when looking at dynamic contrasts in Matteis's other *Ayres*. In the extant sources, both

second and tenor parts follow the first part very carefully in terms of nomenclature and numbering of movements and it is noticeable that when no part exists for them a blank page was left in the book with a number at the top of the page. This may suggest that the intention was to add more parts over time or at least to allow for this possibility or perhaps it means that the copyists were unable or loathe to use initiative and merely copied the numbers religiously before putting in the music. Quite often the tenor parts are shorter than the printed first parts, usually where there was a ornamented version of the melody to follow the initial rendition. In such cases the tenor part could be repeated, although certain aspects would have to be altered slightly to allow for different harmonies — or implied harmonies — in the ornamented version.

The tenor parts are not important as examples of seventeenth-century violin technique, but to concentrate on their technical failings would be to sell them short since their real rôle is to bring the work of Matteis to a wider audience. They may be simply crafted but are nevertheless rich, full and satisfying in performance. The technical ease of the parts means that they add nothing to our understanding of technical issues and as such they have no further rôle to play in the current discussion but their real value is as witness to the living process of seventeenth-century harmony in consort music and I believe that they still have the power today to both inform and to entertain.<sup>221</sup>

### **3.15 The Bodleian Manuscript**

This final section refers to the works which may or may not give a glimpse of Matteis's real levels of virtuosity. Earlier in this Section, Ob Mus. Sch. C.61 was mentioned as containing in some ways the most interesting and technically demanding violin writing of all the Matteis sources, and there are certainly sufficient similarities between material in this source and elements of Matteis's published or manuscript violin writing to suggest a common author. Although only one of the two pieces in the manuscript bears even a clue as to the author (the initials N.M.) they are similar enough in terms of difficulty and style of writing to be fairly confidently attributed to the same composer. It is relatively easy to isolate certain features that

---

<sup>221</sup> See Volume 3 for an edition of some of the *Ayres* from Books 1 and 2 that include a tenor part.

occur in the *Ayres* and also in the Bodleian manuscript. For example, in the following *Ayre* Matteis has combined several technical devices such as arpeggionic figurations, cross-string sixths and thirds plus a rapidly switching tessitura:



**Example 3-123: *Ricercata in C solfaut* Book 1, No.78**

It is striking how similar are the figurations in C.61 both in the first double page of variations (with no composer mentioned) and in the second double page, bearing the letters N. M.:



**Example 3-124: *Ob Mus. Sch. C.61*, anonymous.**



Example 3-125: *Ob Mus. Sch. C.61*, N. M.

Particularly noticeable are the cross-string sixths which seem to be very characteristic of Matteis's writing, appearing in several of the printed *Ayres*, such as Example 3-123 and in this excerpt from the *Alemanda a due corde* (Book 1, No.52):

Plate 3-44: *Alemanda a due corde* Book 1, No.52

In *Ob Mus. Sch. C.61* the same pattern can be discerned, this time descending:

Example 3-126: *Ob Mus. Sch. C.61*, anon.

Example 3-127: *Ob Mus. Sch. C.61, N. M.*

The frequent jumping from a high to a low tessitura, the arpeggios and changing accidentals within the sinuous lines are all points of similarity, but are taken to higher levels in both sections of *Ob Mus. Sch. C.61*. In Example 3-127 the string-crossings keep doubling in frequency, from one large crossing every four semiquavers in bar 50, to two every four semiquavers in bars 52–54 until bar 57 where only a demisemiquaver is allowed for the jump across two strings. Most difficult of all is the very fast switching from D to E string and the simultaneous switching of the first finger across these strings. It is interesting to see how closely such writing echoes that of Davis Mell, the English virtuoso who had stunned audience only a few years before Matteis arrived in England:

Example 3-128: Davis Mell, *Prelude from Suite No.9, bb.19–32*<sup>222</sup>

<sup>222</sup> Quoted by P. Walls in 'The Influence of the Italian Violin School in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century England', *Early Music* 18 (1990), p.579.

If we bear in mind that North specifically states that in division playing Matteis played at the point of the bow, (an approach also advocated by Bartolomeo Bismantova),<sup>223</sup> Matteis would have needed all the stretch of his ‘long arms’ in order to play at the point whilst holding the violin so low down his body, and this may have been one of the aspects of his technique that could explain North’s comment, ‘I have found very few who will believe it possible he could performe as he did in that posture.’ The lighter weight of Matteis’s *bipedalian* bow at the point compared with a later Baroque-pattern bow, let alone a transitional or modern bow, would have made it easier to play quickly at the point, but the sound would also have been more legato, even in the fastest divisions, since it would have been impossible to make the bow bounce there — the laws of physics mitigate against it. Nowadays, even with a short, light bow, we would tend to play the fastest divisions in the centre of the bow with a small wrist action to make the bow bounce. With such a bounce it is possible to play divisions more quickly than at the point because the arm movements required are considerably smaller and the spring of the bow does a large part of the work for the player. However, this results in a very different, more staccato, sound and goes against North’s descriptions of how Matteis performed. In passages such as bar 59 of Example 3-127, the string crossings render it a moot point whether it is faster to play at the point or bounced in the middle.

A further area of similarity between Ob Mus. Sch. C.61 and the printed *Ayres* is in the matter of the written-out trills. In Ob Mus. Sch. C.61, there is a passage where one of the variations is based upon a very specifically-notated trill:

Example 3-129: Ob Mus. Sch. C.61 fo.17v

<sup>223</sup> Bismantova advised that ornaments are best played with separate bow strokes at the tip of the bow. See ‘Regole per accordare e suonare il violino’, *Compendio Musicale* (Ferrara, 1677).

It is striking how similar these written-out trills are to those that were seen in the above section on trills and these similarities add a strong level of circumstantial evidence to the supposition that these variations are by Matteis.

Ultimately, a question mark must remain over the authorship of the works in Ob Mus. Sch. C.61, but the fantastically involving violin writing, full of virtuosic effects, makes it a perfect example of the sort of 'fire and fury' of which North remarks and which was clearly one of the main secrets of Matteis's fascination for his many admirers.

## 4. Conclusions

This study has looked at Nicola Matteis from three different perspectives: firstly an assessment of the biographical details of his life, then of his extant work and finally of his playing style. In each area the existing information about him was lacking and, to some extent, misleading. Biographically speaking, there are still question marks about Matteis; we still do not know where and when he was born, when he came to England, how and by what route he travelled, where he lived, whom he married and when he died. However, despite these considerable omissions it has been possible to define his period of activity with some accuracy and to contextualise his works, thus allowing a more focussed assessment of both his output and his contribution to violin playing. Moreover, in each category it has been possible to draw various important conclusions.

Biographically speaking, perhaps the main conclusion of the present study is to have separated the tangle of references to the various generations of Matteis violinists. This was a prerequisite of defining Matteis's likely period of activity and any consequent appraisal of his work. The realisation that he almost certainly came to England earlier than has been thought and that his son was actually born some years earlier than was previously thought means that the accepted views of his life and work have been proved incorrect. It has been possible to show that the elder Matteis's compositions almost certainly ended with the 1687 publication of the *ayres* (reprints notwithstanding) and that subsequent publications of songs and violin music can all be confidently attributed to his son. It is possible that his date of death will one day become known but at present the best guess is that it occurred sometime in the mid- to late-1690s.

In terms of bibliography, there have been important conclusions drawn also. Having removed the songs from Matteis's confirmed output, it is surprising how few publications remain, considering the reputation Matteis earned and the wealth he enjoyed. Despite the significant number of individual compositions the books of

*ayres* include, there are only five books and a handful of miscellaneous works to add to the very few that are known to be missing, such as the motet *Crudele Guadium*. However, this is a misleading picture, for, as the second section of the study shows, the secret of Matteis's success seems to have been in both the frequency with which the music was re-issued and the very specific audience for whom each issue was prepared. A combination of watermark and textual analysis has suggested a regular series of re-issues and reprints of the printed *ayres* between the main publishing dates, explaining to some extent the gap of nine years between the first editions of books one and two and the later books three and four — a period which also saw the production of the manuscript book 5 (in the early 1680s). The evidence suggesting this manuscript was produced almost to order, and the very few differences between exemplars, leads to the other important conclusion that Matteis was running something of a copyists' production line. This possibility is further reinforced by the appearance of various annotations in Matteis's hand in some of the sources, which give the impression that he was checking them through after production. By specifically preparing copies for individuals, Matteis obviated the need for a print run with its attendant costs and managed to sell them at what sound to have been rather inflated prices, hence explaining a significant area of his income.

The evidence with regard to playing style is probably the most problematic in terms of reaching categorical conclusions. The details which define the playing style of Matteis — indeed of any performer at any time — involve a wide variety of factors, many of which are unnotatable and which we are powerless to replicate, especially three hundred years and more after the event. Moreover, it is all too easy to impose twenty-first century expectations onto seventeenth century practices. We are left with no recorded details of the set-up of his violin, the construction of his strings, the design, tension and hair-width of his bow and, despite North's descriptions, it is still hard to imagine Matteis's exact violin hold. The nature of his musicality and expression are also impossible to replicate confidently since they would have included technical and expressive references both from the milieu of his upbringing and training and of his years in England. These would have further involved rhetorical references and a specific manner of ornamentation and expression that

seems to have been considered by most commentators to have been such an integral part of the contemporary musical consciousness that it went largely unrecorded. In the same way, even some important matters of violin technique do not seem to have been commented on or notated in many of the surviving sources from that period. The matter of fingering patterns is such an example, and due to the complete lack of any information on the subject in relation to Matteis, it has not been possible to comment on it in the present study.<sup>1</sup>

Despite these problems it is still possible to approach an understanding of playing style, particularly in the case of Matteis where there are many recorded comments about his manner of performance as well as a significant amount of information in the printed and manuscript sources. This evidence includes suggestions of the sort of ornamentation that he employed, both in terms of the 'smooth graces' and 'tremulous' graces of which North speaks but also in terms of the bowed ornamentation which was such a feature of his playing. Detailed descriptions from North, allied to specific evidence in the sources all point to a highly characterised style which owes a significant amount to the expressive vocal style of the early seventeenth century. Perhaps the two most important conclusions to be drawn from the performance evidence concern:

- 1) The practical details of his performance such as bowings, figurations and ornamentation.
- 2) The strongly characterised nature of the playing style, born out of the expressive, *chiaroscuro* aesthetic of the early Baroque.

These are both elements that we can incorporate into our own playing or at least examine in order to further inform our playing of music of this period.

---

<sup>1</sup> In order to progress beyond mere guesswork, it would be necessary to be far more confident about Matteis's exact violin hold since this would have strong implications for his manner of changing position and, hence, the fingering patterns he would employ. Another reason for not broaching the matter of fingering is that a comprehensive study of the subject is currently being undertaken by Dr. Peter Allsop which will provide far more detailed information than it would be possible to include given the constraints of time and space in the present study. See also P. Nobes' study, *Neglected Sources of the Solo Violin Repertory Before ca.1750* (PhD, University of Exeter, 2000), in which she considers fingerings from this period.

Perhaps it might be permitted to end this study with a caveat. The interest in informed period instrumental playing has already spanned several decades, and during this time the expectations of audiences and players alike have changed substantially. The constant drip-feed of scholarly research has shed, and continues to shed, new light on various aspects of the music and its performance parameters whilst players and luthiers continue to assess and reassess methods of overcoming practical problems in the performance of the music and capabilities of the instruments. There are, however, several reasons why we should not cease questioning our own conclusions let alone those of others, for 'authentic' performance practices have been shaped over the years by factors quite apart from those conducive to an improved understanding of style or ethos. The practical requirements of larger concert halls and the need for accessible and financially-workable musical programming have gone hand-in-hand with the commercial imperatives of recording companies who have often helped create expectations in audiences which may be incompatible with actual historical facts. Moreover, these expectations are passed on to the ensembles themselves who often have to adapt and conform in order to survive.

Roger North spoke at length about the tendency of his contemporaries to assume that their manner of performing was of a higher standard than anything that had gone before. It is quite clear that we, in the twenty-first century, share a similar arrogance about our superiority, certainly in terms of technical proficiency and musical expression. Are not standards bound to be superior now to how they were in the seventeenth century, or indeed at any time in the past? Since there is no way to vindicate any of our assumptions or conclusions by first-hand experience, the only realistic approach is to examine the unequivocal evidence, and it was this approach that was attempted in the third section of the present study. Perhaps the most important conclusion to be drawn, in terms of performance practice at least, is that the concept of contrast was integral to Matteis's work, both in terms of expressive and technical devices. These contrasts appear to have been utilised to delight, amuse, entertain and also to shock — in short to move the emotions of his listeners, just as had been the aim of the early pioneers of the Baroque style. As our approach to historically-informed performance practices becomes more sophisticated (in all



senses of the word) is it not possible that we are losing what one might term the 'shock' factor? To some extent this is inevitable since Matteis's audiences genuinely had not heard anything like his playing whereas modern ears are regularly treated to displays of technical bravura that have long since desensitised our virtuoso palettes. However, there are undoubtedly aspects of seventeenth-century performance in terms of both expressive and virtuosic devices that have long since fallen out of our modern playing style and, since they are unfamiliar, have a renewed ability to surprise and delight.

A greater knowledge of Matteis's working method grants us the freedom to choose (or not to choose) to adopt the same approach in moving our own audiences. For example, it is clear that he used the juxtaposition of opposite bowing styles to create certain effects; he used rubato to similar ends; his performances were characterised by great extroversion and energy; he extended the bounds of what was thought technically possible to amaze and entertain in his 'flights of fancy'. We can look at all these areas, attempt to understand as much as possible about his exact techniques and try to replicate them in our performances. This would undoubtedly be an informed approach to the performance of his music. Alternatively, an equally informed approach would be to look at all the above-mentioned areas and formulate our own ideas as to how we can produce the same effects and 'affects' in our audiences. We can develop our own bowing contrasts, our own approach to rubato and dynamic contrasts and we can formulate our own expressive and virtuoso ornamentation. In other words it is possible for us to create our own 'conference of extreams'. We may possibly not be true to the letter of what Matteis did but then we might ask whether we are ever likely to fully understand that. Instead it is possible to gain something just as important from a study of this remarkable musician and that is the freedom to be inventive and extreme in our musical choices. Perhaps this is the most important conclusion of all.