

THE THIBAUT LUTE MANUSCRIPT: AN INTRODUCTION¹

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PART I

The window through which the modern player views the Italian lute music of the early sixteenth century, and perhaps glimpses that of the late fifteenth, is afforded chiefly by the five surviving lute-books published by Ottaviano Petrucci², and by the slightly later Capirola manuscript³. This view, however, is unduly restricted, ignoring as it does two large and important manuscript collections having their origins in the years around 1500. The first of these, probably started in the last few years of the fifteenth century, is the heart-shaped manuscript, Pesaro, Biblioteca Oliveriana 1144 (formerly 1193) which, though Italian, uses what we now think of as French tablature⁴. The second, almost certainly a few years later in date, was bought in 1956 from Leo Olchski, an antiquarian book dealer in Florence, by the late Geneviève Thibault, Comtesse H. de Chambure. In 1979 it passed, along with the greater part of her collection, to the Bibliothèque nationale, where it is numbered Res. Vmd. ms.27⁵.

The Thibault manuscript has recently appeared in a most welcome facsimile by Minkoff of Geneva⁶, and it is hoped that this will lead to more widespread appreciation of its contents. Both collections however present difficulties of notation which are sufficient to frustrate most players not brought up in a late fifteenth century musical milieu. In order to make this music more accessible, I am preparing a complete critical edition of the two sources⁷.

Lutenists, doubtless by virtue of the specialised notation they use, have been in the forefront of the recent trend towards the use of original notation in performing old music. Ill-conceived modern tablatures, often interspersed with expansive keyboard transcriptions, and prefaced by all-but-impenetrable editorial reports, have little attraction compared with the more concise and elegant facsimile; indeed some might with good reason question the need for a modern "edition" of a particular collection of lute pieces, especially one containing only *unica*.

Most early printed sources and many manuscripts are, of course, entirely satisfactory for the modern player, who can easily correct occasional obvious errors. On the other hand, many of the manuscripts that appear to have been used by professional musicians make incomplete, or to our eyes very much simplified, use of rhythm signs. It would be wrong to regard these notations as imperfect or erroneous. Apparently players habitually supplemented the indications on the page from memory or, rather, used the notation before them as an *aide memoire*, and guide to fingering, in playing more than one part of a piece they already knew well. In the Pesaro manuscript, for example, there are just three signs of duration, meaning in effect long, medium and short. One serves for the semibreve and occasionally the dotted semibreve or breve; a second for the minim and a third for the semiminim and all lesser values alike⁸. In consequence the player must have a firm grasp of the musical logic of a piece before he can play it from the tablature. His interpretative skills must include the ability to realise ornamental

figures, according to more or less conventional patterns from a rhythmically inexplicit, or only partially explicit, notation. The player was doubtless originally the copyist himself. For the modern player familiar with the styles of the period, such problems should not prove insuperable, but the demands of the Thibault manuscript are altogether greater; for here we have a collection almost entirely lacking in rhythm signs.

In this instance the advantages of a generally available critical edition are obvious: if the source is evaluated in the light of what is known of contemporary practice, the chief barrier to performance – the obscure notation – may be removed: the music becomes immediately accessible, thus saving interested players the exertion of recovering it for themselves.

When she bought the manuscript in Florence, Geneviève Thibault was unable to discover anything of its history, so we must look to the volume itself to learn what we can of its origins.

When Vitale, pupil of the Brescian nobleman Vincenzo Capirola, copied his master's works into the celebrated Capirola lute-book, he sought to have them "perpetually preserved", as he says in his introductory text⁹. In contrast, the compiler of the Thibault manuscript seems to have had more personal and mundane intentions. Vitale was meticulous in his notation of rhythm and ornaments, and created what he described as a "quasi divine book" by decorating a third of the pages "with such noble pictures that if it should come into the hands of one who is lacking such understanding, he will preserve it for the beauty of the pictures"¹⁰. In this sense Vitale was a true amateur, whereas the Thibault copyist reveals perhaps a more professional attitude in recording no more than was absolutely necessary to himself at the time he wrote. Pitches and some fingerings are noted, for the most part accurately, but with only an occasional hint of rhythmic guidance. That a not altogether successful attempt was later made to rhythmicise the notation of some of the pieces bears witness to the fact that not all players at the time were able to cope with so incomplete a notation. Everything in the appearance of the manuscript suggests the swift but competent work of a practised hand, eager to record the music legibly for his own use, but expending no unnecessary time on pretentious ornament. Only in the simple diaper patterns that precede and follow many of the pieces do we find any attempt at decoration.

In her study of the manuscript, Madame Thibault convincingly identifies the compiler of the collection as a lutenist-singer of Venetian provenance, active during the first few years of the sixteenth century¹¹. The repertoire encompassed by the collection is of such stylistic diversity as virtually to equal that of the sum of Petrucci's output. Much the most numerous group of pieces are the frottole, found both as accompaniments, designated for use in vocal performance¹², and as lute solos. It is noteworthy that the vocal parts of the frottole are not included, and must presumably have been memorised by the singer. Amongst the lute solos are found dances (two *Pavane*, one followed by a *Saltarello* and *Piva*, two *Bassadanze* and a *Calata*), five *recerchari* and four intabulations of pieces by northern European masters. Further accompaniments are for two French

chansons, a Mass movement and a Lauda. Only in this last instance is the text to be sung recorded.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Like most Italian secular music-books of c.1500, the manuscript is a small oblong volume, the paper leaves measuring 227 x 163 mm. In its present state it is incomplete, the numeration of the surviving folios running from 12 to 55. Folios 34 and 35 are also missing. The extant part of the manuscript is ruled throughout in ink, with four six-line staves per side, for the copying of lute tablature. The written space is delimited by vertical rulings, the margins being left blank save for occasional *finis* marks and a few figures which spill over from the staves. Initially there must have been further leaves at the end of the manuscript, but internal evidence suggests that these were already missing by the time the final verso was used. In order to complete the copying of the concluding *Ave Maria*, the scribe had to add a rather cramped fifth staff at the foot of the page, something found nowhere else in the collection. Had there been further blank leaves available, this would not have been necessary.

THE COPYING OF THE MANUSCRIPT

A single scribe appears to have been responsible for copying all the lute music. The pieces fall into two categories, the first (occupying fols. 12 to 26) of lute solos and the second (fols. 36 to 55v) consisting predominantly of lute accompaniments to vocal pieces. These were entered into two distinct parts of the manuscript, copying having been started at two points presumably in order that additions might successively be made in either section without the two categories becoming mixed.

All the lute pieces, their titles and the text of the one Lauda, are entered in the hand of the main scribe, a neat humanist script typical of the period. If the copying is not always consistently tidy, there is scarcely ever serious doubt as to the scribe's intentions. The rhythm signs found towards the end of the manuscript, and just occasionally elsewhere, are probably the work of a different hand. They are relatively imprecisely copied in a lighter ink, and are so disposed as to suggest that the scribe was, at best, only vaguely familiar with the music before him.

Whereas the twenty folios (36-55v) allotted to accompaniments were entirely filled, the lute solos cease at fol.26r, leaving fols.26v to 35v of the first section blank. The manuscript clearly remained in musical hands throughout the sixteenth century, as the vacant pages were used in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century to copy a *Canzona di Giovanni Gabrieli*. Set in keyboard score this called for the addition of a seventh line to the second and fourth staves, creating two two-stave systems per page. Later still, folios 34 and 35 must have been lost, since the *canzona* is now incomplete at the end of fol.33. The first surviving folio, numbered 12, begins with the tail-end of an unknown piece. Since there is no evidence that the whole manuscript was not ruled for tablature, we might reasonably assume that the copying of the lute solos originally started at folio 1, or very

shortly thereafter, and that we now have scarcely more than half the original number of pieces in the first section. It is tempting to suppose that the start of the second group, the accompaniments, might originally have fallen at the central point, the scribe having divided his book into two equal parts. If this were the case, the manuscript would have started out with seventy leaves.

The manuscript exhibits some errors which could occur only when copying from score or tablature. We find occasionally the omission of short passages ending with the same chord as that just copied. In the first complete piece in the manuscript, for example, a solo setting of the frottola *Non mi negar signora* by Serafino dall'Aquila, the middle part of a phrase is missing (see the first of the complete musical examples below), because the copyist's eye jumped from one chord to an identical one a few beats later. Such evidence indicates that the contents of the manuscript were copied from an earlier redaction in tablature, rather than intabulated directly from partbooks. Some of the phrases of the *Pavana regia* (fol. 13r) begin with repeated bars, one of which is missing, giving a three-bar phrase in the midst of a piece otherwise composed of regular four-bar phrases. The omission or reduplication of repeated material is one of the easiest mistakes to make in copying from tablature or keyboard score, but one which would never occur in a first intabulation from parts.

Two further types of error confirm that the pieces were copied from Italian tablature. The first, and more frequent, is the inversion of the two figures representing a two-note chord. The other, less common but no less conclusive, is the misreading of manuscript figures in the tablature. In the solo setting of Isaac's *La Mora*, for example, there are two 0's indicating g' on the top course, where one would expect to find the c♯" a tritone higher¹³. Clearly, the copyist misread the intended figure 6 as a 0, perhaps because it was written with an unusually short downstroke.

NOTATION

Several features of the notation used in the manuscript are worthy of comment, being unfamiliar from later sources. The pitches to be played are indicated in the normal Italian tablature, having numbers on a six-line staff whose lowest line represents the highest-pitched course of the lute. This tablature, however, lacks not only the familiar superscript rhythm signs, but also the orthochronic barring characteristic of most later lute sources. A very few barlines are found, but they are irregularly disposed, some being placed at phrase endings, and others after chords falling on strong beats. Only very rarely does a barline lie in the position we would normally expect, before a strong beat.

Except where the notes of a chord lie on adjacent strings, their figures are normally, though not invariably, linked by a vertical line. Occasionally, when this occupies only a single space, it resembles a figure 1, for which it might be mistaken. With two-note chords on adjacent strings, the alignment of the figures is generally obvious, though there too the link-lines are found from time to time, vestigial in length and, to the modern eye at least, serving no useful purpose¹⁴.

The use of dots below the notes to indicate fingering clearly follows the con-

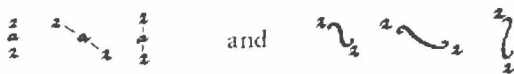
vention first set down in the *Rules for those who cannot sing* included in Petrucci's lute publications¹⁵: the dotted notes are to be plucked upwards, and fall on weaker beats than those without dots, which receive the stronger downstroke of the thumb. The simple chordal *frottola* accompaniments make relatively infrequent use of dots, whilst the more florid *recerchari*, *pavane* and other ornamented solos are liberally if not altogether consistently marked.

Isolated notes to be held in the bass whilst others are played against them frequently have no special marking, the horizontal spacing being sufficient to establish their order. However, many of the pieces use one of two alternative symbols to indicate this unequivocally. The first, found only in four of the solos, amongst those on the first seven surviving folios, consists of the familiar link-line, either vertically or diagonally disposed, with a small letter *a* placed in a break in the line. When the line is diagonal, it is evident that the lower-pitched of the two linked notes is to be plucked first. Concordances confirm that when the link-line is vertical the same sequence of plucking is to be observed, this notation having the advantage of permitting greater lateral compression of the notes on the page. When the two linked notes are separated only by one silent course, the line is dispensed with, and the *a* occupies the intervening space.

Two of the four pieces employing the *a*-link are otherwise unknown *recerchari*¹⁶, leaving only *Giù fui lieto borgionto*¹⁷ and Isaac's *La Mora*¹⁸ for comparison with known models. In both cases the original version confirms that the lower note of the linked pair or group of notes sounds first (invariably on a strong beat) and is held whilst the upper note or notes (be they resolution of suspension, turn or syncopation) are played. Further weight is added to this interpretation by the fact that the first (lower-pitched) note of the linked pair is invariably undotted, whilst the following (higher) note commonly has a dot.

The second type of symbol indicating notes to be held in syncopation is a sigmoid curl linking the bass note to the one following. At the start of an extended passage of syncopated writing in two parts, three notes (bass, treble and bass) may be linked by a longer line with three curls.

It is surely significant that none of the four pieces using the *a*-link also uses the *s*-link found later in the manuscript. Perhaps the most plausible explanation of this is that the two groups of pieces might derive from different parent manuscripts, following subtly different notational conventions. In any case, there is every reason to suppose that



are to all intents and purposes synonymous. Pieces on folios 23v, 25v, 26r and 53r all exhibit a simpler form of the curved link-line (a single arc, without hooked ends), perhaps an indication of copying from a further source.

Though the manuscript has no generally applied system of rhythmic notation, indications of rhythm are not altogether absent. Aside from the fingering dots which frequently provide valuable clues as to the micro-rhythm, extended runs are at times broken into groups of four or eight notes by short strokes of division

placed on the staff¹⁹. Occasionally, in some of the solos near the beginning of the collection, one finds a small T-like sign above what appears, to judge from the intabulation of Heinrich Isaac's *La Mora* (fol.14v), to be a relatively long note. This resembles closely the semibreve sign used in the Pesaro manuscript, but it is applied here so infrequently and inconsistently as to be of little help to the modern interpreter²⁰.

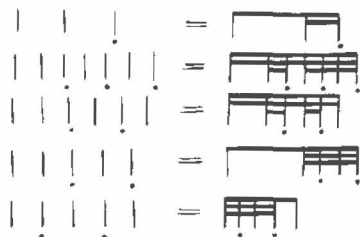
Certain groups of short notes found amongst predominantly longer values are distinguished by a wavy line placed above the staff. This resembles several of the cursive semiminim signs found in the Pesaro manuscript linked together to form a chain, and could have evolved as a time-saving device when copying in haste²¹. On fol.19 we encounter what appears to be a unique example of the grid-iron type of notation for minims, familiar from other manuscripts and from German prints. That this is placed above a group of chords in the midst of doubtless swift runs is typical of the treatment of rhythm signs in the first part of the manuscript: they are used only in exceptional circumstances, to point an unusual rhythm or to remind the player of a particular danger.

Though the main group of frottole accompaniments (fols.36-52) is entirely without overt indications of rhythm, the assorted solos and accompaniments to northern European and Italian pieces which end the collection (fols.52-55v) do exhibit various signs above the tablature which are thought to have been added by a later user of the manuscript²². The solo setting of *Fortuna desperata* (fol.52) has several separate flags of the type used by Petrucci, distinguishing minims, semiminims and, in the concluding flourish, fusae in the florid bass. Mostly accurate, they represent the most complete example of rhythmic notation in the manuscript.

The following solo *Calata* (fol.53) is without rhythm signs, but the last six pieces, all accompaniments, make more or less continuous use of single strokes (corresponding to the normal semibreve sign). These seem to have been intended to mark regular units of time, irrespective of the number of notes within each group. Fortunately, the polyphonic models of all six pieces are known, and it can be shown that whilst most of the strokes are well placed, others do not fall on the principal beats and are therefore misleading.

RHYTHMIC RECONSTRUCTION

The first step in reconstructing the intended rhythms has been to compare, note by note, the intabulations in the manuscript with the polyphonic models upon which they are based. This is of course possible only for those pieces whose models are known. Where the intabulation adheres fairly strictly to the original, as in several of the accompaniments, this is all that is required, but more often the intabulator has ornamented or otherwise altered the basic fabric of the music. Especially in matters of ornamental detail, the fingering dots may constitute the only guide. It is possible to interpret with some confidence certain note-groupings having a known duration, since the dots almost invariably fall on the weaker beats. The following groupings, for example, if known to occupy a semibreve, might be rendered thus:



It must be admitted, however, that the fingering dots are far from being an infallible guide. In some contexts they are open to more than one interpretation, and there are instances of inconsistency, both internal, within a piece, and external, where the rhythms suggested by the dots conflict with those of the model. It is possible to identify a repertory of stylistic traits related to the work of a particular intabulator or to the period as a whole; in the many places where there are no dots, one has to rely upon analogous passages elsewhere. Ultimately though, there must remain many areas of uncertainty in such interpretations, however meticulous the analysis of the text and however wide one's knowledge of contemporary instrumental idiom.

The following representative selection from the pieces in the manuscript is offered in the hope that they will be played and sung. Informed comment regarding the reconstructions will be particularly welcome.

Part II, on the dating and music of the Thibault manuscript, will follow in the next issue.

FOOTNOTES

1. This article is based on a talk given at the meeting of the Lute Society held in London on 30th January 1982. On that occasion the following pieces from the Thibault Manuscript were performed by Christopher Wilson and Tom Finucane (lutes) with Poppy Holden (soprano):
Pavana (fol.25); performed as a lute duet,
Calata (fol.53); lute solo,
Je ne fais plus (fol.54); accompanied song,
Je ne fais plus (fol.16v); lute solo,
Amours, amours; accompanied song with plain tenor and contratenor,
Amours, amours (fol.53v); accompanied song with ornamented tenor and contratenor,
Recerchar di Benedictus (fol.20v) and *Benedictus* (fol.21); lute solo,
Pietà cara signora (fol.46v); accompanied song,
Vale di a misa, vale in pace (fol.45v); accompanied song, preceded and followed by the two *Botte* (fol.51v)
2. F. Spinacino, *Intabulatura de Lauto, Libro Primo and Libro Secondo* (Venice, 1507); J.A. Dalza, *Intabulatura de Lauto, Libro Quarto* (Venice, 1508); and F. Bossinensis, *Tenori e contrabassi intabulati ... Libro Primo* (Venice, 1509) and *Libro Secondo* (Venice, 1511).
3. Chicago, Newberry Library, Acq.No. 107501. Modern edition: O. Gombosi, ed., *Composizione di Meser Vincenzo Capirola* (Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1955).
4. The manuscript is described in W.H. Rubsamen, 'The earliest French Lute Tablature', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXI (1968), pp. 286-99. A complementary study, offering a penetrating analysis of the structure and compilation of the manuscript, is D. Fallows, '15th-

- century Tablatures for Plucked Instruments: A Summary, A Revision and a Suggestion", *The Lute Society Journal*, XIX (1977), pp. 7-33.
5. Described in G. Thibault: 'Un manuscrit Italien pour luth des premières années du XVIe siècle', *Le Luth et sa musique*, ed. J. Jaquot (Paris, 1958; revised 1976).
 6. *Tablature de luth Italienne ... Fac-similé du ms. de la Bibliothèque nationale, Paris. Rés.Vmd.ms. 27 ...* (Geneva, 1981). Unfortunately this facsimile suffers from the disadvantages of high-contrast monochrome photography; in the reduction of all intermediate tones either to black or white, many faint ink marks, including important indications of right-hand fingering, are lost altogether, whilst the darker moisture stains assume the significance of musical notation. Elsewhere, entire chords are obliterated by the penetration of ink from ornamented final barlines on the reverse of leaves.
 7. It is a pleasure to record here my thanks to Michael Murrow and David Fallows, who generously lent me photographs of the two manuscripts at a time when these were not otherwise available.
 8. See Rubsamen, *op.cit.*, p.296.
 9. Gombosi, *op.cit.*, p.LXXXVIII; p.XC.
 10. *Ibid.*
 11. Thibault, *op.cit.*, pp.44-45.
 12. fol.36; *Tenori da sonar & cantar sopra il lauto*.
 13. fols.14v-15.
 14. See, eg., fol.36, 4th line, and fol.40, 4th line.
 15. The *Regola per quelli che non hanno cantare* first appeared in Francesco Spinacino's *Intabulatura de Lauto. Libro Primo* (Venice, 1507). An English translation prefaces H.L. Schmidt III, 'The First Printed Lute Books: Francesco Spinacino's *Intabulatura de Lauto, Libro primo and Libro secundo* (Venice: Petrucci, 1507)', Volume II: Transcriptions (Dissertation; University of North Carolina, 1968).
 16. fol.12 and fol.17v
 17. fol.14
 18. fol.14v.
 19. Eg. fol.21, 2nd line; fol.23v, 3rd line, and fol.24, 3rd & 4th lines.
 20. For the most extended passage employing this sign, see fol.12v, 1st & 2nd lines.
 21. Examples may be seen at the foot of fol.13.
 22. Thibault, *op.cit.*, pp.45-46.

EDITORIAL POLICY

1. The approach to rhythmic reconstruction adopted has been outlined above.
2. The original note values of vocal pieces are preserved. Rhythmic values in the tablature stand in the same relationship to the vocal notation as obtained in the early 16th century; where semi-breve = |
3. The irregular barring of the original is replaced by a regular disposition of bars. Triple-time barring is used wherever it more faithfully reflects the underlying metre of frottole originally designated C.
4. Only original fingering dots are reproduced. Those in the manuscript which appear to be erroneous are omitted, and their existence noted in the critical commentary.
5. The occasional rhythm signs and strokes of division found in the manuscript are discarded in favour of the comprehensive rhythmic notation.

6. Notes in square brackets are editorial additions, made whenever possible with reference to concordances. Some will be found essential to musical coherence, whilst others may be omitted at will.
7. Other alterations to the musical text are noted below. The original forms of notes altered are identified by two or three numbers, as follows: (1) bar number, (2) number of rhythm sign within bar and (3), if two or more notes are plucked simultaneously, number of note within the chord (in descending order).
8. In the songs, the intended relationship of vocal and instrumental pitch has been indicated by specifying the size of lute required to suit the vocal line as written. Lutes of other pitches may of course be used, the vocal part being transposed accordingly.

NOTES ON THE PIECES

1. *Non mi negar signora*

This is a setting for solo lute of a *barzeletta* by Serafino dall'Aquila. The two parts are similar to the cantus and bassus of the four-part version in British Library, Egerton 3051, a north Italian manuscript of c.1495.

1, 2, 2 : 2nd course

bars 7 & 8 : reconstructed after Egerton 3051, fols.51v-52r.

2. *Calata*

This reading differs from that given in G. Thibault, *op.cit.*, p.65 principally in giving regular rhythms to the concluding drone section.

4, 1, 1 : 3

9, 2nd half of bar : *finis* (omitted)

3. *Fortuna desperata*

This piece uses only the cantus of the widely known chanson (see, eg. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés.Vm⁷ 676 for a contemporary Italian source) attributed in some manuscripts to Antoine Busnois, though probably wrongly. The free bass counterpoint is unique to this setting which, though copied amongst the song accompaniments, must be for solo lute; none of the other parts of the chanson is compatible with it.

8, 1, 1 : 3rd course.

4. *Recerchar di Benedictus*

The only guides to the rhythm of this piece are the fingering dots and, in the concluding roulade (bars 35 to 40), strokes of division which group the notes into fours and eights. This is the only piece in the collection whose ending is not marked *finis*; it is presumably intended to lead directly into the following *Benedictus*.

23, 4 : dotted

34, 3 : dotted

37, 2 : dotted

5. *Benedictus*

This is an ornamented intabulation of the *Benedictus* section of Heinrich Isaac's four-part *Missa Quant j'ay au cuer*. For the entire Mass, see F. Fano, ed., *Heinrich Isaac: Messe*, Archivum Musicae Metropolitanum Mediolanense 10 (Milan, 1962), p.38. The three-part *Benedictus* was published in isolation in Petrucci's *Harmonice Musices Odhecaton A* (Venice, 1501) and widely copied elsewhere. Compared, for example, with the *Fortuna desperata* setting, the intabulation adheres relatively strictly to the original, and there is little doubt as to the intended rhythm, save in a few ornamental details.

29, 1, 2 : 3

34, 1, 1 & 2 : 1st & 2nd courses

34, 4, 1 & 2 : inverted

6. *Vale diva [mia], vale [in] pace*

This is a *barzeletta* by Bartolomeo Tromboncino. The source of the vocal part and text presented here is O. Petrucci *Frottole ... Libro Primo* (Venice, 1504), fols.20v-21r; modern editions are to be

found in G. Cesari, R. Monterosso and B. Disertori, eds., *Le Frottole nell'edizione principe di Ottaviano Petrucci* (Cremona, 1954) and R. Schwartz, ed., *Ottaviano Petrucci: Frottole I und IV* (Leipzig, 1935). The two accompaniments presented here differ both in ornamentation and in the application of accidentals. For a simpler intabulation, adhering more strictly to the tenor and bass parts printed by Petrucci, see O. Petrucci pub., F. Bossinensis, *Tenori e contrabassi intabulati ... Libro Secondo* (Venice, 1511), fol.52v.; modern edition in B. Disertori, ed., *Le Frottole per canto e liuto intabulate da Franciscus Bossinensis*. (Milan, 1964). Both the versions published by Petrucci have a coda in which the final note of the cantus is held for a further eight breves.

E – lute version

3, 1 & 2, 1: 3rd course

7, 3, 2 : 3 on 6th course

7, 4, 1 : 1 on 3rd course

10, after 8 : 2 on 2nd course (omitted)

13 : 5 chords, apparently for an alternative ending (omitted)

D – lute version

5, 4, 2 : 4th course

13, 2, 1 : 3rd course

7. Botte 1 & 2

These pieces lack any indication of rhythm.

8. Amours, amours

This chanson by Hayne van Ghizeghem survives in no less than thirteen other sources, ranging in date from c.1470 to c.1504, and is in all probability the oldest piece in the Thibault manuscript. The present reconstruction is made after B. Hudson, ed., *Hayne van Ghizeghem; Opera Omnia, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae* 74 (N.P., 1977), p.5. In comparison with that given in G. Thibault, *op.cit.*, p.71, the present reading adheres more closely to the original part-writing. The *Intabulatura de Lauto, Libro Secondo* of F. Spinacino includes a setting for solo lute (fol.22v).

8, 4, 1 & 2 : inverted

13, 6 : 3

26, 1 : 1 on 6th course

27, 4 : dotted

41, 3, 1 : 2nd course

46, 2 : 6th course

64, 4, 1 : 1st course

1. Non mi negar signora (fol.12r)

Musical score for 'Non mi negar signora' (fol.12r). The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. It consists of several systems of music, each with a treble line and a bass line. The first system starts with a C-clef and a common time signature. The second system is marked with a '5' above the first measure. The third system is marked with a '10' above the first measure. The fourth system is marked with a '15' above the first measure. The fifth system is marked with a '20' above the first measure. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines. A note in the fifth system is marked with an asterisk and the text '*end of original barzeletta'.

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2. Calata (fol.53r)

Musical score for 'Calata' (fol.53r). The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a 6/4 time signature. It consists of several systems of music, each with a treble line and a bass line. The first system starts with a '6/4' time signature. The second system is marked with a '10' above the first measure. The third system is marked with a '15' above the first measure. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

3. Fortuna desperata (fol. 52r.)

5

Handwritten musical notation for measures 1-5. The notation is on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. It features a series of rhythmic patterns represented by numbers (1, 2, 3, 0) and flags, indicating fingerings and rests. Above the staff, there are rhythmic diagrams consisting of vertical lines and flags, corresponding to the notes below.

10

Handwritten musical notation for measures 6-10. Similar to the first system, it shows rhythmic patterns and fingerings on a single staff. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

15

Handwritten musical notation for measures 11-15. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

20

Handwritten musical notation for measures 16-20. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

25

30

Handwritten musical notation for measures 21-30. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

35

Handwritten musical notation for measures 31-35. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

40

Handwritten musical notation for measures 36-40. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

45

50

Handwritten musical notation for measures 41-50. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

55

Handwritten musical notation for measures 51-55. The notation continues with rhythmic patterns and fingerings. Above the staff, rhythmic diagrams are present.

4. Recerchar di Benedictus (fol.20v)

Handwritten musical score for "Recerchar di Benedictus" on folio 20v. The score consists of ten systems of two staves each. The upper staff contains rhythmic notation with various note values and rests, and the lower staff contains a sequence of numbers representing a lute tablature. The piece is marked with a 'C' time signature and includes measure numbers 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40. The notation is characteristic of early printed music manuscripts.

5. Benedictus (fol. 21r.) Heinrich Isaac

Handwritten musical score for Benedictus by Heinrich Isaac, fol. 21r. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. It consists of 55 measures, divided into systems of five measures each. The notation includes rhythmic values (e.g., 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55) and various musical symbols such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings. The score is written in a clear, legible hand.

6. Vale diva mia, vale in pace

B. Tromboncino

fol. 42
E lute

A. Va-le di-va mi-a va-le in pa-ce Che pro-pi-tiel ciel te si-a

fol. 45
D lute

B. Tu te par-tehor più che pri-a La me-mo-ria nel cor ia-ce

10

C. Va-le di-va mi-a va-le in pa-ce Che pro-pi-tiel ciel te si-a.

15

2. A₁ Lieta sia tua dipartita
Lieti sian tuti i toi passi
A₂ Solitaria fia mia vita
Sol fra boschi alpestri e sassi
B Tu te parti e qui me lassi
Fatto sia quel che a te piace
C Vale diva ...
3. A₁ El celeste e dolce riso
Che me prese el tuo bel sguardo
A₂ Fatto m'ha da me diviso
Tal cognhor aghiaccio et ardo
B Nel mio cor firmato ha il dardo
Amor pravo et pertinace
C Vale diva ...
4. A₁ Poi chel tuo corso fatale
Te conduce in altra parte
A₂ Non scio dir altro che vale
Benche vale el cor mi sparte
B Prego voglie ricordate
Del mio amor tanto tenace
C Vale diva ...
5. A₁ Se in tuo pecto casto e degno
Amor puo con sua gran forza
A₂ Prego lassi qualche segno
Chel mio focho alquanto asmorza
B Vanne poi chel ciel ti sforza
Benche assai mi pesa e spiace
C Vale diva ...

7.

Botte 1
fol. 51 v.



Botte 2
fol. 51 v.



8. Amours, amours

Hayne van Ghizeghem

1. 4. 7. A- mours, a- mours, trop me fiers de tes
 3. Car en tout temps de mon ar- dent feu
 5. Dy may pour- quoy telz tour- mens me dé-

D lute

101

me dars. Ne sçay se c'est
 ars, Par quoy ne puis
 -pars, Ou que l'a- me

d'ar- ba- les- tes ou
 du- rer en mil-
 du corps ne me dé-

de arcz, Mais de doul- leur me sens au
 - les pars, Tant ay de gref dont ne suis
 -pars, Sans qu'aye le cuer d'an- gois- ses

35

vif d'a-ay ac-tainct, 2.8. Et croy, se
-me plant. a- trainct, 6. Qu'à pai- ne

45

brief n'est mon grief mal es-
sçay tant suis d'en-ny es-

50

-tainct; Aul-tre-men voys par telz
-trainct, S'il est en-tier ou s'en

55b

60

cru-elz soul-dars.
as fait deux pars.

65

THE THIBAUT LUTE MANUSCRIPT: AN INTRODUCTION

LEWIS JONES

PART II

THE DATE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The evidence both of the musical contents of the manuscript and of the paper on which they are copied points to a date in the first decade of the sixteenth century. The watermark, a crossbow in an oval surround²³, though nowhere surviving in its complete form, has been identified as resembling closely the marks found by Briquet in a Venetian document of 1501 (no.743) and a Roman one of 1505 (no.748)²⁴. In seeking to establish a terminus post quem for the making of the volume we cannot, of course, dismiss the possibility that papers with similar marks may have been in use a few years earlier than these datable examples; indeed a late fifteenth century date for the paper is not out of the question. Conversely, it is known that whilst in printing at that time paper seems normally to have been used within three years of manufacture, small stocks for manuscripts might have been held for much longer²⁵. A book binder preparing a small volume of this sort, as opposed to a long run of printed books, may well have used the tail end of a batch of relatively old paper. Watermark evidence cannot provide a terminus ante quem, so the compass of time is further widened by the possibility that the book, once bound, might have lain unused for some years.

Much the most valuable guide to the date of the manuscript is the repertory it contains, though here too there are problems. Only very rarely is it possible to put a precise date to a secular composition of this period, and none of those in the Thibault manuscript is yet so distinguished. The earliest pieces in the collection are, without doubt, the two French rondeaux, *Amours, amours* by Hayne van Ghizeghem, and *Je ne fais plus*, variously attributed to Antoine Busnois and Giles Mureau. Both probably originated in the early or mid 1470s and became very popular during the final quarter of the fifteenth century. Except for a few of the other northern European pieces, which were probably composed in the 1480s, the great majority of the remaining works are of the 1490s or the first few years of the sixteenth century.

The very earliest frottola-like compositions, predominantly three-part works of the 1480s, are not represented in the Thibault manuscript. Most of the pieces come from the great flowering of activity which occurred in the 1490s, the heyday of the young Bartolomeo Tromboncino and Marco Cara. Of the thirty-one frottole in the manuscript whose composers are known (some of which appear twice), thirteen are by Tromboncino (including one *lauda*), seven are by Cara, four by Filippo de Lurano, three by Francesco Varoter (Francesco d'Ana), and one each by Antonio Capriolo, Michele Pesenti, D. Pelegrinus Casena and Bisan Zanin. These are the men whose works fill the printed frottola books of Ottaviano Petrucci, published between 1504 and 1514. Forty-seven of the frottole published

by Petrucci are found in our manuscript, five of them appearing twice, either as accompaniments at two different pitches or intabulated both as solo and accompaniment.

It is with Petrucci's earlier books that the majority of the concordances are found:-

Book	Date	Number of concordances in Thibault MS	Variant incipits and duplicate intabulations in Thibault MS
I	1504	16	Tromboncino's <i>Vale, diva, vale in pace</i> in alternative accompaniments (nos.50 and 66) ²⁶ Cara's <i>Oimè el core</i> as <i>Oimè lo capo</i> (no.68)
II	1505	4	Varoter's <i>Ochij dolce hove prendesti</i> as solo (no.18) and accompaniment (no.78)
III	1505	4	<i>Andar el ciel</i> as <i>Grida el ciello</i> (no.56)
IV	1505	5	<i>La dolce diva mia</i> in alternative accompaniments (nos.77 and 81)
V	1505	6	Tromboncino's <i>Non pigliar tanto ardimento</i> as solo (no.8) and accompaniment (no.41)
VI	1506	7	<i>Già fui lieto hor giunto</i> as solo (no.4) and accompaniment (no.48)
VII	1507	4	
VIII	1507	0	
X	lost		
XI	1514	0	

It is noteworthy that none of the frottole in Petrucci's late books VIII and XI or in the collections published by Andrea Antico from 1510 onwards is included in the Thibault manuscript. Though the works of Tromboncino and Cara continued to appear in large numbers, these later publications reflect also the work of a younger generation of composers. The absence from the manuscript of the work of such masters as Carpentras, Eustachius, Antonius Patavus and Ioannes Lulinus Venetus suggests that it originated before c.1510.

The text of *Che sera de la mia vita* (no.46) is by the Neoplatonist Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494) and that of *Non me negar signora* (nos.1 and 89)²⁷ is by Serafino dall'Aquila (1466-1500). Serafino was one of the most celebrated *improvvisatori* of the late fifteenth century, but it is not known whether the music associated with his verses in British Library MS Egerton 3051 is his own. This source is believed to date from c.1495, and so must be counted amongst the earliest of the surviving mature four-part frottola manuscripts²⁸. Though it includes early works by Tromboncino and Cara, it is particularly important for its representation of settings of Serafino and fellow members of the preceding generation of poet-musicians. These works, often exhibiting greater declamatory

freedom of phrase lengths and stricter, less contrapuntally animated homophony than their successors, are poorly represented in Petrucci's publications but find a place in the Thibault manuscript. Other significant concordances, establishing links with similar early frottole, are shared with Florence, Biblioteca del Istituto Musicale, MS Basevi 2441 and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Rés.Vm⁷ 676 (copied by one Ludovico Milliare in 1502)²⁹. Many of the simple homophonic accompaniments in the Thibault manuscript, whose true rhythms are unrecoverable for want of musical concordances, closely resemble these early anonymous frottole. Together, their presence strengthens the case for an early date for the collection.

Manuscript sources indicate that Petrucci's earlier frottole books, especially the first, were to a large extent retrospective in character; indeed it is clear that many of the songs had been widely known in manuscript for a decade or so before they appeared in print³⁰. The manuscript versions often differ in detail from Petrucci's, and it is significant that whilst Bossinensis in his intabulations adheres, for the most part with remarkable fidelity, to Petrucci's texts³¹, the Thibault manuscript frequently reflects other traditions of copying. For example, Tromboncino's *Vale, diva* in Petrucci's first book³² ends with a cadential tail eight breves in length, in which the tenor and altus move in lively imitation within a sustained octave in the outer parts. This is retained by Bossinensis³³, but the two Thibault accompaniments, though substantially similar elsewhere, end with a simple cadence only. Others of Petrucci's readings display occasional elaborations, particularly of the inner part-writing, as compared with the simpler and presumably earlier manuscript versions.

Though it is possible that some of the intabulations of frottole in the Thibault manuscript may derive directly from Petrucci's publications, evidently most, including of course the thirty-two that never appeared in print, do not. That it tends to be the simpler pre-Petruccian forms of the songs which are intabulated might suggest a date shortly before they were printed, perhaps in the first few years of the sixteenth century, though the possibility of late fifteenth century origins for at least some of the intabulations cannot be dismissed.

Turning to the intabulations of northern European compositions we find these conclusions reinforced. All five models originated in the final three decades of the fifteenth century, and by the end of the century were, to judge from the surviving sources, amongst the most widely known pieces of their time. All were published by Petrucci early in the sixteenth century: Isaac's *La mora* and *Benedictus*, Hayne's *Amours, amours* and the Busnois/Mureau *Je ne fais plus* all appeared in the first and most obviously backward-looking of his prints, the *Odhecaton*³⁴; *Fortuna desperata*³⁵ was widely known in manuscript and was published by Petrucci in a lute duet intabulation by Spinacino³⁶. These are all three-voiced compositions, already somewhat outmoded in style by the turn of the century. In comparison, the selection of northern pieces intabulated in Spinacino's books of 1507 is more modern. In addition to the products of the 1470s and 80s, by Hayne, Ockeghem, Busnois and their contemporaries, there are more recent works by Brumel, Ghiselin and Obrecht, and pieces in the new

four-voiced style, such as Josquin's *Comment peult avoir joye*, which is unlikely to have been written more than a few years before 1500. Looking forward a decade or so to the Capirola book (c.1517), the balance is weighted more heavily in favour of four-part compositions. Of the twenty intabulations, the models of ten are in three parts and ten are in four. Compositions of the final years of the fifteenth century and first decade of the sixteenth predominate, the composers represented including Prioris, Fevin, Brumel, Josquin, Ghiselin and Craen. Earlier works by Hayne and Urrede are still found, but the latter's *Nunca fue pena mayor* (no.32) is already described by Vitale as *canto vecchio che du si non e bello* (old song which of itself is not beautiful)³⁷. Apparently it was only the quality of Capirola's lute figuration which justified the retention of such a piece. In contrast, the more modern pieces are described variously as *bello*, *bellissima* and *piu belisimo*.

In attempting to date a musical source by its contents we must of course beware of attaching too much weight to the mere absence of a particular repertory. However, the Thibault manuscript is so eclectic that we might expect to find some of the more modern compositions characteristic of the Spinacino and Capirola collections had it been added to after c.1510. The Pesaro lute manuscript³⁸ includes intabulations of northern European chansons of the 1470s and 80s, and of Italian pieces from before c.1495. Walter Rubsamen has used the total lack of transcriptions of four-voiced frottole of the Tromboncino generation in support of his dating of this source to shortly before 1500³⁹. Comparison of the contents of the Thibault manuscript with the Pesaro and Capirola collections, and with Petrucci's books suggests a date after Pesaro, well before Capirola, and close to the Petrucci prints; perhaps a few years earlier.

We have good reason to suppose that the copying of the manuscript may have been discontinuous; that pieces may have been entered over a considerable period of time. The tablature figures themselves vary in size and neatness from page to page, suggesting changing circumstances of copying and the use of different pens. In addition to the inconsistent notational practices mentioned above⁴⁰, the treatment of barlines, rhythm signs, fingering dots and ornament varies considerably, suggesting that pieces were added as they were required, from day to day, or as they became available for copying. We may postulate, for example, that the pieces between fols 40r and 52v may have been copied together under some pressure of time. Elsewhere in the manuscript, each piece is preceded and followed by a double barline ornamented with one of several simple diaper patterns. Here, however, the space between the lines is blank, presumably having been left to be decorated later, when time permitted.

The consensus of past scholarly opinion is that the Thibault manuscript dates from the early years of the sixteenth century. Mme. Thibault concluded that it is likely to have been compiled before 1510⁴¹, and the balance of probability seems to me to favour this. Her view is shared by Walter Rubsamen⁴² and Francois Lesure⁴³. Wolfgang Boetticher⁴⁴ suggests c.1515, but offers no additional evidence in support of so late a date. We have established that most if not all of the works concordant with Petrucci's publications were also known in manuscript, many of them originating several years before they appeared in

print. It should be stressed that few if any of the Thibault intabulations need have stemmed from Petrucci's chanson and frottola publications, and that none is indebted to his lute books. Thus the publication dates of these collections need only be taken as a general indication of date, to be considered where possible alongside other evidence, and should not be seen as establishing a firm terminus post quem for the intabulation of a particular piece.

The stylistic breadth and notational diversity of the collection suggest that the scribe culled pieces from several parent sources. In view of the antiquity of many of the models chosen, it is quite possible that some of the intabulations may have been made in the later years of the fifteenth century. Indeed, we must entertain the possibility that the manuscript itself may have late fifteenth century origins, though the difficulties of dating many of the frottole prevent us from stating unequivocally that copying could or could not have been completed before a particular year.

FOOTNOTES

23. Thibault, *op.cit.*, p.59.
24. *Ibid.*, p.44, and C.M. Briquet, *Les filigranes, dictionnaire historique des marques du papier* (Geneva, 1907); new edition, introduced by A. Stevenson (Amsterdam, 1968).
25. See A. Stevenson, 'Paper as Bibliographical Evidence', *The Library*, Fifth series, Vol.XVII, No.3 (September 1962), pp.197-212.
26. I here retain the numeration adopted by G. Thibault in her table of contents of the manuscript; *op. cit.*, pp.52-56, where the incomplete piece on fol.12r is unnumbered, the *Pavana regia, Saltarello and Piva* (fols.13r-14r) are treated as a single item, and the *Recherchar di Benedictus* (fol. 20v) and *Benedictus* (fol.21r) are numbered separately.
27. See above, Vol.XXII, Part 2, p.79.
28. J. Rifkin, 'A "New" Renaissance Manuscript', *Abstracts of Papers Read at the Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society* (Chapel Hill, 1971), p.2.
29. Facsimile published as *Manuscrit Italien de Frottole (1502), Facsimilé du Ms de la Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, Rés.Vm^o 676* (Geneva, 1979). For an analysis of the contents of the manuscript see N. Bridgman 'Un ms. italien du début du XVI^e siècle à la Bibliothèque nationale', *Annales musicologiques*, I, 1953, pp.117-267.
30. The most comprehensive published tables of concordances with the printed frottola collections are in K. Jeppesen, *La Frottola*, I, (Copenhagen, 1968). Regrettably, the Thibault lute intabulations are omitted.
31. Bossinensis, *op.cit.*
32. O. Petrucci (pub.), *Frottole libro primo* (Venice, 1504), f.20v-21r.
33. *Op.cit.*, *Libro Secundo*, fols.52v-53.
34. O. Petrucci (pub.), *Harmonie Musices Odhecaton A* (Venice, 1501).
35. Attributed to Antoine Busnois in C. Brooks, *Antoine Busnois as a Composer of Chansons* (Unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1951) Vol.1, p.37.
36. F. Spinacino, *op.cit.*, *Libro secondo*, fol.38v.
37. Table of contents pasted inside front cover; col.1.
38. See n.4, above.
39. Rubsamen, *op.cit.*, p.298.
40. Vol.XXII, Part 2, p.73.
41. Thibault, *op.cit.*, pp.47-48.
42. Rubsamen, *op.cit.*, pp.297-298
43. In his introduction to the published facsimiles; see above, n.6. The title page dates the manuscript c.1505.
44. W. Boetticher, *Handschriftlich überlieferte Lauten- und Gitarrentabulaturen des 15. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, RISM B VII (Munich, 1978), p.228-229.