A Translation of Chapter LXVI of Book I, Part I of Fra Lodovico Zacconi’s Prattica di Musica

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A TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER LXVI
OF BOOK I, PART I OF
FRA LODOVICO ZACCONI'S PRATTICA DI MUSICA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Music Department
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Diran Akmajian
July 1962
This thesis, by Diran Akmajian, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Music of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Chairman, Advisory Committee

Member, Advisory Committee

Chairman, Major Department

Date: July 9, 1962

Typed by Diran Akmajian
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Lodovico Zacconi's *Prattica di Musica*, 1592, is one of a large number of music manuals written during the sixteenth century. In addition to discussing such topics as mensural notation, theories of counterpoint, descriptions of contemporary musical instruments, and instructions on instrumental and vocal performance, these manuals would usually include a portion dealing with the technique of improvising embellishments to a given composed piece. Zacconi's work contains one of the more detailed discussions of this kind.

Part I of the *Prattica* is divided into four books. Book I, consisting of eighty chapters, is largely concerned with fundamentals of music and counterpoint; rules to be observed by singers in doing vocal improvisations; and duties, obligations, and qualifications of singers and maestri di cappella. Book II, comprising fifty-eight chapters, deals with time, prolation, proportions, and includes a complete setting of Palestrina's *L'homme Armé* mass.¹

Book III, embracing seventy-seven chapters, discusses the various kinds of proportions. Book IV, containing fifty-six chapters, describes the twelve modes, performance practice of instrumental music in the latter half of the sixteenth century, the tuning of musical instruments, and gives a table of contemporary instruments.

Lodovico Zacconi, who has been called "one of the best singers and teachers of all time,"² was born in Pesaro in 1555, lived the greater part of his life in Venice, and died in Fiorenzuola (near Pesaro) in 1627. Baptized Giulio Cesare, he assumed the monastic name of Lodovico when he became a monk of the order of Saint Augustine. Later he officiated as maestro di cappella at the basilica

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¹ The five-voiced mass entitled *L'homme Armé* that Zacconi quotes is the first of two such masses that Palestrina wrote. Zacconi's copy will be found in Book II, Part I, of the *Prattica*, f. 116v. See also G. P. Palestrina, *Le Opere Complete*, edited by Raffaele Casimiri (Rome: Fratelli Scalera, 1939--) VI, 97.

of San Marco in Venice. He was a pupil of Baccusi and Andrea Gabrieli. In 1585 he sang as tenor in the court chapel in Graz and in 1591 entered the service of the Duke of Bavaria in Munich as Kapellmeister. It was during this service that Part I of the Pratatica was published in Venice. In 1593 he was invited to Vienna by the Archduke Charles to be his Kapellmeister. Riemann states that Zacconi, in his autobiography dated 1626, lists himself as a singer, composer, painter, and poet. Zacconi finally returned to Venice in 1619 to complete Part II of the Pratatica, which remains as his most important work. Part I was published in 1592 and was reprinted in 1596.


4 There seems to be some confusion regarding the dates of Zacconi's service outside Italy as well as the date of publication of Part II of the Pratatica. Since the biography of Zacconi is not within the scope of this thesis, see Baker's Biographical Dictionary, 1834; Eitner's Quellenlexikon, X, 316; Grove's Dictionary of Music, IX, 391; and Riemann Musik Lexikon (Mainz: Schott, 1961), Personenteil II, 956.


6 Other works and compositions by Zacconi, besides the autobiography cited supra in fn. 5, are mostly in manuscript. Listed in Gaspari's Catalogo... di Bologna are the Resoluzioni et Partiture di cento e dieci Canoni Musicali (Vol. I, 305) and Regole di Contrappunto (G. B. Martini collection of miscellany) (Vol. I, 162). Gaspari also states (Vol. I, 266) that the Biblioteca Oliveriana has four books of Canoni Musicali (c. 1583) by Zacconi and others in MSS 559, f. 354. Riemann Musik Lexikon lists Regole di Canto Fermo and Recercari da sonar in organo but does not state where they may be found. The only published works are four books of Canoni Musicali, edited by Francesco Vatielli (Pesaro, 1905). It is not clear if these Canoni are the same as those listed above.
The translation found in this thesis is based on the reprint.\(^7\) Part II, also published in Venice, appeared in 1622.

The title page of the 1596 reprint of Part I reads as follows:

```
PRATTICA/ DI MUSICA/ UTILE ET NECESSARIA SI AL COMPOS!-/ tore
per Comporre i Canti suoi regolatamente, si anco al/ Cantore
per assicurarsi in tutte le cose cantabili./ DIVISA IN QUATTRO
LIBRI./ NE I QUALI SI TRATTA DELLE CAN-/ tilene ordinarie, de
Tempi de Prolationi, de Proportioni, de Tuo-/ni, et della con-
venienza de tutti gli Istrumenti Musicali./ S'INSEGNA A CANTAR
TUTTE LE COMPOSITIONI/ antiche, Si dichiara tutta la Messa del
Palestina[ sic] titolo Lomè Armè,/ con altre eose d'importanza
& dilettevole./ Ultimamente s'insegna il modo di fiorir una
parte con vaghi & moderni accenti./ COMPOSTA DAL R. P. F. LODO-
VICO ZACCONI/ da Pesaro, del Ordine di Santo Agostino,/ MUSICO
DEL SERENISS. DUCA DI BAVIERA, &c./ CON PRIVILEGIO./ (marca
tip.) IN VENETIA, MDXCVI./ APPRESO BARTOLOMEO CARAMPELIO.\(^8\)
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The dedication begins as follows:

```
AL SERENISSIMO/ ET GRATIOSISSIMO/ MIO SIG. ET PATRONE/ IL
SERENISSmo. GUILELMO,/ CONTE PALATINO/ DEL RENO./ DUCA dell'
alta & bassa Baviera, &c.\(^9\)
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\(^7\) A microcard copy of the 1596 reprint was used. Chapter LXVI, Book I, Part I (folios 58-76) is found on cards 5, 6, and 7.

\(^8\) "Practice of Music, useful and necessary for the composer to compose his songs according to rule as well as for the singer to re-assure himself in all things singable. Divided into four books in which are treated ordinary cantilene, tempi, prolations, proportions, tones, and the suitability of all the musical instruments; which will teach the singing of all the old compositions; which will present the entire mass of Palestrina entitled L'homme Armé along with other things of importance and delight; which ultimately will teach the way to embellish a part with beautiful and modern accents. Composed by R. P. F. Lodovico Zacconi of Pesaro of the order of Saint Augustine. Musician to his most serene Duke of Bavaria, etc. With privilege (marca tip.), in Venice, MDXCVI, by Bartolomeo Carampello."

\(^9\) "To the most serene and most gracious, my Lord and Patron, his most serene William, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Duke of Upper and Lower Bavaria, etc."
Although singing and singers are mentioned in some chapters of Book I, it is only in chapter sixty-six that Zacconi goes into detail as to how ornaments and improvisations were to be invented and inserted into already existing compositions. Since vocal improvisation in particular is the subject of this thesis, it is this chapter, and this chapter alone, that has been translated. The other chapters dealing with singing are full of familiar generalities and do not add to our fund of knowledge. Much of the information contained in these chapters has been summarized by Philip A. Duey.10

Some of the chapter headings are:

Chapter 61: Who and what the singer must be.
Chapter 62: Of the particular qualities of the singer.
Chapter 75: What the principal obligations of singers are.
Chapter 76: In what way a confident as well as a timid singer might fall into a notable error.

While Zacconi's book is often mentioned and quoted by various authors, no one, as far as can be ascertained, has translated the entire work into English. 11 There is a German translation of much of Book I, Part I, including chapter sixty-six, by Chrysander. 12 It would seem that there is a need to translate any manual on improvisation because of the renewed interest in the performance of Renaissance music. Until such knowledge of improvisation is made easily available to editors and performers, a faithful presentation of cinquecento music may not be fully realized.


Some explanations on translating procedures are in order. Every effort was made to retain the original flavor of the language used, but certain compromises had to be made for the sake of clarity. This was particularly true in the area of punctuation. Apparently, Italian writers of the cinquecento used punctuation indiscriminately and with no obvious system or regularity. Also, as is the case with most Italian writers of the sixteenth century, Zacconi writes what we would term "run-on" sentences. Therefore, in addition to reducing such sentences to "normal" lengths, modern punctuation has been used in order to make the text intelligible.

At all times the original spelling of Italian words is adhered to. There are but a few differences of spelling between the Italian of Zacconi's time and that of the present. Nevertheless the reader will observe such spellings as: chrome instead of the modern crome; pronuntiar instead of pronunziar, etc.

The reader will undoubtedly find many places where the text seems redundant and labored. This is a characteristic of Renaissance and Baroque writers that simply must be accepted by the reader. No attempt has been made to edit or to abridge such repetitious and often irrelevant phrases. Bukofzer certainly makes an understatement when he calls the music treatises of Zacconi's time "loquacious."13

Two of Zacconi's habits were observed that make an interesting and amusing sidelight. First, in several places where he employs a simile, he pauses to "lecture" the reader in a moralistic tone. Second, Zacconi constantly puts himself on the defensive as regards the reader. Throughout the chapter, he anticipates ridicule, affects a falsely modest tone, and spends much time justifying his statements—not by offering more facts or documentation, but by simply protesting his dedication, his zeal, his honesty towards the reader.

The reader will also notice numerous places where an Italian word has been supplied in parentheses. This is done in order to dispel any doubts the reader may have at that moment as to the author's intention. In some places where Zacconi seems vague and an

interpretation had to be made, the Italian word is supplied to keep
the reader apprised of the translator's judgment. Also, note values
are always identified in Italian so that the reader can verify the
interpretation of a given paragraph. Then again, some words are giv­
en for the sake of amusement while others are supplied where the
reader might possibly be incredulous. Finally, where the meaning
of a large section is cryptic to the translator, the entire portion
is quoted in the original Italian in order to allow the reader to
arrive at his own conclusions.

I wish to acknowledge the kind help I received from Miss
Babette Luz, Drs. Guido Capponi and Efrim Fruchtman, and Mr. James
R. Anthony, all of the University of Arizona; and from Dr. Caroline
Sites Fruchtman and Mrs. Annunzio Russo, both of Tucson. I want to
express my thanks to Sister M. Joachim, O. S. B., of the Convent of
the Infant of Prague in Los Angeles, California, for helping me iden­
tify the text of the motet found on pages 27-30.

In closing, I should also like to add my special thanks to
Dr. Clawson Y. Cannon Jr., of Brigham Young University for his gen­er­ous assistance, patience, and understanding in helping me to bring
this endeavor to its conclusion.
Regardless of the degree to which things were once embellished through artistic skill—in a style now considered outmoded—today, through the diligent study on the part of many, they are embellished [in a new way] to an even greater degree. Indeed, one who examines a thing already embellished may, through constant study and hard work, find new beauty to add to it.

Therefore, so as not to waste time in discussing unimportant things, I will not speak of actual embellishments that have already been practiced in art and nature. Instead, I will only state that music has always been beautiful and can still be made more beautiful through the diligence and study that singers bring to it. Music is neither renewed nor changed by notes that are always the same, but, by means of graces and accents, it is made to seem even more beautiful.

These graces and accents are effected by dividing up and breaking up the written notes so that, in a given tactus or half-tactus, a number of notes are inserted that need to be sung quickly. This gives great pleasure and delight and makes us think we are listening to well-trained songbirds that enrapture our hearts and leave us much satisfied by their singing. Singers who have the ability to produce readily a large number of notes with velocity and in tempo make their songs lovely; whereas those who do not have this ability give little satisfaction to the listener and are not esteemed by fellow singers.
This mode of singing with its ornamentations is commonly called gorgia.\footnote{Gorgia is a generic term for late sixteenth-century improvised coloraturas. Other names used by Zacconi and various writers of the period to indicate vocal embellishments were the verb gorgheggiare, passaggio, diminuere (diminution), rottura (division), fioritura (flowering), accenti (appogiaturas and/or syncopations); in Spanish the most common term was glosa and German writers often use the verb coloriren (to color). See Bukofzer, Baroque Era; Edward Dannreuther, Musical Ornamentation, Part I (London: Novello, 1893); Grove's, articles "Ornamentations," and "Ornaments"; Willi Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, eleventh printing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), articles "Gorgia," and "Ornamentation,"
}  It is nothing more than an aggregation or collection of many eighth and sixteenth notes (\textit{chrome e semichrome}) which are confined to a small division of time. And, due to the velocity with which the many notes are sung, one can learn to perform them better by hearing them than by studying \footnote{The word \textit{misura} must not be understood as "measure" in the modern sense. It is rather a succession of beats or tactus without the inevitable bar-line and the heavily accented down beat.} written \footnote{It is commonplace for many writers on the human voice to employ vague, colorful, general, and often misleading terms regarding the singing apparatus and the emission of the human voice. Zacconi is no exception. He simply uses the words petto (breast) and gola (throat). In the opinion of this writer, he is probably alluding to breath capacity and to the strength of the vocal cords.} examples. This is because in the written examples, one cannot always indicate that pulse and tempo (\textit{misura e tempo})\footnote{It is commonplace for many writers on the human voice to employ vague, colorful, general, and often misleading terms regarding the singing apparatus and the emission of the human voice. Zacconi is no exception. He simply uses the words petto (breast) and gola (throat). In the opinion of this writer, he is probably alluding to breath capacity and to the strength of the vocal cords.} that would insure a faultless execution. Moreover, while it is necessary to run gorgia rapidly, the end of a phrase should not be reached too soon or too late, for this would then be of little value.

Two things are needed by those who would follow this profession: breath capacity (\textit{petto}) and strong vocal cords (\textit{gola}).\footnote{It is commonplace for many writers on the human voice to employ vague, colorful, general, and often misleading terms regarding the singing apparatus and the emission of the human voice. Zacconi is no exception. He simply uses the words petto (breast) and gola (throat). In the opinion of this writer, he is probably alluding to breath capacity and to the strength of the vocal cords.} Breath capacity\footnote{It is commonplace for many writers on the human voice to employ vague, colorful, general, and often misleading terms regarding the singing apparatus and the emission of the human voice. Zacconi is no exception. He simply uses the words petto (breast) and gola (throat). In the opinion of this writer, he is probably alluding to breath capacity and to the strength of the vocal cords.} in order to be able to maintain a certain number of notes and various note values to the end of a phrase; strong vocal cords\footnote{It is commonplace for many writers on the human voice to employ vague, colorful, general, and often misleading terms regarding the singing apparatus and the emission of the human voice. Zacconi is no exception. He simply uses the words petto (breast) and gola (throat). In the opinion of this writer, he is probably alluding to breath capacity and to the strength of the vocal cords.} in order to be able to negotiate a phrase easily. Many singers, having neither the breath capacity nor the support of the hips (\textit{fiancho}), are obliged to stop after four or six notes and leave the phrase half-finished. Occupied as they are in taking a new breath, they are, perforce, unable to stay in tempo where necessary. Some singers, because of weak vocal cords
(gola), do not detach or separate the notes adequately; that is, they do not articulate them as expected for the proper style of gorgia. Others who are accustomed to singing them easily have been gifted by nature. Still others who sing them with difficulty have achieved this ability through great effort. But the former will always delight an audience more than the latter. For those who are endowed by nature and have been helped through skill are, above all others, the most fortunate in this profession. In any given art, the person who dedicates himself entirely can, with time, gain much. But in this profession one can labor in vain unless endowed by nature at least a little. This fact is clearly seen in the singer who has been liberally gifted by nature although understanding but little how to sing. Such a singer takes precedence over the leading singer in the best musical circles simply because this [being gifted by nature], above everything else, is the finest quality a singer can have.

However, although everyone is willing to listen to these graces in singing, the singer is warned to correct all his major faults and all the other abominable practices that have been mentioned above in order not to be laughed at by people. For the singer with bad habits is not disdained as much as the one who is skilled in gorgia because the latter is more noticed and observed—-as is also the singer who delights us with his lovely style. I suggest to him who desires to perform gorgia to do as well as possible or not at all because there is nothing that needs more control and perfect timing (misura) than this. Since every shortcoming can be observed and recognized, pleasure and delight can change to annoyance when a phrase is spoiled and ruined. The result not only is boring but also tedious and offensive. Therefore, in order to save face, no attempt ought to be made except to perform with grace and excellence lest the victim be scorned and laughed at.

Each time, then, that the singer wishes to see how successfully he can perform any gorgia he may have learned, he ought first

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17 Zacconi is probably referring to chapters 61 and 62, mentioned supra on iv, which deal with the qualifications and malpractices of singers.
to try it when all the voices are singing together. Thus, while practicing, he may be heard and listened to. Some who do as I suggest try to judge their own singing, but the person who judges himself is often, if not always, mistaken. To get a sincere and just opinion, it is wise to learn from faithful friends whether one's performance gives delight and sounds well. This is true because many who think they are doing gorgia well are, in fact, doing it so poorly that the effort can be dismissed as worthless. Indeed, I have seen some singers who, by shaking their voices and by moving their heads, think they are performing gorgia. In trying to do better they only do worse so that the listener would rather hear the phrase as it was [written originally] than hear it done so miserably. For this reason I say that allowing oneself to be judged by others and to willingly accept the opinion of others spares the singer many pitfalls and avoids for him many abuses and errors.

The things most desirable in performing gorgia are tempo and rhythm (misura) by which a group and aggregation of notes is ornamented and garnished (condisce). Whoever departs from this tempo and rhythm only ruins the beauty he might otherwise have achieved and, besides bringing no thanks unto himself, fails in his purpose. This, then, is the most difficult aspect of performing gorgia and the one that needs the most diligence and study: namely, not to reduce the note values so as to force too many notes together. Therefore, that singer who indulges in short gorgia with few departures from the original notation will always be more lauded than the one who makes many departures and finishes either too soon or too

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18 Such terms as tempo and misura are used in a way that is vague to us today. What Zacconi means here and passim is that the gorgia should be proportioned in time so as to fall within a precise pulse. See supra, fn. 15.

19 Zacconi here decries the habit of some singers who indulge in tempo rubato. Referring to this practice, Dannreuther, Musical Ornamentation, 36, quotes Tosi, "the recognized authority on Italian singing in Handel's time" as saying: "If I do not advise a student to imitate several of the moderns in their manner of singing airs, it is from their neglect of keeping time, which ought to be inviolable, and not sacrifice to their passages and divisions."
In fact, those who listen and hear a singer who does gorgia sparingly, but well, express their admiration for him, and, even as they do so, they expect more and better from him. How much better it is to have the listener go away satisfied with a little amount of gorgia that is well done than be disgusted and disappointed with too much that is badly done.

Whoever approaches this undertaking should take care to perform well and to measure out gorgia in tempo (misurarla a tempo) in order to satisfy everyone. And he should bear in mind the first rule: in the beginning of any piece, not to begin with gorgia when the other voices are silent. Nor immediately after said beginning, when the others are pausing, should ornaments be done. For it is said that a higher voice is pleasing only in contrast to a lower one, whereas a solo voice [doing gorgia], as everyone well knows, gives but little delight. It is far better to have many voices together producing a sweet and mild harmony. For this reason, it will be seen that a counterpoint in a lower part or a higher part—the one without the other—is not satisfying because it is the contrast of the one to the other that is delightful. Thus the pleasure to be derived from gorgia stems from those charming and short movements by the various voices, especially where one of them moves more rapidly than the others.

Therefore, if the beginnings are not identical (communi) and are not in sequence (sequenti), they must be sung simply and cleanly

20 Whether simple or complex, gorgia would follow the contour of the composed line so that the vertical consonances on the beginnings of the larger time units would be kept intact. This will be seen in the musical examples to follow. See Imogene Horsley, "Improvised Embellishments in the Performance of Renaissance Polyphonic Music," Journal of the American Musicological Society, IV (1951), 3-19.

21 This idea is apparently prevalent with writers of the sixteenth century. Horsley reports that Hermann Finck asks that embellishments not be done simultaneously but in turn so that the ornamentations can be heard distinctly. Likewise, Camillo Maffei is quoted as saying that, in an ensemble of four or five voices, the passaggi ought to be done each in turn so that the harmony can remain clear. Horsley herself goes on to add that a vocal performance in which one or two soloists embellished lines, while the chorus sang the other parts as written, would be effective, and in keeping with sixteenth century practice. See ibid.
so that the entrance of each part can be better heard. For that which is least expected is dearer, the more so when it comes by surprise. In order to understand better how unseemly it is to have a solo voice begin its part with gorgia while the other voices are pausing, I will say that anyone can sing gorgia alone. And while the listeners would not get as much satisfaction from it as from that which is accompanied by other parts, at least said solo singer would not be out of tune with anyone else. For the most difficult thing consists in giving pleasure without distortion and discord. And the player of any given thing is not so much lauded when playing alone as when he plays well with accompaniment.

Moreover, that singer who grossly encumbers gorgia in the presence of singers not familiar to him not only is worthy of censure for trying to make others believe he knows what he is doing, but also brings upon himself shame and dishonor. For should he encounter someone better than himself, while he might be in the midst of his exertions, the better singer could replace him with new skill and thus take away that [reputation] which he had gained hitherto. Those who sing knowingly and well in circles where they are called upon to sing should never reveal all they know at the first opportunity. Instead, with prudence and artfulness, they should proceed carefully while listening to what the others are doing because in every place and on every occasion one can learn. But after having listened and heard the others, the singer may begin, little by little, to come out with his own ornamentations and thus, arousing his listeners to new delights, he may acquire an immortal fame.

Similarly, the singer should pay attention to the endings of any given piece so as not to do that which is done by many who are not clever and are little experienced in this profession: [the latter] do such an abundance of ornaments, trying to display everything in the ending, that they leave the entire middle portion empty and dull. For even children can run along the length of a log without peril or trouble as long as the log is stretched out on the ground. They know that should they fall they cannot hurt themselves badly. But when the log is raised up high and the risks of the fall can be
seen, not only are children frightened and fear to walk on it, but likewise are men apprehensive of the dangers of the fall. Thus the person who does gorgia must not only show his mettle at the endings but must also show his boldness and audacity in the middle portions as well. To repeat: those who never seem to satiate their urge to gorgheggiare at the said endings are blameworthy. In so doing, their colleagues [with whom they are singing] must wait until they complete their endings. The decision as to whether this is desirable is left to anyone who would venture an opinion. It is certainly permissible to do a certain amount of decorative runs and ornamentations at the endings providing the same has been done in the middle portions as well. Otherwise they cannot be allowed, and those who do so deserve to be blamed since, not being able to do a thing well, they disturb those who are in favor of doing something correctly.

I must also not omit to mention the vice of those who are so enamored of gorgia that they want to do a little something with every note and, however good it may be, ruin the syllables and the words. Therefore, to avoid many errors, I would caution the singer, in addition to the first rule, to take care to devise passaggi with quarter note values (semiminimi).\textsuperscript{22} This must be done especially when there are accompanying syllables because the rapidity of the passaggi does not permit much diminution nor too much division (rottura) of notes unless it be in the following examples and other similar cases:

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\textsuperscript{22} In transcribing the musical examples throughout this paper, a reduction of 1:2 was used so that the semibrevis becomes a half-note and the semiminima becomes an eighth note. As for Zacconi's advice to use only quarter note values, writers of the sixteenth century were apparently reluctant to write down any symbol smaller than the semiminima in order not to "alarm" the reader with flagged notes such as our modern eighth and sixteenth notes. See Curt Sachs, \textit{Rhythm and Tempo} (New York: Norton, 1953), 214.
However, should there be occasion at any time to do the above examples on a single syllable, one may certainly ornament the phrase, for more beauty results through such embellishments. Likewise with half-notes (minime)—which are of longer value and consume more time—one can readily do whatever one desires as long as said syllables or words are not ruined. In fact, when more half-notes are found together, one can ornament them at one's convenience as long as the words are not obscured. So too with whole notes (semibreve), breves (breve), and other even larger values that naturally consume more time. For this reason one can join together many ornamentations and decorate a phrase at pleasure. Or one can use an ornament, where necessary and opportune, just as readily for a syllable as for a word. In order to show the person who wishes to learn how and where to embellish these few following examples are proposed:

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23 This is not the only place where Zacconi calls for clarity of language. In chapter 63 of Book I, he says: "But let [the singer] be warned first to pronounce the words cleanly, intelligently, and clearly so that everyone may easily understand them." The reader may find it odd that Zacconi should be concerned with clarity of syllables, vowels, and words when ornamentations, by their very nature, tend to have an obscuring effect. Paradoxical though it may seem, the clarity of words was important to composers of the late Renaissance and early Baroque. Horsley points out that florid figures were used mainly on the long syllables, thus not obscuring the words. Many other writers of the times also plead for the clarity of the words. In the opening of his manual on ornamentation, Bovicelli says that in forming passaggi, one must not only bear the notes in mind but also the words and that great judgment is needed in breaking up words into syllables. See G. B. Bovicelli, Regole Passaggi...Venetia, 1594. Fac. ed. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1957).
By observing well these above examples and by practicing them frequently, one can master them in time. These examples can serve in any given part: in the tenor and the alto as well as in the bass and the soprano. But since some people might ridicule my trivialities (cosette), seeing them demonstrated as opposed to theirs, and claim they desire more mature and more "learned" examples, I excuse myself by saying that I would not exhaust myself just to teach things to those who can already do them and thus be shown up as not having good judgment. Instead, my intention is to show eager scholars, through clear and visible examples, all those things they wish to see and to know. For these scholars, not having the knowledge, yearn for it and ardently consume whatever light is shed. Therefore, those who wish to master these trivialities along with the subsequent examples should first gird themselves with patience so that, after long and hard study, they may find that they can easily master these examples.\(^{24}\)

To facilitate matters even more for those already helped by the above exercises, I say that when singing the notes of what is commonly called a difficult duet, even though you exert yourself and take pains to sing the given notes in tempo—whereby the eighth notes therein will have no flaws or distortions—neverthess bear in mind to sing them according to the rules of gorgia. For should you desire a good style, choose a duet that has many an eighth note and when you feel secure in it, try to sing it on some given words. Should there be a great number of eighth notes, sing them on one single syllable and you will soon find where the difficulties lie. Practice this for two, three, or more times until you profit from it.

However, when fatigue is encountered in doing the said syllables and you begin to force, you must exert yourself to sing them many times until you do them well through force of habit. Be careful to sing with loud and full-bodied syllables as though a choir were doing so from notation or sing with fragments of some words.

\(^{24}\) Except for the sign C that appears for the four music examples shown supra in Ex. I, and for the motet listed as Ex. X infra, no meter or proportion indications are given for any other example throughout the remainder of the chapter.
In doing this you will be able to sing readily syllables not only in the familiar things (often studied) but also be able to sing (where necessary) any given piece. From such exercising one can grasp the idea of moving the voice with velocity so that, in so far as one is gifted by nature, one can sing gorgia and passaggi without needing a teacher.

Similarly, to facilitate matters and to start the student on the way to become a true master, I say that, in addition to all the exercises shown above, the singer should practice the five vowels: a, e, i, o, u.25 Some of these need to be sung closed, as i and u; others need to be done half-open, as e and o; while a is the widest.26 It will be seen that i and u are easily done and that, with a little more effort, e and o can be negotiated. But a, since it needs more breath than all the others, is the hardest to sing. By exercising in this way, one can avoid any pitfall because all the words of the vernacular, as well as most words in Latin, end in vowels.

But before leaving this question, what with my great zeal and desire to be helpful to singers, I further say that the tremolo—that is, the shaking (tremante) of the voice—is the true approach to passaggi and the mastering of the gorgia.27 For a ship that has

25 The approximate English equivalents for the five Italian vowels are: a as in star; e as in set; i as in mean; o as in laud; and u as in loom.

26 Here again such vocal terms as "closed," "open," and "widest" are vague and allow for many interpretations. Probably professional singers and experienced voice teachers will be able to derive meaning from such terms but the layman, unless versed in languages and diction, will certainly be confused.

27 The word tremolo is not used here in the modern derogatory sense of excess and ugly vibrato. It is instead a quick repetition of the same pitch and was often called trillo. See "Ornamentation," "Tremolo," "Trill," and "Trillo," Harvard Dictionary of Music. A most interesting and provocative commentary regarding trillo is offered by Arthur Mendel in his essay "Musicology and the Practical Musician" in Some Aspects of Musicology (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1957), 15, fn. 3. After presenting Caccini's definition of trillo and Playford's comments of the same, Mendel adds: "Unless one
been pushed beforehand glides with more facility than the one that needs to start. And a jumper leaps better if he first takes a running start. This tremolo needs to be short and lovely. For, if done to excess or forced, it will be tedious and annoying. And it is of such a nature that, once used, it should always be employed so that it becomes a habit. This continuous motion of the voice helps by giving an impetus to gorgia and facilitates the beginnings of passaggi admirably. This impetus that I speak of must not be initiated unless it has the proper speed and is powerful and forceful.

The endings of the passaggi should be proper and should sound complete. Likewise the middle, and the portion following it, so that no one is made more aware of the beginnings than of the middle or of the ending. Neither should the ending be more prominent than the beginnings or the middles. For obscuring any one portion not only betrays a timidity but also robs us of pleasure. And for those who, after assiduous study, have enjoyed pleasure and delight from my first examples to the point of having mastered them, I offer the opportunity, after the above simple exercises, to study these other more important examples that I have devised in the following list:

has heard or produced the interrupted tone Caccini and Playford seem to describe, one cannot pretend to be sure it existed; but neither can one be perfectly sure that it did not. My 'instinct' which may well be mistaken, leads me to think they meant a controlled vibrato. So, while I would encourage any singer to experiment and see if he can produce a continually interrupted tone that he and I can learn to find ornamental, until he succeeds in doing so I could not honestly try to persuade him that he must take Caccini's and Playford's explanations at face value."
28 The original print has a sharp before the penultimate $g'$, but it probably belongs before the $f'$ as shown here.

29 The uneven number of notes in this transcription corresponds exactly with the number as found in the original print. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 353, ex. 7.
With these above exercises, one can broaden and enlarge upon [a phrase] with even more then eight eighth notes [per tactus]. But it must be noted that, if speed and velocity are desired, the human voice does not have the facility that hands have when touching the keyboard of an instrument. However, in the above examples, I have indicated only a little ornamentation in order to show how ornaments are devised. As for leaps, I will not fail to show, in the examples yet to come, the various ways one can leap while keeping the voice free and easy.

The instances that lend themselves to ornamentations and passaggi are the cadences. These are such that unless done well they are easily ruined and made ugly and seem quite distorted to the ear. Therefore, to show some [cadences], I have devised these following examples:

30 The tactus was a relatively fixed unit of time measurement represented, according to Gafori (Practica musicae, 1496), by the semibrevis and was equal to "the pulse of a quietly breathing man"—i.e., the approximate metronome speed of 50-60. For a more thorough discussion of this troublesome subject, see Gustave Reese, Music in the Renaissance, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 1959), 179f.

31 Zacconi is not just alluding to cadences found at the end of a composition. As he says earlier on p. 12, gorgia must be devised in the middle portions of a piece as well as at the endings. In other words, diminutions may be inserted at various cadence points throughout a composition. Camillo Maffei goes further and states that passaggi should be used only at cadences except for an insertion occasionally at a definite melodic interval. See Horsley supra, fn. 20 and 21.
32 The original print has an obvious mistake. The final note is shown as a g but should be an a.
33 In the original the bracketed note is a semiminima—probably a misprint. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 355, ex. 10.

34 The original has a sharp before the penultimate b which is probably intended for the c' as shown here. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 355, ex. 10.
The above exercises can be used by singers far and near just as readily in one part as in another.

There is another way of ornamenting a cadence that will make a singer happy if he knows how to draw it out and guide it correctly. This is approached only with the note pattern la, fa, la as seen here:

[Ex. V]

This is true] not only in the manner of singing that appears above. Furthermore, to end a cadence nicely it is necessary to have a fa accidental precede it [the final note?] in order to

35 What Zacconi means by la, fa, la is not at all clear. Moreover, the music example shown does not offer clarification. To help the reader, this paragraph is quoted: "Di più si trova un modo di fiorire una cadenza, la quale [fa] felice quel cantore che la tira bene, et perfettamente la conduce la quale non entra se non in la, fa, la, come qui si vede." In his German translation of this same portion, Chrysander offers what is ostensibly an explanation in brackets: "Es findet sich ferner noch eine Weise, die Kadenz auszuschmücken, welche gut heraus ziehen und vollkommen zu Ende führen ein Sänger sich glücklich schätzen kann. Diese tritt nur mit dem Tonfälle la, fa, la [der grossen Sexte und Quarte] auf, wie man hier sieht." See Chrysander, "Zacconi," 356.
make it sound as it should by its very nature. I suspect that perhaps I have not been entirely understood. Therefore, in order that everyone understand, lest such a practice be lost (notwithstanding the exercises already devised and shown above), I have prepared the following one with the proper style and which can be used in the proper place:

[Ex. VI] [T. 62v]

But there are always certain passages that can be called the ordinary or usual cadences and which are found in every vocal piece. In such instances, some singers who know next to nothing about gorgia feel called upon to do something beautiful but, for lack of ability, only offer something that is bad. Therefore, in order to draw these singers away from that which is ugly and bad and to give them light and help to correct their faults so they may find the proper style through moderation, I devise these other examples listed below:

36 Here again, what Zacconi means by fa accidentale is not clear. Possibly he is asking for the penultimate note to be made a leading tone. While this may be likely, we cannot be certain because, as before, the music example shown does not seem to explain the text unless one adds ficta. Once again, the original Italian is quoted: "Non solo in questa maniera che qui appare: ma anco per farla cadder bene bisogna che li preceda il fa accidentale per volerla far rissonar seconda che la debbe rissonare nella sua natura." Chrysander, ibid., 357, does not translate fa accidentale into German but simply leaves it italicized in Italian. Later in his text, Chrysander alludes to the fa accidentale. This will be discussed in fn. 39, infra.
[Ex. VII] [Begins on f. 62v]
Should someone succeed in doing that which I desire making himself lord and master of my embellishments, ornaments, and passaggi, I wish to remind him that it is not wise to use the above examples at all times. There are times a woman desires a simple ornament. One should rather intersperse them [the simple with the more complex] and to make others beautiful, these simple divisions (rotture) are offered, for there is the proper time and place where these might prevail and be used at one's convenience:
All these call for aptitude, agility, and time without which nothing can be accomplished. The singer practicing these exercises must bear this in mind: to sing as many notes on one breath as he possibly can negotiate with comfort. I say this because there are many singers of gorgia who surpass eight notes per tactus. But since they mete out the notes and make them suit the phrase, they give much pleasure. No one—whether he be a good singer or composer—can realize more than this. Indeed, if one were to set a determined number [of notes] within a tactus and this said number were not to fall in tempo, it would certainly be considered a serious fault. For this reason, I caution scholars that if the number of notes in their gorgia does not correspond to the number of notes of the [original] tactus, it does not matter just as long as said notes conform to a measured pulse and tempo (misura e tempo) and that they be sung without fault and in tune. 

37 The gorgia that Zacconi offers throughout his book do correspond with their original tactus as regards number of notes. But a glance at Silvestro Ganassi's Opera intitulata Fontegara... Venetia, 1535 (Berlin: Lienau, 1956) shows a division of three and a half semiminims to the original minim instead of two to the original as would normally be expected:

La Fontegara, Regola Quarta, XVI, 80.

Original Tactus  Ganassi's Division

This sort of diminution which Ganassi calls "complex" and lists under his Regola Quarta—as compared with his "simple" ones listed under Regola Prima—, as Horsley points out, greatly alters a composition both rhythmically as well as melodically. However, the vertical consonances on the beginnings of the larger time units are kept intact. These are shown by the bracketed notes above. See S. Ganassi, La Fontegara, 80. Also see Horsley, fn. 20, supra.
sion there are many who, in doing gorgia, produce well-ornamented and beautiful passages but who, when attempting to designate them in written notation, always find either too many notes or too few albeit the listener may not notice the slightest fault or lack.

Similarly in the cadences, the reduplications (replicatione) of the note patterns sol, fa, sol; la, sol, la; fa, mi, fa, and so forth can be prolonged for as long a time as desired. There are some who repeat [the above patterns] with sixteenth notes (semichrome)--thus repeating the same type of notes; this is nothing more than multiplication [redoubling] the original notation. I need not present an example of this since I believe this is understandable with these simple words. But whoever wants such examples can find as many as he needs. 38

I would caution singers to take care not to make the endings of the cadences sound weak and dead (languide e morte) as some do. These singers, deluding themselves in believing they are beautifying a passage, only make their runs so misshapen, ugly, and awkward that the listener almost wants to shut his ears so as not to hear. For a faulty presentation of the lower part (parte inferiore) of the cadence makes it seem so clumsy that it becomes untamed and boorish. I believe this is easily understood. But should there be, by chance, those who do not understand, I say this in order to make them understand: [when doing] the last part of the cadence—the part closest to the end—whether you wish to embellish (accentuare) it doubly or simply, you must never make the lower third (terza inferiore) sound so weak (languide) that, in the going back up, we

38 Chrysander, "Zacconi," 362, offers a footnote to explain the reduplications mentioned in the text. This explanation seems quite satisfactory. Using sol, fa, sol as an example, here are quoted the various things a singer can do, according to Chrysander:
get the impression of being drawn up by force and dragged. This cannot be shown in an example because the difficulty lies in the faulty emission of the notes. However, if everyone does not understand me, I must be excused for I know no other way of expressing myself or of explaining it by words. Singers are accustomed to calling such cadences dead, dragged, or weak (feminina) due to the little vitality and vigor therein displayed.

There is still another way of adorning certain notes in the bass or in an even lower part with ordinary accents that can serve in all those places where the said lower parts support the high parts. Therefore, to show some examples, I have devised the following:

39 The meanings of parte inferiore and terza inferiore are not made clear. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 361, translates parte inferiore as tiefer gelegenen Theiles and then adds the following footnote: "Mit diesem tiefer gelegenen Theile ist das fa accidentale, die Unterterz der Finalis gemeint." He would have us believe that the fa accidentale (see fn. 36, supra) is the note which is a third lower (terza inferiore) than the finalis. Therefore, it seems that Chrysander considers parte inferiore and terza inferiore as synonymous in meaning. Proceeding further with the terza inferiore, in the next footnote, 361-62, He offers two music examples, the one showing the "proper" way to sing it, according to what Chrysander believes is Zacconi's advice, and the other the "wrong" way. In each example, the terza inferiore--that is, the note a third lower than the finalis--is underscored:

The "correct" way

\[ \text{Music notation image} \]

The "incorrect" way: the lower third is "weak."

\[ \text{Music notation image} \]

This explanation may be partially adequate, but it does not clear up all the ambiguity. Therefore, the Italian is again quoted: "perche il diffetuarle dalla parte inferiore le fanno parer si rozze che li divengano salvatiche e villanesche: ...dico; che l'ultima parte della cadenza, che è quella più propinqua al fine volendola accen- tuare di doppio o semplice, non debbe mai la sua terza inferiore pronuntiar si languida, che nell'ascendere dimostri di lasciavici tirar per forza, et farsici strascinare."
40 The bracketed note has been added to suit the decorated line. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 363, no. 6.

41 The original print of this example is as follows:

The transcription has been edited rhythmically and melodically in keeping with the style of Zacconi. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 364, no. 8.
Moreover, in order that scholars may better know how to become lord and master of my examples of passaggi, I have devised the following example which is a complete motet. In this way, I can shed light for better understanding as to how a vocal line can be ornamented. My desire is not just to show the ornamented voice part but along with it to show the original line. The top staff is the ornamented line and the one beneath it is the original (nuda) line. Here is the example:

42 The music of this motet cannot be identified with any degree of accuracy. It may even have been composed by Zacconi himself. As for the text employed, it is derived from the first response of the first Nocturn for the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. However, the junction of the phrases is a bit confusing unless one is used to the manner of recitation of the office. The entire text should read as follows:

"Vidi speciosam sicut columbam, ascendentem desuper rivos aquarum; cujus inaestimabilis odor erat nimis in vestimentis ejus; Et sicut dies verni circumdabant cam flores rosarum et lilia convallium. Quae est ista, quae ascendit per desertum sicut virgula fumi ex aromatibus myrrhae et thuris?"

When this is chanted, one cantor goes as far as the versicle and another takes it up at: Quae (etc.). Then it is repeated from the asterisk at Et sicut dies (etc.). The words that Zacconi uses in the motet have been underscored. See Brevarium Monasticum pro Omnibus sub Regula S. Patris Benedicti, third ed. (Malines: Dessain, 1939), 640.
Quae est is———ta Quae est is———ta Quae est is———ta Quae est is———ta Quae———ascen———dit Quae———ascen———dit de su-per——ri-vos ac——qua——— de su-per——ri-vos ac——qua———rum de su-per——ri-vos ac——rum de su-per——ri-vos ac——rum

43 The bracketed note is missing in the original—probably a printing error. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 365, 2nd system.
The bracketed notes have been interpolated because the original shows an uneven number of notes. But this solution seems more in the style of Zacconi than does Chrysander's. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 366, 2nd system.
The bracketed note has twice as much value in the original. Chrysander makes no note of this. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 366, 5th system.
These few ornamentations and lovely patterns may be used in every other occasion. And the singer who uses them aptly may well be contented. While much of these ornaments are delightful to our ears, they do not always please everyone. In fact, I have encountered at times some composers who have avoided the opportunity of having some pieces of theirs sung if only to prevent their compositions from falling into the hands of singers of gorgie. For their desire is to have their own music done with simple and clean lines so that they can hear the various artifices which they themselves have woven into their compositions.

But should someone be surprised and ask why I chose a motet rather than a madrigal, let it be known that I made this choice because madrigals ordinarily are more difficult than motets. For this reason I estimated that, as far as beginners (and those who know little) are concerned, this [motet] would be better than anything else. And through practice [of the same] these [ornamentations] can be applied to any desired phrase. Therefore, in order to help the singer improve even more, I have resolved to offer all these following examples:
The last three notes of this line appear thus in Zacconi:

These were changed to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 369, no. 1, does likewise.
47 The final note on the decorated line is mistakenly printed as a c' instead of the obvious b-flat.
The endings of the two lines vary one from the other but have been copied exactly. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 372, no. 4, makes no note of this.
[Ex. XI. Part III. Mezzo-Soprano]
[ Begins on f. 68\textsuperscript{v}, fifth brace ]
49 The bracketed note is missing in the source and was added to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 376, no. 12, does likewise.

50 The tied note in brackets was added to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 376, no. 12, does likewise.

51 The value of the bracketed note was increased in order to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 377, no. 13, does likewise.
[Ex. XI. Part IV. Contralto]

[Begins on f. 69r, seventh brace]
The bracketed note is printed as a g in the source, probably an error.
The original decorated example starts as follows:

The asterisked notes seemed superfluous rhythmically and were omitted. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 380, no. 15.

The bracketed note has twice the value in the original. Chrysander, "Zacconi, 380, no. 17, makes no note of this.
The tied note in brackets was added to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 381, does likewise.
The original composed line reads as follows:

The values of the bracketed notes have been changed to suit the decorated line. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 381, no. 22, makes no note of this.
The ending of the original decorated line is as follows:

The value of the bracketed note was shortened in order to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 383, no. 14, does likewise but makes no note of it.
[Ex. XI. Part VI. Baritone]
[Beginns on f. 72r, seventh brace]
57a The bracketed note does not appear in the original but was added to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 385, no. 2, does likewise.
The original composed line is as follows:

The bracketed note was changed in value in order to suit the decorated line. Cf. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 388, no. 19.
59 The bracketed dot does not appear in the original but was added to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 389, no. 2, does likewise.
60 The original composed line of this example is missing in the source.
Of the preceding collection, it matters not that one person may choose a particular group of examples while another may choose a different group so long as the entire collection be utilized and doled out. For just as in the case of a glove that may not fit one hand but may be perfect for another, so will these exercises [where applicable] be distributed and used by the students. But since there may perhaps be an exercise liked more than others or that some singers may prefer to sing a part other than their own, I will show all the ways in which a single exercise may be employed to accommodate everyone. 61 I take the first example shown in the above general exercises [See first example of Ex. XI, 32] and give it in all the positions in which it can be placed in order to show how one can do it in the same way with the other examples and in how many points of the [Guidonian] hand one single thing can be used:

61 The fact that Zacconi frequently censures singers who exaggerate the use of gorgia and constantly advises the singer on how to make good divisions only indicates the prevalence of abuses in the practice of improvisation at the close of the cinquecento. There seems to have been much confusion and contradiction as to when, where, how, and how much embellishments were to be done. Dannreuther, in the introduction to his Musical Ornamentation, testifies to this condition: "But we shall not understand them [improvisations] from the usual instruction books, because the writers, both old and comparatively new, have taken more pains to show up what they deem bad practices and hold to be reprehensible, than to expound what they believe to be good and right, and to teach it by clean concept and example." Furthermore, it is not clear whether a singer intent on learning the art of gorgia was supposed to adopt the actual example shown in any of the given manuals of the time or whether these samples were only intended to show him how ornaments might be devised in an "impromptu" manner as the need was felt. Indeed, some of the samples seen in such manuals as Bovicelli and Ganassi certainly do seem incredible and exaggerated. Referring to this sort of gorgia, Nané Bridgman quotes Alfred Einstein as saying that singers certainly did not sing such "monstrosities." (See G. B. Bovicelli, Regole Passaggi di Musica, Postface). Ferand also discusses this same situation in an illuminating essay "Improvised Vocal Counterpoint in the late Renaissance and early Baroque," Annales Musicologiques, IV (1956), 129-74.
First example which will fit all these positions

62 The last three notes of Ex. [a] are identical to the last three of Ex. XI, no. 1 found on page 32 and have been changed in the same way to resolve the rhythm. Chrysander, "Zacconi," 369 and 393, makes the same solution both times.
I have demonstrated how a single exercise can be adapted in many ways for no other reason than to point out that one singer, through his inclination and gift from nature or through special study, may master one exercise more readily than another singer—as often happens. Thus it may be seen in how many ways this exercise may be used and how with one single passage one may attain honor. For, oftentimes, gorgia does not merely consist of variation or of diversity of phrases but rather in a well-balanced and determined quantity of notes. As for the velocity employed, the listener cannot discern whether that which was sung at first is repeated or duplicated. In fact, a small amount of notes may be duplicated and repeated in the manner of a circle or a crown. For the listener derives great pleasure by that sweet and fast motion of the voices—especially when one is not made aware of the uninterrupted repetition of the notes. And it is much better by far for a singer to repeat something often though correctly, especially where ornaments and phrasings are concerned, rather than to do many different things badly. If a singer receives little blame [for repeating the same one pattern] it might well be that he has an audience of connoisseurs who understand or who can tell whether he is repeating the same thing or is creating something new. Moreover, these connoisseurs—whether they be composers or in the profession in some way—when in the presence of other listeners who like to hear a much repeated pattern, will not criticize the singer or reveal the singer's allowable subterfuge. Of all the things that can be excused with good conscience, that of gorgia is the principal one since it is the most worthy of merit. For the voice does not have that dexterity that the hands have when playing on a keyboard with the sort of velocity that often leaves us stupified and awed.

If we desire to see just how tiring it is for the human voice to sing these patterns so fast—while permitting the singer to keep control of his voice—let us consider those singers who go about the world with graceful and easily produced voices and sing with assurance whatever songs are put before them; nevertheless, for a certain inaptitude, they never sing passaggi or gorgia. Dare we believe that,
if they could learn to perform *gorgia* and to do ornamentations easily, they would voluntarily do so? Certainly yes, if they were able! There are many who live meagerly because of their mediocre voices but with the adoption of *gorgia* they could live as lords.

And yet when we hear a singer who does not perform in our style, and to perfection, or perhaps always sings the same things, we must at least believe that he has the intention of singing perfectly and correctly for everyone likes to go beyond his own ability. For this reason I have sought to break up all the above phrases and ornamentations as much as possible in order not to present scholars with tiresome things which would almost be impossible for them. It is my hope that my efforts will not become useless and in vain. For were I to consider them so, I would, so to speak, destroy myself by my own hands.

Even though I have said earlier that a sung passage should be done in a [step-wise] succession and not broken up in leaps, I have myself broken several *passaggi* and thus have contradicted myself. For though it would seem that no one can sing *passaggi* [that are broken up with leaps], nevertheless there are some who are indeed capable of doing so. I have therefore broken some not only to show the way they should be broken but also to show that it is not always necessary to have intervals follow one another in a scale-wise manner.

Now that I approach the end of this chapter in which I have said all that is needed to be said regarding *gorgia*, there remains but this to say: I know full well that there will be some who will diligently speculate on my trifling ideas and will not fail to take them apart and scrutinize them; that they will say they possess little or no value. But I console myself in the knowledge that, by contrast, there will be those who will feel helped and will laud my efforts.

I must not fail to add that some will seek to know why I have not used any sixteenth notes (semichrome) in all the preceding examples. Be it known that, concerned as I am in giving the first impetus to lazy singers, I have written down exercises employing
only eighth notes (chrome) so that beginners might learn them more easily. For this labor is not done for those who are gifted in this profession but for those who, although not capable, are willing to learn. Should anyone master the examples and feel the need for even more divisions (rottture), let him change the eighth notes into sixteenths and thus, by forming new examples, reap more profit through his revived endeavor.

63 See fn. 22, supra.
The concept of variation and the practice of virtuosity have been ever present throughout music history. Whether it be the trope of the twelfth-century mass, the cadenza of the seventeenth-century opera seria, or the transcription of a nineteenth century capriccio—no matter what genre from any century is examined, variation and virtuosity will be found. If one were to take Zacconi as an eye-witness of the condition of the art of music in the late Renaissance, one would see that the written page was only a skeletal blueprint, a mere point of departure. Tradition demanded that the performer—that is, the virtuoso—vary that which he found written. The variations devised by the performer at a mere glance (assuming he was a skilled expert) are what Zacconi calls gorgia, rottura, passaggio. It cannot be ignored that in any given situation such as this, where a performer wields so much power over a composer, the immediate question becomes one of taste and judgment.

Obviously, taste allows for a wide divergence of opinion. The abuses of the virtuosi who performed gorgia have been deplored by Zacconi and countless others. Yet, the practice of varying an already existing composition was not a principle merely tolerated half-heartedly. Instead, it was a highly praised practice and a skill sought by one and all. Zacconi tells us in the very opening of his chapter (supra, 1) that the inserted embellishments made music "seem even more beautiful." Further on the opening page, he emphasizes the value of this practice by saying: "This gives great pleasure and delight and makes us think we are listening to well-trained songbirds that enrapture our hearts and leave us much satisfied by their singing." Much later in the chapter (supra, 74), he says: "There are many who live meagerly because of their mediocre voices but with the adoption of gorgia they could live as lords." Apparently, then, these experts in the skill of gorgia were the "stars" of their day.
and received adulation wherever they went. Consequently, the professional singer of the **cinquecento** sought to perfect this treasured skill—a skill that not only tested his technical prowess but also revealed whether he had good taste, moderation, and a general aesthetic approach to music.

Most of Zacconi's advices can be reduced to just a few do's and don'ts. These may be summarized as follows: pronounce your vowels and words distinctly; make only a few, simple departures from the written line; insert as many notes as you can possibly manage but separate them, articulate them and, above all, stay in tempo; decorate the middle of a piece as well as the ending; and finally, repeat any note pattern as often as you please and feel free to transpose any example to fit the positions of the Guidonian hand.

As for the don'ts, Zacconi has only a few. Despite Dannreuther's contention (**supra**, fn. 61): "writers, both old and comparatively new, have taken more pains to show up what they deem bad practices and hold to be reprehensible, than to expound what they believe to be good and right," Zacconi does not seem to offend grossly in this respect. While it is true he is verbose, repetitious, and tedious in his way of expressing thoughts, he does not spend as much time in condemning bad practices as he does in propounding what to do to achieve good *gorgia*. The only don'ts, as it were, can be summarized as follows: don't begin *gorgia* before the other voices have made their entrances; don't ornament a phrase while the other voices are silent; don't sing *gorgia* as a solo; and don't decorate every single syllable and word. In short, the list of don'ts amounts to a plea for moderation and sobriety on the part of the singer.

Taken as a whole, the musical examples found in this chapter should prove to be the most rewarding feature to the reader. Again, as in the case of the text, some examples could well have been omitted and others seem repetitious. On the other hand, the overwhelming number (254) of exercises conclusively testify to the kind of vocal line, the sort of leaps, and the type of note patterns that were prevalent at the close of the **cinquecento**.
The nature of the lines is typical of what we know about Renaissance vocal music in general. By far the most common line is the scale-wise progression. Leaps serve only to contrast the scale, to change the direction of the line, and to otherwise relieve monotony. Leaps of the octave, ascending and descending, are found rather frequently. Leaps of the seventh and the sixth, whether ascending or descending, are almost never found (There is one exception: in Ex. 10, 55, there is a leap of a seventh). Leaps of the fifth and the fourth are found, though infrequently. The most frequent and the most repeated leap is the third, both ascending and descending, major and minor. It should be added that two leaps, regardless of the interval, are very rarely allowed in the same direction (Only two such cases were found: Ex. 23, 47 and Ex. 10, 50). Finally, the compass of the voice, whatever the category, is usually medium: medium high to medium low—but never extremely high or extremely low.

The chief disappointment in Zacconi's work is that, as in the case of all the other available Renaissance sources, he fails to clarify the very things the modern scholar wants to know most of all: namely, what, where, how, and how much embellishments were to be made. Also, was the student to extract fragments of the music examples found in the manuals or are these merely intended to show him how he might insert ornaments on the spur of the moment when he came upon a phrase that would permit him to do so? True, Zacconi does go into some detail as to how ornaments were to be made; the numerous examples alone testify to this. But the reader is still guessing as to the conditions regarding actual practice of the art of embellishing. Nor is any further light shed on the practice of musica ficta. Since all the available authors fail to illuminate this question, we can infer that the practice of gorgia was so widespread, so accepted, so taken for granted that the writers, being only human, did not think it necessary to spell out that which was so obvious (to them), such common knowledge universally.

Finally, the student of music history who reads this chapter will again observe that cardinal point which must always be kept uppermost in mind: namely, it is only through the study of the
practices of music performance that we can truly approach an understanding of the condition and exact nature of the art of music in a given period.
As an appendix to this thesis, it was felt that a Renaissance polyphonic composition ought to be especially ornamented according to the directions of Zacconi as a service to the reader. To this end, a sacred motet by Lassus, a contemporary of Zacconi, was chosen. In making the choice, Zacconi’s own words were kept in mind (supra, 31) wherein he says that a motet is easier to decorate than a madrigal. By the close of the cinquecento, it will be remembered, the madrigal had become a cumbersome, much-involved, mannered composition full of "busy" motion, competing voices, brisk tempi, etc. Obviously, adorning this sort of composition could tend to obscure the text, the clarity of the parts, resulting in possible chaos.

The motet chosen is entitled *Da pacem domine*. It was found in Wolfgang Boetticher’s edition, Orlando di Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke, Neue Reihe, Band I* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1956), 62. According to Boetticher, the antiphon on which the motet is based can be found in the *Antiphonale Romanum*.

Zacconi’s admonishments were kept in mind when inserting the coloraturas. To begin with, the *gorgie* begin after all the voices have made their initial entrances. The intervals were closely watched to avoid "forbidden" leaps. The insertions of the *passaggi* caused some parallel motion, and these were watched for parallel fifths, etc. The phrases were decorated in their entirety and not just partially at the endings. At all times, the *gorgia* was kept simple.

The coloraturas are applied to word phrases almost always so that they do not, for example, begin in the middle of a word. Also, the phrases were checked to make certain they are manageable to the singer, as regards breath capacity. Suggested breath markings are shown thus (′) throughout each voice part.

A word about dissonance: since little is known as to the
amount and kind of dissonance tolerated in performance practice during the Renaissance, caution was employed in this regard. The reader will notice there are occasional mild dissonances but these occur on weak beats and are resolved instantly by suspension.

Horsley, "Embellishments," (supra, fn. 20), suggests confining ornamentations to two voices in a five or six-voiced chorus. But since Zacconi shows many examples for every voice classification, it was felt that the decorations ought to be shared by each part. No attempt was made to equalize the distribution but instead the melisma were inserted to those phrases that seemed to lend themselves to diminutions. The interpolated coloraturas, throughout the motet, are shown within brackets.

It is hoped that this example will be tried in performance for it is only through actual practice that we can ascertain how "workable" such experiments are. The words of Arthur Mendel are recalled here (supra, fn. 27). Unless we put to actual practice the rules and directions of music manuals; unless we translate into sound the "facts" found in old books, we cannot pretend to know of their validity.

It is not presumed that this edition is a final or the best solution for embellishing compositions. This is merely a first attempt. It may be fruitful for a collegium musicum or a music history seminar group to perform this motet first as written, immediately followed by the decorated version.

Finally, the editor strongly advises that there be only one voice to a part.
Orlando di Lassus: Motet, Da pacem domine

Da pacem, da pacem domine, da pacem

Da pacem domine, da pacem domine in

dominine

Da pacem domine, da pacem do-

ne, da pacem dominine
nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus

nosteris, in di---e---bus
e--bus non---stris:

stris: Qui-----a non

Qui-----a non

est a------li-us,
est a------li-us, qui

est a------li-us,
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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A TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER LXVI
OF BOOK I, PART I OF
FRA LODOVICO ZACCONI'S PRATTICA DI MUSICA

An Abstract of a Thesis
Submitted to
the Faculty of the Music Department
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Diran Akmajian
July 1962
ABSTRACT

It is common knowledge that the practice of improvisation, variation, and ornamentation was widespread during the late Renaissance. Numerous authors testify to this, and scores of manuals exist that "teach" this particular skill. One of the most important theorists to write such a manual was Lodovico Zacconi, a monk of the order of Saint Augustine. Chapter LXVI of Part I of his Prattica di Musica is one of the most detailed of its kind. Because there is a genuine revival today of performance of Renaissance vocal music, and because sufficient knowledge is yet to be had of the practices of this period, it was felt that a translation of this chapter was advisable and necessary.

Although writing in the loquacious, redundant, and flowery style so common to all Renaissance writers, Zacconi does go into much detail as to how ornaments and decorations should be inserted into already existing polyphonic choruses. The advice he urges to be adopted can be summarized as a simple list of do's and don't's: pronounce your vowels and words distinctly; make only a few departures from the written line; insert as many notes as you can possibly manage but separate them, articulate them and, above all, stay in tempo; decorate the middle of a piece as well as the ending; repeat any note pattern as often as you please and feel free to transpose any example to fit the positions of the Guidonian hand; don't begin an ornament before the other voices have made their entrances; don't ornament a phrase while the other voices are silent; don't sing an ornamentation as a solo; and don't decorate every single syllable and word.

The reader of Zacconi soon realizes that this practice
of ornamentation, though much abused by many singers, was a highly sought after art that lured everyone who aspired to be called a professional singer. One can observe that in a situation such as this, where the performer held such power over a composer, the immediate question is one of taste and judgment. Consequently, the artist who practiced this skill was not only tested for his technical prowess but also for his good taste, moderation, and general aesthetic approach to music.

By far the most rewarding feature of the chapter are the numerous musical examples (254 in number) which provide the reader with visual testimony as to exactly what sort of diminutions were employed during this period. While the nature of the examples is typical of what is known about Renaissance style, nevertheless these examples corroborate that knowledge.

The only disappointing feature found in Zacconi is that he fails to clarify the very things the modern student wants to know most of all: what, where, how, and how many embellishments were to be made; and was the student to select the examples shown and perform them exactly as written, or were these meant to show him how to insert ornamentations in an "impromptu" manner as the need was felt? Since Zacconi, as in the case of all the other authors in this field, fails to enlighten us on these points, we can infer that the practice of improvisation must have been so universal, so taken for granted that the writers did not think it necessary to spell out that which was so obvious to them.

Finally, in an effort to put theory into practice, it was felt that a Renaissance polyphonic composition ought to be especially ornamented according to Zacconi's directions as a service to the reader and added as an Appendix to the thesis. Consequently, a sacred motet, Da pacem domine, by Orlando di Lassus, a contemporary of Zacconi, was chosen. It is hoped that this first attempt by this writer will prove satisfactory in helping the practicing musician of today to understand better the probable nature of the vocal music of "the golden age of polyphony."
APPROVED

Chairman, Advisory Committee

Member, Advisory Committee

Chairman, Major Department