

# Canonic techniques in the caccia: compositional strategies and historical development

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**ABSTRACT.** *Canonic techniques in the Trecento caccia reveal a wide spectrum of ostinato procedures ranging from brief cadence patterns to large-scale harmonic and/or melodic repetition schemes. The ostinato phenomenon is thus an important structural component of canonic technique in the caccia. This article examines these ostinato patterns in terms of a putative historical and structural transformation of the genre at the intersection of unwritten and written practices. Special emphasis is placed on the definition of the caccia from the anonymous Trecento treatise, Capitulum de vocibus applicatis verbis, and its correlation with the early layer of the caccia repertoire.*

The anonymous Trecento treatise, *Capitulum de vocibus applicatis verbis*,<sup>1</sup> offers a description of ‘caciae (sive incalci)’ which is at odds with most notated examples in Trecento manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> This discrepancy becomes all the more puzzling when the treatise’s presumed dating (after 1332)<sup>3</sup> and provenance (northern Italy) are considered, since these point to a period and cultural ambit closely associated with the

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<sup>1</sup> The treatise was published in Santorre Debenedetti, ‘Un trattello del secolo XIV sopra la poesia musicale’, *Studi medievali*, 2 (1906–7), 59–82, and, more recently in Thorsten Burkard and Oliver Huck, ‘Voces applicatae verbis. Ein musikologischer und poetologischer Traktat aus dem 14. Jahrhundert (I-Vnm Lat. CI. XII.97 [4125]). Einleitung, Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar’, *Acta Musicologica*, 74 (2002), 1–34.

<sup>2</sup> Facsimile editions include *Il Codice Rossi 215*, ed. Nino Pirrotta (Lucca, 1992); *Il Codice Musicale Panciatichi 26 della Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze*, ed. F. Alberto Gallo (Firenze, 1981); *The Manuscript London, British Museum, Additional 29987*, ed. Gilbert Reaney (n.p., 1965); *Il Codice Squarcialupi, MS. Mediceo Palatino 87, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana di Firenze*, ed. F. Alberto Gallo (Lucca, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> This new dating has been advanced by Elena Abramov-van Rijk, ‘Evidence for a Revised Dating of the Anonymous Fourteenth-century Italian Treatise *Capitulum de vocibus applicatis verbis*’, *Plainsong and Medieval Music*, 16 (2007), 19–30.

early flourishing of the written caccia repertoire (preserved in Reg and Rs).<sup>4</sup> In view of the possible temporal and geographical proximity, one might reasonably expect a certain similarity between the description of the caccia in the *Capitulum* and the earliest examples of the genre, such as *Nella foresta*, *Chiama il bel papagallo*, *Mirando i pessi* (all from Reg) and *Or qua compagna* (Rs). Yet at first glance the definition does not appear to meet even these modest expectations:

Cacce, or incalci, are in all respects constituted similarly to motets, except that the verbal organization of cacce should be either all of seven or all of five syllables. Moreover, they are intended for as many [singers] as there are *partes*, and all [parts] should be constituted over the first *pars*, so that if the caccia were composed of five *partes*, all five singers would sing the first *pars* together.<sup>5</sup> There should be in the number of singers a similar order as was mentioned of the motets, namely, when one ascends the second descends, the third remains firm, the fourth pauses, and the fifth breaks (*quintus rumpat*). And thus, by alternating their roles, a decorative diversity is produced, which most often is found in consonances. Let some of them [i.e. singers] and all at the end, find themselves in consonance, some at the fifth, some at the octave, and beware of the tritone as was said of the motet.<sup>6</sup>

The treatise's descriptions of two basic characteristics of the genre, namely its poetic structure and musical form, are particularly confusing. The *Capitulum* states that caccia verse comprises regular '*quinari*' or '*settenari*' lines, rather than irregular *endecassilabi* and *settenari* typical of the preserved repertory (though a few exceptions

<sup>4</sup> A list of sigla of sources cited may be found in the Appendix at the end of this article. For a description of the Reg fragment and a transcription of its contents, see Marco Gozzi and Agostino Ziino, 'The Mischiati Fragment: A New Source of Italian Trecento Music at Reggio Emilia', in *Kontinuität und Transformation in der italienischen Vokalmusik zwischen Due- und Quattrocento*, ed. Sandra Dieckmann, Oliver Huck, Signe Rotter-Broman and Alba Scotti (Hildesheim, 2007), 281–314.

<sup>5</sup> Since the meaning of the ambiguous term '*pars*' is implied in the passage, I leave it untranslated, as did Huck and Burkard in their edition of the treatise, '*Voces applicatae verbis*'.

<sup>6</sup> '*Caciae (sive incalci) a simili per omnia formantur ut motetti, salvo quod verba caciae volunt esse aut omnes de septem aut omnes de quique syllabis. Volunt etiam esse ad tot, quot partes sunt, et omnes volunt esse formatae supra primam partem, ita quod, si facta fuerit ad quinque partes, omnes quinque cantores cantare possint simul primam partem. In numero canentium habere vult talis ordo, qualis dictus est in mottetis, scilicet quod, quando unus ascendit, alter descendat, tertius firmus stet, quartus pauset, quintus rumpat. Et sic, cambiando officia, fiat diversitas decorata, inveniendō saepisimi in consonantiis. Et pars illorum et omnes in fine in consonantia se reperiant, quis in quinta, quis in octava; et caveant a tritono, ut dictum est supra in mottetis.*' See Burkard and Huck, '*Voces applicatae verbis*', 16. For different English translations of the passage, see Thomas Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA, 1961), xiv; John Griffiths, *Hunting the Origins of the Trecento Caccia*, The Twelfth Gordon Athol Anderson Memorial Lecture (Armidale, NSW, Australia, 1996), 9–10. [www.lavihuella.com/Vihuella/My\\_publications\\_files/GRIFFITHS%201996%20Hunting%20Caccia.pdf](http://www.lavihuella.com/Vihuella/My_publications_files/GRIFFITHS%201996%20Hunting%20Caccia.pdf) (accessed 7 April 2014); F. Alberto Gallo, *Music of the Middle Ages II*, trans. Karen Eales (Cambridge, 1985), 120–1; and Virginia Newes, 'Fuga and Related Contrapuntal Procedures in European Polyphony ca. 1350–ca. 1420', Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University (1987), 47. The most recent discussion of the *Capitulum* definition and its correlation with the caccia repertoire is Lucia Marchi, 'Chasing Voices, Hunting Love: The Meaning of the Italian *Caccia*', in *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 27 (2011), 13–32, at 19–24. I am grateful to Lucia Marchi for sending me the proofs of the article prior to its publication.

to the rule do exist).<sup>7</sup> The description of the caccia's musical structure is different too. The treatise suggests a simple, five-voice circular ('round') canon based on voice-exchange and repetition, rather than 'continuous' (that is, 'through-composed') canon employed in most notated examples.<sup>8</sup>

The present article aims to shorten the distance between theory and practice, as well as between the 'round' and 'continuous' canonic forms, by examining certain archaic compositional strategies of the caccia's canonic texture – particularly noticeable in the earliest, northern layer of the repertoire – that elucidate the genre's historical genesis.<sup>9</sup> The focus will be on various repetition patterns ranging from concise melodic reiterations to large-scale melodic and/or harmonic ostinato procedures that function as important structural elements of the canonic techniques<sup>10</sup> and reveal a tendency towards 'periodicity' in otherwise continuous melodic and harmonic writing.<sup>11</sup>

It is only natural that such regular repetition patterns would reveal themselves first and foremost in the cadential area, which is by nature more 'formulaic' than the surrounding music with respect to melodic, rhythmic and harmonic configurations. If repeated regularly, a single cadential gesture could easily grow into a brief harmonic pattern demarcating a certain segment of composition. For example, in

<sup>7</sup> The metrical structure of the caccia verse is analysed in Maria Teresa Brasolin, 'Proposta per una classificazione metrica delle cacce trecentesche', in *L'Ars Nova Italiana del Trecento IV*, ed. Agostino Ziino (Certoaldo, 1978), 83–105.

<sup>8</sup> Burkard and Huck, 'Voces applicatae verbis', 30. The terminology ('continuous canon', 'round') was proposed in Jamie Croy Kassler, 'The Chases in the MS Ivrea', MA thesis, Columbia University (1967), 363–7, and later used in Newes, 'Fuga and Related Contrapuntal Procedures', 89–90. The difference between the continuous canon as a symbolic representation of the directed motion of the hunt, and the earlier 'round' canon, with its 'wheel-like' motion, is discussed in Oliver Huck, 'The Early Canon as *Imitatio Naturae*', in *Canons and Canonic Techniques, 14th–16th Centuries: Theory, Practice, and Reception History*, ed. K. Schiltz and B. Blackburn (Leuven, 2007), 7–18.

<sup>9</sup> The question of caccia's origins has been raised and differently addressed in Nino Pirrotta, 'Per l'origine e la storia della caccia e del madrigale trecentesco', *Rivista Musicale Italiana*, 48 (1946), 305–23, and 49 (1947), 121–42; Kurt von Fischer, 'On the Technique, Origin, and Evolution of Italian Trecento Music', *The Musical Quarterly*, 47 (1961), 41–57; Marie Louise Martinez, *Die Musik des frühen Trecento* (Tutzing, 1963), 52–3; Kosaku Toguchi, 'Sulla struttura e l'esecuzione di alcune cacce italiane un cenno sulle origini delle cacce arsnovistiche', in *L'Ars Nova Italiana del Trecento III*, ed. F. Alberto Gallo (Certoaldo, 1970), 67–81; Dorothea Baumann, *Die dreistimmige italienische Lied-Satztechnik im Trecento* (Baden-Baden, 1979), 41–3; Newes, 'Fuga and Related Contrapuntal Procedures', 379–414; and John Griffiths, *Hunting the Origins*. The caccia has been successively linked to the French chasse, Italian madrigal, motet and simple canonic rounds. The latter view, expressed by Toguchi and Griffiths, has had the strongest impact on the present article, although I am fully aware that there might not have been any single prototype of the genre (see Martinez, *Die Musik des frühen Trecento*, 52).

<sup>10</sup> The term 'ostinato' is used here in its general sense, as a spectrum of different repetitive techniques ranging from the exact repetition of a harmonic or melodic pattern to a rather flexible varied repetition. In a canonic piece, repetition is certainly an integral part of the compositional process. However, ostinato fragments reveal the intensified density of repetitions which are not produced by the canonic technique itself. The early history of ostinato is discussed in Ernst Apfel, *Grundlagen einer Geschichte der Satztechnik, Teil III: Untersuchungen zur Entstehung und Frühgeschichte des Ostinato in der komponierten Mehrstimmigkeit* (Saarbrücken, 1976), 6–17. John Griffiths (*Hunting the Origins*) was the first to draw attention to the ostinato phenomenon presented in the early Trecento canonic repertoire. His arguments were, however, mainly based on analyses of two-voiced madrigals (*Ogni diletto, Cavalcando, Giunge'l bel tempo*) rather than three-voiced cacce, which are the focus of the present article.

<sup>11</sup> The static and sectional construction of the caccia's texture (as opposed to the late fourteenth-century French *superius* canons) has been pointed out by Virginia Newes, 'Chace, Caccia, Fuga: The Convergence of French and Italian Traditions', *Musica Disciplina*, 41 (1987), 27–57, at 37.

Ex. 1 Jacopo da Bologna, *Oselletto selvagio*, cantus I–II only, mm 41–55.

Jacopo's *Oselletto selvagio* (for three voices)<sup>12</sup> and *Per sparverare*,<sup>13</sup> cadential patterns are similarly located and structured, appearing in the second halves of the strophe after a long rest in the upper voice, and reiterated regularly thereafter (every four or ten breves, respectively).<sup>14</sup> In both cacce, moreover, the approach to the cadential area is characterised by *ritardando*, with the rhythmic activity slowing down to a breve-and-long pace in the upper voices as well as the tenor. (In *Oselletto selvagio*, Jacopo embellishes the skeleton with triplets in cantus I, measure 42, and cantus II, measure 46, but the deceleration remains perceptible nonetheless. See Ex. 1.) Interestingly, cadential patterns occupy important positions in both cacce. In *Per sparverare*, the introduction of the pattern coincides with a climactic textual and musical passage ('*Guarda, guarda, guarda là!*'). In *Oselletto selvagio*, the repetition of the cadential gesture appears to take on a rhetorical function: it begins when the text turns to a critique of contemporary art ('*et tutti si fan maestri*', mm. 40–7) suggesting an ironic subtext (as Elena Abramov-van Rijk has noted with regard to the unusual accentuation and prolongation of the word '*tutti*').<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 96–8, at 97 (mm. 42ff.). Most references to cacce in this article will be to this edition and *idem*, ed., *Italian Secular Music, Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century 6–8, 10* (Monaco, 1967–77), hereafter abbreviated as *PMFC*. For a diplomatic edition of *Oselletto selvagio*, *Per sparverare* and *Segugi a corta*, see Oliver Huck and Sandra Dieckmann, eds., *Die mehrfach überlieferten Kompositionen des frühen Trecento*, 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 2007), 2: 5–9 and 294–317. For editions of three newly discovered Reg cacce, see Gozzi and Ziino, 'The Mischiati Fragment', 306–14. Another important edition is Tiziana Sucato, ed., *Il codice Rossiano 215* (Florence, 2003), 133–6 (*Or qua conpagni*). See also Nino Pirrotta, ed., *The Music of Fourteenth-Century Italy, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 8* ([Rome], 1954–64).

<sup>13</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 77–9, at 78 (mm. 69–71).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 97 (mm. 41–3, 45–7, 49–51 and 54–5; see also Ex. 1); and *ibid.* (mm. 69–71, 79–81, 89–91 and 99–101). See also Huck and Dieckmann, 1: 111–12 and 2: 313–14.

<sup>15</sup> See Elena Abramov-van Rijk, *Parlar cantando: The Practice of Reciting Verses in Italy from 1300 to 1600* (Bern and New York, 2009), 322.

Another early caccia, Giovanni da Cascia's *Per larghi prati*, is a good example of the same *ritardando* procedure. A cadential figure consisting of two concords – E/c# / g# and D/d/a – repeats more or less regularly through most of the strophe, either in full (three-voice) or reduced (two-voice, E/c# and D/d, or E/g# and D/a) form. Initially, the rhythmic accent falls on the second concord,<sup>16</sup> but it later shifts to the first.<sup>17</sup> Finally the pattern changes its harmonic configuration and loses its cadential force.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, as in both of Jacopo's cacce, the repetition is accentuated by considerable rhythmic deceleration, rendering it clearly audible.<sup>19</sup>

The later caccia repertoire provides further examples. In Vincenzo da Rimini's *In forma quasi*, a somewhat extended cadential gesture built on two melodic phrases (one with a downward movement from a to d, the other with a 'winding around' figure, e–d–c#–d) makes its first appearance in measures 52–6, after which it repeats regularly every thirteen measures.<sup>20</sup> (It should be noted, however, that both phrases had appeared earlier in the piece, but were initially separate from one other.)<sup>21</sup> As in Jacopo's cacce, the repetition pattern coincides with salient points of the text: the second phrase marks the beginning of a vivid description of a market scene ('*O della barca, premi e'n via*', mm. 31–4), while the cadential pattern starts with the emphatic '*Chi vuol pesce?*' (mm. 52–6).

Taking the formulaic structure of the cadence into consideration, it is logical to assume that the kind of cadential periodicity described above is not confined to the caccia repertoire. Indeed, a considerable number of similar cadential patterns can be found among early Trecento madrigals and what Nino Pirrotta considered southern *siciliane* recast (in PR) into the northern ballata form.<sup>22</sup> The main differences involve the regularity of cadential repeats in the cacce and the specific rhythmic profile of the cadences, which as we have noted include written-out *ritardando*.

The former feature could be explained as a logical consequence of the canonic setting, but the latter hints at a peculiar aspect of performance practice. As Brooks Toliver has pointed out with respect to the madrigal repertoire transmitted in Rs, written-out deceleration and simultaneous rests may indicate points of communi-

<sup>16</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 74, and PMFC 6: 62–3 (mm. 10–12, 20–2; 28–30, 39–40, 48–50).

<sup>17</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 75, and PMFC 6: 63–4 (mm. 57–9, 67–9, 76–9).

<sup>18</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 75, and PMFC 6: 64 (mm. 87–8 and 97–8).

<sup>19</sup> The same compositional idea can be observed in a much later piece written by Niccolò da Perugia, *La fiera testa*. A cadential pattern consisting of two concords – G/e/b and F/f/c – is repeated (with a few slight changes in the second half of the strophe) throughout the whole section, making its last appearance in the final cadence. See Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 50–2, and PMFC 8: 141–3 (mm. 5–6, 10–11, 15–16, 20–1, [24], [25–26], 35–6, 40–1 and 47–8). Square brackets are occasionally used here to indicate a different variant (reduced, embellished, etc.) of the pattern under consideration.

<sup>20</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 48–9, and PMFC 7: 10–11 (mm. 65–9, 78–82, 91–5 and, finally, 104–8).

<sup>21</sup> Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 47–8, and PMFC 7: 9–10 (mm. 5–7, 18–20 and 41–3; 31–4 and 44–7).

<sup>22</sup> Nino Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque: A Collection of Essays* (Cambridge, MA, 1984), 51–71 ('New Glimpses of an Unwritten Tradition'), and 72–9 ('The Oral and Written Traditions of Music'). The early madrigal repertoire offers many examples of brief melodic and harmonic patterns, especially in the cadential area. See, for example, Oliver Huck, *Die Musik des frühen Trecento* (Hildesheim, 2005), 105–17.

I, m. 165; II, m. 171 "Il lu-po se ne va col

I, m. 176; II, m. 182 A quel ro - mo - re

I, m. 184; II, m. 190 Fu - gi-ron in ver me le gio - vi - net - - - - -

I, m. 200 ...[net] - - - - -

I, m. 168; II, m. 174 mio a - gnol - - - - - lo!"

I, m. 180; II, m. 186 ri - strict - tel

I, m. 192; II, m. 198 - - - - - [tel]

I, m. 204 tel

Ex. 2 Niccolò da Perugia, *State su, donne*, mm. 165–204.

cation between singers in the course of an improvisatory performance practice.<sup>23</sup> Cadential patterns, which have similar characteristics and serve the same compositional purpose regardless of genre – namely to demarcate the musico-poetic form – may offer a glimpse into a presumably unwritten aspect of canonic composition. Although the cadential figures considered above are too brief to allow broad generalisations, they give us an appropriate context to examine longer and more solid ostinato schemes.

Most brief melodic repetitions are found in the cadential area (i.e., at the ends of musico-poetic periods), but in a few cases musical periodicity is not supported by the text, resulting in an overlap of musically regular and poetically irregular structures. Niccolò's caccia *State su, donne*, measures 165–204 (Ex. 2) illustrates this complex musico-textual relationship.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Brooks Toliver, 'Improvisation in the Madrigals of the Rossi Codex', *Acta Musicologica*, 64 (1992), 165–76, at 166.

<sup>24</sup> Note that Examples 2–7 provide a synoptic diagram of the excerpt under consideration, not a usual score (as in Exx. 1, 8–11). In all the examples, the top voice (cantus I) is indicated as 'I', the middle voice (cantus II) as 'II', and the tenor as 'T'.

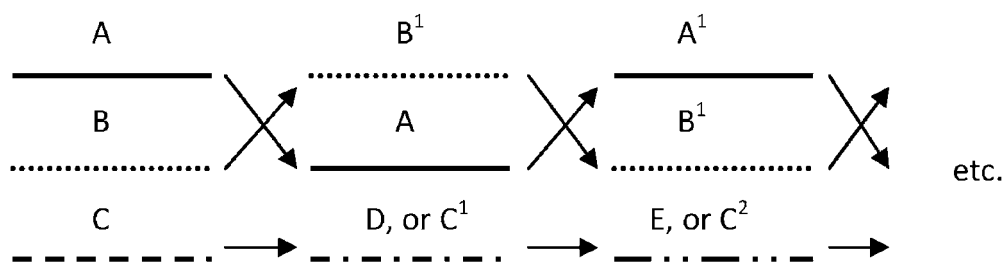


Fig. 1 A scheme of the voice-exchange procedure in the two upper voices.

This excerpt includes three text lines of irregular length comprising eleven, seven and eleven syllables, and occupying ten, eight and fifteen measures, respectively (the third is twenty-one measures long in cantus I): “‘Il lupo se ne va col mio agnello!’ [11] / A quel romor’ ristrette [7] / Fugiron inver me le giovinette! [11]’. Despite the musical and poetic irregularities, however, the passage includes a regularly repeated melodic figure (cantus I: mm. 168–71, 180–3, 192–5 and 198–201; cantus II: mm. 174–7, 186–9 and 198–201) occupying a different position in each musico-poetic period. In the first line, it is incorporated into the end of a syllabic section and the beginning of a melisma (‘mio agnel-[lo]’); it then appears at the end of the second line (‘[romo]-re ristrette’); in the last line it is buried in a richly embellished penultimate melisma (‘[giovi]-net-[te]’), which itself includes a slightly varied internal repetition (cantus I: mm. 188–91 and 200–4). The persistent repetition, and the voice-exchange procedure resulting from it (compare mm. 174–7 and 180–3, 186–9 and 192–5, 194–7 and 200–3),<sup>25</sup> create an effect of a circular motion akin to one produced by a ‘round’ canon.

Now let us turn to large-scale repetition patterns – melodic and harmonic – in order to prove that such archaic compositional procedures as voice-exchange, ‘circular’ melodic motion and ostinato were incorporated into the caccia’s texture early on, and constituted an essential element of the canonic technique. Melodic repetition is usually confined to the upper duo and proceeds according to the scheme represented in Figure 1: the two upper voices build an ostinato unit, a structural framework, while the tenor either moves freely or partly supports the ostinato with its own repetition scheme.

Piero’s *Con dolce brama* is a good example of this. From measure 52 on, each fourteen-measure unit in the upper voices makes a variation on a melodic shape outlined in measures 38–51 (see Exx. 3–4). Each variation not only replicates the original framework, but also a considerable number of specific melodic turns and ornaments (see the framed segments in Examples 3–4), suggesting that the repetition pattern was wholly intentional.

The musical periodicity of *Con dolce brama* is reinforced by regular poetic form (equal hendecasyllables) and steady declamation, yet the musico-textual relationship is complex at the semantic level: the ostinato reveals itself at the very point where

<sup>25</sup> See Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 91–2, and PMFC 8: 189.

I, m. 24; II, m. 38 "An - di - a - mo al - por - to del - la don - na -

I, m. 32; II, m. 66 Lo - ven - to è buon e tutti al - zon l'an - ten -

I, m. 80; II, m. 94 "Is - sa, is - sa, pur te di ma'o'n ma - - - - no!

mi - al! Et c - gli tos - to pre - sc il suo - fra - schet - to.

na. "Ai - os, Ai - os, c l'ar - bo - ro driz - zan - - - - do.

La vcla è su, da vol - ta che si sa - - - - no. A[do]

Ex. 3 Piero, *Con dolce brama*, mm. 24–107.

the poetic text introduces direct speech and shifts from description to action ('*Su! Su! A banco, a banco*'). At first glance, this correlation may appear coincidental, but it has been noted in the examples cited above (Jacopo's *Per sparverare*, for instance) and will be further substantiated below.

Niccolò's caccia, *State su, donne* (mm. 60–96), to which we now return, provides another example of melodic repetition (see Ex. 5). While the variation technique here closely resembles that of the preceding example, the relationship between music and text appears to be more intricate at the structural level: poetic lines of irregular length overlap with the repetition pattern, which is not periodic either – note the elision in the second statement of the original phrase, measures 73–84. The overlap is particularly noticeable in measures 83–7, where the short line '*Questa pesa cento*' breaks into two syntagmas ('*Questa pesa*' and '*cento*') in the course of repetition.

Taken together, Examples 2 and 5 from Niccolò's caccia display a skilful equilibrium between regular and irregular patterns – in the poetic text, the music and, finally, in the coordination of music and text.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Another illustrative example of an irregular repetition pattern is Lorenzo's caccia *A poste messe* (see in particular cantus I, mm. 22–39). This caccia has been discussed at length in Alexander Main, 'Lorenzo Masini's Deer Hunt', in *The Commonwealth of Music, in Honor of Curt Sachs*, ed. Gustave Reese and Rose Brandel (New York, 1965), 130–62.



I, m. 38; II, m. 52  
"Su! su! a ban - co. a ban - co. pi - glia vo - ga!"

I, m. 66; II, m. 80  
Chi - na el qua - der - na! tut - ti ti - ran - - -

I, m. 93; II, m. 107  
[A] - do le fon - de ca - la l'an - zo - le - - - lo. A\_\_\_\_\_

E da le pop - pe mo - la via la so - - - ga.

do, "Sa - ia la ve - la saia in - ves - ti go - mc - nc."

den - tra - - - za mo - la del - la so - - - sta.

Ex. 4 Piero, *Con dolce brama*, mm. 38–121.

Examples drawn from the repertoire of early northern cacce (Piero's *Con dolce brama* and Jacopo's *Per sparverare*) and Niccolò's later pieces (*Dappoi che 'l sole* and *Passando con pensier*) provide the bulk of evidence for a different scheme of melodic repetition, represented in Figure 2. Here, surprisingly, the upper duo interacts with the tenor by means of borrowing and elaborating an extended melodic fragment from its beginning.<sup>27</sup>

Both the scheme of voice-exchange procedures in general and the method of borrowing the tenor melody in the upper voices in particular are strikingly similar in all four pieces. In each case, the cantus ornaments the skeletal shape of the original tenor phrase by means of a simple diminution, breaking the tenor's long notes into shorter ones to accommodate the syllabic declamation of the text (see Exx. 6 and 7).

To the examples already cited a considerable number of less extended tenor borrowings in other pieces could be added, such as the anonymous *Or qua compagni* (tenor, mm. 22–7; cantus I, mm. 31–6; cantus II, mm. 40–5) and Piero's *Con bracchi assai* (tenor, mm. 49–51; cantus I, mm. 57–9; cantus II, mm. 65–7).<sup>28</sup> It is evident in these

<sup>27</sup> A close examination of the tenor voice and its functions in the caccia's texture has been undertaken in Martinez, *Die Musik des frühen Trecento*, 49–53, and Baumann, *Die dreistimmige italienische Lied-Satztechnik im Trecento*, 44–9.

<sup>28</sup> See Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Cacce*, 64–5 and 20–1, and PMFC 8: 72–3 and 6: 7–8, respectively.

I, m. 60  
Po - y su per l'on - - de, chor - ron

I, m. 73  
"pe - sa - mi co - ste - - - - - y"

I, m. 85  
cen - - - - to, e que - sta ben du - gen - - - -

al mu - li - no. "O mu - gna - io. o mu - gna - io".

"Pe - sa an - che le - - - y!" "Que - sta - - - pe - sa

to!" "Tu sc' u - na gras - - - - - sa!"

Ex. 5 Niccolò, *State su, donne*, mm. 60–96.

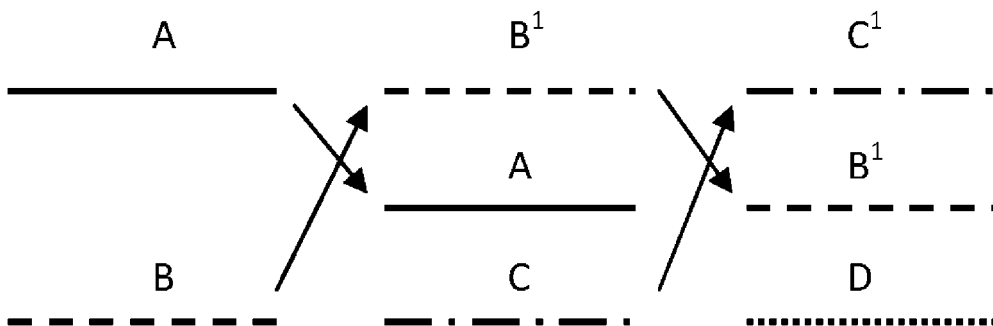


Fig. 2 A scheme of the voice-exchange procedure in all three voices.

examples that the tenor is integrated into the canonic texture to such an extent that it cannot be regarded as an 'additional' part, or simply harmonic 'filler' attached to the upper duo. The three-part texture functions as one undivided unit rather than the sum of 'two plus one'.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> This might reinforce Kosaku Toguchi's idea ('Sulla struttura', 67–81) that the caccia could have employed more than two canonic voices at the early stage of its evolution.

T, m. 1

I, m. 9; II, m. 17

...dol-zi ra-zi a-scon - de E la lu - na di - mo - stra' suo splen-do - re

Ex. 6 Niccolò, *Dappoi che 'l sole*, mm. 1–26.

T, m. 1

I, m. 12; II, m. 23

[Pas]san - do - - - con pen - sicc per un bos - chet - - - to.

Don-ne per quel-lo gi-van fior co - glien - - - do. "To' \_\_\_\_\_ quel, to' quel!" di-

ccn - do. "Ec - cho-lo. cc - cho-lo!" "Che é? Che é?" "Il fior a[lvso]!"

Ex. 7 Niccolò, *Passando con pensier*, mm. 1–47.

While the tenor's involvement in the repetition pattern permits us to reconsider its function in the texture, the diminution technique utilised in the cantus part may shed light on the passage in the *Capitulum* dealing with contrapuntal rules and voice disposition: 'There should be in the number of singers a similar order as was mentioned of the motets, namely, when one ascends the second descends, the third remains firm, the fourth pauses, and the fifth breaks (*quintus rumpat*).'<sup>30</sup> These contrapuntal rules are too vague to allow any firm conclusions; they also appear in an

<sup>30</sup> 'In numero canentium habere vult talis ordo, qualis dictus est in mottetis, scilicet quod, quando unus ascendit, alter descendat, tertius firmus stet, quartus pauset, quintus rumpat.'

earlier section of the treatise dealing with the motet.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, this passage seems to embrace at least some features of the caccia's texture, particularly the complementary upward and downward motion (*quando unus ascendit, alter descendat*) so characteristic of melodic writing in the caccia's upper voices. If the treatise's author (or authors) were referring to actual musical practice, moreover, the description of the fifth voice ('*quintus rumpat*') might allude to a diminution procedure akin to the one encountered in the early caccia repertoire, and not merely to any kind of embellishment or ornamentation.

Let us now proceed to a different compositional strategy, namely the fixing of harmonic structure by means of a simple ostinato either implied by the harmonic context or presented explicitly.<sup>32</sup> We begin with three canonic pieces from the early Trecento that reveal an identical harmonic pattern in which A- and G-rooted concords alternate. The anonymous *Segugi a corta* (Ex. 8) is transmitted in two different metric versions or *divisiones*, *quaternaria* (FP, fol. 99r) and *senaria imperfecta* (Lo, fol. 77v), but with almost identical pitch contents.<sup>33</sup> In both versions, the second half of

Ex. 8 *Segugi a corta*, mm. 32–65.

<sup>31</sup> Margaret Bent has persuasively shown close textural links between the Italian motet and caccia in her groundbreaking study of the former genre, 'The Fourteenth-Century Italian Motet', in *L'Ars Nova Italiana del Trecento VI*, ed. Giulio Cattin and Patrizia Dalla Vecchia (Certaldo, 1992), 85–125, at 104–6.

<sup>32</sup> This part of research owes much to John Griffiths's discussion (*Hunting the Origins*, 12ff.) of various harmonic models in the Trecento canonic repertoire, with an emphasis on the two-voice canonic madrigals.

<sup>33</sup> The FP version offers 'f' instead of 'e' in m. 15; an extra 'c' in m. 29; 'e' instead of 'd' in m. 36; and, finally, 'a' instead of 'e' in m. 37. It could well be that the same original with Marchettan stemless semibreves (and perhaps with an archaic '*cantus mixtus*' writing) was differently 'translated' by the FP and Lo scribes. See the most recent contribution to this particular notational problem by Marco Gozzi, 'New Light on Italian Trecento Notation', *Recercare*, 13 (2001), 5–78, at 50 ff.

The musical score consists of two systems, each with five staves. The first system includes a vocal line with lyrics: "la!" "Qual è, qual è, qual è, vien quà, vien quà, che qui son gli\_"; a second vocal line with lyrics: "Ve' la, ve' la, ve'!" "Dra-gon, Dra-gon, tè, tè, tè." "Ol - la, ol - la, ol-"; a bass line; a piano accompaniment line with chords; and a lower piano accompaniment line. The second system includes a vocal line with lyrics: "or - si!" Sen - ti - va\_ quan - do ad al-tra cac -"; a second vocal line with lyrics: "la!" "Qual è, qual è, qual è, vien quà, vien quà, che qui son gli\_"; a bass line; a piano accompaniment line with chords; and a lower piano accompaniment line. The score is written in a key with one flat and a common time signature.

Ex. 8 Continued

the strophe, which starts with direct speech and the hunter's commands ('*Ve' là, ve' là ve', 'Dragon Dragon, tè, tè, tè', etc.*), deserves particular attention. Although the text offers a vivid and picturesque description of the hunting characteristic of many cacce, the melodic writing here becomes surprisingly 'formulaic' and static, as if the composer were seeking to imitate natural speech or the hunter's shouts musically, rather than to compose a beautiful melody per se. The repetitious and static melodic

The musical score consists of two systems, each with five staves. The top staff of each system is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "cia cor - - - - - or - si!" Sen - ti - va - quan - do ad al - tra cac - - - - - si. - - - - - cia cor - - - - - si. - - - - -". The second staff is a vocal line in treble clef with the same key signature and time signature. The third staff is a bass line in bass clef. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. The fifth staff is a piano accompaniment line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 8 *Continued*

writing, in turn, generates a clearly audible ostinato pattern with the alternation of A and G concords, resulting in an almost monochromatic-sounding segment with the predominant 'A' sonority occupying some twenty-five of thirty-two measures.

On one hand, the use of ostinato as musical counterbalance to the lively poetic description in *Segugi a corta* resembles Piero's *Con dolce brama*. The two cacce also appear closely related in their transmission (Piero's piece immediately precedes

*Segugi a corta* in FP and exploits the same *quaternaria* division throughout the strophe), melodic writing<sup>34</sup> and compositional planning.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, the harmonic pattern links *Segugi a corta* to two canonic ritornelli, one from Piero's madrigal *Si com' al canto*, the other from the anonymous caccia *Chiama il bel papagallo* (Ex. 9) from the Reg fragment, both of which are based on a concise A–A–A–G harmonic progression.

In *Chiama il bel papagallo*, the ostinato is easily perceptible from the very beginning of the ritornello, particularly in the explicitly repetitive tenor voice (cf. mm. 48–51, 52–5 and 56–9); in Piero's madrigal the pattern is buried in extensive ornamentations of both voices, revealing itself only through a series of reductions.

The two anonymous cacce and Piero's canonic madrigal form a single group at the compositional level, revealing the same ostinato foundation for the canonic procedure. For this reason it is tempting to suggest Piero's authorship of the two anonymous pieces, particularly *Segugi a corta*, but we should be very cautious in offering such an hypothesis based on these compositional similarities. It is well known that

Ex. 9 *Chiama il bel papagallo*, ritornello.

<sup>34</sup> Two pieces share many particular ornamental figures including an exceptionally rare one from the final cadence of *Segugi a corta* (cf. mm. 61–4 and mm. 110–13 in Piero's piece).

<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, the stylistic proximity of the two pieces has already been noted by Nino Pirrotta, who went so far as to propose Piero's authorship of *Segugi a corta*. 'Piero e l'impressionismo musicale del secolo XIV', in *L'Ars Nova Italiana del Trecento I*, ed. Bianca Becherini (Certaldo, 1962), 57–74, at 66–68. Although this attribution was subsequently questioned, the two pieces could be considered a good couple, bonded as they are by many common musical gestures.

The musical score consists of five systems of staves. The first system has two vocal staves and three lute staves. The lyrics are: "e Ro - ma - gna can - tan - do van - no e con a - mor si - ba -". The second system continues the lyrics: "Lom-bar - di - a. Mar - ca c Ro - ma - gna can - tan - do". The third system contains a question mark "[?]" above the first vocal staff. The fourth system continues the lyrics: "gna. van - no e con a - mor si - ba - gna." and also contains a question mark "[?]" above the first vocal staff. The fifth system continues the lyrics: "gna." and also contains a question mark "[?]" above the first vocal staff. The lute accompaniment consists of three staves per system, with various rhythmic patterns and chordal textures.

## Ex. 9 Continued

in the Trecento a small group of compositions may indicate a competition between different musicians belonging to the same milieu, rather than the products of individual creation.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Testifying to this tendency are different settings of the same text (including *Si com' al canto*) and the famous 'Perlaro' cycle. On the former, see Kurt von Fischer, 'Das Madrigal "Si com' al canto della bella Iguana" von Magister Piero und Jacopo da Bologna', in *Analysen. Festschrift für Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Werner Breig, Reinhold Brinkmann and Elmar Budde (Stuttgart, 1984), 46–56; concerning the latter, the most recent contribution is Robert Nosow, 'The perlaro cycle reconsidered', *Studi musicali*, nuova serie, 2/2 (2011), 253–80.



The later caccia repertoire presents us with a few examples of harmonic ostinato, though few repetition patterns turn out to be as concise and as easily memorised as the 'A-G' pattern considered above. The beginning of Niccolò's *Dappoi che 'l sole*, for instance, combines melodic and harmonic repetition, the latter emerging almost as a by-product of the former (see Ex. 10). Indeed, the complex imitation scheme (cantus I borrows, at least partly, from the tenor; cantus II imitates cantus I) leaves virtually no opportunity for varying the harmonic progression, which again is narrowed down to the G and A concords (leaving aside a few auxiliary concords on F and one on B<sub>2</sub>).

The image displays a musical score for the beginning of Niccolò's *Dappoi che 'l sole*. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes:
 

- I, m. 1:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: D4 (half), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).
- II, m. 1:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Rests for the first eight measures.
- I, m. 1:** Bass clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: G3 (half), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (half).
- Harmonic reduction:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Shows chords: G3-A3, G3-A3-B3, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4.
- Ostinato basis:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: G3 (half), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (half).

 The lyrics for the first system are: "Dap - - - - - poi che'l so - le i".
   
 The second system includes:
 

- I, m. 1:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).
- I, m. 1:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: D4 (half), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).
- I, m. 1:** Bass clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: G3 (half), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (half).
- Harmonic reduction:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Shows chords: G3-A3, G3-A3-B3, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4, G3-A3-B3-C4.
- Ostinato basis:** Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. Melody: G3 (half), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (half).

 The lyrics for the second system are: "dol - zi ra - zi a - scon - de E la lu - na di - mo - stra'l suo" and "Dap - - - - - poi che'l so - le i".

Ex. 10 Niccolò da Perugia, *Dappoi che 'l sole*, mm. 1-26.

The image displays a musical score for a vocal piece, labeled 'Ex. 10 Continued'. It consists of five staves. The top two staves are vocal lines in G-clef (soprano and alto), with lyrics written below them. The lyrics are: 'splen-do - re. Sen - ti un\_\_\_ gran ro - mo - re for - te gri - da - re dol - zi ra - zi a - scon - dc E la lu - na di - mo - stra'l suo splen-do - re.' The bottom three staves are piano accompaniment, including a bass line and two treble clef staves. The music is in a minor key, indicated by a single flat in the key signature.

Ex. 10 *Continued*

Another example is Gherardello's *Tosto che l'alba*, which includes a large ostinato fragment in the central section of the strophe (beginning at m. 22) comprising seven statements of a 'mutable' harmonic pattern.<sup>37</sup> (Ex. 11 gives only three of seven statements; all seven are represented in Fig. 3.)

The original progression consists of only three concords based on F, G and A (F–G–F–A–G–F); other sonorities (D and C) are introduced later. As is evident in Fig. 3, the pattern gradually changes in the course of repetition, particularly at the beginning and end (the last statement, which deviates sharply from the original, is the exception). No change, however, occurs in the core A–G progression (see the central framed section in Fig. 3) which produces a strong ostinato effect. Even the final cadence of the strophe (mm. 90–4) could be regarded as a concise and abbreviated variant of the original pattern (F–G–A–G–F). As in Piero's *Con dolce brama*, the musical periodicity of this portion of *Tosto che l'alba* is further reinforced by the text underlay, the main difference being the highly irregular poetic structure (compared with the regular hendecasyllables of Piero's piece).

It has by now become clear that sufficient evidence exists to argue that the repetition patterns considered above constitute an essential element of caccia's compositional planning and canonic writing; that these counterbalance the lively melodic writing and vivid poetic descriptions characteristic of the genre; and that structurally, ostinato procedure (particularly large-scale melodic and harmonic patterns) is an important link between 'round' and 'continuous' canonic forms. Let us conclude this examination by briefly considering other examples of ostinato-based compositions

<sup>37</sup> This term is proposed in John Griffiths, *Hunting the Origins*, 15.

from adjacent repertoires in order to contextualise the procedure. I should also like to address the broader issue of caccia's genesis and historical development at the intersection of oral/aural and written traditions.

At first glance, ostinato technique seems to have little relevance to Trecento polyphony broadly considered, but a few examples stand out from the rest in their extensive use of repetition patterns. I refer to the presumably improvised Cividale

I, m. 22

II, m. 22

T, m. 22

Harmonic reduction

Ostinato basis

Su al - to al monte con buon ca - ni al ma - no E gli bracchetti al pia - no

"Al - let - ta li can, te, te, te, te, Vi - o - la, te, Pri - me - ra, te!"

Ex. 11 Gherardello da Firenze, *Tosto che l'alba*, mm. 22–51.

E ne la spiaggia ad or-di - ne - cia - scu-no.  
 Su al-to al mon-te con buon ca-ni al ma - no E gli bracchetti al pia-no

Ex. 11 Continued

mm. 22-31	F	G	F	A	A	A	G	G	G	F	F
mm. 32-41	F	G	F	A	A	A	G	G	G	G	F
mm. 42-51	F	G	F	A	A	A	G	G	G	G	F
mm. 52-61	F	G	F (A)	A	A	A	G	G	G	F	F
mm. 62-71	F	G	F (A, C)	A	A	A	G	G	G	F	F
mm. 72-81	F	F	C	A	A	A	G	G	G	F	D
mm. 82-90	D	D	C	D	A	A	G	G	G	F	F
mm. 90-95	F	G		A			G			F	F

Fig. 3 An ostinato pattern from Gherardello's *Tosto che l'alba*, mm. 22–95.

repertoire of so-called '*cantus planus binatim*' and related styles of 'simple polyphony',<sup>38</sup> including a substantial number of pieces based on voice-exchange technique.<sup>39</sup> Although these simple yet ingenuous pieces differ stylistically as well as functionally from the elaborate and refined caccia, they testify to the existence of an aural experience that could well have manifested itself in other repertoires.

<sup>38</sup> For an overview of '*cantus planus binatim*', see F. Alberto Gallo, 'The Practice of Cantus Planus Binatim in Italy from the Beginning of the 14th to the Beginning of the 16th Century', in *Le polifonie primitive in Friuli e in Europa*, ed. Cesare Corsi and Pierluigi Petrobelli (Rome, 1989), 13–30. See also Margaret Bent, 'The Definition of Simple Polyphony. Some Questions', in *Le polifonie primitive in Friuli e in Europa*, 33–42.

<sup>39</sup> See editions and facsimile reproductions in Pierluigi Petrobelli, ed., *Le polifonie primitive di Cividale* (Cividale del Friuli, 1980); F. Alberto Gallo and Giuseppe Vecchi, eds., *I più antichi monumenti sacri italiani* (Bologna, 1968). See other examples in Angelo Rusconi, 'Testimonianze di "polifonia semplice" nelle biblioteche di Bergamo', in *Un millennio di polifonia liturgica tra oralità e scrittura*, ed. Giulio Cattin and F. Alberto Gallo (Bologna, 2002), 133–59, at 141–4 and 158; and Martinez, *Die Musik des frühen Trecento*, 125 and Appendix XII. For an overview of Cividale sources, see Michael Scott Cuthbert, 'Trecento Fragments and Polyphony Beyond the Codex', Ph.D. diss., Harvard University (2006), 230–76, [www.trecento.com/dissertation](http://www.trecento.com/dissertation).

Another example is even more promising since it is a madrigal transmitted in an early northern Italian source (Rs) which belongs to the same cultural ambit as most early cacce. Thomas Marrocco was the first to draw attention to the anonymous madrigal *E con chaval*, the melodic structure of which reveals a double ostinato.<sup>40</sup> While the cantus melody includes many embellishments of, and deviations from, the original pattern, the tenor line consists of rigid repetitions of a simple progression (A–G–E–F–G–A–G) which is essentially built around the ‘A–G’ pattern discussed above in connection with some early cacce. Marrocco concludes: ‘we have before us a composition which may well be considered a landmark in Italian Trecento music. But it is curious that, despite the existence of this highly sophisticated and cleverly organized composition by a highly disciplined composer, the ostinato technique remains a unicum, for nowhere among the several hundred compositions of the Trecento repertoire it is again encountered’ (emphasis mine).<sup>41</sup> It is time finally to incorporate this madrigal into a more substantial body of ostinato-based Trecento compositions.<sup>42</sup>

Although the pieces considered above clearly show that the ostinato effect was familiar to Trecento musicians, they do not prove its structural importance for canonic writing. Canonic repertoires of other countries might offer additional evidence for the connection between early forms of continuous canon and ostinato technique. Since this issue is beyond the scope of this article, I will restrict myself to a few notable examples from the English repertoire.

As Margaret Bent has pointed out, a certain number of canons from the Old Hall Manuscript require the support of a repeating ostinato.<sup>43</sup> In her detailed analysis of Pycard’s five-voice canonic Gloria, she notes a certain periodicity and freely shifting repetition pattern, although she ultimately concludes that ‘the ostinato character was a by-product of the canon, not the canon of the ostinato’.<sup>44</sup> In a canonic Gloria by Dunstaple, however, the periodicity of harmonic changes and canonic structure leave little doubt that ‘the whole composition could have been built on a minimally simple harmonic ostinato’.<sup>45</sup> These examples suggest that ostinato patterns did not lose their compositional function with the decline of simpler ‘round’ and ‘rondellus’ forms of canon, which include repetition and periodicity as an integral part of their

<sup>40</sup> See Thomas Marrocco, ‘The Newly-Discovered Ostiglia Pages of the Vatican Rossi Codex 215: The Earliest Italian Ostinato’, *Acta Musicologica*, 39 (1967), 84–91. His analysis was reproduced in the edition of the madrigal, PMFC 8: 211.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>42</sup> Other examples of the ostinato procedure and voice-exchange technique include Giovanni da Cascia’s *In sulla ripa* (cf. two melismas, mm. 13–24 and 25–37, particularly the tenor line, PMFC 6: 38–9). The voice-exchange technique is used in two later madrigals, *Astio non mori mai* by Andrea da Firenze (PMFC 10: 4, mm. 1–8) and *Non più infelici* by Paolo da Firenze (PMFC 9: 150–3, mm. 1–15).

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Margaret Bent, ‘A New Canonic Gloria and the Changing Profile of Dunstaple’, *Plainsong and Medieval Music*, 5 (1996), 45–67, at 60. See also the discussion of the Old Hall canons and their presumable political context in Oliver Vogel, ‘The Canons of the Old Hall Manuscript: Music and the Structuring of National Representation’, in *Canons and Canonic Techniques*, 47–59.

<sup>44</sup> Margaret Bent, ‘Pycard’s Double Canon: Evidence of Revision?’, in *Counterpoint, Composition, and Musica Ficta* (New York and London, 2002), 255–72, at 268.

<sup>45</sup> Bent, ‘A New Canonic Gloria’, 60–1.

structure, but rather were assimilated into the new continuous (through-composed) canonic form.

It might be argued that repetition patterns in early Trecento *cacce* suggest a process of assimilating an older *ostinato*-based improvisatory tradition, which could have been similar to that described in the *Capitulum de vocibus applicatis verbis*. *Ostinato* procedure in notated examples would be an elusive trace of what may have been a characteristic feature of the earlier unwritten tradition. The function of *ostinato* had, however, been changing all along the way, such that in the surviving early corpus of Trecento polyphony repetition patterns were used more or less straightforwardly, often in coordination with poetic structures, while in later pieces (by Gherardello, Lorenzo and Niccolò) the irregularity and complex structural relationship between musical repetition patterns and texts reveal a new, skilful and ingenious approach, not a simple emulation of the earlier exemplars. Although the significance of *ostinato* technique evidently declined gradually in the course of *caccia*'s historical development and structural transformation, attention to this phenomenon should be increased now as it might help illuminate a history that has thus far remained shrouded in mystery.

#### Appendix: sigla of manuscript cited

- FP *Florence*, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Panciatichi 26  
 Lo *London*, British Library, Add. 29987  
 PR *Paris*, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, n.a.fr. 6771  
 Reg *Reggio Emilia*, Archivio di Stato, Archivio Comune di Re[ggio], Appendice, Frammenti di codici musicali [Nr. 16]  
 Rs *Rome*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rossi 215 and *Ostiglia*, Biblioteca dell'Opera Pia Greggiati, mus. rari B 35  
 Sq *Florence*, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Mediceo-Palatino 87