

Aleksandra PATALAS (Cracow)

**In search of a mode of criticism.  
*Cribrum musicum* by Marco Scacchi  
and *Censura* by Filippo Kesperle**

When he was working on his first treatise to be published, *Cribrum musicum ad triticum Siferticum*<sup>1</sup> (a form of critical review of the compositional technique of an organist from Gdańsk, Paul Siefert, 1586–1666), Marco Scacchi (ca.1605–1662), the director of Władysław IV's Chapel Royal had already been an experienced instrumentalist and composer. As a theorist of music, however, he was taking his first steps. As a matter of fact, he did not consider himself a theorist, but a composer, a representative of the Roman school whose knowledge of theoretical issues was sound<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Marco SCACCHI *Cribrum musicum ad triticum Siferticum seu, Examinatio succincta Psalmorum, quos non ita pridem Paulus Sifertus Dantiscanus, in aede parochiali ibidem organaedus in lucem edidit, in qua clare & perspicue multa explicantur, quae summè necessaria ad artem melopœdicam esse solent.* Venezia, A. Vincenti, 1643. The print is available on <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/89-3-quod-2f-3/start.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Marco SCACCHI (1643: 13–14): “Verum de Theoreticorum opinione non sum valde sollicitus, quid senserint de Quarta & Octava, quia in nostro casu minus ad nos spectat de hoc disputare. Et si quis curiosus hoc inquirere vellet, videat Stapulensem, Zarlinum, Artusium & alios, qui copiosius hanc materiam pertractant. Sed quicquid sit, ego cum schola Romana Quartam inter Dissonantias connumerandam assero, si scilicet sola sine alia consonantia sit posita.”

Initiating his writings with a text of an argumentative nature, Scacchi selected an original, well thought-out, and persuasive form for *Cribrum musicum*. He chose to model his appraisal on critical papers published at either the end of the 16th century or at the beginning of the 17th century. Out of them most noteworthy seems to be *Alcuni salmi et motetti* (by Scacchi referred to as *Censura*<sup>3</sup>) from 1625 written by Filippo Kesperle.<sup>4</sup> It bears a considerable similarity to the publication by the Warsaw chapel master.<sup>5</sup>

### The germ of *Cribrum musicum*

Entering into the dispute with Siefert was to a large extent aroused by personal motives, which should not be overlooked while studying the writings by the royal *maestro di cappella*. Not only did his private concerns occupy a relatively large part of his texts, they also cast light on the evaluation of the compositions he analysed.<sup>6</sup> Scacchi's theoretical aptitude might never have found an outlet, had it not been for his personal experience, which proved to be so decisive that he shared it in the introduction to the treatise, i.e. the dedication to Kaspar Förster the Elder and the preface to the readers.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. footnote 28.

<sup>4</sup> Filippo KESPERLE *Alcuni salmi et motetti di Vincenzo De Grandis posti in spartitura da Filippo Kesperle*. Venezia, A. Vincenti, 1625.

<sup>5</sup> In *Cribrum musicum* we can also find some references to texts by Giovanni Maria ARTUSI in which he reviewed Monteverdi's madrigals: *L'Artusi ovvero Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica ragionamenti dui*. Venezia, G. Vincenti, 1600; *Seconda parte dell'Artusi ovvero Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica*. Venezia, G. Vincenti, 1603. Cf. Aleksandra PATALAS "Music theory of Giovanni Maria Artusi in the polemical writings and in the music of Marco Scacchi", *Musica Iagellonica* 4, 2007: 19–47.

<sup>6</sup> The problem has already been signalled by Waclaw KMICIC-MIELESZYŃSKI "Geneza *Cribrum musicum*". *Muzyka* 1957 no. 3: 3–15.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Marco SCACCHI (1643: 1): "In arenam (Candide Lector) cum Paulo Sifert descensus, nolui te instituti mei causam et occasionem celare. Profectus Dantiscum negotiorum causa ab amico quodam ego perhumaniter exceptus fui, qui, ut Genio meo morem gereret, (siquidem naturali quadam inclinatione ex aliorum scriptis ac studiis ad ulteriorem cognitionem pervenire non erubescio) aliquot Psalmos quatuor et quinque vocum non ita pridem a Paulo Sifert, in aede parochiali dictae civitatis Organaedo, in lucem editos et super cantum firmum compositos ad manus meas devenire curavit et cum apud simpliciores non mediocrem famam illum fuisse adeptum intellexissem, mira accensus cupiditate experiri volebam, num dicta factis responderent."; foreword: "Invitus (amice charissime) ad Siferticum triticum trituranandum & ventilandum manus admovi; non enim inviciae livor, nec inanis gloriae cupido, nec erga ipsum mali animi affectus ad id faciendum calcar subministrarunt, sed ipse idem Paulus Siferti

A few years before *Cribrum musicum* was published Scacchi had become involved in a dispute started in 1627 between Paul Siefert and Kaspar Förster the Elder, the chapel master of the local Marian church. Scacchi sided with the latter, who he had been befriended by. A student of Sweelinck, Siefert, once the organist of Zygmunt III's music chapel, had many times applied for the most prestigious post of the chapel master of the church of the Most Holy Virgin Mary in Gdańsk. Given to arguments, he alienated the majority of the local musical society. As a result the City Council never awarded the post to him. It severely hurt his pride when the function in question was offered to Förster, a teacher of music in Gdańsk Academic Gymnasium, a cantor in the church of the Holy Trinity and a bookseller<sup>8</sup>. As Förster's subordinate, for many years he could not come to terms with the situation and repeatedly filed official complaints to the City Council against the Kapellmeister.<sup>9</sup> The musicians' meeting took place probably in Förster's house in Gdańsk in 1640, when Scacchi was shown Siefert's psalms<sup>10</sup> which he later commented on in *Cribrum musicum*. It must have been in his interest to belittle Siefert as an artist, however, had it not been for the alleged arrogance of the organist, Scacchi might have been contented with an oral retort. In the meeting both composers exchanged their opinions on the formation of imitative sections featuring *cantus firmus* and presented samples of

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(ut ex eius praefatione ad Lectorem colligi potest) omnis rei causa, & origo fuit: & sic meae, Sacraeque Regiae Majestatis Musicorum existimationi, & famae consulendo, ex debito officij mei a tali cura me subtrahere non licuit." Similar references to the circumstances that prompted the formulation of Scacchi's theoretical observations can also be found in the introduction to Giovanni Maria ARTUSI (1600: 1<sup>r</sup>-2<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Isabel HEITJAN "Kaspar und Georg Förster, Buchhändler und Verleger zu Danzig im 17. Jahrhundert", *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 15, 1975; Jerzy Marian MICHALAK "Zwischen Kunst und Alltag. Caspar Förster der ältere, seine Familie und Verwandtschaft", in: *Musica Baltica. Im Umkreis des Wandels — von den cori spezzati zum konzertierenden Stil*, Akademia Muzyczna im. Stanisława Moniuszki w Gdańsku, Prace Specjalne 64. Gdańsk 2004.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Max SEIFFERT "Paul Siefert 1586–1666. Biographische Skizze", *Vierteljahrschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 7, 1891: 397–428; Danuta POPINIGIS "Sylwetka Paula Sieferta w świetle źródeł" ["Paul Siefert's profile in the light of source materials"], in: *Muzyka w Gdańsku wczoraj i dziś I* [*Gdańsk's music of yesteryear and of today I*], «Kultura muzyczna północnych ziem Polski» 3. Janusz KRASSOWSKI (ed.). Gdańsk 1988.

<sup>10</sup> The collection in question is Paul SIEFERT's *Psalmen Psalmen Davids, Nach Francöischer Melodey oder Weise in Music componirt, vnterschiedliche Theil mit 4. vnd 5. Stimmen zu singen, vnd mit allerhand Instrumenten zu gebrauchen, nebenst einem General-Baß. [...] Erster Theil*. Danzig, G. Rhete, 1640.

compositions they came up with on the spot. Having applied the contrapuntal criteria codified by Artusi and principles he learnt while studying under Giovanni Francesco Anerio, Scacchi noted some technical flaws in Siefert's method of composing<sup>11</sup>.

Allegedly, the reaction of the organist was violent. According to Scacchi, Siefert had overstepped the boundaries of decency: he boasted about his skills and denigrated Scacchi behind his back. He also implied that the disapproved psalms were an example of his superb compositional prowess, which could not be appreciated by just anybody (including Scacchi)<sup>12</sup>.

In the conclusion to *Cribrum musicum*, Scacchi pointed to Siefert's overweening ambition, a combination of conceit, envy and greed as the reasons that prompted him to publish the technically inferior compositions and led to all his actions. One of the ways to make such remarks was quoting from Seneca's letter 73: "Ambitiosis non tam jucundum est multos post se videre, quam grave aliquem ante".<sup>13</sup>

This initially private discussion soon became public and involved the musical circles of Gdańsk. Siefert's maliciousness<sup>14</sup> became evident, for instance, in his comments about the director of Władysław IV's music chapel and its members, especially about the Italians whom he addressed as ignorants of the true art of counterpoint, those who only dealt with trivial pieces such as comedies, barzellettas, ariettas, bergamasques or passacaglias.<sup>15</sup> First of all, Scacchi

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<sup>11</sup> "[...] vel iste Paulus nimius ex abditis musicalibus fontibus hausit, ita ut, licet harmonicas regulas floccipendere crassosque errores admittere videatur, ipsum singulari arte omnia fecisse et speciali praeogativa acutioris ingenii a matre natura esse dotatum arbitrandum sit, quia nigrum pro albo apparere facere possit, vel certe ego a reverendo domine Francisco Anerio Romano, olim in capella Serenissimi et Invictissimi Sigismundi III Regis Poloniae et Sueciae musices moderatore et toto orbe celebri seductus fui et per consequens omnia. Quaecumque ab ipso audivi et didici, nullius esse momenti et valoris." Marco SCACCHI (1643: 1).

<sup>12</sup> "Sed responsum praeter omnem opinionem tale reddidit: cantilenas illas typis impressas non rudi Minerva, immo excellentiori arte compositas nec omnium capacitati esse accommodatas [...]" Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.: 153. Cf. Lucius Annaeus SENECA *Operum tomus secundus. In quo epistolae, et quaestiones naturales*. Amsterdam, D. Elsevirius, 1672: 276.

<sup>14</sup> While relating to Siefert, Scacchi used the phrase 'the foul tongue'.

<sup>15</sup> Scacchi expounded on the root of the dispute in his *Lettera per maggiore informazione, a chi leggerà il mio Cribrum* (Warszawa, P. Elert, 1644: 1) meant for the Italian readers, that is those who did not directly witness the argument: "[...] detto Syfert [...] mi disse, che li SS.<sup>ri</sup> Compositori, e Virtuosi Italiani dovrebbero andar da lui per imparare li veri fondamenti Armonici, afirmando ch' appresso detti Virtuosi, era di già sbandita la vera, & buona scuola

wrote *Cribrum musicum* in defence of the Italian school of composition and the good name of the members of the Chapel Royal, a significant percentage of which included Italians.

Scacchi dedicated his treatise to Förster, which was justified not only by his willingness to support him in the conflict with Siefert, but also by the fact that the bookseller co-financed the publication of *Cribrum musicum*. Following the manner of the epoch, the addressee of the dedication was presented in the best light, as a humanist scholar, teacher in Gdańsk Academic Gymnasium, familiar with both the theory and practice of music. The last remark most probably referred to the fact that he conducted the Marian music chapel, composed some works<sup>16</sup> and authored some papers on the theory of music which have not survived.<sup>17</sup>

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Armonica, & che hoggidi non sanno comporre altro che Comedie, Barzelette, Ariette, Bergamasche, Passacagli, & altre simili Cantilene, ma che in comporre Cantilene sopra Cantifermi, ne andavano affatto innocenti; aggiunge(n)do esser vergogna grande, ch'un Rè così glorioso, qual' e la Maesta Sacra di Vladislao IV. mio Clementissimo Signore, avesse al suo servizio un Maestro di Capella così Ignorante, come la mia persona, & altre impertinenze quali tralascio per modestia." ("The aforementioned Siefert told me that gentlemen composers and artists from Italy should have come to him in order to learn about the proper rudiments of harmony. He claimed that they had already abandoned the true and good school of harmony and that at present they were incapable of composing other works than comedies, barzellettas, ariettas, bergamasques, passacaglias and other pieces alike. When it came to compositions based on *cantus firmus*, they exposed absolute ignorance. He added that the great envy ensued from the fact that the king of his highness Władysław IV's rank, his most gracious lord, appointed a chapel master as uneducated as myself and he went on with impudent remarks which I shall pass over for the sake of decorousness.").

<sup>16</sup> The preserved compositions by Kaspar Förster the Elder comprise four bicinia published in *Bicinorum Libri duo: Quorum prior septuaginta numero continet ad Sententias Evangeliorum anniversariorum a Setho Calvion Musico decantata*. Leipzig, J. Apelius, 1612. Cf. Aleksandra PATALAS "Kaspar Förster senior — znany i nieznany" ["Kaspar Förster the Elder — known and unknown"]. In: *Muzykolog wobec świadectw źródłowych i dokumentów / The Musicologist and source documentary evidence*. Kraków 2009: 209–226.

<sup>17</sup> Marco SCACCHI's letter "Ad Excellentiss.: Dn. Ch. Wernerum," p. 5 (the manuscript kept at Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky, call no. ND VI 5573): "If somebody wishes to know outstanding theoretical principles, let him study the manuscripts by Kaspar Förster, the chapel master from Gdańsk. It is easy to see the abundance of magnificent examples and rules of the most refined art of harmony he related to."

## The form of *Cribrum musicum* and analytical method applied to Siefert's psalms

Scacchi addressed Siefert's charges in a way inherent to his profession. On the one hand, he specified the plentiful weaknesses (as he saw them) of the organist's compositional technique, on the other hand, he displayed his own command of strict contrapuntal language and of his expertise in the principles of *seconda prattica*. Moreover, he encouraged the musicians from the Chapel Royal to compose short polyphonic pieces, mainly in canon, which he then placed in *Xenia Apollinea* to prove Siefert's critique groundless.

The chapel master of Władysław IV wanted his treatise to perform an educational function too. The intention was well legitimised as the musician trainees in the Commonwealth surely lacked current and locally formulated texts on the theory of music. There were two crucial publications of this type in the 17th century; namely, *Tabulatura muzyki* by Jan Aleksander Gorczyn (Kraków 1647) and *Musices practicae erotemata* by Szymon Starowolski (Kraków 1650) which came out only several years after *Cribrum musicum*. Argumentative in character, the treatise by Scacchi was not shaped the way theoretical dissertations usually were (the feature of all Scacchi's writings), it was not a systematic interpretation of the contrapuntal principles. Instead of the standard form there are musical scores, the analysis of which is to bring the reader closer to the arcana of composition, which partly happens with the help of the author. The presence of a significant number of Scacchi's own compositions as well as plentiful short examples devised to illustrate the problems he discusses reveal the theoretical flair of the author.

The text of *Cribrum musicum* is extensive, it covers 247 pages. Its core, comprising 154 pages, is a study of all compositions by Siefert included in the collection *Psalmen Davids* from the contrapuntal and modal perspective.<sup>18</sup> What follows is a series of compositions by Scacchi, originated before *Cribrum musicum* was published and maintained both in *stile antico* and *moderno*. The presentation of the examples of the old style, that is revised sections of three masses that were printed in 1633<sup>19</sup>, was aimed at showing a model compositional language (as opposed to Siefert's style) based on fixed harmonic principles. In order to represent the features of *stile antico*, Scacchi compared sections

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<sup>18</sup> The word "Finis" was printed on page 154 and on the final one (248).

<sup>19</sup> Marco SCACCHI *Missarum quatuor vocibus liber primus*. Roma, G. B. Robletti, 1633.

abstracted from masses and compositions belonging to the new type: two four-part madrigals with basso continuo and three five-part concertato motets.<sup>20</sup> The last component of *Cribrum musicum* (starting on page 204), entitled *Xenia Apollinea* [*Apollo's gifts*], contains compositions by fifty members of the Chapel Royal, including the chapel master whose works conclude the entire publication (pages 226–247)<sup>21</sup>. Scacchi's pieces that complete the entire text were probably new, and could have been composed for the purposes of the treatise. Their structural formula is directly related to the theoretical issues raised on the preceding pages of *Cribrum musicum*. Among these compositions features *Kyrie* with the melody of Psalm 91 from the Geneva Psalter as the *cantus prius factus*, also present in Siefert's publication. The composition has two versions – in duple and triple metres, which Scacchi found incorrectly applied by the author of *Psalmen Davids*. Thus, *Kyrie* becomes a form of alternative to the psalm arranged by Siefert. *Salve Regina* serves as an example of a composition with many versions transformed through removal of specified rests. It is also the three-part work in a form of contrapuntal study without text that received two variants for its rendition (with or without rests).<sup>22</sup> Whereas the aforementioned compositions had a form of instruction on the selected compositional problems and their presence in the treatise is easily justified, rather puzzling seems to be the attachment entitled *Cantilena in stylo recitativo at mixta* at the end of the entire text. Conceivably taken from the sphere of *dramma per musica*, it is followed by a short paragraph on this genre which was rather unknown in Northern Europe. Scacchi might have wanted to point out in this way that the contemptuously approached by Siefert “comedies”, in fact, stand for the “the sweetest and most elegant” type of music.

For the purposes of *Cribrum musicum* all compositions by Siefert had been reprinted in the form of score, which facilitated observation of the relations be-

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<sup>20</sup> They were to be published in two collections: five-part motets and four-part madrigals, which Kaspar Förster the Elder had been unsuccessfully trying to publish since 1636.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Piotr POŹNIAK “Kanony Andrzeja Chylińskiego, prefekta muzyki w Padwie, na tle “uczzonej” muzyki w XVII-wiecznej Polsce” [“Canons by Andrzej Chyliński, Prefect of Music in Padua, on the Background of the “Learned” Music of the 17th Century Poland”]. *Res Facta Nova* 6, 2003:135–150.

<sup>22</sup> While preparing *Errata to Cribrum musicum* (in small print, not dated, published in Venice by Alessandro Vincenti, not earlier than 1645; the unique copy attached to *Cribrum musicum* is kept in Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel), Scacchi added two more compositions of this type: *Modulatio trium vocum* with *cantus firmus* (a piece in four versions) and a three-part canon.



tween parts. The *bassus generalis* present in all compositions of the collection was insignificant in the contrapuntal sense (according to Scacchi), and it performed the role of *basso seguente*, thus it was skipped. Only in the last two *concerti* had the part of organ bass been left, as it was an integral element of the compositions. In keeping with the older practice, the instruments listed in the title of the collection by Siefert were only to double or replace vocal parts; therefore there is no mention of them in *Cribrum musicum*. Scacchi left out the text of compositions while transcribing them, based on the assumption that it was a negligible element of pieces written in *prima pratica*. The omission of text somewhat simplified the analytical procedure employed by Scacchi, especially in the case of Siefert's two concertos. All his compositions were presented and studied in the order in which they were organised in *Psalmen Davids*. Because the relation between *cantus prius factus* and Siefert's compositions was a crucial component of the critical review, Scacchi accompanied each piece (apart from the last concerto which lacked precompositional material) with a matching psalm tune.

The analysis of the psalms is preceded with a general introduction (p. 5–8) listed in twelve points. By way of justification, Scacchi explained that his knowledge of German was poor, which resulted in the omission of the text of compositions in his edition. In addition, he clarified the graphic representation of mistakes in the score, which were marked with a cross or the letter N. At this point he also quoted the publication by Filippo Kesperle, indirectly relating to it as a model for *Cribrum musicum*. He clearly pointed out that his treatise was based on the concepts proposed by the 'Italian school', which on the one hand could have been received as a precautionary measure; and on the other hand it stressed the Italian tradition within the scope of theory and contrapuntal practice—something the Italians allegedly lacked (in Siefert's opinion). Being on friendly terms with many German musicians, Scacchi refrained from explicit argumentation supporting the superiority of one school of composition over another.<sup>23</sup> The sting of his criticism was turned against technical (and personal) deficiencies of just one figure.<sup>24</sup>

The author of *Cribrum musicum* methodically approached his appraisal. The description of the first piece had been preceded with a presentation (in points) of the criteria applied in order to evaluate the compositions. Accordingly,

<sup>23</sup> "Quando Italicae scholae mentionem facio, absque aliarum praeiudicio et praesertim Belgicae hocfactum scias." Marco SCACCHI (1643: 5).

<sup>24</sup> „Ubi ista vel similia verba leges, schola tua, regulae vel praecepta tua, scias me tantum Paulum, non ipsius magistrum, intelligere, uti videre poteris in fine Psalmi 33." Ibid.



Siefert's works were discussed in the ensuing part. Each time, after a piece has been introduced, comes an analysis of all solutions that Scacchi deemed incorrect or imperfect. Critical remarks are coupled with justification by referring to appropriate contrapuntal principles, which the royal *maestro di cappella* believed were commonly sanctioned. Furthermore, some solutions were exemplified in the form of musical notation that pointed the way of avoiding the 'flaws'. Since similar technical defects occurred in most compositions by Siefert, the commentary involved repeating the same faults and arguments, which according to the author of the treatise was aimed at better understanding and remembering of the rules. What is more, it exposed the scale of the adversary's negligence.

To reiterate, one should note that this first theoretical publication by Scacchi took the shape of rhetorical speech. In the introduction the author of *Cribrum musicum* fully explained the reasons for bringing out the book and hinted that Siefert's skills might have been insufficient. Then he specified the premises on which he based his commentary: he itemised the criteria of his evaluation of psalms. In order to bolster his reasoning in the entire text he invoked authoritative figures in the field of philosophy, theory of music (starting with ancient thinkers) and the most acclaimed composers active mainly in the 16th century. Next, he systematically discussed Siefert's works, frequently resorting to repetitions as the means of persuasion. In the end, he resolved that his initial thesis had been supported. Having read *Cribrum musicum*, one might actually be under the impression that the analysed compositions were replete with flaws and did not deserve to be called pieces of musical art. In order to prove how much Siefert had been mistaken in his disrespectful opinion about Italian musicians and members of the Chapel Royal, Scacchi attached their compositions as a gift for the organist from Gdańsk.

### **Censura by Filippo Kesperle**

*Cribrum musicum* resembled in its character another critical review referred to by the chapel master from Warsaw as "the censure".<sup>25</sup> Today nearly entirely forgotten, it concerns psalms by Vincenzo de Grandis<sup>26</sup> and was written by an

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<sup>25</sup> He also applied this term in reference to *Cribrum musicum*, e.g. on page 154 of the publication.

<sup>26</sup> Vincenzo de GRANDIS *Psalmi ad Vesperas et motecta, [...] cum Litaniis BVM, liber I.* Roma, L. A. Soldi, 1624.

unidentified author, a Filippo Kesperle, who had it published as *Alcuni salmi et motetti*,<sup>27</sup> in Venice in 1625. It is likely that to a considerable degree Scacchi modelled *Cribrum musicum* on that text: he assumed an equivalent form of presenting the score, marking and commenting the mistakes and justifying the publication of the critique. The title of Kesperle's print was quoted by Scacchi on one of the first pages of *Cribrum musicum*, and his detailed remarks suggest that he knew that text rather well.<sup>28</sup> Within the scope of the entire treatise, citing a contemporary edition of compositions was rather unusual, which all the more can be seen as a connection between the two argumentative commentaries.

Today, the name of Kesperle is known only from the publication in question from 1625; thus, it might be inferred that it was a pseudonym. It is highly probable that it was Romano Micheli (born about 1575 and died after 1659) who used it.<sup>29</sup> A priest and a composer who had worked for many years in Rome, he became popular as the author of complex canons, who deemed himself an expert in the art of counterpoint. Since the second decade of the 17th century he published argumentative texts about the principles of counterpoint, hence they thematically resembled the work by Keperle. In 1621 Micheli was about to take up the position of *maestro di cappella* in the Roman church Il Gesù. However, having encountered opposition on the part of the singers from the Papal Choir (Vincenzo de Grandis was among them), who were in conflict with one another due to Micheli's publication, he failed.<sup>30</sup> In response, he had another argumentative essay printed in 1624, which he described as *Virtuoso manifesto*.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, in mid 1625 he was reconciled with the Pa-

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<sup>27</sup> See footnote 4.

<sup>28</sup> "Et si forte in hoc mihi non praestatur fides, inspici potest Censura Philippi Kesperle Venetijs anno 1625 impressa contra Vincentium de Grandi, in Psalmo Dixit Dominus Domino meo, sub verbis illis, Tu es Sacerdos in aeternum, ibique patebit, quicquid asservi, non esse a vero fundamento alienum." Marco SCACCHI (1643: 6).

<sup>29</sup> This assumption was made by Jerome ROCHE and Noel O'REGAN, the authors of the article "Vincenzo de Grandis" in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians on line*.

<sup>30</sup> Romano MICHELI *Manifesto ai musici romani* with dedication: *Alli molt'illustri [...] musici della Cappella di N.S.* (Venezia, G. Vincenti, 1618) and *All'illustri & eccellentissimi signori [...] Francesco Soriano [...] et Gironimo Frescobaldo* (Venezia 1619).

<sup>31</sup> Romano MICHELI *Virtuoso manifesto sopra li più dotti studi della musica*. Roma, Grignani, 1624.

pal singers.<sup>32</sup> Kesperle's critique *Alcuni salmi et motetti* against the director of the Papal chapel, Vincenzo de Grandis,<sup>33</sup> was ordered for publication in January 1625, that is at the time of the aforementioned dispute. Most probably, the publication resulted in discrediting Vincenzo de Grandis as a composer and dismissing him from the position of the chapel master, which coincided with reaching an agreement with Micheli. Judging by the circumstances it seems highly plausible that Micheli wrote under the pseudonym 'Kesperle'.<sup>34</sup> It can also be told by the zeal with which Kesperle expressed his criticism.

In the foreword to *Alcuni salmi et motetti*<sup>35</sup> addressed to the Papal musicians, the author explained the reasons for bringing out his critique. He resolved that holding the position of *maestro di cappella* working with the most superb musicians requires maintaining the highest standards of compositional traditions started by Josquin and completed by Arcangelo Crivelli. Kesperle believed that compositions by Vincenzo de Grandis did not meet these conditions and exposed his insufficient education in music. Allegedly, his counterpoint fell short of the commonly applied principles of 'the true manner of composition', which made him unfit not only for the position of chapel master but also of a Papal singer. Kesperle decided to promulgate the opinion in order to prevent Vincenzo de Grandis's undeserved acclaim as an accomplished composer.<sup>36</sup>

Kesperle's crusade against the Papal chapel master must have caused a big stir in the Roman music circles. Conceivably, the dispute could have aroused the interest of Giovanni Francesco Anerio, who took up the position of *maestro di cappella* at Santo Spirito in Sassia, and Vincenzo de Grandis had been one of his predecessors in this church (he worked there till 1605). Scacchi had

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<sup>32</sup> Since July 1625 Micheli started engaging singers of the Papal choir on the occasion of bigger celebrations that involved music held in the church of San Luigi dei Francesi, where he started working in March 1625.

<sup>33</sup> Since 1604 a singer of the Papal choir, Vincenzo de Grandis worked as the Papal *maestro di cappella* in the period 1624–1625.

<sup>34</sup> The fact that he was at variance with the singers of the Papal choir might have compelled Micheli to have *Alcuni salmi et motetti* published under the pseudonym.

<sup>35</sup> The foreword has been included in the Appendix.

<sup>36</sup> By the same token, in Scacchi's opinion it was Siefert who cherished unmerited fame: „[...] et cum apud simpliciores non mediocrem famam illum fuisse adeptum intellexissem, mira accensus cupiditate experiri volebam, num dicta factis responderent. [...] Quapropter censuram hanc ex debito officii mei et personae publicandam existimavi, ne forte hi, qui ipsius loquacitate permoti aliquam sinistram de me conceperunt opinionem, confirmentur [...]” Marco SCACCHI (1643: 1–2).

a perfect opportunity to familiarize himself (thanks to his teacher) with Kesperle's critique, even though it only happened after both musicians had come to Poland.<sup>37</sup>

Kesperle's foreword is followed by a presentation of a selection, not all, of the compositions from Vincenzo de Grandis's publication (including psalms). The reviewer decided that the analysis of just a handful of pieces would be enough to expose the deficiencies in their author's compositional technique. The works were printed without text in a form of score, as it happened more than a decade later in the case of Siefert's music published in *Cribrum musicum*. Their layout is all the more alike as it was devised in the same Vincenti's printing house in Venice. Letters were set in the alphabetical order at the points where Kesperle noted contrapuntal mistakes, and brief comments were inserted below the score (cf. Fig. 1).<sup>38</sup> The defects discussed in *Cribrum musicum* were marked in a similar way, but Scacchi's remarks were decisively longer, which stands as the main difference between these two argumentative texts. Kesperle assumed that the contemporary rules of counterpoint were binding and he did not need to elucidate them to Italian musicians, whereas Scacchi might suppose that at least some of the Polish and German musicians would not be acquainted with the Italian theory of composition.

It is easy to justify the choice of *Alcuni salmi et motetti* by Kesperle as a formal model for *Cribrum musicum*. The first publication almost completely achieved its desired effect, as it most probably put a quicker end to the artistic career of Vincenzo de Grandis.<sup>39</sup> If the censure of Siefert's psalms had been contrived as a weapon in his battle with the musicians in Gdańsk, it should have adopted a well-tried method. In the end, even though the Marian organist was not dismissed from his position, the ill fame of composer accompanied him not only in Gdańsk but in all the places reached by Scacchi's *Cribrum musicum*.

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<sup>37</sup> It is assessed that Anerio and Scacchi arrived in Poland at the turn of the year 1625.

<sup>38</sup> Kesperle limited his remarks to short comments, such as "the use of two parallel seconds between two altos from both choirs, which is incompatible with the principles of counterpoint." In *Cribrum musicum* Scacchi referred to the mistake of parallel motion in all four parts of the second choir spotted in the psalm *Dixit Dominus* by Vincenzo de Grandis.

<sup>39</sup> After 1625 Grandi withdrew from active participation in the world of culture. His later publications remain unknown and so is any further information about his life or even the place of the composer's death.

## APPENDIX

The title page and Foreword to *Alcuni salmi et motetti* by Filippo Kesperle (Venezia 1625).

[title page:] ALCUNI SALMI | ET MOTETTI | DI | VINCENZO DE GRANDIS | POSTI IN SPARTITURA | DA | FILIPPO KESPERLE | IN VENETIA, | Appresso Alessandro Vincenti. MDCXXXV.

[foreword:] AL COLLEGIO DE SIGNORI | MUSICI DELLA CAPPELLA | DI NOSTRO SIGNORE. | Dalla Stampa di Lucantonio Soldi Stampatore in Roma sono usciti | Salmi, e Motetti insieme di Vincenzo de Grandis con un titolo non | più mai inteso al mondo di Maestro di Cappella pro tempore di N.S. | quale novità siccome straordinaria l'hò veduta, così straordinaria-|mente bella & buona pensavo fusse la compositione musicale; Ma | havendola trovata poco osservante delle regole del Contrapunto, | & affatto repugnante alli buoni principij della Musica; non ho potuto far di meno di publicare ancora con la stampa alle Signorie lo-|ro l'eccesso di quest'huomo, acciò per l'avvenire non comportino, che da un luogo così e-|minente, & primo del mondo venghino publicate opere simili, & che le persone intelligen-|ti di questa professione facciano giudicio, che in cotesta Cappella Pontificia sia in tutto estinta | la vera maniera del comporre opere di musica lasciata alle Signorie loro da i suoi antecessori, | & già compagni nel servitio di N.S. come furno un Iosquino, Archadelto, Morales, Pale-|stina, Gio: Maria Nanini, Archangelo Crivelli, & altri più antichi & più moderni buoni | compositori. Questo titolo di Mastro di Cappella del Papa sicome l'ho trovato poco con-|venirsi à questo compositore, così anco ho havuto pensiero, che questa non sia stata inven-|tione da coprire li grandi errori, che sono in queste sue opere & hò fatto giuditio che que-|st'huomo non solo non sia Mastro, ma ne anco Cantore di cotesta prima Cappella del mon-|do; & se questo fosse son certo, che con la lor prudenza provederanno al tutto. Con fare | questa fatica mi protesto di non haver havuto pensiero di offendere l'honoratissimo & vir-|tuosissimo Collegio delle Signorie loro, mà solo far sapere à quelli, che per l'avvenire vor-|ranno mettere alla Stampa, si ricordino prima d'imparare i buoni principij, che à questo | modo i mezzi riusciranno migliori, & ottimi i fini. Et questo sia detto senza pregiuditio del | li buoni Compositori & Maestri di Cappella intelligenti, non solo di Roma, ma anco di tut-|to il mondo. Et per fine augurandoli dal Signore ogni vera felicità li bacio le mani. Piacen-|do à Dio à rivedersi questo Anno Santo. Di Venetia li 24. di Genaro 1625. | Delle SS. VV. Molto Illustre è Molto Reverende | Humilissimo Servitore | Filippo Kesperle.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The text after the copy of the print kept in Biblioteka Jagiellońska in Kraków.



