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TINCTORIS ON *VARIETAS*

The twelve extant treatises of Johannes Tinctoris offer a wealth of insight into almost every aspect of fifteenth-century music theory.[1] A graduate of the University of Orléans and a doctor of canon and civil law, Tinctoris was an expert in both the language arts of the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectic) and the mathematical arts of the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy). Such was his erudition that he was extolled by Johannes Trithemius, one of the leading German humanists of the fifteenth century, as 'a man very learned in all respects, an outstanding mathematician, a musician of the highest rank, of a keen mind, skilled in *eloquence*'.[2] Given Tinctoris's towering intellect, it is no surprise that frequent citations from many of the major thinkers of antiquity – Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Ovid, Virgil, Cicero and Quintilian – appear in his theoretical discussions on mode, mensural notation and counterpoint.

A number of scholars have shown how Tinctoris's writings are grounded in a tradition of humanist thought and learning.[3]

I am indebted to Julie Cumming, Peter Schubert, Margaret Bent, Bonnie Blackburn, Mary Carruthers, Patrick Macey, Honey Meconi and Christopher Moore, who provided perceptive criticisms and suggestions on earlier drafts. Versions of this paper were given in 2006 at the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference in Cambridge, the Canadian University Music Society Conference in Toronto and the American Musicological Society New York State – St. Lawrence Chapter Meeting in Syracuse, NY. This article is based on chapter 3 of my dissertation, 'Unification and *Varietas* in the *Sine nomine* Mass from Dufay to Tinctoris' (Ph.D. diss., McGill University, 2007).

[1] Music treatises by Johannes Tinctoris include *Speculum musices*, lost (before 1472), *Expositio manus* (1472–3), *Proportionale musices* (1472–5), *Terminorum musicae diffinitorium* (1472–5), *Complexus effectuum musices* (1472–5), *Liber imperfectionum notarum musicalium* (1472–5), *Tractatus de regulari valore notarum* (1472–5), *Tractatus de notis et pausis* (1472–5), *Tractatus alterationum* (1472–5), *Scriptum . . . super punctis musicalibus* (1472–5), *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum* (dated 6 November 1476), *Liber de arte contrapuncti* (11 October 1477), *De inventione et usu musice*, partly lost; extracts printed 1481. See R. Woodley, 'Johannes Tinctoris', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed 4 May 2006) and Johannes Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, ed. A. Seay (Corpus Scriptorum de Musica, 22; Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1975–8).

[2] Translation in G. Reese, *Music in the Renaissance*, rev. edn (New York, 1959), p. 138; emphasis mine.

[3] For a discussion of Tinctoris as humanist see R. Woodley, 'Renaissance Music Theory as Literature: On Reading the *Proportionale musices* of Iohannes Tinctoris', *Renaissance Studies*, 1 (1987), pp. 209–20. See also L. Perkins, *Music in the Age of the Renaissance* (New York, 1999),

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Reinhard Strohm, for example, has connected Tinctoris's theoretical works to the grammatical and rhetorical treatises of the Paduan humanist teacher Gasparino Barzizza (1360–*c.* 1431) and to one of the first rhetorical treatises ever printed in France, *Rhetorica*, by Guillaume Fichet (1433–*c.* 1480).[4] Rob Wegman has demonstrated how in the *Proportionale musices* Tinctoris weaves together allusions drawn from ancient sources such as Cicero's *Tusculanae disputationes* and *De oratore*.[5] Ronald Woodley has argued that vocabulary and syntax in the *Proportionale* are 'impeccably, self-consciously Ciceronian' and that *De oratore* 'played a decisive part in the articulation and texture of Tinctoris's narrative'.[6]

Tinctoris's predilection for fusing ancient scholarship with fifteenth-century musical theory is perhaps best illustrated in his most extensive treatise, the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, dated 11 October 1477 and dedicated to his patron Ferdinand I (Ferrante), King of Naples.[7] Comprised of three books, the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* examines the rules of counterpoint – acceptable intervals, consonances, dissonances and their application in simple note-against-note and florid settings. It is near the end of the *Liber*, in the eighth and final rule of Book 3, that Tinctoris sings the virtues of *varietas*, an aesthetic he deems essential to all counterpoint.

What exactly does Tinctoris mean by linking *varietas* – a concept with origins in ancient rhetoric and oratory – to fifteenth-century contrapuntal practice? In treatises such as the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (*c.* 100 BC) and Cicero's *De oratore* (*c.* 55 BC), *varietas* was upheld as a compositional ideal informing all phases of speech

pp. 43–7; R. Strohm, 'Music, Humanism and the Idea of a "Rebirth" of the Arts', in R. Strohm and B. J. Blackburn (eds.), *Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages* (The New Oxford History of Music, iii/1; Oxford, 2001), pp. 360–8; R. C. Wegman, 'Tinctoris and the "New Art" ', *Music & Letters*, 84 (2003), pp. 171–88; S. Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*: Studies in Style and Attribution in the Motets of Johannes Regis and his Contemporaries' (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1998), *passim* but esp. ch. 2.

4 Strohm, 'Music, Humanism, and the Idea of a "Rebirth" ', pp. 364 and 368.

5 Wegman, 'Tinctoris and the "New Art" ', p. 184.

6 Woodley, 'Renaissance Music Theory as Literature', p. 215. According to Woodley, Tinctoris translates motifs and allusions 'from the state of oratory in first-century BC Rome to the state of music in fifteenth-century Europe' (p. 215).

7 The *Liber de arte contrapuncti* is found in three manuscripts: Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert I^{er}, MS II 4147, fols. 52^{r}–101^{r}; Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2573, fols. 87^{v}–166^{r}; and Valencia, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 835, fols. 77^{v}–144^{r}. Johannes Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, ii, ed. Seay, translated as *The Art of Counterpoint*, trans. and ed. A. Seay (Musicological Studies and Documents, 5; [Rome], 1961).

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writing, including the invention of the initial subject, the composition of the speech, memorisation and public delivery.[8] Throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, *varietas* continued to be celebrated as a central stylistic virtue in disciplines such as architecture, monastic meditation, art, poetry and music. As it made its way into the theoretical discourses of several branches of thought and learning, *varietas* acquired many different meanings.[9] In architecture, *varietas* came to be associated with the use of eclectic building materials and stylistic admixture.[10] In literature and poetry, *varietas* was linked to the practice of citing and alluding to copious Classical sources.[11] In

[8] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. H. Caplan (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass., 1954); Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De oratore*, trans. E. W. Sutton (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass., 1942). All English translations of *De oratore* are taken from *On the Ideal Orator*, trans. J. M. May and J. Wisse (New York, 2001). Discoveries of classical works were made throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. For example, Petrarch discovered Cicero's correspondence with Atticus in 1345, and a copy of Cicero's *Ad familiares* (found by Pasquino de Capelli, Chancellor of Milan) was made for Coluccio Salutati in 1392. The first quarter of the fifteenth century witnessed discoveries and rediscoveries of several other classical treatises – events that had a profound effect on many aspects of Renaissance culture. In 1416, Poggio Bracciolini made one of the first major findings when he came across the complete texts of Quintilian's *De institutio oratoria* along with ten previously unknown Ciceronian orations. Then a few years later in 1421, Gerardus Landriani, bishop of Lodi, discovered the entire text of Cicero's *De oratore* (a treatise that until then had been incomplete) and Cicero's *Orator*. Already in 1400, Cicero's *De oratore* (even its incomplete version) was one of the most studied works at schools in Padua and Pavia. See P. O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, ed. M. Mooney (New York, 1979), pp. 231–2 and 239 and M. D. Reeve, 'Classical Scholarship', in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. J. Kraye (Cambridge and New York, 1996), pp. 20–46. See also J. J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974), pp. 357–63; R. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries* (Cambridge, 1954); K. Jensen, 'The Humanist Reform of Latin and Latin Teaching', in J. Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge and New York, 1996), pp. 63–81, at 73.

[9] Mary Carruthers has traced the concept of *varietas* through the writings of medieval writers including St Augustine, Cassiodorus, Bernard of Clairvaux and Geoffrey of Vinsauf. I am indebted to Margaret Bent for bringing Carruthers's work on *varietas* to my attention and to Carruthers for kindly sharing with me her unpublished paper.

[10] On *varietas* in architecture: L. B. Alberti, *De re aedificatoria* (Milan, 1966); G. Clarke, *Roman House–Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 41–84; C. Smith, *Architecture and the Culture of Early Humanism: Aesthetics, Ethics and Eloquence, 1400–1470* (Oxford, 1992). Smith discusses how *varietas* (by means of contrast and antithesis) played a role in the architectural planning of Pienza in Italy (p. 125). She argues that the aesthetic goal of *varietas* was what drove these fifteenth-century architects to incorporate eclectic building materials and to combine both traditional and innovative building practices (p. 101).

[11] On *varietas* in the literary arts see I. Maïer, *Ange Politien: la formation d'un poète humaniste, 1469–1480* (Geneva, 1966), pp. 203–15. Here, in one of the most comprehensive studies on Poliziano's *docta varietas*, Maïer discusses how his literary works borrow from a copious number of Classical sources. See also Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas*, trans. D. B. King and H. D. Rix (Milwaukee, 1963).

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painting, *varietas* was related to varied figural poses and diversity in colour pigmentation.[12]

In music, many scholars have understood Tinctoris's use of the word *varietas* to mean 'variety' or 'diversity' – a generalised conception that links the term to a vast array of procedures: unpredictable melodic lines, continual rhythmic change, harmonic diversity, contrasting textures, varied cantus firmus treatment, and the juxtaposition of varied registers, modes and mensurations.[13] As I shall argue below, what Tinctoris understood by the term *varietas* is not as inclusive and all-encompassing as previously thought. A close examination of the textual explanations and music examples accompanying the contrapuntal rules that comprise Book 3 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* reveals that the theorist attempted to create systematic linkages between ancient theories on rhetoric and his own innovative theories pertaining to counterpoint.[14] These connections require elucidation if we are fully to appreciate Tinctoris's conception of contrapuntal *varietas*.

This article expands upon the work of Margaret Bent, who has already examined links between Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti*

[12] On *varietas* in painting see L. B. Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. J. R. Spencer (New Haven, 1956), pp. 75–6 and M. Baxandall, *Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition: 1350–1450* (London and New York, 1986).

[13] E. H. Sparks, *Cantus Firmus in Mass and Motet: 1420–1520* (Berkeley, 1963), p. 241. W. Stephan, *Die burgundisch-niederländische Motette zur Zeit Ockeghems* (Kassel, 1937, repr. 1973), p. 55; F. Noske, 'Forma Formans', *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 7 (1976), p. 55; M. Bent, *Dunstaple* (London, 1981), p. 36; R. C. Wegman, 'The Anonymous Mass *D'ung aultre amer*: A Late Fifteenth-Century Experiment', *Musical Quarterly*, 74 (1990), p. 588; T. Brothers, 'Vestiges of the Isorhythmic Tradition in Mass and Motet, ca. 1450–1475', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 44 (1991), pp. 1–56, at 45. M. Bent, 'The Late Medieval Motet', in T. Knighton and D. Fallows (eds.), *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music* (New York, 1992), p. 115; Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*', ch. 2; J. Cumming, 'From Variety to Repetition: The Birth of Imitative Polyphony', in press in the IMS 2002 Congress Proceedings, to be published in the Yearbook of the Alamire Foundation, edited by B. Bouckaert, I. Bossuyt and E. Schreurs.

[14] According to Bent, 'Music indeed owes much of its basic terminology to grammar and rhetoric; analogies and cross-references between treatises in these disciplines are ubiquitous'. See 'Sense and Rhetoric in Late-Medieval Polyphony', in A. Giger and T. J. Mathiesen (eds.), *Music in the Mirror: Reflections on the History of Music Theory and Literature for the 21st Century* (Publications of the Center for the History of Music Theory and Literature, 3; Lincoln, Nebr., 2002), p. 47. Also see Bent's rhetorical reading (from the perspective of *pronunciatio* or performance/gesture/practice rather than theory) of Martin Le Franc's poem: 'The Musical Stanzas in Martin Le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames*', in J. Haines and R. Rosenfeld (eds.), *Music and Medieval Manuscripts: Paleography and Performance* (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt., 2004), pp. 91–127.

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and treatises on grammar and rhetoric.[15] While Bent has referred predominantly to Books 1 and 2 of Tinctoris's *Liber*, I will focus exclusively on Book 3. A similar approach to unravelling the meaning of *varietas* has recently been employed by Sean Gallagher in his dissertation on Johannes Regis.[16] The present study draws on the same sources as Gallagher (*De oratore*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Leon Battista Alberti's *De pictura*) but arrives at very different conclusions. First, I establish systematic links between Tinctoris's rules of counterpoint and the classical 'rules' of rhetoric, demonstrating that Book 3 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* emulates the language and style, the structure and organisation, and the theoretical foundations of ancient rhetorical treatises such as Cicero's *De oratore*. Second, I account for the accompanying music examples of Book 3 and reveal how these musical snippets actually serve as meaty extensions to Tinctoris's pithy textual explanations. Read together, music examples and text consistently highlight the interaction between musical repetition (*redictae*) and variety (*varietas*) in counterpoint, a paradigm that has its origins in rhetorical practice. Third, I show how Leon Battista Alberti's *De pictura* (1435/6) – a fifteenth-century painting treatise equally steeped in the traditions of classical oratory – employs terminology that is so similar to that used by Tinctoris, that Alberti's painterly approach to *varietas* can help us 'read between the lines' of Tinctoris's eighth rule and elucidate the meaning of this enigmatic term.

MODERN PERSPECTIVES ON MUSICAL *VARIETAS*

Variety has played a fundamental role in shaping works of music throughout the ages.[17] It is undoubtedly because of the ubiquity of variation as a general aesthetic notion that modern scholars have made liberal use of the term *varietas* when discussing the music of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Most frequently associated with

[15] M. Bent, 'Grammar and Rhetoric in Late-Medieval Polyphony', keynote address, Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference, Tours, France, 13–16 July 2005. Also see Bent's 'The Grammar of Early Music: Preconditions for Analysis', in C. C. Judd (ed.), *Tonal Structures in Early Music* (New York, 1998), pp. 15–59 and Bent, 'Sense and Rhetoric in Late-Medieval Polyphony', pp. 45–59.

[16] Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*', ch. 2.

[17] E. Sisman, 'Variations', in *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed 4 May 2006). H. Weber, 'Varietas, Variatio / Variation, Variante', in *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie*, ed. H. H. Eggebrecht (Wiesbaden, 1986).

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rhythmic variety, references to *varietas* have appeared in studies by Margaret Bent, who connects it with rhythmic diversity in the late medieval motet; by Frits Noske, who links it to the 'great variety of rhythmically contrasting motifs' in works by Sweelinck; and by Wolfgang Stephan, who refers to the contrasting rhythmic profiles of successive phrases in the music of Busnoys.[18] A model for understanding the evolution of rhythmic *varietas* has been proposed by Thomas Brothers, who describes changes in the aesthetic through three stylistic phases, beginning with the mid-fifteenth-century music of Regis and culminating in the late fifteenth-century Milanese-style works of Josquin. According to Brothers, these historical 'stages' of *varietas* include:

> (1) the original conception, to which Regis (and Ockeghem) often remained faithful, of little or no rhythmic repetition from measure to measure, and a diversity of rhythmic values; (2) a shift within Busnoys' oeuvre to more sharply etched rhythms using less diversity of values within a phrase, but creating the possibility of striking contrasts between phrases; (3) a further shift within Milanese music of the 1470s in which Busnoys's preference for a variety of rhythmic profiles from phrase to phrase is reinforced (and at times replaced) by textural variety.[19]

Other interpretations of *varietas* have been proposed by Julie Cumming and Sean Gallagher. Cumming argues that *varietas* is a quality that counters melodic and contrapuntal repetition.[20] The movement away from *varietas* (as epitomised in music of the fifteenth century) and towards repetition, she suggests, signalled the birth of imitative polyphony in Josquin-generation works. Gallagher, who has furnished the most comprehensive musicological study on the topic to date, views *varietas* as a quality that gives structure to a composition through 'a series of alternations between different techniques' and the 'close juxtaposing of contrasting procedures'.[21] On *varietas* he explains:

> Any musical idea or compositional procedure, however beautiful, should not be allowed to persist, but should instead be immediately succeeded by a different, possibly even contrasting procedure. Such an approach to composition means more than

[18] M. Bent, 'The Late-Medieval Motet', p. 115; Noske, 'Forma Formans', p. 55; Stephan, *Die burgundisch-niederländische Motette*, p. 55. On rhythmic diversity in the music of Dunstaple see Bent, *Dunstaple*, p. 36.
[19] Brothers, 'Vestiges of the Isorhythmic Tradition', p. 45.
[20] Cumming, 'From Variety to Repetition'.
[21] Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*', *passim*, but esp. pp. 70 and 66.

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simply avoiding repetitions; it entails actively seeking out possibilities for these types of successive changes within the actual process of constructing a work.[22]

As a way of illustrating this definition, Gallagher analyses compositions by Du Fay, Ockeghem and Regis, works singled out by Tinctoris as paradigms of *varietas*.[23] Du Fay's *Missa L'homme armé*, Gallagher argues, demonstrates *varietas* by alternating between imitative and non-imitative sections and between 'two voices in *tempus perfectum* to four voices in multiple mensurations'.[24] In Ockeghem's bergerette *Ma maistresse*, Gallagher perceives *varietas* in the juxtaposition of syncopated and non-syncopated phrases,[25] while in Regis's motet *Clangat plebs flores* he detects *varietas* in the registral shifts and the alternation between two-voice imitation and free counterpoint.[26]

Edgar Sparks and Rob Wegman have detected yet another type of *varietas* in cantus firmus presentation. Sparks examines Tinctoris's *Missa L'homme armé* in terms of the 'wilderness of effects' brought about by the varied treatment of borrowed material and argues that variety is realised in this mass through a cantus firmus that is ornamented, abbreviated, repeated, treated as scaffolding and presented in canon.[27] Through his investigation of the anonymous *Missa D'ung aultre amer*, Wegman perceives a 'chain structure' that incorporates 'the whole range of cantus firmus treatment – from strictest to freest'.[28] For Wegman, this mass applies the 'greatest possible variety of available contemporary styles to the *cantus prius factus*', making it 'the most varied Mass cycle from the period'.[29]

How closely do these modern-day musical interpretations of *varietas* concur with Tinctoris's theoretical explanations found in

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 62–3. According to Gallagher, 'for Tinctoris . . . the building up of a composition through successive changes in diverse musical procedures [takes] precedence over the idea of an overarching structural plan used to guide the writing of a work' (pp. 63–4).

[23] Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint*, p. 140. The works Tinctoris mentions are Du Fay's *Missa L'homme armé*, Faugues's *Missa Vinus, vina, vinum*, Regis's *Clangat plebs*, Busnoys's *Congaudebant*, Ockeghem's *Ma maistresse* and Caron's *La Tridaine a deux*. The motet by Busnoys and the chanson by Caron are lost.

[24] Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*', p. 66.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 67–8.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.

[27] Sparks, *Cantus Firmus in Mass and Motet*, p. 241. Another type of *varietas* aesthetic may be observed in the varied repetition patterns – at once musical and symbolic – uncovered by Margot Fassler in Victorine sequence music. See M. Fassler, *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, 1993).

[28] Wegman, 'The Anonymous Mass *D'ung aultre amer*', p. 588.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 588.

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Book 3 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*? As we shall see, Tinctoris's conception of *varietas* is actually much more focused than previously thought, as in his *Liber* he applies the aesthetic of *varietas* exclusively to counterpoint – vertical intervals, melodic intervals, cadences, suspensions and motifs.

ELOCUTIO AND *VARIETAS*

The ancient art of writing and delivering a speech involved a standardised process that was divided into five distinct parts known as the *partes oratoris officii*.[30] This five-step compositional system, meant to guide an orator from the early stages of devising ideas up until the performance of a speech, consisted of (1) *inventio* (invention of the subject matter and related arguments), (2) *dispositio* (the formal organisation of ideas and arguments), (3) *elocutio/decoratio* (rhetorical style: finding the specific words, expressions and appropriate tone for a speech), (4) *memoria* (memorisation of the speech) and (5) *pronunciatio* (performance or delivery of the speech).[31]

The branch of oratory that was most often cited in connection with *varietas* was *elocutio*, rhetorical style. With *elocutio* an orator could impart his speech with imaginative language and rhetorical panache that, in turn, could help gain the favour and admiration of the listeners, ultimately persuading them of his particular version of the 'truth'. According to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, through *elocutio* an orator could 'confer distinction upon style . . . to render it ornate, embellishing it by variety (*varietate*)'.[32]

[30] The *partes oratoris officii* were known alternatively as the *rhetorices partes* or *opera oratoris*. Descriptions of the five preparatory phases of speech writing are outlined in H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, trans. M. T. Bliss, A. Jansen and D. Orton (Leiden, 1998), §255 and *passim*.

[31] On medieval notions of *inventio* and *memoria* see M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990) and *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge, 1998). On *pronunciatio* in the Renaissance as applied to music see T. Borgerding, 'Preachers, *Pronunciatio*, and Music: Hearing Rhetoric in Renaissance Sacred Polyphony', *Musical Quarterly*, 82 (1998), 586–98.

[32] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4. 18, p. 275. According to Martin Camargo, 'it was already in the eleventh century that the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* had become the authority on rhetoric . . . That late medieval scribes, commentators, and teachers recognized and valued the [broad] scope of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is evident from the special attention they paid to the treatment of the *exornationes verborum et sententarium*, or figures of speech and thought, that occupies most of its fourth and final book. Indeed during the initial period of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s ascendancy, spanning the late eleventh and most of the twelfth centuries, the sections dealing with the figures spawned independent textbooks, some of which achieved considerable

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Ancient oratory manuals that discuss methods of achieving *varietas* propose that here and there an orator should stray from everyday language or deviate from the normal meaning of words, a task best accomplished through the application of 'figures of thought' and 'figures of speech'.[33] In figurative language, the usual meaning or arrangement of words is altered and certain expressions, usually seen as grammatically incorrect or linguistically and semantically unclear, are viewed as tolerable and even desirable. To this end, the *Ad Herennium* catalogues sixty-four 'figures of speech' and 'figures of thought', collectively known by Classical writers as the *flores rhetoricae*.[34] Among these 'flowers of rhetoric' some certainly reverberate more strongly with the language of music than others. Particularly those pertaining to varied repetition seem to have the most immediate relevance.[35] As I shall argue below, these methods of incorporating *varietas* into Classical speeches later served to guide contrapuntal theories put forward by Tinctoris in Book 3 of his *Liber de arte contrapuncti*.

CONTRAPUNTAL STYLE IN THE *LIBER DE ARTE CONTRAPUNCTI*

Musical treatises had long been modelled on grammar books by the time Tinctoris wrote the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*.[36] Margaret Bent has

popularity.' M. Camargo, 'Latin Composition Textbooks and *Ad Herennium* Glossing: The Missing Link?', in V. Cox and J. O. Ward (eds.), *The Rhetoric of Cicero in its Medieval and Early Renaissance Commentary Tradition* (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, 2; Leiden, 2006), pp. 268–9.

[33] Many rhetorical treatises divide the figures of *elocutio* into 'figures of thought' and 'figures of speech'. The 'figures of thought' overlap with both the 'topics of invention' and the 'figures of speech'; thus differentiating between *inventio* and *elocutio* at this level can pose problems. In the category of *elocutio*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* distinguishes between forty-five 'figures of speech' and nineteen 'figures of thought'. Another treatise that makes the distinction between *copia rerum* (amplification of thoughts and ideas) and *copia verborum* is Erasmus's *On Copia of Words and Ideas*. According to Quintilian a gifted orator would employ 'figures of speech' (as opposed to more prosaic formulations) so as to provide enjoyment, pleasure, freshness and *varietas*. Quintilian, *The Orator's Education: Books 9–10*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass., 2002), 9. 2. 66.

[34] See n. 77.

[35] Figures of repetition in the *Ad Herennium* include *Repetitio*, *conversio*, *conplexio*, *traductio*, *exornatio*, *similiter cadens*, *similiter desinens*, *adnominatio*, *gradatio*, *transitio*, *conduplicatio*, *interpretatio*, *expolitio*, *commoratio*. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. Caplan, 4. 19–21, 28–32, 34, 38, 54–8.

[36] In 'Notre Dame Theory: A Study of Terminology, including a New Translation of the Music Treatise of Anonymous IV' (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1982), Jeremy Yudkin discusses how music theorists, in an attempt to 'describe the complexities of the new music . . . turned

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pointed out certain key aspects of the grammatical and rhetorical foundations of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, noting how Tinctoris starts 'with a quotation from Horace, *Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons* . . . a standard definition of grammar as correct writing, implying here a musical application'.[37] She made further connections between the *Liber* and the idiomatic conceptual and structural fundamentals of grammar books:

> Donatus's *Ars minor*, the main primer for medieval grammar, proceeded from letters and syllables, sound units or phonemes, to syllabic verse metre, accentuation and parts of speech, and gave examples of common faults. Tinctoris proceeds from consonant dyadic intervals, or the phonemes of counterpoint, their orderly succession, and thence to dissonance, its proper treatment and its rhythmic accommodation. He deals with faults, and reproaches some of his contemporaries in several famous passages. He offers new examples of his own confection as models for new composition, a prescriptive rhetorical strategy. His treatise includes both a description and normative treatment of intervals that corresponds to the basics of grammar, and he also offers criticism of faults in named compositions that corresponds directly to the *enarratio poetarum* or literary criticism that was part of grammar.[38]

While Books 1 and 2 of Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti* do indeed emulate grammar treatises, thus revealing how to compose *correctly*, Book 3, with its eight basic rules of counterpoint, is firmly grounded within the rhetorical tradition (*elocutio*) and is primarily concerned with how to compose *well*.[39] Specifically, the correspondences between Book 3 of the *Liber* and the section on *elocutio* in Book

to the vocabulary and technical terminology of Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic – studies that had formed the primary basis of their education' (p. 8). Yudkin highlights Latin terminology (i.e. *copula*, *valet*, *aequipollente*, *multitudo*, *aequalia*, *antecedens*, *consequens*, *species*, and *univoce*) from Johannes de Garlandia that was influenced by logic and grammar (pp. 53–95). In 'Sense and Rhetoric in Late-Medieval Polyphony', Bent writes: 'The parallels between music and language run deep in medieval thinking about the structure of knowledge. Medieval treatises are rich in explicit musical parallels with grammar, logic and rhetoric, the three components of the *trivium*. Music and grammar were the twin pillars of elementary education, though music is hardly mentioned in many seminal works by non-musicologists. It is mainly musicologists who have pointed out the parallels in early music theory (especially for the period up to about 1100) between the terminology of treatises on grammar and rhetoric, on the one hand, and treatises on music theory and the conception of musical composition (word-based chant and monophony) on the other' (p. 56).

[37] Bent, 'Sense and Rhetoric in Late-Medieval Polyphony', pp. 57–8.

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

[39] Book 1 presents an exhaustive discussion of consonant intervals that are employed in note-against-note counterpoint, while Book 2 describes how to incorporate dissonance into florid counterpoint. See M. Bent, 'On False Concords in Late Fifteenth-Century Music: Yet Another Look at Tinctoris', in *Théorie et analyse musicales 1450–1650*, ed. A. E. Ceulemans and B. J. Blackburn (Musicologica neolovaniensia Studia, 9; Louvain-la-Neuve: Département d'histoire de l'art et d'archéologie, Collège Érasme, 2001), pp. 65–118.

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3 of *De oratore* are so striking that it is difficult to deny a Ciceronian influence.

Cicero's *De oratore* describes four essential 'virtues' associated with excellence in *elocutio*: (1) language (*Latinitas*), (2) clarity (*perspicuitas*), (3) distinction (*ornatus:* word choice; word connections; the form and cadence of words including sentence/phrase formation and sectional/sentence/phrase endings; figures of speech) and (4) appropriateness (*aptum/decorum*).[40] In Book 3 of his *Liber de arte contrapuncti* Tinctoris transforms Cicero's 'virtues of rhetorical style' into virtues of contrapuntal style. Table 1 illustrates where rhetorical theories on style intersect with musical theories on counterpoint.[41] As shown, every compositional issue explored in Book 3 of Tinctoris's *Liber* can be linked to Book 3 of Cicero's *De oratore*. Furthermore, Tinctoris presents each contrapuntal rule in the same sequence as Cicero's corresponding *elocutio* categories. Tinctoris's Rules 1 and 2 correspond with the first two 'virtues of style', 'language and clarity'; Rules 3–7 correspond to 'distinction': Rule 3 with 'word choice', Rule 4 with 'word connections', Rules 5 and 7 with 'cadence and form', Rule 6 with 'figures of speech', and Rule 8 corresponds with 'appropriateness'.

Rules 1 and 2 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* can be understood as musical translations of what is described in *De oratore* as 'language' (*Latinitas*) and 'clarity' (*perspicuitas*). 'Language' and 'clarity' have to do with adherence to the principles of the Latin language. Cicero explains in *De oratore* that barbarisms (morphological errors having to do with incorrect word choices or verbal expressions) and solecisms (syntactical errors having to do with grammatical errors) are to be avoided.[42] These conventions governing 'language' and 'clarity' are located within the field of grammar and therefore are

[40] The virtues of *elocutio* vary in rhetorical treatises. In *De oratore*, Cicero employs Theophrastus' four virtues. See J. M. May and J. Wisse's 'introduction' to Cicero's *On the Ideal Orator*, p. 36. For full discussion of all four 'virtues of style' see Book 3 of *De oratore*. On 'word choice' see Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 150; on 'word connections' see 3. 171–2, pp. 276–7. Cicero's description of the form and cadence of words is particularly detailed, touching on topics of metrical rhythm, periodic structure and cadence: *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 173–201, pp. 277–86. His section on the figures of speech is short (*On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 206–7, pp. 288–9) compared with the extremely technical and detailed definitions found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

[41] 'Virtues of style' shown in the right column are presented in the same order (from top to bottom) as they are addressed in Cicero's *De oratore* (references are provided in parentheses).

[42] The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* also refers to barbarisms and solecisms of speech in 4. 17.

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Table 1 *Correspondences between Tinctoris's rules of counterpoint and Cicero's virtues of style*

Tinctoris's eight rules of counterpoint (*Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Book 3)	Cicero's four virtues of style (*De oratore*, Book 3)
Rule 1. All counterpoint must begin and end with a perfect concord.	**Language and clarity** Correct Latin (3. 37–40) Purity of language: avoid barbarisms.
Rule 2. Parallel imperfect concords are permitted. Parallel perfect concords are not.	Clarity of language: avoid solecisms.
Rule 3. When the tenor remains on the same pitch, it is possible to repeat the same interval, but changes of interval are more desirable.	**Distinction** (i) Word choice (3. 149–70): embellish style with rare words, new coinages and metaphors.
Rule 4. Stepwise motion of the counterpoint is preferable, but in order to vary counterpoint some voices can employ 'great leaps' (with moderation).	(ii) Word connections (3. 171–2): words should be well joined and connections should be smooth.
Rule 5. Cadences (conclusions to phrases or sections) should not be made on notes that deny the mode. For the intermediate and final cadences, perfect concords should normally be used. But imperfect concords can sometimes be inserted.	(iii) Cadence and form (3. 192–4): phrase and sectional endings should be varied.
Rule 7. Consecutive cadences should not be made in the same place, for this causes monotony.	
Rule 6. When singing above repetitive plainchant passages, contrapuntal repetition is to be avoided. Sometimes, however, repetition is acceptable (especially when imitating the sound of bells and trumpets).	(iv) Figures of speech (3. 206–7)
Rule 8. Variety must be most accurately sought in all counterpoint. The highest reason must be adhered to. The level of *varietas* depends on the genre: more *varietas* is found in a mass compared with a motet and more in a motet compared with a chanson.	**Appropriateness** (3. 210–12) Style must suit the speech and audience. Ornaments and figures must suit the speech.

essentially immutable. It is no wonder, then, that Tinctoris couches his corresponding contrapuntal rules in a language of obligation: 'All counterpoint *must* begin and end with a perfect concord' and 'parallel imperfect concords *are permitted*. Parallel perfect concords *are not*.' Here Tinctoris implies that a composer who fails to follow these

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rules will be guilty of writing morphologically and syntactically defective counterpoint.

After Rule 2 Tinctoris shifts focus from the nuts and bolts of correct musical 'grammar' and dedicates the remainder of Book 3 to the topic of musical rhetoric. Here, in a manner that echoes *De oratore*, notions of 'right' and 'wrong' are abandoned, and the rules of counterpoint concentrate increasingly on more subjective issues of musical style and compositional refinement. Rules 3 to 8 offer an entire series of compositional choices, all of which are meant to aid the student of counterpoint in attaining stylistic perfection. For example, Tinctoris illustrates how a composer has the opportunity either to repeat the same successive intervals *or* to vary them, to compose with stepwise motion or with skips, to repeat cadences or to vary them, to avoid contrapuntal repetition or to embrace it, to compose with a high or a low degree of *varietas*. Though all the options that Tinctoris presents are *grammatically* correct, he does state that in particular compositional scenarios, some choices are stylistically better than others.

On the 'virtue of style' known as 'word choice' (the first subcategory of stylistic 'distinction') Cicero advises that when given the choice between dull and monotonous words or fine and sophisticated words, an orator should opt for the latter. He states: 'the mark of an excellent orator is to avoid the commonplace and dull, and to employ fine and brilliant words'.[43] Similarly, in Rule 3 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Tinctoris suggests that when two intervals are successively placed over the same tenor pitch it is advisable to choose the less monotonous of the two contrapuntal options: when the tenor remains on the same pitch, it is possible to repeat the same interval, but changes of interval are more desirable.[44]

Cicero's advice to the orator regarding 'smooth word connection' (the second subcategory of stylistic 'distinction') is as follows:

[43] Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 150, p. 268.

[44] 'Tertia regula est quod tenore in eodem loco permanente licet plures concordantias non solum imperfectas verum etiam perfectas eiusdem speciei unam post aliam continuo assumere, ut hic [example]. Attamen ubi aliae concordantiae possunt intermitti, huiusmodi contrapunctus super cantum planum canendo diligenter est evitandus.' Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 3. 3 (*Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 148). Summarised in Seay, *The Art of Counterpoint*, pp. 9–10.

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Their arrangement includes putting together and positioning the words in such a way that their juxtaposition is neither harsh nor gaping, but *well joined and smooth* . . . You will achieve this by joining the words in such a way that there is no harsh clash between the end of one and the beginning of the next, nor too wide a separation.[45]

Tinctoris echoes Cicero's advice in Rule 4, where he discusses the merits of smooth, stepwise contrapuntal motion between intervals. He states: 'counterpoint ought to be made *as closely and as orderly as possible*, even though the tenor has been conversely formed by the joining of wide intervals'.[46]

In Book 3 of *De oratore*, Cicero describes how to vary repetition upon arrival at the conclusions of clauses or periods (the third subcategory of stylistic 'distinction'):

because . . . endings are evident and easily recognized, we must vary them so that our audience does not condemn them, either on the basis of a conscious judgment or because their ear becomes satiated. In fact, we should carefully pay attention to, say, the last two or three feet, and clearly mark them off . . . Thanks to variations among these feet, our audience will not be sated by a steady diet of the same thing, and we will avoid giving the impression that what we are doing is intentional.[47]

In Rules 5 and 7, Tinctoris also discusses 'endings'.[48] In Rule 5 he explains that cadences should always agree with the mode of the piece, but should feature a variety of perfect and imperfect concords, while in Rule 7 (discussed at length below) the theorist cautions the composer to vary consecutive cadential passages.

[45] Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 171–2, pp. 276–7 (emphasis mine). For example: 'pulchra oratione acta iacta te'. Here the first word ends with a vowel and the second begins with one (as do the third and fourth), thereby causing a gap (hiatus) between words. This example is given in Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 9. 4. 36, p. 180.

[46] Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint*, p. 134, adjusted. 'Quarta regula est quod quam proximus et quam ordinatissimus poterit contrapunctus fieri debebit, etiam licet coniunctionibus longorum intervallorum tenor sit e converso formatus.' Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 3. 5 (*Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 149, corrected).

[47] Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 192–4, p. 284.

[48] 'De quinta regula generali quae praecipit ut supra nullam prorsus notam perfectio constituatur per quam cantus distonari possit. Quinta regula est quod supra nullum prorsus notam sive media, sive superior, sive inferior fuerit, perfectio constitui debet per quam cantus distonatio contingere possit. Quodquidem penitus aurium judicio relinquendum censeo . . .'. Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 3. 5 (*Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 150, corrected).

'Septima regula est quod super planum cantum etiam canendo duae aut plures perfectiones in eodem loco continue fieri non debent, licet ad hoc quodammodo cantus ipse planus videatur esse coaptatus, ut hic [example]. Quaequidem regula tam exacte a compositoribus est observanda ut nec etiam huiusmodi tenorem conficere debent, qui bis in eodem loco duarum aut plurium continuarum perfectionum dispositionem habeat. Talis enim compositio cum redictis evidentissimam contrahit affinitatem, unde tamquam varietati contraria omnino est evitanda.' Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 3. 7 (*Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 154).

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In *De oratore*, Cicero emphasises the elegance of repetition and varied repetition in speech writing (the fourth subcategory of stylistic 'distinction'):

> For instance, the doubling of a word is at one time forceful, at another time charming; the same can be said for repeating a word in a slightly altered, modified form; frequent repetition of the same word at the beginning of clauses, and return to the same word at the end of successive clauses, and also when one word repeatedly clashes with a certain other; adjunction; use of progressively stronger expressions; use of the same word several times in different meanings; repetition of a word that was used earlier; and words that end in the same way or have the same case endings, or phrases that have the same length or resemble each other. There are also the figures of gradual development; inversion; elegant transposition of words; antithesis; asyndeton . . .[49]

Similarly, in Rule 6 (discussed at length below), though Tinctoris states that it is important to avoid contrapuntal repetition as much as possible, he admits that motivic reiteration, imitation and the sparing use of contrapuntal repetition are indeed acceptable in a musical composition, especially when executed for rhetorical effect, as when imitating the sound of bells and trumpets.[50]

In contrapuntal Rule 8, Tinctoris makes explicit connections with Cicero's fourth 'virtue of style', 'appropriateness'. Known alternatively by the Latin term *decorum*, 'appropriateness' ensures that the orator makes apt stylistic choices that fit with the specific subject matter, the audience and the genre of speech. According to Cicero:

> no single style is fitting for every case or every audience or every person involved or every occasion . . . when choosing a type of speech – a fuller or a more slender one, or indeed the middle type – we should see to it that it is adapted to the problem at hand . . . the capacity to do what is appropriate is a matter of art and natural ability, but to know what is appropriate at each time is a matter of intelligence.[51]

Tinctoris alludes to the rhetorical quality of appropriateness in Rule 8 where he warns that 'the highest reason must be adhered to' ('verumtamen in his omnibus summa est adhibenda ratio') when a composer is making compositional choices pertaining to *varietas*.[52] It is also here that he refers to the levels of *varietas* that are acceptable and 'appropriate' to each of the different genres of music – the mass, motet and chanson. Here Tinctoris models his discussion of the

[49] Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 206–7, pp. 288–9.
[50] See the text of Tinctoris's Rule 6 below: 'in imitating the sound of bells and trumpets, they [repetitions] are tolerated everywhere'.
[51] Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 3. 210–12, p. 290.
[52] Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint*, p. 139. Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 3. 8 (*Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 155).

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three predominant fifteenth-century musical genres on the three levels of *elocutio* – the grand (*supra/magniloquens*), the middle (*aequabile/mediocre*) and the low (*infimum/humile*). Clearly building upon previous definitions (*cantus magnus*, *cantus mediocris* and *cantus parvus*) put forward in his pioneering *Terminorum musicae diffinitorum*, Tinctoris argues that the mass manifests its stylistic importance by striving for the greatest degree of *varietas*, followed by the motet, then the chanson.[53] In Rule 8 he states: 'nor do so many and such varieties (*varietates*) enter into one chanson as so many and such in a motet, nor so many and such in one motet as so many and such in one mass' ('nec tot nec tales varietates uni cantilenae congruunt quot et quales uni moteto, nec tot et tales uni moteto quot et quales uni missae'.[54]

As we shall see below, Tinctoris emulates Cicero in another important way: much of what the theorist says about style in his rules of counterpoint emphasises the topic of repetition (*redictae*).[55] In fact, one could say that in the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, *De oratore* (and other rhetorical treatises such as the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*) a type of compositional paradox is presented: how to unify a composition by endowing it with a 'uniform finish' without resorting to excessive repetition.[56] Through a closer study of Rules 6 and 7 and their accompanying music examples, we will discover how the two contradictory concepts of *redictae* (repetition) and *varietas*

[53] Johannes Tinctoris, *Dictionary of Musical Terms: An English Translation of 'Terminorum Musicae Diffinitorium' Together with the Latin Text*, trans. C. Parrish (London, 1963), pp. 12–13; 42–3; 40–1. Sean Gallagher has discussed how Tinctoris creatively superimposes the classical terminology governing the three levels of style on fifteenth-century musical genres. Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*', p. 64. This transference is imperfect because in rhetoric the three styles are not necessarily genre-specific. In fact, orators are encouraged to move fluidly between the styles depending on the moment-to-moment context of a speech (regardless of whether the genre is judicial, deliberative or laudatory). According to Julie Cumming, Tinctoris's appropriation of this terminology reflects a tradition that can be traced back to medieval genre/style-specific categories such as those discussed in John of Garland's *Rota virgiliana* (Virgil's wheel), which divides literary works into three stylistic types: *gravis stilus* (epic: the *Aeneid*), *mediocris stilus* (didactic: the *Georgics*) and *humilis stilus* (pastoral: the *Eclogues*). See discussion in Cumming, *The Motet in the Age of Du Fay* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 42–3. Also see *The Parisiana Poetria of John of Garland*, ed. and trans. Traugott Lawler (New Haven, 1974), pp. 40–1 and 86–9.

[54] Johannes Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint*, p. 139; *Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 155 (corrected).

[55] *Redictae* literally means 'repeated things' but I will translate it henceforth as 'repetition'. In 'Models of *Varietas*', Gallagher chooses not to pursue these links between *varietas* and repetition, instead highlighting what he refers to as 'two primary aspects' that constitute Cicero's concept of *varietas* – 'one affective, the other technical' (p. 62).

[56] 'Conpositio est verborum constructio quae facit omnes partes orationis aequabiliter perpolitas'; *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4. 18, pp. 270–1.

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intersect in the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* and how Tinctoris translates these notions into a guide to contrapuntal mastery.

TINCTORIS ON *REDICTAE* AND *VARIETAS*: RULES 6 AND 7

In Rules 6 and 7, Tinctoris transforms ancient rhetorical concepts pertaining to the vices of superfluous repetition and the virtues of figured language into contrapuntal conventions. Like the ancient rhetorical rules they are modelled on, Rules 6 and 7 negotiate a balance between two opposing aesthetic concepts, *redictae* (repetition) and *varietas*. The accompanying music examples, composed by Tinctoris himself, help to clarify the rather brief and enigmatic textual explanations that comprise these rules of counterpoint.[57] For greater ease in the following discussion, I will begin with Rule 7.

In Rule 7 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* Tinctoris states:

> Septima regula est quod super planum cantum etiam canendo duae aut plures perfectiones in eodem loco continue fieri non debent, licet ad hoc quodammodo cantus ipse planus videatur esse coaptatus, ut hic: [see Example 1]. Quaequidem regula tam exacte a compositoribus est observanda ut nec etiam huiusmodi tenorem conficere debent, qui bis in eodem loco duarum aut plurium continuarum perfectionum dispositionem habeat. Talis enim compositio cum redictis evidentissimam contrahit affinitatem, unde tamquam varietati contraria omnino est evitanda.[58]
>
> The seventh rule is that, in also singing above plainchant, two or more perfections ought not to be made [successively] in the same place, granted that this plainchant is seen to be appropriate to this procedure. This particular rule must be so exactly observed by composers that they should not make a tenor of this kind, one which has the placing of two or more [successive] perfections twice in the same place.[59] Since such composition shows a most obvious affinity with repetitions (*cum redictis*), and therefore it must be completely avoided as the opposite of variety (*varietati contraria*).[60]

In the first part of this rule Tinctoris, addressing *super librum* singers, explains that, when adding counterpoint above a plainchant, even

[57] As noted by Seay, 'throughout the treatise there are numerous examples of his own to illustrate more fully the points which he wishes to make; the few which are drawn from the works of others, such as in Book II, Chapter XXXIII, are to point out what he considers as lapses in taste'. This is an important point, as it differs from certain rhetorical and music theory treatises that illustrate errors or vices to be avoided. See Seay's 'Introduction' to Tinctoris, *Opera Theoretica*, i, p. 21.

[58] Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 3. 7 (*Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 154).

[59] Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, pp. 138–9.

[60] Gallagher, 'Models of *Varietas*', p. 61. For the continuation of Rule 7, I choose Gallagher's translation as it incorporates an important reference to *varietas*. Seay's translation is: 'Since such composition shows a most obvious affinity with repetitions, hence it must be completely avoided as an opposite category.'

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Example 1 Tinctoris's music example for Rule 7

though the structure of the chant line seems to suggest it, successive cadences (perfections) should not be made in the same 'place'.[61]

The idea of 'place' or *loco* has been interpreted by Claude Palisca and Albert Seay.[62] Palisca states: 'The musical example that follows clarifies the meaning of "place", for it shows a counterpoint that makes a cadence three times in succession over the tenor's d. Place – *locus* or *loco* – therefore, refers to the pitch of the tenor in a cadence.'[63] In his introduction to the translation of the *Liber de arte*

[61] It is necessary to read the rule in conjunction with the accompanying music example in order to understand 'perfectio' as cadence. Here, 'perfectio' cannot have rhythmic connotation as the music example is not in triple metre. The example features three cadential progressions descending a whole tone to the final, meaning that Tinctoris probably relates 'perfectio' to the completion or end of a musical phrase. In his *Dictionary of Musical Terms*, Tinctoris himself defines 'perfectio' as follows: 'Perfectio equivocum est ad duo. Nam notae in sua perfectione permanentiam, et totius cantus aut particularum ipsius conclusionem designat. Unde pro primo significato sic diffinitur. Perfectio est qualiter nota maneat perfecta ostensio. Et pro secundo sic. Perfectio est totius cantus aut particularum ipsius perfectionis cognitio' ('Perfection is a word with two meanings, for it designates the duration of a single note in its own perfection, and the conclusion of a whole piece or of any of its sections. Hence for the first, the meaning is defined thus: Perfection is a manifestation that a note should remain perfect. For the second meaning, thus: Perfection is the recognition of the completion of a whole piece, or of any of its sections'). Tinctoris, *Dictionary of Musical Terms*, pp. 48–9. On 'perfection' in Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti* see B. J. Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 40 (1987), pp. 210–84, at 243–6.

[62] C. V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven, 1985), p. 341. Seay, 'Introduction' to Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, p. 10.

[63] Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, p. 341.

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contrapuncti, Seay reads Rule 7 in the same way, paraphrasing it as follows: 'Consecutive cadences should not be made on the same pitch, for this brings monotony.'[64]

If these interpretations of the text of Rule 7 are correct, then the accompanying music example (Example 1) proves to be somewhat confusing. Does this music example constitute an accurate or a flawed way of illustrating Rule 7? With three successive tenor cadences moving from *e* to *d* (indicated with boxes in Example 1), one might suspect the latter. This music example, however, has been carefully constructed by Tinctoris himself. Until now, Tinctoris has only used the music of other composers to exemplify 'lapses in taste' and has consistently relied on his own music examples to depict compositional correctness.[65]

The second part of Rule 7 clarifies matters. Here Tinctoris, addressing composers who construct their own tenor lines, seems to be saying that a tenor that successively cadences on the same notes (as shown in the music example) is naturally predisposed to blatant contrapuntal repetition (*cum redictis*). Tenor lines that are constructed in such a way should, therefore, be avoided whenever possible. It follows then, that the counterpoint that Tinctoris supplies in the accompanying music example to Rule 7 must actually illustrate the best way to deal with cadential plainchant repetition when it simply cannot be avoided. In this particular case, he reveals how to write a varied contrapuntal line above three cadences with *e–d* tenor motion. Here Tinctoris evades the tedium of contrapuntal repetition by realising each cadence differently, through varied intervals and different suspension procedures.[66] The first is a cadence (bars 8–9) with a 7–6 suspension that resolves on the octave. The second cadence (bars 12–13) closes on the fifth, while the final cadence (bars 18–19) resolves to the octave again but with different figuration in the upper voice. Remarkably, neither of these last two cadences has a suspension – a feature that will play an important role in the interpretation of Rule 8 below. Furthermore, in accordance with the text of Rule 7, the greatest contrapuntal differences occur between

[64] Seay, 'Introduction', p. 10.
[65] See above, n. 57.
[66] According to Lausberg, *varietas* is specifically meant to 'counteract the audience's *taedium*' through variations in thoughts or linguistic expressions. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, §257 (2).

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successive cadences: 'duae aut plures perfectiones in eodem loco continue fieri non debent' ('two or more perfections ought not to be made [successively] in the same place').

Most significantly, Rule 7 concludes with the phrase 'Talis enim compositio cum *redictis* evidentissimam contrahit affinitatem, unde tamquam *varietati contraria* omnino est evitanda' ('since such composition shows a most obvious affinity with repetitions . . . it must be completely avoided as the opposite of variety').[67] It is at this point that we encounter an explicit reference to *varietas*. Here Tinctoris emphasises how contrapuntal repetition (*redictae*) at cadences directly opposes *varietas* (as *varietati contraria*). He establishes that *varietas* (which must be understood in this context as 'contrapuntal variety' at cadences) is a desirable aesthetic that counteracts the monotony of simple repetition.

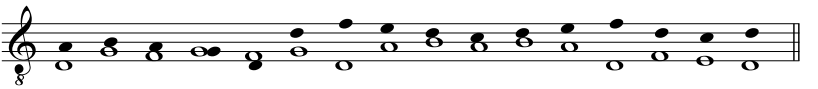
Rhetorical advice comparable to that proffered in Tinctoris's Rule 7 is found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* where the orator is urged to avoid the *vitium* of excessive repetition.[68] The *Ad Herennium* presents a group of ridiculous phrases with which the foolish orator, in an overly zealous attempt to unify the language in his speech, goes overboard in the reiteration of the same letters, the same words and the same case endings (i.e. 'Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti'; 'Nam cuius rationis ratio non extet, ei rationi ratio non est fidem habere admodum'; 'Flentes, plorantes, lacrimantes, obtestantes').[69] In Rule 7, rather than following the lead of the *Ad Herennium* and illustrating musical composition at its worst, Tinctoris demonstrates how to negotiate the aesthetics of repetition (*redictae*) and *varietas* in a successful and effective manner.

Tinctoris grapples with similar issues of *redictae* and *varietas* in Rule 6, where he explains how to avoid contrapuntal repetition when singing above repetitious plainchant:

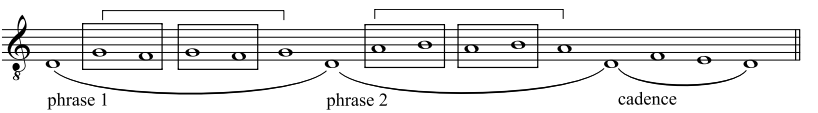
> Sexta regula est quod super cantum planum canentes in quantum possumus redictas evitare debemus maxime si aliquae fuerint in tenore, ut hic: [see Example 2].
>
> The sixth rule is that, in singing above plainchant, we ought to avoid repetitions (*redictas*) as much as we can, particularly if some appear in the tenor, as is seen here.[70]

[67] Emphasis mine.
[68] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4. 18.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 152; *Art of Counterpoint*, p. 137.

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Example 2 Tinctoris's first music example for Rule 6



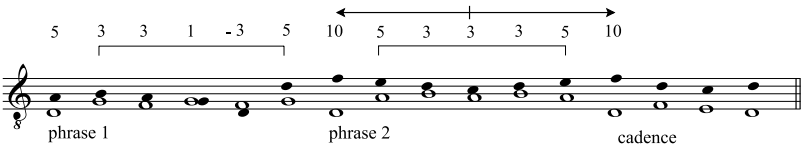
Example 3 Analysis of Tinctoris's first music example for Rule 6 (plainchant repetition)

The point of this all too brief passage is difficult to decipher, as it leaves many questions unanswered. For example, what exactly does Tinctoris mean when he says 'to avoid repetitions' (*redictas evitare*)? Is he referring to melodic repetition, contrapuntal repetition and/or structural repetition? In his understanding of 'repetition', does Tinctoris also include syntactical units such as reiterated intervals – both consecutive and unconsecutive? Is it clear from the music example whether there are exceptions to this rule? Careful inspection of the chant (transcribed here in whole notes) reveals a highly repetitive line. In fact, as illustrated in Example 3, tenor repetition is found at three separate levels.

First, Example 3 reveals a line of chant with a balanced, formal design scheme consisting of three distinct parts, here labelled 'phrase 1', 'phrase 2' and 'cadence'.[71] The phrases overlap, with the end (the tenor note *d*) of phrase 1 functioning as the beginning of phrase 2. The phrases are analogously constructed; each comprises seven notes, beginning and ending on the note *d*. Second (as indicated with square brackets in Example 3), each phrase is positioned around a pivot note – *g* in phrase 1 and *a* in phrase 2 – with concentric tenor-note repetition occurring on either side of these mid-points (phrase 1: *d g f* **g** *f g d*; phrase 2: *d a b* **a** *b a d*). Furthermore, both phrases form palindromes. Third, in addition to structural and concentric repetition, each phrase contains localised repetitions wherein internal pairs of tenor notes are duplicated, *g f/g f* in phrase 1 and *ab/ab* in phrase 2 (indicated with boxes).

[71] Here I am using the term 'phrase' very loosely. Rather than referring to actual musical phrases, this terminology refers to segments of melody. These 'phrase' markings will be useful in the discussion that follows.

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Example 4 Tinctoris's first music example for Rule 6 (repetition of vertical intervals)

The fact that Tinctoris employs a chant line that is inundated with so much repetition to illustrate a rule that is specifically about avoiding repetitions (*redictas evitare*) may seem paradoxical. Rule 6 however, does not pertain to *chant repetition* at all. Like Rule 7 on cadences, this rule is about avoiding *redictae* in the counterpoint, especially when repetition appears in the tenor. What is interesting once again, therefore, is how the theorist copes with this tenor repetition in his contrapuntal realisation (shown in Example 4).

In Example 4, we see that Tinctoris establishes contrast between phrases 1 and 2 in the *contrapunctus* voice (illustrated with black note heads). In phrase 1, intervals are varied above all repeated plainchant groupings, those of the concentric configurations (marked with square brackets), and those involved in the repeated tenor-note pairs (previously marked with boxes in Example 3). For example, in the concentric configurations of phrase 1, *d* is sounded with *a* and later *f*; *g* is sounded with *b* and then *d′*; and *f* is sounded with *a* and later *d*. In phrase 2, however, Tinctoris actually mimics the symmetry of the chant line with a melodic palindrome (*f′ e′ d′* **c′** *d′ e′ f′*) in the superius. This results in the repetition of the three intervals (indicated by the arabic numerals 10–5–3 and 3–5–10) situated concentrically around the pivot note *a*. In the first phrase he counteracts plainchant repetition by varying intervals as much as possible, while in the second phrase he accentuates repetitive chant patterns with concentric contrapuntal repetition.

Tinctoris approaches this contrapuntal realisation in a balanced way by emphasising repetition in some cases and favouring variety in others. This sense of balance is what makes his contrapuntal realisation rhetorically elegant. It is, therefore, only by 'reading between the lines' of Rule 6, and by considering the accompanying music example, that we find that there may not actually be a definitive 'right' or 'wrong' way to approach repetition and

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variation. Though Tinctoris fails to provide clear-cut guidelines for varying counterpoint, one could interpret the ambiguities in this rule as Tinctoris's way of demonstrating how procedures of *redictae* and *varietas* are not associated with grammatical rules, but rather with rhetorical and, therefore, stylistic choices. These choices, Tinctoris implies, should favour an aesthetic balance between the values of *redictae* and *varietas*.

The second part of Rule 6 states the following:

> Et quamvis ex omni parte in re facta regulariter etiam prohibeantur, aliquando tamen sonum campanarum aut tubarum imitando, ubique tollerantur, ut hic [example]. Utque patet in his exemplis, redicta nihil aliud est quam unius aut plurium coniunctionum continua repetitio.
>
> And, although these [repetitions] are also prohibited by rule from every part in composed music, sometimes, however, in imitating the sound of bells and trumpets, they are tolerated everywhere . . . As is seen in these examples, repetition (*redicta*) is nothing other than the continuous reiteration (*repetitio*) of one or many melodic intervals (*coniunctiones*).[72]

Though Tinctoris states at the beginning of Rule 6 that repetition is to be avoided (*redictas evitare*) as much as possible, in his accompanying music example he provides many specific situations where repetition is in fact permitted. As shown in my analysis (see Example 5), Tinctoris crams his second music example full of repeated musical motifs.[73] In some cases, repeated melodic material is strictly reiterated, while in others it is subjected to rhythmic or melodic variation. In the example, imitation between different voices is indicated with square brackets and dotted diagonal lines. Boxes show all occurrences of motivic repetition in a single voice, many of which are found in the extremely repetitive tenor line (reminiscent of the tenor in Example 4 above). The structure of the tenor is interesting in this respect, as it is made up entirely of brief two-, three- and four-note 'ostinato' motifs that change every two bars.[74] 'Modular repetition' occurs where entire three-voice contrapuntal

[72] Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, ii, pp. 152–4; *Art of Counterpoint*, pp. 137–8.

[73] The analytical markings in the accompanying musical example are my own. The analytical technique is borrowed from P. N. Schubert, 'A Lesson From Lassus: Form in the Duos of 1577', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 17 (1995), pp. 1–26.

[74] It is possible that Tinctoris meant the ostinato motifs that permeate the tenor line to evoke, first, the sound of bells (bb. 2–5) and second, the sound of trumpets (bb. 7–15). On how Tinctoris's examples always follow the exact order described in the text see B. J. Blackburn, 'Did Ockeghem Listen to Tinctoris?', in P. Vendrix (ed.), *Johannes Ockeghem: Actes du XIe Colloque international d'études humanistes. Tours, 3–8 février 1997* (Paris, 1998), 597–640 at 633.

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Example 5 Tinctoris's second music example for Rule 6

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Example 6 Tinctoris's second music example for Rule 6: (a) superius, bb. 1–4; (b) superius, bb. 5–6; (c) superius/contratenor, bb. 16–17

complexes (or 'modules') are repeated (see bars 14–15 at *perfrui nostras*).[75]

Amidst all this repetition, there is a short, rhythmically distinctive motif that unifies the entire example. It is introduced in the first bar of the superius and reiterated several times thereafter (see Example 6). This motif is also incorporated into the final gesture of the music example. As shown in Example 6(c), of all statements involving this particular motif, that found in bar 16 – with its homorhythmic superius/contratenor texture – is articulated the most forcefully.

All occurrences of musical repetition found in Example 5 are listed in Table 2 and categorised according to the following subheadings: 'Imitation', 'Single-voice repetition' and 'Multi-voice repetition'. Here musical 'figures' involving imitation, voice-exchange, single-voice ostinatos, multi-voice repetition, rhythmic and melodic variation, unifying motivic devices and three-voice

[75] Jessie Ann Owens defines a 'module' as 'a contrapuntal relationship that can be repeated'. See J. A. Owens, *Composers at Work: The Craft of Musical Composition 1450–1600* (New York and Oxford, 1997), p. 251. J. A. Owens, 'The Milan Partbooks: Evidence of Cipriano de Rore's Compositional Process', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 37 (1984), pp. 270–98. On 'contrapuntal blocks' in Renaissance music see Schubert, 'A Lesson From Lassus', pp. 1–26. On the 'module' as a two-voice combination see P. Schubert, *Modal Counterpoint, Renaissance Style* (New York and Oxford, 1999), pp. 216–17, and 'Hidden Forms in Palestrina's First Book of Motets', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 60 (2007).

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Table 2 *Varieties of repetition in Tinctoris's second music example accompanying Rule 6 (Example 5)*

Imitation
S/Ct imitation at the unison, octave and fourth
indicated with square brackets: bb. 2–3; 4–5 (articulated with rest in S); 7–8 (rest in S/Ct)
Ct/T imitation at the unison
indicated with square brackets: bb. 7–9 (no rests); 11–16 (articulated with rest in T)
S/T/Ct imitation at the unison and octave
indicated with square brackets: bb. 9–12 (articulated with rests in Ct/T)
Voice exchange at the unison
indicated with dotted brackets: bb. 2–3
Hocket at the unison
indicated with dotted brackets: bb. 12–14
Single-voice repetition
T two-, three- and four-note 'ostinato' motifs
indicated with boxes in the T: bb. 2–3 and 4–5, bb. 7–9
Rhythmically or melodically varied repetition
indicated with boxes in the S: bb. 5–6, 12–13
Repetition of main motif
not marked in Ex. 5; shown in Ex. 6, bb. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 16
Multi-voice repetition
Three-voice repetition: 'modules'
indicated by large boxes: bb. 14–16

contrapuntal modules may be seen as loosely analogous to figures of repetition described in rhetorical treatises such as *repetitio*, *traductio*, *gradatio*, *similiter desinens*, *adnominatio*, *expolitio* and *conduplicatio*.[76] In this way, Example 5 depicts musical 'flowers of repetition', corresponding with those 'figures of varied repetition' listed in Book 3 of Cicero's *De oratore*.[77]

[76] See above, n. 35. For a study of musico-rhetorical figures in the music of Josquin see P. Macey, 'Josquin and Musical Rhetoric: "Miserere mei, Deus" and Other Motets', in Richard Sherr (ed.), *The Josquin Companion* (Oxford and New York, 2000), pp. 485–530.

[77] *Ornatus*, which accentuates *varietas*, is sometimes referred to in rhetorical treatises as *flos* (flowers). On ornatus which accentuates *varietas* as *flos* see Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary* Rhetoric, §540 (8). In Book 2. 19 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* Tinctoris refers to the varieties of flowers in the field as an analogy for the use of florid counterpoint (i.e. counterpoint with dissonances and consonances). Here, dissonance (i.e. straying from the 'rules' of harmony), is interpreted as a function of *varietas*: 'And counterpoint of this kind is called diminished (*diminutus*), since, in it, a certain division of the basic notes into different minute parts is made; hence, it is also called "florid" by many, through metaphor, for, just as a diversity of flowers (*diversitas florum*) makes the fields most pleasing, so the variety (*varietas*) of proportions (*proportionum*) produces a most agreeable counterpoint.' See Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, p. 102.

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Although the first part of Rule 6 states that repetition is to be avoided as much as possible, Tinctoris suggests that at times, music, like oratory, needs to stray from the rules. An orator achieves eloquence by deviating from the normal meaning of words and by bending grammatical rules through the use of figures of speech (i.e. figures of varied repetition). And so it follows that, according to Tinctoris, a composer too, from time to time, can artfully deviate from the plain rules of counterpoint (e.g. Rule 6's indication to avoid repetition). In these cases, repetition is not only tolerable, but is actually highly encouraged. In Rule 6, Tinctoris clarifies that permissible forms of *redictae* involve 'nothing other than the continuous reiteration of one or many melodic intervals' ('redicta nihil aliud est quam unius aut plurium coniunctionum continua repetitio').[78] What is particular to this definition is that it explicitly permits melodic repetition. Though there is no mention of contrapuntal repetition in the text of Rule 6, it is possible to make certain assumptions based on the accompanying music example, which, with the exception of bars 14–15, tempers the occurrence of all reiterated melodic motifs with varied contrapuntal repetition.

In the description that accompanies the music example of Rule 6, Tinctoris makes reference to *repetitio*. Here, the rhetorical figure *repetitio*, which (as defined in the *Ad Herennium*) occurs 'when one and the same word forms successive beginnings for phrases expressing like and different ideas', can be translated into the imitative musical language of Tinctoris's music example (Example 5 above) that literally implicates 'the continuous reiteration of one or many melodic intervals' ('unius aut plurium coniunctionum continua repetitio').[79] Up to this point Tinctoris had employed the term *redicta* only to connote musical repetition. It is noteworthy, therefore, that he reserves specific rhetorical terminology, explicitly linked to a figure of varied repetition, to describe musical 'figures' of repetition in his music example. What Tinctoris's theoretical explanation lacks in terms of a developed vocabulary (he fails, for example, to mention other rhetorical figures of varied repetition), he more than makes up for with detail in his accompanying music example.

[78] Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, p. 138; *Opera theoretica*, ii, p. 154, corrected.
[79] For the definition of *repetitio* see the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4. 19; Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, pp. 137–8; *Opera theoretica*, ii, pp. 152–4.

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In Example 5, therefore, repetition – an element that might usually be considered a vice – is interpreted as a virtue, as it is deemed advisable and appropriate to the aesthetic goals of this piece of music.[80] The imitative and repetitive motifs have a mimetic effect, conjuring up images of a celebratory scene. Tinctoris's 'bells and trumpets' in the text of Rule 6, however, are strangely absent from the text accompanying the music example: 'Qui regnas in caelestibus sedes conterens infimas da gaudiis felicibus perfrui nostras animas' ('You who reign in the heavens, destroying the lowest regions, permit our souls to thoroughly rejoice in happy joys'),[81] and therefore probably serve merely as metaphors for joyful musical topoi. Here musical repetition is permissible because, as Tinctoris claims, it serves a purpose – it is meant to emulate sounds of joy. As Quintilian argued in Book 9 in the defence of repetitive figures of speech: '[they make] our words more vigorous, more insistent, and able to display a force that seems to come from repeated outbursts of emotion'.[82]

ALBERTI'S *COPIA*/*VARIETAS* VS. TINCTORIS'S QUANTITY/QUALITY: RULE 8

Like Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Leon Battista Alberti's pioneering treatise on painting of 1435–6, entitled *De pictura*, frequently cites Greek and Roman authors by couching descriptions of painting technique in the rhetorical language of Quintilian, Pliny and Cicero.[83] Robert Zwijnenberg has argued that Alberti invented a theoretical foundation and a specific technical vocabulary for painting that borrowed from principles of the *trivium* (namely rhetoric) and the *quadrivium* (mathematics and geometry) in an attempt to 'elevate painting from its lowly position as a craft, which

[80] Lausberg discusses this phenomenon in rhetoric in the *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*: 'repetition, be it in content . . . or in the words used . . . can become a *virtus* (virtue) if the repetition seems advisable on other grounds' (§306).

[81] I am grateful to Lars T. Lih for kindly providing this translation.

[82] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 9. 3. 54, p. 131.

[83] Alberti probably studied at Padua under the humanist Gasparino Barzizza. In 1421 he was enrolled in canon and civil law at the University of Bologna. See J. Spencer, introduction to Alberti, *On Painting*, p. 13.

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it still had in Italy at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and endow it with the status of a liberal art'.[84] Alberti's sophisticated rhetorical language and the classical concepts that he appropriates – especially those pertaining to *varietas* – are echoed forty years later in the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*. Unlike Tinctoris's counterpoint treatise, however, Alberti's *De pictura* supplies extremely thorough written explanations on the practical applications of *varietas* in art – details that can help to fill certain lacunae in Tinctoris's text.[85]

Central to his notion of refined painting technique, Alberti expresses the theoretical dialectic of 'quantity' versus 'quality' through a discussion of the pleasures of the 'copiousness of things' and the 'variety of things' portrayed in the highest genre of painting known as the *istoria*:[86]

> That which first gives pleasure in the *istoria* comes from copiousness and variety of things (*copia et varietas rerum*). In food and in music novelty and abundance please, as they are different from the old and usual. So the soul is delighted by all copiousness and variety (*varietate et copia*). For this reason copiousness and variety (*varietas et copia*) please in painting.[87]

According to Alberti, *copia rerum* and *varietas rerum* are two distinct concepts. He defines the 'copiousness of things' in painting as follows:

> I say that *istoria* is most copious (*copiosissimam*) in which in their places are mixed old, young, maidens, women, youths, young boys, fowls, small dogs, birds, horses, sheep, buildings, provinces and all similar things. I will praise any copiousness (*copiam*) which belongs in that *istoria*. Frequently the copiousness (*copia*) of the painter begets much pleasure when the beholder stands staring at all the things there.[88]

And later:

> since the *istoria* is the greatest work of the painter, in which there ought to be copiousness and elegance in all things, we should take care to know how to paint not only a man but also horses, dogs and all other animals and things worthy of being seen.

[84] R. Zwijnenberg, 'Why did Alberti not Illustrate his *De Pictura*?', in S. Gersh and B. Roest (eds.), *Medieval and Renaissance Humanism: Rhetoric, Representation and Reform* (Leiden, 2003), p. 167.

[85] In 'Models of *Varietas*', Gallagher also discusses Alberti's *De pictura* but arrives at different conclusions. He sees Alberti's definition of *varietas* as 'very much tied up with the composition and overall effect of the picture'. Aspects of *varietas* that he detects in *De pictura* include: 'abundance of figures' and 'visual harmony and symmetry . . . enriched . . . with a certain variety'. Gallagher concludes that, for Alberti, *varietas* is 'an absolute value while copiousness is not' (pp. 54–8).

[86] The *istoria* is a genre of painting that depicts a literary, historical or biblical scene. Alberti positions it at the highest level of achievement for a painter.

[87] Alberti, *On Painting*, p. 75.

[88] *Ibid.*

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This is necessary for making our *istoria* very copious, a thing which I have confessed to you is most important.[89]

Alberti then contrasts the 'copiousness of things' of the *istoria* with the 'variety of things':

However, I prefer this copiousness (*copia*) to be embellished (*esse ornatum*) with a certain variety (*varietas*), yet moderate and grave with dignity and truth. I blame those painters, who, where they wish to appear copious (*copiosi*), leave nothing vacant . . . In every *istoria* variety (*varietas*) is always pleasant. A painting in which there are bodies in many dissimilar poses is always especially pleasing. There some stand erect, planted on one foot, and show all the face with the hand high and the fingers joyous. In others the face is turned, the arms folded and the feet joined. And thus to each one is given his own action and flection of members; some are seated, others on one knee, others lying. If it is allowed here, there ought to be some nude and others part nude and part clothed in the painting.[90]

In other words, while *copia rerum* describes the *quantity* of different things in a painting, *varietas rerum* describes the specific *qualitative* differences between similar things. Here Alberti specifically applies the term *varietas* only to those varied elements in paintings that are essentially of the same 'genus' or category. Therefore, for Alberti, the term *varietas* describes things (*res*) that are, in essence, the same, but vary in expression (*verba*) (i.e. people in different positions, different shades of the same colour).

Analogous concepts of 'quantity' and 'quality', and copiousness and variety, resurface in the eighth and final rule of Book 3 of Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, confirming the existence of a common critical vocabulary shared by humanists of the period. In Rule 8, Tinctoris's assertion that 'variety must be most accurately sought for in all counterpoint', is reinforced with the following explanation:

Horatius in sua *Poetica* dicit, 'Cytharedus ridetur corda si semper oberrat eadem'. Quemadmodum enim in arte dicendi varietas, secundum Tullii sententiam, auditorem maxime delectat, ita et in musica concentuum diversitas animos auditorum vehementer in oblectamentum provocat, hinc et Philosophus in *Ethicis* varietatem iocundissimam rem esse naturamque humanam eius indigentem asserere non dubitavit.

Hanc autem diversitatem optimi quisque ingenii compositor aut concentor efficiet, si nunc per unam quantitatem, nunc per aliam, nunc per unam perfectionem, nunc per aliam, nunc per unam proportionem, nunc per aliam, nunc per unam coniunctionem, nunc per aliam, nunc cum syncopis, nunc sine syncopis, nunc cum fugis, nunc sine

[89] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[90] *Ibid.*, pp. 75–6.

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Table 3 Varietas *in music, art and rhetoric*

Music (Tinctoris)	Art (Alberti)	Rhetoric
Quantity ('so many'): varied musical ideas	*Copia* (copiousness of things)	*Res: varietas* of thoughts/ideas
Quality ('and such'): varied repetition of musical ideas	*Varietas* (variety of things)	*Verba: varietas* of words/expressions

fugis, nunc cum pausis, nunc sine pausis, nunc diminutive, nunc plane, aut componat aut concinnat . . . nec tot nec tales varietates uni cantilenae congruunt quot et quales uni moteto, nec tot et tales uni moteto quot et quales uni missae.

Omnis itaque res facta pro *qualitate* et *quantitate* eius diversificanda est prout infinita docent opera, non solum a me, verum etiam ab innumeris compositoribus aevo praesenti florentibus edita.

Horace says in his *Poetics*: 'One who sings to the kithara is laughed at if he always wanders over the same string.' Wherefore, according to the opinion of Tullius [Cicero], as a variety in the art of speaking most delights the hearer, so also in music a diversity of harmonies vehemently provokes the souls of listeners into delight; hence the philosopher [Aristotle], in his *Ethics*, does not hesitate to state that variety is a most pleasant thing and human nature in need of it.

Also, any composer or improviser . . . of the greatest genius may achieve this diversity if he either composes or improvises now by one quantity, then by another, now by one perfection, then by another, now by one proportion, then by another, now by one melodic interval, then by another, now with [suspensions], then without [suspensions], now with *fuga*, then without *fuga*, now with pauses, then without pauses, now diminished, now [plain] . . . nor do *so many and such varieties* enter into one chanson as *so many and such* in a motet, nor *so many and such* in one motet as *so many and such* in one mass.

Every composed work, therefore, must be diverse in its *quality* and *quantity*, just as an infinite number of works show, works brought out, not only by me, but also by innumerable composers flourishing in the present age.[91]

Here Tinctoris deliberately juxtaposes the terms 'quantity' and 'quality' in order to refer to the rhetorical division between 'copiousness of things' and 'variety of things' or *copia* and *varietas*. Tinctoris's *varietas* of 'quantity' reflects the logic of the wording 'so many varieties' (*tot/quot*) of the previous passage, while *varietas* of 'quality' reflects the wording 'and such varieties' (*tales/quales*). As shown in Table 3, both of Tinctoris's categories of *varietas* – *varietas* of 'quantity' and *varietas* of 'quality' – are analogous to Alberti's *copia rerum* and *varietas rerum*.

[91] Tinctoris, *Opera theoretica*, p. 155, corrected. Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, pp. 139–40. Alterations to Seay's translation are marked in square brackets. Emphasis mine.

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Essentially, both of these Renaissance theorists are saying the same thing about the compositional process. This is because their ideas are informed by ancient rhetoric, where a division is made between two basic levels of *varietas* in rhetorical style – *varietas* of ideas (i.e. *what* ideas are expressed) and *varietas* of expression (i.e. *how* ideas are expressed) – otherwise known as *res* and *verba*.[92] While *res* describes the content of a speech or *what* is communicated through language, *verba* describes the style and mode of delivery or *how* ideas are communicated.[93] For ancient writers, abundance or variety of *res* (ideas/arguments) and abundance or variety of *verba* (words/expressions) were crucial to speech writing and delivery.[94]

How exactly does *varietas* of 'quantity' and *varietas* of 'quality' translate into fifteenth-century contrapuntal language? For Tinctoris, *varietas* should, on the one hand, be reflected in a piece of music through a great 'quantity' or copiousness of different musical (or contrapuntal) 'ideas'. On the other hand, *varietas* should be reflected through qualitative differences between statements of the same musical ideas – through imitation and varied contrapuntal repetition.

What then, does Tinctoris's list of musical elements in Rule 8 (i.e., *perfectio*, *proportio*, *coniunctio*, *syncopa*, *fuga*, *pausa*, *contrapunctus planus*, *contrapunctus diminutus*) have to do with contrapuntal *varietas* of 'quality' and 'quantity?'[95] After all, several of these words seem inappropriate to a counterpoint treatise and one is left pondering the question: why are these musical terms, which would ostensibly be more at home in a treatise on mensural notation, discussed at the close of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* in what is arguably *the* most important rule of counterpoint? Much of the confusion here is brought about by certain ambiguities endemic to the vocabulary

[92] Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, §255.

[93] Lausberg discusses how *varietas* can be interpreted through *res* and *verba*: (1) at the level of intellectual *ornatus* 'by alternations in the direction of thought' known as *sententiarum exornatio*, and (2) at the level of linguistic *ornatus* (known as *verborum exornatio*). *Ibid*., §257 (2) and §539.

[94] *Res* and *verba* interpreted at the level of *varietas* were known respectively by multiple designations including (for *varietas* of *res*) *copia rerum*, *sententiarum exornatio*, *figura sententiae* and (for *varietas* of *verba*) *copia verborum*, *verborum exornatio*, *figura verborum*. These designations are found in a variety of sources e.g. the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4. 18; Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, 2. 58; Quintilian, *The Orator's Education: Books 9–10*, 10. 1. 15; and Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas*, *passim*.

[95] On the adaptation of rhetorical terms to music see D. Harrán, *Word–Tone Relations in Musical Thought from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* (Musicological Studies and Documents, 40; Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1986).

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Table 4 Varietas *of contrapuntal ideas (quantity)*

Varied contrapuntal ideas/procedures	Terms in Rule 8
Rule 3. Variety of vertical intervals	*Proportio*
Contrapuntal choice: use one vertical interval, then another.	'nunc per unam proportionem, nunc per aliam'
Rule 4. Variety of melodic intervals	*Coniunctio*
Contrapuntal choice: use one melodic interval, then another.	'nunc per unam coniunctionem, nunc per aliam'
Rule 5. Variety of cadences	*Perfectio*
Contrapuntal choice: use one type of cadence, then another.	'nunc per unam perfectionem, nunc per aliam'
Rule 7. Variety of suspensions	*Syncopa*
Contrapuntal choice: now with a suspension, now without.	'nunc cum syncopis, nunc sine syncopis'

itself. For clarification, however, one need look no further than Tinctoris's *Terminorum musicae diffinitorium*, compiled just shortly before the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*. It turns out that the first group of musical elements that Tinctoris mentions in Rule 8 – *perfectio*, *proportio*, *coniunctio* and *syncopa* – can all be situated within the context of strict contrapuntal practice (see Table 4, left column).

Indeed, as confirmed in the *Terminorum musicae diffinitorium*, each of these words has multiple meanings. *Perfectio* can refer to the duration of a note in its own perfection *or* to the conclusion of a piece or section.[96] While *proportio* is known more commonly as a term describing time duration or mensuration, it is also used (throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance) to refer to the measurement of pitch intervals. According to an explanation supplied by Carl Parrish in Tinctoris's dictionary of musical terms, *proportio* can describe 'the relative vibration-ratios of [a] pair of tones'.[97] Earlier in Book 2 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Tinctoris applies exactly this latter definition when he states 'for, just as a diversity of flowers (*diversitas florum*) makes the fields most pleasing, so the variety of proportions (*varietas proportionum*) produces a most agreeable counterpoint'.[98] In the *Diffinitorium*, *coniunctio* is defined as 'the immediate connection of one sound with another'. The word *coniunctio*

[96] See above, n. 61.
[97] Tinctoris, *Dictionary of Musical Terms*, p. 84, n. 34 and p. 83, n. 25.
[98] Tinctoris, *Art of Counterpoint*, p. 102. See also above, n. 78.

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therefore refers to melodic intervals or connections between pitches.[99] Finally, *syncopa* – most literally translated as 'syncopation', suggestive of a rhythmic shift of accent, is better defined in the context of Tinctoris's treatise as a facet of counterpoint. Indeed, it is more practical to conceive of *syncopa* as a suspension dissonance or what Bonnie Blackburn terms a 'stressed dissonance'.[100] For *syncopa*, one need only recall the analysis of Example 1 above, where Tinctoris resolves three cadences differently – the first with a suspension dissonance, and the second two without – reminiscent of the words 'now with suspensions and now without' ('nunc cum syncopis, nunc sine syncopis').

If read according to these 'alternative' meanings, the term *proportio* corresponds with Rule 3's 'variety of vertical intervals' ('nunc per unam proportionem, nunc per aliam'), *coniunctio* with Rule 4's 'variety of melodic intervals' ('nunc per unam coniunctionem, nunc per aliam'), *perfectio* with Rule 5's 'variety of cadences' ('nunc per unam perfectionem, nunc per aliam'), and *syncopa* with Rule 7's 'variety of suspensions'. As shown in the right column of Table 4, *proportio*, *coniunctio*, *perfectio* and *syncopa* can all be understood as aspects of Tinctoris's *varietas* of *res* or 'quantity', therefore specifying the diverse ways a composer can express a large number of contrapuntal ideas in a piece of music.

The final set of musical procedures listed in Rule 8, including *fuga*, *pausa*, *contrapunctus diminutus/floridus* and *contrapunctus planus/simplex*, can be associated with a different aspect of *varietas* – that of *verba* or 'quality' – which harks back to the numerous examples of varied contrapuntal repetition in Rule 6 (see above, Example 5). These musical procedures are pertinent only to repetitive or imitative contrapuntal textures, particular conditions wherein *varietas* is employed to temper *redictae*.

Fuga, in Tinctoris's *Terminorum musicae diffinitorium*, is defined as 'the identity of parts of a composition as to value, name and shape,

[99] 'Coniunctio est unius vocis post aliam continua iunctio.' Tinctoris, *Dictionary of Musical Terms*, pp. 16–17. Similarly, in rhetoric, the connection between groups of words is referred to as *verba coniuncta*. See Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, §537. See also Quintilian, 8. 1. 18.

[100] Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', p. 243. Blackburn defines *syncopa* (as used by Gaffurio in Book 3 of his *Practica musicae* of 1496) as 'suspension' (p. 245, n. 60).

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and sometimes as to the position of the notes and their rests'.[101] *Fuga* can consist of single-voice or multi-voice motivic repetition within one voice, or between different voices.[102] According to Tinctoris, sometimes a composer should incorporate strict repetition/imitation into his composition ('now with *fuga*'), while in other instances he should vary repetition by interpolating different rhythms and pitches ('then without *fuga*'). Furthermore, repeated passages (i.e. short motivic units or imitative passages) can be introduced into the contrapuntal texture in a variety of ways – sometimes repetition should be highlighted with introductory rests (*pausae*) and at other times no rests should be used. Finally, a composer can, at times, repeat note-against-note contrapuntal passages (*contrapunctus planus/simplex*) verbatim (see the three-voice repetitive modules in bars 14–16 of Example 3). In other instances, it is recommended that contrapuntal passages undergo contrapuntal alterations wherein pitches (i.e. dissonances) are interpolated (*contrapunctus diminutus/floridus*).

In summary, Tinctoris explains how a composer can achieve *varietas* of *res* – or a type of quantitative *varietas*, by integrating a large number of different contrapuntal ideas into a piece of music – varieties of vertical intervals (Rule 3), varieties of melodic intervals (Rule 4), varieties of cadences (Rule 5) and varieties of suspension figures (Rule 7). Tinctoris also reveals how a composer can achieve *varietas* of *verba*, or a type of qualitative *varietas* (comparable to varied body positions in the *istoria*), by taking musical 'ideas' – melodic motifs – and repeating them in a variety of ways. As illustrated in the musical 'figures' of Example 5, a composer should vary musical ideas by imitating and repeating motifs in varied contrapuntal contexts. Looking back, then, to what a composer 'of the greatest genius' must master in order to achieve *varietas*, it becomes clear that the long list of musical elements in Rule 8 – *perfectio*, *proportio*, *coniunctio*, *syncopa*, *fuga*, *pausa*, *contrapunctus planus*, *contrapunctus diminutus* – actually summarises the contents of Book 3, Rules 3 through 7.

[101] 'Fuga est idemititas partium cantus quo ad valorem nomen formam et interdum quo ad locum notarum et pausarum suarum.' Tinctoris, *Dictionary of Musical Terms*, p. 32. It is particularly significant here that Tinctoris's definition of *fuga* makes mention of rests (*pausae*), since in the list of musical procedures in Rule 8 rests are mentioned directly after *fuga*.

[102] On *fuga* as repetition in a single voice see P. Schubert, 'Counterpoint Pedagogy in the Renaissance', in T. Christensen (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory* (Cambridge and New York, 2002), p. 511.

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Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti* is, after all, a counterpoint treatise, and so it follows that his definitions of *varietas* are specific to the study of counterpoint.[103]

VARIETAS AND THE ART OF COUNTERPOINT

Overly literal translations such as 'variety' and 'diversity' only succeed in negating the conceptual nuances that are crucial to a more precise understanding of *varietas*. It has been difficult for scholars to unravel the meaning of *varietas* because, until now, the aesthetic has been exclusively read in relation to Tinctoris's eighth and final rule of counterpoint. In actuality, *varietas* plays such an essential role in Tinctoris's whole *Liber de arte contrapuncti* that it would not be an exaggeration to conceive of Book 3, in its entirety, as an eloquently drawn out, systematically designed, theoretical 'essay' on how to achieve contrapuntal *varietas*. Indeed, *varietas* is in no way an afterthought, and is not simply added to Rule 8 for humanist effect. Rather, it is embedded in the language, conceptual framework, and music examples of Rules 3 to 8 – thus confirming how central it was to Tinctoris's ideas about fifteenth-century musical composition.

The links between Tinctoris's *Liber* and Cicero's *De oratore*, and the structural cohesiveness of Book 3, reveal how carefully Tinctoris formulated his definition of *varietas*. In Book 3 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Tinctoris's treatise negotiates all the subtle nuances pertaining to the study of rhetoric, contending with the three 'levels of style' (grand, middle and simple) and the 'virtues of style' – including 'language', 'clarity', 'distinction' and 'appropriateness'. Among these, Tinctoris develops the language of rhetorical 'distinction' most rigorously, integrating the concept of *varietas* with each of its subcategories. To this end, he translates rhetorical 'word choice' into Rule 3's 'vertical interval choice' (*proportio*), 'word connection' into Rule 4's 'melodic interval' (*coniunctio*), 'cadence and form' into both Rule 5's 'variety of cadences' (*perfectio*) and Rule 7's 'variety of

[103] Tinctoris's definition of 'counterpoint', is found in ch. 1 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*: a 'moderated and rational sounding together brought about through the placing of one sound against another, and it is called counterpoint from "counter" and "point" ' ('Contrapunctus itaque est moderatus ac rationabilis concentus per positionem unius vocis contra aliam effectus, diciturque contrapunctus a contra et punctus'): from Blackburn, 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', p. 251.

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suspensions' (*syncopa*), and finally, the 'figures of speech' (namely the figures of rhetorical repetition) into Rule 6's example of varied contrapuntal repetition (with or without *fuga*, *pausa*, *contrapunctus planus/contrapunctus diminutus*).

Throughout Book 3 of the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Tinctoris consistently revisits the relationship between *redictae* and *varietas*. To this end, he establishes that *varietas* opposes *redictae*, but in doing so, also acknowledges that these are qualities that are dialectically connected. In this way, both *redictae* and *varietas* are concepts that work together to generate what was known by ancient and humanist writers as *concinnitas* – true 'harmony' in the most musical sense.

In Rule 8 of the *Liber*, Tinctoris also reveals that there are different *varietates* encountered in musical composition. Of the two types discussed above – *varietas* of thought or *res* (*quantitas*) and *varietas* of expression or *verba* (*qualitas*) – both find direct parallels to *elocutio*, a category of classical oratory that not only included 'figures of speech' but also 'figures of thought'.[104] With *varietas* of *res* or *quantitas*, a composer could integrate a 'variety' of musical ideas. With *varietas* of *verba* or *qualitas*, a composer could simultaneously assert the aesthetics of *redictae* and *varietas* by employing musical 'figures' of varied repetition.

As a learned man who moved among the most prominent humanist circles, Tinctoris must have been self-consciously aware of how crucial it was to express his musical theories with exactly the 'right words'. By establishing a theoretical foundation for music that was allied with the rhetorical tradition, Tinctoris may have sought, like Alberti, to further prove how the act of musical composition could be construed as an academic pursuit that fitted appropriately within the *studia humanitatis*.

Unlike typical music treatises, which preach the practical aspects of accurate contrapuntal practice, Book 3 of Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti* is remarkable since it broaches the topic of aesthetic choice and reflects on the compositional act itself. It is by emulating the structure and content of oratory treatises that Tinctoris makes a systematic attempt at instructing *super librum* singers and advanced

[104] In some treatises, *elocutio* includes both 'figures of thought' and 'figures of speech'. The 'figures of thought' are often indistinguishable from the main ideas or topics of *inventio* – meaning that differentiating between *elocutio* and *inventio* can sometimes be problematic. See also nn. 93 and 94.

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students of composition in the art of singing and writing rhetorically effective counterpoint. Viewed within this context, the *Liber de arte contrapuncti* is an unprecedented tour de force that, by translating the language of rhetorical style into the language of contrapuntal style, reflects the erudition of a 'musician of the highest rank, of a keen mind, skilled in *eloquence*'.[105]

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[105] Reese, *Music in the Renaissance*, p. 138, quoting Trithemius.

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