

Transformation in Intabulation*

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THE CHANGE IN RENAISSANCE lute technique that took place in the third quarter of the fifteenth century as a result of the practices of German lutenists, among them Conrad Paumann, enabled the simultaneous playing of various polyphonic voices on non-adjacent courses.¹ Such a development in technique would seem to be the result of lutenists' awareness of the current polyphonic vocal styles in the late fifteenth century, and their desire to adapt this music to their own instrument. Indeed, intabulations of masses, motets, madrigals, chansons and lieder made up a substantial portion of the sixteenth-century lute repertory. Yet, the surviving sources of this music transmit only the lutenists/composers' final versions of their intabulations from vocal models. Many more must have existed in sketches and in preliminary versions.²

On its basic level, lute intabulation requires the arrangement of music from mensural notation into lute tablature.³ The process, however, was

* This essay is a summary of a paper read at the fifth biennial New College Conference on Medieval-Renaissance Studies at the University of South Florida, March, 1986, and at a joint meeting of the Pacific Southwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society in Berkeley, California, April, 1986.

¹ See my article, "Conrad Paumann and Evolution of Solo Lute Practice in the Fifteenth Century," *The Journal of Musicological Research*, VI/4 (1986), pp. 291-310.

² Some sketches of intabulations may be found in Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, Vokalmusik i handskrift 76b and 76c. The manuscripts are listed in Jan Olof Ruden, *Music in Tablature: A thematic index with source descriptions of music in tablature notation in Sweden*, Musik i Sverige V (Stockholm, 1981), pp. 49-51. The origin and the scribes of Uppsala 76b are discussed in Thomas Gregg MacCracken, "The Manuscript Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, *vokalmusik i handskrift 76b*," (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1985). I am indebted to Professor MacCracken for making available to me some chapters of his dissertation.

³ On lute tuning, see John M. Ward, "Changing the Instrument for the Music," this *Journal*, XV (1982), pp. 27-39. On *musica ficta* in tablature, see Howard Mayer Brown, "Accidentals and Ornamentation in Sixteenth-Century Intabulations of Josquin's Motets," *Proceedings of the International Josquin Festival Conference*, ed. Edward E. Lowinsky (London, 1977), pp. 476-522. These subjects are also treated in my dissertation, "Sixteenth-Century Lute Treatises with Emphasis on the Lute Intabulation Techniques of Adrian Le Roy and Vincenzo Galilei," in progress at the University of Chicago.

more complicated since the intabulator was faced with the time-consuming process of transferring voices originally contained in partbooks and aligning them on a single staff. Some intabulators made intermediate scores to encipher vocal music,⁴ and intabulation treatises included scores to assist the student in comparing the vocal model and its intabulation.⁵ Although the use of a score does help to coordinate polyphonic voices, it was a more common practice to intabulate the voices directly into tablature, perhaps to avoid setting the vocal model twice.

The "literal" intabulation, then, is the faithful presentation of a vocal model in tablature form. By enciphering each voice separately, the intabulator strives to ensure that no note should be changed or omitted from the model unless there are compelling reasons to do so. Indeed, the

⁴ Vincenzo Galilei's vocal scores are preserved in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Anteriori di Galilei Tomo 9. The manuscript is discussed in Edward E. Lowinsky, "Early Scores in Manuscript," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XIII (1960), pp. 146-8. A vocal score of Orlando de Lassus's chanson with its intabulation may be found in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Ms. Mus. 2986. On the manuscript, see Arthur J. Ness, "The Herwarth Lute Manuscripts at the Bavarian State Library, Munich: A Bibliographical Study with Emphasis on the Works of Marco dall'Aquila and Melchior Newsidler," 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1984); and Marie Louise Göllner, "On the Process of Lute Intabulation in the Sixteenth Century," *Ars iocundissima: Festschrift für Kurt Dorfmueller zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Horst Leuchmann and Robert Münster (Tutzing, 1984), pp. 85-94. An example of Italian lute tablature in score format is preserved in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Ms. Mus. 1511c. See Ness, "The Herwarth Lute Manuscripts," vol. 1, p. 129; and Göllner, "On the Process of Lute Intabulation," pp. 87-8. A few examples of German lute tablature in score format may be found in Sebastian Virdung, *Musica getuscht* (Basle, 1511), Martin Agricola's *Musica instrumentalis deutsch* (Wittenberg, 1529) and in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Ms. Mus. 2987. Virdung's treatise has been edited by Robert Eitner, *Publikation älterer praktischer und theoretischer Musikwerke*, 11 (Berlin, 1811); by Leo Schrade (Kassel, 1931); and by Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, *Documenta musicologica*, Ser. 1, Bd. 31 (Kassel, 1970). The section on the lute is translated in Uta Henning, "The Lute Made Easy: A Chapter from Virdung's *Musica getuscht* (1511)," *The Lute Society Journal*, XV (1973), pp. 20-36. Virdung's intabulation is discussed in Hans H. Lenneberg, "The Critic Criticized: Sebastian Virdung and his Controversy with Arnold Schlick," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, X (1957), pp. 1-6. Agricola's treatise has been edited by Robert Eitner, in *Publikation älterer praktischer und theoretischer Musikwerke*, 20 (Leipzig, 1896). An English translation appears in William Wood Holloway, "Martin Agricola's *Musica instrumentalis deutsch: A Translation*," (Ph.D. diss., North Texas State University, 1972). On Munich 2987, see Ness, "The Herwarth Lute Manuscripts," vol. 1, p. 181

⁵ See, for example, the following: (1) Adrian Le Roy, *Instruction de partir toute musique des huit divers tons en tablature de luth* (Paris, 1570-1571?). Its English translation was published by James Rowbotham as a part of his *A briefe and plaine Instruction* (London, 1574). Modern edition in Jean-Michel Vaccaro, *Oeuvres d'Adrian Le Roy: Les Instructions pour le luth (1574)*, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 2 vols. (Paris, 1977); (2) Vincenzo Galilei, *Fronimo* (Venice, 1568/ revised 1584). The 1584 edition is published in facsimile in *Bibliotheca Musica Bononiensis, Sezione II*, n. 22 (Bologna: Forni, 1969). An English translation appears in Carol MacClintock, trans. and ed., *Vincenzo Galilei: Fronimo 1584*, Musicological Studies and Documents (American Institute of Musicology, 1985); (3) Bartolomeo Lieto Panhormitano, *Dialogo quarto de musica* (Naples, 1559); (4) Michele Carrara, *Regola ferma e vera* (Rome, 1585/ revised 1594). 1585-5 and 1594-4. The 1585 edition is published in facsimile edited by Benvenuto Disertori (Florence, 1957).

intabulator often preserves the contrapuntal fabric of the original work even when this results in unidiomatic or technically difficult passages.

More commonly, the technical limitations of the lute force the lutenist to abandon a literal intabulation and rework what cannot be realized in tablature. Discrepancies such as the omission or premature termination of notes are thus inevitable. In fact, the lutenist's technical prowess may both determine his main reasons for arranging a particular work, and provide the means by which he can alter the linear counterpoint of the vocal original.

In the literal intabulation, only the skeleton of the music is presented. The lutenist's artistic license stimulated the addition of ornaments, and the skilled lutenists employed ornaments to help sustain the sound of the lute.⁶ Yet some instrumentalists preferred to violate the integrity of the original music with their idiosyncratic ornaments; they omitted notes or rearranged the original counterpoint in order to facilitate the fingerings. Other lutenists created an instrumental version of the vocal model by transforming certain ornaments into a network of motives independent of the original concept.⁷ Many intabulations are based not on the vocal model but on a pre-existing intabulation resulting in the creation of an instrumental variation.⁸ Finally, pre-existing intabulations became the basis for making abstract instrumental compositions, through the use of parody and paraphrase technique. In this method, bits and pieces of the original intabulation were incorporated with newly composed music.⁹ In sum, lute intabulations came to mean not just

⁶ See Howard Mayer Brown, "Embellishment in Early Sixteenth-Century Italian Intabulations," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 100 (1973-1974), pp. 49-83.

⁷ See John Ward, "The Use of Borrowed Material in 16th-Century Instrumental Music," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, V (1952), p. 93; and Brown, "Accidentals and Ornamentation," pp. 521-2.

⁸ The technique of reworking the earlier intabulations is discussed in Jean-Michel Vaccaro, *La Musique de luth en France au XVI^e siècle*, Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris, 1981), pp. 121-248; and in Arthur J. Ness, "A Letter from Melchior Newsidler," *Music and Context: Essays for John M. Ward*, ed. Anne Dhu Shapiro (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), pp. 355-61.

⁹ The transformation of intabulations is fully treated in John M. Ward, "The Editorial Methods of Venegas de Henestrosa," *Musica disciplina*, VI (1951), pp. 105-13; *idem.*, "The Use of Borrowed Material," pp. 88-98; and *idem.*, "Parody Technique in 16th-Century Instrumental Music," in *The Commonwealth of Music*, ed. Gustave Reese and Rose Brandel (New York, 1965), pp. 208-28. On the concept of *imitatio* in the Renaissance, see Howard Mayer Brown, "Emulation, Competition, and Homage: Imitation and Theories of Imitation in the Renaissance," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXXV (1982), pp. 1-48.

the mere transcription of vocal music but its recomposition, resulting in the creation of an autonomous instrumental genre.

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