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Title: On the Three types of Motion, Direct, Oblique and Contrary

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[-f.93r-] Number 13.

On the Three types of Motion, Direct, Oblique and Contrary

[-f.94r-] “The parts of a Composition written in Counterpoint, namely the Cantus and the Tenor must move by contrary motion, so that, when the Cantus rises, the Tenor descends, and the other way round, et cetera.” (Franchino, book one, chapter three). My Signori, we saw in the past Meeting that, in counterpoint, one was allowed to progress from the Fifth to the octave and from the octave to the Fifth, et cetera, and, consequently that two perfect Consonances one immediately after the other one, as long as they were of Different species. Today, we shall see that, according to the sixth Rule, the parts written in Counterpoint, namely the Cantus, the Tenor, et cetera, must move by Contrary motions, namely, if the Cantus Ascends, the Tenor must descend, and conversely. Franchino says in the above mentioned Chapter: “The parts of a Composition written in counterpoint, namely, the Cantus and the Tenor, Must move by Contrary motion in relation to each other, so that when the Cantus Ascends, the tenor Descends.” However, since this would be a too rigid a restriction for the Composer, since it is necessary sometimes that the parts should move by parallel motion between each other, or in writing fugues or imitations, or in other similar circumstances, This Rule is not placed by Franchino as an absolute and legal [-f.94v-] rule, but one to be applied at one’s discretion. Therefore, he continues thus in the same Chapter, talking about this Rule: “However, this is a rule that has to be applied according to one’s discretion. In fact, often the Notes of the Tenor follow the notes of the Cantus with parallel motion, whether they ascend or descend.” Nevertheless, it is true, as Gioseffo Zarlino says in the Third part of his *Institutioni Harmoniche* at chapter 35, that, since Harmony is a mixture of opposite and Contrary elements, for this reason Contrary motions between the parts must be applied as much as possible, because they are cause of greater beauty and produce a better effect than parallel or Direct motions. Stefano Vannei supports the same view in the eleventh Chapter of his third book entitled ‘On the sixth Rule’, where he says on the matter: “Consonances are produced by different types of motions, because they are the specific and true Effects of Counterpoint and produce a harmony which is sweeter and more varied.” However, since there is no proposition whatsoever against this Rule, in order to be more concise in today’s lecture, I move on to the seventh Rule of the ones which remain to be discussed, which entails, according to Franchino’s opinion, that one must move to the closest perfect Consonance after the imperfect one, as a conclusion of the Composition. Franchino’s Seventh Rule was this one: “when we move from an imperfect Consonance, we arrive at the perfect Consonance, as at the end of the Composition.” For instance, if the Cantus and the Tenor form a major sixth, if the Cantus rises by a note and if the Tenor descends also by a note, one arrives to find the octave in admirable way, since it is a specific property of the sixth to move to the octave. In fact, albeit it is closer to the Fifth than to the octave, nevertheless, since the sixth is found major and minor, one must move from the major consonance to the octave as it is a larger consonance than the

Fifth, and from minor sixth one has to move to the Fifth, which is a Consonance which is smaller than the Octave, namely, less perfect, as Gioseffo Zarlino says at chapter 37 of the Third part of the *Institutioni Harmoniche*, and Franchino himself at the chapter quoted above, with these words: “However, the minor sixth returns more often to the Fifth with a single motion, namely, if one part of the Composition is held and the other one moves, it arrives at the Fifth through contrary motions.” Scipione Cerreto supports the same view in the fourth book of his *musica pratica*, third chapter. So, since there is no doubt about this seventh Rule either, let us move on to the eighth [-f.95v-] and last rule of Counterpoint. The eighth Rule, as Franchino says, states that any Counterpoint must end with the Consonance of the octave, or with one of its replicate, since the octave is most perfect than any other Consonance, as you have heard on many other occasions, or with the unison, which also represents the octave itself. These are Franchino’s words: “The eighth and last Rule states that every Composition must end and conclude with a perfect Consonance, namely, the Unison or the octave or the fifteenth. This rule is applied in the vast majority of cases by every school of music, in order to achieve the perfect Harmonic proportionality. In fact, according to the Philosopher, the final aim of every thing is perfection.” However, although Stefano Vannei that the Counterpoint can also be concluded with a Fifth, as he illustrates in the third book, Chapter thirteen, entitled ‘On the eighth and last Rule’, I reply, together with Scipione Cerreto, book Four, third Chapter, page 210, that, if a Counterpoint concludes with a fifth, it will not end with perfection and the ear will be left wanting, since the Consonance of the Fifth is less perfect than the Octave. For this reason, it is necessary to conclude with the octave, because, as it is more perfect than any other consonance, the ear is left satisfied and it is not left wanting, nor it can be left wanting any other Advantage. And lo, we have completed the discussion, with the help of God, of Franchino Gaffurio’s eighth Rules of Counterpoint, which have been embraced and observed by the entire school of musicians, such as Vannei testifies in the fifth chapter of his third book, entitled ‘On the eighth Rules, or teachings on Counterpoint or Composition’, Guglielmo de Podio, in the sixth chapter of his sixth book, entitled ‘On the origin of Counterpoint’, Gioseffo Zarlino, at chapter 28 of the Third part of his *Institutioni Harmoniche*, Oratio Tigrini, in the first Chapter of the second book of his *Compendio*, and, finally, Scipione Cerreto, fourth book, chapter three, and an infinite number of others, whom I omit for reason of succinctness.

On the eight inviolable Rules to be observed in Counterpoint.

Now that we have established how one should write in Counterpoint and we have silenced the conflicting opinion which confused us, which caused Roccho Rodio, because of such great Confusion, as I showed to you when we dealt with the Rule of the Counterpoint, blurted out that great blunder in his book Entitled Rules of Counterpoint in the Treatise of the different opinions of musicians on Plainchant, where he said that whenever the Contrapuntist aims to write beautifully and to produce a pleasing effect, he is not bound to follow so many different whimsical Rules put forward by others. The entire school of music is opposed to this view, in particular Scipione Cerreto in the first chapter of the fourth book of his *musica pratica*, as you were told. However, since my aim is to facilitate the understanding of Musical Topics with clear explanations, as I always tried to do, and to summarise in a few words the longwinded and obscure explanations of those who wrote on music, [-f.96v-] although Franchino made the matter

much easier with his eight Rules of Counterpoint, nevertheless I took the initiative to lay out a much easier way of doing this, as I am about to show you now with a single and simple explanation. It is certain that the Mistakes which occur in employing the Consonances in Counterpoint consist in moving the parts between them because, if both the parts are still, they cannot produce any mistake. Therefore, let us examine, Signori, in how many ways or manners Two parts can move in relation to each other in a Counterpoint, and we shall see that they can move only with three sorts of motions, namely, either by direct motion, which occurs when the two parts move together ascending or Descending, or by oblique motion, which occurs when a part is held still and the other one moves, or by Contrary motion, which occurs when one of the two parts Ascends and the Other one Descends. There are no other types of motion apart from those, nor can there be. In the Direct motion, which occurs when the parts move together either descending or Ascending, one is not allowed to use perfect Consonances, although the Ancients did use them, but one will be allowed to use as many imperfect consonances as one likes, such as Thirds and sixths. In the oblique motion, which is the second one and occurs when one part moves and the other one is still, you will be able to avail yourself of any Consonance, perfect or imperfect, as it may be, but only because a certain concern for elegance [-f.97r-] one will not be allowed to use the octave after the sixth and the sixth After the octave in it [which is rule of scarce effectiveness add. supra lin.]. In the instance of Contrary motion, which is the third one, you will be able to employ any consonance you may want, imperfect or perfect, as it may be, so that one can gather that the imperfect Consonances are Allowed in all this kinds of motions, except in the oblique motion, as it was said, where one is discouraged from moving from the sixth to the octave or from the octave to the sixth, [[I tell you only that the perfect Consonances cannot be employed in Counterpoint except by Contrary motion. Therefore, be careful and <use> the perfect Consonance in no other motion but the Contrary one or oblique, except when the motion is from the sixth to the octave, which is considered an error in the oblique motion. Thus, by following a single rule, you will have observed all the ones of Franchino. Therefore, take advantage of such an useful invention. I have finished.]] and that the perfect Consonances are not allowed in direct motion when the parts ascend or descend together, and in a single case in the oblique motion, namely, when one moves from the octave to the [-f.97v-] sixth or from the sixth to the octave. Hence one can gather that, since the imperfect Consonances are allowed in any motion without the possibility of making a mistake, the entire mistake will consist in the perfect Consonances, which, since they cannot be used in the direct motion, they will have to be used only with their Contrary Motion and with their oblique motion. Therefore, avoid to use the perfect Consonances by direct motion in any sort of Counterpoint and to move from the sixth to the octave or from the octave to the sixth by oblique motion and be sure to conclude the Counterpoint with an octave. Therefore, you will have, summed up in two single observations, all of Franchino's eight Rules, which you have heard about. However, since it is not my intention to reform the universe, I advise everyone to abide by the Franchino's Eight Rules. In fact, if you do so, you will be sure to be writing a Counterpoint free from any error and endowed of perfect Harmony. [signum] In the following Meeting we shall see what diminished Counterpoint is, or florid Counterpoint, as some might want to call it, and how the Composer must use the Dissonances, which is an interesting subject, but very difficult, [[signum] And how every Counterpoint must end

with the octave, since it indicates its perfection, as Franchino]] [-f.98r-] and how every Counterpoint must end with the Octave, which indicates its perfection. Thus Franchino, concluding his Rules of Counterpoint with the eighth Rule, demonstrates to us their perfection. In the following Meeting we shall see what Diminished Counterpoint or florid Counterpoint, as we want to call it, is, and how the Composer will have to use the Consonances, which is a very useful topic, as it is so difficult. With these words, I have finished.