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Title: A letter by Fiderico Verdicelli to the benevolent and sincere readers in defence of knight Signor Hercole Bottrigaro

Source: Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 326, Busta I,4

[<1>] A Letter by Fiderico Verdicelli to the benevolent and sincere readers in defence of the knight Signor Hercole Bottrigaro against what a certain Artusi has written in two Letters, in a false attempt to rebuke his ideas. These letters were written, one to dedicate his book to the Senate of Bologna, the other one to the courteous readers on the date 12 July 1602 in Milan, and printed by the Printers of the Archbishop.

AT BOLOGNA 1602.

To the benevolent, and sincere Readers

Everyone has every right to be very surprised that somebody who has no involvement in the matter should take it upon himself to defend someone who has received not a grave, but slight offence: one should be all the more surprised that, since nobody has been abused or offended, someone else should run to his defence showing off to appear as his courageous champion. But one should be surprised in the highest degree that somebody should want to appear strenuous defender of who has not even been threatened. Nor anyone should be able to understand the reason why someone because of his impudent and audacious malice should dare to trick someone else, when he himself has not been abused, nor injured, nor threatened. Now, you who enjoy reading other people's writings with benevolent eyes and sincere mind, be prepared, not to be surprised or to marvel, but to be utterly stupefied when you read what I give you to read herewith, as I invite and exhort you to do. In the first months of the year 1594 the Dialogue on the playing together of several instruments entitled *Il Desiderio* was published under the anagram, or, as we say, with the name and surname of Alemanno Benelli, so disguised by changing the order its letters. Later in the month of October of 1599 the same dialogue was published by the printer Bellagamba, but under the true name and surname of the very illustrious knight Hercole Bottrigaro, who was its true and legitimate author. It was published by the Reverend Don Gratia Lodi Garisendi with a dedication to the very illustrious knight Aldobrandino followed by a letter to the benevolent and courteous Readers, where the true reason of this operations was told in a complete, if brief, summary. Twenty months after this second publication, that is in the year 1601, when the rising sun was very close to Sirius entering Leo, a certain Artusi, without being at all involved in this matter, [<2>] but in order to appear as a defender of someone who needed no protection (since he had not been abused nor offended nor threatened, but simply mentioned) took it upon himself to have this same dialogue printed for the third time, as indeed it was in Milan under the same name, but solving the anagram, returning each letter of the name to its place and reinstating Annibale Melone, something which is said and clearly explained that that masked name and surname belies and signifies in the very letter adjoined to the first publication, that is Alemanno Benelli. The knight Signor Bottrigaro says that, had it mattered, and had it thought about it at the time, he could have made up using those letters Almeone, or, even better, Menelao Benelli as a credible name and surname, but, not satisfied with this, Artusi, removed, full of excessive temerity and gall, the letter of dedication to the knight himself by Lodi Garisendi, whose name is

so revered that the main powers of Christianity have it in the greatest regard. With utter impertinence he then replaced it with one his own to the Senate of Bologna, where he dares to launch an unnecessary invective to protect somebody who was not abused, nor offended, nor threatened, namely, Annibale Melone. That Annibale Melone, as he says, had not read this Letter to the Readers in this first publication (to the contrary it will be demonstrated and made clear that he had read it more than once) but that it came to his notice how it was published for the second time, it is one of Artusi's inventions, who did not refrain in any way from offending a person whom anybody else but he would have <not> dared to abuse by writing publicly to a Senate where this person, as a nobleman, has always had brothers-in-law, nephews, cousins and other close relatives and true friends, and exploding impertinently [-<3>-] in said letter with these very words. "And since I seem to hear that someone people have appropriated too daringly the work completed by this servant of your most illustrious Lordships, I thought it good to let the world know the impertinence of these characters". Oh cheek, oh too overt malice. Oh excessive, oh presumptuous, inconsiderate arrogance. Who saw greater than this? Listen to it now. Listen, gracious and most benevolent readers, see how enormous it is, since this man has not even the courage to see it through to its conclusion. In fact, he has released, through a backward tail-less fox-pup of a man, three or four of those copies on the shelves of a bookseller, having re-printed them, without having them first presented them to the Senate itself, as it is usual and necessary duty of anyone who writes such dedicatory letters. This is what the lauded Garisendi did, having presented with his own hands this Dialogue to the Cardinal at a public audience where it was accepted by him with the greatest benevolence and affection. I am sure myself that he is afraid, not to blush, since in a matter such as the one this man is involved with, there is no room for such a noble sign of a soul acknowledging its faults, but is pale, fearing, ashen-faced, that he may receive in return some deserved and appropriate verbal abuse, at the very least. It is enough for him, as it is for madmen who end up with a smashed head, to have thrown the first rock. But, I assume, you will not have any trust in my unsubstantiated my words. I reply to you therefore, that you will have as proof the sworn declaration of the mentioned Senate in the amplest and most authentic form, whose faithful copy, firstly in Latin, then in Italian, I will give you to read as conclusion of this essay. Nor because of this, should you believe that Artusi, this perverted soul, has been happy with making such infamous, evil and totally false accusation (to rob dead people, oh!), albeit [-<4>-] anonymously, in that letter to a knowledgeable person; which person very soon will be exposed by name through that letter of his addressed to the Readers. Although I cannot believe that anyone can read one or the other of these dedicatory letters without feeling nauseous, nevertheless, I will start to comment on it from the beginning, section by section up to the end, not so much to dispute his ideas, as one must never object to the words of an inane chatterbox, but instead to put a stop to this most impertinent, proud and indomitable malice. He begins that dedicatory letter of his with a false statement, saying that the reason why the late Messer Annibale Melone applied himself to write of the nature and details of playing various musical instruments together, was that he was in the service of that most noble Senate as a player and lately as head of the most noble Concerto. In these few words this man tells two great lies. The first one is that Melone was at the service of that Senate, and secondly that he had the title of head of its most noble Concerto, thus not mentioning what Concerto he is talking about. Melone in fact was never in the particular service of that Senate. Eventually, he acquired the title of head of the Concerto of the ordinary musicians, but not of the supernumeraries of the very illustrious and highest

messengers older consuls and Gonfaloniere di giustizia, which is that noble Concerto to which this man refers. However, he was named head of the ordinary musicians. This office was not acquired by Melone and granted to him, as it is not acquired by any other musician and granted by those noblemen, being in the free power of most of them to elect, suspend, make them redundant, pay their wages, increase their salary and to punish them by depriving them at their will of the usual provision of food. Moreover, as they employers, they can give them orders freely, as, by virtue of the same authority, they give them to everybody, to the eight trumpet players with the Guaccharino who are colleagues of these musicians, and also to the ordinary harpist and lute player, to the priests, meat-cutters, mace-carriers, ushers, to the servant who buys food, to those overseeing the pantry, the larder, and the cellar,[-<5>-] to the cook and to others. The ordinaries are eight in all. So, even if we concede that Melone had this intention, he could not realize it in practice, as it will be clearly shown to you in the examination of the other letter by this man to the readers, beyond what you have been able to gather through the letter to the readers in the first re-publication. As you have read, he adds to these two great untruths a third one, namely that some people have attributed to themselves with too much cheek Melone's work. Equally, through the same examination you will be shown how false this accusation is, if not in the respect that Melone worked at making two, or perhaps three copies of this Dialogue, as in truth it was pointed out also in the same letter to the readers in the first re-publication. This man continues by saying that it thought it a good thing to let the world know about the impertinence of those. Firstly, I say it is impertinent of him to perform this office. And who is this man behind hiding the mask? And why is it any of his business, even if it were true, which it is not, what someone had committed such injustice? Finally, who is this man whose business it is to recommend to the Senate to defend Melone against those who want to deprive him of his honour? Do not be astonished, most benevolent of readers, of the extraordinary arrogance and of the raving lunacy of this man, for you will be fully informed as well in the same examination. The last thing I have left to say about his dedication is that I would be very pleased to know how it is his business and falls under his authority, if not by virtue of his audacious and presumptuous arrogance to alter the second title of that dialogue – even if it were, as surely it is not, by Melone – which is this one [Dialogue in marg.] or on the musical playing together of several instruments in music, having removed that adjective, musical, and added it ignorantly to the word concerti. He did this because he does not know, this ignorant, arrogant man, the important difference between composing this second title in the true and well considered first way, and composing it in this other, stupidly altered way, [-<6>-] since the meaning in that one is clear, while in this one it could be inferred that such instruments, not better specified, could be shovels, spades of various sorts, or hammers, pincers, chisels and many others used in mechanics. On top of this he wrote in the conclusion of said title page 'In which the participation of said instruments is discussed, as well as of many topics related to music' in mutilated form, instead of putting 'in which the participation of said instruments is also discussed, and of many other topics related to music'. So, he removed with scarce reason not only the adverb 'also', which denotes that the subject of the participation is a pertinent and important secondary subject, rather than the main topic, as it is indicated ignorantly by saying 'in which the participation of the instruments is discussed', but also the word 'other', where it says 'other topics' and saying simply 'many topics', as if, while the main subject of the dialogue where the game of chess or fencing, many topics related to music were touched upon as a digression. Therefore, it should have read, as in the true

continuation of the title, 'and of many other topics related to music'. In this way, I make aware the author of this title that, albeit many topics are discussed in the dialogue, they are all to do with music. I do not understand then how he can make homage of said dialogue to the Senate, if not because of that same presumptuous and audacious arrogance of his, given that in the same way the dialogue was by Melone (which it was not anyway). But let us move on to examine that letter of his to the readers whom he calls courteous, which if by chance a courteous reader has read, I am very sure that he will have regretted to have read it very much, because it contains nothing but detractions, gossip, slander, acts of malice, lies, and contradictions of the truth and of what he says, since he states what he does not know, and denies what he could easily know. This man confirms [-<7>-] in the beginning of his letter to the readers everything that Melone tells respectively, in the beginning of his letter to the readers in the first re-publication, where he says: "It is very true (benevolent readers) that Messer Annibale Melone always inclined, because of his, nature towards virtue and the civil conversation with those men who were knowledgeable in every profession in those times. Clear proof of this is the high esteem he held for a long time not only towards Costeo, towards the extremely noble Baldi, a unique philosopher, and towards the mathematician Carlo Caracciolo, but also towards the most illustrious knight Signor Hercole Bottrigaro. So, in order that you, benevolent readers of my essay, may be completely certain of this, consider the words at the beginning of the same letter to the readers in the first re-publication. "Such great desire started to burn inside Messer Annibale Melone's heart to understand and to learn music theory in his old age that, having little regard for practical music (which he had practised honourably and publicly, being a singer and a player of various instruments, composing madrigals and motets, and also teaching others in a public school, so that in his young and adult years not only he had managed to get by, but had accumulated so many riches that in old age he had come not to fear poverty) he tried with diligence and any strength he could muster, to get to know, converse and have dealings with each and every one of those who had an interest in such theory, and to be known by them and by everyone as a music theorist. So, having heard that the knight Signor Hercole Bottrigaro had returned in 1587 from Ferrara, where he had lived for many years, to the homeland, and knowing how he had cultivated, among the other mathematical disciplines, this one of music, and had enjoyed himself as a practical musician in his younger years when he composed many agreeable compositions, and later on as a theorist by consulting and reading the books of many theorists both ancient and modern, not only Greeks, but Latin and also Italian, he began showing his esteem and deference towards this gentleman with every affection, diligence and care. Signor Bottrigaro, having been aware of said Melone and of his great kindness for a long time, received him courteously and became such a close friend of his, that out of twenty-four hours in a day, Messer Melone used to spend at least three by day in the summer, and three by night in the winter at the home of the knight Signor Bottrigaro talking about music and music theory. I think many knew that Messer Melone, beyond paying homage to Signor Bottrigaro with his presence, was a close friend with the physician Costeo, but I think that they knew that this was for other reasons than to learn music theory. In fact, as the most excellent Costeo was very fond of his simple singing, as it uplifted him very much, Melone, as well as a few other singers used to frequent his house whenever he had a party hoping that, should he or anyone of his family ever fall ill, he would be looked after and assisted by Costeo who was a most eminent physician. Melone became friendly with the philosopher Baldi and with the mathematician Carlo Caracciolo, if by this name Artusi intends Carlo Carazzi,

nicknamed *il Cremona*. This man was a tailor all his life, and so he worked also for the knight Signor Bottrigaro as well as a mathematician. Since he had a very desire to understand the books of Euclid's *Elements of geometry*, he read with great diligence and careful study those translated into Italian and demonstrated by Tartaglia, as well as those translated by Commandino and other books of mathematics translated into Italian, as he did not understand Latin. Melone then learned from him to use the four numeric operations called algorithms to some extent, and to compose the proportions which pertain music, but with great effort of his tutor from Cremona, since the tutor had scarce understanding of practical music, nor could he express himself clearly. Melone had to work very hard at it himself, as he found it very difficult to understand, and then also to retain knowledge, contrary to common belief in such matters. I also add that Melone was a close friend of Messer Gandolfo Sigonio. [-<9>-] Through their daily conversation, Melone, in his desire to learn, made further progress, since Sigonio was not only a good composer of counterpoint (hence his brother Carlo, a humanist in the main teaching posts in Italy, and a renown university scholar, used to call him jokingly with this nickname that women singers use, *sofamino*), but he was also very well versed in the knowledge of Zarlino's *Instituzioni and Dimostrazioni armoniche*, and a little familiar with the books of music theorists both Latin and Italian of our age. Besides these, Melone (as it is mentioned in the said Letter of the first re-publication) was acquainted with Zarlino, and with Montoya, since he wrote some letters to them. But on this basis is it possible to say – as this lazy Artusi seems intentioned, or rather deliberately wants to do for his love of polemic – that this dialogue entitled *Il Desiderio* was written by Melone? Let me remind you, very truthful readers, the good judgement expressed by that physician, Sacchi, namely that an infirm, having been found afflicted by a grave and sudden change of condition, had eaten his donkey, since, being attentive and perceptive, he had noticed that the saddle was under the bed. Let me remind you then with what rhetorical colours this man strives to embellish this fiction of his. "I will say, and strongly believe (he says at the beginning) that Bottrigaro read it page by page, and even corrected it;" and not only page by page, but line by line, and, I maintain, word by word, letter by letter, as it was written by the tip of the pen which came out covered in ink from his ink-well, and was guided by his right hand to write what his mind dictated, when he was in town and a time of great sorrow and tribulation for him, and not how, and when, and where this man imagines, writing tentatively in this way. "And perhaps when Melone sent him to his villa some page of it, Bottrigaro copied it to avoid ruining Melone's copy with his corrections." As if knight Bottrigaro, [-<10>-] in the villa; where he had not been for the previous two years, and perhaps for the following two, had become in this way the copist of Melone's writings, while instead Melone, when he was alive, had been a loving copist of the musical compositions of knight Bottrigari, as one can read in pure truth in said letter in the mentioned first re-publication. The words contained in that letter are these: "Messer Anniballe Melone copied himself by hand the Dialogue from the original written by hand by knight Bottrigaro, as he was used to copy out all the writings by this gentleman". And particularly those writings that Melone was keen that should be published. These well preserved copies can be seen even to this day. Now consider how credible is this fictitious tale. Artusi adds: "Melone was very happy with this, as he trusted him so much, that he could not do anything without his advice." He was in fact rather more timid, than daring, and deeply cultured. So, Melone would have written many musical works. But if he did, why is he so unwilling to show them, and so late in publishing them? Let them be shown and published, as, in this way, by praising knight Bottrigaro, and doing good to the world,

there will be clear proof of his knowledge and value, and it will be known manifestly how cultured he was. Nor will it be necessary to put forward a letter by Bottrigaro, who is still alive, which (he writes) was written and sent while he was staying at his villa. Which letter, according to Artusi, contains the presentation of one of Aristotle's problems made by Melone, who asks for Bottrigaro's opinion. And by sowing more seeds of thorny dissent, Artusi adds these other words aimed at fomenting doubt. "This presentation is perhaps the one which other people say it is Bottrigaro's work". The last words contain two points that have to be considered; the first one, that Melone had made a presentation of a problem by Aristotle; that second, that others say that this might be a work composed by Bottrigari. [-<11>-] As to the first one, one might say that, since Artusi does not say which one is this problem by Aristotle, it would not be worth thinking about it, because the problems, divided into thirty-eight chapters and covering several subjects, are just short of nine hundred. But, given that he is talking about someone who was by profession a musician and a theorist, it is logical that it should be understood as a musical problem. You must know that, in the fourth letter of the ones written by Melone to knight Bottrigaro, who had residence in the months of August, September and October and also most of November of the years 1595, 1596 and 1597 in his villa in the town of Sant' Alberto (letters which I have seen all individually and can be seen and read by anybody else who would like to see them and read them, since said knight Signor Bottrigaro has had them all bound one after the other as a book for this reason) one can see and read that Melone is struggling not to expose, as Artusi says and which the letter never says, and should say according to him, but to demonstrate (this is how Melone himself calls it in the second, fourth and others of said letters of his) one of Aristotle's problems, which was first the twenty-third, and then the twelfth. But Melone's lack of intellectual strength did not correspond to his strong will, despite the fact that his effort had been preceded long before by the Italian translation made for his perusal by knight Bottrigaro, and by the Latin interpretation by the same on Pietro Abano's commentary, and despite having acquired the Latin translation by the philosopher Pedasio, by doctor Zoppio and finally by doctor Perseo. All this was prompted by the instigation of a gentleman whose name one can read clearly in the second of said letters by Melone. Therefore this is that exposition held in such high regard by Artusi, who wants to prevent at any cost that someone else might think (or think of saying and ultimately say) that it is by knight Bottrigaro, who (and I give you my secure word of honour in his place) does not want at any cost that that someone else might think, or think of saying and ultimately say that it is by him. To the contrary, knight Bottrigaro, even if someone not only said, but maintained absolutely, that it is truly by him, which it is not (and I give you my absolute word of honour in his place), [-<12>-] does not accept it or recognise it, he does not want it, he disapproves of it and rejects it. As to the second claim, namely that others say that said exposition is perhaps the one that others attribute to knight Bottrigaro, I do not believe that there is anybody who claims it. Rather, one can read in said letter to the readers in the first publication, that knight Bottrigaro, besides having translated into Italian for Melone's perusal Aristoxenus' and Ptolemy's Armonics, and having freed them from the thousands of errors, which can be read in the Latin translation by Gogavino, having cleared up many obscure points with some brief notes, and having prepared with easy and brief demonstration the Euclid's Isagoge and the Harmonic Rule, the same Bottrigaro translated also the nineteenth division of Aristotle's problems, Psellus' Synopsis and others of this kind. So, when it mentions the nineteenth division of Aristotle's problems, it does not refer to the exposition of any particular problem

which knight Bottrigaro would have made, but it refers to the whole of said division nineteenth, which contains the musical problems which were exposed by their rightful author, since knight Bottrigaro performed himself only the role of the translator from a language into another one, and without much satisfaction. So, it is well said, albeit with his usual great immodesty and against the point he is trying to make, that it is false that others say that his exposition was Bottrigaro's work. But that it is false, as this chatterbox says, that Melone made two copies of this dialogue from Bottrigaro's original (as it said in the same letter to the readers in the first re-publication), in order to send it to Venice so that it may be printed, just as you have understood being false that in the house of Melone's heirs (these are the specific words of this fraudulent troublemaker) two of those sketches, such as are made [-<13>-] in the beginning, when one starts to plan a book, and that they are written in Melone's hand. This is very clear proof that this dialogue is by Melone and not by Bottrigaro. To the contrary, I maintain on the basis of the same argument, that it is a work composed by knight Bottrigaro, since the true original of this dialogue is found among many other writings by him written in his own hand, which have been shown publicly to many people, as it will be shown (I am very confident of this) to anybody who will want to see it, while the two sketches falsely put forward by this man as written by Melone have never been seen, nor will they ever be able to be shown as originals, as they are not. And if they were, they would be only imperfect copies made by Melone and taken from the very original of knight Bottrigaro. Listen now to another very strong argument put forward by Artusi. "If Bottrigaro (he says) had written this dialogue (which is not true) – rather it is truth itself, from which he parts company immodestly – why did he not have it printed himself the first time round," but he let it out in the world under the name of Alemanno Benelli? One can say that such tight argument was answered by the words which one reads in the said letter to the readers in the first re-publication, which I want to quote here. "And he (Melone) begged many times the knight Signor Bottrigaro and invited him to agree to let this dialogue be published in print, just as he had begged him to agree to publish the first, and second Melone. But, as Signor Bottrigaro was not interested, by cajoling him with promises and good words, finally he obtained for said dialogue to be published anonymously, so that the knight Signor Bottrigaro might learn what the world would think of it without being identified as the author." And further on, "And because in this age it is not premitted to print a publication or a book without the name of the author, a decision was taken to publish it under the anagrammed and credible name of somebody who would lend himself in disguise." As the knight Bottrigaro was not interested in the publication of said dialogue, just as he had shown little interest in the publication of any other one of his works, he decided not to print it, but agreed with Melone, to please him, that he could print it, but under an anagrammed name, so that he may listen incognito to what people made of it day by day. Although he was not particularly satisfied with it himself, because its subject matter is rather of a practical nature, he tried to dress it and adorn it nevertheless, to make it more attractive. And how would this malignant adulator and calumniator conciliate that it would be logical to think that Melone, being the author of this dialogue, would have preyed, exhorted and with many pleas urged knight Bottrigaro to accept for it to be published in print? And the fact that, being Melone, as he has said, timid rather than self-assured, he could not do anything without consulting knight Bottrigaro, whom he trusted very much. And that he who is a real master, as Artusi says Melone was, but very eager as he was, is keen to receive advice, but orders his affairs in his own way and according to his will. And if, since knight Bottrigaro did not want to have said dialogue printed, Artusi wants to deduce

that it was not written by him, as if, because of his very arrogant and domineering attitude, authors were obliged to have their work published in print, or, if they do not have them printed, they would not only miss out on their labour and birth, but also on their conception. How will he be able to conclude logically that the dialogue is by Melone, although Melone had it printed (a task which all day various printers, booksellers and others who [-<15>-] publish other people' s work perform and have performed in the past), if the main and final aim of this dialogue is to praise and commend things never seen nor heard by Melone, having made a meticulous description of places and times to which Melone was never present or introduced to, albeit it is imagined that he says to have heard them not once, but many times, having been present and introduced to them? On the other hand knight Bottrigaro many times has heard and seen and has been present and introduced to such things and has introduced others to them and has seen them because he was there, while in that period of almost eleven years when he had as a second loving homeland Ferrara, and the most serene Don Alfonso the second as his lord and most benevolent protector, while Melone who was never there for any substantial length of time, or stopped there more than a couple of days, has described them and has talked about them. These are the rooms which belonged to the musicians of that Highness. These are the musicians, the instrumentalists and singers on his books. This was his great consort of musical instruments. These were the musical compositions which were played with the sound of various instruments and voices in certain occasions and events. Those were the musical instruments which were used, or not used. Among those not used was that organ in the shape of a spiral, with very long, thick and round pipes made in boxwood, made of a single piece of wood as if they were recorders. And, in order to describe and demonstrate this shape to make it comprehensible to Melone, knight Bottrigaro, while he was writing this dialogue, needed to use great artistry, having first (and to no use) made some designs of its layout, and of the elevation of the layout of the pipes. But as this was not enough, he had to make some models, built with small straight wax candles, which represented the pipes of this organ. Moreover, there was the archicembalo of the arch-musician Nicola Vicentino, which now [-<16>-], I read, is in the hands of Signor Goretto in Ferrara, of which knight Bottrigaro showed Melone the design containing that double keyboard with a large number of white and black, solid and split keys, and showing with straight lines the strings corresponding to them, the jacks. Also there were those three most noble ladies of the secret music of that most serene Highness and of her ladyship his wife, those reverend nuns of San Vito, their most divine musical consort and the most gentle and modest way in which they prepared their group to play in said consort. And since knight Bottrigaro had never seen or heard the concerts of the Messers Accademici Filarminici of Verona, how can Benelli say that, being content with praising them deservedly, and honour them, he did not want to speak by relating somebody else' s opinion, just as he did not want to talk about those in Venice, because, despite having been in that little world seven times, he had not seen or heard chamber concerts, but only public ones, and in churches, as were the ones made of the most extravagant celebrations staged on the occasion of for the Christian naval victory. But up to this point it can be said, judicious readers, that this Artusi has almost joked with knight Bottrigaro, compared with what you will hear that it is contained in the last lines of his letter to the readers, since now he is about to make a serious attack, openly using derisory words and referring to him with animal epithets. But he will get as good as he gives, as we joke with him now while he is serious, the same way that he joked with us while we were serious. Artusi then carries on with these words: "And if he conceded this to his friend

to please him, why, immediately after his friend, from whom he received so much devotion and service, had died, did he give permission for it to be published under his own name, thus disrespecting him.” When knight Bottrigaro allowed the dialogue to be printed to please his friend Melone, such permission was not freely given, but under the condition which I have produced just now, and which can be found in the first [-<17>-] re-publication, which is that the print should be issued without name or surname of the author, and, as this was not allowed by the authorities, that the dialogue should be published under an appropriate anagrammed name of a person which would volunteer and would remain concealed. But, as the condition of the consent was not observed, the consent itself cannot be considered as having been granted. Nor it can be said that the conditions were fully fulfilled because the dialogue was printed under the name of Alemanno Benelli, being the name and the surname both concealed by the anagram, since this anagrammed name and surname was not put there to allow someone else to claim the authorship of the dialogue, but to conceal at that time who the real author was and is. But since the anagram was uncovered and understood by everybody, and almost by deception the spirit of the consent given under such a condition was violated, as someone else came forward to claim the authorship which was not his, knight Bottrigaro did not stand for it as soon as he understood that the anagram had been solved, as one can read in said letter to the readers in the first re-publication. The words are these: “Having learned a few months after the publication of this dialogue that the anagram had been solved, and the real name understood by many, however it may have happened, the knight Signor Bottrigaro was a little displeased, and had a discussion with Melone, who tried to convince the knight Signor Bottrigaro who was away, by sending some letters which are today still extant, to allow him to solve the anagram. Knight Bottrigaro replied in his letters advising him not to do it and to keep quiet, because of several reasons concerning Melone’s reputation.” Now I will make clear to you, most gracious readers, that the anagram was solved, how, by whom and for whose benefit, which is something that was not explained in said letter to the readers of the first re-publication for reason of convenient discretion, except for what concerns how it was solved. Since Melone tried several times with letters to convince knight Bottrigaro to allow him to uncover the solution of the anagram, as you have heard earlier, and since this had not been allowed [-<18>-] by him, who instead advised him in a friendly way to keep quiet, and because he could not refrain his ardent desire to let other people know that the anagrammed name and surname was his, he could not contain himself and was drawn to reveal it to Messer Leonardo Maria Piccinino, a friend of his for many many years and an eminent lutenist, who had been as a lutenist in the service of duke Alfonso of Ferrara, in whose service were still his sons Alessandro Melone, having revealed it, informed the knight within a paragraph of his fifteenth letter dated 21 August 1596 sent to his villa, with these very words of his own. “I have unveiled the anagrammed name of the author of the Dialogue to Messer Leonardo, who was almost sorry for me. He said that he would let it be known everywhere among gentlemen and ladies, and that nobody would find out how it was revealed, as long as he was sure that they would have been pleased to know it, so, your Lordship, I request your advice, as there will be further opportunities to unveil it.” In the seventeenth letter of the twenty-sixth day of the same month and year one can read these very words. “Although the anagram has been unveiled to some people, nevertheless some honour will come of it; and if our evil detractors are going to resent it, it will be to their loss. Anyhow, these people are intent on cause us as much problems as they can.” Since Melone had unveiled and made clear said anagram in a similar way also

to Claudio Achillino on one occasion when he went to his house to teach him to sing, but when he related it to knight Bottrigaro, he was left very annoyed, even more so because Melone, being very keen and ardently ambitious of obtaining the office of Maestro di Cappella in the collegiate church of San Petronio, a position which was left vacant because of the death of Andrea Rota (this is a particular episode told in the letter to the readers in the first re-publication, and in this occasion knight Bottrigaro supported him as much as he could), was going around showing the dialogue and revealing the anagram, not to claim authorship of it, but to refute that common and general opinion held by those who knew him that he was not very learned, [-<19>-] as he himself in this respect admits in the letter 25 of the day of San John 1597, that is the day of the beheading of the saint, dated 29 August and written to the knight Bottrigaro who was at his villa. The exact words are these: “Messer Alfonso (this man is Ganassa, Melone’s successor and head of the musicians of the most illustrious city of Bologna) has told me that, while he was in the square with gentlemen of letters, when they came to talk about the office of magistrate, they were saying that there was nobody in Bologna knowledgeable enough for that office. Melone then mentioned this person and that person, and he also made my name. It was answered to him: “That man has some knowledge, but he has not published anything yet.” I hope to meet them again, and to show them something.” But since Melone was not content with doing something completely against the conditions of consent given to him by knight Bottrigaro because (as it is written in said letter to the readers in the first re-publication) of his ever growing desire and immense want that everybody should know that that was his name and surname, and because of his repeated begging knight Bottrigaro’s for permission to be able to reveal it, finally it was decided to reveal the anagram, which was understood in the first days only by knight Signor Bottrigaro and by Signor Fulvio Codibò, by returning the letters which had been moved to their rightful place via the print. So it was decided to put in the title of the dialogue the name and surname of the knight Signor Bottrigaro as its real and true author, disregarding the opinion of the world. And this is what was put into practice, not, as this Artusi fraudulently says, as soon as his friend Melone died of a sudden death, but much more than eighteen months after that, namely from the middle of April to more than two thirds of the month of October 1599. The intention behind this was to preserve for knight Bottrigaro what is really his, as it would have been done much before, if Melone had lived, not to rob a friend of an honour, a friend whose long and continued reverence knight Bottrigaro always sought to match as much as he could with his own, [-<20>-] by helping him to a position where he would be highly regarded by everyone. So, it has no great meaning, as Artusi thinks, that one can find in a letter of his written to Melone, that he thought of him as a connoisseur, since the term connoisseur must not be interpreted as learned. This letter, if it is still extant, as Artusi says, is not as publicly available as these words are: “For my part I cannot conceive that you, Messer Annibale, who have such great knowledge and experience of modern musical practice and are so versed in theory, may ever hold such an opinion; and if you do, consequently, I am persuaded that I can satisfy your desire and answer your question with little difficulty.” These words can be read at the beginning of *Il Melone*, an essay on harmony by knight Bottrigaro, written as an answer to said Melone, to whom also he dedicated later some considerations on questions about music put to him by said Melone, and for this reason entitled *Il Melone secondo*, which, with the other *Melone* can be seen printed here in Ferrara by Baldino. Moreover, knight Bottrigaro introduced in his *Trimerone Armonico* said Melone as main interlocutor who speaks in an authoritative way, with a clear view to lead and

sustain the familiar exposition of the three giornate (just as he lead the discussion lasting for a day, albeit implicitly in said dialogue). If this is a way to despise somebody' s homage, if this is the manner to take away an honour from a friend without offending anyone else, or if it is a way to hold them in consideration and to honour them, you tell us now, judicious readers; or if it is the conduct of this Artusi, who (if he is the same Artusi, whom one can believe him to be, as one can conjecture judging from his malignant progress in badmouthing others) in the first of his two essays of his musical imperfections (about the second you will hear another time many ignoble things) entitled L' Artusi, having worked laboured anxiously with his grandiloquent ignorance for thirty-three months after Melone' s death to stomp all over him and manhandle this very dialogue by him [-<21>-] named in said first essay il Benelli, which in the aforesaid anagram is the surname of the name Alemanno, and now as a tearful crocodile, pretending to come in as a vainglorious bully to defend Melone, and to anger others and force them to his delight (to defend the interest of their reputation trampled by him) to reveal for the most part how little learned was Melone, whom always with such affection knight Bottrigaro had tried to make appear more knowledgeable; this man would like to attribute to him this dialogue, which he later, having disrespected and sabotaged it, has recommended to a most illustrious Senate asking to protect it, and begging them to defend it, failing to notice that such recommendations and prayers of his rebound directly against himself. These are, very prudent readers, his ways and his methods, these are the tricks employed by this man, not to preserve so impertinently the reputation of his dearest friend Melone, but rather (I myself imagine this not without reason) with this thought that, since Melone is dead (who if he is dead, as he is, has knowledge of the actions of his friends still alive. This I mean to say in conformity to what is written in the Sacred Canons of the Pope, at the end of the chapter Qui divina sanctis de mortuis, aut et cetera, and in the following chapter Fatendum est, under the Title Causa and Question 13. I am convinced that Melone, because of his natural good character, regrets and suffers greatly in hearing about such unwise and unjust action of Artusi, and he would much prefer for this dialogue, even if it were of his composition, to be attributed to knight Bottrigaro, not only for the many debts that Melone had towards him, but to let everyone know that it was a product and almost an offspring of his, which had not been snatched from him, but that was considered and regarded worthy of being adopted by a virtuous and respected man); that someone else impertinently and unwarrantedly should dare to want to attribute said dialogue, which Melone, when he was alive, knew with absolute certainty to be a work by knight Bottrigaro,[-<22>-] with this idea, I say, that after Melone' s death nobody else should take dutiful protection against his slanderous attacks and the very reasonable defence of said dialogue, which nevertheless has been taken up already very competently and has been very seriously carried out in practice by knight Bottrigaro, not as Melone' s champion, but as true and real author, creator, parent and midwife of said dialogue. Regarding the reason why knight Bottrigaro was waiting in the wings to hear what people thought of the dialogue, a fact which this man adds perverting in sinister fashion (in conformity with his usual natural malevolence) that aim, for which it was said in said letter to the readers in the second re-publication, and now is repeated by me, he says lying that he did it for no other reason than because he knows that this dialogue is Melone' s work, and not his. Where are the protections for the troops? Where are the spears? Where are the curved poles and the halberds? So we can pick them up quickly, and come down to a duel, a fight and a battle? But since this is forbidden by the holy laws in our time and it is not allowed, he can carry on to talk nonsense merrily hiding behind the excuse of wanting

to preserve the reputation to someone who has not been deprived of it, and offend, as he does, anybody: and like a good organist he wants to play touching the registers of other people's instruments, moving by semitones and composing recercari through musica finta. Gracious readers, accept this new witness statement as evidence that not considering sufficient what he has stated lying so far against the reputation of knight Bottrigaro, now as an ending of this letter to the readers of his no only he wants to put into doubt what is certain and true, but again to appear against him like the great mare belonging to the giant Mambrino with these words of his unwieldy collection of words. "Who then is the author of those several translations that many talk about, I will reveal it to the world in my opinion about the harmonic tetrachords in defence of Patritio;" and I reveal to you with certainty [-<23>-] that this man is a foul character, a detractor, a boaster, someone, who is such a person as his evil soul would like knight Bottrigaro to be considered, having stolen without any remorse and conscience from his Trimerone armonico every good idea that can be found in the second ragionamento of said musical imperfections, entitled the Artusi, and this will be made clear in full to you another time. The translations into Italian by knight Bottrigaro that this man with a viper's tongue tries to make you doubt about with the venom of his malice that they are really by knight Bottrigaro, beside the ones that I have already related to you that have been mentioned in said letter to the readers in said first republication, are these equally described in the same terms in that very letter. "The music by Plutarch, the one by Gaudentius, the one by Alypius, all authors who wrote in the Greek language. Of those who have written about music in Latin there are the writings of Martianus Capella, Censorinus, Cassiodorus, Beda, the music by Fogliano and the one by Boethius." Not this man, nor any other evil soul will be ever able to deny, if not by lying, that these translations are not really, as they are, by knight Bottrigaro. Finally this layabout, this hunter of crickets and catcher of golden flies boasts of wanting to publish an opinion to defend someone (and this was Francesco Patricio from Gsaro nicknamed the Platonic) who in his lifetime was a writer famous for harbouring most strong and immediate resentment against who dared criticise his writings, as it is shown not only by knight Leonardo Salviato in a letter of his dated 20 May 1587 from Bologna to Mazzone in Cesena recorded to knight Bottrigaro about the defence of said Patricio from the one hundred accusations brought against him by Mazzone. The words after the beginning of that one which starts "Illustrious Signor Patricio, as he has been left very obliged to your Lordship of the accused mention et cetera" are these. "As a person who by nature is very sensitive, he has immediately written a defence of his words and to refute what your lordship has debated in that place against him." But, as also one can read in the proem of the harmonic opinion of knight Bottrigaro (intituled Il Patricio) who was of about our age, he was unforgiving (said Mazzone, Burchiellato, Tasso the son, know it for personal experience, and of such nature regarded him knight Bottrigaro who knew him for many years) when he thought he had some weapon to mount a reasonable line of defence. Nevertheless, although he lived more than four years after the publication in print of said opinion by knight Bottrigaro, (and one of the first printed copies of that book was delivered into his hands towards the end of the same year of the publication, 1593, by a gentleman who was a friend of both men to whom it was given for this reason, being at the beginning of a trip from Bologna to Rome) to avoid arguing against reason, he retreated saving much of his reputation. But now, that a mediocre ignorant boaster, such as this man, should dare with extreme impertinence to want to do what a very erudite man with the most vivacious intellect has not done defending his own interest, nor has wanted to do, it seems to me that one can conclude that this amounts to great

presumption and arrogance on his part. Hence I hope, or rather I am firmly convinced that you, such courteous readers, certain of the great insolence of this man, will judge him, and you will hold him in the regard that he deserves, and in that consideration, in which, with his immense proneness for slander, he has tried his best to persuade you to hold someone else. May you live a long, prosperous and happy life, and do not expect at any time from the presumptuous proffers put forward by this man as confirmation and seal of that invective of his nothing but plagiarism and robberies of other people's writings that he has mangled. And if anything is original, do not expect anything but acts of slander, lies, false doctrine and other such things which are displeasing, useless and unworthy to be read. Here is the promised copy of the certified witness statement of the most illustrious Senate of Bologna

Reformers of the state of the freedom of the town of Bologna

As the knight Signor Hercole Bottrigaro, nobleman from Bologna has informed us that a certain book, which appeared in print some months ago whose title is *Il Desiderio, or on the playing together of several instruments* [-<25>-], a dialogue by Annibale Melone, in which the participation of said instruments to music is discussed, as well as of many topics related to music, printed in Milan by the printers of the Archbishop in the year 1601 with permission by the superiors, had been dedicated to us by a certain Artusi, as a letter by him attached to a certain invective against the reputation of said knight, by whom, as he states himself, this writings about music were written down on paper. He has asked us formally to let it be declared if said book published by Artusi had been presented to us above mentioned. We, who are lovers of truth and who think always with all our heart to the interest and the adornment of our citizens, wanting to grant this favour to the knight Hercole, man devoted to very rigorous studies and adorned with the best arts, publicly and most assuredly state that the above mentioned book was never presented to us by anybody. To certify these things et cetera we have ordered this certificate to be redacted, to be underwritten by our Secretary and to be sealed with the public seal. Given in Bologna, in the Palace where we normally convene and reside, 24 January 1602.

Ciro Spontone, secretary

[Place of the seal in marg.]

Italian translation of the above witness statement of the Senate of Bologna

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lovers of truth and who think always with all our heart to the interest and the adornment of our citizens, wanting to grant this favour to the knight Hercole, man devoted to very rigorous studies and adorned with the best arts, publicly and most assuredly state that the above mentioned book was never presented to us by anybody. To certify these things et cetera we have ordered this certificate to be redacted, to be underwritten by our Secretary and to be sealed with the public seal. Given in Bologna, in the Palace where we normally convene and reside, 24 January 1602.

Ciro Spontone, secretary

Place of the seal

This copy was completed immediately after the seventh hour of the following night was sound on Tuesday last day of the year 1602. At Bologna et cetera