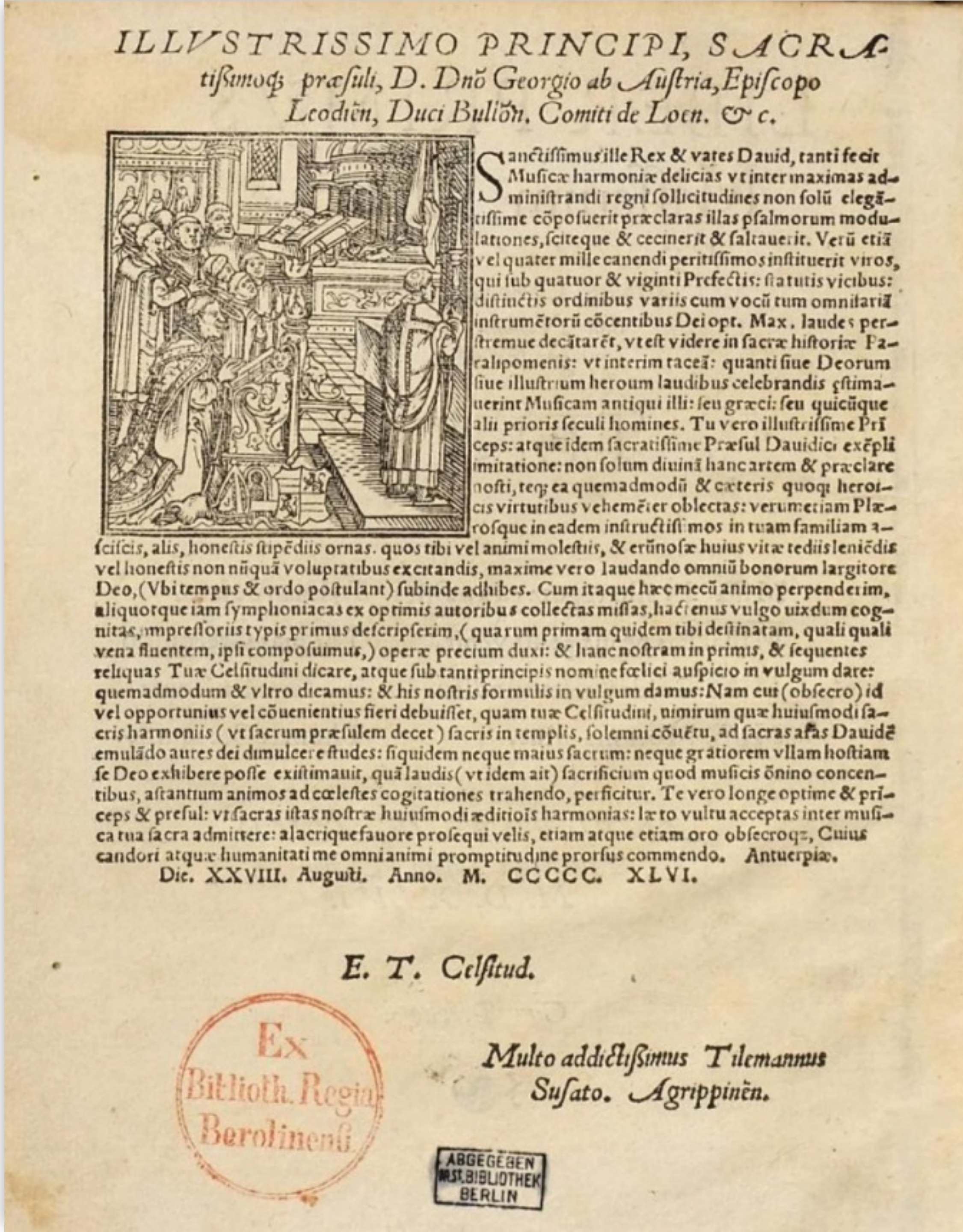
The Dedicatory Epistles of Vocal Music Books Printed in Antwerp and Leuven in the 16th and 17th Centuries. Some Epistemological Reflections

Symposium *The Art of Asking*, Utrecht University, November 15th, 2024

Romane Massart – ULiège (F.R.S.- FNRS)

Introduction. Music printing and dedications in the 16th century



ILLVSTRISSIMO PRINCIPI, SACRA-tiſsimoq; præſuli, D. Dnõ Georgio ab Auſtria, Epiſcopo Leodiẽn, Duci Bulliõn. Comiti de Loen. &c.

Sanctiſſimus ille Rex & vates Dauid, tanti fecit Muſicæ harmoniæ delicias vt inter maximas adminiſtrandi regni ſollicitudines non ſolũ elegãtiſſime cõpoſuerit præclaras illas pſalmorum modulationes, ſciteque & cecinerit & ſaltauerit. Verũ etiã vel quater mille canendi peritiſſimos inſtituerit viros, qui ſub quatuor & viginti Prefectis: ſtatutis vicibus: diſtinctis ordinibus variis cum vocũ tum omnifariã inſtrumẽtorũ cõcentibus Dei opt. Max. laudes perſtrenue decãtarẽt, vt eſt videre in ſacræ hiſtoriæ Paralipomenis: vt interim taceã: quanti ſiue Deorum ſiue illuſtrium heroum laudibus celebrandis ęſtimauerint Muſicam antiqui illi: ſeu græci: ſeu quicũque alii prioris ſeculi homines. Tu vero illuſtriſſime Prĩceps: atque idem ſacratiſſime Præſul Dauidici exẽpli imitatione: non ſolum diuinã hanc artem & præclare noſti, teq; ea quemadmodũ & cæteris quoq; heroicis virtutibus vehemẽter oblectas: verumetiam Plæroſque in eadem inſtructiſſimos in tuam familiam aſciſcis, alis, honeſtis ſtipẽdiis ornas. quos tibi vel animi moleſtiis, & erũnoſæ huius vitæ tediis leniẽdis vel honeſtis non nũquã voluptatibus excitandis, maxime vero laudando omniũ bonorum largitore Deo, (Vbi tempus & ordo poſtulant) ſubinde adhibes. Cum itaque hæc mecũ animo perpenderim, aliquotque iam ſymphoniacas ex optimis autoribus collectas miſſas, hactenus vulgo vixdum cognitas, impreſſoriis typis primus deſcripſerim, (quarum primam quidem tibi deſtinatam, quali quali vena fluentem, ipſi compoſuimus,) operæ precium duxi: & hanc noſtram in primis, & ſequentes reliquas Tuæ Celſitudini dicare, atque ſub tanti principis nomine fœlici auſpicio in vulgum dare: quemadmodum & vltro dicamus: & his noſtris formulis in vulgum damus: Nam cui (obſecro) id vel opportunius vel cõuenientius fieri debuiſſet, quam tuæ Celſitudini, nimirum quæ huiuſmodi ſacris harmoniis (vt ſacrum præſulem decet) ſacris in templis, ſolemni cõuẽtu, ad ſacras aras Dauidẽ emulãdo aures dei dimulcere ſtudes: ſiquidem neque maius ſacrum: neque gratiorem vllam hoſtiam ſe Deo exhibere poſſe exiſtimauit, quã laudis (vt idem ait) ſacrificium quod muſicis õnino concentibus, aſtantium animos ad cœleſtes cogitationes trahendo, perficitur. Te vero longe optime & prĩceps & preſul: vt ſacras iſtas noſtræ huiuſmodi æditioĩs harmonias: læto vultu acceptas inter muſica tua ſacra admittere: alacrique fauore proſequi velis, etiam atque etiam oro obſecroq;, Cuius candori atque humanitati me omni animi promptitudine prorſus commendo. Antuerpiæ.

Die. XXVIII. Auguſti. Anno. M. CCCCC. XLVI.

E. T. Celſitud.

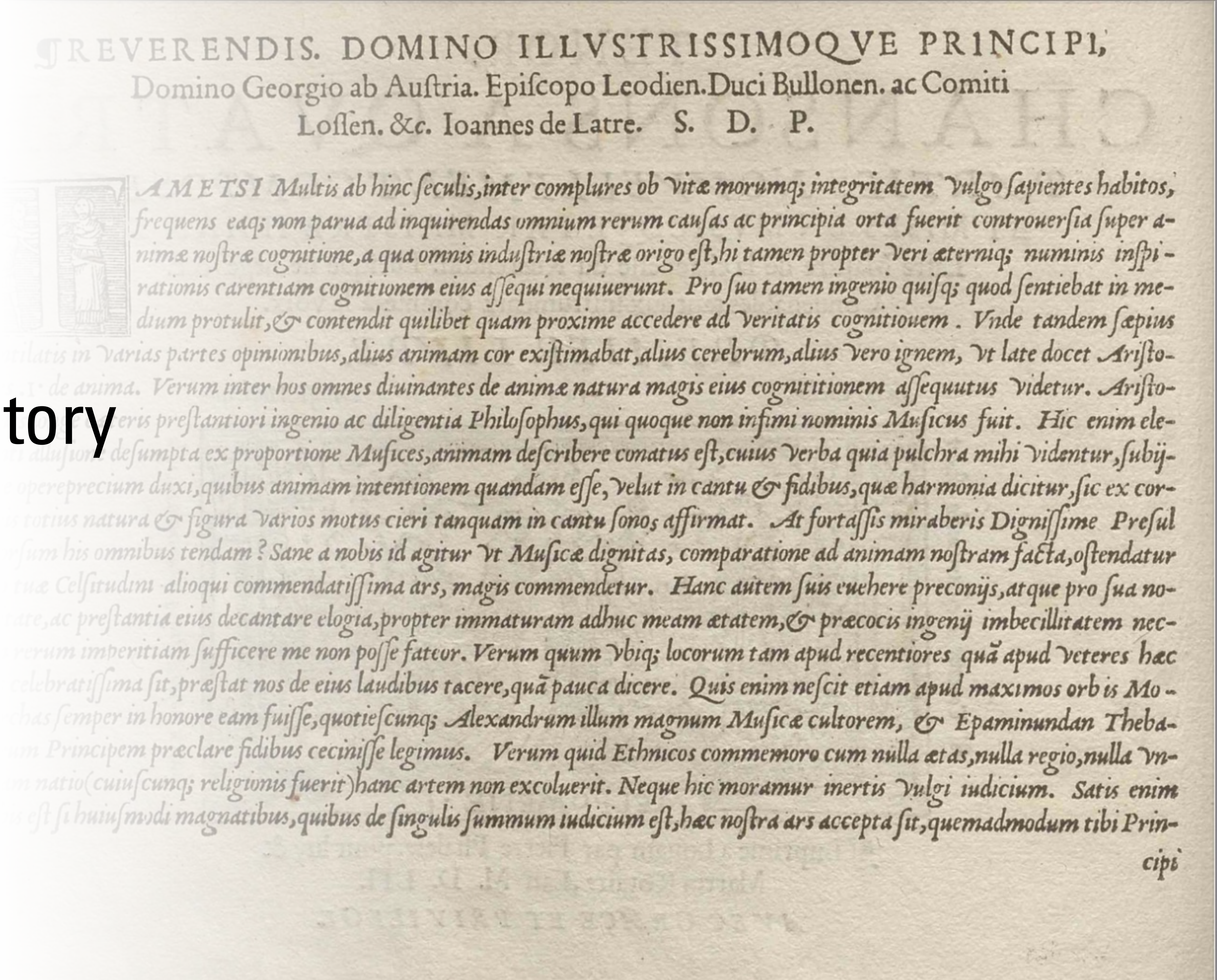
Multo addictiſsimus Tilemannus Suſato. Agrippinẽn.

Ex Biblioth. Regia Berolinenſi

ABGEGEBEN ST. BIBLIOTHEK BERLIN

Dedicatory epistle from the Antwerpian printer Tielman Susato to the prince-bishop of Liège George of Austria in the *Liber primus missarum quinque vocum* (Antwerp, Tielman Susato, 1546, tenor, f. 1v)

1. The Dedicatory Epistle as Discourse



1. The Dedicatory Epistle as Discourse

- ❧ Materiality and form
- ❧ Content

LIBER QVINTVS CANTIONVM SACRARVM VVLGO MOTETA VOCANT, QVINQVE ET SEX VOCVM A D. MAgiſtro Petro Manchicurtio Betunio inſignis eccleſię Tornacenſis Phonaſco nunc primum in lucem æditus.

CONTRATENOR

ſignum eſt ſmaragdi ſic numerus Muſicorum

Sicut in fabricatione auri

in iucundo & moderato vino. Eccl.xxxij.

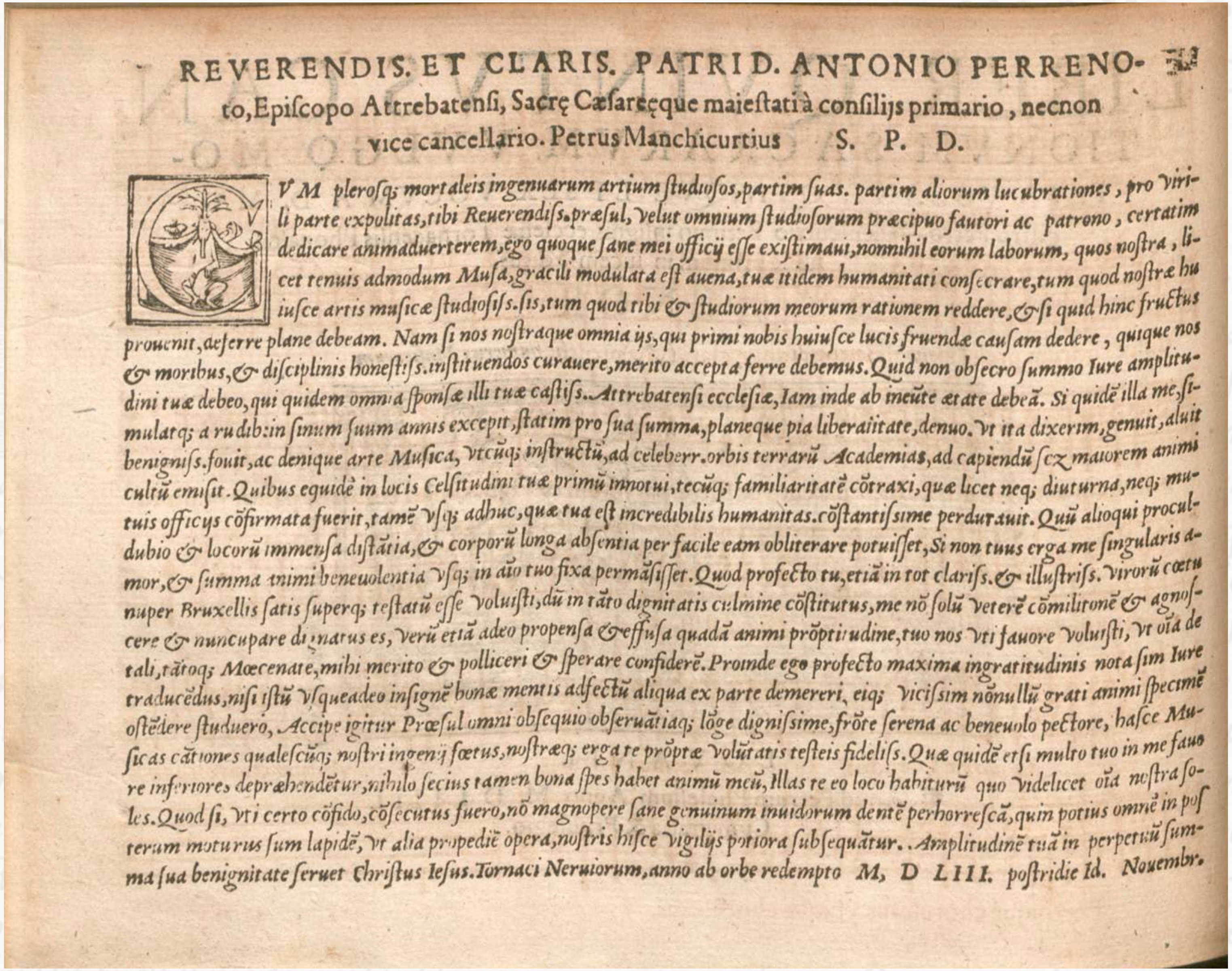
MELPOMENE

LOVANII.

¶ Apud Petrum Phaleſium Anno M. D. LIIII.

Cum gratia & Priuilegio.

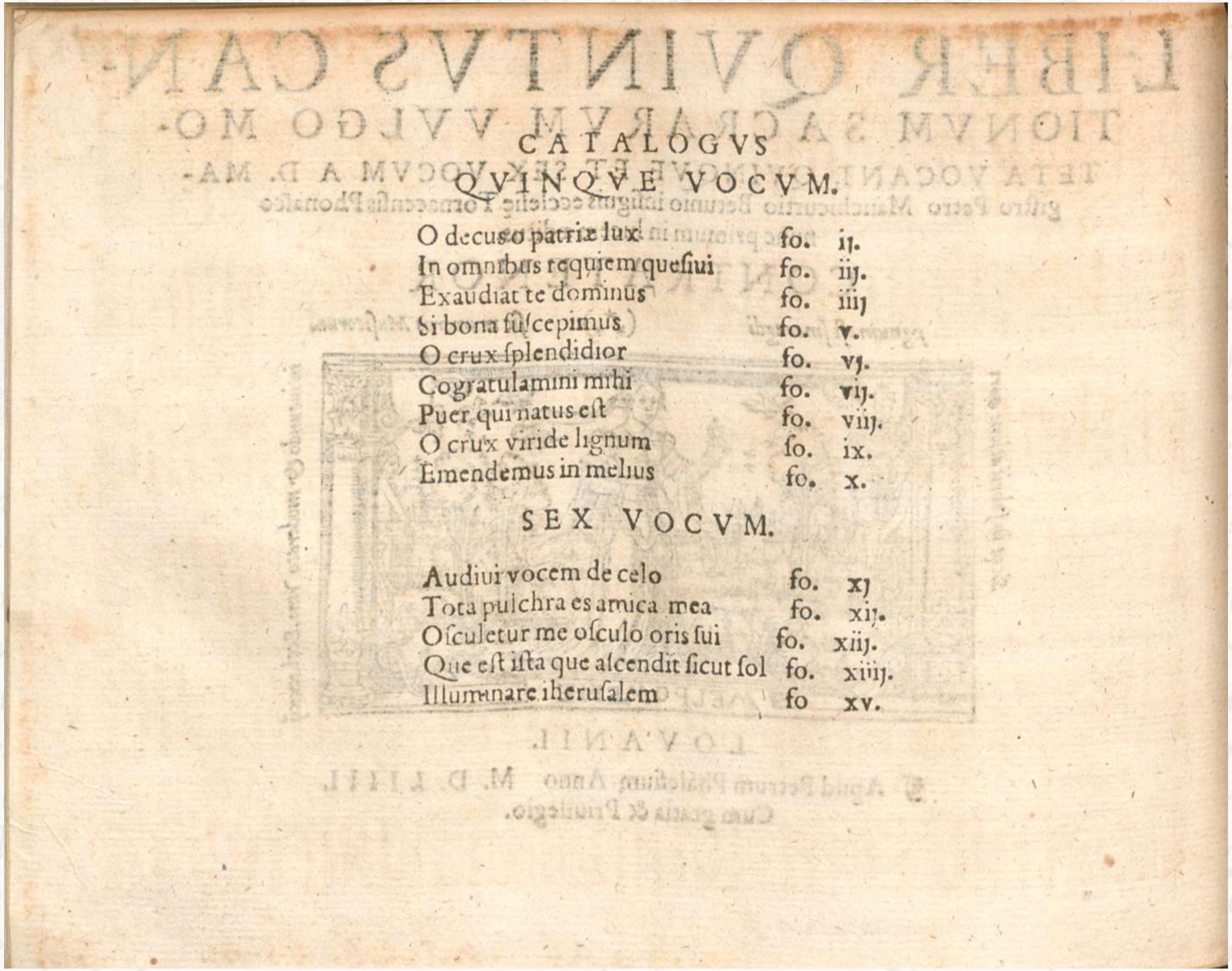
Title page of the *Liber quintus cantionum sacrarum* from the composer Pierre de Manchicourt, Leuven, Pierre Phalèse, 1554



REVERENDIS. ET CLARIS. PATRI D. ANTONIO PERRENO-
to, Epiſcopo Attrebatenſi, Sacrę Cæſareęque maieſtati à conſilijs primario, necnon
vice cancellario. Petrus Manchicurtius S. P. D.

CVM pleroſq; mortaleis ingenuarum artium ſtudioſos, partim ſuas. partim aliorum lucubrationes, pro virili parte expolitas, tibi Reuerendiſs. præſul, velut omnium ſtudioſorum præcipuo fautori ac patrono, certatim dedicare animaduerterem, ego quoque ſane mei officij eſſe exiſtimaui, nonnihil eorum laborum, quos noſtra, licet tenuis admodum Muſa, gracili modulata eſt auena, tuæ itidem humanitati conſecrare, tum quod noſtræ huiuſce artis muſicæ ſtudioſiſs. ſis, tum quod tibi & ſtudiorum meorum rationem reddere, & ſi quid hinc fructus prouenit, aeferre plane debeam. Nam ſi nos noſtraque omnia ijs, qui primi nobis huiuſce lucis fruendæ cauſam dedere, quique nos & moribus, & diſciplinis honeſtiſs. inſtituendos curauere, merito accepta ferre debemus. Quid non obſecro ſummo Iure amplitudini tuæ debeo, qui quidem omnia ſponſæ illi tuæ caſtiſs. Attrebatenſi eccleſiæ, Iam inde ab ineũte ætate debeã. Si quidẽ illa me, ſimulatq; a rudib: in ſinum ſuum annis excepit, ſtatim pro ſua ſumma, planeque pia liberalitate, denuo, vt ita dixerim, genuit, aluit benigniſs. fouit, ac denique arte Muſica, vtcũq; inſtructũ, ad celeberr. orbis terrarũ Academias, ad capiendũ ſcz maiorem animi cultũ emiſit. Quibus equidẽ in locis Celſitudini tuæ primũ innotui, tecũq; familiaritatẽ cõtraxi, quæ licet neq; diuturna, neq; mutuis officijs cõfirmata fuerit, tamẽ vſq; adhuc, quæ tua eſt incredibilis humanitas. cõſtantiſsime perdurauit. Quũ alioqui procul dubio & locorũ immenſa diſtãtia, & corporũ longa abſentia per facile eam obliterare potuiſſet, Si non tuus erga me ſingularis amor, & ſumma animi beneuolentia vſq; in aĩo tuo fixa permãſiſſet. Quod profecto tu, etiã in tot clariſs. & illuſtriſs. virorũ cœtu nuper Bruxellis ſatis ſuperq; teſtatũ eſſe voluiſti, dũ in tãto dignitatis culmine cõſtitutus, me nõ ſolũ veterẽ cõmilitonẽ & agnoſcere & nuncupare dignatus es, verũ etiã adeo propenſa & effuſa quadã animi prõptitudine, tuo nos vti fauore voluiſti, vt oĩa de tali, tãtoq; Mœcenate, mihi merito & polliceri & ſperare confiderẽ. Proinde ego profecto maxima ingratitudinis nota ſim Iure traducẽdus, niſi iſtũ vſqueadeo inſignẽ bonæ mentis adfectũ aliqua ex parte demereri, eiq; viciſſim nõnullũ grati animi ſpecimẽ oſtẽdere ſtuduero. Accipe igitur Præſul omni obſequio obſeruãtiaq; lõge digniſsime, frõte ſerena ac beneuolo pectore, haſce Muſicas cãtiones qualeſcũq; noſtri ingenij fœtus, noſtræq; erga te prõptæ volũtatis teſteis fideliſs. Quæ quidẽ etſi multo tuo in me fauore inferiores depræhendẽtur, nihilo ſecius tamen bona ſpes habet animũ meũ, Illas te eo loco habiturũ quo videlicet oĩa noſtra ſoles. Quod ſi, vti certo cõfido, cõſecutus fuero, nõ magnopere ſane genuinum inuidorum dentẽ perhorreſcã, quin potius omnẽ in poſterum moturus ſum lapidẽ, vt alia propediẽ opera, noſtris hiſce vigilijs potiora ſubſequãtur. Amplitudinẽ tuã in perpetuũ ſumma ſua benignitate ſeruet Chriſtus Ieſus. Tornaci Neruiorum, anno ab orbe redempto M. D LIII. poſtridie Id. Nouembr.

Dedication in the *Liber quintus cantionum sacrarum* from the composer Pierre de Manchicourt to Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, bischop of Arras in France (tenor, f. 1v)



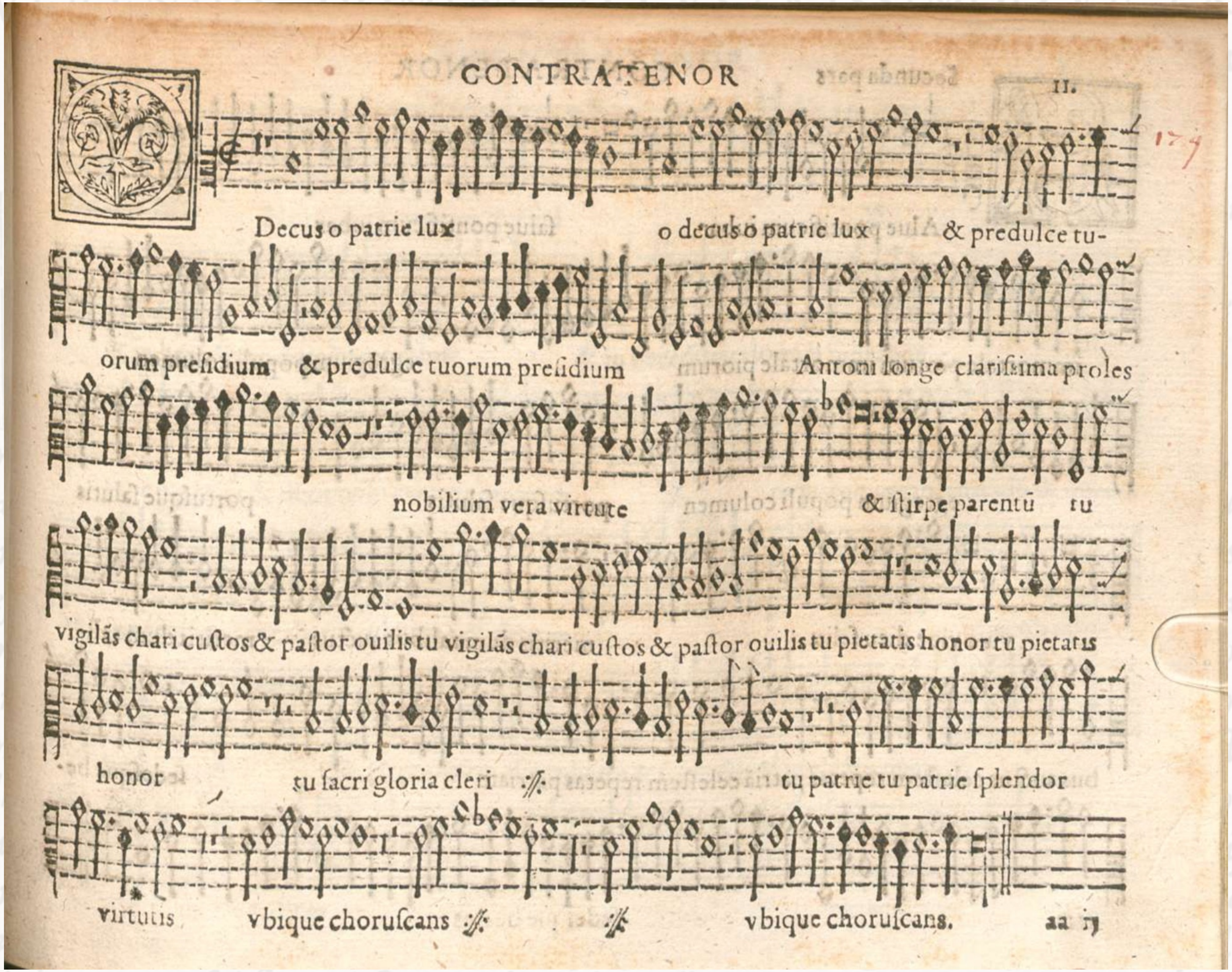
CATALOGVS

QVINQVE VOCVM.

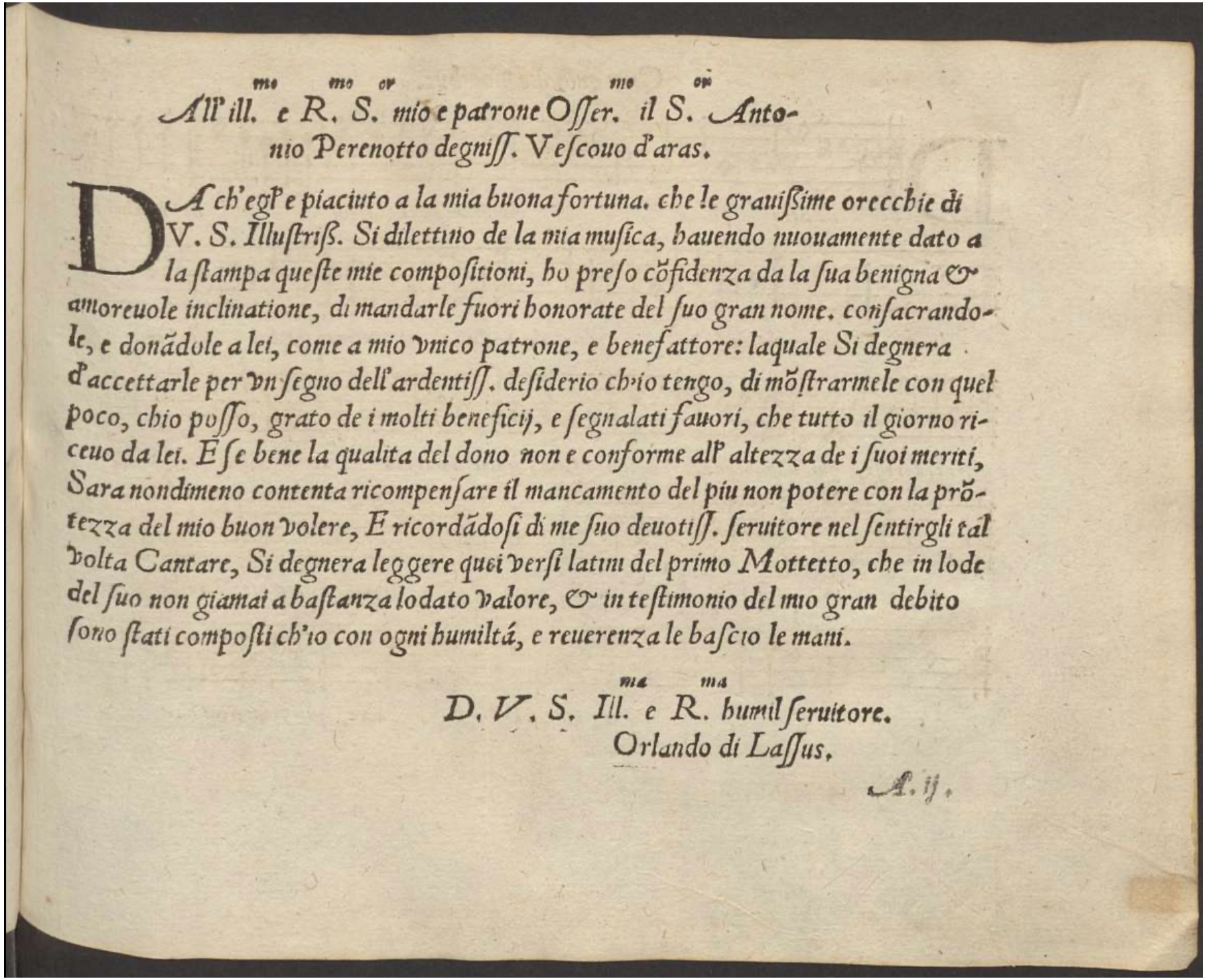
O decus o patriæ lux	fo.	ij.
In omnibus requiem queſiui	fo.	iij.
Exaudiat te dominus	fo.	iiij
Si bona ſuſcepimus	fo.	v.
O crux ſplendidior	fo.	vj.
Congratulamini mihi	fo.	vij.
Puer qui natus eſt	fo.	viij.
O crux viride lignum	fo.	ix.
Emendemus in melius	fo.	x.

SEX VOCVM.

Audiui vocem de celo	fo.	xj
Tota pulchra es amica mea	fo.	xij.
Oſculetur me oſculo oris ſui	fo.	xiij.
Que eſt iſta que aſcendit ſicut ſol	fo.	xiiij.
Illuminare iheruſalem	fo	xv.

Table of contents of the *Liber quintus cantionum sacrarum* (contratenor, f. 1v)

Pierre de Manchicourt, *O Decus o patrie lux*, first motet of the *Liber quintus cantionum sacrarum*

Salutation



All'ill.^{mo} e R.^{mo} S. mio e patrone Oſſer.^{or} il S.^{mo} Anto-
nio Perenotto degniſſ. Veſcouo d'aras.

DA ch'egl'e piaciuto a la mia buona fortuna. che le grauiſſime orecchie di V. S. Illuſtriſſ. Si dilettino de la mia muſica, hauendo nuouamente dato a la ſtampa queſte mie compoſitioni, ho preſo cõfidenza da la ſua benigna & amoreuole inclinatione, di mandarle fuori honorate del ſuo gran nome. conſacrandole, e donãdole a lei, come a mio vnico patrone, e benefattore: laquale Si degnera d'accettarle per vn ſegno dell'ardentiſſ. deſiderio ch'io tengo, di mõſtrarmele con quel poco, chio poſſo, grato de i molti beneficij, e ſegnalati fauori, che tutto il giorno riceuo da lei. E ſe bene la qualita del dono non e conforme all'altezza de i ſuoi meriti, Sara nondimeno contenta ricompenſare il mancamento del piu non potere con la prõtezza del mio buon volere, E ricordãdoſi di me ſuo deuotiſſ. ſeruitore nel ſentirgli tal volta Cantare, Si degnera leggere quei verſi latini del primo Mottetto, che in lode del ſuo non giamai a baſtanza lodato valore, & in teſtimonio del mio gran debito ſono ſtati compoſti ch'io con ogni humiltá, e reuerenza le baſcio le mani.

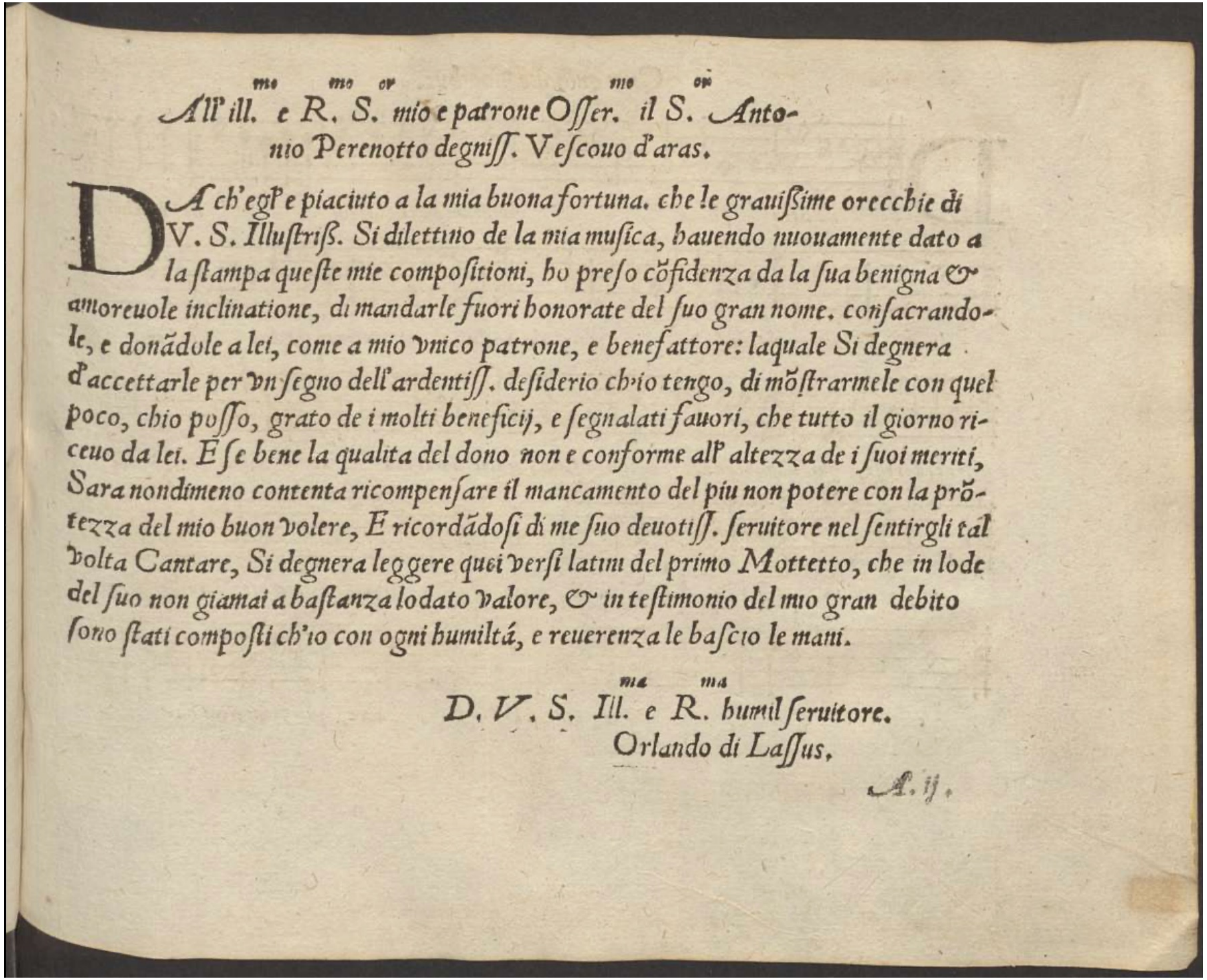
D. V. S. Ill.^{ma} e R.^{ma} humil ſeruitore.
Orlando di Laſſus.

A. ij.

Dedicatory epistle from Roland de Lassus to Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, bishop of Arras, in his *Liber decimus quintus ecclesiasticarum cantionum* (Antwerp, Tielman Susato, 1560, f. 2r)

Salutation

Main text



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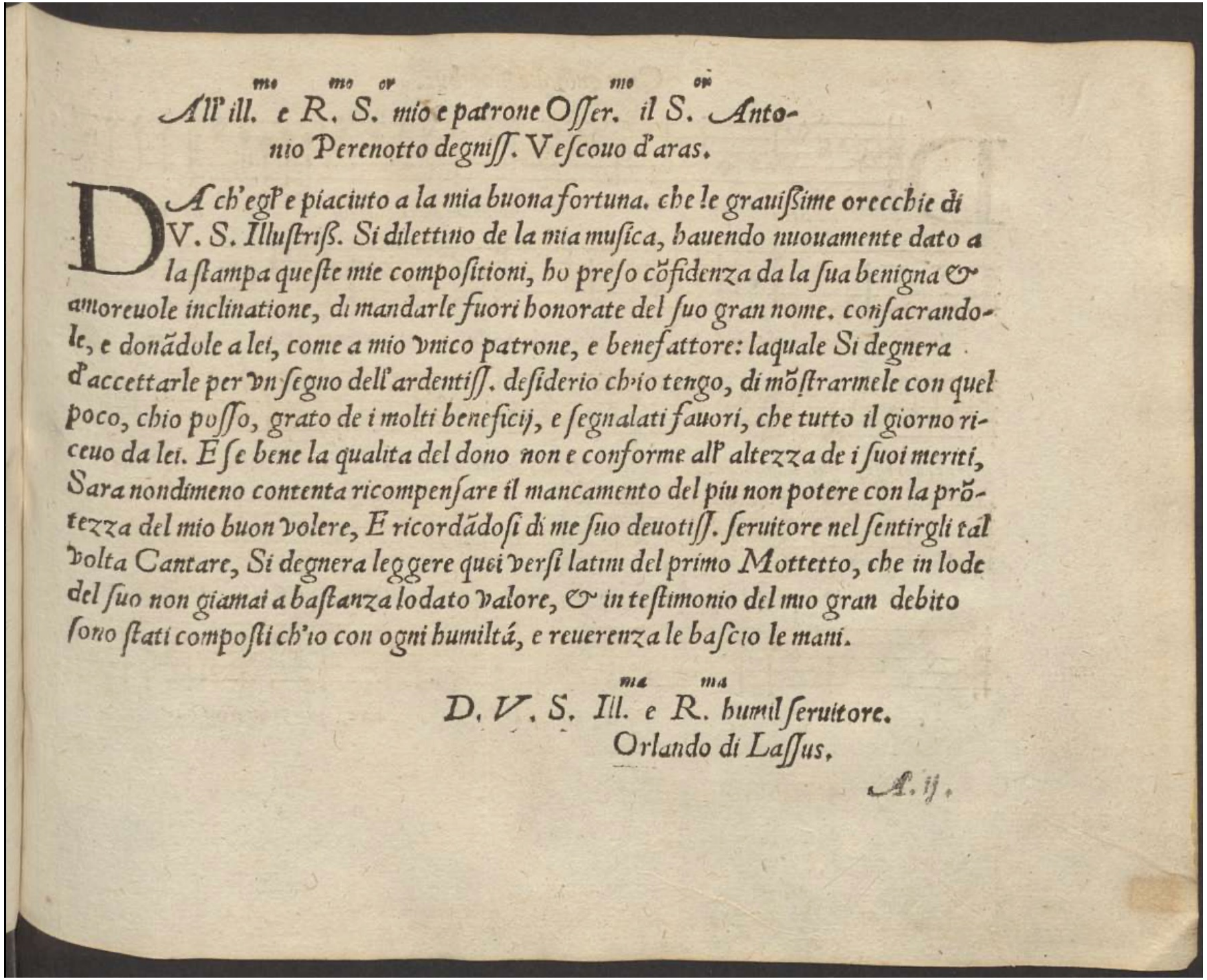
Salutation

Main text

Conclusion



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Dedicatory epistle from Roland de Lassus to Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, bishop of Arras, in his *Liber decimus quintus ecclesiasticarum cantionum* (Antwerp, Tielman Susato, 1560, f. 2r)

The Dedicatory Epistle: Between Constraints, Freedom, and Self-Representation

(False) modesty

Tropes

Deference

Apology

(False) modesty

Tropes

Deference

Stereotyped

Codified

Apology

Apologetic

The Dedicatory Epistle: Between Constraints, Freedom, and Self-Representation

(False) modesty

Tropes

Deference

Stereotyped

Codified

Apology

Apologetic

The Dedicatory Epistle: Between Constraints, Freedom, and Self-Representation

Challenges

Space to speak

New medium

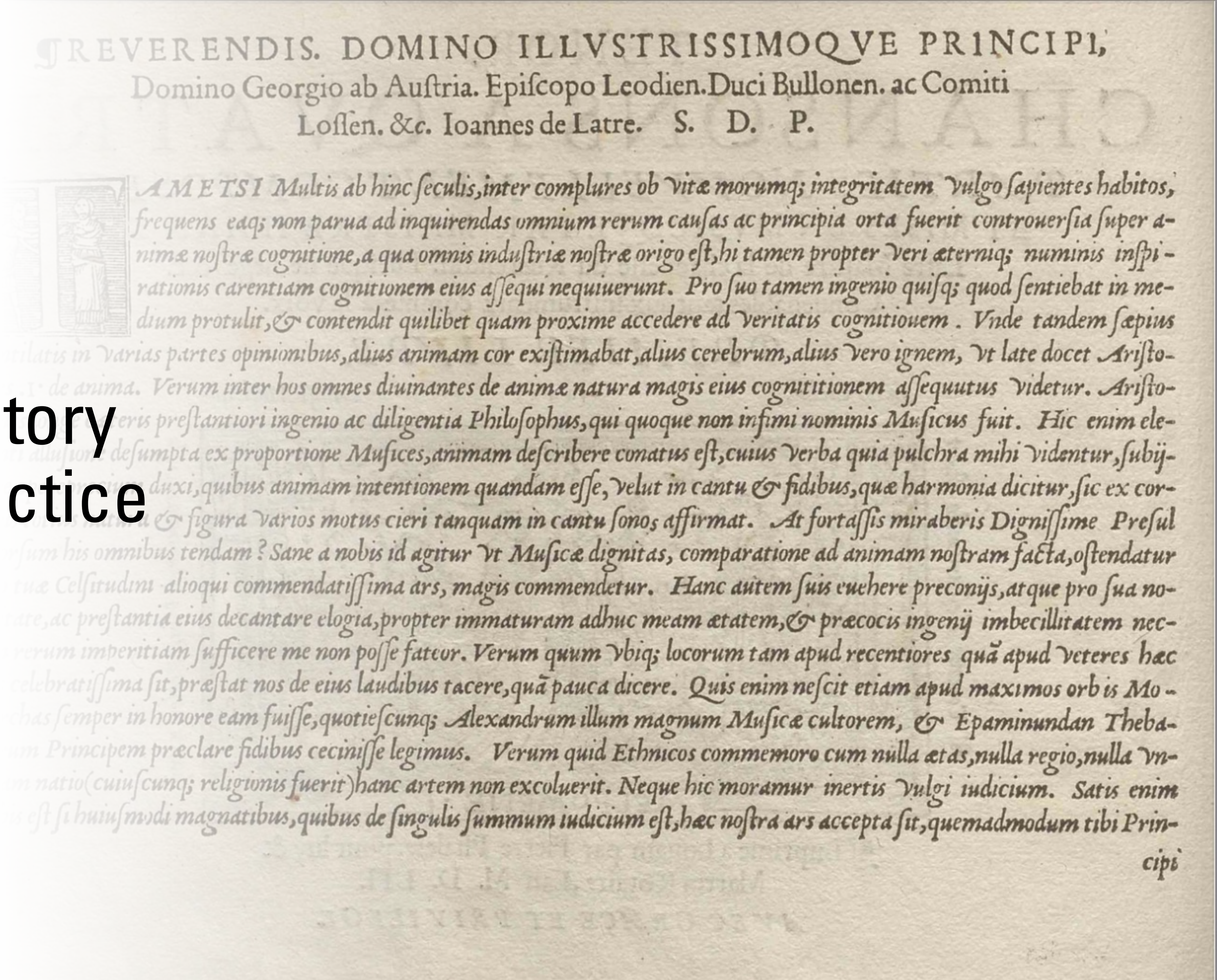
Possibilities

Self-representation

“As I had **published many songs** of all kinds **in different parts of the world, pious and honest friends** began to strongly urge me not to refuse to attempt, this time with three voices, what I had often done before with songs for several voices. Indeed, as not everyone gathering for entertainment has mastered the art of music perfectly**, they thought I would please many by composing songs in such a way that they could sometimes be conveniently sung by only a few. Wishing to satisfy their desire and request**, I did not find it difficult to be persuaded to compose these songs with simpler modulations.”

Roland de Lassus to William, Ferdinand and Ernest of Bavaria, *Liber mottetarum, trium vocum*,
Leuven, Pierre Phalèse and Jean Bellère, 1575

2. The Dedicatory Epistle as Practice and Gesture

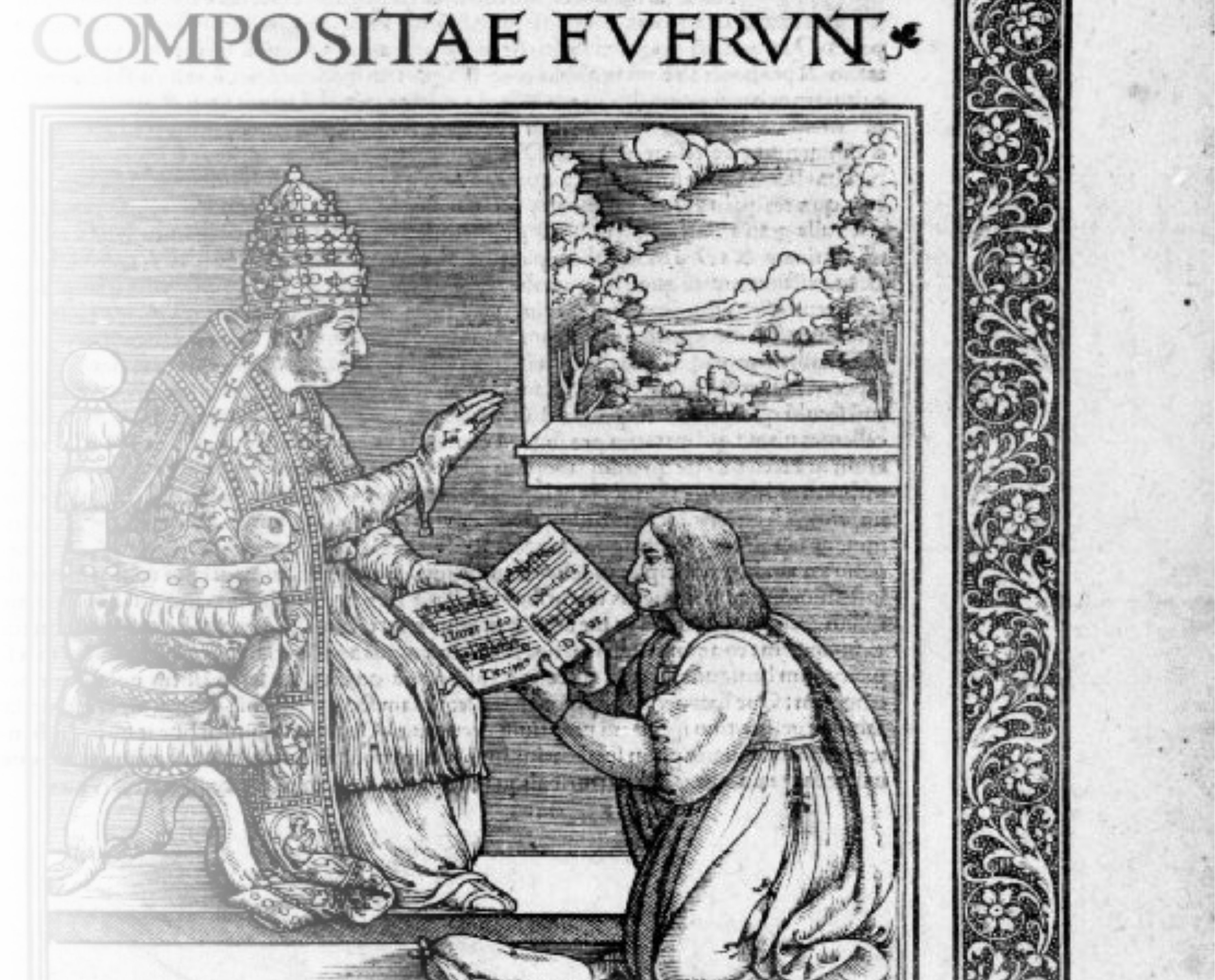

¶REVERENDIS. DOMINO ILLVSTRISSIMOQVE PRINCIPI,
Domino Georgio ab Auſtria. Epiſcopo Leodien. Duci Bullonen. ac Comiti
Loſſen. &c. Ioannes de Latre. S. D. P.

AMETSI Multis ab hinc ſeculis, inter complures ob vitæ morumq; integritatem vulgo ſapientes habitos,
frequens eaq; non parua ad inquirendas omnium rerum cauſas ac principia orta fuerit controuerſia ſuper a-
nimæ noſtræ cognitione, a qua omnis induſtriæ noſtræ origo eſt, hi tamen propter veri æterniq; numinis inſpi-
rationis carentiam cognitionem eius aſſequi nequiuerunt. Pro ſuo tamen ingenio quiſq; quod ſentiebat in me-
dium protulit, & contendit quilibet quam proxime accedere ad veritatis cognitiouem. Vnde tandem ſæpius
tilatis in varias partes opinionibus, alius animam cor exiſtimabat, alius cerebrum, alius vero ignem, vt late docet Ariſto-
de anima. Verum inter hos omnes diuinantes de animæ natura magis eius cognititionem aſſequutus videtur. Ariſto-
eris preſtantiori ingenio ac diligentia Philoſophus, qui quoque non infimi nominis Muſicus fuit. Hic enim ele-
alluſione deſumpta ex proportione Muſices, animam deſcribere conatus eſt, cuius verba quia pulchra mihi videntur, ſubij-
duxi, quibus animam intentionem quandam eſſe, velut in cantu & fidibus, quæ harmonia dicitur, ſic ex cor-
& figura varios motus cieri tanquam in cantu ſonos affirmat. At fortaſſis miraberis Digniſſime Preſul
ſum his omnibus tendam? Sane a nobis id agitur vt Muſicæ dignitas, comparatione ad animam noſtram facta, oſtendatur
tuæ Celſitudini alioqui commendatiſſima ars, magis commendetur. Hanc autem ſuis euehere preconijs, atque pro ſua no-
tate, ac preſtantia eius decantare elogia, propter immaturam adhuc meam ætatem, & præcocis ingenij imbecillitatem nec-
rerum imperitiam ſufficere me non poſſe fateor. Verum quum vbiq; locorum tam apud recentiores quã apud veteres hæc
celebratiſſima ſit, præſtat nos de eius laudibus tacere, quã pauca dicere. Quis enim neſcit etiam apud maximos orbis Mo-
chas ſemper in honore eam fuiſſe, quotieſcunq; Alexandrum illum magnum Muſicæ cultorem, & Epaminundan Theba-
um Principem præclare fidibus ceciniſſe legimus. Verum quid Ethnicos commemoro cum nulla ætas, nulla regio, nulla vn-
natio (cuiuſcunq; religionis fuerit) hanc artem non excoluerit. Neque hic moramur inertis vulgi iudicium. Satis enim
eſt ſi huiuſmodi magnatibus, quibus de ſingulis ſummum iudicium eſt, hæc noſtra ars accepta ſit, quemadmodum tibi Prin-
cipi

2. The Dedicatory Epistle as Practice and Gesture

- ❧ Gift-giving
- ❧ Music-printing market
- ❧ Musical patronage

2.1 Gift-giving



“The custom exists among some nations and even among more courteous individuals, Very Honored Companion, that in order to **maintain the friendships and connections** they have with one another, which they value above all else, **they often send each other small gifts** […] which are the **marks and signs of their goodwill**. ”

Jean de Castro to François le Fort, french merchant established in Antwerp, in *Chansons, odes, et sonetz de Pierre Ronsard, mises en musique a quatre, a cinq et huit parties*, Leuven, Pierre Phalèse et Jean Bellère, 1576

"Indeed, if we must, with reason, **owe** everything we are to those who first granted us the enjoyment of this light and took care to instruct us in the most honorable morals and disciplines, how much more should I not, please, owe to Your Highness, to whom I owe everything since my childhood […]"

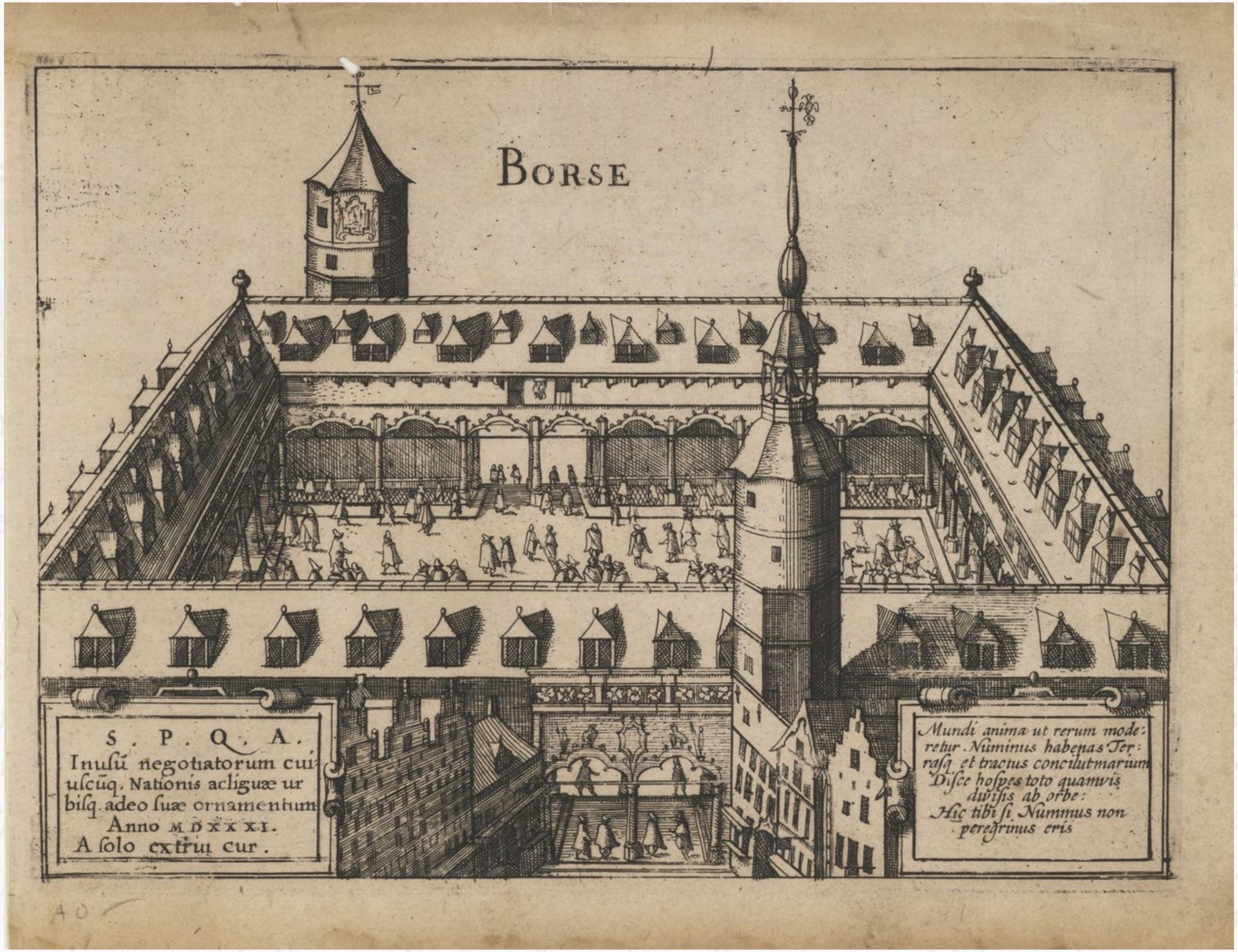
"Consequently, I would justly be marked by the greatest **ingratitude** if I did not seek to deserve, in one way or another, this eminent testimony of kindness and to **show in return** some proof of my **gratitude**. […]"

Pierre de Manchicourt to Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, bischop of Arras, in *Liber quintus cantionum sacrarum*, Leuven, Pierre Phalèse, 1554

2.2 Musical Patronage and the Music-Printing Market

SILLVSTRE ET TRESVERTVEVSE DAME, DAMF MARIE ROYNE
giere Ehongrie .& ce. Thylman Suſato ſon Treſhumble ſeruiteur Felicite proſperite & valitude

ong temps ya, treſilluſtre Princeſſe,
Que mon vouloir a iamais na prins ceſſe.
mploier a trouuer la practicque
moien dimprimer la Muſicque
ſt ainſi, quapres grant diligence
ſans trauail, non ſans coſt & deſpence
Paruenu ſuis au chief de mon entente
Dont touteffois encoir ne me contente.
Iuſques a ce quil plaira a fortune
De moctroier ſaiſon bien opportune
Pour humblement en toute obeiſſance
Me preſenter de toute ma puiſſance



Antwerp's bourse in 1531

"This art [music] was, until a few years ago, known and admired primarily in the **courts of princes** or in **some eminent churches and colleges**. But in this most fortunate century, as other liberal arts are being reborn (as if emerging from a long winter), we see this art, not only in the courts of princes and in the temples of God (as before), but also in **homes, in chambers, and in the honorable assemblies** of virtuous people, appreciated, practiced with enthusiasm, and enjoying great glory."

Tielman Susato to the Senate of Antwerp, *Liber primus sacrarum cantionum quinque vocum*, Antwerp, Tielman Susato, 1546

2. The Dedicatory Epistle as Practice and Gesture

2.1 Gift-giving

2.2 Musical Patronage and Music-Printing Market

- Financial and economic support

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- Financial and economic support
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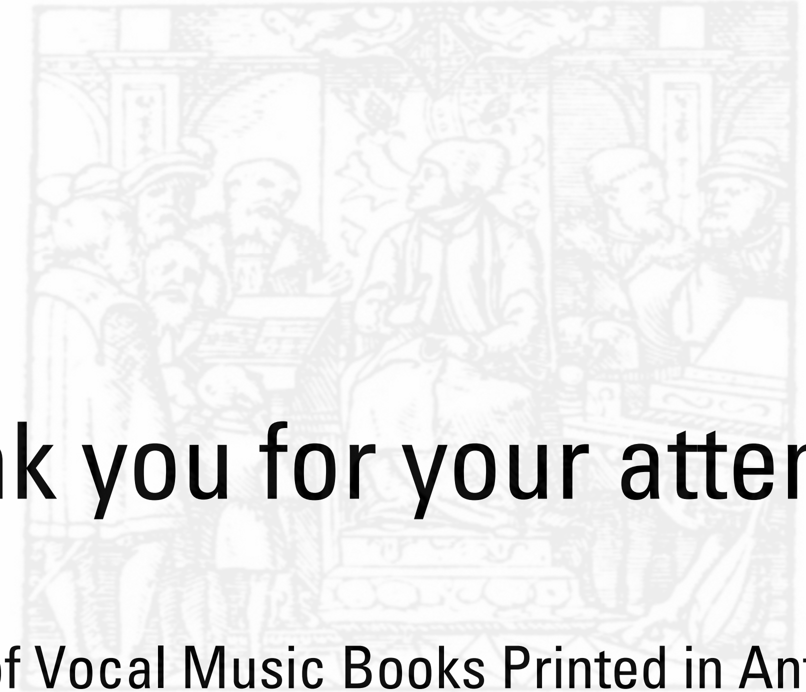
- Financial and economic support
- Strengthening social and professional networks
- Broadening the audience and dissemination of music

“Printed in a practical format, **at our own cost and effort**, we dedicate them especially to you, under your most illustrious names, for the honor, glory, and immortal renown of this flourishing city, so that they may be **spread to the four corners of the world**.”

Tielman Susato to the Senate of Antwerp, *Liber primus sacrarum cantionum quinque vocum*, Antwerp, Tielman Susato, 1546



Thank you for your attention

The Dedicatory Epistles of Vocal Music Books Printed in Antwerp and Leuven in the 16th and 17th Centuries. Some Epistemological Reflections

Romane Massart – ULiège (F.R.S.- FNRS)