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Philippe de Monte: New Autobiographical Documents¹

In a letter written in the year he died, the novelist Italo Calvino spoke of his unease with the writing of the story of his own life: 'Each time I see my life fixed and objectified I am seized with anxiety, especially when it is notes that I myself have supplied...by repeating the same things [but] using different words I always hope to get round my neurotic relationship with autobiography'.² Such testimony from a still-living creative artist is a valuable reminder of the historiographical conundrums of even the most apparently 'authentic' biographical narrative. Those of us who read, research and write the stories of long dead artists, relying as we must on the contents of documents both written and preserved for all kinds of forgotten and quite likely unfathomable reasons, have learned to be cautious, if not a little anxious, in our relationships with what they seem to be saying to us. The more consciously

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² Letter to Claudio Milanini, 27 July 1985, in I. Calvino, *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* (Milan, 1994), 'Cronologia', p. xvii: 'ogni volta che rivedo la mia vita fissata e oggettivata sono preso dall'angoscia, soprattutto quando si tratta di notizie che ho fornito io...ridicendo le stesse cose con altre parole, spero sempre d'aggirare il mio rapporto nevrotico con l'autobiografia'.

autobiographical such writings appear to be, the more circumspectly we tend to tread, trying to temper the seductive pleasure of a time-dissolving intimacy with our subjects which such texts seem to promise, with our historians' sense of their Siren dangers. Nevertheless, in the case of the still largely unknown story of Philippe de Monte, whose scarce documentary sources, apart from a rich but small handful of private letters, consist of the often enigmatic prefaces to his published music, the addition of two new, very substantial and intensely autobiographical documents can hardly fail to excite expectations of increased access to 'the man himself'. Whether it brings us nearer to an understanding of his music, however, probably depends in the end on the degree of our belief in ontological links between 'life' and 'works'.

The recent discovery of documents written by Philippe de Monte in the mid 1580s not only allows a considerable 'filling-in of gaps' in our skimpy knowledge of his biography but they also present a wealth of often subtly detailed insight into the character and temperament of the composer in late middle age, different to all the other sources we so far have, on account of their sometimes intensely personal register. Even the first of the two documents, which is an essentially factual petition for arrears of salary and expenses intended for the notice of the Emperor Rudolph II, though self-consciously constructed in the formal but subtly bitter rhetoric of wounded lament, is shot through with images of a distinctive 'personality', not to mention evidence of a seriously retentive memory, that could recall not only the exact date on which its writer had left Naples seventeen years before it was written, but also long-hoarded and festering minutiae of the injustices and hurts of a history of real (or imagined) prejudice and discrimination in a series of failed attempts to obtain

ecclesiastical benefices.³ Much more intense still, then, seems to be the intimacy with Monte ‘the man’ promised by the glimpses of him in his private domestic world in the second document, that is entitled at the head of the first of its eleven and a half tightly written pages: ‘Account of the things which happened between signor Odd’Antonio Budi, signor Camillo Zanotti and me, Philippe de Monte’⁴ Transcriptions of both documents are in the Appendix.

First, a brief note about the location of these documents, which are bound into a volume of miscellaneous papers in the Pinelli collection of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan: Gian Vincenzo Pinelli was born in Naples in 1535, one of six children of Clementina Ravascheria and Cosimo Pinelli,⁵ originally from Genova. Cosimo was a successful and wealthy merchant who provided his children with a thorough, humanist education, engaging tutors including Gian Paolo Vernaglione (for Greek and Latin), Bartolomeo Maranta, (a famous botanist from Venosa) and for music, the young Philippe de Monte, later to occupy one of the most illustrious musical jobs in Europe.⁶ In 1558, Gian Vincenzo went to Padua to study at the

³ Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana (I-Ma) Q115 sup. ff. 128-130^v, headed in a contemporary hand ‘Scrittura di Filippo di Monte presentata à Rodolfo [second]o dove parla della seca vita’.

⁴ Appendix 1, ff.141r–146r ‘Discorso delle cose accadute tra il Signor Odd’Antonio Budi, il Signor Camillo Zanotti et mi, Filippo di Monte’; the document may be autograph, although further investigation is needed in order to establish this fact.

⁵ Not Domenico, as given in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London, 2001), vol. 17, p. 16.

⁶ P. Gualdus (Paolo Gualdo, Gian Vincenzo’s secretary), *Vita Joannis-Vincentii Pinelli, patricii Genvensis* (Augsburg, 1607), p. 34, describes Cosimo’s attitude to the education of his children: ‘At quia musices cognitio sapientibus viris non minima philosophiae portio semper visa est, eo quod humanas affectiones egregie curet, animosque ab officio deflectentes in semitam revocet, ideo etiam huic operam suam

university where he was taught by, among others, Sperone Speroni and where his close friends included Agostino Valerio (later cardinal) and Ippolito Aldobrandini, who would become Pope Clement VIII. Gian Vincenzo settled in Padua and for forty years his home was a meeting place for visiting intellectuals from throughout Europe, including the Flemish historian and humanist, Lipsius, the physician and antiquarian Girolamo Mercuriale, Galileo Galilei, Clusius (the botanist Charles de l'Écluse), Alvise Mocenigo (who became Doge of Venice), Claude Dupuy, Battista Guarini, Torquato Tasso and many others. Gian Vincenzo directed a copious correspondence with a host of intellectuals, and the letters he received from these famous friends were kept, together with a stupendous collection of books and manuscripts, including important ancient classical texts such as fourth and fifth century copies of Homer. He also had a museum and art collection and was interested in just about everything from numismatics, botany, mathematics, medicine, and astronomy to geography, zoology, theology, law, politics and much else besides. Pinelli died in 1601, and his library

impensam voluit, pro eunte domestico tunc familiari preceptor Philippepo de Monte, quem vidit nostra oetas Phonascum Caesarei chori'. ('But since wise men have always considered the knowledge of music not the least part of philosophy, on the grounds that it takes admirable care of human emotions, and recalls minds that stray from their duty into the right path, and therefore on this too he wished his labour to be expended, since Philippe de Monte, then his familiar servant, whom our age has seen [become] the choirmaster of the imperial choir, came forward as his teacher'). Gian Vincenzo's sister Lucrezia married Antonio Guevara, whose son, Gieronimo was the dedicatee of the *Tenth Book of Madrigals for Five Voices* (Venice, 1598); in his dedication, Monte recalled the happy times spent in the Guevara house and also that of Gian Vincenzo's brother, Galeazzo, created Duke of Cirenza by Philip II. *The Sixth Book of Motets for Six Voices* (Venice, 1584), now lost, was dedicated to Gian Vincenzo Pinelli himself; the letter of dedication also mentions his brother Galeazzo; G. van Doorslaer, *La vie et les oeuvres de Philippe de Monte* (Brussels, 1921/ Hildesheim and New York, 1980), pp. 33–4; 247–8; 265–6.

made its adventurous way to its present home in the magnificent Ambrosian library and art collection established by Cardinal Federigo Borromeo (another close friend of Pinelli's) in Milan, via confiscations of politically sensitive documents by officials in Venice and hijacking by pirates in the Adriatic, who threw a third of the collection overboard, some of which was later rescued by a pontifical prefect in the region of Fermo, where cases of books had been washed up on the beach and used by local fishermen to repair their houses. Of the thirty three cases dumped at sea, twenty two were recovered, but eight cases of books, two of illustrations and one containing 'certain lutes, spheres, mathematical instruments and similar things' were never found. The surviving collection was then sequestered for several years in the *castillo* of Giuliano near Naples during litigation by Pinelli's heirs, before being acquired by Cardinal Federigo and stored in the convent of S. Severino dei Benedetti in Naples, from where, in 1609, packed into sixty cases loaded onto nine ox-carts, it made its way overland to Milan, and joined the papers of Federigo's uncle, Saint Carlo Borromeo, in its present resting place.⁷

⁷ A. Rivolta, *Un grande bibliofilo del secolo XVI: contributo a uno studio sulla biblioteca di Gian Vincenzo Pinelli*, (Monza, 1914); M. Rodella, 'Fortuna e sfortuna della biblioteca di Gian Vincenzo Pinelli: la vendita a Federico Borromeo', *Bibliotheca*, 2 (2003), pp. 87–125; Angela Maria Nuovo, 'Library Collections in the *Respublica literarum*' (unpublished paper read at the Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, Cambridge, April, 2005). If the collection ever contained substantial holdings of either music or works of music theory, there is little sign of them now and Pinelli's original catalogue, that reputedly listed at least 8,440 books, is lost. A partial transcription of this catalogue by Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc made in the early seventeenth century mentioned 'Libri di musica di Girolamo Mei'. However, a letter from Gioseffo Zarlino 'Sopra il plettro degli antichi' (R118 sup., ff. 220–220v), several letters from Girolamo Mei in Rome from around 1580 (S105 sup., ff. 64; 190; 199; 152r; 153), 'Lettere e pareri sull'introduttorio di Guidone d'Arezzo in materia di

The enduring link between Monte and his one-time pupil has long been known, mainly through the dedication to Pinelli of the *Sixth Book of Motets for Five Voices*, and the evidence for a three-cornered correspondence between the two of them and the botanist Charles de l'Écluse, published by G. van Doorslaer and separately by Paul Bergmans in 1921.⁸ Our knowledge of the extent of the relationship has now been expanded thanks to the discoveries of Monte's autograph *avvisi*, regular reports of news and gossip sent from Prague to Pinelli, which are preserved in the Ambrosiana collection and recently published for the first time with extensive commentary by Thorsten Hindrichs.⁹ Hindrichs has shown that Monte maintained links with various academies and individuals in the Veneto; the evidence of the newly discovered *Discorso dell cose* suggest that Monte's place within Pinelli's circle of high-powered humanist intellectuals extended well beyond being a mere provider of gossip and news from an old family servant in Prague. In the case of the

musica' by the same author (R119), a letter to Pinelli from the Bolognese humanist Ercole Bottrigari on *musica ecclesiastica* (S107 sup., f. 207r) with another concerning the death of Giovanbattista Guarini (D 191 inf., ff. 109–109v), suggest a lively interest in current debates about ancient music and contact with leading scholars. The Ambrosiana's celebrated volume of autograph music by Cipriano da Rore (A10 sup.) which once belonged to Luzzascho Luzzaschi, his pupil and *maestro di cappella* at Ferrara in the later decades of the sixteenth century, was actually acquired for the library by Cardinal Federigo Borromeo after Pinelli's death; see J. A. Owens, 'The Milan Partbooks: Evidence of Cipriano da Rore's Compositional Process', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 37 (1984), pp. 270n. and J. A. Owens, *Composers at Work: The Craft of Musical Composition 1450–1600* (New York and Oxford, 1997), p. 64.

⁸ G. van Doorslaer, *La vie*; Paul Bergmans, *Quatorze lettres inédites du compositeur Philippe de Monte* (Brussels, 1921).

⁹ Th. Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte (1521-1603): Komponist, Kapellmeister, Korrespondent* (Göttingen, 2002).

avvisi, their location amongst Pinelli's papers is essentially unproblematic, seeing as Gian Vincenzo was their addressee; in the case of the present pair of documents, the reasons for their presence there are less clear. It is possible that the two documents are copies of originals, sent by Monte to Pinelli, either intended for him to keep, or, perhaps, to be forwarded to other recipients, an office which both Pinelli and Monte often fulfilled for one another (and for others) over a period of many years.

Scrittura di Filippo di Monte presentata à Rodolfo secondo dove parla della seca vita (1585)

Had Monte's request been merely for arrears of payments due to him for the upkeep of the chapel choirboys for the previous three months and reimbursement of the rent of his house for the preceding year – which is the substance of the closing paragraphs of the first document – the matter might presumably have been dealt with by a middle-ranking court treasury official. In fact, the details of the outstanding bill serve almost as a rhetorical gambit to highlight the significance of matters of far greater import, in what is a major petition addressed to the top, concerning the Kapellmeister's entire status and financial situation. The document is, in effect, an account of his entire career in imperial service told in terms of his frustrations and disappointments, and, as such needs to be read with one eye firmly on its rhetorical strategies.

Monte opens with a resumé of the financial details of his job going right back, critically, to its beginning during the time of the present emperor's father, Maximilian II and Monte implies that he had been the victim of broken promises and unsatisfactory outcomes ever since that moment. In relating the story of his

recruitment back in 1568 by Hilfreich Gut, the emperor's agent in Naples, who was in turn reporting to the ambassador in Rome, Graf Prospero d'Arco, Monte refers to the question of whether he had at that time been offered a lower salary than the first choice for the post, Giovanni Luigi da Palestrina. This well-known story has been investigated by Robert Lindell in his exhaustive study of Monte's appointment, based on letters exchanged on the employer's side; the present document allows us now to add Monte's own voice and perspective to that account.¹⁰

Philippe de Monte's name was actually proposed as a possible candidate by the emperor quite early on in the search for a successor to Jacob Vaet, his chapel master who had died on 8 January 1567. Soon after it became clear that the emperor's first choice, the Frenchman François Roussel, was not only asking half as much again in salary as Vaet, but also had a reputation as a drunkard, Maximilian wrote to Arco on 26 July of the same year, asking him to find out more about Monte. His name had already come up back in 1555, when Vice-Chancellor Georg Seld had suggested him as chapel master to Albrecht V in Munich, a post which went in the end to Orlando di Lasso. Lindell speculates that a more recent link through the Orsini family may have played a role – Monte had served Cardinal Flavio Orsini in Rome and his relative, Latino Orsini, had recently had dealings with the emperor and later intervened directly in the negotiations.¹¹ Prospero Arco, however, was at first lukewarm in his reply, reporting that not only was Monte in Naples and not Rome, but that he was well established there and would only be lured away with great difficulty, adding somewhat ominously in the light of the prejudice of which Monte was later to

¹⁰ R. Lindell, 'Die Neubesetzung der Hofkapellmeister am Kaiserhof in den Jahren 1567-1568: Palestrina oder Monte?' *Studien für Musikwissenschaft* 36 (1985), pp. 35–52.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9.

complain, that he was ‘either Flemish or French and has a very fickle mind’.¹² In the next sentence, Arco was singing the praises of the young Palestrina, who was prepared to take the job for 300 *scudi* a year. He followed this up with a second letter a week later reporting on very positive reports of the young Roman, whom he described as ‘quiet and virtuous’; in a subtle hint to twist the emperor’s arm by setting up a straw man as opponent, he added that Roussel ‘is still here in Rome’, thereby implying that it would not be necessary to extend the search to Naples.¹³ Maximilian eventually rejected Palestrina, mainly because of his seemingly exorbitant financial demands, which may themselves have been a calculated way of gently refusing the offer, seeing as Palestrina was at the time in the employ of Cardinal Ippolito d’Este.¹⁴

Before the end of the year, Hiflreich Gut had been instructed to open negotiations with Monte and we now learn that the composer was first approached on 12 January 1568.¹⁵ There was some immediate hard bargaining which initially led to an impasse when de Monte would not budge from his price of 280 *scudi* per year, against the 240 *scudi* which Jacob Vaet had earned and beyond which the emperor was determined not to go; on 4 March, Gut was instructed to break off negotiations. During this initial stage, Monte had clearly passed on the story going the rounds of the music profession, that Palestrina had been offered 500 *scudi* per year, a rumour which

¹² ‘et ch’è, o fiamingho o francese, et ch’ha il cervello assai mutabile’.

¹³ Vienna, Haus-, Hof-und Staatsarchiv, Rom Korr. 31, f. 54r, Prospero Arco (Rome) to Emperor Maximilian II (Vienna), 23 August and 31 August 1567, in Lindell, ‘Die Neubesetzung’, p. 42.

¹⁴ Lindell, ‘Die Neubesetzung’, p. 51.

¹⁵ Appendix 1, f. 128.

Gut was instructed to deny.¹⁶ Monte's version of this is that Gut's report of his suspicions to the emperor apparently provoked the response that, should Monte find that Palestrina truly had been made such an offer, then Monte would be able to claim the same amount. Perhaps it was this letter (which is not among the extant correspondence) which led Monte in his summary near the end of the 1585 petition to recall ruefully that he had 'been called from Naples...at first with many promises'.¹⁷

In the event, by 17 April and after the intervention of Latino Orsini, Monte did in fact settle for the 240 *scudi*, which has since been taken, somewhat unjustifiably, as a sign of his general weakness as a negotiator; another manifestation, perhaps, of the image of the 'quiet, bidable man, innocent as a maiden' with which he was saddled by Georg Seld in 1555, and which has in many ways rather dogged him ever since.¹⁸ Monte also refers somewhat cryptically to the fact that by taking the job, he had had to give up a lawsuit over a benefice worth 300 *scudi* per year, and, because judgement had not been passed before he had had to leave Naples, he had signed over his interests to a friend on the understanding that he might eventually get a pension of 100 *scudi*, which, however, had never materialised. The period between about 1555 and 1568 is virtually a blank in de Monte's career: the only concrete traces are one or

¹⁶ Vienna, Hofkammerarchiv, Gedenkbuch 104, f. 376, Emperor Maximilian II (Vienna) to Hilfreich Gut (Naples), in A. Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusikkapelle von 1513–1619 (IV. Schlussteil)', *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, 9 (1922), p. 47.

¹⁷ Appendix 1, f. 130^r.

¹⁸ 'ein stiller, eingezogener, züchtiger mensch wie ain Junckfraw', quoted in H. Leuchtman, *Orlando di Lasso: 1. Leben: Versuch einer Bestandaufnahme der biographischen Einzelheiten* (Wiesbaden, 1976), p. 305. See Lindell, 'Die Neubestzung', p. 39, who, when referring to the negotiations, writes 'Wie später klar wird....der bescheidenere Monte letzten Endes anstelle des teureren Palestrina die Stelle bekommen hat'. Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, persistently tries to pursue a corrective to the received image of Monte.

two later dedications suggesting Neapolitan and Roman patrons and certainly no suggestion that the composer held any salaried position, notwithstanding Arco's comment that in 1567, at least, Monte was settled in Naples (see above).¹⁹ In the meantime, the lawsuit can be taken as evidence that the pursuit of benefices was something the musician already knew quite a lot about before he arrived in Vienna.

Monte's appointment began officially on 1 May 1568, although on that day Arco wrote from Rome that Monte was still in Naples preparing to leave. In fact, as we now learn, he did not do so until 9 May, perhaps hanging on in the hope of a judgement in the lawsuit, or, as Arco had reported, because he wanted to wait for Prospero Colonna, who was also returning to Vienna from Naples; he reached Rome only on 15 May.²⁰

Monte's petition continues with the long saga of his struggle to improve on the basic salary to which he had agreed, starting with a less-than-satisfactory outcome to his request for an increase in the subventions for the upkeep of the chapel choirboys (although without mention of his successful petition in 1575 to be given 70 *gulden* per year to cover his house tax, a perk he discovered that his predecessor Jacobus Vaet had also enjoyed), moving on to the major question of the pursuit of ecclesiastical benefices and his complaints of discrimination on grounds of his 'foreignness'.²¹ At the end, he returns to the details of his immediate outstanding unpaid account by way of a moan about not getting the usual gratuity when he dedicated the *Fifth Book of*

¹⁹ Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, pp. 96–7.

²⁰ Lindell, 'Die Neubesetzung', p. 50.

²¹ This aspect of Monte's complaint was the subject of a paper entitled "As if Flemings were more Foreign than Italians": Philippe de Monte, a Foreigner at the Imperial Court', given by Seishiro Niwa at the Alamire Foundation Colloquium: *Philippe de Monte in Antwerp*, 30-31 August, 2003.

Madrigals for Six Voices to Rudolf II (1584);²² the expenses he accrued when he had to remain behind in Vienna on account of sickness when the emperor moved the court to Prague in 1583, which left him without salary or subventions for the care of the boys and for his house rent; and the 100 *gulden* he had to borrow once he was well again in order to make the journey to the new capital (which took one month). The account returns repeatedly to instances of men less worthy than he getting promotion, while he was continually passed over.

Monte recalls the mixed blessing of Maximilian II's granting him the position of treasurer to the cathedral of Cambrai in 1575, through the exercise of his power of *preces primariae*. Rudolf II had followed up this award shortly after he came to the throne in 1576 by adding a further benefice, a canonry in the same cathedral, in a process described in detail elsewhere by Robert Lindell and Thorsten Hindrichs.²³ The

²² Monte was, as a rule, well rewarded for dedications, not only by his first employer, Maximilian II but also, at least early on in his reign, by Rudolf. For example, in 1582 he received 100 *gulden* in respect of his dedication of either the *Eighth* or the *Tenth Book of Madrigals for Five Voices* (1580 and 1581, respectively); see Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, p. 100. Rudolf's apparent ingratitude in the case of the 1584 volume might possibly be explained by Monte's inclusion of the famous virulently anti-court madrigal 'Ho sempre inteso dir che nel'inferno / Così sta come si vive in corte' ('I have always heard it said that in hell it is rather like life at court'): see R. Lindell, 'An unknown letter of Filippo di Monte to Orlando di Lasso', *Festschrift für Horst Leuchtman zum 65. Geburtstag* ed. S. Horner and B. Schmid, (Tutzing, 1993), p. 271.

²³ R. Lindell, 'Musicians from the Low Countries, Ecclesiastical Benefices, and the Imperial *preces primariae*' in *Musicology and Archival Research* (Brussels, 1993), pp. 338–55; Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, pp. 107–13. The income which Monte expected to receive from the position was around 700 *scudi* (which translates into about three times his salary), on which, as he reported to Orlando di Lasso in a letter

ensuing lawsuits cost Monte more than 1,200 *scudi* over five years (not much less than five times his entire basic salary in the same period), and although he eventually won the suit, the disruption caused by the Dutch Revolt, during which Cambrai was occupied by the French, meant, as Monte says, that he had so far been able to recover less than half of his legal costs from the proceeds of the benefice, still less realize his dream of retiring from his job, which he had been planning ever since securing the Cambrai posts in 1578.²⁴ Robert Lindell describes this ‘abuse of benefices by collecting as many as possible’ as Monte’s strategy for amassing sufficient means to retire; what is now clear is that this process of ‘collecting’ was on a far greater scale than hitherto known.²⁵

Monte recounts his subsequent applications for benefices in other parts of the Habsburg domains, as they became vacant. These included the provostships of Litoměřice in Bohemia, Zwettl in Austria and Győr in Hungary, all of which foundered on the grounds that Monte was a foreigner and therefore not eligible to hold religious office in the respective countries.²⁶ Monte complains bitterly that this is discriminatory: he cites many cases in which other ‘foreigners’, especially Italians and Poles, had held, and continued to hold, canonries in Wrocław and Olomouc (Bohemia). He even cites the fact that the benefice of Litoměřice itself had once been

of 25 April 1578, he hoped to retire to Cambrai; Lindell, ‘An Unknown Letter’, pp. 261–8.

²⁴ Appendix 1, f. 128^f.

²⁵ Lindell, ‘An Unknown Letter’, p. 268.

²⁶ In Benedictine usage, ‘*praepositura*’ denotes the office of provost, the most senior position in a monastery below abbot, and also to the area of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction, with the attendant incomes. In English, this is sometimes equivalent to the office of dean and by extension, ‘deanery’, although as this is not directly comparable, the term ‘provostship’ is used throughout.

occupied by one Citaldo, who had been a preacher to Maximilian II and who had been born, like himself, in the Low Countries. This provostship had been denied him by ‘Signor Pernstein’ (Vratislav Pernstein, Chancellor of Bohemia from 1566–1582), on the grounds of nationality. But Monte had clearly done his homework, citing the case of one Rucheno, tutor both to Pernstein’s sons and the sons of Baldassar Kyros, the emperor’s grand muleteer, who was also a foreigner (Monte implies he may have been Russian) who nevertheless obtained the provostship of Brno and a canonry in Olomouc. Monte reveals that he had appealed in this case to the emperor and had been granted 400 *talers* from the income of the provostship, but that this had then been reduced by half after he had been persuaded that ‘for many reasons...it was not possible to pay more than 200’.²⁷ In the case of Györ, Monte claims that he was encouraged to go for the provostship in a deal in which he seems to have collaborated with the (Italian) almoner to Archduke Ernst (Rudolf’s brother), who held the benefice but wanted to exchange it for one in Sankt Andrä in Lower Austria. Monte says that although the emperor spoke on his behalf to the Bishop of Györ,²⁸ the bishop insisted that foreigners could not hold benefices in Hungary, and Monte bitterly records that he regards this as having not only made a fool of him, but of the emperor as well.²⁹ Monte then recalls claims that while the court was at the Diet of Augsburg in 1582, Rudolf had promised that he would award Monte a decent benefice as soon as one became vacant, and he was even sent a memorandum to the effect by the grand

²⁷ Appendix 1, f. 128^v: ‘Pur *Sua Maiesta* volse, che io havessi quattro cento Talleri di pensione sopra detta Prepositura; la qual pensione fui poi costretto di ridurre à 200 allegando il Preposito molte ragioni, per le quali mostrava non esserli possibile potere pagare li quattro cento’.

²⁸ György Draskovics, created cardinal priest in 1585, died 1587.

²⁹ Appendix 1, f. 128^v.

chamberlain. But no sooner did a benefice worth 700 *talers* become vacant at the royal chapel in Vienna, than it went to the same almoner of Archduke Ernst's who had apparently cheated Monte of the provostship in Győr around the same time.

Monte's bitterness about the unfairness of his exclusion from the benefices is vented through detailed refutations of the reasons given to him for his repeated disqualifications over the years. His answer to the question of nationality is to point out the hypocrisy by which other foreigners seem to have been able to circumvent the 'problem' – giving rise to his sarcastic jibe that it is 'as if Flemings are [apparently] more foreign than Italians, such that although I am a servant of His Majesty and nobody else, it is only me who is harmed by being a foreigner'.³⁰ Secondly, he casts aspersions on the religious probity of some of his rivals and, more seriously, of their patrons, which surely taps into more general anxieties about 'heresy' in the prevailing environment in Prague. The implied targets of his accusations against, say, Archduke Ernst's almoner or the Bishop of Győr, must presumably have been carefully chosen to play up to Rudolf's own prejudices – Monte was nothing if not an experienced and astute courtier, and even his advanced age would not excuse his crossing too far over acceptable boundaries of diplomacy. Furthermore, Monte's accusations against rivals that they abused the post-Tridentine rules against absentee beneficiary-holders are rather rich, given his own situation in respect of Cambrai. Finally, Monte bemoans the endless grinding frustrations of trying to get subventions for the upkeep of the choirboys or reimbursement of his rent, let alone his salary, actually paid on time and in coinage that is not debased.

Undoubtedly, Monte's complaints are substantial, but it is also clear that they are to some extent routine: after all, one only needs to read Claudio Monteverdi's

³⁰ *Ibid.*

letters to his patrons to see that getting agreed payments out of royal treasuries was not a problem confined to the Prague court. Likewise, although Monte's continual references to his desire to step down from his post and retire were surely genuine, seeing as he had been expressing them for a number of years and at least as far back as his letter to Orlando di Lasso in 1578, there seemed little sign that Rudolf was about to grant him his wish. Monte's strategy should perhaps be understood as part of a sustained campaign of attrition designed to persuade the emperor to intervene on his behalf to secure a dependable source of 'old-age pension'.³¹ Therefore the apparent goal of the petition – payment of outstanding debts – is more an excuse for him to address the nub of his problem: the fact that he will not be able to afford to retire until he has secured some kind of pension income that is independent of the notoriously unreliable court exchequer. Maybe it was this financial question that was the hindrance to his retirement from his post, rather than Rudolf's withholding of permission on 'artistic' grounds (which has been proposed by most commentators).

So did Monte's petition yield tangible results? In 1586 he was allocated half of the (unspecified) income from the Provostship of Sagan, but he had to exchange this for a 'pension' already paid by the court – this may refer to the 'extra' 70 *gulden* annual subvention for his house tax that he had negotiated with Maximilian II in 1575, or to the 200 *talers* 'extra' contribution to the upkeep of the choirboys, both of which he had had such trouble in getting paid once Rudolf came to the throne.³² His campaign to secure a pension of 200 *talers* on which to retire continued for at least

³¹ Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, p. 117, discussing the letter to Orlando di Lasso with its critique of Rudolf II, wonders whether Monte's strategy in complaining might even, at least subconsciously, have been aimed at provoking his own dismissal from office.

³² Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle', IV, p. 50.

another decade. Between 1592 and 1595, Monte pursued the possibility of getting it paid by the monastery of Neu Zell in Bohemia, and this was supported by Rudolf II, although there is no evidence that he ever secured it. Lilian Pruett, who recently discovered the correspondence relating to Neu Zell, also points out that at his death in 1603, Monte, like many other musicians, was still owed money by the court (in his case, 2000 *gulden*) which his heir, Cornelius Parmentiers, never recovered in full, despite years of petitioning.³³

Discorso delle cose accadute tra il Signor Odd'Antonio Budi, il Signor Camillo Zanotti et mi, Filippo di Monte (1588)

The second of the newly-discovered documents, is, put very simply, an account of a dispute between three professional colleagues that started in a minor domestic fracas and which clearly hurt and disturbed Monte to such an extent that he felt constrained to write a very long and pedantically, even painfully, detailed résumé of all that had occurred, both to justify and exonerate himself, and, it seems, simply to try to make sense of what had happened by recording it in the form of an annotated diary. Having read the document many times, I am left with the impression that Monte became obsessed to the point at which he could perhaps only find peace by setting the whole story down, point by point, not unlike his procedure with the petition of 1585.

Although he may have been writing it for a particular reader or readers, this never becomes obvious. Near the end, he announces that ‘this is what has happened between

³³ L. Pruett, ‘New Light on a Musician’s Lot at the Court of Rudolph II: the Case of Philippe de Monte’, in *Essays in Honor of James W. Pruett*, ed. P. R. Laird and C. H. Russell (Warren, MI, 2001), pp.125–32.

us up until the present, which is the 17 February', to which, from internal evidence, it is possible to add the year, 1588.³⁴

The account opens, like the 1585 *Discorso*, with an introductory passage setting the substance in a historical context, and as with that other document, it starts with an account of appointments to the Hofmusik, not this time of Monte himself, but of his assistant and of a chamber singer. Even this opening paragraph is teeming with interesting insights, each of which merits contextualisation:

His Majesty finding himself without an assistant chapel master in 1586, Signor Mercuriale asked me to advance Camillo Zanotti, depicting him as a man of good standing and manners, and adequate to the job. I spoke straightaway to the Most Illustrious Grand Chamberlain, who confirmed that the position was free and that he was content and that I should let [Zanotti] come, which was arranged at a salary of 20 florins per month. He arrived at my house on 12 September where he remained for six months, always at my expense. From time to time he said that it was time for him to leave, [but] I always replied that he should not worry about paying for his board and lodging, which I happily gave him, as well as his salary for several months, which I advanced in order to help him out, because court payments arrived somewhat late. (Appendix 2, f. 141^v)

Girolamo Mercuriale, who recommended Zanotti to Monte, was perhaps the most famous physician of his generation, Professor of Medicine at the University of Padua from 1569, and later of the Universities of Bologna and Pisa. From 1573–1576 he was personal doctor to Maximilian II in Vienna, which is where Monte may have made his acquaintance, if he had not already done so in Rome in the mid 1560s when Mercuriale was physician to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. In 1604 Mercuriale praised Monte and provided a brief biographical note in a letter sent to Paolo Gualdo of the Accademia Olimpico in Verona, who was engaged in writing his *Vita Ioannis-*

³⁴ Appendix 2, f. 146^r.

Vincentii Pinelli, published in 1607 (see above).³⁵ This new evidence of Mercuriale's direct role in Zanotti's recruitment suggests a closer relationship with Monte and a more informed interest in music than has hitherto been recognised; Mercuriale was a scholar with widespread interests beyond the everyday practice of medicine, but has not hitherto been known as a source of expertise about musicians.³⁶

According to Walter Pass, Zanotti's appointment was confirmed on 1 August 1586 and so he moved in with Monte some six weeks later, presumably having arrived from the Netherlands, from where his travel costs had been paid.³⁷ We have here a fascinating picture of the procedure for such an appointment: a recommendation from a contact in Italy (although the candidate himself was currently elsewhere); formal confirmation from the head of the household administration that the post is in fact available; a nod from the head of the household administration that Monte 'should let him come', based presumably on the word of Mercuriale that Zanotti was 'adequate to the job'; a mention of the salary (which Pass states at 25 *gulden* per month and Monte at 20 *florins*) that suggests the chapel master's hand, or at least keen interest, in the matter.³⁸ It certainly implies that the process of

³⁵ Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, pp. 170, 229. Many letters to and from Mercuriale, as well as essays in Latin, survive in the Pinelli archive.

³⁶ See N.G. Siraisi, 'History, Antiquarianism and Medicine: the Case of Girolamo Mercuriale', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 64 (2003), pp. 231–51.

³⁷ W. Pass and G. Vannoni, 'Zanotti, Camillo', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 27, p. 745; A. Einstein, 'Italienische Musik und italienische Musiker am Kaiserhof und an den erzherzoglichen Höfen in Innsbruck und Graz', *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft* 21 (1934), pp. 3–52, esp. pp. 42–5.

³⁸ The forthcoming study of Zanotti by A. and G. Vannoni, promised in the *New Revised Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, will hopefully shed more light on the matter; I have not yet been able to consult Josef Sebesta's recent Diploma Dissertation from the Institute of Musicology, Charles University, Prague: *Camillo*

recruitment was essentially under Monte's direction and did not involve complicated negotiations by the emperor's agents abroad, as his own appointment had in 1568, although we cannot tell from this account whether Mercuriale had himself approached Zanotti directly, or simply given a recommendation. Interestingly, in the light of Monte's remark about advancing Zanotti money on account, the entry in the Hofzahlamts-Rechnungen recording the payment of Zanotti's travel expenses shows that the money was repaid directly to Monte.³⁹

The *Discorso* continues:

On 7 January 1587, Signor Odd'Antonio Budi arrived here, called through my recommendation and confirmed by His Majesty, and both of them stayed until around 1 or 2 March, at my expense. The latter had been appointed as a chamber musician, and having learned that he was born a gentleman (which was confirmed by the Most Illustrious Signor Segna, the papal nuncio) it seemed to me that it would be good to put him in a grade other than *musico*. I asked the said nuncio, that should he get the chance, to let His Majesty, or at least the Most Illustrious Signor Chamberlain know that [Budi] was a gentleman. This he promised to do, which he certainly did with every kindness

Zanotti, Il primo libro de madrigali à cinque voci (Venetia M.D.L.XXXVII): Nové poznatky k životu a dílu málo známé osobnosti na císařském dvore Rudolfa II. v Praze, s kompletní edicí první knihy madrigalu, which promises to throw more light on the circumstances surrounding the publication of Zanotti's first book of madrigals in the year following his appointment, something also referred to in the present document (see below).

³⁹ Hofzahlamts-Rechnungen 1587, f. 261, in Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle', IV, p. 80: 'Item haben die kaiserliche Majestät etc. dero selben vicicapellnmaister Camillo Zannotti [*sic*] fur sein aufgewendete zehrung alß er auß Niederlandt alher erfordert worden, benentlichen funfzig cronen und vierzig kreuzer am putshandl gerait, thue siebenundsiebenzig gulden rh. sechs und vierzig kreuzer zwen phenig, zuhanden Ihrer Majestät etc. capelmaisters Philippen de Monte alß der im solche richtig gemacht, auß gnaden zue raichen verordnet'.

just as I, without otherwise being asked to, either by him [Budi] or by anyone else, organised that he should be made a *gentilhuomo di casa* to His Majesty. The process dragging on, I resolved to beg grace of a private audience in order to conclude this business with His Majesty in person, as well as to discuss various important matters of my own. His Majesty graciously consented, on condition that if he [Budi] should happen to sing again in the private chamber, it would be with the status of *gentilhuomo di casa* rather than simply *musico da camera*. (Appendix 2, f. 141)

Little is known of Odd' Antonio Budi, but according to Monte's will (see below), he came from Cesena in present day Emilia-Romagna, the same town as Zanotti and the account of events in the *Discorso* suggests that the two of them knew one another well before coming to Prague. Smijers records one entry in the Hofzählamts-Rechnungen for 1587, a payment of 50 crowns to the 'newly appointed court servant and chamber musician, Odd' Antonio Budi' (a similar sum to that paid Zanotti to cover his travel expenses).⁴⁰ There is reason to think that Mercuriale may also have had a hand in recommending Budi to Monte: not only was Budi a fellow-citizen of Zanotti's, but seven years later, Mercuriale wrote to Budi from Pisa (on 2 May 1594) in response to the latter's request for advice about his wife's medical condition (see Appendix 3 for a transcription of the letter, which is in the Pinelli archive).⁴¹ In the letter, Mercuriale apologises for the delay in his response, explaining that he had turned to two esteemed colleagues, Signor Tagliacozza in Bologna and Signor Acquapendente in Padua, for advice on the matter. Mercuriale mentions in a postscript that he had been told that Acquapendente was dead, but he

⁴⁰ Hofzählamts-Rechnungen 1587, f. 261, in Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle', II, p. 121: 'Item haben die Kai. Mat. Etc, derosleben neu angenombenen hofdiener und cammermusico Od Antonio Budi...funfzig cronen...anzuggelt...bexallen lassen'.

⁴¹ Appendix 3, f. 63.

turned out not to be so but merely ill, but this explained his delay in replying. This can be none other than Girolamo Fabrici di Acquapendente (1533-1619), a pupil of the great Vesalius and one of the most famous anatomists of his day, who held the Chair of Anatomy at the University of Padua for more than fifty years. Acquapendente's letter to Mercuriale is also in the archive, and although difficult to decipher, is a long and detailed diagnosis of Budi's wife's condition.⁴² Mercuriale passes on Acquapendente's recommended treatment, and concludes with a warm greeting to 'Signore Filippo', surely Monte.⁴³ The final documentary record of Odd'Antonio Budi is that he was a beneficiary of Monte's own will, as we shall see.

Monte is explicit that Budi had initially been appointed as a 'chamber musician', and specifically, as a singer.⁴⁴ The distinction between chapel and chamber singers in the sixteenth century is a special one: Walter Pass lists only one single singer in the Hofmusik with such a specific title: Luigi Fenice, who was called 'Kammerbassist', with a salary of 12 gulden a month at his appointment in 1569, rising to 15 three years later. Fenice left imperial employment in 1576, after duty that had included a sixth-month stint in France between October 1570 and May 1571 in the household of Maximilian's daughter, Elizabeth, newly married to Charles IX.⁴⁵ In

⁴² Appendix 3, f. 65.

⁴³ 'bacio le mani a lei, et al mio *Signore* Filippo à quali Il *Signore* Dio concede ogni felicità'. It is also possible, of course, that it was Monte who first recommended Budi to consult Mercuriale, making use of his own contacts in the Pinelli circle.

⁴⁴ The payment record calls him 'Hofdiener und cammermusico'; see above.

⁴⁵ W. Pass, *Musik und Musiker am Hof Maximillians II* (Tutzing, 1980), p. 218. Details of payments to Fenice and then subsequently to his widow and his daughter are transcribed in Smijers, 'Hofmusik-Kapelle', II, p. 135; A. Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle von 1543–1619, I', *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, 6 (1919), p. 155, lists five 'Cammermusici' before the names of the chapel singers in

the list of the court musicians (Hofkappelle) for the year 1600 transcribed by Smijers, there are five chamber musicians (Cammermusicisti) but no mention of whether they were singers or instrumentalists, or both.⁴⁶ The title ‘Kammerbassit’ could imply that there were other chamber singers who sang other voice registers, whose payments may be recorded elsewhere, or, more intriguingly perhaps, that he was really a bass soloist, with no other counterparts in the imperial chamber music. One can make a comparison here with the Neapolitan singer, Giulio Cesare Brancaccio, who fulfilled a similar role at the court of Alfonso d’Este II in Ferrara in the early 1580s. Like Budi, the minor nobleman Brancaccio was apparently engaged as a singer, although his elevated social status was recognised from the beginning and he was well rewarded as a courtier in both money and in privileges. This did not, however, prevent him complaining about being expected to sing *in camera* whenever required and a feeling that he was essentially ‘no better than a *musicco*’. A subsequent, unsuccessful attempt to be given some other title in order to make the distinction, clearly echoes the significance attached to the nominal title of *gentilhuomo della casa* that Monte secured for Budi, even though the actual duties of both in the respective courts

the payment register from around 1600, two of whom, Georg Ketterle and Marcus Anthonius Mosto have the word ‘Musicus’ written after their names; could they have been instrumentalists rather than singers?; see also C. P. Comberiati, *Late Renaissance Music at the Habsburg Court: Polyphonic Settings of the Mass Ordinary at the Court of Rudolf II (1567-1612)* (New York, 1987), p. 210.

⁴⁶ Smijers, ‘Hofmusik-Kapelle’, I, p. 155.

remained musical.⁴⁷ Although Budi's nominal status was elevated, his salary may not have been.⁴⁸

Finally, Monte's word in the ear of the papal nuncio carefully draws attention to his close acquaintance with this senior diplomat, to which he alludes again later in the narrative by making a point of the fact that he had been invited to dinner with Sega at a critical point in his subsequent dispute with Budi. This may have been his way of signalling that, even though Budi might be of superior birth, he (Monte) had friends in high places. The particular admiration that Monte had for Sega had been expressed in a faintly obsequious remark in one of his *avvise* to Pinelli written in May 1585 on the occasion of the elevation of Pope Sixtus V, where he noted the general hope that the nuncio would be allowed to stay on in Prague, 'a person truly much loved by all for his good quality and most courteous manner with everyone, most liberal in splendour and magnificence'.⁴⁹

In the petition of 1585, Monte mentions, as an example of his honourable behaviour that he had 'by order of His Majesty, taken people into my house for many months at my own expense without seeking for any recompense'.⁵⁰ In other words, Monte's 'generosity' in giving accommodation to the two new musicians while they

⁴⁷ On Brancaccio, see R. Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer: Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and the Performance of Identity in the Late Renaissance* (Ashford, forthcoming).

⁴⁸ In Monte's will, Budi is given the title 'aulico (courtier)'. No other salary payments are recorded by Smijers, which may indicate that Budi was from now on paid from another account; further research in the Hof-Archiv may produce further information. (courtier).

⁴⁹ I-Ma, D.490 inf., f. 166r, in Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, p. 223: 'personaggio veramente amato molto da tutti per le sue buone qualita e cortesissimo nel proceder con tutti, et liberalissimo nel splendor et magnifico'.

⁵⁰ Appendix 1, f. 129v.

found their feet, although genuine, was also normally regarded as part of his job. The domestic arrangements continued, apparently happily, until the beginning of March, when the two lodgers found a house for themselves nearby.⁵¹ But:

having communicated how much they needed the services of Madalena Liebmauer who, together with her father, looks after my house, and because they complained of being cheated by the servant, they begged the said Madalena to agree to do their weekly shopping on Saturdays, which she did with all kindness, as well as doing their cooking at my house for many weeks.⁵² But having later found another servant who seemed somewhat more trustworthy, they lived a while by themselves. But after a few days, noticing the outrageous costs, they asked Madalena to have a word with the landlord and ask him to provide their board for so much a week, in order to save the cost of a servant, but he did not want to, on any terms. Now, seeing their problem and discontent, I said I would undertake their board for payment, with

⁵¹ It has so far not been possible to locate Monte's house in Prague, although it is likely that it was in the 'Kleinzeit' (Malá strana) area below the royal palace, where there was an 'Italian' quarter, still discernible today in the form of the Italian Hospital, next door to the Schönbornský palace (now the United States' embassy).

⁵² Madalena housekeeping duties presumably included providing the chapel choirboys with their meals, which included three good meals on meat days and four on fish days with wine (of good enough quality 'that the boys do not become ill'), with soup and bread for the young boys as required, as minutely specified, along with many other details of clothing and other needs, in the 'Capelmesiters Instruction': 'doch sollen die knaben, wie sich gebühret in speys undt tranckh nach ihrer notdurfft, aiß an fleishtag mit drey, und an fischtagen mit 4 guten speisen...Gleichfalls soll im tranckh des weins auch ein ordnung gehalten werden, nemblich auf jeden knaben zur mahlzeit anderthalb seydl wein, doch das es ein solcher wein seye, damit die knabne nicht daran krankh werden...und nachdem die junge knaben pflegen alle morgen eine suppen und untertags ein brodt zu eßen, soll ihnen dasselbe auch jederzeit gereicht und der nothdurfft nach erfolgt werden'; in Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle, I', p. 157.

which they were very happy, and [so] came to my house, where they stayed for seven weeks. (Appendix 2, f. 141)

Again, all appeared well, until one evening at dinner, when the two of them surprised Monte by inviting him to dine with them the following day at their new house. Zanotti then turned to Madalena and said that they were moving out because she did not want them to stay and everyone had told them they should leave immediately, because of her. The following day, Zanotti came round and with ‘grandissimi gridi’ made more precise accusations against Madalena: first that he had found evidence that ‘all she did was write letters to a Signor Broyardo’ and secondly, that it was she, and not Monte, who apparently decided whether boys who came to audition for the choir were accepted or not. The next day, Signor Budi came – ‘I believed to pay his compliments’ – giving Monte the opportunity to report to him that the day before, the singer’s servant had:

in front of nearly the whole household, taken I don’t know how much of a liberty with my cook, saying, and repeating a number of times: ‘you are no virgin, so why do you wear the garland? If I ever see you in the street with it on, I’ll knock it off your head’.⁵³ To which Signor Odd’ Antonio stood up before me in such a fury that it was truly extraordinary, and responded to me as follows: “My servant has done this? I have never experienced anything like it and I am surprised that you believe such a thing”, and many other words in a similar manner, so that I said to him, “there’s no need to shout so much, as it’s something we can clear up very quickly”. He went out in a rage and called his servant and asked him if it was true, and the servant denied it, but being

⁵³ I have not been able to confirm the significance of the wearing of a garland as a sign of virginity; however, E. Fučíková, et al. (eds), *Rudolf II and Prague: The Court and the City* (Prague and London, 1997), p. 292, reproduces a sheet of illustrations from *Imperii ac sacerdotii ornatus* (c. 1600), from the Umeleckoprumyslovè Museum, Prague, with illustrations of costumes, including one of a bride wearing a garland of flowers on her head, labelled ‘Sponsa nubentis ornatus in Siles [Silesia]’.

convinced by the evidence of everyone else, not only did the servant admit it but said with great arrogance to my servant Leonardo “If I did say it, so what, considering it’s true?”. Seeing which, Signor Odd’Antonio said that he was not dissatisfied with the servant’s explanation, and so the matter rested. For my part, I remained extremely shocked: if one of my servants had used such language to one of my friends, had he been a boy I would have punished him with a good thrashing and if a man, I would have thrown him out of the house immediately, following an answer such as this. (Appendix 2, f. 141^v)

Monte’s account then turns from report to the first of a series of point-by-point refutations of the various accusations which had been made, going to great lengths to explain the misapprehensions of his accusers and reflecting ruefully on the capacity of some people to see the bad in anything. In the process, he drops one nugget of personal information after another.

Certainly, having it said to my face that everyone was saying that Signor Odd’Antonio and Signor Camillo could not stay at my house, upset me very much, [and] that if it was so, it would follow that I allowed myself to be ruled by others and that I was not master of myself and my faculties and my life, although my actions prove the whole time that the opposite is the case, and that if it were true, I would not behave as I do with friends. Such things as they say would not matter and they can make of me what they want, except that by saying similar things about me they treat me as if I was an idiot. Although I don’t know much, nevertheless, having left home at the age of fifteen and having always practised courtly behaviour ever since until my present age of sixty six, and not being (thank God) as stupid as they make me out to be, I have understood and learned a few things about how one ought to converse with friends. I think I have always demonstrated this with effect, and if this time I did not succeed, perhaps it is the fault of others and not me. (Appendix 2, f. 141^v)

It is not news that Monte was sixty six years old in 1587, but it is interesting that here he mentions his precise age, perhaps to drive home how much older he is than his accusers. However, the comment about having left home at fifteen and always

thereafter having ‘pratticato le corti’ is a significant new date in an otherwise barren period of his life story.⁵⁴ He continues:

I do not believe any of what was told to me; certainly, I confess that I do not believe much of what men say, who are of a suspicious nature, and who for this reason say what they imagine to be true. As they are more inclined to bad than to good, they will relate the bad and pass over the good, which is precisely the case with Signor Camillo in what followed. He said that Madalena and Signor Broyardo did nothing else except write letters one to the other so that it appeared on the surface of things as if it was to enable Signor Broyardo to come in [to the house]. As far as coming into my house goes, experience will show how much truth there was in this, as well as how much writing there was between them. It is necessary to know [first of all], that wanting to sell my chain, I gave it to a woman who deals in second-hand things to sell [on my behalf], with the condition that she not say to whom it belonged, and also to see that she got something for the workmanship [over and above the value of the metal]. This woman, having this commission and finding herself with other things in hand to sell (as she said) went one day to, among other houses, that of the Spanish ambassador, who liked the chain very much. At the house she also found Signor Broyardo, who recognised the chain. And seeing that the deal was ready to be concluded, Signor Broyardo took the role of middle-man, saying that the woman had been all over [the place] with it, but had not been offered more than 2 *thalers* for the workmanship over and above the weight of the metal, but was asking for six from the said ambassador and even the gold was of poor quality. Thus the ambassador turned it down, something about which the woman was very

⁵⁴ It is known that Monte was a chorister at Cambrai cathedral between 1547 and 1549, and he would have been 15 in either 1546 or 1547, so this could mean that at this time he also started to live in the household of a senior cleric or noble where he could be said to be ‘being a courtier’. See C. Wright, ‘Musiciens à la chathédrale de Cambrai 1475–1550’, *Revue de Musicologie* 62 (1976), pp. 218–20. By 1549, his voice would likely have broken and it was perhaps then that he first went to Italy, although there is no confirmation of this; see Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, pp. 96–7.

unhappy, believing that he had changed his mind because of something that Signor Broyardo said to him in Spanish, and that Signor Broyardo had done all this in order that he should get the chain himself. It was clear to me already much earlier that he wanted it: in the end he got it. After having got it, he did not have the means to pay the full price, but only paid 100 *thalers*, saying that he would pay the remaining sixty nine within three or four days. But not having the money as he had expected, at the end of four days he wrote to Madalena that for the love of God she say nothing to me of the remainder, that he had not been able to get certain money that he had been firmly promised, but that he would have it in a short time, and knowing that I had sold the chain out of pure necessity, was very worried that such a delay would be taken very badly, and even more so because he knew that the signor ambassador would have paid out the money [straightaway] if he had got the chain. Madalena showed me his first letter, asking me what she should reply as already on three occasions when he should have written, afraid of presenting himself to me, he had come each time to the door of my house to ask Madalena if I wasn't very angry because I had not received the whole sum together, it having taken almost two months to give me the rest. The letter he wrote was interpreted by Signor Camillo in a different way; thus one can understand that he too deceived himself, like the majority of people who judge things that they do not understand, especially those of a suspicious nature. (Appendix 2, f. 142)

'Signor Broyardo' must surely be Francesco Broyardo, a young Italian in whom Monte had already taken an interest in October 1586. In a letter to Charles l'Écluse, Monte asked his friend to help him in his campaign to get Francesco a post as a *gentilhuomo della bocca* to Archduke Maximilian of Tyrol, Rudolf II's brother. Broyardo had apparently no wish to return to Rome but rather to remain in the country. Monte had first enlisted a Signor Serratain to provide a letter of reference for Broyardo, which he could send on to the archduke's marshal. But time being of the essence, Monte has now gone one better and managed to get a testimonial from the queen, a copy of which he is now forwarding to l'Écluse in the hope that he can pass

it on to the right contact. The queen had been very happy to commend Broyardo because of the great satisfaction he had given in some business concerning her chaplain that had turned out well. He asks l'Écluse to find out what, if anything, Signor Serratain has done and said so far, and also to 'be a true gentleman by doing a favour for another' (Broyardo), who, he notes, speaks perfect Spanish, Italian, French and Flemish and has a good knowledge of Latin and German, although not quite as good as the other languages. He is also 'very well-born from a good family in Brussels, most skilled in business, good looking and with the best manners and lifestyle.'⁵⁵

Meanwhile, the would-be courtier found himself embarrassed by his debt to someone who had clearly been very kind to him. Monte appears genuinely non-judgemental of Broyardo, showing a liberal understanding for him and his problems and also for his own housekeeper, who had served him for the past eight years – a generosity of spirit that he missed in Zanotti.

Monte now turns his attention to the question of the auditions of choirboys:

Certainly it troubles me that Signor Camillo could believe that I am so stupid that I would allow Madalena to accept or dismiss choirboys without my consent, and when he told me that the boy who had been sent to audition was not suitable, you should know that at the time I got Madalena to tell the fathers that he was not suitable, and this because I do not know the German language.⁵⁶ I believe that he was referring to Pinello's son, who is under no circumstances good enough for the chapel but nevertheless remains in my

⁵⁵ Philippe de Monte (Prague) to Charles d'Écluse (Mergenthal), 21 October 1586, in Doorslaer, *La vie*, pp. 286–7: 'egli e molto ben nato di famiglia nobile in Brucelles, destrrissimo ne i negotii, di bella precenza et d'ottimi costumi et vita'.

⁵⁶ This remarkable admission from a man who had lived in Vienna for several years and must have had contact with German speakers virtually every day of his life may seem far-fetched; however, the fact remains that there is no evidence to contradict it.

home, believing that it was Madalena who had allowed him to stay. So let the lad have a *scudo* and let him [Zanotti] tell the mother that she should take him back, as I do not have the heart to say it to him. Meanwhile I will keep him here out of charity for a few days, and if I wanted to keep him for good, as I took Christoforo, the son of Giacomo Flamme, Tenorista, eight years and three and a half months and Federico, six years, out of charity, I could have this one just to spite Zanotti. (Appendix 2, ff. 142–142^v)

The ‘son of Pinello’ was presumably the offspring of Giovanni Battista Pinello di Gherardi, composer and tenor singer in the Hofkapelle, who died on 15 July 1587.⁵⁷ It may be that the ailing man’s son was in care with ‘the fathers’ who then tried to get him placed in the choir. The two brothers whom Monte had taken in despite not being any use to the choir, must surely be the orphan sons of another tenor in the chapel choir, Jacobus Flamma, a countryman of Monte’s, who died on 31 July 1580 after sixteen years of service.⁵⁸ The story of Monte’s charity to such boys also reveals that Zanotti had a role in the auditions. Certainly, Monte remarks later on that Zanotti had

⁵⁷ Italian composer and singer who served first in the court choir of Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol in Innsbruck. He was Kappellmeister to the Elector August of Saxony from 1580 – 1584, and then a singer in the imperial chapel from 1584 until his death. He published several collections of *canzone*, songs, masses, Magnificats and sacred motets; M. Ruhnke, ‘Pinello, Giovanni Battista’, in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Personenteil* ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel and New York, 1994), vol. 10, p. 1284; article by E. Fučíková, *Rudolf II and Prague*, p. 629; Smijers, ‘Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle’ I, p.147.

⁵⁸ Smijers, ‘Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle’, I, p. 145 and Pass, *Musik und Musiker*, pp. 108–9. These are presumably the two ‘extra’ boys whom Monte mentions in the petition, together with a young man to whom he also gave 3 *gulden* a month (Appendix 1, f. 130^v).

had the opportunity to pay off the cost of his board and lodging by teaching the boys, although he had only come two times a week.⁵⁹

The dispute about Madalena picked up more heat, and the accusations become increasingly personal and scabrous. As Monte recounts them, we get touching glimpses of a man in his late middle age who essentially wants to get on with a quiet life and to be able to enjoy socialising at home with his friends. His portrait of himself as an otherwise popular, friendly and generous old man is certainly persuasive, and the examples of his continuing generosity to many, including the orphan boys and the young musicians at the start of their careers, do not appear on the face of it to be exaggerated. The following episode paints Monte as a charming and gently teasing avuncular figure, enjoying an intimate dinner party with a group of friends, including the famous chamber musicians Mauro and Martha Sinibaldi:⁶⁰

Having during these days invited Signor Pietro Smissart with his wife and his daughter,⁶¹ and also Signor Mauro with his wife Signora Marta, at dinner time I went to Signor Odd' Antonio's room to call him, and not seeing him there, I asked Signor Camillo after him, who told me that he had gone out to dinner with I don't know whom (I believe for a good reason), perhaps anxious not to

⁵⁹ See Appendix, f. 146v. Zanotti subsequently held the office of Capellnsingerknaben-Praeceptor from 31 August 1586 until his death on 4 February 1591; Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik', IV, p. 148.

⁶⁰ Martha had been recruited and brought to the Imperial Court from the Netherlands in 1571 by Monte; see Robert Lindell, 'Martha gentil che'l cor m'ha morto: Eine unbekannte Kammermusikerin am Hof Maximilian II' *Musicologica austriaca* 1987: 59–68 and Robert Lindell, 'Filippo, Stefano and Martha: New Findings on Chamber Music at the Imperial Court in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century' in *Atti del XIV Congresso della Società Internazionale di Musicologia: Trasmissione et recezione delle forme di culturale musicale*, ed. A. Pompillio, D. Restani, L. Bianconi and F. A. Gallo (Turin, 1990), III, pp. 869–75.

⁶¹ Not yet identified.

intrude, as there were female strangers in the house, and having perhaps regard to the Italian custom. To which I said, “O what an idiot to run away from such good company”, and Signor Mauro and Signora Marta who were present know from the way I said it, that it was a joke such as one makes among close friends, and the same people can testify to my disappointment that he was not there to enjoy such good company. These words “O, what an idiot” being reported to him, he plaintively [showed] me [that] they had been interpreted in the opposite sense: “and what is more besides, with these same words and in this way you also said the other day that I was an idiot and that I acted like an idiot in all my behaviour.” How is it possible that, [having been] loved by me as if he were my own son, as his experience has always shown to be true, that it could possibly occur to Signor Odd’Antonio that I had said such a thing in a malicious way? Certainly my friendship and the kindness that I always practise had been badly misunderstood. (Appendix 2, f. 143)

Things went from bad to worse. Having moved out of the house, Budi now wrote a couple of flowery and pompous letters (reproduced in full), assuring Monte that he had no quarrel with him, but insisting on the dismissal of Madalena and her father, warning that everyone was gossiping about her. He reveals that the letter from Broyardo has been passed around, and that Madalena is accused, amongst other things (not, of course, by Budi himself – he is only reporting what he has heard!) that she once wandered the streets of Prague without a coat, behaving like a whore; that she goes once a week to the house of an old furrier to do ‘whatever suits her’; that she has been seen leaving another house in the suburb of Cleinseit by the garden gate; and even that ‘aborti’ had been found on the ground after she had left the house of the Jesuits and that now she goes around queening it over everyone. Budi then protests that his honour is at stake, and that anyway, he paid all his bills on leaving Monte’s house (which, apparently, Zanotti had not). He ends by telling Monte that he has shown his letter to ‘my friends, to patrons, courtiers, secretaries and gentlemen of all kinds’ so that they can witness what it is that has caused two men of honour to

quarrel. This may have been a standard position in the working out of disputes between gentlemen throughout Europe at this time, taking the form of a sort of ‘duel on paper’, but such sharing of their private dispute with all and sundry was the last straw for Monte, who reveals himself to be, in fact, as touchy about his reputation as he claims to be indifferent to the talking behind his back.

Monte was apoplectic in his reply to Budi, leaping to the defence of Madalena against all aspersions and meanwhile becoming less and less coherent in his attempt to counter each accusation. Eventually he exploded:

I cannot imagine the reason why you obstinately persevere in saying that she did not want you in the house...I beg Your Excellency to let me live in my home again as you saw me, in peace and quiet in this court for twenty years; to recognize that I have a house full of troubles thanks to these idiocies; that I am sixty-six years old and have seen and know how one should live. I care little for what those shitheads (*cagapensieri*) say, speaking of me in the squares and shops: it would be better for them to mind their own business. Your Excellency can speak with me whenever and at any time you want to...and I have always hoped that Your Excellency would come to me and speak with me alone as in the past. It saddens me to the quick that others want to hinder my actions: I, who hinder no one; and that others want to deprive me of the servant with whom I am satisfied. If Your Excellency has kept a copy of the letter you sent me as you say you have, read it. You will see that you have stained my honour (if it's possible to stain the honour of a good man with vain and false writing). Otherwise, I don't care to know who has spoken or speaks about me, or who has seen or not seen the letter. And if nothing else, leave Madalena in peace... Remember that very often you called her mother, saying “what would I have done without you, I would have been a lost man”, and all these services and kindnesses are forgotten with one false accusation that she did not want to welcome you into the house. [Appendix 2, f. 146]

The spiral of accusation and counter-accusation continued for weeks, and every possible rankle was recalled, including Camillo Zanotti's monetary debts to

Monte, which included 30 *scudi* provided to enable Zanotti to get his works published in Venice (which presumably refers to the *First Book of Madrigals for Five Voices* of 1587), as well as Zanotti's meanness in return, apparently charging Monte exorbitant interest to borrow 10 *scudi*.

Notwithstanding the way that the whole dispute blew way out of control, and despite the name-calling, the 'I-never-said-what-you-said-I-said', and the imputations of dishonour, Monte seems to have been determined to get to the bottom of what had caused the upset in first place, repeatedly challenging Budi at least to say why he and Zanotti had really left his house. It emerges that at some point, one Orso Orsato (who is known so far for one friendly letter sent to him by Monte in October 1587)⁶² had lodged in the house for three years and that when he left, Monte had apparently said to Madalena that he would like to return to a solitary life. Then, at some point later, when Zanotti and Budi were living there, Madalena had said in jest "is this the solitary life which you had in mind?"; Budi had then claimed that this was the reason why the two of them had been of the opinion that Madalena did not want them in the house any more. Monte dismisses this, but a little later seems to put his finger on where things started to go wrong, which was:

by paying for their board and lodging, they believed they were lords of everything. And this can be shown, for while they were in my house as my guests, Madalena was the best in the world, there were never problems between them, and her doing everything for them was fine, and they called her "mother". But paying for board and lodging spoiled everything. (Appendix 2, f. 146^v)

The *Discorso* breaks off half way down the page, as though Monte had either had enough or because matters moved on. What, then, happened next? Of Monte's

⁶² See Pietro Revoltella, 'Una lettera autografa di Filippo di Monte al nobile padovano Orso Orsato', *Rassegna veneta di studi musicali*, 2–3 (1986), pp. 297–306.

relationship with Zanotti there is, as yet, no further direct evidence; the chapel master outlived his much younger deputy by many years. In the case of Budi, however, it seems as though the relationship not only weathered this rocky start but went on to become close, even quasi-familial. Monte named Budi in his will as his executor, recording favours and assistance received of Odd'Antonio ('who has deserved well of him [and] in whom he much trusted') during the plague and during his own long illness, during which the noble singer never abandoned, but rather looked after him, presumably to the end. In fact, during Monte's final illness in 1603, Budi took over looking after the chapel choirboys (Kapellknaben), for which money was given directly to him in the Hofzahlungs-Rechnungen from 1 January until 1 February, when the payments were transferred to Cornelius Parmentiers, Monte's nephew and heir.⁶³ These payments were specifically for the living costs of the boys, whose board and lodging were the responsibility of the chapel master and was provided under his own roof, as we have seen (a system which ended after Monte's death),⁶⁴ which might suggest that Budi was living in Monte's house at the time. Budi was bequeathed a number of silver utensils and the sum of 30 *florins* owing on Monte's salary.⁶⁵ Monte also gave his faithful colleague one tenth of his books and instructions to 'distribute the rest suitable for music to persons and men joined together by virtue [i.e., musical accomplishment]', charging him with selling off his goods to raise money to pay for an 'honourable burial'. The wording of the will strongly implies a close and trusting

⁶³ Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle', I, p. 170, fn: 'Jänner 1603 zu handen Irer Mt. etc. hoffdieners Ott Anthoni Budi als verordneter comissari über die Knaben'; Doorslaer, *La vie*, pp. 30, 68, 302.

⁶⁴ Comberiati, *Late Renaissance Music*, p. 23.

⁶⁵ The will specified that Budi should sign a copy of the document to show that he agreed to this bequest, which perhaps implies the settling of a debt (see note below).

relationship between the two men at the end, that went well beyond the normal niceties of collegiality.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Doorslaer, *La vie*, pp. 70, 300–301: ‘Item praefatus Per Ill. et Multum R^{du}s Dns Philippepus Testator dixit, et fatetur in rei veritate habuisse, et reciepisse ab Ill. Dno Oddo Antonio de Budis ex nob. civitatis Cessene, et Sac: Caes: Mg. Nob. : Aulico, varia et diversa beneflicia ac servitia tam tempore Pestis, quam in presenti eius lunga infirmitate, in qua ab ipso unquam derelictus fuit, Imo quasi semper in eius societate, et pro illius tratenimento permansit, ob quam causam et in signum veri amoris ac benivolente eidem Ill. Dno Oddo Antonio eius benemerito legavit, et reliquit eius cuppam Argenteam, par unum salinarum, et custodiam unam cum suis cultris argentatis, necnon, et alteram cartam albam pariter per ipsum ut asserit subscriptam, et eius solito, sigillo munitam, ex predicta eius provisione seu salario ordinario sibi debito ab eadem Imperiali Camera, capientem summam florenorum triginta monete Germanice ut supra, Item praefatus Per Ill: et Multum R^{dis} Dñs Testator legavit et juré legati ac amore dei reliquit omnibus et quibuscumque servis suis utriusque sexus quibus reperiebantur in eius domo et ad ipsius servitum, tempore sui obitus ultra eorum salarium per infrascriptum Dnm eius heredem solven, florenos sex pro quolibet ipsorum pariter per infrascriptum Dnum eius heredem solvendos semel tantum ex praedicta eius provisione seu salario ordinario ab eadem imperiali camera sibi debito, facta prius per eum exactione praedicta, quemquidem Dnm heredem eius infrascriptum pariter gravavit et gravat facta ipsa executione, ad solvendum quoscumque eius creditores quatenus extiterint...

Et vult hoc presens testamentum praevalere, et derogatorium [*sic*] esse omnibus, et quibuscumque alijs testamentis, codicillis, donationibus causa mortis et ultimis voluntatibus per ipsum Dnm Testatorem factis, si qua facta reperientur, remanen tamen semper presenti testamento in sui robore et firmitate, suum vero commissarium et executorem huius sui testamenti, et ultime voluntatis fecit et facit, ac constituit esseque voluit et vult, suprascriptum Ill: Dñm Oddum Antonium de Budis eius benemeritum, cui multum confidit, et cui donavit et concessit, licentiam plenam, liberam, et absolutam, ac potestatem et generale mandatum, accipiendi et captos in se retinendi imprimis et ante omnia secuta ipsius Dni Testatoris morte, unam decimam ad eius libitum quoruncumque eius librorum ac alios ad musicam aptos

compartire et distribuere personis, et viris virtute associatis, prout eidem Illⁱ Dno eius commissario videbitur, et placuerit cum libera facultate etiam exequendi dictum suum ultimum testamentum, et ultimam voluntatem, etiam de bonis eius vendendi, et alliendi, causa solvendi dicta eius legata et sumptus sepulture honorifica fieri, iudicio ipsius Dni Commissarij ut supra et debitas confessiones et quitationes facienu pro publico testamento et ultima voluntate executioni demandandis'. (Item, the aforesaid most illustrious and very reverend Philippe the Testator said and declares that in the truth of the matter he had and received from the illustrious signor Oddo Antonio de Budis from the noble city of Cesena, and noble courtier of his Sacred Imperial Majesty various and diverse benefits and services both in time of the plague as in his present long infirmity, in which he was never abandoned by him; rather he remained almost constantly in his company and in order to look after him, for which reason and in signum of true love and affection he bequeathed and left to the same illustrious signor Oddo Antonio, who had deserved well of him, his silver cup, one pair of salt-cellars, and one chest with its silver-plated knives, and also another blank paper which he avers to be likewise signed by himself and furnished with his customary seal, this his aforesaid provision or ordinary salary owed him by the same Imperial Chamber, containing the sum of thirty florins [gulden] of German money as above. Item, the aforesaid most illustrious and very reverend Testator bequeathed and by the law of bequest and the love of God left to all and sundry of his servants of both sexes who were found in his house and at his service at the time of his death, beyond their salary to be paid by his heir named below, six florins for each of them likewise to be his heir named below [i.e., Cornelius Parmentier] once only from his provision aforesaid or ordinary salary owed him by the same Imperial Chamber, the aforesaid exaction having first been made him, which heir named below he likewise charged and charges, the said exaction having been made, with paying all his creditors insofar as they shall exist ...

And he wishes this present testament to prevail over and override all and sundry other testaments, codicils, donations *mortis causa*, and last wills made by the said testator, if any shall be found to have been made, the present will however always remaining in its force and validity, and his commissioner and executor of this last will and testament he made and makes, and appoints and wishes to be the above named Illustrious Signor Oddo Antonio de Budis, who has deserved well of him. in whom he

Philippe de Monte comes across in the *Discorso* as bewildered and disappointed by the mess created by much younger men to whom he had extended the ‘paternal’ hand of friendship. He portrays himself as tired, disillusioned, and ready to throw in the towel, which would tie in neatly with the ‘crisis’ theory based on the evidence of two dedications to Rudolf II in the early 1580s, and which certainly seems confirmed by the petition back in 1585 in which he explicitly stated ‘I have firmly considered retiring...at this age of sixty four, I am no longer able to suffer the misery which I have suffered up to now in this service’.⁶⁷ However, the events related in this second, intensely autobiographical document unfolded during the same period in which, amongst other things, Monte was engaged in publishing the *Eleventh and Twelfth Books of Madrigals for Five Voices* and the *Second Book of Motets for Six Voices* with Gardano in Venice, as well as the *First Book of Masses* with Plantin in Antwerp. As it turned out, the expressions of failing strength, although very probably

much trusted, and to whom he gave and granted full, free, and absolute licence and power and general mandate of receiving and after receipt of retaining in his possession at the outset and before all other things upon the said Testator’s decease one-tenth at his pleasure of all his books and to divide and distribute the rest suitable for music to persons and men joined together by virtue, as shall seem good to and please the said illustrious signore his commissioner with free faculty besides of executing his said last will and last testament, also of selling and alienating any of his goods for the purpose of paying his said bequests and the expenses of bestowing honourable burial on him, in the judgement of the same Commissioner as above and making the due acknowledgements and quittances for putting his aforesaid will testament and last will into execution).

⁶⁷ Appendix 1, f. 129^r. See also R. Lindell, ‘Filippo di Montes Widmungen an Kaiser Rudolf II: Dokumente einer Krise?’ in *Festschrift Othmar Wessely zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. M. Angerer, E. Diettrich, G. Haas, C. Harten, G. Messner, W. Pass and H. Seifert (Tutzing, 1982), pp. 407–16; Hindrichs, *Philippe de Monte*, pp. 117–20.

genuine from Monte's side at the time they were expressed, proved to be exaggerated, and he was to enjoy further sixteen years of productive life in Prague.⁶⁸ Monte emerges from this particular thicket of human interactions (from which I have been able here to examine only some excerpts) as, above all, a man with a strong sense of his own place in his world and of the limitations of the human predicament, especially his own. As he says in one of his letters to Budi:

In the end I am known for my affectionate nature, a veteran of this court of twenty years standing, where I have always done what is fitting, as far as it is humanly possible. If I have often made mistakes, it's no wonder, seeing as I am only human. (Appendix 2, f. 145)

⁶⁸ The issue was clearly also not simply a gambit in his negotiations over money; Cardinal Scipione Gonzaga passed on a rumour of Monte's impending retirement which was 'the common judgement of all those who know him', in a letter to the Ferrarese courtier Federigo Cataneo in May 1586, transcribed and translated in M. Bizzarini, *Luca Marenzio*, trans. J. Chater (Aldershot, 2003), p. 115.