

## **TIBIA EX TEMPORE, Medieval Flute Meditations: An attempt to reconstruct the contemplative art of instrumental improvisation in thirteenth-century Paris**

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Sometimes it is nearly impossible to separate personal, subjective aspects clearly from impersonal and so-called objective ones. This is a huge dilemma especially when writing about musicological themes, and the dilemma gets even bigger when the writer is a musician himself and not a musicologist at all. More or less I find myself in this paradoxical situation now, before starting to write some small reflections about my approach to medieval flute improvisation and about my project *Tibia ex tempore*.

My topic is medieval improvisation, a lost art which has to be reconstructed from various sources, the main point being that a reconstruction of a performance practice involving improvisation is both judged from the artistic side and from the scholarly side as well. But I can only try to write a very personal report about my work as a musician for whom research and musicological reflection is much more a part of the daily craftsmanship than academia and the discourse of scholarship and teaching; I trust, however, that the various musicological aspects will shine through. They have a lot to do with my own obsession with searching for unexpected contexts of the medieval flute sound. Needless to say, I highly prefer to produce these sounds through actually making music than to write about them. Musicology is for me an overall important collection of tools--a survival kit to use before I start to go out on an adventure trip into a wild jungle called music. Of course, the survival kit is not the adventure itself. But I hope that the reader will find enough interesting ideas in this little essay that might compensate for the lack of actual music in it. A text is not music, but there is no need to regret it! Fortunately, there exists a CD from 15 years ago; and this CD is part of the reason why I write this article, because it was an undertaking which had triggered very important developments in my playing and in my thinking about medieval music back then. So I feel extremely honored by my dear colleagues and friends at the Texas Tech School of Music, who invited me to contribute to the online *Journal of the Vernacular Music Center* with an article that presents *Tibia ex tempore* as a performance concept, a repertoire, a musical experience, a concert program--gradually changing its form up to the present day—and a CD recording from a long time ago.<sup>1</sup>

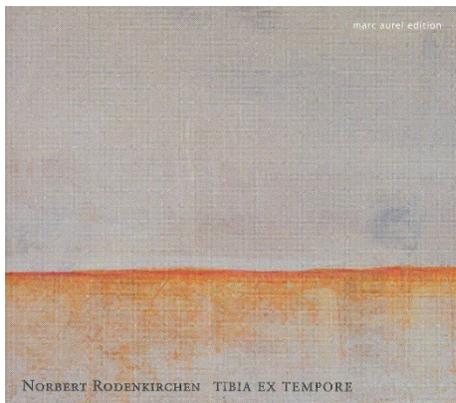
### **Tibia ex tempore: The Project**

In 2016 I am celebrating the fifteenth jubilee with a re-release of the formerly sold out CD *Tibia ex tempore – Medieval Sketches* and a new, revised live version. In 2001 the newly founded record company marc aurel edition in Cologne (which later merged with Raumklang in Leipzig) released my first solo CD, which was recorded in the wonderful acoustics of the

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I also feel honored that Texas Tech University has already been so kind in recent years to invite me for groundbreaking and meaningful artistic initiatives, such as the concerts “Fragments for the end of time” with Sequentia, or my solo “Hameln anno 1284 / medieval flute music: on the trail of the Pied Piper.” The latter also led to a long interview with Dr. Angela Mariani, recorded here in Lubbock to serve as the basis for the nationwide Harmonia early music radio program’s 800th edition.

Romanesque abbey of Brauweiler near Cologne. The music was played on just one middle sized medieval transverse flute and presented in one track in one continuous flow of sound without interruptions. The pieces of the program were not separated, but joined together by connecting improvisations so that it was nearly impossible to tell which were the medieval and which were the modern parts while listening through the music. Of course this phenomenon of metamorphosis from old to new sounds was an integral part of the artistic process; and it had been my main intention to present this unusual open concept as one possible way of presenting medieval music with the help of real improvisation in an extended form, as a concrete counterpart to today's listening conditions which sometimes limit the audience's attention to the short periods of three-minute-long pop songs. There is no doubt that medieval listeners had other time concepts for making music, and that the timing of a medieval performance was certainly extremely different from today's standards.



The CD cover was based on a painting by a friend from my schooldays, the Cologne-based artist Max Höfler. Although the picture was closely related to modern art (just a brown and orange line creating a kind of horizon on a blue grey background throughout the whole inside and outside of the digi pack), it eventually reminded the spectator of a detail in a Romanesque fresco. It certainly didn't include unnecessary ornamentation or special effects (what we in Germany call "Schnick Schnack"). I have always loved ambiguities between ancient and modern arts, and I am completely obsessed with the surrealistic aura of

fragments and ruins – be it in architecture, in literature, in fine arts or in music. The booklet contained as well a fascinating *poème en prose* by Katarina Livljanic from Paris which she had written especially for that publication. Some years later, I joined Katarina Livljanic's great ensemble Dialogos and have performed and recorded with her ever since. But this little beautiful text was the beginning of our friendship and collaboration.

At the time, I was told that there was a certain risk in releasing the disc in that form without much information on the front cover, because the CD market would not know how to categorize the genre. The CD sales people went crazy. Whenever I went to the record shop - yes, at these times there were still huge record shops where you could actually buy CDs - my CD was never there where it should have been. Instead of finding it on the early music shelf, it would have been placed next to Jazz, or Folk, or meditation/ethno/world music. As a result, the listeners would not know what to expect, because no composers were indicated on the outside of the CD digipack, and the cover itself was so pure and miraculous without any unnecessary graphic details. I loved it, although it didn't make life easier to be mysterious. But in spite of all warnings, I had kept the initial idea and released *Tibia ex tempore* in its unique form. I was surprised to find that the music found completely new groups of listeners. There were certainly some early music lovers, but many others with an open ear as well. Over the years I got a lot of feedback from people praising especially the contemplative aspect of the music.

For me personally, it was the first solo project for which I got some very good reviews in the international music magazines, so it changed not only my life but also the way I saw myself as a performer. *Tibia ex tempore* had taught me how to take responsibility for a project under

my own name. If you do something under your own name you have to protect it as much as you can. You don't want to be misunderstood or falsely criticized and you don't want to make compromises (due to commercial reasons, for example). *Tibia ex tempore* astonishingly made some buzz and it had a remarkably long life on stage. I performed it for more than six years in many European countries until I began to develop new solo recital formats. Recently, the record label informed me that the CD had been completely sold out over the years—a result which is not so easy to achieve for an early music record these days. The idea arose, therefore, to celebrate a fifteen-year jubilee. Instead of recording a new version, the label and I decided to present the combination of the re-release of the CD, 100% as it was, with a revised new version of the live program which I plan to perform next year in different places all over the world.

## ***The Medieval Art of Improvisation***

The program *Tibia ex tempore - Medieval sketches* is an attempt to reconstruct the medieval art of improvisation, following the path of vocal sequence, *lai* and *planctus* to the earliest notated instrumental tunes.

There is nearly no written trace of genuine instrumental music before the thirteenth century. The earliest notated instrumental pieces, including the *ductia* and *estampie*, are surprising for their high level of melodic invention and formal organization; and it may therefore be assumed that they represent the first attempt to notate the late form of a highly-developed improvisatory tradition which had been transmitted orally for centuries. The music in this program is an attempt to recapture the earlier forms of this tradition, before the instrumental pieces were actually written down.

Melodic invention was regarded differently in the Middle Ages than in other eras. Most of the music preserved is anonymous. This anonymity is based partly on a medieval world view, according to which the individual artist subordinated any claims to recognition to the higher religious ideal of cosmic unity. It is also rooted in the most important phenomenon of medieval music: the system of the modes. The modal system is a blueprint for melodic organization which uses the church modes as a framework. In the Middle Ages these church modes were far more than scales; they functioned as musical character types, each with its own typical melodic formulae and gestures.

Modal music found itself in a perpetual state of flux, and melodic ideas could be borrowed, varied or completely changed without any danger that charges of plagiarism would be made. There was no great difference in the value placed on a new composition and one consisting of borrowed material. Rather, medieval musicians had to master a certain modal vocabulary which provided the material out of which their melodic forms would crystallize. They made no claims to their value as finished works. It is in this context that the *contrafactum*, a borrowed melody from a different context, and the free exchange of melodic material between the sacred and secular realms, should be understood. The procedure of creative borrowing and quoting could be applied to a single phrase or to complete melodies of existing compositions. It can be stated that most of these *contrafacta* were well known tunes, and therefore more than suitable for a pure instrumental approach. This practice of instrumental performance of well-known vocal music is well documented in examples of medieval literature. (In the new live version of *Tibia ex tempore* 2016, nearly all the original melodies have been chosen as a

coherent suite from the repertoire of *contrafacta* available in the thirteenth century in Northern France, including Paris).

But to what extent did a medieval musician also improvise his very own music, apart from quoting already existing music, and what does this mean for a creative approach to historical improvisation today? How much of one's own invention is convincingly suitable for an attempt to authentically reconstruct a lost art of playing *ex tempore*? This question leads directly to another question: To what extent did the musicians of the time depend on vocal music, using the unique characteristics of their instruments to reflect and extend preexisting songs; and how much did they rely on the collective modal vocabulary independent of vocal models?

The very impossibility of answering this question provides ample impetus for an attempt at reconstruction. There can be only individual artistic answers. My program follows the middle path. In some cases, vocal pieces from the Middle Ages are used as sources of melodic material; in others, a conscious effort is made to break free of such models and to use melodic figures and compositional forms typical of the Middle Ages to create something wholly new. The music appears as a continuous stream of sound, which flows through various levels of orientation towards concrete melodic models and fills a spectrum between a literally exact "note to note" approach and free modal inventions. Without the own creative input of a modern performer the attempt to trace back the ancient roots of improvisation would only lead into an empty ruin.

## **Tibia ex tempore: The Repertoire**

The program of the new live *Tibia ex tempore* program consists of original melodic models – all of them used during the thirteenth century in Northern France, occurring in chronological order:

"Felix qui humilium" super "L autrier estoie" (Adam de la Bassée / Henri III, duc de Brabant), from *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*, thirteenth century

Sequence: "Beata beatorum" (Anonymous), from the Utrecht *Prosarium*, thirteenth century

Planctus: "Planctus ante nescia" (Godefroy de St. Victor), from *Carmina Burana*, thirteenth century

"Olim in harmonia" super notula "De juer et de baler" (Adam de la Bassée / Anonymous), from *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*

Fragment of: "1er Estampie Roial," Anonymous *ductia*, extended, from the *Chansonnier du Roi*, thirteenth century

Stantipes super "Nitimur in vetitum" / "Quant li rosignol" (Philippe le Chancelier / Anonymous), from LoB Egerton Chansonnier 274

"Nobilitas" super rondellus "Qui grieve ma cointise" (Adam de la Bassée / Anonymous), from *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*

"Modestos blandititiae" (Adam de la Bassée), from *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*

"O felix custodia" / "L'autrier matin el mois de mai" (Adam de la Bassée / Anonymous), from *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*

Neupma 1, extended (Anonymous), from Grocheo, *De Musica*

Conductus “In hoc ortus occidente” (Philippe le Chancelier), from Florence *Pluteo* 29,1

Conductus “Fontis in rivulum” (Philippe le Chancelier), from Florence *Pluteo* 29,1

Nota “La note Martinet,” from Chansonnier Paris BN 845

Stantipes super “Ausi com unicorne sui / Ego te tuli” (Thibaut de Champagne / Anonymous), from Chansonniers Cange and Egerton

Neupma 8, extended (Anonymous), from Grocheo, *De Musica*

Fragment of lost responsory “Te sanctum dominum” (Anonymous; Thibaut palimpsest “Tant ai amors servies longuement”), from the Egerton Chansonnier

The freely-improvised passages that create the metamorphosis between these known tunes are reflections in sound which rely on medieval principles for their formal structure and melodic organization. The rhythmic framework of both the historical melodies and the improvisations derived from them is governed by the metrical rules and characteristics of the medieval lyric, which is the basis of all medieval song outside the world of Gregorian chant.

Monophonic liturgical song, or Gregorian chant, was without a doubt the dominant musical current in the Christianized areas of western Europe. The ninth century brought the rise of the *trope* and the *sequence*. These new forms consisted of newly-composed texts and, in part, newly composed music which was appended to the liturgy. These traditions enjoyed a rich flowering over the course of the middle ages and made no small contribution to secular music. Looking back over the intervening centuries, the forms of *lai*, *planctus*, *stantipes* and *ductia* can be seen as direct descendants of the sequence. The clearest indication of this—or perhaps just the most obvious one—is the double-versicle form with open and closed endings which is common to both the sequence and the *estampie* (as well as the *lai* and the *planctus*). A profound kinship can also be seen in the use of characteristic melodic figures common to all. To search for this kinship is an excellent improvisational task which requires a dedication to step into a kind of pseudo oral tradition. This is what inspired the more or less free parts in *Tibia ex tempore*.

### ***Cantus coronatus, stantipes and ductia***

A high form of medieval monophony with its artistic peak during the thirteenth century is the *conductus*. Johannes de Grocheo, the important lecturer from late thirteenth-century Paris describes it in his treatise *De musica* as a *cantus coronatus*, a crowned song of high worth. He gives two examples, “Ausi com unicorne sui” and “Quant li rosignol joli,” both of which are presented in my new *Tibia ex tempore* version transformed into *stantipedes* exactly according to Grocheo’s descriptions, which will be explained later in these commentaries.

The other *conductus* which I used were the highly melismatic “Sol oritur” and “Fontis in rivulum.” Both pieces exist in identical versions in different sources and are taken from two of the most famous manuscripts containing *conductus* repertoire closely related to Notre Dame

Paris, the Florence manuscript Pluteo 29,1 and Codex Las Huelgas. It is remarkable how widely this monophonic repertoire of *cantus coronatus* was distributed all over Europe during the thirteenth century, nearly always with Paris as the center and focus.

Johannes de Grocheo described two differing kinds of instrumental forms: *ductia* and *stantipes*.<sup>2</sup> According to new analysis of Grocheo's exact descriptions, we would have to correct the titles of the famous eight extant *estampies royales* to *ductiae*. They are in fact dancelike, textless tunes in regular rhythm and in a simple form of double versicles. Grocheo, however, also describes a completely different form of improvisation: the *stantipes*. Unfortunately, this more contemplative improvisational genre in a more complex, differentiated form did not survive as concrete pieces written down in manuscripts from the thirteenth century. According to Grocheo, the *stantipes* had to be performed non rhythmically—or in an “open rhythm,” which could have meant that strict and loose rhythmic patterns may possibly alternate. Such organically occurring treatments of open rhythm are found in orally transmitted modal music traditions from all over the world (for example, in the opening part of a Northern Indian raga, or *alap*, which is rhythmically free and performed without accompaniment of the tabla drums). According to Grocheo's very clear description, the *stantipes* needed to be followed by a Gregorian melisma called *neupma* for which he documented the basic notes in all 8 modes, explicitly to be extended *ad libitum*. He wrote “*possent tamen forte subtiliora et pulchriora fieri*,” “make them more subtle and beautiful,” which I interpret as a concrete invitation to improvise. This program presents three attempts to reconstruct original *stantipedes* by including all information given by Grocheo, especially as regards the complicated, more irregular forms and the freedom of dancelike rhythm.

The third *stantipes* on the CD, “Res Tassini,” is a sounding hypothesis based on the melody of one of the few short tenor tunes called “Chose Tassin” of a *joculator* (jongleur or minstrel) called Tassin, which were used in some polyphonic motet settings in the Codex Montpellier. Grocheo mentions the *stantipes* “Res Tassini” as a famous piece within that genre having the special feature of no less than seven sections, or *puncta*.

I might add here that in my opinion, the rhythmic freedom apart from dancelike regularity which I tried to describe above is a subject for a necessary discourse among scholars and musicians to find a new approach for thirteenth century instrumental music. I would love to share experiences and opinions with my colleagues, especially based on a new reinterpretation of Grocheo. It does not have to mean that all the music in a *stantipes* is non-rhythmic; but rather that it is simply not “dance-like.” Where this leads exactly is hard to say in theory because the terms rhythm and *percussio* are ambiguous, and need to be defined in the concrete practice of music making. The necessary addition of the *neupma* mentioned above is another aspect which I would like to discuss. All of the three *stantipedes* above present Grocheo's *pneumata* in embellished versions as well.

### **Sequence, lai and planctus**

Frankish sequence melodies, dating from the time of Notker, a ninth-century monk of St. Gall, were in use throughout the Middle Ages up to the thirteenth century. They were often written down in the early manuscripts as textless *sequelae*. The exact pitches of these melodies can be determined by consulting later sources with clearer forms of musical notation, which are

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<sup>2</sup> *Stantipes* (pl. *stantipedes*): performed spontaneously and right on the spot.

consistent over the centuries and give us a rather clear image of the tunes. This is the case with the melody “O beata beatorum,” the melodic model of which is a *sequela* of Germany in the eleventh century. The model survives with many different texts and titles, the most famous being the Cologne-based “Gaude felix Agrippina”. For *Tibia ex tempore* I choose the precise notation in the *Utrecht Prosarium* of the thirteenth century. It is highly likely that the *sequelae* were also performed instrumentally, as the melodies often pre-date the texts of the sequences. They are not taken from Gregorian chant; they are perhaps survivors of a pre-Christian, indigenous melodic tradition. In the *ex tempore* versions performed on the flute in this program and as well in nearly all other programs (for example with *Sequentia*), I am principally interested in exploring the evident relationships amongst various early medieval sequences. These relationships, which often can be reduced to a handful of archetypal phrases, point to an orally-transmitted repertoire of archaic “*ur-sequences*” which are reflected upon here in improvised instrumental practice. “*Planctus ante nescia*” has one of these oscillating melodies which build a bridge between the old and the new. Although this *planctus Mariae* is one of the most famous melodies used throughout the whole high Middle Ages, with many different texts and melodic variants, it also features some modal characteristics that it has in common with the earliest *ur-sequences* of Notker.

If we have a song with a clear text under the notes we can decipher the syllables as metric units. We know from the number of tones on one syllable, therefore, whether the song is syllabic, which basically means that one tone corresponds to exactly one syllable. If we have compound neumes on one syllable, this indicates that 2-3 tones are to be sung on one syllable. If there are many tones to be sung on one syllable, we call this group of notes a melisma. There is no direct rule regarding the number of notes needed to distinguish a melisma from a normal compound neume, a ligature; it depends on the context of the neighboring phrases. A melisma means that many notes are attached to a syllable. It changes the style of singing tremendously.

Between the syllabic style and the melismatic style lies a whole range of possibilities for dealing with the relationship between tones and syllables in medieval song and chant. This is important for instrumentalists as well, because when the singers pronounce a new syllable, the instrumentalists need to articulate the beginning of that syllable in the special manner of their instruments. A wind player usually does the articulation with the tongue or with the lips, a string player by plucking, strumming or bowing. If we make an instrumental paraphrase of a song without respecting the syllables of the original song in the instrumental interpretation, there will be the risk of completely missing the right melody. This is important, because in many if not most cases we are not already familiar with the song text. If we do not have the song or chant text to model the clear relation of text syllables to tones, we have a dilemma: what is the metric structure? It is indeed very problematic, and a very important task to resolve this dilemma.

The *Chansonnier du Roi*'s textless pieces, which are called *estampies* but are in fact *ductiae*, easily solved this question through an early form of the Franconian mensural notation from which more or less clear rhythms could be transcribed (a very useful new phenomenon in the thirteenth century, originally developed for polyphonic music of the Notre Dame period). They count as the first compositions in Western music history meant entirely as instrumental pieces. But a lot of my research and of my creative dedication is to approach the earliest medieval forms and of instrumental improvisation and playing *ex tempore* in a context of a reimagined oral tradition, prior to the state of being documented in musical notation. For this reason, my approach omits the famous thirteenth-century instrumental compositions from the

*Chansonnier du Roi*. The only exception is the "1er Estampie Real" which, since it has only been preserved as a short fragment, requires not only musicological "know how" but artistic invention and improvisational inspiration to complete it, making it an interesting component of this project. According to Grocheo's descriptions this fragment also should be clearly regarded as a *ductia*, not as a *stantipes* like all other pieces in the suite of the eight *Estampies Royale*.

For slightly earlier pieces such as "La note Martinet," one has to rely on the text structure of its *contrafactum*, the anonymous song "J'ai prouvé et trouvé," to find the rhythmical and metrical balance of the piece. Instrumentalists rely easily on all the principles of stress and release within the metric patterns of the words in the context of the melody. Needless to say, here a melody is regarded in a more technical sense as a vehicle for resounding words which are transformed into instrumental phrases. The emotional impact of the melody in connection with its text is left out of consideration here. But this is mirrored at least in a part of medieval understanding of the relation of words to music. The phenomena of *contrafacta* hints at a looser relationship, and at an interchangeability of tunes, for certain texts. It is not fixed as an expression laid down in a composition such as a Schubert song. To simplify a bit for the sake of this present essay, one might safely say that emotional expression is much more subject to the concrete musical interpretation, ornamentation, embellishment, or other creative means of changing the expression in a musical performance than to the given composition itself. Of course this picture changes rapidly with the Trecento, and the arising of the earliest sunbeams of the Renaissance at the horizon of music history—but Trecento music is from a far later time than everything in *Tibia ex tempore*.

Further outstanding examples of monophonic music of the thirteenth century are presented in an extraordinary collection of *contrafacta* found inserted in the *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*, a work by the poet Adam de la Bassée from Lille in Northern France. It is an allegorical mystery play based on a long poem by the famous Alanus ab Insulis (Alain de Lille) one generation earlier. In the manuscript we can find some beautiful preexisting melodies with Adam's new text, from all important genres of the thirteenth century music (sequence, hymn, *pastourelle*, *chanson*, *rondeau* and many others). And there are also some peculiar and strange unknown melodies of a striking beauty which are probably autodidactic compositions by Adam himself and which are completely unconventional. This is especially true for his own tune "Modestos blanditiae," which uses strange, unconventional intervals to form a modal melody which sounds different in his assumed autodidactic style from anything else during his time. As it is nearly impossible to perform the huge play in a staged version because of the dozens of roles—it was in fact never meant to be performed, but to be taken as literature—an instrumental version of these borrowed melodies is perhaps not the worst choice to employ with this great music. Some catchy melodies from this rare medieval source form a "suite" for flute solo in extemporized interpretations.

### **Te sanctum dominum: A Mirror of Improvisatory Process**

The last piece of the program is a miracle in itself. "Te sanctum dominum" is one of the mysterious pieces in the middle part of the Egerton *Chansonnier*, in which one finds folios with effaced chansons of trouvères and troubadours which had been superimposed with new Latin texts. This common phenomenon of overwriting a previous version of written content on a manuscript's parchment with a new version is called *palimpsest*. Sometimes only the text has

been erased, and in other cases the whole song, text, and melody. Certainly a monk had tried to save some of the melodies; or perhaps he had intended only to create new space on the parchment for some religious repertoire. This process of effacing and overwriting has led to some very unique Latin contrafacta of trouvère songs, but also some in cases to pieces for which it is impossible to say whether it is now a palimpsest or a contrafactum, because nearly everything had been erased.

“Te sanctum dominum” can be traced back as a *responsorium* text taken from the old testament; but according to my Latin consultant Dr. Heinz Erich Stiene, it is unclear to which medieval office of saints it belonged. The melismatic melody is unknown in the repertoire of the *antiphonarium monasticum*. Very likely it is a unique melodic creation, because there are indications that at the end of the piece some notes of the not-entirely-erased chanson previously notated on that folio were used. The few lines in French indicate that it had been originally the chanson “Tant ai amors servies longuement” by Thibaut de Champagne, one of the great trouvères of Northern France. The traces of the written notation of Thibaut’s chanson have nearly completely disappeared through the process of cleaning the space and creating a palimpsest. At the end, we find some authentic Thibaut material; however, it is not clear how it relates to the new sacred song. Perhaps it remained there by chance (somebody forgot to erase it). Alternately, perhaps the remaining material retained a hidden meaning in context of the song (as in the *Carmina Burana*, where there are examples of Latin songs that end with a strophes excerpted from pre-existing *minnesinger* songs in Middle High German!). Given all these peculiar circumstances, we have to regard “Te sanctum” as an entirely new composition, most likely scribbled down by an anonymous monk tasked with overwriting the secular songs with something more sacred.

This new composition is an excellent example of the very special way to deal creatively with modal invention in more or less casual artistic situations during the thirteenth century in the Picardie, France, where the manuscript originates. The piece is actually a sketch in the literal sense of the word, and it is not likely that it could have been intended for monastic use—there is no monastic context for which it would fit. Even if it is unclear whether the last Thibaut fragments at the end still belong to the new sacred composition, I include them in my flute version, because musically they make complete sense as a kind of coda. This is similar to Adam de la Bassée’s technique of inventing modal movements very different from the usual song repertoire of his time, with a remarkable freedom and in an astonishingly open form to serve the musical needs of his *Ludus super Anticlaudianum*. This process could be seen as a mirror of instrumental spontaneity, an act of trying out and playing around with tones *ad libitum*, closely related to Gregorian chant. Perhaps it shows how free an instrumental improviser at his time might possibly have played, with both respect and disrespect for the Gregorian matrix behind all the musical styles available at his time. It might be a guide to the sonic art of an instrumentally extemporizing *menestrel* at Paris during the time of Johannes de Grocheo.

### ***Epilogue: The Instrument used in Tibia ex tempore***



*The transverse flute was a highly-treasured instrument in the Middle Ages. Of all medieval instruments, the flute, a cylindrical wooden tube with six finger holes, is the most similar to the human voice. Through its intensive tone and sensitivity to slight modulations in breath pressure, it plays the role of mediator between man and nature, and in late antiquity it represents communication with the hereafter. Although the flute of the ancient Greeks, primarily*

*associated with shepherds, was held in low esteem, the instrument, like the lyre, was prized by the Romans for the accompaniment of poetry. Pictures from Byzantium indicate that the transverse flute was a popular instrument at court, from whence it made its way to central Europe, where it remained essentially unaltered until the Renaissance. With the exception of early bone flutes, no transverse flutes from the Middle Ages have been preserved. They were similar in form to Renaissance flutes, but their design was less systematized (as iconographic sources tell us). Their finger holes must have been placed differently in order to accommodate Pythagorean temperament and the requirements of the medieval modes. Norbert Rodenkirchen plays on such a medieval transverse flute--reconstructed and built by Berlin-based flutemaker Neidhart Bousset and modified and optimized in close collaboration. Important iconographic documentation of the medieval forms of transverse flutes are found in the so-called Codex Manesse and in the miniature illustrations from the Cantigas de St. Maria in the Codex El Sabio (Escorial j.b.2). In accordance with its early role as an accompaniment to poetry, the flute is well suited to lyric contemplation; by virtue of its facility with percussive articulation, it is also well suited to express rhythmic ecstasy. The flute is thus in the position to authentically represent two important aspects of medieval music: contemplation and ecstasy.*