ABSTRACT

This work pretends to leave written proof of the analysis previous to the composition in the assumption of rescuing an extinct musical genre and its possible reinterpretation nowadays. It is in this case the Italian madrigal and particularly the one that took part between the second half of the XVIth century and the first years of the XVIIth in a period that later was named as mannerism. This genre will be studied from an anthropological and analytical/ theoretical point of view to get into an analysis of other authors that before the one writing these lines undertook a similar task and finally end with some general compositive guidelines that in the very next future will lead into the composition of a "new madrigal".

Este trabajo pretende dejar constancia escrita del análisis previo a la composición en el supuesto del rescate de un género musical extinto y su posible reinterpretación en la actualidad. Se trata en este caso del madrigal italiano y en particular el que tuvo lugar entre la segunda mitad del siglo XVI y los primeros años del siglo XVII en un perdiodo que fue denominado más tarde como manierista. Se estudiará dicho género desde un punto de vista antropológico y analítico/teórico para después pasar a analizar ejemplos de otros autores que antes que el que escribe estas líneas emprendieron tarea similar y finalmente terminar con unas directrices generales compositivas que en un futuro próximo desembocarán en la compsición de un "nuevo madrigal".

Aquest treball prenten deixar constància escrita de la anàlisi prèvia a la composició en el suposat del rescat de un gènere musical extint y la seva possible reinterpretació en la actualitat. Es trata en aquest cas del madrigal italià I en aprticular del que va tenir lloc entre la segona meitat del segle XVI y els primers anys del segle XVII en un període que va ser denominat més tard com a manierista. S´estudiarà el mencionat gènere des de un punt de vista antropològic y analític/teòric per després pasar a analitzar exemples d´altres autors que abans que el que escriu aquestes línies van emprendre una tasca simiar I finalment terminar amb unes directrius generals compositives que en un futur proper desembocaràn en la composició d´un "nou madrigal".

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PROLOGUE

I remember the first time I listened to a madrigal, it was Monteverdi´s *Ohimè dove il mio ben* from his seventh book. From the very first moment that music embraced me and I began researching as much music of that genre as I could, from Verdelot´s simplicity to Gesualdo´s expressionism. At some point I decided that one day I would write “contemporary” madrigals and that moment has finally arrived.

The aim of this work is to present the problems that arise when a composer tries to recover a musical genre from the past and reinterpreting it from an current point of view. In my case, the retrospective glance will be focused in the mannerism period represented fundamentally by figures like Carlo Gesualdo, Luca Marenizio, luzzasco Luzzaschi and Claudio Monteverdi. One may ask why that style and why those composers. In every musical choice there is, of course, a huge amount of personal taste and that would be my first justification, but there is also the impression that a bridge within past and present can easily be traced reinterpreting a genre which served to the composers most powerful desires of experimentation.

The mannerist madrigal is a very interesting genre from a current point of view, astonishingly modern beyond Prince of Venosa´s chromatic experiments. Matters like gesture, contrast, structural flexibility, microtonality and use of timbre connect perfectly with the way of thinking our concert music nowadays. Since the beginning of the baroque era until the beginning of the twentieth century there is a cut in time, a period in which the music was little by little homogenized and left some of what in my opinion are the most interesting aspects of earlier music. Timbre and intonation were the most significant parameters to be flattened, but also tempi flexibility. Less powerful but richer timbrically instruments disappeared in war of volume that led us to the big concert halls and the register-homogeneous voices of the *bel canto*.

Mine is not the first case of interest in that particular period´s music nor Renaissance in general. Thus, I will comment and analyse some contemporary -though from different generations-composers´ approaches presenting their similarities and differences towards their relation with the past.

This work does not pretend to be a musicological study -since it is not the field of the author of these lines- nor a *posteriori* glance over one´s composition. It is a look in real time during the creation process, the composer´s personal and subjective look of his way of facing and proceeding in his work with the problems, doubts and reflections that may appear during it. Written and musical works walk in this case hand in hand, one cannot be understood without the other. Some of the musical sketches and ideas that came up when writing this essay are attached as additional documentation.

I would like to thank Christophe Havel, Valentinna Colonna, Amaia Miranda, Daniel Apodaka, Joan Grimalt, Rubén López Cano and specialy Rolf Baecker for his help in this work.

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE MADRIGAL

1.1. HISTORY

Before linking the late Italian madrigal with the present time, a brief summary about its history may be convenient.

1.1.1. Origins

Among the musical genres of the sixteenth century there is no one more closely related to Italy than the madrigal[1], though ironically it was first developed by franco-flemish composers as Philippe Verdelot (1475-1552), Jacques Arcadelt (1507-1568) and Adrian Willaert (1490-1562) between 1520 and 1550.

There is not a clear origin for the Italian madrigal. Most studies suggest it was a genre that took form in Florence specially and began as a choral popular song for few voices in some way related to the late Italian *frottola*[2] and the French *chanson*[3]. The sentimental mood of these last ones was very close to the early madrigals and the music of Jaques Arcadelt proves this fact. It is with Willaert that the madrigal incorporates the polyhonic structure of the motets as a composition for four (occasionally five) voices of equal importance.

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[1] During the fourteenth century in Italy, the madrigal was a poetic and musical form. There is no musical connection between this musical genre and the one that took place in the same country during the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth but there is a certain link if we focus on the texts used. This first madrigal passed out of fashion around 1420, a century before the term was revived.

[2] The *frottola* was the the predominant type of Italian song of the late fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth. Normally written for three or four voices with melody in the upper one it avoids contrapuntal complexity and wide ranges. Instrumental accompaniment may be used. The most famous composers where Bartolomeo Tromboncino (1470-1535) and Marcetto Cara (1470-1525). *Cf.* HARRÁN, Don. "Frottola". *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* Second edition. London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, vol. 9, p. 294-300

[3] The *chanson* mentioned here is the one referred to Claudin de Sermisy (1490-1562). Some characteristic features are: 1) homophonic texture with the melody on the *superius*; 2) Balanced phrases; 3) Simple and clear structure with repetition at the beginning or the end; 4) Style balanced between popular and courtly For more information about the subject, cf. ATLAS, Allan W. *La música del Renacimiento. La música en la Europa occidental, 1400-1600.* Madrid: Akal, 2002. ISBN 978-84-460-1208-5

1.1.2. Development

Though the madrigal is often related with very educated and complex poetry like Francesco Petrarca´s (1304-1374) at the beginning that was not the case and some simple texts where used. But even those poems were not slavishly limited to the old Italian fixed forms and that liberty was used by the composers to get, little by little, freer structures. Petrarca´s fashion arrived around the middle of the sixteenth century thanks to the work of the most influential writer in Italy during those days: Pietro Bembo (1470-1547).

Bembo was a poet and literary theorist. In his most important work, *Prose della volgar lingua*, finished in 1512 and published in Venice in 1525, Bembo defended Italian as a literary language as relevant as Latin. He developed a theory from which the words themselves could express *gravità* (dignity) or *piacevolezza* (sweetness) depending on their vocals, consonants, rhythm, rime and context. Words could have a visceral effect. Bembo´s ideas where very well known in the intellectual Venetian circles frequented by Willaert. Probably the new style developed by this composer in his *Musica nova* was an attempt to transfer Bembo´s theories to the musical language of the madrigal.

1.1.3. Mannerism

During its evolution, the madrigal became more and more related to the text, in some cases even a merely servant[4]. It was, in fact, the genre that motivated Monteverdi´s notion of *Seconda Prattica* (Second Practice) in which the word should be the master of the harmony. Word painting become the typical resource of the madrigal from the final period of the sixteenth century on, and since then lots of composers used it. Though some of the symbols disappeared, others like *pianto*[5] (weep) and *sospiro*[6] (sigh) remained and became part of educated musicians´ vocabulary, some kind of Western music cliché. The structure of madrigals became freer and hectic, the contrast almost schizophrenic, the harmony more complex, and with Gesualdo´s last books the genre arrived to some kind of expressionism three centuries before Schoenberg´s rise. In a period of time (the Renaissance) were consciousness of the individual was being forged, Gesualdo, better that his predecessors, reflects an attitude towards art that anticipates romantic behaviour.

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[4] The relation between music and text unchained certain criticism. Tasso finished in 1587 a treatise in which he criticized the way the madrigal, in it´s obsession of depict words, lost the general structure of the poem and fell in parody. Not to speak about Camerata Fiorentina discussions.

[5] Probably de most common one, we can find it from the sixteenth century until nowadays. The term refers to a descending minor second, normally chromatic, and imitates the action of crying. Cf. Grimalt, Joan. *Música i sentits. Introducció a la significació musical.* Barcelona: Dux, 2014. ISBN 978-84-942868-3-4, p. 52

[6] A sigh was (and still normally is) represented with an expressive pause. Ibíd., p. 55

To make a comparison with their beloved Ancient Greek culture[7], Mannerism may be seen as the Hellenic part of the Renaissance era, *quasi* grotesque in some way, a period of strange alchemy tests and search but also a fruitful period of time from which one still nowadays can take ideas and inspiration for the very next future.

The madrigal became the most popular form of secular polyphony in the second half of the 16th century, serving as a model for madrigals and madrigal-like compositions in languages other than Italian throughout Europe. It set the pace for stylistic developments that culminated in the Baroque period, particularly those involving the expressive relationship between text and music, and must be regarded as the most important genre of the late Renaissance.

1.2. MADRIGALISMS

Rhetorical figures, madrigalisms and word painting are similar concepts usually used as equivalents though, of course, they are not. Word painting is a general concept, valid for all era whereas madrigalism refers to a specific genre. Rhetorical figures were those formulas used in the Oratory that helped the speaker to obtain a specific effect on the audience, to attract their attention and persuade them; this have also been done in music and it was of huge importance during the whole baroque era and commonly used afterwards until avant-garde arrived.[8]

Full knowledge of the madrigal requires knowing which kind of madrigal was used and how. Nevertheless, in this brief introduction and for the main goal of this project it will be enough to know the most common and famous ones.

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[7] In fact, the undervaluing of both Hellenism and Mannerism are constructions from the nineteenth century.

[8] For further information about the subject, cf. LÓPEZ CANO Rubén. *Música y retórica en el barroco.* Barcelona: Amalgama, 2012. ISBN 0-520-06980-3

1.2.1. Madrigalisms - a classification

In historical texts we can usually find a simple opposition: *hypotyposis* and *pathopoiesis*. *Hypotyposis* was, in its origins, a rhetorical figure used to show the listener an imaginary object as vivid as possible. On the other hand, *pathopoiesis* is the expression of passions[9], and the term is related to the effect caused on the listener -not to a musical nor technical aspect-.

An important thing to take into account is that during the Renaissance, there was not an established vocabulary that could award unambiguously a musical resource to an affection. Solutions where idiosyncratic and had validity only for that particular piece or composer. Nevertheless, some of them had continuity and became part of the future educated composer´s traditional vocabulary.

1.3. RHETORICAL FIGURES

About this and other topics related to musical poetics in the Renaissance music there is a very interesting book written in 1606 by the theorist Joachim Burmeister (1564-1629) called Musical Poetics[10]. Though the analysis of each rhetorical figure would exceed the purpose of this work It could be at least interesting to list all of them and invite the interested reader to consult the chapter dedicated to this topic in Burmeister´s book: Musical Ornaments and Figures.

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[9] This is what the Germanic musicology from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries will call the "Affect theory" whereby an "affect" is a musical rationalization of an emotional or psychological reaction to a stimulus.

[10] cf. Burmeister, Joachim. *Muiscal poetics.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993 (^{1}Rostock, 1606). ISBN 0-300-05110-7

Joachim Burmeister divides the ornaments in two: one pertaining to harmony, the other to melody. Thus there are sixteen species of ornaments pertaining to harmony, which are the following:

1. *Fuga realis*: All the voices imitate freely -not necessary using the same intervals- a certain subject [*affectio*].
2. *Metalepsis*: What we will define as a double fugue.
3. *Hypallage*. A fugue in contrary motion.
4. *Apocope*[11]: It is a fugue not completed in all voices, cut off for some reason.
5. *Noëma*[12]: A harmonic affection or period where the voices are combined in equal notes so that "when introduced at the right time, it sweetly affects and wondrously soother the ears, or indeed the heart"[13]
6. Analepsis[14]: The repetition of a harmonic passage. Hence, it is the iteration of a n*oëma.*
7. *Mimesis*[15]: Occurs when some voices that are closest to one another introduce a *noëma* while the others are silent, then those voices that were silent imitate it in a lower or higher range.
8. *Anadiplosis*[16]: It is the harmonic repetition, through *mimesis*, of what was presented once -it easy to understand it visualizing a literary example-.
9. *Symblema*[17]: beginning with a consonant harmony, then some of the voices remain static on the same note as other move.
10. *Syncopa or syneresis*[18]: It is the opposite of *symblema.* A suspension makes the dissonance in this case.
11. *Pleonasmus*[19]: It is the abundant use of harmony when reaching a cadence.
12. *Auxesis*[20]: Occurs when harmony, made up of consonant chords is grows on a text that is repeated several times.

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[11] *Apocope* means in rhetoric the cutting off of a letter in the end of a word.

[12] *Noëma* means "perception" or "thought".

[13] cf. BURMEISTER, Joachim. *Muiscal poetics.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993 (^{1}Rostock, 1606). p. 165 ISBN 0-300-05110-7

[14] *Analepsis* is the repetition of a word placed at the beginning and at the end of a verse. "a taking again or back".

[15] *Mimesis* means "imitation" and it referred to the imitation of other persons´ characteristics.

[16] *Anadiplosis* means the duplication of a word occurring at the end of a preceding verse and the beginning of the following.

[17] The term means "a joining".

[18] *Syncope* means "a cutting up" and Syneresis means "a join together".

[19] *Pleonasmus* means "excess" -by a superfluity of words-. It something to avoid in rhetoric unless emphasis wants to be made.

[20] *Auxesis* is the use of a word that exceeds the magnitude of the thing itself. For example, crime instead of error.

13. *Pathopeia*[21]: The use of semitones not contained in the mode nor the genus of the piece to make the affections arise.
14. *Hypotyposis*[22]: The sense of the text or even word are depicted.
15. *Aposiopesis*[23]: A sudden silence in all voices at a specific given sign.
16. *Anaploke*[24]: It normally occurs with eight-voice choirs or two choirs, were one choir replicates the harmony done by the other.

and six species of ornaments pertaining the melody, which are:

1. *Parembole*[25]: When at the beginning of a piece, two or more voices carry the subject of a piece while another one moves freely filling the spaces of the others.
2. *Palillogia*[26]: The iteration of the same melodic passage at the same pitch level that takes place in the same voice. This repetition involves all the pitches or the initial ones.
3. *Climax*[27]: Repeating pitch patterns on gradations of pitch levels. We usually call this progression.
4. *Parrhesia*[28]: Adding a dissonance being equal to one half of the *tactus*. Very similar to a passing note.
5. *Hyperbole*[29]: Pushing a melody beyond its mode upper limit.
6. *Hypobole*[30]*:* Pushing a melody beyond its mode lower limit.

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[21] *Pathopeia* means "the excitement of the passions".

[22] *Hypotyposis* means "sketch" or "outline" and it is done when an event is described in such way that it seems present.

[23] *Aposiopesis* means a "sudden silence".

[24] *Anapokle* is the repetition of a word to give it a special meaning, like for example "The consul acted as a consul".

[25] *Parembole* is when something is inserted in the middle of a sentence for the sake of explanation.

[26] *Palillogia* is when the same word is repeated continuously in the same phrase.

[27] *Klimax* means "a ladder". It occurs when one word leads to another so that the next word is always repeated. For example: The loss of principles lead into corruption and corruption into ruin.

[28] *Parrhesia* occurs when in the presence of someone that we should respect we assume a freer personality.

[29] *Hyperbole* means "overshooting".

[30] *Hypobole* means "putting under".

Four figures belong to both types:

1. *Congeries*[31]: Pilling together thirds over perfect fourths allowed to move in similar motion.
2. *Homostichaonta*[32]: The well-known *fauxbourdon*.
3. *Anaphora*[33]: Repeating pitch patterns in several but not all the voices.
4. *Fuga imaginaria*: What musicians usually understand for the term fuge.

Although this catalogue may be too vast for the objective of this project, the idea of comparing musical language and spoken (or written one) is very interesting and effective, and could be incorporated to my madrigals reinterpreting it and making an even more strong (or explicit) link between music and rhetoric.

1.4. SEX IN THE MADRIGAL

This chapter is based on the lecture of Laura Macy´s article "Speaking of sex: Metaphor and performance in the Italian madrigal"[34].

Although Macy´s statements may seem somehow radical, we have to keep in mind that how religious, sexual and other private spheres were mixed since the Late Middle Ages. The relation between sex and the Italian madrigal is reasonable and the are not few examples of this. The musicologist Susan McClary supports this thesis as well in his book "Modal Subjectivities"[35].

It is important to know that during the fifteenth century, both in poetry and medicine the spirit lied in the heart, and this spirit was exchanged by lovers during sex and more specifically during coital orgasm. Thus, the relation between death and orgasm is easy to understand, both of them are link by their shared emission of spirit and this is surely the reason for the metaphoric use of the word death to mean sexual climax.

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[31] *Congeries* is achived in rhetoric by gathering together lots of ideas.

[32] *Homostichaonta* comes from *homostichao*, which means "walk together with".

[33] *Anaphora* is the use of the same word at the beginning of several verses.

[34] Cf. Macy, Laura (1996). "Speaking of sex: Metaphor and performance in the Italian madrigal". The journal of musicology, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 1-34

[35] McClary, Susan. *Modal subjectivities. Self-fashioning in the italian madrigal.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004. ISBN 0-520-23493-6

We can find a clear example of this use in the madrigal “*Il bianco e dolce cigno”,* made famous by Arcadelt´s setting:

IL BIANCO E DOLCE CIGNO

Text: Unknown / Music: Jacques Arcadelt (1507-1568)

Il bianco e dolce cigno	The white and gentle swan
cantando more, ed io	Singing dies, and I
piagendo giungo al fin del viver mio.	weeping arrive at the end of my life.
Strana e diversa sorte,	Strange and unusual fate,
ch´ei more sconsolato,	since he dies disconsolate,
ed io moro beato.	and I die blessed.
Morte che nel morire	Death that in the dying
m´empie di gioia tutto e di desire;	I am filled with all joy and desire;
se nem morir altro dolor non sento,	If in dying I feel no other pain
di mille morti il di sarei contento.	I would be content to die a thousand deaths a day.[36]

According to Macy, the informed reader of the Cinquecento should have known this poem was not about swans but about sex.

By the mid-1530´s, Italy -particularly the northern cities of Mantua and Ferrara- was blossoming country where social and political prowess laid in the skill of intimacy. Elegant conversation skills were really appreciated and men and woman could discuss on topics ranging from fine arts to politics. Verbal agility was more important even that vast knowledge and the art of repartee was the essence of social grace. In this context, Laura Macy suggests that the singing of madrigals could have helped in the development of such skills, as the are plenty of puns, oximorons, metaphors... Their texts were a resource of conceits and clever phrases to be memorized and used in future conversations.

Returning to “*Il bianco e dolce cigno”*, sexual innuendo was a common feature of the early madrigals[37] and it is very interesting how the authors dealt with sex without being rude or impolite. “*Il bianco e dolce cigno”* is written in first person, involving the singers in the sexual confession so as occur in “I cry when I die”. The epigrammatic close adds some humour to the scene, contributing to release sexual tension and marking an end in which whatever transgression

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36 Translated by Laura Macy.

37 The was also more explicit literature, even pornographic, but this out of this author motivations.

has taken place it is contained.

If, according to Laura Macy´s investigation, there is a relation between sex and the madrigal, this may be an interesting matter that could be kept into account when writing new ones nowadays.

1.5. TUNING

Tuning during the Renaissance is a very complex subject that exceeds what can be treated in this essay. There is a lot of information and in many cases oriented towards specialists[38]. Despite of that, for anyone interested in Renaissance music this is something important to keep into account. During the second half of the fifteen century and the first half of the seventeenth there were lots of discussions about how instruments had to be tuned. As have already been mentioned, then man of the Renaissance was very worried and aware about the subtle differences between different tuning systems. In a period of time were the musical system was developing from modality towards tonality this kaleidoscope of tiny distances crystallised in a colourful palette of intervals and tonalities not being homogenized yet by the equal tempered tuning system. Some contemporary music has taken this richness, though sometimes not from this period of our music history but other cultures´ scales like Indian, Arabian[39], etc.

1.6. PERFORMANCE, FORM AND HARMONY

These three subjects have been put together in the same chapter as in the madrigal are strongly related. The text could also have been incorporated but because of its importance in this work will be isolated.

It is important to read what Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643) says in the Preface to the first volume of *toccate*, as he was pupil of the organist and famous madrigalist Luzzasco Luzzaschi. It is reproduced here:

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[38] For further information there is an interesting publication from Mark Lyndley. LYNDLEY Mark. *Lutes, viols and temperaments.* Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1984. This book is plenty of information about the subject and can be a first step before entering directly to the Renaissance theorists themselves.

[39] The Swiss composer Klaus Huber has written some interesting works using Arabian scales, like in his *"Lamentationes de fine vicesmi saeculi".*

> "Knowing by experience how well appreciated is that manner of playing with expressive passages and varied divisions, I have thought it right to show my aptitude and my zeal to succeed in it by publishing these small results of my labour, with the explanations hereunder: but I declare that I bow before the merits of others, and that I respect the value of every one. And now, let the devoted care with which I have presented these principles to the amiable and studious reader be accepted.
>
> Iº Firstly, that kind of style must not be subject to time. We see the same thing done in **modern madrigals**[40], which, notwithstanding their difficulties, are rendered easier to sing, thanks to the variations of the time, which is beaten no slowly, no quickly, and even held in the air, according to the expression of the music, or the sense of the words. [...]
>
> 4º On the last note of the shakes, or passages by skips or degrees, you must pause, even if this note is a quaver or a semiquaver, or unlike the following note, for such a stop avoids confusion between one phrase and another.
>
> 5º The cadences, though written rapid, should be played very sustained, and as you get nearer the end of the passage or cadence, you should retard the time more and more".[41]

Although points number four and five refer to instrumental music -particularly the one played with harpsichord in toccata style- what is important is that both instrumental and vocal music were very flexible in their performance, or at least the freer genres where no "dancing" rules had to be followed. One can easily imagine the fluctuations of the tempi according to the brightness or darkness of the text, accelerating where fast figures and scales occurred and slowing down to ensure tuning in the chromatic passages or even "stopping" time in the suspensions. In that sense, one the most extreme interpretations that can be heard are those by *Il Complesso Barocco*, conducted by Alan Curtis.

Thus, performance in Renaissance music -particularly in madrigals- depended on how the music was written and in the case of the Italian genre music was almost completely dependent of text, as not only the foreground but the form itself of the composition corresponded to "a particular reading of its text and its taylor-made to dramatize its meanings. (…) The structural features of a modal piece function[ed] among dimensions of the piece concerned most expressly with articulating idiosyncratic meanings”.[42]

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[40] The text has been bold and underlined by the author of this work.

[41] Frescobaldi, Girolamo. *Toccate e partite d´intavolatura di cimbalo.* Rome (1615)

It is important to remark that, although the harmony of madrigals did not differ essentialy from the one used in the motets, this experimental genre not dependent on religion -thus, freerer- with a strong manifestation of the composer´s self-consciousness and based on texts full of passions like longing, abjection, disbelief, anguish, resignation, etc, opened the door to experimentation in a way no other genre could. Although we normally speak about harmony, we should never forget that this music was not vertical but horizontal, and one must always keep this in mind as some of the odd or “inexplicable” passages find their answer in this linear conception of the music. It was a music based on modes[43] and triads that looked backwards and re-inhabited some of the old but prestigious structures of the past, but a also a music where eclecticism was common, taking elements from popular music in an attitude closely related to that of nowadays youngest composers.

The strong connection of elements, its reliance, was thus a very important and distinctive characteristic of the madrigals that can be very interesting to incorporate in the composition of a new one.

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[42] Cf. McClary, Susan. *Modal subjectivities. Self-fashioning in the italian madrigal.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004. ISBN 0-520-23493-6

[43] The are lots of books about modal composition in Renaissance style and analytical treatises. For the author, these more technical aspect is not relevant for this essay though a good knowledge of its essence might be necessary in order to afford the task of reinterpreting music from this period.

2. ANALYSIS OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY ITALIAN MADRIGALS

Two representative[44] but quite different madrigals have been selected, Luzzaschi´s setting for Arlotti´s Aura ch´errando intorno and Monteverdi´s one for Rinuccini´s Sfogava con le stelle. Though, as every text is different so is the music written and that every composer had its own peculiarities these two analyses will lead into some general aspects from which the composer could extract important guidelines to his/her composition. These analyses pay attention to the form and the relation of music and text, not to the modal/harmonic complexities of counterpoint that would lead to a strictly theoretical work which is not the intention of this project but to understand more general aspects and motivations, essencial traces to be reinterpreted nowadays.

2.1. AURA CH´ERRANDO INTORNO

Text: Ridolfo Arlotti (¿?-1613) / Music: Luzzasco Luzzaschi (1545-1607)

Aura ch´errando intorno,	O breeze, you who wander about
di fronda in fronda vai, di fiore in fiore,	From frond to frond, from flower to flower
porta veloce a l´idol mio crudele	carry quickly to my cruel idol
le mie triste querele;	my sad laments;
Digli che quasi cigno a l´ultim´ore	tell him that, like a swan in its last hours,
misera piango e moro	wretched I weep and die,
e piagendo e morendo anco l´adoro.	and, both in weeping and in dying, still I adore him.[45]

Arlotti was one the courtier poets at the Ferrarese court. In this poem he uses the *topoi* of unrequited love and the breeze as the absent lover´s messenger but this time the text is spoken by a woman, something not very common. This time the swan appearance has nothing to do with sex but probably Plato´s dialogue "Fedon", as will be mentioned afterwards.

Attending to the rime the poem can be divided in A [BCCB] -enclosed rime- [DD] -couplet-. The poem alternates seven-syllable and eleven-syllable verses forming one quartet and one tercet in this way:

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[44] Again, just remark that this project focuses on the Manneristic repertoire. One could ask why not have chosen madrigals from Marenzio, Willaert or the controversial Gesualdo. This has nothing to do with any preference from the author but with didactic purposes, having found in Luzzaschi´s and Monteverdi´s music and Arlotti´s and Rinuccini´s texts clearly represented the most important features of the genre. The same approximation could be used when analising other madrigals.

[45] Translated by Anthony Newcomb.

- Seven-syllable
- Eleven-syllable
- Eleven-syllable
- Seven-syllable
- Eleven-syllable
- Seven-syllable
- Eleven-syllable

The ambient is bucolic, Arlotti speaks about love using nature as a background and sometimes even metaphorically as happens with the swan. One can find influences from the *Dolce stil nuovo*[46] and some of their followers like Pretrarca. The first part of the poem (quartet) may be interpreted as a prayer to the air, a request for being the lovers messenger, and the air is an important element in platonic love. The second part (tercet) may be seen as the message that has to be carried, the declaration of a love not returned.

Taking a deeper analysis of the text we could pay attention at every single verse[47]:

- 1st verse: The poet embodies the air, he is the messenger to whom the lover begs. Recalling an alliteration, Rinuccini insists on the sound "r".
- 2nd verse: The repetition of the "r" continues as an important feature in a quasi dancing verse which portraits the dynamic movement of the air.
- 3rd verse: The Idol loved (a man) enters in main position, treated as a god with human traces (he is "cruel").
- 4th verse: The adjective "sad" appears in contrast to the strong "cruel". It is a sad complaint by her, the victim of his beloved killer (metaphorically speaking), to whom she has surrendered.

---

[46] Italian for "sweet new style", is the name given to an important literary movement occurred in Italy in the thirteenth century. It was influenced by the Sicilian school and Tuscan poetry. The main theme is love and the texts are refined, plenty of metaphors, symbols and double meanings. The use of oxymoron -a figure of speech that juxtaposes elements that appear to be contradictory- is also very common. Female beauty is adored normally with a deep instrospection from the poet. The artists of the *stil nuovo* are called *stilnuovisti*

[47] The author would like to thank to Valentina Colonna for her helpful and valuable remarks in this chapter.

- 5th verse: Call to the *topos* of the swan´s death.[48]
- 6th and 7th verse: The author uses four different literary figures, wich are: poliptoton[49] (“piango e moro” / “piagendo e morendo”), homeoteleuton[50] (-endo / -endo), Polysindeton[51] (e, e, e) and oxymoron[52]. This last one was extensively used by Petrarca and other authors of the same style and we can find at least one in almost every madrigal. “Moro” rhymes with “adoro”, creating this oxymoron of death and love which is the is fundamental in western literature. Here it is the poet who sings his most beautiful song just before dying - as does the swan in legend.

2.2. SFOGAVA CON LE STELLE

Text: Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621) / Music: Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Sfogava con le stelle	A lovesick man poured forth
Un infermo d’amore	To the stars
Sotto notturno ciel il suo dolore	in the night-time sky his grief,
E dicea fisso in loro:	and said, his eyes fixed on them:
“O imagini belle	“Oh, beautiful images
Dell’idol mio ch’adoro!	of my idol, whom I adore
Sì com’a me mostrate,	just as you show me
Mentre così splendete,	while you glisten thus,
La sua rara beltate,	her rare beauty,
Così mostraste a lei	so show her
I vivi ardori miei;	my burning ardor;
la fareste col vostr’aure sembiante	with your golden semblance you might make her kind,
Pietosa, sì come me fate amante”.	just as you make me lovelorn”.[53]

---

[48] Probably taken from Plato´s dialogue “Fedon”. There is a fragment in it where the philosopher speaks about the swan´s death, which before dying sings more and more beautiful knowing they will soon meet the god of whom there are servants. Platón. *Diálogos 3. Fedón. Banquete. Fedro.* Madrid: Gredos, 1992 (84c-85c) ISBN 9788424910365

[49] Literary figure consisting in the use of several forms of the same word by changing its inflexion morphemes.

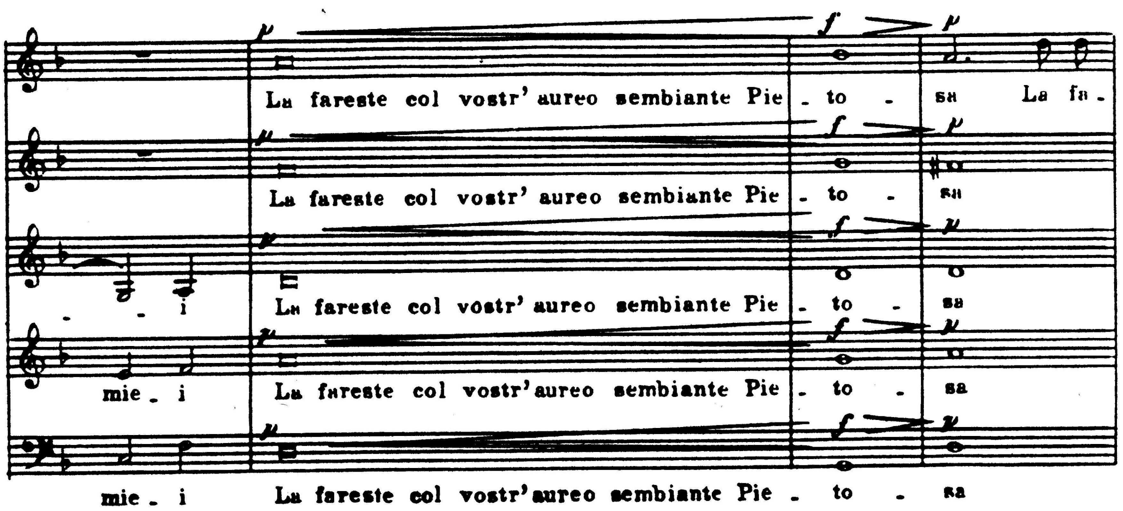
[50] Homeoteleuton refers to the repetition of terminations in words close together.

[51] Polysindeton refers to the use of several conjunctions in close succession, especially where some might be omitted. It is a stylistic scheme used to achieve a variety of effects: it can increase the rhythm of prose, speed or slow its pace, convey solemnity or even ecstasy and childlike exuberance.

[52] A figure of speech that juxtaposes elements that appear to be contradictory.

[53] Translated by the author.

At first glance Rinuccini´s poem may not seem an epigram but it if we exclude the four initial verses which are in fact a dramatic introduction. It is a clear clause after verse number eleven and a second, less important one between verses seven to nine and their answer in ten to eleven. Monteverdi takes benefit of this fact and makes a tonal ellipsis to F major[54] -with three cadences in a very short period of time- moving away from the main D minor that rules the rest of the work. In measure twelve, the composer turns to the initial D minor and does it by getting back to the homophonic texture with which he opened the piece. This resource had the aim of dividing the initial opening from the next scene written in first-person but this time renders with a rapid declamation the harshy *enjambemet* of Rinuccini´s poem: "la fareste col vostr´aure sembiante / pietosa"[55].



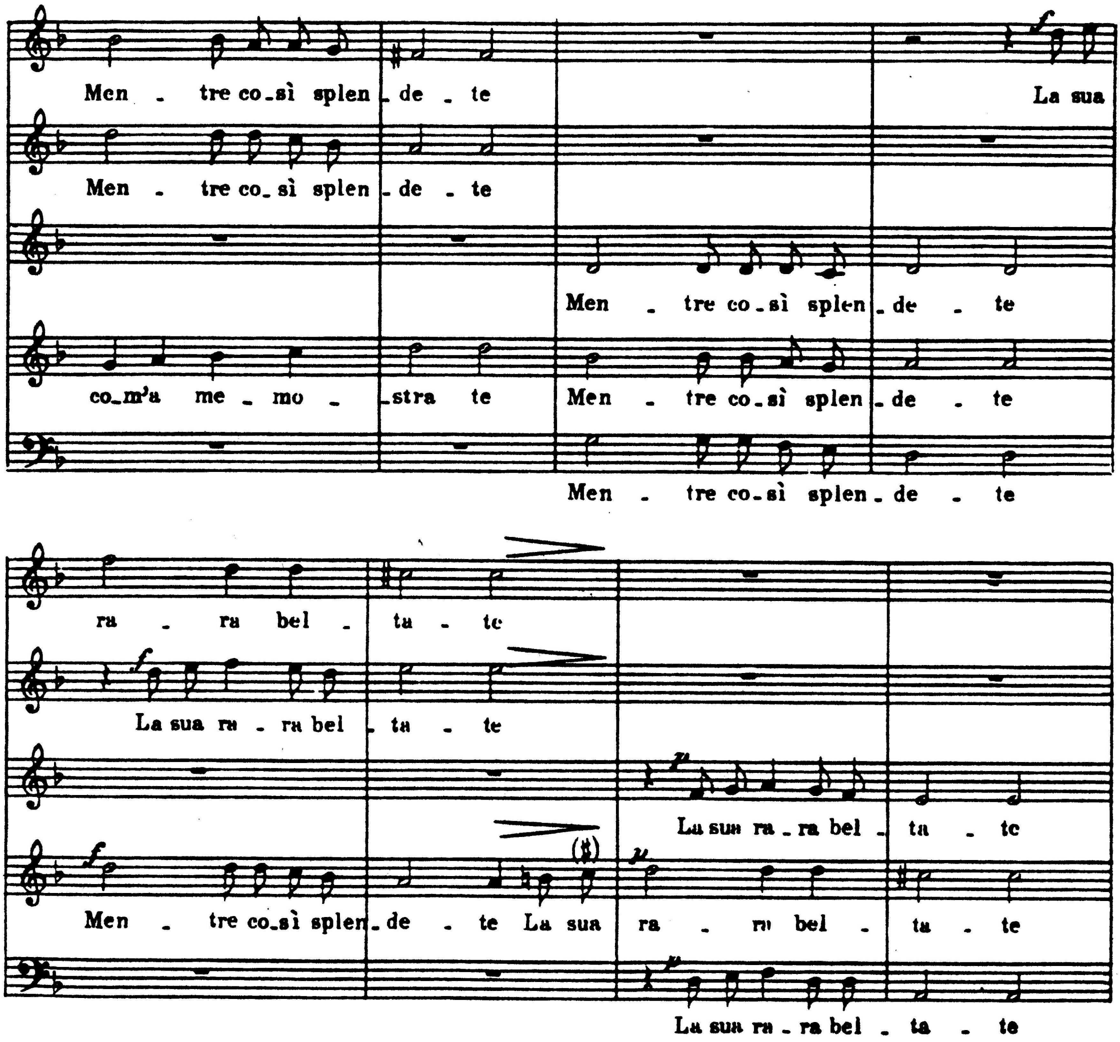
La fareste col vostr' aureo sembiante Pie - to - sa La fa -
La fareste col vostr' aureo sembiante Pie - to - sa
- i La fareste col vostr' aureo sembiante Pie - to - sa
mie - i La fareste col vostr'aureo sembiante Pie - to - sa
mie - i La fareste col vostr'aureo sembiante Pie - to - sa

In order to relieve the plodding of verses seven to nine, Monteverdi repeats as bass lines verses seven, eight and ten supporting the two higher voices which as a duo sing the next verses.

---

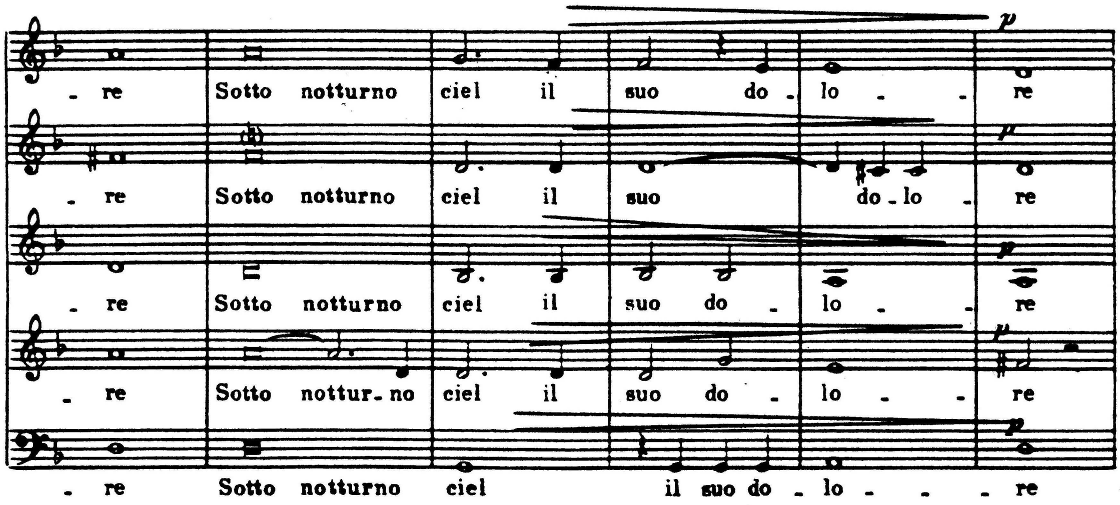
[54] It is assumed that the music in those days was modal, not tonal, and that speaking of Major and minor is not very accurate but it gives a sufficient approximation to the purpose of this analysis.

[55] MONTEVERDI, Claudio (2012). *Il qvuarto libro de madrigali a cinqvue voci di Clavdio Montervede.* [printed music]. Vienna: Universal ([1]Venice: 1615)

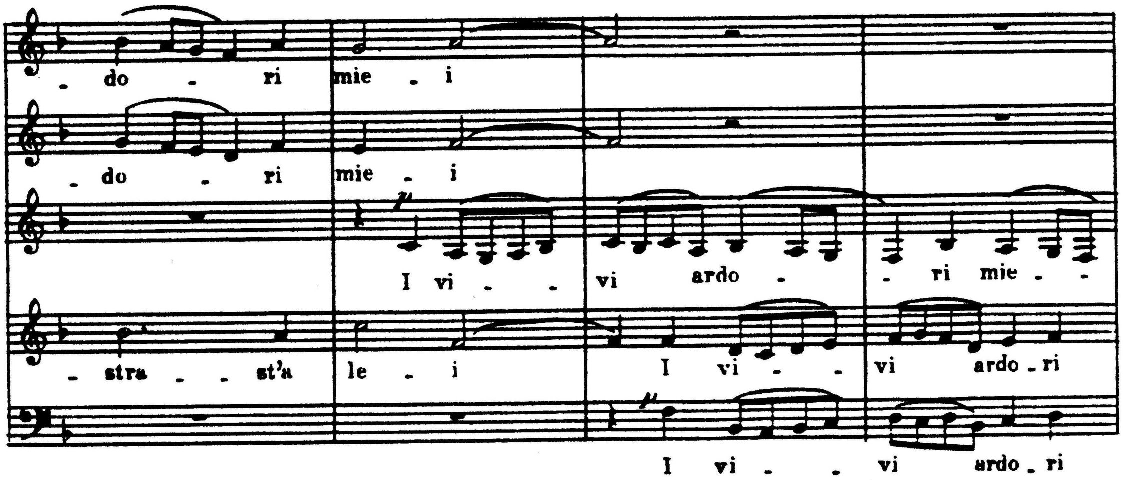

Men - tre co-sì splen - de - te La sua
Men - tre co- sì splen - de - te
Men - tre co - sì splen - de - te
co-m'a me - mo - -stra te Men - tre co-sì splen - de - te
Men - tre co-sì splen - de - te
ra - ra bel - ta - te
La sua ra - ra bel - ta - te
La sua ra - ra bel - ta - te
Men - tre co-sì splen - de - te La sua ra - ra bel - ta - te
La sua ra - ra bel - ta - te
f
(♯)

The madrigalists´ degree of subtleness when underlining or emphasizing certain parts of the text reaches limits that can only be undestood by experts and analysing all the madrigalisms and musical renders exceeds the boundaries of this work, but there are some important traces, easily to be heard, that may be commented:

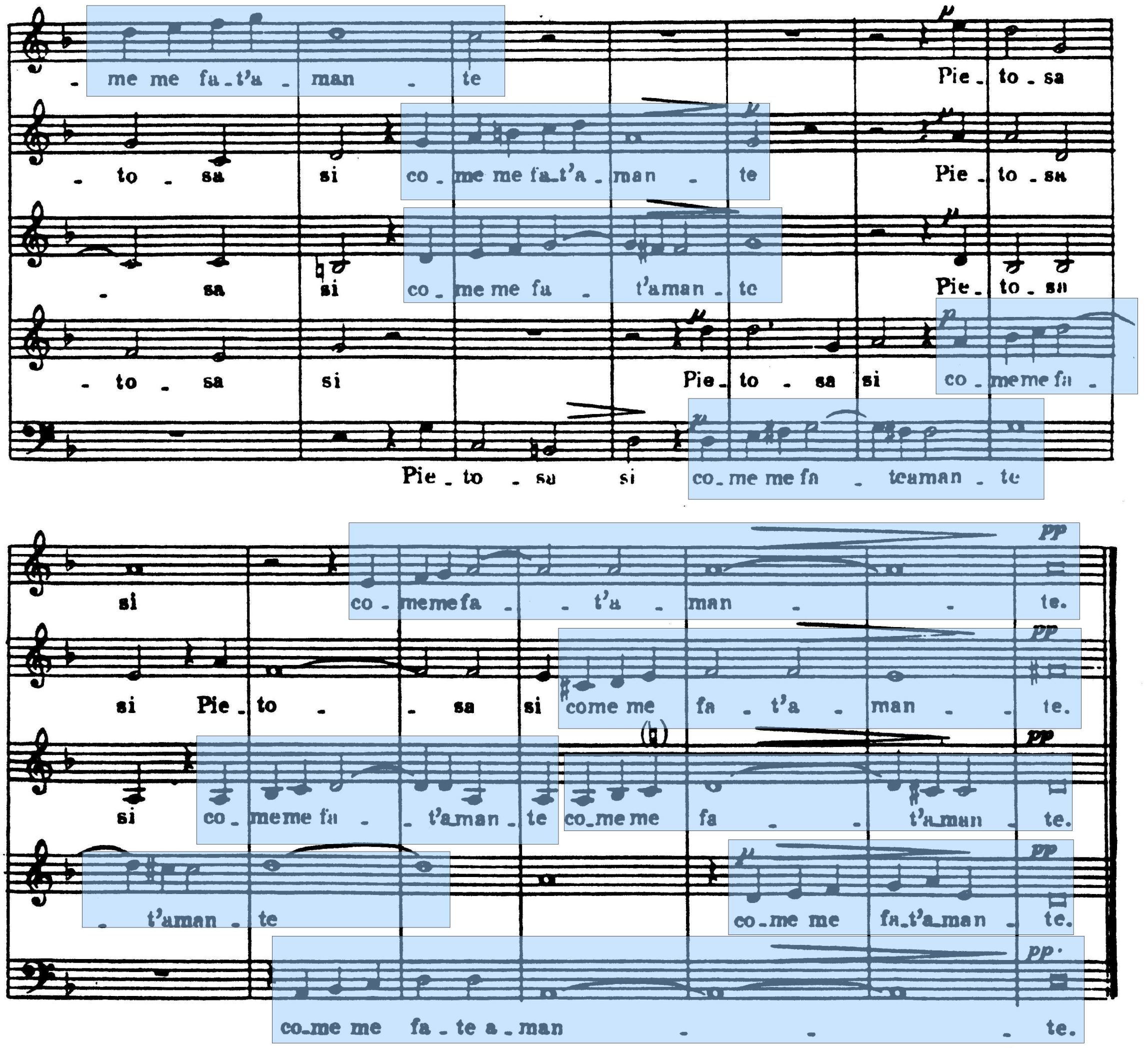
- In measure six Monteverdi changes the D major chord into a D minor and begins a dark descend -the soprano falls stepwise a perfect fifth from A to D- that highights the feeling of grief under the dark sky together with the first dissonance of the piece, a minor seventh between soprano and bass (measures 7 and8). The cadence in D major does not cancel this effect, in fact this was a common way of closing a musical phrase or fragment.


p
- re Sotto notturno ciel il suo do - lo - - re
- re Sotto notturno ciel il suo do - lo - re
- re Sotto notturno ciel il suo do - lo - - re
- re Sotto nottur - no ciel il suo do - lo - - re
- re Sotto notturno ciel il suo do - lo - - - re

– Verses five and six, with their nice character speaking about the beloved´s beauty have the fastest note values of the whole piece -including a dotted figure, almost dancing- and cadences two times in major mode (C and D respectively). Also the ardor of the lover (verse eleven) has a fast figuration although much more restrained.


- do - ri mie - i
- do - ri mie - i
I vi - - vi ardo - - ri mie - -
- stra - - st'a le - i I vi - - vi ardo - ri
I vi - - vi ardo - ri

– The Italian composer underlines the last words of the text: “come me fate amante” by means of a new motif that unfolds in imitation through all the five voices. Monteverdi makes sure he uses more and harsher dissonances in passages where their logical structure is unquestionable.


me me fa _ t'a _ man _ te Pie _ to _ sa
_ to _ sa si co _ me me fa _ t'a _ man _ te Pie _ to _ sa
_ sa si co _ me me fa _ t'aman _ te Pie _ to _ sa
_ to _ sa si Pie _ to _ sa si co _ me me fa _
Pie _ to _ sa si co _ me me fa _ teaman _ te
si co _ memefa _ _ t'a _ man _ _ te.
si Pie _ to _ _ sa si come me fa _ t'a _ man _ _ te.
si co _ meme fa _ _ t'aman _ te co _ me me fa _ _ t'a man _ te.
_ t'aman _ te co _ me me fa _ t'a _ man _ te.
co _ me me fa _ te a _ man _ _ _ te.
pp
pp
(♮)
pp
pp
pp
p

3. ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY WORKS

There are not a few number of composers that have written madrigals during the last fifty years and with very different approaches -Henry Pousseur (1929-2009), Philippe Fénelon (* 1952), Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008), Peter Eötvös (* 1944), etc- It will be impossible to look through all of them so a selection must be done. I have chosen four composers from different generations, all of them with a particular strong relation with ancient music. These are: Salvatore Sciarrino (* 1947), Klaus Huber (* 1924), José María Sánchez-Verdú (* 1968) and Joan Magrané (* 1988). The first three are composers that influenced my work in some way and the last one is a very young composer that was educated in my current music academy -I found interesting to see the vision of of someone related to my composition circle and see if our points of view could have, or not, common traces-.

3.1. SALVATORE SCIARRNO - 12 MADRIGALI (2007)

The Italian composer is well known for dealing in a very characteristic way with tradition. His music is based on timbre, gesture and repetition. Focused on the sound itself and normally moving through very soft dynamics, the musical objects take a primary role. Regarding vocal music, the *messa di voce*[56] technique is strongly associated to Sciarrino´s music.

Salvatore Sciarrino is not only a composer but also a theorist and he has written a lot of the way he understands his music. In the score of *12 madrigali* one can read a two page introduction to his way of conceiving vocal music. For him, vocal music has had little prominence in contemporary music. He wants to recover voice and build/invent a new vocal style searching in the infinite possibilities of the language. Sciarrino is interested in stimulating the listening by the use of tiny elements that attract its attention and present certain periodicity, irregular and suspended, that arise the illusion of a vital ambience (Sciarrino, 2008: [3]). Truly, the musical discourse of the Italian composer recalls nature. There is a wish of "breaking the screen that separates the work of art from life (…) a reduction of everything superfluous thanks to a game of stasis, shadows and light".

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[56] A technique used in *bel canto* which consist in singing a note with very soft dynamic, then gradually lead it to a strong one and finally release it to a very soft dynamic again.

For Sciarrino, in theatre there is no zooming in but the psychological, “dialogue and no dialogues exasperated by pauses, falls in vacuum the question without echo. Occasionally we ask ourselves if those words were ever truly pronounced. Relentless, the repetition of the question becomes unsustainable and when the answer arrives it turns abrupt and unexpected” (Sciarrino, 2008: [4]).

Returning to the voice, his pieces are born from the possibilities of the “natural voice”. Sciarrino takes what he thinks is the essence of some eastern cultures´ singing, applying it to our western culture and making it sound unfamiliar by giving it a new vocabulary. It is not a mere copy of those cultures´ vocal techniques. In *12 Madrigali,* the are two types of voice used: the lyrical singing and the recitation. For the former one two techniques are used, which are the messa di voce[57] and the “sliding of sound”[58]; for the latter, fast microtonal slides of the words which induces to a non tempered impression typical from spoken language.

His madrigals are not a historical recover though they are not in opposition to a historical point of view. The texts selected by Sciarrino for this piece are based on six haiku by the Japanese poet Matsuo Bashô translated into Italian. No harmony occurs, just monody the intervals of which are geometrically generated and related based on their recognizable identity. Concise music to concise poetry.

QUANTE ISOLE!

Text: Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) / Music: Salvatore Sciarrino (1947)*

Quante isole! In frantumi lo specchio del mare	How many islands! Shattered the mirror of the sea[59]

12 madrigali is a choral work for four male singer and three to four female voices, as the alto and mezzo parts can be sung by the same singer. For the texts, Sciarrino took six haiku from the Japanese writer Matsuo Basho and translated into Italian. This is not the first time that Sciarrino works with Japanese haiku, as he also did in his *Amore e psiche* (1971-1972) and *Aka Aka* (1968).

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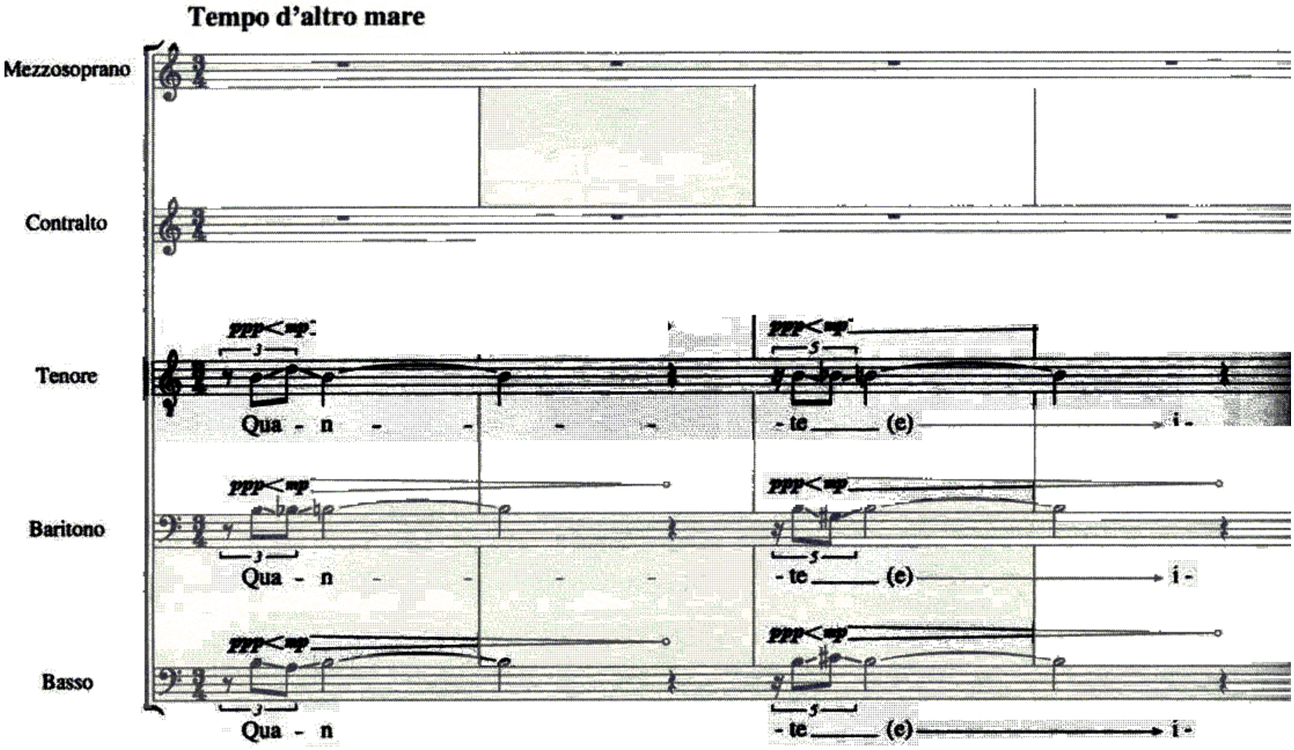
[57] The composer compares this well known technique already described with some articulations done by birds. Again, we can see his predilection for nature sounds/discourse.

[58] For some reason, Sciarrino avoids using the term *glissando.*

[59] Translated by the author.

The large-scale form of the work is determined by the fact that each text is set twice (two times six pieces) in what Sciarrino defines as an “unfaithful mirror”[60]. Numbers one and seven, as related pairs, have many things in common, but only number seven will be analysed.

Written for five voices (mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone and bass)[61], most of the important traces of this movement have already been commented when quoting or paraphrasing Sciarrino´s introductory notes. It is clear that the work in general but particularly this movement is not about harmony -neither counterpoint- And that is interesting as he, at least in this musical parameter, departs far away from what one could expect when writing a madrigal. It is, anyway, a relation with the past, a relation based in negation that fits particularly well with the concise and still motionless haiku. The Italian composer concentrates his discourse in gesture, contrast and little/fast departures from a pole.



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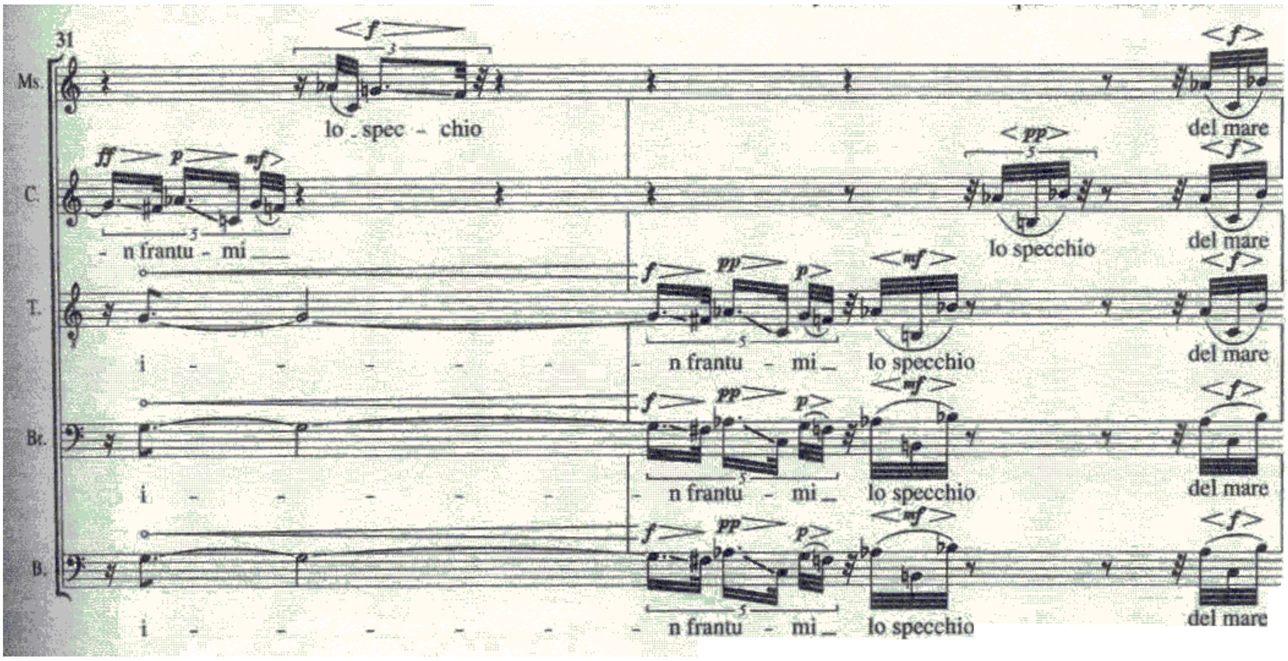
[60] Each pair of movements is related to each other, but this relation is not mirrored exactly, and that is why Sciarrino defines it as an “unfaithful mirror”. This idea could be also analysed but it is not of prime importance for this chapter, which in the case of Sciarrino wants to focus in his use of the voice and how he treats choral writing.

[61] Sciarrino does not use the higher voices, which gives this movement a darker colour.

The style is very “Sciarrinian” and the gestures already known to anyone familiar with his musical language. This “Quante isole!” is plenty of long *messa di voce* lines finished buy a rapid “shaky” sweep, lines that never create an harmony, although in some moments dyads can be heard and have in this still and clean situation a very powerful -and I would say dramatic- role. Eight notes (B / B flat, E, F, F sharp, G, A and C sharp) are used in this lines having B, B flat and F much more appearances than the others, which contributes to the still atmosphere of the movement. The *glissandi* reminds the famous *lamento* figure, even if it is not clear Sciarrino wanted to make this association or if it is just another of his gestures -which in fact uses a lot throughout his catalogue- Fragmets of this “shakes” are scattered here and there throughout the entire movement, normally sang in octaves, contrasting with the static lines. Finally, the score is clearly divided in two parts: male and female, sharing roles in alternation.



3.2. JOSÉ MARÍA SÁNCHEZ VERDÚ - SCRIPTVRA ANTIQVA (2012)

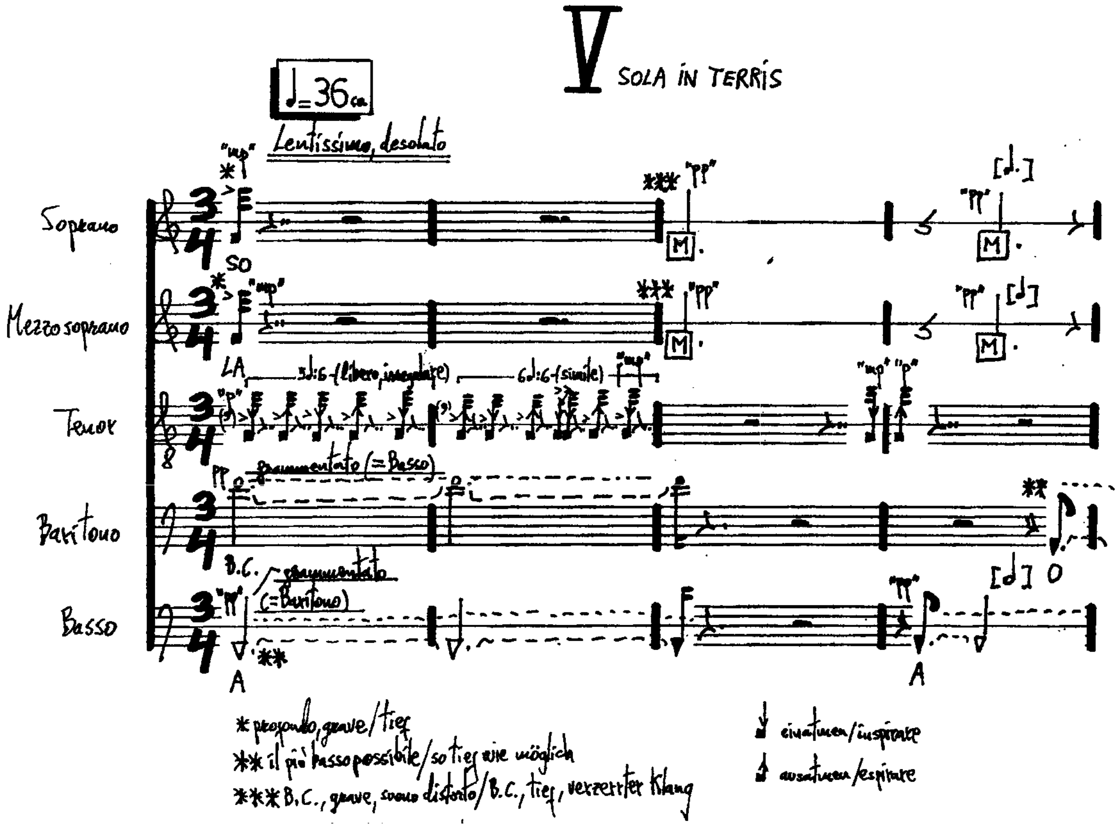
Sánchez Verdú is a Spanish composer very interested in Renaissance music and some of his works have been inspired by or even based in such. SCRIPTVRA ANTIQVA (2010 – 2012) was commissioned by the NEUE VOCALSOLISTEN STUTTGART and consists of seven movements for five singers: soprano, mezzo, tenor, baritone and bass. On the contrary to the *Madrigali* by Sciarrino, a very homogeneous work where all the madrigals are closely related to each other, Verdú´s work is more heterogeneous, like seven studies of different vocal textures and techniques. The reason may be the texts used, of very varied stylistic characters though all of them speaking about a whole life with its twists and turns of fate. I will focus on the fifth one. Here is the text, as the others taken from Latin transcriptions found on antique tombstones:

SOLA IN TERRIS

Text: Unkown / Music: José María Sánchez Verdú (1968)*

Sola in terris omnibus	Everywhere she has alone
uno eodemque in die vitam adepta functaquest.	achieved and perfected life in one and same way[62].

Verdú disintegrates the lyrics into individual syllables, vowels and consonants, so that the text is not comprehensible any more. Sometimes a whole word is fragmented and its syllables[63] sung at once, as in the very first beginning of this movement[64].


V SOLA IN TERRIS
♩= 36 ca.
Lentissimo, desolato
Soprano
Mezzosoprano
Tenor
Baritono
Basso
"mp"
"pp"
"p"
SO
LA
A
O
M
5:6 (libero, irregolare)
6:6 (simile)
granumentato (= Basso)
B.C. granumentato (= Baritono)
[♩.]
[♩]
* profondo, grave / tief
** il più basso possibile / so tief wie möglich
*** B.C., grave, suono distorto / B.C., tief, verzerrter Klang
einatmen / inspirare
ausatmen / espirare

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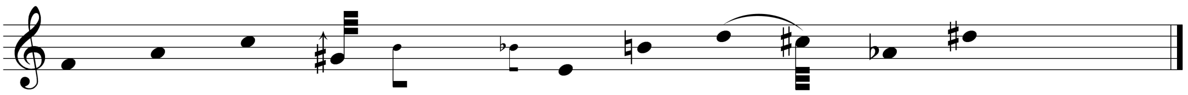
[62] Translated by the author.

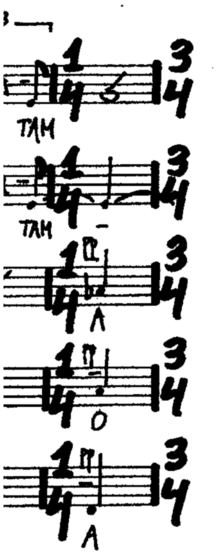
[63] I have also used this technique in a recent work for classical guitar and electronics: *"Tiempo que corre sin respiro".*

[64] Sánchez-Verdú, José María (2012). *Scriptvura Antiqva.* By kind permission of the author.

In my opinion, the work of Sánchez-Verdú -or at least the part of it that I already know- has a strong influence of Sciarrino´s music both in the use of both timbre and gesture. SCRIPTVRA ANTIQVA is not an exception. The harmony is very simple, few pitches are used and no melodies appear.

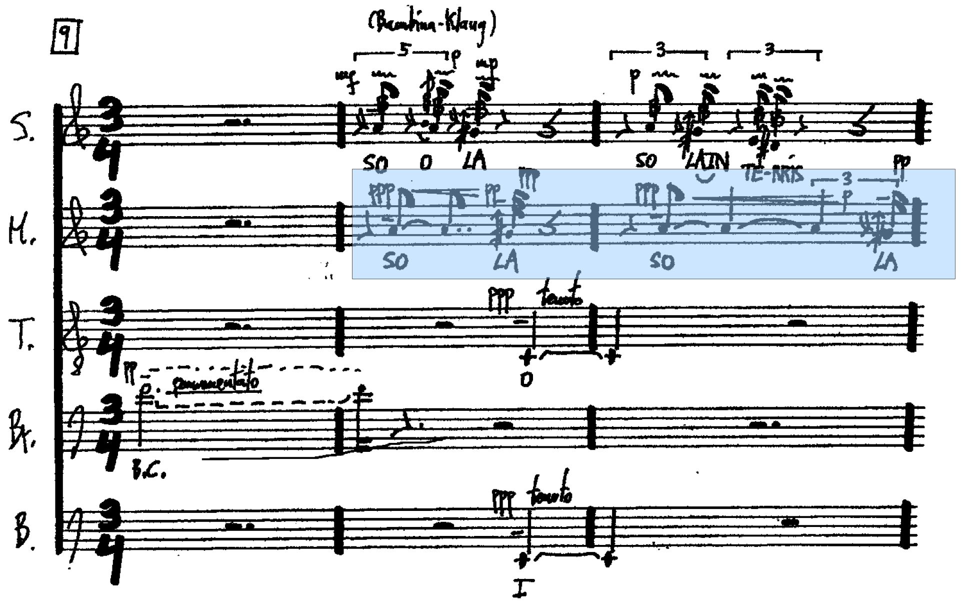
- Pitches used in order of appearance: F, A, C, G sharp quarter tone up -very short value after a *lamento*-, B and B flat -as a grace notes-, E, B, D, C sharp -very short value after a *lamento*-, A flat, D sharp -very short value after a *lamento*-. One could say this work has F as a modal centre.





- Harmony: It is not an harmonic piece though you can hear a very clear F minor/major seventh chord at measure eighteen. In fact, this is in my opinion a very important moment, as four of the five voices enter at the same time with clear harmony and no vocal effects but paradoxically no important word is underlined, just vowels A and O.

- Gesture: The most important gesture of this brief movement is what I have called a *lamento:* The chromatic -sometimes even microtonal descending *glissando* normally asociated to the word *sola.* The tempo mark *lentissimo*, *desolato* could suggest someone´s lament or weep.



– Timbre: It is of great importance in the whole piece but specially in this movement. Breath sounds -both inhaled and exhaled- extremely low frequencies and sometimes even distorted/guttural are combined with standard pitched sounds.

To sum up, this is a very clear, simple piece of music with few but effectively used resources that creates a very particular atmosphere which defines some of the recent work of the author.

3.3. JOAN MAGRANÉ – MADRIGAL (MUSIK MIT GESUALDO) (2012)

Joan Magrané is a young Spanish composer who recently finished a Bachelor degree at ESMUC and has been awarded with several prizes being the most important one the Reina Sofía award. I wanted to include the vision off the past of a very young composer and Joan´s fascination for ancient music/poetry and particularly renaissance and baroque music made me take the decision of analysing his first string quartet, which is in fact based on music by Carlo Gesualdo and Tomás Luís de Victoria (1548-1611).

This work was intended to be played by the Quartet Gerhard though in the end it was premièred by Quatour Diotima at Royaumont´s Foundation abbey. This is the text (in french) that Joan wrote for the programme notes:

> *"Madrigal (Musik mit Gesualdo)* se compose de trois mouvements plus un petit fragment entre le deuxième et le troisième mouvements, *Sphinx* (à la manière de Schumann). Le première et troisième mouvements sont formés à partir d'un travail presque cellulaire sur deux pièces de Carlo Gesualdo (1566-1613): *Io parto* et *Moro, e mentre sospiro* (dans le dernier mouvement apparaît aussi une brève citation du madrigal *Moro lasso al mio duolo*, qui est l'unique citation textuelle de musique originale du prince de Venosa). Le deuxième mouvement est une interruption brusque du discours général de la pièce. Il est basé sur le motet de Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611) *O magnum mysterium* et crée ainsi un dialogue entre les deux polyphonistes, près d'un palimpseste structurelle. Auparavant fluide et contrapuntiste, la musique se transforme en un flux rythmique et horizontal, presque un "perpetuum mobile", commencant à partir de l'ombre pour atteindre un point culminant exalté et lumineux".[65]

In *Madrigal* the author uses counterpoint, madrigalisms and some elements related to baroque´s doctrine of affections as main elements in his composition. They are not only in the foreground but also in its roots and foundations. The work has a tripartite form (Gesualdo/Victoria/Gesualdo), and this structure takes place also in each part dedicated to prince of Venosa with the following proportions: 2:4:2 and 1:3:1. The middle part, the one dedicated to Victoria, is a turning point because of its timbre and structure -this time a binary one based on the golden ratio-. There is also a brief connection between the first and second part. It is important to remark -even if one may make some sort of criticism to it- the traditional approach of the author at least in the background level, as Magrané not only divides the work in movements but also uses symmetry and golden ratio as organizers.

Contrapuntal texture is very important in both movements dedicated to Gesualdo. These are formed by the disposition of four different elements and some variations of them, as if were the four different voices of a madrigal or a motet:

[65] By kind permission of the author. "Madrigal (Musik mit Gesualdo) consists of three movements as well as a little Fragment between the second and the third, Sphinx (like Schumann). The first and the third movements are formed from an almost cellular work in two pieces of Carlo Gesualdo (1566-1613): "Io parto y Moro" and "mentre sospiro" -in the last movement appears briefly quoted the madrigal "lasso al mio duolo", which is the only exact quote from the music of the Prince of Venosa). The second movement is an abrupt interruption of the general discourse. It is based on Tomás Luis de Victoria´s (1548-1611) motet "O magnum mysterium" and creates a dialogue between both polyphonists which is near of being a estructural palimpsest. Previously fluid and contrapunctal, the music transforms into a horizontal rhythmic flux, almost a "*perpetuum mobile*", starting from darkness and reaching a heated and gleaming climax".

- **A** – A note with a little microtonal *glissando* refering the *lamento* (Doppler effect)-
- **A´** – A sustained note.
- **C´´** – Two sustained notes (homophony)
- **B** – Oscillation (also trill and *bariolage*)
- **C** – A note with *crescendo* letting the string vibrate.
- **D** – A sustained note with *crescendo* with timbral and pitch distortion at the very end. This element is only used in the transitional zone between the first and second part.

Here is the **A** element in what the author marks as “*espressivo* **A**[66]”:

These elements are scattered through the first and third movements creating an evolving counterpoint without any ornamentation. Here is an analysis of this elements on the third movement:

A – Blue

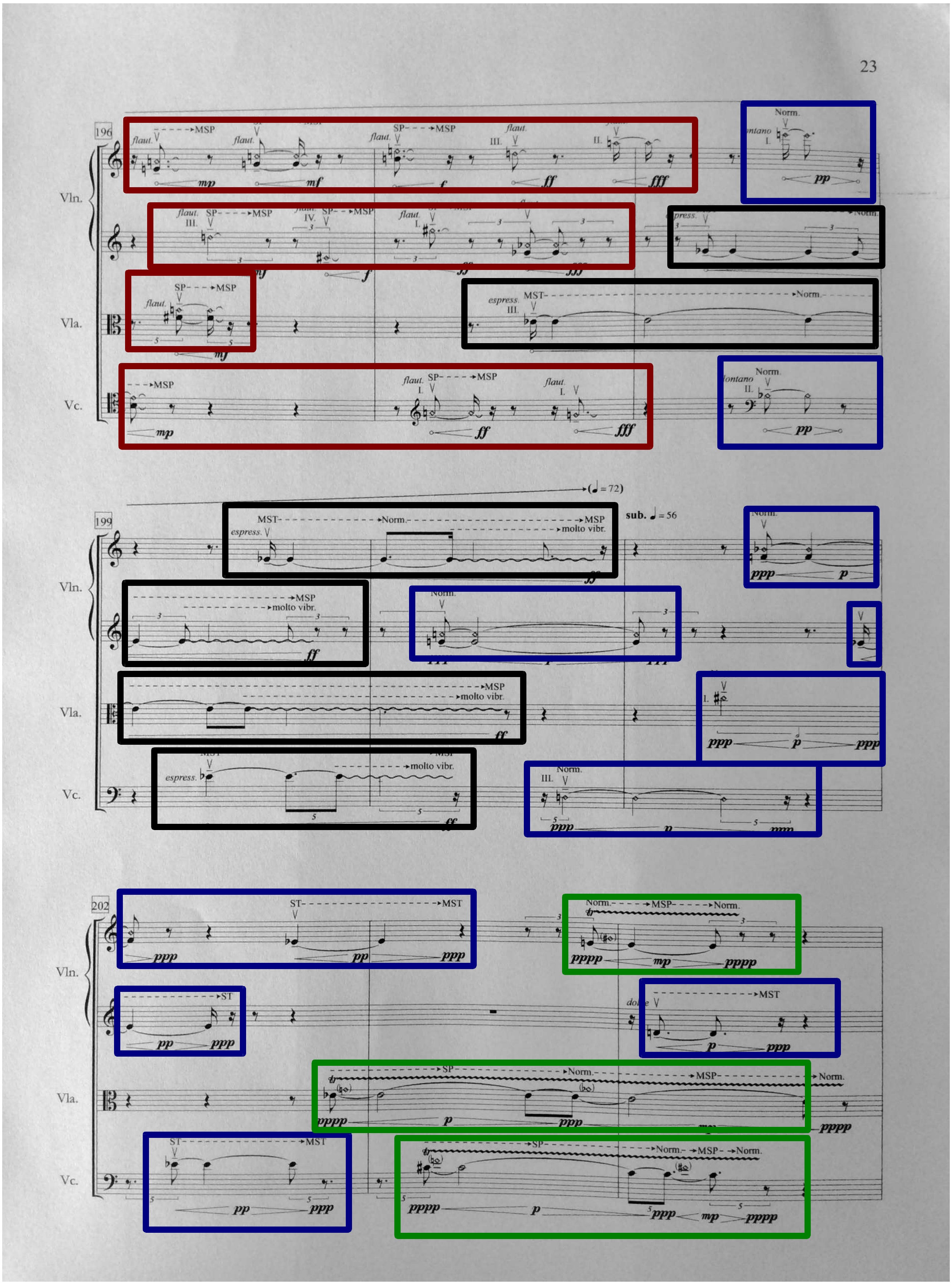
B – Green

C – Red

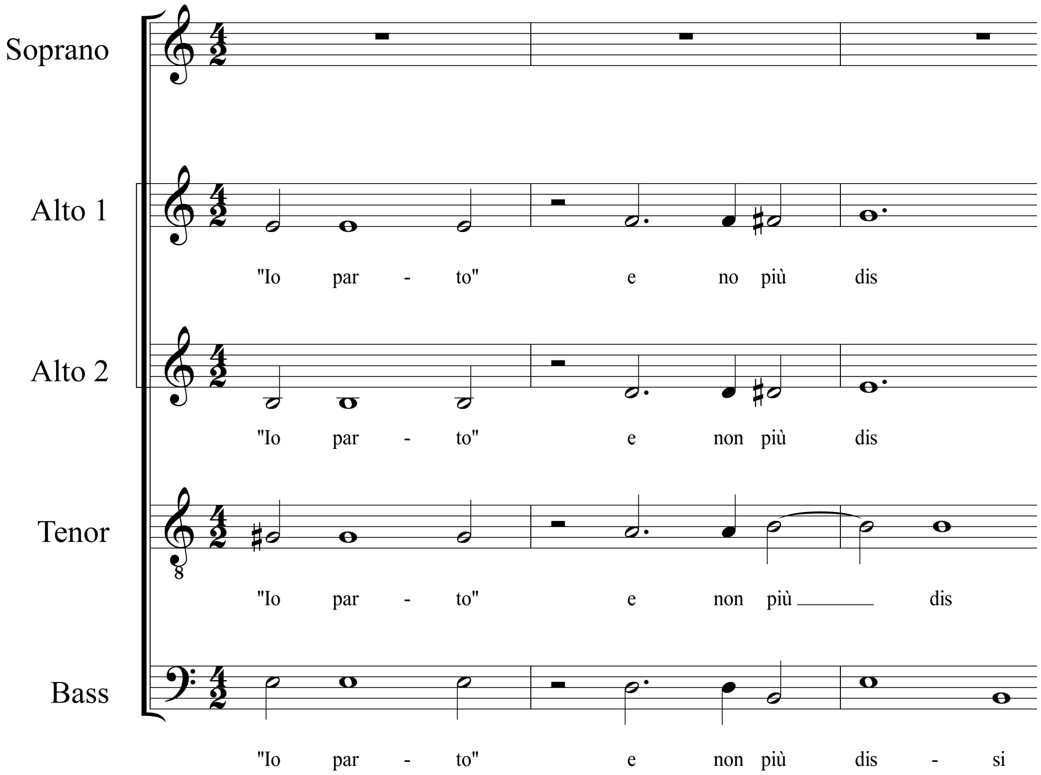
A *espressivo* – Black

---

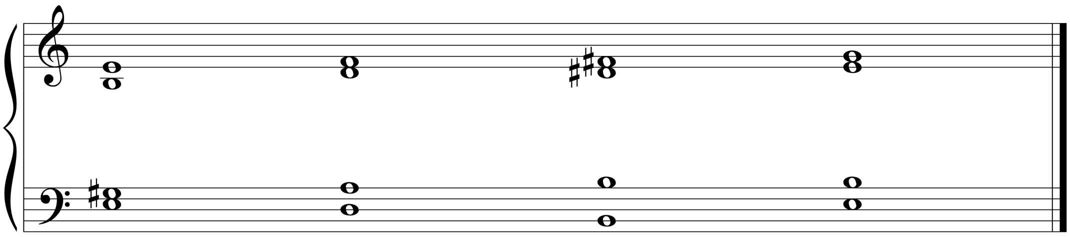
[66] All the scores used in this chapter have been kindly provided by Joan Magrané.


23
196
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
flaut.
SP
MSP
MST
Norm.
lontano
espress.
mp
mf
f
ff
fff
pp
(♩ = 72)
sub. ♩ = 56
199
molto vibr.
ppp
p
202
ST
dolce
pppp

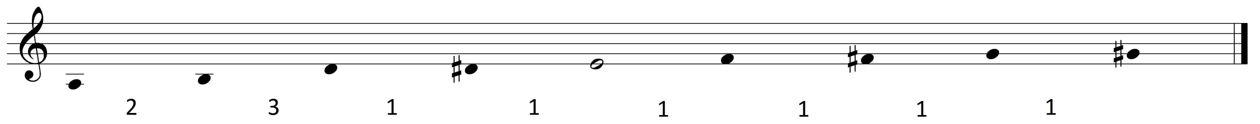
Gesualdo´s famous madrigal *"Io parto"* is the basis of the intervalic and harmonic content of the third movement. Using the first notes of the madrigal and taking E as a central note Magrané begins what he calls a depart (*parto*) where the intervals obtained -one tone, one and a half and six semitones- begin a sort of journey.


Soprano
Alto 1
"Io par - to" e no più dis
Alto 2
"Io par - to" e non più dis
Tenor
"Io par - to" e non più dis
Bass
"Io par - to" e non più dis - si

Harmonic reduction of the fragment above:



The interval content taking E as central and after corresponding octave changes is organized as follows:



What Magrané defines as a journey:

2 3 1 1 1 1 1 1

3 1 1 1 1 1 1 2

1 1 1 1 1 1 2 3

1 1 1 1 1 2 3 1

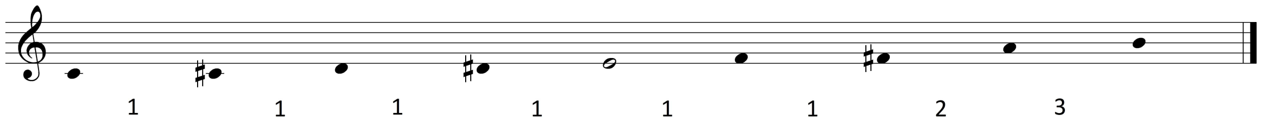
1 1 1 1 2 3 1 1

1 1 1 2 3 1 1 1

1 1 2 3 1 1 1 1

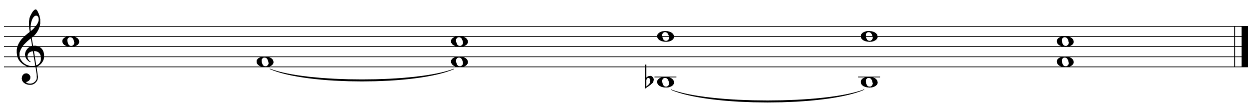
1 2 3 1 1 1 1 1

The inversion of the original is also used at the end of the movement, just before the link with the second one:

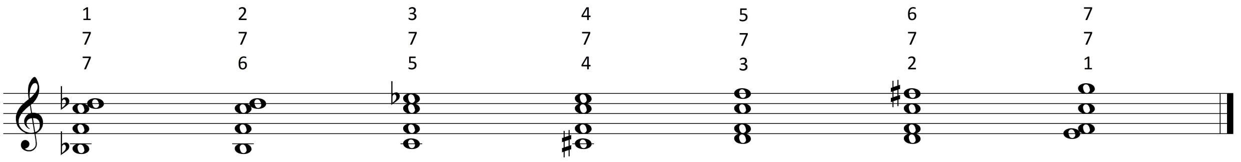


The third movement is based on Gesualdo´s *“Moro, e mentre sospiro”* using the same principle described for “*Io parto”*.

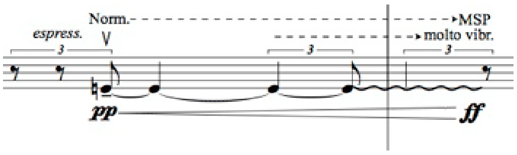
In the second movement, dedicated to Victoria, the composer uses a similar approach, though with little differences. The notes are taken from the motet *“O magnum mysterium”* and are the following:



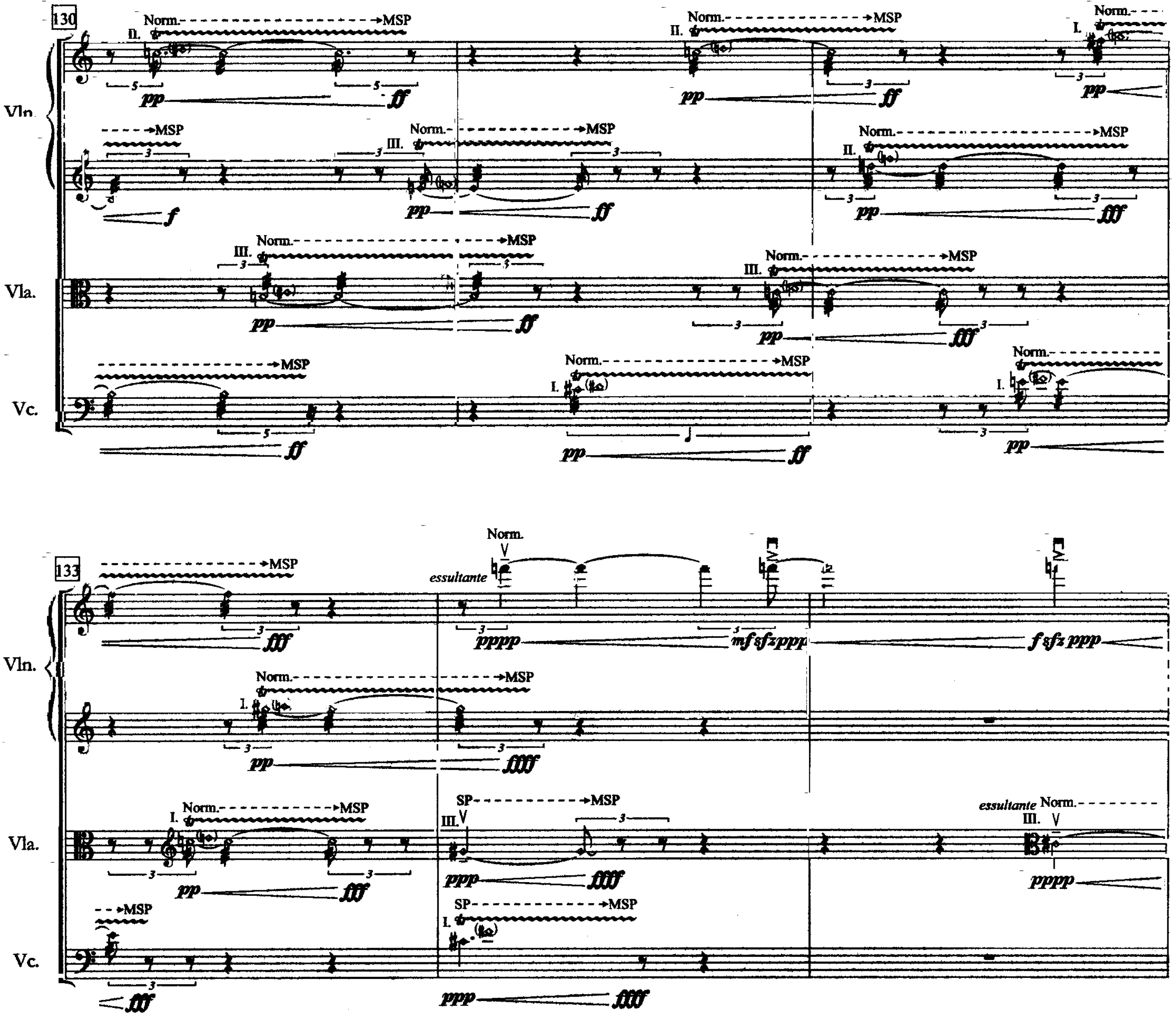
From these notes, and always with the seven semitones interval F-C, the composer creates seven chords built of a total of fifteen different intervals.



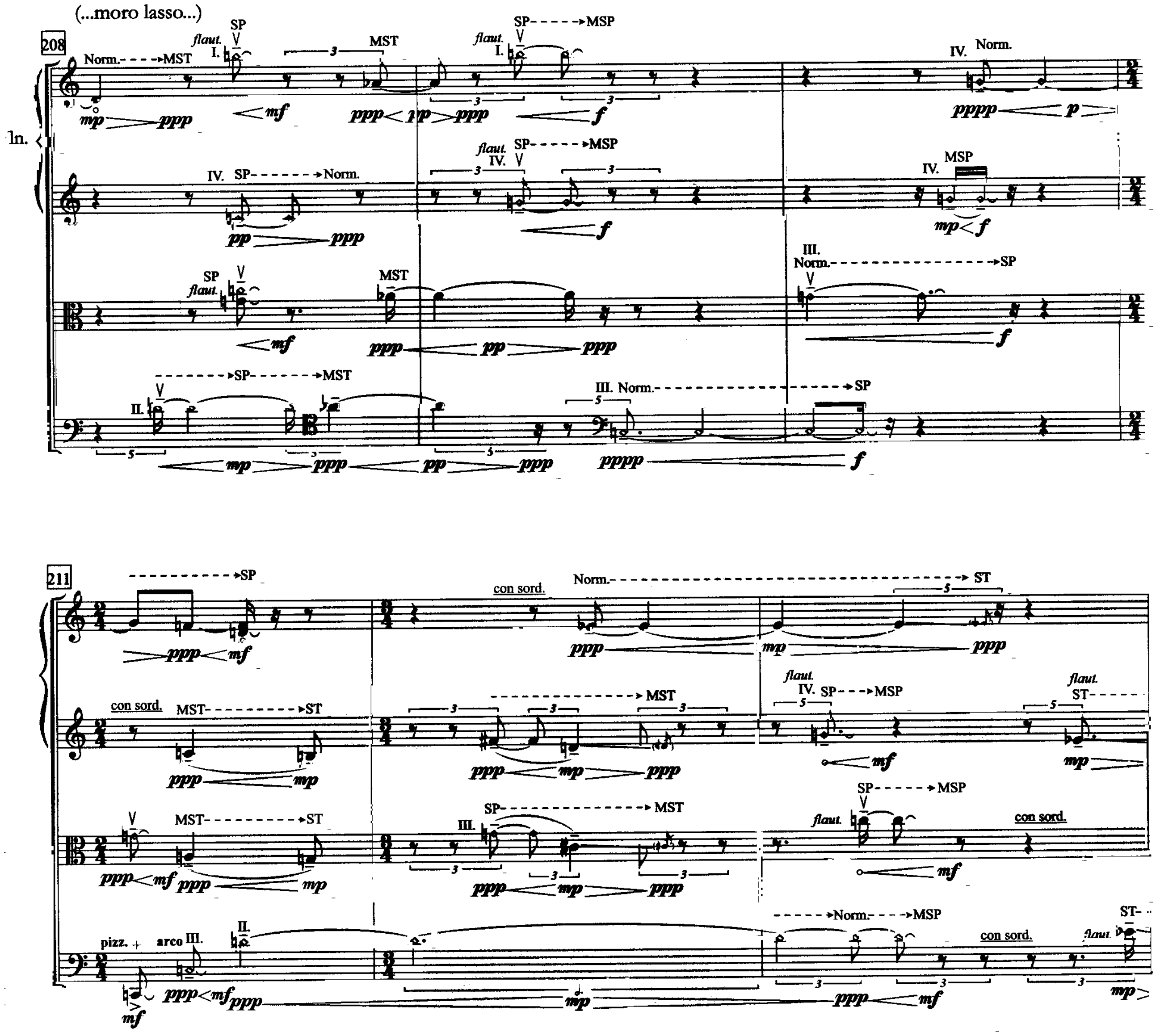
As already mentioned, this central movement is divided in two parts. At the end of the first one, the musical gestures that have been used in it become merged in a new one, reminiscent from the **A** motif. This new, rhythmically articulated *lamento* uses both of the main notes of the seven different chords (C and F).



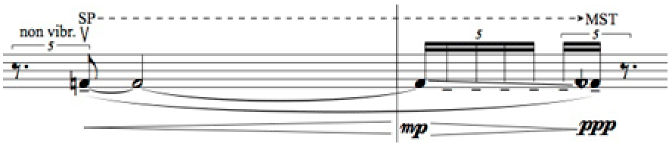
The second part of this central movement is ruled by a static element coming from the **C** motif always with *tremolo* or trill that will lead into an explosion of *bariolages* which are the climax of the work.


130
133
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Norm.
MSP
SP
I.
II.
III.
essultante
pp
ff
fff
ffff
pppp
ppp
mf sfz ppp
f sfz ppp
f

Almost at the end of the piece there is the only quote of it, a little fragment of the madrigal *Moro lasso al moi duolo,* so transfigurated and distorted that it is barely recognizable. In fact, no more that an old disguised modal harmony can be perceived, helped by the brief homophonic textures which contrast with the rest of the piece.


(...moro lasso...)
208
211
ln.
flaut.
SP
MST
MSP
Norm.
ST
con sord.
pizz.
arco
mp
ppp
pppp
mf
f
pp
p

After this quote Magrané returns to the usual gestures that have been being used during the whole piece and finishes it with element **A** played by one violin, which was the instrument that opened the work.


non vibr.
SP
MST
mp
ppp

3.4. KLAUS HUBER - AGNUS DEI CUM RECORDATIONE (1991)

The Swiss composer has been also very interested in ancient music. Although having written a piece based on Gesualdo´s *tenebrae* motets, it will be analysed his tribute to Johannes Ockeghem, which is more related to an aspect of Huber´s music that I want to point out. That is imitative counterpoint.

Agnus Dei Cum Recordatione was written between 1990 and 1991 and thus is a little bit older than the rest of the pieces analysed on this chapter. Its style is also quite different from the others. Huber uses polyphonic writing in a traditional way, rigorous counterpoint rules almost the whole piece. This has to do, in my point of view, with Huber´s predilection for this compositional technique -which we can find in almost all of his works- and also by the fact of it is religious purpose and historical period recovered; but I am sure this feature would have appeared if he had attempt any flirting with the madrigal. In any case, it gives me another interesting approximation that could probably be important for my forthcoming composition.

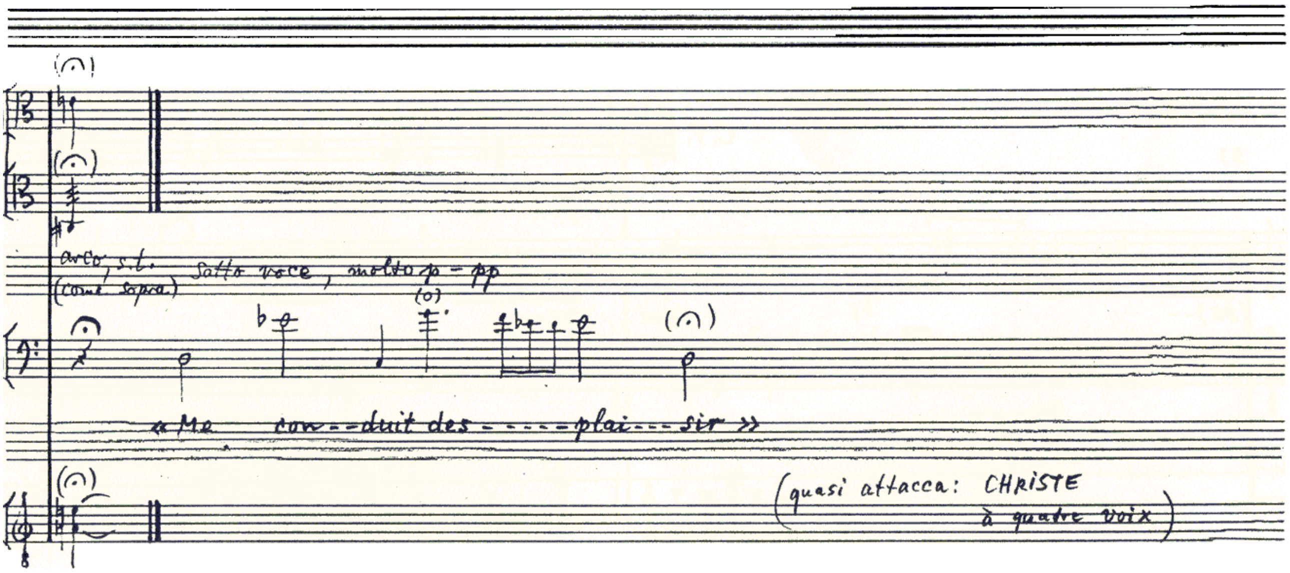
At the bottom of p. 12 and the top of p. 13 the composer -as we will see also in Magrané´s piece- makes a quote, though not Ockeghem´s but Josquin Des Prez´. This quote is not veiled nor camouflaged, it is transparently audible with some tonal interval inversions to make it a little harshier. The answer to this solo baritone line is a counterpoint in such a way that next voice always enters on on the following degree of the chromatic scale. This kind of *intonatio*[67] lets the *Agnus Dei 3* begin with a 2:1 *prolatio*[68] *i*n inversion (atonal, strictly symmetric) between the two tenors. Interesting is to quote the indication written by Huber: *"Cantus cancricans ad inversionem, canon per duo ad septem voces, in prolatione augmentata, duplex ad altera".* The work ends with a seven part counterpoint between the four voices and the three instruments[69].

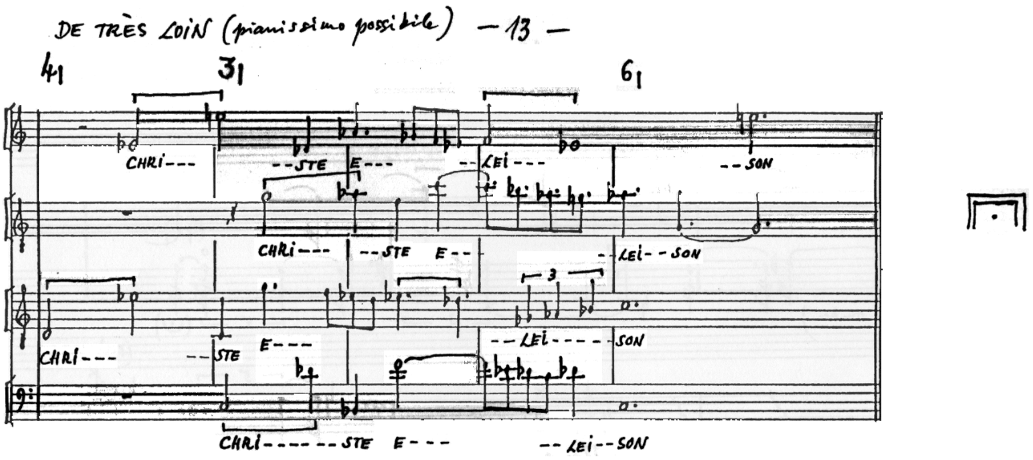
---

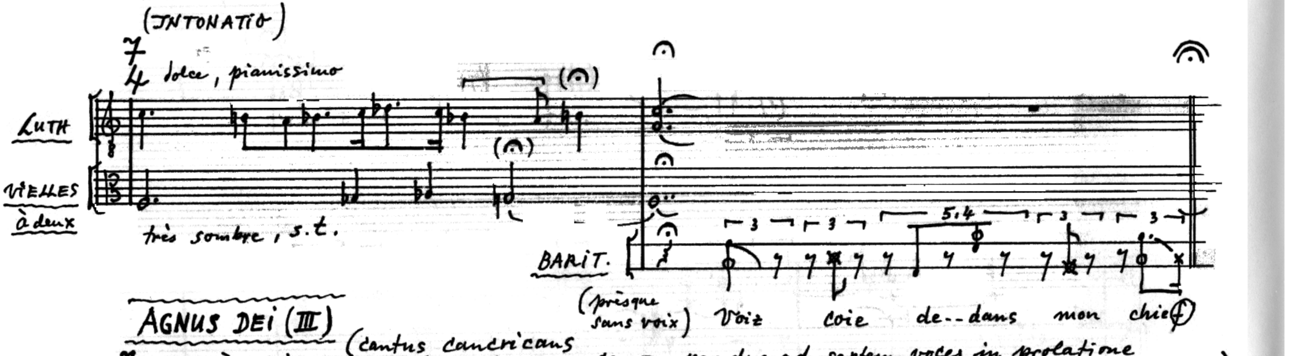
[67] In plainchant a solo singer -normally the priest- used to sing a short phrase, a tune on which the music was based, before the choir began to sing.

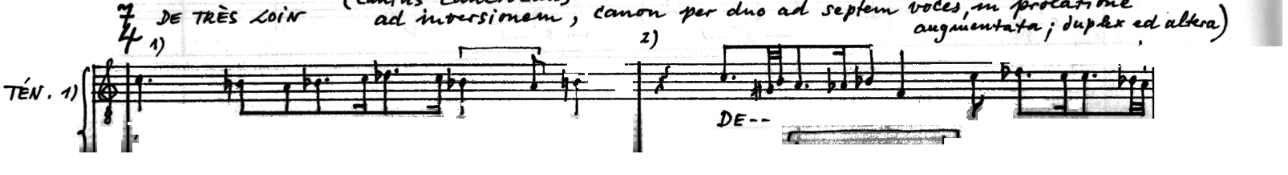
[68] *Prolatio* is a term borrowed from Latin used in medieval and renaissance music to describe rhythmic structures in a small scale. It was firstly used by Phillippe de Vitry in his treatise *Ars Nova.* There where two types of prolatio: minor (imperfect) and major (perfect). In the first one a semibreve (whole note) was equal in length to two minims and in the second one to three minims. Cf. Apel, Willi. *Monteverdi. The notation of polyphonic music (900-1600).* Massachusetts: The medieval academy of America, 1961

[69] Huber, Klaus (1991). *Agnus Dei cum recordatione: Hommage à Jehan Okeghem für Singstimmen und Instrumente* [printed music]. Milano: Ricordi


arco, s.t.
(come sopra)
sotto voce, molto p – pp
«Me con--duit des-----plai---sir»
(quasi attacca: CHRISTE
à quatre voix)


DE TRÈS LOIN (pianissimo possibile) — 13 —
4
3
6
CHRI---
--STE E---
--LEI---
--SON
CHRI---
--STE E--
--LEI--SON
CHRI---
--STE E---
--LEI----
SON
CHRI-------STE E---
--LEI--SON


(INTONATIO)
7/4 dolce, pianissimo
LUTH
VIELLES à deux
très sombre, s.t.
BARIT.
(presque sans voix)
Voiz coie de--dans mon chief


AGNUS DEI (III)
DE TRÈS LOIN
(cantus cancricans ad inversionem, canon per duo ad septem voces, in prolatione augmentata; duplex ed altera)
1)
2)
TÉN. 1)
DE--

An important feature of this movement -something that Klaus Huber has used in other works- is the combination of different texts in different languages. This is not something new, during the Ars Nova the composers used the combination of several languages at the same time, but it interests me as something that could be also be used in my madrigals. Not only is there a contrast between languages but between techniques, as the baritone speaks breathlessly, asthmatically, while the rest of the choir sing almost without vibrato.

I would say this is the most traditional piece of the four being analysed, at least conceptually, and the one with a strongest link to ancient compositional techniques. It is also the only one that uses ancient instruments though sometimes with contemporary techniques as in movements II and IV, an important aspect that may influence my composition.

4. THE MADRIGAL FROM THE CURRENT COMPOSER´S POINT OF VIEW

> "It is not about a thinking about contemporary music but to have a contemporary thinking towards music" (Christophe Havel during a conversation we had in June 2014).

I wanted to begin the chapter with this statement which briefly and just by an exchange of words compresses -and I would say solves- the never-ending debate about contemporary music creation.

Reinterpreting genres from the past is always interesting and tricky. Sometimes you can be too close and sometimes too far, the equilibrium is always difficult. As the reader have already seen, four different solutions to the problem of four different contemporary composers from four different generations have been presented. A new madrigal[70] should, in my opinion, be firmly related to its origins. This could be the text, instrumentation, tuning form, harmony and even stage arrangement.

4.1. TEXT

At the beginning of this project, I firstly had in mind using and old text and putting new music to it, just as the madrigalists used older ones as well, but I recently had the chance of working with a young contemporary poetess and this fact made me change my mind. As new music is going to be made, a good idea could be using new texts, not only reinterpreting music but literature. The same work of rescuing a musical genre could be done with literature and that task has been delegated to three young writers, having requested three new madrigals to them. These poets were born in different countries: one of them Italian, two of them Spanish but from the Basque Country[71], so in the end three poems written in Italian, Spanish and Euskera respectively have been produced. As

[70] My idea is not to make a new madrigal in the sense of creating a new genre- that would not make any sense nowadays- but to have the chance of adding music with a contemporary approach to a text from the past as most of the madrigalists did. Because it is important to remember that The text used in the madrigals, as for example Petrarca ones, where not contemporary but two centuries old.

[71] For those who don´t know, in the Basque Country the speak not only Spanish but a very old, not Indo-European language: Euskera.

already mentioned when analysing Huber´s *Agnus Dei cum recordatione,* the idea of using different texts written in different languages was attractive to me and I wanted this multiplicity to be used in this proposal. This new texts will coexist with old ones from the Renaissance.

UNTITLED

Daniel Apodaka (* 1990)

Argi goxoz eta ahulez agertutako hiri hutsean
hiztik ez zen esan.
Argi horiek utzi nabe

konturatu barik,
bakarrik,

orainaldi hontatik alde egiteko gogo biziarekin,
denbora gainditu zuen momentu horra bueltatzeko norantzarik ez dela...

In the empty city, formed of faint and warm lights
No words were said.
Those light have left me

without realising,
Alone,

Anxious of running away from this present,
with no direction to return to that moment which overtook time...[72]

---

[72] The three poems have been translated by the author.

LA CADENZA SOSPESA

Valentina Colonna (* 1990)

Inizia senza te questo secondo inverno. Svuota le strade di passanti e i banchi le parole dei vili come noi che non parliamo mai. Narriamo di figure in controluce quando crediamo amare illusioni comode divagazioni del reale. Gli spazi restringono il giorno in questo volto che ha le ansie di loro e premono i capelli sul cuscino. Legano le gambe al letto dove negando ti aspetto prima di sparire. Ogni notte è morire. Solo questo ho saputo fare. -Sai, qui l'inverno è infinito. -	Start without you this second winer. Empty streets of pedestrians and benches the words of coward like us that never speak to each other. We narrate figures backlighted when we believe bitter dreams comfortable rambling of reality. Space shrinks the day in your face that has the anxiety of them and struggle the hair on the pillow. My legs tied to the bed where I deny your appearance before disappearing. Every night is dying. Only this I have been able to do. -You know, winter here in endless. -

THERE IS NO PLACE

Amaia Miranda (* 1993)

Fuimos forma y compuesto del deseo líquido de amar solidificando nuestros cuerpos en el hierro candente de la distancia. Ya no hay ningún lugar tan frío como el recuerdo.	We were form and compound of the liquid desire of loving solidifying our bodies in the red-hot iron of distance. There is no place any more as cold as remembrance.

The result of this three poems is quite different and without entering in a deep analysis a few traces are interesting to be remarked. Miranda´s and Apodaka´s poems are more in the mood of the Quattrocento ones, short and concise. Colonna´s and Miranda´s dealt with sex whereas Apodaka´s not, but this last one makes an updating of the Renaissance prototypical bucolic context by mentioning a modern “bucolic” city . All three have a final and crude statement[73].

---

[73] There is no place any more as cold as remembrance / Anxious of running away from this present, with no direction to return to that moment which overtook time... / Only this I have been able to do. -You know, winter here is endless-

4.2. INSTRUMENTATION

There could be countless possibilities of instrumentation but in any of them what should be crucial is how the old and the new are linked, otherwise the decision would obey to an arbitrary decision. This connection could be the social role of the instrument, the technique, instrumental family, tuning, timbre, portability, etc.

The idea of using ancient instruments -including nowadays singers with new and “old” vocal techniques[74]- can work as a direct connection with the past and a chance for the performers to increase their repertoire. Two little groups will be used, one ancient and one modern. For the former and as a basis, a vocal quintet -as most madrigalists did-. An archlute and some percussion will complete it, being the first helpful for the singers to have a reliable intonation guide. For the latter, three narrators[75], one electric guitar and electronics (both live and fixed). The use of ancient instruments will not only sonically but also visually carry the spectator to the past creating a rich contrast of now and then. The idea is to merge both worlds, connecting past and present with as many musical elements as possible, including instrumentation. One may ask oneself which instrument could be nowadays the equivalent to the lute. That is the electric guitar, as both are plucked instruments, portable and receptive to experiments within their construction, number of strings, etc. As the lute had more and more strings in the past, so does the guitars and bass guitars (both acoustic and electric) since some years to the present. It is not strange to see popular music bands playing with seven, even eight string guitars, or trying different types of *scordatura* to achieve certain registers (normally low ones). One can also find lots of examples in the internet of “strange” or even weird guitars and basses. In jazz and classical music, the search for expanding the register of plucked instruments and to adapt them to be more versatile repertoire has also occurred**.** Returning to the instrumentation of the madrigal, the electronic part will sometimes act as new keyboard instrument, not launching samples and transforming them but also used as a syntheziser.

---

[74] Or at least what they are supposed to be “old” techniques. It is very difficult no make categoric statements about the way the music was performed in those days so I will take as valid the current guidelines of the most important performers of ancient music.

[75] When listening to the later Renaissance madrigals, one have the impression of different narrators reading internally the same text at the same time, each one with his/her own timing, accelerating or slowing down independently, even repeating some parts. This idea can be actualized using narrators reciting the same or even different poems freely -or pretended to be by precise score writing-

Trying to separate roles, the singers will be associated with the past and the narrators -that for at least the premiere would be the poets of the new texts used- with the present. The former will sing, the latter will speak, recite, whisper, etc. This will be the performing staff:

- Five singers: Soprano / Alto / Tenor 1 / Tenor 2 / Bass
- Three narrators, one for each new poem
- Lute
- Electric guitar
- Percussion
- Electronics performer

4.3. TUNING

As has already been mentioned, the subject of tuning was of huge importance during the Renaissance. Though our guitars normally move in the equal tempered system there are some examples of applying other tuning systems to them. Sometimes these new tunings are achieved preparing the guitar by using different kind of objects -as have done composers like Clara Maïda and many others- but in other cases is the tuning system that is is changed. Klaus Huber has done a few experiments even with lutes[76]. The author of this essay has already tried a different tuning for the guitar in a work entitled “After Cage”. The system is based on a pseudo spectral basis, as the instrument is tuned mostly from harmonics produced in the sixth string. It is done as follows:

First tune the fifth string with a tuning fork or tuning machine. Then tune the sixth string using the harmonic on the fifth fret of that string and the seventh fret of the fifth string. Using the E two octaves higher harmonic on the sixth string tune the first string. Continue tuning the fourth string using the minor seventh harmonic located on the sixth string (D) and the harmonic on the fifth fret of the fourth string. Using the major third harmonic on the sixth string tune the G# on the first fret of the third string. Finally, using the major third harmonic of the third string tune the harmonic located on the fifth fret of the second string. Result:

---

[76] In fact, Agnus Dei cum recordatione has an alternative score using third tones and that has been also used in his Lamentationes Sacrae Et Profanae Ad Responsoria Iesualdi.

1st E +2cents

2nd B -28cents

3rd G -14 cents

4th D -31 cents

5th A

6th E +2cents

This changes the harmonic colour of an instrument that is many times limited because of the use of opened strings but the harmony is also expanded, as the same interval has different sizes depending on which strings is played. For example a perfect fifth between the sixth and fifth strings will sound almost perfect whereas between fifth and fourth strings will sound quite narrow. Thus, our palette increases. Applying this tuning system to the lute could also be possible but as both fretted instruments have different roles and it is needed a “standard” tuning so that the singer´s intonation is ensured when singing Renaissance passages against modern ones . Moreover, this makes the two systems live together and this contrast may be more interesting than having only one of them, despite of being a not conventional one.

4.4. HARMONY

Contrast between both past and current worlds will apply also regarding to this musical parameter, using it in the former but almost nothing in the latter, excepting in transitions. Using as a basis a modal progression and by inversion, transposition, pitch class[77] treatment and rhythmic variation infinite of new ones reminiscent from the original can be made serving as a bridge or a recall. Lets take an excerpt from end of Gesualdo´s famous madrigal *“Mercè grido piagendo[78]”*.

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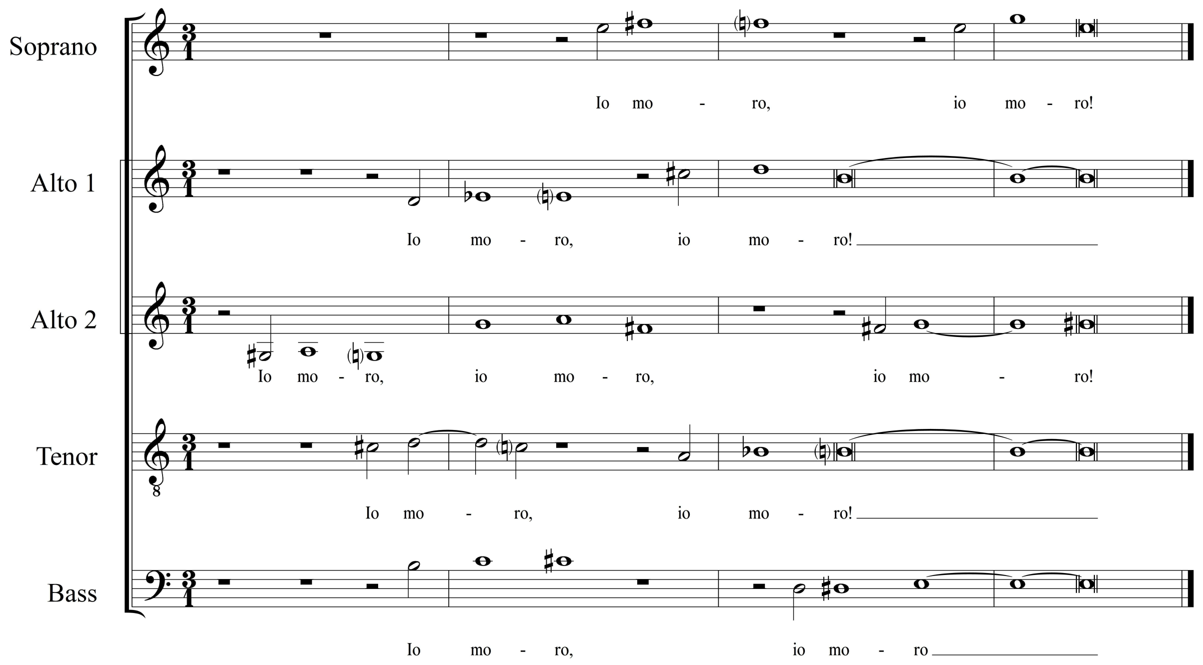
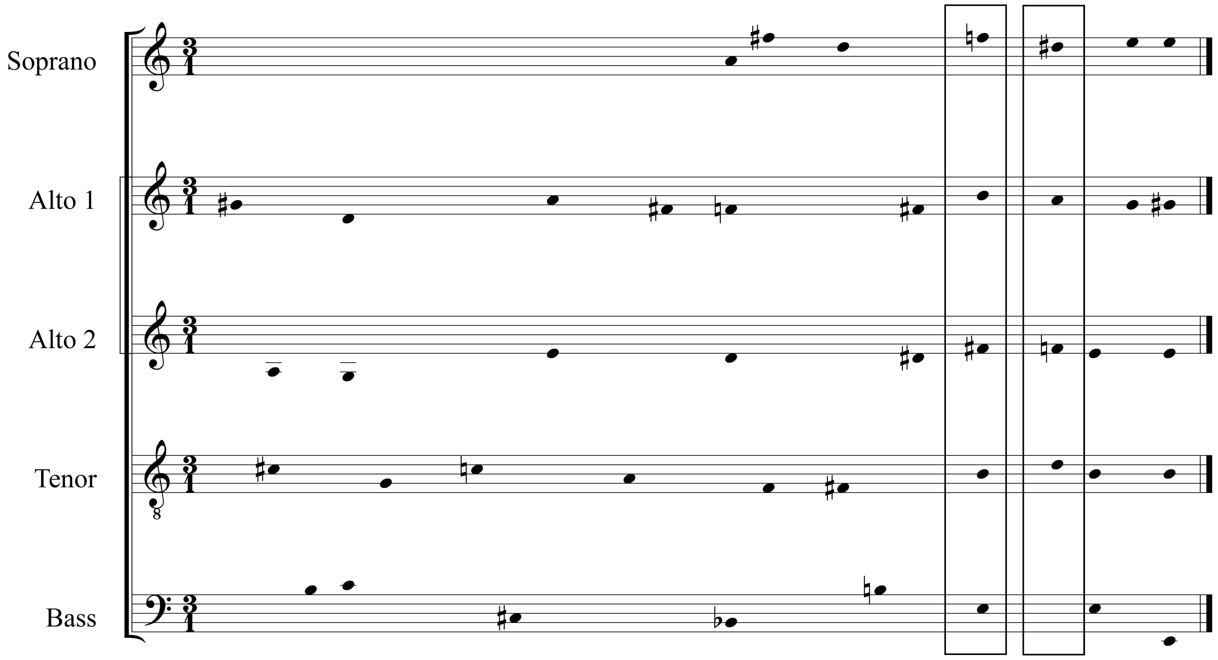
[77] For information about pitch class theory read Forte, Allen. *The structure of atonal music.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973. ISBN 978-0-300-02120-2

[78] Gesualdo, Carlo (1611). *Gesualdo di Venosa. Madrigale für fünf stimmen.* [printed music]. Leipzig: 1980 (^{1}Venice: 1611)


Soprano
Alto 1
Alto 2
Tenor
Bass
Io mo - ro, io mo - ro!
Io mo - ro, io mo - ro!
Io mo - ro, io mo - ro, io mo - ro!
Io mo - ro, io mo - ro!
Io mo - ro, io mo - ro

Now lets make a new version keeping the essence of the chromatic harmony he used, changing the register, inverting chords and even adding a passing chord just before the final E minor. This chord is the same as the previous one if we analyse it using pitch class theory (5-Z36) so we move with it through two different dispositions of the E minor with different suspensions. One can hear how Gesualdo´s harmony almost appears in some occasions, veiled, until it finally rises with the final cadence. No rhythmic values have been used in order to isolate the harmony.



5-Z36 T0

5-Z36 T2

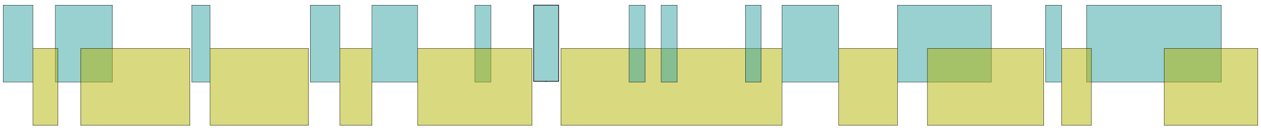
It is important to point out that he pitches have been simplified, no microtonality derived from the guitar tuning system explained has been written in the score. This fact will add more tension and will make more clear both modern and ancient worlds.

4.5. FORM

The purpose of this work is to create a self-sufficient project which could be performed without the necessity of adding more repertoire. Thus, the work has to be long enough and be able to grow or be shortened to adapt any possible future situation. Each new madrigal composed will have an existing madrigal as a basis, it will be an answer to it. One new text will be used combined with an old one and also the new music and the existing one will coexist. In the end, the macro structure of a concert will be the following: Old madrigal – New madrigal answer | Old madrigal – New madrigal... and so on.

As already mentioned, contrast -or dialogue- between past and present is one, if not the most, important part of this project. The structure of the music will reflect this fact in the following way.

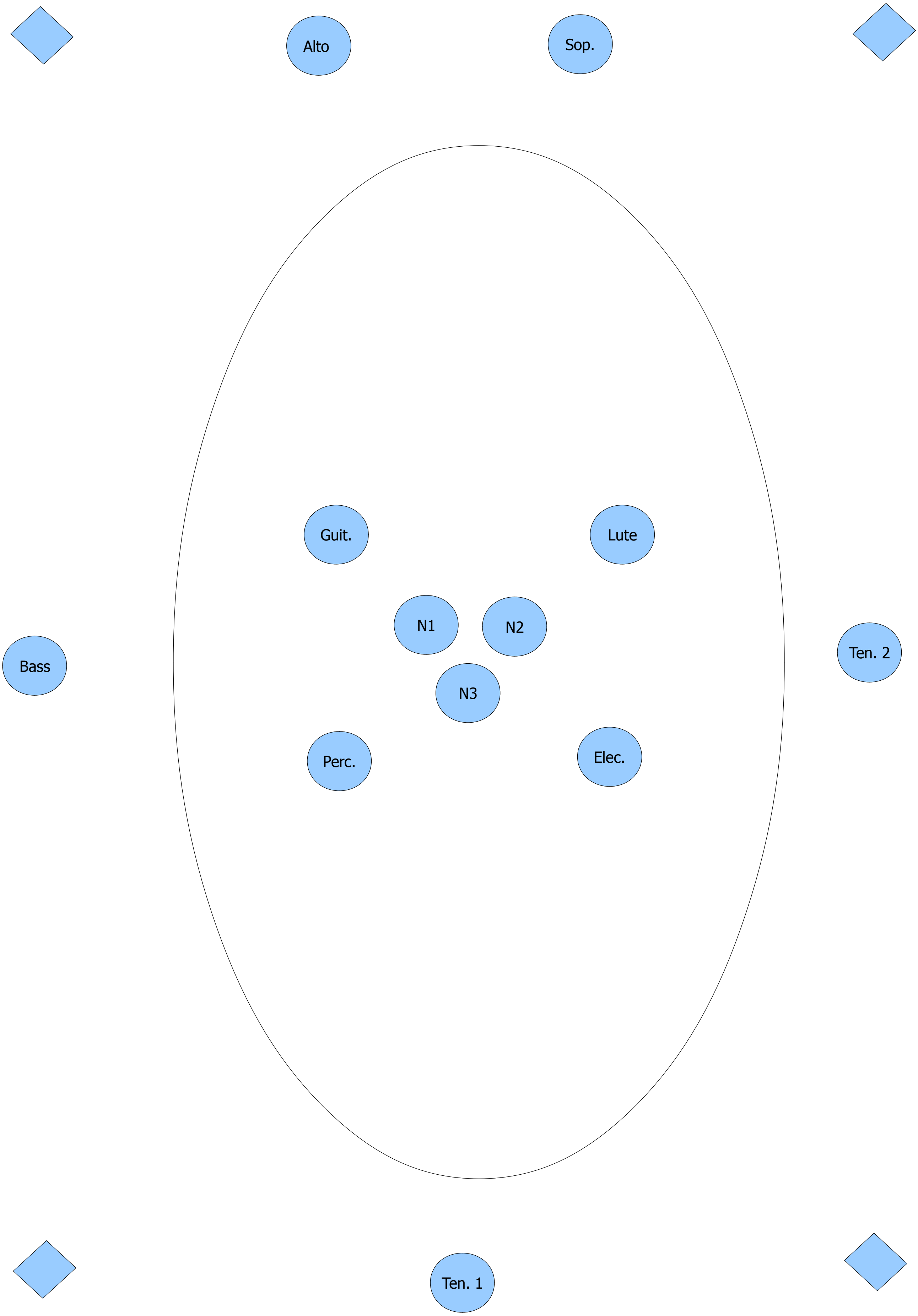
One Renaissance madrigal will be taken and use it as a background, sliced and scattered here and there. The new music will fill the gaps in between but sometimes both worlds will coexist at the same time. Singers and reciters have well defined roles but the other instruments can go from one place to the other. Thus, the electric guitar could quote one of Monterverdi´s compositions while the lute plays with extended contemporary techniques and vice versa. As those instruments have different tunings, they could serve as a way of gradually travelling from one world to another making the singers change their intonation to a modern one when following the guitar and gong backwards when following the lute. A scheme of general structure type could be the following, a procedure of montage that could be applied to the macro and the micro form:



The singers will quote the original renaissance music but disordered, even stretched or superimposed. The electronics will transform madrigal recordings in slightly recognizable quotations, also merged with the new text recited by their respective authors.

4.6. STAGE ARRANGEMENT

The traditional concert format has been changed during the last fifty or even sixty years and nowadays what is related to performers placing on stage, lighting, etc, has become of main importance in contemporary music. Multidisciplinary proposals have become more and more popular. In the case of our subject here, lots of distributions could be imagine but I will suggest something similar to the following scheme:


Alto
Sop.
Guit.
Lute
N1
N2
Bass
N3
Ten. 2
Perc.
Elec.
Ten. 1

There are two rings: one with the speakers -quadraphonic sound system- and singers, one with the rest of the performers. In between, the audience, so the spectator will therefore be immersed inside the scene. This layout limits the number of venues in which the music could be performed, being difficult or impossible to be played in a conventional concert hall. Anyway, this should not be a problem nowadays as a huge number of more -lets say- unconventional venues have arisen.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This present work had the aim of searching in the Italian madrigal -focusing on the late, manneristic period- for possibilities of inspiration for a current composer, trying to find links not only in the technical aspects of composition but also in the social implication of the work itself in a current cultural/artistic context; establishing a procedure and extracting conclusions that could serve not only this author but any other composer interested in the subject.

Important features have been found in the Italian madrigal that could inspire a contemporary composer, all of them related in some way as they have to do with a culture that was evolving rapidly and where composers had lots of stimulus. Experimentation, relation music-poetry and eclecticism are the main items that this author has found.

Experimentation may be applied to almost any matter, from the abstract harmony to the concrete stage arrangement. Madrigalists enlarged and pushed to the limit the boundaries of their musical language and singing/playing techniques in a process that ends with the tormented madrigals of Carlo Gesualdo. But what it is most important, composers were connected with advances and new resources available (like new instruments, tuning systems...) in their society. As so was this musical genre, a new contemporary proposal may be inspired by this thirst of experiment and research, no matter the field of study. It implies a positive attitude towards progress.

The strong link between text and music, the possibility of using texts from other artistic periods or even creating new ones to which set new music, the metaphor as a way of implicit communication. Madrigals dealt with emotions that are still valid in our culture and we can learn from Renaissance composers how make a proposal close enough to the public without renouncing to an artistic goal. There is a very interesting contribution in the creation of a new vocabulary of musical resources and formulas based on another discipline: Rhetoric. The inspiration in other arts have always been fruitful and moreover in a world interconnected like ours.

Though maybe not one of the most characteristic features of madrigals, eclecticism in the Italian madrigal is an important trace that could serve as a basis for current composition. This means, again, a positive and curious attitude towards all facets of modernity, including what popular music has to offer.

The research in this essay will continue with the forthcoming composition of some madrigals using the links found between late Renaissance and current contexts and trying to keep as faithful as possible to results obtained. But this work has not only started the path for a new composition, but also opened a door to other possible investigation projects in different musical genres -not necessarily ancient ones- trying to find more fields for inspiration to come. In relation with what has been commented about eclecticism and popular music, this author has the plan of developing a similar study towards Metal and IDM (Intelligent Dance Music), dealing this time with actual genres and attempting to merge them with the educated tradition.

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