

## Consider the Madrigal

### *Considerando o Madrigal*

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**Abstract:** The huge proliferation of the polyphonic madrigal around 1600 raises basic questions that have not been effectively posed, let alone answered, in the scholarly literature. This essay presents these questions and suggests provisional answers for them. In doing so, it describes several dynamics in the development of the madrigal that seem to oppose the close relation between language and music previously noticed by all commentators. These dynamics create a kind of musical formalism at times, even an anti-linguistic one, where we would least expect it. They point up the opening of a space between sung words and the musical means of their singing that is certainly new in western musical experience.

**Keywords:** renaissance madrigal; neoplatonism and musical rhetoric.

**Resumo:** A enorme proliferação do madrigal polifônico por volta de 1600 levanta questões básicas que não foram efetivamente propostas e muito menos respondidas na literatura acadêmica. Este ensaio coloca estas questões e sugere respostas, pelo menos provisórias, para elas. Ao fazer isso, descreve várias dinâmicas no desenvolvimento do madrigal que parecem ir contra à estreita relação da linguagem e música que todos os comentaristas notaram anteriormente. Essas dinâmicas criam um tipo de formalismo musical, às vezes até mesmo anti-linguísticos, onde menos esperaríamos. Eles apontam para a abertura de um espaço entre as palavras cantadas e os meios musicais do canto que é indiscutivelmente nova na experiência musical ocidental.

**Palavras-chave:** madrigal renascentista, neoplatonismo e retórica musical.

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## 1 – Questions

We know so little about the madrigal. Despite the researches of more than a century, kick-started in the years around 1900 by the prodigious efforts of transcription of Alfred Einstein, the basis for his classic study, *The Italian Madrigal*, forty years later;<sup>1</sup> despite the dozens of books and hundreds of smaller studies devoted to the genre since Einstein (a recent guide to research on the genre (HAMMOND, 2011) runs to

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<sup>1</sup> Einstein's many volumes of transcriptions are still today preserved in the Smith College archives.

over 1200 items); despite the hundreds of first-rate recordings of individual works that are today a few clicks away on You Tube (in my youth my teachers still relied for Monteverdi recordings on an ensemble including Hugh Cuénod, with Nadia Boulanger accompanying at the piano); despite a musicology long intent on understanding the madrigal in the richness of its historical context; despite, indeed, the expansion of this notion of context in recent decades to include studies of subjectivity, gender, sexuality, performativity, and more; despite all this, *we know so very little about the madrigal*.

I'm not referring here to individual styles and techniques, to affiliations and differences among them, to the distinction of subgeneric types of madrigals (*canzonetta*-madrigals, *note nere* madrigals, *madrigali ariosi*, spiritual madrigals, and so on), to bibliographic and source studies and printing history, to connections of the genre to related repertoires such as *chanson* and *frottola*, and the like. These are the kinds of topics musicologists are adept at, and, although there will always be more to learn about them, we know much, and they do not pose any basic mysteries. The unanswered questions, instead, are of a more general and sweeping nature. Here are a few I would like to see answered.

First, why are there so many madrigals? In the century from 1530 to 1630, by Lorenzo Bianconi's count, we know of about 1800 published books of polyphonic madrigals, including reprints; for first editions alone, the number is well over 1000 (BIANCONI, 1987, p.1-3)<sup>2</sup>. Let us say that each of these collections contained, on average, fifteen madrigals. This comes to more than 15,000 new madrigals published across the century, not counting the many madrigals circulated only in manuscript and some prints of which we have lost all trace. Who bought all this printed music? What did the Venetian printers, let alone the composers, think they were doing? Where was the public for Marenzio's *Nono libro di madrigali a cinque voci*, not to mention Sigismondo d'India's *Ottavo libro* or Filippo di Monte's *Trentunesimo libro*?

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<sup>2</sup> The peak decades come from 1580 to 1610. As Bianconi notes, countering old musicological narratives, there is no quick or sheer falling-off in the production of polyphonic madrigals after 1600; just as many collections were published in the 1610s as in the 1570s.

Which prompts another, related question: Who sang this music? Perhaps we can believe the genteel notion, distilled from scenes in books of manners and the like, that bringing out partbooks for after-dinner madrigal singing was a regular feature of Italian aristocratic life around 1550. But such scenes are too generic, too much like the music-making of Castiglione's *Il cortegiano* or, before that, of Pietro Bembo's *Gli asolani* for us to be confident that they are not fictions of a social convention infrequently, even rarely observed. Moreover, even if we accept these domestic music-scenes as real, frequent events, the question is not answered. Amateur singers like those who managed Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno* in 1550 would have been hard-pressed to sing Rore's *Dalle belle contrade* fifteen years later; they would have been stymied by Luzzasco's madrigals in the 1580s, baffled by Marenzio's in the 1590s, flummoxed by Monteverdi's Fourth or Fifth Books after the turn of the century, and defeated by Gesualdo's last books. This music had grown too difficult; the repertory, early in its history, regularly raised its demands to levels most amateur singers could not have hoped to reach. The madrigal quickly became in good measure a genre for professionals. Later we will come to some specifically musical reasons why it did so.

But, once madrigals came to be music for well-trained singers, why publish them at all? Luzzasco's songs with accompaniment for the singing ladies of Ferrara were *withheld* from the public, a prized *musica segreta* exactly because they were the difficult, elite, private province of more-or-less professional singers – highly expert ones, at any rate, if they were not all pros in our sense of the word (NEWCOMB, 1980, chapters 1-4). We might understand Gesualdo's publication of his madrigals as a kind of vanity printing, self-funded in order to satisfy the whims of this unlikable prince, but that special case sheds little light on the dozens of career musicians whose multiple books were printed. Neither can the flood of madrigal books be explained as a reflection of the generosity of the patrons routinely thanked in the dedications. In the first place, the dedications do not always seem to reflect financial support from the dedicatees for the publishing process. Second, in the light of a case like the Ferrarese one – and considering the cases we know of composers whose day-to-day movements, as servants at court, were controlled by their employers – it is less than

obvious why aristocratic supporters were so often willing to make public so much music that was their property.

One more question: If highly trained singers were required, where were they? There were chapels and other musical establishments at courts and civic centers throughout Europe, but it is not clear that madrigal singing formed a regular or primary responsibility for most of these. A few courts, especially north Italian ones, had something like the Ferrarese *concerto delle donne* – mainly in direct imitation of it – but semi-professional madrigal groups were not thick on the ground.

Let us do a little more arithmetic. Press runs for madrigal books and other music books are hard to establish, but the evidence we have for Venetian music prints suggests 500 as an average figure<sup>3</sup>. Multiply even a more conservative estimate of 400, adjusted for smaller reprint runs and other considerations, by the number of madrigal books published and you get close to *three-quarters of a million* sets of partbooks in circulation across the century of madrigal publication – the solid majority of them in the forty years from 1570-1610, when much of the music had grown very challenging. Even allowing for madrigalian pastimes of musical establishments mostly dedicated to other music and for occasional (but in most cases only occasional)<sup>4</sup> performances at aristocratic salons and academies, it is a challenge for the music historian to locate enough singers capable of performing this music to explain the outpouring from the printing houses.

If the puzzles of the market for the madrigal admit of no easy solutions, an even more basic question awaits us: *Why were there madrigals at all?* Perhaps the question will seem silly, even impertinent; so I will rephrase it and explain some of its dimensions. Elite Italian musical culture in the early sixteenth century boasted a rich and venerable tradition of solo singing of love lyrics, with instrumental accompaniment such as *lira da braccio* or lute. What possessed this culture to swerve in the direction

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<sup>3</sup> See AGEE, 1986, p.59-65; 1998, p.41; and BERNSTEIN, 2001, p.78-79.

<sup>4</sup> The detailed manuscript *Diario dell' Accademia degli Alterati* of Florence (Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana Ashburnham 558), for example, reveals that meetings including musical performances were rare—this at an academy that has been held up by musicologists as particularly involved in musical matters (PALISCA, 1994, p.408-31).

of supplying such lyrics with complex, polyphonic settings of a sort more customarily reserved for sacred or other ceremonial words? And then doing it again, and again, and again, and again? The mere desire to ennoble love songs by bringing to them more “serious” musical techniques seems a weak answer, though it probably played a role in certain individual cases such as Willaert’s *Musica Nova*, with its parallel sections of motets and madrigals and its motet-like treatment of Petrarch – all ideologically driven in a Venetian literary culture loomed over by Bembo, Petrarch’s sixteenth-century champion (FELDMAN, 1995, p.87-102 and p.224-259). The main weakness of this answer is that it suggests a felt insufficiency in the singing of secular lyrics before the madrigal emerged, but there is little supporting evidence for this, and a good deal of countering evidence.

The production of polyphonic secular song with Italian words had not been lively in the previous century. This is true notwithstanding the emergence at some Italian centers of a Franco-Flemish affectation toward the end of the 1400s, which seems to have led to the importing of *chansons* of Burgundian and post-Burgundian generations and even local cultivation of these styles; the development culminated in Petrucci’s early, northern-oriented collections, the *Odhecaton* of 1501 and its followers, *Canti B* and *Canti C* (STROHM, 1993, p.557-570). But if native polyphonic song was rare, the tradition of solo song with accompaniment thrived. A little biography of poet-singer Serafino Aquilano, published a few years after his early death in 1500, tells us that he traveled the length and breadth of the peninsula singing to his own accompaniment various lyrics, many his own, but especially those of Petrarch; it reports also that he memorized the whole of the *Canzoniere* and – if that were not enough – the *Trionfi* as well<sup>5</sup>. And Serafino was not alone, but merely a leading light in a whole cadre of *strambottisti* and *frottolisti*, then well-known if now mostly forgotten even by musicologists. These elite ranks probably arose above a humbler foundation, including street *cantimbanchi*, soap-box reciters of popular epics, and the like; traces of this tradition are abundant from the sixteenth century, if not

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<sup>5</sup> See Vincenzo Calmeta, *Vita del facondo poeta volgare Serafino Aquilano (1504)*, (CALMETA, ed. Cecil Grayson, 1959); excerpts trans. TOMLINSON, 1998, p.43-47 (quotation below from this trans., p.45-47); also *Le Rime di Serafino Aquilano in musica*, ed. LA FACE, BIANCONI e ROSSI (1999).

from the fifteenth<sup>6</sup>. The *frottola* itself, the first really large repertory we have of polyphonic Italian secular song, probably was mainly a solo genre in its beginnings (PRIZER, 1986, p.3-7). The many, many frottole published by Petrucci often show signs of being elaborated or “polyphonized” versions of simpler templates, probably reflecting their origin as sung melodies with instrumental accompaniment. One of the foremost *frottola* composers, Marchetto Cara, was renowned for his solo performances to his own lute accompaniment. Certainly some, perhaps most of his works printed by Petrucci originated in this solo form.

Musicologist Reinhard Strohm emphasizes Franco-Flemish polyphony in Italy at this time and downplays native traditions of solo song; to him they seem the exaggerated constructions of an early twentieth-century Italian musicology, steeped in nationalism and led by Fausto Torrefranca, with his hidden, unwritten fifteenth-century traditions, his *segreto del quattrocento*<sup>7</sup>. Notwithstanding Strohm’s doubts, however, we know that the unwritten solo singing of Serafino and the rest was highly prized. A quarter-century after his death it would be held up in *Il cortegiano* as the noblest kind of music; Castiglione even singles out Cara the frottolist as one of the best solo singers<sup>8</sup>. And we know also that this solo tradition did not simply cease in the early sixteenth century, but continued in what appears to us as an undercurrent to the published polyphonic repertory – but may not have appeared so at the time<sup>9</sup>. If the solo tradition persisted, was valued, and even thrived from the 1400s right up until its reemergence into our historical view with opera and monody around 1600, then what brought about the huge flowering of polyphonic settings of amorous lyrics? Again: Why were there madrigals at all?

Susan McClary has recently offered an answer of sweeping application. For her, the burgeoning of the madrigal is a story of polyphonic, multi-voiced music flexing its muscles, so to speak, exercising its unique powers to capture a subjectivity expressed in the words and poems set; we will see below that I think this answer to be at least

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<sup>6</sup> On the unwritten tradition in Italy, see, *inter alia*, RUBSAMEN (1943); and HAAR (1986, esp. chaps. 2 and 4).

<sup>7</sup> See STROHM (1993, pt. 4, chap.4); TORREFRANCA (1939).

<sup>8</sup> See CASTIGLIONE (1972, bk.2, chap.13; for Cara, bk.1, chap.37).

<sup>9</sup> See HAAR (1986, chap. 4).

headed in the right direction, if not quite for the right reasons (MCCLARY, 2004). McClary's madrigalian subjectivity is erotically torn, multiple in its ambivalences, unable to find wholeness and peace. Four or five voices singing the complaint that rightly belongs to one voice could model in music the subject's fragmentation with a fidelity and versatility found in no other artistic medium. Except for the important difference that McClary bases her analysis on the special means of polyphony, unavailable to words alone, this explanation recalls the stories English professors used to tell about Hamlet as the locus of the invention of the modern subject – layered, ambivalent, riven against itself (“To be, or not to be...”). McClary seems comfortable with such a story, though for Hamlet it has been challenged from many quarters; the subtitle of her book on the madrigal, *Self-Fashioning in the Italian Madrigal*, is a bow to another book, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* by Stephen Greenblatt, one of the most prominent exegetes of Hamlet of the last fifty years. Indeed there is a certain reliance in McClary's argument on a recognizably modern, self-aware and self-fashioned subject, a subject she finds lurking even in Verdelot's settings of Machiavelli from the 1520s. Though she tries at times to resist this modernity, there is something suspiciously familiar, late-twentieth-century familiar, about the love-torn souls she finds conveyed in madrigalian polyphony.

My own researches in the music and thought of early modern Italy have pointed me toward a greater defamiliarization of that culture, toward large distances between it and us rather than toward an assimilation of it to us. I first tried to analyze this cultural distance in my book *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance*, where the interplay of humanist and scholastic cultural trends in Monteverdi's formative years and in his music from around 1600 formed the horizon of distance, blocked from our view by the post-Renaissance expression of his late style. I made the exegesis of cultural distance a more explicit aim, then, in *Music in Renaissance Magic*. Here the proliferation of learned ideologies of magic, especially Neoplatonic ones offered by Marsilio Ficino and his followers, was the exemplar of foreignness—a deep, widespread, constitutive force in early modern cultures that poses real difficulties for our understanding of them. I accept McClary's point that such defamiliarization can be carried too far, and I share her confidence that a recognizable subjectivization was not absent from these cultures or from their music. But it was in many regards

differently formed than it is today, and in “reading” this formation from music we are wise to err on the side of overestimating its foreignness rather than sweeping distance away with the stiff-bristled broom of the familiar. In fact, the sense of western culture having traversed several different regimes of subjectivization between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries remains for me a basic one; this is what I tried to examine, through operatic history, in yet another book, *Metaphysical Song*<sup>10</sup>.

I take McClary’s book on the madrigal to be one of the accounts of the genre that attempts to answer the general question of what it was up to, what it was doing, why it happened – rather than describing one or another part of the happening or constructing a historical summary of the whole. So, if we regard her answer as at least a little anachronistic and not fully satisfactory, the question grows more insistent: Why were there madrigals?

## **2 - Sentimental *Maniera***

Nino Pirrotta, an Italian musicologist a long generation younger than Torre Franca, once suggested an answer to the question, in an out-of-the-way little essay few people read anymore. Though people *should* read it: In fifteen pages it distills Italian music history from the time of Petrarch to the beginnings of opera (PIRROTTA, 1984, p.159-174). Pirrotta’s answer was not directed at the madrigal alone, but at broader tendencies in composition and performance that seemed to him to explain a certain departure from Italian vernacular traditions that set in across the sixteenth century. The answer seems to me to have the power to counter Strohm’s overemphasis of ultramontane polyphony and to raise questions about subjectivity in the sixteenth century different from McClary’s. It is all the more powerful for being so – *quiet*; but then, quietness was characteristic of Pirrotta. His answer also seems to me to capture the unsettling foreignness that inhabits the heart of the madrigal, a foreignness that nags, for me, after years spent studying and singing this music.

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<sup>10</sup> See TOMLINSON (1987; 1993; 1999).

Here is the answer Pirrotta offered: “I am strongly tempted to suggest that the entire development of Italian music during the sixteenth century, sacred as well as secular, should be considered as a deliberate adoption of a polyphonic *maniera*” (PIRROTTA, 1984, p.173).

Pirrotta’s choice of word *maniera* was astute. He first published his remark in 1973, at a time when art historians were busily describing a late-sixteenth-century style, lodged between High Renaissance and Baroque, that they called Mannerism. This term had been translated from the *Manierismus* of earlier German scholars; for them it connoted an exaggeration and distortion of the styles of Raphael and early Michelangelo in those of the later Michelangelo, Pontormo, Rosso Fiorentino, El Greco, Tintoretto, and others. By the time of Pirrotta’s remark, many art and literary historians had moved to periodize these tendencies, in the sequence Renaissance – Mannerism – Baroque<sup>11</sup>.

It is not surprising that these efforts in neighboring disciplines stimulated a parallel search for mannerism in music. In the 1970s more than one book was devoted to the topic, including especially a wide-reaching study by Maria Maniates, who argued for the existence of a century-long manneristic period (MANIATES, 1979). A famous conference was held, convened in Rome by Pirrotta himself, and Edward Lowinsky, then the dean of Renaissance musical studies, weighed in with a long essay that placed the madrigal at the center of the matter. Lists of musical stylistic traits qualifying as manneristic were drawn up; composers were enrolled in the camp or excluded from it; music theorists of the time were perused for manneristic tendencies; and music came to seem, for some, the very foundation of the late sixteenth-century Mannerist Era<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> See FRIEDLANDER (1957), whose essays reach back as far as the 1910s; SYPHER (1955) whose second stage in *Four Stages of Renaissance Style: Transformations in Art and Literature, 1400–1700* is Mannerism; HAUSER, 1965; and SHEARMAN, 1967).

<sup>12</sup> Vol. 3 of *Studi musicali* (Florence: Olschki, 1974) is devoted to the proceedings of Pirrotta’s 1973 congress, convened at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, on “Manierismo in arte e musica”; p.131-218 in it are given over to Edward Lowinsky’s “The Problem of Mannerism in Music: An Attempt at a Definition.”

So here is the genius of Pirrotta's quiet move: Even before the conferences and books, he posed limits to the specification of musical mannerism that most of the scholars who later attempted to delineate it did not. He saw that the most productive direction the discussion could take was not toward typologies and trait-lists and composer-rosters but instead toward the more general recognition of the setting-in of a new kind stylistic self-consciousness<sup>13</sup>. Deeper still than this, he sensed that the very *possibility* of such self-consciousness, of *deliberately* adopting a *maniera*, might have been new in the sixteenth century. Pirrotta felt, no doubt, something right about this as an insight into the Italian culture of the time, which he knew so well; it fit with all the self-regard marked in archetypal texts like *Il cortegiano*. *Sprezzatura* is the Italian word coined by Castiglione to capture this self-regard, its ease and its intensity; the word reappeared, in musical discourse, seventy-five years later, when Giulio Caccini reused it to describe the performance manner needed for his *Nuove musiche*. For Pirrotta, stylistic particulars were not the issue; it was not chromatic voice-leading in this or that madrigal, not distorted perspective in this or that painting, not a contorted pose in this or that statue than counted, but something broader: the possibility of thinking styles in a way different from before. Here is a self-fashioning subtly different from that of Greenblatt or of McClary.

What Pirrotta meant by the adoption of a polyphonic *maniera*, ultimately, was the solidification of a cultural formation that took its place alongside the solo rendition of love songs (a tradition, as I have said, that continued through the *cinquecento*). He meant to signal that the two traditions were distinct in more than their musical means. And he raised the possibility that, in the space between the traditions, an artifice, a making, a *poiesis* of a novel sort revealed itself as a special ingredient of elite artistic culture. All this we may infer, I think, without doing violence to Pirrotta's statement at the close of his little article.

In order to carry forward his thinking about *maniera* in regard to the madrigal, then, I want to consider the distinctions of these traditions in a context that will initially

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<sup>13</sup> Pirrotta was not entirely alone in this insight; in the *Studi musicali* conference proceedings, see James Haar, "Self-Consciousness about Style, Form and Genre in 16<sup>th</sup>-Century Music" (p.219-32), which stands almost alone there in offering an alternative to lists of stylistic traits as an approach to mannerism.

seem strange, but that will, I hope, quickly become less so: Friedrich Schiller's famous distinction of naïve and sentimental poets. It is my own McClaryan anachronism, which I will try to justify in what follows<sup>14</sup>. On the one hand was the tradition of solo song; let us call it *naïve* in Schiller's sense: a natural conveyance of authentic feeling, undivided from the nature or object conveyed (that is, the meanings and feelings of the words sung), but bound to their actuality. Here is how Serafino's biographer, writing in 1504, described his solo performances:

“Many players and singers saw that Serafino's fame came from the force of his recitation more than from his composing.... In reciting his poems he was so passionate and matched the music with the words so judiciously that he moved equally the souls of his listeners, whether wise or mediocre or plebeian or female...I believe there never was another poet more successful than he in expressing his thoughts.”

Here is a naturalness and an indivisibility of medium from object of expression, a lack of any interposed conceptualization between poem and musical setting. Indeed there is no distinction of poem from music, only sung words, *recitation*, as Serafino's biographer put it. As with the naïve poet, there can be here “no choice in his treatment,” as Schiller wrote (p.115), only the inevitability of singing words that would merely half exist otherwise, in spoken or written form.

On the other hand, opposed to this solo song, the polyphonic madrigal is a sentimental genre *par excellence*. This mode for Schiller admits of choices in treatment, since a space has opened up between actuality and the reflection upon it; it is not an immersion in nature or natural expressive modes but a seeking after *lost* nature (p.106). The reflection brings with it the possibility of focusing either on the object or its idealization; hence the poet's multiple choices. Indeed expressive force arises from the fact of this connection of object and idea, the first limited in its actuality, the second infinite (p.156), and neither of these is ever entirely absent. In this dual focus is created a kind of self-consciousness foreign to the naïve poet. The sentimental poet, Schiller wrote, “*reflects* upon the impression that objects make upon him, and only in that reflection is the emotion grounded which he himself experiences and which he excites in us” (p.116). This sounds to me, in a general way,

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<sup>14</sup> See SCHILLER, Friedrich von, 1966; page references given in the text.

like a madrigal composer at work, negotiating an alliance between his music and the words before him to be set. It does not sound to me like Serafino Aquilano reciting.

It might be argued that the emergence of the madrigal marks the first incursion of these things into music history. I do not mean to assert, of course, that composerly artifice first appeared in the west with the madrigal. One can quickly call to mind many earlier polyphonic repertoires, from organum to polyphonic Mass, from isorhythmic motet to form fixe *chanson*, to counter such an idea. I mean instead to suggest something more nuanced but probably no less controversial: that artifice came now to be connected to an *idealization of expressive poiesis* in a way that, if it was not entirely new, had few precedents before it, mainly some recent composers working in motet composition.

Neither do I mean to maintain that the idealism involved came to the madrigal in Schiller's Romantic version. Instead it was a Neoplatonic idealism, well dispersed through Italian high culture especially in treatises on love – the *trattati d'amore* – a tradition founded in Ficino's *Sopra lo amore*, a commentary on Plato's *Symposium* (FICINO, 1973). The sovereign, self-conscious powers of choice exercised by the composer/poet in the face of infinite idealism found their fifteenth- and sixteenth-century ideological foundation in the place accorded to man in the Neoplatonic chain of being, a place unique in participating in both material and immaterial realms. In his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, Pico della Mirandola, follower of Ficino, called the capacities originating from this special positioning nothing other than *magic*; it is a fact too often neglected by readers of this famous text that it culminates precisely in a celebration of natural magical powers<sup>15</sup>. I proposed in *Music and Renaissance Magic* that such magical powers form a constant background to musical expression throughout the sixteenth century. Whatever the degree of constancy, these philosophical and ideological bases show that we need only small adjustments to apply to sixteenth-century culture something like Schiller's infinite, idealized poetic sentimentality. In fact, in the long view, the application points up how Schiller's

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<sup>15</sup> See MIRANDOLA, Pico della, 1948, p.213-54; on magic, 246ff. For the Latin original with Italian translation, MIRANDOLA, Pico della, 1942; see especially p.148ff.

Romantic idealism, along with much other Romantic thought, was a distant outgrowth of the early-modern Neoplatonic flowering.

To return to the madrigal: Its expressive force resides not in a natural recitation – a naturally sung state of lyrical words – but instead in a new kind of *distance* opened between words and music; this is what viewing it as a sentimental genre brings home with particular force. It may seem a surprising thing to say about a genre most renowned for, precisely, its tight bond of words and music. But the point is that the Italian lyrical tradition had here for the first time discovered a distinct, independent *poetry* to be joined together with a separate *music*, where before it had known something closer to undivided recitation. We might ponder the role of the printing press in this shift, and not just the musical press; as thousands of copies of more and more editions of poetry new and old began to flood the literate marketplace, poetry-as-words-alone, not recitation or song, was reified and materialized as never before.

The madrigal, in this view, is not so much a *depiction* of a subjectivity, to recall McClary, as it is the adopting of a *stance* toward the world – hence an expression of the subjectivization of its creators. (We need not go farther, asserting the madrigal to be a Marxian hailing or interpellation of its creators, though such a position is not far afield from the one I envision here). This stance has at its heart a new space between object and expression and a new exploration of that space. It was something akin to this stance, I think, that Pirrotta had in mind when he described the polyphonic *maniera* of music in the *cinquecento*. He was thinking of the eruption of a genre in which style could regard itself, critique itself, *think* itself – but only through its productive distance from another medium.

So to the question, “Why were there madrigals?”, Pirrotta’s suggestion, if it cannot help but provoke other questions, leads at least to this preliminary answer: The powers of music were reframed in the adoption of a polyphonic *maniera*, bringing music (and specifically secular song) into a new relation with word and world. This relation was not quite accessible for Serafino Aquilano or his like, who carried forward a distinct, earlier tradition. But it could fall into place once the idealism and

sovereign human powers championed by the Neoplatonists infected the singing of love lyrics with *sprezzatura* – self-knowing, critical distance<sup>16</sup>.

This new relation took powerful hold across the middle of the sixteenth century – gradually, to be sure: the madrigal did not fully come into its own until after 1550. In the later sixteenth century the relation would spread from the madrigal to other genres, finding fertile ground in the French *chanson* and in outgrowths of the madrigal from eastern Europe to England. By 1600, in Italy itself, even solo singers could not avoid the stance. Now they too were divided from their words, presented *with* choices, as Schiller would have it, hailed by disjunctions between the world and the expressive modes in it. The reciting that was the *métier* of Serafino now needed to be thought through, constructed, idealized. This is part of what is revealed in Caccini's elaboration of performance practice in his *Nuove musiche* and in his recourse to the ideology of *sprezzatura* to justify it. It is likewise revealed in the many other prescriptions for new modes of solo song, including dramatic ones, stretching from the 1580s well into the new century.

### **3 - Techniques and Consequences of Madrigalian *Maniera***

All this begins to answer the question of the madrigal, though it is merely a beginning. It points toward archaeological, epistemic formations, shaped by and shaping more visible cultural developments, as well as toward ideologies forming within discursive and institutional frames. At the same time it points also in another direction, back toward the madrigal itself, raising questions about the consequences of the new *maniera* in the genre's unfolding.

One consequence of self-consciousness in the genre is clear: its ratcheting-up of musical means and gestural distinctiveness. The madrigal is famously venturesome in these aspects, and this venturesomeness increased across the late sixteenth century, proliferating new musical devices and techniques and helping to differentiate sub-styles within the genre as a whole. Stylistic self-consciousness (sentimentality,

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<sup>16</sup> For a proposal of Neoplatonic ideas in a particular madrigal, see LA VIA, Stefano, 2002, p.75-116.

*maniera*) is in a general way an accelerant of stylistic change; traditions that are naïve in Schiller's sense tend more toward consolidation or stasis. The mechanism of this change involves a paradoxical aspect of self-consciousness: it is always also *other-consciousness*, outer- as well as inner-directed. We can strongly sense, by the 1580s and 90s, madrigal composers listening *around* themselves as they worked, intent on adapting and surpassing the best ideas of their competitors. This sense is palpable, to cite two of many examples, in Gesualdo's reliance on Luzzasco in his first books, or in the wide catchment, now vying with Marenzio, now with Wert, of Monteverdi's early madrigal styles.

In specific, compositional terms, the most pervasive and important consequences of the madrigalian *maniera* concern the nature of the space opened between music and word – or, more precisely, the construction of this space by composers. Most general accounts of the genre, and even some more detailed ones, analyze this space essentially in terms of *madrigalisms* – those local devices in the music created variously to portray the meaning of the words in a more-or-less iconic fashion or convey, more viscerally, their emotional import. Such accounts can leave the impression that composing a madrigal involved little more than reading the poem, choosing an array of appropriate musical icons, and patching them into a coherent sequence. This misconception has hovered around the genre from the time of Vincenzo Galilei, who lived alongside the composers themselves, down to the present day. Galilei derided the madrigalists for their *laceramento della poesia* and lauded the reciting of actors as models to follow; I suspect he would have appreciated Serafino's performances (GALILEI, 1967, p.88-90)<sup>17</sup>.

The way madrigal composers came to construct the new space between words and music can only be approached trivially by such a view. This is because, first, madrigalisms are not as prevalent in the genre as a whole as such accounts make them seem. Surveying broad stretches of the madrigalian repertory, in fact, you will find few or none. This means that the relation of music and words turns on other aspects of both, and I will mention many of these below.

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<sup>17</sup> For a recent account couched in similarly limited terms, see TARUSKIN, 2005, vol. 1, chap. 17.

Second and more significant, even when madrigalisms do occur they cannot be separated from other *musical* concerns. They never cease to be shaped, constrained, and in fact liberated by these concerns. Madrigalisms are ambivalent devices – not merely working in the service of the words, but instead exploring the new distance between word and music and filling it out with a set of musical values. These can have the effect not of bolstering the meanings of the words but of something closer to the opposite, attenuating or dissipating linguistic meaning in favor of certain kinds of musical formalism. We might call this effect one of *semantic dissipation*, worked on the sung words by the music at the very moment of madrigalistic expression.

We can examine two rather different examples of this semantic dissipation at the beginning of Giaches de Wert's magnificent setting of Petrarch's sonnet *in morte di Laura*, "*Valle, che de' lamenti miei se' piena.*" The music in question sets the first two lines of the poem<sup>18</sup>:

<i>Valle, che de' lamenti miei se piena,</i>	Valley filled with my laments,
<i>fiume, che spesso del mio pianger cresci...</i>	River so often swelled by my weeping...

The madrigalisms here are commonplace examples of the two general varieties into which such devices fall. The diminished fourth setting the word *lamenti* is an *affective* madrigalism, hinting at lamentation in its out-of-the-ordinary musical gesture, oriented also toward what we would call the minor mode; while the long scalar descents on *fiume* are more *pictorial* in orientation, presenting a musical image of flowing water. This is a fair enough conventional description of the word/music relation here, in terms of madrigalisms, but it hardly begins to capture the powerful effect of Wert's music as a setting of these words. It cannot do so, because Wert's setting constructs not so much a narrowing of the distance between the music and the words as a *widening* of it—and with this, a dissipation of verbal meaning in favor of sheer musical design.

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<sup>18</sup> Listen to the vocal ensemble Apollo's Noyse performing this opening at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP\\_a87ISQC8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP_a87ISQC8)

The first line is set in each voice more-or-less as a whole, with the emphasis (and the diminished fourth) on the word *lamenti*. But the voices are arrayed in an imitative texture, indeed in a point of imitation of a length quite extraordinary for a madrigal; this, along with the soft-hexachord, minor-mode sound, gives the work immediately a gravity more customary in motet than madrigal. (If you want to hear just how much this madrigal partakes of Wert's conception of the motet, listen to his setting of the Biblical plaint *Vox in rama*, published a few years before *Valle, che de' lamenti miei*.) From the start, the point of imitation takes on its own, musical dynamic. It seems to begin three times, in dove-tailed phrases, before it can find its way to the closure of a solid cadence. With the second beginning the texture, thin at first in the manner of points of imitation, thickens to all five voices; but this alone cannot bring the passage home. The third beginning, instead, while maintaining the full texture, widens the pitch-range or *tessitura* of the ensemble as a whole; this is a subtle effect because it is the inner voices that reach particularly high in their ranges, not the soprano. This crescendo of tessitura, so to speak, finally brings the rendition of the first line of the poem to a close, almost a full minute into the madrigal.

The dynamic here builds an extended musical trajectory and shape, which together lead the listener through a build-up from silence to outcry and from stillness to tired motion. There can be nothing quite like it in a single line of Petrarch; and, if we stop to imagine Serafino's singing of this very sonnet, we cannot think that there could have been anything like it there either. The poem has been lacerated, as Galilei might complain, but its general demeanor has been conveyed through a fine musical *design* of deep expressivity.

The close of this point of imitation is dove-tailed with the setting of the second line of Petrarch's poem, and here at once two extraordinary things happen, one a purely musical event, the other hovering between music and language but *not* involving linguistic meaning as such. First, another point of imitation begins – the last thing we would expect from a madrigalist, and from this madrigalist in particular, after the long imitative opening that precedes it. This second point of imitation has its own musical design. Staggered, thickly overlapping voices slide slowly downward, finally coalescing into fauxbourdon-like parallelisms and leading to another cadence. At first

the soprano stands aloof from the other voices, moving slowly *upward* rather than down; then she joins in their flow.

This point of imitation does not accommodate the whole of Petrarch's second line, *fiume, che spesso del mio pianger cresci*, but only its first word, *fiume*. And this brings the second extraordinary feature of this passage. By singling out this word and according it its own imitative development, Wert gives us more than a musical icon of flowing water. He suffuses the music with the vocalic assonance *-u-*, a sound, if not exactly rare in Petrarchan Italian, at least infrequent, indeed much less prominent than any other vowel. (There are only two other instances of this sound in accented syllables in the whole of this sonnet.) And then, having isolated it, Wert lingers over this sound for a full half minute. The effect has little to do with the meaning of the word, its semantic dimension, and nothing to do with grammar or syntax – it is, after all, just one vowel. Instead Wert catches a phonetic quality and explodes it through prolongation and textural complexity, pushing it into a space of vocalization that is gestural and paralinguistic.

If we are tempted to doubt Wert's consciousness of the phonetic distortion he has here worked on language, we need only look as far, again, as the motet *Vox in Rama*, already cited for its close relation to this madrigal. Here the same effect is created, with the same vowel. The Biblical words Wert singled out, with a wavering, repetitious line imitated in all the voices, are *ululatus multus*. It is the wailing, the ululation, that Wert captured in the motet, and there the transplanted madrigalism brings semantics to the foreground. But in *Valle, che de' lamenti miei*, where the meaning of the word is "river," Wert pointed his technique toward a more purely musical space of non-semantic, polyphonic plaint.

We see in this example that the polyphonic *maniera* of the madrigal can lead to anti-semantic tendencies even in the process of constructing the reflective space between words and music. It is this dual tendency, at once converging on the meaning of language and steering away from it – carrying that meaning, then, to a singular musical place – that makes madrigalian polyphony so different from the many varieties of song that preceded it in the western tradition. By engaging more intently

than ever before with the meanings of words and phrases, madrigalian music gains a capacity to transform them into something unexpected as they are prolonged, elaborated in contrapuntal play, and distanced from a pragmatic linguistic context; indeed words can be carried very far from any language-like effect at all. Even when their isolation from their context is not so dramatic, as here in Wert's first point of imitation, a musical formalization can take hold that structures its independent affective stance toward the world all the more powerfully because *of* its bond to the words.

It seems, then, that we need other terms, in addition to *semantic dissipation*, to understand the range of effects of the musical setting of words in the madrigal. There is here the potential for an *affective dissociation of phonetics from language*, as in the *-u-* of *fiume*, where a sound is drawn away from its verbal source, approaching the status of a non-linguistic vocalization. This dissociation can involve not only phonetics but *prosody* as well – by which term linguists refer to the intonational shapes and rhythmic articulations of speech. These are the effects of speech closest to singing, and linguists considering prosody often refer, somewhat casually, to the “melodies” or “tunes” of spoken phrases.

Now, it is hardly surprising that the music of madrigals seizes on this gestural, intonational aspect of language and works to capture it in melody and motive. Indeed this shaping of musical means to the patterns of intonation and accent in speech is one of the most pervasive strategies in madrigal composition, and there is no dissociation involved in most such examples. In shorter examples, it takes the form of rhythms that capture the accentual patterns of words, or melodic turns that approximately match the intonational shapes employed in speaking them. Longer examples accommodate entire phrases, lines of poetry, or even whole sentences to suitable rhythmic declamation by the singers or, more subtly, to melodic shapes tailored to the rise and fall of speech intonations. I think the melodic qualities that created this latter correlation are what some musicians of the time meant when they used the word *aria*<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> For a wide-ranging understanding of the term *aria* in sixteenth-century music, see HAAR (1986), passim and esp. chap. 4.

Now and then, however, the subversive, anti-linguistic prerogatives of the musician assert themselves, and even the prosody – the most musical, gestural aspect of language – is carried far from linguistic effect. At these moments a larger musical formalization takes hold – something like the dynamic in the opening point of imitation from Wert’s madrigal – and a basic force of linguistic expression is coopted and turned to new purpose. An example is Monteverdi’s well-known setting from 1603 of Giambattista Guarini’s fetching epigram, *Ohimè, se tanto amate*. Here is the poem<sup>20</sup>:

*Ohimè, se tanto amate  
di sentir dir ohimè, deh, perché fate  
chi dice ohimè morire?  
S’io moro, un sol potrete  
languido e doloroso ohimè sentire;  
ma se, cor mio, volete  
che vita abbia da voi e voi da me,  
avrete mill’e mille dolci ohimè.*

Alas, if you love so much  
to hear “alas” said, then why  
do you kill him who says it?  
If I die, you’ll hear only one  
languid and sorrowful alas;  
but if, my love, you wish that  
I take life from you and you from me,  
you’ll have thousands and thousands of sweet alases.

The crucial word here, *ohimè*, alas, has across its two syllables its own characteristic long-short rhythm, a sustained assonance followed by an abbreviated one, which encourages a sagging prosody in its pronunciation. This was not lost on madrigal composers, most of whom encountered the word frequently enough, and least of all on Monteverdi. He set the opening *ohimè*s, memorably and with bittersweet dissonance, as drooping, parallel thirds for the upper voices against a static bass; the musical “sigh” is a gestural, prosodic madrigalism. But Monteverdi did not stop here: *Every* time the word is sung in the piece, it is delivered with this drooping motive; and the word occurs a lot, in lines 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 of the eight-line poem. In its repetition, Monteverdi’s musical motive quickly begins to take on a status largely independent from the word sung, becoming an organizing gesture for the music as a whole. And Monteverdi famously saved the best for last, when the “thousands and thousands of sweet *ohimè*s” to be had (if only mercy will be forthcoming) are played out with a full eighteen repetitions of the motive.

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<sup>20</sup> Listen to the Consort of Musicke performing this madrigal at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbdpfOPJNFQ>  
Then compare the performance of R. Alessandrini and the Concerto Italiano at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEkPbkHHkNs>

The organizing power of the *idée fixe*, even before this finish, forms a lynchpin for the madrigal, directing and determining its moves. We have the impression that all the other musical gestures – the quick declamation on “*se tanto amate / di sentir dir*,” the exclamations “*deh, perché fate*,” even the prolonged, whining *doloroso* – function only to carry us to the motive’s next occurrence. All the other gestures but one, to be exact: At the central turn in the conceit of the poem, “*Ma se, cor mio, volete...*,” for once, we sense a true contrast. For four bars Monteverdi directs us toward a new tonal center, new motives, new rhythmic animation; then quickly we return to *ohimè*’s for the finish. The overall power of the *ohimè* motive, in league with this miniature, central contrast, is to define an ABA form that exerts an irresistible force of musical coherence; at the same time this form accommodates exactly not the individual words but the *general* conceptual shape of Guarini’s epigram: erotic agony, a divergence to new possibility, and then a return to a (potentially) transformed erotic agony.

Left behind in the dust of this powerful musical sweep, this compelling, non-linguistic projection of the conceit of the poem, is the correlation of musical gesture to the word *ohimè* itself. The prosodic sigh has been lifted, hypostasized to a level of musico-rhetorical formalism that a single word cannot encompass. Musical organization has dissociated prosody from word.

The larger dimension evident here in the matching of words and music is found everywhere in the mature madrigal. I called it a *rhetorical* dimension just now in order to signal its affiliation with classical Latin oratory, revived and further developed in the sixteenth century. I am not here suggesting that composers routinely studied their Cicero and Quintilian, though it seems clear in some cases that they did. I am instead proposing that the rhetorical culture of Italian courts, salons, and academies had its general role to play in the way madrigal composers approached poems and, further, that this role was one that encouraged composers to think in terms of a broad musical organization of their madrigals, to shape their music across the long span in accord with the overall discursive flow of the poems they set. They saw around them a culture of address formalized according to certain broad organizational principles, and they borrowed, not the exact principles that pertained

to verbal discourse, but the *idea* of such principles as it might be fostered through specifically musical means. This is Pirrotta's self-critical *maniera* at work, inhabiting the new opening between music and words.

But as composers borrowed this idea, forging an intersection of rhetorical discourse with the madrigal, the specificities of language often gave way to a concern with broader formal designs in which musical means and prerogatives emerged preeminent. In the reflective space between music and words, yet another set of non-linguistic forces arose. There formed a *musical dissociation of discursive shape* from verbal discourse.

We can see the beginnings of this dissociation, on a local level, in certain polyphonic techniques unavailable to either speech or solo song by which composers analyzed – using that word in its original meaning – the syntax of their poets. These are moments when contrapuntal textures allow two different musical motives to superimpose two phrases of words bound in grammatical dependency. This technique reaches at least as far back as Rore in the 1550s; Monteverdi is particularly fond of it. He will present a dependent phrase first, then juxtapose it in counterpoint with the second phrase on which it depends, and finally present the second, independent phrase alone; thus the clarity of the words is assured while the music performs its grammatical analysis.

The technique encourages a dissociating prominence of musical structuring. In *O primavera*, a Guarini setting from 1592, Monteverdi contrived to work this technique with three phrases, in a *tour de force* of triple counterpoint that opens the work and lasts twenty-eight measures. Perhaps we should call such a passage, in proper oratorical fashion, an *exordium*. And indeed a larger formal organization is at stake: The first three lines of poetry, the ones set in triple counterpoint, all make up an invocation to the beauties of spring; their thought is only completed in the following lines, which say, in essence, “*You* return, but without bringing back my happy, hopeful days.” The contrast between the *exordium* and the music that follows it has exactly the character of a well-made Ciceronian oration, introducing its subject in an opening section before getting down to the particulars of the argument. But the effect here is a largely musical one; it would be felt, I am tempted to say, without any words at all.

If this seems to put the matter of dissociation too strongly, it is at least clear that imitative polyphony came regularly to play in madrigals specific structural roles in their general musical designs – that is, *musical* structural roles. Imitation functions most frequently either as an exordium beginning the piece, or as a peroration ending it – or as both. These prominent structural locations for points of imitation were not new in the madrigal, of course. Countless motets and Mass movements begin with points of imitation or end with them or, often, both. And the tendency for a homophonic, chordal texture to blossom gently into polyphony at its end is marked in pre-madrigalian genres such as the *frottola* and early Parisian *chanson*. The point of imitation that ends Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno* is as much a bow to this formal heritage as it is a madrigalism expressing the “thousand deaths” of the words. But this musical heritage is now put to a new, rhetorical use. It takes its start from discursive shapes in the poetry set, but then, invoking its place in a history of purely musical design, it substitutes for that poetic discourse a musical one.

One of Cipriano de Rore's most famous madrigals, *Dalle belle contrade*, shows the musical design well developed, and in a form not fully dissociated from the poetic discourse. This madrigal is a miniature piece of pastoral erotica, with one lover narrating the scene at beginning and end and, in the middle, the other lover speaking an amorous complaint – before the two get back to the pressing business at hand. The narrative sections, the short introduction and the longer peroration, are both developed imitatively; the direct speech in between, instead, is set to that subtle, staggered chordal declamation of which Rore was a master. A fuller dissociation of musical and poetic discourse is seen in Rore's setting of Petrarch's agonized sestina, “*Mia benigna fortuna e'l viver lieto*<sup>21</sup>.”

Rore set the first two stanzas of the poem only, in separate musical sections. The first of these moves mainly, again, in that flexible Rorean pseudo-homophony, but it opens out at its end for an affecting, imitative peroration on Petrarch's yearning for death. The second part, setting the second stanza, shows a middle section also mainly

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<sup>21</sup> Listen to Paul van Nevel and The Huelgas Ensemble perform this madrigal at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gElZQ7Po\\_9Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gElZQ7Po_9Y)

chordal in effect, but it begins and ends with positively anguished points of imitation. The exordium here is famous for its opening leap of a major sixth on *crudele*, cruel, while the peroration brings sagging, exhausted, and chromatically inflected descending fourths to one of Petrarch's most memorable lines: "*e'l mio duro martir vince ogni stile*" – "and my harsh suffering defeats all expression." These imitative moments certainly convey the general emotional stance of Petrarch's words; but then, they could have accomplished this in setting *any* line of a self-pitying outburst such as this. Their more fundamental motivation is not text-expression but discursive formation. They advance a *musical* design, first and foremost, congruent with the outlines of a general *rhetorical* organization. But in this case, unlike in *Dalle belle contrade*, the rhetorical organization is not evident in the poetry; it is a musical structure alone.

#### 4 - Provisional Answers

Unlike Petrarch, silenced by his sorrow, madrigal composers encountered no blocks to expression; *stile* was not for them a problem. It is, after all, the implausible outpouring of their works across the second half of the *cinquecento* that set in motion the thoughts developed here, and perhaps we have made some progress in understanding the motivations behind the flood. They involve, I think, a new state that took shape in expressive languages, both musical and poetic ones. This was something broader than particular constructions of subjectivity; it was broader than particular enunciatory positions given voice in this or that madrigal, or the mimesis of particular dramatic personae often assumed by the five-voice ensemble – for example those pastoral lovers from *Dalle belle contrade*<sup>22</sup>. Most obviously, the motivations for the madrigalian outpouring stem from something broader than a trivial game with madrigalisms. Interpretations of the madrigal on the basis of word-painting and little more are simply poor interpretations – inattentive or uninformed or worse. On the other hand, those other interpretations – of depicted subjectivity, enunciative stance,

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<sup>22</sup> For canny analyses of Monteverdian enunciatory positions and personae, see Mauro Calcagno, *From Madrigal to Opera: Monteverdi's Staging of the Self* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

dramatic mimesis, and so forth – are not impoverished. They highlight basic aspects of this repertory, aspects that grew in importance, in fact, as the sixteenth-century drew near its end. Nevertheless, even they risk missing the forest for the trees, and it is the forest that I have hoped to step back and survey here, with the help of Pirrotta's *maniera* and Schiller's neo-Neoplatonism.

In the madrigal, polyphonic music came to be a force of verbal and poetic exegesis to a degree never before seen; this we have understood at least since the genre came to the attention of musicologists and was revived by performers. Exactly from within this poetic, linguistic impulse, however, madrigal composition generated a set of musical possibilities – *independent* musical possibilities, even – which, if they had begun to emerge in some sacred composition earlier, had not there assumed the momentum of a cultural movement and its new forms of subjectivization. In the madrigal they could act with a potency unknown before, because their independence was of a new sort, borne of possibilities discovered in the reflective distance opened between language and music. This space was one where language enabled the burgeoning of musical but language-like behaviors, where musical style as a counter to language became an object of contemplation, and where language in musical setting was carried to new, sometimes *anti-linguistic* places. In all this the madrigal is not so much a genre as a *meta-genre* – a genre about the possibility of genre, or at least about the particular conditions of its own possibility. There are strong reasons to think that this marked a development in western musical culture of an importance extending far beyond madrigals themselves. And, within these strong reasons, perhaps we can discover a partial answer to the puzzle of their proliferation.

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<[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP\\_a87ISQC8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP_a87ISQC8)> Accessed : 22/11/2015.

### Note about the author

**Garry Tomlinson** is a musicologist and cultural theorist known for his interdisciplinary breadth. His teaching, lecturing, and scholarship have ranged across a diverse set of interests, including the history of opera, early-modern European musical thought and practice, the musical cultures of indigenous American societies, jazz and popular music, and the philosophy of history and critical theory. His newest book, *A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity* (Zone/MIT, 2015), moves into still other territory, exploring the evolutionary dynamics by which humans came to be musicking creatures. Tomlinson's earlier books include *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance*; *Music in Renaissance Magic*; *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera*; *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact*; and *Music and Historical Critique*. He is the co-author, with Joseph Kerman, of the music appreciation textbook *Listen*, now in its

sixth edition. Tomlinson has garnered prizes from the American Musicological Society, ASCAP, the Modern Language Association, and the British Academy. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and a MacArthur award.