SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE

"A Quest'olmo, a quest'ombre et a quest'onde": Swimming in Musical Marinisms

"A Quest'olmo, a quest'ombre et a quest'onde": um mergulho em maneirismos musicais

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Abstract: Giambattista Marino's (1569-1625) poems were set to music by many composers during the first half of the 17th century. His epigrammatic style, using witty jokes, rhetorical devices, erotic conceits and various kinds of baroque ornaments, was both imitated and criticized in his own time, later underestimated and condemned as a period of decline in the history of Italian poetry. More recently, literary historians have reassessed his status, but musicians and musicologists have been slow in following their example. Poems are made intensely "pathetic", by means of sudden changes, unexpected metaphors, complex and uncommon rhetorical figures. Composers at the beginning of the 17th century were looking exactly for that: to reduce the whole madrigal (or other vocal genres) into a few concise textual-musical ideas (using the technique of contrast, like painters were doing with the chiaroscuro), fitting the ideal of expressing *affetti* and producing *meraviglia*. To which extent did composers accept and exploit this new language and what does it imply? What are the changes in their choices in the transition from the canonical madrigal towards the modern monody? How is the original potential of the poem conveyed or dispersed when it is set to music? These questions will be the central issues of this paper.
Keywords: Marinism; Marino and music; Italian poetry; epigrammatic style.

Resumo: Os poemas de Giambattista Marino (1569-1625) foram musicados por muitos compositores durante a primeira metade do século XVII. O estilo epigramático de Marino, usando piadas espirituosas, artifícios retóricos, conceitos eróticos e vários tipos de ornamentos barrocos, foi tanto imitado quanto criticado na sua época, depois subestimado e condenado como um período de declínio na história da poesia italiana. Mais recentemente, os historiadores literários têm reavaliado seu status, mas os músicos e musicólogos têm sido lentos em seguir seu exemplo. Os poemas são feitos intensamente "patéticos", por meio de mudanças bruscas, metáforas inesperadas, complexas e figuras retóricas incomuns. Compositores, no início do século 17 estavam procurando exatamente isso: reduzir todo o madrigal (ou outros gêneros vocais) em algumas ideias textuais-musical concisas (utilizando a técnica de contraste, como pintores estavam fazendo com o claro-escuro), cabendo o ideal de expressar *affetti* e produzindo *meraviglia*. Até que ponto os compositores aceitam explorar esta nova linguagem e o que isso implica? Quais são as mudanças em suas escolhas na transição do madrigal canônico para o monodia moderna? Como o potencial original do poema é transmitido ou dispersado quando musicado? Estas questões serão os temas centrais deste trabalho.
Palavras-chave: Marino e música; marinismo; poesia italiana; estilo epigramático.

1 - Giambattista Marino

Published in four main collections – *Rime* (Venice, 1602 reprinted as *La Lira* in 1608, with a third part added in 1614), *La Galleria* (Venice, 1619-1620), *La Sampogna* (Paris, 1620) and *Adone* (Paris, 1623) – the works of the Italian poet Giambattista Marino (1569-1625) met with a great success among the composers of the first half of the Seventeenth Century. We know over 800 musical compositions in all the current styles and genres: madrigals, monophonic songs, stage works.[1]

Marino's epigrammatic style, with witty jokes, rhetorical devices, erotic conceits and various kinds of baroque ornaments, was both imitated and criticized in his own time, though later underestimated and condemned as a period of decline in the history of Italian poetry. More recently, literary historians have reassessed his status, but musicians and musicologists have been slow in following their example. Not only are most of the musical compositions on Marino's on this topic is also still quite scarce. Only a few poems by Francesco Petrarca, Torquato Tasso and Giovanni Battista Guarini enjoyed the success of Marino's poetry among musicians. Why did Marino achieve this importance? Even when Marino chose the same subjects investigated by previous and contemporary poets, he treated them with a new, original epigrammatic synthesis, and his extreme laconicism lets the imagination room work on the rest. Common images, like the female body, are treated in a quite original way. Here the attention is drawn not only to the hair, eyes, breast, hands, voice of the beloved, but also on extravagant details such as flaws, feet, and objects (fans, stains on clothes, little dogs, defects and imperfections). Poems are made intensely "pathetic", by means of sudden changes, unexpected metaphors, complex and uncommon rhetorical figures. The sceptical attitude towards the idea of a successful love affair and the mere contemplation of the beauty of the body as an aesthetic object are treated quite originally.

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[1] For a general framework of the musical settings of Marino's texts see R. Simon and D. Gidrol, *G. B. Marino e la musica del '600*, in "Studi secenteschi", 14 (1973), p.79-187, and *RePIM. Repertorio della Poesia Italiana in Musica, 1500-1700*, a cura di Angelo Pompilio: http://repim.muspe.unibo.it/.

The composers at the beginning of the 17th century were looking exactly for this: the reduction of the whole madrigal (or other vocal genres) into a few concise textual-musical ideas (using the technique of contrast, similar to what painters were doing with the *chiaroscuro*), fitting with the ideal of expressing *affetti* and producing *meraviglia*.

The composers who chose to use Marino's poems as a basis for their music were very young musicians, all younger than Marino and almost all partisans of the new monodic style. The first *Rime* were published at the same time as Giulio Caccini's *Le nuove musiche*, the manifesto for the new way of singing the monodic pieces, called *recitar cantando* by this composer and intellectual who had already in 1600, together with Jacopo Peri, composed the score for Rinuccini's *Euridice.* It is therefore quite understandable that the madrigals composed on Marino's texts are committed to the new style. And it is not surprising to find among the musicians who have chosen these texts some of the most fervent and bold experimenters of the new musical possibilities: Marco da Gagliano (1582-1643), Sigismondo d'India (c1582-1629; one of the most radical monodists), Tomaso Pecci (1576-1604; described by Claudio Monteverdi as one of the representatives of the *seconda pratica*), Antonio Cifra (1584-1629) and Claudio Saracini (1586-1630). Nor should we forget that in the meantime Monteverdi himself, starting from his sixth book of madrigals (1614, at a time when his *seconda pratica* was well advanced), used Marino's texts.

The extensive production of music on Marino's poems became very intense after 1620, echoing all over Europe. However, the study of this music is important not only to throw light on the recent innovations of the music language at the beginning of 17th century, but also in order to better investigate the context in which the traditional polyphonic madrigal went through the last stage of its existence. As Gary Tomlinson remarked in the opening lecture of the IV Early Music Week of UFMG (2013), we do not yet know enough about the madrigal, so that some questions still remain unanswered. Why did the western music culture produce so many books of madrigals? Who where the actual addressees of such a large number of compositions?

Who sang those pieces? Moreover, as to the general issue of the scant attention paid to Marino by musicians and musicologists, other questions arise: to what extent did the composers accept and exploit this new language and what did it imply? What are the changes in their choices in the transition from the canonical madrigal towards the modern monody? How is the original potential of the poem conveyed or lessened when it is set to music?

2 - Swimming in Musical Marinisms

These questions were the central issues of the paper presented at the *IV Semana de Música Antiga da UFMG* (Belo Horizonte, 25th September 2013), which is related to the performances, within the same festival, of the Norwegian ensembles *Calliophon* and *L'État Libre de Neige*. They consisted in "theatrical" concerts of music and poetry surrounding the poet Giambattista Marino and his influential baroque style, employing both visual, textual and musical elements, in the real spirit of the Baroque. The research project on Marino and this music was therefore a practical one.

A quest'olmo, a quest'ombre et a quest'onde (MARINO, 2014, s/p). *Swimming in musical Marinisms* is the title of the project, a theoretical and practical undertaking, that had its first public presentation in a festival which embodies exactly the spirit of integrating scientific research and artistic production. The reason behind the title: the first survey of authors and music surrounding the figure of Marino was, precisely because of the lack of attention mentioned above, like taking a dive in a liquid that appeared incredibly dense and full of life, just like an unknown sea sometimes initially appears. The whole series of poems on the theme of the sea – that consists in a sort of poetic-laudatory correspondence between Marino and other authors of his time – occurs as an intellectual game of references to the poet's last name: *È MAR la Poesia: fan dolce invito*; *MARINO, tu se' quel MAR, ch'a' naviganti*; *O ricco, o nobil MAR*; *MAR sei, MARIN, de l'Ocean maggiore*; *MARINO, anzi gran MAR, tu più ch'argento*; *MARINO, al suon di tua sonora cetra*; *MARIN, se 'n grembo al mare, o tra le fronde*; *MARIN, che con le Muse i dì comparti*.

According to the widely accepted definition given by *Enciclopedi Treccani*, "marinism" is a:

> style of poetry and literature started by Giambattista Marino, followed by many Italian writers of the seventeenth century, and characterized by an almost inexhaustible wealth of rich concepts and formal virtuosity, an idyllic-sensual inspiration combined with ambitions of depth and even of morality and religiosity. It remains a central experience in the history of the Baroque style, reflecting also the spiritual crisis which troubled Italy in the 17th century. (TRECCANI, 2015. s/p).

In that group we could include the musicians who drew on the poetic world of Marino for an important part of their production (therefore: "musical marinisms"). Among the most famous composers, we mention (together with the already quoted ones): Antonio Il Verso (c1560-1621), Johann Hieronymus Kapsberger (c1580-1651), Giovanni Domenico Montella (c1570-1607), Pomponio Nenna (1556-1608), Salomone Rossi (1570-c1630), Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725).

A substantial part of the other authors remain absolutely unknown. Among their compositions we can find genuine, small masterpieces, that demonstrate, just like the most famous ones, a following of the innovative poetical-musical early Italian Baroque style, even when their composers were working in peripheral areas, far from the circles of intellectuals and the main courts. I refer for example to: Pietro Maria Marsolo (c1580-after 1614), Giovanni Ceresini (1584-after 1659); Giovanni Priuli (c1575-1626), Marc'Antonio Negri (?-1624), Pietro Pace (1559-1622), Tomaso Pecci (1576-1604), Alessandro Scialla (fl. 1610), Giovanni Valentini (1582/3-1649). Their music is almost never heard in concerts today. Furthermore, we should not forget composers coming from other countries: Richard Dering, (c1580-1630), Johann Grabbe, (1585-1655), Gilles Hayne (1590-1650), Léonard de Hodemont (c1575-1636), Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687), Johann Nauwach (c1595-c1630), Hans Nielsen (c1580-1626 or later), Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672).

The selection of music for the concert has been done according to the following criteria:

1) the goal of ensuring diversity at various levels: different periods, genres, combinations of voices, styles and contents, but also different poetic forms;

2) the intention to create a kind of narrative on a large scale of the love story typically evoked by Marino in most of his short poems – it is not by chance that the musicologist Paolo Fabbri wrote about some of Monteverdi's madrigals that they have to be considered as a "teatro ideale ed allusivo", a repertoire that, although it is not aimed at specific representation, has the perfect characteristics of the *stile rappresentativo* emerging at the beginning of the century (FABBRI, 1985, p.198). He quotes Orazio Vecchi in the prologue of his *Amfiparnaso* (1597): "si mira con la mente, / dov'entra per l'orecchie, / e non per gl'occhi" (VECCHI, 1597, p.6);

3) the idea of providing some examples of the rhetorical devices that characterize what Stigliani, a contemporary of Marino, called *stile metaforuto* ("metaphorical style") (MARINO, 1911-2, II, p.271, 345).

As to the span of the music on Marino's texts, the first source of their wide dissemination is found in the collections of madrigals by the Neapolitan Giovan Domenico MONTELLA (1595, 1596) and the Sicilian Tomaso GIGLIO (1601). The latest source is the manuscript madrigal by Alessandro Scarlatti *Arsi un tempo, e l'ardore* preserved in Vienna, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, for which we do not have an exact date.

With regard to the variety of poetic and musical genres, we find compositions that set to music *sonetti*, *madrigali* and *canzoni*: madrigals for five voices, madrigals for five voices *concertati*, madrigals for three voices (in different combinations of registers), madrigals for two voices *concertati* (the same), *villanelle alla napolitana*, arias or madrigals or *musiche* for solo voice, scenic works (Domenico MAZZOCCHI (1626), *La catena d'Adone* (libretto by Ottavio Tronsarelli from MARINO's *Adone*, 1623).

The favourite poetic form was the *madrigale*, a very free and flexible structure that could best be set to music according to the emerging ideal of creating a piece which is

completely devoted to expressing the emotional tenets of the text (the *affetti*). Because of the use of verses of seven and eleven syllables (*settenari* and *endecasillabi*), with their changing accentuation, the madrigal is perfect for conveying all the *nuances* of the new language of the *seconda pratica*. Not surprisingly, this kind of verses, which imitates at best the spoken language, was used in large parts of the emerging opera, the so-called *recitar cantando* – and later in the *recitativo*. Moreover, repetitions are very common in the madrigal form, and this is quite interesting for a musical setting. Let us consider, for example, the most used poem among musicians, *O chiome erranti, o chiome*, which will be discussed later

Errori di bella chioma
O chiome erranti, o chiome
dorate, inanellate,
o come belle, o come
e volate, e scherzate:
ben voi scherzando errate,
e son dolci gli errori,
ma non errate in allacciando cori.

Errors of a fine hair
Oh hair gone astray,
oh golden, curled hair
oh how lovely
you are flying and joking:
well, you are erring in joking,
and the errors are sweet,
but do not err in tying hearts.

As Martini stated, *se ci interessiamo ancora a questi testi è soprattutto grazie all'attuale fortuna della musica che li accompagna e che allora si dichiarava fedele interprete della lettera* – if we are still interested in these texts it is mainly due to the current fortune of the music that accompanies them and at that time was a faithful interpreter of the text (MARTINI, 1995, p.23). Pieces set on sonnets are fewer.

The resulting program is the following:

- Claudio Monteverdi, *A dio, Florida bella, il cor piagato* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Il sesto libro de' madrigali a cinque voci*, 1614);

- Marco Da Gagliano, *Mentre ch'a l'aureo crine* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Il terzo libro de' madrigali a cinque voci*, 1605);

- Marco Da Gagliano, *O chiome erranti, o chiome* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Il quarto libro de' madrigali a cinque voci*, 1606);

- Antonio Il Verso, *Pallidetto mio Sole* for soprano, tenor and bass (*Il secondo libro de' madrigali a tre voci*, 1605);

- Antonio Cifra, *Ben quel puro candore* for 2 sopranos and bass (*Scherzi et arie a una, due, tre et quattro voci*, 1614);

- Claudio Saracini, *Occhi de la mia vita* for soprano (*Le terze musiche per cantar et sonar nel chitarrone, arpicordo e altri stromenti*, 1620);

- Antonio Cifra, *Vivo mio Sol, tu giri* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Il secondo libro de' madrigali a cinque voci*, 1608);

- Sigismondo D'India, *Piange Madonna, et io* for soprano (*Le musiche da cantar solo nel clavicordo chitarone arpa doppia et altri istromenti simili*, 1609);

- Francesco Rasi, *Ardo, ma non ardisco il chiuso ardore* for tenor (*Vaghezze di musica per una voce sola*, 1608);

- Antonio Il Verso, *Sospir, che dal bel petto* for soprano, tenor and bass (*Il secondo libro de' madrigali a tre voci*, 1605);

- Giovanni Ceresini, *O tronchi innamorati* for tenor and bass (*Madrigali concertati a due, tre e quattro voci con il basso continuo*, 1627);

- Pomponio Nenna, *Taci bocca, deh taci* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Madrigali a cinque voci. Quinto libro*, 1612);

- Girolamo Frescobaldi, *Donna, siam rei di morte. Errasti, errai* for bass (*Primo libro d'arie musicali per cantarsi nel grauicimbalo e tiorba*, 1630);

- Johann Hieronymus Kapsberger, *Voi che dietro a fallaci e cieche scorte* for alto (*Libro secondo d'arie a una e più voci*, 1623);

- Claudio Saracini, *Io moro, ecco ch'io moro* for soprano (*Le musiche, madrigali e arie a una e a due voci per cantare e sonare nel chitarrone, arpicordo*, 1614);

- Pomponio Nenna, *Giunt'è pur Lidia il mio* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Madrigali a cinque voci. Quinto libro*, 1612);

- Domenico Mazzocchi, *La catena d'Adone* (libretto by Ottavio Tronsarelli from Marino's *Adone*, 1626*):* excerpts;

- Sigismondo D'India, *Presa fu l'alma al laccio* for 2 sopranos and bass (*Villanelle alla napolitana a tre voci. Libro primo*, 1610);

- Vincenzo Calestani, *Le note ove son chiusi i miei tormenti* for soprano (*Madrigali et arie per sonare et cantare … a una e due voci. Parto primo*, 1617);

- Sigismondo D'India, *Strana armonia d'amore* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Il quarto libro de' madrigali a cinque voci*, 1616);

- Alessandro Scarlatti, *Arsi un tempo, e l'ardore* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (ms. in Wien, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde).

As to the already mentioned protracted disinterest in Marino, which dates back to the Arcadian rationalism of the end of 17th century, we could quote the words of the influential literary scholar Alessandro Martini:

> …probably other no poet than Marino is more faithful to the romantic theme, and at the same time more alien to make vibrate the string of loving feelings in his readers. Such a glaring paradox is certainly not the last cause for his misfortune (MARTINI, 1995, p.26).

He offers a disenchanted image of love affairs. In the astonished wonder in the face of the admirable features of the beloved, we can read the cynical acceptance of her/his emotional instability and corrupt, immoral attitudes, the uncertain and illusory awareness of a love story at its beginning. The subject of love is a mere pretext: the poet's interest lies in the reactions which can arise by the relating of well-known

themes in unknown combinations, according to the baroque vogue of inspiring wonder by means of artifice. Therefore, for example, Marino

> [...] simply take literally the translated Petrarch [...] and develop all the logical possibilities with almost cynical indifference towards their meanings, bringing them up to the grotesque and the surreal [...] The Petrarchan metaphors and contradictions always dominate lyric poetry, but with a strange physical substance, entirely at odds with the very abstract intellectual code of the poetic language of Petrarch [...] the instruments of this transformation are the concepts and peculiarities that constitute paralogisms (fallacious arguments), which eventually disintegrate the tradition to which it refers to and from which it lives [...] the privileged place of this disintegration is the madrigal, a genre that enjoys greater freedom than the sonnet, that breathes more steadly, a genre of the highest fame. (MARTINI, 1995, p. 22-23).

In the madrigal we can almost always notice three parts: the traditional discovery of love, the doubt about its validity, the witty answer to the question.

Gary TOMLINSON (1982, p.572) goes further, suggesting that "introspection finds no place in the new poetics of Marino. His vision turns decisively outward, to the world of sensory experience, and his inability to transcend the image of life proffered by his five senses forms the foundation of his artistic experience". I think it is not a matter of inability, but of accurately planned poetical choices, of attention to processes rather than results. Quoting again Martini, woman is "no more a Petrarchan lady, but a female yielding to a possession that however it is only visual" (MARTINI, 1995, p.23).

Unfortunately, in the late rediscovery of Marino's poetry, affected by the romantic perspective of exaltation and contemplation of love and beauty, Marino's deliberately provocative and artful features were not fully understood. It would be useful to regard to Caravaggio's works, with their *chiaroscuro*, the brutal attitude of bodies and faces, and the derisory and mocking expressions of the subjects of his paintings, to understand that the absence of an idyllic contemplation of love is not a defect, but led to an era: the first Italian Baroque. However, Marino himself said he used "some metaphor figure, whose mysterious allegory alludes to some lascivious feeling, barely penetrable though awakened and witty intellects" (MARINO, 1911-12, p.76).

The program prepared for *Calliophon* traces on two levels the dynamics of love-disillusionment that characterizes Marino's poetry: at the level of the individual poem, and at the higher level of the narrative told by the concert. The opening scene is the parting of two lovers – a shepherd who departs from his nymph, so brilliantly set to music by Claudio Monteverdi. It is the beginning of a new day, the "sunrise", whose only soundscape is the noise of sighs, kisses and words of the two lovers. The retrospective of a love story, consummated in the manner which Marino describes so wittily, starts from here. A first portion of texts consists of the enumeration of the virtues of his beloved, but also of her indifference and her shadows.

In *Mentre ch'a l'aureo crine* e *O chiome erranti, o chiome*, the poet, becoming a part of the long Petrarchan tradition, glorifies his woman's hair. In the first poem, he describes metaphorically the bewitching, enticing power of that hair: while she loosens her tresses in the wind, Love collects them to build a prison for the poet's heart – from which the antiphrasis *O che bella prigion, tra lacci d'oro*. In the second poem, the author speaks directly to the hair itself, with the famous and extremely musical vocative (this was the most sung text among Marino's poems). Now the poet commands the hair not to exaggerate in tying hearts together. From a purely Platonic contemplation of feminine features, follow the love story as told through the concert.

I would like to focus now on two pieces. The first one is the poem that opens the properly lyric section of the *Lira* collection, its second part, consisting of *madrigali e canzoni*.

Cantatrice crudele
O tronchi innamorati,
o sassi, che seguite
questa Fera canora
ch'agguaglia i Cigni, e gli Angeli innamora;
ah fuggite fuggite:
voi prendete da lei sensi animati,
ella in se stessa poi
prende la qualità che toglie a voi,

e sorda e dura (ahi lasso)
diviene ai preghi un tronco, ai pianti un sasso.

Cruel singer
Oh enamored trunks,
o stones, that are following
this singing Animal
who is equal to swans and makes angels fall in love;
ah, run away! run away!:
you are animated by her,
then she will take for herself
the quality that she removes from you,
and deaf and hard (alas!),
she will become a trunk towards imploring, a stone towards crying.

It is no coincidence that the poem evokes the mythical musicians Orpheus and Amphion. The former, in the construction of the walls of Thebes, could move the stones with the sound of his lyre, and the second pacified the wild animals and was followed by the elements of nature. They shall be treated as the modern singer who has ushered in the opera. It has become clear: the woman he loved, a cruel singer, lets him fall in love with her and then proves to be a cold creature like a beast. The singer, to whom the poem is entitled, is assimilated to trunks and stones. The beloved, cruel singer, lets him fall in love and then she becomes a cold animal. We can identify two parts: first, the poet implores the inanimate objects to escape from the singing beast (vv. 1-5); then he depicts the distressing, tremendous metamorphosis of the cruel woman into a trunk and into a stone.

Figure 1: Giovanni Ceresini, *O tronchi innamorati* for tenor and bass (*Madrigali concertati a due, tre e quattro voci con il basso continuo*, 1627), bars 1-15.

Figure 2: G. Ceresini, *O tronchi innamorati*, bars 16-30.

The madrigal is characterized by a series of bipolarities that Giovanni Ceresini's musical setting conveys superbly. It is a poem of duplicity, which is set as a madrigal for two male voices (tenor and bass) and continuo. Bipolarity of trunks and stones, to which the poet addresses the opening two vocatives (vv. 1-2) and that, with perfect symmetry, come back at the end to describe the result of metamorphosis: the singing beast becomes at last deaf to prayers (like a trunk) and hard to tears (like a rock); bipolarity of swans and angels, of prayers and tears; and so on. That duplicity recurs also in the double imperative *fuggite*, that, more than a conative redundancy, is a double command to two different entities, and that is conveyed by the musical

setting, which makes use of a different voice for each vocative, and the repetition of *tronchi* and *sassi*. Tenor and bass also achieve a sort of chiasmus, by crossing their own lines: all of the first part with the vocatives (before the double imperative), is sung once again, but with the parts inverted (see the bass at bars 15 and following, Figures 1-2).

From Petrarch to Petrarchists the poet is often split into two entities, himself and his heart, but in the madrigal *Taci bocca, deh taci* he is paired with his mouth, to which he offers some advices: the silence after the first, stolen kiss.

Bacio publicato con arguzia
Taci bocca, deh taci
da l'amate bellezze
le rapite dolcezze.
Taci, che s'egli avien che t'oda Amore,
la pena avrà di tue rapine il core:
né minor fora ardire
il parlar, che 'l rapire.
Ma se taciti siam, quanto rapaci,
avrem mill'altri, e più soavi... Ah taci.

Kiss issued with acuity
Keep silent, mouth, don't speak
about the sweetnesses snatched
from the beloved beauties.
Keep silent, because if it so happens that Love is listening to you,
your heart will be punished for your robberies:
nor would speaking be
less daring than abducting.
But if we are as silent as we are rapacious,
we will have yet other thousands, and sweeter... Oh, be silent.

The sharpness of that kiss consists in talking about it, making it public, though urging at the same time to be silent about it. The lover's warning is due to the wish to love in secret, without involving Cupid, who always brings pains: therefore, a love in its most pure, natural, physical essence. This text had great appeal to musicians (it is set in seventeen pieces) for many reasons: free syntax, simple lexicon, easy rhymes, distribution of verses in alternating pairs of seven- and eleven-syllable verses in *rima*

baciata, with the first detached verse. The imperative *taci* occurs in all three periods that build up the madrigal; and it also closes the last verse, where it replaces the object *baci* predicted by the adjectives *mill'altri e più soavi*. The subject of the poem (the kiss), therefore, remains absent throughout the poem, never explicitly used, except with the periphrasis *da l'amate bellezze / le rapite dolcezze* (about the sweetnesses snatched / from the beloved beauties). But it is implicitly evoked in the mind of the reader, by means of the most probable rhyme that the word "rapaci" leads us to imagine (Figure 6).

Figure 3: Pomponio Nenna, *Taci bocca, deh taci* for 2 sopranos, alto, tenor and bass (*Madrigali a cinque voci. Quinto libro*, 1612), bars 1-9.

Figure 4: P. Nenna, *Taci bocca, deh taci*, bars 10-18.

Figure 5: P. Nenna, *Taci bocca, deh taci*, bars 19-28.

Figure 6: P. Nenna, *Taci bocca, deh taci*, bars 29-38.

Figure 7: P. Nenna, *Taci bocca, deh taci*, bars 39-45.

In Pomponio Nenna's madrigal something bizarre happens at the end: after the umpteenth repetition of the final warning *ah taci*, the composition is interrupted (at least graphically): in the original partbooks the last bars are not ended by the barline, as it should be. Furthermore, we should notice the final cadence, where not all voices are aligned on the last syllable (Figure 7).

Let us observe bars 40-42 (Figure 7) – where the soprano acts as the voice of the poet: the melodic line stops well in advance, on the word *più*, and waits for a measure; in the meantime something happens – ideally and theatrically speaking (see again Paolo Fabbri's words quoted above). Nenna renders perhaps better than others the intriguing suggestion that the text of the madrigal is thought-read-declaimed in the midst of a love tryst. The sudden stop after *più soavi,* and the much more abrupt one

at the end of the composition, which suggest that more than one kiss will be issued, brings to mind the famous lines from Dante's *Divina Commedia,* where adulterers Paolo and Francesca tell the beginning of their love story: while reading a book, they give each other the first kiss, after which the reading was dramatically abandoned and never resumed.

Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
esser basciato da cotanto amante,
questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,
la bocca mi basciò tutto tremante.
Galeotto fu 'l libro e chi lo scrisse:
quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante
(DANTE, 1300, Canto V, vv.133-138).

We read on until we reached the line
about a kiss both looked-for and unbidden –
a kiss so long desired and yet so lightly taken –
that line was our undoing: a sidelong
glance – another – into each other's eyes, and we,
who since that day have never been apart,
we latecomers to everything within our hearts,
we put the book away and read no further.
(English version by Paul Batchelor)

Exciting and, in our opinion, successful attempt to reconcile musicology with an artistic production, the project aims to explore the themes that have just merely been mentioned here, specifically analyzing the declamatory mode of Baroque poetic texts, through the use of contemporary sources on rhetoric and the art of declamation – an approach that is by no means a foregone endeavour nowadays: on the contrary, it is urgently necessary when we deal with vocal music from that period, both as musicologists and performers.

The natural references when dealing with issues of musical rhetoric, remain the well known treatises written by German authors (Joachim BURMEEISTER (1606), above all, who were active between the late 16th and early 17th century. In my view, it is necessary to deepen the understanding with the methods of rhetoric or oratory printed in Italy, not only because the area we are talking about is Italy, but also

because it is first of all from language, from analysis of linguistic structures and declamatory practices, that we must undoubtedly begin to analyze the large legacy of musical declamation called, not surprisingly, *recitar cantando.*

In the treatises printed in Italy during this period we constantly find a precursory theory of affects, of which the first instance is attributed to the French philosopher René DESCARTES (1649). They often provide an accurate description and systematization of affect, the identification of causes, effects, and related modes of expression.

The aim is to bring the results of this study to the attention of musicians and to work together with them to create a sort handbook of tools and methods helpful for the performance. And since, as we read in Bartolomeo Cavalcanti' treatise, *ogni huomo partecipa naturalmente, et sino ad un certo termine della retorica* - everyone takes part naturally and up to a certain point to rhetoric - and *la virtù del ben parlare chiamata Retorica si può ridurre in arte* - *he virtue of well speaking called rhetoric can be reduced in art -*, we think we are on the right track.

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