On the Theory and Practice of Chromaticism in Renaissance Music

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Submitted to the Department of Music of Amherst College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with honors.

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May 7, 2013
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Bibliography
To the loving memory of my Grandfather, Mr. Dingxin Wang (王鼎新, 24 December 1928 – 16 April 1999), whose encouragement of me to learn English at a young age changed the course of my life, and who was himself an enthusiast of Classical music.
Acknowledgements

At its current incomplete stage, this project on the theory and practice of chromaticism in Renaissance music will likely continue to be part of my intellectual endeavor during my upcoming years at the University of Chicago. Yet already it has defined my last two years at Amherst College. I owe my gracious thanks to all the scholars I have met or communicated with in the course of this project who had the interest in listening to my ideas and the generosity of sharing theirs: Kyle Adams, Timothy Chenette, Thomas Christensen, Martha Feldman, Stefano Mengozzi, Anthony Newcomb, Jesse Rodin, and Glenn Watkins. Additionally, I want to acknowledge the three scholars whose works have had a profound influence on mine, whether I agree with them or (more often) not: Karol Berger, Edward Lowinsky, and Harold Powers.

I shall acknowledge music theorists of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, whom I consider my predecessors, especially the anonymous author of *Musica enchiriadis*, Ancius Manlius Severinus Boethius, Marchetto da Padova, Bartholomeus Ramis de Pareia, Giovanni Spataro, and Gioseffo Zarlino. I shall also acknowledge the composers whose works this project could not have done without: Guillaume Dufay, Carlo Gesualdo, Orlando di Lasso, Guillaume de Machaut, Luca Marenzio, Cipriano de Rore, Adrian Willaert, and the composer of “Absalon, fili mi” yet to be identified. I shall also thank Christine de Pizan, whose writings have helped me plow through the most difficult moment of this project.

My warmest thanks go to all current and past members of the Amherst College Madrigal Singers with whom I have performed music from the sixteenth centuries and have shared my thoughts on interpreting them as a co-director: Walker Boyle, Alex
Burkot, Madeline Chan, Hilary Cullen Budwey, Julia Edholm, Robert Flynn, Angelina Gómez, Asa Goodwillie, Dana Kaufmann, Miao Li, Beccie Magnus, Charlie Newman-Johnson, Ásgeir Nielsen, Sam Nordli, Zohar Perla, Luisa Santos, Robert Suits, Joseph Taff, and Jaclyn Tran. I shall also thank my fellow music majors, musicians, and friends at Amherst College. I want to specifically acknowledge Matt deButts; I believe he is the only one of my peers to whom I have explained what my thesis is really about.

My thanks go to Ann Maggs at the Amherst College Morgan Music Library. She always has great stories to tell and interesting thoughts to share, and her willingness to extend loans, waive fines, and provide me a private bookshelf has prevented this project from becoming a logistical hazard. I am also grateful for the hard work of the staff of the Department of Music: Suzette Farnham, Sara Leonard, and Ted Keyes.

My growth as a musician owes immensely to the beloved director of the Amherst College Choral Society, Mallorie Chernin, who revived my enthusiasm for music and performance. I shall also acknowledge Mark Swanson, with whom I have collaborated as a harpsichordist in the Amherst College Symphony Orchestra, and Robert Eisenstein as a singer and portative organist in the Five College Early Music Program. My thanks go in addition to Grant Moss and Larry Schipull, with whom I have taken harpsichord lessons, and to Alan Schneider, with whom I have taken voice lessons.

I express my special gratitude to Nadia Margolis. She has inspired not only my passion for French culture but also curiosity in general as a scholar, and has been genuinely supportive and understanding of my highs and lows during this project. I shall thank Rosalina de la Carrera for her enthusiasm for the Enlightenment and tolerance for my support of the Ancien Régime, Nicola Courtright for her eagerness to help and her
model productivity, Michael Davis for his endless knowledge of medieval culture, Margaret Hunt for teaching me to work with primary sources, Laure Katsaros for introducing me to French literature, Paul Rockwell for teaching me Old French, and John Servos for introducing me Plato, Aristotle, and Boethius.

I am grateful to Jeffers Engelhardt, Robinson, and Eric Sawyer for the time they spent on reading this thesis and the insightful comments they shared with me. I shall also thank Eric Sawyer and Lewis Spratlan for allowing me the pleasure of musical composition, and Donald Wheelock for teaching me the art of orchestration. My thanks go to Jenny Kallick, who is a genuinely inspiring conversant.

This series of acknowledgements might already be too long, but it can never be complete without my most gracious thanks to Richard Sherr. I feel genuinely lucky that I did two semesters of independent studies with him on medieval and Renaissance music, and he has been an immensely inspiring mentor. He always gives the most honest comments on my work and the most genuine advice on my academic pursuits. His seriousness and dedication for Renaissance music has served as a role model.

Words cannot describe how much I owe to Professors Klára Móricz and David Schneider, who have been my mentors since the very beginning of my journey in music. Their teaching has always been an endless source of inspiration. Their advice has always turned out to be right. Their comments on my works are always detailed, constructive, and encouraging. Above all, they seem more confident in my capacity and potentials more than I do and are so generous with their trust to let me do what I want. They have helped me define who I am and who I want to be, and I shall always be proud to pronounce that I am a student of theirs.
Finally, I would like to thank Terry Cullen, Georges Fischer, Maddy Parsley, Emma Saltzberg, Luisa Santos, and Anna Seward for being great friends that kept me sane and happy during the depressing moments of this project. I would like to thank Mark Hart, who through meditation changed the way I look at the world and at myself. I shall thank my parents for being as supportive and understanding as they can, and I should probably apologize that I am not exactly going to be a lawyer or be rich enough to pay for their mortgage. And these acknowledgements shall end with my deepest appreciation for my own body, who always makes sure that my brain is nourished, rested, and happy.

_Dasket créxinantoukeut._
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Prologue

I was initially attracted to chromatic music from the Renaissance simply because I found it weird. Pieces that nurtured my enthusiasm include “Calami sonum ferentes” by Cipriano de Rore (1515 or 1516-1565), “Carmino chromatico quae audis modulata tenore” or prologue to *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* by Orlando di Lasso (1530 or 1532-1594), “O voi che sospirate a miglior note” by Luca Marenzio (1553-1599), and “Moro, lasso, ahi mio duolo” by Carlo Gesualdo (1560-1613). The plethora of chromatic semitones, non-harmonic relations, distant harmonies, and tonal adventures in these works struck me as radical even by modern standards. So did the advocacy of Nicola Vicentino (1511-1575/1576) for microtonal tuning and equal temperament in his treatise *L’antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (“Ancient Music adapted to Modern Practice,” 1551). Instead of reflecting the musical thoughts and practices of the sixteenth century, such fervor for chromaticism appeared to be prophetically avant-garde.

In the mid-twentieth century, musicologist Edward E. Lowinsky devoted much effort to chromatic music from the Renaissance. In his book *Tonality and Atonality in Sixteenth Century Music* and essay “The Musical Avant-Garde of the Renaissance, or, the Peril and Profit of Foresight,” among his numerous works on the subject, Lowinsky repeatedly suggests that chromaticism in sixteenth-century music embodied the very spirit of the Renaissance. It disengaged from the medieval past and pointed to the future, specifically to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in which chromaticism would again take center stage in musical innovation. Lowinsky argues that, just as in the sixteenth century when chromaticism overwhelmed the centuries-old modal system, in the late
nineteenth and twentieth century chromaticism would destroy the outdated order of tonality.

Lowinsky’s narratives of musical prophecy and avant-gardism in chromatic music from the Renaissance were a powerful rhetoric. Indeed, who can easily resist admiring the chromatic geniuses of the sixteenth century whose vision of chromaticism seemed to have taken three hundred years for the world to catch up with? The more I engaged with the music and biographies of these composers, however, the more I realized that my admiration of them was from the beginning extremely problematic. If one begins, as I did, with the assumption that Renaissance music should be thoroughly “diatonic” and “modal” (terms that turn out to present their own complications), a fascination with Renaissance chromaticism arises from a surprise: how is it possible that certain pieces of the sixteenth century are neither “diatonic” nor “modal” but “chromatic?” But why can they not, I came to ask? In fact, no composer or composition of the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries had to fulfill my imagination of the Renaissance soundscape. Nothing of the past should be considered weird or avant-garde simply because it falls outside the expectations of our time. Instead, it is we who must discard the various stereotypes and come to terms with the fact that music in the Renaissance era could indeed be “chromatic,” a term that itself needs a great deal of exploration.

Thus, a modern fascination with chromatic music of the sixteenth century that takes it to be a harbinger of musical trends since the late eighteenth century is more or less a form of ahistorical narcissism. Renaissance chromaticism had been regarded as prophetic because it supposedly departed from the norm of its own time and pointed to musical styles that came into vogue of the nineteenth century and defined the musical
practices and tastes of our time. Composers such as Lasso and Gesualdo were regarded by Lowinsky and others as avant-garde because they ingeniously anticipated the forthcoming progress in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that would break out the boundaries of tonality through chromaticism and alternative scale systems. But what makes the tonality and atonality of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries progressive, and the “modality” of the Renaissance backward? What gives us the right to judge what is conservative and what is avant-garde? What makes us, other than a narcissistic preference of the present, the paradigm of musical aesthetics?

In order to avoid the anachronistic fascination that serves as the foundation of many studies on Renaissance chromaticism, the current work rejects a notion of avant-gardism that necessarily privileges “us” over “them.” After all, recognizing their “strangeness” and “progressiveness” adds little to understanding theories and practices of chromaticism during the sixteenth century. In addition, unlike many previous studies of Renaissance chromaticism, the current work does not attempt to promote a particular analytical theory or method. Instead, it treats chromaticism as a historical phenomenon in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It respects the complex and multifaceted nature of chromaticism, which appeared in the works of different theorists and composers of different periods in different contexts. It also recognizes the problematic nature of the term “chromaticism” itself. As a whole, the current thesis looks for answers to the following questions. How did Renaissance chromaticism develop? How did it relate to other stylistic features of the era, especially polyphony, counterpoint, and the modal system, both in musical thought and in practice? How did theorists and composers now
famous for their chromatic works each encounter chromaticism, and what role did chromaticism play at different stages of their careers?

Above all, there is one pressing question that the current work has to address. What is Renaissance chromaticism? In the three chapters in the Part One of this thesis, I shall engage with this question, the discussion of which determines which particular theorists, composers, and works form the basis of this study. In Chapter One, I first strive to understand how musicians of that time imagined the tonal space and its boundaries by examining the debate about the meaning of the signs ♭ and♯ between Giovanni Spataro (1458-1541) and Giovanni del Lago (c.1490-1544) in the summer of 1533. To understand what is at stake in this debate, I shall trace how earlier theorists discussed the nature of tonal space, which includes varying opinions on the famous deductios (often referred to as the “hexachords”) invented by the legendary Guido of Arezzo (c. 991-1033) and on musica ficta. I will examine a famous musical puzzle by Adriano Willaert (c. 1490-1562), which triggered much discussion among his contemporaries and serves as an example of explorations of the tonal space in the early sixteenth century. I will also discuss whether theories of the diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic genera that had supposedly come down from the Antiquity thanks mainly to Boethius (c. 480-524) influenced chromaticism in Renaissance music.

While Chapter One attempts to define “chromaticism” through historical theories, Chapter Two addresses the attribute “Renaissance.” I will examine several widely discussed pieces and composers from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries that rely extensively on musica ficta. These pieces include some chansons of Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300-1377) and Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474), some motets by Dufay
including his deathbed motet “Ave Regina caelorum III,” and the enigmatic “Absalon, fili
mi” attributed to Josquin Desprez (c.1450-1521). By comparing these pieces spanning a
period of almost two hundred years, I shall consider what might have changed in the
middle of the fifteenth century regarding the compositional use of *musica ficta* and
whether these changes could have helped define Renaissance chromaticism.

In Chapter Three, the last chapter of *Part One*, I confront the problem of
definition. Through a literal interpretation of “chromaticism” as “the use of the chromatic
semitone,” I will propose that what is loosely referred to as Renaissance chromaticism
really pertained to a unique feature of the diatonic pitch system prevalent at that time.
The motet “Ave gratia plena” by the important theorist Giovanni Spataro in 1532 is
particularly useful for determining what kind of music was regarded as “chromatic” in
the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The discussion of the theory of chromaticism in *Part One* guides the
investigations of its practices in *Part Two*. As I have said, the three chapters in *Part Two*
do not simply apply the conclusions of *Part One* as an analytical method, although the
findings in *Part One* do illuminate examinations of individual composers in *Part Two*.
Chapter Four addresses the surge of chromaticism in the works of Cipriano de Rore. I
begin with his famous motet “Calami sonum ferentes,” and argue that it is not an
antichromatic hoax as many have considered but a genuine attempt of adapting
chromaticism into Renaissance vocal polyphony. I investigate the role of antiquarianism
in the discourse of chromaticism in the middle of the sixteenth century in relation to
Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” and with the theoretical writings of Gioseffo Zarlino
(1517-1590). In my examination of Rore’s late madrigals represented by “O sonno” I
trace Rore’s approach to chromaticism in his late works, which departed significantly from his early madrigal style.

In Chapter Five I discuss all chromatic works of Orlando di Lasso. It is framed by a reexamination of what appears to be his last work, the seven-voice motet “Vide homo quae pro te patior” at the end of the cycle of spiritual madrigals Lagrime di San Pietro, or “the Tears of St Peter” (1594). I trace how Lasso’s engagement with chromaticism was probably inspired by Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” yet differed from Rore’s from the very beginning. Central to my argument is the relationship between Lasso’s chromatic style and Catholic spirituality, a connection that yields a new interpretation of the peculiar music in “Vide homo.”

In Chapter Six, the last chapter of Part Two and the entire thesis, I consider the difficult life and work of Carlo Gesualdo. I concentrate on an illuminating phenomenon in his later three books of madrigals: the coexistence of the perfection of modal ordering and the intensification of chromaticism. By examining Gesualdo’s usage of tonal types, modal ordering, and chromaticism in these three books, I am able to date these problematic anthologies in relation to his two more securely dated volumes of motets. Against these five volumes, I compare the use of tonal types and chromaticism in what I now believe were Gesualdo’s last works: the Tenebrae Responsoria. My comparison shows an ironic increase in Gesualdo’s rationality in his compositional practice during the last decade of his life marred infamously by rumors of his madness and sadomasochism.

The current study is limited in many ways. My reading of historical music theory is confined to a few key works of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. I give special
weight to treatises that discuss tonal space, *musica ficta*, and chromaticism at length: *Lucidarium* by Marchetto da Padova (fl. 1305-1319); the *Berkeley Manuscript* (of late fourteenth-century French provenance); *la Capiopea Legale* by John Hothby (c.1430-1487); *Musica practica* (1482) by Bartolomeus Ramis de Pareia (c.1440-1490), the epistolary communications between Giovanni Spataro, Giovanni del Lago, and Pietro Aaron (c.1480-1545) in the 1520s and 1530s, and *Thoscanelle de la musica* (1523 and 1529, with supplements, 1539 and 1562); *Trattato della cognition di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato* (1525) by Pietro Aaron. *Dodecachordon* (1547) by Heinrich Glarean (1588-1563), and *Le Istitutioni harmoniche* (1558 and 1571) and *Dimostrazione harmoniche* by Gioseffo Zarlino also influence the current study by their sheer groundbreaking nature in the discourse of modal theory. Numerous other theoretical writings from 1400 to 1600 have to be left out. My inability to read fluently in medieval Latin and Italian necessitates my reliance on modern translations and editions, which undermines my ability to critique the meanings and implications of these writings.

In addition, examining only three composers is insufficient to understand the role of chromaticism at its height in the sixteenth century. Due to time limitations, I have not been able to include composers such as Marenzio, Giaches de Wert (1535-1596) and Luzzasco Luzzaschi (1545-1607), who composed important chromatic works. The audacious compositions of Vicentino as a theoretical advocate for chromaticism and enharmonicism would also be featured in this thesis had more time been permitted. The current work is also necessarily biased towards the more famous composers, since works of the less-known ones and the amateurs were less influential and are less available for study, for example Scipione Stella (1558 or 1559-1622), an important contemporary of
Gesualdo. Geographically, the current work leaves out Germany and England. Both regions saw interesting examples of chromatic composition in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, for example the motet “Ad Dominum, cum tribularer” by Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612) and the madrigal “Thule, the period of cosmography – The Andalusian merchant” by Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623), although the scale of chromaticism in these two regions was not comparable to that on the Italian peninsula. Even within Italy, my work is heavily focuses on Ferrara and Venice, not so much on Rome, and not at all on Naples. Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), Michelangelo Rossi (1601-1656), and Sigismondo d’India (1582-1629) are also not included in the current study. Admittedly, they are more fitting candidates for a study on the echoes of Renaissance chromaticism in the seventeenth century, where they would be examined along with Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643) and Giovanni Maria Trabaci (1575-1647). Nonetheless, the ties between their music composed in the so-called “Baroque Era” and Renaissance chromaticism are undeniable, and the role of chromaticism in the transition from the “Renaissance” and the “Baroque” and from “modal” music to “tonal” music is in itself full of fascinating potentials. Moreover, the current thesis addresses only vocal polyphony and does not consider the role of chromaticism in monody or instrumental music that characterized the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For this reason, writings of Vincenzo Galilei, the quintessential advocate for monody, fall outside of the current project. The connection, or the lack thereof, between monody and chromaticism, both potentially “avant-garde” in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, is a topic that awaits thorough investigation. Last but not least, while this work is primarily concerned with the music itself, it is crucial to posit chromaticism onto the
larger background of history and culture of the sixteenth century. This troublesome era is defined by constant warfare, the spread of humanism, the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter Reformation, and the rise of “mannerism” and the “Baroque” in visual arts and literature as well as music. Chromaticism in music from the second half of the sixteenth century may contribute to this larger picture.

Indeed, despite its limitations, I hope my work can serve as a hook to further studies in Renaissance chromaticism, which rather than relying on an anachronistic and narcissistic fascination with its avant-gardism, will treat it as a thoroughly historical and heterogeneous phenomenon. The obvious limitations and imperfections this thesis simply remind me that, more than half a century after Edward Lowinsky’s seminal studies, much work remains to be done.
Part One
Theory
Chapter One

“It’s one [half] step for man”

That music scholars like to quarrel with one another is hardly news—or new. By the fifteenth century musical polemics had already become a tradition. Musicians squabbled whenever they found a minutia of difference between their opinions. They loved argumentum ad hominem: they demeaned, they menaced, they scorned, they ridiculed, as if their lives were at stake in debating questions that usually turn out to be piddling.

This seems to be exactly what took place in 1533 and is recorded in a pile of letters lost among thousands of others in the Vatican Library.¹ In these letters, Giovanni Spataro (c. 1458-1541) and Giovanni del Lago (c. 1490-1544) wrangle over what they apparently considered a crucial question: what do ♭ and♯ mean? Indeed, even if musicians of our time would not have consensus over the usage of accidental signs, postmodern semiotics would consider the two theorists’ fight over an absolute interpretation of them an awful waste of time. But was it? As I will demonstrate below, this question/debate is indeed crucial for the understanding of the larger question: what is Renaissance chromaticism?

¹ The letters are from Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. Lat. 5318 translated, edited, and commented by Bonnie J. Blackburn, Edward E. Lowinsky, Clement A. Miller, in A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1991). All the quotes are translated by Blackburn, Lowinsky, and Miller. Changes are made to their translations, however, regarding the signs of ♭ and♯. Because the meaning of ♭ and♯ are under debate here, in the current Chapter the two signs will be used only in the modern sense, which is the inflection of the pitch content of the affected step. Otherwise, “round b” and “square b” will be used instead, whose meaning, as the following pages will show, is flexible, debatable, and often confusing.
He cannot express himself clearly

On May 25, 1533, the day on which Henry VIII officially divorced Catherine of Aragon, hundreds of miles away in Venice, Giovanni del Lago received a letter from a certain Raphaello, who raised five questions:

First, placing the sign of round b before F and C, where are their syllables ut and la?

Second, placing the same sign before G and D, where are their syllables ut and la?

Third, placing the sign of square b before B-natural and E, where are their syllables ut and la?

Fourth, placing the same sign before G, where are its syllables ut and la?

Fifth, singing fa on B-natural, where is its mi?2

Del Lago forwarded the questions to the Bolognese theorist Giovanni Spataro with whom he had been exchanging letters for more than a decade. Spataro responded on the fourth of June. For a modern interpreter, del Lago’s questions can be confusing: what does “round b” have to do with syllable names? It turned out that Spataro understood what del Lago assumed he would. Placing the sign of a round b—“b rotondo,” sometimes also referred to as soft b, “b mollis”—in front of a note implies the syllable fa. In this way, del Lago’s second question intends to ask: “if one places the sign of round b before G and D and sings fa on them, what are the syllables ut and la in the Guidonian hexachords of these two fa steps?”

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2 A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians, 634-6. “Memorandum by Giovanni del Lago.” We know that the person who asked del Lago’s these questions was a certain Raphaello based on Spataro’s response to del Lago, 4 June 1533; see A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians, 637-41, paragraph 4.
Here is how Spataro answered. He defined that the round b lowers a pitch by a major semitone, or what modern musicians call a chromatic semitone. Thus, since the ut of the hexachord containing G fa without round b is D ut, and the la B-natural la, the ut and la of the hexachord containing G signed with round b are D ut and B la both signed with round b’s and thus lowered by a major semitone. In modern terms, Spataro is saying that the ut of G-flat fa is D-flat ut and B-flat la. Similarly, the ut and la of D signed with round b and sung fa are A ut signed with round b and F la, or in modern terms A-flat ut and F-natural la.3

Spataro did not respond to the other questions, assuming that del Lago would be able to deduce the answers on his own. Yet answering the second question alone was enough to provoke animosity. His reply signed on the twenty-sixth of June has not survived; Spataro’s subsequent letters and an exchange with Pietro Aron (c. 1480-1545) indicate how seriously the two theorists took offense with each other. Eventually controlling his temper, on 30 July Spataro wrote to Aron, del Lago’s fellow Venetian:

I received a letter from Pre Zanetto [i.e. del Lago] in response to mine in which the poor man not only tries to exonerate himself but to blame me, claiming that I didn’t understand that when he referred to G and D both signed with the round b:

he meant fa in the natural positions of G and D. I gave him a very caustic response and completely rebuffed him, saying I didn’t want to hear from him any more because, although he thinks he is so learned, he cannot express himself clearly; indeed, he takes others to task for not understanding what he means.

3 Ibid., 637-41: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 4 June 1533.
Some of my friends said they didn’t like the tone of my response […] and begged me to moderate my answer. ⁴

In his letter to Aron, Spataro enclosed his “moderate answer” to del Lago in which he wrote:

You [del Lago] say I should pay more attention, for when you said that fa on G and D both signed with the round b arises from […] square b before F and C, you intended to speak of ut on D and A, which arises from F and C signed with the square b or †. To this I reply that I answered according to the letter of your writing and the clear examples you gave […] If you meant fa on G and D natural, you shouldn’t have specified a round b sign in those natural positions […] Learn to speak like a musician, for if you want to have a syllable irregularly placed in a natural position, that imagined syllable should not be signed with either ‡ or †, which remove the note by a major semitone from the natural position.” ⁵

Figure 1-1 compares del Lago’s intention and how Spataro read it. Other parts of Spataro’s letters on 4 June and 30 July suggest that when talking about G and D signed

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⁴ Ibid., 642-7: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 July 1533, paragraph 3.
⁵ Ibid., 648-52: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 July 1533, paragraph 1.
with round b’s, del Lago, unlike Spataro or modern musicians, is not thinking in the term of pitch inflection. Instead, he is imagining a particular situation in which F and C are raised by a major semitone through signs of square b or # (“b quadro,” sometimes referred to as hard b, “b durus”). Del Lago understood that the syllable mi and square b are interchangeable in practice, and so are the syllable fa and round b. In this way, square b imposes mi on F and C and thus gives rise to fa on G and D. Del Lago in turn represents the syllable fa by round b or “♭.” Importantly, the round b’s on G fa and D fa do not alter the pitch content of G or D as del Lago or a modern musician would understand, but only indicates their fa syllables.

For Spataro, however, the two signs serve primarily to alter the pitch content similar to accidental signs in modern practice. Round b not only entails the syllable fa but also lowers the pitch by a major semitone from its natural position. Similarly, square b not only conveys mi but also moves the pitch a major semitone higher. Thus, when he saw del Lago’s G♭ and D♭, he did not understand them as G fa and D fa, but rather G-flat fa and D-flat fa, in modern terminology. The two pairs of pitches are the same in terms of their solmization yet different in frequency.

Had elderly kindness been part of Spataro’s personality, the exchange would have faded out as one of the many Renaissance quibbles. After all, a conflict between only two people regarding what two symbols mean is rather meaningless. Yet having had to restrain his abhorrence in his initial reply did not please Spataro. Attempting to divest del Lago of his affected learnedness, Spataro asked him to resolve a musical puzzle. He
cunningly instructed Aron to find out del Lago’s real opinion in case the latter sought help. The puzzle goes:

Our Bolognese musicians have been unable to reach a conclusion in discussing certain musical questions, and they have asked me to put them before you, with your speculative and subtle mind. Where do you think are the syllables ut and la of F and C both signed with round b [and thus sung fa], and those of ♭ [B-natural in modern terminology] and E both signed with square b [and sung mi]? And, my teacher [Bartolomeus Ramis de Pareia], Tinctoris, and Hothby all say that such signs should not be used in those natural places; what is the reason? Del Lago’s answer took as long as a month to arrive, and Spataro could not help betraying his anxiety to Aron. Meanwhile, del Lago did not appear as simpleminded as Spataro might have wished. At least, he seems to have suspected that Spataro’s question may have come less from the genuine curiosity of his Bolognese friends than from Spataro’s unquenchable thirst for polemics. Moreover, what is now on paper as del Lago’s response to Spataro’s challenge is shockingly Spatari:

Musicians established two signs to remove notes from their natural places. The first, ♭, lowers the note from its natural place by a major semitone. The second, ♯, does the opposite; it raises the note from its natural place by a major semitone

[i.e. it was a puzzle about the locations of certain musical notes and syllables and the reasons for the usage of certain signs. Del Lago’s answer took a month to arrive, and Spataro betrayed his anxiety to Aron. Del Lago suspected that Spataro’s question may have come from a genuine curiosity of his friends rather than from Spataro’s thirst for polemics. Del Lago’s response was shockingly Spatari.]

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6 Ibid., 642-7: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 30 July 1533, paragraph 8.
7 Ibid., 648-52: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 July 1533, paragraph 5.
9 Ibid., 653-63: Letter from Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 15 August 1533, paragraph 1.
When ♭ is signed in one of those natural places, the tone is divided into a major semitone below and a minor semitone above. When ♯ is signed in one of those natural places, the tone is divided into a major semitone below and a minor semitone above … ♭ on F and C lowers the sound to a comma [i.e. the difference between a beneath a major and a minor semitone] E and B, and ♯ raises the sound to a comma above F and C […]

Therefore ut of F and C both signed with a round b [and sung fa] will fall a major semitone beneath C and G and la a major semitone beneath A and E. But ut of E and B both signed with a square b [and sung mi] will lie a major semitone higher than C and G, and la and major semitone above A and E, or a comma above round B and F […]

In Karol Berger’s words, “del Lago’s views were essentially identical with those of Spataro,” since “both theorists believed that the primary function of an accidental was to inflect, even when it was applied to a step which was already fa [F and C] or mi [E and B].” Does this mean that there is no conflict between the two theorists after all, and “only Spataro’s insatiable appetite for quibbling can explain his length criticism?”

I suspect that Berger might have consulted the wrong place to draw his conclusion. Considering the confusion del Lago caused with G♭ and D♭ in the first place, it is implausible that there is in fact no disagreement between Spataro and del Lago’s views on the meaning and function of the signs. Bonnie Blackburn and Edward Lowinsky have convincingly shown that only the second of the three quotes above came from del

10 Ibid: paragraphs 2 and 3.
12 Ibid.
Lago’s own hand at the time of his reply in 1533. The succinct definition of ♭ and ♯ in the first quote is in fact surreptitiously “borrowed” from Spataro’s letter to Aron dating back to September 1524. Del Lago managed to obtain this letter, and he likely did not insert the borrowed quote into his own letter until the 1540s when he was preparing it for publication, an act commonly referred to as plagiarism in the modern scholarship. He also craftily revised his direct answers to Spataro’s questions shown in the third quote.

Spataro’s letter to Aron on October 30 reveals what del Lago actually wrote in 1533 and covered up later:

Then he [del Lago] says that F and C both signed with ♭ will lie a comma lower than E and B, and B and E both signed with ♯ a comma higher than C and F […] Ut of C and F both signed with ♭ [and sung fa] lies a comma lower than G and C … la of C and F signed with ♭ [and sung fa] lies a comma lower than E and A … ut of B and E both signed with ♯ [and sung mi] lies a comma higher than G and C … [la of] E [and B both] signed with ♯ [and sung mi] lies a comma higher than C [and F].

Spataro’s Bolognese friends said that del Lago “made no little error” (Figure 1-2). As I will demonstrate, in the strictest sense del Lago’s error is only mathematical. On the one hand, he was correct about F and C: ♭ lowers them by a major semitone and thus makes them a comma lower than E and B. He rightly maintained that ♯ raises B and E by a major semitone and thus a comma higher than C and F. In all likelihood he did

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13 A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians, 656, footnote no. 12. The original quote can be found in 323-9: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 October 1527, paragraph 4.
14 Ibid., 678-706: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 30 October 1333, paragraphs 7 and 8.
Figure 1-2
Del Lago’s Errors

Lowered by a semitone (not comma) lower than sol la.

Raised by a semitone (not comma) higher than sol la.
understand what ♭ and ♯ meant in terms of inflection. On the other hand, starting from del Lago’s conclusions above and simply counting the number of steps along the Guidonian “hexachord” show that the ut of C♭ fa and F♭ fa are G♭ ut and C♭ ut respectively and the la E♭ la and A♭ la. All these pitches are lower than their natural positions not by a comma but by a major semitone. This is clearly implied by the ♭, the same sign del Lago has just correctly interpreted. Comparably, B♯ mi and E♯ mi have their ut as G♯ ut and C♯ ut and their la as E♯ la and A♯ la respectively. They are all higher than their natural positions by a major semitone, not by a comma.

Considering that the definition of ♭ and ♯ as inflections is borrowed much later from Spataro’s 1524 letter, one may wonder to what extent del Lago really understood the significance of major semitones and commas as incurred by these signs. I would suggest, however, that Berger is too eager to point out Spataro’s obsession with polemics. Simply ridiculing del Lago’s failure to count correctly is unlikely to have satisfied such obsession. Nor do I consider it likely that it would have taken as long as a month before Spataro shared his contempt with Aron, now that he deemed del Lago an unworthy correspondent.¹⁵ That a single diatribe destroyed a decade-long epistolary relationship in spite of some common ground over what the signs indicate suggests a more fundamental disagreement between the two Giovannis. The latter half of their letters illuminates the crucial difference between their musical views.

In his letter to Aron, Spataro responds line by line to del Lago’s points. Del Lago’s comment that the questions about round ♭ on F and C and square ♭ on E and B are

¹⁵ Spataro received Del Lago’s letter on September 28 but only replied on October 30. See Ibid.: paragraph 1.
“pointless and not pertinent to the diatonic genus” offends Spataro particularly.\textsuperscript{16} To begin with, del Lago notices the commas incurred by F♭ and C♭ below E and B and by B♯ and E♯ above F and C. For him these comma-relations transgress the boundaries of musical practice:

This comma creates distances not proper to the diatonic genus. Nor is the interval of a comma used in the chromatic and enharmonic genera […] This is the reason why the comma is not used by any skilled musician as a singable interval, but only to complete the whole tone or consonance; it is very hard for the ear to discern because it is small interval […] Moreover, [*] since monochords and other instruments are not yet divided by commas, it [the comma] can be called useless.\textsuperscript{17}

Spataro responds that the commas “only appear to be there and are not used \textit{per se} because they are included in larger singable intervals.”\textsuperscript{18} For example, in the hexachord with F♭ as \textit{fa} the \textit{mi} step below F♭ is not E but E♭, and although there is a comma between F♭ and E, it is now part of the larger diatonic interval, the minor semitone between F♭ and E♭.

Regarding the monochord, whether Spataro recognizes that “since monochords and other instruments are not yet divided by commas, it [the comma] can be called useless,” marked with an asterisk, is a quote from his own letter to del Lago in October

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 653-63: Letter from Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 15 August 1533, paragraph 1.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.: paragraphs 2 and 3.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 678-706: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 30 October 1333, paragraph 5.
1527 is ambiguous.\textsuperscript{19} Even if he had, he showed no embarrassment in revoking his past opinion:

Every one of them [Boethius and all other theorists] says the comma is necessary to complete many musical intervals on the divided monochord that otherwise would not have the correct proportion [...] And because Boethius says the interval of a comma is the smallest interval perceptive, our [Bolognese] musicians do not claim it is singable or used \textit{per se} on the monochord or by the voice, but they say it is audible and is added to other larger intervals in the necessary places. For a comma not only causes many notes composed of two minor semitones on the monochord to reach their fullness but it corrects intervals that do not quite please the ear. Pre Zanetto [del Lago] seems unaware of this, or he would not have said the comma does not appear on the monochord.\textsuperscript{20}

In fact, based on the previous quote, del Lago is aware of the comma’s function of “completing the whole tone or consonance” but for some reason reluctant to perceive that such completion happens exactly on a monochord.

It might seem that by dismissing Spataro’s questions as irrelevant del Lago has merely been trivializing his own lack of knowledge. Nevertheless, whereas the two theorists still agreed to a certain extent where $F^\flat$ and $E^\#$ should fall and what role the comma plays, and whereas much of the disagreement points to del Lago’s miscalculations, the non-diatonic comment evolves into a confrontation between two distinctive views of tonal space. Del Lago implies that transposing the diatonic order by a

\textsuperscript{19} The original quote can be found in Ibid., 323-9: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, 30 October 1527, paragraph 5.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 678-706: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 30 October 1333, paragraph 11.
non-diatonic interval, for example a comma or a major semitone, will destroy the diatonic purity of the order:

It is pointless to demand such hexachords [containing F♭, C♭, B♯, and E♯] since they don’t follow the natural diatonic order, which is semitone, tone, tone and, in reverse, tone, tone, semitone, and the same holds for the Guidonian syllables. This other order would not be the natural diatonic genus but a mixed one.21

Spataro disagrees. He does not believe that the quality of the transposing interval shall have any effect on the transposed order. He explains:

The string is a continuum, it can be adjusted to any harmonic distance […] He [del Lago] posits a difference between the same things by saying that if the tones and semitones do not fall on the usual lines and spaces, they will be a mixed genus. Our musicians say that the diatonic tones and semitones can fall in any place […] Thus, since musical intervals have not a fixed position in the natural instrument, they have none in the artificial instrument either; art serves nature, and not vice versa.22

Spataro thus subjects the artificial Guidonian gamut to the natural monochord. No matter where the physical sound moves along the musical staff it remains true to its nature. Otherwise:

According to our philosophizer [del Lago], if a man born in Bologna came to Venice, having changed places, he would no longer belong to the genus animal but would take on a composite nature. And it would follow that many works by

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21 Ibid., 653-63: Letter from Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 15 August 1533, paragraph 3.
excellent composers, using ♭ and ♯ to mediate their position, would not be
diatonic but a different nature, as [Jean] Mouton showed in his ‘Missa sine nomie’
and motet ‘Peccata mea,’ which are both signed with ♭ on B and E naturals. 23

Admittedly, it is unlikely that del Lago would consider Mouton’s two compositions non-
diatonic. He would probably point out, however, that the two ♭s transpose his music
down by a major second, a diatonic interval. Regardless, Spataro clarifies that the
transposing signs of ♭ or ♯ are irrelevant to the diatonic integrity of the transposed.

Thus, the tiff is about more than that del Lago “cannot express himself clearly.”
Rather, it starts to appear that the two Giovannis posit themselves on opposite ends on the
“political spectrum” of music theory. Del Lago adheres to the convention of Guidonian
imagination. Since under the Guidonian system singers sing mi when encountering a
square b and fa a round b, del Lago equates the signs with syllables, ♭ as fa, and ♯ with
mi. He holds fast to the Guidonian gamut and is very careful not to transgress its
boundaries. Thus the first thing that occurs to him when seeing an F signed with a round
b is not the obscure F-flat but the quotidian F-natural fa. Upon seeing an E signed with a
square b, he understands that square b assigns the syllable mi but does not inflect the E-
natural into an E-sharp. Transposition by a non-diatonic interval such as a major semitone
would destroy what he sees a pure diatonic order and yield pointless pitches such as F♭
and E♯.

On the other hand, Spataro seems to favor nature. For him, the sound dictates how
one should imagine the musical gamut and not vice versa. Thus, ♭ and ♯ primarily
indicate the lowering or raising of a pitch by a major semitone and only secondarily the

23 Ibid.
solmization syllables fa or mi. Furthermore, in Spataro’s view if the continuous monochord easily accommodates non-diatonic intervals and transpositions by such intervals, the gamut should not restrain their usage.

The ideological rift between del Lago and Spataro becomes even more evident when they evaluate opinions of past theorists. Spataro asks: “my teacher [Ramis], Tinctoris, and Hothby all say that such signs should not be used in those natural places; what is the reason?” Del Lago embraces the statement in Spataro’s question that Ramis, Tinctoris, and Hothby all opposed to placing ♭ where there is regularly fa, for example F, and # where there is regularly mi, such as E:

The [first] reason is that the interval from B to C and from E to F is a minor semitone and not a whole tone that could be divided with the minor semitone below and the major semitone above or vice versa. Therefore accidental signs placed for fa and mi in the regular positions of fa and mi would be useless […] True, musicians say that where ♭ you find fa and where # mi, but that applies only to those positions on Guido’s hand where fa and mi do not occur […]

The second reason is that […] since the space above B and E and below F and C is fixed as a semitone and not a tone, the signs could not have their proper effect.”

Figure 1-3 paraphrases del Lago’s arguments. Placing # on a pitch imposes the syllable mi and divides the major second between the pitch and the one above into a major semitone and a minor semitone in ascending order, according to his first reason. It raises the pitch by a major semitone so that it is now below the next pitch by a minor

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24 Ibid., 653-63: Letter from Giovanni del Lago to Giovanni Spataro, 15 August 1533, paragraphs 4 and 5.
semitone instead of a major second, according to his second reason. Both B and E are already mi on the Guidonian hand and are already a minor semitone below the pitch above them. It thus follows that placing ♯ on these pitches would be redundant. The same arguments apply to not allowing ♭ on F or C.

Contrary to del Lago, Spataro suggests that the three elderly theorists would actually agree to using ♯ on B and E and ♭ on F and C in the sense of raising or lowering their pitch content. His question, in this case, likely a trap for del Lago. Spataro contends that ♯ and ♭ “are not placed in vain”: they always raise or lower the pitch by a major semitone regardless of the circumstance.25 Countering del Lago’s first reason regarding redundant solmization, Spataro compares the two passages in Figure 1-4 that are both solmized as mi-fa/sol-fa-mi.26 He notices that the mi-fa between B and C in the first passage is no different from the mi-fa between F and G♭ in the second. Therefore, if a ♭ on B can alter the semitone between B mi and C fa into a major second between B♭ fa

Figure 1-3
Del Lago’s arguments against B♯, E♯, F♭, and C♭

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26 Ibid: paragraph 20. Figure 1-4 is reproduced from this source.
and C sol and alter the major second between B mi and A re into a semitone between B♭ fa and A mi, a ♮ on F in the second passage should have the same aural and syllabic effect.

In response to del Lago’s second reason, Spataro demonstrates that space above B and E and below F and C are not necessarily fixed as a semitone, for in the following cases:

A ♮ on C changes the whole tone B♭-C into a minor semitone, and the same on F, for the whole tone E♭-F becomes a semitone … B♯ changes the whole-tone B-C♯ into a semitone and E♯ the whole tone E-F♯ into a semitone.27

These two counterarguments further assert Spataro’s position that the diatonic order is pervasive and ♯ and ♮ are universally applicable. It points to the monochord’s “string continuum” as the kernel of Spataro’s perception of tonal space. Contrariwise, del Lago’s insistence on restricting the use of ♯ and ♮ betrays his adherence to the Guidonian gamut, which he perceives as a conventionalized imagination of tonal space consisting of fixed lines and spaces on the musical staff. Hence, over the course of four months, a

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27 Ibid.: paragraph 18.
miscommunication between Spataro and del Lago developed into a clash of contradictory views of musical space and ideologies.

Radical Reformation Redefined and a Return to Guido

“L’arte serve alla natura, et non e contra.” (“Art serves nature, and not vice versa.”)

—Giovanni Spataro, 30 August 1533

This quote of Spataro seems to portray him as a Renaissance reformer who frees art from the chains of medieval conventions and encourages it to imitate nature directly.

Had Berger interpreted del Lago distortions as I suggest above, he would have discovered that the Spataro-del Lago debate fits well with his view of the “expanding universe of musica ficta.” Berger argues that during the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, an evolving understanding of the nature of round b and square b helped musicians challenge the outer limits of musica ficta.28

In Berger’s opinion, late fourteenth-century writings established the outer limit as the sixteen-step gamut. The premise of the gamut is that “the only primary and absolutely indispensable function of an accidental is to indicate the syllable and that only secondarily does an accidental also indicate an inflection.”29 Hence, to obtain such a gamut, one first constructs the Guidonian hand of musica recta with seven series of Guidonian syllables (Figure 1-5.1). Second, on every pitch class that has not been


29 Berger, “The Expanding Universe of Musica Ficta in Theory from 1300 to 1550,” 413.
solmized as *mi* in any of the seven series, one puts a square b, thus solmizing it as *mi*; in this way, one obtains C *mi*, D *mi*, F *mi*, and G *mi*. Because *mi* necessitates *fa*, placing the square b necessitates a change in pitch content and gives rise to C♯, D♯, F♯, and G♯ in modern terminology so that they are now a semitone from the pitches above (Figure 1-5.2). Third, returning to the *musica recta* hand, one puts a round b sign at every pitch class that has not been solmized as *fa* in the seven original series. Thus, one obtains A *fa*, D *fa*, E *fa*, and G *fa*, which are in turn inflected into A♭, D♭, E♭, and G♭ (Figure 1-5.2).

Achieved by assigning *mi* and *fa*, such chromatic alterations are referred to as *coniunctae*. The four “sharp *coniunctae*,” four “flat *coniunctae*,” and the eight *recta* steps (including both B-natural and B♭) equal the sixteen-step gamut.
Berger argues that by the mid-fifteenth century, music theorists began understanding ♯ and ♭ not as syllables of mi and fa but as raising and lowering inflections. With their new focus on pitch content rather than imagined syllables, theorists gradually contested the sixteen-step gamut with what Berger calls as a series of “conquests.” In light of Berger’s time line, the 1533 debate becomes a battle between “Spataro the conqueror” and “del Lago the defender.” Even though Berger did not perceive a disagreement between the two theorists, his account implies that Spataro was a progressive who defied the “practical checks” of conventions and advocated for new “conquests” of musica ficta while more conservative theorists remained complacent with the sixteen-step outer limit.\footnote{Ibid., 430.}

Before evaluating Berger’s arguments about the outer limit, I shall reiterate my caution against the Hegelian undertones in researching tonal space and chromaticism in Renaissance music. Admittedly, Berger’s work on musica ficta shows much more
prudent objectivity in contrast to Lowinsky’s panegyric to “the musical avant-garde of the Renaissance.” Still, his references to “conquests” and “challenges” betray an anachronistic attitude. Looking back into music history from a postmodern standpoint, the fascination with “progress,” “avant-gardism,” and “prophecy” is certainly hard to resist. But it has diverted attention away from “what it was” onto “what it would become,” also known as “what it is now.” Our work should focus as much as possible on the historical present and not on the illusionary and inherently narcissistic “goal.” The current assessment of the Spataro-del Lago debate in the Renaissance discourse of tonal space, pitch inflection, and chromaticism will benefit from more attention to what Berger’s “expansion” actually was at given historical moments and in what specific ways it occurred.

This brings us to the Guidonian syllables fundamental to the sixteen-step gamut. The gamut’s Guidonian origins should not be taken for granted. As Stefano Mengozzi has shown, Guidonian syllables did not become a full-fledged system of organizing the musical gamut until much after its conception. Guido d’Arezzo (c. 995-after 1033) introduced the syllables merely as aids to singing the intervals, and he only briefly discussed the matter in his Epistola ad Michalehem. His earlier and more important

treatise, *Micrologus*, shows no hint at this invention. Probably written between 1026-1032, *Micrologus* derives its “gamut”—since one cannot properly speak of “Γ-ut” when Guidonian syllables were yet to assume importance—from the monochord. He then organizes the steps of his “gamut” into a system not of tetrachords or hexachords but octaves (Figure 1-6). He emphasizes that the affinity of notes, or the likeness regarding the intervals it forms with others, is perfect only at the octave. Thus, for Guido, the musical space consists of two foundational elements: monochord and octaves.

When discussing the Guidonian “hexachord,” Mengozzi painstakingly differentiates between its two aspects: *deductio* (“deduction”) or *proprietas* (“property”), and *hexachordum* (“hexachord”). The former “soft” aspect deals with imagination, which entails a series of syllabic labels that help delineate intervals in a purely mental process. The latter “hard” aspect stands for its aural “sixth-ness,” the interval of a major sixth that actually exists in sound. Mengozzi further argues that throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, musicians used the Guidonian syllables only as *deductio*, thus a mnemonic and pedagogical device, and not *hexachordum*. Therefore, that the Guidonian

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35 Ibid., 59-60.
36 Ibid., 63-5.
“hexachord” happened to span over a major sixth mattered little to musicians at the time, and, as Mengozzi said, “all hexachords are ‘soft.’”38 Using the term hexachordum or “hexachord” would imply major sixth as in Mengozzi’s term the “sine qua non diatonic yardstick” instead of the octave and would contradict the prevailing recognition of octave equivalence in theories and practices during the time period.

Indeed, for centuries after Guido’s invention, theorists predominantly employed the term deductio or proprietas to denote what we now mindlessly call the “hexachord.” Even when Franchinus Gaffurius (1451-1522) began using the term hexachordum in Practica Musice, it does not mean that the actual understanding of the deductio has actually changed or, as Mengozzi says, “hardened.” Quite the opposite, Mengozzi shows that theoretical consecration of major sixth as the diatonic yardstick discloses unmusical motivations. By studying Gaffurius’s 1483 manuscript draft for Practica Musice, Mengozzi discovers that during the revision leading up to the final version printed in 1496, Gaffurius replaced his references to deductio and proprietas with hexachordum, which literally means a sixth. What is more, he added new materials to emphasize the importance of the “sixth-ness” and establish the major sixth instead of the octave as “the primary engine of the diatonic space.”39 Mengozzi explains that Gaffurius’s fundamentally different understanding of the deductio arises from a political agenda at the Milanese court of Ludovico Sforza:

Gafori’s portrayal of Guido as a sort of ‘modern Boethius’ or ‘modern Pythagoras’ […] characterizes a new generation of humanists that was becoming more and more self-conscious about the public dimensions of their scholarly

38 Ibid., 110.
activities and more responsive to the political strategies and needs of the local courts. Thus, by firmly defending Guido’s hexachordal system against the increasing vocal argument of its detractors, Gafori not only protected the church music curriculum, but he also contributed to shoring up a bridge to a medieval past that was both vital to Ludovican politics and key to the self-image of the Milanese-Ambrosian church … Gafori’s idyllic picture of a unified Greco-Guidonian tradition is perhaps the surest sign of the conservative character of his intellectual project. His was a brand of humanism that aimed at defending, rather than at challenging, the political and educational status quo.\(^{40}\)

Mengozzi’s analysis of the political influences behind Gaffurius’s shifting his view of the Guidonian deductio is convincing. It exemplifies how music theorists during the Renaissance era increasingly misrepresented the “soft” understanding of the Guidonian deductio in musical practice as the “hard” hexachordum in theory. Another case is Le Dimostrazioni harmoniche by Gioseffo Zarlino (1517-1590). Zarlino’s agenda of theorizing musical science through a system of logical proofs elevated the hexachordum as foundation to the diatonic space.\(^{41}\) Thus, quite convincingly, Mengozzi reminds us that, regardless of theorists’ “hardening” attitudes, the “soft” conception of the Guidonian syllables as an innocent aide to musical pedagogy has always been true in musical practice just like the principle of octave equivalence, to which even Guido himself attested.

The historiographical interplay between deductio and hexachordum casts doubt on Berger’s portrayal of the “expanding universe of musica ficta” that results from the

\(^{40}\) Ibid., 224-5.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., 187-9.
decreasing influence of the imagined Guidonian *deductio* and the increasing influence of
the actual sound and pitch content. Based on Mengozzi’s observations and my readings
of historical treatises from the period, I suggest that while *hexachordum* never became a
musical reality, it was the increasingly prevalent concept of *deductio* or *proprietas* rather
than a reformative resort to the natural sound that accounted for changes in much of the
discourse on *musica ficta*—or, tonal space and pitch inflection—in the fourteenth to early
sixteenth centuries.

To begin with, that ♯ and ♭ can stand for aural inflections is not a Renaissance
discovery or rediscovery. In his early fourteenth-century *Lucidarium*, Marchetto da
Padova (fl. 1305-1319) discusses at length the square b and round b as pitch inflections.
He dedicates the entire Treatise II of *Lucidarium* to the division of the whole tone. He
divides it into five equal parts, one might thus see him as a predecessor of Nicola
Vicentino (1511-1576) a few centuries later. Each one-fifth portion of the whole-tone is a
“diesis,” and four dieses make up a “chromatic semitone.” Marchetto implies that the
1:4 division occurs only when the square b sign falls on a pitch that has not already been
signed with a round b; for example C♯ divides the whole tone of C-D into a chromatic
semitone and a diesis in ascending order. On the other hand, two dieses make up an
“enharmonic semitone,” and three a “diatonic semitone.” Marchetto defines the diatonic
semitone as “when a permutation is made from round b to square b or vice versa, whether
in ascent or descent,” for example A♮-B♭ or B♭-A♮. The remaining part of the A-B
whole tone, B♭-B♯, thus becomes the enharmonic semitone. Truly, Marchetto’s five-fold

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43 Ibid., 142-3.
44 Ibid, 144-9.
45 Ibid., 144-5.
division in no way represented the common belief of medieval or Renaissance musicians, and not even the Paduan kinship could save his theory from being lambasted by another Paduan, Prosdocimus de Beldomandis (d. 1428) a century later. What is important for the study of chromaticism and understanding of tonal space is that he discusses these signs not in the context of Guidonian syllables but of pitch content.

When he later retakes the topic of whole tones and semitones in Treatise VIII, Marchetto does reframe it within the context of the Guidonian *deductios*. He introduces “permutation” as “a change in the name of a syllable or note lying in the same space or on the same line but with a different pitch … used where the whole tone is divided,” and thus “whenever a square b is set down we sing *mi*; wherever a round b is set down we sing *fa*.”

Though apparent, Guido’s influence on Marchetto’s conception of *musica ficta* is still tenuous. For one, the explanation of square b as *mi* and round b as *fa* appear in Chapter 1 of Treatise VIII before the reader would even know what the Guidonian syllables are from Chapters 2 and 3. After these two chapters Marchetto adds an appendix only to repeat the syllabic designations of the two signs already introduced in Chapter 1. The disorganized presentation suggests that Marchetto was yet to integrate the Guidonian syllables into the systematic understanding pitch inflection.

Furthermore, immediately after assigning *mi* to square b and *fa* to round b, Marchetto declares that the “true property” of these signs is not their syllables but to divide the whole tone into enharmonic and diatonic semitones or chromatic semitone and

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46 Ibid., 274-5.
Thus, despite influences traceable to Guido, Marchetto’s discussion of the signs concentrates on their sound.

The *Berkeley manuscript* is drastically different. To be fair, the anonymous author of this French treatise from 1375 is knowledgeable of the aural implications of square b and round b. Consisting of five treatises, the *Berkeley manuscript* dedicates its fourth to tuning and monochord division. The survey covers more than a millennium of history of tuning from the mythological Orpheus to Guido and shows off its author’s knowledge “speculative music.” In Treatise V, furthermore, the Berkeley theorist uses the two signs to divide the whole tone as creatively as Marchetto, and similarly without the help of the Guidonian syllables. The theorist divides the whole tone into three equal parts: two of them make up a *semitonus*, and the remaining one-third of the tone is a *semitonium*. Whereas almost all medieval and Renaissance theorists contended that the square b raises its following pitch as much as round b lowers it, the *Berkeley* theorist explains that♯ raises the pitch by the bigger *semitonus* yet ♭ lowers the pitch by the smaller *semitonium* (Figure 1-7):

The *semitonus* has to be between *mi* and *fa* and between *fa* and *mi* everywhere

[…] The *semitonium* […] has to be between *fa* and *sol* […] and since if a square b sign should be placed between *fa* and *sol*, there will be only a *semitonium* from *fa* to *sol*; I say this is also true from *sol* to *la*, form *ut* to *re*, and from *re* to *mi* […]

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48 Ibid., 278-9.
On this account, it must be known that if the round be sign should be placed on B and a square b sign on G, B to G will only be sol-fa or fa-sol (a perfect tone).\(^{50}\)

\[ \text{Figure 1.7} \]

Enharmonicism in the *Berkeley Manuscript*

\[ \text{Essentially the Berkeley theorist proposes an enharmonic equivalence between the diminished third between G}^\flat \text{ and B}^\flat \text{ and the major seconds of G}^\natural \text{-A}^\natural \text{ and A}^\flat \text{-B}^\flat \text{. The theorist implies that G}^\natural \text{ and A}^\flat \text{ have the same frequency and so do A}^\natural \text{ and B}^\flat \text{. This is a creative solution to the problem of having two different-size semitones and an early hint at equal temperament.} \]

\[ \text{More curious in this excerpt, however, is the theorist’s inconsistent usage of the Guidonian syllables. By saying that when a square b occurs on fa the distance between fa and sol is reduced to a semitonum, the Berkeley theorist is treating the two syllables as fixated steps on the musical staff, like the letter names. Yet by saying that the semitonum is between every mi and fa of the gamut and by demonstrating the whole tone between G}^\natural \text{ and B}^\flat \text{ as fa-sol the theorist treats the syllabic in the conventional Guidonian} \]

\[ \text{50 Ibid., 240-3.} \]
conception as movable labels. The two contradictory usages of the Guidonian syllables suggest that the integration of *deductio* into discussions of *musica ficta* was still an ongoing process in the late fourteenth century.

Nonetheless, the opening treatise of the *Berkeley manuscript* takes an important step towards understanding pitch inflection and tonal space in Guidonian terms. While Guido begins his *Micrologus* by introducing the monochord and Marchetto his *Lucidarium* by discussing the philosophy of music and the division of the whole tone, in the first sentence of the *Berkeley manuscript* the theorist immediately introduces the Guidonian hand:

Since the singer—to understand what is the mode or tone of any song—formulates beforehand a conception of it, for this understanding it must first be known that there are nineteen letters, joints, or pitch names in the hand and two outside, with all of which the song of the world is constructed [emphases mine].

Following this introduction, the theorist constructs the Guidonian hand with seven *deductios*, defines the intervals that derive from the six syllables, and differentiates the *durus, mollis, and naturalis deductios*. A tonal space arising from *deductios* allows the theorist to define *musica ficta* in Guidonian terms. *Musica ficta*, or rather *coniuncta*, becomes a type of *deductio* disjunction (*disuncta*) or “a violent transition from one *deductio* to another.” Unlike mutations, which are achieved by transiting between syllables on a common step, the *coniuncta* type of disjunction occurs “by reason of the sign.”

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51 Ibid., 32-5.
52 Ibid., 48-9.
53 Ibid.
in its contrast to the ordinary mutation, yet it conveys a much stronger Guidonian undertone:

These coniunctae were invented so that a song formerly called irregular could be brought into regularity by them in some manner. For a coniuncta is the attribute, realized in actual singing, for permitting one to make a semitone out of a tone and conversely. Or rather, a coniuncta is the mental transposition of any property or hexachord from its own location to another location above or below. As evidence of this, it must be noted that every coniuncta is signed by $\flat$ or $\sharp$, placed in an unusual location. Also, wherever the $\flat$ is placed, the sound of that joint ought to be lowered by a major semitone and called $fa$. And where the sign $\sharp$ is placed, the sound of that joint ought to be raised by a major semitone and called $mi$.\(^{54}\)

Again, like Marchetto the Berkeley theorist is aware of “actual singing” in which coniuncta inflects whole tones and semitones. Nonetheless, in context of the treatise the deductio aspect of the two signs is clearly the acting agent that brings forth aural consequences. Indeed, the Berkeley theorist does not present the gamut of musica ficta as a series of pitch classes incurred by signs representing inflections. Quite the opposite, after defining coniuncta the theorist exhibits all the coniunctae deductios. The exhausting list begins with the deductio starting on the extended F-$ut$ below $\Gamma$-$ut$, thus incurring a $\flat$ or $fa$ on the lowest $B$ of the gamut, and ending with the one on high A-$ut$ that contains a C$\#$ as $mi$ (Figure 1-8).\(^{55}\) The presentation makes clear that when $\flat$ or $\sharp$ occurs it is primarily the deductio and not the physical sound at play.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., 50-3.
\(^{55}\) Figure 1-8 is created based on the descriptions in Ibid., 52-67.
Moreover, defining pitch inflections as *coniuncta* or a mental process of transposing *deductios* destroys the aural equality between *musica recta* and *musica ficta*. At the very beginning of the above excerpt, the Berkeley theorist differentiates the regular—the Guidonian hand previously exposed—and the irregular—those inflected by ♭ or ♯ and

### Figure 1-8

*Coniunctae in the Berkeley Manuscript*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitch</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>F♯</td>
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<td>Γ</td>
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</table>

Moreover, defining pitch inflections as *coniuncta* or a mental process of transposing *deductios* destroys the aural equality between *musica recta* and *musica ficta*. At the very beginning of the above excerpt, the Berkeley theorist differentiates the regular—the Guidonian hand previously exposed—and the irregular—those inflected by ♭ or ♯ and
thus not found on the hand. The coniuncta serves to regularize the irregular. Given that the Guidonian hand itself derives from a chain of overlapping deductios, defining the irregular musica ficta through coniuncta deductios defines the irregular in the terms of the regular. The Berkeley theorist downplays the aural subsistence of pitch inflection and makes the ficta dependent on the recta. This explains why ♭ or # can only occur in unusual locations according to the Berkeley manuscript: “regularizing the regular” and “imagining the real” are redundant and absurd. The divide between “regular” and “irregular” shows the extent to which the Guidonian hand had become a convention in theoretical discussions of tonal space, a “hardening” process that according to Mengozzi gradually began among scholastic writers in the late Middle Ages.56

From Marchetto’s Lucidarium to the Berkeley manuscript some decades later, the knowledge of the monochord and the pitch content of ♭ and # has remained but the deductio’s role in accounting for the diatonic tonal space and pitch inflections has increased. By the time of the early fifteenth century, the sixteen-step gamut comfortably based itself completely on the Guidonian deductios. According to Berger:

So long as the controlling image in terms of which the gamut was conceived was that of the hand, so long, that is, as a musician thought about the accidentals primarily in terms of the syllables (♭=fa, ♯ or #=mi), he was likely to assume that the flat (or sharp) could not additionally inflect a step which was already fa (or mi) and that, consequently, in the a-g octave, his gamut would allow no more than

sixteen different pitches, namely, the eight steps of the “true” gamut plus the flats at a, d, e, g and sharps at c, d, f, g.57

Berger’s story continues as such: at this point of the history of music theory, an increasing—or returning—awareness of the physical sound on the keyboard and the monochord should begin liberating musicians from the chains of Guidonian conventions in imagining the tonal space and discovering new inflections.58 My reading of selected theorists from the fifteenth century, however, suggests a different picture. Their actual writing shows the continued and even increasing importance of the Guidonian deductio.

**Guido’s Triumph From A♯ and Beyond**

In his research of the “expanding universe” of musica ficta, Berger devotes much attention to the canonization of A♯:

The introduction of [A♯] broke the barriers which had until then limited the gamut, since it implied that the primary function of an accidental was to inflect and that the syllable-indicating function was derived or secondary. If you could truly sharpen an A, there was no reason that you could not truly sharpen or flatten any other step, or even apply an accidental several times in a row. There were, strictly speaking, no longer any limits beyond which an application of an accidental would be inconceivable.59

As shown in Figure 1-9, A♯ is beyond the conventional gamut because A is already *mi* to the B♭-*fa* above. Yet Prosdocimus, one of the earliest theorists to discuss

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57 Karol Berger, “The Expanding Universe of Musica Ficta in Theory from 1300 to 1550,” 429.
58 Ibid., 414, and 429-30.
59 Ibid., 429.
A♯, observed that musicians who accepted A♯ as a legitimate step highlighted a Guidonian detail. In the lowest *deductio* starting on Γ *ut*, there is only ♯ *mi* and not ♭ *fa* on the step of B because the *mollis deductio* on F *ut* has not been introduced yet. Thus, as opposed to the other two A *la mi re* steps that neighbor a B♭ *fa*, the A in the Γ *ut deductio* is only an A *re*. Since the step of A *re* is not already *mi*, it then follows that an A♯ can occur on this step.60

It thus appears that Prosdocimus’s explanation of A♯ in no way “breaks the barriers” of the Guidonian syllables. Exactly the opposite, it arises from and confirms such barriers. Prosdocimus conceives A♯ not as an upward inflection of A-natural guided

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60 Ibid., 415-6.
by the natural sound but as a logical consequence of the seven Guidonian *deductios* that
differentiate A re from A la mi re.

John Hothby (c. 1430-1487) introduces A♯ from a different angle in his *Calliopea legale*. At the beginning of his treatise, Hothby proposes that there are seven *phtongi* or
diatonic steps: A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. There are also three orders of steps: the first are
the seven steps listed above, the second consists of those marked by a round b except C
and F, and the third those marked by a square b except B and E. In this way, Hothby
acquires a seventeen-step gamut with A♯ belonging to the third order (Figure 1-10).

Seeing that these three orders regard the traditionally *recta* B♭ as *musica ficta*, Berger
contends that “Hothby no longer thought about the use of accidentals primarily in terms
of the hand and its syllables” and that “he thought instead in terms of the keyboard, with
the white keys … and the black ones a diatonic semitone above (or below).”

Indeed, with Hothby avoiding the syllables in his presentation and with the first order as
“white keys” and the other two as “black keys,” Berger’s keyboard metaphor fits well.
Nevertheless, the rest of *Calliopea legale* suggests otherwise. To begin with, Hothby

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61 E. De Coussemaker, *Historie de l’Harmonie au Moyen Age* (Paris, France: Librairie
Archéologique de Victor Didron, 1852), 297-8. Edition of Hothby’s “La Calliopée légale” can be
found in 295-349. All translations into English are mine.

62 Figure 1-10 is based on Ibid., 314. Certain features have been modified: (1) in
Hothby’s original diagram, he only lists steps and not actual pitches; it thus shows that the
syllables *la*, *sol*, *fa*, *mi*, *re*, and *ut* can be applied to every step of the gamut. Nevertheless,
because Hothby makes this diagram “with all the orders,” I have applied actual pitch content
according to all the three orders. His diagram shows that the steps C and F are supposed to be
“counts” and “princes,” (♯ and ♭), B and E “counts” and “princes” (♭ and ♯), and A, D, and G
“counts,” “princes,” and “demonstrators” (♭, ♭, and ♯); (2) Hothby’s original diagram does not
begin with a *deductio* on F *ut*. It implies *deductios* below F *ut* in which the F step is *la*, *sol*, *fa*, *mi*,
and *re* respectively, although all the steps below F are omitted, leaving these *deductios*
incomplete. For convenience’s sake, these incomplete *deductios* are omitted altogether.

63 Berger, “The Expanding Universe of Musica Ficta in Theory from 1300 to 1550,”
421-2.
maintains the distinction between regular and irregular steps comparable to that in the

*Berkeley manuscript:*

The steps of the second and third orders cannot be understood in a fixed manner

[...] if one does not consider the first order, which serves as the foundation of all

the others.\(^{64}\)

That the second and third orders are not self-sufficient but dependent on the first rules out

the idea of “string continuum” central to Berger’s keyboard and monochord.

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\(^{64}\) Coussemaker, *Histoire de l’Harmonie au Moyen Age*, 303.
Furthermore, the way in which the second and third orders depend on and derive from the first, which Figures 1-11.1 and 1-11.2 illustrate based on the following excerpt, betrays the Guidonian logic at work:

Three are three distinctive types of steps: the “prince,” the “count,” and the “demonstrator.” There are two princes in the first order, B and E. There are also two counts: C, who is the count of B, and F, who is the count of E. All the other steps such as A, D, and G are demonstrators. The prince of the first order changes into a count relative to a third-order step immediately below; and the count changes into a prince relative to a second-order step immediately above. The demonstrator changes into a count and a prince as such: into a count relative to a third-order step below, and a prince relative to a second-order step above. The count and prince of the first order change similarly into demonstrators, so do those of the second and third orders.65

Although a step of the second or third orders has been defined as one that carries a ♯ or a ♭, it is not produced by the act of assigning either signs. Instead, it arises from

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65 Ibid., 301-2.
making a prince, a count, or a demonstrator not out of itself but out of its upper or lower neighbor. The first-order A becomes the third-order A♯, for example, not because of sharpening the A itself but because of transforming its upper neighbor B from a prince into a count. Similarly, the first-order B transforms into the second-order B♭ not because of flattening the B itself but because of turning its lower neighbor A from a demonstrator into a prince.

Hothby soon reveals that he is indeed thinking in Guidonian terms. He explicitly calls the prince mi and count fa, and the analogy has already been clear. He further argues that mi and fa define a deductio: “as soon as the prince and the count are recognized, it is easy to find the other syllables of the same deductio.”66 Towards the end of his presentation of musica ficta, Hothby examines all such possible deductios that arise from all the prince-count or mi-fa combinations. Each of the six syllables appears on each step.

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66 Ibid., 307.
of the Guidonian hand thanks to the transposing mi-fa (Figure 1-10 above). Therefore, far from being discarded, the Guidonian deductio remains the acting agent in Hothby’s musica ficta and expands beyond the Guidonian hand. Just like the Berkeley theorist, Hothby is aware of the aural implications of ♯ or ♭ but presents them not as inflections but as the result of transposing the Guidonian deductio, especially its mi-fa core.

Johannes Tinctoris (c. 1430-1511), the most prolific and perhaps the best-known writer on music from the fifteenth-century, confirms the understanding of musica ficta through the Guidonian syllables. In his gigantic oeuvre, Tinctoris only addresses musica ficta in Terminorum musicae diffinitionum, a short dictionary of musical terms. He presents two definitions for coniuncta: (1) “when a note that is normally a whole step is made an exceptional half step, or a note that is normally a half step is made an exceptional whole step,” and (2) “the placing of a round b or square b in an irregular place.” He defines square b as indicating the singing of mi and round b fa, which reaffirms Guido’s influence already divulged by the distinction between “normal” and “exceptional” steps and “regular” and “irregular” places for signs.

The last authority Spataro invokes in his question to del Lago is Bartholomeus Ramis de Pareia (c. 1440-after 1491), whom Spataro claims as his teacher. Clement Miller’s commentary on Ramis’s Musica Practica is full of praise for the theorist’s revolutionary opinions. Ramis disengages with the established conventions of tonal space in his 1482 treatise, which may explain why he never secured a position at the University of Bologna. While many others were elevating Guido and his deductios, the radical

Ramis proclaimed that Guido was “perhaps a better monk than a musician.” He vociferously opposed the Guidonian syllables, an attitude that according to Mengozzi triggered the hardening of *deductio* into *hexachordum* by Gaffurius. In Chapter 7 from Tractate 1, Part One of *Musica Practica*, moreover, Ramis proposes a new mnemonic device that consists of eight syllables—“*psallitur per voces istas*”—instead of Guido’s six (“*Ut queant laxis resonare fibris / Mira estorum famuli tuorum, Solve pollute labii reatum*”). Spanning an octave, Ramis’s *psallitur* would avoid the problem of cumbersome mutations inherent to the Guidonian “sixth-ness” and restore the *sine qua non* status of the octave threatened by the Gaffurian *hexachordum*.

In the following Tractate 2 devoted to *musica ficta*, Ramis disputes the role of *mi-fa* in understanding the *coniuncta*, a view that has remained unchallenged from Marchetto to Hothby. In Chapter 2 entitled “An explanation of *musica ficta*” he complains that the Guidonians “err […] because they sing with Guido’s syllables and not Gregory’s letters, thus saying neither round b nor hard, square b but *fa* or *mi*.” Both Tinctoris and Hothby are among these Guidonians and thus did not escape Ramis’s criticism. Later in Chapter 5 he demonstrates the danger of mindlessly equating square b with *mi* and round b with *fa*:

> For they say, if a tone marked with a preceding round b may be on G-sol-re-ut [G♭*fa*], and on the same place another note may be marked with a preceding square b [G♯*mi*], although they seem to be a unison, because of the lowering of the first note and raising of the second it is a semitone, as *mi-fa*. They speak

69 Mengozzi, *The Renaissance Reform of Medieval Music Theory*, 182-204
70 Ramis de Pareia, *Musica Practica*, 74.
71 Ibid., 76, where Ramis criticizes Tinctoris, and 91, Hothby.
incorrectly […] because if the first note is already lower form its place by a semitone and the second is raised from its place by another semitone, two semitones result [G♭-G and G-G♯]. So there is a difference of a whole tone and not of a semitone, as ut-re.72

As if to make his radical, anti-Guidonian image even more convincing, Ramis conveniently ignores the distinction between major and minor semitones and embraces equal temperament in which the augmented unison between G♭ and G♯ is enharmonically equivalent to a major second. He thus wins another compliment from Miller for being someone “who was never afraid to contest traditional musical thought [and] had several interesting and revolutionary statements.”73

How, then, does the revolutionary Ramis want musicians to understand the two signs? The beginning of Chapter 6 of the current tractate provides a clue to the answer to this question, which Ramis never answers directly: “The diversity of music consists not in quality but in quantity. The diversity of music is formed in the extent of its highness or lowness, but it is not applied in the magnitude or strength or weakness of a tone.”74 He ridicules the Guidonians for differentiating the same pitch (quantity) by assigning various syllables (qualities). To avoid the paradox “that the same thing differs from itself” one should return from mental imagination to the physical sound. In Chapter 1 of Tractate 2, right after presenting his psallitur Ramis teaches that “if the reading cannot sing through the notes with ease by means of the rise and fall of a tone, let him have recourse to a monochord.”75

72 Ibid., 89-90.
73 Ibid., 30.
74 Ibid., 30-1.
75 Ibid., 73.
Ramis’s reformatory agenda that restores sound and monochord as paradigms of musical practice, pedagogy, and theory is hard to miss. Nevertheless, is it not curious that Ramis, while denouncing Guido’s *deductio* especially its *mi-fa*, comes up with his own *psallitur* that assigns meaningless syllables to musical steps that would otherwise correspond directly to pitches on the monochord? Furthermore, if it were the irrational “sixth-ness” of Guido’s *deductio* with which Ramis takes issue, he never applies his octave *psallitur* to *musica ficta*. On the contrary, in Chapter 3 Ramis constructs a “perfect hand” out of seventeen Guidonian *deductios* by putting all the six Guidonian syllables on each of the seven diatonic steps within reach. Although the chapter starts by defining round-b and square-b *coniunctae* via their aural functions of lowering and raising a tone from its natural positions, it immediately takes a Guidonian turn:

For a brief idea of each *coniuncta*, *ut* is important here, so that after knowing a place of *coniuncta* we may return from it by joints of our fingers, saying *fa mi re ut* if the *coniuncta* is round-b, or *mi re ut* if the *coniuncta* is square-b.\(^76\)

Identical to Hothby’s method of locating a *deductio* through positioning the *mi-fa* half step, Ramis’s process lays foundation to his “perfect hand” that is almost identical to Hothby’s (Figure 1-12, compared to Figure 1-10).\(^77\) Even here, he does not forget his routine criticism of Guido. It seems, however, that Ramis is in fact bragging about how his version of the Guidonian hand is superior to that of Guido himself.

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\(^76\) Ibid., 76-77. Changes have been made to Miller’s translation per footnote no.1

\(^77\) Figure 1-12 is created based on Ibid., 77. It has been slightly modified from the diagram Miller provides in that the *deductios* are vertical and not diagonal. In any case, the diagram shows Ramis’s belief that any of the six syllable may occur at any step of the Guidonian gamut. It is important, however, that the twenty-two positions on the left end of the diagram are steps, not pitches. Unlike Hothby who specifies that all the three “orders” are to be applied to these steps, Ramis does not bother to apply actual pitch content to these steps. It is certain, however, that Ramis sees different pitch content in each step, otherwise such a diagram would be completely inapplicable to musical practices.
For everything that has been said readers can surmise how the confusion proceeding from Guido’s teaching has arisen. For he believed that everywhere a semitone was to be sung singers should always sing *mi* and *fa* […] [He] has put two and three syllables on one and the same pitch, as we have shown above. Yet of necessity we have shown mathematically the same six syllables arranged on the preceding positions with his as a basis.  

Thus, when it comes to *musica ficta*, Ramis the anti-Guido revolutionary is not accusing Guido for being Guidonian but rather for not being Guidonian enough.

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78 Ibid., 89-90.
Indeed, although Ramis seems to advocate for a purely aural understanding of ♯ and ♭, he never presents pitch inflections in such manner. Only much later in Chapter 5 “Disproving some of the preceding and showing the correct application of coniunctae” does he consider the pitch content of his “perfect hand.” He notices that the different Guidonian syllables on the same step can actually produce different sounds, for example E fa and E ut (E♭) fall lower than E-la and E-mi (E♯).79 When Ramis finally turns to coniunctae on the monochord at the beginning of Chapter 5, he divides the monochord by juxtaposing three “orders” of diatonic steps. Each order is organized in no other way but overlapping Guidonian deductios: the “natural order” starts on Γ ut, and two “accidental orders” each begins a whole tone away on F ut and A ut. It is in this Guidonian manner that “each whole ton of the natural order is divided by another tone of the accidental orders,” as shown in Figure 1-13.80

In summary, although he vocally demeans Guido’s teachings of coniuncta and his followers, Ramis in fact appropriates the deductios to construct the “perfect hand” and divide the all-important monochord. Were one to speak of any “expanding universe of musica ficta” chez Ramis as well as other theorists I have discussed, the universe expands not by returning to the monochord by exactly by furthering the Guidonian convention of transposing deductios.

In this way, Spataro is truly a good student of Ramis. In his letters to del Lago and Aron, Spataro surprisingly reconciled Ramis with Hothby and Tinctoris whom his teacher fiercely criticized. This suggests that Spataro understood the role the Guidonian deductio actually played in Ramis’s discussion of musica ficta. Spataro also invokes Aron’s

79 Ibid., 87-8.
80 Ibid., 82-3.
Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni in which Aron constructs his own version of the “perfect hand.” Like Hothby and Ramis, Aron distinguishes between natural and accidental orders and assigns each Guidonian syllable to each diatonic step of the Guidonian hand. Chapters 26-45 exhaust all such possible combinations, step by step and syllables by syllable.\textsuperscript{81} Thus, in his 30 October letter addressed to Aron in response to del Lago’s answers, Spataro consolidates the \textit{musica ficta} theories of Hothby,

\textsuperscript{81} Pietro Aaron, \textit{Trattato della natura et cognizione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato non da altrui piu scritti} (Venice, 1525), ff. f ii-g iv.
Tinctoris, Ramis, and Aron, and he explains how transposing the *deductios* defies del Lago’s unwillingness to accept F♭, C♭, B♯, and E♯:

As Hothby and my teacher [Ramis] show, there are three diatonic orders [“ordini diatonici”] use by musicians, no different in nature and substance, but in different locations, that is, one higher than the other with regard to the regular musical spaces of the monochord in relation to its beginning note […] The first occurs in compositions without key signature; since it is called natural, it needs no accidental signs. The second occurs in compositions that have a ♭ where no fa occurs in the first. The third has # where no mi occurs in the first. Therefore our musicians say, in view of the fact that all three orders are equivalent to the one order of Guido, it follows that in the second and third orders ♭ can be used wherever there is no fa and # wherever there is no mi. Therefore, following the rule given by our Pietro Aron—that mi occurs on C and F by virtue of D♭ and G♭ in the second order—they say logically that ♭ can be used on C and F, not in relation to fa of the first order but to mi of the second order, the same pitch as fa in the first order.82

Without any invocation of sound or monochord, Spataro simply applies the conventional guideline of placing # where there is no mi and ♭ where there is no fa not only to the natural order but also to the two accidental orders (Figure 1-14). He justifies the seemingly forbidding pitches not by locating them on the monochord but by explaining them as derivatives of further applications of mi and fa.

82 *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 678-706: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 30 October 1533, paragraph 3.
Thus, what the two Giovannis disagree on is not whether ♯ and ♭ stand for pitch inflections or coniunctae, that is, transposition of deductios. Just as all the theorists from Marchetto da Padova to Bartolomeus Ramis, Spataro as well as del Lago understands both aspects of the two signs. Rather, the debate is really about how far one can transpose the deductio, which both theorists consider the acting agent of musica ficta.

This is not so say that Ramis’s call for reform based on sound and monochord is insignificant. After examining the monochord, Ramis explains what Spataro would call the “string continuum”:

“Therefore, it should be noted from this that singing in the accidental order in one way or other is the same as singing in the natural order. There is only a difference of signs and lines, since the semitone does not occur in the same place as it does in the natural order.”83

Ramis breaks down the boundary between the natural and accidental orders that he himself has proposed earlier in Chapter 5. The idea that all steps correspond to a pitch on the monochord challenges the qualitative distinction between the “regular” musica recta and “irregular” musica ficta. Ramis’s awareness of pitch content or as he terms “quantity” justifies transposing the Guidonian deductio to places beyond Guido’s own imagination and thus producing inflected pitches via coniunctae. Similarly, Spataro’s “string continuum” does not substitute a purely aural understanding of ♯ and ♭ for the Guidonian coniunctae but allows him to be more adventurous with deductios. No matter where on the monochord the two syllables fall, mi-fa always creates a diatonic semitone.

83 Ramis de Pareia, Musica Practica, 88
So, from Guido d’Arezzo to Giovanni Spataro, has there been an “expansion” of the “musica ficta universe?” A positive answer seems undeniable because Guido has never spoken of F♯ or E♭ in the sense of pitch content. Yet the expansion does not occur via a revolution that, as Berger suggests, disengaged with the Guidonian concept of coniuncta and began interpreting ♯ and ♭ as aural inflections. The knowledge that ♯ raises
the pitch and ♭ lowers it by a certain semitone has never been lost. In case anyone would have forgotten it, *De institutione musica* by Boethius (480-524) was always available for medieval and Renaissance theorists.

Admittedly, the same period did witness a rising role for the monochord in music pedagogy and theory thanks to a humanistic movement that Mengozzi traces back to the generation of Johannes Ciconia (c. 1370-1412). Theorists that subscribed to this movement like Ramis and Spataro often criticized Guidonian conventions and might thus appear revolutionary. Notwithstanding shouts and screams against Guido a “better monk than a musician,” the Guidonian *deductio* remained the acting agent of producing and understanding *musica ficta* even in Ramis and Spataro’s writings. Far from diminishing Guidonian agency, the monochord creates a continuous musical space that justifies *deductios* to operate even further. There was not a new sound-oriented understanding of the signs, simply a gradual realization that *mi* and *fa* can occur everywhere. The combination of the *deductio* as agent and monochord as justification suggests the logic of transposition: moving the same musical units to different frequencies without jeopardizing their qualitative integrity. It is transposing the *deductios* in the continuous space that yields the “ordinary” D♯ and E♭ that belong to the sixteen-step gamut, the more “exciting” A♯, and the “revolutionary” C♭, F♭, E♯ and B♯.

Regarding the two Giovannis, the fundamental disagreement that overcame their friendship was not about what the two signs mean. Neither Spataro nor del Lago considered pitch inflection and Guidonian syllables incompatible, and both suggested the importance of *deductio* and transposition. The crucial yet only difference was how far

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one could carry them out. Perhaps the monochord-conscious Spataro does deserve the name of a creative adventurer, but not quite a revolutionary reformer. His audacious views come not from leaving musical conventions behind but from consolidating them in an insightful way and, as a matter of fact, loyally adhering to his teacher.

A Puzzling Proof

In his letter to Aron on 30 October 1533, Spataro the proud theorist invokes only one composer to support his theoretical claims: Adriano Willaert (1490-1562), whose influence on sixteenth-century music including chromaticism is inestimable.

If such subtle considerations [C♭, B♯, et cetera] are beyond ignorant practitioners, they are of great concern to speculative theorists and musicians, as the outstanding musician Messer Adriano [Willaert] of San Marco demonstrated in his ingenious composition on ‘Quid non ebrietas.’ In the tenor he placed a C♭ with great logic and skill and yet with theoretical considerations approved by the speculative musicians.85

For Spataro, Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietas” proves the relevance of steps such as C♭ against del Lago’s criticism and puts the speculative theory of musica ficta to practice (Figure 1-15).86 In fact, Spataro had known the piece for almost a decade: he mentioned it in his letter to Aron on 23 May 1524, and fostered several exchanges regarding it in his circle.87

85 A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians, 678-706: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 30 October 1533, paragraph 18.
86 Figure 1-15 is recreated from Margaret Bent, “Diatonic ‘Ficta,’” Early Music History 4 (1984), 17.
87 A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians, 300-8: Letter from Giovanni Spataro Pietro Aron, 23 May 1524, paragraph 8.
Later musicians, including Joseph Levitan, one of the first modern musicologists to discuss “Quid non ebrietatis“ in detail, knew the piece through Giovanni Maria Artusi’s treatise *L’Artusi, overo della imperfettoni della moderna musica* published in Venice,
Artusi printed a Cantus-Tenor duo entitled “Quidnam ebrietas” (*sic*) whose text draws from Horace’s fifth epistle:

Quid non ebrietas dissignat? Operta recludit,
Spes iubet esse ratas, ad proelia trudit inertem,
Sollicitis animis onus eximit, addocet artes.
Fecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?⁸⁹

In 1956, Edward Lowinsky discovered that the single Altus part book of *Libro Primo De la Fortuna*, a printed collection of music dating back to either 1529/30 or 1535, also contains a piece entitled “Quid non ebrietas.” Its text largely matches that of the duo in Artusi’s treatise, and its melody fits the latter’s counterpoint exceptionally well.⁹⁰ Since in their 1524 exchange Aron told Spataro that “Quid non ebrietas” was initially composed for four voices, Lowinsky concluded that the Altus part from *Libro Primo De la Fortuna* was the missing Altus of Willaert’s work. In his paper “Willaert’s ‘Chromatic Duo’ Reexamined,” Lowinsky reconstructed the missing Bassus. Since then, “Quid non ebrietas” has received significant attention. In spite of the piece’s obscurity, especially compared to Willaert’s anthology *Musica Nova*, the literature on “Quid non ebrietas” is probably the largest for any of Willaert’s individual compositions.⁹¹

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⁸⁹ Edward E. Lowinsky, “The Musical Avant-Garde of the Renaissance,” 123. Lowinsky provides the following translation: “What a miracle cannot the winecup work. It unlocks secrets, bids hopes to be fulfilled, thrusts the coward into the field, the load from anxious hearts, teaches new arts. The flowing bowl—whom has it not made eloquent?” The source is Horace, *Satires, Epistles, and Ars poetica*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (London, 1926), 280-3.


⁹¹ An exception is perhaps “Aspro Core” from *Musica Nova* (1549).
Quid non ebrietas

Horace Flaccus Quintus

Editorial accidentals in parenthesis "( )" are those not dictated by deductios maneuvers but by the need to avoid cross-relations with the Canto.

Adriano Willaert

Transcription by Zhuqing Hu (Lester) based on Giovanni Maria Artusi, L’Artusi overo delle imperfettioni della moderna musica (Venice: Giacomo Vincento, 1600), fols. 21 r/v, as recreated in Margaret Bent, “Diatonic Ficta,” Early Music History 4 (1984): 17.

The unusualness of “Quid non ebrietas” is in fact more provocative than the C♭.

Whereas the Cantus concludes on a D, the Tenor ends on an E (m. 39) and forms a minor seventh that any Renaissance musician would recognize as a dissonance inappropriate for closure. According to Spataro, much chaos occurred at the piece’s first performance in Rome,

Three or more years have passed since Lorenzo Bergomozzi of Modena, who was a singer of Pope Leo’s musica secreta, told me that Messer Adriano [Willaert] sent the Pope a duo that ended on a seventh. The Pope’s singers were never capable of performing it; it was then played on viols, but not very well.92

The reason the Papal singers did not succeed in performing the piece either by singing or by playing it on viols is not because of the contrapuntally incorrect ending. Spataro later bragged that “through the good offices of a friend of mine in Ferrara, Messer Adriano sent me a copy of the duo and it was sung, played, and highly praised here in Bologna.”93

Spataro’s satisfaction with a piece that seems to end on a blatant dissonance brings the attention back to the C♭ (m. 21), which is but one among a series of round b signs starting with the E♭ in m. 11. The contrapuntal context clarifies that all these signs not only mark the steps as fa but also alter their pitch content so as to avoid leaps of augmented forth or diminished fifth. They also point to unnotated signs, for example the E♭ in m. 12 necessary to avoid a B♭-E tritone in m. 12, and indeed Willaert is economical with these signs for he notates each round b coniuncta only once. Thus, when arriving at the notated C♭ in m. 21, the singer would have inflected the C by a major semitone in

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92 *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 300-8: Letter from Giovanni Spataro Pietro Aron, 23 May 1524, paragraph 8.
93 Ibid.
addition to singing it as \textit{fa}, were he imagining the Guidonian \textit{deductio} as an aid to this rather difficult piece. This C♭ meaning C-flat \textit{fa} instead of C-\textit{fa} proves Spataro’s point that del Lago’s equating \textit{b} with \textit{fa} can be confusing and that C♭, as monstrous as it seems, can occur in actual compositions.

Nonetheless, Spataro does not comment on what happens immediately after the C♭ in m. 21. The following F carries no sign. In the context of the piece, however, the need for a leap of a perfect fifth necessitates an assumed round \textit{b} on F. Because of the “key signature,” the seemingly unaltered B in m. 22 is in fact a B♭, and the presence of F♭ right before necessitates an addition round \textit{b}. It thus results in an unnotated B♭♭, a B twice made \textit{fa} and twice inflected downward. The Tenor continues, and at the end of m. 22 one encounters an E notated with a round \textit{b}. Since B♭♭ and E♭ would form an imperfect fifth, an E♭♭ arises, which later gives birth to an A♭♭ in m. 23. No other round-\textit{b} surprises occur after m. 23, but in this way the final E is in fact an E♭♭ whose aural content derives from a chain of inflections necessitated by the need of keeping perfect leaps of fourths and fifths.

Many arguments regarding “Quid non ebrietas” focused exclusively on the E-D or in fact E♭♭-D ending. In his subsequent letter to Aron on 9 September 1524, Spataro comments that the ingeniously conceived piece suffers from a tuning problem at its end. By assigning the syllable \textit{fa}, a round \textit{b} lowers a step by a major semitone so that it is now a minor semitone above the step below. In this way, the Tenor’s E♭♭ is two major semitones below E. Since a whole tone consists of a major semitone and a minor semitone, and since the major semitone exceeds the minor by a comma, the final interval between Cantus and Tenor is not a perfect octave but an octave plus a comma. As
Spataro and later Lowinsky point out, only by applying equal temperament, which does not differentiate between major and minor semitones, could one obtain the perfect octave much at the end of “Quid non ebrietās.”

Because no contemporary instrument was tuned in equal temperament or designed perfectly to accommodate the wide range of pitches in Willaert’s Tenor, Spataro deems it impossible that Aron could have successfully executed the piece on keyboard as he claimed. The human voice, on the other hand, can perform the piece better because it is “nature’s instrument and does not lack in perfection, as do our mechanical instruments.”

Moreover, Spataro warns Aron that a solution to Willaert’s puzzle can be achieved only through speculation: “performing this work is not the same as analyzing” because “the ear, imperfect as it is, can ill judge these tiny and unaccustomed intervals [the commas], therefore reason must come to the rescue where the senses fail.”

A believer of progress and prophecy in Renaissance music, Lowinsky naturally argues that “Quid non ebrietās” was Willaert’s manifesto for equal temperament and a more practical philosophy of music to the chagrin of the conservative theorists like Spataro. Lowinsky uses numerous materials, from additional letters of Spataro to Horace’s inebriated text, to prove Willaert’s knowledge of equal temperament and support of it in the piece. In Lowinsky’s description, Willaert becomes a Renaissance reformer who discards the outdated doctrines of medieval music:

95 *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 311-7: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Pietro Aron, 9 September 1524, paragraph 3.
96 Ibid.
The deeper cause must be sought in the intention [emphasis mine] to revive the Aristoxenian philosophy of music, the primacy of the ear over mathematics, the recognition of the musical realities contested by the mathematical doctrines of the Pythagoreans: the acceptance of thirds and sixths as consonances, the divisibility of the whole tone into two equal semitones, the possibility of dividing the octave into six whole tones and thus twelve equal semitones, and, with these, equal temperament that frees music to circle back and forth from one key to another in the newly conquered and harmonic space.  

Sound familiar? Although Karol Berger disagrees with Lowinsky’s “secret chromatic art,” to which the chain reactions of unnotated inflections in “Quid non ebrietates” serve as an important side proof, both marvel at the “conquests” and “pragmatism” that sixteenth-century musicians newly achieved over their less innovative predecessors.

To this, Dorothy Keyser gives a romantic touch. She vigilantly notices that Willaert’s exploration of the complete circle of fifths coincided with the exploration of another “circle” in the 1510s: Ferdinand Magellan’s circumnavigation of the Earth. Both Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietates” and Magellan’s voyage “mirror the collision between the medieval and Renaissance concept of space” and “offer insight into what one might call the ‘character of exploration.’” As Magellan effectively proved that the Earth is not flat, Willaert, with his E♭♭-D ending “turned the gamut back on itself, creating a circle of what had been a line.”

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100 Ibid.
and Almeida were butchers” in their exploitation of the other cultures, Willaert himself was not devoid of aggression in his tonal adventures.

Furthermore, both Lowinsky and Keyser concoct an inspiring story of honor, revenge, and conspiracy explaining why Willaert had to write the puzzling “Quid non ebrietias.” According to Le Istitutioni harmoniche by Gioseffo Zarlino (1517-1590), one of Willaert’s most intimate pupils, when Willaert was in Rome in the mid-1510s, he visited the Papal singers and stumbled upon them rehearsing his motet “Verbum bonum et suave.” When Willaert claimed his authorship, the Papal singers responded by dropping it from their repertory, saying that they had thought it was composed by Josquin.\textsuperscript{101} Drawing upon the humanistic writings of Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni della Casa, and Leo Battista Alberti, Keyser pictures Willaert in a society “in which honor was highly prized and violently defended.”\textsuperscript{102} With the musical puzzle that the Papal singers failed to resolve, “Willaert showed them that while it was in their power to discard a work of his, it was in his power to write one that they could not place in their repertory even if they wanted to.”\textsuperscript{103} Thus, in “Quid on ebrietas” Willaert simultaneously put forward the agenda of equal temperament as a progressive Renaissance musician and avenged his honor as a dignified Renaissance man.

I agree that equal temperament is an inevitable issue in “Quid non ebrietias.” I also agree that Willaert’s story can serve as a good educational model for our modern society in which people no longer know how to express their opinions and defend themselves subtly or artfully. Yet interpretations of Willaert’s intention behind the piece, be it as

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{102} Keyser, "The Character of Exploration,” 200.
\textsuperscript{103} Lowinsky, “The Musical Avant-Garde of the Renaissance,” 123.
\end{footnotes}
musical propaganda or personal revenge, rewards nothing beyond satisfying an intrusive curiosity. After all, much of Lowinsky and Keyser’s story was solidly based on hypotheses. Does it make a difference if Willaert actually composed “Quid non ebrietas” while inebriated and intended it rather as an insincere and esoteric joke of equal temperament? Does it make the piece less fascinating if Willaert never voluntarily disclosed it beyond his circle, not to mention using it to humiliate the Papal singers?

Regardless of its connection to Willaert’s biography or to musical politics of which we know very little, “Quid non ebrietas” remains a puzzle. How is it supposed to be sung? How is one to understand those round b signs? Karol Berger and Margaret Bent offer two contradictory readings. For Berger, the existence of the double flats proves that musicians of the sixteenth century no longer interpreted ♯ and ♭ as syllables but as inflections.104 On the opposite side, Margaret Bent believes that for musicians throughout the period, ♯ and ♭ do not necessarily imply universal pitch content but always indicate the syllables mi and fa.105 She argues that in “Quid non ebrietas,” instead of interpreting the round b signs as downward inflections, one can realize the Tenor by simply following two rules:

1. ♭ indicates fa (and therefore has a semitone below it and a whole tone above it) until the sign is superseded;

2. All melodic leaps of fourths and fifths are to be sung perfect.106

I suggest that Berger and Bent both err in treating the aural and syllabic interpretations of the signs as mutually exclusive. Even in the heated debate between

105 Margaret Bent, “Diatonic ‘Ficta,’” 14-6.
106 Ibid., 16-8.
Spataro and del Lago, both sides recognize the signs as both syllables and inflections and used them in both ways. In addition, I have already demonstrated that from the E♭ in m. 12 to the assumed F♭ in m. 21 there is no difference in reading the b as a lowering the pitch by a major semitone or singing it as fa.

The real problem occurs in m. 22, in which the Tenor begins with a notated B step and ends with an E signed with a round b. It is undeniable that these two steps as well as all the B and E steps thereafter have to be lowered by two semitones, the actual sizes of which depend on the tuning system. Nonetheless, because of Willaert’s specific manner of notating the signs, interpreting b as a downward inflection or as fa would introduce different processes. To be fair, because the only source of the Cantus-Tenor duo comes from Artusi’s treatise published almost eight decades after its first mention by Spataro, an analysis of its notational features can be rather precarious. Artusi’s transcription does not contradict Spataro’s description, however, and I consider it worthwhile to work with the notated round b’s in Artusi version since it at least comes from the hand of another learned sixteenth-century musician and can represent usages of the sign in the sixteenth century in general if not Willaert’s in specific.

In m. 22, if one takes in the B and E literally, one would inflect the pitches of B and E downward by only one semitone and not by two, since Willaert only notates one. In other words, if the notated b’s only entailed downward inflections, Willaert’s notation would be insufficient. This means that the notated b’s have less to do with the intrinsic aural meaning of the sign itself than with the linear context of the tenor, specifically all the pitch inflections that have come beforehand in a chain-reaction manner. The linearly unfolding deductios containing C♭ and F♭ in m. 22 dictate that singing fa on the notated
B♭ and E♭ inflects their actual pitches into B♭♭ and E♭♭. The same applies to the notated A♭ in m. 23, which due to the linear counterpoint introduces the last assumed double flat, A♭♭. Thus, while the♭ after m. 21 can imply both inflection and the syllable fa, the notation seems to prefer the latter reading as more explicit, relative, and easily maneuvered. Although not necessarily Willaert’s original, the way in which the extent version of “Quid non ebrietas” notates its ♭ suggests that Willaert and his sixteenth-century contemporaries were clearly relying on the Guidonian deductios to solve this puzzle whatever they may have thought about pitch inflection.

Not restricted by the lack of knowledge of Willaert’s original notations, the melodic contour of the tenor from mm. 24 to the end more convincingly proves the role of deductios in conceiving musica ficta. In these eighteen measures accounting for almost half of the piece, the Tenor no longer seeks new “tonal adventures” and stays exclusively in the range of six notated steps—E, F, G, A, B, and C. In addition to ♭♭ on E, A, and B as I have discussed, both Lowinsky and Keyser’s editions add ♭♭’s to all G and C steps after the assumed F♭ in m. 21. These discursive ♭♭’s have nothing to do with the linear successions of deductios in the Tenor itself. Instead, they serve to avoid false relations with the other parts. In other words, they do not shift the deductios but only modify them on the surface after the fact. Indeed, the singers would not have considered further lowering the G and C steps from G♭ and C♭ until they would have taken issue with some false relations after initial run-throughs.

Essentially, after the notated A♭ in m. 23 becomes the new fa and thus A♭♭, the Tenor remains within the confinement of the deductio beginning on E♭♭ ut. As a matter of fact, it does not even transgress the boundaries of the sixth between E♭♭ and C♭♭(♭),
not even through octave duplications. Previously, leaps or melodic outlines of fourths and fifths introduce new *musica ficta* steps through disjointed Guidonian syllables that require new *deductios*. In mm. 11-12, for example, the singer would sing *fa* at the assumed E♭. This E♭ *fa* belongs to the B♭-*ut deductio*, but the immediately following A♭ *fa* in m. 13 calls for a new *deductio* starting on E♭ *ut*. Downward leaps or melodic outlines of fifths in mm. 19 and 21 similarly introduce new *deductios*. The contrast between the active syllabic disjunctions and *deductio* transpositions when the Tenor is constantly introducing new *ficta* steps (before m. 23) and the stability of the *deductio* maneuvers when the Tenor ceases its “tonal adventures” (after m. 23) confirms that the Guidonian *deductio* is the acting agent of conceiving *musica ficta* steps.

Instead of Lowinsky’s paean to a tuning and philosophical revolution and Keyser’s fantasia on the coincidence of two at best tangentially related “circumnavigations,” my interpretation of “Quid non ebrietas” addresses the music and its notation. It is indeed more productive to treat Willaert’s musical puzzle as a witness to the manner in which musicians of the early sixteenth century thought about tonal space and pitch inflections. It exemplifies how transposing the Guidonian *deductios* gives rise to exceptional explorations of the gamut not only in theoretical discussion but also in composition, although the unusually speculative nature of “Quid non ebrietas” is also undeniable.

**The Earliest “Chromatic” Compositions?**

Margaret Bent would almost certainly challenge the relevance of the above discussions of *musica ficta* and “Quid non ebrietas” to Renaissance chromaticism. She
argues that “only melodic progressions that sound chromatic because they use the chromatic semitone qualified as chromatic.” Whereas Lowinsky calls the Cantus and Tenor of Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietas” a “chromatic duo,” Bent notices that the Tenor “is entirely diatonic in its progressions” because of its lack of any non-diatonic interval, “and was never described as chromatic by the theorists who wrote about it at such length.”

If “Quid non ebrietas” were entirely diatonic, and if the discourse of *musica ficta* it relates to had nothing to do with Renaissance chromaticism, what does it mean, then, to speak of pieces as “chromatic” in the context of Renaissance music, and what are the historical writings that would contribute to studying these pieces? Following Bent’s argument, does it mean that a piece becomes “chromatic” simply and only because of a chromatic half step?

The word “chromatic” was not unfamiliar to medieval or Renaissance theorists, yet it had a much richer meaning than the chromatic semitone. They learnt from Boethius that musicians of Antiquity differentiated between three “melodic genera”: diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic. Explaining these three genera requires a brief demonstration of the so-called Greater and Lesser Perfect System shown in Figures 1-17.1 and 1-17.2.

The system consists of eighteen strings or steps, from the lowest sounding *proslambanomenos* to the highest *nete hyperboleon*. Musicians of Ancient Greece organized all the seventeen steps above *proslambanomenos* into five tetrachords. Four

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107 Ibid., 22.
108 Ibid., 23. Here Bent is objecting to Lowinsky’s calling “Quid non ebrietas” a “chromatic duo.”
tetrachords, hypaton, meson, diezeugmenon, and hyperboleon from the lowest to the highest sounding, comprise the Greater Perfect System. The hypaton and meson tetrachords conjoin at hypate meson, and the diezeugmenon and hyperboleon tetrachords conjoin at nete diezeugmenon. The adjacent meson and diezeugmenon tetrachords do not conjoin, however, since the highest of the former, mese, and lowest of the latter,
paramese diezeugmenon, are two separate steps. On the other hand, the Lesser Perfect System replaces the two higher tetrachords with a single synemmenon tetrachord that, unlike diezeugmenon, conjoins with meson at mese.

The tongue-twisting terms such as lichanos hypaton refer to steps, most of which do not have a fixed pitch content, absolutely or relatively. Their sound in relation to one another depends on what genus one assigns to the five tetrachords. Each of the three genera spans over a perfect fourth. Therefore, the outer steps of all the five tetrachords—hypate hypaton, hypate meson, mese, paramese diezeugmenon, nete diezeugmenon, and nete hyperboleon—have stable pitch content in relation to one another. A tetrachord of
the diatonic genus consists of three intervals between its four steps: a semitone, a whole tone, and a whole tone in aurally ascending order. Figure 1-18 applies the diatonic genus to the Greek system and shows the pitch contents of its steps by modern pitch names. The
chromatic genus consists of two consecutive semitones and a minor third (See Figure 1-
19). The enharmonic genus consists of two consecutive dieses, which together make up a semitone, and a major third (See Figure 1-20).\(^{109}\)

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\(^{109}\) Although Boethius does not indicate it in Book I of *De institutione musica*, later parts
The generic tetrachords pour pitch content into the empty containers of steps. Thus, even though the names of all the steps across the three examples are identical, changing the genus alters the pitch content of all the steps except the six fixed steps, which represent pitches of B, E, A and their octave duplications, in modern letter names. In addition, certain intervals are unique to one genus. Obviously, the diesis is unique to the enharmonic genus and the chromatic semitone to the chromatic genus. Unusual to the modern mind, however, as indivisible intervals, the minor third belongs exclusively to the chromatic genus and the major third to the enharmonic.

Probably thanks to Boethius’s *De institutioni musica*, many theoretical treatises from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance discussed the three genera and their implications. In spite of the passage of such knowledge in the realm of music theory, however, there had been virtually no known pieces that put the two non-diatonic genera into practice. By 1 August 1517, however, the first post-Antiquity composition to utilize all the three genera is sure to have come forth. The piece that relates to this date is a four-voice motet, and its composer: Giovanni Spataro.

In his letter to Marc’Antonio Cavazzoni, a fellow Bolognese and probably his former student, Spataro provides a resolution to his motet “Ubi opus est facto,” which, unfortunately, has not otherwise survived.110 A typical trick piece, Spataro’s motet carries

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110 *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 203-15: Letter from Giovanni Spataro to Marc’Antonio Cavazzoni on 1 August 1517.
an obscure Tenor. It features a circle and a brevis rest on the staff but not a single note. The canon reads:

Omnis tetrachordum ordo per tria genera melorum canitur effigens in duobus
secundis dumtaxat unum anfractum suorum tamen duorum primorum
intervalorum et synemmenon utique devitans.

(“Each order of the tetrachords is sung in the three melodic genera, making only
one interval out of the two first intervals in the second and third, and omitting the
synemmenon tetrachord.”)\textsuperscript{111}

Example 1-1 shows Spataro’s painstaking and proud explanation.\textsuperscript{112} The Tenor
consists of all the four tetrachords of the Greater Perfect System, thus excluding
synemmenon unique to the Lesser Perfect. Each of the four tetrachords is sung thrice, the
first time in the diatonic genus, second time chromatic, and third time enharmonic. Each
step lasts for a brevis, and each of the twelve tetrachords is preceded and followed by a
brevis rest. When singing in the chromatic and enharmonic genera, however, the singer
will skip the second step and proceed from the first directly onto the third. Thus, the
chromatic hypaton tetrachord is shortened into three steps: hypate hypaton (pitch content
B), lichanos hypaton (C\#), and hypate meson (E), omitting parahypate hypaton (C\#). The
enharmonic hypaton is also shortened into three steps with their pitch contents as B, C\#,
and E, omitting parahypate hypaton, in this case a diesis above B. The trigeneric Tenor is
not the only esoteric feature of “Ubi opus est facto.” In order to read the other three parts,
one needs to know Astrology and as well as the connection between musical steps and

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., paragraph 6.
\textsuperscript{112} Example 1-1 is reproduced from Ibid., 208.
the planets and zodiac signs. Yet the Tenor attests to efforts of adapting the extant yet obscure knowledge of the ancient three genera into Renaissance vocal polyphony.

Though the first to be discussed at length, “Ubi opus est facto” is in fact certainly not the earliest Renaissance composition to utilize the two non-diatonic genera. A debate between Gaffurius and Spataro erupted in 1520 in which Gaffurius took issue with the Tenor of the no longer extant “Tu lumen, tu splendor patris” composed by Ramis. Shown in Example 1-2, Ramis’s canon resembles Spataro’s: “In perfectione minimorum per tria
genera canitur melorum” (“In major prolation sung in the three melodic genera”).”

Different from Spataro’s Tenor that arises from the simple succession of ascending tetrachords, Ramis notates the particular contour of the melodic line and the steps on which each syllable is supposed to occur. Furthermore, although Ramis seems to have composed a line with E, G, and A, with what he indicates are not pitches but pitch-less steps on the staff lines. “E” represents the Greek step of hypate meson, the missing “F” parhypate meson, “G” lichanos meson, and “A” mese. It is assigning the three different genera that give specific and different pitch content to these steps. The first reading of the Tenor in the diatonic genus results in the actual pitches of E, G, and A, the second reading in the chromatic genus E, F♯, and A, and the third in the enharmonic genus E, F♮, and A.

Thus, while Gaffurius and Spataro mainly wrangle over tuning, what is most relevant to the current topic is that the letter names used in “Tu lumen” that had been representing a specific sound or position on the monochord, could represent pitch-less steps on the musical staff in the context of trigeneric compositions. What appears to be a “G” in “Tu lumen” turns out to be either G, or F♯, or F♮ in its actual sound, depending on

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113 Ibid., 67. “In perfectione minomorum” essentially means that each syllable, lasting as long as a brevis, contains six minims as though in circle-dot. The editors of A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians agree with this reading. Example 1-2 is reproduced from the same source.
Tenor of Ramis's "Tu lumen, tu splendor patris"

Bartolomeo Ramis de Pareia, solution by Zhuqing Hu (Lester)

First iteration: diatonic

Second iteration: chromatic

Third iteration: enharmonic
the genus that the canon assigns. Similar confusions are traceable among theorists. When introducing the three genera in *Toscanello in musica*, Aron replaces the Greater and Lesser Perfect systems with the Guidonian hand so that both the Latin letters and the Guidonian syllables become fluctuating steps. Depending on the genus, the distance between the *mi* on “B” and the *sol* on “D,” for example, is not necessarily a minor third. It can indeed be a minor third if one opts for the diatonic genus, but it would be a major second (B-C♯) or even a minor second (B-C♮) if the other two are in play.114 The newborn confusion of sound and step surrounding the letter names points to the ongoing integration of Ancient Greek theory into Renaissance discourse of tonal space in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Spataro likely learnt his trigeneric trade from Ramis. In his *Musica Practica* Ramis briefly mentions “Tu lumen” and confesses that he composed it during his time in Bologna, thus likely during 1470-1484 when Spataro was studying with him.115 In a letter signed 20 July 1520, Spataro explains to Giovanni del Lago a similar work of his own, *Missa de la tradictora*, which has not survived either. The mass was written “so long ago,” recalls Spataro, “when I was almost a youth, that I can hardly understand [it] myself.”116 Thus, it is likely that Spataro composed under Ramis’s supervision in the 1480s. The “Benedictus” section contains a trigeneric Tenor sung first in the enharmonic genus in *tempus imperfectum prolatio minor alle breve*, then in the chromatic genus, and


finally diatonic genus in 2:1 diminution. Like Ramis, Spataro dictates a particular line for

Example 1-3
Spataro’s tenor in Missa de la tradictora – “Benedictus”

the Tenor shown in Example 1-3. The line consists of two tetrachords: meson and synemmenon, and their Greek steps are represented by letter-name steps on the staff: E, F, G, A, B♭, and C. Example 1-3 provides a complete resolution of the Tenor in all three genera. Significantly, Spataro’s canon still requires “all intervals not present in the diatonic genus [be] replaced with a rest,” thus dropping the B-flat-and-a-half (a diesis lower than B♭) in the enharmonic reading to avoid the diesis and the F♯ in the chromatic reading to avoid the F♯-F♯ chromatic semitone.

All the above compositions, as well as another motet that Spataro dedicated to Pope Leo X with a trigeneric Tenor “Leo pontifex maximus,” employ all the three Ancient Greek genera. Interestingly, however, the Tenor always avoids the chromatic semitones and dieses, which modern musicians—at least Margaret Bent—tend to

117 Example 1-3 is reproduced from Ibid., 220.
consider signifiers of chromaticism and enharmonicism. Nor do they employ unusual *musica ficta* steps such as those in Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietas.”

With chromatic semitones and dieses absent, what end up distinguishing the chromatic and enharmonic genera from the diatonic, moreover, are the easily overlooked minor and major thirds. These two intervals soon came under spotlight as discourse on the three genera expanded during the first few decades of the sixteenth century. One day in the autumn of 1532, Spataro visited Giambattista Casali, the ambassador to Venice of Henry VIII. The King of England enjoyed quite a fame for his musical pursuits; he played lute, composed music, and exchanged letters with another important music lover and patron, Prince Alfonso d’Este of Ferrara. Through his ambassador, the King asked Spataro “whether—in view of the marvelous effects ascribed to ancient Greek music—compositions could be written in other than the common diatonic genus.”

In his letter to Aron a few days later, Spataro records:

> A number of opinions were advanced by the erudite gathering, and it was concluded that good harmony could not be achieved by one genus alone; it might be done in one passage, but the rest would not concord […] It was shown that the diatonic genus is not used exclusively in our ordinary harmony, but that the other two genera assigned by Boethius lend support to it, in melodic progressions as well as concordant intervals. An ascending or descending minor third belongs to the chromatic species, and the major third is an enharmonic interval.  

119 Ibid.
Ave Gratia Plena

Giovanni Spataro

de i genitrix

ni trix de i genitrix

trix de i genitrix

ge nitrix de i genitrix

vir go e nim ortus

vir go e nim ortus

ex te e nim ortus

vex te e nim ortus

ex te e nim ortus est

est e nim ortus

ortus est

solum iustitiem illum

solum lustratiem illum

iustitiem illum
luminans qui in tenebris sunt qui in tenebris
luminans qui in tenebris sunt qui in tenebris
nans qui in tenebris

luminans qui in tenebris sunt qui in tenebris
- lu - mi - nans qui in te ne - bris qui in

lu - mi - nans qui in te ne - bris qui

- lu - mi - nans qui in te ne - bris qui

lu - mi - nans qui in te ne - bris qui
nans qui in tene - bris

lu - mi - nans qui in te ne - bris qui

sunt qui in tene - bris sunt qui

sunt qui in tene - bris sunt qui

sunt qui in tene - bris sunt qui

sunt qui in tene - bris sunt qui
In other words, those present at the “erudite gathering” agreed that Renaissance vocal polyphony was already and had always been chromatic and enharmonic due to the minor and major thirds in the melodies.

Two decades later in June 1551, a famous debate took place in Rome between Nicola Vicentino and Vicente Lusitano (d. after 1561). They argued about whether the presence of a minor third was sufficient to make a composition chromatic and a major third sufficient to make a composition enharmonic, an issue on which Spataro’s gathering reached a positive consensus. Vicentino shares Spataro’s view, but Lusitano argues that since the two non-diatonic genera are absent as entire units, those compositions in question are purely diatonic. The Roman judges decided that Vicentino lost the debate. In 1555, the latter published the treatise *L’antica musica ridotta alla moderna practica* in which he articulates his vision on promoting the use of the non-diatonic genera in polyphony, and protests his loss in the debate.

It is no coincidence that it was Vicentino rather than Lusitano who encouraged chromaticism and enharmonicism not only in theoretical discussions but also in actual compositions. Vicentino’s logic was simple: if for centuries musicians have been unconsciously composing chromatic and enharmonic music, why not employ the two genera more mindfully? The same argument is shared by Spataro, who in 1532 also said that mixing the two non-diatonic genera with the diatonic is crucial to creating “good harmony.” As an example for such trigeneric “good harmony,” Spataro composed the motet “Ave gratia plena,” which has fortunately survived in Spataro’s autograph.

One feature significantly distinguishes “Ave gratia plena” from Spataro’s previous trigeneric compositions: the canonic Tenor and its obscure trigeneric resolutions
are no more. The motet discards the outmoded *cantus firmus* procedures and adapts pervasive imitation with four equal voices. Without believing that the minor third is uniquely chromatic and the major third enharmonic, one would likely consider the motet entirely diatonic, especially since there is not a single chromatic semitone or diesis in the melodies. Does it mean that every single composition during the Renaissance is in fact chromatic and enharmonic as long as there is a melodic minor or major third, especially since both Spataro and Vicentino, the two most important advocates and pioneers of chromaticism and enharmonicism in Renaissance music, believed so? If true, the current work would have to include seemingly innocent chants such as the Easter Sequence “Victimae paschali laudes” victimized by its minor-third and thus chromatic leap from D to F near the very beginning. And should it?

Fortunately, Spataro does highlight one feature that he sees as non-diatonic in “Ave gratia plena” besides the thirds. In his letter to Aron, Spataro confesses that a purpose of “Ave gratia plena” was to show that “the octave B-b can be divided harmonically (with a fifth on the bottom and a fourth on the top) only by using the third chromatic note, *lichanos meson chromatica*, or F♯.”120 Spataro thus believes that the F♯’s in Tenor, m. 11, Tenor, m. 17, and Cantus, m. 21 are chromatic, yet there seems to be nothing special or chromatic about these F♯s according to theory of the chromatic genus, especially since they do not form the unique chromatic semitone or minor third with any adjacent notes. What distinguish these F♯s from many other notated or necessarily assumed pitch inflections in the motet—the Tenor’s final F♯, the Bassus’s B♭ in m. 32, the Cantus’s unnotated cadential G♯ in m. 5, for examples? Is it because that these

120 Ibid.
supposedly chromatic F♯s are the fifth of a sustained triad. Would this mean that the B♭ in Bassus, m. 37, the root and thus more important pitch of a triad, is also chromatic? Does the chromatic nature of these F♯s backfire his later arguments against del Lago in 1533 when he insists that transposing the diatonic order with # or ♮ does not change its diatonic nature?

**What has (not) been achieved?**

So the question remains. What is Renaissance chromaticism?

I began this chapter by considering the 1553 debate between Spataro and del Lago over what # and ♮ mean and to what extent one may apply them. I argued that although they voiced fundamentally different attitudes toward “art” and “nature,” they more or less agreed on the meaning of # and ♮. Like most music theorists of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, they interpreted the two signs as both indicators of pitch inflection and signifiers of the Guidonian syllables mi and fa. By reviewing several musical treatises written during the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, I suggested that the Guidonian *deductio* was the acting agent for conceiving *musica ficta*, pitch inflection, and tonal space, and the growing awareness of sound and monochord in the Renaissance simply justifies a broader space for transposing the *deductios*. In this way, what Spataro and del Lago really disagree about was the second part of the question: how far may one transpose the *deductios*. As an actual composition, Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietas” attests to the role of the *deductio* in introducing *musica ficta* steps as distant as A♭♭.

I then pondered how all these writings and compositions involving *musica ficta* are relevant to the subject of chromaticism. To understand what musicians of the period
considered “chromatic” I revisited theories of the three genera—diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic—originated in Ancient Greek music and preserved in medieval and Renaissance music theory through Boethius. I analyzed Ramis’s and Spataro’s trigeneric-Tenor pieces, which were probably the earliest attempts at applying the two non-diatonic genera to Renaissance polyphony. My analysis shows that in spite of their efforts to use the two non-diatonic genera, these pieces avoid the chromatic semitones and dieses unique to the two genera. Instead, sixteenth-century advocates of chromaticism and enharmonicism, mainly Spataro and Vicentino, were obsessed with the idea that the ordinary minor third is in fact a chromatic interval, and major third enharmonic. Although they conform to theories of Antiquity, such opinion would yield rather absurd consequence that all medieval and Renaissance compositions are chromatic and enharmonic precisely because of the use of thirds. Spataro’s late composition “Ave gratia plena” seems to provide some insight to this conundrum. He suggests that the F♯ in a B sonority is chromatic. Yet he never explains why it is the case.

Although the current chapter has not fulfilled the task of defining Renaissance chromaticism or even justifying the legitimacy of the term, it is not pointless. It has shown significant features that preceded the explosion of chromaticism in the mid- and late sixteenth century: the *deductio* and the logic of transposition, the exploration of tonal space thanks to the *deductios*, the coincidence of such exploration with the burgeoning experiments of Ancient Greek chromaticism and enharmonicism, and the idea that the non-diatonic genera had already been lurking behind Renaissance vocal polyphony. The current chapter points to the need for a thread that could connect the various subjects of pitch inflection, *musica ficta*, tonal space, and the three genera. All these issues relate to
the phenomenon of chromaticism in Renaissance music, and the thread would articulate these relations and bring a more refined definition of Renaissance chromaticism. In his 1532 letter Spataro came close to providing this thread. It is thus the modern interpreter’s job to find the thread that Spataro, deeply entrenched in the musical idioms of his time, could not be fully conscious of.

Yet before I spend more time on what “chromaticism” means, there is another term awaiting my attention. What, after all, is the “Renaissance?”
Chapter Two

The Birth of the Rebirth

Before resolving the mystery of chromaticism that Giovanni Spataro laid out through his theoretical polemics and demonstrative compositions, I suggest looking at some practical works of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. What makes Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietias,” Ramis’s “Tu lumen,” and even Spataro’s “Ave gratia plena” not so practical is their linkage to contemporary theoretical discourse. The composers put forward such pieces not as much for their musical beauty as for their service to promoting their own opinions on pitch inflection and chromaticism. These showcases of esoteric theories would remain mere amusements for theorists if they would not influence other music practitioners.

Looking at more practical cases of Renaissance chromaticism is difficult, however, because one would first have to know what to look for. Even after the exhaustive journey in the previous chapter, Renaissance chromaticism is yet to be defined. Intuitively, though, it seems that we are looking for the use of pitch classes that were unusual in their context. Theorists distinguished between the regular *musica recta* and irregular *musica ficta*, and pitch classes in the later group are usually identified with ♭ and #. Spataro and del Lago argued over G♭, D♭, E♯, B♯, F♭, and C♭ that fall beyond the boundaries of the Guidonian gamut, and Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietias” uses some of these pitches. Additionally, although by absolute standards the F♯s in Spataro’s trigeneric works and the later motet “Ave gratia plena” are fairly normal, the context seems to highlight this pitch class as a marker of chromaticism in a way yet to be explained.
The problem thus boils down to examining the “extraordinary pitches” in Renaissance music. But, speaking of “Renaissance chromaticism,” what does “Renaissance” mean? In western music history, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, or even more precisely the period from 1430 to 1600 according to Lewis Lockwood’s entry in the *New Grove*, are frequently referred to as the Renaissance era.\(^1\) Admittedly, there is little reason why I cannot use instead “fifteenth- and sixteenth-century chromaticism,” especially given the burden of the term “Renaissance.” For one, “Renaissance” implies the “rebirth” of Antiquity. Yet the systematic revival of ancient music theory and aesthetics came about in the mid- and late-sixteenth century with people like Girolamo Mei (1519-1594) and Vincenzo Galilei (c.1520-1591), and influenced the period now called the “Baroque” much more than the so-called “Renaissance.” After all, the prototype of music-making in Ancient Greece is Apollo on his lyre and not Apollo, Aphrodite, and Athena around a choirbook or on partbooks.

Nonetheless, were the less artful yet precise name “fifteenth- and sixteenth-century chromaticism” to be adopted, explaining the rationale of singling out these two centuries remains an inevitable task. A way of completing such task would be comparing chromatic compositions from 1430-1600 to those from other eras, especially the preceding Middle Ages. Obviously, this would entail an enormous amount of work. The so far broad and vague definition of chromaticism as the use of unusual pitch classes would require analyzing pieces on a case-by-case basis and overburden the task even more. Fortunately, there is a shortcut.

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Another Enigma

British Library MS Royal 8 G vii is an elaborate manuscript. Dated between 1513 and 1525, the choirbook of Flemish provenance includes colorful illuminations of the coat of arms and other royal devices of Henry VIII (1491-1547), the King of England famous for his passion for music in addition to wives. Its twenty-eight Latin motets are copied in beautiful gothic cursives by a highly legible hand. The scribe even took pain to provide sufficient text underlay.

What make it an exceptional source, however, are folios 56v-58 (Figure 2-1). Although they lack eye-catching illuminations and contain only plain calligraphic initials in red and blue ink, these pages display a famous and controversial four-voice motet “Absalon, fili mi.” Kriesstein, RISM 15407, a later anthology printed in Augsburg, would ascribe the motet to Josquin Desprez (c. 1440-1521). The most revered composer of the High Renaissance, Josquin has drawn fame both from his compositional prowess and from mysteries surrounding the numerous pieces attributed correctly or wrongly to him. “Absalon, fili mi” is such an extreme case. From 1983 to 1998, as many as four articles appeared in the Dutch journal KVNM arguing over whether the composer of “Absalon, fili mi” was really Josquin as RISM 15407 indicates. Debate surrounding the authorship of “Absalon, fili mi” has nothing to do with conflicting attributions, however. In fact, Josquin is the only known ascription of the motet. Besides RISM 15407, all three other sources of the motet—the manuscript British Library MS Royal 8 and two printed anthologies, RISM 15585 from Heidelberg and 15592 from Nurnberg—are silent on who its composer is.
Figure 2-1 Folios 56r-57v from British Library Manuscript Royal G 8 vii, showing the motet “Absalon, fili mi”

Public domain image from The British Library, http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMIN.ASP?Size=mid&IllID=32303
This is where the London manuscript Royal 8 G vii comes into play. Its version of “Absalon, fili mi” is extremely unusual. The London manuscript sets the piece at a low pitch level with clefs c₃, c₄, f₄, and f₅. It assigns different “key signatures” to the four voices, a phenomenon called “partial signatures.” Some of these signatures are extraordinary: B♭ and E♭ in Superius and Contratenor, E♭ and A♭ in Tenor, and E♭, A♭, and D♭ (!) in Bassus. Thanks to the low voicing and striking signature configurations, the ending of the London version of “Absalon” becomes a rather astonishing passage. In mm. 77-82, a sequence of descending arpeggios unfolds fugally in all four voices over the text “sed descendam in infernum” (“but I shall descend in hell”). In Contratenor and Bassus, especially, the sequence concludes on a D♭ (m. 82), and the Bassus even leaps up by a perfect fourth and ends on a G♭ (m. 83) before concluding on the otherwise unheard of low B♭.

It is clear that the notated ♭s imply pitch inflection in addition to the syllable fa. Unique to the London version of the motet, such adventures into foreign pitch territories and the extremely low vocal ranges appear unfit to Josquin’s style. In addition, since British Library Royal G 8 vii, the oldest and most exceptional source of the piece, does not offer any attribution, it becomes likely that the motet was composed by someone else but was later misattributed to Josquin. Jaap van Benthem has noticed outstanding similarities between “Absalon” and “Pourquoi non,” a chanson by Josquin’s Franco-Flemish contemporary Pierre de la Rue (c. 1452-1518). Featured in a number of sources including the chansonniers of Marguerite of Austria (Brussels, Royal Library, MS 228 and MS 11239) and Ottaviano Petrucci’s Harmonice musices Odhecaton, “Pourquoi non” resembles “Absalon” in its use of flat steps and low ranges. In the version from
Absalon, fili mi (MS Royal 8 G vii.)

Josquin Desprez? Pierre de la Rue?

prote

det ut mori ar prote

Quis det ut mori

ar prote

fi li mi

fi li mi

Non

ar prote fi li mi

Non

fi li mi

Non

vi

vi

vi

Non

vi

vi

vi vam

vi vam

vi vam

Non

vam

vam

vam

Non

vam

vam

vam

Non

vam

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in infernum plolum, 

damn in infernum plolum, 
in infernum plolum, 

dam in infernum plolum, 

non vivam utra, non vivam 

non vivam utra, non vivam 

non vivam utra, non vivam 

non vivam utra, non vivam 

ultra sed de scen- 

ultra sed de scen- 

ultra sed de scen- 

ultra sed de scen- 

in infernum plolum, 

damn in infernum plolum, 
in infernum plolum, 

dam in infernum plolum.
Marguerite’s chansonniers, all four voices carry B♭ and E♭ signatures, just like the top two voices in “Absalon.”² While neither A♭ nor D♭ appears in the signature, “Pourquoy non” adventures into the flat territories. In m. 34, for example, on “la fin” (“the end [of my sad life]”) occurs a D♭-major chord with a low D♭ in the Bassus. It moves to an E♭-major chord in m. 35, comparable to mm. 52-53 and 69-70 in “Absalon.”³

The authorship of “Absalon” is far from being settled, however. In a mid-1990s article, Nigel Davison, editor of La Rue’s Opera Omnia, suggests it too early to decide between Josquin and La Rue as composer of the motet. Although Davison recognizes the similarities between “Pourquoy non” and “Absalon,” he also notices features uncharacteristic of La Rue in the motet, for example the straightforward imitations at fifths and the lack of any parallel fifths at cadences.⁴ He further cautions that the tonal adventures and low range in the motet’s ending “are as atypical of La Rue as they are of Josquin,” and even recommends “[keeping] an open mind” for other candidates.⁵ Honey Meconi, on the other hand, is convinced of La Rue’s authorship. After a thorough comparison between “Absalon” and the works of Josquin and La Rue from mensuration to text-music relationship, Meconi asserts: “someone wrote this work. For now, our best bet is Pierre de la Rue.”⁶ Richard Sherr, editor of a motet volume in the New Josquin Edition, is understandably reluctant to remove “Absalon” from Josquin’s recognized

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⁵ Ibid., 50 and 53.
corpus simply “in view of the fact that his is the only name attached to [the motet] in any of the sources [Kriesstein RISM 1540].”\footnote{Josquin Desprez, \textit{New Josquin Edition, Volume 14: Motets on Texts from the Old Testament, I: Texts from Samuel, Job, The Song of Songs, Ecclesiasticus}, Richard Sherr ed. (Utrecht, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 2002), XI.}


Since the 1940s, Lowinsky had been arguing that Netherlandish composers of early and mid sixteenth century such as Jacobus Clemens “Non Papa” wrote motets that could be sung in two ways. When performing these pieces at public occasions, musicians would sing them as they are notated so that the pieces would sound completely normal and diatonic. When performing to connoisseurs of the “secret art,” however, the singers would add unnotated inflections and thus produce a “chromatic” version, by which Lowinsky means being full of harmonic modulations.

The cue for these inflections is usually a diminished or augmented interval, especially a tritone. According to Lowinsky, upon encountering such a contrapuntal
imperfection frowned upon by generations of music theorists, the singers would correct it by flating the troublesome note. Upholding contrapuntal integrity by adding or assuming an inflection is in no way an exceptional procedure. In motets composed for the “secret chromatic art,” however, the music works in such a way that an added flat often ends up triggering new contrapuntal inflections, which in turn necessitate a chain of new flats that significantly alter the pitch content of the music.

In Clemens’s “Fremuit spiritu Jesu,” Lowinsky’s most discussed example, the B♭ in Bassus II, m. 7 necessitates an added flat on Bassus I’s E in m. 8 in order to avoid a tritone cross relation, according to Lowinsky (Example 2-1). What Clemens composes in the following measures instigates a chain reaction of flatting. Lest there would be a tritone relation, the new E♭ in Bassus I, m. 8 causes an added flat on Bassus II’s A in m. 9, which necessitates flating the following D in m. 10 for the same reason, which similarly causes the flating of the G in m. 11. This chain reaction inflicts all other voices in the passage from m. 8 to the cadence on F in m. 13. Thus, whereas the motet begins with a pseudo “F-major” sound, after this circle-of-fifth modulation caused by a series of added flats, it concludes sounding like “F minor” or even “F Phrygian” with pitch classes A♭, D♭, and G♭ far outside the motet’s signatures.

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9 Example 2-1 is recreated from Jaap van Benthem, “Lazarus versus Absalon,” 57, which is based on Lowinsky, Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet, Music Examples, no. 22.
10 Lowinsky, Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet, 16-24. The transcription Lowinsky originally used in Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet was done by Pierre Phalèse, who indicated B♭ in the signature of Contratenor and both B♭ and E♭ in those of both Bassus I and II. The transcription is rather confusing since none of the eight sources of “Fremuit spiritu Jesu” has such a signature plan, see van Benthem, “Lazarus vs Absalon,” 70-71. Lowinsky argues that the singers of the two authentic versions “[would see] himself obliged … to use an accidental in order to indicate an E flat [in Bassus I, m. 8], while Phalèse achieves the same result through the key signature” in Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet, 17, footnote no. 8. Lowinsky also comments on his use of Phalèse’s transcription and implies that it matters little in “Secret Chromatic Art Re-Examined,” 104-5.
Lowinsky believes that Clemens’s motet is “a six-voice adaptation” and “quotation” “of [the] four-voice passage” at the end of the London version of “Absalon, fili mi,” whose composer he assumes as Josquin.\textsuperscript{11} He compares the “secret chromatic” passages in “Fremuit” to the passage with notated flats at the end of “Absalon,” and notices, “the territory covered by the modulations is exactly the same.”\textsuperscript{12} He also points to both motets’ use of a descending arpeggio motive “as bearer of the modulation,” whose circle-of-fifth gestures necessitate a series of flats.\textsuperscript{13} What matters the most to Lowinsky, however, is a crucial difference between the two: “Clemens works [are] without accidentals, whereas in the earlier work they are clearly set down by Josquin himself.”\textsuperscript{14} In this way, the London version of Josquin’s motet becomes a notated proof of the “secret chromatic art” among Franco-Flemish composers, “a significant indication in favor of the chromatic reading” of “Fremuit spiritu Jesu” that would otherwise seem too provocative to be true.\textsuperscript{15}

Lowinsky finds another work of Josquin, the Italian song “Fortuna d’un grant tempo” published along La Rue’s “Pourquoy non” in Petrucci’s \textit{Odhecaton}, a precursor of the “secret chromatic art.” Here, unlike \textit{Absalon, fili mi}, the obscurant part of the process is retained. Lowinsky argues that the numerous cross relations in the piece thanks to the use of partial signatures necessitate chain reactions of flats similar to those in

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{11} Lowinsky, \textit{Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet}, 24-5.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 25.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 24-5.
\end{flushleft}
“Fremuit” and “Absalon.” As a result, in Lowinsky’s edition the final passage abounds in D♭, A♭, and E♭ that are completely unnotated in Petrucci’s original print.16

After decades of arguments between Lowinsky and virtually everyone else in the field, the current scholarly consensus is that Lowinsky’s “secret chromatic art” is nothing but a beautiful fairy tale. Common counterarguments involve more eclectic source studies that cast doubt on Lowinsky’s “secret chromatic” reading of a particular source and reviews of historical theories that often prescribed against the use of “chain reactions”

to correct cross relations and imperfect intervals. Few seem able to challenge Lowinsky’s interpretation of “Absalon, fili mi” based on the version in British Library MS Royal 8 G vii, however, because all the astonishing inflections that follow the “chain reaction” manner are clearly notated in the source just as in “Quid non ebrietas.”

Lowinsky celebrates Josquin as “pioneer in frontier territory” who “in order to further his efforts toward expression … had utilized this modern type of chromaticism.” Howard Mayer Brown concurs with Lowinsky’s interpretation of Josquin’s avant-gardism: “this moving lament,” he comments, “reaches new heights of expression, especially in a sequence that moves downwards in a circle of fifths […] that demonstrates the outer limits of musical space.” Saul Novack praises Josquin for “[going] further than any of his predecessors and with great imagination [setting] the stage for the opening up of the harmonic space in the sixteenth century.”

Thanks to the sizable commentary on its bold tonal adventures, the much eulogized “Absalon, fili mi” deserves to open this chapter dedicated to “unusual pitch

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inflections” in the “Renaissance.” An analysis of the motet should address how its extraordinary signature and pitch content and its exceptional ending built upon similar traditions of the past and would influence later generations of chromatic composers such as Rore, Lasso, and Gesualdo. Yet I am hesitant to undertake such task without really knowing what I am about to do. Before assailing the piece with numerous analytical tools, I wonder: do we really understand what is at stake in “Absalon, fili mi,” especially in its London version that carries the entire chromatic aura? Do we really know the piece as it truly is?

**Off the Altar**

There are two reasons why many have found *Absalon, fili mi* a defining moment of tonal adventures and chromaticism in Renaissance music. Firstly, the motet’s ending progresses in circles of fifths that resemble “modulations” in tonic-dominant oriented tonal harmony in the common practice. Secondly, and more importantly, the piece boldly uses steps outside the normal gamut as both indicated in the signature configurations and notated in the actual manuscript source, namely E♭, A♭, D♭, and G♭.

I reiterate, however, that the exceptional pitch content of “Absalon, fili mi” is particular only to the version in British Library MS Royal 8 G vii. Meanwhile, the printed versions of “Absalon” in RISM 1540⁷, RISM 1558⁵, and RISM 1559² agree much more among themselves than with their manuscript predecessor. These three sources can be considered as one family with the same archetype with which RISM 1540⁷ is significantly closer chronologically than the other two. All of them set the piece at a pitch level a major ninth higher than the London manuscript. The new pitch level discards the
Absalon, fili mi (Kriesstein RISM 1540?)

Based on Richard Sherr's edition, with text placement unchanged and ligatures excluded; transposition up by a major ninth and explicit accidentals according to, and editorial accidentals in consultation with, Peter Urquhart, "Another Impolitic Observation on Absalon, fili mi," *The Journal of Musicology* 21 (2004): 350-352.
Ab salon fili mi

Ab salon fili mi

Ab salon fili mi

Ab salon

Ab salon Ab salon

Ab salon, Ab salon

Ab salon, Ab salon

Ab salon, Ab salon

Ab salon

Quis det ut moriar

Quis det ut moriar

Quis det ut moriar

Quis det ut moriar.
outlandish partial signatures involving A♭ and D♭, and instead all three printed versions assign an ordinary and straightforward cantus mollis with B♭ to all four voices.\textsuperscript{21} In terms of its tonal adventures, in these later versions the piece only goes as far as A♭ towards the flat end of the circle of fifths.

How important, compared to the printed archetype RISM 1540\textsuperscript{7}, should the source British Library MS Royal 8 G vii be in interpreting “Absalon, fili mi?” Chronologically, the London manuscript appears closest to the piece’s conception and anticipates the later prints by decades. This may imply that the bold signatures and pitch content were intended by the motet’s composer and that they could have ended up corrupted by subsequent scribes, editors, and printers, who generally tended to conventionalize unique musical features. It is perhaps not too extreme to hypothesize the following scenario. An unimaginative copier of the London “Urtext” transposed the piece up by a major ninth so as to avoid the terrifying D♭ and G♭ and thus produced the tempered archetype of the three printed sources.\textsuperscript{22}

Nonetheless, even if the London manuscript reflected most loyally the hypothetical master copy, it appears that not even its scribe could fully understand what would have been the composer’s choice of signatures and inflections. Whereas the three later printed versions provide explicit accidental flats when needed and require little editorial intervention, the London version of “Absalon, fili mi” is abnormally problematic with respect to its pitch content. Usually, the purpose of partial signatures is to

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\textsuperscript{22} This is clearly what Lowinsky had in mind in \textit{Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet}, 24.
accommodate the different pitch content of all the voices and to save the labor of having
to add too many accidental inflections in the music. In the London version, however, its
partial signatures in fact exacerbate the problem. Looking at Sherr’s edition of the motet
and Lowinsky’s of the final phrase “non vivam … plorans,” the London version of
“Absalon” requires a plethora of added accidentals in the top two voices, most of which
are A♭’s in the two upper voices that the partial signatures assign only to the two lower
ones.23 Peter Urquhart even notices the confusing situation that the scribe erased the two
once notated D♭s in Contratenor, mm. 65 and 85, which are in fact needed in accordance
with the simultaneous D♭ in Bassus dictated by its signature.24 While many necessary
accidental are missing or erased from the London version of the motet, Urquhart also
observes that, as if the scribe forgot his own choice of signatures, there are multiple
redundant accidentals, for example the signed D♭ in Bassus, m. 52.25

Based on the chaos the scribe created regarding partial signatures, pitch content,
and accidental inflections, it may be difficult to believe that the version of “Absalon, fili”
in MS Royal 8 G vii would convey the composer’s original in any way better than or
even as good as those from the three printed sources. Although much later and
considerably less “revolutionary,” the printed versions are much better notated. In fact, in
order to sort out the disastrous inflections in the manuscript source, Robert Toft, one of
the earliest scholars to tackle the piece in the 1980s, frequently had to consult Kriesstein,

23 For Richard Sherr’s edition see the score of “Absalon, fili mi (Ms Royal 8 G vii). For
Lowinsky’s see Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet, Music Example no. 23.
24 Urquhart, “Another Impolitic Observation on Absalon, fili mi,” 358-359.
25 Ibid., 359.
RISM 1540 as a paradigm. It thus becomes ironic that from Lowinsky’s “secret chromatic art” to debates about its authorship, literature on the piece has been privileging the London version of “Absalon, fili mi” that now appears to be the confusing and corrupted one. Peter Urquhart, one of the first scholars to challenge this preference, attributes it to the influence of Lowinsky. Indeed, while the later versions such as that from RISM 1540 are more informative of what the piece truly sounds like, substituting a tame A♭ for the provocative G♭ in Bassus, mm. 66 and 83 is understandably uninspiring for Lowinsky and unprofitable for his “secret chromatic art.”

One might still wonder if it is legitimate to dismiss MS Royal 8 G vii as an unreliable source of “Absalon, fili mi.” Even if the London version of the motet is poorly reflective of the more conventional original, does not its unique pitch level with A♭, D♭, and G♭ suggest the gradual incorporation of foreign tonal territories into musical practices? Even if the composer of the motet were perhaps as mundane as the three printed versions suggest, is not the scribe of the London version himself “avant-garde” in transposing the piece with audacious signatures in order to achieve a daring ending?

Before anyone would revere the scribe of MS Royal 8 G vii as the “chromatic pioneer” instead of Josquin or La Rue, Urquhart has shown that the bold “chromatic art” in the London version of “Absalon, fili mi” is really just a mistake. He notices that both the London version and the later printed version of the motet have fairly unusual clefings. While the former is exceptionally low, the latter is rather too high, with g1, c1, c2, and c4. While the former frequents low D♭, E♭, and F in the Bassus, the latter has an impossible

27 Urquhart, 359.
high range for the top voice, which hits several high A’s and even a high B♭ in m. 30. It is also puzzling that the two versions are apart by a major ninth. If, as Lowinsky said, the editor of Kriesstein RISM 15407 wanted to eliminate the scary pitches, why was transposing it by a major second not sufficient?28

Urquhart offers a refreshing solution. Figure 2-2 compares the visual outlook of each of the four voices of the London version, the later printed version from RISM 15407, and a parody mass Missa Absalon fili mi dating from ca. 1527, which is not much later than the London manuscript and carries the more common clefs c₁, c₃, c₄, and f₃.29

Although they bear completely different clefs that indicate varying tessituras, the visual outlook of the three Superius voices and the three Tenor voices appear identical across the three sources. The same is also true for the Contratenor and Bassus in general.


Urquhart proposes that a way to accommodate the visual unity and clefing diversity between the three sources is to imagine a clefless original as an archetype for all three cleffed versions.30

Clefless works were not uncommon in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Johannes Ockeghem composed an entire clefless mass, the *Missa cuiusvis toni* (“Mass in any tone”), and both Josquin and La Rue wrote clefless compositions. To be sure, since the only purpose of a clef is to show the position of a particular step on the gamut in relation to the staff lines, a clefless work differs from cleffed ones only in that its notes do not have fixed positions on the gamut. Without clefs as a reference, in clefless works the anchor of relative pitch content falls on their signatures, which often consist of a number of flats that indicate the position of fa in relation to the staff lines. Indeed, as like Hothby and Ramis argued, knowing where mi and fa fall is sufficient to locate a *deductio*. In Urquhart’s proposed clefless archetype of the Tenor, for example, although there is no

![Figure 2-3](image)

Urquhart’s hypothetical clefless original of “Absalon, fili mi”

30 Urquhart, “Another Impolitic Observation on *Absalon, fili mi*,” 364-368.
clef to give specific letter names, the two flats in the signature allows executing the beginning line as sol-la/re-mi-fa-fa-mi (Figure 2-3).  

When the scribes and editors made cleffed copies of this clefless original, they would decide the appropriate letter names of these notes and apply respective clefs. Now with clefs marking a fixed pitch level in relation to the Guidonian gamut, however, these original flats in the signature should now primarily denote pitch inflections in addition to the position of fa, and they would in turn make unnecessary some signature flats from the original and necessary some new ones. The c₂ in the Tenor of RISM 1540⁷, for example, makes the flat between the third and fourth staff lines redundant now that the third line indicates E and the space above it F. The f₄ in MS Royal 8 G vii, however, would normally require a flat on the second staff line to indicate a B♭ instead of the current B, yet the London scribe seems complacent in simply adding a clef and mindlessly copying the clefless original. In case of the Superius, the editor of RISM 1540⁷ need not and did not revise the signatures that match his g₁ perfectly. The London scribe, on the other hand,  

Figure 2-4
Assignment of clefs and retainment of visual outlooks during the transmission of the hypothetical clefless original of “Absalon, fili mi,” with the Superius voice as example

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31 Figure 2-3 is recreated from Urquhart, “Another Impolitic Observation on Absalon, fili mi,” 368.
should have added a third flat between the second and third staff line to indicate B♭, but he chose to move the also necessary flat on A one step up (Figure 2-4).\footnote{Figure 2-4 is recreated from Urquhart, “Another Impolitic Observation on Absalon, fili mi,” 367.}

That the astonishing version of “Absalon, fili mi” in the London manuscript is an editorial adaptation, indeed a defective one, from a clefless original has significant implications to the “chromatic” interpretation of the piece that has depended on this source. Urquhart summarizes:

What is unusual about Absalon, as presented in the London manuscript, is the use of signature flats that imply three or four flats in the tenor and bass, and the use of explicit accidentals for A♭, D♭, and G♭. These accidentals and signatures are unprecedented for the period, but their names depend absolutely on the clef chosen. That choice may not have been made by the composer of the motet but instead by a scribe. Given the disarray of flat signatures that resulted from the choice, it is likely that the scribe was not entirely aware of the consequences of his decisions.\footnote{Urquhart, “Another Impolitic Observation on Absalon, fili mi,” 379.}

The unique features of the motet “Absalon, fili mi” have nothing to do with how it looks in London, British Library MS Royal 8 G vii. For decades, its incompetent scribe has been sidetracking the pursuit for the motet’s real uniqueness. In order to understand what is truly special about the motet, one has to disengage with Lowinsky’s obsession with wild pitches and “avant-gardism” in the Renaissance. What occurs in Bassus, mm. 66 and 83 is not a “pioneering” G♭ as Lowinsky wants it to be. Rather, it is just a simple
fa on the first staff line to which the London scribe mindlessly gave an incidental letter name.

From another perspective, if one listens to a recording of “Absalon, fili mi,” it can be difficult to appreciate why the motet has drawn so much attention. Why does it really matter, after all, that the third-to-the-last step in Bassus is a notated G♭, especially seeing that modern as well as contemporary singers would perform the piece at various pitch levels tuned to whatever instrument at their disposal? Even if Urquhart were wrong about the clefless original, and even if the London scribe had really transposed the original version of the motet through exceptional signatures to express his vision of a new “chromatic” era, “Absalon, fili mi” is not particularly notable regarding how far tonally it deviates from where it begins. The composer only uses as few as ten pitch classes throughout the entire motet: B♭, C, D♭, D, E♭, F, G♭, G, A♭, and A in the London version, and C, D, E♭, E, F, G, A♭, A, B♭, and B. Only three diatonic pitch classes have a chromatically inflected counterpart. There is little unusual about this.

Focusing on “Absalon, fili mi” the motet rather than the source MS Royal 8 G vii, I would like to pinpoint the real specialty of the piece. When one sings from the clefless archetype of the Superius (or in fact any cleffed version of it), the signatures would likely suggest ut-re-mi-fa-fa-mi for the first six notes (see Figure 2-3 above).34 The note between the second and third staff lines is solmized as ut, and the one between the third and fourth as mi because the signature dictates a fa above it on the fourth staff line. In the final phrase of the Superius line beginning with the “in infernum” in m. 80, the first note

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34 Here the use of the Guidonian syllables only serves to facilitate the analysis. As I have shown in the previous chapter, singers at that time not necessarily sang, imagined, or thought about step on the musical gamut in Guidonian terms.
between the second and third staff lines would likely remain an *ut*, and the second note on the fourth line a *fa*, which keeps the step below the fourth line a *mi*, all consistent with the signatures and the music that has come beforehand.

If one continues from m. 80, however, in m. 82 the note between the third and fourth lines would mutate from its original *mi* into a *fa* due to a necessary inflection that both MS Royal 8 G vii and Kriesstein RISM 1540⁷ indicate. The step between the second and third lines also mutates from its original *ut* into a *re*. In the Contratenor, which ends on an octave below the Superius and forms with it the elaborate final cadence, the mutation to *re* is even more obvious. Its final phrase “-num plorans” would likely be solmized as *fa-sol-fa-mi-re*.

In this way, the step on which the Superius begins and ends, which MS Royal 8 G vii calls a B♭ and Kriesstein 1540⁷ a C, experiences a shift in its tonal quality during the motet’s famous ending “sed descendam in infernum plorans.” The shift involves the interval between the final step and the second step or third degree above it. This interval changes from a major third *ut-mi* into a minor third *re-fa* (see Figure 2-3). In the London manuscript, the major third B♭-D shifts into the minor third B♭-D♭, and in Kriesstein 1540⁷ similarly from C-E into C-E♭. In addition, the interval between the final step and the fifth step above it also shifts from a major sixth *ut-la* into a minor sixth *re-fa* (*re-la/mi-fa*), aligning with the dictum “una nota super *la* semper est cantandum *fa*” (“a note above *la* is always sung as *fa*”). This *la-to-fa* mutation explains the motet’s “far-off pitch,” the third to the last note in Bassus: G♭ in the London manuscript and A♭ in RISM 1540⁷.

In modern terminology, it is as if the motet began in a “major key”—B♭-major and C-major in the two cleffed versions, respectively—but ended in its “parallel minor”: 
the five-flat B♭-minor fulfilled by the G♭, and three-flat C-minor by the A♭. The text-setting purpose of such “modulation” is evident. As the music shifts from “major” to “minor,” David, lamenting the death of his son Absalom, aspires to “descend into hell, weeping.” The “minor key” clearly relates to a sad musical affect. Moreover, setting the entire piece in an ut or “major” tonality but just its ending and final cadence in re or “minor” creates a peculiar asymmetry. This structural imbalance perhaps portrays David’s emotional state as he weeps over the death of his beloved son.

The Real “Pioneer?”

Such obvious “parallel minor modulation” is not very common in late-fifteenth-or early-sixteenth-century music. Although La Rue’s “Pourquoy non” has been considered a pair of “Absalon, fili mi,” its inflections do not affect its overall tonal characteristics. While the version from Marguerite’s chansonnier goes as far as a D♭ near its midpoint, La Rue’s music proceeds in an unambiguous “ut-tonality” throughout the chanson.

Still, “Absalon, fili” mi might only prove its composer a master and not an innovator. A predecessor dates back to more than half a century before MS Royal 8 G vii,: the third polyphonic setting of the Marian antiphon “Ave regina celorum [sic]” by Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474).

Unlike in the previous three-voice settings, in his four-voice “Ave regina celorum III” Dufay parsed the eight-line antiphon text into four sections and added a plaintive trope after each (Table 2-1). While there could hardly have been a more common votive antiphon than “Ave regina celorum, ave domina angelorum” (Hail queen of heaven, hail
the mistress of the angels) in medieval Europe, the tropes of “Ave regina celorum” allows Dufay to appeal personally to the Mother of God. In a deeply personal and penitential tone, Dufay pleads “at the time of [his] death” that he be purified of his sins and meet a good end.

The composer of “Absalon, fili mi” would later respond to David’s desperate will of dying with a “modulation” to the “parallel minor.” Dufay employs the same technique for the first and third tropes in “Ave regina celorum III.” In m. 21, after a cadence on C ut or “C-major,” the Superius introduces the first trope with an E♭, which mutates the C ut into a C re or brings the harmony from “C-major” to “C-minor.” While the three other voices carry the trope, the Tenor continues the text of the antiphon “Ave regina celorum, ave domina angelorum,” but it echoes the E♭ in the Superius and inflects the leading tone to C into a B♭, an inflection that probably persists into m. 23 in spite of Heinrich Besseler’s editorial B♮.35

While it only lasts for two breves at the first trope, the “parallel-minor modulation” expands significantly at the third one in mm. 86-96. Whereas Dufay elides the punctuation between the first section of the proper antiphon text and the first trope, the break between mm. 85-86 is much stronger. There is no longer any overlap between the C-ut or “C-major” cadence in mm. 84-85 and the Superius’s E♭ in m. 86. In contradistinction to the first trope, in which one hears both the texts of the trope and the

35 Besseler’s decision likely considers the cross relation between the B♮’s in the second second half of m. 23. It is not certain, however, that such cross relation would be a major concern at the time of Dufay. It is also likely, furthermore, that the inflections in the unique historical version of Ave regina celorum III is sufficient as in many other sources of the era, which I will show later according to Thomas Brothers’ arguments.
antiphon, here the Tenor remains tacit throughout the first line of the trope “Miserere, miserere supplicanti Dufay.”

Table 2-1
Guillaume Dufay’s Tropes for “Ave regina celorum III”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Text36</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>[Prima pars]</strong></td>
<td><strong>[First part]</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tropus I</em></td>
<td><em>Trope I</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miserere tui labentis Dufaÿ</td>
<td>Have mercy on your dying Dufay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Ne] peccatorum ruat in ignem fervorum.</td>
<td>That he shall not fall into the boiling heat of the fire of sin.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>[Secunda pars]</strong></th>
<th><strong>[Second part]</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Tropus II</em></td>
<td><em>Trope II</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miserere, miserere genitrix domini Ut pateat porta caeli [debiles].</td>
<td>Have mercy, Mother of God, And open the door of Heaven for the feeble.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>[Tropus III]</strong></th>
<th><em>Trope III</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miserere, miserere supplicanti Dufaÿ Sitque in [conspectu Dei] mors ejus speciosa.</td>
<td>Have mercy on the supplicant Dufay And let his beautiful death be in the presence of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>[Tropus IV]</strong></th>
<th><em>Trope IV</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In excelsis ne damnemur, miserere nobis Et juva, ut in mortis hora Nostra sint corda [decora].</td>
<td>[Mother of God] on high, have mercy on us, so that we should not be damned And may it delight you that in the hour Of our death our hearts be beautiful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dufay composes the most daring music for this “miserere supplicanti Dufay,” especially in mm. 86-89 where all three voices move homophonically in semibreves.

Proceeding canonically, the top two voices start with a four-note syllabic theme on “Miserere”: E♭-D-C-B, which outlines a dissonant diminished fourth. The Bassus’s melody A♭-G-E♭-D on the second “miserere” in mm. 88-89 not only outlines the diabolic

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Ave regina caelorum III - Tropus I

Guillaume Dufay

Reproduced from Heinrich Besseler's edition in Guillaume Dufay, Opera Omnia V, Heinrich Besseler ed. (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1966), 124-5. All editorial accidentals are Bessler's, although, as discussed, I do not agree with some of them.
Ave regina cælorum III - Tropus III

Guillaume Dufay

Reproduced from Heinrich Besseler's edition in Guillaume Dufay, Opera Omnia V, Heinrich Besseler ed. (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1966), 127-128. All editorial accidentals are Bessler's, although, as discussed, I do not agree with some of them.
tritone but also completes the “modulation” to “C-minor” at the very beginning of the trope with an A♭. Moreover, with respects to harmony, the homophonic passage on the two “miserere” consists of a chain of parallel imperfect consonances: the parallel minor third between Superius and Bassus in m. 86, the parallel major sixth between Superius and Contratenor in m. 87, and the parallel major third between Contratenor and Bassus in m. 89. Although it is unclear whether these parallel intervals are intended to achieve a particular musical affect, they give rise to numerous cross relations in addition to the melodic dissonances, for example the diminished fourth between the Superius’s E♭ and Bassus’s B in m. 86, the augmented second between the Bassus’s A♭ and Contratenor’s B♮ in m. 88.

The “C-minor” inflections gradually fade out over the last two words “supplicanti Dufay.” The phrase’s final cadence is unambiguously C-ut or “C-major” in mm. 93-96. The rest of the third trope (mm. 97-108) is completely diatonic and “major,” free of inflection. Still, in “Ave regina celorum III” Dufay applies “parallel-minor modulation” to the sole word “miserere” of the two tropes that contain his name and strike as the most personal. Like in “Absalon, fili mi,” the mutation of C from ut to re with E♭ and A♭ exhibits a compelling touch of sullenness and expresses the idea of death in an intimate manner.

Rob Wegman thus takes it for granted that Dufay composed the troped setting of the Marian antiphon for the sake of his own salvation, wishing it “to be sung at his

37 Although the text underlay in Besseler edition respects the ligature in Bassus, mm. 86-87, it is rather unlikely that Dufay would elide the last syllable of the second “miserere” as Besseler does in mm. 89-90.
Indeed, the composer’s last will specified that “Ave regina celorum III” should be sung for him after the last sacraments and agony of death. Robert Nosow even posits Dufay’s troped antiphon onto the tradition of the “art of dying” in the fifteenth century. “As described in the *ars moriendi*” (“the art of dying”), argues Nosow, Dufay “envisioned the deathbed rite as a private but social occasion, on which he was assisted on his last journey by those around him” in the way of singing. Eventually Dufay even transferred the music of the third trope’s “Miserere, miserere supplicanti Dufay” to his *Missa Ave regina celorum* to be sung annually in his memory at the Cambrai cathedral after his death, the cathedral that he served at both the beginning and the end of his career.

While the tropes fit the deathbed scenario particularly well, it is commonly held that Dufay composed “Ave regina celorum III” in 1464. Why did Dufay compose this rather gloomy setting of the celebratory Marian antiphon a decade before his last testament and eventual death in 1474? Composing his deathbed music far in advance is “perhaps typical of Dufay’s character” as Nosow contends, but worrying oneself with “the heat of the fire of sin” (“peccatorum … ignem fervorum,” Tropus I) would still be particularly morbid if one had not otherwise been reminded of the imminence of death.

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40 Nosow, “Song and the Art of Dying,” 543.
Alejandro Planchart suggests that “Ave regina celorum III” could be about parting as well as dying. He notices the similarity between Superius, mm. 89-90 (as well as Contratenor, mm. 90-91) and the beginning motive of “Helas mon dueil,” a virelai dating back to Dufay’s early period. He suggests that the “near quotation” of this “song about separation” bids farewell to Pierre de Ranchicourt, a close friend of Dufay and another canon at the Cambrai cathedral. In 1463, he parted Cambrai permanently for Arras where he was elected the new bishop, leaving Dufay alone and upset.

Planchart does not specify what the “quotation” in “Ave regina celorum III” is, but it probably involves the leap of a diminished fourth between F♯ and B♭ clearly notated in the first breve of the virelai according to its unique source (Example 2-2).

In the *Opera Omnia* edition of the antiphon setting, Besseler puts an editorial sharp above the F’s in Superius, m. 89 and Contratenor, m. 90. Such editorial intervention would not only extend the chain of parallel imperfect consonances but also install melodic diminished fourths. Although they would produce a much more jarring harmony,

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44 Planchart, “Notes on Guillaume Du Fay’s Last Works,” 63.
Besseler’s sharps unnotated in the unique source of “Ave regina celorum III” draw no support from historical theories or practices.

A direct quotation from “Helas mon dueil” to Ave regina celorum III” based on Besseler’s editorial additions is thus unlikely. Nonetheless, it is possible that when Dufay composed the antiphon setting whether as farewell or deathbed music, he had some of his early chansons in mind. As a matter of fact, the technique of setting a piece in a “major key” but modulating at times to the parallel minor was an ordinary component of Dufay’s earlier style. To describe this phenomenon widespread especially in Dufay’s secular output, Besseler even coins the term “Terzfreiheit,” or “freedom of the third degree.”

In “Ave regina celorum III” and the RISM 1540 edition of “Absalon, fili mi,” for example, according to Besseler’s anachronistic concept, E, the third degree of “C major,” takes the “freedom” to shift into Eb and thus gives rise to the parallel “C minor.”

In his thorough examination of *musica ficta* in medieval and Renaissance music, Karol Berger has specifically singled out the rondeau “Navré je sui d’un dart penetratif” for its use of accidental inflections (Example 2-3).

Whereas the A section features scarcely any accidental inflections, the middle of the B section sees several “C-minor”-related inflections: Eb and even an Ab in the Tenor, m. 23. Berger argues that the divergent distribution of accidental flats follows the lyrics. The lack of “C-minor” flats in the A section upholds the E♮ in all three voices and B♮ in the Superius as “hard mi-steps.”

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Because of their role as leading tones in the directional *mi*-fa progressions at cadences, *mi*-steps were associated at Dufay’s time with the *durus* affect: sharpness, harshness, and force. The E♮ *mi* and B♮ *mi* in the A section thus musically depict the “penetrative arrow” that pierced the speaker’s heart (“dart penetratif qui ma percié le cuer de part en par”). The B section, on the other hand, speaks of the “doulx regart” (“soft look”) that every lover desires. Since flats usually related to the *mollis* affect of *fa*-steps, the
“Terzfreiheit” and surge of flats in the B section express the softness and sweetness of the gaze from the beloved in contrast to the piercing arrow.49

There are many more instances of “Terzfreiheit” in Dufay’s chanson output, for example the ballade “C’est bien raison de devoir essaucier,” the rondeaux “Belle, veullies moy retenir,” “Ma dame, je vous pri,” “Helas ma dame, par amours,” and “Je prens congie de vous, amours.” Given the commonness of this phenomenon in Dufay’s oeuvre and its expressive use in both the early chanson “Navré je sui” and the late antiphon setting “Ave regina celoum III,” perhaps Dufay was rightfully the predecessor of the enigmatic composer of “Absalon, fili mi.” After all, Dufay significantly influenced later generations of Renaissance composers in other respects such as the cyclic masses. In addition, after his death, Dufay’s own chanson collections dispersed away from Cambrai.50 Although half a century later Dufay’s secular compositions would have become out of fashion, by the virtue of their number it was possible that one or several of the “Terzfreiheit” pieces reached the composer of “Absalon” and inspired the motet.

Instead of trying to solidify the connection between “Absalon, fili mi” and Dufay’s early secular works, however, it is more important to recognize the differences between their use of inflections and “Terzfreiheit.” Dufay’s motet “O beate Sebastiane” offers an interesting point of departure. It suggests the importance of the non-expressive use of accidental inflections in Dufay’s pieces. The motet has survived in two versions whose accidentals are significantly different and in fact mutually supplementary. In many places in which the Bolognese version of the motet has a fa-step, for example the E♭ in Tenor, m. 21 and the C in Superius, m. 26, the Modenese version has a corresponding mi-

Example 2-4
Dufay’s “O Beate Sebastiane” in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografica Musicale, Q15, no. 311, fs. 314v-315r, or the “Bolognese Flat Version”
(Example 2-4 Continued)
Example 2-5
Dufay’s “O Beate Sebastiane” in Modena, Biblioteca Estense, α.X.1.11 (Lat.471), fs. 85v-59r, or the “Modenese Sharp Version”
Je - sum Chri - stum, ut a pe - ste e - pi - de - mi - ae et
mor - bo li - be - re
mor - bo li - be - re
mor - bo li - be - re
mur. A
mur. A
mur. A
men.
men.
step inflected up by a semitone, the E♮ in m. 21 and the C♯ in m. 26 respectively in this case (Examples 2-4 and 2-5). Moreover, “if all the conflicting accidentals were removed from both [versions] one could arrive at the [Bolognese version] by adding a single flat […],” observes Karol Berger, “but to produce the [Modenese] version, one would have to add six sharps.” In this way, the “sharp” Modenese version was likely a later revision of the earlier “flat” Bolognese version, and Berger’s fairly eclectic source studies suggest that the revision reflects Dufay’s own decisions.

Berger argues that Dufay’s “sharp” revision turned “O beate Sebastiane” into a play of musical iconography. The motet is devoted to Saint Sebastian, the protector against the bubonic plagues in the Middle Ages. The story of the saint is perhaps best reflected by the Italian artist Andrea Mantegna (c.1431-1506) in his St Sebastian, a painting that might date to just a decade before Dufay’s motet (Figure 2-5). In accordance with the tradition of Saint Sebastian in Catholic iconography, Mantegna portrays Sebastian tied to a pillar and shot with numerous arrows.

Likewise, in Dufay’s “sharp” revision of the motet the mi-steps substituting for the original fa-steps serve to symbolize the sharp arrows that pierced Sebastian’s body, as Berger suggests. Similar to the A section of “Navré je sui,” the Modenese version of the motet takes advantage of the affective connotations of mi-steps: their arrow-like harshness and sharpness, especially. In particular, Berger argues that the “♯” sign with

51 Examples 2-4 and 2-5 are recreated from Karol Berger, “The Martyrdom of St Sebastian,” 344-5 and 348-9.
53 Ibid., 343 and 351.
54 Andrea Mantegna, St Sebastian (1457-1459), painting, oil on poplar wood, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, inv. GG 301, image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y. Photo Credit: Erich Lessing/ART RESOURCE, N.Y. Retrieved from www.artstor.org, 1 April, 2013.
Figure 2-5

*St Sebastian* (1457-1459) by Andrea Mantegna
which Dufay indicates $mi$ and upward semitone inflections in the Modenese source visually resembles an arrow. Thus writes Berger at the end of his article researching the motet’s two versions:

“The revised music reveals that what is on [the singers’] minds as they pronounce the words of the [Modenese version of the motet] is the image of the martyr they address, pierced through with so many arrows as to resemble a porcupine—an image not very different from one they might see mounted on an altar.”

Admittedly, Berger’s mimetic interpretation of the “sharp” Modenese version is convincing and creative, yet it leaves the Bolognese and original version of the motet in a rather awkward situation. The several $E_b$ in the “flat” Bolognese version give rise to the “Terzfreiheit” through two $D$-$mi$ and two $C$-$re$ cadences, including even the final $C$-$re$ cadence in mm. 55-56. Given the expressive connotations of flats and “Terzfreiheit” in “Absalon, fili mi”, “Ave regina celorum III,” and “Navré je sui,” it would mean that when first composing “O beate Sebastiane” Dufay was contradicting the iconographical attributes of the saint, a heretical mistake he only realized and corrected later in the Modenese version. The unlikeliness of such situation implies, rather, that the flats and “Terzfreiheit” in Dufay’s original version of the motet do not serve expressive or mimetic purposes at all.

As a matter of fact, apart from “Navré je sui,” “Ave regina celorum III,” and the later version of “O beate Sebastiane,” almost no other case of accidental inflections and “Terzfreiheit” in Dufay’s works seems to relate directly to the text. The Italian rotundello “Quel fronte signorille in paradise,” for example, opens and proceeds in a “major key”

Quel fronte signorille in paradiso

Rotundello

Guillaume Dufay

Reproduced from Heinrich Besseler's edition in Guillaume Dufay, Opera Omnia VI, Heinrich Besseler ed. (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1966), 11. All editorial accidentals are Bessler's, although, as discussed, I do not agree with some of them.
with internal cadences on C ut and G ut. In m. 24, the second to last breve of the entire piece, however, Dufay inflects the first note of the Superius into a B♭, which is the only one of the entire piece, according to its unique source. The final G in m. 25 thus mutates from ut into re. Such sudden final “modulation” into the parallel “G minor” anticipates the ending of “Absalon, fili mi,” but it does not reflect the character of the text, which has no unexpected change at the end.

The French rondeau “Ne je ne dors ne je ne veille” may seem to resemble Navré je sui. Except for the E♭ in the D-re cadence at its very end (mm. 14-16), the A section of the rondeau is generally free of “Terzfreiheit” inflections. In contrast, even though almost none of Besseler’s editorial flats of the rondeau supported by its unique source, the B section has several E♭ and A♭ in its last phrase (mm. 21-27). In particular, the final C-re cadence is essentially identical to that of the version of “Absalon, fili mi” in RISM15407 with E♭-D-C descent in the Superius and A♭-G-C progression in the Contratenor. Nevertheless, although in the B section the speaker does desire to die (“que mort contre moy se resveille,” or “that death arises against me”) in a way comparable to King David (“sed descendam in infernum,” or “but I shall descend to hell”), there is not any contradiction between the two sections’ texts. Whereas “Navré je sui” consists of the contradictory “dart penetratif” and “doulx regart,” the rondeau “Ne je dors ne je ne veille” offers no reason why Dufay should employ “Terzfreiheit” exclusively in the later half of its B section.

Defining Beauty
Ne je ne dors ne je ne veille

Guillaume Dufay

Rondeau

Reproduced from Heinrich Besseler's edition in Guillaume Dufay, Opera Omnia VI, Heinrich Besseler ed. (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1966), 92. All editorial accidentals are Bessler's, although, as discussed, I do not agree with some of them.
The last chapter has shown that by the early fourteenth century when Marchetto da Padova wrote his *Lucidarium*, music theorists had already incorporated *musica ficta* into their knowledge. Thus, the pervasiveness of accidental inflections and *Terzfreiheit* in the compositions of Dufay should not be a surprise. The problem, however, relates not to the ontology of pitches outside the Guidonian gamut but to the teleology: if it is not the text, what triggers the wide use of *musica ficta* in Dufay’s works?

Current discourse of the history of music theory is familiar with the two reasons for using *musica ficta* that medieval and Renaissance theorists often discussed. The first one *causa necessitatis*, or “reason of necessity,” refers to the need to keep perfect consonances perfect. The prescription against augmented or diminished unison, fourth, fifth, and octave either vertically or horizontally was one of the most important contrapuntal rules in medieval and Renaissance theory. Lowinsky’s “secret chromatic art” draws from this tenet, and the many ♭s in “Quid non ebrietás” are also Willaert’s clever workings with this rule.

The second reason for *musica ficta* is *causa pulchritudinis*, which translates as “reason of beauty.” In his monograph on *musica ficta*, Berger suggests that the *causa pulchritudinis* addresses accidental inflections at cadences. The proof of this otherwise random connection between beauty and cadence comes from various treatises of period, including Marchetto’s *Lucidarium*.56 To begin with, in Treatise V of *Lucidarium* on consonances and dissonances, Marchetto defines two types of dissonances: those “compatible to the ear and the mind” and those that are not. There are three principal types of the first category: the third, the sixth, and the tenth, which implies that by

“dissonance compatible to the ear” Marchetto means what is now called an imperfect consonance.57

What makes these dissonances or imperfect consonances compatible to the ear and thus different from the real dissonances? Marchetto explains:

“A dissonance is something imperfect; it requires something perfect by means of which it can be perfected. The consonance is its perfection. The less distant the dissonance lies from the consonance the less distant it is from its perfection and the more it is assimilated to it, and thus the more agreeable it is to the ear, as if it partook more of the nature of the consonance.”58

The above quote suggests that imperfect consonances are hierarchically subjected to perfect consonances. Whereas the latter are “agreeable to the ear and mind” by virtue of their own nature, the former are agreeable only by the virtue of their subjection to the latter. In other words, the raison d’être of imperfect consonances is to reach perfection by moving to the least distant perfect consonance.

This is where Marchetto’s chromatic semitone becomes the game changer. For review, in Marchetto’s five-fold division of the whole tone, the chromatic semitone, being the largest semitone of all, includes four of the five dieses of the whole tone and is signaled by the square b sign. In his discussion of the chromatic semitone, Marchetto takes pains to explain the etymology of its name:

The word “chromatic” derives from chroma; chroma is “color” in Greek. Thus, the “chromatic” is called the “color of beauty,” because it is on account of the

elegance and beauty of the dissonance that the whole tone is divided [into two parts] beyond the size of the division into the diatonic and enharmonic genera—so that the dissonance may lie closer to the consonance that follow them, as both voices move in such a way that a whole tone sounds at a certain distance above or below the chromatic voice.”

Notably, Marchetto’s expression for “color of beauty” is “color pulcritudinis” and “elegance and beauty” is “decorem pulcritudinemque,” and their affinity with the causa pulchritudinis is clear. The pulchritudo of chromatic semitone thus pertains to its making an imperfect consonance more “agreeable to the ear” by bringing it even closer to its closest perfect consonance. It intensifies the contrapuntal motion from an imperfect consonance to its nearest perfect consonance by making the perfecting tendency more directional and more powerful.

Marchetto later argues that such perfection requires contrary motion between both voices of the imperfect consonance, one up and the other one down. Although he does not specify in what occasion such progression should occur, later theorists including Prosdocimus, Tinctoris, and Zarlino indicate that the progression of from an imperfect consonance to its nearest perfect consonance with voices moving in contrary motion is unique to cadences. The various examples Marchetto provides along the two above quotes support this reading of causa pulchritudinis being cadential tension and release (Example 2-6.1, 6.2, and 6.3). In the first progression (Example 2-6.1), the square b sign on the top voice’s C transforms the minor sixth between the two voices into a major

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59 Ibid., 148-151, quoted also in Breger, Musica Ficta, 123.
60 Marchetto da Padova, Luciadrium, 208-213.
61 Berger also gives a rather detailed account of cadences in Musica Ficta, 122-54.
sixth. In this way, thanks to the small distance between C# and D, which is but one-fifth of a whole tone in Marchetto’s tuning, the sense of arrival after the progression from the imperfect sixth to the perfect octave becomes stronger. In fact, it is possible that Marchetto purposefully makes his chromatic semitones (C-C#, for example) larger than those in the normal Pythagorean tuning. He thus increases the tension of the imperfect consonance and strengthens the sense of release at the targeted perfect consonance.

In this way, although cadences in the common practice era are mainly defined through chordal progressions and those in medieval and Renaissance music through contrapuntal progressions, the same logic of tension and release applies equally to both. Chromatic semitones, or musica ficta in general, can be used for the sake of beauty precisely thanks to their ability to produce strong tendency tones at points of cadential tension and release.

Discussed extensively in Berger’s monograph, the view that the causa pulchritudinis addresses particularly the use of musica ficta at cadences has become the conventional interpretation of the term. It does, however, overlook a curious phenomenon.
While usually clear with the meaning of *causa necessitatis* and the prohibition of augmented or diminished perfect consonances, music theorists of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were almost always vague about what *pulchritudo of musica ficta* actually entails. Even in the case of Marchetto who uses the word *pulchritudo* when describing the chromatic semitone, it is not straightforward that *causa pulchritudo* refers as specific to cadential inflections as Berger recommends.⁶³ If, like *causa necessitatis*, *causa pulchritudinis* also denotes codified conventions of music theory and practice such as cadential inflections, why, then, was the former so clearly defined in the theoretical discourse yet the latter so ambiguous?

Seizing onto the contrasting levels of specificity of theorists’ discussions of the *causae necessitatis* and *pulchritudinis*, Thomas Brothers has recently suggested that the two *causae* are opposite reasons for using *musica ficta*. “Necessitas” means the mandatory compliance with hard contrapuntal rules, which theorists held dear to them. “Pulchritudo,” on the other hand, is not a rule but an option. It implies not “systematically codified applications” of *musica ficta* but instead “applications that have no basis in theory.”⁶⁴ After all, “beauty” normally entails not a reasonable attribute but a qualitative concept. “If we think of the gamut as a rational construction,” argues Brothers, “an inflection may be regarded as a digression or deviation from this diatonic pitch field” and “*musica ficta* stands as an irrational phenomenon.”⁶⁵

In spite of the ambiguity of its definition in historical treatises, Brothers notices a particular connection between *musica ficta pulchritudinis* and the secular chanson.

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⁶³ As a matter of fact, Berger himself notices the reoccurring vagueness in theorists’ discussion of *causa pulchritudinis* and the indirect nature of the linkage he establishes between cadential inflections and *causa pulchritudinis*.
⁶⁴ Thomas Brothers, *Chromatic Beauty in the late medieval chanson*, 10.
⁶⁵ Ibid., 11.
According to the thirteenth and fourteenth century Anonymous II, one of the earliest theorists to broach *causae necessitatis* and *pulchritudinis*,

False music has been invented for two reasons, namely, because of necessity and because of beauty in melody itself. The reason of necessity arises because we could not have a fifth, a fourth, or an octave, as in the places examined in the chapter on proportions. The reason of beauty is manifest in the *cantus coronatus*.66

“Cantus coronatus” literally means a “crowned song” or a “prize-winning song.” It has been suggested, however, that it is in fact a generic name referring to the high-style genre of *grand chansons courtois* of the trouvères.67 Thus, what Anonymous II identifies as an arena for beautiful *musica ficta* is the monophonic secular song. A similar passage appears in a treatise attributed to Philippe de Caserta (fl. c. 1370), a theorist and composer active in the Avignon circle that promoted the so-called *ars subtilior*. Interestingly, however, the author substitutes something else for Anonymous II’s *cantus coronatus*:

Boethius invented musica ficta for two reasons, namely, because of necessity and because of beauty in melody. We have the reason of necessity because we cannot

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have consonances in all locations, as stated above. The reason of beauty, however, is manifest in the *cantelina*.⁶⁸

A comparison of the above two quotes allows Brothers to argue for a stable tradition of the “beautiful use” of *musica ficta* in medieval secular songs, which began from the monophonic *cantus coronatus* of the trouvères to the polyphonic *cantelina* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Because of their divergent understandings of the meaning of *causa pulchritudinis*, Brothers’s studies of “chromatic beauty” in medieval music differ significantly from Berger’s. The latter’s explanation of *causa pulchritudinis* as cadential inflection involves the codified and conventionalized application of *musica ficta* at cadences in both sacred and secular polyphony. Such understanding necessarily leads Berger to pay more attention to what theorists had to say rather than what composers wrote idiosyncratically. For Brothers, on the other hand, it is not up to music theorists to define the meaning of *musica ficta* out of *causa pulchritudinis*. Unlike the necessary inflections to avoid prohibited intervals, these “beautiful,” “quirky,” and “discursive” inflections, as Brothers describe them, do not serve to uphold any theoretical tenets. Instead, it is up to composers to demonstrate their understanding of *pulchritudo* and of *musica ficta* as “tools for achieving variety, subtlety, and even irrationality.”⁶⁹ Brothers confines the “beautiful use” of accidentals mainly to the secular corpus in accordance with the accounts of Anonymous II and Caserta, and his monograph is dedicated predominantly to actual compositions: the *Trouvère Manuscript O* at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, the

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⁶⁹ Brothers, *Chromatic Beauty in the late medieval chanson*, 10 and 15.
polyphonic chansons of Guillaume de Machaut (1300-1377), the two famous *ars subtilior* codices *MSS Chantilly 564* and *Oxford 213*, and lastly the early chansons of Dufay.

The part of Brothers’s research that has drawn the most comments is probably his stance on unnotated accidentals when working with primary sources. It is widely held that composers and scribes of the period often did not indicate every accidental inflection. This view suggests that the well-known rules of where to apply *musica ficta*, be it out of *causa necessitatis* or *pulchritudinis*, made meticulous notations of inflections redundant back then. The notion of unnotated accidentals in early music is so common that in modern editorial practices the term *musica ficta* has come to refer not only to pitches outside the Guidonian gamut but also to unnotated accidentals in general. Subscribing to the fairly common notion of unnotated accidentals, Berger devotes the entire last part of his three-part monograph on *musica ficta* to applying the knowledge of historical music theories to editing music of the period.70

Brothers’s emphasis on the undisciplined nature of “beautiful” accidentals, however, necessitates taking specific notational features more at face value. Recreating presumably unnotated *musica ficta* could only reflect the common views of music theorists. Only the individual versions of inflections carried in extant manuscript sources, no matter how insufficient they may seem, can possibly represent the individual choices of the composers. Thus, in order to restore the authority of the “beautiful” accidentals from theorists to composers, Brothers challenges the notion of a tradition of unnotated inflections in medieval music. Such a notion, Brothers notices, received no support from contemporary theoretical writings, which in fact often prescribed specific functions of

accidental signs and instruct composers to notate inflections clearly.\textsuperscript{71} Brothers’s analysis of “beautiful” inflections of a chanson usually considers many if not all extant sources of the piece and treats each notated accidental as the composer’s original decision to the greatest extent possible.

The controversy of whether the tradition of unnotated accidentals really existed in the Middle Ages and early Renaissance is far from being resolved. In their reviews of Brothers’s monograph, both Sarah Fuller and Peter Urquhart have criticized his complete negligence of the possibility of unnotated inflections and his overly indiscriminate attitude of treating all accidentals notated in different versions of a piece as composers’ originals.\textsuperscript{72} Admittedly, the possible deficiency of notated accidentals in extant sources complicates Brothers’s project on the expressivity of accidentals. It is commendable, however, that Brothers recognizes and studies the expressive potentials of every accidental inflection that is not “necessary” in medieval music notwithstanding the limits of modern knowledge. He raises an important point that accidentals should not only be considered followers of theoretical conventions or performance practices but also loci of the subjective \textit{pulchritudo}. Brothers’s unique perspective on the \textit{causa pulchritudinis} leads to convincing and effective case-by-case analyses of individual pieces, which both Fuller and Urquhart acknowledge in spite of their other criticisms.

\textbf{Syntax over Text}

\textsuperscript{71} Brothers, \textit{Chromatic Beauty in the late medieval chanson}, 21-44.
The scope of the beauty and expressivity Brothers studies goes far beyond the mimetic mi- and fa-steps Berger observes in Dufay’s “Navré je sui” and “O beate Sebastiane.” As a matter of fact, the causa pulchritudinis Brothers sees from trouvères’ monophonic songs to late medieval chansons pertains little to how inflections serve the text. Rather, it addresses how through subtle and idiosyncratic use of musica ficta composers created a flexible musical syntax.73

The concept of musical syntax consists of two aspects: the sense of motion and stasis, and the relation between different pitch classes or sonorities. Although such a concept never appears explicitly in medieval treatises, modern discussion of syntax in medieval music draws its basis on the directed tendency of an imperfect consonance towards its nearest perfect consonance that numerous theorists discussed. Sarah Fuller has thoroughly examined how Machaut uses this simple logic of tension-resolution in the progression from imperfect to perfect, or what she calls a “directed progression,” to create forward motion and to clarify the tonal orientation.74 Especially, musica ficta plays a determinant role in the process, since, as Marchetto has shown above, ♯ and ♭ enhance the tension of an imperfect consonance and hence the directionality of its resolution to perfection.

Fuller’s analysis maps and characterizes the directed progressions through which harmonic tensions arising from accidental inflections eventually resolve. She differentiates between three types of sonorities in the musical syntax of Machaut, as exemplified by her analysis shown in Example 2-7.75 An open fifth or octave is a “perfect”

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73 Brothers, *Chromatic Beauty in the late medieval chanson*, 14 and 20.
75 Example 2-7 is recreated from Fuller, “Tendencies and Resolutions,” 232.
sonority and the most stable of all, needing no resolution and resisting forward motion. A vertical third or a sixth especially involving a sharped or flatted leading tone yields an “imperfect” sonority, and the resulting tendency towards the open “perfect” makes it tonally unstable. A double-leading tone sonority is “doubly-imperfect.” It is even less stable because of its two imperfect consonances.\footnote{Fuller, “Tendencies and Resolutions,” 235} These three types of sonorities give rise to varying degrees of musical punctuations. The more “imperfect” the tension and the more “perfect” the resolution, the more powerful the syntactic pause will be. This explains why numerous pieces from the fourteenth century conclude with a double-leading tone cadence resolving to an open fifth.

\footnote{Fuller, “Tendencies and Resolutions,” 235}
In addition to cadences, Machaut’s prudent use of different types of sonorities also creates hierarchical relation between pitch classes on a larger scale. For example, in the motet “De bon espoir/Puisque/Speravi,” several imperfect A sonorities in the beginning of the motet move to perfect G sonorities and clarify G as a local tonal center (Example 2-8).77 Near its end, however, imperfect G sonorities gradually replace perfect ones and subject G to F, on which the motet concludes.78 What Fuller finds especially ingenious is the myriad of techniques Machaut uses to vary the simple imperfect-to-perfect progression. He sometimes places imperfect sonorities at the beginning and ending of a phrase that usually features stable perfect ones and thus installs an impetus of forward motion. He may also extend the forward impulse by suspending the resolution of an imperfect sonority. Transforming an expected resolution into an imperfect sonority or substituting a completely unexpected resolution deflects the syntax towards a new tonal center and adds variety to the music. Unexpected voice leading may also achieve similar effects.

Thus observes Fuller at the end of her study:

77 Example 2-8 is recreated from Fuller, “Tendencies and Resolutions,” 237.
For Machaut, the directed progression is far more than a conventional formula for terminating a phrase or a composition. It is a significant artistic resource through which tonal orientation can be defined or shifted, phrase or section endings bridged, openings imbued with forward thrust.79

According to her observations, directed progressions in Machaut would qualify as what Brothers calls the “beautiful use” of *musica ficta* thanks to their artfulness and unconventionality. Therefore, it is not surprising that Machaut’s chansons are among the prime examples in Brothers’s studies on *causa pulchritudinis*, and his analysis shares much with Fuller’s.

Whereas Fuller focuses on sonorities, however, Brothers emphasizes more the role of individual accidental inflections in a large-scale pitch design. Brothers’s analysis of the Machaut’s two-voice ballade “Biaute qui toutes autres pere” demonstrates his accidental-centered approach.80 To begin with, D strikes him as a structurally important pitch, because every musical phrase of the chanson concludes with a cadence on a perfect D sonority. Curiously, none of the D cadences features a sharped leading tone C or its preceding “sixth degree” B♯, both of which would significantly intensify the drive towards D. In contrast, although G only appears at transitory mid-point arrivals, F♯s clarify and propel the piece’s tonal orientation towards G, namely in mm. 6, 15 (repeated in 37), and 28. The frequent drives towards G overshadow the single directed progression to D in mm. 3-4. Although an E♭-D semitone progression occurs in the lower Tenor, and sonority-wise the imperfect E♭-G moves to D-A, its nearest perfect consonance, Brothers

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79 Ibid., 252
Biaute qui toutes autres pere

Guillaume de Machaut

suggests that “patterns of manuscript evidence make clear … that lowered leading tones hold a minority status” compared to the sharped counterparts.81

Accidental inflections in “Biaute qui toutes autres pere” thus contribute to the syntactic flexibility and tonal design of the ballade. Machaut’s use and disuse of certain inflections give rise to the structurally prominent yet tonally weak D and the structurally unnoticeable but tonally strong G. Such a combination exemplifies a flexible musical syntax particular to medieval music: the piece fluctuates between two contradictory centers, and the ballade “cannot be reduced to a single, dominating pitch.”82

Brothers’s interpretation of “Terzfreiheit” in Dufay’s chansons draws precisely upon the ability of accidentals to propel tension-resolution progressions and clarify tonal orientation. He rejects Besseler’s term “Terzfreiheit” not only because it anachronistically implies functional harmony but also because he sees the so-called “Terzfreiheit” not as a tonal-harmony event as the terminology suggests but as an inherently linear phenomenon.83 To begin with, Brothers observes that “lowered third degrees” produce stronger cadences. In the F-re cadence that concludes the refrain of the ballade “C’est bien raison de devoir essaucier,” for example, lowering the “cadential third” to A♭ triggers a diminished fourth relation with the leading tones E and an augmented second with B♮, the leading tone to C (Example 2-9).84 These dissonant non-harmonic

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82 Ibid., 516.
83 Brothers, Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson, 195-9.
84 Example 2-9 is recreated from Brothers, Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson, 197.
relations generate even more tension in the pre-cadential sonorities on top of the two leading tones and propel the cadential resolution with more forward drive.

In addition, just like the inflected leading tones in Machaut’s “Biaute qui toues autres pere,” “lowered third degrees” also direct the tonal flow in Dufay’s chansons especially when there is more than one tonal center. Brothers briefly notes that in the rondeau “Helas, ma dame par amours,” B♭, the “lowered third degree” of G, “serves to establish direction away from C and towards G, in complement to F♯.”85 Not only does the cross relation between B♭ and F♯ generate tension and drive towards G as explained above, but the flattening of B also announces the temporal unattainability of C as a strong local cadence or tonal center. B♭ thus appears whenever Dufay deflects the tonal orientation away from C to somewhere else, which occurs in most of the middling phrases of the rondeau. And not surprisingly Dufay completes the return to C as a tonal focus with the help of not only B♮ but also E♭, the lowered third degree of C.

85 Brothers, Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson, 192.
Helas, ma dame, Oxford 213, f. 33v

Guillaume Dufay

The interpretation of the *causa pulchritudinis* allows another look at Dufay’s compositions whose textual contents do not particularly call for the “Terzfreiheit.” “O beate Sebastiane” has an interesting tonal plan: it begins with an extended perfect sonority on F, yet much of it proceeds in a C-related tonality. The various E♭ in the course of the Modenese “flat” version strengthen C cadences and negate any potential drive to F. Thus, instead of a mimetic purpose like their sharp counterparts in the Bolognese version, the “lowered third degrees” in the Modenese version serve to clarify C as the tonal focus in defiance of the F opening. The sudden appearance of B♭ at the end of the rotundello “Quel fronte signorille in paradiso” carries the same effect. It deflects the tonal flow away from C and enhances the cadential resolution towards G. In “Ne je ne dors ne je ne veille,” the “lowered third degree” E♭ at the end of the A section weakens the digression to D by producing a D-mi cadence. It upholds the status of C as the center of tonal orientation in accordance with the opening perfect sonority on C and its first cadence on C in m. 11. The “Terzfreiheit” that permeates the entire second half of the B section further solidifies the tonal focus on C by intensifying the cadential tension and resolution in mm. 26-27 and clarifying the tonal drive towards this C cadence after the digression to G in m. 20.

**The Evolving Pulchritudo**

The above analyses have shown that in many of Machaut and Dufay’s chansons, the beauty of *musica ficta* relates not to the text but to the syntax. Regardless how the text proceeds, the inflections of accidentals generate tension and forward motion and thus clarify the tonal orientation. This syntactic function of *musica ficta* puts into practice
what theorists of the fourteenth century were discussing in their treatises: the tension-release progression from an imperfect consonance to its nearest perfect consonance, which *musica ficta* intensifies by bringing the former even closer to the latter.

Chronologically, it seems that Marchetto developed a systematic knowledge of *musica ficta* decades before it began to appear frequently first in the works of Machaut. Nonetheless, the syntactic use of *musica ficta* does not arise from compliance to music theories but from compositional innovation. While theorists dictated the meaning of *causa necessitatis* or when to employ *musica ficta* in order to avoid augmentations or diminutions of otherwise perfect intervals, they never explained when and how *musica ficta* can be used to increase tension and forward drive. Hence it was completely up to individual composers to come up with divergent ways of utilizing the “unnecessary” functions of *musica ficta*. Thomas Brothers thus argues that the optional use of accidental inflections to create a loose and flexible syntax as exemplified in the works of Machaut and Dufay was what some theorists referred to as the *causa pulchritudinis*: a “beauty” that is not conventionalized but idiosyncratic.

In this way, at least in the output of Dufay there are two usages of *musica ficta* that could be labeled “pulcher,” since neither serves to avoid prohibited intervals or follows theoretical dictations and both reflect the ingenuity of the composer. The two versions of “O beate Sebastiane” demonstrate how *musica ficta* served syntactic functions in the earlier “flat” version yet mimetic purposes in the later “sharp” version. In fact, one can even draw a much broader chronology of how the idea of *pulchritudo* could have evolved. Indeed, the expressive “sharp” version of “O beate Sebastiane” could have come as late as fourteen years after the syntactic “flat” original, according to Berger’s
studies of the two sources. In Dufay’s chanson output, which generally falls into his early career, moreover, almost every occasion of “Terzfreiheit” and other “unnecessary” use of musica ficta has no basis in the text and instead fulfills a syntactic need, perhaps with the exception of “Navré je sui.” “Ave regina celorum III,” a representative of his late style, meanwhile, uses “parallel-minor modulation” to express the idea of death in the text.

Therefore, Dufay’s compositional interpretation of the pulchritudo of musica ficta seem to have evolved from the syntactic flexibility seen earlier in Machaut’s chansons to the mimetic text painting featured decades later in Josquin’s “Absalon fili mi.” Such chronology, furthermore, fits well Dufay’s common historiographical image as a transitional composer from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. As Brothers suggests, his early chansons that witness the syntactic use of musica ficta are characteristic of the medieval style, while his late motet “Ave regina celorum III” with expressive “Terzfreiheit” is more an exemplar of Renaissance manners of composing.

It is tempting, thus, to at least suggest a partial answer to the question that has long remained unresolved in this thesis. In general, Renaissance chromaticism, different from its medieval predecessor, serves more to imitate the meaning of the text than to activate the musical syntax. Such a definition of Renaissance chromaticism, however, rather misses the point. The general trend from syntactic to textual-expressive

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86 Karol Berger, “The Martyrdom of St Sebastian,” 343
87 Thomas Brothers thus provides the incomplete picture by indicating that the motet “incorporates techniques [of lowered third degrees] from the chanson,” since such view disregards the essential difference between the two functions the technique of musica ficta serves in chansons and in the motet “Ave regina celorum III.” See Brothers, Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson, 186; also, Brothers, “Contenance angloise and accidentals in some motets by Du Fay.” Plainsong and Medieval Music 6 (1997): 21-51.
88 Brothers, Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson, 199.
89 Ibid., 185-7, and 202-8.
chromaticism in the course of Dufay’s career and late fourteenth to late fifteenth centuries is perhaps evident, but functionality itself does not represent the sharpest difference between the medieval and Renaissance approaches to inflections. Indeed, stylistically speaking, the expressive “sharp” version of “O beate Sebastiane” associates more with the syntactic “flat” version, and “Navré je sui” with “Quel fronte signorille,” than with “Ave regina celorum III” or “Absalon fili mi” despite the shared use of expressive accidentals.

The affinity between “Navré je sui” and “Quel fronte signorille” in spite of the contrasting roles chromaticism plays pertains to the locus of chromaticism’s function. The same can be spoken of the difference between “Navré je sui” and “Ave regina celorum III” notwithstanding the same expressive purpose chromaticism fulfills. As demonstrated above, in Machaut and Dufay’s chansons the responsibility of creating syntactic flexibility falls upon individual inflections. Each twist and turn of the syntax arises from each use or disuse of a cadential leading tone and each lowering of the “third degree.” In the first and third tropes of “Ave regina celorum III,” on the other hand, not one single inflection is able to achieve what “Terzfreiheit” accomplishes as a whole. The technique of “lowered third degrees” does not create localized effects, as does the syntactic use of musica ficta. Rather, it produces an overall affect of sorrow that requires flattening every single E and A in the two respective passages.

In other words, in “Navré je sui,” “Quel fronte signorille,” and the two versions of “O beate Sebastiane,” what matters to Dufay is how each sharp or flat contributes to the musical picture: the sharp imitates an arrow, the flat imitates the softness of the lady’s gaze, the sharp adds cadential drive at the end of a musical phrase, the flat generates more
cadential tension, for examples. In “Ave regina celorum III,” however, what Dufay cares about is the “modulation” to the “parallel minor” or, in a more historical language, the mutation of a C-ut tonality into a C-re. Such “modulation” or mutation in turn portrays the supplicant Dufay pleading for the mercy of God and the intervention of the loving virgin, whereas individual E♭ and A♭ are just necessary inflections to achieve the overall “modulation” in the first place.

In this way, from the chansons of Machaut to Dufay’s late “Ave regina celorum III,” not only does the meaning of pulchritudo shift from syntactic flexibility to expressive and mimetic text setting. The place where musica ficta achieves such pulchritudo also migrates away from each localized inflection and extends to the overall tonal and aural affect of an entire passage. The power of E♭ and A♭ to portray sadness and morbidity musically in Dufay’s tropes no longer comes from their own virtues as fa-steps but from their affiliation with the syllable re on C. The same case occurs at the end of “Absalon, fili mi.” Here, inflections towards the flat side of the circle of fifths make little musical or mimetic sense other than generating above the final a minor third—E♭ in Kriesstein 1540⁹ and D♭ in the London manuscript—and thus shifting the final from an ut into a re step. It is not the E♭, A♭, D♭, or G♭ but the overall tonal shift that responds to David’s desperate will to die in place of his beloved son.

Whoever the composer of “Absalon, fili mi” might be, he or she took a tonal-affective and mimetic approach to flat inflections, an approach comparable to “Ave regina celorum III.” Nonetheless, there is still a rather significant difference between the two. In Dufay’s first and third tropes of “Ave regina celorum,” E♭ and A♭ are literally “inflections.” Without warning, soft b signs simply occur to change the frequency and
sylable of each individual E and A. In “Absalon, fili mi,” however, the shift happens much more gradually so that when the farthest flat step occurs in m. 83—A♭ in Kriesstein and G♭ in London—it seems justified and expected. Moreover, the smooth transition in “Absalon, fili mi” is guaranteed by nothing other than a chain of mutated deductios. What leads to the E♭ and A♭ or D♭ and G♭ in the ending of “Absalon, fili mi” is not directly the composer’s decision to flat these steps but the maneuver of deductios much like in Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietias.” Indeed, as Willaert only has to indicate a few accidental signs in “Quid non ebrietias,” the composer of “Absalon, fili mi” could have even composed the motet’s complicated conclusion in a clefless notation by relying on the deductios.

If one considers “Absalon, fili mi” a landmark of Renaissance chromaticism, the above journey through the many comparable pieces that came beforehand shows what this still anonymous motet marks. Being almost the only work of its kind in its time, “Absalon, fili mi” suggests that, unlike its medieval predecessor, “Renaissance chromaticism” serves to illustrate the meaning and emotion of the text. Musically, while consisting of flat and sharp inflections, it functions through overall tonal and aural effects, for example a “modulation” to the “parallel minor.” Furthermore, such tonal and aural effects are achieved through what theorists of the fifteenth century were increasingly incorporating into their discussions of pitch inflection: the deductios.

Now that I have reached a tentative understanding of what “Renaissance” may mean, it is time to try once again to understand the meaning of “chromaticism.”
The previous two chapters have revolved around the concept and phenomenon of chromaticism in Renaissance music. The first chapter shows that in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, square b and round b signs convey two distinctive yet not incompatible meanings. They imply the Guidonian syllables \textit{mi} and \textit{fa}, and they also signify upward and downward inflections by a major semitone. The tonal space containing all the available steps, however, was constructed upon transposing the Guidonian \textit{deductio} so that the \textit{mi-fa} semitone would occur between different steps. What the two Giovannis disagreed about their debate was how far the \textit{deductio} could be transposed and thus the parameters of this tonal space. Conceiving the musical space as a “string continuum,” Spataro argues that the \textit{deductio} can essentially be transposed anywhere one wants. Willaert introduces such distant transpositions into musical practice in his “Quid non ebrietas,” which goes as far as an A♭♭ in transposing the \textit{deductio} in the flat direction.

In addition, the first chapter addresses the literal meaning of “chromaticism” in theoretical discourse of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: the chromatic genus supposedly practiced by the ancient Greeks. Spataro and his teacher Ramis composed a number of pieces in which the canon calls for all three melodic genera: diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic. These pieces were the earliest examples of composers consciously working with “chromaticism” as well as “enharmonicism” in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. From a modern standpoint, however, the musical outcome of
these trigeneric canons does not strike as chromatic because none of them utilize chromatic semitones. Spataro’s discussion of his own motet “Ave gratia plena” almost gave a straightforward answer to what he thought “chromaticism” meant, yet he did not explain why the three B-minor triads with F♯’s stand out as chromatic moments.

The second chapter deals with the attributive “Renaissance.” Instead of plunging into historiographical debates, it demonstrates that during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the meaning of causa pulchritudinis or “the reason of beauty” evolved in the use of musica ficta or accidental inflections. In the chansons of Machaut and Dufay, musica ficta serves a syntactic function. It clarifies tonal relations, creates harmonic momentum, and articulates the endings of phrases. In Dufay’s later “O Sebastiane” and “Ave Regina celorum III,” however, the use of musica ficta mimics the meaning of the text. In “Ave Regina celorum,” especially, the “modulation to the parallel minor” through E♭ and A♭ portrays the overall affect of the tropes “Miserere supplicanti Dufay” that Dufay added to the antiphon for his own salvation. The famous motet “Absalon, fili mi” possibly composed by Josquin or La Rue also utilizes such “parallel minor modulation” to express sorrow and despair. Whereas the “modulation” in Dufay’s “Ave Regina celorum” occurs in a sudden shift, however, in the later “Absalon, fili mi” it takes place after a series of deductio mutations. In this way, the enigmatic “Absalon, fili mi” may exemplify some of the traits of Renaissance chromaticism: the essential role of deductios, and the affective use of accidental inflections in the form of “modulations.”

We are now in a position to address the question posed at the beginning of this thesis: what is Renaissance chromaticism?
From the Chromatic Semitone

Margaret Bent argues that a musical passage is chromatic if and only if it utilizes at least one chromatic semitone. This definition works well for tonal music after the seventeenth century. Prime examples of chromaticism include Richard Wagner’s “Tristan chord” from the overture of Tristan und Isolde (Example 3-1). The two semitones, D♯-D♮ in the alto voice and the A-A♯ in the soprano voice, are responsible for the chromatic color of this passage. Another well-known example is “Dido’s Lament” from Henry Purcell (1659-1695)’s opera Dido and Aeneas (Example 3-2). The initial line of the passacaglia ostinato in the basso continuo consists of five descending semitones, two of which—F♯-F♮ and E-E♭—are chromatic semitones.

Example 3-1 “Tristan Chord” from the overture of Wagner’s Tristan und Isolde

Example 3-2 Passacaglia theme of “Dido’s Lament” from Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas
Yet if one regards the chromatic semitone as the necessary and sufficient definition of chromaticism, another question follows: what is a chromatic semitone? Or, what distinguishes it from non-chromatic or diatonic semitones? In the ostinato of “Dido’s Lament,” for example, what is the difference between the two chromatic semitones and the three diatonic ones? How would it matter, furthermore, were one to substitute a D♯ for the E♭ in m. 3, so that the chromatic semitone shifts from E-E♭ to D♯-D♮?

Almost all of the theorists from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries discussed in Chapter One would argue that there is at least a quantitative difference between what we refer to as chromatic semitones and diatonic semitones. In spite of their animosity in other subjects, Spataro and del Lago of the sixteenth century had no disagreement over the distinction between chromatic and diatonic semitones. They agreed that the chromatic semitone is the larger “major semitone” and the diatonic semitone is the smaller “minor semitone.”

Obviously, such quantitative difference does not apply to the “Tristan chord” since in the nineteenth century Wagner was working on the basis of equal temperament and enharmonic equivalence. The passage would not be aurally different, therefore, had Wagner spelled the soprano voice in m. 2 in Example 3-1 as B♭-B♮ instead of A♯-B. On the other hand, one could argue that during the seventeenth century, equal temperament might not have replaced the more historical meantone temperaments. Thus, for Purcell,

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1 The author of the Berkeley manuscript is an exception. While introducing two kinds of semitones—*semitonus* and *semitonium*—the theorist perceives an enharmonic equivalence between steps like G♯ and A♭, although G-G♯/A♭ is defined as the larger *semitonus* and G♯/A♭-A♮ the smaller *semitonium*. See Chapter One.

substituting a D♯ for the E♭ in m. 3 would have meant that the semitone in m. 3 would be larger and that in mm. 3-4 smaller than they are now (Example 3-2).

Even more so than the seventeenth, the sixteenth century was a time when theorists held fast to the differentiation between chromatic or major semitones and diatonic or minor semitones. Nevertheless, compositional practices had already begun to assume the central principle of equal temperament: enharmonic equivalence. I have indeed argued that the outrageous D-E♭♭ ending of “Quid non ebrietas” cannot safely determine whether Willaert supported equal temperament. Nonetheless, the sheer existence of the piece may testify that equal temperament and enharmonic equivalence were subjects of theoretical debates as early as in the early sixteenth century. As I have shown in Chapter One, in his discussion with Pietro Aron, Spataro pointed out that only in equal temperament as preached by the ancient theorist Aristoxenus would the D-E♭♭ ending sound like an octave.⁴ Although Spataro did not advocate for “progressive” equal temperament, he was fully aware of it and the consequential possibility of enharmonic equivalence. One should no forget, moreover, that Spataro’s teacher Ramis proposed the use of equal temperament in musical practice in his treatise Musica Practica (see Chapter One).

Indeed, just a few decades after Willaert’s “Quid non ebrietas” pointed to the discourse on equal temperament and enharmonic equivalence, in his madrigal “O voi che sospirate” Luca Marenzio (1553-1599) unambiguously integrated enharmonic equivalence into compositional practice. This madrigal from Marenzio’s Secondo Libro a

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3 See Chapter One. See also A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians, 311-7.
5 (1581) is celebrated for its harmonic audacity in mm. 35-40 (Example 3-3). The passage begins with the G-major triad in m. 35. It heads in the flat direction of the chain of fifths and arrives onto a G♭-major triad in m. 39. Already, there are enharmonic spellings in mm. 38-39: the Canto’s G♯ instead of A♭ within the A♭-major triad (m. 38),

Example 3-3
Enharmonicism in Marenzio’s “O voi che sospirate,” mm. 35-40

the Quinto’s C♯ instead of D♭ within the D♭-major triad (m. 38), and the Alto’s F♯ instead of G♭ within the G♭-major triad (m. 39).

One may argue that, like the D-E♭♭ in “Quid non ebrietas,” these enharmonic spellings in “O voi sospirate” may only point to the possibility of equal temperament in the sixteenth century but cannot prove that it was actually in use. I notice, however, that in m. 39 Marenzio does not continue with the flat spellings as does Willaert in “Quid non ebrietas.” Instead of a C♭ triad that would keep the flat-ward motion on the chain of fifths, in the second half of m. 39 Marenzio opts for its enharmonic equivalent, a B-minor triad. Of course, it is possible that the potential E♭♭ could have made a C♭-minor triad less preferable than the easily spelled B-minor. Still, the spelling suggests that Marenzio does not want to continue his adventure in the flat territories but instead wants to move away from G♭ major back to where he started in m. 35. The spelling of the triad in m. 39 not as C♭ but as B its enharmonic equivalent provides a shortcut precisely because Marenzio’s tonal space appears not as a chain or a ladder that goes into infinity in two opposite directions. Instead, it appears as a circle on which one naturally comes back after a round of adventures. The enharmonic spellings over A♭-major, D♭-major, G♭-major, and B-major (G♭ in Tenor instead of F♯, m. 39) confirm the conjoining of the flat and sharp ends of the chain of fifths. Thus, A♭ and G♯, D♭ and C♯, G♭ and F♯, and C♭ and B are enharmonically equivalent and the sonorities in mm. 38-39 can be considered enharmonic hybrids transforming the chain of fifths into what may now be called the circle of fifths (Figure 3-1).

In this way, while “Quid non ebrietas” quietly suggests that D and E♭♭ may be brought together in a circular fashion, Marenzio’s “O voi sospirate” goes further by
realizing this circular tonal space through clearly notated inflections and enharmonic spellings. Given the several chromatic semitones and cross relations in mm. 35-39 of “O voi sospirate” and given Marenzio’s status in chromatic music of the sixteenth century, equal temperament and enharmonic equivalence are relevant to Renaissance chromaticism. Therefore, the aural distinction between chromatic and diatonic semitones to which only music theorists held fast in the sixteenth century proves unreliable in defining chromaticism in Renaissance music.
Besides the subtle difference between their sizes in non-equal temperaments, the only distinction between a chromatic semitone such as G-G♯ and its enharmonic equivalence G-A♭ is the spelling. Although spelling may seem to be a superficial and trivial matter, just as interval sizes describe the quantitative difference between G-G♯ and G-A♭, the contrasting spellings of G♯ and A♭ demonstrate the qualitative difference between the two steps and their respective semitones. Even when tuned in equal temperament, G-G♯ and G-A♭ are differentiated as chromatic and diatonic semitones because the former can never exist in the same diatonic pitch collection while the latter can. In terms of the Guidonian gamut, which serves as a tonal backdrop to most music theories and practices of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it is possible for G-A♭ to occur in the same *deductio* but impossible for G-G♯. Both G♯ and A♭ arise from creating a *mi-fa* semitone between G and A: G re and A mi in *cantus mollis*, G sol and A la in *cantus naturalis*, or G ut and A re in *cantus durus*. Congruent with the theoretical discussions in Chapter One, there are two ways of realizing the *mi-fa* semitone between the two steps. First, if one sings *fa* on A without changing its frequency, one will need to raise the G into G♯ by a chromatic semitone and sing it as *mi*. In other words, the new G♯ *mi* replaces the original G re, sol, or ut in the new E-ut *deductio* with *mi-fa* between the steps of G and A (Figure 3-2). Second, if one sings *mi* on G without changing its frequency, one will need to lower the A into A♭ by a chromatic semitone and sing it as *fa*. Similarly, the new A♭ replaces the original A *mi*, la, or re in the new E♭-ut *deductio* with *mi-fa* between the steps of G and A (Figure 3-3).

Thus, chromatic semitones such as G-G♯ and A♭-A♮ necessarily juxtapose two *deductios* while diatonic semitones such as G-A♭ and G♯-A each has one and only one
deductio that accommodates them. In addition, the two deductios juxtaposed in each chromatic semitone are at least two and can be as far as six deductios away from each other (Figure 3-4). The same can be observed of non-harmonic intervals such as G♯-C, a diminished fourth, and E♭-G♯, an augmented third, since neither of these intervals can exist in the same deductios or even adjacent deductios.\(^5\) The essence of a chromatic semitone is therefore less importantly described by its precise size than it is by the juxtaposition of two incompatible pitch classes, incompatible because they cannot be accommodated by a single deductio or two adjacent deductios.

\(^5\) An exception is one type of tritone and diminished fifth, which, as Example 7 shows, can exist in adjacent deductios, such as F in cantus naturalis and B in cantus durus.
Figure 3-4

*Deductions containing G, G#, A, and A♭*
Defining the Diatonic Pitch Collection

Yet defining “chromaticism” as the juxtaposition of incompatible pitch classes and their *deductios* may still seem too broad. In “Ave regina celorum III,” which completely lacks direct chromatic semitones, Dufay essentially juxtaposes the B♭ and E♭ in the beginning of the first and third trope with the B♮ and E♮ in the rest of the antiphon setting. In “Absalon, fili mi,” similarly, the flattened third and sixth degrees above the final—D♭ and G♭ in the London Manuscript and E♭ and A♭ in RISM Kriesstein 1540⁷—are juxtaposed with the uninflected third and sixth degrees in the previous parts of the motet. The puzzle remains in Spataro’s motet “Ave gratia plena,” however, which the theorist composed to demonstrate how to use the diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic genera simultaneously. Perhaps Spataro points out the F♯’s in Tenor, m. 11, Tenor, m. 17, and Cantus, m. 21 as chromatic precisely because they are juxtaposed with the F♭’s in the rest of the motet (Example 3-4)—but why? What make these three F♯’s special, thus

Example 3-4
A moment that Spataro identifies as chromatic in “Ave gratia plena” (mm. 17-8)
different, as examples, from the Tenor’s final F♯ or the Bassus’s B♭ in m. 32, who are also juxtaposed with the F♯ and B♭ in the rest of the piece? Did Spataro simply not want to enlist all the examples of chromatic steps in his motet?

If defining “chromaticism” as the juxtaposition of incompatible pitch classes cannot fully account for Spataro’s “Ave gratia plena” and the composer’s own analysis, what else is needed to distinguish between the three F♯’s Spataro specifically mentions as chromatic and the other infected steps of the motet?

To understand Spataro’s confusing comments regarding chromaticism in “Ave gratia plena,” it is more productive to treat chromaticism not as an end but as a dynamic process. In the five-decade old article “The Study of Chromaticism,” William J. Mitchell suggests that diatonicism is an “ordering force” and chromaticism a “diffusing force.” He argues that the ordering force of diatonicism arises from the asymmetry of the diatonic scale and the distinguishable harmonic functions of the diatonic steps. The diffusing force of chromaticism, on the other hand, comes from the complete symmetry of the chromatic scale in equal temperament and the undifferentiated harmonic functions of the twelve chromatic steps. While Mitchell presents the two forces as antithetical, in the context of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries diatonicism and chromaticism are clearly not equals. Although there is no precise way yet to define diatonicism or chromaticism, there is no doubt that Renaissance music was predominantly diatonic and that even occasional chromatic passages such as mm. 35-39 in Marenzio’s “O voi sospirate” operate over a diatonic backdrop. In this way, in Renaissance music, diffusing chromaticism can be seen as reacting against ordering diatonicism, and the diffusion

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occurs by introducing pitch classes incompatible with those in the original diatonic collection.

Now the question is: what constitutes as diffusing, or, what counts as a new and incompatible pitch class?

To understand the conception of the “new,” I shall first examine the “old” or the diatonic system against which the newly introduced pitch classes react. In Chapter One I have presented the diatonic tonal system in Renaissance music as the seven overlapping Guidonian *deductios*. Although Mengozzi argues that the *deductios* had little role in daily musical practices such as singing and composition, the seven-*deductio* gamut was the predominant construct through which theorists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries described the diatonic tonal space. In this respect Ramis is an exception. Nonetheless, as discussed in Chapter One, Ramis was more opposed to the “sixthness” of the Guidonian *deductio* than to the idea of a transposable musical unit itself. Otherwise he would not have proposed his *psallitur* as a substitution for the Guidonian *deductio*.

Indeed, the diatonic tonal space constructed upon *deductios* does not relate to the “sixthness” at all. Figure 3-5 reduces the seven *deductios* into three through octave displacements: *cantus naturalis* on C ut in the middle, *cantus mollis* beginning on F ut on the lower side, and *cantus durus* beginning on G ut on the upper side. It thus appears that the diatonic tonal space of the seven *deductios* is in fact the six pitch classes of the steps in the *cantus naturalis* *deductio* supplemented with B♮ from *cantus durus* and B♭ from *cantus mollis*. Admittedly, the shift from B♮ to B♭ also involves two non-adjacent *deductios*. The coexistence of B♮ and B♭ was very common if not ubiquitous in pieces
set in the “natural” or cantus durus “key signature,” however, and it is reasonable to include both versions of the B step.

Next, it is important that the eight-pitch diatonic collection embedded in the seven deductios is transposable along what Spataro calls the “string continuum” just like the deductios on which it is based. Analogous to the two coexisting B’s in the cantus naturalis diatonic system, pieces set in the one-flat or cantus mollis “key” from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries frequently featured both E♮ and E♭. In this way, the one-flat “key signature” also implies a tonal space composed of eight pitch classes. Six of them come from the cantus mollis deductio, and of the two additional pitches, the E♮ comes from the C-ut deductio a perfect fifth above, and E♭ from the B♭-ut deductio a perfect fifth below (Figure 3-6).

Because it is transposable, the eight-pitch diatonic space is better described as such: it consists of the sixth pitch classes of a particular deductio, which shall be referred hitherto as the prime deductio, the pitch class of the mi of the deductio a major fifth
above, and the pitch class of the fa of the *deductio* a major fifth below. Transposing the

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**Figure 3-6**

Seven *deductios* in *cantus mollis* reduced to three *deductios* and eight pitch classes

- C ut D re E mi F fa G sol A la
- F ut G re A mi B♭ fa C sol D la
- B♭ ut C re D mi E♭ fa F sol G la

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A *deductio* or essentially its *mi-fa* diatonic semitone to different places on the “string continuum” gives rise to different diatonic pitch collections. As Spataro shows in his letter to Aron, singing fa on F♭ and mi on E♭ yields the C♭-*ut deductio*. The consequential diatonic tonal space thus consists of the six pitch classes of the *deductio* from C♭ to A♭ as well as B♭ from the G♭-*ut deductio* and B♭♭ from the F♭-*ut*. Given the prime importance of the *deductio* in such a diatonic pitch collection, in the rest of the thesis I will use the *ut* step of a *deductio* to designate the eight-pitch collection that arises from it. The collection with F♭ fa and E♭ mi is thus the C♭ collection, and that with A fa and G♯ mi the E collection.

If a diatonic tonal space or pitch collection in Renaissance music consists of only eight pitch classes, does it follow that any pitch class outside the current collection signifies the introduction of a new collection? The answer turns out to be negative, and a short digression into modal theory in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries shall explain
the reason. Modal theory originated as a system of categorizing plainchants, especially antiphons and responsories. The system originally recognized four modal finals in the cantus durus or “natural key”: D (Dorian), E (Phrygian), F (Lydian), and G (Mixolydian). Each final is in turn shared by two modes based on their range or ambitus: the higher mode is the authentic, and the lower mode is the plagal (Figure 3-8).

Before the later half of the fifteenth century, modal theory had little to do with vocal polyphony. Johannes Tinctoris’s Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum was probably the earliest treatise to consider modal theory in the context of polyphony. Tinctoris proposes a simple tenet that the modal identity of a polyphonic composition replies on its tenor. Nonetheless, he dedicates a few chapters to polyphonic modality in his treatise and never analyzes his examples. It was Pietro Aron in Trattato della Natura et Cognizione di tutti gli tuoni that went into great detail regarding the modal attributions of polyphonic compositions. Like Tinctoris, Aron still focuses on the tenor as the bearer of a piece’s modal identity. Unlike Tinctoris’s simple treatment of the matter, however, Aron constructs an elaborate system of polyphonic modal identification that accounts for virtually all the ending patterns of the tenor and their respective modal attributions. As Harold Powers and Cristle Collins Judd have shown, Aron’s method may appear arbitrary not only because it seems unnecessarily complicated but also because it was based on just

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8 Some discussion on Tinctoris’s discussion on polyphony and the modes can be found in “Tonal Types and Modal Categories in Renaissance Polyphony,” 432-4.
Figure 3-8 The traditional eight modes and their authentic and plagal forms
a handful of printed anthologies available to Aron at that time.\(^9\) Indeed, although Aron’s modal theory takes polyphonic modality much more seriously, both he and Tinctoris attempted to assimilate the new issue of polyphonic modality into the conventional modal system that originated from monophony. The exclusive attention to the tenor and its final or ending pattern simply applies the monophonic modal theory without addressing the uniqueness of polyphony: the coexistence of multiple voices operating in multiple ranges with multiple finals or ending patterns.

In comparison, two later theorists Heinrich Glarean (1488-1563) and Gioseffo Zarlino (1517-1590) took a completely different perspective. Whereas Tinctoris and Aron were adjusting polyphony to fit into the modal system, in his groundbreaking *Dodecachordon* (1547) Glarean reforms the outdated modal theory to accommodate contemporary practices of vocal polyphony. The key achievement of Glarean’s *Dodecachordon* was the addition of four new modes into the system: the A-final authentic and plagal Aeolian modes, and the C-final authentic and plagal Ionian modes (Figure 3-9). These additions were not arbitrary. Glarean observed that although the conventional octonary modal system identifies A-final pieces in *cantus durus* as the transposition of the D-final Dorian modes, modes built on these two finals are quintessentially different. The difference pertains to their interval species, which is the arrangement of tones and semitones in the octave, fifth, or fourth. In Glarean’s modal theory, each of the twelve modes embodies an octave species, and the octave species in

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turn consists of a species of fifth and a species of fourth. These latter two interval species and the way they combine into the octave species determine the identity of a mode. The D-final Dorian modes in *cantus durus*, for example, both have the species of fifth T-S-T-T in the D-A fifth and the species of fourth T-S-T in the A-D fourth. In the authentic Dorian mode, the species of fifth and fourth are combined so that the latter is above the former—D-a-d, which gives rise to the octave species of D-d (T-S-T-T-T-S-T) divided or “mediated” by a. Meanwhile, in the plagal Dorian mode the species of fifth and fourth are combined so that the former is above the latter—A-D-a, which gives rise to the different octave species of A-a (T-S-T-T-S-T-T) mediated by D (Figure 3-10).
On the one hand, the A-final modes in *cantus durus* have the same species of fifth as the D-final Dorian modes: A-E’s T-S-T-T. On the other hand, they have a different species of fourth: E-A’s S-T-T compared to A-D’s T-S-T. In this way, the two A-final modes have octave species that differ from the two D-final Dorian modes: A-a’s T-S-T-

Figure 3-10
Interval species of Glarean’s Dorian modes

![Diagram of interval species of Glarean’s Dorian modes]

T-S-T-T mediated by E compared to D-d’s T-S-T-T-S-T mediated by a, and E-e’s S-T-

Figure 3-11
Interval species of Glarean’s Aeolian modes

![Diagram of interval species of Glarean’s Aeolian modes]
T-T-S-T-T mediated by a compared to A-a’s T-S-T-S-T-T mediated by D (Figure 3-11). There are similar differences between the species of A-final modes and E-final modes in *cantus durus*, which are frequently considered the same in the octonary modal system (Figure 3-12).

Figure 3-12
Interval species of Glarean’s Phrygian modes

As a result, in spite of the convention of treating A-final pieces in *cantus durus* as Dorian pieces or occasionally Phrygian pieces, Glarean shows that the A deserves to be considered a modal final in its own right and proposes the two Aeolian modes. The story of the two Ionian modes also relates to the modal species. Glarean argues that the two Lydian modes should have a species of fifth of T-T-T-S with the characteristic tritone and species of fourth T-T-S. F-final pieces in *cantus mollis*, which are the common denominator of the Lydian modes, however, have a different species of fifth: F-C’s T-T-S-T instead of T-T-T-S. Admittedly, the B♭ has been added to F-final pieces to avoid the augmented fourth above the modal final F, a classical case of *causa necessitatis* in practice. Nevertheless, Glarean contends that the conventionalized flattening of B in F-final pieces changes the modal character of these pieces. They are modally identical with
Figure 3-13
Interval species of the old “Lydian modes,” and Glarean’s Lydian and Ionian modes

Conventional Lydian

Glarean’s Lydian

Glarean’s Ionian
C-final pieces in *cantus durus*, which Glarean proposes as embodying the two Ionian modes (Figure 3-13).

The modal reform of Glarean matters more than recognizing four new modes. The above discussion shows that the rationale behind the reform was his concentration on the interval species of the modes. As Franz Wiering has shown, this species-oriented understanding of the modes can be traced back to Marchetto’s *Lucidarium* in the fourteenth century.\(^{10}\) Such a view of the modal system differs from the more conventional modal theory. Indeed, Tinctoris and Aron would assign a modal identity to a polyphonic composition by simply looking at certain superficial features of its Tenor: the *cantus durus* or *mollis* “key” it is in, its range, and its final or ending pattern. Wiering calls such superficial understanding of the modes aimed at categorizing polyphonic pieces in an *a posteriori* fashion an “external” view of the modal system.

In contrast, Glarean cares more about how a polyphonic composition embodies the characteristic species of a mode and indeed how one may compose in each of the twelve modes by making use of these species. Even if convention had been dictating that F-final pieces should be labeled with the Lydian modes, for example, the interval species of these F-final pieces would nevertheless point to the Ionian modes. And in order to compose in the Lydian mode, furthermore, one needs to put up with the tritone in its proper species of fifth.

The Venetian theorist Gioseffo Zarlino pushed Glarean’s modal reform even further. The bulk of Book IV “On the Modes” of his monumental *Le Istitutioni harmoniche* (1558) is dedicated to detailed instructions on how to compose in each of the twelve modes. Chapter 30 bears the title “what the composer should observe when

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10 Wiering, *The Language of the Modes*, 7-9.
composing, and how the modes should be judged.”11 In this chapter, Zarlino questions the practice of using a piece’s “final note” to judge its mode. If “the counterpoint ends with a fifth, third, or compound of these,” Zarlino states in Chapter 39, Part III of Le Istitutioni, “it would not be easy to decide which tone . . . is key to the mode of the composition.”12 Thus, instead of the “final note,” he recommends “forma” or “the form of its entire composition” as a piece’s modal indicator.13 Interpreting what Zarlino means by “forma” is a subject of scholarly conjecture. I suggest that the term “forma” does not refer to musical forms such as sonata form or rondo form. Instead, it refers to a particular rule that Zarlino instructs musicians to follow when judging the mode of a composition or composing in a certain mode.14 In both Chapter 39, Part III and Chapter 30, Part IV, Zarlino explains “forma” as “forma, cioè dal procedere” or “form as its manner of proceeding.” In the particular context of this treatise, I propose that this “forma dal procedere” means specifically the cadential pattern of a mode or a composition, that is, the set of pitches on which cadences regularly occur. In Part IV, each of the twelve chapters before Chapter 30 is dedicated to one of the twelve modes (Figure 3-14). In the first of these chapters (Chapter 18) Zarlino already states as an overarching rule that “regular cadences” of a composition should occur on the final, the third above the final, and the fifth above the final of its mode. In each of the following chapters Zarlino repeats

13 Zarlino, On the modes, 9.
14 In his “Internal and External Views of the Modes” from Tonal Structures in Early Music (Cristle Collins Judd ed., pp. 87-107), Frans Wiering suggests a speculative reading of Zarlinos’s argument on “final note” and “forma.” He believes that the “final note” is equivalent to the Aristetilian “final cause,” and “forma” the “formal cause,” and that Zarlino favors the latter as the true essence of a composition. My interpretation of this passage in the paper is, on the other hand, literal.
this rule of regular cadence. Given his usually concise language, which often leads to confusion and ambiguity, these incessant restatements of the rule of “regular cadences” suggest its significance to Zarlino’s modal theory.

Zarlino’s use of the word “forma” as referring to cadential pattern might have originated in Pietro Aron’s *Toscanello in Musica* (1532). Aron shares Zarlino’s emphasis on “forma” and also clarifies it as the cadential pattern of a mode or a composition. When composers write in a mode, he argues in Chapter 18, Book II, “it is first necessary … they consider the form of [this mode].” Aron then explains the reason cadential patterns indicate the “forma” of a mode or a composition: “because the [modes] are composed of different species of intervals, and it follows that different cadences or terminations must be found in them.”

In this way, when one composes in a particular mode, its species of fifth determines much of the musical content of the piece since cadences may occur only on

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Figure 3-15
Glarean’s *Dodecachordon* and its numbering of the twelve modes
the two boundaries pitches of the fifth—the modal final and the fifth above it—and the third above the final, which is said to “mediate” the fifth (Figure 3-15).¹⁶ In other words, the cadential formula of a piece expresses and reflects the characteristic interval species of the mode. Wiering refers to this species-oriented understanding of the modal system manifest in Glarean and Zarlino’s reformative modal theories as the “interval view.” In contrast to the “external,” the interval view cares not only about the surficial musical features such as final or vocal ranges but also the musical content, namely cadences that reflect the species construct of the modes, in Zarlino’s case.

In the 1571 Dimostrationi harmoniche, Zarlino pushes the dodecachordon modal reform even farther. Both Glarean’s Dodecachordon and Zarlino’s 1558 edition of Le Istitutioni number the twelve modes as shown in Table 3-1. The numbering begins with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Final (cantus durus)</th>
<th>Octave Species</th>
<th>Greek Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>d-a-d’</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A-d-a</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>e-b-e’</td>
<td>Phrygian</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>B-e-b</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>f-c’-f’</td>
<td>Lydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>c-f-c’</td>
<td>Hypolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>g-d’-g’</td>
<td>Mixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>d-g-d’</td>
<td>Hypomixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a-e’-a’</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>e-a-e’</td>
<td>Hypoaeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>c’-g’-c”</td>
<td>Ionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>g-c’-g’</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the eight traditional modes from D-Dorian to G-Hypomixolydian. It then proceeds to the four new modes from A-Aeolian to C-Hypoionian, as though the four were attached to the end of the octonary system. Table 3-2 shows Zarlino’s new numbering of the modes in Dimostrazioni. It begins with the two C-final modes, and then D, E, F, G, and finally the two A-final modes.

Table 3-2
Zarlino’s new numbering of the twelve modes (1571 and 1573)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Final (cantus durus)</th>
<th>Octave Species</th>
<th>(Greek Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>c’-g’-c”</td>
<td>(Ionian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>g-c’-g’</td>
<td>(Hypoionian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>d-a-d’</td>
<td>(Dorian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A-d-a</td>
<td>(Hypodorian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>e-b-e’</td>
<td>(Phrygian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>B-e-b</td>
<td>(Hypophrygian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>f-c’-f’</td>
<td>(Lydian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>c-f-c’</td>
<td>(Hypolydian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>g-d’-g’</td>
<td>(Mixolydian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>d-g-d’</td>
<td>(Hypomixolydian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a-e’-a’</td>
<td>(Aeolian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>e-a-e’</td>
<td>(Hypoaeolian)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Stefano Mengozzi notices, Zarlino does not shy away from an exciting detail: the order of modal finals in his new numbering coincides with the cantus naturalis deductio. Thus, Zarlino’s renumbering of the modes unites two separate aspects of medieval and Renaissance music theory on tonal space and pitch organization: the Guidonian syllables and the modes. The six-step deductio from C to A is not only a mnemonic aid to sight signing but also the collection of all the possible modal finals in the C diatonic collection. Transposing the deductio onto other places of the “string continuum” thus not only introduces new musica ficta steps via newly positioned

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syllables but also creates new modes. If the *deductio* is moved to begin on A *ut*, for example, it not only means that *ut* is moved to A, *re* to B, and *mi* to C♯ but also that the two Ionian modes are moved from C to A, Dorian from D to B, and Phrygians from E to C♯ (Figure 3-16).

The unification of the sixth Guidonian syllables and the six modal finals in the *deductio* has significant implication for understanding tonal space and chromaticism in the sixteenth century. Since Zarlino emphasizes cadences as an important indicator of a piece’s modal identity, and since the six syllables in the *cantus naturalis deductio* are also the six modal finals in the C diatonic collection, it is necessary that the collection
incorporate the appropriate cadential leading tones (Figure 3-17). As I have explained in Chapter One, cadential leading tones originated from the desire to intensify the stepwise progression of two voices in contrary motion from an imperfect consonance to its nearest consonance. In music of the late fifteenth and sixteenth century, cadences entail specifically the progression from a minor third to unison or from a major third to the octave. One voice moves by a half step and the other by a whole step. In this way, cadences on C and F in the C diatonic collection do not require additional leading tones given the already existent diatonic semitones B-C and E-F in the cantizans. Neither does

Figure 3-17
Eleven-pitch collection on C
a cadence on E call for a new pitch class thanks to the descending half step F-E in the *tenorizans*. On the other hand, cadences on D and G almost always require C♯ and F♯ as leading tones in order to create the precadential half steps. A, on the other hand, is a special case. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, most A-final pieces in the “natural key” conclude with a cadence involving the lower leading tone G♯. When cadences on A appear in the middle of a piece, however, they sometimes feature G♯ but sometimes the upper leading tone B♭.

Thus, as Figure 3-17 shows, the eight-pitch diatonic collection of C based on the *cantus naturalis deductio* in fact includes eleven pitch classes. Eight of them come from the three foundational *deductios* of the collection: C to A from the C-*ut*, B♮ from G-*ut*, and B♭ from F-*ut*. The remaining three, F♯, C♯, and G♯, however, do not occur on any of the three *deductios*. Admittedly, F♯, C♯, and G♯ are higher than F, C, and G respectively by a chromatic semitone and are thus incompatible with the latter three pitch classes that belong to the *cantus naturalis deductio*. Nevertheless, it is important that F♯, C♯, and G♯ do not arise from transposing the *deductios* or diatonic pitch collections; rather, the inherent property of the C-*ut deduction* being the collection of all the modal finals in the “natural key” necessitates these three pitch classes as cadential leading tones to G, D, and A. It is the idiomatic practices of the modes in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that expand the transposable tonal space from eight pitch classes into eleven. In the one-flat “key,” similarly, the collection consists of the six pitches of the F-*ut deductio*, the E♮ and E♭ from the two adjacent *deductios*, and the three leading tones to G (Dorian), C (Mixolydian), and D (Aeolian): F♯, B♮, and C♯.
Drawing the Diatonic Boundaries

As a result, the conglomeration of the six Guidonian syllables and the six modal finals in the *deductio* gives rise to the eleven-pitch diatonic collection particular to Renaissance music.\(^{18}\) The eleven-pitch collection gives a refreshing view of Spataro’s “Ave gratia plena” and the special moments in mm. 11, 17, and 21 on which Spataro directly or indirectly comments (see Chapter One for score).

In addition to calling the three F♯’s in mm. 11, 17, and 21 “chromatic,” Spataro also discusses in the B-major triad in mm. 17 and its D♯ at length in his letter to Aron.

You will find a D♯ in my composition, indicating a major third with B, which is found in very few monochords. Some might say it should not be used if it is not found on the monochord. My answer is that art should imitate nature and not vice versa. If it can’t be played, it is the fault of the imperfect instrument, not of art. A lute could play it, but the voice would be better; such divisions of intervals are more familiar to skilled singers.\(^{19}\)

The above quote suggests how rare and problematic the D♯ in Cantus, mm. 17 could be among sixteenth century musicians. Yet Spataro’s lengthy defense of the legitimacy of D♯ may seem unnecessary. Since the early fifteenth century, D♯ had always been part of the sixteen-step gamut, which is constructed by having mi and ♯ on all the steps that are not already mi and placing fa and ♭ on all that are not already fa. None of the theorists from Prosdocimus to Hothby and Ramis ever had a problem with it. In fact,

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18 In *Composition, chromaticism [.] and the developmental process* (Aldershot, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), Henry Burnett and Roy Nitzberg propose a new theory of tonality that focus on the eleven-pitch diatonic collection, which resembles the one I am proposing here. Nevertheless, whereas Burnett and Nitzberg aim at inventing an all-applying theoretical construct regardless of period or style, my observations of the eleven-pitch diatonic collection arise from the idiomatic practices of sixteenth-century music itself.

19 *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 552-3.
not even Giovanni del Lago would oppose placing ♯ on D, a step that has never been mi in *cantus mollis, naturalis, or durus deductios*, unlike B or E.

Why would Spataro suspect that some people would oppose to the D♯ he uses in “Ave gratia plena,” a motet with which he demonstrates how to compose in all of the three melodic genera (diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic)?

According to the “key signature” of the motet, had the piece been thoroughly diatonic, D♯ should not have occurred in “Ave gratia plena” at all. The lack of sharps and flats in the “key signature” indicates the C diatonic collection at play. This means that eleven diatonic pitch classes are available for Spataro in this motet: C, C♯, D, E, F, F♯, G, G♯, A, B, and B♭. Importantly, this collection, as well as any other eleven-pitch diatonic collection, is one step short of the chromatic scale. The step dividing the whole tone between D and E is missing. Spataro’s motet, however, features this step as D♯ in Cantus, m. 17. In this way, the D♯ transgresses the diatonic boundaries of the eleven pitch classes dictated by the “key signature” and the C diatonic collection it indicates.

The function of this D♯ in m. 17 elucidates why Spataro introduces this foreign pitch class to the C diatonic collection that governs the motet. It serves as the lower leading tone in a cadence on E in mm. 17-18. In the C collection, cadences on E mi always consist of the *cantizans* featuring a whole-step progression from D re to E mi and the *tenorizans* featuring the half-step descent from the upper leading tone F fa to E mi. The gesture in Cantus and Bassus in mm. 16-17 is a perfect example. In mm. 17-18 however, the leading tone appears not in the *tenorizans* as F fa but in the *cantizans* as D♯. In the *tenorizans*, meanwhile, the upper leading tone F is sharped into F♯, a whole step above the cadential final E.
Thus, the cantizans and tenorizans of the E cadence in mm. 17-18 do not resemble those of a normal E-mi cadence in the C diatonic collection. Instead, the E cadence is more like a re cadence, comparable to cadences on D in the C collection whose cantizans also features a half-step ascent (C♯-D) and tenorizans a whole-step ascent (E-D). In order for E to be a re step in a deductio, however, it is necessary for its l

\[ \text{Figure 3-19} \]
Collections containing D-ut deductios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G ut collection</th>
<th>D ut collection</th>
<th>A ut collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G♯C♯D♯</td>
<td>D♯G♯A♯</td>
<td>E♯G♯A♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEF♯GAB</td>
<td>ABC♯DEF♯</td>
<td>DEF♯GAB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GABCDEFG</td>
<td>GABCDEFG</td>
<td>GABCDEFG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ower neighbor is a whole step below—ut—and its upper neighbor a whole step above—mi. There is only one deductio that fulfills this requirement: D-ut. Nonetheless, the D-ut deductio, as shown in Figure 3-19, belongs to as many as three diatonic collections: G, D, and A.

In this way, the D♯ in the E-re cadence in mm. 17-18 shifts the governing diatonic collection of the motet from C to at least G, the next collection in the sharp direction of the circle of fifths. The tonal consequence of this D♯ sheds light on its fellow, the F♯ in the tenorizans in Tenor, m. 17. Spataro calls the three F♯s in mm. 11, 17, and 21 lichanos meson chromatica. For review, in the Greater Perfect System, lichanos meson is the third step in ascending order of the meson tetrachord beginning on hypate meson whose pitch content is always E. The meson tetrachord is in turn the second tetrachord in ascending order of the entire system. It rests above the hypaton tetrachord, which begins on hypate hypaton or B (Figure 3-20, see also Chapter One). If one applies the diatonic genus to the
system, the *lichanos meson* step will receive the pitch G. If one applies the chromatic genus to the system, however, the *lichanos meson* step will receive the pitch F♯, and the enharmonic genus would yield the pitch F. In this way, by calling the three F♯s in mm. 11, 17, and 21 *lichanos meson chromatica*, Spataro suggests that these pitches are the result of the change of the genus from the diatonic to the chromatic.

It still remains puzzling why it is these three F♯s in particular that involve a change of the genus: what about the F♯ in Tenor, m. 27, and that in Tenor, m. 52? An answer rests in the F♯ in Tenor, m. 17. On the one hand, the F♯ in Tenor, m. 27 is a leading tone to G. The sharpening of this F arises from the modal practices of having cadences on G as a potential modal final in the “natural key” or the C ut diatonic collection. The same can be said of the F♯ in Tenor, m. 52, a Picardy third that may be considered as a potential leading tone to G. Because these two F♯s originate from G as a

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20 The F♯ in Tenor, m. 27 is an editorial sharp added by Blackburn and Lowinsky in *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, 558. It is not unlikely, however, that sixteenth-century singers would sharpen the F as a leading tone to G, just as they would have for many other unnotated leading tone inflections, for example Cantus, m. 49.
modal final in C ut, they too belong to the C diatonic collection. This means that even if Spataro had composed the motet “Ave gratia plena” entirely within the diatonic boundaries of the C collection, these F♯s as leading tones would still be available for him. On the other hand, because the D♯ in Cantus, m. 17 and the E-re cadence shift the diatonic collection from C to at least G, the F♯ in m. 17 as part of the tenorizans of the E-re cadence no longer belongs to the diatonic collection of C. Instead, it is now at least in the G collection, together with E-re in the D-ut deductio.

Thus, although they have the same pitch content F♯, the F♯s in mm. 27 and 52 and that in m. 17 are different steps. The former are leading tones to G in the C collection while the latter is the mi step of the D-ut deductio found only in the eleven-pitch collections of G, D, and A. F♯ as leading tone to G is a regular modal procedure and does not introduce change to the extant diatonic collection. F♯ as the precadential step in the tenorizans, however, points to an E-re cadence available only in the D-ut deductio and thus invokes collections other than C ut. In this way, thanks to the accompanying D♯ that necessarily calls for a new diatonic collection, the F♯ in m. 17 constitutes a chromatic step by breaking the boundaries of C ut, the governing diatonic collection of the piece.

The F♯s in mm. 11 and 21 are comparable to that in m. 17. Neither of them serves as a cadential leading tone to G. Furthermore, as Spataro indirectly notices in his letter, these three F♯s are all fifths of B-minor triads. It thus appears that, in Spataro’s eyes, being not a leading tone but the fifth of a triad gives rise to the structural importance of these F♯’s. Indeed, as I have shown, although F♯ as leading tone to G belongs to the C diatonic collection, it does not have a place in any of the three deductios of the collection. Its existence relies purely on another step: G, its corresponding modal and cadential final,
which has its own place in all of the three *deductios*. In contrast, the three Fs in mm. 11, 17, and 21 have to be F♯s out of the *causa necessitatis* in order to realize the B-minor triad and avoid the B-F tritone.

Moreover, although the two F♯s in mm. 11 and 21 do not belong to an E-re cadence, they clearly have the potential to do so: while the leading tone D♯ in the *cantizans* is missing, both the precadential *tenorizans* F♯ and *bassizans* B are present. In both cases the *tenorizans* even follows its cadential trajectory of descending by a whole step to E, as opposed to the leading-tone motion of ascending by a half step to G. The precadential *bassizans* B, in addition, even signifies that the potential E-re cadence would be a strong cadence comparable to that in mm. 17-18. Thus, like the F♯ in an E-re cadence, the immutable F♯ in a B-minor triad also invokes at least the D-ut *deductio* in which F♯ is an independent step that occupies its proper place. As a result, in “Ave gratia plena,” by the virtue of their appearance in B-minor triads and E-re cadences, the F♯s in mm. 11, 17, and 21 transgress the boundaries of the C diatonic collection and become in Spataro’s conception the chromatic step *lichanos meson chromatica*.

The above analysis shows that the motet “Ave gratia plena” chromaticism focuses on the missing “twelfth step”: the interceding step between D and E absent from the governing C diatonic collection in this particular case. Introducing this “twelfth step” as D♯ has two consequences. First, in its own right, the D♯ challenges the diatonic boundaries of the C collection. The consequential E-re cadence also signifies the shift of the diatonic collection away from C in the sharp direction. Second, as a result of the D♯-E in the *cantizans* of the E-re cadence, F♯ in the corresponding *tenorizans* of E-re also does not belong to the C diatonic collection, since this F♯ is no longer the leading tone to G.
Like D♯, in relation to the governing C diatonic collection, this F♯ becomes a chromatic step found only in the D-ut deductio in a new diatonic collection. In addition, because of their potential for becoming the precadential tenorizans of an E-re cadence, F♯s in B-minor or B-major triads similarly invoke the D-ut deductio and a new diatonic collection. Their fulfillment of causa necessitatis in the B triads also confirms their structural importance.

Thus, Spataro’s “Ave gratia plena” demonstrates that the missing “twelfth step” is really the key to chromaticism. Figure 3-21 lists the eleven-pitch diatonic collections rooted on F, C, G, D, A, and E respectively. It becomes clear that the G♯ missing from

**Figure 3-21**
Collections on F, C, G, D, A, and E and their connections through A2
the F ut collection as well as the resulting A-re cadence and B♭ in the tenorizans is necessary and sufficient to moving from the F diatonic collection to the C collection.

Similarly, D♯, E-re, and F♯ are essential to moving from C to G; A♯, B-re, and C♯ from G to D; E♯ to moving from D to A; and B♯ (!) from A to E.

Figure 3-22, on the other hand, shows another way of interpreting the twelfth step: it is now higher than the denominator of the diatonic collection not by an augmented second but by a minor third. In contrast to the A₂ twelfth steps, the m3 twelfth steps shift the diatonic collection in the flat direction. In a piece governed by the G collection, for example, B♭ would necessarily shift the tonal space to at least C. In the same way, E♭ moves C to F; A♭ F to B♭; and D♭ B♭ to E♭.

Figure 3-22
Collections on G, C, F, B♭, E♭, and A♭ and their connection through m3
“Absalon, fili mi” exemplifies the use of the m3 twelfth step. Here I consider only Kriesstein RISM 1540⁷, since Peter Urquhart has shown that the London manuscript version is a problematic source (see Chapter Two). According to the one-flat “signature,” the motet should stay within the boundaries of the F diatonic collection. This eleven-pitch collection features the six pitches of the F-ut deductio (F, G, A, B♭, C, D), the two E’s (E♭ and E♮), and the three leading tones as required by modal practices: F♯, B♮, and C♯ (Figure 3-23). Because of the particular modal design in “Absalon, fili mi,” no cadences on G or D occur. Therefore, out of the three possible inflected leading tones in the F collection, F♯, B♮, and C♯, only B♮ occurs in the Kriesstein version of the piece, although one could argue for editorial F♯s in Cantus, m. 25 and Altus, m. 33, for example.²¹

²¹ Indeed, that eleven pitch classes are available for a composer working in pure diatonicism does not mean that they have to use all of the eleven pitches. In David Crook’s paper “Tonal Compass in the Motets of Orlando di Lasso,” in Hearing the Motet: Essays on the motet of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Dolores Pesce ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997), he suggests the idea of a tonal compass that excludes not only the “twelfth step” I speak of from the chromatic scale but also chromatic inflections of steps crucial to the mode of a particular piece. For instance, although C♯ is a more-than-common chromatic inflection of C in cantus durus, in a C-final piece in cantus durus Crook would consider it a transgression of the tonal compass because it inflects the modal final quintessential to the piece’s modal identity. I suggest, that these additional restrictions in Crook’s “tonal compass” relate more to the varying conceptions of the modal system than of the tonal space. Indeed, Lasso, the prime example of Crook’s “tonal compass,” generally refrains from sharpening the modal final degree as leading tones not necessarily because such inflection transgresses the tonal boundaries. More likely Lasso’s idiomatic practices of the modes prescribed against having regular cadences on the degree above the modal final. As a matter of fact, cadences on D in C-final pieces or on G in F-final pieces are not as uncommon as they would be had Crook’s “tonal compass” been the

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Figure 3-23
Diatonic collection in “Absalon, fili mi,” Kriesstein RISM 1540⁷

F ıt collection

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
F & G & A & B^\flat \\
\hline 
C & D & E^\flat & E^\natural \\
B^\flat & C & D & E^\flat
\end{array}
\]
The missing twelfth step of the F collection, the one between G and A, appears in Bassus, m. 83 as A♭, the m3 twelfth step. It shifts the diatonic collection from the governing F to B♭ where A♭ is the fa step in the E♭-ut deductio. The shift of the diatonic system accompanying this A♭ has significant implications on the motet’s final cadence on C. In the F collection, because there are two versions of E (E♭ and E♮), there are correspondingly two versions of cadences on C that one might chose from. If E♮ is at play, cadences on C may be called ut-cadences: the cantizans carries the lower leading tone, and the tenorizans descends from the major third above the final, following the syllables mi-re-ut (Example 3-5, in this case E-D-C). If E♭ appears in the cadence, on the other hand, C cadences become re-cadences: their tenorizans descends from the minor third E♭ above the final C, following the syllables fa-mi-re (Example 3-6, E♭-D-C).

Once the diatonic collection is shifted from F to B♭, however, there is no choice but the C-re cadences. While a new conflict surfaces between A♭ from the E♭-ut deductio and A from the F-ut, there is now only one version of E in the three deductios: E♭, in

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governing guideline of tonal space in the sixteenth century. The elven-pitch collection I propose, on the other hand, respects the varying styles of composers and includes all pitch classes they could use without transposing the diatonic system or the deductio.
both B♭-ut and E♭-ut deductios. As a result, regardless of all the C-ut cadences in the previous parts of the piece, the final cadence on C in “Absalon, fili mi” has to be a re-cadence. This is dictated by the A♭ that shifts the diatonic collection from F into B♭, a diatonic collection where the pitch content of E is no longer discussable on the deductio levels.

Dufay’s “Ave regina celorum III” similarly uses m3 twelfth steps to shift the governing diatonic collection in the flat direction. The “key signature” indicates the C collection at play. In the first and third tropes, the sudden appearances of E♭’s invoke the F collection, and the A♭’s even introduce the B♭ collection two steps away from C on the circle of fifths. A crucial difference between “Ave regina celorum III” and “Absalon, fili mi,” however, is that while the E♭’s and A♭’s in the former have little tonal or modal consequence, those in the latter eventually shift the final cadence on C-ut to C-re. They thus invoke the C-Hypodorian mode instead of the C-Mixolydian as promised by the “key signature” and the previous measures of the motet.22 As discussed in Chapter Two,

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22 The plagal voicing is apparent in the ranges of Cantus and Altus. One may argue that the A♭ near the end invokes C-Aeolian instead of C-Dorian. Just as B♮ and B♭ are both common in the C ut collection, so are both A♮ and A♭. C-Aeolian, on the other hand, would imply the E♭ ut diatonic collection that allows only A♭ on the deductio level and features both D♮ and D♭. The
the different tonal and modal consequences in “Absalon, fili mi” and “Ave regina celorum III” pertain to the particular ways in which they are achieved. In the trope of “Ave regina celorum III” Dufay switches abruptly from one diatonic collection to another in a way comparable to the discursive use of accidentals in his earlier chansons. “Absalon, fili mi,” however, exposes the gradual maneuvers of the deductios that lead to the shift: transposition along the circle of fifths.

Figure 3-24
A-E♭ tritone in the F collection and its gateway to the B♭ collection through A♭

Indeed, “Absalon, fili mi” demonstrates that fifth relations and transpositions are the most convenient way of attaining the m3 twelfth step. In any given eleven-pitch diatonic collection, there is a tritone relation between the mi step of the prime deductio

complete absence of D♭ from the Kriesstein version of Absalon, fili mi essentially rules out the possibility of the E♭ ut collection and thus C-Aeolian.
and the fa step of the one a perfect fifth below; in the F collection, as in Figure 3-24, it is the tritone between A and Eb. Importantly, both pitch classes are found on the deductios and are thus inherent to the diatonic collection. Avoiding the tritone relationship often involves flatting A into A♭ and thus converting it into the m3 twelfth step. Therefore, in the F collection E♭ becomes a gateway to chromaticism through its fifth relation with the m3 twelfth step A♭.

On the other hand, Spataro’s motet “Ave gratia plena” has shown that D♯, the A2 twelfth step in C collection, functions in the context of an E-re cadence. In general, sixteenth-century musicians considered that ut- and re-cadences involving lower leading tones and pseudo “V-I” harmonies much stronger than mi-cadences that feature upper

Example 3-7
A four-voice E-mi cadence

leading tones (Examples 3-7 and 3-8). In this way, the E-re cadence in “Ave gratia

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23 For discussions of cadential types and their strengths, see also Stafano La Via, Cipriano de Rores as reader and as read: a literary-musical study of madrigals from Rore’s later collections (1557-1566), Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University (1991); La Via, “Eros and
“tonicization” of E as a local tonal center by featuring the leading tone and A2 twelfth step D♯ and the prevadential B-major triad with its lichanos meson chromatica F♯. Thus, “tonicizing” the mi step of the prime deductio of a diatonic collection—E in C and A in F—through the A2 twelfth step as the upper leading tone and a major-triad on the mi step of the deductio a fifth above the prime becomes another gateway to chromaticism. Because this mi step is closely associated with the Phrygian mode, it is no surprise that some of the most famous and most extreme chromatic pieces of the sixteenth century are set in the cantus durus or “natural key” with E as final.

Chromaticism from Alpha to Omega

Thus, I have finally answered the question: what is Renaissance chromaticism—or, what should I examine in the remaining chapters of this study?

Chromaticism, as Mitchell has argued, centers around the diffusing power of introducing new pitch classes outside an established diatonic collection. Combining *deductio* and modal theory in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, I propose that the diatonic collection that governs a piece according to its “key signature” consists of eleven pitch classes. Six of them are those of the six steps of the prime *deductio*, the one that corresponds to the “key signature” of the piece. Two additional pitch classes are that of the *mi* step of the *deductio* a perfect fifth above the prime and that of the *fa* step of the *deductio* a perfect fifth below the prime. Three additional pitch classes do not belong to any of the three *deductios*. They are leading tones to the *re*, *sol*, and *la* of the prime *deductio* according to the use of the six modal finals in Renaissance music.

The missing twelfth step between the *re* and the *mi* of the prime *deductio* is central to breaking out of the boundaries of the governing eleven-pitch diatonic collection and invoking chromaticism by introducing new pitch classes. Interpreting this twelfth step as an augmented second above the *ut* step of the prime *deductio* shifts the diatonic collection in the sharp direction. Interpreting it as the minor third above the *ut*, in contrast, shifts the diatonic collection in the flat direction. In other words, if a piece never transgresses the boundaries of its governing diatonic collection, when one places all the pitch classes used in this piece onto the circle of fifth, the distance between the “flattest” and the “sharpest” pitches are no more than ten steps. I describe these pieces as structurally diatonic. If the distance is eleven steps or more, however, it is certain that the twelfth step missing from the governing collection actually occurs in the piece. It follows
that there is necessarily at least one other diatonic collection at play at some point during
the piece against the governing collection. I describe such pieces as structurally
chromatic. In particular, if the distance is twelve steps or even more, it follows that there
is at least one pair of enharmonically equivalent pitches. I describe such pieces, which are
already structurally diatonic, as enharmonically chromatic (Table 3-3). In addition, in
recognition of the debate between del Lago and Spataro, pieces set in the “natural” or
one-flat “key” that feature C♭, F♭, B♯, or E♯ will receive special attention. In this way,
what I will be looking at in this thesis as “chromatic pieces” are those that feature the
missing twelfth step: D♯ or E♭ in C or “natural key,” and G♯ or A♭ in F in one-flat “key.”
I will investigate how many steps in total a piece utilizes, and how many of them fall
outside the governing diatonic collection. I will study how these extraordinary pitches are
introduced, whether through cadences, chordal sonorities, or melodic inflections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Gamut (steps)</th>
<th>Descriptive Term</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Purely Diatonic</td>
<td>Non-harmonic relations (chromatic semitones, cross relations) impossible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-11</td>
<td>Structurally Diatonic</td>
<td>Non-harmonic relations possible, yet shifts in diatonic collection impossible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Structurally Chromatic</td>
<td>Necessary coexistence of two diatonic collections; non-harmonic relations possible; Necessary coexistence of at least one pair of enharmonic pitch classes; non-harmonic relations possible;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 and more</td>
<td>Enharmonically Chromatic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Renaissance chromaticism began as an antiquarian fantasia. In the eyes of
musicians of the time, it revived musical practices of the Antiquity and expanded the
tonal space to previously unknown territories. In the end, however, Renaissance
cromaticism serves no more than the simple purpose of introducing new pitch classes
beyond the idiomatic diatonicism of Renaissance music. Hence, the quest for
cromaticism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as witnessed especially in Spataro’s
“Ave gratia plena,” may be characterized as a romance with the all-important “twelfth
step” that definitively moves a work beyond the realm of the everyday.
Part Two
Practice
Chapter Four

*L’antica musica ridotta by Rore alla moderna prattica*

Panaque cum prensam sibi iam Syringa putaret,
corpore pro nymphae calamos tenuisse palustres,
dumque ibi suspirat, motos in harundine ventos
effecisse sonum tenuem similemque querenti.
arte nova vocisque deum dulcedine captum
‘hoc mihi colloquium tecum’ dixisse ‘manebit,’
atque ita disparibus calamis conpagine cerae
inter se iuncis nomen tenuisse puellae.

—Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book I, 705-712

Set for four low voices in an extremely chromatic style, “Calami sonum ferentes” comes from Cipriano de Rore’s publication hiatus, 1550-1557. It sits alone between his “early” and “late” styles and does not exemplify either. Rore (1515/16-1565) did not publish it, and how it ended up in 1555 in Orlando Lassus’s “Opus One” published in Antwerp is still a matter of debate.

Besides Edward Lowinsky, few scholars have studied the piece. Lowinsky calls it the “culmination point of musical avant-gardism” in the sixteenth century, but his interpretation is more complicated than full-hearted praise. In “Calami sonum ferentes: A New Interpretation,” Lowinsky argues that the piece was a “deliberate hoax” and Rore’s

“antichromatic manifesto.”³ In short, Lowinsky “cannot persuade [himself]” that Rore intended the piece to sound good.⁴ This ironic demonstration of the “ugliness” of chromaticism, he contends, served to disabuse Prince Alfonso, the future Alfonso II of Ferrara (1533-1597), of Vicentino’s chromatic teachings.

Characteristically for Lowinsky, his interpretation is bold. Uncharacteristically, however, scholars seem to have accepted Lowinsky’s interpretation, perhaps out of their indifference to “Calami sonum ferentes.” In his edition of motets from Lassus’s “Opus No.1,” “urtext” of “Calami sonum ferentes,” Peter Bergquist takes Lowinsky’s “antichromatic manifesto” theory for granted.⁵ Even Peter Williams, for whom the piece is the “earliest known example” of his theories of “chromatic fourth,” acknowledges that this “seminal” piece of chromaticism was probably Rore’s hoax.⁶

The notion of Rore’s insincerity in “Calami sonum ferentes” is in need of re-examination. If Vicentino’s promotion of chromaticism “stirred no echoes of sympathy [or] admiration” in Rore,⁷ who actually abhorred it so much as to demonstrate its ugliness through an ironic “manifesto,” how could it be, I ask, that Rore would soon integrate chromaticism into his late madrigals? If even Lowinsky agrees that during the period of this piece Rore underwent significant changes in his style, especially regarding

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⁴ Ibid., 609.
⁷ Lowinsky, 610.
chromaticism,\textsuperscript{8} would it not be more logical to treat “Calami sonum ferentes” as a window into his stylistic transition rather than into his (mal)intentions?

A close reading of the work’s music and text informed by consideration of its historical context suggests that “Calami sonum ferentes” was a linchpin to the development of sixteenth-century chromaticism and thus deserves more scholarly attention. The piece reveals Rore’s first engagement with the “ancient” practice of chromaticism and points the way to his later work. It also played an important role in the sixteenth century’s adaption of \textit{l’antica musica} to \textit{moderna prattica}.

\textbf{Giovanni Battista Pigna’s “Chromatic Text”}

“Calami sonum ferentes” literally means “the reeds producing a sound.” As Lowinsky discovered, the text come from the final poem of the Third Book of \textit{Carminum Libri Quatuor}, a 1553 anthology of Latin poems by Giovanni Battista Pigna (c. 1530-1575) dedicated to Prince Alfonso of Ferrara (1533-1597). Entitled “Fistula tertia ex Catulli numeris” or “the Third Pipe in the meters of Catullus,” the poem is the third and last of a set of three \textit{fistulae} or “pipes.” It immediately follows “Fistula prima ex Theocriti numeris” or “The First Pipe in the meters of Theocritus” and “Fistula secunda ex Horatii numeris” or “The Second Pipe in the meters of Horace” (see Appendix to this Chapter for the text and translation of all three poems).

With the help of Arthur Adkins, Lowinsky explained the meanings of “fistula” and “numeris” in the poems’ titles. Inspired by Theocritus’s pipe-pattern poem “Syrinx” (“Συριγξ”), each fistula “starts with a large number of syllables which are decreased successively” and thus renders a pipe shape, bell up and mouthpiece down. “Ex …

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., 603-605.
“numeris” signifies that the meter of each line imitates a specific verse of Theocritus, Horace, and Catullus, respectively. In the first “fistula” the meter imitates Theocritus’s “Syrinx” roughly line by line. For the second and third, on the other hand, Pigna “had to start out with a predetermined [pipe] shape of lines” and “then find in Horace and Catullus the lines [whose meters are] needed.” Pigna thus constructs three pipe-shaped poems in which each line refers metrically to a verse by the three ancient poets.

Whether Pigna’s metrical imitation is a mere compositional method or contains further external references neither Lowinsky nor Adkins makes clear. Instead, Lowinsky proposes that the last “fistula” summarizes the previous two through internal references. His awareness of these internal references leads to a translation different from Bernhard Meier’s in Rore’s *Opera Omnia*. Shown in Table 5-1, the essential discrepancies appear in the first and third verses. Meier understands “numero” in verse 1 as “melodies.” Yet Lowinsky interprets it as poetic “meter,” which seems more persuasive given the titles “fistula ex … numeris.” “Sicilian meter” implies the meter of Theocritus the Sicilian that Pigna’s first poem imitates. Thus the pipe whose reeds fail to dispel the speaker’s sighs in verses 1 and 2 refers to Pigna’s “Fistula prima ex Theocritii numeris.”

Lowinsky extends the pipe-poem metaphor to the next verse. While Meier assumes the “sighs” in verse 2 as subject of “sunt … revulsi” (“that have been … taken out”) in verse 3, Lowinsky argues for the “reeds.” In the latter’s interpretation, the “reeds” taken out (“revulsi”) from the River of Aufidus represents the “Fistula secunda ex Horacii numeris.” “Aufidus” is the core of this reference. Even though the connection between Aufidus and Horace might seem precarious, Lowinsky observes that Horace

9. Lowinsky, 607 and 618.
10. Lowinsky, 607.
“referred to [Aufidus] in a number of his odes.”\textsuperscript{11} Moreover, without such metaphorical reference parallel to that in verses 1 and 2, invoking the River of Aufidus (presently the Ofanto) distant from the sojourns of both the poet and the dedicatee would be desultory.

Table 5-1: Comparison of the translations of Lowinsky and Meier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edward Lowinsky\textsuperscript{12}</th>
<th>Bernhard Meier\textsuperscript{13}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The reed-pipes giving forth a sound in light \textit{Sicilian meter}</td>
<td>The reeds [i.e., the pipes of reed], producing a light sound as in \textit{Sicilian melodies},</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not banish the sighs, all too painful, from the depth of my heart.</td>
<td>[D]o not dispel the much too heavy sighs from the depth of my breast;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nor do \textit{those reeds} plucked from the roaring Aufidus.</td>
<td>[N]or have \textit{they the sighs} been taken away by the murmuring Aufidus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Muse, who dwell’st in the pleasant groves of Sirmio,</td>
<td>Muse, who dwell’st in the lovely fields of Sirmio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through whom unfeeling Lesbia grew tender,</td>
<td>[W]here hard hearted Lesbia became gentle,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit me, who mourn the departure of my prince.</td>
<td>[C]ome to me, who deplore the absence of my “princeps.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Muse, delight of thy Catullus,</td>
<td>[M]use, joy of thy Catullus,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join thy sweet song to the sad [sound of my] pipes.</td>
<td>[M]ingle your sweet song with the sad sound of the pipes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lowinsky’s interpretation of verse 3 is “nor do those reeds plucked from the roaring Aufidus [banish the sighs … of my heart].” As the first “fistula,” neither can the Horacian pipe alleviate the speaker’s sorrows. Thus, the first three verses of “Fistula tertia” summarize and dismiss the previous two “fistulae” that are both metaphorical pipes and actual poems. Through such summary and dismissal, these verses position the third poem on a narrative register higher than those of the previous two.

The refreshing ingenuity of Lowinsky’s reading stops at verse 3. Perhaps he did not find the remaining six verses interesting. I propose, however, that the key to a more

\textsuperscript{11} Lowinsky, 608.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 608.
\textsuperscript{13} Cipriano de Rore, \textit{Opera Omnia VI}, Bernhard Meier ed. (Rome, Italy: American Institute of Musicology, 1975), XI.
thorough interpretation of Pigna’s poem lies in verses 4 to 9. Finding no consolation in
the “pipes” “ex Theocritii numeris” and “ex Horacii numeris,” the speaker seeks succor
from the muse at verse 4. As the speaker turns away from inward monologue to outward
invocation and conversation, the poem establishes a new narrative framework and
switches from internal to external references: Catullus’ visits to Sirmio, a promontory at
the southern end of Lake Garda,” in verses 4 to 6. For Catullus, Sirmio is more than
“pleasant groves” or “lovely fields”:

O quid solutis est beatius curis,
cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum,
desideratoque acquiescimus lecto?

–Catullus XXXI, 7-1014

Catullus’s poetic delight comes precisely from Sirmio being his home, “ad
nostrum.” By invoking Catullus’s home, which Lowinsky has overlooked, Pigna
unclothes for the first time in this poem the poet’s “too heavy sighs”: the absence of
Prince Alfonso away from his home of Ferrara. A Francophile, Alfonso defied his father
Ercole II’s neutrality between France and the Holy Roman Empire. In March 1552, the
Prince fled Ferrara to join the French military campaign. Apparently, for Pigna his
patron’s two-year departure was too long. “Come to the lovely home of Ferrara,”

and New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), 32. Lee translates these four verses as (Lee,
33):

O what more blissful than to have no worries,
When mind lays down the load, and tired of foreign
Service we have come to our own land
And rest content upon the longed-for bed!
murmurs Pigna to the Prince behind the reference to Catullus’s Sirmio not as far away from Ferrara as is the River of Aufidus.

The first plea to the muse therefore contains a double entendre talking to both the muse and the run-away Prince. In the second and conclusive plea, the speaker invites the muse to combine her magical and consoling “sweet song” with the “sad sound” of his pipes. The three-word last verse “junge carmen avenis” literally conjoins (“junge”) the muse’s “song” (“carmen”) with the “reed-pipes” (“avenis”). Seeing that the “sad pipes” represent the two previous “fistulae,” the “carmen” (“song”) of the muse seems to signify the third “fistula” itself now joining the other two as the entire set concludes.

The third “fistula’s” apotheosis as the “sweet song” of the muse surrounds the poem with a mythological aura. The muse’s “sweet” song assumes otherworldliness not only through its Greekness but also through its transcendence over the other two “fistulae” in its narrative register and healing effect. What could be more fitting for such mythological sweet song than chromaticism, deeply entrenched in the sixteenth-century narrative of its Greek origins and, furthermore, only recently revived to mingle with the old pipes of diatonicism, which in this case does not prove successful on its own? Indeed, what could be more fitting for Pigna’s mannered poem constructed on classical meters and saturated with classical references than chromaticism, which is yet to be appropriated from the esoteric discourse of music theorists?

Still, the classical references and motif of a sweet song are not all what might have triggered the piece’s chromaticism. The “fistulae” or “pipes” fabricated as a poetic genre, named in the titles, visualized in the verse patterns on papers, and referred to in all of the three poems clearly recall the myth of Pan and Syrinx in Ovid’s Metamorphoses,
Book I. The pipe into which Syrinx transformed produced a delicate ("tenuem") and lament-like ("similem querenti") sound (line 709), apposite to the sighs in “Fistula tertia.” Yet Ovid’s description of the sound is more specific. Indeed, one need only imagine Lowinsky’s dismay and excitement had he read Ovid’s lines 709-710 in relation to Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes”:

arte nova vocisque deum dulcedine captum
‘hoc mihi colloquium tecum’ dixisse ‘manebit,’15

“Captured by the new art and the sweet sound, the god said ‘this will keep us conversing with each other’” The reed-pipe in Ovid’s Metamorphoses produces not only a “sweet sound” (“vocis dulcedine”) but also a “new art” (“arte nova”). There can hardly be a more direct invitation to the new resurrection of the ancient art of chromaticism upon whose sweetness theorists from Boethius to Zarlino have commented.

Line 710 discloses even more. The lecherous Pan does not get depressed upon seeing the reed-pipe of the resistant Syrinx. Quite the opposite, it assuages his pains (“dumque ibi suspirat,” line 708): the new” and sweet voice of the pipe becomes a bridge over which Pan can converse with Syrinx across the divide of metamorphosis. The new music not only consoles one’s pains through its mythological sweetness but also enables an esoteric pathway of communication.

Given the allusion to Metamorphoses, by setting the muse’s sweet song embodied in Fistula tertia to music with the enabling new art of chromaticism, Rore constructs a bridge through which he addresses someone at a distance in a shrouded manner. Furthermore, given the musical patronage at Ferrara, the most likely addressee is indeed

15. P. Ovidi Nasonis, Metamorphoses, 28.
Prince Alfonso, dedicatee of Pigna’s poems and principal sponsor of the “revival of chromaticism.”

Besides the text’s narrative registers and classical references, understanding Rore’s role in the sixteenth-century discourse on chromaticism further draws Lowinsky’s notion of “antichromatic manifesto” into question. Lowinsky implies a circle of antichromatic musicians around Rore, one of them being Willaert, whom Lowinsky accepts uncritically as Rore’s teacher. Lowinsky seize on “Willaert’s” diatribe against “modern chromaticists” in Zarlino’s *Dimostrationi harmoniche*: “pensate pure, che se fussero a i tempi nostri giudici di costoro [gli chromatici]: quello che farebbono? Son certo che li scacciarebbono del mondo.” Since Lowinsky believes there cannot be “any doubt about the intimate bond between Rore and Willaert,” and since Willaert despises chromaticism, it is impossible for Lowinsky to imagine that Rore pursued chromaticism out of sincerity.

Lowinsky’s syllogism is simple. And false. First of all, the premise of teacher-pupil relationship between Willaert and Rore is not certain. Although both Hieronimo Scotto’s 1548 edition of Rore’s Third Book of Madrigals and an anthology published by Giuliano Tiburtino in 1549 refer to Rore as Willaert’s “discepolo,” they are only sources of secondary importance to Rore’s corpus. In the 1548 publication, the *Vergine* cycle setting the last poem of Petrarch’s *Canzoniere* “Vergina bella, che di sol vestita,” the

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16. Gioseffo Zarlino, *Dimostrationi harmoniche*, (Venice, 1571), fasc. Ed., Gregg Press (Ridgewood, NJ, 1966), 237. Quoted in Lowinsky, 602. “Willaert’s” words roughly translate: “Think straight, if in our time there were judges of these chromaticists: what would they do to them? I am sure that they would chase them out of this world.”

17. Lowinsky, 602.
raison d’être of this publication according to the dedication, is not even complete.\textsuperscript{18} The 1549 anthology, on the other hand, is not devoted to either Rore or Willaert’s works but rather to those of the publisher himself.\textsuperscript{19} Using these two peripheral publications to

\begin{quote}

\begin{quote}
Signor compare honorandissimo, Sapendo io la diligenza, & la fatica che hauete usata questi giorni passati per hauer quelle uergine, gia molti mesi sono, composte a lo eccellentissimo music messer Cipriano Rore, uostro et nostro carissimo amico, mi e parso, essendomi le predette compositioni uenute alle mani, per lo amor che u i porto, & per fatisfare al desiderio uostro, farle stampare con alcuni altri bellissimi madrigali del medemo compositore, & con alcuni del Divinissimo Adriano Villaerth, et de altri suoi discepoli, accio che uostro signoria non solamente sia satisfatta del desiderio suo, ma ne consegua ancora qualche laude & merito appresso il mondo, il quale merce di uostra signoria sara fatto riccho di questo presente, uramente degno di esser ueduto, & goduto da ognumo. Et a. V.S. bacio le mani. Paolo Vergelli, 1548.
\end{quote}

and translates:

\begin{quote}
Your most honorable and fatherly lord, knowing the care and effort you have dispensed during these past days in order to acquire \textit{Le Vergine} composed by the most excellent musician master Cipriano Rore it the dearest friend of yours and ours, which has already been for several months as it seems to me, having the said compositions at my hands, for the love that I maintain for you and the satisfaction of your desire, and about to publish them with some other beautiful madrigals by modern composers and with some pieces by the most Divine Adrian Willaert and by some other disciples of his, I aspire that Your Highness not only be satisfied of your desire by also through this publication achieve from the world claim and merit, which thanks to Your Highness will be increased through this present that really deserves to be seen and enjoyed by everyone. And I kiss the hand of Your Highness. Paolo Vergelli, 1548.
\end{quote}

19. Lowinsky, 602. The title of Tirburtino reads, as transcribed by Lowinsky:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

and is translated by Lowinsky as:

\begin{quote}
Fantasias and ricercars in three voices, accommodated to both voice and instruments, composed by M. Giuliano Tirbutino from Tievoli, excellent
determine the relationship between the two composers is nothing more than a precarious hypothesis.

Even if the relationship did exist it does not necessarily follow that Rore shared Willaert’s view of chromaticism at the time of writing “Calami sonum ferentes.” Without any context, the above references to Rore as the “discepolo” of Willaert should not be taken for granted because the word “discepolo” is too general to suggest any specific relationship. Indeed, as I will discuss later, especially in his “early” works Rore deviated significantly from Willaert’s Musica nova style. Lowinsky’s assumption that Willaert’s opinion on chromaticism would have necessarily bounded Rore’s choices is far from certain.

The “discepolo” dispute aside, “Willaert’s” harangue against “modern chromaticists” in Dimostrationi also warrants a contextual review. Lowinsky correctly summarizes “Willaert’s” arguments: that the “chromaticists’” fail to observe the “chromatic tetrachord of the ancients,” that the notes they use are not “equated with those of the ancients” who “had proper names for each of their tones, such as hypate, lychanos, trite, and so on,” and and that they disregard the mode.20 Yet Lowinsky ignores the context. Previously in the dialogue, “Francesco Viola” does not ask “Willaert” for an aesthetical judgment of the “modern chromaticists”; instead, he poses a theoretical question: is their music chromatic?21 And “Willaert” responds negatively based on the tenet that chromaticism by nature belongs to the ancients, and “chi vuole comporre una

musician. With the addition of other ricercars and madrigals in three voices, composed by the excellent Adriano Willaert and Cipirano Rore his disciple.

20. Lowinsky, 601. Lowinsky is referring to Zarlino, Dimostrazioni, 236 (misprinted as 276)-237.
cantilena Chromatica bisogna che imiti in ciò gli Antichi.” Such imitation of the ancients entails not only the chromatic tetrachord as a building block but also the “proper names” the “ancients” used.

Thus, besides a final observation on the modes, which I shall discuss later, “Willaert’s” opposition to “modern chromatic” music is theoretical. “He” disregards the quality of the music yet focuses on its inadequate Greekness. Why should such a bigoted view illuminate research on sixteenth-century chromaticism— it is hard to imagine that almost anyone would have said something like “the semidiapente between hypate meson and trite synemmenon” on a daily basis.

Is it not odd that “Willaert,” in real life a practical musician, should impose a theoretical fundamentalism and historical correctness upon composers? Let us not forget who really wrote Dimostrazioni harmoniche. Taking the dialoguer “Adriano Willaert” as the real Willaert commits a rudimentary mistake of literary criticism and does not give enough credit to Zarlino’s manipulations. While “creating an all-important impression of neutrality and objectivity,” comments Stefano Mengozzi, the dialogue hides Zarlino’s agenda “to present the traditional subject matter of music theory … as a result of logical necessity … of a rigorous method of demonstration by which particular premises lead indisputably to particular results.” The treatise’s logical “dimostrazioni” based on “ragionamenti,” “definitioni,” and “proposte” witness Zarlino’s theorizing tendency, which likely engenders “Willaert’s” theoretical prejudice against “modern chromaticists.”

22. Ibid., 237. “Willaert’s” words roughly translate: “Those who wish to compose a chromatic song should imitate the Ancients.”
23. The diminished fifth between E and B♭.
Cristle Collins Judd has also observed Zarlino’s theorizing efforts in the realm of composition. In his first anthology *Musici quinque vocum* (1549), Zarlino adds to the motets unexplained dodecachordian labels that many contemporary theorists would not fully understand and thus “deliberately indicates [his] intellectual status and theoretical ambitions” beyond being a mere musical practitioner.\(^\text{25}\) Indeed, “Willaert’s” mockery of the chromatic charlatans in *Dimostrazioni* seems to come not from a practitioner: “Onde perché costoro [gli chromatici] non hanno potuto acquistar nome di eccellenti Musici con le opere loro: ci sono affaticati et anco si affaticano di fare il peggio che sanno: per acquistar nome, et diventar famosi.”\(^\text{26}\) The condescending tone points instead to Zarlino the theorizing *literatus* who portrays himself as possessing a “true mathematical understanding of music” and thus a moral superiority.\(^\text{27}\)

Throughout his career Zarlino feeds on utilizing Willaert the person and “Willaert” the name. *Le Istitutioni harmoniche* cites as examples of modal compositions almost exclusively the works of Josquin, Willaert, and Zarlino. The “and Zarlino,” argues Judd, elevates him to the ranks of not only the deified Josquin but also his teacher Willaert, the “New Pythagoras.”\(^\text{28}\) Zarlino could not have found a better time to promote himself: he obtained the privilege of *Le Istitutioni* in October 1557 during Willaert’s two-year medical leave that caused the chapel’s administration to worry about finding a prospective successor as *maestro di cappella*.\(^\text{29}\) A similar sensitivity to publication dates

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\(^{26}\) Zarlino, *Dimostrazioni*, 237. Quoted in Lowinsky, 602. “Willaert’s” words roughly translate: “Because the chromaticists have not been able to acquire the fame of excellent musician with their works, they try hard to do the worst so as to acquire name and become famous.”

\(^{27}\) Judd, 196.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 240-241.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., 196.
can enlighten the context of Dimostrazioni harmoniche. The dialogue is set at “Willaert’s” residence in “April, 1562”: in 1561-1562 Willaert named Zarlino twice as executor of his estate, dying in December 1562. Though published as late as in 1571, through the rhetoric of names, dialogues, and dates Dimostrazioni reminds its readers of Zarlino’s legitimacy as heir to Willaert’s musical legacy and maestro di cappella position.

Thus, the revered “Willaert” serves as Zarlino’s marionette in Dimostrazioni. “His” belligerent tirade based on a scientific perspective manifests what Karol Berger calls Zarlino’s “musical poetics” of polyphonic diatonicism. A skeptic of “modern chromaticism,” Zarlino dedicated to this matter the last nine chapters in Part III of Le Istitutioni in which he concludes: “only if we return to the practice of the ancients and coordinate meter, melody, and words can we use these genera otherwise.” In other words, chromaticism and enharmonicism belong only to the “ancients” and that modern polyphony necessitates diatonicism.

There is no reason why Zarlino’s outcry against chromaticism should have restricted Rore; contrariwise, one should not expect Zarlino to speak highly of Rore. To Zarlino’s chagrin, it was Rore who became maestro di cappella at St. Mark’s in 1563 immediately after Willaert’s death. Though logistical difficulties soon led to Rore’s resignation, the failure to directly assume maestro after Willaert probably had a lasting effect on Zarlino, who has always portrayed himself as the righteous heir. A year after his eventual appointment, Zarlino published another anthology, Modulationes Sex Vocum in 1565. He attempted to prove himself as capable as Rore of meeting “the expectation …

30. Ibid.
that one of the primary functions of the *maestro di cappella* was to compose for the choir of San Marco” and of doing more than “[restoring] the stability of the choir”; as Judd suggests, it was for the latter reason that Zarlino was hired in the first place, which would not have made him feel dignified.33 *Dimostrazioni harmoniche* completes the anxious demonstration of his musical prowess now as a confident theorist who condescends to unsophisticated practitioners—could Rore not be one of them?

In conclusion, despite Zarlino’s criticism of “modern chromaticists” channeled through “Willaert,” questioning the sincerity of Rore’s chromatic setting of Pigna’s “Fistula tertia” is unnecessarily cynical. Indeed, the poem’s esoteric classicism, its apotheosis as the muse’s mythological sweet song, and its invocation of the new and sweet art that pleases the ear of Prince Alfonso solicit chromaticism. Rore’s chromatic setting in addition conveys a friendly gesture, albeit obscurely, to Prince Alfonso, the patron committed otherwise, precisely through its extreme chromaticism. Since Vicentino was a main advocate of the chromatic movement and was also supported by the Este family, the fact that Rore set a text directly addressed to the Prince in the chromatic style unveils the undeniable influence of his fellow Ferrarese composer.

**Chromaticism in Action**

“Calami sonum ferentes” is Rore’s first experiment in chromaticism. But a review of the piece’s compositional context, or the mere fact that “Calami sonum ferentes” was probably intentionally chromatic, does not illuminate Rore’s ingenuity. It is his musical “working out” of Pigna’s text on both local and global levels that yields a semantically and musically coherent outcome and adapts the *antica musica* of chromaticism to

Calami sonum ferentes

Cant. non pel•lunt gem•itus pe•cto•re, non pel•lunt ge •

Alt. ab imo nimi•um gra•ves, ab i•mo nimi•um

Ten. ro non pel•lunt gem•itus pe•pel•lunt gem•itus pe•cto•re

Bass. pel•lunt gem•itus pe•cto•re

Cant. mi•tus pe•cto•re> ab i•mo nimi•

Alt. ab i•mo nimi•um

Ten. cto•re ab i•mo nimi•um gra•ves, ab i•mo

Bass. ab i•mo nimi•um

Cant. num gra•ves; nec qui stre•pen•te sunt ab

Alt. gra•ves; nec qui stre•pen•te sunt

Ten. ni•mimium gra•ves: nec qui stre•pen•te sunt

Bass. gra•ves: nec qui stre•pen•te sunt ab
Cant.  
_Au - fi - do re - vul - si._

Alt.  
_ab Au - fi - do re - vul - si._

Ten.  
_ab Au - fi - do re - vul - si._

Bass.  
_Au - fi - do re - vul - si._

Cant.  
_sa,- mu - sa_

Alt.  
_sa, mu - sa quae ne - mus_

Ten.  
_sa, mu - sa_

Bass.  
Mu - sa quae ne - mus in - co -

Cant.  
_quae ne - mus in - co - lis Sir - mi - o - nis a - moe_

Alt.  
_in - co - lis Sir - mi - o - nis a - moe -_

Ten.  
_quae ne - mus in - co - lis Sir - mi - o - nis a - moe -_

Bass.  
_lis Sir - mi - o - nis a - moe -_
moderna prattica of diatonic polyphony. To understand this adaption requires analysis of the work.

Firstly, the composer distinguishes himself from the theorists’ chromatic fundamentalism, which dictates that in compliance with the Greeks a composition is chromatic if it uses and only uses the chromatic tetrachord as its tonal and thematic foundation. Instead, Rore embraces a practical approach sensitive to the narrative structure and references in Pigna’s text. Above I implied a bipartite structure interfused with tripartite characters in “Fistula tertia.” Semantically, in the first three lines the speaker summarizes and dismisses the previous two “fistulae,” and in the remaining five he appeals twice to the muse and concludes with the apotheosis of the poem as the muse’s “sweet song.” Syntactically, however, there are three closures in the poem: at the end of verses 3, 6, and 9. Rore not only maps the ABB form of his setting after the semantic and syntactic structure of poem. He judiciously utilizes two distinctive approaches of chromaticism and transmutes the simple mirroring of the text’s structure into a musical reading of its affect.

The opening three lines (“A”) employ the “literal” or melodic approach to chromaticism, which takes form the chromatic subject of the opening fugue (Example 5-1). The subject recalls the chromatic tetrachord, which Vicentino uses in his demonstrative composition Ierusalem from L’antica musica, also shown in Example 5-1. Vicentino’s tetrachord A-B♭–B♮–D includes the two defining features of Greek chromaticism: a “major” or chromatic semitone (B♭–B♮) and a minor third (B–D). Rore’s subject aurally resembles the Greek tetrachord and, and it thus conveys Pigna’s reference to the “fistulae” composed after classical meters and allusion to Ovid’s “syrinx” (here
“calami”) producing the new art of chromaticism. It also employs the soavità frequently attributed to chromaticism in setting the sad tone of the speaker’s lament.

Nonetheless, even when invoking the historical Greekness and chromatic sweetness, Rore does not follow exactly what the theorist dictates; otherwise, his subject would be B-C♯-C♯-E, in compliance with the chromatic genus (Example 5-1). In reality, the composer inserts three additional semitones and obtains what Peter Williams calls a “chromatic fourth,” a sequence of semitones that take up a perfect fourth.34 Opting for a “fourth” instead of a “Greek” tetrachord is neither “seminal” as Williams argues nor random as Lowinsky implies.35 Rore’s deviation from “theoretical correctness” has a practical function. Deemphasizing the internal pitches C♮ and C♯ that would online the “signature intervals” of the chromatic tetrachord, the three filled-in semitones relocate the motivic focus to its boundary B and E, which, as I will show below, are essential to overall modal affect and coherence.

The two “Musa” in mm. 36-40 push the setting onto a different path. Lowinky disdains the “sudden” diatonicism in mm. 36-40 as part of the piece’s “ugliness,” yet I see the opposite.36 Falling on the higher registers of the low voices, the limpid C-major and F-major triads relieve the music from the asphyxiating chromatic imitation that

35 Williams, 12; and Lowinsky, 610. In fact, Lowinsky argues that Prince Alfonso would miss the difference between Rore’s chromatic fourth and Vicentino’s chromatic tetrachord, yet there is indeed no reason to assume Prince Alfonso’s negligence especially given his interests in reviving Ancient Greek music. Regarding Rore’s chromatic subject, Lowinsky also says “it would be difficult to find another piece of that period beginning with an ascending chromatic tetrachord.” Given Vicentino’s Ierusalem, however, I cannot understand where Lowinsky draws his conclusion.
36 Lowinsky, 610.
parallels the “too heavy sighs from the depth of my breast.” The longer note values and *tempus perfectus* they introduce also create a soothing effect. Probably the most beautiful and effective of the entire piece, these four measures, while sudden, respond to the subtle changes in narrative registers as the speaker turns from inward lament to outward plea.

**Example 5-1**

Comparison of Rore’s chromatic fourth and Vicentino’s chromatic tetrachord

*From Altus, mm. 1-4, Calami sonum ferentes*

![Musical notation for comparison of Rore's chromatic fourth and Vicentino's chromatic tetrachord](image)

*From Cantus, mm. 1-3, Hierusalem*

![Musical notation for comparison of Rore's chromatic fourth and Vicentino's chromatic tetrachord](image)

A hypothetical chromatic-tetrachord version of Rore’s chromatic-fourth subject

![Musical notation for comparison of Rore's chromatic fourth and Vicentino's chromatic tetrachord](image)

Still, what the two “Musa” introduce regarding chromaticism would not please theorists like Zarlino: a nonliteral approach to chromaticism that focuses on cadences, vertical sonorities, and their successions in place of or at least in addition to chromatic semitones in the melody. By downplaying the “Greek” chromatic tetrachord and melodic

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inflections and incorporating occasional diatonicism, the nonliteral approach puts at stake the conceptual purity of this “chromatic dedication.” Yet it continues Rore’s pragmatic flexibility and textual sensitivity. In fact, it is in the chordal passage of nonliteral chromaticism that Rore explores the text-setting potential of chromaticism.

“Recessu principis mei tristem” (verse 6) in mm. 60-65 and mm. 67-73, the latter being a varied repetition of the former up a perfect forth, displeases Lowinsky as being “full of false relations that cannot be rationalized by the text.”39 But Lowinsky overlooks Rore’s ingenuity of using interval affect. In this particular case, Rore applies the technique of parallel affective intervals and saturates the two iterations of “recessu …” with minor thirds and minor sixths (Example 5-2). While non-harmonic intervals and cross-relations recall the opening chromatic fugue and its literal approach, it is the vertical sonorities that yield the affective outcome and chromatic sound. The parallel minor thirds and sixths inflect the phrase with a soave or soft affect, more specifically

39 Lowinsky, 610.
despairing sorrow and feeble sadness. It is the nonliteral approach to chromaticism that allows this unconventional yet controlled outburst of emotions.

The affective treatment of verse 6 contrasts that of verses 4 and 5. Here, avoiding harmonic and textural intensity, Rore does not employ parallel intervals. Yet the technique of sustained affective intervals guarantees that the vertical sonorities are almost exclusively root-position major triads in this passage. In mm. 45, for example, by flattening the B in the Bassus Rore continues the root-position major triads while ignoring the chromatic non-harmonic relation between the Bassus’s B♭ and the Altus’s B♮. By doing so, Rore sets verses 4 and 5 to a duro or harsh affect characteristic of major thirds: openness, virility and gravity in this case.

Thanks to the “non-literal” approach, the interval-affective antithesis between mm. 34-54 and mm. 60-65 and 67-73 reads out Pigna’s poetic verses. The durezza of the major third and perfect fifth echoes not only the speaker’s turning his attention outward in verses 4 and 5. It also sets out the hope the speaker invests in of Catullus’s Sirmio and in the muse’s mythological power. The soavità of the parallel minor thirds and sixths, on the other hand, dramatizes the speaker’s “tristitia” for the departure of Prince Alfonso. Grammatically, “Me adi” (“come to me”) at the beginning of verse 6 connects the powerful Muse invoked in verse 4-5 (“Muse, who … come,” emphasis mine) and the helpless invoker (“to me, who mourn …” emphasis mine). Simultaneously, Rore’s affective treatment of mm. 55-57 and 66-67 sits ambiguously between the durezza of the Muse and soavità of the speaker and conjoins the two affective poles on a platform of plea and conversation.
The motif of conjoining the antithetical interval affects at “Me adi” looks forward to the concluding verses 7-9. In m. 74, the speaker again cries to the muse. Thereafter, the texture of Rore’s music becomes more animated and contrapuntal yet without foregoing the two techniques of interval affects. The musical reading of verse 7 accompanies both references to Catullus with parallel major thirds. The first “Catulli” in m. 78 exposes the parallel major third in the Cantus-Bassus duet. In the second “Catulli,” in m. 82 the Altus’s C♯ and Bassus’s B♭ introduce parallel major thirds between the two voices and highlight them through non-harmonic intervals and cross-relations. Such duro affect reflects Catullus’s “joy” in his poems on Sirmio his home and Lesbia his lover thanks to the muse’s intervention.

The lamenting speaker yearns for the same. As he invites the muse to join her mythological sweet song to the sad sound of his pipes in the last two verses, the music gradually joins the antithetical durezza and soavità. Although the contrast between these two affective poles remains traceable, Rore replaces long affective passages with fleeting fragments shrouded under a contrapuntal texture. By bringing forth the P5-m6-P5 progression, the Altus’s B♭ in m. 86 and the Tenor’s in m. 98 invokes the soave affect apposite to the sad sound of the pipes. The parallel major thirds in the Altus-Tenor duet in m. 89 and Cantus-Altus duet in m. 101 and the non-harmonic succession of root-position major triads in mm. 90-92 and 102-104 produce the durezza of the muse’s song. As the last verse “Junge carmen avenis” comes to its end, however, durezza gives yields to affective ambiguity. This perhaps signifies the coming of the muse’s “song” to finally compensate for the speaker’s sorrow.
Thus, sometimes literal and sometimes not, Rore’s flexible approach to chromaticism effectively transmutes Pigna’s messages and sentiments into “Calami sonum ferentes.” From the Greekness reflecting Pigna’s classical allusions to the interval-affective passages responding to individual phrases, Rore’s sensitivity to the poem’s narrative and emotional details continues to cast doubt on Lowinsky’s accusation of his insincerity. As Lowinsky fails to perceive, the text-tone relationship in Rore’s chromatic setting is not mimetic but affective, in Leeman Perkins’s terms. In other words, it matters little that an ensemble of four voices does not sound like a “fistula,” which Lowinsky insists to be a high-pitch “flute” or “shepherd’s pipe.” What is crucial is that the low ensemble gives Rore multiple affective possibilities: in spite of the theorists’ teachings, the low-range “chromatic fourths” and closed-position triads bring out the speaker’s intense lamentations. The low ensemble also allows the heartening relief at “Musa” with the higher and brighter register of the voices. And indeed, compared to the piece’s expressive efficacy, its use of four low voices might be incidental after all. One could argue that while fighting his military campaign in France, Alfonso did not have high-voice singers in his retinue. One could also suggest that Rore uses the low-voice ensemble as a spice of mysteriousness to dress up the new art of chromaticism. Of course, without other evidences these two claims remain hypothetical but they are no more

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41 Lowinsky, 600 and 609.
42 One of Lowinsky’s other critiques of the “ugliness” of *Calami sonum ferentes* is the perfusion of closed-position triads. He argues that both Vicentino and Zarlino would consider chords unpleasant because they place the imperfect consonant major or minor thirds in the low ranges (595-596).
implausible than Lowinsky’s cynical “antichromatic manifesto” reading of the piece that derives solely from its “ugly” low voicing.

Moreover, Rore’s affective setting is not myopically obsessed with verbal minutiae. Admittedly, there are incompatibilities between some uses of interval affect in the piece and the teachings of Vicentino and Zarlino. The “dura” (“harsh,” verse 4) in mm. 54 receives a soave m3-m6 sonority due to the B♭—“B mollis” or “soft B”—in Tenor. Some obvious duro words such as “pectore” (“heavy”) and “graves” (“bottom [of my heart]”) in verse 2 (mm. 11-29) receive little affective treatment. Rore’s ingenuity lies not in painting individual words or mechanically translating verbal expression into musical affect. Instead, his music clearly establishes his own interpretation of what is duro—the muse’s magical power—and what is soave—the speaker’s sadness—and remains consistent throughout. Under this guideline, in addition to local emotive passages, Rore’s setting becomes an affective whole on a global level. Most impressive is that even Rore’s use of interval affect, a technique applied to the most meticulous level of text-tone relationship, complies with an overall plan of balance. Indeed, although the new chromaticism can sound provocative in itself, Rore follows the Bembist principle of decorum that also informed Willaert’s Musica nova madrigals. The coexistence of literal and nonliteral approaches to chromaticism in service of a common affective goal does suggest Willaert’s legacy at work.

In addition to its chromaticism on the surficial level, my analysis of “Calami sonum ferentes” also reveals Rore’s skillful integration of chromaticism into the piece’s modal structure. I challenge Lowinsky’s comment that in “Calami sonum ferentes” Rore “carefully refrained from establishing that inner [modal] logic that marks his style in
general.” What Lowinsky refers to as “an incomplete Phrygian cadence on the chord of E major with G♯ in the higher voice” in mm. 34-3 is a “proper” cadence on E-mi whose cadential module lies between Tenor and Bassus. The difference is more than terminological, for Lowinsky’s notion of a Phrygian cadence discloses his application of functional harmony against the idioms inherent to Rore’s music. His nomenclature overlooks many important stylistic qualities that define the cadence’s status: extensive diminution, homophonic progression of all voices into its final sonority, and lengthy final sonority and rests thereafter in all voices.

As it turns out, what Lowinsky deems incomplete is in fact that piece’s most prominent internal cadence and definitive manifestation of its modal structure. The tonal type of “Calami sonum ferentes” fits Rore’s earlier practices rather comfortably. The first conclusion of the entire text occurs in mm. 94-95 with an E-mi cadence. The final “half cadence” in mm. 106-107, on the other hand, is a truncated elaboration of an E-mi cadence. Therefore, the one medial and two final E-mi cadences point to E as the piece’s modal final. Figure 5-1 reduces the piece’s unusual ensemble to a two-voice model. The upper voice represents the three upper voices and embodies the range of A-a or B-b, ambitus of Plagal Phrygian or mode 4 in the eight-mode system. The lower voice,

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43 Lowinsky, 610.
44 Ibid.
representing Bassus, represents the ambitus of Phrygian or mode 3, E-e. Similarly, Table 5-2 reduces the five E-final madrigals from Rore’s modally ordered I madrigali for five voices (1542). The comparison suggests the tonal type of “Calami sonum ferentes” as a variant of ♭-c1-E typically representing Plagal Phrygian or mode 4 in modally ordered anthologies.

Table 5-2
Five E-final Madrigals from Rore’s I madrigali (1542)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clef</th>
<th>Ambituses</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Mode Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altiero sasso</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>E-e, A(B)-a(b)</td>
<td>♭-E</td>
<td>Authentic Phrygian (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strane ruppi-A guisa d'hom</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>E-e, A(B)-a(b)</td>
<td>♭-E</td>
<td>Authentic Phrygian (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La vita fugge – Tornami</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>E-e, A(B)-a(b)</td>
<td>♭-E</td>
<td>Authentic Phrygian (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu piangi – Lei tutta intenta</td>
<td>c2-c4-c4-f5</td>
<td>A(B)-a(b), E-e</td>
<td>♭-E</td>
<td>Plagal Phrygian (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da quei bei lumi</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>E-e, A(B)-a(b)</td>
<td>♭-E</td>
<td>Authentic Phrygian (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although it accounts for its unusual voicing, the ♭-E tonal type is too typical to explain the setting’s modal peculiarities. In almost all Rore’s ♭-E pieces published before 1550 the imitative openings emphasize E and A. The opening of “Calami sonum ferentes,” however, highlights E and B. The Bassus enters on E with a chromatic fourth theme from E to A, and all three other voices enter on B with an E-B chromatic fourth. The unusual emphasis on B is more apparent at the B-F♯ open fifth in mm. 71-73. Example 5-3 explains it as an altered F♯-mi cadence. Similarly, in mm. 64-65 Rore introduces an C♯-mi cadence ending on an F♯-C♯ open fifth.

Neither F♯ nor C♯ is unusual to the piece. “Calami sonum ferentes” utilizes sixteen pitches from D♭ to A♯ along the circle of fifths, well beyond what the ♭-E tonal

45 The “Ambitus represented” column indicates the modal octaves that the ranges of a madrigal’s voices roughly represent. For review, the first ambitus is the mode-representing ambitus, usually carried by a soprano- or tenor-voice; it betrays whether the mode represented by the piece is authentic or plagal. The second ambitus is the authentic-plagal opposite of the first, usually carried by an alto- or bass-voice.
type ordinarily entails. Unlike the many fleeting outbursts of inflections, the B-F♯ and F♯-C♯ open fifths discussed above directly contradict the ♭-E tonal type by their structural significance. Through structural chromaticism they pronounce a shift in the diatonic collection from C (cantus durus as indicated by the “key signature”) to G and D respectively, adventures on which none of Rore’s earlier pieces has ever embarked.

The modal uniqueness of “Calami sonum ferentes” that the ♭-E tonal type fails to predict aligns with the piece’s provenance from Rore’s unprolific transition period. In her study on mode and modal representations in Rore’s madrigals, Jessie Ann Owens observes a rift regarding the use of tonal types between pre- and post-1500 madrigals. In the early period, Rore’s I Madrigali in 1542 and Il Primo Libro de Madrigali for four voices in 1550 were among the earliest examples of modally ordered anthologies that use tonal types to represent and differentiate the eight modes. For Owens, these two

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anthologies provide paradigms of Rore’s mode-representing tonal types listed in Table 5-3; in other words, these ten types have particular modal implications in Rore’s eyes.\footnote{47}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clef (top voice)</th>
<th>System and Final</th>
<th>Modal Representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>♮-D</td>
<td>Authentic Dorian (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>♭-G</td>
<td>Authentic Dorian (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>♭-G</td>
<td>Plagal Dorian (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>♮-E</td>
<td>Phrygian (3 or 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>♮-E</td>
<td>Phrygian (3 or 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>♭-F</td>
<td>Authentic Lydian (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>♮-F</td>
<td>Authentic Lydian (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>♭-F</td>
<td>Plagal Lydian (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>♮-G</td>
<td>Authentic Mixolydian (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>♮-G</td>
<td>Plagal Mixolydian (8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other types without specific modal representation: ♭-c\textsubscript{1}-C, ♭/♮-c\textsubscript{1}-C, ♭-g\textsubscript{2}-a, ♭-c\textsubscript{1}-a, ♭-g\textsubscript{2}-f, ♮-c\textsubscript{1}-A, ♮-g\textsubscript{2}-A, ♭-c\textsubscript{1}-d, ♭-g\textsubscript{2}-d, ♭/♮-c\textsubscript{1}-d, and ♮-c\textsubscript{1}-F.

Owens also discovers that, among the 108 madrigals by Rore, twenty use a total number of eleven tonal types not found in any of his ordered collections, shown also in Table 5-3.\footnote{49} These types are thus “non-modal,” and they account for seventeen out of forty-five late madrigals compared to three out of sixty-three early ones.\footnote{50} Owens interprets the drastically increased size of non-modal types in Rore’s post-1550 works as the indicator of “an innovator whose ideas ultimately changed the sound of music” and

\footnote{48} Italicized are types used sparingly in Rore’s modally ordered anthologies, which Owens originally put in parenthesis in her article.
\footnote{49} Ibid.
\footnote{50} Ibid., 6.
who “left the modal system behind in order to explore other sorts of tonal structures and indeed to explore the tonal system itself.”

Owens seems to have forgotten that, as Harold Powers repeatedly emphasizes, tonal types are not modes but only represent them. Thus, using more “non-modal types” can only disclose Rore’s loss of interests in representing the modes and not the modes themselves. In other words, Rore did not have to care what mode his piece should represent when he was still thinking in the terms and idioms of the modes. Yet Owens is right in calling Rore an innovator. What he achieves in his “Calami sonum ferentes” and subsequent compositions is the transition from what Frans Wiering calls an “external” view of the modes to an “internal” one. As I have mentioned in Chapter Three, in the course of their efforts to theorize polyphonic modality, mid-sixteenth-century theorists gradually departed from the external understanding of modes that focused on a posteriori categorization and superficial features such as modal finals. Instead, they studied the species intervals as essential components of the modes: the diapason (octave), diatessaron (perfect fourth), and, most importantly, the diapente (perfect fifth). As Wiering and Seth Coluzzi imply, the essential species composition of the modes served as a “common practice” in sixteenth century regardless of the practitioner’s awareness of the modes themselves. This internal view underlies the diverse solutions to practical questions including how many modes there are and where “regular” cadences should occur.

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51 Ibid., 9.
52 Ibid.
54 Wiering, 94-96; and Seth Coluzzi, “Structure and Interpretation in Luca Marenzio’s Settings of Il Pastor Fido” (PhD diss., University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, 2007), 169.
No longer representing the modal system through tonal types and employing more “non-modal” types, Rore followed a similar trajectory in his 1550s transition. Derived from psalm-tones 3 and 4, a more conventional approach to E-Plagal Phrygian or E-mode 4 would emphasize both E and A and have C as an additional point of medial cadence. In “Calami sonum ferentes,” the prominence of B over A discloses Rore’s restoration of E-mode 4’s species origins: the E-b diapente, its inversion the B-E diatessaron, and their combination the B-b diapason with the final E in the middle.

Example 5-4
The impracticality of a B-mi cadence in polyphony for it introduces an F#.

While understanding the mode’s proper form, Rore also seems aware that when dealing with more than two voices, it is difficult to uphold the “purity” of modes 3 and 4 in which both cadences on the final and the fifth above are _mi_-cadences. For review, different from _ut_ and _re_ cadences, a proper _mi_-cadence requires the support of a fifth below its cadential pitch: A in E-mi, and E in B-mi, both in the context of E-mode 3 or 4 (See Examples 3-7 and 3-8 in Chapter Three). Sixteenth-century composers preferred elaborating the E-mi cadences so that they eventually conclude with sonorities on their cadential pitch. Applying the same elaboration to B-mi produces an F# in the final sonority, however, and a usually undesirable shift into the G diatonic collection with an
immutable F♯ in the open fifth above B (Example 5-4). This practical concern led to the substitution of A for B in almost all mode-3 and mode-4 compositions of Rore’s time, to which even the theorizing Zarlino has to give in notwithstanding his ideal two-voice examples in *Le Istitutioni harmoniche*.

While most composers avoid the hazard of B in E-final modes, Rore takes on its chromatic promise. Yet neither does he suppress the more conventional A: he optimizes the affective potential of both. The dolorous setting of “recessu principis mei tristem” posits the “internal” use of E-B modal focus on soavità. The truncated F♯-mi cadence over a B-F♯ open fifth modally realizes the forbidding B in its conclusion (mm. 71-73). The truncated C♯-mi over F♯-C♯ drags the “tristem” even deeper into B’s soave realm (mm. 64-65). In sharp contrast Rore’s setting of verses 4 and 5 emphasizes the E-A modal focus. F-major and C-major triads set the two “Musa” cries, the fugal subject setting “quae nemus in colis …” comes in on A, E, and C, and the subsequent chordal passages highlight A and D and conclude on A (mm. 37-54). By establishing its modal and harmonic phenomena around A, albeit loosely, this passage suggests A’s connection to the muse’s mythological power of durezza to which the speaker appeals in verses 4 and 5.

Interpreting E-B as soavità and E-A as durezza sheds light on the other parts of the piece. The first syntactic sentence of the poem concludes at the end of verse 2 with a peculiar D-re cadence in m. 28. Introducing the D-A species of fifth, this D cadence can appear out of place in the chromatic “A” section whose opening heavily underlines E-B over the conventional E-A with three entrances on B. Imitative entrances of the first half of verse 2 “non pullent gemitus pectore” show similar preference of E-B. The Tenor’s
entrance in m. 19 seems to be on A yet the subject starts on the second pitch, E; thus Rore has three “non pullent” entrances on E and one on B (Altus, m. 16). The second half of verse 2, “abi imo nimium graves,” however, indicates a change. It has two entrances on E, and one each on B and A. From nonexistent to deceptive, and now unambiguous, A surfaces as a local modal focus and makes way to the D-re cadence at the end of verse 2.

Yet Rore moderates the pronouncement of A by tempering the D-re cadence. The cadence disintegrates into two staggered cadential modules: one between Cantus and Bassus, and the other between Tenor and the evaporated Cantus. The first module projects weakly out of the texture, and the second module, though exposed, lacks assertiveness—it lasts for a mere minim, and yields immediately to the next phrase. Compared to the full-fledged mi cadences throughout the setting, this temporary prominence of A mildly disturbs the flow of the E-B modal species. The latter reassumes its dominance as soon as the speaker continues his internal lament in verse 3.

What, then, is the affective function of the E-A/D-A modal focus in mm. 19-29? I suggest that it derives from Bembo’s principle of variatione or variety. Though short-lived, the shift from B towards A adds a different flavor to the otherwise soavissimo E-B dominated and chromatic passage. By gradually emerging in the surface, moreover, A’s ephemeral durezza anticipates the coming of the powerful muse in mm. 37-54. It also foretells the speaker’s plea in the last two verses of combining the muse’s durezza with his own soavità. Rore’s setting of verse 8 “dulce … tuum” starts with imitative entrances on C, the point of medial cadences in E-A, and G, the point of medial cadence in E-B (mm. 83-85 and 95-97). Similarly, the last verse begins with three imitative entrances—two on B and one on F♯ (mm. 89-91 and 101-103), but it concludes with the truncated
elaboration of E-mi that duly acknowledges the conventional importance of A in contrast to the E-B beginning. Together with the interval affects, the ending’s mixture of E-A’s *durezza* with E-B’s *soavità* achieves the speaker’s wish “junge carmen avenis” and satisfyingly completes the piece’s modal structure Rore constructs upon the “interval” use of E-A and E-B modal species.

**The Crossroad**

Composed around 1553, Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes,” whose chromaticism contributes to overall affective unity and modal coherence, illuminates Rore’s unprolific period from 1550 to 1557. Comparing my analysis above to Martha Feldman’s research on the early madrigals of Rore and Stefano La Via’s work on the late madrigals suggests “Calami sonum ferentes” as an important bridge between the two.

In *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice*, Feldman characterizes Rore’s pre-1550 or early madrigals by their gradual departure from Willaert’s *Musica nova*. Planted as early as in Rore’s first publication *I Madrigali* (1542), the seed of such stylistic change yielded fruit in the completion of the *Vergine* cycle in 1549. Feldman’s observations may be summarized into three main features that distinguish Rore’s early madrigals. Firstly, the “rhythmic and textural diversity and strenuous changes of declamatory tempo” make Rore’s early madrigals “far more animated than Willaert’s.” Secondly, Rore’s

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55 I appreciate Professor Anthony Newcomb of University of California, Berkeley for exchanging ideas with me on Rore’s late madrigals especially *O sonno* at the American Musicological Society’s Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA in November 2012.

56 Martha Feldman, *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1995), 408. As I have previously noted, the first six madrigals of *Le Vergine* cycle setting Petrarch’s first six stanzas came out in 1548, a print that indicated Rore as Willaert’s “discepolo.”

57 Ibid., 415, and 261.
increasingly “patter declamation … arrayed in duets or trios with … homorhythm,”
“spare, sharply etched motives,” “florid melismas,” “suspension cadences … far more
lucid than the ones in the Musica nova,” and other “gestures of destabilizing discontinuity”
suggest that he “fuses the demands of a viscous Willaertian polyphony with a newer urge
to articulate the separate parts.”58 Thirdly, Rore extends such fragmentary articulation to
the semantics by employing “overt madrigalisms” and “extensive … pictorial passages”
that “destabilize lyrics by focusing on the single word and on isolated word groups.”59

Feldman believes that through these different treatments of tempo, texture,
cadential articulation, and text painting Rore supplements Willaert’s attention to the
sound and syntax of the text with more focus on its meaning. Whereas “Willaert made
interpretation of localized grammar an overriding concern,” she argues, “Rore’s music
wrested meaning directly from text … [and] balanced the competing demands of
linguistic form and meaning.”60 For Feldman, the Vergine cycle is not only the
culmination of Rore’s deviation from Willaert but also the foundation “underpinning
[Rore’s] later seconda pratica style” and even “a link between the classic Venetian style
of the early forties and the late madrigalistic idioms of the north Italian courts, Ferrara
and Mantua (i.e. Wert, Marenzio, Luzzaschi, and Monteverdi).”61

Stefano La Via takes issue with Feldman’s claim that expressivity in Rore’s early
madrigals points to his post-1557 or late works. He shows that Rore’s late madrigals
instead of deviating further actually went closer to the Willaertian practices. Whereas
Feldman sees that in his early madrigals Rore’s new model of “demonstrative imitations”

58 Ibid., 415, 292, 421, 268, 426, 421, and 411.
59 Ibid., 408, 282, and 423.
60 Ibid., 281.
61 Ibid., 426.
undermines Willaert’s “supertrope” of *decorum*, La Via emphasizes that “many of the syntactic and expressive devices in the later works of Rore … can be still, and perhaps even more easily than in the case of his earlier madrigals, placed within the boundaries of that Neo-Petrarchan, Bembist-inspired ‘musical exegesis’ with which … Willaert had already experimented.”\(^{62}\) In Rore’s late madrigals, La Via argues, the “Willaertian syntactic devices” include “careful, often syllabic, declamation,” “rhythmic interpretation of poetic meter and patterns of accentuation,” “coordination of phrase structure and textural syntactic articulation,” “syntactic treatment of cadences and rests,” and “alternation between homophonic and staggered writing.”\(^{63}\) What Rore achieves in his late period, according to La Via, is giving “a new expressive function” to these “Willaertian” devices in an “‘exegetic’ approach [that] no longer privileges syntax and grammar over other textual aspects, such as prosody and semantics, but usually considers all verbal elements with equal scrupulousness and attention.”\(^{64}\)

Essentially, both Feldman in Rore’s pre-1550 and La Via in the post-1557 madrigals see a balance between syntax and semantics as opposed to Willaert’s almost exclusive concern with the former.\(^{65}\) The disagreement is that whereas Feldman emphasizes the expressive departure from Willaert embedded in the early madrigals, La Via underscores the return to Willaertian *decorum* in the late madrigals. Combining the observations of both authors, I propose that Rore’s late madrigals furthered the many non-Willaertian tendencies already suggested by his “early” madrigals on the one hand and restored some of the features of the Willaertian balance he had once forgone on the

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62 Feldman, *City Culture*, 426; and Stefano La Via, “Cipirano de Rore as Reader and as Read” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1991), 388.
63 La Via, 389.
64 Ibid., 390.
65 Feldman, 281; and La Via, 396.
other. To demonstrate the specific features that Rore preserved, abandoned, or readopted, I shall briefly compare four madrigals—Willaert’s “I piansi, hor canto – Si profund’era” from Musica nova, Rore’s “Strane ruppi, aspri monti, alte tremanti – A guisa d’hom da soverchia pena” from 1542, Rore’s “Vergine, quante lagrim’ho già sparte” from the Vergine cycle, and Rore’s “O sonno, o della queta umida ombrosa – Ov’ è l silentio che’l di fugge e’l lume” from 1557—and evaluate the role of “Calami sonum ferentes “as a transitional piece.

In her analysis of “Strane ruppi,” Feldman argues that its difference from Willaert’s Musica nova madrigals “may largely be conceived as one of melody: Rore, with his large leaps, wide ranges, and abundant melismas to vary the pace and contour of declamation, did not reflect speech patterns to the same extent as Willaert.”66 To some extent she is correct. The minor-sixth leap in Altus, mm. 54-55 depict the sense of abandonment, intervals uncommon to Willaert’s work. Yet although Rore’s use of large leaps persists in “Vergine, quante lagrim’” and “O sonno” (for example Altus, m. 18 of “Vergine, quante lagrim’,” and Cantus, m. 89 of “O sonno”), Rore reserves them to singular words and moments in the text and never pronounces them so audaciously as to disturb the sense of balance. Moreover, melismas are in fact not quite “abundant” in “Strane ruppi,” at least compared to Willaert’s “I piansi, hor canto.” Nor do they become more prominent in “Vergine, quante lagrim’,” and “O sonno” even forgoes melismas entirely. Neither large leaps nor melismas occur in “Calami sonum ferentes.”

Rather than the melody, the most noticeable changes from “I piansi, hor canto” to “Strane ruppi” and “Vergine, quante lagrim’” are increasing cadential articulations,

sa-lir tan-t'er-ti Nu-vo-li in que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
ve a gran pe-na pon sa-lir tan-t'er-ti Nu-vo-li in
tan-t'er-ti Nu-vo-li in que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
vo-li in que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
ti, ti, in que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
ti, in que-sto fo-sco a-
ti, in que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
ti, in que-sto fo-sco a-
que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
ti, a-er fu-man-
ti, in que-sto fo-
Nu-vo-li in que-sto fo-sco a-er fu-man-
ti, in que-sto fo-

Su-per-b'hor-ror, ta-ci-te sel-ve,
er fu-man-
ti, Su-per-b'hor-ror, ta-ci-te sel-ve, su-per-
er fu-man-
ti, Su-per-b'hor-ror, ta-ci-te sel-ve, Su-
sco a-er fu-man-
ti, Su-per-b'hor-ror, ta-ci-te sel-ve, Su-
sco a-er fu-man-
ti, Su-per-b'hor-ror, ta-ci-te sel-ve, Su-

40
super-b'horror, taci-te sel-ve e tan-ti Ne-gr'an-tr'her-bo-
b'horror, taci-te sel-ve e tan-ti Ne-gr'an-tr'her-bo-si in
ci-te sel-ve e tan-ti Ne-gr'an-tr'her-bo-si in ro-te pie-re a-per-ti, in ro-
ci-te sel-ve e tan-ti Ne-gr'an-tr'her-bo-si in ro-

si in ro-te pie-re a-per-ti, Ab-ban-donat-ti, ste-ri-li
te pie-re a-per-ti, Ab-ban-donat-ti, ab-ban-donat-ti ste-ri-li deser-
te pie-re a-per-ti, Ab-ban-donat-ti, ab-ban-donat-ti ste-ri-
te, in ro-te pie-re a-per-ti, Ab-ban-donat-ti, ab-ban-donat-ti ste-
te, in ro-te pie-re a-per-
ti, Ab-ban-donat-ti ste-

O-v'han pa-u-ran-da-le be-
lue er-ran-
ti, O-v'han pa-

O-v'han pa-

O-v'han pa-

O-v'han pa-

O-v'han pa-

O-v'han pa-

O-v'han pa-

de-ser-ti, ste-
-ri-li de-ser-
ti, O-v'han pa-

de-ser-ti, ste-
-ri-li de-ser-
ti, O-v'han pa-

de-ser-ti, ste-
-ri-li de-ser-
ti, O-v'han pa-

de-ser-ti, ste-
-ri-li de-ser-
ti, O-v'han pa-

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-ri-li de-ser-
ti, O-v'han pa-

de-ser-ti, ste-
-ri-li de-ser-

60
Vo' pian gen' d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Voi gen- d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can- gia il ciel,

Voi gen- d'io tra voi, vo' pian gen' d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, vo' pian gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo' pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

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Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,

Vo pian-gen'-d'io tra voi, e se par ti- to Non can-gia il ciel,
varied textures, and destabilized tempo, which as Feldman observes fracture the continuous flow characteristic of Willaert’s madrigals.67 “I piani, hor canto” avoids internal cadences in principle even at structural and syntactic breaks, for example between the first and second quatrains spread across mm. 31-37. Even when cadences do occur, Willaert opts for simple cadences and buries them under overlapping texts, for example in mm. 113-114. On the contrary, Rore implants more cadences in “Strane ruppi” and “Vergine, quante lagrim’,” and some of them highlight fragmented word groups such as “Abbandonati” and “sterili” in the former (mm. 54-55, and 60-61). Especially in the latter madrigal he frequently employs cadential diminutions that further break down the musical surface.

Similarly, while employed sparingly by Willaert, voice pairing and fragmented motives add variety to the polyphonic texture of Rore’s madrigals and disintegrate their textural continuity. As Feldman suggests, in the prima parte of “Strane ruppi” the passage “dissolves into an unsettled motivic counterpoint” after m. 54 with short motives that underline the verse “Abbandonati sterili deserti” (mm. 54-62).68 Such dissolution appears even stronger in “Vergine, quante lagrim’.” After the well-articulated B♭-ut cadence in mm. 41-42, as the speaker of the poem pleads directly to the “vergine,” the music gradually breaks down into homophonic duos and trios that move back and forth between different voice groups (mm. mm. 49-59). They completely disintegrate the verses “I dì miei più corenti che saetta” and “son se n’andati e sol morte n’aspetta” into short word groups, something Willaert rarely does. By isolating these short phrases Rore pushes them to the forefront of the texture and increases their expressive intensity. The

67 Feldman, City Culture, 415.
68 Feldman, “Rore’s ‘selva selvaggia,’” 575.
Le Vergine - Stanza Septima

Petrarch

Cipriano de Rore

su la ri - va d'Ar - no, Cer - can-d'hor que - st'et hor quel l'al-tra par - te, Non è sta - 
poi ch'io nac qu'in su la ri - va d'Ar - no, Non è sta - ta mia
nuo. Cer - can-d'hor que - st'et hor quel l'al-tra par -
te, Non è sta - ta mia

vi - ta al-tro ch'af - fan - no; Mor - tal bel - lez - za, at - ti e pa - ro -
le

m'han - no Tut - t'ing - pom - bra - ta l'al - ma. Ver - gi - ne sa - c'et al - ma, Non tar -
le m'han - no Tut - t'ing - pom - bra - ta l'al - ma. Ver - gi - ne sa - c'et al - ma, Non
le m'han - no Tut - t'ing - pom - bra - ta l'al - ma. Ver - gi - ne sa - c'et al - ma.

m'han - no Tut - t'ing - pom - bra - ta l'al - ma. Ver - gi - ne sa - c'et al - ma. Non tar -
dar,
dar, ch'io son for-s'al-’l’ul-ti-m’án-no: I di miei i di miei più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-
ma, Non tar dar, ch'io son for-s'al-l’ul-ti-m’án-no:

I di miei più cor-ren-ti che sa et-
ta, i di miei Fra mi se-rie e pec ca-ti-
ta, i di miei Fra mi se-rie e pec ca-ti-

I di miei più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-ta, più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-
ta, i di miei più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-
ta, i di miei Fra mi se-rie e pec ca-ti-

I di miei più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-ta, più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-
ta, i di miei più cor-ren-ti che sa-et-
ta, i di miei Fra mi se-rie e pec ca-ti-

Son se n’an-da-ti e sol mor-te n’a-spet-ta.

Son se n’an-da-ti e sol mor-te n’a-spet-ta.

Son se n’an-da-ti e sol mor-te n’a-spet-ta.

Son se n’an-da-ti e sol mor-te n’a-spet-ta.

Son se n’an-da-ti, e sol mor-te n’a-spet-ta.
increasing semiminims after m. 41 also destabilize the tempo, and their word-painting function at “più correnti che saetta” (speedier than an arrow) suggests that in order to imitate the meaning of the word, Rore would forsake Willaert’s focus on imitating its sound and syntax.

It is undeniable that in some aspects the late “O sonno” pushes the early works’ expressive discontinuity even farther. Not only does Rore employ more cadences, but he also articulates them further by having a pause after almost every cadence in the piece. In fact, Rore seems to have transferred the articulating power from the contrapuntal event of cadence to silence; multiple stops in the piece are merely what La Via calls “arrivals”: simple cadences without any suspension or diminution, or, in some cases, just arbitrary pauses (mm. 78-79, for example).69 These pauses isolate individual phrases and destroy the seamless flow once found in Willaert’s Musica nova madrigals and to a lesser extent Rore’s earlier works. In addition, the contrast between homophony and staggered imitation adds to the piece’s textural disunity. Emotions burst out of repetitions such as “Soccor al cor homai” and “A me t’envola, o sonno” (mm. 26-30, and 39-46).

Yet although silence and textural contrasts isolate individual phrases into fragments, as a whole they constitute a uniform and balanced structure. Compared to “Vergine lagrim’,” which progresses from continuous textural density to discontinuous textural collapse, “O sonno” maintains the order of one solitary phrase after another throughout. In place of the “spare, sharply etched motives” that cut through the Willaertian texture,70 “O sonno” restrains its expressive intensity by the uniform chain of self-contained phrases and thus brings back the sense of constancy and continuity,

69 La Via, 137-144.
70 Feldman, City Culture, 292.
O Sonno

Giovanni della Casa

Cipriano de Rore

Secunda Parte
gnì che con non sicu-re Ve-sti-gia di se-guir-ti han per co-stu-me? Las-so,
li-evi so-gni che con non sicu-re Ve-sti-gia di se-guir-ti han per co-stu-me? Las-so,

Las-so ch'in van ti chia-mo e que-ste o-scu-re Ge-li-de omb-re in van lu-sin-
Las-so ch'in van ti chia-mo e que-ste o-scu-re Ge-li-de omb-re in van lu-sin-

ago: o piu-me D'a-sprez-za col-
ago: o piu-me D'a-sprez-za col-
ago: o piu-me D'a-sprez-za col-

me, o not- ti-a-cer - b'e du-re.
me, o not- ti-a-cer - b'e du-re.
me, o not- ti-a-cer - b'e du-re.
col-me, o not- ti-a-cer - b'e du-re.
although within a new idiom of clear articulations and contrasts. Moreover, the pauses that separate the individual phrases in “O sonno” strictly follow syntactic breaks in della Casa’s sonnet and pronounce them more prominently than in any other madrigals. To some extent this rigorous adherence to and articulation of syntax is also a return to Willaert’s legacy and source of the piece’s overall balance.

La Via also correctly observes that rhythmic and textural shifts in “O sonno” do not “[overstep] the limits of decorum (decoro), of disturbing the grave unity of tono of the sonnet.”71 Indeed, its stability of declamatory tempo is comparable to that of “I piansi, hor canto.” Also, madrigalisms and melismas are rare, and their appearances are far less disruptive (mm. 57-60, “che’l di fugge e’l lume,” “[the silence] that drives away day and light”) than “più correnti …” in “Vergine, lagrim’” (mm. 51-55). Therefore, as a whole “O sonno” barely points to the later Ferrarese madrigals characterized with extreme contrasts and exceptionally transparent and light textures. Rather, it points back to Willaert.

This comparison of early and late madrigals of Rore clarifies the role of “Calami sonum ferentes” as a transitional piece. Prominent cadences and pauses, textural contrast between imitation and chordal declamation, and expressive repetitions continue Rore’s departure from Willaert’s Musica nova style. Yet the general constancy of the tempo, the avoidance of madrigalisms, and the uniform structure of self-contained phrases, though less pronounced than what was to come in “O sonno,” already begin balancing the intense expressivity Rore has developed to depict the meaning of the text with the restored syntactic decorum of Willaert. In this way, “Calami sonum ferentes” is a prelude to Rore’s late style. It signifies the start of combining his early departure from and his

71 La Via, 168.
eventual return to Willaert’s *Musica nova*, a balance between semantic imitation of the text through expressive discontinuity and aural-syntactical imitation through *decorum*. In a way, the seemingly provocative piece suggests a process of self-criticism that might have characterized Rore’s unprolific years from 1550 to 1557 during which he evaluated his deviation from Willaert and retracted from the “demonstrative-semantic” style he achieved in the *Vergine* cycle in 1549.

**The Cornerstones of Interval Affect and Modes**

Chromaticism in “Calami sonum ferentes” and the late madrigals such as *O sonno* similarly suggests simultaneous departure from and return to Willaert’s *Musica nova*. Obviously, “Calami sonum ferentes” is unprecedented for its chromaticism in Rore and Willaert’s work. Nonetheless, the piece’s employment of interval affect, an important locus of chromaticism, grows out of Rore’s earlier practices. In his book on interval affect in Venetian madrigals, Timothy McKinney argues that Rore “is aware of the [Willaertian] conventions associated with the theory of interval affect … but … overall the practice is less important to him than it was to Willaert in *Musica nova.*”72 A comparison of “I piansi, hor canto” and “Strane ruppi” shows that McKinney’s observation holds true only in a nuanced manner. Table 5-4 enlists the *duro* and *soave* phrases in Petrarch’s sonnet “I piansi, hor canto” that Willaert effectively contrasts through sustained affective intervalllic passages. Rore appears more tentative than Willaert in establishing an overall contrast between sustained *durezza* and *soavità* and

---

I piansi, hor canto - Si prodund'era

Petrarch

Adriano Willaert

Nel qual oneste'amor chiaro rivela Sua dolce
miei non ce la, Nel qual oneste'amor chiaro rivela
le agli occhi miei non ce la, Nel qual oneste'amor chiaro rivela
le agli occhi miei non ce la, Nel qual oneste'amor chiaro rivela
ce la, Nel qual oneste'amor chiaro rivela Sua dolce forza, e suo santo costume, e suo santo costume:
forza, e suo santo costume, e suo santo costume:
Sua dolce forza, e suo santo costume, e suo santo costume:
Sua dolce forza, e suo santo costume, e suo santo costume:
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Sua dolce forza, e suo santo costume, e suo santo costume:
per accorciar del mio vi ver la tela, Che non pur pon-te,

me tal fiu me, per accorciar del mio vi ver la tela, Che non pur pon-te,

ac corciar del mio vi ver la tela, per accorciar del mio vi ver la tela, Che non pur

ac corciar del mio vi ver la tela, per accorciar del mio vi ver la tela, Che non pur

me tal fiu me, per accorciar del mio vi ver la tela, Che

gua do, o re mi, o ve la, Ma scam par non po tien mi a le né piu me,

o gua do, o re me, o ve la, Ma scam par non po tien mi a le né piu-

o gua do, o re mi, o ve la, Ma scam par non po tien mi a le_

pon te, o gua do, o re mi, o ve la, Ma scam par non po-

la, Che non pur pon te, o gua do, o re mi, o ve la, Ma

non pur pon te, o gua do, o re me, o ve la Ma scam par non

ma scam par non po tien mi a le né piu me, ma scam par

me, ma scam par non po ten mi a le né piu me, ma scam par

né piu me, ma scam par non po tien mi a le né piu me, ma scam par

tien mi a le né piu me, ma scam par non po tien mi a le né

scam par non po tien mi a le né piu me, ma scam par non po tien mi a le né

po tien mi a le né piu me,
Sì pro fun-d'e-ra, e di sì lar-ga ve-na Il pian-ger mi-o,
Sì pro fun-d'e-ra, e di sì lar-ga ve-na Il pian-ger mi-o, e si pun-ge la
Sì pro fun-d'e-ra, e di sì lar-ga ve-na Il pian-ger mi-o,
Sì pro fun-d'e-ra, e di sì lar-ga ve na Il pian-ger mi-o,
Sì pro fun-d'e-ra, e di sì lar-ga ve na Il pian-ger mi-o,
Sì pro fun-d'e-ra, e di sì lar-ga ve na Il pian-ger mi-o,
e si lunghe la riva, Ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a
ri-
va, Ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier à pe-na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col
e si lunghe la riva, Ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a
lun
ghe la riva, Ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe-na, Ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe
na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe-na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col
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na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe
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na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe-
na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-
fian ger mi-o, e si lunghe la riva, Ch'ì mi-
o, e si lunghe la riva, Ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe-
na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-sier a pe-
na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen-
pen-sier a pe-
na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col
v'ag-giunge va col pen sier a pe-
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na, ch'ì v'ag-giunge va col pen sier a pe-
na, c

Non lauro, o palma, ma tran-qui-la o-li-va Pie-tà mi
na, Non lauro, o palma, ma tran-qui-la o-li-va
Non lauro, o palma, ma tran-qui-la o-li-va
Non lauro, o palma, ma tran-qui-la o-li-va
Non lauro, o palma, ma tran-qui-la o-li-va
mandà
del tempo ras-se-re-nà,
tà mi mandà, del tempo ras-se-re-nà,
li vè Pètà mi mandà,
El pian to a-sciu-ga, e vuol an chor,
el pian to a-sciu-ga, e vuol an chor,
el pian to a-sciu-ga, e vuol an chor,
el pian to a-sciu-ga, e vuol an chor,
el pian to a-sciu-ga, e vuol an chor,
instead opts for short affective moments. Over the preponderance of *soave* minor triads

Rore reserves occasional *duro* passages for highlighting the “Dantean wilderness” of certain words as Feldman comments.\(^7^3\) In mm. 48-52, for example, he sets the *duro* verse 6 “Negr’antr’herbosì in rotte pietre aperti” (Black grass-grown caves opening amid broken rocks) to an ephemeral passage of root-position major triads.\(^7^4\)

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**Table 5-4**  
Willaert’s use of interval affect in “I piansi, hor canto – Si profund’era”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Willaert’s Treatment with Interval Affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>… che’l celeste lume</td>
<td>mm. 12-20</td>
<td>Sustained root-position major triads, <em>duro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quel vivo sole à gli occhi miei non cela</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nel qual honesto Amor chiaro rivela</td>
<td>mm. 20-33</td>
<td>Sustained root-position minor triads, <em>soave</em> (Parallel major thirds “forza” and “costume,” <em>duro</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sua dolce forza, et suo santo costume:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onde ei suol trar di lagrime tal fiume</td>
<td>mm. 32-47</td>
<td>Sustained root-position minor triads, <em>soave</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per accorciar del mio viver la tela;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Che non pur ponte, ò guado, ò remi, ò vela</td>
<td>mm. 47-55</td>
<td>Sustained root-position major triads, <em>duro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Si prodund’era, …</td>
<td>mm. 74-78</td>
<td>Sustained root-position major triads, <em>duro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… et di si larga vena</td>
<td>mm. 79-82</td>
<td>Sustained root-position minor triads, <em>soave</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il pianger mio, …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… et si lunge la riva; Ch’l v’aggiungeva col pensier à pena.</td>
<td>mm. 83-106</td>
<td>Sustained root-position major triads, <em>duro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non lauro, ò palma; ma tranquilla oliva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… e’l tempo rasserena;</td>
<td>mm. 108-116</td>
<td>Sustained root-position minor triads, <em>soave</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E’l pianto asciuga; et vuol anchor, ch’i viva.</td>
<td>mm. 117-130</td>
<td>Sustained root-position major triads, <em>duro</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^7^3\) Feldman, “Rore’s ‘selva selvaggia,’” 562-564.  
\(^7^4\) Feldman’s translation in Ibid., 564-565. All emphases mine.
Furthermore, in order to demonstrate the affect and meaning of particular words, Rore employs parallel affective intervals and cross relations more frequently than Willaert. In verse 6, Rore supplements the *duro* major triads with parallel major thirds on “Negr’antr’herbosí” (Black grass-grown caves) in mm. 48-9 and a jarring cross-relation between F and F♯ in the following measure. Similar instances of intensive *duro* “wilderness” include the parallel major third at “strane ruppi” (strange cliffs, mm. 2-3), “nudi” ([rocks] naked [and exposed to heaven], mm. 15-16), and “questo fosco aer fumanti” (this gloomy, fuming air, m. 33), and a cross-relation between C and C♯ in the last one.

“Vergine, qunate lagrim’” continues the above usages yet also shows a return to some of Willaert’s practices. Inflections through accidentals assume a larger role and are no longer necessarily in the form of surficial cross-relations. Expressive words such as “grave danno” (heavy loss, mm. 18-20), “alma” (soul, m. 40), and “morte” (death, mm. 60-61) are set to E♭s that shift further towards the *mollis* side. Parallel affective intervals become more frequent, but to an extent that they seem to lose the same expressive power as in *Strane ruppi*. They often appear incidental as parallel third and sixth passages become frequent, for example in the opening “quante lagrim’ho già sparte” and “I di miei più correnti che saetta”; indeed, the quality of such parallel intervals seems rather unimportant. Simultaneously, local passages of sustained affective intervals grow lengthier and begin to assume structural importance as in Willaert’s *I piansi*. The passage exclusively composed of root-position major triads in mm. 41-49 brings out the positive energy of “Vergine sacr’et alma” (“Holy and life-giving virgin,” verse 9) as the speaker begins speaking to her directly. Similar passages at “Non è stata mia vit’altro ch’affanno”
(“My life has been nothing but troubles”) also bring the first stanza to the end and anticipate the coming of the “vergine” in a way reminiscent of the muse in “Calami sonum ferentes.”

Following the trends in “Vergine, quante lagrim’,” in “O sonno” Rore restores Willaert’s use of interval affect in its entirety. Here, Rore completely gives up parallel affective intervals as agents of expression. Though “O sonno” has not shortage of parallel intervals, it no longer matters what intervallic quality they maintain or whether they maintain it at all. As La Via suggests, the sheer quantity of inverted triads and quasi-fauxbourdons in the *seconda parte* contributes to its dolorous *soavità*.75 Meanwhile, precisely thanks to chromaticism, sustained interval-affective passages become the pillar of Rore’s reading of Giovanni della Casa’s poem. The *prima parte* or *fronte* of the poem rests upon the speaker’s hope that the soothing sleep will come when hearing his plea, and the *seconda parte* or *sirime* upon disillusionment and realization of the cruel reality of sleep’s absence.76 In response, Rore’s setting of the *prima parte* features a good amount of root-position major triads, and the *seconda parte* root-position minor triads.

The transition between the end of *prima* and the beginning of the *seconda parte* especially brings out the sharp contrast. In verse 8, end of the *prima parte* as the speaker calls upon sleep to “extend and rest its wings over him,” Rore employs a passage of root-position major triads (mm. 47-52). It mainly consists of an extended E-major sonority that falls outside the ♭-A tonal type. As the speaker begins to perceive the reality of sleep’s absence in verses 9-11, Rore converts the chromatic E-major sonority into E-minor (mm. 53-62). Together with the B-minor triads, a simple conversion of the type of

75 La Via, 117.
76 Ibid., 158-159.
third above the “root” demonstrates the transition from *durezza* to *soavità*, from hope to disillusionment in della Casa’s text. It is through chromaticism, indeed, that Rore achieves this clever yet profound shift.

“Calami sonum ferentes” thus appears at the crossroad of Rore’s chromaticism. Rore’s approach to chromaticism permits the sustained affective intervals setting “Musa quae nemus … fuit. It also presents the final outburst of parallel affective intervals, a technique that Rore began to doubt as early as in the pre-1550 “Vergine, quante lagrim’.” It is through the two kinds of affective intervals combined that Rore brings out the synthesis of *durezza* and *soavità* in verses 7-9 (“junge carmen avenis”) and establishes an overall plan of affective contrast and balance in “reading” Pigna’s poem. The fact that chromaticism in “Calami sonum ferentes” brings two uses of interval affect to their fullest potential suggests the “experimental” nature of the piece and Rore’s excitement at consciously composing with chromaticism for the first time.

In contrast to the surficial interval affect, the structural interplay between chromaticism and modality in “Calami sonum ferentes” does not relate much to Willaert or to Rore’s earlier practices. Although Feldman argues for the significance of the E-Phrygian mode represented by the ♯E tonal type in “Strane ruppi,” the “linkage between mode and affect” exists only on the external level. The “modal ethos” of “harsh, angry, or excited effects” generally attributed to mode 3 pales in front of “Calami sonum ferentes,” which, as I have shown, explores the modal system internally by taking freedom in tonal system shifts and incorporates chromaticism into its overall modal affect and coherence.

77 Feldman, “Rore’s ‘selva selvaggia,’” 586.
“O sonno” inherits the interplay between mode and chromaticism from “Calami sonum ferentes.” It utilizes a “non-modal” tonal type $b$-A, which may also imply the Phrygian modes convenient for chromaticism, as I have shown above. Similar to E-B and E-A in “Calami sonum ferentes,” in “O sonno” there are two antithetical modal focuses: D in relation to *duro* and “positive” D-re cadences signifying hope, and A in relation to *soave* and “negative” A-mi cadences signifying disillusionment. On the local level, just like that between major and minor sonorities, the antithesis between *duro* and *soave* cadences “mirrors and underscores the conceptual/affective antithesis represented in the text.” Overall, the use of cadential affects stays consistent, and the preponderance of “negative” cadences brings out the text’s “sad, grave concetto [overall idea].” Parallel to interval-affective passages, the prima parte concludes with a “positive” D-re signifying the hope the speaker invests in sleep. The seconda parte, on the contrary, ends with the “negative” A-mi cadence, as the speaker finally perceives the reality: “o notti’ acerb’ e dure” (oh, crude and harsh night).

The transition in the first three verses of seconda parte from the first realization of the hopeful illusion to the painful acceptance of reality does not receive much attention from La Via (mm. 52-68). Here, Rore explores the modal-affective potential of chromaticism through a combination of surficial interval affect and structural tonal system shifts. Rore sets the three verses with a modal focus around E first in *cantus durus* in place of *cantus mollis* as indicated by the tonal type. In mm. 55 the adventure quickly proceeds into the G diatonic collection with a series of E-re cadences. These *re* cadences dissemble the local modal focus of E-Dorian (or E-Aeolian) as the positive D and D-re

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78 La Via, 172.  
79 Ibid., 173.  
80 Ibid., 207.
cadences. Yet soon the speaker sees through the illusion, as the soave interval affect already suggests. With many non-harmonic relations, the music transitions from the G diatonic collection to F or cantus mollis in mm. 64-67, exactly when the speaker realizes that the usual companions of sleep (“che … di seguirti han per costume,” or “who … have the custom of following you [sleep]”)–“silentio” (“silence”) and “lievi sogni” (“soft dreams”)–are not here. Now E reveals its true identity as the extension of A, the modal focus of disillusionment. It yields to a definitive D-re cadence in m. 68 as he speaker desperately turns to the real hope for the last time at the end of the third verse. Hope soon fades away, however: the two “Lasso” cries effectively subject the positive D to the negative A (mm. 70-72), and points doubtlessly towards the negative A-mi ending amidst a disheartening chain of soave minor triads.

**Double Transition**

“Calami sonum ferentes” is first and foremost a musical setting of Pigna’s “Fistula tertia.” Its singular chromaticism does not disturb Rore’s musical language or his syntactic and semantic imitation of the text. Quite the opposite, it does Rore a service. Besides chromatic subjects and non-harmonic intervals in the melody and cross relations in the harmony, Rore’s adoption of chromaticism makes possible sustained and parallel affective intervals and maximizes the text-setting potential of interval affect. On the structural level, Rore also combines chromaticism with an internal view of the modes and uncovers the affective potentials of the interaction between the ancient chromaticism and the modern modal system, or what I call “modal chromaticism.” Rore’s still experimental chromaticism in “Calami sonum ferentes” responds sensitively to Pigna’s verses and
captures the expressions in the text in a way comparable to his achievements in post-1557 madrigals.

Between the likely completion of “Calami sonum ferentes” in 1553 and Rore’s publication of second book of four-voice and fourth book of five-voice madrigals, chromaticism became a component of his late style. Rore abandoned the technique of parallel affective intervals, which became trivialized in his early works, and reestablished the Willaertian contrast between sustained passages of antithetical interval affects. Furthering his internal view of the modes, he also started composing more in non-modal tonal types and using modal chromaticism for musical coherence and affect. At the same time, in his madrigals he combined expressive discontinuity with Willaert’s emphasis on decorum and balance.

Composed during Rore’s unprolific period, “Calami sonum ferentes” reflects the transition between early and late Rore in both chromaticism and general characteristics of his style. This provocative piece represents the crossroad between Rore’s two distinctive periods. It shows the composer’s reevaluation of his previous works in relation to Willaert’s *Musica nova* and the beginning of chromaticism in his work. It shows him entering the second half of his career striving for a balance between decorum and expressivity and exploring the enigma of chromaticism.

In a broader context, “Calami sonum ferentes” is not only a transition for Rore. It witnesses the change of chromaticism from a theoretical topic into an expressive tool for composers. It is the first case of *l’antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica*, an endeavor of which Spataro dreamed, which Vicentino attempted, and to which Rore gave the final touch. Although several chromatic compositions preceded “Calami sonum
ferentes,” Rore’s piece was the first to go beyond the theoretical discourse and become more than a mere experiment. Whether Rore meant the piece as an “antichromatic manifesto” or as an adventure in chromaticism, he succeeded in incorporating Greek chromaticism into contemporary vocal polyphony. It was Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” and late madrigals that demonstrated the exciting potential of chromaticism on both the surficial and structural levels and in the interplay between expressivity and decorum. Indeed, as the following chapters will show, the dialectics between surface and structure and between Aristotelian expression and Ciceronian decorum would be recurrent tropes as Renaissance composers continued Rore’s chromatic pursuit. The story of chromaticism in the practices of Renaissance polyphony began in many important ways with Rore’s quirky but refined “Calami sonum ferentes.”
Appendix: Giovanni Battista Pigna’s three *fistulae* and their translations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fistula prima ex Theocriti numeris</th>
<th>First reed pipe song, in Theocritean meter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syrinx quae dulci modularis arundine Carmen, Tunc primum Panos miseri tu sola voluptas Cum frustra in calamos versam Syringa vocaret. Tu mox Cyclopis furias solata sono Nequicquam flentis labentem Nereida: Amissumque oculum insidiis Ithacensibus. Quem iam perdiderat celery nymphae fuga Tu pastorum denique grata choro Sacro Arethusae Pieridum sociae. Suscipe quaeso meum nunc spiritum. Egregientem flumine lassulo, Meque tuo sonitu refice. Nobis rex &amp; praesidium; Nobis vita recessit. Magni natus abest Amphitryoniadae. Sollicitudinibus Tu modo tactis, Voce canora Pone modum, O Syrinx.</td>
<td>Syrinx, who play a song at the sweet sound of a shepherd’s pipe, You used to be the only relief of wretched Pan At the time when, in vain, he kept calling Syrinx after she had been transformed into a reed pipe. With your music you soon relieved the rage of the Cyclops In vain mourning both the Nereid while she was sliding away from him And the eye he lost for the Ithacan trap. And the flight of the swift nymph had already ruined him, But again you were pleasing to the sacred choir Of Arethusa, who is an ally to the Pierian shepherds. Support, I pray, my inspiration. Restore me with your music As I come out of the rather tired river. My king and my refuge, My life have vanished. The son of the great Amphityronis Is gone. Having calmed My anxieties, Please just put a limit to them With your harmonious voice, Oh Syrinx.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fistula secunda ex Horatii numeris</th>
<th>Second reed pipe song, in Horatian meter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fistula ruris amor me carmine Dorico tenebat</td>
<td>A reed pipe, the love of the fields, was capturing me with its Doric melody</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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81 The Latin original comes from Giovan Battista Pigna, *Jo. Baptisteae Pignae Carminum libri quatuor*. His adiunximus Caelii Calcagnini Carm. lib. III. Ludovici Areosti Carm. lib. II. (Venice, Italy: Valgrisi, 1553), Item P.o.lat. 1661 n in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Germany. Permanent link http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10190424-9, accessed 4 May 2013. My gracious thanks to Luca Grillo, Assistant Professor of Classics at Amherst College, Amherst, MA for providing these translations. Translation of the third *fistula* is based on Adkins and Lowinsky’s.

Ipse rex Regem per acuta saxa, Duras per Alpes, castra per horrida A patria procul urbe secutus. Hic ego non validus referre Quae Martio campo geruntur, Nobis remotum lugeo Hoc illum tenui sono. Rheni prata nivosi Ipse negliget ferox Sydere sub gelido. Hic mea sola mecum Fistula flebit.

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**Fistula tertia ex Catulli numeris**

Calami sonum ferentes Siculo leve numero Non pellunt gemitus pectore ab imo nimium graves: Nec qui strepente sunt ab Aufido revulsi. Musa quae nemus incolis Sirmionis amoenum, Reddita qua lenis, Lesbia dura fuit; Me adi recessu principis mei

---

**Third reed pipe song, in Catullan meter**

The reed-pipes giving forth a sound in light Sicilian meter Do not banish the sighs, all too painful, from the depth of my heart, Nor do those who have been plucked from the roaring Aufidus. O Muse, who dwell'st in the pleasant groves of Sirmio, Through whom unfeeling Lesbia grew tender,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tristem.</th>
<th>Visit me, sad for the departure of my prince.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musa delitiae tui Catulli</td>
<td>O Muse, delight of thy Catullus,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dulce tristibus his tuum</td>
<td>Join thy sweet song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iunge carmen avenis.</td>
<td>To the sad sound of my oaten pipes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Five

*Peregrinus expectavi pedes meos in cymbalis*¹

Let the majesty of the Lord grant us wretched mortals that the most lofty thoughts and wise counsels of Your Holiness, so necessary in these troubled times, will always meet with the desired end. For which I kiss the most holy feet of Your Holiness with all humility, and pray for your perpetual happiness. ²

Thus concludes the dedication of *Lagrime di San Pietro* to Pope Clement VIII on 24 May 1594. Three weeks later, on 14 June, its author passed away after struggling with “religious melancholia” during much of his last years.³ Born in Flanders and educated in Italy, Orlando di Lasso (1530/1532-1594) had served the Bavarian court of Dukes Albrecht V and Wilhelm V at Munich since the mid-1550s, first as a singer and later *maestro di cappella* until his death. He left behind a giant corpus, including an enormous number of motets, more than a hundred Magnificats, and a cosmopolitan mélange of madrigals, villanelles, chansons, and German lieder.

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¹ The title is taken from Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)’s score for Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948)’s film *Alexander Nevsky* (1938). This nonsense Latin phrase is composed of words that Prokofiev arbitrarily picked from the Psalm texts in Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)’s *Symphony of Psalms*. Here the title mocks the arbitrariness, as I will show, of the widespread labeling of “Vide homo, quae pro te patior” as a piece composed in *tonus peregrinus*.


Lagrima di San Pietro concluded Lasso’s life as an exceptional composer. The cycle consists of twenty-one individual pieces set for an ensemble of seven voices. The first twenty are spiritual madrigals based on the poem *Le Lagrime di San Pietro* or “the tears of St Peter” by the Italian poet Luigi Tansillo (1510-1568). In a Petrarchan manner reminiscent of *Le Vergine*, Tansillo reflects upon Peter’s denial of Christ, the meeting of Peter’s eyes with that of Christ on the crucifix, and the apostle’s inconsolable sorrow for his betrayal. In its twentieth and last stanza, the poem concludes with Peter’s desperate call to depart his sinful and dolorous life:

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Negando il mio signor, negai quell ch’era
La vita, ond’ogni vita si deriva;
Vita tranquilla, che non teme, o spera,
Né puóte il corso suo giúnger a riva;
Poi che dunque negai la vita vera
Non è, non è ragión, che unqua più viva;
Vátten, vita fallace, e tosto sgombra;
Se la vera negai, non chiedo l’ombra. 4
```

Lasso’s cycle does not end here, however. After the twenty Italian madrigals each setting one stanza of Tansillo’s poem, Lasso appends a Latin motet:

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Vide homo, quae pro te patior,
Ad te clamo, qui pro te morior;
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4 Transcription from Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke, Neue Reihe*, Band 20, XXI. Ficher’s translation is: “In denying my Lord I denied that which / Is the life from which all life springs, / The peaceful life that neither fears nor hopes, / And in its course cannot reach the shore; / Since, therefore, I have disavowed the true life / There is no reason that I should continue living; / Go then, deceitful life, get you gone without delay: / If I have denied the true life, I do not want its shadow,” in Fisher, “‘Per mia particolare devotione,’” 220.
Vide poenas, quibus affícior;
Vide clavos, quibus confodior;
Non est dolor, sicut quo crucior,
Et cum sit tans dolor exterior,
Intus tamen dolor est gravior,
Tam ingratum cum te experior.⁵

Concluding Lasso’s last composition, the speech of Christ set to music in the motet “Vide homo” must have had a profound religious meaning to Lasso. In contrast to Peter’s penitence in the vernacular Italian, the words of Christ in “Vide homo” are set in the ecclesiastical language of Latin. Moreover, that the crucified Christ speaks directly to the sinful humankind is rather unusual for the genres of the spiritual madrigal and motet. Tansillo’s twenty stanzas, as devotional as they are, only occasionally invoke imagined speeches of Christ on the cross. In “Vide homo,” however, Christ himself speaks as both God and a murdered human being.

It is not for the spiritual gravity of the valedictory “Vide homo” that many scholars have found this motet a fascinating piece, however. Rather, it pertains to three tiny details in Lasso’s music: the “key signature,” the clef of the Cantus, and the Bassus’s final note. They discover that the ♮-g₂-A the tonal type of “Vide homo” appears out of place in the modal ordering of pieces in Lagrime di San Pietro. Table 6-1 lists all the

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⁵ Transcription from Lasso, Sämtliche Werke, Neue Reihe, Band 20, XXI. Fisher’s translation is: “Behold, man, what I suffer for you; / I cry unto you, you for whom I die; / Behold the agonies that I endure; / Behold the nails that pierce me; / There is no pain like that of the cross, / And great as this outward pain might be, / The inner pain is even worse, / To have experienced such ingratitude from you,” in Fisher, “‘Per mia particolare devotione,’” 170.
twenty-one pieces of the cycle and their respective tonal types. Even though Lasso did not explicitly indicate the modal attributions of these pieces, the groupings of tonal types suggest an undisputable modal progression. As Table 6-1 indicates, the cycle proceeds from mode one or authentic Dorian represented by the first four madrigals to mode seven or authentic Mixolydian by the nineteenth and twentieth madrigals.

Table 6-1
Octonary Modal Ordering in Lasso’s Lagrime di San Pietro (1594)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Modal Attribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Il magnanimo Pietro</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dorian (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma gli archi</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dorian (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tre volte haveva</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Dorian (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qual a l’incontro</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dorian (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giovane donna</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypodorian (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Così talhor</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypodorian (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogni occhio del signor</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Hypodorian (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nessun fedel trovai</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypodorian (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi ad una ad una</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Phrygian (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come falda di neve</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Phrygian (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E non fu il pianto suo</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Phrygian (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quel volto</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Phrygian (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veduto il miser</td>
<td>g₂-g₄-c₂-c₄-c₆-f₆</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Lydian (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E vago d’incontrar</td>
<td>g₂-g₄-c₂-c₄-c₆-f₆</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Lydian (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vattene vita va</td>
<td>g₂-g₄-c₂-c₄-c₆-f₆</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Lydian (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O vita troppo rea</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hypolydian (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A quanti già felici</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Hypolydian (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non trovava mia fé</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₅-c₇-c₉-c₁₁-f₁₁</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hypolydian (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queste opre e più</td>
<td>g₂-g₄-c₂-c₄-c₆-f₆</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Mixolydian (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negando il mio signor</td>
<td>g₂-g₄-c₂-c₄-c₆-f₆</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Mixolydian (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vide homo quae pro te patior</td>
<td>g₂-g₄-c₂-c₄-c₆-f₆</td>
<td>♩</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>???</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to completely represent the eight-mode system, Lasso would have to set the appending “Vide homo” to a tonal type that typically represents mode eight or plagal.

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6 Table 6-1 is created based on the information from Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke, Neue Reihe*, Band 20.

7 Lasso’s tonal types do not differentiate between mode three or authentic Phrygian or mode four oor plagal Phrygian.
Mixolydian, for example $\text{♯-c1-G}$. Its actual tonal type $\text{♯-g2-A}$, however, defies the cycle’s modal completion. Its final note A can hardly associate with mode eight, which almost always ends on G and perhaps occasionally on D.

As a matter of fact, in not only Lagrime di San Pietro but also Lassó’s entire corpus it is ambiguous what mode $\text{♯-g2-A}$ pieces are supposed to represent. Peter Bergquist, in his article on Lassó’s “A-minor compositions,” observes:

Unlike some of his contemporaries, [Lassó] seems to have thought of these [$\text{♯-A}$] pieces as belonging to no one of the eight modes. This is shown in part by the modally ordered publications of his music that were issued throughout his career … When any of these collections included pieces in A, those pieces were usually collected together as a group and not ascribed to a mode. They are placed variously in different publications, most often before the pieces in mode 1, after those in mode 8, or between those in mode 2 and modes 3/4. In other words, they are placed outside the modal system altogether, or close to modes 2 and 3/4, both of which would be natural affinities for pieces in A in an eight-mode system.8

In the entire cycle of Lagrime di San Pietro, Lassó does employ the affinity between $\text{♯-A}$ and the Hypodorian mode two and the Phrygian mode three and four.9 He sets three madrigals of the cycle in the $\text{♯-c1-A}$ tonal type, which is similar to $\text{♯-g2-A}$ except for a lower voicing: the third madrigal “Tre volte haveva,” representing mode one, the

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9 Lassó does not distinguish between the authentic Phrygian mode and the plagal Hypophrygian mode in Lagrime di San Pietro. Here they are referred to as “Phrygian” or “mode three and four.”
ninth “Chi ad una ad una,” representing mode three and four, and the eleventh “E non fu il pianto suo,” also representing mode three and four. The conspicuous absence of mode-eight tonal types and substitution of “Vide homo’s” ♭-g₂-A, however, align with what Bergquist sees as the type belonging to no one of the eight modes.

The Unlikely Peregrination

What does it mean, then, that in his very last composition, Lasso arranged his pieces in an ascending modal order, yet left it incomplete with a modal anomaly in the end? Many musicologists researching the concluding motet of Lagrime di San Pietro, from Bernhard Meier to David Crook, have concurred, implicitly or explicitly, with a mysterious explanation: “Vide homo” represents tonus peregrinus.¹¹

The term “tonus peregrinus” or “the wandering tone” denotes a particular psalm tone. A “psalm tone” refers to a melody or more specifically a recitation formula to which psalms and canticles are sung in the Catholic liturgy. Unlike the other eight regular psalm tones in which the recitation tenors remain on the same pitch throughout the tone, in tonus peregrinus, the tenor falls on A at the beginning, yet after the mediatio and the second incipit it moves to G, thus the name “peregrinus.” In addition, unlike the other

¹⁰ Fisher mistakes the tonal types of “Tre vte haveva” for ♭-c₁-D and of both “Chi ad una ad una” and “E non fu il pianto suo” for ♭-c₁-E. In addition, he mistakes the tonal types of the fourteenth madrigal “E vago d’incontrar,” ♭-g₂-C, for ♭-g₂-F, of the seventeenth madrigal “A quanti già felici,” ♭-c₁-C, for ♭-c₁-F, and of the nineteenth madrigal “Queste opre e più,” ♭-g₂-D, for ♭-g₂-G. Perhaps he does not recognize that a tonal type, by not being the mode itself but rather representing it, indicate the root or lowest note of the piece’s final sonority and not its modal final.

psalm tones that have multiple differentiae or “termination patterns,” *tonus peregrinus* ends almost exclusively on the D below its recitation tenors (Figure 6-1). Historically,

![Figure 6-1](image)

The psalm tone *tonus peregrinus*

there had been many psalm tones that similarly consisted of multiple recitation tenors and would have also been called *tonus peregrinus*. Yet the psalm tone with A and G as tenors ended up being the only one of its kind to survive the many liturgical reforms during the Middle Ages. It thus has appropriated the generic name.¹²

In spite of its survival, the use of *tonus peregrinus* in Catholic liturgy at Lasso’s time was limited. Like all the other psalm tones, *tonus peregrinus* was relevant only to the chanting of psalms and Magnificats at the Divine Offices and introits at Masses. The use of *tonus peregrinus*, whose double-tenor structure is anomalous, was furthermore restricted almost entirely to the chanting of Psalm 113, “In exitu Israel.”¹³ The most common occasions for this one of the 150 psalms included Sunday Vespers to which the psalm is proper, as well as a small number of antiphons such as “Nos qui vivimus” whose text derives from the psalm.¹⁴


¹³ 113 is the Vulgate numbering, which differs from most Protestant bibles, which use the Hebrew numbering and number the psalm as 114.

¹⁴ Lundberg, *Tonus Peregrinus*, 17. According to Lundberg, *tonus peregrinus* would later play a significant role in the Lutheran liturgical tradition, especially the German Magnificat *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren* (see 143-61). Yet Lasso’s position at maestro di cappella of the Bavarian court in Counter-Reformation Munich makes such usage of the *tonus peregrinus* unconceivable in the spiritual exercise of *Lagrime di San Pietro*. 
In addition, most polyphonic settings of psalm-tone liturgies during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance such as psalms and Magnificats strived to preserve the melodic integrity of their respective tones. Usually, they either treated the entire psalm tone as a cantus firmus or divided it into several melodic segments and treated each segment as an imitative subject. The convention is even more restraining for Psalm 113. According to Lundberg’s extensive research on polyphonic settings of this psalm, its tonus peregrinus quite often received a simple falsobordone treatment.15 Probably composed in 1580-1581, Lasso’s four-voice setting of Psalm 113 is a perfect example (Example 6-1).16 The composer quotes the entire tonus peregrinus in the Tenor, here a variant in the German chant dialect with its typical A-C incipit.17 While the Bassus acts independently against the Tenor’s cantus firmus, the two upper parts more often move in parallel with the Tenor’s tone except for necessary contrapuntal adjustments.

There are very few ways in which the complexity of “Vide homo” resembles Lasso’s straightforward falsobordone setting of Psalm 113, the one piece that the

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16 Example 6-1 is recreated from Crook, *Orlando di Lasso’s Imitation Magnificats for Counter-Reformation Munich*, 56.
composer actually labeled as “toni peregrini.” *Tonus peregrinus* does not appear in “Vide homo” either as an integral entity or as separate melodic segments. The motet concludes with a triad on A instead of D, the psalm tone’s *differentia*. Thus, the music suggests it unlikely that Lasso conceived “Vide homo” as a polyphonic setting of *tonus peregrinus*.

In the context of modal representation and ordering in *Lagrima di San Pietro*, the notion that “Vide homo,” a motet, represents *tonus peregrinus*, a psalm tone, demands further explanation. First, the motet based on an obscure text is not relevant to any liturgical occasions of singing psalm tones, not to mention the scarce occasions for *tonus peregrinus* or the specific Psalm 113. Second, *tonus peregrinus* is a tone and not a mode. The interchangeability of the two terms notwithstanding, tone and mode are completely different entities in medieval and Renaissance music theory. For review, while “tone” denotes a particular melody to which psalms and Magnificats are chanted, “mode” refers to an abstract concept. It began in the Middle Ages as a method of categorizing plainchant antiphons and responsories based on their melodic patterns, ranges (*ambituses*), and finals. In theoretical discourse of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, mode gradually became a compositional ideal based on the theories of species intervals. It influenced polyphonic compositions that fall outside the psalm-tone repertory, such as masses, motets, and madrigals.

Therefore, the *tonus peregrinus*, as enigmatic as it sounds, does not relate to Lasso’s “Vide homo” musically, generically, or theoretically. Those who believe in assigning this implausible label of *tonus peregrinus* to “Vide homo,” however, appear to have ignored much of relevance in the motet’s musical content. Instead, they focus exclusively on its $\sharp$-$g_2$-$A$ tonal type. In his studies on Lasso’s imitation Magnificats,
David Crook proposes the correspondence between $\sharp$-g$_2$-A and *tonus peregrinus*. He locates another piece in Lasso’s oeuvre, *Magnificat Deus in adjutorium* published in 1587, that is labeled explicitly as *tonus peregrinus* besides his *falsobordone* setting of Psalm 113.$^{18}$

Lasso composed roughly two-third of his Magnificats in the traditional manner by setting their respective canticle tones (the more elaborate versions of psalm tones to which Magnificats are sung) as either *cantus firmi* or a series of imitative subjects. In contrast, in the remaining forty, Lasso does not employ any canticle tone in the melodic lines. Mostly composed during Lasso’s later years, these “imitation Magnificats” are modeled on preexisting polyphonic pieces such as motets and madrigals. The absence of canticle tones in Lasso’s Magnificat models poses a liturgical challenge, however. The mode of antiphons proper to a Divine Office—vespers, in the case of Magnificats—determines the canticle tone in which the Magnificat should be sung on that day. An antiphon in mode one or authentic Dorian necessitates the first canticle tone with A as tenor, for example. Therefore, although the monophonic canticle tone of its appropriate liturgy is not actually featured in an imitation Magnificat, Lasso had to find ways to represent the Magnificat’s canticle-tone identity.

Crook shows that Lasso addressed the issue in two ways. At times, the composer deliberately selected a polyphonic model “whose melodic content resembled the shapes and turns of phrase characteristics of the tone” and thus implied what mode of antiphons the Magnificat should accompany.$^{19}$ *Magnificat Deus in adjutorium*, as well as the other twelve Magnificats from the same 1587 publication, however, suggests a different

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$^{18}$ Crook, *Orlando di Lasso’s Imitation Magnificats for Counter-Reformation Munich*, 133.

$^{19}$ Ibid., 106.
strategy. Here Lasso draws his solution from the one-to-one correspondence between mode and tone in Catholic liturgy. In order to compose an imitation Magnificat in tone two to accommodate proper antiphons in mode two, for example, Lasso would select for the Magnificat a polyphonic model that represents mode two. And what decides whether a model represents mode two? Its tonal type, which would then become the tonal type of the Magnificat modeled after it. Therefore, all Lasso’s ten tone-two imitation Magnificats have the b-c1-G tonal type, which in Lasso’s modally ordered anthologies typically represents mode two—such as the fifth, sixth, and eighth madrigals from *Lagrima di San Pietro.*

The story of the *Magnificat Deus in adjutorium* is less straightforward. Both the Magnificat and its model, Lasso’s own motet “Deus in adjutorium” published in 1582, carry the ♮-g2-A tonal type, just like “Vide homo.” While the modal significance of this type is ambiguous, Crook shows that Lasso, as well as Nicolas Gombert (c.1495-c.1560), Cristóbal de Morales (c.1500-1553), and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594), frequently used ♮-g2-A (or its transposition b-c1-D) to represent tone seven in Magnificats. In spite of the general correspondence between each of the eight modes and tones, mode seven and tone seven appear particularly incompatible (Figure 6-2). Although both mode seven’s *repercussio* and the tone seven’s tenor fall on a D, a mode seven piece would almost always end on a G in *cantus durus,* yet the most common *differentia* of tone seven concludes with an A in *cantus durus* (or a D in *cantus mollis*).

Thus, Crook believes that, given its tone-seven type ♮-g2-A, *Magnificat Deus in adjutorium* is really a tone-seven Magnificat. Yet instead of tone seven, Lasso labels it as

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20 Ibid., 115-7.
21 Ibid., 112-3 and 115-7.
“toni peregrini.” Crook attributes the phenomenon to another Magnificat that also came out in the 1587 Magnificat publication: *Magnificat Amor ecco collei* in ♯-g₂-G. Indeed, *Magnificat Amor ecco collei* is one of the four tone-seven Magnificats that employ the ♯-g₂-G tonal type.²² According to Crook, faced with ♯-g₂-A on the one hand and ♯-g₂-G on the other in the 1587 publication, Lasso was reluctant to label both as tone seven because the two types carry “very different tonal characters.”²³ Nevertheless, considering that A is tone seven’s most common *differentia* and that the twelve ♯-g₂-A and four ♭-c₁-D types make up as large as eighty percent of Lasso’s tone-seven Magnificats, Lasso’s eventual decision to assign tone seven to the ♯-g₂-G *Magnificat Amor ecco collei* is even more surprising.

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²² Ibid., 116.
²³ Ibid., 141.
Although Crook never explicitly explains Lasso’s seemingly irrational choice, he notices that in the late sixteenth century, modal theory gradually permeated into psalm-tone theory. This eventually led to revisions of psalm-tone theory modeled after modal theory.\(^\text{24}\) Similarly, Lasso’s practice of using mode-representing tonal types to represent Magnificat’s canticle tones might have gradually blurred the lines between mode and tone. In this way, \(\sharp-g_2-G\), a typical mode-seven tonal type, for example in “Negando il mio signor,” the twentieth madrigal of *Lagrima di San Pietro*, came also to represent tone seven. It replaced \(\sharp-g_2-A\), which had been the conventional tone-seven type but hardly relates to mode seven. Crook then draws a parallel between the 1587 Magnificats and *Lagrima di San Pietro* in which \(\sharp-g_2-G\) represents tone and mode seven while \(\sharp-g_2-A\) signifies something “outside Lasso’s and the Church’s traditional eight-member system.”\(^\text{25}\) He thus carries over the label of *tonus peregrinus* from the 1587 Magnificat to “Vide homo” based on their shared \(\sharp-g_2-A\) tonal type.

In this way, Lasso’s association of \(\sharp-g_2-A\) with “toni peregrini” in *Magnificat Deus in adjutorium* serves only one purpose: to pave the way for the coronation of \(\sharp-g_2-G\) as the tone-seven tonal type. Because this label is specific to the context of the 1587 Magnificat publication, it is rather insignificant if not haphazard. In other words, without the context of the 1587 publication, “toni peregrini” is more or less an empty label. It has nothing to do with the actual psalm and canticle tone that consists of two recitation tenors, the *tonus peregrinus*. It has nothing to do even with the musical characteristics of \(\sharp-g_2-A\). Designating *tonus peregrinus* to “Vide homo” based solely on its modally unfitting \(\sharp-g_2-A\) turns the tonal type, the *tonus peregrinus*, and the entire piece into mere symbols. The

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 131-40.
\(^{25}\) Ibid., 142-3.
meaning of these symbols derives not from the music but from the contexts of Lasso’s tone- and mode-representation strategies. It derives from the simple fact that “Vide homo” cannot fall under any of the ordinary eight modal categories in Lagrime di San Pietro.

Therefore, discussions of tonus peregrinus add little substance to the anomaly of “Vide homo.” It only reaffirms the viewpoint that the motet falls outside the traditional modal system and dresses it up with a fanciful symbolism. As Harold Powers beautifully puts it:

I am tempted to link the change from Italian to Latin text with the ever diminishing number of pieces in each modal category and the final breaking off of the modal order, and I wonder if here, too, mode may be being used as a religious symbol. The cycle was Lasso’s last work—the dedication to Pope Clement VIII Aldobrandini was signed three weeks before his death—and the words of the Savoir set in the Latin envoi ‘Behold, o man, what things I have suffered for you’ are as removed from Tansillo’s Italian cycle—it is now at last Christ Himself who speaks form the cross—as the tonal type ♯g2-A is removed from the modal cycle. The abandonment of both may be read as symbolizing Lasso’s expectation of his own imminent abandonment of this world, including Christ’s Church on earth, and his hope, through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, of a better world to come.26

Agreeing with Powers’ reading of the religious symbolism of tonus peregrinus, Alexander J. Fisher contextualizes it in the sixteenth-century practices of Catholic spirituality:

The deliberate omission of mode 8 in the preceding madrigals exposes the imperfection of earthly life and human sinfulness. The religious significance of Adurus in the motet affects our view of modality in the cycle as a whole: although an abstract organization by ascending final lacks any inherent spiritual meaning in isolation, the motet’s peculiar modality encourages us to consider whether Lasso intended his careful, goal-directed arrangement to emphasize the meditative progress of the cycle […] finally to direct confrontation with the divine figure.27

The aura of tonus peregrinus has turned the discussion of “Vide homo” into a competition of prose writing preoccupied with the symbolism of the motet’s ♯-g2-A tonal type. No doubt a mesmerizing endeavor, interpreting symbolism creates fascinating stories of Lasso’s inner mind and his religious fervor as he approached his death. Nevertheless, such interpretation continues the tradition of ignoring all aspects of the music of “Vide homo” besides its tonal type—as if the motet had written itself once Lasso determined the tonal type, or to put it another way, as if tonal type were more important than innumerable other details of the work. There should be no doubt that the meaning and significance of the mysterious motet rest not with the symbolism or modal attribution of the ♯-g2-A tonal type but within the exquisite music to which Lasso actually set the text. It is an unfortunate oversight that apart from its tonal type, “Vide homo” has drawn little interests in previous scholarship of Lagrime di San Pietro.

In the present chapter, I attempt to give a fuller account of the music of Lasso’s “Vide homo” and discuss how the motet’s musical peculiarities may shed light on its status as the last piece in Lasso’s Lagrime de San Pietro his “swansong.” In order to

achieve this goal, an isolated analysis of “Vide homo” is far from enough, however. In fact, I propose as a starting point of this chapter’s investigation a familiar place, although perhaps surprising: “Calami sonum ferentes.”

A Point of Contact

By the time Orlando di Lasso finally established himself as a published composer in 1555 he had already acquired quite a reputation. In 1552, at the age of no more twenty-two, the young Lasso became maestro di cappella at the prestigious S. Giovanni in Laterano near Rome, the ecclesiastical seat of the Pope as the Bishop of Rome. When Lasso left for the Flanders his birthplace in 1555, the musician that succeeded him was none but the thirty-year-old Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525 or 1526-1594).

Although it might not have been the determining factor in Lasso’s fame, the “Opus One” is in many ways a notable publication. Printed in Antwerp in 1555, Lasso’s “Opus One” was an anthology of his works entitled Le quatoirsiesme livre a quatre parties contenant dixhuyct chansons italiennes, six chansons francoises, & six motetz faictz (a la nouvelle composition d’aucuns d’Italie) par Rolando di Lassus (“The Fourteenth book in four parts containing sixteen Italian songs, six French songs, and six motets made (in the new manner of composition by certain Italian) by Rolando di Lassus”). The publication enjoyed an immense success. Soon after its release, its publisher Tielman Susato (c. 1510-1570) reissued it with some revisions and a new Italian title D’Orlando di Lassus Il primo libro dovesi contengono Madrigali, Vilanesche, Canzoni francesi, e Motetti a quattro voci (“Of Orlando di Lassus the first book where it

contains madrigals, vilanescos, French songs, and motets in four voices”). The market’s demand remained, however, and five years later, when Lasso was already settled in Munich, Susato released yet another edition under the original French title.29

“Opus One’s” consecutive publications in two languages suggest the young composer’s popularity among both Italian immigrants and local consumers in the Flanders. The exhaustive list of genres in the titles—French chansons, Italian madrigals (or “Italian songs,” as the French title describes), villanelles, and Latin motets—already points to the cosmopolitan character of Lasso’s oeuvre. His extensive travels during his period of formation as a composer no doubt helped Lasso work in different traditions and languages.

Much like his Lagrime di San Pietro or “Opus finalis,” furthermore, Lasso’s “Opus One” concludes in a surprising way. As specified in the French title, the anthology finishes with six motets, yet the last motet is not composed by Lasso. Instead, it is Cipriano de Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes,” the extremely chromatic setting of Giovanni Battista Pigna’s “Fistula tertia ex Catulli numeris” for four low voices. As introduced in the previous chapter, Rore himself appeared reluctant to put the piece to print, and Lasso’s “Opus One” was in fact the only publication of “Calami sonum ferentes” in the sixteenth century.

More curious is the preceding piece, the second to the last of the anthology: Lasso’s own motet “Alma Nemes.” Table 6-2 compares the text of “Alma Nemes” with “Fistula tertia.” In contrast to Pigna’s esoteric modeling after classical meters and the subtle pipe-shape visual pattern, the anonymous “Alma Nemes” is a straightforward Latin

poem. It consists of three elegiac couplets, a simple metrical form in classical Latin poetry, and each couplet has a hexameter verse followed by a pentameter verse as dictated in classical poetry. Together, the three couplets make up a single sentence. In spite of its much simpler form, just like “Fistula tertia” that makes several references to classical poets, “Alma Nemes” emits an antiquarian aura from its very beginning. The poem opens with a series of comparisons of the addressed Nemes to Ancient Greek gods: Aphrodite (“Cypris”), Athena (“Pallas”), and Grace (“Charis”). Through these references to Greek mythology and its use of ancient metric forms, while perhaps not as erudite as Pigna’s “Fistula tertia,” “Alma Nemes” still discloses a learned and classicizing poetic manner.

Table 6-2
Comparison of “Alma Nemes” and Fistula tertia (“Calami sonum ferentes”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Alma Nemes”</th>
<th>“Calami sonum ferentes”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alma Nemes, quae sola Nemes, quae dicere Cypris altera, quae Pallas altera, quarta Charis, quae pellis nubes, quae caelum fronte serenas et risu et laetis flammea luminibus, alma veni vocemque tuam, qua flumina sista funde, canas mecum dulce novumque melos.</td>
<td>Calami sonum ferentes Siculo leve numero non pellunt gemitus pectore ab imo nimium graves: nec qui strepente sun tab Aufido revulsi. Musa quae nemus incolis Sirmionis amoenum reddita qua lenis, Lesbia dura fuit; me adi recessu principis mei tristem. Musa deliciae tui Catulli dulce tristibus his tuum junge carmen avenis.</td>
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</table>

30 Orlando di Lasso, The Complete Motets 17: Motets from Printed Anthologies and Manuscripts, 1555-1569, ed. Peter Bergquist (Madison, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 1999), xxvi. Bergquist’s translation of the text reads: “Propitious Nemes, you who are the one-and-only Nemes, who are called a second Venus, a second Minerva, a fourth Grace, / you who dispels the clouds, who cheers heaven with your brow and the fiery orbs with your laughter and happy eyes, / come, kind one, and pour forth your voice, with which you make rivers stand still, sing with me a sweet, new song.”

31 For a translation, see Chapter Five.
Similar to the last six verses of “Fistula tertia” in which the speaker appeals to the Muse, the six-verse “Alma Nemes” speaks of a plea to Nemes. Even more striking is the manner in which both pleas end. In the last two verses of “Fistula tertia,” the speaker requests that the Muse shall “join [her] sweet song to the sad sound of [his] oaten pipes.” In the last verse of “Alma Nemes,” on the other hand, the speaker asks Nemes to “sing with [him] a sweet, new song.” The phrase “sing with me” (“canas mecum”) sends the same invitation of musical conjoining to Nemes as does the speaker in “Fistula tertia” to the Muse with the word “join” (“junge”). Also comparable is the word “dulce” (“sweet”), which describes both the “carmen” of the Muse and the “melos” of Nemes. In addition, the word “novum” (“new”) in the last verse of “Alma Nemes” probably echoes Ovid’s description of the sound that Pan produces on the pipe of Syrinx (“arte nova vocisque deum dulcedine,” see Chapter Four) to which Pigna’s “Fistula” makes several allusions.

Rore responds to the speaker’s invocation of a mythological sweet and new song in “Fistula tertia” with chromaticism. So does Lasso. Like “Calami sonum ferentes” for Rore, “Alma Nemes” is Lasso’s first deliberately chromatic composition. The second note of Altus, the D♯ in m. 2, already transgresses the C diatonic collection in cantus durus. Near the motet’s end in mm. 50-57, when the text repeats the much important “dulce novumque melos” (“sweet and new song”) Lasso’s chromaticism reaches its climax as the first and only A♯ appears in m. 51 in Cantus as part of an F♯-major triad. Here the Cantus also has two prominent chromatic semitones in m. 51 and mm. 54-55, affirming the chromatic nature of the sweet and new song mentioned in the text. As a whole, the motet utilizes fourteen pitch classes from E♭ to A♯ along the circle of fifths, a
gamut shorter than the sixteen pitches from D♭ to A♯ in “Calami sonum ferentes” yet convincingly adventurous.

The parallelisms between “Alma Nemes” and “Fistula tertia” and between Lasso and Rore’s chromatic settings shed light on the two pieces’ back-to-back appearance in Lasso’s “Opus One.” Based on “diverse circumstantial evidence,” much of which might be better called hypotheses, Lowinsky composes a fantasia explaining the conception of “Alma Nemes” as Lasso’s first chromatic composition and the birth of Orlando di Lasso as a great musician of the sixteenth century. Lowinsky conjectures that during his years at S. Giovanni in Laterano, Lasso once ran away from his post and went to Ferrara to study with Rore, “the master he most admired.”32 Lasso’s rather compact biography during his two-year tenure at Laterano would allow very little time for such absenteeism, however. In compliance with such restrictions, Lowinsky gives Lasso only one month of time. “Considering the advanced stage of the young composer,” explains Lowinsky, “one whole month with Rore would have meant as much as one year for a more moderately endowed musician.”33 It was during this month of sojourn with Rore, whom Lowinsky also assumes as a pupil of Adriano Willaert, that Lasso learnt the Willaertian/Venetian manner of composing motets and madrigals that would significantly influence his musical language.34

Around the same time, Lowinsky continues, Rore had been working on his “Calami sonum ferentes,” the “antichromatic manifesto” rebuking Nicola Vicentino’s advocacy of chromaticism and enharmonicism. The young Lasso encountered the piece

33 Ibid, 617.
34 Ibid, 613.
and became “intoxicated with the master’s chromatic adventure.” Agreeing with Lowinsky that his pupil is no ordinary lad but a “young, irrepressible genius” and that he would not go errant as those despicable chromaticists, master Rore decided to show Lasso the mystery of chromaticism with much delight. He revealed the secrets behind “Calami sonum ferentes” and instructed Lasso to shun away from its ironic ugliness and eccentricities: the unusual low voicing, abrupt chromatic harmonies, and lack of text painting. The talented Lasso learnt the trade from his master and produced the beautiful *Alma Nemes*, which, in spite of their sharp contrasts, is modeled on Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes.”

Lowinsky story ends on a somber tone. What Lasso inherits from master Rore were not only the Willaertian style and the mastery of chromaticism but also his antagonism with Vicentino and Prince Alfonso. Indeed, when Rore’s Ferrarese patron Duke Ercole II died in 1559 and Alfonso became Duke Alfonso II of Ferrara, Rore, at that time in the Flanders, offered the new duke his service yet disrespectfully termed it “taking up the yoke.” Duke Alfonso took great offense at this term and turned down Rore’s offer, according to Lowinsky. Eight years later, when Lasso visited Ferrara as *maestro di cappella* at the Bavarian court in Munich, the Duke’s hostility towards his teacher had not dwindled. Thus, even though Lasso humbly dedicated one of his books of madrigals to Alfonso, the Duke received him in a notably cold manner.

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36 Ibid, 614.
Besides his numerous unfounded postulations, the major flaw of Lowinsky’s theory is that by overemphasizing the importance of Lasso’s hypothetical one-month apprenticeship with Rore, Lowinsky ignores what we already know about Lasso’s biography and especially his musical style. Although it was unlikely for him to escape the influence of Willaert entirely, by the time of his “Opus One” Lasso was still predominantly a Roman composer distanced from Willaert and Rore’s Venetian manners.

According to his contemporary biographer Samuel Quickelberg, when he returned to Flanders in 1555, Lasso had ventured through most of the major musical centers in Italy, notably Mantua, Milan, Naples, and Rome—except, curiously, Willaert’s Venice and Rore’s Ferrara. From 1544 to 1549, as a teenager Lasso served his first patron Ferrante Gonzaga, who later became the Holy Roman Emperor’s governor of Milan. According to James Haar, during this period Lasso had close connections with Hoste da Reggio (c.1520-1569), an older composer also at the service of the Gonzaga family. Haar discovers conflicting attributions of a four-voice madrigal entitled “Non vi vieto per questo.” Its earliest appearance was in Venice, 1554, published under Hoste’s name in his Secondo libro a 4. It is the third part of a cycle of madrigals by Hoste setting stanzas from Ariosto’s Orlando furioso. In 1560 the same “Non vi vieto per questo” appeared under Lasso’s name, however, in his first book of four-voice madrigals published in Rome. The book’s publisher gathered Lasso’s many other madrigals including those from

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the 1555 “Opus 1” and appeared completely unaware of the piece’s previous publication under Hoste’s name.\textsuperscript{41}

Haar argues that these two conflicting attributions are not a coincidence but rather an indicator of the stylistic overlap between Lasso and Hoste who both worked for the Gonzagas.\textsuperscript{42} Many madrigals from Lasso’s early years, Haar observes, resemble the style of Hoste’s “Non vi vieto per questo.” In contrast to pervading imitations with equal voices in the madrigals of Willaert and early Rore, the piece employs a largely homophonic texture. The upper voice frequently assumes its role as a soloist and quotes recitation formulas that can also be found in Philippe Verdelot (c. 1480-1530) and Jacques Arcadelt (c. 1507-1568)’s chasonesque Florentine madrigals. In addition, whereas Willaert and Rore would usually adhere to the syntax of the poem and avoid clear cadences (until in Rore’s post-1557 madrigals), the line-by-line setting in “Non vi vieto per questo” as well as Lasso’s early madrigals treats each poetic line as a compositional unit and conclude each verse with a clearly audible punctuation.\textsuperscript{43}

In 1549, Lasso left the Gonzaga household and his colleague Hoste for Naples and subsequently Rome in 1552. During this period a particular genre with which he worked was the madrigale arioso. These madrigals demonstrate the anti-Venetian characteristics of the solo-and-chordal accompaniment texture and line-by-line setting that Lasso might have learnt from Hoste during his Gonzagan period. “Ben veggio di lontan’,” a setting of the sirma of Petrarch’s sonnet “Amor, che vedi ognio pensero aperto,” exemplifies Lasso’s treatment of the genre. Just like Hoste in “Non vi vieto per

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, 19-21.
Ben ueggio di lon-tan'il dolce lume

Petrarch

Orlando di Lasso

questo,” Lasso sets each poetic line to a complete musical phrase that concludes with a clear cadence regardless of its syntactic context. For example, an articulate suspension cadence on D-re occurs in mm. 23-24 between verses 4 and 5, although grammatically these two verses form a single sentence. Similarly an even stronger A-mi cadence followed by a minim rest in all voices punctuates the break between verses 5 and 6 (mm. 29-31). Regarding its texture, although near the end of the last phrase (mm. 37-44) all four voices behave independently to highlight the speaker’s sigh for his beloved lady (“per lei sospiri”), throughout the entire work Lasso predominantly employs what Howard Mayer Brown calls “unrelieved chordal simplicity.”

Furthermore, Brown notices the “ametrical melody” in the top voice: the melody moves in a narrow range, has many repeated notes, and follows a frequently syncopated rhythm that mirrors the stressed syllables in the text. For him, these qualities not only establish the top voice as the soloist in the piece’s chordal texture. They also disclose the origin of its melody as a recitation formula from the improvisatory practices that gave birth to the genre of madrigale arioso itself. The name “madrigale arioso” occurred in the three volumes of madrigali ariosi published by the Roman publisher Antonio Barrè (fl. 1551-1572) in 1555, 1558, and 1562. Lasso contributed six pieces to these volumes, including “Ben veggio.” Because of its scarce occurrence elsewhere James Haar suggests that Barrè himself probably coined the term, which means “aria-like madrigals.” By studying Barrè’s three volumes, Brown summarizes the particular model the publisher probably had in mind: “an uncomplicated declamatory style incorporating elements from

45 Ibid., 95.
sixteenth-century arias, those musical formulas used by Italian improvisers to declaim both lyric and narrative poetry.”

Indeed, in their text-oriented rhythm and phrasing, solo-and-chordal accompaniment texture, and use of recitation formulas in the top voice, many of Lasso’s early madrigals—not only those included in the three madrigali ariosi volumes but also those in the style of Hoste that probably date earlier—fit Barrè’s model quite well. Unlike the introspective reading of the text in Willaert’s madrigals or the extroverted performance of its meaning and affect in Rore’s, Lasso’s early non-Venetian madrigals imply the context of domestic singing. Such madrigals serve to supplement the solo and often improvisatory singing of Italian poetry, an “unwritten (and therefore partly popular) tradition” as Brown suggests. Lasso’s declamatory style allows the soloist to continue the text-oriented improvisatory practices such as syncopation and recitation formulas, but it also provides an accompaniment in the lower three voices in a simple and unobtrusive chordal texture.

James Haar argues that such declamatory-improvisatory style specifically met the “local tastes” in the mid-sixteenth century of Roman and Neapolitan patrons, who only later became interested in the Venetian style of Willaert and Rore as it spread from Venice and Ferrara. Although published in the Flanders, Lasso’s “Opus One” had a similar patronage and readership. Lasso dedicated the Italian version of the publication to Stefano Gentile, a Genoese merchant-banker in Antwerp. In fact, the publication was likely commissioned not simply for Gentile himself but rather for the Genoese

48 Ibid., 115.
community, who flourished in Flanders in the early sixteenth century thanks to their financial ties with the Holy Roman Emperor.⁵⁰

Lasso’s connection with the Genoese trading-banking community went beyond the commission of “Opus One,” moreover. Like other merchant colonies in Antwerp, Gentile and his Genoese compatriots formed an informal salon devoted to contemporary literature and the vernacular arts as well as banquets and feasts.⁵¹ According to Donna G. Cardamone, because he was “amply endowed with the improvisatory wit expected in such gatherings,” the Genoese salon invited Lasso not only to organize musical entertainments but also to “mentor [the patrons in music] by example and stimulate coterie performances as well.”⁵² Thus, when Lasso came to the Flanders in 1555, he was probably glad to find himself in a familiar setting much comparable to that of Naples and Rome where patrons wanted to participate in solo and improvisatory singing at informal gathering. This familiarity explains why Lasso’s “Opus One” included pieces that probably date from his Italian period.⁵³

Hence, despite its co-appearance with a Ferrarese composition, “Alma Nemes” arises from an essentially Roman-Neapolitan musical environment. Cardamone speculates that the addressed Nemes is in fact a female singer in Gentile’s salon, since compared to the “junge carmen avenis” in “Calami sonum ferentes,” the last verse in *Alma Nemes* specifically requests Nemes to “canas” (sing) with the speaker, who perhaps personifies the composer himself. Cardamone explains that members of such salons

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⁵¹ Donna G. Cardamone, “The salon as marketplace in the 1550s: patrons and collectors of Lasso’s secular music,” in *Orlando di Lasso Studies*, ed. Peter Bergquist (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 64.
⁵² Ibid, 64-65. Here Cardamone draws evidences from Quickelberg’s biography.
Alma Nemes

Orlando di Lasso

am, al - mi ve - ni vo - kem - que tu -
-ceum - que tu - am, al - ma ve - ni vo - kem - que tu - am,
ni vo - kem - que tu - am, al - ma ve - ni vo - kem - que tu - am,
ve - ni, al - ma ve - ni vo - kem - que tu - am, qua flu - mi - am, qua flu - mi - na si - stis fun - de,___
qua flu - mi - na si - stis fun - de, ca - nas___
quae flu - mi - na si - stis fun - de, ca - nas___
na si - stis fun - de,___
ca - nas me - cum dul - ce no - me - cum dul - ce, ca - nas me - cum dul - me - cum dul - ce, <ca - nas me - cum dul -
ca - nas me - cum dul - ce no -
vum - que me - los, dul - ce no - vum - que me - los.
ve - ni vo - kem - que tu - am, qua flu - mi - am, qua flu - mi - na si - stis fun - de,___
quae flu - mi - na si - stis fun - de, ca - nas___
na si - stis fun - de,___
ca - nas me - cum dul - ce no - me - cum dul - ce, ca - nas me - cum dul - me - cum dul - ce, <ca - nas me - cum dul -
ca - nas me - cum dul - ce no -
vum - que me - los, dul - ce no - vum - que me - los.
traditionally took up pseudo-antique nicknames, and Nemes was probably a shortened form of Nemesis, the Greek goddess of divine retribution. Although substantial evidences regarding the archetype of Nemes is scarce, it is not difficult to see “Alma Nemes” as Lasso’s musical tribute to the singing and improvisatory events at the Genoese salon as were the other works in “Opus One.”

The most convincing testament that “Alma Nemes” was not simply Lasso’s modeling of Rore’s Venetian-Ferrarese take on chromaticism comes from the music. Admittedly, compared to that of “Non vi vieto per questo” and “Ben veggio,” the texture of Alma Nemes is not chordal-declamatory except for two measures near its conclusion (mm. 51-52). In fact it has fewer strictly chordal passages than “Calami sonum ferentes.” Nevertheless, whereas “Calami sonum ferentes” goes between the extremes of the lightness in extensive fugal passages and the heaviness of strict chordal declamations, in “Alma Nemes” Lasso generally upholds a full texture by having all four voices singing most of the time and moving together or slightly staggered.

Meanwhile, although it is true that most phrases and word groups begin either with points of imitation or scattered entrances, each individual line preserves the declamatory style in Lasso’s early Italian madrigals. An example of the aria-like character is Lasso’s use of melismas. Near the piece’s end, lengthy melismas on the single word “canas” (sing) occur fugally in all four voices (mm. 45-50). The Cantus especially has one such melisma in mm. 47-48 composed of as many as twelve semiminims compared to the others’ eight. Another imitative passage of extensive melismas occurs in mm. 27-29, which sets the word “risu” (laughter). Here, Lasso groups the four voices in pairs, and each pair moves in parallel thirds or sixths in a manner

54 Cardamone, “The salon as marketplace in the 1550s,” 66.
reminiscent of the “più correnti che saetta” in Rore’s “Vergine, quante lagrim’”—except that each individual line is not syllabic but melismatic.

While the word-painting strategy behind these lavish melismas on “canas” and “risu” is straightforward, there are also melismatic passages in “Alma Nemes” that do not seem to serve an obvious textual purpose. At the beginning, for example, the breve-based syllabic motives on “Alma Nemes” (Propitious Nemes) give way to the lengthy melismas on “sola” whose meaning “the one-and-only (Nemes)” does not seem to inherently call for a particular treatment with numerous notes. As a matter of fact, although the word “altera” means the direct opposite of “sola”—it means “the second” or “the other (Pallas)”—it also receives a melismatic treatment (mm. 12-15). The other example is “sistis” in Bassus, mm. 42, whose meaning “stand still” contradicts what melismas usually convey.

Lasso’s use of melismas in “Alma Nemes” contrasts the syllabic, compact, and austere melodies and texture in Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes.” Regardless of their varying text-painting effect, the melismatic passages help preserve the aria-like characters of the solo top voice from Lasso’s earlier Italian madrigals. In other words, whereas Rore’s *Calami sonum ferentes* as well as other Venetian madrigals emphasizes the ensemble of individual voices, Lasso’s *Alma Nemes* gives each voice the opportunity to aurally stand out from the piece’s generally full texture.

To summarize, Lowinsky’s hypothesis that “Alma Nemes” comes from an exchange between Rore and the young Lasso during the latter’s tenure at S. Giovanni at Laterano fits neither the Roman-Neapolitan musical environment in Antwerp nor the general style of the particular piece. Quite the opposite, “Alma Nemes” is a Roman-
Neapolitan composition. It was dedicated to—and very likely commissioned by—a group of Genoese merchant-bankers in Antwerp that frequently engaged in informal solo-improvisatory singing. This was an environment similar to that at the Gonzaga household and in Naples and Rome for which Lasso composed madrigals in the chordal-declamatory style, such as the *madrigali ariosi*. Although much more sophisticated than these earlier Italian madrigals, “Alma Nemes” preserves their aria-like characters through each individual voice part and through its consistently full and balanced texture.

**Roman-Neapolitan Chromaticism**

Of course, one day new evidence may appear to support Lowinsky’s conjecture on the exchange between Lasso and Rore specifically about “Calami sonum ferentes” and chromaticism in the 1550s. Admittedly, even if such an exchange never occurred, there is no doubt that Lasso’s knowledge of chromaticism and his inspiration for the Roman-Neapolitan “Alma Nemes” benefited his encounter with Rore’s Venetian-Ferrarese “Calami sonum ferentes.” What Lasso achieved in “Alma Nemes,” however, is not simply studying and emulating Rore’s work or learning about the cryptic message behind it as Lowinsky suggests. Instead, Lasso absorbed its essential elements into the Roman-Neapolitan musical traditions that he had been working with and perhaps gradually internalizing as his personal style. Notably, the chromaticism in “Alma Nemes” strikes me as distinctively different from that in “Calami sonum ferentes” in a way comparable to the difference between their overall styles.

To begin with, although both texts solicit chromatic settings with the motifs of “sweet, new song” and of musical conjoining, they differ sharply in their emotional and
expressive content. In Pigna’s “Fistula tertia,” the speaker goes through a psychological journey from inward analysis in the first three verses to outward pleading in the remaining six. Throughout this journey, Pigna exposes the intense, asphyxiating sadness of the speaker and later on his hopeful relief from conversing with the Muse. The transition from introspection to conversation and from desperation to hopefulness becomes the driving force of the poem’s narrative. The moment of this transition, the “Musa” in the beginning of verse 4, thus becomes a dramatic climax.

Although the authorship of the text “Alma Nemes” is yet to be established, it is logical to speculate that it was written for the sake of Lasso’s chromatic composition rivaling Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes.” Essentially, “Alma Nemes” is a variation of the last three verses of “Fistula tertia.” Leaving out the contents of the other verses is a curious decision, because it discards the psychological transition in Pigna’s poem as well as its expressive and emotional gravity. Instead, the text becomes a simple and lighthearted invitation to Nemes not to console the speaker’s sorrows—because the speaker does not seem sad—but to join him in the delight of singing. As a result, “Alma Nemes” exhibits a profound lack of emotional drama and of the sense of time.

Rore and Lasso’s employments of chromaticism reflect the contrast between drama and the lack of drama in the two texts they set. For review, much of the chromaticism “Calami sonum ferentes” arises from the instability of its E-Hypophrygian mode where E-A and E-B are rival dominant modal species. Whereas the A-E species gives rise to the more common E-mi cadences, the E-B species, with its emphasis on B as the mode’s tonal sub-center, sometimes yields ut and re cadences on E and B, which would necessitate F♯ and C♯ and transgress the boundary of the C diatonic collection.
Rore thus utilizes the chromaticism-inducing tonal rivalry between A-E and E-B, which demonstrates the speaker’s transitions between desperation and optimism.

“Alma Nemes” also appears to be a piece in E-Phrygian in cantus durus and the C diatonic collection, here the authentic version based on the ranges of its four voices. Like “Calami sonum ferentes,” it concludes with a truncated E-mi cadence that resembles a half-cadence on E (mm. 56-57). Nevertheless, although the E-Hypophrygian mode of “Calami sonum ferentes” probably influenced Lasso’s choice of mode, in no way does he explore the chromatic and affective potentials of the Phrygian modes as Rore does, that is, the tension between the A-E and E-B modal species. There are two major internal cadences in “Alma Nemes.” The A-re cadence in mm. 32-34 serves as the division point of the piece’s bipartite structure. It coincides with a drastic change of texture from chordal declamation to pervading imitation and with a semantic break in the poem from description of Nemes to the speaker’s imitation. In some way this break is comparable to that around the “Musa” in “Calami sonum ferentes.” In addition, the C-ut cadence in mm. 44-45 becomes a strong internal cadence because of its articulation: it is the only cadence with suspension and diminution throughout the entire piece. It also introduces the melismatic “canas” section. These two cadences suggest Lasso’s conventional take on the Phrygian mode focusing on the A-E species with C as its third degree. They suggest his disinterest in cultivating the chromatic and affective potentials of the Phrygian mode especially the E-B species compared to Rore in “Calami sonum ferentes.”

The imitative entrances at the beginning of “Alma Nemes,” however, might seem as a modal gesture emphasizing the unstable and unconventional B-side of the Phrygian mode. Although not as provocative as the start of “Calami sonum ferentes,” which has
three entrances on B and one on E, “Alma Nemes” still begins with quite unusual entrances: three on E, one on B, and none on A (mm. 1-3). Nevertheless, a more contextualized analysis of this beginning shows an another logic at work other than modality: the circle of fifths. As a matter of fact, were it in strict imitation with the Tenor’s B-C♯-D (mm. 2-4) and the Cantus’s E-F♯-G (mm. 3-5), the opening E-G♯-A motive of Bassus (mm. 1-3) would be F♯-G♯-A. The three entrances thus move successively along the circle of fifths towards the flat direction. In its continuation, entrances of the line “quae sola Nemes” occur first on A (Altus, m. 4 and Tenor, m. 5) and then on D (Bassus, m. 4 after Tenor, and Cantus, m. 6). The underlying harmony of the beginning passage also moves in the circle of fifths from E to C in the Bassus. The other major imitative section of the piece in mm. 34-36 also features circle-of-fifths entrances, from the E in Cantus to the G in Bassus.

In this way, instead of embodying the piece’s modal species of fifth by having entrances on A and E, the two main passages of imitative entrances dissolve the A-E species along the circle of fifths. Much as both sections of the bipartite piece begin with circle-of-fifth imitative entrances, they also end with circle-of-fifths harmonies before the concluding cadences. In mm. 30-33, a circle-of-fifths progression from E-major to C-major precedes the E-A cadential harmony at the end. The piece’s ending in mm. 51-57 features an even longer progression from F♯-major to G-major triads before the final E-mi cadence over an E-A-E progression, which by now may sound like part of the circle-of-fifth progressions. Thus, each of the two sections of “Alma Nemes” literally becomes a circle-of-fifths arch.
In addition to these two extensive arches, the circle of fifths also occurs on a smaller scale. Although most entrances in the piece are not strictly imitative, Lasso frequently sets their initial notes along the circle of fifths. “Quae pellis nubes,” for example, enters on D, A, and E successively in mm. 19-21. “Quae caelum fronte serenas,” which immediately follows, enters on G, C, and D in mm. 22-24. In the harmony, short circle-of-fifths progressions appear even more frequently throughout the piece. Lasso sometimes combines two or more movements by fourth or fifth in the Bassus into a harmonic phrase, for example the F-C and D-A in mm. 9-10 and the C-G and B♭-E♭ in mm. 24-26. At other times, he utilizes what might seem to be fragments of longer circle-of-fifths phrases, for example the E-A-D in mm. 11-12. One or more triads from outside the circle might intercede such phrases. For example, an A-B♭-A neighboring motion occurs in the Bassus in mm.18-19 interrupting a larger E-A-G-D phrase in mm. 17-20. In m. 40, for another instance, a C-major triad replaces the E-major triad in the circle-of-fifths progression from B to G in mm. 39-41.

Whereas it is almost absent from “Calami sonum ferentes,” the circle of fifths is the dominant tonal logic in “Alma Nemes.” As I have shown, in both opening imitations and closing cadences, Lasso substitutes it for modality as the governing principle of the piece’s structure. Given the piece’s generally chordal and fully voiced texture, furthermore, Lasso frequently uses root-position triads in the circle-of-fifths progressions so that the Bassus becomes an outstanding tonal marker. As a matter of fact, in order to maintain the circle-of-fifths bass line in the Bassus, in mm. 22-23 Lasso overrides contrapuntal rules by allowing a parallel fifth between the Bassu’s G-C and the Cantus’s
B-E. This outrageous contrapuntal transgression testifies to the significance of the circle-of-fifth progressions in “Alma Nemes.”

In addition to the tonal logic of the circle of fifths, “Alma Nemes” also differs from “Calami sonum ferentes” regarding its harmonic and aural quality. Rore’s use of the affective contrast between the *duro* major sonorities and *soave* minor sonorities is key to the chromaticism in “Calami sonum ferentes” and to its setting of the emotional drama in Pigna’s “Fistula tertia.” In *Alma Nemes*, on the other hand, the overwhelming majority of circle-of-fifths progressions feature exclusively root-position major triads. Minor sonorities are particularly scarce in “Alma Nemes”: they make up a mere seventeen percent of the piece, compared to thirty-four percent in both Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” and the later and predominantly chordal “O sonno” (See Table 6-6 below). The first minor triad does not occur until as late as in m. 8, and it appears overshadowed by the extensive major-triadic circle of fifths preceding it.

This is not to say that among the ocean of major sonorities these occurrences of minor triads become special affective moments. Quite the opposite, in “Alma Nemes” Lasso does not seem to be using interval affect for text-setting purposes at all. While transitions between areas of major and minor harmonies in “Calami sonum ferentes” follow the psychological journey of the text’s speaker, I detect no meaningful logic in the scattered appearances of minor sonorities in “Alma Nemes.” Occasional parallel intervals also bear little specific connection to the text, for example the parallel major third followed by a parallel minor third between Tenor and Bassus in m. 18-19 over “quae pellis” (“you who dispels”). After all, without any emotional drama, the text “Alma
Nemes” does not call for the use of interval-affective contrasts, as does Pigna’s “Fistula tertia.”

If they are irrelevant to the text’s affect, what is the reason for the plethora of root-position major triads in “Alma Nemes?” I suggest that it has to do with “canas mecum dulce novumque melos,” the new and sweet song that Lasso’s “Alma Nemes” embodies. Whereas Rore’s melodic, interval-affective, and modal chromaticism focuses on bringing out the emotions of the text, Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism provides a peculiar tonal color that is in itself the “dulce novumque melos” (“sweet and new melody”).

Indeed, numerous non-harmonic relations of “Alma Nemes” arise from progressions of root-position major triads, including the circles of fifths that I have discussed. Stepwise progressions of triadic roots in the Bassus lead to immediate non-harmonic relations, for example the progression from B-major to C-major in mm. 39-40. In a typical circle-of-fifths phrase with only major triads, on the other hand, a triad necessarily has non-harmonic relation with those that are two steps away towards either end of the circle (Figure 6-3). In the concluding phrase of “Alma Nemes,” for example,

![Figure 6-3](image)

Non-harmonic relations in stepwise progressions from one major triad to another

the G# of the E-major triad in m. 52 and the root of the D-major triad in mm. 53-4 form a tritone relation, and so do the root of this E-major triad and the A# in the F#-major triad
in m. 53. Occasionally, Lasso anticipates an all-major circle-of-fifths progression with a minor triad in either stepwise or circle-of-fifth relations, for example the E-minor in m. 21 and D-minor in m. 30. Because of the augmented second between the minor triad and its following major triad, such juxtaposition yields more audible non-harmonic relations and adds flavor to the tonal color at the initiation of a circle-of-fifths progression.

In addition to cross relations, Lasso’s “Alma Nemes” also features direct chromatic semitones, although sparingly. The three most audible chromatic semitones occur in the Cantus, and all come from third relations in the harmony: the progression from C-major to E-major in m. 32 causes the Cantus’s G-G♯, D-major to F♯-major in m. 51 A-A♯, which is the farthest Alma Nemes goes on the sharp end of the circle of fifths, and G-major to E-major in mm. 54-55 G-G♯. In some way, the other chromatic semitone, the C-C♯ in Tenor, m. 40, is a variation on the above situations: a progression from C-major to A-minor appears at the beginning of the measure only to delay the sharpening of the Tenor’s C until the triad’s chromatic alteration into A-major. Similarly, in mm. 38-39 the Bassus moves from D to B, yet the Tenor sustains its D before leaping down to B while the Altus leaps up to the D♯ after the alteration of the B-minor triad into B-major.

Supported by distinctive progressions of major triads, the non-harmonic relations and chromatic semitones add up to the peculiar chromatic color in “Alma Nemes.” Yet the effect of major triads and their circle-of-fifth and third-relation progressions does not stop here. They also bring in a sense of tonal disorientation to “Alma Nemes,” another aspect of its “new and sweet” chromaticism. In a circle-of-fifths progression, the fourth- and fifth-leaps in the Bassus and the homophonic movements among all voices resemble the clausula bassizans at strong internal cadences, or what Roman numeral analysis
labels as V-I or IV-I. In the “V-I” progression, which is the predominant type in “Alma Nemes,” the sharped or major-triadic thirds can serve as pseudo-leading tones and further enhance the progression’s aural resemblance of a cadence.

Therefore, extensive circle-of-fifths progression, such as those preceding the two major internal cadences in “Alma Nemes,” gives the impression of constantly reestablishing a modal final through cadences. These swift and frequent shifts of tonal focuses further subdue the A-E Phrygian modal structure and enhance Lasso’s tonal logic of the circle of fifths. Indeed, both the A-re in mm. 32-33 and the final truncated E-mi, the two most important cadences of the piece, may appear haphazard after the numerous pseudo-cadences that come before them. Furthermore, in both cases a third-relation progression concludes the lengthy circle of fifths and introduces the final cadential progression: C-major to E-major before the A-re and G-major to E-major before the truncated E-mi. The inherently abrupt interjection of third relations further weakens the two following cadences, as if they occurred randomly only to fulfill the cadential requirement of the conventional Phrygian mode.

In conclusion, in “Calami sonum ferentes” Rore’s chromaticism works closely with interval affect and the piece’s Phrygian modality. Contrariwise, the circle-of-fifth and major-triadic chromaticism in Lasso’s “Alma Nemes” takes no notice of the interval affect and curbs the importance and clarity of its modal structure. In fact, the chromaticism in Lasso’s “Alma Nemes” is consistent with the declamatory style in his early Italian madrigals. Rather than rendering a musical meditation on the text as Willaert’s Musica Nova madrigals or performing the text’s meaning and affect as Rore’s, Lasso’s Roman-Neapolitan works set their texts as vocally accompanied arias. A solo
melody appears in the top voice, and the lower voices carry a chordal accompaniment that more often than not employs root-position triads for the simplicity and clarity of the texture. In “Alma Nemes” Lasso continues the chordal style. Although the piece is not as strictly chordal-declamatory as his *madrigali ariosi*, the composer predominantly uses root-position major triads that are central to the piece’s chromaticism. Lasso frequently organizes these major triads and the limited number of imitative entrances throughout the piece along the circle of fifths, a tonal logic that goes against conventional modal procedures and weakens the role of modality in the structure of “Alma Nemes.”

Moreover, the harmonic circle-of-fifths progressions, stepwise relations, and third relations create a unique chromatic sound and an atmosphere of tonal disorientation throughout the entire piece. In addition, for the present purposes the interest of “Alma Nemes” and its chromaticism does not come from its workings with the meaning and affect of the text. Rather than the chromatic drama in “Calami sonum ferentes,” the ingenuity of “Alma Nemes” comes from the aural qualities of the music. Its chromatic sound responds only to the call for a chromatic “dulce novumque melos” at the end of the text. As a matter of fact, the same music could have set a completely different text, as long as it explicitly calls for a new and sweet song.

Therefore, although he probably owed his knowledge and inspiration of chromaticism to Rore, Lasso’s chromatic motet “Alma Nemes” was very different from Rore’s. Instead of a poignant musical drama that follows every motif in the text, Lasso simply composes a chromatic sound world. The simple multi-voice aria reflects the Roman-Neapolitan tradition of improvised solo songs and the declamatory style in his early Italian madrigals. Its circle-of-fifth and major-triadic chromaticism yields a static,
non-dramatic, and self-sufficient aural ambience. It is chromatic purely for chromaticism’s sake.

**Road not Taken**

The decade after Susato published Lasso’s “Opus One” in Antwerp is perhaps the most confusing part of the composer’s biography. On the one hand, records at the Munich Kappelle indicate unambiguously that in 1556 the Bavarian court under Duke Albrecht V invited Lasso to move north. On the other hand, during his stay in Antwerp and his first few years in Munich beginning with the 1555 “Opus One,” the European print market experienced an unusual outpouring of Lasso’s works. These pieces occurred in various cities from Antwerp to Venice. They came in books containing exclusively Lasso’s compositions, such as his first book of four-voice madrigals published in Rome, 1560, or in anthologies featuring a myriad of composers, like Barrè’s three volumes of madrigali ariosi published between 1555 and 1562. Although the sheer quantity of these freshly published works means that Lasso had most likely composed the majority of them before he left Italy in 1554, the lack of substantial evidences and the scattered appearances of these compositions prevent the understanding of the context of each and complicate their analysis.

Such would be the case for “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier,” a two-part setting for five voices of a Petrarchan sonnet, yet fortunately we have more than usual information about the circumstances of this piece. A key to dating this madrigal is the text of its

Amor, che ved'ogni pensier aperto - Ben veggio di lontano

Petrarch

Orlando di Lasso

si onde tu sol mi scor gi, Nel fendo

duri passi onde tu sol mi scor gi, Nel fendo

duri passi onde tu sol mi scor gi, Nel fendo del

E i duri passi onde tu sol mi scor gi, Nel fendo del mio

del mio cor gli occhi tuoi por gi, A te pa le se, a tutt’ al tri co-per
del mio cor gli occhi tuoi por gi, A te pa le se, a tutt’ al

mio cor gli occhi tuoi por gi, A te pa le se, a tutt’ al

cor gli occhi tuoi por gi, A te pa le se, a tutt’ al

cor gli occhi tuoi por gi, A te pa le se, a tutt’ al
to. Sai quel che per se-guir ti, Sai quel che per se-guir ti

tri co-per to. Sai quel che per se-guir ti; Sai quel che per se-guir ti

tri co-per to. Sai quel che per se-guir ti, Sai quel che per se-guir ti ho gia sof fer

_ co-per to. Sai quel che per se-guir ti, che per se-guir

tri co-per to, Sai quel che per se-guir ti, che
Per aspre vie mi sprone girì, mi sprone girì;
aspre vie, Oue per aspre vie mi sprone girì, mi sprone girì;
aspre vie, Oue per aspre vie mi sprone girì;

Ma non ho, come tu, da volar piu me.

Ma non ho, come tu, da volar piu me.

Ma non ho, come tu, da volar piu me.

Ma non ho, come tu, da volar piu me.

As sai conten ti lascì miei desì ri,
Purché ben de si - an- di mi con - su - mi, Ne
si - ri, Pur che ben de si - an- di mi con - su - mi, Ne gli dis - piac - cia
si - ri, Pur che ben de si - an- di mi con - su - mi, Ne gli dis - piac - cia
si - ri, Pur che ben de si - an- di mi con - su - mi, Ne gli dis - piac - cia
si - ri, Pur che ben de si - an- di mi con - su - mi, Ne gli dis - piac - cia
si - ri.
seconda parte, the *sirma* of the sonnet: “Ben veggio di lontan’ il dolce lume …” which is identical to the text Lasso set to the four-voice *madrigale arioso* discussed above.

Furthermore, while Antonio Barrè published the four-voice “Ben veggio” in Rome, 1562, “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” comes from Lasso’s *Il Terzo Libro delli Madrigali a cinque voci* issued by the same Barrè a year later in Rome, 1563. A common text and a shared Roman publisher cannot guarantee that Lasso composed “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” around the same time as “Ben veggio,” that is, during his Roman-Neapolitan period, nonetheless. After all, Barrè could well have acquired the two pieces from two unrelated sources.

What may illuminate the compositional context of “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” is the madrigal’s music. Howard Mayer Brown succinctly summarizes the characters of “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” in comparison to “Ben veggio”:

> The text … has been atomized, so that each clause gets its own music, in most cases triggered by some image in the poetry that can be effectively translated into notes … [I]t is to a much greater extent than in the earlier setting of *Ben veggio* [in terms of publication date] determined by the nature of the independent melodic lines. The later setting gives us a totally different view of the kind of music thought appropriate in the sixteenth century for the poetry of Petrarch, a view closer to that of the northern European composers active in Venice.\(^{56}\)

Whereas “Ben veggio” in its declamatory style offers music for a poetic reading, “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” provides a performance of the meaning and affect of Petrarch’s poem in Willaert and Rore’s Venetian manner. The pervading imitations and independent

voices in the latter clearly contrast with the simple texture of solo top voice and chordal accompaniment in the former.

More interestingly, in “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” Lasso composes two passages that are reminiscent of the chromaticism of Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” and “O sonno.” The passage in mm. 37-38 sets the text “e di me non t’accorgi / Ch’io son sì stanco” (“and [you] pay no attention to me / who am so weary”).57 In the entire sonnet, this is the one and the first of the rare occasions when the speaker directly discloses his emotions, that is, without using metaphors. Lasso underlines this special and crude exposure of the speaker’s weariness for love with an equally exceptional chromaticism in the music. With its F♯ and D♯, the B-major triad in mm. 37-38 transgresses the madrigal’s governing C diatonic collection or cantus durus as indicated by its “key signature.” It then progresses to E-major and A-minor triads and gives forth a short circle-of-fifths progression and pseudo-cadences on E-re and A-re, both momentarily transgressing the plagal D-Dorian modality suggested by its ♯-c1-D tonal type.

Lasso makes similar yet bolder moves at the beginning of the seconda parte. The prima parte, in compliance with the plagal-Dorian modality, starts with imitative entrances on D and A, the two boundary pitches of the modal species of fifth D-A. The seconda parte, however, begins in mm. 48-50 with imitative voices entering on E, B, and G. These entrances suggest not Dorian but a Phrygian modality. Indeed, in m. 56 appears a B-re cadence, with A♯ in Canto as leading tone. As if concerned with this provocative cadence that shifts the passage from a C diatonic collection to as far as a D collection with F♯ and C♯, Lasso evaporates the clausula tenorizans (D-C♯-B) in Quinto, mm. 55-

56, evades the *clausula bassizans* (F♯-B) in Basso, m. 56, and substitutes a modally acceptable G-major triad for the would-be B-major. Yet the B-major triad eventually resurfaces in m. 57 and moves to an E-major triad. Its triadic third D♯ ascends to E as part of an E-re pseudo-cadence that keeps the passage away from the C diatonic collection.

Here, similar to the beginning of the *seconda parte* of Rore’s “O Sonno,” the extraordinary E-centered modality and its consequent shift towards the sharp end of diatonic collections—not only E-Phrygian in the C collection but also E-Aeolian or E-Dorian in G and D collections—illustrate the illusion in Petrarch’s sonnet. The passage sets the first two verses of the *sirmia*, “Ben veggio io di lontan’ il dolce lume / Ove per aspre vie mi sproni et giri” (“I do see from afar the sweet light toward which you spur and turn me through these hard ways”). The speaker finally receives a response from Love (“Amor”) for which he has been longing. The end of the second verse, however, recalls the reality that the speaker is still on his harsh and wearisome journey. As a matter of fact, the word group “per aspre vie” (“through these hard ways”) receives an interval-affective treatment from Lasso. In mm. 54-55, a series of parallel fourths arise between the Canto’s G-A-B and the Alto’s D-E-F♯. At the end of the evaporated B-re cadence in m. 56, furthermore, the Basso moves from F♯ to G in a parallel major third with the Canto’s A♯-B. These parallel affective intervals convey the *duressa* of the speaker’s journey and lead naturally to the next verse in which the speaker returns to the harsh reality that the separation between him and Love shall continue: “ma non ò come tu da volar piume” (“but I do not have wings, as you do, to be able to fly”). In response to the text, Lasso gradually brings the music from the unreal territories back to its original D-
Dorian modality with the sustained D-sonority and passing cadential gesture on D-re in mm. 59-60.

In this way, although there are no direct chromatic semitones in “Amor che ved’ogni pensier,” the two passages examined above expand the gamut of the madrigal to as wide as thirteen pitch classes from B♭ to A♯ comparable to the E♭ to A♯ in “Alma Nemes.” Lasso’s chromaticism in “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier,” however, differs significantly from that in “Alma Nemes.” The latter adopts what can be described as pan-chromaticism. In response to the allusion to chromaticism in the text, it focuses on creating a pervasive chromatic sound throughout the entire piece through major-triadic sonorities, circle-of-fifths progressions, and third relations.

Such is definitely not the case in “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier.” Its text has nothing comparable to the “dulce tristibus his tuum / junge carmen avenis” in Fistula tertia or the “canas mecum dulce novumque melos” in “Alma Nemes,” both of which explicitly call for a chromatic setting. In addition, whereas only seventeen percent of the sonorities in “Alma Nemes” are minor, the percentage is as high as twenty seven percent in “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier.” The short circle-of-fifths progressions with major triads at the chromatic passages in “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” are in fact by-products of the Venetian-Ferrarese model of chromaticism. Indeed, unlike the remnants of the chordal-declamatory style and the pan-chromaticism in “Alma Nemes,” which suggest many Roman-Neapolitan quanlities, “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” is essentially a Venetian-style madrigal. It may not strike the listener as thoroughly chromatic as “Alma Nemes” because the purpose of the musical setting is not to render a peculiar sound. Rather, Lasso highlights certain passages in Petrarch’s sonnet with interval affect and particularly
modal chromaticism that Rore has applied, which illustrate the meaning and affect of the
text. As a result, although it was “Alma Nemes” that Lasso published together with
Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” in his “Opus One,” “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier”
appears to be modeled much more closely on Rore’s later madrigals in their Venetian
style and use of chromaticism.

Regardless of when Lasso composed “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier,” eventually it
would be the Roman-Neapolitan chromaticism of “Alma Nemes” that would triumph
over the Venetian-Ferrarese chromaticism of “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” in Lasso’s
subsequent compositions. While the Venetian-style madrigal was but a single
composition experimenting with Rore’s kind of chromaticism, the major-triadic
chromaticism of “Alma Nemes” had a more lasting influence on Lasso’s style.

**The Inevitable Prophecy**

Lasso’s *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* is a work that no discussion of chromaticism in the
composer’s works or of Renaissance chromaticism as a whole could ever possibly escape.
The primary source of this cycle of thirteen Latin motets compose for four voices is a
sumptuous set of manuscript part books dedicated to its patron, Duke Albrecht V of
Bavaria. Lasso himself hand-copied the music, and Hans Mielich at the Bavarian court
painter provides a portrait of Lasso with the caption “Orlando di Lasso at the age of
twenty-eight years.”58 With Lasso born either in 1530 or 1532, the manuscript can be

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58 Bergquist, “The Poems of Orlando di Lasso’s ‘Prophetiae Sibyllarum’ and Their Sources,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 32 (1979): 516-520. According to Bergquist, the manuscript is held by the Oesterreichisches Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, Austria, under catalog number MS. Mus. 18744.
safely dated to either 1558 or 1560 when Lasso had just settled down at the Munich Kapelle in service of the Bavarian Duke.

Each of the latter twelve motets in the cycle sets a six-line poem based on the oracles of one of the twelve Sibyls. These prophetesses of Antiquity had supposedly foretold the forthcoming of Christ the Savior long before his birth. The first motet, on the other hand, is not based on a prophetic text. Rather, it introduces the following twelve Sibyls as a prologue. Marjorie Roth argues that the speaker in the prologue is Hermes Trismegistus (“Hermes the thrice-greatest”), the mythological father of Western Hermeticism and one of the few figures that would deserve to introduce the Sibyls as a higher-ranking prophet.\textsuperscript{59} Both the author and speaker of the text remain unidentified, however.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{The text of the prologue to \textit{Prophetiae Sibyllarum}}
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
Original Latin & Word-by-word Translation \\
\hline
Carmina chromatico quae audis modulata tenore, & Songs chromatic which you hear polyphonically to a chromatic tenor, \\
Haec sunt illa quibus nostrae olim arcana salutis & These are they in which our once the mystery of salvation \\
Bis senae intrepidum cecinerunt ore Sibyllae. & Twice-six fearless sang with mouth Sibyls. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

A striking feature of the prologue’s three-line text is its extremely convoluted syntax that perhaps serves to capture the mysterious mumbling of the Sibyls. Table 6-3 presents a word-by-word translation of the text, which probably means:

Oracular song Songs which you now hear, sung polyphonically to a chromatic tenor.

Prologue to *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*

Orlando di Lasso

They are those in which our twice-six Sibyls
Fearlessly proclaimed the mystery of salvation.60

In ardent response to the second word “chromatico,” Lasso puts a D-D♯ chromatic semitone in Cantus, m. 3 and a third-relation progression from G-major to B-major underneath. The unusual B-major triad continues through a C♯-minor triad to E-major in mm. 4-5 in fulfillment of the pseudo-cadence on E-re that the F♯ in Tenor and D♯ in Cantus imply in m. 3. Similarly, the next verse begins in mm. 9-10 with a third-relation progression from C-major to E-major, and in m. 14 it goes even farther to an F♯-major triad with an A♯. The last verse slides onto the flat end of the circle of fifths, on the other hand, with an E♭-major triad in m. 19. Such chromatic passages are plentiful throughout the entire motet cycle.

Because of its enigmatic topic of prophecy, its unusually chromatic language, its scope, and Lasso’s exceptionally young age when he composed it, Prophetiae Sibyllarum has received enormous attention from scholars. In particular, its prologue, with the explicit acknowledgement of the “chromatic tenor” in these pieces, has even become the touchstone for theories of sixteenth-century chromaticism. It is impossible to review all the studies on this piece as short as twenty-five breves, and below I paraphrase four of the most relevant analyses.

Edward Lowinsky describes the prologue as an example of “triadic atonality” where “extreme chromaticism and constant modulation within a triadic texture of

60 Roth, “The Voice of Prophecy: Orlando di Lasso’s Sibyls and Italian Humanism,” Volume I, 31. Peter Bergquist has a much similar translation in Bergquist, “The Poems,” 532-533. Notice that the “chromatico” does not modify “carmina” but instead “tenore,” and that “modulata” is not translated as “modulatory” as in the sense of harmonic modulations, but as “mensural,” or indeed “polyphonic.”
harmony erode any sense of stable tonal center.”61 Lowinsky even asserts that the union of such chromatic “atonality” and prophecy in *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* had a symbolic meaning in that Lasso “probably implied that chromaticism was the music of the future.” Such interpretation of the cycle pleased Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) who wrote the foreword for Lowinsky’s monograph *Tonality and Atonality in Sixteenth-Century Music* and probably saw himself as a fulfiller of Lasso’s three-century-old prophecy for chromaticism and atonality.62 It appeared indefensible in light of the fact that, as I will elaborate on later, very rarely would Lasso revisit chromaticism after *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, which undoubtedly testifies to his mastery of this “futuristic” style.

William J. Mitchell takes fault with Lowinsky’s “triadic atonality.” He argues that Lowinsky’s analysis suffers from its elusive method that employs descriptive and ambiguous terms such as modal and tonal. He asserts that that by focusing exclusively on its triadic sonorities, Lowinsky evaluates only the prologue’s harmonic features rather than address its fundamental structure.63 Mitchell’s solution to Lasso’s prologue is a Schenker chart where the unambiguous B-A-G *Urlinie* and G-D-G *Bassbrechung* suggest a pseudo-G-major tonality (Figure 6-4).64 While he accuses Lowinsky of “atonal pejoration,” however, Mitchell himself encounters the prologue with the presumption of its Schenkerian structure. After all, what other than the presupposed *Urlinie* and


62 Ibid., vii-ix. At the beginning of the foreword, Stravinsky writes: “Professor Lowinsky’s new book is a study in the harmonic logic of those sixteenth-century maestri whose musical explorations led them beyond the confines of modality and to the discovery of the ‘free’ harmonic world, which, however cut and patterned, is still the harmonic filed of the composer today.”


64 Figure 6-4 is recreated from Mitchell, “The Prologue to Orlando di Lasso’s Prophetiae Sibyllarum,” 272-3.
Figure 6-4
William Mitchell’s Schenkerian Analysis of “Carmina chromatico” by Lasso
Bassbrechung decides that all of harmonic activities before the G-major triad at the end of m. 20 are merely prolongations of an underlying G-sonority? And that the semiminim-long D-major triad in m. 21 is structurally more important than the breve-long B♭-major in mm. 22-23? Although musical structure should always be an important part of analysis, Mitchell’s Schenkerian approach to the prologue serves no purpose other than proving its arbitrary presumption of the Schenkerian fundamental structure in a circular reasoning inherent to Schenkerian analysis.

Karol Berger attempts to merge Mitchell’s attentiveness to musical structure with a more historical and idiomatic manner of analysis. His analysis of the prologue appears at the end of his monograph *Theories of Chromatic and Enharmonic Music in Late Sixteenth Century Italy* as an example of an analytical method he proposes. Based on his interpretation of theoretical treatises from the sixteenth century, Berger’s method stems from the precept that a sixteenth-century composition is based on a fundamental mode to which other modes are subordinate in a hierarchical fashion. These hierarchical levels of modes are represented both linearly and vertically by their modal species intervals—octaves, fifths, and fourths—and important modal steps—final, fifth, and third. The goal of the analysis is to unveil the piece’s modal hierarchies and the way they are reflected in the music.65 Berger suggests that in Lasso’s prologue each triad represents a distinctive mode: the root of the triad embodies the modal final, the triadic fifth the fifth above the final, and the triadic third the third above the final. The cadential formula of the prologue suggests a G-mode as its fundamental mode, and Berger demonstrates through Roman-

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numeral analysis how in the first phrase (mm. 1-9) the individual triads-modes are subordinated to the fundamental mode in four hierarchical levels (Figure 6-5).$^{66}$

**Figure 6-5**

Karol Berger’s triadic analysis of the first phrase of Lasso’s “Carmina chromatico”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triad:</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>c♯</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>f♯</td>
<td>(D)</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure:</td>
<td>4th level:</td>
<td>(V)</td>
<td>(IV)</td>
<td>(IV)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd level:</td>
<td>(V)</td>
<td>(VI)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd level:</td>
<td>(III)</td>
<td>(II)</td>
<td>9♯</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Soprano:</td>
<td>Car- ina</td>
<td>Chro- ma- tico</td>
<td>quae</td>
<td>au-dis</td>
<td>mo- du- la- ta</td>
<td>te- no- re</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parts:</td>
<td>Car- ina</td>
<td>Chro- ma- tico</td>
<td>quae</td>
<td>au- dis</td>
<td>mo- du- la- ta</td>
<td>te- no- re</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After a period of scholarly dormancy on the cycle, Marjorie Roth revisits the *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* in her 2005 dissertation *The Voice of Prophecy: Orlando di Lasso’s Sibyls and Italian Humanism*. The first nine chapters of her two-volume work are devoted to background research on the role of the sibyls in religion, mysticism, and philosophy during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and on the culture of sibylline prophecy in sixteenth-century Rome as a context of Lasso’s cycle. In the tenth and last chapter, Roth proposes an exciting “new analytical approach” to the prologue. She shows that the chromaticism in the piece results from a series of transposed hexachords (*deductio*) from two-flat hexachord starting on B♭ to the four-sharp starting on E. In particular, the first two phrases (mm. 1-18) feature predominantly hexachords towards the sharp end of the spectrum, yet the third and last phrase (mm. 18-25) explores the flat hexachords (Figure 6-6).$^{67}$

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66 Berger, “Tonality and Atonality in the Prologue to Orlando di Lasso’s ‘Prophetiae Sibyllarum,’” 492-9. Figure 6-5 is recreated from Example 2 in 499.

67 Roth, “The Voice of Prophecy,” Vol. II, 343-5. Figure 6-6 is recreated from 344.
Roth further suggests that this plan of hexachordal transpositions in the prologue models after the “Prophecy Tone” to which prophecies from the Old Testament texts were chanted at masses or ceremonies on special feast days during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Compared to the tones to which Gospels and Epistles were sung, the Prophecy Tone has a unique feature: in spite of its cantus durus signature and the various B♮ steps, the tone concludes on a series of B♭’s (Figure 6-7). Roth argues that Lasso’s large-scale design of starting with sharp hexachords and eventually moving to the flat ones in the mollis direction derives from the peculiar ending of the Prophecy Tone. It “reflects the chromatic melodic possibilities embedded within the monophonic Prophecy Tone.”

68 Ibid., 320-9. Figure 6-7 is recreated from 323.
69 Ibid., 346.
Roth believes that her analysis based on the Prophecy Tone “adds much to what we know about the *Carmina chromatico* as a purely musical entity.”\(^70\) Nonetheless, the argument that the chromatic features in the prologue arise from the unique ending of the Prophecy Tone is based on a series of claims that even Roth herself acknowledges as mere hypotheses. No substantial evidence proves that the Prophecy Tone was certainly in use during Lasso’s time, not to mention whether it influenced Lasso’s compositional decisions.\(^71\)

Furthermore, Roth’s hexachordal analysis contributes nothing besides describing the musical phenomena in the prologue in historical terms whose analytical significance she never addresses sufficiently. Hexachordal labels not illuminate the piece more than its original notation or any anachronistic description—after all, what is the difference in such a game of names? Essentially, Roth’s analysis of the prologue begs the question. It

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70 Ibid., 347.
71 Ibid., 325. Two important quotes are “it is possible that Lasso and contemporaries would have known the version of the Prophecy Tone formula given in [Example 10 of this current chapter]” and “while it is true that toward the end of the sixteenth century the distinctive characteristics of the three Lessons Tones [Prophecy, Gospel, and Epistle] began to be ‘regularized’ and much of their individual melodic identities disappeared, there is still some evidence that in the middle of the century the musical features unique to the Prophecy Tone were still intact.”
analyzes the piece in a historical manner for the sake of historical authenticity, but merely
describing the piece in historical terms hardly analyzes it at all.

As a matter of fact, all the above interpretations of the prologue suffer from
analytical deficiencies. To begin with, all the interpreters ignore the rest of Lasso’s cycle.
Such disinterest suggests that they are not really interested in Lasso’s cycle but rather the
all-applying theories and analytical methods they propose. Second, they are obsessed
with the question how the prologue can stand by itself as a tonally coherent composition.
Yet all the theories—“triadic atonality,” Schenkerian fundamental structure, triadic-
modal hierarchies, and the Prophecy Tone—disclose their inability to overcome a simple
fact: no matter how one describes or analyzes it, the prologue will always be what it is,
that is, a unique and independent musical creation. Instead of trying to use various
analytical methods to support the prologue, it is better to respect its idiosyncrasies than to
argue them away.

Table 6-4
Ordering of Motets in Lasso’s *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motet</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carmina chromatico</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persica</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libyca</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delphica</td>
<td>g2-c2-c3-f3</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cimmeria</td>
<td>g2-c2-c3-f3</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samia</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumana</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellespontica</td>
<td>g2-c2-c3-f3</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrygia</td>
<td>g2-c2-c3-f3</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europaea</td>
<td>c3-c4-c4-f3</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiburtina</td>
<td>c3-c4-c4-f3</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erythraea</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrippa</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The current chapter does not aim at providing a thorough analysis of Lasso’s *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*. In spite of the scope of scholarship on the cycle, many issues besides the much studied chromaticism and tonal structure remain to be addressed: the ordering of its pieces (Table 6-4), texture, and text-tone relation. These issues go beyond what this chapter can accomplish and in fact do not pertain much to the topic of chromaticism of this thesis. Nor does the current chapter intend to come up with a new theory or new approach accounting for the ontology of the cycle’s chromatic style. Instead, I would bring the entirety of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* back to Lasso’s oeuvre and posit it onto the plotline of chromaticism in his compositional career. Thus, the question at stake becomes how the chromaticism in *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* relates to the Roman-Neapolitan chromaticism that Lasso began to work with in “Alma Nemes” only a few years before the cycle’s conception? How will it affect Lasso as a composer and his approach to chromaticism afterwards?

Table 6-5 summarizes some important parameters of the thirteen motets in *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* and compares them to those of the four chromatic pieces that I have previously analyzed. In its entirety, the gamut of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* contains fifteen pitch classes from A♭ to A♯, short of the D♭ in the sixteen-pitch D♭-A♯ in “Calami sonum ferentes” and only adding a new A♭ to the fourteen-pitch gamut of “Alma Nemes”. As Berger once commented Lasso’s use of pitches in the cycle is

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73 Table 6-5 is created based on the information from Orlando di Lasso, *Sämtliche Werke, Neue Reihe / Band 21: Prophetiae Sibyllarum*. 
“eminently practical, even frugal.” On average each motet of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* employs fewer than thirteen pitch classes, barely satisfying the criterion for a structurally chromatic gamut (see Chapter 3). Fewer than half of the motets meet the thirteen-pitch threshold for enharmonic chromaticism as do “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier” and Rore’s “O sonno,” neither of which sounds particularly chromatic, and only two of the motets have as many pitch classes as “Alma Nemes.”

Nevertheless, the motets of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* thoroughly triumph over any other chromatic composition in Table 6-6 in one respect: the preponderance of major triads. On average, less than ten percent of a motet’s duration features minor sonorities, significantly less than even the seventeen percent of “Alma Nemes.” Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism, which functions primarily through circle-of-fifths and third-relation progressions, is the determinant.

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75 Table 6-6 is created based on the information of the aforementioned sources of the pieces.
To begin with, throughout the entire cycle, except for in a few imitative passages mostly in the last motet “Sibylla Agrippa,” Lasso employs a primarily chordal texture. Although staggered voices occasionally occur, the motets are significantly more homophonic than “Alma Nemes” in a way that resembles the chordal accompaniments in madrigali ariosi. The triads, furthermore, are almost exclusively major. In pieces whose tonal types typically represent a mode that has a minor third above its final—namely the D-, A-, and E-final types and the ♭-G types, which might be called the “minor” tonal types—the percentage of minor sonorities are slightly higher, usually above ten percent. In these pieces, the triad on the modal final is usually minor, for example G-minor triads in a ♭-G type piece; so are the triads on the fifth degree, for example D-minor triads in a ♭-G type piece. Still, they are significantly more major sounding than the four pieces in Table 6-6, which all have “minor” types, incidentally. Indeed, in all pieces of Prophetiae Sibyllarum, Lasso purposefully raises the third of most minor triads. In “Sibylla Cimmeria,” for example, in spite of the ♭-g2-G tonal type, all G-root sonorities that last longer than a minim are major except in the second half of m. 25, and all D-root sonorities regardless of duration are major except in the first half of m. 43. In “Sibylla Erythraea,” a ♭-c1-G piece, fewer than six percent of the piece’s duration features minor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piece</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitones</th>
<th>Minor Sonorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alma Nemes</td>
<td>♮-c1-E</td>
<td>E♭-A#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amor, che ved’ogni pensier</td>
<td>♮-c1-D</td>
<td>B♭-A#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calami sonum ferentes</td>
<td>♮-f3-E</td>
<td>D♭-A#</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O sonno</td>
<td>♭-g2-A</td>
<td>E♭-D#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sonorities, the lowest percentage in the entire cycle. As a matter of fact, the entire second half of the motet starting from m. 21 uses exclusively root-position major triads.

It thus appears ironic that although the prologue has an unambiguously “major” tonal type $b$-c1-G and receives the most attention for its chromaticism, its percentage of major triads is the lowest in the entire cycle. Even so, progressions of root-position major triads constitute major tonal and harmonic events throughout the entire prologue. An extensive circle of fifths using mainly major triads precedes all the three major cadences in the piece: the G-re in mm. 8-9, the C-ut in mm. 17-18, and the final G-ut in mm. 24-25. The C-ut cadence is even part of the lengthy circle-of-fifths progression from the F#-major triad in m. 14 to the Eb-major and Bb-major triads in mm. 19-20, which covers the entire gamut of the prologue from A# to Eb.

In addition, underneath each of the four chromatic semitones—the D-D# in Cantus, mm. 2-3, F-F# in Cantus, mm. 7-8, F-F# in Altus, mm. 18-19, and G-G# in Altus, mm. 29-21—is a third-relation progression from one major triad to another, most famously the G-major to B-major near the beginning of the piece. These third-relation major triads do not necessarily cause direct chromatic semitones, however. In the progression C-major to E-major in mm. 10, for example, Lasso substitutes a cross relation between the Altus and Cantus for what would be a G-G# chromatic semitone in the Altus, perhaps in order to avoid an excess of direct melodic chromaticism.

It often occurs that third-relation progressions between major triads push the music towards the sharp direction, and circle-of-fifths progressions balance them out by bring the music back towards the flat. In mm. 20-21 over the text “cecinerunt,” for example, the circle of fifths from E-major to Bb-major immediately follows the third-
relation progression from G-major to E-major at the beginning. Major stepwise progresses on the other hand can go either way, since they are essentially truncated circle-of-fifths progressions. In mm. 13-14, the stepwise motion from E to F♯ in the Bassus pushes to the sharp end, whereas the progression from G-minor to F-major in mm. 21-22 moves to the flat.

In all thirteen motets of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, Lasso organizes the plethora of root-position major triads into a balanced harmonic fabric of circles of fifths, third relations, and stepwise progressions. “Sibylla Hellespontica,” the only motet of the cycle other than the prologue to have a fourteen-pitch gamut, for example, opens with a predominantly homophonic phrase that exhibits a direct chromatic semitone (A-A♯ in Cantus, mm. 2-3), a spectrum of pitches from B♭ to A♯, and countless non-harmonic relations. The mixture of circle-of-fifths, third-relation, and stepwise progressions makes this phrase even more disorienting and directionless than the opening of the prologue where the extensive circle of fifths at the end may at least serve as a harmonic anchor. In different motets, furthermore, Lasso varies the combination of harmonic progressions, which ends up with different chromatic qualities. In “Sibylla Delphica,” for example, Lasso uses circle-of-fifths progressions of different lengths and stepwise progressions more than third relations. On the other hand, Lasso saturates “Sibylla Libyca” with third-relation progressions. As a result, whereas “Delphica” has a smoother harmonic progression and fewer cross relations and direct chromatic semitones in comparison with most of the other motets in the cycle, “Libyca” has as many as twelve direct chromatic semitones, which is even more than Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes,” and exhibits a distinctively chromatic sound.
Thus, the presence of Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism as the governing tonal and harmonic principle and agent of the piece’s chromatic sound is even more prominent in *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* than in “Alma Nemes.” An intensified chromaticism at all frontiers does not necessarily lead to a complete disposal of modal structure, however. Admittedly, Lasso’s chromaticism, especially his preference of root-position major triads does create tonal disorientation to different extents and weakens the structural importance of modality. In “Sibylla Delphica,” for example, besides for the two-voice G-re and D-re cadences at the beginning (mm. 3-4 and 6-7) and the final G-re cadence in mm. 47-48, there is not a single internal cadence with suspension or diminution. An evaded cadence in mm. 14-5 would become an elaborate F-ut cadence, yet it would have nothing to do with the transposed plagal Dorian mode that the $b\text{-}g_2\text{-}G$ tonal type conventionally implies. All the other pauses in the motet are simple chordal arrivals. They occur on a myriad of steps—D, C, E, F, and A—and appear irrelevant to articulating a modal structure.

Most motets of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, however, resemble “Alma Nemes” regarding their treatment of modality in light of chromaticism. Major internal and final cadences occur on modally important steps: namely on the final and the fifth above the final. Yet such cadential patterns are not structural explorations of the mode but a surfical and conventional compliance to the rules of modal compositions. It leaves plenty of musical space within this skeleton of cadences in which major-triadic chromaticism can assume its role. Indeed, no matter how chromatic they become with circles of fifths and third relations, most motets arrive at a modally acceptable cadence at some point in the course of the piece and at its end. In “Sibylla Hellespontica,” an elaborate cadence on D-re in mm. 8-9 and a suspension cadence on G-ut in mm. 14-15 align with the final D-
re cadence in mm. 40-41 and the piece’s ♭-g₂-D tonal type, although what particular mode this type is supposed to represent or whether Lasso intends it to be modally representative may be matters of debate. “Sibylla Libyca” has powerful internal cadences on D-re (mm. 38-39), D-mi (mm. 45-46), and, additionally, a B♭-ut (mm. 41-42, as well as an evaded G-re that ends on B♭ in mm. 16-17), which supports its ♭-c₁-G tonality with a bit of Terzfreiheit (see Chapter 1). These cadential patterns set the stage for the impressive chromaticism in both motets.

In conclusion, Lasso’s Prophetiae Sibyllarum is a continuation of the Roman-Neapolitan chromaticism that began in 1555 with “Alma Nemes.” Major triads play a significant role in the cycle’s chromaticism and in fact become much more pervasive than in “Alma Nemes.” Such major-triadic chromaticism reduces modality to a marginal position, although it still maintains its presence through cadences as a surficial convention that guarantees of structural stability. Meanwhile, Lasso employs circles of fifths, stepwise progressions, and third relations even more frequently so that Prophetiae Sibyllarum furthers the tonal disorientation of the chromatic sound in “Alma Nemes.”

Prophetiae Sibyllarum would have a major impact on Lasso’s subsequent adventures in chromaticism. It is as though the motet cycle, which was probably Lasso’s first major work, were really a prophecy. Although Prophetiae Sibyllarum probably did not intend to predict the future of music as Lowinsky hoped, its amplified major-triadic and circle-of-fifth chromaticism that once came from the Roman-Neapolitan style of chordal declamation defines what chromaticism meant to Lasso. Admittedly, Prophetiae Sibyllarum calls for more examination for the relation between the oracular texts and Lasso’s chromatic music on all levels. It is apparent, however, that Lasso does not
employ chromaticism as a common compositional tool elucidating particular words or phrases as he would in any ordinary text. Quite the opposite, as in “Alma Nemes,” Lasso’s chromaticism converts the entire cycle into a chromatic aural ambience in response to its overarching theme that calls for the peculiar sound of chromaticism.

Importantly, whereas in “Alma Nemes” the cause of chromaticism pertains to a secular domestic setting, the subject of Prophetiae Sibyllarum is unambiguously religious. The breathtaking chromaticism addresses the “arcana salutis” as the prologue states: the mystery of salvation that Christ brings with his birth, which the Ancient Sibyls successfully prophesized. The union in Prophetiae Sibyllarum between Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism and the Catholic-Christian yet indeed esoteric and mystical sibylline prophecy appears almost symbolic: a few years after the cycle’s completion, Lasso, previously devoted to secular domestic music making, became maestro at the ducal Kapelle in 1563.76

The Chromatic Hook

When he was appointed the maestro di cappella at the Bavarian court, Lasso was no more than thirty-three years old and had been a singer at the chapel for as few as five years. As it turns out, Lasso’s chromatic compositions such as “Alma Nemes” and the motets in Prophetiae Sibyllarum may have played an important role in his swift success at Munich. According to James Haar, in 1555 Duke Albrecht V instigated a search for musicians, which ended up with Lasso and several others coming to Munich. The duke

specifically instructed the scout, a certain “Dr. Seld,” the imperial vice chancellor, to look for “singers (or, rather, singer-composers) who were expert in the ‘new art’ and in musica reservata.” Though Haar never explains what the term “musica reservata” entails, he suggests that Prophetae Sibyllarum was “an extreme case” of musica reservata. Indeed, the Bavarian dukes “wished literally to reserve them by delaying their publication” for as long as four decades until after Lasso’s death. In this way, Haar implies that musica reservata denotes music reserved from the market for the dukes’ private use. But what does it really mean that Albrecht V asked Seld to find singer-composers that are “expert in music for the dukes’ private use?” What qualities define “expert in musica reservata?”

Claude Palisca offers a direct answer. In his account of the search for singer-composers, Seld referred to musica reservata as a distinctive musical style unknown to many musicians. Specifically, Seld opposed musica reservata to the style of Nicolas Gombert and pervading imitation. These usages of the term musica reservata thus imply that, for Albrecht V and Seld musica reservata is musica nova, a new manner of musical composition different from the pervading Franco-Flemish style.

Although what is new and thus reserved would depend largely on the context, it is likely that the musica reservata hook between Lasso and Albrecht V was the former’s chromatic compositions. Admittedly, in the discourse of music theory in the sixteenth century the usages of the term musica reservata were exceptionally divergent and


confusing. Nevertheless, two sources that were temporally and geographically pertinent to Lasso’s settlement in Munich both referred to *musica reservata* as the use of chromaticism in polyphonic composition: *Astrologiae iudiciariae isagogica* by Jean Tainsnier published in Cologne, 1559, and *Doctrina de tonis* by Eucharius Hoffmann (d. 1588) published in Greifswald, 1582. The chromaticism in “Alma Nemes” and *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* easily qualify as *musica reservata* under such definitions.

In addition, Palisca argues that the “a la nouvelle composition d’aucuns d’Italie” in the French title of Lasso’s 1555 “Opus One” refers to “Alma Nemes” and Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes,” the two chromatic pieces at the end of the publication. Through such “nouvelle composition,” the young Lasso “embraced the ideals of the *musica nova*” as early as in his first publication and identified himself as the “expert in *musica reservata*” Albrecht V was looking for. As for *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, whether composed before or after Lasso’s employment at the Bavarian court the cycle would only add to the duke’s appreciation of Lasso as a *musico reservato*—and indeed he did, as the sumptuous manuscript of the cycle commissioned by Albrecht V himself testifies.

Lasso’s eventual adoption of the symbols of ♯, ️, and ♭ in his coat of arms further

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79 An example is that in the musical scene at Ferrara during the reign of Duke Alfonso II, *musica reservata* or *musica secreta* at the ducal court referred to music reserved for a small and qualified audience. The establishment of the *musica reservata* was independent of the more public music making at the *cappella di musica*, and it generally involved virtuosic solo singing. See Anthony Newcomb, *The Madrigal at Ferrara 1579-1597*, Volume I (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 21-2.

80 Albert Dunning, “Musica reservata (i),” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed December 19, 2012, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19429. Samule Quickelberg’s comment on Lasso’s *Penitential Psalms* is another one of such sources. Quickelberg explains *musica reservata* as music that skillfully expresses the meaning and affect of the words. Yet as Dunning argues in his *Grove* article, “The value of Quickelberg’s definition of musica reservata is reduced for two reasons: first, such musical word-painting and portrayal of affect were precisely the central characteristics of most music written around 1560; second, he omitted any mention of the specific compositional techniques used in this period.”

81 Palisca, “A Clarification of ‘Musica Reservata,’” 149.
confirms his identity as a composer of chromaticism, the *musica reservata*, at the Bavarian court (Figure 6-8).  

A few years after *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, around the time of his promotion as *maestro di cappella*, Lasso further demonstrated his mastery of *musica reservata* by composing two new motets in the style of major-triadic chromaticism: “Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit.” In many ways these two works should be treated as a pair. “Timor et tremor” was published in *Thesaurus musicus*, a five-volume anthology published in Nuremberg in 1564 by the printing firm of Johann vom Berg and Ulrich Neuber as part of their twenty-one volume collection of over a thousand Latin motets.  

“Concupiscendo concupiscit” came out a year later in Lasso’s motet publication *Quinque et sex vocibus perornatae sacrae cantiones* issued by Scotto in Venice, 1565. The texts

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of both motets are two-part paraphrases of psalm verses in which the speaker pleads directly to God for his mercy.

“Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit” continue many aspects of Prophetiae Sibyllarum. As in the motets of the cycle, in both “Timor” and “Concupiscendo” Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism reduces the modal structure to a mere formula. On the surface, both motets follow a cadential pattern that is more or less consistent with the particular modes that their tonal types normally represent. The ♯-g²-D tonal type of “Concupiscendo concupiscit” suggests a D-Dorian modality, and in compliance with the D-A modal species, the motet has numerous internal cadences on D besides the final D-re cadence and one on A besides the “half cadence” on A at the end of the prima pars. Within the skeleton of such regular cadential formula, however, Lasso employs circles of fifths, stepwise progressions, and third relations that undermine the stability of the modal structure. Although Lasso’s major-triadic sound world pervades throughout the entire motet, its opening phrase is its most intensely chromatic section. Before the D-re cadence brings it back to the modal “home” in m. 22, the opening phrase (mm. 1-22) ventures through a series of sustained root-position major triads from B-major to B♭-major and covers a gamut as wide as twelve pitches, only missing the E♭ to come in the secunda pars (m. 51). The phrase brings forth a number of non-harmonic relations and direct chromatic semitones and thus introduces a sense of tonal disorientation from the outset. The music reacts to details of the text: “Concupiscendo concupiscit anima mea laudate, O Dominus omnipotens,” (“with great longing my soul desires to praise thee, O Lord, O omnipotent God”).⁸⁵ Here, as the speaker invokes the

⁸⁵ Translation from Ibid., xxiv.
Lord, Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism brings out his “desire to praise” as well as the awesomeness of the Lord. As the speaker’s longing for the divine permeates the rest of his prayer, Lasso in accordance also continues his chromatic language in the rest of the motet, although to a slightly lesser extent. Still, in mm. 53, Lasso extends his chromatic adventures to the flat side of the circle of fifths, adding E♭ to the gamut.

Unlike “Concupiscendo,” “Timor et tremor” has a rather irregular cadential formula. The final cadences of the two parts—the “half cadence” on D in mm. 40-41 and the elaborate G-ut cadence in mm. 80-84—seem perfectly consistent with ♮-c1-G tonal type. Whereas “Concupiscendo” sees constant internal cadences on its modal final D, in “Timor” there are only two major internal cadences on G and both are near the piece’s beginning in the prima pars (mm. 13 and mm. 20-21). The other two internal cadences with suspension are both in the secunda pars: C-ut in mm. 60-61, and A-re in mm. 68-69. Although one might argue that ♮-c1-G types occasionally entail a C-G modal species instead of G-D, the A-re would still remain difficult to explain. Besides, there are three important cadences without suspension that do not seem to relate to the ♮-c1-G type at all: two F-ut cadences in mm. 7-8 and 48-49, and the “half cadence” on B♮ in mm. 29-31 and the F-ut cadence in mm. 48-49.

As in “Sibylla Delphica,” the much weakened modality in “Timor et tremor” points to a particularly powerful major-triadic chromaticism. Table 6-7 compares the chromatic parameters of “Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit” with that of the prologue to Prophetiae Sibyllarum and of the cycle’s average. Both motets have a thirteen-pitch gamut from D♯ to E♭, which is enharmonically chromatic. Although this gamut is an A♯-step shorter than the gamut of prologue, it still falls above the average of
Timor et tremor

Orlando di Lasso

a refugium meum es tu,
et ad-
a refugium meum es tu, et ad-
re fugium meum es tu, et ad ju-
et ad ju-
et ad ju-
et ad ju-
a refugium meum es tu, et ad ju-
et ad ju-
a refugium meum es tu, et ad ju-
et ad ju-

ad ju-
tis. Domine, in vol-
ad ju-
tis. Domine, in vol-
ad ju-
tis. Domine, invokers. Domine,
ad ju-
tis. Domine,
ad ju-
tis. Domine,
ad ju-
tis. Domine,
ad ju-
tis. Domine,
the cycle. Both motets have more direct chromatic semitones than the prologue and smaller percentages of minor-sounding durations. In particular, “Timor et tremor” has as many as eight chromatic semitones, and less than ten percent of it durations are minor sonorities, compared to the six and less than thirteen percent of “Concupiscendo concupiscit.” In fact, not only does Lasso employ more non-harmonic relations and direct chromatic semitones in “Timor” than in “Concupiscendo,” but he also spreads them out more evenly. Circle-of-fifth and third-relation progressions are ubiquitous, bringing the peculiar chromatic sound to every corner of “Timor.”

As a whole, the chromatic aural ambience Lasso creates through major-triadic chromaticism brings out the atmosphere of “Timor et tremor” well articulated in its first verse: “Timor et tremor venrunt super me, et caligo cecidit super me” (“Fear and trembling are come upon me, and mist has fallen over me”).86 Although the text “Timor et tremor” is also a plea to the Lord, unlike “Concupiscendo concupiscit” it is more than a ritualistic prayer. The uncontrollable trembling (“tremor”) and mysterious mist (“caligo”) address the bodily sensations of praying for God’s mercy during a spiritual meditation. Therefore, in response to the deeply devotional and perhaps mystical experience of the

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text, Lasso sets up the chromatic sound world in “Timor et tremor” that is much more thorough and compelling than in “Concupiscendo concupiscit.”

With *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* copied in a sumptuous manuscript and “Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit” coming soon to print, by the time Lasso became *maestro di cappella* at the Bavarian court in 1563 it seems probable that the young composer would continue his chromatic endeavor that started less than a decade earlier with “Alma Nemes.” Yet what ended up happening was exactly the opposite: after the 1565 “Concupiscendo concupiscit” Lasso rarely touched the chromatic style at all. His pulling away from the style contrasts Rore’s frequent use of chromaticism in his late madrigals such as “O sonno.” It further differentiates Lasso from the younger generation such as Luca Marenzio and Luzzasco Luzzaschi who brought chromaticism to its climax after the 1580. Were it really the chromatic *musica reservata* that helped Lasso get the prestigious job offer and early promotion at a very young age, soon after Lasso’s appointment Duke Albrecht V would have had to change his musical taste drastically against his previous excitement for *musica reservata*.

In this way, although circumstantial evidences surrounding the usages of the term *musica reservata* and the context of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, “Timor et tremor,” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit” support Lasso’s chromatic style as a deal-breaker in his rise to *maestro di cappella* at the Bavarian court, the decline of chromaticism in Lasso’s later works suggests otherwise. Indeed, one might never know whether chromaticism was what Albrecht V was really looking for in his search for singers, or how much Lasso’s chromatic output, which by the time of “Timor” and “Concupiscendo” had undoubtedly surpassed all foregoing experiments of chromaticism, contributed to Lasso’s success at
Munich in the late 1550s and early 1560s. One thing is clear, however: regarding chromaticism, the same Lasso that started as a young adventurer became a rather tame conservative soon after he assumed the title *maestro di cappella* of the Munich Kapelle.

One might imagine that the disappearance of chromaticism in Lasso’s works after his ascension to *maestro* would relate to the religious nature of his duties. After all, the endeavor of adopting chromaticism to vocal polyphony began in both Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” and Lasso’s “Alma Nemes” as a secular musical trope. Although Rore did incorporate chromaticism as a common element into his late style, he never applied chromaticism to sacred music. Although Lasso’s *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* first linked chromaticism with the Christian religion and the motets “Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit” only strengthened such a tie, it is not illogical to assume that the solemnity of Catholicism in Munich would scrutinize the boldness of chromaticism, especially when the Catholic Counter-Reformation was unfolding. The Council of Trent concluded in 1563, the same year Lasso became *maestro*. With the Jesuits increasing their influence and Wilhelm V “the Pious” becoming the duke in 1579, the character of the Munich court would only become more and more religious. After all, the “religious melancholia” that haunted Lasso’s last years could not have formed in one day.

Citing religion as the prime reason for Lasso’s forgoing of chromaticism is likely an oversimplification, nonetheless. For one, as Clive Wearing suggests, there is not a firm stylistic distinction between Lasso’s sacred and secular works, especially compared to his contemporary Palestrina. According to Wearing, the “secular sounding” nature of Lasso’s sacred music could actually explain why when nineteenth century musicians looked back
to the sixteenth in search for a model of sacred music, they focuses not on Lasso but on Palestrina. Had Lasso been willing to expand his chromatic pursuits, Munich provided the stage for him to do so by composing secular music. Unlike Palestrina or Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611), Lasso served a temporal prince who demanded all kinds of secular music. This ranged from everyday music making such as during the duke’s meals and afternoon naps to special occasions like Wilhelm’s marriage to Renata of Lorraine in February 1568. The music Lasso provided for these events included not only vocal polyphony but also instrumental music with viols and brass, for example. As a matter of fact Lasso’s service to the Bavarian dukes did not restrain him from composing secular music at all, but instead encouraged him to continue his cosmopolitan work with a wide variety of genres. Yet Lasso’s chromaticism did not yield fruit in these secular works outside of a single madrigal-chanson “Comme la tourterelle” that like “Timor” and “Concupiscendo” dates from the 1560s.

God, the Erotic

I propose that Lasso’s rather sudden withdrawal from his chromatic adventures was not out of necessity as he became the maestro but out of choice. For review, Lasso’s pan-chromaticism through the pervasive use of major triads responds only to texts whose thematics especially solicits the sound of chromaticism. In particular, the monumental motet cycle Prophetiae Sibyllarum has linked this major-triadic chromaticism with the esoteric and mystical aspects of Catholic Christianity. The two chromatic motets of the

1560s, especially “Timor et tremor,” further indicate that for Lasso only texts that embody a profoundly spiritual and devotional experience of communicating with the Divine deserve a chromatic setting.

Understandably, such mystical experience would not appear frequently in Lasso’s sacred works, which more often than not were composed for the ducal court’s consumption. The seven “penitential psalms” Lasso set to music in Psalms Davidis poenitentiales in 1584, for example, have deeply spiritual potential; nonetheless, Lasso’s lavish setting and its extravagant manuscript copies obviously mattered more as a public display of compositional prowess, artistic taste, and piety than as a locus for personal devotion. Perhaps the same can apply to most of Lasso’s sacred output during his tenure as maestro to which Lasso chose not to apply major-triadic chromaticism. In his essay “Tonal Compass in the Motets of Orlando di Lasso,” David Crook presents a laborious investigation of Lasso’s entire motet corpus as printed in the Magnum opus musicum published posthumously by the composer’s two sons Ferdinand and Rudolph in 1604. The publication did not include the thirteen motets from Prophetiae Sibyllarum. Among the more than five hundred motets, only fifteen contain meaningful transgressions of the modal gamut, and among those only eight motets feature D♯, an important marker for a chromatic gamut as shown in Chapter Three.89 In fact, in only as few as four pieces does chromaticism appear as the governing tonal and harmonic principle, three of them being “Alma Nemes,” “Timor et tremor,” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit.”

The fourth piece, however, deserves more attention. The two-part motet “Anna, mihi dilecta” has a fourteen-step gamut from A♭ to D♯, as wide as that of “Alma Nemes” and the prologue to *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, although shifted towards the flat side. Though carrying a “minor” tonal type b-c₁-G, “Anna, mihi dilecta” has a percentage of minor-sounding durations lower than eight percent, which is lower than that of “Timor et tremor” and ten motets from *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*. Most astonishingly, while the motet is just seventy-two breves, it has an astonishing number of twenty-seven direct chromatic semitones. This is more than twice the number of direct chromatic semitones in “Sibylla Delphica,” which has the greatest number in *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* and almost thrice the number in Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” characterized by a conspicuous melodic chromaticism.

Besides the two G-ut cadences concluding the motet’s two parts, moreover, in “Anna, mihi dilecta,” there is no major internal cadence with suspension. In fact, in spite of its harmonic extension, the final G-re cadence in mm. 70-72 has no suspension or diminution. Internal pauses are more or less arbitrary arrivals on chords that do not conform to the b-c₁-G tonal type. Instead of the practically nonexistent modal structure, major-triadic progressions, mostly third relations and stepwise progressions in this case, dominate the tonal and harmonic logic of the motet. Constant shifting of tonal systems and ubiquitous non-harmonic relations in addition to direct chromatic semitones make the piece extremely disorienting and directionless, even more so than the “Sibyllae Delphica,” “Libyca,” and “Hellespontica,” the three most chromatic motets of *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*.

Thus the climax of Lasso’s chromatic adventure is “Anna, mihi dilecta.” The compositional context of the motet is as peculiar as its music. It came out in an anthology
of Latin motets entitled *Altera pars selectissimarum cantionum ... Quinque et quatuor vocibus compositarum* published in Nuremberg, 1579.\(^90\) Whereas most other motets of the publication set religious texts, Lasso’s “Anna, mihi dilecta” is flagrantly sexual:

*Prima pars*

Anna, mihi dilecta, veni mea sola voluptas,

Nectareus stillat cujus ab ore liquor,

nympha, mihi dare basiolum digneris, in omni

alter ate nulla est charior orbe mihi.

*Secunda pars*

Accipe daque mihi pro votis oscula, faxint

numina, sic semper mutuus adsit amor,

nec nisi sola quibus restinguat adurimur ignes

Atropos, atque tibi sola placer queam.\(^91\)

Essentially, the two-part Latin poem builds upon the exchange of kisses between the speaker and the addressed Anna. The description of the kiss is highly figural: “my only delight from whose mouth honeyed essence distills.” At the end, the speaker burns together with Anna in the flames of desire and love. Curiously, he asks for Atropos and only Atropos, the Moirai of Death, to come and quench such fire by which he can please Anna. The union of love and death in the quenching of the fire may symbolize the

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\(^91\) Translation from Ibid., xxxiii-xxxiv: “Anna, my beloved, come, my only delight / from whose mouth honeyed essence distills, / nymph, may you deign to give me a little kiss, / in the whole world no one else is dearer to me. [Second Part] Receive and give me kisses in return for my prayers / that the gods cause our mutual loves thus always to be present / and let Atropos alone quench the fires with which we burn, / and—her alone—whereby I can please you.”
Tristanesque consummation of love in death, but in the context of carnal pleasure in *Anna*, *mihi dilecta* it very likely implies the orgasmic *petite mort*.

Attempting to identify the addressed “Anna” of the poem, Peter Bergquist comes up with two theories. He suggests that “Anna” may refer to Lasso’s daughter Anna, who could have just got married around 1579 when the motet came to print. In this case, “Anna, mihi dilecta” would be an epithalamium. Another possibility is that Lasso composed “Anna, mihi dilecta” upon Albrecht V’s request as a tribute to his wife Anna of Austria more than a decade before its publication. In this scenario, “Anna, mihi dilecta” would have come from the period around Lasso’s tenure as *maestro di cappella* when the composer was most enthusiastic about chromaticism. It would also be another incident of Albrecht V being impressed by Lasso’s mastery of the chromatic *musica reservata.*92

Both Bergquist’s theories demand more substantial evidence. Admittedly, an epithalamium would be an ideal gift from a father-composer to his to-be-married daughter Anna. Setting it to a text in which his future son-in-law engages his daughter in sexual delights and publishing such sensuous and voyeuristic music for the entertainment of all and sundry are, however, not so fatherly. As for the theory of “Anna, mihi dilecta” being a tribute from Albrecht V to his wife, Anna of Austria, it would be equally bizarre that Lasso published this musical testament to the private sexual pleasures of the duke in 1579, the same year in which he died.

I suggest that Lasso composed “Anna, mihi dilecta” around 1578. In a correspondence dated 11 March 1578 between Lasso and Wilhelm, the then heir-apparent,

92 Ibid., xxi.
the composer made reference to the chromatic opening of his motet “Timor et tremor.”93 Considering that after “Timor” and its pair “Concupiscendo” Lasso have almost completely abandoned the chromatic style, Lasso’s recollection of “Timor et tremor” fourteen years after its publication is in itself unusual. After a hiatus of more than a decade, the sudden return of chromaticism into Lasso’s life indicates that at the time of his communication with Wilhelm, the composer had at least looked back on his previous chromatic works and probably had a plan for composing a new one. Published a year after this exchange, “Anna mihi dilecta” is in fact the only candidate.

On the surface, “Anna, mihi dilecta” seems like Lasso’s nostalgic reenactment, although much more intense, of his first chromatic composition: “Alma Nemes.” Unlike the texts of the other chromatic pieces, the motets in Prophetiae Sibyllarum, “Timor et tremor,” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit,” both “Alma Nemes” and “Anna, mihi dilecta” are secular. Both texts make learned references to ancient mythology like Pigna’s “Fistula tertia,” and both employ elegiac couplets, a metrical form in classical Latin poetry. In terms of their contents, both “Alma Nemes” and “Anna, mihi dilecta” address a female singer, and they both extend to her an invitation to join the speaker in in his delights, be they musical or sexual.

Considering these similarities, it was quite possible that when conceiving “Anna, mihi dilecta” Lasso reviewed the then twenty-five-year-old “Alma Nemes.” The key to understanding the motet’s unrivaled chromaticism and it sensuous eroticism, however, lies not in what came before it but in what was to come afterwards. In 1591, more than a decade after the publication of Anna, mihi dilecta and a few years before Lasso’s death, a

93 Orlando di Lasso, The Complete Motets 3, Bergquist ed., xiii-xiv. Lasso’s original words were quite comical: “it is said also that four bottles of semitones [raised] by the square b sign are named commanders of ‘Timor et tremor’ by Lasso.”
catalog of music approved and prohibited by the Jesuits appeared in Munich. Although this catalog did not reflect the official policies of the Bavarian Duke, it banned certain pieces from being performed at venues related to the Society of Jesus, for example the Jesuits College, and thus had a notable influence. The cataloguer treated Lasso with special respect: in the catalog there are two sections dedicated to approved and prohibited music composed by Lasso alone. Given its provocative text, it would be a major oversight on the part of the Jesuits had “Anna, mihi dilecta” not appeared on the prohibited list, and indeed it did. When the composer’s sons Ferdinand and Rudolph published “Anna, mihi dilecta” among almost all other motets by Lasso in Magnum opus musicum in 1604, however, the problem of prohibition had been dealt with in a clever way. The music of “Anna, mihi dilecta” was left intact, yet now it came with a new text that conveys a completely different meaning.

On the surface, the corporeal sensuality depicted in the original “Anna, mihi dilecta” and the profound spirituality of the new text “Christe, Dei soboles” are utterly incompatible. Nonetheless, Table 6-8 shows that the purification of “Anna, mihi dilecta” in “Christe, Dei soboles” takes just one simple step: the substitution of Christ for the female lover Anna. “Anna, my beloved, my only delight” simply turns into “Christ, child of God, my hope and my only delight” (verses one), while most of the other motifs such as “dear” (verse four) and “Atropos” (verse eight) stay the same but become appropriate thanks to the new addressee. Especially, even though the erotic kiss in “Anna” is replaced by “gift” (“xeniolum [sic?],” verse three) and “joys of heaven” (“caeli gaudia,” verse five), verse two, the sensuous description “from whose mouth honeyed essence distills”

remains completely intact. For whatever reason, such superficial and effortless purification met no resistance, and “Christe, Dei soboles” came out in *Magnum opus musicum* with a thoroughly innocent outlook.

Table 6-8
Comparison of “Anna, mihi dilecta” and “Christe, Dei soboles”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anna, mihi dilecta</th>
<th>Christe, Dei soboles[^95]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prima pars</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna, mihi dilecta, veni mea sola voluptas, Nectareus stillat cujus ab ore liquor, nympha, mihi dare basiolum digneris, in omni alter ate nulla est charior orbe mihi.</td>
<td>Christe, Dei soboles, spes et mea sola voluptas, nectareus stillat cujus ab ore liquor, ecce tibi leve xeniolum [sic?] fero promptus ad aram. Te nihil in toto est charius orbe mihi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secunda pars</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accipe daque mihi pro votis oscula, faxint numina, sic semper mutuus adsit amor, nec nisi sola quibus restringuat adurimur ignes Atropos, atque tibi sola placer queam.</td>
<td>Accipe daque mihi pro votis gaudia, caeli gaudia prae cunctis nam tua semper amo, nec nisi sola queat restinguere mentis amorem Atropos, Ach, peto, te praeter amare nihil.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The easy conversion from “Anna, mihi dilecta” into “Christe, Dei soboles” reminds us that in Counter-Reformation Europe the distance between profane sexuality and religious devotion might not be that far after all. As David Crook comments:

The desire to comprehend religious experience in terms of intense physical sensation, expressed most famously perhaps in Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s sculpture

[^95] Text from ibid., 27. Crook’s translation of the text goes: “Christ, child of God, my hope and my only delight, / from whose mouth honeyed essence drips, behold! / with promptness I bring to the alter my little gift for you. / Nothing in the whole world is dearer to me than you. [Second Part] Accept my prayers, and grant me the joys of heaven / before all things, for I shall love you forever, / nor may any but Atropos alone succeed in extinguishing / the love in my soul. Ah, I seek to love nothing but you.”
Anna, mihi dilecta/Christe, Dei soboles

Orlando di Lasso

- hi da re ba si o lump digneris, in om ni al te-

bire se ni o lump feroprom pes ad a ram. Te ni hil in to-

dare ba si o lump digneris in om ni

le ve se ni o lump feroprom pes ad a ram. Te ni hil in
da re ba si o lump digneris, in om ni

le ve se ni o lump feroprom pes ad a ram. Te ni hil in

ra te nul la est charior or be mi hi,

to te ni hil in to to est charius or be mi hi,
al tera te nul la est charior or be mi hi,

to, te ni hil in to to est charius or be mi hi,
al tera te nul la est charior or be mi hi,

to to, te ni hil in to to est charius or be mi hi,
al tera te nul la est charior or be mi hi,

to to, te ni hil in to to est charius or be mi hi,
in omni altera te nul-la est chari-or

in omni altera te nul-la est chari-or

in omni altera te nul-la est chari-or

in omni altera te nul-la est chari-or

in omni altera te nul-la est chari-or

in omni altera te nul-la est chari-or

Secunda pars

or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, <ac-ce-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-

charius or-be mi-hi. Ac-ce-pe, ac-
restituat ad urrimur ignes Astropos,
restrin gere mentis amorem Astropos,
restituat ad urrimur ignes Astropos,
restrin gere mentis amorem Astropos,
restituat ad urrimur ignes Astropos,
restrin gere mentis amorem Astropos.

atque tibi sola place re queam, atque tibi sola place re queam, atque tibi sola place re queam, atque tibi sola place re queam, atque tibi sola place re queam, atque tibi sola place re queam.

Ach, peto te prae ter a mare nihil, ach, peto te prae ter a mare nihil, ach, peto te prae ter a mare nihil, ach, peto te prae ter a mare nihil, ach, peto te prae ter a mare nihil, ach, peto te prae ter a mare nihil.
- bi so la pla ce re que am.
- bi so la pla ce re que am.
- bi so la pla ce re que am.
- bi so la pla ce re que ram.
of The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa (1652), had already assumed an important role in Catholic culture in general and Jesuit spirituality in particular by the end of the sixteenth century.  

Indeed, Lasso’s “Timor et tremor” has already shown that the devotional experience of speaking directly to the Lord may have intense bodily consequences such as trembling (“tremor”) and vertigo (“caligo”). These physical sensations in turn easily translate into the erotic experience. The contrafactum of “Anna, mihi dilecta” into “Christe, Dei soboles” proves the other way around: the parlance for an orgasmic encounter can readapt to the context of a spiritual colloquy with God.

It is unknown who undertook the unsophisticated task of providing the text for “Christe, Dei soboles.” It is also unclear whether before his death Lasso already brought about the contrafactum. Still, were it really Ferdinand and Ruldolph who came up with the contrafactum solution of overcoming the Jesuits’ censorship, it is hard to imagine that their father Orlando di Lasso would have to any extent been less knowledgeable of the resonance between the spiritual and the sexual that served as its foundation to the contrafactum. The contrafactum “Christe, Dei soboles” could have well been a religious interpretation of “Anna, mihi dilecta” in the fashion of the Counter Reformation and Catholic spirituality that Lasso himself would endorse. Such connection between “Anna” and “Christe” would only become more compelling for the composer at the time when Wilhelm V “the Pious” ascended to dukedom the same year “Anna, mihi dilecta” was published, when the Jesuits gradually became so influential that they could openly scrutinize music composed by the maestro of the ducal Kapelle, and when Lasso entered his late years tormented by “religious melancholia.”

96 Ibid., 28.
Figure 6-9
Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Ecstasy of Saint Theresa of Ávila*
Thus, fourteen years after Lasso’s previous chromatic composition “Concupiscendo concupiscit,” “Anna, mihi dilecta” with its religious contrafactum reaffirms the link between Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism and the Christian religion. The long chromatic hiatus before “Anna, mihi dilecta” and the extremity of the motet’s chromaticism suggest that Lasso’s use of chromaticism had become much more discerning. He expanded on the trope of chromaticism and Christian mysticism that Prophetiae Sibyllarum and “Timor et tremor” had initially cultivated. The unique history of “Anna, mihi dilecta” shows that, for Lasso on the verge of his late period, the peculiar sound of chromaticism suited only the mystical experience of ecstasy, which can be either corporeal eroticism or spiritual devotion. In particular, this convergence of the bodily and the transcendental aligned with the Catholic spirituality that the Jesuits promoted in Counter-Reformation Munich. In this way, after three decades of development, Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism became music for Catholic mysticism, the exceptional occasion of a personal connection and union with God through deep meditation that engages both the body and the spirit—like the Ecstasy of Saint Teresa (Figure 6-9).  

The Whispered Farewell

So, what about “Vide homo?”

In his thorough study on the historical and compositional background of Lagrime di San Pietro, Alexander J. Fisher traces the origins of the text “Vide homo” back to the

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Middle Ages. The earliest setting of “Vide Homo” Fisher finds, which uses a different yet much similar text, is a monophonic conductus by a composer of the Notre Dame School, Philip the Chancellor (c. 1160/1170-1236).98 Fisher is unable to find any subsequent musical settings of the text until the publication of Lasso’s cycle, nonetheless. Based on the sources available to Lasso at Munich in the late sixteenth century, Fisher implies that only through two documents could the composer have likely encountered the text. The first one is a 1306 compilation of Latin texts entitled *Manipulus florum* by a certain Dominican monk named Thomas of Ireland. It was the earliest to attribute the text to St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), an attribution that Fisher dismisses as unfounded.99

It is the second source, however, that catches Fisher’s attention: *The Book of Prayer and Meditation* (1554) by the Dominican friar Louis of Granada (1505-1588).100 Granada’s book was an important instruction of what Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), founder of the Society of Jesus, first discussed as the “spiritual exercise” in his treatise *Exercitia spiritualia* (1548, written much earlier). Adhering to Catholic doctrines and emphasizing penitence yet incorporating elements of mysticism, Loyola conceived the spiritual exercise as a series of meditations on the nature of human sin, the life of Jesus, and the meditator’s personal relationship with God. An essential component of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, the spiritual exercise had a profound impact on the Bavarian court, which witnessed an increasing influence of the Jesuits and a growing culture of religious devotion especially during the reign of Wilhelm V, “der Fromme” (“the Pious”).101

98 Fisher, “‘Per mia particolare devotione,’” 195.
99 Ibid., 195-8.
100 Ibid., 197-8.
101 Ibid., 180-4.
Fisher argues that the appearance of “Vide homo” in Granada’s treatise attests to the connection between the text and the Counter-Reformation practice of spiritual exercise. Indeed, in 1606, less than fifteen years after the publication of Lagrime di San Pietro, the obscure text “Vide homo” resurfaced in a German compilation of penitential texts entitled Meditationes sacrae.102 For obvious reasons, this particular source could not have influenced to Lasso’s composition, yet it further testifies to the connection between the appended motet in Lasso’s cycle and Catholic spirituality in Counter-Reformation Germany.

For Lasso, the religious melancholia that haunted the last years of his life suggests his personal involvement in the environment of Catholic spirituality in Munich. And indeed, devotional meditations are not new to Lasso’s music at all. Many of his chromatic compositions build their distinct chromaticism upon the profoundly spiritual and mystical aura of their texts. In the cycle of Lagrime di San Pietro, both Tansillo’s dramatic account of Christ’s powerful gaze and Peter’s penitential tears and the response of Christ to human’s sin in “Vide homo” echo Loyola’s meditations.

The influence of Loyola’s spiritual exercise on the motet “Vide homo” does not stop with the provenance of its text or the general resemblance of its themes, however. Fisher argues that the cycle of Lagrime di San Pietro is specifically structured after Loyola’s spiritual exercise. Loyola prescribes of a four-week program for the exercise, which consists of numerous meditations whose content varies as the program unfolds. During each of these meditations, Loyola instructs the meditation to follow a tripartite

102 Ibid., 198.
sequence: composition, analysis, and colloquy. Each part corresponds to a capacity of the mind: memory, intellect, and will.103

Fisher maps the trajectory of Lagrime di San Pietro onto this tripartite structure. Most importantly, “Vide homo” culminates the meditation as the colloquy, or a “true dialogue with the divine personages,” where, as Fisher observes, “Ignatius [Loyola] most closely approaches the mystical.”104 The motet appended to Tansillo’s twenty stanzas thus completes the meditation à la Loyola with a compelling moment of transcendence not present in the original penitential poem. Lasso’s addition of this Latin motet to Lagrime di San Pietro, notwithstanding its linguistic and generic departure from the rest of the cycle, suggests that the composer really aspired to and cherished the mystical experience of directly conversing with God during the spiritual exercise.

Indeed, similar to “Timor et tremor” and “Christe, Dei soboles,” the contractfactum of “Anna, mihi dilecta,” “Vide homo” addresses the mystery of direct conversation with God in Catholic Christianity. In fact, hearing through music the speech of Christ as God and a dead human being is so enthralling that the mystical aura of “Vide homo” may even rival that of Prophetiae Sibyllarum in which one hears the murmurs of the enigmatic sibyls that predict another major mystery of the Christian faith: the Nativity. Although not every text that touches on the divine colloquy has to receive a chromatic setting, “Vide homo” doubtless seems a strong candidate for the chromatic sound world that Lasso reserves exclusively for the most devotional texts.

For reasons I will not pretend to understand, “Vide homo” does not appear to be chromatic at all. It employs a mundane eleven-pitch gamut from G# to B♭, and does not

103 Ibid., 173-4.
104 Ibid., 177, 190.
Vide homo

Vide homo,

Vide homo,

Vide homo,

Vide homo,

Quae pro te patior, quae pro te

Quae pro te, quae pro te

Quae pro te patior

Ad te clamor

Ad te clamor

Ad te clamor

Ad te clamor

Ad te clamor

Ad te clamor

Qui pro

Qui pro

Qui pro

Qui pro

Qui pro

Qui pro

Vide poenas, Vide poenas, Vide poenas, Vide poenas,

Vide morior: Vide morior: Vide morior: Vide morior:

prote morior: prote morior: prote morior: prote morior:

 Qui bus afflictor: Qui bus afflictor: Qui bus afflictor: Qui bus afflictor:

Vide clavos; vide clavos; vide clavos; vide clavos;

qui bus afflictor: qui bus afflictor: qui bus afflictor: qui bus afflictor:
vos; Non est, non est, non est,

Non est, non est, non est dolor,

qui bus con codi or; Non est, non est, non est do-

qui bus con fo di or; Non est dolor no

qui bus con fo di or; non est do -

non est dolor, non est dolor

est dolor

non est, non est dolor

lor non est dolor si cut quo cruci or, si cut quo

lor, non est dolor si cut quo cruci -

est dolor si cut quo cruci -

lor si cut quo cruci -
et cum sit tantus dolor exterior

Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior

Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior crucior;

In tusc tam men or;

Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior

Tam ingratum, tam ingratum,

Tam ingratum,

Tam ingratum, tam ingratum

dolor est gravior;

dolor est gravior;

dolor est gravior;

dolor est gravior; Tam ingratum

dolor est gravior; Tam ingratum
tam in gratum cum te experior, tam in gratum
tam in gratum cum te, tam in gratum
tam in gratum
in gratum, tam in gratum cum te
experior tam
in gratum cum te experior, experior

tam in gratum
in gratum, tam in gratum cum te
experior experior

in gratum cum te experior, experior

in gratum, tam in gratum cum te
experior

in gratum, tam in gratum cum te experior.
particularly elaborate the tonal tension between these two leading tones to A. There is not
a single direct chromatic semitone or any direct diminished or augmented intervals. Nor
are cross-relations prevalent, and in fact the only highly noticeable one is the chromatic
semitone between Cantus I’s C and Cantus II’s C♯ in m. 35. The percentage of minor
sonorities is roughly twenty-five percent. While significantly lower than the forty percent
of “Tre volte aveva,” a ♮-c₁-A motet that has a brief yet convincing adventure into E♭ (m.
22), this percentage is not particularly impressive considering that “Chi ad una ad una”
and “E non fu il pianto,” the other two ♮-c₁-A pieces, have approximately nineteen and
twenty-two percent, respectively.

This is not to say, however, that the music of “Vide homo” is unrelated to Lasso’s
adventures of major-triadic chromaticism. To understand this connection, however,
requires a return to the much-discussed ♮-g₂-A tonal type of the motet. For review,
Bergquist discovers that in Lasso’s modally ordered publications, pieces with ♮-c₁-A and
♮-g₂-A tonal types “simply do not fit comfortably into [Lasso’s] modal system,” which is
the traditional octonary system.105 In Lagrime di San Pietro, however, the three ♮-c₁-A
pieces are comfortably assigned to mode two and mode three and four respectively, and it
is only “Vide homo’s” ♮-g₂-A that presents a problem. Fortunately, “Vide homo” is not
the only motet that Lasso sets to the modal anomaly of ♮-g₂-A in his late period. Table 6-
9 lists all the ♮-g₂-A motets of Lasso published in the 1580s and 1590s before his death
that have five or more than five voices.

105 Peter Bergquist, “Modal ordering within Orlando di Lasso’s publications,” in
Orlando di Lasso Studies, Peter Bergquist ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press,
1999), 226.
The major contributor to the group are two 1582 anthologies both published in Munich. *Mottetta, sex vocum, typis nondum uspiam excusa* concludes with two ♯-g2-A pieces, “Benedictio, et claritas,” and “Deus in adjutorium.” The latter motet, which is also the last of the anthology, is the model of the 1587 Magnificat that Lasso labeled “toni peregrini” and thus the source of the *tonus peregrinus* legend of “Vide homo.” The other two motets, “O altitudo divitiarum” and “Ad te levavi animam meam,” appear in the middle of the anthology. It is ambiguous what mode Lasso intended these ♯-g2-A motets to represent or whether they are mode-representative at all—the anthology only occasionally groups together pieces that share the same tonal type and does not follow a particular modal order.106 By the virtue of their distinctively high percentage of minor-sounding durations, however, “O altitudo divitiarum” and “Ad te levavi animam meam” are sharply different from “Vide homo.” The same applies to “Evehor invidia pressus” from the other 1582 anthology, *Sacrae cantiones quinque vocum.* “Respexit Elias,” the other motet from the publication, has a relatively lower percentage of minor sonorities

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### Table 6-9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piece</th>
<th>Vcs.</th>
<th>First Edition</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Evehor invidia pressus</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Sacrae cantiones quinque vocum</em></td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Respexit Elias</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Sacrae cantiones quinque vocum</em></td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ad te levavi animam meam</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Mottetta, sex vocum, typis nondum uspiam excusa</em></td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Benedictio et claritas</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Mottetta, sex vocum, typis nondum uspiam excusa</em></td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Deus in adjutorium</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Mottetta, sex vocum, typis nondum uspiam excusa</em></td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O altitudo divitiarum</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Mottetta, sex vocum, typis nondum uspiam excusa</em></td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quocumque loco fuero</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Hieremiae prophetae lamentaiones</em></td>
<td>1585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cantabant canticum Moysi</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Cantiones sacrae sex vocum</em> (Graz)</td>
<td>1594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fratres nescitis quod ii</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Cantiones sacrae sex vocum</em> (Graz)</td>
<td>1594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vide homo quae pro te patior</em></td>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Lagrime di San Pietro</em></td>
<td>1594</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
much like “Benedictio” and “Deus in adjutorium.” Because the ordering in *Sacrae cantiones* is not particularly modal, the modal attributions of “Evehor” and “Respexit” are also ambiguous.\(^{107}\)

Three other motets of the ♭-g\(_2\)-A list come from later anthologies and all have a percentage of minor sonorities comparable to that of “Vide homo.” “Quocumque loco fuero” is the only one that was not published in a motet anthology; rather, it appeared in *Hieremiae prophetæ lamentationes*, the setting of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, along with six other motets.\(^{108}\) The other two, noticeably, come from the famous *Cantiones sacrae sex vocum* published in Graz, 1594: “Cantabant canticum Moysi” and “Fratres, nescitis.” This is one of the only two publications that Lasso attended to between 1590 and his death in 1594, the other being *Lagrimæ di San Pietro*.\(^{109}\) It also contains a seemingly valedictory piece “Musica, Dei donum optimi” that praises the power of music as given by none but God as a gift. In the original plan of Lasso, who reasonably suspected that the Graz motet publication would probably be his last, the motet “Musica” would have concluded the anthology, as does “Vide homo” in *Lagrimæ di San Pietro*.

The *Cantiones sacrae* of 1594 also resembles *Lagrimæ di San Pietro* in its straightforward modal ordering. The two ♭-g\(_2\)-A pieces occur between two pieces in ♭-c\(_1\)-F, which clearly represent mode six or plagal Lydian, and three in ♭-c\(_1\)-G, which represent mode eight or plagal Mixolydian. As David Crook explains, the confusing use of ♭-g\(_2\)-A to represent the G-final mode seven or authentic Mixolydian arises from the


\(^{110}\) Ibid., xvi-xvii.
conflation of psalm-tone theory and modal theory in the late sixteenth century. What had previous represented mode seven, ♯-g₂-A, may now represent tone seven in imitation Magnificats, and thus what typically represented a tone-seven Magnificat, ♯-g₂-G, can also represent a mode-seven motet. As a matter of fact, based on the two ♯-g₂-A pieces representing mode seven in Cantiones sacrae published in the same year of Lagrime di San Pietro, in his exhaustive analysis of the cycle Robert C. Luoma considers “Mixolydian as the basic orientation” of “Vide homo.” He deems the motet “an example of Mixolydian commixio,” or a mixed-mode based on the G-final mode seven. 

Although Luoma has made elaborate charts to summarize the modal parameters of the motet, close inspection reveals that they do not show what he intends at all. The only entrance that gives a minuscule hint at the G-final Mixolydian is in m. 10, where the lower four voices enter in a G-major triad; in fact, the homophonic nature of this passage makes it barely an “entrance.” A candidate for G-centered imitative entrance can be mm. 31-32, where Altus I and Tenor II enter with the text “Et cum sit tantus” on D and G respectively, which outline the modal species of mode seven. Even so, Cantus I’s entrance with the same text on A in m. 31 obscures the presence of G. Furthermore, throughout the entire piece there is not a single cadence or chordal arrival on G-ut.

Why does Luoma look at his own observations and insist on “Vide homo” being a Mixolydian piece? Luoma himself confesses the answer: “with Mixolydian established as the presupposed norm, the psychological impact of deviation should be more secure.” In other words, assuming the Mixolydian identity of “Vide homo” allows Luoma to

111 Crook, Orlando di Lasso’s Imitation Magnificats for Counter-Reformation Munich, 141-5.
112 Luoma, Music, Mode and Words in Orlando di Lasso’s Last Works, 169.
113 Ibid.
ascribe meaning to the musical behaviors in the motet that challenges the Mixolydian modality. It allows him to call much of the piece’s music “deviations” and say things like “the mode suffers as much as the Lord.” It allows him to call the anomalous assignment of Mixolydian to the tonal type ♭-g₂-A as a representation of the word “ingratum” in the text, the ingratitude of humankind towards their savior.

Presuming “Vide homo” as composed in the Mixolydian mode only to make symbolic sense of its not behaving like a Mixolydian piece is circular reasoning. Besides trivializing the unmistakably non-mode-seven qualities of the motet’s music, Luoma confuses what it means by saying that “Vide homo” represents mode seven and what is means that “Vide homo” is composed in mode seven. In addition, Luoma also confuses the concept of mode and tone as actual musical entities. There is no obvious quotation of psalm-tone seven in “Vide homo,” and it does not make theoretical sense for “Vide homo,” a motet, to be composed in a psalm-tone.

In fact, comparing “Vide homo” to the two 1594 Mixolydian-representing motets in ♭-g₂-A shows suggests that even representing the Mixolydian mode is unconceivable for “Vide homo.” Although both “Cantabant” and “Fratres” have approximately the same amount of minor sonorities as “Vide homo,” their modal structure is significantly clearer than that of “Vide homo.” In “Cantabant canticum Moysi,” there is a consistent strain of major internal cadences on D-re and less frequently A-re. Although Bergquist argues that in “Fratres, nescitis” there is “as much D as A,” in fact besides the D and A cadences there are several cadences on E-mi and C-ut that support A as a more compelling modal context.

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114 Ibid., 172.
115 Ibid., 174.
In “Vide homo,” on the contrary, the modal structure is much more obscure. Besides the elaborate final cadence on A-re, there are two major internal cadences with suspensions on E-mi (mm. 6-7 and mm. 38-39, the later one being supported in an arcane way by a D-A “half cadence”), two on F-ut (20-21 and 27-28), and one each on C-ut (9-10), D-re (15-16), and A-re (22-23, which is evaded), conspicuously missing the Mixolydian G-ut. This cadential pattern does not point to any particular mode as being embodied or represented.

By the same token, the motet “Deus in adjutorium” whose imitation Magnificat would be labeled with “toni peregrini” is also unlikely to indicate the modal associations of “Vide homo.” Its texture is almost exclusively homophonic. There is no imitative entrance at all, and there are only two cadences with suspensions, not even including the final “half cadence” on A. The more powerful of the two is the A-re in mm. 22-23. All other pauses in the piece are simple cadences or non-cadential chordal arrivals. Most of them align with the two A cadences in suggesting A as the modal center, however, with occasional D-centered passages. Thus, whatever label Lasso assigned to “Deus in adjutorium” or its imitation Magnificat is probably irrelevant to the music of “Vide homo.”

Admittedly, the remaining three motets also have rather clear modal structures. Of the two 1582 motets, the five-voice “Respexit Elias” implies A as a strong modal orientation, and the six-voice “Benedictio, et claritas” leads toward D. The 1585 “Quocumque loco fuero,” however, is a fascinating case. Throughout the entire motet there is a strong tension between D and A as the center of modal orientation. Peter

Bergquist observes this D-A tension, although he considers it fairly normal in most ²-g₂-A motets, which, as I have shown above, fall on the spectrum between D and A regarding their modal centers.¹¹⁷ In “Quocumque,” however, it seems as thought Lasso was taking advantage of the tonal tension between the two centers. In the motet’s cadential pattern, there is an equal footing of D and A cadences. Cadences on other steps, which are helpful in strengthening one of the two potential modal centers, are rare. The secunda pars, moreover, consists of a cadential confusion where one hears series of cadential gestures but only few of them end up being articulate cadences—perhaps only the D-re in mm. 40-41 and A-re in 57-58. Many of these gestures are either buried under the contrapuntal texture, for example a series of pseudo-D-re in mm. 59-61 with the sharpened leading tone C♯, or completely evaded, for example the potential A-re cadence in mm. 52-53. This cadential confusion permeates into the piece’s very end: an A-re cadence in mm. 63-64, which can potentially be the last cadence of the piece, is flagrantly evaded: the Altus leaps away from the suspended, diminished, yet unsharpened clausula cantizans, and the Bassus drops out from its E-A clausula bassizans. The lavish melismas in mm. 64-66 serve nothing in reclaiming the lost cadence, and the piece concludes with a “half cadence” on A, a typical gesture of cadential elaboration that in this case does not seem to know what it is elaborating.

The cadential confusion in the secunda pars is not the only way in which Lasso creates a sense of disorientation in “Quocumque loco fuero,” however. Unlike the unfruitful cadential motions in the secunda pars, the prima pars contain a number of well-articulated internal cadences. In between these cadences Lasso employs the now

Quocumque loco fuero

Cantus I

Quo·cum·que loco fu·ero, Je·sum me·cum de·si·si·

Cantus II

Quo·cum·que loco fu·ero, Je·sum me·cum de·

Altus

Quo·cum·que loco fu·ero, Je·sum me·cum de·si·de-

Tenor

Quo·cum·que loco fu·ero, Je·sum me·cum, <Je·sum me·cum> de·

Bassus

Quo·cum·que loco fu·ero, Je·sum me·cum de·si·de·

Quo·cum·que loco fu·ero, Je·sum me·cum de·si·de-

Quam lae·tus cum in·ve·ne·ro,

si·de·ro. Quam lae·tus, <quam lae·tus> cum in·ve·ne·ro,

ro. Quam lae·tus cum, in·ve·ne·ro, quam

si·de·ro. Quam lae·tus cum in·ve·ne·ro, quam

ro. Quam lae·tus cum in·ve·ne·ro,

quam felix
cum tenue ro,
tunc am-
ple xus,
tunc oscu la quae vin cant mel lis
am ple xus,
tunc oscu la quae vin cant, quae
quae vin cant <quae vin cant> mel-
cula, sed in his par va mo ru la, Je-
pocula, sed in his par va mo ru la, Je-
vin cant mel lis pocula, sed in his par va mo ru la, Je-
lis pocula, sed in his par va mo ru la, Je-
pocula, sed in his par va mo ru la, Je-
o, quod con-ce-pi-te

quod con-ce-pi-te, <quod con-ce-pi-te> te-ne-o,

o, quod con-ce-pi-te te-ne-o,

o, quod con-ce-pi-te te

a-mo-re Je-su, a-mo-re Je-su

a-mo-re Je-su, a-mo-re Je-su lan-

a-mo-re Je-su, <a-mo-re Je-su> lan-

a-mo-re Je-su, <a-mo-re Je-su> lan-gue-

mo-re Je-su, <a-mo-re Je-su> lan-

lan-gue-o, lan-gue-o et cor-de to-tus, et cor-

lan-gue-o, lan-gue-o, et cor-de to-tus ar-de-

lan-gue-o, lan-gue-o, et cor-de to-tus ar-de-o,

o, lan-gue-o, et cor-de to-tus, <et cor-de

gue-o, <lan-gue-o>
de totus ardeo, et corde totus ardeo, et

<et corde totus ardeo, et> corde totus ardeo, et
totus,> et corde totus, et corde totus

totus ardeo, et corde totus ardeo,
familiar circles of fifths. The opening phrase on “Quocumque loco fuero” contains both E-major and B♭-major triads whose roots are a tritone apart. The phrase “quam felix cum tenuero” in mm. 11-15 is a clear circle of fifths from E-major to F-major, featuring exclusively root-position major triads with sharpened G♯, C♯, and F♯. A similar circle in “sed in his parva morula” proceeds from A-major to B♭-major (mm. 21-24). In this way, whereas the confusion in the secunda pars arises from two modal poles rivaling each other by preventing each other’s cadences, the disorientation in the prima pars is a result of the circle of fifths and other major-triadic progressions that unsettle the established modal structure and cadential formula. Indeed, approximately nineteen percent of the prima pars are minor-sounding sonorities, compared to the thirty-nine percent of the secunda pars and the twenty-nine-percent average of the entire motet.

Among all the ♮-g2-A pieces, why does Lasso use circle-of-fifth disorientation and cadential-modal confusion in “Quocumque loco fuero?” The answer lies in the text:

*Prima pars*

Quocumque loco fuero,
Jesum mecum desidero.
Quam laetus cum invenero,
Quam felix cum tenuero,
Tunc amplexus, tunc oscula
Quae vincant mellis pcula,
Sed in his parva morula,
Jesum sequar per secula.

*Secunda pars*
Jam quod quaesivi video,
Quod concupivi teneo,
Amore Jesu langueo,
Et corde totus ardeo.\textsuperscript{118}

The Counter-Reformation fervor of the text “Quocumque loco fuero” is hard to miss. Yet, as Bergquist observes, the text possesses a distinctively joyful character\textsuperscript{119}—in fact, is it not just another version of “Christe, Dei soboles,” the contrafactum of the erotic “Anna, mihi dilecta?” The \textit{prima pars} of the motet abounds in sensual description of the love of Christ as imagined by the longing meditator: kisses (“oscula”), embraces (“amplexus”), and honey-like sweetness (“mellis”). Yet it is in the \textit{secunda pars} that the meditator really experiences the mystical love of Christ. The words speak of the meditator fainting in reception of the divine love (“ langueo”) and burning with the passion of such love (“ardeo”), a perfect enactment of Loyola’s spiritual exercises and Saint Teresa’s ecstasy.

This profound moment of fainting in the embrace of Christ’s Love set in mm. 45-53 sees the union of the circles of fifths and major triads from the \textit{prima pars} and the cadential confusions mainly utilized in the \textit{secunda}. In mm. 45-49, there are two cadential gestures with sharpened leading tones—D\textsuperscript{-}re in m. 46 and C\textsuperscript{-}ut in m. 48—and two evaded cadences—D\textsuperscript{-}re in m. 47 and C\textsuperscript{-}ut in m. 49. The Bassus plays a determining role in these two cadential evasions. Instead of following the \textit{clausula bassizans} and

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{118}] Translation from Ibid., xxix-xxx: “In whatever place I shall have been, / I wish Jesus to be with me. / How joyful when I have found him, / how happy when I have held him, / then embraces, then kisses / that surpass cups of honey, / but in these a wee bit of delay, / I shall follow Jesus forever. [Second part] Now what I have sought I see, / what I have desired I hold, / I faint for the love the Jesus and I burn wholly in my heart.”
\item[\textsuperscript{119}] Ibid., xviii.
\end{itemize}
leaping to a D or C respectively, in both occasions it moves stepwise downward. In so doing, the Bassus outlines a circle of fifths from A to F in m. 45 to m. 49. This circle of fifths furthermore supports a sequential movement: indeed, mm. 48-49 is essentially a downward sequential transposition of m. 46-47. As the fainting comes to an end in mm. 50-53, the harmony moves in the reverse direction along the circle of fifths from C-major to E-major. It now features gestures of mi cadences, and the clausula bassizans in the Bassus is particularly audible.

Essentially, “Vide homo” is an elaboration of this “fainting” section in “Quocumque loco fuero.” For most of the time, “Vide homo” proceeds in a call and response between the higher and lower voices and maintains a textural clarity. Within this texture, Lasso combines an ambiguous cadential and modal structure with circles of fifths and other major-triadic progressions. Whereas in “Quocumque,” mainly in the secunda pars, modal confusion arises from two rivaling modal centers, in “Vide homo” although the motet opens with an A in Cantus I and concludes with an A-major triad, Lasso incorporates elements from virtually all the eight modes at both entrances and cadences. The agglomeration of all these modes is especially prominent in the last section of the piece setting “tam ingratus cum te experior.” All seven voices enter imitatively with a four-note motive and these entrances occur on D, E, G, A, and B.

Meanwhile, the circle of fifth assumes an even stronger tonal and harmonic role in “Vide homo” than in “Quocumque loco fuero.” As in “Alma Nemes,” many imitative entrances in “Vide homo” do not establish a modal species of fifth, yet instead proceed along the circle of fifths. At the motet’s beginning, while Cantus II and Altus I enter imitatively on E and A with the text “Vide homo” (mm. 1-3), three of the lower voices,
Altus II, Tenor I, and Bassus with the text “Quae pro te” enter on E, A, and D (mm. 2-4). They carry a circle-of-fifths motive that move the harmony further towards the flat side of the circle of fifths until the sustained C-major triad in mm. 4-5, quite far away from the opening A-major. The following entrances of the higher voices in mm. 7-8 move along B, E, and A, which are accompanied by a circle-of-fifth harmony from E-major to C-major (mm. 7-10).

In addition, the harmony also moves in other stereotypically major-triadic progressions. Lasso sets the word “morior” in m. 12 to a stepwise progression from C-major to B♭-major, and the transgression of the latter triad into cantus mollis perhaps symbolizes the meaning of the word “death.” Similarly, in m. 36-37, the word “dolor” is set to a progression from G-major to F-major; notably, whereas Rore would set the word to an unarguably soave interval affect, Lasso sustains a major-triadic circle of fifth from m. 35 to m. 38.

Together, the negation of a uniform modal structure through the incorporation of all of the modes and the preponderance of circles of fifths and other major-triadic progressions creates a peculiar aural space. Within such space, individual lines and polyphonic harmonies seem to move freely without any preconceived constraints. As a consequence, when Lasso was composing music for “Quocumque loco fuero” and “Vide homo” in his late years, he likely had in mind the previous devotional and mystical texts that he set to the style of major-triadic chromaticism. Although the musical space in “Quocumque loco fuero” and “Vide homo” is in no way chromatic, it resembles the aural ambience that Lasso creates in pieces such as the motets of Prophetiae Sibyllarum, “Timor et tremor,” and “Anna, mihi dilecta/Christe, Dei soboles.” The combination of an
eclectic and thus ambiguous modal structure and circles of fifth especially in “Vide homo”
recalls Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism, in which pervasive use of circles of fifths,
third relations, and stepwise progressions creates the chromatic sound world and reduces
the modal structure of those pieces into mere formulas. In fact, there are several passages
in “Vide homo” that could have been potentially chromatic. The descending third-relation
progression from F-major to D-minor and then to B♭-major in mm. 24-26, for example,
would yield non-harmonic relations and perhaps even direct chromatic semitones had
Lasso chosen to have a D-major triad instead of the minor and revise certain voice-
leadings. Still, even without chromaticism, as in the chromatic compositions, in “Vide
homo” progressions of root-position major triads contribute to the music’s directionless
and disorienting character.

Thus, the mystery of “Vide homo” and its modally obscure tonal type ♭-g2-A
perhaps lies in its Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism, a connection it shares with an
earlier devotional motet “Quocumque loco fuero.” Although Lasso probably began his
chromatic endeavors under the influence of Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes,” from the
very beginning Lasso absorbed chromaticism into his musically native Roman-
Neapolitan tradition. In “Alma Nemes” he devised the major-triadic chromaticism that
aligns with the chordal-declamatory style. Unlike Rore’s use of chromaticism to enhance
interval affect, Lasso’s chromaticism favors root-position major triads that create a
chromatic sound world in circle-of-fifths, third-relations, and stepwise progressions.
Instead of cultivating the expressive potentials of the modal structure through
chromaticism as Rore did, Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism emaciates modality into a
mere skeleton of cadences.
Moreover, from the very beginning Lasso proves to be an extremely selective chromaticist. Rore used his interval-affective and modal chromaticism throughout his late madrigals as a common text-setting tool. Lasso understood such use and in fact experimented with it in a Venetian-Ferrarese style madrigal “Amor, che ved’ogni pensier.” This ended up being a road not taken. Lasso’s chromatic sound world does not apply to all manner of texts but requires an extraordinary occasion. In “Alma Nemes,” Lasso seems to have reacted to a simple invitation to “sing a new song,” yet gradually he associated chromaticism with certain esoteric aspects of Catholicism. In *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, the chromatic rationale is the union of the Christian mystery of Jesus’s virginal conception and the pagan mystery of the sibyline oracles. In “Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit,” chromaticism responds to the physical sensations of trembling and vertigo during a prayer to God.

The religious nature of chromaticism further intensified in the late 1560s and 1570s, when Lasso restrained himself from composing chromatic music. What eventually attempted him to pick up his chromatic pen and render his last and most extreme chromatic composition turned out to be an erotic text “Anna, mihi dilecta” speaking of the orgasmic encounter between two lovers. Later, however, the text was easily transformed into a devotional text “Christe, Dei saborles” that describes the sensuous experience of transcendence during a meditation. By now, Lasso’s chromaticism would only apply to the most mystical and devotional aspect of the Catholic faith during the Counter Reformation: the direct encounter of the love of God, which is referred to as the colloquy with the Divine in Ignatius Loyola’s spiritual exercise.
Composed in Lasso’s late period, both “Quocumque loco fuero” and “Vide homo” are settings of such mystical and devotional texts. Although Lasso in his old age chose to forgo chromaticism on the musical surface, the logic of an enfeebled modal structure and pervading circles of fifths is as prominent in these two late motets as in the chromatic pieces. In “Quocumque loco,” the ambiguous tonal type $\natural g^2-A$ allows Lasso to instigate a fight between the two potential modal centers D and A. The rivalry results in a cadential stagnation in the later half of the piece at the price of modal clarity. “Vide homo,” on the other hand, is in the unique situation of concluding the modal cycle that happens to be Lasso’s last composition. It incorporates all the eight ecclesiastical modes, which Lasso have been using and representing in polyphonic compositions throughout his life. The agglomeration of these modes leads to modal confusion. In both pieces, Lasso employs circles of fifths as well as other major-triadic progressions and further upsets the already disorienting modal structure. In “Vide homo,” particularly, the clear texture pushes the imitative entrances and root-position harmonic progressions to the forefront so that circle of fifths has a powerful tonal and harmonic principle.

There is much to imagine about Lasso’s last years haunted by his “religious melancholia,” and there is much to interpret about the last motet of Lagrime di San Pietro, as past scholarship has shown. What is important, however, is that musically Lasso associates progressions of root-position major triads and their disorienting effect with Catholic mysticism and devotion. It is as if the music were simply peregrinating in a state of wonder—unrelated to the tonus peregrinus—along the circle of fifths, most often progressing onto one step after another (circles of fifth), while sometimes skipping one step along this circle (stepwise progression) or even more (third relations). For decades,
such religious association appeared as major-triadic chromaticism in a very limited number of pieces. In “Vide homo,” Lasso’s “swansong,” through circles of fifths and tonal disorientation, one can only hear aspects of such chromaticism distilled into diatonic form—quiet white whispers of what Lasso had originally developed in the bright colors.

The diatonicization of Lasso’s major-triadic chromaticism in the last motet of his last publication coincides with the fate of Lasso’s chromatic style. Perhaps due to Lasso’s restriction of its use to only the most exceptional texts or to the composer’s geographic isolation from Italy, a major center of music making in the sixteenth century, major-triadic chromaticism did not seem to have had an influence at all on what was to come regarding chromaticism in the late Renaissance. As a matter of fact, after Lasso’s two chromatic motets composed around his promotion to maestro in 1563, few chromatic works were written in Italy for nearly two decades. It is as though the community of musicians were gathering momentum for an explosion of chromaticism in the 1580s at the hands of none but the Ferrarese.
Chapter Six

Murderer, Masochist, Musician

Nothing better represents the musical reputation of Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa (c. 1562-1613) than *Libro Sesto delli Madrigali a cinque voci*. Published in 1611, just two years before his death, the anthology was among the last issues of Gesualdo’s works during his lifetime. It contains almost all the madrigals responsible for his fame. These include “Beltà, poi che t’assenti,” which Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) scored for a modern orchestra in *Monumento pro Gesualdo* in honor of Gesualdo’s four-hundredth anniversary. Another famous one, “Moro, lasso,” appears in numerous textbooks as an example of Gesualdo’s extreme chromaticism.

Table 8-1.2 shows just how much Gesualdo had cultivated chromaticism less than a century after the exchange between Giovanni Spataro and del Lago. Together, the twenty-three madrigals in *Libro Sesto* span over twenty pitch classes from C♭ to B♯. This gamut is five pitches wider than that of Orlando di Lasso’s *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* as a whole. It is only one-pitch shorter (F♭) than the “string continuum” Spataro was only able to imagine in theory.

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1 A seventh book of Madrigals by Gesualdo, formally entitled “Madrigali a cinque voci Dell’Illustrissimo, & Eccellentissimo Sig. D. Carlo Gesualdo, Principe di Venosa” was printed and published in Naples by Ambrosio Magnetta in 1626, dedicated to Leonora d’Este, the widowed wife of Gesualdo. Only the Quintus part has survived. For a facsimile of the Quintus part, see Gesualdo di Venosa, *Instrumentalwerke, Psalmen, Canzonetten*, Glenn E. Watkins ed. (Hamburg, Germany: Ugrino Verlag, 1967), 37-47. Because the source is incomplete and the publication date posthumous, the authenticity of this source may be questionable; thus, it will not be discussed in this current chapter.

2 Table 8-1.2 is created based on the transcription and information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen nach dem Partiturdruck von 1613, Sechstes Buch*, Wilhelm Weismann ed. (Ugrino Verlag, 1957). All data of all the tables in this chapter count the reprises.
Even compared to Gesualdo’s own *Libro Quinto* published just a month before, *Libro Sesto* noticeably increases the intensity of chromaticism. On average, a madrigal from *Libro Sesto* spans over more than fourteen pitch classes. While this number is not significantly larger than that of *Libro Quinto* (Table 8-1.1), the widest diatonic collection of a single madrigal from *Libro Sesto*, which is that of “Tu piangi, o Fili mia,” covers as

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3 For reasons to be explained below, all data concerning *Libro Sesto* exclude its last madrigal, “Quando ridente e bella,” and all concerning *Libro Quinto* exclude its last madrigal, “T’amo mia vita.”
many as eighteen pitch classes from C♭ to A#. In comparison, the maximum of Libro Quinto spans over sixteen pitch classes. In addition, only four madrigals from Libro Quinto possess a sixteen-pitch gamut, which is already as wide as that of Cipriano de Rore’s “Calami sonum ferentes” and two pitches wider than that of “Anna, mihi dilecta,” Lasso’s most chromatic piece. Still, in Libro Sesto, as many as eight madrigals make use

Table 8-1.2 Chromaticism in Gesualdo’s Libro Sesto (1611)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Gamut Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Se la mia morte brami</td>
<td>b-g2-G</td>
<td>Db-G#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beltà, poi che t’assenti</td>
<td>b-g2-G</td>
<td>Db-E#</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu piangi, o Fili mia</td>
<td>b-g2-G</td>
<td>Cb-A#</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resta di darmi noia</td>
<td>b-g2-D</td>
<td>Eb-E#</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiaro risplender suole</td>
<td>b-g2-D</td>
<td>Eb-A#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Io parto” e non più dissi</td>
<td>b-g2-E</td>
<td>Ab-E#</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mille volte il di moro</td>
<td>b-g2-E</td>
<td>Db-E#</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O dolce mio tesor</td>
<td>b-g2-E</td>
<td>Eb-A#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deh, come invan sospiro</td>
<td>b-g2-E</td>
<td>Eb-B#</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Io pur respiro in così gran dolore</td>
<td>b-g2-E</td>
<td>Ab-E#</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alme d’Amor rubelle</td>
<td>b-g2-F</td>
<td>Eb-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candido e verde fiore</td>
<td>b-g2-F</td>
<td>Bb-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardita Zazzaretta</td>
<td>b-g2-G</td>
<td>Db-D#</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardo per te, mio bene</td>
<td>b-g2-G</td>
<td>Db-E#</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancide sol la morte</td>
<td>b-g2-A</td>
<td>Bb-E#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quel “no” crudel che la mia speme ancise</td>
<td>b-g2-A</td>
<td>Bb-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moro, lasso, al mio duolo</td>
<td>b-g2-A</td>
<td>Db-E#</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volan quasi farfalle</td>
<td>b-g2-F</td>
<td>Eb-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al mio gioir il ciel si fa sereno</td>
<td>b-g2-F</td>
<td>Eb-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu segui, o bella Clori</td>
<td>b-g2-C</td>
<td>F#-A#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancor che per amarti</td>
<td>b-g2-C</td>
<td>Eb-A#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Già piansi nel dolore</td>
<td>b-g2-C</td>
<td>Eb-A#</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average**                               |            | 14.45  | 9.68       |

**Composite**                             | C♭-B#      | 20      |

Quando ridente e bella                    | b-g2-G     | Eb-C#  | 11         | 1

4 Table 8-1.1 is created based on the transcription and information from Gesualdo di Venosa, Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen nach dem Partiturdruck von 1613, Fünftes Buch, Wilhelm Weismann ed. (Hamburg, Germany: Ugrino Verlag, 1958).
of sixteen pitch classes or more. The above-mentioned “Moro, lasso” and “Beltà, poi che
t’assenti” cover sixteen and seventeen pitch classes respectively.5

In terms of surficial chromaticism, each madrigal from Libro Sesto has on average
more than nine chromatic semitones in the melody, almost one semitone more than the
average of Libro Quinto. Both “Beltà, poi che t’assenti” and “Moro, lasso” have twenty-
eight chromatic semitones. They outnumber Lasso’s “Anna” by one semitone and
completely overshadow “Sibylla Libyca” (twelve), the most melodically chromatic motet
from Prophetiae Sibyllarum, and Rore’s “Calami” (ten). In comparison, “Itene, o miei
sospiri” and “Mercè, grido piangendo,” the two madrigals that have the highest number
of chromatic semitones from Libro Quinto, have twenty-three chromatic semitones.

The remarkable chromaticism in Gesualdo’s late madrigals is not a new discovery,
and my data analysis of Libro Sesto only quantifies the volume’s chromatic language.
Indeed, there seems to be no lack of knowledge nowadays when it comes to Gesualdo,
especially his gruesome and fascinating biography. We know that on the night of 16
October 1590 Gesualdo murdered his wife Maria d’Avalos and her lover Fabrizio Carafa,
the Duke of Andria. We also know much about Gesualdo’s life during his last fifteen
years at some point of which he composed the madrigals in Libro Sesto. Although after
1597 the Prince of Venosa spent his life in almost total seclusion in his castle at Gesualdo,
we possess information about this period in voyeuristic detail. We know that her second
wife, Eleonora d’Este, cousin of Alfonso II, the last Duke of Ferrara of the Este dynasty,
was so distressed about their marriage that she fled to his brother Cesare d’Este, Duke of

5 Glenn Watkins has compared Gesualdo’s use of accidental inflections in the Quinto and
Sesto Libri, from which one may draw similar conclusions. See Glenn Watkins, Gesualdo: the
table in 196.
Modena, for an extended stay, a move that caused diplomatic strife and rumors.\textsuperscript{6} We know that Gesualdo’s long-term mistress, a certain Aurelia d’Errico, once had him drink her menstrual blood as a love potion, and she confessed such matter under torture in 1603 after the scandal erupted and a witch trial followed suit.\textsuperscript{7} We even know that near the end of his life Gesualdo suffered from severe constipation; according to modern medical studies his anal-retentive behavior are likely attributable to his homosexuality and masochism. Evidence even suggests that Gesualdo hired a regiment of young men to beat him daily for his enjoyment and to ease his bowel movements.\textsuperscript{8}

Since Gesualdo’s chromaticism has been conceived as weird and avant-garde in the sense used to describe twentieth-century modernism and tied to his private life full of scandals and intrigues, little effort has been made to study Gesualdo’s music from some of the seemingly more mundane angles that are generally part and parcel of scholarship on Renaissance composers. So little, indeed, that it has been largely ignored that Gesualdo’s ultra-chromatic \textit{Libro Sesto} is modally ordered. Although Ludwig Finscher mentions the modal ordering of pieces in \textit{Libri Quinto} and \textit{Sesto} in his 1972 article “Gesualdos ‘Atonalität’ und das Problem des musikalischen Manierismus” and Peter Watkins, \textit{Gesualdo}, 73-81, where Watkins provides excerpts from Eleonora’s letters to her Estense relatives regarding the unfortunate marriage.

\textsuperscript{7} Watkins, \textit{The Gesualdo Hex: Music, Myth, and Memory} (New York, NY and London, UK: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2010), 24-32. In 26-30, Watkins provides a translation of a report from Cesare Staibano, counsel in Gesualdo’s service, to the Viceroy of Naples after facts regarding the matter had been established through hearings and tortures. According to Watkins, the eventual punishment for the said Aurelia d’Errico was not burning at the stake but imprisonment in the very castle of Gesualdo, probably in order to prevent the rumor from going public and damaging the Prince’s reputation—just imagine how bitter Eleonora would be!

\textsuperscript{8} A medical diagnosis of Gesualdo’s abnormal behaviors during the last years of his life is provided in William B. Ober, M.D., “Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa: Murder, Madrigals, and Masochism,” \textit{Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine} 49 (1973): 634-645. Of course, one shall never know whether Dr. Ober’s observations are correct, not to mention whether his use of Gesualdo’s music as medical evidences is reliable. An assemblage of historical accounts of Gesualdo’s physical sufferings leading up to his death, on the other hand, can be found in Watkins, \textit{Gesualdo}, 81-4.
Table 8-2 Ordering of Madrigals in Gesualdo’s *Libro Sesto* (1611)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Se la mia morte brami</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Beltà, poi che t’assenti</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tu piaugi, o Fili mia</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♬</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Resta di darmi noia</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chiario risplender suole</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>“Io parto” e non più dissi</em></td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Phrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mille volte il di moro</em></td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Phrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O dolce mio tesoro</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Deh, come invan sospiro</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Io pur respiro in così gran dolore</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Alme d’Amor rubelle</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Lydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Candido e verde fiore</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Lydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ardita Zanzaretta</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Mixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ardo per te, mio bene</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Mixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ancide sol la morte</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₂-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quel “no” crudel che la mia speme ancise</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Moro, lasso, al mio duolo</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Volan quasi farfalle</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₂-c₂-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Ionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Al mio gioir il ciel si fa sereno</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Ionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tu segui, o bella Clori</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ancor che per amarti</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Già piansi nel dolore</em></td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quando ridente e bella</em></td>
<td>g₂-g₂-c₁-c₂-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>(Dorian)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Niedermüller has later reexamined Finscher’s observations of modal orderings in Gesualdo’s publications, their work has drawn little attention.⁹ Their observations are conspicuously missing from Glenn Watkins’s two editions of *Gesualdo: the Man and His Music* and the fairly recent *The Gesualdo Hex: Music, Myth, and Memory*.¹⁰

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¹⁰ I will discuss later Watkins’ fleeting note on modal ordering in Gesualdo’s books of madrigals in his second book *The Gesualdo Hex*. 
Indeed, as soon as one lists the tonal types of its twenty-three madrigals, the modal ordering of Gesualdo’s *Libro Sesto* becomes evident (Table 8-2).11 Most modally ordered publications of the sixteenth century, for example Rore’s first printed anthology of madrigals, *I Madrigali* (1542) and Lasso’s *Lagrima di San Pietro* of 1594, are arranged according to the traditional octonary modal system.12 In contrast, the first twenty-two madrigals of Gesualdo’s *Libro Sesto* represent the dodecachordon modal system advocated by Heinrich Glarean and Gioseffo Zarlino toward the second half of the sixteenth century. After the two ♮-g2-G madrigals representing the Mixolydian mode that terminates the octonary modal system, the anthology proceeds to three pieces in ♮-g2-A, two pieces in ♭-g2-F, and three pieces in ♮-g2-C. Three additional tonal types represent the Aeolian mode, the transposed Ionian mode, and the Hypoionian mode, all unique to the dodecachordon system.

I suggest that what distinguishes the modal ordering of Gesualdo’s *Libro Sesto* is more than the use of the dodecachordon modal system. Whereas both Rore’s *Primo Libro* and Lasso’s *Lagrima di San Pietro* employ a healthy mix of g2-f3 and c1-f4 clefings, Gesualdo’s *Libro Sesto* leans heavily towards the former. Except for the sixth and seventh madrigals, all the madrigals are set in the high g2-f3 clefing with g2 in the top voice and f3 in the bottom voice. The last madrigal “Quando ridente e bella” is an exception: it employs g2 for both two top voices and c1 for the middle voice and thus calls for an ensemble distinctively higher than any other piece in the anthology. Nonetheless,

11 Table 8-2 is created based on the transcription and information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen nach dem Partiturdruk von 1613, Sechstes Buch*.
with its $b$-$g_2$-$G$ tonal type coming after $b$-$g_2$-$F$ and $c$-$g_2$-$C$, this madrigal falls outside the established modal sequence, and will not be considered in the context of modal ordering.

Of the remaining twenty $g_2$-$f_3$ madrigals of the modal sequence, moreover, all but two—

“Ardita Zanzaretta” and “Volan quasi farfalle,” both set in $g_2$, $c_2$, $c_2$, $c_3$, and $f_3$—have $g_2$, $c_1$, $c_2$, $c_3$, and $f_3$ clefs assigned to their five voices.

Niedermüller cautions that the orderings in Gesualdo’s six books of madrigals may reflect the decisions not of Gesualdo but of the publishers. He cites as an example the 1616 reprint of the six books in Venice in which the publisher Bartholomeo Magni

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changed some of the order in the original 1611 editions (Table 8-3). Nevertheless, based on the clefing and voicing unity in *Libro Sesto*, I argue that the modal ordering in this anthology reflects Gesualdo’s precompositional planning. To begin with, all five voices of the madrigals from *Libro Sesto* appear well contained within their respective voice ranges and clefs. This means that in Gesualdo’s *Libro Sesto* the absolute predominance of g<sub>2</sub>-clefing—or even more specifically g<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>1</sub>-c<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>3</sub>-f<sub>3</sub>—could hardly have been the result of transpositions after the composition of the madrigals. Furthermore, it is also unthinkable that either publisher of *Libro Sesto* or Gesualdo himself could select after the fact as many as twenty madrigals that not only employ exclusively the g<sub>2</sub>-clefing but also fall under a perfect modal distribution. Such a scenario would mean that many of Gesualdo’s late madrigals that are set not in g<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>1</sub>-c<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>3</sub>-f<sub>3</sub> or g<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>2</sub>-c<sub>3</sub>-f<sub>3</sub> were intentionally left out from *Libro Sesto*. There is no evidence, however, that several madrigals in c<sub>1</sub>-, c<sub>2</sub>-, or g<sub>2</sub>-g<sub>2</sub> clefings were either left unpublished or crammed into other publications. For one, *Libro Quinto* has a balanced ratio of eight madrigals in c<sub>1</sub> to twelve in g<sub>2</sub>.

The logical conclusion is that Gesualdo himself decided to compose some twenty madrigals specifically for *Libro Sesto* that he had planned beforehand to arrange in accordance with the dodecachordon modal system. Gesualdo seems to have chosen to compose in the g<sub>2</sub> clefing as often as possible in order to consolidate the modal sequence into a more coherent whole. More important, at the time he was composing music for

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14 Table 8-3 created based on the information from the original publication of *Madrigali a Cinque voci. Libro Setso. Nuovamente Stampati* printed and published and Bartholomeo Magni in Venice, 1616, scanned by and retrieved from gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France: http://gallica.bnf.fr /ark:/12148/btv1b8426019k.r=carlo+gesualdo+1616.langEN on 2 April 2013.

15 I am grateful to Professor Anthony Newcomb for first calling my attention to the predominance of g<sub>2</sub>-clefing in *Libro Sesto*. 
Libro Sesto, Gesualdo must have been immersed not only in what has been regarded as his “avant-garde” chromaticism, his famous staple, but also in the supposedly archaic modal system.

**Modal Ordering in Gesualdo’s Early Publications**

In his recent *The Gesualdo Hex: Music, Myth, and Memory*, Glenn Watkins glosses over the role of the modal system in Gesualdo’s late chromaticism. A footnote suggests that Watkins has indeed read Finscher or Niedermüller’s works on modal ordering in Gesualdo’s anthologies:

Despite the evidence that Gesualdo continued to pay attention to modal ordering in his madrigal collections while playing with the internal tonality of each work, Cipriano de Rore, father of the *seconda pratica*, had already abandoned the idea of modally ordered sets.16

In the corresponding section of the main body, however, Watkins writes:

Gesualdo, like Schoenberg and Stravinsky, launched his career with classically proportioned specimens (the first three madrigal books) only to quickly signal that the old modal order was irrevocably under attack and that his discoveries pointed to expressive solutions well beyond the domain of the madrigal.17

Watkins seems to argue that Gesualdo’s first three books of madrigals published in the 1590s followed “the old modal order,” yet with the more daring chromaticism in his later publications Gesualdo deserted the modal system, though complying with it superficially.

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17 Ibid., 268.
Despite Watkins’s suggestion, mode and chromaticism are not mutually exclusive in Gesualdo’s musical style. On the contrary, from the 1590s to the 1600s, the influence of “the old modal order” in Gesualdo’s growingly chromatic compositions did not dwindle but dramatically increased. To begin with, Gesualdo never “launched his career with classically proportioned specimens” in the way Watkins suggests. Although the madrigals from Gesualdo’s first three books are generally diatonic, none of the three anthologies presents a modal ordering comparable to that of Libro Sesto. Table 8-4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 list all the madrigals from Gesualdo’s Libri Primo (Ferrara, 1594), Secundo (Ferrara, 1594), and Terzo (Ferrara, 1595), and their tonal types.18 Whoever organized these pieces in the volumes usually groups together those with the same tonal type. But it is not evident that these tonal-type clusters serve to represent modes and that these sequences of tonal types embody a higher modal order.

Admittedly, one might argue that Libro Primo presents some kind of modal ordering (Table 8-4.1). It alternates fairly regularly between $g_2$- and $c_1$-clefings, which can differentiate authentic and plagal versions of a mode. The first two madrigals in $\flat$-$g_2$-G and the following two in $\flat$-$c_1$-G, for example, may represent authentic Dorian and Hypodorian. The fifth to seventh madrigals may represent authentic Mixolydian with $\natural$-$g_2$-G and $\natural$-$g_2$-C, which have both been used in Rore’s and Lasso’s modally ordered anthologies.

Table 8-4.1 Ordering of Madrigals in Gesualdo’s *Libro Primo* (1594)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baci soave e cari – Quanto ha di dolce Amore</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>D, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madonna, io ben vorrei</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come esser può ch’io viva</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gelo ha Madonna il seno</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre Madonna il lasso – Ahi, troppo saggia nell’errar</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>C, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se da si nobil mano</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amor, pace non chero</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Si gioioso mi fanno i dolor miei</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O dolce mio martire</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirsi morir volea – Frenò Tirsi il desio</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>C, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre, mia stella, miri</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non mirar, non mirare</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questi leggiadri odorosetti fiori</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felice primavera – Danzan le Ninfe oneste</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>D, F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son si belle le rose</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella Angioletta</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-4.2 Ordering of Madrigals in Gesualdo’s *Libro Secundo* (1594)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caro, amoroso neo – Ma se tale hà costei</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C, F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hai rotto e sciolto e spento</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se per lieve ferita – Che sentir deve il petto mio</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>B♭, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In più leggiadro velo</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se così dolce è di duolo – Ma se avverrà ch’io moia</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>B♭, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se taccio, il duol s’avanza</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O come è gran martire – O mio soave ardore</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>E, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sento che nel partire</td>
<td>c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non è, questa la mano – Nè tien face o saetta</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>D, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candida man</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalle odorate spoglie – E quella arpa felice</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♯</td>
<td>A, D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non mai non cangerò</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>B♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al l’apparir di quelle luci ardenti</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>B♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non mi toglia il ben mio</td>
<td>g&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;1&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;-c&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;-f&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>B♭</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The modal representation of the five tonal types of the remaining nine madrigals would all be rather straightforward, as shown in Table 8-4.1. Nonetheless, I refrain from calling the arrangement of pieces in Libro Primo a modal ordering for two reasons. First, unlike in Libro Sesto, both the two Phrygian and the two Lydian modes are missing from Libro Primo. The two Phrygian modes, especially, are among Gesualdo’s favorites, as I will show later. Had Gesualdo decided to present the madrigals in Libro Primo in a modal order, the ♭-c₁-E and ♭-g₂-B♭ pieces from the contemporary Libro Secundo would be perfect representatives of Phrygian and Lydian modes.

Second, the avoidable absence of Phrygian and Lydian in Libro Primo also suggests that the organizer of the anthology was unwilling to separate the Dorian-representing pieces in ♭-G and Mixolydian-representing in ♭-G. Indeed, without tonal types representing Phrygian or Lydian, the first half of Libro Primo is flooded with eight G-final madrigals, and the anthology as a whole employs as few as only four finals—G,

### Table 8-4.3 Ordering of Madrigals in Gesualdo’s Libro Terzo (1595)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voi volete ch’io mora – Moro o non moro</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ah! disperata vita</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languisco e moro</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₁-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del bel de’ dei vostri occhi</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ah! dispietata e cruda</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolce spirto d’Amore</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sospirava il mio core – O mal nati messaggi</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>E, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veggio, sì, dal mio sole</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non t’amo, o voce ingrate</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meraviglia d’Amore – Ed ardo e vivo</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crudelessima doglia</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se piange, oimè, la Donna del mio core</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancidetemi pur, grieve martiri</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se vi miro pietosa</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deh, se già fu crudele</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolcissimo sospiro</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna, se m’ancidetete</td>
<td>g₂-g₂-g₂-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C, A, and F—with half of them being G and only five final-system combinations—♭-G, ♮-G, ♮-C, ♮-A, and ♮-F. Composed and published at the same time, Libro Secundo employs seven finals and final-system combinations, none of which appears quite as predominant as G in Libro Primo. Libro Sesto also has six modal finals and eight final-system combinations. It thus seems that the organizer of Libro Primo cared more about specific arrangements of tonal types than their modal representations. In this manner Libro Primo resembles less the modally ordered Libro Setso and more Luzzasco Luzzaschi’s “non-modal” Il quarto libro de’ madrigali a cinque voci, which was published just a few months after Libro Primo and was dedicated to Gesualdo. As Table

Table 8-5 Ordering of Madrigals in Luzzasco Luzzaschi’s Quarto Libro (1595)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crudelissima Donna</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₃-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quante volte volgete</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₃-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra le dolcezze</td>
<td>c₁-c₁-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre la notte</td>
<td>c₁-c₁-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Io veggo pur pietate – O dolci meraviglie</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di semplice farfalla</td>
<td>c₁-c₁-c₁-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invide siepi</td>
<td>c₁-c₁-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Io v’amo, anima mia”</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₃-c₃-c₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu ribello d’Amor</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vero è ch’Amor</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolce mia fiamma</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S’homai d’ogni su’ errore</td>
<td>c₁-c₁-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se a voi di me non cale</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolorosi martir</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questi tuoi dolci sguardi</td>
<td>c₁-c₃-c₄-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La dove par</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₃-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Io t’amo,” spesso mi dice</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentil bella mia Donna</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fra più dolci amorosi avolgimenti</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₃-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se’ Lauro è sempre verde – Dhe, se pur secco fosse</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₁-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quand’io miro me stessa</td>
<td>g₂-c₂-c₃-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8-5 shows, Luzzaschi’s anthology, utilizing as few as four modal finals and five final-system combinations, also focuses highly on G-final tonal types (♭-G and ♮-G).¹⁹

Since the two anthologies were published immediately after Gesualdo arrived in Ferrara, the non-modal ordering in Libri Primo and Secundo reflects the composer’s musical background. By the time of his arrival, all the madrigals of the two Libri had not only been composed but also separated into the current two books, ready to hit the press. Alfonso Fontanelli, a composer and diplomat at the Estense court, greeted Gesualdo outside the city the day before his arrival and testified in a letter to Duke Alfonso that Gesualdo was bringing “two different books of music in five parts, all his own work.”²⁰ Moreover, before Gesualdo surfaced in Ferrara and formally became a published composer, he had already published Libro Secundo under the pseudonym Gioseppe Pilonii, according to the dedication in the 1594 publications from Ferrara.²¹ Therefore, it is logical to speculate that Gesualdo himself decided what pieces should appear in which anthology, and that by the first publication of Libro Secundo the two books were already organized in their current non-modal order.

In summary, although Libro Primo might give the impression of flirting with the idea of modal ordering, when Gesualdo came to Ferrara in 1594 anxious about publishing his music through the ducal press, he had no serious interest in organizing his anthologies according to the modes. The decisive turn would appear two years later in Gesualdo’s Libro Quarto published in Ferrara, 1596, a year after the publication of his Libro Terzo.

¹⁹ Table 8-5 is created based on the information from Luzzasco Luzzaschi, Complete Unaccompanied Madrigals, Part 2: Il quarto libro de’ madrigali a cinque voci (Ferrara, 1594) and Madrigals Published Only in Anthologies, 1583-1604, Anthony Newcomb ed. (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, Inc., 2004).
²⁰ Watkins, Gesualdo, 44-46.
²¹ Ibid., 56-57, especially footnote no. 41, which contains a transcription of the dedication, and 133.
Here, pieces in the ♮-E tonal types represent the Phrygian mode, and the arrangement of

Table 8-6 Ordering of Madrigals in Gesualdo’s *Libro Quarto* (1596)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luci serene e chiare</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Ionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall’or sano desio</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Ionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Io tacerò – Invan dunque o crudele</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C, G</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Che fai meco, mio cor</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questa crudele e pia</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or, che in gioia – O sempre crudo Amore</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>D, G</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cor mio – Dunque non m’offendete</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A, E</td>
<td>Phrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spargi la morte al mio Signor nel viso</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Mixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moro – Quando di lui la sospirata vita</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-f₄</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>D, G</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre gira costei</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Mixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A voi, mentre il mio core</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Mixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecco, morirò dunque – Ahì, già mi discoloro</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>E, A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arde il mio cor</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se chiudete nel core</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il sol, qual or più splende – Volgi, mia luce</td>
<td>g₂-c₁-c₂-c₃-c₃-f₃</td>
<td>♭</td>
<td>G, C</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dodecachordon ordering in *Libro Quarto* is not only unambiguous. It is also unique. The volume does not begin with what we usually refer to as the “Dorian” mode typically represented by ♭-G tonal types in Gesualdo’s anthologies. Instead, the sequence begins with three madrigals in ♭-g₂-F. This tonal type represents the transposed authentic Ionian mode near the end of *Libro Sesto*. The two “Dorian” modes come after this “Ionian”: first the plagal version represented by a madrigal in ♭-c₁-G and then the authentic one by three pieces in ♭-g₂-G. More curiously, after two madrigals in ♮-g₂-G representing authentic Mixolydian and two in ♮-g₂-A representing authentic Aeolian, the anthology concludes with two pieces in ♮-g₂-C. In the context of Gesualdo’s modal

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ordering, this tonal type may only represent the Ionian mode again, this time its plagal version, or Hypoionian.

Niedermüller also observes this interesting phenomenon in Libro Quarto, which he describes as “framed” by the two Ionian modes. Nonetheless, he never explores the reason behind this curious ordering. What, then, led to the sudden change from the “non-modal” Libri Primo and Secundo to the peculiar dodecachordon modal ordering in Libro Quarto over the course of the two years between their publications (1594 to 1596)?

Gesualdo probably started working on Libro Quarto after his publishing debut in 1594. From that year until the publication of Libro Quarto in 1596, Gesualdo’s life had been mainly revolving around the Estense court. Hence, one would naturally want to look at Ferrara during those years for the origins of Libro Quarto’s “Ionian bookends.” In the late sixteenth century, Ferrara was still one of the most prominent centers of music making, and the company of Luzzaschi, whom Gesualdo admired, and Fontanelli would provide the Prince with an exciting musical forum.

Nevertheless, neither Luzzaschi nor Fontanelli published any modally ordered anthology during this period. In fact, modal ordering was not common in the Ferrarese print market around that time, as Luzzaschi’s Il quarto libro and Fontanelli’s Primo libro de’ madrigali senza nome for five voices (1595) both testify. Furthermore, in spite of Niedermüller’s warning of the power of publishers, it is unlikely that it was the publisher, the ducal printer Vittoria Baldini, who decided the particular modal ordering in Libro Quarto. This is the same person who issued Libro Primo and Secundo back in 1594 and the Terzo just a year before without paying any attention to the modal order. Thus, again,

24 Watkins, Gesualdo, 45-46, which is based Fontanelli’s letter to Duke Alfonso on February 18, 1594.
it is reasonable to postulate that the modal design of *Libro Quarto* came from Gesualdo himself.

I propose that the ordering in *Libro Quarto* points not to Ferrara but to Venice, specifically to Gioseffo Zarlino. For review, the traditional octonary modal system begins with the two D-final Dorian modes (or modes one and two) and ends with the two G-final Mixolydian modes (seven and eight). In *Dodecachordon* (1547), Glarean simply attached the four new modes at the end of the old octonary system: the A-final Aeolian modes (nine and ten) and C-final Ionian modes (eleven and twelve). In the first edition of *Le Istitutioni harmoniche* (1558), as well as in his first published anthology *Moduli motecta vulgo noncupata liber primus* (1549), Zarlino directly adopts Glarean’s new modal system.

In the subsequent *Dimostrationi harmoniche* (1571) and the 1573 edition of *Le Istitutioni*, however, Zarlino renumbered the modes. He moved the two C-final modes from the end of the sequence to the very beginning. They become modes one and two, followed by D-, E-, F-, G-, and, finally, A-final modes. As I have discussed in Chapter Three, Zarlino unifies the dodecachordon system with hexachordal theory by starting the sequence of modal finals on C ♯, the beginning of the *cantus naturalis deductio*, and end on A ♯.25 Although Zarlino refrained from using Greek names for the modes in order to avoid further confusion, some subsequent writers and publishers started calling Zarlino’s C-final modes “Dorian” and D-final modes “Phrygian.”26 In the current chapter, as in Chapter Three, “Ionian” always indicates a C-final mode in *cantus durus*, “Dorian” D-

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25 See Chapter Three.

Gesualdo’s *Libro Quarto* seems just as confused as the nomenclature of the dodecachordon modes. It is suspended between Glarean’s original or Zarlino’s 1558 numbering and Zarlino’s 1571 numbering. With the two Ionian modes separated by the rest of the anthology, it is as if *Libro Quarto* were still in the process of adjusting from the old numbering to the new or *vice versa*. From another angle, it seems that Gesualdo understood the history of the dodecachordon modal theory. He knew both its original form in Glarean’s treatise of 1547, probably through Zarlino’s 1558 edition of *Le Istitutioni*, and its eventual reform at Zarlino’s hands in 1571. The unique “Ionian bookends” of *Libro Quarto* suggest the depth and seriousness with which Gesualdo had explored modal theory under the influence of Zarlino’s renumbering of the modes.

Given the absence of direct witness, it is unclear how dodecachordon theory and Zarlino’s reform reached Gesualdo as he was composing *Libro Quarto*. A meeting between Zarlino and Gesualdo would have been unlikely given the former’s death in 1590 before Gesualdo’s first journey to northern Italy. On 15 May 1594, however, after celebrating his marriage with Eleonora d’Este, the Prince of Venosa headed home without his newly wedded Princess. Instead of travelling straight to Campania, Gesualdo took a detour to Venice before sailing back to the south. According to Fontanelli, who accompanied Gesualdo on this journey, they had arrived in Venice on or before 21 May 1594 via Chioggia, Zarlino’s hometown, and Gesualdo spent more than half a month at Venice until the middle of June.27 Fontanelli’s letter to the Duke on 23 May suggests that in addition to fulfilling his princely role with activities such as meeting the Venetian

27 Ibid., 61.
Doge, Gesualdo explored the Venetian musical scene. He very likely met Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1554-1612), the first organist at the ducal chapel of St Mark’s Basilica.\textsuperscript{28} Although never mentioned in Fontanelli’s account, Gesualdo could have easily also met Baldassare Donato (c. 1529-1603), the \textit{maestro di cappella} at the time.

This inevitably brings Zarlino into the picture. By the time of his death four years earlier in 1590, Zarlino had served as \textit{maestro di cappella} at St Mark’s Basilica for more than two decades since Willaert’s death in 1563 and Rore’s resignation in 1565. In this period, Zarlino dominated the chapel and enjoyed a high reputation in the Venetian print market. The monumental \textit{Le Istitutioni} secured his fame in 1558, and, as discussed in Chapter Four, the 1566 motet collection \textit{Modulationes}, the 1571 \textit{Dimostrationi}, and the 1573 reissue of \textit{Le Istitutioni} kept his name alive outside the Basilica and reinforced his image as Willaert’s successor. Moreover, near the end of his life Zarlino got involved in the famous polemics against his pupil, the Florentine music theorist Vincenzo Galilei (1520-1591). Galilei harshly criticized Zarlino’s treatment of ancient musical sources in his \textit{Dialogo della musica antica et della moderna} (1581), and Zarlino replied with equal vehemence in his \textit{Sopplimenti musicali} (1588).

Thus, echoes of Zarlino and his theories must have still been resonating within St Mark’s Basilica and the lagoons of Venice in the summer of 1594. Gesualdo could have encountered Zarlino’s modal reforms there at its place of origin in 1594, or even purchased a copy of the 1573 edition of \textit{Le Istitutioni} bound with \textit{Le Dimostrationi}. In fact, the short detour to the city of Willaert and Zarlino appeared to have inspired Gesualdo during the period of 1594-1596. On 25 June Fontanelli reported that since he returned home from Venice less than two weeks ago Gesualdo had already finished “five or sixth

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 62-3, Fontanelli’s letter to the Duke on May 23, 1594.
most artful madrigals, a motet, an aria, and [had] brought to a good point a dialogue for three sopranos.”29 Almost certainly, these “artful madrigals” would appear in his *Libri Terzo* and *Quarto*. Of course, it is impossible to determine whether Gesualdo consciously composed *Libro Quarto* in the modal system or planned out the “bookends” beforehand; since it only involves moving two madrigals, it is possible that he had already started composing music with a vision of one numbering when the alternative numbering occurred to him. Nonetheless, the influence of Zarlino’s modal reform in the 1570s is self-evident in the unique mixture of modal numberings in *Libro Quarto*. It is also possible that Gesualdo swiftly composed the madrigals to which Fontanelli referred under the newly acquired vision of a modally and indeed uniquely ordered *Libro Quarto*.

**The Marriage of Chromaticism and Mode through Tonal Types**

Interestingly, although coming after Gesualdo’s trip to Venice and predating *Quarto* by just a year, *Libro Terzo* (1595) shows no trace of modal ordering (Table 8-4.3). Its organization appears to be only by tonal type and resembles much more *Libri Primo* and *Secundo* than the chronologically closer *Quarto*. It might be that before setting out for Ferrara in early 1594, Gesualdo had not only finished *Libri Primo* and *Secundo* but also done much work on *Libro Terzo* and that he was still working on this project during the trip. Thus, when dodecachordon theory occurred to Gesualdo, *Libro Terzo* would have been more or less in its current shape. Its swift publication after Gesualdo returned to Ferrara in 1595 implies its readiness in contrast to the delayed publication of *Libro Quarto* in 1596.

Such an explanation might seem tenuous, but modal ordering is not the only feature that sets *Libro Terzo* and *Libro Quarto* apart. In *Gesualdo: the Man and his Music* Watkins analyzes Gesualdo’s six books of madrigals in three pairs. This decision, he explains, comes from each pair’s chronological proximity and stylistic comparability.\(^{30}\) I argue that *Libro Terzo* and *Libro Quarto*, despite their chronological proximity and shared compositional circumstances, demonstrate highly contrasting styles. The difference pertains not only to the anthologies’ modal or “non-modal” outlook but also to the presence of chromaticism in each individual madrigals.

Tables 8-7.1, 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4 summarize the important parameters of chromaticism in Gesualdo’s first four books, juxtaposed with Tables 8-1.1 and 1.2 that presents those of the fifth and the sixth.\(^{31}\) In terms of the gamut, *Libro Terzo* indisputably resembles *Libri Primo* and *Secundo*: they all have a composite gamut of thirteen pitch classes from E♭ to D♯, and individual madrigals in these anthologies utilize at most twelve pitch classes. Only just over one-third of the first three books have a twelve-pitch gamut, in addition, while most other madrigals have the standard eleven-pitch gamuts from E♭ to C♯ in *cantus mollis* and B♭ to G♯ in *cantus durus*.

Although the twelve-pitch madrigals from *Libri Primo*, *Secundo*, and *Terzo* in no way rival the more extreme chromaticism in the earliest experiments of Rore or Lasso, they already include the crucial “twelfth step,” G♯ in *cantus mollis* and D♯ in *durus*,

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 133.  
\(^{31}\) Table 8-7.1 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen, Nach dem Partiturdruk von 1613, Erstes Buch*. Table 8-7.2 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen, Nach dem Partiturdruk von 1613, Zweites Buch*. Table 8-7.3 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen, Nach dem Partiturdruk von 1613, Drittes Buch*. Table 8-7.4 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen, Nach dem Partiturdruk von 1613, Viertes Buch*. 
### Table 8-7.1 Chromaticism in Gesualdo’s *Libro Primo* (1594)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Gamut Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baci soave – Quanto ha di dolce Amore</td>
<td>g₂-b-F</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madonna, io ben vorrei</td>
<td>g₂-b-F</td>
<td>E♭-G♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come esser può ch’io viva</td>
<td>c₁-b-G</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gelo ha Madonna il seno</td>
<td>c₁-b-G</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre Madonna – Ahi, troppo saggia</td>
<td>g₂-h-G</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se da sì nobil mano</td>
<td>g₂-h-C</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amor, pace non chero</td>
<td>c₁-h-G</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Si gioioso mi fanno i dolor miei</td>
<td>c₁-h-G</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O dolce mio martire</td>
<td>c₁-h-G</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirsi morir volea – Frenò Tirsi il desio</td>
<td>g₂-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre, mia stella, miri</td>
<td>g₂-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non mirar, non mirare</td>
<td>c₁-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questi leggiadri odorosetti fiori</td>
<td>c₁-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felice primavera – Danzan le Ninfe oneste</td>
<td>g₂-b-F</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son si belle le rose</td>
<td>g₂-h-C</td>
<td>F♯-G♯</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella Angioletta</td>
<td>g₂-h-C</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Average</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.25</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.06</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Composite</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>E♭-D♯</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8-7.2 Chromaticism in Gesualdo’s *Libro Secundo* (1594)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Gamut Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caro, amoroso neo – Ma se tale hà costei</td>
<td>g₂-b-F</td>
<td>E♭-G♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hai rotto e sciolto e spento</td>
<td>g₂-b-F</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se per lieve ferita – Che sentir deve</td>
<td>g₂-b-G</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In più leggiadro velo</td>
<td>g₂-b-F</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se così dolce – Ma se avverrà ch’io moia</td>
<td>c₁-b-G</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se taccio, il duol s’avanza</td>
<td>c₁-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O come è gran – O mio soave ardore</td>
<td>c₁-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sento che nel partire</td>
<td>c₁-h-E</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non è, questa la mano – Nè tien face</td>
<td>g₂-h-A</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candida man</td>
<td>g₂-h-C</td>
<td>B♭-D♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalle odorate spoglie – E quella arpa felice</td>
<td>g₂-b-D</td>
<td>B♭-G♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non mai non cangerò</td>
<td>g₂-b-B♭</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al l’apparir di quelle luci ardentì</td>
<td>g₂-b-B♭</td>
<td>A♭-C♯</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non mi toglia il ben mio</td>
<td>g₂-b-B♭</td>
<td>E♭-C♯</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Average</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.36</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.57</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Composite</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A♭-D♯</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8-7.3 Chromaticism in Gesualdo’s Libro Terzo (1595)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Gamut Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voi volete ch’io mora – Moro o non moro</td>
<td>c1−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-G#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahi, disperata vita</td>
<td>c1−♭-A</td>
<td>F♯-C#</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languisco e moro</td>
<td>g2−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del bel de’ bei vostri occhi</td>
<td>g2−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahi, dispietata e crude</td>
<td>g2−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolce spirto d’Amore</td>
<td>g2−♭-F</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sospirava – O mal nati messaggi</td>
<td>g2−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veggio, sì, dal mio sole</td>
<td>c1−♭-A</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non t’amo, o voce ingrate</td>
<td>c1−♭-E</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meraviglia d’Amore – Ed ardo e vivo</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>B♭-G#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crudelissima doglia</td>
<td>c1−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se piange, oimè, la Donna del mio core</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-G#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancidetemi pur, grieve martiri</td>
<td>g2−♭-C</td>
<td>F♯-D#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se vi miro pietosa</td>
<td>c1−♭-F</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deh, se già fu crudele</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolcissimo sospiro</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna, se m’ancidete</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average | 11.29 | 1.53 |
Composite | E♭-D# | 13 |

Table 8-7.4 Chromaticism in Gesualdo’s Libro Terzo (1596)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrigal</th>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Gamut Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luci serene e chiare</td>
<td>g2−♭-F</td>
<td>A♭-C#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall’or sano desio</td>
<td>g2−♭-F</td>
<td>A♭-C#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Io tacerò – Invan dunque o crudele</td>
<td>c1−♭-G</td>
<td>A♭-G#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Che fai meco, mio cor</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questa crudele e pia</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or, che in gioia – O sempre crudo Amore</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>A♭-C#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cor mio – Dunque non m’offendete</td>
<td>c1−♭-E</td>
<td>F♯-D#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparge la morte al mio Signor nel viso</td>
<td>c1−♭-E</td>
<td>B♭-A#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moro – Quando di lui la sospirata vita</td>
<td>c1−♭-G</td>
<td>E♭-C#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentre gira costei</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A voi, mentre il mio core</td>
<td>g2−♭-G</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecco, morìrò – Ahì, già mi discoloro</td>
<td>g2−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arde il mio cor</td>
<td>g2−♭-A</td>
<td>B♭-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se chiudete nel core</td>
<td>g2−♭-C</td>
<td>B♭-G#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il sol, qual or più splende – Volgi, mia luce</td>
<td>g2−♭-C</td>
<td>B♭-G#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average | 11.73 | 4.27 |
Composite | A♭-A# | 15 |
which is an important indicator of thinking in the terms of diatonic collections and modal transposition necessary for chromaticism. These “twelfth steps” also imply that before he arrived to Ferrara in 1594, Gesualdo was possibly acquainted with the surge of chromaticism in northern Italy during the mid- and late-sixteenth century. After all, he was an admirer of Luzzaschi and was likely familiar with his chromatic works such as “Quivi sospiri.”

Still, much like the appearance of modal ordering, the chromaticism in *Libro Quarto* was a historic moment in Gesualdo’s madrigals. The anthology begins with a surprise: set in the ♯-g₂-F tonal type, the first three madrigals have A♭’s unprecedented in Gesualdo’s works. The eighth madrigal set in ♯-c₁-E, in addition, introduces Gesualdo’s first A#. Thus, *Libro Quarto* expands Gesualdo’s compositional gamut one step further in each direction along the circle of fifths, resulting in fifteen pitch classes. Regarding individual pieces, out of the fifteen madrigals two utilize thirteen pitch classes on their own and are thus “enharmonically chromatic.”

Besides tonal adventures on the structural level as reflected in the gamuts, the use of chromatic semitones further distinguishes *Libro Quarto* from *Libro Terzo* as well as from *Libri Primo* and *Secundo*. On average, each madrigal from *Libro Terzo* has no more than two chromatic semitones. This number is even smaller in *Libri Primo* and *Secundo* but almost tripled to more than four in *Libro Quarto*. Two madrigals from *Libro Quarto* have chromatic semitones in the melody, and another has nine. In comparison, the most melodically chromatic madrigal from *Libro Terzo* has a mere six, while *Libri Primo* and *Secundo* have almost no melodic chromaticism.
Thus, instead of grouping *Libri Terzo* and *Quarto* as pair or even labeling all the four books published before 1600 as his “early works,” I suggest that Gesualdo’s three years in Ferrara from 1594 to 1597 saw a major change in his madrigal style. First, whereas none of *Libri Primo*, *Secundo*, or *Terzo* is modally ordered, *Libro Quarto* not only presents a convincing modal ordering but also plays with the difference between different modal numberings. Second, Gesualdo’s musical language in *Libro Quarto* is noticeably more chromatic than in the first three books. The expansion of the gamut into the more daring territories of A♭ and A♯, the first appearance of enharmonic chromaticism in an individual piece, and the surge of chromatic semitones suggest *Libro Quarto* as the first volume reflecting Gesualdo’s interest in extreme chromaticism.

The coincidence between an increased interest in modal ordering and an intensified chromatic language is not particular to the transition between *Libro Terzo* and *Quarto*, however. Whereas Finscher notices that Gesualdo’s most chromatic books of madrigals, *Libri Quinto* and *Sesto* are also modally ordered, I emphasize that as Gesualdo’s madrigals became more and more chromatic, the modal ordering of his anthologies also became more and more exact. The comparison of Tables 8-7.4 and 8-1.1 shows the most evident escalation of chromaticism in Gesualdo’s books of madrigals between *Libro Quarto* (1596) and *Libro Quinto* (1611). The composite gamut expands by two pitches on both the sharp and flat sides. The average gamut of each individual madrigal increases from less than twelve pitch classes to almost fourteen pitch classes. The average number of chromatic semitones is more than doubled.
Meanwhile, Table 8-8 shows that the intensified chromaticism is accompanied by
a refinement in modal ordering.\textsuperscript{32} The ascending modal order in \textit{Libro Quarto} is
imperfect. In a modally ordered anthology, tonal types representing the authentic version
of a mode usually come before those representing its plagal counterpart in compliance
with the numbering. This convention is upheld in \textit{Libro Quarto} except when it comes to
the two Dorian modes: a madrigal set in $b$-$c_1$-$G$ representing Hypodorian anticipates the
two $b$-$g_2$-$G$ pieces representing authentic Dorian. In addition, another $b$-$c_1$-$G$ madrigal
interrupts the procession from the two Phrygian-representing pieces set in $\sharp$-$c_1$-$E$ to the
two Mixolydian ones set in $\sharp$-$g_2$-$G$. In comparison, the modal ordering of \textit{Libro Quinto} is

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Ordering of Madrigals in Gesualdo’s \textit{Libro Quinto} (1611)}
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|l|}
\hline
Madrigal & Clefing & System & Final & Mode \\
\hline
Gioite voi col canto & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $b$ & $G$ & Dorian \\
S’io non miro non moro & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $b$ & $G$ & Dorian \\
Itene, o miei sospiri & $g_2$-$g_2$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $b$ & $G$ & Dorian \\
Dolcissima mia vita & $g_2$-$g_2$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $b$ & $G$ & Dorian \\
O dolorosa gioia & $c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $b$ & $G$ & Hypodorian \\
Qual fora, donna & $c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $b$ & $G$ & Hypodorian \\
Felicissimo sonno & $c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $b$ & $G$ & Hypodorian \\
Se vi duol io mio duolo & $c_1$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $\sharp$ & $E$ & Phrygian \\
Occhi del mio cor vita & $c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $\sharp$ & $E$ & Phrygian \\
Languisce al fin & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $\sharp$ & $E$ & Hypophrygian \\
Mercè grido piangendo & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $\sharp$ & $E$ & Hypophrygian \\
O voi, o voi troppo felici & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $\sharp$ & $G$ & Mixolydian \\
Corrente, amanti, a prova & $c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $\sharp$ & $D$ & Aeolian \\
Asciugate I beglio occhi & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $\sharp$ & $A$ & Aeolian \\
Tu m’uccidi, o crudele & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $\sharp$ & $A$ & Aeolian \\
Deh, copirate il bel seno & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $\sharp$ & $A$ & Aeolian \\
Poichè l’avid sete – Ma tu, cagion & $c_1$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $\sharp$ & $C, A$ & Hypoaeolian \\
O tenebroso giorno & $c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$c_4$-$f_4$ & $\sharp$ & $A$ & Hypoaeolian \\
Se tu fuggi, io non resto & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $b$ & $F$ & Ionian \\
T’amo mia vita & $g_2$-$c_1$-$c_2$-$c_3$-$f_3$ & $b$ & $G$ & (Dorian) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{32} Table 8-8 is created based on the transcription and information from Gesualdo di
Venosa, \textit{Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen nach dem Partiturdruck von 1613, Fünftes Buch}. 
devoid of such irregularities. Each piece takes its appropriate place except for the last
madrigal set in ♭c₁-G, which, like the last piece in Libro Sesto, does not belong to the
modal sequence.

The ambiguity in Libro Quarto about which numbering of the twelve modes
Gesualdo adopts persists in Libro Quinto. Admittedly, the seven ♭-G madrigals at the
beginning of Libro Quinto seem to suggest that Gesualdo completely forsakes Zarlino’s
modal reform and declares himself a follower of Glarean. At the end of the modal
sequence, after four Aeolian-representing pieces in ♮A, however, there is only one
madrigal representing Ionian. It is set in the ♭g₂-F tonal type, which appeared at the
beginning of Libro Quarto. The other Ionian tonal type ♮C featured at the end of Libro
Quarto, on the other hand, is absent from Libro Quinto. The scarcity of ♭-F and ♮-C tonal
types in Libro Quinto is unique in all Gesualdo’s books of madrigals. It is thus unlikely
that the exceptional modal ordering in Libro Quinto did not occur to Gesualdo until after
he composed all the madrigals. This means that the modal ordering in Libro Quinto, just
as that of Libro Quarto and Libro Sesto, likely arose from Gesualdo’s precompositional
decisions.

It is in the even more chromatic Libro Sesto that Gesualdo finally seems to have
made up his mind about the Ionian modes. At the end of the anthology (again excluding
the last madrigal) there are five pieces representing the Ionian modes: two in ♭g₂-F for
authentic Ionian, and three in ♮g₂-C for Hypoionian. The much healthier size of pieces
representing Ionian at the end of Libro Sesto indicates that Gesualdo at last decided to
forsake Zarlino’s new numbering and to fully embrace Glarean’s and Zarlino’s old
numbering.
The spectacle of modal ordering in *Libro Sesto* does not stop at the Ionian solution, however. With the two F-final madrigals between the ♮-E and ♮-G pieces Gesualdo reaches the perfection of dodecachordon modal ordering: incorporating the real Lydian mode. Before *Libro Sesto*, there was not a single piece that represents any of the two Lydian modes in Gesualdo’s modally ordered books of madrigals. Indeed, these two modes are tricky in the dodecachordon modal system. In the octonary system, composers such as Rore, Lasso, and Palestrina uses ♭-F tonal types, and occasionally their transposition, the ♮-C tonal types, to represent the Lydian modes. Such a strategy would not work under the twelve-mode system. As discussed in Chapter Three, the main reason of Glarean’s expansion of the octonary modal system into the dodecachordon was to correct what he saw as mistakes in treating pieces set in ♭-F and ♮-C (and also in ♭-D and ♮-A). Based on dodecachordon theory, the ♭-F and ♮-C tonal types no longer represent the Lydian modes but instead the two Ionian modes, which Gesualdo had been following since *Libro Quarto*.

In order to be distinguished from Ionian, authentic Lydian and Hypolydian modes should be represented by ♮-F types in *cantus durus* or ♭-B♭ in *cantus mollis*. The three ♭-g₂-B♭ madrigals at the end of *Libro Secundo* would be perfect candidates, although given the non-modal context of *Libro Secundo* it is unclear whether Gesualdo intended them to represent any mode. In fact, in the sixteenth century pieces set in ♮-F and ♭-B♭ tonal types are extremely rare. As I have shown in Chapter Four, throughout his entire life Rore set only two pieces in ♮-F tonal types and none at all in ♭-B♭. The augmented fourth above the final makes it difficult to compose in ♮-F and ♭-B♭. Such difficulty explains
why since as early as the fourteenth century F-final pieces were almost always set in $b$-F whose $B\flat$ guarantees a perfect fourth above the final.

Gesualdo’s setting of two madrigals in the $\sharp-g_2$-F tonal type to represent the real authentic Lydian mode in *Libro Sesto* is thus unusual. Although it is unclear whether the two $\sharp-g_2$-F madrigals were planned beforehand or added to the sequence later, in *Libro Sesto* Gesualdo certainly cared much more about representing the dodecachordon system in its entirety than he seems to have in *Libri Quarto* and *Quinto*. So much, indeed, that he appears to have added the Lydian for completion. The use of the obscure tonal type $\sharp-g_2$-F instead of the more conventional $b$-F or $\sharp$-$C$ further indicates Gesualdo’s knowledge of the subtle difference between these in addition to his steadfast adherence to the dodecachordon system.

Revisiting Watkins’s problematic remarks quoted above draws a curious comparison between Rore and Gesualdo. Both composers have a distinctive publication hiatus in their biography: Rore from 1549-1557, and Gesualdo from 1596-1611 (except for two collections of sacred motets published in 1603). Over these periods, the degree of chromaticism notably increased in the works of both composers. Nevertheless, in spite of the historic legacy of his *Primo Libro* (1542), Rore completely abandoned modal ordering after the 1550s. Gesualdo, in contrast, freshly adopted the idea of modal ordering in *Libro Quarto* and continued to perfect the dodecachordon ordering in his later two collections.

I contend that the simultaneous climaxes of modal ordering and chromaticism in *Libro Sesto* are not a sheer coincidence. Rather, composed after Gesualdo’s second
marriage to Eleonora d’Este, Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals witnessed another marriage: that between mode and chromaticism through the match-making of tonal types.

The connection between mode and tonal type gradually strengthened in Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals. Here, again, Rore can serve as a counterexample. I have shown in Chapter Five that Rore’s chromatic adventures after 1550 arose not only from the mimetic use of interval affects and chromatic semitones but also from the increasingly insightful treatment of the modal species or what Frans Wiering calls an internal view of the modes. That a deeper compositional engagement with the modes and their interval species coincides with the abandonment of modal ordering reflects Rore’s understanding of the nature of modal representation. To be sure, ordering the pieces of an anthology in an ascending modal order in which each mode is represented by certain tonal types was a widespread practice in the sixteenth century and is usually nothing but a game of labels. In such an anthology, the modal identity of a piece depends not on its actual musical content but on its musical outlook: tonal system, clefing, and final sonority, together make up its tonal type. As Harold Powers has shown, a tonal type does not have an inherent modal ascription and may be used to represent different modes. Inversely, the same mode may be represented by varying tonal types.\(^{33}\)

What mode a tonal type represents depends on the context of modal ordering in the particular anthology. In other words, the modal identity of a tonal type is more or less a meaningless label attached externally to a piece regardless of its musical content. Therefore, as Rore explored modal species and chromaticism in the musical content of his pieces, he probably considered the modal representations of tonal types superficial.

and insubstantial. Such an attitude necessarily facilitated his disengagement with modal ordering based on tonal types.

As for Gesualdo, even though he consciously composed madrigals of Libro Sesto for a dodecachordon sequence using almost exclusively the g2-f3 clefing, this precompositional decision might have implications only for the appearance of the volume and might mean little for the sound of its music. In particular, given the rarity of ♯-F and the natural tendency to flat B♭s in F-final pieces, it is not unlikely that, in order to represent the obscure Lydian mode, Gesualdo would have composed four madrigals in ♯-g2-F but taken away the ♯ signature from two of them simply as a visual representation of their Lydian mode, which is practice would sound like Ionian. That is, “♯-g2-F” could just be a label of sorts. Regardless of how the music sounds, this tonal type fulfills its function of representing Lydian as long as it is visually distinguishable from the Ionian-representing “♭-g2-F.”

Significantly, this is not the case in Gesualdo’s Libro Sesto. Both ♯-g2-F madrigals truly deserve their “♯-g2-F” tonal types and “authentic Lydian” representation by the virtue of their music. Gesualdo does not avoid the problematic B♯ that is dissonant with the final F but emphasizes it as the defining step of Lydian’s species of fifth (T-T-T-S) in differentiation of Ionian’s (T-T-S-T). As a result, there are only three B♭’s throughout the entire “Alme d’Amor rubella” and two in “Candido e verde fiore.” Furthermore, in the two ♯-g2-F madrigals, the frequent B♭-major and occasional E♭-major triads reflect the structural importance of B♭ in F-Ionian’s species of fifth. This contrasts with the two Lydian-representing madrigals, in which E-major and E-minor triads uphold the integrity of B♯ that determines the madrigals’ modal identity.
The close musical relation between ♮-g₂-F and authentic Lydian is not unique to Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals. In fact, in each of Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals, there is a one-to-tone connection between tonal types and modes; the only exception being that the authentic Aeolian mode in Libro Quinto is represented by both ♮-g₂-A and ♭-c₁-D. Moreover, putting all the fifty-six madrigals together, these one-to-one connections still hold true, excluding Hypodorian, which ♭-c₁-G represents in Libri Quarto and Quinto but ♮-g₂-D represent in Libro Sesto probably to keep the g₂-f₃ clefing. Unlike in Lasso’s modally ordered Lagrime di San Pietro, in Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals there is not a single case in which two tonal types that are not mutually transformable through transpositions represent the same mode, nor is there any tonal type that represents more than one mode.

The coexistence of a Lydian outlook and a Lydian musical content in the two ♮-g₂-F madrigals and the one-to-one connections between modes and tonal types indicate that for Gesualdo a tonal type no longer serves as an empty label. The modal identity of the tonal types in Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals are less externally ascribed but more internally predetermined. Given the reliable one-to-one connections between tonal types and modes in these books of madrigals, I propose referring to these tonal types as “modal keys.” As in common-practice tonality, the term “key” entails a specific and relatively fixed body of tonal and harmonic expectations. In context of Gesualdo’s late madrigals, the concept of “modal keys” implies that through its visual parameters—key signature, clefing, and final—a piece’s tonal type is a sign that not only represents a mode but also reflects, and to some extent predicts, how the composer works with the

34 This excludes the final madrigals in Libri Quinto and Sesto, which as argued do not belong to the modal orderings.
interval species of the represented mode as well. The Lydian “key” /modal mode as well. The Lydian “key” ♮-g2-F, for example, determines that in “Alme d’Amor rubella” and “Candido e verde fiore” Gesualdo should not be avoiding the B♮ but instead working with it.

As the ties between tonal type and mode strengthened over *Libro Quarto* to *Libro Sesto*, so did the connection between tonal types and chromaticism. Supplementing the list in Table 8-1.2, Table 8-9 calculates the average values of the chromatic parameters of each tonal type in *Libro Sesto*: the composite gamut of the type, and average number of pitch classes in each individual piece, and the average number of chromatic semitones.35

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Comp. Gamut</th>
<th>Comp. Size</th>
<th>Ave. Gamut Size</th>
<th>Ave. Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g2-♮-A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A♭-A♯</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1-♮-A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B♭-E♯</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♮-A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A♭-E♯</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1-b-D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>D♭-A♯</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g2-♮-E</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>D♭-B♯</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>19.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1-♮-E</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A♭-A♯</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♮-E</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>D♭-B♯</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.25</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g2-b-F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>D♭-D♯</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g2-♭-G</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B♭-A♯</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g2-b-G</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>G♭-E♯</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>16.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1-b-G</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>D♭-D♯</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♮-G</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>G♭-E♯</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>10.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>G♭-B♯</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison across all the madrigals suggests that their varying degrees of chromaticism result from several factors. One may argue that it is the interval species of the Phrygian modes that unsurprisingly make ♮-E a theatre for chromatic experiment. In Chapters Three and Four I have demonstrated that the unique *mi-fa* semitone above E-Phrygian’s modal final makes it especially susceptible to tonal adventures and

35 Table 8-9 is created based on the transcription and information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen nach dem Partiturdruck von 1613, Sechstes Buch*, excluding the last and modally out of place madrigal, “T’amo, mia vita.”
chromaticism. The similarity between ♭-g₂-G and ♮-g₂-G in terms of chromaticism makes one wonder if their final G plays a bigger role than the two distinct sets of interval species, however. Indeed, while G is a re step in the formal type but ut in the latter, pieces in the two tonal types have not only comparable averages but also similar gamuts that explore both sides of the circle of fifths with equal conviction. On the other hand, both Dorian ♭-g₂-G and Hypodorian ♮-g₂-D types, which have exactly the same species of fifth and fourth, accompany fairly chromatic pieces. There is still a slight but consistent difference between the two types, however: in every chromatic parameter, for some reason the two ♮-g₂-D madrigals always fall behind the three ♭-g₂-G ones. Such difference may point to the different ways in which the same species of fifth and fourth are combined (authentic or plagal) or the different tonal systems into which they are transposed. The same can be said of the authentic Ionian ♭-g₂-F and Hypoionian ♮-g₂-C, whose chromatic adventures, while unimpressive, are nevertheless mutually distinguishable.

Comparable phenomena are also observable in Libro Quinto, Libro Sesto’s twin both in chronology and in chromaticism (Tables 8-1.1 and 8-10). As in Libro Sesto, the authentic Dorian type ♭-g₂-G accompanies some of the most chromatic madrigals of the anthology. Its plagal pair ♭-c₁-G is much less impressive, with notably fewer semitones and commonplace gamuts. In contrast, in the four ♮-E madrigals it is the plagal Phrygian type ♮-g₂-E that trumps the authentic Phrygian ♮-c₁-E especially in the number of chromatic semitones. In fact, a comparison of the ♭-G and ♮-E madrigals in Libro Quinto

36 Table 8-10 is created based on the transcription and information from Gesualdo di Venosa, Sämtliche Madrigale für Fünf Stimmen nach dem Partitursdruck von 1613, Fünftes Buch, excluding the last and modally out of place madrigal, “Quando ridente e bella.”
may even suggest that the clefing, regardless of its authentic or plagal implications, is related to how chromaticism plays out in a piece.

Understanding how each factor affects the chromatic outcome of a piece requires extensive analysis of Gesualdo’s late madrigals. In the end, however, all the factors that seem to have an influence—tonal system, final, clefing, authentic or plagal voicing, and modal species—are expressed through one single agent: the tonal type. The data for Libro Sesto especially show consistent connections between each individual tonal type and chromaticism. They reveal that madrigals set in the F-final types, $\#$-$g_2$-$F$ and $b$-$g_2$-$F$ alike, tend not to be very chromatic. They suggest that the two G-final types, $b$-$g_2$-$G$ and $\#$-$g_2$-$G$, and the two E-final types, $\#$-$c_1$-$E$ and $\#$-$g_2$-$E$, are the most chromatic types. Thus it is not a surprise that these four types together make up almost half of the anthology. Two of the remaining types, $\#$-$g_2$-$D$, $\#$-$g_2$-$A$, are also fairly chromatic, with $\#$-$g_2$-$C$ somewhat less so. These observations generally hold true among madrigals in Libro Quinto, especially with the remarkable chromaticism in $b$-$g_2$-$G$, $\#$-$c_1$-$E$, and $\#$-$g_2$-$A$ tonal types and with their co-final types to a lesser degree. In fact, even in Libro Quarto where Gesualdo’s extreme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Comp. Gamut</th>
<th>Comp. Size</th>
<th>Ave. Gamut Size</th>
<th>Ave. Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$#$-$A$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Db-E$#$</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>12.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$#$-$C$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Eb-E$#$</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$b$-$D$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eb-E$#$</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$#$-$E$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ab-B$#$</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$c_1$-$#$-$E$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Db-E$#$</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$#$-$E$</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$D#$-$B#$</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.80</td>
<td>12.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$#$-$F$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eb-D$#$</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$b$-$F$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eb-C$#$</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$#$-$G$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Db-E$#$</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g_2$-$b$-$G$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cb-E$#$</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>18.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>$C#$-$B#$</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.45</td>
<td>9.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
chromaticism was still in its embryonic period, the most chromatic madrigals carry ♭-G or ♮-E tonal types (Table 8-7.4). Considering the consistent relationship between tonal type and chromaticism, in Gesualdo’s Libro Sesto and similarly in Libri Quarto and Quinto, I propose yet another name for tonal types: “chromatic keys.” Like “modal keys,” the concept of “chromatic keys” implies that a piece’s tonal type represents, reflects, and predicts how Gesualdo works with chromaticism within it.

Therefore, the simultaneous increase of modal ordering and chromaticism in Gesualdo’s last three books of madrigals transformed the tonal types. During this process Gesualdo gradually formed compositional habits surrounding his most frequently used tonal types so that they gained specific and relatively stable musical meanings. Tonal types in Gesualdo’s last publications were no longer mere labels but “modal chromatic keys.” It was probably these “keys” that Gesualdo had in mind when he laid out the modal ordering of tonal types at the precompositional stage and when he was in the process of composing individual madrigals for this ordering master plan. For many others like Rore and Lasso tonal types only fulfill their functions of modal representation on the outlook. For Gesualdo, on the other hand, they become “modal chromatic keys” and translate the surficial identities into actual music where they determine how modal species and chromaticism should play out in the actual music. It is the conception of “modal chromatic keys,” in addition, that united mode and chromaticism, two completely different traditions, into a singular musical marriage.

**Sorting out the Mystery of Time**
The trajectories of modal ordering, chromaticism, and “modal chromatic keys” in Gesualdo’s fourth, fifth, and sixth books of madrigals elucidate Gesualdo’s late period. The mystery of his final years spent mostly in seclusion pertains not only to witchcraft, domestic crisis, death of a son, sadomasochism, and presumed madness, but also to the lengthy hiatus between his Libri Quarto and Quinto. After the ducal press at Ferrara published Libro Quarto in 1596 and Gesualdo arrived home with his new family in 1597, it would be another fifteen years before Gesualdo would publish another set of madrigals. When Gesualdo did resurface in the madrigal market, however, he brought with him seventy-two works. Forty-three of them are five-voice madrigals from Libri Quinto and Sesto, and the other twenty-nine are from his six-voice settings of Tenebrae Responsoria for the Holy Week with “Benedictus” and “Miserere mei deus.” All three of these volumes were printed and published in the same year of 1611, two years before his death.

The gap between Libro Quarto and Quinto and the eruption of publications in 1611 contrasts with Gesualdo’s consistently prolific three years in Ferrara when he published four books of madrigals, two of them composed there afresh. It is strange that Libro Quinto and Sesto dragged behind the previous Libro Quarto for so long. One would naturally wonder to what extent patterns of these publication dates reflect Gesualdo’s compositional activities and the development of his style.

The dedications in Libri Quinto and Sesto add to the mystery. The publisher Giovanni Pietro Cappuccio declares that “the world [has] waited for the duration of fifteen years from the time when [these madrigals] were composed.” The composer’s “humble and modest desire” had kept his “rare musical compositions hidden from public applause,” until fraudulent copies started to circulate and triggered Cappuccio to publish
them against Gesualdo’s objection. Perhaps there is no reason other than cynicism to
distrust Cappuccio’s story that the forty-three madrigals from *Libri Quinto* and *Sesto*
were composed as early as in 1596, the same year that *Libro Quarto* was published. But
there is also no reason other than imprudence to believe Cappuccio’s words. If Gesualdo
had been so humble and modest that for fifteen years he had been withholding these
madrigals from public, how could Cappuccio the Neapolitan publisher dare to violate the
Prince’s wish? Indeed, such sycophant dedications are often simply elaborate plays of
rhetoric—or, in colloquial terms, lies. In all likelihood, Cappuccio was acting as
Gesualdo’s mouthpiece. Using such dedications as propaganda was not uncommon
around 1600. Considering Gesualdo’s princely status, in fact, it would be more surprising
had the composer himself appeared in the foreword and accused others of plagiarism.

The only way to determine when Gesualdo composed music for *Libro Quinto* and
*Sesto* as well as the contemporary *Tenebrae Responsoria* is to look at their music. This is
where Gesualdo’s two volumes of motets come into play. Seven years after his return to
the south and eight years before the outpouring of creative activity resulting in the
publications of 1611, Gesualdo issued the two volumes of *Sacrae Cantiones* in 1603, one
for five voices and the other for six (with a final seven-voice piece). Since these thirty-
eight motets were necessarily composed before 1603, they offer another frame of
reference for the dating of *Libri Quinto* and *Quarto* and *Tenebrae Responsoria*.

Fontanelli testified that during his trip back to the south in the second half of 1594,
Gesualdo not only started working on madrigals for his *Libro Terzo* (1595) and *Quarto*
(1596), but also on sacred motets. It is likely that these new motets would eventually
occur in one of the two volumes of 1603. Thus, at least a certain number of motets from

the two volumes Sacrae Cantiones were composed together with madrigals from Libro Terzo and Quarto and may date back to as early as 1594. Since only four parts of Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7 have survived, it is difficult to conceive of a complete picture of this anthology. On the other hand, it appears that the fully extant Sacrae Cantiones a 5 and Libro Quarto are similar in terms of chromaticism. They have virtually the same average number of pitch classes (almost twelve) and chromatic semitones (more than four) per madrigal (Table 8-11).38

Nevertheless, a closer look shows that, compared to Libro Quarto, not only is the chromaticism of Sacrae Cantiones a 5 more “conservative” but also more out of sync with what was to come in Libro Quinto and Sesto. Whereas Libro Quarto has a fifteen-pitch composite gamut from A♭ to A♯, the later Sacrae Cantiones has only thirteen pitch classes in total from E♭ to D♯, which is in fact the same as Libro Terzo. The wider gamut in Libro Quarto is attributable to its more diverse collection of individual gamuts, some leaning in the sharp direction and some in the flat. Those in Sacrae Cantiones a 5, on the other hand, are rather monotonous.

Looking only at chromaticism, it seems as if Sacrae Cantiones a 5 would fall between Libro Terzo and Libro Quarto. Yet the problem of relying on chromaticism for determining the chronological relations between the motet and the madrigal volumes is that traditionally sacred music tended to be much more sparing in its use of chromaticism than secular works. Although Lasso’s “Timor et tremor” and “Concupiscendo concupiscit” are both chromatic settings of psalm texts, as I have shown in Chapter Five Lasso

38 Table 8-11 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, Sacrae Cantiones für Fünf Stimmen, Nach den Stimmbüchern des Don Giovanni Pietro Cappuccio, Glenn E. Watkins ed. (Hamburg, Germany: Ugrino Verlag, 1962).
reserved chromaticism only for religious texts that invoke an intense meditative experience. As a result, almost all of Lasso’s gigantic sacred output is purely diatonic.

Neither did Rore or Marenzio employ chromaticism in their sacred works. With the D#s and thirteen-pitch gamuts in Sacrae Cantiones a 5 Gesualdo was already a pioneer in sacred chromaticism. Still, comparing the chromaticism in his motets restricted by their sacred nature to that in the secular Libro Quarto is of little value in determining chronology.

Whereas chromaticism is unreliable when dealing with sacred and secular music at the same time, modal ordering, a practice frequent in both sacred and secular music, might prove helpful in the case of Gesualdo. As Table 8-12 shows, the ordering of the
motets in Sacrae Cantiones a 5 greatly resembles that of Libro Sesto. While all but two madrigals of Libro Sesto are set in the g2-f3 clefing, Sacrae Cantiones a 5 is exactly the opposite: all but two motets are set in the c1-f4 clefing. In addition, both the two ♮-c1-E pieces from Libro Sesto and the two ♮-g2-A pieces from Sacrae Cantiones a 5 interrupt the uniform clefing of their respective anthologies for the sake of differentiating an authentic mode from its plagal counterpart. Furthermore, in order to represent the authentic Dorian and authentic Phyrigan modes, in Sacrae Cantiones a 5 Gesualdo does not use the more common ♮-g2-G or ♮-g2-E tonal types featured in all of Libri Quarto, Quinto, and Sesto. Instead, he opts for two less frequented types: ♮-c1-D for authentic Dorian and ♮-c1-A for

Table 8-12 Ordering of Motets in Gesualdo’s Sacrae Cantiones a 5 (1603)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motet</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ave, Regina coelorum</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venit lumen tuum</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ave, dulcissima Maria</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminiscere miserationum tuarum</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dignare me, laudare te</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domine, corda nostra</td>
<td>c1-c3-c3-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypodorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domine, ne despicias</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Phyrigian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hei mihi, Domine</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Phyrigian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboravi in gemitu meo</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peccantem me quotidie</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O vos omnes</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Hypophrygian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exaudi, Deus</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypomixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precibus et meritis beatae Mariae</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Hypomixolydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Crux benedicta</td>
<td>g2-c1-c3-c3-f3</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribularer si nescirem</td>
<td>g2-c1-c3-c3-f3</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aeolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deus refugium</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Hypoaolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribulationem et dolorem inveni</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Hypoaolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illumina faciem tuam</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria, mater gratiae</td>
<td>c1-c3-c4-c4-f4</td>
<td>♮</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hypoionian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39 Table 8-12 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, Sacrae Cantiones für Fünf Stimmen, Nach den Stimmbüchern des Don Giovanni Pietro Cappuccio.
authentic Phrygian. These atypical choices of types indicate Gesualdo’s conscious efforts to use the c1-f4 clefing. ♮-g2-D in Libro Sesto, which Gesualdo rarely used, serves the same purpose. In contrast, Libri Quarto and Quinto, as I have shown, do not suggest Gesualdo’s deliberate attempt at a uniform clefing.

Unlike Libro Quarto, in Sacrae Cantiones a 5 Gesualdo unambiguously embraces Glarean’s and Zarlino’s old numbering, starting with D-Dorian and ending with A-Aeolian and C-Ionian. One may argue that the two Ionian-representing ♭-c1-F motets at the end of the volume are still rather timid compared to the two ♭-g2-F and three ♮-g2-C madrigals at the end of Libro Sesto. One may even suggest that in this regard Sacrae Cantiones is more like Libro Quinto in which Gesualdo seems to avoid the fight between old and new modal numberings by composing only one madrigal representing the Ionian mode. I observe, however, that in Libro Quinto the presence of the Ionian mode and its ♭-g2-F representative is not only small in number but also dwarfed by the presence of all the other modes. There are eight ♭-G madrigals representing the two Dorian modes. Sacrae Cantiones, on the other hand, has a more balanced composition in which not a single mode, tonal type, or final-system combination appear to dominate. In this way, although the two ♭-c1-F motets do not impose an especially strong presence, they are enough to demonstrate Gesualdo’s anchorage in the old modal numbering. The employment of the old numbering and the uniform clefing in Sacrae Cantiones a 5 strongly suggest that this motet volume is chronologically closer to Libro Sesto than is either Libro Quarto or Libro Quinto. They also indicate that Gesualdo probably planned out this perfect modal ordering (except for the missing Lydian) before he finished composing the motets.
The real ordering surprise occurs in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7*. Although only four parts survived and Glenn Watkins’s edition does not provide information of original clefings, it is possible to recreate the musical outlook of the anthology. The tonal system is marked in every extant voice, the final sonority can be induced from the available voices, and clefings may be determined by both looking at the ranges of the top voice and at Watkins’s modern clefs.

What Table 8-13 reveals is a perfectly regular and balanced ordering of tonal types similar to that in *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* and *Libro Sesto* and unlike that in *Libro Quarto* or *Libro Quinto*.40 In addition, *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* also uses predominantly

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40 Table 8-13 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, *Sacrae Cantiones für Sechs und Sieben Stimmen, Nach den Stimmbüchern des Don Giovanni Pietro*.
the c₁-f₄ clefing, although, with four pieces in g₂-f₃, the clefing is not as consistent as it is in *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* or *Libro Sesto*. The resemblance between *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* and the simultaneously published *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* as well as *Libro Sesto* suggests that the former, just like the latter two, was likely modally planned out before Gesualdo finished composing the motets.

In terms of the numbering of the modes, it might seem that Gesualdo is using neither the new nor the old numbering of the dodecachordon modal system in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7*. Were he using the new numbering, the anthology should not begin with ♮-c₁-D motets representing authentic Dorian. Were he using the old numbering, the two Hypoionian ♭-c₁-F pieces should come after the three Hypoaeolian ♮-c₁-A motets. I argue, however, that the reverse of Ionian and Aeolian in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* indicates that at the time of this ordering Gesualdo had just begun to embrace Glarean’s and Zarlino’s old numbering. The essential difference between the old and new numberings is that, while the new numbering orders the modes according to the *cantus naturalis deductio*, the old numbering begins with the “old” modes and finishes with the four “new” modes. By not bothering with the right order of Aeolian and Ionian, the ordering in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* seems to declare that what is unique about the old numbering is the distinction between the traditional and the innovative however one arranges the two groups among themselves. The eager emphasis on the rationale behind Glarean’s and Zarlino’s old numbering suggests that Gesualdo could have just come to

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*Cappuccio von 1603*, Glenn E. Watkins ed. (Hamburg, Germany: Ugrino Verlag, 1961). In his edition, Watkins does not provide any clefing information for any individual motet of *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* except for the first one. All clefing types are induced judging from the ranges of the extant top voice.

41 Although the Bassus part is not known to have survived, given the c₁ clefing in the top voice, f₄ is the most feasible clefing for Bassus.
understand it. In this way, *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* constitutes the first anthology in which Gesualdo asserted Glarean’s and Zarlino’s old numbering of the twelve modes. The new adoption of the old numbering indicates that *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* should have come after the ambiguous *Libro Quarto* and the timid *Libro Quinto*, but before *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* and *Libro Sesto*, which restore Aeolian and Ionian modes to their proper placements.

The last five motets in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* are particularly important in this respect. Specifically, the sixteenth and seventeenth motets are set in ♮-g2-F. This is, by publication dates, the first time ever that Gesualdo used this particular tonal type that would represent the real Lydian and finally complete the dodecachordon sequence in *Libro Sesto*. Here in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7*, however, it remains unclear whether Gesualdo intends the ♮-g2-F motets to represent the Lydian mode. As a matter of fact, based on their placement, it is as if the two ♮-g2-F pieces were representing the authentic Ionian mode, the correct form of which would be ♭-g2-F. After the two Mixolydian modes, *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* features two ♭-c1-F motets representing Hypoionian and three ♮-c1-A pieces standing for Hypoaeolian. What follow and conclude the modal sequence are none but the two ♮-g2-F motets followed by two in ♭-c1-D. The last motet falls outside the sequence because it is the only seven-voice piece in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* and it has an odd voicing that features four baritone or bass voices; without it *Sacrae Cantiones a 6* would have nineteen motets in total, the same number as its five-voice twin.

Since the two ♭-c1-D motets appear to represent the authentic counterpart of ♮-c1-A’s Hypoaeolian, it would follow that the ♮-g2-F pieces should represent that of ♭-c1-F’s
Hypoionian. But this is improbable since Gesualdo had known what sets the Ionian modes and the real Lydian modes apart ever since the first time he organized an anthology according to the dodecachordon modal order. The Ionian modes he only represents by ♭-F or ♮-C types, and the Lydian modes he consciously avoids representing until he dared to compose two madrigals in ♮-g2-F for *Libro Sesto*. To a certain extent the ♭-c1-D tonal type shares the same story. Since in *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* Gesualdo understood that ♭-c1-G is the plagal version of ♮-c1-D and ♭-c1-A the plagal version of ♮-c1-E, in the simultaneously published *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* he would know that ♭-c1-D is the plagal version of ♮-c1-A. Perhaps it is the distinctive voicing and clefing that separate the final motet in ♮-A from its Aeolian compatriots, the two ♮-c1-A motets. Yet why did Gesualdo also leave the two ♭-c1-D pieces hanging awkwardly at the end by themselves? These two motets are normally voiced and clefed and could perfectly represent the authentic Aeolian mode.

I suggest that nonmusical circumstances prevented Gesualdo from putting the two ♮-g2-F motets and the two ♭-c1-D motets at their appropriate positions as representatives of the authentic Lydian and Aeolian modes. It appears then that these four motets, along with the final seven-voice one, were composed and added to the anthology a while after the other pieces had been completed in a fairly coherent modal sequence. This addition must have taken place quite near 1603 and necessarily after *Sacrae Cantions a 5* was finished, since neither ♮-g2-F nor any Lydian-representing tonal type made its way into *Sacrae Cantiones a 5*.

The above examinations of the two volumes of *Sacrae Cantiones* allow me to suggest a chronology for all of Gesualdo’s publications published after 1596 except
Tenebrae Responsoria, which I will discuss later. An important part of my reasoning is that the modal ordering in both volumes of Sacrae Cantiones, as in Libro Quinto and Libro Sesto, was decided by Gesualdo himself before he finished composing all the pieces. Since I have shown that Sacrae Cantiones a 5 is chronologically closer to Libro Sesto than is Libro Quarto or Libro Quinto, and since the Lydian tonal type ♯F in Libro Sesto did not yet appear in Sacrae Cantiones a 5, it is safe to date Sacrae Cantiones a 5 before Libro Sesto yet after both Libro Quarto and Libro Quinto. It follows that, since Sacrae Cantiones a 5 was necessarily finished by 1603, the same can be said of Libro Quinto in spite of its much later publication date in 1611.

Meanwhile, since the modal sequence of the first fifteen motets in Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7 already attested to Gesualdo’s commitment to Glarean’s and Zarlino’s old numbering of the twelve modes, it necessarily comes after Libri Quarto and Quinto in which Gesualdo appears to be uncertain whether the Ionian modes should come first or last. These fifteen motets had to come before Sacrae Cantiones a 5 and Libro Sesto, nonetheless, because Gesualdo reverses the Ionian and Aeolian pieces, an irregularity that he would correct later in Sacrae Cantiones a 5 and Libro Sesto. On the other hand, because of their exclusion from the modal sequence, which seem to be explainable only by extramusical factors, the sixteenth to nineteenth motets of Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7 as well as the final seven-voice piece would seem to have been composed and added near the 1603 publication date after both motet volumes were already or at least mostly completed. This indicates a significant interval between the first fifteen and last five motets in Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7, during which Gesualdo would plan out and work on Sacrae Cantiones a 5.
Consequently, *Libro Quinto* would seem to date from before Gesualdo began to conceive the first fifteen motets and their modal sequence in *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7*. Since there are only at most seven years between the publication of *Libro Quarto* in 1596 and the two motet volumes in 1603, and since these seven years had to accommodate thirty-nine motets and probably as many as twenty madrigals, Gesualdo might have started to work on *Libro Quinto* as soon as *Libro Quarto* went to the ducal press in Ferrara. Therefore, Pietro Cappuccio does not appear to have been lying when he claimed in 1611 that Gesualdo composed the madrigals in *Libro Quinto* as early as fifteen years ago.

What about *Libro Sesto*, which Cappuccio also declared as coming from the late 1590s? Admittedly, the deliberate incorporation of two ♭-g₂-F madrigals suggests that *Libro Sesto* could not have been finished in its current version before the addition of the two ♭-g₂-F motets to *Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7* in 1603. Still, it is possible that Gesualdo started working on part of the anthology before he began writing ♭-F pieces. Indeed, the comparable regularity and balance of their modal orderings and their uniform yet mutually complementary clefings suggest treating *Libro Sesto* and *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* as a pair. Thus, although Cappuccio was likely exaggerating when he stated that madrigals from *Libro Sesto* date back to 1596, it is likely that many or even most of its madrigals were composed around the time or shortly after Gesualdo published the two motet volumes in 1603.

**Looking Back and Looking Beyond in *Tenebrae Responsoria***
The above attempts to date Gesualdo’s post-1596 publications suggest two distinctive styles during the eight years from 1596 to 1603: one manifest in *Libri Quarto* and *Quinto* that both date back to the mid and late 1590s, and the other in the secular *Libro Sesto* and sacred *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* and *a 6 e 7* that center around 1603.

Although I have been relying mainly on modal ordering to sort out the chronology of these anthologies, the perfection of dodecachordon ordering and adoption of the old numbering are not the only factors demarcating these two styles. In addition, Gesualdo’s practice of the “modal chromatic keys” also changed between these two styles. As I have shown, the concept of “modal chromatic keys” began with *Libri Quarto* and *Quinto* where Gesualdo gradually established ♭-G, ♮-E, and to a lesser degree ♮-A as not only his favorite but also the most chromatic tonal types. Though in *Libro Sesto* these three types remain among the most chromatic “keys,” the volume already showed signs of departure from their established usages, as Gesualdo started to use new tonal types and explore the chromatic potential of previously unimpressive ones. Besides the historic appearances of ♮-g2-F representing the authentic Lydian mode, in *Libro Sesto* Gesualdo also experiments with the chromatic potentials of ♮-G, ♮-D, and even ♮-C tonal types, whose Ionian companion ♭-F remains largely diatonic throughout Gesualdo’s output. The ♮-D tonal types, in addition, have only appeared once before in Gesualdo’s *Libro Secundo* dating back to before 1594, but they appear twice in *Libro Sesto*, both times with remarkable chromaticism that rivals that of the ♭-G pieces.

Probably because of their sacred content, which warrants distinction from that of the madrigal collections, the two volumes of *Sacrae Cantiones* went even farther in rejecting the established “modal chromatic keys.” Similarly to the chronologically
proximate *Libro Sesto*, both motet collections employ the previously rare ♮-\text{c}_1-\text{D} tonal type to represent authentic Dorian (Tables 8-12 and 8-13). Among the three ♮-\text{c}_1-\text{D} motets in *Sacrae Cantiones a 5*, furthermore, two rank among the most chromatic motets in the volume. Besides, while ♭-\text{A} never before appeared in Gesualdo’s publications, two of the three ♭-\text{c}_1-\text{A} motets stand out in terms of chromaticism. The two ♮-\text{c}_1-\text{E} motets, which were Gesualdo’s more favored representatives of Phrygian, still have relatively wide gamuts but are not equals of the ♭-\text{c}_1-\text{A} motets. As the above discussions show, ♭-\text{G} types are another chromatic favorite of Gesualdo. Although *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* features three ♭-\text{c}_1-\text{G} pieces, with a meager eleven-pitch gamut and almost no chromatic semitones, none of these three motets is chromatic at all.

The anomalous treatment of ♭-\text{G} and ♮-\text{E} and the experiments with other tonal types in *Libro Sesto* and the two *Sacrae Cantiones* volumes witness the beginning of Gesualdo’s breakaway from the practice of “modal chromatic keys” in the early 1600s. It is in *Tenebrae Responsoria* that Gesualdo completely disengages from the legacy of his early chromatic style in *Libri Quarto* and *Quinto*. *Tenebrae Responsoria* for Holy Week came out in the same year as *Libri Quinto* and *Sesto* in 1611. Unlike the motets in the two *Sacrae Cantiones* volumes, *Tenebrae Responsoria* is dedicated to a specific liturgy: the Tenebrae, which refers to the Matins and Lauds celebrated on the last three days of the Holy Week: *Feria V* or Maundy Thursday, *Feria VI* or Good Friday, and *Sabbato Sancto* or Holy Saturday. Usually taking place in the early morning, each of the three Tenebrae services consists of three nocturns. Each nocturn includes three readings, and each reading is in turn accompanied by a responsory. Each responsory consists of two responses (\(a\) and \(b\)), and a verse (\(V\)). They are usually organized in the form of \(abVb\) or
as determined by the original liturgy. In this way, each nocturne has three responsories and each Tenebrae service nine, which adds up to a total of twenty-seven during the triduum sacrum (“three holy days”) leading up to Easter Sunday. In addition, each Tenebrae service also involves the chanting of “Benedictus” and Psalm 50 “Miserere mei Deus,” for which Gesualdo also provides his own settings at the end of the Tenebrae volume.

Presented in Table 8-14, the musical outlook of Tenebrae Responsoria indicates just how far Gesualdo has broken from his past concerning tonal types and “modal chromatic keys.” In continuation of Libro Sesto and the two Sacrae Cantiones volumes, many of the once underused or underdeveloped tonal types assume much greater importance at the expense of what used to be Gesualdo’s favorite “keys.” Throughout this entire set of twenty-seven six-voice responsories in c1-f4 clefing, b-c1-G appears only twice. The other Dorian type, ♭-c1-D, although previously underappreciated, shows up five times. ♭-c1-D, which appeared only once in Libro Quinto and twice near the end of Sacrae Cantiones a 6 e 7, occurs six times in Tenebrae Responsoria. In comparison, four pieces were set in the more conventional Aeolian type ♭-c1-A. ♭-F, the type that has never been omitted from any of Gesualdo’s publications, is absent from Tenebrae Responsoria. ♭-c1-C, its Ionian companion, appears only once. ♭-G, the only tonal type Gesualdo has ever used to represent the Mixolydian modes, also makes only one appearance, and in

42 Table 8-14 is created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, Responsoria et Alia ad Officium Hebdomadae Sanctae Spectantia für Sechs Stimmen, nach dem Partiturdruck von 1611, Glenn Watkins ed. (Hamburg, Germany: Ugrino Verlag, 1959). Since the Canticle “Benedictus” and Psalm 50 (“Miserere mei Deus”) are not responsories and nor are they particular to any of the three days, they are not included in this table. In the versus section of “Aestimatus sum cum descentibus in lacum,” Nocturn iii., Sabbato Saneto, the Tenor voice is assigned with the baritone clef instead of the tenor clef.
Of Gesualdo’s favorite “modal chromatic keys,” ♯-C♯-E seems to be the only one that survived the change from *Libri Quarto* and *Quinto* to *Tenebrae Responsoria*. As a matter of fact, Gesualdo reserves ♯-C♯-E exclusively for responsories on Holy Saturday.

### Table 8-14 Ordering of Responsories in Gesualdo’s *Tenebrae Responsoria* (1611)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liturgy</th>
<th>Responsor</th>
<th>Clefing</th>
<th>Syst.-Fin.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.i</td>
<td>In monte Oliveti oravit ad Patrem</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.i</td>
<td>Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.i</td>
<td>Ecce vidimus eum non habentem speciem</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.ii</td>
<td>Amicus meus osculi me tradidit signo</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.ii</td>
<td>Juda mercator pessimus osculo petiti Dominum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.ii</td>
<td>Unus ex discipulis meis tradet me Hodie</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.iii</td>
<td>Eram quasi agnus innocens</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria Vi.iii</td>
<td>Una hora non potuistis vigilare mecum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.i</td>
<td>Seniores populi consilium fecerunt</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.i</td>
<td>Omnes amici mei dereliquerunt me</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.i</td>
<td>Velum temple scissum est</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.i</td>
<td>Vinea mea electa, ego te plantavi</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.ii</td>
<td>Tamquam ad latronem existis cum gladiis</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.ii</td>
<td>Tenebrae factae sunt, dum crucifixisset Jesum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.ii</td>
<td>Animam meam dilectam tradidi in manus iniquorum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.iii</td>
<td>Tradiderunt me in manus impiorum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.iii</td>
<td>Jesum tradidit impius summis pricipibus sacerdotum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feria VI.iii</td>
<td>Caligaverunt oculi mei fletum meo</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.i</td>
<td>Sicut ovis ad occasionem ductus est</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.i</td>
<td>Jerusalem, surge, et exuete vestibus jucunditatis</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.i</td>
<td>Plange quasi virgo, plebs mea</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.ii</td>
<td>Recessit pastor noster, fons aquae vivae</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.ii</td>
<td>O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.ii</td>
<td>Ecce quomodo moritur justus</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.iii</td>
<td>Astiterunt reges terrae</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.iii</td>
<td>Aestimatus sum cum desertibus in lacum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab. San.iii</td>
<td>Sepulto Domno, signatum est monumentum</td>
<td>c₁-c₂-c₃-c₄-c₅</td>
<td>♯-E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

fact one may argue that “Recessit pastor noster,” a responsonry in ♯-C♯-G, is really an E-oriented piece that happens to have an irregular G-ending.⁴³

⁴³ Indeed, similarly, one may argue that the ♯-C♯-F responsonry “Ecce viimus eum” on the First Nocturn of Maundy Thursday is really a G-oriented piece with an irregular F-ending.
Table 8-15 Chromaticism in Gesualdo’s *Tenebrae Responsoria* (1611)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsery</th>
<th>Ton. Type</th>
<th>Gamut</th>
<th>Gamut Size</th>
<th>Chr. Semitone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In monte Oliveti oravit ad Patrem</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem</td>
<td>b-c₁-A</td>
<td>Eᵇ-E#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecce vidimus eum non habentem speciem</td>
<td>b-c₁-F</td>
<td>Eᵇ-A#</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amicus meus osculi me tradent signo</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juda mercator pessimus</td>
<td>b-c₁-C</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unus ex discipulis meis tradet me hodie</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Bᵇ-G#</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eram quasi agnus innocens</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Una hora non potuistis vigilare mecum</td>
<td>b-c₁-A</td>
<td>Bᵇ-G#</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seniores populi consilium fecerunt</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td><strong>Feria V Average</strong></td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Eᵇ-D#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omnes amici mei dereliquerunt me</td>
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<td>Eᵇ-C#</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Velum temple scissum est</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Eᵇ-D#</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vinea mea electa, ego te plantavi</td>
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<td>Eᵇ-D#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamquam ad latronem existis cum gladiis</td>
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<td>Eᵇ-C#</td>
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<td>Tenebrae factae sunt</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animam meam dilectam tradidi</td>
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<td>Eᵇ-D#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tradiderunt me in manus impiorum</td>
<td>b-c₁-D</td>
<td>Eᵇ-G#</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jesum tradidit</td>
<td>b-c₁-A</td>
<td>Eᵇ-D#</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caligaverunt oculi mei fletu meo</td>
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<td>Aᵇ-G#</td>
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<td>b-c₁-E</td>
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<td>Sicut ovis ad occisiononem ductus est</td>
<td>b-c₁-E</td>
<td>Eᵇ-E#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerusalem, surge</td>
<td>b-c₁-E</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
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<td>Plange quasi virgo, plebs mea</td>
<td>b-c₁-G</td>
<td>Bᵇ-E#</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recessit pastor noster, fons aquae vivae</td>
<td>b-c₁-A</td>
<td>Bᵇ-A#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam</td>
<td>b-c₁-E</td>
<td>Bᵇ-D#</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecce quomodo moritur justus</td>
<td>b-c₁-E</td>
<td>Fᵇ-D#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Astiterunt reges terrae</td>
<td>b-c₁-E</td>
<td>Fᵇ-D#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aestimatus sum cum descentibus in lacum</td>
<td>b-c₁-A</td>
<td>Eᵇ-D#</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sepulto Domno, signatum est monumentum</td>
<td>b-c₁-E</td>
<td>Bᵇ-G#</td>
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<td><strong>Sabbato Sancto Average</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
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<td>7.22</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Composite</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.41</td>
<td>7.22</td>
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and six out of the nine responsories on this day carry the $\flat-c_1-E$ tonal type.\footnote{This does not count “Recessit paster noster,” which is still visually presented as $\natural-c_1-G$.} Perhaps Gesualdo is relying on the Phrygian qualities and chromatic potentials of this tonal type to portray the mourning that took place on this day of penitence and austerity before the joy and celebration on Easter Sunday. Nevertheless, in Tenebrae Responsoria the chromatic glamor of the $\natural-c_1-E$ pieces is in no way comparable to his earlier use of this tonal type. On average, each of the six $\natural-c_1-E$ responsories spans over twelve and a half steps, which is in fact below the average of Holy Saturday in its entirety (Tables 8-15 and 8-16).\footnote{Tables 8-15 and 8-16 are created based on the information from Gesualdo di Venosa, Responsoria et Alia ad Officium Hebdomadae Sanctae Spectantia für Sechs Stimmen, nach dem Partiturdruck von 1611. Since the Canticle “Benedictus” and Psalm 50 (“Miserere mei Deus”) are not responsories and nor are they particular to any of the three days, they are not included in these tables. As for Table 8-16, as argued, the single $c_1-\natural-F$ responsory is somewhat problematic, because it behaves exactly like a $c_1-\natural-G$ piece until its very end.} Each $\sharp-c_1-E$ responsory also has only slightly over five chromatic semitones on average, which is below the average of not only Holy Saturday but also the entire Tenebrae Responsoria. As a matter of fact, the average number of pitch classes per responsory in the entire volume, excluding “Benedictus” and Psalm 50, is only slightly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tonal Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Comp. Comp.</th>
<th>Ave. Gamut</th>
<th>Ave. Chr.</th>
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<tr>
<td>$c_1-\natural-A$</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>E♭-E♯</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>A♭-D♯</td>
<td>14</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total | 27 | A♭-E♯ | 16 | 12.41 | 7.22 |
above twelve, which would place the chromaticism of *Tenebrae Responsoria* between that of *Libro Quarto* as well as *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* and that of *Libri Quinto* and *Sesto*. The average number of chromatic semitones is slightly above seven; while approaching that of *Libro Quinto*, it is not particularly large especially considering the extensive lengths of the responsories.

The average chromatic parameters of ♮-c₁-E responsories and the entire *Tenebrae Responsoria* give the impression that at the time Gesualdo was composing this volume his chromaticism was more intense than that of *Libro Quarto* and *Sacrae Cantiones a 5*, but was yet to reach the climactic *Libri Quinto* and *Sesto*. Such impression is false, however, because despite these average numbers, in *Tenebrae Responsoria*, unlike in the two *Sacrae Cantiones* volumes, Gesualdo does not pull back from chromaticism at all. Though the flat end of its composite gamut only reaches an A♭ as it does in *Libro Quarto*, the sharp end falls onto an E♯ that only *Libro Quinto* and *Sesto* dare to touch. The unimpressive average numbers of the ♮-c₁-E responsories arise not from an immature chromaticism but from the unusual diversity among these pieces in terms of their chromaticism. On the one hand, there is “Jerusalem, surget,” the second responsory of the First Nocturn on Holy Saturday, which spans fifteen pitch classes from E♭ to E♯, a gamut that would easily be above average in both *Libro Quinto* and *Libro Sesto*. There is also “Ecce quomodo moritur justus,” the third responsory of the second Nocturn on Holy Saturday, which has fifteen chromatic semitones in its melody and a jarring b section whose harmony shifts between E-major, B♭-major, and B-major triads in the course of a few measures (mm. 22-31). On the other hand, despite their sorrowful words, “Astiterunt reges terrae” and “Sepulto Domino,” the first and third responsories of the Third and last
Nocturn on Holy Saturday, have only eleven pitch classes each and virtually no chromatic semitone in their melodies.

The incompatibility between these two pairs of $\text{♮}-c_1-E$ responsories on the Holy Saturday indicates that the chromatic features of a $\text{♮}-c_1-E$ piece are no longer predictable in *Tenebrae Responsoria*. In this way, although Gesualdo keeps $\text{♮}-c_1-E$ as a major tonal type unlike $\text{♮}-c_1-G$ and although the type retains its great chromatic potential, it is no longer a “modal chromatic key.” This contrasts the type in all the previous post-1595 publications in which upon recognizing the $\text{♮}-E$ tonal types one can safely project that the corresponding madrigals or motets are almost certainly among the most chromatic pieces of the collection. In *Tenebrae Responsoria*, however, because $\text{♮}-c_1-E$ no longer predicts the musical content of the pieces, it becomes again an empty label that may be attached to both “Jerusalem” and “Astiterunt” regardless of the sharp difference between chromatic and non-chromatic pieces.

The same transition from a “key” back to an empty label happens to the other “legacy” tonal type in *Tenebrae Responsoria*: $\text{♮}-c_1-A$, which appears four times in the volume. Although the four $\text{♮}-c_1-A$ responsories have on average almost thirteen pitch classes and ten chromatic semitones per piece, there is still the contrast between “Una hora non potuistis” of the Third Nocturn on Maundy Thursday, which spans over only an eleven-pitch gamut and has but two chromatic semitones in the melody, and between the other three convincingly chromatic $\text{♮}-c_1-A$ responsories, such as “O vos omnes,” the second responsory of the Second Nocturn on Holy Saturday. Such striking disunity among $\text{♮}-A$ pieces does not occur in *Libri Quarto, Quinto*, or *Sesto*. Although the two $\text{♮}-c_1-A$ motets are noticeably more chromatic than the two $\text{♮}-g_2-A$ motets in *Sacrae
Cantiones a 5, I have shown that having a different type of clefing or authentic-plagal voicing has appeared to affect the chromaticism of “modal chromatic keys,” for example $\flat$-g$_2$-G and $\flat$-c$_1$-G in Libro Quinto. Nothing in their tonal types can foretell the divergent chromaticism in these $\natural$-c$_1$-A responsories, and like $\natural$-c$_1$-E the tonal type has been transformed from a reflective sign into a label without a strong connection to musical sound.

As for $\flat$-c$_1$-D and $\natural$-c$_1$-D tonal types, which are featured six and five times in Tenebrae Responsoria, their frequent appearances may admittedly suggest them as Gesualdo’s newly favored “modal chromatic keys.” Nonetheless, it seems that Gesualdo is uninterested in cultivating their individual characters as he once did with the extremely chromatic $\flat$-G and $\natural$-E and the fairly chromatic $\natural$-A. Indeed, although the $\natural$-c$_1$-D responsories, all on Maundy Thursday, tend to be the less chromatic ones in Tenebrae Responsoria, the type cannot rival the $\flat$-F tonal types that have remained thoroughly diatonic throughout Gesualdo’s life. There is still the difference between “Seniores populi consilium fecerunt,” which features sporadic moments of B-major triads and chromatic semitones, and “Unus ex iscipulis,” which is completely diatonic except for one chromatic semitone in the verse (mm. 45-46). The $\flat$-c$_1$-D responsories, all on Good Friday, on the other hand, range from “Tamquam ad latronem” that is largely diatonic, to “Tenebrae factae sunt,” whose chromaticism is only remarkable in two chord progressions (mm. 1-2 and 20-21), and to “Omnes amici mei dereliquerunt,” which begins with all of its twelve chromatic semitones over the course of eighteen measures.

Thus, what occurs in Tenebrae Responsoria is the breakdown of the system of “modal chromatic keys” developed since Libri Quarto and Quinto in the 1590s. First,
tonal types that have always appeared in Gesualdo’s previous publications, namely the $b$-G, $b$-F, $b$-G, and $b$-C types, have a very modest presence in or are completely absent from *Tenebrae Responsoria*. In the other post-1595 publications, Gesualdo perceived these tonal types as “modal chromatic keys” that entail specific modal, harmonic, and chromatic characteristics. $b$-G, for one, had been Gesualdo’s favorite and most chromatic “key.” The underrepresentation of Gesualdo’s once favorite “keys” such as $b$-G in *Tenebrae Responsoria* indicates a disengagement from his early chromatic styles, a breakaway already traceable to *Libro Sesto* and, to a lesser degree, the two *Sacrae Cantiones* volumes. Second, the tonal types he uses most frequently in *Tenebrae Responsoria*, namely $c_{1}$-E, $c_{1}$-A, $c_{1}$-D, and $b$-$c_{1}$-D, are no longer “modal chromatic keys” whose musical behaviors are predictable. They are instead labels that may apply to a wide range of pieces regardless of their musical content, especially their chromaticism. The fact that the average chromatic parameters of $c_{1}$-E, $c_{1}$-A, and $b$-$c_{1}$-D are similar further points to their lack of character. The transformation of these tonal types from “keys” into “labels” suggests that Gesualdo was no longer thinking in the terms of “modal chromatic keys” when working on *Tenebrae Responsoria*.

The abandonment of “modal chromatic keys” on the level of each individual responsory is further reflected in the musical outlook of *Tenebrae Responsoria*. Indeed, what visually distinguishes *Tenebrae Responsoria* from all of Gesualdo’s other publications pertains to the ordering—or, in fact, disordering—of its responsories (Table 8-14). Of course, because *Tenebrae Responsoria* pertains to a particular liturgy, the twenty-seven responsories are naturally ordered according to their proper day, their proper nocturn, and their appropriate placement within each nocturn as prescribed by the
Tenebrae liturgy. Nevertheless, it is still unusual that Gesualdo seems to have cared little about creating musical unity for his responsories. In all of Gesualdo’s other publications, even when a volume is not modally ordered, pieces with the same tonal type or at least the same modal final always cluster around each other. In Tenebrae Responsoria, on the contrary, with the exception of two occasions where Gesualdo assigns the same tonal type to all the three responsories in the same nocturn (♭-c₁-D in the Second Nocturn, Good Friday, and ♮-c₁-E in the First Nocturn, Holy Saturday), most of the responsories succeed one another without any systematic order according to the tonal types. In comparison, Lasso’s Lagrime di San Pietro, which also has to follow an order predetermined by Tansillo’s spiritual verses, unfolds in an ascending octonary modal sequence that necessarily required Lasso’s precompositional planning.

What is even more interesting is that in spite of its randomly assigned tonal types Gesualdo’s Tenebrae Responsoria does profess two all-applying musical organizing principles. As a matter of fact, the scope of these principles is even higher and broader than those in any other Gesualdo’s anthology. In addition to the uniform c₁-f₄ clefing for all twenty-seven responsories, as I have mentioned, the five ♮-c₁-D responsories may only occur on Maundy Thursday, the six ♭-c₁-D responsories only on Good Friday, and the six ♮-c₁-E responsories only on Holy Saturday; this does not mean, however, that these responsories with the same tonal type are grouped together. More astoundingly, all of the nine responsories on Maundy Thursday, regardless of their modal finals, are set in cantus durus. All of the nine responsories on Good Friday are in contrast set in cantus mollis. And lastly, all of the nine responsories for Holy Saturday are again set in cantus durus. And there is not a single exception to these two organizing principles.
Why does Gesualdo completely abandon modal ordering or even any sort of
tonal-type or modal-final oriented ordering and employs instead the large-scale ternary
plan of *durus-mollis-durus* to organize the three-day sequence of *Tenebrae Responsoria*?
Symbolism seems an easy explanation. Good Friday is a major climax of the Holy Week
because it commemorates the Crucifixion of Christ two days before his miraculous
Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Therefore, in *Tenebrae Responsoria* Gesualdo is
probably using *cantus mollis* to distinguish the nine responsories on Good Friday from
the others set in *cantus durus*. The soave connotation of feebleness, sorrow, and death
also make *cantus mollis* more suitable than *cantus durus* to the liturgical significance of
Good Friday. Furthermore, the use of a single tonal type for each of the three days can be
seen as a way to establish a distinctive musical identity of each Tenebrae service.

Regardless of what triggered these unique organizing principles, the presence of a
strong musical organization other than modal or tonal-type ordering in *Tenebrae
Responsoria* indicates that Gesualdo surpassed completely the mixture of mode and
chromaticism that appeared first in his *Libro Quarto*. The organization in *Tenebrae
Responsoria* signifies the arrival of his late style in which he no longer thought in the
terms of “modal chromatic keys,” no longer practiced modal ordering, and, indeed, no
longer aimed at pushing his chromaticism beyond C♭ and B♯ in *Libro Sesto*. He seems to
have cared no longer about expressive catharses in the form of chromaticism, be it distant
and abrupt harmonies or chromatic semitones. Rather, the abandonment of strong-
charactered “modal chromatic keys” such as ♭-G and the temperament of ♯-E and ♯-A
suggests that Gesualdo might have found solace in what Willaert cherished the most:
decorum and balance. This does not mean a withdrawal from chromaticism but instead
the integration of chromaticism into the rest of his music. Because of its stylistic affiliations with *prima practica*, sacred music is especially convenient for integrating the special and intense chromaticism with the normal diatonicism that Gesualdo sets sharply apart in his madrigals.

The transformation of the motet “O vos omnes” from *Sacrae Cantiones a 5* into the second responsory of the Second Nocturn on Holy Saturday “O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam, attendite, et videte” offers a precious window to witnessing Gesualdo’s transition into his late style. Besides the newly composed verse, the “O vos omnes” responsory is essentially a revision of the “O vos omnes” motet. Yet the fact that Gesualdo, in addition to simply adding a sixth voice, cared to revise and rewrite what he could directly use for the responsory implies a change in Gesualdo’s musical style. Gesualdo achieves more balance and coherence by structuring the music more towards E\text{mi}, the already most predominant tonal center of the piece. To this end, Gesualdo transposes the chordal progression at the beginning of the motet from C-major to A-major and F-major (mm. 1-5) down by a minor second in the responsory so that the roots of the triads in the Bassus outline an E-minor instead of an F-major triad (mm. 1-6).

While the music in the responsory’s *b* section is borrowed from mm. 15-28 and its repeat in 34-48 of the motet, Gesualdo makes an interesting change. The material in the motet from the second semibreve in m. 15 to roughly the first semibreve of m. 18 is transposed up by a major second in mm. 16-18 in the responsory. By doing so, Gesualdo eliminates the G-minor triads in mm. 15-16 and 35 of the motet. Without the B♭s in these measures, the harmonic contrasts between the beginning of this phrase and the pseudo B-re cadence in m. 19 of the responsory with A♯ and C♯ can be more controllable. Similarly, in order
O vos omnes (1603)

Carlo Gesualdo

Reproduced from Carlo Gesualdo, Sacrae Cantiones für fünf Stimmen, Glenn Watkins, ed. (Hamburg, Germany: Ugrino Verlag, 1962), 40-41
O vos omnes

Cantus

Sextus

Altus

Quintus

Tenor

Bassus

do\-lor si-\-mi-lis, si est do-\-lor, do-\-lor si-\-mi-lis sic\-ut si-\-mi-\-lis, si est do-\-lor si-\-mi-lis sic\-ut si-\-mi-\-lis, si est do-\-lor si-\-mi-lis sic\-ut sis, do\-lor si-\-mi-lis, sic\-ut do\-lor si-\-mi-lis, sic\-ut do-\-lor me-\-us, sic\-ut do-\-lor me-\-us. At-ten-\-di-te, u-\-ni-

Versus
Si est dolorem medium:
to avoid direct harmonic conflict with the frequent E-major and B-major triads in the piece, Gesualdo eliminates all the E♭s from the motet, for example the E♭ from Quintus (mm. 22 and 41 of the motet). He rewrites the jarring progression from C-minor to E-major in mm. 13-15 and 31-33 of the motet into a purely diatonic passage in mm. 8-14 of the responsory, which simply alternates between C-major and F-major triads. He replaces the D-mi cadence in mm. 7-9 of the motet with A-re in mm. 6-8 of the responsory, which is more at ease with the E- and B-harmonies. The newly composed versus concludes on a B-mi cadence over a B-major triad and contributes to the E-centered tonality.

In addition, Gesualdo changes the ♮-c1-A tonal type of the motet to ♮-c1-A in the responsory. Although the reduced presence of E♭ and B♭ may account for this change, ♮-c1-A is indeed a better reading of the final cadence that remains unchanged in the responsory. In mm. 45-47 of the motet and mm. 28-30 of the responsory, the B-major triad suggests an E-re cadence in which the D♯ in the motet’s Altus and the responsory’s Sextus would ascend to E by a cadential half step, while the F♯ in the motet’s Tenor and the responsory’s Quintus would descend to E by a whole step. By lowering the D♯ and F♯ into D♮ and F♮, however, Gesualdo chromatically transform the potential E-re cadence into an actual E-mi. Thus, both the motet and the responsory conclude with this chromatically arrived E-mi cadence over a harmonic progression from D-minor to A-minor sonorities. The importance of the B-major triad in this ending makes ♮-c1-A a rather awkward tonal type, and changing it into ♮-c1-A makes the responsory’s tonal type more suited to the music.

Overall, what Gesualdo does by turning the motet “O vos omnes” into the responsory is not eliminating chromaticism. There are still seventeen chromatic
semitones in the responsory as in the motet, and the number of pitch classes covered also remains thirteen. Yet without the E♭s and with the pseudo B-re cadence, the gamut is shifted from E♭-D♯ in the motet to B♭-A♯ in the responsory. The latter’s emphasis on the sharp side of the circle of fifths fits better the tendencies of the E-major and B-major harmonies at the expense of some genuinely chromatic passages such as the aforementioned mm. 11-13 in the motet. Indeed, in general, the impression the responsory “O vos omnes” gives is a more coherent version of the motet “O vos omnes,” whose chromaticism no longer challenges the stability of its harmony or tonality but is dissolved into the smoothly flowing music.

“Dissolution” is perhaps the best word when it comes to describing what might have happened after Gesualdo published the two volumes of Sacrae Cantiones in 1603 and finished Libro Sesto a short time after that. Although we may never know when Tenebrae Responsoria was planned out or composed, Gesualdo’s unique musical organization of the twenty-seven responsories and his treatment of the individual tonal types demonstrate the dissolution of the three musical themes that had dominated Gesualdo’s chromatic style since Libro Quarto: modal ordering, extreme chromaticism, and the unity of the two through “modal chromatic keys.” Yet dissolution does not imply elimination. Chromaticism, for one, continues to play an important role in Tenebrae Responsoria, though the example of the two “O vos omnes” suggests its integration into a more balanced and coherent whole. Modal ordering and tonal types, which are no longer the predictable “modal chromatic keys,” have not completely disappeared from Tenebrae Responsoria either. With our current knowledge, it is difficult to understand what the durus-mollis-durus ternary form and the predominance of ♯-c1-D on Maundy Thursday,
♭-c₁-D on Good Friday, and ♮-c₁-E on Holy Saturday could have meant to Gesualdo.

Going beyond the past practice of “modal chromatic keys,” modal ordering, and intense chromaticism and settling down to a more profound sense of balance, coherence, and order suggests a reasonable and active mind, however, in contrast to the general assumption about Gesualdo’s madness and masochism in the last years of his life. What needs to be reviewed is not only the style and chronology of Gesualdo’s music or even the biographical details of his last years, but also, and more significantly, the idea of madness itself. Maybe the common interpretation of the extreme chromaticism in *Libro Quinto* and *Sesto* as Gesualdo’s remorse for having murdered Maria d’Avalos and the Duke of Andrea needs additional scrutiny. Maybe a sensuously indulgent soul and a deeply tormented mind could be combined with the religious devotion, musical consistency and calmness in *Tenebrae Responsoria* within Gesualdo’s scourged body.

All of Gesualdo’s stories, true or false, have been dissolved into the passage of time, leaving us only with his six books of madrigals, two books of motets, complete setting of Holy Week responsories, and some other scattered works. May the above attempts of dating some of these anthologies and tracing their musical interrelations count as another step towards understanding the enigma of Gesualdo: the murderer, the masochist, the musician, and, ultimately, the man.
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* Only editions whose contents are reproduced, quoted, or referred to in this thesis are included.


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