

L'Istituto Italiano di Studi Gesualdiani intende, attraverso questa autorevole collana di studi e testi ideata dalla Fondazione Carlo Gesualdo, contribuire a una concretizzazione dei propri scopi istituzionali volti a una ricerca intellettuale che riesca, tramite la conoscenza e l'approfondimento di esigenze sempre mutevoli nel tempo, a incidere efficacemente sulla risoluzione delle problematiche etiche e di convivenza sociale che rattristano l'umanità dolente, intrisa di esasperato e vano egoismo, non protesa invece a prediligere l'autentica natura identitaria dello spirito. Per siffatta ragione, l'idea scientifica del progetto editoriale, quale suggello della pregevole arte di Carlo Gesualdo, può realmente concorrere alla formazione di una coscienza civile di appartenenza al proprio territorio, perseguendo comunque il bene comune in una sodale unità d'intenti.

EDGARDO PESIRI
Sindaco di Gesualdo

Istituto Italiano di Studi Gesualdiani

Comitato scientifico

GUIDO BALDASSARRI – L. RINO CAPUTO – ALBERTO GRANESE –
STEFANO CAMPAGNOLO – DINKO FABRIS – AGOSTINO ZIINO

Patrocinio scientifico

FONDAZIONE CARLO GESUALDO
CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE DI STUDI, RICERCHE E DOCUMENTAZIONE

Proprietà letteraria riservata
© 2019 Istituto Italiano di Studi Gesualdiani
Via A. D'Errico
83040 Gesualdo Avellino

© 2019 Il Terebinto Edizioni
Sede legale: Via degli Imbimbo 8/E
83100 Avellino
tel. 3406862179
e-mail: terebinto.edizioni@gmail.com
www.ilterebintoedizioni.it

ISBN 9788897489900

CARLO GESUALDO E IL SUO TEMPO

Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi
Gesualdo-Salerno, 16-17-18 novembre 2013

A cura di
Alberto Granese e Luigi Sisto



INDICE

ALBERTO GRANESE, LUIGI SISTO Prefazione	7
GLENN WATKINS Gesualdo: Lectio Magistralis	9
AGOSTINO ZIINO Un “omaggio” di Sebastian Raval a Carlo Gesualdo	17
PARTE PRIMA	
ALBERTO GRANESE Gesualdo, il suo delitto, il “castigo” dei poeti nella Napoli di Tasso e Marino	37
DOMENICO DEFILIPPIS Il “successo tragico e amoroso” di Carlo Gesualdo, Maria d’Avalos e Fabrizio Carafa	49
ROSA GIULIO Tasso, gli Inquisitori, il Principe di Salerno: una doppia verità	71

PASQUALE GUARAGNELLA	
Giambattista Basile e alcune esperienze letterarie del Cinquecento italiano	101
MARCO MANGANI	
Di nei, principi e stelle: interventi gesualdiani sulle rime di Torquato Tasso	125
PASQUALE SABBATINO	
Ritratti di Napoli nel secondo Cinquecento e l'Europa di Bruno negli anni parigini	147
PARTE SECONDA	
MARTIN KIRNBAUER	
«Compiacimento di purgattissimo conoscimento» Performing Gesualdo in Mid-Seventeenth Century Rome	169
MARINA TOFFETTI	
La ricezione della musica di Gesualdo e la ricostruzione della polifonia incompleta. Il caso della raccolta <i>Sacrarum cantionum liber primus</i> (Napoli, 1603)	181
MARGARITA GRIGORYEVA	
La logica sfuggente nell'armonia delle tarde opere di Carlo Gesualdo	201
LUIGI SISTO	
I d'Aponte, costruttori di viole a Napoli al tempo dei Gesualdo	211

Martin Kirnbauer

«COMPIACIMENTO DI PURGATTISSIMO CONOSCIMENTO» –
PERFORMING GESUALDO IN MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
ROME

The title of this contribution contains two different elements: Firstly a quotation referring to Carlo Gesualdo, the then and still today praised madrigal composer, and secondly a statement worthy of being discussed, namely that Gesualdo's music was not only known and studied in the 17th century, but that it was also performed (at least at a certain time and place). It seems to me a curious characteristic that it is precisely the performance and performance practice of Gesualdo's music that is mostly neglected in scholarly discussion – leaving aside the famous verdict of John Hawkins in his *General History of the Science and Practice of Music* in 1776, who stated that the music of Gesualdo is «indeed not easy to sing»...¹

Glenn Watkins has in his seminal study on *Gesualdo, The Man and His Music* already summarised the esteem in which Carlo Gesualdo was held as a composer during the 17th century: Gesualdo was praised as «a model, as

¹ J. HAWKINS, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, Payne & Son, London 1776, III 213 (“Doni speaking of the fourth madrigal in the sixth book, ‘Resta di darma noia,’ calls it ‘quell’artificiosissimo Madrigali del principe +;’ and indeed it well deserves that epithet; for being calculated to express sorrow, it abounds with chromatic, and even enarmonic intervals, indeed not easy to sing, but admirably adapted to the sentiments.”). Furthermore, James Wood has recently added that, «Singers in Gesualdo’s day would have been accustomed to singing not in equal temperament, but in either Just Intonation (when singing unaccompanied) or in quarter-comma meantone (when singing with certain instruments, especially keyboards). [...] The implications of this for today’s performers of both Gesualdo’s sacred and his secular music are considerable», (see “On reconstructing Gesualdos ‘Sacrae Cantiones, Liber Secundus’”, in *Early Music* 61/4 [2013], 657-64, 661-2).

a master of his age», an opinion normally linked by contemporaries to his princely rank². From this emerges the image of a composer, who was known in the course of the 17th century only by his sheer reputation, perhaps combined with the mute study of his music (in the sense of an analytical reading of his printed compositions, facilitated by the edition of all his madrigals in score in 1613)³ – but not as a composer of music which was performed and which was known by listening to it.

But several documents from Rome prove that Gesualdo's music and especially his madrigals were not only studied but indeed performed during the 17th century. This is remarkable, because several sources seem to document a general decline of the polyphonic, unaccompanied madrigal after 1600. Often quoted is the verdict of Pietro della Valle (1586-1652) in his treatise *Della Musica dell'età nostra* from 1640. He stated, subsequent to his reminiscence of Gesualdo's famous madrigal "Resta di darmi noia", which he liked most as he was young (i.e. at the beginning of the 17th century) because of its «affetto pietose, e compassionevole»:

Quando io era giovanetto mi piacevano assai quei del Marenzio, e particolarmente per certe sue grazie quel tanto cantato 'Liquide perle'. Per la dolcezza mi piaceva 'I tuoi capilli Filli in una cistula', di Ruggier Giovannelli, e per affetto pietose, e compassionevole 'Resta di darmi noia', del Principe di Venosa famoso Madrigale. Oggi non se ne compongono tanti, perchè si usa poco di cantare Madrigali, nè ci è occasione, in cui si abbiano da cantare [...]⁴.

As I was young I most liked the madrigals by Marenzio, especially his "Liquide perle" because of its certain grace. For its sweetness I liked "I tuoi capilli Filli

² G. WATKINS, *Gesualdo, The Man and His Music*, Oxford: Clarendon 2/1991 <Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press 1/1973>, 365-77; see also CATHERINE DEUTSCH, "Antico' or 'Moderno? Reception of Gesualdo's Madrigals in the Early Seventeenth Century", in *The Journal of Musicology* 30/1 (2013), 28-48.

³ See for example the study of Gesualdo's madrigals by Constantijn Hugheens, quoted by Glenn Watkins, *The Gesualdo Hex. Music, Myth, and Memory*, Norton, New York & London 2010, 272-4 (perhaps Joan Albert Ban could be added, who refers to the music of "een Principe di Venosa" in the preface of his *Zangh-Bloemzel*, Amsterdam: Paulus Matthijs 1642; see also R. RASCH, "Ban's intonation", in *Tijdschrift van de Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 33 [1983], 75-99, 87).

⁴ P. DELLA VALLE, "Della musica dell'età nostra Che non è punto inferiore, anzi è migliore di quelle dell'età passata." (dated January 1640), published in Giovanni Battista Doni, *Lyra Barberina Amphichordos. Accedunt eiusdem opera pleraque nondum edita, ad veterem musicam illustrandam pertinentia ex autographis collegit, et in lucem proferrè curavit Antonivus Franciscus Gorivus...*, Typographia Caesarea, Florence 1763 <2 vol.>, II, 249-64, 259.

in uns cistula” composed by Ruggier Giovanelli, and for its pitiful and pathetic affect the famous madrigal by the Principe di Venosa, “Resta di darmi noia”. Today not so many madrigals are composed, because we have little use for singing madrigals, nor occasions for singing them [...].

But Della Valle writes also about the decline of singing and composing madrigals:

Ma benchè oggi, come ho detto, si compongano pochi Madrigali, tuttavia ne anno pur fatti a’ di nostri de’ buoni, e da giudizio degli intendenti molto migliori degli antichi [...].⁵

But although today, as I have said, only a few madrigals are composed, nevertheless good madrigals are composed in our days and according to the connoisseurs they are even better than before [...].

Then Della Valle adds a list of modern composers of madrigals like Mutio Effrem, Tomaso Pecci, Pomponio Nenna, «e molti altri, che sarei lungo a nominare». Strange to say, in this list is missing a composer who had published a book with polyphonic madrigals only two years before Della Valle wrote his ‘report on the music of his time’ (dated January 1640): Domenico Mazzocchi (1592-1665) and his *Madrigali a cinque voci*, published in 1638 parallel in partbooks as well as in score⁶. The publication contains mostly polyphonic madrigals, some of them designated «da cantarsi senza Istrumento» (to sing without instruments), others with a Basso continuo which is sometimes labelled «se piace». Interestingly, in his foreword Mazzocchi is referring explicitly to Gesualdo (although in the context of a special notational praxis – I will return to this later). The *Madrigali* are dedicated to cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597-1679), the influential nephew of Pope Urban VIII. (1568-1644, ruling from 1623). In this dedication Mazzocchi describes the precise place of his polyphonic madrigals and their performance:

⁵ P. DELLA VALLE, “Della musica dell’età nostra”, 260.

⁶ D. MAZZOCCHI, *Madrigali a cinque voci, Et altri varij Concerti* and as well as *Partitura de’ Madrigali a cinque voci, E d’altri varij Concerti*, Rome: Francesco Zannetti 1638. Cf. for this and the following M. KIRNBAUER, *Vieltönige Musik – Spielarten chromatischer und enharmonischer Musik in Rom in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Schwabe, Basel 2013 (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis Scripta 3), 39-45.

Il più ingegnoso studio, che habbia la Musica [...] è quello de' Madrigali; mà pochi hoggi di se ne compongono, e meno se ne cantano, vedendosi per loro disauuentura dall'Accademie poco men che banditi. [...] Hora affidati dalla singolar benignità di Vostra Emin.^{za} prendono ardire di vscire alla luce del mondo, e di ricouerarsi, come in sicurissimo Asilo, sotto l'ambita sua protettione; già ch'ella, per alleuiar l'animo dalla grauezza de'publici affari, si è compiaciuta alle volte di honorarli, co'l sentirli cantare sopra il Concerto delle sue Viole⁷.

The most ingenuous object of study in music [...] is that of the madrigal, but few composers write them nowadays, and they are sung even less, seeming for their misfortune little less than banished from the academies. [...] It has sometime pleased Your Lordship to honour [the madrigals] by hearing them sung to [the accompaniment of] your consort of viols.

After, here again, complaining about the decline of madrigal composing and singing in his days, Mazzocchi stresses the particular interest of the Barberini cardinal in madrigals, who loved to relax by hearing them «cantare sopra il Concerto delle sue Viole». This “Concerto delle sue Viole” is a well documented musical establishment, founded in 1634 and supervised by Virgilio Mazzocchi (1597-1646), the younger brother of Domenico, maestro di cappella at the Cappella Giulia and music director in the cardinal's household (therefore the ensemble is called in the sources as well “l'accademia del Mazzocchi” or “accademia delle viole”)⁸.

For this group of singers and viol players Domenico Mazzocchi composed his polyphonic madrigals; in our context it is more interesting that the household of the cardinal purchased other printed collections of madrigals (from the famous publisher Gardano in Venice): «20 mute di Madrigali» in 1634 (and in 1636 again «21 mute de libri a sonare di viola»)⁹. Among this huge repertory

⁷ D. MAZZOCCHI, *Partitura*, 4 (the following translation is taken from the edition by B. MANN [ed.], *The Madrigals of Michelangelo Rossi*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London 2002 [Monuments of Renaissance Music 10], 12).

⁸ F. HAMMOND, “Girolamo Frescobaldi and a Decade of Music in Casa Barberini”, in *Analecta Musicologica* 19 (1979), 94-124, 101-7; W. WITZENMANN, “Beiträge der Brüder Mazzocchi zu den musikalischen Akademien Kardinal Francesco Barberinis”, in Wolf Frobenius, Nicole Schwindt-Gross & Thomas Sick (edd.), *Akademie und Musik. Erscheinungsweisen und Wirkungen des Akademiegedankens in Kultur und Musikgeschichte: Institutionen, Veranstaltungen, Schriften (Festschrift für Werner Braun zum 65. Geburtstag)*, Saarbrücken: SDV 1993 (Saarbrücker Studien zur Musikwissenschaft, Neue Folge 7), 181-214; KIRNBAUER, *Vieltönige Musik*, 40-50.

⁹ F. HAMMOND, “Girolamo Frescobaldi and a Decade of Music”, 108 + Fn. 51; Witzennann, “Beiträge der Brüder Mazzocchi”, 196 + 205; Kirnbauer, *Vieltönige Musik*, 46-9.

of printed madrigal collections – with music by Giovanni Maria da Nanino, Pomponio Nenna, Sigismondo d'India etc. – we find all madrigal books by Carlo Gesualdo (except the fifth book, which perhaps was already at hand, as I suppose). These madrigals were performed by the «accademia delle viole», apparently in a specific mix of semi-instrumental performance (on viols) and singing: «suonano viole e cantano» (this is the wording in a document describing the performance of the «accademia del Mazzocchi»)¹⁰.

The madrigals by Gesualdo played a decisive role in the context of the “accademia delle viole”. As I have already mentioned, Domenico Mazzocchi is referring in the foreword of his *Madrigali* explicitly to the “Principe di Venosa” within the context of a specific notational practice. First he describes that any accidental is also valid for the immediately following notes of the same pitch; but then he complains about this notational custom and says that he would have liked to notate like Gesualdo:

Benche ciò poca à me piaccia, mà à giusto rigore secondo il mio genio, e che più si accosta al Principe di Venosa, tutti deurebbono eßere scritti come l'ottauo Madigrate di questo Libro¹¹.

Although I do not like this method very much; my own opinion, closer to that of the “Principe di Venosa”, is that all pitches should be rigorously written, as in the eight madrigal of this book.

In fact, the mentioned eight madrigal (“Pian piano, aure tranquille”) is notated like the madrigals of Gesualdo with accidentals put for every single note even when the note is repeated. This practice is due to an excessive usage of accidentals in this madrigal, reminiscent of Gesualdo’s music as well (and, if I may add in brackets, this notational practice should be observed in any modern edition of Gesualdo’s works as well).

For example, in the last part of the madrigal “Pian piano” (to the inspiring text line «Beltà crudel») we find not only f#, c#, g#, d# and a#, but also a sign

¹⁰ In a description of a huge painting depicting the ensemble: “Un Quadro senza cornice in tela l'accademia del Mazzocchi cioe diversi Ragazzi che suonano viole e cantano alto palmi nove e largo otto” (see M. ARONBERG LAVIN, *Seventeenth-Century Barberini Documents and Inventories of Art*, New York University Press, New York 1975, 248); KIRNBAUER, *Viertönige Musik*, 50.

¹¹ D. MAZZOCCHI, *Partitura*, 4 (the following translation is taken from Richard Eric Englehart, *Domenico Mazzocchi's "Dialoghi e Sonetti" and "Madrigali a cinque voci" (1638): A modern edition with biographical commentary and new archival documents*, Ph.D. Diss. Kent State University 1987, 311, who however failed later in the text with his mistaken translation of «Instromenti hodierni perfettamente spezzati» as «modern instruments which were perfectly tempered»).

in form of a “x” (for e and b), meaning a so-called “Diesis Enarmonico” to raise a note’s pitch by a minor semitone. Interestingly, this sign can be found as well in the Basso continuo part for bass notes and in the figures, pointing to the need of a special key at the keyboard instrument to play these pitches. And in fact, Mazzocchi explains the “Diesis enarmonico” in another publication in the very same year 1638 by pointing to the «Instromenti hodierni perfettamente spezzati», keyboard instruments with split keys (like a Cimbalo cromatico with at least 19 keys per octave)¹². To be sure that this augmented number of pitches is respected in any performance, Mazzocchi added the severe instruction:

Questo Madrigale si canta come è scritto, à rigore: però non si faccia alteratione, alcune se non doue si trouerà segnata¹³.

This madrigal must be strictly sung as written, and no accidentals are to be added, only the ones which are written.

In other words: any performance must respect the many different pitches notated in this madrigal. And the composer was evidently inspired by the music of Carlo Gesualdo, which was performed in the same context – and presumably in the same performance practice – side by side.

* * *

But what do we know about the specific performance practice of the “accademia delle viole”? The madrigals were performed by a group of (boy and male) singers and viol players (perhaps in a mix of semi-instrumental performance) or other instruments. A keyboard instrument with several split keys was available for accompaniment as well, therefore respecting the differences of notated sharps and flats (like e.g. the difference between $g\#$ and ab , $d\#$ and eb and so on, which is fundamental in meantone temperament) – this is what I call “vieltönig” (verbatim using “many pitches”), which is more fully investigated in a recent publication¹⁴. Additional information on the performance practice is provided by Giovanni Battista Doni (1595-1647), serving the Barberini pope as a secretary of the Sacred College of the Cardinals, who was a keen musical

¹² D. MAZZOCCHI, *Dialoghi, e Sonetti posti in musica da Domenico Mazzocchi*, Francesco Zannetti, Rom 1638, 181; see also KIRNBAUER, *Vieltönige Musik*, 26-7.

¹³ D. MAZZOCCHI, *Partitura*, 63 (and accordingly in the partbooks)

¹⁴ M. KIRNBAUER, *Vieltönige Musik*.

scholar. Doni's interest in Gesualdo deserves a paper of its own, because for him the madrigals of "il Principe" represent the best examples of «melodie Metaboliche, ò variate di diesi #, & b. molli»¹⁵:

I Madrigali, massimamente i più artificiosi, come quelli del Pecci, e del Principe, ricercano molte, e variate corde, facendo alle volte di quegli'intervalli, che di rado si usano, e difficilmente s'intuonano come di seste, e settime, usando allora i segni accidentali, non solo in una voce sola; ma in tutte le parti, come fa il Principe nel Madrigale¹⁶.

The madrigals, especially the most artful like the madrigals by Pecci and Gesualdo, demand many and different pitches, asking for intervals which are seldom used and difficult to intone (like sixths and sevenths) and using therefore all accidentals, not only in one voice, but in all voices, as it was done by Gesualdo in his madrigals.

And this musical diversity in madrigals (especially in Gesualdo's), in combination with contrapuntal variety, and especially if only the upper voice is sung and the others voices played by viols, is according to Doni superior against the monotone effect of monody¹⁷:

¹⁵ G. B. DONI, *Annotazioni Sopra il Compendio de' Generi, e de' Modi della Musica*, Rom: Andrea Fei 1640, 302; KIRNBAUER, *Viertönige Musik*, 150.

¹⁶ G. B. DONI, "Trattato della Mvsica Scenica" (in *Lyra Barberina*, II Appendice 25-6).

¹⁷ Cf. G. B. DONI, "Trattato della Mvsica Scenica" (in *Id.*, *Lyra Barberina*, II 1-144, 99): «[...] i Madrigali cantati da un solo Soprano, sonandosi le altre parti con le viole: ancorchè tali composizioni non siano fatte per questo; nè detti Soprani contengano spesso tutta la cantilena, e tutto il bel procedere dell'aria.»; or Giovanni Battista Doni, *Compendio del trattato de' generi e de' modi della musica*, Rome: Andrea Fei 1635, 123: «imperoche se quelli artificii di fughe dritte, e rouescie, & altri simili, che ne' Madrigali si fanno per le voci humane, iui s'adopressero in quattro voci instrumentali, cantandosi la quinta; qual perfettione maggiore si potrebbe desiderare?»; or in his "Trattato della Mvsica Scenica" (in *id.*, *Lyra Barberina*, II 1-144, 98): «[...] potendosi praticare una sorta di melodia, che abbia tutte le perfezioni de' Madrigali, e molto più, senza quelle imperfezioni; e questa riuscirebbe tale, quando un solo Cantore, o più cantassero sempre la medesima aria; mentre altre parti differenti, ponghiamo caso, quattro fossero sonate, e non cantate, massime da Viole, e simili Instrumenti, che hanno la tenuta di voce [...], nelle quali acconciamente si potrebbero fare tutti quelli artifizi di fughe, imitazioni, ridette, &c. che ora si fanno dalle voci stesse; e così non si perderebbe l'intelligenza delle parole, come succede in questi nostri Madrigali, e Motetti».

accompagnando la voce con il concerto di tre, o quattro parti instrumentali, faranno mirabil effetto, & aiuteranno i cantori in modo, che con poca difficoltà potranno proferire gl'interualli stessi Enarmonici, tenuti quasi incantabili¹⁸;

to accompany the voice with the consort of three or four instruments makes an incredible effect and helps the singers in a way, that they can with only a little difficulty sing even enharmonic intervals, normally held as unsingable.

Although Doni propagated rather complicated viols, prepared in a special way¹⁹, he mentions 'viole communi' as well, but explicitly those in a 'more perfected manner'. Like the additional keys of a Cimbalo cromatico, these normal viols have had extra frets on the fingerboard, providing all the required many pitches²⁰:

le Viole comuni più perfette, anch'esso sogliono avere un tastino, che fa l'istesso effetto, ed altrimenti malamente vi si possono suonare i Madrigali del Principe, e simili cantilene Metaboliche, come ad ogni peritio di tali instrumenti è noto²¹.

the "viole comuni più perfette", i.e. normal viols but equipped in a more perfect manner, because they have a "tastino", an additional fret, which do the same effect [as keyboard instruments with split keys], and otherwise you cannot play Gesualdo's madrigals and similar "metabolic" melodies, as everyone with some experience on these instruments knows.

¹⁸ DONI, *Compendio*, 24; see Kirnbauer, *Vieltönige Musik*, 71.

¹⁹ See M. KIRNBAUER, "Wherein the most compleat Harmony was heard': The Viola da Gamba in Chromatic and Enharmonic Music in Seventeenth-Century Rome", in S. ORLANDO (ed.), *The Italian Viola da Gamba. Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Italian Viola da Gamba, Christophe Coin & Susan Orlando, directors, Magnano 29 April – 1 May 2000*, Solignac: Edition Ensemble Baroque de Limoges & Turin: Manzoni 2002, 34-51; Kirnbauer, *Vieltönige Musik*, 70-6.

²⁰ Cf. also G. B. DONI, "Discorso Terzo Sopra la Diuisione eguale..." (in *Annotazioni*, 284-313, 302; similar on p. 287, where he links this to "Musiche Cromatiche").

²¹ G. B. DONI, "Della Disposizione ..." (in *Lyra Barberina*, I 376-96, 389); see also KIRNBAUER, "Die Gamben Donis", 244-5. – In his "Discorso Terzo Sopra la Diuisione eguale ..." (in *Annotazioni*, 284-313, 288) Doni describes the practice «col aggiugnere vn tastino ne' luoghi del semituono maggiore, [...] con che lo diuidono nel minore, & nell' eccelso; chè la vera Diesi; & propriamente la Minima», in Doni, *Compendio*, 45-6, one can read: «il che non riesce [i.e. the aforementioned performance of music with many accidentals on Doni's viols] ne' comuni quando bene vi s'aggiunga qualche mezzo tasto che diuida ogni semituono maggiore, si perche in pochi luoghi seruono; & gl'altri recano impedimento notabile al Sonatore».

In other words: Doni is describing «viole comuni più perfette», i.e. normal viols but equipped in a «more perfect manner» with additional frets, which are needed to perform “i Madrigali del Principe”²². And it is reasonable to identify this «viole comuni più perfette» with the viols used in the “accademia delle viole”, performing madrigals by Gesualdo as well as a madrigal repertory inspired by Gesualdo. A “vieltönige” performance practice of Gesualdo’s madrigals – in augmented meantone tuning and respecting the difference between d# and eb etc. – is absolutely beyond question, at least in Rome in the context of the “accademie delle viole”. I would argue that it is likewise to assume for Gesualdo himself, who owned for example a «cimbalo cromatico»²³. But discussing this would go far beyond the limitations of my paper.

* * *

To conclude I would like to come back to this madrigal repertory inspired by Gesualdo. Beside the polyphonic madrigals by Domenico Mazzocchi, others composed such madrigals as well. Only recently a madrigal collection by Michelangelo Rossi (1601/2-1656) with altogether 32 polyphonic madrigals was discovered, notated again (like the madrigals by Gesualdo and by Mazzocchi) parallel in score and in partbooks²⁴. There are many more similarities: Rossi uses the same notational practice of signing repeated notes with accidentals (like Gesualdo and Mazzocchi) and in exploring the boundaries of the tonal

²² See also M. KIRNBAUER, “e potrà facilmente sonare quelle del Chromatico” – Das Gamenensemble in Italien und ‘vieltönige’ Musik”, in *Repertoire, Instrumente und Bauweise der Viole da gamba*, ed. by Christian Philipsen, Monika Lustig and Ute Omonsky, Augsburg: Wißner & Michaelstein: Stiftung Kloster Michaelstein 2016 (Michaelsteiner Konferenzberichte 80), 281-94.

²³ In an inventory of the castle in Gesualdo from the 1630s is mentioned «un zimbalo grande con le ottave stese cromatiche» <a grand chromatic harpsichord with enlarged octaves>; M. COLUMBRO, “Il Fondo Gesualdo della Biblioteca Provinciale di Avellino”, in Luisa Curinga (Hg.), *La musica del Principe: Studi e prospettive per Carlo Gesualdo; Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Venosa, Potenza, 17–20 settembre 2003*, Libreria musicale italiana, Lucca 2008, 171-84, 182. Interesting as well as mysterious in this context is a note by Robert Craft, that Strawinsky visited Gesualdo in July 1956 “to examine musical instruments reputedly in the basement of the castle and reputedly Gesualdo’s (Strawinsky: ‘he must have composed at a keyboard instrument’)”; R. CRAFT, “A Note on Gesualdo’s ‘Sacrae cantiones’ and on Gesualdo and Strawinsky”, in *Tempo* N.S. 45 (1957), 5-7, 6.

²⁴ “Madrigali del S: Michelangelo Rossi, Libri Due.” in USA-BEm Ms. 176 and part books in CDN-Mc Inv. 12160 (with missing part book for Cantus II, which is however preserved as a microfilm in USA-NYp *ZBT).

system – therefore we find the same warning notice to sing accidentals only if they are explicitly notated²⁵.

We do not know exactly the context of the polyphonic madrigals by Michelangelo Rossi – Brian Mann, who edited them recently, proposed a date early in the 1620s, while Rossi was in the service of cardinal Maurizio of Savoy²⁶; on the contrary, I argued for a much later date, because at least two of the madrigal texts date from the 1630s at earliest and because the two copies of the collection (the score and the partbooks) were written in Rome about 1650 and were later owned by Queen Cristina of Sweden (1626-1689), who had resided from 1656 in Rome (see below). In this perspective it makes more sense to situate Rossi's madrigals in a similar context to the madrigals of Mazzocchi.

This context leads to “madrigali al tavolino”²⁷: this term is documented for the first time in a letter of Marco Scacchi (c. 1600-1662) in 1649, where he mentioned it in his classification of musical styles in the group of secular or chamber music:

Primum est Madrigalium exclusis instrumentis, quae vocantur vulgo: da Tavolini²⁸.

The first group is the madrigal without accompaniment by instruments, which is normally called, “da Tavolino”.

The expression “da tavolino” can be derived from the image of singers sitting around a table and singing madrigals from partbooks – this as in contrast of a solo singer “al modo d’Orfeo”, standing in front of his audience and singing without sheet music (but perhaps with a lyra or a harp in his hand). This is clearly expressed in the already quoted statement of Pietro della Valle about the decline of madrigal singing:

Oggi non se ne compongono tanti, perchè si usa poco di cantare Madrigali, nè ci è occasione, in cui si abbiano da cantare : amando più le genti di sentir cantare a mente con gli strumenti in mano con franchezza, che di vedere quattro,

²⁵ “I # e i : b : non si cantano se non doue sono segnati” <Sharps and flats are sung only where they are notated>, at the begin of every part book; see B. MANN [ed.], *The Madrigals of Michelangelo Rossi* and M. KIRNBAUER, *Vieltönige Musik*, 183-6.

²⁶ B. MANN [ed.], *The Madrigals of Michelangelo Rossi*, 2-4.

²⁷ See M. KIRNBAUER, *Vieltönige Musik*, 189-97.

²⁸ M. SCACCHI, “Ad Excellentiss.: Dn. CS. Wernerum.”, ed. in Erich Katz, *Die musikalischen Stilbegriffe des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Augsburg: Bärenreiter 1926, 83-9, 83.

o cinque compagni, che cantino ad un tavolino col libro in mano, che ha troppo del scolaresco e dello studio²⁹.

Today not so many are composed, because we have little use for singing madrigals, nor occasions for singing them, since people would rather hear [musicians] singing confidently from memory, instruments in hand, than see four or five fellows singing at a little table, partbooks in hand, [all of] which has too much of the schoolboy and of study about it.

More information about the “Madrigali al tavolino” and its context can be found in a Roman madrigal publication of 1678. Domenico dal Pane (c. 1630-1694), castrato singer and later Maestro di cappella at the Cappella Sistina, writes in the dedication:

Fra tutti li Musicali Concerti, sempre quello de’i Madrigali al tauolino ha occupato i primi luoghi nelle Accademie per esser di tutti gli altri il più sublime, ritrouandosi in esso l’estratto dell’Armonia vnendo insieme con vn perfettissimo Studio, vna incomparabile vaghezza di melodia esprimendosi al viuo i sensi più proprij della Poesia à segno di muouere, e rimuouere gl’affetti de chi gl’ascolta³⁰.

Of all musical compositions, that of the “Madrigali al tavolino” has always occupied the foremost place in the academies, being of all the most sublime, as one finds in it the essence of harmony combined with a perfect study, an incomparable grace of melody expressing in life the most intrinsic meanings of the poetry in order to move, and move again the affections of whoever listens to them.

Here the art of madrigal composing and singing is again linked to musical academies, like the madrigals by Domenico Mazzocchi. This was the only place where the subtleties of counterpoint, of elegant melodies and refined harmony were still understood. And in fact, newly composed “madrigali al tavolino” as well as an older madrigal repertory like the music of Carlo Gesualdo were performed in Roman academies. This is documented for example in the acad-

²⁹ P. DELLA VALLE, “Della musica dell’età nostra”, 260; translation is taken from B. MANN [ed.], *The Madrigals of Michelangelo Rossi*, 11.

³⁰ D. DAL PANE, *Il Secondo Libro De Madrigali A Cinque Voci*, opera quarta, Rom: Succesor’al Mascardi 1678, no page number. – Margaret Anne Mabbett, *The Italian Madrigal, 1620-1655*, Ph.D. Diss. King’s College University of London 1989 <2 vol.>, I, 255-6, translates the expression “al tavolino” simply with “in partbooks”.

emy of Dal Pane's teacher, Antonio Maria Abbatini (c. 1600-1679), in which madrigals by Gesualdo and Monteverdi were performed³¹. To cite only one last example (which will also unravel also the title line of this contribution): In 1708 Alessandro Scarlatti sent a polyphonic, unaccompanied madrigal to Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici in Florence:

Dando il campo alla comparsa de' Madrigali a Tavolino (compiacimento di purgatissimo conoscimento dell'Arte speculativa del comporre che, dal Principe di Venosa in qua, la fu Regina di Svezia, che fu mia Padrona, se ne compiaceva più d'ogn'altra composizione, e V.A.R. l'hanno sostenuta) [...]³².

[...] "Madrigali a Tavolino" (a compensation of the most refined knowledge in the speculative art of composition in the manner of Gesualdo, and it was the Queen of Sweden, my former patron, who was pleased by it more than anything else).

Alessandro Scarlatti spent the years between 1680 and 1689 in Rome as a "maestro di cappella" of Queen Cristina of Sweden, who obviously loved to hear madrigals by Gesualdo. It is perhaps not by chance that (as already mentioned) the madrigals by Michelangelo Rossi were in the possession of the very same Queen Cristina. Here we can detect a direct line between the extravagant music of Carlo Gesualdo, composed at the beginning of the 17th century, its ongoing performance in Roman "accademie" and its inspiration for newly composed "madrigali al tavolino" up to the beginning of the 18th century – then still a "compiacimento di purgatissimo conoscimento dell'Arte speculativa del comporre". This is a repertory yet still to be discovered, not only in performance...

³¹ A. SPAGNA, *Oratorii ovvero Melodrammi sacri ...*, *Libro primo*, Rome: Giovanni Francesco Buagni 1706, 11-2 ("Anzi che in una virtuosa Accademia, che si adunava una volta il mese in casa del Sig. Antonio Maria Abbatini [...] dove mi ritrovai più volte, frà le altre materie ivi discusse, e ventilate, fù riconosciuto, che i nostri Recitativi erano succeduti in luogo di quei Madrigali, che furono posti in musica dal Principe di Venosa, e dal Monteverde [...]").

³² I-Fas Mediceo, Filzo 5903, Lett. n° 224 (quoted by Mario Fabbri, *Alessandro Scarlatti e il Principe Ferdinando de' Medici*, Florence: Olschki 1961 [Historiae Musicae Cultores, Biblioteca 16], 82-3, 82); cf. also B. MANN (ed.), *The Madrigals of Michelangelo Rossi*, 9.