VII WERT, ARIOSTO, AND THE PHALÈSE ANTHOLOGIES

MARCO MANGANI

Giaches de Wert's madrigals appear to have fared badly in Flemish music publishing. As Gerald R. Hoekstra has observed regarding the anthologies of Phalèse, "in spite of Wert's popularity in Italy and his importance as a madrigalist, the composer received little attention in these popular Antwerp anthologies, and none of his madrigal books was reprinted in the Low Countries".[1] Accordingly, in the collections bound in PL-Wu SDM 8–36 we encounter only three madrigals by Wert: *Vaghi boschetti di soavi allori* (in *Melodia olympica*),[2] *Chi salirà per me, madonna, in cielo* (in *Symphonia angelica*),[3] and *Cara la vita mia* (in *Musica divina*).[4] The pieces belong to different creative periods of the composer's oeuvre: *Cara la vita mia* and *Chi salirà per me, madonna, in cielo* were both published in 1558 (in RISM W 855 and 1558[13], respectively), while *Vaghi boschetti di soavi allori* is a much later composition that first appears in Wert's Seventh Book of Madrigals for Five Voices (1581, RISM W 884). But even though Wert's madrigals are a minor presence in PL-Wu SDM 8–36 in quantitative terms and the settings were not composed at the same time, the selection is still worth considering, as it fleshes out the overall picture of the reception of Wert's madrigals and helps us to better understand the stylistic orientation of the anthologies produced in Antwerp. Furthermore, *Vaghi boschetti* and *Chi salirà per me* are both based

1 Hoekstra, "Wert's Reception", 73.
2 Wert, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VII, 22–24.
3 Wert, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XV, 62–64.
4 Wert, *Opera Omnia*, vol. I, 45–48.

on octaves from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, a coincidence that suggests that reading the two settings in comparison could be fruitful. Finally, a case study on Wert's madrigals also seems appropriate given that a specific interest in his music appears to have existed within the context in which PL-Wu SDM 8–36 was used, at the Viadrina University in Frankfurt an der Oder: PL-Wu SDM 44–55, a set of partbooks from that institution, contains a copy of the *Modulationum sacrarum quinque et sex vocum libri tres*, a large anthology of Wert's motets printed in Nuremberg in 1583 (RISM W 853).

VII.1 *CARA LA VITA MIA*

Cara la vita mia, on a text by an unknown author, was published in Wert's *Primo libro di madrigali a cinque voci*, printed in Venice by Girolamo Scotto in 1558 (RISM W 855). We can once again cite Hoekstra regarding the qualities of this youthful madrigal, in particular its "prevailing free homophonic texture with occasional points of imitation".[5] With regard to the dissemination of *Cara la vita mia* throughout Europe, Hoekstra speculated that its appearance in *Musica divina* may have marked the beginning of a new wave of popularity, and he cites a range of evidence in support of this claim.[6] The success of *Cara la vita mia* is evident also from its citation in the text of the madrigal *Dall'odorate spoglie*, written by Orsina Cavalletta and set to music by Luzzasco Luzzaschi (*Terzo libro de' madrigali a cinque voci*, 1582, RISM L 3124), Lodovico Agostini (*Nuovo echo*, 1583, RISM A 409), Giulio Eremita (*Madrigali a cinque voci. Libro primo*, 1586, RISM E 744), and Carlo Gesualdo (*Madrigali a cinque voci [Libro secondo]*, 1594, RISM G 1725). Cavalletta's text, which celebrates Laura Peperara's musical skills, closes with an eloquent exhortation that, if nothing else, demonstrates the independent fame enjoyed by Wert's *Cara la vita mia* in Ferrara:[7]

5 Hoekstra, "Wert's Reception", 76.
6 Hoekstra, "Wert's Reception", 76.
7 On this text and its musical settings, see Passadore, "'Dice… d'essersi messo'", 202–3; Newcomb, "Gesualdo's Luzzaschi", 221–22; Gesualdo, *Madrigali*, xlvii, lxxiv–lxxv (with translation by Elisabetta Zoni), and 52–56.

Dall'odorate spoglie
sciogliete omai la mano
che 'l mio voler e disvoler mi toglie;
e quell'arpa felice
a cui non si disdice
stringersi col bel petto,
d'Amor fido ricetto,
togliete, e con l'usata leggiadria
fateci udir "Cara la vita mia".

From your sweet-smelling robes
free now your hand
which takes my will and unwillingness from me;
and pick up that lucky harp
which can, without disgrace,
be held close to your fair bosom,
faithful receptacle of love,
and with your wonted grace
let us hear "Cara la vita mia".[8]

VII.2 WERT AND *ORLANDO FURIOSO*

As mentioned above, the other two pieces by Wert in the anthologies examined here are both based on octaves from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*: the first octave of Canto XXXV (*Chi salirà per me*) and the twenty-first octave of Canto VI (*Vaghi boschetti*), respectively.

In Wert's oeuvre, octaves from *Orlando Furioso* are a constant presence.[9] A comprehensive examination of Wert's Ariosto settings would be in order, along the lines of the research on his settings of Torquato Tasso's rhymes and octaves.[10] This task is beyond the scope of the present chapter, however, which will therefore limit itself to a comparison of the two madrigals from the Phalèse publications to which the present book is dedicated.

When considering the madrigal settings of Ariosto's octaves, one popular approach is to explore their relationship with the tradition of the *arie per cantar ottave*, that is, the melodic formulae intended for the stanzaic execution of long narratives articulated in *ottava rima*.[11] Obviously, the relationship between madrigal composition and the oral tradition of the *cantar ottave* does not translate into the straightforward adoption of the formal models typical of the latter practice. What we find, rather, is the frequent recurrence—at least in madrigals composed on Ariosto's octaves—of two stylistic features: the *arioso* character of the subjects, at least as they are presented in the leading voice of each

8 Translation by Elisabetta Zoni.
9 According to RePIM, there are thirty Ariosto settings by Wert, composed between 1558 and 1581. On the spread of the octave metre within the sixteenth-century madrigal and the privileged position of Ariosto's poem, see Luzzi, "L'ottava rima", 47–52. Balsano and Haar, "L'Ariosto in musica" remains a seminal study on Ariosto's particular case.
10 Schick, "Melische Dichtung". See also Owens, "Marenzio and Wert".
11 Haar, "Arie per cantar". See also Luzzi, "L'ottava rima", 52–60.

point of imitation; and the presence of musical repetitions that are independent of the meaning of the text, thus creating a formal regularity that seems, to a certain extent, to be established *a priori*. With regard to the first aspect in particular, "*arioso* character" does not refer to homorhythmic declamation performed in imitation of solo singing—a feature that James Haar rightly points out as connoting the *arioso* style.[12] Rather, we are referring to the strong directionality of a musical idea, compatible with the *arioso* style, even in cases where this idea is used as the subject of a point of imitation (▶ Ex. VII.2). This is an aspect that may help to explain the inclusion among Barré's *arioso* madrigals (see below) of pieces such as Wert's *Chi salirà*, in which the element of homorhythmic declamation does not seem to play a particularly prominent role except sporadically as a function of musical word-painting (▶ Ex. VII.5). At the same time, it is well worth exploring whether and to what extent such stylistic traits (*arioso* subjects and formal outline) derived from the oral tradition are reconciled with the rhetorical amplifications and word painting typical of madrigal aesthetics.

▶ p. 200

▶ p. 202

From this perspective, a comparison of Wert's two Ariosto madrigals in the Phalèse anthologies, two pieces that, as mentioned above, belong to two different stylistic phases of Wert's oeuvre, is highly instructive.

VII.3 *CHI SALIRÀ PER ME, MADONNA, IN CIELO*

The madrigal *Chi salirà per me, madonna, in cielo*, first published in Rome by Antonio Barrè in 1558,[13] is based on the opening octave of Canto XXXV. Astolfo has just recovered Orlando's wits and is now visiting the palace of Time and Glory. The octave that opens Canto XXXV, along with the one immediately following, constitutes a digression: the poet, addressing his beloved, wonders who would be willing to go and recover the sense she has taken from him by making him fall in love with her:[14]

12 Haar, "Arioso and Canzonetta". According to Haar, this kind of *arioso* seems to be a stylistic trait of Wert's even beyond the poetic form of the octave.

13 The piece was included in the *Secondo libro delle muse… madrigali ariosi* (RISM 1558[13]) and was Wert's first contribution to an anthology of music. See Fenlon, *Giaches de Wert*, 23–32, in particular 28–29.

14 For the text of the poem, cf. Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, ed. Segre; the English translations are taken from Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, trans. Waldman, modified as necessary by the author to follow Wert's version of the text.

Chi salirà per me, madonna, in cielo
a riportarn'il mio perdut'ingegno?
che, poi ch'uscì da' bei vostr'occhi il telo
che 'l cor mi fisse, ognor perdendo vegno.
Né di tanta iattura mi querelo,
pur che non cresca, ma stia a questo segno;
ch'io dubito, se più se[15] va scemando,
che stolto me n'andrò pel mondo errando
[Ariosto: di venir tal qual ho descritto Orlando].

Who will ascend to heaven, mistress mine, to fetch me back my lost wits? They have been ebbing away ever since my heart was transfixed by the arrows shot from your fair eyes—not that I complain of my misfortune so long as it grows no worse than it is now: I fear that any further depletion of my wits will lead me to wander the world like a fool [Ariosto: shall reduce me to the very condition I have described in Orlando].

Leaving aside the minimal variant in line 7 ("si va" to "se va"), it is worth noting the major textual variant related to line 8, which in the version set to music by Wert eliminates the direct reference to the main character of Ariosto's poem. As far as we know, only one setting of this octave preceded Wert's:[16] it features in the *Secondo Libro* of Anselme de Reulx, published in Venice in 1546 (RISM R 1206). Since the variant is not present in Reulx's version, we can assume that it was introduced by Wert himself. If this is indeed the case, it confirms the musician's erudition, or at least his in-depth knowledge of *Orlando Furioso*, since that variant is an adaptation of the line that concludes octave 42 of Canto XXXI; these are the words of Fiordiligi, who informs Rinaldo that Orlando, once wise and renowned, has been made a fool, and is wandering through the world: "è fatto stolto e va pel mondo errando". It is not until Marc'Antonio Pordenon's *Terzo libro de' madrigali a 5 voci*, published in 1571 (RISM P 5103), that we re-encounter the textual variant adopted by Wert. While it is possible to hypothesize that the text set by Pordenon was taken directly from Wert, at present there is insufficient evidence to support this hypothesis. However, the fact remains that, as far as we know, this particular version does not seem to be attested in the literary tradition of Ariosto's poem.

Coming to the music, we note that the two characteristics of Ariosto settings mentioned above, namely the *arioso* nature of the subjects and the formal regularity independent of the content of the poetic text, are present to a very marked degree in this madrigal by Wert, which is perhaps unsurprising given that it was originally included in an anthology of *madrigali ariosi*.

15 Ariosto: "si".
16 As indicated by searching in *RePIM* (accessed 5 July 2023).

The tonal type chosen by Wert for this madrigal is g2-♭-F. As Daniele Sabaino and the present author have repeatedly shown, this is one of the tonal types that present the fewest problems in terms of modal attribution.[17] We can only wonder whether, at this early stage, Wert was still adhering to the eight-mode system—in which case it can be read as fifth mode[18]—or had already embraced the twelve-mode system—in which case it can be read as eleventh mode transposed to the upper fourth. Be that as it may, the exordium (▶ Ex. VII.1), the tenor range (▶ Ex. VII.2), and the cadential plan—the latter consisting entirely of cadences on F and C—indisputably indicate an authentic mode.

▶ p. 200

▶ p. 200

Let us consider the musical subjects of the first two lines as they appear in the tenor voice (▶ Ex. VII.2). Their most significant feature is the balance they strike between the *arioso* character typical of the oral tradition and the musical word-painting that characterizes the madrigal aesthetics. Taken together, the two subjects form a single melodic pathway, structured by an antecedent ending on *a'* (the first subject) and a consequent ending on *f* (the second subject). At the same time, the melody's trajectory is conceived so as to express the meaning of the words: the entirely ascending line of the first subject, exceeding the octave above the *finalis* by a major third, is an evident madrigalism of the verb "salire" ("to ascend"), while the descending line of the second subject just as clearly represents the act of descending to "bring back" the poet's lost wits.

In addition to this synthesis of *arioso* and madrigal elements, *Chi salirà* has a straightforward formal structure (see Table 1). As is also frequently the case in the early Florentine madrigal (regardless of the metre adopted for the poetic text), the distinctive feature of this arrangement is the musical repetition that concerns the first two pairs of lines,

17 Mangani and Sabaino, "Tonal Types".

18 It is worth remembering that the traditional fifth mode generally has B♭ in the key signature not to indicate a transposition, but rather to alert singers to the risk of creating *mi contra fa* at imitation points. In other words, as Zarlino puts it, the *F–f* octave species "only allows harmonic subdivision" ("non riceve altra divisione che l'harmonica"); i.e., it can only be subdivided into a low fifth (*F–c*) and a high fourth (*c–f*), whereas the sequence fourth plus fifth would result not in an arithmetic division, but rather in a tritone followed by a diminished fifth. See Zarlino, *Istitutioni harmoniche*, IV.22, 325. For this reason, as Glarean observed, the Lydian mode "is not used in our time by singers, who turn all its songs into the Ionian by substituting *fa* for *mi* in the *b* key" (i.e., introducing B♭ instead of B♮). See Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, trans. Miller, vol. I, 166. See also Mangani and Sabaino, "Is Modality still a Compositional Tool in Monteverdi's 1610 Mass?". These two authors are currently researching the presence and characteristics of the fifth and sixth modes without B♭ in the compositional practice of the second half of the sixteenth century.

TABLE 1. Giaches de Wert, *Chi salirà per me, madonna, in cielo:* formal structure

LINE PAIRS	MUSIC	TEXT
AB_1	*A*	Chi salirà per me, madonna, in cielo
		a riportarn'il mio perdut'ingegno?
AB_2	*A*	che, poi ch'uscì da' bei vostr'occhi il telo
		ch 'l cor mi fisse, ognor perdendo vegno.
AB_3	*B*	Né di tanta iattura mi querelo,
		pur che non cresca, ma stia a questo segno;
CC	*C*	ch'io dubito, se più se va scemando,
		ch'io stolto me n'andrò pel mondo errando.
CC	*C*	ch'io dubito, *etc.*

which share the same rhyme.[19] (In ▶ Ex. VII.3, in order to show that the first two pairs of lines are musically identical, their music is written out only once.) In this way, the formal imperative typical of fixed forms ends up prevailing over the madrigal element, since the music of the first two lines no longer has any analogous relationship with the content of lines 3 and 4. However, the analogy between text and music dominates again in the setting of lines 5 and 6, the last two AB rhymes, for which Wert composes new music. Particularly noteworthy is the musical rendering of line 6: the concept of the "misfortune" ("iattura") that must not "grow" ("purché non cresca") is underlined by the static repetition of a subject that remains locked within a narrow ambitus (▶ Ex. VII.4).

▶ p. 201

▶ p. 202

One final point remains to be made about this youthful experiment of Wert's. Since he decides to end the piece by repeating the text and music of the last two lines in full, *Chi salirà* ends up—from a purely musical point of view—with the form typical of a tripartite canzonetta: AA|B|CC.[20] The fact that the B section is the only one not to end with an authentic cadence (▶ Ex. VII.5)—a common occurrence in tripartite canzonettas—suggests that this arrangement is no accident; moreover, it is a form that Wert would later use to great effect in his *Canzonette villanelle* (Venice, 1589; RISM W 888).

▶ p. 202

19 Gialdroni and Ziino, "Machiavelli in musica", 55; Luzzi "L'ottava rima", 55.

20 On the formal schemes and other musical aspects of the canzonetta in the second half of the sixteenth century, see Assenza, *La canzonetta*, 144–209. On the style of Wert's *Canzonette villanelle*, see Mangani, "Per un'analisi", vol. 1, 156–58.

VII.4 *VAGHI BOSCHETTI DI SOAVI ALLORI*

Wert's *Vaghi boschetti di soavi allori* is his last published setting of a text from *Orlando Furioso*, appearing, as mentioned above, in his 1581 Book of Madrigals for Five Voices (RISM W 884). The text describes the enchanted garden of the sorceress Alcina, towards which the marvelling Ruggiero glides astride a hippogriff:[21]

Vaghi boschetti di soavi allori,
di palme e d'amenissime mortelle,
cedri ed aranci ch'avean frutti e fiori
conteste[22] in varie forme e tutte belle,
facean ripari[23] ai fervidi calori
di[24] giorni estivi con lor spesse ombrelle;
e tra quei rami con sicuri voli
cantando se ne gìan i rosignuoli.

Enticing thickets of cool laurel, of palms and loveliest myrtle, of cedar and orange trees whose fruit and blossoms were disposed in sundry harmonious ways—these all afforded shade, with their thick spreading foliage, against the searing heat of the summer's day. And, safe amid their branches, flitted melodious nightingales.

This octave inspired a far greater number of musical settings than *Chi salirà*.[25] It seems to have aroused marked interest in the first half of the 1580s in particular, starting with Marc'Antonio Ingegneri's version in his *Terzo Libro* for five voices (Venice, 1580, RISM I 55). In addition to Wert's version, these years saw the publication of settings by Benedetto Pallavicino (5 vv., 1581, RISM P 773), Girolamo Belli (5 vv., 1584, Nuovo Vogel 308),[26] Rinaldo Del Mel (6 vv., 1584, RISM M 2199),[27] and Filippo Nicoletti (5 vv., 1585, RISM N 677).

Wert's madrigal is in the tonal type g2-♮-A. This is a notoriously problematic type in terms of modal attribution, although in several cases the second mode, transposed to the upper octave and ending on

21 The poetic text in *Melodia olympica* is identical to that in the print of the *Settimo libro*, apart from a few misprints in the Phalèse edition. It is worth noting that the variant in line 6 ("di" instead of "de'") coincides with that of the second edition of Ariosto's poem (1521); the wording of the penultimate line, however, clearly shows that Wert had recourse to the last edition of the poem (1532), as the two previous editions (1516 and 1521) were worded "e tra li rami" (see Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, ed. Debenedetti and Segre). Finally, the modern spelling of the euphonious conjunction has been adopted here ("cedri ed aranci"), since it is established that the spelling "et" was an etymological residue with no phonetic significance (the issue is summarized in Mangani, *O felice eloquenza*, 29–30).

22 Ariosto: "contesti".

23 Ariosto: "riparo".

24 Ariosto: "de'".

25 RePIM counts no less than twelve settings of *Vaghi boschetti*, compared to six of *Chi salirà*.

26 There was a complete copy of this print in the Gdansk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PL-GD), but it has now disappeared.

27 The bass part of this collection has not survived.

the *confinalis*, is easily recognizable.[28] This modal attribution also holds for *Vaghi boschetti*, as shown by the *exordium* and the tenor ambitus (▶ Ex. VII.6) as well as by the cadential plan, in which the cadences on A alternate only with cadences on D. ▶ p. 203

As far as the relationship with the tradition of the *arie per cantar ottave* is concerned, *Vaghi boschetti* differs markedly from *Chi salirà* and is oriented far more towards the purely madrigal end of the spectrum. In fact, in *Vaghi boschetti*, exact repetition is reserved for the music of the first line, which is taken up in its entirety in the third line, while the music of the fourth line does not repeat that of the second, but is completely new. Another important difference lies in the way the musical repetition is introduced: whereas in *Chi salirà* the setting of the second line closes with an authentic cadence in which all the voices participate without producing any shift in the pronunciation of the text (see again the conclusion of ▶ Ex. VII.3), in *Vaghi boschetti* such a cadence is present, but it occurs when the alto has already begun the reprise of the initial point of imitation, taking over the role previously played by the quinto. At the same time, the quinto concludes the pronunciation of the second line when the cadence has already been realized, while the bass presents a truncated *clausula basizans*: the goal of the descending fifth, typical of the bass voice in the cadential context, is replaced by a rest (▶ Ex. VII.6). As a result, the repetition of the music of the first line is strongly disguised, and the piece's connection with the formal articulations typical of the oral tradition is severely weakened. Instead, the *arioso* nature of the musical subjects is preserved (▶ Ex. VII.6), giving the piece a lightness far removed from the highly expressive madrigals that Wert himself composed to verses by Tasso, for example. It is significant, however, that even in his last Ariosto setting Wert wished to maintain a link, however tenuous, with the *cantar ottave* tradition. ▶ p. 201 ▶ p. 203 ▶ p. 203

A glance at some of the settings of this octave that appeared in print in the same period reveals a wide variety of approaches, ranging from the exact repetition of the music of the first line in the third line to the complete absence of musical repetition.

28 Powers, "The Modality"; Mangani and Sabaino, "Tonal Types", 234.

In Nicoletti's piece we find exact repetition,[29] so much so that it is possible to transcribe almost all the music of the first line by placing the text of the third line under the notes (▶ Ex. VII.7). However, Nicoletti distinguishes the respective cadences in such a way that the first line ends on the *finalis*, while the third ends on the *repercussa* of the plagal mode (▶ Ex. VII.8a–b). In doing so, Nicoletti shifts the cadential plan in relation to the *exordium* of the piece, which clearly configures a first mode (i.e., authentic) transposed to the upper fourth (▶ Ex. VII.7). As for the way the repetition is introduced, it is true that there is a textual mismatch with the previous cadence (▶ Ex. VII.9) but, compared to what Wert does at the same point (▶ Ex. VII.6), this mismatch is minimal.

▶ p. 204 ▶ p. 205 ▶ p. 204 ▶ p. 206 ▶ p. 203

At the opposite extreme to Nicoletti is the piece by Benedetto Pallavicino,[30] who, while retaining the *arioso* character of the musical subjects, carefully avoids any repetition of a formal nature.

An intermediate case, which I have examined elsewhere, is the madrigal by Marc'Antonio Ingegneri.[31] In this madrigal, the music of the first line is only partially repeated, limited to the incipit of the two upper voices. Moreover, the repetition occurs in an unexpected place: not in the third line, which shares the rhyme of the first, but in the seventh, which, according to the strophic scheme of the *ottava rima*, presents a completely new rhyme. The traditional relationship between repetition of rhyme and musical repetition is thus completely severed (▶ Ex. VII.10a–b). The strength of the musical repetition is preserved, however, by the fact that Ingegneri sets the last couplet of the octave identically, twice in succession. A similar choice is evident in the madrigal *Vaghi Boschetti* by Marc'Antonio Pordenon (da Pordenone), which appeared in his second book of madrigals for five voices, printed in Venice in 1567 (RISM P5102): in fact, Pordenon sets the last line of the octave twice in succession, with a subject identical to that of the first line (▶ Ex. VII.11a–b).

▶ p. 207–8 ▶ p. 209

29 Nicoletti's piece includes a second part that sets the next octave of Ariosto's poem. This second part does not contain a similar musical repetition.
30 Pallavicino, *Opera Omnia*, vol. I, 9–12.
31 Ingegneri, *Il terzo libro*, ed. Mangani, XLII; for the whole piece, see also LI (poetic text) and 11–14 (music).

VII.5 CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis has shown that the connection of madrigal settings of *Orlando Furioso* with the *arioso* tradition of *cantar ottave* gives rise to a varied typology that does not follow a linear evolutionary path. In the case of Wert, a more thorough investigation is required to review the totality of his Ariosto settings from this specific angle. As far as Phalèse's choices are concerned, although the scarcity of Wert's madrigals in his collections remains largely unexplained, it is clear from what we have seen that they were to a large extent oriented precisely towards the felicitous *arioso* vein of the Flemish master's music.