VI *VESTIVA I COLLI E LE CAMPAGNE INTORNO*: PALESTRINA READS CAPILUPI

FRANCESCO SAGGIO

Although Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina is now better known for his sacred works, throughout his lifetime he also devoted himself to the secular repertory.[1] His secular oeuvre comprises more than one hundred compositions, printed in two monograph publications and in about twenty anthologies.[2] In addition, he published two books of spiritual madrigals for five voices,[3] a genre at the intersection of sacred and secular.[4] Even though his sacred production was greater by far, his secular works enjoyed popularity and were published widely;[5] indeed, in the early years of his career, Palestrina's fame was closely linked to his madrigals.[6] Against this background, it is no surprise to find Palestrina represented in the anthologies of Italian madrigals printed by Phalèse. Two of the collections that constitute the set PL-Wu SDM

1 Note that Palestrina is the composer's birthplace; his proper surname was Pierluigi (his father was Sante Pierluigi). However, the composer was already known as "il Palestrina" during his lifetime. On the composer's biography, see Tibaldi, "Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giovanni".

2 The monograph publications are RISM P 752 and P 763.

3 RISM P 761 and P 764.

4 A comprehensive catalogue of secular and spiritual madrigals is provided in Della Sciucca, *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, 358–62 and in Japs, *Die Madrigale*, 367–401.

5 Palestrina features in most madrigal collections of the second half of the sixteenth century, particularly the Roman ones. Sometime his name is highlighted on the title page, as is the case in RISM 1558[13] ("con doe canzoni di Giannetto", "Giannetto" being the nickname Palestrina used for his secular compositions in anthologies).

6 See Tibaldi, "Ingegneri e Vinci rielaborano Palestrina", 634–37.

8–36 feature works by Palestrina: *Melodia Olympica* (*Morì quasi il mio core*; *Veramente in amore*; and *Non son le vostre mani*) and *Musica Divina* (*Già fu chi m'hebbe cara*;[7] *Qual più crudel martire*; *Vestiva i colli e le campagne intorno*; and *Ogni loco mi porge doglia e pianto*). Of these, one madrigal in particular holds a special status in the history of the genre, *Vestiva i colli e le campagne intorno*. Few other pieces of the entire madrigal repertory can compete with its popularity. Its celebrity is evident not only from the circulation of the piece itself, but also from the vocal and instrumental elaborations of it, as well as from its use as a model for several imitation masses. Moreover, it is likely that *Vestiva i colli* was performed and appreciated precisely within the context in which PL-Wu SDM 8–36 was first used, the academic environment of Frankfurt an der Oder. As highlighted in Chapter 1, the title of the madrigal is underlined in the table of contents of the canto partbook of PL-Wu SDM 8–36. Furthermore, a handwritten German contrafact of the madrigal, *Ich will den Herren loben allezeit*, appears in PL-Wu SDM 73, a set of partbooks that belonged to the library of Viadrina University in Frankfurt an der Oder.[8]

In the following, I will provide as complete a picture of the madrigal as possible. I will retrace the textual tradition of *Vestiva i colli*, investigating the place and time of its composition. I will then examine the poetic text and proceed to an analysis of the madrigal's musical characteristics. The results of this analysis will, I hope, provide some explanation of *Vestiva i colli*'s enduring popularity from the Renaissance to the present day. We will see that it was not always the complexity or uniqueness of a composition that determined its success; on the contrary, I argue that it was the sheer regularity and orthodoxy of *Vestiva i colli* that led to its widespread circulation.

VI.1 TRADITION AND RECEPTION OF *VESTIVA I COLLI*

The madrigal *Vestiva i colli* was first published in *Il Desiderio. Secondo libro de madrigali a cinque voci de diversi auttori*, a madrigal collection

7 The text is by Giovanni Boccaccio, an unusual choice for a Renaissance madrigal. On settings of Boccaccio in the sixteenth century, see Campagnolo, "Boccaccio in musica nel Cinquecento".

8 PL-Wu SDM 73 is an incomplete set of partbooks that binds together Costantino Ferrabosco's *Canzonette a quatro voci… liber quarto* (Nuremberg: K. Gerlach, 1590; RISM F 258) and several handwritten pages. *Ich will den Herren loben allezeit* appears on the endpapers and bears the number "VII". I would like to thank Antonio Chemotti for sharing this information.

assembled by Giulio Bonagiunta, printed in Venice in 1566 by Girolamo Scotto in collaboration with the bookseller Aniello Sanvito.[9] *Il Desiderio* is a set of three volumes, the first and the third for four voices, the second for five voices. Its peculiar title derives from the first madrigal of the set, *Il desiderio e la speranza Amore* by Cipriano de Rore. The collection contains madrigals by composers of varying fame, primarily active in the regions and milieus with which Bonagiunta was himself associated: the Veneto, the Marche (his birthplace), and the Bavarian court, which he visited several times. Palestrina, so closely linked to Rome, is something of an anomaly, and indeed in the three volumes of *Il Desiderio* he is represented by *Vestiva i colli* alone.

It is difficult to determine the madrigal's date of composition precisely. The dedicatory letter of *Il Desiderio*—addressed to the Venetian nobleman Alessandro Contarini—is dated 5 December 1565. Accordingly, Bonagiunta must have obtained a copy of *Vestiva i colli* for his book in the final months of 1565 at the latest. But this provides only a *terminus ante quem* for the composition. Albeit employed at religious institutions, Palestrina was no stranger to the secular genre: his first known madrigal appears in a collection dated 1554,[10] and in 1555 he already published his first complete book of madrigals,[11] followed by several madrigals scattered in various anthologies.[12] To complicate things further, the composer's biography is poorly documented for the period when *Il Desiderio* was assembled: he became chapel master at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome on 1 March 1561, but the last document concerning this role is dated 20 January 1565. His next official employment, at the Seminario Romano, is attested only from April 1566 onwards. The madrigal could also have been composed in the summer of 1564, when Palestrina headed the private chapel of Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este (Lucrezia Borgia's son) at the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, certainly a suitable context for the production of secular music.[13]

9 RISM 1566[3]. Giulio Bonagiunta was a musician, composer, and editor of several music prints, mostly anthologies. He was a singer at San Marco in Venice from 1562 to 1568, when he entered the service of the Farnese family in Parma. Cf. Antolini, "Bonagiunta, Giulio".

10 *Con dolce, altiero e amoroso cenno* (RISM 1554[28], p. 2).

11 On the tradition of the first book of madrigals, see Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Il primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci*, ed. Gialdroni.

12 At least six collections before *Il Desiderio* contain Palestrina's madrigals. One of the most important is RISM 1561[10], which features eight madrigals by the composer.

13 Tibaldi, "Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giovanni".

Interestingly, the first reprint of *Vestiva i colli* occurred not in Italy, but in a northern anthology, namely Phalèse's *Musica Divina* (1583). Only one year later, in 1584, *Vestiva i colli* was the first piece in the Venetian collection *Spoglia amorosa. Madrigali a cinque voci*.[14] In 1588 it appeared in *Gemma musicalis* (Nuremberg)[15] and in *Musica transalpina* (London), with its text translated into English.[16] Finally, in 1593 it was also printed in *Nuova spoglia amorosa* (Venice).[17] The madrigal was also copied from the prints into several manuscript sources.[18]

Vestiva i colli's popularity is further attested by the large number of transcriptions and reworkings produced in the years between the *editio princeps* (1566) and the first reprint (1583). In 1568 Vincenzo Galilei transcribed it into lute tablature for his *Fronimo Dialogo*,[19] and it was used as the polyphonic model for masses by Caterino Bianchi (1574) and Palestrina.[20] The lute and voice tablature of Cosimo Bottegari was composed in the same period.[21] From the 1580s onwards we see a continuous stream of such publications up to the second half of the seventeenth century.[22] There are about ten tablatures, for lute (with or without voice) and for keyboard,[23] more than twenty imitation masses,[24] two Magnificats *ad imitationem*,[25] *contrafacta*, transcriptions with diminutions,[26] as

14 RISM 1584[5]; pp. 3–4.

15 RISM 1588[21], No. XXVII. The editor of *Gemma musicalis* took Palestrina's madrigal from the first edition of *Musica Divina* (1583), as demonstrated by a linguistic mistake they share. In *Musica Divina* the first verse of the madrigal is printed as "Festiv'i colli e le campagn'intorno" and listed as "Festivi colli" in the table of contents. This mistake was corrected in the 1588 edition of *Musica Divina* (RISM 1588[16]), but the same erroneous reading is found in *Gemma Musicalis*.

16 RISM 1588[29], No. XXX. Note that *Musica transalpina* reproduces only the first part of the madrigal, with the following text, which is a free paraphrase of the original Italian: "Sound out my voice, with pleasant tunes recording, / the new delight that Love to mee inspireth, / pleasd and content with that my mind desireth, / thanked be Love so heavenly loyes affording, / she that my plaints with rigor long reiected, / bynding my heart with those hir golden tresses, / in recompence of all my long distresses, / said with a sigh: —Thy griefe hath mee infected—".

17 RISM 1593[5]; pp. 26 [*recte* 27]–28.

18 See Japs, *Die Madrigale*, 374–81.

19 RISM G 145, pp. 15–16. Galilei, speaking of Palestrina as a madrigalist, calls him "grande imitatore della natura" ("great imitator of nature", p. 61). On this topic, see Carapetyan, "The Concept of 'Imitazione della natura'".

20 RISM B 2520; RISM P 683.

21 The transcription survives only in Bottegari's autograph manuscript, I-MOe Mus. C 311, fol. 41^{r-v}.

22 The last imitation mass, Bonifacio Graziani's *Missa Vestiva i colli*, is dated 1671 (RISM G 3685). The various elaborations and derivative works are listed and described in Reardon, "Two Parody Magnificats", 71–72, n. 18; Delfino, "Due appunti", 483–86; Della Sciucca, *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, 140–42; Toffetti, "*Contrafacta* of Palestrina's Works", 100–10.

23 In addition to the abovementioned tablatures by Galilei and Bottegari, there is also one for solo lute by Emanuel Adriaenssen (RISM 1584[12]).

24 For a complete survey, see Japs, *Die Madrigale*, 327–40.

25 Described in Reardon, "Two Parody Magnificats".

26 For example, Della Casa, *Il vero modo di diminuire*, 36–37.

well as reworkings, quotations, and even a parody, Adriano Banchieri's *Rostiva i corni e le castagne al forno*.[27]

VI.2 CAPILUPI'S SONNET *VESTIVA I COLLI*

Naturally, before it became a madrigal, *Vestiva i colli e le campagne intorno* was a poem. The following version of the text is based on *Musica Divina* (1595), the edition that appears in PL-Wu SDM 8–36:

Vestiva i colli e le campagn' intorno la primavera di novell'honori, e spirava suavi arabi odori, cinta d'herb'e di fronde'l crin adorno.	Spring dressed the hills and fields around with new honours, and it breathed sweet Arabian scents, girdled with herbs and her hair adorned with leaves.
Quando Licori, a l'apparir del giorno, cogliendo di sua man purpurei fiori, mi diss': "In guidardon di tant'ardori, a te li colgo et ecco io te n'adorno".	When Licori, at the break of day, picking purple flowers with her hand, said to me: "As a reward for such ardour, I pick these for you; see, I adorn you with them."
Così le chiome mie, suavemente parlando, cinse, e 'n sì dolci legami mi strins'il cor, ch'altro piacer non sente.	Thus, speaking gently, she encircled my hair, and she bound my heart with such sweet bonds that it feels no other pleasure.
Onde non fia giamai che più non l'ami degli occhi miei, né fia che la mia mente altri sospiri desiand', o chiami.	Hence, it will never be that I love her less than my own eyes, nor will my mind ever sigh or call with desire for someone else.

The poem is a sonnet, with fourteen hendecasyllables divided into two quatrains and two tercets. The rhyme scheme is *ABBA ABBA CDC DCD*. Verses 4 and 8 are in *rima equivoca* (equivocal rhyme), using the same word "adorno" in two different grammatical functions. Verses 9 and 13 have a derivative rhyme, "suavemente": "mente". From a syntactic point of view, each quatrain and tercet is a complete unit in itself. In the tercets, however, the syntax is less bound to the verse unit; in particular, in verses 9–13 there are enjambements: "suavemente / parlando" (verses 9–10); "legami / mi strinse" (verses 10–11); "l'ami / degli occhi miei" (verses 12–13). Thus, the first hemistich of the verse is tied syntactically to the previous verse.

The poem's topic is typical of pastoral poetry, both in its vocabulary and in its narrative structure:[28]

27 RISM B 817. For a description of the parody process, see Della Sciucca, *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, 144–51.
28 On the pastoral poetry of the time, see Ferroni, *Dulces lusus. Lirica pastorale*.

First quatrain	Verses 1–4	*Opening*. Idyllic pastoral setting, caught in the moment of nature's greatest splendour, the spring (metaphor for the "best" human age, youth).
Second quatrain / First tercet	Verses 5–11	*Narrative episode*. Floral tribute of the nymph Licori (verses 5–6), brief interlocution (7–8), and binding of the lover (9–11). The time indication "a l'apparir del giorno" ("at the break of day"), in addition to contributing to the description of the pastoral environment, could allude to the nocturnal consummation of the passion between Licori and her beloved (a shepherd?). In that case, verse 7, "in guidardon di tant'ardori" ("As a reward for such ardour") would refer to this event.
Second tercet	Verses 12–14	*Epilogue*. Final invocation and declaration of loving devotion.

The author of the sonnet, Ippolito Capilupi, was a Mantuan nobleman and prominent prelate who served as bishop of Fano from 1560 until 1567. Capilupi was associated with the diplomatic career of Duke Ercole Gonzaga: in the role of Gonzaga's agent at the papal curia, he spent most of his life in Rome.[29] He enjoyed a strong relationship with Pope Julius III, whose election to the Holy See Duke Gonzaga had supported. Note that even though there is no evidence of a direct relationship between Palestrina and Capilupi, they were both part of Pope Julius III's milieu, and they may have met in or around the Roman curia.[30]

The sonnet *Vestiva i colli* enjoyed a prominent career in print. It was first issued in the *Libro terzo delle rime di diversi… autori* (Venice, 1550; fol. 83^{v}), and not long after in *Rime di diversi ecc. autori, in vita, e in morte dell'ill. s. Livia Col.*, published by Antonio Barré in Rome in 1555 (fol. 32^{v}).[31] Here it is included in the section "In vita" ("in life") of Livia Colonna, but is mistakenly recorded as "Del Molza" ("by Molza").[32] The Barré edition, however erroneous its authorial information, proves

29 On Capilupi's biography, see De Caro, "Capilupi, Ippolito".

30 Furthermore, some years later, both Capilupi and Palestrina were involved with the confraternity of Santissima Trinità dei Pellegrini (Japs, *Die Madrigale*, 76).

31 This collection was dedicated to the Roman noblewoman Livia Colonna, "[che] era stata uccisa l'anno precedente da Pompeo Colonna, condannato a morte da Giulio III e poi militante nelle schiere contrarie a Paolo IV" ("who was killed one year before by Pompeo Colonna, who was sentenced to death by Pope Julius III and afterwards fought in the ranks opposed to Paul IV"); Tibaldi, "Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giovanni".

32 This ascription appears both below the poem (fol. 32^{v}) and in the final *Tavola* (fol. NN^{v}). "Molza" is Francesco Maria Molza, the author of the following sonnet, *Vincerà, chiaro sole, il vostro raggio* (fol. 33^{r}). The other Capilupi sonnet, *Come per l'ampio ciel girando il sole*, is printed on fol. 33^{r}, with the (correct) ascription "Del Capilupi".

that *Vestiva i colli* circulated in Rome, and reveals an important link to Palestrina: the same collection also features Francesco Cristiani's poem *Ecco oscurati i chiari raggi al sole* (fols. 95^{r}–97^{r}), which Palestrina set to music in his first book of madrigals of 1555. Thus it seems likely that Palestrina used this very Barré edition as his source for the text of *Vestiva i colli*, although we do not have any conclusive evidence in this regard. Before the publication of Palestrina's setting, the sonnet is also found in *De le rime di diversi… da M. Dionigi Atanagi* (Venice, 1565; fol. 128^{v}). Capilupi himself was arguably proud of this text and decided to include it in his collection of Latin poems, the *Hyppolyti Capilupi Carmina* (Antwerp, 1574, p. 106). The poem also appears in the 1585 posthumous edition of the *Rime del S. Lelio, e Fratelli de Capilupi* (Mantua, 1585, p. 115).[33] The sonnet's remarkable prominence is finally confirmed by the publication of the two quatrains in *Le Rose d'amor spiegate* (Vicenza, 1614; p. 61), under the title "Madrigale antico" ("ancient madrigal"), and by the sacred reworking printed in Curzio Verallo's *Corona di laudi a Maria Vergine* (Venice, 1617; p. 189).

The text is essentially consistent in all printed sources. The only important variant concerns verse 7. In the first edition of 1550, this reads "mi disse, in premio dei tuoi fieri ardori" ("[she] said to me: 'As a prize for your proud ardour'"), instead of "mi disse, in guidardon di tanti ardori" ("[she] said to me: 'As a reward for such ardour'"). This variant is no longer present in the 1555 edition and all subsequent reprints, and accordingly is absent also from Palestrina's setting. Palestrina, however, has a curious variant reading in the last line: "*altri* sospiri" (which could mean both "other sighs" or "sighs for someone else", masculine plural) instead of "*altra* sospiri" ("sighs for someone else", feminine singular). In Capilupi's text, the feminine pronoun "altra" refers to "another" nymph, so that verses 13–14 mean "it will never be that I love her less than my own eyes, nor will my mind ever sigh or call with desire for someone else". The masculine "altri" is arguably caused by the closeness with "sospiri". This reading, despite being incorrect, is attested in all the musical sources, and thus it is advisable to retain it.

33 For a modern edition of this collection, see Camillo e Ippolito Capilupi, *Rime*, ed. D'Adamo; *Vestiva i colli* is on p. 68.

VI.3 THE MUSIC OF *VESTIVA I COLLI*

Palestrina's music follows the metrical features of Capilupi's poem strictly: each verse corresponds to a musical phrase with its own cadence, and the form reflects the sonnet's quatrain and tercet structure. This close relation between text and music notwithstanding, there are no instances of word painting, nor any contrapuntal licenses justified by an expressive purpose. Palestrina's choice of a pastoral poem defined by fairly straightforward linguistic and syntactic features suggests the composer was seeking a text suitable for an equally straightforward polyphonic setting. An analysis of the music and its relationship with the text reveals the madrigal's great internal coherence, which is developed using the classical tools of sixteenth-century polyphony.

To understand Palestrina's compositional intentions, we need to examine three specific aspects of his musical language. The first is the use of "tonal space", that is, the pitch classes around which the musical discourse is built, the ranges within which the voices move, and the possible modal interpretations. The second concerns form and counterpoint—what the relationship is between the poetic and the musical structures, how the counterpoint unfolds and in which style. The third aspect concerns notation and rhythm, through which the melodic subjects and the vertical texture are "plastically" constructed.[34]

34 In the following description, part names and bar numbers correspond to the edition provided in Appendix 7.1 (p. 257) based on *Musica divina*. Note that in the first edition of the madrigal, from 1566, the "tenore" and "quinto" part labels are reversed.

TABLE 1. Vocal ranges and reference octave

	CLEFS	COMPLETE RANGE	REFERENCE OCTAVE
Canto	G2	*g'–f"*	*a'–a"*
Alto	C2	*a–c"*	*d'–d"*
Quinto	C3	*g–a'*	*a–a'*
Tenore	C3	*g–a'*	*a–a'*
Basso	F3	*A–d'*	*d–d'*

Tonal space

The madrigal has five voices; their ranges are given in Table 1. The clefs imply a high vocal range. The canto has the narrowest range, due to its high register, and essentially its melody is based on the fifth *a'–e" (+f")*. Tenore and quinto are situated an octave below the canto and cover a complete octave. Alto and basso occupy the octave starting on *d'* and *d* respectively, but their complete range is an octave plus a fourth: the alto touches *a* just once (b. 74), while the basso rises to *A* three times (bb. 15, 35, 90, plus last note, b. 92), always in a leap.

The key signature is ♮, the so-called *cantus durus*. The first part ends on D, the second and final part on A. The entire polyphonic texture revolves around these two degrees, starting from the beginning: the first subject is built on the leap *a'–d"* (canto, b. 1) or *a–d'* (quinto, b. 2; tenore, b 4), and *d'–a'* (alto, b. 1) or *d–a* (basso, b. 5). Although they are different, the subjects of the exordium of the second part are built around the same pitch classes.

The cadential plan of the madrigal is summarized in Table 2.[35] In general, each verse corresponds to a phrase of music; the cadences, usually on the two structural degrees A and D, mark the division between verses. Any deviation from this standard practice depends on the specific metric structure of the text and its poetic meaning, as I detail below.

35 Another analysis is provided in Japs, *Die Madrigale*, 224–27.

TABLE 2. Cadential plan

	VERSE[36]	BAR[37]	VOICES[38]	PITCH CLASS	FORMULA[39]	COMMENTS
Quatrains	1/5	4/24	C-**A**	A	Sm-M-Sm-Sb	Evaded in C
	2/6	11/31	C-**A**-T	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	
	3/7	16/36	C-**T**	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	
	4/8	21/41	**C**-T-B	D	M-Sb-M-Sb	
	(8)	44	**A**-Q	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	
	(8)	47	**C**-Q-B	D	M-Sb-M-Sb	
Tercets	9	52	C-**A**	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	
		56	**C**-Q	E	M-Sb-M-Sb	Phrygian
	10a	59	**C**-T	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	
	10b	63	**A**-Q	C	M-Sb-M-M	Diminished
	11	66	**A**-T	A	Sm-M-Sm-M	
		69	**T**-B	D	Sm-M-Sm-M	
	12	74	A-**Q**	E	M-Sb-Sb [*sic*]	Phrygian, without suspension
	13a	76	A-**T**-B	F	M-Sb-M-Sb	Diminished
	13b	79	**A**-B	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	Phrygian (in *cantus mollis*)
	14	83	C-**A**-T	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	
		86	**Q**-B	D	M-Sb-M-Sb	
		90	**C**-T-B	A	M-Sb-M-Sb	

The entire first quatrain is segmented by cadences on A, i.e., the piece's final. At the end of the first verse, the cadence is skilfully evaded by the entry of the subject in the tenore, as well as by the melodic extension of the canto towards *e*". The first part concludes with a series of cadences on A and D, the latter being the degree on which the first part ends. At the beginning of the second part, the first real cadence is on A (b. 52), but

36 / = both; a = first hemistich; b = second hemistich.

37 The bar of the final sounding chord. The full unfolding of the cadence may also extend into the previous bar.

38 C = canto; A = alto; Q = quinto; T = tenore; B = basso. Bold letters indicate the position of the *clausula cantizans* (ascending stepwise motion).

39 Br = breve; Sb = semibreve; M = minim; Sm = semiminim. According to Vicentino, *L'antica musica*, Libro Terzo, Cap. XXIIII, fol. 51^{r-v}, the M-Sb-M-Sb formula corresponds to the *cadentia minore*, Sm-M-Sm-Sb to the *cadentia minima*. The last value of the cadential structure may change depending on the context.

the whole episode setting verse 9 ends with a Phrygian movement on E (b. 56). This solution is used to avoid an overly marked break between verses 9 and 10, and indeed true closure comes only after the first hemistich of verse 10. By doing this, Palestrina merges the end of verse 9 with the beginning of verse 10, thus respecting the poem's syntactic enjambement. Similarly, the cadence on C in b. 63, a weak degree compared to the principal ones A and D, is used to mark the verse unit without interrupting the syntactic flow of the enjambement between verses 10 and 11. The A cadence (b. 66), followed shortly after by a cadence on D (b. 69), signals the end both of verse 11 and of the first tercet.

The same rationale governs the Phrygian cadence on E of b. 74, which closes verse 12. This cadence is concealed in the contrapuntal texture both by its irregular rhythm and by the melodic emphasis of the low voices. The cadence after the first hemistich of verse 13 (b. 76) is presented in a diminished form to underline the end of the sentence begun in the previous verse. But as this comes in a middle of the verse, Palestrina chooses to cadence on a weak degree, F. This enables a brief deviation into *cantus mollis* (b♭ system), affecting the cadence on A in b. 79, which has to be realized as Phrygian, and enabling the perfect imitation of the *mi–fa* subject of the last line (*e"–f"* ▶ *a'–b♮'♭* and *e'–f'* ▶ *a–b♭*). The music of the final verse revolves entirely around the two principal degrees, with cadences on A (b. 83) and D (b. 86) that segment the textual repetitions and culminate in the final A cadence (b. 90). This is followed by the customary plagal movements of the final *supplementum* (bb. 90–92).

To summarize: the pitch class A, the *finalis*, is used to mark off the poem's individual verses; the secondary pitch class D, besides constituting the conclusion of the first part, is used as an alternative to A, particularly when verses are repeated. The hierarchically weaker cadences on E (a fifth above the final A) and on C and F (a third above the more important pitch classes A and D) are used to avoid an overly pronounced syntactic interruption: this happens in conjunction with enjambements, when syntactical units run across verses.[40]

Let us now consider the modal implications of the tonal space just described. Theorists of the late Renaissance all agree that *Vestiva i colli*

40 On this issue, see Meier, *The Modes*, 118.

is a piece in second mode transposed up an octave. Adriano Banchieri was the first to propose this interpretation in his "Duo spartiti al contrapunto" (1614):

Questo secondo modo […] similmente trasportando […] un'ottava sopra riesce gratioso per strumenti acuti mutandosi di Plagale in Autentico come bene l'avertì il Pallestrina nel suo Sonetto, Vestiva i colli.[41]	This second mode […] in like manner transposed […] up an octave is lovely for high instruments, changing from plagal to authentic, as Palestrina was well aware in his sonnet *Vestiva i colli.*

Just a few years later, Ludovico Zacconi took up the same idea in the second part of *Prattica di musica* (Venice, 1622), adding a reflection on the emotion evoked by this kind of mode. He relates this to its high range:

ma quanto poi per il mede[s]mo 2. Tuono vogliano comporre qualche cosa allegra, e che produci giocondo effetto, servendosi dell'ottava, ne lo compongono come qui si vede. [example follows] Di questo Tuono così trasportato all'ottava è Vestiva i colli.[42]	but when for the same mode two, they want to create something cheerful that creates a joyful effect using the octave, they compose it in the way you can see here [example follows]. *Vestiva i colli* is in this mode, transposed up an octave in this manner.

The same affective concept also appears in Orazio Vecchi's *Mostra delli tuoni della musica*:

Vestiva i colli, il quale è del Secondo tuono, una Ottava più alta, e pur non vi s'ode un minimo segno di mestizia; anzi, che chi lo canta, o chi l'ode, si riempie di allegrezza, e consolatione.[43]	*Vestiva i colli*, which is in second mode an octave higher and yet no one hears the slightest sign of sadness; indeed joy and comfort fill whosoever sings or listens to it.

Incidentally, this reveals the danger of projecting modern perspectives on the affective connotations of tonal space onto the past: *Vestiva i colli*, with its "A minor" feel, might sound sad and melancholy to modern listeners, while in the late Renaissance it was evidently heard as a joyful piece. It cannot be ruled out that Palestrina chose the tonal type

41 Banchieri, *Cartella musicale*, 115.
42 Zacconi, *Prattica di musica*, 41–42.
43 Vecchi, *Mostra delli tuoni*, 9, in I-Bc C.30.

precisely for this reason, as a response to the pastoral setting and the amorous idyll portrayed in the text.

Despite the agreement among early theorists, a close reading of the particular features of *Vestiva i colli*'s tonal space seems to impede unambiguous interpretations of the piece according to Renaissance modal theory.[44] As summarized in Table 3, some elements (exordium, entry notes, and cadences on D, F, and A) do suggest a transposed second mode,[45] but others seem incompatible with this interpretation. In particular, the degree A, which concludes the madrigal, would have to be regarded as a *confinalis*, while the mode's proper *finalis*, D, appears as a intermedial cadence at the end of the first part. A comparison with Palestrina's modally ordered collections further complicates the interpretation of *Vestiva i colli* as in second mode. In the *Offertoria* of 1593,[46] the motets with the *finalis* A (with high clefs and *cantus durus*) are the first four, which represent the first mode. The motets with the *finalis* D, by contrast, represent the second mode. The same is the case in *Le Vergini*, a cycle of eight madrigals on the strophes of Petrarch's *canzone*: the first madrigal *Vergine bella*, representing the first mode, ends on A; the second madrigal *Vergine saggia*, representing the second mode, ends on D.[47]

Given these inconsistencies, it is tempting to read *Vestiva i colli* in a twelve-mode system and assign it to the ninth mode. However, this does not resolve all the contradictions with the theoretical framework: the *finalis* on A, the range of the tenor, the cadences on E and C, as well as the use of the fifth *a*–*e*,[48] are indeed compatible with the ninth mode, but the prominence of the D degree, both in the exordium and in the final cadence of the first part, is not.

All in all, it is likely that Palestrina regarded tonal spaces like that of *Vestiva i colli* as related to Dorian modes, but it is impossible to provide

44 Accordingly, the modality of *Vestiva i colli* has attracted much scholarly attention, leading to a new approach to the interpretation of modes. The most important contributions in this regard are Powers, "The Modality of 'Vestiva i colli'", and Freis, "Tonal Types and Modal Categories". Other studies are quoted in Japs, *Die Madrigale*, 224 ff.

45 Cf. Meier, *The Modes*, 224–26 and 105 ff.

46 New critical edition in Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Offertoria totius anni*, ed. Tibaldi. On the issue of the collection's modal organization, cf. Powers, *Modal Representation*, as well as Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Offertoria totius anni*, XXII–XXIII.

47 On this cycle and on the thematic similarity with *Vestiva i colli*, see Powers, "The Modality of 'Vestiva i colli'", 40 ff.

48 Zarlino, *Le Istitutioni Harmoniche*, Parte Quarta, *Del Nono modo. Cap. 26*, 329 ff. On Zarlino's Aeolian mode see Mangani and Sabaino, "'*Modo Novo*' or '*Modo Antichissimo*'".

TABLE 3. Musical features and their possible modal interpretation

MUSICAL FEATURES	POSSIBLE MODAL INTERPRETATION
Finalis (of the whole madrigal): A	IX
Exordium: *la–re/re–la* (*a–d/d–a*)	II
Finalis (of part 1): D	II
Cadential plan: A, D, F	II
Cadential plan: A, E, C	IX
Tenor ambitus: *g–a'* (ref. octave *a–a'*)	IX

TABLE 4. Formal outline

PART	VERSES	BARS
A	1–4	1–21
A'	5–8	21–47
B	9–14	48–92

a more detailed modal interpretation in line with the theory of the time. Thus, we must be content with recognizing the "modally problematic nature" of this madrigal and its tonal space.[49]

Form and counterpoint

The madrigal is organized in two parts that correspond to the two quatrains and the two tercets. The two parts are approximately the same length (46 breves and 45 breves), which was certainly not a random compositional choice, since the texts of the two parts are not equal in length (eight and six verses). Table 4 summarizes the formal outline.

The two quatrains have basically the same music—even though the verse accentuation is not identical[50]—with small variations at the beginning and end of the second repetition of section A. Note also the repetition of the last verse at the end of the first part: the canto presents the melodic subject exactly in the same way (bb. 38–41 = 44–47), while the other voices are varied to create a new contrapuntal texture, albeit with a similar melodic profile.

49 Cf. Mangani and Sabaino, "Tonal Types and Modal Attributions", where other A pieces are discussed.
50 Cf. Gallico, "Due contributi", 21.

The whole madrigal is built on a series of points of imitation, with the voices entering in varying orders at short intervals no longer than a semibreve. It is worth noting that the exordium of the second part mirrors that of the first, resorting to the same entry notes, pairing of imitations (2+1+2), and time intervals between voice entries. The final part is made up of the reiterated repetition of the last verse, which take up ten breves, plus three breves of *prolongatio longae* (bb. 90–92), i.e., the conclusion upon a held note of the canto. The last subject is introduced by the canto (bb. 80 ff.), with a melodic profile defined by leaps of a third (*f*”–*d*”, *e*”–*c*”, *d*”–*f*”). This seems conceived with regard to the plagal movement of the conclusion (bb. 90–93), which alternates the pitch classes A and D, providing something akin to a summary of the tonal space traversed in the entire madrigal.

As mentioned above, when it comes to word-painting, Palestrina is very restrained. The appearance of *c*’♯ and *f*’♯ at bb. 59–60 could be related to the sweetness evoked in verse 10 (“e ’n sì dolci legami”, “with such sweet bonds”), which is set to music in a series of major triads. However, this is the only passage in the entire madrigal that seems to musically illustrate an individual image in the text.

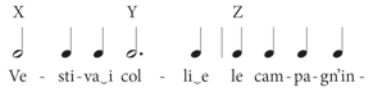
Notation and rhythm

The notation of *Vestiva i colli* stands halfway between the traditional white notation and the “new” black notation of the *note nere* madrigals, where the semiminim has taken the place of the minim as the syllable-carrying value.[51] From a compositional point of view, the *tactus*, the reference pulse, is on the semibreve: see, for example, the time intervals of the imitative entries at the beginning of each of the two parts, as well as the predominance of *cadenze minori* built on minim and semibreve values (Table 2). The frequency of syllabic semiminims, however, calls for a performance with a slow semibreve *tactus*, halfway between a semibreve and a minim *tactus*, which can be approximated as c. M.M. 44.[52]

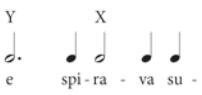
51 On *note nere* madrigals, see Campagnolo, “Stile e notazione” and the bibliography quoted there.

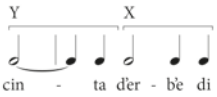
52 See Saggio, “Palestrina mensuralista” for a survey of Palestrina’s notation. For a comprehensive study of sixteenth-century notation, see DeFord, Tactus, *Mensuration and Rhythm*.

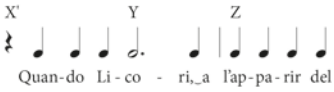
One significant factor in the composition's overall coherence is rhythm. Recurring rhythmic cells give the madrigal a unified character defined by a homogeneous and fluent rhythmic activity without abrupt changes. The three fundamental cells that recur throughout the madrigal are already present in the opening melodic subject, and they correspond to a single semibreve unit:

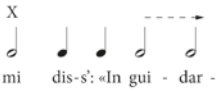


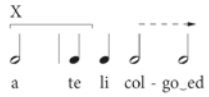
The first cell (X) consists of a dactylic rhythm (M Sm Sm), the second (Y) of a dotted rhythm (dotted M Sm), and the third of four semiminims (Z). The first two cells X and Y define the entire rhythmical texture, while the cell Z recurs as a melisma upon one syllable (bb. 7, 10, then 27, 30; 49–50, 82, 85, 90–91). These rhythmic cells and their variations occur throughout the madrigal associated with different verses:

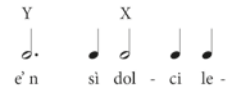
verse 3: 

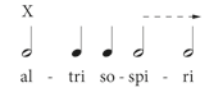
verse 4: 

verse 5: 

verse 7: 

verse 8: 

verse 10: 

verse 14: 

Commenting on this specific rhythmic shape and the composition's thoroughly imitative texture, Alfred Einstein remarked that "considered from the point of view of its musical form, Palestrina's *Vestiva i colli* is not a madrigal [...]. *It is a* canzon francese *with Italian text*" (italics

original).[53] Even though Einstein here traced boundaries between genres that now appear overly strict, it is true that *Vestiva i colli*'s peculiar features resemble the Parisian chanson. The adoption of this style in the madrigal had some success in the years following the publication of Palestrina's setting.[54] If we restrict our analysis to the madrigals republished by Phalèse, we notice that Giovanni Maria Nanino's *Quando fra bianche perle al canto snoda*,[55] for example, was modelled on Palestrina's *Vestiva i colli*. The madrigal sets a sonnet, dividing it into two parts—one for the two quatrains and one for the two tercets—with the same form AA'B that is employed in *Vestiva i colli*. Moreover, just like in Palestrina's setting, the first verse is sung with a dactylic rhythm followed by a dotted rhythm. In the first verse of the second quatrain (verse 5), the dactyl is transformed into three semiminims preceded by a rest, but only for the two higher voices, while the others keep the original rhythm, exactly like in Palestrina's madrigal. In addition, although Nanino's madrigal is firmly rooted in the first mode (*finalis* D, *cantus durus*), it makes ample use of A cadences. A similar style is employed in Luca Marenzio's *Ecco l'aurora con l'aurata fronte*, a madrigal on a pastoral strophe by the poet Vincenzo Quirini.[56] Marenzio probably referenced the earlier setting of the same text by Andrea Gabrieli (1566), which contains an imitative dactylic incipit. The exordium, nonetheless, also appears indebted to Palestrina's *Vestiva i colli*, as suggested by the leap of a fourth in the subject and by the descending order of the vocal entries from canto to basso.

VI.4 CONCLUSIONS

It is not possible to establish with any certainty when and why *Vestiva i colli* was composed. However, it likely originated in the Roman curial context, a milieu that saw diplomats, artists, intellectuals, and musicians collaborate daily in the organization of cultural events for the highest nobility. But the madrigal's popularity seems to depend less on a network of patronage than on the stylistic features of poem and music. Palestrina's *Vestiva i colli* employs a transparent style of musical writing

53 Einstein, "Narrative Rhythm", 476, 478.
54 In addition to the examples discussed here, see those analyzed in Einstein, "Narrative Rhythm", 478–82.
55 RISM 1574[4], p. 20. Reprinted in *Melodia Olympica*, fols. 20[v]–21[r]. Modern edition in Nanino, *Complete Madrigals. Part 2*, ed. Boenicke and Newcomb, 102–10.
56 First published in RISM M 549, p. 15, and reprinted in Phalèse's *Madrigali a cinque voci ridotti in un corpo*, RISM M 572 (fol. 32[r]).

that is fully consonant with the simple pastoral narrative of the poetic text. The imitative episodes follow one another in a continuous flow without any interruptions or unexpected turbulence. Melodic subjects are modelled on the verses and their prosody, while cadences underline the syntax. The form balances the madrigal's two parts, and the rhythm is used as both a propulsive and a unifying element. In short, this is a madrigal of the *prima prattica*, in which the metric form serves as the matrix of the musical form and the meaning of the verses is supported by the melody without any need for "madrigalisms", word painting, or radical deviations from harmonic and melodic norms. Its absolute regularity and its archetypal character are certainly among the reasons why *Vestiva i colli* is one of the most emulated, transcribed, and reworked pieces of the Renaissance.