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Bembism and Motivicity in the Madrigals of Willaert's *Musica nova*

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Madrigals of Willaert's *Musica nova*

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Master of Arts degree in musicology

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Abstract

In Venice in the mid-sixteenth-century, the madrigal was emerging as the highest musical expression of poetry. One of the foremost composers of this new genre was Adrian Willaert. The madrigals contained in his *Musica nova* for many are the pinnacle of the Italian madrigal. It has been suggested that Willaert's settings of Petrarch's poetry in this collection may have been influenced by the writings of Pietro Bembo, who was active in Venice in the first half of the sixteenth-century. It has also been suggested that Willaert used a compositional tool called motivicity in many of his works. The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not Willaert used motivicity as a method of composition in order to highlight the principles put forward by Pietro Bembo for Petrarch's sonnets. The results demonstrate that while in some madrigals it does appear that Willaert used motivicity in order to adhere to Bembist ideals, it was not always a determining factor.

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Introduction

In the sixteenth-century in Italy, a shift occurred in the way that poetry was being set to music. The simple, strophic settings of the *frottola* were being replaced by the more complex and polyphonic madrigal. The geographic center of this development was the city of Venice. One of the foremost composers of this new genre, Adrian Willaert, lived and worked in Venice, and his influence was widely felt and can be seen in the works of many other composers and theorists. Although Willaert's influence has been noted by many, the influences on him have not been as widely explored. In fact, cultural developments in the city of Venice may be one of the primary factors for the development of madrigal writing, with Willaert's works as one of the most notable examples. In the first half of the sixteenth-century, a literary theorist named Pietro Bembo was prominent in Venetian society. In 1525, his *Prose della volgar lingua* was published. In it, Bembo writes of the poetry of Petrarch and uses it as the supreme example of Italian poetry. Bembo's writings focus on the sounds of words themselves rather than their meanings. Each vowel and consonant, as well as various combinations, can produce a sound that is either pleasing or harsh. Bembo states that Petrarch's choice of words was deliberate, and that Petrarch demonstrated a higher understanding of the Italian language than most other poets. While a possible link between the madrigals of Willaert's *Musica nova* and the writings of Bembo has been noted by several authors, as will be seen in chapter 1, no suitable analytical method has been identified which could

help determine whether or not Willaert systematically applied Bembo's theories to his works.

Joshua Rifkin has suggested that Willaert used a compositional technique that he calls motivicity in many of his polyphonic works.¹ The model is only loosely defined by Rifkin, and is applied only to the motet. However, it is clear even from a preliminary examination of some of the madrigals in the *Musica nova* that there is motivic writing. Although Rifkin himself did not explore the application of his model to the madrigal, he does suggest that motivicity may be a determining factor in many of Willaert's works outside the motets, and the high degree of occurrence of motivic writing in the madrigals of the *Musica nova* make it a promising model of analysis. Many authors, such as Martha Feldman, Dean T. Mace and Claude V. Palisca have suggested that an awareness of Bembo's ideas can be seen in Willaert's settings of Petrarch's sonnets. Since it is possible both that Willaert was influenced by Bembo's theories and that he used motivicity as a compositional tool, could it be that the two can be combined, and that Willaert used motivicity in order to incorporate Bembo's ideas into his music? That will be the purpose of this study—to determine whether or not Willaert used motivicity in order to highlight Bembo's ideals of Petrarch's poetry.

The method used to discover whether or not Willaert does use motivicity for the purpose of exposing Bembo's traits will be testing this theory through the model of motivicity in several madrigals. Ten madrigals from the *Musica nova* have been selected, and the motivic patterns in all will be analyzed, as well as the poetry examined in order to

¹ Joshua Rifkin, "Miracles, Motivicity, and Mannerism: Adrian Willaert's *Videns Dominus flentes sorores Lazari* and Some Aspects of Motet Composition in the 1520s" in *Hearing the Motet: Essays on the Motet of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Dolores Pesce (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

determine any possible Bembist ideas at work. Bembo's writings will be thoroughly discussed in chapter 2 in order to achieve a clear understanding of his ideals. In chapter 3, the writings of one of Willaert's students, Gioseffo Zarlino, will be discussed to shed light on Willaert's compositional practices regarding the setting of text to music. The madrigal *Aspro core e selvaggio* serves as an exemplary analysis in chapter 4. It will be examined first following Rifkin's definition of motivicity as he has proposed, and then with alterations that allow Bembist traits to be shown. Finally, nine more madrigals will be analysed in chapter 5 in order to further test the theory and refine the model of motivicity.

The selection of the madrigals to be tested presents many possibilities. The *Musica nova* contains twenty-five madrigals, and all but one are settings of Petrarch sonnets. For this reason, there are many possible rationales which could be used in determining which madrigals should be analyzed. One possibility would be to base the choices on the poetry itself, for example, choose sonnets which deal with the same subject matter in order to determine whether or not Willaert always sets the same subjects in the same way. This will form a part of the selection. However, it may be more interesting and revealing to determine the manner in which Willaert sets sonnets with very different contents. Another possibility would be to choose those madrigals which contain the highest degree of permeation of motives, for this would provide the most interesting analysis. However, since we are trying to determine whether or not Willaert used motivicity regularly, it would be best to choose a group of madrigals with varying degrees of motivic permeation. Therefore, the madrigals have purposely been selected in order to explore different patterns of motivicity. For example, some pieces contain a high

density of permeation at the beginning of the piece, and less as the piece progresses.

Others contain an increasing level of permeation throughout. There will also be madrigals which contain a cross-reference of motives (the same motives between works). This will be very interesting, for it will offer insights not only into how Willaert varied motives in order to adhere to Bembo principles in a single sonnet, but also how he must vary that same motive to adapt to the content of another poem. In the end, the value of Rifkin's model as a tool to help us understand Bemboism in Willaert's madrigals will be determined.

Chapter 1

Context and Approaches

The Development of the Madrigal

In order to understand why the madrigal developed and how this can be linked to Petrarchism, we must first explore the antecedents to the madrigal. The definitive text on the origins and development of the madrigal as a genre is Alfred Einstein's 1949 multi-volume work, *The Italian Madrigal*.¹ Einstein's work begins with a look at the artistic climate and musical developments which occurred in Italy in the *Trecento*, which need not be recounted here. However, Einstein's discussion of the frottola and its limitations is important if we are to understand his position on the rise of the madrigal. Einstein believed that "madrigal, *villanesca*, canzonetta, everything is found in embryo form in the frottola."² Einstein uses Petrucci's books of frottole as examples of the typical style and character of the genre, and states that his books and those of most of his successors serve a "particular practical purpose: namely, to offer a definite social circle suitable compositions for all occasion and situations of amorous and courtly life, in the sense given to the Burgundian chanson..."³ In short, although the form and style of the frottola could be varied, it always served the purpose of simple courtly entertainment rather than serious artistic statement. Although the frottola often contained many of the same characteristics as we see in Petrarch's poetry, and often used entire phrases taken from his *Canzoniere*, they are not dealt with in a serious manner as it would be in the madrigal. Instead, the type of love expressed in most frottole is meant to be understood in the social

¹ Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949)

² Einstein, 60.

³ Ibid.

sphere of the Renaissance court.⁴ Although it is meant for performance at the court, it is a “deliberately superficial art” which “makes light of all ceremonials and avoids all affectation.”⁵

In musical setting, there is usually an almost exact parallelism between rhymed lines and melodic repetition. Although it can appear to be polyphonic, it is actually most often harmonic, often with four-part harmony.⁶ It can also be monodic, with any accompaniment simply improvised. The most significant characteristic that should be noted here is the form of the frottola. Even though there is not a set form, it usually follows a strophic verse form which coincides with the rhyme scheme of the poetry. Many different poetic genres can be set in a frottola, but they are related through their strophic repetition. In fact, music was often only provided for the first few lines of a piece, and the rest could be supplied by the performer since the melodic line was repeated based on the rhyme scheme.⁷

Einstein identifies Pietro Bembo as the “man who presumably had the most influence upon the development from the frottola to the madrigal.”⁸ In a visit to Isabella d’Este in 1505, Bembo brought three sonnets in a Petrarchan style and asked that they be sung by Isabella. She turned to Marchetto Cara to set the poetry to music. It was requested that they have nothing in common with the usual frottole, but instead be a “musical dialogue.”⁹ This forced the composer to try to develop a method of setting a higher poetic genre, and this could not be effectively done in the schematic form that had

⁴ Ibid, 69.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid, 79.

⁷ Ibid, 100.

⁸ Ibid, 109.

⁹ Ibid, 111.

been used for the frottola. By about 1530, composers had adopted the term “madrigal” to mean any piece of music which sets music of a free poetic form which does not have a stanzaic structure. Einstein hypothesizes that the composers probably did this based on suggestions in Bembo’s *Prose della volgar lingua*,¹⁰ which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2. There is no link between the poetic form of madrigal and the musical form. As stated above, the musical form can be a setting of any free poetic text. It can also be a setting of a stanzaic text, but the musical setting itself is not strophic. According to Einstein, the shift from the frottola to the madrigal was gradual, and actually began within the frottola itself. For the sake of expression, “accompanied monody” gives way to polyphony. Each voice achieves equal importance in the structure of the piece. The dance-like rhythms of the frottola are replaced by “rhythmic suppleness.”¹¹ Although there are elements of motet-style in the madrigal, strict imitation is avoided, opting instead for a form of quasi-imitation.¹²

Another author who attempts to find the reason for the development of the madrigal is Dean Mace in his 1969 article “Pietro Bembo and the Literary Origins of the Italian Madrigal.”¹³ Mace begins the article with a look at the accepted view at that time of the reasons behind the rise of the madrigal, which are those put forth by Einstein in *The Italian Madrigal*. As explored above, Einstein theorized that the rise of the madrigal could be explained by the fact that the frottola was an inadequate musical genre for the level of expression required for settings of Petrarchan poetry. Mace debates Einstein’s theory. According to Mace, there are no records of unsatisfactory settings of *canzone* in

¹⁰ Einstein, 118.

¹¹ Ibid, 119.

¹² For more on Einstein’s discussion of the disintegration of the frottola, see Einstein, 119.

¹³ Dean T. Mace, “Pietro Bembo and the Literary Origins of the Italian Madrigal,” *The Musical Quarterly* 55 (1969): 65-86.

frottola form. On the contrary, most accounts of such settings state that they were highly effective. Specifically, Mace cites Castiglioni's records of Cara's music in *Il Cortegiano*. For Castiglioni, Cara's settings of canzone were full of "mourning sweetness," and the metrical irregularity of the verse was thought to contribute to that. Mace's argument is that it was not the poetry itself that required a new musical genre, but the manner in which that poetry was being read. In the 1520's and 1530's, Pietro Bembo was leading a revival of the writings of Petrarch and Boccaccio, and reading them in a manner which emphasized rhythm and sound in relation to word meaning. The external structure was no longer a factor in the reading of a poem, and thus musical forms which emphasized external structure (like the frottola) were no longer sufficient. Although Einstein does discuss Bembo's role in the development of the new genre, Mace asserts that Einstein did not identify the elements of Bembo's writings that necessitated the shift from the frottola to the madrigal.¹⁴ In order to understand Mace's view of Bembo's contribution to the madrigal, his article must be recounted in some detail.

Literary Considerations

From his brief discussion of his opinion on Einstein's views, Mace goes on to explain Bembo's theories and how they relate to the music in some detail. He discusses the three styles of rhetoric, low, middle and high, which were determined by the subject matter. This is borrowed from the rules of classical rhetoric, and will be explained in detail during the examination of Feldman's works. Mace focuses not on the styles of rhetoric, but rather on the two qualities, *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, which determine the tone of the poetry along with the three styles of rhetoric.

¹⁴ For Mace's views on Einstein's theories, see Mace, 65-68.

The terms *gravità* and *piacevolezza* are essential to an understanding of literary criticism in the sixteenth-century. They are the two contrasting qualities which can and should exist in all worthy literature, and under their broad rubric many more specific qualities can be found. Under *piacevolezza*, Bembo includes *la grazia, la soavità, la vaghezza, la dolcezza, gli scherzi, i giuchi*, and other similar qualities. Under *gravità* are the related terms *l'onestà, la dignità, la maestà, la magnificenza, la grandezza*, and others.

In poetry, these qualities are created through the use of three elements, *suono, numero* and *variazione*. These are the principles on which many later *cinquecento* writings on literature and music would be based. It is the rhythm and sound of the words which dictates whether the quality is *gravità* or *piacevolezza*, not the meanings of the words themselves. Mace takes time in the article to outline Bembo's instructions on this.

Mace quotes Bembo's definition of *numero* as follows: "It is nothing else but the quantity of the syllables, long or short, which sometimes is provided by the letters which comprise the syllables, sometimes by reason of the accents in the words, and sometimes by one and the other."¹⁵ Most often, the placement of the accent within the word determines whether the quality of that word is *piacevolezza* or *gravità*. If the accent lands on the antepenultimate syllable, the word is *piacevole*. If the accent is on the last syllable, the word is *grave*. When the accent is on the penultimate syllable, the accent is tempered; it can be *gravità* or *piacevolezza* depending on the arrangement of vowels and consonants. Generally, when clusters of consonants lengthen a word, the effect is that it is

¹⁵ "Altro non è che il tempo che alle sillabe si dà, o lungo o breve, ora per opera delle lettere che fanno le sillabe, ora per cagione degli accenti che si danno alle parole, e tale volta e per l'un conto e per l'altro." Translated in Mace, 70.

more *grave*. The reason for this is that “all slowness is a natural indication of *gravità*.”¹⁶ This is also true in consideration of the number of syllables in a line. This is the aspect of *suono*, and it also plays a part in determining whether the verse is *piacevolezza* or *gravità*. Bembo states that the result will be *piacevolezza* when the rhymes are close together and *gravità* when the rhymes are further apart. Therefore, *versi rotti* (seven syllables) will always be more *dolce* than *versi interi* (eleven syllables). According to Bembo, the subject matter of the words themselves can be very similar, but the content and meaning can be entirely different based on *numero* and *suono*.¹⁷

The central tenet of Bembo’s view is that the two qualities should be constantly opposed. This is the element of *variazione*, which actually governs the other two elements, *suono* and *numero*. In order for a poem to be successful, “*piacevolezza* and *gravità* should be constantly opposed.”¹⁸ For Bembo, this is what set Petrarch and Boccaccio apart from other Italian poets—they understood *variazione*.

The remainder of Mace’s article is devoted to an examination of why a Bemboist setting was possible through the polyphonic madrigal, but not through the monodic frottola. Mace asserts that in the madrigal, rhythm, harmony and melody could bear exactly the same relation to word meaning as Bembo’s *numero*, *suono* and *variazione*. In terms of *numero*, Mace points out that the most important feature of Bembo’s conception here is that it “provided flexibility and ‘irregularity’ in rhythm.”¹⁹ That way, *variazione* in the rhythm could create both *piacevolezza* and *gravità*, while still maintaining the regular metrical structure of the seven or eleven syllable line. According

¹⁶ Mace, 71.

¹⁷ Further discussion on the information in this paragraph can be found in Mace, 70-72.

¹⁸ Ibid, 73.

¹⁹ Ibid, 75.

to Mace, this corresponds perfectly to the madrigal. There is flexibility in the rhythm of each voice, but it is held together by the steady tactus. This allows the voices to freely imitate the rhythmic patterns of the words in the text, and thus stay true to Bembo's teachings. Mace asserts that this would be impossible in the frottola, where regularity of accent is one of the most important features.²⁰

In the madrigal, "harmony operates in a manner similar to Bembo's *suono*; that is, it is not usually employed merely for 'constructive' purposes or for euphony nor is it merely the accidental result of the deployment of simultaneous voices; rather it may be calculated to embody individual words or phrases in *piacevolezza* or *gravità*."²¹ It is another aspect that can be altered in order to highlight the desired quality, and can easily produce *variazione*. This could not be done nearly as effectively in the frottola. Mace sums up his views in this way: "Autonomous melody cannot relate itself to a verse word by word, and it prevents harmony and rhythm from doing so. Only in polyphony could melody be sufficiently subordinated so that harmony and rhythm could function as its equals in the total musical machinery. For a *variazione* in music equivalent to that demanded by Bembo and the *Petrarchisti*, autonomous melody had to be subordinated in the same way and for the same reason that autonomous metrical and rhyming patterns had to be subordinated in verse."²²

Another author who has written extensively on the Italian madrigal and its literary influences is Martha Feldman. In her article, "The Composer as Exegete: Interpretations of Petrarchan Syntax in the Venetian Madrigal," Martha Feldman sets out to prove that in around 1540, the Venetian composers, led by Willaert, developed a new style of madrigal

²⁰ Mace, 75.

²¹ Ibid, 75-6.

²² Ibid, 78.

writing. This style was marked by a “turn to thick motet-like polyphony” and “abandonment of line-by-line settings in favor of a grammatical phrasing of text.”²³

Feldman sets out to prove that these two characteristics are interrelated, and that the dense polyphony was well-suited to an interpretation of the grammatical structures of Petrarch’s poetry. In particular, Feldman focuses on the rules of grammar and aesthetics as stated by Pietro Bembo in his *Prose della volgar lingua*, which will be examined in detail in chapter 2.

Like Mace in his article from 1969, Feldman outlines the principles of Bembist literary theory. Her work here differs from Mace’s in that Feldman focuses on the principle of *variazione*. She believes that this is the Bembist principle that must have appealed most to composers who were trying to set Petrarch’s poetry. The madrigal was the perfect outlet for settings of Petrarch because of the freedom that it offered. The composer could express the *variazione* of the poetry through altering metrical stresses in order to reflect the grammatical accentuation and by “weighing of a subtle hierarchy a variety of musical cadences matched to verbal schemes.”²⁴ Here, she also alludes to the primary method of analysis undertaken in this thesis by mentioning that the Venetian composers “worked with fragmentary, often recitational melodic motives, echoing them repeatedly in continual alteration.”²⁵ This is the most basic characteristic of motivicity, which will be discussed at length below, and Feldman touches on the theory that this was one of the key compositional tools which Venetian composers, Willaert in particular, used to achieve Bembist *variazione* in their settings of Petrarch. She states that “multiple

²³ Martha Feldman, “The Composer as Exegete: Interpretations of Petrarchan Syntax in the Venetian Madrigal,” *Studi Musicali* XVII/2 (1989): 204.

²⁴ Feldman, 206. Most of the information in this paragraph can be found on this page.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

functions and meanings latent in certain textual passages could be realized in music by stating the text in more than a single way.”²⁶ However, she does not go into any detail in order to show the manner in which this device was used, which leaves the reader with questions about how this method actually contributes to an understanding of Petrarchism in madrigal settings. This is one of the starting points for the research undertaken here.

Feldman goes into more detail on Bembo and other literary theories that contributed to the development of the madrigal in her doctoral dissertation.²⁷ Her first chapter focuses on literary criticism in Venice in the *primo cinquecento*, and includes a discussion of Bembo as well as other significant literary theorists of the time. She begins her chapter by citing the Mace article discussed above. Feldman agrees with Mace that one of Bembo’s most important contributions to Renaissance poetics is the principle of “affective word sound”²⁸, the fact that meanings of words cannot be determined simply by their definition, but also by their sonorous content. However, Feldman points out that Mace failed to stress another essential element of Bembo’s work, the “Ciceronian maxim of decorum,” which Feldman views as Bembo’s most important aesthetic principle, and inseparable from the principle of *variazione*.²⁹ She states that Italy in the Renaissance was a rhetorical culture, and thus oratory was the model for all syntactic forms of expression, which includes drama, prose, poetry, and even music. In Bembo’s *Prose della volgar lingua*, Ciceronian ideas were adapted without the political element that was so central in classical Ciceronian rhetoric. Instead, the ideals of decorum and variation were adopted in order to achieve perfection in art and language. The process of Bembo

²⁶ Feldman, 218.

²⁷ Martha Feldman, *Venice and the Madrigal in the Mid-sixteenth Century*, diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1987 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1987).

²⁸ Mace, 70, and Feldman diss., 14.

²⁹ For Feldman’s discussion on Cicero and decorum, see her dissertation, 33-38.

and his followers of using the Ciceronian models of decorum and variation led them to the poetry of Petrarch.

Feldman goes into some detail about the rules of oratory as they are set out by Cicero, and how these rules are met by Petrarch. The first rule is that “only those things affecting the senses in moderation will not tire us.”³⁰ This goes hand-in-hand with the second rule, which states that in order for the listener to not tire of a particular affect, there must be variety. This notion of stylistic restraint is central to almost all writings on rhetoric and poetics of the early sixteenth-century, and Feldman asserts that this is especially true in Venice.

There are many more specific rules that must be followed if the orator is to maintain decorum. One important topic is the use of metaphors. Cicero states that these can be used differently in his three oratorical styles, high, middle and low. For example, he states that in the low style, “the restrained speaker may use...[metaphor] a little more freely than others, but not so boldly as if he were speaking in the grandest style.”³¹ Stylistic devices must be used properly so that the speaker may respect his style. “Indecorum” or “impropriety” occurs “when the stylistic boundaries are crossed and devices proper to one style are used in another.”³² Thus, the meaning of stylistic decorum has two tenets: moderation and style. This presents difficulty for the orator or poet, for they must respect the style in which they are writing, but must occasionally change style in order to achieve variation. This is where Bembo focuses his writing, which will be examined in more detail in chapter 2. For now, it is sufficient to know that Feldman

³⁰ Feldman diss., 34.

³¹ Quoted in Feldman diss., 35.

³² Feldman diss., 35.

traces these Ciceronian ideas in order to illustrate the traits that Bembo and his followers were seeking when they arrived at Petrarch as their most revered poet.

In his book *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, Claude V. Palisca also includes discussion on Bembo and poetics in his chapter 12, “A Natural New Alliance of the Arts.” Palisca begins his chapter with an overview of the general view of poetry in the time before Bembo wrote *Prose della volgar lingua*. Palisca points out that the seven liberal arts were contained by medieval theorists in a quadrivium, which included music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy, and a trivium which included grammar, rhetoric and dialectic. Since poetry was not included among the communicative arts, the system had to be expanded.³³ This was done by Coluccio Salutati. The verbal arts are distinguished by function. By combining the functions of all the arts, the result was poetry, “the only art worthy of praising the beauty and excellence of the human or of the divine being.”³⁴ Other writers of the Italian Renaissance, such as Angelo Poliziano, Benedetto Varchi and Girolamo Mei, also tried to create a new system in which poetry is recognized as one of the arts. This demonstrates the growing respect for poetry, and the belief that it could communicate often more effectively than any of the other communicative arts.

Palisca then moves to a discussion on Bembo and the *Prose della volgar lingua*. Palisca notes that Bembo based his ideas on his study of Petrarch’s earlier drafts of the *Canzoniere*, and that is why Petrarch was seen as the paragon. Bembo discovered that most of Petrarch’s revisions did not change the subject or imagery, but the sound.³⁵ Like

³³ Claude V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1985) 333.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid, 355.

Feldman, Palisca also cites Mace's article. Palisca believes that although the theory is "attractive and plausible", it is difficult to document a relationship between Bembo and the composers of the earliest polyphonic madrigals, and thus Mace's theory that Bembo's ideas were the impetus for the creation of the genre is incorrect.³⁶ However, Palisca also notes that a connection between Bembo and Willaert is probable, since they may have known each other through their Venetian cultural circles. Palisca then cites Zarlino's *Institutioni harmoniche* as proof that composers were aware of the sonorous qualities of Petrarch's poetry without Bembo's influence. However, since Zarlino's work was published in 1558 in Venice and Bembo's *Prose* was published in 1525, it is difficult to claim that Zarlino would not have been influenced by Bembo while at the same time stating that Willaert would most likely have been aware of Bembo's theories.

Theoretical Considerations

Sixteenth-Century Theorists

In *Humanism*, Palisca also includes a lengthy chapter on music theorists who wrote on the setting of poetry.³⁷ The most important figure in music theory in the Italian Renaissance was Zarlino. His work is especially important when examining the music of Willaert, since Zarlino was a student of Willaert's and wrote on many of the issues that arise in his music.³⁸ As we know, in the Renaissance the philosophies and views of ancient Greece were revered. This is reflected in the sixteenth-century view of the poet and the musician-in both eras, the poet and the composer were considered to be one

³⁶ Palisca, 356.

³⁷ Palisca, chapter 13 "The Poetics of Music", 369-407.

³⁸ Zarlino's writings will be considered in more detail in chapter 3, and Palisca's use of Zarlino's theories in practical application will be examined in chapter 4.

person. A union between music and poetry was seen as natural, however, many rules were required in order for this “natural” alliance to be maintained. While the theoretical rules according to Zarlino will be examined in some detail in chapter 3, there are many other theorists and composers considered by Palisca. One is the poet Benedetto Vardi, who wrote of how to most effectively set poetry to music. Until the beginning of the sixteenth-century, the musical recitation of poetry was viewed by many poets as the best way for their work to be musically represented. This would most often be done with only the accompaniment of a lute and with a simple melody. There are many poet/singers who became famous for this art.³⁹ However, with the rise of the madrigal, simple musical recitation of poetry began to be overshadowed, as poets and musicians alike favoured the effect that could be achieved in a free polyphonic form. Some rules for how to best represent the poetry in music are laid out by Vardi in his *Discorso mandato a Giulio Caccini ditto Romano, sopra la Musica anticha, e 'l cantar bene*.

1. The composer and singer must be careful not to spoil the verse by overindulging in musical artifice, such as an excess of contrapuntal activity.
2. The music, as Plato said, must follow the verse and not be led by it. The words are the soul of the music, and the counterpoint the body. Counterpoint must take its rule from the text, as the body is governed by the soul.
3. The length of the syllables of verse must be strictly observed, for in rhythm, as Aristotle said, are images of the affectations.
4. A composer must choose a high, intermediate, or low range of the voice and create a melody of a few notes out of this segment, revolving around the median tone of mese. He must choose the harmonia or octave species most appropriate to his subject and remain faithful to it.⁴⁰

These suggestions run parallel to those of Pietro Bembo, as was discussed above.

Like in the poetry which it sets, music must respect the rhythm and affect of the poetry, not just the subject matter.

³⁹ Palisca, 373-375.

⁴⁰ As translated in Palisca, 378-79.

In her dissertation, Martha Feldman includes a chapter on the role of rhetoric in Venetian music theory, which focuses on the theories of Gioseffo Zarlino and Giovanni del Lago.⁴¹ Feldman begins her study of del Lago by proving that he was close friends with Venier, who was a prominent poet in Venice and “eventually took over Bembo’s paternal literary role.”⁴² This allowed del Lago to come into contact with Bembo’s theories, as well as many of the most well-known poets and musicians in Venice. Feldman identifies the following as del Lago’s most fundamental rule in composing music for a text:

As to the observation on composing a harmony, first it should be noted that every time you wish to compose a madrigal, or sonnet, or barzeletta, or other lyric poem, it is first necessary, searching diligently with the mind, to find a melody suited to the words...that is, one which suits the material.⁴³

This is very vague, and does not seem to give much guidance to the composer. However, del Lago believes that too many composers do not base their music on the poetry, and thus are not adhering to the ancient maxim of propriety, which was explored above. In the following paragraph in del Lago’s letter, he points out that in order for the music to match the text, the composer must consider the affect of the poetry and in which mode the music should be composed in order to best convey that affect. Also, the movement of the melody must be considered, as it too will determine the affect of the music.

Del Lago also includes more specific directions for the composer. In one of his letters, he instructs the composer to consider the use of intervals in setting poetry to music.

⁴¹ See Feldman diss. Ch.2, 68-141.

⁴² Feldman diss., 77.

⁴³ “Quanto alla osservatione di comporre un concerto primieramente è da notare, ogni volta ache vorrete comporre un madrigale, o sonetto o barzeletta, o, altra canzone, prima bisogna con la mente diligentemente cercando ritrovare uno aere conveniente alle parole...cioè che convenga alla material.” Ibid, 82.

Force yourself to make your harmony such that it may be happy, soft, full, sweet, resonant, grave, and fluid when sung, that is composer of consonants in the common usage, as are thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and octaves.⁴⁴

Since there are many affects and many intervals listed here, it is presumed that the composer should choose the intervals that are best suited to the affect that is contained in the text. According to Feldman, the above statement also includes the assumption of *varietas* or *variazione*. The variation would only contain those consonant intervals listed, as dissonant intervals were discouraged by del Lago.⁴⁵

Del Lago also includes discussion of verbal syntax and how this should best be reflected in the text. Cadences are most important in this, and del Lago cautions that they should be used “where parts of the text (or one of its portions) finish and not always in an identical place.”⁴⁶ Although del Lago does appear to be concerned with many of the same principles as Bembo, Feldman asserts that del Lago’s requirements do not stem from the same Ciceronian concern for style that motivated Bembo. Instead, he was trying to emphasize the structural aspects of language. However, Feldman argues that another Venetian theorist, Zarlino, was very concerned by Bembo’s precepts of style. Zarlino’s writings and Feldman’s views on them will be considered in chapter 3 of this study.

The Model of Motivicity

Perhaps the work on theoretical considerations with the most relevance to this study is Joshua Rifkin’s article “Miracles, Motivicity, and Mannerism.”⁴⁷ Rifkin’s work

⁴⁴ “Sforzatevi di far il concerto vostro che sia allegro, suave, pieno d’harmonia, dolce, resonante, grave, et agevole nel cantare, cioè di consonantie usitate, come sono terse, quarte, quinte, sestete, et ottave.” Translated in Feldman diss., 86.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 87.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 89.

⁴⁷ Joshua Rifkin, “Miracles, Motivicity, and Mannerism: Adrian Willaert’s *Videns Dominus flentes sorores Lazari* and Some Aspects of Motet Composition in the 1520s” in *Hearing the Motet: Essays on the Motet*

in this article provides the basis for the analytical method that will be used later in this study. It is a method that has been informally defined by Rifkin in the above mentioned article.⁴⁸ According to Rifkin, motivicity is a compositional method used in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, especially in the music of Josquin des Prez and Jean Mouton, who was the teacher of Adrian Willaert. Rifkin's informal definition of motivicity is "the maximum permeation of a polyphonic complex by a single linear denominator or set of denominators."⁴⁹ Rifkin goes on to explain these terms in more detail. By "linear denominator", he means a unit of music that is characterized both diastematically and rhythmically, which is the usual definition of a motive as it is known in music of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries. However, Rifkin states that although the unit itself may be defined in the same way, it is used and manipulated very differently. The motives do not transform as they do in the analysis of music of the Classical era, but rather remain essentially the same throughout the composition, with only minor variances as are required for the sake of contrapuntal exigency. Also, the motives as they are used in the music of the fifteenth-century do not necessarily have a distinctive profile or a prominent role in the music, as is most often the case in music of the Classical period. They can occur at any point in a melodic phrase. What is important is that the motives are repeated in one or more than one voice in a polyphonic work. For this reason, Rifkin compares the motives in fifteenth-century music to segments in twelve-tone theory, but without the "embracing context of a larger set."⁵⁰ So, the motives

of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, ed. Dolores Pesce (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁴⁸ The informal definition as discussed below can be found on Rifkin, 244.

⁴⁹ Rifkin, 244.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

to which Rifkin is referring are defined as follows: they must include both rhythm and pitch, and must be repeated.

Rifkin realizes that this rather vague definition makes it difficult to define the units of motivicity in a musical work, but he states that it is actually quite simple. Anything that is repeated in either one voice or many voices and maintains its rhythm and contour can be considered a motive. He also realizes that it is difficult to distinguish between motivicity and imitation, which is the primary compositional device used in the music to which Rifkin is referring. In fact, imitation can be one of the manifestations of motivicity, but there are others. Any repetition can be considered motivicity, so this can include ostinatos, or multiple appearances of the motive within a single point of imitation, not only in incises.

Willaert and the *Musica nova*

One of the first articles on Willaert's *Musica nova* to be published in English was Armen Carapetyan's "The *Musica Nova* of Adriano Willaert."⁵¹ Unlike most other articles and books studied in this chapter, Carapetyan's serves as a broad overview of various elements rather than an in-depth study to prove a certain point of view.

Carapetyan begins by making observations about the unusual circumstances surrounding the publication of the *Musica nova*. First of all, it was unusual that a mixed collection of madrigals and motets would be published, and also that a collection of works of only one composer would be compiled. He then discusses various problems which arose during the publication of the work, some of which had to do with the

⁵¹ Armen Carapetyan, "The *Musica Nova* of Adriano Willaert," *Journal of Renaissance and Baroque Music* 1 (1946/47) 200-221.

Vatican's negative view of Petrarch's poetry. Carapetyan provides examples of letters by Duke Alfonso d'Este which were written in an attempt to get the *Musica nova* published despite the problems that it was encountering. Carapetyan does this in an attempt to show how important and revered Willaert was in the musical world at that time. From there, Carapetyan moves on to a consideration of the chronology of the pieces of the *Musica nova*. Although the collection was published in 1558, it has been suggested (both by Carapetyan and others) that many of the pieces it contains actually date from before 1545. Although Carapetyan's arguments here are interesting and compelling, they do not directly effect the direction of this thesis.⁵²

The second section of Carapetyan's article deals with stylistic considerations.⁵³ He argues that the "theoretical substructure of the *Musica nova* is decidedly formed of progressive elements."⁵⁴ Carapetyan draws a distinction between chromaticism and non-diatonicism. He suggests that the structure of the work rests largely on triadic writing, and therefore the chromatic writing is not the type of chromaticism that was widely practiced and accepted in the sixteenth-century, but rather served as a contrast to the diatonicism of much of the writing in these works. This is a significant observation, for it suggests that musical analysis of the madrigals in this collection must be done with a consideration of harmonic implications as well as melodic, and that while there is counterpoint, there are also triadic harmonies hidden within that must be considered.

From there, Carapetyan moves to a discussion of Zarlino and the extent to which his writings are a reflection of Willaert's own compositional techniques. He very quickly gives an overview of Zarlino's views as stated in the last nine chapters of his *Institutioni*

⁵² For Carapetyan's arguments on the chronology of the *Musica nova*, see Carapetyan 201-204.

⁵³ Carapetyan 204-207.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 205.

Harmoniche. In short, Zarlino describes the difference between chromaticism and enharmonicism. He also states that when mixed with the diatonic modes, chromatic and enharmonic devices can be quite effective. This allows a greater range of possibilities for the composer, and thus it becomes easier for the text to be set in the most effective means possible. Here, Zarlino outlines in theoretical terms the reason that Willaert's music is so effective. He knows how to mix diatonic, chromatic and enharmonic qualities in order to set texts properly. In particular, this allows Willaert to musically convey the complexity and duality of the poetry of Petrarch. Carapetyan offers his own interpretation of the manner in which Willaert combines different types of harmony in order to set poetry effectively. He believes that what set the *Musica nova* apart from other works of that time is "a freedom from conventions, an enlarging of tonal means, and a new sense of harmonic (and melodic) organization...".⁵⁵ This is ultimately achieved through a combination of *musica ficta* and new tonal means.

In section III of Carapetyan's article, he addresses the important issue of texture in the *Musica nova*.⁵⁶ The question which must be asked is this: is the *Musica nova* homophonic or polyphonic? This is also an issue that I will address in my own analysis of the madrigals. Carapetyan points out that there is a variety of musical textures and that the writing alternates between homophonic and polyphonic sections. My perspective on this will differ from Carapetyan's since I will be examining the relationship between musical texture and text, while Carapetyan considers it in purely theoretical terms. He further examines the writings of Zarlino in an effort to find theoretical proof that Willaert's style of writing here was codified. Zarlino's relationship with Willaert's music

⁵⁵ Carapetyan, 206-207.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 208-212.

will be discussed in detail in chapter 3, but there is one point of interest in Carapetyan's observations. While he is outlining the various types of contrapuntal writing as laid out by Zarlino, Carapetyan refers to a style called "Comporre di fantasia." The compositional process involved was to state the contrapuntal subject, then to write a counterpoint based on various segments of that subject. This is a significant part of my working definition of motivicity, and provides proof that it was a compositional tool used by Willaert. This will also be further explored in chapter 3.

In section IV, Carapetyan proceeds to explore the issues of mood.⁵⁷ He makes an observation that in the madrigals of the *Musica nova*, Willaert's "expressiveness consists of the mood of the text as a whole, rather than of details in tonal description."⁵⁸ While this may be true on the surface, I intend to prove that Willaert did alter his writing in order to express particular details of the text. Although he did not often use word painting as overtly as it is used by many other composers, he did use variations in texture, rhythm, range and rate of motivicity in order to express the subtleties of the text.

In *The Italian Madrigal*, Einstein includes a lengthy chapter on Willaert and the works in the *Musica nova*. Einstein sees Willaert as descendant from Verdelot when it comes to madrigal composition, but with some definite traits of his own that can be seen from his earliest madrigals. First, Willaert's madrigals contain a "freer and bolder feeling for harmony and...freer and less constrained voice leading."⁵⁹ The most important factor in Willaert's madrigals, according to Einstein, is the complete fusion of voice-leading and harmony. Einstein is keenly aware of Willaert's subtlety in representing the text. There is

⁵⁷ Carapetyan, 212-221.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 213.

⁵⁹ Einstein, 326.

attention to diction and rhetoric without simple “imitazione della natura”, and this is what makes Willaert such a successful composer of madrigals set to sonnets of Petrarch.

Einstein later goes into more detail on the *Musica nova* itself. He points out that the collection had been buried for several years, and revised before its publication in 1558.⁶⁰ Thus, the title cannot indicate that the works are newly composed. Einstein suggests that the title is drawing attention to the fact that the collection is “new in literary uniformity, new as an attempt to reflect the changing moods of the soul as expressed in the sonnets of a single great poet.”⁶¹ Einstein calls attention to the fact that Willaert writes all the madrigals in a bipartition form, which is the motet model set down by Josquin in two-fifths of his motets. This lends an air of solemnity to each of the madrigals. This bipartite division of madrigal settings of sonnets would become the norm for the sixteenth-century.⁶²

Martha Feldman also includes sections on Willaert and the *Musica nova* in both her dissertation and her book, *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice*.⁶³ The third chapter of her dissertation is devoted entirely to this topic, including an overview of Willaert’s career and patronage of Willaert in Venice. While these sections include a wealth of valuable information, Feldman’s views on Willaert’s style and the *Musica nova* itself are most relevant to this study. She identifies the tremendous historical importance of the madrigals in this collection. As was noted above, Willaert’s bipartite structure was modeled from the motet, and Feldman remarks that “Willaert for the first time fashioned

⁶⁰ Einstein, 334-35.

⁶¹ Ibid, 335.

⁶² Ibid, 337.

⁶³ Martha Feldman, *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995).

a true secular counterpart to the sacred motet.”⁶⁴ This type of madrigal was a great departure from the more simplistic and “pleasing” type that was common before the publication of the *Musica nova* in 1558. Feldman identifies the fact that the literary ideals at work in Venice in the first half of the sixteenth-century were crucial to Willaert’s aesthetic development, and those literary ideals combined with developments in music theory allowed Willaert to develop this new style of madrigal writing that would take into account these two streams, and combine to create the best possible vehicle for musical settings of Petrarch’s sonnets. Feldman notes that many authors have written about the “extreme reserve and absence of a tuneful melody” in Willaert’s madrigals, but Feldman believes that these characteristics are due to the “literary and rhetorical aesthetic criteria current in Willaert’s Venice.”⁶⁵ Feldman uses several musical examples from the madrigals of the *Musica nova* to prove that Willaert’s settings were informed by literary theories in Venice, which were dominated by Bembo. Her analyses deal with several issues, but most notably, she does address the device of motivic variation. Although it is not the same as Rifkin’s motivicity (see above), it is yet more evidence that Willaert was composing with motives in mind. Although Feldman does look at Willaert’s use of motives on the surface, there is no detailed analysis, and the variation of the motives themselves are not the prime factor which she uses in order to demonstrate Willaert’s attention to Bembo’s ideas. However, she does note that that the motivic character of some of the madrigals helps to transmit the poetic language. Feldman also looks at any musical characteristics in each madrigal to determine how Willaert achieves either

⁶⁴ Feldman diss., 142.

⁶⁵ Feldman diss., 196.

gravità or *piacevolezza*.⁶⁶ In this way, Feldman's research most closely resembles the research undertaken in the present study.

In *City Culture*, an entire chapter is devoted to Willaert's madrigals. Much of the information included in this chapter has already been mentioned above in the review of her dissertation, but there are a few noteworthy insights. She notes that Willaert's madrigal output was most likely entirely Venetian, and in most cases there is a link between northern polyphonic techniques and Bembist literary ideals, but that this can be most clearly seen in the madrigals of the *Musica nova*. These Bembist ideals include "scrupulous attention to the affective values of sound, the strength and articulation of syntactic components, and the weighty canons of decorum."⁶⁷ She also draws attention to some large scale characteristics of the collection. The pairing of austere madrigals with sacred motets that deal with issues of sin and penitence add even more gravity to the madrigals than was noted above. Also, certain groups of madrigals are more weighty and serious than others. In general, the four-voice works are the least complex, though still in the new style, and the seven-voice works are often dialogues that use often homophonic alternations.⁶⁸ Feldman views the five and six-voice works as the most serious and introspective.

Feldman also makes broad observations about the nature of the sonnet in relation to musical settings. The sonnet is a very formal and fixed poetic genre, and has often served as "the traditional lyric vehicle for expressing archetypal states of emotion."⁶⁹ Also, many literary theorists, including Bembo, had noted that the sonnet's long lines and

⁶⁶ For Feldman's discussion on the style of the madrigals in the *Musica nova* and analysis of individual madrigals, see her dissertation, 193-271.

⁶⁷ Feldman, *City Culture*, 199.

⁶⁸ This dialogue format will be seen in the analysis of *Liete e pensose* in chapter 5.

⁶⁹ Feldman, *City Culture*, 227.

widely-spaced rhythms created a feeling of *gravità* regardless of the other elements that may be at work in the poem. This will be examined in more detail in later chapters.

Feldman also includes more detailed analysis of *Pien d'un vago pensier* from the *Musica nova*. While they need not be recounted in detail here, there are some elements that are relevant to the present study. As mentioned above, Feldman has noted Willaert's use of motives in his madrigals. Here again, she links the use of motives to Bembist *variazione*. However, she states that the variances are created by using different motivic shapes for different parts of the text. In this study, the purpose of motivic analysis will be to determine whether or not the variations of the motives themselves are used to mimic Bembist *variazione*.

The writings reviewed above can be seen as leading to the following conclusion: Willaert's aesthetics and rhetorical understanding stemmed from the views of Pietro Bembo which were current at the time. This led to the development of a new type of madrigal writing which took Bembist principles into account. Also, the writings of Rifkin and Feldman inform us that Willaert often wrote motivically. A logical next step in research is to determine whether the two are linked. Did Willaert use motivicity in order to create a Bembist reading of the text? A clearer understanding of Bembo's principles is necessary in order to search for those elements in the madrigals of the *Musica nova*. Also, the writings of Zarlino must be considered, as his theories were also informed by Bembo (as was stated above), and form a link between literary and musical theory that will allow for a clearer understanding of the manner in which Willaert uses compositional devices to create the most effective possible settings of Petrarch's sonnets.

Chapter 2

Pietro Bembo and the *Prose della volgar lingua*

Pietro Bembo was already established as one of the most important figures in Venice on literary theory by the time that *Prose della volgar lingua*⁷⁰ was published in 1525. Even though the full book was not published until that date, manuscript copies are known to have existed by about 1512.⁷¹ Bembo's ideas were most popular in Venice, where he frequented the salons of many literary and musical figures. In that city, Bembo's premises were widely known and discussed, and this made it possible for Adrian Willaert to be exposed to the ideas that led to his particular style of madrigal composition. But what exactly were these Bemboist ideas, and why did they have any effect on the composition of madrigals?

There are many aspects of Bembo's writings which come together to create the intellectual and aesthetic backdrop for Willaert's madrigals. One of the most central tenets of Bembo's ideals, which must be understood in order to shed light on all others, is the idea of poetry as oratory. The assimilation of the discipline of poetry into oratory was not a Bemboist idea, as it was beginning to be pervasive in many writings of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries.⁷² The model for Bembo and many others who turned to oratory as their inspiration was Cicero. Bembo sought to extract the ideals of literary purity from Ciceronian doctrine without including the important political aspect. Cicero was seen as

⁷⁰ The edition used in this chapter is Pietro Bembo, *Prose della volgar lingua*, ed. Mario Marti (Padua: Liviana Press, 1967). Marti's edition is based on the third edition of *Prose*, which was published in Florence in 1549.

⁷¹ Feldman diss., 13.

⁷² See discussion on page 11 of this study. See also Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, 333-338, and Feldman diss., 26-33.

the paragon of ancient literature, and thus the most admired figure to Bembo and his followers. Although this aspect of Bembo's work has been ignored by some writers, it is crucial to a complete understanding of his ideas that may seem to be more directly applicable to Petrarch and Willaert.

Decorum and *Variazione*

The study of oratory is important for Bembo because it instructs readers on the three styles of oratory—high, middle, and low. The high style is characterized by more serious character and *grave* uses of language, while the low style is characterized by more simple, pleasing subjects and use of language. The style of oratory used should be determined not entirely by the subject at hand, but also by the listener. If the argument is going to persuade the audience, it must be delivered in a way to which that audience will respond. There are also more specific rules on how each style is to be used. Stylistic devices may be used more freely in the high style, a moderate level in the middle style, and less often in the low style. Also, the complexity of these devices should be greater in the high style than the low. The manner in which these styles are used and devices are manipulated is referred to by both Cicero and Bembo as decorum. In order for decorum to be maintained, the style of oratory must match the material. However, Cicero warns against using the same style to an extreme: “A style...that lacks relief or check or variety cannot continue to give pleasure for long, however brilliantly coloured the poem or speech may be.”⁷³ This brings in the most important of the Bemboist ideas, *variazione*.

Bembo's *variazione* is taken from Cicero's idea of *variatio*. It is based on the idea that remaining for too long in any one affect will not be as effective as constantly varying

⁷³ From Cicero's *De Oratore*, as quoted in Feldman diss., 34.

the style of the speech. This is illustrated by Cicero in *De Oratore*: “Perfumes compounded with an extremely sweet and penetrating scent do not give us pleasure for so long as those that are moderately fragrant.”⁷⁴ Although the oratory or poem should be dominated by the style that best suits its material and audience, there must be some shifting to the other styles in order to maintain interest and balance. This notion of *variazione* is part of decorum. The style must match the material, but must also be varied in order to maintain decorum. Bembo makes this dual role clear in his *Prose*:

One must then choose the words; if speaking of lofty material, grave, high, resonant, clear, and brilliant ones; if of low and vulgar material, light, flat, humble, popular, quiet ones; if of material in between these two, then likewise middle and temperate words which incline as little towards one or the other of these two poles as possible. It is necessary, nonetheless, in these rules, to observe moderation and avoid above all satiety.⁷⁵

This belief that *variazione* must be at work in order for literature to maintain decorum is the primary reason that Bembo identifies Petrarch as the paragon of vernacular literature rather than other Italian authors. In particular, Bembo attacks Dante’s writings as containing far too much *asprezza*, and therefore breaking the rules of decorum. Bembo believed that Dante’s writings contained language that was “le vili...le dure...le dispettose.”⁷⁶ While Bembo concedes that sometimes harsh, vile and spiteful language is necessary, they should be avoided if at all possible, and that it is usually better for an author to remain silent than to use such language. Bembo quotes several passages from Dante’s *Divine Comedy* that he views as needlessly offensive.

⁷⁴ As quoted in Feldman diss., 33.

⁷⁵“Da scegliere adunque sono le voci, se di material grande si ragiona, gravi, alte, sonanti, apparenti, luminose; se di bassa e volgare, lievi, piane, dimesse, popolari, chete; se di mezzana tra queste due, medesimamente con voci mezzane e temperate, e le quali meno all’ uno e all’ altro pieghino di questi due termini, che si può. È di mestiero nondimeno in queste medisme regole server modo, e schifare sopra tottu sazieta.” Bembo, 55. Translation from Feldman diss., 36.

⁷⁶ Bembo, 55.

After his condemnation of Dante's excessive harshness, Bembo moves on to the reasons that he sees Petrarch as the better poet. While Dante used bitterness where it could have been avoided, Petrarch made conscious word choices that would maintain decorum and purity: "Petrarch did not do thus...if there was some small word which he could say better, he changed it and changed it again until he could not say it any other way."⁷⁷ Using Petrarch and Ciceronian oratory as his models, Bembo structured a complex theory of language and poetry which is dominated by the precept of *variazione*.

The Elements of *Variazione*: *Gravità* and *Piacevolezza*

While the maxim of *variazione* is meant to represent variation between the high, middle, and low styles, for Bembo, it can also mean variation between two affects: *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. This is seen in the following passage from *Prose*:

I declare that one could consider how much a compositor does or does not merit praise also by...two aspects that make all writing beautiful, gravity and pleasingness.⁷⁸

Bembo identifies some of the characteristics of *gravità* as "honesty, dignity, majesty, magnificence, grandeur."⁷⁹ The characteristics of *piacevolezza* are "grace, softness, loveliness, sweetness, playfulness, games."⁸⁰ By melding his discussion of these two elements with his discussion of the three styles of oratory, it is implied that Bembo sees a correlation between the two groups, although this is never stated explicitly. If there is a

⁷⁷ "Non face così il Petrarca...se alcuna minuta voce era, che potesse meglio dirso, egli la mutava e rimutava, infino a tanto che dire maglio non si potesse a modo alcuno." Bembo, 56-57. Translation from Feldman diss., 46.

⁷⁸ "Dico che egli si potrebbe considerare, quanto composizione meriti loda o non meriti, ancora per...due parti...che fanno bella ogni scrittura, la gravità e la piacevolezza." Bembo, 63. Translation from Feldman diss., 48-49.

⁷⁹ "L'onestà, la dignità, la maestà, la magnificenza, la grandezza." Bembo, 63. Translation from Feldman diss., 49.

⁸⁰ "La grazia, la soavità, la vaghezza, la dolcezza, gli scherzo, i giuochi." Ibid.

correlation, it would clearly be that the high style contains more elements of *gravità*, and the low style contains more elements of *piacevolezza*. Presumably, the middle style would contain a mix of the two.

As mentioned above, Bembo felt that Dante used language that was too harsh and broke the rules of decorum. Specifically, Bembo believed that Dante stayed too long within the confines of *gravità*. On the other hand, there were poets that he felt were too dependent on *piacevolezza*. Only Petrarch was seen to have achieved a perfect balance between the two:

Petrarch attains each of these qualities marvelously, to such a degree that one cannot choose in which of the two he was the greater master.⁸¹

While Cicero and Bembo's definitions of the three styles of oratory contained more references to the types of literary devices that could be used in order to achieve proper decorum, Bembo's definitions of *gravità* and *piacevolezza* contain only references to the subject matter. In order to explain the manner in which these two stylistic elements can be manipulated in poetry, he introduces two new terms, *suono* and *numero*. These two compositional devices, along with *variazione*, provide the means by which the writer can control the style of writing: "And the things, then, which fill out and compose these two qualities are three: sound, number, and variation."⁸² It is interesting that Bembo includes the principle of *variazione* here even though it has already been discussed at length in earlier sections of the *Prose*. It shows that this is the principle that is most important. In fact, it is the principle that governs all the others. While *suono* and *numero* are used in order to create *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, *variazione* is used in order to control

⁸¹ "Il Petrarca l'una e l'altra di queste parti empìe maravigliosamente, in maniera che scegliere non si può, in quale delle due egli fosse maggior maestro." Bembo, 63. Translation from Feldman, 50.

⁸² "...e le cose, poi, che empiono e compiono queste due parti, son tre, il suono, il numero, la variazione." Ibid.

these aspects so that proper decorum can be respected, which is most important to Bembo.

Suono and *numero* comprise the details of poetry which come together to create either *gravità* or *piacevolezza*. Bembo describes *suono* as follows:

That concord of sounds and that harmony which is generated in prose by the arrangement of the words, and in verse, in addition to this, also by the arrangement of the rhymes.⁸³

In short, the sounds of the words themselves and the rhyme scheme are the most important aspects of *suono*, and the manner in which these elements are used can create a feeling of *grave* or *piacevole*. Bembo goes into quite a lot of detail regarding the sounds and qualities of various letters and combinations of letters. He ranks the vowels in descending order A, E, O, I, and U.⁸⁴ He ranked A as the best vowel because it expels the most air, and thus makes the best sound. He also states that all of these vowels make a better sound when the syllable is long rather than short. A long syllable ends with a vowel, and a short syllable ends with a consonant.

Bembo also addresses the qualities of many of the consonants:

The L is soft and delicate and very agreeable, and of all the letters in its family sweetest. By contrast, the R is harsh, but of a generous breath. In the middle between these two, then, are the M and the N, the sound of which is heard almost as crescent-shaped and horn-like within words. The F makes a somewhat dense and resonant sound. Similarly dense and resonant but quicker is the G. The C is of the same density and resonance, but more halting than the others. The B and D, then, are pure and graceful and fluent. Extremely graceful and pure are the P and the T, and both are very fluent. Above all the others, finally, the Q has a poor and dead sound; and so much the more so, for without the U which sustains it, it can have no place. The H, since it is not a letter, can have nothing by itself; but it adds

⁸³ “Quel concento e quel armonia, che nelle prose dal componimento si genera delle voci; nel verso oltre a ciò del componimento eziando delle rime.” Bembo, 63. Translation from Feldman diss., 51.

⁸⁴ Bembo, 64.

resonance and the flesh almost to the letter which it stands beside in the manner of a servant.⁸⁵

Based on these guidelines, the quality of words can be determined by the combination of letters and syllables used. That is the manner in which *suono* contributes to the affect of the poetry.

Aside from simply the sound of the letters and syllables themselves, *suono* also consists of the distance between the rhyming words in poetry. More distant rhymes are *grave*, and closer rhymes are *piacevole*. This is because any slowness or increase in length is considered to contribute to *gravità*. Therefore, sestine are considered the gravest form of poetry, since the rhymes only occur from stanza to stanza. Canzoni can vary considerably in their *suono* based on the rhyme scheme since it is a freer poetic form. Rhymes within lines are considered the most *piacevole*, although “frequent repetition of rhymes generates noise rather than *suono*.”⁸⁶ In the case of the sonnet, *versi rotti* (seven syllables) is more pleasing than *versi interi* (eleven syllables).

The other element that Bembo cites as important in determining the affect of the poem is *numero*. It is defined as follows:

Number is non other than the time given to syllables, either long or short, created by virtue of the letters which make up the syllables or by reason of the accents which are given to the words.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ “Molle e dilicata e piacevolissima è la L, e di tutte le sue compagne lettere dolcissima. Allo ‘ncontro la R aspera, ma di generoso spirito. Di mezzano poi tra queste sue la M e la N, il suono delle quali si sente quasi lunato e cornuto nelle parole. Alquanto spesso e pieno sunon appresso rende la F. Spesso medesimamente e pieno, ma più pronto il G. Di quella medisma e spessezza e prontezza è il C, ma più impedito do quest’altri. Puri e snelli e ispediti poi son oil B e il D. Snellissimi e purissimi il P e il T, e insieme ispeditissimi. Di povero e morte sunon, sopra gli alteri tutti, ultimamente è il Q; e in tanto più ancora maggiormente, che egli, senza la U che’l sostenge, non può aver luogo. La H, per ciò che non è lettera, per sé medisma niente può; ma giugne solamente pienezza e quasi polpa alla letera, a cui ella in guisa di servente sta accanto.” Bembo, 66. Translation from Feldman diss., 52-53.

⁸⁶ “Spesso ripiliamento di rime genera strepito più tosto che suono.” Bembo, 72. Translation from Feldman diss., 54.

⁸⁷ “Numero altro non è che il tempo che alle sillabe si dà, o lingo o brieve, ora per opera delle lettere che fanno le sillabe, ora per cagione degli accenti che si danne alle parole, e tale volta e per l un conto e per l’altro.” Bembo, 73. Translated in Feldman diss., 54.

The notion of accents in words is much easier to gauge than the time of syllables. The accents are defined as being on one of three syllables: the last, penultimate, or antepenultimate. If the accent falls on the antepenultimate syllable, the word is *piacevole*. If the accent is on the last syllable, the word is *grave* and heavy. If the accent is on the penultimate syllable, then the word can be either *grave* or *piacevole*. The quality will then be determined by the use of vowels and consonants as discussed above. Bembo uses the following example from Boccaccio's *Decameron* to illustrate that words that have the same meaning can have a very different quality based on the placement of accents. This line has a grave quality:

Umana cosa è l'avere compassione agli afflitti.

If the line had been rewritten with accents placed largely on antepenultimate syllables, the passage would have a much sweeter quality:

Debita cosa è l'essere compassionevole a'miseri.⁸⁸

It is clear that the second example creates a different feeling than the first, even though the meaning of the words is essentially unchanged.

The other meaning of *numero* is the "time given to the syllables." This can be difficult to determine, since there are no definite rules. Even Bembo's explanation is rather vague:

Gravity is imparted to words when they are full of vowels and consonants which are conducive to it and at times pleasingness is imparted when they are stripped and very destitute of vowels and consonants, or are sufficiently clothed and dressed with those that produce pleasingness.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Bembo, 76. Translation from Mace, 71.

⁸⁹ "Gravità dona alle voci, quando elle di vocali e di consonanti, a ciò fare acconce, sono ripiene; e talora piacevolezza, quando e di consonanti e di vocali o sono ignude e povere molto, o di quelle di loro, che alla piacevolezza servono, abbastnza coperte e vestite." Bembo, 74. Translation from Feldman diss., 55.

Aside from simply the length of the words, *gravità* is also created with clusters of consonants, as they slow the rhythm of the word. Bembo cites the following passage from Petrarch's sonnet "Mentre che'l cor dagli amorosi vermin" from the *Canzoniere* in order to demonstrate how *numero* can contribute to *gravità*:

Fior', frond', erb', ombr', antr, ond' aure soavi.

The many clusters of consonants slows the rhythm of this passage considerably. Also, it is *versi interi*, and is therefore slower and more grave than if it was *versi rotti*.

The third element used to contribute to *gravità* and *piacevolezza* is *variazione*. As mentioned above, *variazione* does not actually function to create either affect, but is a factor in the way that *gravità* and *piacevolezza* are used. However, while Bembo's discussion early in the *Prose* do not take *numero* and *suono* into account, his later discussion does:

In seeking gravity, after many words with resonant and lofty letters, one must place some low and barren ones; and with many distantly placed rhymes, a close one will answer better, which others in the same manner will not do; and among many accents which are arranged in the penultimate syllables, one must see fit to bring in some which stand on the final and in the penultimate; and in the midst of many very long syllables, to insert some short ones adds grace and ornament.⁹⁰

Of course, only Petrarch among all vernacular writers has achieved perfection in balancing *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, and thus understands the important principle of *variazione*.

⁹⁰ "Nel cercare la gravità, dopo molte voci di piene e d'alte lettere, è da porne alcuna di basse e sottili; e appresso molte rime tra sè lontane, una vicina meglio risponderà, che altre di quelle medesima guisa non faranno; e tra molti accenti che giacciono nelle penultime sillabe, si dee vedere do recarne alcuno, che mezzo di molte sillabe lunghissime frammetterne alquante corte giugne grazia e adornamento." Bembo, 82. Translation from Feldman diss., 57.

Chapter 3 Gioseffo Zarlino

In Venice in the mid-sixteenth-century, literary theory was having a profound effect on many disciplines. Music theory was not exempt from the influence of prominent literary theorists, in particular Pietro Bembo. One of the most important music theorists of the sixteenth-century was Gioseffo Zarlino. Zarlino's work is especially relevant to this study, since he was a student of Adrian Willaert and may have been directly influenced by Bembo. Also, because of his respect for Willaert's work, Zarlino's writings are often direct references to the manner in which Willaert composed, and he often uses Willaert as the primary example of how music should be written.

Zarlino's *Institutioni harmoniche* was first published in 1558 in Venice.⁹¹ This work contains instruction on many aspects of music theory and composition, including concrete musical issues as well as philosophical, historical and poetic ideas. Zarlino's work is considered humanistic, because it includes a study of poetry, history, moral philosophy, grammar and rhetoric.⁹² For the purposes of this study, only Zarlino's views on the use of rhetoric and grammar as they apply to ideas stated in previous chapters will be discussed in detail.

From the first pages of the *Institutioni*, Zarlino makes it clear that he views Willaert as the pinnacle of music composition.

The great God...has bestowed the grace of making Adriano Willaert born in our time, truly one of the rarest intellects who has ever practiced music, who...has

⁹¹ The full title is *Le institutioni harmoniche di M. Gioseffo Zarlino da Chioggia; Nelle quali; oltre le materie appartenenti alla musica; si trovano dichiarati molti luoghi de Poeti, d'Historici, & di filosofi; Si come nel leggerle si potrà chiaramente vedere; con due tavole; l'una che contiene le materie principali; & l'altra le cose più notabili, che nell'opera so ritrovano* (Ridgewood, N.J.: Gregg Press, 1966).

⁹² Feldman diss., 101.

begun to elevate our times, leading music back to that honour and dignity that it formerly had.⁹³

It is clear from this quote that much of the *Institutioni* would be devoted to elevating Willaert's music. This is also clear in the ratio of musical examples by Willaert in comparison to those of other composers. In Part IV alone, which addresses polyphonic compositions, Zarlino provides thirty-six examples of music by Willaert. The next highest amount belongs to Zarlino himself, as he uses twenty of his own compositions as example, followed by Josquin with only six compositions. Other composers are represented by one or two compositions.⁹⁴

Zarlino provides many basic criteria for a musical composition which sets a text. The first criteria is that the composer "serve and please the minds of his listeners with harmonic accents."⁹⁵ He then lays out the remaining five criteria:

The second requirement of a composition is that it be composed principally of consonances, and that it contain incidentally also many dissonances so arranged and placed as to conform with the rules which will be given later. The third requirement is that the voices of a composition proceed properly, that is, through true and legitimate intervals born of the sonorous numbers, so that by their use good harmonies result. The fourth condition to be met is that of variety in the movement of the parts and in the harmony; for harmony is nothing other than diversity of moving parts and consonances, brought together with variety. The fifth is that a composition be ordered under a prescribed and determined mode, or tone, as we like to call it. It must not be haphazard. The sixth and last requirement... is that a musical composition complement the text, that is the words. With gay texts it should not be plaintive, and vice versa; with sad subjects it should not be gay.⁹⁶

⁹³ "L'ottimo Iddio...ne ha concesso gratia di far nascere a nostril tempi Adriano Vuillaert, veramente uno de più rari intelletti, che habbia la Musica pratica giamai essercitato: il quale...ha cominciato a levergli, & a ridurla verso quell'honore & dignità che già ella era." Zarlino, 1-2. Translation from Feldman diss., 102.

⁹⁴ Vered Cohen, *Zarlino on Modes: An Annotated, Indexed Translation, with Introduction and Commentary, on Part IV of "Le Institutioni harmoniche."* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 1977) xxv.

⁹⁵ "...di giovare, & dilettere gli animi de gli ascoltanti con gli accenti harmonici." Zarlino, 172. Translation from Feldman diss., 103.

⁹⁶ La Seconda è, che sia composta principalmente di consonanze, dipoi habbia in sè per accidente molte dissonanze, collocate in essa con debiti modi...La terza è, che le parti della cantilena procedino bene, cioè che le modulationi procedino per veri, & legittimi intervalli, che nascono da i numeri sonori; accioche per

There are notable correlations between these criteria and those set out by Bembo in his *Prose*. The second criterion, that music be principally based on consonances, is very similar to Bembo's suggestion that poetry should not contain vile or harsh language or imagery unless absolutely necessary, which was the reason for his criticism of Dante. The fourth criterion, which calls for variety in movement of parts and in harmony, can obviously be linked to Bembo's notion of *variazione*. The sixth criterion, that the music must fit the words, can be linked to Bembo's decorum. The use of language and whether it is *grave* or *piacevole* should correspond with the desired and appropriate affect of the piece.

Zarlino elaborates on his second criterion in a reply to chromaticists. In this passage, the link between Zarlino's view of chromaticists and Bembo's view of Dante can be clearly seen.

It is indeed inappropriate. It is one thing to speak normally and another to speak in song. They say we must imitate orators if we are to move the affections. Yet I have never heard an orator use the strange, crude intervals used by these chromaticists. If orators were to use them, I do not see how they could sway the mind of a judge and convince him of their point of view, as is their goal; rather the contrary would occur. It would be possible to include such things comfortable in one voice of a composition, where these accents, properly used, would have a good effect. Were this voice combined with others, however, the result would compel one to seal one's ears.⁹⁷

il mezzo loro acquisiamo l'uso delle buone harmonie. La Quarta conditione, che si ricerca, è, che le modulationi, & il concerto sia variato: percioche da altro non nasce l'harmonia, che dalla diversità delle consonanze, messe insieme con variatione. La Quinta è, che la cantilena sia ordinate sotto una prescritta, & determinate Harmonia, o Modo, o Tuono, che vogliam dire: & che non sia disordinata: Et la Sesta...è, che l'harmonia, che si contiene in essa, sia talmente accomodata alla Oratione, cioè alle Parole, che nelle materie allegre, l'harmonia non sia flebile; & per il contrario, nelle flebili, l'harmonia non sia allegra." Zarlino, 172. Translation from Feldman diss., 103-104.

⁹⁷ "E grande inconveniente; imperoche altro è parlare familiarmente; & altro è parlare modulando, o cantando. Ne mai hò udito Oratore (poi che dicono, che gli affetti) che usi nel suo parlare quelli cosi strani, & sgarbati intervalli, , che usano costero: perchioche quando li usasse, non so vedere, in qual maniera potesse piegar l'animo del Giudice, & persuaderlo a fare il loro volere; si come è il suo fine; se non per il contrario: Conciosia che quantunque si potesse fare il tutto commedamente in una parte della cantilena, & si udissero tali accenti fatti con proposito, & che facessero buoni effetti; tuttavia nelli accompagnamenti si udirebbero cose tanto ladre, che sarebbe dibisogno chiudersi le orecchie." Zarlino, 291. Translation from Feldman diss., 110.

Like Bembo, Zarlino viewed beauty as most important in art, and considered anything vulgar to be counterproductive to the composer's wish of pleasing his audience. Later in the *Institutioni*, Zarlino gives further instruction on how to proceed if the composer does want to communicate harshness or bitterness.

He should take care to accompany...each word in such a manner that, when the word denotes harshness, cruelty, bitterness, and other things of this sort, the harmony will be similar to these qualities, namely, somewhat hard and harsh, but not to the degree that it would offend.⁹⁸

Clearly this passage can be linked to Bembo's notion of decorum, since it states that words should be accompanied by appropriate music, but that it must not offend the listener. This passage can also be seen to promote the Bembist doctrine of *variazione*. Some degree of harshness must be allowed in order for there to be variety in the music and for those affects to be represented. However, there should not be any excess of those or any other types of sounds. While Zarlino never explicitly cites Bembo as the source of some of his ideas, he does refer the reader to the disciplines that Bembo embodies.

The Grammarian, Orator, and Poet have this knowledge from music: that the persistence of a sound, that is the repetition of a syllable or letter in a clause of text creates...bad speech or bad consonance, as one hears in the verse, "O fortunatam natam me consule Romam," because of the doubling of the syllables "natam" and the ending of the verse in the syllable "mam," which gives the listener little pleasure.⁹⁹

This can also be linked to Bembo's idea of *suono*. In poetry or oratory, the sounds of the syllables must be varied or else it will lack beauty. In music, the sound of the melody and

⁹⁸ "Debbe avertire di accompagnare...ogni parola, che dove ella dinoti asprezza, durezza, crudeltà, amaritudine, & altre cose simili, l'harmonia sia simile a lei, cioè alquanto dura, & aspra; di maniera però che non offendi." Zarlino, 339. Translation from Feldman diss., 111.

⁹⁹ "Il Grammatico, il Rhetore, & il Poeta hanno dalla Muisca questa cognitione, che la continovatione di un suono, cioè il replicare molte volte une Sillaba, o una littera istessa in una clausula di una Oratione, genera...Cativo parlare, o Cativa consonanza; come si ode in quell verso, *O fortunatam natam me consule Romam*; per il raddoppiamento della sillaba *natam*, & oer la terminatione del verso nella sillaba *mam*, che porgono all'udito poco piacere." Zarlino, 194. Translation from Feldman diss., 114.

harmony must be varied in order to create beauty. Zarlino makes the musical application of this idea of variety clearer elsewhere in the *Institutioni*:

We should seek to vary constantly the sounds, consonances, movements, and intervals; and thus through diversity we will attain a good and perfect harmony...Just as a painting in many colours pleases the eye more than a monochrome, varied consonances and melodic movements please the ear more than the simple and invariant, and therefore a diligent composer uses variety in his work.¹⁰⁰

It is clear from this passage that Zarlino intends for musical variety to exist in many forms. The musical elements of sound, consonance, melodic movement and intervallic content must work together to create a perfect harmony, and this must be constantly varied.

Zarlino also provides more specific instructions for how to musically portray a variety of affects.

Wishing to express effects of the first kind [harshness], one will do best to accustom oneself to arranging the parts of the composition so that they proceed with movements that are without the semitone, such as those of the whole tone and those of the major third. One should allow the major sixth or thirteenth, which by nature are somewhat harsh, to be heard above the lowest note of the concertus; also accompanying them with the syncope of the diatessaron or eleventh above this part, with somewhat slow movements, among which the syncope of the seventh may also be used. But when wishing to express effects of the second kind [sadness], in that case one should (in observance with the given rules) use movements which proceed by the semitone, by the minor third and similar others, often using above the lowest note of the composition minor sixths and thirteenths, which are by nature sweet and soft, especially when combined in the right ways and with discretion and judgment.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ “Dovemo cercare di variar sempre li Suoni, le Consonanze, li Movimenti, & gle Intervalli; & per tal modo, dalla varietà di queste cose, verremo a fare una buona, & perfetta harmonia...Onde si come il vedere une Pittura, che sia dipinta don varij colori, maggiormente diletta l’Occhio, di quello che non farebbe se con un solo colore; cosi l’Udito maggiormente se diletta, & piglia piacere delle Consonanze, & delle Modulationi variate, posted al diligentissimo Compositore nelle sue compositioni, che delle semplici, & non variate.” Zarlino, 177. Translation from Feldman diss., 114-115.

¹⁰¹ Translated in Cohen, 210.

Here Zarlino accounts for both melodic and harmonic content in his explanation of how intervals can be used to create harshness or sweetness, and thus also how to create variety by using both styles at appropriate points.

Aside from the intervallic content itself, Zarlino also refers to “natural” and “accidental” movement in chapter 32 of part IV of the *Institutioni*. Natural movement occurs when there are no accidentals, and accidental movement when sharp or flat signs are added. These two types of movement in combination with the intervals noted in the passage above can create a feeling of harshness or sweetness.

Thus we should note that the natural movements make the composition somewhat more sonorous and virile, and the accidental movements make it sweeter and somewhat more languid. For this reason the former can serve to express effects of the first kind, and the latter movements can serve for the other effects. So that combining the intervals of the major and minor consonances with the natural and accidental movements which make up the parts, with some judgment, one will succeed to imitate the words with a well-understood harmony.¹⁰²

Again, the idea of how the sounds used contribute to the harshness or sweetness of the music can be linked to the Bembo ideal of *suono*, where the sound of the words themselves helps to determine the communicated meaning.

In her dissertation, Martha Feldman attempts to provide a more concrete link between Bembo’s *gravità* and *piacevolezza* and Zarlino’s notions of harshness and sorrow or sweetness. She compares the terms used by both Bembo and Zarlino in their explanations of the terms.

Bembo	Zarlino
Gravità:	Harshness:
Onestà	Asprezza
Dignità	Durezza
Magnificenza	Crudeltà
Maestà	Amaritudine

¹⁰² Translation from Cohen, 211.

Grandezza

Piacevolezza:

Grazia
 Soavità
 Vaghezza
 Dolcezza
 Scherzo
 Giuochi

Sorrow:

Pianto
 Dolore
 Cordoglio
 Sospiri
 Lagrime

Based on the passage quoted above from chapter 32 of part IV, although these are certainly valid comparisons, it appears that Bembo and Zarlino differ on their interpretations of these terms. While Bembo's notion of *gravità* consists of dignity and grandeur, Zarlino's notion of harshness has a more virile, angry tone. Bembo's *piacevolezza* can include sorrow, but also includes playful and joyful feelings. Zarlino's idea of sorrow includes only those images linked to sadness, although it is not a deep mourning but rather a sweet melancholy.

As seen in the previous chapter, Bembo presented three primary elements which must be observed in order to write beautiful poetry: *variazione*, *suono* and *numero*. We have already seen that Zarlino also addresses the issues of variation and sound the *Institutioni*. In fact, Zarlino also refers in many different contexts to *numero* in music. Zarlino's use of the term has been interpreted to mean either rhythm or rhythm and meter.¹⁰³ While he refers to *numero* in many contexts throughout the *Institutioni*, most relevant to this study are those cases where Zarlino's use of the term can be linked to Bembo's.

In Bembo's *Prose*, *numero* referred to the number of syllables in a line or word, the placement of the accentuation within a word, and the proximity of rhyming words. In

¹⁰³ Cohen, xxxii.

all cases, fewer syllables and closer rhymes created *piacevolezza* because they created a swifter tempo, and more syllables and further rhymes created *gravità* because they were indications of slowness. Zarlino echoes the idea that any slowness is a natural indication of graveness in chapter 32 of part IV of the *Institutioni*.

Then as to the observance of numbers, the primary consideration should be the subject matter contained in the speech. If it is gay, one should proceed with powerful and swift tempi, namely, with figures that carry in themselves swiftness of tempo, such as minim and semiminim. But when the subject is tearful, one should proceed with slow and lingering tempi, as Adrian has shown in expressing both ways in many compositions.¹⁰⁴

Here we see not only evidence of Zarlino's awareness of Bembo's idea of *numero*, but also of decorum and *variazione*.

Zarlino also addresses how *numero* should be used when it comes to appropriate rhythm and syllable length.

We should also take care to accommodate the words of the speech to the musical figures in such a manner and with such numbers that one does not hear any barbarism, such as when in a vocal piece a syllable that should be short is made long, or vice versa, when a syllable that should be long is made short, which is heard every day in infinite compositions and is really a shameful thing.¹⁰⁵

Here Zarlino again shows sensitivity to Bembo's ideas. He is aware of the notion of long and short syllables and the idea that the length of a syllable contributes to the affect of the piece.

Finally, Zarlino also refers to grammar and how the grammatical structure of the text should be observed in the musical setting. In fact, these are some of the most detailed instructions given by Zarlino when it comes to text setting. These rules are also contained in chapter 32 of part IV.

¹⁰⁴ Translation from Cohen, 211.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 212.

In order that the sense of the words be complete, one should likewise take care not to separate from each other by rests any parts of the speech as long as a clause, or any of its parts, is not finished, as done by some of little intelligence. Furthermore, one should not make a cadence, especially one of the principal ones, nor put rests larger than those of the minim, unless the period, or the perfect sense of the speech, is completed. Nor should a rest of a minim be placed in intermediate points, for this is really a vicious thing;...[the composer] should take care to put the rest of a minim or semiminim (whichever suits him) at the head of the intermediate points of the speech, because they will serve there as commas. But as the head of the periods he should put whatever quantity of rest is convenient for him, for it seems to me that when the rests are placed in such a manner one can best distinguish the members of the period from another and hear without any discomfort the perfect sense of the words.¹⁰⁶

Based on Zarlino's attention to the ideas of variation, sound, number and decorum, as well as grammatical structure, it is clear that he was influenced by the works of literary theorists in Venice in the mid-sixteenth century. Even though we do not know for certain whether or not Zarlino ever had direct contact with Bembo, the parallels in their writings suggest that Zarlino was aware of Bembo's ideas, and felt that it was crucial for any composer setting a text to observe these characteristics and incorporate them into their musical setting.

¹⁰⁶ Translation from Cohen, 213-214.

Chapter 4 Exemplary Analysis of *Aspro core*

In the present chapter, two published analyses of Willaert's madrigal *Aspro core*, a madrigal from his *Musica nova* collection and easily his most frequently analyzed work, are presented and discussed, each of them following a different analytical model, in order to expose the effectiveness of each in bringing textual-musical connections and historical stylistic points to the surface. Palisca's method,¹⁰⁷ based heavily on his reading of Zarlino, is considered first, then the work of Mace,¹⁰⁸ informed principally by that author's interpretation of the application of Bembo's writings to madrigals. After this, a new analysis of the piece will be carried out, using the model of motivicity, first at face value, with the informal, working definition of Rifkin, then with refinements that bring it more closely into alignment with the writings of Zarlino and Bembo. Throughout the chapter, Willaert's probable compositional goals and his interpretation of the text in music will be considered.

The Text of the Sonnet

Before discussing the analyses themselves, one or two points concerning the text may be noted. This sonnet contains many oppositions, and, as is often the case with Petrarch, the oppositions are meant not to show conflict, but duality of meaning. One of the most pervasive oppositions is the duality of coldness and warmth in the way that

¹⁰⁷ Claude V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1985) 357-364.

¹⁰⁸ Dean T. Mace, "Pietro Bembo and the Literary Origins of the Italian Madrigal," *The Musical Quarterly* 55 (1969) 65-86.

Petrarch views Laura. The first two lines are a perfect example of this conflict which characterizes the entire sonnet:

Aspro core e selvaggio, e cruda voglia

In dolce, humile, angelica figura

Laura is portrayed as both harsh and cruel and sweet and angelic. These apparent contradictions and Willaert's musical interpretation of them will be revisited later in the chapter.

There is also a noteworthy reference to Dante here on Petrarch's part. The beginning of Dante's *Divine Comedy* also contains the words "aspra" and "selvaggia" in the first line. It is not surprising that Petrarch would include a reference to Dante in his work, since Dante was considered to be one of the first great Tuscan writers and Petrarch was known to have admired him. Also, Petrarch may have wanted to suggest that he was the next great Tuscan writer. Still, as obvious as the reference here appears to be, it has remained unmentioned by virtually every musicologist who has written on this madrigal.

Palisca's Analysis

Palisca begins his analysis of *Aspro core* with a brief discussion of Zarlino's writings,¹⁰⁹ with particular attention Zarlino's mention of poets's use of not only the meaning of the words to convey images and feelings, but also the sounds of the words themselves. Although this appears to be closely linked to Bembo's ideas about Petrarch, Palisca asserts that Zarlino saw these values at work without Bembo's guidance, and cites

¹⁰⁹ Throughout this chapter, any reference to Palisca's writings can be found in his *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, pp. 357-364.

a passage of Zarlino's which praises Vergil for his use of sweet, pleasing sounds for subjects of that kind and harsh sounding words for unpleasant subjects. In this sense, Palisca's view of *Aspro core* is very similar to Mace's, except that Palisca appeals to Zarlino's writings while Mace uses Bembo as his justification. However, Palisca then uses Zarlino's writings, along with those of Vincenzo Galilei in his *Fronimo* of 1568, in order to provide a more theoretical interpretation of Willaert's setting. Palisca begins by citing Galilei's rule that an imperfect consonance must go to the nearest perfect consonance. This rule may only be broken when imitating the words, and Galilei refers to *Aspro core* in particular as a perfect example:

...as the famous Adriano did (among other composers) in the beginning of that learned music he composed for six voices on the sonnet of Petrarch which begins *Aspro core, e selvaggio, & cruda voglia*. There are several times, in order to express the subject with grace, he passes not only from a major sixth to a fifth, but from a major third to another by conjunct movement.¹¹⁰

Palisca shows that the progression of a major sixth to a perfect fifth occurs four times in the setting of the first line, and that parallel major thirds occur in mm. 2-3 and mm. 7-8. Palisca further bolsters his argument by citing not only Galilei, but also Zarlino, who also prohibits parallel major thirds:

They produce a bitterness in their progression, because in the movement of the parts there is missing the interval of the large semitone, in which all the good of music resides. Without this interval every progression of harmony is hard, bitter, and nearly dissonant.¹¹¹

Palisca notes that the interval of a melodic semitone is used only four times in the first ten measures. This is done in order to musically portray the harshness of the subject matter itself, as well as the harsh sound of the words. Palisca briefly turns to Bembo and shows that Willaert also seems to be trying to set the triple consonants of "aspro" with

¹¹⁰ Palisca, 357.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 362-63.

major thirds, since clusters of consonants produce a hard sound. Palisca concludes that Willaert “more than matched the effect Petrarch attained with the hard sounding clusters *spr*, *lv*, *cr*, and *gl*, and the closed *o* sounds.”¹¹²

Palisca then turns to the second line of the poem in an effort to prove that Willaert continued to observe Petrarch’s nuances. Here, Willaert shows attention to the “lilting rhythm, liquid consonants, sonorous vowels” which contrast the first line and create the impression of sweetness. Palisca, of course, is aware of the use of antithesis here. He asserts that the two lines are linked musically by the use of a common melodic thread. What was E-D-C-E-D in the first line becomes D-C-E-D in the second line. This is very close to the theory of motivicity by which the piece will be analyzed later in the chapter. Palisca also notes that this is transposed to B flat-A-G-B flat-A, and that the use of B flat here creates semitone motion and thus produces a sweet sound, which contrasts with the hardness of the first line.

Palisca also draws attention to the use of a leap in the bass as an expressive device which was beginning to be used in the sixteenth-century. He refers again to Galilei, who writes that the bass “is the part that gives profile and countenance to a multipart composition.”¹¹³ Leaps up a fifth or down a fourth produce a sad effect, while leaps up a fourth or down a fifth produce feelings of happiness and excitement. Palisca believes that Willaert consciously employed these devices in *Aspro core*. In order to create a *grave* feeling in the first two lines, the bass moves by upward leaps of a fifth or downward leaps of a fourth. In the beginning of the *seconda parte*, Willaert uses leaps of a fourth up or fifth down to create *piacevolezza*.

¹¹² Ibid, 363.

¹¹³ Palisca, 364.

Mace's Analysis

As mentioned in chapter 1, Mace's article was one of the first to draw attention to Pietro Bembo's influence on the development of the madrigal. Since Mace believes that the madrigal developed as a direct result of Bembo's readings of Petrarch, he obviously believes that most madrigals will show evidence of the application of Bembo's theories. However, Mace asserts that Willaert's madrigals from the *Musica nova* are some of the few that appear to be "working on musical form through language."¹¹⁴ Like Palisca, Mace begins his analysis by drawing attention to Petrarch's use of juxtaposition, and since Mace is writing from a Bemboist point of view, he refers to these juxtapositions as being between *piacevolezza* and *gravità*. Also like Palisca, Mace notes that the opposition here is not just in the subject matter, but also the sounds and rhythms of the first two lines. Mace also believes that Willaert's setting provides an effective depiction of the poetic juxtaposition, but Mace uses harmonic analysis rather than analysis of melodic intervals in order to prove this.

For Mace, the most effective device used by Willaert to set the poetry is the use of a dissonant succession of six-three chords for the first line which resolves into consonances in the second line. Also, Mace views the rhythm of the music of the first line as graver than the lilting rhythm of the second line. Finally, Mace writes that "the tonal qualities of the words have been carefully transferred into musical ones through the resources of polyphony. Monody could not have achieved this although it might well have been more 'expressive'."¹¹⁵ Unfortunately, Mace does not explain in any more

¹¹⁴ Mace, 78.

¹¹⁵ Mace, 80.

detail exactly how Willaert achieves this, or whether or not he seems to be equally attentive to the subtleties of Petrarch's text throughout the madrigal.

Considerations Derived from Other Approaches

Another scholar whose work has been very influential is the study of Petrarch and the madrigal is Martha Feldman. Although she has not herself published a detailed analysis of *Aspro core*, an analysis based on her approach (as outlined in chapter 1) is quite revealing.

Although the duality in the first two lines has already been heavily examined, and although Mace's analysis was strongly influenced by his reading of Bembo, there are many other Bembist considerations which must be taken into account. Not only are the sounds of the words themselves more *grave* in the first line than in the second, but the syllabic content and accentuation also contribute to the balance between *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. Both lines contain eleven syllables rather than seven, which produces a *grave* feeling. However, the accent for most words falls on the penultimate syllable, which usually signifies a balance. Willaert's use of longer note values on the accentuated syllables may indicate his sensitivity to this poetic point. Also, he uses the longest note values on the vowels of the first line, in which the text itself is more *grave* in nature. In addition, Bembist principles dictate that a slower pace is used to enhance the feeling of *gravità*, and this may be the reason for which Willaert lengthened the syllables of the first line and used faster note values for the second line, in which Petrarch is expressing Laura's sweeter side.

Literal Application of the Model of Motivicity as Defined by Rifkin

Rifkin defines a motive as “a unit of music characterized not just diastematically, but rhythmically as well.”¹¹⁶ This means that only standard operations like transposition can be considered to be contributing to the degree of permeation, which is demonstrated by the percentage of notes that can be accounted for by a single motive or group of motives. By using Rifkin’s definition literally, the motive used for the first half of the first line, motive a, is not the same as that used for the second half. The original instance of motive a is a five note motive built on the contour same-down-same-same. At the end of the line, the motive used for the words “cruda voglia” uses the contour same-same-down, and is only a four note motive. However, to the listener the motives are clearly related. Although the contour is different, both forms of the motive are based on repeated notes and a descending second. This may reveal a possible compositional process in which the second motive is derived from the original five note motive. Taking Rifkin’s definition at face value, only the first form of the motive would be calculated in the percentage of permeation. This results in a percentage of permeation of 45%, or 30/66 notes.

From there, Rifkin’s analysis would probably turn towards an examination of the intervals at which the motive is transposed. This reveals interesting compositional process on the part of Willaert. Since it a six-voice madrigal, the first line is stated first in imitation by one group of three voices, then by a second group. In the first group, the motive begins first on C, then E, then G, thus resting clearly in the C hexachord. The

¹¹⁶ Rifkin, 244.

statements from the second group begins on F, then A, then C, and is therefore is the F hexachord. Willaert has changed the quality of the sound in the second statement of the line by transposing it to the soft hexachord.

It may be noted that the low D in the bass voice in measure 6, while it does present a new interval, would not be considered a departure from the motive in the motivicity model because the contour remains the same as other instances of motive a. This might be revealing of a shortcoming in the model, because the change of interval seems to be noteworthy and could be related to harmonic considerations at the cadence.

The second line of text, which begins with “in dolce humile,” also begins with a derivation of motive a. To the listener, the connection between this motive and the first instance of motive a is clear. It is also a five note motive with a contour of same-down-same-same, and also contains a descending interval of a second. However, a literal application of Rifkin’s definition would not allow the motive in the second line to be referred to as motive a because the rhythm is different.

The second stanza uses two motives, motives d and e. Like the beginning of the first stanza, the density of motivicity is high. The level of permeation would be very high if small variations in the motives were allowed. For example, motive d can be most easily identified to the listener by its rhythm and upwards motion for the last three notes. The contour of the first instance of motive d is same-up-up-up, and by Rifkin’s definition this would be the only version of the motive allowed. However, there are many instances of a motive similar to motive d in that the rhythm is the same, but the contour is slightly different (same-down-up-up). Virtually all occurrences of motive e are the same. By

following Rifkin's definition of motivicity, the resulting level of permeation from mm.35-43 is 44%.

For the rest of madrigal, the level of permeation is low if we take Rifkin's definition at face value. For example, the music that accompanies "Piango ad ogni hor. Ben ho di ventura, Di Madonna e d'Amore onde mi doglia" contains only one prominent motive, motive g. This is a four note motive defined by its rhythm and a contour of down-up-up. The original version of the motive consists of whole notes and half notes, and by Rifkin's definition, only that rhythm would be allowed, and the motive only occurs four times. However, if we allow the motive to be divided into smaller note values (for example, a half note divided into two repeated quarter notes), the motive occurs nine times. Although there is a small change in the rhythm, it can still be clearly be heard as a variation of the same motive, and yet it would not be allowed by Rifkin's definition.

The *seconda parte* begins with a variations on motives a and e, where both are inverted and the rhythm of a slightly altered in various ways. This may reveal an attempt by Willaert to link the beginning of both parts of the madrigal, and although the reason for the connection is not quite clear, it is an issue worth exploring. This link between the motives would not be apparent if only analyzing the motives by Rifkin's standards, but can be seen by allowing small variations.

There is not a lot of motivic activity again until the final stanza. In the first two lines, motive i is introduced and used prominently. It is defined rhythmically and by the contour same-same-up-same-up. The characteristic which defines it most easily for the listener is the three repeated quarter notes at the beginning of the motive. If small variations in the contour are allowed, in particular descending motion at the end rather

than ascending, the percentage of permeation would be 74%. By only allowing Rifkin's definition of the motive, the level of permeation is only 22%.

In the final line of the madrigal, motive j is introduced. This is a six note motive of all quarter notes with a contour of up-up-down-down-down. If Rifkin's definition is taken literally, the motive occurs only five times in the final line. If small variations in rhythm and contour are allowed, motive j occurs nine times. Since the variations allowed are small, each occurrence can be considered to be derived from motive j, and so it suggests a possible compositional process. This is one of the greatest shortcomings of Rifkin's method. By allowing small variations in either the contour or rhythm of the motives, much more can be revealed about the compositional process, as well as the relationship between the text and the music.

Refinements of the Motivicity Model Suggested for this Madrigal

Incorporating the idea of related musical motives into the model of motivicity, and bringing the writings of Bembo into consideration with the analysis, the musical setting of the first two lines can be re-interpreted as follows.

The motives are closely related because they differ only in rhythm. The textual lines do stand in contrast, but they also can be seen to complement each other. In using two motives very closely related, Willaert in effect makes a link between the two lines. Because the motives are so similar, they will both be labeled as motive a. The outcome could be understood as the musical equivalent of *variazione* in that it creates a formal connection between two successive lines. In so doing, the contrast and relationship

between the two ideas is thrown into sharp relief. While the percentage of permeation here under Rifkin's model was 45%, by allowing the variation in the motive the percentage is 81% in the first line. Not only does this variation on the motivicity method reveal more of the possible compositional process, it also contributes to our understanding of the intricacies of Petrarch's text in a manner which none of the other methods discussed above could achieve.

The final two lines of the first stanza do not contain as high a permeation as the first two lines. This may be because there is not the same opposition between *gravità* and *piacevolezza* as in first two lines, and so perhaps Willaert did not need to use motives to express the meaning. These lines are both *gravità*, for they both contain eleven syllables, and the *suono* is much harsher than in the first two lines because of the dominance of consonants over vowels. Rather than motivicity, Willaert expresses the harshness musically through the use of sharps and short repeated notes. Although there is a motive at work here (motive c), it is not varied in the same way or for the same purpose as motive a.

The second stanza begins with a high density of motivicity, as did the first stanza. However, this time there are two motives which are used to express the opposites in the text, motives d and e. The opposites here are very straightforward:

Che, quando nasce e mor fior, erba e foglia

Quando è'l dì chiaro e quando è notte oscura

It seems that Willaert uses motive d to symbolize the birth and day, and motive e to symbolize death and night. Motive d is a rising figure in a dotted rhythm. In music, rising figures generally create feelings of joy, and according to Bembo, faster rhythm

creates *piacevolezza*. On the other hand, motive e begins with an upward leap of a fourth and ends with a downward leap of a third, and the rhythm is much slower than motive d. However, although these two motives function in a manner which shows the oppositions which occur in the text, Willaert does not use these motives on the words that express the meanings most clearly. Only in m.50 in the bass in motive e used for the words “quando è notte oscura.” However, another motive is introduced in m.46 which can be seen as a balance between motives d and e. Motive f is in a faster rhythm, like motive d, but ends with a downward leap of a third, like motive e. Willaert may be using motive f to signify that there is a balance created with the oppositions, as he did with the use of motive a in the first stanza.

The next line begins with one of the most moving lines of the poem, “Piango ad ogni hor.” Willaert gives a tremendous amount of importance to this line through his setting. It is the first time that whole notes have been used. It is also the first time that a line is repeated three times by all voices. Willaert apparently uses these methods to express his reading of the sonnet here rather than motivicity.

The *seconda parte* of the sonnet begins with an inversion of motive a. This time, it begins in harmony rather than strict imitation. It also begins with an F sharp, which suggests that Willaert reads Petrarch’s text here in a negative light rather than seeing that he does not at least still have hope. Almost every statement of “vivo sol” begins with either an inversion of motive a or an inversion of motive e. One might ask whether this use of inversions of earlier motives is linked to a Bembist device. This is not immediately apparent, as it is difficult to interpret what Willaert was trying to express by using these inversions. In any case, the rest of the stanza is almost completely without motivicity.

In the final stanza, Willaert again uses motives in order to express the Bembo principles contained in Petrarch's sonnet. Two new motives are introduced, motives i and j, and are used frequently until the end of the madrigal. The first part of the line, "Non è si duro cor" is opposed to the next part of the line, "che lagrimando, pregando, amando." Although both parts seem to be expressing Petrarch's sadness, they are actually opposite when examined in the light of Bembo's writings. The first part of the line contains shorter syllables with less consonants, and is therefore *piacevolezza*. The second part has longer, slower syllables with many consonants, and is therefore *gravità*. In order to express *variazione* here, Willaert again uses the technique which he used at the beginning with motive a. For the first part, motive i is used in a rising figure, with a relatively quick rhythm. In the second part, motive i begins with a rising second, but then falls. Also, the dotted half note from the first part is replaced by a whole note, which slows down the rhythm.

In conclusion, while Rifkin's model of motivicity does reveal some possible compositional devices used by Willaert, with some refinement the model can reveal far more. While the original model can provide insights into the formal process and the manner in which the piece is structured, it does not provide any insight into textual-musical considerations. By allowing for slight modifications to the motives in both rhythm and contour, a clearer picture of Willaert's possible knowledge of Bembo theories can be seen, and the selection and manipulation of motives seems much more deliberate. In the following chapter, nine more madrigals from the *Musica nova* will be analyzed and the model of motivicity will be further developed. For now, the refined definition of motive will be any short unit of music which is manipulated and repeated,

yet retains approximately the same rhythm, intervallic content and contour. The motive will be considered the same if it is inverted, or if the rhythm is changed but it maintains the number of beats that it had originally.

Fig. 4.1 Motivicity in *Aspro core e selvaggio*, mm. 1-13

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Aspro core e selvaggio" (mm. 1-13). It features two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and a piano accompaniment. The score is written in C major and common time (C). The lyrics are: "A - spro co - ree sel - vag - gio, e cru - da vo - glia". The piano accompaniment consists of a simple harmonic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves, and the piano accompaniment is written below the bass staff. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The lyrics are: "A - spro co - ree sel - vag - gio, e cru - da vo - glia". The piano accompaniment consists of a simple harmonic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves, and the piano accompaniment is written below the bass staff. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

Fig. 4.1 continued

Handwritten musical score for Fig. 4.1 continued, featuring vocal lines and piano accompaniment with Italian lyrics. The score is written on seven staves. The first staff is a vocal line with lyrics: - spro co- re e set- vag- gio, e cru- da vo- glia. The second staff is a vocal line with lyrics: In dol- ce hu- mi. The third staff is a piano accompaniment line with lyrics: co- re e set- vag- gio, e cru- da vog - glia. The fourth staff is a vocal line with lyrics: A- spro co- re e set- vag- gio, e cru- da vo- glia. The fifth staff is a vocal line with lyrics: In dol- ce hu- mi- le, an- ge- li-. The sixth staff is a vocal line with lyrics: In dol- ce hu- mi- le, in. The seventh staff is a piano accompaniment line with lyrics: In dol- ce hu- mi- le, in.

Lyrics: - spro co- re e set- vag- gio, e cru- da vo- glia. In dol- ce hu- mi. co- re e set- vag- gio, e cru- da vog - glia. A- spro co- re e set- vag- gio, e cru- da vo- glia. In dol- ce hu- mi- le, an- ge- li-. In dol- ce hu- mi- le, in.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Amor Fortuna-Né spero i dolci

This sonnet is one of the most sorrowful of all the poems in the *Canzoniere*, and certainly one of the most depressing of those chosen by Willaert for the *Musica nova*. However, despite the bitterness which is expressed in the poetry, Willaert's setting begins in the natural hexachord and includes many shifts to the soft hexachord and hard hexachord. Perhaps Willaert is trying to show the continual duality of Petrarch's feelings. The shifts to the soft hexachord often appear at the points in the poetry when Petrarch is expressing the height of his anguish, for example, the use of B flat for "m'affligon" in the second line. However, although the emotions expressed in this sonnet are primarily sadness and bitterness, they are the result of the tremendous love that he has for Laura, and this is the form that Petrarch's duality takes in this poem. It is a duality of the subject matter itself rather than in the use of language as was seen in some of the other sonnets in this chapter.

This is one of the shortest and most densely polyphonic madrigals in the collection, and is set for only four voices. Part of the reason that it is so short is that although several of the lines are repeated, when there is repetition they are often only fragments. Also, no line is sung more than twice, unlike many other madrigals where lines are repeated several times. Since most repetitions are only of fragments, it is worth noting when Willaert has chosen to repeat full lines of text, and how they were repeated. The first line that is repeated is repeated is: *Invidia a quei che son su l'altra riva*. In this

case, the full line is sung twice by all four voices. This draws attention to this already poignant line, where Petrarch states that his anguish is so great that he often wishes that he could be “on the other shore”, or dead. From that line to the end of the *prima parte*, most lines are repeated either in full or fragments. The last two lines of text are both sung twice by all four voices: *Onde la mente stolta s’adira e piange/ e così in pena molta sempre convien che battendo viva.*

In the *seconda parte*, Willaert has chosen to repeat many more lines than in the *prima parte*. Here also is the only line that is repeated three times: *e di mio corso hò già passato il mezo*. It is stated three times in the superius only, and twice in the other three voices. This is another very somber line, in which Petrarch states that his life is already half over. There is a pause of a full measure at the end of the line to add extra emphasis. This is especially effective since there are so few long pauses in this madrigal. Almost all other lines are sung twice in all four voices for the remainder of the piece.

The level of motivicity in this madrigal shifts often. There are several sections where the percentage of permeation is quite high, and others where there does not seem to be any level of motivicity at all. The first stanza contains quite a high level of permeation, and uses only three motives. The motives here do not seem to have a specific relationship to each other as they do in some other madrigals (for example, having many motives based on repeated note patterns). Instead, each motive is quite distinct. Some variation of the motives has been allowed. Most often, the variation consists of a change of direction from up to down, but repeated notes must remain the same. The rhythm has not been varied except lengthening note values at points of emphasis, such as cadences.

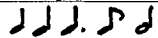
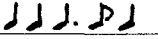

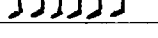
Under these parameters, the first stanza has a percentage of permeation of 42%, using only motives a, b and c.

The second stanza does not yield such a high percentage. In fact, it was very difficult to define motives in this section, for although there is repetition in the imitation, it is too varied to consist of a motive, and is not repeated outside that narrow point of imitation. In Willaert's setting of the first two lines of the second stanza, the only use of motivicity that could be identified was two appearances of motive b. However, there is a higher density of motivicity in the final two lines of the stanza, although still insignificant in comparison to the first stanza. Motive b appears four times, and a new form of motive a is introduced. Motive a1 consists of the same rhythmic pattern as motive a, but ends with three repeated notes rather than an ascending or descending pattern. Still, the percentage of permeation for the last two lines of the second stanza is only 21%.

The *seconda parte* contains a slightly smaller degree of permeation than the first stanza. It is interesting to note that this is one of few madrigals where there are no new motives introduced in the second part, but only variations on the three motives introduced at the beginning. Perhaps this is a reflection on the absence of duality or multiplicity of emotions in this sonnet. Although there is the contradiction of love and misery, the entire sonnet has a somber mood. Like other sections of this madrigal, the occurrence of motives increases in the second half of the section. The percentage of permeation for the final stanza is only 25%. However, if only the final two lines of the stanza are considered, the percentage increases to 30%. Finally, if only the top three voices of the final two lines of the stanza are considered, the percentage of permeation is 36%. Although in much of

the madrigal there is quite a high percentage of permeation in the bass voice, in this final stanza the bass only contains two motives.

Fig. 5.1 Motives in *Amor, Fortuna*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		s-u-d-d	m.5	Contour/rhythm
a1		u-s-s	mm.55-56	Contour
b		u-s-u-s	mm.7-8	rhythm
c		s-u-u-u-u	mm.18-19	contour

I begli occhi-Questi son que'begli occhi

Once again, this sonnet begins with an opposition. The beautiful eyes wound the poet, yet they are also the only thing that can heal him. Like most of Petrarch's sonnets, this one contains instances of using a single image for dual purposes, in this case, the eyes both wound and heal. However, the opening lines contain the only example of this type of poetic device in this sonnet. Throughout the rest of the poem, *variazione* is achieved through shifts in syllabic accentuation and the use of harsh or sweet sounding syllables (for example, clusters of consonants produce a harsh sound while longer vowels create a sweet sound). For this reason, there are two important questions which must be explored when analyzing Willaert's use of motivicity in this madrigal: are certain motives used only for sweet or harsh words or phrases? If not, are the motives varied according to the Bembi ideas which are at work?

There are only four motives in this madrigal, and each are varied in simple ways. The pattern of motivicity is different here than in some of the other madrigals in this

chapter. Motive a is used at the very beginning in all voices but the tenor. Some rhythmic variation has been allowed by substituting the final two whole notes for half notes.

Motive a is not seen again until the opening of the *seconda parte*, where it is again used in every voice but the tenor. Here, more variation in the motive has been allowed, for in many occurrences the downward stepwise motion is omitted, but there is still a clear relationship between the version of motive a seen here and the original motive a as seen at the opening of the madrigal. Not only is this a way that the large-scale structure of this piece, the *prima* and *seconda parti* are unified, but they also both contain the same words.

At the opening of both parts are the madrigal, the text contains the words “begli occhi”.

Although other madrigals examined in this chapter contain the use of the same motive at the beginning of both sections of the madrigal, none use the same motive for the same image. In this madrigal, motive a is used almost every time the words “begli occhi” are used. Although some variation has been allowed in order for the connection to be clearly seen, it is obvious that the musical ideas used for each statement of “begli occhi” are from the same motive. It is characterized primarily by the use of a dotted half note followed by a quarter note and repeated pitches. The rhythm after the first two notes can vary slightly and a change in pitch for one of the notes from the original form of the motive is also allowed. The next question that must be asked is whether Willaert used different forms of motive a in order to express any Bembist principles that are at work in the text, or if they are based purely on musical considerations? One possibility would be the use of consonant intervals to express *piacevolezza*, and dissonant intervals for *grave*. This seems like a reasonable manner in which to use the motives in different ways. However, each time the motive appears it has a slightly different form in each voice. For


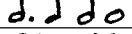
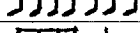
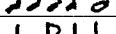

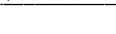
example, in the opening statement the motive sometimes ends with a minor second and sometimes ends with a perfect fourth. Obviously, the text is the same for all the voices, and so the change in intervallic content cannot be based on textual considerations. The same is true each time the motive appears.

The other three motives used in this madrigal are more typical of Willaert's writing. In fact, most of the motives used here have been seen in many of the other madrigals examined in this chapter. Motive b may consist of either five (in this case, motive b1) or seven notes. The choice seems to be entirely dependent on musical considerations rather than textual. Motive c can be varied in a few ways. It can move up or down, and can either end by continuing to move in the same direction or with repeated notes. Occasionally, it has been included as a motive even if it ends with a leap, but only if this leap occurs for harmonic reasons (for example, in the alto in m. 23). The same questions about the variations that were asked for motive a can be applied to the variations in motive c. Is there something in the text which dictates the contour or intervallic content? In virtually every occurrence of motive c, the first three pitches are sung to a single syllable and the final pitch is the final syllable of the word. Also in almost all cases the first syllable of the motive is accentuated, although it may be either the first or second syllable of the word. The *suono* of the syllables varies. Often the second syllable begins with a hard sound, but not always. The sound of the syllables does not seem to have any bearing on the form of the motive that is used. So in the case of motive c, the variation on the motives is not determined by any Bemist principles in the text.

Motive d is the only other motive used in this madrigal. It is a fairly simple motive, defined by three repeated quarter notes followed by two repeated quarter notes. The final two quarter notes are often combined into a single half note. Most often, the difference between the two sets of repeated pitches is only an interval of a second. Occasionally, another pitch moving in stepwise motion is included if it seems to be a part of that musical idea (for example, alto voice mm. 87-88). There are many instances of motives that were close to motive d, but not enough to be labeled as a motive. There are especially many places with two repeated quarter notes, but what follows or precedes those two quarter notes varies too much to constitute a new motive.

In terms of percentage of permeation, this madrigal is quite average on the whole. Unlike many of the other madrigals, there are sections with almost no permeation and sections with a high level. All stanzas range between 15 and 20%. Even the section that appears to have the highest level of permeation, the first two lines of the final stanza, only have a percentage of 27.7%. This higher level is due to the fact that the first line of the stanza, “Questi son que’ begli occhi” is sung twice in all voices, and most statements are singing motive a. The increased level of motivicity is not the result of anything in the text, but only due to the fact that the first part of the line is repeated.

Fig. 5.2 Motives in *I begli occhi*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		s-s-d	mm.1-3	none
a1		s-u-d	mm.99-100	contour
b		u-u-u-u-u-u	mm.6-7	none
b1		u-u-u-u	m.12	none
c		u-u-s or d	mm.6-7	none
d		s-s-u or d-s	mm.5-6	none

Liete e pensose

This madrigal is written in a very different style from all the others in this chapter. The sonnet itself contains more obvious oppositions than almost any other sonnet in the entire *Canzoniere*. For example, the poem opens with the lines “Liete e pensose, accompagnate e sole/ Donne, che ragionando ite per via/ O’vè la vita, ove la morte mia?” In these first few lines, there are already three opposites placed directly adjacent to each other: happy and sad, accompanied and alone, life and death. However, the words that Petrarch uses are interesting, for although their meanings are perfect opposites, their *suono* is actually quite similar. “Liete” and “pensose” both have three syllables and the accent falls on the penultimate syllable. “Vita” and “morte” sound very similar, with the same placement of vowels and consonants and the use of the letter “t” before the final syllable. Only the pair that consists of “accompagnate” and “sole” are not very similar, yet they still both end with the same sound. The rhymes are very close to each other, which creates a feeling of *piacevolezza*, even though the rhythm of the text is slow and *grave* because of all the commas. Still, although Petrarch has used language in such an interesting manner, Willaert has not used motivicity to develop these ideas as he has in other madrigals. Despite the fact that there are many Bembist principles at work here, Willaert chose to write this madrigal in a very different manner.

This piece is set for seven voices, one of few for so many voices in the *Musica nova*. Much of the variety in this piece is achieved through the use of certain voices. For different stanzas, different groups of voices are singing. When the poet is speaking during the first stanza, Willaert has used a lower group of voices. When the women begin to

speak in the second stanza, a higher group of voices is used. In the third stanza, there is a mix of high and low, due to the fact that both the poet and the women speak. Here, the poet uses the bottom three voices and the women are represented by the top four voices. In the final stanza, the voices are widely mixed. The final two lines are repeated several times until in m.115 all seven voices are finally used together to restate “sì vedemmo oscurar l’alta bellezza, e tutti rugiadosi gli occhi suoi.” It is sung several times in all seven voices, and although the texture is almost homorhythmic, there is still some use of polyphony so that the lines of text overlap. Although Willaert does use the shift in voices to create variety and create emphasis, it cannot be seen as a manifestation of Bembist *variazione*. It does not happen locally (within one or two lines), but rather from one stanza to the next. For *variazione* to be at work, the variation must occur in very close proximity.

There is very little use of motivicity in this piece. Even those motives which can possibly be identified must be almost varied beyond recognition. Motive a is characterized primarily by its dotted rhythm, which can occur in either an ascending or descending pattern. Motive b is defined by its use of three repeated quarter notes followed stepwise motion to a note of longer value. Although this is certainly not a motive by Rifkin’s definition, it was allowed in an attempt to find some pattern of motivicity in this piece. Finally, motive c is defined by three repeated quarter notes followed by two more repeated quarter notes, and ending with a final different note. The shift from one set of repeated notes to the next can be in any direction, and is usually in stepwise motion although leaps have been allowed in some instances. In certain passages, especially the final stanza, it seems that there are almost motives at work, but although

there are certain motivic themes (for example, the use of many repeated quarter notes), it is very difficult to actually identify a motive which has been used in any deliberate manner.

Although the three motives identified above are used throughout the piece, it is difficult to apply them to any of the Bembist principles which have been seen in other madrigals. For example, in the first stanza motives a and b are used several times, but although there is *variazione* in the text, the motives are not used in order to reflect that. There is not a high percentage of permeation at any point in the madrigal. It appears that although there was certainly opportunity to use motivicity here, Willaert chose to use other compositional devices in this setting of this sonnet. This calls into question why this would be the case. If the hypothesis that Willaert used motivicity as a method which could easily be adapted to Bembist ideas is correct, then one possible reason that motivicity is not used in a madrigal is that there are no Bembist principles at work in the text. As stated above, this is not the case in this madrigal. Another possibility is that there is a difference in the form or subject of the text that Willaert chose to set differently than most of the madrigals in the *Musica nova*. This is a distinct possibility, since this sonnet is written in the form of a dialogue and the other madrigals considered in this chapter are not. In order to test this theory, other madrigals in the *Musica nova* which are also settings of sonnets in dialogue form should be examined. The only two madrigals in the *Musica nova* which are settings of dialogues are *Io mi rivolgo-Talhor m'assale* and *Occhi piangete, accompagnate il core*. In both of these madrigals, Willaert's writing is similar to many of the other madrigals in this chapter. Although the level of motivicity was not examined in detail, it is clear that there is far more use of motivicity in both those

writing seen in *Aspro core*. There are only three main motives used, motives a, b, and c, and everything else is simply variations on those motives. Even with only those three motives, there is quite a high level of permeation for much of the madrigal. Motive a is by far the most widely used, mostly because it exists in three separate variations. All three are defined by rhythm and contour, but what creates the link between the three and the reason that they should be considered variations on the same motive is the use of dotted rhythm. In this madrigal, the design of the motives demands a Rifkin-like interpretation of motivicity. For many of the motives in other madrigals, the intervallic content was at least as or more important than the contour. Here, the intervals change often, but the contour seems to dictate the links between motives. This is clear from the opening statement. The superius, alto, and bass voices all open with motive a in its original form, and although all three contain different intervals, the contour remains the same. Yet, it is clear that the same motive is used in all three instances since the rhythm and contour is identical. This is also true for subsequent occurrences of motive a. This motive is also seen often with the same rhythm and contour but in reduction. Motive a1 consists of the same rhythm but a different contour, while motive a2 begins with the dotted rhythm and only contains repeated pitches. Because there are so many variations on the original motive, there are not any significant variations allowed on the motives themselves. Motive b also contains a dotted rhythm, but its contour and other rhythmic contents dictate that it is not another variation on motive a. The only variation that has been allowed for motive b is that the final three notes, which are repeated in the original version, may move by step or leap an octave (for example, cantus mm.20-22 and tenor mm. 23-24). Since motive c is defined primarily by its use of three repeated notes, that is

not varied in any instance. However, the final note may be omitted or the last two repeated quarter notes may be combined into a single half note.

As mentioned above, the level of permeation is quite high throughout the madrigal, although it does decline in the *seconda parte*. The first two lines of text contain motive a almost exclusively, and still the percentage of permeation is 55.6%. The percentage for the next line of text is even higher at 73%. This third line of text also contains a compositional device which has not been seen often in Willaert's madrigals, which is overlapping motives. Many of the final notes of one motive are also the first note of another motive. They are sometimes the same motive (two occurrences of motive a1 are often linked) or two different motives (most often motives b and a1). This line contains the highest level of permeation by far, and the text must be examined in order to determine whether this is an attempt on Willaert's part to expose properties of the text, or if it is for purely musical purposes. The subject matter itself could be the possible reason for Willaert's compositional choices. Here, Petrarch writes about the strange, hidden ways to Laura's heart. Perhaps Willaert is trying to mimic this sentiment by weaving hidden motivic activity into the music. The interweaving motives could represent the confusing path that the poet must take. The sound of the syllables could also be the reason for the use of overlapping motives. In the middle three voices, the overlap occurs over the syllables "ci-ta". These syllables occur immediately after "sì ta". The sound is very similar, and it could be that Willaert was trying to imitate the overlap in *suono* by overlapping the motives. This is a definite Bembo reading of the text, as Bembo was always concerned with the sound of the syllables and held the belief that the sound itself was at least as important as the subject matter.

Ove ch'i posi gli occhi-Amor e'l ver fur meco

The text of this sonnet contains less Bembist traits than many of the other sonnets set by Willaert. The subject matter is Petrarch's longing for Laura and that wherever he turns he is reminded of her. The tone of the poem is sad but sweet, and although there are not the contradictions in meaning that are so prevalent in Petrarch's sonnets, there is the opportunity for much *variazione* between *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. All lines contain eleven syllables rather than seven, which creates a feeling of *gravità*. Although there are many consonants used, most have a soft sound rather than hard. Only the "chi" syllable really contributes to the feeling of *gravità* in the first line, but the second line contains many harsher sounding syllables. Although this is interesting from a Bembist perspective, it does not appear to have influenced either the type of motive used by Willaert or the level of motivicity.

There are five primary motives used in this madrigal. Motive a occurs at the very beginning in all voices but the alto, and is characterized by an ascending leap of a fourth filled in by a downward leap of a third. A variation of changing the second interval from a third to a fifth has been allowed if this occurs for harmonic reasons. This most often happens in the bass voice. Another common variation is that it also occurs in inversion. The rhythm of motive a in its original form is half note-dotted half note-quarter note. The value of the final note is variable because once that note is struck the motive has been completed. Therefore, if the final quarter note becomes a whole note the motive is still heard as the same motive. Other rhythmic variations have also been allowed. Rather than a dotted half note, the second note may become a half note. Also, the value of one note

may be split to become two notes. For example, a dotted half note may become a quarter note and half note on the same pitch. A final variation of motive a occurs when it is used to open the *seconda parte*, but in this case the first note is given a whole note value.

Motive b is primarily characterized by its rhythm. Once again, the value of the final note of the motive is variable. In certain instances, one of the quarter notes may take on the value of a half note. This has been allowed since it does not change the sound of the motive enough to make it unrecognizable to the ear. Also, it appears that this slight change in timing has been chosen by Willaert only so that it can fit in better with the other voices. Like slight changes for harmonic reasons, variations which are made in consideration of fitting in with other voices should not eliminate the motive as long as the variations are very small. In certain cases, motive b is changed from a four note to a three note motive by eliminating the final note. A final variation is that motive b can be extended to include the final note in a cadential figure (for example, see mm. 27-29). This has been allowed because it feels like that final note is a natural extension of the motive. Motive b1 consists of the same rhythm as motive b in its original form, but contains only repeated notes rather than stepwise motion. It has been labeled a variation on motive b rather than a new motive because motive b is defined most strongly by its rhythm, and motive b1 uses that same rhythm.

Motive c is a series of five quarter notes, with the sixth note being any value. The primary characteristic here is that the first three notes are repeated, the next two notes are a pair of repeated notes, and the final note returns to the first pitch. The only variation of the original version of motive c is to eliminate one of the first three repeated notes. A more significant variation has been labeled as motive c1. It consists of three repeated

quarter notes followed by another note, which can be either a half note or repeated quarter notes. In this case, the return to the original pitch is eliminated. It has been derived from motive c because of the use of the three repeated notes, although the motive is different after that. The final pitch can be approached from step or leap.


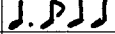
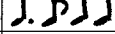




Motive d is the most straightforward of all the motives used in this madrigal. In its first appearance it consists of a seven note scale, and can be in any mode as long as it maintains stepwise motion. Variations include moving down rather than up, and reducing the motive to only five notes. All variations must be at least five notes and must move by step in a single direction.

Finally, motive e is the least used of all motives in this piece. It is difficult to even define it as a motive at all, since it is infrequently used and requires more variation than most motives in order to be significant. It has been allowed here because it does appear to be representative of a style of writing that Willaert uses often in this madrigal and others, and for that reason perhaps Willaert was writing with the same idea of repetition and variation for this motive as he was for the more obvious motives. Motive e consists of a series of four quarter notes and contains one pair of repeated notes and the others moving by step or leap of a third. The repeated notes may appear either at the beginning of the motive or in the middle. There are many passages in this madrigal where there are musical ideas similar to motive e, but contain too much variation. For example, mm.60-70 contain many groups of four quarter notes where one of those notes is repeated. In some cases, they can be considered a variation of motive c. In most cases, they are too far from either motive c or e to be considered either one. There are a few appearances of triadic movement, but not enough to be considered a motive. There are also a few

instances where there are two pairs of repeated quarter notes, but again they do not appear frequently enough to be considered a new motive, and the large intervallic leaps make them too different from motive e to be considered a variation. For these reasons, this madrigal contained more difficulties in motive definition than most of the other madrigals in this chapter.

The degree of permeation is quite evenly distributed in this madrigal. Unlike others in which certain stanzas contain a very high level of motivicity and others are very low, here there is a moderate level in almost every stanza. Most of the motives are used throughout the madrigal, with the exception of motive e which appears in the *seconda parte*. Although there are variations in the motives, it is difficult to link this variation to anything specific in the text, especially anything of a Bembist nature. For example, motive a in its original form is used at the very beginning in all voices but the alto. A variation of motive a is used at the beginning of the *seconda parte* in three out of six voices, but the manner in which the motive is varied and the fact that the same motive is used does not seem to be for the purpose of highlighting Bembist traits in the poetry. Instead, this appears to be a common compositional device used by Willaert, as it has occurred in other madrigals in this chapter. Its apparent purpose is an attempt to unify the two large sections of the madrigal rather than any textual purpose.

Fig. 5.5 Motives in *Ove ch'i posi gli occhi*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		u-d	mm.1-2	rhythm
b		all steps u or d	m.8	rhythm
b1		s-s-s	m.38	rhythm
c		s-s-u or d-s-u or d	mm.22-23	rhythm
c1		s-s-u or d-s	mm.101-102	rhythm
d		all steps u or d	mm.16-17	none
e		s-u-u or u-s-u	m. 94	rhythm


Quest'anima gentil-Se si posasse

The sonnet set in this madrigal appears very early in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. Yet although this sonnet is only #31 and thus occurs long before the section traditionally accepted to have been written after Laura's death, the subject matter is about a woman on her deathbed. It is possible that Laura was very ill at the time that the sonnet was written, but survived for many years after that. It is also possible that this sonnet was written for someone other than Laura, although that is unlikely since she is the focus of almost every sonnet in the *Canzoniere*. This particular sonnet does not contain any of the oxymorons that are such a common device in Petrarch's poetry. Perhaps this is because the subject matter, someone whom he admires dying, promotes an outpouring of pure affection rather than a contrast between the light and dark in Laura's character and Petrarch's feelings for her.

The madrigal itself is one of the shortest in the *Musica nova*, and the *prima* and *seconda parti* are almost the same length. Almost the entire madrigal is written in the

hard hexachord, which suits the subject matter well. The polyphony is much denser than in many of Willaert's other madrigals, with very few periods where any of the four voices are not singing. It begins homorhythmically, with the entire first line stated in that fashion. The second line, which begins with the text "Anzi tempo chiamata," is written homorhythmically for the superius, tenor and bass, with the alto entering three beats later. The texture here is striking, and may have been used to call attention to the text since the subject matter is so serious.

The second line of text is repeated more than any other line in the entire madrigal. It is stated either partially or in its entirety four times in every voice. However, despite the repetition, it is very difficult to define a motive. There appear to be many possibilities, yet although the definition of motivicity and the variations allowed is still flexible, in order to find a motive that it used enough to say that Willaert was using motivicity as a compositional tool too much variation would have to be allowed. Still, the three most widely used motives of the madrigal make their first appearances in this section. Motive a is a four note motive of all quarter notes, with a contour of same-down or up-same. The shift in direction in the middle of the motive has been allowed because the two pairs of repeated quarter notes can still be clearly heard, and the change of direction is not enough to dictate that the motive should not be the same, although it would not be the same motive by Rifkin's standards.

Motive b is also first introduced during the repetition of the second line, in m.7. This is the most easily recognizable and widely used motive in the entire madrigal. It is defined rhythmically as follows:  . A slight rhythmic variation is allowed by changing the last two quarter notes into a half note, but the motive must always be four

beats. The contour of this motive is not fixed, but is instead defined rhythmically. In fact, almost every possible variation on the contour has been allowed, and the only rule that has been applied outside of rhythmic considerations is that the motive must consist only of repeated notes and/or stepwise motion. Although Rifkin does not consider intervallic content at all in his definition of motivicity, we have seen that it can greatly affect the way in which the motive is heard, as well as reveal interesting compositional processes on Willaert's part. In this case, I have decided to apply these rules to motive b because of the way in which it is used most often and it is only clear to the ear when it uses these intervals.

The final motive that is widely used and first appears in the second line is motive c. This motive is also defined primarily by its rhythm, which must always be three quarter notes, but the final quarter note can be replaced by a half note in certain cases. There are three forms of motive c which can be identified throughout the madrigal. The first consists of the contour same-same. Motive c1 has a contour of down or up-same, and motive c2 has a contour of same-down or up. As with motive b, variations in the contour have been allowed, but not in the intervallic content. Motive c will always contain only repeated notes, and motives c1 and c2 are comprised of a repeated note and stepwise motion. The only instances where exceptions have been allowed is when the bass voice leaps for harmonic purposes, which occurs quite often in this madrigal since all four voices sing together for the most part.


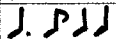



The only other motive that is used in this madrigal is motive d. It also appears first in this section, but is used as often as the other three motives. It is based on a run of

four eighth notes followed by a quarter note, with all five notes either ascending or descending.

The percentage of permeation for the first two lines of text is not significant, although the motives are all introduced here. However, the level of permeation for the final two lines of the first stanza is moderately high. If motives a, b, and c are all taken into account, the percentage of permeation is 51%. This level of permeation is typical throughout the *prima parte*. Also, this level can only be maintained if all forms of the motives outlined above are taken into account. The motivic activity does increase slightly at the end of the *prima parte*, but not significantly.

The motivic activity decreases significantly in the *seconda parte*. The same four motives are used, but with lesser frequency. It is very difficult to find a textual reason for this. It is also difficult to find any links in the manner in which the motives are used throughout the madrigal. In other madrigals, there appears to be a reason for which Willaert uses certain motives at certain points, and often the reasons were to highlight certain textual events. In conclusion, this madrigal does not support the idea that Willaert used motivicity as a way of portraying Bembo's ideas in his madrigals.

Fig. 5.6 Motives in *Quest'anima gentil*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		s-u or d-s	m.8	none
b		d-d-s	mm.7-8	contour/rhythm
c		s-s	m.22	none
c1		d or u-s	m.4	none
c2		s-d or u	m.4	none

L'aura mia sacra-Ella si tace

This is one of the few sonnets chosen by Willaert which was written after Laura's death. The poetry itself, like many of Petrarch's sonnets, portrays the author's relationship with Laura in a bittersweet way, even after her death. She comes to him while he is sleeping, and he feels that he can tell Laura how he is feeling more easily now than when she was alive. Overcome by pity for Petrarch, Laura begins to weep, which wakes him from his dream.

As in many of his poems, Petrarch uses many contradictory images. For example, the following lines from the second stanza: *Io incominio da quel guardo amoroso, Che fu principio a sì lungo tormento*. Laura's "guardo amoroso," which should have made Petrarch happy, is instead the cause of his "lungo tormento." Willaert portrays this duality by using the same motive in two different ways. He uses motive f on both "amoroso" and "lungo". In the case of "amoroso", it is used in ascending stepwise motion on the third syllable. In the case of "lungo", the same motive is used in descending stepwise motion on the first syllable.

It is also interesting to consider which lines of the poetry Willaert has chosen to repeat in his setting. In the *prima parte*, the only line that is repeated before the final line is the one that was examined in the previous paragraph, "*Che fu principio a sì lungo tormento*." This line is stated twice in every voice except the bass, which is the last voice to come in in this point of imitation. The other line that is restated is the final line of that stanza, "*Di di in di, d' hora in hor' Amor m'ha roso*." This line is repeated three times in all voices but the superius.

In this respect, there is quite a contrast between the *prima* and *seconda parti*. Almost all lines in the *seconda parte* are stated at least twice. Those lines which are not repeated occur near the beginning of this section. In this case, it is more efficient to discuss those lines which are not repeated. The only part of the first stanza that is repeated is “*parte sospira*.” This draws the listener’s attention to the most effective image of this stanza, that which best conveys to us both Laura and Petrarch’s feelings at that moment. The next line, “*E di lagrime honeste il viso adorna*,” is repeated twice in the lower three voices, because they begin this point of imitation together. Every line in the final stanza is stated twice in all five voices. The only exception is “*Mentre piangendo alhor seco s’adira*,” which is only stated once in the bass since it is the last voice to come in with this line. The increased repetition towards the end of the madrigal suggests that Willaert wanted to emphasize the text of the final stanza. This view will be reinforced through an examination of Willaert’s use of motivicity throughout this madrigal.

In general, Willaert uses a lower density of motivic permeation here than in some of the other madrigals which are being studied in this chapter. In particular, the entire *prima parte* lacks any long melodic motives, but instead uses a series of short fragments which reappear throughout the entire madrigal. Many of the motives here are based on patterns of repeated notes. All three motive c’s are based on different rhythmic patterns of repeated notes. In general, these motives consist of only three notes. They are so short that it may seem farfetched to label them as motives at all, but they are also so pervasive that it seemed that they were functioning as motives. Motive b is also based on a pattern of repeated notes, but the repeated notes are in pairs rather than all four being the same. Altogether, these repeated note motives, especially all versions of motive c, account for a

very large percentage of the notes in the *prima parte*. So the question that most be asked is why did Willaert choose to base so much of this madrigal on repeated note figures?





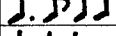

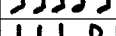
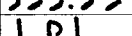

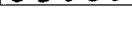
The most obvious answer to this question is that the subject matter dictated that the music be more solemn than some of the other madrigals. This solemnity can be seen in other aspects of the musical setting as well. In addition to the motives consisting largely of repeated notes, they are also made almost entirely of quarter notes, with the occasional half note. The only motives from the *prima parte* which form exceptions to this are motives d and f. Apart from Willaert's choices of motives, another aspect of the music which creates a somber mood is the range. The upper two voices are quite low, with the superius never rising above the F above middle C. Finally, the entire madrigal is densely polyphonic, which suggests that Willaert was trying to set the text in a serious style. All five voices are almost always singing, with no significant exceptions. Also, there are very few moments where more than two voices are singing homorhythmically, even at the beginning and end of points of imitation. Since this is one of only a few sonnets which Willaert set which were written after Laura's death, it is appropriate that it would be written in a more serious and somber style than some of the other madrigals.

Willaert uses a different style of motive in the *seconda parte*. There are still varied versions of motive c and several occurrences of motives d and f. However, he also introduces a longer, more melodic and rhythmically complex motive for the first time, motive e. This new motive is given prominence from its first statement by being set for all three lower voices homorhythmically. This is the highest degree of homorhythmic writing to have occurred in the madrigal thus far. Motive e combines the repeated notes of motive c and the dotted rhythm of motive f. This combination of motives coincides

with the higher incidence of the repetition of poetic lines. The increased rhythmic variety and decreased use of repeated notes results in a more lively style. However, Willaert here also uses more notes with longer values, such as half notes and whole notes. In that respect, the slowing of the rhythm increases the feeling of solemnity. Also, although the polyphony is still quite dense, there are now a few bars where only four out of the five voices are active.

It is very interesting that Willaert chose to create a somber mood in both parts of the madrigal, but in different ways. Perhaps the reason for this variety is that in the first part of the sonnet, Petrarch speaks of Laura as though she were dead (which she is). He writes of how he can speak more freely to her now that she is dead than when she was alive. In the second half of the sonnet, Petrarch is writing as though Laura were there with him. The subject matter is still sad, for Laura is weeping and upsets Petrarch greatly, but it is a different kind of sadness. It seems that Willaert uses the increased rhythmic and intervallic variety to signify Laura's lively presence at this point in the poem.

Fig. 5.7 Motives in *L'aura mia sacra*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		d or u-s	mm.1-2	none
b		s-u-s	m.20	none
c		s-s	m.17	none
c1		d-s	mm.11-12	contour
c2		s-s-s	m.55	none
c3		s-s	mm.13-14	none
d		d-d-d-d	m.20	change direction
e		s-u-s-s	mm.84-85	contour
f		u-u	mm.10-11	change direction
g		u-s-s-s	mm.49-50	none

Quando fra l'altre donne-Da lei ti vien

The sonnet which is set in this madrigal is one of the sweetest of all sonnets in the *Canzoniere*. While many of the poems have an element of bitterness or sadness, this one is free of any negativity. Although there is no opposition in the text in terms of subject matter or imagery, there is still some use of more obvious direct opposites (for example, the beauty of other ladies diminishing while his desire for Laura grows.) Since the subject matter of the poem is so sweet, one would expect to see Bembist examples of *piacevolezza*. The lines are *versi interi* (eleven syllables), which is an indication of *gravità*. Also, many of the words in the opening stanza are slowed down through the use of many consonants, for example, the first three words “Quando fra l’altre” feel quite slow because of the use of so many double consonants. This also creates a *grave* feeling as opposed to *piacevolezza*. However, for most of the words the accent falls on the first syllable, which is *piace*, or on the penultimate syllable, which creates a balance. Also, rhyming words are placed very close together. The first line again serves as a good example: “Quando fra l’altre donne adhora adhora.” The close proximity of the rhymes also helps to create *piacevolezza*.

Willaert’s use of motives in this madrigal effectively conveys this balance between *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. The use of repeated notes in motive a creates a somewhat stagnant and *grave* feeling, whereas movement would produce the opposite effect. However, the most widely used motive in this madrigal by far is motive b. Motive b is characterized by its use of dotted rhythm and stepwise motion, and definitely helps produce the sweet character that is suggested both in the subject matter and in the

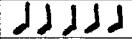




Bembist analysis above. The fact that this is the motive that Willaert chose to use most prominently suggests that he was aware of the Bembist principles of *numero*, *variazione* and *suono*, and that he used the motives in order to produce a suitable setting of this poem.

Quite a lot of variation has been allowed in defining the use of motives in this madrigal. The variation on motive a is very simple—it is often seen in retrograde. Also, it may begin with a half note rather than a quarter note, as can be seen in the opening statement. Motive a1 contains two pairs of repeated quarter notes rather than a set of three and a pair. As has been the case in most of the motives seen in this chapter, intervallic content is more important here than contour. The distance between the sets of repeated notes must be a second. This is important because it takes Zarlino's writings into account, in which the use of melodic intervals is important in creating a serious or playful feel. Motive b is the most widely used and widely varied in this madrigal. As mentioned above, this motive is characterized by its dotted rhythm and movement by step, so these two elements are present in every occurrence of motive b. A small variation that often appears is that the motive can begin with a half note or a single quarter note rather than repeated quarter notes. However, the most significant variation usually occurs at the end of the motive. It is often extended in order to allow for the completion of a word or a syllable, and is often cadential (see alto mm.77-79 and cantus mm.82-84). These extensions to the motive are allowed because they occur frequently enough to be considered part of the motive, and also because it feels like a natural extension. In some cases, it was difficult to determine whether the motive should be extended to finish the entire word or only the syllable. It was usually determined by which seemed most natural.

Motive c is the most straightforward of all the motives in this madrigal. The only variation allowed is the exclusion of the first note. Finally, motive d was the most difficult motive to identify. Throughout the piece, there appeared to be many places where a pair of repeated quarter notes were placed adjacent to a leap of a third. The repeated notes could occur before or after the leap. Motive d is an attempt to place the prominence of this figure into a motive even though it does not maintain the same contour or have the same intervals in the same order each time. Although the rhythm and intervallic content are the same in all appearances, it was still difficult to identify and define because it is so varied. There are also many instances where the leap of a third is substituted by a fourth or a fifth. In these cases, they are too far removed from motive d to be included. The primary element which linked all appearances of motive d is the intervallic content, and without that it is difficult to justify labeling motives.

The degree of permeation of this madrigal is fairly high, and it is also quite consistent until the final stanza. The percentage of permeation for the first two lines is 54%, and for the final two lines of the stanza it is 43%. The percentage continues to be in this range until the final stanza, where it drops significantly to only 15%. The rhythm also changes here. While most of the piece was written in fairly quick rhythms, here the pace slows and more half note values are used. The reason for this is unclear. Although the text does not convey any sadness or *gravità*, the use of a slower rhythm suggests that perhaps Willaert sees a certain degree of sadness in the final line of the sonnet. This may be because it was one of the earliest sonnets in the *Canzoniere*, and Willaert knew that by the end all the hope that the poet felt when he wrote this poem would disappear.

Fig. 5.8 Motives in *Quando fra l'altre donne*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		s-s-u-s	mm.1-2	rhythm/contour
a1		s-u-s	mm.6-7	none
b		s-u-d-d	mm.4-5	rhythm/contour
c		d-u-u-u-u	m.24	rhythm/contour
d		s-u-d	m.12	contour

Passa la nave-Pioggia di lagrimar

Like so many other sonnets in the *Canzoniere*, this one contains mixed emotions. There is still hope and desire, but the predominant emotion is despair and frustration. In Bembit terms, this can be clearly seen in Petrarch's use of language. There are double or triple consonants throughout the poem which slows down the pace and helps create a *grave* feeling. Also, the lines are *versi interi*, which also lends to *gravità*. There is less balance between *gravità* and *piacevolezza* here than in most of the sonnets in the collection. The *numero* and *suono* are overwhelmingly *grave*, which suggests that although there is still hope expressed in the poem, Petrarch wants the reader to see the sadness and despair.

Willaert's choices in setting the sonnet reflect more of a balance than is seen in the poem itself. Both parts of the madrigal begin with long notes, which shows Willaert's sensitivity to the fact that *grave* is most easily created by slow rhythms. However, the long note values in both cases only continue for a few bars, and from then on the movement is mostly by quarter note. The motives themselves also represent a balance. Motive a is characterized by dotted rhythm, which balances the serious feeling with melodic and rhythmic movement. The major variation on motive a, motive a1, returns to

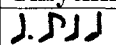

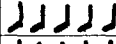
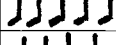
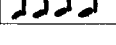
the *grave* character by using repeated notes rather than movement by step. Any use of repeated notes takes away from movement and thus creates a more serious mood. There are several forms of motive b. They are always characterized by sets of repeated notes, either three followed by a pair or simply two pairs. In either case, there is a balance between *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. The quarter notes are fairly quick in rhythm which creates a light feel, but the repeated notes feel more serious. The only other motive used in this madrigal is motive c, which also uses repeated quarter notes but with more movement. Unlike in all forms of motive b, motive c only contains one pair of repeated notes, which is why it warranted a new label rather than being considered a variation on motive b. Once again, the use of repeated pitches combined with the use of quarter notes creates a balance.

The level of motivicity in this madrigal is fairly high, even though there are only three motives used and they are all very short motives. All three motives in all their forms are widely used. The motivicity is quite consistent, except for the opening measures of the *prima* and *seconda* parti. For most of the madrigal, the percentage is between 20 and 30%. The only area where the level is significantly higher is in the final stanza of the *prima parte*. The percentage of permeation for the setting of the final line is 51%.

Willaert is showing his sensitivity to Bembo's writing very clearly here. This is the only part of the text where Petrarch expresses any hope, and so Willaert uses many statements of motive a to create *piacevolezza*. However, there is still balance because the form of motive a with repeated notes is used, rather than the original version which moves by step. It is interesting that in this madrigal Willaert uses a higher level of motivicity to express positivity, and no motives at all in the most solemn parts of the madrigal (the

opening measures of both parts). The reason for this is unclear, but the use of motives and the design of the motives themselves does suggest that Willaert was aware of Bembo's writings, and was trying to incorporate those ideas into the madrigal.

Fig. 5.9 Motives in *Passa la nave*

Motive	Rhythm	Contour	1 st Occurrence	Variation
a		u-u-s or d	m.5	none
a1		s-s	m.50	contour
b		s-s-u-s	mm.8-9	contour
b1		u-s-d-s	mm.26-27	contour/rhythm
c		u-s-d	mm.13-14	contour/rhythm

Chapter 6 Interpretation of Results

Similarities in Motive a's

It has been noted that many of the motives found in the ten madrigals examined appear in more than one madrigal. There is also a larger trend which merits attention. In most of the madrigals, motive a consists of longer note values, while almost all the other motives are built primarily on quarter notes and eighth notes. This is the case in *I begli occhi*, *L'aura mia sacra*, *Ove ch'i posi gli occhi*, *Aspro core* and *O invidia*. In still more madrigals, the opening consists of long notes, but they were not motivic. This occurs in *Passa la nave*, *Quest'anima gentil* and *Amor, Fortuna*. This leaves only two madrigals that do not begin with long notes, *Liete e pensose* and *Quando fra l'altre donne*. As has been noted many times, slower rhythms are the most basic way of creating *gravità*. Why would Willaert chose to begin so many of his madrigals in that way? In terms of subject matter, certainly some of the sonnets set in these madrigals are more serious than others, but they are not divided in the way that is seen above. All the sonnets used in the madrigals that have been examined here are *versi interi* rather than *versi rotti*, and are thus already somewhat *grave*. This could be the reason that Willaert chose to set so many in a serious style from the beginning, but it does not explain why *Liete* and *Quando* were exempt. Perhaps *Liete* can be excluded from this examination, since we have already seen that it was not written in a motivic style. A possible reason that *Quando* was set with a quick rhythm at the beginning is that the words themselves are slower than the first words of the other sonnets. "Quando fra l'altre donne" contains many double consonants, and is more difficult to say than the opening lines of the other poems set by Willaert.

Perhaps he was trying to achieve a balance by setting those slow paced words with a faster rhythm. It may also indicate that although the language itself suggests *gravità*, Willaert wanted to create a feeling of sweetness and lightness.

Fig. 6.1 Motive a's or opening statements in their unvaried forms

Madrigal	Rhythm	Motive?
<i>Passa la nave</i>	o d d d . J o d	no
<i>Quando fra l'altre donne</i>	J J J J J	yes
<i>L'aura mia sacra</i>	o d . J	yes
<i>Ques'anima gentil</i>	J J . J J J J	no
<i>Ove ch'i posi gli occhi</i>	J J . J	yes
<i>O invidia</i>	J J d . J J	yes
<i>Liete e pensose</i>	o o	no
<i>I begli occhi</i>	d . J o o	yes
<i>Amor, Fortuna</i>	o d d J J o d	no
<i>Aspro core</i>	d . J J J J	yes

Motives with Dotted Rhythms

Throughout the ten madrigals examined in this study, there was one type of motive that appeared in almost all—motives that contain dotted rhythms. In some cases, the motive is repeated exactly from madrigal to madrigal (at least in its original form). In other cases, there are motives which are similar to those in other madrigals, but not identical. Both types of motivic repetition must be examined in order to determine the answers to several questions. When Willaert used identical motives in different madrigals, were they used for the same purpose? Whether yes or no, what was the purpose for the use of those motives? Are they used and varied in the same way? When the motives are similar but not identical, what is the reason for the variation? Finally, can the answers to any of these questions be linked to Bembist principles?

We will first examine a set of identical motives, LAURf, IBEGc, QUESb and PASSa. In all cases, the rhythm and contour are exactly the same, as well as the intervallic content. In almost all cases, all four motives move only by step or repetition. All the motives first appear near the beginning of their respective madrigals. IBEGc and PASSa in the first line of text and LAURf and QUESb in the second. In all four cases, the motives are used not only in isolated sections of the madrigals, but throughout. Now that the basic forms of the motives have been established, are the variations of each also identical? In almost all cases, the answer is yes, but in different degrees. All four motives can be varied by moving in contrary motion by step for the final note rather than repetition. Both motives can begin by moving up or down, as long as they maintain their contour and rhythm. However, there are also different variations used. LAURf and PASSa often end with a half note rather than two quarter notes, which never occurs with IBEGc and occurs only three times with QUESb. There are several variations on IBEGc that do not appear with LAURf or PASSa. First, the final note may continue to move in the same direction as the rest of the motive. This is also a common variation on QUESb. Also, the final note may leap rather than repeating or moving by step. Although it is very interesting that QUESb and IBEGc appear to share the same variations, the reasons for these variations are usually related to issues of voice leading and harmonic considerations rather than Bemist principles.

When examining the motives and their locations from a Bemist perspective, it is clear that they are not used for the same reasons. Motive LAURf is almost always used on a single syllable, which creates a longer vowel sound. This long vowel in combination with the quick dotted rhythm results in a feeling of *piacevolezza*, which is much needed

since the mood of the text itself and many of the other musical aspects of the madrigal are quite solemn. In contrast, IBEGc, QUESb and PASSa are almost always written over at least two syllables, and thus there are more consonants and shorter vowel sounds. The use of consonants in itself creates a feeling of slowness, but the IBEGc is also often used with a hard “c” sound, which Bembo refers to as the consonant that slows the rhythm more than the others.¹¹⁷ Aside from LAURf, all three motives are often used with double or triple consonants, which definitely slows the rhythm and thus creates a *grave* feeling. However, the quick dotted rhythm of all four motives creates *piacevolezza*. Perhaps Willaert was trying to achieve a balance by his use of PASSA, QUESb and IBEGc. Whatever Willaert’s purposes may have been, it is clear that these three motives were used in the same way, while LAURf, though similar, was used in a very different manner.

Another set of the repeated motives which use dotted rhythms is AMORa, QUANb, and LIETa. In all three cases, the first appearance of the motive is exactly the same in rhythm and contour, but can be comprised of slightly different intervals. After the repeated notes, the motive can move either by step, by third or by fourth. Since the contour and rhythm are the same, they are still considered the same motive. Like the other set of motives with dotted rhythms mentioned above, these three also make their first appearances early in their respective madrigals, in this case all in the first line. Once again, they are all used throughout their madrigals.

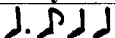

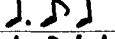
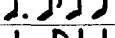
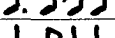
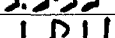
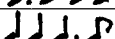
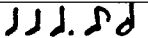

This set is particularly interesting. In chapter 5, the analysis of *Liete e pensose* showed that this madrigal was not written motivically as were the other nine madrigals. LIETa is one of only three motives used in that madrigal. For this reason, it will be very interesting to see whether or not Willaert used that motive in the same way that he used

¹¹⁷ Bembo, 66.

the same motives in different madrigals. All three share the variation of extending one of the first two quarter notes to a half note or dotted half note. Both LIETa and QUANb sometimes include an extra note before the dotted rhythm. This repeated note can be anything, but in all cases appears as a quarter note. This variation never occurs with AMORa. QUANb and LIETa sometimes begin with a leap of a third rather than repeated notes, which again never occurs with AMORa. Motive QUANb is often extended to accommodate a cadence or the end of a syllable. This occurs once with motive AMORa , but never with LIETa.

In Bemist terms, all three motives are used in a similar manner. Each note usually is sung to a syllable, except for the three notes which comprise the dotted rhythm, which are sung to a single syllable. For all three motives, that syllable used for the dotted rhythm can be either long or short (ending with a vowel or a consonant). There is a wide mix of vowels and consonants used, so it is difficult to say definitively that any of the motives are used primarily to depict *gravità* or *piacevolezza*. Again, the quickness of the dotted rhythm helps to create a light feeling, but the heaviness and slowness of the syllables often counteracts the effect of the rhythm. Still, it is interesting that although *Liete e pensose* was written in such a different style from the other two madrigals, when there is motivic writing it is very similar to motivic writing in other madrigals.

Fig. 6.2 Motives with dotted rhythms

Motive	Rhythm	Contour
IBEGc		s-s-u-s
QUANbb		s-u-d-d
LAURf		d-d
IBEGc		u-u-s or d
QUESb		d-d-u
PASSa		u-u-s or d
OVECb		u-u-u
AMORa		s-u-d-d
LIETa		s-d-u-u

Systematic Correlation between IBEGc and PASSa

Throughout the madrigals examined, there are many instances where one motive appears in more than one piece, sometimes with small variations. One motive that appears in exactly the same way twice is motive c from *I begli occhi* and motive a from *Passa la nave*. Before comparing the use of these motives, some characteristics of the motive itself should be reviewed. In both cases, the rhythm is the strongest characteristic and is only varied by changing the value of the final note. The contour and intervallic content can change slightly. In all appearances, the first three notes move by step. The last note can stay the same, or change direction. The variations will be examined in more detail below. Because of the combination of long note at the beginning and quick rhythm for the last three notes, this motive can be used to create either *gravità* or *piacevolezza*.

When comparing the use of a similar motive in two madrigals, there are several analytical questions that must be asked. The first and most obvious is: are the motives both used and varied in the same way? In this case, all variances occur in both madrigals, but in different degrees. In the case of IBEGc, it is most often varied by continuing all

pitches in the same direction by step rather than changing direction or repeating the final pitch. Although this variation does occur for PASSa, it only happens three times as opposed to eleven times for IBEGc. For motive PASSa, the most common variation is for the final pitch to change direction and leap. The leap can be any interval, but it is most often a third or a fifth. This occurs only four times with motive IBEGc. Those are the only variations that occur with either motive.

Another question that must be asked is how do these motives reflect the rhythm of the poetry? This covers two issues: the syllabic accentuation, and whether the rhythm is slow or quick (*grave* or *piace*). Here, the two motives differ in the way that they are used. For both motives, the first three pitches usually sing only one syllable, with a new syllable arriving on the final pitch. However, the musical rhythm used for PASSa coincides much better with the poetic rhythm than does IBEGc. In almost all occurrences of PASSa, an accentuated syllable is set to the first three notes of the motive, so the syllable is strong in both the poetry and the musical setting. However, IBEGc is sometimes set with a strong syllable on the final pitch (for example, alto voice mm.19-20). In this case, the final note of the motive is extended to a half note, so it does not feel abnormal. However, IBEGc is often metrically displaced so that the first note of the motive does not fall on a strong beat. This creates rhythmic confusion, as the rhythm of the poetry and expected placement of the strongest beat of the motive are disrupted. This metric displacement of the motive does not occur with PASSa, so the reason for its occurrence in IBEGc must be examined. It could be that Willaert was trying to emphasize the placement of the strong syllable by placing it somewhere unexpected for the purpose of drawing attention to the *grave* or *piace* character of the word. Since this

shifts each time this device is used, that is not likely the reason. It could also be a way of slowing the rhythm, thus creating the feeling of *gravità*. The occurrences of IBEGc which are displaced are not any more or less *grave* by nature than the other occurrences, at least as far as the poetry itself is concerned. However, it could be that Willaert wanted to draw attention to that aspect of the character at those times, and he used metric displacement in order to do so.

Finally, the two motives must be examined in order to determine whether or not they represent Bembist ideas. Are they used for certain types of sounds? Are they usually used for words that are *grave* or *piace*? There are no definitive answers to these questions. In many cases, both IBEGc and PASSa are used on words that have double or triple consonants, and are therefore *grave*. But since this is not always the case, it cannot be the reason that Willaert chose to use these motives. In terms of placement in the text in a larger sense, the motives are not used consistently at the same point in a line or stanza, and are not used for any text that is either sweet or serious by subject matter. Even though both motives are varied, it does not appear to be for the sake of Bembist *variazione*. For that to be the case, the variations would have to be associated with one affect or another, and that is not consistent with these two motives.

Willaert's Treatment of "occhi"

A wide variety of madrigals were chosen for this study in order to determine how Willaert chose to set sonnets that contained many different Bembist elements. Also, madrigals which were set to sonnets with the same imagery or Bembist ideas were chosen so that a comparison could be made between Willaert's settings of the same subject in

different madrigals. This was the case in choosing *I begli occhi* and *Ove ch'I posi gli occhi*. The questions that arise here are not based so much on Bembo's principles, but rather on Willaert's treatment of the image of eyes. Does he use the same kind of motives for the word "occhi" in both madrigals? Are the motives varied in the same way? Does Willaert's choice of motives seem to have anything to do with Bembo's ideas?

As we have already seen, *I begli occhi* is unique in that the same motive (IBEGa) is used virtually every time that the phrase "I begli occhi" is stated. There are slight variations allowed which need not be restated here, but essentially the rhythm and basic contour of IBEGa are maintained. Also, that motive is only rarely used for any text other than a restatement of that phrase. This is not the case in *Ove ch'i posi gli occhi*. As seen above, both madrigals begin with a motive *a* that is comprised primarily of longer note values. However, OVECa is not set to the word "occhi", but only to "ove ch'i." The word "occhi" appears at the beginning (mm. 7-10) and end of the madrigal (mm. 118-122). At no point is included within a motive. However, even though it may not be part of a motive, it could still display awareness on Willaert's part of deliberate setting of the word if it were set in a similar manner each time it appears. That is not the case here. The setting of "occhi" in mm. 7-10 is comprised of a half note followed by a quarter note, with a repeated pitch in all but the bass voice. When the word is stated in mm. 118-122, it is usually a repeated pitch, but the rhythm is altered to two quarter notes. That is not enough of a similarity to conclude that Willaert deliberately set it in the same manner each time, although that is certainly a fair conclusion for *I begli occhi*. Certainly, there is no similarity in his settings of the word "occhi" between the two madrigals.

Conclusions

As was seen in chapters 5 and the 6, the alterations made to Rifkin's model of motivicity allow Willaert's possible compositional process to be seen. The testing of the model done in chapters 4 and 5 indicate that Willaert was aware of Bembist ideas and often used motivicity in order to portray these ideas musically. By incorporating the writings of both Bembo and Zarlino into Rifkin's model, the full potential of this model can be seen. It can be used not only to show structural aspects of Willaert's works, but also relationships between text and music. This allows the listener to understand not only the words of the text, but the Bembist implications. By using motivicity as an analytical tool, a richer reading of Willaert's madrigals can be achieved which allows for full comprehension of the poetry itself as well as the music, and the relationship between the two.

However, the value in testing the model was not only that its strengths were revealed, but also its weaknesses. While the refinements to the model do sometimes show an understanding on Willaert's part of the writings of Bembo in such madrigals as *Aspro core* and *O invidia*, there are also several madrigals in which motivicity does not appear to have been a tool used by Willaert, or it was not used in order to portray Bembist traits in the text. Although the case of *Liete e pensose* can be explained as using a different style of writing because the sonnet is in the form of a dialogue (see pages 64-67), all other madrigals examined in chapter 5 which either contain low levels of motivicity or do not use it to show Bembist traits cannot be explained so easily. It could be that the model still needs refinement in order to be used to its full potential, and that there are

relationships between the text and the music which will be revealed if these refinements are made. It could also be that Willaert simply did not wish to emphasize Bembo ideas in certain madrigals and chose instead to focus on other elements. This can only be known through more extensive testing. It is clear that Rifkin's theory is true—Willaert did use motivicity as a compositional tool in at least some of his works. And the theory put forth here does appear to have some truth—motivicity was often used by Willaert in order to musically portray a Bembo reading of the text. However, although many alterations have been made in order to allow the model to reveal all possible elements, it still cannot be easily defined. This is in part due to the number of alterations that had to be made from one madrigal to the next. What was considered a motive in one madrigal may not be a motive in another. For example, *Quest'anima gentil* contains several three note motives. Although these same patterns appear in many other madrigals, they were not labeled as motives because they were not used motivically. This proves the difficulty of defining motives. Even after testing several madrigals, all that can be concluded is that the motives must be defined and variations allowed in a manner that seems to reveal the most about that particular composition. Motivicity can be a very helpful analytical tool and may help us to better understand this music, but more work must be done in order to reach a final definition of motivicity as it has been used in this study. One possible avenue for further research would be to place greater restrictions on the definition of motivicity and determine the degree of permeation that it yields, rather than allowing for as many variations as necessary in order to expose as many links to Bembo as possible. Through systematically using different types of motives in the analysis, the best definition of motivicity for the purpose of finding relationships between the text and

music could be discovered. Also, motivicity could be used to search not only for Bembist links to the music, but for other expressive purposes as well. That was not within the scope of this study, but since it is clear that Willaert did use motivicity to a certain extent and it cannot always be linked to Bembism, the reasons for his use of motivicity as a compositional tool still need to be discovered. Although there are still many unanswered questions, it is clear that the madrigals of Adrian Willaert merit more attention than they have received in the past.

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