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POLYPHONIC MEDITATIONS FOR “MISERABLE TIMES”: MUSIC AND DEVOTION IN THE SPIRITUAL MADRIGALS OF PHILIPPE DE MONTE

IZVLEČEK: Philippe de Monte (1521–1603), verjetno najbolj plodovit madrigalist 16. stoletja, je bil tudi eden najustvarjalnejših skladateljev posebne zvrsti duhovnih madrigalov. V prispevku je podan pregled Montejevega ustvarjanja, predstavljena njegova ideja duhovnega madrigala in orisana povezava s sodobno kulturo in duhovnostjo. Kot najpomembnejši se je izkazal vpliv Družbe Jezusove: jezuiti so bili namreč med temi, ki jim je Monte svoje zbirke posvetil, in avtorji/oskrbovalci uglasbenih besedil.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Philippe de Monte, duhovni madrigal, Vittoria Colonna, Družba Jezusova, jezuiti in glasba

ABSTRACT: Philippe de Monte (1521–1603), possibly the most prolific madrigalist of the entire sixteenth century, was in addition one of the most productive in the special field of spiritual madrigals. In this article I survey Monte's output, outline his idea of a spiritual madrigal and map the connections with contemporary culture and spirituality. The most notable influence is revealed to be that of the Society of Jesus: Jesuits were in fact among the dedicatees and authors/providers of the texts set.

KEYWORDS: Philippe de Monte, spiritual madrigal, Vittoria Colonna, Society of Jesus, Jesuits and music

MONTE'S BOOKS OF SPIRITUAL MADRIGALS

Philippe de Monte (1521–1603), possibly the most prolific madrigalist of the entire sixteenth century, was also one of the most productive in the special field of spiritual madrigals. Between 1581 and 1593, he published five books of such compositions (see Table 1).¹ Although not much has been written about the transalpine and European reception and dissemination of the Italian spiritual madrigal,² Monte's production surely stands out as one of the most substantial corpora of such compositions written north of the Alps. Whereas the general context still awaits a systematic exploration, in this article I will limit myself to surveying Monte's own books and mapping their connections with contemporary culture and spirituality.

Table 1 | Philippe de Monte's books of spiritual madrigals

TITLE	CITY AND PUBLISHER	YEAR	REFERENCES
<i>Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci</i> [hereafter Book I a 5 (1581)]	Venice: Angelo Gardano	1581	Nuovo Vogel (NV) 802; RISM M 3317
<i>Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci</i> [hereafter Book I a 6 (1583)]	Venice: Angelo Gardano	1583	NV 803; RISM M 3318
<i>Il secondo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei et sette voci</i> [hereafter Book II a 6/7 (1589)]	Venice: Angelo Gardano	1589	NV 804; RISM M 3322
<i>Il terzo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci</i> [hereafter Book III a 6 (1590)]	Venice: Angelo Gardano	1590	NV 805; RISM M 3323
<i>Eccellenze di Maria Vergine</i>	Venice: Angelo Gardano	1593	NV 733; RISM M 3324

Monte's books of spiritual madrigals apparently belong to different typologies. Book I a 5 (1581) is the most homogeneous one, clearly the result of careful planning. The following Book I a 6 (1583) and Book II a 6/7 (1589) have a more composite nature, notwithstanding the remarkable presence of recurring subjects. In contrast, Book III a 6 (1590) is linked to a specific occasion (the dedication of the Jesuit church

1 On Monte's spiritual madrigals, see in particular Nuten, *De "Madrigali Spirituali"*; Pass, "Die originelle Ansicht des Unendlichen"; Powers, "Spiritual Madrigal in Counter-Reformation Italy", 112–115 and *passim*; Filippi, "Earthly Music"; Schmalzriedt, "Philippe de Montes geistliche Madrigale"; and Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits".

2 Some notes on the Munich context for Lasso's spiritual madrigals appear, for instance, in Fisher, *Music, Piety, and Propaganda*, 106–112.

of St Michael in Munich), whereas Monte's last effort, the incompletely preserved *Eccellenze di Maria Vergine*, is unique in that it sets the stanzas of a single poem.

Monte dedicated his Book I a 5 (1581) to the newly elected Superior-General of the Society of Jesus, Claudio Acquaviva (for the contents of this book, see Table 2).³ The Jesuit connections of the book, however, are not limited to the dedication but concern its very genesis: as Monte states in the dedication, he received the texts of the madrigals from a member of the Society, a certain "Lorenzo Cotemanno" (alias Laurent Coteman) who had previously been among his pupils in the Imperial chapel. From documents published by other scholars and information retrieved at the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI) by the present writer,⁴ we now know that Coteman came from Liège, where he was born in 1557, and that he left Vienna after his voice broke in 1576; he went to Italy and entered the Society of Jesus in the summer of 1577;⁵ and at least until 1579 he is recorded in the Roman Province of the Society. It is not known how many texts Coteman sent to Monte and whether the composer selected the texts to set from a larger number.⁶ What is certain, though, is that the book is structurally very consistent: all fifteen texts are sonnets, and each sonnet is set in two *partes*, respecting its metrical subdivision into quatrains and tercets; moreover, there seems to be a certain regularity in length and a quasi-symmetrical ordering by mode.⁷ Intriguingly, the only identifiable authors are two female poets: Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati (author of the opening sonnet) and Vittoria Colonna (author of eight texts); the other texts are of unknown authorship.⁸ The book is less uniform in terms of content, but several recurring themes (with matching keywords) are recognizable: the view of the world as a "valley of tears" in contrast to Heaven, the crucial role of divine grace in the soul's battle for salvation and the conflict between reason and earthly desires. Interestingly, no fewer than three pieces depict spiritual experiences by means of musical metaphors (nos. 8, 11 and 12).

3 Modern edition of the whole book in Nuten, *De "Madrigali Spirituali"*, vol. 2.

4 See more detailed information and references in Filippi, "Earthly Music"; and Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits".

5 The precise date is a new addition to the data I have already published: "Lorenzo Cotemanno: 27 agosto 1577" appears in a list of novices of the Provincia Romana, 1565–1586 (typewritten copy of ms. ARSI, *Rom.* 171C, attached to the volume of indexes "*Prov. Rom.* 41–171b" available in the reading room at the ARSI).

6 It is worth noting that the texts set by Monte follow the versions of Colonna's famous manuscript for Michelangelo rather than those of her printed collections (Filippi, "Earthly Music", 219): for further reflections on how those manuscript versions might have reached the Jesuit milieu in Rome, see Veronica Copello's introduction to Colonna, *La raccolta di rime*, XL–XLI.

7 See Filippi, "Earthly Music", 222–223.

8 For a discussion of the two poets' Jesuit connections, as well as of other aspects of this book, I refer the reader simply to my previously published works cited in the preceding notes. On Monte (and other composers') settings of Colonna's poems, see Piéjus, "Musical Settings of the 'Rime'".

Table 2 | Monte, Book I a 5 (1581): contents

TEXT	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION
1. <i>Se gli occhi innalzo a rimirar talora / Oh come son di voi stelle più ardenti</i>	L. Battiferri degli Ammannati	All texts are sonnets (always set in two partes)
2. <i>L'alto consiglio, allor ch'eleger volse / Perché non la legò, né meno in forse</i>	V. Colonna	
3. <i>Mentre io sciolto correa da me lontano / Ma lettere in ghiaccio scritte e poste al sole</i>		
4. <i>Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese / Cangiar obietto o variar pensiero</i>	V. Colonna	
5. <i>Signor, chi n'essorrà gli alti tuoi modi / O pur perché dobbiam noi reverenti</i>		
6. <i>Quando il turbato mar s'alza e circonda / E se talor la barca del desio</i>	V. Colonna	
7. <i>Su l'alte eterne ruote il pie' fermasti / L'alma sul divin monte altera siede</i>	V. Colonna	
8. <i>Se 'l breve suon che sol quest'aer frale / Che fia quando udirà con vivo zelo</i>	V. Colonna	
9. <i>Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente / Non ti smarrir, rinforza il vago volo</i>	V. Colonna	
10. <i>Puri innocenti, il vostro invito e forte / Voi senza fede d'este il pianto solo</i>	V. Colonna	
11. <i>Vorrei l'orecchia aver qui chiusa e sorda / Amor alza le voci, amor le abbassa</i>	V. Colonna	
12. <i>Ben che da dotta man toccata sia / E se l'istessa man, saggia e possente</i>		
13. <i>Oggi, Signor, non con molt'oro ed ostro / E di cometter poi tanto s'avanza</i>		
14. <i>Or che non più di te né d'altro calmi / A te così di me mai più non caglia</i>		
15. <i>Quand'io scorgo i larvati basilischi / Ma fera incauta son ch'ove più incorsa</i>		

Book I a 6 (1583) was dedicated to “Gioan Fuccari”, i.e., Johannes, or Hans, Fugger (1531–1598), who has been characterized as “possibly the greatest Maecenas of non-princely origin of his time”.⁹ In the dedicatory letter, signed at Vienna on 25 Sep-

9 “[...] der größte Mäzen nichtfürstlichen Geschlechts seiner Zeit”: Rieckenberg, “Fugger, Johannes Graf”. On Fugger, see also Honisch, “Sacred Music in Prague”, 399–400. A modern edition of Book I a 6 is Monte, *Madrigalium spiritualium*, edited by Georg van Doorslaer. For

tember 1583,¹⁰ Monte praises Fugger for having remained "staunch, among so many storms and wrecks, in the true and most holy Catholic religion" ("sald[o], fra tante tempeste e naufragii, nella vera e santissima religion Catolica").¹¹ Despite the stereotyped character of such remarks and in light of the debate about Monte's position in the troubled confessional landscape of his time,¹² it needs to be stressed that to all appearances the composer remained faithful to Catholicism throughout his life and in his old age even became a Catholic priest.¹³ The poems chosen for this book (see Table 3) are mainly sonnets (unlike in the first book of 1581, however, they are often set in a single *pars*). Besides Colonna, of whom five texts are set consecutively (nos. 2–6), we are able to identify a certain number of authors (more than in any other book in this series): Francesco Beccuti, also known as "il Coppetta" (no. 17); Giovanni della Casa (nos. 7 and 12);¹⁴ Gabriele Fiamma (no. 9); Bruto Guarini, also known as "Bruto da Fano" (no. 18).¹⁵ Eight poems cannot currently be attributed. The main subjects are the mysteries of Incarnation and Redemption (also in relation to the Virgin Mary); meditations on the Cross of Christ and on His death (considered from many different perspectives); the *contemptum mundi* and (desire of) conversion. As in other books by Monte, there seems to be a nucleus of texts that insist on these leitmotives plus a handful of pieces on miscellaneous subjects — such as, here, Christmas (no. 15), Easter (no. 14) and martyrdom (no. 13).

Book II a 6/7 (1589) was dedicated to Archduke Charles II, a prominent member of the House of Habsburg, which, to quote the dedicatory letter signed at Venice on 25 August 1589, had remained the "buttress of true religion in these miserable times" ("sostentamento della vera religione in questi miseri tempi").¹⁶

the facsimile, see Monte, *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a 6 voci*, published in the series Corpus of Early Music. A digital reproduction of the copy held at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France is available at <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k45003216>.

10 See the transcription in Nuten, *De "Madrigali Spirituali"*, vol. 1, 84–85.

11 All translations in the article are the author's unless otherwise stated.

12 See, for instance, Silies, *Die Motetten des Philippe de Monte, passim*.

13 Surely after 1585 (not by 1577, as frequently stated): see Wistreich, "Philippe de Monte", 289; and the comments in Filippi, "Earthly Music", 224n70.

14 The version of no. 7 set by Monte has a different incipit from the one that predominates in the printed tradition of Della Casa's works ("Sperando, Amor, da te salute invano" instead of "Mentre sperai da te salute invano").

15 The poem was printed in *Rime piacevoli di Cesare Caporali, del Mauro, et d'altri autori* (Ferrara: V. Baldini, 1586). See the record for Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Ms. F 42 in *Manus online* (http://manus.iccu.sbn.it/opac_SchedaScheda.php?ID=171919).

16 See the transcription in Nuten, *De "Madrigali Spirituali"*, vol. 1, 93–94. Modern edition of the whole book in Nuten, *De "Madrigali Spirituali"*, vol. 3. For the facsimile, see Monte, *Il secondo libro de madrigali spirituali a 6 & 7 voci*, published in the series Corpus of Early Music. A digital reproduction of the copy held by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek is available at <http://stimmbuecher.digitale-sammlungen.de/view?id=bsb00075258>.

The opposition between “true religion” and “miserable times” clearly alludes to the inter-confessional conflicts of the period and is reflected in one way or another in the subjects of the poems: the most recurrent theme is that of the earthly travails and battles that humans must endure — under the threat of the Enemy but with the Saints and the Virgin Mary as protectors, models and intercessors — en route to their heavenly home. Looking at the texts, several aspects are worth of note (see Table 4): the continuing presence of Vittoria Colonna (with three sonnets); the first and only occurrence of Torquato Tasso in Monte’s spiritual madrigal production, with the sonnet *Padre del ciel, or ch’atra nube il calle* (no. 2); and the inclusion of three texts in Latin (nos. 4, 6 and 11), which has no parallel in Monte’s other books. An examination of the Latin texts reveals interesting details. One of them, the seven-part *Virgo vetustis edita regibus*, is taken from the Jesuit Peter Canisius’s book *De Maria Virgine incomparabili et Dei genitrice sacrosancta* (Ingolstadt, 1577), a cornerstone of contemporary Catholic apologetics.¹⁷ As I have argued elsewhere,¹⁸ the inclusion of this text testifies to the enduring Jesuit connections and strong confessional engagement underlying Monte’s spiritual works. While *Proh quae tenero vis in amore est* (no. 6) might be linked with theatrical activity, perhaps with a Jesuit Christmas play,¹⁹ some features of the other Latin text, *Celestis sponsa, excelsi regis iam gloriosum* (no. 4), seem to point to a different destination. Its composite text, variously in prose and verse, is an invocation to St Catherine of Alexandria; it consists of a patchwork formed from pre-existing liturgical or paraliturgical texts, with Litany elements. As if echoing the central passage that reads “let us joyfully sing to each other [or sing alternately] a sweet canticle, to be intoned only by virgins” (“canticum dulce solis virginibus decantandum laetantes invicem canamus”), Monte sets this text with an unusual scoring (employing clefs G2, C1, C1, C1, C3, C4),²⁰ which might point towards a performance by female voices, perhaps one with instrumental accompaniment. Add to this the surprising praise of women included in no. 9, a text by Colonna that, opposing the courage of the “defenceless St Mary Magdalene” at the sepulchre to the fear felt by the “strong Apostles” barricaded in the Cenacle, concludes that “it is right to give women full credit for having a more fervent and more constant heart [than men].”²¹ All this could suggest the existence of yet unexplored connections between Monte’s devotional music and female religious houses.

17 See Silies, *Die Motetten des Philippe de Monte*, 207.

18 Filippi, “Ask the Jesuits”, 70–71.

19 See Silies, *Die Motetten des Philippe de Monte*, 250–254; and the comments in Filippi, “Ask the Jesuits”, 70.

20 Which has a parallel only in *Virgo vetustis edita regibus*, with clefs G2, G2, C2, C2, C3, C3, C4.

21 “Convien dar alle donn’il pregio intiero / d’aver il cor più acceso e più costante”.

Table 3 | Monte, Book I a 6 (1583): contents

TEXT	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION
1. <i>Sparse il bel volto di color di Tiro / E pareo in vista dir questa mia vita</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
2. <i>Vergine pura che de' raggi ardenti</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in one part)
3. <i>Donna dal Ciel gradita a tanto honore</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in one part)
4. <i>Stella del nostro mar chiara e sicura</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in one part)
5. <i>Vedea l'alto Signor ch'ardendo langue / Nuovo trionfo e in modo nuovo</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in two parts)
6. <i>Dimmi, lume del mondo e chiaro honore / Io sol ti scorgo afflito e dentr'e fuore</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in two parts) [but first part = first quatrain only]
7. <i>Mentre sperai da te salute invano / E sì come augellin, campato il visco</i>	G. Della Casa	sonnet (set in two parts)
8. <i>Quando tutto di sangue e sudor pieno / Credo ben io ch'indi restavi morta</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
9. <i>Son questi i chiari lumi onde sereno / Ahi che spietata stampa hoggi rimiro</i>	G. Fiamma	sonnet (set in two parts)
10. <i>È morte o vita quella che ne toglie / È vita a chi morendo visse bene</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
11. <i>Quando l'anima mia pensa al gran pegno / E vuol che sian per le paci tranquille</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
12. <i>Io che lieto solea viver nel fango / Che poi ch'a mortal rischio è gita invano</i>	G. Della Casa	sonnet (set in two parts)
13. <i>Fu sempre chiara e memorabil prova / Anzi è vittoria illustre, anzi son molte</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
14. <i>In questo di giocondo</i>		madrigal
15. <i>A l'apparir del sol ch'al cieco e averso / Tutta lieta il raccoglie e 'n picciol velo</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
16. <i>Alma felice che sì dolcemente</i>		sonnet (set in one part)
17. <i>Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo</i>	F. Beccuti	octave
18. <i>Con negra benda il ciel gl'occhi velarsi</i>	Bruto Guarini	sonnet (set in one part)

Table 4 | Monte, Book II a 6/7 (1589): contents

TEXT	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION
1. <i>Non son degn'io, Signore</i>		madrigal
2. <i>Padre del ciel, or ch'atra nube il calle</i>	T. Tasso	sonnet (set in one part)
3. <i>Padre nostro e del ciel, con quanto amore / Dal fermo stato poi nasce la fede</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in two parts)
4. <i>Celestis sponsa, excelsi regis iam gloriosum</i>	[Latin text]	
5. <i>Giace nel mezzo de le fiamm'ardenti / Prova ben degna del divino amore</i>	Raffaele Bonelli	sonnet (set in two parts)
6. <i>Proh quae tenero vis in amore est / En Samsonem pronubus alterum</i>	[Latin text]	
7. <i>Signor cui fu già poco / Signor la nott'e 'l giorno / Signor cui piacqu'ornare</i>		3 stanzas: abAbbcC
8. <i>L'ardente robo e mai dal foco offeso</i>		madrigal
9. <i>La bella donn'a cui dolente preme</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in one part)
10. <i>Quanta gioia tu segno e stella ardente</i>	V. Colonna	sonnet (set in one part)
11. <i>Virgo vetustis edita regibus</i> (7 parts)	[Latin text] P. Canisius	

As mentioned above, Book III a 6 (1590) is directly connected with an event, a place, a religious order, a ruler and a complex story of patronage. The title page advertises the fact that the book was composed on occasion of the dedication of the Jesuit church of St Michael in Munich, sponsored by Duke Wilhelm of Bavaria. According to the dedication,²² and similarly to what had happened in 1581 with Coteman, Monte had received the texts from a Jesuit father, Gerolamo Ferricelli, who had sent to Monte from Munich some poems “partly composed by him, partly by other Fathers of the Society of Jesus”. But it was ultimately the duke who “gave them cause to write [these poems], by having built the most splendid temple [...] dedicated to St Michael the Archangel”. Monte, in turn, had only tried with “great love and fervour” to “complete [the poems] with the grace they deserve for their subject and their elegance”. As a result of this peculiar genesis the book has several distinctive features (for the contents, see below, Table 5). The only recognizable author is Della Casa (no. 11), and it is unfortunately not possible at the moment to illuminate further the role of Fer-

22 Signed from Venice on 10 November 1590. See a facsimile in Nuten, *De “Madrigali Spirituali”*, vol. 1, 100–101; and a full transcription and translation in Filippi, “Ask the Jesuits”, 79–80.

ricelli and his fellow Jesuits. However, it seems no mere coincidence that two of the texts were later set by Asprilio Pacelli in his first book of spiritual madrigals published in 1601, when he was "maestro di capella nel Colleggio [*sic*] Germanico di Roma" — that is to say in one of the main Jesuit institutions in Rome (see below, Table 6).²³ Some of the poems seem to be directly related to the occasion, the patron and the church: in particular, no. 1, which is an acrostic sonnet in honour of Duke Wilhelm (the first letters of each line spell out the words "DUCA GUGLIELMO") and might even flatteringly suggest an equation of the duke with St Michael. No. 3 seems to refer to the construction of the church of St Michael, and the way in which it addresses the Archangel in the second part reminds one immediately of Hubert Gerhard's bronze statue, prominently placed in the façade of the church:²⁴

Tu sol, Michel, mentre soccinto stai
 E del fiero Dragon domando l'ira
 Conturbi in parte nostre liete voglie
 Ma col baston che l'huom trasse da' guai
 E rese al cielo le dovute spoglie
 A vittorie e trionfi ogn'uno aspira.²⁵

Other texts may allude to pictures or relics preserved in the church (e.g., no. 2); in general, affectionate meditation on the Passion is a central subject; a series of texts (nos. 5–9) appear to be interconnected in various ways, sharing subjects, keywords, concepts and rhyming words; they possibly form a set of variations (by different hands?) on the theme of the suffering Christ and his Most Precious Blood (here, too, the reference to a picture venerated as St Michael, such as an *Imago Pietatis*, seems likely). On the other hand, the imagery of the concluding *sestina* (no. 12), which invokes God as the "wind" and "light" for the "battered ship" of the faithful that strives to reach harbour through a perilous sea, is strikingly similar to that of other poems set in previous books by Monte, notably no. 6 (by Vittoria Colonna) and no. 14 in Book I a 5 (1581).

The last spiritual book published by Monte, the incompletely preserved *Eccellenze di Maria Vergine* (1593), is exceptional within this series for many reasons. Contrasting with the more or less composite nature of the previous books, it sets the forty stanzas (octaves) of a single poem by Orazio Guarguanti in honour of the

23 See the title page reproduced in Pacelli, *Madrigali*.

24 See Smith, "Art of Salvation in Bavaria", 568; Smith, *Sensuous Worship*, 70–72.

25 Translation: "You alone, Michael, while with your vestment girded up you tame the anger of the fierce Dragon, you somewhat perturb our happy mood; but armed with your spear that rescued mankind from its woes and rendered up to Heaven its due spoils, everyone can aspire to victories and triumphs".

Table 5 | Monte, Book III a 6 (1590): contents

TEXT	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION
1. <i>Densi nemi d'intorno e fieri venti / In tanti lutti un sol rimedio scorgo</i>		acrostic sonnet (set in two parts)
2. <i>Chi vuol mirar li par veder un gioco / Qui gli angelici spirti intorno stanno</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
3. <i>Fondar in vivi sassi i fondamenti / Tu sol, Michel, mentre soccinto stai</i>		sonnet (set in two parts)
4. <i>Chiare luci serene</i>		abCcdd[...]eeE
5. <i>Di teneri diamanti</i>		abbaCCdD
6. <i>Duro mio core ingrato</i>		abcCdedeE
7. <i>Chiare lucide stille</i>		abbAcCDD
8. <i>Ben fia tosto Signore</i>		abaCcbDD
9. <i>Stella più chiara e bella</i>		abBCcdaEE
10. <i>Signor a cui tacita parla</i>		abbcDDdEefF
11. <i>Questa vita mortal [che 'n una o 'n due] / Anz'il dolce aer puro e questa luce</i>	G. Della Casa	sonnet (set in two parts)
12. <i>Stanco già di solcar sì crudel onde (sestina)</i>		sestina (set in six parts)

Blessed Virgin,²⁶ adding a final sonnet *de Passione* (already present in the printed editions of the text alone). The project is obviously comparable to the almost exactly contemporary spiritual cycles by Lasso (*Lagrima di San Pietro*, 1594 [published 1595], setting a popular poem by Luigi Tansillo) and Palestrina (*Priego alla Beata Vergine*, 1594, setting a text by the obscure Antonio Migliori).²⁷ While the *Eccellenze* share with the *Priego* the Marian subject, it should be noted that Guarguanti's poem was repeatedly printed together with Tansillo's *Lagrima*.²⁸

26 "[...] celebrandosi in essa l'Eccellenze del corpo e dell'anima della Madre di Gesù Cristo Salvator nostro": see the dedication transcribed in Hindrichs, *Philipp de Monte*, 199.

27 On Lasso's cycle, see Fisher, "Per mia particolare devotione". On Palestrina's cycle, see Della Sciuca, "Esegesi testuale e grande forma".

28 For instance, in *Le lagrime di san Pietro del signor Luigi Tansillo; con le Lagrime della Maddalena del signor Erasmo da Valuasone. Di nuouo ristampate, et aggiuntoui l'Eccellenze della gloriosa Vergine Maria, del signor Horatio Guarguante da Soncino* (Venice: appresso Simon Cornetti & fratelli, 1592). For further editions, including one possibly dating from as early as 1589, see *Editr6*, "Censimento nazionale delle edizioni italiane del XVI secolo", <http://editr6.iccu.sbn.it/>.

The lack of surviving evidence concerning the dissemination and reception of Monte's *Eccellenze* makes it difficult to ascertain whether they played any role in inspiring Lasso's and Palestrina's choice of setting a unified cycle of spiritual madrigals at such a short temporal distance. The coincidence, however, is surely remarkable. In the cyclic "swan songs" of these composers, who all belonged to the fading generation born in the 1520s, the polyphonic spiritual madrigal perhaps reached its most ambitious stage of development. It is true, however, that in the case of Monte the book has a less personal connotation than have those by Palestrina and, especially, Lasso. In fact, whereas in at least two other books by Monte we have observed the agency of a "provider of texts" (the Jesuits Coteman, in 1581, and Ferricelli, in 1590), the role of Orazio Guarguanti (1554–1611), a multi-talented physician, seems here even more significant. Not only was he the author of all the texts set in the book, but he also signed, at Venice (on 10 January 1593), the dedication of Monte's work, addressing it to "Benetta Pisana": i.e., Benedetta Pisani Dolfin, wife of the Procurator of San Marco Andrea Dolfin.²⁹ Incidentally, Guarguanti had already collaborated with Monte in 1591, when he wrote a canzone in memory of the Venetian noblewoman Bianca Ruzini Contarini, then had it set to music "con arte maravigliosa dal Signore Filippo di Monte, Maestro di Capella della Sacra Maestà Cesarea, Compositor Eminentissimo",³⁰ and finally published it together with madrigals by Rore, G. Gabrieli and other prominent composers.³¹

SPIRITUAL CONTENTS AND DEVOTIONAL CONTEXTS

In order to understand better Monte's idea of a spiritual madrigal, let us try to map the spiritual contents and possible devotional contexts for this music in order to arrive at some general reflections on its style. What kind of spirituality does this corpus reflect? On the one hand, there are a wide variety of themes and approaches. On the other, certain specifically characterized approaches to specifically characterized themes occur repeatedly.

Several texts are relatable to devotional practices or even to the sacramental life of the faithful. An example is *Non son degn'io, Signore* from 1589, a poetic madrigal that paraphrases the words usually said in prayer at Mass before Communion:

29 On Guarguanti, see Ceruti, *Biografia soncinata*, 200–206; Fonte, *Worth of Women*, 182 and 218–220. For an engraved portrait of Guarguante by Raphaël Sadeler, dated 1600, see <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-1909-4554>.

30 From the dedication to Count Luigi Della Torre, published in Hindrichs, *Philipp de Monte*, 197; see also *ibid.*, 77–78.

31 *La Ruzina canzone di Filippo de Monte, insieme un'altra di Cipriano de Rore, et altri Madrigali de diversi famosissimi autori* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1591). See Baroncini, "Giovanni Gabrieli e la committenza privata", 39–40.

“Domine non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum [...]” (“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof [...]"). Other texts allude more or less specifically to festivals in the liturgical year, such as the feast of the Holy Innocents (*Puri innocenti, il vostro invito e forte*, 1581, text by Colonna), Easter (*In questo dì giocondo*, 1583, text unattributed) or the Epiphany (*Quanta gioia tu segno e stella ardente*, 1589, text by Colonna). Other pieces refer to saints and possibly to their feast days: St Catherine of Alexandria (*Su l’alte eterne ruote il pie’ fermasti*, 1581, text by Colonna; and *Celestis sponsa, excelsi regis iam gloriosum*, 1589); St Laurence (*Giace nel mezzo de le fiamm’ardenti*, 1589, text by Raffaele Bonelli); St Mary Magdalene (*Sparse il bel volto di color di Tiro*, 1583; and *La bella donn’a cui dolente preme*, 1589, text by Colonna); St Michael Archangel (*Fondar in vivi sassi i fondamenti*, 1589); and St Victoria martyr (*Fu sempre chiara e memorabil prova*, 1583).

Numerous pieces, unsurprisingly, honour and invoke the Virgin Mary: in her Immaculate Conception (*L’alto consiglio, allor ch’èlegger volse*, 1581, text by Colonna); in her Assumption (*Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese*, 1581, text by Colonna); as the *Mater dolorosa* (*Quando tutto di sangue e sudor pieno*, 1583); for the “excellencies” of her body and soul (the whole book of *Eccellenze*, 1593); in association with Christmas and the Mystery of Incarnation (e.g., *A l’apparir del sol ch’al cieco e averso*, 1583); or, more generally, as an advocate and intercessor (e.g., *L’ardente robo e mai dal foco offeso*, 1589). Only Book III a 6 (1590) contains no Marian settings.

Other pieces develop more speculative or introspective themes or have mystical and ascetic subjects. The themes of *vanitas*, *contemptum mundi* and conversion are often introduced — for instance in *Or che non più di te né d’altro calmi* (1581) and *Mentre sperai da te salute invano* (1583, text by Della Casa). Death is the subject of such pieces as *È morte o vita quella che ne toglie* and *Alma felice che sì dolcemente* (both 1583). Remarkable, too, are the three musico-mystical pieces of 1581 mentioned above, which draw parallels between earthly and heavenly music and touch upon the topic of the spiritual senses. One madrigal alone in the whole corpus has a moral and not explicitly Christian theme: the utterly pessimistic *Quand’io scorgo i larvati basilischi*, which closes Book I a 5 (1581).³²

While God the Father is invoked in a handful of pieces, such as *Padre del ciel, or ch’atra nube il calle* (1589, text by Tasso), the Christocentric character of the corpus is apparent. Whereas certain pieces depict Gospel scenes such as the Nativity or the Multiplication of the loaves and fishes (*Oggi, Signor, non con molt’oro ed ostro*, 1581) or reflect in abstract terms on the mysteries of Incarnation and Redemption, the material centre of this Christocentric landscape is undoubtedly the Cross (see especially 1583 and 1590). The Cross is regarded as the seat of Christ’s humble triumph (*Vedea l’alto Signor ch’ardendo langue*, 1583, text by Colonna), but most of all as the place

32 See Filippi, “Earthly Music”, 222.

where He bitterly suffered for sinners. No fewer than three pieces from 1583 feature a dialogue between the worshipper and the crucified Jesus or a first-person address to Him: *Dimmi, lume del mondo e chiaro honore* (text by Colonna), which highlights the contrast between Christ's love and the ingratitude of non-repentant men; *Son questi i chiari lumi onde sereno* (text by Fiamma), which includes a contemplation of the limbs of Christ (the eyes, the head, the hands and the feet); and *Quando l'anima mia pensa al gran pegno*, whose unattributed text concludes with the offering of a "crucified heart" to Jesus.

To conclude this survey of Monte's texts, it should be noted that just a few of them had been or would be set by contemporary composers (see Table 6). Besides the overlap with Pietro Vinci's monographic collection of settings of poems by Colonna (*Quattordecim sonetti spirituali della illustrissima et eccellentissima divina Vittoria Colonna [...] messi in canto* [Venice: heir of G. Scotto, 1580]),³³ the concordances with the 'Roman' books of spiritual madrigals by Marenzio (1584) and Asprilio Pacelli (1601) may repay further investigation.

As discussed above, the texts for at least two of Monte's books (1581 and 1590) were provided by Jesuits, and further links with Jesuit environments emerge in other books as well. We know that Monte had connections with the Clementinum, the Jesuit college in Prague: in 1586 he presented some of his printed motets to a member of the college,³⁴ while other contacts with the Jesuits in Prague, trivial though these may be, are documented.³⁵ As far as the spiritual madrigals are directly concerned, however, evidence seems to point, rather, towards Jesuits based in Rome and Munich.³⁶ On the other hand, a letter of 1603 by a prominent member of the Society (and future saint), Robert Bellarmine, gives us a rare piece of concrete evidence regarding the post-print reception of Monte's spiritual madrigals.³⁷ Bellarmine, recently appointed archbishop of Capua, requested one of his correspondents in Rome to provide him with copies of the 1583 and 1590 books, at the same time affirming that he already possessed and had put to practical use the 1589 and (probably) 1581 books.³⁸ Indeed,

33 See again Piéjus, "Musical Settings of the 'Rime'".

34 Honisch, "Sacred Music in Prague", 72 and 75.

35 See Honisch, "Sacred Music in Prague", 66; Wistreich, "Philippe de Monte", 295.

36 In view also of Monte's contribution of a six-voice "cantio sacra de nomine Iesu", *O bone Iesu exaudi me* (in three parts) to Georg Victorinus's *Thesaurus litaniarum* (Munich: Adam Berg, 1596). Victorinus was *praefectus musicae* at the Jesuit church of St Michael in Munich.

37 As to the dissemination of the books, Hindrichs reports that the Augsburg patrician Hans Heinrich Herwart had a copy of Book I a 5 (1581) in his extensive collection of music books, whereas another contemporary collector, Georg Knoff, possessed both the 1581 book and Book I a 6 (1583). King João IV of Portugal, in turn, had copies of Book I a 6 (1583) and Book III a 6 (1590). Book I a 6 (1583) was present also in the library of the Accademia Filarmonica in Verona. See Hindrichs, *Philipp de Monte*, 87–90.

38 The document is published in [De Santi], "Il ven. card. Roberto Bellarmino". See also the comments in Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", 73–75.

Table 6 | Concordances for Monte's spiritual madrigals

	TITLE	AUTHOR OF THE TEXT	OTHER KNOWN SETTINGS
I a 5 (1581)	<i>Puri innocenti, il vostro invito e forte</i>	V. Colonna	- Vinci, <i>Quattordeci sonetti</i> (1580)
	<i>Vergine pura che de' raggi ardenti</i>	V. Colonna	- Vinci, <i>Quattordeci sonetti</i> (1580) - text with "cantasi come" in <i>Lodi devote</i> (Genua, 1589)
	<i>Stella del nostro mar chiara e sicura</i>	V. Colonna	- Vinci, <i>Quattordeci sonetti</i> (1580)
I a 6 (1583)	<i>Son questi i chiari lumi onde sereno</i>	G. Fiamma	- text with "cantasi come" in <i>Lodi e canzoni</i> (Turin, 1579)
	<i>Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo</i>	F. Beccuti	- Marenzio, Book I a 5 [spiritual] (1584) - Zenaro, Book I a 3 (1589) - G. F. Anerio, <i>Teatro armonico spirituale</i> (1619)
	<i>Padre del ciel, or ch'atra nube il calle</i>	T. Tasso	- Marenzio, Book I a 5 [spiritual] (1584) - Malvezzi, Book I a 6 (1584) - Dueto, Book II a 4 (1586)
	<i>Padre nostro e del ciel, con quanto amore</i>	V. Colonna	- Vinci, <i>Quattordeci sonetti</i> (1580)
II a 6/7 (1589)	<i>Signor cui fu già poco</i>		- A. Gabrieli in RISM 1586/1 and in Book III a 5 (1589) (RISM 1589/14) - Marenzio, Book I a 5 [spiritual] (1584) - Merulo, Book II a 5 (1604)
	<i>La bella donn'a cui dolente preme</i>	V. Colonna	- Vinci, <i>Quattordeci sonetti</i> (1580)
	<i>Quanta gioia tu segno e stella ardente</i>	V. Colonna	- Vinci, <i>Quattordeci sonetti</i> (1580)
III a 6 (1590)	<i>Di teneri diamanti</i>		- Pacelli, Book I a 4 [spiritual] (1601)
	<i>Chiare lucide stille</i>		- Pacelli, Book I a 4 [spiritual] (1601)

Jesuit houses, seminaries and the residences of prelates were among the possible sites for the performance of Monte's madrigals.

As mentioned above in the discussion of Book II a 6/7 (1589), performances of certain pieces in convents could also be a possibility to consider. Besides religious and noble houses, the Imperial court itself and princely courts in general were possible performance sites, as the 1582 incident involving Ludwig Haberstock in Vienna confirms (this was when the agent of the duke of Bavaria heard a performance of spiritual madrigals by Monte, in all likelihood from his Book I a 5 [1581], and reported the fact by mail to his master in Munich).³⁹ Although Monte did not dedicate any of the books either to Emperor Rudolph II or to members of the Prague court or the city's élite, he conspicuously advertised his position as *maestro di cappella* to the Emperor on title pages. Despite the absence of documentary evidence concerning their reception in the Imperial capital, Erika Honisch has suggested what the audience for them in Prague might have consisted of: the Italian congregation of the Blessed Virgin (sponsored, once again, by the Jesuits),⁴⁰ papal legates and their circles, Catholic noblemen and — perhaps especially — noblewomen.⁴¹ Private or semi-public devotional exercises on certain days or in certain periods of the liturgical year could be occasions for the performance of these pieces, but the spiritual madrigals could also be included in less formal musical entertainments. Whereas Book III a 6 (1590) is connected with a specific event (even though no record has emerged so far that Monte's madrigals were actually sung during the celebrations for the dedication of St Michael in Munich), the problem of the practical destination for such a work as the *Eccellenze di Maria Vergine* is surely thought-provoking. As with the other contemporary mega-cycles mentioned above, we may wonder whether they in fact had a mainly "representative" character — as an abstract project, without any predetermined option for actual performance — or, conversely, ponder which precise institutions or situations could accommodate complete performances of such extended works.

POLYPHONIC MEDITATIONS IN A VALLEY OF TEARS: NOTES ON MONTE'S STYLE

As I remarked earlier, certain subjects, keywords and images occur repeatedly in the corpus of texts set by Monte as spiritual madrigals. These include: binary oppositions such as sin versus conversion; the paradoxical aspects of sacred history; metaphors depicting life as a stormy and dangerous sea; harsh sounds, words and phrases, as if

39 See the two letters by Haberstock published in Leuchtman, *Orlando di Lasso*, vol. 2, 26n17; English translation, further comments and bibliography in Filippi, "Earthly Music", 213–214; and Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", 68–69.

40 See Edwards, "Repertory Migration", 91.

41 Honisch, "Sacred Music in Prague", 407.

redolent of Dante's *rime petrose*. A negative pathos, an anguished mood dominates in these texts. Monte reads them with the hyper-refined tools and techniques of the consummate madrigalist he is, but the resulting alchemy, elegant and well-balanced as it is, never crosses the boundaries of a restrained aesthetics. Undoubtedly, the *aurea mediocritas* of Monte's style, combined with his amazing productivity, helps to explain the limited interest his music has aroused among modern scholars and performers.

Sections⁴² are kept short. The texture is quintessentially polyphonic: tension and drive are achieved mainly by varying it, albeit without ever resorting to a treble-dominated solution. We may venture to say that Monte's writing is "anti-melodic": his lines are gestural, asymmetric and expressive rather than directional; they are subordinate to the texture, not vice versa. In a sense, this is the exact opposite of what can be seen in the music of some of his contemporaries and notably another "Habsburg" composer, Tomás Luis de Victoria.⁴³ Even when Monte employs homorhythmic declamation, the content is prevailingly rhythmic-harmonic and the overall effect is far from that of an accompanied melody (with the partial exception of some of the pieces in Book I a 6 (1583), scored CAATTB and thus possessing only one treble part).

The declamatory vein emerging in Book I a 6 (1583) (and in Book II a 6/7 (1589) as well, but chiefly in the Latin-texted pieces) seems to be intended to compensate for a certain fragmentation of form — an inherent risk in madrigalian literature from which Monte was not immune. In fact, Monte always focuses on the individual image, word or syntagm much more than on higher and broader levels of meaning and organization. At times, the complex construction of sonnets, for instance, appears to be made less transparent by this musical treatment (see Colonna's *Quando il turbato mar* in Book I a 5 (1581) and also Della Casa's *Mentre sperai da te salute invano* in Book I a 6 (1583)). Again in Book I a 6 (1583), we see Monte adopt another strategy in order to cope with similar problems: in several madrigals he alternates sections in which a meaningful image or keyword inspires a special or expressive contrapuntal device with other sections offering purely homorhythmic declamation (see, for instance, *Son questi i chiari lumi*).

Unsurprisingly in light of all this and in line with a time-honoured madrigalian tradition, Monte appears to prefer texts characterized by vivid images and frequent structural oppositions, where such strategies can be more effectively employed. A telling example will suffice to wind up our discussion. The text of *Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo*, from Book I a 6 (1583),⁴⁴ repeatedly insists on the opposition between the events that occurred when Jesus died on the Cross and the lack of commensurate reactions in the

42 I follow here the definition given by John Milsom: "Section: a span of polyphony in which a discrete phrase of verbal text is set to music, using thematic content that contrasts with that of its neighbours." John Milsom, "Analyzing Renaissance Polyphony: Taxonomy and Terminology" (unpublished manuscript read at the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference, Brussels, 9 July 2015).

43 See Filippi, "Sonic Styles"; Filippi, "Formal Design and Sonic Architecture". On Victoria as the composer of the Habsburgs *par excellence*, see de Vicente, "El entorno femenino de la dinastía", 222–224.

44 Modern edition in Monte, *Madrigalium spiritualium*, 216–224.

lyrical self. Francesco Beccuti's octave is reproduced here, with the addition of numbers identifying the main sections of Monte's polyphonic setting:

- (1) Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo,
- (2) E il mio sì sta dinanzi agli occhi avvolto.
- (3) Trema la terra e fassi oscuro il cielo:
- (4) Io non muto pensier, non cangio volto.
- (5) Spezzansi i sassi, (6) ed io non rompo il gelo.
- (7) Surgono i morti, (8) io giaccio ancor sepolto.
- (9) Ma tu, cagion di tante cause, dammi
- (10) Ch'io risorga, apra gli occhi (11) e 'l cor infiammi.⁴⁵

Section (1) starts with a volley of imitative entries with complementary motives (c-c-d-e-f-g... vs. g-g-f-e-d-c...: see Music example 1; the complete Canto part is reproduced in Figure 1). Their linear profiles and nervous rhythmic layout unmistakably depict the sudden rending of the temple veil. To the contrasting image of section (2), the permanence of a metaphorical veil still intact before the sinner's eyes, there corresponds a clearly perceptible slowing-down of the rhythm, which leads to the drawn-out cadence of bb. 6–7. Section (3), sung by the four upper voices, resumes the ascending motivic elements and staggered entries of the opening in order to sketch briefly the earthquake and the ensuing darkness: when section (4) starts, the contrast is maximized by changes in scoring, rhythmic pace, texture, tonal area, frequency and prominence of the dissonances, all of them illustrating the obdurate stubbornness of the sinner. Section (5), focusing on the earthquake, once again resumes the imitative construction of the opening (this time, including its descending elements), as well as its faster pace and lighter texture: the contrasting "unbroken ice" in the sinner's heart is represented in section (6) not only by a denser, more homorhythmic texture but even more by a tonal twist that, in a varied re-statement of the two sections, leads to a cadence on A (b. 20), foreign to the C-mode of the piece (see Music example 2). And this is where Monte imaginatively inverts the rhythmic mechanism that has shaped the madrigal so far: section (7), which describes the rising dead, features a powerful homorhythmic texture in long note values (directly juxtaposing, incidentally, a G triad to the preceding A), whereas the following section (8) reintroduces the dotted rhythms (see again Music example 2). It is worth noting that at the very end of the piece in section (11) Monte employs and recombines the ascending and descending motives first

45 Translation: "I hear the veil of the old Temple tearing, and my own veil remains wrapped up in front of my eyes. The earth trembles and the sky darkens, but I do not change my mind, nor alter my countenance. The rocks break, but I do not break my ice. The dead rise, but I still lie buried. You, then, who are the determining cause of such effects, give me that I may rise, open my eyes and set my heart on fire."

heard at the opening and recurring in sections (3) and (5) in order to reflect the words “e ’l cor infiammi” (“that I may set my heart on fire”) — and possibly to adumbrate the “taking in” of all the prodigies (the torn veil, the earthquake and the broken rocks) by the sinner’s heart, finally set alight by love for Christ. Having reached this point, and adding to the many Jesuit connections detected so far in Monte’s madrigals, one is tempted to make the final observation that the flaming heart — a symbol sometimes associated with Francis Xavier — and the image of Jesus as *inflammator cordium* (inflamer of hearts) were indeed a trademark of contemporary Jesuit iconography.⁴⁶

Music example 1 | Philippe de Monte, *Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo*, from Book I a 6 (1583), bb. 1–7 (ed. Doorslaer)

Sen-to squar-ciar del vec-chio tem - pio il ve - lo E il mio si sta
 Sen - to squar - ciar del vec - chio tempio il ve - lo E il
 Sen-to squar-ciar del vec-chio tem - pio il ve - lo E il mio si
 Sen - to squar - ciar del vec - chi - o tem - pio il ve - lo
 Sen - to squar-ciar del vec - chio tem - pio il ve - lo E il mio si sta
 Sen - to squar - ciar del vec - chio tem - pio il ve - lo E il

di - nan - zi a - gli oc - chi a - vol - - - to Tre - ma la ter - ra e fas -
 mio si sta di - nan - - - zi a - gli oc - chi a - vol - - - to Tre - ma la ter - ra e
 sta di - nan - zi a - gli oc - chi a - vol - - - to Tre - ma la ter - ra e
 E il mio si sta di - nan - zi a - gli oc - chi a - vol - - - to Tre - ma la
 di - nan - zi a - gli oc - chi a - vol - - - to
 mio si sta di - nan - zi a - - - gli oc - chi a - vol - - - to

46 See, for instance, the print of 1619 by Hieronimus Wierix entitled “The infant Jesus with a flaming heart between Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier” in the collection of the British Museum (Museum no. 1859,0709.3111), https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1859-0709-3111.

Music example 2 | Philippe de Monte, *Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo*, from Book I a 6 (1583), bb. 18–26 (ed. Doorslaer)

- zan-si i sas-si) et io non rom-po il gie-lo Sur-go-no i mor-ti
 Spez-zan-si i sas-si et io non rom-po il gie-lo Sur-go-no i mor-ti
 (Spez-zan-si i sas-si) et io non rom-po il gie-lo Sur-go-no i mor-ti
 (Spez-zan-si i sas-si) et io non rom-po il gie-lo Sur-go-no i mor-ti io
 Sur-go-no i mor-ti io
 Sur-go-no i mor-ti io
 io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Sur-go-no i mor-ti io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Ma
 io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Sur-go-no i mor-ti io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Ma tu ca-
 (Sur-go-no i mor-ti) io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to
 giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Sur-go-no
 giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Sur-go-no i mor-ti io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to
 giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Sur-go-no i mor-ti io giac-cio an-cor se-pol-to Ma

Philippe de Monte's spiritual madrigals form a unique corpus within sixteenth-century devotional music whose many links with post-Tridentine culture we have only just begun to elucidate. It is to be hoped that further documentary evidence will emerge, helping us better to understand the intellectual and material circumstances of the madrigals' composition, performance and reception. It will surely be worth attempting to complete the identification of the texts' authors as well as to explore in greater depth the relationship between Monte and contemporary devotional practices, especially those promoted by the Jesuits.⁴⁷ More abundant comparative analyses are also needed in order to situate Monte's output more exactly

47 At the time of completion of the present notes a PhD dissertation project by Lothar Peirsman is still in its initial (but promising) stages at the KU Leuven under the title of "Jesuit Ideology, the Counter-Reformation and the Spiritual Madrigals of Philippe de Monte (1521–1603)".

in the context of late sixteenth-century spiritual music. What is more, the recent release of a CD by Cappella Mariana entirely devoted to this repertory gives cause for hope that interest in this remarkable combination of sacred poetry and madrigalian music will not remain confined to the academic world.⁴⁸

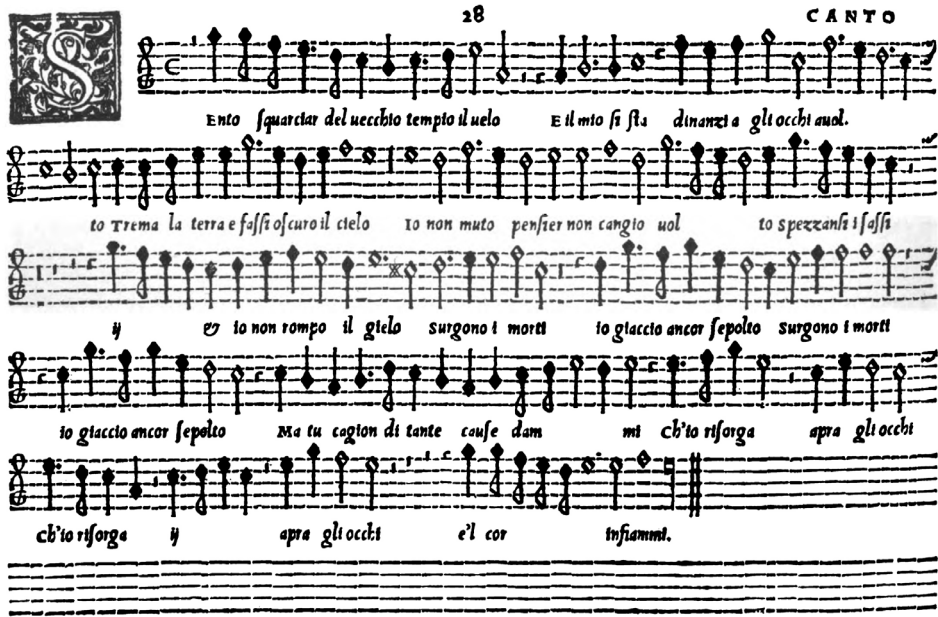


Figure 1 | Philippe de Monte, *Sento squarciar del vecchio tempio il velo*, from Book I a 6 (1583), complete part of Canto (Bibliothèque nationale de France, gallica.bnf.fr)

48 Philippus de Monte, *Madrigali spirituali*, Cappella Mariana, Vojtěch Semerád, Passacaille PASII43, Alamire Foundation Editions, 2023, compact disc.

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POLIFONE MEDITACIJE ZA »NESREČNE ČASE«:
GLASBA IN POBOŽNOST V DUHOVNIH MADRIGALIH
PHILIPPA DE MONTEJA

Philippe de Monte (1521–1603), verjetno najbolj plodovit madrigalist celotnega 16. stoletja, je bil tudi eden najustvarjalnejših skladateljev posebne zvrsti duhovnih madrigalov. Med letoma 1581 in 1593 je objavil pet knjig s tovrstnimi skladbami. V prispevku je podan pregled Montejevega ustvarjanja, predstavljena njegova ideja duhovnega madrigala in orisana povezava s sodobno kulturo in duhovnostjo.

Kot najpomembnejši se je izkazal vpliv Družbe Jezusove: ne le, da je Monte svojo prvo knjigo iz leta 1581 posvetil vrhovnemu predstojniku Claudiu Acquavivi, temveč so mu drugi jezuiti tudi neposredno posredovali besedila za taisto knjigo (vključno s pesmimi Vittorie Colonne in Laure Battiferri) in za tretjo knjigo za šest glasov iz leta 1590. Poleg tega je slednja knjiga nastala ob posvetitvi jezuitske cerkve sv. Mihaela v Münchnu, ki jo je sponzoriral bavarski vojvoda Viljem (nekatera besedila se nanašajo na gradnjo cerkve ali na nekatere njene relikvije in okrasje).

Kakšno duhovnost odražajo te zbirke? Po eni strani najdemo veliko različnih tem in pristopov, po drugi strani pa se večkrat pojavljajo določeni specifični pristopi k specifičnim temam. Nekateri madrigali se nanašajo na pobožne prakse ali celo na zakramentalno življenje vernikov, medtem ko se drugi bolj ali manj specifično navezujejo na praznike liturgičnega leta. Številne skladbe, kar ni presenetljivo, častijo in nagovarjajo Devico Marijo, vključno s celotnim ciklom *Eccellenze di Maria Vergine* (1593) na panegirično pesem italijanskega zdravnika Orazia Guarguantija (1554–1611). Druge skladbe imajo bolj spekulativne ali introspektivne teme ali pa imajo mistične ali asketske teme – med njimi so tri glasbeno-mistične skladbe iz leta 1581, ki vlečejo vzporednice med zemeljsko in nebeško glasbo ter se dotikajo teme duhovnih čutov. Očiten je kristocentrični značaj celotnega korpusa, materialno središče takšne nabožne krajine pa je nedvomno križ. Le nekaj besedil, ki jih je Monte uglasbil, so že prej (ali pa kasneje) uglasbili njegovi sodobniki, med njimi Pietro Vinci, Luca Marenzio in Asprilio Pacelli.

Nekatere teme, ključne besede in podobe se ponavljajo: binarna nasprotja, kot je greh nasproti spreobrnjenju; paradoksalni vidiki svete zgodovine; metafore, ki prikazujejo življenje kot razburkano in nevarno morje; ostri zvoki, besede in besedne zveze. V teh besedilih prevladuje negativni patos, tesnobno razpoloženje, kot odmev na »nesrečne čase«, omenjene v enem od Montejevih posvetil. Skladatelj jih obravnava z nadvse prefinjenimi orodji in tehnikami vrhunskega madrigalista, kakršen je, vendar nastala alkimija, elegantna in uravnotežena, kot je, nikoli ne prestopi meja obvladane estetike. Odseki so kratki in tekstura je izrazito polifona: napetost in zagon Monte dosega predvsem z njunim spreminjanjem, pri čemer se nikoli ne zateče k oblikovanju, v katerem prevladuje zgornji glas. V nekem smislu je Montejevo pisanje antimelodično: njegove linije so kot geste ter asimetrične in ekspresivne, ne pa usmerjene; podrejene so teksturi in ne obratno. Lahko rečemo, da je ta pristop pravo nasprotje tistega, ki ga najdemo v glasbi nekaterih njegovih sodobnikov, predvsem drugega »habsburškega skladatelja« Tomása Luisa de Victoria.

Zdi se, da ima Monte v skladu z madrigalno tradicijo rad besedila, za katera so značilne živahne podobe in pogosta strukturna nasprotja, v katerih lahko na učinkovit način uporabi svoje kompozicijske strategije. Vedno se osredotoča na posamezno podobo, besedo ali sintagmo, veliko bolj kot na višje in širše ravni pomena in organizacije. Zdi se, da je deklamacijski stil, ki se pojavi v prvi knjigi šestglasnih duhovnih madrigalov (1583), namenjen kompenzaciji določene razdrobljenosti oblike – to je tveganje, ki je neločljivo povezano z madrigalno literaturo in pred katerim Monte ni bil imun.