

Title: Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* and Analogies of the Ages

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Source: *Das italienische Madrigal : Alfred Einsteins »Versuch einer Geschichte der italienischen Profanmusik im 16. Jahrhundert« und die Folgen*, ed. by Sebastian Bolz, Moritz Kelber, Katelijne Schiltz; Dresden, musiconn.publish 2025, (= troja. Jahrbuch für Renaissancemusik 20), p. 101–121.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25371/troja.v20223936>

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Das italienische Madrigal.

Alfred Einsteins »Versuch einer Geschichte
der italienischen Profanmusik im 16. Jahrhundert«
und die Folgen

Herausgegeben von

Sebastian Bolz, Moritz Kelber und Katelijne Schiltz

Die Tagung im Jahr 2022, auf die dieser Band zurückgeht, und diese Publikation erfuhren großzügige Unterstützung. Wir danken herzlich unseren Förderern:



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Layout: Sebastian Bolz und Moritz Kelber
Cover: Moritz Kelber

ISSN: 2513-1028

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25371/troja.v2022>

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Der vorliegende Band ergänzt und kommentiert
die deutschsprachige Erstausgabe des titelgebenden Werks:

Alfred Einstein, *Das italienische Madrigal.*
Versuch einer Geschichte der italienischen Profanmusik
im 16. Jahrhundert, hrsg. von Sebastian Bolz, München 2025
(Münchner Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, 83)

Die Edition von Einsteins Text ist digital verfügbar:

DOI: 10.5282/ubm/epub.128701 (PDF)

DOI: 10.5282/ubm/data.691 (TEI, MEI)

Katelijne Schiltz

Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* and Analogies of the Ages

»But there is no danger to anyone who has learned everything and then ›unlearned‹ but not forgotten it, who has so absorbed the past in himself that it becomes his living heritage.«¹

When reading Einstein's study on the Italian madrigal, its composers, genesis and development, we are struck by the vast number of parallels the author draws throughout the book between the sixteenth (and early seventeenth) century on the one hand and later periods on the other – whether it be in terms of particular pieces, collections or composers.² A systematic investigation of these comparisons, their context, their positioning in the book and their narrative purpose has proved a worthwhile undertaking.³ Some of the analogies appear somewhat far-fetched to us and seem to miss a sense of the transformations, inconsistencies and discontinuities that mark the passage of time. But that is not the point. Einstein's focus on recurrent patterns in music history brings to the fore his cyclical understanding of history in general and music in particular.⁴ His whole thinking

1 Alfred Einstein, »Affinities of the Ages«, *Modern Music* 18 (1940–1941), pp. 22–26: p. 26.

2 In his obituary of Einstein, Hans Ferdinand Redlich, »Alfred Einstein zum Gedächtnis«, *Die Musikforschung* 5 (1952), pp. 350–352: p. 351, also emphasized »Einsteins eigentümliche, mit Goethe verwandte Fähigkeit, ein geschichtliches Phänomen gleichsam stereometrisch sehen zu können«. As Sebastian Bolz convincingly argues in his contribution to this volume, this might also be explained in part by the fact that while working on *The Italian Madrigal* (a process that lasted decades) Einstein was also developing other major publications. This might have caused him to conjunctly reflect on musical phenomena from various epochs and think about their similarities.

3 It should be noted that the comparisons in Einstein's *The Italian Madrigal* are not only diachronic in nature, but also include synchronic reflections on Renaissance literature and art. Although I will occasionally refer to these art forms, synchronic comparisons are not the focus of my attention. See also Anna Magdalena Bredenbach's and Florian Mehlretter's contributions to this volume.

4 As Sebastian Bolz, »Cipriano de Rore, Alfred Einstein and the Philosophy of Music History«, *Cipriano de Rore. New Perspectives on His Life and Music*, ed. Jessie Ann Owens and Katelijne Schiltz, Turnhout 2016, pp. 451–477: p. 476 has shown, »we should understand his narrative

is led by the conviction that past and present are intimately connected and that our understanding of the past can only be comprehended from the present and vice versa.⁵ By concentrating on these comparisons, this contribution seeks to investigate the place of the madrigal (and the phenomena related to it) in the context of Einstein's more general view on and reading of music history. To be sure, Einstein's comparative method is not limited to *The Italian Madrigal*, but also permeates his other writings,⁶ such as *Greatness in Music* (1941), where he develops the concept of the »law of the affinity of periods«.⁷ A focus on Einstein's comparative approach also makes it possible to connect his views and narrative strategies to those of his predecessors and contemporaries, scholars both from the field of musicology and from other disciplines. Indeed, such a diachronic view was not unique – neither in musicology, nor in scholarship in general at that time. The comparative method was cultivated particularly in the first half of the previous century and has subsequently become the subject of critical debate.⁸ Or, as Klaus Hentschel, who scrutinizes »de[n] historische[n] Vergleich, der schon immer mit Vorsicht zu geniessen war, da er leicht in überaus spekulative Thesen über »unausweichliche Zyklen der Kulturentwicklung« oder in hegelianische Geschichtsphilosophie abgleiten konnte«, asks: »Ist es überhaupt legitim, his-

method not simply as anachronisms, but rather as the deliberate creation of historical parallels in order to bring out structural and intellectual coherence and relationships between different styles and centuries, and frame a cyclical model of history«.

- 5 See especially Einstein's short essay »Vom Trivialen in der Musik«, *Der Auftakt* 4 (1924), pp. 69–71; p. 69: »Und es ist nicht ohne Nutzen, sich das historische Beispiel ein wenig näher anzusehen – es ist auch für den Historiker nicht ohne Nutzen, denn er hat dabei zu lernen, daß er manchmal das Geschichtliche nur aus der Gegenwart und ihren Nöten heraus begreifen kann«.
- 6 For a list of Einstein's publications, see https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/object/lexm_lexmper-son_00001417.
- 7 See Alfred Einstein, *Greatness in Music*, transl. César Saerchinger, London/New York/Toronto 1941, p. 208: »Romantic« times are attracted by the romantic; »classical« times by the classical. One period appreciates the sketch more than the finished product; and a time like ours, which would like so much to negate all tradition, and which would most like to begin from the beginning, cultivates a strange relationship to all that is primitive, exotic – yes, even barbaric«. This quotation also confirms what Sebastian Bolz, »Cipriano de Rore«, p. 465 has observed about Einstein's use of terms such as classicism, romanticism and modernity: »With these comparisons, Einstein does not aim at absolute facts or at the anachronistic equating of technical devices. He proposes instead a typological account of recurring patterns in history. Terms like »classic« and »romantic« are not intended to label particular phases in time. They serve rather as operators that are meant to delineate structural equivalents«. It is worth noting that a year before the publication of *Greatness in Music*, Einstein published an article with the explicit title »Affinities of the Ages« (see above).
- 8 See, among the numerous existing studies on this phenomenon, Maurice Mandelbaum, »Some Forms and Uses of Comparative History«, *American Studies International* 18 (1980), pp. 19–34 and Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, New York 1984, especially the chapter on »Universalizing Comparisons« (pp. 97–115).

torische Prozesse des 17. und des 20. Jahrhunderts miteinander zu vergleichen, und trotz aller unübersichtlichen Verschiedenheiten des geistesgeschichtlichen und sozialen Kontextes nach wiederkehrenden Mustern zu suchen?»⁹ In the case of Einstein, as Sebastian Bolz has shown, we find similar conceptions of history in works by scholars such as the historian and philosopher of history Oswald Spengler,¹⁰ the art historians Jakob Burckhardt and Heinrich Wölfflin, but also musicologists like Theodor Kroyer and Alfred Lorenz – with whose works Einstein was familiar.¹¹ In this network of disciplinary and interdisciplinary actors and factors, both Einstein and the madrigal found their own voice and place.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all existing parallels, which are indeed numerous, in this contribution. They often concern questions such as poetic preferences, favourite topics and the similar way they are treated across the centuries. We see Einstein comparing the male perspective of a great number of frottole and their way of addressing women with a Schubert serenade,¹² or the occurrence of themes such as farewell and wanderlust in the frottola genre with Schubert lieder.¹³ Marenzio and Mozart are linked a couple of times, not only when it comes to their wide range of expression (from the pastoral to the playful to the melancholic) – Einstein even calls Marenzio »the true Mozart of the madrigal« –,¹⁴ but also

9 Klaus Hentschel, »Der Vergleich als Brücke zwischen Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Wissenschaftstheorie«, *Journal for General Philosophy of Science / Zeitschrift für allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie* 34 (2003), pp. 251–275: p. 255 and 252. Hentschel also quotes Schiller's inaugural lecture at the University of Jena on p. 269: »Die Methode, nach der Analogie zu schließen, ist, wie überall, so auch in der Geschichte, ein mächtiges Hilfsmittel: aber sie muß durch einen erheblichen Zweck gerechtfertigt, und mit ebenso viel Vorsicht als Beurteilung in Ausübung gebracht werden«.

10 Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*, 2 vols., Vienna 1918 and Munich 1922. Einstein wrote a brief, but critical essay about Spengler's *Untergang*, especially about his problematic use of terminology, his analytical deficiencies and historical classification: see »Oswald Spengler und die Musikgeschichte«, *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 3 (1920–1921), pp. 30–32.

11 Bolz, »Cipriano de Rore«.

12 *TIM*, p. 65: »compositions intended for men – that is, addressed to women. This is so typical that verses intended for women are particularly striking and have as a rule a peculiar and more passionate character. The frottole are serenades in the proper sense of the word, even when this is not as clearly indicated [...] How long a series of ancestors Goethe-Schubert's *Serenade* has«. It goes without saying that Einstein was deeply familiar with Schubert's music – see among other works his *Schubert. A Musical Portrait*, New York/London 1951.

13 *TIM*, p. 73 f.: »Lastly, in the fifth book [...] there appears a striking foretaste of a motif, which in the three following centuries was to undergo a thousand variations, namely the *partenza* or farewell song: the lover's body departs, but his heart is left behind with the beloved as a pledge; he is afraid of death and prays his beloved to remain faithful to him [...] An anonymous composition [...] is a sort of anticipation of the wanderlust motif which, three centuries later, was to find such poignant expression in Schubert's *Müller-Lieder*«.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 205: »Sannazaro is the poet in whose verses music studied and learned the expression of the pastoral element, of playful grace, of delightful melancholy. It is significant that Luca Maren-

with regard to both composers' predilection for the sensual and the treatment of the obscene.¹⁵ But Einstein also has an eye for continuities, and throughout *The Italian Madrigal* one finds numerous suggestions for epoch-spanning studies on specific topics. For example, he uses Banchieri's *Il Metamorfosi musicale* and the phenomenon of musical travesty to suggest a study of humour, which would start with the frottola and end with the opera buffa.¹⁶ Banchieri's penchant for the burlesque also offers Einstein the opportunity to reflect on the role of music as entertainment and pastime, for which he finds descendants in works from Rathgeber and Bach to Haydn, Mozart and Schubert.¹⁷ The contest between Apollo and Pan, which is a central topic of a Paduan commedia of 1566, allows him not only to make the obvious connection with Bach's secular cantata BWV 201 and Gluck's *Feste d'Apollo*, but also to reflect on the shifting audiences for which these works were written, »from the patrician or aristocratic accademia and the student entertainment down to the courtly and classicistic opera«. ¹⁸ A passage on

zio, the true Mozart of the madrigal, whose creative career does not begin until about 1580, loved him most of all and more than Petrarch.« Mozart makes regular appearances throughout *TIM*. Einstein was intimately acquainted with his music, not only as an editor of his works, but also via the republication of Köchel's *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Werke W. A. Mozarts*, Leipzig ³1937.

- 15 *TIM*, p. 646, in the context of Marenzio's third book of six-voice madrigals: »Its tone is wholly sensuous and hedonistic. But within these limits there is room for variation – the basic color is susceptible to shading. One madrigal represents an extreme beyond which even Marini did not venture: *Stringeami Galatea* [...]. The seed of Guarini's *Tirsi morir volea* has borne fruit, and Marenzio has certainly done nothing to discourage its growth. Tone-painting and symbolism stand side by side: the treatment of *stringeami* would deserve a place of honor in a history of obscenity in music, along with the last measures of Mozart's »catalogue« aria«.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 806: »The most amusing piece in the work is perhaps No. 12, a parody on Marenzio's famous madrigal *Liquide perle amor*, here altered to *Liquide ferl' amor; ranocchi e spazzi* and introduced and followed by a burlesque imitation of a ritornello for lute. To understand the humor of this time, one ought to compare all these travesties with their models, beginning with the frottola and villanella and ending with the opera buffa, where Metastasio is the usual butt of the joke.«
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 819 f.: »With Banchieri, the madrigal-comedy, the »concatenazione drammatica,« is at an end. But burlesque composition for voices lives on. The quodlibet cannot die as long as there are jovial musicians to sing together. [...] [Carlo] Grossi is by no means the last of the successors of Striggio, Vecchi, and Banchieri. There is also Benedetto Marcello with his burlesque pieces, especially his satire on the castrati, condemned to eternal damnation as »trees that bear no fruit«; in Southern Germany, there is Valentin Rathgeber with his *Musikalischer Zeitvertreib* (a literal translation of the Italian *Divertimento* or *Fuggilozio*); then there is Bach with his »Peasant« and »Coffee« cantatas. Down to Haydn, Mozart, and Schubert this tradition remains alive: so venerable is the ancestry, so long the line of descendants, of which »Music as Entertainment in Company« can boast.«
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 474–476: »Yet it is only a step from the dialogues of the Muses and the Horatian pair of lovers to the intermezzi of the comedies performed by the Paduan students. Some light is thrown on the part played by music in these Paduan *commedie* by an anonymous description of the intermezzi acted in the Sala dei Giganti of the Palazzo del Capitano on Shrove Tuesday, 1566 [...]. In the third intermezzo was represented the contest, and the challenge of Apollo by the

the *mascherata*, which is part of the chapter on »The Lighter Forms«, serves as a final example. Its basic ingredient, the disguise – often in combination with a persiflage of the peasant population –, leads Einstein to a comparison with later phenomena such as banquets and peasant balls, up to a quotation from Gilbert and Sullivan's 1885 comic opera *The Mikado*.¹⁹

In the following, I will give some examples of representative passages and contextualize them in order to gain a better understanding of Einstein's shaping of the history of the madrigal. My investigation is led by the threefold question of where, how and why he uses these historical parallels. As we have seen above, Einstein works with such comparisons for various purposes, ranging from detailed remarks to large-scale ideas that include questions of performance practice and of a composer's personality in relation to his predecessors, contemporaries and future generations. In this contribution, I have chosen to focus on the way analytical observations – especially how composers treat their motivic material – can lead to and be interpreted against the background of larger issues.

Motivic Density, the Emancipation of the Voices and the Madrigal as Chamber Music

We see Einstein comparing *Io non son però morto* (the opening piece of Giaches de Wert's *Ottavo libro* of 1586), which displays a dense interweaving of *soggetti* and polymotivic structure,²⁰ with a development of Haydn's:

god Pan [...]. About 150 years later Bach wrote for his »Collegium musicum,« the students of Leipzig, his own »Contest of Phoebus and Pan.« And about 200 years later Gluck wrote for Parma his *Feste d'Apollo* (1769). It would be interesting to trace the Paduan intermezzi of 1566 down to the work of the »Reformer of Opera,« from the patrician or aristocratic *accademia* and the student entertainment down to the courtly and classicistic opera.«

- 19 Ibid., p. 343 f.: »The *canti carnascialeschi* of the time of Lorenzo il Magnifico, the political *carri* of the time of the Florentine republic, soon give way to the typical *mascherata*, in which three, four, and five (rarely more) singers in all sorts of disguises, usually bearing obscenely suggestive attributes, make the women blush and the populace burst into laughter. Its character does not change and its last survivals are as late as Goethe's *Wer kauft Liebesgötter* and, even later, Gilbert and Sullivan's »If you want to know who we are / We are gentlemen of Japan. ...« The demand was insatiable, and thus all prints of villanelle, villotte, and canzoni of the time are filled with *mascherate*, following the example of Petrucci's frottola prints. *Mascherata* and villanella have something in common: the peasant (*contadino*) was the favorite object of mockery and at the same time the favorite form of disguise, just as in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the so-called »Wirtschaften« (banquets), the nobility dressed themselves as servant folk, while in the »peasant balls« of the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie appeared in peasant dress.«
- 20 As several scholars have observed, this polymotivty was a clear model for Monteverdi's *Ecco mormorar Ponde* (1590). On this madrigal, see among others Carl Dahlhaus, »*Ecco mormorar Ponde*: Versuch, ein Monteverdi-Madrigal zu interpretieren«, *Chormusik und Analyse. Beiträge zur Formanalyse und Interpretation mehrstimmiger Vokalmusik*, ed. Heinrich Poos, vol. 1, Mainz 1983,

»Apart from tendentious settings of texts from Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* and madrigals for the *tre cantatrici*, Wert's eighth book of five-voiced madrigals (1586) also contains certain pieces that point in the most positive way to a new trend that is beginning to affect the madrigal – the trend towards motivic working-out in general. Yet this motivic working-out is simply the other side of the competitive concerto-like conduct of the voices. The very first number furnishes the most striking example. The first half of the text consists of four short lines, each of seven syllables:

Io non son però morto,
 Donna, come pensate,
 Perche piu non m'amate,
 Anzi ritorn'in vita...

Each line has its own characteristic motif and each motif is combined with every other, resulting in a motivic web of thirty-seven measures, as ›discursive‹ as any development of Haydn's.«²¹

Example 1 shows how Wert simultaneously combines the opening lines of the poem and the *soggetti* that go with it. In so doing, he not only breaks up the original structure of the (syntactically convoluted) text – a true challenge for listeners trying to reconstruct the poem's form –, but also brings out its semantic oppositions.²² This close interweaving of the first four lines, which creates an impressive kind of motivic (and textual) density that takes up almost two-thirds of the madrigal, is a textbook example of Wert's sense for combinatorics, which also characterizes further pieces from his eighth book of madrigals.²³ It is the contrapuntal complexity and the emancipation of the individual voices that leads Einstein to his comparison between Wert's approach and the development of, say, a string quartet by Haydn.

However, this analogy is not limited to an analytical level, but goes much further. When Einstein stresses the role each of the individual voices is playing in

pp. 139–154; Geoffrey Chew, »Ecco mormorar l'onde« (1590)«, *The Cambridge Companion to Monteverdi*, ed. John Whenham and Richard Wistreich, Cambridge 2007, pp. 45–52; Lorenz Welker, »Monteverdi, Tasso und der Hof von Mantua: Ecco mormorar l'onde (1590)«, *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 53 (1996), pp. 194–206.

21 *TIM*, p. 831.

22 The edition can be found in vol. 3 of *TIM*, pp. 301–305.

23 For an analysis of *Io non son però morte*, I refer to Hartmut Schick, *Musikalische Einheit im Madrigal von Rore bis Monteverdi. Phänomene, Formen, Entwicklungslinien*, Tübingen 1998 (Tübinger Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft, 18), pp. 312–317 and *passim*.

C. *Io non son pe-rò mor - to Don - na co -*

5. *An - zi ri-tor-n'in vi - ta, An - zi ri-tor-no in vi -*

A. *Io non son pe-rò mor - to Don - na*

T. *Io non son pe-rò mor - to*

B. *An - zi ri-tor-no in vi - ta*

me pen - sa - te, Per - che più non m'a - ma - te, Don - na co - me pen - sa -

- ta

co - me pen - sa - te Per - che più non m'a - ma -

Don - na co - me pen - sa - te Per - che più non m'a - ma - te An -

Ex. 1: Giaches de Wert, *Io non però son morto*, bb. 1–12 in vol. 3 of Einstein's *The Italian Madrigal*, p. 301

the polyphonic fabric, this is perfectly in line with his view on the social setting of the madrigal and on matters of performance practice.²⁴ The madrigal – at least in most cases – is chamber music,²⁵ written for a select audience (if there is an audience at all) and to be performed one voice per part, which Einstein, on a number of occasions, compares to chamber music by Haydn and Mozart:

»It cannot be sufficiently emphasized how small and select the circle must have been that cultivated secular music as a form of art and for which the

²⁴ See also Laurie Stras's contribution to the present volume.

²⁵ »The Madrigal as Chamber Music« is also the title of a subchapter of *The Italian Madrigal*, pp. 244 f. Einstein writes about the madrigal, its social setting and place in society in other contexts, too. See e.g. »Early Concert Life« in *Essays on Music*, New York 1956, pp. 26–38, which was also published as »Aus der Frühzeit des Konzertlebens« in *Nationale und universale Musik*, pp. 11–22.

collections of the printers were obviously destined. It was no greater than, in the eighteenth century, the circle of chamber-music players for which Haydn and Mozart composed their new quartets. It was considered elegant to follow one's individual part in a complex ensemble, more elegant, certainly, than to appear as a singer to lute accompaniment. These singers to the lute were nearly always professionals who were hired and paid as such. The madrigal is artificial in every sense of the term: in its origin, in its practice, and as a work of art.

Thus there were no listeners, but only ›active‹ singers; there was no singing by heart, but constant adherence to the part-book; all participants were equally privileged. The comparison with eighteenth century chamber music is too pertinent to overlook. It can indeed be made to include the question of the number of performers required for the single parts. The madrigal *is* chamber music, just as much as a quartet by Haydn or a quintet by Mozart.²⁶

Einstein connects the emancipation of the voices with a certain socio-economic distinction (lute singers who are being paid for their job versus a select circle of singers), but he is careful enough not to generalize his claim about the performance setting and apply it to the madrigal *per se*. On the contrary, he sees an evolution over the course of the century: »The early madrigal by no means forbids the selection of some one voice as principal voice and the subordination of the others to it. But the early madrigal was essentially a cappella music for several voices, usually four. The manner of performance was still a matter of choice. But the character of the inner structure had undergone a fundamental change«. ²⁷ Interestingly, Einstein sees a contradiction (or rather a remarkable friction) between musical and political developments at that time. For him, the emancipation of the voices stands in stark contrast to rulership in Italian courtly culture: »In an epoch so given to the arbitrary show of individual power, this ›democratic‹ tendency is something of an enigma, the more so since this is also the epoch which invented the concept of the virtuoso and found the first embodiment of this concept in the singers to the lute and viol and in the players of these instruments«. ²⁸ In the chapter on »Music in Company: Striggio, Vecchi, and Banchieri« – hence situated at

26 *TIM*, p. 153.

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.* This seeming anomaly even leads him to suggest that »one may consider sixteenth century secular music as an aberration, a deviation from the natural course of development initiated by the frottola, an aberration which – strange are the ways of history! – led back to the right track only through the equally artificial ›discovery‹ of monody toward the end of the century.«

the other end of the chronological spectrum of his study – he again distinguishes between various types of madrigals and their degree of publicness and privateness, which he once more links with performance situations in later epochs:

»In the sixteenth century the several forms of secular music – the madrigal and the various classes related to it – are neither private nor public, but occupy an anomalous position halfway between the two. Solitary and completely intimate art, such as that of the Preludes and Fugues of the ›Well-Tempered Clavichord‹ or certain sonatas of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, is unthinkable. It would stand in complete contradiction to the function of sixteenth-century music, whose aim is not emotion, not edification, uplift, or self-improvement, but to serve as entertainment at best, and often enough as a prelude to Venus, an accompaniment to eating and drinking, or a mere pastime. What public music the age brings forth in the way of festival motets and festival madrigals is strictly segregated in its style and attitude from the great mass of the production – the chamber madrigal. But the chamber madrigal requires no audience. The four, five, or six singers are as self-sufficient as two chess-players or a group at a card-table, where ›kibitzers,‹ although they may stand by, are uninvited and a general nuisance. For the madrigal this character of companionable entertainment is essential. Only after the foundation of the *accademie* do we begin to meet with ›art for art's sake‹ and with the Horatian hatred of the *profanum vulgus*.«²⁹

Einstein compares the madrigal's companionability with the self-sufficiency of other forms of private entertainment such as a chess or card game.³⁰ Moreover, he instrumentalizes this argument in order to fulminate in a very vivid way against performance traditions of madrigal singing in the nineteenth century. According to him, this practice violates the original setting in various respects: from the presence of a conductor and his »unrestrained« interpretation to problems

29 TIM, p. 743.

30 In the chapter on »The Position of Music in Sixteenth Century Aesthetics«, Einstein underpins the ideal of communal singing by referring to Alessandro Piccolomini's 1540 treatise on education, while at the same time drawing a parallel with performance aesthetics in the twentieth century – *ibid.*, p. 215: »Nor is the mere enjoyment of music by listening to it sufficient; it is necessary to practice it: ›però che à colui che è esercitato in qualche operation dilettevole, più diletto porge il proprio operare, che quello istesso da' altri aspettare ...‹ – ›for he who is trained in some enjoyable occupation derives more pleasure from engaging in it himself than from merely expecting it of others ...‹ (This is a passage which anticipates the twentieth-century idea of ›community music.‹)«. See among others Elizabeth Janik, *Recomposing German Music: Politics and Musical Tradition in Cold War Berlin*, Leiden 2005, *passim* about »community« music as promoted by the Nazis.

of acoustics and dynamics caused by the sheer number of singers (reflecting the choral tradition of the Romantic period) and the performance venue to the lack of knowledge on the part of the audience:

»The madrigal demands *voci di camera* [...]. Madrigals are to be sung softly, and the text is to be properly brought out. In the madrigal is implicit from the beginning the principle of concerted music-making. Singing in chorus would have been in violent opposition to the social ideal of the time, and would have been a thing that was simply ›not done.« [...] Compare with this the misapprehension with which the nineteenth century usually approached this music: the gesticulating and sputtering conductor urging on or holding in check two dozen singers, who sincerely thinks he has done justice to the peculiarity of the genre if he does without his baton. Add to this the giving of each part to from four to six persons, the dynamic exaggeration, the transfer of this delicate chamber music to murderous concert halls, its performance before a public innocent of the slightest knowledge of the relationship between text and music; and one will not be surprised that – excepting in England, where the devoted cultivation of the Elizabethan madrigalists has kept its stylistic tradition alive – the madrigal has remained to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a mystery, sealed with seven seals.«³¹

Madrigal Composers between the National and the Universal

In the chapter on »The Three Great Oltremontani«, Einstein uses one of Orlando di Lasso's early five-voice madrigals, published in the *Secondo libro delle Muse* (Rome, 1557) to argue that the composer's formal and technical inventiveness reflects Lasso's status as a major figure of music history:³²

»This does not mean that Lasso did not sometimes abandon his harmonic incisiveness to spin out a motif or round out the form. Lasso is also a universal master in that he has at his disposal *all* means and *all* forms. One of the five-part madrigals of 1557, Fortunio Spira's sonnet *Volgi cor mio, la tua speranza homai* contains in its *prima parte* an outstanding example of contrapuntal freedom: the soprano illumines the other parts like a ray of sunlight [...] But in the *seconda parte* there occurs an interweaving of motifs which when repeated extends over sixteen measures [...] It is this sort

31 *TIM*, p. 245.

32 On Lasso, see also Bernhard Schmid's contribution to the present volume.

of motival work that Monteverdi carries to the point of exaggeration and that recurs in a similar form in the last quartets of Beethoven.«³³

It is Lasso's tossing and turning of a single *soggetto* – quite literally playing with it both melodically and rhythmically, thus constantly reshaping it and recombining it with itself in an almost kaleidoscopic way – that leads Einstein to a comparison with the kind of motivic concentration found in Beethoven's later string quartets.³⁴ More importantly, Einstein considers Lasso a »universal composer«, whose music transcends stylistic dichotomies and refutes a widespread cliché also encountered in later epochs:

»[Lasso] has developed an entirely new sense for harmonic conciseness in homophonic writing. The passage [from *Invidia nemica di virtute*] may serve to refute the familiar assertion that ›harmony,‹ two-dimensional art, and the vertical point of view are indigenous to the ›South‹ and that ›polyphony‹ and the linear point of view are indigenous to the ›North,‹ an assertion which, in its broad formulation, is as erroneous as all other ›racial‹ generalizations. Lasso, the Fleming, is no more ›polyphonic‹ than Giovanni Luigi from Palestrina in the Sabine hills or Andrea Gabrieli from Canareggio. He is capable of purely homophonic declamation or purely chordal progression [...].

The difference between Palestrina and Lasso is not a difference of race or style but a difference of personal temperament; in a similar way, Johann Sebastian Bach is not the supreme master of polyphony because he is a German, a Thuringian, or (as some would have it) a ›Gothic‹ master, but simply because he is Bach – this follows sufficiently from the homophonic, two-dimensional motets of other Thuringian members of the Bach family.«³⁵

At several points in *The Italian Madrigal*, especially in the chapter about »The Three Great Oltremontani: Lasso, Monte, Wert«, Einstein distinguishes between »national« and »universal« music and develops the idea that the way a composer such as Lasso (or Bach) composes is a matter of personality and temperament, something that is independent of race or nation. These thoughts can no doubt be interpreted against the background of and might even be a deliberate reaction against debates on race and nation that were especially en vogue in the

33 *TIM*, p. 489 f.

34 On the role of Beethoven in Einstein's narrative, see Sebastian Bolz, »Das Ende der Unschuld. Beethoven als biographisch-historiographische Denkfigur bei Alfred Einstein«, *Beethovens Vermächtnis: Mit Beethoven im Exil*, ed. Anna Langenbruch, Beate Angelika Kraus and Christine Siegert, Bonn 2022, pp. 349–375.

35 *TIM*, p. 488 f.

1930s in German circles in general and in German scholarship in particular.³⁶ The topic also recurs in other publications by Einstein, such as his essay »National and Universal Music«, in which he tries to approach this question from an epoch-spanning perspective.³⁷

Another central figure in Einstein's work is Luca Marenzio, many of whose madrigals Einstein edited for the *Publikationen älterer Musik*.³⁸ Einstein is keen to stress this composer's »wholly novel, wholly personal charm-style« right from the start of his madrigal output. In order to assess Marenzio's first book of five-voice madrigals (1580), he again employs a comparison with later times:

»A music-historical parallel will perhaps help us to define the nature of the individual, personal element that delighted Marenzio's contemporaries in his first work. It is in some ways comparable to the phenomenon called forth, about 1730, by Pergolesi's music, when the idiom of the opera buffa penetrated the whole melodic style of Italy, even the opera seria, the church music, and the sonata. It was a Neapolitan dialect, but also a personal one – except that Marenzio, over and above the charm of his light and cheerful madrigal, can still write in the older, »serious« style without falling into archaisms, as Pergolesi does when he seeks to make a »learned« impression. And while Pergolesi's buffo style has only one possibility, Marenzio's has a hundred – if one may speak at all of a buffo style in this connection. But what name is one to give a wholly novel, wholly personal charm-style?«³⁹

Einstein calls Marenzio's »sense for architectonics [...] a little miracle in itself« and quotes a piece from his second book of five-voice madrigals (1581) to illustrate how the composer combines brevity (the madrigal is only 48 bars long) and

36 The most prominent examples undoubtedly are Friedrich Blume, *Das Rasseproblem in der Musik*, Wolfenbüttel 1939 and Richard Eichenauer, *Musik und Rasse*, Munich ²1937. On Eichenauer, see Hans-Christian Harten, Uwe Neirich and Matthias Schwerendt, *Rassenhygiene als Erziehungsideologie des Dritten Reichs. Bio-bibliographisches Handbuch*, Berlin 2006, pp. 259–261. See also Sebastian Werr, *Musikwissenschaft und Rassenforschung im Nationalsozialismus*, Munich 2020 (Münchener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, 80). On the impact of German musicology on Einstein's biography, see among others Pamela M. Potter, »From Jewish Exile in Germany to German Scholar in America. Alfred Einstein's Emigration«, *Driven into Paradise: The Musical Emigration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1999, pp. 298–321.

37 Alfred Einstein, »National and Universal Music«, *Modern Music* 14 (1936–1937), pp. 3–11. The essay was then published in the eponymous essay collection *Nationale und universale Musik*, pp. 231–242. At the very beginning, Einstein states that the question of national and universal music was catalysed by the (First) World War.

38 See the two volumes *Madrigale für fünf Stimmen* (Buch I–III and Buch IV–VI), Leipzig 1929.

39 *TIM*, p. 617.

C. Chi - un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_a don -

A. Chi - un - que_a don - na, chi - un - que_a don - na, chi -

T. Chi - un-que_a don - na, chi - un - que_a don - na, chi -

S. Chi - un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_adon - na, chi -

B. Chi - un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_adon - na,

- na, chi - un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_adon - na, chi -

un-que_adon - na, sem - pli - cet - to cre - de, chi - un-que_a

un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_a don - na, sem - pli - cet - to cre - de, chi - un-que_adon - na,

un-que_adon - na, chi - un-que_adon-na, sem - pli - cet - to cre - de, chi - un - que_a

chi - un-que_adon - na, sem - pli - cet - to cre - de, chi -

Ex. 2: Orlando di Lasso, beginning of the final line of *Völgi cor mio* in vol. 2 of Einstein's *Italian Madrigal*, p. 490

resourcefulness, which according to Einstein is not unlike the compact expressiveness of a Schubert song:

»The third Petrarch setting is *I' piango; ed ella il volto* [...]; it shows Marenzio's personal style in ideal purity. It is one of his shortest madrigals, though not because of the shortness of its text alone. Marenzio is brief because of the wealth of means placed at his disposal by the long history of the madrigal – these include chromaticism and freedom of declamation – and because he is a supreme master in the use of these means for purposes of suggestion. Brevity and resourcefulness are possible only at the end of an

epoch. A Schubert song can combine wealth of resource with the utmost brevity. Zelter and Reichardt can also be brief, but their songs are as simple and poverty-stricken as a frottola.⁴⁰

It is worth noting that Einstein reinforces his argument by drawing another historical parallel (»Zelter and Reichardt can also be brief, but their songs are as simple and poverty-stricken as a frottola«), which he uses to differentiate between two types of brevity, between mere shortness and clever conciseness. He clearly considers the frottola on the one hand and Zelter on the other as immature predecessors, as part of a preliminary stage that paves the way to perfection.⁴¹ This reasoning not only is related to Einstein's positioning of Marenzio »at the end of an epoch«,⁴² but – more importantly and more generally speaking – clearly corresponds to his thinking about epochs and genres according to a biologicistic model of rise, heyday and decline (not unlike childhood, youth, adulthood and old age – the different ages of humankind), which one also encounters in his other writings. Indeed, as specific (and anachronistic) as Einstein's abovementioned statements may seem – with Wert, Lasso and Marenzio on the one hand, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert on the other –, they are all deeply rooted in the way Einstein is trying to tell the story of the madrigal, its evolution, settings and protagonists. As he puts it programmatically on the very first pages of *The Italian Madrigal*, he sees the history of the madrigal as a »development running in a per-

40 Ibid., p. 624 f.

41 It should be noted that Einstein considers the frottola as part of a large-scale evolution in music in another sense, too – one that is brought full circle in Bach's music (ibid., p. 79): »In the frottola the conception is simultaneous; the musician invents the accompaniment and the melody at the same time, and he usually invents them in the fullest and most sonorous form, namely in four parts. Four-part writing does not become a genuine norm until the earliest times of the madrigal, about 1530: by this time three-part (and even more, two-part) writing is understood as an obligation to adopt a particularly delicate and fastidious scoring of much the same kind as that which, in later times, differentiates the string trio from the string quartet; five-part writing is viewed as an enrichment in sound and a sort of luxury. In the typical four-part style of the frottola we find, for the first time, the view that four parts suffice to fill the entire range of harmony, that four parts constitute the purest and most transparent foundation of all harmonic effect, and that in four-part writing there is an ideal balance between the demands of harmony and voice-leading, that is, of polyphony. At the end of this development stand the chorales of Johann Sebastian Bach; but it is worth noting that the development has its inception in the modest frottola of Mantua.«

42 Bolz, »Cipriano de Rore« has noted the influence of Theodor Kroyer, who in *Die Anfänge der Chromatik im italienischen Madrigal des XVI. Jahrhunderts. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Madrigals*, Leipzig 1902, p. 149 writes about Marenzio and Gesualdo: »Für ihre Zeit sind sie, was die Romantiker des 19. Jahrhunderts für die unserige; sie bringen den Subjektivismus im Madrigal zum vollen Durchbruch; freieste Formgebung, zügellose Phantasie und bewußte Bereicherung der Kunstmittel sind ihre Erkennungszeichen. Marenzio und Gesualdo sind darum »die Romantiker des 16. Jahrhunderts«.

fect and well-rounded curve, including a definite beginning, a beautiful dramatic rise toward a peak, a gradual falling off, and a definite end». ⁴³

Personalities, Paradigms and the Pendulum of Music History

Intimately related to this is Einstein's evaluation of the role certain composers and/or certain works play in the history of the madrigal and how this affects the relationship these composers have to their predecessors, the reaction of their contemporaries and their reception in later times. Almost as a logical consequence hereof, the question of personality comes up a number of times in Einstein's study. In the context of his overarching narrative, it is no coincidence that the chapter on the early madrigal, especially »The Circle about the First Three Masters« (Verdelot, Festa and Arcadelt) downplays the role of personality. Their music serves a functional purpose, which explains its »conventional character, its uniformity, and its extraordinary productivity« – and it leads Einstein to draw a comparison with music practice in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

»Verdelot, Festa, and Arcadelt are three musical personalities who did not strive for »personality«; hence the uniformity of their production, hence the erroneous and confused ascriptions in the prints and the anonymity in the MSS. Their art is deeply rooted in the society of their time and for this very reason it is an art. This explains certain of the tendencies of Italian secular art in the Cinquecento: its conventional character, its uniformity, and its extraordinary productivity, tendencies directly opposed to those prevailing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In these two centuries personality is everything, and the number of works of general validity bound to outlast their time is very small. During the last hundred years and more, musical practice both in private and in public has been nourished on compositions dating back generations, which have proved their eternal value, as it were, and which constitute the treasure of our musical tradition. Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, and Chopin form a pleiad, to which in the individual nations only a few household gods are added [...] In the sixteenth century the situation was just the reverse. The person-

43 *TIM*, p. 3. Many years before the publication of *TIM*, a similar statement can already be found in Einstein's essay »Das Madrigal«, *Ganymed* 3 (1921), pp. 101–112: p. 102: »In einem Zeitraum von kaum siebzig Jahren ist der ganze Weg, von den Anfängen über den Höhepunkt bis zum Abstieg durchlaufen, der Kreis einer Schöpfung von einer abgeschlossenen Eigenart vollendet, die uns nirgends mehr Anknüpfung, ja kaum mehr Imitation erlaubt, und doch voll unbedingter Lebendigkeit ist bis in ihre letzte Faser«. The text was subsequently published as »The Madrigal«, *The Musical Quarterly* 10 (1924), pp. 475–484 and posthumously in the collected volume *Nationale und universale Musik*, pp. 23–34: p. 24.

ality of the musician meant little, however much it was appreciated. To be sure, the musician felt an urge to distinguish himself, to offer something special; and within the range limited by these two extremes, conventionality and individual artistic ambition, there took place the whole evolution of the madrigal (and of all other art forms).⁴⁴

But throughout *The Italian Madrigal*, it becomes clear that the question of a composer's personality, indeed the »urge to distinguish himself«, gains importance in the course of the century. In several instances, Einstein tries to underscore this with analytical observations. For example, when comparing a setting of *Cruda Amarilli* by Pallavicino and Monteverdi, Einstein writes that Monteverdi's »urge to outdo his predecessors sweeps him onward, just as it does Beethoven when he measures himself against Haydn and Mozart, except that Monteverdi lacks Beethoven's exuberance«.⁴⁵ Einstein's comparison of a »chain« of settings of *Crudel acerba* by Lasso, Rore and Wert goes in a similar direction. Rore's setting and its impact are said to be comparable to Schubert's *Erkönig*, »which put an end to the innocuous strophic composition of ballads and which had few competitors«.⁴⁶ Such paradigmatic works, which herald the end of an »age of innocence«, explain, as Einstein continues, the hesitation of later composers in engaging with forms so

44 *TIM*, p. 275 f.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 853: »But Monteverdi carries the procedures of his colleagues to such extremes that stylistic unity is threatened. The urge to outdo his predecessors sweeps him onward, just as it does Beethoven when he measures himself against Haydn and Mozart, except that Monteverdi lacks Beethoven's exuberance. There is something demonic in him, something bent on destruction; he is a man of destiny in the history of music, in an even more fatal sense than Beethoven is.« At the very start of the chapter on »The Great Virtuosi«, Einstein already associates Monteverdi with the demonic, destroying the madrigal by going beyond its boundaries, for which Einstein compares him with Michelangelo – see *ibid.*, p. 608: »Monteverdi's case is in fact a rather special one. He belongs to this triumvirate of virtuosos only during the first half of his career. He is not only one of those latecomers who perfected the madrigal, he is also the man who destroyed it. Thus he must be discussed, not only in this chapter, but also in another one devoted to him alone – not because he survived Marenzio by more than forty years and Gesualdo by nearly thirty, or because he is quite as much a man of the seventeenth century as of the sixteenth, but because his demonic urge carried him far beyond the stylistic limits of sixteenth-century music, just as a similar urge drove Michelangelo Buonarroti beyond the stylistic limits of fifteenth century painting, sculpture, and architecture.«

46 *Ibid.*, p. 560 f.: »After Lasso comes Rore's setting [of *Crudel acerba*] for four voices (1557), one which we have already attempted to characterize [...]. This set an example comparable to that set, in the history of German song, by Schubert's *Erkönig*, which put an end to the innocuous strophic composition of ballads and which had few competitors. Rore's setting appears to have fully satisfied the age and to have frightened imitators away. Not until 1588 does Giaches Wert in Mantua take up the text again, setting not only the first but also the second stanza of the *sestina*. He is of course obliged to outdo Rore, not only in setting the poem for five voices (as against Rore's four), but also in his expression.«

consummately executed by their predecessors with which later composers coped with it, almost in the sense of a Bloomian »anxiety of influence«.⁴⁷ In other places, Einstein goes into more detail about the »game-changing« role of a composer like Cipriano de Rore, especially when he describes his contemporaries' relationship with and reaction to him as follows:

»Willaert, and still more so Rore, had swept the madrigal to so sudden a height scarcely twenty years after its innocent beginnings, that few of their contemporaries were able to follow them. And the word »contemporaries« always means three generations at once: the fathers, who are taken by surprise by the sudden feat of a genius and who can choose only between adjusting themselves and following suit or becoming senescent and fading from view; those of the same age who for the most part have in some mysterious manner an active share in the deed itself or who are at least equal to the new technique; and finally youth, the sons, who either continue boldly what has been boldly won or refine upon it or even conventionalize it and exploit it. One could no more ignore Rore than in the nineteenth century one could ignore Wagner. And it speaks for the more admirable, more youthful, and more progressive spirit of the sixteenth century that Rore aroused only the opposition of the theorists, while the creative musicians for the most part recognized him as their model and master.«⁴⁸

Einstein sees both Rore and Wagner as pioneers, as visionary, »modern« composers, who have a formative influence on their environment and whose music is ahead of their time. We find a similar idea in Einstein's *Greatness in Music*, where he expands upon the concept of greatness and what it means for the evolution of

47 See also Bolz, »Das Ende der Unschuld« on the concept of innocence in Einstein's historical narrative in general and his analysis of Beethoven in particular. As regards Rore, Einstein compares his role with that of Michelangelo in art history – see *TIM*, p. 393: »But the greater part of Rore's madrigals grow out of the subjective urge of a powerfully inspired soul and as such are wholly his own, just as the Moses or the Tombs of the Cappella Medici are Michelangelo's, the only master to whom Rore may be compared both in character and in influence: in character, as a master of dark and deep emotion, intensified means, and compelling expression; in influence, as one who brought violently to a close the classical age of the madrigal, the age of innocence which, without him, might have gone on and on, and as one who opened a new age, more self-confident, shaken by more vehement contrasts.«

48 *TIM*, p. 423 f. In other contexts, too, Einstein discusses the question of generations and how this relates to the stylistic evolutions taking place as well as to the relationship between teacher and pupil. See for example *ibid.*, p. 718: »But Monteverdi has little more in common with Ingegneri than Philipp Emanuel with Johann Sebastian Bach or Hector Berlioz with Lesueur and Reicha. The two generations to which they belong are too different, and the possibilities of musical development were now too varied and too extensive to permit the character of the younger musician to be exclusively determined by his teacher. Monteverdi does not even follow his master in external things.«

an art form: »Whether a great man is carried by his time, or whether he drags his time after him, his works are always an impulse, a push forward, with which that curious thing known as the world of art (in our case the ›musical world‹) must come to grips«. ⁴⁹ What is more, Einstein makes a clear case that the reception of paradigmatic composers is subject to change, not only in their own time, but also in later times. He even specifies and refines his ›law of the affinity of periods‹ to such an extent that the way later periods react to such a composer varies according to the musical ›climate‹ of the period in question and its ›love of experimentation‹. As Einstein puts it: »elective affinity,‹ or the affinity of periods – that curious fluctuation of taste between that which excites and that which calms, between the Apollonic and the Dionysian. The attitude of the period to the great masters changes with every generation«. ⁵⁰ Apart from the fact that Einstein's conceptual pair Apollonic–Dionysian seems to be inspired by Friedrich Nietzsche's *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (Leipzig, 1872), ⁵¹ it will come as no surprise that this is a topic Einstein seeks to illustrate via Gesualdo – who together

49 Einstein, *Greatness in Music*, p. 261. See also Kai Marius Schabram, »Es lohnt sich, Charakter zu haben. Neue Musik im Verständnis von Alfred Einstein«, *Musik in Bayern* 88 (2023), pp. 64–87: Wagner is mentioned several times in *The Italian Madrigal*, in various contexts. Particularly instructive is Einstein's appraisal of Marenzio's last book of madrigals, which he considers a singular and ›inimitable‹ apotheosis: »Throughout this book one has the impression that it is a last work, the climax and more than climax of a wholly personal style, just as one has this impression of Wagner's *Parsifal*, which could likewise have been followed only by repetitions. Marenzio himself was not of this opinion: in his dedication to Vincenzo Gonzaga, he expresses the hope that his feeble intellect, stimulated by the favor of his patron, may in future produce something more worthy.«

50 Einstein, *Greatness in Music*, p. 7. See also *ibid.*, p. 209: »The historical evaluation of preparatory and classical periods, the ›happy‹ and ›unhappy‹ times, will always vary in accordance with ever-changing ›affinity‹ to an ever-changing present«. In *TIM*, p. 201, Einstein not only applies this idea to composers, but also to other art forms. A case in point is Dante and his varying reception in later times: »In the favor of sixteenth century composers, Dante is completely overshadowed by the later and lesser poet Petrarch, who is his very antithesis. Not only is he overshadowed, but in comparison with this rival he disappears almost entirely from view. The great realistic mystic and mystic realist of the Middle Ages resists the spirit of the century with its formalism and conventionality. Yet the indestructible and uncanny power of attraction in the *Divine Comedy* never ceases to fascinate the representative spirits, even in the sixteenth century [...]. Dante's literary fate in the midst of an intellectual current so opposed to the spirit of his work may be aptly compared with the fate of Johann Sebastian Bach in the period of ›gallant‹ music: through all the changes of literary fashion he is upheld, until his hour strikes anew, by the secret respect of the masses and perhaps also by the understanding of a few men who are independent of their time.« See also Alfred Einstein, »Dante, on the Way to the Madrigal«, *The Musical Quarterly* 25 (1939), pp. 142–155.

51 See also James I. Porter, *The Invention of Dionysus. An Essay on The Birth of Tragedy*, Stanford 2000. Before Nietzsche, the concept of the duality between Apollo and Dionysus was already used by scholars such as the philosopher Friedrich Schelling, the art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann and the literary critic Friedrich Schlegel. Einstein mentions and cites Nietzsche in various writings, such as *Greatness in Music* or his essays »Wagner und Ludwig II.« and »Wagner, Brahms und wir«, both published in *Nationale und universale Musik*, pp. 101–109 and 110–115

with Marenzio, Monteverdi and da Gagliano forms the subject of a chapter on »The Great Virtuosi«, those composers »who represent the fulfillment and the end of the madrigal«.⁵² Gesualdo's »extreme style« is bound to provoke equally extreme reactions in later times:

»Posterity's attitude toward him will continue to change and will depend always upon the extent to which his expression is held to be truthful and sincere; it is not surprising that he should have fared worse in the time of John Christian Bach, in Burney's *History of Music*, than he fares today in the time of Stravinsky and Schönberg. Perhaps the pendulum will swing to the other side again before long«.⁵³

However, Einstein does not limit his observation to the reception by composers, but extends his view towards the critics, too:

»What sort of musician was Gesualdo and what was his place as an individual musician and as a link in the chain of musical development? His contemporaries thought him a great man, but their judgment is visibly influenced by his princely rank [...]. The opinion of posterity is divided. For Burney, Ambros, and Eitner, Gesualdo is a dilettantish experimenter; for Leichtentritt, Keiner, and Heseltine he is unquestionably a genius. Ambros, to be sure, was too artistic and independent a critic to misjudge Gesualdo altogether and would never have subscribed to the stupidities of Eitner [...]. Evidently he was no one-sided madrigalist but a man of some versatility. And apart from this, has anyone ever criticized Chopin for not having written a symphony or a string quartet?«⁵⁴

Concluding Remarks

What *is* the place of the madrigal in music history? Let me end this contribution with a closer look at the very first pages of *The Italian Madrigal*, where Einstein links this fundamental question with a critical reflection on the way music history is written and how that has influenced the narrative on the madrigal. To a

respectively, or »Affinities of the Ages«. On Einstein's reception of Nietzsche, see also Bolz, »Das Ende der Unschuld«, passim.

52 *TIM*, p. 608.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 706. As Bolz, »Cipriano de Rore«, p. 464 has shown, Einstein's use of the term »modernity« also fits into this thinking: »Modernity serves as a collective term and addresses notions of historical consciousness and ambiguity as well as the need for a self-positioning of an epoch in relation to its predecessors [...]. The relation to one's own time serves as an indication of a composer's significance.«

54 *TIM*, p. 691 f.

certain extent, his view remains valid today, I would argue. He starts with the observation that we tend to perceive the musical changes around 1600 as particularly strong and paradigmatic: »With the new century, almost with the very year 1600, new art forms again put in their appearance: concerted music, the accompanied monody, solo singing – which reached a climax in opera – and the new instrumental music«. ⁵⁵ But at the same time, these changes did not happen *ex nihilo*, as they rarely do:

»In the history of art [...], there is always a constant flow: the past runs over into the present in the form of undercurrents, just as in every epoch generations live side by side, influencing one another in a great variety of ways. Leaves and flowers grow out of buds, and the greatest genius in art, however much his life and work may appear to be out of harmony with his time, can only affect the pace of the development, not the development itself.« ⁵⁶

Note that Einstein illustrates his argument twice using metaphors from the sphere of nature – the flow and its undercurrents on the one hand, the morphology of plants on the other. Especially the latter metaphor, with its stages of birth, maturation, blooming and decomposition, hints at the biologicistic understanding of history found in the theories current at the time by thinkers such as Spengler, who – it should be added – subtitled his *The Decline of the West* with *Outlines of a Morphology of World History*.

When it comes to the history of the madrigal, Einstein warns against a narrative of music history that is too strongly focused on »big changes«, which runs the risk of underestimating other kinds of evolutions and developments: »We have become used to viewing as particularly dramatic and particularly stirring music-historical events the conflicts taking place in the domain of opera: the war of the Florentine Camerata against counterpoint [...]; Gluck's fight for a new, less formalistic ideal of opera [...]; Richard Wagner's fight for the new romantic music drama«. ⁵⁷ And then comes the following caveat:

»We may attribute to these conflicts all the importance they may rightly claim; but [...] the most far-reaching revolutions are carried out without

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 3. Regarding the perception of »new music« throughout the centuries and its relation to previous decades, I also refer to Einstein's »Cycle of Three Centuries«, *Modern Music* 15 (1938), pp. 135–139.

⁵⁶ *TIM*, p. 3.

⁵⁷ A similar idea can be found in Einstein's *Geschichte der Musik. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Zurich 1953, p. 155 and further writings. See also Schabram, »Neue Musik«, p. 69: »Eine mögliche Intention des historischen Vergleichs könnte darin liegen, dass es Einstein um die

fanfare. The transformation, about 1520, of the song style of the preceding centuries into the poetic motet style of the sixteenth century was just such a far-reaching and quiet revolution. This is also the birth date of the madrigal.«⁵⁸

Einstein clearly stresses the importance of this momentum. With his monumental study – the first monograph on the genre –, he finally gave the madrigal the place it deserves in music history.⁵⁹ The fact that scholars keep referring to his study to the present day proves the success of his undertaking.

Hervorhebung einer gleichsam zyklischen Entsprechung von Tradition und Innovation in der Musikgeschichte geht«.

58 *TIM*, pp. 3 f.

59 In the preface to *TIM*, p. vi, Einstein describes the difficult situation of madrigal research before him: »Even the strictly musicological literature has its limitations. There are some first-rate monographs among the many that deal with particular problems and with certain of the greater and lesser masters of secular music at this time; local archives have been combed for information about music and musicians in almost every part of Italy, although this is unfortunately least true of the Ferrara of the first half of the century, one of the most important centers. But this literature has never been classified, sifted, or coordinated; it has never been surveyed from a genuinely historical point of view; and without such a general survey one's picture of a particular individual is necessarily myopic and tentative. The relevant sections in the great standard works on the history of music are sometimes insufficiently detailed (the liveliest and most detailed account is still that by A. W. Ambros); sometimes they regard secular music too exclusively from the point of view of the general development and the preeminence of church music«.

Abkürzungen

<i>DIM</i>	Alfred Einstein, <i>Das italienische Madrigal. Versuch einer Geschichte der italienischen Profanmusik des 16. Jahrhunderts</i> , hrsg. von Sebastian Bolz, München 2025 (Münchener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, 83), DOI: 10.5282/ubm/epub.128701
<i>DDT</i>	<i>Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst</i> , hrsg. von Rochus von Liliencron u. a., Leipzig 1892–1931
<i>DTB</i>	<i>Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern</i> , hrsg. von Adolf Sandberger, Leipzig 1900–1920, Augsburg 1924–1938 (Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst, Zweite Folge); Neue Folge (N. F.), Wiesbaden 1962 ff.
<i>DTÖ</i>	<i>Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich</i> , hrsg. von Guido Adler u. a., Wien 1894 ff.
<i>Grove Music Online</i>	<i>Grove Music Online</i> , hrsg. von Laura Macy, fortgesetzt von Deane L. Root, Oxford 2001 ff.
<i>LexM</i>	<i>Lexikon verfolgter Musiker und Musikerinnen der NS-Zeit</i> , hrsg. von Claudia Maurer Zenck u. a., Hamburg 2005 ff., https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/
<i>MGG Online</i>	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart Online</i> , hrsg. von Laurenz Lütteken, Kassel u. a. 2016 ff.
<i>PäM</i>	<i>Publikationen älterer Musik</i> , hrsg. von Theodor Kroyer, Leipzig 1926–1940
<i>TIM</i>	Alfred Einstein, <i>The Italian Madrigal</i> , übers. von Alexander H. Krappe, Roger Sessions und Oliver Strunk, Princeton 1949

Zitate aus *Das italienische Madrigal* / *The Italian Madrigal* erfolgen in der Regel in der Sprache und Ausgabe des jeweiligen Aufsatzes. Im Sinne dieses Bandes, dem es um eine Re-Lektüre unter den Bedingungen von Original und Übersetzung geht, werden entsprechende Stellen bei Bedarf in den Fußnoten in der jeweils anderen Sprache wiedergegeben.

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