Hearing Homophony
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Hearing Homophony

Tonal Expectation at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century

Megan Kaes Long
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing this book has been one of the great privileges and pleasures of my life. This undertaking would not have been possible without the support of innumerable people and institutions, to whom I owe profound gratitude. The seeds of this project were planted during my graduate study at Yale University, where I was fortunate enough to be advised by Daniel Harrison. His curiosity and eclecticism are constant sources of inspiration, and his mentorship and goodwill carried me through graduate school and have buoyed me through every stage of writing this book. Ian Quinn has advocated for this book from the beginning, and his insights have shaped the very foundations of my thinking about tonality. I am grateful, also, to Richard Cohn, Patrick McCreless, and Robert Holzer for their mentorship and continued investment in my work. And, for setting me on a trajectory that has led me to the curious and delightful world of music theory, I am grateful to my mentors at Pomona College: Alfred Cramer, Joti Rockwell, and Donna Di Grazia.

The project was little more than the spark of an idea when Steven Rings first suggested that it might be a good fit for Oxford Studies in Music Theory. His interest gave me the push I needed to develop Hearing Homophony into a book, and his support along the way has been invaluable. I am grateful also to Dmitri Tymoczko and the two anonymous reviewers, whose critical feedback strengthened my ideas and helped me hone the book’s structure and tone. Brian Alegant, Christopher Brody, Daniel Harrison, and Ian Quinn each read portions of the manuscript and helped me refine my thinking and writing.

I am grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a Summer Stipend grant that facilitated several weeks of archival research in the early stages of developing this project. Oberlin College has also provided me with generous support in the form of a Research Status Grant, an H. H. Powers Grant, and two grants-in-aid; in particular, Oberlin’s provision of time, in the form of a year-long sabbatical, gave me the opportunity to think deeply and write slowly. Several individuals helped me to put the finishing touches on the book. Nate Mitchell prepared the book’s musical examples with tireless attention to detail. An ensemble of talented musicians, Elena Mullins, Melanie Emig, Joseph Schlesinger, Evan Bescan, Brian MacGilvray, and Brian Kay, gamely recorded the musical examples in two marathon days. Gregory Ristow was instrumental to this process—he masterfully organized and produced the recordings, and sang on several of the tracks as well. Christ Episcopal Church in Oberlin made their space available to us for recording.

So many individuals have generously supported this project in ways large and small. I am grateful to Thomas Christensen, Michael Dodds, Jessie Ann Owens, Ian Quinn, Paul Schleuse, and Dmitri Tymoczko for providing me with pre-publication copies of their forthcoming work or work in progress. The Early Music Analysis Interest Group of the Society for Music Theory has been a great source of support and encouragement over the past several years, and I am particularly grateful to Kyle Adams and Gregory Barnett for their friendship and insight. Tessie Prakas, Christoph Schlechter, and Julia Doe generously hosted me on my international travels and helped me navigate unfamiliar libraries.

The Oberlin College Conservatory of Music has been my rich intellectual home since 2014. I am thankful for my inventive colleagues in the Music Theory Division and the broader Oberlin community. For helping me develop ideas, I am grateful especially to Ben Geyer, Will Mason, Jan Miyake, Arnie Cox, Rebecca Leydon, Bryan Parkhurst, Allen Cadwallader, James O’Leary, Steven Plank, and Gregory Ristow. And my sincere thanks are due to Jeanne Rosecrans, our tireless administrator, who has helped me in more ways than I can count.

I couldn’t have written a single word of this book without my dear friends Christopher White, Christopher Brody, Alexandra Kieffer, and Julia Doe. Our frequent conversations and daily text messages helped me hash out my broadest methodological questions as well as the smallest details of wording and typography. I never once felt alone while writing this book because of their friendship and encouragement. I am grateful, also, to my larger intellectual community, especially Eden McLean, Tessie Prakas, Amy Dunagin, and Lisa Crawford, for inspiring me with their relentless pursuit of excellence.

Finally, thank you to my family. My parents, Jeff and Lori Kaes, fostered my passion for music from an early age and continue to be my most ardent supporters. And I extend my deepest and most profound gratitude to my husband, Sylvan Long. His patience, generosity, and enthusiasm made this book possible.
ABOUT THE COMPANION WEBSITE

www.oup.com/us/hearinghomophony

A companion website accompanies Hearing Homophony. This site includes audio clips of all of the partsongs discussed in Chapters 1 through 6. These recordings have been made especially for this book, and feature Elena Mullins (soprano), Melanie Emig (soprano), Megan Kaes Long (alto), Joseph Schlesinger (alto), Evan Bescan (tenor), Gregory Ristow (tenor), Brian MacGilvray (bass), and Brian Kay (lute). Readers are encouraged to consult these recordings in conjunction with the musical examples printed in the chapters. Examples available online are indicated in the text with the symbol 🎧.
CHAPTER 1

How We Got into Harmonic Tonality, and How to Get Out

Few topics in our discipline are more fraught, or more fundamental, than tonality. The term has been applied to diverse phenomena: from basic pitch relationships in music of myriad global traditions, to the energies created by the union of the subdominant and the dominant in the tonic triad, to listeners’ psychological orientations toward statistically likely musical events.¹ Even within the domain of the Western “common practice,” tonality coordinates such varied attributes as triads and seventh chords, major and minor scales, key-defining cadential formulas, and interactions between harmony and counterpoint.² Yet, though several scholars have catalogued tonality’s defining characteristics, their lists rarely agree, and it is not always clear how these characteristics relate to each other. Need they all be present or only a few? Are they mutually dependent or separable? And why prioritize some attributes of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Western tonal music but exclude others? Brian Hyer reminds us that much of this definitional slipperiness is a symptom of tonality’s philosophical origins. When Alexandre Choron and François-Joseph Féris coined the term in the early nineteenth century, their goal was historical periodization, not theoretical description.³ As Hyer puts it, “tonality is an ideological as well as a theoretical construct.”⁴

1. For the definitive catalogue of definitions of the term tonality, see Michael Beiche, “Tonalität,” in Handwörterbuch der Musikalischen Terminologie, ed. Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht (Stuttgart: Verlag, 1992), 412–433.
Given the haze surrounding the terminology, it is unsurprising that we have sought tonality’s origins time and again, and that our studies have yielded varied and controversial results. Carl Dahlhaus is one of the most successful modern thinkers to undertake this project; Eric Chafe subsequently expanded some of Dahlhaus’s most intriguing observations in an extensive study of Monteverdi. More recently, emboldened by the pioneering work of Harold Powers, historians of theory have plumbed the amorphous discourses surrounding pitch structure in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to trace connections between individual modes and keys. And in the past few years Dmitri Tymoczko and Ian Quinn have called into question some of the basic assumptions that underlie our histories of tonality, encouraging new avenues of investigation. These studies are built upon wildly different methodological and philosophical foundations: some address the history of theory while others trade in style change and compositional practice, some are unapologetically presentist while others are meticulously historicist, and all define tonality in different ways. Disagreements about tonality’s ancestry have a robust history—as Thomas Christensen has recently chronicled, when Fétis drew a firm boundary between tonalité ancienne and tonalité moderne, he sparked a drawn-out battle among prominent nineteenth-century musicians and historians who sought the origins of tonality’s appellative consonance in ever-earlier repertoires. As today, these debates masqueraded as attempts to trace tonality’s history, but they belied more fundamental disputes about what constitutes a tonal music in the first place.

This contentious disciplinary history makes one thing clear: tonality has many histories that must be considered independently. Tonality is woven from a motley array of threads: pitch structure, counterpoint, harmony, meter, rhythm, phrase structure, and form, but also music theory, instrument design, notation, acoustics, philosophy, and cognitive psychology. Each element is situated in several historically, geographically, and culturally specific loci. No one parameter developed in a single context, no subset of parameters collectively define tonality.

Most of these features are overdetermined and thus arise in several contexts for varied, often disparate reasons. Consequently, I believe we should narrow our focus to consider single panels in the tapestry of tonality and tug on the particular threads that combine to form one compelling figure. We won’t understand tonality fully if we only gaze on the tapestry from a distance; instead, we’re faced with the more daunting task of accounting for the journey of each and every thread. And it’s possible that if we pull in the right places, the entire picture will unravel.

Accordingly, this book isolates one moment in tonality’s history: it examines a modest repertoire of homophonic vernacular partsongs that straddled the turn of the seventeenth century, and considers how these partsongs exploit rhythm and meter to craft harmonic trajectories. In 1591, Italian composer Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi published a book of balletti—light, homophonic secular songs in a dance-like idiom—that sparked a brief but intense vogue for vernacular homophony. Gastoldi’s homophonic style spread like wildfire throughout Italy and was enthusiastically imported and imitated by English and German consumers for the next two decades. Composers of homophonic partsong engineered a particular kind of centricity that I argue is distinctively tonal: they strategically deployed dominant harmonies at regular periodicities and in combination with poetic, phrase structural, and formal cues, thereby creating expectation for tonic harmonies. Homophony itself created the conditions for these experiments.

Spurred by an increasing demand for comprehensible texts, Gastoldi and his contemporaries developed rigid text-setting procedures that promoted both metrical regularity and consistent phrase rhythm. Together, parameters like text-setting, rhythmic consistency, metrical regularity, phrase structure, and form—all features that regulate pitch content—supported compositional frameworks where composers could establish trajectories from dominants to tonics at multiple scales.

In other words, this book argues for a model of tonality—and of tonality’s history—that centers not pitch, but rhythm and meter. Metrically oriented harmonic trajectories encourage tonal expectation. And we can locate these trajectories in repertoires that we traditionally understand as “modal.” For instance, in the A section of his partsong Il prigioniero (1594, no. 6), Gastoldi points from the dominant at the phrase’s midpoint to the tonic at its conclusion with several signs. The phrase appears as Example 1.1; I use arrows to show possible trajectories of expectation. Gastoldi establishes regular phrase rhythm, with two-measure lines that group into four- and eight-measure units. He repeats the stanza’s third line to create a symmetrical structure out of an asymmetrical poem; the abrupt “non mi far” in m. 6 interrupts the listener who might be satisfied by the completed honor/amor rhyme and instead directs her to the

10. Throughout, I will identify partsongs with their first date of publication and their number in the collection; refer to the list of musical sources for more details.
11. I will refer to mensural note values with their mensural names (semibreve, minim, etc.) but larger mensural units as “measures,” according to the barring in the figure. In most instances, I have barred examples according to the theoretical tactus (which, in the partsong repertoire, is usually the semibreve). The concept of theoretical tactus—the tactus implied by the mensuration sign—is drawn from Ruth I. DeFord, Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm in Renaissance Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 50–52.
end of the phrase. The opening measures embark on a melodic descent from 5 down to 2, which Gastoldi echoes (reharmonized) in mm. 5–6. The two dominant arrivals (mm. 4 and 6) orient us toward the tonic cadence that completes the melodic descent and concludes the rhyme. A suspension further marks the final cadence. Gastoldi immediately repeats this section, both clarifying its formal boundaries and enabling the listener to re-traverse now-familiar terrain, perhaps catching signs that she missed the first time, or perhaps attending to the broader landscape now that her immediate path is clear. This simple phrase creates abundant expectation for the final tonic; Gastoldi’s toolbox includes metrical periodicity, poetic rhyme, surprise changes of phrase rhythm (“Non mi far!”), melodic goal-direction, cadential dissonance treatment, and formal repetition. Though he also uses some traditionally “modal” harmonies, they do not compromise the phrase’s period-like form or its large-scale dominant–tonic trajectory.12

I am hardly the first person to suggest that tonality is not merely a pitch phenomenon. In 1930, Edward Dent remarked that “throughout the sixteenth century we shall find that the incipient sense of classical tonality is always most strongly to be felt in the music which is most vigorously accented. Form, rhythm, and tonality are in fact inseparably bound up with one another, and they ought to be studied as inseparable things.”13 More recently, Brian Hyer has called attention to the artificiality of the pitch/meter divorce in our broader discourse:

12. Period-like phrases are much older than this late sixteenth-century canzonetta. Leo Treitler identifies this common structure in medieval song in “Musical Syntax in the Middle Ages: Background to an Aesthetic Problem,” Perspectives of New Music 4, no. 1 (1965): 75–85.
Tonal theories have tended to concentrate on harmonies to the virtual exclusion of all other musical considerations. . . . Yet this separation of harmonic from other musical considerations is artificial. Meter in particular is crucial to the subordination of dissonant harmonies to consonant ones. . . . While most theorists concentrate on harmonic and sometimes melodic considerations, tonality is perhaps best conceptualized as a tertium quid in which melody, harmony, and meter all combine into a single musical nexus.14

In fact, theorists of tonality have long advocated the integration of melody, harmony, and meter. Though this aspect of their work has faded in our increasingly pitch-centric discourse, even Jean-Philippe Rameau and Fétis assigned meter and phrase structure a supporting role in the history and practice of tonality. Pondering Claudio Monteverdi’s Cruda Amarilli, Fétis suggests that the unprepared dominant seventh chord, Monteverdi’s primary innovation, precipitated a change in music’s unfolding in time. Palestrina’s music, Fétis argues, is characterized by “the incessant connection of phrases, and the absence, or at least the extreme rarity of final cadences.”15 By contrast, Monteverdi assembles his madrigal out of short homophonic phrases demarcated by cadences. Fétis emphasizes the modernity of this shift, writing, “the creation of modern tonality. . . . had another result; namely, the formation of the regular rhythm of the periodic phrase, by the frequency of cadences.”16 The dominant seventh chord’s goal direction and periodic phrase structure, for Fétis, went hand in hand.

This book argues at length that we have much to gain from broadening our understanding of tonality to incorporate music’s motion in time, but for now two examples can demonstrate this point in brief. Edward Lowinsky opens his study of the “evolution” of tonality with its naissance: “the cadence,” he argues, “is the cradle of tonality,” and ground bass patterns are “the playground in which it grew strong and self-confident.”17 Lowinsky compares two similar ostinato patterns, the passamezzo moderno and the Zefiro (Example 1.2). The two bass lines begin identically, establishing G as the tonal center and moving to D at the midpoint of the phrase. The second half of each phrase restarts on G, but here, they part ways: the passamezzo moderno repeats its first half, increasing the harmonic rhythm to close not on D but on G. The Zefiro has the same destination, but detours to F♮ en route to its final cadence. But Lowinsky identifies a crucial difference between these two bass lines: the passamezzo moderno bass presents “harmonic progressions in a clear tonal major, whereas the related Zefiro . . . is a

In other words, the presence of a Mixolydian F♮ indicates that the Zefiro is modal; its absence similarly identifies the passamezzo moderno as tonal. There are a few problems with this claim. First, if we take the F♮ to be a signal of the modality of the Zefiro, we cannot take its absence to indicate the tonality of the passamezzo moderno. Lowinsky hedges against this view, taking care to note that the sixteenth-century musicians using this progression were probably not thinking tonally: “It is tempting to interpret the term passamezzo moderno as indicating awareness on the part of the sixteenth-century musician that the ‘tonal’ pattern of the passamezzo moderno constitutes something novel.”

Yet, he goes on to attribute this scare-quoted “tonal” pattern to “clear use of the Ionian” (a mode which, we should note, had not yet been described in theory in the first decade of the sixteenth century, when the frottole that are the subject of Lowinsky’s inquiry were being preserved in printed sources). In other words, Lowinsky equates identity with ancestry: since the passamezzo moderno and the Ionian mode sound like G major, they are tonal; accordingly, since the Zefiro sounds different, it is not. (We might note, also, Lowinsky’s choice to notate these bass lines with a sharp signature, which did not appear in contemporary sources.)

Yet, the passamezzo moderno and the Zefiro are far more similar than different. The power that Lowinsky attributes to a single “modal” degree, F♮, does a disservice both to the apparent modality of the Zefiro and the supposed tonality of the passamezzo moderno.

If we gently redirect our attention away from pitch content and toward other parameters, we may more robustly account for the similarities between these two ostinato bass patterns. Both create a strong trajectory of expectation from the D major harmony that bisects them to the G major harmony on which they conclude. This trajectory is supported by the sense of re-beginning that arrives with the fifth chord of each pattern, as well as the faster harmonic rhythm that prepares the final tonic at the end of the phrase. I argue that this trajectory is tonal, and that its tonality is neither compromised by the Mixolydian F♮ in the Zefiro, nor guaranteed by the absence of this degree from the passamezzo moderno. In fact, the tonal harmonic trajectory and the modal background collection are different kinds of phenomena; the presence of one need not require the absence of the other.
The ostinato bass patterns reveal that two pieces with distinct pitch content can share a single tonal trajectory. At the same time, a single pitch framework can invite both modal and tonal interpretation. Ever since Fétis identified Monteverdi’s *Cruda Amarilli* as the harbinger of *tonalité moderne*, the madrigal has become an important analytical touchstone for modern scholars seeking to characterize seventeenth-century tonal structure. But there is little consensus on the madrigal’s tonal allegiances, as indicated by the contrasting titles of Eric Chafe’s *Monteverdi’s Tonal Language* and Susan McClary’s *Modal Subjectivities*, both of which feature prominent analyses of *Cruda Amarilli*. Both authors base their analyses on the binary between love (*amar* and bitterness (*amaramente*)—puns on Amarilli’s name—that motivates Guarini’s text (Example 1.3a). Chafe and McClary agree that Monteverdi stages a conflict between two potential tonal centers, C and G, to reflect Mirtillo’s ambivalence: he loves Amarilli but fears she will reject him. But Chafe and McClary differ in their reading of the madrigal’s harmonic equivocation: for McClary, *Cruda Amarilli* exploits the unique capacities of the Mixolydian mode, for Chafe, it embraces the tonal energies of subdominant and dominant functions mediated by their tonic.

In Chafe’s reading, the love/bitterness binary plays out in the conflict between F♮ and F♯ built into the madrigal’s Mixolydian mode. When Monteverdi introduces cadences on D in the madrigal’s final section, he confirms the G tonal center and the F♯ reigns ascendant (Example 1.3b). As a result, Chafe posits that “Monteverdi’s conception of the mode is a tonal one”: the G tonal center emerges from the antithesis between the cadences on the subdominant and the dominant. He clarifies: “The main point is therefore not that Monteverdi has anticipated modern tonality and the concepts of subdominant and dominant in choosing those particular cadences, but that he found a means of applying his reading of the poetic text . . . to the creation of an analogous dynamic within the madrigal.” Chafe’s provocative theory of seventeenth-century tonal structure allows him to imbue modal pitch collections with tonal energies. In brief, Chafe separates a composition’s pitch content (the hexachordal gamut under one of two transpositions), conceptual system (mode or key), and melodic, harmonic, and contrapuntal character (modal or tonal). As a result, he is able to argue that Monteverdi’s works are founded on modal assumptions even as they explore tonal dynamics—hence, *Cruda Amarilli* is in the Mixolydian mode, but manipulates the symmetrical arrangement of subdominant and dominant around its G tonal center. Chafe manages to have it both ways: Monteverdi’s music is at once both modal and tonal and neither modal nor tonal.

21. Ibid., 17.
22. Chafe argues that the Guidonian system of interlocking hexachords underlies transposition in modal repertoires. Depending on its signature, a work may express either the normal gamut (based on the F, C, and G hexachords, with no signature), or the transposed gamut (based on the fictive B♭ hexachord and the F and C hexachords, with a signature of one flat). The central hexachord for each system (♯ or ♭ signature) constrains a work’s tonal content (that is, its cadences and range of accidentals). Ibid., 24–31. Chafe’s most succinct explanation of this theory appears in *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 74–77.
Susan McClary pushes back against the narratives advanced by Fétis and Chafe, sensibly arguing that throughout the sixteenth century the madrigal “move[s] not closer to but instead further and further away from what might qualify as ‘tonal.’”

In *Cruda Amarilli*, Monteverdi dramatizes Mirtillo’s pain by

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exploiting an ambivalence in the Mixolydian mode. As McClary interprets it, the G–G Mixolydian octave divides in two ways: properly, as G–D/D–G, or deviantly, as G–C/C–G. The competing fifth species (D–G and G–C) stoke the enmity between potential G and C finals. In McClary’s semi-Schenkerian reading, the G final can only overtake C if the upper D is prepared by a full fifth descent from A. Monteverdi first introduces us to this A early in the madrigal—in the infamous m. 13, where a series of dissonant licenses famously aroused Giovanni Maria Artusi’s indignation (and, eventually, attracted Félig’s attention). For McClary, the “ahi lasso” A is not just a “cute escape tone”; rather, it’s a violent confrontation: the

Example 1.3a Continued.

from Modal to Tonal Organization in the Works of Monteverdi” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1976), 160–175.
canto voice tries to establish the D with a fifth descent from A, but the lower voices thwart her with their insistence on a C context. This moment embodies Mirtillo’s incompatible love and bitterness.²⁶

Both Chafe and McClary explore how the madrigal’s melodic structures, cadences, and harmonies express Mirtillo’s love and anguish. Yet Chafe’s

²⁶ McClary, Modal Subjectivities, 185–187.
How We Got into Harmonic Tonality

interpretation hinges on Monteverdi’s emergence as a tonal composer, whereas McClary’s depends upon the composer’s commitment to an expressive approach to polyphonic composition rooted in the modes. The two authors adduce much of the same evidence to support their oppositional arguments. For Chafe, the C and G are two Riemannian functions seeking their third, whereas for McClary they reflect a melodic and structural instability in the Mixolydian mode. For both writers the ambiguity is resolved through the tonicization of D in the madrigal’s final section. Chafe’s dominant identifies G as the tonic, McClary’s is the culmination of the process by which the high A of “Ahi lasso” is repurposed as the top of a fifth descent to D which neuters the pull of the Mixolydian mode’s upper register toward C. What does it mean for our theories of tonality and modality that such perceptive analysts as McClary and Chafe can use the same evidence and come to radically different conclusions? Their conflict suggests that in an effort to define the origins of tonality we may be looking in the wrong place.

Why can’t McClary and Chafe just get along? Their impasse follows from their question: “Is Cruda Amarilli tonal?” does not have a yes-or-no answer. The question comes from Fétis: his initial claim that modality and tonality are two different manifestations of the same phenomenon (tonalité ancienne and tonalité moderne) has long been naturalized as an assumption that pieces adhere to one
system or the other. But in practice the two systems can be difficult to differentiate. Chafe and McClary both tie their analyses to the madrigal’s pitch content, yet, modal and tonal pitch collections are in many cases identical. As a result, pitch structure is an imperfect and often misleading criterion by which to distinguish modal and tonal repertoires. Instead, we might ask “How is Cruda Amarilli tonal?” Fétis would say that the madrigal’s tonality lies in the apppellative consonance and the drive toward tonic that this interval creates—that is, tonality is an energetic dynamic that directs a listener’s attention toward an anticipated future tonic arrival. In her later work, McClary similarly argues that the earliest tonal composers “harnessed the leading tone in order to create extended trajectories of desire,” though she does not cite Cruda Amarilli as an example. Alternately, Chafe locates tonality in the madrigal’s frequent cadences, motivated by Monteverdi’s mostly homophonic texture. Without imitation to guide his unfolding counterpoint, Monteverdi turns to short, goal-directed phrases, transposition, and repetition; phrase rhythm and large-scale structure govern the madrigal’s tonal relationships. Pitch, it seems, is not the key that unlocks Cruda Amarilli’s tonality—rather, it’s how Monteverdi organizes pitch that counts.

Of course, rhythm and meter alone cannot account for tonality in all of its rich, chaotic diversity. Tonality involves a host of intersecting parameters—consistent pitch distributions, stereotyped harmonic progressions, standardized voice-leading frameworks, conventional phrase templates, formal procedures involving modulation to closely related keys, to name only a few. Each of these components has its own complicated history. And none of them constitutes tonality on its own. But we have underemphasized the importance of regulatory structures, ranging from rhythm and meter to phrase structure and form, in our theories of tonality. Harmonic progressions and voice-leading frameworks are mired in specific metrical contexts; changing the metrical disposition of a phrase can alter our interpretation of it. Similarly, even as tonality motivates eighteenth- and nineteenth-century phrase structure and form, phrases and forms shape and communicate tonal trajectories—they don’t use tonality, but make tonality. Investment in these regulatory structures can pay particularly rewarding dividends for tonality’s history, precisely because they can be studied independently of incremental changes in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pitch structure. This is not the only story of tonality’s history worth telling, but it is a history that we cannot ignore.

27. Fétis sets up a dichotomy between tonalité ancienne and tonalité moderne throughout his writings. For instance, in the immediate aftermath of Monteverdi’s discovery of the V7 chord, “there was no longer a first, second, nor third mode, neither an authentic nor plagal in music; there was but major and minor, and in a word, tonalité ancienne disappeared and the moderne was created.” Fétis, Résumé philosophique, ccxxiii.

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Modality is not the Renaissance version of tonality

In 1974, Bernhard Meier characterized mode as “a well-established system of musical logic, complete in itself—a system of order effective in every place in any music according to its laws.” He believed that modality could unlock the mysteries of sixteenth-century polyphony if only we could internalize modal principles in the way we already unconsciously internalize tonal ones. He frames this quest in grand terms:

May this book lead its reader to that goal toward which the author has never tired of striving for twenty years: the revelation of Renaissance music to today’s listeners and students as a tonal language as alive and expressive as is more recent music, with which we are more familiar, and as a means of expression that speaks to our common humanity, if only we prove able and willing to understand its point of view and adopt it again as our own.

With this autobiographical petition, Meier situates his work in opposition to midcentury German attitudes about modality—that the modes are “deficient” versions of the major and minor scales waiting to be actualized as the tonal system of twenty-four keys within a triumphant narrative of musical progress. Instead, Meier argues that the modes organize the musical surface and background structure in the music of “the old masters,” lending them “coherence” and acting as “bearers and mediators of musically logical development.”

Meier embraces two common assumptions about modality: that (all) Renaissance music was composed in the modes, and that modality is analogous to tonality.

Harold Powers devoted much of his career to advocating a more skeptical view of modality. Powers contends that modal theory should be understood not as a prescriptive set of compositional rules, but rather as a descriptive classification system applied, mostly post hoc, to musical works. He notes that, when Pietro Aaron first articulated a doctrine of polyphonic modality, he aimed to organize compositions into modal categories, not to characterize mode as a musical property that was inherent to the compositional process. Instead, Powers notes


31. Ibid., 17, 27.


that composers were trained not on modal principles but rather on counterpoint rules. The separation of counterpoint and mode in Renaissance treatises is emblematic of the distinctive place these two discourses held in sixteenth-century musical thought. Counterpoint was the domain of musical practice; mode occupied the hazier realm of speculative theory. Furthermore, Powers demonstrates that composers tended to be explicit when they were composing “in” the modes. After Aaron’s treatise appeared in 1525, composers began to craft modal cycles and editors and music printers began to organize collections according to the modes. Self-consciously modal composition was a symptom, not a cause of modal theory. As a result, Powers urges us to separate modal theory from contrapuntal practice—two domains that were sometimes allied but often independent:

Polyphonic compositional practice and polyphonic modal theory are in principle completely independent of one another, and have a common historical basis only in their primitives, in the underlying tonal system of the Guidonian diatonic. Their convergence in the sixteenth century needs to be examined in the domains of practice and theory separately, and with different kinds of intellectual tools.

The gamut alone provides sufficient constraints to organize sixteenth-century counterpoint; modality adds an additional, optional layer of complexity.

Powers’s work has significant ramifications for the study of Renaissance polyphony. Frans Wiering succinctly summarizes the analytical opportunities that separating counterpoint, modal theory, and mode in practice affords:

Powers’s contribution to the study of polyphonic modality opens the way to a study of the creative and varied ways in which composers applied the modes to their works, provided that they chose to make use of them. The object of modal analysis is no longer to determine the mode of a piece, list the exceptional features, and explain them away according to a rather fixed set of principles; but rather to determine whether a mode figured in the composition, what conception the composer had of modality, by which modal characteristics he expressed the mode, how these features might have interfered with non-modal aspects of composition, whether and how the text is expressed by means of the mode, and so forth.

34. Because they are explicit about their modal designs (whether pre-compositional, in the case of composers’ cycles, or post-compositional, in the case of anthologies organized by editors or music printers), modal cycles have become the basis for most studies of polyphonic modality. See especially Frans Wiering, The Language of the Modes: Studies in the History of Polyphonic Modality (New York: Routledge, 2001), which includes an indispensable appendix listing modal cycles, and Michael R. Dodds, From Modes to Keys: The Organ in Baroque Liturgy (forthcoming).


At the same time, mode is not the only tool—or even an appropriate metric—for understanding much Renaissance polyphony.

Similarly, if we avoid reflexively describing all sixteenth-century counterpoint as “modal,” it is clear that we need to nuance claims like the ubiquitous “modality evolved into tonality.”\(^{37}\) Such a statement invokes at least three distinct historical and theoretical projects, which have different methodological underpinnings and attendant truth claims. First, we might trace how the eight or twelve modal scales eventually give way to the twenty-four major and minor keys; this question concerns the history of music theory. I will refer to this as the \textit{history of scales} approach. Joel Lester undertakes this project in \textit{Between Modes and Keys}, where he studies “the transition from recognition of modes to recognition of major and minor keys” in German music theory, which he links to “the transition from an intervallic to a chordal conception of harmony.”\(^{38}\) But this recognition—and even this \textit{chordal conception}—is the domain of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century music theorists, not composers (even though their concerns intersect).\(^{39}\) Critically, we can use musical sources in support of this theoretical history. For instance, Powers and Michael Dodds both use modal cycles to trace incremental changes in contemporary understanding of pitch structure.\(^{40}\) However, modal cycles are themselves engaged in a kind of theoretical project—studying them still tells us more about music theory than about musical practice writ large.

Powers makes a related but narrower argument in “From Psalmody to Tonality,” where he follows the paths of just two church tones as they transform into two modern keys in a constellation of French and German liturgical sources. Powers demonstrates that different keys have different kinds of origin stories—some modern keys are transformations of modes and church tones, others are transpositions of other keys. And some modes and church tones were “dead ends” that did not evolve into new keys. By attending to the nuances that distinguish different keys and modes, Powers challenges our modern assumption that all twenty-four keys are transpositionally equivalent. Powers notes, for instance, that “subtle differences among and within eighteenth-century tonalities are echoes of more fundamental differences among their ancestral sixteenth-century

\(^{37}\) Powers expresses this view forcefully: “This suggests that modality and tonality may be different kinds of phenomena, and therefore not related through any of the simple evolutionary sequences to which we are today accustomed, such as: ‘the modal system was displaced by the tonal system’; or, ‘modality evolved into tonality’; or, ‘the ancestors of our major and minor scales were the Ionian and Aeolian modes.’ “Is Mode Real?” 11–12. Cf. Chafe: “The dialectic of old and new is not the equivalent of a simple transition from modality to tonality” (Monteverdi’s Tonal Language, xiv).


\(^{40}\) Powers, “Tonal Types and Modal Categories”; Dodds, \textit{From Modes to Keys}. 
tonalities.” For example, when he traces the transformation of the Phrygian-inflected fourth church tone into E minor, he notes that “an E-minor tonality arising from the replacement of F-natural in the mi-tonality of E with F-sharp is not the same as an E-minor tonality arising from transposition up one degree of a D-minor tonality.” Studies like Lester’s and Powers’s explore the history of the twenty-four major and minor keys. However, just as we should avoid conflating sixteenth-century modal theory with sixteenth-century contrapuntal practice, so should we resist treating the twenty-four major and minor keys as constitutive of tonality.

A second, related project, entails not modes and keys themselves, but rather the background pitch structure that supports them. I will describe this as a history of pitch argument. For example, in his forthcoming monograph, From Modes to Keys: The Organ in Baroque Liturgy, Dodds documents a transformation from a linear, vocally conceived diatonic gamut (conceptualized as a set of octave species that are rotations within a fixed ladder) to a circular, keyboard-based chromatic gamut (conceptualized as a set of transposable scales organized by the circle of fifths). Dodds centers organists in his narrative: he documents a feedback loop between performance practice, repertoire, and music theory that motivated major shifts in how musicians of all stripes understood pitch structure in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of course, the history of scales and the history of pitch are intimately connected. Lester, Powers, and Dodds all elegantly traverse the porous boundary between them. Nevertheless, they describe distinct phenomena that affect theory and practice at different times and in different ways.

Finally, we might explore how tonal procedures inhere in sixteenth-century counterpoint, or how sixteenth-century contrapuntal procedures persist in later musics, an argument that is exclusive to musical practice—what I will call a history of style. This model locates tonality’s origins not in modal theory, but rather in a set of compositional principles that gradually emerge from polyphonic counterpoint. Considering tonality as a history of style draws our attention away from theoretical descriptions of modal classification and toward real compositional decisions and the listening strategies that they motivate. This approach prompts us to examine the tonal properties of surface-level musical features: consistent harmonic patterns, cadences, phrase structure, melodic construction, and musical form all impart tonality to Renaissance counterpoint. But this work depends on and is reciprocal with our definitions of tonality.

Because tonality is multivalent, histories of style study diverse repertoire through a variety of methodological lenses. For instance, Eric Chafe explains that Monteverdi’s Tonal Language is “less an attempt to describe a system according to

which Monteverdi composed than to set forth the systematic features of the tonal language of his time in general and describe his particular version of it.”

The scaffolding for Chafe’s study is not modality, but rather what he calls the “modal-hexachordal system,” which supports the background pitch collection, available cadence points, and transpositional possibilities of Monteverdi’s music.

Monteverdi’s tonal language, in Chafe’s argument, consists of a new, vertical dissonance treatment that animates directed tonal motion, an attendant distinction between surface and structure, and a hierarchical arrangement of tonal centers that organizes musical form, with hermeneutic effects. In a forthcoming book, Dmitri Tymoczko undertakes a radically different kind of style history. Tymoczko studies statistical properties of diverse repertoires to argue that “functionality” (that is, harmonic patterns that follow the kind of syntax we teach in undergraduate music theory courses) is shaped by and emergent from contrapuntal norms.

Following Lowinsky, Tymoczko identifies a kind of “proto-functionality” in the frottola and other popular song genres that flourished around the year 1500; he then explores the incremental changes in contrapuntal structure, harmonic progression, chord construction, and melodic style that contributed to the emergence of more mature functionality by the end of the sixteenth century. This book, too, is a history of style: I argue that composers invested homophonic counterpoint with dynamic tendency by harnessing the power of text-setting, meter, phrase structure, and form. They crafted harmonic trajectories where strategically placed dominant arrivals created expectation for tonic at multiple scales. These three projects trace different histories: Tymoczko is interested in the unwritten rules that govern chord-to-chord harmonic syntax, Chafe in the hermeneutic potential of large-scale tonal allegory, and I am concerned with how composers orient tonal trajectories in time. These are distinct histories of tonality, but they are complementary; their breadth reflects tonality’s abundant resources. What’s more, their points of contact and divergence are productive starting points for untangling some of tonality’s thorniest questions.

**Tonal expectation**

As composers explored new musical textures in the late sixteenth century, they experimented with fifth-related triads, building connections between them on multiple levels. I will call these triads *dominants* and *tonics* despite the terminological anachronism, and I will argue that connections between them facilitate *tonal expectation*, a mode of listening oriented toward tonic.

When composers deploy dominant arrivals strategically, they train listeners to predict tonic cadences at

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44. Chafe, *Monteverdi’s Tonal Language*, xiii.
45. Ibid., 21–37.
47. By framing tonality as a mode of listening rather than a property of musical works, I follow the recent work of Steven Rings, who posits that tonal hearing consists of listener “intention” or
structurally significant loci. Composers marshal a variety of musical parameters in support of these dominant–tonic trajectories: text-setting encourages metrical regularity, poetic rhyme promotes binary grouping structure, goal-directed melodies increase expectation for tonic arrivals, and formal repetition expands the listener’s perspective. As listeners connect increasingly distant dominants and tonics, they develop frameworks for orienting themselves within musical forms. Dominants and tonics act like you are here stickers on maps, situating listeners temporally and giving them space to observe the broader structures that surround them. By this model, tonality provides a set of navigational tools that organize listeners’ experience of musical works and make ever larger formal and tonal horizons accessible to them.

Tonal expectation is a feature of large-scale harmonic frameworks rather than surface-level chord syntax. Of course, these domains are intertwined—local harmonic progressions contribute to tonal expectation, and the history of tonality unfolds in the interaction between local and global musical features. However, if we separate global expectation from local syntax we can consider these domains independently, and thereby paint a fuller picture of tonality’s complex history. For instance, in the homophonic partsong repertoire, the large-scale trajectories that organize phrase structure and form are both consistent and circumscribed even when the surface-level harmonic progressions evade functional interpretation. The repertoire’s abundant period-like phrases and I–V–I tonal plans are important antecedents to later tonal strategies. Eventually, big-picture dominant–tonic trajectories and highly regulated harmonic syntax would come together. But we’ve focused disproportionally on the latter, causing us to ignore other significant early milestones in tonality’s history—milestones like homophony.

Homophonic textures—ranging from Gastoldi’s bite-sized vernacular confections to Victoria’s rich sacred polychoral fare—have long attracted scholarly attention because their surface is so obviously triadic. But these triads don’t merely provide us with evidence of sixteenth-century harmonic syntax. Homophonic textures motivated composers to develop new tools for organizing music’s temporal flow, since the musical surface was no longer animated by the orientation toward tonic that colors other musical events: Tonality and Transformation (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). David Huron has made a similar argument about tonal hearing rooted in the psychology of expectation in Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).


49. For instance, Lowinsky notes “the composer’s interest in chordal progressions that receive their sanction not from laws of intervallic counterpoint but from a harmonic sense based on an astonishingly early feeling for tonal logic” in the frottola and villancico (Tonality and Atonality, 6). More recently, Miguel A. Roig-Francoli has identified “the presence of a harmonic bass that supports fifth-related root-position triads” in Victoria’s polychoral masses: “From Renaissance to Baroque: Tonal Structures in Tomás Luis de Victoria’s Masses,” Music Theory Spectrum 40, no. 1 (2018): 40.
gradual interaction of perfection and imperfection and the placid interweaving of points of imitation. Instead, in homophonic contexts the structure and rhythm of the text plays a substantial role in shaping the phrase structure and the form—a role that's decidedly different from the line-by-line approach to texts that Zarlino and other theorists advocated for polyphonic counterpoint. Homophonic counterpoint produced a highly segmented musical surface, with efficient text-setting, frequent cadences, minimal dissonance, and audible phrase boundaries. Composers, I argue, used tonal expectation to make this regimented surface comprehensible—and even meaningful. Homophony was a new kind of terrain that demanded novel equipment.

Since Leonard Meyer claimed that musical experience is characterized by expectation, the term has become as slippery and overdetermined as the triad itself.50 At the same time, expectation lies at the intersection of culture and biology, making it difficult to theorize definitively.51 Since Emotion and Meaning in Music was published sixty years ago, the theoretical literature on expectation has expanded considerably, but the intuitive general principle has remained surprisingly stable. When we listen to music we unconsciously compare what we're hearing to other music that we know and hypothesize about likely future events; when musical stimuli confirm or contradict these expectations, we react emotionally. David Huron has explored psychological expectation at length, building on recent work in experimental music psychology and computer-assisted corpus analysis. He demonstrates that expectations arise from repeated exposure to contextually similar stimuli, a process called statistical learning. Listeners remember and respond to regularities in a repertoire, thereby forming expectations that unfamiliar works will follow familiar patterns. Accurate predictions yield a cognitive reward—which we experience as pleasure—and expectation generally facilitates perception.52

In the homophonic partsong repertoire, then, tonal expectation involves a feedback loop between regular features of the musical surface and listeners' capacity to hear and interpret these regularities. The first of these is easier to pin down: dominant–tonic trajectories are ubiquitous in the homophonic partsong repertoire. What's more, composers use a number of other parameters to highlight these trajectories. More complicated is the question of what listeners heard and how they interpreted it. Robert Gjerdingen and Vasili Byros have recently laid critical groundwork for the study of historical listening. In his work on galant music, Gjerdingen has argued that we can access historical listening habits by studying regularities in musical repertoires—specifically, skeletal musical gestures that he calls schemata.53 Gjerdingen's theory is built on cognitive psychology: an individual's listening history determines the schemata that she brings to the

51. Huron, Sweet Anticipation, 3.
52. Ibid., 43. For a summary of the relationship between statistical learning and expectation, see pp. 59–89.
listening experience and thereby frames her understanding of the work’s meaning and quality. While Gjerdingen does not consider expectation explicitly, his work, like that of Meyer and Huron, builds on the notion that learned probabilities of likely musical events shape the way listeners engage with music in real time. At the same time, Gjerdingen acknowledges that characterizing historical listening presents significant obstacles and instead describes his project as “developing a historically informed mode of listening to galant music.”\textsuperscript{54} Byros has recently expanded Gjerdingen's project by triangulating schema theory, corpus analysis, and reception history.\textsuperscript{55} Byros traces the shifting reception of the opening of Beethoven’s \textit{Eroica} from the nineteenth century to the present; he argues convincingly that shifts in musical style—in particular, the rise and fall of a particular chromatic melodic schema—conditioned changing interpretations of the harmonically ambiguous opening phrase. Consequently, Byros argues that schemata “engender a situated psychology of hearing” and “provide access to historical modes of listening today.”\textsuperscript{56} By extension, he concurs with Gjerdingen’s hypothesis that we can “interpret[] a musical corpus as a metaphor for experience”: schemata are indeed “equivalent to the knowledge structures of listeners.”\textsuperscript{57} Of course, schemata are historically situated: they are specific to eighteenth-century courtly listening and therefore have little relevance to sixteenth-century compositional practice or listening habits. Nonetheless, Gjerdingen and Byros’s work is provocative in its suggestion that statistical regularities in musical repertoires may help us to reverse-engineer the expectations of listeners whose experience is quite distant from our own.

At the same time, sixteenth-century recreational musicians interacted with the music of their day in a manner quite different from eighteenth- or twenty-first-century listeners. As I will outline in Chapter 2, the homophonic partsong repertoire provided popular entertainment for the educated and noble classes. These enthusiastic musical amateurs rehearsed and performed these works in amicable company, using whatever combination of instruments and singers was at hand. This is not music for listeners. Rather, sixteenth-century composers routinely embedded these charming partsongs with humor, references, and puns that would have been invisible to listeners. Consequently, my approach to sixteenth-century popular song emphasizes the experience of amateurs performing from partbooks. Performers are a privileged kind of audience—their encounters with musical works are visual, aural, and embodied, they engage with pieces multiple times, they are participants in as well as consumers of the music.

\textsuperscript{54} Gjerdingen, \textit{Music in the Galant Style}, 19.
\textsuperscript{56} Byros, “Meyer’s Anvil,” 278.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 278, 306.
On sixteenth-century listening

In his incisive commentary on the assumptions underlying the discipline of music theory, David Temperley calls attention to two distinct approaches to the study of “musical structure”: descriptive theories “intent . . . to describe some aspect of musical perception or cognition,” while suggestive theories “seek . . . to enhance it in some way.”

Both of these methodologies are complicated by history. Whether we aim to describe a mode of perception or enrich hearings of a musical work, we have to ask whose perception is at stake. Is it our own? Or is it that of the historical listener, contemporary with the musical work? Obviously, the former is tidier: we can make (fairly) uncomplicated claims about our own experience, and assume that our experience can be replicated in listeners who resemble us. But the latter—our historical listener—is more difficult to pin down, even as she hovers implicit in the background of much of our theoretical work.

In this book, I aim to explore how sixteenth-century listeners might have heard based on the statistical regularities in the repertoires to which they were exposed and the compositional decisions that reflect assumptions about these regularities. Though we can’t know for sure how listeners of any period heard, we can study how repertoires change and how repertoires and the pieces that comprise them make space for, and encourage, certain kinds of hearing. I have sought continuities between possible sixteenth-century listening strategies and modern ones. I posit that this modern experience of listening is tonal, insofar as it describes our ability to hear motion from dominant to tonic at multiple scales within a piece.

Of course, we can never know how sixteenth century listeners heard, or even what they heard—musica ficta, text underlay, mensural notation, performance practice, and more leave much to our historical imagination. And we certainly ought not to map our own anachronistic hearing backward more than four hundred years. But it’s also clear that the resources of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theories are limited in their capacity to account for the music of their time, and that our own modern listening experience is no more or less contingent than a sixteenth- or eighteenth- or twenty-second-century one. To combat these criticisms, allow me to state at the outset my assumptions. First, tonality can be understood as a way of hearing that posits meaningful relationships between certain kinds of harmonic events (tonal expectation). Second, we are taught to hear tonally by regularities in the repertoires we know well (statistical learning), and we don’t have to understand that we are hearing tonally to hear that way.

Third, many of the features that contribute to our experience of hearing tonally

exist, robustly, in repertoires outside of our agreed upon tonal "common practice." And finally, where possible, I have endeavored to contextualize historical compositional techniques and listener/performer behaviors with the intellectual culture that surrounded, influenced, and aimed to describe them.

The elusive phenomenon of tonal expectation pervades our thinking about music in part because we can account for it in so many different ways: it is an intrinsic property of musical works, a mode of listening, a feature of cognition, and an aspect of the collective experience of engaging with culturally situated artifacts. I borrow unapologetically from all of these methodological camps. In Chapter 2, I introduce the repertoire that is central to this study: the balletto and homophonic canzonetta. These popular partsongs circulated widely in Italy in the decades surrounding the turn of the seventeenth century, and their infectious style was avidly translated and imitated by English and German composers. I situate the international circulation of these partsongs within a broader culture of early modern translation to show how tonality emerged in distinct ways in different regions. I also explore how three musical styles—homophony, monody, and dance—converge in the homophonic partsong repertoire, and suggest that they share a vertical orientation that directs compositional attention away from pitch and toward music's movement through time.

The main body of the book comprises four chapters that explore how the homophonic partsong repertoire encourages tonal expectation on different levels. In Chapter 3, I draw on sixteenth-century text-setting rules and recent theories of sixteenth-century mensuration to demonstrate how metrically constrained text-setting schemas reinforce harmonic motion at regular periodicities. I correlate this argument with research from cognitive science that shows how meter orients listener attention toward metrically strong events. In Chapter 4, I place Carl Dahlhaus’s theory of subordination versus coordination in dialogue with recent theories of phrase structure in vocal music to argue that composers used melodic, poetic, and rhetorical techniques to guide listeners through phrases. Through the analysis of over one thousand phrases, I demonstrate how repertoire-wide norms privilege dominant–tonic relationships at the phrase level. Chapter 5 uses theories of smallness to illustrate how balletti train listeners to attend to tonal dynamics at multiple scales within individual musical works. And I consider Italian, English, and German balletti in terms of sixteenth-century theories of translation to explore how regional stylistic variation reflects localized musical preferences. Chapter 6 takes a broader view: I draw on Elizabeth Margulis’s work on repetition to explore how listeners oriented and reoriented themselves within musical forms, and I follow Hepokoski and Darcy to argue that deviations from harmonic, tonal, and formal norms establish and reinforce those norms. What this diffuse approach lacks in systematic rigor it gains in flexibility, which is critical in a study that explores tonal dynamics in so many different domains. After all, tonality is woven out of many threads, and only a flexible approach can begin to account for its rich colors and intricate patterns.

The final chapter steps away from the homophonic partsongs that are the focus of the rest of the study and instead reflects on other homophonic repertoires that flourished throughout the sixteenth century. I consider the improvisatory forms of
the frottola, which captivated courtly circles in the first decades of the century and which benefitted from Ottaviano Petrucci’s earliest experiments in music printing. I then turn to France and musique mesurée, and explore the impact of midcentury rhythmic experimentation on the kinds of tonal expectation that I discuss earlier in the book. Finally, I look to the sacred realm and address the German cantional—four-voice Lutheran chorale settings that were the precursors to Bach’s chorales. These repertoires encompass three languages and span one hundred years, yet, they all set vernacular poetry and prioritize the comprehensibility of their texts. And all of them encourage, to different extents, the same kinds of listening strategies manifested in the homophonic partsong repertoire. All four repertoires are products of the aesthetic requirements of humanism, which demands a new attention to the meaning, character, and moral effect of vernacular texts. Homophony, and the tonal hearing it supports, is simply a means to an end.

It is clear from the many promising leads, false starts, dead ends, and unanswered questions that plague studies of this topic that any history of tonality will be necessarily speculative, contingent, and incomplete. What’s more, every attempt to elucidate an aspect of this history must take a position on what tonality is in the first place—a question that, as a discipline, we continue to discover is more complicated than we thought. These questions, at their best, go hand-in-hand. We can’t fully grapple with tonality if we don’t understand its origins, and we can’t trace its history if we don’t know what it is. Thus, this book offers a hypothesis: that one view of tonality and one sixteenth-century repertoire interact and illuminate one another in compelling ways. I believe that we can learn something about tonality through this approach, speculative though it may be, that we cannot learn any other way. And this book explores only one of many routes through which tonality came to be.
An encounter between two brothers—a stricken Philomathes and his more stolid counterpart Polymathes—opens Thomas Morley’s *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*. Sensing his brother’s distress, Polymathes inquires about the social gathering that Philomathes attended the previous night, and Philomathes recounts his humiliation:

> Supper being ended, and Musicke bookes, according to the custome being brought to the table: the mistresse of the house presented mee with a part, earnestly requesting mee to sing. But when after manie excuses, I protested unfainedly that I could not: everie one began to wonder. Yea, some whispered to others, demaunding how I was brought up: so that upon shame of mine ignorance I go nowe to seeke out mine olde friend master Gnorimus, to make my selfe his scholler.¹

Music literacy, like the ability to dance or play cards, was an essential social grace for the well-bred gentleman in the late sixteenth century. Philomathes was embarrassed because, while he could discourse learnedly on a number of subjects, he was unable to opine on the musical trends of the day and was stymied by the request that he might sight-read from an unfamiliar music book. Morley’s account provides a rare glimpse into the role of music-making in English social life. The whole family could enjoy singing from partbooks after supper, and it is easy to imagine mixing some sight-singing with more confident performances of a handful of favorite ditties, working out an Italian madrigal in a learned style alongside a more familiar English ballet, or handing around a newly published anthology and working out which of the five-part songs best suited the voice types of the present company.

A well-connected family’s music collection might include a variety of partsongs, lute books, and keyboard music in a range of styles and languages. For instance, a 1622 catalogue of the music books of Edward Somerset, fourth Earl of Worcester includes over one hundred printed collections, about half English and half Italian, of a mix of sacred and secular partsongs. Somerset collected Thomas Morley’s and Thomas Weelkes’s cheerful balletts alongside the more serious secular songs of Michael East and John Wilbye, he owned several anthologies of Italian madrigals translated into English, and he maintained a significant collection of Byrd’s Latin-texted sacred music. At the same time, his collection included serious madrigals by Luca Marenzio and Claudio Monteverdi, lighthearted *canzoni napolitani* and *canzonette* by Giovanni Feretti and Orazio Vecchi, and motets and *madrigali spirituali* by Marenzio. His diverse tastes likely reflect those of other well-to-do English families.

### Popular song

Though scholars have devoted a great deal of energy to the fine volumes of serious madrigals that appear in these private collections, we have paid less attention to the frivolous popular songs that were ubiquitous at sixteenth- and seventeenth-century social gatherings. As composers developed the literary Italian madrigal in the sixteenth century, they simultaneously cultivated a lighter, rustic style. Courtly musicians appropriated regional dialect songs and combined them with more learned contrapuntal techniques to develop a number of distinct partsong and monodic genres, including the *canzone villanesca alla napolitana*, the *villotta*, and the *villanella*. These strophic, sectional forms flourished in Italy throughout the sixteenth century and interacted with more serious secular styles. By the final decades of the century, the rustic genres were increasingly corralled in miscellanies of light partsongs with metaphorical titles, where they were treated as humorous set-pieces poking fun at regional stereotypes (one of these collections, Vecchi’s *Il convito musicale* [1597], was in Somerset’s library). Meanwhile, in the 1580s
Vecchi developed a new genre, the canzonetta, which interwove the popular homophonic style of the villanella with more learned counterpoint. A similar form, the balletto, emerged a decade later, with its roots in instrumental dance music. The balletto and canzonetta gained international popularity in the decades surrounding the year 1600. These simple, mostly homophonic partsongs combined the appeal of the villanella’s carefree strophic texts and tuneful melodies with the rhythmic vitality and ebullient energy of dance.

In the pages that follow, we will observe how transmission and translation of canzonette and balletti across geographical and linguistic boundaries encouraged the proliferation of novel musical forms as composers adapted Italian styles to best suit their regional preferences. Homophonic partsongs circulated widely, helping the new, simplified musical style to spread throughout Europe. Adaptations of the canzonetta and balletto varied regionally, and we will see how local stylistic preferences fostered distinct tonal norms. Finally, we will consider how the canzonetta and balletto incorporate features of polyphony, monody, and dance to create a musical style that encourages a decidedly tonal form of participation.

The transmission of Gastoldi’s Balletti a cinque voci

No music book better demonstrates the potency of the homophonic style than Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi’s Balletti a cinque voci (Venice, 1591) (Figure 2.1). Though Gastoldi did not compose the first balletto—that honor apparently goes to Vecchi, who had included a single balletto in Selva the previous year—Gastoldi both named and popularized the genre with his bestseller. Morley attributes the genre to him in A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke, writing: “There be also an other kind of Ballets commonlie called fa las, the first set of that kind which I have seene was made by Gastaldi, if others have laboured in the same field, genres to early experiments in opera, on the other hand, it has been used to distinguish the light partsongs of Vecchi, Banchieri, and others from more “serious” secular polyphony in the last decades of the sixteenth century. Instead, I will describe these books as canzonetta collections, though I acknowledge that they encompass a variety of generic types. See discussion in Paul Schleuse, Singing Games in Early Modern Italy: The Music Books of Orazio Vecchi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 161–175.


I know not but a slight kind of musick it is, & as I take it devised to be daunced to voices.” As Morley indicates, balletti are distinguished primarily by their fa la

8. Morley, Plaine and Easie Introduction, 180. Morley’s apparent disdain for the genre is disingenuous as he had already published a collection of balletts largely based on Gastoldi’s in 1595, two years before the publication of A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practickall Musick. Jeremy Smith has
refrains and their unambitious scope. The core of Gastoldi's collection is a set of fifteen balletti with descriptive titles, framed by a handful of partsongs in other genres. The collection defined the form of the balletto: each consists of short homophonic verses paired with homophonic or lightly contrapuntal nonsense syllable refrains. Each setting is strophic, and ten out of fifteen use a binary refrain form (ArArBrBr). La sirena (no. 11) is a representative example: it is homophonic throughout, with a consistent rate of declamation and completely regular phrase rhythm (Example 2.1). La sirena has a limited harmonic palette: the verses emphasize F major while the refrains return to the D final, preparing each final authentic cadence with a half cadence that bisects the refrain. Gastoldi uses dissonance sparingly. Typically, Gastoldi's B section traverses wider harmonic territory than his A section; atypically, his second refrain is essentially identical to the first. The entire partsong is incredibly concise—with repeats and both verses, a performance at a quick tempo lasts only a minute.

Venetian music consumers must have enjoyed the novelty of the balletto's simple tunes and charming refrains, because Gastoldi's Balletti a cinque voci was instantly popular. The collection was reprinted ten times in Venice, including three impressions in 1591 alone. A typical press run was between five hundred and one thousand copies, though a printer might produce two or three thousand copies of a bestseller, so before the year was out several thousand copies of Balletti a cinque voci were circulating in Venice and possibly nearby cities on prominent trade routes. The thriving music printing trade created a new opportunity for consumers to impose their tastes on composers, printers, and booksellers; Venetians demonstrated an unequivocal desire for more homophonic partsong.

9. To aid readers unfamiliar with mensural terminology, I refer to semibreve groupings as measures and my musical examples include bar lines at this level. However, I also use mensural terminology as necessary; my approach to mensuration is informed by Graeme M. Boone, “Marking Mensural Time,” Music Theory Spectrum 22, no. 1 (2000): 1–43; Ruth I. DeFord, Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm in Renaissance Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

10. In response to the schematic text-setting and recursive grouping structure in the repertoire, I am quite liberal in my application of the term “cadence”—I treat most metrically strong harmonic arrivals approached with a leap by fifth or fourth in the bass as a cadence. This allows for terminological consistency across multiple levels of formal hierarchy, though it demands that I describe some sub-phrase endings as cadential. However, most of these sub-phrase arrivals would have been considered cadences by Renaissance musicians; for a summary of Renaissance cadence types see Bernhard Meier, The Modes of Classical Vocal Polyphony: Described According to the Sources, with Revisions by the Author, trans. Ellen Beebe (New York: Broude Brothers, 1988), 89–122.


Example 2.1 Gastoldi, *La sirena* (1591, no. 11).

A section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 mm. verse</th>
<th>4 mm. refrain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

```
Que sta dol-ce Si-re-na Col can-to-ac-que-ta il mar Fa la la la la la la la la
```

B section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 mm. verse (rhymes with A section)</th>
<th>4 mm. refrain (echoes A section refrain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

```
Un suo leg-gia-dro ri-so Può l’a-ria se-re-nar Fa la la la la la la la la la
```

```
III
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```
V
```

```
I:PAC
```

```
III
```

```
V
```

```
I:PAC
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Gastoldi followed up on his success with a collection of three-voice partsongs with lute tablature, *Balletti, con la intavolatura del liuto, per cantare, sonare, & ballare* (Venice, 1594). Though this collection featured the same cheerful homophony and colorful descriptive titles as the 1591 print, none of its so-called *balletti* include a nonsense syllable refrain, and the pieces are better described as homophonic *canzonette*. Gastoldi’s misleading title may have been a marketing ploy—an attempt to capitalize on the stunning success of his 1591 collection. In any case, Gastoldi’s 1594 *Balletti à 3* garnered an impressive thirteen reprints, but was eclipsed by the immense popularity of the 1591 collection.

The fever for Gastoldi’s *Balletti a cinque voci* spread through Europe as booksellers promoted reprinted editions, anthologies, and translations of Gastoldi’s partsongs. Eleven editions appeared in Antwerp between 1596 and 1640, and the collection was also reprinted in Nuremberg (1600, 1606), Paris (1614), Douai (1627), Rotterdam (1628), and Amsterdam (1641, 1648). Thomas Morley was the first to pay homage to Gastoldi with his *First Booke of Balletts to Five Voyces* (London, 1595). Morley’s collection contains twenty-one partsongs, fifteen of which are balletts, after Gastoldi’s model. Eight of Morley’s balletts are free compositions of partsongs from Gastoldi’s print. Morley also published his *First Booke of Balletts* in a parallel Italian edition, possibly in an (unsuccessful) attempt to market modified copies of Italian music back to Italians, or, less likely, to satisfy a desire for Italian “fa las” in England, since Gastoldi’s collection was never printed there. Morley’s Italian-language collection was subsequently translated into German by Valentin Haussmann as *Liebliche fröhliche Ballette* (Nuremberg, 1609). Curiously, Haussmann does not address the collection’s close relationship to Gastoldi’s originals, which had already appeared in two editions in Nuremberg, though he does reference his own German edition of Gastoldi’s three-voice *canzonette* in his introduction.

*Balletti a cinque voci* continued to spawn translations through the late seventeenth century, so apparently they were not deemed too old-fashioned for continued adaptation. The late translators often eschewed the genre-defining

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nonsense syllable refrain, suggesting that they were drawn to the partsongs’ simple melodies, straightforward harmonies, and regular phrase rhythm rather than their forms. Both of Gastoldi’s balletto collections were reprinted in the mid-seventeenth century in Amsterdam with Dutch texts. Printer Paulus Matthysz published a parallel-language anthology of Gastoldi’s five-voice collection in 1657 (Italianese Balletten mit vijf en ses stemmen) (Figure 2.2). Matthysz faithfully translates all of Gastoldi’s partsongs, but also squeezes in some bonus partsongs at the bottoms of roomy pages in smaller type. Matthysz usually replaces the nonsense syllable refrains with additional text, but he often sets this text in a Roman typeface rather than Fraktur to differentiate it from the verses. Twenty-five years later Gastoldi’s balletti were translated again, this time into English. Scottish publisher John Forbes included translations of six of Gastoldi’s balletti in the 1682 edition of Songs and fancies to severall musciall parts. The new texts make no reference to the

Figure 2.2 Gastoldi, Il contento (1591, no. 3), and Vecchi, Chi vuol goder il mondo (1597, no. 41), in Matthysz, Italianese Balletten mit vijf en ses stemmen (1657), Canto partbook, sig. A3r. © The British Library Board, Music Collections B.317.

18. Four of these come from Gastoldi’s 1594 collection and one, O sovereign of my joy, from the 1591 collection (A lieta vita). I have not been able to identify the source of the sixth song, Bring back my comfort and return, though Forbes attributes it to Gastoldi.
original Italian meaning of the words and have been composed based solely on the music, because the number of syllables per line does not align with Gastoldi’s originals, nor does Forbes maintain the fa la refrains.

The title of Gastoldi’s collection advertised its suitability for a variety of performance contexts—per cantare, sonare, & ballare—and this flexibility is reflected in the diversity of sources in which his balletti survive. They were popular sources for German contrafacta, made famous in the third volume of Lindemann’s Amorum filii dei decades duae (1598) and subsequently transmitted in several manuscript sources. They also appeared with their Italian texts in books of lute music, including Emanuelli Adrienssen’s Pratum musicum (1600) (see Figure 2.4) and a manuscript lutebook, Anderer Thail | P. H. Lautenbuecher. Two appear in lute tablature in Cesare Negri’s dance treatise, Le Gratie d’Amore (1601), with choreography. Texted part songs were often performed by viol consorts (with or without a singer); accordingly, five of Gastoldi’s balletti appear in an early seventeenth-century instrumental collection. And thirteen of the three-voice pieces from Gastoldi’s 1594 balletto collection appear in keyboard intabulation in a collection that dates from the turn of the seventeenth century.

19. Lindemann’s collection survives only as a single tenor partbook (PL–Kj Mus.ant.pract. L 920) and little is known about it; I have been unable to locate a catalogue of the volume’s contents, though we know that it contains eight Gastoldi balletti. The prominence of nos. 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 14, and 15 in later manuscript sources suggests that these may have originated in the Lindemann collection. The print is discussed in Michael Chizzali, “Musik aus Italien an ernestinischen Höfen des 16. Jahrhunderts,” in Die Ernestiner: Politik, Kultur und gesellschaftlicher Wandel, ed. Werner Greiling et al., Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission für Thüringen (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2016), 420–421. The title page is reproduced in Aleksandra Patalas, ed. Catalogue of Early Music Prints from the Collections of the Former Preußische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, Kept at the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow (Kraków: Musica Iagellonica, 1999), 214. The seventeenth-century manuscript sources include D–W Cod. Guelf. 322 Mus. Hdschr., D–DI Mus.Löb.10,4, D–Cl Ms Mus 18 and D–WRha Udestedt 4 (these appear to be two partbooks from the same source), and D–LUC 3469 B.

20. Pratum Musicum anthologizes several genres. It is a lovely folio edition and must have been expensive to produce. I have not seen the manuscript lute book, which is housed in the Herzog August Bibliothek (18.7 Aug 2o [II]). These sources are quite different and must not be related to one another—the Adriansen is a tablebook with lute tablature and a canto and basso part and includes nine of Gastoldi’s balletti with the first verse of their Italian text only; the manuscript has only two of Gastoldi’s balletti but includes all of their verses, and has lute tablature but no additional music notation. Hudson reprints the lute arrangement of Tutti venite armati from the manuscript source in The Allemande, the Balletto, and the Tanz, 1:125, 2:26–28.


22. D–As 4o Tonkunst Schletterer 219/1. Only the Basso partbook survives, so it is possible that the text was included in another partbook.

The widespread popularity of Gastoldi’s modest collection, even before his
death in 1609, surely exceeded his expectations: it precipitated more than thirty
editions in three languages and inaugurated the balletto as a fashionable—and
profitable—genre. When we track the dispersal of Gastoldi’s collection, we get a
glimpse of how musical style circulated and was transformed throughout Europe
in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The accessible style of the balletto
appealed to a variety of amateur musicians. No doubt inspired by Gastoldi’s
success, English and German composers, editors, and publishers began producing
editions of Italianate partsong to satisfy their growing market. But, as I will explore
in the next section, each region developed a slightly different style, inspired by
their distinct musical histories, the particular tastes of their audiences, and even
the accentual patterns of their vernaculars. Additionally, English and German
musicians had divergent aims—while Morley adapted the Italian style to make it
more English, Hans Leo Hassler and his contemporaries refashioned the German
style to make it more Italianate. In the homophonic partsong we have the rare
opportunity to see composers from around Western Europe in conversation with
one another as they together develop a new musical style.

_Englishing English, entdeutschen Deutschen_

Gentlemen like Sir Charles Somerset purchased anthologies of Italian music from
local booksellers and collected music from foreign printing centers while traveling
abroad. Yet, while musically literate families had access to Italian music, it is
difficult to imagine how they _experienced_ this music, as many educated Europeans
did not speak Italian. Much of the Italian madrigal’s appeal lay in the nuances of
Petrarchan poetic tropes and the coordination of music and text. At the same time,
the lighter styles, especially the earlier _canzoni alla napolitana_ and _villanelle_,
assumed familiarity with stereotypes about regional Italian dialects and cultures.
This posed a problem for English and German consumers who generally lacked
the facility with Italian language and culture that would enable them to grasp the
deeper meanings of these partsongs. As English editor Nicholas Yonge describes
in the preface to his anthology _Musica Transalpina_ (1588), “Italian Songs, are for
sweetnes of Aire, verie well liked of all, but most in account with them that
understand that language. As for the rest, they doe either not sing them at all, or at
the least with little delight.” For a typical English citizen or German burgher, the
combination of sight-singing in a foreign language and missing the meaning in a
repertoire defined by the relationships between music and text was surely
frustrating. The author of a 1608 English translation of Italian sacred songs echoes

25. Nicholas Yonge, _Musica Transalpina_ (London, 1588), sig. Aii. Prefaces to German collections
   frequently echo Yonge’s concerns; see Hammond, _Editing Music in Early Modern Germany_,
   77–116.
Yonge’s concerns and implies that Italian-texted partsongs were often sung without the words. He laments:

Through their want of understanding the Italian, they are deprived of a Chief part of their delight. For albeit that the verie concet of the Note may sweetly strike the outward sence of the eare; yet it is the Dittie [text], which conveyed with the Musicke to the intellectual Soule, by the Organs of hearing, that doth touch the hart, and stir the affections eyther to Jocondnes, or Sadnes, Levitie, or Gravitie, according to the nature of the Composition.

The translator’s concerns are both aesthetic and moral—in the context of humanist interest in ancient music’s capacity to move the affections and related anxieties about decorum, understanding the close relationship between music and text was not incidental but essential to musical experience.

Unsurprisingly, then, two features of Italian music—its text-focused aesthetic and its popularity abroad—fostered a lucrative market for translations. As a result, a new intermediary entered the already intricate web of labor surrounding music printing: the composer, printer, and bookseller were joined by the professional music editor, who assembled anthologies, often with texts translated into the vernacular. This editorial work both responded to and shaped local musical tastes. Editors selected partsongs that complemented one another and suited their local clientele, they accounted for regional variations in notational conventions, such as musica ficta and repeat signs, and they translated both the sound and the sense of their texts, which were often rife with allusions that would be lost on foreign audiences.

Even structural differences between languages posed problems for editors, as Abraham Ratz explains in the preface to his German-language edition of Jacob Regnart’s canzoni alla napolitana:

These Italian rhythms are very uneven, since one line might have eleven syllables, the one following it five, another one six, or more or fewer syllables (whereas, in contrast, the Germans count their meters and rhythms precisely in even and exact

feet); also often in the Italian texts an entire syllable is elided and removed at the end of a word . . . which the German language does not permit.\textsuperscript{31}

Ratz identifies a fundamental incompatibility between the German and Italian languages. Italian syllabic verse is counted according to the number of syllables in a line, while German (and English) accentual-syllabic verse is counted according to the number of metrical feet. (I will explore the interactions between syllabic and accentual-syllabic verse in more detail in Chapter 3.) The difficulties of mapping the accentual patterns of German or English onto the irregular structures of Italian poetry are compounded by the musical setting. Hammond reminds us that in the madrigal “the musical gestures were designed to reinforce the grammar, syntax, punctuation, and tonic accent of the original language.”\textsuperscript{32} Musical meter, melodic contour, pitch duration, cadential placement, and a host of other musical parameters require coordination with the text. Furthermore, translators hoped to maintain the close relationship between text and music that made Italian secular song so attractive in the first place. Thus, editors had to balance the distinct demands of translating the text faithfully, harmonizing the meaning of the words with the text painting, and coordinating the rhythms and accentual patterns of the text to those of the original musical setting.

Consequently, composers and editors developed a variety of translation strategies, which varied according to whether they preferred an accurate linguistic translation or a satisfying musical setting. Laura Macy compares two English anthologies, Nicholas Yonge’s \textit{Musica transalpina} (1588, 1597) and Thomas Watson’s \textit{Italian madrigalls Englished} (1590) to demonstrate this distinction. Yonge’s and Watson’s contrasting approaches to translation are evident in the titles of their anthologies. While in Yonge’s edition the texts were “brought to speake English” and translated with faithfulness to the meaning of the original words, Watson’s anthology was translated “not to the sense of the originall dittie, but after the affection of the noate.”\textsuperscript{33} The verb “to English” implies more than linguistic translation—in a period when English cultural, linguistic, and proto-national identity was taking shape, the act of “Englishing” involved both absorbing foreign works and re-forming them in a new, native English style. Yonge, Watson, and eventually Morley did not merely translate Italian texts into English, they adapted


\textsuperscript{32} Hammond, \textit{Editing Music in Early Modern Germany}, 86.

\textsuperscript{33} Laura Macy situates the two approaches in terms of the anthologists’ understanding of decorum, the notion that style and sense should be coordinated. Yonge carefully copied his source texts in an attempt to maintain the decorum of the original setting. Watson, on the other hand, wrote his texts strictly based on the music, allowing the musical figures to dictate the content and syntax of his poetry. See Laura Macy, “The Due Decorum Kept: Elizabethan Translation and the Madrigals Englished of Nicholas Yonge and Thomas Watson,” \textit{Journal of Musicological Research} 17, no. 1 (1998): 1–21.
the Italian musical style to make it more English. Morley’s collection, which he marketed not as a translation, but rather as a new collection of English pieces, is the culmination of this process.

Given the challenges of translating Italian music into German and English, many anthologists preferred the simplicity of strophic partsongs to the nuances of serious madrigals. Sara E. Dumont argues that the lighter Italian styles circulated more widely and were more broadly imitated because they were more approachable, even with a language barrier:

While Germans could fairly easily grasp the immediate meaning of an Italian poem, the extremely subtle and complex text-music relationship of the most serious madrigals, which depended upon a complete literary understanding of the poem’s content and its form, would have been much more difficult for Germans to grasp, and even more difficult to translate.34

*Balletti and canzonette* usually had simple texts with short three- or four-line stanzas—these modest poems were much easier to translate than the traditional Italian literary forms that were sources for more serious madrigals.35 Strophic partsongs lent themselves particularly well to translation because their music and text were not too closely coordinated. As Ruth DeFord has demonstrated, strophic settings require text-setting that is consistent with the meter of the poem rather than the declamation of individual words.36 Consequently, composers relied on formulaic rhythmic patterns, which aided translators who hoped to map the accentual patterns of English and German onto the flexible declamation of Italian.

Translation animated Renaissance intellectual culture. Humanism demanded the translation of ancient texts from Greek into Latin, an enterprise that stirred anxieties in Renaissance translators and commentators about the unbridgeable gap between antiquity and the present.37 Many of these anxieties played out in theories of translation that debated the relative merits of word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation. Word-for-word translation was surely the best way to capture the aura of the distant past, or to maintain the divine power of the Biblical Word. But many translators realized that literal translation ultimately obscured the meanings of their source texts.38 Indeed, as translators gradually became aware

34. Dumont, *German Secular Polyphonic Song*, 191. For the specific examples of Friedrich Lindner and Valentin Haussmann, see Hammond, *Editing Music in Early Modern Germany*, 72, 85.
38. This debate, which originated in the writings of Jerome and Cicero, is succinctly summarized in Theo Hermans, “Renaissance Translation between Literalism and Imitation,” in Geschicht, System, Literarische Übersetzung/History, Systems, Literary Translations, ed. Harald Kittel, Göttinger Beträge zur internationalen Übersetzungsforschung (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1992), 96–99. See also
of the insufficiencies of word-for-word translation in the early Renaissance, they came to understand that different languages had their own untranslatable grammars and idioms. Though the notion that different languages communicate in different ways seems obvious today, it was revolutionary to the humanists, and it precipitated a new awareness of the specific linguistic, geographical, and historical context of contemporary life. Translation both gave the reader access to distant cultures and made her conscious of her difference; this awareness of the other in turn fostered a new sense of individual identity.

Early modern anxiety about translation extended to vernacular languages, which were increasing in stature through the sixteenth century. Humanists attempted to heighten their vulgar tongues by imitating Latin grammar and usage even as they began to take pride in their spoken languages’ unique turns of phrase. The spirit of this shift is encapsulated in an important theory of literary translation by French poet Joachim Du Bellay, *Deffense et illustration de la langue francoyse* (1549). In a particularly vivid metaphor, Du Bellay writes, “If the enrichment of the vernacular language and literature is the aim, we must do as the Romans did: imitate the best foreign writers, that is to say . . . transform ourselves into them, devour them and, having digested them well, convert them into nourishment.”

Du Bellay argues that translators should move beyond mere sense-for-sense reproduction; rather, they should imitate and remake foreign works in their own image. The turn from translation to imitation in Du Bellay’s text reflects an increasing trend toward self-definition and a growing awareness of the unique identities of distinct regional cultures. Critically, when we read musical translations in light of the rich tradition of Biblical and Classical translation and the theories that describe it, we discover that questions of poetic meter, semantic meaning, affective character, and musical style intersect with the development of proto-national linguistic, poetic, and musical identities. When they adapted Italian music, English and German composers carved out discursive spaces where they explored the relationships between their native traditions and the Italian models that they imitated. Indeed, as Thomas M. Greene argues in his landmark study on *Humanist imitatio*, translations and imitations call attention to the situatedness (cultural, linguistic, stylistic, historical) of both the source and the target texts; there are few better windows into personal and national identity than the framing, content, and character of these musical translations.

English and German musicians approached Italian culture in divergent ways, and their unique paths illuminate the regions’ distinct anxieties. Elizabethans were particularly self-conscious about their geographical, cultural, and linguistic isolation. While it was expected that educated Englishmen should learn Latin,
French, and Italian, it was understood that no one outside of England would ever learn to speak the impoverished, unsophisticated English language. Consequently, England avidly imported European culture, much of which made it to English shores in translation. Translators, however, undertook far more than mere linguistic translation; as the spectrum of Yonge, Watson, and Morley’s collections demonstrates, translators saw themselves as intermediaries who helped to re-make foreign texts as though their authors were locals. Warren Boutcher explains the appeal of these naturalized translations: “For the consumer, a translation was a cheap and reader-friendly way of importing a book and hiring an expert commentator to explain its meaning and relevance.”

The influx of translations in the late Elizabethan period transformed English language and culture. Translators borrowed many foreign words and coined new English terms by hybridizing old Anglo Saxon words with elements from Latin, French, and Italian. Translation played a paradoxical role in this process: it was both the cause of Elizabethan linguistic self-consciousness and the process by which the English language overcame its perceived deficiencies. The refinement of English was, for the Elizabethans, an essential component of their nascent proto-national, religious, and cultural identity; as Michael Wyatt explains in his study of early modern Italian–English dictionaries, “Dictionaries anticipate developments in the formation of early modern ‘nations,’ vernacular languages having staked out the identities of particular communities in a form different from armed conflict, diplomacy, and fixed geographical boundaries.” Indeed, early modern accounts framed translation as a kind of conquest of other vernaculars, and, thereby, of other national cultures. We can see this in the titles of English madrigal prints. Whereas German composers and editors marketed Italianate partsong as Italianate, English madrigalists present their collections as a wholly native enterprise.

In England, language and literature participated in the construction of a national identity; English translations and adaptations of Italian music reflect England’s growing cultural confidence. But in German-speaking lands the cultural conditions that supported translations of Italian culture were wildly different. Most importantly, there was no “Germany” in the early modern period, but rather a collective of hundreds of independent sovereignties without a central court or uniform culture. The diffuse German language consisted of many regional dialects. Yet, as Peter Schaeffer explains, “the language remained as the only measure by
which anyone could classify oneself as German.” In unified states like England and France, “the language and its literature were the emblems of national identity—in Germany, its necessary surrogate.”47 The movement toward a unified national language found an early voice in Martin Luther’s new vernacular Bible, which he translated in the 1530s. In contrast to the earlier High German translation of the Bible, Luther aimed to create an accessible, idiomatic translation that captured the spirit, if not the exact sense, of the original.48 He was successful—Luther remains a model for Biblical translators today, in part because he embraced German grammar, idioms, and colloquialisms. But intellectual debates about the status of German raged on into the early seventeenth century. Poetry reformer Martin Opitz and other seventeenth-century philologists defended German’s literary pretensions on two counts: first, Old High German had long been used as a literary language, and second, the language’s grammar and vocabulary were inherently beautiful and should not be corrupted by foreign influence.49 Luther’s Bible aptly demonstrates both points.

German composers absorbed Italian culture more voraciously, yet more cautiously, than their English counterparts. Anthologies of Italian madrigals appeared in German-speaking lands many decades before similar anthologies were published in England, though German translations date from around the same time as analogous English collections (the late 1580s).50 But Hammond argues that, just as Luther’s translation of the Bible had the potential to unite the German people under a national identity, so did the search for new poetic and musical models that could modernize German poetic and musical expression.51 German composers looked to madrigalian genres as suitable replacements for the dated Germanic song forms, including the Tenorlied and the Tanz, and the humble poetry associated with them.52 But they were cautious in their appropriation of Italianate style. German composers wrote new Italianate partsongs in Italian first, and composed to German texts only after they were comfortable with the Italian idiom. This practice is unique to German composers—English composers did not write partsongs in Italian! Indeed, Germans were always forthcoming about the Italian-ness of their Italianate songs; this transparency contrasts markedly with the

50. For a list of secular translations of Italian partsongs in German-speaking cities see Hammond, Editing Music in Early Modern Germany, 82–84.
51. Ibid., 85–100, 115–116.
Hearing Homophony

English approach, which downplayed the madrigal’s Italian heritage. Hassler explains his process in the preface to *Neüe Teütsche Gesang* (1596):

> But since every day much more beautiful songs are published in these languages by famous musicians and composers, and on the contrary little is composed in the German language, even though not everyone understands Latin and Italian, I have often been urged to compose some German songs and to publish them. I wanted to do this, and with my humble ability I have composed these present songs, together with their words or texts, and issued them in print, in order to give other, better composers reason to follow, so that this praiseworthy art could come better and more into use in the German language.\(^{53}\)

Hassler situates his collection as an imitation of the popular Italian style, but also as a nationalist call to other German composers to follow suit. He specifically identifies the German language as the beneficiary of this new art.

Sources

This project examines the brief but intense vogue for homophonic partsong sparked by Gastoldi’s *Balletti a cinque voci*. I have assembled a corpus of nearly four hundred partsongs that are stylistically resonant with Gastoldi’s collection. I have selected representative and often exhaustive examples from over thirty printed collections spanning four decades: balletto and canzonetta publication flourished between 1590 and 1610, though a handful of English and German collections were published into the late 1620s by a younger generation eager to flex their Italianate muscles.\(^{54}\) I have focused primarily on three urban centers where most homophonic partsongs were printed: Venice, London, and Nuremberg. About a third of the partsongs in my corpus are balletti (ArArBrBr) and the majority of the remaining partsongs are homophonic canzonette (AABB or AABCC without refrains). The sources of homophonic partsongs vary between Venice, London, and Nuremberg due to each city’s unique publishing conventions and the taste of local music consumers. In each city, the balletto and related genres

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54. I exclude double choir pieces, though they are often homophonic. The demands of writing for double choir tends to result in a narrower harmonic palette than that of the balletto, and the phrase overlap and larger scope typical of antiphonal writing compromises the phrase structure and formal articulation characteristic of partsongs for smaller forces. However, the role of double choir settings in the emergence of tonality is a promising avenue for further study. Writing about Palestrina’s double choir motets, Peter Phillips has suggested that the relationship between the double choir style, homophony, and the emergence of tonality “is in urgent need of a fundamental reappraisal.” Peter Phillips, “Reconsidering Palestrina,” *Early Music* 22, no. 4 (1994), 585.
occupied a different rung of the stylistic hierarchy, a distinction that colored the
genres’ development in different local contexts.

In Italy, the balletto was a curiosity—Gastoldi’s collection was the only
publication of partsongs in this genre. The balletto derives from the Neapolitan
dialect songs that circulated widely earlier in the century. Donna Cardamone and
Ruth DeFord have documented how the three-voice villanesca, which emerged in
the 1530s, was gradually refined into the villanella in the 1560s, and eventually the
canzone and canzonetta in the 1580s. Gastoldi’s balletti extend this shifting
generic conversation. However, while the canzonetta joined the light style of the
villanella with more learned counterpoint borrowed from the madrigal, the
balletto embraced a strictly homophonic style, augmented with nonsense syllable
refrains. As Gastoldi was developing the balletto form, Orazio Vecchi was exploring
new publication strategies that exploited the massive generic variety characteristic
of late sixteenth-century secular song. Typically, Italian music prints collected
works in a single genre and for a consistent ensemble size. Vecchi defied this
tradition; instead, he assembled compendia of loosely connected musical episodes
in various styles and genres. These miscellanies incorporated serious madrigals,
updated versions of older vernacular genres, trendy balletti, and one-off generic
experiments. I draw the Italian-language pieces in this study from Gastoldi’s two
balletto collections and from the miscellanies by Vecchi and his contemporary
Adriano Banchieri. Several sources anthologize both Gastoldi’s partsongs and
excerpts from Vecchi’s miscellanies, confirming the affinity of these works.
Matthysz’s Dutch translation of Gastoldi includes thirteen partsongs from Vecchi’s
Il convito musicale (recall Figure 2.2). Adriansen’s lute collection, Pratum
Musicum (1600), anthologizes nine of Gastoldi’s balletti alongside several
unattributed canzoni napoletana that resemble the light works in the miscellanies.
And Morley’s First Booke of Balletts draws mostly on Gastoldi’s 1591 collection but
also recomposes a balletto from Vecchi’s Selva. Because Italian composers and
music consumers had so many outlets for secular polyphony, the balletto and
other homophonic songs played a minor role in Italian musical culture. But as an
export, the balletto played a much more substantial role abroad, particularly in
London.

Thanks to Morley’s compositional and editorial efforts, the ballett was central
to the English madrigal movement. In contrast to the genre segregation that
characterized Italian madrigal prints, English composers published their Italianate
partsongs in mixed-genre prints which included (mostly light) madrigals,

Hudson argues that the fa la refrain comes from the earlier villotta in The Allemande, the Balletto,
and the Tanz, 80–86.
56. Schleuse, Singing Games in Early Modern Italy, 90–119. See also Donald Beecher, “Introduction,”
in Orazio Vecchi: Le Veglie di Siena, ed. Donald Beecher (Ottowa: Institute of Mediaeval Music,
2004), xiii.
57. Matthysz chooses the most homophonic, sectional, and straightforward of Vecchi’s partsongs (nos.
41–42, 44–51, 56–57, 59). His decision to juxtapose these works—and to present them in different
layouts and typefaces—suggests that he understood them to be stylistically analogous, though the
Vecchi partsongs were apparently subordinate to Gastoldi’s.
canzonets, and balletts. The mixed-genre prints were practical—English composers did not produce enough secular partsongs to support single-genre collections. But, fortuitously, mixed-genre prints created space for stylistic blurring, minimizing the space between the English ballett, canzonet, and madrigal. As a result, English composers developed the ballett far more than their colleagues on the Continent: they wrote more balletts, and their balletts tend toward a more contrapuntal style characteristic of the Continental canzonetta. Most of the English balletts I use for this study come from two collections: Morley’s First booke of balletts (1595) and Weelkes’s Balletts and madrigals to five voyces (1598). Other balletts appear in isolated groups within larger collections by Morley and Weelkes, William Holborne, Thomas Greaves, and Henry Youll, published between 1597 and 1608. Finally, balletts appear in three late madrigal publications, most notably John Hilton’s Ayres, or Fa las for three voyces (1627). In his dedication, Hilton acknowledges that Italianate partsongs are “in their declining age” and, though dedications are meant to be self-effacing, he is not too hard on himself when he describes his unhappy effort as “unripe First-fruits of my Labours.” More compelling, as we will see in later chapters, are Weelkes’s vibrant adaptations of the genre, which play with text-setting and mensural norms and hybridize the ballett with more serious madrigalian styles. Far from being a lowly folk genre, the English ballett provided composers with a charming and popular framework to display contrapuntal virtuosity and compositional ingenuity.

German composers explored homophony in two contexts: they composed canzonette and balletti, and they published books of homophonic Tänze with and without text. Valentin Haussmann published twelve volumes of secular song, which span both of these genres. While Haussmann’s partsongs are workaday, functional songs bound to please diverse publics of amateur musicians, Hassler’s more ambitious secular collections reflect a deeper assimilation of the emotional and stylistic range of Italian madrigals and explore the limits of the madrigal and canzonetta forms. Hassler’s mantle was taken up by many more obscure figures, including Johann Steffens, who wrote a set of balletti that his son published in 1619, three years after the composer’s death. These balletti demonstrate a familiarity with Hassler’s style—they are larger and include more imitation than Gastoldi’s—and Steffens, uniquely, writes multi-part balletti after the Italian madrigal tradition. And, though Johann Hermann Schein’s mature compositional style moves away from the light Italianate style of Hassler and Haussmann, his Venus Kräntzelin (Wittenberg, 1609) and Studenten-schmaus (Leipzig, 1626), contain several homophonic canzonette and balletti. At the same time, a number of German composers hybridized the older instrumental Deutscher Tanz with the new vocal Italianate style, yielding collections of homophonic dances for voices or instruments. Unfortunately, many of the composers have faded into obscurity and much of their music is unknown and unedited. Dance collections usually

59. Hudson has documented the influence of the Deutscher Tanz on later vocal developments in German-speaking lands; see The Allemande, the Balletto, and the Tanz, 124–129.
60. These works are unknown in part because a significant collection at the Jagiellonian University Library in Kraków has only recently been catalogued in Patalas, Catalogue of Early Music Prints.
identify their contents in their titles; they often consist of both texted and untexted dances, and duple time dances may be followed by a triple-time Nachtanz (a relic of the Deutscher Tanz). Since most surviving Tänze are unedited and difficult to access, I have focused on a few representative collections, including Christoph Demantius’s Sieben und siebentzig . . . Polnischer und teutscher Art Tänze (Nuremberg: Baur, 1601), and three collections by Haussmann. These two traditions—the Italianate song and the Tanz—have distinct origins, but both merge native and Italianate poetic and contrapuntal style.

In Italy, composers explored homophony as part of their drive to imitate the folk—the balletto’s inconsequential counterpoint and rhythmic simplicity arise from the simultaneous romanticism and parody of Neapolitan culture. Yet, the genre’s folksy connotations were lost on the English and German consumers who sang Italian music and the local composers who anthologized and absorbed it. If Italian composers found homophony limiting, English composers used the texture as a starting point for vibrant settings that juxtaposed homophonic verses with contrapuntal refrains. The ballett remained at the bottom of the generic hierarchy in the English madrigal tradition, but, in contrast to Italy, this hierarchy had only three rungs, and English composers cherished the fa la’s cheer and frivolity. Indeed, the ballett, canzonet, and madrigal must have been a welcome respite from the elegant but unpopular sacred works that Byrd and Tallis published while they maintained the printing monopoly, and it is unsurprising that light secular genres flourished precisely when Byrd’s patent expired. (Morley certainly profited from filling the vacuum that Byrd’s monopoly had left behind!) In Nuremberg, the imported Italian style formed the basis for the compositions of new works—Hassler’s Lustgarten is the best example—but at the same time Italianate polyphony interacted with the older Tanz tradition, precipitating a new genre of homophonic vocal dances. The German dances exhibit many of the same characteristics as Gastoldi’s balletti—schematic text-setting, consistent phrase rhythm, periodic cadences, and repetitive sectional forms—though their origin is native rather than Italianate. (And several German dance collections draw elements from Polish folk music, which suggests an intriguing analogy with the Italianate appropriation of the folk.) I sought out sources united by their musical features, though for each

There is a great deal of work to be done on German secular song—nearly all of the extant complete collections are scattered among several libraries and are unedited. Much of the groundwork is laid in Dumont, German Secular Polyphonic Song; Hammond, Editing Music in Early Modern Germany; and Hudson, The Allemande, the Balletto, and the Tanz, 124–136.


type of source we can trace a lineage back to the lightest forms of secular homophony that emanated from Italian cities. In all of these works, composers grappled with text-setting, phrase construction, cadential relationships, and form—all different ways of organizing and regulating homophonic counterpoint—usually to similar ends.

An art form meets a commercial enterprise

Print culture—not in its infancy but rather its adolescence—was a necessary prerequisite for the emergence of tonality, insofar as it enabled the transmission of musical style, as well as its absorption, imitation, and ultimate development. Without widely circulating, affordable printed music, amateur music-making and collecting would be confined to an even smaller and more elite population. Composers, too, benefited from the relatively rapid circulation of printed music. The commercial success of Balletti a cinque voci facilitated the collection coming into Morley’s hands, and its popularity in Venice inspired Kauffmann to print it in Nuremberg, where Hassler and Haussmann would eventually discover it. The availability of Gastoldi’s and other Italian and Italianate collections in turn shaped musical taste in both London and Nuremberg, and created demand for more collections of similar works. English and German composers, then, adapted Gastoldi’s musical style, and created poetic and musical idioms that suited local tastes. The development of a new musical style—and the potential for a new mode of tonal hearing that accompanied this style—was an international undertaking that required both the circulation of new musical ideas and the creation of popular demand for more of them.

Per cantare, sonare, e ballare

As the title of Gastoldi’s collection implies, balletti lie at the intersection of three distinct musical traditions: homophony, monody, and dance. All of these performance contexts have been credited with facilitating the emergence of a tonal language in the early modern period. For instance, Anthony Newcomb and Edward Lowinsky describe a shift from linear to vertical composition in late sixteenth-century polyphony, and hypothesize that stereotyped patterns of chords prefigured, and eventually gave way to, functional harmonic progressions. Nigel Fortune and

64. The section title is a quotation from Bernstein, Print Culture and Music in Sixteenth-Century Venice, 29. For an overview of the diverse effects of printing on secular music-making in the sixteenth century, see Rudolf Rasch, ed. Music Publishing in Europe 1600–1900: Concepts and Issues, Bibliography (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005).
Claude Palisca suggest that Giulio Caccini and his circle “developed a rudimentary system of tonality” in their monodies, which exploited a new melody–bass polarity. The basso continuo, a central component of the Baroque style, symbolized the new harmonic, vertical orientation of these solo songs. Susan McClary points to the repetitive structure and “dependable groove” of dance music, and Richard Hudson notes that the short phrases in dance require regular cadences and consistent phrase rhythm; both authors connect these compositional parameters to large-scale tonal organization. But these musical styles—and the innovations attributed to them—are interrelated. The harmonic patterns that Lowinsky describes derive from dance, and were typical improvised accompaniments for monodies. The melodic structure of homophonic songs, many of which evoked popular dances, shaped how composers of solo songs wrote new melodies. Ultimately, all three traditions, alone and in combination, reoriented the relationship between pitch and time in the decades surrounding the turn of the seventeenth century. Each of these textures created the possibility for listeners to hear, interpret, and compare increasingly large gestures, phrases, and sections.

**Per cantare**

The term *homophony* has been used to describe several distinct phenomena; as I use it here, the term refers to *homorhythmic polyphony*, that is, multi-voice textures where all voices move at (mostly) the same rate. Homophonic textures have several emergent properties that starkly differentiate them from imitative counterpoint. First, the vertical sonority is the primary perceptual unit. It does not matter whether composers conceive of vertical sonorities as stacks of intervals or as chords; the homorhythmic texture diminishes voice independence and refocuses attention on simultaneities. Second, homophony emphasizes a single

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68. Fortune describes “the little canzonets and ballet[ts] of men like Gastoldi” as important influences on the monodists, citing the ballet’s “suave and rounded” melodies and early “conception of tonality.” “Italian Secular Monody,” 175.


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melodic voice, usually the top voice. Finally, lower voices “fill out” the vertical units; in sixteenth-century repertoires these vertical units are analogous with $5 \over 3$, $6 \over 3$, and $6 \over 5$ chords.

Composers had diverse motivations for exploring homophony in the sixteenth century. Many were inspired by the new demands of vernacular humanism to design musical settings with intelligible texts, a phenomenon that I will explore at length in Chapter 7. Others mimicked aurally transmitted popular song or dance music in their vocal works; still others adapted emerging solo styles to multi-voice textures. But in all of these cases homophony demanded that composers think in new ways about the music they penned. Homophony encourages syllabic text-setting. As a result, composers developed new text-setting strategies that translated poetic meter into musical meter. Homophony typically demands a faster rate of harmonic change than polyphonic counterpoint. Consequently, composers began to group successions of harmonies into phrases and to devise strategies for organizing increasingly long time spans. And homophony supports a single goal-directed melody, which no longer competes with other equally important polyphonic voices. Instead, composers learned to amplify these melodies with harmonic plans, designing phrases where harmonic and melodic trajectories collaborated to guide listeners from cadence to cadence.

If homophony is a collaborative enterprise, it interacts in curious ways with the material form of a sixteenth-century music “book”—a set of partbooks. Singing from parts can be very much like playing cards: you cannot see the whole picture, but the reward lies in the unfolding social interaction of performing the music. In my experience, much of the fun is in learning in real time how the parts interact—the excitement of a contrapuntal refrain, the thrill of an unexpected point of imitation, the camaraderie of singing in parallel thirds for a few beats, the relief of a cadence. Try singing from the canto partbook for La sirena (Figure 2.3) and observe how your experience is different from using the score in Example 2.1. When I have sung from partbooks with my students, some reflected that the homophonic songs were boring—the students missed the opportunity for individual expression afforded by imitative polyphony. But others found the experience exhilarating, because homophonic partsongs are easy to execute, and it can be satisfying to join together as one voice.

71. David Huron demonstrates that upper-voice primacy is a perceptual property of multi-voice musical textures in Voice Leading: The Science Behind a Musical Art (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), 47–52. Of course, there are many exceptions to top-voice primacy; barbershop quartets are an instructive counter-example.

72. Kate Van Orden warns us to beware “the anachronistic style of reading promoted by modern scores and the ideologies of textual control and compositional authority that stand behind them,” instead encouraging us to embrace the “collaborative, part-by-part mentality promoted by the material form of separate partbooks.” Materialities, 24. Cristle Collins Judd also provides an illuminating view of the manifold ways that format impacts our analyses in Reading Renaissance Music Theory: Hearing with the Eyes (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
At the same time, a single partbook conveys more information than a modern reader or musician, accustomed to playing from scores, may realize. When I first started working with sixteenth-century music books, I quickly learned to identify homophonic songs from a single part. These partsongs have syllabic text-setting, regular rhythmic patterns with a narrow range of note values, few rests or long

Figure 2.3 Gastoldi, *La sirena* (1591, no. 11) (Venice: Amadino, 1593), Canto partbook, sig. B3’. Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Fétis 2.251 A (RP).
notes, and obvious melodic and rhythmic cadences. Even visual markers of form, like strophic texts, repeat signs, and fa la refrains helped me imagine what the other parts might sound like. Many of the features that define the homophonic partsong repertoire, including schematic text-setting, regular phrase rhythm, and sectional form, are apparent even from a single part. This is an important reminder that these partsongs don’t encourage tonal expectation because they are homophonic, but rather that homophony facilitates the coordination of other musical parameters that contribute to tonal expectation.

Per sonare

When Morley published *Canzonets or little short aers to fiue and sixe voices* in 1597, he supplemented the canto partbook with lute tablature. In the volume’s dedication, he explains:

> I haue also set them Tablature wise to the Lute in the Cantus booke for one to sing and plaie alone when your Lordship would retire your selfe and bee more private: howbeit I wote [know] well your Lordship is never disfurnished of great choice of good voices, such indeede as are able to grace any mans songes.73

In the same year, John Dowland published his first book of lutesongs in a new format that he and Peter Short had devised.74 Dowland’s lutesongs are printed as tablebooks, with the canto part and lute tablature on the verso side of each opening, and three lower voices printed, facing three directions, on the recto side. Morley was no lutenist—he admits that he devised his own idiosyncratic intabulation method and, as a result, his lute parts are unidiomatic and awkward. Dowland’s inner voice parts are little better, and they do not always coordinate with the lute part. Morley and Dowland pursued novel publishing strategies to inoculate themselves against changing musical tastes. But their experiments reflected a century of musical practice. The histories of polyphonic and solo song genres had been intertwined since the beginning of the sixteenth century. Many partsong traditions originated in solo song. As Donna Cardamone has documented, the *canzonetta* was the result of decades of interaction between improvised solo songs and polyphonic arrangements of these songs.75 At the same time, partsongs were often performed as accompanied solos. Musicians frequently improvised or arranged lute accompaniments for songs published in parts, as the appearance of partsongs in lute books like *Pratum musicum* demonstrate (Figure 2.4). And the experiments of the Florentine Camerata—which resulted in the solo song repertoire that would come to be defined as monody proper—originated with

73. Thomas Morley, *Canzonets or Little short aers to fiue and sixe voices* (London: Short, 1597), sig. A2r.
Figure 2.4 Gastoldi, *Il contento* (1591, no. 3) in Adriansen, *Pratum musicum* (1600), sig. I1v–I2r. (fol. 33v–34r). © The British Library Board, Music Collections K.8.g.2.
Vincenzo Galilei’s solo arrangements of homophonic partsongs. Solo song and light vernacular partsong were, for much of the sixteenth century, two sides of the same coin.

Indeed, when Giulio Caccini printed his so-called Nuove musiche in 1601, he was not so much inaugurating a new style as he was consigning to print a performance practice that singers and lutenists had engaged in for a century. Monody is typically credited with introducing several new innovations into Italian musical culture: solo song prioritizes a single melody, this melody is supported by a harmonically conceived bass line, and the attendant melody/bass polarity is made visible in the new notational technology of the basso continuo. But these features (excluding the basso continuo) existed in other repertoires, particularly the homophonic partsong genres that had inspired the monodists. Even Caccini—a sedulous self-promoter—wrote that one of the central innovations of his collection was not its new musical style, but rather, its new notational techniques.

Both monody and homophony demand that we face head-on the ontological status of vertical sonorities. The advent of the basso continuo calls striking attention to the vertical aspect of accompanimental counterpoint, insofar as it reduces an intricate musical texture to a series of one-note summaries of all of the activity that might occur during the course of a single semiminim. In homophonic textures it is similarly hard to avoid the vertical: homorhythm minimizes voice independence and instead calls attention to the sequence of analogous vertical objects. Contemporary theorists described these verticalities not as chords, but rather as stacks of consonant intervals; the rules of counterpoint privilege interval stacks that create triads. But, critically, when composers harnessed the organizational power of a single melody in place of the interaction of several polyphonic voices, they created an opportunity for other musical parameters, such as meter and

76. Palisca, “Vincenzo Galilei,” 345. The term monody has a number of possible referents that are summarized in John H. Baron, “Monody: A Study in Terminology,” Musical Quarterly 54, no. 4 (1968): 462–474. Here I refer specifically to the repertoire of solo song attributed to Giulio Caccini and other members of the Florentine Camerata, and the accompanied solo song traditions that their prints inspired. Of course, the term “monody” was not applied to this repertoire until 1635. The history and style of monodic repertoires has been studied extensively and will not be revisited here; for an introduction see Fortune, “Italian Secular Monody”; Claude V. Palisca, Music and Ideas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 107–129.


phrase structure, to take charge of music’s unfolding in time. Vertical sonorities play a central role in this story, regardless of whether composers, performers, and theorists conceptualized them as the outcome of linear counterpoint, privileged stacks of intervals, or chords. (And of course composers and theorists, lutenists and singers may not have conceptualized them in the same way.)

**Per ballare**

Much of the character of the balletto derives from dance—the square rhythmic profile, binary grouping structure, light affect, and nonsense syllable refrains all evoke instrumental dances. We have clear evidence that Gastoldi’s balletti accompanied dance: choreographies for both *L’innamorato* (1591, no. 1) and *La sirena* (1591, no. 11) survive in Cesare Negri’s dance manual, *Le gratie d’amore* (Milan, 1602).\(^81\)

Though it is difficult to reconstruct the choreographies precisely (Negri only inconsistently describes step timings, for instance), they illuminate some of the ways that dance and partsong influenced one another.\(^82\)

Negri choreographs *La caccia d’amore* (his name for *La sirena*) for a large group of dancers, evoking a rowdy country dance.\(^83\) The dance has five parts: a partnered dance; a braid, where partners weave in and out of one another; the chase; a wheel dance, where the women and men form concentric circles; and a series of improvised galliard variations. Based on the number of steps and the speed at which they can be practically executed, it appears that each of the first four sections corresponds to two complete AABB cycles of *La sirena*; the fifth section requires the musicians to improvise a triple time version of the tune for several athletic galliard variations. As the title implies, the dance is flirtatious—the braid allows the women and men to exchange partners; during the chase, the women may decline to take the hands of the men and run through the line of dancers as the men follow; and during the fourth section an additional man joins the dance and displaces successive gentlemen from their partners. The dancers are meant to tease whichever man ends up without a partner: “Always will stay one man without his woman, and each one will take endless pleasure of this one.”\(^84\)

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81. Negri’s text can be cross-referenced with Fabritio Caroso’s *Nobilità di dame* (Venice, 1600), trans. and ed. Julia Sutton as *Courtly Dance of the Renaissance: A New Translation and Edition of the Nobilità Di Dame (1600)* (New York: Dover, 1995). Many of these dances have been reconstructed; videos are easy to find on the Internet.


Negri’s choreography interprets the melody, phrase structure, and form of Gastoldi’s balletto; in turn, Gastoldi’s rhythmic structure and phrase design draw on dance (Figure 2.5). Both dance manuals and music treatises indicate that the anatomical symmetry of the body should be reflected in choreographic and

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Number of Measures</th>
<th>Step Name</th>
<th>Step Description, Notes</th>
<th>Characteristic Rhythmic Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>riverenza grave</td>
<td>a slow bow, which occurs on the third beat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 continenze</td>
<td>step to the left; R foot touches L instep, then repeat in the other direction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 seguiti ordinari</td>
<td>three steps forward, ending on the toes, then lowering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 seguiti ordinari</td>
<td>going around to the left, turning face to face</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 riprese [gravi?]</td>
<td>step to left toe, join with right toe, then lower heels; repeat in the other direction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 seguiti ordinari</td>
<td>changing places</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 seguiti ordinari</td>
<td>going around to the left [to face partner]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 fioretti spezzati</td>
<td>three rapid kicks, going to the head [back] of the dance floor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 fioretti spezzati</td>
<td>return to the foot opposite their ladies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>riverenza grave</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 continenze</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 seguiti ordinari</td>
<td>changing places</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 seguiti ordinari</td>
<td>going around to the left [to face partner]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 riprese [gravi?]</td>
<td>around to the left [to face partner]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.5** Negri’s choreography for the first part of *La sirena (La caccia d’amore)*.

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85. Choreography in the figure is drawn from Negri, *Le Gratie d’Amore*; summaries and timing of steps from Kendall, “Rhythm, Meter and Tactus,” 15; Kendall, “Le Gratie d’Amore,” 507. Rhythmic patterns are my own, based on my understanding of the choreography. I do not pretend to be an expert in historical dance reconstruction! Even expert dance historians have to tidy up irregularities in Negri’s choreographies and struggle to identify the appropriate tactus and step durations. My reconstruction is approximate.
musical symmetry. Accordingly, Negri’s choreography consists of a series of four measure gestures, most of which divide into symmetrical two-measure step patterns. The embodied symmetry of performing a series of steps leading with the left foot, then repeating this pattern on the right, mimics the melodic and rhythmic parallelism at the two-measure level in Gastoldi’s balletto, and, when I attempted to execute Negri’s choreography, the embodied symmetry helped me attune to this parallelism more closely. The balletto’s rhythmic gestures and Negri’s steps also reinforce one another. Gastoldi sets his text schematically, with an agogic accent for the accented syllable at the end of each line; Negri matches this rhythmic gesture with steps like the seguito ordinario and ripresa that pause on these accented beats.

The choreography also acknowledges the musical form. During the A sections the partners move in sync with one another, but during the contrasting B sections they part ways, taking up more of the dance floor and displaying the women’s full skirts and the men’s capes while tracing elegant curves. For instance, the first B section corresponds with the first major choreographic path: the dancers turn away from each other and step in a circle, then return to face each other for two riprese. When the B section repeats the partners take hands and circle each other, switching places, then circle away from each other and back again. Negri’s choreography also reinforces the relative openness and closure of musical gestures. Negri is adamant that dance cadences correspond with musical cadences. In La caccia d’amore, three of the four B sections end with seguiti ordinarii that lead the dancers back to their partners; this physical closure prepares them to begin the next section of the dance afresh.

Dance was a central part of everyday life for Europeans of all social strata; however, in the absence of choreographies like Negri’s or specific written accounts, there is no conclusive evidence that confirms whether English and German partsongs were danced. Many German partsong collections describe their contents as Tänze, and several anthologize both vocal and instrumental dances. For instance, in Lustgarten Hassler labels six of the eight balletti as either Tänze or Galliarden. Each of the Tänze is followed by a Proportio, an afterdance that recomposes the partsong in triple meter, in the tradition of the older Deutscher Tanz. And Hassler’s collection concludes with ten instrumental intradas and a galliard. The titles, generic designations, and juxtaposition of sung and instrumental dances suggest that Hassler’s balletti may have accompanied dance, but it is difficult to know for sure. But the rhythms and gestures of dance impact the musical style and rhythmic structure of his partsongs, regardless of whether anyone ever danced to them.

87. On the afterdance, see Hudson, The Allemande, the Balletto, and the Tanz, 15–20, 125–126.
It is less likely that English balletts were danced. Several scholars have argued that English balletts were too musically complex to accompany dance. Lionel Pike, for instance, distinguishes “dance-like” balletts from “the kind of piece that has more ‘musical’ content,” and indicates that the more elaborate English balletts were not “simple enough to accompany an actual dance.” Pike assumes that dance-like pieces feature metrically regular phrases and simple harmonies presented homophonically, in contrast to the freer imitation and irregular phrase lengths characteristic of some English balletts. The notion that English balletts were too “musical,” “intricate,” or “refined” to accompany dance has become commonplace in scholarship on the repertoire; yet, Yvonne Kendall has argued militantly against this view, demonstrating that Italian choreographies easily accommodated metrical irregularity. Instead, extramusical evidence supports the hypothesis that English balletts were probably not danced, in spite of the insatiable Elizabethan appetite for Italian dance. Unlike their Italian and German counterparts, books of English partsongs do not refer to dancing in their titles or prefaces. English sources of dance music tend to list dance types explicitly: for instance, Anthony Holborne’s *Pavans, galliards, almain, and other short aiers* (London: Barley, 1599). But balletts are usually grouped with madrigals, canzonets, and other vocal partsong genres that are not dance-like. English composers probably imported the ballett exclusively as a sung genre, even as they delighted in its evocation of dance.


91. One notable exception is a pair of mercurial fairy dances included in Thomas Ravenscroft’s *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees* (London: Edward Allde, 1614),
Delightful new inventions

When Anthony Newcomb identified a new chordal style in the villanella and canzonetta, he hoped to find “proto-functional harmonic procedures,” but he was disappointed: “the harmonic successions of their short phrases are often quite wayward when judged by the criteria of subsequent functional tonality.” But what is new in this repertoire, according to Newcomb, is a “concept of harmonic rhythm,” which “enable[s] the listener to grasp a longer section of music as the decoration and prolongation of a single chord or of a basic chordal progression.” In Newcomb’s formulation, homophony gently redirects the listener’s attention away from the moment-to-moment unfolding of the musical surface toward longer phrases. The basso continuo plays a similar role in monodic contexts. Richard Taruskin argues that the basso continuo is a symptom of the ascendancy of harmony, which, in late sixteenth-century monody, emerges as “a driving or shaping force in music” that could be “deploy[ed] over larger and larger temporal spans.” Eric Chafe concurs, noting that in Monteverdi’s concertato madrigals the basso continuo makes the bass line “much slower and supportlike,” a move that “in turn affect[s] other musical features, such as the regularizing of the rate of harmonic change and the phrase structure.” Susan McClary links dance forms to “the seventeenth-century concern with the shaping of temporality,” noting that ostinato bass patterns and other characteristics of dance music “made it possible for musicians and listeners to inhabit and become accustomed to vast stretches of static time.” In other words, at the end of the sixteenth century what was changing was not pitch, but time.

Homophony, monody, and dance are historically and stylistically intertwined, and the balletto is a particularly vivid example of the ways in which these stylistic points of reference interact. And the central innovation of the three styles is not that they call attention to the vertical triad—though this is certainly the case—but rather that they are not polyphony. Polyphonic music unfolds in time through the interaction of two or more equally important melodic lines; its linear, metrical, and tonal organization results from fluctuations of consonance and dissonance, strings of evaded cadences (what Zarlino called fuggir la cadenza), and occasional points of simultaneous closure in all voices. By contrast, homophony verticalizes counterpoint, creating a vacuum that demands a new way of organizing music as it moves through time, one that prioritizes upper voice melody, goal direction, phrase structure, rhythm and meter, periodicity, and symmetrical grouping structure. We can study this new kind of organization by analyzing harmonic

93. Ibid., 120.
progressions and identifying gradual changes in local harmonic syntax. But we can also consider the ways that tonal trajectories orient themselves within longer musical spans. A full account of tonality’s history, of course, requires both points of view.

Homophonic textures—like those of the balletto—do not necessitate harmonic trajectories that play out across larger groupings, but they do create a space for composers to explore these relationships. And features built into the texts facilitate these trajectories. Poetic meter, rhyme, verse–refrain pairs: these poetic, generic, and formal features could (but did not have to) support and be supported by harmonic rhetoric.
CHAPTER 3

The Work of the Words

What do the words have to do with anything? After all, isn't tonality the province of instrumental music? Dahlhaus thinks so—he argues, mostly implicitly, that humble words have little effect on formidable tonality, even as he locates tonality's origins in Monteverdi's madrigals. He presents most of the musical examples in *Studies on the Origin of Harmonic Tonality* without text underlay. And, he claims, Monteverdi achieves tonality in his late madrigals when he devises musical forms that unfold independently of the text. At the other extreme, Eric Chafe attributes Monteverdi's tonality to the composer's emerging theory of *oratio*. In his chapter “Tonality and Word,” Chafe recounts the history of the *seconda prattica* in terms of the familiar ascendance of *melodia* over *harmonia*. Harmony, it seems, had met its match with Guarini's words, and the dissonant melee of *melodia* (and its attendant tonal dynamics) arose to take its place. So which is it? Were the words a mere distraction, an unnecessary hindrance that was eventually discarded as tonality took hold of the compositional imagination in the seventeenth century? Or were the words *everything*, the catalyst for Monteverdi's dissonant experimentation that would portend the decline of modality?

If we turn our attention away from Monteverdi and toward the popular songs that flourished at the turn of the century, both of these questions seem to miss the point. The homophonic partsong reveals that text plays a signal role in the emergence of tonality—but the words are both much more important and much more banal than Dahlhaus and Chafe suppose. In Chapter 1, I suggested that we augment our usual stories about tonality's history by exploring the parameters that regulate pitch content: meter, phrase structure, and form. Many homophonic partsongs are metrically

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1. The typical view of tonality as an instrumental phenomenon is summarized in Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 5 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2:187–188. Taruskin writes that “‘Tonality’ as a fully elaborated system emerged first in the context of instrumental music.” This “all-important development . . . put instrumental music on a path of ascendancy that would ultimately challenge the preeminent status of vocal genres.”


regular throughout. The regular meter promotes periodic cadences and directs listener attention to these cadences. Partsong composers prefer fifth-related cadences, prompting tonal expectation. Such expectation is enhanced when frequent cadences correspond with phrase structure cues and clearly articulated formal boundaries. In vocal genres, particularly homophonic ones, these parameters originate not in pre-compositional planning, but rather in text-setting. Because it demands syllabic text-setting, homophony translates poetic meter into musical meter: line lengths determine phrase lengths, patterns of verbal and poetic accent determine musical accent, and poetic form determines the placement and types of cadences and formal boundaries. As we will see, regular text-setting contributes to musical meter in a period when mensural structures are giving way to metrical ones—a process that remains obscure. Ultimately, a new metrical style and a new tonal language emerge in tandem in the early seventeenth century; the balletto and canzonetta repertoires highlight the close relationship between these evolving musical systems.

### Schematic text-setting

There’s more than one way to be homophonic. Consider the prologue to Vecchi’s *L’Amfiparnaso*, which is largely homophonic with occasional bursts of free counterpoint (Example 3.1 🎵). The text sets the stage for an imagined production:

> Benche sia’tusi, O spettatori illustri,  
> Solo di contemplar Tragici a spetti  
> O comici apparati  
> In varie guise ornate,  
> Voi però non sdegnate  
> Questa commedia nostra,  
> Se non di ricca e vaga scena adorna,  
> Almen di doppia novità composta . . .  
> Ma voi sappiat’intanto,  
> Che questo di cui parlo  
> Spettacolo, si mira con la mente,  
> Dov’ entra per l’orecchie, e non per g’occhi.  
> Però silentio fate,  
> En vece di vedere hor’ascoltate.

> Although you, illustrious spectators  
> Are accustomed to seeing only tragedies  
> Or comedies  
> Embellished in sundry manners,  
> Do not disdain  
> This our comedy  
> Which is certainly not graced with a rich and fancy stage  
> But is comprised with double novelty . . .  
> But meanwhile, know  
> That the spectacle of which I speak
The Work of the Words

Example 3.1 Vecchi, Prologue to L'Amfiparnasso (1597, no. 1), mm. 1–19.

Is beheld by the imagination
Which it penetrates through the ear, not through the eye.
Therefore, be silent,
And instead of seeing, listen.  

Example 3.1 Continued.

- se, in va-rie guis’or-na-ti, In va-rie guis’or-na-ti, Vo-

- ti, In va-rie guis’or-na-ti

va-rie guis’or-na-ti in va-rie guis’or-na-ti, Vo-

- ti, in va-rie guis’or-na-ti, in va-rie gui-se, in va-rie guis’or-na-ti, Vo-

- ti, or-na-ti, in va-rie guis’or-na-ti, Vo-

pe-rò non sde-gna-te Ques-ta com-me-dia no-stra, Se non di ric-ca e

pe-rò non sde-gna-te Ques-ta com-me-dia no-stra, Se non di ric-ca e

pe-rò non sde-gna-te Ques-ta com-me-dia no-stra, Se non di ric-ca e


va-ga sce-na-dor-na, Al men di dop-pia


Vecchi addresses the “audience” directly, framing both the work and the genre in which it participates.5 (Schleuse argues convincingly that this audience is the group of singers themselves, who are “envoicing an imaginary figure addressing an imaginary audience” within their private musical gathering.6) The expository text consists of a single eighteen-line stanza of irregularly rhymed lines of different lengths. Accordingly, the setting is through-composed. Vecchi opens in a formal register suitable for the illustrious spectators the singers describe. The slow rate of declamation and subtle chromaticism depict the dramatic tragedies to which Vecchi opposes his evening’s diversions. As the text turns to comedy, Vecchi enlivens the musical texture with imitation, text repetition, shorter note values, dotted rhythms, and a faster rate of harmonic change. The text again changes registers, imploping the audience to encounter the comedy with new, undisdainful eyes, and Vecchi swings back to homophony, but with disorienting syncopations and a faster rate of address than the solemn exordium. The prologue’s opening nineteen breves compare three types of music, using the homophonic texture and faster declamation of the third section to establish L’Amfiparnaso as an enterprise simultaneously more serious than a typical comedy and yet less self-serious than a tragedy. As such, the opening reflects the “double Parnassus” of the title and foreshadows the juxtaposition of musical styles that animates the work.7

Though it is primarily homophonic, the texture and character of the prologue hardly resembles the homophonic counterpoint of a dance-like balletto. Vecchi includes a typical balletto in Il convito musicale, a partsong collection published in the same year as L’Amfiparnaso (Example 3.2).8 The text of Chi vuol goder il mondo consists of ten stanzas of five lines: two couplets of rhyming settenari (seven-syllable lines) each lead to a fa la refrain, and the second refrain gives way to an additional settenario tronco. (I will summarize the principles of Italian versification in the next section.) Vecchi’s setting reflects the text’s straightforward meter and rhyme scheme. He maintains a consistent rate of declamation: he sets the verse with quick semiminims and the refrain with fusae, and punctuates both with minims for the accent near the end of each line. This accent, the accento comune, corresponds with a harmonic arrival of varying weight. The strophic text does not permit careful attention to the mood or precise declamation of each line; instead, Vecchi relies on a simple repeated rhythmic pattern for each settenario

6. Schleuse, Singing Games in Early Modern Italy, 139.
Hearing Homophony

Example 3.2 Vecchi, *Chi vuol goder il mondo* (1597, no. 41).

*piano.* The rhythmic parallelism highlights each couplet’s rhyme, though Vecchi elides the ending of each couplet with the onset of the refrain.

Vecchi’s two settings, though both homophonic, differ in style and effect; their approaches to text-setting can be characterized as *dramatic* on the one hand and *schematic* on the other. In the *L’Amfiparnaso* prologue, Vecchi uses dramatic text-setting to express the nuances of the text at the level of the single line or individual word. Dramatic madrigalian texts might have varied line lengths and rhyme schemes, which composers set with shifting rates of text declamation and diverse contrapuntal styles. The texts demand a broad expressive palette, rooted as their aesthetic is in the Mannerist fluctuation of ideas and moods. By contrast, *balletti* and other homophonic dance songs are liberated from such text-setting requirements—their strophic texts require simpler, flexible settings that can accommodate the words of multiple stanzas. And the limited affect of mediocre *poesia per musica* did not inspire the same kind of varied setting that was the lifeblood of more literary madrigals.
Ruth DeFord describes such regular text-setting procedures as *schematic*. In lighter strophic genres, “the rhythm, like the formal structure, tend[s] to be schematic, following the meter of the text, rather than the details of declamation, which might vary from one stanza to another.”

While schematic text-setting permits less sensitivity to the nuances of a poem, it has the benefit of encouraging musical rather than textual organization. That is, schematic text-setting shifts the compositional focus away from the regulatory force of the text and towards phrase structure. The phrases in the *L’Amfiparnaso* prologue vary in length and character according to the rate of text declamation and the contrapuntal style most suited for the expression of each line. By contrast, the *balletto*’s phrase rhythm is stubbornly consistent—each line lasts for two measures, and each couplet for four; with the addition of the refrain the A section extends for eight measures.

To compensate for the *balletto*’s simplicity, Vecchi introduces variety with harmony rather than phrase rhythm or texture, contrasting arrivals of varying weights on G and D. The harmonic plan corresponds to a melodic scheme: the second line of each couplet concludes one step below the first line, echoing the poetic rhyme with a musical rhyme. The combination of these rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic processes imparts a hierarchy to the *balletto*: the first line of each couplet is subordinate to the second, each verse is subordinate to its refrain, and the A section is subordinate to the B section. The dramatic trajectory of the declamatory prologue is replaced by a dynamic trajectory within the repetitive dance structure of the *balletto*.

Music theorists implicitly encouraged composers to develop schematic text-setting strategies. Gioseffo Zarlino asserts that each note should receive its own syllable, and short syllables and long syllables should be paired with short and long notes respectively. Sensibly, he suggests that rests should not appear in the middle of words, but they should articulate syntax and punctuation. Thomas Morley, who reproduces much of Zarlino’s discussion of text-setting, is specific even about rests’ relative duration: “You may set a crotchet or minime rest above a coma or colon, but a longer rest then that of a minime you may not make till the sentence be


10. The repeat is notated with a repeat sign in the source; it causes the repetition of the A section to be displaced by a minim, which requires the performers to adjust the *tactus*. DeFord argues that minim displacement reflects the irrelevance of the semibreve mensural level in light strophic genres in *Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm in Renaissance Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 448. *Chi vuol goder il mondo* is particularly unusual because it opens with only one beat of rest. Similar *balletti* nearly always begin with three beats of rest, a change which corrects the minim displacement here; this solution is adopted in the modern edition.

perfect, and then at a full point you may set what number of rests you will.”
Similarly, both theorists require a cadence at the conclusion of a phrase or sentence. All of the principles necessary for schematic text-setting are built into Zarlino’s and Morley’s instructions: composers should set texts line-by-line according to their syntax, they should give increased weight to stressed syllables based on the poetic meter, and they should define complete syntactical units with rests and cadences. Zarlino and Morley establish a hierarchy of musical events that correspond with poetic ones: the more final the punctuation, the longer the rest and the more conclusive the harmonic arrival.

How to match the measure

When English and German composers imported and translated Italian popular song, they largely maintained the idiosyncratic structure of Italianate verse. But, as I outlined in Chapter 2, their adherence to foreign poetic norms introduced some practical challenges: the patterns of stress and accent in German and English did not map well onto Italian verse forms. Italian poetry is syllabic: it is measured by the number of syllables in a line. English and German poetry, however, are accentual-syllabic and measured by the number of metrical feet in a line. These poetic distinctions correspond with the structure of the languages themselves: while Italian is a syllable-timed language (all syllables have relative equality until the end of a phrase), English and German are stress-timed languages (some syllables have more weight—and therefore length—than others, regardless of their context). Nevertheless, the character of Italian poetry—and Italian text-setting practices—resonated in German and English partsongs even in the absence of the Italian words.

Italian poetry is described according to two parameters: line length and line ending. Italian verse consists primarily of three line types: quinari, settenari, and

endecasillabi (five-, seven-, and eleven-syllable lines). An accent falls near the end of each line (the accento comune). Normally, this accent occurs on the penultimate syllable, yielding a verso piano (plain verse) with a feminine rhyme. However, the accento comune may also fall on the last syllable of a line, yielding a masculine rhyme, or verso tronco (truncated)—poets often use versi tronchi at the ends of poems to create closure. Alternately, though rarely in the partsong genres, the accento comune may fall on the third-to-last syllable of a line, creating a sdrucciolo (sliding) ending. Crucially, all lines are counted as though they are versi piani, thus a settenario piano has seven syllables with the accent on the sixth syllable, a settenario tronco has only six syllables with the accent on the final syllable, and a settenario sdrucciolo has eight syllables, with the accent on the third-to-last syllable. At the same time, in musical settings the number of sung syllables can be as relevant as the number of counted syllables—I distinguish between the two by describing counted syllables with their Italian names, and sung syllables with an English number (i.e. settenario tronco, or six-syllable line).

We might think of schematic text-setting as a series of rules for composition, shaped by the aesthetic goal of making the text comprehensible and ensuring that the meter of the poem is reflected in the rhythm of the music. The rules are simple:

1. Set the text syllabically.
2. Align the accento comune with a metrically accented beat.
3. To ensure that the accented character of the final rhyme is audible, elongate the accento comune, preferring a 2:1 ratio of long to short notes.
4. Align any secondary poetic accents with metrically accented beats.

These principles yield a surprisingly narrow range of rhythmic options for each line length: a single triple time formula for quinari (\( \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} | \frac{1}{4} \)) and a single duple time formula for settenerari (\( \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} \frac{3}{4} | \frac{1}{4} \)). Eleven-syllable lines, endecasillabi, are more complicated, as we will see later in this chapter. The large-scale structure of a poem similarly influences the musical setting—poems with even numbers of lines of similar lengths are more likely to encourage metrically regular setting than those with irregular structures. Schematic text-setting formulas are simple, but they have a ripple effect through deeper layers of musical structure. They establish a robust metrical structure with a two-level hierarchy of note values and periodic loci for cadences. Concomitantly, schematic text-setting creates a framework for listener attention, focusing our hearing on the line-ending metrical accent and its corresponding poetic rhyme and harmonic arrival. At the same time, text-setting formulas create space for composers to attend to other, larger-scale parameters—when the rhythm, meter, and text are taken care of, a composer might turn his attention to how melodic trajectories, harmonic arrivals, or refrain structures play out across the section.

Quinari

Italianate five-syllable lines, quinari piani, have a strong accent on the penultimate syllable (the accento comune) and a secondary accent on the first syllable.
Consequently, Italian and English composers usually set quinari in perfect mensuration (triple time), aligning the first and fourth syllables with strong beats, and elongating the accento comune to produce the schema \( \text{3} \odot \text{3} \mid \text{3} \). Because schematic text-setting is so formulaic, balletti based on similar poems often sound alike. Gastoldi, Morley, and Hassler all use the quinario formula for every line in their balletti L’innamorato, Sing we and chant it, and Tantzen und springen (Example 3.3). Gastoldi’s setting was the model for Morley’s and certainly influenced Hassler’s setting as well (I discuss the relationships between these balletti further in Chapter 5).

**Example 3.3** Schematic text-setting with quinari. Gastoldi, L’innamorato (1591, no. 1); Morley, Sing we and chant it (modeled on A lieta vita) (1595, no. 4); Hassler, Tantzen und springen (1601, no. 20).
Balletto poems typically open with a couplet followed by a fa la refrain. The quinario formula ensures that each line will last for two measures in modern barring, and each couplet will extend for four measures. The four-measure verse provides a natural antecedent that all three composers balance with a consequent-like refrain of equal length. In all three settings, the regularity of the poem combines with the text-setting formula to yield metrical regularity. The refrains, on the other hand, reflect the composers’ decisions to balance their verses symmetrically (or not to). The balletto’s verse-refrain structure motivated composers to coordinate poetic regularity with metrical regularity, and these two parameters reinforce one another.

The quinario formula also derives from dance. In the late sixteenth century, the most common triple time dance was the galliard, which involved elaborate, athletic variations on a single step pattern, the cinque passi. Cesare Negri—the dancing master we met in Chapter 2—devotes much of his treatise to variations on this basic step. The galliard was a showy dance, meant to display men’s strength and agility. For instance, Negri describes galliard variations that required the gentlemen to leap into the air and kick a hanging tassel (Figure 3.1). Negri describes the cinque passi with characteristic clarity:

First, standing in step with the body straight and the legs well extended, with the left foot four fingers ahead of the right, somewhat in a straight line, with the toe of the foot a bit out, so that the legs and the knees are very straight, stopping the body over the right foot, one will do a hop with the left foot, raising the right forward. Then lowering it, one raises the left, puts [down] the right, and with the left does the cadence of the cinque passi giving it grace, spreading the knees somewhat. Afterwards one will do the same over the right foot, always going forward; in the same order, one will also do it going around the said steps, and one does it in two ways, the first as said.

In the second one does like the first: after having done two steps, one with the right foot and the other with left, one does two steps forward with the right high, and the second step a little higher than the first. Then a step with the left a little faster and the cadence with this left; these are six strokes in one measure.


Figure 3.1  A dancer performing galliard variations with a tassel. Negri, *Le gratie d’amore*, 64. Bibliothèque nationale de France, RES-V-600.
That is, the *cinque passi* consist of five steps stretched over six beats, following the pattern

_kick kick kick leap! --- (and) land._

Because the leap takes more time than the small kicks, the resulting rhythmic pattern is $\frac{5}{6}$, many instrumental (and vocal) galliards ornament the virtuosic leap (and the possibility of landing on both feet, one after the other) with a dotted rhythm $(\frac{5}{6})$. The leap corresponds with the metrical accent on the fourth beat as well as the poetic accent on the fourth syllable, contributing to the sweeping forward momentum of the _quinario_ formula. After the _cinque passi_, the dancer should complete a second set of _cinque passi_ on the other foot to create a symmetrical pattern. Thus, a pair of _cinque passi_ corresponds to a couplet of _quinari piani_. (Negri also provides variations for metrically irregular scenarios.)

We can see the _cinque passi_ in action in the choreography for _A lieta vita_, which Negri includes in _Le gratie d’amore_ under the title _Alta mendozza_. Though _Alta mendozza_ is not a galliard, it uses the galliard rhythm throughout, and the choreography (by a Maestro Stefano) includes a number of _cinque passi_. Stefano pairs _A lieta vita_ with a second tune based on the canary rhythm; the entire dance is in ABA form with the contrasting canary tune in the middle. The first section of the dance consists mostly of simple walking steps ornamented with _cinque passi_ to reinforce the cadences. The faster B section is more athletic and prepares for the return of the A section, which Stefano choreographs exclusively with _cinque passi_. Stefano uses the galliard steps to articulate both harmony and form choreographically: in the first A section they support the harmonic closure of the cadences, and in the second A section they demarcate the final section of the form, reinforcing the insistent rhythmic patterns of _A lieta vita_ with the percussive sound of the steps. The rhythmic formula pervades triple time music, in part because it is overdetermined: it derives from schematic text-setting as well as galliard choreography.

When a text consists principally of _quinari piani_, composers overwhelmingly use the schematic galliard rhythm (Figure 3.2). But other patterns are possible. Vecchi and Banchieri both adopt a few alternative _quinario_ rhythms. In _Venite amanti_ from _Il zabaione musicale_ (1604), Banchieri juxtaposes three gestures to set his _quinari_ (Example 3.4). His A section resembles Gastoldi’s _A lieta vita_ and other typical _quinario_ settings. But Banchieri changes his strategy for the _balletto’s_
Figure 3.2 Most popular rhythmic patterns for setting *quinari piani*. This table includes any formula that appears more than four times and omits four Italian, two German, and no English settings. Numbers in the “poetic meter” column represent the number of syllables in a line, underlines indicate masculine rhymes (for instance, 6 is a *settenario tronco*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Mensuration</th>
<th>Poetic Form</th>
<th>Setting Type</th>
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</thead>
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<td>1590 – 10</td>
<td>d3</td>
<td>11 11</td>
<td>7 7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7 7 4 4 7 7</td>
<td>• • • • • • •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>O 3</td>
<td>5 5 5 5 5</td>
<td>• • •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morley</td>
<td>1595 – 1</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>8 8 8</td>
<td>5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morley</td>
<td>1595 – 4</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>5 5 5 5 5</td>
<td>• • • • • • •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1595 – 6</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>7 5 5</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holborne</td>
<td>1597 – 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7 7</td>
<td>5 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weelkes</td>
<td>1598 – 12</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>5 6</td>
<td>6 6 6 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weelkes</td>
<td>1598 – 15</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
<td>5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassler</td>
<td>1601 – 19</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>5 7</td>
<td>5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassler</td>
<td>1601 – 20</td>
<td>c3</td>
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<td>5 5 5 5 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schein</td>
<td>1609 – 4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13 8 13 8</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>d3</td>
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<td>11 5 6 11 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>O 3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>O 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banchieri</td>
<td>1608 – 1</td>
<td>O 3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vecchi</td>
<td>1590 – 16</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
<td>3 3 3 8 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>c3</td>
<td>11 7 11</td>
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<td>1597 – 44</td>
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<td>1608 – 1</td>
<td>O 3</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
<td>• • •</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B section, replacing the forward momentum of the schematic default with a more stately, halting alternative that emphasizes the second beat. There are no obvious textual cues that encourage Banchieri’s rhythmic adjustments; indeed, the second verse accentuation is very awkward in the B section:

\[ \text{La corda e l’ali,} \\
\text{Largo e gli strali} \\
\text{Con le ferite} \\
\text{Tanto gradite.} \]

All three of Banchieri’s rhythmic patterns permit the same periodicity as the schematic default. Nonetheless, the default quinario formula attracted more composers because it placed a definitive accent on the accento comune.

**Settenari**

The seven-syllable settenario piano is the most common line length in Italianate verse. Settenari are long enough to fill two measures in duple time, but short enough to afford compositional flexibility. Partsong composers prefer a text-setting formula that treats every syllable as a semiminim except the accento comune, yielding a formula that begins on an upbeat and extends for two measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Poetic Form</th>
<th>Setting Type</th>
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<td>Gastoldi</td>
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<td>Morley</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>7 7 7</td>
<td>5 5 6 6 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassler</td>
<td>1601–6</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>1 1 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steffens</td>
<td>1619–1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>5 5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steffens</td>
<td>1619–9b</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6 6 4 4</td>
<td>5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastoldi</td>
<td>1594–3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>7 7</td>
<td>1 0 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassler</td>
<td>1601–18</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6 6</td>
<td>6 6 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schein</td>
<td>1609–15</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>7 6 5 7 6 5</td>
<td>7 5 5 5 5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steffens</td>
<td>1619–2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6 6</td>
<td>6 6 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steffens</td>
<td>1619–10</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4 4 5 4 4 4 4 5</td>
<td>[\underline{\vdots}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Weelkes constructs *To shorten winter’s sadness* (1598, no. 2) in the same vein as Gastoldi’s *A lieta vita*, but in imperfect (duple) mensuration and with a lilting dotted rhythm that subtly supports the verse’s iambic meter (Example 3.5). The rhythmic default ensures that Weelkes’s verse will be four measures with regular harmonic emphasis on the *accento comune*, which aligns with a metrically strong beat (a semibreve *initium*). Weelkes’s four-measure verse leads to a half cadence that creates expectation for a tonic return at the end of the eight-measure refrain.

21. The term *initium* is drawn from Graeme M. Boone, “Marking Mensural Time,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 22, no. 1 (2000): 1–43. It is developed in DeFord, Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm, 38–39. *Initium* refers to the “initial position in the order of pulses” (Boone, “Marking Mensural Time,” 6) and is a mensural alternative to metrical terminology like *downbeat*. *Initia* are hierarchical: a breve *initium* is also a semibreve, minim, and semiminim *initium*. However, only every other
The *settenario* formula begins, distinctively, on an upbeat. Composers take care to notate the upbeat with three beats of rest before the first sounding pitch (see Figure 2.3 for an example). This subtle notational decision may seem unimportant, but it’s quite seditious in a repertoire printed in mensural notation and published in partbooks. An oft-quoted passage from a sixteenth-century
etiquette book illustrates the problem. After tracking down a set of partbooks and dividing up the voices, the singers must figure out how to begin:

**Dierick:** Who begins? Is it you, Ysaias?
**Ysaias:** No, not I. I’ve a four-beat rest.
**Antoni:** And I one of six.
**Ysaias:** Well then, you come in after me?
**Antoni:** So it seems. It’s up to you then, Rombout!
**Rombout:** Yes, I’ve only a quarter-note rest. But we’d better get the pitch.22

Richard Taruskin cites this passage as evidence that it was preferable for at least one voice, if not all of them, to begin on the “downbeat.” However, to make this argument Taruskin omits Rombout’s final statement, where the singer reveals that he also begins on a rest. In any case, Taruskin suggests that the dactylic rhythm that opens many chansons (\(\frac{\text{c}}{\text{d}}\)) is a pragmatic notational solution that avoids the ostensibly more difficult \(\frac{\text{c}}{\text{d}}\) rhythm.23 The schematic settenario rhythm provides an intriguing counterexample to Taruskin’s claim. Imagine the conversation between singers, when every part begins with a rest! Though it certainly wouldn’t pose much of a technical challenge, every time a new group of amateur musicians encountered these partsongs they would have to begin with a discussion of the four-beat grouping and the metrical emphasis on the line’s second and sixth syllables. Mensural notation is full of metrical information, even (especially!) in the absence of barlines. The fact that many partsongs open with three beats of rest indicates that composers and performers were concerned with both four-beat groupings and the metrical emphasis of the accento comune.24

In Weelkes’s balletto and the three quinari examples we considered earlier, schematic text-setting creates regular phrase rhythm because the poems use all lines of the same type. But many contemporary literary and music theorists urged composers to seek out poems with alternating masculine and feminine rhymes. These poems, theorists suggested, permitted pleasing variation of cadential rhetoric. Consequently, composers developed strategies for incorporating alternate line endings into their text-setting schemas. For instance, they paired the default settenario rhythm with several different line types while maintaining metrical regularity: the settenario piano could join with a second settenario piano, a settenario tronco, or an ottonario tronco. Compare the rhythms of Weelkes’s balletto with those in Example 3.6 by Hassler and Gastoldi 🎵. Despite their

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Example 3.6  Schematic text-setting with *settenari piano*. Hassler, *Feins Lieb du hast mich g’fangen* (1596, no. 4); Gastoldi, *Il contento* (1591, no. 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 mm. phrase (A section)</th>
<th>4 mm. phrase (A section repeat)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>settenario piano</em> (7 syllables)</td>
<td><em>settenario tronco</em> (6 syllables)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```
Feins Lieb du hast mich g'fangen mit dein zwey aug-lein schon, nach dir steht mein ver-langen von dir kan ich nit stahn.
```

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 mm. verse</th>
<th>2 mm. refrain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>settenario piano</em> (7 syllables)</td>
<td><em>ottonario tronco</em> (7 syllables)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```
Piacer gio-ia e di-let-to, Sen-te-o-gnun che se-gu’amor, Fa la la la la la.
```

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I:HC</th>
<th>I:IAC</th>
<th>I:HC</th>
<th>I:IAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

different line lengths, all three settings produce identical phrase rhythm because composers consistently align the accento comune with a strong beat. At the same time, alternating line endings enabled composers to differentiate the rhetorical weight of their cadences.

For example, in his canzonetta Feins lieb du hast mich g’fangen (1596, no. 4) Hassler alternates settenari piani and settenari tronchi. Hassler furnishes the distinct line endings with hierarchical cadential rhetoric: he uses half cadences for the feminine rhymes of the settenari piani and authentic cadences for the masculine rhymes of the settenari tronchi. The feminine rhyme creates forward momentum, which is bolstered by the weaker cadence, while the masculine rhyme demarcates the end of the short A section. Whereas Weelkes’s ballett A section is harmonically open in preparation for the following refrain, Hassler’s is harmonically closed in preparation for the turn away from the final that characterizes canzonetta B sections.

By contrast, in Il contento (1591, no. 3), a balletto, Gastoldi follows a settenario piano with an ottonario tronco. Gastoldi’s cadential rhetoric is opposite Hassler’s due to the balletto’s distinct formal requirements: the first line prolongs the G tonic while the second line moves to a half cadence that prepares a return to tonic in the refrain. Whereas Hassler uses the contrasting rhythmic rhetoric of feminine and masculine rhyme to establish a hierarchy between a weak cadence to the dominant and a stronger cadence to tonic, Gastoldi relies on the formal motion from an end-of-verse cadence on V to an end-of-refrain cadence on I to achieve the same effect.

In these three settings, schematic text-setting has a ripple effect, creating periodicities upon periodicities at ever larger scales. The texts’ poetic accents correspond with regular agogic accents, which composers support with strategically designed cadences. The rhyming couplets group two-measure units into four-measure units, and canzonetta repeats and balletto refrains expand these four-measure groups into broader eight-measure sections (except in Gastoldi’s phrase, which is only six measures). Composers also use cadential rhetoric to communicate formal information, contextualizing the surface-level regularities within broader formal norms. The smallest textual irregularity has the potential to upset the partsongs’ balanced symmetries. But at the same time, our confidence in their periodicity increases as regularities accrue on the level of the semibreve, the breve, the long. As we sink into the surface-level regularities, we begin to attend to larger-scale features, such as how composers’ cadential rhetoric tells us what kind of form we’re hearing.

Endecasillabi

As we have seen, quinari and settenari foster regular schematic text-setting in triple and duple time respectively. However, endecasillabi are rarely set schematically. With a whopping eleven syllables, endecasillabi are simply too long to fit into either a duple or a triple context consistently. The schematic defaults for quinari and settenari produce two-measure modules that are easily grouped into
larger sections; *endecasillabi* require at least four measures when set with a two-to-one ratio of long and short notes. Consequently, settings of *endecasillabi* tend to be ad hoc rather than schematic, and composers frequently accommodate long lines by eschewing homophony altogether, favoring imitative or contrapuntal textures instead. Composers avoid schematic setting for *endecasillabi* in part because of the internal accentual structure of the line—*endecasillabi* feature a caesura midway through the line, but the location of the caesura varies. Consequently, no single schema adequately accommodates the flexibility of *endecasillabi* in Italianate poetry.

Poems rarely consist exclusively of *endecasillabi*; rather, the long lines come nestled among other lines of varied lengths, creating intriguing compositional challenges. For example, Vecchi’s *Felice schiera* (1597, no. 19) opens with several five- and six-syllable lines that he treats as *endecasillabi*.

Felice schiera di leggiad’è belle
Lucenti stelle
Che qui risplendete,
Hor come havete
Il ciel solo lasciato
In tristo stato?
Al dolce canto di questi Pastori
Che Mandan fuori
Da lor’almacciase,
Vi sete pur arrese
E innamorate
E’l ciel spregiate.

Happy company of graceful and beautiful
Shining stars
That shine here,
Now how have you
Left heaven alone
In sad state?
To the sweet song of these shepherds
Which they give forth
From their kindled souls,
You also have surrendered
And have become enamored
And scorn the heaven.25

Vecchi sets these *endecasillabi* schematically in triple time, yielding two four-measure units that group into an eight-measure phrase (Example 3.7). He decorates the paired *belle* and *stelle* with a twinkling dotted rhythm that calls attention to the internal rhyme without violating the broader metrical regularity. But the B section causes a text-setting problem: we learn that the shining stars

25. Trans. in Martin, ed., *Orazio Vecchi*, 234. According to Schleuse, Vecchi probably wrote the text; see *Singing Games in Early Modern Italy*, 4, 19.
Example 3.7 Vecchi, *Felice schiera* (1597, no. 19).

8 mm. A section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Fe·li·ce schie·ra di leg·gia·drè bel·le Lu·cen·ti

A section (cont.)

<table>
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</table>

stel·le Che qui·ri·splen·de·te, Hor co·m'ha·ve·t'il ciel so·lo la-

B section (cont.)

<table>
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scia·to In tri·sto sta·to, In tri·sto sta·to?

8 mm. phrase (C section)

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</thead>
</table>

I: IAC Al dol·ce can·to di

(C section cont.)

<table>
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</thead>
</table>

que·sti Pa·sto·ri Che man·danuo·ri da lo·r'al·mac·ce·se,

V: IAC
Example 3.7 Continued.

8 mm. phrase (repetition/elaboration) (C section cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>endecasillabo piano</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

can-tò di que-sti Pa-sto-ri Che man-dan fuo-ri da lo-r'al-mac-ce-se,

III

homophony

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>endecasillabo piano</th>
<th>(quin. pian.)</th>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Vi se-te pur ar-re-se e in-na-mo-ra-te, e in-na-mo-

Vi se-te pur ar-re-se e in-na-mo-ra-te, e in-na-mo-

Vi se-te pur ar-re-se e in-na-mo-ra-te,  
i:HC

imitative departure homophony

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>quinario piano</th>
<th>quinario piano (rep.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  
r-a-te.  
E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  
E’l ciel spre-gia-te.  

E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  
E’l ciel spre-gia-te.  

(E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  
E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  

E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  
E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  

E’l ciel spre-gia-te,  
E’l ciel spre-gia-te.  

(i:HO)  
I:PAC

from m. 32
have left the firmament; the heavens’ suffering is depicted with a single stoic quinario (“In tristo stato”). Vecchi accommodates this juxtaposition by abandoning schematic text-setting and shifting into imperfect mensuration worthy of the moment’s solemnity. He highlights the accent on the sixth syllable of the opening endecasillabo—“the sky”—initiating a pattern of syncopation that continues through the following quinari. To balance the mismatched line lengths, Vecchi then repeats the gloomy quinario, elongating the second repetition to emphasize the accento comune and extend the B section to a symmetrical eight measures. The triple time C section that follows evokes the sweet pastoral song that has lured the stars out of the heavens. Vecchi returns to a modified version of the carefree endecasillabo pattern from the A section. But again a quinario interrupts the texture, casting a shadow over the text’s negative turn: the stars “scorn the heaven.” Vecchi breaks off the final syllables of the endecasillabo, playing with the pairing of innamorate and spregiate—love and contempt. The two-faced final couplet entwines in imitation and falls into the final cadence. Vecchi’s text uses line lengths to characterize its main actors—the carefree stars that shimmer in perfect mensuration, and the scorned heavens, ponderous and staid quinari in imperfect mensuration. But only the heavens create formal and tonal closure—in both the A and C sections, their repetition brings about the final cadence and the tonic harmony in a futile attempt to restore the universe’s natural order.

Vecchi’s schematic approach to eleven-syllable lines is unusual. Gastoldi rarely sets endecasillabi. Only one appears in his 1591 collection, in La bellezza (no. 12), where it is surrounded by settenari and ottonari (Example 3.8). He accommodates the long line by breaking it into two parts of four and seven syllables. But the endecasillabo abruptly violates the phrase rhythm that defines the rest of the balletto. Whereas every other phrase begins with a one- or two-beat pickup, the phrase “chi sempre mai” starts on the second beat of a measure, upsetting the rhythmic patterning and interrupting the pause that should follow the would-be authentic cadence on the text “mille cor.” The four “extra” syllables compromise the otherwise consistent regularity of two- and four-measure phrases as well as the audibility of the poetic structure and the rhyme between “Accendi mille cor” and “Può viver liet' ogn'hor.” Gastoldi goes so far as to alter the usual repeat structure of the balletto to accommodate the irregularity caused by the endecasillabo, repeating only from “chi sempre mai” rather than “e con un raggio sol,” as would be more typical. This repetition creates a canzonetta-like structure (AABCrCr) rather than the more typical two-part balletto form. The irregularity of the endecasillabo and the formal conflict it causes gives Gastoldi’s balletto its character. At the same time, Gastoldi’s careful accommodation of the line and the dearth of endecasillabi in his source poetry suggest that he avoided lines of this length because of the metrical and musical irregularities that they so frequently cause.

When Morley encounters endecasillabi, he eschews homophony altogether, preferring free counterpoint or imitation. Morley opens My lovely wanton jewel (1595, no. 12) with a homophonic settenario piano, but he breaks into imitation for the endecasillabo that follows (Example 3.9). Joseph Kerman suggests that Morley uses imitation in balletts because he aims to extend the boundaries of the
Yet it seems that Morley also responds to the demands of the text—for Morley, *endecasillabi* are simply too long to set homophonically. Liberated from the requirement of homophony, Morley sets the rest of the ballett imitatively. The opening homophony and fa la refrains provide strong enough generic signals that Morley can override the ballett’s textural default without compromising the integrity of the form.

*Endecasillabi* are too long to fit into a metrically regular homophonic framework consistently. Though some metrically regular frameworks were

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>homophony</th>
<th>imitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>settenario piano</em></td>
<td><em>endecasillabo piano</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My lovely wanton jewel,
To me at once
To
My lovely wanton jewel,
To me at once both kind a-
My lovely wanton jewel,
To me at once both kind a-
I

(continued)

me at once both kind a-las and cru-el.
both kind a-las and cru-el.
To me at once both kind a-las and cru-el.
To me at once both kind a-las and cru-el.
Fa

once both kind a-las and cru-el.
Fa

free counterpoint

*refrain*

la la la... Fa la la la...
la la la...
la la la...
la la la...
la la la...
available, as illustrated by the opening of Felice schiera, composers rarely used them, preferring irregular, often contrapuntal or imitative setting for their endecasillabi. At the same time, endecasillabi reveal how composers thought about metrical regularity, symmetry, and balance. For example, Gastoldi's reluctance to set endecasillabi suggests that he was aware of the line's metrical limitations. Morley found a novel solution that eliminated the problem of metrical regularity altogether—imitation. In fact, he sets many more endecasillabi than his contemporaries because he was unbounded by homophony. The challenges that endecasillabi pose highlight composers' relative prioritization of meter and the powerful role of schematic text-setting in producing metrically regular frameworks. In all of these settings, textual imbalances force the composers to abandon schematic text-setting and find alternate means—fragmentation, repetition, imitation, and syncopation—to create adequate balance and closure.

**Thinking ahead**

Schematic text-setting procedures reveal that it is not the meaning but the structure of the text that shapes a homophonic song. And the impact of the poetry cannot be overstated: it affects the mensuration, the phrase structure, the disposition of cadences. Schematic text-setting creates a regular framework on multiple scales. It begets metrical regularity and, by extension, regular phrase rhythm. It guides composers' formal decisions—in balletti, for instance, composers often pair regular texted verses with refrains of equal or proportional length. And text-setting formulas encourage a grouping-based compositional framework. Lines group according to rhyme scheme, semantic meaning, and musical form. Schematic text-setting establishes a robust metrical skeleton upon which composers could hang all kinds of rhetorical, formal, harmonic, and tonal materials.

Schematic text-setting codifies, in a series of unwritten compositional rules, an organizational framework that parallels the way the mind constructs musical meter. Recently, we have begun to understand that meter is not an intrinsic property of musical works but rather is an aspect of the experience of listening. As Aniruddh Patel describes it, the "musical metrical grid . . . is a mental pattern of multiple periodicities in the mind of a listener, not simply a map of the accentual structure of a sequence." When we listen to or perform music, our neurocognitive rhythms synchronize with regularities on the musical surface. These attentional oscillations have major ramifications for how—and what—we hear. Mari Riess Jones has devoted much of her career to studying what she calls dynamic attending, the theory that our attention peaks and wanes in response to regularities in our

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environment. She and her collaborators have shown how our fluctuating attention shapes our experience of musical and nonmusical time. For instance, Jones performed an experiment where she played a reference tone for listeners, then several beats of distracting music, and finally a comparison tone. Listeners were asked to determine whether the second tone was higher or lower than the reference tone. Jones found that listeners identified the comparison tone more accurately when it fell precisely on a downbeat, but struggled when the new tone was slightly early or late. Similarly, Patel has shown that listeners tap downbeats more precisely than internal metrical pulses. Both studies (in addition to a great deal of other experimental work) suggest that our attention is most precise at moments of greater metrical depth. These oscillations in attention in turn facilitate perception—without realizing it, we simply pay more attention to musical events that happen on stronger beats.

Viewed through the lens of dynamic attending theory, the regular periodicities of homophonic partsongs correlate with listeners’ unconscious attentional strategies—and this kind of listening is fundamentally metrical. What’s more, dynamic attending is future-oriented (this is Jones’s term): listeners are constantly predicting both what is going to happen and when it is going to happen. This mental framework helps to explain how musical meter and tonality interact. Tonal expectation requires that a listener attend to and compare temporally distant musical events, and that initial events create expectation for future ones (the arrows in the musical examples represent these expectations). These events might be only a few measures apart (consecutive line endings) or they might be more distant (section-ending cadences), but listeners can easily shift their attention between smaller- and larger-scale periodicities. Both kinds of expectation originate in metric attending. While metrical regularity is not necessarily a prerequisite for tonal expectation, it is provocative to hypothesize that metrical regularity facilitated such expectation in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when tonal harmonic relationships were not yet taken for granted. Only after listeners developed robust attentional strategies rooted in tonal expectation could these harmonic trajectories be divorced from their initial highly regulated metrical environment.

One benefit of situating tonality in the mind of the listener is that human cognition changes much more slowly than both musical style and philosophical discourse. DeFord points to one of the most intractable challenges of analyzing older repertoires in terms of the theories that are contemporary with them (which, let’s remember, may not aim to describe or even prescribe them). In a review of Roger Matthew Grant’s recent book on time measurement in the early modern period, DeFord asks whether the philosophical issues that contextualize theories of mensuration and meter are valid grounds for music analysis:

The issue at stake is the relation between philosophy and psychology. Does a person’s philosophical view of time influence or determine his or her response to musical time? Would an eighteenth-century listener with a Newtonian orientation hear Palestrina differently from a sixteenth-century listener or an eighteenth-century listener who adhered to the Aristotelian perspective? For that matter, does our modern awareness of Einsteinian time affect the way we hear music that was composed under an Aristotelian or Newtonian paradigm?33

This is a big and probably unanswerable question—and DeFord acknowledges this—but it does introduce a productive wedge into the so-called presentist/historicist debate: perhaps the constants in human cognition are more reliable witnesses to musical experience than the mutable and often unreliable declarations of theorists. After all, it is hard to imagine that our attentional strategies, which evolved over millennia, have really changed that much in the past few hundred years—even in light of the technological upheavals we’ve witnessed (the clock, the printed book, the railroad, the assembly line, the television, the Internet) and the alarmist invectives that declare with each breakthrough that we are compromising something fundamental about our humanity.

On the other hand, it is much more difficult to make claims about cognition—the things we don’t know about the human brain far outstrip the things we do know. And the questions we think to ask and the interpretations of the data that we develop, even in empirical studies, are themselves conditioned by our historical position and our aesthetic theories. But if we set aside these important caveats temporarily, we are left with a promising hypothesis about the emergence of tonal expectation. If meter orients our attention to regular periodicities and helps us to compare distant events, then the tonal expectations that accrue when we connect fifth-related cadences to one another originate in metrical, not tonal hearing. That is, the listening strategies that we think of as tonal may actually be fundamentally metrical. This paradigm shift has crucial ramifications for the history of tonality, because metric attending is much less historically contingent than tonal hearing.

German words should be “pronounced daintily and with refinement”

Please forget the words of foreigners
For they erode your own language in many places;
In lieu of an oath you must hereby promise
That from now on you will speak good Silesian German.34

As I discussed in Chapter 2, early modern German poets, like their contemporaries across Western Europe, strove to enhance the status of their vernacular as a viable medium for artistic expression. To raise the artistic profile of the German language, many poets emulated Italian poetry and music, which had already achieved standing near to that of Greek and Latin. But this passage, penned by seventeenth-century translator and poet Wencel Scherffer von Scherffenstein (a contemporary of famed reformer Martin Opitz), speaks to a competing concern: German words do not fit well into Italian molds (or the Greek and Latin frameworks that were equally prominent objects of humanist interest). To address this concern, Opitz proposed a new poetic style where word stress coordinated with poetic meter, a strategy which in turn facilitated elegant musical setting. In particular, Opitz advocated for strict adherence to iambic and trochaic meters, with their unhampered alternation of strong and weak syllables.35 But though Opitz did not articulate this viewpoint until the 1620s, and though late sixteenth-century poetry did not adhere to Opitz’s principles, our German anthologists and composers had already begun to experiment with new text-setting models that paid closer attention to the accentual qualities of German speech and the accentual-syllabic character of German poetry. When German composers redistributed metrical importance from one syllable per line (the accento comune) to several syllables per line (metrical feet), they reshaped the basic assumptions of text-setting.

For example, though German composers often set texts schematically, they also cultivated a unique vocabulary of additive rhythmic patterns for typical

Italianate line lengths (common *settenario* patterns appear in Figure 3.3). The additive patterns that German composers preferred contradict several principles of schematic text-setting. They do not necessarily use a two-to-one ratio of long and short notes. They impose agogic accents on multiple syllables and do not prioritize the *accento comune*. And they upset the metric regularity implied by the poetic meter. Instead, these ad hoc German settings are sensitive to the declamatory patterns of the texts—just as Opitz would later encourage. For example, Hassler opens *O Auffenthalt meins Lebens* (1596, no. 6) with an

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Mensuration</th>
<th>Poetic Form</th>
<th>Setting Type</th>
</tr>
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| Hassler    | 1596 – 6 | †         | 7 7 | 7 11 | ↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓→
additive pattern that extends the first and second syllables of the *settenario* (Example 3.10a). In the first verse, this extension is a pun on the text “O Auffenthalt” (O stay); in subsequent verses it calls attention to the poem’s speaker (“Laß mich doch nicht verderben” and “Hilff mir auß meinem leiden”). Haussmann uses a similar rhythmic pattern in *Wenn wilt dich zu mir kehren* (1592, no. 21) (Example 3.10b). Here, the syncopation highlights the text’s

**Example 3.10a** Additive *settenario* piano setting in Hassler, *O Auffenthalt meins Lebens* (1596, no. 6).

![Example 3.10a Additive *settenario* piano setting in Hassler, *O Auffenthalt meins Lebens* (1596, no. 6).](image)

**Example 3.10b** Additive *settenario* piano setting in Haussmann, *Wenn wilt dich zu mir kehren* (1592, no. 21).

![Example 3.10b Additive *settenario* piano setting in Haussmann, *Wenn wilt dich zu mir kehren* (1592, no. 21).](image)
iambic meter by introducing three-beat groupings; the text encourages us to hear the rhythmic pattern as $\square \mid \square \mid \square \mid \square \square$.

German additive text-setting strategies are particularly compatible with **endecasillabi**. While Italian and English composers tend to avoid these long lines, German composers set them as frequently as any other verse type. In *Ach lieber schatz* (1594, no. 9), Haussmann designs a new rhythmic framework for each line to accommodate nuances in the poem’s declamation (Example 3.11 📌). For each of the first three lines, Haussmann emphasizes the fourth and sixth syllables, but he changes the rhythmic emphasis for the final line and extends the fourth and **fifth** syllables, realigning the agogic accents with the metrical framework provided by the **tactus**. Additive text-setting enables Haussmann to respond to subtle variations in each line that schematic setting could not accommodate. At the same time, the partsong freely alternates between groups of two and three beats, creating an unmoored sense of meter.

Additive text-setting is most common in Haussmann’s and Schein’s outputs, and is typical of through-composed partsongs. By contrast, the lightest genres nearly always use schematic text-setting. Hassler, for example, uses a mix of both text-setting styles in *Lustgarten*, but all eight of his balletti feature strict schematic text-setting. Similarly, Schein mixes declamatory styles in *Venus Kräntzel* but adheres exclusively to schematic defaults in his rowdier collection of drinking songs, *Studenten-schmaus*. German composers deviated from text-setting schemas because they approached both text-setting and meter differently from their Italian and English counterparts.

A primary strength of schematic text-setting is its capacity to adequately (if not ideally) accommodate strophic texts. Secondarily, schematic text-setting creates two-measure patterns that nest with one another, encouraging metrical periodicity. German composers sometimes sacrifice both of these benefits; instead, they attend to text declamation and exploit the rhythmic variety of shifting two- and three-beat groupings. The resulting settings diverge substantially from the regular patterns of Italian and English partsongs. Additive text-setting is a poor fit for the character of the Italian language with its limited accentual patterns—the metrical emphasis on the **accento comune** reflects the syllabic equality of Italian declamation. The accentual character of German, on the other hand, demands greater sensitivity to the secondary accents within each line, even in poetry based on Italian models.

But, given that German and English are both syllable-timed languages, why didn’t English composers also explore additive text-setting? This discrepancy arises, in part, from the distinct characters of the two poetic traditions. English poetry is metrically flexible, even within its basic accentual-syllabic framework. English poets often use metric substitutions—an occasional trochee takes the place of an iamb, for example. By contrast, German poetry’s strict alternation of weak and strong syllables can feel naïve and mechanical; German composers used additive text-setting to mitigate this effect. English and German composers also had different goals when writing their own texts. English composers reserved their finest poetry for the through-composed madrigal, which was an outlet for their most nuanced text-setting. But in their homophonic partsongs English composers
set poor *poesia per musica*. Liberated from the demands of thoughtful text-setting, they instead experimented with metrical organization. German composers, on the other hand, were engaged in a poetic movement as well as a musical one, which aimed to promote German as a viable artistic language. It is unsurprising that

Example 3.11 Haussmann, *Ach liebster schatz* (1594, no. 9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 mm. phrase</th>
<th>4.5 mm. phrase (offset)</th>
<th>4 mm. phrase</th>
<th>6 mm. phrase (repetition)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>endecasillabo piano</td>
<td>endecasillabo piano</td>
<td>endecasillabo piano</td>
<td>endecasillabo piano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English composers, who treated poetry as a mere vehicle for music-making, would write more schematic settings of poetry in the service of purely musical aims, whereas German composer-poets, who valued poetry more highly, would produce more sensitive but less metrically regular settings.36

From text-setting to meter

If you’ve ever sung from partbooks, you may have noticed that they communicate much more information about meter than their unbarred, seemingly undifferentiated mensural notation suggests. Ruth DeFord first alerted me to this phenomenon when she observed that dissonances have a consistent relationship to the *tactus*—in particular, only suspensions occur at the beginning of the *tactus*, while other dissonances must occur on weaker beats.37 Attentive to the relationship between dissonance and mensuration, I began to notice that other notational details could orient me to the *tactus*, even in the absence of other voices. For instance, rhythmic groupings are rarely syncopated against the background mensuration—a dotted semiminim paired with a fusa will usually fall on a minim *initium*, and the fusa is often a dissonant passing or neighbor tone. Cadences are even clearer mensural indicators, and it’s easy to identify a melodic cadence in your part (especially if you’re an alto like me—we often get the juicy suspension). Cadential resolution usually falls on a semibreve *initium*, and the preceding suspension will be syncopated against the semibreve *tactus*. (When I sing from parts with my students, we inevitably discover that cadences are critical in rehearsal contexts—it’s useful to have points of contact in the middle of pieces so that you don’t always have to start over from the beginning if and when your performance derails.) Printers often notate consecutive rests on different lines to differentiate rests that conclude one mensural grouping from rests that begin another.38 As a result, it is usually easy to determine if the first note of a phrase occurs on a strong or a weak beat; textual cues (for example, an unimportant word like “and”) reinforce these subtle indications. These and myriad other notational details point to the presence of a robust mensural hierarchy that governs not only rules for notation, counterpoint, and dissonance treatment, but also how performers might approach playing or singing from unbarred parts. And, in homophonic partsongs, this mensural hierarchy is amplified by the text.

Poetic and musical parameters have a reciprocal relationship, and it is only in their coordination that strong metrical trajectories emerge. Composers rely on musical accent to render poetic meter and verbal accent intelligible, while at the

38. Ibid., 47.
same time poetic meter and verbal accent contribute to regular musical accent. This apparent tautology in fact illuminates the process by which metrical regularity came to be established first as a norm and ultimately as a value in homophonic secular music. But schematic text-setting yields not only metrical regularity, but also metric hierarchy. Verbal texts incorporate hierarchies of accentuation. Five- and seven-syllable lines encourage two-measure patterns, rhyming couplets promote symmetrical groupings of these rhythmic patterns, and the pairing of line endings with harmonic arrivals yields regular harmonic rhythm, and in turn, a hierarchy of tonal areas. The introduction of systematic patterns of metrical hierarchy signaled a crucial conceptual shift that helped to transform mensural music into metrical music.

In fact, the transition from mensural to metrical composition in the seventeenth century is still poorly understood. Like the analogous shift in pitch structure, changes in theoretical and compositional understanding of rhythm and metrical organization were gradual and overlapping. DeFord rails against the notion of a rift between two wildly different systems:

Modern scholars sometimes treat it [mensural music] as the opposite of “metrical music.” This is a false dichotomy based on an oversimplified view of the difference between “Renaissance rhythm,” in which the system of measurement is sometimes alleged to have no relation to rhythmic structure, and later styles, in which time signatures and bar lines are sometimes assumed to prescribe structures in a straightforward manner. This reductive opposition does not do justice to the music of either era.

Instead, older practices continued to survive intact as newer ones developed. And subtle conceptual shifts guided incremental alterations in terminology and notation, shifts that were encouraged by changing compositional practice.

Though its presence in metrical music is undisputed, the role of hierarchy in mensural music has been a central question in studies of rhythm and meter from the Middle Ages through the early Baroque. Mensural time was governed by the tactus, a fixed beat demarcated by tapping or a down-then-up motion of the hand. The tactus could be subdivided according to duple or triple proportion, but it is not clear that subdivision of note values necessarily implies hierarchical

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39. For example, seventeenth-century meter is omitted from The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory, which follows a chapter on rhythmic notation until the year 1600 with a chapter that addresses theories of rhythm in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
40. DeFord, Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm, 2.
41. The common idea that seventeenth century composers were simply confused about mensuration has been debunked many times; see especially Roger Bowers, “Some Reflection upon Notation and Proportion in Monteverdi’s Mass and Vespers of 1610,” Music & Letters 73, no. 3 (1992): 347–398; Margaret Murata, “Pier Francesco Valentini on Tactus and Proportion,” in Frescobaldi Studies, ed. Alexander Silbiger (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987).
42. Boone summarizes the history of this debate in “Marking Mensural Time,” 26.
43. For a thorough consideration of the theoretical basis of the tactus, see DeFord, Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm, 51–81. On its Aristotelian philosophical underpinning see Grant, Beating Time and Measuring Music, 15–90.
metrical organization. Graeme Boone has argued that a number of aspects of contrapuntal practice impart hierarchy to the mensural grid: he identifies regular articulation of multiple voices on increasingly deep metrical levels, and he demonstrates how prescriptive rules for dissonance treatment presuppose a hierarchy of weaker and stronger mensural points. DeFord expands Boone’s argument and shows how contrapuntal structure, dissonance treatment, surface rhythms (including syncopation and hemiola), cadences, and text-setting contribute to and reinforce a mensural hierarchy. These features “are potentially hierarchical in that they can generate articulations that vary in strength, from subtle to pronounced. They interact in complex ways that may reinforce or conflict with one another.”\(^{44}\) Boone uses the concept of \textit{initium} to characterize this metric hierarchy: the \textit{initium} is the beginning of a time unit for any note value (a breve \textit{initium} occurs every breve from the first \textit{tactus} stroke, a semibreve \textit{initium} occurs twice as often, et cetera). DeFord explains how \textit{initia} stack: “Because mensural structure is hierarchical, every \textit{initium} on one level is also an \textit{initium} on all smaller levels.”\(^{45}\) \textit{Initia} are salient in performance: because note values cannot be syncopated against their own \textit{initia}, long notes, such as breves and semibreves, instantly orient a singer (reading from a partbook) to the \textit{tactus}.

DeFord emphasizes that mensural hierarchy is determined by the musical surface, not by the mensuration sign. She explains that “Perceptible mensural regularities are created not by notation, but by compositional regularities that make them audible.”\(^{46}\) We can revisit Example 3.6 to demonstrate this point. Hassler’s \textit{Feins lieb du hast mich g’fangen} (1596, no. 4) is the metrically simpler of these partsongs. The \(\frac{3}{4}\) mensuration sign indicates a semibreve theoretical \textit{tactus} (demarcated in the figure with barlines).\(^{47}\) No surface-level musical motion occurs on the level of the semibreve, however. Instead, Hassler’s setting consists exclusively of minims and semiminims, and the rate of declamation is the semiminim. In this case, the minim is what DeFord would call the compositional \textit{tactus}.\(^{48}\) Thus, the inaudible semibreve theoretical \textit{tactus} is supported by two of its subdivisions: the

\(^{44}\) DeFord, \textit{Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm}, 82.
\(^{45}\) Ibid., 38; after Boone, “Marking Mensural Time,” 5. This hierarchical approach to mensuration resembles the metrical structure described in Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, \textit{A Generative Theory of Tonal Music} (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 17–25.
\(^{46}\) DeFord, \textit{Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm}, 470.
\(^{47}\) DeFord distinguishes between three practical varieties of \textit{tactus}. Theoretical \textit{tactus} is that typically implied by a mensuration sign. (In this case, the theoretical \textit{tactus} of a semibreve indicates a downstroke every semibreve with an upstroke on the intervening minims. Though \(\frac{3}{4}\) indicated a breve \textit{tactus} in the early sixteenth century, by the last few decades of the century it had evolved to indicate a semibreve \textit{tactus} at a faster tempo than that of \(\frac{3}{4}\).) Performance \textit{tactus} reflects the physical gesture that a single musician would use to orient the rest of the ensemble; this could vary according to the individual performers. The compositional \textit{tactus} is the reference for dissonance treatment, syncopation, and other contrapuntal elements. Ibid., 51–52, 145–146.
\(^{48}\) Compositional \textit{tactus} is one level slower than the rate of declamation; it can be identified based on cadential placement (cadences will fall on compositional \textit{tactus} downstrokes), suspension length (suspensions also fall on downstrokes), and syncopation (note values smaller than the \textit{tactus} level are rarely syncopated). Ibid., 51.
minim compositional tactus and the semiminim rate of declamation. At the same time, Hassler’s schematic text-setting yields rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic parallelism at the level of the breve which is magnified by the regular agogic accents in mm. 3, 5, 7, and 9. And the formal repetition of the A section creates periodicity on the level of the long (two breves), though this is not an audible level of the mensural structure. Hassler’s A section articulates three levels of the mensural structure (breve, minim, and semiminim), and implies a fourth (semibreve, which mediates between breve and minim) (Figure 3.4).

Gastoldi’s Il contento (1591, no. 3) resembles Hassler’s setting, with a semibreve theoretical tactus, a minim compositional tactus, and a semiminim rate of declamation. Gastoldi’s schematic text-setting encourages rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic parallelism that yields audible regularity on the level of the breve. However, Gastoldi’s setting introduces a new mensural layer. Because Gastoldi pairs his settenario piano with an ottonario tronco, he adds texted fusae, which ensure that the accento comune lands on a strong beat. Consequently, Gastoldi’s A section articulates four levels of the mensural hierarchy (breve, minim, semiminim, and fusae) and implies a fifth (semibreve). Furthermore, regularity at the level of the long is implied by the verse, but then denied in the refrain.

Weelkes’s To shorten winter’s sadness (1598, no. 2) further subdivides the mensural hierarchy (Example 3.5). The mensuration sign again indicates a semibreve theoretical tactus. The verse (mm. 1–5) articulates at least three levels of mensural hierarchy: the minim (compositional tactus), the semiminim (rate of declamation), and the fusae (which appears in mm. 2 and 4). The minim level is

49. The mensuration sign of Il contento is $\xi$. In theory, $c$ and $\xi$ indicate the same tactus in the late sixteenth century, though the signs imply different tempi, and $\xi$ generally uses more white notes while $c$ uses more black notes. In practice, composers of homophonic part songs do not seem to treat $c$ and $\xi$ differently, though they generally prefer one or the other.
reinforced by the alternation of strong and weak syllables, the agogic accents in mm. 3 and 5, and the dotted semiminim–fusa pairings in mm. 2 and 4. Yet, whereas the refrain in Gastoldi’s balletto confirms the mensural grid already in place, Weelkes’s refrain (mm. 6–13) expands it. Weelkes speeds up the surface rhythm in the refrain with a constant stream of fusae (mm. 6ff.), and eventually ornamental semifusae (mm. 9 and 12). At the same time, the harmonic rhythm emphasizes increasingly slow mensural levels: first the minim (mm. 6–9), then the semibreve (mm. 10–13). Weelkes’s contrapuntal structure reinforces several mensural levels. The cantus and quintus share an E–D motive in minims that repeats every semibreve. The C–D–E–C fusa motive also occurs on the semibreve level (moving from the bassus to the altus, tenor, bassus, and tenor in mm. 6–10). The breve in turn organizes the mensural hierarchy. The cantus and quintus descending motive (E–D–C–B) repeats every breve, reinforcing the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic parallelism at the breve level introduced in the verse. And the musical form and periodic articulation of the breve supports regularity at the level of the long. Weelkes’s A section projects seven levels of a mensural hierarchy centered around the minim compositional tactus, with three slower levels (the semibreve, breve, and long) that organize the phrase structure and form of the ballett, and three faster levels (the semiminim, fusa, and semifusa) that comprise the surface rhythm.

The mensural hierarchy in these examples is increasingly typical of partsongs in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. In mensural music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the tactus gradually slowed as composers used faster note values.50 This transition culminated in the introduction of texted fusae in light partsongs of the 1580s, which Ruth DeFord argues singularly heralded the new metrical style of the Baroque.51 Texted fusae sped up the rate of declamation, encouraging shorter motives, text repetition, and frequent cadential articulation. When provided with text, fusae became structural rather than decorative elements of the rhythmic surface. DeFord argues that this faster mensural level crucially encouraged the regular accentual patterning characteristic of metric hierarchy:

The differentiation of three, rather than only two, metric levels [the minim, semiminim, and fusa] results in greater contrast between the strongest and the weakest metric positions on which notes occur, and therefore increases the relative strength of the accents on the strong beats. At the same time, the increased range of available note values increases the number of rhythmic patterns that can be constructed without grouping notes in ways that conflict with the norms of the meter. Consequently, motives including consecutive fusae are almost always found


in passages where the accents implied by the rhythmic patterns of all voices correspond strictly to those implied by the meter. The result is a rhythmic style in which lines separating the tactus units have the same significance as modern bar lines, and the accents implicit in the meter are not normally overridden by the actual rhythms of the music, as they often were in the earlier madrigal.52

That is, the rhythmic style of light genres at the end of the sixteenth century projected a new kind of mensural hierarchy, one which operated on multiple levels of mensural structure and in turn supported periodicity on increasingly slow levels.

The new metrical style that DeFord describes is characteristic of light, popular genres, which are influenced by dance on the one hand and liberated from the demands of learned counterpoint on the other.53 Though DeFord limits her discussion to Italian canzonette and villanelle, the homophonic partsongs discussed here are the immediate descendants of these genres. In homophonic partsongs with schematic text-setting, verbal, poetic, and metrical accents are all coordinated and occur at regular periodicities. Deviations from these periodic norms are not uncommon, though they reveal a respect for the underlying metrical grid as often as they suggest a distance from it. As we will see in the following chapters, metrical periodicity supports other crucial parameters in the partsongs’ emerging tonal style, including phrase structure (and its melodic and harmonic components) and form. The correspondence between an emerging tonal language and an emerging metrical language in this repertoire is not a coincidence. As poetic meter and musical meter have a reciprocal relationship, so do musical meter and the articulation of tonal trajectories. Tonality and meter reinforce one another. Together, they make it possible for listeners to organize increasingly large time spans hierarchically.

**Minutes and seconds, minims and semiminims**

The broadening of the mensural grid paralleled a coincident broadening of the horological grid as timekeeping technologies grew in popularity and increased in precision in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.54 The Middle Ages and Renaissance marked a gradual increase in the reach and accuracy of timekeeping—large public clocks came to dominate the visual and aural identity of urban centers throughout Europe beginning in the fourteenth century, and such clocks signified

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52. Ibid., 54.
a city’s modernity and openness to innovation as well as its internal rational order and regulated economy. From the early fifteenth century, wealthy households began to demand smaller private clocks for their tables and walls, and by the sixteenth century personal (and even portable) timepieces were popular status symbols for wealthy merchants and the learned elite—doctors, lawyers, and the like. As the demand for clocks increased, so did the demand for accuracy. As David Landes points out, the more clocks you have, the more accurate they need to be. And accurate they were not—even fairly “precise” Renaissance clocks needed to be set every day (portable watches often included a small sundial and compass by which to set the mechanical clock), and they could vary by fifteen minutes or more each day. (Banchieri humorously recounted the shame of his collar clock “beating out of time” with the town clock and took great pains to synchronize the two, without success.) But over time clocks and watches grew increasingly accurate as weights gave way to springs and, in the mid-seventeenth century, springs yielded to the pendulum. What began as glorified timers—signals for public officials to ring the bells for monastic prayers or town gatherings—evolved into the precision instruments that today govern every aspect of our daily lives.

One symptom of the gradual refinement of timekeeping technology was the introduction of increasingly precise vocabulary for ever smaller units of time. The hour derives from the Medieval hours (hora) that divided the monastic day, unequally and flexibly, into times of prayer. It was only in the fourteenth century that some communities divided the day into hours of equal length, and still later that our modern system of counting the hours, beginning at midnight, came to be widely accepted throughout Europe (and in fact equal and unequal hour reckoning coexisted for centuries). The minute entered the popular imagination in the late sixteenth century—earlier accounts refer only to fractional measurements like the quarter or sixth of an hour. Astronomer Tycho Brahe documents this shift in his journals (astronomers are particularly good witnesses to changing timekeeping practices because they required highly accurate measurement technology to study the celestial bodies). In his writings from the 1560s, he refers to minutes only twice; in 1577 he describes a marvelous new clock with minute designations, and by 1581 seconds enter his vocabulary. Brahe’s account parallels William Harrison’s “Description of England,” first published in 1577:

Our common order therefore is to begin at the minut, which conteineth part of an houre, as at the smallest part of time knowne vnto the people, notwithstanding that

56. Landes, Revolution in Time, 92.
57. Adriano Banchieri, Lettere armoniche ... intrecciate in sei capi (Bologna: Girolamo Mascheroni, 1628), 43–45. Translated in Cypess, Curious and Modern Inventions, 161–162.
58. The history of modern hour-reckoning (dividing the day into twenty-four equal hours and counting them with the numbers one through twelve) is messy and regionally specific, and suffers from a dearth of reliable evidence. See Dohrn-van Rossum, History of the Hour, 113–117; Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift, Shaping the Day: A History of Time Keeping in England and Wales 1300–1800 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 25.
in most places they descend no lower than the halfe quarter or quarter of the houre; and from whence they proceed vnto the houre, to wit, the foure and twentith part of that which we call the common and naturall daie, which dooth begin at midnight, and is obsereued continuallie by clockes, dialles, and astronomicall instruments of all sorts.\textsuperscript{60}

Harrison corroborates the minute’s increasing prominence in the late sixteenth century and correlates this temporal precision—in contrast to “most places” which generally “descend no lower than the halfe quarter or quarter of the houre”—to the high concentration of timekeeping instruments “of all sorts” in England. Adam Max Cohen has noted a related fascination in Shakespeare’s writings—the bard refers to the minute over sixty times in his published writings, but never to seconds. (In \textit{A Midsummer Night’s Dream}, Titania mentions “the third part of a minute”—this is the smallest time increment Cohen documents in Shakespeare’s works.)\textsuperscript{61}

It is hard to avoid the analogy between the increasing division of measured time and the introduction of ever smaller mensural values in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—culminating, as DeFord brilliantly documents, in the increasing prominence of the texted fusa in the late sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{62} In Weelkes’s extensive mensural hierarchy, from the fleeting semifusa all the way up to the stoic long, we hear an echo of the King’s fantasy of a pastoral life in Henry VI, Part 3:

\begin{quote}
Carve out dials quaintly, point by point,
Thereby to see the minutes how they run:
How many makes the hour full complete,
How many hours brings about the day,
How many days will finish up the year,
How many years a mortal man may live.\textsuperscript{63}
\end{quote}

The King here imagines himself as a maker of sundials, entranced by the rational order of marking the passage of time. But Shakespeare reverses the historical progress of time—the division of the day into ever smaller units—reframing it as the grouping of small, precise units into ever larger ones. It’s not the years, but the minutes that enable the King to comprehend the scope of his life. So too does the mensural hierarchy rely on the increasing subdivision of time to give deeper meaning to slower rhythmic values. They take on new roles as keepers of global order, organizing phrase and forms and watching the minimis, semiminims, fusae how they run.


\textsuperscript{62} DeFord, “\textit{Evolution of Rhythmic Style}.”

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Henry VI}, Part 3, 2.5.24–29. See discussion of this passage in Cohen, \textit{Shakespeare and Technology}, 130.
Shakespeare’s romantic equation elegantly captures the delicate balance of a well-matched couple.\(^1\) Neither lover is complete without the other, and Shakespeare’s lines weave them together. The first two lines introduce two figures and frame their relationship as an equitable, if oppositional one. Syntactically, this phrase could stand alone were it not for the semicolon, half-cadential punctuation that subordinates the second clause to the first. Semantically, a truncation would be ineffective—we have only heard half of the story; it is “left to be finished by such as she.” Shakespeare’s conjunction confirms their connection: “and she”—we turn and see the equation from her perspective. Shakespeare describes the same phenomenon from her point of view, linking her back to him while revealing that together the pair is not merely complete, but perfect. The passive constructions intensify the dependence of the lovers on one another. She does not complete him; rather, he is left to be finished by her; he does not perfect her; her perfection lies in him. Shakespeare’s exquisite phrase creates dependencies through the careful balance of semantic and syntactical features, though its elegance lies in the subtler details of its language.

Shakespeare’s language evokes the gender dynamics and physical symmetries of sixteenth-century social dance. In *Le gratie d’amore*, Cesare Negri describes how a gentleman should approach his partner:

> Going then to take the woman, he will stop ahead of her in a straight line with the right foot forward, and will do the riverenza grave [a deep choreographed bow] as said above; the woman will get up and she will also do the riverenza grave with the left foot, with those actions and that grace that the man will have done, who in that time will pull the left foot behind, and will do another riverenza breve in order to honor the woman. Then, raising the right arm, and the woman the left pretending to kiss her hand with grace and decorum, he will take the middle of the woman’s hand, holding it above his. . . . Afterwards the woman will turn opposite, the man

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stopping with the right foot forward, and the woman with the left, and they will let
go the hands pretending to kiss them, and doing together the riverenza as at first.²

Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. The woman does not merely
repeat what the man does, rather, she imitates each action on the opposite foot
with “that grace that the man will have done.” The couple’s symmetry is captured
in the woodcut that Negri selects to accompany his prose description (Figure 4.1):

Figure 4.1 A couple preparing for a dance. Negri, Le gratie d’Amore, 44.
Bibliothèque nationale de France, RES-V-600.

² Cesare Negri, Le Gratie d’Amore (Milan: Pacifico Pontio and Giovanni Battista Piccaglia, 1602), 43.
(DMA diss., Stanford University, 1985), 98.
in addition to their bodily symmetry, the engraver reflects the angular sweep of their garments and the flamboyant feathers of their headpieces across the image’s central axis. Dance was a privileged domain in which men and women could meet physically and emotionally. As Jennifer Nevile explains, “The interactions between the dancers during the course of these choreographies chronicle the interaction between the two genders. Dance was a vehicle for expressing desire, a point continually hammered by its opponents yet openly accepted—even celebrated—in descriptions of dancing found in chronicles and other documents.”

Dance was a refuge from the circumscribed patriarchal order of early modern society, wherein men and women played complementary if not equal roles, and where the aesthetic privileged the graceful symmetry of the dancing couple.

The balletto is a dance genre—even though many of these partsongs never accompanied a dance, the grace of an advance paired with a retreat echoes through their phrases. Though symmetry is not an absolute rule in the homophonic partsong repertoire, it is a strong aesthetic default: schematic text-setting ensures that two-measure lines group into four-measure units and eight-measure phrases, which in turn combine into sixteen- and thirty-two-measure forms. Each musical phrase is a dance of its own; every melodic gesture, every harmonic turn a curtsy that demands a bow. And, just as Shakespeare’s chiasmus intertwines his first two lines with his last, so do the phrases in partsongs spin harmonic and rhetorical connections that create and ultimately reward expectation.

To illustrate, let’s consider the various ways that Haussmann builds harmonic connections in Cupido, kleines Kind (1603, no. 30). The minute canzonetta consists of several tonally open “halves” that accumulate desire for tonal return on three levels: line, phrase, and form (Example 4.1). Haussmann sets each rhyming couplet with a weak harmonic arrival followed by a stronger cadence; his schematic text-setting ensures that these cadences occur at metrically regular intervals, and, as a result, that they correspond with peaks of listener attention. The rhyme scheme determines Haussmann’s form: settenari tronci, with masculine line endings, close the A and B sections (lines 1–2 and 5–6), while feminine rhymes of settenari piani create forward momentum in the longer B section (lines 3–4). The cadences close each phrase with a series of dominant flirtations: first, a confident declaration of affection, then a coquettish retreat accompanied by a glance over the shoulder, and finally a more vulnerable gesture—an outstretched hand—to which tonic finally acquiesces. Each time Haussmann’s dominant exposes itself it demands a tonic response; its desire for affirmation accumulates as the canzonetta progresses. In this simple pastoral canzonetta Haussmann builds expectation for tonic return at the level of the four-measure phrase, the eight-measure section, and the twelve-measure form.

Dynamic attending theory suggests that listeners are attentive to periodic phrase endings—but how do we get from one cadence to the next? Haussmann reinforces his harmonic trajectories with goal-directed melodies. For instance, the
partsong opens with a tonic prolongation, which Haussmann immediately transposes up a fifth to create a I–V trajectory in his first phrase. Following William Caplin, I will describe such trajectories as statement–response. The phrase that

begins the *canzonetta* resembles the initial bow of a male dancer inviting a partner to join him: the gesture establishes an expectation for a specific musical outcome that will balance the awkward asymmetry of the vulnerable first phrase, left tonally open. But here the lady rises to join the dance. The second couplet, which begins the B section, is harmonically mobile: Haussmann tonicizes D (vi), then redirects the melody back to V. While mm. 6–9 ascend through the upper fourth of the melody’s register, mm. 10–13 descend back to the lower tonic. The eight-measure B section thus enacts what I call an *action–reaction* trajectory: the tonally and rhetorically open first phrase (mm. 6–9) prepares a tonally and rhetorically closed second phrase (mm. 10–13), like two step patterns that circle in opposite directions but meet together again at the center of the hall.5

Sixteenth-century theorists did not describe phrase structure. In their prescriptive compositional theories, they were concerned with counterpoint—with controlling the ebb and flow of consonance and dissonance from each overlapping point of imitation to the intermittent cadences that organized longer forms. But phrase was an unavoidable consideration in the new homophonic environment. We have already seen how schematic text-setting ensured that homophonic phrases were concise and discrete. They segmented the musical surface into short, symmetrical units demarcated by efficient cadences. Melodic construction changed in turn—composers were no longer concerned with composing points of imitation that would make for interesting contrapuntal combinations. Instead, they focused on getting from cadence to cadence. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that these early experiments with phrase design had a strong harmonic component: composers actively exploited large-scale relationships between dominant and tonic. And they supported these harmonic trajectories with new melodic strategies that emphasized transposition and transformation of goal-directed motives.

**Phrase structure has a voice problem**

As we saw in Chapter 3, schematic text-setting encourages symmetrical, binary grouping structure in homophonic partsongs. Though groups aren’t always perfectly symmetrical, two-measure lines tend to group into four-measure couplets and eight-measure phrases; poetic features like rhyme, syntax, and punctuation reinforce these groupings. The two-part, eight-measure phrases that pervade the partsong repertoire invite comparison with the eighteenth-century musical period. Indeed, many phrases in balletti and canzonette adopt a harmonic plan that resembles that of the period: a four-measure antecedent proceeds to a

5. The term *action–reaction* is based on Caplin’s *antecedent–consequent* (*Classical Form*, 49), but permits looser melodic construction. It describes harmonic trajectories that move from a weak cadence on the dominant to a stronger cadence on the tonic. I will discuss action–reaction phrase construction in more detail later in this chapter.
half cadence (or other weak cadence), and a four-measure consequent recomposes the antecedent to produce an authentic cadence (as in *Sing we and chant it*, Example 3.3b). This harmonic trajectory is bolstered by rhythmic, poetic, and melodic rhetoric that establishes the second, stronger cadence as an answer to the question posed by the first, weaker cadence.

However, though sixteenth-century phrases exhibit period-like tonal structure, their thematic design does not reflect eighteenth-century period archetypes. As a result, the terms “antecedent” and “consequent” are not a good fit for this repertoire. Melodies in the part-song repertoire rarely exhibit the features that Caplin describes as *characteristic*; instead, they tend to be *conventional*. Characteristic melodies feature “a diversity of intervallic content” as well as “a variety of durational patterning” that helps “bestow individuality on the idea.” By contrast, “conventional ideas tend to feature consistent stepwise or arpeggiated motion within a series of uniform durational values.”

**Haussmann’s canzonetta** is a study in conventionality. Though each four-measure unit could be understood as a statement of a melodic idea followed by its varied repetition, each melodic idea consists of stepwise motion in schematic semiminims, and each line’s individuality is determined solely by its contour. Haussmann’s three melodic ideas are hardly distinguishable from one another, let alone from melodies in his other part songs. Consequently, repetition, variation, and development of melodic ideas plays a smaller role in the part-song repertoire than in eighteenth-century instrumental music.

In general, the voice, particularly the amateur voice, necessitates conventional melodic construction. Just try singing the opening of Beethoven’s op. 2, no. 1, the *locus classicus* of the musical sentence! The range, the arpeggiated melody, the ornamentation, the fragmented contour, and the quick surface rhythms pose challenges for even a virtuosic singer. Idiomatic writing for voices demands a narrower range and a more conjunct contour. Voices cannot practically execute many techniques that composers use to develop characteristic motives, including fragmentation and acceleration, which both play a prominent role in Beethoven’s sentence. Text declamation and comprehensibility—challenges unique to vocal music—similarly limit melodic construction. Zarlino describes the importance of natural text declamation:

> Take care to accommodate the words of the text to the written notes in such a manner and with such rhythm that no barbarism is heard, such as when in a vocal piece a syllable that should be short is made long, or vice versa, a syllable that should be long is made short, something heard every day in innumerable compositions and really a shameful thing.


Zarlino goes on to suggest that composers should restrict themselves to a limited range of durational values, as setting that is too fast is difficult to articulate and understand, and setting that is too slow or too varied can be incomprehensible. Finally, phrase boundaries in vocal music are demarcated in part by breath; breaths are determined by both vocal technique and punctuation. In the absence of characteristic melodic construction, poetic, rhythmic, and rhetorical factors play a greater role in supporting the motivic development typical of a musical sentence and the weak/strong cadence pair typical of a musical period.\(^9\)

Phrase structure in vocal music is both circumscribed by the physical constraints of the human voice and regulated by the text. As a result, even those phrases that superficially resemble eighteenth-century instrumental phrase types have unique properties specific to the vocal idiom. We have already seen how the harmonic framework of the eighteenth-century musical period has a precedent in the partsong, even in the absence of periodic melodic rhetoric. The musical sentence provides even clearer testimony to the unique features of vocal phrase construction, as the sentence relies more strongly on melodic cues than harmonic ones. Indeed, the sentence is a prominent phrase type in another vocal repertoire: twentieth- and twenty-first-century rock and popular music.

Walter Everett captures the unique character of vocal phrases with his SRDC phrase type, often described as the “vocal sentence.”\(^{10}\) SRDC (Statement–Repetition–Departure–Conclusion) corresponds with a sentence's basic idea, repetition, continuation, and cadence.\(^{11}\) Unlike the sentence proper, SRDC characterizes groupings on both the phrase level and larger levels. In short, SRDC structure is recursive, while sentences are not. The flexibility of SRDC reflects the cadential structure of much rock and popular music. Eighteenth-century sentences build momentum and do not contain a cadence. By contrast, it is difficult or disingenuous to analyze many SRDC songs without noting at least one internal cadence, in part because many rock verses are built on repetitive harmonic cycles rather than goal-directed tonal harmonic syntax.\(^{12}\) SRDC

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12. SRDC sentences are often sixteen measures rather than eight (though Caplin [Classical Form, 35] would argue that they are eight “real measures”) and their four-measure units can be more independent than the two-measure units of a typical Beethovenian sentence. For example, consider Schubert’s “Das Wandern” and the Beatles’ “Her Majesty,” both of which strongly project SRDC norms. At the same time, there is some contention as to whether harmonic arrivals that bisect larger SRDC phrases constitute cadences; see, for example, David Temperley, *The Musical Language*
structures also have balanced melodic rhetoric and tonally closed harmonic trajectories, which distinguish them from sentences. All of these features can be traced back to text-setting, which encourages modular construction. A composer, tasked with setting four lines of equal length with varying syntactical and semantic relationships, will approach phrase structure very differently from a composer constructing a sonata theme. Similarly, an SRDC phrase is often coextensive with a formal section. Its motivic material is rarely developed later in a composition; rather, it stands alone as a self-contained whole.\(^{13}\) Sentences, on the other hand, are thematic, with characteristic melodic ideas that are developed throughout a composition.\(^{14}\) In his discussion of SRDC, which he calls the AABA sentence, Matthew BaileyShea points out the conflict between (ostensibly opposing) periodic and sentential norms inherent in the SRDC structure: the phrase type has “almost periodic balance” with a 2+2+2+2 metric grouping that contrasts the momentum-building of a more typical 2+2+4 sentence.\(^{15}\) BaileyShea notes that SRDC phrases are “often reserved for vocal contexts” and links SRDC to German folk song—in particular, to Barform.\(^{16}\) (I will address Barform in more detail later.) Everett extends SRDC beyond the limitations of a single cadential span, BaileyShea invokes “vocal contexts” and explores SRDC’s unique rhetoric, and several authors connect SRDC to Barform: each of these accounts exposes a mismatch between the realities of phrase structure in vocal music and the Schoenbergian label “sentence” as Caplin developed it to describe the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

Of course, we must use caution when borrowing eighteenth-century terminology to describe sixteenth-century music. The language of periods and sentences has only limited utility for describing earlier phrases, though the aesthetic values of balance and symmetry, tonic and dominant alternation, and question and answer ripple through the partsong repertoire. But these early phrases are provocative precursors to common eighteenth-century phrase types. In spite of the wealth of scholarship surrounding the sentence and the period in eighteenth-century and later repertoires, the history of these phrase structures has not been explored in much depth.\(^{17}\) Periods and sentences are generally taken to be emblematic of Classical style, with roots in unnamed popular and dance repertoires of the Renaissance, as Leonard Ratner describes:

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One of the most significant aspects of the change of style that occurred during the eighteenth century was the change in the quality of musical movement. Baroque music was characterized by continuous flow; phrase endings were covered and disguised by polyphonic texture, by the basso continuo, and by the momentum created when short motifs and ornamental figures were systematically developed. Classic music was characterized by well-defined articulations; phrases and periods tended to balance and complement each other, reflecting the popular song and dance idioms from which Classic music was drawn.¹⁸

The aesthetic characteristics of eighteenth-century phrase reflect schematic text-setting procedures as much as dance rhythms. But these procedures far predate the late sixteenth-century songs that we’re considering here. For instance, Leo Treitler has noted how text-setting conventions encouraged periodic phrase structure in medieval song genres. Treitler’s argument unfolds in the same vein as my own: he notes that regular poetry encourages syllabic text-setting and alternating line types yield cadences of different weights. In medieval song, he argues, “musical form is a matter, first of balanced phrases, then of a relation between phrases that allows us to hear one as consequent to, or closure for, the other.”¹⁹ These examples remind us that vocal repertoires—both literate and aurally transmitted—play a larger role in the history of eighteenth-century phrase structure than we have previously assumed, even if these repertoires are not directly ancestral to later instrumental genres.

From subsequence to consequence

Sometime in the late 1610s, Monteverdi began to construct phrases in a new way. This claim is a small but important part of Dahlhaus’s argument that Monteverdi’s late madrigals inaugurated a new tonal language. Dahlhaus divides Monteverdi’s phrases into two categories: when a phrase merely succeeds the previous one, the structure is paratactic, but when a phrase is a consequence of the previous one, the structure is hypotactic. Paratactic phrases are independent, hypotactic phrases dependent.²⁰ Dahlhaus notes that Monteverdi’s phrases shift increasingly toward hypotactic relationships in his later madrigal books. Hypotactic structures, he argues, are constitutive of tonality: they create “halves requiring completion” by using “subordinating harmony.” He explains:

A subordinating harmony combines the contrast of an F- and a G-major cadence with an expectation of a C-major cadence, a cadence that reconciles the contrast

and represents a superordinate key that accommodates both the F- and G-major cadences as cofactors, as its subdominant and dominant.\(^{21}\)

That is, hypotactic construction confers tonal expectation—it implicates an eventual tonic cadence, then makes us wait for it. Dahlhaus, using a Riemannian lens, attributes this expectation to the contrast of subdominant and dominant. But in the homophonic partsong repertoire, the dynamic polarity of tonic and dominant organizes the musical surface, not a three-function model. (In fact, different combinations of signature and final or key note have distinct harmonic vocabularies. Though dominant–tonic polarity plays a significant role in each of them, this tonal variety weakens the capacity of any two non-tonic chords to strongly imply a tonic.) Dahlhaus applies a paratactic/hypotactic binary recursively; it can describe relationships both within and between phrases.

Dahlhaus takes for granted that the contrast of cadences on F and G creates expectation for a C major cadence. But we cannot assume that tonal dynamics that inhere in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century repertoires are meaningfully replicated in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century ones. As an alternative, Lerdahl and Jackendoff extend the subordinate relationships of meter and grouping structure to the pitch domain.\(^{22}\) As harmonic and melodic events interact with meter and grouping hierarchies, they accrue their own hierarchy of structural importance. Implicit within this hierarchy is a “relative stability of pitch-events”—a background pitch structure based on some tonal center and “a scale of distance of other pitch-events from the tonal center.”\(^{23}\) Thus, Lerdahl and Jackendoff argue that cadences, phrase beginnings, and the like become “pillars of tonal organization,” contributing to an “arc of tonal motion over the duration of a group.”\(^{24}\) This process may produce a unique hierarchy for each musical idiom; as we will see, the partsong repertoire is built on the pillars of tonic and dominant.

Hypotactic structure is overdetermined in the partsong repertoire: it results from phrase rhythm and cadence (as Dahlhaus asserts), and from meter and grouping (as Lerdahl and Jackendoff argue), but also from rhythmic parallelism and poetic form. To capture the modular, recursive structure of homophonic partsongs, I will describe a composer’s setting of a single line of text as a phrase unit.\(^{25}\) Diverse musical and poetic parameters link phrase units into larger hypotactic groups. For instance, listeners respond to poetic cues and seek out the completion of a semantic unit or rhyme. They attend to rhythm, especially line endings: after the fluid forward motion of a series of feminine rhymes, the abrupt stoppage of a stodgy accented ending indicates closure. Melodic and rhetorical

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21. Ibid., 298.
23. Ibid., 280.
25. I prefer the term *phrase unit* to *phrase* or *subphrase* because modular construction is recursive—*phrase unit* is neutral regarding structural level and can capture the construction and combination of two-, four-, or eight-measure modules.
cues, including melodic parallelism, melodic interruption, and the pairing of weak and strong cadences, reinforce these poetic features but seldom act independently of them. And all of these features contribute to tonal expectation on multiple levels of hierarchy.

Composers enlist different tools to support tonal trajectories at different scales. Gastoldi uses the tonal attraction of half and authentic cadences to link the two halves of his rhyming couplets in *Lo spensierato* (1594, no. 3) (Example 4.2). In the A section, the half cadence points toward the G final, but Gastoldi redirects the harmony to a more optimistic B♭. The symmetrical harmonic structure of the A section is an elegant musical analog to each stanza’s opening gambit: a negative cause is followed by its positive effect (*Poi che’l mio foco è spento / Vivrò lieto e contento*; “Because my fire is out / I will live happy and contented”). The B section changes course to close on the G final. After the A section’s schematic *settenari*, the B section’s irregular text threatens to unseat the *canzonetta*’s metrical order. But Gastoldi keeps the phrase in line: he careens through the *decasillabo piano*, but then unhurriedly lopes through the final, shorter *quinario piano*. This whiplash-inducing declamation ensures that the final syllable—and with it, the final cadence—arrives on a strong beat. In a virtuosic display of concision, Gastoldi reproduces the hypotactic relationship of each four-measure phrase (V–i) on the formal level (III–i), matching the poem’s conjunction (the “and” that opens the second half in two stanzas) with a melodic echo and appropriating the assertive closing line for a strong final cadence.

Demantius’s *O Venus scharffe pfeil* (1601, no. 5) unfolds almost identically (Example 4.3). Demantius expands Gastoldi’s harmonic trajectory from the four- to the eight-measure level; the larger scope enables him to explore more subtle relationships between phrase units on the four-measure level. The first three phrase units manipulate a simple motive, and the fourth closes with a stereotyped cadential formula. The repetition that links the first and third units grounds the whole phrase: the action unit (mm. 2–5) is tonic-rooted and the reaction unit (mm. 6–9) departs from and subsequently returns to this tonic. At the same time, Demantius highlights the parallelism within the first couplet with statement–response repetition. The thrice-repeated melodic gesture thus has a great deal of tonal responsibility: it asserts tonic, builds expectation with motion to dominant, and finally redirects the phrase away from its safe tonal mooring to create a problem that the satisfying final cadence solves. The melodic parallelism in the first three phrase units amplifies the harmonic trajectory, linking the units to one another and enhancing our expectation for the return of tonic at the end of the phrase.

The tonal stability of the eight-measure norm permits expansion, contraction, and variation without compromising the dominant–tonic harmonic trajectory. Hassler plays with scale in the *erste Teil* of his bawdy four-part madrigal, *Ein Bräutlein wollt nicht gehn zu Bett* (1601, no. 11) (Example 4.4). The partsong depicts the first nervous sexual encounter between newlyweds. The climactic

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**Example 4.3** Demantius, *O Venus scharffe pfeil* (1601, no. 5), A section.
scene involves a pun, where the anxious bride calls out for reassurance from her aunt (*Base*), but the confused groom believes she’s asking him to be “better” (*baß*). Hassler opens the partsong with a straightforward tonic prolongation. But the second line slips furtively into harmonically mobile counterpoint; the

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descending fifths sequence leads to a cadence on dominant. The change in texture corresponds with the poem’s shifting voice: an objective observer notes the bride’s reluctance to consummate her marriage, but then her voice takes over with disquieted counterpoint that reflects her uncertainty about the liaison. The seven-measure phrase—an expansion of the four-measure norm we saw in Demantius’s partsong—is large enough to stand on its own as the A section of a canzonetta. Consequently, the restatement of the opening material in m. 8 sounds like formal repetition—at first. However, Hassler tweaks the bass and canto parts, weakening the direction toward tonic and preparing the harmonic contrast that follows. The final phrase unit repeats the sequence transposed down a fifth, converting the V:PAC of the first half into a I:PAC and closing the harmonic trajectory opened by the first seven measures. In this through-composed madrigal, Hassler fuses the conventions of formal A section repetition (reminiscent of the canzonetta) with the action–reaction trajectory typical of Italianate partsong. The transposed repetition of the sequence facilitates the dominant–tonic trajectory that defines the action–reaction phrase.

In each of these examples, the composer creates tonal expectation by pairing a tonally open action phrase with a tonally closed reaction. However, the composers present the dominant–tonic trajectory at different scales (Figure 4.2). At the simplest level, these phrases are analogous: each phrase is symmetrical with a division half-way through, each pairs a cadence on the dominant with a cadence on tonic, and each phrase sets a complete semantic unit supported by the conclusion of a rhyme. The text organizes all three harmonic trajectories. For instance, Hassler and Demantius both set pairs of rhyming couplets; Hassler simply expands the eight-measure norm when he replaces the expected homophony with a longer contrapuntal passage for the second and fourth phrase units. Gastoldi’s phrase, on the other hand, is a reduced version of the same eight-measure norm; Gastoldi is simply limited by his shorter poem. But the dominant

![Figure 4.2 Summary of dominant–tonic trajectories in Gastoldi, Demantius, and Hassler.](image-url)
arrivals that bisect these phrases, which are themselves supported by poetic and melodic features, prepare and predict the tonic cadences that close them, regardless of the scale of the phrase.

**What to expect when you’re expecting (a cadence)**

In all of the examples we’ve considered in this chapter so far, I have suggested that cadences on the dominant create expectation for tonic return (and I have implied that motion to III can have a similar effect). But why would listeners in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have these expectations, which seem intuitive to us today only because of our lifetime of exposure to tonal music? In part, this expectation is built into the structure of the gamut and the history of the clausula, details that I won’t belabor here. But recent work in cognitive science suggests that we can study a repertoire’s statistical properties to get a sense of the possible expectations of its original audience. Listeners unconsciously abstract norms from the music they’re exposed to, and use those norms to form expectations of new works, a process called *statistical learning*. Though many barriers prevent us from describing an early modern listening experience with confidence, we can use the statistical properties of a repertoire as a starting point for untangling what kinds of musical events would have surprised a German patrician in 1604, and what would have struck him as utterly conventional.

Our patrician would expect phrase-level motion from V–I. For this study I analyzed 381 partsongs drawn from thirty-one printed collections (as well as a handful of manuscript sources), comprising 1,030 phrases. Often, phrases are easy to segment. Some Gastoldi balletti divide into four eight-measure phrases, each of which contains a weak–strong cadence pair and sets a rhyming couplet. But other partsongs are more difficult to parse. For example, Hassler frequently weaves homophony and polyphony together in his grander canzonette. Similarly, some elaborate through-composed vignettes from Italian miscellany collections have extensive, overlapping phrase units interspersed with solo lines or random choral outbursts. In some of Haussmann’s and Demantius’s dance songs, whole sections are only four or six measures long. And Weelkes aggressively upsets mensural expectations; many of his balletts have only one or two internal cadences. To account for the variety of phrase (and non-phrase!) construction in the partsong repertoire, I identified phrase boundaries according to the following informal

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criteria, which draw on Zarlino’s text-setting guidelines, Lerdahl and Jackendoff’s grouping well-formedness and preference rules, and exigencies of the repertoire:

- **Scope.** Prefer passages that are long enough to be perceived as a completed unit (longer than four measures) but short enough to be comprehended as a single phrase (shorter than twelve to sixteen measures depending on mensuration and tempo).  
- **Closure.** Phrases end in a cadence. Prefer final cadences that are stronger than preceding or subsequent cadences.
- **Completeness.** Segment the musical surface such that no incomplete units remain. (For example, consider a twelve-measure balletto section with an eight-measure verse and a four-measure refrain. The refrain is too short to meet the conditions of the scope criterion. Prefer to treat the verse + refrain grouping as a single phrase rather than treating the verse as an independent phrase.)
- **Isolation.** Prefer passages that are isolated from surrounding material by rests, cadences, semantic content and rhyme scheme, et cetera.
- **Poetry.** Prefer passages that express a complete semantic idea. Prefer phrase boundaries that complete a rhyme.
- **Periodicity.** Prefer symmetrical structures, even numbers of bars, and internal periodicity.
- **Parallelism.** Treat passages with melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic parallelism as analogous units within larger groups.

Based on these preference rules, I eliminated 108 imitative passages that are not phrase-like. The remaining 922 phrases divide into three categories: two-part, three-part, and short.

About two-thirds of the phrases in the partsong repertoire are **two-part**. These symmetrical phrases are normally eight measures and divide into two melodic and harmonic gestures. Asymmetrical phrases, which arise from elision or expansion, or from metrically irregular texts, can usually be related back to the symmetrical norm. Figure 4.3a summarizes harmonic trajectories in two-part phrases. Figure 4.3b organizes phrases by mode, and Figure 4.3c organizes phrases by region. V–I trajectories stand out as a clear default—they are about twice as likely as the next most common trajectory, I–I. Notably, the preference for V–I phrases is strongest in England and weakest in Italy; the comparative study of balletti in Chapter 5 will

30. After GWFR 5, which demands that larger groups “must be exhaustively partitioned into smaller groups.” Ibid., 38.
31. After GPR 2 (Proximity), ibid., 45.
32. After Zarlino’s text-setting instructions: “In order that the sense of the words be complete, care should also be taken not to separate any parts of the text by rests while a clause, or any of its parts, remains unfinished.” Zarlino, *On the Modes*, 96.
34. After GPR 6 (Parallelism): “Where two or more segments of the music can be construed as parallel, they preferably form parallel parts of groups.” Ibid., 51.
Figure 4.3a Harmonic trajectories of two-part phrases in all regions.

Figure 4.3b Harmonic trajectories of two-part phrases divided into major keys (319 phrases) and minor keys (335 phrases).
account for this difference. Italian composers prefer tonic-rooted phrases (I–I). Their harmonic reticence may reflect the generic variety of Italian *canzonetta* collections. Unlike more traditional partsong collections, Vecchi’s and Banchieri’s miscellany books juxtapose a variety of generic types; indeed, Vecchi invents a number of forms exclusively for these novel publications.35 The unique forms provide much of the books’ interest, yet prevent composers from establishing and

manipulating generic norms. Consequently, Italian miscellany collections feature more modular, paratactic phrases to fit their ad hoc formal construction.

German composers supplement two-part phrases with a three-part model. About 18 percent of German phrases are three-part, compared to only 7 percent and 8 percent of English and Italian phrases. Again, V and III are common mid-phrase points of articulation (Figure 4.4). In contrast to the balance and symmetry encouraged by two-part phrases, three-part phrases build momentum—if the two-part action–reaction phrase is the period of the homophonic partsong, then the three-part phrase is its sentence. For example, Haussmann’s O schönes Lieb (1603, no. 2) sets three tercets with ebbing and flowing momentum based on their abc abc ddc rhyme scheme (Example 4.5). Following the conventions of Barform, Haussmann sets the first two tercets as the canzonetta A section.

Haussmann hovers around III for the aimless opening line before descending efficiently to a I:PAC for the rhyme between Begier and mir. The B section is more obviously goal-directed: Haussmann highlights the dd rhyme with melodic parallelism that leads to a i:HC, which points to the I:PAC that closes the canzonetta and forms a final rhyme with Begier and mir. Typically, in three-part phrases one or more of the three harmonic arrivals is non-cadential; in Haussmann’s canzonetta, the opening phrase simply prolongs III, and the B section explores v before landing on a i:HC. The resulting grouping structure creates the impression of acceleration as each phrase progresses; the 2+2+2 structure of each half groups into a 4+2 action–reaction phrase.

Short phrases participate in larger formal processes or set up subsequent, longer phrases; consequently, they are more likely to be tonally open than

![Figure 4.4](image-url) Figure 4.4 Harmonic trajectories of three-part phrases in all regions.
other phrase types (Figure 4.5). Forty-three percent of short phrases in my corpus end off-tonic, compared to 21 percent of three-part phrases and only 16 percent of two-part phrases. These normally four-measure phrase units comprise just under 20 percent of Italian and German phrases but are rare in England (only 4 percent of phrases). Short phrases are typically full sections (often first sections) of canzonette, and are particularly common in the dance-like settings of Gastoldi’s Balletti à 3 (1594), Demantius’s Sieben und siebentzig . . . Polnischer und teutscher Art Täntze (1601), and Haussmann’s Rest von polnischen und ändern Täntzen (1603) (see Examples 4.1 and 4.2). Normally, we would consider four measure units at a quick tempo too short to be phrases. However, these phrases’ formal independence demands that we consider them as self-contained units, where the norms of phrase structure and the smallest-scale forms interact.

Phrase construction in homophonic partsongs has a harmonic component. As composers explored ways to organize their new discrete phrases, which plowed through text with unprecedented efficiency, they looked to harmony. Dominants and tonics support poetic rhyme and syntax, but more importantly, they create tension and resolution in the absence of contrapuntal dissonance. But composers didn’t create expectation by merely alternating dominant and tonic cadences at regular periodicities. When composers deploy this trajectory across a repertoire

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**Example 4.5** Haussmann, *O schönes Lieb* (1603, no. 2).
they create generic expectations, but when they support this trajectory with melodic, rhythmic, and rhetorical parameters they encourage tonal expectation. My analysis of over one thousand phrases reveals two robust generic norms in homophonic partsongs: first, two-part phrases, and second, dominant-to-tonic motion within phrases, with some variation based on key, phrase length, and region. With these two norms in place, composers had ample opportunity to experiment with other musical parameters that could guide listeners from cadence to cadence.

**A fair divided excellence: How to build a half that requires completion**

In the previous section, I demonstrated that many phrases in the partsong repertoire are balanced on a dominant/tonic axis. However, while I showed that V–I trajectories are likely, I did not show that their relationship is hierarchical or dependent. How do composers draw dominant and tonic into a symbiosis where one does not merely precede, but predicts the other? We could interpret the range of cadential possibilities in the partsong repertoire as a simple mapping of tonal space, consistent with Zarlino’s prescriptions of appropriate cadential points within each mode.\(^36\) Unsurprisingly, cadences on the final and the third and fifth

\(^36\) Zarlino, *On the Modes*, 54–89.
above the final are prominent. In this case, successive paratactic phrase units explore several arbitrary but equally important harmonic areas before concluding on a tonic. Such phrases might be understood as operating in a solar tonal system, to borrow a useful image from Leonard G. Ratner, where several secondary key areas orbit around a central tonic. Yet composers often bolster dominants and tonics with melodic, contrapuntal, metrical, and poetic rhetoric. These features mold phrases into hypotactic structures where the two halves depend on one another, consistent with what Ratner describes as polar tonality, based on the contrast of tonic and dominant. Ratner ties this distinction specifically to the kinds of phrases that animate homophonic partsongs:

As harmonic layouts shifted from the discursive solar arrangement to the dramatic polar, the rate of chord change began to slow, and progressions began to show greater symmetry, with stronger focus upon the harmonic goal at the end of a period. Thus the polar arrangement contributed to the strong sense of periodicity characteristic of classic structure.  

Though Ratner links solar tonality to earlier modal practices and ties polar tonality to eighteenth-century phrase and formal structures, his comparison is apt for the partsongs under consideration here. And it coheres with Dahlhaus's distinction between paratactic and hypotactic phrase structure. Both Ratner and Dahlhaus describe a process by which phrases move from a subordinate key area to tonic not by chance, but rather because the initial cadence prepares and predicts its eventual resolution.

Connections between phrase units fall on a spectrum ranging from paratactic (arbitrary succession of verses and exact repetition) to hypotactic (transposition schemes and sequences). Diverse phrase types coexist in single collections and individual partsongs. However, phrases do vary regionally, illuminating diverse approaches to tonal expectation in Western Europe. In fact, regional variation in partsongs is most pronounced at the phrase level, where distinctions among vernacular poetic traditions are magnified and local aesthetic preferences are on display. Confronted with homophony, Italian, English, and German composers all experimented with phrase construction, and they all sought new ways to connect dominant and tonic. Creating tonal expectation may not have been their only or even their primary aesthetic goal, but it was certainly a consistent outcome of their compositional practice.

38. Dahlhaus's "subordination" corresponds to polar tonality, "variety" to solar tonality (*Studies on the Origin of Harmonic Tonality*, 315). Ratner's discussion echoes Dahlhaus's description of the paratactic construction of *Teiltonarten*: "The main key of a composition is not a center to which the remaining component keys [*Teiltonarten*] are related as secondary keys, but merely a *primus inter pares* [first among equals]. To be sure, it is a main key insofar as it is set off from the society of component keys by its frequent recurrence and by its position at the beginning and end. . . . But it does not form a 'basic' key from which the dependent keys are derived" (292).
Dahlhaus’s exemplar of paratactic structure is Monteverdi’s *O Mirtillo* (Example 4.6). Monteverdi uses paratactic phrases to set lines of asymmetrical lengths, discouraging binary grouping structure (what Dahlhaus calls “nested binary subdivision”); each verse (a setting of a single line) is “independent and

*Example 4.6* Monteverdi, *O Mirtillo*, mm. 1–14. Boxed labels beneath the staff reflect Dahlhaus’s list of “cadences or verse endings.”
Accordingly (for in Dahlhaus’s view, harmonic and phrase properties are codependent), Monteverdi’s tonal structure is diffuse: the madrigal has frequent “cadences or verse endings” on G, d, a, F, and C, providing little support for its D final.\textsuperscript{40} The phrase structure and harmonic organization together ensure that the madrigal does not use “subordinating harmony” that characterizes Monteverdi’s later, more tonal phrases. In O Mirtillo, Monteverdi sets the blank verse of settenari and endecasillabi flexibly—Dahlhaus describes the setting as “a musical presentation of speech.”\textsuperscript{41} Monteverdi divides the endecasillabi into irregular groupings, and repeats individual lines as it suits the madrigal’s rhetoric. In the absence of regular phrase rhythm, poetic rhyme, and large-scale goal direction, the phrases indeed feel “strung together” (Dahlhaus’s term) more flexibly than what we find in the homophonic partsong repertoire. The madrigal is dramatic; an episode in Guarini’s larger tragicomedia pastorale: Monteverdi supports the artful poetry with musical twists and turns, and captures Amarilli’s potent despair with a range of expressive techniques that famously provoked Artusi’s scorn.

Yet there is a conflict between the idea of paratactic phrase structure, where each phrase unit is self-contained, independent, and detached from its surroundings, and the reality of poetic form, where each line is part of a larger syntactical whole and relates to the surrounding lines through rhyme scheme and meter. Monteverdi’s paratactic phrases are an instructive counterexample. They arise from a sympathy between Guarini’s soliloquies, with their dramatic arcs, flexible verse, and charged emotional valence, and the composer’s commitment to the via naturale all’immitazione (the natural expression of changing emotions).\textsuperscript{42} But the sprawling phrases, nuanced poems, and varied textures of Monteverdi’s fifth book of madrigals lack analogues in the simple homophonic partsong genres. Balletti and homophonic canzonette prized schema over drama, concision over expression. As a result, paratactic structure is uncommon in homophonic partsongs.

A three-voice aria from Selva, Se gliè vero Himeneo (no. 13), meets some of Dahlhaus’s conditions for parataxis (Example 4.7).\textsuperscript{43} Vecchi’s A section text pairs a single settenario piano with four quinari piani rhymed in couplets. Vecchi sets the text nimbly, weaving between declamatory homophony, schematic text-setting, and modest counterpoint, and swerving from perfect to imperfect mensuration. Consequently, the phrase segments asymmetrically into three units (3+4+5), which in turn group uneasily as 3+9. After a declamatory opening, Vecchi begins the rhyming quinari in schematic homophony. But he abandons the schema and breaks into a more fluid cadential formula for the final quinario.

\textsuperscript{39} Dahlhaus, Studies on the Origin of Harmonic Tonality, 297.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 289–290.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 297.
\textsuperscript{42} Massimo Ossi, Divining the Oracle: Monteverdi’s Seconda Pratica (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 11.
compromising the internal symmetry of the second rhyming couplet and eliminating the potential for analogy with the previous couplet. The poem’s grammatical structure reinforces this uneven division even as it ties the asymmetrical units together. Each stanza of the strophic partsong sets a single sentence: the first line establishes a conditional “if” (“If it is true, Hymenaeus”), the following two couplets expand the condition (“that you bind / the souls and hearts . . .”), and the B section provides the resulting “then.” The second stanza begins with the conjunction “and,” binding the entire text together. Because of the irregular phrase rhythm and inconsistent text-setting, it is difficult to predict both when the final cadence will occur and what harmony it will articulate. Nonetheless, a tonal
hierarchy still governs the partsong, constantly orienting and reorienting the listener toward the larger G–C polarity.\textsuperscript{44}

The paratactic phrase structure in Vecchi’s *aria* is quite different from what Dahlhaus describes in Monteverdi’s madrigals. In particular, the irregular phrase rhythm, disregard for poetic structure, and ad hoc melodic construction in Vecchi’s partsong do not correspond with arbitrary cadential points as Dahlhaus argues they do in Monteverdi’s Book V. Instead, Vecchi’s partsong is comfortably balanced on a tonal axis, mitigating the potentially disorienting effect of the asymmetrical combination of phrase units. This raises an intriguing question: is the narrow harmonic range of these pieces simply a feature of the light style, or does the limited durational and emotional scale of these tiny partsongs discourage composers from exploring a broader harmonic palette? Relatedly, does the potential for listeners to make connections across broader swaths of music—phrases and forms—result from metrical and phrase structural cues or is it just a cognitive benefit of concision? None of these features are mutually exclusive, and it is in their interaction that the capacity for tonal expectation emerges.

**Exact repetition**

The simplest way to connect two phrase units is exact repetition. English and Italian composers rarely repeat phrases exactly, as repetition can be monotonous in strophic, sectional forms.\textsuperscript{45} But in Germany exact repetition persists, a legacy of the native *Barform*. *Barform*, derived from the medieval *Meistersinger* tradition, is an AAB structure familiar to us from many hymn tunes. It consists of a repeated opening *Stollen* followed by a longer *Abgesang*. In *Feins lieb du hast mich g’fangen* (1596, no. 4), Hassler writes a concise four-measure A section that efficiently traverses a dominant–tonic axis (recall Example 3.6). He then repeats the A section, but with new text, following *Barform* conventions. The exact repetition aptly illustrates the speaker’s stasis; he is ensnared (*gefangen*) and immobilized (*Von dirk an ich nit stahn*) by desire. *O Auffenthalt meins leben* (1596, no. 6), from the same collection, opens almost identically (recall Example 3.10a). Here, Hassler states the opening couplet twice, altering it the second time to emphasize a melodic descent from $5_{\#}$ to $1_{\#}$. He encloses the larger ten-measure phrase in repeat signs, defining the entire complex as the A section. Hassler converts the formal repetition in *Feins lieb* into phrase repetition in *O Auffenthalt*. But the harmonic work of the latter phrase still occurs on the smaller, five-measure level rather than the ten-measure level, linking this phrase repetition to the formal repetition of *Feins lieb*. The two phrase units that make up the A section of *O Auffenthalt* resemble, but do not rely on one another. The first phrase unit does not predict the second, and the

44. The B section echoes the G–C polarity, though the partsong ultimately closes on A, causing us to reinterpret its tonal hierarchy as one centered on III (C) and V/III (G).

45. There is a curious tension between the monotony of too much repetition and the importance of parallelism in constructing the cognitive experience of grouping structure. See Lerdahl and Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*, 52–53.
second unit does not react to the first. Exact repetition connects two phrase units, but does not create the effect of halves requiring completion. Rather, exact repetition builds momentum into the phrase that follows—a useful technique for canzonetta A sections.

**Transposed homophonic blocks**

But repetition may combine with transposition to create harmonic trajectories. German composers, especially Hassler, love this trick. For example, Hassler’s *canzonetta Mit dein’ lieblichen Augen* (1601, no. 7) closes with two iterations of the poem’s final couplet; the first explores D minor and culminates in a V:PAC, and the second transposes this passage down a fifth to produce the final I:PAC (Example 4.8). Transposition facilitates efficient if inelegant trajectories from dominant to tonic, mediating between the stasis of exact repetition and the dynamism of motivic development. Hassler’s more nuanced dominant–tonic trajectories often pay homage to transposition schemes. In the final section of a drinking song, *Fröhlich zu sein in ehren* (1596, no. 14), Hassler loosely transposes the melody down a fourth to create a I–V trajectory (Example 4.9). Hassler manipulates his “transposed” phrase to transform its rhetorical weight, weakening each of the first

**Example 4.8** Hassler, *Mit dein’ lieblichen Augen* (1601, no. 7), B section (form is AABB).
phrase's cadences the second time. This transformation prepares the return of the final tonic not merely with the harmonic I–V–I trajectory, but also with a strong–weak–strong cadential hierarchy that renders V subordinate to I.

Hassler’s two phrases have similar effects—transposition facilitates tonal motion by restating a tonic passage in the dominant or vice versa—yet they evince different approaches to tonal hierarchy. When Hassler transposes a phrase strictly in *Mit dein’ lieblichen Augen* he establishes dominant and tonic as two equal tonal areas; tonic has greater weight simply because it is presented last. By contrast, in *Frölich zu sein in ehren* he relates tonic and dominant more subtly—we view the dominant version of the repeated phrase through the lens of tonic. The first phrase does not create expectation for the second phrase in either case; rather, we predict the outcome of the second phrase by analogy to the first phrase. The half does not require completion, but the completion presupposes the half. (Of course, the harmonic trajectory is complicated in *Frölich zu sein in ehren* because the transposed material prepares the final cadence—in this case, multiple phrase

46. The rhetorical strength of this cadence depends on whether the person singing the discant part treats the C as a ficta note. Printers of the partsong repertoire tend to be meticulous about accidentals, so ficta is rarely needed. Yet, this transposition is a plausible exception, as the singer might treat it analogously to the previous phrase. See critical notes in Hans Leo Hassler, *Neüe Teütsche Gesang*, ed. Rudolf Schwartz, *DDT* Ser. 2 Bd. 5 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1905), xxxv.
construction schemes are colliding, and the repeated unit produces expectation for the sudden harmonic, poetic, and rhetorical closure that follows.)

While Hassler uses transposition to craft harmonic trajectories, Haussmann treats transposition as a tool for motivic development. In *Mit lieb bin ich getroffen* (1598a, no. 14), Haussmann sets the opening quatrain with a generic melodic gesture and its transposition (Example 4.10). He transposes the first two measures literally, but redirects the final measures to yield harmonic motion from I to V. Haussmann’s transposition does not create a harmonic trajectory—motion from I to V emerges in spite of the transposition, not because of it. Instead, it develops his melodic material. He uses a similar strategy in *Cupido mir durch seine strahl* (1603, no. 26) (Example 4.11). The opening melody descends from 5 to 3 in the context of the local F tonality. Haussmann then transposes the melody diatonically down a fourth but alters the harmony, recomposing the final cadence as a PAC. The A section gradually strengthens the F tonality, and the melodic transposition stages a gradual melodic descent: mm. 1–4 emphasize 3, mm. 5–6 descend to 2, and the final cadence completes the descent to 1. In both *canzonette*, transposition responds to the *abab* structure of the text: the melodic and harmonic parallelism mimic the text’s metrical parallelism, while the recomposed second cadence intensifies the end rhyme.

47. The cantus part is transposed literally. The tenor part is altered—Haussmann is likely attempting to keep the tenor in a comfortable register.
If you regularly sang Haussmann’s and Hassler’s partsongs as a member of an amateur choral society, you might find Hassler lazy or repetitious—he frequently sets the same text multiple times in succession at different pitch levels, but he rarely intervenes with a new melodic gesture or an altered cadence. Perhaps you would be more attracted to the melodic and harmonic variety of a Haussmann song—Haussmann favors varied melodic repetition, more like motivic development, in response to the changing rhythms and meanings of his text, which does not repeat. Haussmann molds his phrases to maximize symmetry and balance. He uses transposition to supplement the limited possibilities for motivic development given the conventional (rather than characteristic) nature of his melodic material. As a result, Haussmann's halves require completion to a greater extent than Hassler’s—he balances the rhetorical gesture of melodic transposition with harmonic progressions rooted in the local tonic. If you were performing Haussmann's partsongs, you might experience this as a kind of inevitability drawing you toward the final cadence. In other words, the equilibrium between motivic and harmonic development that Haussmann constructs establishes a cadential hierarchy rooted not exclusively in tonal hierarchy, but also in the rhetorical presentation of the cadences. Because he places individual melodic gestures in multiple harmonic contexts, Haussmann provides more tonal information to listeners than Hassler, who is bound by the limitations of his strict transpositions.
Sequences

Repetition and transposition establish several of the necessary conditions for halves requiring completion: they encourage symmetrical phrase construction and metrical periodicity, articulate a hierarchical relationship between related harmonic areas, and build motivic links between phrase halves. Composers may enhance the directed motion of these phrases with sequences, which project a path through pitch space.

Traditionally, we associate sequential writing with common practice tonality. As Daniel Harrison puts it, the sequence “is not only a distinctive technique of the common practice, but also co-extensive with it.” 48 Richard Taruskin attributes tonality’s beginnings in part to the reduction of the circle of fifths from a twelve-chord chromatic cycle to a seven-chord diatonic one. Taruskin describes sixteenth-century manifestations of the circle of fifths as “harmonic curiosities” used for special effects and sneaky modulations. Drawing on the work of Edward Lowinsky, Taruskin cites the celebrated motet Passibus ambiguis (1553), in which German composer Matthias Greiter ruminates on the inevitability of the “wheel of Fortune.” Greiter extends a circle of fifths far flatward, from F to F♭, thereby transforming “the ‘happiest’ final (Lydian façade) into the ‘saddest’ one (Phrygian mi).” 49 The first explicit theorization of the circle of fifths, by Nikolai Diletsky, similarly invokes the twelve-step chromatic circle, not the more circumscribed diatonic one. 50 The diatonic circle, by contrast, originates in Italian instrumental music of the 1680s and found its strongest advocate in Arcangelo Corelli. The addition of a diminished fifth circumscribed the meandering chromatic sequence into a diatonic, tonality-defining harmonic progression; it was “transformed from a modulatory device . . . into a closed system of harmonic functions that interrelate the degrees of a single scale.” 51 Thus, the story often goes, the birth of tonality and the origin of the diatonic circle of fifths coincide in the final decades of the seventeenth century in the Italian instrumental music that, freed from the demands of text expression, marked a decisive turn toward modernity.

But the sequence has a robust history in the sixteenth century and earlier, and the partsong repertory exploits a variety of sequential trajectories—ranging from the harmonic “riffs” that Newcomb identifies in Marenzio’s secular song to diatonic


circles of fifths that come remarkably close to the Corellian progressions that Taruskin associates with tonality. Nearly one-third of the partsongs in my corpus include at least one sequence. Partsong composers prefer the same sequences as eighteenth-century composers, though some are squeamish about diminished triads and alter their sequences accordingly. They favor the descending fifths sequence (sometimes diatonic, sometimes modulatory, and sometimes modally diatonic, as we saw in Example 4.4), but also use alternative down-by-step sequences $-3/+2$ and $-4/+3$. Extensive iterations of the Romanesca and ascending 5–6 patterns are common, and ascending fifths sequences appear occasionally. Sequences balance the competing values of melodic projection (you can predict where a sequence is going) and tonal disorientation (but, in this modal environment, you can rarely predict when a sequence will conclude). However, this combination of seemingly contradictory values makes the sequence an advantageous ally for creating expectation at the phrase level.

For instance, Gastoldi uses sequences to mediate between two potential tonal centers in *Il bell’humore* (1591, no. 2). The balletto stages a confrontation between G and C, which represent the conflict between happiness and sorrow depicted in the first two lines (“I wish to live happily / Free from deep sorrow”) (Example 4.12). The A section plots a course from G to C; its refrain restores G major with an ascending 5–6 sequence that prepares the closing I:IAC. The B section is a


53. The former sequence—a straightforward alteration of descending fifths—is controversial. Brent Auerbach criticizes its "dubious compositional value" in "Techniques for the Functional Classification of Two-Chord Sequences," *Intégral* 27 (2013): 125. The four sequences standardized in *Harmony and Voice Leading* (304–305) (ascending and descending fifths and ascending and descending 5–6) all have a maximally harmonic, contrapuntal, or melodic value under Auerbach’s scheme, and $-3/+2$ does not share this characteristic. However, Auerbach writes that the sequence can be “redeemed” by its similarity to the descending fifths (137), particularly the descending fifths featuring interlocking seventh chords (which is, of course, not available at the turn of the seventeenth century). Dmitri Tymoczko, writing before Auerbach, criticizes music theorists for their "relunctan[ce] to acknowledge its existence"; Tymoczko treats the $-3/+2$ sequence as simple thirds substitution within a descending fifths framework, and identifies several compelling examples of the sequence in the common practice literature. See Dmitri Tymoczko, *A Geometry of Music: Harmony and Counterpoint in the Extended Common Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 245.

54. I did not classify four-chord Romanescas as sequences because this is such a common bass–discant formula in this period.


**action (moves to IV)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>statement</th>
<th>subdominant response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vi-ver lie-to vo-glio Senz’al-cun cor-do-glio, La la la</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vi-ver lie-to vo-glio Senz’al-cun cor-do-glio, La la</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**expanded reaction (tonally closed)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ascending 5-6 (IV-I)</th>
<th>cadence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>la la la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>la la la</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**verse (IV-I trajectory)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>first phrase unit (on IV)</th>
<th>action? (emphasizes IV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>puoi re-star Amor, Di sa-et-tar mi il cor Spen-di pun-gen-ti stra-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu puoi re-star Amor,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puoi re-star Amor, Di sa-et-tar mi il cor Spen-di pun-gen-ti stra-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tu puoi re-star Amor,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puoi re-star Amor, Di sa-et-tar mi il cor Spen-di pun-gen-ti stra-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example 4.12 Continued.

verse (cont.)

reaction? (tonally closed)

16

-li, O-ve non pa-ian fra-li, Nul-la ti sti-mo po-co, E di te

li, O-ve non pa-ian fra-li, Nul-la ti sti-mo po-co, E di te

li, O-ve non pa-ian fra-li, Nul-la ti sti-mo po-co, E di te

restrain (tonally closed)

-4/+3 sequence
cadence

21

pren-do gio-co, La la la la la la la la la la la la la

pren-do gio-co, La la la la la la la

pren-do gio-co, La la la la la

I: IAC

IV

refrain (cont.)
cadence (cont.)

26

1. 2.

la la la la la. Tu la.

Tu la.

Tu la.

I: IAC
Halves Requiring Completion

mirror image of the A section: C major dominates the first two phrase units as the text berates Cupid for his wanton arrow-shooting, but G major makes a late comeback at the end of the verse, when the poem's speaker belittles Cupid's wiles. The second refrain inverts the three-note motive of the first refrain and repeats the same sequence in reverse; this "backward" ascending 5–6 (−4/+3) unseats G's temporary stronghold and meanders down to C major. Gastoldi, our referee, claims the sequence's C major goal as the cadential pre-dominant, and declares G the victor. Gastoldi reserves sequences for his refrains—they have the power to either reinforce or unseat the tonic that closes each verse. The sequences create efficient trajectories between the competing tonal centers but ultimately subordinate C to G.

The sequence and the refrain are natural companions. About half of the sequences in the homophonic partsong repertoire occur in refrains. Sequences thrive in an untexted environment, and, like refrains, they signal "the beginning of the end." They can rescue a composer from a harmonic digression, or they can lead him away from harmonic stasis. Gastoldi achieves both ends in *Il bell'humore*: his sequences link the competing tonal centers. The efficient A section creates an action–reaction trajectory, albeit on a I/IV axis; the sequence initiates the reaction and erases the tonicization of C major. The longer B section verse is not so easily balanced by the brief refrain, but the motivic call-back seems to undo the threat of C major, just as the texted refrain (*E di te prendo gioco / "And I treat you as a joke") dismisses the looming shadow of unhappiness. At the same time, the second refrain takes us on its own tonal journey. The melody ascends to E and the sequence moves from I to IV; the second half of the refrain turns us around and sends us right back home again.

The homophonic partsong was a fruitful breeding ground for the sequence. Newcomb has traced the roots of several sequential patterns back to the *villanelle* of the 1580s that inspired the *balletto* and the homophonic offshoots I discuss in this book. It seems fitting that the sequence, which resists both fully harmonic and fully contrapuntal interpretation, would thrive in tandem with homophony, where we are forced to face head-on our anxieties about the integrity of the triad separate from counterpoint. Born out of experimentation with linking triads to one another, the sequence provided a goal-directed alternative to a still nascent sense of harmonic progression. At the same time, sequences offer convenient voice-leading solutions for the simple stepwise melodies that characterize many *balletto* refrains. And the Romanesca, folia, and other related discant patterns were already swimming around in the muck. In general, sequences in partsongs are efficient—they usually consist of four to six chords presented in succession, and they are rarely composed out. Perhaps composers adapted the conventions of discant formulas for new chordal patterns, like the descending fifths and ascending 5–6 progressions.

57. Newcomb, "Recurring Patterns with a Structural Function."
Action–reaction phrases

The previous catalog has given us a glimpse of the diverse tools that composers employed to craft connections between phrase units and build expectation for phrase endings. Exact repetition forges motivic connections, transposition balances disparate harmonic areas, and sequences carve out harmonic pathways. But none of these tools is sufficient on its own. For both Dahlhaus and Caplin, phrases project and fulfill expectation most strongly when composers construct them with several of these techniques in mind. An action–reaction phrase requires metrical periodicity or symmetrical phrase construction, motivic linkage or repetition, harmonic organization based on the polarization of tonic and dominant (what Dahlhaus calls “subordinating harmony”), and the rhetorical balance of weak and strong cadences.

Perhaps no phrase in the homophonic partsong repertoire better embodies the values of halves requiring completion than the opening of Morley’s *Now is the month of Maying* (1595, no. 3) (Example 4.13). Equipped with schematic text-setting, the eight-measure phrase is strictly periodic with a harmonic way station every two measures. The phrase traverses tonic and dominant symmetrically, climbing melodically from 1 to 5 in the verse, pausing to appreciate the view at a tonicized half cadence, and then carefully descending back to tonic. Morley leaves the text behind and shifts to nonsense syllables to signal the beginning of our

Example 4.13 Morley, *Now is the month of Maying* (1595, no. 3).
return journey, and the refrain’s metrically strong arrival at our tonal base camp holds greater weight than the feminine rhyme that echoed at the summit.

What makes this phrase so effective is its abundance of rhetorical cues: the half cadence predicts the authentic cadence with the help of Morley’s commitment to metrical regularity, his graceful melodic arch, and his formal rhetoric. Morley might abandon one or several of these elements on his journey without compromising his phrase’s predictive character (symmetry is usually the first to go). But, in its tight construction, *Now is the month of Maying* encapsulates many of the conditions for tonality that exist in the homophonic partsong repertoire, especially the balletto. Morley’s text-setting supports a metrical hierarchy. His melodic ascent demands a corresponding descent. The opposition of verse and refrain assigns hierarchical weight to the two cadences. These features together establish a tonal hierarchy, where a subordinate dominant both contrasts with and demands a return to tonic. But perhaps most intriguingly, Morley’s phrase imbues this return with inevitability. We cannot know whether a sixteenth-century amateur musician, enjoying Morley’s partsongs at a social gathering, could predict this tonic return. But the conditions for such prediction, which would become a hallmark of eighteenth-century phrase structure, were certainly present not just in *Now is the month of Maying*, but in hundreds of similar partsongs passed around hundreds of similar social gatherings in hundreds of similar households.

**Fullness of perfection**

Several of the most important studies of eighteenth-century music treat the periodic phrase as the touchstone of the Classical style. Leonard Ratner devotes a chapter of *Classic Music* to periodicity, which he defines as “the tendency of classic music to move toward goals, toward points of punctuation.” Ratner construes periods broadly when he writes that classic music’s “motion is focused toward points of arrival, on every scale of magnitude, from the figure to the movement.”

Periodicity is especially characteristic of eighteenth-century music because of its cadential saturation, “in contrast to the occasional cadences in Renaissance music” and the “clouded” cadences of the nineteenth century. Ratner’s emphasis on periodicity echoes Charles Rosen’s discussion in *The Classical Style*. “The clearest [element] in the formation of the early classical style,” Rosen writes, “is the short, periodic articulated phrase. When it first appears, it is a disruptive element in the Baroque style, which relied generally on an encompassing and sweeping continuity. The paradigm is, of course, the four-measure phrase.” Both authors emphasize the importance of symmetry as a component of periodic phrase structure. Ratner attributes “the symmetrical grouping of short phrases” to dance and poetry, and

59. Ibid., 53.
argues that binary grouping structure facilitates comprehension: “In addition to the greater effect of stability thus produced, symmetry increased the degree of immediate intelligibility to the listener who quickly grasped paired statements—2 + 2 and 4 + 4 measure groups—as units and was undoubtedly more comfortable in following the continuity of the music.”

Rosen also attributes “a heightened, indeed overwhelming, sensitivity to symmetry” to the period. But whereas Ratner argues that periodic structure helped listeners hear and group phrases and forms, Rosen suggests that it directed listener attention to slower metrical levels. Rosen writes,

The dominance of symmetry came from the periodic nature of the classical phrase: a period imposes a larger, slower pulse upon the rhythm, and just as two similar measures are almost always necessary for us to understand the rhythm of the music and to identify the downbeat, so now a comparable symmetry of phrase structure was necessary to hear and to feel the larger pulse.

In other words, the period facilitates large-scale hearing: it orients listeners to slower metrical levels and helps them comprehend larger groups. By extension, the period supports a listening strategy rooted in tonal expectation. Rosen explicitly ties periodic phrases to “a dramatic style based on tonality” with its “new emphatic polarity between tonic and dominant, previously much weaker.” Ratner concurs, identifying a new kind of “classic harmonic rhetoric”—the polar key system, which he contrasts with the solar key system, discussed earlier. Ratner and Rosen describe a highly regulated feedback loop, where frequent cadences beget periodic phrase structure, which emphasizes symmetry, which is made possible by tonality, which in turn is expressed by frequent cadences. . . .

The musical period looms large in accounts of the Classical style because the period is a symptom of tonality. If we understand tonality merely as a system that undergirds harmonic syntax, then the period emerges in tandem with but not in response to a heightened compositional exploitation of this syntax. But in fact, the period articulates the foundational dynamic of tonal expectation—it is not adjacent to, but entailed by tonality. I have argued that tonality involves the regulation of pitch in time, such that listeners learn to hear and interpret distant relationships between dominant and tonic. The period efficiently scaffolds this listening strategy, as it articulates dominant and tonic at regular periodicities that correspond with peaks in listener attention, and supports a hierarchical relationship between dominant and tonic with goal-directed melodic construction. But periods in the Classical era are special because phrase construction and tonality are uniquely stable in the late eighteenth century. Caplin notes in Classical Form that his theory is specific to the music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven because their compositions are both highly imaginative and highly constrained. Caplin explains, “Although

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61. Ratner, Classic Music, 35.
63. Ibid., 57, 26.
64. Ratner, Classic Music, 48–51.
tonal music from earlier and later periods . . . also exhibits formal functionality in a variety of ways, form in these periods is considerably less conventional, thus frustrating the establishment of general principles. 65 Christopher Brody has recently framed such claims in terms of the relative correlation of two complementary parameters: tonal structure and thematic design. In most tonal repertoires, structure and design are “fractionally independent.” That is, certain combinations of structure and design are “gravitational attractors” within a repertoire (schemas), but composers can still exploit a variety of structure and design frameworks with some flexibility and independence. 66 Late eighteenth-century music, however, is highly schematic, meaning that structure and design are maximally correlated—Brody calls this a “high-water mark” for schematic composition. 67

Because tonality is mature in the Classical era, the repertoire contains a high concentration of well-defined musical periods (as Brody points out). In the partsong repertoire, a weaker tonality yields a weaker manifestation of the musical period. Yet, sixteenth-century action–reaction phrases are not proto- or nascent eighteenth-century periods; rather, they’re a manifestation of the tonality of the earlier repertoire. At the same time, the space between sixteenth- and eighteenth-century phrases has the potential to illuminate some aspects of the space between sixteenth- and eighteenth-century tonality. “Dove sono,” from Mozart’s Le nozze di Figaro, makes for an instructive comparison with the partsong repertoire (Example 4.14). Mozart’s phrase derives its periodicity from the meter of its text. The aria’s opening quatrains consists of two questions, rhymed abab; Mozart sets the rhyming lines with analogous music. But he departs from this regular schema for the quatrains’ final line: he repeats the text, increases the rate of declamation, and expands the phrase to capture the perfidy of the Count’s “lying lips.” While these superficial characteristics of Mozart’s phrase have analogues in the earlier partsong repertoire, Mozart’s phrase has a much broader expressive and harmonic range. Mozart is not constrained by the amateur voice; accordingly, his setting has a varied rate of declamation, a great deal of melodic ornamentation, and an athletic rhythmic profile and melodic contour. But, critically, the phrase derives much of its elegance and restraint from the interplay of the vocal melody and instrumental accompaniment. The melody/accompaniment texture permits a slow harmonic rhythm, creating space for the Countess’s elaborate melody. Indeed, the phrase depends on the misalignment between the vocal melody and the accompaniment—the very play of dissonance and consonance that the partsong, with its strict syllabic setting in all voices, avoids.

The phrases in homophonic partsongs hardly resemble the phrases in Mozart’s songs and arias. Homophony makes periodic phrase structure possible because of its frequent cadences and weak but persistent dominant/tonic polarity. But homophony also limits the extent of these phrases. In a partsong, the melodic contour is constrained by the syllabic text-setting, rhythmic consistency, and

65. Caplin, Classical Form, 3.
67. Ibid., 124.
limitations of the amateur voice. The melodic and harmonic pacing are circumscribed by the fast harmonic rhythm (typically one chord per semiminim). And the melody lacks independence because it is tied to the homorhythmic texture of the lower voices. In Mozart’s phrase, the opposition of melody and accompaniment fosters a slower harmonic rhythm, more florid vocal writing, and the dynamic interplay of voices that propels the Countess from her introspective opening turn through the impassioned ascent that closes the phrase.

Ratner describes the period as “a complete statement . . . whose sense is fully grasped only when it has come to a close.”68 His sentiment echoes Shakespeare’s

“fullness of perfection”—the elegance of the couple’s symmetry lies not in the way they balance one another, but in the way they complete each other. But this completeness is explicit not only when the cadence sounds; rather, from the first intake of breath we are waiting for the phrase’s conclusion. Every note, word, and gesture provides us with evidence of the eventual what and when of the phrase-ending cadence. The dynamics of the expectant phrase cannot be separated from the tonal pull of dominant toward tonic. When we listen, we are always caught in expectation.
The balletto as miniature

In his manuscript treatise on the painting of miniature portraits, *The Arte of Limning*, Nicholas Hilliard recounts a conversation with Sir Philip Sidney. The poet imagines a scenario where two men of different heights are painted, and each portrait is exactly six inches tall. Sidney wonders if “one might weel and apparently see which was the taule man, and which the littel, the picture being Just of one lenght.” Hilliard replies that such distinctions are a simply matter of proportion. A good painter, he explains, will convey the relative proportions of head and shoulders, arms, torso, and legs, as “the cheefest mastery and skill consisteth in the true proportion and line, and a tall mans picture exactly drawne but in the lenght of sixe Inches, shall shewe to be a taller mans picture, then a littel mans picture drawne at the lenght of fowre and twenty inches, or in his owne full height, if his true shape be observed.” Hilliard takes pride in his observation skills and enumerates a number of guidelines to help aspiring artists render their subjects accurately on any scale. But he adds that proportion is also a matter of unconscious perception: “ower eye is cuninge, and is learned without rulle by long usse, as littel lads speake their vulger tonge without gramour Rulls.”

Hilliard was renowned for his likenesses of Queen Elizabeth, her courtiers, and London citizens, images that rarely exceeded two and a half inches in diameter (Figure 5.1). Trained as a goldsmith and accustomed to working on a small scale,
Hilliard was ideally suited to the art of limning, or miniature painting. His intimate portraits (and those of his less talented successor Isaac Oliver) were wildly popular in England’s courtly and professional circles in the second half of the sixteenth century and into the first decades of the seventeenth. Hilliard’s achievements were so highly regarded that Henry Peacham mentions him in the same breath as Michelangelo. And his ability to capture not just the appearance but also the character of his subjects inspired John Donne to write

And, a hand, or eye
By Hilliard drawne,
is worth an history,
By a worse painter made.6

The appeal of Hilliard’s portrait miniatures lay in the intersection of their diminutive size, which encouraged both private collection and public display, and their accurate—and intimate—portrayal of their subjects.

Miniatures of all types continue to allure us today in part because of their virtuosity. As John Mack explains, “The makers of miniature things were well aware that the evaluation of their skill is linked to an observer’s sense of the impossibility of what they are trying to achieve.” Hilliard was particularly celebrated for his ability to render intricate lace ruffs, curly hair, fine embroidery, and the like on an impossibly small scale. Accordingly, miniature-making requires admirable discipline. In The Arte of Limning, Hilliard catalogs a host of precautions the limner must take to safeguard the integrity of his or her creations: one must practice temperance in all aspects of one’s life, be clean and free of dust and smoke, wear the finest silks to avoid stray hairs, and be careful not to speak or even breathe too near an image in progress. Miniatures also create space for informality impossible in large portraits destined for public display. Hilliard took advantage of this more casual register and sometimes depicted his subjects in spontaneous poses. He meticulously observed the details of the human face as well as more subtle intimations of character, and he sought to capture the unguarded moments that revealed something true about his sitter. The intimacy of these portraits reflected their private use. Many Elizabethan courtiers and citizens—including Elizabeth herself—kept portraits of their lovers in their most private chambers, or hid those portraits in lockets that hung below the necklines of their garments.

The balletto, too, is a miniature form, “a slight kind of musick,” as Morley described it. Morley’s dismissal of the genre reflects its ambition as well as its scope. Consistent with the principles of decorum, the light register of these secular songs encouraged modest settings, and the poorly constructed poesia per musica hardly inspired composers to linger on their stilted clichés. Yet, the balletto’s concision is part of its rustic charm. Some of Gastoldi’s balletti extend for only thirty-two measures, and many can be performed in under a minute—with repeats. The simple homophonic textures, straightforward rhythms, and delightful refrains make them easy to learn and fun to perform. In the absence of the organizing principles of imitative polyphony, composers constructed balletti with careful attention to the relative proportions of individual lines, verse and refrain, and A section and B section, layering symmetry upon symmetry at many scales. As Richard Stephen Argosh points out, smallness creates intriguing compositional challenges: “Brevity affords provocative opportunities for musical invention while at the same time constraining the nature of that invention in highly specific ways.”

The primary constraint of the balletto was proportion: composers carefully organized their symmetrical sections according to hierarchical harmonic trajectories that encouraged tonal expectation.

The economy of means on display in the balletto perhaps more closely resembles the simplicity of a nineteenth-century character piece than the virtuosity of a Hilliard portrait miniature. But in fact a number of perceptual benefits are hidden in this apparent deficiency of imagination. As Hilliard intimates, proportion is the key to unlocking the grace of a balletto. Because of their tiny scale, balletti lie at the intersection of meter, phrase structure, and form. They are short enough that listeners can comprehend them in hypermetric terms. Lerdahl and Jackendoff are careful to limit the scope of their claims about the perceptibility of metrical hierarchy, but they note, “Even though the dots in a metrical analysis could theoretically be built up to the level of a whole piece, such an exercise becomes perceptually irrelevant except for short pieces.” Depending on tempo, phrases in balletti can easily fall within the perceptual thresholds for metrical entrainment. For instance, in the King’s Singers recording of Now is the Month of Maying, the minim tactus is about 500 ms (\( \frac{1}{\text{d}} = 120 \)), yielding a 1 second semibreve (measure) pulse, 2 second breve pulse, and 4 second long pulse. The last of these—still within the perceptual threshold for entrainment—is the length of a verse or refrain in the balletto. And metric cues on lower levels reinforce this slower pulse.

Brevity has a perceptual benefit for hearing tonal relationships as well. Nicholas Cook has demonstrated that listeners’ ability to remember a structural tonic fades after about one minute. This cognitive limitation, he argues, calls into question the perceptual claims of “tonal unity” that underlie Schenkerian theories about form in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, the one-minute perceptual boundary is provocative for the balletto, in which most of the tonal


“work” occurs on the scale of a single verse–refrain pair (which can extend for as few as eight seconds) or within the relationship between an A and B section (which rarely lasts longer than a minute). Perhaps in the miniature form balletto composers cultivated an ideal laboratory for tonality. The potential to identify a local tonic and compare it with a global tonic is built into the scale of the piece. (Modulation, on the other hand, does not play a role in the repertoire.) The metrical regularity engendered by schematic text-setting and regular poetry facilitates such comparisons, as distinct harmonic arrivals occur at predictable periodicities.

The strength of a miniature balletto, then, perhaps has more to do with Polonius’s ironic quip that “brevity is the soul of wit” than with the seemingly impossible virtuosity of painting an intricate lace pattern on a piece of vellum mounted on the back of a playing card. Yet, our ability to comprehend and appreciate miniature forms is tied to habits of perception that benefit from their small scale. Like a Hilliard miniature, the balletto is a microcosm—of the more complicated canzonette that appeared in parallel publications, of the additive construction of phrases, of the capacity of form to communicate tonal information, and, as I argue, of the emergence of tonal procedures in the seemingly inhospitable environment of late-Renaissance partsong.

The balletto has one principal attribute that distinguishes it from the canzonetta and the ad hoc forms favored by Vecchi and Banchieri: its nonsense syllable refrain. When this refrain combines with the balletto’s small scale, the genre becomes a unique meeting point for meter, phrase structure, and form. We can revisit Morley’s Now is the month of Maying, discussed at the end of Chapter 4, to illustrate this point. I wrote that the action–reaction structure of the ballett’s A section is bolstered by the contrast between verse and refrain. But, crucially, the two phrase halves are coextensive with the two formal sections—in this ballett, the action–verse dances with its reaction–refrain, and thus rhetorical cues at the phrase level reinforce and are reinforced by rhetorical cues at the formal level. These cues are made audible by the nonsense syllables, which signal the formal boundary of verse and refrain, even to a naïve listener, and which announce the temporary cessation of the partsong’s semantic content. Liberated from text-setting burdens, nonsense syllable refrains enable flashier counterpoint and guarantee a final cadence on the strong beat. At the same time, the refrain’s freedom from schematic text-setting increases the composer’s agency—his decisions about the length, scale, and scope of the refrain have important ramifications for the balletto’s internal proportions. As we will see, Gastoldi, Morley, and Hassler approach this compositional challenge in unique ways that affect the harmonic trajectories of their balletti.

The balletti are also the most directly comparable subset of the homophonic partsong repertoire, though they constitute only a small proportion of it.15 Their small size facilitates the comparison of individual phrases, and their highly constrained repeat and refrain structure inspires larger claims about tonal

15. Just over one-third of the partsongs I studied for this project are balletti, though these come overwhelmingly from England. However, one or more balletti appear in twenty of the thirty-one collections I discuss.
trajectories. For much of this book I have focused on the overlap between the Italian, German, and English partsong repertoires. However, their points of divergence are equally productive for untangling how tonal expectation came to be possible around the turn of the seventeenth century, and they highlight the multifaceted nature of tonal expectation. To this end, this chapter narrows its focus and compares the small number of balletti composed by Gastoldi, Morley, and Hassler.

**Italian madrigals Englished**

As I outlined in Chapter 2, Gastoldi’s 1591 collection of balletti spawned an abundant brood of reprints, translations, contrapuncta, and arrangements with international reach. Morley’s 1595 Booke of Balletts is the most unusual of these progeny. Morley’s collection builds on the tradition of Englished Italian madrigals promulgated by Thomas Watson and Nicholas Yonge. Yet Morley does not provide English texts for extant Italian works (as he would in later publications); rather, he uses Italian balletti, canzonette, and villanelle as models for new pieces. Many of these models, and probably the plan for the collection as a whole, come from Gastoldi’s Balletti a cinque voci (Figure 5.2). This collection is an example of both linguistic and stylistic translation—Englishing in its truest sense—as Morley recomposes Italian works to best suit English taste. Though the cross-pollination of secular style throughout Western Europe is a major theme of this book, and though the Italian influence on English madrigal style is a commonplace in scholarship on this repertoire, we have very few examples of English works directly modeled on Italian ones. Consequently, the Morley/Gastoldi pairs provide invaluable evidence of the precise differences between the two styles.

As I discussed in Chapter 2, Morley’s balletts are part of a larger vogue for literary translation in Elizabethan England. Throughout the sixteenth century a massive proportion of English printed books were translations; the market for translations peaked in the last three decades of the century. English translations of literature, poetry, scientific tracts, Classical texts, and more flourished largely because the English people were self-conscious about their language. English had a relatively small, inflexible vocabulary compared to Latin and other European vernaculars, and, consequently, English writers were anxious about the quality of the cultural products their language could support. But translation in the

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Text</th>
<th>Italian Text</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dainty fine sweet nymph</td>
<td>Vezzosette ninfe</td>
<td>Gastoldi, Balletti a cinque voci (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoot false love</td>
<td>Viver lieto voglio</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now is the month of Maying</td>
<td>So ben mi c’ha bon tempo</td>
<td>Vecchi, Selva di varia ricreazione (1590)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing we and chant it</td>
<td>A lieta vita</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing alone</td>
<td>Amore l’altro giorno</td>
<td>Ferretti, Il terzo libro delle napolitane (1570)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No no Nigella</td>
<td>Possa morir chi t’ama</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My bonny lass she smileth</td>
<td>Questa dolce sirena</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I saw my lovely Phyllis</td>
<td>Madonna mia gentile</td>
<td>Orologio, Canzonette, libro I (1593)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What saith my dainty darling</td>
<td>Piacer gioia</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thus saith my Galatea</td>
<td>Al piacer alla gioia</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Maypole</td>
<td>Al suon d’una sampogna</td>
<td>Trofeo, Primo libro di canzonette (1589)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My lovely wanton jewel</td>
<td>La bella ninfa mia</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You that wont to my pipes’ sound</td>
<td>Vaghe ninfe</td>
<td>Gastoldi (1591)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire fire</td>
<td>A la strada</td>
<td>Marenzio, Il secondo libro delle canzonette . . . (1585)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those dainty daffadillies</td>
<td>Le rose frond’e fiori</td>
<td>Marenzio, Il primo libro delle villanelle (1584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady those cherries</td>
<td>Al primo vostro sguardo</td>
<td>Marenzio (1584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love alas I love</td>
<td>Innamorato sono</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo she flies</td>
<td>Fugiro tant’Amore</td>
<td>Marenzio (1584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave alas this tormenting</td>
<td>Non mi date tormento</td>
<td>Ferretti, Il secondo libro delle canzoni alla napolitana (1569)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why weeps alas my lady?</td>
<td>Non dubitar</td>
<td>Ferretti (1569)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phyllis I fain would die now</td>
<td>Filli morir vorei</td>
<td>Croce, Il secondo libro de madrigali (1592)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.2 Poetic and probable musical sources for Morley’s *First booke of balletts to five voyces* (1595).

The sixteenth century was quite different from modern translation. Whereas today a translator aims at invisibility and the goal of a translation is to produce a near replica of the original text, an early modern English translation was more like a commentary that refashioned a foreign text in the garb of a native one. Translators intervened in the text. As Warren Boutcher argues, for Elizabethans, it was “the point the translator wished to make, or the mediation he or she wished to offer
regarding a particular issue . . . by means of a translation, which prevailed over any desire to offer a textually accurate version of a noted author’s work.”

At the same time, translation gave rise to an intriguing paradox: as English composers imported foreign texts, they reconstructed these texts in their image, thereby elevating their own cultural production and building a proto-national cultural identity. In the process, the English language itself transformed: English writers imported new words from other languages, building for the English language a rich lexicon as suitable for cultural expression as Latin, French, or Italian. But translation also mediated between the adoption of foreign culture and the naturalization of it, ultimately eliminating the need for consumers to access foreign cultures directly. Morley’s *First Booke of Balletts* reveals this process in action. Unlike Watson and Yonge, Morley chose not to merely translate Italian works. He did not describe his collection as a translation, and he did not identify any of the pieces on which he modeled his partsongs. Rather, he clothed his Italian models in English dress, refashioning them as new English compositions, and styling their music and their text in a more native idiom. His English pieces, then, rather than the Italian sources for them, became the point of reference for other English collections of balletts.

Morley’s *First Booke of Balletts* arose out of a variety of motivations: economic necessity, artistic growth and integrity, and perhaps even nationalistic piety. As the father of the English madrigal tradition, Morley may have felt compelled to reconstruct Gastoldi’s balletti in a native vein in order to set an example for his countrymen. This would not be Morley’s only nationalist undertaking: he claimed that he wrote *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* in part for “love of contrie,” and much of the treatise is concerned with setting out the ways in which English practice is distinct from Continental practice (for instance, in his cursory discussion of mode). Morley is even defensive of English culture and tries to ward off foreign influence: “such be the newfangled opinions of our countrey men, who will highlie esteeme whatsoever commeth from beyond the seas, and speciallie from Italie, be it never so simple, contemning that which is done at home though it be never so excellent.” Jeremy Smith interprets Morley’s patriotic claims more cynically—Morley was competing for the music printing patent in 1597, the year his treatise was published, and his public claims of nationalism were likely meant to entice the queen to grant him the lucrative

monopoly. Similarly, Morley edited *The Triumphes of Oriana*, a collection of twenty-five madrigals by English composers celebrating the queen after her death. Smith argues that the *Triumphes* were a musical manifestation of the cult of Elizabeth, part of Morley’s desire to “compose Elizabethan England in music” that resulted directly from England’s particular combination of print capitalism and royal favor. We might read the *First Booke of Balletts* as an early manifestation of this nationalistic impulse, one that participates in the broader Elizabethan movement toward defining English culture through translation.

**Clear harmonic style**

Morley’s recompositional procedures have long captured scholars’ attention, though they have eluded precise definition. Alfred Einstein seems to be the first to reference what he calls “the clearing-up of the harmonic style” in light secular partsongs of the late sixteenth century. He declares that “the setting in which this harmonic clarification took place was not so much the lofty madrigal . . . but rather the canzonetta, the canzone, the balletto,” and cites Gastoldi “and his German and English imitators” as sources of this style. Kerman quotes Einstein and narrows his focus to address Morley’s recompositions specifically:

Einstein has pointed out that the harmonic style at the end of the century ‘clears up’ considerably towards our major-minor system, and that it is precisely through the lighter forms of music, like the ballet, that this is accomplished . . . With the English composers . . . this ‘clearing up’ is well developed and apparently well understood. Morley grasped the principle of the dominant relationship as Gastoldi evidently did not; or at least he had a lively sense of the contrast between dominant and subdominant cadences. Almost always Morley’s first phrase stays in the tonic, and the second moves to the dominant; almost invariably he modulates more widely than Gastoldi does.

Kerman is careful to relegate Einstein’s terminology to scare quotes, but, like Einstein, suggests that a clearer harmonic style involves pairing tonic and dominant phrases.

Einstein’s and Kerman’s language recurs in other contemporary scholarship. For example, Susanne Cusick attributes the success of *Now is the month of Maying* to “Morley’s melodic inventiveness and clear harmonic thinking.” David Brown describes Morley’s light style similarly, indicating that his “harmonic progressions

24. Ibid., 169.
have become clearer” than those of his older English contemporaries, including Byrd.\textsuperscript{28} Edward Lowinsky devotes an entire chapter in \textit{Tonality and Atonality in Sixteenth-Century Music} to the balletto, both in England and on the Continent. Like Einstein, Lowinsky treats light secular genres as a countercurrent against modality and chromaticism, and emphasizes, once again, that “the English madrigal and canzonet, especially in the hands of Thomas Morley, contributed to the clarification of tonality”\textsuperscript{29}

Again and again we encounter the ambiguous notion of “clarity,” almost certainly borrowed from Einstein. These scholars heard critical differences between Italian and English balletti, but did not articulate the precise character of these differences. What is it, exactly, that is clarified in the balletto repertoire? Kerman and Brown suggest that a “clearer harmonic style” follows a harmonic plan, with phrases organized around tonic and dominant cadences. By contrast, Brown and Lowinsky cite a slower and more consistent harmonic rhythm as the source of this style, and Cusick and Lowinsky invoke the balletto’s regular phrase structure. As we have seen, all of these features contribute to the emergence of tonal trajectories in balletti.

Yet, in all of these writings, the relationship between “clear harmony” and a tonal style remains tantalizingly implicit, if undefined. For many of these scholars, “clarity” corresponds with a shift from a modal to a tonal language, which occurs in light secular genres. Kerman and Lowinsky go a step further and argue that Morley’s balletts are more tonal than the partsongs on which they are modeled. The following section aims to describe the relationship between Gastoldi’s and Morley’s compositions more precisely to reveal both what the composers’ styles have in common and how they differ.

\textit{Morley and his models}

Morley’s approach to recomposition shifts significantly depending on his source. In some balletti, Morley simply augments the original counterpoint, perhaps redirecting a cadence or reshaping a melodic gesture. Others hardly resemble their apparent sources, which Joseph Kerman identified based on text concordances in the parallel Italian-language edition of Morley’s collection.\textsuperscript{30} Within this flexible approach to recomposition, Morley favors four Englishing techniques. Morley tends to arrive on tonic earlier and more frequently than his Italian models do,

\textsuperscript{28} David Brown, \textit{Thomas Weelkes: A Biographical and Critical Study} (London: Faber & Faber, 1969), 51. Brown is describing Morley’s 1593 publication, \textit{Canzonets to three voices}. He elaborates, “the harmonic rhythm, now moving in semibreves and minims, is more regular, and founded largely upon fundamental bass movement in fourths or fifths, or by step. In other words, it is manifesting strong characteristics of diatonic harmony. . . . The hallmarks of the new style are directness, effectiveness, and refinement.”


\textsuperscript{30} Kerman, \textit{The Elizabethan Madrigal}, 136–144.
especially in minor-key pieces. He uses dominant harmony strategically, pairing weak dominant arrivals with stronger tonic cadences. His cadential rhetoric is generally stronger than that of his models; frequently this involves introducing pre-dominant harmony, adding dissonance, and increasing the harmonic rhythm toward the cadence. And Morley prioritizes regular metrical periodicity—in the rare cases that he selects metrically irregular models, he imposes periodic four-measure phrases. Each of Morley’s techniques links harmony with phrase structure and form. As we shall see, these subtle shifts in Morley’s musical rhetoric are crucial to the sense of tonality that his balletts evoke.

To begin, let’s return to two balletti we first encountered in Chapter 3. Sing we and chant it (no. 4) closely resembles its model, Gastoldi’s L’innamorato (A lieta vita) (no. 1). But Morley imparts a dynamic sense of departure and return onto Gastoldi’s simple framework (Example 5.1). Many surface details of the two ballets are identical: Morley chooses the same keynote as Gastoldi (♮–G), he echoes Gastoldi’s melodic incipit, and he maintains much of the first refrain’s bassline. But Gastoldi’s setting is harmonically stagnant. Seven of the A section’s eight measures articulate tonic, the verse’s melody consists mainly of an arpeggiated tonic triad (supported by two iterations of a plagal progression), and Gastoldi does little to mitigate the dogged trochaic rhythm that his quinari piani establish. Morley enlivens Gastoldi’s tonic-rooted verse by recomposing its second half. He introduces a contrasting melodic line decorated with figuration, redirecting the

Example 5.1 Morley, Sing we and chant it (1595, no. 4), and its model, Gastoldi, L’innamorato (1591, no. 1).
harmony away from its tonic stasis and toward a refreshing half cadence. In other words, Morley reconceives Gastoldi’s tonally static verse as a tonally open action phrase that prepares a tonic reaction in the refrain. And Morley ensures that we can’t miss the tonic return: in his efficient refrain he increases the harmonic rhythm, introduces a pre-dominant harmony, and bounds through a hemiola, imparting a strong sense of inevitability to the verse-ending cadence. Though both Gastoldi and Morley close their first refrain with an IAC, Morley’s cadential rhetoric highlights the relative strength of the second cadence compared to the half cadence that precedes it. At the same time, Morley’s phrase hierarchy corresponds to the ballett’s form: the weaker tonally open verse prepares a stronger tonally closed refrain.

Morley constructs a similar action–reaction trajectory in *Now is the month of Maying* (no. 3). He takes significant liberties with his model, Vecchi’s *So ben mi c’ha bon tempo* (1590, no. 23) (Example 5.2). While Vecchi uses the minor-inflected ♮–D, Morley selects a new, cheerier keynote, ♮–G. Vecchi’s A section comprises a single *settenario piano* that he sets twice, repeating the first two measures exactly. But Morley prioritizes variety: he replaces the single *settenario* with a couplet and recomposes the repeated ascent from 1̂ to 5 with a more leisurely climb that extends for the entire verse. Under Morley’s pen, Vecchi’s statement–repetition verse is transformed into a statement–response; this recomposition both increases the verse’s tonic emphasis and prepares a forceful tonicized half cadence. Both pieces begin with a tonally open verse. But while Vecchi’s relies on the repetition of a simple half cadence formula, Morley’s is based on the dynamic contrast of tonic and dominant.

Characteristically, Morley is more flexible in the refrain. Vecchi’s fa las continue the climb initiated in his verse, culminating in a v:PAC. But Morley again devises a more symmetrical plan. He mirrors the slow ascent of his verse (1̂–2–3, 3–4̂–5) with a two-phase descent (4̂–3–2, followed by a firm 3–2–1). The emphatic tonic cadence—decorated with a suspension and a passing seventh—fixes Morley’s ballett firmly in the tonal orbit of its keynote. Though the half cadences of Vecchi’s opening phrase are sufficient to establish D as his key note, his A section circles conspicuously around V; by contrast, Morley’s move to V is grounded in the ballett’s G tonic. This departure-and-return trajectory recurs at the formal level: while Morley’s A section emphasizes tonic, his B section moves away from tonic (to V and V/V), and his second refrain returns to tonic. By contrast, Vecchi’s B section tonicizes both D major (I) and F major (III) before descending to its final cadence.

These two examples are underpinned by aggressive metrical regularity: two-measure sub-phrases combine into four- and eight-measure phrases, and even 16- and 32-measure groups. This is no accident—Morley sought out metrically regular models. On the rare occasions that Morley drew inspiration from an irregular *balletto*, he reshaped it to conform to his more rigid metrical preferences. This is
Example 5.2 Morley, *Now is the month of Maying* (1595, no. 3), and its model, Vecchi, *So ben mi c’ha bon tempo* (1590, no. 23).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>action: verse (tonally open)</th>
<th>reaction: refrain (tonally closed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>statement</strong></td>
<td><strong>recomposed to stay in tonic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now is the month of Maying, when merry lads are playing. Fa la la...</td>
<td>Fa la la...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verse (tonally open)</th>
<th>refrain (modulates to v)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>statement</strong></td>
<td><strong>repetition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So ben mi c’ha bon tempo, So ben mi c’ha bon tempo, Fa la la...</td>
<td>modulates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>cadence</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I:HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v:PAC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the case in *No no Nigella* (no. 6), modeled on Gastoldi’s *Il Martellato* (no. 14) (Example 5.3). Gastoldi’s A section extends for seven seditious measures; Morley expands his version to eight symmetrical measures. This metrical difference suggests that Gastoldi’s compositional framework is text-based and Morley’s is musical meter-based: Gastoldi sets seven syllables, while Morley fills four measures. In the absence of text, both refrains extend for eight measures, strengthening the sense that Gastoldi’s metrical perfidy has to do with the complication of setting a settenario piano in the schematically unfriendly context of perfect mensuration. And Morley’s symmetrical expansion has a harmonic effect: he fills the extra measure with a dominant chord, replacing Gastoldi’s plagal

**Example 5.3** Morley, *No no Nigella* (1595, no. 6), and its model, Gastoldi, *Il martellato* (1591, no. 14).
Hearing Homophony

Example 5.3 Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>statement (3 mm.)</th>
<th>response (tonally open, prepares refrain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>settenario piano</td>
<td>quinario piano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1

Post a morir chi tama Ni gel la in gra ta, Sen za fe na ta,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>refrain (8 mm.)</th>
<th>action (tonally open)</th>
<th>reaction (tonally closed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8

Fa la la la...

Morley and the minor mode

Morley overwhelmingly composed balletts in major keys and, as we have seen, he even recast some minor models in major. The minor mode complicates the tonal trajectories that Morley so carefully articulates in the balletts discussed earlier.

tonic prolongation with a dominant–tonic relationship. Otherwise, Morley emulates Gastoldi closely.

Though the A sections of his models differ substantially, each of Morley’s A sections follows a similar trajectory. Working within a metrically regular framework, Morley states an opening phrase in tonic. Each verse then moves to V, either through a diatonic half cadence, a tonicized half cadence, or a local tonicization of V. His action-verses are answered by reaction-refrains, which restart in tonic and close with strongly articulated cadences that feature figuration, dissonance, and sometimes quicker harmonic rhythm. Morley’s Italian models similarly oscillate between tonic and dominant, but they are more ad hoc in their approaches to these harmonies. Morley’s innovation lies in his consistency: he reshapes his relatively simple models because he prioritizes the rhetorical departure–return gesture that corresponds to the ballett’s verse–refrain form.
Whereas in major keys Morley uncompromisingly balances I and V, minor introduces a competing center of tonal gravity: III. Generally, Morley’s recompositions minimize the role of III and emphasize a minor key note unambiguously. For example, Gastoldi opens *Il piacere* (no. 7) on III, initiating a Romanesca that arrives on i in the second measure. By contrast, Morley’s setting, *Thus saith my Galatea* (no. 10) begins on i (Example 5.4). This harmonic redirection requires little manipulation of the melody, though Morley moves Gastoldi’s melodic descent from 5 to 1 into an inner voice. Significantly, Morley replaces Gastoldi’s three consecutive tonic arrivals with motion to tonic, dominant, and tonic again, establishing a trajectory of departure and return that ultimately strengthens the cadence that closes the verse. The two composers’ approaches to tonic articulation in these *balletto* verses might be characterized as “brute force” in Gastoldi’s case and “tonic–dominant polar” in Morley’s.

Morley approaches the uneasy relationship between i and III differently in *You that wont to my pipes sound* (no. 13), modeled on Gastoldi’s *Gloria d’Amore* (no. 6) (Example 5.5). Gastoldi sets his pastoral scene by establishing III as a potential tonic. Morley imitates Gastoldi by opening with a gesture toward III, but he turns immediately to a i:HC, erasing the potential of a major tonic. After two phrases, neither composer has established the A key note as tonic;

*Example 5.4* Morley, *Thus saith my Galatea* (1595, no. 10), A section, and its model, Gastoldi, *Il piacere* (1591, no. 7), A section. Both *balletti* use an irregular ABrBr form.
Example 5.5 Morley, *You that wont to my pipes sound* (1595, no. 13), and its model, Gastoldi, *Gloria d’Amore* (1591, no. 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action (tonally open)</th>
<th>Reaction (tonally closed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long anacrusis + statement</td>
<td>Incorporates extra text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Shortened refrain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **You that wont to my pipes sound**, Dain-ty to tread your ground, Jol-ly Shep-herds and Nymphs sweet. Li-rum li-rum li-rum.

- **Verse (tonally closed)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Reaction (to III)</th>
<th>Cadence (to I)</th>
<th>“Brute force” tonic articulation</th>
<th>Cadence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Va-ghe Nin-fe e voi pa-stor** Ch’al mio can-tal dol-ce suon Ral-le-grar so-le-t’il cor, Li-rum, Li-rum...

V/III III I:IAIC I:IAIC
however, Gastoldi’s pairing of weak and strong cadences implies a C final, while Morley’s early half cadence creates expectation for an arrival on the A key note four bars later. Here the composers diverge: Gastoldi extends his verse with a third phrase, this time leading to a strongly articulated I:IAC. He follows this expanded tripartite verse with a four-measure refrain that bolsters the newly defined tonic. Morley shortens Gastoldi’s refrain to yield periodicity, subsuming the third line of text into his response phrase within a symmetrical action–reaction structure. Morley rarely simplifies Gastoldi’s texture, especially in refrains, which encourage contrapuntal elaboration. Here, however, Morley opts for metrical regularity rather than contrapuntal virtuosity; the periodicity allows him to frame his verse and refrain with paired dominant and tonic arrivals. Though Gastoldi finds the final sooner than Morley (Gastoldi’s m. 7, Morley’s m. 9), his tonic cadence is poorly prepared; Gastoldi stands on i throughout his refrain in order to reinforce the A final. Morley’s periodic, parallel structure—with its tonally open first half that balances its tonally closed second half—establishes tonic while allowing Morley the luxury of moving away from tonic and creating harmonic and melodic parallelism between the statement and response phrases (mm. 6–7 follow mm. 2–3). But in spite of Morley’s metrical adjustments, evidence of the irregularity of his model lingers: the decorative inner-voice counterpoint that precedes the homophonic harmonization of the soprano melody yields an extended anacrusis that challenges his otherwise carefully orchestrated metrical regularity.

Morley’s models already articulate tonic and dominant at metrically regular intervals that correspond with both phrase structure cues and formal boundaries. Yet Morley consistently strengthens these attributes in his recompositions, creating an uncompromising ballett formula:

a) four-measure verses establish tonic and open to dominant, creating an action phrase  
b) four-measure refrains return to tonic, creating a reaction phrase  
c) refrain cadences are stronger (rhetorically and tonally) than verse cadences, yielding a cadential hierarchy

When Morley’s texts prohibit strict adherence to this formula, or when his models encourage him to go off-book, the basic premises of the framework remain intact. No no Nigella duplicates this framework on the sixteen-measure scale but maintains its exact proportions. Following its model, Thus saith my Galatea uses the non-standard ABrBr form. Morley compensates for the missing A section refrain by pairing dominant and tonic arrivals within the smaller container of his stand-alone verse. And Morley prioritizes action–reaction periodicity over verse–refrain independence in You that wont to my pipes sound, illustrating the central role of dominant–tonic polarity in articulating formal motion. If the balletto is already predisposed to be a strong player in the emergence of tonal expectation, Morley’s balletts are on steroids—they boost each and every tendency toward a “clearer harmonic style” that Einstein and his successors identified.
English composers were primed to develop a unique musical language in the early modern period. England’s geographical, political, and religious isolation made the nation a breeding ground for novel ideas. In particular, by the seventeenth century England was no longer Catholic, and England’s distinct musical culture began to lose touch with the regulative modal traditions of Catholic music. Jane Flynn has demonstrated that “by about 1565, a generation of choristers had been educated without learning liturgical chant (other than psalms).”

Correspondingly, English music theory documents a rather different set of theoretical ideas than we find in Continental sources. Modal terminology is strikingly circumscribed in English treatises, which were overwhelmingly practical and marketed to amateur musicians. Instead, English theorists developed an independent discourse of key more than a century before similar terminology was deployed on the Continent. If mode was of only secondary importance to Byrd, as John Harley has argued persuasively, it had faded far to the background in Morley’s compositions, after another generation elapsed. Though the relationship between modal theory and the kind of compositional procedures documented here is far from clear, it is possible that the English distance from Continental modal pedagogy contributed in some way to Morley’s unique approach to harmony, meter, phrase structure, and form in the balletto.

Hassler and the German balletto

The balletto was a curiosity, if a popular one, in Italy; it was a phenomenon in England. In German-speaking cities the balletto had a smaller impact. I have already addressed the German reception of Gastoldi’s collection in Chapter 2, but a few points merit revisiting in brief. Gastoldi’s balletti were reprinted twice in Nuremberg (1600 and 1606) and were popular contrafacta by 1598. However, even though German printers frequently anthologized Italian secular song, Gastoldi’s texts were never translated into German. (Curiously, Haussmann translated the Italian edition of Morley’s 1595 First Booke of Balletts, but he does not seem to have connected his source material to Gastoldi’s collection.) The balletto played only a supporting role in German secular song—Hassler showcased eight at the center of his marvelous Lustgarten (1601), Johann Steffens composed twelve, which appeared in his posthumously published Neue teutsche weltliche Madrigalia und Balletten (1619), and Haussmann and Schein sampled one each in Liebliche fröliche

ballette (Haussmann’s 1609 Morley translation) and Studenten-schmaus (1626, but probably anthologizing works written much earlier).36

Hassler’s balletti have been described as “virtually indistinguishable” from those of Gastoldi, and a cursory comparison of, say, A lieta vita and Tantzen und springen (recall example 3.3) confirms this impression.37 Yet, Hassler put his own distinctly German stamp on the genre. Hassler treats the balletto form more flexibly than both Morley and Gastoldi. Only two of his eight balletti use the standard ArArBrBr form. Consequently, Hassler’s balletti are more expansive than their models, and many lack the regular points of harmonic articulation that make Morley’s and Gastoldi’s balletti so well suited for articulating tonal trajectories. Though Hassler also exploits the dominant–tonic relationship in his balletti, he does not rely on the action–reaction phrase structure so crucial to Morley’s tonal language. Instead, he conjures harmonic trajectories through other means: sequences and transposition.

Morley’s balletts encourage tonal expectation in part because his forms are so predictable: tonally open verses pair with tonally closed refrains. But Hassler often deviates from this structure, and so his cadences on dominant and tonic provoke different rhetorical and tonal effects. For example, Zu dir steht all mein Sinn (no. 17) opens with a rhyming quatrain that, because it is twice as long as the typical opening couplet, is a poor fit for the balletto’s regular verse–refrain form. Consequently, Hassler eschews the initial refrain. Instead, he begins the balletto with a tonally open four-measure phrase that he immediately repeats, in the manner of Barform (Example 5.6 ). This adjustment accommodates the four-line quatrain in the space usually reserved for a two-line verse plus its refrain. Yet, though each phrase has an internal cadential hierarchy, the repetition eliminates the possibility of a hierarchical relationship between the cadences that close the two phrases. Instead, the tonally open A section looks ahead to the contrasting middle section that follows. The canzonetta-like AABCC form that results is the inevitable outcome of Hassler’s tonally open A section. Hassler’s repetition has tonal as well as formal implications. The balletto opens with such thorough dominant emphasis that the G centricity is established only peripherally. Confronted with a similar opening phrase, Morley pairs motion from I to V in the first phrase with closure on I in the second. Indeed, Hassler’s first phrase is nearly identical to that of Vecchi’s So ben mi c’ha bon tempo, and we have already seen that Morley recomposed this phrase to establish tonic rather than permitting it to move so quickly toward dominant.

More typically, Hassler’s balletti open with a verse and refrain. Hassler’s A section refrains always end with an authentic cadence on tonic; however, for internal cadences Hassler uses III (in minor), IV (in major), and I and V (in both) about equally. Wer liebt auß treuem Herzen (no. 16) is a typical example: Hassler’s verse tonicizes V, then III, before a short fa la refrain restores I (Example 5.7 ). As

37. Ibid., 238.
in *Zu dir steht all mein Sinn*, Hassler does not open with a tonic prolongation. Though his initial off-tonic harmonic arrivals prepare the satisfying cadence on the tonic at the close of the refrain, some clear establishment of tonic in the opening is crucial for the sense of departure and expectation for return that characterizes Morley’s ballett A sections. The balance of an action–reaction phrase is also lost in Hassler’s three-part phrase—Hassler does not seem to value periodicity like Morley does, as only two of his eight balletts have an eight-measure A section.
By contrast, in his second refrains, Hassler favors dominant–tonic trajectories, which he augments in six of his eight balletti with either sequences or transposition (or both). For example, Hassler closes Zu dir steht all mein Sinn with the transposed homophonic blocks technique discussed in Chapter 4. Hassler pairs a single line of text with a fa la, which he sets twice, leading to a V:PAC followed by a I:PAC.
He colors the second phrase unit with a more diverse harmonic palette, thereby strengthening the rhetorical gesture of the cadence. Yet the pairing of dominant and tonic is brought about by simple transposition and is not supported by melodic and rhythmic rhetoric. Hassler combines transposition with sequencing in the final refrain of *Nun laßt uns fröhlich sein* (no. 18). Hassler is an avid composer of sequences, and he recognizes their potential for producing a trajectory toward a harmonic arrival—all but one of his *balletti* uses a sequence either in the final refrain or in the B section that prepares this refrain. This *balletto* concludes with the idiosyncratic −4/+3 sequence, stated first in V and repeated a fifth lower (Example 5.8). Hassler relies on the sequence to do much of the refrain’s harmonic work. His B section verse concludes with a V:HC; he then allows the sequence to spin out mechanically to V. This off-tonic arrival motivates the *balletto*’s irregular ArArBrr form—when the first B section refrain fails to return to tonic, it demands a second attempt. In both of these *balletti*, Hassler constructs his final refrain by pairing a four-measure dominant phrase with a four-measure tonic phrase. However, Hassler’s dependence on transposition compromises two crucial aspects of action–reaction rhetoric: the trajectory of departure (from an initial tonic that is absent in Hassler’s refrains) and return, and the pairing of weak closure with stronger closure. While Hassler’s phrases repeat, Morley’s respond.

The *balletti* of Gastoldi, Morley, and Hassler appear superficially similar, but closer investigation reveals crucial stylistic distinctions among them. All three

*Example 5.8* Hassler, *Nun laßt uns fröhlich sein*, second refrain (form is ArArBrr) (1601, no. 18).
composers use dominant and tonic relationships to organize formal sections; the balletto’s verse–refrain formal rhetoric further reinforces this harmonic polarity. But whereas Morley uses action–reaction phrase structure to achieve closure, Hassler relies on transposition and sequences for this effect, and Gastoldi tends to articulate tonic through brute force repetition. Only Morley consistently establishes tonic before moving to dominant. And the three composers supplement their dominant–tonic trajectories with a variety of tonal preferences—Gastoldi is likely to use I–I trajectories, whereas Hassler is likely to move indiscriminately from I, III, IV, or V to I, especially in his A sections.

Polar and solar tonality

In Chapter 4, I invoked Leonard Ratner’s distinction between polar and solar tonality to account for the interaction of phrase structure and dominant–tonic harmonic trajectories in the partsong repertoire. Ratner demonstrates that the distinction between polar and solar tonality depends not on the particular harmonies or pitches available to a composer, but rather on the rhetorical relationship between these harmonies. Yet the polar/solar binary can also describe subtler differences between the harmonic and formal practices of Gastoldi, Morley, and Hassler. Figure 5.3 compares the harmonic trajectories in two-part phrases in the three composers’ balletti. In Chapter 4 I noted that composers from all regions preferred V–I trajectories, but that this preference was the strongest among English composers and the weakest among Italians (recall figure 4.3c). The smaller sample of balletti magnifies the broader regional preferences discussed in Chapter 4 and reveals additional preferences unique to the admittedly small habitat of the balletto.

Gastoldi, Morley, and Hassler’s balletti might be understood as existing on a spectrum from polarity to solarity. Morley, with his strong preference for motion from dominant to tonic, operates in a polar tonal universe, where these two harmonies govern most tonal motion. Gastoldi’s balletti evince a weaker dominant–tonic polarity (though his stronger preference for motion from III to I reflects the larger proportion of minor-mode balletti in his collections), and he is nearly as likely to compose static tonic-rooted cadence pairs as he is to contrast tonic with dominant. Hassler, on the other hand, explores more diverse harmonic trajectories. While V–I and I–I are prominent, they make up a much smaller proportion of Hassler’s two-part phases. (Again, the frequency of III–I, III–V, and V–III reflects the significant number of minor key balletti in Hassler’s output.) Though the sample of phrases in these three composers’ balletti is quite small (totaling just

over one hundred phrases), the clear differences between their harmonic languages are striking, and they reinforce the more intuitive claims about “clarity” in the analyses discussed earlier.

What I find compelling is the extent to which these regional harmonic preferences interact with other characteristics of composers’ styles. Morley does not merely pair dominant and tonic cadences more frequently than his German and Italian contemporaries. Rather, he bolsters this harmonic motion in several other domains: he is fond of metrical regularity, dedicated to establishing a strong initial tonic, and stubbornly committed to normative ballett form. Hassler, on the other hand, relies more heavily on sequences and transposition to produce tonal closure since his melodic and formal rhetoric do not necessarily support the V–I trajectories that govern his B sections. Hassler’s frequent deviations from the
balletto form open up other opportunities for exploiting listener expectations—tonal, formal, and otherwise—that we will investigate in Chapter 6. But they challenge the predictable alternation of dominant and tonic that Morley’s regular balletts enjoy.

But are these balletti tonal, and are Morley’s partsongs somehow more tonal than Gastoldi’s or Hassler’s? Though this book has focused primarily on the ways in which tonal expectation emerges uniformly across the homophonic partsong repertoire, the case study of the balletto provides an opportunity to take stock of the variety of compositional practices that can support tonal expectation. On the one hand, these three composers’ balletti reveal how the genre was particularly well suited for creating tonal trajectories of expectation—they are concise, repetitious, affectively even-keeled, and have strictly circumscribed forms. But at the same time, they illustrate how different rhetorical, harmonic, and even formal approaches can accommodate tonal expectation. That is, these pieces suggest that tonality, especially as it emerges in the seventeenth century, might profitably encompass a more diverse set of practices than we have previously admitted. I find this plurality attractive, as it allows us to embrace both the characteristics of these partsongs that unite them as well as those that distinguish them.39

From phrase structure to form

As I argued earlier, the balletto’s brevity supports several perceptual benefits that could help listeners to connect harmonic events across large time spans. The shortest balletti lie at the perceptual limit for hearing hypermetric structures and within the perceptual boundary for remembering a tonic. The metrical regularity that balletto composers cultivated, especially Morley, encourages symmetrical grouping structure, which is reinforced by audible formal cues like the nonsense syllable refrain. Dynamic attending theory posits that periodic cadences correspond to peaks of listener attention, enabling listeners to observe and compare distant harmonic events. Sectional and strophic repeats foster a deeper knowledge of these tonal, phrase structural, and formal procedures as they shower listeners with abundant opportunities to hear and engage with them.40 At the same time, repetition directs listener attention to larger groupings, both by helping them segment the music and by creating space for them to attend to larger formal units.41 Together, these principles may have enabled listeners to identify important harmonic events, compare them across broad time spans, and associate them with specific formal units. These are the precise features that animate formal processes in later tonal repertoires. And these features occur consistently across the

40. I will address the fascinating role of repetition in more depth in Chapter 6, but my claim here is based on Margulis, On Repeat; David Lidov, Is Language a Music? Writings on Musical Form and Signification (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Peter Kivy, The Fine Art of Repetition: Essays in the Philosophy of Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
41. Margulis, On Repeat, 7–9, 23.
Hear homophony repertoire of balletti, building a set of generic norms that fostered their own kind of expectation. I don't intend to argue that sixteenth-century listeners necessarily heard in this way, since that is beyond the capacity of archival and perceptual research to determine. But certainly the potential for this kind of hearing—dare I say tonal hearing?—existed in the balletto, and it is provocative to imagine that composers may have explored the kinds of harmonic, metrical, phrase structural, and formal techniques that I discuss here precisely because of the perceptual benefits that they accrue.

The balletto’s brevity also situates the repertoire at the intersection of phase structure and form and creates intriguing opportunities for recursion in larger forms. Thomas Weelkes, the most ambitious composer of balletts, regularly expands the form’s scope while continuing to exploit large-scale relationships between tonic and dominant. For example, Hark all ye saints above (1598, no. 8) expands Morley’s default 4+4 verse–refrain structure: Weelkes’s A section consists of a 10½ measure verse paired with an 8 measure refrain; the B section is similarly proportioned (10+7) (Example 5.9). Weelkes’s A section is tonic-rooted, though he includes a prominent arrival on V after eight measures—the third line of text (an “extra” line by schematic text-setting standards) follows, and elides with the refrain. Weelkes’s B section presents a straightforward V–I trajectory. The B section verse matches the shift in poetic meter with a surprising turn toward F major (the keynote is G) before an affective shift to a slow, dissonant semibreve passage and I:HC that prepares the concise, homophonic refrain. Weelkes expands the proportions of Morley’s balletts and alters Morley’s carefully ordained symmetry, but these alterations have a clear rhetorical purpose. At the same time, Weelkes’s formal flexibility is effective precisely because it is built on the foundation for the ballett that Morley laid in his 1595 collection.

Incidentally, Hark all ye lovely saints above is my favorite ballett. I’m attracted to the ways it plays with but respects every defining characteristic of the ballett genre. Its delightful syncopations unseat schematic text-setting norms but still call attention to the iambic tetrameter without feeling sing-songy. It shifts between imitation and homophony but provides just enough homophonic grounding that its debt to ballett norms is clear. The affective contrast in the B section opens with a pun—the texture slows immediately at the word “cease”—and is full of juicy suspensions, affect-laden minor intervals, and even a scrumptious cross-relation (common in English partsong but rare in balletts). Weelkes atones for his brief deviation from the light character that the genre demands with a homophonic refrain that owes a clear debt to Gastoldi. And his juxtaposition of quick fusae with a passage in semibreves encourages a quick tempo that seems to accelerate from beginning to end—it’s a real joy to sing with my madrigal group! But within all of this excitement, Weelkes anchors his ballett in a few harmonic principles: he orients his verse–refrain pairs around dominant and tonic cadences (even confirming our expectations for a two-line A section before accommodating the extra line) and he takes advantage of the enlarged scope of the B section to introduce a contrasting tonal area before returning triumphantly to dominant and then tonic in the final refrain. As we will see in Chapter 6, composers exploit similar tonal relationships on increasingly large scales in their canzonette.
circumscribed form and limited tonal vocabulary of the *balletto* and other miniature dance songs prepared these composers—and their listener-performers—to articulate, identify, and connect important tonal events on ever larger scales.

In his discussion of proportion and scale, Nicholas Hilliard invokes the power of the eye—he explains that the mind can perceive the relationship between a tiny portrait and the real man or woman whom that portrait represents. So long as the relative proportions are maintained the size of the portrait is irrelevant. Composers
Example 5.9 Continued.

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action (tonally open)

Do you not see how they a-gree then cease fair La -

Do you not see how they a-gree then cease fair La -

Do you not see how they a-gree then cease fair La -

---

action (cont.)

continuation (tonally open)

-dies, why weep ye, why weep ye? Fa la la la la...

-dies, why weep ye, why weep ye? Fa la la la la...

-dies, why weep ye, why weep ye? Fa la la la la...

-dies, why weep ye, why weep ye? Fa la la la la...

---

reaction (tonally closed)

action (tonally open) 

reaction (tonally closed)

I:HC

I:HC

I:AC
of balletti similarly experimented with proportion. In homophonic partsongs composers began to exploit harmonic trajectories across increasingly large time spans, building phrases that followed preordained routes from tonic to dominant and back again. The balletto expanded that phrase structure process to the formal level, facilitated by the one-to-one relationship, in many balletti, between phrase and formal section. Thus, the balletto established the possibility that harmonic trajectories explored at the phrase level could similarly govern formal relationships. Motion from V to I within a phrase could also be understood as motion from V to I from verse to refrain. The harmonic work of a verse was to create a tonal opening that could be closed by a goal-oriented refrain. The same principle that allowed the eye to perceive the similarity between a tall man and his tiny portrait could surely apply to the relative proportions of musical forms, ranging from the tiniest balletti and canzonette to the more elaborate sectional forms that bridged the gap between frivolous secular song and serious through-composed madrigal.
Florence, the mapmaking capital of Europe, was abuzz in the early fifteenth century with the news that Ptolemy’s celebrated Geographia (ca. 150 AD) was being translated at last. Ptolemy meant to map the entire world; his Geographia was the first atlas. Ptolemy’s ambitious tome collected tables of coordinates for thousands of peoples and places; maps, and descriptions of how to draw them; and an extensive written theory of mapping. In the text, Ptolemy distinguished two enterprises that would shape Renaissance mapmaking: geography and chorography. Whereas geography mapped the entire world and its major regions, chorography sketched out the individual details of cities and towns, palaces and gardens. As Ptolemy explained, “The end of chorography is to deal separately with a part of the whole… For as in an entire painting, we must first put in the larger features, and afterwards those detailed features which portraits and pictures may require.” Geography demands precision and careful calculation, while chorography requires an artist’s hand and eye: “Chorography is most concerned with what kind of places those are which it describes, not how large they are in extent. Its concern is to paint a true likeness, and not merely to give exact position and size.” A chorographer was meant to distill a city’s unique character into a single image.

Rather than duplicating the original maps in Ptolemy’s Geographia (if they had survived, or even existed in the first place), Renaissance mapmakers appended dozens of new global, regional, and city views to fifteenth-century manuscript

3. Ibid., 26.
copies of the text. The copy that first belonged to King Alfonso of Naples, for instance, includes thirty-three geographies and eleven more detailed chorographies, painstakingly hand-drawn and colored. Figure 6.1 reproduces the image of Rome.⁴

4. Bibliothèque nationale de France Lat. 4802. The manuscript's date is uncertain but it comes from the second half of the fifteenth century; see Miller, *Mapping the City*, 19; Dalché, "The Reception of Ptolemy’s Geography," 321.
The artist depicts the city schematically: he draws the city walls in shifting perspective, and the individual buildings as they appear at ground level. He nestles the city among some generic hills to provide a sense of Rome's surroundings, and marks out its general shape with the Tiber river and the city walls. And he scatters most of Rome's famous landmarks around the city, fastidiously labeling each one. The oversized monuments stand in approximate locations, and they appear in perspective with their facades uniformly facing the viewer. The mapmaker omits Rome's roads and houses, as well as the grittier details of the Roman landscape. The city view resembles a modern tourist map—a “greatest hits” caricature of the city that might serve as an aide- mémoire for a traveler once he returns home, or a window into a foreign locale for a less adventurous scholar.\(^5\)

City view images exploded in popularity in the sixteenth century: while only a few dozen circulated in the fifteenth century, by the end of the sixteenth there were too many to count. The cartographic landscape transformed, radically, as artists developed new representational methods and scientists and surveyors refined their measurement technologies. Linear perspective, land surveys, indirect measurement, and the invention of devices that measured topography enabled cartographers to depict cities with unprecedented accuracy. And printing dramatically increased the dissemination—and popularity—of these increasingly precise images. In 1572, geographer Georg Braun and engraver Frans Hogenberg published the first volume of their monumental atlas, *Civitates orbis terrarum*, marking the culmination of sixteenth-century advances in mapmaking. The atlas included more than five hundred images in its six volumes, the last of which appeared in 1617. Compare the map of Rome included in the first volume with the map appended to *Geographia*.\(^6\) In Braun and Hogenberg’s image, based on a map by Giovanni Francesco Camocio, we see Rome from a bird’s-eye view (Figure 6.2). Camocio draws the city and surrounding topography realistically. He exaggerates the city's most famous monuments and surrounds them with generic urban infill; he represents the buildings in perspective, but chooses a high angle that does not obscure the networks of roads and alleyways that connect them. The image conveys the extent of Rome's urban density and natural resources. In lieu of labels, Camocio provides a detailed legend that helps us to identify important gateways, churches, and monuments without disrupting the verisimilitude of the landscape. The two figures at the front of the image—typical of sixteenth-century bird's-eye views—have a dual purpose: they give us a sense of local fashion, but also testify to the image's accuracy, as it is through their eyes that we engage with the landscape.

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Viewed from above, the city appears as a unified whole, in marked contrast to the assortment of landmarks that comprise the Ptolemaic map.

City views like those presented in *Civitates orbis terrarum* literally gave local citizens and world travelers a new perspective on the cityscape. For the first time, bird’s-eye view images illustrated a city’s larger shape, giving form to the formless. At the same time, they depicted the urban landscape in astonishing detail. As Hilary Ballon and David Friedman argue, the bird’s-eye view provided a “holistic view of the city,” which “could accommodate the plenitude of the city as well as visually organize it.” This new visual technology gave viewers “an all-encompassing, elastic vision, a way of representing space that could look around buildings, move in multiple directions, and see building facades as well as the contour of streets.”

Cartographers achieved this effect by combining careful measurement, direct observation from within the city, and a bit of artistic imagination, culminating in a view that balanced the competing values of accuracy and legibility. A viewer, in turn, could newly orient herself in the city as she reimagined it in a novel,

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7. Ballon and Friedman, “Portraying the City,” 688. The utility of such a view is evident if you compare the Braun and Hogenberg image with an overhead satellite image from Google Maps. To counter the shortcomings of the orthographic satellite view, Google Maps has introduced a “3-D” map image that simulates the bird’s-eye view perspective. Obelisks, it turns out, don’t look that interesting from directly above.
scientifically robust way. She could experience the city from an impossible point of view and situate herself within its larger network of streets, buildings, and natural features. And she could traverse the city imaginatively, identifying new routes and recontextualizing familiar ones. The viewer engaged with bird’s-eye view images on two planes: from within and without the city.

Our experience of musical form is also twofold: we hear the work as it unfolds in time, but we also imagine and interpret the form as a whole, out of time. We have given different names to these two domains—Kurt Westphal distinguished *Form* (form-as-shape) from *Formung* (form-as-process); Edward T. Cone later reframed these categories in terms of listener psychology, differentiating *synoptic comprehension* and *immediate apprehension*. These binaries capture the unique ways in which music plays with time: to fully understand musical forms, these authors argue, we must negotiate between these two perspectives; we are simultaneously in and out of time. But how does this process work? Dahlhaus argues that our experience of form is mediated through memory:

> Insofar as music is form, it attains its real existence, paradoxically expressed, at the very moment when it is past. Still held firm in memory, it emerges into a condition that it never entered during its immediate presence; and at a distance it constitutes itself as a surveyable plastic form. Spatialization and form, emergence and objectivity, are interdependent: one is the support or precondition of the other.

Dahlhaus invokes a visual metaphor here: our synchronous understanding of form requires that we “survey” the form and correlate that abstraction with both our in-time experience and our memory of that experience. Form comes into being through this reckoning—Dahlhaus suggests that forms do not exist objectively in the world, but “attain their real existence” as they are constituted in the listener’s mind. Nicholas Cook expands this argument, borrowing Dahlhaus’s phenomenological language: “If form is to be defined as the intentional object of the listening process, then it follows that listeners must experience the music in terms of connections between temporally remote points.”

That is, as listeners move between their in- and out-of-time experience of musical form, they draw distant musical events into relations with one another. The music’s “temporally remote points” come together like opposite corners of a folded map.

As bird’s-eye view images altered viewers’ orientation toward their urban environments, so did tonal expectation draw the performer and listener into a new relationship with musical form. Bird’s-eye views showed individual citizens how the city’s parts fit into its whole and fostered introspection about what it meant to


be a member of an urban community.\textsuperscript{11} As musical form and tonal structure grew increasingly codependent, they similarly oriented listeners in the formal landscape, encouraging them to attend to form itself as a meaningful component of a composition. With their highly regulated strophic sectional forms, \textit{balletti} and \textit{canzonette} were ideal catalysts for transforming tonal hearing—they are more like modern cities on rectangular grids than medieval cities built haphazardly on irregular interlocking alleyways. Composers coordinate carefully planned metrical regularity, periodic phrase structure, melodic goal direction, and formal cues to draw listener attention toward section-ending cadences—“temporally remote points”—and to train listeners to connect these points and use them to navigate musical forms.

I should note here that by invoking sixteenth-century cartography, I am not arguing that early modern listeners created visual maps of musical form, either imaginatively or physically. Mark Evan Bonds has demonstrated how such visual modeling of musical form emerged in the eighteenth century in response to changing conceptions of musical time, and in parallel with new technologies that represented linear time in visual space (such as the timeline, invented in the 1750s).\textsuperscript{12} By contrast, early modern conceptions of time were cyclical, as manifested in the circular conception of the clock and the calendar.\textsuperscript{13} The correspondence between cyclical time and the repetitious structure of strophic, sectional forms is provocative, and has substantial ramifications for the listener’s relationship to musical form, as I will outline later. Nor do I wish to suggest that bird’s-eye view images caused changes in the understanding of musical form, or that the two conceptual frameworks originated from a common cultural phenomenon. Rather, I aim to draw an analogy between the new visual strategies available to viewers of bird’s-eye view images and the new aural strategies available to listeners who engage with musical forms animated by tonal relationships.

Three characteristics of the \textit{balletto} and \textit{canzonetta} facilitate tonal expectation and, in turn, foster new listening strategies. First, the forms are comprehensible—a naïve or experienced listener-performer could easily segment the form and locate herself within it. Second, they are highly repetitive. Repetition both facilitates statistical learning and alters a listener’s orientation toward the music, shifting her attention to higher structural levels. And finally, the forms are predictable, both because they are so repetitive and because they incorporate predictable patterns at

the lower levels of meter and phrase structure. Together, these features equipped listeners to attend in meaningful ways to ever more remote relationships between dominants and tonics. In turn, composers exploited the stability of form and tonal structure across the repertoire—they manipulated formal norms to create meaning, and they expected their listeners to use tonal information to make judgments about formal structure. In the pages that follow, I will explore how each of these formal features helped listeners develop new strategies for interpreting and evaluating musical form. Within this formal landscape, dominant and tonic landmarks confirm that the listener is on the right path and reassure her that she has arrived at her destination. Tonal expectation emerges as a new navigational technology that redefines the listener's relationship with musical form: the listener leverages her knowledge of tonal relationships to participate in the form.

Composing comprehensible forms

Much like today, when tourists visited new cities in the sixteenth century, they had to get oriented.\textsuperscript{14} Sixteenth-century travel books direct tourists to approach the city from a distance and, if possible, to climb a nearby hill to get a sense of its size and scope. Upon entering the city, a tourist should ask his host for guidance—a good host will take his guest to well-known public monuments, then to excellent private houses, and finally, to a high tower or steeple: “and from here he shows him the [city’s] site, width, and length, and points out to him the public buildings, the streets, and everything [else]; thus, from this high vantage point, he forms an image of this place in his mind.”\textsuperscript{15} To compile this synoptic image, the traveler must cross-reference his experience on the ground with his broader views. Listeners, too, orient themselves to novel musical forms. Partsongs are full of signposts—changes in texture or text, sectional repetition, and tonal cues all help the listener navigate the form.

The \textit{balletto} (ArArBrBr) and \textit{canzonetta} (AABB and AABCC) are conspicuously repetitive. Their repeat schemes help listeners identify formal boundaries and, subsequently, interpret and compare harmonic events at these boundaries. Elizabeth Margulis explains how repetition facilitates segmentation: “Repetition tends to reify a passage—to set it apart from the surrounding context as a ‘thing’ to be mused on, abstractly considered, and conceptualized as a unit.”\textsuperscript{16} In other words, once the listener has used repetition to segment the form, he can then contemplate each section “out of time” and evaluate it in relation to the rest of the form. We can see this process at work in Gastoldi’s parody of a German drinking

\textsuperscript{14} Frangenberg describes the traveling strategies of sixteenth-century Italian tourists in “Chorographies of Florence,” 48–58.
\textsuperscript{15} Quotation from Anton Francesco Doni, \textit{I Mondi del Doni libro primo} (Venice, 1552), translated in Frangenberg, “Chorographies of Florence,” 48.
song, *Il Tedesco* (1594, no. 5) (Example 6.1). When we hear the *canzonetta’s* opening four-measure phrase, we may imagine that it is the antecedent of a longer phrase. But when it repeats, we identify it as a self-contained formal unit. As a result, we must reinterpret the III:IAC that concludes the section as a point of relative stability rather than a harmonic departure. Similarly, when we hear the C section repeat, we identify its boundaries as well as those of the contrasting middle section. The eventual strophic repetition provides little new formal information; rather, it directs our attention to different aspects of the form.


Viva viva l’inventor
Di si dolce e buon licor,
Che non beve a gara ognun?
Beva lieto homai ciascun
Primamente io bevèrò,
*Brindes brindes io, io, io.*
But Gastoldi is not limited to repetition; he uses several other cues to distinguish the sections of *Il Tedesco*. Gastoldi differentiates the sections harmonically—the A section begins away from the final and the B and C sections gradually restore it. He reinforces the harmonic trajectory with hierarchical cadential rhetoric, moving from a slightly tipsy III:IAC to a firmer I:IAC to a confident final I:PAC. Listeners have multiple opportunities to hear, process, and compare each of these points of arrival because the form is so compact and repetitive.

In Chapter 5, I situated the *balletto* at the intersection of phrase structure and form because its phrases are coextensive with its formal sections. The refrain structure enhances its already robust goal-direction, as action verses pair with reaction refrains. These refrains, I argued, direct listeners through the form: their nonsense syllables make them audible, and they announce a change in direction toward section-ending tonal closure. But refrains are not exclusive to the *balletto*; many *canzonette* (and also some *balletti*) incorporate texted refrains. Refrains are crucial signifiers of both generic identity and formal structure, but they vary in their capacity to communicate formal information. While a naïve listener can identify a nonsense syllable refrain when it first occurs, she needs to hear at least two verses to recognize a texted refrain. For instance, *Il Tedesco* closes with a toast that swerves between text and nonsense syllable—“Brindes brindes io, io, io!” But it is only in the second verse that we recognize this toast as a refrain. In other words, while nonsense-syllable refrains are obvious, texted refrains, in most cases, must be identified after-the-fact. The former articulate formal structure, while the latter comment on the text and build larger-scale connections within strophic partsongs. And, while composers can draw on their listeners’ expectations that the *balletto* refrain will facilitate a return to tonic, composers of texted refrains cannot necessarily rely on the refrain to guide their listener through the harmonic implications of the form.

In some circumstances, texted refrains may be as audible—and even as predictable—as nonsense syllable refrains. In another drinking song, *So da, mein liebes Brüderlein* (1626, no. 2), Schein closes both the A and B sections with a toast in French (Example 6.2). The new language signals that this toast is a refrain, and its efficient V–I trajectory fulfills a refrain’s tonal obligation. Characteristically, Schein revels in a more expansive B section—the singers, engrossed by their drinking, veer sharpward away from the final. A repeated “heraus” returns us to an expectant V as we hold our glasses in the air. It is echoed in subsequent verses (“ist aus” and “Bald aus”), setting up a narrative from “the glass must be overturned” (first verse) to “the glass must be refilled” (second verse), culminating in “the glass must be emptied” (third verse). These drunken exhortations pull us off our tonic–dominant axis and tonicize IV. But just as our belligerent singers threaten the partsong’s tonal stability, the culminating French-language refrain returns to right the harmonic stumble. The toast’s harmonic and formal responsibilities are no different from those of a typical *balletto* refrain.

17. Gastoldi makes particular use of texted refrains in his 1594 collection; 7 of the 16 *canzonette* include a refrain. Perhaps the refrains were meant to compensate for the lack of nonsense syllable passages in this collection of *canzonette* misleadingly titled *Balletti*. 
Refrains are signposts that point to the nearest site of tonal and formal closure. While repetition demarcates sections, refrains subdivide these sections and build hierarchical relationships within them. Formal sections in turn correspond to tonal functions. Listeners, primed by frequent repetition, learn to associate phrase and section boundaries with specific harmonic arrivals, and as a result they
develop a set of expectations for how harmonic trajectories play out across whole pieces.

Every strain repeated

Humanism encouraged composers to pay unprecedented attention to their vernacular texts, animating each linguistic nuance, each affective state, each poetic contradiction in sound. But few musical techniques could be less compatible with this text-focused aesthetic than strophic repetition. The *canzonetta* and *balletto* are
both sectional and strophic—they revel in nearly constant repetition while disabling traditional text expressive techniques, which were instead the purview of the more ambitious madrigal. We have already seen one consequence of strophic form: schematic text-setting frees composers from the impossible burden of attending to multiple stanzas’ declamatory and semantic nuances, instead equipping them with a neutral rhythmic plan capable of accommodating most verses with minimal impropriety. And schematic text-setting had one unexpected result: as I argued in Chapter 3, it redirected listener attention away from surface-level declamation and toward periodic metric patterns and phrase structure.

Repetition provokes a similar reorientation at the formal level. At its simplest, sectional repetition segments a musical form, empowering listeners to identify section boundaries and contemplate the phrase-level trajectories that connect them. But the combination of sectional and strophic repetition magnifies this effect, directing our attention to increasingly broad formal levels. Margulis provides empirical support for this intuitive experience. In a behavioral study, she asked listeners to identify repeated patterns in musical works across multiple exposures. She found that, while listeners initially identified small repeating units but not longer ones, after several exposures they grew worse at hearing smaller repetitions and better at hearing larger repeating units.\(^\text{18}\) She interprets these data with a spatial metaphor:

Repeated exposures trigger an attentional shift from more local to more global levels of musical organization. Repetition, thus, can be understood to affect a listener’s orientation towards the music; the horizon of involvement widens with additional exposures, so that the music doesn’t seem to be coming at the listener in small bits, but rather laying out broader spans for consideration.\(^\text{19}\)

If sectional repetition helps a listener identify formal boundaries, strophic repetition directs that listener’s attention to a broader formal level—she might identify form as a possible site for meaning production or attend to harmonic and melodic trajectories familiar from the phrase level on this new, more expansive horizon. According to Margulis’s model, repetition transforms musical form from a precompositional organizational property into an interpretive framework.

Let’s take a moment to consider a potential hearing of *So da, mein liebes Brüderlein* through the lens of repetition. We’ll assume that our listener is familiar with the *canzonetta* genre, which was admittedly out of fashion by the time Schein’s charming pieces were published in 1626. The listener would recognize the opening rhythm as a familiar text-setting schema. After hearing or singing the initial couplet, the listener might predict a continuation of the periodic two- and four-measure metric groupings. The couplet ends with a half cadence that marks this moment as the midpoint of the phrase and, due to the repertoire-wide preference for V–I A-section trajectories and pregnant descent from 5 to 2, accrues expectation


for a cadence on I in m. 9. Schein delivers, rewarding the listener’s accurate expectations. He then repeats the phrase, cementing the action–reaction structure. The listener, revisiting familiar terrain, can now hypothesize about the form: is it AABB or AABCC? Why the French-language text? Will courage be paired with a rhyme in the next section? The listener may now begin to attend to the eight-measure grouping, which Haussmann has marked as a level that will reward attention. The B section disrupts the regularity established by the A section with new poetic, metrical, and harmonic rhetoric. Such disruptions are typical of contrasting middle sections. Thus, confronted with a strong dominant arrival in m. 15 (prepared by its own dominant) and the return to schematic text-setting in m. 16, the listener might draw on her genre-wide schematic memory to conclude that the pickup to m. 16 initiates a C section that will efficiently conclude on I. The passage that follows resembles the action phrase in the A section, but moves to unfamiliar harmonic terrain. Here, to the listener’s surprise (for such repetition is exceedingly rare in the canzonetta repertoire), the A section refrain returns. The refrain, the listener soon discovers, escorts us efficiently to tonic closure. The B section repetition that follows clarifies that this is a binary canzonetta form, allowing the listener, through this second iteration, to reconsider the apparent contrasting middle section (mm. 10–15). This time, she might attend to the accumulation of dominant arrivals, or to the ways in which the final eight-measure phrase echoes yet differs from the phrase that constitutes the A section. Finally, she may contemplate the refrain and note how it brings rhetorical closure to each section. With each successive verse, our listener can refine her understanding of the piece and attend to different aspects of it. Indeed, the joke in the text—the progressive belligerence of the singers—depends on such long-range connections.

It may seem fanciful to impose such a hearing on a seventeenth-century listener, especially when we acknowledge that this individual was actually a performer, reading from a part where both the repeats and the refrain structure were visible at a glance. Indeed, the canzonetta’s form is highly visible in the partbook (Figure 6.3). The repeat signs plainly identify the binary form. The typography highlights the contrast between the strophic verses and the text-invariant refrain, which stands out both because it is presented alone and because it appears in a distinct typeface. And the three stages of the joke are printed one atop the next, providing a quick summary of the trajectory of the whole partsong. In a single performance a singer would move through each section six times—and the refrain twelve times! Such repetition is not an incidental feature of these forms, but rather an essential one. Repetition divides the form into meaningful segments, it points the listener-performer to levels that will reward her attention, and it engages the listener’s short-term memory, drawing her into an imaginative interaction with the formal structure out of time. The balletto and canzonetta, in their repetitiveness, teach listeners to attend to form, and teach them how and why to do so.

“Music takes place in time,” Margulis writes,

but repetition beguilingly makes it knowable in the way of something outside of time. It enables us to “look” at a passage as a whole, even while it’s progressing moment by moment. But this changed perspective brought by repetition doesn’t
feel like holding a score and looking at a passage's notation as it progresses. Rather, it feels like a different way of inhabiting a passage—a different kind of orientation.

Margulis’s invocation of visual and spatial metaphors captures the way that repetition can de-temporalize music and allow us to make sense of how a piece’s components fit together, provocatively echoing Dahlhaus’s description of “surveyable plastic form.” This reorientation is not unlike the change of perspective that Braun and Hogenberg imagined their bird’s-eye view images would encourage.

20. Ibid., 7.
In the foreword to Book II of *Civitates orbis terrarum*, Braun writes, “We offer representations of the form of cities and towns so that the reader can see into their alleys and streets and view their buildings and squares.” A seventeenth-century traveler might imagine himself into the streets of Rome, peering at a church before taking a right, and then a left, and heading toward the Colosseum, all while viewing the city from afar and comparing the distance of his imagined journey with the scope of the broader city and its surrounding countryside. A listener might navigate a partsong similarly, traversing the form either in her memory or in real time, as the repetition gradually pulls her farther and farther from the musical surface and gives her a broader view of her surroundings.

**Listening to the future**

In *Sweet Anticipation*, David Huron argues that our emotional responses to music derive from the myriad ways in which composers manipulate our expectations. Listeners experience pleasure when they successfully predict an event, or when a successful prediction is overridden by a musical surprise. Huron identifies four different ways that musical events can be made predictable, which correspond to four different types of memory:

1. Schematic predictability (long-term memory) draws on listeners’ familiarity with the basic tenets of a musical style.
2. Dynamic predictability (short- and intermediate-term memory) involves work-specific expectations built into individual pieces.
3. Veridical familiarity (episodic memory) arises from multiple exposures to a single work (the experience of knowing how something goes).
4. Conscious predictability (working memory) is the result of a listener’s active observation and analysis of musical events.

Schematic predictions are broadly style-specific and reflect statistical regularities in the repertoire. For homophonic partsongs, schematic expectations include metrical regularity, groupings of four and eight semibreves, cadential schemas, harmonic patterns specific to each pairing of system and final, and formal conventions ranging from rhymed couplets to repeat structure. Dynamic predictability arises from internal features of individual works. For example, when a phrase uses melodic parallelism or initiates a sequence, listeners expect the melodic trajectory to continue. Sectional repetition is also an aspect of dynamic predictability. While schematic and dynamic predictions reflect compositional choices, Huron argues, veridical familiarity and conscious predictability are outside of a composer’s control, since the former requires that a listener engage

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21. Translated in Ballon and Friedman, “Portraying the City,” 687.
with a single work multiple times and the latter involves extramusical contemplation. But the high degree of sectional repetition in the partsong repertoire may encourage veridical familiarity—by the sixth time through an eight-measure A section, a listener surely knows how the piece goes. And homophonic partsongs were written for performers, not listeners; a certain amount of rehearsal and repetition is built into the way communities of amateur musicians participated in the repertoire, certainly engaging veridical familiarity but also encouraging a kind of contemplation that is not characteristic of a modern listening experience.

Figure 6.4 schematizes the harmonic plans of balletti and canzonette to give us a sense of the formal expectations that experienced listener-performers might accrue. We saw in Chapter 5 that balletto refrains overwhelmingly end on I, yielding a static I–I tonal trajectory between the two halves. Balletti are tonally stable because their harmonic interest lies in the relationship of the verse and refrain rather than that of the A section and B section. By contrast, only 68 percent of binary canzonette rely on I–I trajectories. Instead, composers often close their A sections on V or other secondary key areas: in many cases, their A sections are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Balletto</th>
<th>AABB Canzonetta</th>
<th>AABCC Canzonetta</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ar</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.4a Harmonic goal by section and form. (Final sections end on tonic.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trajectory</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Examples (in order of frequency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I–X–I</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>I–V–I (33% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I–IV–I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I–III–I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X–X–I</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>V–V–I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V–III–I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IV–V–I</td>
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<td>III–V–I</td>
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<td>IV–III–I</td>
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<td>III–IV–I</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>VI–IV–I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X–I–I</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>V–I–I</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>III–I</td>
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<td>IV–I</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>VI–I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I–I–I</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.4b Tonal trajectories of AABCC canzonette.
longer than those of balletti, and they do not conclude with tonally circumscribed refrains. Three-part canzonette stimulate composers to venture to more harmonically distant terrain. Middle sections are particularly likely to end on V, preparing a tonic return in the final section. In the canzonetta, as in the balletto, formal sections have unique tonal functions that shape a listener’s journey through the form’s poetic and tonal narrative.

Two-part canzonette can be distinguished from balletti in part because their harmonic trajectories extend across the entire form. For instance, the A section of Gastoldi’s Il ballerino (1594, no. 1) is a short antecedent-like phrase that descends from i to V (Example 6.3). The B section delays the resolution called for by the half cadence as it moves away from G minor and instead lands confidently on B. Gastoldi follows this harmonic departure with a texted refrain that disrupts the prevailing texture, rate of declamation, and regular phrase rhythm. The refrain aggressively restores the G final, stating the harmony on four consecutive semibreve initia, including the final PAC. The canzonetta’s i–V | III–I trajectory presents a narrative of exposition, departure, and return bolstered by the expectation-generating i:HC that closes the A section. This tonal rhetoric is augmented by the texted refrain—the harmonic and textual returns correspond, signaling the import of the poem’s final lines even on a naïve encounter.

Other AABB canzonette have a simpler I | I trajectory, which requires composers to communicate tonal and formal information with internal cadences and phrase structure. For example, Hassler’s expansive canzonetta, Hört zu all die jr tugend kennt (1601, no. 26) pairs a tonally restrained A section (I–V–I) with a chromatic, exploratory B section (Example 6.4). The A section establishes the C final in two full homophonic phrases that surround a more timid antiphonal passage tonicizing G. The B section begins imitatively and cautiously outlines I and V before returning to I again. Here, however, Hassler tonicizes the distant harmonies A minor and D major in a pair of antiphonal phrases. He closes the canzonetta with a homophonic restatement of the imitative subject that restores C, giving the B section an arch-like form with a strong conclusion. Both the A and B sections move from tonic-rooted stability to a new harmonic area set antiphonally, followed by a concluding pair of tonic cadences. The expectation that results occurs within sections rather than between them. Nevertheless, the overall I–V–I | I–X–I tonal plan supports formal boundaries with tonal ones and contrasts a harmonically straightforward A section with a more florid, tonally adventurous B section.

Harmony and form do not merely correspond in the partsong repertoire; rather, they reinforce one another. Paradoxically, we can best observe this phenomenon in the partsongs that violate formal and harmonic norms. The balletto particularly encouraged formal experimentation. The form’s circumscribed repeat structure and omnipresent fa la refrain are sufficient to identify the genre, creating space for composers to play. And play they did—more than a quarter of all balletti distort the conventional form. In these nonconforming balletti, composers manipulate the genre’s audible formal signals and predictable tonal structure, using each to communicate information about the other. For example, Gastoldi appends a bonus refrain to Caccia d’Amore (1591, no. 13), creating an
ArArBrrBrr form (Example 6.5). He navigates the extra refrain with the transposed homophonic block technique. The balletto’s A section is normative. But the B section text motivates Gastoldi to diverge from the typical balletto form. The second part of Gastoldi’s poem pairs a couplet of senari piani with a couplet of settenari tronci:
Example 6.4 Hassler, Hört zu all die jr tugend kennt (1601, no. 26).

A section

statement? (tonally closed)

Hört zu all die jr tugend kennt, Merckt auf mein Red kommt her be-

A section (cont.)

response? (tonally open)

A section (cont.)

repetition (tonally closed)

prei sen, helft mir diß Fräu-lein prei sen, helft mir diß Fräu-lein

B section

contrasting section; imitation

sie ists wol werth auf der Erd...
Serendipitously, the first verse's final couplet rhymes with “fa la la,” and its tronco endings differentiate it from the rest of the text. Gastoldi separates the final lines and interleaves them with nonsense syllable refrains, yielding a double refrain structure. Already, the interjection of text into a fa la refrain is unusual; the twofold
repetition of this structure is particularly surprising. Indeed, this irregularity seems to have confused several printers of Gastoldi’s collection—in many of the basso partbooks printers mistakenly replace the final line of text with an extra fa la. But Gastoldi carefully primes his listener for the formal irregularity. The B section begins to imply a i:HC–i:PAC trajectory (mm. 10–12) but veers

23. “Il cor vi ferirà” is replaced with “fa la la” (on the repeat only) in the Paris 1614, Douai 1627, Antwerp 1605 and 1617, and Amsterdam 1657 (in Dutch) editions; this mistake does not appear in the Venice 1593, 1597, and 1600, Antwerp 1596, or Amsterdam 1641 editions. (I have not seen any
unexpectedly sharpward to a V:HC. Gastoldi thus prepares the double refrain that follows: the two parts of the refrain move down from E to A to D, culminating on the final I:IAC. The harmonic cues extend the B section but also help listeners navigate the unusual form. Gastoldi prompts this hearing in subtler ways as well. The entire *balletto* juggles cadences of varying weight. Each of the B section’s three parts close with increasing tonal and rhetorical confidence (V:HC, V:IAC, i:PAC / I:IAC), imparting stability to the final cadence. On a larger scale, Gastoldi manipulates the section-ending cadences. After the first A section closes with a confident I:PAC, the repeated A section omits the raised cadential third and adds contrapuntal elaboration that elides into the following section. Gastoldi closes the first Brr almost identically (m. 23)—the ornamented D minor cadence marks the

other basso partbooks.) The error is particularly notable in the Paris edition, because the printer (Pierre Ballard) has written out the repeats in the bass part to accommodate the different underlay (though some parts use a sign of congruence for the B section of this partsong). The error certainly reflects the irregularity of Gastoldi’s refrain structure, but it also results from the construction of the bass part. Each other part alternates text with nonsense syllables; the basso part, on the other hand, is tacet for the first set of fa las. Consequently, it would be easy for a printer working from another part to mistakenly write in the fa la rather than the second line of text. Nonetheless, the duplication of this error in so many sources is provocative, especially because all sources treat the first statement of this refrain correctly.
beginning of each B section, aiding the naïve listener by signposting the end of the unusual Brr the first time.

_Caccia d'Amore_ illustrates how composers used tonal structure to reflect characteristics of their texts and organize goal-directed phrases into larger musical works. But to what extent were these relationships salient to sixteenth-century listeners? In other words, to what extent do expectations from the phrase level “scale up” to form? The recursive relationship between phrase structure and form is of course foundational to the contemporary discipline of music theory. Leonard Meyer suggests that expectations from local levels accrue on larger ones: comparing phrases and forms to sentences and paragraphs, he writes, “the significance of the longer parts of a musical work depends upon the existence of meaningful relationships between the shorter ones.”

Without coherence on local levels, global organization is impossible. Lerdahl and Jackendoff offer a similar account of form’s reliance on and analogy to shallower levels. They describe a perceptual shift from metrical to grouping structure at larger levels, but argue for the continued interaction of perceptual strategies associated with meter and grouping within longer time spans. And, they write, a composition’s pitch structure can shape our experience of larger levels: “the launching of a section, the return of a tonal region, or the articulation of a cadence can all have large-scale reverberations.” They call these reverberations “structural accents;” these “points of gravity” organize our experience of form.

In both Meyer’s and Lerdahl and Jackendoff’s accounts, the coherence of a musical work requires that small units connect to one another in meaningful ways at increasingly large scales, thereby shaping our perception of the work’s global structure. Form and phrase exist in a reciprocal relationship, where local order begets global order, which in turn justifies and elevates the local order. But neither Meyer nor Lerdahl and Jackendoff explore whether such global coherence is perceptually salient for listeners.

In the late 1980s, Nicholas Cook began to investigate whether listeners could hear global tonal closure, and subsequent studies have revealed that listeners are not as sensitive to global tonal relationships as we might expect. Listeners do not report greater pleasure or satisfaction when works return to the key in which they began; this phenomenon is supported by studies that demonstrate that listeners do not retain an aural memory of an initial tonic for long after a modulation.

Though we think of global tonal closure as a quintessential feature of tonal music, it seems to be fairly inconsequential perceptually. Some ostensibly tonal repertoires eschew

tonal closure altogether—consider, for instance, the ubiquitous “pump-up” modulation in contemporary popular song. While listeners are extremely sensitive to harmonic and melodic closure at local levels, their capacity to hear these relationships rapidly diminishes at larger scales.

Though listeners are unable to predict the key of a final cadence, the final cadence remains a composition’s most predictable event. As David Huron has demonstrated, listeners can identify both the what and the when of a final cadence by drawing on copious metrical, melodic, and harmonic cues (many of which are noncontiguous with the predicted event). In the homophonic partsong repertoire, these expectations may be enhanced by poetic rhyme, refrain structure, and repetition. Indeed, we saw in the previous section that repetition broadens the span to which listeners attend, facilitating more distant connections. But the experimental data demand that we look to other domains to account for formal expectation. Our formal expectations arise not from local trajectories, but rather from the relationship of an individual piece to the broader corpus of similar works that we have experienced. As Meyer puts it, “in form we are, in a sense, constantly expecting,” because we are always comparing our in-time experience with our out-of-time conception of a genre’s ideal type. Our experience of expectation in forms is different in kind from our experience of expectation in phrases, but these expectations interact and shape one another. Ultimately, I cannot argue that a V: IAC that closes a canzonetta A section is directly perceptually relevant to a I: PAC that closes the B section. But the homophonic partsong repertoire belies the increasing compositional relevance of such frameworks. At the same time, local trajectories in many cases support and reinforce global trajectories in these partsongs, creating an intricate network of interlocking expectations at multiple scales that shape the listener’s dynamic experience of moving through the musical work. Within the narrow harmonic palette, concise scope, and highly repetitive environment of the homophonic partsong, expectations across multiple domains collide, testing the limits of tonal perception.

Predictability is tricky to theorize because it depends, in part, on getting into the listener’s head. The more distant the historical listener is from ourselves, the more contingent our claims. What’s more, homophonic partsongs are predictable across multiple domains. In this section, I’ve discussed both a listener’s formal expectations and their tonal expectations. But these two domains have a sympathetic relationship: well-defined, easy-to-hear forms encourage tonal expectation, and tonal expectation emerges as a new technology for interpreting form. Although the statistical regularities in a repertoire give us some insight into the expectations of an experienced sixteenth-century amateur musician, these data are limited in their capacity to tell us what these expectations may have meant.

to listeners. Perhaps the clearest view of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century expectations can be found in the music: when composers stretch the limits of their forms, they rely on their listeners’ accumulated stylistic competence to make their deviations meaningful.

Rearranging landmarks: Deviant forms and meaning production

In *Kein grösser freud* (1596, no. 10), Hassler breaks many of the basic rules of the *canzonetta* form (Example 6.6). However, his misbehavior reveals a commitment to the genre’s underlying formal norms and suggests that he expected his listeners to use their knowledge of formal and tonal conventions to navigate the form. Hassler adapted the text from earlier collections of translated Italianate verse—it had appeared in older songbooks compiled by Regnart and Haussmann. Because *Kein grösser freud* is not strophic, Hassler had some leeway to build an expansive setting. The *canzonetta* uses a modified AABCC form and begins straightforwardly. Hassler sets the opening line antiphonally; it is tonic-rooted and prepares the second line, which tonicizes V. Typically, the V:PAC in m. 11 would mark the end of the A section, and would precipitate a repetition of the opening material. However, when the first line begins again, the opening melody is transposed down a fourth (compare mm. 1–4 and mm. 11–14)! Hassler, it seems, has replaced the normative sectional repetition with something new. The transposed first line reorients the opening from tonic to dominant. Hassler attempts to “correct” his errant repetition by replacing the second antiphonal statement of the first line (mm. 4–7) with confident *tutti* declamation that restores tonic (mm. 15–17). The third phrase, which corresponds to the beginning of the second line, appears to return to normal, as mm. 18–20 correspond exactly with mm. 8–10. However, Hassler alters the final cadence, redirecting the quinta voice to avoid the third and eliding into a new bonus repetition. Again, Hassler uses a transposed homophonic block: mm. 22–25 transpose mm. 18–21 down a fifth, refiguring the V:PAC as a I:PAC to, at last, close the AA′ complex. This transposition transforms the tonal trajectory of the A section from I–V (mm. 1–11) to I–I (mm. 1–25). At the same time, Hassler organizes the internal repetitions tonally—the first A section has a tonally open I–V trajectory, the first and second A sections have a V–I relationship, and the two phrase pairs in the second A section each follow a V–I trajectory with the help of the transposed homophonic blocks technique. Though Hassler disrupts the rules of *canzonetta* form, his transpositions and manipulations in fact reshape

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Example 6.6 Hassler, *Kein grösser freud* (1596, no. 10).

A section (tonally open)

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>line 1</th>
<th>line 1 repetition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[\text{Kein grösser freud kan sein auff di-ser Er-den, Kein grösser freud kan sein auff di-ser}]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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A section (tonally open) (cont.)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>line 2</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>[\text{Er-den, dann lie-ben und g'wiß sein ge-liebt zu werner den, kein}]</td>
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</tbody>
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A section “repetition” (tonally closed)

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>surprise line 1, transposed to V</th>
<th>line 1 repetition, back to I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[\text{grösser freud kan sein auff di-ser Er-den, kein grösser freud kan sein auff di-ser}]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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A section “repetition” (tonally closed) (cont.)

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>line 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[\text{Er-den, dann lie-ben und g'wiß sein ge-liebt zu werner den, dann}]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Tonal Orientation \(\infty\) 195
Example 6.6 Continued.

A section (tonally open) (cont.)

surprise line 2 repetition, transposed to I

\[ \text{lie-ben und g’wiß sein ge-liebt zu \hspace{1cm} 1:PAC} \]

\[ \text{wer - den, schöns \hspace{1cm} Fräu-lein zart laß} \]

B section (tonally open)

line 3 \hspace{1cm} line 3 repetition

\[ \text{mich dein gunst er - \hspace{1cm} III:IA C} \]

\[ \text{wer - \hspace{1cm} III:IA C \hspace{1cm} so m. 46} \]

\[ \text{ben, schöns Fräu-lein zart laß mich dein gunst er - \hspace{1cm} III:IA C} \]

\[ \text{wer - \hspace{1cm} III:IA C} \]

\[ \text{ben, lieb} \]

C section (tonally closed)

line 4 \hspace{1cm} line 4 repetition

\[ \text{du auch mich, gleich wie ich dich, lieb \hspace{1cm} V} \]

\[ \text{du auch mich, gleich wie ich dich, und} \]
the partsong’s large-scale tonal structure. The A section closes on I rather than V and explores dominant–tonic relationships on multiple scales.

Hassler compensates for the A section’s formal and tonal trickery with a B section that conforms to canzonetta norms. He returns to the gentler antiphonal writing of the opening to accommodate the text’s shift in register—it turns from abstract sentiments about love to a personal appeal. The B section tonicizes III, a welcome contrast to the tonic–dominant axis of the A section. But it ultimately closes on V as part of the I–V–I trajectory that governs the whole canzonetta.

The C section, predictably, restores tonic. Hassler sets the clichéd four-syllable Germanic lines statically, rocking between III and v three times before moving to V (though he fails to produce a cadence in m. 38). The dominant prepares three
statements of the Italianate *endecasillabo piano* that closes the poem: the first culminates in a V:PAC, and the second, an antiphonal repetition in the lower voices, transposes the passage exactly to bring about a I:PAC. But Hassler is not satisfied with this tonal closure. He adds a third altered repetition in five voices that reiterates the final tonic cadence. And yet the *canzonetta* isn't over! Hassler repeats the C section, beginning with a “close enough” repetition (m. 47 is similar to m. 35), perhaps an homage to the “error” of the A section repeat. After the harmonic redirection of the section's first measure, Hassler restates the C section exactly. But, despite the twice-repeated final cadence, Hassler adds a final coda—an extended repeat of the last phrase—to reiterate tonic harmony and reassure his listeners that they will not encounter another unexpected transposition.

While *Kein grösser freud* hardly resembles the concise strophic *canzonetta* familiar to German choral societies from Haussmann's earlier collections, its formal identity—and its reliance on *canzonetta* norms—is undeniable. The partsong's tonal structure and formal rhetoric are normative: the I–V–I trajectory is colored by a turn to III in the proportionally smaller B section and reiterated by a final coda, but otherwise uncompromised. But beneath the surface, Hassler exploits his listeners' familiarity with formal norms: his A section promises a straightforward *canzonetta* but its repetition delivers something else entirely. Hassler could only manipulate the form in this way because his listeners understood that A sections regularly end on both I and V. Furthermore, he relies on his preferred method of establishing dominant and tonic trajectories—transposed homophonic blocks—to organize the form. The constantly shifting relationship between tonic and dominant echoes the romantic dance between lovers described by the text: that there is no greater joy than to love and be loved; the plea to love me as I love you.

Composers experimented with tonal relationships in their sectional forms because they could leverage those forms' comprehensibility, repetition, predictability, and consequent fitness for meaning production. A form's audible sectional boundaries allowed listeners to compare harmonic events on increasingly large scales, extending from the relationship between a verse and refrain to the relationship between the *prima pars* and *seconda pars* of a through-composed madrigal. Both the concision and the repetition characteristic of strophic, sectional partsongs strengthened that capacity, and helped listeners to develop a robust sense of the genres' harmonic norms. But it is in the forms' predictability that composers bridged the gap between a tonal *relationship* and a set of tonal *expectations*. The simple, metrically regular frameworks, statement–response phrase structures, and repetitive forms on which the *balletto* and *canzonetta* are founded proved to be ideal vehicles for exploring the many ways in which global dominants could create expectation for the return of global tonics. Such expectation occurs on multiple hierarchical levels, each reinforcing the next.

If the audibility, repetition, and predictability of sectional forms reveal why these forms supported early seventeenth-century experiments with tonal hierarchy, their capacity for meaning production illustrates how tonal and formal cues work together. Partsongs in non-standard or deviant forms repeatedly rely on tonal structure to communicate information about formal structure and vice versa. As
these parameters support one another, they create space for deviation in either category. *Kein grösser freud, Caccia d’Amore*, and dozens of other atypical partsongs reveal the paradox that Hepokoski and Darcy identify in the principle of dialogic formal norms:

Norms, generic options, and more-or-less standard procedures are not laws at all. And since they are not, there was no need to suppose that the existence of numerous exceptions or deviations invalidated the norm. Perhaps the many deviations were purposeful dialogues with the background norm. But this would mean, paradoxically, that deviations helped to reinforce the socially shared norm that was being temporarily overridden.  

Composers don’t manipulate formal and tonal procedures because of flexible or ill-defined formal norms; rather, composers understand the power of a cadence on the dominant to signal continuation or a nonsense syllable refrain to signal conclusion, even and especially in the absence of normative rhetoric.

**Putting form on the map**

In *Studies on the Origin of Harmonic Tonality*, Carl Dahlhaus ignores musical form until the book’s final pages. Only after he has accounted for background scales, counterpoint, and harmonic progression in Monteverdi’s madrigals does Dahlhaus invoke large-scale musical organization. “Tonality is a cofactor of musical form,” he writes. “And it is an unavoidable coincidence that compositions whose harmonic techniques are tonally oriented also depart the most decisively from the traditions of the sixteenth century in their form.”  

The tradition to which Dahlhaus refers is “the stringing together of verses” in through-composed madrigals; by contrast, Monteverdi’s later madrigals, though still through-composed, establish “musical coherence through repetition and variation.” A tonal composition, for Dahlhaus, exploits the hierarchical relationship between dominant and tonic, “and so it is no accident that a composition that is tonally based tends toward a form that is based on repetitions and correspondences.” Further, tonal form is independent of text: “the form arises out of relationships that . . . seem to be imposed on the text from the outside and that constitute a structure that can stand on its own without the text’s support.” (Dahlhaus insists on viewing sixteenth century music as absolute music and rarely includes texts in his examples; it is unsurprising that he would claim freedom from the text as a defining characteristic of tonality.) Dahlhaus’s tonal exemplars, all from Monteverdi’s seventh book of madrigals,

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35. Ibid., 312.
36. Ibid., 318–319.
exploit the contrast between open and closed harmonies, typically trajectories from dominant to tonic, and often recapitulate harmonic or melodic material from earlier in the madrigal at its conclusion. Together, these features create “stability and coherence across the longer stretches of music”—for Dahlhaus, tonality requires the coordination of motive, harmony, and form.37

Ever since Fétis, drawing on the rhetoric of the Artusi–Monteverdi controversy, canonized Monteverdi as the pioneer of tonality, we have worked to understand the composer’s tonal legacy. Yet balletti and canzonette embody Dahlhaus’s tonal criteria much more reliably than Monteverdi’s late madrigals. Dahlhaus does not acknowledge the diverse array of sectional forms that thrived alongside the madrigal. The through-composed madrigal was hardly an inviting venue for composers who wished to experiment with harmonic trajectories or organize musical forms around tonal relationships. Rather, it was the circumscribed environment of the sectional partsong that animated such experimentation. Strophic song even meets Dahlhaus’s text-agnostic criterion, in a way. Composers structured their balletti and canzonette according to the same tonal principles across the repertoire, demonstrating that form and harmony were already becoming linked in sectional partsong by the 1590s. And the last four chapters have traced how these sectional partsongs were imbued with predictability from the smallest surface-level details of text-setting all the way to the formal level. This predictability fostered a listening strategy based on tonal expectation; composers in turn took advantage of tonal expectation to manipulate their formal structures.

Sixteenth-century musicians did not theorize about form—they wrote about genres and the formal conventions that characterized them, but could not yet imagine the emphasis on the organic relationships of parts and whole with which eighteenth-century theorists would become preoccupied.38 Indeed, musical form does not emerge as an abstract, theorizable entity until the eighteenth century, when new conceptions of musical time enabled theorists, composers, and listeners alike to attend temporal successions of musical events, and the emerging work concept directed philosophical attention to form as an aspect of creative compositional planning.39 In the Renaissance, such a conceptual frame for form

37. Ibid., 321.
39. Recent synoptic views of the emerging formal consciousness in the eighteenth century include Bonds, “Spatial Representation”; Berger, Bach’s Cycle, Mozart’s Arrow; Scott Burnham, “Form,” in
was inconceivable. Though our evidence for compositional process is limited, it seems that Renaissance composers typically constructed pieces phrase-by-phrase (the kind of “stringing together” that Dahlhaus imagines), an approach that is supported by Zarlino’s text-setting rules, which encourage composers to treat each line of text as a self-contained musical unit, and by the unique properties of notation in parts, which required composers to sketch out short phrases in score before transferring them to partbooks (if they worked with scores at all). Of course, composers did not ignore large-scale planning. They differentiated beginning, middle, and ending sections texturally and tonally, and sometimes planned out the proportions of larger works. In vocal genres, musical organization was determined by poetic form—a poem’s stanzaic structure and rhyme scheme provided a frame across which musical material was stretched. But composers and printers were committed not to formal plans but to generic distinctions, which had as much to do with poetic source, stylistic register, and contrapuntal style as formal design. Form, it seems, was either too self-evident to merit theoretical consideration, or wasn’t an interesting or important enough parameter to conceptualize independently. Yet, the balletto and canzonetta reveal that composers developed and manipulated diverse formal signifiers and that listeners had robust strategies for interpreting them. How can we account for this mismatch between form in theory and in practice?

To answer this question, let’s briefly revisit the two maps of Rome that I discussed at the beginning of this chapter—the Ptolemaic map, representative of late medieval city iconography, and the Braun and Hogenberg map, which draws on sixteenth-century developments in city imagery. In both of these maps, Rome’s landmarks are prominent—the city is defined by the Colosseum, the Pantheon, its obelisks, aqueducts, and churches. In the Ptolemaic map, these landmarks constitute the city, though their relative locations are approximate and their size arbitrary. In the Braun and Hogenberg map, on the other hand, the landmarks are subsumed within the broader urban and geographical landscape. They are still defining features of the city, but now we see them as part of a larger urban network. Their locations are more accurate, and, in contrast to the earlier image, the map could be used, in principle, to navigate the city. But the landmarks are not really drawn to scale—though the city view seems accurate to our eyes, Camocio has
magnified the most famous buildings to capture their importance in the urban, cultural, and social fabric, and to make the whole image easier to read.\textsuperscript{43}

As landmarks make city view images legible, tonal expectation, itself defined by harmonic landmarks, makes musical forms audible. Important harmonic cues—dominant and tonic cadences at formal and textual boundaries—are perceptually exaggerated to facilitate our navigation of the form. When we step away to view the form from a distance, they are more prominent than the harmonic infill that makes up the bulk of the partsong. Of course, such landmarks had long been an aspect of Renaissance composition. Different combinations of signature and final encouraged different secondary points of harmonic emphasis, but tonic and dominant were usually prominent cadential goals. But in the harmonic partsong repertoire, tonics and dominants came to occupy fixed positions, and thereby solidified as reliable markers by which to orient oneself in the work. If we want to account for the emergence of tonality in the Renaissance, we too should focus on the exaggerated tonal landmarks, not the paths that connect them. After all, dirt and cobblestone gave way to pavement long after a city's layout was fixed.

When we listen to pieces in familiar genres, our hearing is at once in-time and out-of-time: we revel in the moment as the music unfolds, but simultaneously compare our listening experience with a mental representation of the form. Our mental map of the form is atemporal and abstract, an imaginative space that we can inhabit in many ways—we can be in multiple places at once. We take pleasure in the interplay of our in-time and out-of-time formal knowledge. Because of our schematic understanding of the form, we know when we should be surprised, when we should feel satisfied, when we should sing along or dance or play air guitar. We construe the form in our act of interpreting it. Tonal forms are distinguished by the constitutive relationship between formal norms and harmonic frameworks, a relationship that is beginning to coalesce in sectional forms in the sixteenth century. The \textit{balletto} and \textit{canzonetta} do not require specific harmonic moves—the first half of a binary \textit{canzonetta} can (though rarely does) close with a cadence on any secondary key or can remain in the tonic, for instance. Yet, as we have seen, tonal expectation provided a new kind of listening strategy, one that enabled listeners to experience musical forms both in and out of time.

\textsuperscript{43} Maier, “A True Likeness,” 727–729; Frangenberg, “Chorographies of Florence,” 43.
Studies of the history of tonality tend to focus on the ways in which tonal and “modal” repertoires differ. But tonal repertoires have much in common with their sixteenth-century antecedents. The underlying materials of tonal music of the eighteenth century and contrapuntal music of the Renaissance—a diatonic pitch collection, triads, controlled dissonance treatment, the basic rhetoric of cadence and phrase, a background tonal structure based on fifth-related degrees—are mostly the same. As Hyer succinctly puts it, “important historical continuities underlie music before and after the emergence of musical modernism around 1600, and . . . the crucial difference between tonalité ancienne and tonalité moderne is one of emphasis rather than kind.”¹ Yet, we have few methods for studying what this difference in emphasis entails.² I have argued that tonality is an energetic dynamic that began to take advantage of the affordances of a diatonic system that had been around for centuries. Meter, phrase structure, and form all helped to channel the energies of dominant and tonic into a framework that supports tonal expectation.

In this book, I have suggested that close attention to a single moment in the development of tonality—a cross-section—can both help us understand its broader history and call into question some of the assumptions on which modern theories of tonality are built. In particular, I have argued that homophony played a critical role in reorienting compositional style in the sixteenth century. As an alternative to linear polyphony, homophony encouraged composers to develop new techniques for manipulating vertically oriented pitch materials and exploiting their relationships across increasingly broad time spans. At the same time, I have questioned the dependence of modern definitions of tonality on global pitch collection and local harmonic syntax, and instead argued for a more listener-oriented approach to tonality rooted in harmonic expectation.

However, my microscopic focus on the balletto and canzonetta does not preclude me from painting a broader picture of changing tonal style in the sixteenth century. One benefit of the cross-section approach that I advocate here is that it helps us isolate individual style features that contribute to tonality and consider their independent development. We have seen that features of homophony encourage particularly tonal modes of composition and enable certain kinds of tonal hearing; tracing the history of homophony through the sixteenth century allows us to view different instantiations of this process in other homophonic repertoires. What’s more, we can tie the origins of homophony itself to broader movements in sixteenth-century intellectual culture, which helps us to explain why the sixteenth century was such a fertile period for major changes in musical style.

In this chapter, I take a broad view of sixteenth-century homophony. I begin with frottola, a courtly Italian genre descended from an improvised tradition of poetic declamation that flourished in the first decade of the century. Then I turn to musique mesurée, a musical manifestation of a midcentury French philosophical movement. Finally, I close with the first homophonic Lutheran chorale settings from the final decades of the century. Though these repertoires represent one hundred years, three languages, and disparate political, cultural, religious, and philosophical contexts, they all identify homophony as a solution for their unique compositional challenges. The repertoires’ similarities are suggestive: tonality emerges not as a feature of a single turn-of-the-century repertoire, but rather as a mode of listening readily adaptable to any number of vertically oriented genres. I argue that tonality results not from different genres of musical experimentation, but rather from a series of intellectual and cultural innovations that transformed sixteenth-century artistic thought: humanism, the corresponding elevation of the vernacular, the Reformation, the invention of music printing. All of these movements, seemingly distant from the nuts and bolts of mode and counterpoint, encouraged a realignment of aesthetic values away from abstract polyphony and towards the hegemony of the text.

Music made to order: The frottola

Is Marco Cara’s frottola Oimè el cor oimè la testa (Petrucci I, no. 2) tonal? Edward Lowinsky and Carl Dahlhaus both ask this question in their studies of tonality’s sixteenth-century origins. Lowinsky says yes: he identifies the frottola as an “early illustration” of the “simultaneous conception of triadic harmony with the root in the bass.” Cara’s frottola, he argues, is “written over” a bass pattern resembling the

passamezzo antico; such bass patterns were the earliest seeds of the vertical thinking of tonality that contrasts with the linearity of polyphonic modality.\textsuperscript{5} Lowinsky identifies an “astonishingly early feeling for tonal logic” in Cara’s frottola (Example 7.1): the bass line emphasizes tonic, elaborates this tonic with dominant, and strengthens the cadential gesture with subdominant (mm. 11–12). By extension, Lowinsky suggests, Cara and the other frottolists intentionally developed “chordal progressions” rooted in harmony rather than “intervallic counterpoint.”\textsuperscript{6} But Lowinsky’s argument rests on two problematic assumptions: first, that the frottola’s bass line was composed first, and second, that sequences of triads that resemble eighteenth-century harmonic progressions were composed with a proto-tonal intention.

Dahlhaus unsurprisingly takes issue both with Lowinsky’s linear/vertical binary and his invocation of the passamezzo antico for Cara’s frottola.\textsuperscript{7} He criticizes Lowinsky’s reading of the repertoire not for being incorrect, but rather for being incomplete. Ostinato bass patterns like the passamezzo antico are not signs of vertical thinking—on the contrary, they emerge when composers add a lower voice to a discant–tenor framework. The innovation of the frottola, for Dahlhaus, is its combination of the techniques of discant–tenor composition with those of discant–bass composition. That is, in the frottola the principles of two-voice composition gradually merge with and are replaced by those of four-voice composition, wherein all voices are conceived simultaneously as equal partners in a framework that may be either polyphonic or chordal.\textsuperscript{8} At the same time, though Dahlhaus rejects a bass-first compositional process, he notes that the frottola still supports an essentially vertical compositional model.

Though Dahlhaus’s theory accommodates Lowinsky’s, the two thinkers assess the frottola’s influence differently. Lowinsky believes that the frottola marks the beginning of vertical thinking that characterizes secular vernacular song and dance music throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Dahlhaus, on the other hand, argues that the simultaneous conception of voices leads not to triadic harmony, but rather to polyphony. That is, the frottola initiates “the transition from the framework technique—the method of drafting a two-voice counterpoint and then supplementing it with added voices—to a simultaneous conception of all the voices.”\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 7–9.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{8} Sabine Meine makes a similar argument in Die Frottola: Musik, Diskurs und Spiel an Italienischen Höfen, 1500–1530 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 297–300.
\textsuperscript{9} Dahlhaus, Studies on the Origin of Harmonic Tonality, 287. Dahlhaus’s argument supports the then-prevailing narrative, promulgated by Alfred Einstein, that the frottola evolved into the polyphonic madrigal, a narrative that James Haar and Iain Fenlon have more recently called into question. See Iain Fenlon and James Haar, The Italian Madrigal in the Early Sixteenth Century: Sources and Interpretation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 3–14; James Haar, Essays on Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350–1600 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
Example 7.1 Cara, *Oimè el cor oimè la testa* (Petrucci I, no. 2). Read once through with no repeats (the *ripresa* + refrain), then read the repeats the second time (the *stanza* + refrain).

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<td><img src="image3" alt="Musical notation" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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V:PAC

i:PAC
Lowinsky accounts for the harmony and Dahlhaus the counterpoint of Cara’s frottola, though ultimately Dahlhaus reveals that their analyses are compatible. But, as I have argued throughout this book, I believe that their myopic focus on pitch structure has distracted them from the rhetorical features that distinguish the frottola from other contemporary genres. For instance, *Oimè el cor* features a regular three-measure phrase rhythm that arises from its schematic text-setting pattern. The text interacts in a consistent way with the modular musical form: Cara sets the *xyyx* *ripresa* with an ABBC form (mm. 1–12), treating the *y* lines analogously (mm. 4–6 = mm. 7–9). The refrain (mm. 13–21) echoes the first two lines of the *ripresa* (yielding an ABBC ABʹ structure, schematized in Figure 7.1). Cara manipulates the music at the end of the refrain to produce closure: he shortens the B phrase by two beats and elides it into a more conclusive coda, breaking the three-measure phrase rhythm.

Cara packs this concise frottola with melodic and harmonic rhetoric that encourages listeners to link phrase units together. For instance, the AB units, mm. 1–6, trace an octave descent from 5 to 2, and then down to 5 below; this melodic gesture corresponds with a weak arrival on v (or V depending on the *ficta*) followed...
by a clearly articulated V:PAC. (Lowinsky’s invocation of the passamezzo antico does not account for tonicizations of V, which are such a crucial part of this frottola’s harmonic and rhetorical vocabulary.) The second phrase pair of course repeats this V:PAC, which here prepares a i:PAC. The C phrase (mm. 10–12) contrasts with the preceding material, departing from the schematic rhythm and lingering on the major III and VII harmonies in a confident Romanesca-like descent from 5 to 1. With its i:PAC, the C phrase responds to the harmonic preparation of both instantiations of the B phrase; its harmonic descent recalls the A phrase and recomposes it to achieve the frottola’s first tonic cadence. The refrain reproduces this entire process in miniature: A pairs with a reduced B, followed by an extended coda that riffs on B while building on the harmonic rhetoric of the final cadence from C.

The phrase structure is more complicated in the stanza, which reuses the music from the four-line phrase for the eight-line verse. Cara’s repeat scheme, typical of a barzelletta with an eight-line stanza, ensures that rhyming lines correspond to
identical musical material. Yet, these repetitions do not wholly align with our initial parsing of the phrases into two measure groups, nor do they maintain strictly the formal divide between the ripresa/stanza and the refrain.

Cara’s frottola is constructed from musical modules that are applied to a highly regulated poetic form. The repeat scheme alters the relationships between the modules; however, the simple harmonic patterns, repetitive rhythms, and stepwise melodies mostly accommodate these irregularities. The phrase endings are limited to arrivals on i and V, which relate hierarchically. The refrain exists outside of the twelve-measure structure of the ripresa and the stanza (with the exception of the porous boundary between the last line of the stanza and the first line of the refrain). Consequently, Cara uses the refrain to reorient the listener and performer; the coda’s interruption of the phrase rhythm and appropriation of earlier harmonic and melodic patterns strongly asserts both tonal and rhetorical closure.

Dahlhaus and Lowinsky’s arguments provide a helpful illustration of why the notion of “harmonic tonality” can be so treacherous. Lowinsky’s invocation of ostinato patterns and Dahlhaus’s exploration of discant–tenor counterpoint both account for Cara’s frottola successfully and indeed the two approaches are compatible, as Dahlhaus astutely observes. The rapport between their readings reflects the slipperiness of pitch structure in the sixteenth century. Oimè el cor admits multiple interpretations because the Guidonian diatonic pitch collection preconditions both of them. The acoustic properties of consonance, the overdetermined triad, the cultural history of the fluctuation of imperfection and perfection—these and other forces combine to yield a background pitch collection that is just not that different from the so-called tonal system, especially in the makeup and deployment of its raw pitch content. Cara’s frottola is modal or tonal or something in between depending on the lens through which we view it, or the narrative in which we place it. Our insistence on pitch will lead us back perpetually into the rabbit hole that Dahlhaus navigates with such nuance: Which came first, the counterpoint or the harmony? In the frottola, there is good evidence for both sides, suggesting that, per Dahlhaus, the answer is a bit of both, or that the question is not the right one. (Indeed, Dahlhaus deftly circumvents this minefield when he points out that counterpoint is a technical term, harmony a philosophical one that “less denotes than interprets musical relationships.”)

Yet what if the parameter that imparts a sense of tonality to Cara’s frottola is not its pitch content, but rather the way Cara organizes this pitch content in time and space?

**Music and poetry in the Este court**

Several letters circulating among composers, poets, and courtiers capture the vibrant role that musical settings of courtly poetry played in Isabella d’Este’s court.

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10. The ripresa should not include the internal repeats, which are notated for the stanzas only. See William F. Prizer, “Performance Practices in the Frottola: An Introduction to the Repertory of Early 16th-Century Italian Solo Secular Song with Suggestions for the Use of Instruments on the Other Lines,” _Early Music_ 3, no. 3 (1975): 228.

in the first decades of the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{12} The poet Galeotto del Carretto, a regular correspondent of Este’s, routinely sent her verses and asked her to send them to composers for musical settings. One letter, from January 14, 1497, details such an exchange:

Your Ladyship recalls having promised me on my departure from Mantua to send me the settings by Tromboncino of some of my barzellette. Since I never received them, I am asking you to send them to me by the courier of our Lord [of Monferrato]. . . . I should also like to have a new melodic scheme for capitoli, if possible.\textsuperscript{13}

Carretto’s letter indicates that Este was the intermediary between the poet and the composer, Bartolomeo Tromboncino, who might either compose a setting for a given poem (as with Carretto’s barzellette) or provide a ready-made setting that could accommodate any poem in a given form (such as the capitolo setting that Carretto requests). Another poet, Niccolo da Coreggio, provides further insight into this practice in a letter dated August 23, 1504:

As for the canzone of Petrarch, which Your Excellency wishes me to select to be set to music, I have chosen one of those that I esteem most. . . . In order that Your Excellency may appreciate still more this predilection of mine, I am sending a canzone of my own of the same structure, so that the music of Petrarch’s canzone may be used also for mine, if this meets with Your Excellency’s approval. And I am sending not only this but still another, with the motif of a reconciliation after a lovers’ quarrel, according to the scheme of another of Petrarch’s canzoni.\textsuperscript{14}

According to Coreggio’s testimony, musicians might perform any number of poems with a single musical setting, which was defined primarily by the poetic form it was designed to accommodate. These letters mark the frottola as a descendant of earlier oral traditions, where improvvisatori declaimed poetry to music while accompanying themselves on the lute. This widespread fifteenth-century performance practice involved pairing stock musical phrases with poems in a variety of styles and registers, and it was attractive to both popular and aristocratic audiences.\textsuperscript{15} Under Este’s patronage, the improvised tradition of

\begin{enumerate}
\item[13.] Trans. in Einstein, \textit{The Italian Madrigal}, 1:45–46.
\item[14.] Ibid., 1:104.
\end{enumerate}
musical declamation of Italian poetic formes fixes was newly inscribed as a literate genre, which has survived in several manuscript sources and a number of prints, most notably Petrucci’s eleven volumes of frottole published between 1504 and 1514.\footnote{Petrucci’s volumes are my sources for this study; the tenth does not survive and I have been unable to locate a modern edition of the fifth. Digital images of volumes 1–9 are accessible on the Internet.}

Though Petrucci set sacred polyphony in partbooks, he printed the frottola repertoire in an unusual choirbook format (Figure 7.2). Petrucci’s prints are very small (and the Antico prints that followed them smaller still!), and it would have been impractical but not impossible for four singers to perform from them. Instead, it is likely that these works were meant to be performed as solo songs with lute accompaniment, like their improvised antecedents. An April 2, 1535, letter that was probably from Tromboncino to music theorist Giovanni del Lago confirms that frottole were performed in several guises:

You ask of me a transcript of “Se la mia morte brami;” and I send it to you with much pleasure, noting that I have written it only to an accompaniment by the lute, that is, in three parts and without alto. For this reason, if it were to be sung a cappella, an alto would have to be added. Had there been no such hurry, I should have arranged it in four parts and so that one part would not interfere with any of the others, and on my return to Venice, at the beginning of May, on a suitable occasion, I propose to write one of this sort as proof that I always have been, and will be, at your service.\footnote{Trans. in Einstein, \textit{The Italian Madrigal}, 1:48. Oimè el cor appears in manuscript sources without the tenor voice, just as this letter describes. See Prizer, “The Frottola and the Unwritten Tradition,” 18.}

The music suggests that, despite the books’ formats, some frottole were probably sung by four voices, others performed monodically, and still others treated more flexibly. While some frottole feature active, unsingable inner voices, others are strictly homophonic throughout and could easily accommodate group singing. Indeed, Antico’s \textit{Canzoni nove con alcune scelte} (Rome, 1510) includes a woodcut that depicts four men singing from a single choirbook.\footnote{The image is reproduced and discussed in Harrán and Chater, “Frottola,” §4.} Nevertheless, the impractical choirbook format is puzzling. Taruskin suggests that choirbooks were simply the most saleable way of marketing frottole, because they were adaptable (certainly a group of singers could write out their parts by hand, and well-sighted youths might be able to crowd around a single copy).\footnote{Richard Taruskin, \textit{The Oxford History of Western Music}, 5 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1:697. See also discussion of the choirbook format in Hiroyuki Minamino, “Chicken or Egg: Frottola ‘Arrangements’ for Voice and Lute,” \textit{The Lute: The Journal of the Lute Society} 38 (1998): 43–45.} Einstein provocatively suggests that the frottola prints were not intended for practical use at all; rather, they may have simply preserved the works in the manner of a poetry anthology. Indeed, he treats frottole as mere musical ephemera meant to serve the expressive needs of Este’s court; he calls them, “a sort of erotic arsenal, a guide to
Figure 7.2 Cara, “Oimè el cor oimè la testa” in Petrucci, Frottole libro primo (1504, no. 2). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Rar. 878-1/9#1, sig. Aii – Aiii r, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00082307-7.
improvisation.” I admit, having seen one of Petrucci’s frottola prints in person, I am skeptical that more than one or two singers could use it at a time—the music and text is miniscule, and I struggled to read it from more than a foot or so away with the benefit of both corrective lenses and electric illumination (not to mention stares from fellow library patrons). Of the myriad sixteenth-century sources I’ve worked with, Petrucci’s frottola prints feel most like a “study score” and least like a practical performing edition.

The frottola is a rich, self-contained repertoire of partsongs that are newly accessible both in modern editions and via digital images of the original sources, and consequently they are ripe for music theoretical inquiry. I am going to focus what remains of my modest discussion on only three topics, which have implications for tonal expectation: text-setting, phrase structure, and repeat structure.

*Tonal expectation and the improvisational matrix*

Frottola is a catch-all term like madrigal or partsong; Petrucci’s prints anthologize several musico-poetic genres. The most prevalent poetic form in Petrucci’s frottola prints is the barzelletta, which I will focus on here. Barzelletta poems feature eight-syllable lines in a trochaic meter. As in Oimè el cor, a barzelletta consists of a four-line ripresa and one or more 6- or 8-line stanzas; both the ripresa and the stanza are followed by a refrain based on all or part of the ripresa. The typical rhyme schemes are:

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xyyx xy ababbx xy bcbcx xy . . . or xyyx xy ababbcxx xy dedeffx xy . . .
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The stanza often reuses the melodic material from the ripresa (as in Oimè el cor); about 20 percent of the time the stanza sets new musical material. Most barzellette use one of two melodic models: ABBC AB+coda (as in Oimè el cor) or ABCD AB+coda, yielding, normatively, one of the two schemes shown in Figure 7.3. As William Prizer argues, these schemes have two features that make them particularly valuable for improvised performance of memorized poetry: simplicity and “patterned redundancy.” Prizer describes the barzelletta and other frottola settings as “mnemonic forms”: “since these repetitions are linked to the rhyme scheme of the poem, they serve both to reduce the number of phrases the performer must learn and to provide a kind of mnemonic key through which a given melody is

22. About 40 percent of the pieces in Petrucci’s frottola prints (excluding Books 5 and 11) are barzellette. For a summary of each of the frottola’s poetic forms and the musical structures associated with them, see Prizer, “Performance Practices in the Frottola,” 228.
associated with a given line.”

As the oral tradition became a notated one, barzelletta settings gradually increased in complexity, but the underlying schematic framework remained unaltered.

Because the barzelletta was a vehicle for declaiming poetry, its composers developed a handful of simple, syllabic text-setting schemas. Four conditions combine to encourage a default three-measure schema (as in Oimè el cor): eight-syllable lines, a two-to-one ratio of long and short notes, an overwhelming preference for imperfect (duple) mensuration, and a preference for placing the accented penultimate syllable of each line on a strong beat. In contrast to the single schema that accommodates settenari piani, the trochaic ottonario permits several variations on the basic model (𝅗𝅥𝅥 | 𝅗𝅥𝅥 | 𝅗𝅥), including a jaunty hemiola pattern (𝅗𝅥𝅥 | 𝅗𝅥𝅥 | 𝅗𝅥), which is sometimes barred to show triple groupings (𝅗𝅥𝅥 | 𝅗𝅥 | 𝅗𝅥). The swung rhythm and the potential for variation within the broader schema help to mitigate the singsong quality of the trochaic meter. In contrast to the strictly syllabic text-setting we’ve seen in the balletto, barzelletta melodies use melismas and introduce the possibility of broken elisions. Antonio Caprioli’s Quella bella e biancha mano (Petrucci VIII, no. 16) is typically flexible, with a range of eight to thirteen melodic notes per line (Example 7.2). Because the melody can accommodate several approaches to underlay, a robust understanding of the underlying rhythmic schema is critical for a successful impromptu performance of a new poem (the form is schematized in Figure 7.4).

Caprioli adheres to three-measure phrase rhythm for most of his setting, but he slips from this rhythmic default for the fourth phrase (mm. 10–13). Barzelletta composers frequently expand the phrase that closes the ripresa to impart a strong sense of finality at this formal boundary—I call this the 3+4 technique. The extra measure emphasizes the section-ending cadence, which is the culmination of the ripresa’s I–V | V–I trajectory. Caprioli’s melody highlights the final cadence by contrasting the plagal ambitus of the third phrase (mm. 7–9 move from 3 down to 5) with a descent through the authentic ambitus (5–1); the bassus descends in parallel thirds with the cantus, the harmonic rhythm slows at the cadence, and the cantus revels in an ornamented suspension before gliding into the final. The expanded phrase rhythm permits not the penultimate but the final syllable to fall

Figure 7.3 Rhyme schemes and musical forms in the frottola.

on the strong beat (the breve *initium*), and the formal boundary is marked by the first breve in the setting. (Cara may have avoided the 3+4 technique in *Oimè el cor* because the final cadence in the *riprosa* is different from that of the stanza—the eight-line stanza in Cara’s setting instead introduces some formal slippage between stanza and refrain.) The coda that closes each refrain performs the same function.
Many though certainly not all *barzellette* share the consistent three-measure phrase rhythm and regular harmonic articulation that characterize *Oimè el cor* and *Quella bella*. These features support a binary grouping structure. The four-line *ripresa* further encourages this hearing, as it groups two-phrase pairs into larger groups of four phrases, which culminate in a strong cadence and complete the quatrain’s rhyme scheme. Many composers reinforce this grouping structure with harmonic cues: when they pair the *xyyx* rhyme scheme with an ABBC melody, the resulting phrases often trace a I–V | V–I trajectory, as in *Oimè el cor* (*Quella bella* establishes the same harmonic plan without repeating the B phrase). Indeed, Cara’s dynamic *ripresa* is strongly hypotactic: its harmonic trajectory, melodic repetition, and strong drive toward the final cadence all encourage us to hear the twelve-measure phrase as an action–reaction pair.

However, the *barzelletta*’s unique repeat structure—its own testament to the form’s roots in mnemonic improvisatory techniques—complicates these trajectories. In the improvised tradition of poetic declamation, performers set rhyming lines with analogous musical material. The *xyyx* *ripresa*, for instance, encourages an ABBC setting. However, in an ABBC *ripresa* the B phrase unit both concludes the first six-measure phrase and initiates the second phrase. Its dual

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**Example 7.2 Continued.**

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Example 7.2 (cont.)

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<th>D’ (coda)</th>
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<td>19</td>
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functionality compromises its capacity to serve as either the first or the second half of an action–reaction phrase pair. In *Oimè el cor*, the B unit’s redundancy is an asset: the dominant arrival that closes the unit encourages expectation for a cadence on the A final at both the six-measure (m. 9 → m. 12) and the twelve-measure level (m. 6 → m. 12). But when the B unit does not end with a dominant arrival, its harmonic and tonal role is more complicated. For instance, in Nicolò Pifaro’s *Fora son d’ogni speranza*, the B unit completes a V–I trajectory in mm. 1–5; subsequently, however, the strong cadence on the final that closes the B unit pairs poorly with the C unit, which arrives weakly on the final (mm. 6–11) (Example 7.3). Pifaro is in a bind: closing the C unit with another strong cadence to the final might be too repetitive; instead, he adds an extra D phrase that returns to V and resolves the *ripresa* with an expansive coda.

Repetition is a virtue in the *balletto* repertoire but a liability in the frottola. In the *balletto*, repetition helps listeners to identify the phrase and formal boundaries, enabling them to assess the relationships between these larger units. Consequently, the *balletto* repeat scheme trains listeners to attend to larger musical chunks and make comparisons between harmonic and melodic events across broader time spans. The same technique has a different purpose and effect in the frottola. Motivated by the pragmatic demands of accommodating texts of different
lengths to a single melodic framework, frottola repetition obscures rather than illuminates formal and phrase structure. Repetition within stanzas breaks up perceived musical units rather than reinforcing them. Composers deploy repetition irregularly, and repeated units are not of uniform size. Consequently, whereas balletto repeat structure clarifies the form and orients the listener within the larger
structure, frottola repeat structure obfuscates the form and disorients the listener. Nevertheless, the refrain attempts to ameliorate the stanza’s caprice: the return to the opening music and the opening text reorients the listener within the form. The stanza-ending rhyme and the determined coda reinforce the listener’s sense of place unambiguously.
The modular, flexible, agglutinating phrases of the barzelletta exemplify paratactic phrase construction, which I discussed in Chapter 4. Paratactic construction does not exclude the possibility of expectation; we have seen that the regular phrase rhythm, periodic harmonic articulation, and goal-directed melody and harmony in Oimè el cor resembles the hypotactic structure characteristic of many balletti. Ultimately, the constantly shifting groupings direct attention away from small-scale harmonic and melodic trajectories towards broader formal trajectories. Series of cadences to the dominant, for instance, all point towards a strong final cadence that closes the ripresa. The 3+4 technique and the coda built into the barzelletta refrain are both symptomatic of paratactic construction. In the absence of reliable melodic and harmonic rhetoric (since this rhetoric can be regrouped at any time), composers rely on expanded phrase rhythm and lingering, unambiguous cadential suspensions to signal closure.

Richard Taruskin describes the frottola as “not so much a song as a kind of matrix for song-making; a melodic/harmonic mold into which countless poems could be poured.” Taruskin’s formulation somewhat undersells frottola composers—in their time, they ranked above the itinerant improvvisatori but below more traditional professional composers, and the most well-known frottolists, Marco Cara and Bartolomeo Tromboncino, developed a sophisticated musical language for the genre. But Taruskin’s image helpfully captures what happens when a non-notated genre is converted to a notated one. In the barzelletta, the organizing principles we expect—melody, phrase structure, cadence, form—play a secondary role; instead, the genre’s framework is mnemonic, schematic. The barzelletta’s logic is governed by the text, not the music. And what a text! Composers may choose to match the internal rhyme in the xyyx ripresa with analogous music, or they may ignore this repetition. They must balance the four-line ripresa with the longer stanza. They must accommodate the concatenating rhyme that connects the stanza’s piedi (abab) to its volta (bx or bccx) as well as the return of the x rhyme that closes the stanza. They have to mark the refrain as a closing module even while it repurposes music that we’ve heard before. It can be difficult to explain the musical logic of the barzelletta because the logic is not musical. Instead, listener expectation is redirected to the largest formal levels: the 3+4 technique and the adamant final coda alert us to the formal boundaries. Composers prepare these boundaries harmonically in a general way—perhaps with frequent cadences to the dominant—but they are difficult to predict.

25. Fenlon and Haar, The Italian Madrigal in the Early Sixteenth Century, 11. Though Einstein and other early commentators maligned the quality of both frottola verse and music, more recent assessments have demonstrated that many frottole display a high degree of artistry; see, for instance, Prizer, Courtly Pastimes, 105–166.
Humanism in theory and practice: Musique mesurée

Claude Le Jeune’s *Le Printemps* (1603) opens with a “Preface sur la musique mesurée” that makes some remarkable claims:

The ancients who discussed music divided it into two parts: harmony and rhythm. The first consisted in the proportional assembly of low and high sounds, the other of short and long durations. For them, harmony was so poorly understood that they used only consonances of an octave, fifth, and fourth: from which they would compose a kind of chord on the Lyre, to which they sang their verses. Rhythm, by contrast, was brought into such perfection by them that they created marvelous effects with it, moving the souls of men to whatever passions they desired: those which we have seen portrayed in the fables of Orpheus and Amphion, who softened the feral disposition of the most savage beasts and enlivened the woods and the stones until they moved themselves to where they were desired. Since that time, such rhythm has been so neglected that it is completely lost, while for the last two hundred years harmony has been carefully studied until it was rendered perfect, capable of beautiful and great effects, but not at all like those recounted in antiquity. . . . But no one was found to remedy this until Claude Le Jeune, who is the first person emboldened to pull back suffering rhythm from the tomb where it lay for so long prostrate, to pair it with harmony. This he has done with such art and such enthusiasm that all at once he brought our music to the height of perfection . . . making it not just the equal of that of the ancients, but far more excellent, and more capable of beautiful effects, such that he makes the body listen and join together with the soul, where until hearing our music they had been separate. Because only harmony, with its agreeable consonances, can arrest the most subtle spirits in true admiration: but rhythm comes to enliven them, and can enliven as well indeed animate, move, lead wherever it pleases, by the soft force of its measured movements, any soul, however rough and coarse it may be.26

Le Jeune’s volume claims miraculous effects for *musique mesurée*, effects that were carefully crafted in the laboratory conditions of Jean-Antoine de Baïf’s Académie de Poésie et de Musique three decades before the posthumous publication of *Le Printemps*.27 As the preface recounts, French humanists took literally ancient


claims that music could purify the soul and elevate human knowledge and consciousness. The Pléiade, a group of Parisian poets and intellectuals active from the late 1540s, believed that ancient music achieved these effects through the perfect union of poetry, which had the power of persuasive rhetoric, and music, which had the power to affect emotions. Pierre de Ronsard outlines the principles of this synergy in his *Abbregé de l’art poétique français*: “Poetry, without instruments, or without the grace of a solo voice or several voices, is not at all agreeable; nor are instruments, without being enlivened by the melody of a pleasing voice.” Ronsard’s colleague Pontus de Tyard concurs: “the intention of music seems to be to give a tune to words, so that anyone hearing it will have his passions roused and will himself be drawn to the poet’s affection.” Both poets are explicit that though poetry and music ought to collaborate, they are not equal partners—music must support but not distract from poetry, allowing the rhetoric and affect of the text to reach the listener in its purest form.

Baïf’s Académie provided an ideal outlet for testing the Pléiade’s theories. Baïf was a member of the Pléiade, and in the late 1560s he began to experiment with a new style of poetry and song in collaboration with musician Joachim Thibault de Courville. The private meetings of intellectuals that Baïf hosted in his lavish home eventually attracted royal attention, and in 1570 Charles IX granted the group official Letters Patent, declaring them the Académie de Poésie et de Musique. The Académie’s charter outlines two aims: to unite text and music, and, thereby, to revive music’s ancient effects. In Baïf, the Pléiade found a thinker with a concrete plan to translate their poetic ideals into musical reality, and with the Académie they gained unprecedented royal patronage that enabled them to test their musical experiments on real auditeurs, assess their effects, and perfect their methods.


daily. Every Sunday, the musicians performed a two-hour concert for a select group of auditeurs, erudite members who paid for the privilege of sitting in enforced silent contemplation of the experimental music. No music was to be removed from the premises, nothing could be copied or distributed, and new auditeurs were admitted only with the approval of the entire group. Baïf was adamant that musique mesurée remain under lock and key until it could be perfected and its moral effects could be proved. The stakes could not have been higher: he believed that, executed properly, musique mesurée could restore moral discipline to France. The Letters Patent outline this aim: “It is critically important for the morals of a city’s citizens that the current and practiced music of a country be constrained by certain laws. . . . Where the music is disorderly, there morals are naturally depraved, and where it is well ordered, there we find upstanding men.”

Many of Baïf’s vers mesurés survive in a manuscript housed at the Bibliothèque nationale de France; though the manuscript is probably not in Baïf’s hand, it maintains his idiosyncratic orthography. Figure 7.5 reproduces Vous me tuez si doucement. The poem is typical of Baïf’s Chansonettes, which provided a wealth of material for Académie composers, including Claude Le Jeune and Jacques Mauduit. With his vers mesurés, Baïf introduced three innovations in poetic style: his poems are in French, they are devised according to his own reconstruction of an ancient poetic meter, and they are unrhymed.

Like their contemporaries in the Florentine Camerata, the Pléiade and subsequently the Académie aimed to reproduce the effects of ancient music not in Greek and Latin, but rather in the vernacular, which they hoped to ennoble for artistic and intellectual expression. Onto his French poetry Baïf mapped the poetic meters of ancient verse: the ˘ and ˘ markings in his manuscript distinguish between the short and long durations described in Le Jeune’s preface. Of course, the Académie poets here encountered a major linguistic obstacle: Greek and Latin have syllable quantity, whereas French does not. Baïf and his colleagues understood this linguistic mismatch, but they hoped to impose quantity on French to recreate the affective power of ancient poetry. Critically, for Baïf, music provided an ideal outlet for quantitative verse; by developing an orthographic system that regulated the length of each syllable, Baïf shifted the rhythmic compositional burden away from the composer and onto the poet, who, in Baïf’s view, should have as much control over the music as possible.

34. F-Pn MS Fr. 19140. In addition to a digital copy available on Gallica, the manuscript is available in two modern editions with different methodological approaches: Barbara Anne Terry, The Chansonnettes en vers mesurés of Jean-Antoine de Baïf: A Critical Edition (Birmingham: Birmingham Printing Company, 1966); Jean-Antoine de Baïf, Chansonnettes, ed. G. C. Bird (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1964).
Baïf, “Vous me tuez si doucement” from Chansonnets. Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Fr. 19140, fol. 314r.
Mauduit’s setting of *Vous me tuez si doucement* illustrates how the Académie translated Baïf’s *vers mesurés* into music (Example 7.4). Mauduit matches Baïf’s longs and shorts with minims and semiminims and adheres to Baïf’s poetic meter religiously. The resulting setting is homophonic—ensuring comprehensibility of the text—and syllabic—following the dictates of Baïf’s interpretation of ancient meter. Mauduit’s loyalty to Baïf’s rhythmic schema overrides mensural concerns: his setting freely alternates groupings of two and three semiminims. Consequently, the principle unit in a *musique mesurée* setting is not the semibreve grouping but the phrase, demarcated in Mauduit’s *air* by bar lines.

37. Baïf hoped to perfect *musique mesurée* before setting it loose upon the French public, so no *musique mesurée* was published during the Académie’s brief tenure. Mauduit’s 1586 collection of *Chansonettes mesurées* and Le Jeune’s *Le Printemps* are the most substantial sources of secular *musique mesurée* that can definitely be traced to the Académie—both men were medallion-carrying members—but scattered *airs mesurés* appear in collections by Fabrice Caietain (1578), Guillaume Tessier (1582), and Nicolas de la Grotte (1583). In addition, there’s much more work to be done on the measured psalms from Baïf’s two psalters, both preserved in the same manuscript as the *Chansonettes*; Le Jeune (1606) and Eustache du Caurroy (1610) both published large quantities of *psaumes mesurés*.

38. Most examples of *musique mesurée* separate phrases with either bar lines or semiminim rests. Bar lines seem to be a later development—the earliest collection I know of with bar lines is Mauduit’s

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Vous me tuez si doucement,
Avecque tourmans tant benins,
Que ne scay chose de douceur
Plus douce qu’est ma douce mort.

S’il faut mourir, mouron d’amour.

Si glorieux je suis d’aymer,
Et tant satisfait, tant heureux,
Que je priz’ un de mes ennuis
Cent mille biens d’un autre main.

S’il faut mourir, mouron d’amour.

Puis que si doucement je meurs,
Avecque tourmans tant benins,
Que ne scay chose de douceur
Plus douce qu’est ma douce mort.

S’il faut mourir, mouron d’amour.

*Figure 7.5b* Baïf, “Vous me tuez si doucement,” as set by Mauduit (1586, no. 1).
in length from twelve to fifteen semiminim beats, and resist interpretation according to a minim or semibreve tactus. Each line has a unique rhythmic scheme and, as a result, a distinctive character: the first phrase, for instance, has a lilting 2+2+3+3+2, while the fourth phrase falls into a triple-inflected iambic pattern.\footnote{39} Though the mesuré rhythms violate the most basic principles of mensuration, they did not faze contemporary musicians. Antoine Parran, one of the first French theorists outside of the Académie to describe musique mesurée, explains the procedure for performing these airs: “the beat, or common movement, is not taken at all according to a regular meter [mesure], but one beats more or less on each

1586 print. Some of Le Jeune's chansons appear both ways: in Le Printemps (1603) phrases are separated with rests and sometimes supplemented with bar lines, whereas in airs à III. IV. V. et VI parties (Paris: Pierre Ballard, 1608) the rests are eliminated in favor of consistent bar lines. Though both collections were published posthumously, this evidence indicates that the bars may have been interpreted as breath marks or rests. See His, “Air mesuré et air de cour,” 158.

39. Baïf does not always approach his texts in this way. His poems may have either regular or varied line lengths, and he may deploy either regular or varied poetic meter throughout a poem.
note, and it is called musique d'air.\textsuperscript{40} Settings of vers mesurés are as diverse as the composers who wrote them—not every composer strictly maintains the two-to-one long-to-short ratio, for instance—but they inevitably prioritize the declamation of the flexible poetic meter over any fealty to an imagined background mensural grid.

But French musicians were very concerned about the lack of end rhymes. Baïf’s vers mesurés strictly followed the model of ancient verse, eschewing end rhyme altogether. In its place, Baïf makes ample use of assonance and other rhyming strategies.\textsuperscript{41} For instance, in Vous me tuez si doucement the vowel that Baïf transcribes as “8” resounds nine times in the first stanza:

\begin{quote}
Vous me tuez si doucement,
Avecque tourmans tant benins,
Que ne scay chose de douceur
Plus douce qu'est ma douce mort.
S'il faut mourir, mouron d'amour.
\end{quote}

These concessions to rhyme were not sufficient for Baïf’s contemporaries, however. Marin Mersenne, a close friend of Mauduit and ardent supporter of the then-defunct musique mesurée, explained the French predicament: “Rhymed verse has so accustomed our ears to the cadence of rhyme that they do not receive any pleasure from vers mesurés if and when they are not rhymed.”\textsuperscript{42} Indeed, rhyme was so indispensible that only five years after the publication of Le Printemps, Claude Le Jeune’s sister republished much of the collection with altered, rhyming texts in two volumes of \textit{Airs à III. IV. V & VI parties} (Paris: Paul Ballard, 1608).\textsuperscript{43} Though rhymed verse was counter to Baïf’s ideals, it proved much more popular than its unrhymed counterpart, and a new wave of rhyming \textit{airs} inspired by (but not strictly conforming to the principles of) musique mesurée began to flow from the presses. Surely Baïf would have lamented this development—the Académie’s charter reveals that he was obsessively controlling of the mesuré style, and he deplored the thought that a less-than-perfect form of musique mesurée might make its way to public ears.

\textbf{The laws of another measure}

In Vous me tuez, Baïf’s metrical design impacts Mauduit’s melodic and harmonic rhetoric, phrase structure, and even musical form. Though each line has the same number of syllables, Baïf chooses a flexible, shifting metrical scheme that imparts

\textsuperscript{40} Antoine Parran, \textit{Traité de la Musique} (Paris: Ballard, 1639), 85.
\textsuperscript{43} Vignes documents the changing perceptions of rhymed verse in “Brève histoire.” Baïf himself had written a psalter in rhymed vers mesurés, perhaps to sway the pope otherwise unconvinced by his Catholic argument in favor of his vernacular psalter.
a distinctive character to each line. To reinforce this rhythmic diversity, Mauduit, Baïf’s close collaborator, develops a unique melodic and harmonic paradigm for each line. As a result, the musical setting is unpredictable: without end rhyme, rhythmic parallelism, and the melodic and harmonic parallelism that rhythm supports, the air flits temperamentally from phrase to phrase. To compensate for the air’s changeability, Mauduit imbues each phrase with rhetoric that clarifies its formal position. The poem opens with a distinctive dactylic rhythm, which Mauduit sets with an assertive melodic motive (\(\hat{1}-\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}\)). This gesture initiates an arpeggiated ascent to \(\hat{5}\); the air’s final phrase responds in kind with a stepwise \(\hat{5}\) to \(\hat{1}\) descent to an authentic cadence. While Mauduit grounds the outer phrases in an F tonality, he traverses more distant harmonic terrain for the internal phrases, reflecting their unstable poetic meter. Each phrase culminates on a different local dominant harmony; the harmonic plan descends slowly by fifths from D back down to F. However, each phrase-ending dominant relates backward to events earlier in the phrase, not forward to the next cadence. Mauduit does not create a series of expectations; rather, he seals off each phrase before moving to a new, unrelated harmony to start the next gesture. But, for the fourth phrase, Mauduit redirects the typical phrase-ending melodic cadence: instead, he ascends to a tonicized \(\hat{5}\), a gesture that closes the air’s developmental space and prepares the final cadence. The last phrase—a lyric-invariant rechant (or refrain)—is strongly goal-directed. The confident alliterative swing of “S’il faut mourir, mouron d’amour” and the melody’s efficient descent complement the line’s epigrammatic concision.

While Baïf deliberately undermines rhythmic regularity in Vous me tuez, poets of vers mesurés often chose regular poetic meters, which they manipulated to demarcate poetic form. In his 1586 collection, Mauduit follows Vous me tuez with a more regular poem, Come le fenix je suis. The air’s chant (verse) consists of three phrases, each of which opens with a \(\hat{5}\) gesture (Example 7.5). Mauduit highlights the rhythmic head motive with melodic and harmonic parallelism in the first two phrases—he opens both with a descending gesture that prolongs a single harmony. As in Vous me tuez, Mauduit inverts this pattern for the third phrase, a move that concludes the chant’s I–V–I harmonic trajectory. The poet chooses a lilting trochaic pattern to set a thrice-repeated command: “tuë, tuë, tuë moy.” Mauduit matches the speaker’s entreaty with a desperate ascending sequence that earnestly climbs from \(\hat{5}\) to \(\hat{1}\); in his frenzy, the speaker sweeps the rechant to a tonicized V that resolves with the refrain “pour cela ne mourray.” This violent romantic death contrasts markedly with the “killing me softly” sentiment of Vous me tuez. In Vous me tuez, Baïf lopes through the poem’s gentle declamation, shifting the ground beneath the listener as he lingers on each “8” vowel in the chant. Baïf reverses course in the rechant and drives away from the “8” sound to the nihilistic word endings “mourir, mouron d’amour” that slide gently down into death. By contrast, Come le fenix uses urgent goal-directed rhythms from the start. Each phrase of the chant tumbles to the fourth syllable, emphasizing the fiery images of the Phoenix and his ashes. After the momentum builds, an explosive pause on the first “tuë” ignites the rechant; the bass joins in, and the melody rises up to a triumphant death and rebirth.
Mauduit likely composed both of these settings under the strict supervision of the Académie. Since no musical evidence survived from antiquity, Baïf could only experiment with musical forms and test his results on the Académie’s auditeurs; indeed, he described his micromanaged concerts as “preuves” (evidence). How might the principles of Greek and Latin poetic meter be most thoroughly embodied in a musical setting? Mauduit’s airs aim to answer this question: the fluid, declamatory irregularity of Vous me tuez and the concise tight-knit construction of Come le fenix echo and amplify the poems’ metrical characters. Whereas Vous me tuez meanders among distant harmonies that isolate the phrases from one another, Come le fenix marches confidently from dominant to tonic harmonies, drawing the phrases into relationships. Poetic meter does not merely constrain Mauduit’s compositional behavior; rather, it imbues the entire poem with a character that demands sensitive musical setting. Poetic meter sculpts the smallest

melodic gesture and the largest-scale tonal trajectories—*Vous me tuez* rejects connections between phrases, *Come le fenix* demands them.

*Vers mesurés* typically pair a *chant* (verse) and *rechant* (refrain). While Mauduit’s austere settings minimize the distinctions between sections, Le Jeune’s more expansive *airs mesurés* exploit this formal relationship. Le Jeune seeks out elaborate poems, such as *Francine, rôzine*, which revels in a fanciful *rechant* (Example 7.6). The anonymous poet opens the *rechant* with a series of rhyming three-syllable words; he chooses a mechanical dactylic meter that stands out from the rest of the setting. Le Jeune sets the conspicuous dactyls with an exuberant descending sequence; the meter, rhyme, and cascading melodic descent shape this line into a memorable refrain within the larger *rechant*. The sequence drives to dominant; the remainder of the *rechant* journeys back to tonic, closing with an illicit rhyme (*couleur/blancheur*) that reinforces the formal boundary. Le Jeune certainly highlights the poem’s subtle refrain, but this formal innovation is largely the work of the poet, not the composer. In fact, much of the elegance of Le Jeune’s setting is lost when it reappears with a new, rhymed text in *Airs à III. IIII. V & VI parties*. The new *rechant* text (which appears in italics in the example) maintains the *couleur/blancheur* rhyme, but dismantles the dactylic refrain. In the absence of the rhymed three-syllable words, Le Jeune’s sequential setting makes little sense. The translator’s awkward disrespect for the relationship between the dactylic meter and the word boundaries ruins the original poet’s carefully coordinated prosody and poetic meter.45

Schematic text-setting influences nearly every aspect of both the *balletto* and the *air mesuré*. Yet because the repertoires have such distinct aesthetic aims, schematic text-setting yields dramatically different results. For instance, in *Now is the month of Maying* schematic text-setting produces a homogenous rhythmic profile as it leans toward the *accento commune* (recall Example 4.13). Morley groups the poem’s two texted phrases: because they share a similar rhythmic profile, he outfits them with a single ascending melodic line and a musical rhyme that corresponds with their poetic rhyme. Morley uses the couplet’s grouping structure as a springboard for larger binary groupings. As I have argued, binary grouping structure and its attendant metrical periodicity shapes phrase structure and form, creating space for trajectories from dominant to tonic at multiple scales. Several factors in combination, including rhyme, melodic parallelism, metrical periodicity, refrains, and repeat structure, create the possibility for harmonic expectation, yielding an aesthetic where tonally open phrases *prepare* and *predict* subsequent tonally closed phrases. Schematic text-setting initiates this process. It is a viable compositional strategy in part due to the meagerness of Morley’s hackneyed verse—the poem’s metrical regularity, unambitious rhymed couplets, and resistance to expressive deviation all encourage Morley to focus his attention on musical rather than textual organization.

By contrast, the text takes center stage in a *musique mesurée* setting, to the detriment of the grouping structure. Because of their asymmetrical rhythms and

45. These rewritten texts were almost certainly the work of poet Odet de la Noue; see His, “Air mesuré et air de cour,” 159.
Example 7.6  Le Jeune, Francine, rôzine (1603, no. 11). Italicized rechant text is from the 1608 rhymed version.
La violett'a son lôs. Francine, rôzine, nimphète, blanchète, parfète beaupè.

Qui loû la brune couleure, Ne blâme pas la blancheur.
irregular line lengths, *vers mesurés* ensure that the smallest possible musical unit is the phrase. The *mesuré* phrase cannot be subdivided. What’s more, in the absence of line-ending rhymes, *mesuré* phrases rarely group into pairs. Of course, the *balletto* and *musique mesurée* share many features: both create and exploit melodic connections between phrases, both develop V–I relationships on multiple levels of musical structure, both use refrains to help articulate musical form. Yet, the *air mesuré* favors asymmetry over symmetry, an aesthetic priority that supports harmonic trajectories but discourages predictability. Instead, composers of *airs mesurés* create expectation through other means—Le Jeune’s refrains, for instance, use melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic cues to orient listeners toward the final.

Frances Yates describes *musique mesurée* as “perhaps the most thorough-going attempt ever made to translate into practice the precepts of musical humanism, and so to produce in modern times songs which should be ‘spells for souls.’”

Humanism motivated a shift in emphasis away from contrapuntal design and toward sensitivity to the text. *Musique mesurée* is an extreme manifestation of this impulse, undergirded by an urgent ethical imperative to reform an increasingly war-torn French society. Indeed, *musique mesurée* and the *frottola* both arise out of the humanistic emphasis on text over music, though they fall at opposite ends of a spectrum. In both repertoires, the aesthetic concerns motivating the poetry condition the character of the musical settings. But whereas the stakes of the frottola were very low—entertainment for the court—for *musique mesurée* and the Académie they could not have been higher. Accordingly, the frottola is maximally flexible. Its humble roots in improvised, popular song reflect its frivolous courtly function. Its repetitive mnemonic form simply reproduces the *barzelletta* rhyme scheme. And its melodies are meant to be repurposed for multiple texts, so that novice courtly poets could serenade one another with their newest romantic efforts. By contrast, *musique mesurée* is maximally regulated. It was born out of the prestigious intellectual world of the Pléiade and supported by the most official forms of royal patronage. Its settings are sensitive to the text at the level of the individual syllable. Every poem demands a unique musical setting, such that the perfect union of music and word could elevate an attentive listener to a higher spiritual plane.

**A universal priesthood of all believers proclaims the Word**

Bach’s chorale harmonizations have long been critical pedagogical and analytical touchstones for music theorists. Bach’s chorales are exemplars of voice-leading ingenuity and harmonic sophistication, and by extension they embody, in miniature, many of the core tenets of tonal composition. Assumptions like these build on a venerable tradition of Bach reception history instigated by Bach’s eighteenth-century publishers, who, faced with a public puzzled by and
uninterested in Bach’s unplayable chorale harmonizations, marketed them as the apothecosis of a distinctly German artistic tradition.\footnote{Matthew Dirst, \textit{Engaging Bach: The Keyboard Legacy from Marpurg to Mendelssohn} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 34–54.} In order to sell Bach’s chorales, Johann Friedrich Reichardt extolled the composer as the “creator of harmony” and the “greatest harmonist of all times and nations,” thereby framing the chorale harmonizations as essential works for contemplative study.\footnote{Quoted in ibid., 51.} It is not difficult to hear echoes of our modern pedagogical tradition in Reichardt’s words. John Eliot Gardiner, for instance, recounted his studies with Nadia Boulanger:

Her way of teaching harmony was founded on Bach’s chorales, which she regarded as models of how to establish a beautiful polyphony—with each voice being accorded equal importance while still playing a different role in the four-way conversation, now advancing, now retreating: contrapuntally conceived harmony, in other words.\footnote{John Eliot Gardiner, \textit{Bach: Music in the Castle of Heaven} (New York: Knopf, 2013), 3–4.}

Ian Quinn has recently outlined several features of Bach’s chorale corpus that make it so pedagogically and analytically fruitful: the corpus is large, the chorales are remarkably consistent, they maintain four independent voices, they feature a consistent harmonic rhythm (usually the quarter note), and the combination of this harmonic rhythm and voice-leading constraints limits the types and extent of figuration.\footnote{Ian Quinn, “Tonal Harmony,” in \textit{The Oxford Handbook of Critical Concepts in Music Theory}, ed. Alexander Rehding and Steven Rings (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).}

But the features that make the chorale well suited for analytical study are precisely those features that make it a poor analogue for other eighteenth-century composition. That is, its harmonic rhythm, itself an outgrowth of its melodic construction, is much more consistent and much faster than that of, say, a Mozart string quartet. The result, to my ear, is a decidedly vertical, “chordy” style that Bach amiably balances with juicy inner-voice melodic lines. (I’m an alto and I sing a lot of Bach, and for every nonsensical “filler” part I’ve plowed through I’ve relished a graceful, joyous path through a tortuous chorale harmonization.) The Bach chorale is surely the \textit{locus classicus} of homophony, yet, as I will recount, its theoretical and liturgical history produced a repertoire that had little in common with homophonic secular song.

Like sixteenth-century vernacular song, the Lutheran chorale and the Reformation that created it responded to humanist principles.\footnote{The most important introduction to the Reformation and its musical effects remains the revised and expanded English-language version of Friedrich Blume, \textit{Protestant Church Music: A History} (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975). For more concise introductions to music and Lutheranism, see Robin A. Leaver, “The Lutheran Reformation,” in \textit{The Renaissance: From the 1470s to the End of the}
of the sixteenth-century Catholic church. His return to ancient sources corresponded closely to humanist ideals, as did his emphasis on the role of the individual in seeking God's grace, *sola fidei*, through faith alone. Consequently, Luther produced a monumental translation of the Bible in an elegant yet simple style that did for modern German what Shakespeare did for modern English. As the German Bible would make the Word of God more accessible to the laity, so would Luther's new liturgy, which emphasized a universal priesthood of all believers. Luther devised a model for worship as a collective, congregational act of thanksgiving to God for his grace, rather than a priestly offering to God made on behalf of the (passive) congregation.

While many Protestant reformers rejected the opulence of Latin-texted, polyphonic Catholic music, Luther embraced music in worship. In fact, Luther's taste in liturgical music was conservative, and he maintained many Catholic musical traditions in his new liturgy.52 Luther was a skilled singer and lutenist and incisively discussed contemporary musical trends in his writings; he saw music as a gift from God and a potential tool to help promote piety and spread the gospel.53 “I want to see all the arts, especially music, used in the service of Him who has given and created them,” he wrote in a preface to an early hymn book.54 Consequently, in the 1520s Luther developed the chorale, a German-texted strophic form designed for unison congregational song. Luther and others adapted these chorales from contemporary Latin hymns and sequences, German-language religious songs called *Leisen* (so named for their “Kyrieleis” refrains), and even folk and popular tunes, and Luther composed many new chorale tunes usingmelodic formulas drawn from all of these traditions. To this repertoire Luther also contributed translations of portions of the mass as well as each of the six parts of the catechism. The chorale was pragmatic from the start. Luther was not picky about the sources of his melodies (“Why should the devil have all the good tunes?” he reportedly, if apocryphally, quipped) and the chorale's simple yet flexible style reflects its multifaceted origins.55 In his chorales, Luther emphasized the same accessible verbal style that he displayed in his Bible—he favored short words, imperative verbs, simple alliteration, and sing-song rhythms that imparted an immediacy to his biblical and liturgical texts.56


54. Quoted in ibid., 14. The hymnbook was Johann Walter's *Wittenbergisch deudsch Geystliches Gesangk Büchlein* (Wittenberg, 1524), which contained polyphonic settings of thirty-eight hymns, several of which are attributed to Martin Luther; Walter’s was the first Luther-sanctioned Lutheran hymnbook.

55. Herl points out that this popular Luther quote does not appear in any of Luther's voluminous writings in *Worship Wars*, 21.

Luther's chorales were accessible to the laity. They were simple enough that even illiterate members of the congregation could listen to them, understand them, and memorize them by rote (Luther's concerns for text intelligibility resemble those of Baïf's Académie and the Florentine Camerata, and extend from the minutest principles of text-setting all the way up to cathedral design).\(^{57}\) And they embodied his theology: armed with a series of memorized chorales, a layperson could own and understand the Word, could use it in worship and private devotion, and could spread it to others. As Blume puts it, Luther's chorales “were poetic words of Scripture, not merely devotional thoughts and prayers like the German song in the Catholic church. They not only possessed a general religious content, but in them the layman was given the biblical word itself and the extrabiblical liturgical text as his own property, not easily lost.”\(^{58}\) The hymns embodied the congregant's new personal relationship with God.

Because hymnody is such a fixture of modern Protestant worship and the Bach chorale such a centerpiece of our pedagogy, it is easy to forget that Luther's initial hymn tunes were monophonic. Though a handful of polyphonic hymn settings were published in the sixteenth century, these did not play a significant role in worship, because the melody usually sounded in the tenor voice and was therefore difficult for the congregation to hear. Instead, congregational song was unison and a cappella (organ accompaniment did not emerge for another century), or, depending on a church's resources, congregations might sing \textit{in alternatim} with the choir, instruments, or the organ. (Herl notes that not all congregations were enthusiastic about singing—or church attendance, for that matter.\(^{59}\)) The earliest hymns were published as unauthorized broadsheets laden with mistakes; later hymnbooks collected mostly texts with only a handful of tunes. Hymnbooks were expensive and churches did not provide them—rather, an enterprising congregant might purchase one for study, and, if permitted, might bring it to worship. But for the most part, hymn singing was an enterprise for amateurs, and much of the early hymn tradition was an illiterate one.

Only in the late 1580s did a musically capable theologian, Lucas Osiander, devise a model for congregational chorale singing with harmonic support: the cantional.\(^{60}\) Osiander explains his novel approach in the preface to \textit{Funfftzig Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen}:

\begin{quote}
I know well that as a rule, the composer usually places the chorale in the tenor. But when that is done, the chorale is unrecognizable under the other voices. Then the
\end{quote}

\(^{57}\) Leaver, “The Reformation and Music,” 373.

\(^{58}\) Blume, \textit{Protestant Church Music}, 43.

\(^{59}\) Herl, \textit{Worship Wars}, 164.

\(^{60}\) The literature on the cantional is surprisingly scant; to date no major music theoretical or musicological study of the repertoire exists. Given the increasing availability of the sources, the time is ripe for a consideration of this repertoire. For an introduction to and edition of Osiander's cantional see Louis Eugene Schuler, “Lucas Osiander and His \textit{Funfftzig Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen}: The Development and Use of the First Cantional” (PhD diss., Washington University, 1986). For preliminary studies of the cantional's musical style, see Erich Wolf, \textit{Der vierstimmige homophone Satz: die stilistischen Merkmale des Kantionalsatzes zwischen 1590 und 1630} (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1965); Ian Quinn and Panayotis Mavromatis, “Voice-Leading
common man cannot understand what sort of Psalm it is, and cannot sing along. Therefore I have placed the chorale in the discant so that it is truly recognizable and every amateur can sing along.61

Osiander conceived his volume as a companion for the Württemberg hymnal—the congregation would sing the familiar melodies, which they learned from the hymnal, and the choir would accompany them in four-voice homophony, singing from Osiander's partbooks (Figure 7.6). The cantional experiment obviously met an urgent congregational need: after Osiander's publication, dozens of cantionals appeared in Lutheran cities throughout Germany, in both partbook and choirbook format (Figure 7.7). The cantional reached an apotheosis with Michael Praetorius's monumental nine-volume Musae Sioniae (1605–1610), which aimed to anthologize all of the German hymns—and all of their settings—in common use at the time.62 A second wave of cantional publishing followed in the 1620s and '30s, inaugurated by Johann Hermann Schein's 1627 cantional with basso continuo. Thus we can draw a straight line from Luther's early monophonic hymns through early polyphonic chorale settings to the homophonic cantional, accompanied homophony, and ultimately to the Bach chorale.

Why should the devil have all the good tunes?

Example 7.7 juxtaposes five cantional settings of Christ lag in Todesbanden. The tune, one of Luther's earliest, is based on the Latin Easter sequence Victimae paschali laudes. Like many chorale tunes, it builds trajectories and creates melodic contrast primarily via register. The stepwise borrowed melody demands a harmonic rhythm of one chord per melody pitch. These constraints, along with the chorale's syllabic text-setting, yield five settings that are remarkably similar. Five of the tune's six phrases end with a three-note descent; all five composers set 3–2–1 with i–V–i and 7–6–5 with a corresponding v–V/V–V progression. These progressions often conclude or extend Romanesca bass lines (in the first, second, and final phrases), further unifying the five settings. In other phrases, however, the

61. Osiander's preface is rich with musical details and is translated in full in Schuler, “Lucas Osiander,” 66–69. Quotations from Osiander in the rest of this chapter come from Schuler's translation.
Figure 7.6 Christ lag in Todesbanden (no. 11) in Osiander, Fünfzig Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen (Nuremberg: Gerlach, 1586). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 4 Mus.pr. 88#Beibd.4, Discantus partbook, sig. Ci⁵, and Bassus partbook, sig. BBi⁴, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00075340-0.
Figure 7.7 Christ lag in Todesbanden (no. 23) in Calvisius, *Harmonia cantionum ecclesiasticarum* (Leipzig: Apel, 1597), sig. F5v–F6r. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Mus.pr. 92.34, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00045305-1.
settings diverge. Two phrases encourage a tonicization of III (the first half of the second phrase, and the first phrase of the Abgesang); the cantional composers vary the most in their treatment of these gestures. In these tricky spots, the harmonic choices seem arbitrary.\textsuperscript{63}

Osiander sets nearly every melodic note as a semibreve. This rhythmic consistency is typical of chorale settings (excepting a handful of syncopated melodies like \textit{Ein feste Burg}). Many chorales were originally printed in chant notation without rhythmic values. These rhythmically austere settings were a boon for congregants, who generally learned the melodies by rote. But a variety of performance practices emerged to articulate phrase structure in the face of this

\textsuperscript{63} The arbitrary chord selection is confirmed by Quinn and Mavromatis’s statistical study of modal and tonal chorale corpora in “Voice-Leading Prototypes,” 239.
Some chorale settings extend the last note of each phrase, either with a fermata (Osiander, Figure 7.6) or a longer note value (Melodeyen Gesangbuch). Alternately, settings may adjust the first note of each phrase: Praetorius elongates line-opening syllables in his Stollen and shortens them in his Abgesang. Printers may reinforce these rhythmic adjustments typographically, by separating phrases with bar lines (Calvisius, Figure 7.7). These subtle rhythmic cues compensate for the ametrical quality of many chorales: they make the second note of each phrase feel like a metrical arrival, and they make the final note of each phrase feel firmly conclusive, even in the absence of other metrical organization. Thus, the vertical, “chordy” style of the harmonized chorale derives not only from the borrowed stepwise melodies, but also from the mostly undifferentiated

64. The undifferentiated rhythmic structure of the chorales raises a number of intriguing questions about performance practice and tempo that are outside the scope of this project; see Blume, Protestant Church Music, 66–71.
rhythmic surface. Luther and other early hymnodists enhance this effect with the texts—the poetry of *Christ lag in Todesbanden* is mostly iambic, with many clipped one- and two-syllable words.

Because they make a few things explicit that are only implicit in other homophonic genres, cantionals reframe the relationship between homophony and harmony in the sixteenth century. First, their melody is designed independently of a harmonic context; often, chorale melodies are adapted from earlier monophonic chant, sacred song, and folk music. When Schoenberg explores the pedagogical value of chorale harmonization in his *Harmonielehre*, he complains about “the unnatural position of constructing the harmony for a melody already given.” Instead, he argues that melodies are always conceived with harmonic frameworks in mind: “One does not harmonize, one invents with harmony.”  

chorale, with its pragmatic repertoire of borrowed tunes, deviates from this principle. The stepwise melodies demand a new harmony for each chord. The absence of an initial harmonic framework contributes to the arbitrary chord selection that we see in some of the cantional harmonizations, but also facilitates the elegant harmonic solutions that attracted Bach to the repertoire. At the same time, the cantional reveals how certain melodic formulas, in particular the $3\rightarrow2\rightarrow1$ melodic cadence, paired well with simple harmonic frameworks.

Second, once Osiander moved the borrowed chorale melody from the tenor to the soprano, he reoriented the contrapuntal framework for the cantional settings to a discant/bassus model. Osiander is explicit about his approach to the counterpoint:

> But all composers understand how difficult it is to compose such a contrapuntal piece where one must remain between the chorale in the discant (in which one is permitted to change no notes) and between the bass (from which one does not want to take away its solemnity and charm with changes of harmony) like as between two ditches in the street, and yet not the less want to have perfect consonances.

Osiander goes on to describe his process of “filling in” the inner voices, and explains that he tried to keep them simple enough that the choirboys could sing them. Bach, too, seems to have composed his chorales in this manner, starting with the melody, writing a bass line, and subsequently filling in the inner voices.  

Osiander also explicitly breaks discant/tenor compositional rules to prioritize complete triads: “I also know well how the tenor should conclude opposite the discant in the cadences (according to the common manner). But when one wants to preserve four perfect voices in the cadences of a contrapuntal piece, and the hymn is only set in four voices, then the general rule cannot be followed (concerning the cadence).” In other words, Osiander leaps from $7$ to $5$ in an inner voice at most cadences, prioritizing complete triads over smooth voice-leading—and over the cantizans cadential formula of proper counterpoint.

As a result, the cantional’s primary vertical unit is explicitly the triad, in particular, the root position triad. Of course, all of the repertoires that I discuss in this book consist predominantly of root position triads. In the cantional tradition, however, the triad is explicitly theorized. Osiander provides a theological justification: “For God has also portrayed the Holy Trinity to some extent in the music, in that no more than three voices can be found or contrived which rightly sound together. But if one wants to have more voices, then they must fall in the octave with the three, that is the equivalent as when one of the three voices are


67. Cf. Ian Quinn’s radical new model of tonality in the Bach chorale in “Tonal Harmony,” which considers any vertical sonority that can bear a figured bass label as a viable “chord.” The cantional settings are decidedly more conservative in figuration and dissonance treatment than Bach’s chorale corpus.
repeated or doubled.” The practical conditions of congregational singing also affected the way composers conceptualized the cantional’s contrapuntal framework. Johann Georg Schott describes a common performance reality in the preface to his 1603 *Psalmen vnd Gesang-Buch*:

Do not become confused when the octave [i.e., the melody] is sung underneath like a tenor part [i.e., an octave lower] by men, who already know how the psalms and hymns go. This procedure, although it may hinder the counterpoint, strengthens the choir to such an extent that the voices and manner are more easily heard and learned by many.68

Schott’s willingness to ignore major violations of contrapuntal decorum reflect an emerging conception of the melody’s independence from a contrapuntal—and ultimately harmonic—background.

Finally, the cantionals engage explicitly with the notion of “arranging” or “harmonizing” a given melody. The preface to the *Melodeyen Gesangbuch* helps to set the stage:

In this little book you will find German hymns that are the very best and most commonly found in German churches arranged [abgesetzt] by the four appointed organists of this honorable city in four parts, so that any Christian, inexperienced in music and illiterate, may nonetheless, with the other three distinct voices sounding in concord, make music just the same.69

Osiander uses a similar term when he writes that he has “set [gesetzt] these fifty spiritual songs and Psalms with four voices.” In his massive compendium, *Musae Sioniae*, Praetorius explores the implications of the notion of harmonization: he juxtaposes several settings of each chorale, testing a range of harmonic, rhythmic, and even melodic possibilities for each. A tension emerges in the cantionals between those melodic fragments that are always harmonized in the same way (cadential formulas) and those that encourage more flexibility. In the latter scenario, each pitch might be the root, third, or fifth of a triad; in the absence of a robust harmonic syntax or consistent voice-leading scripts, composers rely on stereotyped discant–bass patterns like the Romanesca to select appropriate accompaniment for each melody note. But a broad view of the entire cantional repertoire indicates that some harmonic choices are more common than others; such emerging patterns are necessary preconditions for a theory or practice of harmonic syntax.70

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68. Trans. in Herl, *Worship Wars*, 114.
69. Trans. in ibid., 114–115.
These four features are neither new with nor unique to the cantional. We have seen how Morley modifies Gastoldi’s melodies and creates new, inventive accompaniments for them. We have observed Dahlhaus and Lowinsky’s disagreements about the relative importance of the bass and the tenor for the frottola. And we have been unavoidably confronted with the primacy of the triad as a consequence of basic contrapuntal writing. But the cantional tradition makes these elements explicit, largely because hymnbook prefaces consistently provide thorough liturgical and musical justifications for the new musical style.

However, the homophonic style of the cantional, with its fast harmonic rhythm and stepwise melodies, emphasizes a different feature of emerging tonality than the other repertoires I’ve considered in this book. The cantional draws our attention away from large-scale melodic, harmonic, metrical, and formal trajectories, and instead toward local harmonic syntax. Given the reception history of the Bach chorale, seeded some 250 years ago, it is unsurprising that empirical studies of homophonic repertoires have largely considered chord-by-chord syntax in Bach chorales, and that such studies have taken center stage in our theories of tonality and in our pedagogy. But I have argued that such a localized focus obscures the more compelling energies of large-scale tonal organization in a haze of consternation about arbitrary local compositional decisions. The cantional raises fascinating syntactical questions that provide critical evidence for changing conceptions of harmonic progression and harmonic function in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. But syntax is a single stratum of tonality’s many-layered history. When our theories of tonality depend exclusively on chord-by-chord syntax, we miss so many other layers of tonal experience, layers that I have aimed to excavate in this book.

Humanism and the invention of homophony

These three repertoires do not tell a story of the development and refinement of the homophonic style. Rather, they reveal that homophony is a potent solution for a series of related aesthetic problems, all of which are motivated by the demands of humanism. The frottola is a relic of the earliest experiments in music printing; under Isabella d’Este’s patronage, Tromboncino, Cara, and Petrucci together transformed an improvised tradition into a literate one. Composers designed flexible musical settings that could accommodate any number of courtly poems written with a single rhyme scheme and poetic meter. But the genre’s mnemonic form sacrifices musical trajectories for poetic ones, and its homophonic style belies its monodic roots. Musique mesurée arose from a philosophical and poetic movement rather than a musical one. Baïf and his colleagues hoped that by recreating the effects of ancient music they might bring moral order to war-torn France. The quantitative meters that they explored could only find musical expression in syllabic homophony. The Lutheran chorale had a similar moral underpinning: this pragmatic music enabled an amateur and often illiterate congregation to participate not only in worship, but in the act of hearing and
proclaiming the Word. Its immediate, intimate syllabic texts combine with borrowed or formulaic melodies to bestow the gift of the Word upon the congregation. Homophony is Osiander’s solution for converting a monophonic repertoire into a polyphonic one suitable for true amateur performance and rote learning. All of these movements derive from humanism, which, among its many attributes, encouraged the rediscovery and imitation of ancient texts, placed emphasis on the individual, elevated the vernacular for artistic expression, and promoted the potential for new interactions between music and text. The question that guides all of these repertoires is How do we ensure that the words are understood? The answer is homophony.

Of course, despite their shared intellectual context and their collective commitment to intelligible text-setting, these repertoires have little in common. How do we account for the improvisatory character of Oimè el cor, the lilting tunefulness of Vous me tuez si doucement, the stolid monumentality of Christ lag in Todesbanden, and the dynamic goal-direction of Now is the month of Maying in the same breath (or same book, in this case)? We might imagine homophonic style as a kind of pyramid: text-setting supports meter, which supports phrase structure, which supports form, and the interaction of these elements may be more or less tonal depending on the sorts of melodic and harmonic frameworks composers employ. Our repertoires differ, then, at the lowest level: in their approach to text-setting. All of them set texts schematically, but to divergent ends. In the frottola, the octosyllabic verse encourages three-measure phrases; frottola composers use codas and phrase extensions to create closure and to balance the sense of acceleration that accumulating three-measure phrases create. In musique mesurée, the text-setting derives strictly from Baïf’s imposition of quantity onto French vowels. The result is sometimes metrically regular and sometimes irregular, but always requires a bit of getting used to from a musical perspective. The tunes are catchy (indeed, I found their metrical irregularity uncanny at first, but the more time I spent with them, the more I came to enjoy their studied off-centeredness), but regular phrase rhythm and meter are lucky byproducts and not goals of mesuré text-setting. Chorale text-setting is comparatively flat, and the notated rhythms provide little evidence of what was surely widely varied performance practice. Though some settings orient the phrases metrically by lengthening or shortening the first or last syllable, the underlying conception is not explicitly metrical (nor was it for Bach, who was sometimes agnostic about bar line placement in his chorales). The demands of rote learning and the character of borrowed chant melodies overrode the development of a metrically motivated text-setting scheme.

But while the text-setting infuses every aspect of the spirit of these genres, the more distant our view of the repertoires, the more homogenous their style. All of them use goal-directed melodies, large-scale harmonic trajectories from V to I, and strophic sectional forms with refrains. Homophony, which I argued in Chapter 2 directs compositional attention to the way musical materials are oriented in time, creates similar outcomes on larger scales in spite of localized difference in
aesthetic motivation, text style, and text-setting technique. Consequently, I could have written this book about any of these repertoires (or the many other homophonic genres that emerged in the sixteenth century); though the details would differ, the larger argument would remain intact.

What sets the balletto apart is the perfect storm of regulatory techniques that its composers exploit. The balletto takes the innovation of homophony for granted, yet, unlike earlier homophonic genres, balletti are not written in the service of a text. Their mediocre poesia per musica instead encouraged composers to turn away from the text and back toward the music. The balletto’s invocation of dance, its nonsense syllable refrains, and its position at the intersection of light and learned secular genres reinforce the compositional principles that earlier homophonic repertoires founded, while also introducing a new preference for metrical regularity, clearly demarcated formal sections, repetition, and melodic goal direction. As a result, the balletto has three primary perceptual benefits that strengthen its ability to project tonal expectation. First, text-setting schemas for five- and seven-syllable lines (often) encourage strict binary grouping structures; dynamic attending theory shows us that such regular schemas help orient listeners toward predictable, periodically articulated harmonic events. Second, nonsense syllable refrains provide an audible cue that locates listeners in the form and rhetorically points listeners toward a section-ending tonic cadence. Finally, the balletto’s compact formal structure laden with sectional repeats allows listeners to attend to larger formal levels in meaningful ways. The balletto, and to a lesser extent the canzonetta, are thus able to exploit harmonic and melodic trajectories on larger scales than the other repertoires I’ve discussed here. The metrical periodicity engendered by balletto and canzonetta text-setting schemas is a critical perceptual bonus: it builds an exceptionally firm foundation for our stylistic pyramid.

Invention, innovation, intention

The modern term invention implies the presence of an agent who, with intention, creates something new. But when I describe the “invention” of homophony, I’m interested in a sixteenth-century meaning of the term, which connotes the communal discovery of a solution to a problem. All of these repertoires originate from a problem: how to set a certain kind of text to music, such that the aesthetic, moral, or functional aims of that text are best represented in a musical setting. Each of these three repertoires identified homophony as a solution to their problem, whether it was a framework to support courtly poetry, a manifestation of the magnificent affective powers of music and poetry perfectly fused, or an opportunity to support a new congregation of believers with first-time access to the Word of God. Homophony was a style developed not for its own aesthetic merits, but rather in response to the challenges of humanism: the foregrounding of a vernacular text that could and should be understood by a larger community, to amorous, moral, or religious ends. In homophony, composers, poets, patrons, and performers identified a musical framework that could support their diverse aims.
Homophony was not the result of an artistic or aesthetic movement, or the ideas of a single brilliant composer or collective of artists. Rather, homophony was a pragmatic solution to a series of problems engendered by vernacular humanism in many sixteenth-century contexts. That the ideal conditions for the emergence of tonality existed in the homophonic environment was a byproduct, not a cause, of homophonic exploration. To fully mature, tonality would have to be divorced from its initial homophonic environment; perhaps this is why we associate the style with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music rather than with the earlier repertoires that first built systematic large-scale trajectories connecting V with I.
In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, composers invested in new musical resources, endowing their music with an increasingly robust capacity to support tonal trajectories. It is not a coincidence that, as Daniel Harrison argues, early twentieth-century composers gradually disposed of the very same resources.\(^1\) What are Debussy’s experiments with modal and other collections but a study of the capacity of musical features besides the V\(^7\) chord to demand tonal closure? What are Wagner’s languidly unfolding melodies but an attempt to throw off the tonal shackles that meter imposes? Or the reverse: how does Schoenberg’s Op. 11 No. 1 so clearly communicate the difference between a “chord tone” and a “dissonance” when all pitches are ostensibly created equal? In their experiments, attempts to dismantle some of tonality’s buttressing, these unlikely composers remind us that tonality is an intricately constructed but overbuilt edifice. Any number of columns or beams may be singly removed without compromising the integrity of the structure, but when too many of these foundational elements deteriorate the structure finally collapses. (And let us remember that many of these twentieth-century iconoclasts were themselves ardent students of medieval and Renaissance music.\(^2\))

Of course, late-nineteenth and twentieth century music differs from Renaissance and early Baroque music in its relationship to tonality because composers in the former group are deliberately writing in response to it, while those in the latter group could not yet anticipate it. But the comparison is a helpful reminder of the stability of that “tonal feeling,” which we take for granted in later musics but are reluctant to apply to earlier ones. Tonality is not constituted by a single musical phenomenon, like the resolution of the dissonant V\(^7\) chord to the consonant tonic as Rameau would have us believe. Nor can tonality be

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circumscribed to pitch alone, as Tymoczko suggests. Pitch rose to prominence precisely because meter, phrase structure, and form controlled pitch content in consistent ways. And it is our ability to isolate subsets of these parameters and continue to create tonal effects that makes tonality so viable as a musical language. Tonality is flexible because it is overdetermined; this flexibility has granted it the staying power that Tymoczko’s “extended common practice” imagines.

With this prismatic view of tonality in mind, the futility of identifying a *terminus post or ante quem* for tonal composition is especially clear. To be sure, we could establish a list of minimal markers of tonality and assess the membership credentials of individual works or repertoires on the basis of their background scale, their harmonic plan, their capacity to establish trajectories of expectation, or their adoption of some acceptable number of tonal characteristics. Or we could treat tonality as a pre-compositional feature and distinguish between those works composed with a tonal framework in mind and those without (though this procedure would eliminate many canonical favorites from our tonal harmony curricula!). (Such an etic/emic distinction has long framed discussions of mode; perhaps we ought to map this distinction forward onto canonically tonal works as well.) But these approaches (straw men though they may be) gloss over precisely those qualities that have made tonality such a vital part of Western musical culture for so long; they neglect tonality’s energy, the psychological sensations it produces, its acoustical bases, its compositional possibilities, its seemingly boundless flexibility.

To insist on an evolutionary metaphor, we might look to the notion of “preadaptation” that Patrick McCreless usefully explores in a discussion of the nineteenth-century second practice. Preadaptation is a solution that evolutionary biologists have developed to account for the gradual evolution of complex structures—to paraphrase Stephen Jay Gould, what use could an organism have for only 10 percent of an eye? As Gould explains, “a structure can change its function radically without altering its form as such. We can bridge the limbo of intermediate stages by arguing for a retention of old functions while new ones were still developing.” As an example, Gould invokes the intricate complex of interlocking bones that form the jaw of a fish. In earlier, jawless fishes, these bones were a crucial component of the gill mechanism; it just so happened that they were also “admirably preadapted to become jaws.” We might understand sixteenth- and eighteenth-century instantiations of tonality in the same way. Homophony

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establishes many of the necessary conditions for tonality—schematic text-setting begets metrical regularity, metrical regularity encourages periodic deployment of cadences, modal pitch schemes prioritize fifth-related cadences, vocal composition demands straightforward, stepwise melodies, organization of phrase structure facilitates goal-directed melody construction, repetition promotes statistical learning. Few of these features are pitch-related; tonality emerges as a feature of homophony, rather, because of the texture’s other characteristics. But tonality is preadapted for other kinds of robustness, which composers begin to explore as it is detached from the initial homophonic environment. We’re most familiar with the late-nineteenth-century manifestations of this exploration: harmonic function is divorced from chord quality, triads are divorced from harmonic function, extended tertian chords begin to replace triads and seventh chords as contextual consonances. But the same process works in reverse: features like meter and phrase structure that are initially independent from (and ignorant of) tonality eventually come to be inseparable from it.

Attentive readers have probably noted that I’ve been quietly agnostic about declaring the balletto (or the frottola, musique mesurée, the cantional) a tonal repertoire. But ultimately I believe that treating tonality as a membership category undermines rather than upholds our efforts to understand it, both because we fail to consider music that has much to teach us about tonality, and we assume that canonically tonal works are wholly tonal, and use tonal materials in analogous ways. The balletto exploits tonal harmonic trajectories. It encourages tonal listening strategies. And in its unfamiliarity—its basis in the Guidonian diatonic gamut and its semi-regulated harmonic syntax—it forces us to reconsider some of our assumptions about what tonal repertoires look like, and why. Our best strategy for understanding the tonality of our common practice comes from tugging at its loose ends. The time has come to embrace those practices that are uncommon.
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