

MISCELLANEA

5

EARLY SACRED MONODY

GIOVANNI LUCA CONFORTI

“SALMI PASSAGGIATI”

(1601–1603)

MURRAY C. BRADSHAW

VOLUME 1



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

HÄNSSLER-VERLAG

1985

68.851

PUBLICATIONS OF THE
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

ARMEN CARAPETYAN
Director

GIOVANNI LUCA CONFORTI
"SALMI PASSAGGIATI"
(1601-1603)

BY
MURRAY C. BRADSHAW

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY
ARMEN CARAPETYAN, Ph. D.
DIRECTOR

Copyright © 1985 American Institute of Musicology
Hänssler-Verlag, D-7303 Neuhausen-Stuttgart
Order No. 68.851
ISBN 3-7751-0965-X

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Introduction | XIII |
| The Composer | XV |
| The Publications | XXIII |
| The “Salmi passaggiati” | XXIX |
| The Falsobordone | XXIX |
| Basso continuo and Monody | XXXIV |
| Text | XXXIX |
| Embellishment | XLII |
| Tempo and Rhythm | LI |
| Modality and Tonality | LIII |
| The Performance | LVII |
| The Editions | LIX |
| Acknowledgments | LXII |
| Selected Bibliography | LXIII |
| Critical Notes | LXVI |
| Facsimiles | LXXIX |
| Plate I. <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> , 1601, title page | LXXIX |
| Plate II. <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> , 1601, dedication | LXXX |
| Plate III. <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> , 1601, introduction | LXXXI |
| Plate IV. Conforti’s handwriting and signature (1602) | LXXXII |
| Plate V. Notice of Conforti’s death (1608) | LXXXIII |
| Plate VI. <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> , 1602, page 30 | LXXXIV |
| Plate VII. <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> , 1603, page 51 | LXXXV |
| <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> for Soprano (1601) by G. L. Conforti | LXXXIX |
| Dedication | XC |
| To the Readers | XCI |
| [1.] Laudate pueri. Primus Tonus | 1 |
| [2.] Dixit Dominus. Secundus Tonus | 10 |
| [3.] Laetatus sum. Tertius Tonus | 18 |
| [4.] Confitebor. Quartus Tonus | 25 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| [5.] Nisi Dominus Quintus Tonus | 35 |
| [6.] Beatus vir. Sextus Tonus | 41 |
| [7.] In convertendo. Septimus Tonus | 53 |
| [8.] Magnificat. Octavus Tonus | 61 |
| [9.] In exitu. Tonus Peregrinus | 69 |
| <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> for Tenor (1602) by G. L. Conforti | 79 |
| Dedication | 80 |
| To the Readers | 82 |
| [10.] Laudate pueri. Primus Tonus | 83 |
| [11.] Dixit Dominus. Secundus Tonus | 90 |
| [12.] Laetatus sum. Tertius Tonus | 98 |
| [13.] Confitebor. Quartus Tonus | 105 |
| [14.] Nisi Dominus. Quintus Tonus | 115 |
| [15.] Beatus vir. Sextus Tonus | 122 |
| [16.] In convertendo. Septimus Tonus | 133 |
| [17.] Magnificat. Octavus Tonus | 141 |
| [18.] In exitu. Tonus Peregrinus | 150 |
| <i>Salmi passaggiati</i> for Bass (1603) by G. L. Conforti | 164 |
| Dedication | 165 |
| To the Readers | 166 |
| [19.] Laudate pueri. Primus Tonus | 167 |
| [20.] Dixit Dominus. Secundus Tonus | 175 |
| [21.] Laetatus sum. Tertius Tonus | 183 |
| [22.] Confitebor. Quartus Tonus | 192 |
| [23.] Nisi Dominus. Quintus Tonus | 203 |
| [24.] Beatus vir. Sextus Tonus | 210 |
| [25.] In convertendo. Septimus Tonus | 218 |
| [26.] Magnificat. Octavus Tonus | 226 |
| [27.] In exitu. Tonus Peregrinus | 236 |
| (Appendix) Amara Vita | 249 |

INTRODUCTION

Giovanni Luca Conforti (ca. 1560–1608) has gained more renown, at least among scholars, for his *Breve et facile maniera* (1593) than for the three volumes of his *Salmi passaggiati* (1601–1603). The chief reason for this is Johannes Wolf's facsimile edition of the treatise with German translation published over sixty years ago and long available to musicologists.¹ The *Salmi passaggiati*, however, are a far more impressive achievement. All the volumes were apparently written by 1601, for in the introduction to the first volume Conforti wrote that he had already finished "this present volume, along with two others for bass and tenor." (All quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from Conforti's prefatory material to the *Salmi passaggiati*.) There are many ways in which these "embellished psalms" are more important to our understanding of Western music than the composer's *Breve et facile maniera*.

To begin with, Conforti's psalms are the first sacred monodies, the first solo pieces with basso continuo accompaniment, to appear in print. They preceded by one year the publication of Viadana's *Cento concerti ecclesiastici* (1602), long considered the first example of sacred music with basso continuo. Even more important, Conforti's whole style of writing is vastly different than Viadana's or, for that matter, Fattorini's *concerti* of 1600, and is closer to the declamatory style of the Florentine Camerata with whom true monody is said to begin.² Although there is much of the Renaissance about Conforti's music, other elements – like the dissonance treatment, the text expression, and the texture of slow moving bass lines supporting rhetorical and florid vocal lines – are vastly different. The pieces, too, are all for solo voice and basso continuo, unlike Viadana's

¹Johannes Wolf (ed.), *Breve et facile maniera d'essercitarsi a far passaggi*, facs. ed. with German translation (Berlin, 1922).

²Gabriel Fattorini's *Sacri concerti a due voci* (RISM F129), first published in 1600, are similar in style to Viadana's *concerti* of 1602. Although Fattorini's pieces (RISM F 129–132) are scored for two to four voices (and with an added four-part *ripieno* in the 1602 and later editions), they do include solo sections. On the history of the term "monody" – which was first used by Cerone in 1613 and later by Doni in 1635, who discussed it at some length – see John H. Baron, "Monody: A Study in Terminology," *The Musical Quarterly*, LIV/4 (1968), 462–474.

Ex. 10. Conforti, *Trilli*

(a) no. [4], mm. 45–46 (a cliché) (b) no. [11] m. 34

(c) no. [18] mm. 143–144 (d) no. [22], mm. 77–79

The cliché just discussed is also used in sequences and the following is a good example.

Ex. 11. Conforti, no. [27], mm. 109–113

Conforti made extensive use of sequences (two occur in Ex. 11, for instance), but, as with his other embellishments, never to the extent that they become predictable in appearance or ubiquitous in technique. Sequences occur about six times in every piece, vary in length from a semiminim (♪) to a semibreve (♩), and are sounded about two or three times for the most part.⁶⁹ Like *groppi*, sequences occur toward the middle or end of a piece,

⁶⁹Exceptions occur as, for instance, in no. [14], 99–100, where a sequence is sounded seven times.

* SOPRANO *

EMBELLISHED PSALMS ON ALL THE TONES
THAT ARE ORDINARILY SUNG
IN THE HOLY CHURCH,

At Vespers on Sunday and feast days
throughout the year,

*With the accompanying bass, for singing with organ or with
other instruments.*

If singers practice them they will not only become accustomed to singing
with confidence and grace, but shall in a short time acquire the ability
to learn how to embellish all kinds of notes.

*They will also benefit those who wish to play with ease
the viola, violino, or wind instruments.*

Written by GIO. LUCA CONFORTI of the city of Mileto, singer
in the Chapel of Our Holiness, Pope Clement VIII.

Book One

[Coat of arms, with Cardinal's hat]

IN ROME,

By the Heirs of Nicolò Mutij. 1601

With permission of Superiors.

(1.)
LAUDATE PUERI
Primus Tonus

(p. 5)
Cantus

Sit 2. Sit no - men Dó - mi - ni be - - - -

Sit

ne - - - - - dí - ctum,

ex hoc - - - - nunc, et us -

que - - - - in saé -

* TENOR *

EMBELLISHED PSALMS ON ALL THE TONES
 THAT ARE ORDINARILY SUNG
 IN THE HOLY CHURCH,
 At Vespers on Sunday and
 feast days throughout the year,
*with the accompanying bass, for singing
 with organ or with other instruments.*

If singers practice them they will not only become accustomed to singing
 with confidence and grace, but shall in a short time acquire the ability
 to learn how to embellish all kinds of notes.

*They will also benefit those who wish to play with ease
 the viola, violino, or wind instruments.*

Written by GIO. LUCA CONFORTI of the city of Mileto, singer
 in the Chapel of Our Holiness, Pope Clement VIII.

Book One

[Coat of arms, with Cardinal's hat]

IN ROME, *By the Heirs of Nicolò Mutij.* 1602

With permission of Superiors.

et hu - mí - li - a ré - spi - cit in

cae - - - - lo

et

in ter - - - - ra?

* BASS *

EMBELLISHED PSALMS ON ALL THE TONES

THAT ARE ORDINARILY SUNG

IN THE HOLY CHURCH,

At Vespers on Sunday and

feast days throughout the year,

with the accompanying bass, for singing

with organ or with other instruments.

If singers practice them they will not only become accustomed to singing

with confidence and grace, but shall in a short time acquire the ability

to learn how to embellish all kinds of notes.

They will also benefit those who wish to play with ease

the viola, theorbo, or wind instruments.

Written by GIO. LUCA CONFORTI of the city of Mileto, singer

in the Chapel of Our Holiness, Pope Clement VIII.

BOOK ONE

[Coat of arms, with Cardinal's hat]

IN ROME, By the Heirs of Nicolò Mutij. 1603.

With permission of Superiors.

(p. 7)

- ri - gens paú - - - pe - rem:

8. Qui ha - bi - tá - re fa - - - cit

80 sté - - - - - ri - lem in do - - -

85