

## The Sensual Sonata: Construction of Desire in Early Baroque Instrumental Music<sup>1</sup>

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He played with such excellence, coupling the sweetness of harmony with the near-expression of the naturalness of words, that he nearly brought his listeners to ecstasy...<sup>2</sup>

In the early seventeenth century, a vibrant repertory of instrumental music began to develop independently of its vocal

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1. I would like to thank Susan McClary and Mitchell Morris for their comments on earlier versions of this paper. Without the advice and encouragement of Gregory Salmon this project would never have come to fruition: the resulting essay is dedicated to his memory.

2. "Sonava con tanta eccellenza, che accoppiando alla dolcezza dell'armonia la quasi espressa naturalezza delle parole rendeva poco meno che estatici gli uditori..."; Leonardo Cozzando, writing on Biagio Marini, a violinist/composer active in the first half of the seventeenth century (*Libreria Bresciana*, 1694; quoted in Piperno 1990, xxx).

counterpart. In order to succeed with early Baroque audiences, the repertory had to conform to (and to shape) post-*seconda prattica* sensibilities, a process which involved incorporation of the seductive, rhetorical musical language—as described and analyzed by Susan McClary (1991)—most notably found in the dramatic music of Monteverdi. One genre which fully exploits the capabilities of an autonomous, seductive musical rhetoric is the concerted, *stile moderno* small-ensemble sonata of the 1610s and 1620s. In examining the use of this rhetoric in the construction of musical desire in a *sonata concertata in stile moderno* by Dario Castello (1621), this essay will explore not only the characteristics of the new style and its resonances with contemporary drama, but also its aesthetic context and possible socio-political role in early Baroque Venice.

## 1.

I will begin with an explanation of what I mean by “desire” in music and of how—and by whom—such desire can be “constructed.” Constructing an ebb and flow of musical tension and release, and setting up and toying with expectations, are components in the creation of a musical desire. Musical desire of this sort is by no means equivalent to erotic desire. Yet the two sorts of experiences—musical and erotic desire—can be linked in metaphorical terms by understanding the one in terms of the other: in other words, by mapping onto the unfolding of musical events the emotional—and perhaps physical—*frissons* of erotic desire. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have explored the many ways in which we structure everyday events in terms of simple bodily experience-related metaphors.<sup>3</sup> Given the correct incentive, this kind of metaphorical

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3. Both authors (1980, 1987) have long argued for a broader definition of metaphor, to include large-scale perceptual systems as well as literary figures. See also note 5 below.

mapping of the erotic onto musical experience may well occur. Scholars approaching issues of music and narrative have found the concept of narrative in music to be most successful for nineteenth-century Western repertoires, since the *topos* of narrative was particularly relevant to culture as a whole during that period.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, I will argue below that the *topos* of erotic desire was culturally relevant at the turn of the seventeenth century.

What, then, do I mean by “constructing desire” in a seventeenth-century sonata? In essence, inducing the listener to map a specific trajectory within the emotional repertory associated with erotic desire onto the progression of musical events in the sonata. As for the agency in this construction—that is to say, exactly *who* is constructing this pattern of desire—I will remain for the most part deliberately and infuriatingly noncommittal. Castello's manipulation of certain musical devices is unquestionably intentional; on the other hand, I do not believe that he sat down at his writing-desk intent on creating explicitly erotic stirrings in his listeners. I believe, however, that he *did* intend to create emotional (perhaps physical) stirrings; that those stirrings can be parsed into a map of a specific kind of sensual interaction; and that this specific kind of sensual interaction was a *topos* that was not only common but indeed crucial in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In my analysis I will provide what I believe to be a historically reasonable reading along these lines.

But first, let us look at the historical and philosophical context for the *topos* of desire. As José Maravall (1986) observes, intellectuals of the early seventeenth century discussed the operations of the senses with renewed interest, while regarding less highly its former faith in reason's adequacy to describe the world. The universe, the argument went, is in a constant state of flux; what seems certain one moment can become a mere

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4. For a discussion of the cultural relevance of narrative in the nineteenth century, see Dell'Antonio, Hill, and Morris 1991.

shadow the next. The result was a kind of sensual empiricism: while human senses are flawed, they are the only available resource in a world of ever-changing appearances. Accordingly, much emphasis was placed at this time in both philosophy and the arts on contrasts which greatly stimulated and startled the senses, on the construction of kaleidoscopic and fluid images. Neo-Platonic diffidence towards sensory stimuli was rejected in favor of a search for the ever more sensually challenging.

Stimulation of the senses is often described in literature of this period as heating the passions; this metaphorical linking of passions and heat was no mere poetic device but rather a concept central to structuring and understanding physical phenomena.<sup>5</sup> Heat was especially crucial to the creative passions, since all creation—and procreation—was considered to be dependent on the heat of the generating individuals: hence the importance of s(t)imulating sensual “friction to heat”—a term developed by Stephen Greenblatt (1988).<sup>6</sup> Greenblatt sees such s(t)imulation of friction in opposite-sex verbal sparring in Shakesperean drama: the interaction between the male and female protagonists, often containing thinly veiled double entendres, was meant not only to arouse erotic heat in the heroine (thus preparing her for the nuptials at the denouement of the

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5. Galen's medical theories, common knowledge through the seventeenth century, involve extensive discussions of the role of heat in the interaction of the humors, and hence in human mental and physical balance. See Laqueur 1990, *passim* and esp. 28, 109, and 118. Understanding passion in terms of human experience of the physical phenomenon of heat is not limited to the “unscientific” pre-Enlightenment. If we can judge by everyday twentieth-century expressions such as “in the heat of passion” or “all fired up”—not merely figures of speech, but standard ways of describing (and thus understanding) passion—the metaphor “PASSION operates like HEAT” is still very much with us today. See Johnson's discussion of a parallel case, the experiential metaphor PHYSICAL APPEARANCE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE (1987, 7-17).

6. See Laqueur 1990, *passim* and esp. 100ff.; Greenblatt 1988, 79. Indeed, female orgasm was considered necessary for the male seed to take hold in the womb.

## 2.

It is not too bold to recognize in the early seventeenth-century re-evaluation of instrumental music—which is characterized by aiming at the senses of the listener, while vocal music, as an interpretation of a poetic text, aims at the listener's reason—also a sign and an effect of re-evaluating the status of sensuality versus rationality characteristic of Baroque culture...instrumental “sensuality” is not an unknown trait but—until Marini's day—an especially suspect one.<sup>8</sup>

We must immediately note that McClary's analysis of the rhetoric of seduction in “Rosa del ciel” is based to a very large extent—indeed, almost exclusively—on analysis of the *musical* underpinnings of Orpheus's monologue. McClary shows how the harmonic/melodic unfolding operates along a rhetorical pattern all its own. She convincingly argues that the listener is seduced by this harmonic rhetoric as much as by the text. Indeed, since the harmonic rhetoric operates at a nonverbal level of sensation rather than the verbal level of reason, it could be even more spell-binding: sensation, after all, seemed to carry more weight than reason in the philosophical outlook of the early seventeenth century. What could be more appealing to the Baroque mind than a musical rhetoric, which works its seductive heating unimpeded by the “cooling” effect of verbal reason? We can see this rhetoric in action in the *stile moderno*

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8. “Non è azzardato riconoscere nella rivalutazione dello strumentalismo—del quale proprio il sollecitare la sfera sensoriale del fruitore diversamente dalla vocalità che mira, in quanto proposta interpretativa di un testo poetico, a soddisfarne quella razionale—anche un segno ed un effetto del rivalutare la sensualità a fronte della razionalità caratteristico della cultura barocca....La ‘sensualità’ degli strumenti è, dunque, cosa non ignota ma, fino agli anni del Marini, esteticamente sospetta” (Piperno 1990, xxix; n. 24). Piperno cites attacks by both Galilei and Zarlino on instrumental music and “garbled” vocal music because it merely titillates the ear rather than stimulating the mind. While I believe Piperno is right in his speculations about the reasons for the popularity of the new instrumental style of Marini's generation, his clear dichotomy between vocal and instrumental music needs questioning, certainly when applied to the early 1600s.

sonata of the 1610s and 1620s: the construction of this new instrumental style gives us strictly *musical* examples of both the emphasis on sensual stimulation and the dynamic interaction of musical friction to heat.

This is not to imply that musical rhetoric is not as forceful and seductive in vocal music as in instrumental. Seventeenth-century authors confirm McClary's views, as their accounts focus on the rhetorical power and expressivity of the "new" vocal style, while instrumental music is pointedly ignored.<sup>9</sup> Yet both vocal and instrumental repertoires utilize the same musico-rhetorical devices, and it becomes difficult to distinguish which repertory is borrowing from which; the expressive gestures which *stile moderno* instrumental music appears to cull from contemporaneous vocal music were in large part the outcome of *seconda prattica* borrowings from instrumental practice of the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, it is perhaps easier to isolate the characteristics of an independent musical rhetoric where there is no text to guide the structure of the music. This will be the goal of my analysis below.

How, then, to proceed in an analysis of this repertory? Carl Dahlhaus (1983) has pointed out that:

Musical analysis, to put it bluntly, is either a means or an end. It aims at theory and is thus its first step; or it tries to do justice to a musical work as a particular individual formation. (p. 9)

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9. In addition to the study of *Orfeo* cited above, see also McClary's discussion of the *Lamento della ninfa* (1991, 86-90); for a discussion of how exegetes of the *seconda prattica* reacted to instrumental music, see Dell'Antonio 1991, 349-78.

10. See, for example, Anthony Newcomb's assessment (1980) of changes in performance practice and compositional approach in end-of-century Ferrara, regarding the repertory that spawned the madrigals which touched off the Monteverdi/Artusi controversy: "concerti of virtuoso singers encouraged the incorporation of diminution into the written language of the madrigal, which in turn brought about a change in the composer's attitude toward part-writing and toward the treatment of dissonance" (p. 65).

Along these lines, there are two approaches to musical analysis which are generally considered incompatible: the generalizing and the specific. In the generalizing approach, a musical gesture is made to cohere within some over-arching theoretical model, whether it be sonata form, the *Ursatz*, or a tone row. In the specific approach, the uniqueness of that gesture is explored to obtain its specific meaning at that particular point within that particular composition. Since the purposes of these two types of analysis are diametrically opposed, a given analysis seldom combines the two approaches.

I would likewise suggest that there are two ways of approaching a work as a whole: as the representative of a genre or as a unique expressive entity. Each of the two requires a separate framework, a set of assumptions, and a way of proceeding towards the piece (in other words, the sorts of questions we might ask of it and the role we wish it to serve in our repertoire). It is not impossible to approach a work from both perspectives, as Kallberg (1988) has shown. Yet when dealing with a genre which is little known as a whole and is regarded as generally incoherent, the temptation is to engage in a long exposition in order to familiarize the reader with its uniform inner workings, leaving little impetus (or space) for a return to the specific. I will briefly address some large-scale, genre-defining issues at the opening of the analysis, but I will leave it to the reader to consult elsewhere (Dell'Antonio, 1992) on the precise generic nature of the Castellan sonata. What I wish to convey about this particular sonata is not so much the generic framework but the way Castello manipulates that framework in order to construct his narrative of desire.

In the course of analysis, one must choose whether one wishes to construct models to explain the technical workings of a composition (what I will henceforth call "intrinsic" analysis) or whether the task is to seek *reasons* for musical gestures which go beyond the self-contained structural logic of the work (henceforth "extrinsic" analysis). Elsewhere, I have examined the intrinsic characteristics of the structures of the *sonata con-*

*certata* genre. Here I propose an extrinsic analysis, suggesting a reading of what meanings those structures convey. Implicit in this operation is the assumption that it is possible for music to signify—whether directly or through metaphorical mapping—something beyond its self-contained structure. I believe this assumption was widely held in Castello's time. I also believe that this assumption is widely held in the 1990s, perhaps by more of us than generally care to admit it.

Some may object that, in analysis, it is more scientific (that is, less subjective and less arbitrarily skewed) to stick to “raw facts”—number of measures, chords, structural scale degrees, and so forth. But the very selection of any set of criteria for analysis constitutes an interpretation of what is deemed to be valuable and/or worthy of analysis. All analysis is based—and must stand or fall—on an individual's interpretation of what some sounds are *supposed* to mean, whether that individual would rather hear them as an ordered sequence of pitches or as the erotic interaction of two subjects. For the sake of this analysis, I will identify musical “friction to heat” with close, overlapping entries; frequent note-crossings or note-switching between the parts; and suspensions and other dissonances at close intervals (especially seconds and fourths). I will be using a paradigm I feel is historically appropriate and a set of terms for harmonic/structural analysis derived from extensive study of the music of Castello and his contemporaries. Nonetheless, the analysis which follows is based on *my* interpretation of the sonata.

Before proceeding to my analysis, a few words on context and terminology.<sup>11</sup> Dario Castello's First Book of *Sonate Concertate in stile moderno* (1621) was the first collection dedicated exclusively to compositions called “sonata,” and the first whose title predicates a “modern style” of instrumental music.<sup>12</sup> Though indebted to the turn-of-the-century sonata and canzo-

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11. A fuller analysis of Castellian “sonata form” is presented in Dell'Antonio 1992; a slightly different version in English can be found in chapter 2 of Dell'Antonio 1991.

na, the Castellan *sonata concertata* is indeed in a new style: among other innovations, the works in this collection display a remarkable consistency of formal organization. Each sonata is divided by fermatas into four large-scale sections, each characterized by a set of musical procedures; while the local-level procedures are not exactly the same in every sonata, the structural similarities throughout the collection are unquestionable.

Also surprisingly uniform is the quasi-functional use of harmonic areas. Castello always establishes a single triad as the fundamental tonal area within the first dozen or so measures, and this is always the triad with which he ends the sonata; a second triad serves as most frequent alternative resting point. Not wanting to postulate too close a connection with functional tonality, I have chosen to use the terms "Primary" and "Secondary" to describe these triads. The opening of a sonata, then, invariably involves a cadence on the Primary, a move to the Secondary, and a return to the Primary to end the first major section of the work.<sup>13</sup>

A final uniform characteristic is the use of the circle of fifths as a transitional framework. It is difficult to speak of modulation as such in Castello's collection (a useful model is perhaps Dahlhaus's concept of "open modulation"), but there is a definite sense that each cadential area is approached by sequencing through the circle of fifths. Within a given sonata the important cadential areas (Primary, Secondary, and one or two others) are almost invariably related by proximity within the circle of fifths.

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12. For a thorough outline of the sources for this collection, see Selfridge-Field 1977, viiff.

13. See Dell'Antonio 1992 (or 1991, 37ff.) for a more thorough discussion of these terms. My analysis shies away from analytical models involving connections between series of descending modal *diapente* (particularly thorough models are given in McClary 1976 and Stein 1991), given the triadic contours, wide range, and frequent changes of register which characterize Castello's idiom.

The following abbreviations are employed in the analysis: S1, S2 = *soprano primo, soprano secondo* (the two melody instruments); BC = *basso continuo*; triads are indicated with underlined letters, uppercase if major and lowercase if minor (e.g. C = C-major triad, a = a-minor triad); individual notes are indicated with upper-case, non-underlined letters. Lower-case, non-underlined letters are used to indicate pertinent motives.

### 3. *Dario Castello: "Terza Sonata a due Soprani" (1621)*

The S1 opens with three gestures which revolve around A: first an arpeggiation from E solidly down to A, then—after a speedy return to E—an extended sequential gesture which wends its way down to A again, drawing out the descent through the descending modal diapente, and finally a push through the "E" ceiling with an augmented second leading to a standard cadential syncopation.<sup>14</sup> These three gestures firmly establish the a triad as the Primary triad of the sonata: such an unambiguous presentation of a Primary is typical of Castellian opening motives.

But how secure is the a triad? Consider the BC line, beyond the opening two measures. Beginning with an apparent canzona-like response to S1 (which states the alternative A-based *diapente*, A - D), the first three measures (mm. 3-5) spell out a fairly standard bass-line cadential pattern—implying a cadence to d. Most puzzling is the B flat in m. 5; what is a flattened second degree doing under a soprano phrase which overwhelmingly, even obstreperously says "a"? That the BC takes us right back towards a with a leap and three hammer strokes on E does not eliminate this contradictory seductive move to d—indeed, the G natural and F natural which end m. 7 in the BC could well be directing us back to that alien area. While the surprise appearance of the G sharp in the S1 catapults us back to a, this central pitch area is being undermined at the same time as it is being

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14. There is no reason to believe that the F natural—the last eighth note in m. 7, S1—should be sharpened to smooth the transition to the cadence by avoiding the augmented second: the use of accidentals seems absolutely deliberate throughout the collection.

proffered. The opening introduces contradictory desires: a is evidently the Primary (its pre-eminent position as the beginning triad is reinforced by the three A-gestures in the S1), but the cadential formula in the BC toward D is persuasive, and the lack of a resolution to that triad is frustrating. In fact, the tension toward D is reinforced by the BC's G and F natural in m. 7, and its exorcism requires the somewhat brutal force of the high G sharp. Thus, while A is portrayed as the natural locus of the sonata, we are manipulated into desiring the veiled D.

Castello then repeats the opening phrase with S2. This wholesale repetition is extremely unusual—indeed unique—in the openings to Castellian sonatas, which in almost all cases consist of a short (two-measure, at most) motive in one of the upper parts, answered at the fifth/fourth by the other part. Again we are offered a, and again the B flat in the bass beckons elsewhere, only to be again rudely interrupted first by the four hammering Es and then by the piercing G sharp in S2.

S1 proposes another argument, x, as S2's initial phrase draws to a close. This argument, another two-measure cadential gesture, is no less fixated on A: S2 shows little wit in repeating it exactly. The BC is also stagnating, oscillating between a and E triads. But when S1 re-proposes x, incorporating the suggestive B flat and proffering the formerly withheld, seductive d, the action begins in earnest.

S2 cannot do any better with x the second time, but the new area, d, is clearly fertile ground: when S1 returns to the opening material at m. 20, we can distinguish two discrete ideas, a and b. Finally, S2 appears to have been coaxed out of its shell; its imitative response (mm. 22ff.) is more compatible with the interactive behavior which generally characterizes Castello's opening sections. Call and response between S1 and S2 intensifies into friction through mm. 28-31, and the BC speeds us through a satisfying cadential formula (mm. 30-33) to a firm return to a—the first nonoverlapped cadence in the sonata—in m. 34.

We have established, departed from, and returned to the Primary. Significantly, however, S1 and S2 were able to initiate meaningful interaction and friction only through a move to the Secondary d: a was sterile as a harmonic center, permitting only triadic and cadential gestures to the Primary. Thus already in his opening section Castello has established tension between a clearly (perhaps *too* clearly)

Terza Sonata *a due Soprani*

Dario Castello (1621)  
Ed. Dell'Antonio

Musical notation for measures 1-4. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measure 1 has an 'A' above the staff. Arrows point to notes in measures 2, 3, and 4.

Musical notation for measures 5-8. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measure 5 has a '5' above the staff. Measure 6 has a circled 'b' and 'NB'. Measure 7 has an 'A' above the staff. Arrows point to notes in measures 5, 6, 7, and 8. Bass clef has notes 'd?', 'E', '6', '(6)', 'A', 'A?', '#', '4', '#'. Chord symbols 'A', '6', '(6)', 'A', 'A?', '#', '4', '#' are written below the bass staff.

Musical notation for measures 9-12. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measure 9 has an 'A' above the staff. Measure 11 has a circled 'b'. Bass clef has notes 'A', '6', 'd?'. Chord symbols 'A', '6', 'd?' are written below the bass staff.

Musical notation for measures 13-16. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measure 14 has an 'x' above the staff. Measure 15 has an 'x' above the staff. Bass clef has notes 'E', 'A?', '#', '4', '#', 'A', '#'. Chord symbols 'E', 'A?', '#', '4', '#', 'A', '#' are written below the bass staff.

17

NB

x

x

#

#

→

20

a

a

b

a

d

#

24

b

a

a

a

28

a

friction →

b

b

32

affetto  
affetto  
affetto #6 4 3

37

6 # → d  
5 #6 6 → extended →  
#

42

d 5 #6 6 6 # #  
→ a? → # extended → A

47

x y z  
A # 6 # # # V/→

Castello: Terzo Sonata a due soprani; mm. 32-50

51

$\#$  A  $\#$  (play with x and y results in modulation)  $\longrightarrow$

55

cf. mm. 48-51

$\#$   $\#$   $\#$   $\#$  6 6  
 V/  $\rightarrow$  d

59

$\#$   $\#$   $\#$   $\#$  6  
 V/  $\rightarrow$  D

63

$\#$   $\#$   $\#$   $\#$  4 3 Solo 5 6  
 Solo

V/  $\rightarrow$  C

Castello: Terzo Sonata *a due soprani*; mm. 51-67

68

5 8

71

→ G?                      → C?

74

C confirmed

6 3 4 3

V/→ C

78

5 6                      5 6

Castello: Terzo Sonata *a due soprani*; mm. 68-81

82

85

88

92

Castello: Terzo Sonata *a due soprani*; mm. 82-95

96

adasio  
adasio  
adasio

6 6 7# 8 5 A

"out of control?" v/→ A ?v/→

101

p.  
p.

F v/C → C

105

f. p.  
f. p.

ecco

108

f. p.  
p. f. p.

ecco

v/→ A#

Castello: Terzo Sonata a due soprani; mm. 96-110



defined Primary a (which, though set up as the pitch we should anticipate as stable and concluding, is nevertheless not at all conducive to interplay between the parts) and a shadowy, fertile, Secondary d. While d first comes to the forefront with S1's seductive move in mm. 18-20, we must remember that the idea for a move to that area—featuring the incorporation of B flat—was suggested by the BC at the opening. And it is the BC which takes control as the upper parts initiate friction at m. 29ff., leaving the a-D pivots which had occupied it through the preceding measures to once again emphasize E and guide the harmony through a cadential formula back to the Primary. It is the task of the BC to suggest the fertile, “foreign” Secondary area and then to bring it under control in the move to a which closes the first large-scale section of the sonata.

The second section opens, as in all Castellian sonatas, with a slow and highly dissonant series of cadential gestures (usually marked “*adasio*” [sic], but “*affetto*” in this case). In most cases, the result of these cadential gestures is a move to a different pitch center, often the Secondary triad established in the opening section. Indeed, the BC again suggests the slippery B flat, and the harmony quickly returns to d. The cadential gesture is repeated: this time the BC's resolution to D is thwarted (m. 40) and sensuously drawn out through suspensions for another measure and a half.

But Castello will not let us rest on d; the second phrase is repeated exactly, down a fourth, to bring us back to the primary a. After the intensification and erotic stretching through the two cadences to d, the redundancy of the move to a strikes us not as a reinforcement of the Primary triad but rather as an afterthought. Having again been seduced to d, we are reminded of the “correct” harmonic goal: where d constructs sensuality, a hearkens back to “reality.”

The triple meter section which follows opens with a tripartite motive in the S1 (x-y-z; mm. 47-50). While the S1 version of the motive would take us to D, S2 follows S1 at the fourth and returns us safely to A. S2 now claims the upper register for A (pushing the ceiling B flat up to a B natural), and A appears firmly entrenched. But as soon as S1 draws S2 into friction-play with motives x and y, the action quickly turns to D (mm. 51-56).

To ensure that D has replaced A as the topic, S1 repeats the opening phrase of the triple meter section at m. 56; S2, easily seduced, follows suit by duplicating the pattern of mm. 47-51, and

again provides the cadential formula to D. Note that S1 appropriates the opening notes of S2's statement of A in mm. 48-51, and re-interprets the end of the phrase—excising the G sharp—into an equally convincing statement of G.

S1 again suggests the x-y-z motivic sequence, moving further along the circle of fifths and looking to confirm G—quite antithetical to the primary a—as a resting point. The following pattern leads me to this emplotment: S1 begins on scale degree 5, S2 on scale degree 1; S1 offers a cadence on IV, which S2 corrects to a cadence on I. This pattern occurs in mm. 47-51 returns again when S1 seeks to confirm D in mm. 56-60, and clearly commences once more at m. 60ff. The upper parts are now straying too far from the a/d polarity, and risk the introduction of disruptive, “foreign” pitch areas. The BC quickly inserts a G in m. 63 (instead of the D we would expect from the established pattern) to turn the S1's C into a suspension, which must resolve to B and cadence on C.<sup>15</sup>

This emergency show of force by the BC—compelling S1 away from G and towards C—leads to a focus on C for the entire solo section. Solo sections in Castellian sonatas are always rhapsodic and frequently contain elaborate motivic play.<sup>16</sup> This solo is no exception, as S1 introduces and juggles a variety of short motivic cells. A feint towards G (mm. 72-73) is balanced by a return to C (mm. 73-74) and a strong reiteration of that area.

S2 repeats the solo exactly, perhaps portraying tonal area C as unable to provide the generative “heat” required for creativity and spontaneity—C is thus coupled with the stable, unthreatening (but sterile) Primary a.

Picking up on a neighbor-note figure at the end of S2's solo, S1 suggests a shorter idea for imitative interaction; S2, however, seems wary of leaving the security of C (cf. also the similar situation in mm. 15-18). Following a tactic similar to that of mm. 18ff., S1 coaxes S2 to G—where imitative friction begins in earnest. S1 and S2, inter-

15. While C is even further along the circle of fifths, it is more closely connected in Castello's system to the primary A: in the A-primary sonatas of the collection, C is often used as co-Secondary with d.

16. For a detailed study of Castello's “formative” motivic play in his solo sections, see Dell'Antonio 1992 (or 1991, 65-68). While the motivic play in this solo is interesting, it is not pertinent to the course of this analysis.

twined, quickly spin out of control in a furious sequence—and the BC churns through the circle of fifths, providing the fastest harmonic motion to this point. It is nearly impossible for the listener not to hold her/his breath at this frenzy.

But in fact the BC is still fully in control of the situation. S1 has succeeded in arriving at C. This misconduct must be rectified, and the BC takes advantage of the confusion caused by the intensification of friction, directing the harmony through a cadential formula (mm. 97ff.) squarely back to an explosive cadence on A. Given the unbridled effect of mm. 94-97, the BC's construction of such a stable point of fulfillment leads S1 and S2—and us—to welcome A as the long-lost goal. In fact, the BC is not entirely responsible for the return to A: S2's G sharp in m. 97 seems to require resolution to the Primary. While S1 initiated musical seduction, and the BC provided a framework for friction, it is S2's leading G sharp which triggers the climactic cadence.

The release of tension is evidenced by the almost post-coital parallel thirds (unprecedented in this sonata and extremely rare throughout Castello's collection) which swoon over a pedal as the final section begins.<sup>17</sup> The BC appears to be firmly in control, and the parts are moving in harmony of purpose: a move to C (mm. 103-108) is juxtaposed with a repeat of the cadential echo gesture leading to a return to A (mm. 108-112), thereby re-establishing the connection between the two pitch areas and asserting the primacy of the latter.<sup>18</sup>

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17. I am not quite sure of the significance of the F triad at this point (a puzzling choice for the longest bass note of the piece so far). Castello frequently uses juxtapositions of third-related triads for dramatic contrast in the collection as a whole, and the A - F shift is one such juxtaposition (see Dell'Antonio 1992, or Dell'Antonio 1991, 36). The supposition that falling-third shifts had a particular affective implication for Castello (and for his contemporaries—both composers and listeners—as well) bears exploring; see for example the passage surrounding the text “Luci care e serene” in Monteverdi's madrigal “Al lume delle stelle,” Book VII (1619). There is no evidence in the rest of the collection for the self-conscious use of the subdominant triad as dominant preparation, so I hesitate to view this triad as, for example, anything like a functional IV of C.

18. The connection is established through the use of E, prominent in the flourish at mm. 108-109, as a pivot note: scale degree 3 of C; it also functions as scale degree 5 of A.

Castello could very well stop here.  $\underline{A}$  has been re-established as the ruling triad,  $\underline{C}$ 's role has been explained, problematic/sensual  $\underline{D}$  has been exorcised. But S1 initiates yet another repetition of the echo formula in m. 112—returning us to  $\underline{D}/\underline{d}$ .<sup>19</sup> In the final canonic swoop, both S1 and S2 twice reach the peak of the high B flat before reluctantly settling on the obligatory final  $\underline{A}$  triad.<sup>20</sup>

It is perhaps telling that neither S1 nor S2 ends on scale degree 1 of the Primary, which must be provided by the ever-controlling BC. The lack of a strong, articulated cadence to the Primary is unique in the collection; for his other “plagal” endings (in both Sonatas 2 and 4, for example) Castello provides a strong perfect cadence on the Primary before adding on a final “I - IV - I” gesture. A huge climactic resolution onto  $\underline{A}$  comes “too soon” in m. 99. It would seem that S1 and S2 are ready to resume friction in the “sensual” area  $\underline{d}$  at m. 116, if the BC would only let them. There is thus a sense of incompleteness, of lack of closure at the end of the sonata, despite the fact that the Primary has been reached and the expected set of formal procedures (see Dell'Antonio 1992, or 1991, 29-33) has been fulfilled.

In the above analysis I have located S1 as the active partner, who suggests ideas and initiates modulation, while reading S2 as the initially bashful but ultimately equally willing and creative partner. Mapping of socially implicit “masculine” and “feminine” traits would be a logical step at this point; furthermore, both individuals share equally the dynamics of seduction and the “generative heat of passion” at crucial moments, which is eminently compatible with late-Renaissance views on passion briefly explored above. Of course, this interpretation depends on the acceptance of metaphorical mapping derived

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19. It would seem, indeed, that S2 initiates the transition to  $\underline{d}$  this time, since without its cooperation the connection between the flourish in m. 112 and those preceding it cannot be established. The roles of seducer and seduced are not as clearly delineated as we might have thought.

20. Thus re-establishing this signifier of sensual  $\underline{d}$ —a disruptive flat second scale degree of the Primary triad  $\underline{A}$  rather than the B natural proffered by the S2 in mm. 113 and 115—as the true ceiling pitch.

from an anthropomorphic reading of the relationship between the upper parts of the sonata. Admittedly there is no direct evidence that seventeenth-century audiences would consciously have parsed a sonata along these lines. Yet the general aesthetic concerns outlined above, combined with the uniquely Venetian fascination with dramatic interaction in a genre (as demonstrated by the *commedia dell'arte*) which often had a decidedly erotic focus, make such metaphorical mappings of friction to heat possible, even likely.<sup>21</sup>

Construction of desire is thus present through a fairly clear masculine/feminine erotic mapping, with an active "seducer" and a passive "seduced," though both partners are equally involved in friction/creation. There is also another level of gender/power mapping: I have characterized the upper parts as sensual and seductive, the BC as controlling and moderating. By traditional Renaissance models, sensual is to thinking/moderating as female is to male; and the success of the BC in restraining the upper parts could easily be seen as a re-establishing of status-quo, male stability. Yet that re-establishing is problematic, because the instability is wrestled with and hammered back, rather than resolved, at the end of the sonata. Furthermore, it *is* the BC which first introduces the problematic B flat.

The teleological predictability of functional tonality is not yet present in this sonata; in its place we find a flexible, seductive discourse which proffers and then withholds desired harmonic goals. Because they own the melodic language, the upper parts (and especially the S1) are the ones that lead us through motivic interchange and friction, enticing us to follow their sensual gyrating to ever more forbidden pitch areas. The BC is the ever-watchful moderator, first suggesting a fertile area for exploration, then stepping in when—as in mm. 6off. and

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21. For a contemporaneous testimony on the importance of the *commedia* in Venetian social life of the seventeenth century, see Bianconi 1982, 298-306.

especially 94ff.—the upper parts become too involved in their friction to notice that they are exceeding the bounds of the constructed harmonic “propriety.” In this sonata, the Baroque aesthetic of sensual instability is reconciled with the equally Baroque desire for an underlying controlling, unifying force.

Up to now, we have dealt primarily with the specific narratives of desire constructed in this sonata. I would like to go further, and suggest that this kind of frictional interaction is a driving characteristic of the *stile moderno* genres. Friction to heat is constructed and resolved in a specific way in this sonata, but its procedures and narratives inform the entirety of Castello's sonatas, the *stile moderno* sonatas of his contemporaries, and indeed a great deal of small-ensemble music of the early *seicento*, both vocal and instrumental.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4.

Genres and conventions crystallize because they are embraced as natural by a certain community....Struggles over musical propriety are themselves political struggles over *whose* music, *whose* images of pleasure or beauty, *whose* rules of order shall prevail. (McClary 1991, 27-28)

The seductive musical rhetoric of the *stile moderno* is constructed not only to fulfill the desire for local sensory stimulation but also to provide satisfactory resolution (though not necessarily exorcism) of musical “problems” presented along the way. Not the least important characteristic of the new style is to establish itself as desirable through its ability to move the listener so effectively and, perhaps, through its latent erotic appeal. In fact, the instrumental *stile moderno*, an almost exclu-

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22. Indeed, the very construct which engenders the *stile moderno*, i.e. the *seconda prattica*, could be seen—rather than simply as the predominance of words (*oratione*) over music (*armonia*)—as an advocacy of the creative, generative power of friction to heat between two partners, *oratione* and *armonia*. But the question of master/servant (S & M? butch/femme?) friction must remain a topic for another occasion.

sively Venetian movement, may have served a socio-political function during its short flourish—from the 1610s to the disastrous plague of 1630. This was a time of considerable political upheaval in Venice, as the *Interdetto* (the virtual excommunication of the entire city by Pope Urban VII, whose authority the Venetian government had questioned) had exacerbated the conflict between two factions of patrician families: the so-called *vecchi*, who were conservative, predominantly land-owning families, tendentially pro-Roman; and the *giovani*, newly prosperous and more progressive, who called for political renewal and increased ties with France and especially England and the Netherlands.<sup>23</sup>

The *giovani* had advocated ties with the upwardly mobile Protestant countries in order to revitalize what they (correctly) saw as stagnating economic conditions in the *Serenissima*, particularly with respect to trade. It was the *giovani* who subsidized Galileo Galilei during his years at Padua (1592-1610); the scientist's circle included the historian and cleric Paolo Sarpi, who was to become the leading figure in the Venetians' conflict against Rome. The intellectual interests of the *giovani* were directed more to scientific and historical-political studies than to humanistic disciplines such as Greek and Roman literature and philosophy, displaying a pragmatic tendency to embrace the present and the future rather than the traditions of the past.

Their rhetoric of change and renewal served the *giovani* well in the conflict against Rome. But in the wake of the *Interdetto*, the now-ruling *giovani* suffered some political setbacks in the 1610s as the Spanish empire enjoyed military successes, both against the Venetians on the Italian mainland and against their potential allies, the rebellious provinces of the Netherlands. The political situation in the Republic was thus more

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23. The historical information in this section is derived primarily from Cozzi 1979 (139ff. and especially 155, 196-97, 270-76). See also Logan 1972, 64 and passim; Zorzi 1990, 111ff.; and Piperno 1990, xv.

fragile than ever, and the *giovani* must have felt a need to stabilize their political influence.

Piperno (1990, xv) has pointed out the preponderance of *giovani* family names in the list of dedicatees for Marini's *Affetti Musicali* of 1617 (which could be considered the first *stile moderno* instrumental collection). Unfortunately, we cannot determine the dedicatee of Castello's 1621 collection, as the first edition has been lost.<sup>24</sup> But it stands to reason that a political movement which touted itself as forward-looking and innovative should have adopted and encouraged a musical style that would portray the same image of novelty, especially if that new style was unabashed in its sensual appeal. For if a certain type of music (the *stile moderno*) could be portrayed as standing for a given aesthetic and—by extension—political outlook (that of the *giovani*), those seduced by the music could very well accept the rest of the package. Moreover, the duo-texture of the *stile moderno* could easily have resonated with the brisk (and often sensual) dramatic interchange typical of the hugely popular (and *giovani*-fostered) *commedia dell'arte*.<sup>25</sup> No doubt the *giovani* were aware of the advantage of identifying their cause with the "new style."<sup>26</sup> Such use of art for political—especially mass-political—purposes was characteristic of Baroque ideology.

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24. Eitner (*Quellen-Lexicon* II:361) cites a copy of the 1621 edition in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek. That copy appears to have been lost when a portion of the Staatsbibliothek collection disappeared during the course of the Second World War. (As this article goes to press, I have discovered that the copy of the 1621 edition cited by Eitner has resurfaced in the Bibliotheka Jagiellońska in Cracow. I am in the process of obtaining a microfilm which may provide additional answers.)

25. The activity of the *commedia* had been radically curtailed in the last decades of the sixteenth century because of pressure on the Venetian government by the Church; it enjoyed a marked revival in the period following the *Interdetto* under the aegis of the *giovani* (see Logan 1972, III).

26. While more evidence is needed on this point (for example, investigation of *giovani* patronage of composers and performers connected with the new style), this is a theory that bears exploring.

If we approach the interplay between the two melody instruments through a general metaphorical mapping of "frictional" dramatic interaction, it is all too easy to ignore the role of the accompaniment. Indeed, this omission is reinforced by the naming of sonatas and canzonas in the *stile moderno* repertory, which excludes the basso continuo part: a sonata for two violins and BC was labeled "sonata a due."<sup>27</sup> The fact that the accompaniment (as we have seen) plays an essential, controlling role in the instrumental rhetoric of seduction contradicts the implication that the BC is unimportant to the "plot" of the work; furthermore, the guiding nature of the BC resonates with the Baroque model of an unseen, yet crucial force which manipulates and directs the apparent surface chaos.<sup>28</sup> If we come to appreciate the skill with which early Baroque musicians manipulated harmonic structures to channel desire, it will become clear that referring to early seventeenth-century uses of "rudimentary tonality" undermines the raw power of musical seduction in this repertory, a power which is lacking in the codified tonal formulae of the later Baroque.

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27. While such a statement is of course a generalization, this tendency nevertheless obtains in the overwhelming majority of the instrumental repertory, with the exception of works which are clearly dance-derived or influenced by the *canzonetta*; and these works are quite different from the expressive "new-style" sonatas and canzonas. See also Mangsen 1990.

28. Another instance of an unseen, controlling element is the unquestionable structural model which governs the apparently "patchwork" surface discontinuity of the multisectional sonatas. See Dell'Antonio 1992; 1991, chapter 2.

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### Discography

- Castello, Dario. "Sonata terza for Two Violins and Basso continuo." *Virtuoso Chamber Music from Seventeenth-Century Italy*. Performed by Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. Musical Heritage Society CD MHS 512225H.

(NOTE: I do not entirely subscribe to this interpretation of the sonata, which to my mind does not sufficiently bring out the analytical points I am making. On the other hand, it is the only recording of the sonata commercially available, and it is valuable as such.)