

**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO**  
**DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN STUDI LETTERARI, LINGUISTICI E**  
**STORICI – SLL STUDI LETTERARI**

**ABSTRACT DELLA TESI DI DOTTORATO**

**di**

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***NEW TASSIANE EXEGETIC ROUTES***

The PhD thesis, *New Taxi Exegetical Pathways*, deals first of all with the arrangement and study of bibliographic material, which was necessary for the drafting of the research project, not only in the Library and the journal fund of the University of Salerno, but also in the Vatican Apostolic Library and in the Library of the "Centro di Studi Tassiani" of Bergamo. The retrieval of these texts was fundamental for the articulation of the structure of work, which presents as an introductory part the variegated framework of poetic production, particularly lyrical, of the 16th century, with precise references to the history, forms and canons of the madrigal, from the first to the late Renaissance. The poetic motifs inspired by the Neoplatonic conception of beauty have also been investigated, compared with the topical elements of the Italian poetic tradition and merged with some fundamental themes, such as the multiformity, the mutability and the multiplicity of the manifestations of beauty, components emblematically embodied by the god Proteus, a key figure in the entire series of madrigals, so congenial to the poetics of Tasso as to inform numerous areas of his entire production. The texts have been explored, from a methodological point of view, according to a dynamic dimension, bringing into dialogue both the previous textual history with the provisional manuscript crystallization, and the subsequent one. Moreover, this optic was useful both for the data relating to the structure and for those relating to the revision process, especially to describe how the first lines originally represent some of the peculiarities of the wider taxi-opera lyrical laboratory.

The thesis is therefore structured in several chapters: a historical-literary picture of the madrigal in the sixteenth century, the theories and anthological collections of madrigals, the formal structures and the metric typologies of the madrigals also in relation to music, the madrigals of Torquato Tasso, also with reading exercises on the most significant, their function both in translations and in various imitations, as a further investigation of their critical fortune through time. This is followed by the complete collection of the entire corpus of the philologically decontextualized madrigals from the approximately two thousand compositions of the poet. It is clear that the fundamental theoretical reflections, from Bembo to Ruscelli, from Minturno to Trissino, from Dolce to Piccolomini, insert the madrigal into the hedonistic horizon of courtly entertainment, recognizing however a stylistic typology that can vary from

magnificence to gentility, from the a joke to the moral sentence, feeding on contrasting stylistic tensions, of rare and ingenious concepts, of an oxymorically very pure and artificial elocution. Therefore, the anthological collections of madrigals also show the high degree of formalization acquired by the topical situations of the lyric, which could then be subjected to further variations: in the functioning of a specific theme, in the forms that it assumes, the constituent elements of the madrigal, but not through general considerations on the innumerable motifs, mostly the same ones of the sonnet, of the song and of the canzonetta, which are therefore not at all distinctive. However, it is concluded that heterometry becomes the fundamental characteristic of the madrigal, together with the rule of not going beyond the twelve verses: precisely these two qualities clearly differentiate it from the form of the sonnet and will make it increasingly present in the late sixteenth century songbooks.

The survey shows that the popularity of the madrigal develops through the channels of production and musical diffusion: in the polyphonic scores the title of "madrigal" is extended to compositions attributable to other genres (sonnets, ballads and songs, octaves, sestines ), gradually acquiring a more precise textual physiognomy, which allows him to achieve his own *raison d'être* in the lyric and musical publishing of the late Renaissance, the period in which Tasso's poetic personality predominates, to which he often links the most great composer of music for madrigals, Carlo Gesualdo. The madrigal is, therefore, formed by a single verse of variable length from five to twenty verses (preferably from seven to twelve), with free rhyming disposition (an unrelated rhyme may also be present, in particular on the first verse) and alternation (usual, but not obligatory) of septenaries and hendecasyllables (quinari are also possible), determined not only by the alternation of the two meters, but also by the combination of various groups of verses. Despite being free as regards the frequency of rhymes, the number of its rhymed verses can range from one to three, but, as can be seen from the research carried out, the arrangement of the rhymes can determine an almost uninterrupted succession of different terminations left only in part, groups of couplets, of verses in kissed rhyme or alternating: the freedom of the madrigal concerns its dimensions, the alternation of hendecasyllables and septenaries or its exclusive adhesion to one of these two meters.

In this description the hermeneutic work inserts the unfolding of many of Tasso's madrigals as harmonious scores, which are certainly the most obvious example of the "lyricism" of the sixteenth-century madrigal: forms and phrases that return, barely changed on themselves, with replicas, anaphoras , abominations, echoes, pauses, to draw a scenario of elegant eroticism translated into sweet sonorities, where the landscape is evoked in its traditional, elementary reliefs, love is the protagonist with its exciting and allusive game of unresolved gallantry, while the personifications of the fluvial and sylvan elements are the pawns of an invisible chessboard that returns the illusion of life in the uninterrupted opposition of the state of nature to the civilization of the courts. To obtain these effects, on the basis of an appropriately traced register, the poet uses some essential stylistic procedures, such as the redundancy of the ornament, the choice of verbal forms at infinity which, enhanced by the structural use of the polysynthesis, free the evocative moment from every

commitment of logical understanding, suspending its temporal perception, the sensuality that involves the poetic language and aims to obtain marked phonic effects.

In the final part of the work the profound reasons for the great success of Tasso's madrigal production emerges in an original way, explained by the growing affirmation of a courtier style that favors, on the one hand, the meaningful and conceptual use of a brilliant Arcadian symbolism, from the another is the reflection, less tied to Petrarch's stylistic modules, around the affective contents of love poetry, often made more intense by female vocal performances, such as in those admirable verses so loved by Foscolo, in which the final couplet expresses the insatiable desire for kisses mixed with the song that the word fails to capture. Coherently with a research, intended to contextualize the madrigal in the general context of the genus, the madrigal production is followed up to its last Renaissance season, on the threshold of the seventeenth century, when the madrigal becomes more and more refined and witty, so much by transfigure the realistic scene into an abstract comedy of concepts, thus affirming itself as the true successor of the epigram, if the Baroque poets, being aware of it, will tend to equal the ancient prestige.

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